

## **The Storytellers**

### ***A Course exploring Zines, Comics and Video***

**September 10 – October 24, 2018**

#### **Brief outlines of the modules:**

##### **Z is for zines | Himanshu S**

The first week of The Storytellers course focused on zine-making and was titled ‘z is for zines’. Conducted by Himanshu S of the Bombay Underground collective, the module introduced the participants to the various facets of zine-making, publishing and distribution politics. As an extension of this discussion, the participants went out on the streets to hustle and sell zines of Bombay Underground. Covering different locations including Connaught Place, PVR Cinemas (Saket) and Hauz Khas, the participants displayed and hustled the zines using tactics they deemed right for the location and its constitutive public. The 5-day module also included a trip to the Faridabad Majdoor Samachar (Faridabad Workers’ News). Founded and edited by Sher Singh, FMS is a monthly workers’ newspaper published from the Majdoor Library, Autopin Jhuggi, Faridabad since 1982.

##### **Drawing Experience | Malik Sajad**

The second week of The Storytellers course had graphic novelist Malik Sajad conduct sessions on his craft with the participants. Following the discussions, Malik introduced the concept of the ‘storyboard’ to the participants. As part of the exercise, he asked each one of them to pen down an intimate story (fictional or otherwise) with a conscious effort to avoid jargon, judgment and abstraction. The week also had evening lectures by artists Bhagwati Prasad and Vidyun Sabhaney who used their own bodies of practice to initiate the participants into the craft and familiarise them with the process of making and the afterlife of the narrative in print.

##### **Ways of Seeing | Sameera Jain**

The third week of The Storytellers course came to a close with filmmaker Sameera Jain’s module on video. Focusing on the differences and overlaps between textual and non-textual channels of expression, Sameera discussed the indexical nature of the image and how it shapes perception on the viewer’s end. The module also had guest speakers Ruchika Negi and Nayantara Gupta over for lectures on their respective fields of practice. Prof. Gupta especially introduced the participants to the history of the Defence Colony neighbourhood using interesting anecdotes and old maps of the city, which the participants used to subsequently navigate their own trajectories around the area while making videos.

### **About the Educators:**

**Himanshu S** runs Bombay Underground and Art Room Foundation with Aquil Thami. Bombay Underground's work is centred on running reading spaces, libraries, indulging in self-publishing, and interventions in public and private spaces as well as participatory community projects. The Art Room Foundation utilises the medium of art to empower children and women of marginalised communities. Through workshops, exhibitions and story-telling, the Art Room creates self-sustained community centres in marginalised neighbourhoods to explore life through art. Over the past twelve years, they have reached more than 6,000 beneficiaries, in particular through their sustained work in Dharavi in Mumbai and partnered with more than 30 organizations and institutions.

**Malik Sajad** is a visual artist and writer. The thematic content of his work revolves around human conditions and the psychological consequences of socio-political uncertainties. *Munnu: A Boy From Kashmir*, published by HarperCollins, UK, is his first graphic novel, which won the Verve Storyteller Of The Year Award and included as a part of the permanent collection (Artists' Books) at the Brooklyn Museum in New York. Malik is an Inlaks Scholar (2011) and OMI, Francis Greenburger Fellow (2013). He studied visual art and storytelling at Kashmir University and Goldsmiths, University of London. Prior to publishing *Munnu*, Malik wrote several short stories documenting the human toll of political crises across South Asia such as *Identity Card*, *The Posterman*, *Endangered Species*, *Facebooked*, *Gulberg Society Massacre Timeline* and *Side Effects of Fairness Cream*.

**Sameera Jain** is a filmmaker and editor, and has worked for over 30 years in the arena of film and video. Sameera has edited several award-winning documentaries and some fiction feature films. Her directorial ventures 'Portraits of Belonging', 'Born at Home' and 'Mera Apna Sheher' (My Own City) have been acknowledged for cinematic excellence at national and international festivals. Sameera has been on film juries and participated in curriculum formulation at various institutions. She has been mentoring film students and filmmakers at diverse platforms and has been invited to teach filmmaking at many places, including her alma mater FTII. She has conceptualized, and is Course Director of the Creative Documentary course at SACAC (Sri Aurobindo Centre for Arts and Communication) in New Delhi.

### **Course Facilitator:**

Lokesh Khodke is an independent artist, illustrator based in New Delhi, India. He is one of the cofounder and core team member of BlueJackal ([www.bluejackal.net](http://www.bluejackal.net)), which is a platform for creating and engaging with visual narratives, comics, picture books and initiating dialogues through interactive programs. He has worked as Project Coordinator for 'Writing Art' of Asia Art

Archive (AAA) (2014-16). His solo exhibition was held in 2009 at the Guild Art Gallery, Mumbai. He has participated in several group exhibitions, artists' camps and artists' residency programs in India and overseas. He has completed his Masters of Visual Arts (Painting), from Faculty of Fine Arts, M.S. University of Baroda in 2004. As part of his wider interests, Lokesh has worked for several children's books as an illustrator with publications such as Eklavya Publications, Bhopal, DC Books and also contributed to the Hindi children's magazine Chakmak and Sabdarbh. Lokesh has been conceptualizing and conducting various kinds of art workshop for university and school students.