



Nàdar / Prakriti

Ravi Agarwal

**Edinburgh  
Printmakers**

**EP**

Nàdar / Prakriti

A solo exhibition  
Ravi Agarwal  
27 July to 20 October 2018

Presented by:  
Edinburgh Printmakers

### **Introduction:**

Nàdar / Prakriti is a UK premier exhibition by Indian artist Ravi Agarwal, as part of Edinburgh Art Festival, with new print commissions and video published by Edinburgh Printmakers.

Ravi Agarwal has a diverse and interdisciplinary practice as an artist, environmental campaigner, writer and curator, and combines the ideas and approaches of science and culture in his projects. Agarwal undertook a research residency in the Scottish Highlands supported by the John Muir Trust to inform a print studio residency at Edinburgh Printmakers, where he developed new prints for this exhibition.

As part of his research, Agarwal considered the various pressures and challenges posed to nature in Scotland and India, and community efforts for re-wilding and 'taking back' nature, as well as the ongoing various multidisciplinary conversations to rethink urban sustainability as part of a larger ecospace. Nàdar / Prakriti brings these aspects to the fore by interrogating ideas of nature and landscape.

"The print series in the exhibition is an outcome of my research and print residency with Edinburgh Printmakers that took place in July and August of 2017. During this project, I had the opportunity to explore a variety of Scottish landscapes and have many conversations about them with academics, conservationists, community project leaders, environmental campaigners as well as artists. My aim was to go below the surface of things, and understand the cultural, political and historical imperatives that have shaped the famous and glorious Scottish lochs, forests, grasslands and rural and urban re-greening efforts.

Alongside this research, I was interested in seeing the connections with Indian natural landscapes and their long historic relationship to Scotland regarding scientific forestry as well as biological gardens. Both countries have large mammals which are now either extinct, such as the wolf, or under threat, such as the tiger. This loss has upset the delicate ecological balance of these lands. There are also similar efforts to tame rivers and water through the creation of dams and the rechanneling of rivers. These are important learnings especially when climate change is looming large over us. I have tried to depict these realities of violence and rejuvenation in the work on display in the exhibition. Culture plays an important role in the way we relate to nature, hints of which can be seen in the Gaelic and Hindi language through which I have revisited contemporary landscapes.



Finally, I had the opportunity to work with the master printmakers at Edinburgh Printmakers' studio, to produce lithographs and copper etchings. As a person working with lens-based media, this was a wonderful and educational experience. The print releases the photograph from its inescapable indexicality, and its subsequent reception, and opens up a new space and language for further explorations." *Ravi Agarwal, July 2018.*

**Nàdar/ Prakriti**

*Dialogical Possibilities: Nature and Wildness in Scotland and India*

The idea of nature is a complex one. It is not a fixed entity. Nature is experienced in many ways, often simultaneously as a cultural, legal, political or scientific exploration. Relationships with nature are also differently formed when looked through the lens of gender, race and caste. On the other hand, nature has been assumed to be free and available on demand, taken for granted as a resource. However, the current planetary crisis marked by the Anthropocene and Climate Change has brought home the fact that there are limits to which nature can be exploited without tipping the planetary balance. To re-value nature will need a reassertion of its complexity. It has to be revisited in all its nuances and examined as a construct of social power and cultural inhabitations. It is also important to give equal recognition and space to the non-human, to allow it to survive on its own terms, and not only in service of humankind. We are all part of an interconnected ecology and with an equal right to exist. Following such trajectories can open up new possibilities for understanding and engaging with 'nature,' beyond existing epistemological traps, and hopefully lead towards sustainable futures. It is not to be man vs. nature, but man in nature and man as nature.

Nature is often evoked as an idea of the 'wild and untamed.' Even though nature is not 'natural' any more, with the hand of man being everywhere, yet wildness exists as an attitude, or desire. It evokes subjective values of peace, harmony and co-existence. Understanding peoples' understandings of wildness and nature is important to mobilise participatory action for conservation.

