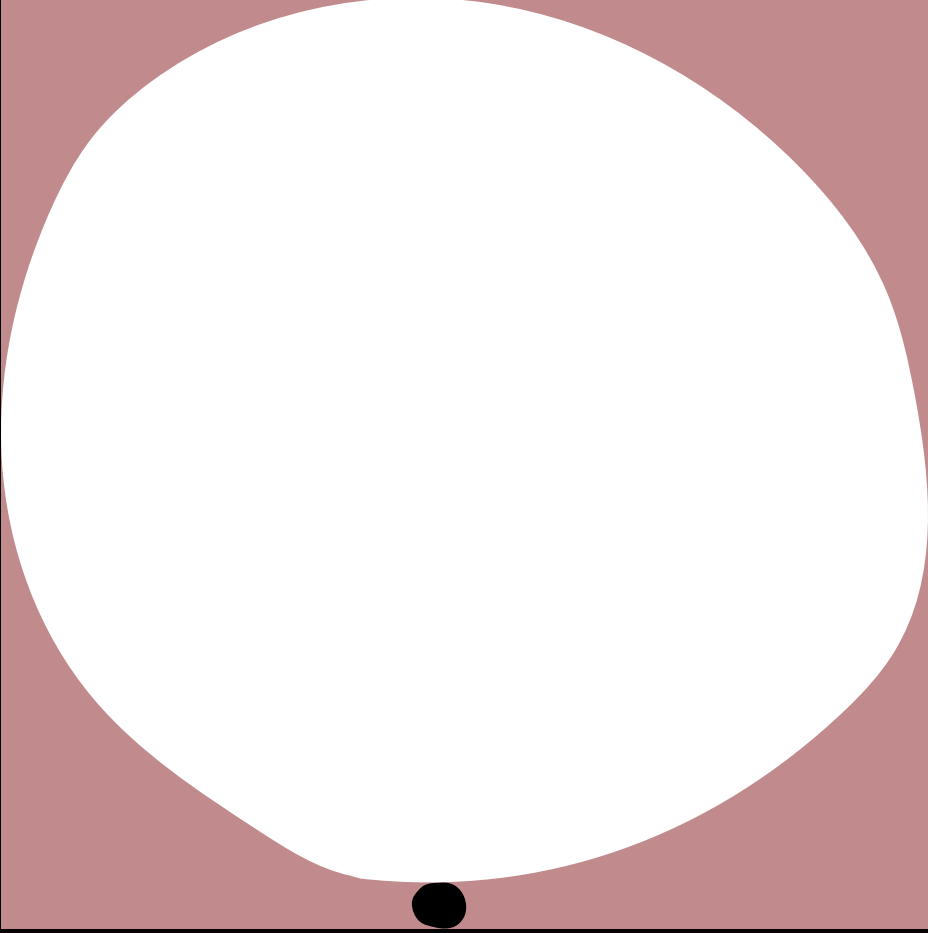


**Beyond  
Theory:**



*Imagining*  
**Infrastructure**

**Beyond  
Theory: Infrastructure**  
*Imaging*

**APRIL 12-13, 2024**



## DAY 1 / FRIDAY

APRIL 12, 2024

10:00 am–10:10 am	<b>Welcome Address</b> Kamini Sawhney
10:10 am–10:20 am	<b>Introductory Remarks</b> Arnika Ahldag and Mehreen Yousaf
10:25 am–10:55 am	<b>Keynote</b> Arundhati Ghosh
11:15 am–12:30 pm	<b>Session 01: Enduring Forms of Institution Building</b> A conversation between Vidya Shivadas and YSK Prerana, moderated by Arnika Ahldag
	LUNCH
01:30 pm–02:30 pm	<b>Session 02: All That Blue - Infrastructure in Publishing</b> A conversation between Siddhesh Gautam and Bhumika Saraswati, moderated by Nihira
02:45 pm–03:45 pm	<b>Session 03: Visible Cities, Invisible Infra</b> A panel discussion moderated by Shraddha Jadhav. Speakers include Harshita Bathwal, Ruchira Das and Nisha Mathew Ghosh
04:00 pm–05:00 pm	<b>Session 04: Spectral Undergrowths</b> A conversation between artists Suvani Suri and Aarti Sunder
05:15 pm–06:15 pm	<b>Session 05: Documentary Forms</b> A conversation between Iram Ghufuran and Pallavi Paul, moderated by arshad hakim
06:30 pm–07:00 pm	<b>Film Screening: There is Something in the Air</b> 28 mins   Hindi-Urdu with English subtitles A film by Iram Ghufuran

## DAY 2 / SATURDAY

APRIL 13, 2024

10:00 am–10:30 am	<b>Keynote</b> Vikramaditya Sahai
10:45 am–11:45 am	<b>Session 06: Mostly, in Friendship</b> A panel discussion with Imaad Majeed (The Packet) , Sadia Marium (Kaali Collective) and Millo Ankha (Aama Collective), moderated by Mehreen Yousaf
12:00 pm–01:00 pm	<b>Session 07: Including Rest</b> A conversation between Mallika Taneja and Shreyasi Pathak, moderated by Sneha Joshi
	LUNCH
02:30 pm–03:30 pm	<b>Session 08: Don't Wait for the Archive</b> A panel discussion with Mridu Thulung Rai, Karen Lalrindiki Donoghue and Donskobor Junisha Khongwir, moderated by Ishwari Arambam
03:45 pm–04:45 pm	<b>Session 09: Ways of World Making</b> A conversation between Navjot Altaf and Srajana Kaikini
05:00 pm–05:15 pm	<b>Closing Remarks</b> Shilpa Vijaykrishnan
06:30 pm–07:30 pm	<b>Performance: I Promise the Bearer . . .</b> A performance by Anuja Ghosalkar

# Introduction

“The hope is that we might all be better equipped to bear the inconvenience of each other’s necessary proximity. That in bearing such close relations we might rethink the power of our relationality.”

