

The LAMO Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 2

January 1st, 2015

Among these Mountains - An Exhibition by Ladakhi Contemporary Artists

Great things are done by a series of small things brought together," once said Vincent Van Gogh, the Dutch artist. And similar is our thought, as we did our first bit towards elevating the contemporary art scene in Ladakh.

Among these Mountains, an exhibition of paintings by nine contemporary artists from Ladakh opened on 9th July at Ladakh Arts and Media Organisation (LAMO).

In June, LAMO organised an art camp for Ladakhi artists - Tundup Dorjey Churpon, Tashi Namgail, Chemat Dorjey, Shujat Ali, Tsering Motup, Rigzin Paljor, Kunzes Zangmo, Skalzang Otsal and Isaac Gergan. Some of these artists are studying art in various art colleges of India, others have completed their first degrees.

The camp was an extension of a similar one organised by LAMO in June 2013 under the exhibition "Mapping Old Town", and students worked under the theme of the exhibition. This year they explored the idea of identity and what it means to be a contemporary Ladakhi artist.

The exhibition showcased 24 paintings made on canvas using oil and acrylic colours and three prints.

Isaac Gergan, LAMO's Programme Officer, Arts felt that such camps and exhibitions are significant building blocks for contemporary art in Ladakh. "The artists are striving for options in sustaining and amplifying art's role in the daily life of



Hon'ble CEC Shri Rigzin Spalbar addressing the artists during the opening of "Among these Mountains."

Ladakh. LAMO, together with the artists is committed to take such endeavours further," he said, hopeful of support and encouragement from the local community as well as the government.

Similarly, Chemat Dorjey, one of the artists pursuing his MFA from Banaras Hindu University, felt that with changing times in Ladakh, modern art should also be

encouraged.

The CEC, Shri Rigzin Spalbar, who was the chief guest at the occasion, shared that Ladakh does not lack talent but opportunities and platform, particularly in context of creative arts. He congratulated LAMO for creating such a platform, which will prove to be an important stepping-stone in each of the artist's careers.

FEEDBACK

It was inspiring to spend weeks at LAMO last September, making works in an environment where traditional Ladakhi architecture, culture and community mix together with the contemporary. At the same time, it was special to show some works in the environment and cultural community in which they were inspired and made in a very rare experience.

Bryan Mulvihill
Calligrapher

It was a precious experience to share my art made during/ after my visits to Ladakh and working with kids, youth & adults from Old Town Leh. It was like repaying my gratitude to this special place. I am grateful that I could do this through LAMO.

Tomoyo Ihaya
Artist

It was a pleasure to work with the LAMO staff.

My experience was one of a real exchange with pupils and teachers. I could feel a really nice welcome and I do recommend your valuable guidance. Wish you all the best in the future.

David Balade
Celtic Graphism Artist



Talking Textiles – Dialogues around Ladakhi Fabric

Monisha AHMED

Textiles play an important part in our lives – as clothing, coverings and shelter. They also tell us about a region's history, culture, socio-economic and political relations. In Ladakh the very origins of human existence are tied in with the making of cloth. Here, stories of the loom are often metonyms to human existence and

relationships to the world around.

Ladakh has always produced its own fabric based on local supplies of wool and pashmina but it has also depended on textiles that have

come in through trade. Through textiles we are able to explore the weaving process, learn about the different cultures that assimilated into Ladakh, and have an insight into religious, cultural and artistic motifs.

LAMO launched a project on textiles in May with a workshop to initiate a dialogue around the topic. At the same time an exhibition on the subject opened of some textiles representative of those made and used in Ladakh.

The workshop was attended by a small group of professionals who work with textiles – tailors, weavers, boot and hat makers, a dyer and fashion designers. The group talked about textiles in Ladakh and shared their experiences of working as textile practitioners – looking at the past, discussing the changes and the challenges that lay ahead. They were invited to work on a collaborative piece of art using textiles available in Leh market. What emerged was a patchwork hanging of a *ka* (pillar) with a Ladakhi man and woman below in traditional clothes.

Over the next few years LAMO hopes to develop and grow the textile project to reach out to those actively working with textiles, share stories, inform each other of methods and skills. This would lead to a documentation of the various textile practices in the region and highlight their use, role and importance. At the same time LAMO hopes to look at product development, new technologies and marketing skills.

