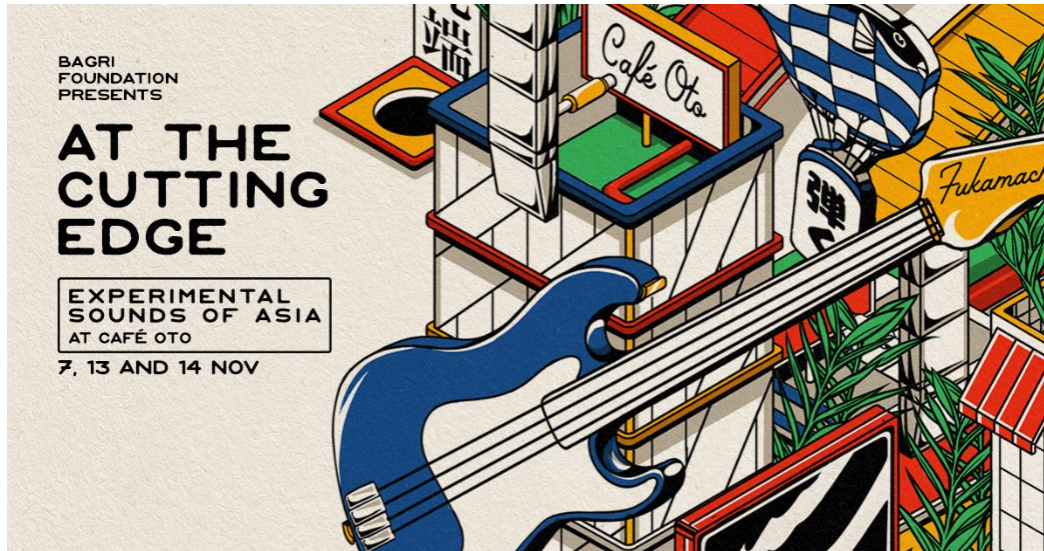


5 September



Bagri Foundation Presents...
At the Cutting Edge: Experimental Sounds of Asia
7, 13 and 14 November 2019, Café OTO, London

Concerts of New Music from Across Asia and the Diaspora

Highlights:

- First UK performance by Istanbul-based **ISLANDMAN**
- Rare UK solo performance by award-winning Filipina-American composer, percussionist and sound artist **SUSIE IBARRA**
- First UK performance by **haihm**, SXSW Showcase musician 2016, as part of a new commission with Korean visual artist **BONGSU PARK**

At the Cutting Edge: Experimental Sounds of Asia, curated by the Bagri Foundation, is a series of concerts celebrating new music from across Asia and the diaspora. The series brings together extraordinary experimental artists, many who have never performed in the UK and many for the first time on the same bill. From varied backgrounds and training, these natural born collaborators cite influence from across artforms. The series features an eclectic mix of exceptional performers: **haihm**, **SUSIE IBARRA**, **NABIHAH IQBAL**, **ISLANDMAN**, **DJ KOBAYASHI**, **O YAMA O**, **BONGSU PARK**, **PHEW** and **SUNN TRIO**.

The Bagri Foundation, based in London, works across the fields of film, visual arts, music, dance, literature, courses and lectures, giving artists and experts from across Asia, or those inspired by the continent, wider visibility on the global stage. No other UK Foundation has dedicated a series of new,

innovative music focusing on artists that span from across Asia and the diaspora into one programme.

Inspired by the acclaimed Japanese composer and jazz musician Jun Fukamachi, who worked across art forms, *At the Cutting Edge*, takes its name from his rare record *Nicole*, recently re-released in 2017, which was made especially for the Nicole fashion house's now legendary 1986 spring/summer collection show.

Akin to Fukamachi, each of the musicians, are natural collaborators and experimenters who push boundaries and incorporate an array of influences. These include the visual arts, ethnomusicology, found object percussion, archival records from across the world, polyrhythms and even traditional instrumentation. These pioneering artists pave the way for new cross-arts historiographies, which expand upon or subvert conventional musical genres of Asia.

