



F o n d s

Prince Claus Fund for
Culture and Development



Call for Proposals 2017

Contemporary Take, Beyond Cultural Heritage

Projects' summaries

13 projects granted through this joint call for proposals by the Prince Claus Fund and the British Council

Contemporary Take, Beyond Cultural Heritage 2017:

Projects granted per country

Countries	Projects granted
India	7
Pakistan	3
Bangladesh	2
Nepal	1
TOTAL	13

Projects granted per discipline

Categories	No. of Projects	Projects' Name
Photography	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ORAL HISTORY PROJECT: Mofussil photography in Bangladesh• Imagine• Disappearing Roots
Audio-Visual	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• iDiscover Ahmedabad• Fuzzscape• Culture Connect
Theatre/ Performance/ Installation	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Museum of Food: A Living Heritage• Sniffing out the differences!
Digital art/Game development	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pakistan + : Exploring South Asian Culture Through Futurism and Fantasy• Here-In-Time• Culture Connectors• Re-Aligning Goan Heritage through Mixed Reality• Bambahiyya VR

CONTENTS

Bangladesh

- Disappearing Roots
- ORAL HISTORY PROJECT: Mofussil photography in Bangladesh

India

- Bambahiyya VR
- Culture Connectors
- iDiscover Ahmedabad
- Here-In-Time
- The Museum of Food: A Living Heritage
- Re-Aligning Goan Heritage through mixed reality
- Sniffing out the differences!

Nepal

- Fuzzscape

Pakistan

- Culture Connect
- Imagine
- Pakistan +: Exploring South Asian Culture Through Futurism and Fantasy

Bangladesh

Disappearing Roots

Who: Samsul Alam Helal

What: Using the mediums of photography, film and audio, along with found objects, Helal aims to challenge the way that indigenous history is portrayed in mainstream media. The final project will be exhibited at the Bangladesh National Museum.

Amount: 9,525 Euro



Samsul Alam Helal, an emerging documentary photographer, will travel to the Chittagong Hill Tracts intermittently over the span of ten months to conduct in-depth multi-media research into the plight of the indigenous communities living there. By revisiting the same places over the duration of the project, Helal will be able to dive deep into the issues surrounding the indigenous communities in question. This depth will also allow him to create meaningful relationships with youth organizations, research groups and journalists in the region.

One of the aims of the project is to redefine the way that indigenous communities are regarded within society. Helal has extensive experience working with marginalized groups, and in portraying them in a way that gives them agency. Through this project Helal hopes to give a voice to an alternative narrative surrounding the indigenous community, and to shine light on issues that are being ignored by popular culture. By engaging young people through this multimedia intervention he aims to inspire them to educate themselves further, realize the presence of alternative points of view and finally to be inspired to bring about positive change. The main effect of the project will be to challenge culturally prejudiced mindsets to be more inclusive of alternative narratives of heritage.

This project will result in an exhibition at the Bangladesh National Museum, with a panel discussion to be held at the opening. This panel discussion is an important component of the project as it is through discussion that people are afforded the opportunity to expand their mindsets. The young people from the Hill Tracts who were engaged in the process of documentation will be invited to be present at the opening. After the exhibition in Dhaka has closed, it will travel back to the regions where it was created. Along with the exhibition, the concept of a discussion panel will also travel.

Together with the main exhibition, there will be various other smaller events organized in tandem, which will be designed to actively engage young people with alternative narratives regarding the indigenous communities. To engage the academic world in this project, Helal will hold discussions at four universities within Bangladesh.

Photo Credit: Samsul Alam Helal

Oral History Project: Mofussil photography in Bangladesh

Who: Dr. Shahidul Alam, ASM Rezaur Rahman, and Prof. Christopher Pinney

What: 'ORAL HISTORY PROJECT: Mofussil photography in Bangladesh' aims to revive the vernacular history of *mofussil* (small town) photography in Bangladesh. The project will work with young student photographers and journalists working in rural areas. Together they will conduct a survey on studio photography and collect oral histories of *mofussil* photographers. This research will then be made available to the broader public through the development of an archival website

Amount: 18,981 Euro



Drik is an alternative media organisation that uses its multimedia expertise to challenge social inequality. They have an extensive track record in organising advocacy and awareness campaigns as well as the Chobi Mela international photography festival. The organisation is internationally well regarded for the work it does, especially in challenging the way that western media portrays Bangladeshi (and other non-western) life.