LAUREN BERLANT, *On the Inconvenience of Other People*

hand, leaves us with very precise numbers, and on the other, with ghosts—why does the art sector of South Asia have its specific temporalities? How do artists and art workers move within this sector? How do we sustain ourselves? And what instances standardise infrastructure or challenge it? In this fairly unstoried framework, the second iteration of *Beyond Theory* attempts to locate the experiences of marginalised genders and sexualities in shaping arts infrastructure. How have these built networks specifically influenced, discouraged, questioned, and promoted new ideas around feminist solidarities and action in our communities?

The conference is a gathering of artists, art workers, collectives, art institutions, and representatives from grant-making bodies who will be in conversation with each other, sharing learnings and doubts on how they work with and reimagine infrastructure in the region. These conversations will hopefully reveal moments of success, but also of breakdowns, of calls for systems to be relooked at and fixed. In facilitating this, we hope that the conference becomes its own infrastructure – a space where all of us feel comfortable sharing, leaning on each other and trying to arrive at answers together – not only during these two

Our instinctive understanding of infrastructure is almost always associated with a certain bureaucratic blandness—of concrete, roads, money, and other material traces. Infrastructure as a spatial proposition derives from the word *infra*, as in something under or below. In the arts, this is a highly blurry plane that meets us with questions on how it came to be at multiple registers and over time. An interest in understanding infrastructure in this context, on the one

days, but also going forward, so that these conversations have an afterlife that supports us in our careers in the arts.

The panels will touch upon various concerns, including but not limited to the inception of arts infrastructure in the region, material and immaterial shifts that are discernible in artistic practice, instances that have led to innovation and more enduring models, changing curatorial and discursive frameworks, and more. Imagining, here, is less about conceiving new worlds and more about drawing attention to resilient structures that already exist, placing them within the framework of arts infrastructure, while foregrounding the work of artists, collectives and organisations that have performed the labour of imagining and implementing.

*Beyond Theory: Imagining Infrastructure* is programmed in conjunction with our permanent exhibition, *VISIBLE/INVISIBLE: Representation of Women in Art through the MAP Collection*. Drawing from the various thematic threads of the collection, this exhibition explores the notion of gender through artworks in the collection. It attempts to re-address preconceived notions of femininity and gender as a social construct through art history, by providing a more inclusive understanding of it. Showcasing almost 130 artworks, the exhibition is divided into four sections, following the narratives of *Goddess and Mortal*, *Sexuality and Desire*, *Power and Violence*, and *Struggle and Resistance*.

# Speakers

Aarti Sunder  
Anuja Ghosalkar  
Arnika Ahldag  
arshad hakim  
Arundhati Ghosh  
Bhumika Saraswati  
Donskobar Junisha Khongwir  
Harshita Bathwal  
Imaad Majeed  
Iram Ghufuran  
Ishwari Arambam  
Kamini Sawhney  
Karen Lalrindiki Donoghue  
Mallika Taneja  
Mehreen Yousaf  
Millo Ankha  
Mridu Thulung Rai  
Navjot Altaf  
Nihira  
Nisha Mathew Ghosh  
Pallavi Paul  
Ruchira Das  
Sadia Mariam  
Shraddha Jadhav  
Shreyasi Pathak  
Siddhesh Gautam  
Sneha Joshi  
Srajana Kaikini  
Suvani Suri  
Vidya Shivadas  
Vikramaditya Sahai  
YSK Prerana

DAY 1	11:15 AM - 12:30 PM
Session 01	Enduring Forms of Institution Building
Vidya Shivadas, Director, Foundation for Indian Contemporary Art [FICA] and YSK Prerana, Artistic Director, Conflictorium, in conversation with Arnika Ahldag, Head of Exhibitions, MAP, as they think through some of their organisational and individual practices and their work towards establishing better models.	

“We live and work in economies based on the concept of “just-in-time” production—and “just-in-time” usually means things have to be ready in no time at all. Who sets the urgent pace according to which all others are measuring their progress?”

**JAN VERWOERT**  
*Exhaustion and Exuberance*

themselves as alternative. ‘Slow’ in this context doesn’t necessarily mean requiring more lapse time, but rather, indicates connection, similar to how Dr Megan Arney Johnston defines ‘slow curating.’ It involves embracing tools and methods that facilitate deep connections to community and locality, and reciprocal relationships between artists, art workers, and audiences.

Within this premise, what can nourishment look like, beyond grants? How can an organisation look beyond funding, in how they support the artist community? And how can engagement be driven towards more than just an immediate impact, and into actually establishing the foundation of an afterlife? Building this kind of meaningful community engagement is a long and slow process that requires a lot of care, commitment and experimentation, a process which, over the years, has been replaced by commitment elicited under false pretences of high performance and profitability.

In thinking of infrastructure, what do we imagine as an alternative? A model that perhaps concerns itself with just the broken parts, and operates to fix them, or one that entirely reimagines structure and revises the template?

Perhaps less radical than either of what is suggested here are organisations that prioritise slower and more enduring forms of institution building. These organisations often don’t think of

## LUNCH

12:30 PM - 01:30 PM

DAY 1	01:30 PM - 02:30 PM
Session 02	<b>All That Blue: Infrastructure in Publishing</b>
In this conversation, Siddhesh Gautam and Bhumika Saraswati share their experience of building <i>All That Blue</i> , their focus on visual storytelling in the magazine, approaches to inviting entries, production, dissemination and more. Moderated by Nihira.	

Some modes of infrastructure are maintained in order to further inaccessibility. Vestigial ideas of what to, how to and where to gain access often throw you into a loop that was created to keep you out. In art publishing, access to social capital not only defines the dominant aesthetic but also gatekeeps modes of production and distribution. Access can often become social infrastructure that excludes.

*All That Blue* is a magazine conceptualised by artist Siddhesh Gautam and led by journalist Bhumika Saraswati, photographers Anurag Banerjee and Jaisingh Nageswaran, and artist Shrujana N Shridhar. The print art magazine platforms creative anti-caste expressions of the Blue community and embodies the spirit of the equality movement. *All That Blue* is set to launch later this year.

The magazine is a coming together of contemporaries who have built ways of working together based on mutual respect, trust and a desire to break away from hierarchical models that hamper creativity. There is trust gained through work; of admiring each other's practices, finding likeness in language and ethics, and in what they find important to commemorate.

