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COLOMBOARTBIENNALE

READING ROOM



BLUEPRINT12 AND COLOMBO ART BIENNALE
presents
'READING ROOM'

*Anne Cowell | Banoo Batliboi | Deng Yifu | Jagath Weewasinghe | Kingsley
Gumatillake | Layla Gonaduwa | Liz Fernando | Radhika Hettiarachchi &
Shanika Perera | Samanta Batra Mehta | Samit Das | Sathyanand Mohan |
Sauriti Choudhary | Zach Stensen*

EXHIBITION OPENS April 24th 2014 6:00pm - 9:00pm
ON VIEW TILL April 26th 2014 11:00am - 7:00pm

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— Anne Cowell, *Yarned Order*, A Game of Dice, 2012

READING ROOM

April 24- April 26 2014

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The 'Reading Room' is a journey of discoveries and experiences, of nostalgia and witness; a space where the many and varied perspectives and practices of the book arts find a place of meeting, dialogue and expression.

Book art demands both an aesthetic engagement and critical conceptual inquiry into the work. Aesthetic engagement with book art requires a paradigm shift to reading a different logic in the book: the logic of the visual, textural and cultural. Traditionally, the book has signified knowledge, and can be considered a visually embedded cultural site because of this history (consider the many times that books have been burnt as acts of symbolic violence). It is a site where many versions of history, senses of identity and narratives (both dominant and counter) converge.

The book in contemporary art, is thus an object completely transformed – not just in its structure, but also in its meaning. Walter Benjamin calls this the 'renewal of existence.' This sense of renewal is to be experienced in the work of the exhibiting artists brought together in conversation in the 'Reading Room'. The mood is sometimes fantastical and playful, and sometimes evocative and intimate. At its most activist, it stands as a collective resistance to dominant politics and ideologies. And, as the artist, in many ways, works as an interpreter of the book, so will the viewer of the work.

The experience of reading is deeply personal, whether approached with anticipation, curiosity, or sometimes even with hesitation. Thus, the 'Reading Room' invites the reader of this space to carry with them the memory of this experience in a context created for encounter, discussion, and making meaning.

FREEING THE BOOK

Ruhanie Perera

“The Book – a traditional object, which nevertheless is capable of the most contemporary adaptation, yet retains an aesthetic dimension” – Mabel Kaufmann, The Book as Art and Idea

“(…) one of the finest memories of a collector is the moment when he rescued a book to which he might never have given a thought, much less a wishful look, because he found it lonely and abandoned on the marketplace and bought it to give it its freedom…” – Walter Benjamin, Illuminations

As a child I would sit with my grandfather for hours in what I used to call his ‘book room.’ That is where I learned to love the smell of books. I was taught not to fold over, or ‘dog-ear’ the pages of books to mark the page I stopped reading at, and discovered with fascination that silver fish could make the most beautiful patterns of tiny holes that sunk deep into the pages of a book. I learned the posture of reading old school: to sit upright, to hold the spine of a book and to slip my index finger under the page in readiness to turn over. Already, for my grandfather, and through him, for me – the book was art, with its accompanying practice, mode of engagement and embodied experience.

Perhaps that is why when Walter Benjamin writes of the collector of books unpacking his library, and he speaks of an accompanying mood that is not elegiac, rather that of anticipation, it feels almost as if he picked the most apt word to describe the sensory experience of confronting a book. This sense of anticipation, I feel, is the mood to be carried on into experiencing the book as contemporary art.

Art historian and critic Johanna Drucker is quoted to have referred to book art as “the quintessential 20th century art form.” The book as a form of artistic expression has been a part of evolutionary moments of contemporary art from Russian futurism to feminist art to conceptual art and performance art, and the number of artists using books as a medium in art is increasing.

And yet, book art remains more on the peripheries of contemporary art institutions, communities, practice and audiences – especially in the Asian region.

