

# Workshop Participants



## KHULOOD ALAWADI

A UAE-based design scholar and practitioner. She is a full-time faculty in Engineering Design at NYU Abu Dhabi, where she develops and teaches courses at the intersection of Engineering, Design, Art, and Technology. Her pedagogical interests include decolonizing design education and critiquing the socio-political systems that govern design practice today. Khulood is also the director of the Plastic Recycling lab at NYU Abu Dhabi, looking critically at plastic's ubiquity in global consumer cultures, understanding environmental politics, and experimenting with contemporary alternatives.



## SAMUEL MARK ANDERSON (NYUAD)

An ethnographer of West African expressive culture in its encounters with religion, politics, and public health. He has written for *Africa*, *Cultural Anthropology*, and *American Ethnologist*, and co-edited the volume *The Art of Emergency: Aesthetics and Aid in African Crises* (Oxford University Press).



## UMAIR BILAL

A documentary filmmaker whose undergrad in Media Sciences introduced him to the world of visual storytelling, Bilal received a full scholarship to complete a joint master in Documentary Film Direction under the Erasmus Mundus program of the European Commission ([www.docnomads.eu](http://www.docnomads.eu)), where he studied in University of Theater and Film Arts in Budapest, LUCA School of Arts in Brussels and Lusofona University in Lisbon. He got the opportunity to direct several documentary films which were screened in various international film festivals. His recent interest in research is exploring the intersection of visual anthropology and interactive media.



## UDAY CHANDRA

He teaches at Georgetown University, Qatar. His research has focused on the sociology of caste, tribe, and the state in modern India as well as indigeneity and mobility in a broader comparative postcolonial canvas. He has just finished co-editing two collections of essays on "circularities" in the Indian Ocean (Georgetown University Press) and "Thinking with the Indian Ocean" (CSSAME). He is currently working with colleagues on a new collaborative project, tentatively labeled Doha Urban Lab, which will develop a new multimedia website and a monograph situating Doha's futuristic urbanism in its wider Indian Ocean context.



## P K DAS

He is popularly known as an Architect-Activist. His priority has been to establish a very close relation between architecture and people by involving them in a participatory planning process. His wide spectrum of work includes organizing slum dwellers for better living and evolving affordable housing models, engaging in policy framework for mass housing, reclaiming public space in Mumbai by developing the waterfronts, re-envisioning the city and the open spaces of Mumbai, urban renewal and conservation projects along with an architectural practice involving urban planning, urban design, architecture and interior design assignments across the country. He hopes to integrate architecture and democracy to bring about desired social change in the country. Das is the Chairperson of the Mumbai Waterfront Centre, which has been awarded the first Urban Age award instituted by LSE. P K Das is the Founder-Publisher of *Question of Cities* e-journal; and the recipient of the first international Jane Jacobs medal.



## VIKRAM DIVECHA

Beirut-born, Mumbai-bred, Vikram Divecha is an artist and educator based in the UAE. He holds an MFA in Visual Art from Columbia University and was a participant of the Whitney Museum's Independent Study program. Divecha has exhibited at the National Pavilion UAE, 57th Venice Biennale, 13th Sharjah Biennial, and Louvre Abu Dhabi. He currently teaches as an Adjunct Assistant Professor at the New York University Abu Dhabi. Divecha's practice often has a focus on 'found processes' - a term he uses to describe the urban operations he investigates and deploys. Found processes depend on existing commercial and social structures in place in the Gulf region. They range from municipal gardening, wholesale exporting, railway scheduling, construction, demolition and more. The city has become Divecha's studio, where he uses social practice techniques to find and engage with collaborators who are crucial to opening up gaps within these urban systems. This long-term research is transformed (most often) into participatory art, public art, and conceptual interventions. Through these projects he often returns to themes of transience, time, architecture, migration and labor. Divecha also develops installation, moving image, photography, painting and drawing based works. His recent proposal 'Wall House' (2022) envisions transforming demolition refuse into an archive. 'Dohrana' (2021) continues Divecha's collaboration with Sharjah's municipal gardeners, exploring Urdu poetry and choreography within UAE's landscaping sights. Divecha recently made his curatorial debut with '184' Nails (2022), which unpacks Hassan Sharif's semi-system works in a non-static exhibition. 'Veedu' (2016) an ongoing project investigates the influence of Gulf remittances in Kerala through the lens of gender, masculinity and architecture. Exhibitions include: Icon. Iconic., Louvre Abu Dhabi, UAE (2022); El Dorado, Gallery Isabelle van den Eynde, Dubai (2022); Sharbaka: Entanglement/Attunement, 19 WSN, New York (2021); Love, Labour, Leisure, Goethe-Institut, Abu Dhabi (2021); Conjunction, The Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts, New York (2020); Second Hand, Jameel Arts Center, Dubai (2019); Rock, Paper, Scissors: Positions in Play, National Pavilion UAE, 57th Venice Biennale (2017); Tamawuj, Sharjah Biennial 13 (2017); Co-Lab, Louvre Abu Dhabi, UAE (2017); Binary States India-UAE, Kochi (2016); DUST, Centre for Contemporary Art, Warsaw (2015).





