

Artist Statements

Beyond Text: Visual Poetry & Body Calligraphy

Introduction Beyond Text: Visual Poetry and Body Calligraphy is a participatory and community art proposal to be implemented within the Deaf community in New Delhi, India. It is based on interdisciplinary arts that blend together Spanish poetry, photography, Indian sign language, body movement, and gesture. The aim of the art proposal is to explore disability and representation through a range of different art concepts. The goal is to explore the body as tool for language and visual communication. Within this formula the project objective follows, first to act as cross-culture arts between India and Spain. Using Spanish literature and Indian sign language as way to explore both countries cultural references through language. Secondly is to explore photography as an alternative tool to create visual text, moreover to experiment body, language and visual poetry. Thirdly, it aims to give voice to the Deaf community by using art for social change by promoting the Indian sign language, disability and Deaf culture through a serial of public exhibitions and awareness campaigns. To present the Spanish culture to the Indian Deaf community the proposal aim to refer to Federico Garcia Lorca figure.

As a literary example of his work I will introduce 'Romance ro Gitano'. In this, literary piece Lorca's metaphoric language and subliminal poetry represents the Spanish gypsy ethnicity minority a marginal community in Spain. Through this point of departure, the project aims to make a link with the Indian Deaf community and intends to awake the participant's creativity and inspiration to after ward represent their own community from their own point of view and language. Through Lorca's encouraging poetry and by using participatory techniques the project aims to achieve two main objectives: One to identify the needs, the cultural differences, and communication barriers that Deaf community experiment. Two find new ways of creating messages that represent and visually communicate their community points of views to the society. As final goal the project aims to fight against linguistic and cultural discrimination celebrating therefore disability culture and promoting the Indian sign language and their communication rights.

The project is the result of three collaborative bodies: Jose Abad Lorente artist, project designer, and coordinator. KHOJ studios: an international artist organization that provide artist support and professional directions. The Deaf Way Foundation: Who develop a range of social work, education, and support to the Deaf community in India. Strategies the project framework is designed within a period of six months. Divided in three month's workshops. The designed activities are divided in three modes, and each mode is framed into one month with eight workshop sessions. Facilitated twice a week, for two hour each session. The other three months are due to the artist work in editing and curating the final exhibitions. (Please see chronology table below)The workshops sessions will take place at KHOJ Studios or alternatively at the The Deaf Way activity centre. The beneficiaries of this project will be the in the majority the youth Deaf community in Delhi. With an approximated number from ten to fifteen participants. One Indian sign language translator, and the artist as workshop facilitator and project coordinator. The three workshops, each one offers a different discipline to the participants as it follows: Firstly, the project aims to offer a multicultural aspect through presenting and studying the poetry of Federico Garcia Lorca to the young Deaf Indian participants. The workshop will be facilitated in Indian sign language, Hindi and alternatively English. Will use already translate

didactic material from Spanish to Hindi as way to introduce the figure and work of Lorca. Complementary it will use visual material such as the movie 'Lorca, muerte de un poeta' directed by J. A. Barden.

The aim of this mode is that the participants started to get familiar with poetry language and to explore the metaphor and conceptual language. The session will conclude with the participant's first approach to create their own writing poems based on representations of their own life experience as being part of a marginal and discriminated community. The second mode is based on dance movement the rapy techniques as way to encourage the participants to take a journey and self-awareness of their own behavior, body language, and gesture. With the result of these sessions the mode will proceed to translate the anterior poems in sing, body movement and gesture language. The third mode will commence with a basic introduction to photography and the disposables cameras (provided by KHOJ) that they will be using as tool to represent and create the final visual poems interpreted through body calligraphy – language-. The participants will be arranged in pairs or group of three in order to offer the opportunity to photograph each other body movements. In this sense, the projects aim that the participants discusses and analyze the content of the poem together. Bringing up their community issues, through their own point of view such as representing themselves as insiders instead of someone else representing them as the 'others'.

The result of this mode it will conclude with a serial of poems that aims to give voice to the Deaf community through visual text. After concluding the tree modes, the project will follow a final editing of the visual text by the artist. Departing from the artist own aesthetic point of view the visual poems will mounted. Moreover, the artist will take care about the final presentation of the exhibition, design catalogue. The project will conclude as a community and collaborative art project with the final meta of promoting multiculturalism and social change through art process.

Jose Abad