The premise of this essay is thus to consider the contemporary art positioning, and the many interpretations, of the book as an art object and its cultural and political agency. It seeks to find ways of understanding book art, and explore paradigms of reading, and interpreting work produced in this context. While the delineation of the book as art object is contextualised within a more global discussion – the project here is to extend the thinking to contemporary exhibition curation and exhibition making in the South Asian Region, bringing into focus the philosophy of the ‘Reading Room.’

Inside the ‘Reading Room’

In its articulation, the ‘Reading Room’ engages the idea of an active, working studio (invoking book art histories in antecedent bookmaking practices – papermaking, illustration, binding and printing); it also evokes the inherently multi sensory, experiential dynamic of the book. The notion of the ‘Reading Room’ focuses the approach to the exhibition as one that considers the specific history of ‘reading practice’ associated with the book, its materiality, its proximity to everyday life and its suggestion of a kind of intimacy. It even goes so far as to suggest interaction, thus articulating – in the invitation to participate in art – a democratising principle.

Jules Prown recommends that, in art contexts, when objects are not available for physical investigation, perceptions regarding sensory aspects “must be done imaginatively and empathetically.” This is important, she notes, because in most cases, books in exhibitions are often placed behind glass to protect them from damage that might occur from handling (in Burkhart, 2006, p.263). And so, in the ‘Reading Room,’ the possibility of ‘handling’ the work becomes a politic engaged with. This is only scratching at the surface of the site of resistance (which will be discussed in more detail later) that is the book in art.

Existence Renewed: The Book in Art

In his essay “Unpacking My Library: A Talk About Book Collecting,” Walter Benjamin discusses the book from the perspective of the collector. He frames two interesting perspectives that can be drawn into an exploration of the practice of book art brought into discussion in this essay. First, his approach to ‘ownership,’ and second his expression of the ‘renewal of existence.’

What is interesting to note is that Benjamin sees ‘ownership’ as one of the most intimate relationships that one can have with objects. Ownership, or perhaps more accurately, ‘possession,’ is the expressive power of a ‘relationship’ that exists between collector and object, “which does not emphasize their functional utilitarian value – that is, their usefulness – but studies and loves them as the scene, the stage, of their fate” (1969, p.60). Taken into account in a consideration of book art, this is in a sense, an act of ‘freeing the book,’ in that it is given an expressive power beyond the traditional approach to the book. The book is given a new frame of reference by the artist. And, the invitation is to ‘read’ differently.

Benjamin goes on to suggest that for a ‘true collector,’ acquisition is the rebirth of a book. He also speaks of the element of the ‘childlike’ in this respect –

(...) For children can accomplish the renewal of existence in a hundred unending ways. Among children, collecting is only one process of renewal; other processes are the painting of objects, the cutting out of figures, the application of decals – the whole range of childlike modes of acquisition, from touching things to giving them names. To renew the old world – that is the collector’s deepest desire (p.61).

This metaphor of a child’s treasury contextualises the idea of the ‘renewal of existence.’ It, in effect, speaks of the possibility of reimagining the object – discussed in the hands of the child, but can be extended to acknowledge the premise of existence renewed for the book by the artist.

Defining the Artists’ Book

The ‘artists’ book’ functions as an art object; the term itself refers to works of art realised in the form of a book. Claire Bernstein describes artists’ books as “radical extenders of form rather than neutral vessels,” which results in

“a vision of books as laboratories for the invention and performance of perceptual systems: new worlds carved out of the wilderness of human thought and language” (in Burkhart, 2006, p.249).

Artists’ books are typically understood as different from finely crafted books that demonstrate technical mastery; more often than not, the artists’ book finds its most profound expression as the artists’ sketchbook. Loosely framed, an artists’ book is a work of art in its own right, conceived specifically for the book form (Lippard as cited in Burkhart, 2006, p.249). A point to note within the artists’ book dialogue is that in the understanding of, and approach to the artists’ book, the book form itself is intrinsic to the aesthetic of the work.

