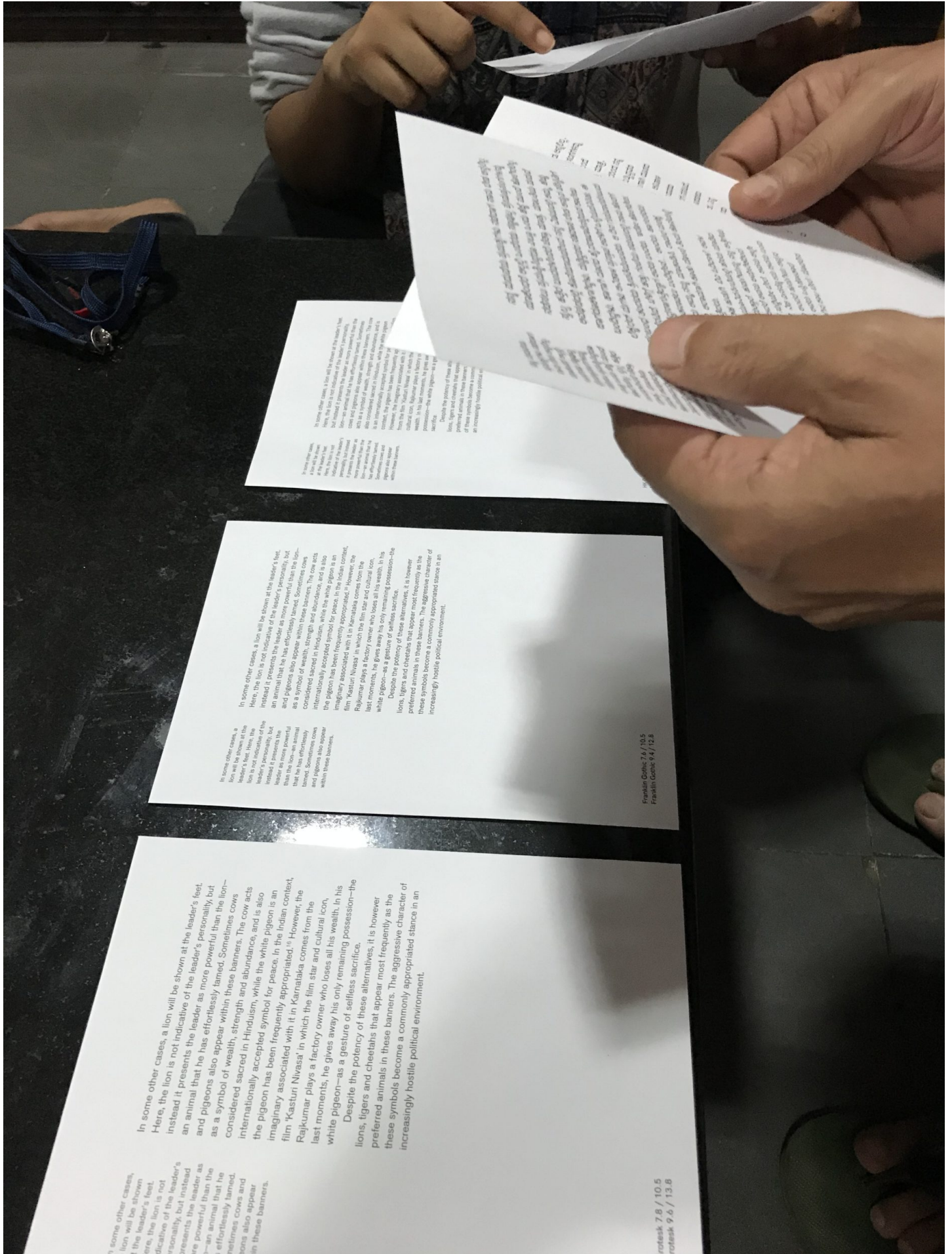


RELIABLE COPY



In some other cases, a lion will be shown at the leader's feet. Here, the lion is not indicative of the leader's personality, but instead it presents the leader as more powerful than the lion—and pigeons also appear within these banners. Sometimes cows are considered sacred in Hinduism, while the white pigeon is an internationally accepted symbol for peace. In the Indian context, the pigeon has been frequently appropriated.¹⁶ However, the imaginary associated with it in Karnataka comes from the film 'Kasturi Nivasa' in which the film star and cultural icon, Rajkumar plays a factory owner who loses all his wealth. In his last moments, he gives away his only remaining possession—the white pigeon—as a gesture of selfless sacrifice.

Despite the potency of these alternatives, it is however preferred animals in these banners. The aggressive character of these symbols become a commonly appropriated stance in an increasingly hostile political environment.

