

U N I T E D
S C R E E N S ::
O N C I N E M A
B E Y O N D T H E B O R D E R S
O F T H E S C R E E N
E X H I B I T I O N
06.07.-22.07.2018
I N V O C A T I O N S
20.07. & 22.07.2018

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EDIT FILM CULTURE!



The Arab Fund For Arts and Culture
المندوب العربي للثقافة والفنون – أفاق

CONCEPT

FADE IN:
LANDSCAPE / S - SPACE / S

E G Y P T 2016 Egyptian filmmaker Tamer El Said's internationally acclaimed film *In The Last Days of the City* has never been screened in Egypt. Even though the Egyptian government never officially banned the film, it didn't receive a screening permit. Which is "a way to ban the film without announcing it publically," as described by the director in the Guardian article *The Cinematic Love Letter to Cairo that None of its Residents Will See*.¹
M A U R I T A N I A 1970 Med Hondo's critical film *Soleil Ô (Oh Sun!)*, on the stretching of colonial imperialism and its ongoing embeddedness in the contemporary today, was banned in many African countries for several years after its release. "Whether I make a film in Paris or Nouakchott, it is pretty obvious that my country will not see it. Over the long terms the situation becomes a latent suicide,"² Hondo articulates in his groundbreaking work *The Cinema of Exile*.

FADE IN:
FUNDS

I R A N 2018 An Iranian film professional, who goes by the alias Pouya and has a history of collaborating with Owj, told Al-Monitor, "everyone knows that Owj is funded by the IRGC.³ The IRGC gets its budget from the government. The nature of this funding is no different from what is given to other organizations for producing films. The reality is that Iran's cinema is ultimately a government-owned business."⁴

I N D I A 2018 During his visit to India, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu chose to mark his last evening in the country with a special event for the Indian film industry. "Bollywood Shalom" was held in Mumbai and Bollywood stars like Amitabh Bachchan and Aishwarya Rai were in attendance. It ended with an Oscar-style selfie and Netanyahu's declaration: "We want Bollywood in Israel. We are putting our money where our mouth is."⁵

G E R M A N Y 2015 An applicant for production funding should typically furnish a producers' contribution of 50% of the German financing share. Exceptions can

be made for projects with a content or style that exposes their economic exploitation to a high degree of risk.⁶

CUT TO WIDE SHOT:
INFRINGEMENT

T H E U N I T E D S T A T E S O F A M E R I C A 1964 In an interview⁷ in 2001, Jonas Mekas expressed his attempts to engage with the process of "distribution/ dissemination system" of films that – as he describes – seemed to be uninteresting for known and commercial distribution platforms, at the time, in the USA. His various attempts of putting Jean Genet's *Un Chant d'Amour* (1950) and Jack Smith's *Flaming Creatures* into the market resulted in the arrest of the filmmaker on obscenity charges.
F R E N C H - C O L O N I Z E D A F R I C A 1934 *La Décret Laval* was issued under the purview of the minister of colonies, Pierre Laval, to control the content of films that were shot in Africa, and to minimise the creative roles Africans played in making these films.⁸

MATCH CUT:
AESTHETICS

I N D I A 1979 "If we have gathered here to discuss the role of cinema in developing countries, I think it would be right for us to discuss why these directors face these identical problems. It is because, I think, many governments would be very happy if we talked about cinema only as an art form, as an aesthetic medium. They would not be so happy if we spoke about the strikes in our country and the troubles in our country. I personally do not see any purpose as a creator to use this aesthetic aspect to communicate with this minority of bourgeois people who are in our country."⁹ (Ousmane Sembène speaking at *Symposium on Cinema in Developing Countries*.)

PAN TO:
ARCHIVING

N I G E R I A 2014 Hundreds of rusted cans of films were found in the abandoned rooms of Nigeria's old Colonial Film Unit in Lagos. This led to further discovery

1 Michaelson, R. (2017, July 12). *The cinematic love letter to Cairo that none of its residents will see*. Retrieved from www.theguardian.com/cities/2017/jul/12/cinematic-love-letter-cairo-last-days-city
2 Martin, M. T. (1995). "The Cinema of Exile". *Cinemas of the Black Diaspora: Diversity, Dependence, and Oppositionality*. Detroit, Wayne State: Wayne State University Press, p. 340
3 Established after the 1979 Revolution, The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) is a branch of Iran's Armed Forces.
4 Alipour, Z. (2018, May 04). IRGC funding for cinema stirs debate in Iran. Retrieved from www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2018/03/iran-irgc-cinema-owj-financial-support-hatamikia-damascus.html#ixzz5lcmuk9s6
5 Gautam, A. (2018, January 21). *Bringing "Brand Israel" to Bollywood*. Retrieved from www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/bringing-brand-israel-bollywood-180121135704857.html