Clive Phillpot (1998) – the former director of the Museum of Modern Art Library – applies the phrase Mongrel Nature to the artists’ book, explaining that they are “distinguished by the fact that they sit provocatively at the juncture where art, documentation, and literature all come together” (p.33). What is interesting about the phrase is that it, for one, brings into focus the many different histories of the artists’ book. It also makes evident the fact that the artists’ book works against a single definition. There is, thus, no consensus on the definition of the artists’ book, nor is there “a single form, production method, or conceptual framework that embodies what an artists’ book is” (Burkhart, 2006, p.249). Consulting different sources indicate, however, that there are some fundamental parameters in place to approaching, engaging with and critically evaluating the artists’ book as art practice.

The Book as an Art Object

It becomes evident then that the evolution of the book as an art object communicates a massive diversity in form, approach, content and style that can be found within this medium – and, in a sense, there is an emerging conceptual sense of how to consider, interpret, understand and critique the art form. Some critics (especially in art education contexts) offer categories that function as conceptual tools to better understand the collection of objects called the artists' book, and to convey the wide variation that exists within this context. These categories, advanced within the specific definition of the artists' book, can be extended to frame an approach to decoding the ways in which books function as an object that is “artistically engaging” and “culturally relevant” (Burkhart, 2006, p.254).

The categories of reading, which are adapted from Burkhart's exposition of a suggested scope for interpretation, include: The book in its auratic nature, textual innovation, conventions, appropriations, performative qualities, narrative, assemblage, documentation, 'democratic multiple,' activism and digitization (pp. 253-260).

Some books emanate a powerful aura because of their physical presence, and some artistic works emphasize this 'auratic' nature. With such work, meaning is conveyed sometimes through symbolic association that could depend on the history or the form of the book. Instances of 'textual innovation' can be read in books that optimize the expressive potential of words on a page; this is different from narrative, which will be discussed later. Engagement with structural aspects of the book can be considered under the category of 'conventions' – in addition to books that play with literary conventions, including expectations regarding image and text relationships. Some artists use 'appropriations,' to alter books in varying degrees, from simple highlighting to manipulating it until it is completely transformed.

Methods of this kind of alteration include printing, cutting painting, masking, folding, shaping, layering and collaging (for example, see Fig.1).

Traditionally, the book has occupied a space as an instructive authority, and in some instances, the artistic engagement is with the element of directing action to create a more active role for the spectator; therein lives the 'performative' aspect of work. The 'narrative' (for example, see Fig.2) is the most pervasive aspect of the book genres – it is the form and voice of expression that can be read through the said, the unsaid and the suggested of a text.

Book artists tend to experiment with narrative structures as artistic comment, record or personal story. An 'assemblage' (for example, see Fig.3) is a compilation, which brings into either a two- or three-dimensional structure artwork, non-traditional artistic materials, objects, even found objects – creating a kind of artefact that can be read through its layering.



Fig. 1 – Banoo Batliboi (India), Deco Zig Zag, Book Sculpture



Fig. 2 – Zach Stenson (USA), Elementary Astronomy, Dryfire Press



Fig. 3 – Samit Das (India), Vibrations and Silence 4, Cardboard Egg Box and Paper, Hand stitched

Book art that can be read as ‘documentation’ draws on journals and diaries – in some ways it is also a product of a modern art world in its close relationship with the documentary. The ‘democratic multiple’ stands in direct opposition to tome-like books that indicate the processes of hand production. It is the renegade book, in that it is a mass-produced object created for life in the realm of the public, its status lying in its existence on the margins of mainstream art contexts and institutions.

Artists have long understood the place, and role of the arts in societies of upheaval – some book artists too are inheritors of this legacy and create work with ‘activist’ agendas (for example, see Fig.4&5) that focus on generating meaningful social reflection, and action. Although many book artists are working with ‘digitization’ processes (for example, see Fig.6), one of the most exciting new modes of engagement in contemporary art contexts, the material book has not yet disappeared. In an age where technology has changed how we read, however, considering how processes of digitization will intervene in a book art practice will be the next stage of inquiry.

