

Nottingham
Contemporary

Shahana Rajani

*Lines That World a
River* لکپروں سے دریا تھامنا

Easy Read Guide



How to use this Guide



In this guide, hard to understand words are underlined. We explain what these words mean after they have been used.

The guide starts with an introduction about the exhibition.

After the introduction, there is a section of the guide telling you about different themes in the exhibition.

You can use the contents page to find out which page of the guide information on each theme is found at.

The contents page is on the next page and tells you what page number to turn to for each section.

The page numbers are written at the bottom of each page.

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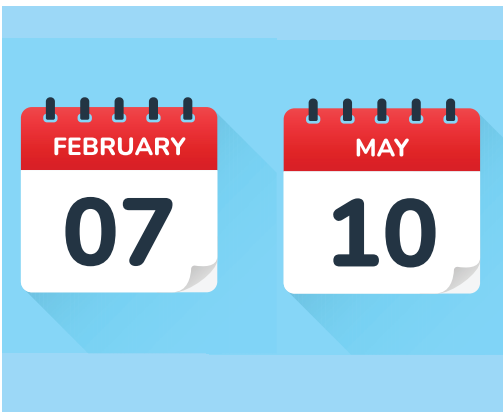
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Introduction



This exhibition is a display of artworks by an artist called Shahana Rajani.



We are showing works by Shahana at Nottingham Contemporary from 7 February to 10 May 2026.



Shahana is an artist from Karachi in Pakistan.



The show also includes work by Ustad Abdul Aziz, Abdul Sattar, and Aziza Ahmad.

The Indus River Delta



The artworks in the exhibition are based on Shahana's research. Research is when someone looks carefully into something to find out more about it.



Shahana researched the Indus River Delta and the people who live there. The Indus River Delta is a place in Pakistan where the river Indus meets the Arabian sea.



The Indus River brings water and rich soil to the land near the sea.



This water and soil help the land, plants, animals, and people to live.



Since the 19th century, many things have been built which have changed and controlled the river.

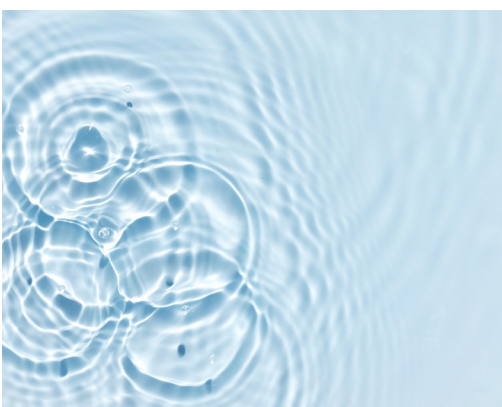


Dams and barrages were built. These are big walls and gates built across rivers to block the water. This is done to store water for things like drinking, farming, or making electricity, and also to stop floods or make rivers easier for boats to use.

Dams and barrages both hold water back, making the river smaller so less water reaches the Indus River Delta.



Canals were built too. Canals are like rivers but they are made by humans to move water, allow boats to travel, or provide water to farms. Canals move water inland so less water reaches the sea at the Indus River Delta.



The people in charge in Pakistan think that water that reaches the sea is wasted because it isn't being used for things like watering plants on farms, and making things in factories.



For fisher communities, the place where the river meets the sea is sacred. Sacred means something that is special and important, and is treated with great care and respect.



Because less water is reaching the sea, the land by the sea is weaker. This makes more erosion of the land happen. Erosion is when the water from the sea wears away the land, making the land smaller.



Because there are lots of islands in the Indus River Delta, when the land is eroded the islands disappear. This means that the people who live on the islands lose their homes and have to leave to live in new places.



Elders in the community believe that the sea and the river love each other. They say that because the river is smaller, the sea is moving into the land to look for the river. Elders are respected people who have a lot of wisdom, life experience, and strong ties to their culture. They guide, teach, and support younger generations.

Shrines



There are lots of water shrines in the Indus River Delta. A water shrine is a holy or special place built near water. It is used for praying, worshiping, or showing respect to nature or gods.