6 Medienboard, Berlin-Brandenburg GmbH [PDF]. (2015, January). Berlin: www.medienboard.de
7 Frye, B. L. (2011, June 09). Interview with Jonas Mekas. Retrieved from sensesofcinema.com/2001/experimental-cinema-17/mekas_interview/
8 Diawara, Manthia (1992). *African Cinema: Politics and Culture*. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, pp. 22–23.
9 Symposium on Cinema in Developing Countries. (1979). New Delhi: Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Govt. of India.

of 10 000 cans of films in relatively good condition at the National Film, Video and Sound Archive at Jos.¹⁰
G E R M A N Y / I N D I A 2009 pan.do/ra is developed by Pirate Cinema, Berlin in collaboration with CAMP, Mumbai. This online open media archive enables the annotation, searching and editing of multimedia archives, which led to further instances of pan.do/ra such as pad.ma, indiancine.ma, bak.ma, and 858.ma.

F A D E I N : C O L L E C T I V I T Y

I N D I A 1984 Filmmaker John Abraham brings together Odessa Collective – an endeavor to collectivize cinema production and exhibition. In 1986, Odessa Collective produced the film *Amma Ariyan (Message to my Mother)* with crowdfunding efforts and exhibited it free of charge across the state of Kerala.

J U M P C U T : T E C H N O L O G Y

I N D I A 2007 “From a technical perspective, we propose a model of operation that is founded upon a flat distributed architecture, the blockchain. One aspect of Surfatial’s work at the moment involves imagining and adapting the blockchain architecture for cultural applications, particularly a distributed writing platform. The blockchain is set to impact value and not just information sharing, plus it is inherently constructed with the principle of preserving trust and integrity between strangers. Trust within this system is established peer-to-peer in a mass collaborative mode, and not via powerfully centralized brokers. It offers a system whereby transparency of transactions is preserved, and there can be checks and balances formulated depending on the particular application so as to discourage forms of gate-keeping of content.”¹¹

I N D I A 2007 According to CAMP, a critical art and media platform launched by Shaina Anand and Ashok Sukumaran, one of the key objectives of the platform is to “engage with questions, claims and potentials around infrastructure: materials, systems, and tools. This means working directly with such things as electricity, transport, trade, archives, video, radio and the internet; developing ways to think about these as integrated with human life, and beyond the ‘network’ as its representative thought-model.”¹¹

C U T A W A Y T O F I L M C U L T U R E (S) : W H A T I S F I L M C U L T U R E ?

S C E N E O N E What are the other(ered) film

culture(s)? Where is film culture? Who is film culture? A series of questions arise while pondering the existence and sustenance of film cultures around the world. Questions that deal with the representation of emerging cinema and cinematic expressions as a means to resist experiencing all film cultures from a Euro-American perspective and that encourage our understanding of film and cinema industries within the context of their colonial pasts.

How cinema emerges and evolves in and around its industry has been – and still is – characterised by a constant negotiation between independent or alternative filmmakers, operating within small-scale grassroots film initiatives, and the mainstream industry. Many such films consciously and even unconsciously reject industry standards and practices of production, aesthetics, distributions, storytelling, funding etc. in order to reappropriate the medium to the context(s) in which the images and sounds are produced.

Such initiatives strive to activate the potential of films to become agents of social transformation through means of indigenous expression. These non-Euro-American cinematic languages are not only attempting to reclaim their cultural heritage but also to reinscribe it into today’s cinematic expressions. Such a process of reinvention of cinematic practices and industry standards, which were imposed through first cinema¹² idealisations and colonial aspirations of the perfect image,¹³ is an extremely difficult task for many filmmakers to take on “because our viewing audience is used to a specific film language.”¹⁴

S C E N E T W O How can film exist in exile? Is cinema free? Who sees films? Where are films seen? Does a film exist, if it isn’t seen?