If you would like to be part of the textile project or share your knowledge with us please write to us info@lamo.org.in

Monisha is Executive Director, LAMO



Life 'Outside'

Sara H. SMITH

What's it like to study outside Ladakh? What do you miss? What challenges do you face? Each year students from across Ladakh set out to travel over the mountains to the busy urban centers of Jammu, Delhi, Mumbai, and countless cities across India. What are their experiences like? What aspects of Ladakhi life do they strive to maintain and how does their perspective on Ladakh and what it means to be Ladakhi change? To discuss some of these issues and focus on student life outside Ladakh, I started a project on education-driven urban migration in collaboration with LAMO.

As an assistant professor from the Geography Department at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, I have been interviewing Ladakhi students about their experiences since 2011. With the help of everyone at LAMO, but especially Monisha Ahmed, Tashi Morup, Mabel Disket, and Isaac Gergan, I have organised a project in which a small group of students studying in Jammu, Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, and Hyderabad will document through visuals and text their lives. This will be worked into a larger project on student experience outside Ladakh, as well as an exhibition and event in the summer of 2015.

The project began by putting out a call to invite students to participate; eight answered our call. This was followed by a lively discussion with six students at the LAMO centre in July 2014, in which we talked

about shared and different experiences and everything that students found interesting, difficult, or exciting in the movement between Leh and their schools – from food to autorickshaw art. Each student has been provided with a camera and voice recorder.

Thus far, the students have sent compelling, poignant, and even humorous photos that comment on the challenges of development, homesickness, freedom, and the hard work of studying. Across the group it was common to document food – from the simple breakfasts eaten while studying to a group of friends making momos together to remember home. Photos of hostel and rented room life show the ways that students come together and create spaces of home far away, both building firm Ladakhi communities and reaching out to those from the plains or from the Northeast. Street scenes emphasise the hurried pace of life and self-portraits challenge the fashion and gender norms we expect in Leh's Main Bazaar.

While students are sending updates, I'm looking forward to meeting again in the summer as a group to see what we can learn about young people's experiences of studying and how they might shape the future of Ladakh.

Participants include Namgyal Angmo, Tundup Dorjay, Kunzes Zangmo, Tashi Namgyal, Angela Paljor, Tundup Angmo, Tsering Lhamo, and Deachen Spalzes.

This project is supported by LAMO and a University of North Carolina University Research Council Grant.



2014 has been an exciting year at LAMO, where we have learnt much, met new people, explored new ideas and above all, grown as an organisation. With a full calendar, marked with various events throughout the year, we have all been busy planning and organising exhibitions, discussions and workshops from graphic design to creative writing, calligraphy to photography.

Probably the highlight of the year for us was the first ever exhibition of Ladakhi contemporary art. While organising it we were anxious as to how it would be received in Ladakh, and concerned about the pricing structure we were introducing. But the response was positive and overwhelming, and we are determined to continue to be a platform for contemporary artists from the region.

At the same time we were delighted to see the response to art from across ages and communities in Ladakh as everyone from children to elderly women from Old Town came forth to take part in Japanese artist Tomoyo Ihaya's textile installation of a bridge.

We published our first two children's books, *Ghost Stories from Old Town* and *My Walk Back from School*. Both books were written

by children and the stories compiled by Sharon Sonam, LAMO's former Projects Officer. The effort was appreciated by educational organisations and DIET (District Institute for Educational Training, Leh) bought 300 copies of each for libraries at Higher and Higher Secondary Schools in Changthang and Nubra as well as Middle Schools around Leh.

In response to the floods in Kashmir in September we raised funds and provided immediate relief to people in the form of rations, medicines and other necessities. We did this along with Kashmir Loom and are grateful to everyone who supported our efforts at this time.

As we look back at the year gone by we would like to thank each and everyone of you for your encouragement and support. From those who work in local government in Leh to school principals and teachers, members of the tourism sector, local journalists and scholars and the community in old town. A special thanks to those who held workshops with us, contributed books and visuals to our library and gave us monetary donations. We look forward to another productive year and to welcoming you all to LAMO.

