

Rajyashri Goody

b. 26/07/1990 Pune, India

Nationality: British

VISUAL ARTIST & ETHNOGRAPHER

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EDUCATION

2012-2013 MA in Visual Anthropology, The Granada Centre for Visual Anthropology, University of Manchester

2008-2011 BA in Sociology, Fergusson College, University of Pune, India

2008-2011 Diploma in Liberal Arts, Symbiosis Centre of Liberal Arts, Pune, India

2009 Certificate Course, Women and Development, Krantijyoti Savitribai Phule Women's Studies Centre, University of Pune, India

2006-2008 ISC - English Literature, Economics, History, Fine Art, Rishi Valley School, Krishnamurti Foundation India

EXHIBITIONS/WORKSHOPS/CONFERENCES/RESIDENCIES

2016 Trick or Treat Conference & Exhibition, Medicine Corner, British Council, New Delhi, India

2015 Foreign Exchange Exhibition, La Generale, Paris, France

2015 The Eroles Project for COP21, L'Annex, Paris, France

2015 International Artist Residency, Bamboo Curtain Studio, Taipei, Taiwan

2015 Interactive Workshop on Caste & Social Structure, Mahindra United World College, India

2015 KHOJ Peers Share Conference, New Delhi, India

2015 KHOJ Refracting Rooms Workshop & Exhibition, Pune, India

2014 Capturing the Scene Exhibition, High Spirits Café, Pune, India

2013 Peanut Gala Exhibition, Antwerp Mansion, Manchester, UK

2013 Ethnography Is Sexy Exhibition, University of Manchester, UK

ETHNOGRAPHIC ART PRACTICE

2015 Refresh/Reflect

2015 Bindia

2015 The Jack Goody Archive

2015 Cast a Net into the Land

2015 Skyscape

2014 Ambedkar in Pop Culture

2013 In High Spirits

WORK EXPERIENCE

November 2015 – Present

Curator

Students' Biennale 2016

Kochi Biennale Foundation

The Students' Biennale, part of the Kochi Biennale Foundation's educational initiatives, seeks to extend and strengthen art educational practices and infrastructure in India. The Students' Biennale is an alternative platform for BFA and MFA students from art-colleges in India to produce and exhibit work and for developing a professional pool of curators. The intention is to expose graduate and post-graduate art students as well as young curators to the processes of contemporary art-making and exhibition-making.

As one of the 15 young curators, I work with students at art schools around India, and am being trained by an advisory and mentor group towards a Students' Biennale exhibition that will run parallel to the Kochi-Muziris Biennale 2016.

November 2015 – January 2016

Ethnographer

Trick or Treat, Medicine Corner

BLOT! & Wellcome Trust

As an ethnographer for Trick or Treat, Medicine Corner, I was part of a team that researched alternative medicine, healing, and health practices found in India, particularly in Pune, Mumbai, and across North Kerala. The project pitches the use of digital arts to create public engagement experiences.

May 2014 – Present

Program Manager

Good Artists of Pune

Employer: Shraddha Borawake

- September 2014 – March 2015

KHOJ Refracting Rooms

KHOJ International Artists Association Workshop, presented by the Good Artists of Pune

A two-week site-specific experimental art workshop with 20 multi-disciplinary artists from across the world in Pune.

As key working group member and participating artist of Refracting Rooms, I managed the workshop from its conception, planning and arrangement to execution and wrapping up.

My responsibilities included

>Selecting a venue for the workshop

>Researching and selecting artists for the workshop

>Coordinating funding from and exchange with Polish Institute, Goethe Institute, Norwegian Embassy, Diaspora Vibe Cultural Arts Incubator (U.S) & Miami Dade County

>Raising a large amount of funding for the entire workshop (including travel arrangements for all artists, food and beverages for the duration of the workshop, design and printing of flexes, banners and posters, a production budget and per diems for all, payment of volunteers, interns and coordinators) through personal presentations, meetings, fund raisers and pitches to both large corporations and institutions as well as patrons of the arts in Pune.

>Hiring able coordinators, designers and accountants

>Preparing a concise schedule for the workshop

>Participating as an artist and creating an installation for the workshop

>Arranging the logistics for the Open Studio Day (March 1st) where the public of Pune was invited to view the art created by the fellow artists at the workshop

>Post Workshop wrap up, including preparing thank you baskets with a work of each participating artist, as well as concise documentation and news articles about the workshop to each and every sponsor (more than 50 sponsors)

Below are a few images of KHOJ Refracting Rooms, taken before, during and after the workshop.





