

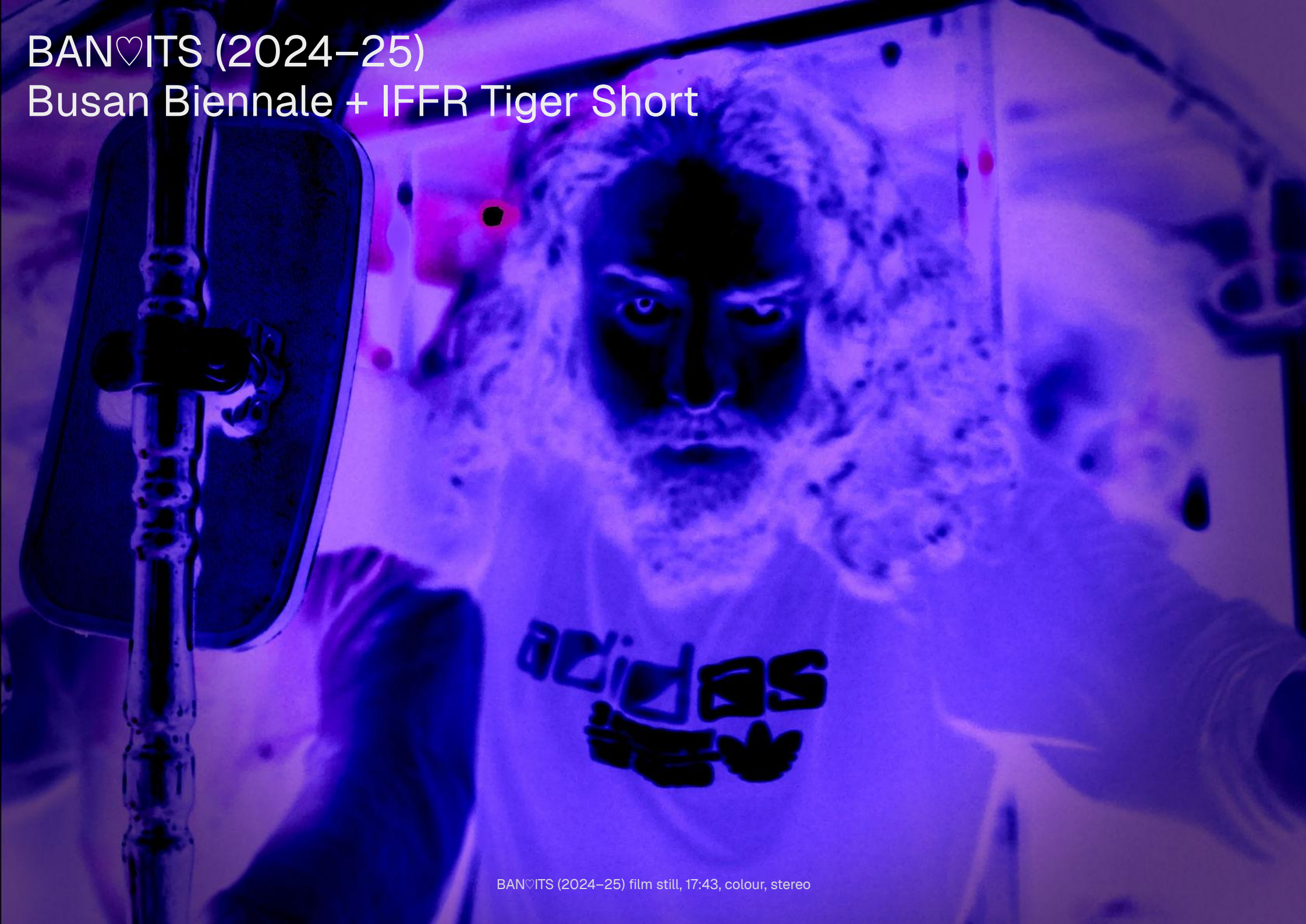
Omar Chowdhury (BD, BE, AU, 1984)
Selected Works 2026



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BAN♥ITS (2024–25)
Busan Biennale + IFFR Tiger Short



BAN♥ITS (2024–25) film still, 17:43, colour, stereo



Installation at Busan Biennale 2024, BAN♡ITS (2024–25), 17:43, colour, stereo,
Aluminium and Mesh Pavilion, JBL PartyBox Speakers, LED Lighting



[View video documentation](#)

Installation at Busan Biennale 2024, BAN♥ITS (2024–25), 17:43, colour, stereo,
Aluminium and Mesh Pavilion, JBL PartyBox Speakers, LED Lighting

Out near the lawless eastern borderlands of Bangladesh, a diasporic artist returns to make a film with a crew of washed-up ban♥its obsessed with Heath Ledger's Joker. As they comically reenact their romanticised past, we confront the divergent histories and philosophies of peasant banditry as political resistance.

