

Travel to,  
into and  
through Art



A TRAVEL AND ART EXPERIMENT



KALGA, HIMACHAL PRADESH

PARTNERS AND ASSOCIATES (2017)

swiss arts council

prohelvetia



Ausstellungsraum  
Klingental



Partner event as part of a bilateral celebration  
launched by the Swiss Embassy in India (2017-18)



Swiss-Indian  
Friendship  
Connecting Minds  
Inspiring the Future  
1948 - 2018



# KALGA - 5


An Oasis Of Expression  
At The Top Of The World

## The Vision

Establishing a Himalayan village as one of the choicest destinations in the world to imagine, produce or experience art, with long-term ecological and sustainable impact


## The Mission

Creating a new global benchmark for ecological and sustainable impact to define and drive rural tourism with art and community as a social catalyst



Kalga-5 and KYTA began as a travel and art experiment and our journey and the people we have met along the way have embraced and strengthened our founding principles. We look up over the ridges for inspiration to continue to energise a community of creators and appreciators to come together, live, share, exchange, take responsibility and establish a new cultural identity for the muse Himalayan village.

In 5 years, although being a very short period for such a project, we intend to deliver this cultural ecosystem within the larger context of safeguarding Kalga's essence as a Himalayan village.





The Plan - 5 Years. 5 Residencies. 5 Facilities.

**KALGA - 5**  
(2014 - 2018)

## Residencies

- 5 Travel and Art experiments
- Experimental Resident and Visiting artists across disciplines
- Intimate Cultural, Knowledge and Skill Exchange with partner countries as well as with the world at large through solo artists and institutional associations
- Local Material Research
- Transdisciplinary projects

5 Annual Editions of KYTA - to introduce artists from around India and the world to Kalga - our Himalayan muse village. Every edition brings together an equal number of Indian and international artist besides visiting artists to produce new works and experiences in the village that in turn introduces the muse to the wider world over the internet. The artworks and documentation become part of Kalga's private art collection.

## Art Collection

- Open Air Visual Art and Installation Museum
- Indoor Artworks
- Electronic Archive
- Publications

Kalga's private art collection consists of artworks that are being produced by artists during residencies or while using the creative facilities.

The artworks reside all over the village, its houses and structures, and in an electronic archive of recordings, videos, books and other forms of digital artworks.

## Facilities

- Sculpture
- Audio Environment
- Wood and Stone Craft
- Extreme Subject Library
- Artificial Intelligence Lab

A minimum of 5 facilities are under planning and development to establish a year-long relationship between Kalga and creators. As a group of facilities, the overall objective is to create stimuli for practical, theoretical and intellectual discourse in one of the most beautiful villages on the planet.

All facilities will function without any assistance involving artists to connect to and administrate the facility while in residence. Artworks produced using these facilities continue to build Kalga's private art collection over the years





Established in October 2016 by Rashi Jain (resident artist - Kyta 2014), Karma Studio now invites sculptors and potters through the year to work in Kalga and produce small-scale sculptures using the studio space and the traditionally-designed and handmade kiln.

Samples of clay from different parts of the surrounding region and Kalga are also collected in the studio as part of the Karma Studio's material research.



# KARMA STUDIO

Pottery Studio and Clay Research Lab



# KYTA

KYTA (Karma Yatri Travel and Art) is an experimental residency program currently based in the Himalayan village of Kalga. The focus of the residency is to research and explore the relationship between travel, living, culture, art and expression. The artistic focus is on the process and the confluence of various artistic practices and thought streams across experimental human endeavour.

As a framework, we invite multiple artists from various disciplines and nationalities every year to produce a unified artistic result within a finite time period. Alongside, we are building associations and partnerships with artists, projects and institutions globally to expand the scope of cultural exchange with India.

