



**Students'
Biennale
2018**

**EXPANDED
EDUCATION
PROGRAMME**

Students' Biennale 2018

A Report



FOUNDATION
FOR INDIAN
CONTEMPORARY ART



KOCHI
BIENNALE
FOUNDATION



**EXPANDED
EDUCATION
PROGRAMME**

Students' Biennale 2018

Report compiled by

Vidya Shivadas, Bhooma Padmanabhan & Agastaya Thapa

Conceptualised and Facilitated by

Foundation for Indian Contemporary Art

in Collaboration with Kochi Biennale Foundation

Supported by

TATA TRUSTS



FOUNDATION
FOR INDIAN
CONTEMPORARY ART



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BIENNALE
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Students' Biennale 2018

SUPPORTED BY

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IN ASSOCIATION WITH



EDUCATION PARTNERS



VENUE SUPPORT: Ajay Mariwala (VKL), Armaan and Co. (Armaan Building)

Expanded Education Programme was conceptualised and facilitated by Foundation for Indian Contemporary Art, in collaboration with Kochi Biennale Foundation, as part of Students' Biennale 2018

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Expanded Education Programme

The Expanded Education Programme (EEP), which emerged from the very heart of the Students' Biennale (SB), sees itself as a space for learning and a platform to reflect on learning. The Programme which developed as an organic extension to the Students' Biennale's last two editions (2014 & 2016), was made necessary by the need to re-engage with India's vast network of art colleges and its material and pedagogic environments.

SB in all its three editions has been the materialisation of very ambitious and at times even unwieldy processes. The exhibition platforms have visibilised and brought together many complex entities – pedagogic systems, the different sites, articulations of practitioners, their energies and aspirations, the diverse curatorial interventions. These experiments at bringing together the two systems of education and exhibition have generated a great deal of energy and engagement.

Running parallel to the 2018 exhibition platform, *Making as Thinking*, the Expanded Education Programme (EEP) was introduced as a pilot to undertake a long-term enquiry into the paradigms from within which art students emerge into the world – their institutions, educators/mentors and their local contexts of learning. At a time when the art world has acknowledged and embraced the 'educational turn' what

do we make of our decades-old government art schools and expanding list of newer ones? What roles and modes do educators need to employ? And what do students need to be equipped with to engage in an art practice that extends beyond making?

The future of art pedagogy is being discussed in many places in the world around key issues of quality, relevance and access. And these urgent dialogues move from a larger critical positioning of art, the role of the artist and what constitutes art education to more specific challenges that students are facing whether around debt, imposition of standardised curriculums or the impoverishment and the dismantling of public sector (art) education. EEP emerged out of this desire to be locally attentive and rooted to the conditions of higher art education in the Indian context and at the same time participate in this global dialogue on the question of art pedagogy.

Thus, EEP's focus was on expanding the definition and scope of what an educational outreach project could do with art colleges in India. It was not only to acknowledge the current status of art education, but explore possibilities of what all it could become and how art could be taught with renewed energy and rigour.

The Backdrop

As with any project that brings together several dynamic organisations, SB 2018 initial meetings saw all stakeholders approach the question of art education in India through their own perspectives, and the options brought to

the table included proposals for surveys of art institutional infrastructure, redressal of curriculum needs as per international developments, creation of teaching modules, workshops and resources, engaging with larger questions of pedagogy for the arts, creating greater accessibility for students, readdressing the potential of student exhibitions and residencies, and the possibility of creating a centralised access system on art schools in India.

There was one point of general consensus – the SB needed to streamline and take forward the 2016 edition’s student-curator-led workshops and involve experienced educators to develop customised workshops for the college/group they engage with. The other point of agreement was on the question of focusing on pedagogical frameworks in art colleges, and understanding how similar curriculums and departments function in different institutions.

From all these discussions, we were able to create the focus of Expanded Education Programme to:

- » Develop and run education workshops at art college campuses across the country;
- » Keep it educator-led;
- » Focus the workshop, in equal parts, on theory and practice;
- » Understand existing pedagogical frameworks put to practice in the colleges;
- » Use this as a research platform to study the various institutional environments in which art is taught, and gauge possibilities for future collaborations for SB.

The Workshops

A set of nine workshops were envisioned as a series of engagements with students and teachers to identify existing frameworks of learning across art colleges in India, and to imagine new directions in pedagogical practices within and around these institutions.

The workshop model had already been employed by the previous years’ curators, who in their bid to reach out to art college students and develop works for the SB had created site-specific workshops that saw students collaborate, share ideas and skills and present group projects. Not only were the workshops able to engage the students in brief but intensive ways, but allowed the curators to observe the process of learning and create a lab for self-reflection and critique amongst the young artists.

Taking up this thread, the EEP envisioned the 2018 workshops as independent platforms of exchange of knowledge and collective learning led by educators who have been re-imagining modes of teaching in their own practice. The workshops were neither necessarily about what the students were already learning in school nor were they exclusively about introducing the students to new ideas. They were seen as evolving platforms of learning and sharing experiences. The workshops sought to acknowledge the local knowledge which the students came equipped with as well as the personal stories they had to share.

The educators were brought in to create new ecologies to understand, articulate and develop these into new forms. The

process gained greater focus through the workshops, enabling participants to see new value in research, theory and material. While some of the workshops were re-articulating existing knowledge albeit in a 'slowed down' and more nuanced fashion, others were engaging the participants in new perspectives of learning. They allowed students to think of their own experience and work through fresh conceptual frameworks beyond academic markers based on mediums and themes. The workshops included site visits, readings, craft exercises, poetry writing, body and movement, poster making, student-presentations and more, expanding the lab or studio from the college into the city and online.

The Educators

The cog in the wheel that made it happen was the educator. Working as part of the EEP team right from the beginning, the educators were crucial in framing the programme, setting the larger learning goals, meeting academic criteria and paying attention to the smallest of details in the classroom.

EEP invited nine Indian and international educators who individually or in collaboration with a colleague, conceptualised and ran workshops specific to the colleges and sites that had been identified by the programme. As professionals - artists, curators, art historians, performers, institution builders and as teachers - they brought a wealth of knowledge with them with the common aim of creating an optimal space for learning.

The educator's expertise and engagement beyond the

disciplinary bounds of arts, into areas such as theatre and performance, cinema, ecology and urban design, poetry, etc., was made visible during the workshops which allowed the students to imagine their own education beyond specialised fields of knowledge and skill. With a deep working knowledge of functioning within university systems, combined with their own experience as artists and practitioners in the art world and being invested in emerging pedagogies in education in the global and local contexts, the educators were in a unique place of being able to work with local contexts and resources. Many educators reached out to other professionals in the field of arts, education, ecology, theatre and film to participate as resource persons and observers thus allowing cross-disciplinary dialogues to emerge. The educators' role in the EEP further emphasised their importance as mentors whose role extended beyond the classroom in shaping students to become engaged participants in greater social roles.

The Conference

Following the six-months of conducting workshops we brought together the insights gathered through this process at an international conference titled *Pedagogical In-Flux and the Art of Education* which took place in Kochi on March 21-22, 2019. The conference explored the systemic shifts in global (art) education that is redefining the roles and significance of art schools as one of the primary spaces of learning and knowledge production. It extended key questions that emerged from the Programme, focusing on learner-centric and artist/educator-led pedagogy, technologies of

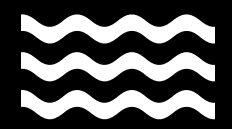
teaching, new materialism and processes of making, and the significance of locations/site in artistic practices. Even as we thought of newer pedagogic models to replace the traditional art school studio/classroom, it became inevitable to excavate and expand the potential of the art school as 'laboratories for thinking' by diversification and intensification of learning environments. The conference report is included within this publication.

Publication Structure

The Publication has most importantly involved ideation on its structure and its forms of address. It was agreed that this text would firstly address educators across the country – mainly teachers in colleges, but also independent educators working with museums/foundations/schools – to present the EEP as an experimental set of exercises, within and outside the classroom, that addresses important questions related to contemporary pedagogy in the arts.

The Publication thus preserves the original categories of workshops as prototypes which can be imagined in various ways according to your own context. Each workshop/chapter includes a report, a brief institutional overview as well as workshop schedule and a section titled 'Exercises' which are condensed versions of the forms and modes of engagement that the EEP educators worked with. The chapters also include interviews with the educators to make visible the contexts from which they have developed their modes of teaching, their primary concerns as art educators today, and their own trajectories in the field.

A project of this nature involves many people and the publication ends with a very long list of names that need acknowledgement - the sponsors who made the programme possible, the institutions that hosted us, the educators and resource persons who conducted the sessions, documentation teams and technical assistants that gave the workshops their afterlives, the Kochi Biennale Foundation team members for timely logistical and organisational support as well as FICA team for their inputs, and last but not the least the students who wholeheartedly participated in the workshops and gave us so much of their time and energy.



NOTE ON SURVEYS CONDUCTED

In 2014 when the Students' Biennale was first launched, we were aware of the ambitious parallel survey that had been undertaken by our partner organisation Foundation for Indian Art and Education (FIAE) which was a nation-wide survey on the state of fine art colleges in India. This provided us with a point of departure to shape the focus of the Expanded Education Programme (EEP) survey and envision it also as a series of workshops.

The FIAE Survey

FIAE set out to collate data on institutions given the fact that despite the large number of art colleges in the country, we still struggle to answer basic questions about them. Here, FIAE found governmental and other institutional data lacking, and incomplete at best.

This starting point became a much deeper, rooted effort to understand the role that the fine art institutions in India play. While artistic practices continue to grow like never before alongside the growth of private galleries and art fairs, the role of the art college, across its many iterations through the colonial-era, state, central, public, private universities, remains largely uncharted. The FIAE survey became interested in providing this overview of the state of art educational institutions in the country.

In 2014, 31 colleges from South India were covered under the survey and the data from this informed an educational conclave in 2015 held in collaboration with Kochi Biennale Foundation.

By 2018, 82 colleges were covered in 14 states and this data was presented at a conference *Art Education in India: Challenges and Possibilities*, organised by FIAE in Goa in the same year.

The survey conducted by FIAE, by the researcher-surveyors approaching each college, essentially focused on putting together standard primary data. The survey was divided into four sections that included:

- » **Basic Details of the Institution:** This included the type of college, degree-levels offered, tuition fees, language of instruction, admission criteria and reservation for SC/ST/OBC candidates.
- » **Facilities/Resources Availability:** This covered the requirements as per the art colleges are concerned, including studio space, infrastructure needs; resource, library and archival material, and whether they are regularly renewed.
- » **Programmes Offered:** This section covers the training that the faculty and students receive beyond the purview of their courses – from extra-curricular programmes and discussions conducted in conjunction within an arts curriculum to the encouragement of art-related events and activities in the town/city, or even workshops conducted within the department.
- » **General Feedback from the Department:** This section was filled by the institution to highlight particular areas that may be lacking, or difficulties faced by them. This required some critical feedback on evaluation of teacher performances and more.

Even as the work on the Students' Biennale continued on a parallel track with a team of 15 curators focusing on the exhibition platform, the FIAE survey formed an important backdrop. For the 2014 edition specifically, the FIAE questionnaire informed the curators' modes of engagement with the institution and the students.

Expanded Education Programme Survey

For the 2018 edition, as part of the Expanded Education Programme, we decided to engage with the survey format more seriously and developed a questionnaire to the FIAE survey. The EEP questionnaire was aimed at a small sample of students, who had participated in our workshops, to provide us with a student-centric understanding of the institutions.

While the FIAE questionnaire covered the quantitative aspect of the institution, accounting for official details, figures, and department structures, the EEP survey sought to expand the data to an additional qualitative layer to address students' views on the same. With the survey, we hoped to gain a more thorough understanding of the facilities and support offered to the students, from their teachers to department at large, and finally, the institution, through funding, curriculum, resources, and more. The survey was largely meant to be reflective of the students, with a few prompts to strike different resonances.

By and large, the EEP survey was divided into three sections:

» **Art Practice and Discursive Space:** The first part looked at the discursive grounds available to students, from the

discussions in the classroom to availability to outside exhibitions, exposure to specialised workshops, and more. This also looked at accessibility around art, through questions around (written, spoken, reading) language and prior and current exposure to art.

» **Infrastructure:** This section asked students to rate the variety of infrastructure offered - including access to computers and media equipment, art material, library and specifically contemporary art literature, and crucially, studio space. Other forms of support structures were also highlighted such as availability of counselling centres and comfort level in classroom.

» **Before and After the Course:** The final section aimed to understand the professional trajectory students might take, asking a few basic questions in regards to their artistic background, and further, how they see future work prospects.

The questionnaire was translated into Hindi and Marathi while oral translations were undertaken in Tamil for the students in the Chennai workshop. In hindsight we realise that translations into other languages would have supported the process more. Time was another factor given the 70-plus questions that were included in the questionnaire. In some workshops we were able to set aside a day for this but in others given the dense nature of the workshops themselves, the students were left to fill the document in their free time. Nonetheless a small but concentrated sample of students did participate in the exercise - a total of 191 students of which 43 percent were female students - and offered us some inferences.

The number of schools addressed through this survey was much smaller than the FIAE sample, with a majority of the students coming from nine art colleges in the different cities and institutions where the workshops were held. An additional 20-30 percent students from 20 other institutions were also invited to be part of the workshops and filled in the questionnaires as well. In total we had 70 percent of the participating students fill in the questionnaires.

The surveys were collated and examined by data analyst Dr Marina Rai. Given the sensitive nature of some of the questions we gave the students the option to answer the questionnaires anonymously.

Findings from EEP Survey

We have chosen to highlight a few of the findings in this publication. Students assessed the various infrastructure made available to them and this data has been included at the end of every workshop section. Other samples of data have been clustered together in this chapter. These range from questions regarding economic conditions of students as well as whether their courses encourage them to work collaboratively.

The data included here also correlate with the workshops in terms of content explored, methods deployed and issues that were raised. For example the question of language was addressed in the questionnaire to see if there were anomalies between languages in which resources are available and the languages in which students think and discuss. The data proved this was the case and it cannot

be stated enough that we need many more texts in regional languages so that students can access them. The Kalady workshop, conducted almost entirely in Malayalam, helped us further reflect on what this translation exercise actually entailed. As Dr Santhosh noted that while building a resource of translated texts was essential, it was also equally important to adequately annotate and relate these texts to particular socio-linguistic knowledge traditions of different regions. In the Guwahati workshop, there was a strong component around mental health with resource persons Dr Sangeeta and Abhijit Goswami leading sessions with students to explore well-being and emotional health. We included questions around access to counselling centres recognising the pressing need for these facilities in educational institutions. Given the emphasis on technology in many of workshops, we included our data on access to digital media within curriculums and asked students what their sources of learning were.

Many of the workshops also focused on an active engagement with the city and asked students to explore this active environment as a resource. This drove us to ask questions about the level of involvement of students with issues of environment, social protests and movements, questions of caste, religion and gender.

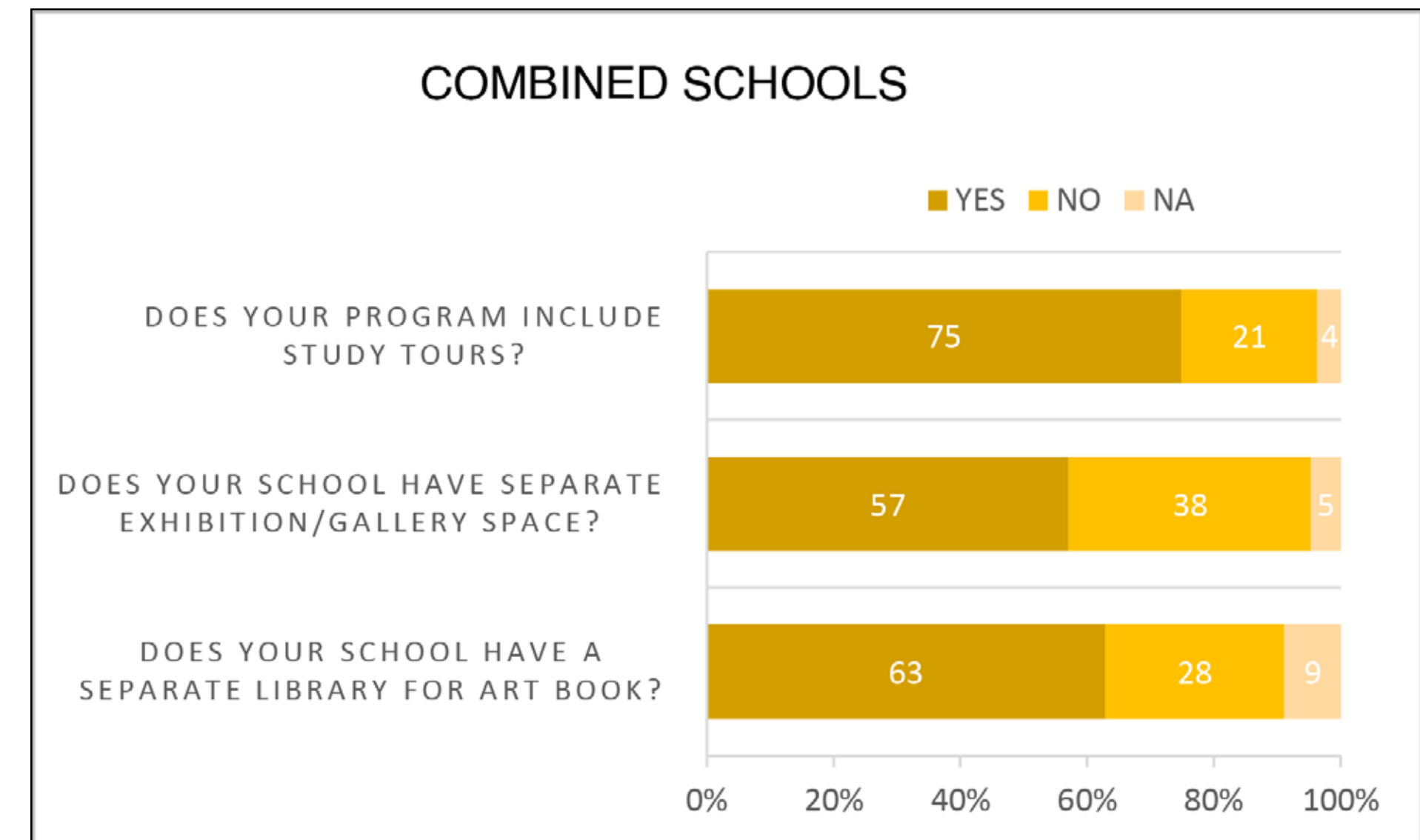
The survey, presented via fragments in this publication, is the start of a larger study that needs to be carried out with the art students at various institutions. Like FIAE has stated, there is very little information out there to understand the art education landscape whether in terms of their pedagogic and administrative structures, or in terms of

the students' understanding and requirements of these learning spaces. It leaves us with little doubt that more research needs to be conducted on the ground.

Infrastructure

At the end of every workshop section we included a table on the students' perception of resources available to them in their particular institutions. As mentioned before, a majority of these students belonged to the college where the workshop was held whereas a few additional students from the same city or in some cases state also filled out these documents.

The questions on infrastructure ranged from access to facilities like furnace, metal casting and carving foundry to studio equipment, and access to computers and the internet as well as studio facilities. Below we present one such combined data on the students' perceptions on the availability of resources like gallery spaces, libraries and study tours.

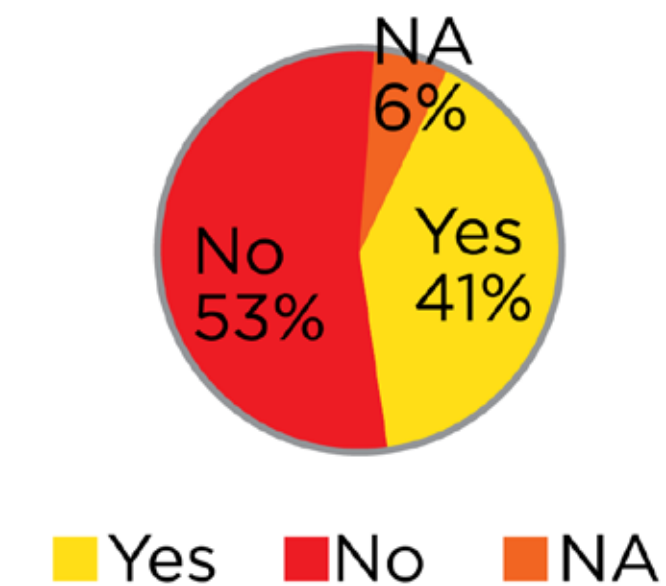


New Media

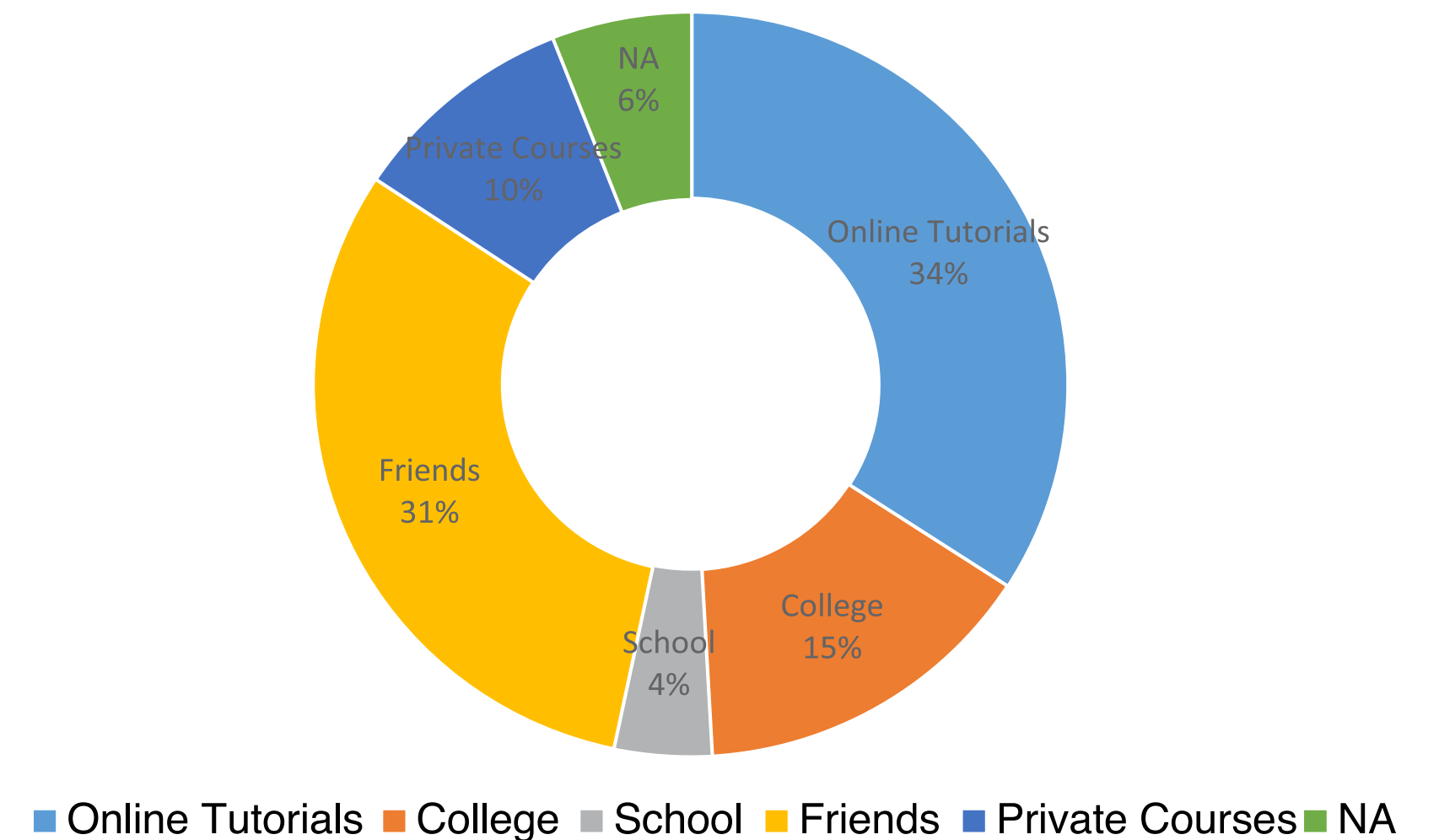
From the FIAE survey close to 79 percent of the colleges answered affirmatively when asked whether they provided with provisions for New Media and materials. The question of course is framed rather open-endedly and it is not very clear how institutions define these provisions.

From the EEP survey also 41 percent students acknowledged that the schools provided them with skill development in digital media. In another question on their main sources of learning they ticked Online Tutorials (34 percent) and Friends (31 percent). Only 15 percent of them stated the College as a source of learning.

Does your programme involve skill development to work with digital media? (Data for all schools)

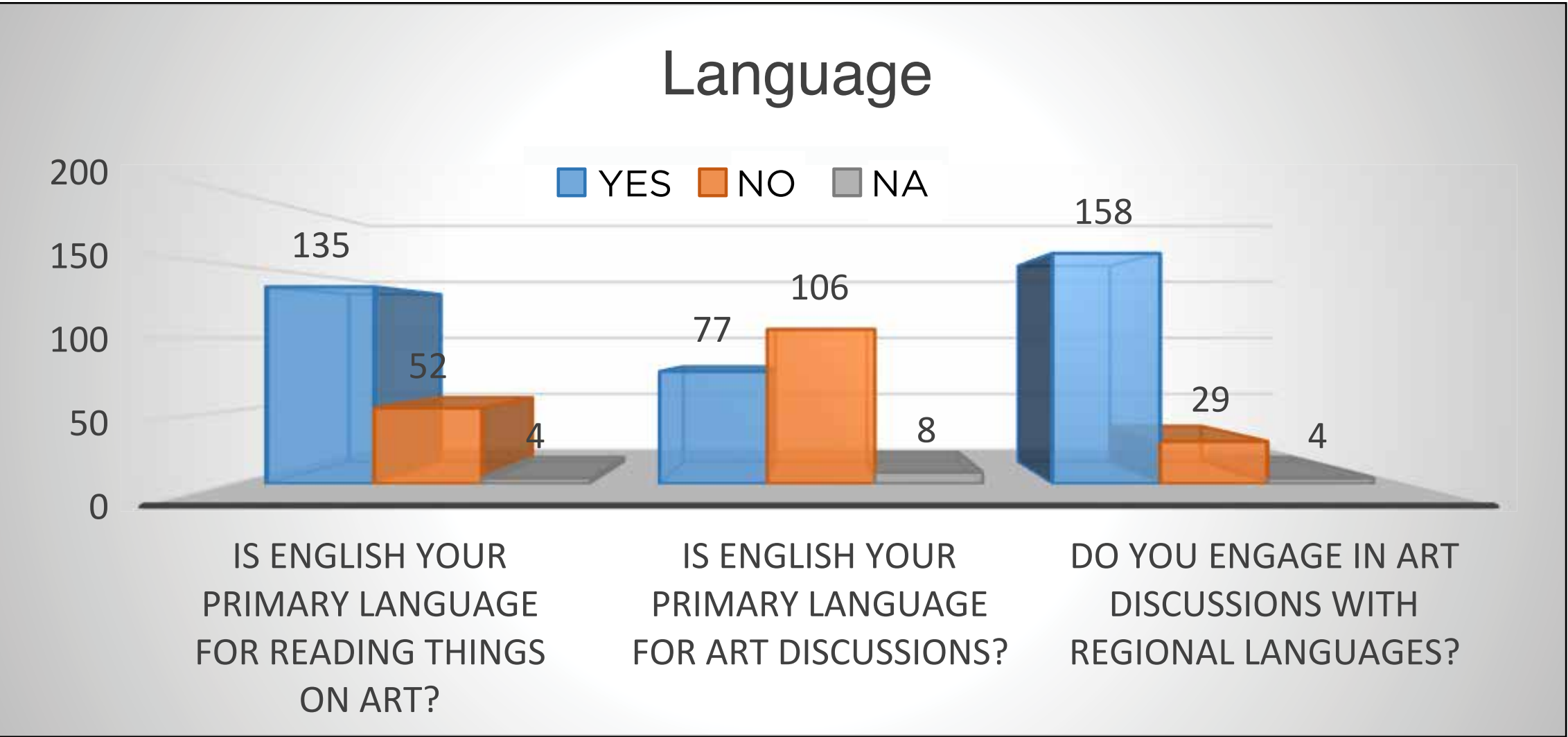


What is the main source for you to learn digital media skill?



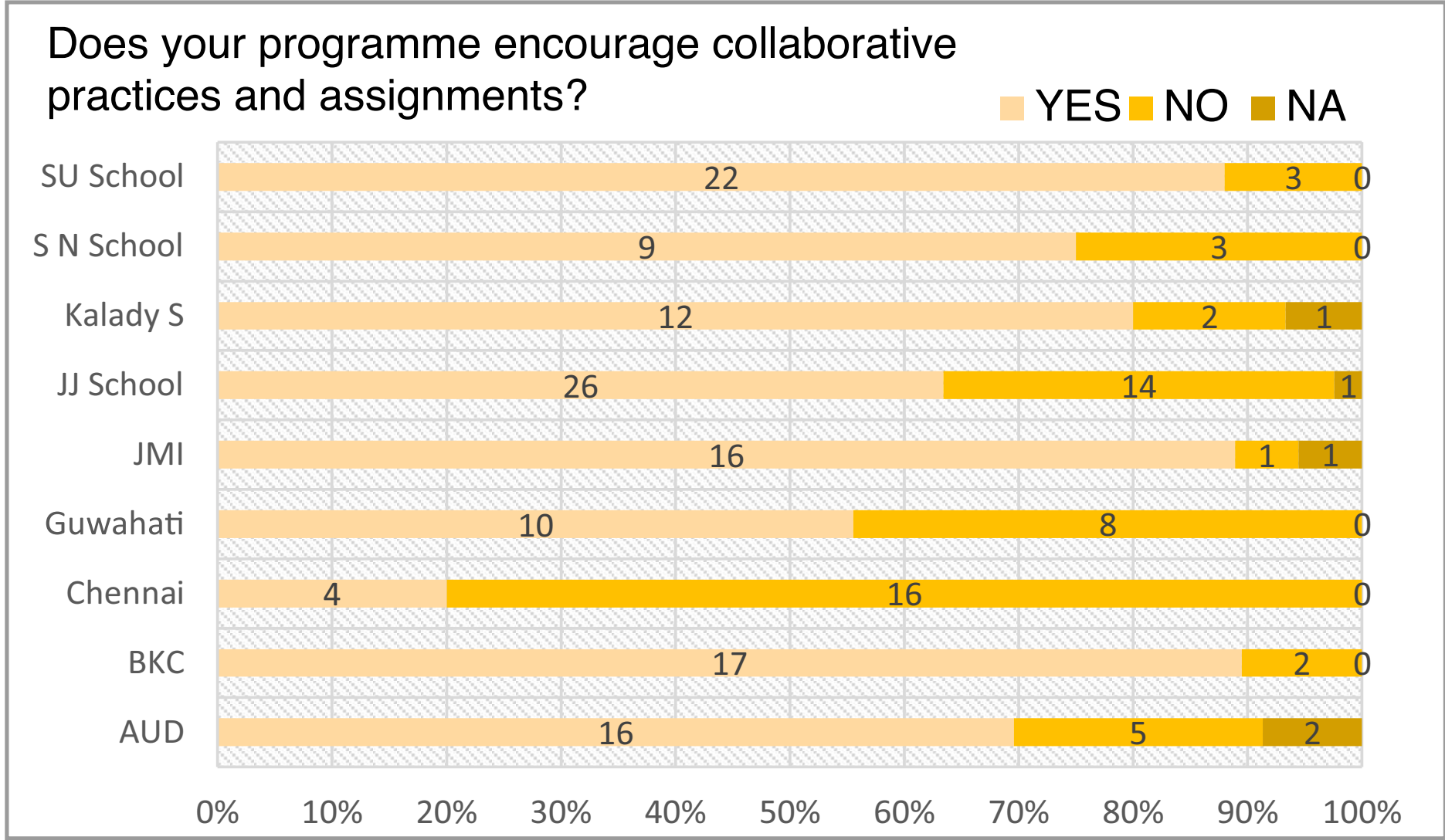
Language

We asked students a number of questions around language regarding the language of reading and discussion. Seventy percent of the sample said they read texts in English while 50 percent shared that discussions were not conducted in English and 82 percent of them shared that art discussions were held in regional languages. The FIAE survey also had 42 percent institutions stating that teaching was bilingual while 15 percent spoke of teaching taking place only in English.



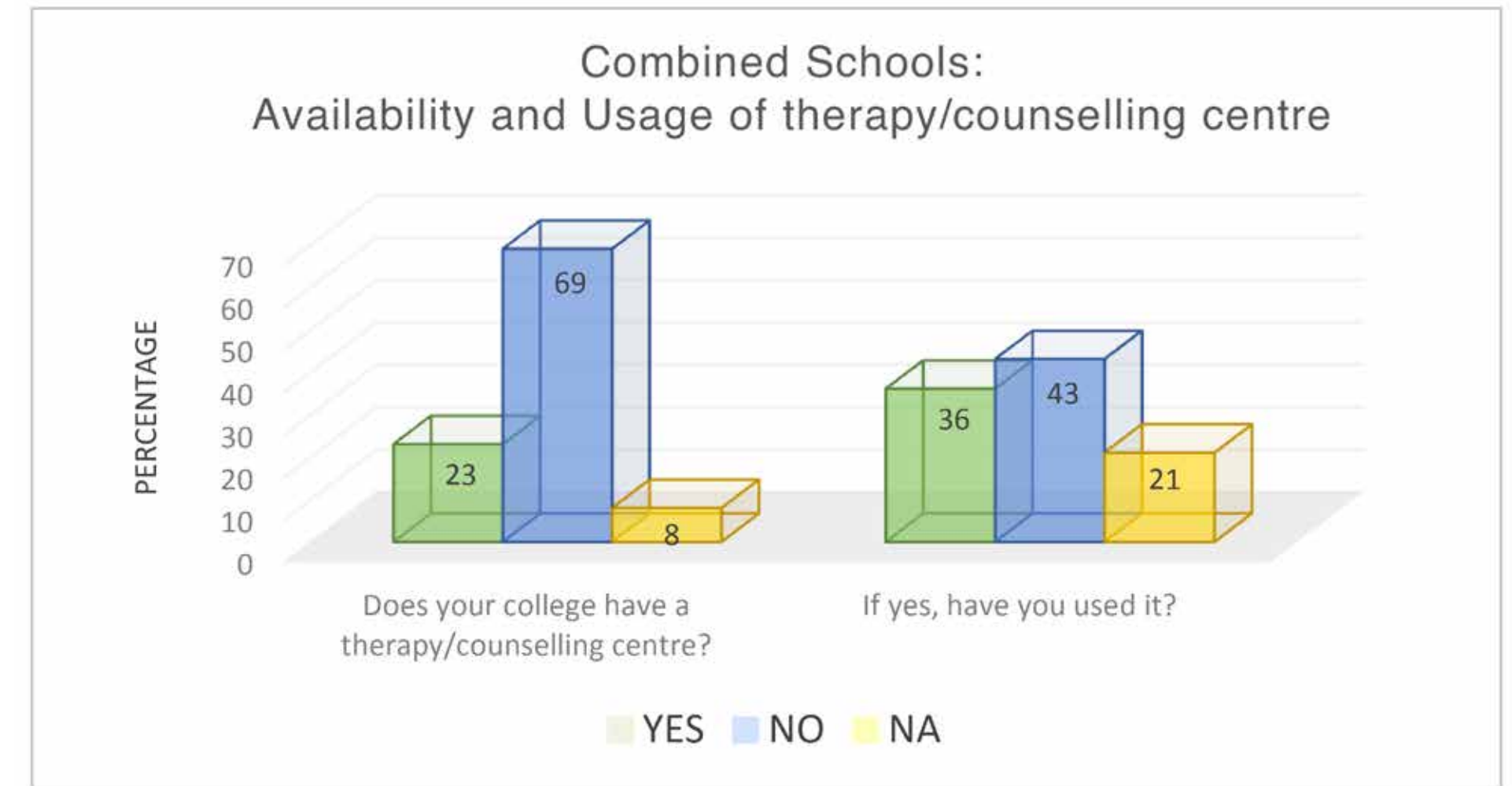
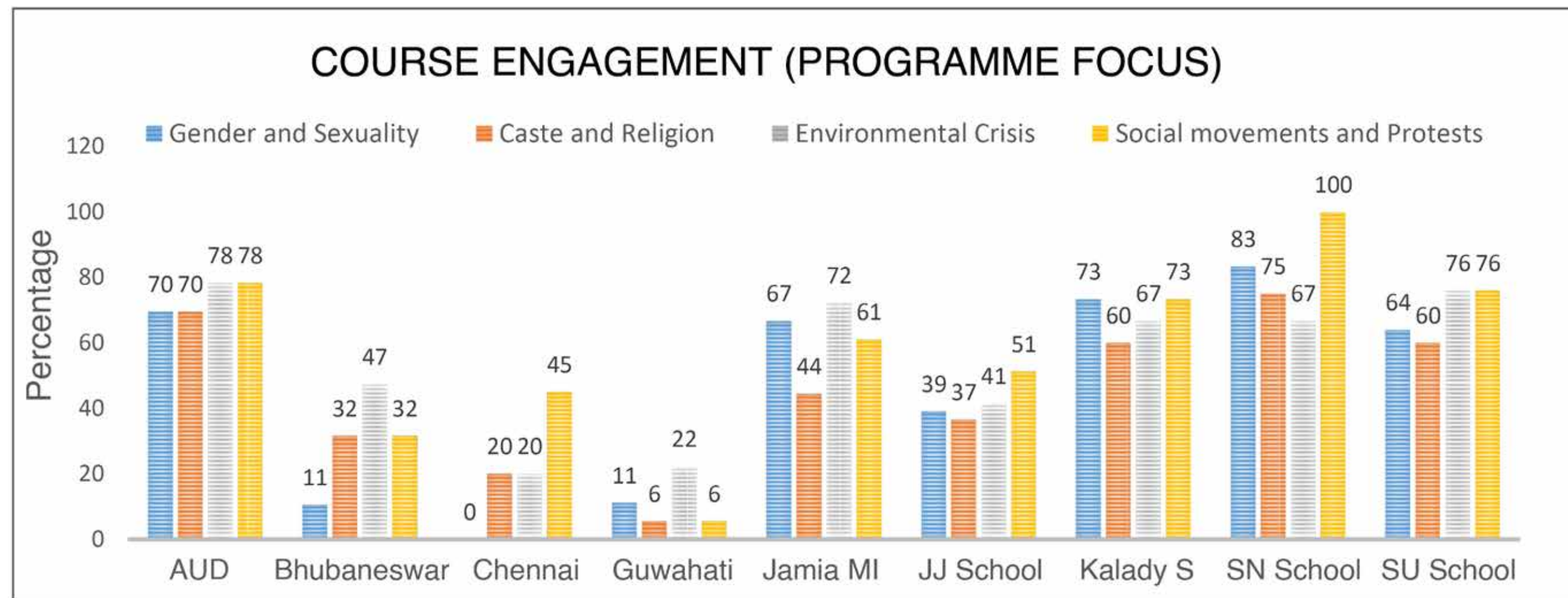
Collaborative Practices

On the question of whether institutions encourage collaborative practices, close to 70 percent students replied affirmatively.



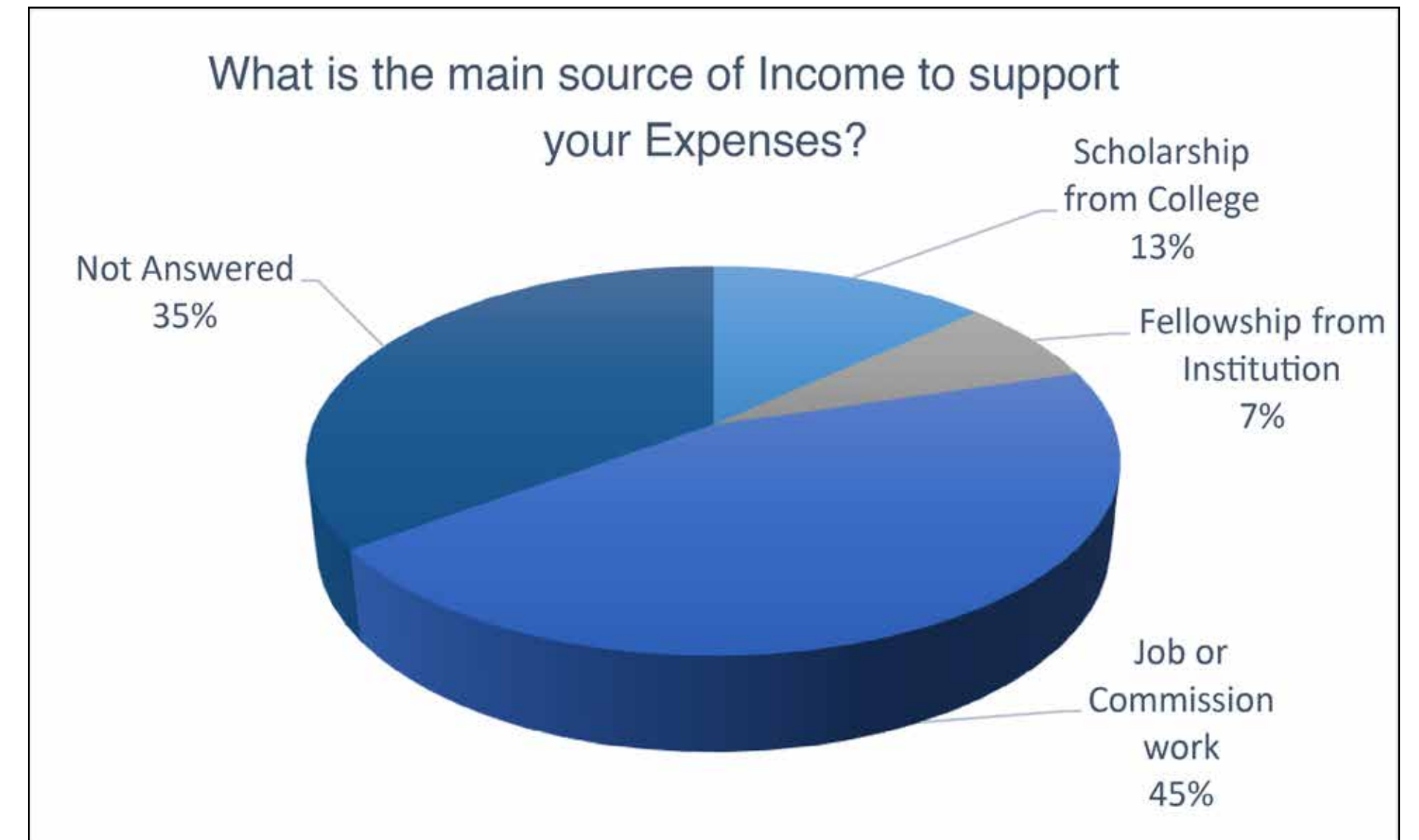
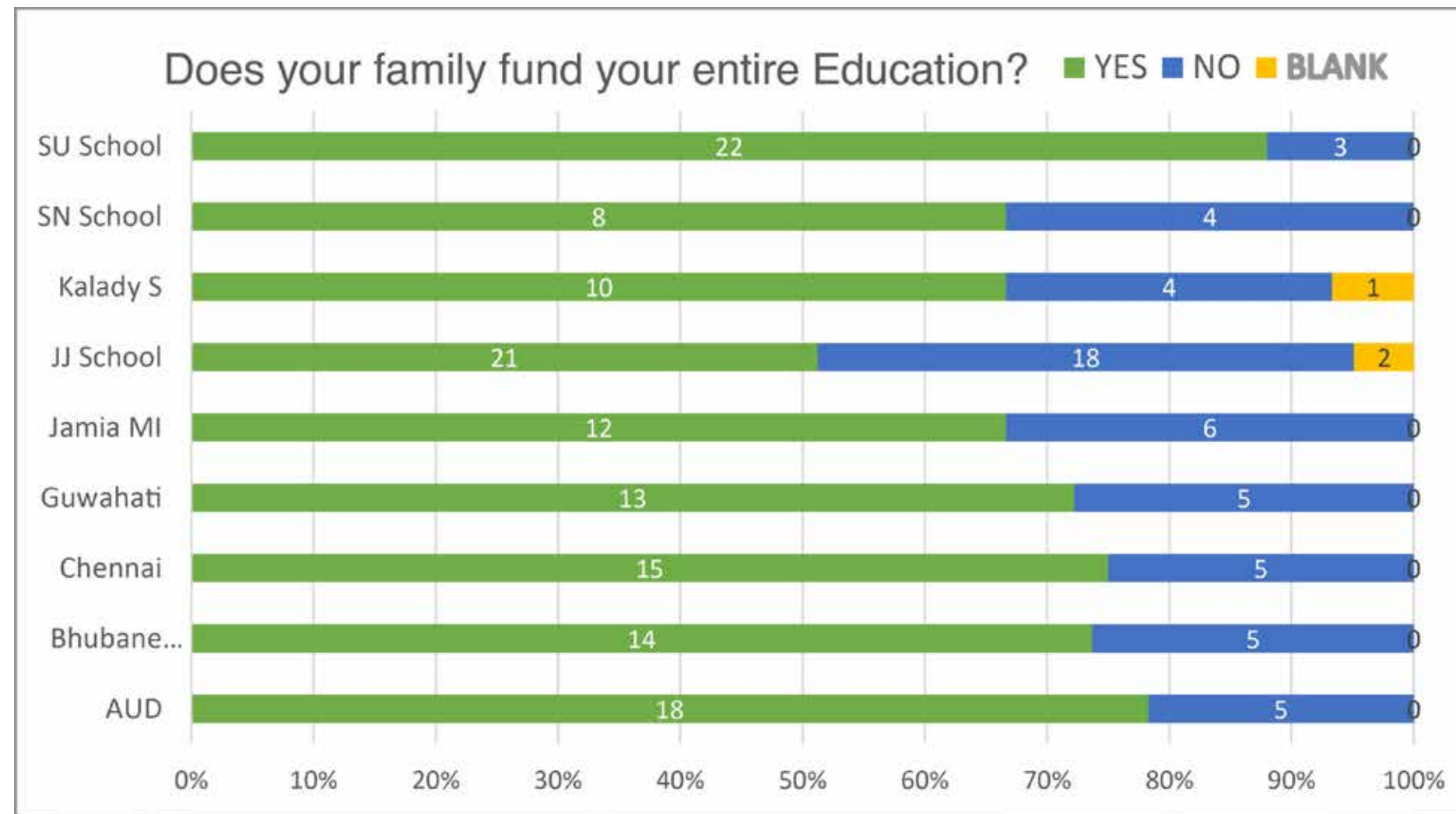
Programme focus

A set of questions were also asked around how much the programmes prepared students to engage with pressing contemporary issues related to environment, gender and sexuality, caste and religion and social movements and protests. Here the tables make it possible to see the responses of the students in different institutions.



