

ART & DEAL

ISSUE.113 VOL.14 NO.80 FEBRUARY 2018

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INTERNATIONAL CONTEMPORARY ART

20/20

VISION

An interview with
ZACH HARRIS

RAJESH PUNJ

FAIRYLAND
IN CONVERSATION WITH
TESSA FARMER INDIRA LAKSHMI PRASAD

59TH NATIONAL EXHIBITION OF ARTS
at **LALIT KALA AKADEMI**

ASHUTOSH DEB:
LIFE AND TIMES

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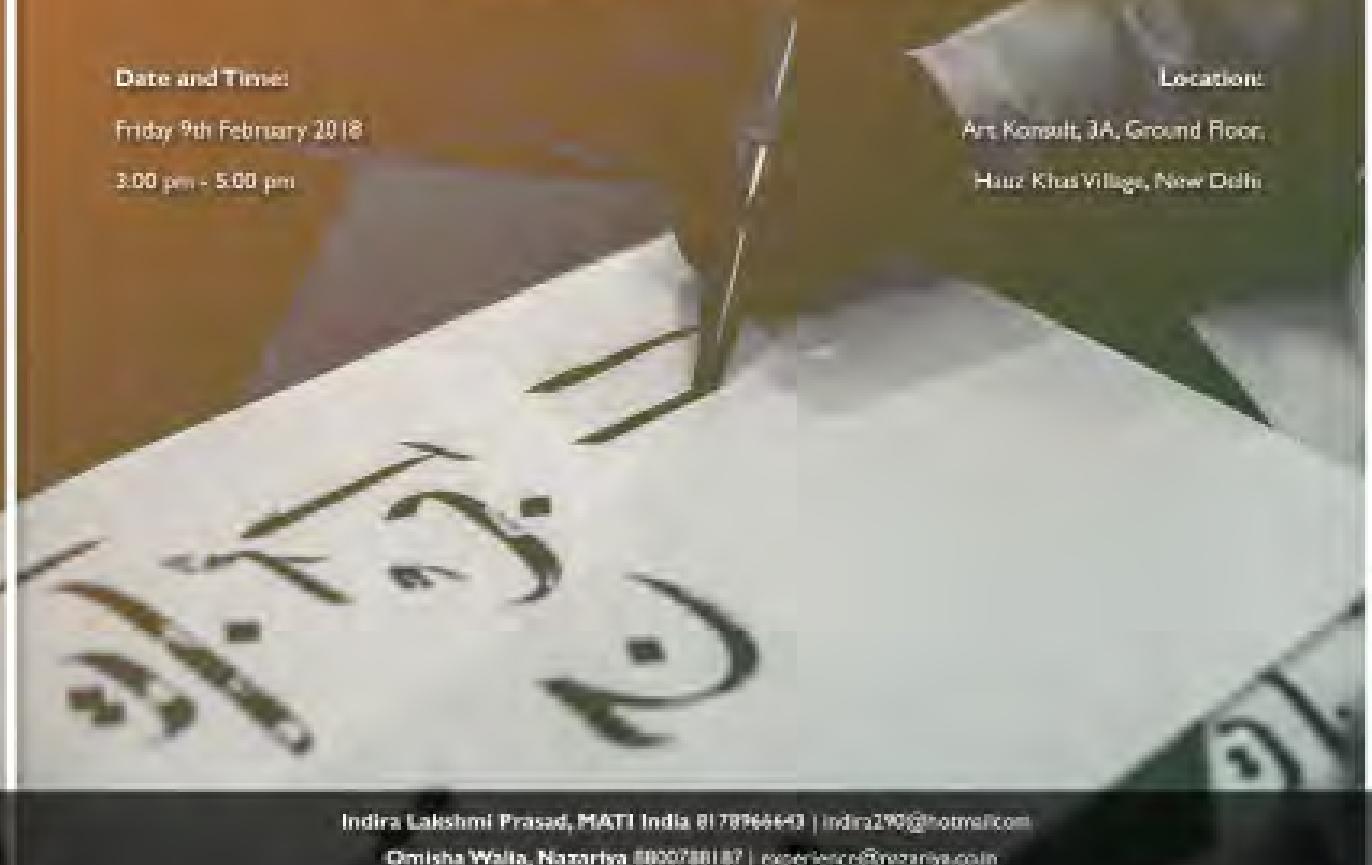
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Date and Time:

Friday 9th February 2018
3:00 pm - 5:00 pm

Location:

Art Konsult, 3A, Ground Floor,
Hauz Khas Village, New Delhi



Indira Lakshmi Prasad, MATI India 8178764443 | indira2908@hotmail.com

Omisha Walia, Nazariya 9800788187 | experience@nazariya.com

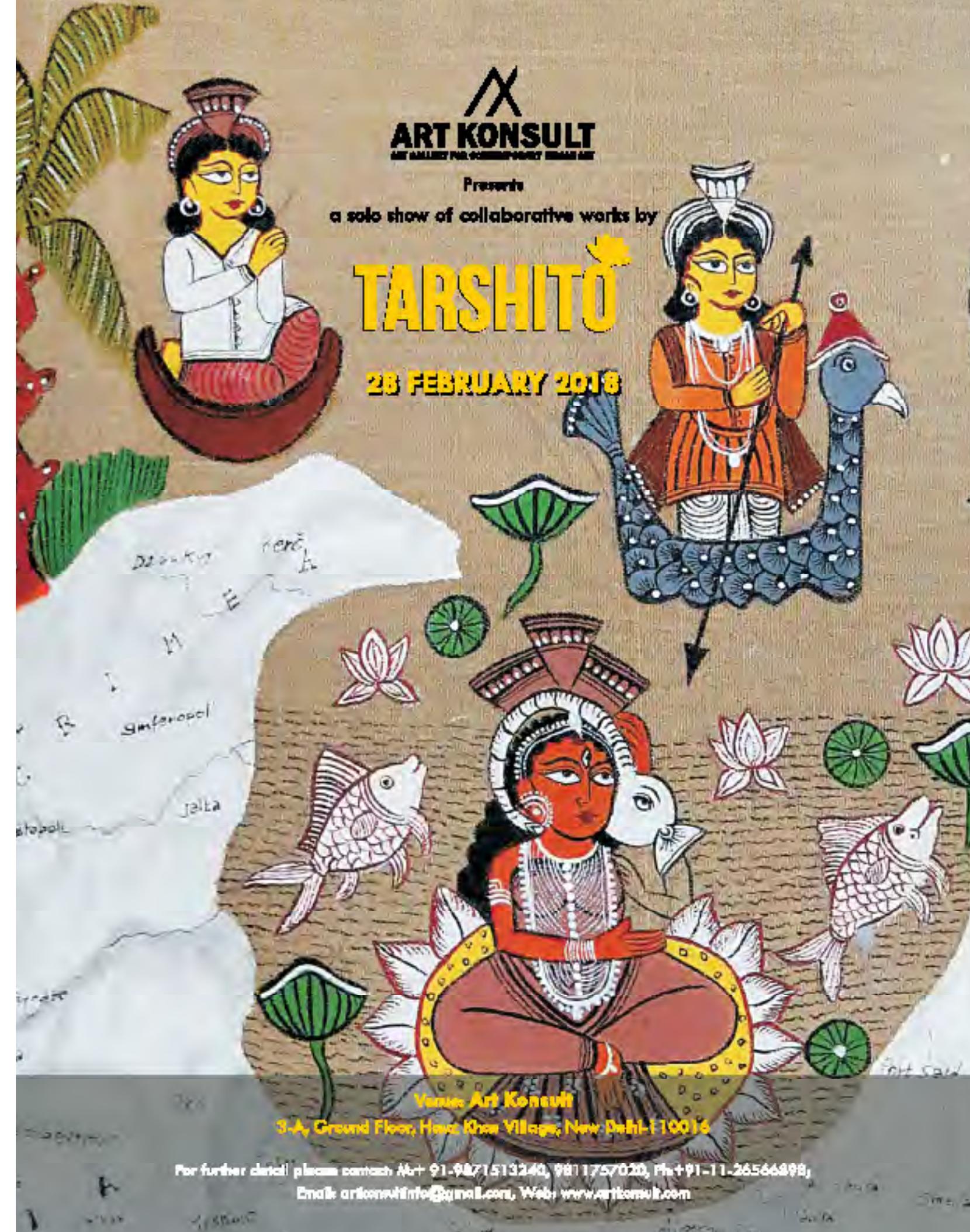
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ART GALLERY FOR CONTEMPORARY ARTS

