

On the initiative of Goethe-Institut/Max Mueller Bhavan Mumbai, an exchange programme was organised between the photography departments of the National Institute of Design (NID), Gandhinagar and the Academy of Fine Arts (HGB), Leipzig which ran for a period of 4 years between 2016 and 2019. Altogether 16 students and 5 faculty from the two institutions took part in the project.

The exhibition explores a spectrum of now 21 photographic works that stems out of this peculiar moment – the new and the sudden shift in culture, geography and time. The photographic works presented in the exhibition were produced as the participants ventured to make new meanings out of unfamiliar settings. How does one gaze through this moment of transition? To what extent can the artist's practice and contexts in India and Germany, be transferred and translated to the country in which they are guests at this particular moment?

Photography, an ineluctable product of industrial modernity, perhaps corrupts this notion of unfamiliar with its affinity for expanded mobilities. Everything that exists affirms its existence by travelling to us, through images, populating our books, screens and minds. We already know about a place even before we have actually been there. How does then one respond, through images, when they themselves become a subject of travelling?

When one travels, the histories of nation and culture get enmeshed with the history of one's being in this world. It is through this situation that one looks at a temporary home, a cage, a monument, a train or an album of photographs. Even if there are points of uncertainty, there are also moments of awareness: about one's own image-making practice as well as the practice of looking at images. This exhibition brings together the intersection of all these dispositions as a set of responses to the condition of moving from one place to another and inhabiting a new location with an older self.

# RESPONSES

Tarique Ahamed  
Sabrina Asche  
Swasti Bharti  
Max Bodenstedt  
Johannes Ernst  
Vamika Jain  
Annette Kisling  
Kush Kukreja  
Sophie Meuresch  
Shreyasi Pathak  
Amarnath Praful  
Sunny Pudert  
Mohan R  
Juli Schmidt  
Riti Sengupta  
Sidharthan  
Sourav Sil  
Rishi Singhal  
Matteo Visentin  
Anna Voswinckel  
Arthur Zalewski

## 13.03. – 25.04.2020

Goethe-Institut/Max Mueller  
Bhavan Mumbai

# Max Bodenstedt

Was born in Gießen, Germany in 1990. From 2011 to 2019 he studied photography with Peter Piller and Tina Bara at the Academy of Fine Arts in Leipzig. He went on an exchange in 2014 to the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design in Jerusalem, in 2015 to the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Lyon and in 2017 to the National Institute of Design in Gandhinagar.

[www.maxbodenstedt.net](http://www.maxbodenstedt.net)

## Gandhinagar, 2018

Gandhinagar

Oh town of Gandhi,  
your roads are wide,  
your skies are blue,  
I will miss the time I had with you.

You welcomed me,  
smiled bright, green and clean,  
You were my home,  
What a wonderful place to have been.

**Untitled**  
**(Part of the series**  
**„Time always passes too**  
**quickly“), 2020, ongoing**

**01**

# Amarnath Praful

Amarnath Praful is a visual artist and teacher who primarily works with Photography. Currently he is an Associate Faculty in the Master's program for Photography Design at NID Gandhinagar. His practice explores performance, text, video, and found material – often guided by the landscape, folk traditions, cultural and political histories of Kerala, India. His pedagogical concerns are in the area of representational politics, history of photography in the subcontinent, intermedia image practices and cinema studies.

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## Horizon studies

1. I tiptoe on the horizon line.
2. Balance my gaze on the visible divide which separates the land from the sky.
3. Land is everything, but the sky is grey waiting for blue.
4. I have 5 legs.
5. My feet impersonate an impressionist painter who once sketched an imagined landscape.
6. My hands are cold from waiting.
7. I want to remember an imagined west from my childhood.
8. How to photograph a german landscape without social context on instant film.
9. Instant film = Latent image\*
10. Is chemical visceral than data?
11. A friend once told me that if you don't take care of your latent image\* It will vanish in 5 years.
12. Can this also pass off as a magic trick?

Photographs made in 2015, Stockholmer Allee, Hannover, Germany  
Text written in 2020, Gandhinagar, Gujarat India.

# Sidharthan

Sidharthan was born in Thiruvalla, India in 1994. His practice revolves largely around travel and associated inquiries relating to geography, culture and space. An architect by training, he joined the National Institute of Design in 2017 to pursue a Master's degree in Photography Design. He currently lives in Kochi, India.