Presented on a large LED wall inside a stylised village pavilion, *BAN♥ITS (2024–25)* combines cinema, ceremony and party. Flashing lights animate the roof; speakers burn beside the screen. The installation becomes both social space and stage set, while the work musically asks its central question: when the art world comes calling, who are the real ban♥its?

The bandits occupy every frame as “knowing” subjects, spraying slogans, philosophies and nihilistic declarations across the screen. Their wiry leader emerges as prophet, performer and political theorist, insisting that their failed and increasingly inert violence remains a form of revolution. Extremely unserious, serious people, in other words. But revolutionaries have always been a little theatrical. Revolutions still happen.

The artist remains physically absent but verbally present: an interloper, a pariah and a minor agent of exoticism. The bandits casually discuss murdering him for his possessions, yet he cannot quite transform their boasts into heroic cinema. Unable to verify their mythology, he turns to their soliloquies to fill the vacuum where his own art is supposed to be.



[View complete film](#)

BAN♥ITS (2024–25), 17:43, colour, stereo



They say that the civilized eat each other
문명인들은 서로를 잡아먹는다고 해



We are agents of chaos but order needs chaos
우린 혼돈의 대리인인데, 질서는 혼돈이 필요해

ArtReview Busan Biennale Review: Artistic Privilege Is Swept Aside



Installation and crowd interaction at Busan Biennale 2024

Iddddd (2023) Contour Biennale 10, Martins+Montero



Performance documentation, Iddddd (2023), five performers



Installation view Contour Biennale 10, Iddddd (2023), five performers, PVC cards, card dispenser, acetate laser etchings and LED wall segment with 3:45 video.



[View video documentation](#)

Iddddd (2023) is an installation and performance in which the artist and four dancers attempt pickpocketing techniques on unsuspecting museum visitors. However, instead of stealing, they discreetly ‘gift’ an object. The work turns theft into a delayed, uncertain encounter: visitors may only realise later, while checking a pocket or bag, that they have been drawn into an act of intimacy. At its most precarious, the action results in a performer being caught; trained by a viral Tik Tok logic of de-escalation, they look into the visitor’s eyes, dance, or say, “I’m just trying to make a living.”

A scenography of works spreads this action through a busy transitional museum space, creating isolated pockets in which attention is diverted by passers-by and a catchy Hindi music video. Five acetate etchings on the back wall of a glass elevator mimic grocery-store wanted posters, showing security images of the performers alongside their sex and race. Above them, a bright LED screen resembling a train-station information display loops a Hindi tune about love and trust. At unpredictable moments it freezes on “ATTENTION,” while a disembodied voice calls “attenzione” and “gifters”.