Presents
a solo show of collaborative works by

TARSHITU

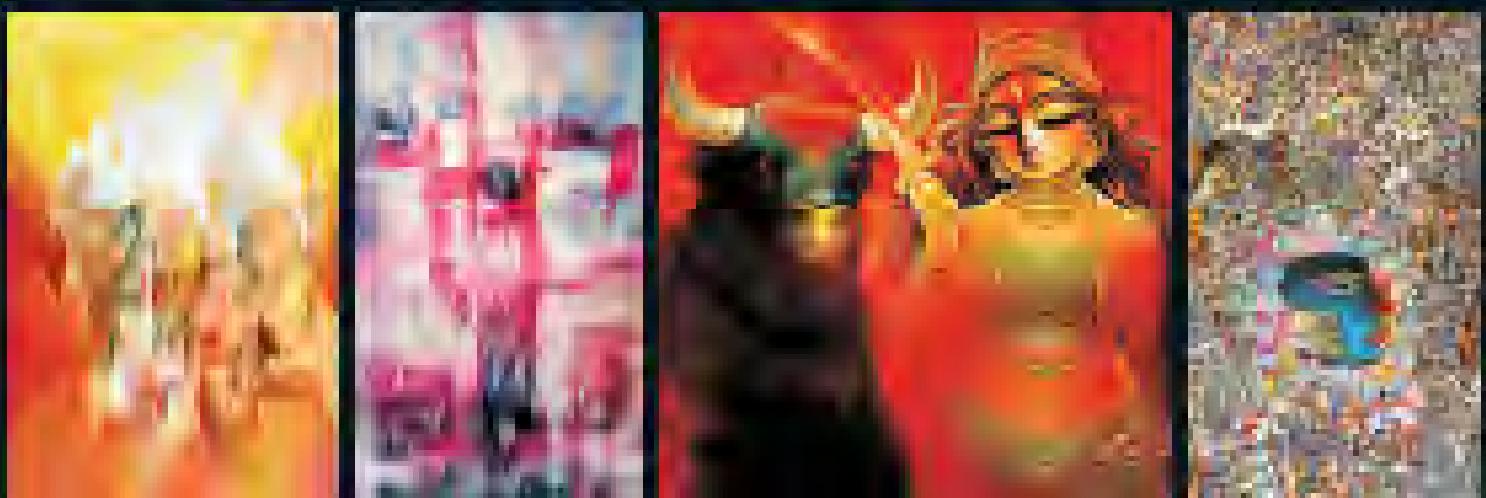
28 FEBRUARY 2018



Venue: Art Konsult

3A, Ground Floor, Hauz Khas Village, New Delhi-110016

For further detail please contact: Mob: +91-9871513240, 9811757020, Ph: +91-11-26564898,
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INDIA PRANAY DUTTA

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INDIA SONAM CHATLIRVEDI

INDIA SOUTHIK MAJUMDAR

BELGIUM TATJANA HUONG HENDERIECKX

INDIA VISHAL KUMARASWAMY

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EDITORIAL

Each day we bear witness to the evolution of the art scene as it unfolds before us. This past few months has been the season for exhibition openings and events all over the country, and we await yet more showcase of both budding and established talent in the coming months.

The past decade has seen epic growth in the artistic and creative landscape as we know it, as globalization has taken place in myriad ways, simultaneous with technological advancement. We now live in a time where we have a window into what is happening in all corners of the globe, in the arts and otherwise, and each moment are exposed to a plethora of previously unseen imagery. Our horizons have been broadened by the advancements in technology, and barriers which separate cultures, ethnic groups and economic factors are being challenged. Globalization is not a new phenomenon; however the rate and intensity at which it is occurring in the contemporary age is unprecedented, and is undoubtedly taking effect on the art world.

In February's issue of Art & Deal, as well as a representation of the current happenings in the Indian Art Scene, we feature two international interviews. Rajesh Punj, our correspondent in London interviews contemporary painter Zach Harris, a California based artist whose work alludes to the endless psychological realm beyond our physical plane. We also feature an 'in conversation' piece with contemporary British Sculptor Tessa Farmer, whose found object assemblages take us to another dimension entirely which draws heavily from British folklore, the British hedgerow and human nature itself. The Historic Environment Scotland (HES) shares with us the discovery of a collection of century old photographic negatives taken in Kolkata, found wrapped in newspapers dating from 1914.

Our Delhi correspondent reviews 'Shades of Green' the solo exhibition of Abhijit Saikia, a Delhi based artist originally from Assam, whose work draws from both the surrealist tradition and the Taoist school of thought to depict the crisis we face as a society - alluding to our immediate environment and our collective psychological landscape. And Rajesh Ram's solo exhibition 'I wonder' further explores our socio-political and environmental landscape as we know it. Himanshu Dabral reports on the 59th National Exhibition at Lalit Kala Akademi, where a cross section of contemporary Indian art was showcased.

Tanishka D'lyma, our correspondent in Mumbai reports on the interactive event 'The Mythologies of Mumbai' a project which tells us a story more than 300 years in the making, of forgotten stories in the mills of Mumbai. In our article 'The Politics of Hair' we catch up with Ritu Kamath as she prepares for her solo show titled 'i-seek' which explores the gender stereotypes in our culture, and the way in which they are challenged in the contemporary age.

As always we welcome you to get in touch with us with any comments or feedback.

Happy Reading

Siddhartha Tagore.

ART&DEAL™

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FEEDBACK, COMPLAINTS, QUERIES

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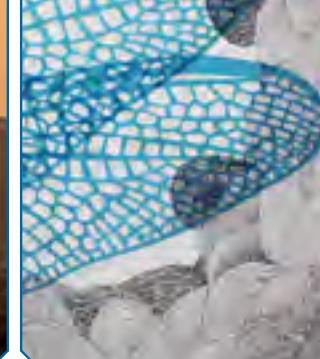
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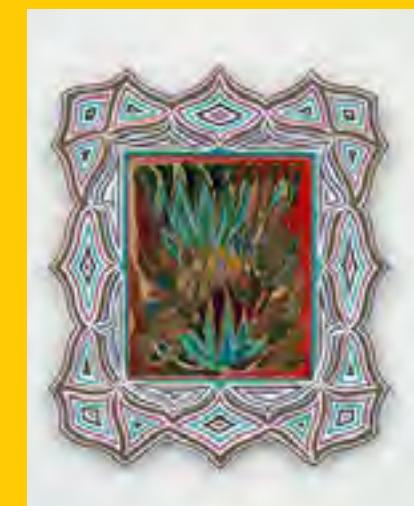
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HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND is the lead public body established to investigate, care for and promote Scotland's historic environment.