DAY 1	02:45 PM - 03:45 PM
Session 03	<b>Visible Cities, Invisible Infra</b>
<p>A conversation between Ruchira Das, Director of Arts, India, British Council, former Artistic Director at Arthshila, and Founder, ThinkArts; Harshita Bathwal, Arts Research Programme Officer, India Foundation for the Arts [IFA]; and Nisha Mathew Ghosh, Architect and Lead at The Mathew and Ghosh Sustainable Creation Care Foundation. Moderated by Shradha Jadhav, Development Manager, MAP.</p>	

In the world of Information Technology, dynamic infrastructure is that which is made of systems that assess demand and predict precise, actionable information. The arts sector is constantly in flux, and the cities where we build are even more so – growing, connecting and calibrating at exponential rates. In South Asia, this growth has to be rooted in the lifeblood of a city or town, so we grow in ways that respond to what exists and is required. And, there is no precise actionable information that we can tap into. There might be a playbook, but one that’s also in flux; every state, every city, and every town needs its own assessment, and infrastructure that responds.

In this panel, we bring together art workers from different backgrounds who have funded, built or are building spaces that combine strong local roots and transnational approaches to imagine resilient infrastructure in our region: from understanding funding and immaterial shifts including what support, impact and result mean in artistic interventions, to thinking of how physical traces including land, material, and transport are all negotiated as we work out of different locales.

They will share their experiences and unique expertise in setting up and working as part of arts institutions across the country, and the challenges, triumphs, breakdowns and dialogues they have encountered.

DAY 1	04:00 PM - 05:00 PM
Session 04	<b>Spectral Undergrowths</b>
<p>A conversation between artists <b>Suvani Suxi</b> and <b>Aarti Sunder</b></p>	

Thinking of spectral undergrowths in infrastructure is an exercise in exposing what is invisible. Behind the public face of artistic practice lies an ecosystem of grants, residencies, seed funds, proposals and more, that help sustain it. Contemporary art now sits at a juncture where infrastructure—material, discursive and of support are constantly renegotiated in encounters with artistic practices.

In this panel, Aarti Sunder and Suvani Suri meander between questions and concerns stemming from their respective practices. Taking off from the idea of the spectral that is a presence in both their artistic inquiries, the interaction will take us through discontinuous thinking in forms and frameworks of authorship, navigating and co-producing institutional infrastructures, strategies of knowledge (re)generation and more.

When one works with fields like sound, technopolitics, platformisation and more, what kinds of pressures are applied to the institutional? How do these forms of associative art practice and artistic forms help co-produce infrastructure, and in the process, blur the line between artist and curator?

Through these prompts and more, the artists will think outside of the reductive infrastructural diagnostics of the art field in the region, and speak to knowledge production and interpretation beyond exhibitionary modes, as configured and maintained by institutions.

DAY 1	05:15 PM - 06:15 PM
Session 05	Documentary Forms
<p>In this panel, we hear from two filmmakers, Iram Ghufuran and Pallavi Paul, who have worked with the 'document' in ways that are less about reproducing the world, and more in terms of practices of opening up new possibilities for formal play and unexpected imagery. Moderated by arshad hakim.</p>	

Documentary filmmaking in India has a colonial past—of a machinery co-opted from the British, and in some ways, set up by them for us to inherit. The British legacy to the Films Division of India is significant in several respects. In 1948, immediately after independence, the Government of India formed the Films Division and described it as the official organ of the Government of India for the production and distribution of information films and newsreels. Historically, the Films Division was a successor to colonial instruments of governance set up by the British, like the Film Advisory Board and Information Films of India: state-controlled filmmaking that had sufficient support and infrastructure for production and distribution.

Independent documentary filmmaking in India established itself in the 1970s, by means of "guerilla filmmaking on a borrowed Super 8 camera, improvised editing and underground exhibition."<sup>1</sup> It was marked by a conscious positioning of filmmaking practices outside of the Films Division of India – the state-run means of production and distribution. Over the years, this identity has evolved – characterised by a recalibration of the cinematic image itself, physical infrastructure and modes and spaces of circulation.

As film acquires the force of the art world, how is this resource-intensive industry adapting? Films directed towards artistic expression develop their own qualities—the language is different, the audiences might be different, and the spaces that showcase works are different. So are indicators of success. Support systems of friends and peers become the infrastructure for an independent filmmaker; for an early career practitioner, funding is sparse and helplessly allocated towards known modes of distribution, like film festival applications. 'Resource-intensive' also takes on a whole new meaning, as film enters exhibition spaces. Outside of funding, infrastructure in this context also means an undertaking of exhibition practices and technical practices.

<sup>1</sup>Shweta Kishore, Indian Documentary Film and Film Makers: Independence in Practice, 2.

DAY 1	06:30 PM - 07:00 PM	
FILM SCREENING	There is Something in the Air	
	A film by Iram Ghufuran	
28 mins	English, Hindi and Urdu with English subtitles	2011

*There Is Something In The Air* is a call from the periphery of sanity. This documentary essay is a series of dream narratives, and accounts of spiritual possession, as experienced by women 'petitioners' at the shrine of a Sufi saint in North India. The shrine is a space where ritualised performance becomes the predominant rule of engagement, and one can begin to think of the possibilities that 'insanity' produces. The film invites the viewer to a fantastical world, where fear and desire are expressed through dreams and 'afflictions of air'. The drama unfolds via dreams, and appearances of djinns and disappearances of women. The shrine becomes a space of expressions of longing and transgression. Here, boundary breaches are the norm and if spirit possessions are usually recounted as a loss of the autonomy of the self, *There is Something In The Air* explores how a personhood may also be expanded through a relationship of reverie with non-human forces.



DAY 1	notes
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DAY 1	notes
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DAY 2	10:45 AM - 11:45 AM
Session 06	Mostly, in Friendship
<p>This panel brings together the people of three artists' collectives from South Asia - Imaad Majeed from <i>The Packet</i> [Colombo, Sri Lanka], Millo Ankha from the <i>Aama Collective</i> [Northeast India] and Sadia Marium from the <i>Kaali Collective</i> [Dhaka, Bangladesh]. Through this session, we hope to first, hear each collective's story-of their inception, their ways of working together and of their location of practice; and then, to think through what forms social infrastructures take, and how they enable practice outside of/ alongside formal structures. Moderated by Mehreen Yousaf.</p>	

"The main objective was for us to work together-to not be lost again in this male-dominated world and to retain kindness... that we are not creating a box, just to get out of another box."