The LAMO team
Kharyog, Leh
28.12.13

Tara Trust, Goa, an Experience

Sonam ANGCHUK

In January 2014, I got the opportunity to intern with Tara Trust, an NGO based in South Goa. The idea had come up in the summer of 2013 when two of their people had held workshops at LAMO. It was suggested that I volunteer with them, observing and learning how they function as an NGO and at the same time share my experience of working at LAMO.

In 2012 and 2013 people from Tara Trust had held workshops at LAMO. I had attended the 2013 workshops – one was on creating art from waste material we found in Old Town and then recycling it to make murals, the other was a play on the problems faced by women in Indian society. I found those workshops very productive and interesting. Getting the opportunity to work with them in their environment interested me and it was definitely an experience I will appreciate always.

Tara Trust is located in the village of Benaulim in South Goa. The NGO's primary work is with children in the age group of 6 to 18 years. They conduct a range of workshops on art, such as painting, ribbon-band making, storytelling and playing games at schools and homes for differently-abled and HIV children. While Mondays are spent taking care of office work and planning their activities for the week, the other weekdays are spent visiting either schools or other child facilities, including homes for children with HIV/AIDS as well as differently-abled

children.

One of the other remarkable things was to see how well organised they were, in terms of distribution of work, flow of information, punctuality and dedication towards what they do.

While I was volunteering with them, I got the opportunity of attending various workshops with the team, who are mostly volunteers from different parts of the country. Also outside the country – Germany for instance.

While there, I also gave a presentation on Ladakh at a school for children with HIV/AIDS. I told them of the geography, culture, food habits as well as music traditions of Ladakh. I was happy to answer their curious questions about the harsh weather of the region.

Furthermore, I also taught and played with the kids a traditional Ladakhi game-*Tibi sBalay*.

To sum up my experience, apart from their dedication towards the special kids, I was mostly inspired by their systematic functioning as an organisation.

Angchuk is Assistant Officer, Media



LAMO in collaboration with *Stawa* organised a workshop on creative writing in November. It was attended by students from Moravian Mission School and students from other schools who live in Old Leh Town. The workshop explored the use of language to express ideas and thoughts. A series of such workshops will be held throughout the year to encourage students to express themselves. The writings from these workshops will be published in *Stawa* and other publications/places.

The Visual Archive at LAMO



Tonyot Shah, 1936, by Richard Nicholson; courtesy Tim Mitchell

The LAMO library, one of the focal projects of the organisation, is established as an initiative to encourage reading habits among the youth of Ladakh, as well as to be a reference source for researchers, scholars and students. Apart from a still-growing collection of books on the arts and media, research papers, thesis on various topics concerning Ladakh and the Himalayan region as a whole, LAMO has been maintaining a visual archive of old photographs and films of Ladakh. Some of this starts as early as the middle of the 19th century but more recent images and videos are also a part of our collection.

Bearing in mind Ladakh's important strategic location as an important point on the trade routes between India, Tibet, China and Yarkand; the region drew travellers, government officials, scholars and missionaries from

around the world. These visitors often documented the region in the form of photographs, films and drawings, as well as in text. Therefore these documented footages become a vital source in understanding Ladakh's history and culture, its people and the landscape.

Most of LAMO's visual archive has been built up through donations of images – many of them from family members of scholars and travellers who came to Ladakh in the first part of the 19th century and later, or museum collections. Some of the earliest images in our collection are from 1861 and 1873, taken by the photographers Captain Robert Melville Clarke and Edward Francis Chapman respectively.

The bulk of our collection is from the 1930s and 1940s. These include Rupert Wilmot, an officer in the British Army who travelled in the Indian Himalayas between 1926-38. Photography was a hobby for Rupert and he was keen on "travel and natural history photography." His photographs of Ladakh portray activities and events, which give an important and interesting insight to early Ladakh.

Photographs by Richard Nicholson, who, along with Marco Pallis, Dr Robert Roaf, J. K. Cooke and Freddie Spencer Chapman travelled the Himalayas in 1936, depict Ladakh's landscapes and its people. Since the group's purpose was mountaineering and studying Tibetan Buddhism, the collection comprises of ample photographs of monasteries, monks and monastic events.

