

Moonis Ahmad

Academic and Visual Artist

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CAREER SUMMARY

I am a visual artist and an academic with 3 years of teaching experience, holding a Doctoral Degree in Visual Arts from The University of Melbourne. I have excelled as an art practitioner and an academic, presenting at conferences, moderating discussions, and leading workshops. I have presented my work and research in various exhibitions, conferences, artist residencies, and awards. I am deeply engaged in exploring the afterlives of the dead in the context of the occupation, war and colonization. My artistic practice includes interdisciplinary work and research in new technologies, such as Machine Learning, Natural Language Processing and GANs in Visual Arts.

EDUCATION

PhD, Visual Arts, The University of Melbourne

2017 Feb – 2021 Nov

- Received the 4-year **Australian Government Research and Training Program Scholarship** covering all costs of PhD. with a monthly Stipend.
- Conducted practice-led research investigating **the archive**, its historical context, contemporary use in art and power politics.
- Challenged conventional typifications of the archive and proposed '**Anarchic Archive**' as the novel approach based on **Alain Badiou's theories on militant subject, truth event, being, and ethics of truth**.
- Employed **Natural Language processing, Recurrent Neural Networks and creative coding** to create **generative art works and kinetic sculptures**.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Lecturer, Faculty of Music and Fine Arts, The University of Melbourne, Australia

2021 Mar – 2023 June | 2018 March – 2019 June

- Conducting undergraduate level courses in **Visual Arts**, fostering an engaging and interactive learning environment.
- Taught various courses such as **Image and Text, Tools and Techniques (Digital Media), Impossibilities of the Object: Time, Translation and Sculpture** open to students from diverse backgrounds.
- Led tutorials and critical discussions that explored **new technologies of digital image making** such as **Interactive Projection Mapping, Physical Computing and Creative Coding** in the context of Contemporary Art.
- Developed **course curriculum, lectures, and assignments** aligned with the latest academic standards and emerging trends in the field.
- **Advised and mentored** students on **research projects and creative work**.
- **Published** creative work at **national and international conferences**, contributing to the advancement of visual art cultures in South Asia.
- Successfully secured **research grants** and **collaborating with interdisciplinary teams** to conduct impactful research projects.
- Participated in **academic committees**, contributing to the university's administrative duties, and actively engaging in departmental and institutional initiatives.

Research Fellow, Visual Arts, Akademie Schloss Solitude, Stuttgart, Germany

2023 July – 2024 May

- Research Fellow in Visual Arts sphere with stipend, travel and research project support.
- Conducted research investigating the use of John Conway's algorithm, Game of Life, in Unreal Engine to create digital worlds with undecidable futures.
- Employed NVIDIA Instant NeRF to create digital ecologies and connected them with real time sensor data from API's for the ecologies to grow, de-grow and respond to earthly data.
- Challenged conventional notions of time by interrogating colonial time and its chronologies.
- Explored alternative considerations of time, introducing concepts such as Deep Time and Schizogenic Time.
- Led discussions on critically reflecting on the recording, archiving, and interpreting of time within political marginalities in the context of occupation and colonisation.

Guest Faculty, School of Culture and Creative Expression Ambedkar University, New Delhi, India

2022 Jan – Jun

- Taught a theory course called **Critical Perspectives of Art**, open to master's students from all backgrounds.
- Introduced **interdisciplinary engagement** while investigating the concept of **margins and voids** through the works of Mathematician **Georg Cantor's Set Theory**, Philosopher **Alain Badiou's Mathematical ontology and the theory of Event**, Sociologist and activist, **Anand Teltumbde's Mahad: The making of the first Dalit Revolt** and IT activist **Timnit Gebru's Algorithmic Bias in Artificial Intelligence**.
- Organized **guest lectures** by inviting a diverse set of artists and researchers working across different cultures, media and research fields to enrich academic discourse and provide students with exposure to industry experts.
- Demonstrating a commitment to excellence in teaching, research, and service to further the university's academic mission.

