

# an 4aa

The background of the poster is a virtual performance scene. It features a dark, octagonal architectural structure with a central circular opening. Several red, stylized human figures are positioned around the perimeter of the octagon, appearing to be in motion. The scene is overlaid with a white grid of lines, including a central cross and diagonal lines. The top and bottom of the poster have a solid red background.

## AN4AA POSTGRADUATE SYMPOSIUM

Re-(en) visioning Past and  
Present of Asian Art

15 August 2025, 9.00 AM - 05.00 PM  
AEST

Picture in the cover:  
Virtually *Harir* Choreography, Shinjita Roy, 2022,  
Screen capture of virtual performance.



Samira Alikhanzadeh, *No. 7 from the Persian Carpet series, Borchalu rug*, 2011, Digital print on Perspex, with acrylic paint and mirror fragments mounted on a Borchalu rug and board, 160 × 217cm, Courtesy of the artist & Assar Gallery (Tehran); featured on Google Arts & Culture from the Iran Pavilion at the 2015 Venice Biennale)

# About AN4AA

The Australasian Network for Asian Art (AN4AA) consists of researchers including academics, curators, and post-graduate students from Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand working in the field of Asian art. Our specialisations and interests are various across geographical and temporal registers. In addition to studies in Asian art, the Network is attentive to histories of cultural interaction among Asian cultures and between Asian and non-Asian cultures.

Our activities currently include:

- Talks and symposia related to Asian art
- Annual professional gathering held in conjunction with the AAANZ annual conference
- Annual graduate researcher workshop
- Advocacy for Asian art research and resources

AN4AA is an open means for sharing research and fostering a scholarly community. It is also a vehicle for advocacy and a site for mutual critique in a supportive environment. There is no fixed membership structure, and all researchers are supported by their home institutions. Building and maintaining critical mass in this area of research is a primary goal of the Network, to which end, we seek to proactively engage with researchers and research groups across Australasia and internationally.

For more about AN4AA <https://www.an4aa.org/>  
Join our network! <https://www.an4aa.org/join>

AN4AA acknowledges, celebrates and pays our respects to Indigenous people across Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand, on whose traditional lands and waters we live, work and gather.

### **Coordinating Group 2023-2026**

Alex Burchmore, *The Australian National University*  
Michelle Antoinette, *Monash University*  
Olivier Krischer, *University of New South Wales*  
Russell Kelty, *Art Gallery of South Australia*  
Tammy Wong Hulbert, *RMIT University*

### **Postgraduate Students Representatives 2023-2026**

Akshatha Rangarajan, *Monash University*  
Asep Topan, *University of Sydney*  
Aulia Yeru, *University of New South Wales*  
Hasina Chowdhury, *RMIT University*  
Pratyay Raha, *RMIT University*  
Ruihan Ma, *University of Sydney*  
Yuexiu Shen, *Art Gallery of South Australia*



lo âu về tương lai, hay bị ám ảnh bởi những  
lỗi lầm thời non nớt? Liệu Bố có yêu ai  
mãi mãi không rời xa mẹ đi?  
(Mẹ nói Bố không yêu ai khác ai khác)  
đẹp nhất năm 1993) Liệu Bố có hối hận  
về những quyết định trước kia?  
Hay liệu Bố có mua quần áo rộng hợp  
mặt cỡ, để được san sẻ nó với Nội?

Từ căn phòng nhà trọ nơi con viết lá thư  
này, con tưởng tượng liệu Bố có nghĩ tới  
viễn cảnh mình quay lại Xiêm Riệp này gần  
40 năm sau, với con và với một tâm thế mới?

Bầu, con trai Bố  
Xiêm Riệp  
22/01/2024



2025 marks the eighth year since the establishment of Asian Art Research Now, the annual postgraduate symposium organised by the Australasian Network for Asian Art (AN4AA).

The theme of the 2025 symposium, 'Re-(en)visioning', suggests both a critical examination of the past and a hopeful envisioning of the future, promising acts of restoration, reclamation, and resignification. It seeks to bring to light histories that have been obscured, misread, or constrained by prescriptive frameworks. This process unfolds organically through artistic research and practice, where the past is transformed and reimagined to shape more inclusive and dynamic futures.

