NOTATIONS ON TIME

18 JANUARY - 20 MAY 2023
Ishara Art Foundation proudly presents Notations on Time, a group exhibition that explores the philosophical and political dimensions of time through the works of 20 contemporary artists from South Asia and its diaspora. Curated by Sandhini Poddar and Sabih Ahmed, the exhibition stages a dialogue between artistic generations to highlight entanglements between the past, present and future. The exhibition exists as a veritable laboratory of time, exploring art in notational, experimental and fragmentary forms. Standing apart from Western notions of linearity, progress and capitalist domination, Notations on Time explores ontological systems that reveal how artists from this region and its diaspora think about aesthetics, existence, remembrance and futurity.

Where and how do we ‘read’ time? On bodies, skins, machines, rivers, landscapes, and stars. Within wormholes in cosmic space and underground, in unseen root systems, within site-readings from archaeological and evidentiary fieldwork; within ancestry and oral traditions; within myths, folklore, and storytelling; within science fiction and mixed realities; within long-dead stars in the cosmos viewed through powerful telescopes; and so much more.

The exhibition poses questions such as, “what happens when residues from the past are reincarnated into the future? Where does the jurisdiction of the present end? What is the future of the past? What possibilities can the space of an exhibition offer to think through these questions?”


Artworks for this exhibition have been loaned from the Ishara Art Foundation and the Prabhakar Collection, the private collections of Taimur Hassan and Shweta & Vikram Puri.
TOP:
DAYANITA SINGH
Box of Shedding (2018)
Teak boxes containing 30 offset-printed image cards, published by Spontaneous Books, New Delhi
30 boxes, edition of 360, 21 x 16 x 3 cm each
Courtesy of the artist. From the Ishara Art Foundation and the Prabhakar Collection

BOTTOM:
ANOLI PERERA
Watch Series (2020)
Mixed media on paper
Set of 8, 29.21 x 20.32 cm each
Courtesy of the artist. From the collection of Shweta and Vikram Puri

AYESHA SULTANA
Breath Count XXI, XXII, XXIII (2021)
Clay-coated paper
21.6 x 28 cm each
Courtesy of the artist. From the Ishara Art Foundation and the Prabhakar Collection
Beautification inquires into the lingering scars left by the violent civil strife in Sri Lanka’s history. The work directs the viewer’s gaze towards a system that has led to thousands of families being forcibly evicted from their homes and cultural monuments destroyed to redesign the country in a new image after the civil war ended in 2009. The fallen Themis (Goddess of justice in Greek mythology) in Thenuwara’s work laments the deliberate negligence of rights, lack of reconciliation efforts and the facades created to obliterate history through architectural and landscaping interventions.
LADHKI DEVI
Dashki Mata (2020-21)
From the series Forms of the Devi, set of 14
Poster paint on mud-coated cloth
36 x 46.5 cm
Courtesy of the artist. From the Ishara Art Foundation and the Prabhakar Collection

GAURI GILL & RAJESH VANGAD
Dussehra in the Temple (2014)
From the series Fields of Sight (2013-ongoing)
Ink on archival pigment print
40.6 x 60.9 cm
© Gauri Gill and Rajesh Vangad. From the Ishara Art Foundation and the Prabhakar Collection

JANGARH SINGH SHYAM
Sher, Gufa, Ped aur Pakshi (1992)
Acrylic on Paper, 131.6 x 163.83 cm
From the collection of Lekha and Anupam Poddar

JAGDISH SWAMINATHAN
Untitled (c.1980)
Oil on canvas, 92 x 84 cm
From the collection of Taimur Hassan
SOUMYA SANKAR BOSE

Where the Birds Never Song (2017-2020)
Inkjet print on archival paper, set of 45
Dimensions variable for each print
© Soumya Sankar Bose. From the Ishara Art Foundation and the Prabhakar Collection

AMAR KANWAR

Listening Bench #5 (2013)
Recycled local wood,
soundtrack: 5:46 minutes
49.4 x 167 x 35.5 cm
Image courtesy of the artist and Marian Goodman Gallery
From the Ishara Art Foundation and the Prabhakar Collection

SHEBA CHHACHHI

Silver Sap (2007)
Archival pigment prints, set of 8
76.2 x 60.96 cm each
Image courtesy of the artist and Volte Art Projects
From the Ishara Art Foundation and the Prabhakar Collection

