

# ARTS RESEARCH



PAST  
FORWARD

OCTOBER 25 - OCTOBER 27, 2024

## THE PLEASURE, PURPOSE AND PRACTICE OF ARTS RESEARCH

### Curatorial Note

The last decade has been tumultuous, challenging, and perplexing in more ways than one. From a socio-political climate that quickly gave way to oppressive regimes, environmental and mental health crises, a global pandemic, mass migrations, to the emergence of new technologies, we have witnessed rapid and contradictory shifts in the world we live in. As individuals, collectives, and organisations, it became imperative that we adapt, respond, and find new ways of making meaning of the circumstances that have continually been in flux.

The arts help us to register and respond to such paradigmatic shifts while also holding out hope and desire for that which is yet to come. Their capacity to generate new ways of thinking and knowledge could enable us to get a more complex picture of the human predicament.

Research, particularly in the context of the arts, not only becomes a mode of engaging with such emergent forms of thinking but also shifting the values and maxims associated with dominant circuits of knowledge production. Arts Research foregrounds an awareness of urgency and has the capacity to forge a dynamic and singular relationship with time by responding to past and present contexts while also probing unforeseen futures.

*Past Forward: The Pleasure, Purpose and Practice of Arts Research* showcases the works of scholars, curators, and creative practitioners that have been supported and implemented by the **India Foundation for the Arts (IFA)** in the last **10 years of the Arts Research** programme. At this festival, we bring together over **70 projects** implemented across disciplines, languages, regions, and communities. We invite you to engage with these various investigations through panel discussions, performances, film screenings, exhibitions, and workshops.

We wish to hold room for contexts that are precarious, contingent, heterogeneous, different, and/or relative. We would like to talk about the understated **pleasure** of researching the arts—the joy of chance encounters, moments of divergences, the necessary failures, the suspension of familiar paradigms, the hovering in the undefined in-betweens, the delights of speculation, the risk and desire of being subversive and the performativity of it all. By discussing and showcasing creative **practices** of knowledge building and, conversely, also, the acts of research in artistic practices, we hope to foreground the **purpose** that such practices have served in engaging with diverse histories and cultural contexts while fostering wider perspectives and engagements with the arts in the last decade.

IFA welcomes you to *Past Forward: The Pleasure, Purpose and Practice of Arts Research*.

*We would like to thank BNP India Foundation for making this festival possible.*