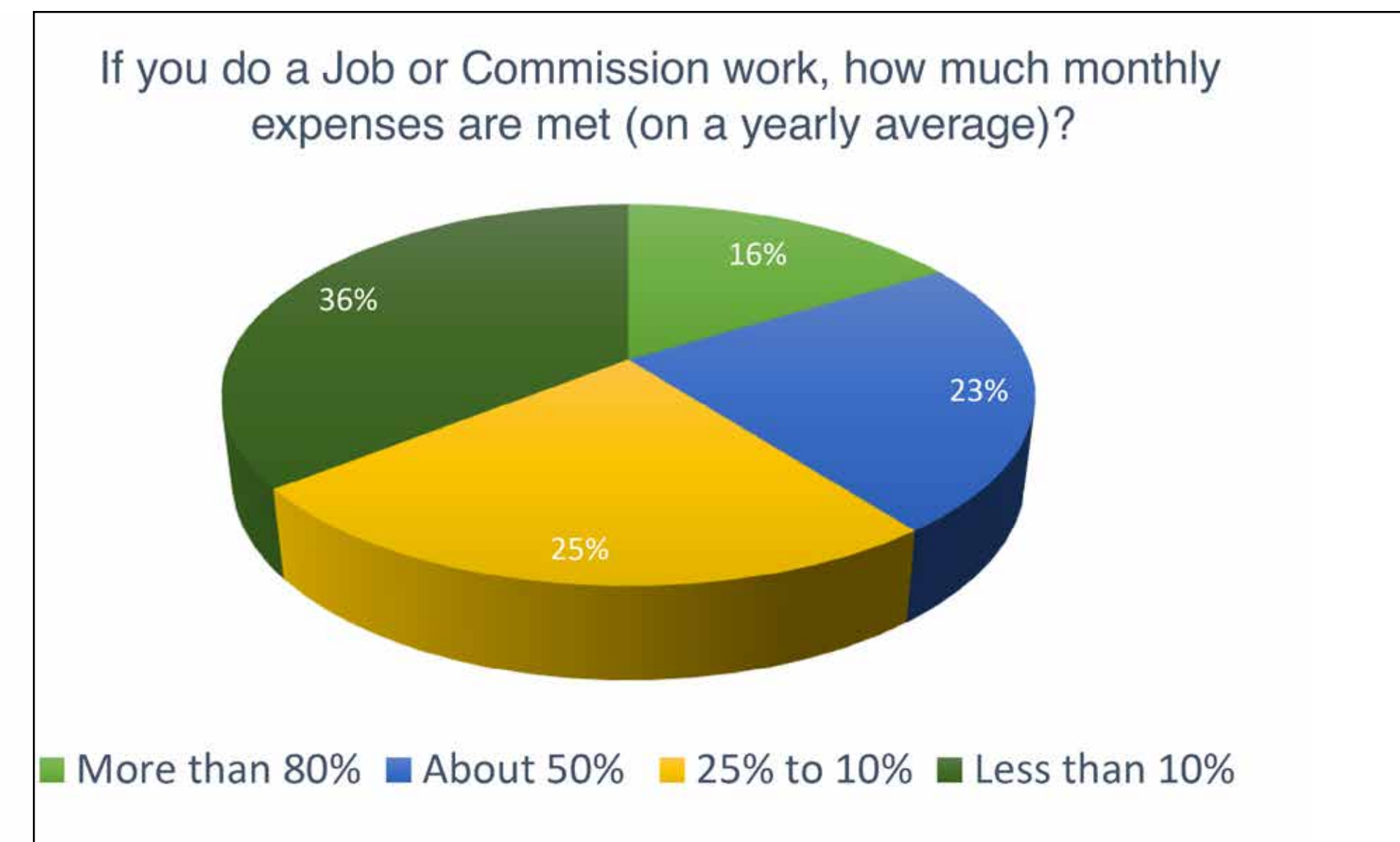
Access to Counselling

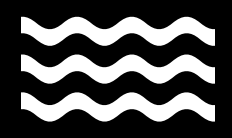
We asked students about access to counselling and therapy centres. Only 23 percent of the students they had access to this while 69 percent replied they did not. Also we further asked whether students who had access had did availed of the services and 36 percent of them replied yes.



Economic Condition and Sources of Funding

On the question of funding again we asked students whether their families funded their entire education. Seventy percent of the students replied yes to this. Forty five percent of students also admitted to taking on jobs or commission work to support their expenses. On being asked further about how much these jobs and commissions cover in terms of their expenses 36 percent admitted that it was less than 10 percent of their monthly expenses while 25 percent shared that it covered between 10 and 25 percent of their expenses.



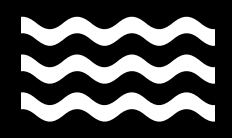


The researchers for the Expanded Education Program (EEP) were in charge of the overall running of the Expanded Education Program's workshops and tasked with a number of activities that directly helped in structuring and developing the program. This being the first year of the EEP, the researchers' role was diverse in its scope - from ideating on the themes, inviting educators, liaising with partner colleges and participating students, aiding the educators during the workshop, conducting research, and filing reports. Additionally, the researchers also doubled as representatives of the Biennale, thus enabling formal and informal networks to take shape with the aim of future collaborations between the Biennale and the art schools.

During the workshops in the various cities, the researcher spilt themselves between facilitating the workshop and conducting research. The research aspect involved gathering information on the history of the colleges, courses offered, curricular structure, institutional facilities, conducting interviews with faculty members and students to gauge the cultural and social spaces that they operate in, and collecting feedback. Finally, the researchers also developed and conducted written surveys with the students to gather data on their needs and access to resources. The EEP workshops were run in nine different sites across India, and they were equally split between the three researchers.

Following the six-months of conducting workshops the EEP team was shuffled to move towards the next step which involved two parts - the Art Education Conference in Kochi and the compilation of the reports for the publication. Vidya and Bhooma conceptualised the conference with valuable inputs from Dr Santhosh S. The conference framework was developed with the aim to consolidate what had happened during the workshops, and to envision the future of the EEP.

Thus, it brought together three groups of participants - the EEP educators, EEP researchers, and other invited scholars whose research spoke directly with the questions that EEP was seeking to address. Agastaya Thapa also came on board in an editorial capacity to document and transcribe the conference as well as work on the publication.



Bhooma Padmanabhan is a curator, researcher and art program manager. She is currently the co-curator of the Chennai Photo Biennale 2020, a bi-annual international photography festival that locates itself across public venues in Chennai. Bhooma worked for a decade as Programme Manager with the Foundation for Indian Contemporary Art (FICA), a New Delhi-based non-profit institution, overseeing its grants, collaborations, public art and art education. While with FICA she curated several exhibitions, both group shows and solos, experimenting with the curatorial space as platforms for learning, resource sharing, and collaboration. She has also worked closely with educators on developing workshops and teaching resources for students.



Vidya Shivadas is a curator and director of Foundation for Indian Contemporary Art (FICA). She has been closely involved with the Students' Biennale since its inception in 2014 and worked in the capacity of Curatorial Consultant, mentoring the curatorial teams of 2014 and 2016.

She has curated a number of exhibitions at the Vadehra Art Gallery since 2002 as well as Devi Art Foundation (2009), Kiran Nadar Museum of Art (2013), Edinburgh Art Festival (2014) and Serendipity Arts Festival (2017). In 2018 she was invited by Kunstsammlung NRW and Goethe Institut in Dusseldorf to participate in a residency programme for international curators at the museum.

Shivadas has been Adjunct Faculty at School of Culture and Creative Expressions, Ambedkar University Delhi since 2013 and visiting faculty for the Post Graduate Diploma in Modern & Contemporary Indian Art & Curatorial Studies at Bhau Daji Lad Museum, Mumbai (2012 -2017).



Karthik KG is an artist and researcher, whose practice is driven by his deep interest in abstractions and questions of technology. He completed his M.Res. in Curatorial/Knowledge from Goldsmiths, University of London as a FICA Inlaks Goldsmiths Scholar [2015-16] and holds M.A. in Visual Arts from the Ambedkar University, New Delhi [2014] and B.E. in Electrical and Electronics from KLN College of Engineering, Anna University, Madurai [2005]. He worked as System Analyst and Team Coordinator at Tata Consultancy Services, Chennai [2005-2011]. He has participated in many exhibitions and also taught digital art at Ambedkar University, Delhi.



Agastaya Thapa, is currently an independent researcher. She completed her PhD from the School of Arts and Aesthetics at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, in 2017. Her thesis, entitled, *Circuits of Representation: Visual Art Practices and the Formation of the Subject in Darjeeling from the Colonial Period to the Present* looked at representation through the lens of tourist art and colonial ethnology. Her research interests include colonial visual culture, photography, popular paintings and prints, Eastern Himalayan history and socio-political movements.

WORKSHOPS

MAKING
MATERIALITY

Workshop
as part of
Expanded
Education
Programme,
Students'
Biennale
2018

MATTER:

ART

HISTORY

AS
THE

Conducted by **Sarada Natarajan**
October 29 - November 5, 2018
B K College of Art and Craft, Bhubaneswar

Open to Registered Participants

HISTORY

OF

MAKING



B.K.COLLEGE OF ART & CRAFTS

GOVT. OF ODISHA, KHANDAGIRI, BHUBANESWAR

ESTD : 1984

BK COLLEGE OF ARTS AND CRAFTS

University: Degree offered by Utkal University of Culture

University type: Public University, State

Location: Bhubaneswar, Odisha

Year of founding: 1983

Degrees offered: BVA (4years, full-time)

Specialisations: Painting (Indian and Western style), Print Making, Applied Art and Design, Sculpture, Art History, and Pottery and Ceramic

The BK College of Fine Arts has been the primary institution for fine arts education in Odisha since 1983, and is well-reputed for its practical courses in applied arts and painting. Located in its own campus close to the Udayagiri caves in the outskirts of the city, the campus comes equipped with shared studios for all practical students, a department library, a computer lab and an art gallery.

There is a government-sponsored scholarship offered to 35 students each year. The student population includes those from other states like Delhi, Jharkhand, Uttarakhand, and Bengal , besides local students. The programme consists of first year foundation followed by three years of specialisation, with all first-year students taking two language classes (English and Odiya/Alternate English), and an exam on social studies. Completing their foundation year, the students get to choose their streams after a counselling session, and based on their merit they can choose a specialisation (major) and an elective (minor). The school remains open from 10am-5pm, with studios openly kept open for longer upon special permission.

The college is an integral part of the cultural scene in Bhubaneswar, with students participating in local residencies, art festivals and other cultural events. Despite there being no direct reference to contemporary art in their curriculum the students are benefitting from the growing scene in the city. Most students take interest in courses outside the school and train in computer-based design (image and video editing). The school places great emphasis on work placements and encourages students from the 7th semester to start interning part-time with professional studios, media and publication houses.

The faculty within the school has three permanent staff and other teachers are there on a temporary basis. They also have provisions to invite visiting scholars/faculty who are usually called during the winter semester. They hope to expand this provision to international visiting scholars.





Sarada Natarajan

Making Materiality Matter: Art History as the History of Making

29/10/2018 - 05/11/2018

Venue: B.K. College of Arts and Crafts, Bhubaneswar

Participating Colleges: Government College of Art, Khallikote

Documentation: Taarini Photographers, Debasis Beura,
Bhooma Padmanabhan

Researcher: Bhooma Padmanabhan

What would the History of Art (in any historical/geographical context) look like if it was reframed as the History of Making? Starting with this question Dr. Sarada Natarajan's eight-day workshop led the students through a series of practical and theoretical exercises focused on making, observation and collaboration, to locate the making of art at the confluence of *material flows* and *processual forces*. The aim of the workshop was to introduce the question of 'How is art made?' in the broadest sense into the study of art historical material - to learn how we make sculpture for example, extending to the various processes of making, which in turn interrogate the identity of the maker, has been written out of Indian art history.

This workshop was developed for students of painting, sculpture, printmaking and other practical streams, besides art history students, and brought together a series of exercises that explored observation, recording, questioning, and theorising while keeping the key focus on making. The workshop's emphasis was on slowing down the processual aspects of making and to set the scene for in-depth



readings of the artists' use of material. The educator made a choice to look at an ancient Indian material - the Udayagiri caves and Konark Sun Temple- and an unfamiliar craft process like basket weaving to allow students to encounter making processes far removed from their own modes of practice. It also allowed the focus of the workshop to be anchored in local and familiar sites, but pushed for a re-reading of them.

Day one of the workshop was spent introducing the students to the schedule and confirming participation, as the process of the workshop was an important component to the engagement the educator sought. Starting with a craft exercise, the workshop jumped right into the question of making and the material forces that to be negotiated in this process. A family of bamboo basket weavers - Padma and her husband Venkatesh - set up their workshop within the school premises. The students were first asked to observe, record, engage with the artisans, and understand the context within which this practice survives today.

The interactions led to more intimate conversations with craftspersons about their economic conditions, method of trade, personal stories, stories of migration, and sense of pride and identity embedded in their practice. The students were then encouraged to learn the entire process - from cutting, cleaning and measuring of bamboo, to the actual weaving of baskets - under the supervision of the artisans. With the actual making in progress the question of material resistance, bodily resistance, affordances and artistic will, came to be addressed. The steep learning curve that a craft such as basket weaving (viewed by many as a simple or easy craft before the workshop) pushed the students to negotiate with their material and their own bodies. The material aspect of making was thus approached not as a concept at this early stage, but as a





part of process and experience. This thread would later be taken on at various points in the workshop to understand choices made by sculptors and builders who worked on grand-scale historical projects.

“Materials are all around us. But when you decide to use it in an artwork, it becomes a medium....Material has lots of potential, but they are still unborn, they are not born in their object form. So it can just be. But, if you pick it up and use it in an artwork it becomes a medium. This could be one possible definition.”

Alongside the craft exercise, the days also included lengthy discussions with the educator, bringing forth questions regarding arts and crafts binaries in the modern imagination, the role of gender in practice, and the need to question implied hierarchies within the arts in India.



The workshop then shifted to exploring the Udayagiri caves in the vicinity of the campus and mapping it through a study of the material and methods of making. A full-day visit focused on students exploring the site by stepping away from the usual categorisations of dynastic rule, patronage or dates, and instead looking for the perspective of the makers - the stone carvers, architects, sculptors - to understand how the original makers had to negotiate with the terrain, climate, resources and social norms to create a living site of worship and dwelling. On-site exercises included map-making, sketching and presentations of deep-studies the students conducted of the various elements in the site. The educator also introduced the idea of ‘affordances’ offered by materials and sites (James Gibson’s *Theory of Affordance*) and allowed students to explore core ideas of the theory while negotiating with the site.

Related discussions included examining the triangular relationship

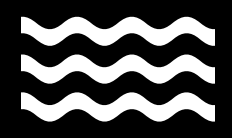
between material, force and Idea in the making of any art work, understanding a systematic process in a historical site and ways to read it. Discussions led to the students proposing the idea of working with material as a sort of collaborative exercise, between two active forces, one human and other inanimate. The educator also shared her own research observations from working at Ellora's Cave 14 as not just a historical site, but through its contemporary identity.

The third part of the workshop focused on the Sun Temple of Konark. This investigation took two approaches - first, engaging with text as historical record, and second, the site itself as it stands today. The educator set the students up in groups to undertake the deep-reading of the text *Baya Cakada*, a 13th century historical record of the construction timeline and rituals at the Sun Temple, with discussions around specific data from the text - 1. on tools and materials of making, 2. payments and economic transactions during the construction, and 3. reflections on social relations between various guilds of makers and the patrons. The day-trip to Konark Sun Temple thus became an extension of their readings of the text. The students were tasked with re-constructing the temple through a step-by-step dissection of the process, identifying various types of stones used, methods of carving and construction.

The final day of the workshop included a slide lecture by the educator on contemporary practitioners who work with this awareness of material possibilities, extending the debates around thinking vs. making, making as a form of thinking, social hierarchies inscribed into ways of seeing, and forms of possible resistance. The students also presented their documentation and research conducted around both sites, and received critical feedback.







Sarada Natarajan is an art historian and till recently was the Principal of Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath's new evening college in Bengaluru. She did her Masters and Ph.D. in Art history from M.S. University of Baroda and recently completed a postdoctoral stint with Forum Transregionale Studien and Humboldt University, Berlin. Sarada has 14 years of experience teaching art history and theory to practicing artists and to students of theatre at the University of Hyderabad. She helped formulate the art history syllabus for the Department of Art & Performing Art, Shiv Nadar University, Dadri and taught courses there for three years. Sarada illustrates and writes for children. She is a trained Carnatic vocalist and experiments with music and movement for theatre. Her research interests include ancient and medieval Indian sculpture and iconography, art historiography, art history pedagogy and the environmental humanities.



What would you define as the need of the hour in art education today and ways to strengthen it? Some believe the focus needs to be on bolstering curriculums while others feel the effort should be in developing the educators - what is your understanding of this?

Two primary trajectories have become central to my recent pedagogical practice. The first is an endeavour to constantly generate meaningful interweavings of art history/theory and art practice, both in the studio and in the classroom; the results are palpable and almost immediate. The second is to make students alive and responsive to the extremely sticky and serious issues facing us both locally and globally today. Art practitioners and art historians have to relentlessly engage with the world, I feel, especially because the ivory tower is all too attractive and accessible to people in our field. Of course, this implies that curricula in art colleges have to be updated and broadened and made relevant to the students in each institution - every context is unique. Some of the most effective art teachers I have encountered combine an overarching, meta-theoretical perception of art education with an understanding of their students' specific strengths and competencies and an awareness of the nature of their own interventions as teachers. Finally, it is important for us teachers to keep in mind the idealism and passion with which many students of our generation fought for and acquired an art education, often against tremendous odds and parental opposition.

You have been preoccupied with the question of how art history could be rewritten if read from the perspective of making. While you engage with this as the focus of your research, how do you translate it into your work as a teacher and bring it into your classroom?

As an art historian teaching art practitioners, one of the things I realised at the very beginning of my teaching career was that the art history we patiently absorbed as an orderly archive of dates, patrons, dynasties, cultic affiliations and iconographies had no traction for a majority of art practitioners. Understandably, they were more interested in 'how' of art making than the 'why'. This compelled me to go back to the standard literature on pre-modern Indian art for my doctoral project, where I found to my surprise that the 'how' remained largely unaddressed through two hundred years of research and historiography.

So, step one was to openly acknowledge this major lacuna in our understanding of Indian art. As a recuperative step two, I shifted some of my teaching of folk, tribal and popular art to the workshops of the artisans in and around Hyderabad. Every year students would do a project on potters or Durga /Ganesh idol makers in the city, doing interviews, making videos, lending a hand with the spray-gun or learning an entirely new craft skill. The intention of these projects was to shift the focus away from the contested terrain of craft versus art and to seek some respite from the vexed issues of aesthetics, originality, concept and contemporaneity. Instead, students spent time gaining valuable insights into the material and sociological circumstances of making, how caste, class and gender

politics shape artisans' lives in India, the resistances and affordances offered by craft material and the vagaries of the market. It was easy and appropriate for them to extrapolate from here to the circumstances that surrounded making in medieval India and Europe. So the 'how' of making was answered to a certain extent through this crucial exercise, but in terms of other criteria, not in terms of techniques and processes.

Who were/are your mentors, teachers and inspiration? In what way has your work and your modes of teaching been shaped by them?

I do believe that my B.F.A. training as a practicing artist had a huge influence on my fascination with making; this is an edge that art historians in India have. Not only do most of us begin our college education as practitioners, we also spend much of our time in close proximity to the studios even when we choose to specialise in theory due to the institutional structure of art departments in this country. In addition, I had the advantage of having one foot in the humanities and social sciences scene in Baroda and Hyderabad at the height of the poststructuralist/postcolonial ferment of the 1990s. It was then that I decided to strike out on what was then considered an eccentric orbit for art historians, combining my love for medieval sculpture and architecture with my ideological affinity for feminist and subaltern theory and cultural studies.

Apart from the daily studio work of my BFA course, I also trained in Carnatic vocal music in a somewhat traditional mode for seventeen years. This was a repeat-after-your

guru-and-ask-no-questions form of procedural learning. And then there were four years of martial arts training in my early twenties, where flow-state and mindfulness had a direct correlation with whether or not one got one's wind knocked out with a solar plexus kick or knuckles rapped painfully with a bamboo stick- effective lessons in embodied awareness! Prolonged exposure to these modalities of learning continues to generate insights into how learning takes place in alternative pedagogical systems. It acts as a powerful corrective to many of my unthinking assumptions about knowledge transmission today, which may not apply to artistic production in pre-modern societies.

Your SB workshop laid great emphasis on the process of slowing down in order to observe, experiment and articulate. Could you expand upon this mode of working that you have consciously been developing?

The first exercise we did at the SB workshop was a two-day session of basket-weaving, a craft process chosen specifically because none of the students of the Bhubaneswar and Khalikote colleges had ever tried it before. The intention of this workshop was to drag students out of their comfort zone in the handling of familiar materials and to plunge them into a self-conscious confrontation with an unfamiliar and resistant material and a steep learning curve. Students were encouraged to watch themselves grappling with the alien medium, to observe how their bodies had to push, bend and shift weight to coax the recalcitrant bamboo cane into a pre-determined shape and to contrast their own clumsiness with the fluid grace of the craftspeople who mentored them.

This reflexive meditation on the process of learning a skill, and a phenomenological awareness of the affordances and resistances of the material was echoed in other ways in the other approaches to making that followed. For example, we extended the idea of affordances and our bodily responses to them by experimenting with a J.J. Gibson inspired exercise of freestyle climbing up and down a rock face near the Udayagiri caves. This exercise offered the additional affordance of getting everyone's adrenalin pumping in an otherwise observation-and-logic heavy day.

In the background of all this was the timely influence of Tim Ingold, of course, whose work I stumbled upon in Berlin in 2016. Ingold's remarkable corpus of research on skilled material practices, alternative modes of cultural transmission, the agency of materials and his phenomenological approach to making and doing resonated with me, and clarified many of the ideas I had already been trying to articulate and apply in my pedagogical practice from 2007-2008 onwards. Ingold continues to be the single major influence on my recently initiated exploration of human-nature interactions at specific nodes in South Indian history.

Can you share one teaching exercise that is an essential part of your practice as a teacher? (Please give complete details on why this exercise is important to you and your class, its aim, the critical thinking and making skills it enables, and outcomes it has generated)

A popular Making and Materiality exercise that practicing art students seem to enjoy is an immersive interaction with sculptures I guide in the museum. This exercise is a

simplified version of my own work-in-progress, an on-site methodology I am evolving for my research into making which meshes with recent theoretical debates in phenomenology, anthropology, material culture studies and new materialism. My research focus at the moment is stone sculpture from medieval India so this is what I share with the students.

Many state capitals in India have at least one government museum that houses medieval lithic sculpture. We usually begin the Making and Materiality exercise with a museum walkthrough which I opportunistically convert into a perambulatory survey course, explaining chronology, historical contexts, iconography, the stone used and so on of each sculpture. At the very beginning of the walkthrough, students are warned to watch out for a complex sculpture or two in the museum that grabs their attention instantly, that they find unusually striking, attractive or piquant in some significant way. Most do fall in love at first sight and they prepare to spend the rest of the day, or multiple days, engaging with the sculpture of their choice.

For the duration of this exercise, students are urged to shift their focus away from the usual art historical questions of chronology, stylistic analysis, iconography and so on and to concentrate on the sculpture as an individual physical artefact, a quasi-person almost, imbued with completely unique material attributes, presence and agency. The questions they are to ask of their sculpture resolve into five primary heads.

» Encounter and material presence: This preliminary section would include questions like, ‘why did this particular

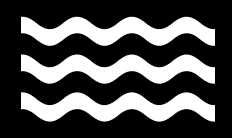
sculpture call out to you?’, ‘how did you instinctively adjust your body and gaze while viewing it?’ and ‘what is the sculpture’s tone of address?’

- » Speculating on original architectural context: The first set of answers act as a lead-in to solving the second section. This component includes ‘what possible positions could this sculpture occupy in its original architectural context?’ I usually guide this section one-on-one as some prior knowledge of architectural modes and iconological schemes in specific Indian sites helps students avoid major errors.
- » Reconstructing making: This begins as an exercise in reverse engineering, conceptually working one’s way from the finished sculpture to the block or slab from which it was formed. Art students are particularly adept at conceptualizing via sketching – a crucial mode of visual/material thinking for them. From a close examination of chisel marks, breakage and the finish of the sculpture, they also deduce the affordances and limitations of the stone used.
- » The work’s post-history: Signs of use and damage are categorised into natural, accidental and deliberate. Sometimes these new insights force students to revise their earlier conclusions.
- » The artefact’s agency today: Students spend many hours hovering around their chosen sculpture, taking notes, sketching, photographing and these actions pique the interest of other museum-goers. They are encouraged to keep their eyes and ears peeled for details of how people move around and talk about the sculpture. For artists, this

form of eavesdropping is significant because they then begin to think about how ordinary people would react to their own art works in an exhibition space.

The detailed questionnaire that I hand out at the start of this exercise is only a set of guidelines to think with; students invariably outstrip the limited scope of my questions and engage with their chosen artefacts in astonishingly creative ways. By the end of the exercise, most students arrive at a personal understanding of my reiterated injunction 'listen to the sculpture, don't just look at it'. The most frequent responses to this exercise are as follows.

Students professed that they had contracted a profound, lifelong attachment to 'their sculpture' – bordering on the intersubjective. Almost all students reported that they would never again dismiss any medieval sculpture as 'traditional' or 'old'. This is heart-warming for me as a medievalist as one of my pedagogic missions is to make my students perceive the startling contemporaneity of ancient and medieval art- a phenomenon that exists in an interesting tension with the equally startling resistance offered by the impenetrably alien nature of the past. Perhaps the most invariably and completely unsolicited response from each batch of art students has been that the exercise made them rethink the presence, materiality and agency of their own artworks and their interaction with different constituencies of viewer.



#1 | Notes on Making

This is an exercise in conscious observation of processes of making. Ideally, it could be done when learning a new skill or art form. Combining sketching, notes and camera-based documentation, this close-study of process allows for a deeper understanding of how materials behave, how artists negotiate and change the form that suits the medium, and where innovation comes into question. The record made by the student becomes a sort of knowledge bank that is authored from the point of view of the maker.

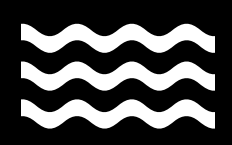
- » While starting to learn a new art form start with observing the teacher/mentor as they are engaged in making. Pay attention to their body language, where they locate their work space, their gestures, and duration of practice.
- » Sketch aspects of their work method that comes across as important to remember (for example, the basket weavers use their leg as a way to anchor the basket to the ground, and their toe to keep the weaves separate). By breaking down the process into sketches, each bodily action that is invested by the artist is understood and recorded.
- » Sketches or illustrations can be accompanied by working notes and tips.





- » Use the camera as a final mode of documentation, to bolster what you have already recorded in drawing and notes.
- » Try your hand at making and put down your observations on how the experience felt, what was challenging and what was enjoyable. How you negotiate with the material and process are important personal notes to add.
- » Discuss the design and use of the work being made, from where the artist learnt it, and how they use it in their lives.

These Notes on Making becomes an exercise in slowing down the process that artists engage in everyday - processes that sometimes become invisible and mundane, but essential to understand how labour played a major role in the history of art.



WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

29 Oct -

- ▲ Welcome address at the Art History department and distribution of sketch books
- ▲ Short classroom interaction to introduce the idea of material-based reading of art history. Introduction to basket weaving exercise.
- ▲ Afternoon session - observation, note taking, documentation and interaction with the family of bamboo basket weavers. Parallel conversations between groups of students and educator.

30 Oct -

- ▲ Group discussion to share observations and ideas learnt from the previous day's sessions.
- ▲ Full day spent in learning to make baskets, and in discussion with educator.

31 Oct -

- ▲ Site visit to Udayagiri and Khandagiri cave complex, brief introduction and walkthrough of site with educator while discussing important caves, and methods and tools of excavation and sculpture.
- ▲ Introduction to James Gibson's *Theory of Affordance*
- ▲ Afternoon session at Rani Gumpha (Cave 1) - group exercises in sketching, theorising on probable method of construction and sculpture, tools used and stone types, and utilitarian purposes.

01 Nov -

- ▲ Morning lecture presentation on the idea of Affordances, the work of Andy Goldsworthy, ideas of mind vs. body and the question of value.
- ▲ Afternoon session was dedicated to a presentation of the educator's own navigations and research at Ellora Cave 14 - as a possible method of researching on-site.

02 Nov -

- ▲ Classroom session with reading of the historical records on the building of Sun Temple Konark titled *Baya Cakada*.
- ▲ Group readings with focused areas of research, and presentation of findings

03 Nov -

- ▲ Daytrip to Konark by bus. On site documentation, sketching and discussions.

04 Nov -

- ▲ Being a Sunday, the day was dedicated to students working on their final presentations.

05 Nov -

- ▲ Morning lecture by educator on contemporary engagements with the idea of materiality, with additional notes by SB researcher
- ▲ Final presentations by students of their research and observations from the workshop.

Bhubaneswar

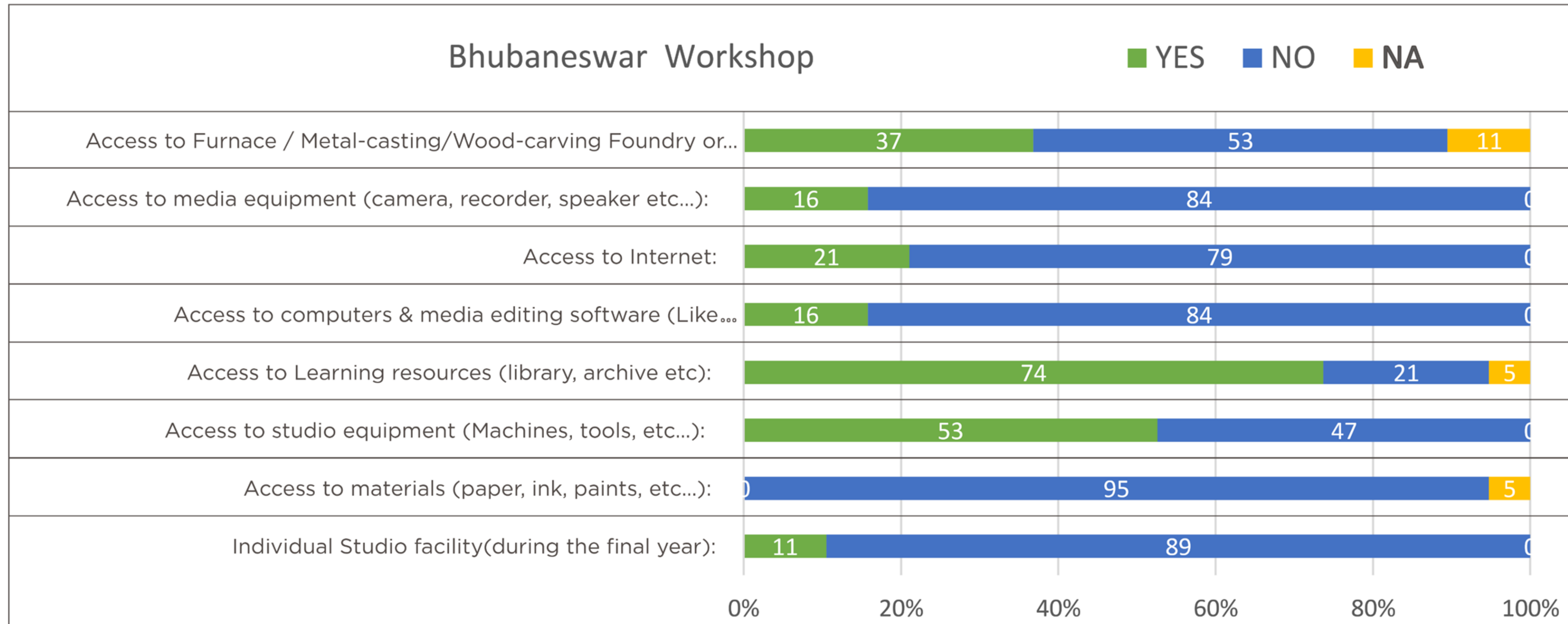
Students' response to the question: Does the infrastructure in your school meet the needs of your practice?

Total sample size: 19

Male: 9

Female: 8

N/A: 2





**Workshop on
Inter-media Arts:
Sound and
Visual Expressions**

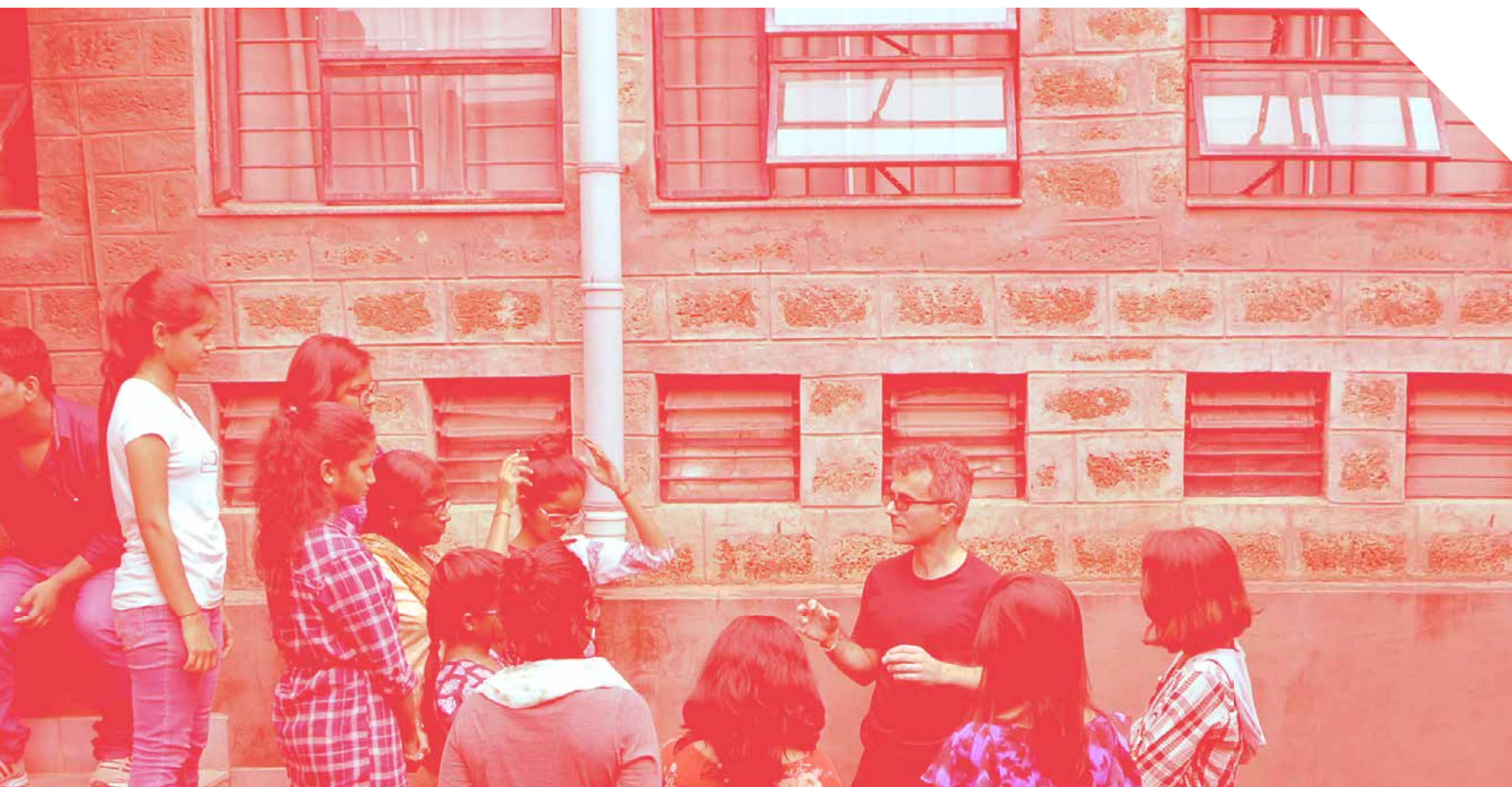
Conducted by **Igal Myrtenbaum** and **B V Suresh**

20-27 August, 2018

S.N.School of Arts and Communication,
University of Hyderabad

3-8 September, 2018

Department of Fine Arts, Narmad Bhavan,
Veer Narmad South Gujarat
University, Surat



Department of Fine Arts, Sarojini Naidu (SN) School of Arts and Communication



University: University of Hyderabad

University type: Public University, Central

Location: Hyderabad

Year of founding: 1988

Degrees Offered: MFA, PhD

Specialisations: Painting, Printmaking, Sculpture,
Art History, Visual Studies

The University of Hyderabad is a Central University set up along the lines of the Six-Point Formula of 1973, in response to agitations in coastal and other regions of Andhra Pradesh during the Jai Andhra Movement of 1972, successor to the Telangana Movement. Besides the set up for accelerated development of economically backward regions in the State, and development of the state capital, the Six-Point Formula also met the need for the set-up of state-wide public institutions including a central educational facility, the University of Hyderabad. This would then be placed under the ambit and educational policy of the Indian state, resulting in the 32nd Amendment to the Constitution.

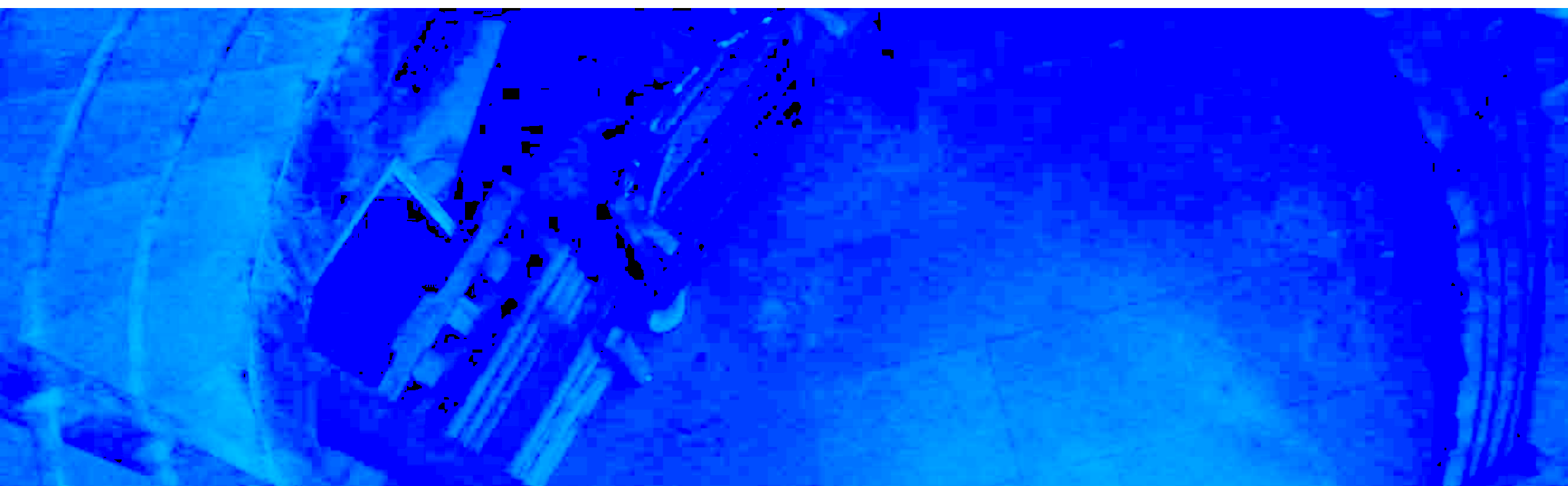
The Department of Fine Arts was started under the aegis of Vice Chancellor Dr. Bh. Krishna Murthy in 1988 with the aim to encourage interdisciplinary practice and interaction between various streams in the humanities. The other departments in the school include Dance, Theatre and Communication. The Fine Arts department started functioning initially with focus on painting under the mentorship of Prof. Laxma Goud, and with the support of D.L.N. Reddy and Belinder Dhanoa, it then expanded to include Sculpture, Art History and Visual Studies. The school introduced the specialised course in Printmaking in 1995 under the leadership of R.S. Sham Sunder.

The School program thus integrates various modes of practices to explore core ideas of creativity and collective practice. While they have a strong group of full-time faculty, the program's versatility comes from the fact that they invite a great number of visiting scholars and practitioners to teach throughout the year.





Department of Fine Arts, Shri Gijubhai Chhaganbhai Patel Institute of Architecture, Interior Design & Fine Arts



University: Veer Narmad South Gujarat University

University type: Public University, State

Location: Surat, Gujarat

Year of founding: 2006

Degrees offered: BFA (4years, full-time)

Specialisations: Painting, Sculpture, Applied Arts
(subsidiaries: printmaking, photography and pottery)

Website: <http://www.vnsgu.ac.in/dept/uni/history.php>

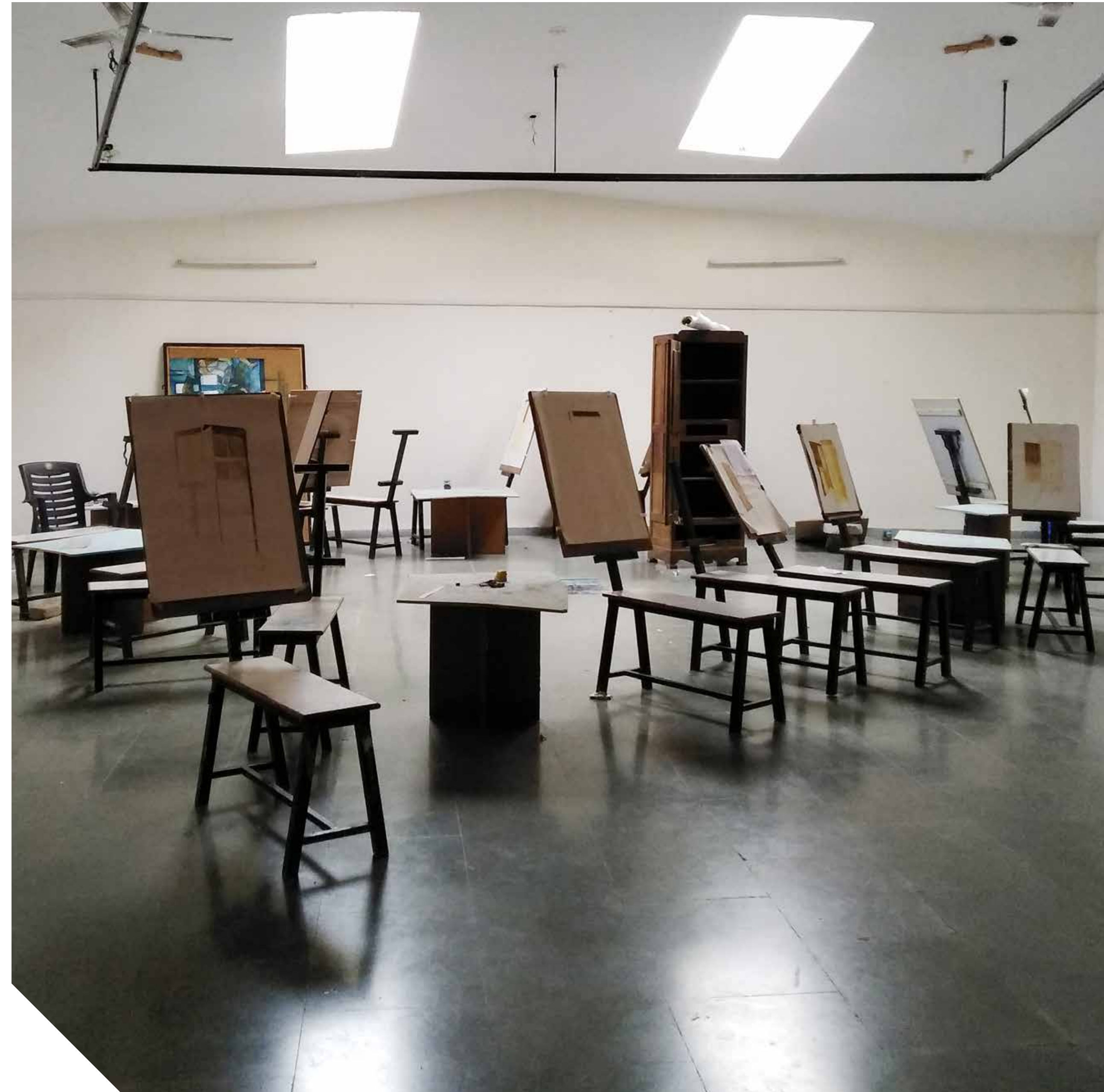
The Veer Narmad South Gujarat University was founded in 1965 to address the dearth of quality state universities in the southern part of Gujarat. The University is geared towards enrolling students from Gujarat, especially the seven districts of south Gujarat, and has only one percent of students from outside the state.