## NELIDA FUCCARO

Nelida is Associate Dean, Graduate Studies; and Professor of Middle Eastern History at New York University Abu Dhabi. Professor Fuccaro's recent research investigates the diverse histories of visual, material and public cultures of oil in the Middle East and is located at the intersection of History, Social and Visual Anthropology, the Energy Humanities, and Science and Technology Studies. She has edited with Mandana Limbert *Life Worlds of Middle Eastern Oil: Histories and Ethnographies of Black Gold* (Edinburgh University Press, 2023) and is writing a monograph on the material and public worlds of petroleum in the twentieth-century Middle East. She is one of the founders of the collective OCMELA (Oil Cultures of the Middle East and South America), an interdisciplinary group that brings together area studies specialists, bridging academic and artistic research. She has written on cities, public violence, frontier societies and on the urban, social, material and visual cultures of oil in the Persian Gulf, Iraq and Arabian Peninsula. She is the editor of *Violence and the City in the Modern Middle East* (Stanford University Press, 2016) and of the special issue 'Oil and Urban Modernity in the Middle East' in *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* (2013). She is the author of *Histories of City and State in the Persian Gulf: Manama since 1800* (Cambridge University Press, 2009).



## DALE HUDSON

Dale teaches at NYU Abu Dhabi, where his current work focuses on (1) film, visual, and digital media within and against the Western-defined areas or regions of Middle East [Southwest Asia], North Africa, and South Asia and (2) environmentalist and indigenous modes of contestation to privatization and financialization of resource and knowledge extraction. His latest book, *Reorienting the Middle East: Film and Digital Media Where the Persian Gulf, Arabian Sea, and Indian Ocean Meet*, coedited with Alia Yunis, is forthcoming late this year.



## SHARMEEN INAYAT

She is a cultural worker. She is currently working with the Sharjah Architecture Triennial on charting and establishing the SAT Research initiative as Research Curator. Sharmeen was raised in Dubai, San Francisco, Karachi and Nairobi and variably claims origin in each. Her independent research work is invested in decolonial narratives that resist and rework conformed relations of racialized precarity. Sharmeen has previously worked with non-profit organizations and cultural institutions including the Sharjah Art Foundation, Visualizing Palestine and Ralph Appelbaum Associates. Sharmeen was an Architect on the team for the Mureijah Art Spaces, shortlisted for the Aga Khan Award for Architecture in 2019. She was a Production Architect for Sharjah Biennials 10 and 11 where she worked on the research and implementation of urban interventions. Sharmeen is the Commissioning Editor of *Uncommon Dubai+*, an anthology of essays and artistic reflections exploring the capacity of the urban narrative and belonging. Her independent research work has been exhibited on platforms including Hamburger Bahnhof Museum for Contemporary Art, Berlin, Gulf Research Centre, Art Dubai, Seoul Biennale of Architecture and Urbanism, Asia Europe Foundation, Villa Vassilieff, Betonsalon, Mithila Bhavan Akhara, Ayodhya and the Independent Museum of Contemporary Art in Limassol.



## SUKRITI ISSAR

She is an Associate Professor of Sociology at CRIS, Sciences Po. She is the Scientific Director of the master's program Governing the Large Metropolis (GLM) of the Ecole Urbaine, Sciences Po, Paris. Her research interests focus on housing, urban policy, institutional change and social history. Her research has recently been published in *EPW*, *Urban Studies*, *Housing Studies*, and *Studies in Interdisciplinary History*.



