WHAT'S YOUR NAME?

Marie Julia Bollansée

The making of an Art film
working title: **The colour of India TARPAULIN BLUE PEOPLE**

Concept and background.
10 Years ago, after a residency in Mumbai (IN), I started using blue tarpaulins as carriers of meaning in my performances and installations. Since then, they have been very recognisably linked to my identity as an artist. I am now finalising an investigation into the multi-functional industrial tarpaulins I have been using in my work since 2014. Where and how are they made? In what conditions? The ecological impact? What chemicals define my 'Tarpaulin blue'?
Most of all, I wanted to meet the people who make my tarpaulins. Who are they? How do they live? What is the impact of their tarpaulin-work on their lives and body and mind?
Therefor I undertook a residency of 6 weeks in Ahmedabad this January and February 2025.
I talked to the people who make tarpaulins, at all levels of the factories, from the CEO to the working floor, and witnessed the impact of production on their lives. To do this, I went to the industrial zones of Ahmedabad and Mumbai in India, which is where many factories producing tarpaulins are located. My starting point for this research was the cargo of blue tarpaulins I ordered in India, Navi Mumbai, in 2017, which were delivered by boat at the port of Antwerp. 150 Tarpaulins that I use in my performances, photographs and installations. I wanted to look for their origins. It concerns an artistic and humane research that connects with science and ecology.

I got help from Belgian architect/architectural historian Dr Sarah Melsens. She is a researcher/ professor at FLAME University Pune (India) and at CEPT University Ahmedabad.
Sarah was my 'Gateway to India' in my search for the people behind the tarpaulins.
Priyashi Valia, a student of Sarah's worked with me as my translator on field trips to tarpaulin factories. Priyashi also assists me in historical and materials research. Sarah and I inducted and guide her DRP (directed research program) *"Tarpaulins in history and today: materiality, ecology, and human condition".* Together Priyashi and I visited manufactories and tarpaulin production plants in Ahmedabad en Mumbai. We interviewed and filmed people in all layers, from the CEO to labourers on the work floor, Priyashi translating my questions to them in their own language.

Art film
My film will be about the people in this tarpaulin-industry and about the production process of this worldwide used sheeds.
During the factory visits, meeting the people working in this industry, I witnessed the inequality and the different lives of labourers and factory owners. Labourers, lowly educated, little payed, doing dull band work, without any insurance for accidents or sickness. They often live inside the factory, spending all their life there. Or live in slums, under a tarpaulin roof, aside the factory. The system exists and survives, even flourishes for the manufactory owners, thanks to this rude inequality between labourers and owners. And tarpaulins can only be so cheap (for me too!) and widely used thanks to the work of these people at the bottom of the pyramid.

Wider seen, the story of this tarpaulin industry is emblematic for many stories of cheap consumer-products, thinking about plastic toys and household stuff, cheap clothing, slippers… They all have similar stories of cheap labour and inequality of people.
So, through the visualisation of the tarpaulin industry, my film aims reflecting on the mechanism of the neoliberal capitalist system.

Working titl**et " The colour of India"**
This part of the titel is inspired on Pier Paolo Pasolini.
Pasolini visited India in 1960 accompanied by his friends the writers Elsa Morante and her husband Alberto Moravia. On this trip he wrote a travel log "**The scent of India**" "**L'Odore dell' India"**. He was looking for film locations, but never filmed in India. Between the lines of his travel log, I sense Pasolini's difficulties to connect with the Indian people in the streets, they were too obedient and resigned. He was more familiar with the 'ragazzi' in the streets of Rome who must

have been more rebellious. I also read his sadness about the growing neoliberal capitalist system and the inequality between people, what, even at the time, was more visible in India than in Italy.
“**TARPAULIN BLUE PEOPLE”**
I invented the name for a blue of the 21st century, “Tarpaulin blue”, the blue that is related to blue tarpaulins. The tarpaulins are used as a universal emergency solution and a shelter, symbolising for me the vulnerability but also the resilience of human beings today; a kind of cypher for the human condition today.
This film will focus on the people behind the tarpaulins. And wider seen, on the human condition in the neoliberal capitalist system today.
final title: **WHAT'S YOUR NAME?**
When somebody has a name, he exists as a human being. My film gives a face and a name to the people at the bottom who are often overlooked.

Footage
The footage for the film I recorded during 6 weeks of field work in India (January-February 2025), using an iPhone and a Nikon DSLR camera, and TASCAM sound recorder for the interviews.
All this footage has to be selected and edited in my studio.
The interviews are to be transcribed (by Priyashi) and translated to English, as many of them were conducted in Gujarati or Hindi.

- **Storyline**
- going to the origin: Navi Mumbai, Shield Products
- The production proces of tarpaulins, from the resource (oil derivated granules) over the weaving to the lamination of the cloth, until the cutting and finishing of usable tarpaulins.
- Interviews with people in all ranks of the factories, from CEO to labourers.
- Living circumstances of people
- Nomad people living in tarpaulin tents and their work in building sites
- Ecological impact, street views with tarpaulins
- The people that mix the colours for all plastic products manufactured in India and also abroad, the production of the so called “master batch”.

Film Music
I engage Laurens Dierickx to compose, play and record the music for my film.
Laurens is a young composer and musician, he is a versatile pianist and organist who studied jazzpiano at the Royal Conservatory of Antwerp under the guidance of Erik Vermeulen.
Laurens Dierickx is playing in the band Absynthe Minded, and also works with video-artists like Lydia Hannah Debeer. https://laurensdierickx.com/

Editing
Done by me**,** using Adobe Premiere Pro, 16/9 HD format. With advice by Cynthia Vertessen, my young and dynamic cameralady with a very critical eye. Cynthia studied film and film direction at RITS in Brussels.
https://www.cynthiavertessen.be/about/

Subtitling in English
Done with help of Priyashi Valia, who transcribed the interviews and translated them to English when conducted in the local language, Hindi or Gujarati.

Flanders
State of the Art