Around the site



Syaiful picks his workspace for collages



Dedication and hard work



Minette prepares her sarree bridge



Kasia acheives the impossible while kissing the blades of the grassroots in Pune

- November 2014

GAP Conn+ct Make Dove, Not War

GAP initiated the collaboration of international NGO Students for a Free Tibet, independent film start up Pop Up Talkies, rooftop cinema Lost The Plot, and origami artist Sangram Sadhale for an evening of creative dialogue with the public centered around the topic of Freedom of Expression. The evening was packed with independent film screenings about Tibet, short talks and musical performances, and origami dove making, all of which sparked off discussions about freedom, peace and expression.

I was instrumental in not only connecting all of these institutions and individuals with one another and drawing up an innovative way of inspiring people to engage with such topics of universal importance.

This collaboration also led to many of the people involved to join forces with others in the city for more such multi-dimensional projects, thereby adding a new element to the nature of public events in Pune.

- October 2014

GAP Co[Lab]

A first of its kind venture of public art and sharing of unexposed local talents in a non-judgmental raw space, where the public was invited to create work with natural pigments alongside international and national artists for a period of three days, an attempt to change the archaic paradigm of the existing exclusivity of access to art

For two months, I worked on

- >Scouting out a raw space large enough for a minimum of fifty people to create art simultaneously

- >Fund raising for materials, equipment, publicity, printing and logistical work

- >Arranging for 30 international and local multi-disciplinary artists to attend and experiment with their practices for the entire duration of GAP Co[Lab]

- >Managing the Co[Lab] during the event, making sure everybody who entered the space got a chance to make work, and that people from all walks of life could come, interact and feel inspired by one another.

February – April 2013

Curator

Art Hop Pune

I curated the work of 55 visual artists of various disciplines for Art Hop, a one-day art and music street festival, which were displayed in public spaces, including cafes, restaurants and on the streets of Koregaon Park, Pune.

November 2013 – June 2015

Event Manager , Copywriter & Curator

High Spirits Cafe, Pune

July 2013

Filmmaker

ARC (Action for the Rights of the Child) Organization, Pune

I aided in filming a short documentary based on the advantages and the realities of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009.

June 2012 – August 2012

Event Manager

CMYK Bookstore, Pune

Employer: Priya Kapoor, Head of Roli Books Publishing

January 2012 – April 2012

Media & English Teaching Intern

Sevalanka Foundation, Sri Lanka

Employer: Harsha Kumara Navaratne, Chairman of Sewalanka

I taught Basic English to rural Sri Lankan youth on a 3-month Leadership Program held in Anuradhapura, and filmed and produced a promotional video on Sevalanka's Islander resort. Alongside, I worked as an official photographer for the International Galle Music Festival held in March 2012.

September 2011 – December 2011

Media Intern

Video Volunteers, Goa

Employer: Stalin K Padma & Jessica Mayberry

I wrote daily articles on community issues, which were then published on the organization's website, press releases, and also undertook the photo-documentation of training camps and events at the Organization.

June 2011

Intern

Karuna Trust, London, UK

I aided in fundraising activities for Dalit communities in India.

November 2010

Intern

Manuski, Pune

I was involved with extensive documentation in the form of writing and photography, including preparing case studies for Manuski, an NGO that works for the empowerment of the Dalit community in India.

April 2010 – July 2010

Research Intern

Krantijyoti Savitribai Phule Women's Studies Centre, University of Pune

I researched the relationship between women and domestic work for a university publication, involving an extensive time-use study of over 30 women in Pune from across social strata.

WORKS

REFRESH/REFLECT

At Bamboo Curtain Studio

Taipei 2015

An ongoing mixed media project and cultural exchange engaging with identity and self-representation in Taipei





During a month-long artist residency at BCS, ten 25 year olds in and around Taipei shared their thoughts and experiences of identity, while learning how to make masala chai in their homes. Four words from each of their interviews were carefully picked and added to a circular blackboard, which then became an interactive installation. Members of the public were invited to read and construct a web of their own identity using the wool provided, thereby playing on the fluid multiplicity of the concept of 'identity', and the possibility of imagining a co-dependent empathetic social system based on the appreciation and celebration of differences rather than the wiping out of cultural diversity in order to create a sense of equality. *The video footage from the interviews and the interactive installation is currently in the process of being edited.*



BINDIA

Pune, 2015

A photographic enquiry into the symbolism of the red dot and its politics of identity and beauty in the Indian subcontinent and beyond.