Cover Detail:



Zach Harris, *Small Succulent*, 2013-17
Carved wood, water-based paint, ink,
57.2 x 48.3 cm, © Courtesy of the artist &
Perrotin



Tessa Farmer, *The Hunt (detail)* 2010.
Bones, insects, plant roots,
Image courtesy: Tessa Farmer

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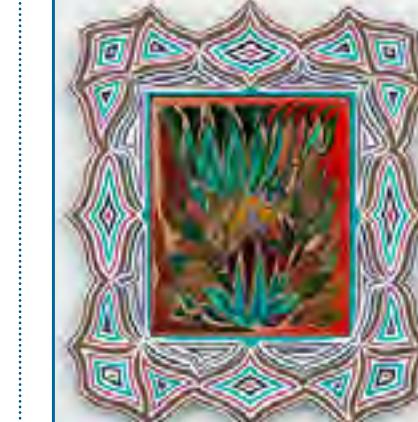
'I Wonder' Rajesh Ram's fifth solo show

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ALTAF, A RETROSPECTIVE: Late ALTAF MOHAMEDI DAG MODERN, New Delhi



The artist **Altaf Mohamedi** (1942-2005) is the focus of DAG's exhibition, a retrospective opening on January 25, 2018 in Delhi.

An affable, well-read artist trained in London, Altaf nevertheless chose to align his work to a **Marxist political ideology** in which he was completely invested. Not only did he take his work to the **Matunga Labour Camp** and to **slums in Bombay**, he worked with mobile crèches, printed counter-revolutionary posters with his wife Navjot and their friends in **PROYOM** (Progressive Youth Movement), and refused to consider his visual practice from a perspective based on aesthetic alone, instead preferring the more deeply thought and felt arising from a level of **intellectualisation** rare in Indian art at the time.

The timing of this important retrospective is particularly apt. Altaf's works are surprisingly **strong** and **evocative** of his belief in the politics of power and corruption, the marginalisation of the proletariat, and are haunted by the spectre of death. Memorialisation and displacement, parallels with myths, an occupation with concerns of life and death, Altaf's world was intended to **mirror an alternate reality** of a decaying, dystopian culture. To a great extent, he was successful, though it might be argued that an excess of thinking smudged the result.

The exhibition, which includes his works from the 1960s onwards, mirrors his concerns while articulating his own position. Yet, the question we must ask is where one places Altaf and his work in the history of Indian modern art. Several scholars have attempted to answer it in the accompanying book

with essays by **Nancy Adajania** and **Sanjoy Kumar Mallik**; interviews by **Navjot Altaf** of those who knew the artist well: Jitish Kallat, Vivan Sundaram, Anand Patwardhan, Mariam Dossal and Narendra Panjwani; and Zasha Colah's interview with Navjot who unravels known and unknown facets of the artist's life, work and milieu.

Elaborating further about Altaf's work Mr. Ashish Anand, CEO of DAG says 'The retrospective by DAG will go a long way in helping us gain appreciation of an artist whose work touched on subjects of great importance in the modern times, and needs to be revisited for its continuing context.'

Date: Until 17th March 2018

Venue: DAG,
11 Hauz Khas Village, New Delhi - 110016
T: + 91 9810790846
W: www.discoverdag.com

I WONDER: RAJESH RAM Palette Art Gallery, New Delhi



"I wonder" is **Rajesh Ram's** fifth solo, after a gap of nine years.

Comprising Ram's most recent body of **watercolour drawings** and **life-size bronze sculptures**, the exhibition resumes the artist's interest in **storytelling**, capsule in idioms and proverbs that tell of a time of childhood innocence and curiosity.

Informed by the tales of the **Panchatantra** and the **Jatakas**, Ram's work is a visual retelling of **children's fables** and **animal stories**, resplendent with mysterious details that place the painter's own

ART . MUSIC . DRAMA . MOVIE

experiences and memories at the heart of each story. Narrated in first person, the exhibition is an **autobiographical** account of Ram's reminiscences as a young boy growing up in a small village, retold as an adult living in a bustling metropolis.

Date: Until 15th February 2018

Venue: Palette Art Gallery, 14 Golf Links, New Delhi-110003
Timings: Monday - Saturday 11:00 am - 7:00 pm
T: +91 11 4174 3034 | +91 95992 03270
W: www.paletteartgallery.com

RELIVING VAN GOGH: A CAFÉ EXPOSITION Gandhi King Plaza, India International Centre, New Delhi



'What colour is in a picture, enthusiasm is in life.
Success is sometimes the outcome of a whole string of failure'
Van Gogh

The Van Gogh paintings are divided in sections. From his darker early work in the Netherlands including **The Potato Eaters** from 1885 and the **Skull of a Skeleton with a Burning Cigarette** 1886 to his move to Paris (1886-88) where he produced many of his iconic self-portraits. Finally we see the more colourful South of France period including **The Yellow House** 1888, **Sunflowers** 1889 and **Almond Blossoms** celebrating the birth of his nephew in 1890 just before his own death. On the invitation of Habiart Foundation three artists. Seema Kohli (India), Begum Tayebba Lipi and Mahbubur Rahman (Bangla Desh) along with the curator Rekha Mody visited three museums Van Gogh Museum Amsterdam, The Kröller-Müller Museum Otterlo, Het Noordbrabants Museum in Netherland in 2015. Motivated by their trip, they have created artworks inspired by Van Gogh's creations using the image of The Potato Eaters and Almond Blossom.

Habiart and India International invite you to experience the spirit of Van Gogh in an exhibition Reliving Van Gogh : A Café Exposition at Gandhi King Plaza India International Centre from 12 to 17 February 2018. Daily there will be an **interactive Potato Eaters Party at 4 pm** to enable the viewers to understand the spirit of Van Gogh. Van Gogh did more than 30 copies of works by some of his favorite artists such as Delacroix, Millet, Rembrandt, using black-and- white photographs and prints

and he described his copies as interpretations or translations comparing his role as an artist to that of a musician playing music written by another composer.

Habiart Foundation has been involved with promotion of art since 1989. In protest of destruction of Bamiyan Buddha, Habiart organized a creative protest involving over 108 artists in 2001 in six cities Kolkata, New Delhi, Hyderabad, Mumbai, Bhopal and Kathmandu. The works were displayed in Indian Parliament and at the prestigious World Economic Forum annual meet at Davos. To celebrate 500 years of Mona Lisa the famous work of Leonard Da Vinci; Habiart commissioned twelve artists from India, Pakistan , Nepal , Italy and USA to interpret Mona Lisa in contemporary style in 2006.

Date: Until 23rd February 2018

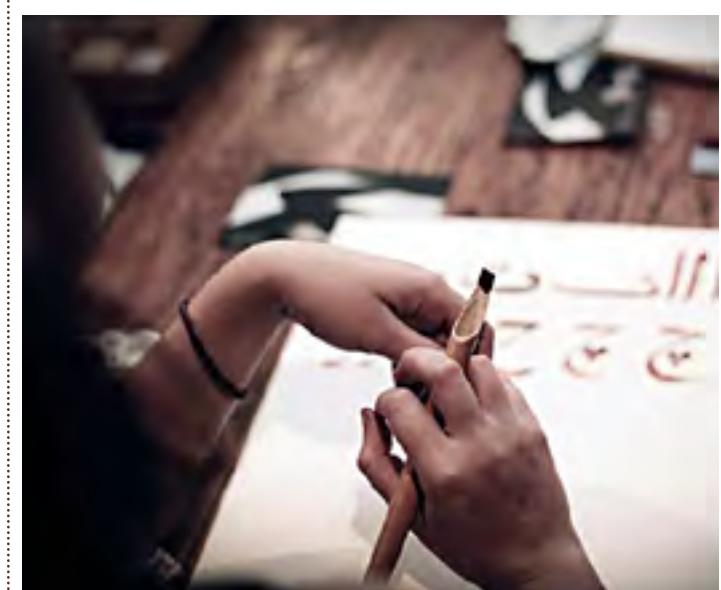
Venue: Gandhi King Plaza, IIC,
40 Max Mueller Marg, New Delhi, 110003
Timings: Daily 3:30 pm
E: habiart@gmail.com
W: www.habiartfoundation.org

ARABIC CALLIGRAPHY WORKSHOP Art Konsult Gallery, New Delhi

MATI India and organization **Nazariya** have joined forces to create a workshop on Arabic Calligraphy, led by master calligrapher **Katib Abdur Rehman**, giving all the opportunity to learn the art of versatile writing and sophisticated strokes of this age old art form.

