

Yokohama Triennale 2020 Announcement Raqs Media Collective Appointed as Artistic Director for Yokohama Triennale 2020

The Organizing Committee for Yokohama Triennale is pleased to announce the appointment of Raqs Media Collective as the artistic director of Yokohama Triennale 2020.

Since its inauguration in 2001, the Yokohama Triennale has strived to be a leading force in the Japanese contemporary art scene. Ahead of its 20th anniversary, the triennale seeks to reassess and shift its position by joining forces with Raqs Media Collective, a New Delhi-based collective consisting of Jeebesh Bagchi, Monica Narula, and Shuddhabrata Sengupta.



Raqs Media Collective (from left: Jeebesh Bagchi, Monica Narula, Shuddhabrata Sengupta) Photo: TANAKA Yuichiro

Selected on the basis of its highly intellectual and polemical approach, the collective is notable for its originality and inquisitive attitude. Active as artists, curators, and producers, the group is versatile and collaborative, working frequently with architects, computer programmers, writers, curators, and theater directors. Among the major biennales and exhibitions they have curated are the Shanghai Biennale “Why Not Ask Again” (2016) and most recently “In the Open or in Stealth” (2018) at Museu d’Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA).

In the 19th century, Yokohama became one of the first Japanese ports to open to the outside world after a period of nearly 200 years of national isolation. Since that time, the city has remained open to untested ideas and unfamiliar knowledge. Acutely aware of local issues, Raqs Media Collective will function as creative agents, finding “polyglot anchors that translate and poetically amplify” the triennale’s concerns, including subjects with specific global and social implications.

Yokohama Triennale 2020

Exhibition Dates: early July - mid-October, 2020

Organizers: City of Yokohama, Yokohama Arts Foundation, Japan Broadcasting Corporation (NHK),
The Asahi Shimbun, and Organizing Committee for Yokohama Triennale

Official Website: <http://www.yokohamatriennale.jp>

Twitter: @yokotori_

Facebook: YOKOHAMATRIENNALE

Instagram: yokohama_triennale

Selecting an Artistic Director

Asada Akira

Chairperson of the Artistic Director Selection Committee for the 7th Yokohama Triennale

It is with great pleasure that we announce the appointment of Raqs Media Collective as the Artistic Director of Yokohama Triennale 2020. The selection process, which began with a shortlist of prospects based on a number of recommendations and concluded with an interview, provided the committee with an opportunity to discuss what the triennale could be in 2020 and to choose a director with the vision and capacity to realize a project with artistic and social importance.

The shortlist consisted of leading figures from the global art scene and professionals of a very high caliber. However, the proposal submitted by the Delhi-based Raqs Media Collective was decidedly different. Whereas the other candidates were concerned with “trendy” concepts related to today’s most urgent issues, the Raqs Media Collective drew on sources such as a book by a British anthropologist dealing with a day laborer in Yokohama who was well-versed in the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari. These sources seemed promising as a means of developing and expanding the concepts that are needed to shape the project. Raqs Media Collective was selected due to our belief that their experience as artists in a variety of places, including Japan, and their proven ability and flexibility as curators would lead to the realization of a truly unique triennale.

Among many other issues, the committee discussed the fact that most domestic art festivals have been dominated by Japanese male directors. And as it happened, we settled on an Indian collective of mixed gender. It is my belief that the appointment of Raqs Media Collective will not only serve as an inspiration for the Yokohama Triennale, but also for the Japanese art scene as a whole. With this in mind, one might say that the triennale’s new direction began with the selection process. It is our hope that, like a plant growing and extending its roots, Yokohama Triennale 2020 will transcend a superficial type of globalism and mature into a genuinely international art festival.

Artistic Director Selection Committee for the 7th Yokohama Triennale (in alphabetical order)

ASADA Akira (Chairperson)
Critic / Director, Graduate School Academic Research Center, Kyoto University of Art and Design

KURAYA Mika Chief Curator, Department of Programs Development, The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo

OSAKA Eriko Director, Yokohama Museum of Art / Executive Chairperson, Organizing Committee for Yokohama Triennale

SAWARAGI Noi Art Critic / Professor, Tama Art University

WASHIDA Kiyokazu Philosopher / President, Kyoto City University of Arts / Director, sendai mediatheque

The Selection Process

The selection process was conducted in two stages. First, the Selection Committee compiled a shortlist from the 21 candidates that were nominated by the 14-member Recommendation Committee. Next, the committee interviewed the candidates and selected the Raqs Media Collective as the finalist. The Organizing Committee accepted this decision and the chairperson officially appointed the collective as artistic director.

About Raqs Media Collective

Raqs Media Collective was formed in 1992 by Jeebesh Bagchi, Monica Narula and Shuddhabrata Sengupta. The word 'raqs' in several languages denotes an intensification of awareness and presence attained by whirling, turning, being in a state of revolution. Raqs Media Collective takes this sense of 'kinetic contemplation' so as to make a restless and energetic entanglement with the world, and with time. Raqs practices across several forms and media; it makes art, produces performances, writes, curates exhibitions, and occupies a unique position at the intersection of contemporary art, philosophical speculation, and historical enquiry. The members of Raqs Media Collective live and work in New Delhi, India. In 2001, they co-founded the Sarai program at CSDS (Centre for the Study of Developing Societies) New Delhi and ran it for a decade, where they also edited the Sarai Reader series.

Raqs Media Collective official website: <http://www.raqsmediacollective.net/>

Exhibitions curated by Raqs Media Collective

"In the Open or in Stealth - The Unruly Presence of an Intimate Future" (Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona [MACBA], Barcelona, Spain, 2018-19)
11th Shanghai Biennale "Why Not Ask Again: Arguments, Counter-arguments, and Stories" (2016-17)
INSERT2014 (Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, New Delhi, India, 2014)
"Sarai Reader 09" (Devi Art Foundation, Gurugram, India, 2012-13),
Manifesta 7 "The Rest of Now" (Bolzano, Italy, 2008)

Solo Exhibitions

"Raqs Media Collective: Not Yet At Ease" (Firstsite, Colchester, UK, 2018-19)
"Raqs Media Collective" (K21 Ständehaus, Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Dusseldorf, Germany, 2018)
"Raqs Media Collective: Twilight Language" (The Whitworth, Manchester, UK, 2017-18)
"Raqs Media Collective: If the World is a Fair Place Then..." (Laumeier Sculpture Park, St. Louis, USA, 2015-16)
"Raqs Media Collective. Es posible porque es posible" (Fundación Proa, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2015)
"Raqs Media Collective: It's Possible Because It's Possible" (Museo Universitario Arte Contemporáneo [MUAC], Mexico City, Mexico, 2015)
"Raqs Media Collective. Es posible porque es posible" (Centro de Arte Dos de Mayo [CA2M], Madrid, Spain, 2014)
"Asamayavali/Untimely Calendar" (National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi, India, 2014-15)

Biennales

Sharjah (11th, 2013 / 13th, 2017), Venice (50th, 2003 / 51st, 2005 / 56th, 2015), São Paulo (29th, 2010), Shanghai (8th, 2010-11), Istanbul (10th, 2007), Sydney (15th, 2006), Taipei (2004-05), Documenta 11 (2002)

Group Exhibitions in Japan

Setouchi Triennale 2019 (Kagawa Prefecture, scheduled in 2019)
SUZU 2017: Oku-Noto Triennale (Suzu City, Ishikawa Prefecture, 2017)
"Chalo! India: A New Era of Indian Art" (Mori Art Museum, Tokyo, 2008-09)
Ogaki Biennale 2006 (Ogaki City, Gifu Prefecture, 2006)

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