The Listening Benches developed from the presentation of The Sovereign Forest at Yorkshire Sculpture Park, England, in 2013. On the occasion of the exhibition, the coincidental dismantling of the YSP chapel’s nineteenth century organ provided a partial impetus for Kanwar’s material and concept. Remnants of wood inscribed by the organ makers at their construction are re-incorporated within new objects: benches which would offer viewers a space of rest and contemplation. A sonic element is a key feature, as Kanwar made sound recordings that are embedded in the benches using the stories of The Sovereign Forest as soundtracks.
Monument takes place at a collective graveyard and memorial, a place where families have gathered the bodies of their loved ones killed in a suicide bomb attack at a tuition centre, which took more than forty students’ lives. While sensitively depicting the intimate details of a particular site of memorial in Afghanistan, Hazara’s work also functions as a broader meditation on loss and remembrance, the individual and the collective, considering ways that communities come together to grieve, honour and celebrate lives lost.

AZIZ HAZARA
Still from Monument (2019)
Double channel UHD digital video, colour, sound
5:20 minutes
© Aziz Hazara, Image courtesy of the artist and Experimenter Gallery

LALA RUKH
Detail of Mirror Image II: 1, 2, 3 (diptych) (2011)
Graphite on carbon paper, 20.33 x 27 cm
Image courtesy of the Estate of Lala Rukh and Grey Noise. From the Ishara Art Foundation and the Prabhakar Collection

MARIAH LOOKMAN
Still from Night Song (2015)
Installation with 2 monitors and headphones. Video and sound collage, colour and sound, 9:15 minutes, loop.
© Mariah Lookman
Zarina’s *The Ten Thousand Things* functions as a portable index of her studio practice and more broadly, is a compendium of her ruminations on the concept of home, geographic place, time, architectural dwelling, mother tongue and faith.

**ZARINA**  
*The Ten Thousand Things III* (2016)  
A set of 100 collages mounted on Somerset white paper  
Sheet size: 22.9 x 15.2 cm each, image size variable  
© Zarina. Image courtesy of the artist and Luhring Augustine  
Photo: Farzad Owrang. From the Ishara Art Foundation and the Prabhakar Collection

**ALI KAZIM**  
*Ruins iii* (2016)  
Watercolour pigments on paper  
75 x 114 cm  
 Courtesy of the artist and Jhaveri Contemporary

**RAQS MEDIA COLLECTIVE**’s book - ‘Seepage’ (2009)  
Vinyl on wall, dimensions variable  
Courtesy of the artist

jugernaut imperial zombie overbearing tense tangible totalizing battlefield yes-man dissector nadir algorithmist Kalashnikov catatonic carapace veteran Armageddon freezer director biometrician shrill cost cell accountant vault drill evasive attester gripping abhorrent captor copyright inescapable alphanumeric secular endemic binary system fractal gamut admonisher vain stony abscess incorporeal decree anthrax sacrificer sepulchral summoner immune gun fetish fall-out combat Technicolor disposer speedy disclaimer eliminator barren uncontrolled gallows ablaze gunboat cable shunter severe industrialist undead disillusioner electric expensive unbeholden narcotic census abjurer shield glutton grandee dignitary inert impassive smooth conspirator calculus wreck immaterial abyss uranium executor impotent terrorist sensor trader eruption sculptor fascist sanctuary futurist entropic central pillager splicer turbid unaccountable examiner sickness club venomous scatophagous drudge viral electronic disinfectant junta hawk secretive engorging enlightened excitor capital energetic zamindar cleaver excessive betrayer astringent bloc theorist concentrator canker spinner impermeable snatcher fighter scanner bazooka encircling corporal aggrandizer sedative excrement beyond sclerotic thoroughbred
Soumya Sankar Bose (b. 1990) is an artist based in Kolkata, India. He reconstructs archival material and oral histories into photography, films, alternative archives and artist books. Bose’s hybrid mode of practice interweaves long-term research and engagement with local communities including his own family history. Bose was awarded Magnum Foundation’s Social Justice Fellowship for ‘Full Moon on a Dark Night’ and received Magnum Foundation’s Migration and Religion Grant in 2018. He is the recipient of the Foundation for Indian Contemporary Art’s Amol Vadehra Art Grant, The Agroecology Fund, Murthy Nayak Foundation Photobook Grant, Henry Luce Foundation grant and India Foundation for the Arts grant. His books and works are in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art New York (New York), The Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York) and the Ishara Art Foundation and the Prabhakar Collection (Dubai).

