



SERENDIPITY  
ARTS  
FESTIVAL  
GOA | 15-22 DEC '18

## **Common Ground - Location, Time and Memory in Visual Arts Practice**

**Date** – September 28, 2018

**1** Day | **4** sessions

### **Venue**

Goethe - Institut Max Muller Bhavan

K. Dubash Marg, Kala Ghoda, Mumbai, Maharashtra 400001

### **Timing**

10:30 – 10:45 - Introduction

10:45 – 12:00 - **Session 1** - Counting the Contemporary

12:00 – 12:15 - Artist Presentation

12:15 – 12:30 - Tea Break

12:30 – 1:45 - **Session 2** - Crosscurrents

1:45 – 2:15 - Lunch

2:15 – 3:30 - **Session 3** - Art and the everyday

3:30 – 3:45 - Break

3:45 – 5:00 - **Session 4** - Reframed futures

5:00 – 5:15 - Artist Presentation

5:30 – Wrap Up

### **Introduction**

With the planning of the exhibition, **Common Ground**, as part of the Serendipity Arts Festival (December 15 – December 22, 2018), this symposium is aimed at generating ideas and discussions around the place and changing significance of interplaying and interrelated visual cultures in our present which have led to differing sensibilities about high and low and imitative, innovative and reproductive forms of representation.

There is an overwhelming presence of subcultures and contrasting languages of visual engagement in most liberal arts practices. Given this diversity, we wish to

explore how we might envision an alternative future for or a rethinking of art practices and institutional mandates that can reckon with 'little' histories and practices that often are elided with technological change and cultural shifts. The focus for these talks will be with an eye to photography in visual arts practices, the moving image as well as literature in the context of pedagogical engagements and projects.

### **Session 1 - Counting the Contemporary**

**Moderator** - Rahaab Allana

**Speakers** - Annapurna Garimella, Anusha Yadav, Abhishek Hazra

*Practices within the field of visual art, which include the moving image, have restructured the field ever since the overwhelming expansion of media practices through the digital revolution. The session is a way of asking specific media practitioners and pedagogues to discuss the ways in which they create terms of reference for the vernacular, for marginalized practices and histories and how they have changed research and teaching practices and study. Does our field of enquiry need to be further broadened? Can expanding social histories be part of this transition in media and if so, how?*

### **Artist Presentation – Karan Shrestha**

### **Session 2 - Crosscurrents**

**Moderator** - Sabeena Gadihoke

**Speakers** - Diwas Raja, Kaiwan Mehta, Abhay Sardesai

*Visual arts practices have always been concurrent with the written word as well as other inter-media forms. In the visual arts, the move towards archives and collections, the development of social media platforms, the need to use experimental formats and found material – all create ways in which the 'local' has been articulated and framed. At the same time, writing and exhibitionary forms too have expanded through works in translation, through a focus on new practices and how they enter various fields of curation. The session then speaks to practitioners across arts fields to think about ways in which they have created shifts in practice by reference to elided, fading forms of representation. Can*

*interdisciplinary mandates change how these practices are viewed?*

**Session 3** - Art and the everyday

**Moderator** – Ram Rahman

**Speakers** – Sukanya Ghosh, Hanif Kureshi, Girish Shahane

*Personal narratives and the documentation of daily life remains a focus in many teaching courses, as 'little' histories have become characteristic of photo work in the past five decades. Most recently, the steady growth of popular viewing cultures and the infinite expansion of digital simulacra in all areas of life continue to saturate our eyes and minds via mass replication, manipulation and distribution. All these practices and outputs find place in pedagogical syllabi, as well as in exhibitionary modes through events at cultural institutes, through workshops and seminars, and via international biennales. Are these directions satisfactory enough for arts fields to become more inclusive; and how have the concepts of personal history and domesticity been transformed by them?*

