



By Phalguni Desai on February 28 2014 8.07am

Three questions with... Gitanjali Dang

*Time Out spoke to Dang about the venue's debut show *Echoes*, a two-person exhibition featuring works by the late Cuban-American artist Ana Mendieta*



Ana Mendieta's *Anima, Silhueta de Cohetes (Firework Piece)*

Khanabadosh, the arts lab set up by curator Gitanjali Dang is all about DIY. By that, we mean she packs her bags and travels to find new connections and draw out existing ones. Time Out spoke to Dang about the venue's debut show *Echoes*, a two-person exhibition featuring works by the late Cuban-American artist Ana Mendieta and Mumbai-based Ratna Gupta, who in her last outing presented her experiments with form through abstract wax sculptures.

Tell us about Ana Mendieta.

Mendieta lived in New York. Her multidisciplinary practice, combining body and land art, performance, photography, sculpture and film, is close to the bone literally and

metaphorically. Although she resisted it, it is hard not to examine the relative invisibility of her narrative from the broader discourse on art from a feminist position. Her work has recently gained renewed visibility, with recent retrospectives at the Art Institute of Chicago (2011) and London's Hayward Gallery (2013) where a foreword to her work identified her as a "doubleminority in North America's largely white, male art world of the 1970s and 1980s". I encountered her (video) work at the Daros Latinamerica Collection, Zurich. They generously loaned us the videos to exhibit in India for the first time, to create a dialogue around Mendieta's intriguing narrative.

How do you see Gupta's work positioned with Mendieta's?

The exhibition is called *Echoes* to quite simply underscore the fact that neither the passage of time nor the neglect it has encountered have stopped the reverberation of Mendieta's work from being extended to the present moment. Gupta is also interested in undermining the body-nature binary that Mendieta explores. While Mendieta's work employs Paganism in order to shrink the gap between body and earth, Ratna reflects on this spurious binary by being in a contemporary situation from where she speculates on the ways in which this binary has been fuelled by consumer cultures.

What other projects can we expect from Khanabadosh?

Exploring curation beyond exhibition-making is an interest, so the plan is to continue in that direction. We are also interested in pursuing public space in various ways. There's the new project tentatively titled *Is the very opposite of doing nothing*. It refutes open-ended sections of the Bombay Police Act used to keep people off the streets at night by doing something as simple as a collective late night walk, where the mathematician Compasswallah [Rohit Gupta] holds forth on Bombay's secular past, the politics of the night and astronomy. [We are] collaborating with the Zurich University of Arts (ZHdK) on a decentralised public art project, taking place at seven urban sites across the world.

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