Arts House Makeshift Publics Research Project, City of Melbourne

2022 Apr-23 Apr

- Spearheaded the development of an innovative **RNN-based Machine Learning** project utilizing **Generative Adversarial Networks (GANs)** and **Deep Learning techniques**.
- Employed advanced **algorithms** to produce captivating sounds, data visualizations, and textual outputs at **LIEF HPC-GPGPU Facility**.
- Transformed the generated sounds into **generative soundscapes**, seamlessly integrated with **GPS mapping** technology to map across the Arts House neighborhood.
- Collaborated with a multidisciplinary team to create a custom-built app, enabling users to access and engage with the interactive soundscapes effortlessly.
- Contributed to the project's experimental research **design, data analysis**, and documentation of outcomes.
- Leveraged technology to explore the intersection of **art, technology, and public engagement**, fostering innovative artistic expressions within the urban landscape.

AWARDS

2023-24

Schloss Solitude Fellowship

2021

Featured in Forbes India 30 Under 30: The ones we had to mention

2017

Won Emerging Artist Award 2017, Foundation of Indian Contemporary Art

2018

Recipient of VCA AAP Award, The University of Melbourne

2017-18

Recipient of VCA Access Mentorship Award, The University of Melbourne

2018

Recipient of Faculty Small Grant Scheme

2017

Recipient of Australian Graduate Research Training and Program Scholarship covering all costs of my PhD Research at University of Melbourne

2012-16

Dean's Honor's List Awarded during consecutive semesters of my undergraduate study.

2012-16

UMISAA scholar (United Nations Madanjeet Institute of South Asian Arts). Scholarship funded by South Asia Foundation and UMISAA for BFA programme at BNU. Scholarship covered full tuition, living, traveling and a monthly stipend.

RESIDENCIES

2022

Akademie Schloss Solitude, Stuttgart, Germany, fully funded residency with stipend, project and travel support.

2018 Jul

Lucerne HSLU, Switzerland artist residency funded by FICA and Pro Helvetia.

2018 May-Jun

Progr, Stadtgalerie, Switzerland artist residency funded by FICA and Pro Helvetia

2021 Oct

ArtsGen, Melbourne, Artist's Residency.

2016 Jun

The Shifting Place Aesthetic, Spatial and Temporal Fractures of Transitional Territories, Italy, UNIDEE/TIPP residency at Cittadellarte-Fondazione Pistoletto, fully Funded by E.U.

RESEARCH OUTCOMES

Solo Shows

2021 Mar

Anarchic Archive: The Spectres of Inconsistency, Fiona and Sidney Myer Gallery, Melbourne, Australia.

2019 Jun

Atlas holding Heavens, Vadhera Art Gallery, supported by Foundation of Indian Contemporary Art, New

Delhi

2018 Jun

De-ceasing Relevance: Figuring the Local/s, SattelKammer, with support from Pro-Helvetia, Foundation of Indian Contemporary Art and University of Melbourne, Bern, Switzerland

2017 Oct

Phd Confirmation, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia

2016-17 Dec- Jan

Counter Memories, Rohtas Gallery, Curated by Salima Hashmi, Lahore, Pakistan

Group Shows

2025 May

- scape, curated by Ritika Biswas, Project88, Mumbai, India

2025 Mar

(Un)layering The Future Past of South Asia, Curated by Manmeet and Saleema Hashmi, SOAS Gallery, University of London.

2024 December

Film Screening, Birkbeck, University of London.

2024 Jun

Fehras Publishing Practices, Publication, With Regard to Presence, Berlin, Germany.

2024 Feb

Film Screening, Topographies of Occupation in Let's Sit Down Together And Talk About A Little Culture, SAAVY Contemporary, Berlin, Germany

2023 Dec

Winter Festival, Akademie Schloss Solitude, Stuttgart, Germany.

2023 Nov

Echographies of the Invisible, Film Screening, Akademie Schloss Solitude, Stuttgart, Germany

2023 Nov

MMORPG, Issue 47, Commission for Echographies of the Invisible, Short Film, Runway Journal, Melbourne, Australia

2023 Nov

Echographies of the Invisible, Film Screening, Australian Center of the Moving Images, Melbourne, Australia

2023 Apr

Okkoota (Gathering / Alliance) Arts House, Melbourne, Australia.

2023 May

Hungry for Time, Publication, Raqs Media Collective, Specter Books, Germany.

