



## PHYSICAL BARRIERS, VIRTUAL FREEDOMS: PROTECTION VS CREATIVITY AMIDST A GLOBAL CRISIS

**DATE** May 31, 6.30pm–8.30pm  
**WHO** Ian Howard, Roohi Shafiq Ahmed & Abdullah M. I. Syed  
**LOCATION** COFA, Cnr Oxford St & Greens Rd Paddington Lecture Theatre: EGO2

In the lecture *Physical Barriers, Virtual Freedoms: Protection vs Creativity Amidst a Global Crisis*, COFA's Dean, Ian Howard, and two current postgraduate students, Roohi Shafiq Ahmed and Abdullah M. I. Syed, discuss a project they undertook together in Pakistan. The three artists made a work on the Wagah Gate, part of the border separating Pakistan from India; a highly charged zone, both politically and emotionally.

Professor Ian Howard is Dean of COFA UNSW. His artwork focuses on bringing together the disparate, sometimes conflicting, interests of civilian and military cultures. This has lead Howard to undertake works on, for example: the Berlin Wall (1974), the Great Wall of China (2000), and the Israeli Barrier (2009). Although recognized as a 'quixotic gesture', the research, production (physical and bureaucratic) and resulting artworks demonstrate the moderating effect civilian culture can have upon otherwise hostile border situations. He has just returned from a project on the Mexican/US border at Tijuana.

Roohi Shafiq Ahmed lives and works in Karachi, Pakistan. She teaches fulltime at the Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture in Karachi. As a multi-disciplinary artist, her work often draws upon cartographical references in order to investigate the ontological realities of human existence in a degenerating political, social and religious environment, especially in Pakistan. Ahmed has exhibited widely throughout Pakistan and her work has been featured in the 11th Asian Art Biennial in Bangladesh and numerous other international exhibitions. She is currently on a sabbatical to pursue an MFA at COFA.

Abdullah M. I. Syed was born in Karachi, Pakistan. He is presently working and living in Karachi and Sydney, where he is working on his PhD at COFA. Syed is an artist, freelance designer and curator. He has coordinated the Design Department at the University of Karachi, lectured at the University of Central Oklahoma, USA, and been an artist in residence at COFA's Cicada Press. His co-curating credits include: Michael Esson: *A Survey of Drawing*, Michael Kempson: *A Survey of Prints, Aboriginal Dreams and Let's Draw the Line* in Karachi.

IMAGE Ian Howard working on the Mexican/US border fence.

### TUESDAY: HAPPY HOUR

- ▶ DRINKS
- ▶ ART
- ▶ CONVERSATION

5.30 - 6.30pm  
Ground Floor of EGO2

For more info: [HAPPY HOUR website](#)

### WHAT'S ON: SHOWS

- ▶ **KUDOS GALLERY**  
6 Napier St, Paddington, NSW  
*The Free Market*

For more info: [KUDOS website](#)

- ▶ **COFAspace GALLERY**  
E Block, Ground Floor  
*Half Way House*

For more info: [COFAspace website](#)

### WHAT'S ON: TALKS

- ▶ **COFA TALKS**  
Resume 19th July  
For more info: [COFA TALKS website](#)