shisha
presents

Asia Triennial
Manchester 11

Asia Triennial Manchester 11 at Jodrell Bank

Silsila: a Sufi-inspired cosmic journey in sound

Come you lost Atoms to your centre draw

And be the Eternal Mirror that you saw

Rays that have wandered into Darkness wide

Return and back into your sun subside

Extract from Farid Uddin Attar's poem The Conference of the Birds

Artists Tasawar Bashir and Brian Duffy, working with astrophysicist Tim O'Brien, present *Silsila*, a qawwali-inspired sound installation based on the epic Sufi poem *Conference of the Birds*, commissioned especially for Asia Triennial Manchester 11. *Silsila* will be installed at the University of Manchester's Jodrell Bank Discovery Centre in the shadow of the world-famous Lovell Radio Telescope.

Researching a wide range of wavelengths, an endless musical algorithm will translate data sourced from stellar events such as, cosmic background noise, star formation, pulsars, solar plasma, and light from galaxy clusters, and combine it with the voice of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, arguably the greatest qawwali singer of the modern era. This installation will further develop ideas from Brian Duffy's earlier project The Optophonic Lunaphone, a device that changed starlight into music.

Asia Triennial Manchester 11 (ATM11), initiated and led by Shisha, is a festival of visual culture that features a series of exhibitions, commissions and interventions by 40 international and UK artists exploring the theme of *Time and Generation*, presenting new site-specific work alongside work not seen before in the UK, and challenging stereotypical viewpoints of contemporary Asian artistic practice.

Qawwali is a devotional music inspired by the universal wisdom of Sufi thinkers. Traditionally, the music begins as a vocal drone and raaga and builds steadily to a high energy inducing hypnotic states in the musicians and audience.

Tasawar Bashir is an artist who explores the notion of sacred using modern design and technology. His simple Audio Visual aesthetic exercises test the relative efficacy of contemporary art forms, modern technologies, and data visualisation software, to see if it is possible to enhance the ontology of participants to meditate, reflect and enter communion with Allah.

Brian Duffy is a conceptual artist, whose work involves live performance, installations, original music composition, and the creation of new musical instruments. He has performed and presented internationally.

Brian's central themes explore the limits of human sense data and the notion of perceptual habit. His work reveals the hidden world around us by utilizing modified and self-built apparatus.

Tim O'Brien is a Reader in Astrophysics at the University of Manchester's Jodrell Bank Observatory. His research focuses on the study of exploding stars using telescopes around the world and in space, He has also worked on a number of artistic collaborations including the Pulsar Polyphon at the European Capital of Culture 2009 in Linz, Austria.

About The Optophonic Lunaphone Project

Brian Duffy's Optophonic Lunaphone was voted 19th weirdest musical instrument ever in a poll taken by sonicstate.com, it is a device/musical instrument he created for listening to starlight. The lunaphone consisted of six computer controlled telescopes fitted with special sensors which convert the light from stars into air pressure waves of the same frequency, the performers follow a score, moving the telescopes to pre prescribed celestial coordinates while modulating the incoming starlight with hand held rotating discs of alternating black and transparent stripes, the six telescopes return to a central control panel that allows the signals to be mixed and modulated in real time. The performance is at the mercy of the earth's atmosphere and the amount of available starlight.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W3z2CuynH2U

About Jodrell Bank Discovery Centre

The University of Manchester's Jodrell Bank Discovery Centre opened to the public in April 2011. The Centre showcases the world-leading research of Jodrell Bank Scientists and Engineers. It provides an exciting, contemporary space in which to connect with science. The Centre includes two exhibition spaces, extensive gardens and a cafe with views of the giant Lovell Telescope.

http://www.jodrellbank.net

Visit www.asiatriennialmanchester.com for updates and events information

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