SADIA MARIUM, on a Zoom call connecting the panel

changed immensely, since. Collectivising has played a huge role in building social infrastructure in the arts - of friendship, community and support that institutions often fail to offer. Beyond this system of care, collectives might also respond to the complexities and socio-historical injustices of their contexts, and seek forms of organising that foreground this. Most often, practitioners who come together and form these groups are also people who've moved within art institutions and realised the cogs that are rusty, ineffective and that do not empathise. Moving away from these models means that they prioritise and build new forms-counter-institutions that allow for doubt, slowness, experimentation and care.

Most often, we think of collectivising as a response to institutional critique, but Imaad, Ankha and Sadia fill us in on more than that-of forms of solidarity that allow them to be together, and to feel safe and seen.

Artist collectives in South Asia have existed since the 1900s. Groups like the Bombay Progressive Artists' Group and Cholamandal Artists' Village established themselves between the 1940s and 60s. Later, KHOJ, Britto Arts Trust, Theertha International Artists Collective, and Vasl Artists Collective defined new forms of collegiality among artists of the region. The form of the collective, the intentions of working together and organising has

DAY 2	12:00 PM - 01:00 PM
Session 07	Including Rest
<p>In this conversation, Mallika Taneja and Shreyasi Pathak think through their perceptions of rest, un-structuring time as an accommodative practice and raise questions regarding what infrastructural demands can look like, to include rest. Moderated by Sneha Joshi</p>	

"Crip time is time travel. Disability and illness have the power to extract us from linear, progressive time with its normative life stages and cast us into a wormhole of backward and forward acceleration, jerky stops and starts, tedious intervals and abrupt endings."

ELLEN SAMUELS  
*Six Ways of Looking at Crip Time, Disability Studies Quarterly*

consider normative time frames - "rather than bend disabled bodies and minds to meet the clock, crip time bends the clock to meet disabled bodies and minds."<sup>2</sup> How can we understand crip time and the necessary rest it accounts for, as part of arts infrastructure?

The Resting Museum's work uses rest, queerness and disability as methodology in their art practice and curatorial projects to intervene in art and design history discourse, and archives. They are interested in the aesthetics of the incomplete and the performativity of the missing body in disability theory, and how they can be used in institutional and infrastructural critique.

Mallika Taneja is a theatre practitioner and curator of *Rest of the Struggle* - a project that creates spaces and strategies for rest, amidst the struggle. The project brings together practices that enable restfulness. Mallika speaks to us of her understanding of rest as a spectrum. Even the process of doing nothing can induce restlessness for many of us who work with high performance models - ones where rest and recovery become very difficult to understand and attain. The anxieties of what lie beyond a period of rest takes over.

<sup>2</sup> Alison Kafer, *Feminist, Queer, Crip*, (2013), 27.

Facilitating rest is care. However, outside of looking at it as an activity that needs to be facilitated in intervals, and as a process that allows for productivity, rest is a necessity. How do we think of rest as an investigative tool to undo restlessness that is built into our ways of labouring?

Shreyasi Pathak, one half of The Resting Museum and an archivist at the National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad speaks to us of crip time. Crip time un-structures what we

## LUNCH

01:00 PM - 02:30 PM

DAY 2

02:30 PM - 03:30 PM

Session 08

### Don't Wait for the Archive

In this panel, Donskobar Junisha Khongwir, Karen Lalrindiki Donoghue and Mridu Thulung Rai will speak about their interactions with the archive, community engagement, dissemination practices and how their individual practices shape or are shaped by the archive. Moderated by Eva Arambam.

“To not wait for the archive is to enter the river of time sideways, unannounced... The archive can be deployed: as a set of shared curiosities, a local politics, or epistemological adventure. Where the archival impulse could be recast, for example, as the possibility of creating alliances: between text and image, between major and minor institutions, between filmmakers, photographers, writers and computers, between online and offline practices, between the remnant and what lies in reserve, between time and the untimely.”

#### *PAD.MA, 10 Theses on the Archive*

in the present, and enables artistic production. What infrastructure exists to support these practices that help bridge or challenge the memory of the state?

In this panel moderated by Eva Arambam, we are joined by Donskobar Junisha Khongwir, Karen L Donoghue and Mridu Rai. Junisha works with the Northeast India AV Archive, a public audiovisual archive established in 2019, and located in the Department of Mass Media, St Anthony's College, Shillong. The Northeast India AV Archive started as a film archive but quickly expanded into more as public

In April 2010, the digital art collective Pad.ma released a manifesto titled *10 Theses on the Archive*, proposing alternatives to conventional understandings of the archive. The first, '1. Don't Wait for the Archive,' exposed collective and now outdated tendencies of waiting for state archives as the singular possibility for historical records. In this context, to not wait for the archive is a response to the absence of archives and compiled historical records in many parts of the world.

What happens when archives stop moving inwards, driven primarily towards finding, guarding, and building safe repositories? More contemporary archival practices treat their work as material that engages public memory

engagement led to it receiving material across media. The Confluence Collective is a group of photographers and researchers working with their respective interests to bring together visual and oral stories of the Darjeeling-Sikkim Himalayas. The archive is interested in personal practices that challenge colonial homogenous representations. *Stories from the Valley* authored by D Junisha Khongwir and Karen L Donaghue is a quiet and warm account that traces the memories and spirit of the diasporic Mizos of Happy Valley, Shillong. The book was published by The Northeast India AV Archive keeping in line with how they approach the archive – as a living thing that senses the need for documentation of communities that has often remained hidden and does the work of good media representation.

