



question. create. deliberate.

five years on  
ready to create more ripples of change

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**re.** it's not even really a word

as a preposition it simply refers to something else

as a noun, it's the second note of a musical scale

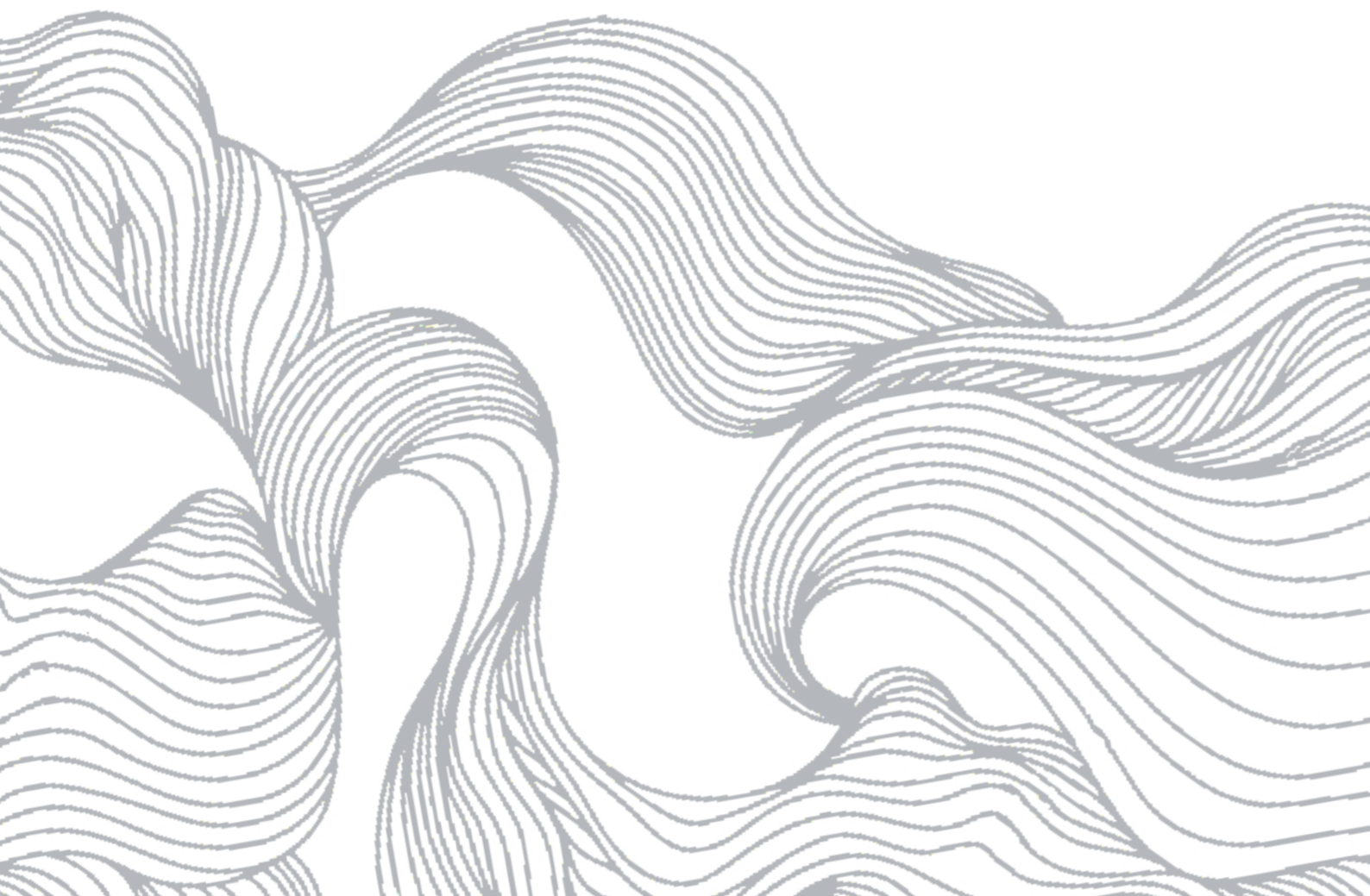
as a symbol, it stands for rhenium, one of  
the rarest elements on earth

as a prefix, it's an indicator of going back,  
or repeating something

or doing something anew  
and that's the sense in which it inspires us  
to think, imagine, plan and do things

not as they've been done before

rather, in ways they can be thought of,  
dreamt of, imagined, planned and done  
anew







## the why

**re-**imagining spaces for free thinking and expression

**re-**affirming diverse voices and means of expression

**re-**thinking ways to expand the ambit of artistic works

**re-**starting dialogues to complement, challenge and energise each other

**re-**framing social and political discourses through art

## the who

reFrame was conceptualised and initiated by feminist activist, documentary filmmaker and mixed media artist, **vani subramanian**

reFrame's work and perspectives are honed by:

