

HAYWARD GALLERY

Press Release

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Hayward Gallery and Bagri Foundation announce वेणु [Venu], an immersive bamboo installation by Asim Waqif

Thursday 20 July - Friday 22 October 2023



The Hayward Gallery and the Bagri Foundation present वेणु [Venu], a new, immersive and striking bamboo structure by Indian artist **Asim Waqif**, exploring themes of urban space, ecology and community. The 2023 commission joins a vibrant portfolio of outdoor summer installations at the Southbank Centre, continuing the Centre's commitment to providing engaging, free art for all.

Asim Waqif, who works at the intersection of art, architecture and design, is creating a large-scale artwork with a bamboo frame that will be supported by an industrial metal skeleton, combining two predominant materials associated with buildings from South Asia and London. Visitors will be able to walk inside and view the installation, and play musical instruments made from bamboo, which will be placed in and around the artwork.

This new public installation, which will be located on the Hayward Gallery Level 2 Terrace, is the third commission from the partnership with the Bagri Foundation since 2021, which

provides artists from or inspired by Asia and its diaspora with the opportunity to create a prominent public commission.

Asim Waqif said: “I am honoured to be selected for the 2023 Bagri Foundation Commission at the Hayward Gallery. With my work, I want to create situations where each member of the fabrication team is encouraged to collaborate to make something together. I want to decentralise the creative decision making process. For our highly polarised world, I offer वेणु [Venu] as a meeting ground of vernacular weaving with parametric design.”

Ralph Rugoff, Director at the Hayward Gallery, said: “We’re delighted to have this newly commissioned, ingeniously designed architectural artwork by Asim Waqif on our site, and very grateful to the Bagri Foundation for enabling us to present this installation to all our visitors. Striking a playful contrast to the Hayward’s concrete structure while also complementing the Gallery’s baroque Brutalism, Waqif’s sculpture/shelter salutes the creative and sustainable use of organic materials and technologies.”

Asim Waqif (b.1978, Hyderabad, India. Lives and works in Delhi, India) has worked in sculpture, site-specific public installation, video, photography, and with large-scale interactive installations that combine traditional and new media technologies. After studying architecture at the School of Planning and Architecture in Delhi, he worked as an apprentice in a carpentry workshop where he developed an interest in natural materials and craft practices. His recent projects explore contemporary urban design, and the politics of occupying and using public spaces.

The bamboo for this commission is generously donated by the Misty Mountain Experience in Peermade, Idukki, Kerala, India. The commission is realised with Shantanu Heisnam, Artist Collaborator.

Additional support for this project provided by Nature Morte, New Delhi.

#ENDS#

Join the conversation:
#VenuHaywardGallery

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NOTES TO EDITORS

Image Credits (from left to right)

Details of Asim Waqif, *Improvise*, 2022 © the artist.

Exhibition Listing Information:

Asim Waqif: वेणु [Venu]
Bagri Foundation Commission 2023
Thursday 20 July - Sunday 22 October

Hayward Gallery Level 2 Terrace
Free

Further information:

www.southbankcentre.co.uk

Twitter: [@haywardgallery](https://twitter.com/haywardgallery)

Instagram: [@hayward.gallery](https://www.instagram.com/hayward.gallery)

Facebook: www.facebook.com/haywardgallery/

About Asim Waqif

Based in Delhi, Asim Waqif (b. 1978) creates work that crosses between architecture, art and design with references to contemporary urban design and the politics of public spaces. After studying architecture at the School of Planning and Architecture, Delhi and initially working as an art-director for film and television, Waqif later started making independent video and documentaries before moving into sculpture and large-scale installations. Concerns of ecology and anthropology often weave through his work, inspired by his extensive research on vernacular systems of ecological management, especially with respect to water, waste and architecture. His artworks often employ manual processes that are deliberately pain-staking and laborious, while the products themselves are often temporary and sometimes even designed to decay. He has held solo shows at Vancouver Art Gallery Offsite (2017) and Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2012). Recent group exhibitions include the 5th Kochi-Muziris Biennale, Kochi (2022), Durga Puja Pandal, Kolkata (2019), Colomboscope, Sri Lanka (2017), Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (2016), 8th Asia-Pacific Triennial, Brisbane (2015), and Marrakech Biennale (2014).

About the Bagri Foundation

The Bagri Foundation is a UK registered charity whose main mission is to realise unique, unexpected ideas from and on Asia, weaving traditional culture with contemporary thinking. The Foundation provides support towards artistic and educational projects and establishes collaborative partnerships with institutions that range in scale—from small cultural organisations that share our ethos and mission to large national and international partners like the British Museum and Hayward Gallery in London, Artes Mundi Prize in Cardiff, The Metropolitan Museum of Art of New York, and La Biennale di Venezia. The Foundation's supported projects include film, visual arts, music, literature, courses and lectures, and each of them aims at giving artists and experts from across Asia and the diaspora, or those inspired by the continent, wider visibility on the global stage.
www.bagrifoundation.org

About the Hayward Gallery

The Hayward Gallery, part of the Southbank Centre, has a long history of presenting work by the world's most adventurous and innovative artists including major solo shows by both emerging and established artists and dynamic group exhibitions. Opened by Queen Elizabeth II in July 1968, the gallery is one of the few remaining buildings of its style. The Brutalist building was designed by a group of young architects, including Dennis Crompton, Warren Chalk and Ron Herron and is named after Sir Isaac Hayward, a former leader of the London County Council.

The Hayward Gallery is actively working to be more sustainable. Current and upcoming environmental measures include using the Gallery Climate Coalition's carbon calculator to track emissions, installing energy efficient LED lighting and relaxing humidity controls, when artwork requirements allow. By 2025, the Hayward Gallery aims to reduce emissions from curator travel by 50%.

Across the Southbank Centre site, further measures include lowering temperatures by 1°C, trialling PropelAir toilets that reduce water per flush by 66% using compressed air in office spaces, with a view

to upgrading across the site, installing a Wastemaster which composts food in 24 hours to reduce food waste collections by 80%, and launching a sustainability e-learning module for all staff to complete. The Southbank Centre has also recently appointed a Sustainability Advisor to implement more environmentally-conscious measures across the organisation.

The Southbank Centre aims to be a Net Zero carbon site by 2035 (Scope 1 and 2, which refers to measures controlled by the Southbank Centre such as energy used on-site) and fully Net Zero by 2040 (Scope 3, which refers to indirect emissions that are released as a result of the Southbank Centre's activity). By 2025, the Southbank Centre also aims to be a single-use plastic free site, to have curated its first Net Zero exhibition, and to reduce its carbon emissions from its buildings by 50%. For the latter, in 2022, 42% of this target was already achieved.

Please find the Southbank Centre's environmental sustainability webpage [here](#).

About the Southbank Centre

The Southbank Centre is the UK's largest arts centre occupying a prominent riverside location that sits in the midst of London's most vibrant cultural quarter on the South Bank of the Thames. We exist to present great cultural experiences that bring people together and we achieve this by providing the space for artists to create and present their best work and by creating a place where as many people as possible can come together to experience bold, unusual and eye-opening work. We want to take people out of the everyday, every day. The site has an extraordinary creative and architectural history stretching back to the 1951 Festival of Britain. The Southbank Centre is made up of the Royal Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Purcell Room and Hayward Gallery as well as being home to the National Poetry Library and the Arts Council Collection. It is also home to six Resident Orchestras (Aurora Orchestra, Chineke! Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra, London Sinfonietta, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and Philharmonia Orchestra). www.southbankcentre.co.uk



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