## **Cross-Disciplinary**

Exploring artistic intersections across cultures, practices, styles and thinking patterns with invitations to 5 Indian and 5 International artists every year

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## **Collaborative**

Every resident artist is compelled to make a short presentation of their work and a workshop of their choice in the first two weeks resulting in a process-oriented collaborative process

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## **Open Source**

Capturing micro and macro processes through an intensive documentation and archival process to follow, visualise and share the larger picture

## **Travel and Art**

Researching relationships of micro-communities through the artists as they live, share and exchange with each other, the Himalayan village and its surroundings

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## **Experimental**

Challenging artistic production with the lack of access to special materials or tools shifting the focus to experimental processes and the collaborative potential

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## **Open Canvas**

Every year, the artists and the larger group decide the themes of their works, and are encouraged to experiment with forms and formats that is not part of their original practice

# KYTA

A Brief Timeline

**April 2014:** Established the residency program with its first edition featuring 5 Indian and 5 international artists - the transdisciplinary resident group was free to choose everything from the form, theme and narrative of the collaborative artistic result

**April-May 2014:** Hosted 5 visiting artists at KYTA 2014 practicing across a broad canvas but not limited to astrophysics, intellectual property law, curating in South Asia, mixology and music technology

**May 2014:** Showcase of KYTA 2014 at Zorba the Buddha in New Delhi premiering the artistic result - alpha, a short experimental film weaving together the works of all the 10 artists

**April 2015:** Announced a bilateral collaboration between 10 artists representing India and France in the winter of 2015

**July 2015:** Created an association with the prestigious Villa Arson, Nice to curate and support an emerging artist from the school's illustrious alumni as a resident artist at KYTA 2015

**Oct 2015:** The 2nd edition of KYTA opened with an artistic target of producing a minimum of 60 minutes of material for a feature length film

**Nov 2015:** Showcase of KYTA 2015 at Zorba the Buddha in New Delhi with extracts from the feature film project and the residency experience

**Aug 2015:** Artist, Sergio Racanati wins a crowdfunding campaign in Italy to participate at KYTA 2016

**Sept 2015:** The 3rd edition of KYTA opens with 5 artists from India and 5 from South Africa, Italy, Germany, Slovakia and USA to begin to build Kalga's private art collection

**Oct 2015:** Rashi Jain (KYTA 2014 artist in residence) returns to establish Karma Studio, a sculpture and pottery facility besides a small studio space and a pizza oven

**Oct 2015:** Showcase of KYTA 2016 at Contemporary Art Week, New Delhi with all artists in attendance

**March 2016:** Premiere of Inedie, artistic result of KYTA 2015 - a full-length film featuring the music of 8 experimental Indian sound artists

**April 2017:** The 4th edition of KYTA announced as an experimental trilateral with 17 artists from India, Switzerland and South Korea to continue building new works for the Kalga private art collection

**Sept 2017:** KYTA 2017 opens as an official program in the '70 Years of Swiss-Indian Friendship' - a celebration initiated by the Swiss embassy in India. With support from Pro Helvetia - Swiss Arts Council, multiple artist associations in Switzerland and South Korea energised the resident group

**Oct 2017:** The first Open Village Showcase was hosted in Kalga with exhibitions and performances over 4 days featuring artists like Susmit Sen (Founder, Indian Ocean). The showcase was presented on invitation by the Gujral Foundation in New Delhi

**Jan 2018:** 'Korean Gangs in Himalayas' - an archive and exhibition by the Korean residents of KYTA 2017 opens at Artertain (Seoul)

**Sept-Oct 2018:** The 5th edition of KYTA to play out in Kalga



Megha Katyal (India):  
Experimental Weaving and New Media



Emile Degorce (France):  
Ceramist



Fernando Visockis (Brazil):  
Music Composition and Interaction Design



Ameet Singh (India):  
Architect



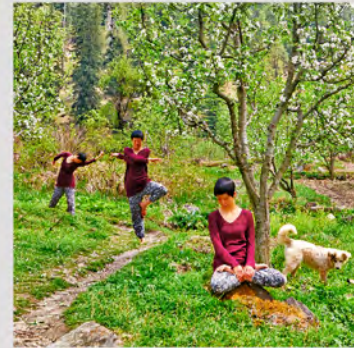
Sanaya Ardeshir (India)  
Music composition and live performance



Damian Linossi (Argentina)  
Installation and Video

# KYTA 2014

Resident Artists



Wei Ching-Ju (Taiwan)  
Dance and Theatre



Rashi Jain (India)  
Sculpture and Pottery



Alec Schachner (USA/Vietnam)  
Linguistics, music composition and technology



Sachin Pillai (India)  
Films

# KYTA 2014

Artworks and Experience

In its inaugural edition, KYTA opened in the summer of 2014 with a mix of 5 artists from India and 5 from guest countries (Brazil, Argentina, France, USA and Taiwan) besides a diverse roster of visiting artists through the month-long program.

The resident artists were free to choose the form, format and themes of what they would create as long as the final result was a single, collaborative artwork.