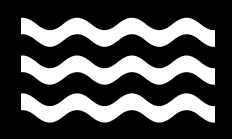
As one of the newer institutions in India dedicated to fine arts teaching the Department of Fine Arts, VNSGU, is a fast-growing department located on the university's new campus in Surat and is designed as a self-financed programme. Currently the Fine Arts department shares classroom and studio space with the Departments of Interior Design and Architecture, and has recently been assigned a new building for its foundation year classes. Final year students are assigned their own studio space

a 10 x 10 ft. partitioned space with the other batches using shared studio space. The department also has a computer lab with access to internet, and a reference library. The course follows the basic curriculum-outline as taught in MSU, Baroda, with all students completing a foundation year before selecting their specialisations, and with compulsory credits for theory class for all students. English as a language classes are compulsory for all students (which includes sessions on artists' statement writing and practical communications skills). The evaluation is based on a 60:40% basis between external evaluation to internal/class work respectively. Like many newer institutions the course is designed based on the courses offered by visiting faculty members other than their regular syllabus covered by department faculty.

With many of the faculty members being from the fraternity of artists and students from MSU of Baroda, the school has expanded its cultural life to include a bi-annual faculty-wide festival called "Artijan" under which artists' workshops and a residency is organised other than a carnival-like festival event; every year there is a study-tour organised for all students to visit historical sites for research purposes and for sketching exercises. The teaching faculty were also actively engaged in keeping a Fine Arts Film Club alive with weekly screenings of international films for their students.

The faculty and class timings are from 8am-6pm, studios remain open according to work undertaken by students.





BV Suresh and Dr. Igal Myrtenbaum

Intermedia workshop

20/08/2018 - 27/08/2018

Venue: SN School of Arts and Communication, Hyderabad

Participating Colleges: Jawaharlal Nehru Architecture and Fine Arts University; , Hyderabad Andhra University, Visakhapatnam; Sri Venkateshwara College of Fine Arts, Hyderabad; Potti Sreeramulu Telugu University, Hyderabad

03/09/2018 - 08/09/2018

Venue: Surat School of Fine Arts in collaboration with Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, Veer Narmad South Gujarat University, Surat, Gujarat

Participating Colleges: CVM College of Fine Arts, Anand, Gujarat; MS University of Baroda, Gujarat; MA Parikh Arts and Fine Arts College, Palanpur, Gujarat

Documentation and Tech support: Tulika Suresh, Kaushal Sapre

Researchers: Bhooma Padmanabhan in Surat & Karthik K.G in Hyderabad

This itinerant workshop was developed as a collaboration between two educators, one a visual artist and the other a composer, both engaged in independent practices centred around questions of creativity, the invisibility of everyday actions, technologies and new modalities of thinking about

artmaking. While the conceptualisation was a collaborative exercise, the project was led by Dr. Myrtenbaum in both sites, with greater focus on exploring movement, performance, sound and collaboration, using his preferred 'spiral' mode of engagement.

On the spiral model - *“Most problems (that students have) have to do with things that are not disciplinary... they may not be able to estimate the importance of something, not because they didn't understand the subject matter, (but that) they fail to understand usually the impact it has on their lives or the lives of others, and to make analogies. So, this model is very different from the straight-line (and) enables me to jump and see similarities between things that syllabus-wise will be far apart but are very much connected.”*

Thus, the workshops didn't come as ready-made modules, but evolved through the duration of making, and in dialogue with the students. There was great emphasis on these networks of exchange between the educator and students throughout, with each aspect of the workshop making this possibility for exchange and sharing visible.

In both schools the first day was dedicated to 'Pecha Kucha' style presentations by the students as a form of introduction of their work, their interests and presentation skills.

The educator used this exercise to also engage directly with each student, expanding on interesting ideas, understanding local/regional forms, narratives and styles, and gauging concerns that may directly impact the workshop, such as lack of a common language or skill set. He spoke of various aspects of sound that he identified in their presentations,



pointing to ideas that he would later elaborate upon. He also gave critical feedback on the significance of artist's ability to articulate their ideas and take ownership of their work especially after it leaves the studio and moves into other contexts.

From the researcher's notes: *The educator decided to engage with the students present on campus in an impromptu session - he introduced himself and asked each student to say their name and share a few words about their practice. After a few shy moments the students began speaking up. Some spoke in English; some chose to speak in Hindi or Gujarati which was translated by their friends. There was this one student who started their introduction in English and suddenly stopped, unable to translate their thoughts anymore into a language not their own; they broke down. The educator stopped the session to speak to them, assuring them that in this space of 'engagement' all languages and gestures were welcome. He distinguished engagement from teaching as something that has a circular form of energy, it necessitates the need to be present and be an active listener.*

The structure of the workshops oscillated between two main exercises - digital work that was primarily happening on their laptops/PCs where they were working with software such as Max MSP, Ableton, Audacity and Cubase, and analogue exercises or what was termed 'Unplugged' sessions where the students participated in group activities inspired by theatre exercises. These were interspersed by regular seminars by the educator on various topics including introduction to fundamentals of sound, its connection to

temporality and other aspects of the everyday, a brief look at theories in European music, ideas of order and randomness, the social and political implications of various genres and composers, and finally also lectures focused on the software used in the workshop.

For the seminars the educator opted to use a lecture-mode with substantial time dedicated to listening to sample audios as a group, and ideating on what the sounds/music prompted in their imagination. The sessions came together to create an environment for students to engage with pedagogic forms of knowledge but through personal observations and questions. The mornings were usually dedicated to a lecture presentation followed by a more loosely programmed second session for students to go out for fieldwork, explore the new software, and create their own short sound pieces. While some students had their personal laptops, many were working on group projects using their school's computer labs. These collaborations were very exciting to many of them as they had not worked in this manner in their classrooms before. The Unplugged sessions interspersed the other sessions, as and when the energy of the group faltered. Many of these exercises allowed students to engage in movement-based and sound-based experiments, and were particularly poignant as they shifted the students' focus from what to make to how to think about why they are making it.

There was a constant back-and-forth between these sessions, allowing for ideas to flow from one to another. Dr. Myrtenbaum shares his experience in Surat -

“In the case of Surat, after introducing some concepts related to sound - how do you drive energy in time? What happens if you repeat things? What happens if you have intense sound and then silence? How do you measure sound? - after setting this scene with singing and talking, we went to the software. Here they would cut and paste. I would (listen to these software generated works and) rationalise not on the ground of better sound, but just (seeing how they are) using the computer as mirror. Not only at what they are doing here, but using similar principles as what they did outside now the computer became a tool.”





experience was so much greater than what I experienced before. Now it was the real thing, and the computer sound became 'poor' when compared to this."

While moving between the Unplugged sessions and their time with the new software allowed the students to draw ideas from one domain to the other and explore, it was the third aspect of the workshop which was more informal but in fact most effective, and this was the peer review sessions that was scheduled every evening. Here the students shared their short audio pieces developed during the day, with all other participants listening and critically reviewing each other's works. These peer review sessions were very effective in helping students gain confidence in sharing their works and learning to articulate about it. It also allowed them the time and space to build and hone a vocabulary around handling sound, and thinking beyond the domain of visual arts. The educators use of analogues to explore ideas and concepts, helped in breaking through inhibitions around language, and made these sessions very participative.

The question of technology was a major component in both workshops. From the start with the educator's early presentations it was apparent to all that the definition of technology was to be expanded beyond the digital question into understanding how technology is an extension of how humans think and experience the world. While most students initially relegated technology as being something outside the domain of arts (and of concern to artists) associating it with scientific disciplines, the educators' constant evocation of (what could be understood as) 'technical' terms during the unplugged sessions allowed them to explore these concepts

And then they reversed the process. Igal shares, "someone was interested in moving source of sound between left and right (speakers), and immediately we did it in an unplugged session. The room was big and echo-ey, and someone of us were standing in the middle saying some words. The

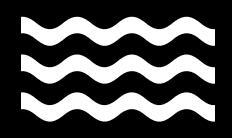
as patterns through which the body and mind experience the world.

The educator's use of analogies in his lectures also created a platform for students to imagine these concepts as ways to understand nature and the human role in it, rather than as set scientific formulae.

On using digital technologies - *"There are two things - one, is how to make the program work, what it can do. And (the other is) to use the program to explore things that you will anyway explore life, relations, emotions, colours, whatever. In between these two poles are the exciting corners that the software might suggest."*

Finally, the workshops also became spaces for cultural exchange, between the educator and students, and also between students from different schools present. The gaps in communication and articulation made visible the various ways in which different educational institutions define teaching/learning, the parameters within which the students function, and the cultural spaces in which art education is being addressed in India today.





The collaboration with Students' Biennale was welcomed with a grand gesture at the VNSGU with the department arranging a formal inauguration of the workshop on day three of the workshop (4 September 2018). In line with the university's tradition, the event began with a prayer by students followed by the VC of the university Dr Shivendra Gupta welcoming everyone and how he saw more such international scholars visiting the university. The HOD of the English Department also welcomed the guests.

The SB educator Dr. Myertambaum then spoke about the workshop and the connections that exists between the various streams of art, music, performance, Bhooma Padmanabhan introduced the Students' Biennale and its Education initiative. Mehul Patel the coordinator for the School of Fine Arts delivered the vote of thanks. Following this the short video of the Hyderabad workshop by Dr. Myrtenbaum was also screened.

This event was attended by about 200 students and teaching staff from the School of Fine Arts, School of Architecture, Dept of English and Dept of Mass Communication. This was held at the School of Architecture.





B V Suresh was born in Bangalore and studied Painting at Ken School of Art in Bangalore (1978) and completed his diploma and post-diploma at the Faculty of Fine Arts, Maharaja Sayaji Rao University, Baroda, in 1985. He later went on to do an MA in painting at the Royal College of Art, London, on an Inlaks Scholarship where he studied under Peter De Francia and Ken Kiff (1987). His most recent installation *Khamoshi ki Dastaan / Chronicles of Silence* was shown at Kochi Biennale 2018 and earlier versions of the installation were presented at Vadehra Art Gallery, New Delhi and Sumukha Gallery, Bangalore in 2016. Earlier solo exhibitions have been held at Vadehra Art Gallery (2006), Gallery Chemould, Mumbai (1998) among others. His artistic life extends beyond studio practice into teaching, theatre design and children's book illustration. BV Suresh taught between 1992 and 2017 at the Painting Department, Faculty of Fine Arts, M.S. University of Baroda and is presently faculty at the Fine Arts Department, S.N. School of Arts and Communication, University of Hyderabad. He has also been visiting faculty at Ambedkar University Delhi and CAVA, Mysore.



Dr. Igal Myrtenbaum is a composer, lecturer and educator. His work and passion ranges from synchronizing sounds to studying the many ways of human synchronization, through learning communities and multi-cultural environments. Composing both electronic and music for acoustic instruments, his projects and works are performed in Europe, USA, South America, Japan and Israel. His workshops and clinics mostly deal with emergent properties as manifested in natural phenomena and artistic expression, often aided by digital tools. He is a co-founder of the Music Technology Studies at the Bar-Ilan University and has been researching and developing tools for music educators at the Levinsky College of Education. Among the cultural projects led by him are the `Izozo` (Yangareko foundation, Bolivia) dedicated to the cultural preservation and empowerment of the Guarani indigenous community in the Bolivian Chaco, and `Adika shel Maala` - an onsite musical interpretation of community gardens (Jerusalem). His lectures and workshops inspired artists from multiple backgrounds and led to an ongoing research project focused on innovative learning methods entitled `Analog Networks`.





IGAL MYRTENBAUM

What would you define as the need of the hour in art education today and ways to strengthen it? Some believe the focus needs to be on bolstering curriculums while others feel the effort should be in developing the educators - what is your understanding of this?

This is a fundamental question that reflects yet an even more fundamental one: what would be the need of the hour in art creation. However we choose to look at it, education is done with a goal in mind, and since we cannot define a common “need of the hour” in art creation, we cannot create a recipe for a student trying to meet that “need”. This is probably clear to all art teachers. I would like to believe that it is clear to all teachers, whatever their subject is but, I’m afraid my experience tells me this is not the case. Even amidst higher education institutes throughout the world, a goal is predefined, and the process of study is usually thought of as the breaking down of the path leading to that goal. Execution instead of exploration. Keeping this in mind, we still should ask what can be done, how the education of a future artist should look like, without creating ‘too clear’ of a goal. How can we nourish and support a reflective mind that inevitably thinks and works out of a system, out of the box?

Asked this way, the model that comes to my mind has more to do with nurturing and parenting. Inspired by a model that is difficult to quantify or predict, we may extract several principles, and I will mention just a few:

1) Individuality

Tailoring an individual and dynamic work plan for every student. It is crucial to act not as if we, educators, produce a product, but rather doing the work of a gardener in a garden with many different plants. This is the biggest financial threat on institutes, because the more private the education the less it is profitable. Other, less obvious dangers should be considered here for the same reason. Using technology is one of them. Advanced tools, and especially acting in the digital world, brings about the conditioning of a working process with common traits, and therefore stripping off the artistic action of ‘happy accidents’ and other individual and original attributes. A wise and healthy attitude should be taken in this regard, such as one that helps to deal with complexities (of the artistic mind as well as the work itself), without narrowing and flattening them down to what a computer can express.

2) Consciousness

Here I refer to what is usually aimed at art history classes among other things. Understanding art in its proper context, not only historical but from cultural and social points of view, as well as following current trends and schools, is vital and dangerous at the same time. Here too, individuality should be encouraged, keeping in mind that if, there is indeed a goal, it would not be to have educated students, but to educate them in order to develop their own artistic world - their own expression and skill. I guess that not many colleagues would agree with me on this, but I truly think that some students should know a chapter of history and others must read another. Being conscious of the art world, would also mean going further than reading and observing the works of others. Whatever is learnt from such works, past or present, should be extracted and installed in the students’ world.

Whatever they are exposed to should be carefully chosen, should be relevant to the stage they are in and to the direction they wish to pursue. Exploration by interest and inclination and not only by dates and genres.

These are just two examples of the way I prefer to pose and answer the question. The answer would be then, beyond `bolstering curriculums` versus `developing the educators`. It would be developing educators in such a way that they would be able to tailor an individual curriculum that changes over time and adapts itself to different conditions – not very different than the way parents educate their children. Skill should be considered in the same way, keeping always in mind that based on past experiences (old teachings, old works, old disciplines), the student should be encouraged to explore new territories.

Your collaboration for the Students' Biennale workshop has been a unique form of exchange of ideas and shared methodologies. Could you tell us more about how your collaboration came about and how you see yourself developing on it?

I met Prof. Suresh in 2010 when he invited me to the Faculty of Fine Arts at the M.S.U Baroda. Since then I came again in 2013 and in 2018, to the universities in Baroda, Hyderabad and Surat. In 2018 Suresh was not able to take an active part at the two workshops so it was an opportunity to realise how essential he is to the workshop, and how he supports and forms a vital part, even without being fully present.

The first thing I remember about our collaboration is Suresh asking me to `Interact` with his students. Not to teach or work but to interact. In spite the fact, that a great part of our

communication is not done verbally – one look can tell what many words will not – choosing the right words makes a big difference. Indeed, interaction became a premise upon which the workshops were based. The students were presented with a new domain (sound, music) but in such a way that it related to their own experience as an artist as well as a human being. Lines were constantly drawn from technical and philosophical issues to practicing sound art. This became possible because both of us do not take disciplinary boundaries too seriously and are not afraid to cross over and use new tools (video, literature, sculpture, sound) when we find it is the right thing to do. Passing this feeling on to the students, showing them that they `already know` and all they need to do is to interact using what they have – is paradoxically a great way to learn. Not conquering or mastering a discipline but interacting. This playful attitude (which brings challenges too) caught on the students and unleashed them as I can attest after hearing some feedbacks.

The excitement of exploring a new world, try out different things and creating without the fear of making mistakes, brought about a special atmosphere. I was surprised every time to see the level of enthusiasm, originality and hard work shown by the students. Formalities were brought to the minimum (this, I believe, is essential for a genuine interaction) and the students felt confident enough to initiate, respond and take whatever they learn and use it in new ways. I learnt a lot and did not hesitate to show it. Whenever possible and applicable I also gave the students enough room to take charge of some sections of the workshop. This, if not anything else, was a very exciting aspect. It gave birth to yet another face of `interaction` – the interaction between students.

I cherish several special moments from the workshops, surpassing what one might call 'scholar education'. Compassion, sharing of resources, helping each other and group thinking, seemed to be all over. It is true that I was lucky to get extraordinary students, but on top of this, the overall collective mind was strong, allowing for collaborations rather than competition. However, one of these special events was when a group of students from the theater department took over some exercises as well as a session and suddenly, as a proud father I could see that this child is walking on its own. They can do without me. That was clearly the spirit of Prof. Suresh, giving me enough confidence for me to pass on. A confidence that with the right intentions, a full heart, a computer, pair of speakers and a projector - the sky is the limit. Last, but not least, I must say that the faculty staff and others involved, (in both Universities, Hyderabad and Surat) were extremely kind and cooperative. I guess I followed Suresh to where the good people are to be found. The people that do not just work together but interact.

Who were/are your mentors, your teachers and inspiration? In what way has your work and your modes of teaching been shaped by them?

This would be rather difficult to answer. The list is very long and very short in the same time. It consists of people with whom I had a long interaction, a short one, people I have never met, my students, as well as some that accidentally taught me the hard way - what should I not do. I can only say that the best among them, the ones who not only inspired me but helped me get going, were those who taught me to "kill the Buddha when I meet him" - to get independent. I do not have one mentor (that survived) but, even avoiding a mentor can't make for a recipe. Sometimes

I wish I had.

Your workshop sought to address the processes of artistic creation, specifically in relation to how technology enables these processes. How do you define technology here, and how does it impact the creative process?

A dear colleague was sitting next to me when I was just about to start one of the workshops and address issues regarding technology. He quietly said, rather sarcastically, that this generation should be taught how to avoid technology and not how to use it. That was funny and true to some extent. Living in times in which new inventions and tools change our lives in many ways the question is how to integrate new tools in a healthy way that would keep our minds focused and balanced. Together with the exploration and invention of new technologies we must ask what we can do with these novelties, and whether we really need them, or under which conditions. Asked this way, the question regarding the integration of technology is put on an entirely different paradigm and brings us back to asking - what is it that we are looking for? regardless of the tools used - old or new. So, aside from presenting digital tools for editing processing and programming as plain tools, as well as manifestations of basic human characteristics, I included a kind of an 'antidote' - the 'unplugged session'. These sessions were dedicated to exploring sounds and movements produced with our bodies. The absence of technology in these sessions allowed to observe the many ways in which our bodies become tools. These sessions tuned to be an interesting laboratory, mirroring the other, digital sessions, where we were editing, recording and so on. The concepts of sequencing or encoding for instance, can be taught as a protocol that occurs inside of a digital machine, but it can

also be acted out in a group, revealing their dramatic and mental properties. Singing was also a great tool in this regard. Listening to one's voice in a recording, analysing its spectral structure, and meeting the same voice while improvising in a musical group sitting in a circle, was an excellent way to see how technology can help, and what limitations does it entail.

The exercises in the sessions involving technology were of a creative kind, and posed a true, if limited, artistic challenge. Among other things it functioned as a precaution, making sure the students will not dive too deep in the formalistic ocean technology can offer. It also calmed down those who were reluctant or afraid of technology. When a variety of tools is offered and replaced smoothly and quickly enough to meet artistic need, the proper perspective between the `what` (we are looking for) and the `how` (are we going to get it) is kept. I can remember more than once how a student that ended up not participating too much in the technological sessions, came and thanked me just by giving me a look that said (so I believe) - "Thank you for showing me that the technological, planned, functional aspects of creation, need not necessarily be dry, cold and full of right or wrong. I can breathe in front of the computer."

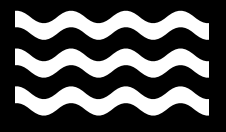
Can you share one teaching exercise that is an essential part of your practice as a teacher?

It would be hard to describe an exercise out of its context and do justice to what it meant and the impact it had. So, I will give an example of one that does stand alone, and had always interesting outcomes. Long before the workshops

started, I contacted the students, created a Facebook page for the workshop and asked them to take part in the Pecha Kucha style opening. Pecha Kucha is a format of a talk given with 20 powerpoint slides allowing 20 seconds for each slide.

Our version consisted of 5 slides in 20 seconds for each. No constraints were given but if in doubt, I mentioned that they could talk about their work or about the relation they had to sound or music since they were about to enter deeper into this world. These opening sessions were meaningful in many ways. First, they allowed me as well as everybody else to get to know each other very quickly. When the first session started afterwards, it felt as if we had already known for some time and it enabled me to scan through my examples and add remarks that connected specific students to what I was telling. It was also very interesting (and a core issue of the workshops) to see how they chose to present. The strategy they chose, how do they perform, how do they use their voices and body, etc. In some cases, those initial short talks continued to be present throughout the workshop and even served as a base for a section presented during the final days.

It also helped in setting the space as a space of communication. They started a weeklong workshop not by listening politely, but by talking to a large audience. Naturally some had it more difficult than others, but every challenge in this respect was welcomed not only as a sign of communality but later, as the workshop continued and evolved, as a focal point and learning material. To conclude I would say regarding the exercises involved, that I know they work when exercises generate new ones and when the students themselves make variations, create and conduct them. When it goes viral.



B V Suresh

What would you define as the need of the hour in art education today and ways to strengthen it? Some believe the focus needs to be on bolstering curriculums while others feel the effort should be in developing the educators - what is your understanding of this?

I think both are important. It is about looking at what is happening in other streams as well. Recently we met Shubha Mudgal who came to consult for our music department, and she expressed how by tradition we in the arts have been training (students) to make them the perfect practitioner. I think now it is important for students to take a position and think about what they are making or singing, and we have to encourage them to express what they have done. It is more than just seeing and understanding what they have made, but to also be aware of their understanding of their contexts. We have to understand all aspects of the students' lives in order to learn ourselves. In the graduation level the focus on skill is important but so is the ability to study art history and the focus on all aspects of learning. Learning to draw lines is important too. Like Nasreen Mohammadi, a belief in skill is good but the conviction to do something, and exposure for students is very important. I think we are trying to strike this balance in our school.

Your collaboration for the Students' Biennale workshop has been a unique form of exchange of ideas and shared methodologies. Could you tell us more about how your collaboration came about and how you see yourself developing on it?

While I couldn't take part in the Students' Biennale workshops my previous experience in working with Igal was important for us to imagine this workshop. My interest was in how he brings together performance and technology to engage with creativity, in whatever stream. It is not based on materials used but about thinking about new medias. However what the workshop was finally unfolded differently from what we imagined, but in a good way. The exercises that have emerged from our workshop has opened up a different kind of understanding and helped us develop new programmes for our college curriculum - its ability to push our students to be more physically engaged, a new awareness between body and nature. Because of this workshop's intervention now there is a conscious effort to move out of the studio spaces. There is definitely an afterlife to this workshop in our school (SN School, Hyderabad).

Who were/are your mentors, your teachers and inspiration? In what way has your work and your modes of teaching been shaped by them?

As artists we often mention where we started, and talk about our early stages of learning. Each stage and each mentor matter and we recollect them often to our students. Some like R.M. Hadapad of Ken School, who was so forward, open-minded and built a cultural space reflective of that

mindset. We also learnt to dream from here. In the next stage in Baroda we had Nasreen, Nilima, Gulam Sheikh, Jyothibhai and they were always open, and we learnt from them and not just in the studio. Then there are numerous small instances from various other teachers which I still recollect and reimagine for my students. Royal College again opened up a new vision. The very question of what is painting was changing, and still is, and we try to impart this by re-sensitising that question for current times. We have taken in a lot from them, but now I think of what we didn't get, unknowingly so. We are learning that we don't want to indulge in looking at our own work, but instead focus on learning, to focus on art but also what is beyond art. Nasreen never really taught us anything formally, but she just kept saying "keep doing", and now I understand what she meant, how important it is 'to read' more than 'to see', to engage with the atmosphere, the in-between. It is actually reading in that moment of time. No other teacher taught us this, they usually taught us by showing and describing. Nilima used to share so much with us and in such detail, which was very important and pushed us so much, but Nasreen did the opposite and we see her value today, to sense, read and heal. They pushed us hard and had a pride in seeing how the students did. Through my mentor at Royal College I learnt that both conviction and perspective are important - we cannot see where we are or what we have achieved until we look back from where we started. I think these many moments has given me a complex understanding of teaching.

Your workshop sought to address the processes of artistic creation, specifically in relation to how technology enables

these processes. How do you define technology here, and how does it impact the creative process?

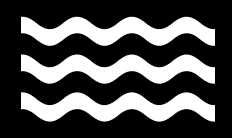
For me the use of technology is always to sort of evoke a certain sensuality and a sensorial experience. It isn't about using technology for something to function perfectly or for meticulous presentation, but for the intense sensorial experience it can evoke in the audience. Like the work at Kochi I made recently - it was an object dropping from above, the technology is raw and basic, but the sensation to the viewer is something more than what a silent object can do - this is where discourse comes in. It is the possibility of that something through the use of technology. Technology is not something that comes forward and stands by itself but it creates a visibility. We as artists have skills, tools and technologies but carving a work is not just about how skillful you are but about the experience of using an axe as different from using a chisel. Paper is technology too. In my college I gave my students just a sheet of paper and asked them to make anything, without any other instructions. It was a novel experience for them and tough to grapple with. It broke the idea of a paper as a material and pushed them to think of paper as technology. So, technology is not machines and things but a part of what has come out of technology too. The challenge to students was also about how to validate their ideas, and that too with conviction. That is very important in today's learning environment, to not focus only on skills but skills of intelligence and sensibility as they develop their practice. Without students there is no teaching to speak of because it all emerges from their problems and looking at their experience, and thus the learning.

Can you share one teaching exercise that is an essential part of your practice as a teacher? (Please give complete details on why this exercise is important to you and your class, its aim, the critical thinking and making skills it enables, and outcomes it has generated)

I can think of two exercises that I use often -

- » Still life in Baroda - Taking from Gulam Sheikh's ideas on what and how objects can be used. It is an exercise in freeing one's self and seeing the accidental process. I start with setting up a still life study and the students start looking at it and making their drawings. Halfway through their work I change the position of the objects - and of course the students are shocked and protest or are upset - but I tell them to go ahead and do what you can. The learning here was to see how each of them handled this disruption, some erased and started again, some drew over it, and some others found ways of engaging with this otherwise traditional art college still-life in their own innovative ways. It is to ask, what does it do for your process, the sensation, feeling and the struggle. Some of my students who are teachers now apparently carry forward this exercise!
- » Nude Studies in Fine Arts - The idea of hiring a nude model for life-study is fading nowadays although the romantic notion persists amongst students - that it is a part of a fine arts education. In Baroda, just before I left, there was some trouble in hiring a model. The Fine Arts department was quite popular and had a public presence and the model who used to usually come was scared of

being recognised and refused. So, I asked my students - what is it we are questioning here? Why do nude studies? They then visited the family of the lady model, and discussed with them their views and objections. It was an exercise in understanding the context and reality of why this traditional studio practice needed rethinking. If the aim was to do a study of a nude subject, why not imagine a nude and transform what they wanted to express through that? This again was something that cropped up not as a teaching method in itself, but out of students' problems and challenges. It was about finding modes to allow them to engage with their own situation, though conceptual and real terms, and not finding solutions for them.



#1 | Name Gesture

This exercise was used as an icebreaker when engaging with the large group of students, from different schools, who are meeting for the first time. It is a simple exercise to help remember names of new members of a group and is done in a playful manner.

- » The group stands in a circle.
- » The exercise begins with one person making a unique gesture/action and saying their name. The gesture needs to be obvious and distinct from the others.
- » This continues in an order around the circle. It can be done for about 3-4 rounds and with each round the pace must increase. By the last round they can stop saying the names and merely gesture.

It is a quick exercise and is effective in helping students or participants remember new names and faces.

#2 | Mirroring

Borrowing from theatre this exercise is simple observation - based exercise where a pair 'mirror' each other's movements. It helps build observation skills and allows individuals to try movements which are not naturally their own.

- » Pair up in twos and face each other.
- » Begin by one person making a gesture/movement and the person standing facing them 'mirror' the same gesture (almost like the image we see in a mirror where the right becomes left and vice versa).
- » Repeat with the second person now being the active one.
- » By keeping the gestures slow and deliberate the pair can start predicting each-other's movements and create a well-coordinated set of movements.



#3

This exercise helps the group with their focus, memory and to think on their feet. It involves a minimum of 3 rounds, with it becoming more complex as a new round is added. Each round as a theme (example: object, animal, place...)

- » Stand in a circle.
- » Start by naming the first round's theme, let's say Animals - the person starting should say the name of an animal out loud and point at any person in the circle who must then say their animal name. Then they point at a third person, and so on. This continues until every person in the circle is chosen and has given an animal name. The order in which this round proceeded must be kept in mind.
- » A teacher or moderator can write down the name of person with their choices of animals and the order of the participants speaking.
- » Round 2 and 3 can happen in the same manner (starting with the last person to finish the previous round) but with different themes and in a different order. The same can be noted down by a moderator.
- » Now each participant must remember their animal, object and place, and the person who comes before and after them in each of the rounds.
- » The real game begins now, where the group tries to replicate the three rounds in the same order and the correct names of animals, objects and places. Instead of pointing at the next person they need to make eye contact with the next person, thus making it more challenging.
- » The game can continue at a faster pace after the first round.





Intermedia Workshop in Hyderabad

19 Aug -

- ▴ Evening session: Setting up of equipment with students and interaction with Igal pre-workshop.

20 Aug -

- ▴ Pecha Kucha style presentations by 40 students.
- ▴ Igal presentation on sound and Music, Tone, frequency, pitches. Different relationship with time, counting exercise, etc.
- ▴ 'Unplugged session': Theatre exercises for two batches of 16 students each.

21 Aug -

- ▴ Igal Presentation: Music compositions from ancient western compositions to recent composers. Introduction to beats, and counting beats. Introducing the four-figure analogy.
- ▴ Introduction to audacity software
- ▴ 'Unplugged session': Theatre exercises for two batches of around 15 students.

22 Aug -

- ▴ Igal Presentation: Introduction to waveforms, synthesisers, metronome, spectral analysis of sound in Audacity software, Analysing sound using SPEAR software etc
- ▴ Presentation of audio pieces which students recorded/took from available internet library and composed using Audacity software. Discussion on each audio composition and feedback/comments with educator.
- ▴ 'Unplugged session': Improvised performances for a small batch of students.

23 Aug -

- ▴ Introducing the various components of Sound mixer and how to use them.
- ▴ Introduction to Ableton Live software
- ▴ Presentation of audio pieces which students recorded/took from the available library and composed using Audacity software. Discussion.
- ▴ Improvised theatre exercises and performances, plans for the final production.

24 Aug -

- ▴ Introduction to MaxMSP
- ▴ Group exercise that picked from the previous day improvised performance and the four-figure analogy.
- ▴ Presentation of audio pieces which students recorded/took from the available library and composed using Audacity software. Discussion.
- ▴ Improvised theatre exercises and performances, plans for the final production

25 Aug -

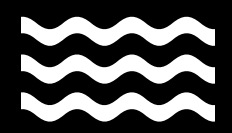
- ▴ 'Campus Raising' film screening
- ▴ Introduction of rough script for the final production.
- ▴ Presentation of audio pieces which students recorded/took from the available library and composed using Audacity software
- ▴ Rehearsals for the performances, filming and recording sound and voices

26 Aug -

- ▴ Rehearsals and audio/ video recording continues
- ▴ Film screening in the dept
- ▴ Filming and recording on campus by students

27 Aug -

- ▴ Rehearsal and filming continued outside the studio space
- ▴ A meeting with all students and faculty to discuss the workshop so far, and conclusion of the workshop with plans on continuing some work individually post the workshop.



Intermedia Workshop in Surat

02 Sep evening session -

- ▴ Setting up of equipment with students and interaction with Igal pre-workshop.
- ▴ Discussion with students present on what the workshop is going to be

03 Sep -

- ▴ Pecha Kucha with students
- ▴ 'Unplugged session' on time and rhythm.
- ▴ Pecha Kucha continues along with exercise on understanding basics of stereo sound and how we experience sound.
- ▴ Second 'Unplugged session' for the day with theatre exercise

04 Sep -

- ▴ "It's about Time" presentation by Igal, with a historical journey into time and music.
- ▴ Formal inauguration hosted by the university with the VC welcoming the workshop.
- ▴ Presentation by Igal on softwares and students were given the trial version of the softwares to install

05 Sep -

- ▴ The students were divided based on the available number of computers to start their work on their sound softwares.
- ▴ A special session with Mass Com students who missed out on a few unplugged sessions due to their different working hours.
- ▴ Unplugged session in the evening to try out movement-based exercises. Today's session was led by a few students with their ideas being made into a series of exercises.

06 Sep -

- ▴ Presentation by Igal on technology and creativity through history, from analogue days to the use of digital technologies.
- ▴ Students continued to work on their personal recordings
- ▴ Evening 'Unplugged session' was led by another two students who led the entire group in a performative work with music and reading of text.

07 Sep -

- ▴ Morning session on softwares and working on MaxMSP
- ▴ Full afternoon session on student presentation of audio and multimedia works developed on the new software, and discussions.
- ▴ Unplugged session in the evening

08 Sep -

- ▴ Students' presentations and discussions
- ▴ Final presentation by Igal on important figures in the history of sound from around the world and the significance of their inventions. In conclusion he shared his contact details with students and planned how many can complete their works or do new works and share with him.

SN School of Arts and Communication, Hyderabad
Students' response to the question: Does the infrastructure in your school meet the needs of your practice?

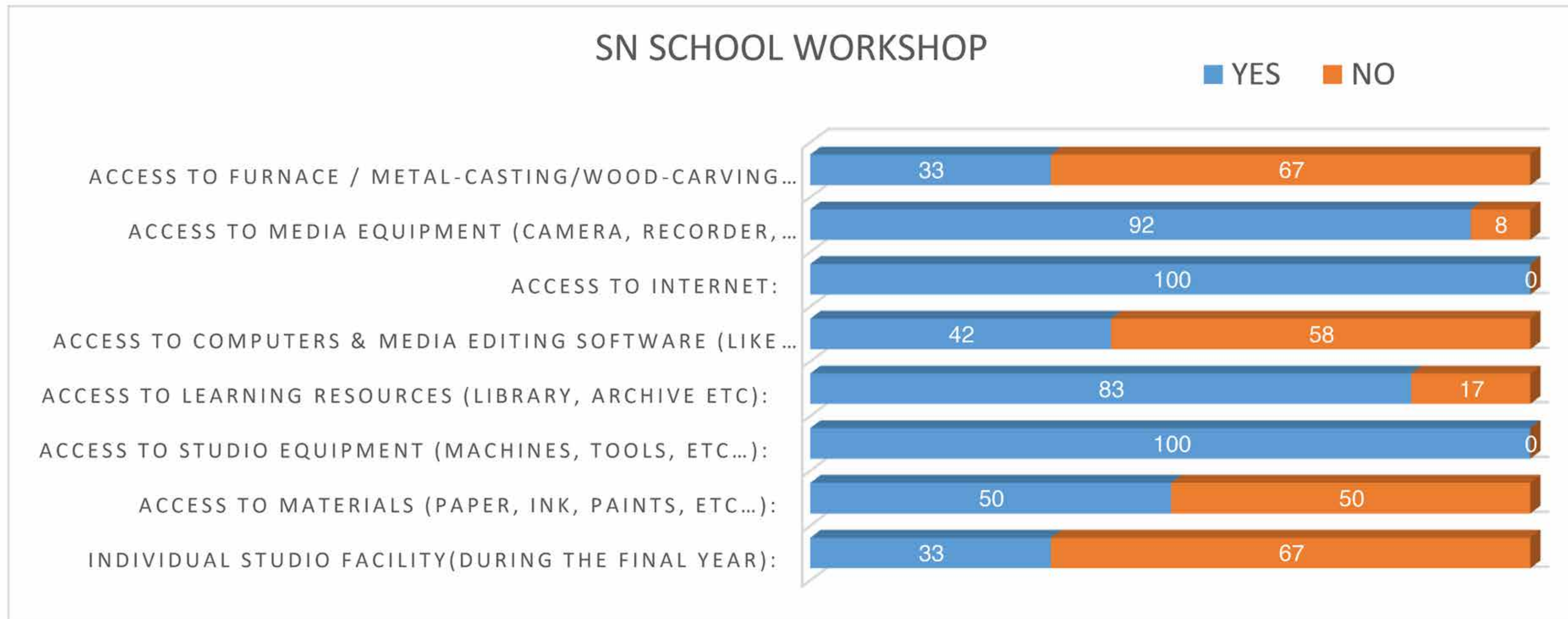
DATA FROM
STUDENTS' BIENNALE
QUESTIONNAIRE



Total sample size: 12

Male: 8

Female: 4

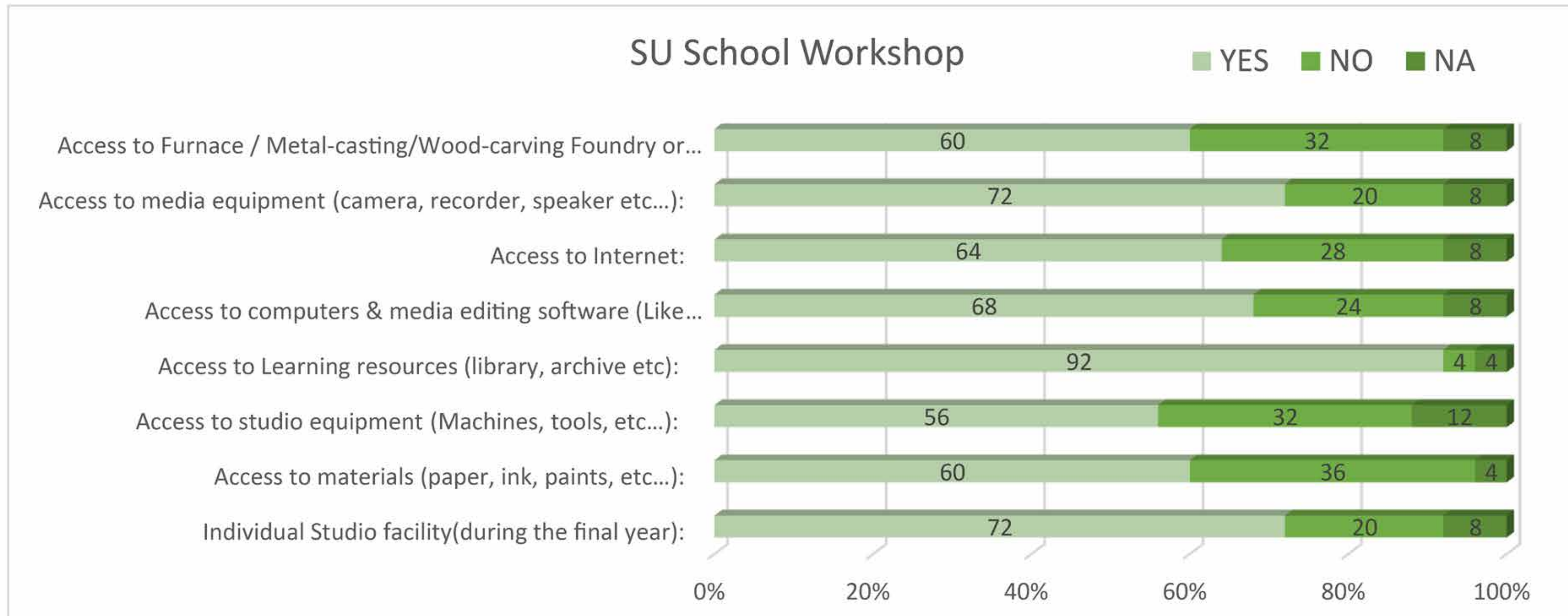




Total sample size: 25

Male: 9

Female: 16



THE CITY AS ARTIST'S STUDIO

Workshop
as part of
Expanded
Education
Programme,
Students'
Biennale
2018

Conducted by **Sanathanan Thamothersampillai**

17 – 23 October, 2018

House No 2/126 A, Cholamandal Artist Village, Chennai

Open to Registered Participants



Site: Chennai

Workshop title: City as artist's studio

Dates: 17/10/2018 - 23/10/2018

Educator: Sanathanan Thamothersampillai

Participating colleges: Government College of Arts and Crafts, Chennai; Bharathiyaar Palkalai Koodam College, Pondicherry; Government College of Arts, Kumbakkonam

Venue: House no. 2/126 A, Cholamandal Artists' Village, Injambakkam, Chennai.

Documentation: Ponraj Kumar

Workshop support: CP Krishnapriya and Narendran

Researcher: Bhooma Padmanabhan

The workshop in Chennai was one of the two site-based workshops that chose to locate itself outside the art college campus, allowing for a residency-style engagement. The week-long intensive was led by the Jaffna-based artist and educator Sanathanan Thamothersampillai, who imagined the workshop as a series of 'memory works' that allowed for the imagination of alternative narratives of the city. While Chennai was the site of interrogation, the focus was very much on the artistic process - ways of seeing, listening and understanding cities in contemporary times - and the conceptual tools and skills that are required of an artist who chooses to work with socially engaged processes, collaborative spaces and public platforms.



The workshop also brought together students from three art institutions from across Tamil Nadu, many of whom had worked together in the past and were looking to ideate on forms of future collaborations. The residency model thus enabled them to negotiate these relationships, by creating the intensity that only comes from travelling and working together, while also being mentored simultaneously. Their interactions also defined the conceptual route that the workshop took, with many ideas and debates emerging from the students' own lives, their struggles, questions, fears and discomforts, which the educator navigated while punctuating that with lectures and exercises.



City. Studio. Artist. Practice

With the title of the workshop “City as artist’s studio” the educator Sanathanan Thamothearampillai set the stage for a deep engagement with the conceptual premise of the City , in this case, Chennai. But this was a gradual process starting with the first session around the question - why are we doing this? The students had signed up for the workshop with various expectations - to meet interesting professionals and possible collaborators, to explore Chennai, to learn about ‘contemporary art’ as it existed ‘outside’ (their college/ their city), to network, to travel, and to experience their first ever art residency. To many of the female students this was the only opportunity they would get to travel outside their homes as students. This session was full of questions, and set the tone for the concerns that would be taken up through the week - around medium, concept, installation, articulation, language, caste, hierarchy, gender and more. Without presenting the students with answers Sanathanan chose to describe the workshop as an attempt to initiate them into a lifelong learning process - not to ask whether you like doing painting or installation, but to ask why we are doing it. What are we seeking through our art?

The first lecture was an exercise in understanding the ideas of location, site, and history. Leading the students through a brief history of cities - its special place in the advent of modernity, the artistic imagination around the city in Europe, Social Realism, Post Impressionism, gender, class, gaze, and then the setting up of colonial art schools across India, the city in post-independence India, the shifting artistic centres and concerns, the framing of rural and urban, and

finally the contemporary preoccupation with cities and urban lives. While based clearly in the art historical discourse Sanathanan kept bringing back into the discussion the role of the artist in relation to the understanding of the city, allowing the shift to occur from looking at the *city* to looking at the *self*.

Throughout the workshop the educator focused on three key 'skills' that is needed of an artist today. They were reinforced through a slide presentation, lecture and resultant group discussion (on social control), and set the tone for what to expect in the upcoming 'memory works' sessions.

- » On reading the visual - how to 'read' a painting or a visual as opposed to seeing it?
- » On speaking - articulation was a key component of this workshop, with the educator encouraging everyone to speak about a work of art and use relevant terminologies.
- » On collaboration - how do you work as a group, and think as a group?

'Memory works' - How do we understand city as an archive of contested multiple histories, memories and everyday experiences?

'Memory works' as Sanathanan framed it consisted of a series of interactions with resource people from the city - scholars, environmentalist, researcher, historian, artists - sometimes framed as site visits and sometimes as anecdotal interactions, as a mode of listening to the various stories and histories that emerge from the city and its peoples. More often than not they subverted and challenged the



very structures through which the city is defined in the national imagination. This frame emerges from Sanathanan's own methodology of artistic research and his preoccupation with questions of location, memory, and identity. The Chennai workshop included the following 'memory works'-

- » 19 Oct 2018 - Half day visit to the Dakshinachitra Heritage Museum - this was the first site visit and was not mediated like the other session, but allowed the participants to explore questions of heritage, the bifurcation of our imagination into rural and urban in modern times, the role of objects in redefining these categories, and the role of the museum in this project. All ideas that had been discussed by Sanathanan in his introduction to the session.

» 20 Oct 2018 – Morning fieldtrip to North Chennai / Vada Chennai's Ennore area with environmentalist Mr. Nityanand Jayaraman, where he presented his ongoing work on mapping the region's degrading coastline, the environmental impact of the various industries located there, the social implication of development and its adverse impact on native communities, and the need to make visible the social problems at the heart of this environmental issue. This session had a profound impact on the students, and later manifested in some of their works produced for the Students' Biennale exhibition in Kochi.

» 20 Oct 2018 – Afternoon at the Government College of Arts and Crafts, Chennai, with art director Mr. Trotsky Marudu. This anecdotal conversation with the well-known alumni of the school clearly delineated the needs of an artist/ art student to seek education beyond the boundaries of the arts college, and was a stark reminder that an art education isn't merely an academic exercise, but a lifelong learning process.

» 21 Oct 2018 – Morning fieldtrip to Triplicane area with filmmaker Mr. Anwar, explored the long history of this locality through a look at its mixed population of Hindus and Muslims, their domestic and religious architecture, existing businesses in its busy markets and the social relations that exist even today.

» 21 Oct 2018 - Afternoon talk by Mr. Paneerselvam, Reader's Editor at *The Hindu*, on the history of caste politics in India, its legal implications, the Mandal commission, ideas of Pride/ Humiliation, caste and its politicisation in TN, and the



significance of this knowledge in everyday practice.

» 23 Oct 2018 – Morning fieldtrip to Kallukuttai, new urban settlement near the IT corridor OMR with Dr. S. Anandhi, Professor at Madras Institute of Development Studies, whose works on Women's Studies with special focus on Gender, Caste and Identity Politics, and her research student Ms. Deepa. This session was particularly insightful in breaking down complex ideas around urban development, labour, migration, the transitory existence of migrant workers and their loss of identity, and emerging masculinities. It reinforced the necessity to look at 'the other side' and listen to narratives that problematised ideas of development and social mobility.

