

INTERNATIONAL DIGITAL MEDIA ART FESTIVAL

6-29 NOV
FREE ACCESS

<de>confine
Novembre Numérique

FR • IN • BGD
PK • NP • SK

WWW.DECONFINE.ORG

CONVERSATIONS

ONLINE EXHIBITION

WORKSHOP



About the Festival

Deconfine is an online media art festival conceived and curated by Media Art South Asia, under the aegis of November Numerique by Institut Francais. It is presented by the network of Alliance Francaises in South Asia (India, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh) and Institut Francais en Inde.

Deconfine features artists, curators and researchers from France and South Asia. It seeks to foster regional cooperation within the subcontinent and between South Asia and Europe. It examines the evolving, dynamic and multifaceted nature of human – technology relationships, and showcases works and initiatives that leverage the potential of technology to reflect on that relationship and other social issues.

Along with an online exhibition, the festival will host conversations with artists, curators and researchers on different aspects of media art and digital culture.

This is a one-of-a-kind collaboration between creators and the organizations involved, resulting in one of South Asia's first purely online media art exhibitions, making media art more accessible than ever to South Asian audiences.

Participants

India Aisha George, Researcher
India Amay Kataria, Artist
India Anushka Rajendran, Curator
France Beatrice de Fays, Artist
Nepal Bidhata KC, Artist
Sri Lanka Danushka Marasinghe, Artist
Pakistan Faisal Anwar, Artist
India Jasmine George, Researcher
France Justine Emard, Artist
France Natacha, Artist/Researcher
Bangladesh Palash Bhattacharjee, Artist
India Parvathi Nayar, Artist
France Pauline Fournier, Curator
France Pierre-Jean Giloux, Artist
France Pierrick Mouton, Artist
France Vincent Moon, Artist

Curatorial Note

Confinement is the very essence of human existence, the fundamental truth of the mortal condition: we are limited by the minds and bodies we are born in. Along with this biological confinement, society has conjured its own modes of confinement, deployed to control those who dare to transgress the norms, to digress from the invisible (but imposing) script. With the evolution of human civilization, its members have grown more and more adept at devising multi-faceted tools of confinement: schools, prisons, factories, visas and permits being some of the most common instances.

In the recent past, the COVID-19 pandemic has made physical confinement necessary for the sake of public health and safety. It has underlined the paradox of our relationship with technology: we are simultaneously confined and liberated by the devices and screens that are now integral parts of our lives. These tools allowed us to work, socialise and create when free movement and physical interaction with others were not possible. At the same time, they trapped us in their own way within their virtual walls.

<de>confine is an attempt to break free: to renegotiate and reconfigure the nature of our collective association with technology, to redraw the contours of this intimate connection. The artists and other creators featured in this festival have used these technologies to tell stories about the world around them, to critically examine and/or reinvent our usual ways of using these tools, and to ask questions about the future of this relationship.

Vincent Moon's 'Tajalli' is a documentary on the main Sufi singers of the largest Sufi shrine in Southeast Asia - Ajmer Dargah Sharif. Parvathi Nayar's digital art and performance-based video 'Water Exchanges' throws light on the water crisis in Chennai. Pierre-Jean Giloux's 'Metabolism' is a video recreating Tokyo on the basis of Metabolism, a Japanese architectural movement, using footage and digitally rendered images. Danushka Marasinghe's 'Now I never go home on the old road' is a collage of video footage charting the changing landscapes of his homeland after a devastating war. Pierrick Mouton's 'Sector 13' is a film about sector 17, a commercial area in the centre of Chandigarh, designed by the legendary architect Corbusier. These artists have used technology to narrate stories, both real and fictional. Bidhata KC's 'Aadhar' is an experimental video on human fragility in the face of the ubiquity of digital media. Palash Bhattacharjee's 'Special Feature' is a three-channel video depicting the body's encounter with mass media. Amay Kataria's 'Mom I'm Safe' is an interactive website that re-conceives virtual exchanges of affection. These artists implement technology to turn the gaze at the tool itself.

Beatrice De Fays' 'Inspace' combines Augmented Reality with painting, broadening the boundaries of an age-old art form with the latest tools. Faisal Anwar's 'Char Bagh', referring to a particular type of me-

dieval garden, allows viewers to participate in creating the artwork by uploading pictures with specific hashtags on Instagram – data he then converts to mutate his piece. Justin Emard’s trilogy studies patterns of engagement between artificial intelligence and human beings. These artists unfold exciting possibilities not just for the future of art, but for the relationship between technology and society. ‘Mom I’m Safe’, ‘Aadhar’, ‘Metabolism’ and ‘Shahi Qawwals of Ajmer’ were made for online viewing. The other works were adapted for on-line viewing especially for this exhibition.