**nidhi kol's** interest in comparative literature, experience in research and programming contemporary art practice

**neeharika sreedhar's** love for design and research, not to mention her fascination with history; and until recently,

**tulika srivastava** and **ridhima mehra** who brought on board their immense experience in commissioning, mentoring and programming

together, they share the conviction to work towards meaningful social change with and through the arts. and the feminist ideal of making our dreams a reality, collectively





PLEASE DO NOT TOUCH



## the when

reFrame came into being barely a week after the nation went into lockdown due to the covid-19 pandemic,

like everyone else, it took us a while to wrap our heads around the drastically changed circumstances of life

we decided to respond to this social, economic, public health and political crisis just as we intended to respond to other issues of gravity and concern with and through the arts



in august 2020, reFrame put out a call for submissions for an online exhibition of art centred around the politics and the lived experiences of the pandemic

the personal and the public, the fear and illness, loss and loneliness, 'touch' and 'untouchability' came together in an exhibition called touchpoint



18 artists featured in an online show that included:

- photography
- installation
- digital art
- poetry
- video art
- illustrations
- graphic story
- performance videos



# the what

at reFrame, we gave ourselves  
a mandate to focus on 5 key aspects of art making:

## smalltalk

discourse building interactions on contemporary  
challenges to arts practice and art making

## art fellowships

for emerging artists engaged with issues  
relating to gendered life and living

**mentorship** to guide and support  
the creative processes of selected fellows

## arts research

documentation and engagement  
with people, regions, materials and memory

**curated dissemination plans** to take  
the art created to new and unexpected places and  
audiences, and initiate wide-ranging conversations





smalltalk is a series of conversations between artists working across diverse mediums, forms, languages, materials and ideas; discussing commonalities, challenges, questions and concerns.

events have featured:

nina sabnani and hansa thapliyal on 'film, craft and other stories in the making'

'reflecting on political art making' with madhusree dutta, githa hariharan, sneha ragavan and vani subramanian, to launch the digital archives of majlis culture centre, mumbai





since 2020, reFrame has had 35 genderalities fellows.

4 cycles of fellowships offered two cycles have been partially supported by the goethe institut delhi

the focus has been on creating works that contemplate, expose, challenge and celebrate the lives of women, trans\* and queer folks



# our fellows 2020-2025

our artists and their works  
reflect upon complex intersections between  
geographical, caste, class, race, religion and other  
challenges with gender identity  
and sexual orientation

much of the art created speaks to  
the present moment marked by increasing  
majoritarianism, conservatism, misogyny,  
homophobia and transphobia

AAKASH CHHABRA  
A WINTER'S ELEGY.  
Documentary Film

ABHISHEK ANICCA  
DEAR APHRODITE.  
Performance Video

ANAM KAZMI  
NO COUNTRY FOR MUSLIM  
WOMEN. Series of Essays

APRAJITA GUPTA  
BEYOND RATINGS.  
Documentary Film

ARUL KANI  
IDENTITY MATTERS. Podcast  
Series

CHANDNI GANESH  
WHO CARES FOR THE  
CAGED BIRD? E-Zine

DITILEKHA  
TIPOSI FINDS THEIR WINGS.  
Short Stories for Children

DEBARATI SARKAR  
IN MEMORY OF FUTURE  
PROTESTS. Mixed Media  
Online

DHAARCHIDI COLLECTIVE  
PAHADAAAN DA LAAN.  
Mixed Media Installation

DIVYA SACHAR  
SEARCHER. Film

EKTARA COLLECTIVE  
EK JAGAH APNI.  
Feature Film

FATIMA JUNED  
TAARO'N KE DARMEYAN.  
Photo Exhibition

GURLEEN GREWAL  
INN PANNON MEIN  
Documentary Film

HENGAM RIBA  
RACIFIED. Documentary  
Film

IPSITA CHOUDHURY  
GHOR. GHAR. HOME.  
Interactive Website

JYOTSNA SIDDHARTH  
JANEU PROMPTS.  
Performance Videos

MANJARI K  
FIREFLY WOMEN. Digital  
Performance Videos

MEHDI JAHAN  
CAN THEY HEAR OUR  
SONGS? Film

MUNTAHA AMIN  
SIEGE IN THE AIR.  
Documentary Film

NAJRIN ISLAM  
WHAT'S IN A NAME?  
Performance Video

NATASHA CHANDHOCK  
BEREFT. Mixed Media

RESHMA KHATOON  
INVISIBLE WOMEN. Mixed  
Media Exhibition

REYA AHMED  
NUR & THE NIGHTMARE.  
Illustrated Tale

RUMI HARISH  
JOURNEY A TO E... AND  
MORE. Play Script

SANGEETA JAWLA  
WHEN WOMAN BECOMES  
THE WHEEL HERSELF.  
Mixed Media

SAMATA KALA MANCH  
SONGS AGAINST  
BRAHMANICAL  
PATRIARCHY. 4 Music  
Videos

SHARANYA  
RAMPRAKASH  
PROJECT DARLING.  
Performative Piece

SHARVARI DESHPANDE  
Writing Sketchbook/  
Journal

SHOBHANA KUMARI  
AM I A MASS  
PRODUCTION MACHINE?