This is an opportunity to not only **learn a dying art form**, but also **improve your concentration span and level of patience**.

Katib: Abdul Rehman is a **master Arabic calligrapher** who has learnt the art from the **enriching lineage** of the masters themselves! He is one of the only few **authentic** teachers and propagator of the exotic art form. Join us as we propagate this exotic, rare & beautiful art form and walk away as part of a legacy that you will carry forward.



All Material will be provided by Nazariya and MATI India on the day.
It's time to give history a future!

Date: Saturday 10th February 2018
Venue: Art Konsult Gallery,
3A, Ground Floor, Hauz Khas Village, New Delhi-110016.
Timings: 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm
T:+91-11- 26566898, 8178966643,
W: www.matiindia.org, www.nazariya.in/

CONFLUENCE: 80 YEARS OF ARTISTS AND THEIR ART Dhoomial Gallery at NSIC, New Delhi

Dhoomial Art Gallery invites you to its special showcase at the **India Art Fair, 2018**. Join us as we celebrate eighty years of being the point of confluence – where modern masters, some of the greatest thinkers of our times, inspiring souls of unmatched intellect, have converged. Converged and formed a whole that doesn't merely fit together as pieces of a jigsaw. It's dynamic, strongly individualistic identities that have given birth to a movement that will know no bounds and will continue to grow ceaselessly. The Gallery has witnessed iconic works come to life and stood, unflinching, with its artists – a repository of their faith.

Artist's works on display: Jamini Roy • Sailoz Mookherjea • BC Sanyal • KS Kulkarni • Bimal Das • FN Souza • HA Gade • J Swaminathan • Himmat Shah • Amrita Sher-Gil • Tyeb Mehta • VS Gaitonde • SH Raza • KH Ara • MF Hussain • Krishen Khanna • Ganesh Pyne • Ram Kumar • Anjolie Ela Menon • GR Santosh • Satish Gujral • Sohan Qadri • Bikash Bhattacharjee • Laxma Goud • Arpana Caur

Curated by Ashish Thapar

Date: 10th February – 12th February 2018
Venue: NSIC, Booth 20, Okhla, New Delhi
Okhla Phase 3, New Delhi 110020
Timings: Saturday, February 10th: 2pm – 8pm
Sunday, February 11th: 11am – 8pm
Monday, February 12th: 11am – 8pm
T: 011- 4151 6056
W: www.dhoomialgallery.com

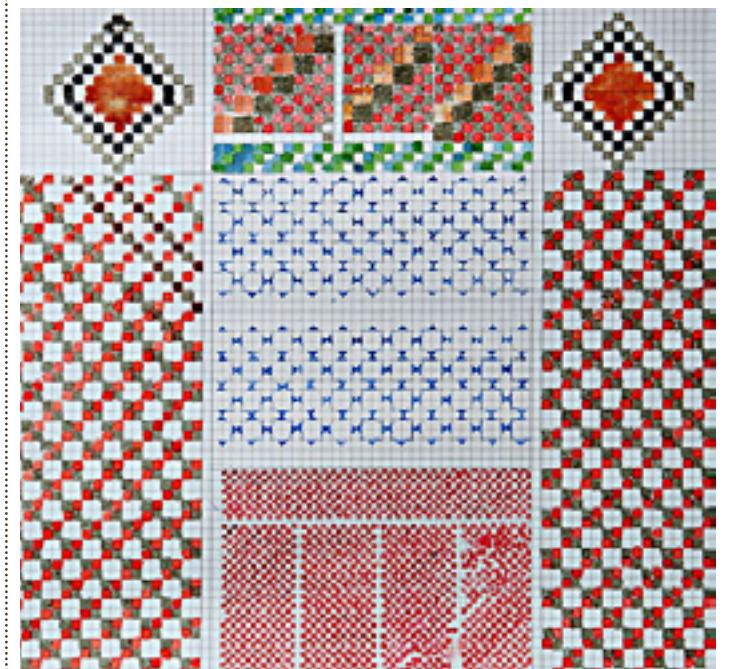
PATTERNS OF A TACTILE SCORE: YASMIN JAHAN NUPUR Exhibit 320, New Delhi

Yasmin Jahan Nupur's art practice is influenced by the socio-political developments that have shaped the ecological and cultural landscape of Bangladesh, and helped define the values of the community at large. Her work is **socially engaged**, and to that extent, is **emotionally charged**. For her solo, she presents works on **paper**, in **thread** and in **net**, alongside two **neon sculptures**.

Patterns of a tactile score is an iteration of the artist's process-based research in the fine weaving technique of **Jamdani**. Comprising delicately woven textile forms, and drawings inspired by the weaver's array of **floral** and **geometric motifs**, the show reflects the artist's interest in pliable sculptural forms, and explores the dialectic of tension as language.

Yasmin's leaning toward experimenting with textiles dates to memories of her fascination with her mother embroidering, observed as a young child. Her first foray into making textile art dates to 2008, when her interests in history, community and material coincided in the craft of Jamdani weaving. Originating in **Dhaka**, and celebrated as one of the finest muslins ever produced, patronized by royalty and traded to various parts of the world, the now almost lost weaving technique finds a voice in Yasmin's art.

In weaving, the basic structure of the woven material relies on a grid to materialize. With threads intersecting at right angles, a system or matrix of grids is built to form a piece of cloth. This matrix resolves the physical and aesthetic in its



form, corresponding respectively to material and ideology, and functioning at once as structure and as symbol. In Yasmin's sculptures, the matrix extends beyond the surface of the material to suggest the communal network of weavers that labours to produce it. Focused on the process, **tactility** and **structural arrangement**, the textile sculptures are rescued from the definition of object, emphasizing instead an order antithetical to that of natural objects.

Accomplice to the sculptures is Nupur's series of geometric drawings that again, **underline the significance of the grid**. Painted in the manner of graph paper, an aid used by weavers to guide design, the logic of the network of squares is more clearly manifest. The 25 drawings deliberately displayed as a grid, together form lyrical patterns that read like a musical score.

In her book *On Weaving*, 1965 the artist and weaver, Anni Albers dedicates a chapter to **'Tactile Sensibility'** in which she elaborates on the surface qualities of materials and the human need to touch the things we form, a way of assuring ourselves of reality. She writes, "Sometimes material surface together with material structure are the main components of a work; in textile works, for instance, specifically in weavings or, on another scale, in works of architecture."

Intrinsic to the history of textiles is the history of women and

the **feminist agenda** for equality within a male dominated historical narrative. Subversively employed by feminists in the 1960s and 70s, fiber arts were a means by which women addressed issues of identity, social place and sexuality. The gendered architecture of the medium underpin Yasmin's art in a more subtle way, where it follows the schematic of the handmade rather than of feminist politics.

