

# CORIOLIS EFFECT

## MIGRATION & MEMORY

International Residency | 16 Aug - 4 Oct 2016

### OPEN STUDIO DAY | 29 SEPTEMBER 2016 \_ 6:30 - 9:00 PM

**Andrew Ananda Voogel, Chibuike Uzoma, João Orecchia, Liza Grobler, Mahesh Shantaram, Malini Kochupillai, Persis Taraporevala & Swati Janu**

*What happens to your identity when you lose your place of belonging? What are memories of home and place that you carry with you? How does the collective memory inform a sense of belonging?*

With these questions in mind, the second edition of *Coriolis Effect* extends its original curatorial intention of tracing cultural and historical exchanges in the Indian Ocean Worlds, and invites speculations on ideas of movement, displacement and the formation of new and informal models of 21st century communities. The artists selected for the residency represent a diverse geographical spread, and have approached the project concept through varied and abstracted perspectives. The artists also employ an incredible diversity of media and material into their practice including photo and video installations, live interactive-media projects, experimental sound performances and textile-based immersive sculptural works.

For the Open Studio, Swati Janu will continue to ruminate upon her central concern: informal modes of media sharing via imaginative uses of cheap, low-tech electronic devices. Closing her temporary Khirkee storefront, Janu will transpose the archive of songs, movies and video clips that she has been collecting over the past few weeks into public spaces around Khoj, inviting the local community and audience to curate and re-play live content. During her time at the storefront, Janu continuously ruminated upon her relationship and position within this charged public space, observing the gaze that she both received, and projected. The notion of the 'gaze' and movement within public space has also been pivotal in Andrew Ananda Voogel's work. In addition to his ongoing sculpture based pieces which addresses his durational interest in migration and transient cultures, Voogel will present a set of distinguishing 'phrases & keywords' in the form of carefully embroidered textile panels, which for him become emblematic of understanding and responding to the viewership and voyeurship in the context of Delhi. Both Voogel and fellow resident Liza Grobler have extensively explored the possibilities of incorporating textile, embroidery and other locally sourced and produced methods into their work. Grobler responds to the ideas of Coriolis Effect through a complete abstraction of form. Her studio transforms into a viscerally immersive space, where one can reflect on her notion of migration as a movement of ideas and inspiration. Grobler incorporates a variety of rich, brightly coloured materials and textures into her work, including pipe-cleaners, embroidered fabrics, glittering paper cards as well as multiples of her intimate abstracted paintings and drawings.

Chibuike Uzoma, an emerging photographer and visual artist from Lagos, keenly observes his experiences in the process of leaving home, and making space in a new environment. His work during the residency has been a series of layered observations. Often positioning his own self within the various stages of the work, one can think of the meta - manipulated quality of his photographs and drawings as a exaggerated form of digital collage. For Uzoma, memory is very important, and through his work he is attempting to express and capture the 'flexibility and translation of memory into vision'. Similar to Uzoma, Joao Orecchia has also developed a set of works which are a very organic response to his time in the spaces of Khoj, Khirkee and New Delhi. As a sound artist, Orecchia has developed number sonic landscapes; abstract auditory sketches which extend and reconfigure the rhythms and tones of our streetscape. During the residency, Orecchia would play these recorded loops over FM 88, a pirate radio station accessible only in the direct vicinity of Khoj and its' makeshift broadcast. During the Open Day, he will performing moments from within these sonic archives, played on various home-made instruments which bring together his nuanced understanding of interactive technology with locally sourced non-traditional instruments.

Mahesh Shantaram and Malini Kochupillai, respectively from Bangalore and New Delhi are both exploring the medium of photography and of all the residents, confront the contemporary reality of 'Africans in India' from the most head-on perspective. Kochupillai has been a Khirkee resident for several years; she's had the opportunity to make strong connections with several of the African migrants who have occupied spaces in Khirkee and has been photographing the intimate spaces of homes, kitchens and beauty parlours. Via the residency, she is working to collate her archive of stories, interviews and memories into the format of multi-lingual local newspaper. Primarily working as a photojournalist, Shantaram's current project was first triggered when he became aware of an incident of racially charged attack against a Tanzanian female student in Bangalore early in 2016. From that time onward, Shantaram became intrigued by the lives of various African students enrolled in institutions across the country, and has slowly been travelling to different cities in attempt to capture the stories of these individuals. The presentation of his work at Khoj presents an opportunity to delve deeper into the complex issues of discrimination, race and systems of power and reflect upon the questions posed in the framing of the *Coriolis Effect* residency

*(text by sitara chowfla, 2016)*

## **Andrew Ananda Voogel**

### ***Look With Love*** (Working Title)

Freedom to safely move through public space becomes possible when there is a mutual agreement between those present and those not present to uphold and maintain a certain level of societal infrastructure. This includes the personal, political, economic and physical notions that govern our understanding of shared space.