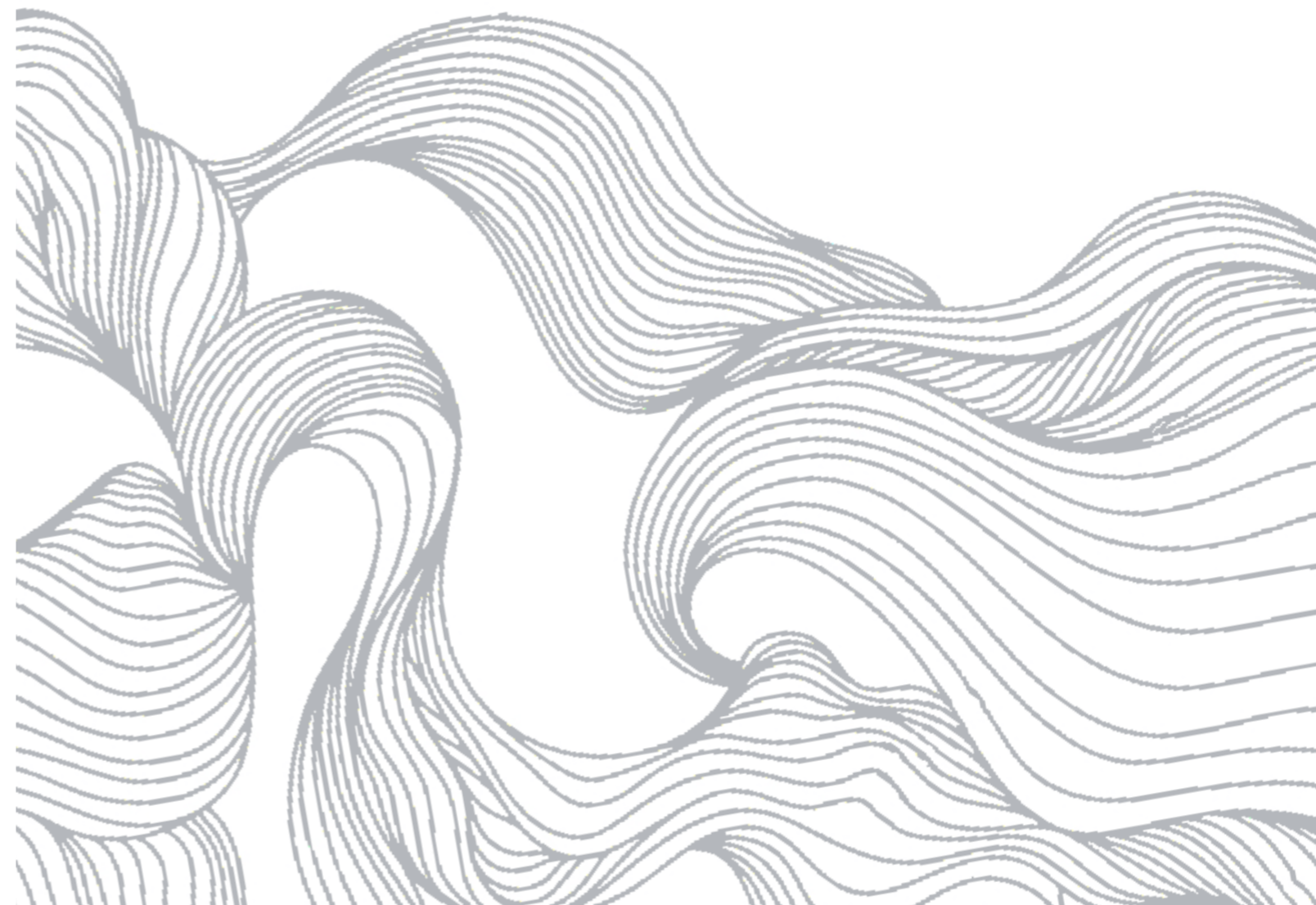
TALIN SUBBARAYA  
THIS IS THE "MALE"  
WASHROOM. Performative  
Piece

