

# A Special Arrow Was Shot In The Neck...



As a human endeavour over land, modernity has drawn up the categories by which territory is divided and placed under a contract of subjugation. How might the current order of material progress then be infiltrated by the agency of land as a narrative substance?

*A Special Arrow Was Shot In The Neck...* presents the work of artists, film-makers, choreographers and poets, as well as archival contributions, plotting relations between landforms, geological events and the rural paradigm, across colonial modernity and amidst the current regime of extractive commerce.

While the geographic imperative of capital has transfigured the earth into an algorithmic construct, there is a corresponding attempt to recognise the claims of land as a living archive, as political matter as well as to borrow from French Sociologist, Marcel Mauss—a “total social fact.”<sup>1</sup> Through an assembly of temporalities that challenge the singular scope of anthropogenic time, this exhibition approaches the earth system through cosmological diagrams, archaeological fragments, crafts tradition, botanical studies and line drawings that chart the detail and the fold of landforms as aspects of cultural memory.

The 1814 chart *A Comparative View of the Heights of the Principal Mountains and Other Elevations in the World* drafted by Scottish cartographer John Thompson stands as a key point of departure for this exhibition. Its composite view foregrounds a radical effort in assembling peaks from the Eastern and Western hemispheres upon a singular horizon.

The chart draws out elevations ranging from the volcanic Chimborazo in Ecuador to the snow-covered Dhaulagiri massif in Nepal. This rare piece is one of the earliest examples of the comparative chart genre, which came to ascendance in the 19th century as lines of travel and trade were drawing a cartographic net around the globe.

One of the antecedents to this navigation genre was the nautical survey of coastal elevations in the 18th century. Emerging from such directional aids of maritime trade, the comparative chart is a symptom of the empirical drive that moulded real and imagined scalings of geological bodies against the limits of political boundary lines. As a multipurpose image, the comparative chart acts as a visual guide to transcontinental exploration histories—inscribing botanical, mineral and climactic information

gathered through extensive field surveys. Hence, these charts conceive a universal perspective of measures and scales while also paradoxically investing in a picturing of far flung mountains as sedimentary companions.

The notion of a ‘world image’—plotted through such highly imaginative composite views—was superseded by territorial projections affirming national sovereignty. And yet, these speculative formations of *terra firma* may serve us today in reading alliances and echoes in a range of artistic positions that propose cartographic acts as modes of resistance and as a re-drawing of boundaries between land, labour and bodily encounter.

Across much of continental philosophy and western science, nature is treated as ontologically separate from human civilisation and the earth in turn as dead matter, systemically cut off from the organic processes of history-making. The mineralogical signature of desert sands traipsed in the sole of a traveller’s shoe, and the black dust inhaled into a miner’s lung inscribe the interpenetrative condition of a laboured earth. In these encounters, land refuses to be exploited as mute witness, piercing instead the stratigraphic surface of the body-politic. As Lebanese-American poet Etel Adnan writes, “History doesn’t drive on camels anymore but it’s still eating dust. Communication lines, since, are buried deep under the skin.”<sup>2</sup>

From the intensified time of extraction of the earth surface to the slow time of the planet and its re-composition, this exhibition traverses practices ranging from abstraction located in an archaeological imaginary to geocosmic choreography, from somatic narrations to etchings of a riverbank, hand-made books and rural design. Concluding with research contributions and artists’ notes, *A Special Arrow Was Shot In the Neck...* attends to high-intensity mining as a limit condition of geography and its image as a negative frontier.

Landings (Natasha Ginwala & Vivian Zihler)

## Endnotes

1. Marcel Mauss, *An essay on the gift: the form and reason of exchange in archaic societies*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969 (Reprint)
2. Etel Adnan, *Seasons*, Post-Apollo Press, 2008

## Etel Adnan

Since the 1960s Mount Tamalpais has been a compositional agent and an enduring presence within the paintings of poet, artist and writer Etel Adnan (1925-). The mountain is captured in swiftly executed renderings of its geological body, permitting a vision beyond the border-logs of geography itself. Its slow time stresses an orientation across decades of geopolitical upheaval and itinerant dwelling.

Adnan responds to political urgencies with acts of aesthetic solidarity. Her visual practice and her writing—in journal-ism and poetry—has remained committed to cultural readings of terrestrial struggle, inscribing deep affinities beyond the limits of translation. After training in literature at the Sorbonne, Paris, Adnan commenced painting while teaching in San Francisco in the 1950s. There—in response to the ongoing Algerian war of independence—she began to resist the colonial implications of writing in French and shifted her focus to painting in oil on canvas. Moving between Beirut, Paris and San Francisco over a number of decades, Adnan's creative output has likewise followed shifting itineraries.

Also included in this exhibition, Adnan's accordion-folded leporellos—which were commenced in the 1960s—serve as portable forms that capture the contingencies of travel. The folds of paper act as a compressed landscape that also surfaces as a device of memory and the lived experience of place.

## Boyle Family

*Kerb Study with Worn Tarmac, Manhole Cover and Coin* is part of Boyle Family's ongoing *Earth Studies* series. These works appear to apply a scientific model of sampling to points on the earth's surface as though assembling an archive of planetary habitus. They suggest 'core-samples' of the planet's skin, in this case its urban crust. In practice Boyle Family's methodology deploys chance operations; such as throwing a carpenter's square or throwing darts at a map blindfolded.

The *Earth Studies* started in 1964 amid the destabilisations of the counter-cultural movement. Boyle Family founders Mark Boyle (1934-2005) and Joan Hills' (1931-) earliest works included light projections with Soft Machine and Jimi Hendrix, as well as performances at the ICA, London. The zeitgeist stood on the eve of the 1969 moon landing

and the 1972 'blue marble' earth image captured by Apollo 17. The *Earth Studies* depart from this time of 'extra-terrestrial' accomplishment while at the same time denaturalisation processes had begun to overtake the notion of any pure ecology.

The meticulous *Earth Study* fabrications are the product of a cooperative family effort that remains grounded in the materiality of practice. As children Sebastian (1962-) and Georgia Boyle (1963-) joined their parents' work, later becoming equal accomplices in the Boyle Family project. The terms of kinship and inheritance thereby mark the *Earth Studies'* lateral archaeology of raw encounter.

## Chandralekha

Dancer-choreographer Chandralekha (1928-2006) was trained in the Indian classical dance form *Bharatanatyam* and performed as an exceptional soloist in the 1950s. She went on to engage with ancient Sanskrit and Tantric treatises, traditional Indian crafts and architecture, yoga and martial arts forms such as *Kalaripayattu* to conceive a unique practice of modern dance from the 1980s onwards. Her early work such as *Devadasi* (1961) and *Navagraha* (1971), with later group productions such as *Angika* (1985), *Lilavati* (1989) and *Prana* (1990) considered geometric balance and energy flow, planetary behaviour and the complexities of desire. She realised these investigations through a multi-dimensional approach to mythological symbolism, spirituality and abstraction.