THE LINE UP:

Susie Ibarra, Sunn Trio + Special Guest

7 November, 7:30pm

<http://bit.ly/cuttingedge711>

Tickets: £10 in Advance

The series launches on **7 November** with a night of improvisation and exploration and a rare UK headline solo performance by acclaimed, avant-garde Filipina-American composer, percussionist, and sound artist **SUSIE IBARRA**. Susie will perform a set of pieces built around rhythmic cycles; a type of meditation which will weave through tempos, melodies, textures and phrases that move through various rhythms and polyrhythms. Susie has only performed in the UK twice before, but never a solo set, so this will be a unique opportunity to see her incredible, mesmerising live percussion.

Susie's performance will be preceded by Arizona-based band **SUNN TRIO**, who will play an improvised jazz and desert-rock set, experimenting with the Afghan instrument, the Rubab, alongside a guest musician. Inspired by Indo-Arabian sounds and Middle Eastern guitar music, the band is led by guitarist Joel Robinson.

Islandman, Nabihah Iqbal and DJ Kobayashi

13 November, 7:30pm

<http://bit.ly/cuttingedge1311>

Tickets: £10 in Advance

ISLANDMAN, hailing from Istanbul, headline the second concert, bringing their psycho-electronic beats to the UK for the first time. Launching their new album, the band's record is full of ethno-cultural material from Japan to Bulgaria, including field recordings of throat singers from Tuva, Central Asia. Islandman will bring their unique mix of mellow electronic structures and dance beats with spacey live guitars, with a backing of shamanic rhythms to Café OTO.

A true collaborator, **NABIHAH IQBAL**, with a popular following in the UK, will be performing an experimental, live set which brings together her vast range of influences including Turkish, Indian and Thai music. We will be graced by the sounds of London based **DJ KOBAYASHI** to kick off the evening as he mixes from his vast record collection spanning Middle Eastern grooves and Global Funk inspired music from archives around the world.

Phew, O YAMA O and haihm with Bongsu Park

14 November, 7:30pm

<http://bit.ly/cuttingedge1411>

Tickets: £10 in Advance

14 November brings together three fantastic collaborators for an evening of electronic, ambient music from Japan, South Korea and London. Japanese underground legend **PHEW** headlines, performing a solo set which celebrates the music she has created over her lengthy career, from jazz to punk and everything in between.

Featured as a Showcasing Artist at SXSW 2016, this will be the first performance in the UK by Seoul-based electronic producer and composer **haihm**, who is also releasing a new album this autumn. She will be presenting a new work with London-based Korean visual artist **BONGSU PARK**, commissioned especially for *At the Cutting Edge*.

Café OTO regulars, **O YAMA O**, inspired by the folk music of Japan, will open the evening with a collaborative set exploring their unique combination of sounds from found object percussion to electronic loops.

Chelsea Pettitt, Head of Arts at the Bagri Foundation and curator of the series said:

"We are thrilled to present this unique concert series, showcasing stellar artists working across various art fields. We proudly bring many artists who have not had the opportunity to perform, or rarely perform here, to the UK for the first time. At the Cutting Edge embodies the very ethos of the Foundation in its aim to support cross-cultural programmes that weave the traditional with the contemporary in unexpected ways and support extraordinary talent."

Twitter: [@bagrifoundation](#) / Instagram: [@bagrifoundation](#) / Facebook: [@BagriFoundation](#) / YouTube: [BagriFoundation](#) / #atce2019

Download press materials [here](#).