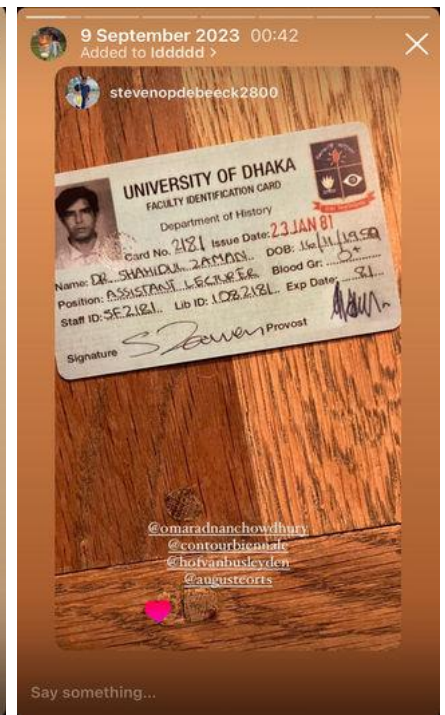
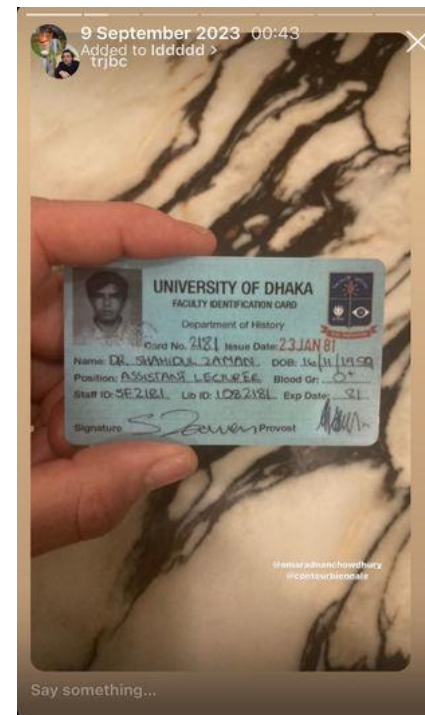
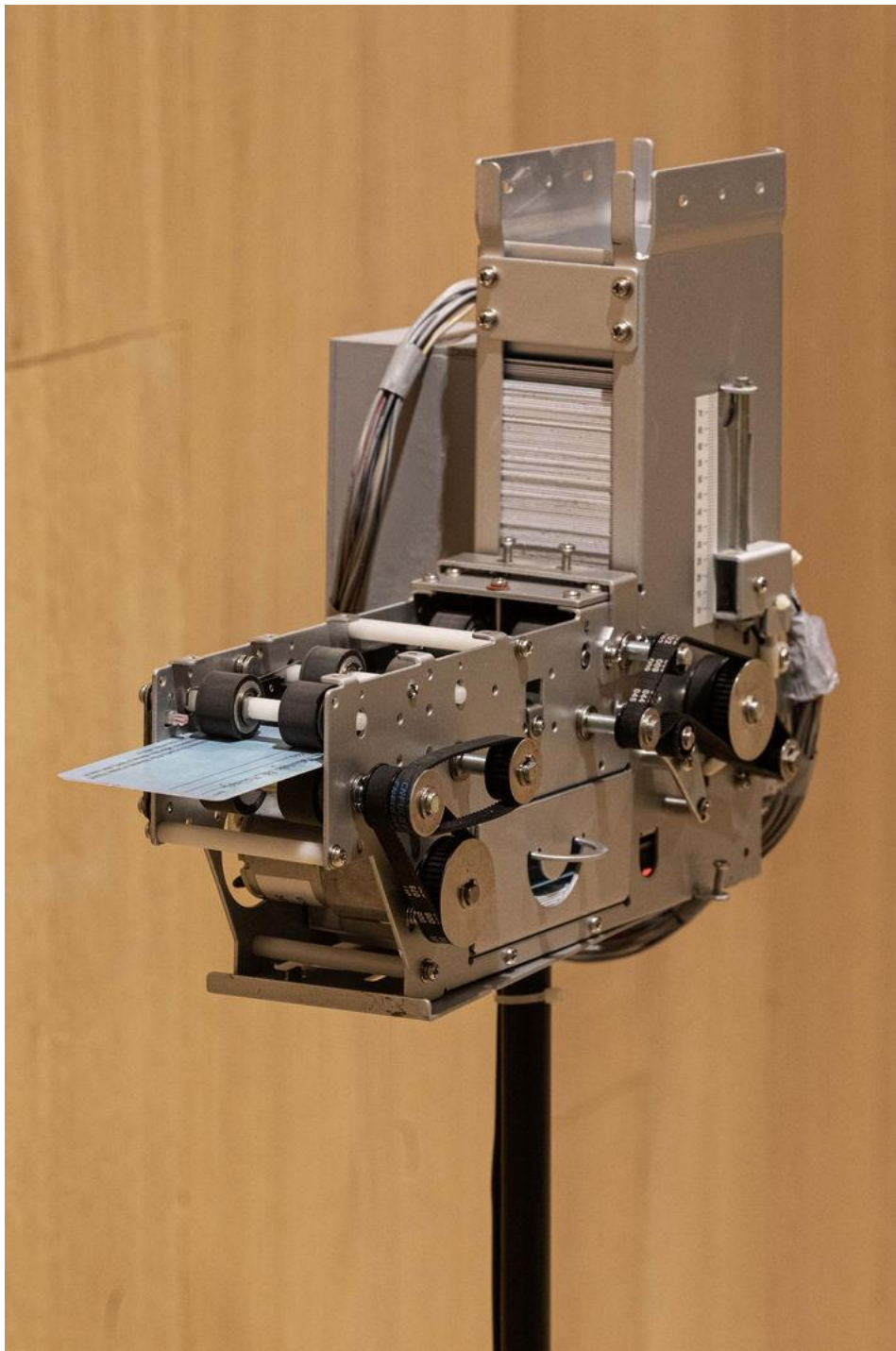
The work draws on a viral Italian meme of a far-right-associated woman who ‘warns’ Venice tourists about pickpockets. Disassembled machinery, acting as a ‘fence’ for the gifters, dispenses a facsimile of a University of Dhaka identification card for Dr Shahidul Zaman. A mystery. Multiple cameras surveil the performers as they prowl, offering glimpses. In *Iddddd*, surveillance, vulnerability and performance unsettle the line between social contact and violation: the political battle may be dismantled, but the war over intimacy has not.