## SABYN JAVERI JILLANI

She currently heads Undergraduate Writing at NYUAD and is a Senior Lecturer of Writing, Literature & Creative Writing. Her books include 'Hijabistan' (Harper Collins: 2019) 'Nobody Killed Her' (Harper Collins: 2017) two multilingual anthologies of student writing titled, 'The Arzu Anthology of Student Voices' (Vol I & II. HUP: 2019, 2018) as well as the recent 'Ways of Being' an anthology of creative non-fiction by Pakistani women writers (Women Unlimited, 2023). Her writing has been published in the *South Asian Review*, *London Magazine*, *Litro*, *Bookends Review*, *Journal of Commonwealth Literature*, *Wasafiri* and *Trespass*, amongst other publications. Her short story, 'The Letter', won the Oxonian Review Award and her translation of Khalida Hussein's short Fiction, 'A Busy Woman' won the runner up prize for The 2022 - 2023 Jawad Memorial Translation prize. Her research focuses on translations as a form of decolonial feminist resistance and she is currently working on translating the works of Pakistani women writers into English. She is a graduate of the University of Oxford and has a PhD in critical and creative Writing from University of Leicester.



## GEORGE JOSE

He is an urban anthropologist researching metropolitan transformation in and of contemporary south Asia. His work explores the urban periphery as a crucial, if undervalued, site for culture and politics that generates a distinctive form of urbanism especially in the global south. He studies the manner in which quotidian processes of work and consumption craft citizenship even as it limits rights and produces the conditions of precarity and informality. George is interested in the multiple ways in which the contemporary city is imagined, produced and consumed in its margins, by its marginalized citizens. He has held research, teaching, and leadership positions in the academia and not-for-profit sectors. George was Dean of the Jyoti Dalal School of Liberal Arts, NMIMS University, Mumbai; the inaugural Program Director for Asia Society India; Program Officer with India Foundation for the Arts (IFA), Bengaluru; and a Research Fellow at Forum Transregionale Studien, Berlin.





## MATTHEW KARAU

Matthew is Senior Lecturer of Engineering Design, NYU Abu Dhabi. He is an electronics engineer from the United States who specializes in designing interactive systems. Matthew has spent much of his career teaching in European universities and working in interdisciplinary research organizations (MIT Media Lab, Media Lab Europe, and Distance Lab). In industry, he has provided engineering and design consulting services for a diverse range of companies.



## JACOB KOHN

He is the co-founder and COO of Bandhu, where he leads product development and data science. His responsibilities include leading Bandhu's team of software developers, designing the platform's front-end and back-end processes including data dashboards, and curating the platform's marketing strategy and design. Jacob holds a Master's in City Planning from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (2019), where he focused on applying geospatial data science to better understand informal economies. His thesis studied possible formalization scenarios and futures for small informal recycling businesses in Mumbai, India. He has worked as a geospatial tech and data science/visualization consultant for urban and rural infrastructure projects in the United States, Latin America, the Middle East, and South Asia. These projects related to urban growth and environmental sustainability; urban mobility and transit-oriented development; and disaster risk and resilience. Previously, he worked as a management consultant in the Washington, DC area. Jacob has a Bachelor's in Politics and minor in Middle East Studies from the University of Virginia (2012). Jacob was also an exchange student at the American University in Cairo (Egypt).



## HABIBUL HAQUE KHONDKER

He is a Professor of Social Sciences at Zayed University, UAE and co-chair of Research Committee 9 (Social Transformations and Sociology of Development) International Sociological Association. Previously, he was an Associate Professor of Sociology at the National University of Singapore. Dr. Khondker studied in University of Pittsburgh, Carleton University, Ottawa and University of Dhaka, Bangladesh. Khondker co-authored with Bryan Turner *Globalization: East/West*. (Sage, 2010; Turkish translation, 2019). He co-edited *Asia and Europe in Globalization: Continents, Regions, and Nations* (Brill 2006) with Goran Therborn and *21st Century Globalizations: Perspectives from the Gulf*. (Zayed University Press, 2010) with Jan Nederveen Pieterse. His recent works include *COVID-19 and Governance* (Routledge, 2021) co-edited with Jan Nederveen Pieterse, and Haeran Lim, and *The Emergence of Bangladesh: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (Palgrave and Macmillan, 2022) with Olav Muurlink and Asif Bin Ali.



## NIDA KIRMANI

She is an Associate Professor of Sociology in the Mushtaq Ahmad Gurmani School of Humanities and Social Sciences at the Lahore University of Management Sciences. She is also Faculty Director of the Saida Waheed Gender Initiative. Nida has published widely on issues related to gender, Islam, women's movements, development and urban studies in India and Pakistan. She completed her PhD in 2007 from the University of Manchester in Sociology. Her book, *Questioning 'the Muslim Woman': Identity and Insecurity in an Urban Indian Locality*, was published in 2013 by Routledge. Her current research focuses on urban violence, gender and insecurity in the area of Lyari in Karachi.