THE CHINKY HOMO PROJECT  
REFRAMING NORTHEAST.  
Podcast Series

THE STORYBOARD  
COLLECTIVE  
RESERVED. Graphic Novel

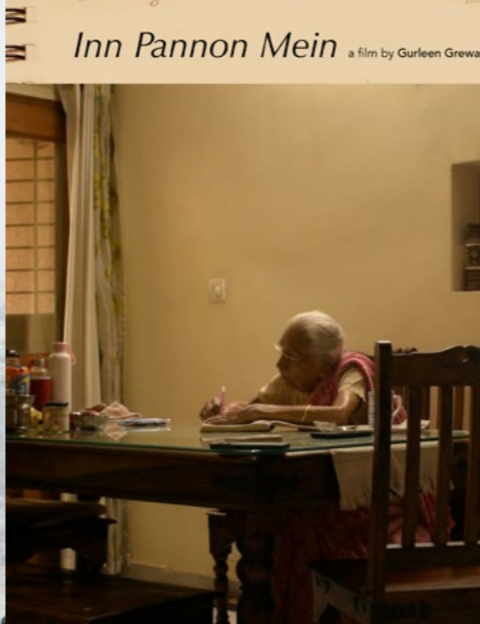
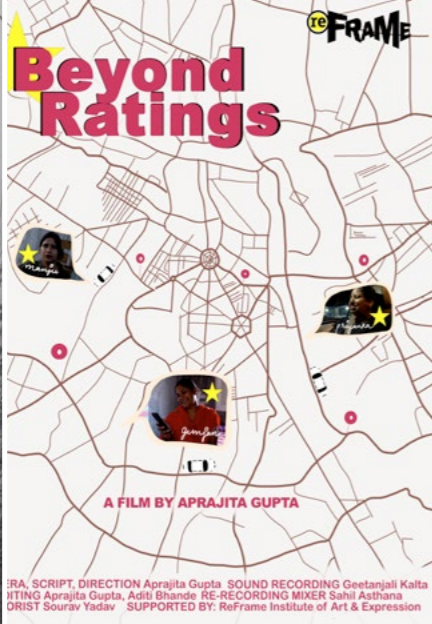
VIHAAN VEE  
DEAR AAI. Epistolary Novel

WORK OF A BODY  
COLLECTIVE  
LADAI CHHODAB NAHI.  
Documentary Film





films



music videos



the kind of art our fellows have created

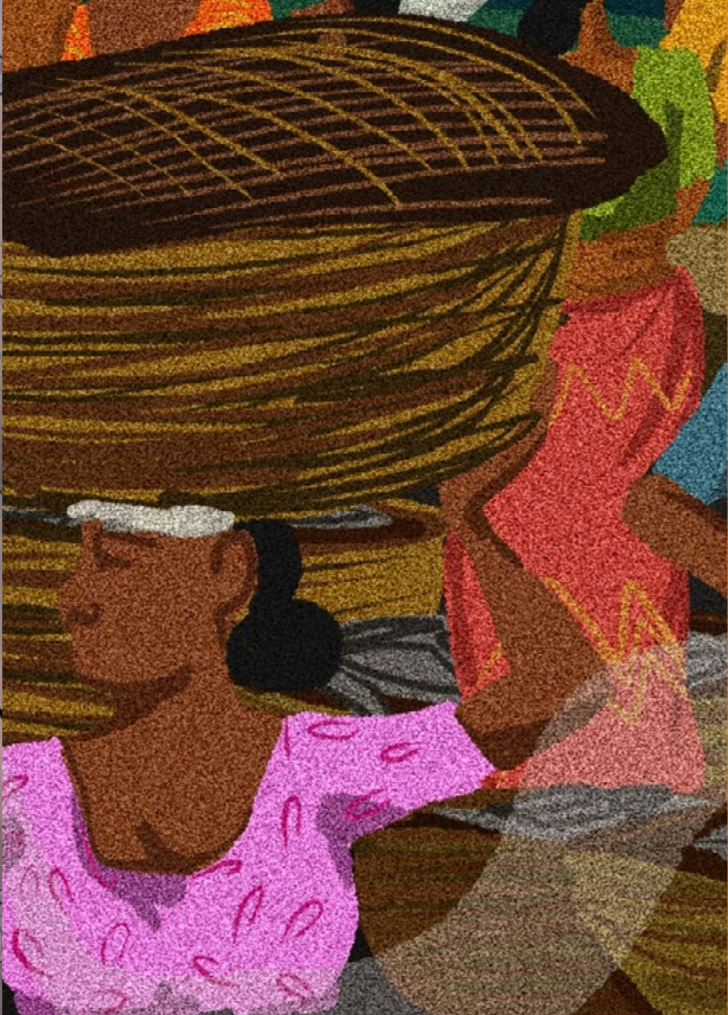
live performances



photography



graphic novels



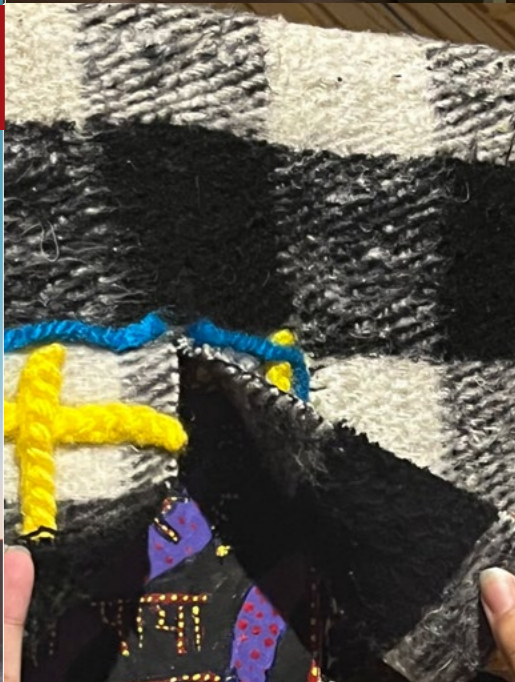
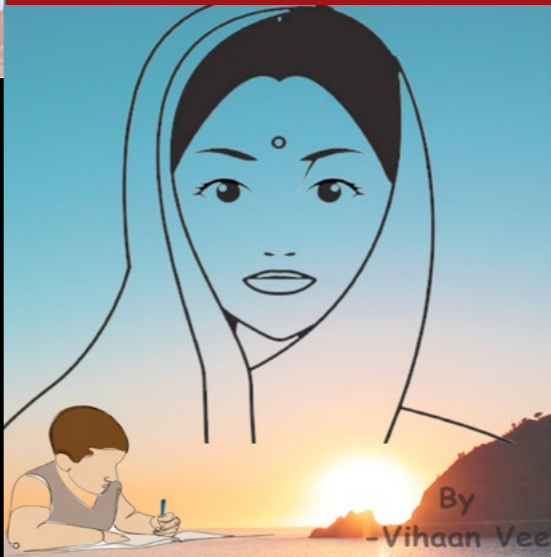
podcasts



