REMOTE RESIDENCY | FOUR MONTHS | SEPTEMBER - JANUARY

A POLLINATOR RESIDENCY, 2021
| |
Virtual Nursery

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Virtual Nursery 2020 - 2021

Fissure
Featuring works of residents
Ani Dalal, Deepikah R Bhardwaj & Sneha Joshi

Virtual Nursery is a humble initiative by **Pollinator** to understand what a residency can do virtually in the context of present times, how it can impact creators and makers in their thinking process, how we can let go of certain mandated structures and requirements of traditional artist residencies. To broaden our scope, this is our attempt to create an inclusive residency on as many fronts as we can. We seek to emphasize on rethinking the arts and creative practices in the virtual context by concentrating more on what one can create going forward, rather than rest on accolades of what one has already created.

Pollinator is an agency that seeds fundamental debates through intangible value systems. With the evolving times, we intend to diversify our peer ecosystem through cross-pollination. Through our first project "Collection Bureau" in 2017, the duo of Thukral and Tagra in collaboration with Prayas Abhinav, tried to critique the process through which the value of a work is formulated and established in the art context. What are the markers of such a value of a work of art? Is there any system that can access the work of art through a distinctive currency? Can a work be collected or a collection be built by overlooking the monetary framework?

Going forward with the idea of looking into the value systems to build it into a coherent collection, the team of Pollinator initiated the collection of articulations of an object, service or sentiment offered in response to the volatile climate and atrocities across the country in the beginning of 2020. The teams addressed the ideas of 'hate and concern' by exchanging the ideas of care. This project - "Nafrat/ Parvah" at POND, New Delhi, was not a site of protest, rather a safe space to expand our understanding of the verb "hate" through vocabularies, aesthetics, and value systems of the antagonistic force.
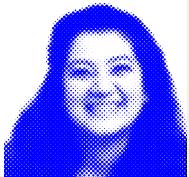
As Pollinator has always placed itself as a catalyst for interdisciplinary actions and reactions to the present

Shaleen Wadhwana | *Writer & Curator*

time, the third project "Solitude" aimed at small exercises at the times of isolation to make people think of ways to create new dimensions during these tough times. The exercises are meditative with a pinch of darkness which is so evident in today's social paradigm.

To curate Pollinator's 4th project and its first residency "FISSURE", Pollinators invited Shaleen Wadhwana - Arts Educator, as a Guest Pollinator.

FISSURE
Curatorial prompt by Shaleen Wadhwana

Fissure means
"To split,"
"A state of incompatibility or disagreement,"
or "The beginning of a crack."

There are multiple ways to interpret fissure. For Pollinator 2020, we are focussing on fissures in the recent timeline of global and local human history. It ranges from the Pandemic, the damaging and healing effects of varying degrees of social isolation to large scale movements for human rights and protests against violence caused by hate, bias, fear.

In these ruptures, we have witnessed the extent of human compassion through global cooperation.
We have faced the undeniable fact that some have much more than they need and many do not have the bare basic minimum for sustained survival. We, as a community, are in a moment of fissure, and how we respond to this determines how we are remembered in history.

Through the Virtual Nursery, Pollinator will delve into how 'bias' and 'fear' are understood in art, history, and contemporary society, in relation to the fissures that have been, and are being created around us.

Outcome - Virtual Exhibition

The selected residents' minds were engaged with a curriculum-based guided intervention over 4 months virtual/remote residency. Residents had access to study circles, industry peer group sessions and curated mentorship for adapting practices to this digital 'new normal' as they responded and critiqued this core curatorial prompt of Fissure.

The virtual exhibition that launched on 16th January 2021, exhibits the artworks by residents Deepikah R Bharadwaj, Ani Dalal and Sneha Joshi. They attempt to understand how artistic practices can expand their vantage points to address the evolving biases and fear in their contemporary society. For their processes, they mapped the timeline of socio-political milestones from the 19th century to 2020 with the artworks, artists and movements that responded to fissure of their times and assessed their symbiotic relationship.

Through this overarching framework and contextual lens, SarvSatvikRashtra - Atmanirbhar 2Q48 is a purity driven alternate reality by Deepikah which confronts the viewer with a cuisine free of 'other'-ised elements. In contrast to that, Lost in a Dreamscape by Ani invites us to pause in his panopticon-like universe, which showcases our innermost child-like dreams with progressive life-stage demons 'outgrowing' them. Lastly, The Missing Link by Sneha questions the lack of accessibility in this increasingly digitally dependent world operating on an able-bodied centric design.