Alongside, human societies are urbanising rapidly, and the conservation of urban ecologies is a major challenge. While urban settlements had always been carved out of natural surroundings, along rivers, water bodies or in wilderness areas, today the size of urban clusters has grown manifold, and concrete jungles have taken over natural ones. The rapid urbanisation of nature is a significant contributor to the ecological crisis. In an effort to protect what there is, people's resistance movements, opposing big dams, sacred hills and lands of indigenous peoples are important. Protecting nature is a community effort and a mark of active citizenship. We have the agency, it is up to us!

Nàdar Landscapes Series





Nàdar Landscapes Series - 1, 2018

Lithograph

Paper size: 56 x 74.5 cm | Image size: 38.6 x 58 cm

Edition of 10



Nàdar Landscapes Series - 2, 2018

Lithograph

Paper size: 56 x 74.5 cm | Image size: 38.6 x 58 cm

Edition of 10



Nàdar Landscapes Series - 3, 2018

Lithograph

Paper size: 56 x 74.5 cm | Image size: 38.6 x 58 cm

Edition of 10



Nàdar Landscapes Series - 4, 2018

Lithograph

Paper size: 56 x 74.5 cm | Image size: 38.6 x 58 cm

Edition of 10



Nàdar Landscapes Series - 5, 2018

Lithograph

Paper size: 56 x 74.5 cm | Image size: 38.6 x 58 cm

Edition of 10



Nàdar Landscapes Series - 6, 2018

Lithograph