2022 Aug

Simulacrum, curated by Arushi Vats, Anant Art Gallery, Delhi, India

2022 May

Notes on Tending, Foundation of Indian Contemporary Art, India Art Fair, Delhi, India

2022 May

Can You Hear My Voice?, Northern Centre for Contemporary Art, Northern Territory, Australia

2021 Dec

Fields of Vision, Video art of Indian Contemporary Artists, India

2021 Sept

Pro(found) Object, Vadhera Art Gallery, New Delhi, India

2021 Mar

Can you hear my voice? Fiona and Sidney Myer Gallery, Melbourne, Australia

2020 Mar

A Voyage of Seemingly Propulsive speed and an Absolute apparent Stillness, Ark Gallery, Baroda, India

2019 Jan

Games of Chance, curated by Leandre D'Souza, Sunaparanta, Goa Centre of Arts, Goa, India

2019 Nov

Phantom Limb, Sridharani Art Gallery, Raza Art Foundation, New Delhi, India

2018-2019

Critical Constellations, IGNCA, New Delhi, Curated by Vidya Shivadas, India

2019 Feb

Start-up States, Sarai CSDS curated by Laura McLean, New Delhi India

2018 May

Beyond Boundaries, Auckland Art Fair 2018, New Zealand

2018 Apr

Bureaucracies of Imagination, Two-person Show, Canvas Gallery, Karachi, Pakistan

2018 Feb

Boxed Light, Mars Gallery, Melbourne, Australia

2017 Dec

Detritus / Matter out of Place, Serendipity Arts festival Goa, India

2017 Nov

One Night With, MARS Gallery, Australia

2017 Aug

Past as Present, Gandhara Art Gallery, Karachi, Pakistan

2017 Jul

A Million Mutinies Later - India at 70, curated by Bhooma Padmanabhan, Anshika Varma and Iona Fergusson, Turner House, Cardiff, UK

2017 Mar

Group Show, Sleepless Constellations, Curated by Salima Hashmi 1x1 Gallery, Dubai

2017 Feb

Premise of Promise Curated by Quddus Mirza, Canvas Gallery, Karachi, Pakistan

2016 Sept

New Wight Biennial 2016 as Seh Rang Collective, UCLA, Los Angeles, USA

2016 May

BFA Thesis Show, Beaconhouse National University, Lahore, Pakistan

2015

Invited by Rashid Rana for a performance in his Venice Biennale Project, "The viewing, the viewer and the viewed" in Lahore.

2015

Borders and Disorders, Venice Art House, Italy

2014 December

Close Together Borderlines Production, Houston, USA

CONFERENCES AND ARTIST TALKS

Conferences

2022 January

Speaker at Staging the Contemporary: The Next Generation, Ishara Art Foundation and India Art Fair, Dubai and India

2021 December

Kashmir before us, Panelist, Westspace, Melbourne, Australia.

2021 December

Orbits of Desire, VAICA Festival, India

2021 December

Organising team, Graduate Research Meetup, Asia Pacific Artistic Research Network 2021, Melbourne, Australia

2021 September

The Profound Object, moderated by Sabih Ahmed, Associate Director and Curator, Ishara Art Foundation, organized by Vadhera Contemporary, Delhi, India

2021 September

Knowledge Production and Research in Practice, Shiv Nadar University, India

2020 November

Panelist alongside Raqs Media Collective, Rebordering the Archipelago: Asia Pacific Exchanges, presented by the Centre of Visual Art, University of Melbourne in Association with the Asia Pacific Artistic Research Network, a joint project of Victorian College of the Arts, University of Melbourne and Indonesian Institute of the Arts, Yogyakarta.