The symposium will take place in a hybrid format, with in-person hubs in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand hosted at the Art Gallery of South Australia (Adelaide), University of Auckland (Auckland), Australian National University (Canberra), RMIT (Melbourne), and University of New South Wales (Sydney). The day-long symposium aims to highlight and share the vitality and diversity of Asian art research undertaken by current and recent postgraduate students. It aims to foster supportive critique, feedback, and conversations across institutions and across the diverse geographies and temporalities of Asian art research.

The symposium serves as a platform for connecting with other scholars and emerging academics across Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand. It provides an opportunity to share research in progress among Asian art researchers from various backgrounds, including Masters (coursework or research) students and doctoral candidates in disciplines such as art history, creative practice, arts management, museum studies, and heritage studies.

## In-Person Venues

### Sydney

Room F202, F Block  
UNSW Art & Design  
Oxford St & Greens Rd,  
Paddington NSW 2021

### Adelaide

Collab  
Police Barracks Building Level 1  
South Australian Museum, North Terrace,  
Adelaide, SA 5000

### Auckland

Humanities Building 206  
Room 301  
The University of Auckland, City Campus  
14A Symonds Street  
Aotearoa New Zealand 1010

### Melbourne

The Garden Building  
Level 6 - 010.06.089  
RMIT University  
124 La Trobe St  
Melbourne VIC 3000

# AN4AA Postgraduate Symposium

## 2025 Schedule

TIME (AEST)	Session	
9:00 - 9:10 AM	Opening Remarks	
9:10-10:25 AM	<b>PANEL 1</b>	<b>Re-configuring Identity and Narratives</b>
	Maryam Attarbashi	Unveiled
	Jiugeng Niu	Drowning in a Vanished Yesterday: Memory, Identity, and Resistance in Post Pahlavi Iranian Art
	Mita Chowdury	From The River Delta
10:25-10:35 AM	Break	
10:35-11:50 AM	<b>PANEL 2</b>	<b>Re-constructing Memory: Archive as Method</b>
	Phuong Nguyen Le	Giao Điểm: To be nearby my father’s war
	Shinjita Roy	(Re)Dancing Cultural Heritage: Duets Between Body and Site in Virtual Space
	Petrus Christologus Susanto Sidhi Vhisatya	We Work With and As an Archive: Representing Trans and Queer Aesthetic in Art Through Everyday Archival Materials
11:50-12:50 AM	Break	
12:50-02:00 PM	<b>Keynote Session by Grace Gassin</b>	<b>Cultivating Hope: Art, activism and the memory of Asian protest in Aotearoa</b>
02:00-02:10 PM	Break	
2:10-2:25 PM	<b>PANEL 3</b>	<b>Re-signifying Voices from the Periphery</b>
	Zining Ke	Voices of the Subaltern: Knowledge Production, Visibility, and Resistance in Okkoota, Odalala and Nireekshane
	Ye Liu	From Ritual to Relational: Re-envisioning Collective Memory and Collaboration in Chinese Rural Art Projects
	Riyadhus Shalihin	Power To Powder
2:25-3:35 PM	Break	
3:35 - 4:50 PM	<b>PANEL 4</b>	<b>Re-signifying Voices from the Periphery</b>
	Anna Stewart-Yates	Uncovering the secret lives of Korean ‘Mingei’ objects
	Alexander Leslie Sutherland	Changing Perspectives in East Asian Art: The Curious Case of the Mongol ‘Nestorian Crosses’
	Audrey Newton	The Transmission Was Clear: Recognising the Global Influence of Asian Art
4:50 - 5:00 PM	Concluding Remarks	



P. M. Scott, *Photograph printed in 'Some Mongol Nestorian Crosses'; Chinese Recorder, February 1930, pp. 104-108. This image appears on page 108.*



# Keynote



*Woman placing handprint, anonymous, digital photograph, 2022, collection of Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa.*

## **Cultivating Hope: Art, activism and the memory of Asian protest in Aotearoa**

Grace Gassin, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa

*As purveyors of public history, museums are frequently sites of contestation. Among the diverse range of people who regularly engage with museums are those who do so as part of wider efforts to bolster our collective memory of particular events and injustices to influence present and future politics. These actors, who include activists, artists and academics, are sometimes referred to by memory studies scholars as ‘memory activists’.*