Keywords to artistic exploration

While the 'memory works' were defined by the stories and knowledge shared by the various resource people, Sanathanan allowed the 'classroom' sessions (for the lack of a better word) to emerge from the questions that the students had. After every site visit the group came together and shared their thoughts - what they learnt, what was new, what was difficult, what bothered them and in what way it changed their idea of a city/Chennai. These were free-flowing debates around development, ecology, dignity, gender, mobility, social control and it came together in disjointed forms and often as just questions. But with every 'memory work' and every discussion hence, the ideas grew in number and became more complex. Some of these discussions ended as unanswered questions, some resulted in a short lecture by Sanathanan, but the 'climax' came in the form of a series of keywords around their experiences. More than halfway through the workshop the educator called upon the students to make a short 'pecha kucha' style talk on their workshop experience so far. This required them to think and write down a short text which they would read out (and this writing exercise in itself was a rare form of articulation that they did as artists). What emerged from the 'pecha kucha' session was a set of Keywords which became the vocabulary to thinking about the city -

Caste, Map/Place, Smell, Disturbance, Fish, Cement (as object and symbol), Art, Heritage, Waste, Waste Management, Beauty, Education, Other Side, Power, Fear, City as Exhibition, Conflict, Perspective, Hide, River, Change,

Value system, Price, Sound/noise, Language, Invisibility .

These words emerged not only from what was told to them but from their own enquiries and concerns. The political was no longer something external but something that emerged from their own experiences, concerns, questions and readings of their locations.

The final session was an exercise in proposal writing - to be done in groups to allow for collaboration, and as a document of their ideas. The following questions were asked: What is your work about? How will you make it? Why are you making it? While a lot of ideas did emerge in discussions, their translation into proposals proved to be harder. While the exercise didn't come together in the end, it brought into focus the urgent need for art schools to equip their students with the necessary verbal and writing skills needed to articulate their ideas for various contexts - college application forms, proposals, artists statements, and presentation skills - enabling them to better articulate their ideas and positions in an increasingly integrated artworld.





PUBLIC EVENT

Artist as Witness

Artist Presentation by Sanathanan Thamotharampillai

17 Oct 2018, 5.30-7pm

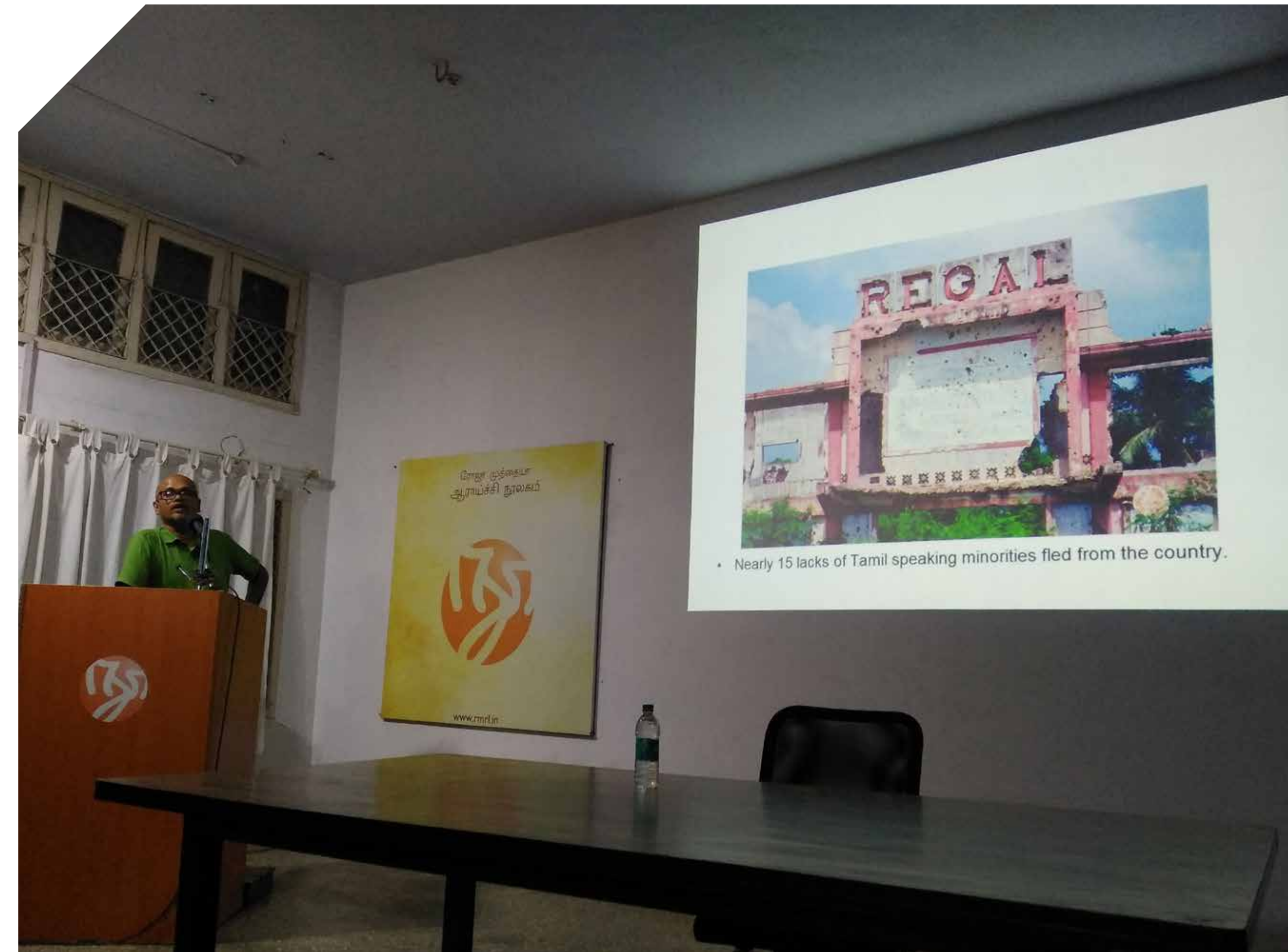
In collaboration with Roja Muttiah Research Library (RMRL), CIT Campus, Taramani, Chennai.

The public presentation by Sanathanan Thamotharampillai was held at the Roja Muthiah Research Library, CIT Campus, Taramani. The RMRL's legacy as a world class archive of Tamil literature and books on humanities, social sciences and the arts with a regular audience engaged in Tamil studies, added another critical layer to this public event by a Tamil artist from Sri Lanka. The artist was in Chennai now on a formal visit long after his college years, and this moment allowed him to reflect on his complex relationship with the city.

Presented fully in Tamil, the artist's talk accompanied a slideshow of his work from his early years to his most recent one, and was almost an autobiographical account of his journey as an artist from his home in Jaffna to Chennai to study at the College of Arts, the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi which abruptly put an end to his admission at the college and his nomadic journey in the city, then on to his move to Delhi's College of Art and the cultural exposure he got there, the post-war return to his home town and the subsequent emergence of a new political awareness in his practice. The presentation further explored how his political voice emerged from his everyday realities, opportunities to collaborate

and imagine exhibitions around crisis and violence but also about humanising these acts, and his constant need to learn.

This was followed by Q&A with the audience which also included the SB workshop participants. This talk had a profound impact on the SB participants - engaging them in deep introspection on what it means to understand the political in one's life, the need to engage with art historical knowledge, the need to look at the other side, and ways to negotiate with objects and ideas.





Thamotharampillai Shanaathanan is a visual artist living and working in Jaffna, Sri Lanka. He is also an art educator and co-founder of the Sri Lanka Archive of Contemporary Art, Architecture, and Design (SLAAD). His work has been exhibited widely in Sri Lanka and at the Museum of Anthropology at UBC, Vancouver; Queensland Art Gallery, South Brisbane; Museum of Ethnology, Vienna; Devi Art Foundation, New Delhi among others. His artist books include *The One Year Drawing Project*, *The Incomplete Thombu*, and *A-Z of Conflict* (forthcoming). He holds a degree in painting from the University of Delhi and a PhD from Jawaharlal Nehru University. He is currently Senior Lecturer in Art History, Department of Fine Arts, Jaffna University and advisor on Sri Lanka's national curriculum for teaching art in schools.



What do you think is the role of art education, in the south Asian context?

There is a question that we need to ask before this, and that is “what is art education in south Asia today?” For us this mode of art education was introduced by the British colonial powers. As Partha Mitter says, the British colonial power brought art education to India at a time when even in Britain there was no clear distinction between art education and technical education. Thus, this confusion was inherent in a way. It came to be clarified to a certain extent in various schools during the nationalist struggle as it manifested in each of these areas, and in a way the relationship between art and nation building made art a political/social project. Just like how they used many of the colonial methods of political rule for the new nationalist agendas, similarly they used art to create new kind of agency for their own ends. This fire (or energy) continues till about the 1960s and ‘70s, where one of the major sites of nation building becomes the art colleges.

However, after the active nation-building phase passes the role of the art school also becomes unclear; the role of the art colleges begins to decline slowly after these years. And now, the objective of art education is almost non-existent. If you look at the art world it has completely changed. There is thus no connection between art education and the art world today. What can we do now? We need to define the objective of art education today, whatever it may be. Sometimes we may not have a single objective, in which case we could also look at

courses with multiple objectives achieved through multiple courses and specialisations. But it is about defining an objective without which we cannot speak of curriculums.

You have played an important role in the development of the arts curriculum in Sri Lanka. From that position what do you think of the growing interest in art education amongst private institutions who are looking to bridge the gap between education and the artworld. How do you look at this and the state of government art schools?

Post the 1990s, and especially from 2000s, a great many projects have emerged from this vacuum. Everyone from the India Art Fair to Kochi Biennale are doing their own education projects, private galleries are producing resources, publishing books and thus creating art histories. And, this leaves us in a tough spot ... because it is creating new connections between art and businesses, and there can be questions raised about whose stories are being told and by whom and why. This makes the need for state institutions all the more relevant, and not just for education. On the one hand is the growing art market, however we lack the discourse to monitor and humanise this market. The institutions that create these discourses haven't been formed, and the market in turn has been creating this discourse. This is very ironical and hard to comprehend.

The other issue here is that other than the declining skills there is also a declining space for artists to express themselves and tell their stories. If you were to take the course that we are running in Jaffna University, it is a course that is directly affected by larger curricular revisions and changing rules implemented by the university. So, for the purpose of a grant proposal we had to write we did a research about our course,

from which we realised the course didn't have an objective. From this we made two major changes - we introduced Outcome-based Education, and brought in Student-Centred Learning. There are of course challenges and problems in these methods too, but when we researched to see if we have answers to the questions these methods were asking we realised no! We didn't have a way to gauge quality of students works, the parameters for students profiles - this realisation helped us structure our ideas. We then identified three skills that we needed our students to have - we called it the Three Cs "Craftsmanship, Creativity, Criticality". Keeping this, we created our new syllabus. It wasn't that we changed the pre-existing courses, but we brought them under this view, and this gave us a new purpose. We now could think of using the course with these skills in mind.

The second thing we enabled was to look at the livelihood of the students after college. The craft industry played a major role here, and so we brought in craft as an elective subject into our syllabus. This was an experiment for us too. The third change we made was to introduce internships, and facilitated in placing our students with an established artist or within the craft industry with a master craftsman. We also converted the whole final year into a project-based work - for this they had to submit concept note, produce artworks, write a dissertation, and all of it had to be connected to the internship. Some of these forms existed but we just integrated it into a single project which connected the dissertation with their studio practice and internship. So these are the major structural changes that we have made to the curriculum and that has involved a great deal of production, and despite the changing nature of faculty this has provided the essential structure for the department's functions. This also creates the possibility

for self-learning. After a few years of this being implemented we are now seeing how and where we have to change our teaching methods to make this work, and through this process we are learning how to introduce theoretical concepts around the market, museums, contemporary politics, and artistic interventions. If the aim of the school is to produce artists, we had to ask ourselves if we had equipped the students with the right tools to face the challenges once they graduate.

In addition to this we also had to address larger concerns that the university was identifying - that the students had to have soft skills, communication skills beyond the subject skills / knowledge offered by each department - and required us to look a group assignment, presentations to make this happen. But on the whole, this has been a great shift, and the challenge now would be to keep up this momentum which would require good infrastructure and human resources.

You already spoke about student-centric learning, which is powered by the teacher to a great extent. What do you think the role of the educator is now in art schools?

If you ask me, I am a facilitator. Nowadays there are enough resources and material available. I used to prepare a PowerPoint beforehand and share the presentation with my students in class. But we didn't have Internet in the class in those days and if I didn't have access to an image, I had to tell them I will get back the next day. But there came a time when my students had better access to technology than I did, and they were able to find images on their phones in a moment. Technology has empowered the younger generations greatly, and they have access to more advanced tools. I no

longer need to bring the resources to them, but rather am focused on facilitating this process. Nowadays both of us have equal access to Internet, and so I give them the topics to research and make presentations on. We are also quite involved in mentoring students after their final year - we have done three exhibitions with interested students. Here the exhibition came as a model which could connect education and industry, and I came in as a curator - not as someone from the gallery's side but from the side of education. I have told myself that this is the kind of curation I will undertake, where as an educator I am introducing my students to the artworld. I think this should be a part of what an educator does.

So far educators have not taken on this role properly. If it is about outcome-based learning then the educator should also face these challenges of addressing the outside world and have the answers to the questions that the students might have in the process. We have never imagined curation as the role of an educator so far, and it wasn't the concern for a certain generation of teachers. That generation taught the students only what they knew themselves but not what was required to make them an artist. That is a problem we are overcoming now, and we are trying to create a climate or space which can enable our students to meet these challenges and answer these questions.

This workshop that we are here for is a platform focused on art education within the larger efforts of the Students' Biennale, and marks a shift within from pure exhibition-making to also engaging in other modes of engagement with students. What roles and responsibilities would need to come under consideration here?

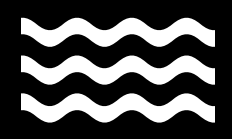
Exhibition making is a method within education now - we have the biennale now, and before this we had the final displays in art colleges. We are all aware of the potential of this, and the pitfalls - if you look at what happened to this space in Baroda, how such an interesting exchange space was captured by the market and became a conflict zone that impacted the future of the department. This is a classic example on what an art practice without a discourse could lead to, and the dangers of an art market without a discourse. However, at a time when state universities are collapsing it is inevitable that an institution like the Kochi Biennale will step in. So rather than looking at it as a model, this education platform is an experimental space to me. It is too early to say what can evolve out of this space but it brings in great possibilities.

Until now the artist or the student lacked a space to imagine themselves as artists, and Kochi Biennale has opened up this space for imagination which is very significant. The first thing is we have a space for dreaming. The second important aspect is that the biennale is creating a platform for viewership - just as the artist is evolving, we have a new community of viewers also emerging today which is equally important. But a discursive space hasn't opened up yet - it has yet to define what a platform such as the Students' Biennale expects of the students - are we looking at thematic engagements or larger practice or craftsmanship? This clarity hasn't been reached but we are moving towards defining this. Parallely we need to have discussions around this criticality, it needs to be about the biennale, and artists need to be equipped to answer in these forums. The biennale's large-scale platform allows us to meet publics, and we need to think about how to actively engage with the viewers.

This active viewer is essential for an active art practice. Biennale is one model and there can be multiple such models to suit the types of practice we have today. Even if state institutions were strong today, we don't know if it would have been enough to engage with the multiplicity of contemporary practices. We need to humanise these processes and it is our responsibility.

How can healthy discursive spaces emerge or be sustained today, where students are able to experiment with ideas and practices?

There is a lack in our public sphere, there is too little participation, too few exchanges, there is no debate, and this is what affects art. We cannot look at art as a separate thing, it has always been part of the larger discourse. Our question now is, how can we bring art into the larger discourse today? There is also the question of engaging in critical discussions within the disciplinary space of art. Here it is important to look at art history and what it can say about this. Unfortunately, art history has been relegated to being merely a subject for a degree both by students and teachers. The absence of art historical understanding is a major lack. In times when we can use any technology, any material, and even craftsmanship, what differentiates an artist from a non-artist is equally defined by theory as it is by skill. For an artist, theory is essential to historicise their own practice. This comes back to the need for an objective for art education, only then can we define how theory is taught.



#1 | Keywords Proposal

Proposal writing is one of the key skills that an artist needs today. This exercise can be adapted to any context and can be repeated often for students to learn to work collaboratively, think through words, learn to debate, and plot the logical steps towards making a work. The Keywords that will start this exercise can be from a lesson taught in the classroom, a lecture attended by them, a topic of critical debate, or even a film. The important part of this exercise is for them to present three things -

- »»» What are they going to make? - The description of the artwork should be thorough, with details on material/medium/scale/duration. Sketches or visualisation can also be presented.
- »»» How are they going to make it? - A detailed description of the process.
- »»» Why? - Their argument for the reason their work/process is valid.

- » The teacher or moderator can choose FIVE Keywords with the students from their topic of interest. Better yet if the students can come up with the words after discussions on given topics.
- » The group can then work by themselves to prepare their Proposal. They need to prepare a written proposal to be read out aloud.
- » After the given duration (determined by the teacher) the group must present their proposal, followed by Q&A.

The potential of this exercise is greatly determined by the space for critical thinking and debate that the teacher/moderator makes available.



WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

17 Oct -

- ▲ Student introductions and sharing expected learning outcomes
- ▲ 'City as artist's studio', Lecture by T. Sanathanan
- ▲ Afternoon session - Discussions around the question: What is the role of an artist?

18 Oct -

- ▲ Lecture presentation on how to 'read' a work of art
- ▲ Afternoon session - Group discussions around the questions - "Do you feel the effects of social control? How does social control change the role of an artist?"

18 Oct -

- ▲ Lecture by A.S. Panneerselvan, Journalist, Reader's editor of the Hindu, on the history of the College of Art in Chennai and the colonial legacy.
- ▲ Site visit to Dakshinachitra heritage museum

20 Oct -

- ▲ Early morning 'Memory work' with Nithyanand Jayaram, environmentalist and writer, to Ennore in north Chennai.
- ▲ Afternoon session - 'Memory work', a talk by Mr. Trotsky Marudu, Art Director, at Government College of Arts and Crafts, Chennai

21 Oct -

- ▲ Early morning 'Memory work' with Mr. Anwar, Filmmaker, in and around Triplicane.
- ▲ Afternoon session - discussion of previous sessions of 'memory works' and building keywords about the city.
- ▲ Evening session - Mr. A.S. Paneerselvam on the caste politics in India and its implications for artists.

22 Oct -

- ▲ Morning session - discussion on how to write proposals, and presentation by the educator on "Re-presentation" - followed by discussion on socially engaged practice and the creation of platforms.
- ▲ Proposal writing exercise using keywords begins.

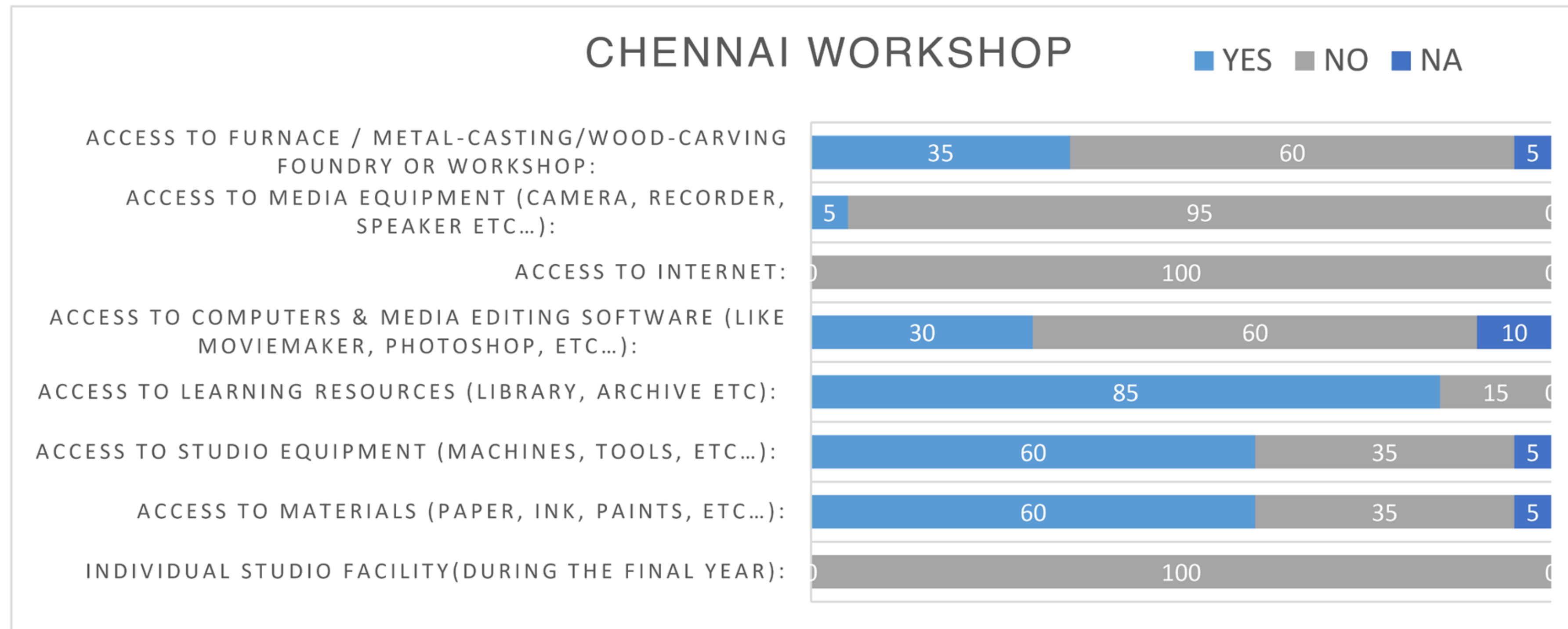
23 Oct -

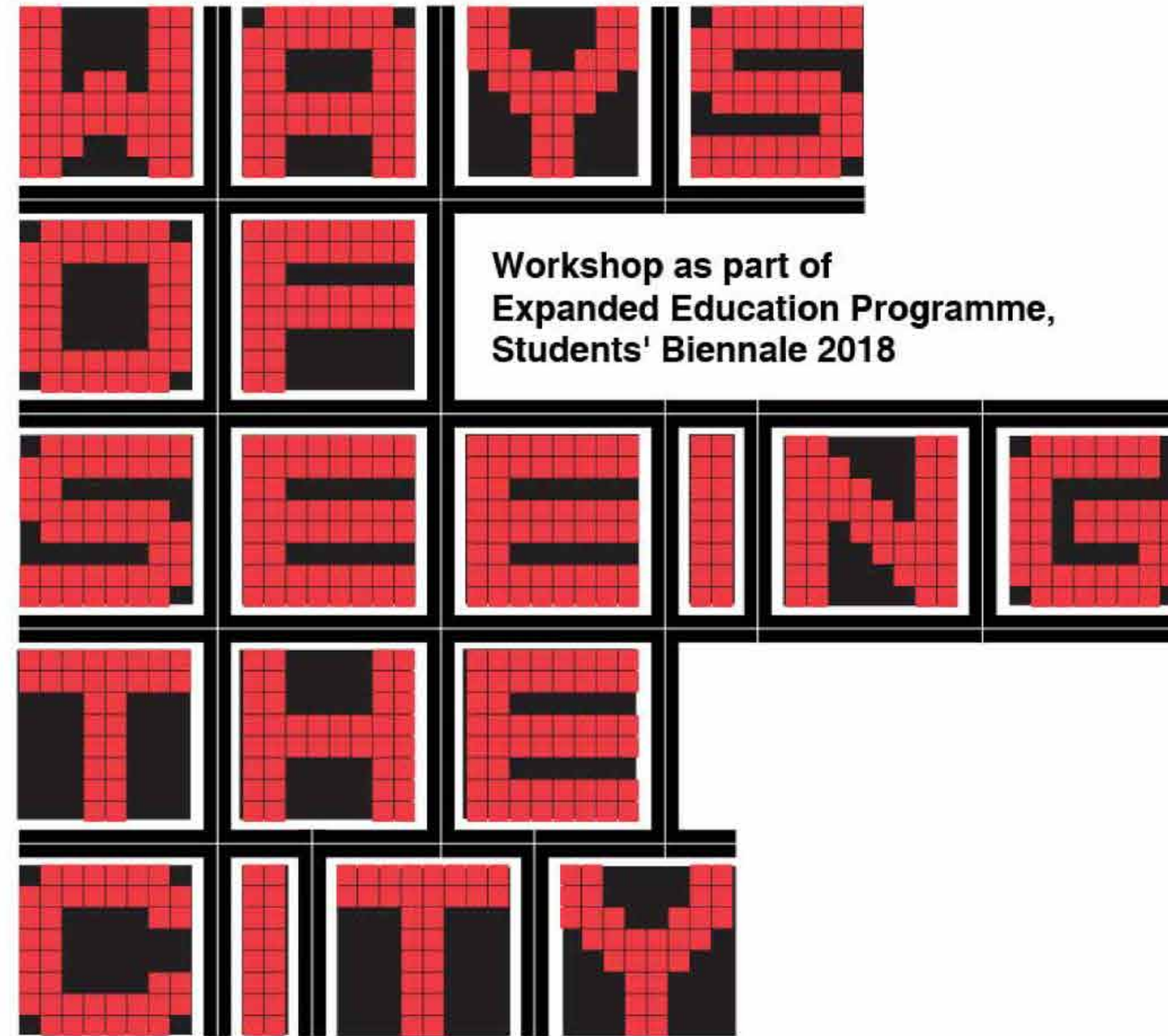
- ▲ Morning 'memory work' with Dr. S. Anandhi, Professor at MIDS, and research student Deepa, to an urban settlement in Taramani.
- ▲ Closing session with presentation of proposals and feedback session.

Chennai
Students' response to the question: Does the infrastructure in your school meet the needs of your practice?



Total sample size: 20
Male: 12
Female: 7
N/A: 1





Conducted by **Kausik Mukhopadhyay**
Additional Resource Person: **Sonal Sundararajan**

24 – 29 September, 2018
Sir J J School of Art, Mumbai

Open to Registered Participants



Sir. JJ School of Art, University of Mumbai, Maharashtra

University: Degrees in affiliation with the University of Mumbai, and Diplomas in affiliation with Directorate of Art, Maharashtra.

University type: Public University, State

Location: Mumbai, Maharashtra

Year of founding: 1857

Degrees offered: UG, PG (full time), Diploma and Hobby courses (part-time options available)

Specialisations: Drawing and Painting, Sculpture and Modelling, Interior decoration, Textile design, Metal work, Ceramic, and Teacher Training.

Sir. JJ School of Art is one of the oldest and best-known art institutions in India. Established in 1857 as a school for the training of Indian artists in the European academic tradition, the school soon added specialisations in architecture and decorative design keeping with the founding ideology of wanting to focus on “improvements of Arts and Manufactures”. The crucial shift occurred in 1890 when the school was taken over by the Education Department of Government of Bombay, moving the focus from technical training to defining Indian art as a part of cultural education. In 1965 the Directorate of Art (DOA) came into existence for handling all art institute and col-

leges of graduate and postgraduate level in Maharashtra and was based out of JJ School. This body has complete authority around recruitment of teaching and non-teaching staff, government aids, syllabus exhibitions and examination and administrating central admission process of students in Maharashtra. In 1981 the School affiliated with Mumbai University to start Painting degree, followed in quick succession by Sculpture degree and Art & Craft (Metal Work, Textile Design, Interior Decoration, Ceramic) degree.

The college has produced numerous well-known artists – modernist masters and contemporary practitioners – known for their engagement with progressive western ideals, a preoccupation with urban spaces and lives, and a bold vision of the future. JJ has remained integral in producing several generations of visual artists, filmmakers and photographers.

The JJ School of Arts today stands today with a clear focus on specialised departments of art education and skill-centric learning. Students spend a majority of their time in their studios or sketching at a site, under the mentoring of the professors. Without a full-time art history course the school focuses on bolstering the students' practice with mentoring on portfolio development and encouraging placements. Best known for its Painting and Sculpture programmes, the college also runs camps for artists from across the state focused for sharing these resources and knowledge.

In recent years the college has renewed its focus on indigenous art forms, inviting artisans and craftspersons to hold workshops for their students on specialised fields like Indian mural painting. In the future there are plans for

institutional collaborations with other renowned visual arts colleges to set up exchange programmes and knowledge sharing.

All three schools within JJ – of Fine Arts, Architecture and Applied Arts – have also been fighting to gain autonomous status and in 2016 the Maharashtra Cabinet granted them academic autonomy which translates into freedom to design their own curriculums, appoint teachers and raise funds, as well as form their own independent regulatory board. The matter has met some impediments with University Grants Commission (UGC) asking for mandatory NAAC accreditations needed to finalise the same.





Ways of Seeing the City
Kausik Mukhopadhyay and Sonal Sundararajan
24/09/2018 - 29/09/2018

Venue: JJ School of Art, Mumbai

Participating Colleges: SNTD, Pune; Dr. Bhashaeb Ambedkar University, Aurangabad; Government College of Art & Design, Nagpur; Bharathi Vidyapeeth College of Arts, Pune

Documentation: Sabari Pandian

Researcher: Karthik KG

Both educators come from the architecture background and so the thematic of the workshop emerged from the Architecture/Art intersection, with the idea of developing new ways of seeing the city through a practice of making a work- to look at the city and build 'kinetic sculpture'. The workshop was structured around this approach of seeing, making, thinking, discussing and working.

Two weeks prior to the workshop, a small orientation was organised to brief the students on the module and to invite them to sign up for it. The session began with Vidya Shivadas giving an overview of the Students' Biennale and Kochi Muziris Biennale to a large group of students and teachers who had gathered. It was followed by a short presentation by the educators on the workshop premise which they had developed teaching architecture students over the past two decades. It explored ways of seeing the city not as a collection of built forms, but a network of activities, created by exchanges, interactions of people, production and consumption. The educators also

stressed that the works made by students in the workshop would be with discarded/ found objects. The students were left with a series of sites which they could begin researching as a lead up to the workshop.

While there was a lot of enthusiasm for the workshop, we also realised that a negligible amount of students had worked with found materials or explored any kinetic works.

We were very warmly welcomed by Dean Vishwanath Sabale and all arrangements for the session were made by Prof. Smita Kinkale, Lecturer. We were supported by Prof Sabale in publicising the workshops in art schools over Maharashtra and could sign up students from institutions in Pune, Nagpur and Aurangabad who made their way to Mumbai for the workshop.

Over a brief conversation with the Dean of the school, Prof. Vishwanath Sabale, spoke about the pedagogy of the school and also specifically about the workshop. He mentioned a few things of interest: The pedagogy of the school might be more conventional but it helps students to develop a strong foundation required to survive in different fields after their studies. Only few of these get to be 'artists' while others have to find their footing in different places so their learning does come in handy. Nonetheless, he was very interested and appreciative of this workshop and welcomed any such forums that introduced students to current art practices. He also expressed a willingness to host any such events using their studios and infrastructure. Especially during the long holidays, the spaces could be opened up for these activities, inviting students from other schools as well. .

The first lecture-presentation was an introduction to ways of

map-making through the works of designers, artists and architects and showcasing various approaches to visualising the ongoing process of a place and capturing its energy. After this brief, the students formed groups and were assigned nine different sites to develop projects around Bhuleshwar, Banganga, Chowpatty beach, BBD chawls, Crawford market, Mangaldasmart, Dalalstreet, Bhochidaka, CSMT station. The initial visit to the sites was to observe and document the place as photographs, videos, drawings etc. This then paved the way for brainstorming about what they would like to develop their work around, followed by another round of research. The brainstorming session with Kausik and Sonal allowed the groups to engage in and dissect the meanings that these sites have and how each group understood these sites.

The creative process began with the educators engaging in long discussions with students once they presented initial sketches of how their projects will look and the conceptual idea the work seeks to explore. While many students produced exact



naturalistic rendering of the site, these discussion sessions with the educators allowed their work to open up through a methodical set of research questions into these sites. These sessions led to the dismantling of traditional definitions of sketching and map-making, allowing the students to animate their proposals with ephemeral and non-visual elements. This process also allowed them to engage with the question of artistic research, the logistics involved in artistic processes and the need to continuously negotiate with your idea as the work develops.

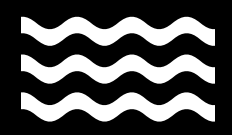
The second part of the workshop focused on making, with instructions to develop a 'kinetic sculpture' around ideas that they had gathered during their site visits. The educators introduced the term 'kinetic sculpture' by presenting artworks, especially through the works of Alexander Calder, Jean Tinguely, Theo Jansen among others. Here, the challenge for both students and educators were to unpack the terms 'kinetic' and 'sculpture' and to engage with the meaning of sculpture beyond its

traditional understanding and values into a contemporary space of engaged art. The term 'kinetic' also had to be metamorphosed from being synonymous with 'movement' to anything that has a 'potential to move.' After this intensive exercise of learning and unlearning, the students started playing around with expanded ideas of sculpture, resulting in ideas for videos and live performance.

In the final part of the workshop students began to develop their projects. Funds were distributed to each student in order to procure materials and cover the making costs. From then students were occupied in gathering their materials, experimenting with stuff, discussing and shaping their projects. The educators were constantly involved during this process, questioning the students, giving them suggestions in terms of materials and techniques and during unsuccessful events they helped them with some workarounds. This constant engagement of thinking, discussing, making, continued till the projects were put up for the display on the last day of the workshop.

In the end there were some rich pieces of works inspired from the localities successfully put together in a short span of few days: Table-football inspired installation with beach sand and moulds of the garbage portrayed the changing aspects of the Chowpatty Beach, an artistic miniature model showcasing the various occupants of BDD Chawl, a board game inspired from the fish market of Bhochidaka, a visualisation of the hierarchy of various labour classes in Dalal Street through an assemblage of clay sculptures, a pandal decoration inspired work from Bhuleshwar, rotating light and shadow installation portraying the day/night activities of CSMT station, an installation of hanging hooks inspired from the way shopkeepers entice customers in the Crawford market, a video documenting a day in the life of workers in these busy markets.





The Final Display

29 Sep 2018

As the workshop at JJ School of Art was focused on making, the realisation of a final work of art was a central concern to the outcome. Keeping this in mind the educators set up a final day of display where the teams of students installed their works in the large gallery space and seminar hall on the ground floor of the school, and the educators had invited a group of contemporary artists to engage with the students. As the researcher Karthik KG observes, “During the display, the teams presented their works. They were questioned and their ideas got challenged by the audience – a mixed group of artist, art historian, curator, educator among other students, which later the students reflected as a useful exercise to further develop their practice. This approach of seeing, making, thinking, discussing and developing newer ways of seeing things is what the educators had to offer as part of this workshop which the students can carry back with them to their own practices.”

The invited artists included Mumbai based artists Mansi Bhatt and Archana Hande, and SB Curator and Baroda-based artist KP Reji.





Kausik Mukhopadhyay born in 1960 and completed his BVA at Rabindra Bharati University Kolkata in 1986 and MFA at Visva-Bharati University, Santiniketan, West Bengal in 1989. His one man shows include *Squeeze Lime In Your Eye* at Chatterjee and Lal, Mumbai, 2017, and *Guaranteed to work throughout its useful life*, held jointly at Pundole Art Gallery and The Guild Art Gallery in 2009. Other participations include *Making/ Unmaking Objects*, Vadehra, New Delhi, 2007, *Reverse Depth*, Tamarind Arts, New York, 2006 *Edge of Desire*, Perth, Australia, 2004, *Century City - Art and Culture in the Metropolis*, Tate Modern, London, 2001, *Collaborative Space, Collaborative Work* with Tushar Joag, 1997. He has held fellowships at the Kanoria Centre for Art, CEPT, Ahmedabad and the Inlaks Foundation. He has been teaching at the Kamla Raheja Vidyanidhi Institute for Architecture and Environment Studies since 1996, for 22 years.



Sonal Sundararajan has a B. Arch Degree from the University of Mumbai, 2000, and M. Arch degree in Urban Design from the School of Planning and Architecture, New Delhi, 2006. She has been teaching at the KRVA since the year 2007. She has worked on a research and documentation project on the environment management of the geo-thermal zone of the Tansa river basin through the Research and Design Cell of the institute. She has written essays on architecture, urbanism and art that have been published in design journals. She currently teaches Architectural Design, Architectural Representation and Design Dissertation at the undergraduate level.



What would you define as the need of the hour in art education today and ways to strengthen it? Some believe the focus needs to be on bolstering curriculums while others feel the effort should be in developing the educators - what is your understanding of this?

Kausik: We do need to develop the educators but any change they want to make would be blocked by the curriculum. Most of these institutions have a history where more enlightened educators left or kept away from these institutions. To really have an effect, the curriculum has to change with developing the educators.

Working between disciplines is not something new to both of you. But how do you approach the teaching of these strategies and challenges of inter-disciplinary research and practice to your students?

Sonal: The disciplinary boundaries of art and of architecture in their individual trajectories, as practices, and vocabularies have anyways in the last decades been dissolving. The KRVA has always looked at the idea of research and multi-disciplinarity as a strategy to keep the questions of space making engaged with the larger world of practice and of the city. The question of both the disciplines of art and of architecture for us come together as an idea of spatial experience and form. The exercises or projects in the studio are therefore, always designed as questions of form making, around certain

stimuli or situations. The works produced in the studio are not pre-determined in terms of material or technique. The intent comes from the encounter of every individual student with the situation. References and resources are pulled in from various disciplines such as architecture, art, theatre, etc. The skill in handling material or making is developed through each student's idea of the form.

Who were/are your mentors, your teachers and inspiration? In what way has your work and your modes of teaching been shaped by them?

Kausik: I would say Pinaki Barua and KG Subramanyan. Pinaki Barua joined Kala Bhavan when we were at the end of second year or beginning of third year. He was young and energetic, our age difference was less than six or seven years. He involved us in everything that was happening in the studio - whether it was repairing the etching press or the making of better ink. He changed our perspective about things we did. He taught us the Print-Making techniques very carefully but allowed us to do what we wanted with our image making.

What I learnt from KG Subramanyan was through listening to his lectures and him talking to other fellow students about their work. He always spoke about larger issues about image making. He was distant and uninvolved with things happening around.

Sonal: Aneeruddha Paul has been the director of KRVA for several years and has shaped curricula always in response to the changing landscape of the city. He has always believed that the academy is a space that can occupy a critical,

reflective and imaginative space for new ways of seeing the world to emerge. There is never anything that is not the domain or concern of an architect or a student of architecture – whether it is the type of fish found in the river to the regional effects of local practices. He shapes a sort of ecological idea of practice and form that engages all scales. This has influenced the sort of engagement that the Institute and various studios have with the city becoming a laboratory of ideas and projects.

I have to also include Kausik in this list. He is perhaps as brilliant a teacher as he is an artist. It has been incredible teaching with him for the past twelve years. I am not sure what shapes his particular technique as a teacher – rigorous conceptual thinking mixed with conversations about his cats and a performance of eccentricity. For students it allows them to engage with very complicated ideas through acts of play, a free space of exploration. Most students love him and find it easy to approach him and speak to him. He is never patronising about student work. It is all work. He is very critical about projects, including the way they were formulated, and failures. So every year the projects evolve, methods and ideas change and shift. So every year, as a teacher in the course, there are new ideas and explorations and it has been the best education I could have so I am very happy teaching with him.

Deepti Talpade has been another inspiring teacher. She was six years my junior at KRVIA . She did some theatre and I think that has influenced the way she gets students to learn through performing acts of making, immersing themselves in

inquiries of the smallest details and aspects of works. She is always able to bring a lot of energy to this kind of attention to process. It helps students launch into an independent immersive processes of research and of making. I would love to be able to do that as a teacher.

In your SB workshop there was a constant tension between idea and skill, between the ability to conceptualise and to execute - how do you guide your students to engage with both?

Most of the students at the workshop despite whatever idea they had formed fell back on the skill sets already determined by their training. We failed to understand their skills and instead tried to break them away from their idea what materials and skills could be.

Meanwhile our course at KRVIA is not structured as a trajectory of increasing complexity in terms of ideas or skills. All projects can be as complex as a student can conceptualise. Skill is not imagined as the skill of handling particular materials and there is no separation between idea and skill. They can choose their material to produce the work. All materials are allowed- including objects, food, projections, etc. They develop a skill through the making of their idea and not as working a particular material for itself.

Can you share one teaching exercise that is an essential part of your practice as a teacher?

In 2015 we combined the architectural design studio with the allied design studio. This was done to collapse the difference between architectural design or shelter making and the

pure formal play of the first year allied design studio. The exercise used several strategies that we had evolved over the years. The project was designed around the study trip to Sawantwadi in Maharashtra. The intent of the first year study trip is usually to develop an understanding of how built form emerges from ways of living, working, exchange, etc. While there, students understood the relationship of social and economic networks through drawing the spaces and activities, objects of the town.

On their return, they were given a selection of popular children's fairy tales that they used as lenses to read the place they had documented. They then drew the place again through the lens of the fairy tales. The lens helped them to look at the place through metaphor and develop a reading of the place rather than a mere documentation. The drawing or image that they constructed served as a starting point for an exploration of a spatial experience or form. These they made into three-dimensional works. The formal or spatial idea of these were used as operations on sites within the city as speculative architectural interventions developed through scaled models and drawings.

(For example, a student read the toys in the market as alive- like the beanstalk-ladder in Jack and the Beanstalk. She drew the objects as they turn from toys to living things in the market. Her three-dimensional work was a stuffed fleshy tentacled form that split to spill open. She was trying to construct the sense of an eerily half-alive object. In her architectural intervention she chose the site of an existing butcher shop and operated on it as if it was a cut of meat to create a soft flesh-like space inside.)

The process of the project involved many steps that merged art and architecture making practices. There are some things we developed over the years as simple strategies. A lot of the projects involve going to different sites in the city of Mumbai to really look at the world around and rediscover it. With students coming from diverse backgrounds, reading English is very often a difficult task for many, so mostly in text based projects we try to choose simple texts or short phrases. Drawing also usually clarifies a formal idea and most students are comfortable drawing rather than directly making three-dimensional works. So we almost always use drawing as a stage in the process.



#1 | Experience Maps

This exercise can be used at various sites – heritage sites, museums, urban neighbourhoods - allowing the student to determine how they navigate and see the space. Rather than this being a map-making exercise replicating the actual site, the exercise seeks to capture one's experience of the space, that can be later used as the first step while searching for ideas. This can be an individual or group exercise and layers can be added with the inclusion of texts, drawings and video clips.

- » You will need the following - paper/notebook, pencil/pen, a foot-ruler, camera and compass.
- » Ask the students to take the most natural route around the site and find their way back to the starting point.
- » While doing this make note of general direction of movement, changes in elevation, obvious landmarks such as a rock or a tree or a shop. Make notes on the map of smaller observations.
- » Pause at each point that seems significant and mark on the map and make notes on interesting details which can be captured by photo or video or audio.
- » Look for the large and small things, the obvious and the mundane.
- » Pause and listen/smell.
- » Upon completing the first round of the site, sit with the map and notes to review what you have - mark what is of





interest to you, what you may have missed to document, and possible alternate routes.

- » Place it against an actual map of the site to gauge your movement and other information.
- » Make another visit following the same route, and add to your maps, notes and documentation.

It is important that the student sits with these maps and makes notes quickly to make a presentation in order to critically engage with the material and articulate their thoughts. They can ask these questions -

- » How would you describe the site?
- » Who did you encounter in the site? And how did they behave in the space?
- » How did you negotiate moving in that space - was it comfortable, difficult, crowded, interrupted?
- » Was the site what you expected it to be? Or were there any contradictions?



WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

24 Sep -

- ▲ Educators' presentation on different ways of map-making through the works of designers, artists, and architects.
- ▲ Students divided into groups and assigned sites for research; they go to respective sites for documentation.

25 Sep -

- ▲ Sharing of images and videos by the various groups, and discussions.
- ▲ Groups set to the task of visualising what type of work to propose for the workshop, and assigned to produce sketches of ideas

26 Sep -

- ▲ Funds for each group's work was assigned and once the initial sketch was approved the students went about buying material and starting the production.

27 Sep -

- ▲ Production continues along with parallel discussions with the educators on process and ideas.
- ▲ Some groups go back for second round of shooting and data collection.

28 Sep -

- ▲ The making continued today with students working on and off campus.

29 Sep -

- ▲ First half of the day was spent in displaying the work in the galleries on the ground floor
- ▲ Afternoon was the open display with students presenting their works to the invited audience.