DAY 2	03:45 PM – 04:45 PM
Session 09	<b>Ways of World Making</b>
<p>In this session, Navjot Altaf will speak about her practice at large, her time in Bastar, engaging the distinction between art and craft, the afterlife of some of their projects and her environmental concerns. Following a brief presentation, Navjot will be in conversation with Srajana Kaikini, and will share anecdotes from her time in Kondagaon and other parts of Chhattisgarh.</p>	

The title of this panel borrows from Navjot Altaf's project, *Modes of Parallel Practice: Ways of World Making* (1997-98), a body of work (wood sculptures and water colour drawings) that came about as a result of her initial year-long interactive phase of engagement with *adivasi* artists working in wood: Raituram, Shantibai, and Rajkumar Korram from Kondagaon, Bastar; Bhanumati Padamsee, an art historian; and Raju Mewada, a carver from Mumbai who had been assisting Navjot since 1994. They worked at a common studio space at Shilpi Gram, a centre imagined and built by the *adivasi* bell metal sculptor, Jaidev Baghel. The project self-consciously violates the boundaries of traditional demarcation—of defining works of art as separate from craft.

Modes of Parallel Practice juxtaposes Navjot's first co-operative/ collaborative installation, *Links Destroyed and Rediscovered* (1994) which was made of plastic pipes, door frames, drawings and soil. The installation incorporated films by Madhusree Dutta and Teesta Setalvad, and music composed and sung by Neela Bhagwat, addressing anti-Muslim violence post the Babri Masjid demolition in 1992-93, in Bombay (now Mumbai).

Navjot's time in Bastar, and her manner of collaborating in ways that transformed everyone involved was informed by her feminist consciousness. There was a process to build collegiality and challenge the distinct and extremely unequal networks that exist for art and craft. Navjot and the artists she worked with in Kondagaon eventually moved on from Shilpi Gram to start the *Dialogue Interactive Artists Association* (DIAA), an organisation whose work would move beyond critique to make meaningful improvements upon infrastructure that already existed. Through these interactions, Navjot was already contributing to making worlds that we did not have the language to speak of. More recently, the vocabulary to define them, has emerged.

DAY 2	06:30 PM – 07:30 PM
PERFORMANCE	<b>I Promise The Bearer...</b>
	Conceived and Performed by Anuja Ghosalkar
	Written by: Ashutosh Potdar and Anuja Ghosalkar Visual Artist and Design: Debanshu Bhaumik Performance Design: Rebecca Spurgeon Light Design: Vikrant Thakar Visual Design and Execution: Aliasger Dhariwala Costume Design: Rency Philip Lithography Printing: Pagal Canvas Backyard Lithographs & Woodcuts Videos: Atelier Prati

DAY 2	notes
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“I promise the bearer the sum of...” is a phrase that appears on Indian currency notes of all denominations.

This solo performance takes us through the everyday journey of a female artist in India—her dreams, desires, and struggles of being an artist in a rapidly changing social and political landscape. The show uses the stereotypes of an artist’s life, playfully—praying for a grant, meetings with funders and an auction. The light-hearted register of what it means to be an artist, in the murky terrain of arts funding, grant applications, collectors, curators, gatekeepers and the risk involved in questioning power structures, gives way to the show’s central question – is money the greatest object of fiction? For which we trade lives, bodies, loves?

What is the promise of a person who owns this object of fiction?

Through the show, the artist makes her own money on stage and distributes it to the audience, using two printmaking techniques – the lithograph and the woodcut. Could this tactile method of making fictional currency lead us to a more humane existence?

This is the India premiere of the show.

This performance was part of the White Money project initiated by Flinnworks, in 2021. The show was made during the second wave of the pandemic. It opened at Sophiensale, Berlin in November 2021.

## Bios

**Kamini Sawhney** is the founding director of the Museum of Art & Photography's (MAP). She has helped shape a vision for MAP that seeks to democratize art through an accessible, inclusive space where everyone feels welcome. The opening exhibitions of the museum that Kamini visualized along with her curatorial team have been particularly well received.

In her earlier role, Kamini was the head of the Jehangir Nicholson Art Foundation – one of the premier private collections of Modern Indian Art, at the CSMVS, Mumbai, formerly known as the Prince of Wales Museum. She was selected as one of the first candidates for the Brooks fellowship at Tate Modern, London in 2014 in collaboration with the Delfina Foundation. In a previous avatar as journalist and television anchor, Kamini was the Bureau Chief of NDTV, Mumbai one of India's leading news channels where she reported on her whole range of events both political and cultural. Elected to the Board of CIMAM (International Committee for Museums and Collections of Modern Art) last year, Sawhney is the first Indian to hold that position and hopes to reflect the views and challenges of the global South through this forum.

**Arun dhati Ghosh** is a cultural practitioner based in Bangalore with three decades of experience at the India Foundation for the Arts which she led as its Executive Director till May 2023. Her awards include the Global Fundraiser Award from Resource Alliance, Chevening Clore Leadership Award (2015–2016), Chevening Gurukul Scholarship at the London School of Economics (2005–2006), and the Salzburg Global Seminar Fellowship. She has contributed on advisory panels and boards of the Seagull Foundation for the Arts, Blind with Camera, and Toto funds the Arts; she continues to sit on the advisory panel for The Museum of Art and Photography (MAP), Bangalore and is a Board Member of Sangama, Bangalore, an organisation working for the rights of sexual minorities, sex workers and people living with HIV. She has co-curated the

International Theatre Festival of Kerala (2020) organised by Kerala Sangeetha Nataka Akademi. She speaks on arts and philanthropy for leading Indian and international organisations including International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies (IFACCA), Kelola Foundation, On the Move, Festival Academy Europe, UNESCO Berlin, The Arab Fund for Arts and Culture (AFAC), Kultura Nova Foundation, University of Leeds, Theatre Cooperative Turkey, among others. She writes for publications such as Scroll, The Wire, The Hindu, The Deccan Herald, News 9, Himal, Business Standard, etc. She is a poet in Bangla and her first collection of poetry, *Oshomoye phire esho nodi hoye* was published in January 2023 by Lastrada Prakashan in Kolkata.

**Vidya Shivadas** is a curator based in New Delhi. She is the Director of the Foundation for Indian Contemporary Art, a non-profit arts organisation that works in the field of art education, and aims to broaden the audience for contemporary Indian art, enhance opportunities for artists, and establish a continuous dialogue between the arts and the public through education and active participation in public art projects. Shivadas has curated a number of exhibitions at the Vadehra Art Gallery since 2005 as well as guest curated exhibitions at Devi Art Foundation, Kiran Nadar Museum of Art and Edinburgh Art Festival. She was the visual arts curator for Serendipity Arts Festival 2023. Shivadas has been Visiting Faculty at School of Culture and Creative Expressions, Ambedkar University Delhi since 2013.