Sheba Chhachhi (b. 1958) is an artist, photographer and thinker based in New Delhi, India. Her practice investigates questions of gender, eco-philosophy, violence and visual cultures, with an emphasis on the recuperation of cultural memory. An activist/photographer in the women’s movement in the 1980s, Chhachhi is known for creating intimate, sensorial encounters through large-scale multimedia installations. She has exhibited widely over the years, including the Gwangju, Taipei, Moscow, Singapore and Havana biennales. Her works are part of significant public and private collections including the Tate Modern (London), Kiran Nadar Museum (Delhi), Bose Pacia (New York), Singapore Art Museum (Singapore), Devi Art Foundation (Delhi), National Gallery of Modern Art (Delhi) and the Ishara Art Foundation and the Prabhakar Collection (Dubai). Chhachhi speaks, writes and teaches in both institutional and non-formal contexts.

Shezad Dawood (b. 1974) is an artist based in London, United Kingdom, where he is Senior Lecturer and Research Fellow in Experimental Media at the University of Westminster. He was trained at Central St Martin’s and the Royal College of Art before undertaking a PhD at Leeds Metropolitan University. Dawood works across various media and much of his practice involves collaboration, frequently working with other artists to create unique networks around a given project or site. These networks span across different geographic locations and communities and are particularly concerned with acts of translation and restaging. Dawood is one of the winners of the 2011 Abraaj Capital Art Prize. His work has been exhibited internationally, including as part of ‘Altermodern’ at Tate Britain (London), the 53rd Biennale de Venezia (Venice), and the Busan Biennale (Busan). His other exhibitions include interventions in cities such as Tangiers, Mumbai, Karachi, Hamburg, and Singapore. Projects include a solo touring exhibition opening at Modern Art Oxford and a solo exhibition at Parasol Unit, London.

Ladhki Devi (b.1955) is based in Sakhre in Maharashtra, India, and is a practitioner of Warli art. Now in her late sixties, she makes ‘chauks’ - auspicious squares made of rice-flour paste with goddesses and gods depicted within them. It is an art she had observed closely since her youth from her mother and grandmother, who were both ‘susvasi’s, a title given to married women who help conduct wedding rituals. Devi is also the mother and teacher of the accomplished Warli practitioner Rajesh Chaitya Vangad, a collaborator of Gauri Gill since 2013. For Gill’s exhibition ‘Sheher Prakriti Devi’, Devi was invited to make work outside the context of the village as a fellow practitioner of contemporary art.
Gauri Gill (b. 1970) is an artist and photographer based in New Delhi, India. Working in both black and white, and colour, Gill addresses the Indian identity markers of caste, class and community as determinants of mobility and social behaviour. She has exhibited within India and internationally, including the 58th Biennale de Venezia (Venice), Museum Tinguely (Basel), MoMA PS1 (New York), Documenta 14 (Athens and Kassel), Kochi-Muziris Biennale 2016 (Kochi), the 7th Moscow Biennale (Moscow), Wiener Library (London), and the Whitechapel Gallery (London). Her work is in the collections of prominent institutions worldwide, including the Museum of Modern Art (New York), Tate Museum (London), the Smithsonian (Washington), the Ishara Art Foundation and the Prabhakar Collection (Dubai), and Fotomuseum (Winterthur). In 2011 she was awarded the Grange Prize, Canada's foremost award for photography.

Rajesh Vangad (b. 1975) was born and lives in Ganjad in Maharashtra, India. He is a bearer of the Warli style of painting, which is a traditional form of painting belonging to the indigenous people of Warli. He has painted notable murals at the Craft Museum in New Delhi, the Homi Bhabha Tata Memorial Hospital in Mumbai, and the T2 Terminal at the International Airport in Mumbai. His work has been exhibited across India and internationally in the UK, Spain and Japan. Vangad has published three books: ‘My Gandhi Story’ published by Tulika Books, 'Kabir Saamagni' as part of the Kabir Project, and ‘The Indian Crafts Journey’, as well as a map of Maharashtra by Dastkaar Haat Samiti. Since 2013, Vangad has worked in collaboration with the photographer Gauri Gill for their collaborative series titled ‘Fields of Sight’. Over Gill’s photographs of the coastal region of Ganjad and nearby Daham villages, Vangad executed drawings in the Warli idiom, bringing local botanical life, myths, community rituals and oral history in contact with the photograph’s narrative of urbanisation, industrialisation and ecological despair.