Paper size: 56 x 74.5 cm | Image size: 38.6 x 58 cm

Edition of 10



Nàdar Landscapes Series - 7, 2018

Lithograph

Paper size: 56 x 74.5 cm | Image size: 38.6 x 58 cm

Edition of 10



Nàdar Landscapes Series - 8, 2018

Lithograph

Paper size: 56 x 74.5 cm | Image size: 38.6 x 58 cm

Edition of 10



Nàdar Landscapes Series - 9, 2018

Lithograph

Paper size: 56 x 74.5 cm | Image size: 38.6 x 58 cm

Edition of 10



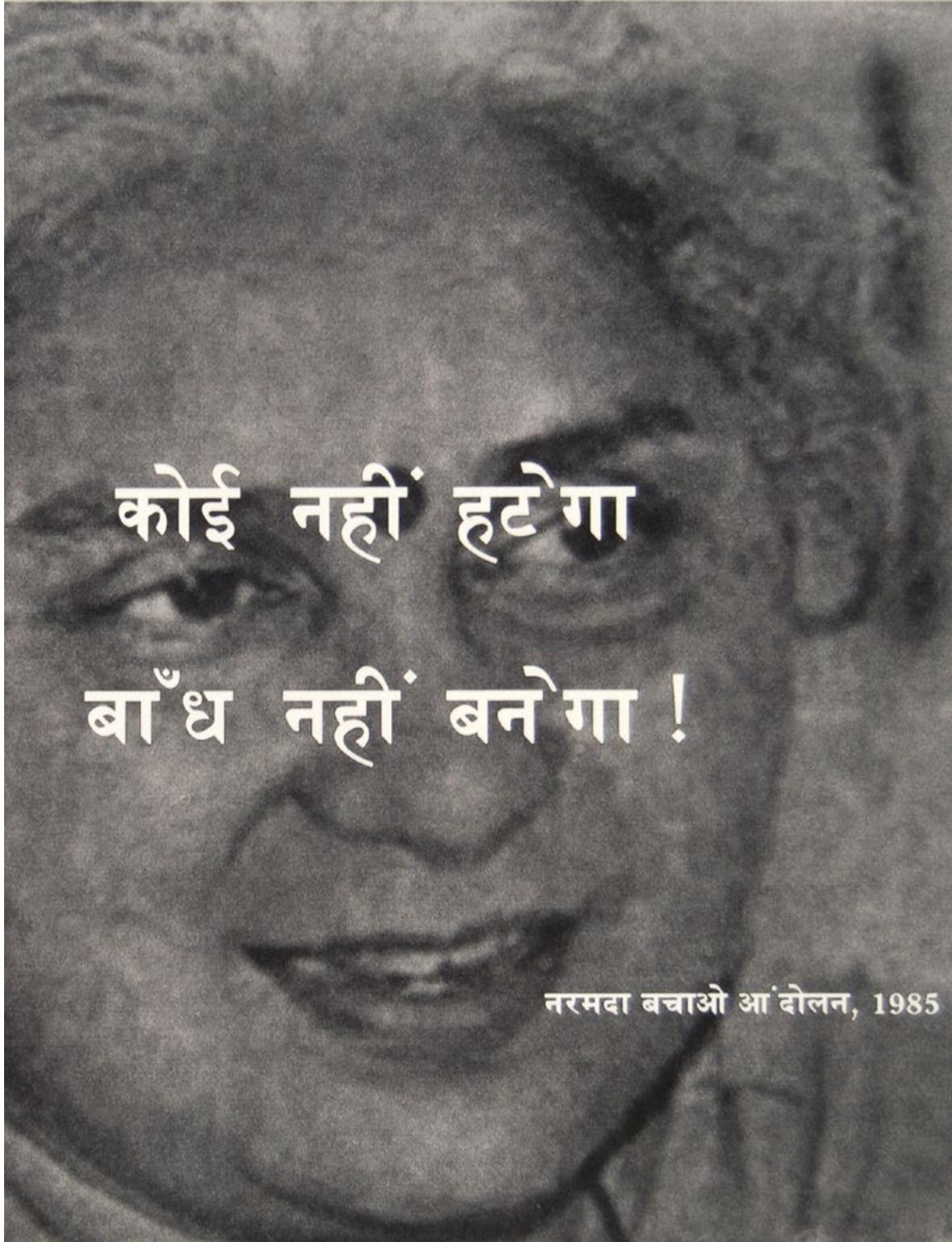
Nàdar Landscapes Series - 10, 2018

Lithograph

Paper size: 56 x 74.5 cm | Image size: 38.6 x 58 cm

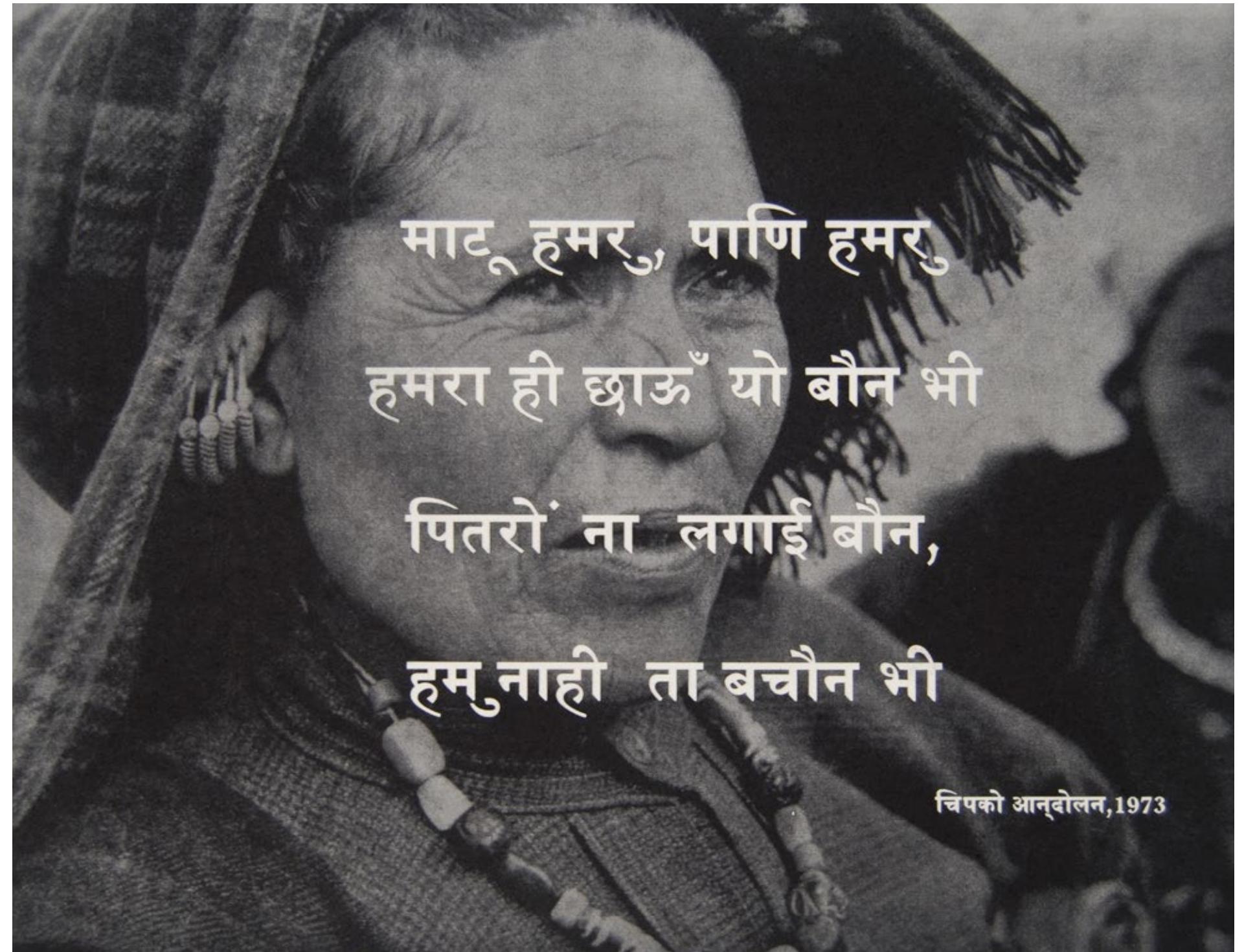
Edition of 10

Prakriti Resistances Series



कोई नहीं हटेगा  
बाँध नहीं बनेगा !