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## in-between, 2018

When one travels to another part of the world, to an unfamiliar geography that is completely foreign to them, the initial period is characterised by a feeling of 'in-between'ness. When all markers of a familiar geographic reality are left behind elsewhere, one almost lives in a fictional space for a bit. With time, the unfamiliar becomes familiar and this fictional space dissolves into a new lived physical reality. These photographs are the artist's explorations from the first two weeks of the exchange period, during which he was briefly suspended in the 'in-between

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# 02

# Arthur Zalewski

Arthur Zalewski (born 1971) is a German fine-art photographer and artist. He studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Leipzig with Astrid Klein and Joachim Brohm. Among others starting in 2011, he realized a series of book and photo projects with Spector Verlag Leipzig. Since 2014 Arthur Zalewski works as a lecturer in photography at the Academy of Fine Arts Leipzig. He lives in Leipzig.

## The Idea of the University (after Ian Wallace) 2015 - 2020

For the work "The Idea of the University (after Ian Wallace)" I started to photograph in April 2015 at the Academy of Art in Leipzig where I work as a lecturer in photography. An attempt to document what surrounded me at work at that time. I continued this during my stay in 2017 at the National Institute of Design Ahmedabad, India.

Basically, I assume an essayistic understanding of photography, subjective and unsystematic. The choice of the relevant visual languages in relation to the object or the narrative is an essential part of my work. In this way, I have tried to create a network of relationships between the protagonists of the exhibition and the works shown there, between personal, general and purely practical demands. as lecturer in photography at the Academy of Fine Arts Leipzig. He lives in Leipzig.

# Sophie Meuresch

Sophie Meuresch (\*1994 in Braunschweig) studies Photography in the class of Heidi Specker at the Academy of Fine Arts Leipzig. In September 2018 she received a bachelor's degree in Photography of Folkwang University of the Arts in Essen. In addition, she was enrolled in the Media School of Angela Melitopoulos at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts in Copenhagen in 2016/17. Exhibitions have been in Berlin, Montepulciano, Copenhagen, Essen, Leipzig and Darmstadt. Her bachelor's project, the self-published book „Nichts bleibt vergessen“ was exhibited at Folkwang Finale in Essen in 2018. Together with Jana Mila Lippitz she had a one-month-residency in Vairano, Ticino, Switzerland in May 2018. In September 2017 she had a residency at Kolleg für Musik und Kunst in Montepulciano, Italy, where she collaborated with Elisa Kühnl and exhibited the video-sound installation *somo*. 2016/17 she gained a grant of Deutschlandstipendium and since 2017 she has been a scholarship holder of the Studienstiftung des deutschen Volkes. Sophie Meuresch lives and works in Leipzig.

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## Composition (2020)

The work reflects the artist's interest in structures, surfaces, materials and how human beings correlate with them. We see details of historical architecture, steps and different kinds of models out of steel and wood. The dimension of the objects in the images are elusive. Most of the spaces seem fattened by the image-taking process; they turn into a repetitive pattern. Some images capture a man building self-supporting structures with small wood sticks and big hands: a fragile situation, that oscillates between destruction and composition. A moment, that is omnipresent in a world, that suffers under the hands of humankind. Nevertheless, a huge fascination for human creation emerges from the work. As very little spaces can be attached to specific places, there is a certain placelessness, that gets increased by the fact of having mixed images from India and Germany. A composition can be found in two levels: in the dense net of lines and strings from the images and in the bigger dimension of the wall installation, where the images speak with one another and open up different reading directions for the viewer.

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# 03

# Juli Schmidt

Juli Schmidt lives and works in Berlin and Leipzig.