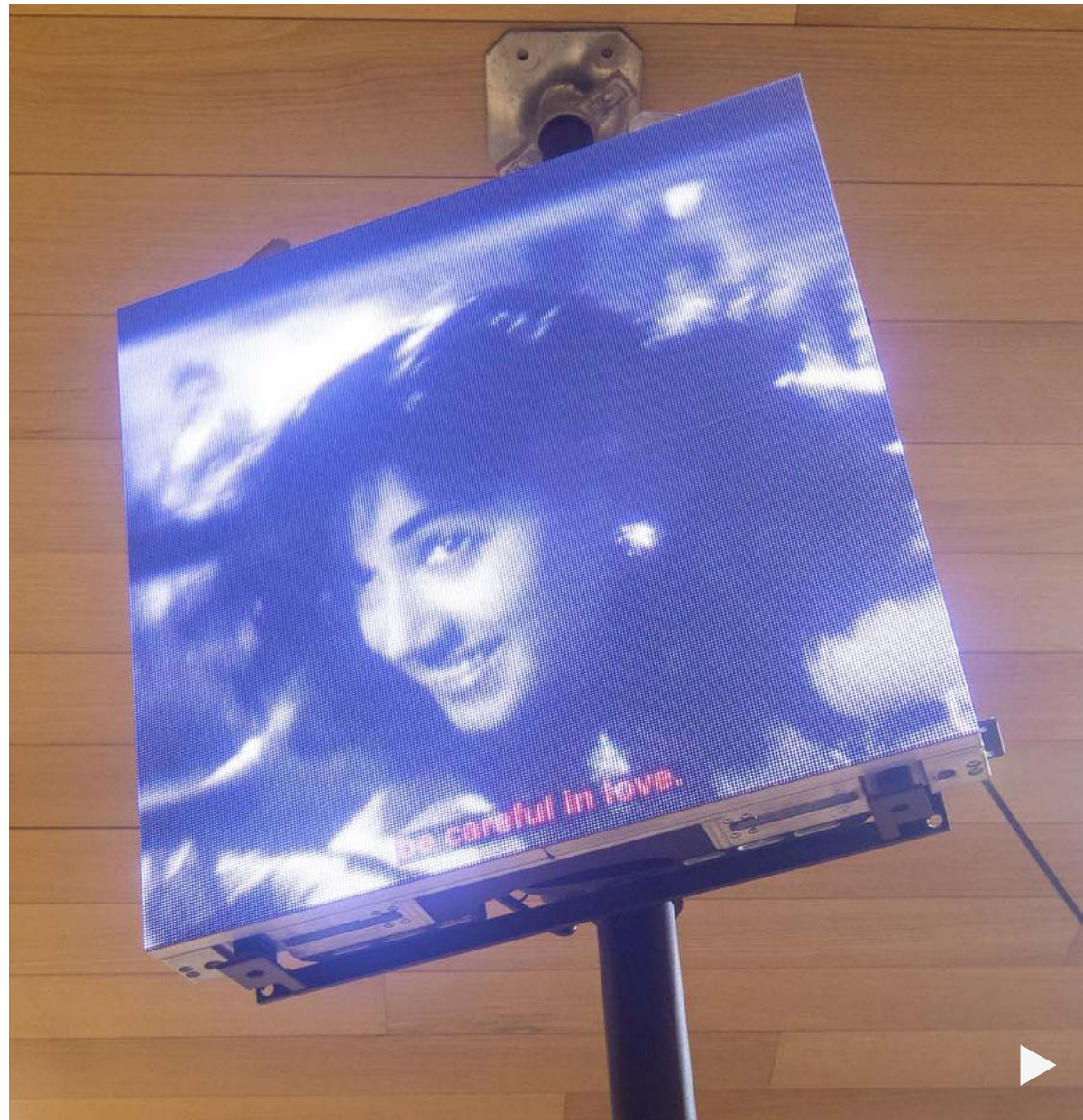
Performance documentation,
ddddd (2023), 5 performers