Protesak 7.8 / 10.5
Franklin Gothic 9.6 / 13.8

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Founded in 2018 by artist Nihaal Faizal and editor Niharika Peri, and registered as a non-profit, Reliable Copy is an independent publishing house based in Bangalore. Set within a conceptual framework and working through unconventional mediums, the platform reimagines and gives new thought to the practice of publishing. Run by collaborative efforts, the young team includes program coordinator Sarasija Subramanian, trustee Bilal Javeed and designer Roshan Shakeel. The endeavour is to redefine and bridge the gap between the circulation of art and publishing as a practice, through new modes of presentation and dissemination of various ideas and proposals.

In contrast to the limited reach of physical exhibitions, the printed medium in the form of brochures, catalogues and books, amongst other forms, have been made use of to circulate information and educate the public at large- today more often through online channels than offline forums. Reliable Copy, as the name suggests, provides a platform for the publication of a variety of proposals- from art, research essays, texts, photo books, cookbooks and novels, to anything that the potential of publishing can encompass. The purpose is to expand art through circulation, as well as experiment with the practice of publishing, explains Nihaal. With an aim to build ways for wider circulation beyond the capacity of exhibition spaces and closed-room discussions, and structured on the standard design of a publishing house, the platform takes it a step further. Reliable Copy with the artists, collectively curates the final outcome of the project both in the format of the publication as well as within interactive set-ups through exhibitions, workshops, launches and panel discussions.



(<http://artdose.in/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Niharika-Peri-and-Nihaal-Faizal-e1560221293789.jpg>)

Niharika Peri and Nihaal Faizal

Beginning activities in January 2019, they successfully collaborated with the London-based artist-run publishing house Pure Land Press to share some of their publication, in the form of book launches and an exhibition. In May they released their first publication with a photobook in the form of a digital file, comprising a series of works by the artist Chinar Shah. Titled 'A Memorial for the New Economy', the artist with the series of 121 embroidered handkerchiefs, tries to trace the ramifications felt during the period of demonetisation that affected the livelihoods of the many who fell prey to the economic alterations. Each industrially-produced handkerchief coming with its own set of colours and patterns is used as a backdrop for her incorporations of meticulously embroidered

floral designs and other elements, reminiscent of the motifs found on Indian banknotes. Further, cocooned within the copious surroundings are the embroidered single first names of the many individuals who died in the aftermath of the new economy, now seemingly resting in a bed of flowers. Each handkerchief is a memorial dedicated to each victim, in order to commemorate the abstract event of an unspoken mass killing.



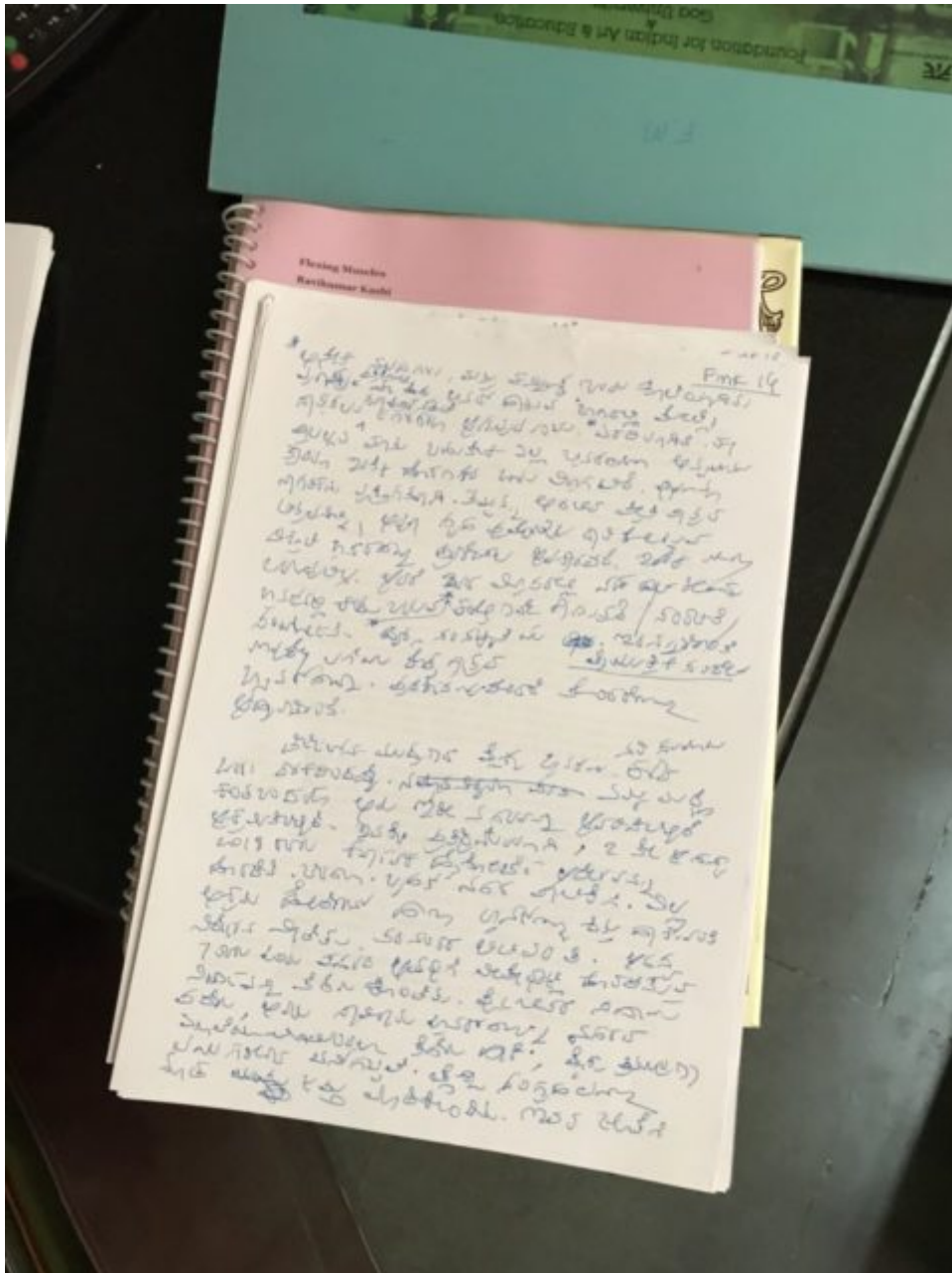
(<http://artdose.in/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/NAV2631-e1560236934637.jpg>)