By approaching *mofussil* photography as visual heritage, the project will unearth a regional tradition that developed in marginal spaces. Allowing the project's participants, and the eventual viewers of the future website, to see the way photography has contributed to Bangladeshi

ideas of history and memory, will hopefully broaden their conceptions of what constitutes Bangladesh's "heritage". This project also hopes to create an avenue for *mofussil* youth engagement that has not been co-opted by the mainstream political parties. It will allow these youth to experience an alternative perspective on their country's history, using photography as a catalyst.

To implement this project, Drik will call on its rural journalism program and train 10 students and 5 journalists in the methodologies of visual research and the collection of oral histories. Once trained, these participants will go to various small towns to conduct research and to collect artifacts and photographs. At the end of the research period each participant will produce a multimedia report which will include a district photographer's database, the collection of photographs, and a compilation of the oral narratives recorded. These reports will be compiled in an archival website, which will then become the only visual archive in *mofussil* photography in Bangladesh. The website will be publicly available as a research tool for anthropologists and researchers of any interested discipline.



Photo Credit: Kamal Hossen, Drik

Bambaiyya VR

Who: Archit Vaze, Salil Parekh and Jyoti Narayan

What: A virtual reality experience of the city of Mumbai narrated through folk stories of traditional communities of Mumbai.

Amount: 14,900 Euro



“Bambaiyya VR” will be carried out by a group of designers and animators who will create a VR (virtual reality) experience of Mumbai as seen through the eyes of the local traditional communities, such as the Koli fisher folk. It will allow the users to “visit” digital reproductions of important architectural and historical sites in Mumbai, following a storyline that integrates both the culture and the folk stories of the local traditional communities.

The aim of the project is to preserve, and create a testimony of Mumbai’s tangible and intangible heritage for local residents and for people abroad. It strives to spark Mumbai’s youths’ interest in - and appreciation of - the multifaceted culture of the city. Additionally it will allow local participants to revisit familiar locales through the eyes and narratives of different communities. The project will also engage foreign audiences who have an interest in the heritage and culture of Mumbai and in new media, as well as

connect to diasporic Indians around the world to help them (re)connect with their history.

The first phase of the project will research the folk stories of various communities in the city. A selection of these stories will be made and translated into a virtual journey through the streets of Mumbai. For this journey, 3D prototypes of the various locations and heritage sites will be created through photogrammetry. The last phase of the project will integrate characters into the program, and will refine the final VR film with sound, visuals, interactions and effects. The final product will be promoted and distributed online through local and international partner organizations, as well as through arts festivals.

Culture Connectors

Who: Flow Education and Culture Consultants Pvt. Ltd.

What: An immersive virtual reality experience will be created using a selection of cultural environments of New Delhi. It will be piloted in 8 distinct cities in the north, west, south and east of India namely Amritsar, Kolkata, Bangalore, Chennai, Pune, Mumbai, Rewa, Ajmer.

Amount: 19,300 Euro



“Culture Connectors” will be undertaken by Flow Education and Culture Consultants Pvt. Ltd., whose mission is to make cultural capital accessible and relevant to the educational context. Their work moves cultural heritage out of the realm of museums and revamping the educational syllabus to include a more collaborative dialogue and inquiry into diverse cultural narratives. Their work thus far underlines their desire to undo the passive approach taken to cultural heritage education that relegates it to the realm of the past. Through the development of their own education methodology, “creative enquiry”, they seek to emphasise that cultural heritage is a tool for active self-reflective engagement and a stepping stone towards cultural pluralism.

Through “Culture Connectors”, the organisation will integrate VR into their self-developed “creative enquiry” methodology and pilot a project that will shape the cross-cultural perspectives of students between 11 to 14 years of age. This VR experience will personalise the students’ critical engagement with India’s diverse cultural heritage, allowing them to make personal connections and gain a broader understanding of the past, and thus India’s present. These experiences will be designed to be age-appropriate and will be based around selected Indian cultural spaces and traditions. Through their VR based creative enquiry approach, “Culture Connectors” will emphasise empathy, cultural engagement and problem solving skills in young learners. This VR experience will be paired with offline activities and toolkits for various capacities. Toolkits are student worksheets with activities that stimulate structured learning and a means for Flow Education to receive continuous feedback on the progress of the project.