Many filmmakers involved in grassroots initiatives and independent cinema platforms are taking it upon themselves to showcase their films, while exhibitors and independent spaces are taking on the role of curators to hold film screenings relevant to their communities. In India, as a part of the research for this chapter of the exhibition project, we have come across Chalti Tasveerein, which believes that “films [and filmmakers] are getting stuck in film festivals.”¹⁵ Consequently, the collective founded a traveling film festival that screens experimental documentaries and feature-length films to large audiences across seven states in the North of India. The notion of “let’s take the film to the people” opens up the possibility of seeing films in a very different context, thus

12 First Cinema: Hollywood Cinema, as defined by Fernando Solanas & Octavio Getino in the essay/manifesto *Towards a Third Cinema*

13 Steyerl, H. (2009, November). *In Defense of the Poor Image*. Retrieved from www.e-flux.com/journal/10/61362/in-defense-of-the-poor-image/

14 N. Frank Ukadike, *The Hyena’s Last Laugh [interview with Djibril Diop Mambety]*, Transition 78 (vol.8, no. 2 1999), pp. 136-53. Copyright 1999, W.E.B. Dubois Institute and Duke University Press

15 Interview by Abhishek Nilamber with Chalti Tasveerein Collective for United Screens Project, New Delhi, April 2018

10 *Reclaiming History, Unveiling Memory Part II*. (2015). Retrieved from www.arsenal-berlin.de/en/berlinale-forum/archive/program-archive/2017/program-forum-expanded/forum-expanded-think-film-no-5/reclaiming-history-unveiling-memory-part-ii.html, Program Notes.

11 About CAMP. (2007). Retrieved from studio.camp/about/

deconstructing cinema and the formalities often associated with film screenings (chairs, setting, ticketing, dress code, caste codes, geographical location of cinema's, marginalisation through darkness and silence etc.). For instance a format of a traveling film festival breaks through such formalities and creates another understanding of a space for experiencing films. That which is not bound to a specific geography of a Cinema space or a film festival's location, which follows a particular curatorial vision that dictates who is able to see the films and how they are discussed.¹⁶ It becomes a space that encourages a more inclusive experience of watching films collectively, which Chalti Tasveerein considers "possibly one of the most intellectual experiences you can have."¹⁷

In Cairo, Mosireen – a group of activists, videographers, and cultural workers – initiated screenings in the infamous Tahrir square. Tahrir Cinema regularly showed video footage to protestors in the square with the intent to return the form and medium of cinema to the people. Film has become a very powerful tool because guerilla screenings with video content shot by the people allows what bell hooks has termed "new transgressive possibilities for the formulation of identity."¹⁸

S C E N E T H R E E Which cultures contribute to the understanding of cinematic expression, industry, commonality, and diversity?

"Fundamentally, African cinema does not exist because film distribution is not in Africa's hands."¹⁹ One can extrapolate Férid Boughedir's analysis to many countries of the Global South (maybe all), and through this lens rethink contemporary images being produced by and in the Global South today. Be it foreign funding and therefore lack of local viability, technologies, film distribution formats, the ecosystems of international film festivals and their inherent validation of films, appropriation of geopolitical content and exploitation of time-based socio-political events – there are many factors involved in the complex ecosystems in which films exist. Among others, they determine which films are being produced, in which language, and for which audience.

To further contextualize the diversity and problematics arising between Western and non-Western film cultures, let us rewatch a film that is considered a gem of Senegalese cinema: *La petite vendeuse du Soleil* (*The Little Girl Who Sold the Sun*) (1999). The film was directed by Djibril Diop Mambety, whose short and long films are statements in cinematic expression and contemporary African image aesthetic and are considered to be part of

a process of liberation of – and beyond – the screen. In the film, Mambety navigates through a multilayered scenery of Dakar, narrated through the story of a hand-capped Senegalese girl who supports her family by selling the *Du Soleil* newspaper on the streets of Dakar. Throughout the film, Mambety carefully shows the remnants of the heavy colonial past that are embedded in its architecture. Furthermore, he strongly revolts against the post-colonial ties by choosing to make the film in Wolof and not French. He moves his camera lens towards a post-colonial landscape of Dakar, and shifts the dynamics of perception towards the urgency of localizing the film to the community and not necessarily catering it to audiences outside of that community. In that sense, he took us into a process of delineation through film and continued to articulate this point by using very sharp cuts, oversaturated images and contrasts, etc. creating a very politicized image that rebels against certain notions of representation through the filming and editing processes. Even though the film is not a documentary, per se, it carries a documentary style of narrating a story and its flow creates an archival form of a situation, a story, and a moment. Mambety reclaims the process of filmmaking by finding very individual means of understanding cinematic language: repositioning the role of the director as "that of the griot – more than storyteller", where the griot is "a messenger of one's time, a visionary and the creator of the future"²⁰. Considered one of the pioneers of the Third Cinema movement, Mambety and the likes of Heiny Srour, Helena Solberg Ladd, Kidlat Tahimik, Med Hondo, Sara Gomez, and Ritwik Ghatak, to mention a few, worked and used film profoundly as a medium to re-conceptualise the conventionality of screens in the Global South. These filmmakers, and their peers, proposed a new understanding of cinematic expression with a broad reach and philosophy that extended outside of Western cinema's Euro-American centralisation.