Reginald Schomberg's

photographs from the 1940s include portraits of the people of the region, including the then king and queen, as well as other important personalities.

The Lalit Studio was amongst the first photo studios established in Ladakh in the 1950s. The family has a rare collection of images of important events happening in and around Leh. In the following years, two more such studios emerged – Dijoo and Syed Ali Shah's but unfortunately our efforts to get their collections have not been favourable.

Apart from the above

Sanghralaya, Mumbai and various images from the archives of the Museo Nazionale d'Arte Orientale, Rome.

Later, when the region was re-opened for tourists in 1974, more photographers made their way to Ladakh. One of the first was Jaroslav Poncar and his book "Ladakh 1974-2008; A photographic homage," documents his work over 34 years in the region. Continuing to visit Ladakh each year, Poncar feels that much of the face of Ladakh has changed as modernisation has crept in.

by a local artist working for a European in the 1850/60s. The maps came courtesy Dr Diana Lange from the university of Leipzig, Germany, and part of her research project titled "Visual Documentation of Regional Topography and Everyday Life in the mid-nineteenth century Tibetan Cultural Areas: The British Library's Wise Collection." The drawings depict a Ladakhi/Tibetan marriage scene and are the focus of Amelie Veronika Bader's MA dissertation on marriage customs in the region.



Leh Bazar - Yarkand Mission 1873, by Edward Francis Chapman; courtesy Hugh Ashley Rayner

mentioned, LAMO has a selection of images from the Alkazi Foundation, New Delhi; Amar Mahal, Jammu; Hugh Ashley Rayner, London; the Moravian Mission Library, London; Li Gotami, courtesy the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu

Apart from photographic documentation, this year, LAMO was glad to receive a copy of a rare collection of maps and drawings both from the British Library's Wise Collection. The hand-drawn maps of Ladakh and Tibet are believed to be drawn

LAMO's Visual Archive is an ongoing project. If you have an image you would like to share with us please contact the Librarian at LAMO. We would appreciate your support as we endeavour to make our visual archive of Ladakh as comprehensive as possible.



Bringing Western Classical Music to Leh

Tashi MORUP

As Lakyzes Angmo held a recorder to her lips for the first time she was both excited and curious. The sounds that came out at first were loud and piercing but as the week progressed they gradually evolved into a melodious tune. From playing individually, she learnt how to follow other children to create a rhythmic sound, based on a simple musical score, played with an instrument completely new to her.

LAMO introduced the first in a series of music workshops in Leh in August this year. These are in collaboration with Kinship, a UK based not-for-profit organisation.

The purpose of the workshops was primarily to introduce local students to the fundamentals of music-making, history of music and an overall appreciation of music. The focus was on western music, largely classical.

The workshops were held by two third-year undergraduate piano students from the Royal Academy of Music – Hannah Teoh and Beatrice Stezmuller, with support from Rigzin



Hannah Teoh & Beatrice Stezmuller during a workshop at one of the schools

Nurba, a local contemporary musician and sound engineer. Hannah and Beatrice are also the founders of the Phoenix Music Academy, that offers introductory music courses for children.

Wind, string and percussion instruments such as a recorder, harmonica, xylophone, and ukulele were introduced to the children to play. Senior grade students from both govt. and private schools such as Lamdon Model, Moravian Mission, Girls Higher Secondary and Siddhartha, as well as children from old town Leh attended the workshops. Students enjoyed the sessions, which gave them a theoretical as well as practical training, and allowed them to listen to various kinds of music.

Apart from workshops with the students, Hannah and Beatrice also shared their music and interacted with popular local artists: Padmashree Morup Namgyal, Ralam Angchuk, young musicians Tsewang Phuntsog and Sonam Chorol.

Lively exchanges of skills, knowledge and experiences took place among them during the interactive sessions where some music lovers and experts visiting LAMO joined in.

At the end of the workshops the students held a concert at the LAMO Centre, which was open to the public. They were accompanied by some of the professional singers and musicians including Tsewang Phuntsog, Tashi Jorgais and his singer wife Lhadol.

Through the workshops Hannah and Beatrice acquainted participating students on the history of western classical music and some western instruments, while Rigzin Nurba introduced them to trends of Ladakhi music and outside influences.