Photo Credit: Flow India

iDiscover Ahmedabad

Who: Sameeha Sheth with her organization International Center for Sustainable Cities (ICSC), Creative Yatra and Ester van Steekelenburg from Urban Discovery **What:** They will create an illustrated map which will be paired with an app that features community curated walking routes in three neighbourhoods of Ahmedabad's Old City.

Amount: 18,800 Euro



The project “iDiscovery Ahmedabad” will be carried out by the International Center for Sustainable Cities (ICSC) and Urban Discovery. The ICSC is a think tank of urban practitioners who work to define innovative and alternative approaches to make cities more livable and lovable. Their approach is led by their belief that India’s culture, heritage and traditions must be at the heart of any new urban development model for it to be sustainable within the local context.

ICSC and Urban Discovery will create illustrated maps of three neighborhoods of the old city of Ahmedabad, which can be discovered through the iDiscovery app. Each map will be curated together with the local community to shed a personalized light on the neighborhoods’ stories, heritage sites, traditional businesses, unique food, cultural events, artists and emblematic characters. Using photography, video clips and quality copywriting the project will create a digital experience that will show the interconnectivity of tangible and intangible heritage.

The project will rearticulate the way Ahmedabad’s youth engage with heritage by capitalizing on their preoccupation with digital culture. The area selected is home to Islamic monuments, Hindu temples, Jain temples, traditional markets and much more. This project will shine light on the culturally plural microcosmic nature of neighborhoods.

The hope is that in addition to connecting the youth with the depth of their city’s heritage, it will also inspire the next generation of NGO startups, street associations, and artistic collectives - who care about their environment and urban identity.



With this grant, the ICSC and Urban Discovery will hold research workshops to map out the story they want to tell of the three selected neighborhoods. Together with the participants they will create the visuals and accompanying text that will go into the digital map, and finally launch the product.

Photo Credit: Sameeha Sheth, Architect – Urban and Regional Planner

Here-In-Time

Who: Akshita Mehta

What: It is an on-site augmented reality (AR) trivia based treasure hunt game that will allow the user to experience historical places in an engaging way.

Amount: 15,433 Euro



Akshita Mehta of the National Institute of Design in India, will further develop an online augmented reality (AR) trivia-treasure hunt game that can be used at architectural heritage sites. The AR component and the first person perspective of the player will allow them to digitally travel back in time. The experiential emphasis of the project ensures that the player is engaged with the heritage site in a way that is not possible as a passive observer. The aim of this project is to engender an active emotional connection between heritage sites and the public engaging with it by reconnecting the site to the present.

The project is notably directed at youth, but is designed to be attractive for any and all interested persons in possession of a smart phone. It is a learning tool that triggers the imagination, and brings back architectural heritage into popular consciousness in a more active and present way. The multi-layered gameplay includes information on architectural elements, comparisons between then (era when the monument was built) and now (how has it come to belong in its place today), and stories associated with the site.

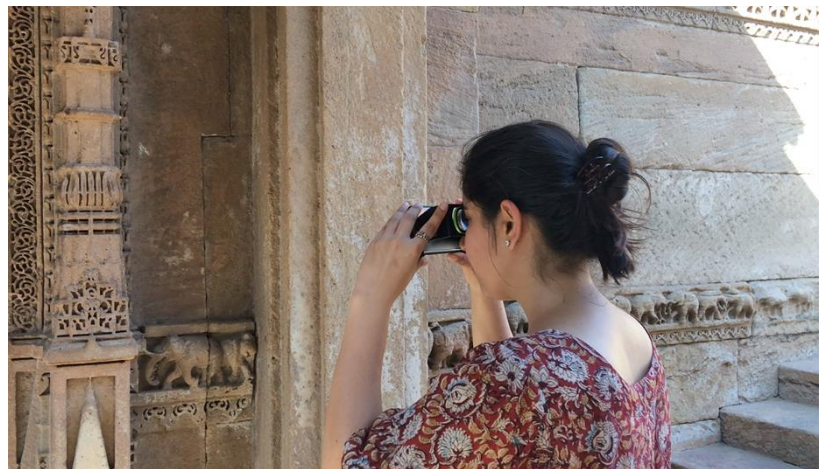


Photo Credit: Akshita Mehta

The Museum of Food: A Living Heritage

Who: Revue

What: The project will revolve around a communal kitchen that will be established in the multi-ethnic neighbourhood of Khirki-Hauzrani in New Delhi.