Chandralekha's visual lexicon involved the production of screen-printed books and poster design, as well as multi-media projects and poetry. In the 1980s she produced hand-made books that are seminal projects in the dancer's work dealing with a body politics and a self-conceived ecofeminism, as part of the SKILLS collective with Dashrath Patel in Chennai (then Madras). These traverse motifs of the automation of the seed, the movement of the element of fire from primordial worship to means of earth destruction, and a vector piercing the abundance of wild nature through to the managed notation of the environment in leaf impressions.

Among Chandralekha's radical approaches to choreography lies the reference to the cultural practice of *Kolam*—floor patterns derived from sacred design that adorn household courtyards and thresholds in Southern India. The dancer-choreographer composed over

forty notebooks of *Kolam* patterns that performed as key motifs for dynamic relations between bodily time and floor spaces. The connected movement between the line and dot hence informed the dancer's temporal presence and intricate stage formations. This interest in experiments in line was shared by her long-time collaborator and companion Dashrath Patel, who documented and developed stage design for many of her dance productions.

## Comparative charts

Comparative Charts of mountains and rivers emerged in the 19th century as a cartographic trend, one not in aid of navigation itself but rather in surveying a 'world image' of measures and empirical limits. These maps propose a radical re-shaping of geographic features, bringing together disparate landforms upon a single page through a composite scaling.

Alexander von Humboldt's study of Mount Chimborazo within his profile of the Andes *Geographic der Pflanzen in den Tropenländern, ein Naturgemälde der Anden* (1805) is an important precursor to this cartographic genre. Based upon his extensive expedition and study of the Chimborazo, Humboldt mapped the mountain's vertical elevation noting its mineral, climate and vegetation features as well as plotting the elevation of several known mountains including Popocatepetl, Mont Blanc, Vesuvius, and Orizaba.



This vertical clustering of peaks presents a transcontinental community that belongs to that 'world image', disavowing the scale imposed by nations and jurisprudence. While such comparative maps drew upon the legacy of mineral elevation charts commonly used in early mining as well as nautical navigation charts of the 18th century, they also suggest a futuristic mode of 'remote sensing'—of knowing the mountain as a conflated and imagined topography in the terms of globality.

## Bonita Ely

*Life is Full of Situations* is an early piece within the River Murray series by Bonita Ely (1946–), an artist recognised as a forerunner of feminist and ecological concerns in Australia. Across etching, photography and performance Ely frequently returns to the Murray Darling—a river system that irrigates an immense agrarian region in the South-East of Australia and which fuelled the settler-colonial nation's economy in wool and cotton commodities through the 19th and early 20th centuries. Now recognised as a national ecological crisis—afflicted by salination and algal blooms—the Murray Darling is a heightened subject of state governance and political attention.

In a series of works in the late 1970s, Ely approached the banks of the river as a terrain of self-cartography, where the fold of biography, politics and place meet at a water-line. *Life is Full of Situations* composites four 'mappings' of the river, alternating between water's edge and the aerial gaze, each conveying a world of use and inhabitation. Here the river-bank finds itself reduced to an industrial resource, such that its entire terrain is deadened in pursuit of fuel and indeed of fuelling an idea of futurity. Ely's own drawings find the river as a personal horizon while also consciously addressing the embedded violence of long-drawn histories of settler occupation.

## Simone Forti

Rather than replacing one sensation or action with another, Simone Forti (1935–) positions her materials—whether they are images, sounds, words or movements—atop and among each other, constantly willing her audience to notice itself noticing. The piece *Onion Walk* was produced in 1961, at the time of Forti's landmark *Dance Constructions*, five radical choreographies based upon improvisation and chance that were first presented in the New York loft studio of Yoko Ono. The series also included the renowned choreography *Huddle*, a precursor to dance improvisation experiments in New York throughout the 1960s.

From these early minimalist compositions, through animal studies, news animations and land portraits, Forti has worked with an eye towards creating idioms for exploring natural forms and behaviours. Over the past fifteen years Forti has been developing *Logomotion*,

an improvisational dance/narrative form wherein movement and words spring spontaneously from a common source.

In *Onion Walk*, an onion is permitted to sprout perched on an empty bottle: "To observe the redistribution of weight while sprouting and loosing balance". This potential tipping over is the unsettled point of worlds in motion and the real task at hand, the necessity to become conscious of equilibriums via bodily presence and through a sociality-in-space. This movement-image is also indicative of the tipping point of the earth-body and of improvisational modes of performing within that planetary belly.

## Simryn Gill

Simryn Gill's (1959–) artistic practice often deals in the raw matter of place. Material residues of certain locations are gathered and ordered according to self-given logics. Against any fixed notion of origins or static dwelling they frequently reveal histories of migration, of the everyday conditions of global commerce and of the perennial incursions of organic processes into 'permanent' human structures.

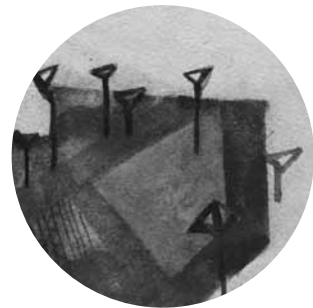
Gill increasingly draws inspiration from the area surrounding Port Dickson on the Malaysian coast of the Straits of Malacca, one of the world's most intensive shipping lanes. Slow and meticulous accumulations—in found materials and photographic images—suggest an attentive and associative method of re-narrating the world from this frayed edge of globalisation. Within the exhibition Gill contributes a set of cubes fashioned from termite-clays gathered around Port Dickson. Their colours annotate the incessant digestion and destruction of different materials such as trees, concrete buildings and soils. Indifferent to the integrity of property as such, these hand-crafted cubes perform an inverse extraction as blocks of a kind of non-value; perhaps as notes towards the wealth of time itself.

Books are an ever-present resource for Gill, both for their words and as a material substance. Within the exhibition multiple copies of two 20th century books act as sedimentary markers of the geographies of extractive labour. The prone condition of the human body and the earth's surface are evoked in a field-manual on uranium prospecting (published by the Australian Atomic Energy Commission & Department of National Development, 1957) and a 1936 text of Marxist geography by J. F. Horrabin titled *The Opening Up of the World*.

## Ganesh Haloi

Ganesh Haloi (1936–) decades-long artistic practice is comprised of a unique vocabulary of abstraction, inspired by techniques of mineral and vegetal pigment application and handmade paper-making practiced in the wide-ranging tradition of Indian miniature painting. Born in a suburban district of Eastern Bengal that is now part of Bangladesh, Haloi completed art school in Kolkata, and joined the Archaeological Survey of India soon after, as a senior artist in 1957. Over six years, he meticulously studied the caves and monasteries at Ajanta, an ancient Buddhist site. There he pioneered a comparative reading of the religious iconography of the cave murals and supplemented these with anthropological sketches of communities indigenous to the area.

