Perween Rahman
The Rebel Optimist
a film by Mahera Omar

DOCUMENTARY SCREENING

An intimate portrait of Pakistani architect and urban planner Perween Rahman and her remarkable work for Karachi's poor. The documentary screening will be followed by a Q&A with Perween’s sister Aquila Ismail, architect and urban planner Arif Hasan, Parween’s lawyer Faisal Siddiqi, and the current director of Orangi Pilot Project Anwar Rashid.

ABOUT THE DOCUMENTARY

“No one is safe in this city. Those who think otherwise are living in a fool’s paradise”, says Perween’s best friend and colleague Anwar Rashid as he navigates the chaotic roads of Karachi. An architect and urban planner, Perween Rahman dedicated her life for the poor of Pakistan. She was shot dead by armed assailants on her way home in March 2013. When she joined the Karachi based Orangi Pilot Project, founded by Dr. Akhtar Hameed Khan, Orangi’s lanes were full of filth and choking gutters. Back in the early 80s, the people of Orangi, most of them migrants from India and Bangladesh, were taking their own steps to improve sanitation. Dr. Khan assigned Perween the task of developing a low cost sanitation model for Orangi.

Perween’s pioneering work in Orangi led her on a collision course with the various mafias in the city. She surveyed the water supply to Karachi and pinpointed locations from where water is being stolen from the bulk supply lines. She mapped and documented Karachi’s informal settlements to provide the poor security against land grabbers. Perween had an alternate vision for the development of Karachi. "Development doesn't come from concrete. Development is not five star hotels and mega road projects. What we need is human development."

Friday, May 6, 2016
6:00 - 7:30 pm
Tariq Rafi Hall