*In this presentation, I explore two instances of memory activism that has led to the collection of Asian New Zealand art and creative work at the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa. The first, which involved New Zealand-based supporters of Hong Kong protests of 2019-20 in response to a proposed anti-extradition bill, led to the development of the museum's Hong Kong and Aotearoa protest collection in 2021. The second, initiated by members of the Wellington-based Iranian Solidarity Group New Zealand, resulted in the recent acquisition of materials documenting local solidarity activism associated with the Women, Life, Freedom movement originating in Iran.*

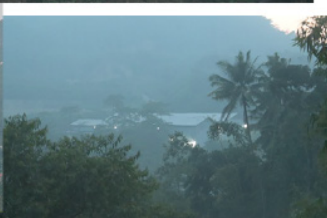
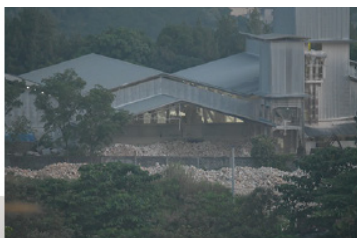
*These cases present an exciting opportunity to explore the complex dynamics and processes that come into play when New Zealand-based memory activists (as defined by their objectives and activities) set their sights on the national museum as a platform for socio-political change at the domestic and international level.*



**BIO:**

Grace Gassin is Curator of Asian New Zealand Histories at the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa and the former President of the Dragon Tails Association, which was set up to promote research into the histories and heritage of Chinese people (and their descendants and associates) in Australasia. Her wide-ranging interests encompass the historical and contemporary experiences of Asian diaspora communities in Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia. She co-convened both the Dragon Tails 2017 conference, held at the Golden Dragon Museum in Bendigo, Victoria, and the 2019 conference, held at the Victoria University of Wellington – the latter was the first, and remains the only, Dragon Tails conference ever held in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Over the past decade, Grace has led or been involved in several major collaborative initiatives combining the diverse strengths and aims of curators, historical researchers, activists, and artists in various ways. These projects include: Chinese Languages in Aotearoa, the Asian Mental Health project, The Pandemic Chronicles, and the We Are Kiwi Hong Kongers protest collection. She is also the editor of the forthcoming, multi-authored book, *Between Dreams: Resistance and Representation in Asian Aotearoa* (Te Papa Press, 2026).

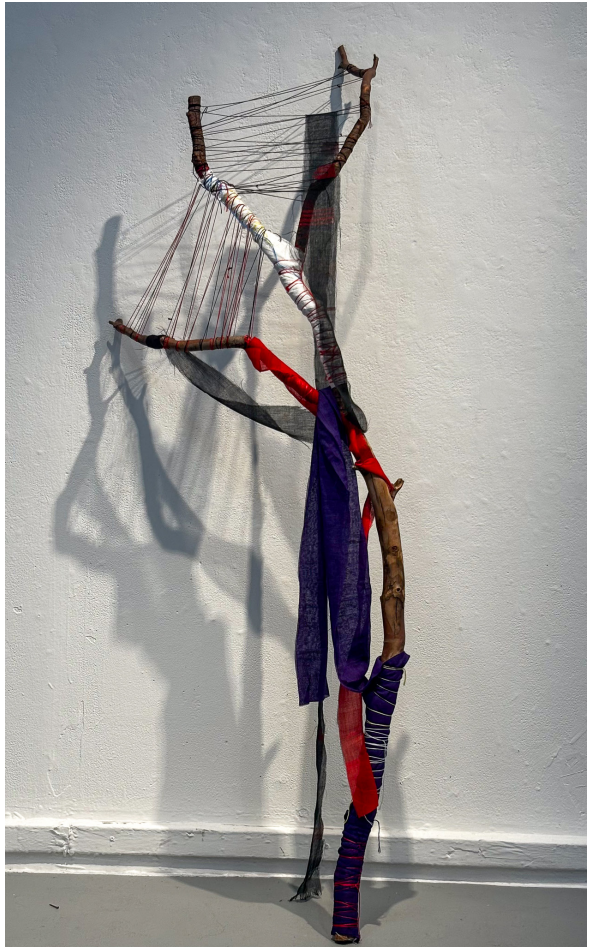


Riyadhus Shalihin, footage from research footages, 2025, courtesy of the artist

# Abstracts Bios



Mita Chowdhury  
*Desire for Belonging-5*, 2025  
Mixed medium ephemeral sculpture  
(found Gum tree branches, Khadi,  
Cotton sari and Cotton threads)  
dimensions variable  
Courtesy of the artist