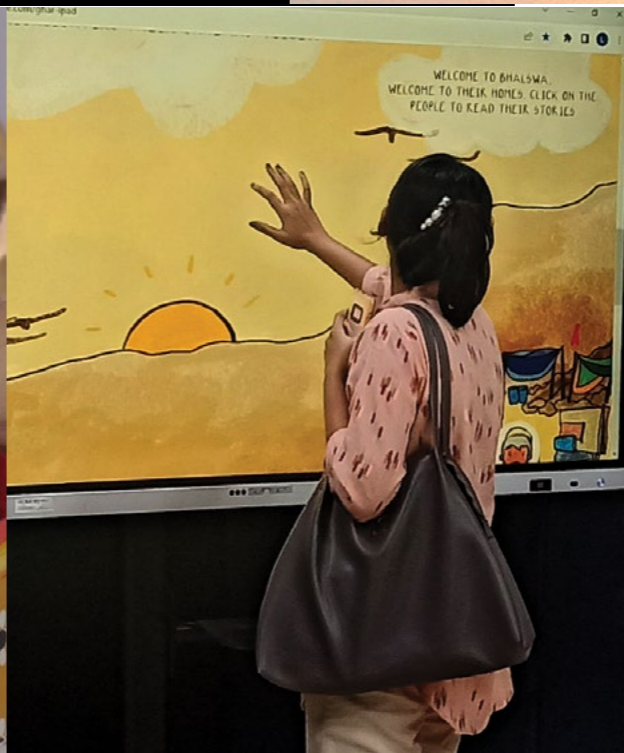
mixed media



writing



60 film festival selections  
30 performance events  
10 national & international awards