## DAVID LUDDEN

He is a is a Professor of History at New York University. He studied Tamil literature and published translations of Tamil poetry, before shifting to studies of economic and social history, focusing first on the Indian peninsula and then on Bangladesh and northeast India. He has chaired the Department of South Asian Studies at University of Pennsylvania, and the South Asia programs at the Social Science Research Council. He was the President of the Association for Asian Studies.



## PIIA MUSTAMÄKI (NYUAD)

She is a travel writer, scholar of travel narratives and Global South cities as site of performance. Her research interests include gendered access to public spaces and the effects of colonialism on urban environments. Her academic articles have appeared in *The Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism* and *Neohelicon*.





## RAM NATARAJAN

Natarajan earned a PhD in Anthropology from New York University. His research, teaching interests, and publications concern law, trauma, violence, memory, race, and literature. He is currently working on a book manuscript on the afterlives of violence in Argentina and starting a new project on non-violence and India. His work appears in journals such as *Ethnos and Human Studies*. Previous to joining NYUAD, he was a Mellon Fellow at the Mahindra Humanities Center at Harvard University, a Visiting Fellow at Wolfson College, The University of Cambridge, and an Assistant Professor of Anthropology at The University of Arkansas. The Andrew Mellon Foundation/Social Sciences Research Council, the Fulbright-Hays Program, the National Sciences Foundation, and the Wenner-Gren Foundation have funded his research.



## D PARTHASARATHY

He is Professor and Dean, School of Public Policy, Nanyang University. He is currently on leave from his position as Professor of Sociology at the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay. He is also an Associate Faculty of the Inter-disciplinary Program in Climate Studies, the Centre for Urban Science and Engineering, and the Ashank Desai Centre for Policy Studies at IIT Bombay. He has earlier worked or held visiting positions at the Australian National University, National University of Singapore, and Zentrum Moderner Orient, Berlin. He has carried out research projects and published in the areas of urban studies, resource governance, legal pluralism, gender and development, climate studies, and disaster risk and vulnerability. His current research is on coastal transformation and vulnerability, urban flood risk governance, ocean conflicts, and transformation to sustainability.



## SUJATA PATEL

She is Kersten Hesselgren Visiting Professor, Umea University, 2021-2022. Earlier she was Distinguished Professor, Savitribai Phule Pune University, National Fellow at the Indian Institute of Advanced Studies, Shimla and has been a teacher of sociology at the Universities of Hyderabad, Pune and SNDT Women's University. Her work on modernity and social theory, history of sociology/social sciences, urbanization and city-formation, social movements, gender construction, and caste and class formation in India combines an historical sensibility with four perspectives-Marxism, feminism, spatial studies and post structuralism. She has been an active interlocutor of teaching and learning practices, and has written on the challenges that intervene in its reorganization within classrooms and in university structures. She has coordinated a postgraduate online teaching and learning resource of 15 courses in Sociology titled Epathshala. She has authored, edited and co-edited 14 books and 70 peer reviewed papers/book chapters. She is the Series Editor of Oxford India Studies in Contemporary Society (Oxford, India) and Cities and the Urban Imperative (Routledge, India) and in between 2010-2015 edited Sage Studies in International Sociology and Current Sociology Monographs (Sage, London). She has been associated in various capacities with the International Sociological Association and has been its first Vice President for National Associations (2002-2006). She was the President of Indian Sociological Society from January 2016 to December 2017.



## IROMI PERERA

She is a researcher and activist, and is the founder and director of the Colombo Urban Lab. She works on post-war urban development and spatial justice in Sri Lanka. Her research looks at the lived experiences of communities affected by large-scale infrastructure projects and development masterplans, focusing on housing, livelihood, public space and social protection. Iromi is a Co-Investigator leading the research work in Colombo for two multi-country research projects funded by the UKRI's Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), studying human-infrastructure interactions in the context of urban crises and urban change (2020 - 2024). In 2019 Iromi was a Commissioner on the People's Commission on Land initiated by the People's Alliance for Right to Land (PARL) in Sri Lanka. Iromi was a Senior Researcher at the Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPA), a Sri Lankan public policy research and advocacy think tank from 2008 - 2017 and headed CPA's survey research unit.