तरमदा बचाओ आंदोलन, 1985

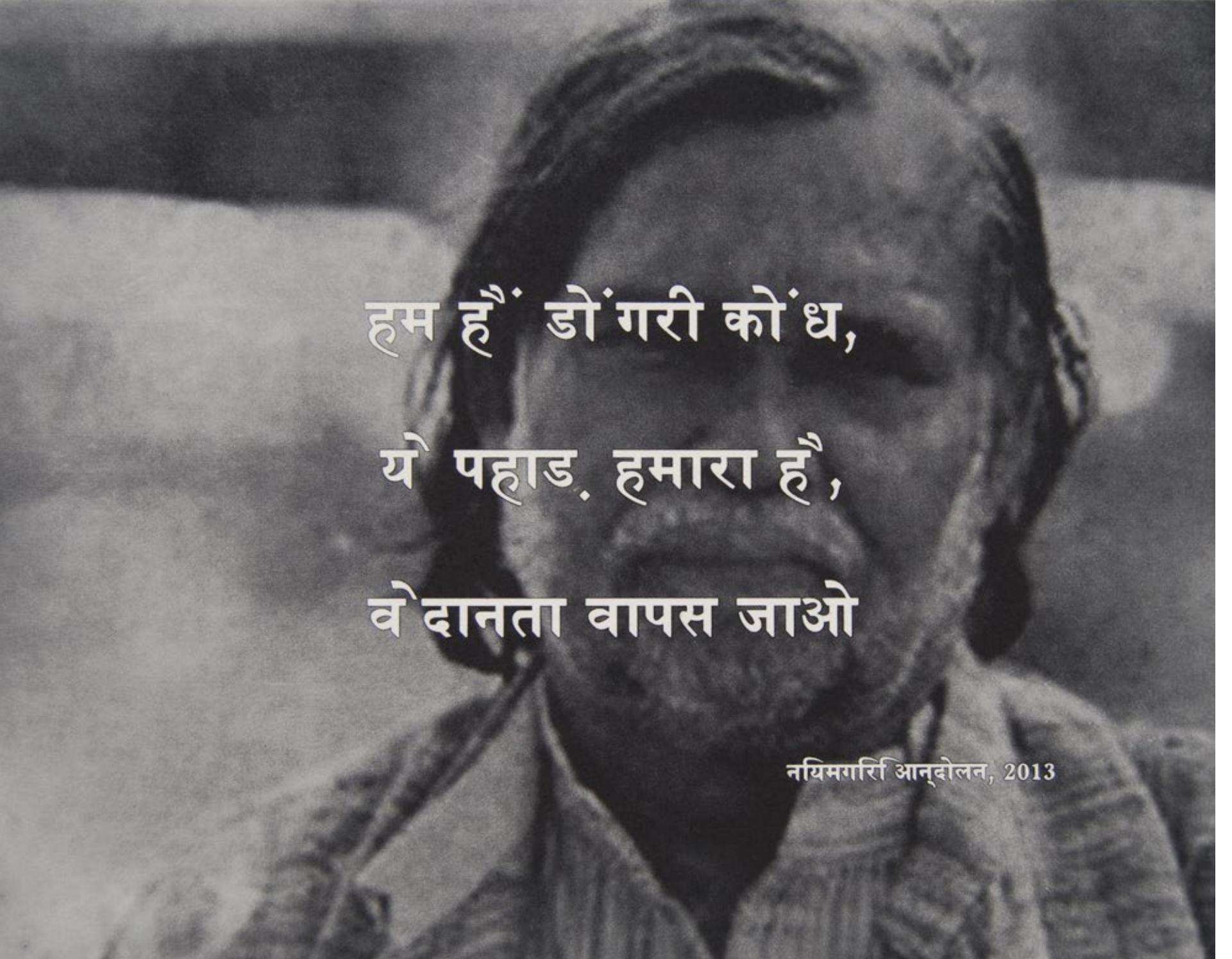


माटू हमरू, पाणि हमरू  
हमरा ही छाऊँ यो बौन भी  
पितरों ना लगाई बौन,  
हमुनाही ता बचौन भी

चिपको आनदोलन, 1973

Prakriti Resistances Series - 1, 2018

Toyobo Etching  
Paper size: 35.5 x 39 cm | Image size: 20.5 x 26  
cm Edition of 10  
Text:Courtesy Ita Mehrotra-Forest Song