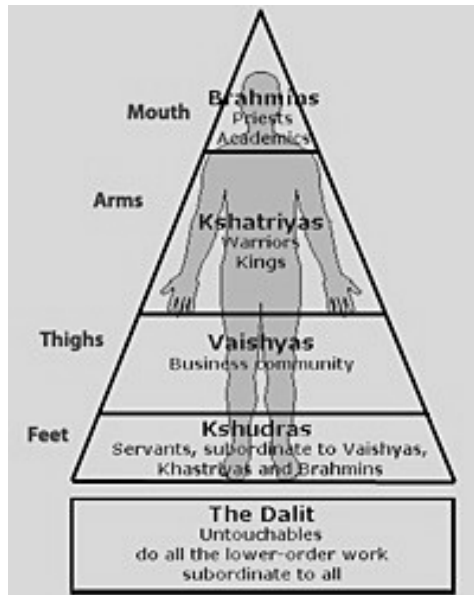
Often used as a visual identifier for a married Hindu woman, and broadly for being 'Indian', the Bindi is steadily transforming into a fashion statement amongst a diversity of people, not just South Asians. But is it just that? Through this photography project, I mull over the significance and strength of a Bindi in both a personal as well as socio-political context.



SKYSCAPE

At KHOJ Refracting Rooms

Pune 2015



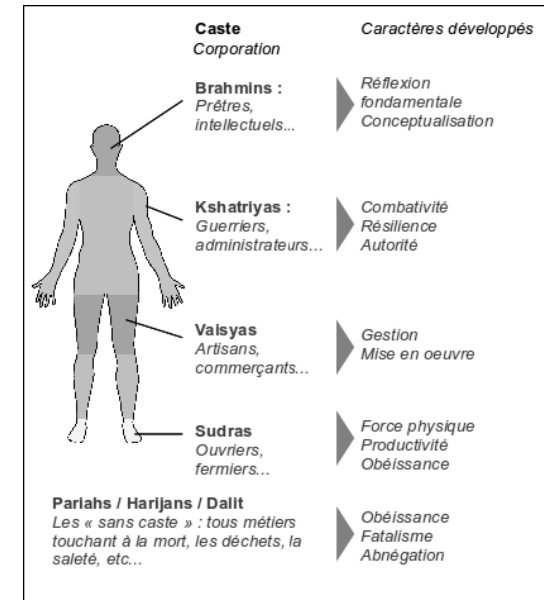
<http://www.indiandacoit.com/tag/caste>

Laws of Manu

Circa 100 BC

From his mouth God
created the Brahman (priest),
from his arms the Kshatriya (ruler),
from his thighs the Vaishya (commoner),
and from his feet the Shudra (servant)

Chapter 1, Verse 51



<http://factsanddetails.com/asian/cat64/sub413/item2626.html>

Skyscape is a tangible interpretation of the Hindu Varna system, where, according to popular belief as well as sacred Hindu texts such as the Manusmriti, it is believed that every caste comes from, and therefore represents a certain part of the human body.

The position of Dalits, or ex-untouchable community, is below the Shudras, below the feet. For centuries their caste occupation has been to handle and dispose of all forms of pollutants, be it carcasses, dead bodies, excreta, and all bodily fluids. In fact, they themselves are deemed polluting and impure.

Though the practice of untouchability is officially banned in India today, it is still widely observed across the country in various forms, and many attempts by Dalits to break out of the clutches of caste have been suppressed with systemic forms of violence as well as horrific brutality and bloody retaliation, even to basic human rights such as education.









Two silent videos made to go alongside the cloud of shoes, placed side by side in a separate room. The feet of the children in both videos are alive and constantly in motion, lending, I believe, a sense of lightness but also ceaseless persistence to the installation.

Left: Swinging I Vimeo link: <https://vimeo.com/123713867>

Right: Swinging II Vimeo link: <https://vimeo.com/123713868>

AMBEDKAR IN POP CULTURE (ONGOING)

'Ambedkar in Pop Culture' is an attempt to document, particularly through the medium of photography, how the image of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar is and has been, represented across varied sections of Indian society, with the hope that this ongoing process will lead to a deeper understanding of the part that visual culture plays amongst the New Buddhist Movement specifically, and socio-religious, political, and academic movements at large in India.