Along with the exhibition, three panel discussions on media art cultures will also take place. Founder members of Incommon.cc and Hidden Pockets will discuss the need for open source cultures and democratisation of knowledge on the internet. Pauline Fournier, a French curator who worked for Toulouse HackerSpace Factory for five years will throw light on different facets of hacker culture. Anushka Rajendran, an Indian curator who was the Assistant Curator for Kochi-Muziris Biennale 2018, and is the curator of Colomboscope 2021, will talk about the implications of going digital for media art in South Asia.

<de>confine is a call to action, an urgent reminder: to reflect and renegotiate the topography of our digital engagement. It does not advocate complete detachment or rejection. It invites audiences to make their own interpretations as we move towards a world more technologically mediated than it has ever been before. It urges them to imagine and wonder about all the roads not taken – yet.

Curators

Khayal Trivedi and Proiti Seal Acharya
Media Art South Asia

Media Art South Asia is a project dedicated to the dissemination of media art created in the Indian subcontinent: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. The goal is to document and promote media arts organisations, festivals, galleries, grants, awards, exhibitions, residencies, labs and artists in South Asia for stakeholders working at the crossroads of art, science and technology all over the globe.

Artists / Online Exhibition

Inaugurating on 6th November on www.deconfine.org

The works featured in the exhibition are diverse in content and form: While Vincent Moon ('Tajalli'), Pierrick Mouton ('Sector 13'), Danushka Marasinghe ('Now I never go home on the old road'), Pierre-Jean Giloux ('Metabolism'), Parvathi Nayar ('Water Exchanges') and Palash Bhattacharjee ('Special Feature') and Bidhata KC ('Aadhar') have worked with video, Faisal Anwar ('Char Bagh') and Amay Kataria ('Mom I'm Safe') have created interactive artworks, and Justine Emard and Beatrice de Fays ('InSpace') have worked with Artificial Intelligence and Augmented Reality respectively.



Aadhar



Char Bagh



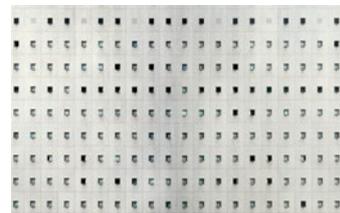
Reborn / Soul Shift / Co(ai)xstance



Special Feature



Inspace



Metabolism



Now I never go home on the old road



Tajalli / Shahi Qawwals of Ajmer



Sector 13



Water Exchanges



Mom, I am Safe



Programme

While the exhibition is on, conversations between the participating artists and invited guests from the field will be organised to mediate various facets of media art cultures. These sessions will be released on the website on their respective dates. They will also be streamed on all Alliance Francaise Facebook pages every week, moderated by the curators of Deconfine. Apart from this, the festival will also host discussions with renowned curators and researchers from this domain. Indian researcher and curator Anushka Rajendran will speak about the digital medium and the ways it has manifested in the post-COVID context. The INCOMMON Collective, makers of a cooperative data library in Europe, will be in conversation with the Hidden Pockets Collective, an initiative to map women's clinics in India. Pauline Fournier, curator of the Toulouse Hacker Space, will talk about her experiences in the underground media arts scene in France.

This is the inaugural edition of 'Deconfine', which is set to expand in the coming years, hosted by the French Cultural Network. The programme may be subject to changes.

- 6 Nov *Festival Inauguration*
-
- 17.30 IST Introduction to Deconfine by Gael de Kerguenec, Director, Alliance Francaise Ahmedabad, Jean-François Hans, Director, Asie Océanie de la fondation and curators Khayal Trivedi and Proiti Seal Acharya (Media Art South Asia), with a virtual walk through the exhibition
- 7 Nov *Community Empowerment with Open Source Technology*
-
- 17.30 IST Jasmine George and Aisha George (Hidden Pockets) in conversation with Natacha (In Common), on leveraging technology to benefit local communities. The speakers will discuss their respective projects: a co-operative data library and a women's health initiative | Moderated by Proiti Seal Acharya, co-curator, Deconfine
- 7 Nov *Ethnographic Explorations and the Digital Commons*
-
- 18.30 IST Vincent Moon (France), in conversation with Thomas Simoes, Director. Alliance Francaise, Bhopal and Khayal Trivedi, co-curator. Moon will discuss his craft, his project Petites Planetes and his film, Tajalli: Shahi Qawwals of Ajmer. Moon will talk about being an artist in the internet era, and reflect on the philosophy behind making his work freely accessible to all.