websites & e-zines

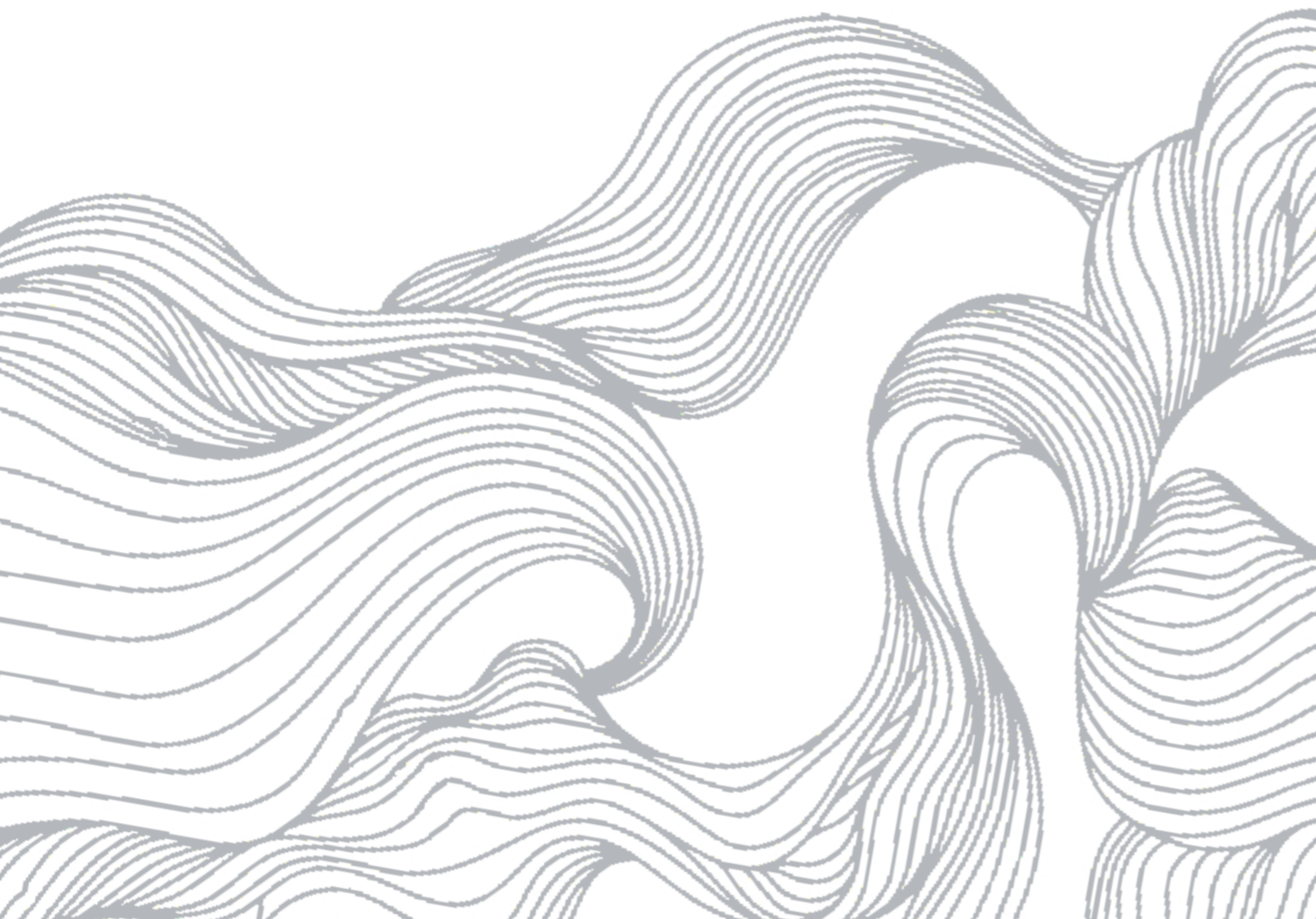
performance videos



## arts research

initiated by the reFrame initiatives foundation

because some art projects require a longer gestation and deeper engagement with subjects, regions, materials and memory, we have kicked off this fellowship programme with a documentation and filming project on hybridity and citizenship along the north eastern borderland of india.



the 'flying tigers' project helmed by eminent archivist, curator and filmmaker, madhusree dutta, borrows its title from a second world war military operation of the american army in 1941.

it explores how the operation resulted in massive movements of goods, peoples and machineries into the idyllic landscape of assam, and changed its social fabric forever.





## **dissemination.**

it's such a cold, business-like word

a word that captures  
none of the beauty of putting art works  
out in the public domain

none of the energy of seeing  
them complement, complicate  
and converse with each other when  
they are exhibited together

none of the magic of encounters in  
which diverse audiences find resonance with  
the lives and creative expressions of artists

none of those light bulb moments  
when we can virtually witness  
one creative work inspire another.  
and another. and another





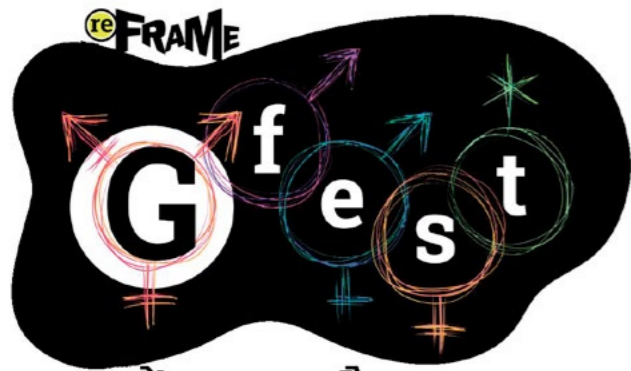
## the how 2023-2025

**gFest** a travelling festival of gender and the arts that takes the works of our artists to newer audiences, contexts and spaces

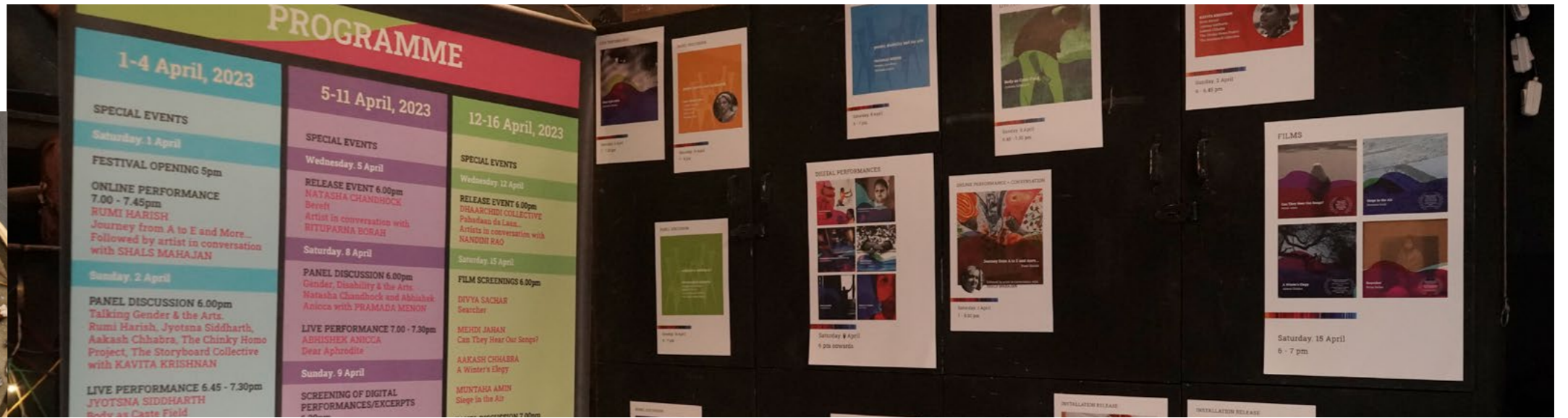
**programmes** that curate and create opportunities to experience, engage with and converse about art and society