# Panel 1

## Re-configuring Identity and Narratives

## Unveiled

Maryam Attarbashi, RMIT University

*Title: Burnt Shadows: Art, Healing, and the Echoes of Resistance*

*This politically driven, feminist installation project re-(en)visions the emotional and political landscape of Iran's "Burnt Generation," those shaped by the aftermath of the 1979 Revolution, through an embodied and critically engaged practice. Using materials such as charcoal, hair, eucalyptus oil, manipulated light, and sound, the work interrogates culture, oppression, displacement, and healing. Framed through a feminist lens, it explores how gendered experiences of repression and resilience are remembered and expressed, particularly within diasporic contexts. The symbolic eucalyptus, found in both Iran and Australia, embodies continuity, survival, and the complex emotional terrain of exile. By transforming domestic and bodily materials, the installation challenges patriarchal and state-imposed narratives, reclaiming silenced histories and foregrounding feminist resistance. This research contributes to Asian art discourse by offering an affective, sensory re-reading of memory, identity, and protest, while proposing feminist strategies of healing and empowerment through art.*

### BIO

Maryam Attar is an Iranian-born visual artist based in Melbourne. Working across painting and immersive installation, her practice explores feminism, activism, and displacement. She holds a Bachelor of Visual Communication Design (Deakin) and an MFA (RMIT), and has exhibited in solo and group shows as an award-winning artist.

## Drowning in a Vanished Yesterday: Memory, Identity, and Resistance in Post Pahlavi Iranian Arte

Jiugeng Niu, The University of Auckland

*The research examines the visual art created by both Iranian-based and diaspora artists since the 1979 Islamic Revolution, with particular attention to how they express nostalgia for the past (including but not limited to monarchy), critique the current religious and political environment, and reflect on displacement or exile. By reassembling and repurposing family photographs, era imagery, and traditional elements, these artists revive the Pahlavi era as a lost secular modern past, engaging in a form of subjunctive nostalgia that evokes Iran's secularism and women's rights under the Shah, alongside a patriotic narrative affirming imperial identity and Persian grandeur. Amid the interwoven layers of nostalgic memory for a time that no longer exists, the artists' sense of loss and exile gradually transforms into a burgeoning cultural pride - imbuing them with the courage to counter and resist the ideology of the Islamic Republic.*

### BIO

Jiugeng Niu is an Art History Master's graduate from the University of Auckland, currently applying for PhD candidacy. With the advice and encouragement of their supervisor, Dr. Linda Taylor, they hope to share their research and contribute meaningfully to its supportive academic environment for emerging scholars.

## **From The River Delta**

Mita Chowdhury, RMIT University

*From the River Delta is an art research project exploring Bangladeshi-Australian diasporic identity and cultural in-betweenness through interdisciplinary creative practice. It centres creative practice as methodology and incorporates autoethnographic responses to examine hybrid identity formation. Informed by postcolonial theory and diasporic experience, the project investigates how memory, cultural duality, and material practices shape belonging. Drawing on Homi K. Bhabha's Third Space (1994), Stuart Hall's concept of identity as process (1996), and Kuan-Hsing Chen's Asia as Method (2010), it explores how identity is negotiated across cultural and historical contexts. Culturally specific materials—such as Khadi, turmeric, stitching, and storytelling—are used as tools of inquiry and meaning-making. By foregrounding embodied, relational, and non-Western epistemologies, the research addresses ontological and epistemological gaps in dominant discourse. Through artworks, workshops, and collaborative processes, it contributes to contemporary conversations in visual art, diaspora studies, and decolonial creative methodologies.*

## **BIO**

Mita Chowdhury is a Bangladeshi-Australian visual artist and PhD candidate at RMIT University. Her research explores hybrid identity, memory, and belonging through decolonial, feminist, and diasporic frameworks. Grounded in lived experience, her interdisciplinary art practice examines postcolonial subjectivity and invites dialogue across cultures through creative and relational methodologies.