This experience strongly informed Haloi's later artistic developments, which complicate the genre of landscape painting in order to express the dynamic relations between human civilisation, land use, and the modernist project of archaeology. Further underpinning his aesthetic language are the artist's early memories of the Brahmaputra delta region, rural-urban migration, and historical events such as the genocidal partition of the Indian subcontinent that began in 1947 and the Bangladesh Liberation War of 1971.



Alongside his longstanding painting practice Haloi has produced notebooks of poetry, sketchbooks with field studies from historical sites across India, as well as children's books. Here, his minimalist renditions drawn from elemental forms of nature—the line, the curve and the diagonal—expose a kinship between the human and the animal world.

## Camille Henrot

Camille Henrot works across mediums of film, drawing, sculpture and

architectural display, often in combination, by performing as a kind of analogue editor drawing upon materials from scientific, archaeological, popular culture and cosmological spheres. The artist has described her working method as “a form of personal anthropology”, through which she observes the migration of forms across knowledge structures as well as mythological circuits that animate the world’s coming-into-being.

Henrot began her film *Cynopolis* (2009) while on travels in Egypt about two years before the start of the revolution, considering the impact of Western travel literature on the region, such as Gustave Flaubert’s *Voyage en Egypte* (1951). Striving to infiltrate the view of a romanticised and ‘eternal’ Egypt, the artist presents composite scenes where stray dogs, rubbish dumps, rag-pickers and tourists interweave with the oldest complete stone building known to humankind, the Saqqara step pyramid of Djoser.

Shot on 8mm and transferred to video, the dog appears as a key intermediary. *Anubis*—the ancient Egyptian god of death, of the underworld and of embalming—took the form of a dog. The tomb of the Old Kingdom is watched over by the mythic canine as perhaps these structures may have themselves been first developed to protect corpses from foraging dogs. The impossibility of knowing haunts the persistent actions of human and animal interaction through an archaeology of rubble. The emblematic notation of the scavenger emerges here as a narrator of fragments, revealing history as a by-product of erosion among place and terrain, between ancient, geocosmic and contingent times.

## Yee I-Laan

*Empires of Profiteers and Their Glorious Ventures* is a work within the *Orang Besar* series of artist Yee I-Laan (1971), living and working in Kuala Lumpur. These works are set on the seas of the Southeast Asian archipelago, which serves as a material guide to histories of de-colonial resistance. This sea-territory sustained a maritime traffic that brought forth a contestation between the commercial desires of profiteers and the insular border-politics of the nation. The sea emerges as both a corridor of exchange and as a porous zone for a floating citizenry that may narrate itself as the ebb and flow of a tide.

The *Orang Besar* were the henchmen and privateers of the Sultans. They dictated political and economic structures that had centrifugal and centripetal dynamics

through distant trade and migration. With a ruthless territorial cunning their stateless political structures—formed through the treacherous conditions of the archipelago—continued to govern social dynamics beneath the grasp of colonial governance.



*Empires of Profiteers and their Glorious Ventures* is produced on *Batik*, a technique of fabric design through dye patterning that was traded in sarong-lengths for goods such as spices, medicines and slaves. The textile included in the exhibition is a sari-length, a measure pointing to a pre-national tier of commerce between the Malay Peninsula and South Asia, and to a body politic of circulatory relations.

## Jumaadi

Through drawing, painting and performance Jumaadi (1973-) crafts an evolving itinerary of solitary characters navigating the territorial and juridical shadow of an un-natural disaster. The gridded world of nation-states is traversed by these wandering personae whose task—as though in myth—is to bear the burden of geography as itself an ongoing process of displacement and of re-drawn lines of control.



*The End of Geography and the Beginning of Line* and *The Beehive Series* are within a body of work that departs from a 2006 mud-volcano disaster that caused mass displacement and the inundation of villages and farms in Jumaadi’s birth town of Sidoarjo, East Java. The figures traverse

the double abandonment of destroyed dwellings and of the dubious legal battle over ‘responsibility’ claimed against the destabilisation of gas-drilling or of distant seismic activity. The exhibition also includes photographs of the disaster-affected area taken by Jumaadi as journalistic field-notes, as well as a poem by Jumaadi’s collaborator Triyanto Triwikromo (1964-) that confronts the errant mobility of these figures with the subjective stasis of a landscape subsumed in mud.

Jumaadi’s drawings often originate in social landscapes documented as travel memories, short poems and drawings within visual diaries. Here these impressions are distilled with references to the buffalo-hide characters of *wayang kulit* (shadow puppetry). Dwelling indifferently upon the maps, the figures are a personification of the inverse space of the shadow, a field of projection convened by the artist in redrawing characters of terrain and place.

## Hortus Indicus Malabaricus

The *Hortus Indicus Malabaricus* (Garden of Malabar) was the most extensive atlas of the botanico-medical resources of South Asia prior to the 18th century. It is a key pre-Linnean text of plant classification that was published in Amsterdam between 1678-1693. *The Hortus Indicus Malabaricus* is renowned both for its exhaustive scale and for its numerous copper-plate engravings, detailing 742 plants with 792 specimen images across the twelve volumes. Part of the colonial scientific production of a global knowledge, these illustrations offer a multilingual treatise annotated in Malayalam, Konkani, Sanskrit, Latin and Arabic

The book was conceived by Hendrik van Rheede (1636-1691), the Governor of Dutch Malabar having ousted the Portugese from Cochin. Uniquely for his time, Van Rheede upheld indigenous Malibari scholarship and the first volume includes hand-written testimonials inscribed by a number of local physicians and scholars. Itty Achudem, of the ancient Kollatt family of traditional *Ezbava Ayurvedic* practitioners of Kerala, is placed first among these. Unlike the following Brahmin scholars, Achudem cites an ancestral palm-leaf text, the whereabouts of which is now unknown.

The images of *The Hortus Indicus Malabaricus* periodically break from the convention of botanical studies to depict tableaux with human figures and plants in graphic juxtapositions of scale and



relation. Volume three opens with a table that features a European figure, speculated to be van Reede, in dialogue with a South Indian figure, both overshadowed by a towering frond of coddapan palm. Their specimen drawings verge towards the abstraction of the line. They render plant and human bodies in suspended relations between 'native' and 'nature'. Echoing the pages of the lost palm-leaf text, the images remain on the edge of apocrypha.

## The Otolith Group

*Medium Earth* is a film by The Otolith Group that attunes itself to the seismic psyche of the state of California. It listens to its deserts, translates the writing of its stones, and deciphers the calligraphies of its expansion cracks. Its intensive surface readings offer the cinematic survey of a tectonic upheaval to come.

Within this volatile present, Californian 'earthquake sensitives' arise as corporeal instruments of premonition, prediction and pre-emption. Their bodies are in radical collusion with the geo-tectonic event sphere. They decode a symptomatology that confuses corporeal and chronological time, with the global architecture of techno-industrial earth sensing.