Freedom and safety in publicly shared space is threatened when individual and minority interpretations of who actually constitutes “the public” become a dominant discourse.

The media, government and community organizations oftentimes step in to facilitate an understanding in relation to civil discourse in publicly shared space. With exception of community organizations, the media and the government generally don’t have an in-depth understanding of the day to day personal encounters that work to define a person’s public sphere, as well as their perceived identity while moving through shared public space.

Over the past six weeks of the Coriolis Effect Project, I have researched rhetoric and vocabulary local to Khirkee and Delhi that associates itself with personal encounters in public space.

Through a series of interviews, conversations, and collection of media headlines, I have pieced together a small appendix of vernacular phrases that I feel broadly discusses the concept of the contemporary gaze in India. At times confrontational, at other times playful, each phrase is intended to facilitate a discussion about how we see each other in the public/personal sphere.

Kindness, violence, love, tragedy, romance and chaos all exist on the streets of Khirkee. In some ways, it exists as a grand microcosm to the growing urban challenges of Delhi and the broader world. As an extremely multicultural space, Khirkee has provided an intriguing and diverse platform to work through notions of the gaze, public space and civil conduct.

In some way, I hope to have sparked a small conversation of how we may play with our own gaze, in order to cultivate a broader understanding; that we are all humans, passing each other by, on a small chaotic highway toward future understanding.

*(text by andrew ananda voogel, 2016)*

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## **Chibuike Uzoma**

### ***Rose Garden***

#### ***West to the Horn is the Heart***

The two projects executed during the Coriolis Effect residency at Khoj, New Delhi, are both an extensions to projects started in Vienna and Nigeria. Uzoma's execution of any project depends on how he react to a space and vice versa. This informs his instincts and projects are birthed in the forms and manner they appear.

The drawings, *Rose Garden* focused on movements of people and the flexibility of memory. The works attempt to highlight the countless obvious or invented reasons why people move and how fluid memory is and could suddenly even become a vision or dream. The drawings were done in addition and subtractive manner using a range of drawing and painting materials and random web contents addressing migrations.

In the extension to the project *West to Horn is the Heart*, Uzoma enacted advice and suggestions which is frequently received in Nigeria, when one is about to embark on a journey out of the country. These self-performance portraits were done by bringing some part of the City of Delhi into the studio where he could be free to explore, dance and freeze his ideas.

Just like migration, the issue of racism or matters that has to deal with the African continent and race is quite vast and diversely complex to come into a single context. Uzoma narrows his search to personal and collective experiences.

*(text by chibuike uzoma, 2016)*

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## **João Orecchia**

João Orecchia is exploring the audible patterns of movement of Delhi through a number of sonic works. Broadcasting from the rooftop of Khoj to the immediate area around the building will be a series of sonic sketches - deconstructions of the sounds and rhythms of navigations around Khirkee and central Delhi. In the studio will be a meditative interactive installation and revolving performances on electro-acoustic musical instruments built by João during the residency. The instruments are built from found sounds, field recordings and interactive technology. As a whole, these works represent fleeting and disjointed impressions of city in constant motion.

*(text by joão orecchia, 2016)*

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## Liza Grobler

### ***Greener Pastures: There are worlds out there***

The project has to do with how IDEAS travel. Much like viruses, ideas spread across borders and fluidly flits between fact to fiction. Every small interaction helps this migration along, every association leaves a trace. Physical space and memory co-exist. Small actions replicated over a long period of time creates mass. Material used, include wedding invitations, pipe cleaners and seeds to produce immersive spaces in which the viewer becomes an active participant: I am making a gold room to reflect the viewer, a giant drop to hide in, and 200 grasspods that will migrate through Khirkee. I seek to show connections. Connections between people. Connections between place: Cape Town where the idea was born, and New Delhi, where the idea has grown.

We migrate for basic needs, but we are the subordinates of our ideologies. The project stems not from a desire to prove that we are the same, but that we are all inter-dependable. It is not a search for the ultimate route, nor for the correct answer, but instead a search for better questions; for multiple answers.