Wanted (2023), 29.7 × 21 cm, 5 acetate laser etchings



Left: Fence (2023), card dispenser and PVC identification cards. Right: visitors' Instagram posts showing cards received during the performance.



[Watch performance video](#)

Faydabad For-Sale (2023) Ke Ba Kahara, Dhaka Art Summit





Shroud (2023), 50' x 50' x 22', Hessian, mild steel, black dye, hand-tied and altered
Removal (2021-23), variable dimensions, removal of electrical items, removal of electricity, removal of cleaning schedules

At one of architect Marina Tabassum's earliest buildings, the looped performance *Faydabad For-Sale (2023)* unfolds through architectural interventions, video projections and death-metal music. Five performers move in synchrony with a guitarist's death-metal score to explore the tangled history of an imported modernism and its obsolescence amid Bangladesh's urban transformation.

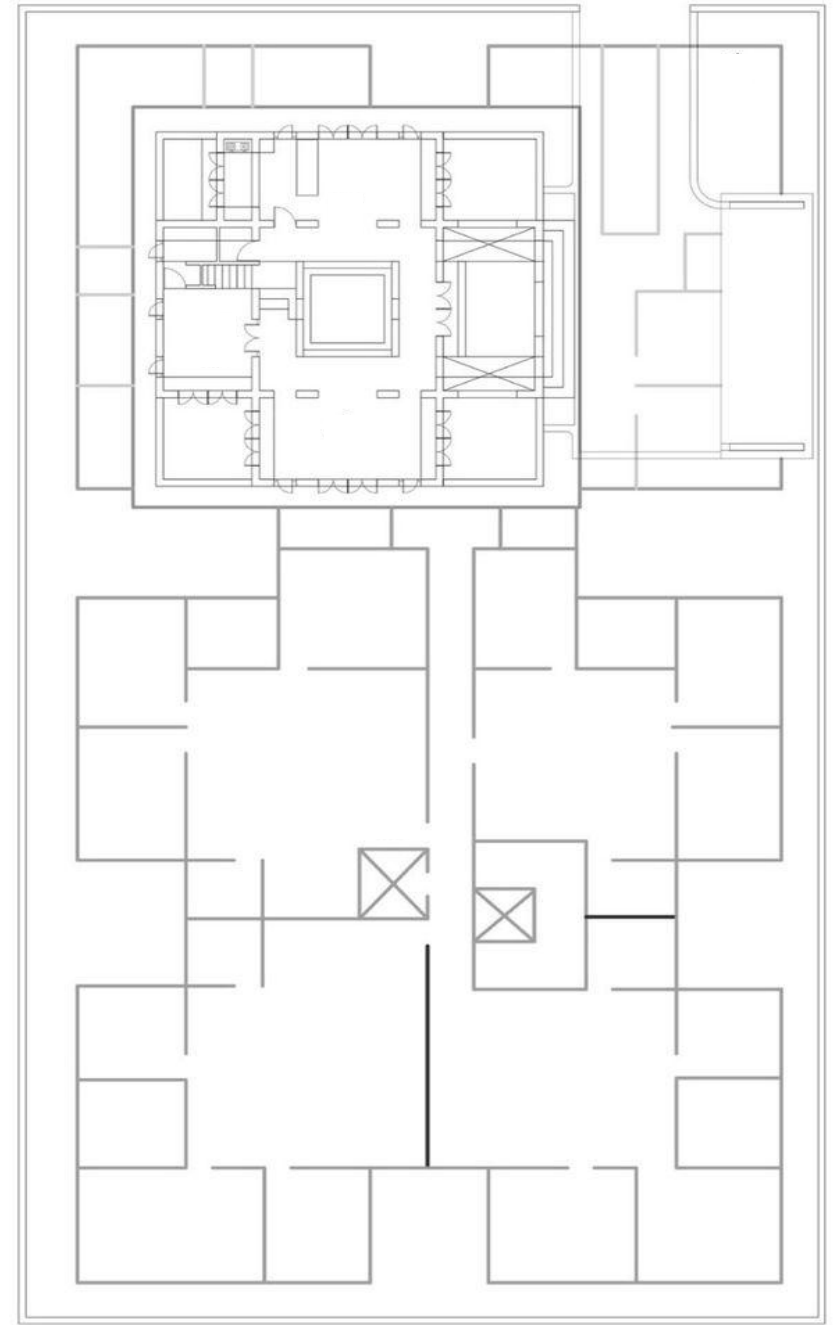
Faydabad For-Sale (2023) is the second performance and installation staged at Tabassum's abandoned early modernist property on the edge of Dhaka. Stripped of its fittings and enclosed in a metal frame and black hessian shroud, the building awaits demolition. In its place, a real-estate company proposes a contemporary block of forty flats. A sign proudly displays its 3D model, while pink Puma tape traces the proposed building at full scale across the existing site.