Founded by Anjalika Sagar and Kodwo Eshun in 2002, The Otolith Group has grown as a collaborative platform that seeks to rethink the dynamics of cultural production under conditions of accelerated, unstable and precarious global conditions. For over a decade, the Group have explored the moving image, the sonic and the aural, and aspects of various science fictions within the gallery. Their work in particular has focused on the essay film as an expanded form that seeks to inhabit events and histories that inform our present and future. Commissioned by REDCAT, Los Angeles, *Medium Earth* is the first work produced by The Otolith Group within an American context.

## Selma and Sofiane Ouissi

The relationship of hand and clay binds the multiple lives of *Laaroussa*, an ancient fertility symbol, a clay doll, a rural economy, a choreographic score, and a bond in gesture and labour. *Laaroussa* is the centre of a project established in 2010 by dancer, choreographers and film-makers Selma and Sofiane Ouissi (1975- and 1972-).

As part of their social and political commitments Selma and Sofiane established the *Popular Spaces Art Factories* in Sejnane—northwest Tunisia—with a group of sixty women potters. While supporting social cohesion in order to ground a collective practice, Selma and Sofiane stayed several times within the community and contributed to the construction of a permanent space to host their collective efforts. Here clay is pounded and moulded while child-care and kitchen roles are integrated parts of production. The ancestral knowledge and skill of the pottery is transmitted from mother to daughter and is based on resources available to hand.



From their ongoing observations, working relations and discussion, Selma and Sofiane developed a choreographic repertoire based upon the repetitive gestures carried out by the women in artistic production and everyday labour. The gestures index social relations and shared understandings, as well as the desire for betterment as a potential within the work of art-making itself. Set in the heart of Sejnane the film speaks to the committed relations between Selma, Sofiane and the group. In addition to these intersecting lives the video points to the 'hand-making' of land relations in the rural setting, encountered here as a site of poetic-political labour prior to and through the transition of national revolution.

## Prabhakar Pachpute

Prabhakar Pachpute's (1986-) artistic practice foregrounds the crossing between agrarian history, land politics, rural labour and the extraction industry. Born into a family with a three-generation history as miners in Chandrapur, Western India, Pachpute has drawn out complex linkages that place the mineral sediment at the core of individual and collective history. Through sculpture, stop-motion animation, drawing and installation the artist projects images that lie somewhere

between documentary and personally crafted allegory.

The loss of ancestral lands to the mining corporation, distressed migration from the village to the city, and the technologisation of labour 'below ground' are often given shape through charcoal murals that stress a material narration deploying the black matter that is the ultimate residue of excavation as well as the fuel to imagine otherwise. The chimney of a defunct textile mill, the safety light of a miner's hard hat illuminating a shadowy figure and the worker whose head has morphed into a digging tool dwell together as a scenography of surreal avatars.

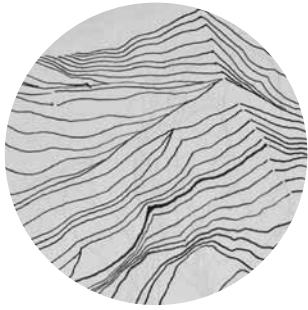


In his new site-specific work on this exhibition, *Land Escape*, Pachpute further considers the destruction of arable lands. Here coal is personified in absurd figures scurrying across the landscape. Having witnessed catastrophic farmer's suicides in the Vidarbha region of Western India, Pachpute reflects upon the homicide of land itself, its charred and scavenged body refusing to perform as stable horizon.

## Dashrath Patel

Dashrath Patel (1927-2010) was a painter, ceramist, designer, architect and photographer who continued to re-invent himself to conceive a highly diverse oeuvre that may be understood as a *Gesamtkunstwerk*, and whose vision has been instrumental in shaping design education in India. Patel's artistic practice evolved through narrative and impressionist paintings in the fifties when he was closely associated with Indian painters such as Tyeb Mehta, M.F. Husain and V. S. Gaitonde at studios of the Bhulabhai Desai Memorial Trust (Mumbai, then Bombay), as well as during his years of study at the College of Arts, Madras, the École des Beaux-Arts, Paris and in the Art Ceramics department in Prague. Later moving into abstraction via experiments with the line and mix media collages, Patel drew from motifs of popular culture, modernist and sacred

architecture as well as crafts traditions to create essential design forms and haptic images.



Thousands of Patel's line drawings have recently been compiled and published by cultural critic and archivist, Sadanand Menon. He notes: "The constant flow of lines through musings, meetings, discussions and planning sessions, day after day over five decades, was his substitute for words, diaries, memory sticks and data banks. It was the way Dashrath thought and remembered."

### Design Education and Exhibition Design

The National Institute of Design (Ahmedabad) was launched upon recommendation of *The India Report* (1958) by American designers Charles and Ray Eames in 1961, and the committed support of industrialists Gautam and Gira Sarabhai. Patel became a foundational figure at the institute, setting up departments and curricula in Visual Communication, Ceramics, Photography and Exhibition Design, as well as in critically linking the structural position of the school to wider cultures of design and its societal relevance. During his institutional tenure, Patel conceptualized large-scale exhibitions, museum design and international festivals showcasing post-independence Nehruvian India such as the India pavilion at New York World's Fair (1964) and the 'Festival of India' in Paris (1985) and in former USSR (1987).

### Photography

Dashrath Patel took up photography under the influence of eminent photographer and his friend Henri Cartier-Bresson in the late 1950s. Early lens-based works consist of documentation of industrial design and design processes, cultural life, and the city.

The exhibition presents Patel's photography series of the Sabarmati River from the 1960s—dyed textiles dry on the riverfront, the Sunday market unfolds, make-shift dwellings and labour processes

converge to render the river as a vital character in cultural life. These images, some of them aerial studies, were considered by Patel as the capturing of "a river of happenings" and made in the company of Cartier-Bresson, whose archive also includes a portfolio of the Sabarmati. With the waning of the textile industry and the rapid urbanization of Ahmedabad city, this river has been dammed and heavily managed to succumb to the blueprint of a state-led beautification committee.

Also seen here is the extensive crafts documentation carried out by Patel in the Mithila region of Bihar focusing on the traditional style of Madhubani painting in the 1960s. These rare images reveal the lives of rural artisans and the domestic setting of this craft form on the wall and floor spaces of mud homes as part of ritual and festive purposes. In subsequent years, the women artists were coaxed to transfer their practice onto paper and to replace the use of natural pigment with commercial paints by the Indian cultural bureaucracy and rising international interests. With the inundation of several villages where Madhubani artists lived, resulting from an embankment project along the Kosi River in Northern Bihar, the commercial circulations have further replaced much of the original practice and technique of Mithila painting.

### Rural Design School at Sewapuri

From 1981, Patel left the National School of Design and became involved with the Sagan Khsetra Vikas Samiti, a rural design unit based on Gandhian principles of village development and self-sufficiency, located in Sewapuri, Northern India. There he initiated a rural design school to re-vitalize the work processes, labour safety, lower costs and increase distribution of crafts products in leatherware, ceramics, woodenware, and vegetable dyed *Khadi* (handspun cloth) textiles.