**workshops** that focus on learning, discussing and understanding gender and society through the lens of the arts





जेंडर. कला. और हम  
1-16 april 2023



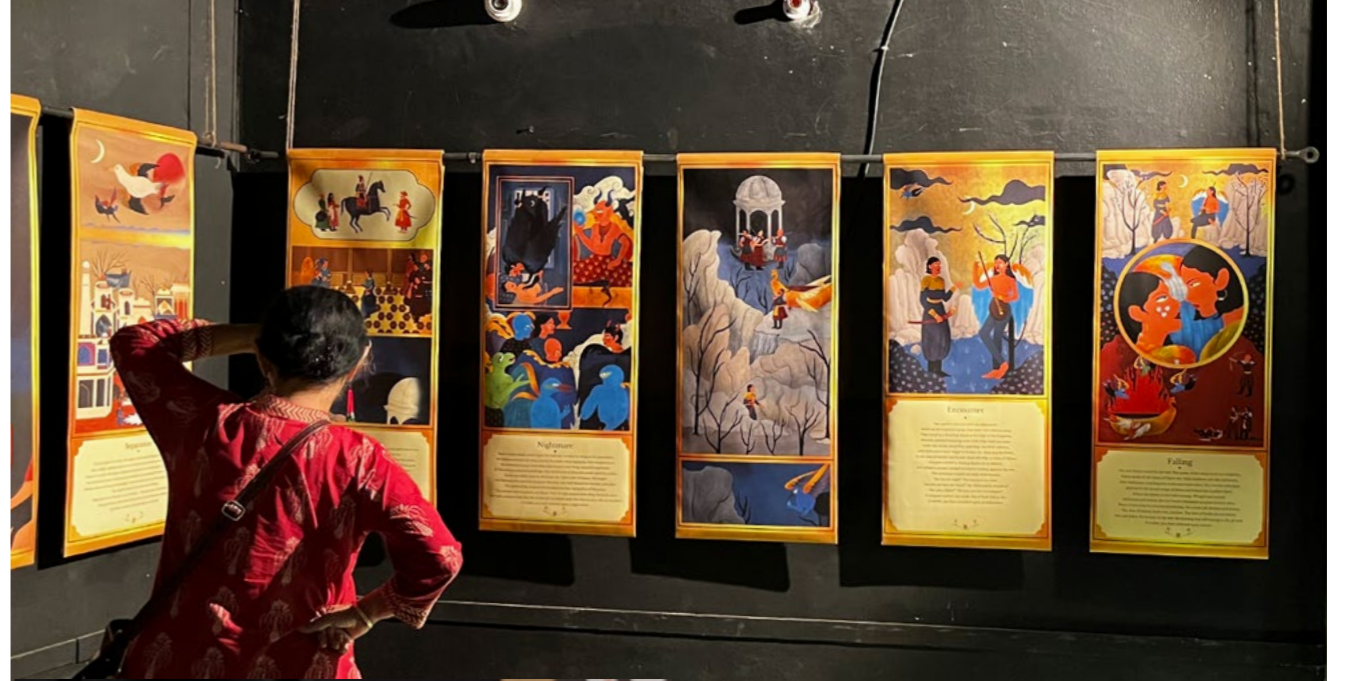
a vibrant festival of art,  
film, performance,  
and more.  
  
organised in collaboration  
with studio safdar,  
an alternate space for  
staging and  
experimenting with art.







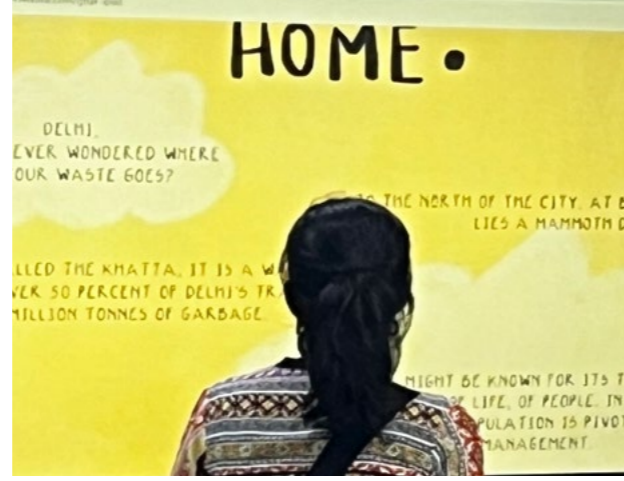
featuring  
works of 21 artists  
9 film screenings  
+ q&a with film makers  
3 live performances  
8 sessions of  
artists and filmmakers in  
conversation  
5 panel discussions  
with subject experts,  
activists and artists  
3 workshops with delhi  
based feminist groups







7-9 dec 2023



a three-day college festival that showcased films, and a range of art created by our fellows.

held in collaboration with akshara centre, and svkm's mithibai college of arts, chauhan institute of science & amrutben jivanlal college of commerce & economics, mumbai.