## **Giao Điểm: To be nearby my father's war**

Phuong Nguyen Le, RMIT University

*My practice-led research, **Giao Điểm**, explores how photographic practice can deepen my understanding of my father's experience as a Vietnamese soldier sent to Cambodia after the American War in Southeast Asia. In early 2024, I made self-portraits with my father in Siem Reap, re-enacting his gestures of wartime storytelling, accompanied by his visual archives and my photographs of sites connected to his memories. By transforming these images into collages and installations, I explore how his experiences can be safely shared to others, ensuring I am 'speaking nearby' his stories—an idea explained by Vietnamese-American filmmaker and theorist Trinh T. Minh Ha as a claim to not fully represent others in your works, but to leave a gap for meaning to be suspended (Trinh, Balsom 2018). I emphasise my process of unlearning rather than retelling, protecting the secrets linked to his trauma and grief. This research positions photography as a site of intergenerational solidarity, creating space for understanding across historical and ideological divides.*

### **BIO**

Lê Nguyễn Phương (or Phuong Nguyen Le in Western naming convention) (b. 2002, Ha Noi) is an emerging Vietnamese photographer, artist, and researcher. His works focus on themes of collective identity, community, and family in the aftermath of the American War in Vietnam.

## **(Re)Dancing Cultural Heritage: Duets Between Body and Site in Virtual Space**

Shinjita Roy, The University of Melbourne

*My practice-led PhD explores the convergence of Indian classical dance, digital technology, and site-specific performance to reimagine embodied relationships with heritage architecture. Focusing on a 3D virtual reconstruction of the 15th-century Bai Harir ni Vav stepped well in Ahmedabad, the research investigates how photogrammetry and motion capture facilitate new sensory and affective engagements with historic sites. The resulting VR performance stages a duet between physical and virtual stimuli, proposing a relational and reparative framework for de-colonising heritage conservation. By embracing the pluralities of traditional knowledge and resisting fixed disciplinary boundaries, the work challenges conventional museological and architectural narratives. It advocates for inclusive, imaginative approaches to experiencing culture, foregrounding affect as a connective force between past and future in the Anthropocene.*

### **BIO**

Shinjita Roy is an architect and choreographer whose interdisciplinary practice bridges heritage, Indian classical dance, and digital performance. With a PhD in Dance from the University of Melbourne, she creates site-specific VR works that activate memory and space through embodied storytelling, presented internationally across academic, artistic, and community platforms. Lê Nguyễn Phương (or Phuong Nguyen Le in Western naming convention) (b. 2002, Ha Noi) is an emerging Vietnamese photographer, artist, and researcher. His works focus on themes of collective identity, community, and family in the aftermath of the American War in Vietnam.

## **Examining Chinese-Australian Hybrid Identity through Auto-ethnographic Video Essays Informed by Critical Realism**

Petrus Christologus Susanto Sidhi Vhisatya RMIT University

*This research explores the intersection of art and archive, and how their collaboration creates new possibilities for engaging with material culture in discussions of trans and queer aesthetics. It departs from an understanding of the interaction between subjects and archival material objects, the precariousness of personal and collective preservation, and processes of meaning-making. The study focuses on three trans and queer art and archive-related projects: Cerita-Cerita Keberagaman by Persatuan Waria Kabupaten Sikka (Perwakas) in collaboration with the KAHE Community in Flores, Indonesia; Dinh Thi Nhung's Queer and Sexuality's Lexicon in Saigon/Hanoi, Vietnam; and Hon Fan Chon's I Enjoy Being A Girl in Penang, Malaysia. Each of these projects emerges from the intersection of art and archival practices, employing distinct artistic and archival approaches. This research aims to understand the various modes employed by trans and queer initiatives to expand the horizon of art history in Southeast Asia by centering trans and queer artistic and everyday aesthetic practices.*

### **BIO**

Sidhi Vhisatya is an Indonesian queer art practitioner, currently based in Sydney, Australia. He is a Master by Research student at University of Technology Sydney. He is a member of the Queer Indonesia Archive (QIA) since 2020 and developed Bali Archive and Repository (BaliAAR), focusing on curating exhibitions and collecting materials through field trips. His work centers on storytelling and public histories as key tools for queer community engagement in Indonesia and the broader Southeast Asian region.