Sir. JJ School of Art

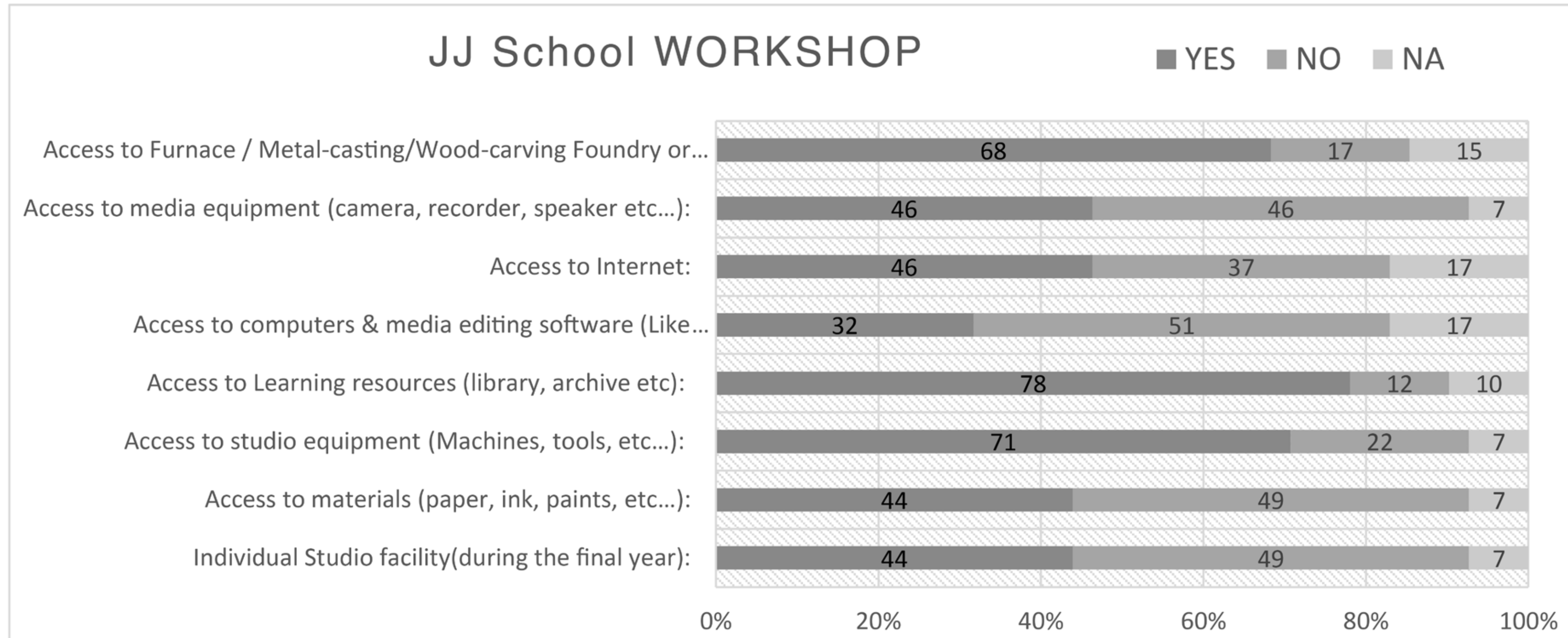
Students' response to the question: Does the infrastructure in your school meet the needs of your practice?

Total sample size: 41

Male: 17

Female: 18

N/A: 6



TECH
NOLO
GATES

OF / AND ART

Workshop as part of Expanded Education Programme,
Students' Biennale 2018

Conducted by **Santhosh Sadanandan**
Additional Resource Person: **Chinnan Vinod**

12 - 18 September, 2018
Faculty of Arts,
Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit,
Kalady



University: Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit

University type: Public University, State

Location: Kalady, Kerala

Year of founding: 1994

Degrees Offered: BFA, MFA

Specialisations: Painting, Mural Painting, Sculpture

Website: <https://ssus.ac.in/painting-pgm>

Department of Painting, Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit



The Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit has set up six regional campuses in Kerala, since 1994, The University prides itself in being spread along rural areas so as to provide educational infrastructure to economically disadvantaged communities. The University pioneers teaching, research, and scholarship around Sanskrit and Indian and Foreign Languages, Humanities, Social Sciences and the Fine Arts in Kerala.

Kalady is a small town located in the district of Ernakulam, a mere 45 kilometres away from Kochi. The Department of Painting was established in SSUS, Kalady, in 1995. The department, within the Department of Arts and Social Sciences offers degrees in Bachelor of Fine Arts (MFA) with specialisations in Painting, Mural Painting, and Sculpture, the latter of which has more recently been incorporated into the school as a subject. The students are admitted into a four-year BFA course after the completion of the foundation course where the students study Painting as a major subject, with the additional Graphics and Visual Communication as an interdisciplinary subject, or the options of Sculpture and *Darusilpa* (Wood Carving) and History of Art. After an integrated foundation course in a semester system, the students are asked to specialise in one of the three core subjects after a year.

The current four year style BFA course was introduced in 2002. There are twenty seats available to students.

There is a wide range of materials, methods and mediums that the students are said to engage with. There is a specialised focus on traditional Kerala mural painting and their techniques that influence the works, noticeable in the students of painting as well. Through this the department aims to evolve a new aesthetic perspective that links traditional, modern and contemporary art practice and discourse. There is also a university library that is open till 8 PM on all days, with a consistently updated digital library and electronic catalogue.





**Technologies and/of Art
Dr Santhosh Sadanandan**

12 / 09 / 2018 - 17 / 09 / 2018

Venue: Faculty of Arts, SSUS, Kalady

Participating Colleges: RLV college, Tripunthira; Government College of Fine Arts, Thirussur; Raja Ravi Verma College of Fine Arts, Mavelikara

Resource Persons: Chinnan Vinod and Karthik K.G

Documentation: Muhammad Shafi & Vipin George

Researcher: Karthik K.G

This workshop comprised of two modules, first, a series of lecture/demonstrations, based on the writings of some key philosophers, especially their ruminations on art, technology and aesthetics. The second module contained certain 'practical' components, engaging with the distinct intersection of art, technology and aesthetics in contemporary cultural practices and their genealogies.

The first day of the workshop began with a brief introductions by the participants regarding their areas of interests, some expectations they have about the workshop, and so on. Following this, Dr Santhosh Sadanandan, the principal facilitator introduced key texts and initiated discussions around some of the core concepts of the workshop. These lecture-cum-discussion sessions were conducted in both English and Malayalam. The lectures worked as an orientation towards the objectives and possible outcomes of the workshop. The general enthusiasm of the participants in discussions around the questions of



art, aesthetics, technological mediation and politics was exemplary.

The second day of the workshop began with a focused discussion on Walter Benjamin's essay 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction'. This essay led the participants to discuss questions regarding the political dimensions of artistic practices on the one hand, and possibilities of technologically mediated artistic practices, on the other. The discussions around this text also paved the way for the introduction of the practical components of the workshop.



The afternoon session began with the screening of a TED talk by Lera Boroditsky on 'How Language Shapes the Way We Think', followed by discussions. This was followed by an introduction to the practical component: the historical, semantic, and affective dimensions of typography led by artist Vinod Velayudhan (Chinnan). After the introduction, students were encouraged to participate in a few exercises around typography and certain tasks were assigned to them to complete before the next session.

The third day began with discussions around Benjamin's ruminations regarding the aestheticisation of politics and politicisation of art. This discussion was initiated keeping in mind the atmosphere in the campus. The campus was going through political turmoil due to students' ongoing protest regarding lack of basic infrastructural facilities. The situation was particularly volatile due to the disastrous flood that engulfed the entire state of Kerala for a few days prior to

the commencement of the workshop. This session discussed the possibilities of artistic intervention without reducing the role of art into an instrument of political mobilisation.

The second half of the morning session consisted of screening Hannah Gadsby's *Nanette* followed by discussions. The afternoon session furthered discussions about art and technology through Martin Heidegger's text 'Question Concerning Technology'. In the latter half of the afternoon, Chinnan Vinod continued his practical exercises on typography. The day ended with the screening of a documentary on typography by Gary Hustwit, *Helvetica* followed by discussions.

The fourth day continued with discussions around Heidegger's text along with a guest lecture by Prof. Abey Koshi (Department of Philosophy, SSU, Kalady) on



Heidegger's philosophical pursuits. This lecture was also followed by a detailed discussion.

The afternoon session began with the introduction of memes as a mode of artistic expression/intervention by researcher Karthik K.G. Student participants were asked to identify a few canonical art works (especially from the art historical context of Kerala) to express some contemporary and everyday concerns. This exercise generated a lot of enthusiasm among the participants.

The fifth day of the workshop began with discussions around artistic intervention not merely in terms of the work of art but more in terms of the performative dimension of political actions. The lecture brought into focus certain historical instances from social reformation movements from Kerala



and the artistic dimension of certain acts within these events. The afternoon session was dedicated to working on the memes participants created, along with discussions around each individual work/s. Students displayed their memes across the campus. These reflected upon multiple aspects, including the ongoing student protest in the campus. Apart from this, Chinnan Vinod introduced water calligraphy as a method of artistic action. Student groups had undertaken calligraphic writing across the campus. The ephemeral nature of water-calligraphy and the performative dimension of it came up as a major discussion point during this session and discussion thereafter.

The sixth and the last day of the workshop was more of a reflection session where Santhosh revisited the activities and discussions of the previous five days to assess the impact of the workshop. The responses from the students were very encouraging and many had opined that the workshop had opened up new ways of approaching the question of the interfaces between art, technology and aesthetics, and that it expanded the possibilities of artistic practices beyond the confines of an object-centric art. Most of them observed/suggested that the intensive mode of engagement along with rootedness in the specific context is a good pedagogical mode. Moreover, they observed that the workshop managed to re-establish the symbiotic relationship between life and art.



Reading List

‘The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction’, *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*, Walter Benjamin; ed. Hannah Arendt, RHUS: London, 1968

‘The Question Concerning Technology’, *Basic Writings from Being and Time (1927) to The Task of Thinking (1964)*, Martin Heidegger; ed. David Farrell Krell, Harper and Rowe: New York: 1977

Being and Technology, Gilbert Simondon; ed. Arne De Boever, Alex Murray, Jon Roffe and Ashley Woodward, Edinburgh University Press: Edinburgh, 2012

The History of Communication Media, Friedrich Kittler; ed. Arthur Kroker & Marilouise Kroker; <http://www.ctheory.net/articles.aspx?id=45>, 1996



Santhosh S. is a cultural theorist based in New Delhi, India. He teaches at the School of Culture and Creative Expressions(SCCE), Ambedkar University Delhi.

One of the founding members of SCCE, he has been a part of the team that developed a vision document for the School. Dr. Sadanandan has taught Art History for two years from 2005-2007 at the Department of Art History and Aesthetics, Faculty of Fine Arts, M.S. University of Baroda. Following this, he taught Art History for two years from 2009-2011 as guest faculty at the School of Art and Aesthetics, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. He also worked as an Academic Fellow for SCCE, AUD from 2011-2012, before joining as an Assistant Professor in the same School.

He has been a visiting faculty member for the Post Graduate Diploma in Modern and Contemporary Indian Art and Curatorial Studies conducted by the Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Museum, Mumbai since 2015. He was one of the Project Directors of a series of workshops on curation titled, *Curating Indian Visual Culture: Theory and Practice*. These travelling workshops were held between 2010 and 2013 at Vadodara, Kochi, Hyderabad, Jammu, and New Delhi.

Drawing on his training in art history, his work critically examines the structural dynamics of the institutionalisation of culture from a minoritarian perspective. He often writes on contemporary cultural politics in India, with an emphasis on deconstructing technologies of visibility and the affective dimensions of the political.



What would you define as the need of the hour in art education today? And how can the educator make the difference here and now?

The pedagogy of art needs to envision itself as site of knowledge production. Here, the compartmentalisation of history, theory, and practice is counterproductive. The biggest challenge is to build a pedagogic model which symbiotically integrates these along the lines of creative praxis. The need of the hour is also to cautiously step outside of art historical canons to address the larger question of knowledge production, as well as the complex relationship of power-knowledge. Once we initiate this process within ourselves as well as in the larger pedagogic structure, we will be able to establish a better connection with students as singularities and as a community of knowledge producers.

Further, we need to rebuild infrastructures to connect vernacular knowledge traditions with multiple histories of the global contemporary, which will in turn produce a sense of belongingness among students. The idea here is neither to essentialise the vernacular nor to homogenise the global. On the contrary, the attempt would be to develop mechanisms to facilitate a great degree of internalisation of some of the core concepts of artistic production and its closely-knitted relationship with the 'historical' through better exposure to

heterogeneous forms of knowledge production. Or in other words, what I feel is the success of any new initiative is the ability of pedagogy to transgress the binary of the particular and the universal without fetishising the particular, per se.

At SCCE, AUD, while we were envisioning a new MA Visual Arts programme, the biggest challenge we encountered was to step out of these existing binary models. As a pragmatic mode and analytical gesture, we have devised six coordinates—the curatorial, the archival, the collaborative, rethinking artistic practices (through the prism of artistic research), and a more nuanced understanding regarding the interface between technology and art, and an introduction to contemporary critical theories. Instead of offering art history as a supplementary course, art historical developments and methodological tools are integrated within each of these six coordinates. The advantage of such a model is that it is adaptive to the requirement of each student/cohort group, and it frees the educator from the burden of providing a chronological narrative of art histories. History appears here mostly as a conceptual tool to locate and critically examine both one's own practice, as well as develop a nuanced understanding regarding the contemporary currents in artistic expressions. Even the elective courses and dissertation are conceptualised more as serving special interests of student groups, as well as structurally developing a critical reflection on one's own artistic production.

Pedagogy needs to have porous borders and the internal strength to produce and withstand fissures which will in turn continually revitalise pedagogic intent. In fact, if at all a new pedagogy is required for artistic practices then its aim must

be to initiate a deconstruction of given pedagogical thinking of art and art history in terms of mode, modalities and goals.

What are the disciplinary and theoretical tools young practitioners need?

Young practitioners today should have a great amount of familiarity and dexterity to engage with contemporary critical theories. By this, I refer to the ability to engage with both structural and lived dimensions of life and art. Since the discursive ambit of art itself has expanded exponentially in contemporary times, in order to be in sync with these developments, art history should be taught more as a part of larger intellectual histories, and the interventional potential of art in the affective domains of human and non-human lives needs to be highlighted. In a philosophical sense, young practitioners should be equipped to bridge the seeming division between the sensible and the intelligible, in order to refashion their own role in the socio-cultural milieu. Young practitioners need critical tools to move beyond modernist dichotomies of form, content, and material, towards more context specific, semiotically and aesthetically potent, and conceptually and sensorially affective modes of practice.

And what 'skills' do you think art students today need to be equipped with?

Since the very definition of art and artist is continuously evolving, the term 'skill' also has to be consistently rethought. The notion of skill could be thought more in terms of artistic research or 'practice as research' in order to both

engage and produce archival and curatorial knowledges. Similarly, art students should be equipped to facilitate collaborative artistic projects. Curatorial knowledge, for instance, enables art students to understand the contextual dynamics of the production of artistic knowledge/experience. It also enables them to integrate the aspect of reception as central to the production of art itself. Similarly, artistic vocabularies such as technics, material, method, skill, and so on need to be redeployed keeping in mind the semantic, experiential, and hermeneutical dimensions of these vocabularies. In other words, we need to trace the poetical (poiesis) dimension of them in order to expand their role in the technologies of self-making.

Could you please reflect on the question of resource sharing among educators?

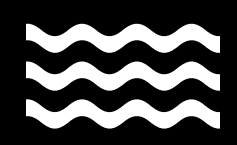
We should undertake a collective effort to build online modules for educators. One of the biggest challenges of art education is that most of the history of art is Eurocentric in nature and thrives on modernist formalism. The challenge to build pedagogic resources stems from this discursive lacuna. The idea is to build modules which provide contextual specificity to historical developments based on conceptual rubrics rather than chronological models. We need to build integrated teaching materials for art educators which have to be designed in such a manner that it can be adaptable to different and specific contexts. By that, what I mean is specificity in terms of language, region, culture, and the everyday. Art history itself needs to be integrated with larger historical currents, and artistic practices need to be redefined by the performative dimensions of socio-cultural practices.

Also if we extend the question of resources to students – your module was very well received because you took many of the sessions in Malayalam. What can we do to enable more resources in vernacular languages?

Linguistic diversity is one issue, but often students coming to art school are deprived of access to English language due to socio-economic backgrounds. Keeping in mind this reality that one encounters on a day-to-day manner, there should be a collective effort to identify and translate key texts. The question is not merely about translation alone, but to explore what are the ways in which one conceptualises the very act of translation keeping in mind these texts as enablers of pedagogic process. For instance, translations need annotation and notes which not only unravel complex concepts laid out in a text, but also connect it with particular socio-linguistic knowledge traditions of the region.

Secondly, one needs to weave these translated texts into effective modules either in terms of everyday classroom discussions and exercises, but also in terms of short intensive workshops and other critical engagements. In other words, there should be a larger rationale behind the entire translation project, than a mere identification of canonical texts. One should make use of possibilities opened up by the digital medium as it carries wider dissemination and proliferation effects. The success of such an enterprise however depends entirely on the ability to inculcate a sense of collective ownership of knowledge among all its stakeholders. In that sense, it should move from an authorial model to an author-function one.

Our approach towards teaching art history needs to be reoriented. For instance, more than providing chronological aspects of art historical developments, one needs to bring forth parallels of counter-institutional thinking from canonical art histories, philosophical schools, along with multiple histories of subaltern counter-publics and their active role in the production of artistic and affective knowledges. In most instances, the role of an educator might be re-defined more as an agent-provocateur. Such a redefinition of the role of the educator enables the process of localising knowledge through a careful evocation of the histories of the performative matrices of knowledge production within the ‘vernacular’ milieu. This also brings us back to the question regarding resource sharing. My suggestion here is that it is equally important to reframe resources in order to produce newer traction among the knowledge communities. We can think about an online resource where possibilities of such critical and creative reframing are possible.



12 Sep -

- ▴ Introduction session of students and educator
- ▴ Santhosh introducing workshop premise and laying the agenda for the next one week.
- ▴ Inviting students' response on art, aesthetics, technological mediation and politics.

13 Sep -

- ▴ Lecture from Walter Benjamin's text 'The Work of Art in the age of Mechanical Reproduction' followed by discussion
- ▴ Screening of TED talk by Lera Bboroditsky on 'How Language Shapes the Way We Think', followed by discussions
- ▴ Module with practical component: The historical, semantic, and affective dimensions of typography led by artist Chinnan Vinod

14 Sep -

- ▴ Presentation on Walter Benjamin's ruminations regarding the 'Aestheticisation of Politics and Politicisation of Art'
- ▴ Screening Hannah Gadsby's *Nanette* followed by discussions
- ▴ Afternoon session reading Martin Heidegger's text 'Question Concerning Technology'.
- ▴ Practical Module on Typography with Chinnan Vinod continues
Screening of Documentary *Helvetica* by Gary Hustwit, on the making of a font followed by discussions

15 Sep -

- ▴ Guest Lecture by Prof Abey Koshy (Head of Department, Philosophy) on Heidegger followed by discussion session with students
- ▴ Practical Module by Karthik K G: Introduction of memes as a mode of artistic expression/intervention using photocopied images
Discussion on artworks with students and the recent protests at the University
- ▴ Screening of 'Fifteen Million Merits' - an episode from Black Mirror sci-fi series

16 Sep -

- ▴ Discussion on Performative aspect of Political actions with examples of movements in Kerala
- ▴ Afternoon session: Display from Meme exercise and exploring water calligraphy
- ▴ Summing of workshop by Santhosh, revisiting core ideas and concepts discussed
- ▴ Students Responses on workshop and Discussion

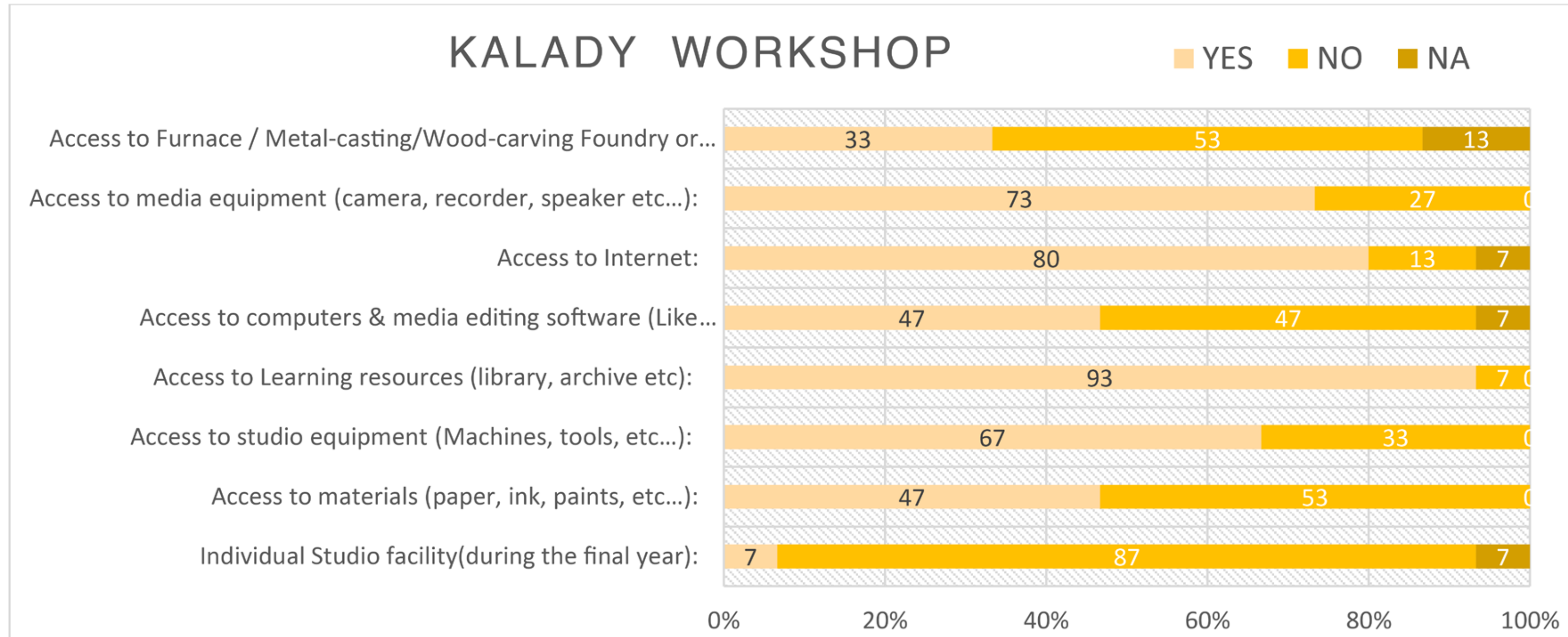
Kalady

Students' response to the question: Does the infrastructure in your school meet the needs of your practice?

Sample size: 15

Male: 9

Female: 6

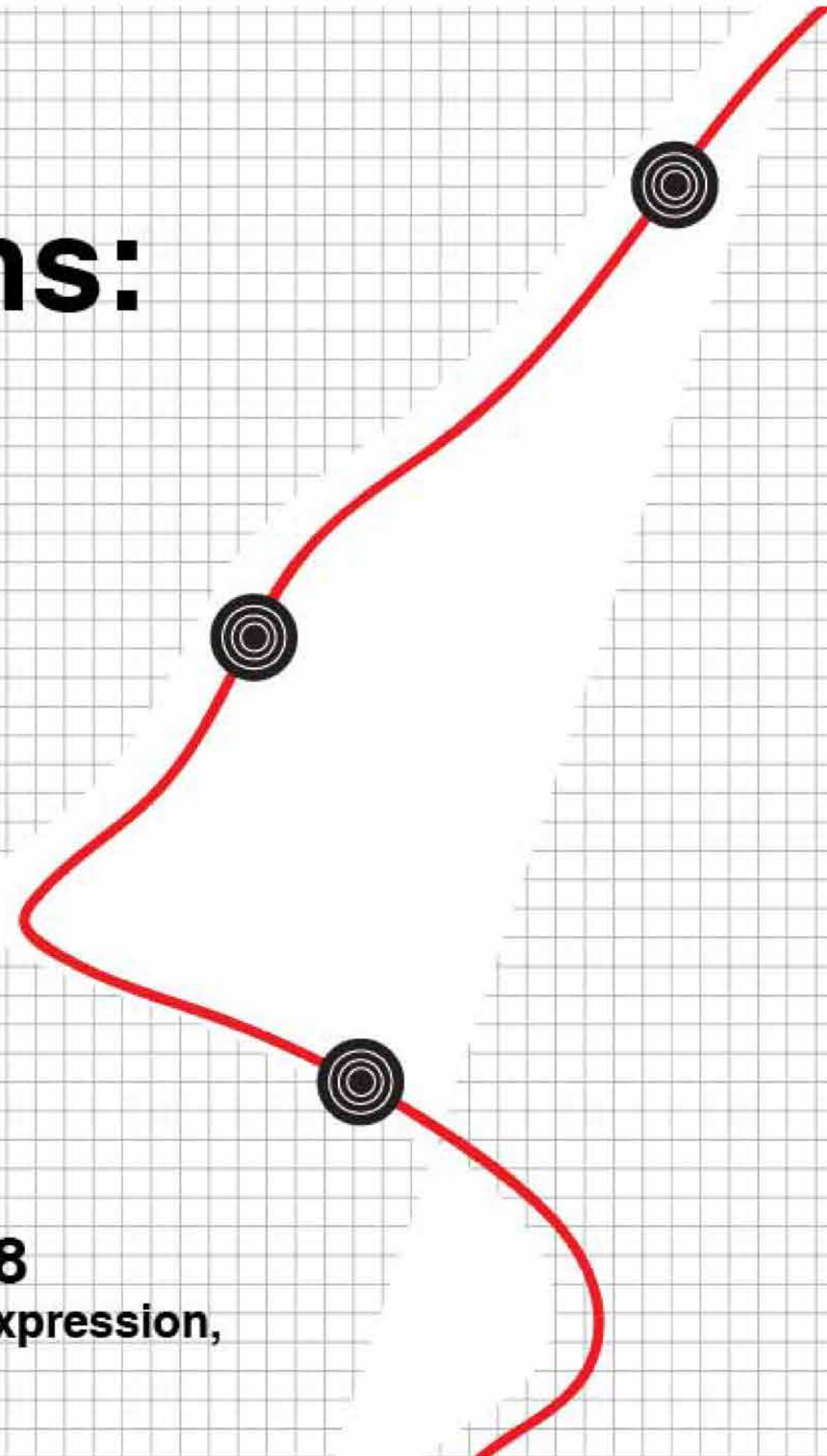


Erasures & Reclamations: ~~Labour and~~ ~~Migration in~~ Song

**Workshop as part of
Expanded Education Programme,
Students' Biennale 2018**

Conducted by
Rangoato 'Ra' Hlasane

24 - 28 September, 2018
School of Cultures and Creative Expression,
Ambedkar University, Delhi





The School of Culture and Creative Expressions, Ambedkar University Delhi



University: Ambedkar University
University type: Public University, State
Location: Delhi
Year of founding: 2012
Degrees Offered: MA and PhD
Specialisations: Visual Arts, Creative Writing, Performance Art, Dance, Cinema
Website : <https://scce.aud.ac.in>

The School of Culture and Creative Expressions (SCCE) was founded in 2012, as a School under Ambedkar University Delhi.

The University was established by the Government of Delhi through an Act of Legislature in 2007 which was further notified in July 2008. The University is focused on research and teaching in the social sciences and humanities and guided by the vision of Dr Ambedkar in bridging inequality and scholarship through research and educational opportunities.

The School of Culture and Creative Expressions (SCCE), was conceptualised as a place for the implementation of a new vision for arts pedagogy and practice in India, with noteworthy programmes that look towards the opening up of a dialogue between practice and research. It is host to Postgraduate (PG) and Research Studies (RS) Programmes, in the disciplines of Film Studies, Literary Art, Performance Studies and Visual Art, with additional new department dedicated to an MA in Performance Practice (Dance) at the postgraduate level. The postgraduate programme has an overall intake of between 60-70 students.

SCCE sets itself out with a critical approach towards art-making practices and the environments under which they have developed historically as well as how they are informed in the contemporary, taking into consideration the precarity of the artist as a figure today.

The School aims to engage with and instil in scholars and practitioners, creative and critical apparatuses that nurture action. The department also critically approaches the government art school format and re-evaluates the systems that have kept artistic production at a university level limited. Collaborative and critical practices are encouraged in an active re-appraisal of gallery and market circulation systems. The School provides an overall grounding for the development of critical dialogue and discourse across the different disciplines.





**Erasures & Reclamations: Labour and Migration in Song
Rangoato (Ra) Hlasane**

24/09/2018 - 28/09/2018

Venue: School of Culture & Creative Expressions, Ambekdar University Delhi

Participating Colleges: College of Art, Delhi; Faculty of Fine Arts, Jamia Milia Islamia University

Documentation and Tech support: Nikhil K C

Researcher: Vidya Shivadas

The workshop at AUD was planned keeping in mind the Post graduate curriculum at SCCE Visual Arts, specifically the third semester module *Explorations in Concept and Media III: Community Art/Collaboration/Public Art*. The module orients students towards practices that are invested in larger cultural politics in general and in community and participation oriented practices in particular. Rangoato (Ra's) own practice as a Johannesburg-based educator and artist has been focused on community-based projects which are deeply rooted in agenda of social justice. The workshop deployed the sonic as a point of interest and departure to think of questions of erasure and the aesthetic possibilities of recuperating narratives that lay below the radar of the dominant / official versions. It also laid ground for the participants to examine their own subjectivities and location when engaging with projects which are participatory and collaborative in nature. Ra structured the workshop in such a way that it extended from self to think of other identity formations whether of family, street, society, community or nation.

Creating Conditions: The Workshop Setting

For the workshop we also invited AUD's Centre for Community Knowledge (CCK) as Knowledge Partners. CCK is an interdisciplinary research centre that is documenting and archiving oral knowledge and their various research programmes are centred on people's narratives of knowledge, history and cultural transformations. This collaboration proved most beneficial as we connected with a range of resource persons and guest speakers via the CCK network and also had presentations by CCK team members and students on their modes and methods of conducting research. The presentations were framed by broader thematics of migration, colonial dispossession, structural erasure and cultural reclamations and forms of writing and reading which were beyond the formal text.

The last thing the workshop set out to do was look critically at theory and praxis, treating the two as mutually inclusive throughout the week. Ra noted that we could discuss and debate a text and test it against the experiences we had with a community stakeholder. In this framework one form of knowledge making was not privileged over another, rather ways to critically reflect on the various processes at work.

Researcher's Note

A relatively new art school like SCCE always throws up the question of how to define resources and infrastructure. The institution, ambitiously positioned as implementing a new vision of arts pedagogy and practice in India, is also experimenting and searching for ways to materialise these





directions. The school both by design and by constraints (working out of a temporary campus with limited classroom and studio spaces) is rethinking what the institution 'provides', how to make its boundaries more porous, and how one can think around questions of partnerships, sources and resources. And these issues are presented even more sharply in a module like community art/ collaboration / public art which throws up challenges to practice - both at an individual and institutional level.

Ra spoke interestingly about the location of a university and how one thinks of the relationship of inside and outside, "The primary resources of a university are the people themselves. They are engaged with it at many levels and constantly go in and out. We have to realise that despite the walls and the access cards, universities are still permeable spaces. And it is people who make them permeable. The student body is a foremost example - they are there for limited period of time and then go back into the world. So this whole inside / outside dynamic becomes very interesting and we have to take cognisance of the fact that it is very fluid.

The university is a critical space for resource generation but then we have to ask the question that the knowledge is for what and for whom. We go to the university to change conditions in the world in whatever field we are interested in."

Workshop Premise

The workshop started with an introduction by Ra into his own research and practice with his ongoing PhD in African literature and music videos of the 1990s that

challenged the notion of nationalism. He spoke of his interest in exploring the modes of history writing that have emerged in poetry and music especially in the context of colonisation. Indigenous sounds are a great social artifact, they interlock multiple voices. When we work with the aural, the sonic and with voice, a space for knowledge is produced in conversation with writing or sometimes even against it. Ra gave the case study of Kwaito music which is South African electronic music with its spiritual and political undertones, and how the organisation he co-founded, Keleketla Library, has been exploring this form via histories in songs and the songs of histories.

“The heavy beats of Kwaito is based on repetition. The music makes us remember where we are coming from and where we are going. We need to ask what can sound do and how can we work with it.”

The other important element of the workshop was to really internalize and devise a method for collectivity. “You have to remember you are not going to do anything alone,” Ra reminded the group and stressed how this space of the collective was important to recuperate. The classroom was a place to begin, and the participants were asked to reflect on this site which brought together a multiplicity of interests. Ra spent the morning giving a brief outline of the workshop and the participants shared their own varied interests in materiality, memory, identity, conflict, found objects, space, subjectivity and psychology, sound and performance, body, documentation and technology, and nature.





their family tree. Ra invited the group to work on this exercise in pairs but it was interesting to see how they immediately got on the phone with family to make their respective family trees.

The participants actively responded to the reflection session that followed - a crucial component of the exercise itself. There was discussion on the strong role of memory (first-hand and second-hand) and one's intimate associations of people that came into play when drawing up the family tree.

How does one limit the description of a full life into one or two words?

How much can language contain and translate of those experiences?

The reflection also brought out the complex dynamics at play between the personal and political. More than one student commented on the impact of patriarchy on the family in terms of whose story was told and assumed importance. There was also linking to larger historic events like Partition and the telling of these events from the space of the personal also created very interesting textures around modes of narrations which were equally about omissions and silences. Rangoato rounded the session by sharing that the different realisations people were having was the very subject of the workshop. Erasures and reclamations were very much present across the stories. He in particular spoke about the act as projecting oneself into history and the discomfort this act produced. It was important to dwell on this discomfort and keep it in mind when one worked with communities. To internalise these problems of history writing which often

In Praise of Praise Poems

The main tool of the workshop - the form of the 'Praise Poem' - was then introduced to the participants. A familiar trope in the South African context, praise poetry is an important cultural form that works with self-affirmation and awareness, and equally critique. For Ra this exercise in self-writing, working with personal and family narratives was crucial. He also stressed that we were also critically approaching the praise poem - moving from *Direto* (Praise Poetry in its pure form as national art) to *Go-Itheta* (foregrounding self-affirmation as recognition of others).

The subject of the Praise Poem was the Family Tree. And with a small brief the participants spent the morning making

take place with or without consent, and think about responsibility we are entrusted with when undertaking such tasks. To be aware of the choices we make and the consequences these will have because we are engaged in work which is not about the single story but rather multiple stories.

Decolonising Research: Presentations and Readings

The participants were introduced to Maori anthropologist Linda Tuhiwai Smith's seminal book *Decolonising Methodologies, Research and Indigenous Peoples*. This publication – with its sharply articulated critique of research itself as linked to European imperialism and colonialism, and its presentation of counter case studies of indigenous projects as powerful acts of resistance became something the group returned to from time to time through the workshop.

The following days were peppered with presentations. We started with CCK researchers who provided us with a quick overview of their key concerns and methodologies of working with communities. PhD student Sangeeta Jwala spoke about her research on the potter communities in Delhi's Uttam Nagar, and parts of Haryana and Rajasthan, exploring in particular the folklore and the narratives of migration, as well the shifting patterns of livelihood. Mesha Murali shared her work as part of CCK's Delhi Oralities Project. With a special focus on studying migration, Mesha shared that this could only be understood as a process and not a singular event. One would have to explore various narratives – like the setting of a market by residents or looking at the ways people created common spaces in new neighbourhoods – to grasp

the complex phenomena at work.

With Researcher Kartikeya Jain, who was working on CCK's River and City Project, we visited the Yamuna Old Ghats, which is walking distance from the AUD campus. Kartikeya shared how his research had taken him beyond the familiar narrative of the river in crisis, to think about our points of connection and disconnection with the water body. He was documenting the vibrant culture that surrounded the river and communities that were closely connected to it, collating various stories, narratives and songs from the farmers, boatmen, homeless migrants and others who lived in close proximity to the river.

We also met other practitioners who brought us closer to the voice and music via their engagements. We witnessed a delightful lecture performance by *Qissa Goi* specialist Irshad Alam Khubi. *Qissa Goi* is a particular form of storytelling from Old Delhi that the *tanga-wallahs* (horse carriage drivers) undertook to keep their customers entertained. Rising above the ridicule *Qissa Goi* practitioners like his father faced, Arshad realized the value of this form that was filled with stories of the *galis* and *mohallahs*, which spoke of the deep connection between *sheher* (city) and *zubaan* (language). His organization Talent works with children to actively collate and present the stories, conducting research and making maps of the various neighbourhoods, and performing these amidst various audiences.

There was an inspiring session with Arati Jainman, who runs Gurgaon Ki Awaaz Radio Station - the only civil society-run community radio station in the NCR region of Delhi. Arti spoke of her journey of setting up a radio station to express

the diversity of a place like Gurgaon which had so many migrant workers as well as the use of music as a mode of dialogue to work through the huge amounts of friction that exists between locals and migrants. She also shared how the station made a special effort to connect with women listeners and spent many years building this rapport:

“It is not enough to say we have opened doors. There many barriers different sections face and one has to make specific efforts if one wants to involve a particular demographic. For example we realised that women found it difficult to come to our studio and if we wanted to talk to them then we would have to go to their homes and record them. We listened to them when they called in. It took time to build their confidence in the station.”

Each of these presentations gave us the opportunity to discuss modes of engagement with different communities as well as reflect on the forms of telling. The participants kept developing their Praise Poems alongside and dwelling on what each presenter was leaving behind with them.

Exploring Discomfort

Two sessions, in particular, generated soul searching through the workshop. One was related to the visit to the Ghats where we asked the group to engage with residents, record sounds on the river side, or conduct interviews if they wished to do so. Some in the group felt uncomfortable with this exercise. Ra writes about this experience in his report:

“Our group entered the Yamuna banks ‘armed’ with

recorders, cameras and headphones. This incredibly visible ‘armour’ made us hyper elevated as people of importance, people with power to ‘take’ something from the residents and inhabitants of Yamuna. This situation created tension in the group. What is interesting in the case of the workshop were the differing views and reflections that seemed to be on the opposite side of the critical spectrum. It is the difference that I find great value in the role of discomfort in the context of the workshop. There needs to be this moment of disjuncture in order for praxis to emerge, for theory to make sense.”

Ra asked the group to introspect on the discomfort they experienced and turn this into a generative moment instead of one leading to paralysis or withdrawal. He asked them to recognise that this experience is an educational one, that the responsibility of learning and teaching is rooted in everyday sociality. Such moments presented us with opportunities to critically reflect on our modes of engagement and consider our agency as a researcher.

The second such engagement, our meeting with Mahesh AKA MC Freezak and Sandeep AKA MC Akshay Kumar, rappers, bboys and members of the Khirkee 17, presented more expansive opportunity for dialogue. The musicians spoke about their process of making music via YouTube videos. They shared how they had learnt to become self-reliant in their craft- making videos, writing and performing, downloading background sounds, organising regular cyphers (gatherings of rappers in different parts of the city) and disseminating their music online.

When prodded about questions of authenticity and survival at a time when rap was going mainstream, they left the group with the message: “Underground is the real shit. It is our time and we have enough raw material and experiences to draw from. We ‘freestyle’, which is our ability to respond in the moment, to improvise freely. We are not following a script.” Their words resonated with the group as they realised that working with communities first and foremost meant being open to the process, learning to ‘freestyle’ to use the rap term.

Ra gave a little context, making connections between Rap and Praise Poems. These oral forms have migrated and been translated in different contexts, but ultimately share the same notions of writing histories and writing oneself. Giving the example of the music of American rapper Talib Kweli, we discussed how within the compacted form of one song, Kweli does multiple things – speaks of his relationship with his mother, makes connection with the Civil Rights movement, evokes the genealogy of Black women musicians etc. Rap gives us this kind of compact narrativising, in relation to a larger society, and we have to stay attentive to how it defines the self and mobilises histories in the making of this (larger collective) self. This is the spirit we carry while working on the family trees and our praise poems.

Following all these presentations and discussions, Ra guided the group back to the sonic piece that had to be made. The sound piece is a wave, a timeline, and it was left to the group to consider what collective narrative could emerge from all the experiences they had gathered through the workshop – how praise poems could come together as well as absorb

other voices. Ra also asked them to consider the forms it could take – for example a podcast to share amongst the group, an audio aired on a community radio station, a sonic essay uploaded online. The group could also think of other collaborations like inviting Khirkee 17 to screen print t-shirts together, or write a series of reflective essays on the making of the praise poems. This was their decision to make.

In the final rendition the group came together to edit a collective Praise Poem. The participants also agreed that the recording could be shared in educational contexts.

Summing up

Following a listening session of the final sonic piece produced, the workshop ended with a final feedback session. Ra asked the group to reflect on what had shifted for them during the course of the workshop, and what remained with them at the end.

The students’ feedback really made us realize how potent the experience of the workshop had been. To list a few of their statements:

- » *My opinions differ vastly from my family’s. They see my education as giving me new-fangled ideas, ones that are making me a stranger to them. But for this exercise, we drew up the family tree together, reminiscing and sharing stories of different family members. For the first time my education did not alienate them!*
- » *I always saw the river from a distance while travelling on the bridge. This the first time I saw it up close, from below. I think*

it has left me with a new outlook and a more sensitive approach to deal with things.

- » *The exercise of the family tree really made me think. The whole time I thought it was about researching others. But this workshop made me realize that how could I know others if I didn't know myself.*
- » *The workshop was so much more than producing a work. We couldn't control the outcome but something significant did emerge, something organic.*

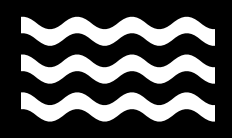
The space we inhabit, this studio / classroom, underwent a transformation. We got to know each other in different light. Even as our opinions clashed sometimes, we were able to accept that our way was not the absolute way. So this shift of consciousness was the most important experience for me.

Ra ended the workshop by stressing again how important it is to create conditions which are guided by reciprocity and generosity. To create a safe space for different validities to be together and realize that the learning is a lifelong process which needs to be both structured and open-ended. The element of play was very important in developing these artistic projects. In his report he brings the reflection back to the educator.

It seems to me that how we teach (methods) is linked to what we teach (content). The combination (pedagogy) is implicated in the role and place of what we understand as education in society. Intention and effect. Who we are (even when this may seem superficial or overemphasised) is

therefore implicated in our teaching and learning environments. What is always at stake for me, at least, when engaging in teaching and learning environments, that are (geographically and / or otherwise) beyond my context, is the question of who am I?





Rangoato (Ra) Hlasane is a cultural worker, writer, archivist, DJ and co-founder of Keleketla! Library. Rangoato is committed to ‘art/s education’ with a social justice agenda. His interest in publishing collective/self-reflective case studies of decolonial education is evident in the publication of two Keleketla! Library books titled *56 Years to the Treason Trial: Intergenerational Dialogue as a tool for Learning* (2012) and the revision, *56 Years to the Treason Trial: Intergenerational Dialogue as a tool for Learning* (2014). Rangoato was invited as a guest author with Malose Malahlela for the 2014 book *Creating Spaces: Non-formal Art/s Education and Vocational Training for Artists in Africa Between Cultural Policies and Cultural Funding* by Nicola Laure Al-Samarai. He contributed and led a reflective, multi-authored case study of Keleketla! Library in the Brazil-based journal,

Mesa (No3: Publicness in Art, 2015). Rangoato is an active member of ARAC (Another Roadmap Africa Cluster). As Mma Tseleng, he plays music to expand his research into the social, political and economic significance of South African music, with Kwaito at the centre of his work. He has presented sonic lectures at events such as the ‘Under the Mango Tree’ gathering of documenta 14 (2017), Kassel, ‘The Night School’ (2017), Vienna, ‘The World Show on Kaya FM’ (2017), Johannesburg, ‘Year After Zero’ conference (2013), Berlin, the ‘Someone who knows something, and Someone who know something else: Education and Equality symposium’ of the 9th Bienal do Mercosul (2013), Porto Alegre and more. His ongoing project, *Thath’i Cover Okestra*, co-curated with Malose Malahlela, is an experiment in ‘writing’ (South) African music histories and rerouting their family trees. Its fifth volume was recently presented at the 10th Berlin Biennale of Contemporary Art.



What would you define as the need of the hour in art education today? And how can the educator make the difference here and now?

We need to urgently change our mindset from thinking about art education as a path (or the only path) to employment and one that is lucrative. Some of the most prominent artists in South Africa, but also all over the world, have had access to minimal and largely informal art education. Yet, the institutionalisation of art education has widened the gap between artists with degrees and those without. The big lie is the instrumentalisation of the idea of art education, especially its growing relationship with the so-called 'creative industries'. We need to reframe the way we understand the role and place of art education in life, rather than in vocation. We understand that art education produces artists, who go on to make art and be 'successful' artists. But it should not end there – artists are more than artists; they are also philosophers, educators, writers, parents, activists the list goes on.

The idea of 'creative industries' and 'art education' remains imbalanced and inequitable across race, class, gender and many lines and different geo-political spaces all over the world, especially in so-called postcolonial worlds. Rather than instrumentalise the arts, art education should be seen as what people do, not what they should do. In other words, art education programmes can do better to

study what the people do, and build critical tools in response to the here and now, in relation to what is happening in other geo-political places. Because the issues are fundamentally systemic and structural, innovative forms of organising are necessary to address issues of policies, enforcement of their implementation, political will etc. So art education needs a reframing that will change the mindset of societies. By far and large art education is ill-perceived. It is not seen as an area of practice that has relevance in society beyond entertainment – it is tainted by neo-liberal language-ing.

There are administrative matters required of the educator, and great educators attend to this with creativity and with inventiveness. There are resources to be instigated and processes to maximise minimal resources – the combination makes for emergent pedagogies. A lot of times we need to be reminded that other forms of organisations already exists or is possible in a community life and network. Let me not be abstract and clarify by way of example:

In 2013, Keleketla! Library tried to acquire 2 Risograph duplicators for a then 'independent' publishing workshop on low budget. We had invited a resident 'librarian' from out of town. Both duplicators that we acquired failed to operate and that seemed like the end. The then resident artist instead made a 'how to make a zine' zine.

A year later, we discovered that our partner high school, Freedom Community College, had a Riso. Indeed, the Riso is used most in schools in South Africa and it makes sense; its tenacity to duplicate many types of documents is

appropriate, ingenious in fact, as can be seen by its adoption by activists, anarchists, artists collectives and independent press, among other organisations. Well, we didn't know it was such a prominent resource in the community. Upon realisation, late as it was, in 2016 the Wits University third year fine arts students collaborated with learners to make a newsletter and this was duplicated with Freedom Community College's Riso. Thus, to rethink resource network is one of the required forms of organising in art education.

Can you share with us some of the most significant lessons or ideas that you carry between your roles as an artist and an educator?

I stay curious, and constantly instigate collectivity – attempt to be with people, and to gather people. This is important because learning together is a natural phenomenon, in sync with Ruben Gaztambide-Fernandez's argument that 'culture is what people do'. Learning also is what people do naturally – we learn all the time. Being an artist and educator is therefore a life-long learning process for me. An example is that an artist makes new work all the time, every time, so does the educator – they are making new work all the time.