11 digital and physical works showcased.

panel discussion on living art/doing gender/doing art/  
living gender with shals mahajan and mridul dudeja.

over 500 students from 14 different colleges engaged  
with the work, enjoyed guided walks, and participated  
in thought- provoking debates and conversations.







celebrating the works of 21 reFrame fellows.

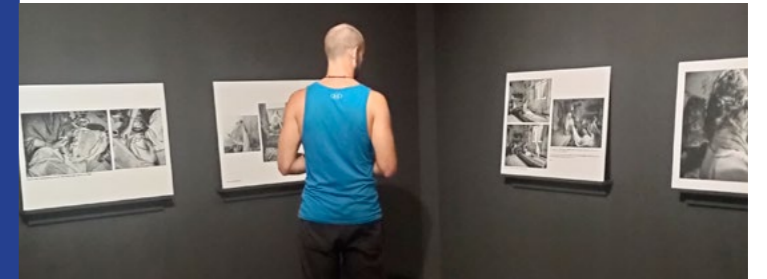
in collaboration with, and at the kerala museum, kochi

additional tech support from goethe institut, new delhi





11 works on display  
8 films screened  
4 sessions with artists  
3 live performances  
1 special event in collaboration with the janal archives  
guided walkthroughs with school and college student groups.  
workshop at sree sankaracharya university of sanskrit  
weekly workshops in collaboration with raising our voices foundation.







celebrating the works of 20 reFrame fellows.

in collaboration with, and at museo camera, gurgaon  
additional tech support from goethe institut, new delhi







2 galleries of art

7 projects displayed

8 films screened

3 live performances

sessions with artists and filmmakers

7 walkthroughs with various universities and institutions

select screenings in collab with rough edges







**gender. kala. aur hum.**  
three art appreciation and  
art making workshops held  
in collaboration with the  
sambhaavnaa institute of  
public policy and politics,  
himachal pradesh and  
lamakaan, hyderabad





workshops



in addition to reframe team members, resource persons **shals mahajan, dhaarchidi collective and chayanika shah** unpacked the dynamics between gender, sexuality, caste and community

participants created experimental films, plays, songs, theatrical readings, digital art and more

the workshops were complemented with public events such as film screenings and performances



it's amazing to hear this song about savitribai, the first woman educationist in india. she is both, a dalit and a national icon. the lyrics and visuals say it so beautifully, 'we are savitri's daughters.' that's really who we are, especially as teachers.

teacher trainees about samta kala manch's music video, *amhi savitricha leki*

we also host and conduct many workshops, but it's amazing to see the space you have managed to create for such trust and sharing among people who came in as strangers.

fatema c, education programme coordinator, sambhaavna institute of public policy and politics

the political dimensions of the film are easy to read - both, the alienation of muslims on the one hand, and also the region's alienation from the rest of the mainland. because it is speaking in the cultural form of the community. so the evocation of the sufi is important because it allows you to surmount the challenge of overtly stating the political dimension.

uma chakravarti about mehdi jahan's film, *can they hear our songs?*

you have no idea how much your love, appreciation and understanding means. there are obstacles at every turn for people like us. so the opportunity to tell our own stories meant a lot. but even shooting this film in public places wasn't easy. we had to turn a deaf ear to all the comments we would get, and just focus on the work. real acting that was!

muskan, transwoman actor in ektara's feature film, *ek jagah apni*

thanks so much for making this. as a queer-disabled person, so much of my life has just gone into negotiating and trying to meet the world at an able-bodied standard which i held myself to. so i find that i am constantly questioning myself: 'why am i not functional enough?' 'why am i not sane enough for able-bodied dominated spaces?'

audience member on natasha chandhock's mixed media work, *bereft*

we have all kinds of festivals in our colleges, but to see such art and have conversations about it, and to debate things we rarely talk about among ourselves is amazing. this is my last semester here and i'm delighted i got a chance to see it before leaving.

student reaction at gFest mumbai



plans for the future  
hopeful of your support

**supporting the creation of more art** that responds to questions of gender and sexuality in the multiple contexts of caste, class, region, ethnicity, religion, ability and disability

**working with marginalised social groups** to enable them to bring their creative potential to competitive fellowship programmes like ours

**taking forward our work through interactive formats** to generate deeper conversations around gender and its many, complex intersections

**strengthening the culture of learning and discourse-building** with special focus on students and the emerging art community

**nurturing linkages and mutuality of support** across artists working in different mediums, artistic languages and forms

**building on the foundation of institutional collaborations** so far with an ambition to amplify both, programming and outreach







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