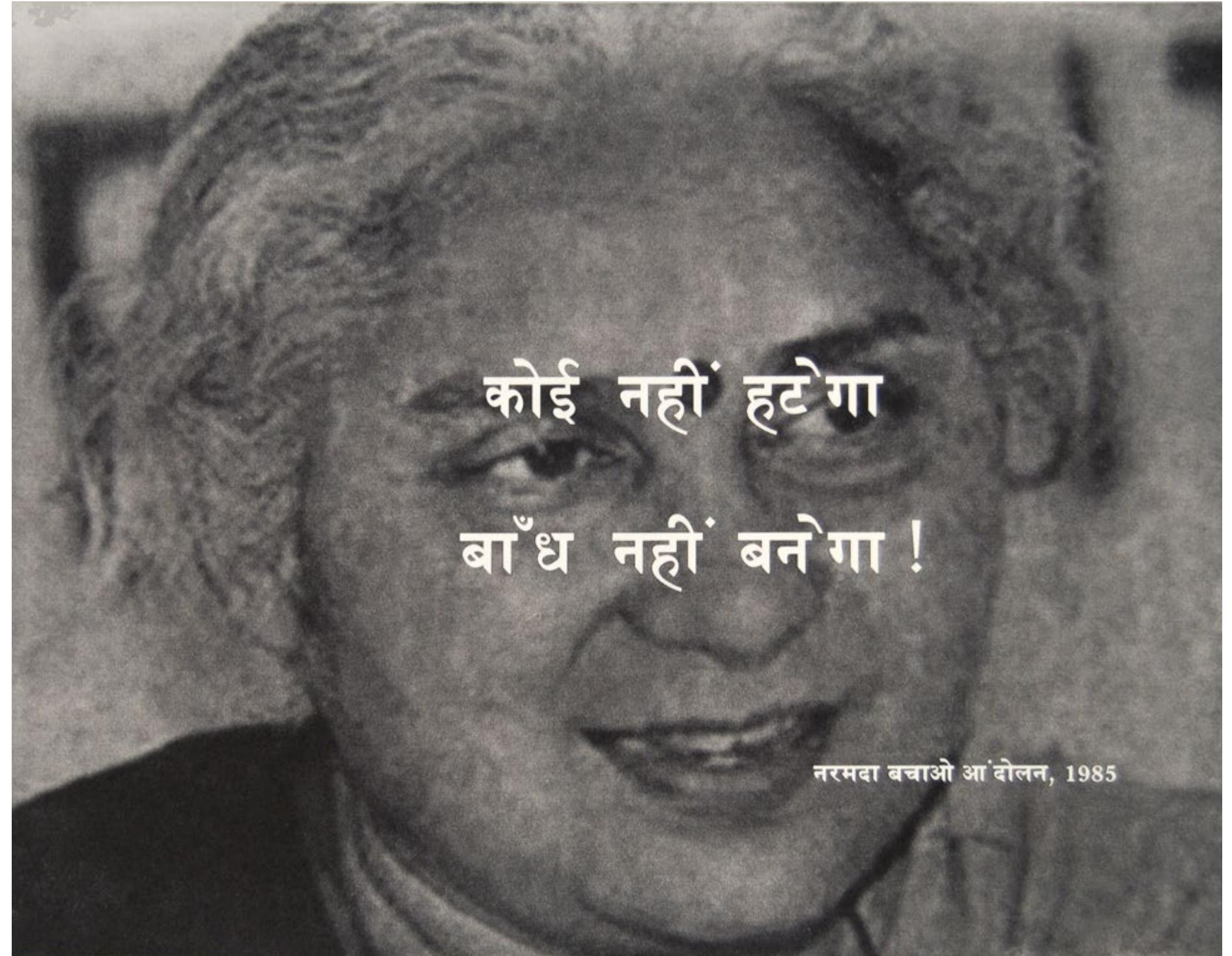


हम हैं डोंगरी कोंध,  
ये पहाड़ हमारा है,  
वेदानता वापस जाओ

नयिमगरि आन्दोलन, 2013

Prakriti Resistances Series - 2, 2018

Toyobo Etching  
Paper size: 35.5 x 39 cm | Image size: 20.5 x 26 cm  
Edition of 10



Prakriti Resistances Series - 3, 2018

Toyobo Etching  
Paper size: 35.5 x 39 cm | Image size: 20.5 x 26 cm  
Edition of 10

Power - Nature Series





Power - Nature Series - 1, 2018

Photographic print  
Image size: 38.6 x 58 cm  
Edition of 10



Power - Nature Series - 2, 2018

Photographic print  
Image size: 38.6 x 58 cm  
Edition of 10



Power - Nature Series - 3, 2018

Photographic print  
Image size: 38.6 x 58 cm  
Edition of 10



Power - Nature Series - 4, 2018

Photographic print  
Image size: 45.5 x 58 cm  
Edition of 10



**Video Stills:** Community Led Conservation, Highland Perthshire Communities Land Trust, conversations with William Hoare (above) and Heather Hamilton (below) 2018  
HD Video with Audio, 32 min approx  
Edition of 3



**Video Stills:** Scotland's Ecology, in conversation with Alan McCombes;  
2018 HD Video with Audio, 83 min approx  
Edition of 3  
Alan McCombes is the Media Manager for the John Muir Trust, Scotland.

Prof. Mahesh Rangarajan



**Video Stills:** Forest and the Colony, in conversation with Prof. Mahesh Rangarajan, 2018  
HD Video with Audio, 40 min approx  
Edition of 3