"A concept of a white dwarf ageing"  
by Damian Linossi





# KYTA 2014

Result

alpha  
Film (Color); English language; 22 mins





**Shailesh B.R**  
Installation and Culinary Art



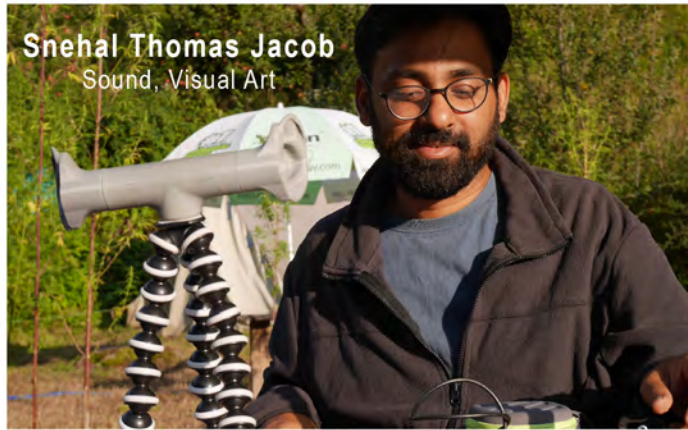
**Ayesha Hassanwalia**  
Dance, Choreography



**Rashi Jain**  
Sculpture,



**Akash Sharma**  
Sound, Code, Engineering



**Snehal Thomas Jacob**  
Sound, Visual Art



**Atia Sen**  
Installation Art



**Gaurav Godkhindi**  
Music and Sound Design



**Abhinav Mishra**  
Architecture, New Media

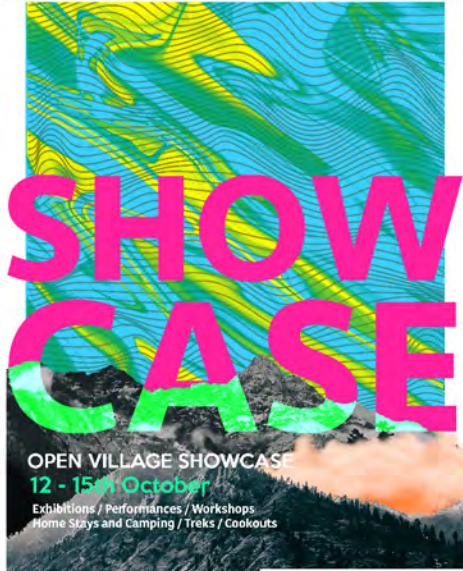


**Rashi Jain & Friends**  
"Clay Lunch"  
Clay vessels, custom recipes



**KYTA**  
KASA, MANCHA, MACHAN

An Experimental Residency  
Program in the Himalayas  
Sept 08 - Oct 15



Supported by

swiss arts council  
**prshelvetia**

Pro Audio Partners

Modi Digital



Artist Associations



Installationraum  
Klingenthal



The last 4 days of the residency were opened up to the public for exhibitions, live performances, open studios and culinary experiments

**KYTA 2017**  
Open Village Showcase





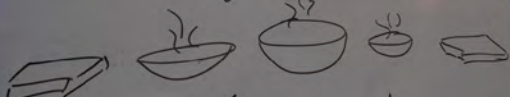
**KYTA 2017**  
Experience










#KITA2017  
 1st OCT: LUNCH by Rashi Jain & friends  
 Food will be served in  
 freshly fired clay-works.  
  
 1 pm onwards



  
 응기종기 Hong Dhaba  
 ong gi jong gi  
 Menu  
 noodle - Korea "janchi guksu" (veg or nonveg)  
 Rice - Korea "jumbuck bob" (veg or non-veg)  
 (ball)  
 fried meat - Korea style Chinese food  
 (chicken) "Kkan panying gi"  
 fried mushroom - "Tang su yook"  
 "No price,  
 Send LOVE"





Sharing the #KYTA2017 experience  
with an audience in New Delhi on  
invite by The Gujral Foundation

**KYTA 2017**  
**Sept 08 - Oct 15 | Kalga, Himachal Pradesh**  
Curator's Report by Shazeb S.

KYTA's journey as a travel and art experiment has been uphill through winding roads since its inception in 2014. What's around the corner is rarely known and been left to exploration each time - reinforcing experimentation at the very core of the residency's organisation and management. The results, however, have been serendipitous each time building greater confidence in and validation for our vision of establishing the Himalayan village of Kalga as one of the choicest places in the world to produce, imagine or experience art. Having hosted 48 resident artists from various disciplines and nationalities across 6 continents, along with a stellar roster of visiting artists each year, we now have an international community of artistically and emotionally invested creators and professionals whom Kalga can consider its very own friends. With a bilateral (Indo-French in 2015) and a trilateral (Indo-Swiss-Korean in 2017) edition, we have also engineered deeper associations with partner countries to produce focused cultural exchanges to expand our networks beyond the artists to institutions.