**YSK Prerana** is interested in writing, language and translations. They are the current Artistic Director of Conflictorium, a role that mostly leads them to embody and apply a poetical and critical bureaucracy. They have, in the past, worked with developmental organisations that address concerns of body, land, sovereignty and mobility. Here and there, sometimes everywhere, they read children's literature, imagining, nourishing, praying, for a world of simpler injustices and grander silliness.

**Dr. Arnika Ahlrag** is the Head of Exhibitions at MAP. An art historian, her interests cover the representation of labour in Indian contemporary art, institutional critique, exhibition histories and archives. She holds a PhD from the School of Arts and Aesthetics at JNU and an MA from University College in London, UK and Albert Ludwigs University in Freiburg, Germany. Her curatorial projects include the public programme for IAF 2020 and *Mapping Gender:*

*Bodies and Sexualities in the Global South* at the Jawaharlal Nehru University. She co-founded the Feminist Syllabus, which is part of the workshop series, *Pact of Silence, How to break it*, a programme for intersectional feminist discourses in the arts. Prior to this, she lectured at the National School of Drama and OP Jindal Global University in New Delhi.

**Bhumika Saraswati** is an independent documentary photographer-filmmaker and journalist based in New Delhi. Her work has been published with national and international news organisations. She is the recipient of the UN-Laadli Media Award, RedInk Award of Excellence in Indian Journalism, and the Human Rights Press Award — the latest, for her documentary film on the lives of sex workers as single mothers and their relationship with their children. She is currently indulged in two long term photography projects: one, about heat, women's bodies and marginalisation; and the second, on *Women of India* (specially Dalit and Adivasi women) in protest, activism and social movements across the country.

**Siddhesh Gautam** is a Delhi-based multidisciplinary artist, designer, writer, poet, and committed Ambedkarite, who personifies his journey to Begumpura (the land of no sorrow) through diverse mediums. As a dreamer, storyteller, and treasure hunter, Siddhesh shares his unique perspective, aiming to inspire profound connections through visual art. His mission is to encourage people to live deeply, love fearlessly, and appreciate Earth as a heavenly place and all humans as equals. Currently, Siddhesh passionately documents the anti-caste movement, climate crisis, and gender equality, weaving societal narratives into his vibrant tapestry of expression.

**Harshita Bathwal** is a writer and researcher, with a PhD in the Visual Studies programme from the School of Arts and Aesthetics, JNU, New Delhi (2017–2023). In her research, she studied the oeuvre of artist Nasreen Mohamedi. She is a recipient of JRF (2019) and DAAD grants for research (2019–20). She has completed the BARPS Teacher's Training Programme from Abhyas Studio in the BARPS method of Yoga, supervised by Dr Rishiraj Pathak and Navtej Johar (2022–23). She was associated with the Curatorial lab at the School of Arts and Aesthetics, supported by the Inlaks Foundation for three years. She was also a co-curator at the Kochi Students' Biennale in 2016.

**Ruchira Das** is an arts leader with 25 years of experience in working on projects in India and internationally. Before joining British Council India as Director of Arts, she worked as Artistic Director at Arthshila, where she oversaw programming of multi arts centres in locations across India. In 2013, she founded ThinkArts to facilitate high quality, transformative arts events for children and young people. She has also been a tutor of Strategic Planning & Financial Management in short courses organised by ARThink South Asia, where she served as the Deputy Director.

**Nisha Mathew Ghosh** is an architect, multi-medium art practitioner and independent researcher-curator whose work and area of interest engages the liminal areas between architecture, art and ecology. Her work is “curatorial” in nature, as she comments critically on and reacts to areas of interest in these domains and their hybrid overlapping. Selected as Curator for the India Pavilion at the London Design Biennale 2021, she presented the showcase *Small is beautiful – a billion stories*. She is interested in projects that address equitability and is currently focused on curatorial interventions in the old abandoned former gold mine area of Southern India via the project *From Mountain to Molehill – post colonial renewal*. Her community and urban empowerment work interests are initiated via The Mathew and Ghosh Sustainable Creation Care Foundation, and other collaborations. She has been showcased in The Venice Biennale Space Time Existence exhibition, and in the Wallpaper Design show, and has won multiple awards for her architecture works (with partner, Soumitro Ghosh, Co-founder of Mathew and Ghosh Architects), and art objects over the last two and a half decades.

**Shraddha Jadhav** is the Development Manager at MAP, and works on fundraising, co-creating strategy and building donor relationships for the museum; she was active in founding the MAP Staff Welfare Committee. With a background in arts management over the last 8 years, she has worked with institutions including the Asia Art Projects in London; CSMVS Museum and Artisans’ Gallery in Mumbai; and SNS Arts Development Consultancy, Chennai. Shraddha completed her MA in Art History at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) in London. Her academic journey began with a BA in Ancient Indian Culture from St. Xavier’s College in Mumbai, solidifying her foundation in the cultural heritage that continues to inspire her work today. She is also a trained Hindustani singer, a Latin dance instructor and podcaster.

**Suvani Suri** is an artist based in New Delhi, India. She works with sound, text and intermedia assemblages that think through modes of listening and voicing. Her practice plumbs the gaps, cracks, absurdities and excesses embedded within the technological processes of production, mediation and perception of sound. This often takes the form of podcasts, objects, installations, mixtapes, workshops, curatorial propositions, publications, live/ discursive sessions and collective interventions. She also composes sound for video and performance works and has been teaching at several educational spaces where her pedagogical interests conflate with a sustained inquiry into the digital and sonic sensorium. Suvani’s works have been exhibited at Serendipity Arts Festival (2023), Kunsthalle Bern (2022), Five Million Incidents (2020), Khoj Curatorial Intensive South Asia (2019), Kochi-Muziris Biennale (2018), Mumbai Art Room (2018), and Sound Reasons Festival VI (2018). As part of a collective inquiry, she co-conceived the telephonic project, *Out of Line* (2019), which received the FICA Public Art Grant (2021). She was one of the curators for the Students’ Biennale (Kochi-Muziris Biennale 2022) and is an artist/ curator with the program *Capture All: A Sonic Investigation*, developed by Sarai (Delhi) and Liquid Architecture (Melbourne).