Both artist and educator are knowledge creators. So willingness and a curiosity that is rooted in the recognition of collectivity is to me one of the most important lessons in my practice, so far. It is in collective engagements in my practices, and instigation of collective ethos in the classroom that I have been convinced time after time about the specificity of art education and how it may look like from here and now.

Who were/are your mentors, your teachers and inspiration? In what way has your work been shaped by them? (Please feel free to share this in anecdotal form. We want to acknowledge the invisible forms of knowledge transfer that is so important in any environment of learning.) You often speak of intergenerational learning so perhaps expand on this as well.

My mother Mabunang Edith Hlasane, is by far the most significant. Of course she taught me everything important! She taught in junior primary school during Apartheid South Africa between the years 1962-1969. My mother was co-implementing that imposed inferior and demeaning system called Bantu Education – a structurally, fundamentally and deliberately separate education system for black people in South Africa. She has also taught in early childhood development in post-1994 South Africa, way after her retirement age. She founded a crèche, hosted within the primary school I attended, in my last year of primary school. This was significant, because my mother was running a school within the premises of my primary school. Most of the graduates (and the community) still refer to her as Mistress (a colonial term for teacher). These include primary school learners of her time (1962-1969) and crèche graduates who started their early childhood development in 1993. I heard this address everywhere – from passers-by at our home, at church, at ceremonies/rituals, when introduced to people etc.

When I started teaching at the university in 2013, I asked my mother what her philosophy for education was. It was a simple answer – love your pupils. If you love them, they will open their hearts and their brains. This was most inspiring

because this philosophy developed at a time when she was part of a teaching and learning community that found itself operating within a hateful system. How else would they fight the system on/from the ground?

As an artist who has long been engaged in discourses around themes of erasure, violence and loss of cultural identity, how do you introduce your students to the challenges of engaging with critical socio-political questions or the task of working with communities? In other words, how do you teach criticality within the space available to you as an educator?

Forms of organising such as collective/self-publishing have been central in my work as a critical tool to look at historical and contemporary moments in which artists as activists lead/led to the creation of knowledge outside of the dominant narrative. I introduce students to literature and practices of collective refusals to oppressive power, and the commitment to community by way of making and disseminating knowledge in various forms of practices, with a focus on alternative publishing acts and practices.

The fixation with collective/self-publishing is that it inspires the classroom organisation as collective of study groups that formulate their own questions – meditations about present socio-political and spiritual realities. Criticality is encouraged by the collectives' self-generated editorial questions. Driven by commitment to each other as a community – ephemeral as that may be – armed with questions to engage society, there is not only ownership of the process but commitment to the outcome. I also encourage and inspire a sense of re-

sponsibility to the teaching and learning environment, a site that recognises or at the least resembles what Manuel Borja-Villel asks of education – an “an encounter between someone who knows something and someone who knows something else”

With reference to your role as an active member of Another Roadmap Africa Cluster, please speak about the initiative and what are the core questions of this cluster with regard to art education? Anything around the question of curriculum would be welcome.

The main body, Another Roadmap For Arts Education was founded by a group of interesting and interested practitioners, artists, educators and activists in art education from around the world, in response to UNESCO's 'Roadmap for Arts Education'.

The Africa Cluster was convened in Uganda in 2015 in order to create a network that is Africa-specific and one that would respond to the geo-political complexities of a continent that is already divided across linguistic and regional lines (Anglo/Luso/Franco/Arab vis-à-vis North/Central/South/West/East).

One thing in common is the limited art education in basic education as a matter and result of separate developments enforced by colonial and other oppressive systems at a point in time, and their ramifications as history in the present. Thus when the broader network decided on three research clusters (Ecologies, Popular Education and Inter/Twining Histories), most if not all the Africa Cluster working groups chose to engage Inter/Twining Histories, understanding that

notions of Ecologies and Popular Education would be and are implicit in the notions, acts and practices of Histories. Some of the collective questions are:

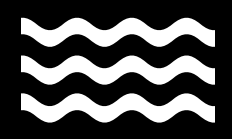
- » What do we do with 'an' Africa that is big and complex, each 'region' distinct in terms of its colonial histories?
- » Why work on histories?
- » How does the project articulate that which we are already doing or thinking locally?
- » How do we understand posterity?
- » What does it mean to record omissions?
- » How do we deconstruct/disrupt hegemonic narratives?
- » How do we examine past experiences in a manner that could inspire and help us in the moment (artistically, spiritually, scientifically or scholarly etc)?
- » Can we deconstruct the idea of progress?
- » How do we understand calendar/rhythm, how do we visualise time differently?
- » How can we imagine decoloniality as a condition that; give rise to/shapes the curriculum, insist on the colonial as the universal imperial, insist on the alternative, the critical?
- » How do we (and if yes/maybe) articulate questions of social justice in a mutually generative manner?

One of the rituals that we started, by 'accident' in Uganda was the notion and the practice titled "People who think together dance together", a dance party at the end of, and sometimes in the middle of, the colloquium gathering. The practice has since been adopted by the broader Another Roadmap network and is a key feature of learning, thinking, eating, and being together as a critical mass.

What 'skills' do you think art students today need to be equipped with?

In November 2019 I was invited as an opening address speaker for NEWWOR19, an annual ritual, largely collectively organised by undergraduate fourth year students of the Fine Art Department at Wits School of Arts, University of Johannesburg. My address was based on the notion and practice of collectivity as an anti-thesis to the 'art-world'. I quote an excerpt that focused on the idea of 'skills' with the capacity, ability and willingness in:

- » Analysis of problems (collective/self-defined)
- » Earnest attempts to resolve identified/said problems, visually and including otherwise i.e not leaving it at symbolic or metaphor level
- » Articulation of solutions in clearest terms possible; visually and otherwise, and with poetry
- » Deep commitment to 'community'



#1 | Praise Poem on the theme of Family Tree

The praise poem is an important cultural form in the South African context attesting to the dynamism of oral culture and the active role of poets and poetry in South African history. Often used as a pedagogical tool, this exercise in writing works with self-affirmation and awareness.

The exercise of the praise poem specifically addresses personal and family narratives via the family tree.

- » They could do this exercise alone or in pairs.
- » They are encouraged to write in any language.
- » They are then asked to develop the materials collected around the family into a praise poem.
- » Collective Reflection on the poems written is an important component of the exercise.

Participants are asked to think about keywords like Memory and History. Who did they choose to focus upon in the family? Dwell on the sensitivity of this decision. Ask them to look closely at the poem. Analyse for themselves what was used and what got left out. Any thoughts on the complex dynamics at play between the personal and political.

Exercise

Writing a praise poem from the family tree

- » Your name in full.
- » Your pet name, if any.
- » Your parents name in full.
- » Where did they come from – geographical location/s.
- » What are their characteristic features – physical / spiritual/ emotional?
- » What are their strengths / weaknesses / losses / victories?
- » How do you celebrate them if at all?
- » The same exercise to be carried out with grandparents and great grandparents.
- » You are free to consult anyone you like in the making of this chart.
- » Write a poem from the information gathered. You can focus on any aspect you like.



WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

24 Sep -

Thematic: 'Praise poetry' from self to family ***Dispossession and dislocation in colonial sites***

- ▴ Introductions: Thinking about working together: terms of engagements, partners, intentions and expectations.
- ▴ Sharing family trees
- ▴ Considering the way in which oral 'praise poetry' is a collective writing of histories.
- ▴ Discuss readings circulated prior to workshop: Rangoato Hlasane, "It was at Radioke When I Invoked the Late Brenda Fassie" *In an education documenta 14*, Archive Books, Berlin. 2018
- ▴ Students prepare a family tree in conversation with family, extended family, friends, 'community' and 'other' sites of self-knowledges.

25 Sep -

Thematic: 'Praise poetry' from the family to the street ***Forced removals and migrant labour***

- ▴ Presentation by Sangeeta Jwala, PHD student in English Programme, AUD on her research on potters communities
- ▴ Discussion on impulses and intentions of collaboration, as well as the modes of invitation to participation.
- ▴ Discussion on Reading: Linda Tuhiwai Smith, 'Imperialism, History, Writing and Theory' In *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. Zed Books, 2012
- ▴ CCK Research Assistant Mesha Murali, project Delhi Citizens Memory Project
- ▴ Presentation by Irshad Alam Khubi about the form of Qissa Goi, sheher and zubaan
- ▴ Continuing discussions.

26 Sep -

Thematic: 'Praise poetry' from the street to the community ***Structural erasure and cultural reclamations***

- ▴ Presentation by Arati Jainman, representative of Gurgaon Ki Awaaz Radio Station,
- ▴ Listening to recordings
- ▴ Working with tools (Audacity)
- ▴ Field visit to Yamuna Ghats with Kartikeya Jain, Research Assistant, CCK Working on River and City
- ▴ Meeting, interviewing people, recording
- ▴ Discussion following the visit

27 Sep -

(Working out of AUD Campus at Khirki Extension Area, New Delhi)

Thematic: 'Praise poetry' from community to society ***Sonic inscriptions and other public hi/stories***

- ▴ Presentation and discussion with Mahesh AKA MC Freezak and Sandeep AKA MC Akshay Kumar members of Khirkee 17
- ▴ Students left to do recording sessions
- ▴ Attending Evening Panel at School of Arts and Aesthetics, JNU organized by Pro Helvetia New Delhi and SAA titled Sonic inscriptions & other public histories- reading & writing beyond the formal text,
A conversation between Rangoato Ra Hlasane, & Prof YS Alone, Professor, School of Arts and Aesthetics
- ▴ Parallel event at Khoj where DJ Mma Tseleng (Rangoato) played a set comprising of his sonic research (specifically around Kwaito) concerned with 'songs as texts'

28 Sep -

- ▴ Students finalizing recordings| Listening and making
- ▴ A wrap up day of Reflections and Futures

AUD

Students' response to the question: Does the infrastructure in your school meet the needs of your practice?

Total sample size: 23

Male: 9

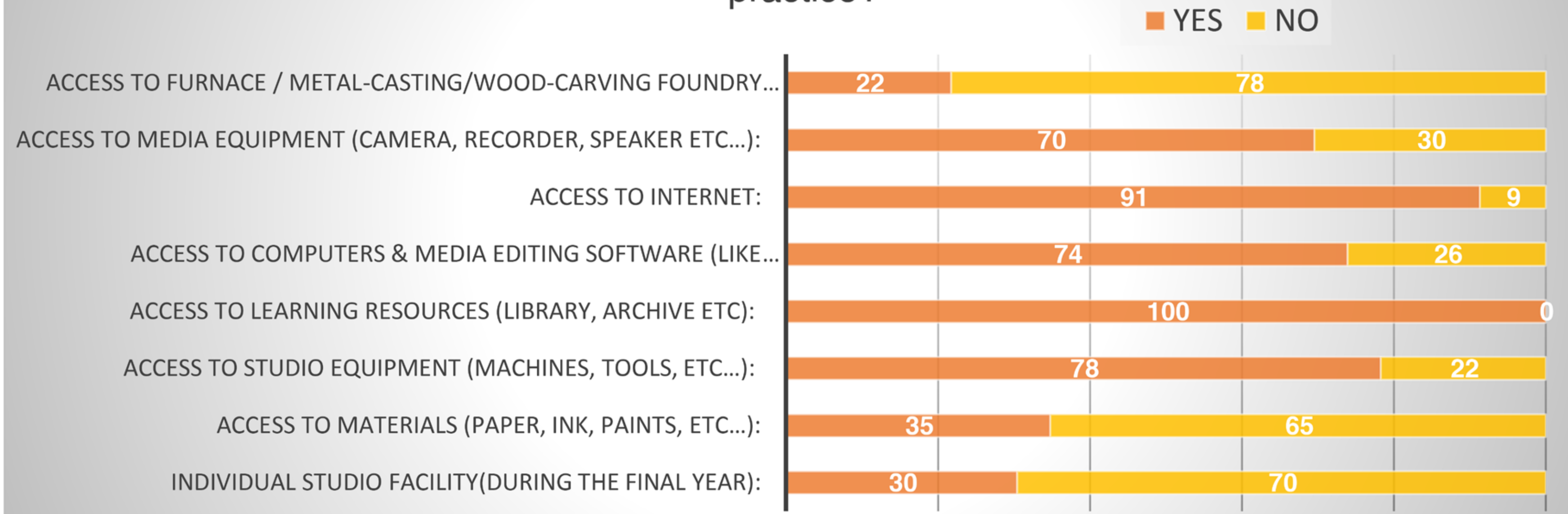
Female: 12

N/A: 2

DATA FROM
STUDENTS' BIENNALE
QUESTIONNAIRE



AUD Workshop: Does the infrastructure in your school meet the needs of your practice?



Workshop as part of
Expanded Education Programme,
Students' Biennale 2018

ANOTHER ANOTHER STORY

Alternative Histories
Artists' Museum
Workshop on Curation

Conducted by **Federica Martini**

October 29 - November 2, 2018
Faculty of Fine Arts,
Jamia Milia Islamia, New Delhi

Open to Registered Participants



Faculty of Fine Arts, Jamia Millia Islamia University



University: Jamia Millia Islamia University

University type: Public University, Central

Location: Delhi

Year of founding: 1951

Degrees Offered: BA, BFA, MA, MFA, PhD

Specialisations: Applied Art, Painting, Sculpture, Art Education, Graphic Art, Art History & Art Appreciation

Website: www.jmi.ac.in/ffa/

The history of Jamia Millia Islamia University predates Independence. The initial foundation was laid in 1920, in the United Provinces of India, in Aligarh. It was only in 1988 that Jamia was acknowledged as a Central University by an Act of Indian Parliament. It is a university that had its roots in the Indian Independence Movement, including the Khilafat Movement. Following Gandhi's orders to boycott colonial educational institutions, there was a separation that created Jamia Millia Islamia from Aligarh Muslim University.

In 1925, Jamia was shifted from Aligarh to Karol Bagh, New Delhi. In 1935, all factions of Jamia University besides the Jamia Press, the Maktaba, and the library were moved to Okhla, on the outskirts of Delhi, then a non-descript village. In 1962, Jamia was recognised as a University and finally in 1988, as a Central University.

The Faculty of Fine Arts was founded in 1951 as Art Institute by Abul Kalam Azad, who laid its foundation in New Delhi, as an extension of the belief that art is an integral part of life of citizens. The objective was to train and impart knowledge of arts and crafts in line with modern concepts and methods of Art Education. Individual study and a focus on Western and native traditions was emphasised here.

In 1967 the Arts Institute became the Department of Art and Craft Education, part of the Teacher's Training College. In 1980-81, the department was granted the status of Department of Fine Arts and Art Education, with professional courses (BFA) in Painting, Applied Art, and Sculpture. Later the BA (Hons) in Art and Art Education was expanded to an MFA in Art Education, providing an important course and comprehensive degree programme for art educators. Culturally, the faculty is renowned for a creative and intellectual culture that nurtures art-making practices, research, and scholarship, with over 450 students enrolled.





Another Story: Artists' museums, alternative histories
A workshop on curation

Federica Martini

29/10/2018 - 02/11/2018

Venue: Faculty of Fine Arts, Jamia Millia Islamia

Participating Colleges: College of Art, Delhi

Documentation: Manas Rastogi

Researcher: Vidya Shivadas

The workshop “Another Story: Artists’ museums, alternative histories,” explored curation as a method of meaning-making. Moving away from static ideas of curation as a straightforward presentation of artworks, the workshop was designed to think more expansively about the curatorial as method and process, as well as a way of engaging with practices, ideas and materials around them.

Federica Martini, the educator, started her introductory session with a short clip from Jean-Luc Godard’s classic, the 1964 film *Band of Outsiders*, where the three young protagonists sprint across the Louvre Museum with hope of setting a ‘world record’. Federica used this excerpt to make a case for the curatorial which allowed for playful, inventive, even eccentric and tangential relationships to be made between art works, spaces, time periods and audiences. Casting aside the more reverential art historical approach and its evocation of the museum as an exemplar of the canon, the workshop instead focused on the ways artists, curators and writers have adopted, parodied and commented upon the museal strategies of their time,

challenging traditional notions of cultural history and temporality. Far from being a site for storing information, the archives, the collections and the museums produced by artists are situations where knowledge is produced and not merely re-presented.

Building on discussions around selected artists' museums, the workshop addressed the notion of collecting as part of artistic and curatorial practices. What happens when we consider substituting institutional museum visions with individual artistic and curatorial narratives, obsessions and fictional acts? How may a collecting impulse inscribe in an artistic practice? Could we think of collecting and curating as subjective, convivial and sentimental; situate them somewhere between social and personal histories?

The Museum Manifesto: Seeking other histories

Federica's introductory lecture traced the early usage of the term curation, to the context of science museums where classified experiments carried out in laboratories were made public. She proposed holding on this association of the word curation and to think of exhibitions not as sites of representation but as sites of experimentation.

She shared examples of such 'experiments' undertaken – which ranged from Marcel Duchamp's interventions in the 1938 surrealist exhibition of hanging 1200 coal bags from the ceiling, to Swiss artist Daniel Spoerri's *Sentimental Museum* located within a larger exhibition that Jean Tinguely curated to mark the opening of Centre Pompidou in 1977, and New York based collective Group Material's 1981 exhibition *The People's Choice* where they invited the neighbourhood

to bring together significant objects as core materials of display. She also shared the curatorial experiments of Harald Szeemann, credited to be the first independent curator, which ranged from a home museum on his grandfather to curating the path breaking exhibitions *Live in your Head: When Attitudes become Form* (1969) and Documenta 5 (1972), or mobilizing an international network of artists to assist with the setting up of Museum of Solidarity in Chile (1971-73).

Recuperating curation's subversive impulse, even as we know that these gestures often get absorbed within the mainstream or in some cases neutralized, Federica asked us to consider the radical proposals of artists and curators, which reclaim plural histories and even make room for 'failure'.

The students were then invited to introduce themselves via objects they had brought to the workshop. A table soon filled with different things they shared an identity card, empty frame, camera, memory card, journal and sketchbooks, artworks, mirror, watch, currency note, newspaper, plastic bottles, chocolate, some flowers and leaves, among other things - the start of our museum collection to be built upon during the workshop week.

Turkish author Orhan Pamuk's 'Modest Manifesto for the Museum', nestled within his essay 'Museum and Novel', was the next point of discussion. In this essay Pamuk speaks about his own process of writing his novel *Museum of Innocence* – developing his ideas around collecting and exhibit the 'real' objects of a fictional story in a museum as

well as write a novel based on these objects. In the manifesto, Pamuk asks for museums that are about stories instead of epics, homes instead of monuments and expression instead of representation.

Apart from reading the text, we also watched the film *Innocence of Memories* made on Pamuk's museum which opened in 2012, in a 19th century house in the Cukurcuma neighbourhood in Istanbul. We closely examined the multiple modes of narration deployed – whether in the film (told from the perspective of multiple characters), the audio guide in the museum or the official catalogue *Innocence of Objects*. The students were able to think alongside such exhibitory and narrative structures that are constantly shifting and situating themselves somewhere between high and low culture, between private and collective memory, and between nostalgic and impulsive registers.

Alongside Pamuk's positioning of the museum as first and foremost a repository of stories told by different subject positions, the students began to work with their personal objects. An additional exercise around timelines was added into this mix. The group was made to think about chronology and time periods, with a special emphasis on the role of memory, nostalgia as well as the act of telling. Moving from Pamuk's exploration of these questions, other timelines written by artists and collectives like Adrian Piper, Felix Gonzalo Torres and Group Material, that focus on non-linear ways of dealing with time, chronology, memory and events, were shared with the group. They were asked to write their own timelines of the last decade keeping in mind personal and public events that had occurred.

Field Trips: Exploring the Neighbourhood

The second day of the workshop was about exploring the immediate Jamia Nagar neighbourhood. Led by anthropologist Sarover Zaidi, our first stop was the Saiyidain Manzil, the home of a distinguished social activist Syeda Hameed in Jamia Nagar that also doubles up as the office of Muslim Women's Forum and Khwaja Ahmed Abbas Memorial Trust. Some materials from an exhibition of pioneering Muslim women in the field of education, literature and institution building was exhibited in the lawns as were the film posters that KA Abbas wrote scripts for. The group spent the morning looking at these archives in the making and thinking about the potential of spaces in the neighbourhood which contained different kinds of histories



and stories within them. Sarover then broke the participants into groups and sent them on a field experience to observe and record their experiences of different areas in Jamia Nagar. She asked them to consider the architecture and urban structures from the perspective of people that inhabit them. Focusing on elements of the 'horizon' and the 'corner', she asked students to find out how people mobilised spaces to connote these zones.

In the classroom discussion that followed, Sarover asked the students to reconsider the terms they were using repeatedly – terms like congestion, ghetto, legal / illegal – which slipped easily into their narratives. She asked them to think people's reactions, their hesitation, resistance or nervousness and to allow these to register within their mapping exercises, allow the texture of these encounters to inform the archiving exercise.

The session ended with a very interesting presentation by Agastaya Thapa on the 'Feminist Memory Project' initiated by the team of Photo Kathmandu in 2018 to create a visual archive within the Nepal Picture Library of women's and feminist movements. Agastaya was a researcher on the project and she shared the ways this first ever archive on the public life of women in Nepal was put together. She dealt with the sensitive nature of the material- ranging from photographs, letters, oral testimonies and interviews – much of which had not been available in the public domain the task of bringing these together to tease out larger narratives around women and political mobilization, women's journals and writings, as well as women education in Nepal.

Many tangential and lateral connections were made through the day around private spaces, untold stories and how these could enter the public domain – what forms of telling could they take as exhibitory formats. There was also the questions working with less resources and at times on very sensitive subjects which were discussed.

The group discussed how the understanding of spaces was relative – for an underground movement the living room could be a public space or how women might think of the balcony in their homes as public spaces. When entering people's homes, we also had to consider the qualities of intimacy, experiences and knowledges that would be entering the collections we were building. The challenge was to keep those qualities alive within the exhibition we were making. We looked at artistic strategies around these questions used by artists like Allan Sekula and Noor Abuarafteh, whose practices have focused on the 'insufficiencies' or 'forgetful character' of a medium like photography, and revealed instead the medium's contingent, contextual and dialogic character.

Timelines

The next day was devoted to presentation of the timelines the students made of their past decade which were an interesting mix of fiction, speculation, facts and micro events that they pieced together. The exercise with the objects was also accumulating as students were thinking of ways to link the timelines and the objects. Federica took forward the discussion with objects around the axes of culture / non culture and art / non art. We discussed James Clifford and the classifications he analyses in *Predicament of Culture*

around objects of ‘masterpiece’ and ‘artefact’, ‘authentic’ and ‘inauthentic’ coming from non-western contexts. The students were given the afternoon to work on their curation with objects and timelines and invited to attend Federica’s public talk ***Exhibition Experiments: Situating the curatorial in research-based visual art programs*** in the evening at the MF Husain Gallery. In the talk, Federica focused on key curatorial projects held at her institution (Ecole cantonale d’art du Valais (ECAV), Sierre, Switzerland) which included alumni, teaching staff, students and people from communities, to address exhibitory forms that emerged from collective enquiries on questions of gender, construction of invisibility and migration of languages, among others.

On the fifth and final day a temporary exhibition of the objects was set up we discussed naming of this space. Like Thierry De Duve’s description in *Kant after Duchamp* of explaining art to Martians seeing it for the first time, the group took up the naming exercise and labelled various objects in the museum. We also undertook a walk through the exhibition to look at the potential itineraries that were forming, and the way objects and narratives relate to each other. Even though the timelines and all the other observations gained through the workshop on the neighbourhood and the personal timelines were not included in the temporary exhibition, it did form an important background.

For the researcher the workshop was a very interesting mobilisation of various resources and documents that were gathered to create many lateral connections and provide

students with a large set of texts, videos, artworks and materials to draw from. Federica also discussed the possibility of setting up a virtual Google classroom and finding ways to continue our engagements long distance.

The workshop mobilised many ideas for the students which included the curatorial as a playful and performative way of dealing with practices of other artists, navigating between the personal and the larger political realm, and of thinking of the logic of collecting and exhibiting first and foremost as creative practices within the framework of their practice.





Federica Martini

Exhibition experiments: Situating the curatorial in research-based visual art programs

M F Husain Gallery, Jamia Millia Islamia
November 1, 2018

Moderated by Vidya Shivadas

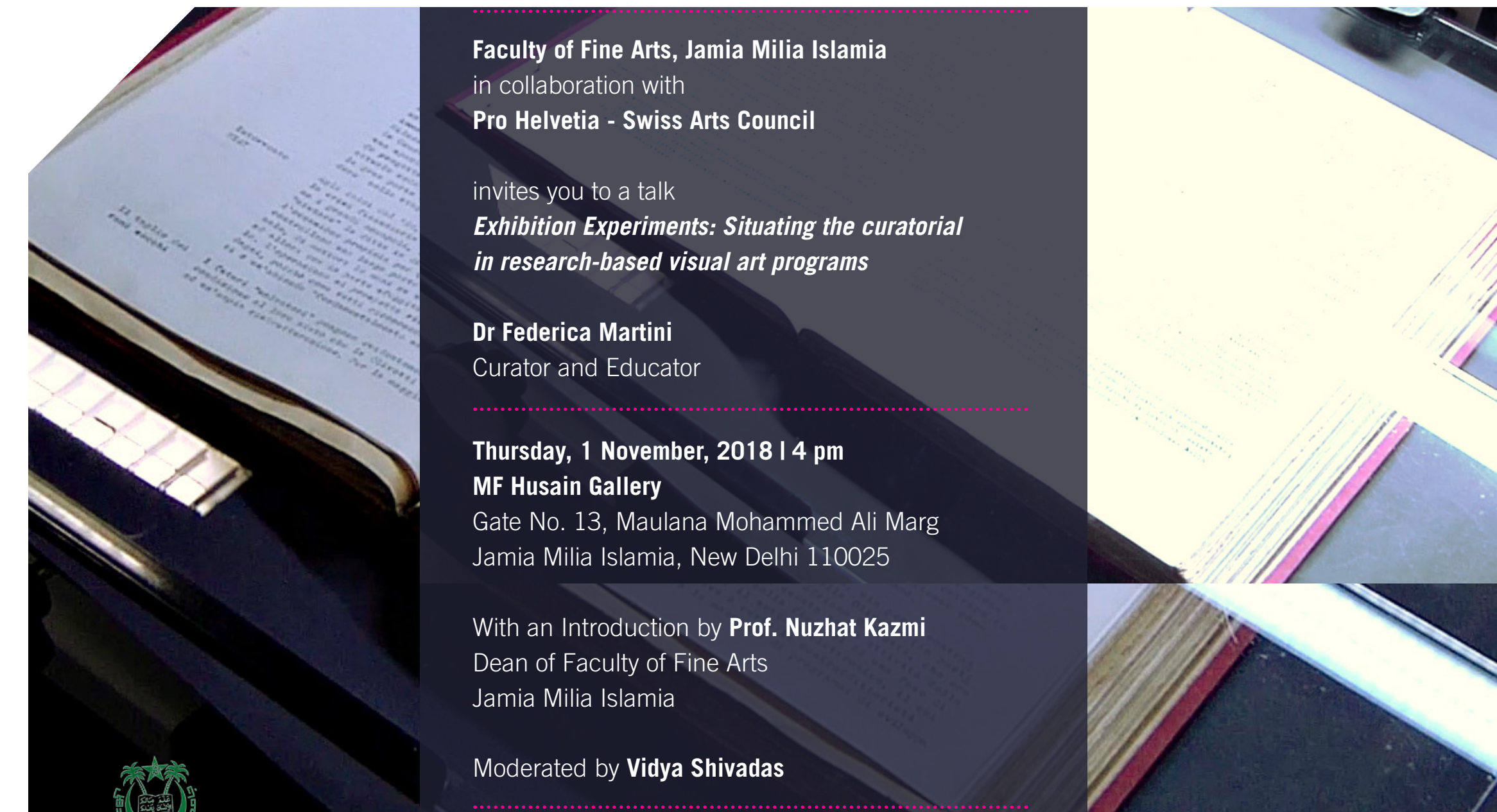
Following an introduction by Prof Nuzhat Kazmi, Dean of Faculty of Fine Arts, Jamia Millia, Dr Federica Martini began her talk by prefacing questions of art education in Europe in the 21st century. She touched upon the Bologna Process which strove to standardise education across Europe and provide common evaluation systems and how this impacted the different art institutions.

She spoke about art schools being increasingly preoccupied with the question of research as practice. And within this context how the question of exhibition making becomes important where we need to define what it means to be a professional artist today. Exploring how the word curation was first used in the context of the science museum, she argued for keeping alive its association with experimentation where the performative and the unpredictable both find expression.

She spoke about the city Sierre in which her school is located, a small city with a population of 16,000 people (with a

sizeable migrant population of Italian, Spanish, Portuguese and more recently Arab people). The Curatorial seminar at the Masters level students started in 2009 and an undergraduate programme was initiated in 2018.

Given that Sierre was not an art centre and didn't have many art audiences, the school has undertaken many interesting projects like opening a shop in the city centre to experiment with ways of engaging with publics. The various displays held here have looked at questions of food and produce, or the industrial legacy of the region. The key curatorial projects have included alumni, teaching staff, students and people from communities, and exhibitory forms have emerged from collective enquiries on questions of gender, construction of invisibility and migration of languages, among others. The talk was followed with a lively discussion with the audience.



Faculty of Fine Arts, Jamia Milia Islamia
in collaboration with
Pro Helvetia - Swiss Arts Council

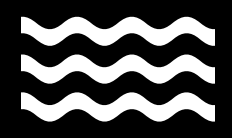
invites you to a talk
Exhibition Experiments: Situating the curatorial in research-based visual art programs

Dr Federica Martini
Curator and Educator

Thursday, 1 November, 2018 | 4 pm
MF Husain Gallery
Gate No. 13, Maulana Mohammed Ali Marg
Jamia Milia Islamia, New Delhi 110025

With an Introduction by **Prof. Nuzhat Kazmi**
Dean of Faculty of Fine Arts
Jamia Milia Islamia

Moderated by **Vidya Shivadas**



Federica Martini, PhD, is a contemporary art historian and curator. Since 2018 she is Professor and Head of the Visual Arts Department at the EDHEA – Valais School of Arts. Previously (2009-17), she was Head of the MAPS Master of Arts in Public Spheres (EDHEA), and a member of the curatorial departments of the Castello di Rivoli Museum of Contemporary Art, Musée Jenisch Vevey and Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts/Lausanne. In 2015-16 she was research fellow at the Istituto Svizzero di Roma. Together with Patrick de Rham and Elise Lammer she initiated the Museum of Post-Digital Cultures (2012). In 2012, with Julie Harboe she started the editorial series *SARN Minutes*, focusing on art-based research. Publications include: *Blackout Magazine* (No. 0 Art labour and No. 1

Olivetti poesia concreta, 2017); *My PhD is my art practice. Notes on the Art PhD in Switzerland* (2017, with P. Gisler); *Vedi alla voce: traversare* (2016, Traces); *Publishing Artistic Research* (SARN, with B. Drabble, 2014); *Open Source Artistic Research* (SARN, with B. Drabble, 2014); *Tourists Like Us: Critical Tourism and Contemporary Art* (with V. Mickelkevicius, 2013); *Pavilions/Art in Architecture* (with R. Ireland, 2013); *Just Another Exhibition: Stories and Politics of Biennials* (with V. Martini, 2011).



What would you define as the need of the hour in art education today? And how can the educator make the difference here and now?

I think that there is a need for art education in every educational programme. When Bob and Roberta Smith's painting suggested that every school should be an art school, this was meant both as a pedagogical praxis and as a research method. Art pedagogies are anti-economical, non-linear in time, organic and practice-based. Autonomy, intuition, informality, and conviviality support a kind of knowledge production whose field-work is social change. As such, art programmes do not fit in the mass university production system. In their practice, they serve Elisabeth Povinelli's notion of endurance and exhaustion: the persistence of alternative forms (and programmes) prompts the exhaustion of other forms. Unfortunately, the symmetric statement is also true: neo-liberal homologated educational forms may (or try to) exhaust socially-engaged pedagogies and contradicts Tim Ingold's take that what keeps a learning community together are their diversities, not their similarities.

An additional challenge is sharply articulated by the Another Roadmap School project. Since new educational reforms in the years 2000, there has been a need for some time to change vocabulary, de-centre existing hegemonic systems (Western, patriarchal) and position alternatives to them, that are not derivative but rooted in different reference networks. Through this path, we should also question the publicness of (art) education, in terms of its real accessibility, in terms of

class-, gender- and race-based exclusions, and of the dramatic restrictions on human mobility.

Who were/are your mentors, your teachers and inspiration? In what way has your work been shaped by them?

Reading as a daily practice was and still is my first trip to the moon. I guess that reading – main texts, footnotes, in between the lines, literally, speculatively – stays for me the main curatorial and research methodology I practice.

I learned to read in 1982, during the so-called Lead Years, a few months after the Lebanon War broke out and the Falklands conflict started in Argentina. Reading the newspaper was a daily and collective gesture at home, and my parents would take special care in connecting the day's news with the history I was studying.

Related to that, I have this memory of my primary school teacher Pinuccia Massari coming to class one morning and asking us to write a text. Then she opened the newspaper and started to cry while leafing through the pages: it was May 30, 1985, the day after 39 people died in Brussels for hooligans' violence. Her feeling concerned and her public tears left a mark on me. It is through this primary school teacher that I learned to work in groups, avoid individualism for the sake of a better work, and move the tables around the class for everybody to feel comfortable.

From high school to University I was involved in many associations and students' initiatives, such as our magazine Cerbero, the Laboratori Creativi, and Altera. It is there, with my peers, that I read texts that are still crucial today – Giorgio Agamben, Nanni Balestrini, Guy Debord, Frantz Fanon,

Stuart Hall, Paul Gilroy, Carla Lonzi, Deleuze & Guattari – and learned to share opinions and views, and argue for them. Through Barbara Lanati’s North-American Literature classes I got in contact with an undisciplined and expanded notion of the arts. She also put in my hands my first Gertrude Stein and Toni Morrison’s books, and sparked my interest for experimental writing, visual texts, memory troubles and repetition. Nicole Schweizer, curator at the MCBA Lausanne, introduced me to feminist pedagogies and theories – and in particular to bell hooks, Renée Green, Griselda Pollock, Trinh T. Minh-ha.

My own work as an educator cannot be separated from the collective practice and critical reflections I share with my colleagues Françoise Brunner, Kadiatou Diallo, Petra Koehle and Anne-Julie Raccoursier and the EDHEA students. These are the people and practices I am constantly speaking with.

Tell us about your specific location in Switzerland as an educator / cultural practitioner – on artistic research and the relationship between independent art practices and teaching

This fall, the European Forum for Advanced Practices network released a Charter that proposes to overcome art research and practice-based research. The alternative they propose includes unexpected configurations of knowledge that are not progress-oriented, foster collaboration and lived experience, and are situated in civil societies from where they prompt and speculate. What inspires me in their approach is that binary distinctions between institutional and non-institutional/art and academic research are deflated, in favor of a more ubiquitous paradigm of research bodies of work. In our Master of Arts in Public Spheres, at EDHEA,

we’ve been working on the idea of a multi-sites program for similar reasons. We imagine our students as independent art practitioners whose practice we do not want to interrupt but rather accompany through dense collective research.

One ardent topic in Switzerland at present is the question of visual artists’ salaries and wages. This implies an attempt to define art as a profession - and therefore has an impact on art schools and their curricula. There are many reasons for this. First, because an art school is less a set of seminars and classes than a place for artistic production. Secondly, because in the context of 21st century new institutionalism, art education becomes an artistic and curatorial form, for example in the “100-day school” project of the non-realized Cyprus Manifesta (2006) or the exhibition and series of events A.C.A.D.E.M.Y (2006, Hamburg, Antwerp, Eindhoven). In this context, artists of all ages return to school to face the new contexts, regulations, or requirements from the art system and the labor market. In terms of curricula, this produces a paradox, as the point of an art school is not to “create” artists who fit the system, but facilitate reflections on how to produce own, divergent economies.

What ‘skills’ do you think art students today need to be equipped with?

Last spring Natalie Wexler commented on the 2018 US National Assessment of Educational Progress in The Atlantic. The article assessed the last 20 years there was a complete lack of advancement in reading skills in US primary education, and blamed it on the kind of skill-oriented training practiced in schools. As the national tests would be on text comprehension, teachers would practice the skill of

“comprehension”, rather than contributing to increasing vocabulary, literary knowledge and knowledge tout-court that would give tools for the students to understand texts. What is so important and inspiring in art schools is there is no training for skills – rather, the focus is on knowledge and practice as an organic whole from which skills will raise. And somehow, art education (and art) is also a lot about de-skilling.

You started the workshop by speaking of the curatorial as a method which engages with histories and institutional structures but not necessarily with the same reverence, linearity and hierarchy accorded to them. What are the theoretical frameworks that students need today?

Art research is about looping, re-searching again (I take this from my colleagues, artists Petra Koehle and Nicolas Vermot-Petit-Outhenin), and I guess that as an art historian I consciously and gladly got caught in art schools’ need to position everything in and from the practice, including theoretical frameworks. The curatorial approach implies to collectively taking care – and taking on – institutional languages and histories as open-source materials that may be affected, improved, revised, re-phrased by a community of users.

I would also like you to reflect on your experiences not as an educator but as an administrator, as dean of the school - how you would work to update institutions and shift their mandate?

You are right at pointing that I am not only a teacher or an art historian, but that there are expectations that in my role

as a head of department I am a “manager” too. I believe organisation is a crucial part in every collaborative process, and gladly embrace this line of work to foster participation. I am also at ease with notions of precision – I’ve never met anybody who is more precise than an artist. And I say this consciously, to contradict the unverified beliefs that administrators or theoreticians may be more precise.

I was prompted by Catherine Queloz, emeritus professor at the HEAD in Geneva, to imagine research, teaching and the responsibility of a programme or department as one organic field, without exhausting myself in the attempt of separating them. Furthermore, Paul Goodwin, Director of TRAIN at the Chelsea School of Art, London, brought to my attention the importance of ‘opacity’ (in Edouard Glissant’s terms) and recalcitrance in our inscription within learning institutions. It is through Goodwin’s definition of opacity that I started to systematically substitute the notion of “transparency” with one of “clarity”, as a strategy to address policies, decision-making processes, their inclusivity, and the (collective) creation of the pedagogical devices through which we work.

This is how it should work, even though we are going through unprecedented bureaucratic work-loads and, what is more troubling, the equilibrium between pedagogical (and therefore art) contracts and administrative ones is direly unbalanced. I also think that much work is done in reverse: pedagogy should create the (infra)structure and the administration should facilitate it, and not in the other way around.



29 Oct -

- ▲ Preparation exercise for students: Bring an object to workshop
Every participant will introduce her/himself through bringing an object and/or a representative work. Each participant has a 10 min slot for his/her presentation.
- ▲ Introduction to Curation.
- ▲ Introduction of the participants through the “Bring an object exercise”.
- ▲ Presentation about a book called *Museum of Innocence* by Orhan Pamuk and the museum he has set up in Istanbul.
- ▲ Discussion on Museums made by artists.
- ▲ Screening of the movie *The Innocence of Memory*, film based on Pamuk’s novel.
- ▲ Introduction of the Timeline assignment.
- ▲ Assignment for home: Make your own personal timeline (2008-2018)

30 Oct -

- ▲ Morning Session with social anthropologist Sarover Zaidi on “Thinking with objects and spaces”.
- ▲ Field visit to Saiyidain Manzil, Jamia Nagar, to look through the archives of writer Khwaja Ahmed Abbas and some glimpses of the exhibition *Pathbreakers: The Twentieth Century Muslim Women of India*.
- ▲ Students asked to engage with the space and the archives presented.
- ▲ Group assignment of visiting different nearby areas and explore the neighbourhoods.
- ▲ Meet back at the Classroom to discuss findings.
- ▲ Presentation by Agastaya Thapa on researching and collating the archive around *The Public Life of Women: A Feminist Memory Project* as part of Photo Kathmandu 2018

31 Oct -

- ▲ Inputs on fictional museums that participants need to explore
- ▲ Presentation of the timelines by students
- ▲ For the afternoon session, group exercises around making fictional interventions and temporary exhibition / museum, keeping in mind sites visited, objects collected and timelines drawn up.
- ▲ Collective sharing of the ongoing work that will continue on Day 4.

1 Nov -

- ▲ Discussion and presentation by the educator.
- ▲ Screening of short film.
- ▲ Post lunch students will be left to develop their projects and museum proposals in groups.
- ▲ Evening talk by Dr Federica Martini titled *Exhibition Experiments: Situating the curatorial in research-based visual art programmes* at M F Husain Gallery

2 Nov-

- ▲ Collective sharing of the ongoing work – questions and problems.
- ▲ Organisation of Speculative Curatorial Walks around the museums projects.
- ▲ Presentations of proposals for the museums.
- ▲ Conclusion of workshop

Jamia Milia Islamia

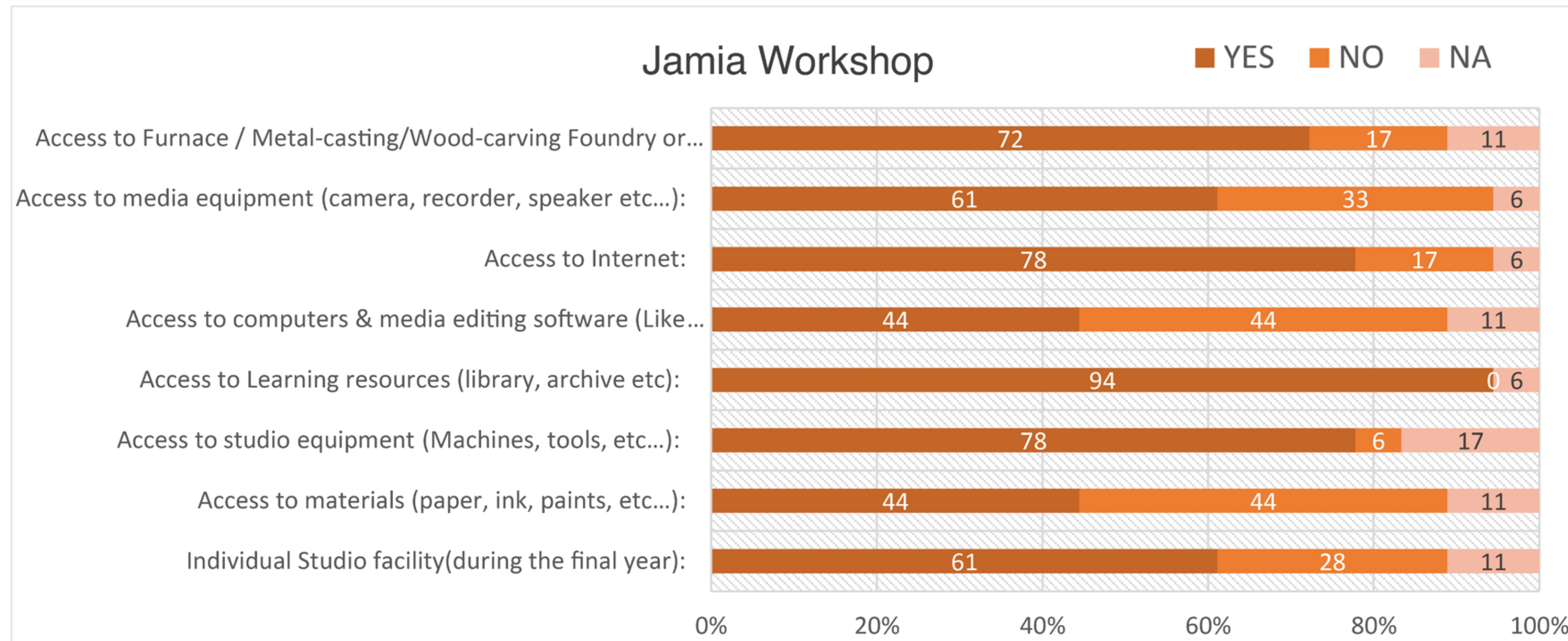
Students' response to the question: Does the infrastructure in your school meet the needs of your practice?

Sample size: 18

Male: 8

Female: 10

DATA FROM
STUDENTS' BIENNALE
QUESTIONNAIRE



THE
SCHOOL
Workshop as part of
Expanded Education
Programme,
Students' Biennale 2018 **OF**
EVERYDAY:
PRACTICE
AS
PEDAGOGY

Conducted by **Mriganka Madhukaillya**

1 - 7 November, 2018

AGORA,
East Block, Anuradha Cine Complex, Bamunimaidam, Guwahati- 781021



Site: Guwahati

Workshop title: The School of Everyday - Practice as Pedagogy

Dates: 01/11/2018 - 07/11/2018

Educator: Mriganka Madhukaillya

Participating Colleges: Government College of Art and Crafts, Guwahati, Assam; Kokrajhar Music and Fine Arts College, Kokrajhar, Assam; Department of Fine Arts, Assam University, Silchar, Assam and Kala Bhavan, Visva-Bharati Santiniketan, West Bengal

Venue: AGORA, A space of Contemporary Culture initiated by MIND, India, Institute of Positive Mental Health and Research and PERIFERRY

Documentation: Kulanidhi Mahanta

Researcher: Vidya Shivadas

“Our practical conclusion is the following: we are abandoning all efforts at pedagogical action and moving toward experimental activity”

- Asger Jorn: *Notes on the Formation of the Imaginist Bauhaus, 1957*

The workshop in Guwahati did not take place within an art college but chose to locate itself within a newly instituted space titled Agora. Founded by the artist collective Periferry and MIND India, Institute of Positive Mental Health & Research, this workshop was the first in a series of such

initiatives to be held in the space to foster free, creative exchange among young practitioners in the city.

The idea of the workshop was to create both in thought and practice a critical pedagogy for the Northeast region. Within this temporary laboratory, participants and resource persons investigated the notion of reviving practice through invoking the idea of “space of flow”. The Catalan economist Manuel Castells describes the modern world as a “space of flows”—flows of people, capital, information, technology, images, sounds, and symbols.