Through the 1980s, Patel was also involved with the SKILLS collective of artists and media activists in Chennai (then Madras), extensively developing printing techniques, workshops and graphic communication for people's movements and street campaigns contesting issues around gender and ecological concerns as well as caste politics. The dancer-choreographer, Chandralekha was also a vital member of this collective.

### Mundus Subterraneus

Mundus Subterraneus was an encyclopaedic manuscript of the 'underground world' published in twelve volumes

between 1664 and 1678. A major contribution to a sciences of the earth by German Jesuit polymath Athanasius Kircher (1609-1680), its richly illustrated pages proposed a radically conceived 'geocosm' of subterranean creatures and geothermic monstrosities, as well as the first documented conception of an organic source of seismic and volcanic activity through internal fires and convulsive subterranean chambers.

Kircher had been a scholar at the *Collegio Romano*, a fulcrum of early modern science, where his vast output spanned music, astronomy, archaeology, magnetism, mechanics and geology, twelve European and Oriental languages and translation of Ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics. Kircher's deciphering of the earth's 'secrets' reported on the remains of cave-dwelling giants, as well as hidden and occult passages within the ocean's depths. In two globe cross-sections (included in Volume III) Kircher exposed the notion of a cavernous earth interior channeling fire and water to its surface through a network of fissures. A planetary system—with a blood of fire—proposes a corporeal circulation akin to the physiological discoveries of William Harvey (1578-1657) and perhaps a seismically attuned precursor to the Gaia hypothesis of James Lovelock (1919-).

In one of the first instances of geological fieldwork, the underground globe of *Mundus Subterraneus* was influenced by extensive travel throughout the volcanic regions of southern Italy. The shattering impact of Kircher's experience of earthquake in Calabria (1638) was backgrounded by the geopolitical crisis and displacement of the 30 Years War in his native Germany.

## EPILOGUE: EXTRACTION

### Angela Melitopoulos and Angela Anderson

The contribution of artist, film-makers and activists Angela Melitopoulos and Angela Anderson alludes to the popular 18th century melodic storytelling form of the *moritat* (cantastoria), allegorically intoning the devastated moral condition of gold mining within the Greek debt crisis. This picture story portrays the anti-productive value system of open-pit gold mining in Halkidiki, Greece, as a story of theft—of gold, water, and other natural resources. Here forests are asphyxiated

with fine dust cast out by extraction technologies that pursue formerly unprofitable gold seams. The pulverization of earth bodies is therefore a mirror figure to the abstraction of the shareholder as an age-old social and ecological system disrupted in the search for 'value' during the collapse of both a financial order and of state governance.

A gold ring and a potato—sourced from a cooperative farming project in the village of Megali Panagia—are markers of a shattered social contract and of a temporal rupture with its promise of futurity. The heap of soil resides as the flesh of earth, which undergoes a schism—a shattering while also being the assimilation of the rare element and the vegetal, the human imprint and the remainder of a post-prospecting present.

What then separates living soil from dead earth? This image performs as a material collage, in terms of producing a space where surfaces meet surfaces in attempting to wrestle with the question of the elemental order of life and death, between pulverisation and narrative emergence.

The accompanying video *Unearthed Disaster* narrates the profit-motive of catastrophe, where democratic structures are replaced by a repressive security apparatus. Here the loss of social memory remains tied to the loss of recognition of the land.

## Filipa César

Filipa César (1975-) contributes a series of visual notes and sound recordings that draw upon her ongoing research across decolonial histories and militant film, their geological contingency and bearing on present-day neocolonial land relations. This assemblage of maps, film-stills and sound are notations towards César's forthcoming *Mined Soil*—a project that takes aural and filmic measure of the Alentejo region in Portugal as it is subject to intensive vertical drilling for traces of deep gold mineralization.

Filmed within the unstable time of 'prospection', *Mined Soil* shifts across temporal registers to layer current land exploitation, with the region's history as an imperial and mercantile crossroad, and the slow time of geology itself. In her film, César proposes the microphone as a suspended geophone, probing the earth's underbelly as a sonorous frontier.

Alentejo is a subject of the legal exceptions and material impacts of 'Experimental Mining Leases' granted in northern Portugal following the economic crisis of 2008. In 1952 the region was also surveyed by Amílcar Cabral—a

student of Agronomy who would become a renowned revolutionary thinker and leader of the independence movement of Guinea Bissau. César traces the radicalisation of Cabral's thought into a geopoetics of insurgency through his soil erosion studies in Alentejo. As Cabral gathered political support across the countryside while carrying out agronomic studies for the Portuguese administration, the material narratives of rural soil conflate with the grounds of colonial governance.

## De Re Metallica

Georg Bauer (Georgius Agricola) is considered a founding figure of geology as a scientific discipline. His work paved the way for further systematic study of the earth—its rocks, minerals and fossils. Agricola made fundamental contributions to Mining, Geology and Metallurgy, Mineralogy, Structural Geology and Paleontology.

Agricola's *De Re Metallica* (On the Nature of Metals), published in 1556, reviewed all matters then known regarding mining, including equipment and machinery, means of finding ores—he rejected the use of divining-rods and other such magical means, methods of surveying and digging, assaying ores, smelting, mine administration and even the occupational diseases of miners. Agricola noted that rocks were laid down in definite layers, or strata, and that these layers occurred in a consistent order and could be traced over a wide area. This observation was one of the first contributions to stratigraphic geology, and one that would become critical in understanding the arrangement and origins of the rocks of the earth.

*De Re Metallica* was extensively illustrated, presenting interrelated diagrams of land surface, extractive technology and labour formation. The first English translation of *De Re Metallica* was published in 1912 by subscription in *The Mining Magazine* (London). The translators were Herbert Hoover, mining engineer and 31st President of the United States of America, and his wife Lou Henry Hoover, a geologist and Latinist.

## Rachel O'Reilly

Writer, poet, curator and critic Rachel O'Reilly was born in Gladstone, Queensland, a key industrial harbour exporting Australia's mineral wealth, most recently the 'unconventional' (fracked) gas boom accelerating death-threats to

the Great Barrier Reef ecology within world heritage protected zonings. Since the death of her father in 2010 she has become interested in the speculative linguistics and distancing, standardising and anonymizing mechanisms that link mining and container culture to material poetics.

O'Reilly's research project *The Gas Imaginary* (2012-), posits the mine itself as a kind of paternity—material attachment, symbolic economy and cipher—channeling memory and path-dependent will, productive and reproductive drives. Across poetry, installation and publication formats she responds to fracking's exceptional legal forms and norms, alongside the industries' own duplicitous rationality and aesthetic composure, from which the main form of defence from dispossession has been ahistoric surface inscriptions of settler colonial property rights.