Aziz Hazara (b. 1992) lives and works between Berlin, Germany, and Kabul, Afghanistan. He is currently a KFW Residency artist hosted by Künstlerhaus Bethanien (Berlin). His work has been exhibited both regionally and internationally at Smack Mellon (New York), 58th Carnegie International (Pittsburg), Busan Biennale (Busan), NIRIN 22nd Biennale of Sydney (Sydney), among others. He has also participated in various residency programmes such as Colomboscope in 2021, the Embassy of Foreign Artists (EoFA) in 2020, the Camargo Foundation in 2019 and KHOJ International Artists’ Association in 2017. Hazara is the main prize winner of the 6th edition of the Future Generation Art Prize, Pinchuk Art Centre (Kyiv).

Amar Kanwar (b. 1964) was born in New Delhi, India, where he currently lives and works. Kanwar has distinguished himself through films and multi-media works that explore the politics of power, violence and justice. His works have been exhibited at Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza (Madrid), Tate Modern (London), Minneapolis Institute of Arts (Minneapolis), Frac Pays de la Loire (Carquefou), Ishara Art Foundation (Dubai), and the Assam State Museum in collaboration with Kiran Nadar Museum of Art and North East Network in India. Kanwar has also participated in documents 11, 12, 13 and 14 (Kassel). He has been a recipient of several awards including the IHME Helsinki Commission 2022, an Honorary Doctorate in Fine Arts, Maine College of Art, USA in 2006, the MacArthur Fellowship in India in 2000, and the Golden Gate Award, San Francisco International Film Festival, USA in 1999.

Ali Kazim (b. 1979) was born in Pakistan and currently lives and works in Lahore, Pakistan. His work has been exhibited widely in solo and group shows internationally, including the British Museum at Seoul Arts Center (Seoul), Centre for Contemporary Art Ujazdowski Castle (Warsaw), the Barbican (London), the 12th and 13th Asian Art Biennale in Bangladesh (Dhaka). He has participated in a number of artist residencies including Finalists for the Catlin Prize, The Art House Residency, The Land Securities Studio Award, Melvill Nettleship Prize for Figure Composition at UCL, Art OMI artist residency in New York, and the Young Painter Award by Lahore Arts Council.

Mariah Lookman (b. 1973) is an artist based between Galle, Sri Lanka, and Karachi, Pakistan. Specialising in process-centred and research-based practice, she also teaches and curates. Currently, she teaches in the graduate programme at the Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture in Karachi. Over the years her practice has evolved from single authorship projects to collaborative work. Most recently, Mariah was commissioned for the Istanbul Biennial in 2022, where she built an aquatic garden with a meditation and performance deck titled ‘Nelumbo’ accompanied by a video installation titled ‘A search for Sanjeeewani in Sri Lanka’. She was a participating artist in the Asian Art Biennale in Taiwan and Colomboscope Art Festival in Sri Lanka in 2021.

Haroon Mirza (b. 1977) was born in London, United Kingdom, where he lives and works. He has won international acclaim for installations that test the interplay and friction between sound and light waves, and electric current. He describes his role as a composer who manipulates electricity, working with the invisible and volatile phenomenon to make it dance to different tunes while calling on instruments as varied as household electronics, vinyl, turntables, LEDs, furniture, video footage and existing artworks. His process is left exposed where sounds occupy space in an unruly way, testing codes of conduct and challenging the atmosphere.

Anoli Perera (b. 1962) is a painter, sculptor and installation artist based between Colombo, Sri Lanka, and New Delhi, India. As a writer, she has contributed consistently to bring visibility to contemporary art in Sri Lanka. She is a founding member of Theertha Artists Collective and has played an instrumental role as an institution builder, supporting her peers in revitalizing the arts in Colombo through strategic programming, workshops and international collaborations. From the 1990s, her aesthetic interventions — in politics, personal and feminist — ushered in a new wave of art-making in Sri Lanka. Perera has deployed her work to present contradictory as well as complex narratives that emerge when living in contemporary society.