The "perfect image," however, speaks beyond the direct aesthetic value of the image, and becomes a broader representation of an ecosystem that invites a specific way of thinking, making and experiencing films, thus affecting where those films live, in which cinemas they are screened and by whom are they seen. Making films made outside of this scope of filmic standards and set of technical rules do not only intend to create an experimental language or an experimental way of telling a story, often they are simply films that are situated in specific realities that dictate their filming aesthetics. The perfect image is also associated with a set of technical rules of filming: high resolution formats of new cameras and their out-of-proportion price tags, the framing of angles and the decisions associated

16 Ibid.

17 Ibid.

18 Used by bell hooks when describing the process of regaining the power of the "oppositional gaze" by black female spectators in cinema who were often alienated from film representation.

19 Férid Boughedir, *Afrique Noire: Quel Cinéma?* Paris: Actes du Colloque Université Paris IO, Nanterre (Dec. 1981), p.31.

20 Grayson, S. M. (2001). *Djibril Diop Mambety: A Retrospective. Research in African Literatures*, 32(4), pp. 136–139.

21 Guattari, Félix (1996). "Postmodern Deadlock and Post-Media Transition." *Soft Subversions: Texts and Interviews 1977–1985*. Los Angeles, CA: Semiotext(e). (Pages 291–300 in the 2009 edition of the book)

22 Hatherley, O. (2016, April 21). *Soviet squares: How public space is disappearing in post-communist cities*. Retrieved from www.theguardian.com/cities/2016/apr/21/soviet-squares-public-space-post-communist-cities

with what makes it into that frame and what is left behind, the stability of the image, flawless – and often unrealistic – cinematic quality (editing, cuts, etc.). As screens are getting more personalized, expressed by Félix Guattari as the “miniaturization and the personalization of equipment,”²¹ the spaces for collective critical viewing of cinema are diminishing, which becomes the backdrop for the disappearance of other community/public spaces.²²

The Neighbor before the House (Al Jaar Qabla Daar) (2009) is yet another film that challenges the notion of what is considered to be a perfect image. The resolution of the film, often pixelated and stretched over the screen, creates the possibility of looking secretly at the oppressive Israeli occupation of Jerusalem. The people filming and manipulating the camera are also the homeowners themselves claiming agency of filming and documentation. The use of such filming processes also gave space to re-appropriate film mediums and surveillance machines; opening a possibility of experiencing an imperfect cinema that goes “beyond the technical misuse of surveillance technologies, the filming methods open up to new potentials: a house becomes a support for a camera, a sort of tripod built from stones.”²³

These film practices create a constant state of flux between the definition of a perfect cinema and its imperfect other. But for the authors and the audience of this film, the content holds more importance than the quality of the image. The state of an “imperfect cinema, therefore, has no need to struggle to create an audience.”²⁴

ENDING SCENE: OR A BEGINNING OF A SEQUEL

C I N E M A Borrowed from French “cinéma,” shortening of “cinématographe” (a term coined by the Lumière brothers in the 1890s), from Ancient Greek κίνημα (kínēma, “movement”) + Ancient Greek -γράφειν (-gráphein, “write(record)”)

C I N E M A S A space for the exhibition of cinema

C I N E M A true to its etymological name, is always in motion and in constant evolution. Through the **U N I T E D S C R E E N S** research project, we intend to chronicle, understand, map and archive the relationships that exist and evolve between **C I N E M A** and **C I N E M A S**. We are specifically interested in relationalities that are evolving in the Global South and in what is referred to as the fourth world, where means of producing cinema is in the process of constant democratization and decentralization, which has resulted in the evolution of new cinematic practices,

expressions and languages, that claim their own rightful representation.

In this phase of the project, we have primarily – but not only – engaged with evolving film cultures in India. Through over thirty documented interviews and several informal conversations, we understood that this evolving film culture is also dealing with the imbalance of power created because while **C I N E M A** has been democratized, **C I N E M A S** still remain centralized. We also observed that collectives of alternative initiatives and individuals, empowered by technology, were renegotiating this power imbalance and creating new relations between **C I N E M A** and **C I N E M A S**.

There are efforts already in motion in these regions to self-organize and distribute film content in independent and passionate exhibition spaces. It is only logical to bring these efforts under a common ideological umbrella and a complementary infrastructure in order to open a cross-continental dialogue through films.

U N I T E D S C R E E N S is a long term research and exhibition project that intends to create a platform through which independent filmmakers, exhibitors and distributors can activate a network of co-ordinated and programmed exhibition spaces. In the future, we will propose a new platform to distribute films produced across the Indian subcontinent, African and Asian continent at large, Latin America and Eastern Europe.