Amount: 16,143 Euro



Through this grant, Revue will establish a community kitchen in the multi-ethnic neighborhood of Khirki-Hauzrani, New Delhi. This project builds on Revue's successful work thus far, all of which is based on a philosophy of community interaction. Revue's main methodology for their practice is sustained community dialogue, which is the crux of their Museum of Food project.

This community kitchen, through its multiple weekly events, will be a meeting place for young women from various ethnic and migrant groups in the area. These include intra-national migrants from Bihar, Bengal and various South and North-Eastern states of India, as well as international migrants such as Afghans, Nepalis and Somalis. Based on the fact that each community has their own quintessential cuisines, the goal of the project is to function as a living archive of these communities' culinary heritage. Through the development of this archive, the kitchen will become a space for inter-cultural interaction between women, allowing them to focus on their similarities using food as a catalyst. The kitchen will function as a living-archive of cuisines from different cultures living side by side.

Revue's project will culminate in a website created together with the collaborators from the community. The website will be interactive, a mobile app will be developed to sync with the site, and an online magazine will be published, all of which aim to engage a wide cross-section of the different communities in the area. Along with the histories of cuisines, ingredients and tools, it will contain narratives of journeys of food over time and space. The bilingual magazine will be edited by the artists of Revue and be published every two months. It will be distributed for free at different communal sites such as tea stalls, barber shops and cafes to try to ensure the widest possible reach. Events at the kitchen will range from workshops four times a week focusing on the preparation of specific dishes to a monthly event aimed at all inhabitants of the area, which will include a Pop-Up kitchen as well as performances of narratives, songs and poetries around food and exhibition of materials collected during the month.

Photo Credit: Sreejata Roy, Revue

Re-Aligning Goan Heritage through mixed reality

Who: The Greenhouse/Quicksand

What: The project aims to make heritage, culture and history more accessible, interactive and fun using the mediums of Virtual and Mixed Reality

Amount: 10,900 Euro

The Greenhouse, is a new collaborative lab set up in Goa by the Delhi-based studio Quicksand along with the Mumbai-based studio The Busride.



Their project will engage young Goans with their heritage by using VR and AR (Augmented Reality) app software to focus specifically on traditional Goan homes. This project sees the home as being the touchstone for exploring different facets of Goan heritage. The houses and the objects they encapsulate all have stories, and these stories are what constitute the local traditions.

This project seeks to change the way heritage is looked at in the region. By taking their subject matter online, the project disrupts the notion that heritage can only be interacted with at museums. The VR and AR components allows the viewer to overcome the sense of detachment that comes with not being able to

physically interact with the material (in order to preserve it for the future) making their experience with the heritage more immersive. The digital aspect of the project will also allow the Goan diaspora to engage with their heritage without having to be physically present in Goa.

The 3D models of these homes will be developed through photogrammetry sessions and workshops with Goan residents and experts who are knowledgeable about the local history. While working on the project, the organisation will collect feedback from people picked from different parts of Goan society, and adjust the details of the project accordingly. Through this they hope to meaningfully involve communities, as well as raise awareness and interest in the project.



The project will result in an app, a mobile museum installation that can travel across India and a print publication that will document the production of this project.