These eleven frameworks only hint at the massive range of artistic experimentation possible, and explored within the book form in contemporary art. This range (as can be understood through the frameworks described) is indicative of the fact that the contemporary book art praxis, especially because of its multi sensory and experiential dynamic moves the culture of spectatorship beyond the limitation of considering visual aspects of work to taking into account the book in art as a visually based cultural site.



Fig. 4 – Kingsley Gunatillake (Sri Lanka), *Bullet Book, Book, Cartridges*



Fig. 6 – Satyanand Mohan (India), *Chronicle, Set of 16 Photos*

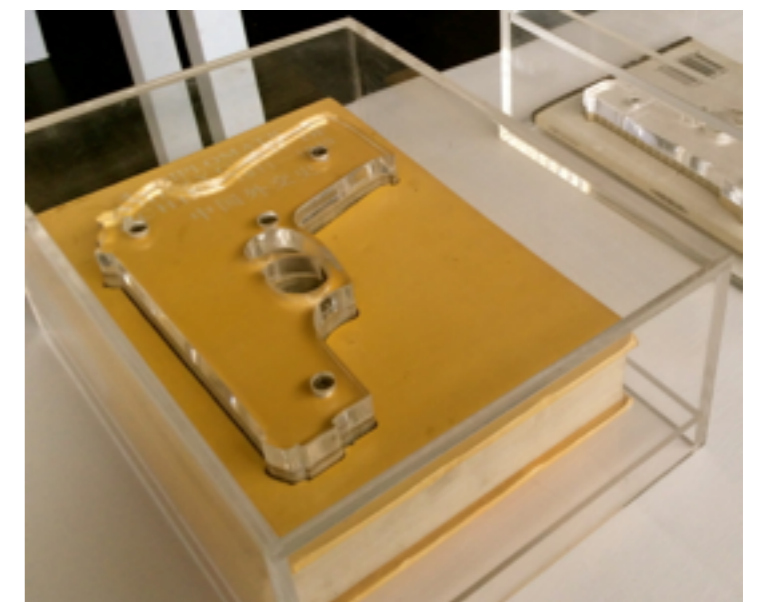


Fig. 5 – Deng Yifu (China), *Diplomatic History (Y1145-Gun), Book, Perspex, Screws*

Reading 'Resistance'

Resistance is an interesting perspective to adopt when delving into the artistic, political and conceptual aspects of book art created and curated in the global South. Ranjit Hoskote defines 'Resistance' as a condition of the global South in his delineation of the 'biennales of resistance.' In "The Shapeshifting Trajectory of The Biennale," he discusses the shifting geography of the biennale from the traditional centres of biennale activity situated in West Europe to the global South – in Asia, Africa and Latin America. He notes, with the Sao Paulo Biennale (founded in 1951), the significance of the act of 'participation' in the "supposedly cosmopolitan, though essentially Euro-American ambit of international art." Already, there is a formulation of a dynamic of resistance – the shift away from traditional centres, and the aspect of meaningful participation (in effect a democratic principle) in the international art domain.

The first place of 'resistance' in Hoskote's articulation is the imagining and mapping of the global contemporary – from a different axis. Secondly, where the politic is of emergence itself, the art context becomes that of collective witness, remembrance and resistance. The 'Reading Room,' in its curation and its collection, 'imagines and maps' a global contemporary position of the book conceived from an axis of difference. While the work is sometimes fantastical and playful, and sometimes emotive and intimate, at its most activist, it stands as a collective statement on dominant politics and ideologies. It is work that reminds us that the resistive power of the book art form is both possible and significant, and in the consideration of such work, critical and evocative. And, as the artist, in many ways, works as an interpreter of the book, so will the viewer of the work.