**Aarti Sunder** is an artist living and working in India (Chennai). She works with moving image, writing, drawing and painting. Her interests lie within techno-politics, focusing on the study of infrastructure and society – from contemporary labour practices, fictional edges of protest, myth, and digital-terrestrial play, to expanded platform politics. Aarti published *Platform Politics - Within, Above and Under*, a short set of contributions that considered different readings into the idea of the platform. Ideas ranged from contemporary philosophy to online niche spaces, to education, AI/ labour, and the future of gig work. She is currently working on technology and its relationship with the spiritual, exploring overlaps that become a mode of governance and what kinds of visuals are born out of that relationship.

**Iram Ghufuran** is an independent filmmaker and artist based in New Delhi. Her practice spans moving image, sound and text, deploying speculative modes in narrative creation, to critically engage with the nature of truth and the



construction of reality. She holds an MA in Mass Communication from the AJK Mass Communication Research Centre, Jamia Millia Islamia University (2003), and a PhD from the Centre for Research and Education in the Arts (CREAM), University of Westminster (2023).

Iram's work has been supported by Arts Network Asia, IAWRT India, Pro Helvetia Swiss Arts Council, Public Service Broadcasting Trust, Sandarbh and West Heavens. Her films have been screened at renowned art and cinematic platforms including Brakhage Centre, Cinema Akil, Experimenta India, Forum Expanded at Berlin Film Festival, International Film Festival of India, Seoul International Women's Film Festival (SIWFF), and Taiwan International Video Art Exhibition among others. Iram teaches at the Department of Art, Media and Performance, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Shiv Nadar Institution of Eminence, Delhi (National Capital Region).

**Pallavi Paul**'s practice interrogates how the idea of 'truth' is produced and imaged in public life. Paul is particularly interested in poetic explorations of the tension between the document and its aesthetic utterance - the documentary. Her most recent solo exhibition took place as part of the Forum Expanded Berlinale at Savvy Contemporary (2022). Her work has been exhibited in venues including Berlinische Galerie (2022), The International Film Festival of Rotterdam (2021), HKW (2020), The Rubin Museum (2019), Beirut Art Centre (2018), AV Festival (2018, 2016), Contour Biennale (2017), Tate Modern (2013). Paul received her PhD in Cinema Studies from JNU, Delhi. She was the 2021 Visual Arts Fellow at the DAAD Artists-in-Berlin Program. Her recent residencies include Martin-Gropius-Bau, Berlin (2023) with a solo exhibition following the residency and Alserkal Arts Residency (forthcoming, 2024).

**arshad hakim** is an artist and filmmaker. he writes, draws and makes films. he is interested in conditions of impasses, interludes, parentheses, suspensions and interruptions; his video/film essays and drawings derive from philosophy, film, theology, music and poetry.

**Vikramaditya Sahai** is Visiting Faculty at the School of Culture and Creative Expressions, Ambedkar University, Delhi. They live and love in Delhi.

**Imaad Majeed** is a multidisciplinary artist, curator and writer based in Colombo, Sri Lanka. They are Director and Curator of the trilingual performance platform, "KACHA KACHA"; one part of the artist collective "The Packet"; and VJ/ DJ for "Packet Radio" (SUPR FM). They enjoy making playlists, DJing as "imaDJinn", and writing about musicians from Sri Lanka for international music blogs. They are Project Coordinator and Co-Curator of Thattu Pattu, a platform for music from the fringes of Sri Lanka. Their poetry has been published in *Out of Sri Lanka: Tamil, Sinhala and English poetry from Sri Lanka and its diasporas*, *CITY: A Journal of South Asian Literature*, as well as the local small-press chapbooks *Lime Plain Tea* and *Annasi & Kadalagotu*.

**The Packet** is made up of a group of artists from Sri Lanka. With a particular focus on hyper-locality, collaborative processes and conversation, it grew out of 8 artists coming together to realize an artist publication entitled The Packet.

**Millo Ankha** is a former dentist turned poet, artist and storyteller. She belongs to the Indigenous Apatani community from Ziro, Arunachal Pradesh, India. She primarily works with photography, texts, oral literature, and performance. Her work explores themes of gender, nature and indigenous worldview. She is the founder and member of AAMA collective; a collective of women visual artists from the North east of India.

**Sadia Marium** dreamt of being a filmmaker, worked as a merchandiser, and at present is an independent photographer based in Dhaka and Chattogram, in Bangladesh. Sadia's practice pollinates the process of creating photographs, books, videos, and alternative printing methods. The question of 'Intrusion' in photography intrigues her the most. Ordinary characters, unremarkable memories, spaces, and objects are the protagonists of her works in tracing overlaps between reality and fiction, private and public. Sadia's interest in geopolitics and border discourse, and the role of narratives in creating memory shape her recent and newest works. She is one of the founding members of Kaali Collective.

**Kaali Collective** (founded in 2018, based in Dhaka) is a group of women photographers from Bangladesh who have individual practices but envision writing and rewriting her-stories, memories and contradictions collectively.

**Mehreen Yousaf** works as a Programme Coordinator with the Exhibitions Team at MAP, Bengaluru. She works with the museum's permanent exhibition *VISIBLE/INVISIBLE: Representation of Women in Art through the MAP Collection*.

**Mallika Taneja** lives and works out of New Delhi, India. Through performances, installations and curatorial work, she explores questions of gender, solidarity, pleasure, rest and remembering. She is particularly interested in exploring political possibilities of performative ensembles and the role songs have to play in leaving and gathering traces of people, places and things. Some of her works and collaborative spaces include *Be Careful, Allegedly, Rest of the Struggle, Zanana ka Zamana, Women Walk at Midnight, and Sex Chat Room*. She won the ZKB Acknowledgment Prize for *Be Careful* in 2015, the ZKB Patronage Prize for *Allegedly* in 2021 and the Mahindra Excellence in Theatre Award for *Do You Know This Song?* in 2024.