Raqs Media Collective (est. 1992). The word ‘raqs’ in several languages denotes an intensification of presence and the sensation of elation attained by whirling, turning, being in a state of revolution. Raqs take this sense to mean ‘kinetic contemplation’ and a restless and energetic entanglement with the world and with time. Based in New Delhi, India, Raqs Media Collective’s practice spans across several media, making installation, sculpture, video, performance, text, lexica, and curation. They were the artistic directors of the Yokohama Triennale 2020, ‘Afterglow’.

Lala Rukh (1948 – 2017) studied art at Punjab University, Lahore, Pakistan, and at the University of Chicago, USA. She taught for 30 years at Punjab University, Department of Fine Art and the National College of Arts where she set up the M.A. (Hons) Visual Art Programme in the year 2000. After retiring from teaching, Lala Rukh devoted her time in her studio and to activism in Lahore. She was among the foremost feminist activist artists of South Asia. Her work has been exhibited at the Kiran Nadar Museum Art (Delhi), Punta della Dogana (Venice), Jameel Arts Centre (Dubai), Centre Pompidou (Paris), the Documenta 14 (Athens and Kassel), the Yinchuan Biennial (Yinchuan) and Sharjah
Jangarh Singh Shyam (1962 – 2001) belonged to the Gond community of Mandla district in Madhya Pradesh. His works reflect the vision of tribal art practices that have been passed on from generations. In 1985, he won the Shikhar Samman, the highest honour in Madhya Pradesh for an artist. In 1990, he painted the main dome of Bharat Bhavan in Bhopal that depicted the Gond Deity, Baradeo. Jangarh was invited to Paris for a show at the famous Pompidou Centre. He also travelled to the US, the UK and other countries to exhibit his works. He was one of the five artists selected to be part of an arts program called the ‘Other Masters’ at the Crafts Museum, New Delhi. Like many folk artists from India, he was also invited to work at the Mithila Museum, Japan, which resulted in a body of work that is now in the collection of the museum.

Dayanita Singh (b. 1961) is an artist based in Delhi, India. She uses photography to reflect and expand on the ways in which we relate to images. Her recent works, drawn from her extensive photographic oeuvre, are a series of mobile museums that allow her images to be edited, sequenced, archived and displayed. Stemming from Singh’s interest in the archive, she presents her photographs as interconnected bodies of work that are replete with both poetic and narrative possibilities. Publishing is also a significant part of the artist’s practice. In her books, often published without text, Singh extends her experiments on alternate forms of producing and viewing photographs. Her works have been exhibited internationally in museums, biennales and festivals and collected by museums and private collections around the world.

Ayesha Sultana (b. 1984) was born in Jashore, Bangladesh, and lives and works between Dhaka, Bangladesh and Atlanta, USA. Sultana’s work has been exhibited at Art Basel (Basel), San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (San Francisco), FIAC (Paris), Queens Museum (New York), the 11th Gwangju Biennale (Gwangju), the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art (New Delhi), the Dhaka Art Summit (Dhaka), the 9th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art, QAGOMA (Brisbane), the Lahore Biennale 01 (Lahore) and the Jameel Arts Centre (Dubai) among others. Sultana is a member of Britto Arts Trust, Bangladesh.

Jagdish Swaminathan (1928 – 1994) was born in Shimla, India, and educated at Delhi Polytechnic, and later in Warsaw, Poland. In the late 1950s, Swaminathan decided to become a full-time artist, and with his contemporaries he founded Group 1890. In the 1990s, he broke away from his earlier geometric brush paintings to explore the use of symbols in tribal art. Swaminathan received numerous awards during his career including the Nehru Fellowship to work on ‘The Significance of the Traditional Numen in Contemporary Art’. He was also a member of the International Jury of São Paulo, he served on the board of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, and was a trustee of the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts. In 1981, the government of Madhya Pradesh invited Swaminathan to set up Roopanker, an art museum at Bharat Bhavan, Bhopal. Over his career, Swaminathan held over 30 solo exhibitions and participated in numerous national and international exhibitions.