At the outset Mriganka stated the future art academy would be a space, not a structured or set curriculum. The Guwahati workshop was seen as an experiment to develop such a space. Thinking about radical pedagogical examples like Black Mountain, an important incubator of many of the American Avant-Garde artists of the 1960s, the focus of the workshop was essentially to create an experimental and interdisciplinary environment. The collective that Mriganka co-founded, Desire Machine Collective, has also materialised projects like Periferry and Assembly of Desire. These are driven by the rationale of bringing people together to a space – whether a ferry on the river Brahmaputra or the river island of Majuli – and build critical and creative dialogues inspired by the site and the coming together.

The workshop constituted an intense week of living and working together, where art students, young practitioners and educators came together to critically reflect on two key words – ‘Experience’ and ‘Experimentation’. Taking cues from the seminal essay by humanist geographer Yi-Fu Tuan titled *Life as a Field trip*, participants asked themselves how these words played out in their practice.

“As soon as we are awake, we are in the field (world), experiencing. Experience is a key word in the humanist geographer’s lexicon. What is it? Simply put, it is how an animal, especially a human animal, apprehends reality through all its senses and mind. Experience has both a passive and an active component. The passive component is suggested by the word undergo: One undergoes experience. An experienced person is one to whom much has happened, whether he or she wants it to or not.



The active component is suggested by the root ‘per’, as in the word peril: To experience is to venture forth, to run a risk. In experiencing, the passive component is predominant. The world is full of forces and stimuli that bombard the individual. Many (cosmic rays or microorganisms that enter the body, for example) are not consciously registered at all; many are fleetingly noted and then forgotten; a few are retained to be reworked into an individual’s store of information or knowledge, and this can happen because the ‘few’ have been expected-prefigured in a person’s culture. Active, deliberative learning, as in a classroom, makes use of these few stimuli, reworked into visual images, almost exclusively.”

- (*Life as a Field Trip/ Yi-Fu Tuan/ Geographical Review, Vol. 91, No. 1/2, Doing Fieldwork.)Jan. - Apr., 2001*

Discussions on this key reading were focussed on exploring the Concept of ‘Field Notes’. The participants were taken on various walks through the city and asked to think of the stimuli it offered as well as focus on their process of experiencing it. They were particularly asked to pay attention to the questions that arose in their mind around what they were seeing, feeling, what kind of images came up. Small exercises of making and drawing followed which ended with group discussions.

Mriganka, as the core educator, engaged with ideas derived from Marshall McLuhan’s *City as Classroom: Understanding Language and Media*, where the media theorist debunks the notion of programmed instruction and instead asks students to explore the wide range of characteristics of their social environment as well as contemporary mediatic forms.

The focus of the workshop was not so much to provide participants with insight into a new medium or thematics but to reorient their idea of practice itself and to prepare the ground for an interdisciplinary approach which relied on different knowledge systems - art, ecology, archaeology, technology etc. It encouraged them to expand their site of production and engagement with the city at large and explore new constellations of artistic collaborations and relationships, and ways of engaging with the public domain.

The preparation process involved putting together a comprehensive reading list which collated references that exceeded art history to look at seminal texts in design pedagogy (Oti Aicher’s *The World as Design*), vernacular literature (which included important poets and writers like Nilamoni Phukan, Saurabh Kumar Chaliha and Hiren Gohain), evolutionary biology (best sellers like *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind*), architecture, archeology and history of the region (with a focus on ancient history with publications like *Prehistory and Archeology of Northeast India & Early history of Kamrupa*, as well as the colonial period - *The History of Assam: From Yandabo to Partition, 1826 - 1947*).

‘Field’ was a key term investigated through the workshop, in particular the field that is the state of Assam. There was a general consensus that Assam as a region had never been properly comprehended in its complexity right from the colonial period. The state shares 99 percent of its borders with other countries and has diverse indigenous groups many of whose origins and sense of identity extend national and state boundaries. Its complex history, culture and

ethnography has never been duly acknowledged within the grand narrative of Indian history. And there is also the tragic and ever-present component of armed struggles and conflict that have marked this region since independence.

Mriganka invited four educators to be present throughout the workshop and engage with the students. For Mriganka it was important to assert the role of practitioners in the region and have them involved with the students. Many times over the workshop discussions were held regarding the lacuna of conventional art history which had no grasp on the range of



practices in the Northeast. Here there were more 220 languages and dialects in circulation, and this aesthetic, political and social complexity of the region had to be carefully considered.

The educators gave a glimpse of this diversity when sharing their practices. We had Maneswar Brahma, a printmaker based in Guwahati. Sharing his sensitive practice, he spoke about his experiences as a young Bodo growing up at a time when the Bodoland agitation was ongoing and how that impacted his opportunity to study. In 1995 a great tragedy struck him when he was abducted in a case of mistaken identity and shot at twelve times by some insurgents. The last 25 years have been about a slow recovery from all the injuries sustained alongside working to express these personal experiences and address socio-political issues in the state like ethnic killings of Bodo and Santhals or the atrocities of the army and insurgents. Brahma's language is often abstract. In his soft gentle voice, he reassured students to not lose heart and learn from his example of channelling art to deal with crisis and the feelings of despondency on the conditions around him.

Debananda Ulup, another educator, is a painter who belongs to the transnational tribe Singphos. The Singphos are an ancient, hilly tribe, found in Arunachal Pradesh and Assam, who trace their ancestry to Myanmar. For Ulup the rich tradition of Singphos folk stories has been a very important reference point and his paintings are expressive colourful renditions of these narratives.

Rajkumar Mazinder and Nikhileshwar Baruah also made slide

presentations. Both these artists had moved out of Assam to study in M S University, Vadodara in early 1990s. The effects of violence in the state made their way into their works. Both have spent many years working as educators – Mazinder is currently a professor in Department of Fine Arts, Silchar and Baruah taught in Vadodara and is now a visiting faculty member in the design department of IIT Guwahati.

Apart from taking cognisance of the practitioners working and living in Assam, the workshop also fostered an interdisciplinary approach to art education. The idea was also to create an integrated space where students came in contact with people from diverse disciplines whether philosophy or performance. One of the most concrete inputs came from Dr Manzil Hazarika, Assistant Professor & Head, Department of Archaeology, Cotton University, Guwahati. Hazarika gave an overview on the discipline, unlike history which is often linear and unidirectional in its approach, archaeology dealt with cross-sections, of simultaneous artefacts across the spectrum. He then took participants on a walk to various archaeological sites.

Hazarika's own research has focused on the prehistory of the region. The study of this period, which is essentially without written records, cuts across many disciplines of geology, genetics, history etc. He asked students to think of the implications of a discipline beyond mere fact gathering to think of how one could address problems confronting the northeast today from archeologically derived knowledge. Following in the footsteps of pioneering archaeologists like T C Sharma and M C Goswami who undertook the earliest archaeological excavations in Northeast in 1960s, Hazarika

also argued for an ethno-archaeological methodology where historical artefacts and contemporary cultural practices can be seen in a continuum and could be a concrete way of overcoming the lack of attention paid to prehistory of the northeast. The rest of the day was spent visiting an archaeological site of Ambari, situated in the heart of Guwahati city, in particular the dig within the compound of the Reserve Bank of India. The site, where Guwahati Circle of ASI and Directorate of Archeology, Assam had been excavating, has provided ample evidence for understanding the cultural growth of the area since the beginning of Common Era.



One steady practice through all seven days of the workshop period were the early morning mindfulness session conducted by mental health experts Dr Sangeeta and Abhijit Goswami. Their organisation Mind India, set up in 2006, is one of the first bodies in Northeast formed by dedicated professionals to address issues related to mental health. They are keenly interested in supporting young people and have worked with various adolescent and youth groups, from school students to girls and young women working in the tea estates. The workshop was their first attempt to bring in elements of personal effectiveness and emotional awareness with a group of aspiring artists. Though the interactions were non-invasive in nature there were many queries after the session was concluded. Most of these were on personal emotional aspects of the participants where they shared issues of boredom and anger. Abhijit shared that their extensive work in the region had made them aware that young people were low in critical and creative thinking, and dealing with a lot of fear.

The sessions, like other aspects of the workshop, were a constant and fluid component. Experiential in nature, they were based on participatory delivery of content with emphasis on self-exploration, use of checklist, role plays, interactive sessions, group tasks and audio visual aids based on established theories and practices. Through the sessions they touched upon various aspects of holistic health, discussed addictions. They gave participants simple tools to manage emotions and stress as well as asked them to foreground positive visualisation and motivation. Working on the coping and negotiating skills, participants were asked to

set aside daily time to spend with themselves and value their own expressions. The resource persons came away feeling energised from the experience and are keen to work towards a manual on “Well-being and Emotional First Aid for Art



Community” which can be introduced in art colleges and also used by facilitators during workshops and regular classes.

The diversity of participants in terms of the institutions from Guwahati, Kokrajhar, Silchar and Santiniketan, and also batches (we had first year graduates as well as final year students and some who had finished their Masters) led to an interesting environment of different generations coming together. While we wondered whether the readings and inputs were too complicated for the younger participants, the final year students shared at the end of the workshop that they wished this kind of session had come earlier in their education so that they could have been oriented to the field of art making very differently.

There was also the presence of members of the Anga Collective who energised the whole process while playing the role of workshop facilitators. Sanjib Kalita, Ankan Dutta, Rahul Lahon and Dharmendra Prasad are alumni from the Guwahati College of Art and Crafts, spoke about their collective forming in reaction to their perceived lack of inputs from the college. They remembered asking the college to allow them 24-hours access to the studios and were told to open their own space if they wished for such a facility. They did precisely this and undertook a self-learning process where they compared the worlds inside and outside the campus and began thinking of materials and contexts in very different ways.

They also benefitted from the Periferry space (2007-14) activated by Desire Machine Collective when a ferry on the

river Brahmaputra was converted into a creative, communal space. Periferry was a space that organically responding to the city, the river, exploring the flux and flows. Anga recounted how this proximity to the activities taking place at Periphery really shaped their core practices.

“We would come every day and make our watercolours while they worked on their computers but in retrospect we have realised this encounter had a decisive impact on our practices – materially and conceptually. It made us think



about the definitions of being an artist and whether our works addressed people and the contexts around us. We changed our materials and began with locally sourced things, with agricultural waste etc. The studio we set up was not a confined space. It was located close to the Guwahati College and open to anyone who wanted to work.”

Members of Anga have continued to associate with subsequent projects organised by Desire Machine Collective like the 2018 multidisciplinary symposium and festival Assembly of Desire in Majuli Island where people came together to immerse themselves in this site amidst the Bihu celebration, think about local cultural production and blur the lines between art and life. It is also important to note the presence of Kulanidhi Mahanta who was documenting the workshop and conducted many interviews with the participants as well as supported them with their technical experiments.

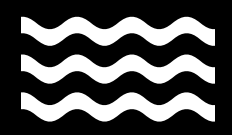
The relay between different generations of practitioners in Guwahati also made us realise that integrating art students and practitioners into contemporary art projects made for a very interesting learning environment and created a culture where artists opened up their spaces to younger practitioners.

The workshop thus flowed organically with readings, screenings, presentations, activities and exercises. It culminated in an open display which came through an afternoon of intense activity on the sixth day. The last day of the workshop was set aside as a day of reflection. The session was attended by all the resource persons as well as

Students’ Biennale curator, Sanchayan Ghosh who came down from Santiniketan for it.

The participants were divided into small groups and asked to reflect on the kind of learning spaces they would find meaningful. They responded by sharing that they would like spaces which were not constricted with rules and hierarchies, and where self-learning is encouraged and not stifled. They also spoke of art college not being an isolated institution but one that could allow for exchange with other colleges, and students could be exposed to like philosophy, literature, science etc as well as engage with visiting scholars and artists. They also shared the need for more discussion and engagement with the teachers and more exposure via trips and residencies to other places.

One group even proposed a radically different idea of pedagogy based on ecology and rural philosophy and where the school was a nomadic unit and the students are given the possibility of immersing themselves in different contexts and experience the power of different spaces. They all agreed that the School of Everyday that could be developed together was indeed a project worth considering.

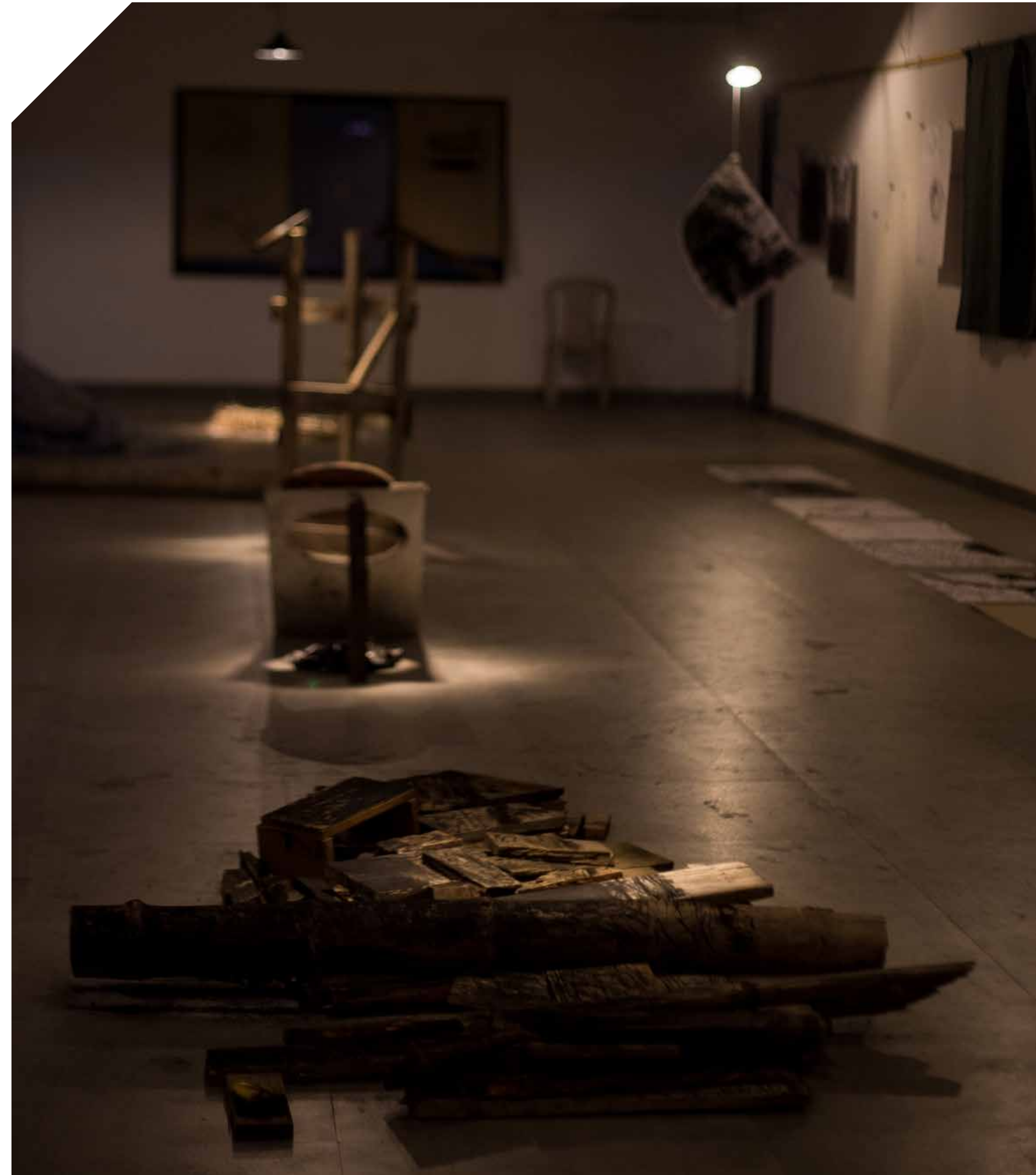


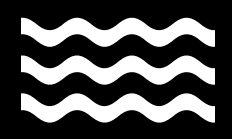
Open Day | School of Everyday
November 6, 2018 | 6 pm - 9 pm

An Open Day was organised for the workshop on the sixth day and participants spent the day working individually and collectively to set up a display. Given the fact that the workshop was not geared towards this kind of exhibition production, it was interesting to see how the participants responded to this call as a way of processing the various inputs, relooking at exercises and readings, exploring materials and spaces.

The notions of process and outcome, making and exhibiting, individual and collective were complicated. A fragment of an asbestos roof was propped with signage of the School of Everyday and there was a mobilisation of all kinds of found and discarded materials in the works. People also worked with their own preoccupations – a first year student focussed on making charcoal portraits while others made sculptures and assemblages. Yet another group worked on the curation, displaying remnants of the various exercises.

One group worked in a quiet frenzy to remake the Tatlin Tower, using only an A 4 pixelated image as their reference. The unrealised sculpture proposed by Russian avant garde artist Vladimir Tatlin remains a symbol of modernist Utopia from early 20th century. Made with wood scraps, bamboo sticks and discarded materials, we saw another materialisation of this vision - a provisional monument made from urban detritus that rose from the ground and made clear its stakes in the future, towards imagining the School of Everyday.





Mriganka Madhukaillya, since 2005 is an Assistant Professor, in the Design Department at the Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati, India. He co-founded Desire Machine Collective in 2004 with Sonal Jain. Assuming their name and theoretical disposition from *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, by French Deleuze and Guattari, Desire Machine Collective seeks to disrupt the neurotic symptoms that arise from constricting capitalist structures with healthier, schizophrenic cultural flows of desire and information.

They employ film, video, photography, and multimedia installation in their works. In 2007 he co-initiated Periferry, an alternative artist-led space situated on the M. V. Chandardinga, a ferry docked on the Brahmaputra River

in Guwahati. He also founded the Media Lab as an interdisciplinary centre within Department of Design for experiments with digital forms of design and learning. The main focus is on film, video, audio, new media, digital culture and technology. The outcome of projects is often not defined before they are started. They allow for tinkering, sites of non-formal learning practices, where learning by doing is stimulated. The purpose is to promote the creative use of new technologies by providing a collaborative environment for research and experimentation at the intersection of art, technology and culture.



WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

28 - 31 Oct

Pre workshop preparation

Given that the workshop was residential and focussed a great deal on creating a stimulating environment for the participants the prepping of the space gathering various physical materials, readings and making arrangements for the participants etc was very crucial. The Agora space which was a large hall was left open for students to experiment with one corner organised as a dark room for projections and presentations. Arrival of the participants at the hotel on 31 Oct.

1 Nov -

- ▲ Introduction session
- ▲ Session on Wood (Material) - Abhijit Goswami
- ▲ Daily sessions of Mindfulness with Sangeeta and Abhijit Goswami

2 Nov -

- ▲ Early morning session on Mindfulness
- ▲ Introducing readings like Life as a Field Trip by Yi-Fu Tuan followed by discussion and exercises

3 Nov -

- ▲ Early morning session on Mindfulness
- ▲ Exercise: Exploring the concept of field notes
- ▲ Field trip followed by drawing exercise of converting that stimulus into an image.
- ▲ Afternoon discussion on this experience of working via observation and contemplation
- ▲ Evening Presentations by Nikhileshwar Barua and Rajkumar Mazinder

4 Nov -

- ▲ Early morning session on Mindfulness
- ▲ Talk by Dr Manjil Hazarika on discipline of archaeology
- ▲ Visit to excavation site of Ambari, Cotton University and other heritage sites in the city
- ▲ Night Screening of Armenian Classic from 1969, *The Colour of Pomegranates* by Sergei Parajanov

5 Nov -

- ▲ Early morning session on Mindfulness
- ▲ Continuing with field notes exercises
- ▲ Drawing exercise with music and exploring the body
- ▲ Group Discussion
- ▲ Presentations by Maneshwar Brahma and Debananda Ulup
- ▲ Screening of Kannada experimental film *Gaalibeeja* by Babu Eshwar Prasad

6 Nov -

- ▲ Early morning session on Mindfulness
- ▲ Discussion on the display
- ▲ Participants working towards Open Day
- ▲ Presentation by musician Lain from the band Rains in Sahara
- ▲ Evening Display

7 Nov -

- ▲ Early morning session on Mindfulness
- ▲ Presentation by Mriganka Madhukallya on his practice and summing up the workshop
- ▲ A day long reflection session attended by all the resource persons
- ▲ Collective feedback session by the participants on workshop and on their expectations from art college
- ▲ Questionnaire filling

Guwahati

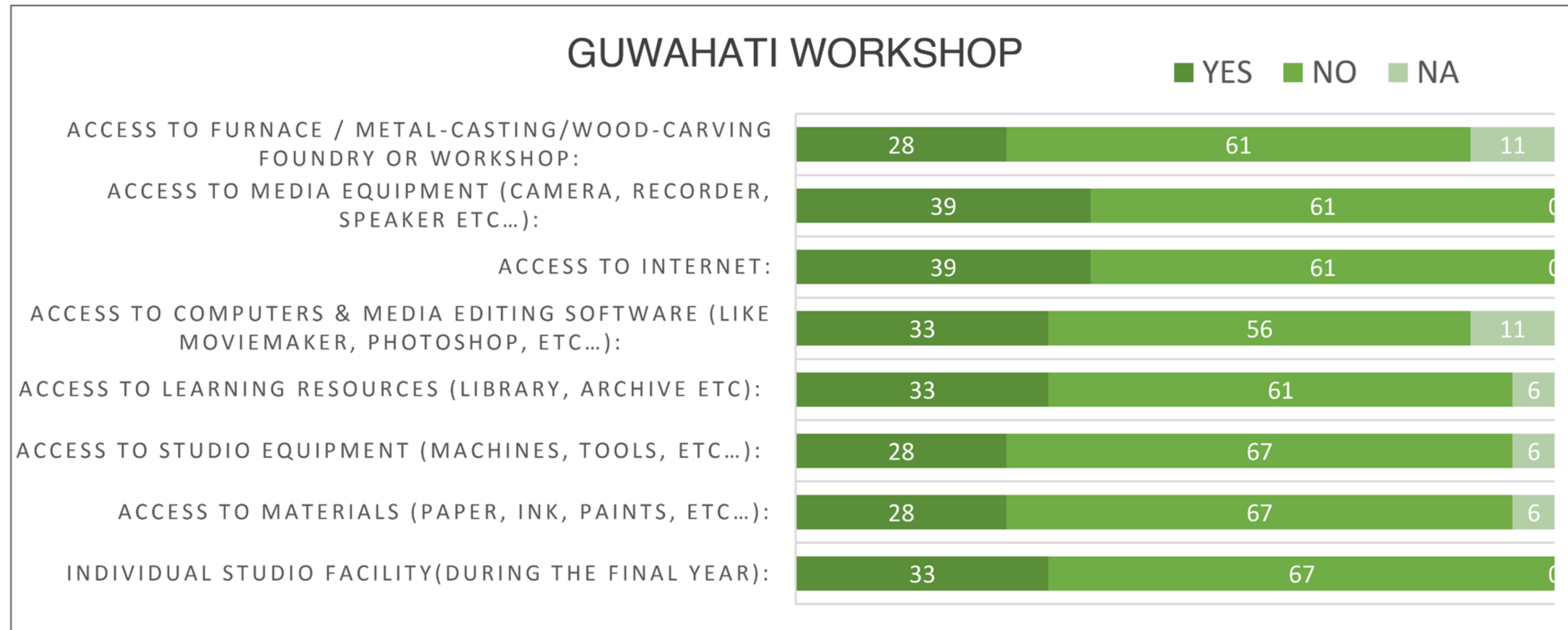
Students' response to the question: Does the infrastructure in your school meet the needs of your practice?

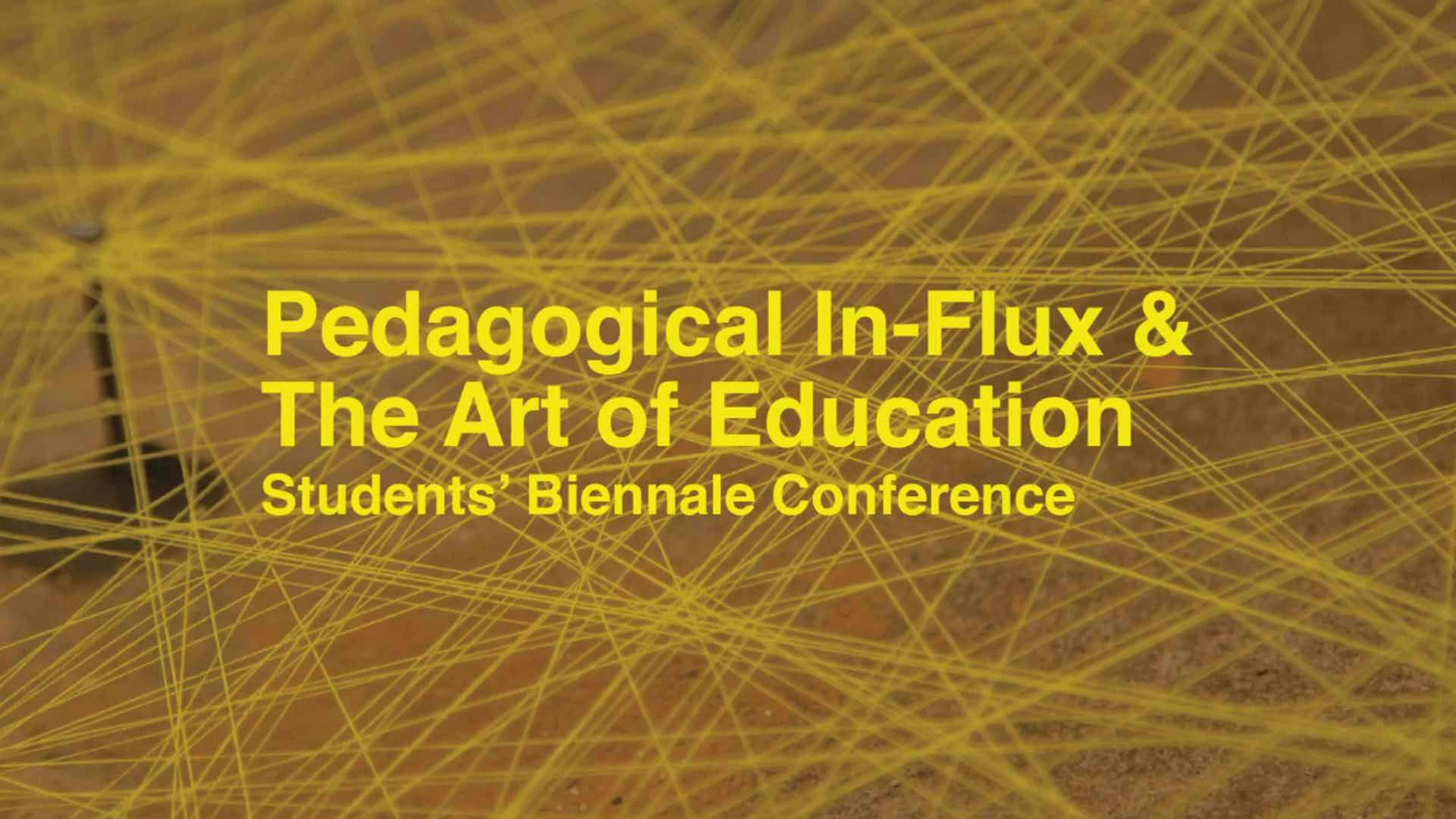
Total sample size: 18

Male: 13

Female: 3

N/A: 2





**Pedagogical In-Flux &
The Art of Education
Students' Biennale Conference**

Report on the Students' Biennale Education Conference

Pedagogical In-Flux and the Art of Education

21 & 22 March, 2019

Biennale Pavilion, Fort Kochi

This was the second Students' Biennale education conference organized by the Kochi Biennale Foundation and the Foundation for Indian Contemporary Art (FICA). The two-day conference had a large unpacking to undertake in such a short amount of time, compressing within its presentations not only global contexts of art education and knowledge production but also educators' and researchers' presentations to take stock of what had transpired in the workshops that had been conducted in art schools across India in the previous year under the aegis of the Students' Biennale's Expanded Education Programme (EEP).

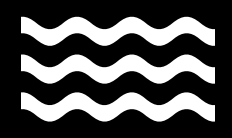
The conference was organized under three main panels: 1) Material/ Making 2) Site/City and 3) Technologies of Art. These panels were bookended by keynote address and presentation at the start and a round table session at the end.

The inaugural note by Bose Krishnamachari, Founder Member and President of the Kochi Biennale, gave a brief history of the Students' Biennale (SB) as an initiative which started with twelve art schools in the 2012 Biennale and its expansion and

further development over the subsequent editions. Deepika Sorabjee, who heads the Arts and Culture portfolio at Tata Trusts, and a long-time supporter of the Students' Biennale, gave a brief background of the circumstances which had led to the development of the EEP. She recalled the SB conference held in 2016 where one of the major concerns that emerged was the general apathy about pedagogy in the larger landscape of Indian art production. She called for deeper engagement with art institutions and initiation of practical programmes in art schools. She highlighted some of the key issues that needed to be addressed in art schools like the lack of trained faculty, the need for new teaching methods and the overhaul of the curriculum.

These concerns were carried onto an overview of the Students' Biennale and the EEP by Vidya Shivadas and Bhooma Padmanabhan. Vidya provided the conference with its background, tracing the developments in the Students' Biennale and the possibilities that the first two editions created for the setting up of EEP and the scope of the EEP 2018. Bhooma then spoke about the structural choices and logistical framework of the EEP workshops that had taken place from August through November, 2018, and outlined the use of a student-centred workshop model. She also presented a brief summary of the workshops and forms of research conducted by the team.





**Mick Wilson | Between a Rock and a Hard Place:
Higher Arts Education After the Global**

“After the Global’ does not signal a real epochal change rather a moment of redistribution of political rhetorics.”

Mick Wilson, a researcher-artist-educator from Europe, presented the state of higher arts education in the period “after the global.” The ‘after the global’ was seen as a response to the changing political rhetorics in the world with the emergence of “strongmen in politics” and the rise of ethno-nationalist rhetorics. He brought back the question of art education within the framework of the geo-political through his analysis of various examples like the film *Bitter Lake* (2015) by Adam Curtis which explores Euro-American cultural imperialism in Afghanistan; Elena Filipovic’s essay “The Global White Cube”; and a reading of national pavilions at Venice Biennale as a “20th century arrangement, miniature model of European imperial power and conflict of empires.” Using two photographs from the 1960s – the first Jacqueline Kennedy gifting the Children’s Art Carnival project, developed by Museum of Modern Art, New York, to Indira Gandhi at the Children’s Museum in Delhi; and second an image of Clement Greenberg delivering a lecture on ‘Two Decades of American Painting’ at Delhi – he made a case for cultural transmissions that were important signs of the relationship between the founding of modern art and geo-politics. He acknowledged shifts with exhibitions like *Magiciens de la Terre* (1989) and its rhetoric of multi-centered world, however within a Euro-centric fold. The question of relating the global to the local was explored through the format of the biennales of the 20th century. Citing the example of Ai Weiwei’s recreation of the image of the drowned Syrian child Alan Kurdi as “a child displaced by war was now displaced by Ai Weiwei”, he argued that it is “commonplace”

for contemporary artists to deal with the rhetoric of human rights as something to be thematised in an artist’s work.

Another example he gave was the Guggenheim in Abu Dhabi which is treated as an instance of strange internationalism that reveals the infrastructure of contemporary art system as positioned within geo-politics. From here he moved closer to the site of higher education stating that “There is a particular structuring in the inequality of global relations and this plays out not just in the register of real politics of state but also in the cultural politics of the



contemporary art system and it plays out in the politics of the reputational economies of higher art educational systems.” He observed that a new model of mobility came into being with the implementation of the Bologna Accord which set a common framework for higher education across Europe; and its extension to other parts of the world like the creation of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. Pointing towards the pattern of this particular paradigm – born out of Europe, with emphasis on quantifiable and comparable outcomes being imposed, standardised and exported – he returned the focus to the political backdrop against which this took place – the rise of populist ethno-nationalist sentiments in a number of European states led to the European Union doubling the funding of such initiatives.

Wilson went on to speaking about his book, co-edited with Paul O’Neill, titled *Curating and the Education Turn* (2010), where he observed that contemporary curating as well as the production of contemporary art was being pervasively marked by “educational formats, programmes, models, terms, processes and procedures.” The Bologna model of the practice of education as a form of art making was further analysed and the genealogy/ genealogies of this thinking of education as artistic process was unpacked by Wilson through a focus on initiatives like ASIKO, Lagos, RAW Academie, Dakar and other such transcultural and political initiatives from the South which step outside Eurocentric biases. He shared many more illustrations of projects and resources that were looking at the question of the geopolitics within the frame of art pedagogy, thus presenting a concrete case for a more defined focus on these questions in conferences on contemporary art and art education.



PRESENTATION

Shukla Sawant | Art Education Today: Practice as Intervention

Shukla Sawant’s presentation on the question of art education as a form of practice and as a form of intervention was made against the backdrop of Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi, where she teaches. Revisiting some unaddressed issues within the university - such as of caste, gender and politics – she set it against a background of terror and disruption that had been unleashed on the university and its student body from the outside. Within this context she argued that there is an urgent need to understand that universities were no longer the preserve of upper class, upper caste men, and that it had to be understood through the social vectors of caste discrimination and the place of women in Indian society. She acknowledged the success of various social justice measures within the university system, and shared her concerns about the undermining of these systems by the current administration. Shifting her focus to the increasing participation of women in education she pointed out that this stood in contrast with the glaring disparity between genders in the labour market.

After framing the initial arguments, she shifted to a historical reading by recalling John Clark’s triaparte scheme of how modernism unfolded in the Asian context through the agencies of the ‘aristocrat figure’, the ‘artisan figure’ and the certified ‘professional artist’ a product of art school and access to the salon. Identifying the educational transfer model of the institution (also in the context of Clark’s argument) as a British paradigm, she pointed out to the Indian artist’s loss of agency and imagination within this system, and the space of conflict that they operated within. Citing the examples of the colonial nature artist Gangaram Chintaman Tambat and the aristocratic Raja Ravi Verma, Sawant threw into relief the caste tensions that existed around the introduction of this new mode of knowledge transfer

through colonial art schools. She subjected Ravi Verma's painting *Shantanu Wooing, the Fisherwoman Satyavati* to readings and interpretations looking at it through the lens of class, caste, gender and epidermal register.

From here she shifted the focus to looking at historical figures who brought in the question of gender and caste into these colonial educational spaces. Starting with Mangala Bai, sister of Raja Ravi Varma, who assisted him, she pointed out that many others like her studied at these schools but did not have careers of their own. Importantly the women who entered these institutions before the medium of instruction was changed to English came from the artisan background. Next was the artist K. Venkatappa from Mysore, whose sculpture of Eklavya is an early example of engagement with the framework of caste. Sawant acknowledged how he himself was an Ekalavya-like figure, and how this character became a very important image in the representation of marginalisation of Dalits within the education system. Sawant also touched upon the figure of the working-class woman posing as a model for life study when it was introduced in the curriculum in 1919, before

speaking of stalwarts like Hansa Mehta who became the Vice Chancellor of a university post-independence and was instrumental in setting up the Maharaja Sayajirao University at Baroda and Nasreen Mohamedi, one of the earliest women to teach in a university and have a prolonged career as an artist. Sawant concluded by identifying the emergence of "hyper-masculine" artistic groups like the Progressives and Group 1890 in response to the increasing entry of women into the educational space of the university, and the need to further unpack the role of women within such a matrix as model and muse by male artists.

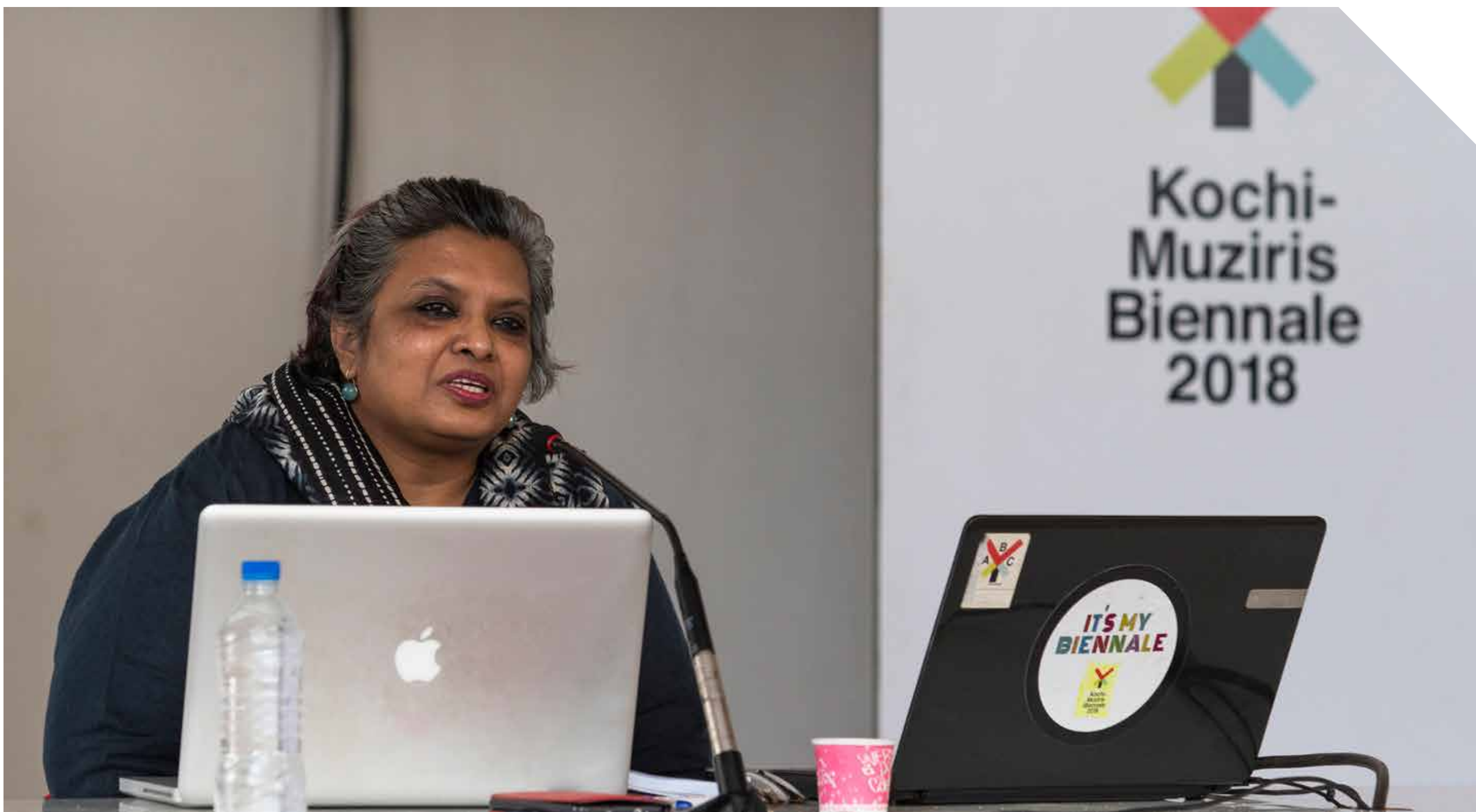


PANEL 1: MATERIAL/MAKING

The first panel addressed the urgent issues of material and making as cornerstones of re-negotiating the semantic and affective understanding of materials and their situation in art and art making and especially in the context of practice-based art pedagogy. This panel's discussions were moderated by Shukla Sawant.

Dr. Sarada Natarajan | Making Materiality Matter

Art historian Sarada Natarajan presented her thoughts and notes on the seven-day workshop she conducted at the B.K. College of Arts in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. Working with a group of 35 students from Bhubaneswar and Khallikote the workshop focused on sites around Odisha as ways to explore making and materiality from the point of view of a practice and theory. As a teacher of many years Natarajan's identified the lack of exposure to art history and theory as the greatest challenge to her art students. She asks, "What exactly is too much theory for a practitioner?" Sharing her teaching strategy of deliberately "contaminat(ing) whatever studio practitioners I work with as much theory as possible", she called for



a new imagination of art history as something relevant, significant and exciting for artists. She recalled her PhD research on Indian sculptural historiography as the starting point to her search for a reformulation of art history - "...what would the history of art, specifically Indian art, look like if it was rewritten as the history of making? So, what would happen to art history itself if it was recast, reformulated as history of making and why can't we look at it as a history of making...?"

Thus, the workshop had attempted to answer this question in multiple ways, by renewing the students' experiences of materiality, "of materials themselves, of making, of the body interacting with material, of processual flows, of forces that work on materials and material resistances that are kind of interacting with body's own forces." Natarajan then shared her notes on the processes and structural logic of her workshop. Inspired by readings of the anthropologist Tim Ingold's work, the first two days of basket weaving with two traditional basket weavers, were imagined as an undertaking in learning

a new skill, encountering a new material, and registering the sensations, the forces and the resistances offered by the material. It was to make the students aware of their thoughts on making and materiality, and learning forms of articulating their experiences. The second part of the workshop held at the 2nd century BE Udayagiri Caves combined the skills of detecting and logical reconstruction of the making of a familiar art historical site, shifting the focus away from a teleological model to a processual method of investigation. For the third part of the workshop she juxtaposed the text with the site - through the reading of the 13th century text *Baya Cakada*, a daily ledger of the construction of the Konark Temple, followed by a visit to the site itself. While not entirely satisfied with the results of her workshop, she realized that the workshop was not about the seven days but it as "something that is likely to percolate down and make a difference over many years."

Kausik Mukhopadhyay | Ways of Seeing the City

Held in Mumbai's JJ School of Art, Mukhopadhyay's workshop in collaboration with his colleague Sonal Sundarajan, focused on finding new ways of seeing the familiar city of Mumbai, and exploring new vocabularies to speak about the city. Mukhopadhyay shared notes on how he dedicated the first part of the workshop to encouraging the students to explore various pockets of the neighbourhood around their school, shifting their focus away from the 'academic' lessons they are focused on otherwise. He encouraged them to not only look at spaces, but also people, movement, flows, materials, sounds and smells, drawing them away from conventional materials. He discussed how he spent the next stage discussing their documentation and drawings of their sites, encouraging them to develop their ideas into a work. The focus was to produce a 'kinetic sculpture'. The projects that emerged included a monopoly-like boardgame of the Bhaucha Dakka fish market using clay sculptural forms, a moving shadow work inspired by the movement and forms at Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus; and a kinetic sculpture using actual garbage from the Chowpatty beach. The second part of his presentation was on how



he deploys similar modes of engagement with students in his school, the Kamla Raheja Vidyanidhi Institute for Architecture and Environment Studies, which he illustrated with further examples. The final part of his presentation shifted the focus to how these processes and exploration of material are an integral part of his own artistic process, and he shared a few examples of his recent works.



C.P. Krishnapriya | On curating Students' Biennale

Artist and curator C.P. Krishnapriya's paper focused on her experiences and modes of working with students in the last two editions of Students' Biennale, and the need to analyse the site of the classroom in most government run art schools in India. She argued that the classroom as a space for critical thinking remains in a questionable state as most schools, entangled in their legacies, colonial or otherwise, without any infrastructural changes, survival only in some ways through the dedication of extraordinary teachers who teach to register resistance against the system. By identifying the wide gap that exists in art education between the loud/competitive and the "fragile, not-so-loud and not competitive" due to glaring systemic inadequacies, she raised concerns of how these marginal voices are forever at risk of being silenced due to infrastructural lack as well as from the homogenising tendency of nation-building project. Krishnapriya thus makes a call for "critical vulnerability of viewing, analysing and observing."

"The imagined ideal classroom seems so far away. Is it still possible to reach out and redefine it? Is the intervention of the Students' Biennale helping facilitate conversations that are otherwise becoming more difficult to engage with? Can diversity be addressed to allow for more inclusive dialogues? Can production, consumption, engagement and the future of art be more accessible? Can art and art education be more about building autonomous communities and not just employment opportunities?"

From her experience of curating the last two Students' Biennales she pointed out that most students who participated came from rural backgrounds and from poorer urban spaces, a phenomenon of the legacy of colonial art schools with its foundations in industrial arts and emphasis on labour-intensive practice and production. Taking the example of Madras School of Art, she argued that despite its shifting focus, art as a professional choice for students coming from economically weaker backgrounds is still a "labour-based choice of work", where even "... choice functions within all the connotations of social hierarchies and privileges. Art from these schools is seen as labour work

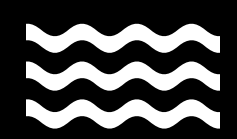
and is rarely linked to intellectual contributions....needs to be understood as opposed to the romantic notion of the institutions brewing artists free from economical, political and social constraints. Artists' desires and aspirations have not appeared but the question is where do they disappear?" She offered a critique of the strict division between disciplines, calling it limiting to students, with focus on the mechanical instead of the cerebral experience, and as inadequate means for the students to build emotional or social or political connections to the skills you have acquired. She highlighted the need for art education to take into serious consideration modes of critical thinking and experimental learning together with a reconsideration of medium and materials within a transdisciplinary understanding.

She then drew attention to her first SB curation around the central theme of labour and her work with students from Chennai and Kumbakonam. She spoke of how the institutional history of the Madras College of Art also became one of the driving forces in picking the theme while responding artistically to the institution's relationship with labour. The challenge was how the students coming from agricultural and craft-based labour dispensations could emotionally and creatively connect with the theme. She shared a visual presentation of how the works came together to form an archive of labour which was to be imagined as placed inside a locked-up museum at the Madras College of Art. The presentation then looked at the current edition of the Students' Biennale where she worked with students from the same institution as before along with students from the Bharatiyaar Palkalai Koodam College, Pondicherry, College of Fine Arts, Patna and Faculty of Fine Arts and Music, Kashmir, and how a common theme around violence was readily identified.

Krishnapriya's engagement with thinking about and responding to material also formed a new and experimental space for the students to work with new mediums and exhibit it for pure interaction. In this context she spoke of various works by students that dealt with themes of urban displacement and ghettoisation, the archive, images of body, material and identity, all through artistic expression using photography, video and

technology. She also spoke of how personal and social struggles as direct narratives emerged during the process of exhibition making, and how these along with attendant research and critical thinking became building blocks for the exercise. These important interventions in art education happened within what she called the 'alternate classroom model' where every experience was held relevant and open to questioning; knowledge embodied by each individual could be shaped for sharing and the knowledge of one's community could be recognised as having relevance without fear or prejudice. She concluded her presentation stating that the SB was not only an exhibition space but as the beginning of a growing community which needed to be further strengthened for the creation of a more inclusive and imaginative platform for presenting diversity.





