India Foundation for the Arts (IFA)

- A nation-wide, independent, not-for-profit, grant-making and project implementation organisation that supports practice, research and education in the arts and culture across India

- Since 1996: 26 years, **734 projects**, 23+ languages, INR 343 Mill (USD 4.5 Mill)

- **50+** projects every year

- **7** Programmes and Initiatives through the year:
  - Arts Research
  - Arts Education
  - Arts Practice
  - Archives and Museums
  - Project 560
  - IFA Archive

Registered under the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act * Vetted and approved to receive grants by Charities Aid Foundation America (CAF) and Foster India Foundation, USA * Contributions to IFA qualify for 50% exemption under Section 80G of the Indian Income-tax Act and 100% exemption under IRC 501(c)(3) in the USA.

**Outcomes:**
Films, publications, archives, exhibitions, websites, performances, installations, workshops, residencies, conferences, and more...
Belief: Arts vital for a just world
Support: Challenge dominant narratives
Address: Gaps, Erasures and Silences
Role: Facilitator, Catalyst, Provocateur
Encourage: Explorations and Experiments
Kalam Patua, *Kalighat Painting*
Unsettling the Dust
India at the Edge
Practicing Resilience | Building Solidarities | Mobilising Resources
Beirut, May 2022
Significant Shifts in the Past Decade

1. Failure of Neoliberal Economics: Loss of jobs and livelihoods
2. Rise of the Fundamental Right: Constraints on Lives and Freedoms of ‘Others’
3. Collusion of State and Market: Increasing Overlaps and Mutual Benefits
5. Polarisation of Rich and Poor: Increasing Levels of Anger and Mistrust
6. Polarisation of Ideologies: Shrinkage of Spaces for Debate and Dialogue
7. Strong Identity Politics: Congealing of the Communities and Fear of ‘Others’
8. Lack on Consolidated Organised Political Opposition: Fragmented Regional Politics
9. Rise of Dissent and Resistance: Emerging Voices from the Margins and Civil Society
10. Digital Ecology: Democratisation of Virtual Spaces
During COVID-19....Masks on, Blindfolds off

**No help from Government for Artists**

1. The huge inequalities in the country are lying bare for all to see
2. The systems are broken; the faith in the government is an all time low
3. Big business does not care
4. The environmental threats are at an all time high
5. Our citizens have great empathy for each other and source of deep power

**Our Needs**

1. We need solidarities across inter sectoral people’s movements
2. We need a new politics, and new ways of doing politics
3. We need arts and artists to be a strong part of imagining our futures

‘WE’ are all that WE have got
Practicing Resilience  |  Building Solidarities  |  Mobilising Resources

Some Stories...
Aravani Art Project, Bangalore

Trans-women and women
Arts Collective
Stigma and Discrimination
Cityscapes
Public Arts
Mural/ Theatre/ Music/ Photography
Income other than Sex Work and Begging
Aravani Art Project, Bangalore

Resource Mobilisation
Grants
Arts Services
Donations from Individuals
Selling of Artworks
In-kind support
Skills and Expertise
Media Visibility
Community Participation
TheatreDost, Mumbai
April to November 2021
Theatre People for Theatre People
Over 1000 theatre workers
Food, Medicines, Vaccines,
Alternate Jobs, Reskilling
TheatreDost, Mumbai

Resource Mobilisation

Individual and Organisation Support

In Kind Support from Theatre people

Audience support

Community Connections and Networks

Media Visibility

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TheatreDost Stories

Gawali bau migrated to Mumbai from his village in Solapur to work in a textile mill.

He loved folk theatre and Tamaasha, and became well-known as a comic actor.

He lost his job when the textile mill was shut down. He looked after a newspaper stall to earn a little money. He was paid 30 rupees a day.

In 2021 he was struck by paralysis. His medications are expensive and he finds it increasingly difficult to manage.

TheatreDost reached out to him, and now helps him cover the cost of his medications.

At 81, Gawali bau is our most senior TheatreDost!

theatredost@gmail.com

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TheatreDost Stories

Madhuri tai grew up in the heart of Mumbai’s textile mill district watching music and dance rehearsals by cultural troupes, known as Kala Pathaks.

At ten, she began to learn Lavani from the legendary Maya Jadhav. A few years later she became well-known playing the lead in the super hit Loknatya, Gadhvacha Lagon.

Madhuri tai has travelled and performed widely. But over time lavani troupes have faced hard times and dwindling performances.

The pandemic seems to be the final blow. At 52, ill health has added to her anxiety.