*iteration #2* is a collaboration with Pa.La.Ce (Valle Medina and Benjamin Reynolds) and Rodrigo Hernandez that diagrams the love plots and debt drives of the gas' avant gardism. Across Australia, the absence of the underground mining body in fracking is precursored in coal's late transnational exportation with the dragline. Different viewpoints focalise antinomies key to the double negative of divestment.

## Stereoscopic Views of the California Gold Rush

With the advent of photography, the practice of Stereoscopy facilitated a dimensional view upon images, through an arguably simple proto-animation device called the Stereoscope. Described as 'general panoramas of the world,' stereographic images delivered visual impressions that transcended the limits of the photographic apparatus. They were used extensively to document major infrastructural and exploratory developments of the 19th and early 20th centuries.

In a strange historical coincidence, the Brewster Stereoscope, which greatly enhanced the spread of stereo photography, was invented in 1849, the same year the Gold-seekers called the *Forty-Niners*—immigrated to California from across the world upon hearing of James W. Marshall's discovery of a gold nugget in the American River, while he was constructing a sawmill for a Sacramento agriculturalist. These early stereographic views offer a ghostly acoustic image of extraction through the imaging of

high-pressure pipelines coursing through the Californian terrain that came to be called 'The Gold Mountain.'

The selection includes a stereographic photograph made by Carleton E. Watkins, one of the greatest photographers of the American landscape, and particularly of the Californian frontier during the Gold Rush. He made a special stereoscopic camera, and on at least one occasion captured himself with it, posing as a 'primitive' miner. It was a self-portrait he made for his children, most likely a performative sign, both of his times and of the inextricability of the mine from his life in photography.



***A Special Arrow Was Shot in the Neck...*** is curated by Vivian Zihel and Natasha Ginwala.

It was produced at DRAF by Nicoletta Lambertucci, with Rachel Cass and Benedict Goodwin, assisted by Sooanne Berner, Francesco Gorni, Harry Lawson, Sofia Lemos, Maite Marciano and Alex Roberts.

Graphic design for printed matter by Paul Gangloff. Printed by Pureprint.

**DRAF Curators' Series** supports international curators by commissioning special research-based projects, considering the curator as an author. Former participants include Cylena Simonds (UK), Raimundas Malasauskas (Lithuania), Mihnea Mircan (Romania), Mathieu Copeland (UK), Simone Menegoi and Chris Sharp (Italy and US) and Pablo Leon de la Barra (Mexico). Natasha Ginwala (India) and Vivian Zihel (Australia) are the seventh curators in the series.

*Curators' Series* is supported by Arts Council, England.

### July at DRAF

Afrikadaa is The Body: A Live Editorial Saturday 5 July, 4pm, free. Performances and discussion in celebration of the launch of *Corps Medium*, issue 7 of *Afrikadaa*, the bi-lingual online review of Afro design and contemporary arts.

The Otolith Group, *Medium Earth* (2013, UK, 41 min) Tuesday 22 July, 6.15pm at Rio Cinema, Dalston, free. Offsite screening of The Otolith Group's *Medium Earth*, which explores the seismic psyche of California.

### DRAF

David Roberts Art Foundation (DRAF) is an independent, non-profit foundation founded in 2007. It is directed and curated by Vincent Honoré. DRAF develops an international programme of contemporary art exhibitions, commissions and live events.

The David Roberts Art Foundation Limited is a registered charity in England and Wales (N° 1119738) and a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (N° 6051439) at 4th Floor Adam House, 1 Fitzroy Square, London, W1T 5HE. It is proudly supported by the Edinburgh House Estates group of companies.

### Address

Symes Mews  
37 Camden High St  
London, NW17JE

info@davidrobertsartfoundation.com  
+44 (0) 207 383 3004  
www.davidrobertsartfoundation.com

The nearest tube stations are Mornington Crescent and Camden Town.

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### Opening times

Thurs-Sat, 12-6 pm  
Tues & Wed by appointment

### Free admission



**TAE MAP HOUSE**

**cura.**



MILANI GALLERY





## Etel Adnan

*Untitled*  
2004  
Ink on paper  
17.8 × 25.4 cm

*Untitled*  
Circa 2000  
Oil on canvas  
22.9 × 30.5 cm

*Untitled*  
Circa 2000  
Oil on canvas  
22.9 × 30.5 cm

All works courtesy of the artist and Callicoon Fine Arts, New York

## Boyle Family

*Kerb Study with Worn Tarmac, Manhole Cover and Coin, London*  
2005  
Mixed media  
183 × 183 cm

Courtesy of the David Roberts Collection, London

## Chandralekha

*Postcards: Kriti – Women's Workshop of Creative Expression*  
1983  
Screen-printed postcards  
Publisher: SKILLS, Madras

*One More News*  
1987  
Screen-printed book  
Publisher: SKILLS, Madras

*Navagraha* (production photographs)  
1971  
Conceived and choreographed:  
Chandralekha  
Dancers: Chandralekha and Kamadev  
Photography: Dashrath Patel

*Navagraha* (production booklet)  
1971  
Conceived and choreographed:  
Chandralekha  
Dancers: Chandralekha and Kamadev

*Leaves*  
1981 (facsimile edition, 2014)  
Hand produced book  
Publisher: SKILLS, Madras

*Fire Counter-Fire*  
1983  
Custom printed and bound book  
Publisher: SKILLS, Madras

*Audio recordings compilation*  
1990s and 2000s  
Edited audio, various sources: Television interview on the production *Lilavati* (1990), documentary on the production *Sharira* by Ein Lall (2003), interview with Sadanand Menon, last given, March 2006. Digital audio, 34 min 10 sec

All materials courtesy of Sadanand Menon and the Chandralekha Archive, SPACES, Chennai

## Comparative Charts



J.T.Thomson  
*A Comparative View of the Heights of the Principal Mountains*  
1814  
63.5 × 50.8 cm

Joseph Meyer  
*Geological and Biological Survey*  
1845  
58.42 × 20.32 cm

Augustus Mitchell  
*Lengths of the Principle Rivers of the World*  
1846  
33.02 × 40.64 cm

All maps courtesy of The Map House, London

## Bonita Ely

*Life is Full of Situations*  
1978  
Etching, six plates  
104 × 73.6 cm

Courtesy of the artist and Milani Gallery, Brisbane

## Simone Forti

*Onion Walk*  
1961 (2014)  
Glass bottle, sprouting onion

Courtesy of the artist and LA Box gallery, Los Angeles

## Simryn Gill

*Notations on value*

Cubes made from clay taken from various termite mounds in the vicinity of the artist's studio in Port Dickson, Malaysia, 2014

Ten copies of James F Horrabin, *The Opening Up of the World... With 45 Maps*, (1936, Methuen: London), from the artist's personal collection

Four copies of *Prospecting and Mining for Uranium in Australia: Notes for the Guidance of Prospectors*, (Australian Atomic Energy Commission & Department of National Development, 1957) from the artist's personal collection