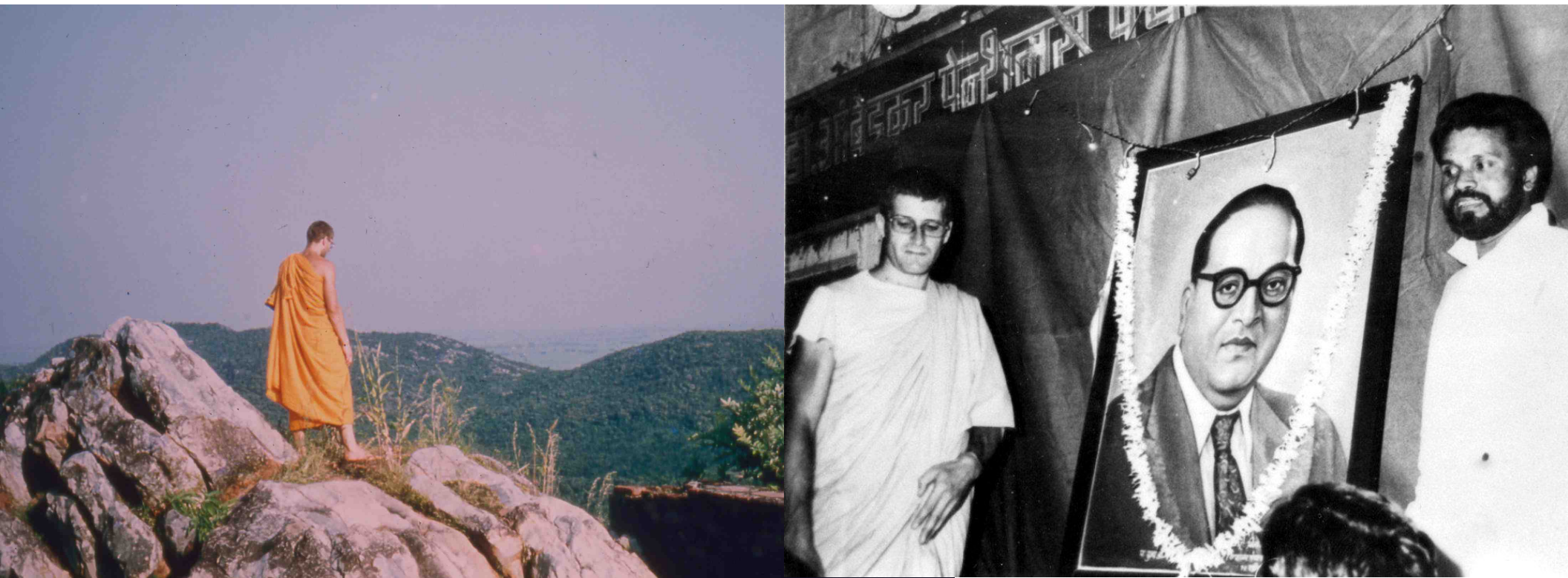


Clockwise from left: A shrine in a bedroom at Nagaloka Girls' Hostel (Nagpur), drinks coaster found in London, photo taken in the living room of a dalit family in 1977 by my father, stamps of Dr. Ambedkar from the '60s

BUDDHISM IN 1970s INDIA: A PHOTO ELICITATION

2013

In 1977, my father, Jeremy Goody, or Lokamitra, as known by his Buddhist name, moved permanently to Pune, India from London. Since then, he has been helping work towards the social and spiritual empowerment of the Dalit ex-untouchable community across India. This photo elicitation project focuses on his first few years in India when he was a Buddhist monk. Though interweaved with his personal impressions of travelling in a foreign land as a monk, the project primarily attempts to explore intricate facets of the Dalit Buddhist Movement and the lives of its participants in the late '70s and early '80s, as recounted by my father.