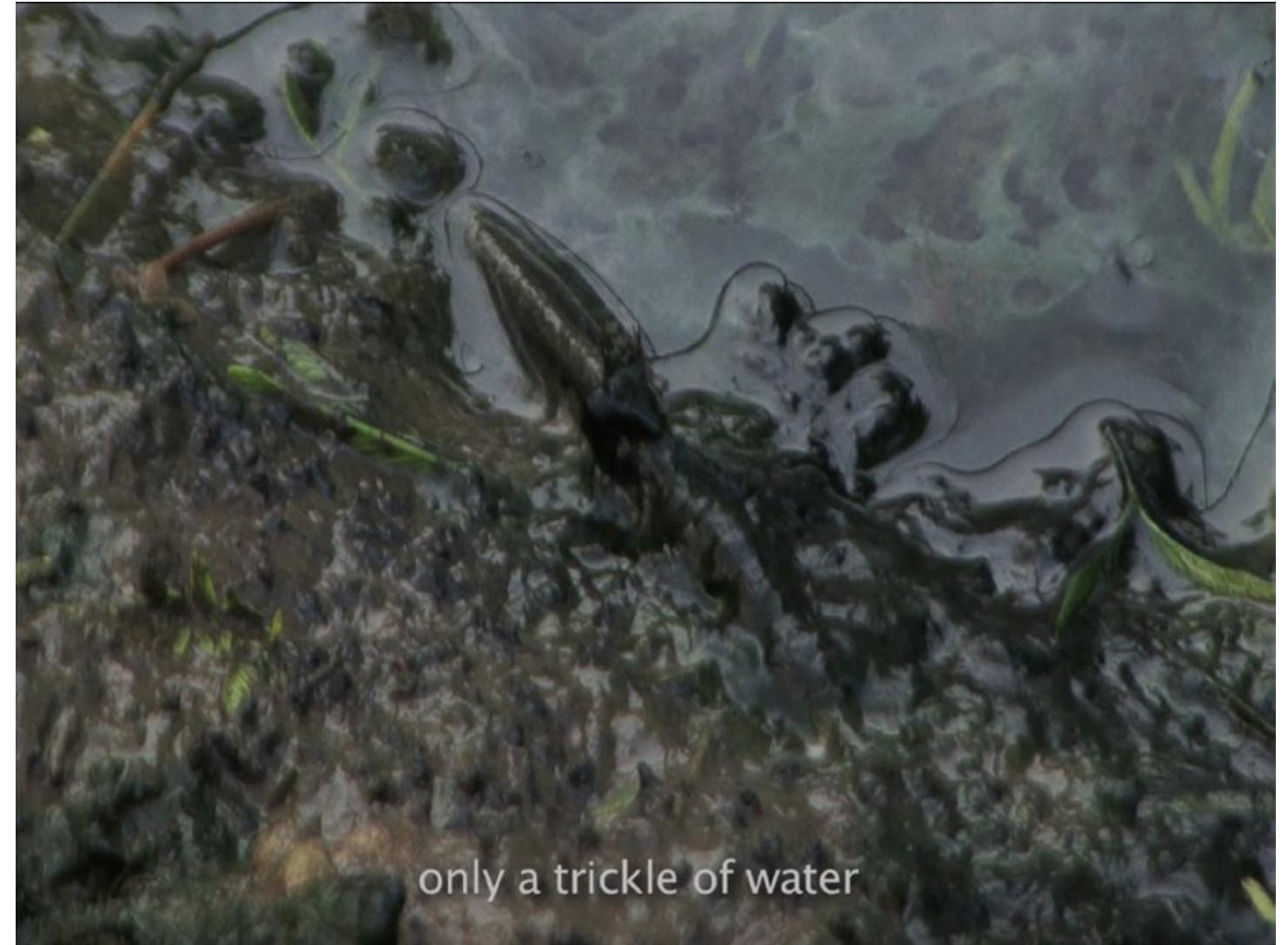
Prof. Mahesh Rangarajan is an eminent researcher, author and historian with a special interest in environmental history and colonial history of British and contemporary India. He is a professor of Environmental Studies and History at Ashoka University, New Delhi.

**Video Stills:** The Sewage Pond's Memoir, 2013

SD Video with Audio, 6.3 min approx

Edition 2 of 3

The film shot over a period of a year and a half forms part of the work on urban ecology. The ancient Delhi Ridge Forest inhabits the tail end of a 1.5 billion year old mountain chain traversing the western coast of the country. The ecological security in terms of water and cover it provided was one reason why the many cities of Delhi developed over time, and were located here for over a thousand years. It has taken years of citizen's action to keep it from being totally destroyed and urbanized, and is now legally protected. However it is constantly being degraded, as the ecologically strained city explodes and encroaches upon it, dumping it with sewage, garbage and illegal construction. Decades of engagement with the urban forest, has been the source of many personal reflections, and questions about nature, technology, progress and urbanization in contemporary times.