All materials courtesy of the artist

## Camille Henrot

*Cynopolis*  
2007–2009  
Video Super 8 film and DVDCAM  
10 min

Courtesy the artist and Kamel Mennour, Paris

## Yee I-Laan



*Empires of Privateers and Their Glorious Ventures*

2010  
Direct digital mimaki inkjet print with acid dye, batik chop Remazol Fast Salt dyes on 100% silk twill  
132 × 400 cm

Courtesy of the artist

## Ganesh Halo

*Untitled*  
2009  
Gouache on paper  
17 × 26 cm

*Untitled*  
2007  
Gouache on paper  
29 × 39 cm

*Untitled*  
2006  
Gouache on paper  
25 × 35 cm

*Untitled*  
2006  
Gouache on paper  
27 × 35 cm

*Untitled*  
2007  
Gouache on paper  
18 × 25 cm



*Untitled*  
2012  
Gouache on paper  
27 × 35 cm

*Frogs and a Snake*  
1995  
Book  
Saraswati Art Printers, Delhi

*Chalte Chalte (On the Way Home)*  
2005  
Book  
Saraswati Art Printers, Delhi

*Untitled*  
2014  
Watercolour on paper, series of eight  
17 × 17 cm

All works courtesy of the artist and Akar Prakar, Kolkata

## Jumaadi



*The End of Geography*  
2014  
Pencil on found map  
245 × 200 cm

*Beehive series, (nos. 1, 2, 3, 4)*  
2014  
Pencil on found map  
38 × 45 cm

*Two photographs of Sidoarjo in the aftermath of the mud-volcano disaster, taken during travel by the artist and Siobhan Campbell in 2008*  
Colour print  
13 × 10 cm  
Triyanto Triwikromo  
*The Mud Purgatory*  
2008  
Publisher: Gallery 4A, Sydney (publication accompanying solo exhibition by Jumaadi)

All works courtesy of the artist

## Hortus Indicus Malabaricus

Hendrik van Rheede  
1678–1693  
Recto, *Hortus Indicus Malabaricus*, Volume 1  
Verso, *Hortus Indicus Malabaricus*, Volume 1  
Codda-pana (Latin). Tab. 1, Vol. 3; Tab. 2, Vol. 3; Tab. 3, Vol. 3  
Pee-amerdu (Latin), Pars 7, Table 20  
Ballam pulli (Latin). Fig. 23  
Publisher: Joannis van Someren and Joannis van Dyck, Amsterdam

Courtesy of the Wellcome Trust, London

## Selma and Sofiane Ouissi



*Laaoussa*  
2011  
HD video, 12 min

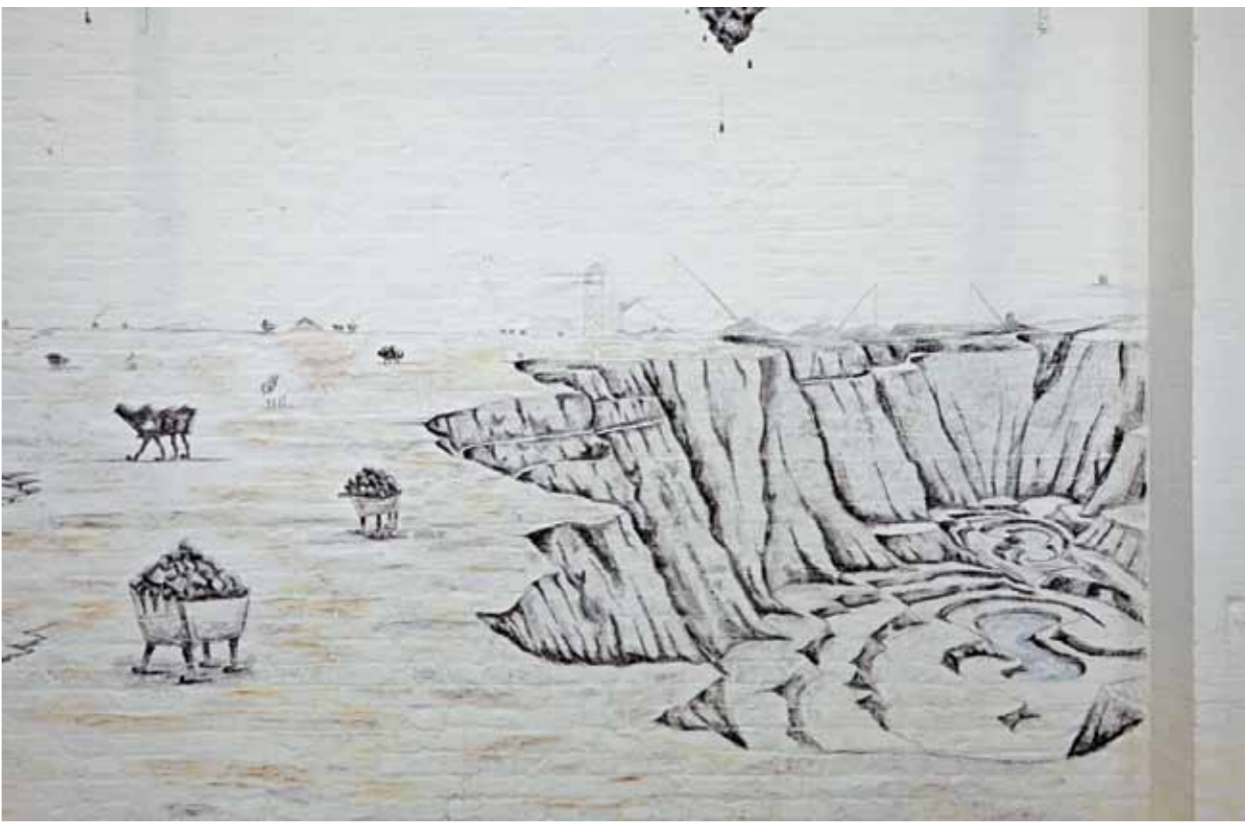
*Hand-gesture choreographic notation: Laaoussa*  
2012  
Choreographic notes on card  
29.7 × 40 cm

*Performance score: Laaoussa*  
2012–2013  
Choreographic score on manuscript paper  
20 × 29.7 cm

*Popular Spaces Art Factories, Sejnane*  
2012–2013  
Photographs: Mongi Aouinet for L'Art Rue  
12.7 × 17.8 cm