Since 2015 Photography in the class of Heidi Specker, Academy of Fine Arts Leipzig

2019 – 2020 Sculpture in the class of Monica Bonvicini, Berlin University of the Arts

2013 – 2015 Master Sociology, University of Bielefeld

2012 – 2013 Traveling through South America (Argentina, Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia)

2011 – 2012 Voluntary work in Santiago de Chile, Chile

2006 – 2011 Bachelor Sociology and Pedagogy, University of Wuppertal

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## Transcending matters (2018 – 2019)

Six thousand kilometers from home. It's not six million light-years from Earth, but at least it's a significant initial approach. And sometimes it should be exactly about that: An impression of strangeness that sharpens perception and transcends the ways of thinking as well as routines of action and the certainty of natural standards. It's like in Stanislaw Lem's novel *Eden*: Five astronauts crash on an unexplored planet. While struggling out of the shattered spaceship without any major injuries they enter a world that questions all knowledge of shape and form. It's a world where the crew reaches their limits of conventional means of thought and language. The scientists explore the organic and inorganic phenomena as well as the social coexistence of the inhabitants and try to draw a picture of the planet despite their anthropocentric worldview.

# Mohan R

Mohan R was born in Chennai in 1995. After completing his bachelor in Visual Communication from Madras Christian College, he went on to work in the field of advertising as a brand strategist for two years. Wanting to follow his interest, he joined the National Institute of Design in 2018 to pursue his masters in Photography Design and is currently studying there. He recently attended Hochschule für Grafik und Buchkunst, Leipzig, Germany as an exchange student in winter 2019. Mohan is intrigued by the historicity and transition of spaces. He enquires and documents this phenomenon through photography and image-making. He is also interested in working with archives and multimedia.

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## The History Remains, 2019

Germany used to traditionally import its cotton yarn from England and Switzerland. The taxes on imports of coarse-grade thread were high and demand for cotton rose drastically. In June 1884, the Leipziger Baumwollspinnerei Aktiengesellschaft bought a plot of ten hectares in Leipzig, Germany and erected the largest cotton mill of continental Europe (it remained the largest till 1907). The result was a fascinating factory town with workers' housing, garden and own kindergarten. Up to 4,000 people used to work here in three shifts. Since the termination of cotton yarn production in 1992, talks were going on to demolish the colossal structure. But some artists came forward to revive the once-abandoned factory space. Today Spinnerei is an artists' settlement with over hundreds of studios and galleries. Even though the interiors of the factory aren't recognisable due to constant renovations, the exterior is almost untouched or carefully restructured in some parts. The artist's photographic enquiry here focuses primarily on the historicity of this space and its transformation over time.

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# 04

# Riti Sengupta

Born in 1995, Riti completed her Bachelor's Degree from Lady Brabourne College, Calcutta. She is presently pursuing a Master's in Photography Design at the National Institute of Design, Gandhinagar. As a student with a scholarship from the Goethe-Institut, she was part of an exchange program in 2016 at Hochschule für Grafik und Buchkunst (Academy of Fine Arts) Leipzig, Germany. She was also an Invisible Photographer Asia Art Awards 2018 finalist and the recipient of the NOOR Stanley Greene Scholarship in 2018. Her works have been published in magazines and newspapers such as The Hindu, PIX and Campus Diaries. She has developed a keen interest in editorial writing and photo books, alongside photography.

@riti\_sengupta

## In Another Country, 2016

During her stay in Leipzig, Sengupta was visiting the temporary homes of people who had sought refuge in Germany, far away from their homeland. They became friends. Through the course of their conversations, the artist began collecting their photographs and memories from the places that they had left behind. This work is a collective photo album of the people she met.

# Johannes Ernst

Johannes Ernst lives and works in Leipzig, Germany. He studied visual communication at the University of Applied Sciences Düsseldorf and photography at Hochschule für Grafik und Buchkunst Leipzig (HGB Leipzig). Currently he is a „Meisterschüler“ in the class for Photography and Media guided by Joachim Brohm at the HGB Leipzig.

## Recovery, 2019

On New Year's Eve 2019, 11 months after the exchange project between the National Institute of Design Ahmedabad and the Academy of Fine Arts Leipzig, a hard drive was stolen from my backpack at Frankfurt Central Station. It contained my entire photographic archive about Indian modernism. The loss was irreplaceable. A few weeks later I was back on a flight to Delhi. This time I had the possibility of a reconstructive perspective when re-photographing places that I had previously visited. Among other places, I visited the Hunnarshala Foundation in a small town of Bhuj, near the Pakistani border in the state of Gujarat.

After the devastating earthquake in 2001, the Hunnarshala Foundation was founded by Indian scientists, architects and designers, to offer the people of this region new job opportunities and apprenticeships.