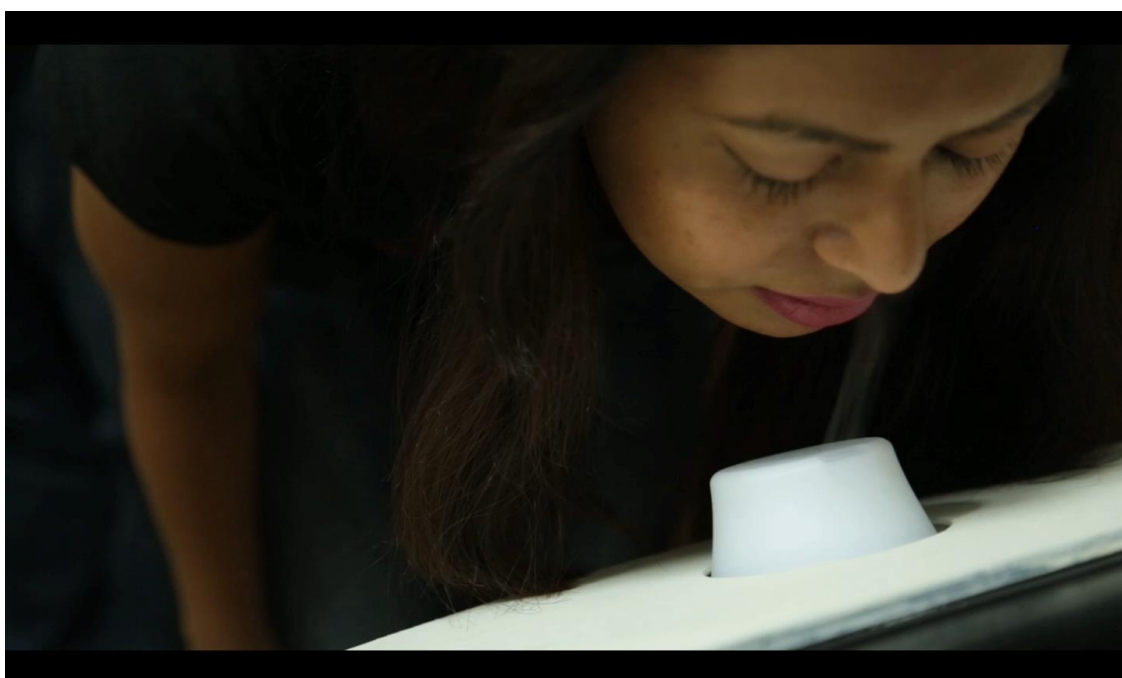
Photo Credit: The Greenhouse, Salil Parek

Sniffing out the differences!

Who: Charuvi Agrawal, Kadambari Sahu

What: Realization of a new media installation that will allow audiences to experience different cultural scents and smells from South Asia.

Amount: 19,800 Euro



Charuvi Agrawal of Charuvi Design Labs (visual artist and designer), and Kadambari Sahu (new media and Interaction designer and, electronics and communication engineer), will pool their diverse experiences together to collaborate on this project.

They will create an art installation using scent with emphasis on the cultural significance that will allow the visitor to discover and engage with the olfactory heritage of South Asia. Their project is rooted in the belief that in tracing the journey of a scent, one can trace cultural exchanges between different south Asian communities that are primarily grouped together based on religion. They will translate the history and olfactory journey into an art installation in order to experience cultural narratives, trigger curiosity, and dialogue amongst the visitors.

With this grant, Agrawal and Sahu will research and collect scents from seven locations in India (Delhi, Hyderabad, Varanasi, Kochi, Mysore, Jaipur & Bikaner and Guwahati) and from cities (to be determined) in Bhutan and Sri Lanka. Their research will focus on discovering and emphasising connections between the scents of the different locales, and weaving narratives of cultural confluences, identities, perception and heritage. Visitors leaving the installation will hopefully leave understanding that culture is created not through exclusion but through exchange. Finally, they will design and produce the interactive artwork.

Photo Credit: Mr. Gaurav Patekar

Nepal

Fuzzscape

Who: Rajan Shrestha, Nhooja Ratna Tuladhar and Fuzz Factory Productions

What: The participants will collaborate with the local youth and traditional musicians in the respective areas to create audio, visual and text-based content that describes and elaborates on the history and situation of the culture of the given space.

Amount: 13,127 Euro



Fuzz Factory Productions, a media production company offering a variety of Audio Visual production services, and local Nepali artists will collaborate on Fuzzscape, a project that aims to connect Nepali youth with their musical heritage.

Very broadly, this project will combine and translate the local music and stories into digital content. In addition to the documentary component Fuzzscape will also work with the communities to help reimagine the musical heritage in a way that can be relevant to the present. This will be done

mainly through opening a dialogue with the local communities and effectively encouraging the sustainability of these traditions.