KYTA 2017 has been our largest endeavour yet with 17 artists from India, Switzerland and South Korea bringing together a trio of disparate cultures to blend through human experiences and intersecting artistic practices. This edition also gave us the privilege and experience to partner multiple local and international institutions including Pro Helvetia - Swiss Arts Council (New Delhi), Gujral Foundation (New Delhi), Atelier Mondial (Basel), Nachom Arts Foundation (Manipur), Ausstellungsraum Klingental (Basel), Alps Art Academy (Tenna), Modi Digital (Mumbai) and Artlabban (Seoul) in various capacities. KYTA 2017 was also an official event in the special celebration of '70 years of Swiss-Indian Friendship. Connecting Minds - Inspiring the Future' - an initiative by the Swiss Embassy in India. This was also the first time, we hosted a 4-day Open Village Showcase in Kalga with exhibitions, screenings, cookouts and live performances including the enigmatic guitar virtuous, Susmit Sen (Founder - Indian Ocean). Later in the same year, the Korean group produced a KYTA archive and exhibition in Seoul (Artertain Gallery, December 2017).

The coming together and contribution of the residents of KYTA 2017 each have a special story - the Korean front came through Jaehong Jo, our visiting artist from the 2015 edition who returned to his beloved Himalayan village with a group of 5 fine art and installation artists. Extending my own wonderful and symbiotic relationships from my residency in Basel (2015), I had the support from all my hosting partners from this project to contribute to this edition bringing the Swiss edge to the Himalayas. The Indian resident group featured artists from different regions all over the country and yet another wholehearted earthy contribution from Rashi Jain - our resident from the first edition (2014) who came back in 2016 to build our first facility for small-scale pottery research and production. As a specially pre-planned collaboration, Ayesha Hassanwalia and Margarita Kennedy, dancer-choreographers from New Delhi and Basel respectively, were invited to symbolically pilot an Indo-Swiss dance exchange program in the Himalayas that is now already in existence at the Nachom Arts Foundation since February 2018 in Manipur.

Sifting through memories in my mind and the massive load of media documented by Sameer Singh with contributions across the board, there were certainly a lot of experiences that will continue to influence our dreams. With the Korean group, we had our closest encounter with fine artists as part of the residency - this was best seen with "Days and Nights of Kalga", a twin painting with watercolour on paper sealed on handmade wooden frames by Jaehong Jo, and a series of paintings, words and poetry by Hyejin Shin who set up her own solo exhibition in one of the village houses during the showcase. Juhee Lee, writer and curator authored a critique for the Korean artists while Ikkyun Shin and Seolae Lee, produced a series of installations. Ikkyun made a series of pagodas that he surprisingly found missing in a mountain village like Kalga, and he also created a version of his trademark floating table. Seolae Lee, on the other hand, quietly collected found objects to establish a large 4-room exhibition of installations with a concept at the intersection of nature and urbanisation.

The Swiss artists had their own unique productions based on their existing practices except for Gregory Chapuisat, the legend of wood, who for the first time was producing an installation with ropes - "Laziness", a hand-stitched hammock hanging over a safety net made with thousands of handmade knots that he carefully engineered through his stay. Mirjam Spoolder found inspiration in the local Himachali crafts and style of fabric, textiles and even architecture to produce a series of haute couture that was exhibited as well as performed as a fashion piece by three ladies from the residencies bringing together Switzerland, Denmark and India. Mirjam's performance was scored by Gaurav Godkhindi as a 7-minute piece. Simon Wunderlich strived to produce a space for reflection using the locally found glittering mica stones - he laboriously curated these stones from all over the local region, created his own process for grinding and powdering them, doing a multitude of tests with different varieties and sealants, and eventually painting the shining over an abstract but geometrically interesting 9-sided public water tank. Margarita Kennedy produced a stunning series of performances showcasing both agility and euphoria especially with her performance on a tree where she established her own web with stretched fabrics.