During the reconstruction, it became clear that many of the artisans had a huge knowledge of traditional building techniques, revealing the strengths of original building systems and forms. Through collaboration and various construction projects, the local workers can expand their technical skills and artistic craft, and establish their own companies. The research of modern building science combined with traditional knowledge, advances the commitment for the production of high-quality buildings, infrastructures and social spaces. This applied research shows that there is a sustainable method of knowledge transfer, which requires not only an understanding of technology but also that of people and places. This human-centered design approach was the original inspiration for me to reconstruct these social space photographically and convert it into the medium of a photobook.

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# 05

# Kush Kukreja

Kush Kukreja was born in Delhi, India in 1994. He is presently a student of the Photography Design program in at the National Institute of Design, Gandhinagar. His practices and enquiries root majorly in the 'post-truth' era. His photographic enquiries discourse on the idea of fictionality and non-fictionality around the idea of an image, the interlinkages within other art forms, and politics of representation. He has also worked with "Third Space Collective" as an assistant director, which is a theatre group based in Delhi, for almost a year.

@kushkukreja

## 397101115, 2019

The project was an attempt to build a narrative about the city of Leipzig. The artist took several trains to reach different ends of the city, photographing architecture, built environment and text which responded to the socialist housing societies and the naturalisation that he could see around the city of Leipzig.

# Anna Voswinckel

Anna Voswinckel is a Berlin-based artist and curator with a background in Visual Communication, Cultural and Gender Studies. In her artistic practice, she combines curating, photography, writing and graphic design. From 2012 to 2018 she was teaching at the photography department of Hochschule für Grafik und Buchkunst Leipzig.

## Strasse der Erinnerung, Berlin, 2018

„Straße der Erinnerung“ (Road of Remembrance) is a publicly accessible private monument parkour in the Berlin district of Moabit. It consists of several busts of famous personalities of the arts, sciences and politics, who according to the monument's founder Ernst Freiburger, a German entrepreneur and real estate manager, "achieved extraordinary things and demonstrated exemplary attitude in the most difficult times". The busts are presented on pedestals, most of them carrying citations of the person. The "Road of Remembrance" was installed at Freiburger's real estate property, „Spreebogen“ in Berlin-Tiergarten, an office and industrial park. By establishing a publicly accessible monument on a private space, the entrepreneur not only cements cultural hegemony through the process of compilation but primarily seeks to gentrify his real estate property through statements of artists who would turn over in their grave if they saw busts and statements of themselves in front of this built environment.

## Institute of Indology, Ahmedabad, 2019

The Institute of Indology in Ahmedabad was designed in 1962 by Balkrishna Doshi. Its purpose was to house ancient manuscripts, a research center and a museum, which exists until today.

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# 06

# Sabrina Asche

Sabrina Asche (b. 1981 Blankenburg, Germany) is a multi-disciplinary visual artist who works with photography, video, sound and text as well as diverse techniques of arts and crafts like silk screen printing. In 2010 she was awarded a scholarship from the Federal Ministry for Research and Education to study photography at the University of Fine Arts Braunschweig. As the recipient of a German Academic Exchange scholarship (ISAP/DAAD) in 2013, she spent a semester studying in the Fine Arts Department at the Institute Technology Bandung, Indonesia. After completing her BA in Photography in 2014, she spent some time living and working in Bangladesh. In October 2014, she was accepted into the MA program and Class of Fine Art Photography and Moving Image under Prof. Tina Bara, at Academy of Fine Arts Leipzig where she graduated in February 2020. During her MA studies, she advanced her work about empowering structures between gender and labour, and vestimentary communication. A Goethe Institute scholarship in 2018 afforded another study semester abroad at the National Institute of Design in Ahmedabad, India. Globalisation and labour, production and conditions, emancipation and the understanding of values and sustainability are factors, that permeate her artistic practice and work.