2020 July

Artists Roundtable, Gallery Ark and Art Fervour, India

2019 August

Artist Talk, Foundation of Indian Contemporary Art, New Delhi, India

2019 August

100 years of state violence and people's resistance in South Asia, Panel Discussion and Artist Talk, University of Sydney, Australia

2019 April

Interactive Session, Interrogating the 'Archive' in Analogue and code, Vadhera Contemporary, New Delhi, India

SKILLS AND COMPETENCES

- Adobe Creative Cloud
- Adobe XD
- Figma
- Invision
- Arduino Programming
- Processing
- Python
- RNN based Machine Learning
- Pytorch
- TensorFlow
- Art History
- Continental Theory
- Post Continental Theory
- Set Theory
- C++ Programming
- Wordpress

- CSS
- HTML
- Autodesk 3ds Max
- Autodesk Maya

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- *26 South Asian Artists Explore Shared Histories and Resilience in Landmark London Exhibition.*
<https://london-post.co.uk/26-south-asian-artists-explore-shared-histories-and-resilience-in-landmark-london-exhibition/>
- *A London exhibition reflects on shared south Asian histories and splintered maps*
<https://www.stirworld.com/think-opinions-a-london-exhibition-reflects-on-shared-south-asian-histories-and-splintered-maps>
- *30 Under 30: The ones we had to mention.*
<https://www.forbesindia.com/article/30-under-30-2021/forbes-india-30-under-30-the-ones-we-had-to-mention/66317/1>
- *Frieze Critics Guide* by Skye Arundhati Thomas
<https://frieze.com/article/critics-guide-new-delhi-india-art-fair-returns-best-shows-town>
- *Frieze Exhibition Review, Complexities of being heard in Kashmir* by Shaad D'Souza
<https://www.frieze.com/article/can-you-hear-my-voice-2021-review>
- *Moonis Shah investigates the politics of archived history through his practice*, Interview by Rahul Kumar
<https://www.stirworld.com/inspire-people-moonis-shah-investigates-the-politics-of-archived-history-through-his-practice>
- *Working Toward a Politics of Borderlessness* by Cher Tan
<https://hyperallergic.com/817473/working-toward-a-politics-of-borderlessness-okkoota/>
- *Five Questions with Okkoota*
<https://www.liminalmag.com/5-questions/okkoota>
- *Conflict Sites and Militant Botany* by Najrin Islam, ASAP Art
<https://asapconnect.in/post/253/singlestories/conflict-sites-and-militant-botany>
- *Tales of myth, suspension, and violence* by Gowri S in The Hindu
<https://www.thehindu.com/entertainment/art/tales-of-myth-suspension-and-violence-shine-in-this-multi-disciplinary-show/article31932920.ece>
- *A Glimpse of the White Whale* by Tai Mitsuji in Art Collector
<https://artcollector.net.au/auckland-art-fair-2018s-new-sector-gives-collectors-access-to-undiscovered-talent/>
- *Telegrams from a Landscape Scout: A Para-Archive of Kashmir as Image*
<https://asapconnect.in/post/254/singlealbums/telegrams-from-a-landscape-scout>

- 4 Indian artists recontextualize everyday items at Vadehra Art Gallery's latest exhibition
<https://www.architecturaldigest.in/story/the-profound-object-exhibition-vadehra-art-gallery-delhi/>
- *Disappearing Graffiti*, Interview by Lowercase Staff
<https://www.lowercasemagazine.com/blog/moonis-shah-kashmir-graffiti>
- *Nationhood Interrupted by Najrin Islam*, ASAP Art
<https://asapconnect.in/post/344/singleevents/nationhood-interrupted291221>
- *We, In Conflict 2019*, Tribune India
<https://www.tribuneindia.com/mobi/news/spectrum/we-in-conflict/818362.html>
- *Winding time and Exploring Space*, Exhibition review by Art Fervour
<https://www.artfervour.com/post/winding-time-and-exploring-space-gallery-ark-and-its-current-show-on-myth-suspension-and-violence>
- *Interview* by Sarah Hall, Arts Precinct, University of Melbourne
www.precinct.finearts-music.unimelb.edu.au/2017/11/24/moonis-shahs-anarchic-archive-work-wins-the-prestigious-fica-award/
- Meet Indian art's newest voices by Avantika Bhuyan
<https://lifestyle.livemint.com/news/big-story/meet-indian-art-s-newest-voices-111651211272549.html>
- *Interview* at Victorian College of the Arts, The University of Melbourne
<https://finearts-music.unimelb.edu.au/about-us/news/moonis-shah>
- *Atlas Reimagined* by Shruti Kapoor
<http://platform-mag.com/art/atlas-reimagined.html>

REFERENCES

Available upon request