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ANA COVELL



Raking Light



Natural Order

As an artist, I am drawn to the structure of the book as a mechanism for exploring the temporality of sensory experience. A book for me is as much about the tactile experience of handling, as it is about the sound it makes in action, the smell of its ink, and the shape and texture of its visual makeup. My work often utilizes natural and historic production methods, such as natural dyeing and hand papermaking, as a means to produce cohesive work that is sensitive to the preservation of material resources and processes. Transience and decay are not only of the natural world, but are also of the material culture we construct.

Anne Covell is an MFA candidate at the University of Iowa Center for the Book, where she studies letterpress printing, bookbinding and hand papermaking. In 2004, Covell completed a dual BA from San Diego State University where she studied art history and metalworking, and in 2010 she completed a joint MA in Library and Information Science and Graduate Certificate in Book Studies/Book Arts & Technologies from the University of Iowa where she was Robert A. Olson Fellow in Special Collections.













Education and Outreach

As a part of an education and outreach initiative, schools were invited to visit the show and interact with the artists and curators. Students of different age groups were given tours of the exhibit, including a talk and presentation by artist Banoo Batliboi. In collaboration with Spell & Bound bookshop, a pop up library was created which included books on contemporary art, novels and storey books which visitors were free to pick up and read over a cup of coffee.



Selected press for the show



THE READING ROOM

Book Art is one of the most underrated of art mediums. When paintings and sculptures are finding their way in the art galleries and museums, book art is yet to be discovered as a medium of expression and a form of art. It takes wide range of forms through fold-outs, fold-ins, scrolls etc. Artists enhance the visual quality of the book and take it as their tool to showcase their creativity. It could be easily understood when observed closely but most of the book artists prefer to give their imagination an abstract form. As its one-of-a-kind art is also said to be quiet 'unique & attractive.' Though it's a contemporary art form it marks its space at the first glance in an art lover's mind.

With one of the richest histories - books and manuscripts date back to the Egyptian period, to Mughal painted manuscripts to contemporary digital reproductions, books arts still doesn't find itself at par with other mediums like paintings and sculpture.

Though every artist has multiple sketchbooks (artist's book), each and every artist also uses to learn and be inspired. Be it a library or personal collections, hundreds of books speak of the knowledge that we have acquired.

These books, be it historical or contemporary, also become the medium by which artists interrogate its form and structure, its content and reinterpret it in their own practice. Reinterpretation of books takes

the forms of abstracting the content through folds and turns that are seen in Banoo Batlibol's books, or through destruction and reconstruction, which can be seen in Samit Das's assemblages. Kingsley Gunatillake and Deng Yifu use historical and political books from Sri Lanka and China respectively to reflect upon the effects of war in contemporary times. Hand painted books by Smriti Choudhary and Jagath Weerasinghe and the digitally reproduced book by Liz Fernando are self reflective and talk about fantasy, identity and nostalgia.

Participating Artists: Samit Das, Smriti Choudhary, Kingsley Gunatillake, Liz Fernando, Sathyanand Mohan, Banoo Batlibol, Deng Yifu, Anne Cowell, Samanta Batra Mehta, Jagath Weerasinghe and Layla Gondwana.

Artists Speak!

Samit Das: I cannot separate the intimate connection between my source of inspiration (also various books) from my own process of execution throughout my artistic journey. To engage with the book is a form of performance and a manner of taking this process further by the use of different materials and images, thus creating different architectural thoughts. This form of expression can allow a contemporary viewer to make a connection between history and the present in an ongoing act.

Banoo Batlibol: For the past two years I've been working in the field of 'altered book art'. I work with old and abandoned books which have served for many years in their conventional form as a vehicle for narrative ideas. Now, by shifting focus to the tactile and visual qualities of the book, I imagine an alternate interpretation. Through a precise series of folds the books are reconfigured into an intriguing sculpture where the original text becomes a texture.

Anne Cowell: As an artist, I am drawn to the structure of the book as a mechanism for exploring the temporality of sensory experience. A book for me is as much about the tactile experience of handling, as it is about the sound it makes in action, the smell of its ink, and the shape and texture of its visual makeup. Much of my work in this way draws upon the evocative nature of the senses in relationship to memory, and in tandem, as each relate to the structure of the book as a medium for expressing the passing of time and the fragility of nature.

