Press Release
January 2015

The Gujral Foundation presents My East is Your West – artists from India and Pakistan collaborate for Venice Biennale 2015

Collateral Event of the 56th International Art Exhibition – la Biennale di Venezia

The Gujral Foundation is delighted to announce My East is Your West, a Collateral Event of the 56th International Art Exhibition – la Biennale di Venezia, which unites for the first time at the Venice Biennale the historically conflicting nations of India and Pakistan in a collaborative exhibition by artists from both countries.

Internationally recognised artists Shilpa Gupta (India) and Rashid Rana (Pakistan) will work together on a shared presentation located in the Palazzo Benzon, in the centre of Venice on the Grand Canal. As neither India nor Pakistan has a permanent national pavilion at the Venice Biennale, this presentation will provide a unique platform for artists from the Indian subcontinent to enter into a dialogue through the arts. My East is Your West is conceived by Feroze Gujral, Director and Founder of The Gujral Foundation, with Natasha Ginwala as Curatorial Advisor and International Curator of Public Programming. The Gujral Foundation have partnered with the Fondazione Antonio Mazzotta on the project with Head Curator, Martina Mazzotta, programming collateral events in Italy.

“Whilst we share a common history, we have a divided present. We are now working together for a more collaborative future” - Feroze Gujral, Founder & Director, The Gujral Foundation

Born out of the desire to reposition the complex climate of historical relations between the South Asian nation-states of India and Pakistan, My East is Your West will present these two countries as a singular region within the context of the Venice Biennale. The thought of how the world would have been different had India and Pakistan not been measured by borders lies dormant but is ever present. In view of their practices, and as one artist from each country, Gupta and Rana have been invited to work together to create a unique presentation that will express the integral essence of a people divided, a history which spans antiquity, colonial modernity and a cosmopolitan present entangled in conflict.

This journey towards conceiving a shared platform in Venice builds on the artists’ concerns to negotiate between the individual and the communal in relation to the ‘everyday’ experiences of collective consciousness. Within their practices both artists explore notions of location and dislocation, transnational belonging, and the impact of cultural and political conditioning in determining our relationship to geographical and national territories. With works that challenge the modern nation-state and its divides, Gupta and Rana have developed a material aesthetic that surveys the potential of a common region, separate from the state and its model.

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For more information please contact:

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Notes to Editors

*My East is Your West*
5 May – 31 October 2015
Palazzo Benzon, San Marco 3917, Venice 30124
(Preview Schedule and Opening Hours to be announced)

Concept and Curation: Feroze Gujral, Founder/ Director, The Gujral Foundation
Artists: Rashid Rana (Pakistan) and Shilpa Gupta (India)
Curatorial Advisor and Public Programmes Curator: Natasha Ginwala
Italian Partner Foundation: Fondazione Antonio Mazzotta
Advisory Board: Richard Armstrong, Director of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum and Foundation
Amin Jaffer, International Director Asian Art, Christie’s

🔗 About The Gujral Foundation🔗

The Gujral Foundation was founded in 2008 by Mohit and Feroze Gujral, son and daughter-in-law of renowned Indian Modernist artist, Satish Gujral. The foundation is a non-profit trust dedicated to supporting contemporary cultural engagements within the realms of art, design and culture in the Indian subcontinent. Feroze Gujral, philanthropist and entrepreneur, also founded Outset India in 2011, a philanthropic organisation which provides a platform for contemporary art in India, and for Indian artists abroad. Feroze Gujral is on the advisory board of the Kochi Muziris Biennale and on the board of the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA). Mohit Gujral is a leading Indian architect and is part of the core management and is on the executive board of India’s largest real estate development company. Amongst other projects, The Gujral Foundation has arranged the loan of ‘Aspinwall’, the primary location of the Kochi Muziris Biennale 2012 and 2014 and has supported the 55th Venice Biennale, South Asian artists at the 8th Berlin Biennale and the Guggenheim Museum, New York exhibition, *V. S. Gaitonde: Painting as Process, Painting as Life* (2014). For the past three years The Gujral Foundation has fostered a range of projects steadily expanding its reach with the world of contemporary art and is committed to building infrastructures that sustain cultural freedom, social engagement and the artistic imagination. [www.gujralfoundation.org](http://www.gujralfoundation.org)

🔗 About the Artists🔗

**Rashid Rana** (b. 1968) was born in Lahore, Pakistan, where he lives and works. He trained as a painter at the National College of Arts in Lahore and the Massachusetts College of Fine Arts in Boston. He is the founding faculty member and head of the Fine Art department at Beaconhouse National University in Lahore. Recent solo exhibitions include a major mid-career retrospective of seventy works, entitled *Labyrinth of Reflections* at Mohatta Palace Museum, Karachi (2013), as well as survey shows at Cornerhouse, Manchester (2011) and Musée Guimet, Paris (2010). Participation in major group exhibitions includes Dhaka Art Summit (2014), the Kiev Biennial (2012); Fotomuseum Winterthur, Whitechapel Gallery and Saatchi Gallery, London (2010); the Asia Society, New York (2009), the fifth Asia Pacific Triennale, Queensland Gallery of Art, Brisbane (2006) and the Singapore Biennial (2006).
Shilpa Gupta (b.1976) lives and works in Mumbai, India where she has studied sculpture at the Sir J. J. School of Fine Arts from 1992 to 1997. The artist has had solo exhibitions in Asia, Europe and the United States, especially, in recent years, at: Kunstnernes Hus, Oslo; MO Mucsarnok Kunsthalle, Budapest; MAAP Space, Brisbane; Arnolfini, Bristol; and the OK Center for Contemporary Art, Linz. Gupta has taken part in the Triennale Younger Than Jesus, New Museum, New York; the Lyon Biennale, curated by Hou Hanru; the Biennale of Gwangju, directed by Okwui Enwezor and curated by Ranjit Hoskote; the Triennale of Yokohama, curated by Hans Ulrich Obrist, the Biennale of Liverpool, curated by Gerardo Mosquera; and more recently at Dhaka Art Summit, curated by Diana Campbell-Betancourt, the Biennale of Sharjah, curated by Yuko Hasegawa, and the 8th Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art, curated by Juan Gaitán and with artistic team member Natasha Ginwala. From 2002-2006, Gupta co-facilitated Aar Paar, a public art exchange project between India and Pakistan, along with Lahore-based artist Huma Mulji.

About the Natasha Ginwala

Natasha Ginwala (b. 1985, India) is an independent curator, researcher and writer. She was a member of the artistic team of the 8th Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art (2014). Her recent work includes the ongoing multi-part curatorial project Landings, presented at Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art, David Roberts Art Foundation, NGBK Berlin, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam and other partner organisations, 2013 – present (with Vivian Ziherl) and The Museum of Rhythm at Taipei Biennale 2012 (with Anselm Franke). Ginwala has taught at the University of Amsterdam, the Sandberg Institute and the Gerrit Rietveld Academie. She has contributed to publications such as art agenda, e-flux Journal and Manifesta Journal, amongst others. Ginwala is currently curator-in-residence at Hordaland Art Centre, Bergen.