The knots in each work lend **strength** to an otherwise fragile looking piece of mesh. Their shape is mutable, defined by the manner in which they are hung. The **arching loops** and dense clusters resemble a web- of linkages, of disruptions, of harmonies and rhythms.

At yet another level, threads are understood as episodes of life, occurring repeatedly, often in sequence. Borrowed from the logic of minimalism where multiple units repeat themselves to form the whole, embroidered sculptures like *Manifesto*, 2017 reveal an underbelly, where loose threads appear behind the embroidered metallic surface. This work makes the idea of the threshold lucid for the sheerness of the fabric is obstructed by silver yarn embroidery in a seemingly decorative way, punctuating our experience of the work.

Yasmin's body of work can be viewed as being in a 'state of becoming', where the personal narrative feeds into collective memory, most pronounced in works like *Nobody Bought Anybody's Silence*, 2017 and *Lucid Blue Dream*, 2015. Here she offers a revision of political sight. While the shape of the sculptures themselves is more defined, the inclusion of text renders the structure of communication problematic.

Crafted from the imagination of people for over two centuries, jamdani represents the temporal texture of its region, hinged on traditional processes, articulating the need to relocate our cultural inheritance. Drawing on Austrian philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein's suggestion that language stems from a variety of social practices that control and make possible various forms of discourse, that he refers to as language games, Yasmin's treatment of text can be seen as an ethnographic reading relating to the craft of textile making, its importance as a vehicle of social history and its contemporary applications and functions. Language therefore, is a social construct that represents an observable pattern or a series of codes whose rules change as per its usage in time and space.

Patterns of a Tactile Score is a parallel play on tensile and often emotive structural forms and on the textured fabric of place and people. The show activates the friction between art and craft and between language and experience.

Date: Until 19th February 2018
Venue: Exhibit 320, F-320, Lado Sarai, New Delhi
Timings: 11:00 am to 6:30 pm
Closed on Sunday and public holidays
T: +91 11 46130637
W: www.exhibit320.com

VISWAROOPA: THE FORM OF THE UNIVERSE Birla Academy, Kolkata

Birla Academy presents **51st Annual Exhibition**. As usual in the Annual Exhibition there are **two sections** – one is special exhibition with guest artists and another is competition section.

This year the special exhibition is 'Viswaroopa: The Form of Universe', curated by **Johny ML**. This is a magnificent show with wonderful works of art by well-known artists in India.

Date: Until 9th February 2018
Venue: Birla Academy of Arts and Culture, 108-109 Southern Avenue, Kolkata, West Bengal 700029
Timings: 3:00 pm - 8:00 pm Tuesday - Sunday
T: 033 2466 2843
W: www.birlaart.com

ASYMMETRICAL OBJECTS, GROUP SHOW Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Museum, Mumbai



In January 2018, the Museum will complete 10 years since it opened to the public in 2008. In March 2017 the Museum completed 160 years since it was first opened to the public by Lord Canning in 1857. Inspired by these important dates we have conceptualized an exhibition that takes its cue from the earliest impulses to establish the Museum and have juxtaposed it with our ongoing engagement with the prevailing '**environment**'.

Nature and Science were the founding principles of the Museum and are as significant today as they were then. However the lens through which we view both has changed radically. Nature traditionally was seen as a celebration of the divine and was made sacred and ritualized. Many of those values have been compromised or rejected as industrialization and consumption have threatened older rituals and modes of thought. Science was the instrument through which one observed and made sense of the world. It held out the possibility of endless hope. Today Artificial Intelligence is seen more as a threat than a remedy.

We have invited **ten** of our **foremost artists** whose practice includes an interest in nature and science or consumption and degradation as process and product, to respond to these ideas and to explore the much debated **Age of the Anthropocene** and its impact on the environment and the effects on biodiversity.

The exhibition endeavors to articulate a visual vocabulary that addresses these issues. Each artist has explored a different **theme** such as **alienation, pollution, destruction of biodiversity, unnatural divisions, mutations and distortions, the politics of water and waste and the destruction of landscapes and rivers**. Is healing and redemption possible? What does the future hold? The exhibition invites viewers to form their own

conclusions and share these with the Museum in a dialogue that will continue for the length of the exhibition through many activities and discussions.

Originally established in 1857 as the Government Central Museum of Natural History, Geology, Archaeology and Economic Products, the Museum's original collection included natural history specimens, archaeological artefacts and geological materials. However, many of the artefacts, including sculptures, coins and taxidermied animals were given to the erstwhile 'Prince of Wales Museum' now Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya, the 'Haffkine Institute', Parel, the 'Reay Industrial Museum' now the Mahatma Phule Museum, Pune and the 'Government Central Museum', Nagpur to enable them to start their Museums.

The Museum retains a small but significant natural history collection as well as a rich archive that documents its early efforts at displaying natural history specimens. Interestingly it won a gold medal at the 1883 International Fisheries Exhibition, London for specimens of dried fish and fishing nets. The participating artists are **Atul Bhalla, Jitish Kallat, Manish Nai, Mithu Sen, Prajakta Potnis, Ranbir Kaleka, Reena Kallat, Rohini Devasher, Sahej Rahal and Shilpa Gupta**

Date: Until 27th March 2018
Venue: Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Museum
 A-91 Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Road
 Byculla - East, Mumbai - 400 027
Timings: 10:00 am to 6:00 pm
T: +91 22 2373 1234
W: www.bdlmuseum.org

ARCHIVAL DIALOGUES - REVISITED Gallery Priyasi, Mumbai



The response to an art-work and its critical analysis is largely dependent on the immediate space that frames it. The aesthetics of white-cube space, however contested, still holds true for contemplation on art, in a space away from the mundane. The 'white-cube' has itself become an institutional identification of art, somewhat analogous to the **Foucauldian idea** of power in relation to archives.

The re-contextualization and re-curation of Archival Dialogues would be in this dialectical mode, moving away from the Derridean notion of arkheion or physical domicile of the archive, the critical under-current of the preview at Khotachi Wadi.

The exhibition seeks to bring together a group of young artists from MSU Baroda whose practice responds to the manifold ruptures in political, social, ecological and personal spaces, looking through the lens of critical discourses on **Archivization** and **Museumization**. The selection of artists is based on the notion of an archival performative approach adopted by them to different ends. For each of these artists, the relationship between 'fine-art' and craftsmanship becomes extremely important in understanding their diverse methods to a quasi-scientific museum display.

Looking at the dynamics of space as it functions with the artworks, the re-curation of the show, Archival Dialogues, previously shown at Ferreira House, Khotachiwadi, facilitates an additional dialogue like the title of the exhibition promises. This reiteration of the show curated by Pronoy Chakraborty, seeks to explore the concept of museumisation and archivisation in the now, white-cube space at Priyasi Art Gallery through the work of six young artists from M.S. University, Baroda, who in their respective practices present unique perspectives on approaching the same.

Date: Until 12th February 2018
Venue: Gallery Priyasi, 42 Madhuli
 4th Floor, Shiv Sagar Estate
 Next to Poonam Chamber
 Dr Annie Besant Road, Worli, Mumbai 400018
T: +91 9323582303
W: www.gallerypriyasi.com

SILENT ECHO: RAVIKUMAR KASHI Sakshi Gallery, Mumbai

Sakshi Gallery is pleased to present 'Silent Echo' an exhibition of installations and artists' books by the Bangalore based artist, writer and educator, Ravikumar Kashi. The show previews on January 31 and will run through February 23, 2018.