The Indian resident artists had one amongst them who stayed the shortest ever (3 nights) but made the largest impact with the message he abruptly left us behind with - Abhinav Mishra - he emailed us a PDF called "the disappearing act" as his artwork in which he hammered our initiative with brutal criticism reminding us of our actions and its impacts in a beautiful Himalayan village like Kalga. In stark opposition, the Mumbai-based duo, Sound.Codes (Akash Sharma and Snehal Thomas Jacob) toiled through the residency period producing our second facility - an experimental audio environment, while being ecologically spot on. The facility to be opened up this year (2018) functions as a bedroom studio with a quadrophonic pro-audio setup and a pair of hand-made synths for sound and music based artists to produce new works up in the Himalayas. This initiative was generously supported by Aditya Modi of Modi Digital with the equipment he gifted to us for this space. Shailesh Ramamurthy, who was also a resident at Atelier Mondial in Basel (2016) with Mirjam Spoolder as his coach united with her again as her co-resident at KYTA 2017. He produced various works in painting, illustration and installation besides collaborations and some of the most sincerely stunning gastronomical experiences. His Smoke Tree is bound to become a motif in the culture of the

Himalayan villages where the 'hamam' - a manual water heater - is glorified with smoke patterns to resemble the local trees. Ayesha Hassanwalia experimented with spaces not just in Kalga but also in the neighbouring sister village of Pulga besides a series of collaborations with Margarita Kennedy. The youngest of the lot, Atia Sen, produced a new space with an installation of glass and mirrors visually rearranging the Parvathi valley in glimmers of bouncing sunshine. Gaurav Godkhindi who had to return earlier than expected was probably the only artist we have ever invited who had participated in KYTA but never been to the residency - the back story being that he scored the music of Inedie, the artistic result of KYTA 2015, a feature-length film.

Usually working with a group of 10 artists, at KYTA 2017 we had 17 artists in residence and the probability of inter-connections were expanded and amplified. This year, the only visiting artist we had were Rashi Jain who came back for a 3rd collaboration with KYTA to produce a stunning community lunch served in hand-made clay cutlery made in her own hand-made kiln from 2016. She was the one to make the connection with Alps Art Academy where she participated in 2017 with Gregory Chapuisat playing one of her mentors.

In the past 3 editions, we usually went back to the capital to showcase the artworks and experiences of the residency, however in line with the vision of the project, this time, we hosted the last four days of the residency as a first Open Village Showcase in Kalga itself. Starting the Showcase with a walkthrough going across all the artworks and exhibitions set all over the village, we came back and perched in the great Himalayan vista for a picnic lunch. The next days were full of #LiveFromKalga activities including dance and music performances also involving a local singer to perform in our newly built sound facility besides a packed house performance by Susmit Sen and Melanie Hardage in Sunset Cafe. Masterchef Hong (Jaehong Jo) invited everyone to his pop-up cafe / kitchen - "Ongi Jongi" that served some of the most delicious food ever in the village. The edition concluded with the whole team riding into Delhi on invitation by Feroze Gujral to present our experiences at the Gujral Foundation to guests and close friends from the capital.

Being one of the most fulfilling editions of KYTA, a big plan for the future has been seeded and will begin to find its manifestation as early as 2018 - stay tuned on the following platforms to track our grand Himalayan dream. The road never ends!



# KYTA 2018

The 5th edition of KYTA will focus on consolidating its global community, their efforts in the past years and forging a clear future towards the vision - establishing Kalga as one of the choicest places in the world to imagine, produce and experience art, with long-term ecological and sustainable impact

# Patrons, Partners and Associations

KYTA has been generously supported over the years by various institutions, individuals and artists directly through international travel support, production support, facilitation, participation, token funds, materials and equipment besides the immense value we have aggregated via presence, knowledge sharing and expertise. Karma Yatri continues to be the sole sponsor of KYTA.