PUBLIC PRESENTATION | THOMAS HIRSCHHORN

The Swiss artist Thomas Hirschhorn had been invited at the Biennale to conduct the workshop “Energy=Yes! Quality=No.” Through the month, Hirschhorn facilitated short workshops which were open to the public to register for. The participants were required to bring a contribution in the form of a song, a drawing, a painting, a tattoo, a movement. These contributions were then discussed as a group and judged on the basis of energy. If there is energy inside then it is a yes and if there is only quality inside then it is no. Around two hundred and fifty objects, songs and poems had been discussed and judged at the workshop. Energy was recognised by the artist as a more important and horizontal criteria - there could be bad, good, negative or positive energy; while quality was seen as a more exclusive and vertical criteria. As the conference was taking place at Hirschhorn’s workshop site at the Biennale Pavilion we felt it was only fitting to have his presentation within



the fold of the conference.

Hirschhorn showed photographs of his practice and explained his practice as being tools to encounter the world, to touch reality and to live in the present time. He spoke of the importance of materiality to his practice and how he only worked with simple materials that were utterly disposal. His choice of material was to include people. This publicness, he claimed was fundamental to his art practice. “..I think what was interesting in public space was the conflict and to challenge the value of art.”

He referred to his practice in public spaces as the presence and production as he wants people to be “present and producing.” This he differentiates from the practice of community art which also works in the public domain, and denied doing any community art, educational art or aesthetical relation art himself. He showed more works of his and discussed them at length.



PANEL 2: SITE/CITY

This session looked at how the environment of the student could provide not only thematic content but also become part of their artistic and critical practice. The session was moderated by Kaushik Bhaumik.

Sanchayan Ghosh | Site-specific Art and Pedagogy

Ghosh proposed that pedagogy is embedded in forms of engaged practice that are related to public spaces and that a site is a complex phenomenon that transcends its geographical or physical dimension to include “complex co-existence of multiple co-habitants and practices” operating under situations of continuity and transition. He calls for site-specific activities that are seen as as engagements with the nomadic and the close-range on a micro-level, and the observation of and participation in general lifestyle on a macro-level. “There is an inherent nomadism to the practice of site specificity, of becoming and disowning at the same time.”

If the site was engaged with in traditional art schools from the perspective of observation and interpretation, always approached from the outside as a “reference frame” to be “recollected and contemplated” within studio practice, he proposed the Santiniketan school as a model of art pedagogy that reversed this form of engagement with site. Here “...the model was not about representing the site but more about generating a transit point in relationship to a site”.

“..Santiniketan ... in a certain time frame has intended towards a kind of lived engagement with the location, trying to build a location or build a site and generate a site so that for me still remains as a kind of working model and to re-engage with it over and over again.”

As a pedagogical model Santiniketan was seen as a temporal space that hosted conversations between multiple cultures cohabiting that space in that time, facilitated in close contact with the local environment and landscape, and in a Tagorean pedagogic efforts, this was supported by other models such as workshops, collective making, expedition and travel to historical sites. He defined the Santiniketan model to be a “new urban phenomena that based its centre in indigeneity”, never generating site as an external intervention but as a model of co-working and living together where it intervenes into sites as lived experience in transit.

With this framework in place he discussed the collective project ‘Black House’ undertaken by students and faculty of Santiniketan with local practitioners from the tribal neighbourhoods which became an entry point for him into discussing the city not merely as a collection of cohabitants of diverse cultural and social backgrounds, but as “a living and practicing archive of diverse histories, of making that traverses history to multiple timelines of knowledge, technology and faith.” Here the site emerges as a pedagogical interface, which can be seen as a catalyst to the unfolding of one’s own individuality and situating oneself in the context of a “larger publicness.”

The reciprocal pedagogy of listening and learning that is inherent to a site is said to expand the field of art pedagogy into the discipline of applied anthropology as the subject of study becomes a ‘co-worker towards a collective dialogical exploration’ rather than the ‘other’. One of the projects which was undertaken by the students in Santiniketan involved exploring the landscape of a farmhouse started in 1980 as an experiment to develop alternative methods of farming and landscaping. This project was workshop based and the students explored the farming practices and tools involved as they lived at the site for seven days and interacted with local communities. They developed an understanding of the process through which many other projects emerged like the blog which documented the conversations and reflections of the students on the process.

The other part of the presentation dealt with the proceedings of the 2016 SB workshop at Vishakapatnam that Ghosh conducted, where the curator Noman Ammouri was attempting to build a conversation and create a working model with the students of displacement as a kind of engagement with site. He was interested in bringing together students from two different locations at one site; hence the workshop was constituted of students from an art college in Vizag and students from Santiniketan. A group which knew the city well were brought together with a group which had no prior context of the city. Some of the themes which were discussed during the workshop included site-specificity, plurality and recollection, the notion of intervention, analysis of site and creation of site-specificity out of locations based on historical environment, situation and performative factor. Fieldwork formed an integral part of the process as the students were taken on walks to different sites in the city as simultaneously they were looking at the constitutive elements of the walk. The workshop was structured in two phases, one was the visual interaction and physical engagement with the site, the other involved the displacement of the site-specific conversation to another “situation of architectural location or another new site.”

“Can the idea of site specificity have multiple lives in relationship to architectural and physical experiences because these transitional



Nicole Marroquin | Situated Practice

Artist-researcher-educator, Nicole Marroquin's presentation spanned her entire practice – from her current research into the Chicago School Uprisings of the 1970s, to her teaching practice that encompasses a broad spectrum of education levels (graduates, high schoolers to kindergartners) and her ongoing community work in Pilson area in Chicago. With a practice situated in a community she started working with the archive to build a toolbox of tactics and strategies for students inspired by the book *Beautiful Trouble*. The archive has thus emerged as a recent tactic in her art and pedagogic practice which allowed her students and the artist to access school yearbooks from the Chicago Board of Education archives in order to look at the demographic changes in the schools and also work on their own research agendas.

“How do we bring a work of art to life as though it were a classroom?” she asked prompted by her reading of Claire Bishop; which led her to developing and running a course called ‘Doing Democracy’. The class is focused on working on and in the site of Chicago digging deep into its radical histories of people fighting for desegregation and movements which were geared towards building utopias. This direct engagement with the city and its history of learning and teaching then gets pushed back into the curriculum which the presenter calls “emergent curriculum” as it is dependent on and responsive to the things that are happening on the site itself. Her form of community practice is anchored on the ethics of letting the envisioning be “led by those who feel the deepest impacts of systematic power imbalance; the driver of the conversation are the people who are most affected.”

Speaking of the overlaps in her practice as an artist, teacher and mediator she said, “The art making process is the research then translates into my teaching, the teaching can also be the art, the school can also become the artwork and so a lot of the research I am doing with the kids working with teenagers informs all the courses that I teach, it becomes the content. It is not

engagements are fragments and how this notion of displacement or removing things from the site works in the sense of original memory of experiencing it in the site and how a new situation is generated so this was also a challenge to unfold.”

The institutional space as the new site of public sphere of engagement with constantly changing community of practitioners was underscored by the Sanchayan as he pointed out that new institutional spaces held the potential to generate “new dynamic curriculum of working together and build up an integrated process and can energise the context of the individual and the collective.” However, he cautioned that this was in no way a call to transform the curriculum of existing institutions but was an invocation to generate a “parallel known system that could co-exist and generate an environment of critical multiplicity in an institutional space.”



as if I am teaching my artwork but I am teaching sort of the modes, we are creating frames that we can work into so that they can develop their frames to work [for] themselves in different communities where they are at.” She discussed some case studies that illustrated her forms of practice. On her role in these initiatives said “I feel like my contribution to the field is talking about the expertise of teens and children and be able to find the things that they do better than anybody else and to make that the work that we are doing.”

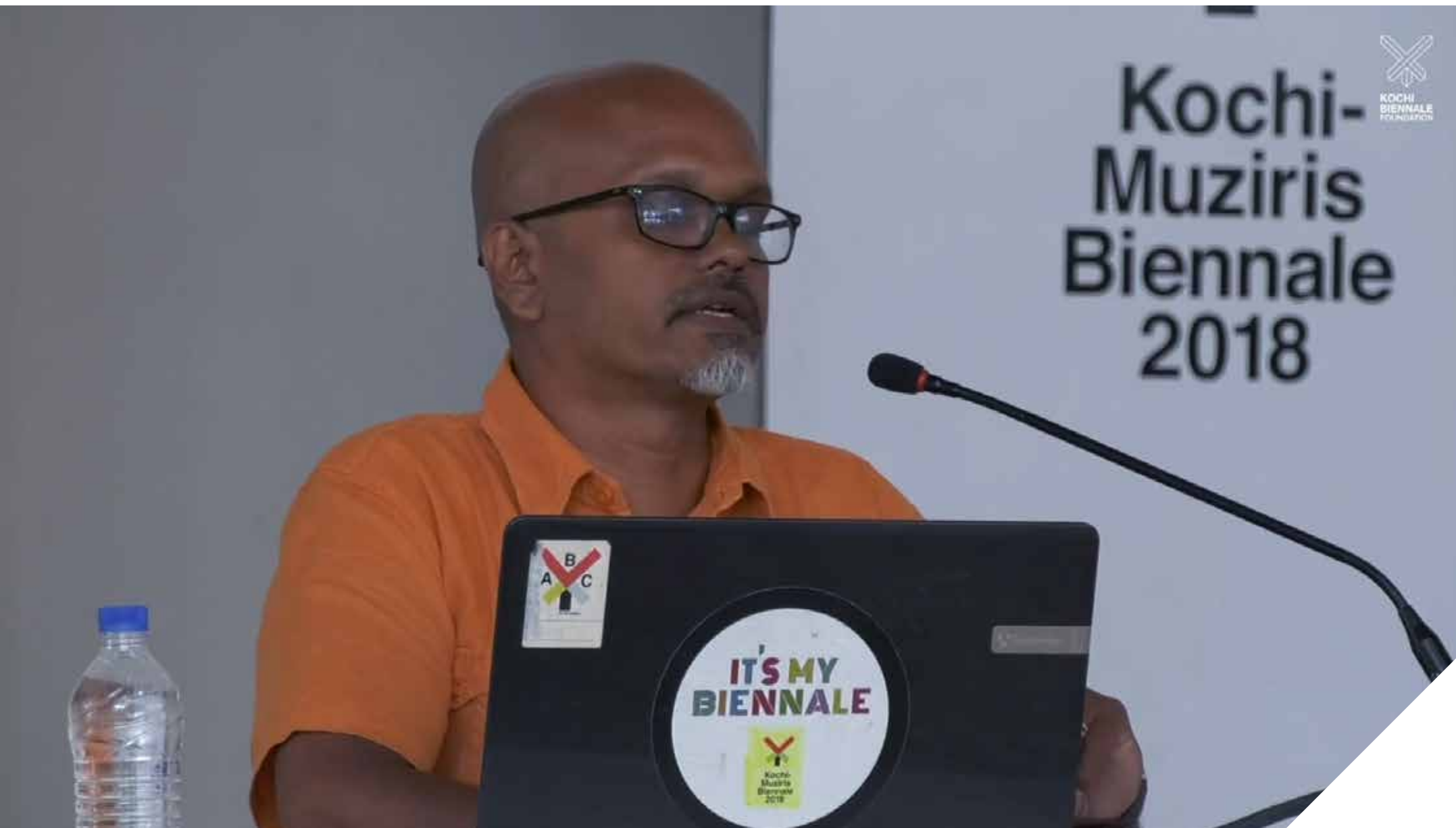
T. Sanathanan | City as artist’s studio

Sanathanan’s presentation on his EEP Chennai workshop included three components - 1) His personal story to contextualize his role in the whole project; 2) The earlier project which led to the Chennai workshop; 3) The argument on why the project is not about the production of art. His personal narration included his early education in a Sinhala medium school as a Tamil-speaking native, his move to Chennai for college, and then his next move to Delhi where his practice began in taking shape. This led him to ask

the important questions that led to his current vision for the workshop - on what it means to be an artist. How can you be committed to communities? How essential are the oral and visual histories in approaching and understanding larger social realities? How to archive? How to achieve equilibrium between personal interest and social responsibility as an artist? How to evolve art teaching and learning methods involving self-reflection, dialectical learning and critical thinking?

He then shared the turning point in his teaching career, when in 2011, the Asian Art Archive in Hong Kong sent a mobile library to Jaffna to the university where he worked. The mobile library soon became part of their curriculum and a site for his classes. When language was a barrier, the books became a source for visual learning, and his students soon began to respond to Asian art histories and produced works transcending conventional material, language and approach. His second iteration of this teaching around the archive led to his formulation of keywords, which he again deployed in the Chennai workshop. He shared how this was an organic process, that changed the students’ reading and understanding of artworks. As a professor at the University of Jaffna, these experiences also impacted his course, changing the curriculum through new theory-based requirements, introduction of fieldwork with local artisans and craftsmen, and finally through the introduction of an apprenticeship model for final year students.

He then shifted to how he envisioned the Chennai workshop as ‘memory works’ on various issues wherein memory, city and archive were approached as art making resources and art making was treated as a method of archiving. He emphasised how the critical dialogue with students on issues relating to their life after art school and discussions around the artist as a social category was analyzed through the lens of class, caste, gender, sexuality, religion and ethnicity. Looking at how own students who have graduated with an arts degree he observed how “...we don’t prepare them to face with (life). They have some skills, they paint they draw and they can talk about their own work



**Kate Daw and David Sequeira | Victoria College of Art,
University of Melbourne**

The duo's presentation on the studio model of art education and the attendant challenges and outcomes of this pedagogical model of artists teaching students to become artists, called for a re-examination of studio practice in contemporary pedagogy. They called for a perspective on how this can be understood as a way to bring the elements of the external world into the internal mechanisms of daily teaching. They premised their argument on two points – firstly, on how studio fosters an independence of spirit, self-reliance and maturity. The studio here is about taking responsibility for their own actions and developing dialogue around their capacity at the critical age in their lives; and secondly, it fosters a practice around the idea of “learning through making and making through thinking.” They further unpacked their school's structure of working with two curriculums - the studio-based curriculum and the incidental curriculum- and the symbiotic

but they don't know how to situate it in a kind of a larger society...” Sanathanan set the tone of his workshop as a direct challenge to and disruption of the dominant structuring principle of the government art colleges which does not want to engage with politics or the social. Thus the idea of art as a political act, art as ideology, directly spoke to its students. He shared the educators' notes on the workshop and the idea behind the various resource persons he invited for the 'memory works'. The various site-visits brought to the fore issues like the city as a consuming force which devours culture, heritage and village. Each walk also complicated the definition of a city as we know it. Sanathanan ended his presentation by presenting the kinds of keywords that emerged from the Chennai workshop and how this itself was a significant shift in the practice of the students, allowing them to think in ways the art colleges don't accommodate within their structures.



relationship that exists between them. Their school's location away from the main campus was also cited as a key reason for the logic of this model.

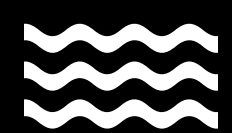
Sequiera, director of the Margaret Lawrence Gallery located at the school, further explained the existence of an official and an incidental curriculum at the school as way to counter the paradigm of the establishment with its dominantly Eurocentric and white vision. He shared how discussion on the history of indigenous art practices was initiated through the inclusion of a work by an indigenous artist during an exhibition marking the 150th anniversary of the institution which marked a shift into how the so-called masters would be henceforth perceived. He posed an argument for exhibition making as a way to challenge and subvert institutional structures, "... to present an exhibition like this as a way of righting something that's wrong or addressing a historical imbalance would be to only half see our work's possibilities."

Daw brought the focus back to the studio space as both private and communal spaces, with a "pedagogy (that) is largely self-guided with an expectation that the students will develop their own subject matter, material knowledge and conceptual thinking." She also spoke of the critical and theoretical studies programme they run by artists rather than critics or writers, keeping in line with the heavily artist-oriented focus of the art school. She explained how the incidental curriculum is based upon the curatorial practices undertaken at the gallery space as well as through the curated programme 'Art Forum' where weekly talks are delivered by artists and curators to the students. During such talks the students receive not just knowledge about current practices but they are given insider information on the business of art and the challenges posed in translating a conceptual framework for the audience. She concluded by emphasising the possibilities of an incidental curriculum, and its possibilities to "generate a space....for our students to step up into. We generate a space for conversation."

Anita Dube | Curator, Kochi Muziris Biennale 2018

Addressing the conference, the curator of the Kochi Biennale 2018, Anita Dube brought to the fore her thoughts on the need of the Students' Biennale to go beyond the exhibition model and to re-imagine practice for young people. Sitting in the Biennale Pavillion she brought the participants focus back to this space as a curated framework for open dialogue, and called for the creation of "a knowledge lab" for students to have critical discussions and learnings. She then shared how the Pavillion allowed for all kinds of productions and participations, and reflected on the types of works that the pavilion has provoked so far being determined by its architecture. She then pushed the 'conference audience' to reimagine an education space as a social bar - a self-governed and self-organised space, where young people fresh out of college could work in and educate themselves at the same time. She spoke of how we need to think of ways to counter both visible and invisible forms of repression in our society, to radically alter the normative, which stands in the way of thinking freely. She called for a shift "towards pedagogy as a very pleasurable thing, this is something that I am enormously concerned with because I really think that without pleasure if we are trying to affect people it doesn't work."





PANEL 3: TECHNOLOGIES OF ART

The structuring principle of the panel was based on the need to move beyond technological thinking and to re-orient art practice towards a more nuanced and poetic conception of technology and discover technology implicit in art, distinct from science. The panel was moderated by Bhooma Padmanabhan.

Rangoato Hlasane | Original Time Travelling: The Primacy of Oral and Oral Technologies in Knowledge Production and Disseminations

Rangoato Hlasane's presentation aimed to look at the recurrence and persistence of the sonic, particularly the oral in the form of the radio as a technological object that also emits other forms of technologies and imagined it in terms of its ability to move, to traverse and transplant. He positioned the radio as technology which celebrates the oral and the oral imaginations, implicitly linked to knowledge production and dissemination. His presentation was modelled on the notion of a multi-level time travel, five levels of time travel to be precise –

» The first time travel took place along the plane that considered the radio not as waves but “ripples of narratives.” Citing the example of the South African radio station Radio Bantu conceived by the Apartheid State as a sonic and oral tactic of divisions across race, class and ethnicity, he reveals how the covert intentions of the state were subverted by the untrained broadcasters by including literature in indigenous languages and radio dramas in the broadcasts. “Its aesthetic strength to make one imagine other worlds meant that it was a tool to escape censorship.” He takes a tour here to the 1970s's African National Congress (ANC) underground movement called Radio Freedom, and back to the present with Keleketla! Library project which was co-founded by him in 2011. Based in Johannesburg their projects were directed towards thinking about the power of radio as “something that rethinks oral histories of a particular time in another time”

but also thinking about the social media today and the “dominance and particularly the dangerous dominance of information technology but also the agencies that we have in feeding this particular information technologies.” This slowing of time – to research together, construct, write script, record...etc - he poses as the broken aesthetic towards remembering where we are and why we need to do these acts.

- » The second time travel titled “If Songs are Voice Notes Please don't let Me be Misunderstood” involved a temporal shift to the South Africa of the 1970s when South African pianist and composer Abdullah Ibrahim's recording ‘Mannenburg’ was embraced as the sound of freedom by the people and became an unofficial national anthem of sorts. Rangoato pointed out the power of collective memory which was instrumental at that moment in time to escape censorship as “people could perform it together and challenge the narratives that were being shared.”
- » The third time travel was a reflection on the workshop he conducted at Ambedkar University, as part of Students' Biennale. “The rationale for this workshop was to think about how family trees and the inherent knowledge preservation also carry with them particular hegemonic toxicities that allows for interruption when brought into a collective space but also when placed as a centre for study as an object of study.” Thus, the “making sonic that which is written” is seen as a disruptive process that questions written, official and sacred knowledge through listening and reflecting in a communal space, and the whole process viewed through the framework of collective narratives.
- » In the fourth time travel titled “If the camera speaks English whose Voice is this?” Rangoato engaged with the question of technologies and the language they speak. Through a discussion of a particular scene from the film *Blue Notes for Bra' Geoff* (2015) by South African filmmaker Aryan Kaganof and a homemade YouTube video of an elderly grandmother reciting a praise poem he brought into focus the behaviour of people

around technologies such as the camera and how it is necessary to make technologies like the camera speak “our languages” so as to decolonise technology and the mind.

- » After the fast paced time travel into the four realms the last one involved slowing down time as the print technology in a time of social media was examined. The discussion centred around the Cape Town based journal of arts and politics, *The Chimurenga Chronic*, a project developed to intervene into and question the newspaper form as a medium of knowledge production and dissemination in 2011. He ended his presentation with a call for slowing time and thinking about technology and collective forms of making as resistances against neoliberal or capitalist times of absolute consumption as engendered in ventures like the Jo Hazardous Pirate Radio, a Pan African Space Station (PASS) founded in 2008 by Chimurenga.

Santhosh Sadanandan | Teaching Machines: Ruminations on Technical Mentalities

Santhosh Sadanandan began by delimiting the definition of technology in the “widest epistemological sense or affective sense”, while calling for the re-reading Joseph Beuys’ 1973 lecture as not only a call to redefine creativity but also to “reinvigorate the pedagogy as well as pedagogic functions of art”. He proposed that in the context of pedagogic thinking, movements such as conceptual art, performance art, the so-called new media art, may be considered as laboratories of a new pedagogy, since all these and other movements, research and experiments have replaced form as a guiding force. Keeping in mind propositions from Jacques Derrida’s *Margins of Philosophy* (1972) and M.S.S. Pandian’s essay ‘One Step outside Modernity’, he spoke of the need to discover “models of reform” from outside and from within the discipline, which bring attention to the function of education in a socially stratified world.

“The essential point of modern social science or modern social analysis of

education is that education is a device of power and control whose chief purpose is to reproduce the dominant values of society and to legitimise the authority of the state. The difference between the current assessment and early and mid- twentieth century views is that the association of education with state power and its advocacy of the ideas of universalism and nationalism are now perceived as a problem rather than an objective.”

He argued that the most important aspect of pedagogic communication was not the message but the medium itself, understood in the larger sense as the “scene of teaching” in the environment of the university. In his capacity as an educator who has been in charge of the curriculum at Ambedkar University Delhi and as an EEP workshop facilitator, one central concern has been the new methodology of instruction needs to be shifted from a verbal discourse of purely intellectual, distanced, neutralised, transmission of information to a “paradoxical technique of affective knowledge”.

Santhosh then presented his EEP workshop titled ‘Technologies of/and Art’ at Sree Sankaracharya University at Kalady, and spoke of his role as an “agent provocateur” showcasing parallels of “counter-institutional thinking” from western art history and philosophical schools and “histories of subaltern public making within the history of modern Kerala.” The thrust of the workshop he emphasised was in the creation of “lived relations” within a pedagogical space. The objective of the workshop was to identify the complex nature of knowledge production within the matrix of power relations, while also recognising instances of vernacular knowledge production through Malayalam poetry, stories and anecdotes from social histories of Kerala. The workshop model as a site of pedagogical communication was described as being a deconstructive mode of knowledge transmission.

One of the structuring principles of the workshop was the concept of “localising knowledges” which were activated through discussions on certain radical incidents from western art history (the inauguration of ready-mades by Duchamp) and cultural history of Kerala (two acts of consecrations by 19th century subaltern radical social and spiritual reformer Shri Narayana Guru),

while drawing parallels between them. He spoke of the “need to cultivate a vernacular knowledge tradition” where the seemingly disparate and seemingly parallel will be able to connect themselves with their own cultural past, thereby reconfiguring their own subjectivity in a more radical way.

Santhosh spoke about the term technology which was deployed in the workshop to trace aspects of the Heideggerian *techne* and *poiesis* on one hand and technologies of self-making on the other hand, through the examination of concepts like temporality, spatiality, subjectivity, instrumental rationality, common sense, reification of aura, sensorial deprivation and phantasmagoria. “These initiatives around the question of technology was an attempt to look at the possibilities of engaging with the affective dimensions of technical mentality within the context of artistic pedagogy or the pedagogy of art.” The paper was directed towards the conceptual recovery of “craft thinking practice against the dominant mode of categorical thought.” Santhosh further recognized two schema of universal technological

intelligibility in the form of the Cartesian mechanism and Cybernetics theory. The Cartesian mechanism is seen as analogous to the functioning of a logical thought as in a simple machine of “transfer without losses” while the Cybernetics is seen as a more adaptive process of information relay. “Keeping in mind this dogmatic or dominant cognitive dimension of technology the way we structure or restructure pedagogy we have to keep in mind the necessity to reconfigure the modernist notion of the artist figure and all the figuration as such. The question of craft or *techne* need to be thought more in terms of its cognitive and affective potentials.”

The major challenge facing art pedagogy in relation to technology according to Santhosh is the need to look beyond the mimetic and repetitive mode of production or the reduction of craft to a stylistic category of nationhood and to resist the deployment of cybernetics or automative technology in an instrumental way. “The shift in the paradigm of education which I am investigating maybe summarized as a shift away from the exclusive domination of mind, intellect or verbal discourse to a mode that includes body, desire and the will to knowledge, a shift with important implications for instructional method.”



B.V. Suresh | “Studio in a Classroom: Classroom in a Studio”

The artist-educator began by recollecting his own formative training at Ken School of Art, a small studio-cum-institution in Bengaluru before progressing to a more formal structure of the MS University of Baroda. He spoke of the integral nature of studios to the Indian art education system and of his own experience of working with a studio-based art pedagogy. He then identified the shift that occurs at the postgraduate level, with highly specialised orientation, outstation students and campus life, that result in a sense of alienation for both students and teachers.

Recognising two modes of knowledge reception among students, short-term and provisional, of being “carried away” by something new and exciting; and more the long-term and indelible mode of “preoccupation”. He expressed his weariness with modes of pedagogy that sought to modify curriculum through short-term interventions, and pointed that these short-term introductions

could be seen as “ruptures” to a sustained practice. He illustrated this further by sharing examples of such preoccupation from the evolving practices of his own students.

He then shifted to speak of the kind of interventions and experiments which were being introduced into the practices of the students which looked at art making beyond the studio and at collective practices as a strategic move away from the “narcissistic” and “heroic” practice which sees the artist as an individual creator, and the creator of work as embodied with divine or sacred connotation. He spoke of how he encourages his students to go back in time “make(ing) use of their own material, their own creation as a material rather than a body of work” – a recycling process – as a way of taking away this divine element of creation, and also as a way for them to form critical and dialogical readings of their own practice. He argued that this kind of practice is not taught within traditional art school’s curriculums where the material comes to be predefined (watercolours, woodcarving, lithography etc.), and how this kind of reimagining can allow for the reading of material as technologies, and allow students to identify materials based on how well the materials speak for them. Following this proposition, he shared some works by his students, while describing their process, overall practice, subject matter, technology, tool and language.

The second part of his presentation was focused on the EEP workshops which he facilitated along with composer, lecturer and educator Dr. Igal Myrtenbaum. He spoke of the kind of visual-sound collaboration that they undertook, and how the question of technology was addressed as interactive and as complementary to artistic imagination - “technology would assist or accommodate their preoccupation, their interest, their knowledge, their sensibility, rather than getting carried away with technology.” He then discussed works that were produced by the students around the question of technology, and how the workshop helped connect the dots between forms of learning in technology and the liberal arts. He also spoke of current developments within his school following this workshop, and shared his hopes of such interventions “actually changing the dimensions in academic practice.”



Round Table
Conducted by Mick Wilson and Shukla Sawant
31 Participants

The concluding round table was seen as a time to reflect on the last two days and to identify certain issues and questions for more in depth discussions. The interactive session allowed various participants and also audience members to discuss the topics that had emerged in the last two days. Taking from the last session the discussion began with the question of technology and pedagogy especially given the conditions of art schools which were often impoverished. The role of the educator as a technician in terms of methods of teaching and methods of engagement was also brought up. The teaching of art and the many roles it encompasses was explored through a framework which saw this space as a moving field rather than a fixed one as the educator moves between the roles of an artist and a mentor. There were further deliberations on technology which dealt with the question of bad versus good technology and how to frame a space for the disruption of these technologies. One such space of disruption was the shift of focus from the high-tech to the cost effective low-tech interventions.

The role of art educators was further brought into consideration as the question of what happens to students when they pass out of art schools came up. The possibilities for artists have exploded with time as many more things are possible than just tradition art production, thus the introduction of media into the academic arena would provide students with good exposure to opportunities they will be able to pursue once they move out of the institution. The discussion on art pedagogy and technology was further opened up with the introduction of the concept of open space technology by one of the participants. This concept is based on a dialogic process which places artists, curators and technicians on a flat plane of co-ownership.

Art as pedagogy was put on the round table for discussion especially in the context of Indian educational system. The presence of inspiring artist pedagogues in the older generation of artists like Gulammohammed Sheikh

was mentioned and the question was put up if there are newer generation of such figures in the art educational landscape. This brought up a kind of stock-taking exercise as the institutional history of art schools from pre-independence to post-independence was investigated. The fact emerged that the position of the artist pedagogue is very much a “self-proclaimed” position and there are no specific training courses, institutions or policies that address this issue. The role of artists in art pedagogy was initiated after this discussion along with the “affective methodology” employed by artists in guiding students through the process of understanding and complicating making and materiality. The key questions that emerged at this juncture were the ones related to defining affect and translating this affect into skill in the classroom.

This point was further investigated as the question emerged whether it is possible to reduce one’s entire pedagogical experience to the figure of one great artist or one great figure. Learning as a never-ending process was underscored in the discussion as different people and experiences were said to inspire and teach a person during a lifetime rather than just one great artist or individual. From the artist in art pedagogy the discussion moved to



the how student protests influence and shape art pedagogy. Specific cases from South Africa, the US and India were discussed for instance the 1976 protest by high school students against the imposition of Afrikaans that had a huge impact on artistic practices in South Africa and the 2015 call by high schoolers for free quality decolonial education saw the production of a lot of downloadable zines on the movement, reflective memoirs and books and free newspapers.

There was also mention of the more recent wave of student protests against lack of infrastructure, outdated teaching practices that was being witnessed across Indian universities. In the case of Madras College these protests were layered with caste issues and the protest that took place in 2017 had strong caste politics embedded in it. The caste dimension in student protests brought the discussion around to the Rohith Vemula movement where the suicide of Rohith Vemula at the University of Hyderabad in 2016 brought the issue of caste in education to the forefront and prompted protests from students all over India and the university. The movement had also witnessed large scale mobilisation of art and visual culture which played a crucial role in taking the movement to the national and global level.

The round table concluded with these remarks that reflected on art education in the time of protest and how this could turn into a generative moment for the students.



Mick Wilson is an artist, educator and researcher. He has been Professor of Art at Gothenburg University, Sweden; and is currently Fellow at BAK, basis voor actuele kunst, Utrecht, the Netherlands (2018/2019). He was previously head of Valand Academy (2012-2018) and founder Dean of the GradCAM, Ireland (2008-2012). Co-edited volumes include (with Paul O'Neill *et al.*) *Curating and the Educational Turn* (2010); *Curating and Research* (2014); *The Curatorial Conundrum* (2016); *How Institutions Think* (2017); (with S.v.Ruten) *SHARE Handbook on Artistic Research Education* (2013); and (with G. Zachia *et al.*) *Public Enquiries: PARK LEK and the Scandinavian Social Turn* (2018). He is active in the project teams working on the journal and conference platform *PARSE* (<https://metapar.se/journal/>); the art research network *EARN* (<http://www.artresearch.eu/>); and the online publishing platform *L'Internationale Online* (<https://www.internationaleonline.org>).

Shukla Sawant is a visual artist and Professor of Visual Studies, School of Arts and Aesthetics, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi where she has taught since 2001. She is also currently visiting faculty at the Bhau Daji Lad Museum, Mumbai. Prior to joining JNU, Shukla Sawant taught for twelve years at the Department of Fine Arts and Art Education Jamia Millia Islamia New Delhi. After graduating in painting from the College of Art, New Delhi she specialised in printmaking at the École Nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris and later went to the Slade School of Art and Center for Theoretical Studies, London on a Commonwealth grant. Her research interests include Modern and Contemporary Art, Art in Colonial India, Photography, Printmaking and New Media. She was part of the curatorial team for Student' Biennale 2018.

Sanchayan Ghosh received his Masters in Fine Arts from Kala Bhavan,

Santiniketan in 1997 and currently works as an Associate Professor, Department of Painting, Kala Bhavan, Visva Bharati University, Santiniketan. Over the years, Sanchayan has been interested in site-specific art and has done extensive work in space designing for experimental and contemporary theatre. He is part of the curatorial team for the Student' Biennale 2018

Krishnapriya C P is a practicing visual artist based in Chennai. She completed her Masters from the Govt. College of Fine Arts, Chennai. Her work is multidisciplinary in nature; she uses paintings, drawings, collage, found objects and sculptural installations to engage with her concerns. She is part of the curatorial team for the Student' Biennale 2018 and was also one of the curators of Students' Biennale 2016. She was awarded Tata Trusts Students' Biennale International Award for Curation, 2016-17. She was a resident artist at University of Pennsylvania, 2017, sponsored by the South Asia Centre, UPenn.

Nicole Marroquin is an interdisciplinary artist, researcher and teacher educator whose current research looks at Chicago school uprisings between 1967 and 1974. She has recently been an artist in-residence at the Chicago Cultural Center, with the Propeller Fund at Mana Contemporary, at Watershed, Ragdale, ACRE and Oxbow. In 2017 she presented her art and research at the Hull House Museum, Northwestern University and the Museum of Contemporary Art. In 2015, Marroquin was invited to present research at the University of Chicago in conjunction with the exhibit *The City Lost and Found: Capturing New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles, 1960-1980* and at the Art Institute of Chicago for the symposium *The Wall of Respect and People's Art Since 1967*. She received an MFA from the University of Michigan in 2008 and she is Associate Professor in the Department of Art Education at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

Kate Daw is an artist and educator based in Melbourne. Her visual art practice explores issues of authorship, narrative and creative processes and moves between the domestic and the social, the everyday and the imagined. Kate has degrees from the VCA, Glasgow School of Art, RMIT University and completed her PhD at the University of Melbourne in 2006. She is currently Head of Painting at the VCA. Kate has been Chair of the Creation Panel (New Work) at Arts Victoria and a Board Member of the Australia Council Visual Arts Board. She is a recipient of a 2008 State Library of Victoria Creative Fellowship, and (with Stewart Russell) completed the inaugural Basil Sellers Fellowship residency at the MCG.

Dr David Sequeira is Director, Margaret Lawrence Gallery, Victorian College of the Arts, University of Melbourne. Much of Dr Sequeira's research has focused on the use of colour and geometry in the creation of contemplative experiences for viewers. Dr Sequeira has exhibited his work extensively throughout Australia and his work is held in important public collections including the National Gallery of Australia. He is recipient of several residencies and awards including the Australia Council for the Arts studio residency in Paris, the Collex Museum of Contemporary Art acquisitive prize, Artist in residence at the University of Texas, Dallas and the Wyndham Art Prize. Prior to his current role as Director Margaret Lawrence Gallery, Dr Sequeira has held senior positions in a range of public cultural institutions including the National Gallery of Australia, the National Portrait Gallery and Old Parliament House, Canberra.

Born in Lucknow in 1958, **Anita Dube** completed her BA (History) from Delhi University in 1979 and her MVA (Art Criticism) from the Faculty of Fine Arts, Maharaja Sayajirao University, Baroda in 1982. As a member of Radical Painters and Sculptors Association she wrote the manifesto of the seminal exhibition 'Questions and Dialogue' in 1987. Dube is the co-founder and board member of KHOJ International Artists' Association. She has contributed texts to many publications on contemporary art. Her works are in the collection of the Tate Modern, London; Kiran Nadar Museum of Art, New Delhi; and the Devi Art Foundation, Gurgaon, among others. She is curator of the Kochi Muziris Biennale

2018 titled *Possibilities for a Non-alienated Life*.

Thomas Hirschhorn was born in 1957 in Bern (Switzerland). He studied at the Kunstgewerbeschule Zürich from 1978 to 1983 and moved to Paris in 1983, where he has been living since. His work is shown in numerous museums, galleries and exhibitions. With each exhibition in museums, galleries and alternative spaces, or with his works in public space, Thomas Hirschhorn asserts his commitment toward a non-exclusive public.

Please note the bios of educators and researchers who spoke are already covered in the workshop reports

Additional Workshops held under aegis of Students' Biennale 2018

Apart from the workshops held under the Expanded Education Programme, additional workshops were organised by Students' Biennale curators as part of their process to engage with students and develop their projects for the exhibition. Alongside the U.S. Consulate General, Chennai supported a series of workshops in March 2019 in Kochi while the Biennale was ongoing.

Please find below some information on these workshops conducted:

Workshops organised by Students' Biennale Curators

Workshops by CP Krishnapriya

Srinagar, September 18 - Oct 2, 2018

Chennai, October 6 - 9, 2018

C P Krishnapriya's curatorial process was mediated through workshops that aimed at creating a space within which students could work. She spent two weeks in Srinagar looking at the works of students, engaging in intense group and individual discussions. Together, they put together a small exhibition in their classrooms. Students were asked to bring images of their paintings, drawings, photographs or newspaper cuttings/images that they were interested in, attempting to try and build connections between these different images within the physical space of the classroom.

In Chennai Krishnapriya carried out a similar process to

gauge what the students were thinking about and their daily practice. Her attempt was also to acknowledge the personal experiences of students outside of the academic institution. The workshops aimed at helping students navigate through their concerns and engage with their realities in a manner where they were not solely talking about something that is distant - broader problems of the world, such as global warming, for instance - but things that are more accessible to them. Krishnapriya worked with students to familiarise them with research methodologies to develop their projects around the practice of mapping.

Workshop at Ceramics Triennale, Jaipur

Conducted by KP Reji

Jaipur, October 16 - 18, 2018

KP Reji organised visits to the Ceramics Triennale in Jaipur with selected students from Pune, particularly those who were working with ceramics, to help them understand the possibilities of using materials and introduce them to a range of exciting contemporary experiments with the medium. The Ceramics Biennale turned into a live site for students to explore diverse practices apart from having discussions with the artists and curators.

Politics of Representation in a Time of Resistance with specific reference to the context of the Local

Conducted by Sanchayan Ghosh and Archana Hande

Imphal, October 15 - 27, 2018

Sanchayan Ghosh pointed out that many of the students'



proposals aspired to develop works that were not directly part of their current academic curriculum. He turned to workshops as well as smaller interactive sessions to initiate students into, and introduce them to those methods of making. He facilitated these workshops together with artist Archana Hande and in collaboration with R&V Art House. The workshop focused on the politics of representation in the time of resistance, as well as ways of re-engaging with the city. Local experts were invited from fields of practice other than the visual arts, including theatre activist Lokendra Arambram and dancer Nongmeikapam Surjit.

City as Studio

Conducted by KP Reji

Visakhapatnam, October 29 - 30, 2018

Reji worked together with the students at the Department of Fine Arts, Andhra University, to reflect on the city as studio. His workshop explored the materiality and histories of the city of Visakhapatnam. The workshop resulted in the group project, *Vizag - The City of Destiny*, that was exhibited at the Students' Biennale exhibition.

Working with Leather

Conducted by KP Reji, Chinna Ramana and Jagannath

Hyderabad, November 1 - 4, 2018

This workshop around the art and history of leather was organised by KP Reji and facilitated by Chinna Ramana and Jagannath, local artisans who work with leather puppets.

They spent time in the college studios demonstrating their craftsmanship and interacting with the students. The workshop concluded with a leather puppetry performance known as Tholu Bommalata.



Technologies of the Self: The Body and the Question of Labour

Conducted by MP Nishad and Santosh Sadanandan
Bangalore, November 2 - 4, 2018

This workshop was titled *Technologies of the Self: The Body and the Question of Labour*, and was led by Santosh Sadanandan and MP Nishad. It attempted to engage students with questions of media in art and the technological dimensions of these mediations. The workshop tried to bring in to focus the concept of the body in art, the role of skill and labour in artistic production, and the functional modalities of artistic practices under the regimes of capitalist economy.

Workshop on Proposal Development

Conducted by Shukla Sawant
New Delhi, November 9, 2018

Shukla Sawant's workshop with selected students was aimed at developing their proposed projects towards the Students' Biennale exhibition. Curators who had been involved in the programme in previous years were also able to discuss with students the practical and material aspects of exhibiting in Kochi. The workshop also acted as a space for peer exchange between the student-artists.

Workshops Organised by U.S Consulate General, Chennai in Kochi, March 2019

Art History for Artists

Conducted by Amelia Rauser
Biennale Pavilion, Kochi
March 1, 2019

This workshop was open to all and was led by art historian Amelia Rauser. The workshop included two components: a brief art historical survey, and a practice-based session looking at historical artworks. Artists often approach the history of art looking for motifs they can draw upon in their own art. But the ideas behind the styles are also important for artists today who wish to situate themselves in relation to the past. The participants explored case studies of actual dialogues between artistic practices and styles in particularly Western art history. The workshop also considered exchanges in artistic ideas between cultures. The final session consisted of sketching exercises and group discussions with the participants.

Introduction to Typography

Roopali Kamboo
Sacred Heart College, Kochi
March 11, 2019

This introductory workshop on typography was led by Roopali Kamboo and open to students from all departments. The workshop comprised a brief survey of typographic

practices, especially of Indic scripts, as well as a practical component of font design.

The participants examined various type design practices within their cultural and technological contexts, considering the various local and global influences in design choices. Besides this social and historical perspective, the workshop also took students through an aesthetic inquiry of scripts, exploring them as visual and generative elements. Additionally, the workshop also considered the advent of the digital, and the possibilities and challenges for non-Latin languages on the Internet. Students were also encouraged to think about font design through practical drawing and digital exercises.



Building a Portfolio

Roopali Kamboo

Sacred Heart College, Kochi

March 12, 2019

This practical workshop was open to art and design students and was led by Roopali Kamboo. The workshop introduced participants to simple best practices that would help organise and communicate their works.

The transition from print or physical artworks to their digital representation is fraught. The latter circulates quicker than the former, and opportunities arise for many young artists based on these representations. The workshop emphasised the requirement of portfolios not simply to present a list, but to engage and focus the viewer. Students were asked to think about both standard and customised portfolios. Considering the variety of viewing devices, participants were also taken through options for size and format of digital files. Introductory principles for the use of industry standard software were also shared.

Higher Education Workshop

Sacred Heart College, Kochi

March 12, 2019

The EducationUSA workshop explored opportunities for higher education in Fine Arts and related subjects in the United States, which is home to six out of the top ten ranked art institutions in the world. Workshop content included an

overview of American higher education, the variety of educational and art education institutions and offerings in the USA, various degrees, and other useful information.

The speaker emphasised that applicants must verify the accreditation status of the schools, including through online verification methods and consultation with the US India Educational Foundation's EducationUSA offices. The workshop explored the structure of US undergraduate and graduate programs and application requirements, including the importance of portfolio building. English language proficiency tests are generally required for all courses. Finally, a list of publications, financial aid resources, and online art program information was shared, including contact information for students and faculty seeking more information about study, research, and exchanges in the United States: usief.org.in or WhatsApp: +91 950 008-4773.

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Education Partners

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Institut Francais India
The Alkazi Foundation for the Arts
U.S. Consulate in India

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Archana Hande
Mansi Bhatt
K P Reji
Sangeeta Jwala
Mesha Murali
Irshad Alam Khubi
Arati Jainman

Kartikeya Jain
Mahesh and Sandeep, members of Khirkee 17
Sarover Zaidi and the team of Saiyidain Manzil

Workshop Host Institutions

- * Department of Fine Arts, SN School of Arts and Communication, Hyderabad, Telangana
- * Surat School of Fine Arts and the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, Veer Narmad South Gujarat University, Surat, Gujarat
- * Sir. JJ School of Arts, Mumbai, Maharashtra
- * BK College of Arts and Crafts, Bhubaneswar, Odisha
- * Faculty of Arts, Sree Sankaracharya University, Kalady, Kerala
- * Faculty of Fine Arts, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi
- * School of Culture & Creative Expressions, Ambedkar University Delhi

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Other Participating Institutions

- * Auro University Surat, Gujarat
- * CVM College of Fine Arts, Anand Gujarat
- * MS University of Baroda, Gujarat
- * MA Parikh Arts and Fine Arts College, Palampur, Gujarat
- * SNTD, Pune, Maharashtra
- * Dr. Bhashaeb Ambedkar University, Aurangabad, Maharashtra
- * Government College of Art & Design, Nagpur, Maharashtra
- * Bharathi Vidyapeeth College of Arts, Pune, Maharashtra
- * Khallikote College of Arts and Crafts, Khallikote, Ganjam, Odisha
- * Fine Arts, SSUS, Kallady , Kerala
- * RLV College, Tripunthira, Kerala
- * Govt College of Fine Arts, Thirussur, Kerala
- * Raja Ravi Verma College of Fine Arts, Mavelikara, Kerala
- * College of Art, New Delhi
- * Government College of Art and Crafts, Guwahati, Assam
- * Kokrajhar Music and Fine Arts College, Kokrajhar, Assam
- * Department of fine arts, Assam University, Silchar, Assam
- * Kala Bhavan, Santiniketan, West Bengal

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- * BV Suresh, Head of Department, L.N.V.Srinivas, Associate Professor and Kirtana Thangavelu, Associate Professor, SN School of Arts and Communication
- * Brighu Sharma, School of Fine Arts, Veer Narmad South Gujarat University, Surat
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Speakers

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Kausik Mukhopadhyay
Sarada Natarajan
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Rangoato Hlasane
Sanathanan Thamothersampillai
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Kochi Biennale Team

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Students'
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