A salesman, an architect and a caretaker attempt to make a final sale. Their choreography is timed by a shadowy guitarist on the roof, whose death-metal compositions wash over the building through three enormous speakers. The performers follow separate paths, sometimes converging as scenes unfold simultaneously throughout the site. At the end, they return to their starting positions and begin again. Repeated four times, the work reveals different moments with each iteration while ensuring something else is always missed, producing a strange fusion of nostalgia and persistent FOMO.

Performed in Bangla, the work is accompanied by a printed translation followed like a libretto. Upstairs, a video shows an early reading by the actors; downstairs, a large projection presents the first performance in the series, staged years earlier.



Performance documentation, Faydabad For-Sale (2023).



Outline (2023), 149' x 79' x 14", nylon webbing, bamboo stakes and nails; full-scale superimposition of the proposed building over the existing site

hcbahara

FAYDABAD FOR-SALE PERFORMANCE OMAR A. CHOWHURY 5 FEB, 2 PM BAITUR RAUF MOSQUE

5th of february 2023

A performance and installation
melding Dhaka metal music and
abandoned architecture

2pm

Visit Baitur Rauf Jame Masjid
faydabad, Dakhkhin Khan

3-4:30pm Performance at Rauf's Villa (Tabassum)

hcbahara.com/faydabad

hcbahara@gmail.com

01750 910 204



[Watch performance video](#)





Billboard (2023), 8' x 4' x 1.5", vinyl print, PVC board, steel



Performance documentation, Faydabad For-Sale (2023)

Echo, Saturn (II)— The Courts (2021) Annet Gelink Gallery



Barrister's Coat (2021), 55 cm × 110 cm × 10 cm black UK barrister/graduation gown, 3 UV orange fishing hooks

Echo, Saturn (II)—The Courts (2021) overlays the working spaces of Annet Gelink Gallery with fragments of the Rajshahi law courts and archive: a city within a city. The reception, offices, kitchen and basement remain in use, while taking on the atmosphere of crowded lawyers' chambers, tea stalls, barred windows and deteriorating archives where papers disappear and petitioners wait. Gallery employees are recontextualised as visitors move between these two institutions, cities and moments in time. Bureaucracy emerges not as an abstract system but as a condition of delay, repetition and obstruction. Memory accumulates and every attempt to negate the past sinks one further into it.

Visitors encounter fragments: a barrister's gown hangs in a passageway, tea is served in clay cups, a security grill replaces a window, and a ceiling fan turns overhead. Downstairs, mobile shelving, ageing papers, cabinet doors and broken handcuffs evoke the administrative viscosity of an archive slowly falling apart. The exhibition is haunted by Dr Shahidul Zaman, who visits the law courts of Rajshahi in the early 1980s, searching for the deeds to family land he hopes to sell to finance his emigration to Europe. Missing documents lead back to Partition, forced migration and an exchange of property between Hindu and Muslim families.