## PAST SUPPORT (2016)

PRO-HELVETIA - SWISS ARTS COUNCIL: PARTNER (ZURICH AND NEW DELHI)  
MODI DIGITAL: PRO-AUDIO PARTNER (MUMBAI)  
ATELIER MONDIAL: ARTIST ASSOCIATION (BASEL, CH)  
AUSSTELLUNGSRAUM KLINGENTAL: ARTIST ASSOCIATION (BASEL, CH)  
ALPS ART ACADEMY: ARTIST ASSOCIATION (TENNA, CH)  
ARTLABBAN: ARTIST ASSOCIATION (SEOUL)  
THE FOUNDATION: ARTIST ASSOCIATION (MUMBAI)  
GUJRAL FOUNDATION: SHOWCASE PARTNER (NEW DELHI)

OUR CROWDFUNDING CAMPAIGN FOR #KYTA2017 RAISED 2,76,485 INR -  
A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL OF THE FOLLOWING SUPPORTERS!  
SUSHIL FOMRA, SUSHANT, PRAVEEN, SIDHANT, PRANAV MISHRA, SHASHWAT  
JAYAKUMAR, SUNDEEP HOLANI, MANISH KUMAR, AMIT ANAND, ABBAS ALI, SAHAR  
SHAMIM, ARSH SAYED, QASIM, PRUTHVIRAJ JAISINGRAO PATIL, SNEHAL THOMAS,  
SAYADAT NOOR, KEA FOGELBERG, DEEPA, RAHUL BOSE, RABIA FATHIMA, ELSA  
BOUTILLIER, IPSITA NAYAK, VILLAVAN ELANGO, KAVYASHRI SHASTRI, RISHI MEHRA  
AND EAKTA

## PAST SUPPORT (2016)

CONTEMPORARY ART WEEK (NEW DELHI): KYTA 2016 SHOWCASE HOST  
BEART (ITALY): CROWDFUNDING CAMPAIGN FOR INTERNATIONAL ARTIST SUPPORT

## PAST SUPPORT (2015)

VILLA ARSON (NICE, FRANCE): ARTIST SUPPORT  
SHIVNAKAUN MEDIA ARTS (NEW DELHI): ARTIST SUPPORT  
ZORBA THE BUDDHA (NEW DELHI): KYTA 2015 SHOWCASE HOST

## PAST SUPPORT (2014)

BAYLIN CODDINGTON MEMORIAL FOUNDATION (USA): ARTIST SUPPORT  
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF MIGRATION (SWITZERLAND): ARTIST SUPPORT  
DUX COWORKING (SAO PAULO, BRAZIL): ARTIST SUPPORT  
HOTSPRING PROJECT / SHANGLIN WU (TAIPEI, TAIWAN): ARTIST SUPPORT  
ZORBA THE BUDDHA (NEW DELHI): KYTA 2014 SHOWCASE HOST

WE ARE GRATEFUL TO THE FOLLOWING INDIVIDUALS FOR THEIR PERSONAL  
SUPPORT TO AMPLIFY OUR EFFORTS AT KYTA SINCE ITS INCEPTION  
**ABBAS, PHILIPPE, MAHESH, RAMA, ADITYA, DEEPA, NIKHIL, VINNY**



Karma Yatri is an experiential travel company specializing in motorcycle expeditions in the Himalayas and road trips across India.

This experiment with KYTA is to observe the interaction between travel & art. This region over centuries has impacted the art of many artists but here-in we aim to explore the impact of art & the artist - on travel. Will this experiment change the perspective towards travel to Kalga?

Will art allow Kalga to remain (as it is) and allow it to flourish (commercially)?

CO-FOUNDERS



**Hashim Qayoom**  
Host & Residency Producer



**Shazeb Arif S.**  
Curator & Residency Director

KEY CONTRIBUTORS

**Sameer Singh**  
Documentation Director  
(2015 onwards)

**Bianca Mendonca**  
Co-Founder & Residency Manager  
(2014)

**Sunny Sun**  
Yoga and Wellness Director  
(2015 onwards)

**Rabia Khan**  
Artist Manager  
(2014)

**Sanju Negi**  
Host & Residency Manager  
(2014-16)

**Shazia Shaikh**  
Assistant Curator  
(2017)

**Shawn Pereira**  
**Christabel Menezes**  
Residency Manager  
(2015)

**Ratan Premu**  
Local partners  
(2014 onwards)

PRESS



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**Sameer Singh**  
**Ikkyun Shin**  
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**Simon Wunderlich**  
**Sachin Pillai**  
**Arsh Sayed**  
**Adityavardhan Gupta**  
**Charlotte J Ward**  
**Diya Sarker**  
**Malini Kochupillai**

Catalogue Design:  
**Diya Sarker**

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[kytaindia@gmail.com](mailto:kytaindia@gmail.com)

*"Best artist residencies in India (2017)"*