**Session 4** - Reframed futures

**Moderator** - Savia Viegas

**Speakers** - Naman Ahuja, Riyas Komu, Massoud Hossaini

*The linked issues of location, geography and cultural specificity that so powerfully influence the grammar of image-making today are at the core of a fraught debate about image hierarchies and the historical privileging of certain visual typologies. 'Location' as a key variable in practice is heavily problematized as we negotiate spaces in which art can be harbored. Regional and community imperatives in current image discourses therefore need attention. How have these played out in terms of museums, archaeological sites, galleries, and other festivals in the postcolonial South – examples of which can be contemporary or historical?*

**Artist Presentation** - Mohan Rao

|| Sessions will be co-chaired by **Rahaab Allana** and **Annapurna Garimella**

### **Rahaab Allana**

Rahaab Allana is the curator/publisher of the Alkazi Foundation for the Arts in New Delhi, and a Fellow of the Royal Asiatic Society in London. He has curated several exhibits, edited and contributed to national and international publications, and worked closely in museums and galleries such as The Brunei Gallery (London), Rencontres d'Arles (Espace Van Gogh), and the Rubin Museum (NY), among others. He also teaches an annual diploma course on the history of photography at Bhau Daji Lad Museum in Mumbai. Rahaab is the Founding Editor of PIX, one of India's first theme-based photography quarterlies, and is the author/collector of *Filmi Jagat: Shared Universe of Early Hindi Cinema*.

### **Annapurna Garimella**

Dr. Annapurna Garimella is a Delhi-based designer and an art historian. Her research focuses on late medieval Indic architecture and the history and practices of vernacular art forms in India after Independence. She heads Jackfruit Research and Design, an organization with a specialized portfolio of design, research and curatorial. She is also the Founding and Managing Trustee of Art, Resources and Teaching Trust, a not-for-profit organization that runs a public art library, conducts independent research projects and does teaching and advisement for college and university students and the general public. Her most recent curatorial projects include *Vernacular, in the Contemporary* (Devi Art Foundation, New Delhi) and *Faith: Manu Parekh in Banaras 1980-2012* (Art Alive, New Delhi) and *Drawing 2014* (Gallery Espace, New Delhi). Her most recent book is about a collaboration between a Rajasthani miniature painter and expatriate American photographer and is titled *The Artful Life of R. Vijay* (Serindia, 2016).

|| About the **Collaborators**

### **Serendipity Arts Foundation**

The Serendipity Arts Foundation is a collaborative platform for the arts which fosters pluralistic cultural expressions, sparking conversations around the arts while also nurturing journeys of emerging artists across South Asia. Committed to innovation, the Foundation intends to support, promote and create platforms for innovation and

creativity providing the wider public with a unique cultural and historical source of modern contemporary art and culture.

### **Serendipity Arts Festival**

The Serendipity Arts Festival is a multi-disciplinary arts Festival curated by a panel of eminent artists and institutional figures. Spread over multiple venues in Goa, the Festival is held annually each December and is now in its third year. Spanning the visual, performing, and culinary arts, SAF is a long-term cultural project that hopes to affect positive change in the arts in India on a large scale.

### **Alkazi Foundation**

The Alkazi Foundation for the Arts is a registered charitable trust in New Delhi (India), dedicated to the preservation of the cultural history of South Asia through extensive research on photography and the allied arts. The Alkazi Collection of Photography (ACP) includes an array of photographic material in varying formats, primarily shot between 1850 and 1950; and prior as well as subsequent scholarship from AFA focuses extensively on the interlinked zones of the 'metropole' and the 'colony' through anthropology, social history as well as art history.

### **Goethe-Institut / Max Mueller Bhavan Mumbai**

The Goethe-Institut / Max Mueller Bhavan Mumbai is the cultural institute of the Federal Republic of Germany and has been working actively in the fields of art, cinema, theatre, dance and literature by supporting programmes, that are interdisciplinary and promote cultural exchange of ideas. It has a state of the art gallery space, which focuses on contemporary art and photography. The institute has a well-established language department, which offers German language courses, translation courses, corporate courses and intercultural trainings, teacher training programmes and promotes the language in schools across Mumbai. The Institute has a well-stocked and efficient Library, which houses books, magazines and other research material on German culture and society.



The Alkazi Foundation  
for the Arts

