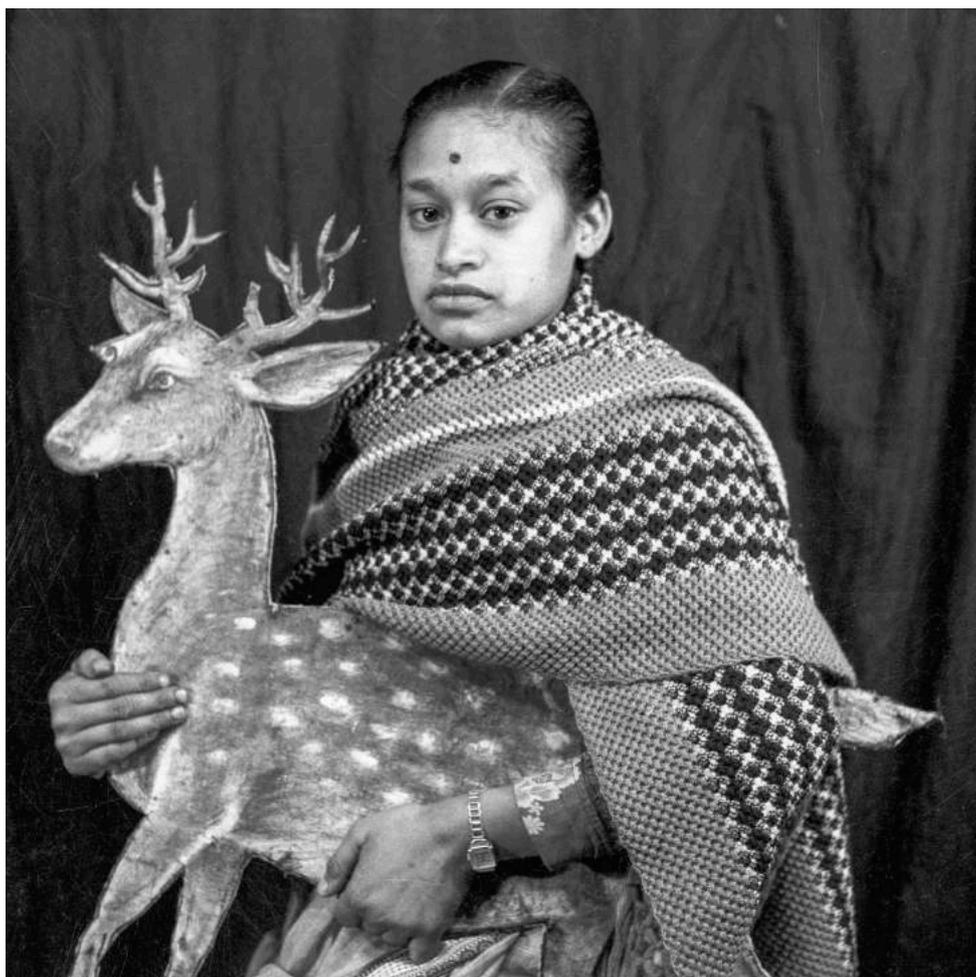


## Press Kit



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## **VISUAL ARTS EXHIBITION**

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**April 27 to June 4, 2016**

## **FOUND**

### **Remnants of a Separation**

Aanchal Malhotra (India / New Delhi)

### **Nepalese Photo Studio**

Margret Nielsen (Germany / Montreal)

**Presented by Festival Accès Asie**

Maison de la culture Frontenac / Studio 1  
2550 Ontario East Street, Montréal, Québec, H2K 1W7



Kakim Goh  
Curator  
Festival Accès Asie  
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## FOUND

**Opening cocktail:** Saturday, May 7, 2016 from 2:00 to 4:00 pm

**Meeting with the Artists:** Sunday, May 8, 2016 from 2:00 to 4:00 pm

**Exhibition:** April 27 to June 4, 2016

Maison de la culture Frontenac / Studio 1  
2550 Ontario East Street, Montreal, Quebec, H2K 1W7

Frontenac metro station (behind the metro)

### Free admission

**Festival Accès Asie**, in collaboration with the **maison de la culture Frontenac**, is pleased to present **Found**, a two-person exhibition featuring photography, video and installation works by artists **Aanchal Malhotra (India / New Delhi)** and **Margret Nielsen (Germany / Montreal)**. The exhibition will run from **April 27th to June 4th, 2016**. The public is invited to attend the opening cocktail on **Saturday, May 7th, 2016, from 2:00 to 4:00 pm**, as well as the meeting and discussion with the artists on **Sunday, May 8th, 2016, from 2:00 to 4:00 pm**.