The water shrines are made near to the graves of saints who people believe protect the Indus River Delta. Saints are religious people who lived good, holy lives and are thought to be close to God. People often pray to saints for help.



People decorate the shrines with flags and special objects.



People pray and bring gifts to the shrines. They do this to ask for protection for the land and water in the Indus River Delta.



Lots of the shrines are disappearing because the water levels are rising so that people can no longer reach them. Sometimes, only the flags can be seen where shrines are under the water.



Local painters have made murals to remember the shrines that they can no longer see or visit. Murals are large paintings on walls.



These paintings mean people still feel connected to their home in the river delta even when they can't be there any more.



A painter called Abdul Sattar made some paintings of shrines that you can see on the walls of our gallery.



These paintings are put on the wall in the order they'd be in if you travelled to see them. This is a bit like a map but without any lines.



There are also paintings by Ustad Abdul Aziz which show some of the fish that live in the Indus River Delta where the shrines are.



There is also a structure in the gallery that looks like a shrine in a place called Phitti Creek in the Indus River Delta. The shrine is where people go to pray to a saint called Yousuf Shah.



People pray at this shrine to ask for protection of the coast from building projects and natural disasters. Natural disasters are things like floods and storms which damage people's homes.

Shahana's Video Artwork



For the exhibition in our galleries, Shahana has made a new video work which plays across three screens.



This new video work is called Lines That World a River.



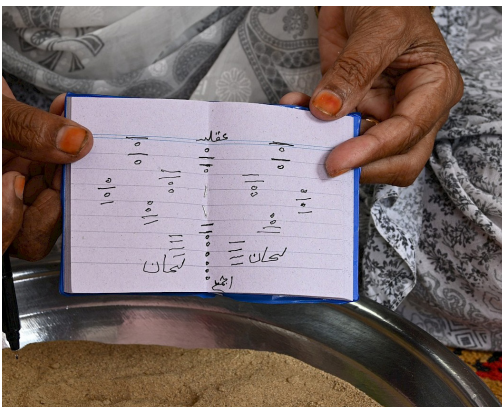
The new video work uses videos from an older work called Four Acts of Recovery.



The video work shows a fisher called Abido Dablo and his family. They had to move home from a place in the Indus River Delta called Mul Creek because of rising sea levels. They now live in a city called Karachi.



The film also shows two painters called Ustad Abdul Aziz and Abdul Sattar. Some of their paintings are in our galleries.



The video also shows a healer called Fatima Bibi. Fatima and her family make talismans. Talismans are drawings made to offer protection to the land and the water. Talismans have been made by muslims for a very long time. Muslims are people who follow a religion called Islam.

Workshops with Children



Shahana worked with Aziza Ahmad to run a workshop with children in a place called Rehri Goth.



In the workshop, the children drew the river, the sea, fish, boats, shrines and people and places where they live.



The children also spoke to elders in the workshop.



For the exhibition Shahana and Aziza turned the children's drawings into an animated glossary. Animations are videos made by using lots of drawings. A glossary is a list of words with pictures or descriptions to explain what the words mean.

For More Information



You can find out more about what we do by looking at our website here:

nottinghamcontemporary.org



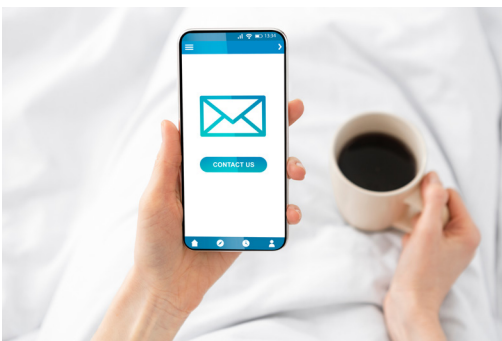
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If you need more information please contact us by:

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We have to write these in the way they are written below because of special rules. You don't need to read this part of the guide unless you want to. This part of the guide doesn't tell you anything more about the artworks in the exhibition.

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