We also look to the past to revisit efforts made and claims raised in the process of decolonizing forms of film distribution, in order to furthermore engage with the formation of decentralized distribution channels of film that exist beyond bodies of censorship, agencies of control and institutions in position of power. We aim to understand postcolonial ties to current formats of film distribution because only with an historical register can we pave the path to a broader understanding of modes of censorship, state control of screens, and processes of othering through cinema. We hope that with this research project, we can collectively propose and form a more inclusive understanding of film distribution beyond its normative socio- and geopolitical contexts and barriers.

In this first chapter of our research, many curiosities materialised into friendships, and friendships flourished into camaraderies. These interactions within a growing network were collected as documented films, audio interviews and personal memories.

The exhibition invites you to take a walk through mapped research on parts of the Indian film ecosystem: experiencing select video-interviews, notes, as well as informal conversations. Out of this research we have distilled seven key-nodes towards the understanding of this ecosystem. They are: funds, aesthetics, infringement, archiving, spaces, collectivity and technology.

²³ *Al jaar qabla al daar (The neighbour before the house)* film description on CAMP. (n.d.). Retrieved from studio.camp/projects/neighbour1/

²⁴ Ibid.

With this exhibition, we hope to engage the audience in a careful consideration on the evolution of divergent film cultures and reflect on a decentralised technology-based infrastructure for alternative cinema.

T H E E N D

C R E D I T S

A L H A J I A D E D A Y O T H O M A S Abuja interviewed in Berlin on 17.02.2018 is the Executive Director of the National Film and Video Censors Board (NFVSB) in Nigeria.

B U R A K Ç E V I K Istanbul interviewed in Berlin on 24.02.2018 is a filmmaker, curator, and the founder of experimental cinema society Fol. After his graduation from Istanbul Bulgi University in 2016, he produced the creative-documentary feature film *Meteors* (2017) which won the Swatch Best First Film Award at 70th Locarno Film Festival. His first feature film the *Pillar of Salt* (2018) premiered in Berlinale Forum (2018).

T Y R O N R I C K E T T S Berlin interviewed in Berlin on 26.02.2018 is an actor, television host, filmmaker, and a spokesperson in the promotion of racial tolerance initiated by the German government. His starring short film *The Roar of the Sea* (2010) was selected to compete for the best live action short film at the 84th Academy Awards in 2012. He is also part of the musical group Brothers Keepers (Afro-Deutsch).

M A R I A M G H A N I New York interviewed in Mumbai on 12.03.2018 is an artist, writer, and filmmaker. She has engaged herself with several long-term collaborations with institutions such as the national archive Afghan Films since 2012. Her work spans across social, political and cultural themes and has been exhibited at internationally renowned museums.

A S H I S H R A J Y A D H Y A K S H A Bengaluru interviewed in Mumbai on 15.03.2018 is a film and cultural theorist. He co-authored the *Encyclopaedia of Indian Cinema* and *Indian Cinema in the Time of Celluloid: From Bollywood to the Emergency*. He is also one of the curators of the show *Bombay/Mumbai 1992–2001*, which was part of the *Tate Modern's Century City: Art and Culture in the Modern Metropolis* (2001).

B I K A S M I S H R A interviewed in Mumbai on 18.03.2018 is a screenwriter and director with his debut feature *Chauranga* (2016) being awarded the Grand Jury Prize at the Indian Film Festival of Los Angeles. He has also served as a selection committee of Mumbai Film Festival and as critic's juries of other international film festivals.

P R A B O D H P A R I K H interviewed in Mumbai on 18.03.2018 is a poet, short fiction writer and a visual artist. He published his book of poems *Kaunsmān* in 1993 and it won several awards including the Best Poetry Collection of 1993–1994 by the Gujarat Sahitya Akademi and the G.F. Saraf Award for Best Gujarati Book in 1992–1995.

S A N D E E P M O H A N interviewed in Mumbai on 18.03.2018 is an independent filmmaker. He wrote and directed his feature debut *Love, Wrinkle Free* (2011) and his latest film *Shreelancer* (2017) is an official selection by the New York Indian Film Festival.

S A N A L K U M A R S A S I D H A R A N Tiruvananthapuram interviewed in Kochi on 26.03.2018 is a film director and poet. He formed Kazhcha Film Forum

in 2001, a film society that makes independent movies through crowdfunding. The Forum produced his first feature-length movie *Oraalppokkam* (2014) and it earned him the Best Director award in the Kerala State Film Awards the same year.

V I P I N V I J A Y interviewed in Kottayam on 27.03.2018 is a film director and screenwriter. He has an accomplished career in his career with experimental and art films, with his work screened in international film festivals and his short film *Video Game* (2006) is the first Indian film to win a Tiger Award.

