15 INVITATIONS 15 YEARS
SHILPA GUPTA MAR MAY 16
ASIA ART ARCHIVE
SHILPA GUPTA

That photo we never got
Mumbai-based artist Shilpa Gupta presented That photo we never got, a research-based exhibition that drew out narratives from the AAA collection to explore friendships and love in the field of art.

Shilpa Gupta
That photo we never got
March–May 2016
“I am not saying the viewer is not important to others but for me I feel that I do not paint in an ivory tower, I need to communicate. I need my viewer and their response matters to me.”

“Actually no, even my viewer matters to me. But I think the viewer matters to every artist. Maybe you have a more social relationship with your viewer when you say your neighbour recognizes the portrait, it’s more like a talkative relationship whereas my viewer is someone else and somewhere else.”
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'We both took this photo from the same angle' – Gulam

Nasreen, Gulam, Nilima & Dhumal
Fatehpuri Sikri, 1970
"you should see this work."

He often spoke of me to others, saying that
I remember Vivan telling me that he was at Altaf’s place and there used to be heated discussions. They had allegiance with different parties, right? Vivan was CPI, while Altaf was CPI(ML). And at 2am he stormed out because of some argument and Altaf had to bring him back.
But by '68, I couldn't continue the history of cinema course because of lack of money, and in the mean time my landlady, Hillary Rowling, had got some money and she bought a house on 154, Barnabury Road, where she opened up a kind of radical anarchist commune. The spirit of the times was to be activist, and the context in which I was in, the commune, and everything else around it, signalled to me that I should be an activist.

It was at this moment that the idea of bringing people together, working with other people became part of my very make up.

- Vivan
'That photo we never got'

Mumbai-based artist Shilpa Gupta presents That photo we never got, a research-based project that sets out to explore the worlds of friendships, associations, love, and incongruities in the field of art. Working alongside AAA Senior Researcher Sabih Ahmed, the artist draws out narratives from the 60s, 70s, and 80s to follow the innumerable tangents and overlapping vectors across and beyond the Archive's collection.

From documents about art institutions, to artist-organised camps, workshops, exhibitions, and publications, to travels around the world, the project extends itself into some of the addas and activities in Mumbai. It looks into stories of how various artistic positions drifted and altered over the course of time, as well as the question of how belonging to an art world is itself sometimes partial. By drawing out narratives from the AAA collection, incomplete stories are gathered around chance encounters and fraught friendships, some imagined and others not, revealing the varied aspirations of artists and their relationships to their peers, their cities, and the world.

Gupta's practise delves into the dynamics of contexts, perception, and cartographies of knowledge, and has often incorporated methods of archiving into her work. While a number of stories gathered in this project had an archival trail to follow, others surfaced as annotations from conversations and interviews conducted during its research. The project consists of photographs and documents from the AAA collection and those which were shared by the interviewed artists. The text annotations are stories gathered from a number of people with whom conversations ensued. As the artist herself stated, 'an archive can only be a proposal', this project positions itself as an incomplete proposition of fragments placed in the interstices of the archival document and living memory.

An earlier iteration of this project was shown at the 2015 India Art Fair.
stretched against the blue
high headed manner
that one expected from
what it was for the second inter-
me a little bit for this purpose, the
list of participants in the

been only a few months
the intense faction-fight
community in general
to some extent, especially
committee consisted of 8
chairmen of the Academi-
and early tailor. They
and are known to main-
for us that these older
Art.
representatives is even more
y claim to be an assist-
focus leaders now
artists who did not see
bed of selection is again
Bombay Contemporary Indian Artists (Young Turks)
Founded in 1941

Calcutta Group
Founded in 1943

Progressive Artists’ Group
Founded in 1947

Baroda Artists Group
Founded in 1956

Group 1890
Founded in 1963

Cholamandal Artists' Village
Founded in 1966
Artists: K.C.S Panicker and others

Astitya Group
Founded in 1976-77
Artists: Prabhakar Barwe, Shakuntala Kulkarni, Anand Bowen Nayk, Waghela, Adeevra, Lajmi, Dilip Ranade

Four Women Artists
Founded 1987
Members: Arpita Singh, Madhvi Parekh, Nalini Malani, Nilima Sheikh