This initiative on the part of LAMO is in continuation of its endeavour to support music practices in Ladakh. A first of its kind event in the region, this opened up a new area of music opportunities with the support of Kinship whose mission is to enrich people's lives, especially children, through art and play.

LAMO hopes to be able to continue such workshops in the future and to reach more distant areas in Ladakh apart from Leh and surrounding villages.

Tashi is Projects Director, LAMO

Journey in Contemporary Art

Tashi NAMGAIL

Born in the village of Skurbuchen in Ladakh, I was brought up in an atmosphere where modern art was virtually non-existent. In my early years I was exposed to traditional Buddhist paintings, mainly wall paintings in monasteries and *thangkas*, but I did not come in much contact with contemporary art. However my father who was inclined towards art, played a significant role in encouraging me to pursue learning art. He was a painter of sorts and had done some realistic work that focused on the Ladakhi landscape and people. I went to school where we had no art. But I used to draw or paint whenever I had the chance.

There is no denying the fact that I was fascinated by traditional paintings, but I grew fond of contemporary art as I came to understand it more when I joined an Arts college in New Delhi. Coming in contact with people who shared various views and perspectives about art helped me broaden my thinking and increased my awareness of the vast world of Art. These discoveries showed me a limitless freedom of expression without the boundaries of tradition. Artists, scholars, poets, writers, dancers and musicians express their experiences, emotions and their portrayals of society seemed to have a similar essence of thought; differing only in the means they used to express themselves. As a result of this realization, in my work I was able to experiment with various mediums, styles, sizes and textures.

As an up and coming artist, it is difficult to establish an identity in the competitive art

world. Like any newcomer, I was confused and hesitant to take the first steps towards sharing my art with an audience. Back in Ladakh I also did not know where to go and what to do with my art. I was immensely pleased to discover LAMO as a space where artists could meet and work. LAMO has given me the opportunity and support in the changing face of art in Ladakh. The organisation endeavors to raise awareness amongst Ladakhis about art and encourage the ones interested in the field of art by means of various workshops and exhibitions, which is backed by a dedicated team.

LAMO conducted a month-long art camp in the summer of 2013 with students studying art in various art colleges in the country. The aim was to introduce young artists to each other, share views and discuss ideas to develop the art scene in Ladakh. This was followed by a second month long camp in the summer of 2014, the theme of which was "What it meant to be a contemporary artist in context of Ladakh." This was followed by an exhibition and sale of paintings, which I can say was a total success for all nine of us who were a part of the camps. We all felt that we had triumphed in our initiative, and bonding with each other. LAMO has and continues to be a strong foundation for all of us and I will be happy to work with them again in the near future. For me, LAMO has been the first milestone towards my destination.

Tashi is pursuing a Bachelor's Degree in Art from Delhi College of Arts. He took part in LAMO's Art Camps in 2013 and 2014



In Search of a Tradition



Rinchen DOLMA

A rare set of six drawings depicting a wedding ceremony from the Wise Collection, British Library, were shown at LAMO. They are part of a research project undertaken by Amelie Veronika Bader an M.A student of Cultural Anthropology from the University of Leipzig (Germany). Through her research Amelie is trying to understand whether the images depicted in the drawings

pertain to a Ladakhi wedding ceremony or a Tibetan one. Whether the drawings are based on actual events or folk renditions or part of the artists imagination. While the artist remains unknown, it is believed to be drawn by a person from Zaskar sometime in the 19th century.

The exhibition drew much interest and discussions with various scholars was held including Tashi Norboo Martse (President, Ladakh Cultural Forum), Tsering Sonam Sopari (Director, National Arts and Cultural Society), Chimet Namgyal (Editor, *Ladags Sargyur*). Members of CATS group Sonam Yangchan and Deskit. The main question that was debated was whether the drawings showed the tradition of Tibetan or Ladakhi marriage system or were they a mix of both traditions? Further

questions looked at whether the drawings depicted a typical ceremony held across both regions or a ceremony specific to a royal or a noble family? Were the drawings based on a historical model or a practically observed tradition?