G A R G I H A R I T H A K A M Kozhikode interviewed in Kochi on 28.03.2018 is a member of Penkootu Media Collective, the first women-initiated Trade Union registered in Kerala. The team aims at providing political education surrounding the idea of being a “feminist,” and to bring attention to those who have been marginalized in mainstream media.

A B H A S A B H I N A V interviewed in Bengaluru on 05.04.2018 is the founder of Deeproot Linux and Mostly Harmless. He has been a member of the Free Software Foundation of India since 2012 as his work is closely related to the promotion the use of free and open source software.

S H A I H E R E D I A interviewed in Bengaluru on 06.04.2018 is a filmmaker and curator of film art. She founded Experimenta in 2013 to facilitate the experimental cinema in India. Her co-directed film *An Old Dog's Diary* (2015) won the best short film award at the 2015 London Film Festival.

Q interviewed in Goa on 10.04.2018 is a filmmaker and a rapper. His film *Gandu* (2010) premiered at the 2010 South Asian International Film Festival and was an official selection at the 2011 Berlin International Film Festival. His new feature *Garbage* premiered at the 2018 Berlinale.

A L A N K R I T A A N A N D interviewed in Goa on 12.04.2018 is a journalist for Video Volunteers, an online media facilitating community media in India. The research interests of Alankrita Anand include gender and media, visual cultures and ethics of science and medicine.

H A R I N I L A X M I N A R A Y A N Bengaluru interviewed in Goa on 12.04.2018 is a documentary and media producer with a keen interest in stories concerning humanities, social justice, democracy, and governance. Her pursuit to increase consumption and viewership for narrative non-fiction has led her to experiment with new media practices and disruptive distribution techniques across a range of highly-awarded independent works. At Irregularity Media, she leads the charge on strategic alliances, international partnerships and distribution strategies.

U M E S H V I N A Y A K K U L K A R N I interviewed in Pune on 16.04.2018 is a Marathi filmmaker. He directed, wrote and produced *Valu* (2008) and the comedy was featured in the Berlin International Film Festival. *Kumbh* (2017), a short documentary was nominated as the Best Short Documentary in the Amsterdam International Documentary Film Festival.

In Pune, he has activated Arbhaat Short Film Club that encourages and empowers young individuals to engage with cinematic medium.

B A R D R O Y B A R R E T T O interviewed in Mumbai on 20.04.2018 is the director of *Nachom-ia Kumpasar* (2015), an award-winning Konaki musical drama film which was shortlisted at the 2016 Oscars for Best Picture and Best Original Score. His production house Brown Skins focused on the production of advertising films.

S U N I L S U K H T A N K A R interviewed in Mumbai on 20.04.2018 is a filmmaker whose work is predominantly done for Marathi cinema and Marathi theatre. He has written and directed fourteen feature films, fifty short films, and four TV serials.

A L A N K R I T A S H R I V A S T A V A interviewed in Mumbai on 21.04.2018 is an independent filmmaker. She assisted Bollywood director Prakash Jha on producing and directing before she made her directorial debut with *Turning 30!!!* (2011). Her recent black comedy film *Lipstick Under My Burkha* (2017) received two nominations at the 63rd Filmfare Awards, simultaneously also banned by Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC), India.

R I N C H I N interviewed in Bhopal on 23.04.2018 is a media activist working with Ektara Collective. Ektara Collective is an independent, autonomous, non-funded group of people who seek to combine creative efforts and imagination and collaborate with trained and untrained people to make films that are content-wise and aesthetically located in people's subjective, contextual realities and experiences. Through this process Ektara has made and produced two short fiction films—*Chanda Ke Joote* (2011), *Jaadui Machchhi* (2013), and a fiction feature film *Turup* (2017).

S U R A J P R A S A D M A H A T O & A N U J M A L H O T R A interviewed in New Delhi on 25.04.2018 the duo founded the Lightcube Society, a collective of film programmers, designers, writers, critics and curators. The Society has organized retrospectives, theme-based film programmes and publications in collaboration with both government and private institutions.

V K C H E R I A N interviewed in New Delhi on 26.04.2018 is a journalist and strategic communications professional. He has written numerous articles in English and Malayalam across India and abroad. His latest publication is *India's Film Society Movement: Its Journey and Impact* (2016).

R I T U S A R I N Dharamshala interviewed in New Delhi on 27.04.2018 is a film director and producer. Since her student days, she has been making films with her husband at the San Francisco Bay Area. Their shared creation includes documentaries, video installation, and a dramatic feature film. They also started the Dharamshala International Film Festival in 2012 to offer an alternative cinema to the local community.