Curated by **Kakim Goh**, with the assistance of **Catherine LaMendola** and **Elodie Lavergne**, **Found** is a research-based show that explores the artistic use of found objects and themes of discovery, recognition and restoration.

In **Aanchal Malhotra's series *Remnants of a Separation***, the artist plumbs the depths of Indian and Pakistani refugees' experiences to uncover hidden memories of a turbulent and painful chapter in world history - the 1947 Partition of the Indian Subcontinent. By using extensive research and face-to-face interviews, the artist combines photography and texts to create a rich narrative dealing with family, displacement and belonging. This ongoing project debuted in 2015 at the FOFA Gallery in Montreal and has toured internationally, with stops at The Institute for Applied and Creative Thinking at Staffordshire University in England and The Partition Museum in New Delhi. This marks the first presentation of this series in French.

In **Margret Nielsen's *Nepalese Photo Studio***, the artist presents a selection from her collection of thousands of preserved negatives acquired from a family-run photo studio in a small town in Nepal. The images, which date from the 40s to the 90s, were taken by two Nepalese photographers, father and son, who specialized in portraiture, events, street photography and snippets of daily life. A culmination of many years of photo preservation and research, this presentation raises questions about the depiction of Nepalese culture, the role of the photographer in society, as well as the public and private domains of memory and experience.

### For information, contact:

Curator | Kakim Goh | (514) 270-6913 | [commissaire.artsvisuels@accesasie.com](mailto:commissaire.artsvisuels@accesasie.com)

### Exhibition visiting hours

Until May 22, 2016: Tuesday to Thursday from 12 pm to 7 pm / Friday to Sunday from 12 pm to 5 pm  
Starting May 24, 2016: Tuesday to Thursday from 12 pm to 7 pm / Friday and Saturday from 12 pm to 5 pm



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## FESTIVAL ACCÈS ASIE

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### Visual Arts Team



#### **Kakim Goh - Curator & Vice President of the Board of Directors**

Kakim Goh ([www.kakimgoh.com](http://www.kakimgoh.com)) was born in Singapore and lives in Montreal. He is the Vice President of the Board of Directors at Festival Accès Asie, in addition to serving as the Curator of the Visual Arts Program, responsible for organizing visual arts exhibitions, professional development programs and cultural mediation activities. He holds a BFA in Painting and Drawing from Concordia University. As a visual artist who creates interdisciplinary painting, performance and video installations, Kakim has been exhibiting in Mexico and Quebec since 1993, most notably at MAI, the OBORO New Media Laboratory and la Maison de la Culture du Plateau-Mont-Royal.



#### **Catherine LaMendola - Assistant Curator**

Catherine LaMendola was born in Texas and lives in Montreal. She is currently completing her bachelor's degree in Art History at McGill University. She is also the co-president of McGill University's student art gallery and her research focuses on contemporary installation practices and art criticism. She has written and edited for various Montreal publications including *The Main* and McGill's journal *Canvas*. She has served as a curatorial intern at Festival Accès Asie since Spring 2015.



#### **Elodie Lavergne - Event Coordinator**

Elodie Lavergne was born in France and lives in Montreal. She holds a Bachelor's degree in International Business and Corporate Development from CNAM Haute-Normandie. In France, she gained marketing and event management experience working for L'Oréal Paris and volunteering at the Fontenay-Sous-Bois City Hall where she organized events, concerts and exhibitions. She is currently specializing in arts and culture by pursuing a Certificate in Animation and Cultural Research at UQAM. She has served as an Event Coordinator at Festival Accès Asie since Fall 2015.

**Festival Accès Asie** ([www.accesasie.com](http://www.accesasie.com)) is a Montréal-based non-profit organization (NPO) that promotes Asian arts, histories and cultures in Québec and Canada through various artistic disciplines including visual arts, dance, theatre, video, film, music, comedy, poetry, literature, performance, new media and culinary arts. Formed in 1995, Festival Accès Asie is the longest continuously running Asian heritage arts festival in Canada. To date, it has presented works of over 600 artists of Asian origin from more than 20 different Asian countries.