A photograph from Chinar Shah's 'A Memorial for the New Economy'

The artist arrived at this project after months of research through available news records to gather names of the victims of the disaster: of lost money and of life. Chinar initially wanted to memorialize the event in the form of a printed unbound book, with the photograph of each handkerchief printed on each leaf. But because of the nature of the work, the printing costs proved very expensive. Primarily working with photographs, and having pondered over new ways to display this project so as to reach a larger viewership, the final outcome employed a new method of dissemination. Reliable Copy brought the series out in the form of a digital publication (a zip folder), available for free to everyone. It is downloadable from a link on their website, and can be accessed as a collection of jpeg files: that one can email, rename, resize or reformat, validating its free circulation and personal consumption. As a result of this free circulation, the team recently announced the first exhibition of this publication at the Landskrona Museum, Sweden, as part of a larger exhibition exploring the discourse on photography in India.

Their second project, an artist book titled 'Flexing Muscles' is due for publication in August-September. Authored by the Bangalore-based artist Ravikumar Kashi, the book is the result of research conducted over the past six years, documenting through text and

photography, the changing nature and content of flex banners that used to get installed in the city-centres. A marker of a Kannada land, its people, their identities, their different occupations and their political vulnerabilities, the familiar use of these flex banners were banned in 2018 keeping in mind health and environmental hazards. Kashi's book is a hundred-page proposal with an essay of approximately 7,500 words both in Kannada and English translated by the artist himself and accompanied by photographs.



(http://artdose.in/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/IMG_8202-e1560221114829.jpg).

A page from the Kannada manuscript for Ravikumar Kashi's 'Flexing Muscles'

Through this form of creative production, artists from various disciplines are given a platform to publish their projects in experimental formats. In the process, the publication itself becomes an artwork- an artwork which in return, goes out into circulation in the form of a publication. The reason it is so diverse is that the possibility of a publication could be anything, says Nihaal. The process itself becomes an investigation of the practice of publication.

The publishing house aims to collaborate on various kinds of projects, not pertaining to a single theme, concept, genre or category. For instance, some of their programs scheduled across 2019-2020 include a cookbook titled 'The 1Shanthiroad Cookbook', which is a project supported by Suresh Jayaram, an artist, curator and the founding director of Bangalore's oldest non-profit organisation 1 Shanthi Road. From the 15-year old kitchen that has enabled friendships, partnerships and community-building over food, the cookbook with a compilation of the recipes from this site of exchange, will investigate the intimate experiences of its temporary residents, artists, curators and extended family. The other projects slated for the latter part of the year are the web-based series by

Mario Santanilla, the first international artist they will be closely working with to bring together and publish material around the last five years of his practice; and a sci-fi techno-feminist novel titled 'Horizon 2000' authored by Jessika Khazrik based in Beirut.

Reliable Copy itself is a collaborative project. This initiative is an extension to Nihaal's community space that he maintained in his own apartment during his university days. Called G.159, the intent was to develop a community based on an exchange of dialogue and proposals, in the process, enabling and encouraging artistic practice and creative production. Reliable Copy, likewise, aims to generate discourse and expand from a local audience to involve larger participation.

Cover image: Font tests for Ravikumar Kashi's upcoming publication 'Flexing Muscles'.

All images used with permission.

11th June 2019

By Shalmali Shetty