## NATHALIE PEUTZ

Peutz is Executive Director of the Core Curriculum and Associate Professor of Arab Crossroads Studies at New York University Abu Dhabi. A cultural anthropologist, she has conducted wide-ranging, ethnographic research in Yemen, Djibouti, and Somaliland. Peutz completed her BA at the University of Pennsylvania and PhD at Princeton University. She is the author of *Islands of Heritage: Conservation and Transformation in Yemen* (Stanford, 2018), which examines the impact of environmental conservation, development, and heritage projects in prewar Socotra, Yemen's Indian Ocean archipelago and one of the most biologically diverse places in the world. She is also the co-editor of *The Deportation Regime: Sovereignty, Space, and the Freedom of Movement* (with Nicholas De Genova, Duke, 2010). Her work has been supported by the American Council of Learned Societies, the Institute of Advanced Study in Princeton, and the Bellagio Center of the Rockefeller Foundation, among others. Peutz is currently writing a book on Yemeni refugees and Ethiopian migrants in the Horn of Africa.





## HARSHANA RAMBUKWELLA

He is a comparative literature and cultural studies scholar with an interest in the intersections between literature, history, aesthetics, and nationalism in South Asia. He is also a sociolinguist with interests in critical sociolinguistics and discourse analysis. Harshana is the author of the *Politics and Poetics of Authenticity* (UCL Press 2018) and is an Associate Editor of the *Journal of Sociolinguistics* and serves on the editorial board of the *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*. Harshana is currently working on a project on the 'cultural life of democracy,' looking at democracy in 'everyday life' as expressed in cultural and aesthetic artifacts, partly funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation. Harshana is currently Visiting Professor at NYU Abu Dhabi.



## ARIJIT SEN

He is an Urban Planner and Architect with over 10 years of professional experience in India, UAE, USA and Finland. He currently works as Master Planner for Aldar Projects, Abu Dhabi focussing on National Housing and Mixed Use Development Projects. Previously, he has worked with other leading Design and Development Offices such as Modon Properties, Abu Dhabi Urban Planning Council, KEO Insite, and HCP Design Planning & Management on Township Master Plans, Public Realm Design, and City-Level Strategic Master Plans.

He has a Master's Degree in City Planning from University of California, Berkeley and B.Arch. from KRVIA, Mumbai.



## MARK SWISLOCKI

Swislocki is Associate Dean, Research and Faculty Development, Arts and Humanities; Program Head, History; and Associate Professor of History Mark Swislocki in NYU Abu Dhabi. He is a historian with research interests in China, environmental history, food history, and the writing of global history in the age of the Anthropocene. Mark is currently writing two books: *Green Walls in China*, a research monograph on the environmental history of China-Himalayan borderlands; and *The Predicament of History: Educational Encounters in "Global Liberal Arts,"* a series of linked essays on curricular development and teaching in New York University's global network. He is Editor-in-Chief of the *Encyclopedia of Asian Environmental History* (Oxford University Press Reference Editions, in progress). He directs the NYU Abu Dhabi Global Asia Initiative and is "Co-Head Chef" of the Anthropocene Research Kitchen of the Division of Arts and Humanities of NYU Abu Dhabi. He is Co-PI of the Luce Foundation funded research project: "Port City Environments in Global Asia" (with David Ludden, NYU; and Tansen Sen, NYU Shanghai), 2018-2021 and 2021-2024. Mark is the author of *Culinary Nostalgia: Regional Food Culture and the Urban Experience in Shanghai* (Stanford, 2009) and articles on the history of nutrition, critical animal studies, and the environment.



## RANA TOMAIRA

Tomaira is Research Scientist and Lecturer, NYU Abu Dhabi. Rana's teaching and research fall in the area of development and public policy. She is particularly interested in comparative development policies and practices in the Arab world. Her research at NYUAD has focused on three areas so far. The first is centered on emerging global cities. Her work examines policies that have led to the rise of Dubai in the network of global cities. Her second area of research is focused on philanthropy. This work stems from over twelve years of being personally involved in volunteer humanitarian and medical work in Iraq. Rana's third area of research focuses on the demise of Arabic as the primary language of instruction in K-12 schools in Jordan, Lebanon, and the UAE.



## DEEPAK UNNIKRISHNAN

Unnikrishnan is a writer from Abu Dhabi. His book *Temporary People*, a work of fiction about Gulf narratives steeped in Malayalee and South Asian lingo, won the inaugural Restless Books Prize for New Immigrant Writing, the Hindu Prize and the Moore Prize.