Timings: 11 A.M. to 7 P.M.
When: April 24th to 26th, 2014
Where: Alliance Francaise, KK Birla Marg, Lodhi Gardens, Lodhi Estate
Timings: 11 A.M. to 7 P.M.
When: April 27th to May 11th, 2014
Where: Nandan Art Gallery, Anand Nik

A different reading

BOOK ART USES DISCARDED BOOKS TO BRING NEW MEANING, CONVERTING TEXT TO TEXTURE, SAYS ARUNA BHOWMICK

Nandan Art Gallery showcases Reading Room, at the Alliance Francaise New Delhi from 24th to 26th April. The show will continue at the gallery's own premises at Anand Niketan, from 27th April to 11th May. Participating artists are Samit Das, Smriti Choudhary, Kingsley Gunatillake, Liz Fernando, Sathyanand Mohan, Banoo Batlibol, Deng Yifu, Anne Cowell, Samanta Batra Mehta, Jagath Weerasinghe and Layla Gondwana.

The Reading Room is a group exhibition accompanied with a talk session by Banoo Batlibol, considered a pioneer in book art in India. She will be showing her work and talking about her

work, explaining the reasons that go into the making of a book. With one of the richest histories - books and manuscripts date back to the Egyptian period, to Mughal painted manuscripts to contemporary digital reproductions, book art still doesn't find itself at par with other mediums like paintings and sculptures. Artists enhance the visual quality of the book and take it as their tool to showcase their creativity. It could be easily understood when observed closely but most of the book artists prefer to give their imagination an abstract form. As its one-of-a-kind art is also said to be quiet 'unique & attractive.'

With one of the richest histories - books and manuscripts date back to the Egyptian period, to Mughal painted manuscripts to contemporary digital reproductions, books arts still doesn't find itself at par with other mediums like paintings and sculpture.



Top:
Published in The Delhi City,
18th April- 2nd May, 2014
Bottom right:
Published in The Statesmen,
24th April 2014.

BOOK-ED FOR ART

In this "reading room", book shelves are the canvas and manuscripts are the medium of expression - check out how book art binds a group of artists to create unique book sculptures

Book art by Anne Cowell

NIVI SHRIVASTAVA
 THE ASSIAN AGE
 Imagine a reading room where books are not just meant for reading but they also double up as pieces of art. Cutting seasonal, the city will witness an interesting exhibit on book art that will showcase the works of selected Indian and international artists. The exhibition titled "The Reading Room" is organised by Blueprint 12 in association with Colombo Art Biennale and will be on from 24 to 26 April, at the Alliance Francaise.

The organisers of the show, Manjura Lamba and Rohi Bhada of Blueprint 12, inform more about the central theme of the exhibition. They say "When we first conceptualised the exhibition, we intended to create a library where people could come and read books, even if they were art books. Based on the model of a library and a cafe shop, we wanted to come and interact, spend time

are around 20 works on display and the artists were chosen on the basis of their experience working with book art. We have names like Jagath Weerasinghe, Banoo Batlibol, Anne Cowell, Zach Stroum and more, who are showcasing their works this time."

Artist Samanta Batra Mehta, mentions her work investigates themes in personal history, gender constructs, socio-political order and colonisation. She says, "As an Indian artist living and raising a family in New York, I examine the ideas of identity, parenthood, displacement and migration. My work identifies explores the ideas of hybridity, multiplicity and cultural memory. I have been a long-time collector of antiquarian books, maps and objects. I often delve into my collection and incorporate antiquarian objects, texts, prints and maps. In doing so, I re-purpose and re-contextualise and ascribe alternative meanings to them. It is through this process of collage, based on prints of my drawings onto a vintage Chinese

I like to "save" beautiful old books from oblivion and find a new way to honour them in our lives

BANOO BATLIBOL, ARTIST

The imagery depicts figures involved in activities or in play on which I have collaged prints made from my drawings.

