



From “Acts of Appearance,” by Gauri Gill. Credit Gauri Gill/Nature Morte, New Delhi, India

Art: Gauri Gill at MoMA PS1

Through Sept. 3; momaps1.org.

The photographs in the Indian artist Gauri Gill’s “Acts of Appearance” series are halfway between ethnographic intervention and community art project. Asking members of a Maharashtra community known for its papier-mâché masks to depict everyday characters and animals instead of the usual lions, gods and heroes, Ms. Gill then photographed them, in the masks, in their own familiar surroundings.

A teacher in a blank-eyed mask in front of a classroom’s wall covered in signs and posters brings out the weirdly arbitrary way almost any cultural practice looks when seen from the outside. And a shopkeeper with the head of a cobra is a reminder that everyday life is the material from which gods and heroes evolve in the first place.

“Acts of Appearance” is Ms. Gill’s most recent series, but this exhibition will also include stark black-and-white shots documenting life in Rajasthan, as well as images of a defunct government initiative to encourage writing and drawing on schoolhouse walls. *WILL HEINRICH*