

MANISHA SHARMA

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EDUCATION

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Virginia - M.F.A. in Creative Writing (fiction), fully funded as an Alfred Knobler Scholar. (May 2009).

Jai Narain Vyas University, India - Ph. D. English Literature, Indian English Literature, Role of Language in transporting emotional experiences across linguistic boundaries, fully funded by a research scholarship. (May 2005).

Jai Narain Vyas University - M.A. English Literature, British Literature, Graduated with distinction. (August 1999).

Jai Narain Vyas University - B.A. in English Literature, History, and Philosophy. (May 1997).

CERTIFICATIONS

Swami Vivekananda Yoga Anusandhana Samsthana, Bengaluru, India - Yoga Instructor, International Yoga Teacher. (Winter 2015).

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Virginia - Preparing the Future Professoriate. (Fall 2008).

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA - Participant in The Fellows Program, Open Documentary Lab, Comparative Media Studies Program. (2017).

The Open documentary lab is a program that “brings together storytellers, technologists, and scholars together to explore new documentary forms with a particular focus on collaborative, interactive, and immersive storytelling” (<http://opendoclab.mit.edu/about-3/>). I participated in their weekly presentations, discussions from experts in innovative storytelling from around the world and connected with them.

WRITING RESIDENCIES

Vermont Studio Center, Johnson, Vermont - funded in part by a merit scholarship and work study.

(November 2017).

Association of Writers and Writing Programs, College Park, Maryland - Writer to Writer Mentorship Program,

Poetry mentee. (Spring 2016).

Bread Loaf Writers' Conference, Middlebury, Vermont, General Contributor. (August 2010).

PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

Yoga Instructor, New River Community College. (August 2018 - present).

Lecturer, Department of English, New River Community College. (August 2017- present).

Adjunct faculty, Queensland Conservatorium and Research Center, Griffith University, Brisbane, AU. (2015).

Affiliate Faculty, Center for Peace Studies and Violence Prevention, Department of Sociology, Virginia Tech. (2013-2014).

Visiting Assistant Professor, Women's and Gender Studies, Department of Sociology, Virginia Tech. (2011-2016).

Faculty Fellow, Institute for Creativity, Arts, and Technology, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA. (2011-2016).

Instructor, English as a Second Language, Virginia Tech Language and Culture Institute, Blacksburg, VA. (2009-2010).

Graduate Teaching Assistant, Creative Writing, Writing & Rhetoric, Writing Center, Department of English, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA. (2006-2009).

Lecturer, Freshman English, Jai Narain Vyas University—Jodhpur, India. (2000-2002).

Teacher, English Language, Literature, Delhi Public School (Middle-High) —Jodhpur, India. (1999-2002).

PROJECTS

***The Vanishing*, Poetry, Sound & Art Installation** (2014-2016)

Collaborators: Dr. Kim Cunio, Senior Lecturer, Australian National University, & Akshay Sharma, Chair, Industrial Design, Virginia Tech, Dr. Gautham Dayal, Professor, Srithi School of Art and Design, Bengaluru, India.

Brisbane, Sydney, AU Virginia Tech, USA Jaipur, Bengaluru, India

The Issue: More than 7 million girls were not born in India due to female feticide, the practice of prenatal sex determination followed by selective abortion of female fetuses. A preference for sons over daughters, research says, is one of the major reasons behind the age-old neglect of the female offspring that has taken various forms from female infanticide in the 1800s to female feticide at present.

The Project Rationale: The Vanishing is an interdisciplinary, collaborative art-sound installation that aims to create awareness about the issue of female feticide. By means of data-driven storytelling, recorded poems, physical artifacts, and arduino-based sensing and playback mechanism, this project proposes to explore the impact which a fusion of writing, music, art, design and technology may have on its spectators.

The Installation: Imagine stepping into a dimly-lit installation space and seeing in front of you a larger-than-life mannequin, dressed in an Indian sari, seated on the floor, her face covered with a veil. As the audience member/visitor sits on a stool/chair in front of the mannequin, one of the pressure sensors is activated and music-blended recorded narratives are played. When the visitor gets up from the seat, the narrative abruptly stops playing.

Snippets of the project audio: <http://www.manisha-sharma.com/>

The Collaborative Research: Growing up in India I was aware of a preference for boys, and its impact on the girl child. The Vanishing is a multi-layered project. Studying available literature made me more confused than ever before. The research was confusing, complicated, and would make sense only to fellow scholars, sitting in their ivory towers. It certainly would not make sense to the people it affects the most, Indians, or to any general person.