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NOTES TO EDITORS

ABOUT THE BAGRI FOUNDATION

www.bagrifoundation.org

The Bagri Foundation is a UK registered charity, inspired by creative, unique and unexpected ideas that weave the traditional and the contemporary of Asian culture. The Foundation is driven by curiosity, a desire to learn and supports myriad of exciting artistic programmes that challenge, engage and inspire. Through a diverse programme of film, visual arts, music, dance, literature, courses and lectures, Bagri Foundation gives artists and experts from across Asia, or those inspired by the continent, wider visibility on the global stage.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

haihm is a Seoul based electronic musician, producer and DJ. She was classically trained on piano and studied Klavier-Konzertfach at Universität Mozarteum Salzburg in Austria. She has released two self-produced albums based on electronic music. Her new album featuring a Korean traditional vocalist as well as a Jazz bassist will be released this autumn 2019. She has been performing at many festivals alongside working with artists from various fields, including the visual arts, contemporary dance, film and classical symphonic orchestras. She works with interest in the energy created by pure sound.

"It takes a magic touch to make haihm's kind of electronic music. Working with an array of glitchy elements - vocal snippets, clipped synths, cut-up samples - the Seoul beatmaker forms stunning compositions that transcend their techy roots and speak to a very human sense of emotional understanding and generosity. Powerful stuff." - by Peter Holmlin, DJmag.com.

[YouTube](#)

Sample Music: <https://soundcloud.com/haihm>

Susie Ibarra is a Filipina-American composer, percussionist, and sound artist. Her sound has been described as "a sound like no other's, incorporating the unique percussion and musical approach of her Filipino heritage with her flowing jazz drumset style" (*Modern Drummer Magazine*). Recent commissions include Kronos String Quartet's 50 for the Future Project Pulsation, PRISM Saxophone Quartet + Percussion's Procession Along the Aciga Tree, Talking Gong trio with pianist Alex Peh and flautist Claire Chase and an interactive performance Fragility: A Game of Polyrhythms commissioned by Asia Society NY. Susie Ibarra is a 2019 United States Artist Fellow in Music and a 2018 Asian Cultural Council Fellow in support of her sound research of An Acoustic Story on Climate Change: Himalayan Glacier Soundscapes.

[YouTube](#)

Nabihah Iqbal has a varied background, having studied History and Ethnomusicology at SOAS, an MPhil in South African History from Cambridge, with experience working in human rights law and a black belt in Karate. Formerly known as 'Throwing Shade', she's ditched that moniker to embrace the name she was born with. Her debut album for Ninja Tune, *Weighing of the Heart* is a big statement in two ways: firstly, because she's taken her real name to stand proudly as a female British Asian artist making music and, secondly, because she's moved her music in a bolder, more expansive direction. She's collaborated with Chinese artist Zhang Ding, has been commissioned by Tate to compose music for the Turner Prize and collaborated with Wolfgang Tillmans as part of his Tate Modern exhibition. At a time when dance music is embracing cross-pollination and eclecticism more than ever before, it is a prime moment for Nabihah's increasingly all-embracing approach.

[Nabihah Iqbal Live from Studio 13 | Nabihah Iqbal - Full Performance \(Live on KEXP\)](https://ninjatune.net/artist/nabihah-iqbal)
<https://ninjatune.net/artist/nabihah-iqbal>

Islandman was born from the musical dreams of Istanbul based musician/producer Tolga Boyuk, Islandman represents a fiction character, a music persona, a dreamer composing the stories of a non-existing place... Islandman performs on stage as an electro-acoustic live trio format. Their music can be described as a unique mix of mellow electronic structures and dance beats with spacey live guitars, backed up by shamanic rhythms. The mixing idea during the record sessions or in live performances is to bring Turkish Psychedelia or an African roots music reef together with a feeling of the electric universe. The power of the band comes from their perfect balance of electronic structures and acoustical harmonies. The band has just finished recording their second album which will be released in mid-October.

YouTube

Newly released tracks: [Dimitro, Kaybola](#) | [Lamani, Music for Dreams](#)

DJ Kobayashi

has been digging for music around the world, you could say it is his full time job! Anything that has got a groove and the right melodies makes him pick the records. His style varies from Mediterranean sounds to the Balkans and east Europe, however he is not foreign to the electronic beats, "It starts to get really interesting when you get producers/DJ mixing old sound with new beats". He is also a member of Gypsy Hill, where they combine Balkan beats and Mediterranean grooves.