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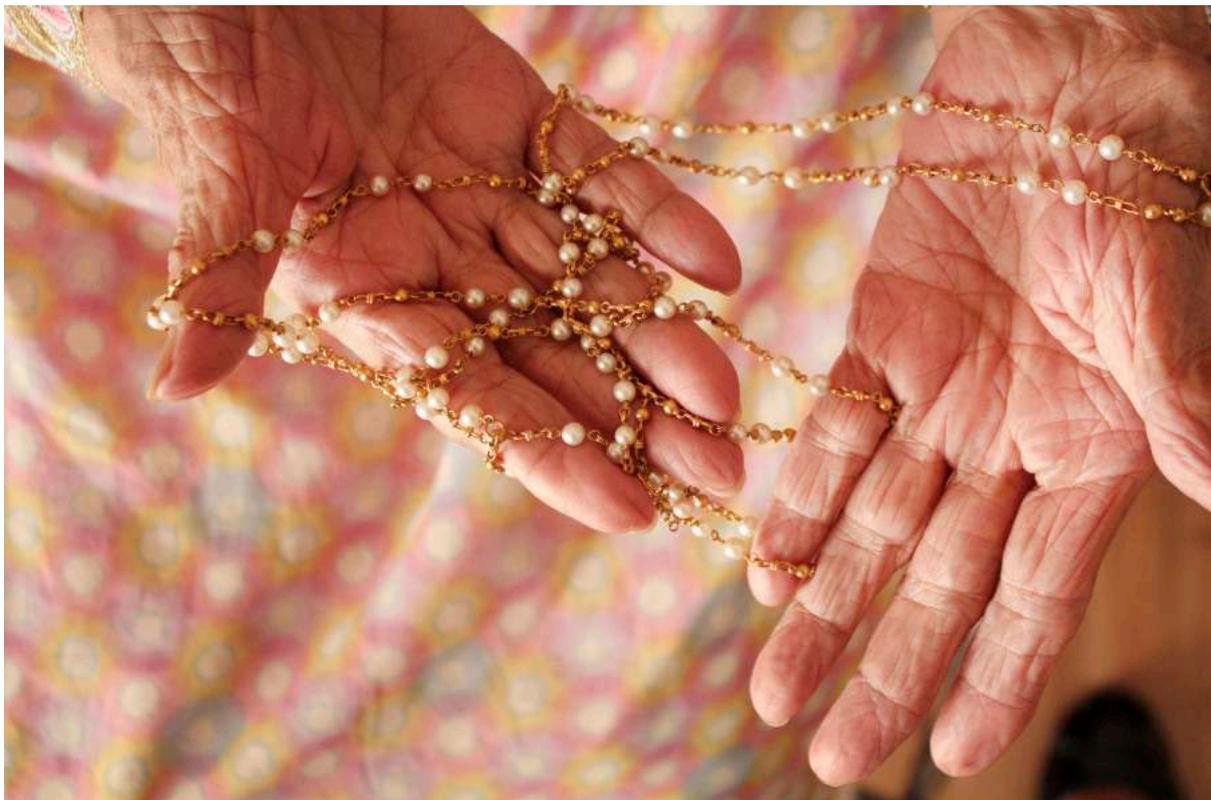
## AANCHAL MALHOTRA

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### Artist - Remnants of a Separation



**Aanchal Malhotra** ([www.aanchalmalhotra.com](http://www.aanchalmalhotra.com)) was born in India and lives in New Delhi. She is interested in banality, acts of recollection and the malleability of our memory. Her projects explore the written word, various forms of the book and the versatility of traditional printmaking. She reflects on issues like cultural diaspora, notions of belonging, the forgotten fragments of collective experiences, and family history and genealogy. Aanchal holds a BFA from OCAD University, Toronto and a MFA in Studio Art from Concordia University. She was awarded the 2011 OCAD University Medal in Printmaking and has exhibited in Toronto, Quebec, Portugal, Serbia and India.



© Aanchal Malhotra



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## Remnants of a Separation

The British colonial rule of India lasted from 1858 to 1947.

At the end of WWII, Britain was left financially weak and unable to hold onto a number of its colonies including India.

The British decided to grant Independence to India in August 1947. The British chose to create a Muslim state of Pakistan within India due to the rising disparity between the Indian National Congress (predominantly Hindu) and the Muslim League. As a result, the British gave predominantly Muslim populated areas in India to Pakistan. Any Hindus or Sikhs residing in those areas were forced to move to India. Similarly, Muslims that found themselves on the Indian side were forcibly relocated to newly created Pakistan. This led to riots, bloodshed, communal violence and the death of millions crossing the new borders.

1947 saw the division of India, the creation of Pakistan and subsequently, cemented the real meaning of the words Indian or Pakistani. The partition of the Indian Subcontinent made the question of citizenship one of utmost importance.

With the departure of British rule, both India and Pakistan could call themselves free nations.

But apart from gaining independence in August 1947, it also paved the way for the largest mass migration of people in the history of the world - leaving over 12 million displaced and 1 million dead. Several decades have passed since then and with these passing of years, innumerable stories have been told about the birth of these nations. Stories about the loss of homes, loved ones, livelihoods and belongings; stories of hatred, deception, religious animosity, murder and ruthless acts of violence; stories of the demise of the empire, of hope and sometimes, stories of a new beginning.