**Shreyasi Pathak** works as an archivist at the National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad and is one part of the Resting Museum. Resting Museum is the artist duo of Priyanka D'Souza and Shreyasi Pathak, in India, using rest, queerness and disability as methodology in their art practice and curatorial projects to intervene in art and design history discourse and archives. They are interested in the aesthetics of the incomplete and the performativity of the missing body in disability theory, and how they can be used in institutional and infrastructural critique. They look at experiences of isolation of disabled body-minds and the formation of certain 'publics,' physically and virtually, through practices of sitting, resting, and participating together. They travel and think through, with, and around crip and queer time.

**Sneha Joshi** is a multidisciplinary artist and curator based in Bangalore whose work explores sociocultural norms and identity. She completed her B.A. Fine Art from Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design, University of the Arts London and M.A. Curatorial Practices from Srishti Manipal Institute of Art, Design and Technology. Her practice is research-driven, focusing on participatory and interactive art projects to spark meaningful conversations and foster inclusivity. By challenging preconceived notions and encouraging critical reflection, she aims to create a platform for cultural dialogue that explores the complexities of identity, inclusion, and exclusion.

**Mridu Thulung Rai** is a PhD scholar in Anthropology at the University College London. Her research centres on harnessing indigenous cosmologies as methodologies and frameworks within visual culture. She is the co-founder of the Confluence Collective, a platform of researchers and artists that facilitates interdisciplinary dialogues and critical engagement with visual practices in the Eastern Himalayas.

**Karen Lalrindiki Donoghue** presently teaches in the Dept. of Journalism and Mass Communication, North Eastern Hill University (NEHU), Shillong. Her PhD is focused on media representations of Northeast India on mainstream Indian media, and her research interests include Media Representation, Media and Gender, and Oral History. She enjoys reading, playing the guitar and listening to music. She loves long walks with her dogs and writes poetry, occasionally.

**Donskobor Junisha Khongwir** is an educator and visual artist from Laitlyngkot, Meghalaya. Junisha graduated from AJK Jamia Millia Islamia University. She is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Mass Media, St Anthony's College, Shillong. She is also the curator at the Northeast India AV Archive.

**Eva/Ishwari Arambam** is an art and culture worker from Imphal, Manipur. She serves as The Himalayan Fellowship for Creative Practitioners' Project Coordinator at the Foundation for Indian Contemporary Art (FICA), supporting the works of practitioners from the Western Himalayas and the Northeast through the fellowship. In addition to assisting the Director and Curator at the 1st edition of the Kigali Photo Fest, Rwanda in 2019, Eva has worked as an art mediator with the Kochi-Muziris Biennale (2018–19). In a previous role as Programmes Coordinator at the Museum of Art & Photography (MAP), she curated and executed public programmes for the museum, and also built and fostered a youth collective.

**Navjot Altaf** (b.1949) is a transcultural artist, whose inventive multimedia work reflects political and aesthetic concerns that have been informed by dialogical ways of working. Her practice is located in the metaphor of flow – across materiality and theory, across place and people, and in finding a transdisciplinary perspective where inquiry and self-inquiry intersect. Her ideological positions shift from Marxism in the 1970s, to feminism in the 1980s-1990s, and eco-feminism from early 2000 onwards, critically examining the intersectionality between natural systems, community growth, and development. With a sustained engagement with indigenous cultures, local knowledge systems, ecology and social justice, her intellectual trajectory, like her creative process, has been shaped by life experiences and theoretical readings. It has been marked by complexities, conflicts, and imaginative turns. From a formalist training in Western modernism, her quest has been to find a conceptual and artistic language through forms of “critical emplacement” or experiential belonging in various locales. This has prompted her to work in Bombay and Bastar, to engage with an *adivasi* life-world, *adivasi* artists, as well as artists and researchers from other parts of India and beyond. Her extensive dialogues with *adivasi* communities and artists led to the co-founding of the Dialogue Interactive Artists’ Association (DIAA, 2000) in Kondagaon, Bastar.

**Dr Srajana Kaikini**’s work spans curatorial, artistic and philosophical domains. Her research has been published in journals like *Voices in Bioethics*, *Journal of Sociology*, *The Deleuze Studies: India Special Issue*, *Kunstlicht Tijdschrift*, *Journal of Cancer Research and Therapeutics* and she is a regular contributor to newspapers and magazines like the *Hindu*, *Deccan Herald*, *Art India* et al. Her research domains include metaphysics, aesthetics, curatorial studies, arts pedagogy, kinship and relations, philosophy of language, philosophy of art, image, cinema and space. At Krea University, she teaches topics in aesthetics, metaphysics, ontology, phenomenology, art theory, arts practice and curatorial studies and has served on various institutional committees. As a founding faculty member at Krea, Dr Kaikini has been an integral part of the process of developing the curriculum and programmes at the Philosophy Department as well as the Global Arts Department.

**Anuja Ghosalkar** founded Drama Queen, a Documentary Theatre company, in 2015. Her interdisciplinary practice extends the idea of theatre to create audacious work, with a focus on little histories, archival lapses and blurring the hierarchies between audience and performer. Critical to her performance-making and pedagogy are iterations around form and process, modes of media, sites, technologies and narratives on gender and intimacy. Her performances, lectures, workshops have been programmed by University of Oxford, Hong Kong University, University of Cambridge, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Sophiensale, Museum of Art and Photography, Ullens Centre for Contemporary Art, National Centre for Biological Sciences, among others. As visiting faculty at many art institutes, she leads practice-based pedagogy and has written on film and performance for *Forum Modernes Theater*, *Routledge*, *Outlook India*, and *Nang Magazine*.

notes

“It matters what matters we use to think other matters with; it matters what stories we tell to tell other stories with; it matters what knots knot knots, what thoughts think thoughts, what descriptions describe descriptions, what ties tie ties. It matters what stories make worlds, what worlds make stories.”

DONNA J HARAWAY

*Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene*

Thank You!

We hope the conference is a kind exercise in thinking of, critiquing, learning about and imagining infrastructure. As art workers, our hope is that the conversations that happen here are carried forward, tapped into and reworked constantly. Treat them not as fixed heritage but as stories, knowledge and questions that need to be revisited and built on.



Stay in touch and carry forward these conversations with us, at [visible@map-india.org](mailto:visible@map-india.org).