<https://batovrecords.com/artists/dj-kobayashi/>
https://www.mixcloud.com/DJ_Kobayashi/stream/

O YAMA O

Explores a certain domestic and democratic quality of everyday life, born through associations of folk music of Japan and a folding of myth, tradition, and routine; the non-spectacular and the sublime. Formed of musician and artist Rie Nakajima and Cafe OTO co-founder Keiko Yamamoto, they have performed since 2014 at venues and festivals such as, Ikon Gallery, Wysing Arts Centre, Supernormal, Borealis Festival and allEars Festival. O YAMA O also move between pop and the philosophical, defined by the overall space afforded to texture and movement. Nakajima's performance often focuses on the use of found and kinetic objects, using modest items such as rice bowls, toys, clockwork, balloons and small motors as instruments to create a "micro orchestra". Elements are layered into impressive and immersive atmospheres. Yamamoto alternatively floats and charges through this with body and voice; chanting, incanting, thundering, whispering, stamping on the floor. The swooping energy and power of Yamamoto's voice can be playful or emotionally charged, particularly when the duo arrange themselves in ensemble with violinist Billy Steiger and percussionist Marie Roux.

[Latest Project](#)

Bongsu Park is a London-based Korean artist. Her recent work is founded on how our innermost thoughts may connect with other people's and how these can be shared publicly. She studied at the Slade School of Fine Arts, UK and at l'Ecole des Beaux-Arts de Bordeaux, France. She has exhibited internationally including at the Zona Maco Arte Contemporáneo-Sample, FIAC-cinéphémère, The Moving Image Istanbul, Barcelona LOOP, Gyungnam Art Museum in Changwon, South Korea and her performance work showed at Camden Arts Centre, Rosenfeld Porcini gallery and the Print Room Coronet Theatre in London. Her work finds its roots in the philosophy of her homeland South Korea and brings this into the context of contemporary western societies.

<https://www.bongsupark.com/about>

Phew's career began in the 1970s when she fronted Osaka punk group Aunt Sally (who released one album on Vanity Records in 1979). Ryuichi Sakamoto produced Phew's first solo release in 1980 and in 1981 Pass Records issued her debut LP, a classic featuring Holger Czukay and Jaki Liebezeit of Can, and Conny Plank. She's since collaborated with members of DAF, Neubauten, Boredoms and more. *Pitchfork* calls her a "Japanese underground legend". The albums she created over the last 40 years have gone from record store rarities to being included on many "best of" lists. She worked solo with musicians such as Ryuichi Sakamoto, Holger Czukay, Jaki Liebezeit, Chrislo Haas, Alexander Hacke, Yuji Takahashi, Seiichi Yamamoto, Hiroyuki Nagashima, Otomo Yoshihide in the group Novo Tono, Dieter Moebius on Phew's Project Undark Radium Girls project, Jim O'Rourke and Ana da Silva.

Sample music:

[Voice Hardcore Album](#) | [Light Sleep Album](#)

<https://pitchfork.com/artists/18705-phew/>

Sunn Trio hail from Phoenix, Arizona, surrounded by deserts like the Middle Eastern guitar music that is one of the notable influences on their sound, along with free jazz and harsh exotica and touchstones as disparate as Sonny Sharrock and Thinking Fellers Union Local 282. In the words of Alan Bishop, "*Wielding Indo-Arabian Saz and white lightning six-string shrapnel amidst an alligator snapping turtle's rhythm section, this trio-quartet-sextet may also sprout horns, flutes, animal skins, or shadow gamelan to faithfully demolish that whiny and predictable listening experience of today's tepidly lazy, underachieving experimental music scene.*"

Album launching soon. Tracks and artwork available on request.

[YouTube](#)