C H A L T I T A S V E E R E I N interviewed in New Delhi on 30.04.2018 interviews with members Amudhan R. P., Sameer Gardner, Aswathy Senan,

New Delhi is a 45 day travelling film festival that “freed” films and filmmakers by screening documentaries, feature films and experimental cinema across seven North Indian states as a means of generating conversations about the past, present and future as a polity. S U R Y A S H A N K A R D A S H interviewed in Bhubaneswar on 02.05.2018 is a co-founder of www.videorepublic.tv, an online platform for marginalized journalists and activists. As a filmmaker, activist and journalist, he has been documenting the various people’s movement against industrialization and mining in Orissa. He is also in the collective of Bring Your Own Film Festival (BYOFF).

A S H I S H A V I K U N T H A K interviewed in Kolkata on 05.05.2018 works incorporates Western avant-garde practices into the focus of Indian epistemology. His name was listed on the Future Greats 2014 by Art Review. His films have been shown worldwide in film festivals, galleries and museums. Notable screenings were at the Tate Modern, London, Centre George Pompidou, Paris, Taipei Biennial 2012, Shanghai Biennial 2014, Pacific Film Archive, Berkeley, along with London, Locarno, Rotterdam, and Berlin film festivals among other locations.

K A S T U R I B A S U interviewed in Kolkata on 05.05.2018 is a member of the People’s Film Collective. The cultural-political Collective is formed in 2013 to offer an alternative media for people, by organising monthly film screenings and conversations in Kolkata and hosting the Travelling Cinema to show films and movemental videos across several districts of Bengal. M O I N A K B I S W A S interviewed in Kolkata on 06.05.2018 Moinak Biswas is a Professor of Film Studies at Jadavpur University and the Coordinator of the Media Lab at Jadavpur. Besides his research on Indian film and culture, he also wrote and co-directed *Sthaniya Sambaad* (2009) which won the 11th Annual New York Indian Film Festival.

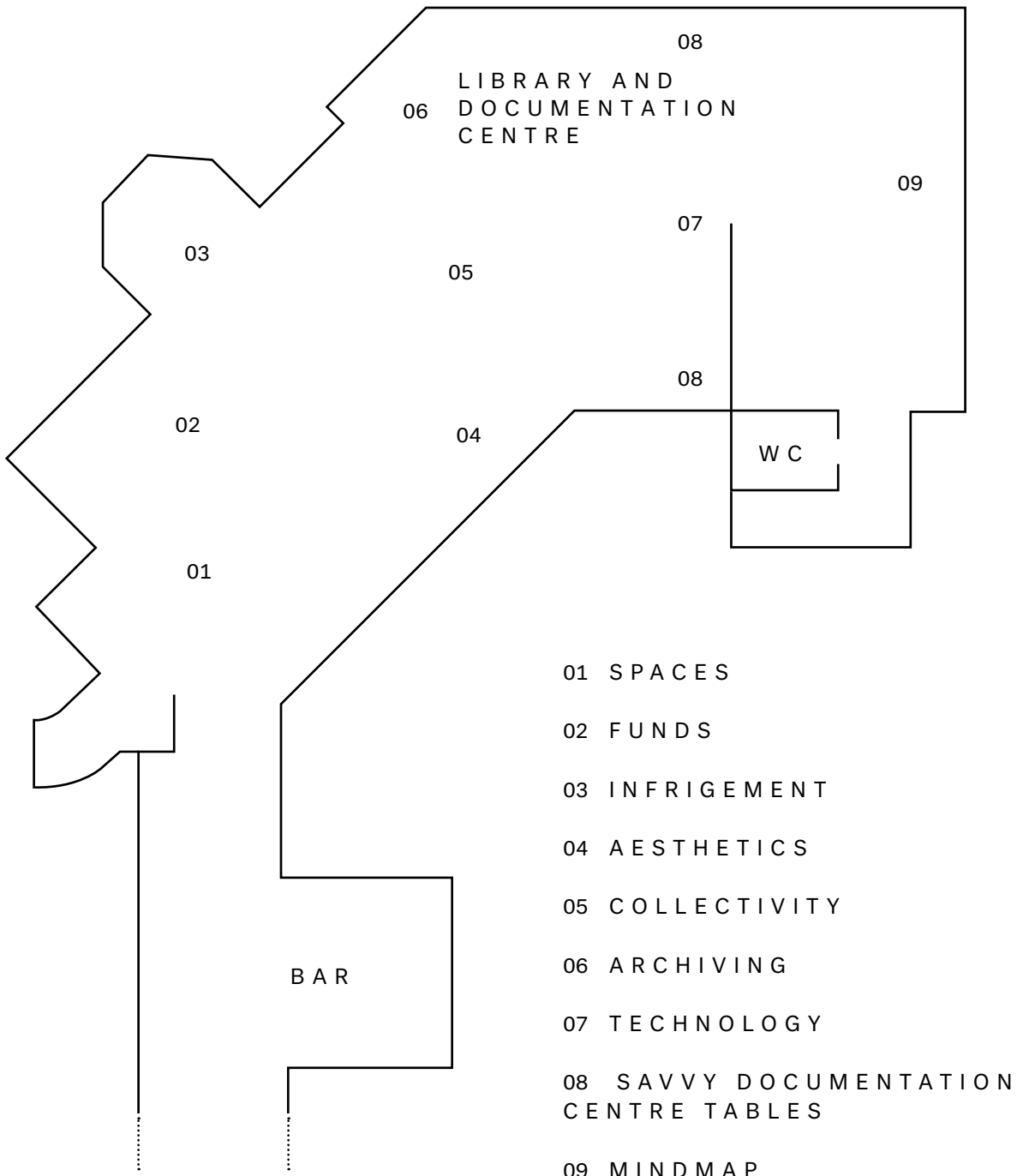
S U B H A D A S M O L L I C K interviewed in Kolkata on 06.05.2018 is a documentary filmmaker and a media teacher. On a variety of subjects, she has produced more than 50 documentary films and a majority of them have been aired on national television. She is currently a visiting faculty at the Institute of Leadership, Entrepreneurship and Development.