In workshops the youth participants will select an element from their heritage to research and document in creative ways. They will engage with older musicians and storytellers of the area, allowing for the passing down of musical traditions. The workshops will also facilitate other means of creative storytelling, such as drawings and written texts. This style of workshop will encourage the participants to think of ways that this heritage is relevant to our current times. The outputs from these workshops will be compiled into a multidimensional archive of text, audio and visual material. This archive will be a source of information on aspects of Nepali culture that have thus far not been explored in depth. This entire process will be documented through a film that together with the archive will be publically accessible.



Photo Credit: Manish Paudel (top), Ronit Singh (bottom)

Pakistan

Culture Connect

Who: The Little Art (collaborating with Morango Films)

What: Culture Connect aims to inform, engage and enable youth to use existing cultural heritage spaces artistically, creatively and recreationally via workshops, tours and new media on-site interventions.

Amount: 19,189 Euro



The Little Art is a Pakistan based NGO working to empower children and young adults through the arts. Through this grant, they will implement their project, *Culture Connect*, which broadly seeks to rethink and challenge the ways in which youth engage with heritage sites, galleries, and museums.

Through digital interventions in the form of VR kiosks, *Culture Connect* aims to reach the youth and enliven the various stories that exist in cultural artifacts and heritage sites. Through engaging new media, the

initiative will present challenging narratives concerning literature, poetry, science, music and migration. Additionally, it will include its target demographic in the preparation of the event by organizing multiple workshops for around 40 individuals. This effort is mutually beneficial as it hopes to inspire the youth to participate in heritage preservation and provides them with the agency to suggest how *Culture Connect* can successfully meet its goals. Two of the workshops will have the youth participants engage with new media artists to creatively rethink the ways in which these sites are relevant to today.

The final exhibitions will revolve around the stories and histories of the Lahore Fort, Walled City of Lahore and Lahore museum.

The exhibitions will be curated after 4 workshops held with a group of youth participants.

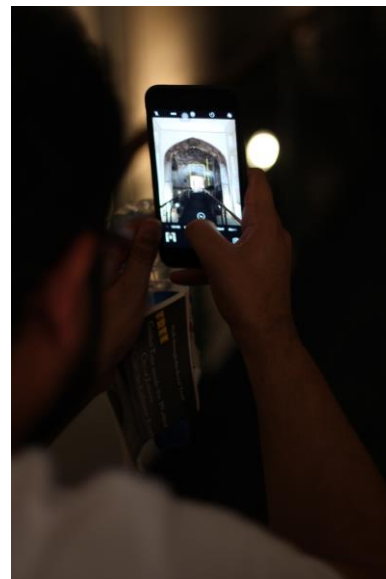


Photo credit: The Little Art

Imagine

Who: Syed Mazhar Zaidi with Promotional Partners Karachi University, Habib University and IBA, and Technical partners Mateela Films Karachi.

What: Installation based stop motion project that seeks to destabilise dominant historical narratives

Amount: 19,300 Euro



Mazhar's project is an installation based on a historically and culturally iconic image of Pakistan that will incorporate movable set pieces that the audience can manipulate. This manipulation aims to stimulate a discussion and promote an alternative narrative that will hopefully counter the dominant discourse around the iconic image. The tactile intervention is key to the success of the project as it encourages the audience to be more than just a passive viewer, instead encouraging immersive engagement with cultural heritage.

The installation takes traditional handmade miniature sculptures and uses them as stop motion props. The incorporation of these traditional sculptures works to rearticulate the way such objects are interacted with and takes steps to making them relevant to a contemporary context.

Mazhar's project is important because it provides a playful way for people to explore different versions of single established narrative, thus opening the door for different perspectives.

The subjects of the works to be displayed transcend ethnic diversities and instead focus on the elements that culturally unite the locals - roadside chess, street cricket, chai etc. By focusing on the things that are common across ethnic divides, this exhibition could be a step in the direction of an inclusive society that is more focused on commonalities than differences.