'Silent Echo' is a compilation of Kashi's work revolving around the 'object.' One of the main threads that bind these works is an insight on how objects become an extension of ourselves, retain memory, and gain their own persona over a period of time. Additionally, when more than one object comes together, they affect and alter each other's meaning. Five distinct but interrelated works in the show address the character, historicity, function, and relevance of diverse objects that the artist chooses to build his narratives around. He is as comfortable with hand-crafted objects as with photographed, drawn or ready-made ones.

The centerpiece, 'Silent echo' from which the show draws its name, is a **sculptural installation**. It is made with mesh and paper pulp and evokes many of the metaphors of our time where hope and despair ride together side by side. 'Heirlooms of Fear' and 'Dark Revenue,' also installations, are assemblages of found and hand-crafted objects coming together to create ensembles packed with multi-layered narratives where every detail brings in a new thread into play.



Kashi effects a correlation with these installations by displaying a set of 'Artists' Books,' a rarely seen genre in India. In this genre, an artist creates books predominantly with visuals, and not so much with words, thereby defying the commonly-held notion of a book. Kashi has been creating artists' books for nearly a decade now, combining his creative sensibilities with the tactile craft of hand-made papermaking. He has exhibited these books in various shows and museums outside the country. In this show, he displays a set of artists' books called 'All is always now.' The books are filled with images of objects from different places and time zones generating discontinuous stories.

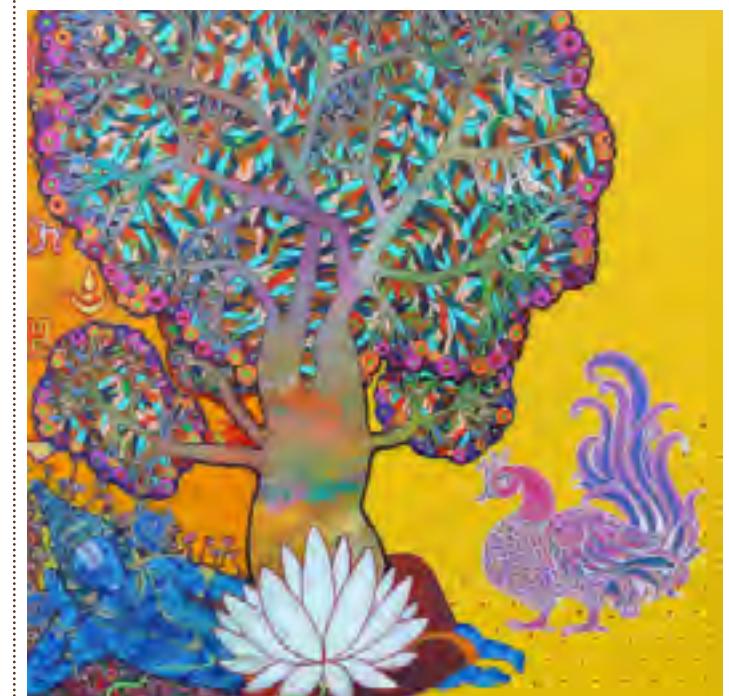
The third dimension is provided by **three sets of works with photography as the mainstay**. These works are from the series 'Memorial' and explore the complex narratives that emerge from 'showcases' which are ubiquitous in most middle class homes, and display cases in shops.

Through the unique character of each of the mediums, the artist is making connections between the self and the world of objects. He extracts volumes of meaning from something as simple as a plastic toy chair, or as symbolic as the open eye, by means of precise juxtaposition of the object and the manipulation of context through grouping. His observation of human nature and sociological responses enable him to embed 'clues' that act as windows into his world; a world that is silent and eloquent at

the same time, and inhabits spaces between physical truth and imagined reality. These works transcend different boundaries in communication and create palpably altered perception of objects by the viewer.

Date: Until 23rd February 2018
Venue: Sakshi Gallery
 6/19, Grants Building,
 2nd Floor, Arthur Bunder Road
 Colaba, Mumbai 400 005
Timings: 11:00 am to 6:00 pm, Monday - Saturday
T: +91 22 66103424
W: www.sakshigallery.com

KALPAVRIKSHA: CHANDRA MORKONDA Forum Art Gallery, Chennai



Born in **Srikalahasti**, Andhra Pradesh, Chandra Morkonda has completed M.F.A. in Graphics from **Kala Bhavan**, Visva-Bharati University, **Santiniketan**, West Bengal in 2014 and B.F.A. in painting from JNTU, Hyderabad in 2011.

He has participated in Art Shows like: 'Margazhi Musings', Forum Art Gallery, Chennai; 'Hues of the Muse', Shree Yash Art Gallery, New Delhi; 'Motley Hues', Gallery Vision Art, New Delhi; Group Show at Phoenix Mall by Reves Gallery, Bengaluru; 'Vividhta Mein Ekta' and 'Big & Beautiful' at Samanvai Art Gallery, Jaipur; **India Art Festival** by Gallerie Splash, New Delhi in 2017; 'Visible Visages' at Gallery Veda, Chennai; **Art Loot**, India Habitat Centre, New Delhi; and **New Delhi Airport** by Gallery Nvyा, New Delhi in 2016; 'Traditional Art Camp' at Lalit Kala Akademi, Chennai; and **Charity show for Cow** at Ford Showroom, Bengaluru in 2015; at Birla Academy of Arts and Culture, Kolkata; and Visva Bharati University Annual Show at ICCR Kolkata in 2014; 'Project 7' at Sunville, Mumbai;

'Colours of Life', 'Art with a Heart', Elysium Mansion, Mumbai; and 'Within Reach IV' at Gallery Nvya, New Delhi in 2013; 'Display of Art' at Gallery Point of View, Mumbai in 2012; Akruthi Annual Art Exhibition at JNAFAU, Hyderabad in 2011; 6th All India Art Competition by Hyderabad Art Society and 1st National level Art Exhibition by Scribble, Hyderabad in 2009; and in 11th State level Art Exhibition by PST University Hyderabad in 2008.

His Solo Show 'Kalpavriksha | Vahana Series' is in 2018 and 'Kalpavriksha' was in 2016 at Forum Art Gallery, Chennai.

He has received **South Zone Andhra Pradesh State Award** from PDAF, Mumbai in 2016, **Arnavaz Vasudev Scholarship** Bengaluru in 2014-2015, and **State Award** from Potti Sree Ramulu Telugu University, Hyderabad in 2008.

Date: Until 9th February 2018

**Venue: Forum Art Gallery,
57, 5th Street, Padmanabha Nagar,
Adyar, Chennai 600020**

Timings: 10:30 am - 6:30 pm, Monday - Saturday

T: +91 (44) 42115596 / +91 (44) 42115597

W: www.forumartgallery.com

SENSORIUM
Sunaparanta - Goa Centre of the Arts, Goa



*The End is Only the Beginning
Things fall apart*

This happens on rote, continuously, on different levels – psychological, corporal, in known realms, and in ineffable ways. Simultaneously they are also born, remade, renewed. In the space between the two, we are marshalled by one task: **observation**. 'We are here to notice each thing so each thing

gets noticed', wrote Anne Dillard, 'otherwise, creation would be playing to an empty house.'

What appears as a wall can turn also into a threshold – and beyond it, unseen worlds await, even death loses its aura of finality. The possibilities are many. An artist in exile produces her strongest work in an alien country. A marriage ends, and a man begins to write. The death of a parent is recalled on a canvas. The 2018 edition of Sensorium examines how the apparent conclusions in our life – the windup of a relationship, the betrayal of faith – become starting points for us. **Sic itur ad astra – we journey to the stars**. And it is from stars, we are encouraged to believe, that we emerge. Shadows pass, light remains. Here, then, is the light.