According to Tsering Norboo Martse, though *tholu* and *gholu* (specific marriage songs) are represented in the images, *tholu* is not performed in Tibet while *gholu* is performed both in Tibet and Ladakh. He said, "It is very difficult to differentiate between the two traditions because both share more or less striking similarities. The only difference that can be made are the performance of *tholu* and *gholu*, the use of *dadar* (arrow), and the mask dance." He adds, "In Ladakhi tradition the *dadar*



Tashi Namgail working on one of his paintings during the Art Camp at LAMO in June, 2014

is carried by the *tashispa* (person who accompanies bride to groom's house) while in Tibetan tradition it is put on the bride's neck – that is where it is seen in the drawing. So is this a Tibetan marriage?"

Tsering Sonam Sopari mentioned that, "The *chams* (mask dance) and the guards on the gate are not a part of common Ladakhi tradition, they may be symbols denoting royalty. But the house itself contradicts the point as it seems very ordinary." The clothes worn in the drawings appeared to be Ladakhi,

but participants observed that the bride was not shown wearing a *perak* (turquoise-studded headdress). Also the image of *Ache Lhamo* as shown here is not found in Ladakhi marriages.

The research clearly showed that more documentation is needed on wedding ceremonies in Ladakh. In addition, it was interesting to observe the many ways a visual can be interpreted and speak to us.

Rinchen is a freelance writer who interned with LAMO in September-October, 2014

Visiting Artists



Tomoyo Ihaya setting up her soft bridge installation

Isaac GERGAN

LAMO is established to articulate an alternative vision for the arts in Ladakh. In 2014, keeping with this vision, we hosted a variety of workshops and exhibitions by artists from around the globe. Having such varied selection of artists gave participants of workshops the opportunity to grow, collaborate, and situate Ladakh on a global platform as well as expand our notions of art. In many ways Art at LAMO this year can be seen as a metaphorical bridge, which while allowing a steady flow under it, also helps connect us to other sides. Often it is a stimulating side by which we are able to draw meaningful reflections of our own world. Past art endeavours that LAMO has undertaken culminated in the success of building thoughts and perspectives of art this year.

As the busy mid-summer season concluded we hosted Tomoyo Ihaya, a Japanese artist from Vancouver, Canada, who came through The Canada Council for the Arts for a month long residency at LAMO. During the month various workshops and collaborations on printmaking, knitting and introduction to materials were held for various ages. The central installation of a soft bridge in her solo exhibition, "Building Bridges" brought in contributions from all around the world in its creation. Art that is a result of collaboration by the public allows for an

invested experience in which the participants can indulge in the act of art making.

Collaborations step beyond the customary act of looking and indeed the process of creating itself becomes a part of the artwork. In this instance adding knitting, crotches, strings and other formulations with wool and string, the participants became a part of a larger concept; adding their contributions to strengthen, beautify a bridge which fuelled dialogues around reconciliation, past and present, peace and unity. With such opportunities which hinge on popular skill sets, many people across gender and ages were able to participate. Tomoyo's work in

the exhibition reflected her many journeys to Ladakh and her close relation to its people. Her installations having a central theme of Water helped communicate to many people her reflections in the context of their lives.

A part of her work was based on the act of self-immolation by Tibetans in their struggle for freedom- the works are contemplative and portray a spirit world making room for art as a contemplative tool. In this case these works became a metaphorical bridge between life and death. Works on such themes allowed people to see an artist's reflections on contemporary issues, and in ways a different form of art.

Jampa Lungthok, an award winning print maker from Tibet, followed with a two-week exhibition of his prints and paintings. Jampa's various forms of printing techniques allowed the viewers to see the new possibilities of an art form that already exists in Ladakh. Artists and artwork that build on traditional processes of art making help open new doors and initiate ideas for local artists and students to build on.

Similarly David Balade, a leading artist in Celtic Graphism from France held his workshops at LAMO and in two schools.

Some thirty students participated in creating three-meter wide Celtic mandalas by which he drew interesting correlations between Ladakhi



Bryan Mulvihill and Chamspa Dorje working during Bryan's calligraphy workshop

and Celtic cultures from Western France and Ireland. Through such correlations Ladakh's traditions, art forms and philosophy can be revisited with a global perspective. This ability to connect then becomes an important part of children's education in our time.