A ruptured voice arrives through headphones and an FM transmission disturbed by interference; two synchronised CRT monitors show silent images from Rajshahi; photographs recur like uncertain evidence. Moving through spaces normally hidden behind the gallery's public face, the visitor becomes part client, part witness and part intruder. The exhibition produces a dissociative haunting in which memory, migration and bureaucracy become impossible to separate—and the past refuses to let its subjects leave.



installation view, Barrister's Coat (2021), Removal #2 (2021), The Courts (seating)
(2021), The Courts (film) (2021), Blue Fan (2021)



Cha (2021), variable dimensions, 20 cm diameter metal kettle from Pakistan, wooden spoon, whisk, 8 cm diameter mesh kitchen sieve, single electrical hob, 40 cm × 30 cm sheet metal tray with exposed welds, 80 Kulhad unglazed clay cups, Stanley thermos, proprietary ingredients in glass containers, recipe on note paper and envelope 10 cm × 15 cm.



The Courts (film) (2021), dual-channel, 3:51, 4:3, colour, ProRes, no sound; two synchronised Hantarex 28" monitors and two media players.



Archive Vinyl (2021), Couplings (2021), Transcript FM Radio Broadcast 2016 (2021)



Archive shelving (2021), 160 cm × 200 cm × 232 cm, mobile metal archive shelving, book supports, tea-soaked paper folder, old papers circa 1940, organising paper labels



The Courts (cabinet facade) (2021), 88 cm × 136 cm × 18 cm, steel cabinet doors, silver spray paint, scratches, orange hook, broken and bent handcuffs, small screw.



Mother (2021), 29.7 cm × 21 cm × 3 cm, aluminium-framed D-print photograph on archival semi-gloss paper with reflective glass



Ajar (2021), variable dimensions, blue filter, storage door left ajar and screwed in, radio playing All India Radio (Kolkata)



The Courts (grill) (2021), 138.5 cm × 92 cm × 5 cm, galvanised steel security grill, welds, wooden banister, silver paint, metal bolts.
Removal (2021), removed large glass window from founder's office.



Barristers (2021), 66 cm × 61 cm × 3 cm, aluminium information frame with D-Print photograph on archival semi-gloss paper, keys, glass doors left ajar.



Chambers (2021), 15 cm × 45 cm × 2.5 cm, CNC machined oak wood, wood stain, metal fitting.



Land Images (some time apart) (2021), 2 × (21 cm × 29.7 cm × 3 cm), aluminium framed D-Print photographs on archival semi-gloss paper.



Rope and Chains (2021), 50 cm × 40 cm × 3 cm, aluminium framed D-Print photograph on archival semi-gloss paper.

Age of Saturn (2016) Bengal Foundation



Reflection of Lightbox (Absence) (2016), 6.5 ft x 4.8 ft x 7 in., inkjet prints on PVC, double-sided aluminium frame, fluorescent tubes



System Decay and Its Origins (2016), installation view. Variable dimensions: two soldiers in uniform, microphone, headphones playing *Memoirs.mp3*, sound mixer, two media players, 40-inch television playing *Heuristics.mp4*, security camera and monitor, and plinth with Text (*Memoirs of Saturn*)



Lightbox (Disillusionment) (2016), installation view, 213 × 152 × 152 cm, inkjet prints on PVC, double-sided aluminium frame, fluorescent tubes and rusted metal stand with bolts

Age of Saturn (2016) is a two-floor parafictional exhibition in which a diasporic artist attempts to recover his broken relationship to Bengal through the political historian Dr Shahidul Zaman. Film, illuminated portraits, staged photographs, family documents, collages, sculpture and performance reconstruct lives shaped by Partition, political violence, exile and return. Yet every apparent piece of evidence is troubled by substitution: memories contradict documents, private lives merge with public history and fact becomes inseparable from invention.

At its centre, the film and mirroring text, both titled *Memoirs of Saturn*, follow a solitary figure—performed by the artist Dhali Al Mamoon—moving through apartments, classrooms, streets and archives. Around the film, monumental light-boxes confront intimate photographs, publications and archival composites. Organised into unstable temporal states, events separated by decades coexist as fragments of one unsettled present. In *System Decay and Its Origins*, uniformed soldiers classify visitors, grant or refuse access, direct selected people to read aloud and return their recorded speech to the installation. Colonial administration becomes a bodily encounter in which the viewer is made subject, witness and participant.

Shortly after opening in Dhaka, the exhibition was dismantled amid opaque pressure surrounding its treatment of Bangladesh's post-independence history. Its uncertain closure echoed the work itself: censorship became another missing document, disputed memory and invisible force. This experience generated the wider Saturn cycle, in which whatever is repressed returns—altered, doubled and increasingly difficult to leave behind.