Sajjan Mani, *Stretched Light and Muted Howls*, 2023, Acrylic and Serigraphs on natural rubber sheet, 70 x 42 inches, Courtesy of the artist

## Panel 3 Re-signifying Voices from the Periphery

## **Voices of the Subaltern: Knowledge Production, Visibility, and Resistance in Okkoota, Odalala and Nireekshane**

Zining Ke, Australian National University

*This thesis investigates how contemporary art exhibitions facilitate the production of subaltern knowledge within dominant power structures, with a particular focus on the caste-oppressed Dalit community. Through case studies of Okkoota, Odalala, and Nireekshane (Arts House, 2023–2024), it examines how artists use visual language to construct narratives that challenge dominant power structures. Drawing on Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's question "Can the Subaltern Speak?", the study asks: In what language, and to whom, do subaltern voices speak? It argues that Dalit artists engage art as political intervention, navigating tensions between individual experience and collective memory, emotional reflection and political protest. The thesis introduces "strategic solidarity" as a curatorial framework that enables these voices to resonate across cultural contexts and mobilise broader political and affective awareness. Combining visual analysis and archival research, the study offers new insights into caste, marginality, and the political possibilities of curatorial practice within decolonial and postcolonial discourse.*

BIO:

Zining Ke holds Master's degrees in Art History and Curatorial Studies (Advanced) from the Australian National University (2024) and in International Politics from Fudan University (2022). Her research explores the intersection of contemporary art and politics, with a focus on knowledge production from the Global South.

## **From Ritual to Relational: Re-envisioning Collective Memory and Collaboration in Chinese Rural Art Projects**

Ye Liu, RMIT University

*This research explores how contemporary rural art projects in China reconfigure traditional rituals into relational practices, foregrounding new forms of collaboration and cultural memory-making.*

*Drawing on my relational approach in socially engaged art, I examine several participatory art initiatives where rituals are transformed into platforms for relational aesthetics. These practices highlight the emotional labour, everyday aesthetics, and shifting power dynamics embedded in grassroots cultural collaboration. By investigating how memory, ritual, and collaboration are embodied and reactivated through artistic processes, this research argues that relational art in rural China functions as an affective infrastructure for rebuilding place-based social fabrics, rather than a means of traditional culture preservation. It enables communities to reclaim voice, generate local knowledge, and participate in the ongoing negotiation between past traditions and future possibilities.*

BIO

Ye Liu is a Doctor of Art graduated from RMIT University, her research focuses on the integration of Chinese philosophy and socially engaged art, exploring how affective engagement can rebuild connections between nature, people and communities, and how creative practice can articulate the value of multicultural communities.

### **Power To Powder**

Riyadhus Shalihin, independent artist and researcher

*This essay explores the maritime-related features of Fujian trade ceramics during the long eighteenth century, influenced by the dynamics of the maritime trade route. Zhangzhou ware flourished from the late Ming dynasty to the early Qing dynasty, catering predominantly to Southeast Asian markets, including the Islamic community, with its market-oriented approach. In contrast, Dehua blue and white ware saw prosperity from the early to mid-Qing dynasty, characterised by its Chinese aesthetic and competitiveness in the marketplace. Both types of ceramics drew upon Jingdezhen influences but exhibited unique motifs and makes tailored to their respective markets. These differences were analysed through their typology based on a variety of collections and archaeological evidence, not only highlighting the shifting identities of overseas patrons but also underscoring the cultural exchanges and developments facilitated by the maritime trade route.*

### **BIO**

Riyadhus Shalihin is a Bandung-based artist working in video, installation, performance, and visual media. His practice explores working-class issues, feminist economies, infrastructural memory, and material culture. He holds a master's in art curation from FSRD ITB. Recent projects include Goethe-Institut, State of Fashion, and residencies in Prague and Berlin.



*Installation view of Art Without Heroes: Mingei at the William Morris Gallery, 2024, Photo by London Design Festival*

## **Re-visioning Historical Canon and Cross-Cultural Exchange**



## Uncovering the secret lives of Korean ‘Mingei’ objects

Anna Stewart-Yates, University of Oxford

*This paper interrogates the central yet obscured role of Korean objects in shaping the Mingei Japanese folk craft movement, as exhibited in Art Without Heroes: Mingei (William Morris Gallery, London, 2024). While Mingei is often celebrated as a quintessentially Japanese aesthetic, its philosophical and curatorial foundations are deeply entwined with Korean ceramics. Tracing the genesis of Yanagi Sôetsu's theories to his encounters with Korean objects collected during Japan's occupation of Korea, this paper re-(en)visions Mingei as a transnational narrative shaped by asymmetrical power, aesthetic appropriation, and historical erasure. Through a critical reading of contemporary curatorial practice, this research questions how exhibitions perpetuate or challenge the myth of Mingei's cultural homogeneity. It argues for a reconfiguration of Mingei that recognises its intercultural origins and confronts its colonial entanglements — resisting simplified readings and offering a more nuanced understanding of how histories of conflict and exchange inform present-day Asian art narratives.*

### BIO

Anna Stewart-Yates is a History of Art and Visual Culture graduate student at Oxford. Her current research explores intercultural exchange and the global movement of Korean objects. She holds degrees in Art History/Curatorship, and Law from ANU, and brings interdisciplinary experience across art history, legal theory, and museum provenance research.