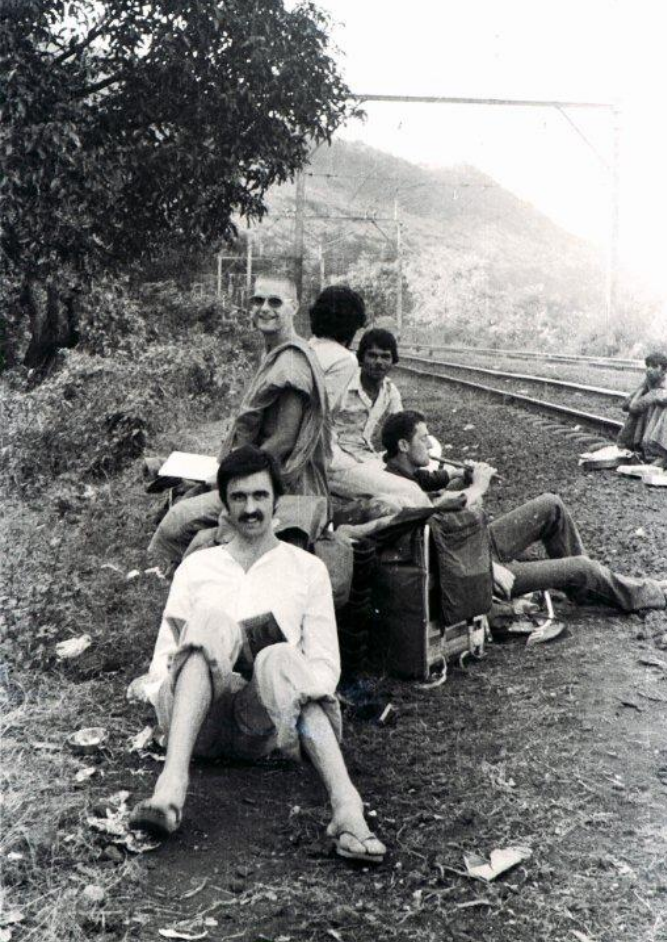
"I became a monk when I was in England. An Anaragika, which is a sort of freelance monk. If you're a proper monk you take 220 vows or something, you can't handle money... so I thought well, let me become a monk just for a few years. I found it made an instant connection with the local Buddhists, which I couldn't have done if I hadn't been in robes."



"We would often hold weekend retreats with basic meditation and a bit of study. You were away from home, and homes were very crowded then, often 15 people living in a small house. Slums are still the same today. Taking people away for two days made a massive amount of difference."

"There was a small Buddhist community in Panchgani, desperate for some knowledge. The old man in the middle wanted to join us for meditation in the mornings but he said, 'The problem is that it's so cold here and I'm not well enough to have a bath before meditating.' This was an old Hindu notion, of bathing before meditating. So we said look, don't worry. In Buddhism there's no such rule. It's not outward washing that's important, it's inward washing."





"There are thousands of old Buddhist caves dotted across Maharashtra, and I loved exploring them. One day, when the train to Bombay from Pune stopped for 30 seconds to check its brakes, we got off to see some caves. We trekked for an hour and a half to get there, and spent the night. It was fascinating, this Buddhist history of India, that was now being awakened again with Ambedkar."



IN HIGH SPIRITS: EXPLORATIONS IN COMMUNITY, SECURITY & FREEDOM IN AN ENTERTAINMENT VENUE IN INDIA

A sensory media project as part of my Masters dissertation in Visual Anthropology
2013

I attempted to scrutinize the contrasts and parallels that exist amongst the larger conservative Indian discourse about pub culture and its associations perceived to be individualistic, hedonistic, and impure, while urban middle-class youth see such spaces, instead, as havens of freedom and security. I conducted my research at High Spirits Café, Pune, using still photography, sound recordings, as well as a study of the online world of High Spirits. Visit the website [here](#)





Clockwise from left: girls entering High Spirits for a party, screen grab from a news story on India TV regarding a “party bust” by local police, people drinking and smoking at High Spirits, poster made by Morparia when Policeman Dhoble, who was in charge of a series of “busts” of Mumbai pubs and restaurants, was transferred to another city

ORFORD NESS

2013

Orford Ness is Europe's largest vegetated shingle spit, an environment that is extremely fragile and can be easily destroyed. It was used by the Department of War since the early 20th century as a base for conducting secret military experiments, particularly on atomic bombs. It was also where Cobra Mist, a form of radar, was built. Now run by the National Trust, it follows a policy of continued ruination; the buildings are allowed to decompose to natural forces of wind, sun, and rain, without any human intervention.

These images, of the ground of Orford Ness, are an attempt to capture the continual natural change and simultaneous deep stillness of the elements.





THANK YOU