In rare, bold, majestic ways, the artists in this edition of Sensorium are cartographers of meaning, of being, exploring what ends and how this find surprising renewal and unexpected revival.

Employing mediums as varied as **video, photography, installation, and sound**, our artists are championed here by strong, generous galleries and museums, from across **India, Sri Lanka and Sweden**. Each artist emboldens the principal that we fail, we lose, but we begin again. Their voices are disparate, clear, powerful; their stories are our stories, their nightmares and dreams also ours.

*You are not leaving.
Even as the light fades quickly now,
you are arriving.
- David Whyte*

Date: Until 1st March 2018

**Venue: Sunaparanta
Goa Centre For The Arts
63/C-8, Near Army House
Altinho, Panaji – 403 001, Goa**
T: +91 832 2421311
W: www.sgcfa.org

PROCRUSTEAN POSSIBILITIES, ZAKKIR HUSSAIN
The Guild, Alibaug

The Guild is delighted to present **Procrustean Possibilities** a solo exhibition of new works by **Zakkir Hussain**. The Guild had earlier exhibited Zakkir Hussain's works in a two person show at NCPA, 2006, and then in various group shows at The Guild Art USA Inc., New York, 2006 and 2012.

"Hussain's poetic refrain manifests in the violent leitmotifs of corporal discipline and restraint that have punctuated his drawings for almost a decade. And while his repeated and rehearsed images might be read a closure or an impasse, I would like to suggest that the poetic possibilities of the refrain may point to something a little more slippery. In keeping with this, my short introduction to Procrustean Possibilities considers how Hussain's use of the visual refrain may perform an ambiguous function to not only mark a world replete with the tacit ironies of entropy but also to potentially point to untold paths that exist beyond the picture plane."

- Dr. Kathleen Wyma

ART . MUSIC . DRAMA . MOVIE



Zakkir Hussain was born in **Kerala** in 1970 and received BFA in Painting from The College of Fine Arts, Trivandrum, in 1994 and Masters in Fine Arts (Graphics), MSU Baroda.

Zakkir Hussain was invited to the first Kochi Muziris Biennale curated by Bose Krishnamachari and Riyas Komu, 2012; recent works, curated by Kathleen Wyma, The University of British Columbia, Canada.

His solo exhibitions include: **Prolonged hours of Disguised Situations**, Gallery SKE, Bangalore, 2015; **Translating the Silence**, Vadehra Art Gallery, New Delhi, 2015; **Zero Tolerance**, Vadehra Art Gallery, New Delhi, 2012; **103d C Yellow Fever and other works**, Gallery SKE Bangalore, 2010; **Re-Turn of The Unholy**, Vadehra art Gallery, New Delhi, 2008; **Emerging from the Womb of a Scapegoat**, Kashi Art Gallery, Kochi.

His group shows include: "Mattancherry," curated by Riyas Komu, Uru Art Harbour, Kochi, 2017; "Peak-Shift-Effect," curated by Gayatri Sinha, Vadehra Art Gallery, New Delhi, 2013; Skoda Contemporary Art Show, National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi, 2012; A Further Global Encounter, Grosvenor Vadehra, London, 2012; Krinzinger Project, Gallery Krinzinger, Vienna, 2008; Venice & Kassel Interlude, The Guild, Mumbai, 2008.

Date: Until 15th February 2018

**Venue: The Guild, Alibaug
1028, Ranjanpada, Next to Sai Temple
Mandwa Alibaug Road
Alibaug - 402201
Timings: Open All days
10.00 am - 6.30 pm
T: +91 02141 247847
W: www.guildindia.com**

NAVARASA DUENDE GLOBAL CARNIVAL
Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, New Delhi

'Navrasa Duende Global Carnival', a one its kind global carnival

will have assemblage of pavilions dedicated to complete range of arts and entertainment by over 400 performing artists which will include 200 top international artists. The three day carnival will be soaking experience of almost 100 hours of live performances across 20 performing arts genres for entire range of global arts and entertainment; where in all age groups coming from any part of the world can have real experience of a Getaway in the truest sense. We expect more than 100,000 audiences from all around the globe. We invite all the arts and entertainment lovers from all over the world to experience a complete gateway for intellectual, physical, spiritual and fun experience.

Expecting over 1,00,000 discerning audience, the Carnival will be spread across 35 acres with 4 live stages and will include Indian/Western/World- Classical, Rock, Pop, Jazz, Folk, Electronic Music, Classical, Popular Music and Dance



Concerts, Theatre, Photography/Cartooning/Painting/Sculpture Exhibitions, Screening of feature films & Documentaries, Wellness Sessions, Interiors product exhibitions, Literary events, Fashion Shows, global cuisines, world class bars, exhibition arena and many more surprises.

Date: : 23rd – 25th February 2018

Venue: Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium,

Pragati Vihar, New Delhi, Delhi -110003

Timings: From 10.00 am onward.

T: +91 771 888 9955

W: www.navrasaduende.com

To feature a snippet in this section
write to us at
indira290@hotmail.com,
artanddeal@gmail.com

Ph: +91-11-26566898

20/20 VISION

An interview with
ZACH HARRIS

RAJESH PUNJ



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*Zach Harris, Small Succulent, 2013-17
Carved wood, water-based paint, ink,
57.2 x 48.3 cm, © Courtesy of the artist &
Perrotin*

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*Zach Harris, Detail of Double Helix (in
2020), 2015-17, Carved wood, water-based
paint, ink, 208.3 x 152.4 cm, Photo: Claire
Dorn, Courtesy Perrotin*



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*Portrait of Zach Harris
Photo : Claire Dorn*



There is something pleasurable whilst being intuitively irresponsible about spoiling a document; of rolling a pencil over it with the intention of applying free reason as free reign. But the action to introduce oneself, to imprint one's identity upon material matter is what is intrinsic to our being in and of a moment; of engaging by disengaging with one's circumstances. And for California born and based artist Zach Harris the intention of wanting to impress upon everything something of himself, has matured into a deeper language, that he explains as "regressive and progressive at the same time". Deciding "it is all based on a stream of consciousness. I never know what is going to come. And it is kind of regressive, kind of what I did when I was a child. I drew all day at school. So all of this is about

me getting back to being a kid again. But then it is also art historical, referencing the highest art. Raphael, Michelangelo's Last Judgement, and all of those overtones, whilst still being childlike, very simple. And I like that, regressive and progressive at the same time." As the aesthetics of his 'alter' pieces are as sophisticated as they appear adolescent.

For Harris each of his works has its own identity, as though the subconscious trappings of many different minds. Never returning to a particular approach or palette, the artist sees each work as a universe that is as much autobiographical as it is a new adventure for the artist. "I draw, I meditate, and I sit in front of a work, and really think day-by-day, so I am conscious of what I can accomplish myself; and spend



ten, twelve, fourteen hours, getting myself into that state. So you do it and you do it just by working, and it is easy after a few hours to find that intensity again. Saying that, I struggle everyday. I am impatient, I worry - I don't know what I am doing, I don't know where the work is going. It is not easy at all. And I have never done this before - each composition is a new proposition." Pressed about whether he draws as much from reality as he does from the advantages of abstraction, Harris explains his approach as about

being able to immerse himself in a prolonged moment, that stretches as long as it takes one to feel differently. Where contemporary art appears to be animated by a visual immediacy, Harris' works are determined by slow and serious time. Seeing our lives as open to much deeper dimensions. "I really want to create deep space and deep time. So you can go into space, and you go into time, and you spend time in this illusionistic world. I think illusion is something that is the basis of reality, and painting especially, because it is just on the surface where the distortion is happening."