#### About the Artist:

**Ravi Agarwal** has an inter-disciplinary practice as an artist, photographer environmental campaigner, writer and curator. His work explores key contemporary questions of ecology, society, urban space and capital. He works with video, public art, installations, and recently also printmaking. His key projects are long engagements over time, and are often accompanied by published diaries and writings. He has shown very widely, including at the Yinchuan Biennial (2018), Kochi Biennial (2016), Documenta XI (2002), and the Sharjah Biennial (2013). He co-curated the Yamuna-Elbe project, Indo German twin city public art and ecology project (2011), and Embrace our Rivers an Indo-European project in Chennai (2018), and has been appointed photography curator for the Serendipity Arts Festival (Goa, India, 2018). His work is in several private and public collections, and he has served on several art juries and committees.

Agarwal's practice has been written about extensively in publications such as *Fotografie-Eine Analyse der Arbeiten von Ravi Agarwal* (in Kulturelle Übersetzer, Cathrine Bublitzky, Germany 2018), *Art Ecology Now*, (Andrew Brown, Thames and Hudson, UK, 2014), *Cities and Photography*, (Jane Thorny, Routledge, 2013) and *Third Text*, (Dec 2014, ed. T.J Demos). The book *Down and Out, laboring under globalization* (OUP 2000), photographed by him, is part of visual anthropology curriculums.

Agarwal is also the founder director of the environmental NGO Toxics Link and has pioneered work in waste and chemicals in India. He serves on many policy and regulatory committees and Boards and writes extensively on sustainability issues both academically, as well as in the popular media and has co-edited several books. He was awarded the UN Special Recognition Award for Chemical Safety in 2008 and the Ashoka Fellowship for social entrepreneurship in 1997. His formal training has been in engineering and management.

#### Credits for images:

Ravi Agarwal, Nàdar Landscapes Series - 1 to 10  
2018, Edition of 10, Lithograph  
Paper size: 56 x 74.5 cm (each)  
Image size: 38.6 x 58 cm (each)  
Commissioned and published by Edinburgh  
Printmakers. Copyright Ravi Agarwal.  
Photo Edinburgh Printmakers.

Ravi Agarwal, Prakriti Resistances Series - 1 to 3  
2018, Edition of 10, Toyobo Etching  
Paper size: 35.5 x 39 cm (each)  
Image size: 20.5 x 26 cm (each)  
Commissioned and published by Edinburgh  
Printmakers. Copyright the Artist.  
Photo Edinburgh Printmakers.

Ravi Agarwal, Power – Nature Series - 1 to 4  
2018, Edition of 10, Photographic prints.  
Image size: 38.6 x 58 cm (each)  
Commissioned and published by Edinburgh  
Printmakers. Copyright the Artist.  
Photo the artist.

Ravi Agarwal, Forest and the Colony  
in conversation with Prof. Mahesh Rangarajan,  
2018, Edition of 3, HD Video with Audio  
40 min approx. Commissioned and published  
by Edinburgh Printmakers. Copyright the Artist.  
Photo the artist.

Ravi Agarwal, Community Led Conservation  
Highland Perthshire Communities Land Trust  
conversations with William Hoare and Heather  
Hamilton 2018 Edition of 3, HD Video with Audio,  
32 min approx Commissioned and published by  
Edinburgh Printmakers. Copyright the Artist.  
Photo the artist.

Ravi Agarwal, Scotland's Ecology  
in conversation with Alan McCombes; 2018  
HD Video with Audio, 16 min approx Edition of 3.  
Commissioned and published by Edinburgh  
Printmakers. Copyright the Artist.  
Photo the artist.

Ravi Agarwal, The Sewage Pond's Memoir  
Edition 2 of 3, 2013, SD Video with Audio  
9 min approx. Copyright the Artist.  
Photo the artist.

## Acknowledgements and Support:

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[www.britishcouncil.org](http://www.britishcouncil.org)



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### Partnership support from:

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All Lithographs were produced and printed by Alastair Clark at Edinburgh Printmakers. All Toyobo etchings were produced and printed by Jodi Le Bigre at Edinburgh Printmakers.

### Project Commissioned and Presented by:

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