In 2014, I took a year off to conduct unstructured interviews in 6 states of India with an aim to understand the level of awareness among people about female feticide. Based on insights from the data, emerged the **first layer** of the Vanishing in the form of 50 short poems that I wrote; they talk about the potential of vanished girls from multiple perspectives. How different the world would have been if these girls were alive? Then I met, Dr. Kim Cunio, an Australian music composer and my first collaborator who contributed the **second layer**. Supported by an Autodesk industry grant, Kim came to India, and we recorded women and girls reading the poems. Kim composed the recordings with layers of music, sounds of India, street sounds, conversations, natural sounds, instruments and vocals. The **third layer** was contributed by Akshay Sharma, an Industrial Design faculty at Virginia Tech, who collaborated by designing a female mannequin that represented the vanished Indian women and girls. Finally, Dr. Gautham Dayal, a Computer Science professor at Srishti School of Art and Design in Bengaluru, India, contributed the **fourth layer** by programming arduino-based sensing and playback mechanism that gave the audience an agency on controlling the stories they could hear by embedding audio into the floor at installation sites.

Gendered Arrangements Information Enhanced Animation, 2014.

Collaborators: Dr. Simone Paterson, Former Associate Professor, School of Visual Arts, Virginia Tech, Emylee Esteban, a student in the School of Visual Arts at Virginia Tech.

Gendered Arrangements is a 3D infograph (information-enhanced animation) to simplify and explain the complex problem of sex ratio imbalance at birth in India and its global effects. The project builds on the successful completion of a short animation and static digital posters developed through an Institute for Creative Arts and Technology at Virginia Tech (ICAT) startup grant. Gendered Arrangement is a research-led practice of making visual, highly charged information and research data that seeks to enhance our understanding of sex-selection and to raise new questions.

Link: [Gendered Arrangements: 3D Animation](#)

Gendered Arrangements Information Graphics, 2013.

Collaborators: 2 undergraduate students, Michele Gailhac , Hannah Tushara, Industrial Design, Virginia Tech

Link: [Infographs](#)

AWARDS & GRANTS

“Gendered Arrangements: Vanishing,” An Interdisciplinary Poetry Project, Autodesk, \$ 10,000 (2015).

Creative consultation, social issues in humanities courses. Griffith University, Brisbane, AU \$550 (2015).

TedX, Virginia Tech, Shortlisted (2014, 2015).

"Gendered Arrangements," Institute for Creativity, Arts, and Technology, Virginia Tech, \$3,000.00 (2013).

The Greenbelt Review Prize for Fiction “Aunty Lakshmi” Greenbelt Review (2009).

Best New American Voices Nomination for “Godhara” (2008.)

(First Runner-up) Virginia Tech Fiction Prize, “Godhara” (2008).

PUBLICATIONS

Works in Progress

The Vanishing, poetry collection

Peer Reviewed Journal Articles

“Understanding perspectives on sex-selection in India: an intersectional study” *The Lancet*. (2014).

What’s Next: “Blurred Images, Better Futures” By Suzie Boss *Stanford Social Innovation Review*. Featured research, (2014).

“... The [Lingering](#) Problem of Female Infanticide” *The Socjournal , A New Media Journal of Sociology and Society*. Over 232,233 views as of Sept. 15, 2016. (2013).

“Gendered Arrangements: India” Change Observer: *Design Observer*. Featured article. (2013).

Book Chapters

Sharma, Manisha and Kim Cunio, “The Vanishing: Artistic Research as Activism,” Book Chapter Proposal, *Women in the Creative Arts*, Submitted to Oxford University Press. (2018).

Sharma, Manisha, “...The Lingering Problem of Female Infanticide” *At Issues: Gender Politics*, Greenhaven Publishing, Cengage. (2017).

Sharma, Manisha, "Children's Literature in India: Genres, Reading, Education and the Demands of the Digital Age." *The Anthology on Literature for Children: A Reader*. Eds. Sharad Rajimwale and Kalpana Purohit, New Delhi, India: Sarup Books & Publishers. (2011).