# Pattern, global, 1954

ATMA stands for “Ahmedabad Mill’s Owner Association Building“ and is the headquarters of the employer’s association founded in 1891. It is committed to promote and protect the interests of the organised sector of the textile industry in and around Ahmedabad – one of the most important industrial locations in India. Designed by Le Corbusier and completed in 1954, the building symbolises the activities of this association. It is described as a modern monument and a landmark of architectural history and testifies to the early modernist aspirations of a community of industrialists. The building material, described as “Béton Brut“, with its varied rhythmic surface structures, is the focus of this work. Pixels become grid dots and, like a fabric, are interwoven through a manual process. “Pattern, global, 1954“ explores the creation of unique pieces through a medium that is intended for series production. The work resists mass production through a manual work process that is inscribed in the large-format silk-screen prints; a dialogue that, then and now, focuses on the mutual transfer of knowledge.

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# Vamika Jain

Vamika Jain was born in Meerut, India. She finished her Master of Design in Photography at the National Institute of Design, India in 2019 and graduated as an architect in 2016. Her practice is an inquiry into the environment, ecology, places, non-places and intersections of popular culture and visual media. She is interested in working with photographs, collages, text, sound and installations. Through her work, she intends to make people inquisitive about their interaction with technology and more aware of the perception of natural and urban landscapes.

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# When I Couldn't Look Them In The Eye, 2017

Zoos in all parts of the world function as institutions of entertainment and awareness channels about animals. They are popularised amongst children as places to ‘look’ at their favorite animals. Under the umbrella of knowledge and conservation, is it right to keep animals in constructed cages? The gaze projected on animals in menageries is intrusive and voyeuristic. Humans, greedy for a better view, constantly desire to get closer to these animals in the enclosures. The project is an inquiry into the human gaze on animals and their interaction with them in a human-controlled setting. The project has been photographed in India, Germany and the Czech Republic and finds a similar pattern in human behavior around zoo animals across all three countries.

# 07



# Shreyasi Pathak

Shreyasi Pathak was born in Pune, India. Her practice explores the issues of environment, gender; representation. Her practice lies in research as well as phenomenological responses. She works with photography, found objects, text, sound, and installation. She has a bachelor's degree in Architecture and is currently pursuing a master's degree in Photography at National Institute of Design, Gandhinagar. In 2019 she was a part of Spinning Triangles summer school at SAVVY Contemporary, Berlin (Germany).

@wannabegarbagewarrior

## Untitled, 2017

The body of work brings together various registers of speech from different sources (books, articles, interviews, blogs, etc.) to talk about the idea of looking and the gaze. The work also intends to raise questions about one's position in their immediate context and in the larger picture. The photographs and the screenshots have been printed and selectively blackened with charcoal to leave only slits, as if peeping or peering at the text, as if viewing becomes a clandestine act.

# Matteo Visentin

Matteo Visentin, \*1988 in Treviso (Italy). He studied visual art at IUAV in Venice (Italy). He currently lives in Leipzig (Germany) and studies photography at HGB.

## medleys, 2019

A Holobiont is „an assemblage of host and the many species living in or around it“. Holobionts are organisms made of a simpler form of organisms that co-exist symbiotically and whose interaction allow the whole to function. In holobionts, the whole, as one organism, can only function when all its constituting part exist autonomously and through their interactions and collaboration guarantee the structure to survive and flourish. Reciprocal frames are self-supporting structures built using only wood rods, not joined with any kind of ropes or nails. The fundamental concept of reciprocal frames is that of the mutual action-or relationships-: every rode supports and is supported by another rode so that the structure can only stand if all its constituting elements are in balance. The failure of a single element may lead to the failure of the whole structure. Because of the lack of any other kind of support that ties the elements together, self-supporting structures only result in collaborative work.

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08

# Tarique Ahamed

Tarique Ahamed was born in Kozhikode, India in 1995. He primarily works with photography and video. Through his practice, he engages with notions of memory and time, past and present, and still and moving image. His interest in photography arrived through his deep investment in cinema. He is currently pursuing a master's degree in Photography from the National Institute of Design, Gandhinagar.

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## Something about moving from a place to another, 2018

These photographs were made during travels around Europe, through the frame of a moving train window. The subject of the photographs reminisces two very important motifs in the history of lens-based media: the train and the window. Reminiscing the Lumiere's train and the window at Le Gras, the series marks a quintessential moment of transit.

