

MEDIA RELEASE



Omar Chowdhury
Ways

30 May – 2 August 2014

Presented by 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art



Omar Chowdhury, *Locus II* (still), 2014, single-channel, 1.33:1, 1080p ProRes 422 (delivery H.264), colour, stereo, 1:25:45. Courtesy the artist. Commissioned by 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art with the assistance of the Keir Foundation and the Edward M. Kennedy Center for Public Service and the Arts, Dhaka.

4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art is pleased to present *Ways*, the first major solo exhibition by Dhaka and Sydney-based Australian artist Omar Chowdhury. Chowdhury has spent the past two years working in the country of his birth, one of the most densely populated on earth, whose character is deeply informed by religious faiths and daily acts of worship. There, Chowdhury has created an ambitious new body of work, which traverses urban and rural terrains searching for material embodiments of spiritual transcendence.

This will be the first exhibition 4A has shown from Bangladesh, highlighting their commitment to bringing to Australian audiences new work from diverse areas of Asia.

Chowdhury produces large-scale, richly detailed moving image works, which are filmed during extended periods of immersion in various cultural and physical landscapes. *Ways* presents a captivating new body of work from Chowdhury, including the specially commissioned *Locus I, II*, which documents rituals undertaken by believers at a Muslim mosque and Hindu temple in the ancient city of Old Dhaka and explores the relationship between spiritual ways and physical means.

Locus I, II has been commissioned with the assistance of The Keir Foundation, a private fund fostering innovation and excellence in the arts among new and emerging practitioners.



In these works tensions arise—between form and formlessness, action and inaction, presence and absence—which are heightened by the artist through a cinematic style that draws on both the mechanisms of documentary filmmaking as well as more experimental narrative structures. For Chowdhury the camera is not simply a tool for image-making but a means to frame and test acts of philosophical and artistic enquiry.

Says 4A Director Aaron Seeto of Chowdhury's work "We are very pleased to be presenting these new works by Chowdhury, an exciting emerging Australian artist with a very unique practice and background, working in this region of South Asia. This exhibition is part of our ongoing commitment to supporting the development and presentation of new work by young Australian cultural practitioners working within the Asian context."

Ways also coincides with the recent announcement of two important opportunities for early-career artists and curators: 4A's [Beijing Studio Program](#) and [Curators' Intensive](#).

Omar Chowdhury is in Sydney and available for interview. Please direct media enquiries to Joanna Bayndrian joanna@creative-asia.net / +61 4 05 933 896.

Preview Chowdhury's latest work on [Vimeo](#)

WAYS

OMAR CHOWDHURY

EXHIBITION OPENING Thursday 29 May, 6pm – 8pm
EXHIBITION DATES 30 May – 2 August 2014
Q&A WITH OMAR CHOWDHURY Saturday 31 May, 2pm – 3pm

VENUE DETAILS

4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art
181-187 Hay Street, Haymarket, Sydney
Open 11am-6pm, Tuesday – Saturday
Closed public holidays

[WWW.4A.COM.AU](http://www.4a.com.au)

Supported by





Artist Biography

Omar Chowdhury was born in 1983 and studied at the University of New South Wales, Sydney. He currently lives and works both in Sydney, Australia and Dhaka, Bangladesh. In 2014 he has upcoming solo exhibitions at ALASKA Projects in Sydney and at MOMENTUM, Berlin. He is the recent recipient of an Australia Council Skills and Development Grant, Edward M. Kennedy Grant for the Arts, a Copyright Council Career Fund Grant, and an Australian Cinematographer's Society Gold Award. He has shown works in galleries, institutions and festivals in Australia, Asia and Europe including Dhaka Art Summit, Bangladesh (2014), Fehily Contemporary, Melbourne (2013) and Time Festival Machine, Sydney (2012).

About 4A

4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art (4A) is dedicated to the contemporary art of the Asia-Pacific region. We were established in 1996 at the outset of the international development of this field. Our exhibitions, educational workshops, residencies and support of artists positions Australia as part of a critical discussion reflective of the many shifts towards Asia that are occurring throughout all levels of society.

Our perspective is unique, it speaks globally about the cultural, economic and social transformations occurring in the region, whilst also considering Australia's unique culture, history and social make-up that has occurred through migration. 4A creates awareness of Asian and Australian culture and is used by educators around the country as an important tool to facilitate cultural literacy. Importantly we create real opportunities and pathways for Australian art in the region. We work with significant Asian artists and at the same time we support some of the youngest and emerging. Our activities are constantly developing through the research and insight of a dedicated and knowledgeable board and staff. 4A is adventurous, ambitious and relevant both nationally and internationally, through contemporary art, we tell a story that is relevant to our time.

History

4A was established in 1996 by a dedicated group of artists, curators and theatre makers. This group was passionate about creating opportunities for other artists and raising the profile of Asian art and culture in Australia, while developing platforms to exhibit and to nurture critical and independent discussions.

4A was one of the first organisations in Australia to dedicate itself to encouraging, documenting and fostering contemporary Asian-Australian art activities and to seriously explore the art, culture and ideas unique to the context of Australia and the Asia-Pacific.



Omar Chowdhury, *Torsions* (still), 2014, single-channel video, 1.78:1, 1080p ProRes 422 (delivery H.264), colour, stereo, 1:45:15. Courtesy the artist.



Omar Chowdhury, *Torsions* (still), 2014, single-channel video, 1.78:1, 1080p ProRes 422 (delivery H.264), colour, stereo, 1:45:15. Courtesy the artist.



Omar Chowdhury, *Locus I* (still), 2014, single-channel, 1.33:1, 1080p ProRes 422 (delivery H.264), colour, stereo, 2:24:20. Courtesy the artist.



Omar Chowdhury, *Locus II* (still), 2014, single-channel, 1.33:1, 1080p ProRes 422 (delivery H.264), colour, stereo, 1:25:45. Courtesy the artist.