*(text by liza grobler, 2016)*

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## Mahesh Shantaram

### ***Looking at You Looking at Me***

#### ***::: The African Portraits :::***

*“In early February this year, I woke up to the news of a mob attack on a Tanzanian student in Bangalore. It was not the first incident of violence against Africans in India, but this particular incident made me curious about Africans in India, and through them, the harsh truths about racism in our country.”*

Since that day, Shantaram has been travelling (Bangalore, Manipal, Hyderabad, Jaipur, and Jalandhar) to meet African students learn more about their experiences in India. As he makes friends, he also make portraits to preserve that encounter in a way that he as a photographer knows best. A portrait can have the power to make one stop and stare (which anyway is a national pastime) and evoke the viewer’s curiosity about the life and condition of the subject.

As a community, Shantaram has discovered that foreign students are the most vulnerable. They are part of a loosely regulated industry which brings with it certain insecurities and puts them at the mercy of The System. These students, leaders of tomorrow’s Africa, look at India as some sort of mecca for higher education. College years are typically the best years of our lives—full of innocence, adventure, experimentation. But because of their skin colour and our legendary prejudice against dark skin, the African student’s life in India resembles a prison sentence. Soon, apart from their student commitments, they take on additional roles: victim, survivor, activist, revolutionary.

When Shantaram started this project in Bangalore, it was a simple matter of meeting Africans to get to know more about them. His time in Delhi and at Khoj, has unravelled many more stories. The many conversations he has had so far with Africans as well as other scholars have served to both broaden and deepen a perspective into complex issues. Through this project—both the portraits and the accompanying stories—Shantaram want to raise awareness of how racism and xenophobia is such a waste of human potential.

*“We are at the cusp of coming to terms with the idea of racism and how to deal with it. As a photographer and artist, I will use my power and ability to draw national attention to the matters of racial discrimination. Africans are accustomed to meeting Indians in hostile spaces—police stations, TV studios, and hospitals—whenever there is an “incident”. As this work travels across India, it will bring together Indians and Africans for a conversation in a space of art and culture. Imagine that.”*

*(text by Mahesh Shantaram, 2016)*

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## **Malini Kochupillai**

### ***Searching for Common Ground***

Malini Kochupillai’s project for the residency is a public art intervention in the form of an accessible and irreverent tabloid. Kochupillai has spent her time at the residency collecting and curating a series of stories and photographs that link India and the African continent in interesting ways, presenting a more nuanced and multi faceted view of the African Diaspora.

As an unintimidating object of daily perusal, the Newspaper as an object of art has the potential to break the barriers that traditionally stand between art and the general population. The collection of stories and essays introduces the reader to a few of the different countries that constitute the continent, presents personal accounts of struggles and triumphs, and references to the historic relationship between India and Africa, to seek a common ground between communities seemingly at odds, but deeply connected through our shared humanity.

*(text by Malini Kochupillai, 2016)*

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## **Swati Janu**

Janu’s project experiments with informal modes of media sharing in the neighbourhood of Khirkee Extension through the temporary rental of a local phone recharge store. Acting as public hubs of information exchange, these shops often operate as convenience stores for everything from gas cylinder refills, phone repairs to online ticket reservations. Equipped with a computer, most provide media downloads on mobile phones at 5 to 10 Rs for a movie or several megabytes of songs and video clips in Indian cities. Less than a hundred metres from Khoj, her studio in the street created a

multi-cultural archive of songs, movies and video clips from her 'customers' over the duration of the residency.

Co-curated by the community through a barter system of media content, this intervention in Khirkee's micro-economy set up a digital hub for the migrant communities from different Indian states, African nations, Nepal and Afghanistan. From Bhojpuri films to 'Madrasai' films dubbed in Hindi, from Bangla to Naija music, from 'bewafa' and 'bhakti' songs to rap music – a cultural mash-up was played and projected across the street. The shop also became a space for conversations over the counter, for an exchange of stories, stories of here and stories of home. The phone memory cards became associated with the memories people carried with them.

For the open day, Swati's project will reference her practice based research process of the communal media exchange and its co-curation. The installation invites the visitors and community to explore and interact with the multi-lingual, multi-cultural digital library of Khirkee. Her project also talks of the resourcefulness displayed by the community as a response to inadequate facilities, through its creative amalgamation of cheap China made electronic devices on which runs the informal network of pirated digital content.

*(text by swati janu, 2016)*

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