Guest Pollinator | Curator
Shaleen Wadhwana

Shaleen Wadhwana, academically trained in History, Art History, Liberal Arts, and Cultural Heritage Law, lies at the intersection of art, history, heritage and culture. She has professional expertise of working across museums and galleries. Currently, her independent pedagogical practice includes teaching, curating and writing about South Asian history, art and culture to bring audiences closer to it. She frequently writes about the impact of technology on art, and the links between art and public spaces.

POLLINATOR.io

VIRTUAL NURSERY 01

exhibition

FISSURE

Guest Pollinators | Residents

Ani Dalal is a researcher/designer based out of Bangalore. Working at the intersection of speculation and media, Ani uses digital technology as his medium to create experiences and narratives.

Deepikah Rahul Bhardwaj is an interdisciplinary artist based in Bangalore, India. Trained in Communication design from Delhi, she uses painting and installation art to express issues related to gender, self-worth, body dysmorphia, social conditioning and perception.

Sneha Joshi is a multidisciplinary contemporary artist and curator based in Bangalore, India. Her overarching practice focuses on challenging perceptions around sociocultural norms in the Indian and global context. She is interested in the creation and sharing of knowledge produced through conversations, mediated over varied sources and platforms with an interest in publishing.

Guest Pollinators | Mentors

The Virtual Nursery program by Pollinator identifies cultural practices as pedagogy and aims to cultivate an inclusive learning ecosystem through cross pollination. Throughout the duration of the Nursery, Shaleen hosted multiple group and one-on-one sessions with each resident to support, expand and build their practice further through the lens of her curatorial theme 'Fissure'. In addition to this, the residents were mentored by guest industry leaders and peers from within and outside the arts ecosystem, to develop critical thinking.

Sarnath Banerjee - Graphic Novelist
Viraj Joshi - Designer and Technologist
Sharbendu De - Artist, Academician and Writer
Varud Gupta - Writer and Author
Rajyashri Goody - Visual Artist
Sheena Maria Piedade - Editor and Creative Director
Ayushi Rastogi - Illustrator and Designer

Guest Pollinators | Jury Members

At the beginning of the residency, the jury members helped the team of Pollinator and Shaleen through their expertise and experience to review the applications for the remote residency through the lens of technological feasibility, cultural desirability and social inclination.
Rana Ayyub - Journalist
Dr. Susmita Mohanty - Spaceship Designer and Entrepreneur
Dr. Shobhita Punja - Art Historian and Independent Scholar

Guest Pollinators | Organizations & Institutions | Peer Ecosystem

Pollinators believe that we are all part of one ecosystem. Communities cannot operate in isolation, hence, the projects are designed to facilitate and inspire a dialogue within communities in order to revitalize and defragment them. The team believes in creating brief moments of care, where care doesn't synonymize the feeling of concern but transcends deeper to empathy and optimism.

Virtual Nursery was developed on these same principles and works in tandem with individuals and organizations that are a part of the Pollinator ecosystem. The aim is to build a peer-to-peer ecosystem that strongly encourages community -driven initiatives that have socially driven impact. Keeping in line with this ethos, the Pollinator residents gave a minimum of 10 hours of skill sharing to the following NGOs:
Ani Dalal x Slam Out Loud
Deepikah R. Bhardwaj x Dream School Foundation
Sneha Joshi x Colours Centre for Learning

Core Pollinators

Sumir Tagra - Visual Artist
Jiten Thukral - Visual Artist
Urvashi Matta - Researcher, Writer and Editor
Saumya Grover - Graphic Designer
Shiva Kumra - Project Manager and Writer

Support | Foundation Thukral and Tagra

The establishment of Foundation Thukral and Tagra in 2008 was a sincere effort to spread awareness and explore new innovative avenues to bring alive the real-time issues to society by using a multi/ interdisciplinary approach, through strategic and system thinking, which are the hallmark of Thukral and Tagra's studio practice.

Through the use of communication design and produced commodities, the goal was to infiltrate multiple strata of society in which discussions about socio-cultural issues of public health, mental & emotional health are fraught with conservative mindsets and taboos. Through such an intervention, they sought means to interact and reach the new audience in the capitalist society.

These space-oriented projects "Put it on", "Pehno", "Memoir Bar" and others were to present a spectacular and compelling facade to draw unsuspecting people into the discussion/ debate, to build public dialogues to those who may consciously avoid the subject matter.

"We have always seen the foundation as the beginning of a relationship for us, our fellows, institutions, and our peer network which will continue to foster, cultivate an inclusive learning ecosystem."

→ Read more about Pollinator's various projects at pollinator.io

Write to us at studio.pollinator@gmail.com