Whereas, artist Smriti Choudhary who was raised in a small town in Rajasthan, says that her world changed drastically when she moved into the hustle and bustle of Ahmedabad city to study design in 2006. She says, "I use my work as a way of escaping from the bodyscape of the city life to a peaceful and tranquil world. Through my illustrations I tend to focus on the harmony that seamlessly exists

my illustrations, entering this dreamlike state, which reflects itself in the atmosphere of each place. Figure's poses are the primary medium used in my illustrations, where the contrast of black and white, in combination with the vast amount of miniature detailing is something I find very satisfying and therapeutic."

On the other hand, artist Banoo Batlibol who is also known as the pioneer of book art in India, informs that old books are like raw material, and she likes creating book sculptures in unexpected ways. She says, "I am intrigued by systems of logic that result in a visual structure, so I think of a page as a unit and then plot a precision fold on each of them. When I first saw a book with folded pages I knew immediately that it was what I wanted to do. The book I use have between 400 to 700 pages. For me the motivation is to find the formula or crack the code to enable the transformation. The complex form of the sculpture is a result of finding only three or four cutting or stacking involved. I place a great importance on maintaining the integrity of the book - I guess the challenge for me is to rescue

INGENUOUS Through carvings, drawings and various other ways of changing forms, artists have reinterpreted books in 'The Reading Room' exhibition.

When paintings and sculptures are finding their way in the art galleries and museums, "Book Art" is yet to be discovered as a medium of expression and a form of art. Therefore, a group of artists from Sri Lanka, USA, China and India have come together to present book art as a medium of art in the exhibition "The Reading Room".

The exhibition will showcase how artists have used books - by drawing in them, carving them and sewing them, to give an insight into the contemporary issues of displacement, war, fantasy, nostalgia and history.

The artists have enhanced the visual quality of the book through fold-outs, fold-ins, scrolls etc. Be it historical or contemporary, these books

have also become the medium by which artists interrogate its form and structure, its content and reinterpret it in their own practice.

Reinterpretation of books takes the forms of abstracting the content through folds and turns that are seen in Banoo Batlibol's books, or through destruction and reconstruction, which can be seen in Samit Das's assemblages.

Sri Lanka's Kingsley Gunatillake and Deng Yifu have used historical and political books from Sri Lanka and China respectively to reflect upon the effects of war in contemporary times. Hand-painted books by Smriti Choudhary and Jagath Weerasinghe and the digitally reproduced book by Liz Fernando are self-reflective and talk about fantasy, identity and nostalgia.

"For the past two years I have been working in the field of 'altered book art'. I work with old, abandoned books which have served for many years in their conventional form as a vehicle for narrative ideas," says Banoo Batlibol.

"Through a precise

CREATIVE: Anne Cowell's work. **Archana Mishra**

Top:
Published in Asian Age, 19th
April 2014
Bottom Left:
Published in Deccan Herald,
24th April 2014

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Blueprint12 is the vision of Mandira Lamba & Ridhi Bhalla. Mandira alumni from Fashion Institute of Technology, New York and Ridhi from Oxford University come together to collaborate for their mutual love for the art. The Vision of the gallery is to promote challenging and experimental forms of art, focusing primarily on Indian artist and also bringing major International art into India. The objective of the gallery is to work closely with artist, curators, art writers/critics & collectors in showcasing and promoting a one-off opportunity for Indian artist the world over.



COLOMBO **ART** BIENNALE

The Colombo Art Biennale is Sri Lanka's premier art festival that takes place bi-annually in the city of Colombo. With three editions under its belt, CAB, as it is popularly called, is one of the emerging convergences of people and ideas (Harris 2011, 1), that is motivated towards providing a platform for Sri Lankan Art to rub shoulders with their contemporaries from across the globe (Hempel 2009). Single-handedly led by Annoushka Hempel, Co-Founder and Director, and supported by a very small team of professionals, CAB is defining its own character in a 'Biennale boom' across the globe.