All material courtesy of the artists and L'Art Rue Association, Tunis

## Prabhakar Pachpute



*Land Escape*  
2014  
Charcoal mural, direct application on wall  
398 × 997 cm

Courtesy of the artist and Experimenter, Kolkata

## Dashrath Patel

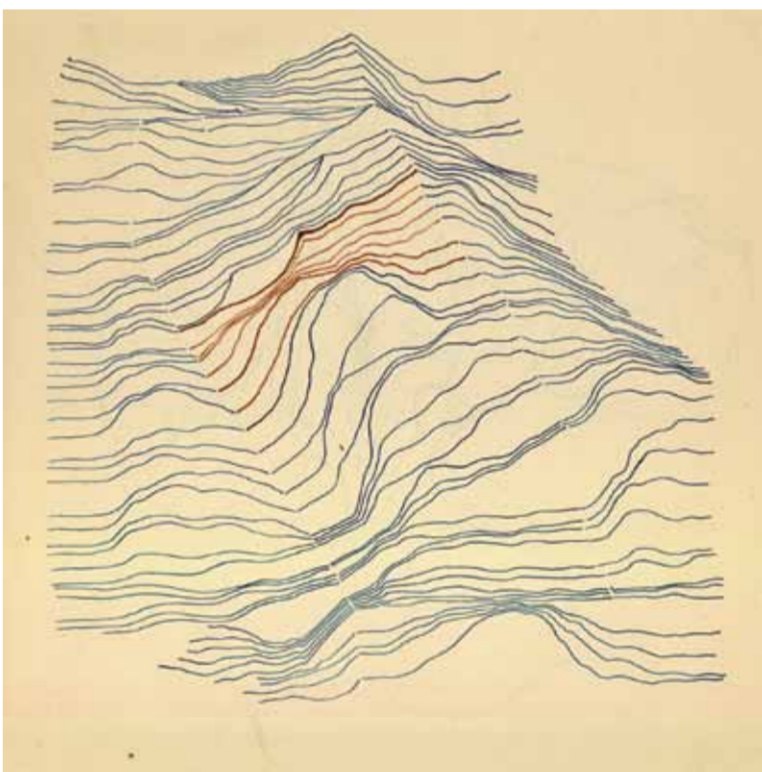
*Sabarmati River Photographs*  
1960s  
Photographs of the Sabarmati riverfront in the 1960s with dyed textiles drying on the riverbank (selection).  
Photographs: Dashrath Patel

*Line drawings: 1950s*  
Hard-cover book, single edition  
Published: Sadanand Menon, Spaces, Chennai

## Mundus Subterraneus

Athanasius Kircher  
1664  
Systema Ideale Pyrophyliaciorum  
Published: Apud Joannem Janssonium à Waesberge and viduam Elizaei Weyerstraet, Amsterdam

Courtesy of The Map House, London



*Line drawings: 1970s*  
Hard-cover book, single edition  
Published: Sadanand Menon, Spaces, Chennai

*Product photographs from Sewapuri Workshops, Design and Ceramics Studios*  
1984–1991  
Photographs: Dashrath Patel

*In the Realm of the Visual*  
1998  
Exhibition catalogue, curator Sadanand Menon  
Published: National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi

*Sewapuri Workshops at Rural Design School*  
1984–1991  
Documentation photographs  
Group tuition within the workshops of the Rural Design School established by Dashrath Patel in 1981 as an addition to the Gandhian rural development unit in Sewapuri, near Varanasi.

*Vegetable dye textiles*  
1980s  
Rural Design School, Sewapuri:  
Vegetable dyeing workshop

*Madhubani/Mithila Photographs*  
1960s  
A photo-essay of sixty-nine photographs taken in the Madhubani/Mithila region, Bihar, India, in the mid-1960s (selection)  
Photographs: Dashrath Patel

All works and materials courtesy of Sadanand Menon

## EPILOGUE: EXTRACTION

## Angela Melitopoulos And Angela Anderson

*Unearthing Disaster*  
2014  
Installation  
Shattered glass plate  
Wedding ring case  
Soil, from Halkidiki, Greece  
Potato, from cooperative farming project, Megali Panagia, Halkidiki, Greece  
Satellite image of the Skouries gold mine Halkidiki, Greece  
Photograph of plants covered with pulverized earth alongside a mining road in the Skouries forest, Halkidiki, Greece  
Video, HD 29 min

All materials courtesy of the artists

## Filipa César

*Mined soil*

*Map of soil / map of erosion Cuba, Alentejo, Portugal* in Amílcar Cabral, *Estudos Agrários de Amílcar Cabral*, Instituto de Investigação Científica Tropical, Lisboa e Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisa, Bissau; 1988, Lisboa/Bissau

*Geological map of Guinea Bissau* in A. J. da Silva Teóxeora, Os Solos da Guiné Portuguesa, Junta de Investigações do Ultramar

Stills from footage shot at the gold mining site Boa Fé, Portugal  
November 2014

Excerpt from the soundtrack *Mined Soil*, 2014

All materials courtesy of the artist

## De Re Metallica

Georgius Agricola  
1556  
Publisher H. Froben and N. Bischoff, Basle  
Folio 154: A—Axes. B—Levers. C—Toothed drum. D—Drum made of rundles. E—Drum in which iron claws are fixed.  
*Folio 171: A—Descending into the shaft by ladders. B—By sitting on a stick. C—By sitting on dirt. D—Descending by steps cut in the rock.*

Images courtesy of the Wellcome Library, London

## Rachel O'Reilly

*The Gas Imaginary, iteration # 2, with Rodrigo Hernandez and Pa.La.cE (Valle Medina and Benjamin Reynolds)*  
2014  
Riso on paper, ink, pencil

Courtesy of Rachel O'Reilly

## Stereoscopic Views of the California Gold Rush

Photographer Unknown  
*Placer Mining, Brown's Flat, Tuolumne County*  
1863–1868  
stereographic photograph (facsimile edition)  
Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

Photographer Unknown  
*Placer Mining, Panning Out*  
1865–1876  
stereographic photograph (facsimile edition)  
Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

Carleton E Watkins  
*Primitive Mining the Old Rocker. C.E. Watkins Posing as Miner*  
1880  
stereographic photograph (facsimile edition)  
Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

The Curators would like to thank the Founder, Director and staff of DRAF for their commitment, collaboration and support in realising the exhibition, as well as the following individuals for their invaluable help and inspiration: Define Ayas, Anke Bangma, Hendrik Folkerts, Gabrielle Schleipen, Margarida Mendes, Fernando Garcia Dory, Qinyi Lim, Rene Ridgeway, Rosalind Morris, Elizabeth Povinelli, Denise Ferreira da Silva.

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**Chandralekha**  
Sadanand Menon  
**Bonita Ely**  
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**Simone Forti**  
LA Box Gallery (Jacqueleine Tarquinio)  
**Simryn Gill**  
Jane Eyles  
**Ganesh Halo**  
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**Camille Henrot**  
Marie Heilich  
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**Juma-adi**  
Siobhan Campbell

**Angela Melitopoulos and Angela Anderson**  
**The Otolith Group** (Kodwo Eshun and Anjalika Sagar)  
Yunjoo Kwak  
Hannah Lilley  
LUX Artists' Moving Image  
Rio Cinema  
**Selma and Sofiane Ouissi**  
Dhouha Bokri  
L'Art Rue Association  
**Prabhakar Pachpute**  
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**Rachel O'Reilly**  
Rodrigo Hernandez  
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