TheatreDost reached out to Madhuri tai and helps her with medicines and basic essentials. “Support from my theatre community is very special,” she says.
March 3 and 4, 2019
Political Struggle
Civic Action
Collaboration Movement
Artists - 3000+
Multilingual - 11
Multidisciplinary - 13
Multicity - 10
Volunteers
Audiences - 35000+
Media - 60+
Creative Publicity - 74+

#ArtistsUnite
For Democracy
Against the Politics of Hate
Artists Unite, Pan India

Resource Mobilisation
Individual Donations
In-kind support
Skills and Expertise
Networks Sharing
Media Visibility
Creation of Hubs

Artists, Activists, Academia, Lawyers...
Layered Collective Leadership
National Register of Citizens (NRC)
Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA)

December 2019 to March 2020

WE WILL NOT SHOW PAPERS!
Disappearing Dialogues, Kolkata
East Kolkata Wetlands, 125 sq km, Ramsar site
Produce Food, Treat Sewage, Help Drainage
Bio Diverse Endangered Eco System
People and Nature
Youth Forum Explorers
Art and Ecology
Waste, Flora Fauna, Cultivation, Fisheries
Disappearing Dialogues, Kolkata

Resource Mobilisation
- Small Grants
- In-kind support
- Skills and Expertise
- Media Visibility

Community Participation
School Partnerships
Chitpur Local, Kolkata

Lost Glory/ Forgotten Memories
Diverse Class/ Religion/ Language
Community Arts Festival
Old Locality
Artisans and Craftmakers
Shops/ Police Station/Home/ School
Community Spaces
Chitpur Local, Kolkata

Resource Mobilisation
- Small Grants
- Individual Donations
- Families of Neighbourhood
- In-kind support
- Skills and Expertise
- Media Visibility
- Multiple Stakeholders
- Community Participation
Ten Common Features

1. **Relevant** to the contemporary concerns of humanity
2. **Innovative** support systems are non traditional and non market
3. **Crowdsourcing** of ideas, expertise and funds
4. **Solidarities** across disciplines and sectors
5. **Skills and Resources** complimenting across partners
6. **Networks** interconnected with diverse Audiences
7. **Alternative Media** both online and offline: Trolley Times
8. **Radical Leaderships**, a common’s approach
9. **Community Participation** in planning, executive and as audience
10. Leveraging **Institutions** which remain uncompromised
IFA Listening Posts: 53 artists from across India
Concerns of Arts and Culture Folks

Financial
• Threat of losing incomes, employment and livelihoods - partial or complete - short term and long term - traditional and contemporary forms - rural and urban areas
• Persons with disabilities or compromised immunity are likely to be further marginalised

Work
• Given that the possibilities of ensemble work and audience / artist assembly look bleak, how artists create work, reach their audiences, and what spaces they showcase are worrying
• The over-digitalising of arts may be detrimental to the aesthetics of particular artistic practices/forms and also brings into question their online/on-screen sustainability

Online
• Online medium and technological gadgets are accessible to an elitist section of society only
• Existing applications and digital platforms are not conducive to sharing or teaching all art forms. While they might partially work on some cases such as music, they are inadequate for forms such as theatre or dance that involve much physicality and in some cases working together

Support
• Shifts in individual and collective priorities in the society. From small families to large corporate houses, funding for the arts received severe blow
• The arts community itself is feeling isolated with no collective voice
• No support announced by government
• Totally uncertain tomorrow
Suggestions from Arts and Culture Folks

**Funding**
- Multi disciplinary projects through collaborations
- Work that has takes into account questions of sustenance and survival within the ecology
- Curating young artists and providing monthly stipends
- Marginalised artists who fall outside the digital footprint
- Smaller grants to more artists
- Reframing funding programmes across grant making organisations

**Online Platforms**
- Share resources in the arts should be built for online audiences, networking and building collaborations
- Arts integrated pedagogies for school education
- Building master classes for teaching the different arts
- Generate ways to build revenue opportunities from online arts where artists share their work
- Skill-building workshops around using and monetising the arts through digital technology

**Others**
- Redressal of issues in the arts ecology like systemic and structures inequalities and injustices
- Surveys for rural artists in need and creating databases of those unconnected to digital technology
- IFA becoming a bridge for the arts and a representative for artists to connect, work and lobby with governments, insurance companies, audiences, arts lovers and donors, learners of the art and social change makers.
In Lidda, in Ramla, in the Galilee, we shall remain like a wall upon your chest, and in your throat like a shard of glass, a cactus thorn, and in your eyes a sandstorm.

Here we shall stay, sing our songs, take to the angry streets, fill prisons with dignity. we shall remain, guard the shade of the fig and olive trees, ferment rebellion in our children as yeast in the dough.

Taufiq Ziad, Palestine

I am grass
I will grow over all your wily deceitful acts

Throw a bomb if you want on the university
Raize the hostel to the ground
Burn down our huts if you so desire

What will you do with me?
I am grass
I will grow on everything

Destroy Banga
Erase Sangrur
Ground to dust the district of Ludhiana
The greenery will do its own work
Two years...ten years later
Passengers will again ask a bus conductor Where is this place
I have to go to Barnala
Where there is a forest of green grass

I am grass, I will do my own work
I will grow over all your wily deceitful acts

Pash, India