

Shabbir Hussain Mustafa Appointed as Artistic Director of Aichi Triennale 2028



Shabbir Hussain Mustafa (Photo by Leila Shirazi)

(Aichi, Japan, July 24, 2026) The Aichi Triennale Organizing Committee is pleased to announce the appointment of **Shabbir Hussain Mustafa**, Chief Curator of Singapore Art Museum, as the **Artistic Director of Aichi Triennale 2028**.

The selection of Shabbir Hussain Mustafa reflects the Organizing Committee's confidence in his ability to lead Aichi Triennale 2028, based on the following considerations:

- Extensive international experience and a distinguished track record as a curator and museum leader, offering strong potential to deliver a triennale of international caliber.
- The ability to bring a fresh international perspective to the triennale, shaped by work across different cultural and institutional contexts, enriching its artistic vision and global relevance.
- A strong commitment to engaging with local communities and place-based practices, creating opportunities to further enhance and communicate the unique character and appeal of Aichi.
- An extensive global network across the visual arts, enabling the triennale to strengthen Aichi's international profile and presence.
- Substantial leadership experience overseeing museum curatorial programs, providing confidence in his ability to direct the triennale with both sound judgment and flexibility.

Message from Shabbir Hussain Mustafa, Artistic Director of Aichi Triennale 2028

I am deeply honoured by this appointment, and thank the Chairperson, Obayashi Takeo, and the Organizing Committee for their trust. Aichi Triennale has built an important place for contemporary art and for the urgent questions that shape our present. Working with artists and the Triennale's excellent team, I look forward to learning from Aichi and its publics, and to approaching the next edition with attentiveness to the many communities that will gather around it.

Selection Process

For the selection process, several candidates were recommended by nominators including individuals associated with the Aichi Triennale. Subsequently, the Aichi Triennale Advisory Board selected finalists, and the final decision was made by Obayashi Takeo, Chairperson of the Aichi Triennale Organizing Committee (Chairperson of the Board at Obayashi Corporation). **Nominators** included Hoor Al Qasimi (President and Director, Sharjah Art Foundation; President, International Biennial Association), Jochen Volz (General Director, Pinacoteca de São Paulo), Iida Shihoko (Curator), Reuben Keehan (Curator of Asian Contemporary Art, Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art), Kimura Eriko (Director, Hirosaki Museum of Contemporary Art), Samantha Lackey (Director, Liverpool Biennial), Eugene Tan (CEO and Director, National Gallery Singapore and Singapore Art Museum), Tezuka Miwako (Director, Dib Bangkok), and Ushiroshoji Masahiro (Director, Kitakyushu Municipal Museum of Art). **The Advisory Board** comprised Ueyama Shinichi (Professor Emeritus, Keio University), Kataoka Mami (Director, Mori Art Museum), Shima Atsuhiko (Director, The National Museum of Art, Osaka), Tatehata Akira (Director, Kyoto Art Center), and Hirase Reita (Director, Aichi Prefectural Museum of Art). *Titles are those held at the time of the selection process.*

Shabbir Hussain Mustafa - Profile

[Chief Curator, Singapore Art Museum]

Born in Sri Lanka in 1984, Shabbir Hussain Mustafa is based in Singapore, where he serves as Chief Curator of Singapore Art Museum. He holds a B.Soc.Sci. (Honours) in Political Science and an M.A. in South Asian Studies from the National University of Singapore, where he was also a University Scholar. He began his curatorial career at the National University of Singapore Museum (2007–2013), before serving as Senior Curator at National Gallery Singapore (2013–2023) and Senior Curator and Head of Exhibitions at Guggenheim Abu Dhabi (2023–2025). He has been Chief Curator at Singapore Art Museum since 2025, where he oversees research, exhibitions, acquisitions, and public programmes, and leads the Singapore Biennale office and the Singapore Pavilion at the Venice Biennale.

Mustafa curated the Singapore Pavilion at the 56th Venice Biennale (2015) and co-curated the Dhaka Art Summit (2018) and the forthcoming quadrennial Rubaiya Qatar (2026). He served on the Programmes board of Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin (2017–2022), and was a DAAD Artists-in-Berlin Fellow (2017). He has served on the board of CIMAM, the International Committee for Museums and Collections of Modern Art, since 2025.

Press Conference with Shabbir Hussain Mustafa (Artistic Director) and Obayashi Takeo (Chairperson)

Date: Aug 13, Thursday, 2026. Time: 1pm - 2pm (JST)

Place: Mini Theater, Aichi Prefectural Art Theater, B1F Aichi Arts Center

Address: 1-13-2 Higashisakura, Higashi-ku, Nagoya City, Aichi Prefecture, 461-8525, Japan

**The press conference will be streamed online and conducted primarily in Japanese.*
Consecutive Japanese interpretation will be provided for English remarks, but English interpretation will NOT be available for remarks delivered in Japanese.

Registration form: Submit from [here](#).

Deadline: Aug 7, Friday, 2026, 5pm (JST)

Aichi Triennale

The Aichi Triennale, which has been presented once every three years since 2010, is one of Japan's premier international art festivals. Featuring a diverse range of Japanese and international artists, the festival is held at a variety of venues, including the Aichi Arts Center, in cities throughout Aichi Prefecture. With a focus on contemporary art, the festival transcends genre boundaries in the performing arts, learning programs, and other fields, conveying the spirit of artistic diversity from the Aichi region.

Website: <https://aichitriennale.jp/en/>

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/aichi_triennale/

Press Kit (including images): Download [here](#)

Press Contacts

Aichi Triennale PR Team: press@aichitriennale.jp