

Beyond Pain: An Afterlife



Beyond Pain: An Afterlife, an exhibition of paintings, posters, books and videos, anchored by Ms. Vasudha Thozhur, contemporary artist and Faculty, School of Arts, Design and Performance, Shiv Nadar University concluded on July 31, 2013. The show was a part of a decade-long project undertaken by Ms. Thozhur in Gujarat after the riots of 2002. Her project has taken the shape of the collection of art work by amateur artists who are part of a community affected deeply by riots. Through this exhibition, Vasudha hoped to examine the role that art can play in collective trauma, addressing issues that range from personal loss and displacement to rehabilitation and economic revival.

Working with six young girls affected by the Naroda Patiya carnage, she facilitated art workshops and other fieldworks with the help of resource persons in the first Phase. In the second phase she added her own paintings and held the first exhibition in Ahmedabad in 2007, the fifth anniversary of the carnage. Vasudha received two successive grants from the India Foundation for the Arts, Bangalore and support from Khoj International Artists Association for her project. Thozhur also collaborated with Monica Wahi and Zaid Ahmed Shaikh of Himmat to initiate her community art project.

Sharing her thoughts on the exhibition, Vasudha says, "The exhibit focuses on building an understanding, and the message at its most basic is about friendship. It could be considered as a working model through which a range of skills were acquired along with political awareness and the possibility of resistance, intervention and change through creative means. The focus is on process rather than a pre-determined outcome, and also the recording of process through writing, painting and the digital media, as an archive against forgetting and the creation of a context-specific resource."