Lightbox (Exile, Now) (2016), front and reverse installation views, 180 × 146 × 25.4 cm, inkjet prints on PVC, double-sided aluminium frame and fluorescent tubes



Installation view of Film (Memoirs of Saturn) (2016), 51:00, ProRes 422, colour, stereo; projection, stereo speakers and used benches



[Watch complete film](#)

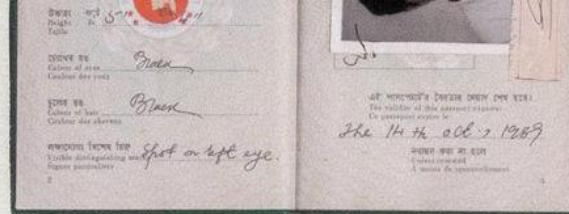
Film (Memoirs of Saturn) (2016), variable dimensions, 51:00, ProRes 422
(delivery in H.264 MOV), colour, stereo, used benches.



Photograph (Future) (2016), 122 cm × 96 cm, Inkjet print on archival photo paper



Clockwise from upper left: Photograph (Pre-history) (2016), Combine (Pre-history 2) (2016),
Combine (Disillusionment) (2016), Photograph (Disillusionment) (2016)



Uk

- (4) সে পৌঁছেলেন, সে আমাদের সাথে থাকবে এই মাসে, হতে পারে পরের মাসেও। আমি অনেক খুশি যেহেতু বাচ্চাটা অনেক বিরক্ত করছিল। তোমার ভাইও আজকাল বেশ সময় বাসায় থাকছে। নতুন অনেক আসবাবপত্র কেনা হচ্ছে এবং পুরোনো গুলো মেরামত করছে। এখানে এখন খুব ব্যস্ত সময়। আমি আশা করছি যে তুমি ভাল আছো এবং আরও বেশি করে লিখতে পারছ। আমি ভাল আছি, আতিক ও তাই।

আমি তোমাকে সত্য কথাই বলতে চাই। তুমি কোথায় চলে গেছ? আমি তোমাকে সব চেনা জায়গায় খুঁজেছি, তুমি সেখানে নেই। তুমি কোথায় চলে গেছ? তুমি কি আমাকে ছেড়ে চলে গেছ? আমার সব কিছু খেমে গেছে এবং আমি ওই স্মৃতি নিয়ে বেঁচে আছি। এটাই কি হওয়ার ছিল? পলায়ন? আমি গত মাসে দুবার ফোন করেছি কিন্তু বন্ধ ছিল। একজন মহিলা ধরেছিল, বলেছে হয়ত ভুল নাম্বার। আমি কি ভুল নাম্বারে ফোন করেছিলাম? আমি তোমাকে সব কিছু দিয়েছি, বিনিময়ে পেয়েছি নিঃসঙ্গতা...

মিতা আক্তার জামান
মার্চ ১৮, ১৯৮৩
রাজশাহী

- (5) Another one of those days. There's no noise here. Speaking in some alien voice. Eggs, milk, flour, the rotis I make are terrible. Better to just stick to their bread. There's only one thing to look forward to but I don't know if it is even real.

(1) The passport Dr. Zaman used on his first trip overseas. Issued 1979.

(2) Mita Zaman and Dr. Zaman on a trip to Moscow in, I think, 1988.

(3) Atiqur Zaman, born November 1980. He is at Columbia studying Art History now. Dr. Zaman and he are estranged.

(4) A letter from Mita Apa to Dr. Zaman (used with her permission). He and she are now estranged. My translation: 'has arrived and will be staying with us for this month and most probably the next one. I am very happy as the baby is demanding much time. Your brother is also at home more these days and is doing repairs and purchasing new furniture. It is very active these days here. I am hoping that you are well and that you are writing more these days. I'm well and so is Atiq. Yet not everything is alright. I have to tell you the truth. ... Where have you gone? I look in the familiar places and you are not there. Where have you gone? Have you left me? Everything for me has stopped and I'm living in those memories. It was worth it? To escape? I tried to calling two times last month and the number is not good. One woman answered, said probably wrong number. Did I call wrong number? I give my everything to you and I hear only this silence. ... Mita Akther Zaman, March 18, 1983, Rajshahi.

(5) Extract from Dr. Zaman's very limited diary, 30 August 1983.





Installation view, Age of Saturn (2016), Bengal Foundation, Dhaka