

Notes from the Desert: Photographs by Gauri Gill

On view September 17, 2016–February 12, 2017, Freer|Sackler

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Since the late 1990s, Gauri Gill (born 1970) has been photographing marginalized communities in western Rajasthan, India. Often revisiting her extensive archive of negatives, collectively titled *Notes from the Desert*, Gill selects images and arranges them into different series focusing on a particular individual or idea. This exhibition showcases nearly sixty of her prints, including three powerful portraits from *Balika Mela*, named for a village fair for girls.

A striking portrait of Izmat, a key figure in Gill's work in this remote desert region, anchors the selection of works on view. For more than a decade, Gill has visited and corresponded with Izmat and her two daughters. Her older daughter, Jannat, died at twenty-three. The daily life of these women inspired another series of fifty-two photographs and letters, one for each week of the year, and serves as a poignant memorial of Jannat's short life. Collectively, the works convey the sense of intimacy and trust that are integral to Gill's practice as a photographer.

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"Izmat," from the series *Notes from the Desert*
Gauri Gill (India, born 1970)
1999-2010, printed 2014.
Gelatin silver print.
Arthur M. Sackler Gallery S2014.16



Raami, from, *Balika Mela* series
Gauri Gill (India, born 1970)
2003-2010, printed 2013.
Archival Pigment Print
Arthur M. Sackler Gallery S2013.7

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Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery



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Untitled (10), from the series, *Jannat*
Gauri Gill (India, born 1970)
1999-2007, printed 2016
Courtesy of the artist and Thomas Erban Gallery, New York
ELS2016.13.1-44



Untitled (30), from the series, *Jannat*
Gauri Gill (India, born 1970)
1999-2007, printed 2016
Courtesy of the artist and Thomas Erban Gallery, New York
ELS2016.13.1-44