



*Image Caption: Nil Yalter & Theo Lesoualch, Mime Programme from Paris to Istanbul to Tehran to Bombay 1956-1959. The image on the right is taken outside the former opera hall near Clark House which will become the National Gallery of Modern Art. Image courtesy Nil Yalter.*

## **And I laid traps for troubadours who get killed before they reached Bombay**

Opens 7 February | 6pm

Exhibition continues till 30 April, 2014

Open all days 11am-7pm including Sundays.

With: Francis Alÿs, Liz Ballard, Yael Bartana, Yogesh Barve, Kemi Bassene, Judy Blum, Sachin Bonde, Kennedy Browne, CAMP, Ceal Floyer, Aurélien Froment, Grupo Etcetera, David Horvitz, Poonam Jain, Jamboys, Mangesh Kapse, Ben Kinmont, Lawrence Liang, Simon Liddiment, Aurelien Mole, Scott Myles, Prasad Nikumbh, Roman Ondak, Open Circle, Prabhakar Pachpute, Amol Patil, Rupali Patil, Pratchaya Phinthon, Justin Ponmany, Tatiana Pozzo Di Borgo, Prajakta Potnis, Nikhil Raunak, Société Réaliste, Zied Ben Romdhane, Caecilia Tripp and Nil Yalter.

3 February all-day | Workshop with the students of the Printmaking Studio, Sir JJ School of Art & students of Rachna Sansad College Department of Fine Art, a pedagogical project.

5 February 6pm-8pm | Lawrence Liang presents a lecture-performance as a response to the provocations of the exhibition | 5pm onward performative interventions conceived by Caecilia Tripp, Scott Myles and Roman Ondak.

Curated by Emilie Villez, Zasha Colah & Sumesh Sharma

A collaboration between Kadist Art Foundation, Paris & Clark House Initiative, Bombay

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The image of Nil Yalter above tells a history, impossible today, traveling from Istanbul to Bombay, by trains and road, crossing several national borders. The exhibition's title, taken from a song by the Rolling Stones, is Lucifer's amoral recount of evil in history. Mick Jagger's man of wealth and taste is a cultural transference of Mikhail Bulgakov's unnerving devil, the urbane foreigner to St. Petersburg, the magician in the novel 'Master and Margarita' published in English in 1967. The recording in 1968 of 'Sympathy for the Devil' is captured in a film by Jean-Luc Godard 'One Plus One', who weaved in his own political commentary of the sixties from the hippies, to the Black Panthers, to Maoism. Jagger's 'Bombay' ironically conjures all the exoticism of the East for those on the sixties hippie trail. Instead of romanticising the movements of 1968, the song calls all sinners saints and every cop a criminal. Its incantatory chorus 'When after all/ it was you and me/ (Who who, who who)', inverts the easy guises of blame; which the exhibition taps into, to urgently recall alternatives, the economies of the social contract, of gift-exchange, and the commons, in the face of rising exclusive nationalism.

And I laid traps for troubadours who get killed before they reached Bombay is an exhibition of cultural transference: how ideas travel through objects and how the meaning of artworks will change and accrue, when brought into the context of Bombay's political and social realities, and imaginaries. The exhibition in Bombay combines works from the Kadist collection in Paris with productions by artists from Bombay, or those who once travelled to Bombay. Works exist in situ: the travel experience, more than importing a pre-existing meaning, gives them the possibility to multiply their possible interpretations in the light of a new context. Clark House, once a shipping office, a political refuge, and an antiques storage – a historical place for the circulation of objects and ideas – therefore becomes a site of works in conceptual and aesthetic shift.

International exhibition making is often a logistical feat that lacks the presence of a social contract between artists exhibiting and those they intend to address. To include the social contract within the exhibition, imagines an alternative economy in art as a political act. The failure of derivative economics has led to drastic changes in society. Subsequently, we have witnessed a reorganisation of politics that has begun a phase of new arrogance, derived from assumed positive growth indices, ushering in a change that is making our societies more conservative and inward-looking. Yet the economy is a cultural phenomenon, which interacts on a personal level with people. The exhibition in Bombay circumvents the trade routes that art works tread, eliminating the chicanery of customs regulations and taxes, through instruction artworks and performances, digital files, and artists travelling to produce work while sharing techniques, conceptual inquiry and experience with younger artists. A social contract emerges of anarchist making.

The exhibition is the second part of a project started in Paris in 2013 with the exhibition *L'exigence de la saudade*, curated by Zasha Colah and Sumesh Sharma then in residency at Kadist. In return, this new exhibition co-curated by Clark House Initiative and Kadist Art Foundation, and hosted in Bombay, claims that genealogy by taking over the title of the publication of *L'exigence de la saudade*. The first part of this collaboration had achieved in presenting the work of Indian artists, not visible enough in Europe: historical works (Jean Bhowmargy, Tyeb Mehta, Nalini Malani, Krishna Reddy, Chandralekha) were associated with new productions by artists (including Padmini Chettur, Prajakta Potnis and Zamthingla Ruivah) in a multi-disciplinary proposition deconstructing an unequivocal image of India, where instead the subcontinent was considered in its tensions and contradictions creating new political and aesthetic potentials; while asking how a work of culture may retain its radicality as it is transferred, propelled or translated into the context of Paris – to imagine what 'cultural equality' may mean.



Clark House Initiative is a curatorial collaborative and a union of artists based in Bombay.

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Opposite Sahakari Bhandar and Regal Cinema, next  
to Woodside Inn.

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