Radical Painters' and Sculptors' Association
Founded in 1987

Members of the some groups changed over the years.
Some groups only had one show together
All the time he was in Bhopal, he wore a sweater made by Ambadas’ wife who was Norwegian, and he never took it off. So he’d have this one Norwegian sweater on throughout winter. He liked it so much, that he had his wife knit many more of the same kind with imported buttons.
All the time he was in Mongolia, he wore a sweater made by Antäder’s wife who was Norwegian, and he never took it off. So he’d have this one Norwegian sweater on throughout winter. He liked it so much, that he had his wife knit many more of the same kind with imported buttons.
Dear Sheikh, Nagji:

See what this damn fellow is doing. Don’t you think he should be a serious chartered Accountant? He is being funny. Did you see those papers in his hands? They are all to be discussed. Now he should go to conference.
Nathan had written the catalogue essay. Your artists, Madhuri, Arpita, Nitu and myself, Ashutosh, our women's show didn't happen, but with just us

Frankly, our women's show didn't happen, but with just us

absurd that it deserved an absurd answer.

with story about an owl. She thought the idea was so
posted and sent it to Arpita. Her response was this
exhibition, I counted it on them. I wrote it out on a

"In 1985, I had this wild idea to hold a woman-only

"There's an owl called Oscar, and he keeps holding on to
We all became teachers in Fine Arts. We wanted to show some pictures because we thought our way of looking at images was different - not like how journalists and news media showed. So we decided to group show together as 'Painters with a Camera'. Our first show was at Jehangir in Bombay in 1968.

-Jyoti Bhatt
"In some sense, one has always felt that one only partially belongs to any of these groupings.

Like, when I was in medical college and was doing art, I was part of my medical college friend’s circle but a bit outside as well. With the Left group in Pune, we were all politically committed, but they didn’t quite understand what exactly I was doing as a painter. And when I came to Bombay and started showing in galleries, there was something outside.

There was this big non-art-world audience that I always had and I always liked being connected with.

The outside was always beckoning, that that was where I should be.”

-EF
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- SP
That photo we never got

Shilpa Gupta
21 Mar–21 May 2016

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. Krishen Khanna
. Shakuntala Kulkarni
. Nalini Malani
. Mrinalini Mukherjee
. Czetan Patil
. Sudhir Patwardhan and Shanta Patwardhan
. Johan Pijnappel
. Dilip Ranade
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Asia Art Archive marks its 15th year by extending *15 Invitations* to creative practitioners to look within and beyond the organisation as an archive, a collection of material, a digital platform, and a node in a wider collective network. *15 Invitations* take various sizes, forms, and creative directions—literary, polemic, political, sonic, physical, and digital—and function as a series of ‘drop pins’ to alternatively navigate where AAA originated and where it may be going. AAA’s e-journal *Field Notes* traces the 15 participants as they contribute notes and entries to document the process.

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Asia Art Archive is an independent non-profit organisation initiated in 2000 in response to the urgent need to document and make accessible the multiple recent histories of art in the region. With one of the most valuable collections of material on art freely available from its website and on-site library, AAA builds tools and communities to collectively expand knowledge through research, residency, and educational programmes.

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15 INVITATIONS 15 YEARS
MARISSA LE
WANDOWSKA
APR - MAY '15
01

15 INVITATIONS 15 YEARS
SAMSON YOUNG
JUN - JUL '15
02

15 INVITATIONS 15 YEARS
INGRID CHU
AUG - OCT '15
03

15 INVITATIONS 15 YEARS
ZOE BUTLER
NOV - DEC '15
04

15 INVITATIONS 15 YEARS
INTI GUERRERO
FEB - MAR '16
05

15 INVITATIONS 15 YEARS
HU FANG
ZIANG WEI
FEB - JUL '16
06

15 INVITATIONS 15 YEARS
SHILPA GUPTA
MAR - MAY '16
07

15 INVITATIONS 15 YEARS
WALID RAAD
JUN - SEP '16
08

15 INVITATIONS 15 YEARS
RUANGRUPA
AUG - SEP '16
09

15 INVITATIONS 15 YEARS
WONG WAI YIN
OCT - NOV '16
10

15 INVITATIONS 15 YEARS
KAMOERI ARAMPILLAI
SHANATHAN
NAN
NOV '16
11

15 INVITATIONS 15 YEARS
SARAH HOWE
NOV '16
12

15 INVITATIONS 15 YEARS
SOLOMON BE
RASHID RA
NAM
MAR '17
13

15 INVITATIONS 15 YEARS
NONNY DE
LA PÉRA
MAR '17
14

15 INVITATIONS 15 YEARS
ANG
JAN '17
15