# Sourav Sil

Sourav Sil was born in Kolkata, India in 1994. He is presently a student of the Photography Design program at the National Institute of Design (NID), Gandhinagar. Through his practice, he attempts to inquire into the relationships between reality and representation, history and culture, memory and politics, and time and image. He usually works between and across various media and forms: image, text, book, print and sound. His work on the architecture of NID was part of the exhibition "Modernism in India – Through NID Archives" in Museo Cabanas, Guadalajara, Mexico (2019-20).

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## A Travelogue for Windows, 2018

In the duration of the exchange program, Sil had travelled to fifteen cities in ten different countries in Europe. In none of the journeys that he made, he carried his camera. Only when he would return, in between the journeys, to his temporary home in Leipzig he felt the impulse to look through the viewfinder: to look at the windows of his apartment and think about a photograph he had once found in a book about architecture – an image of Sigmund Freud's chamber, of the mirror that hung on the mullion of one of its windows; an image that he could neither forget nor recollect in those fleeting moments of disenchantment

# 14

# 09

# Swasti Bharti

Swasti Bharti recently graduated from the National Institute of Design after pursuing a Masters in Photography and also briefly attended Hochschule für Grafik und Buchkunst Leipzig as an exchange student with a scholarship from Goethe Institute. She uses a multidisciplinary approach in all of her projects working with photographs, installations, texts, videos and projections. Since early 2018, she has been working on the project “Transient Mothers” that is a peek into the (mostly) hidden lives of surrogate mothers in India. Her research project „Es war einmal“ was presented at the 25th European Conference on South Asian Studies held in Paris, July 2018.

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## Loneliness 2.0, 2016

Loneliness 2.0 is a reflection of my feelings from a few years ago when I lived in Germany. Walking through the city, in the chilly winters, I missed a certain someone's presence. I sheathed myself in the warm comfort of our memories together. Memories of a life I once lived, in surroundings so similar, and feelings so familiar. I wanted to be left alone. I wanted to feel lonely again, with him, even in his absence.

# Annette Kisling

Annette Kisling lives in Berlin and Leipzig. She studied at the art colleges in Kassel, Offenbach, and Hamburg. She has spent significant periods of time abroad in Zurich, Rotterdam, Paris, Marfa (Texas), Venice, and Bangalore (India) with fellowships as well as while conducting her artistic work. In her photography series, she describes experiences with the architecture that surrounds her. Her particular focus is 20th-century modernity. Since 2009, Annette Kisling has been a professor of photography at the Academy of Fine Arts in Leipzig.

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## Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, 2019

## Institute of Indology, Ahmedabad, 2019

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# 10

# Sunny Pudert

Sunny Pudert lives and works in Berlin and Leipzig. In her works – that range from photography to video, text and sculpture – she often creates narratives, that center around contemporary (pop)culture, oscillate between the virtual and the real or blend personal with universal memories and experiences.

since 2015 Photography in the class of Heidi Specker, Academy of Fine Arts Leipzig  
2011 – 2015 European Literatures (Master), Humboldt University of Berlin

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## Signs of Absence (2018)

Metal, pink paint  
Photo Documentation

The work Signs Of Absence was developed during the academic exchange at the National Institute of Design in Gandhinagar/Ahmedabad. The intervention in public space refers to the concept of proxemics and its effects of gender and ethnicity on interpersonal distance preference. The object traces the artist's body size and measurement of her personal space zone and was installed in several public places in Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar.

## Untitled (2018 – 2019)

# Rishi Singhal

Rishi Singhal is the Discipline Lead of NID's master's program in Photography Design in the department of Communication Design. He has received his education from the Centre for Environmental Planning & Technology (CEPT) Ahmedabad, Visual Studies Workshop (VSW), Rochester, NY and the College of Visual & Performing Arts (CVPA), Syracuse University, NY

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## Berlin Street Views, 2004

Rooted in a certain lineage of Neue Sachlichkeit (New Objectivity), these street views depict the built-form in the city of Berlin, in and around the areas where the Berlin Wall once stood between 1961 and 1989. The Eastern bloc influences are quite apparent in the architecture in this area, often also reflected in the built form on the Westside; perhaps a reminder of the austerity exercised during the war years, as well as this being a heavily militarised zone until the fall of the wall. Much has changed since the work was made in 2004. Several of these buildings have now been retrofitted with very different materials and in many cases given way to newer construction.

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# 11