R W I T A D U T T A interviewed in Kolkata on 07.05.2018 is the editor of *Filmbuff*, an international film journal. The journal conducts interviews with Indian filmmakers and creates articles on subjects related to the cinematic scene of India. She is a film critic and a member of Fédération Internationale de la Presse Cinématographique (FIPRESCI).

S U R O J I T S E N interviewed in Kolkata on 07.05.2018 is an actor and screenwriter. He edited *Gandu* (2010), the award-winning black-and-white Indian film. Expanding his experience in filmmaking, he wrote for *Cosmic Sex* in 2015 and in the next year he acted in the short film *Changing Lens* (2016). He has been a researcher on subaltern cultures of Bengal – specifically Sufism.

Finally, it is also important to point to the process of handling the collected interviews towards the exhibition and it’s archiving. The collective spirit of S A V V Y Contemporary team offered to watch each interview and add to it their own reflections through the annotations that accompany the exhibition. This collective process manifests itself in the following forms: annotation notes by S A V V Y Contemporary team, mind-map representing relationalities between Cinema and Cinemas, specific to this phase of research which has been co-created with Trishla Talera, annotated online archive of the interviews hosted at pad.ma

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T H A N K Y O U

This project could not have been realised without generous, but critical guidance of Antonia Alampi and Dr. Bonaventure Soh Bejeng Ndikung who channeled the idea for it to germinate in the right fashion. This project also couldn't have been possible, without the power of collectivity, that makes S A V V Y Contemporary happen(ing).

Additional to the immense support of the S A V V Y Contemporary team, this project in its current state, wouldn't have been made possible without the loving, dedicated support of the following people:

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S A V V Y Contemporary – The laboratory of form-ideas is an art space, discursive platform, place for good talks, foods and drinks – a space for conviviality. S A V V Y Contemporary situates itself at the threshold of notions of the West and non-West, to understand and deconstruct them. S A V V Y Contemporary has realized a kaleidoscope of art exhibitions, performances, film screenings, lectures, concerts, readings, talks, dances. S A V V Y Contemporary has established a participatory archive on German colonial history, a performance arts documentation centre, a library, a residency program, as well as educational projects with schools. The art space engages in its neighborhood's history and socio-political realities which are entangled with the reflections and discourses of the project.

S A V V Y Contemporary is Elena Agudio Antonia Alampi Jasmina Al-Qaisi Lynhan Balatbat-Helbock Bona Bell Marleen Boschen Federica Buetti Pia Chakraverti-Wuerthwein Olani Ewunnet Raisa Galofre Johanna Gehring Anna Jäger Laura Klöckner Cornelia Knoll Saskia Köbschall Kelly Krugman Nathalie Mba Bikoro António Mendes Kamila Metwaly Arlette-Louise Ndakoze Bonaventure Soh Bejeng Ndikung Abhishek Nilamber Beya Othmani Elena Quintarelli Marleen Schröder Jörg-Peter Schulze Lema Sikod Lili Somogyi Jorinde Spletstößer Laura Voigt Elsa Westreicher Karen Wong

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