Chandraruptha Thenuwara (b. 1960) is an artist, activist, curator and educator based in Colombo. His wider body of work includes sculpture, painting, drawings, public monuments, lectures, curatorial and collaborative projects, all of which are informed directly by his activism. In 1993, after receiving his Master of Fine Arts from the Moscow State Institute in the USSR, Thenuwara founded the Vijhavi Academy of Fine Arts (VAVA), an artist-run school dedicated to fostering Sri Lankan contemporary art. He has presented works extensively in solo and group exhibitions internationally including the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art (Colombo), Devi Art Foundation (New Delhi), Dhaka Art Summit (Dhaka), Shanghai Zendau Museum of Modern Art (Shanghai), and Fukuoka Asian Art Museum (Fukuoka). Thenuwara’s work was featured in ‘Cities on the Move’, an exhibition in Vienna organized by visionary curator Hans Ulrich Obrist. In 2022, Thenuwara presented a sculptural installation in ‘Personal Structures’ at the European Cultural Centre, a collateral exhibition of the 59th Biennale de Venezia (Venice).

Zarina (1937 – 2020) was born in Aligarh, India, and after years of itinerant moving, she settled in New York where she lived and worked for over four decades. After receiving a degree in mathematics, she went on to study woodblock printing in Bangalore and Tokyo, and intaglio with S. W. Hayter at Atelier-17 in Paris. She has exhibited at numerous venues internationally including representing India at the 54th Biennale de Venezia (Venice), and her retrospective exhibition entitled ‘Zarina: Paper Like Skin’ was presented at the Hammer Museum (Los Angeles) in 2012, at the Guggenheim (New York), and the Art Institute of Chicago (Chicago) in 2013. Her work is in the permanent collections of the Tate Modern (London), the Hammer Museum (Los Angeles), San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (San Francisco), Whitney Museum of American Art (New York), Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum (New York), Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York), Museum of Modern Art (New York), Menil Collection (Houston) and the Ishara Art Foundation and the Prabhakar Collection (Dubai).

CURATOR BIOGRAPHIES

Sandhini Poddar is a London-based art historian and Adjunct Curator at the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi Project, where she is responsible for acquisitions, commissions and research for the future museum. Previously, Poddar served on the curatorial team at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum and Foundation from 2007 until 2016 as part of its international Asian Art Initiative. During her tenure, she curated ground-breaking exhibitions on modern and contemporary Asian art including, ‘V. S. Gaitonde: Painting as Process, Painting as Life’, ‘Being Singular Plural’, and ‘Anish Kapoor: Memory’. She also organized the Guggenheim’s presentation of ‘Zarina: Paper Like Skin’. Poddar writes on contemporary art, aesthetics, and politics and has contributed articles for magazines such as Artforum, ArtAsiaPacific and Art India. Poddar recently curated ‘India’s Net’ for Frieze London. She is a Trustee of South London Gallery.

Sabih Ahmed is the Associate Director and Curator at the Ishara Art Foundation in Dubai. Prior to Ishara, Ahmed was a Senior Researcher and Projects Manager at Asa Art Archive from 2009 to 2019. Over the years, he has led research and digitisation projects around artist archives, organised international conferences on art history and educational resources, and has co-curated exhibitions in Barcelona, Dhaka, Delhi, Hong Kong and Shanghai. At Ishara, he has curated exhibitions and programmes that include ‘Staging the Contemporary: The Next Generation’, a symposium organised in collaboration with the India Art Fair (New Delhi), ‘Navajat Altaf: Pattern’ among others. Ahmed’s writings have been published by Mousse, the Whitworth, Arts Cabinet, onCurating, and he serves on the Advisory Board of Sher-Gil Sundaram Arts Foundation, New Delhi.
Ishara Art Foundation was founded in 2019 as a non-profit organisation dedicated to presenting contemporary art of South Asia. Located in Dubai, the Foundation supports emerging and established practices that advance critical dialogue and explore global interconnections.

Guided by a research-led approach, Ishara realises its mission through exhibitions, onsite and online programmes, education initiatives and collaborations in the UAE and internationally. The Foundation facilitates exchange between South Asian and international artistic networks that include museums, foundations, institutions, galleries and individuals.

The Ishara logo, a synthesis of a square and circle, is based on an ideogram by Zarina to convey the word ‘Aasman’, Sky. It forms one of 36 images from “Home is a Foreign Place” (1999), a work in the collection of Ishara’s Founder and Chairperson, Smita Prabhakar. Ishara signifies a gesture, a signal or a hint, and is a word common to several languages including Arabic, Persian, Hindi, Swahili and Urdu. Ishara is grateful for the generosity extended by Zarina and her family to use the ideogram in the Foundation’s logo.

Ishara Art Foundation is presented in partnership with Alserkal.