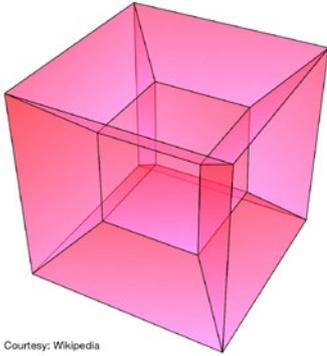
- 8 Nov *Behind the scenes of Toulouse HackerSpace Factory*
17.30 IST Pauline Fournier, one of the curators of the Toulouse HackerSpace Factory, a space for exploring different facets of hacker culture with more than three hundred annual participants, will discuss her experience behind the scenes. She will share her insights on the underground media and arts scene in France, and throw light on how models like the Toulouse HackerSpace create alternate pathways for artists and technologists.
-
- 10 Nov *Metabolism in Video Art*
17.30 IST Pierre Jean Giloux (France), in conversation with Eva Martin, Director. Alliance Francaise, Trivandrum. Moderated by Khayal Trivedi, co-curator, Deconfine. Giloux will discuss his work based on the Metabolism movement in Japan in the 60s, at the intersections of the biological, material, virtual and real worlds. He will also talk about his ongoing project in India
-
- 11 Nov *Performance, Artificial Intelligence and Video Art*
17.30 IST Justine Emard (France), in conversation with Khayal Trivedi, co-curator, Deconfine. Emard will talk about her artistic process, and throw light on the emerging field of artificial intelligence art and video art as a language. She will do so by presenting three of her artworks, Reborn, Co(Ai)xstance and Soul Shift which are part of the exhibition. In conversation with co-curator, Khayal Trivedi.
-
- 20 Nov *Contemplating a shifting Digital Culture in the Arts*
17.30 IST Researcher and Curator Anushka Rajendran will share her insights on curating digital exhibitions, and discuss the implications of the format for South Asian arts. With Khayal Trivedi and Proiti Seal Acharya (Media Art South Asia)
-
- 21 Nov *Technology as Metaphor: Time and Empathy*
17.30 IST Amay Kataria (India), will discuss how his practice, situated at a convergence of physical and digital materiality, deconstructs temporality and considers new models of human empathy by repurposing existing technologies
-
- 22 Nov *The Body in Space: Video and Performance Art*
17.30 IST Palash Bhattacharjee (Bangladesh) in conversation with Selvam Thorez, Director, Alliance Francaise, Chittagong. Moderated by Proiti Seal Acharya, co-curator, Deconfine. The artist will talk about his creative journey in the context of contemporary media arts in Bangladesh, focusing especially on his resistance to mass media as an ideological tool

- 22 Nov *Histories of Violence: Irony in Video Art*
18.30 IST Danushka Marasinghe (Sri Lanka), will shed light on contemporary media arts in Sri Lanka, and discuss the historical and societal influences on his work. More details to be announced soon
-
- 27 Nov *The Making of 'Water Exchanges'*
17.30 IST Parvathi Nayar (India) in conversation with Bruno Plasse, Director, Alliance Francaise, Chennai. Moderated by Khayal Trivedi, co-curator, Deconfine. The artist will discuss the crisis that informed her artwork 'Water Exchanges' and shed light on the process of adapting it for the online exhibition
-
- 28 Nov *Public Data and Community Engagement: Interactive Art*
17.30 IST Faisal Anwar (Pakistan), the artist will discuss his artistic process, focusing on data driven art and the ethical use of social media. He will also discuss the possibilities for creating dynamic interactive art on digital platforms
-
- 28 Nov *Human Dependency on Technology*
18.30 IST Bidhata KC (Nepal) in conversation with Anne-Laure Petit, Director, Alliance Francaise Kathmandu. Moderated by Proiti Seal Acharya, co-curator, Deconfine. The artist will reflect on her foray into the media arts, in the context of contemporary arts in Nepal. She will talk about 'Aadhar', her first experimental video piece, and reflect on her creative process
-
- 29 Nov *InSpace: Storytelling with A.R. and Painting*
17.30 IST Beatrice De Fays (France) in conversation with Samuel Berthet, Director, Alliance Francaise, Hyderabad. Moderated by Khayal Trivedi, co-curator, Deconfine. The artist will discuss InSpace, her series in progress, combining painting with augmented reality
-
- 29 Nov *Closing Note*
18.30 IST The curators and organisers will reflect on the festival and present an open call to facilitate further cooperation in the South Asian region for media art and digital art practices



Workshop: Fourth Dimension

Amay Kataria, Artist | 4th week of November - TBA



Courtesy: Wikipedia

Only 7 students will be selected from design and art colleges to participate in this Artist's workshop conducted by digital media artist Amay Kataria.

To apply:
<https://forms.gle/n32mSbDcuzo41gJ66>

Our lived experience is primarily event based - a phenomenon that occurs within the bounds of space and time. We perceive the space around us in a three dimensional way, which is visualized using length, width, and depth. However, mathematically there may be many more dimensions in space that are beyond our ability to perceive. This difficulty in visualising higher dimensions became the premise for inspiring cubists, surrealists, and abstract artists to borrow ideas from higher dimension mathematics and apply it to their practice. In this seminar, we will closely deconstruct the visual and spatial properties of a tesseract; an object from the fourth dimensional space into three dimensional space using Augmented Reality (AR) technology. Participants will be introduced to SparkAR, an AR tool to construct their own three dimensional projections of tesseracts. Consequently, participants will be encouraged to utilize this idea of extrapolating spatial dimensions as a metaphor to devise new situations, interventions, associations, and experimental narratives using any tools or mediums that they wish to use.