Bryan Mulvihill, a calligraphy artist from Canada, had a similar endeavour in his calligraphy workshops where he introduced a vast array of brushes. Of the many brushes, some were made from grass, rooster feather and polar

bear hair, giving ideas to how to make calligraphy brushes locally. A calligraphic work can be discussed at various levels like its philosophical meaning and the methods of creating. Bryan and the participants looked at Ladakhi calligraphy and discussed its ties between Tibetan, Chinese, Japanese, Middle Eastern and Indian calligraphy. Through such discourses of a complex ancient art form we were able to compare and deconstruct the influences that constitute what "Ladakhi" means.

While such a variety of art promoted dialogue, growth and understanding, it helped us bridge the interested Ladakhis to a global platform, at the same time helping visitors understand Ladakh in an engaging way. Such Art being a means to inform, tell a story, heal and bridge distant worlds we look forward to a new year with an already packed calendar of events. In addition, our library also received a number of books on Western and Indian art, through which interested visitors can peek into the vast world of art. As we are established here for your benefit, on behalf of which we encourage you to be a part of this stimulating journey with us in the coming year.

Isaac is Program Officer Arts, LAMO



Jampa Lungthok interacts with visitors during his exhibition "In Between"

Film Making at LAMO

Mabel DISKET

A scarf neatly covers her head. Not a strand of her hair remains uncovered. Dressed in a *salwar kameez*, a camera hangs on her left shoulder, while holding a notepad and a pen in her right. Journalist Hajira Bano Balkhang starts off yet another day of constant movement, listening and observing. She loves her profession and takes pride in being the first woman from her community to be a journalist.

This year, LAMO worked on a film that looks at women entrepreneurs in Ladakh. Women who have broken the shackles of society's interpretation of a 'woman' by opting for careers and professions that in Ladakh are predominantly male-

dominated. Although many names left us in awe of their achievements, we decided on four. Through these films we want to share the lives of these women with others in Ladakh and outside.

Along with this, we made a music video for Siddhartha Public School, Stok, based on their music programme. "Gifts from the Past" a film based on the 'Memory Wall' part of our exhibition in 2013 on 'Mapping Old Town', which looked at the collaborative work LAMO did with residents of Old Town, wherein they each contributed an object to the exhibition and talked about the past, changes they had witnessed, the importance of Old Town and its future.

Another video focused on conversations with Ladakhi

contemporary artists who participated in a camp and exhibition "Among these Mountains - Nine Contemporary Artists from Ladakh"

In October, LAMO received a grant from the India Foundation for the Arts, an organisation based in Bangalore (south India), to make a film on music in the Old Town of Leh and this will occupy us for most of 2015.

With each film that LAMO makes, we are endowed with the opportunity to learn and work on a piece which can be a tool to spread awareness about many relevant issues prevalent in our society, educate people about our history and culture.



Tashi Morup filming Hajira Bano Balkhang during one of her interviews for a story

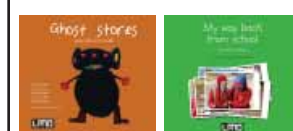
Mabel is Program Officer Media, LAMO

Editorial team and LAMO staff

MABEL DISKET: Newsletter Editor & Designer, Program Officer, Media
With contributions from:
MONISHA AHMED: Executive Director
TASHI MORUP: Projects Director
ISAAC GERGAN: Program Officer, Arts
SONAM ANGHUK: Assistant Officer, Media
TSERING CHOZOM: Librarian and Assistant Researcher

Copyright © LAMO 2014
Published and printed by LAMO,
Post box no. 152, Below Namgyal Palace, Old Town,
Leh, Ladakh 194101, J&K, India.
Email: info@lamo.org.in, URL: www.lamo.org.in
Phone: +91-1982-251554
Join us on facebook:
https://www.facebook.com/LAMOLadakh,
https://www.facebook.com/oldtownleh
Printed at Gautam Arts, Mumbai

LAMO PRODUCTS



LAMO T-shirts are available for sale in three designs; *gyanak-Lchakri*, *rabsal* and *dragon*

LAMO books; *Ghost Stories from Old from Leh* and *My Way Back from School* are for sale at the LAMO library and Leh-Ling Book Shop, Leh Bazaar