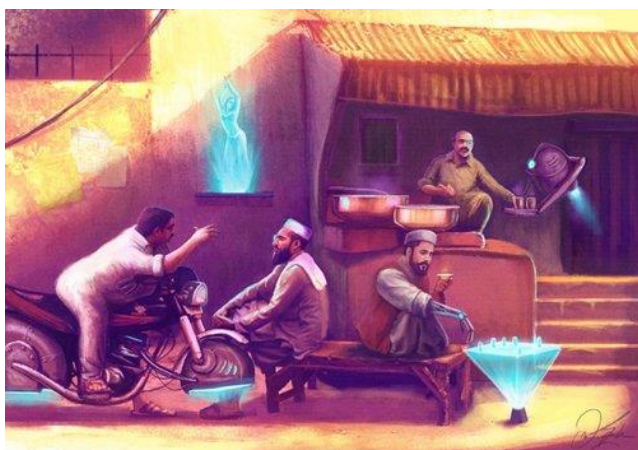
Photo Credit: Mazhar Zaidi

Pakistan+ : Exploring South Asian Culture Through Futurism and Fantasy

Who: Omar Gilani

What: Using mixed media, including digital illustrations, animation videos, ambient sounds, 3-D installations, interactive art, and virtual-reality displays, Gilani will showcase Pakistan in a futuristic science fiction and fantasy setting.

Amount: 17,000 Euro



Omar Gilani is a self-taught conceptual artist, illustrator, and designer from Peshawar, Pakistan. Drawing on his educational background in engineering and robotics, Gilani produced a set of works that theorize what a futuristic Pakistan may look like. Through this project, Gilani will exhibit these works in a new media based exhibition that will have digital illustrations, animation videos, ambient sounds, 3-D installations, interactive art, and virtual-reality all choreographed so as to create an immersive experience. In addition to providing the artistic material, Gilani will also be responsible for the VR and interactive elements himself.

The innovative aspect of Gilani's works lay in the way he imagines the incorporation of Pakistani culture and heritage in the future. His conception of the future is very different from the mainstream western notion of sci-fi futurism. The latter tends to divorce itself from the past completely, creating a futuristic picture where technological advancements are paramount. Gilani's conception of the future, however, does not cut ties with the past in its entirety. He has recognized certain elements as being intrinsically characteristic of the local culture, such as the *dhabbawallas* (street food vendors), *galli cricket* (street or alleyway cricket) and *doodhwallas* (milk delivery men), and finds a place for them in his imagined future. Gilani's project undermines the dominant idea that progress necessitates a break from traditional ways of life and inherited cultural practices. His proposed exhibition will also challenge the idea that traditional aspects of local culture are obstacles to progressive future.

Gilani hopes that this will be a transformative experience for the Pakistani youth familiar with western science fiction. Through the exhibition, he hopes that the youth will be able to re-engage with elements of their culture and to see it in a new light.

Gilani's works also subtly challenge and comment on certain social issues in the region. Warrior Aunty and the female cricket player portray strong independent women with agency while the cyborg beggar illustrates that poverty and inequality still persist in the future. Gilani's proposed exhibition is not utopian but presents to the audience a cautiously optimistic and thus realistic future. It is this truthfulness that promises to engage and resonate with the exhibition's audience as it has done so in the past.

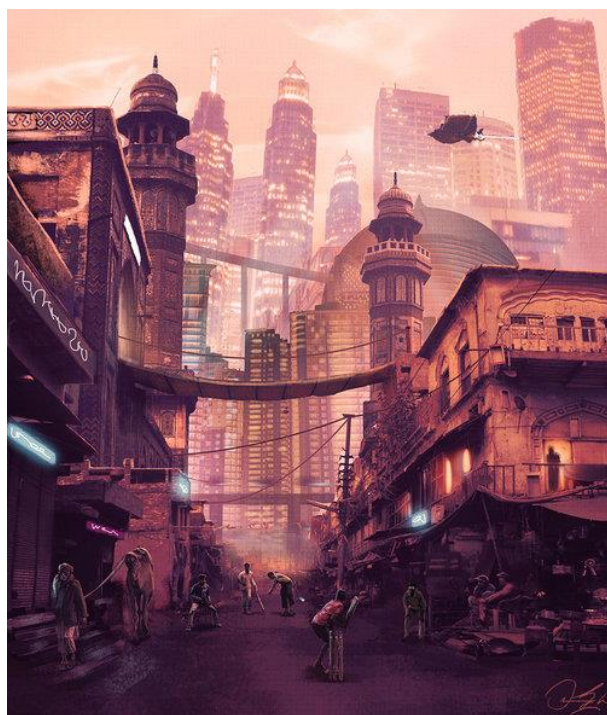


Photo Credit: Omar Gilani