

# experimenter

Volume 3 Issue 2

**Kallol Datta**

Experimenter – Hindustan Road

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Experimenter presents *Volume 3 Issue 2*, Kallol Datta's second solo at Experimenter – Hindustan Road, bringing together Datta's ongoing inquiry in native clothing practices in South-West Asia, North Africa, Indian Subcontinent and the Korean Peninsula.

Making structural experimentations in pattern cutting, Datta skews traditional geometry to create silhouettes which shroud, swaddle and cocoon the body that inhabit the textile object. For *Volume 3 Issue 2*, Datta roots his interest through exploration of sculptural forms constructed in textiles, from the native wear of the Late Showa Period in Japan and old Indian sarees, both made between 1945 – 1989. Datta pushes the boundaries of his practice, by questioning material and their apparent tenacity, juxtaposing several rare handwoven textiles not only in stitching together new sculptures with the fabrics he collects, but delving deeper into ideas of cultural sustainability, post-war politics in Japanese clothing edicts, episodic events and personal memories that become as much part of the textiles as the threads they are woven with.

The origins of *Volume 3 Issue 2* were seeded at SOAS, London followed by a residency at Aomori Contemporary Art Centre, Japan in 2021, which in turn led to the use of traditional garments worn after the War, especially in peri-urban and rural areas of the Tohoku region in Japan. As part of his residency, Datta studied the archives of photographer Kudo Shoichi, where the *kakumaki* as documented by him, were similar in form to the *chador* worn in Iran. The textile sculptures that Datta creates within an immersive installation at the gallery, underscores a delicate balance of tensions between his training as a pattern-maker and the external elements of *kimonos*, *haoris*, *obis*, and *sarees*. Through the solo, Datta assimilates, integrates and constantly distorts garment composition principles, while simultaneously drafting patterns required to reconstruct the donated clothing forms.

*Volume 3 Issue 2*, seems like a punctuation in Datta's practice and could be viewed as an end of a process, or a continuity of enquiry or maybe even a beginning of a new direction. Organic forms in the sculptures are palpable, possibly stemming from producing new garments from older textile pieces. Datta uses the solo to reflect upon reconstructing, repurposing and restructuring donated pieces of clothes, that hold memory, emotion and history, to negotiate larger questions about work and production, of labourer and user and of ideas revolving around research as production.

**Kallol Datta** is a clothes maker who lives and works in Kolkata, India. He spent his childhood in Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Manama. Datta graduated in Womenswear from Central St. Martins, London in 2006. He had his first solo in 2017 at Experimenter, Kolkata, was awarded the Arts Network Asia Grant in 2019 and was a finalist of the Jameel Prize in 2021. Datta has exhibited widely including at the Aomori Contemporary Art Centre; Aomori, Centro Cultural La Moneda; Santiago, Victoria and Albert Museum; London, Nomad Monaco and Beirut Design Fair.

Donors of vintage clothing: Shiroto Harumi, Kurashima Emiko, Takahi Shinobu, Kaze no Hana, Aomori Kita no, Mahoroba Rekishi-jab, Kanta Jhangiani, Nivedita Bairagi, Meenakshi Datta, Surya Kumari Thodla.

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