I have grown up with these stories. Being from a generation once removed from the partition, fragments of it linger in my personal history. But lately, I've found myself interested in the minor facets that remain from this separation. Apart from the people on either side of the border, apart from the establishment of the border itself...what else remains that is tangible- that which can be seen or touched, that which has a history.

My project attempts to narrate the history of the subcontinent through remnants. It is a study into the objects that individuals took with them when they left their homes at the time of the partition of India- the belongings that became a part of their life, their journey- whatever shape it was to take, and those which are now a part of their histories. What do you take with you when you don't know whether you will live to see tomorrow? Do you take anything at all? Is it the tangible- money, valuables, or is it the intangible that accompanies you- memories, values, a feeling of displacement.

Whatever remains today from this event carries within it the history of a place and the distant image of a true home. These objects and the individuals that they belong to are the subject of my research. The project takes the form of images and narratives based on interviews, combining photographs and text.



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## MARGRET NIELSEN

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### Artist - Nepalese Photo Studio



Photographer **Margret Nielsen** ([www.margretnielsen.wordpress.com](http://www.margretnielsen.wordpress.com)) was born in Germany and lives in Montreal. Her work is influenced by classic photojournalism and currently focuses on reinterpreting and reusing found material. She is a former photo editor at laif photo agency in Germany. During her extensive travels throughout Asia, Margret taught photography to women in Afghanistan. Her photographic series on China have been featured in two exhibitions at the Goethe-Institut in Germany.



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### **Nepalese Photo Studio**

The Nepalese Photo Studio collection allows for the discovery of a little-known chapter in the history of photography: Nepalese photography.

This exhibition presents the rare opportunity to explore classical Nepalese studio photography.

"Nepalese Photo Studio" is a selection of found photography from my collection of thousands of preserved negatives that I acquired in 2010 from the Banepali family-run photo studio in the small town of Bhaktapur, Nepal. Having been kept in storage for years, the negatives were in a poor state, intended to be sold for recycling due to the silver content.

The images were taken by two generations of photographers, father and son, who specialized in portraiture, events, street photography and snippets of daily life. The images date from the late 40s to the 90s, providing insight into the life and history of a small Newari town and its inhabitants.

For the past three years, I have been tenaciously restoring and archiving the negatives, even returning to Nepal in April 2015 to conduct interviews with Kedar Banepali, one of the original photographers as well as with Nepali archive specialists and historians. The exhibition consists of 50 framed photos, a projection of images taken in the aftermath of the devastating earthquake in April / May 2015, texts descriptions as well as a hand painted backdrop from Nepal that recreates the atmosphere of a Nepalese photo studio.

Photography can't be seen separated from history, social and cultural science. The presentation of "Nepalese Photo Studio" aims to provoke questions about the importance of photography, the significance of representation, the reading and interpretation of images. It allows us further to enquire about the photographer in the role of a documentalist and to explore not only the obvious differences in cultures but the predominant similarities depicted in these photographs. My goal is to present a valuable facet of Nepalese daily life photography. The exhibition is engaging the general public in a presentation that marries captivating images with research into the predominantly Newar culture of the Kathmandu Valley.



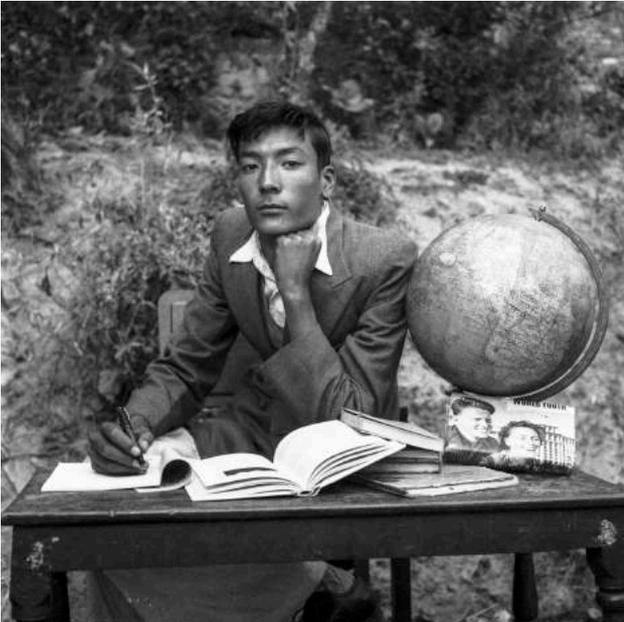
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