## Changing Perspectives in East Asian Art: The Curious Case of the Mongol ‘Nestorian Crosses’

Alexander Leslie Sutherland, University of Canterbury

*From the time they were first published in Christian missionary journals in the 1930s, the so-called ‘Nestorian crosses’ were the subject of what historian Fu Sinian called ‘ban-Han’, or ‘half-Chinese’, scholarship. Archaeologists, sinologists, and art collectors interpreted bronze amulet-seals discovered in China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, the ‘Nestorian crosses’, as Christian artefacts with little consideration given to alternative Chinese or Mongolian interpretations. Since 2015, art historians have reassessed the legend of the Nestorian crosses and now propose new perspectives from which to interpret their significance. Consequently, even the concept, ‘Nestorian cross’, is now subject to revision as the consequences of cross-cultural exchange continue to influence their ongoing historical narrative. This paper examines the ways in which the history of these enigmatic objects exemplifies changes in Chinese and non-Chinese approaches to art history in China from the 20th through 21st centuries.*

### BIO

Alexander Sutherland recently completed his PhD from the University of Canterbury, focusing on the creation of the concept and canon of the Nestorian crosses. His research interests include the history of art in China, Silk Road studies, and the role of cross-cultural exchange in cultural and intellectual history.

## **The Transmission Was Clear: Recognising the Global Influence of Asian Art**

Audrey Newton, University of Sydney

*This paper critiques the freedom in practice in dominating Western art histories and the limitations they impose on Asian artists. It examines the lasting impact of Euro-American canons, pedagogies, and value systems, which often omit non-Western practices and result in reductive or “ethnic” categorisations of Asian art today. Focusing on the Gutai Art Association (Japan) and Hamad Butt, the research re-envisioning Asian art history to uncover obscured narratives which challenge future artistic freedom for Asian artists. The paper questions why American and European movements like Arte Povera are hailed as global pinnacles of art, despite evidence of earlier, similar gestures by Asian artists. By highlighting Gutai’s and Butt’s influence on figures such as Marina Abramović and Damian Hirst, it underscores the need to reclaim suppressed narratives. This reclamation not only challenges dominant paradigms but also creates space for broader creative expression. Ultimately, the study contributes to reconfiguring how Asian art is remembered, theorized, and practiced in contemporary global contexts..*

### **BIO**

Audrey Newton is currently a PhD candidate at Sydney College of the Arts under the federal governments Research Training Program Scholarship. She has also completed her Master of Fine Arts at Sydney College of the Arts and Bachelor of Fine Arts Honours at Western

Sydney University. Audrey has exhibited broadly across Australia including Fairfield Museum and Galleries, 4A Centre of Contemporary Asian Art, Substation, Verge Gallery, Firstdraft, Campbelltown Arts Centre, Pari and Tributary Projects.

## Acknowledgement and Thanks



Hamad Butt, *Transmission*, 1990, mixed media, variable dimensions, as installed in “Apprehensions” at Whitechapel Gallery in London. Photo: Damian Griffiths.

The 2025 AN4AA symposium organising team would like to thank all involved in realising the 2025 AN4AA postgraduate symposium, with special thanks to all our paper presenters and our keynote speaker, Grace Gassin.

We are also grateful to all host spaces supporting the in-person/hybrid participation of symposium attendees across Sydney, Adelaide, Melbourne and Auckland in 2025, at UNSW Art & Design, Collab at the South Australian Museum, RMIT University, and The University of Auckland .

## AN4AA Coordinating Group 2023-2026



**Alex Burchmore**

*The Australian  
National University*



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**Olivier  
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*University of New  
South Wales*



**Russell Kelty**

*Art Gallery of  
South Australia*



**Tammy Wong  
Hulbert**

*RMIT University*

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*University of New  
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**Hasina  
Chowdhury**

*RMIT University*



**Pratyay Raha**

*RMIT University*



**Ruihan Ma**

*University of  
Sydney*



**Yuexiu Shen**

*Art Gallery of  
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