Digital Scholarship, Invited Radio Interview

Earshot, ABC Radio, Australia, with Kim Cunio, Producer Gretchen Miller, Sydney, AU (conducted 2015)
<http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/earshot/foeticide-of-girls-in-india/6657292>

Poetry

"Notes from the Field" *Puerto Del Sol*, featured poem of the week (December, 2017)

"A Mother's Confession to Her Daughter", "Bhaiya, Bhaiya", "Names" *The Aerogram* (2017)

"When God is the Groom" *TAB: The journal of poetics & poetry*, (January 2017), print issue

"Would You Still Blame Me?" "Dear Daughter" in *The Saturday Poetry Series*, in *As it Ought to Be* (2016)

"Indian Girl Crumbling" *New Asian Writing* (2016)

"Five Poems" *The Bombay Review* (2016)

"My Dreams, re-published on Meduim.com, National Poetry Month, (2017)

"Yoga", "Handle with Care", *Silhouette* 31.1. Pages 6, 43 (2007)

Fiction

"Aunty Laxshmi", short story *The Greenbelt Review* (2009)

"Godhara", *Superficial Flesh* 3.2 (2008)

Creative Nonfiction

"Maneka Gandhi's Baseless Marital Rape Theory...", *The Huffington Post* (2011)

"Dickens in Paris", *The Common* (2007)

"Heavenly Beauty Reborn", *Pinnacle Living Mountain Homes Southern Style* (2007)

Editorial. *The New River Journal of Digital Writing and New Media* (2008)

Book Reviews

Untitled Social issue novel

"An Epic in Prose: *Cutting for Stone* by Abraham Verghese", *The Common* (2015)

INVITED SPEAKER, INSTALLATIONS, DISCUSSIONS

ICAT Playdate, *The Vanishing* Project, ICAT, Virginia Tech. (2016).

The Vanishing, Art Installation, *Brisbane, Sydney*, Australia; *Jaipur*, India. (2015).

Art Week, Queensland Conservatorium Research Center, Griffith University, Australia. (2015).

Attended by approx. 500 people

The Vanishing - A Social Issue, Community event, A discussion on Social Issues, City-Fringe Art Gallery, Sydney, Australia (2015).

Attended by 100 people

Meet the Makers, *The Vanishing*: Tech talk and immersive listen of the project followed by a Q & A , Queensland Conservatorium Research Center, Griffith University, Brisbane, Australia. (2015).

Women's Forum, Queensland Conservatorium Research Center, Griffith University, Brisbane, Australia. (2015).

Invited Speaker, "Law Mantra' on 'Female Foeticide: A Challenge to Indian Society' Law College, Rajasthan University, Jaipur, India. (2015).

Invited Speaker, Message, a Non Governmental Organization, International Women's Day, Jaipur. "Perspectives on female foeticide" (2015).

Invited Speaker, Through Feminist Eyes Speaker Series, Women's Center, WGS, Virginia Tech, Robeson Hall. Guest Scholar. (2012).

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Contributing Editor, Aerogram Magazine (2017- present).

Writing Coach, NuVu Innovation Studio, Cambridge, MA (2016 - 2017).

Presider and Moderator, Human Rights Forum, Virginia Tech (2014, 2017).

Scholarship Reviewer, College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences, Virginia Tech. (2013).

Manuscript Reviewer, Sociological Compass. (2013).

Reader, Los Angeles Review. (2008).

Managing Co-Editor, *The New River Journal of Digital Writing and New Media*. (2008).

COURSES TAUGHT

Undergraduate

English Fundamentals ENF 3: Preparing/College English III New River Community College. (Fall 2018).

College Composition I ENG 111 New River Community College. (Fall 2018).

Survey of American Literature IENG 241 New River Community College. *Virtual Class*
(Fall 2018).

Physical Education and Recreation PED 109: Yoga New River Community College. (Fall 2018).

English Fundamentals ENF 3: Preparing/College English, New River Community College. (Fall 2017).

College Composition I ENG 111, New River Community College. (Fall 2017).

Women and Creativity WGS 2224, Women's and Gender Studies, Department of Sociology, Virginia Tech.
(2011- 2016).

Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies WGS 1824, Women's and Gender Studies, Department of
Sociology, Virginia Tech. (2011- 2016).

English as a Second Language Instructor, Virginia Tech Language and Culture Institute, Virginia Tech. (2010).

Introduction to Creative Writing, English 2744, Department of English, Virginia Tech. (2009).

First Year Writing, Writing from Research English 1105, 1106, Department of English, Virginia Tech.
(2006 - 2009).

Tutor, Writing Center, Department of English, Virginia Tech. (Fall 2006).

Compulsory English, Jai Narian Vyas University, India. (2000 - 2002).

EXTRA CURRICULAR

Yoga & Meditation Instructor, Vermont Studio Center. (November 2017).

Yoga Instructor, Jodhpur, India. (1999-2002).

Yoga, Meditation Instructor, Virginia Tech. (Spring 2007).

Yoga Instructor, Rec Center, Blacksburg, VA. (Fall 2006).

22 October 2018