And against any illusion that they are decorative, there is in Harris' work an incredible lexicon of lavish ideas, that sees snakes devouring money, contorted cats wrestling puppets, (Dutch graphic artist) Escher like hands drawings themselves, a crucifixion harbouring rats, and cupids flying over seascapes. As mythological symbols, science, and the solar system are all employed as sensitive scenery for each of his carefully crafted masterpieces. For which the ambition of Harris's work is positively spurred by the artists' inventive imagination, and intention to explain everything as though the illustrations for Aldous Huxley's 'A Brave New World'; a world not too distant from Harris' in which reproductive technology, sleep-learning, psychological manipulation, and classical conditioning alter everything irrevocably.

Recalling the Old Masters, for Harris' use of wooden panels and integrated frames, an individual work's almost biblical appearance is as a consequence of the hand carved detail and satisfying symbolism that nourishes the central depiction. And like the Old Masters the artist sees perspective as integral to the work, and the unfolding narrative.

Zach Harris, *Sunrise Sunset (in 2020)*, 2015-17, Carved wood, water-based paint, ink, 219.7 x 158.8 cm, Photo: Claire Dorn Courtesy Perrotin

Recalling the Old Masters, for Harris' use of wooden panels and integrated frames, an individual work's almost biblical appearance is as a consequence of the hand carved detail and satisfying symbolism that nourishes the central depiction. And like the Old Masters the artist sees perspective as integral to the work, and the unfolding narrative.

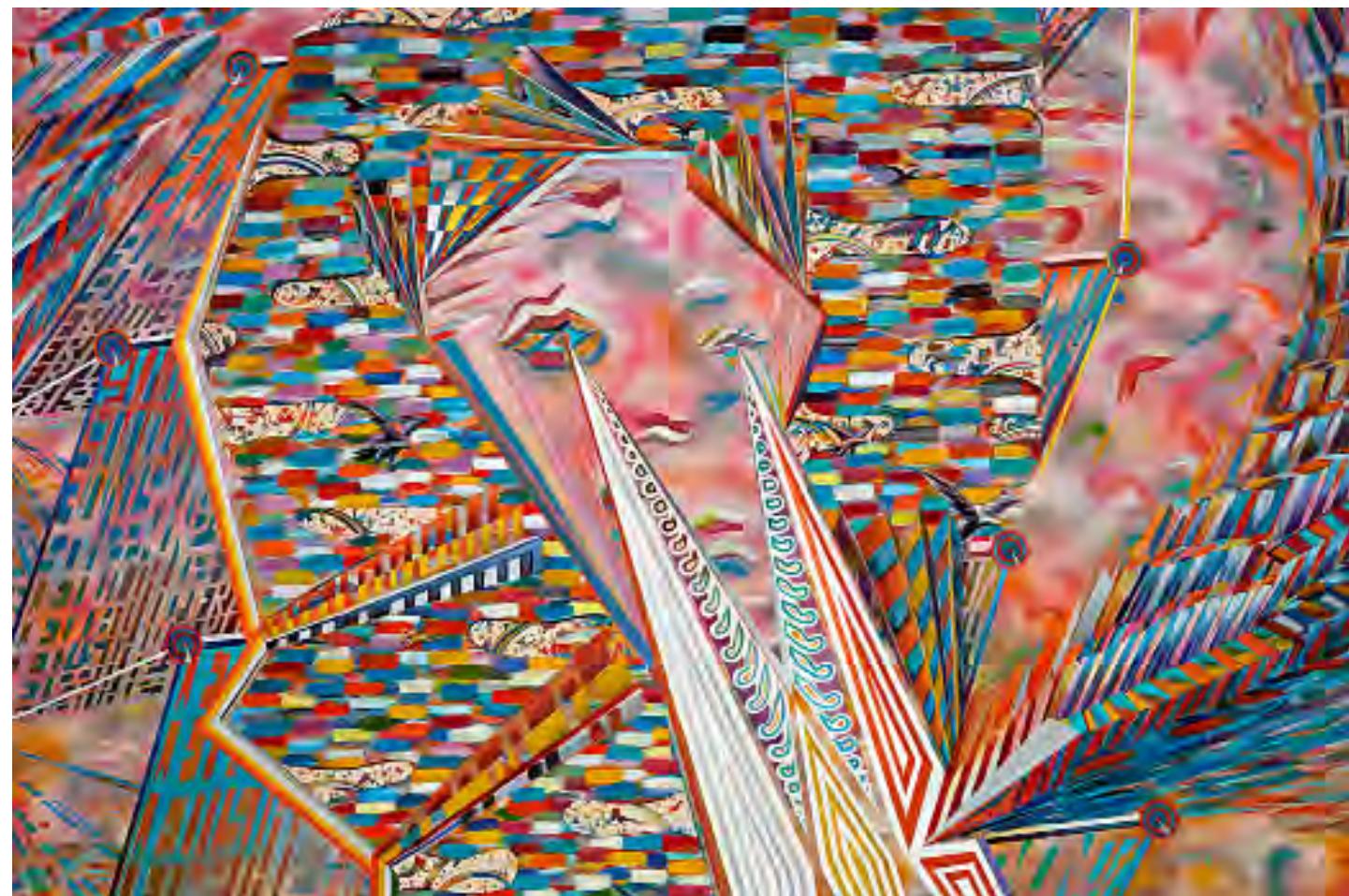
More easily unexplained, Harris' imagination borrows from two worlds, that which we are in when we speak, and then another more introspective universe, that has him scrutinise over the anatomy of an artwork, for a invariable amount of time. The detail as visual dynamite, as Harris explains, is born over a period of many weeks and months. As panels are individually cut into, sprayed over, meticulously painted, and then mounted into an accompanying frame, that has all of the same technique applied to it, and for its appearance could be a work in itself; challenging the final image. Which serves to illustrate the relationship of the inner and outer order of things. As the artist explains how each work "goes through so many phases, that the painting looks good but the frame is terrible. The frame really contradicts the painting, and then towards the end it becomes an entire entity,

which then leads to my working on the whole thing at once." And at a moment when we are saturated with standard images and information, Harris purposefully applies himself to the task of creating something other; that serves as salvation for our imaginations.

Interview

Rajesh Punj: What interested me yesterday when looking over your exhibition catalogue was of the construct of your work, by which I mean the order of things - that the frame and the central panel become one and the same thing entirely? How did that come about? And is everything as much based in reality, as it is on the otherworldly?

Zach Harris: I trained mostly as a painter, that is my first love, and I have spent a long time looking at paintings, and drawings. Old Master paintings, contemporary



art, Abstract Expressionism, I can mention as an influence. So I got into painting, and then I spent a lot of time in churches. A lot in Europe, and I spent time in India, and I did murals, and decorated meditation spaces that were for contemplation, and for focusing and going inward. In a church the whole programme of images, is about the painting and its frame, the alter, (glass) windows and architecture. It is about everything existing together within a spiritual space.

For me the distinction between what is art and what isn't, or what is fine art and what is craft (doesn't exist). So with my work I am playing with those dichotomies, where the frame, as you said, is no longer a frame; and then there is also the question of focus versus periphery. Of how I originally didn't want to make a painting or a sculpture, but an object (that was also a) painting; so I wanted to do both. I wanted to make the painting almost a meditative object, and the frame as a strategy to keep you looking; to keep you focused. So sometimes (there is one work here and another one back there), where the painting is ten by eight inches, by the frame is three feet by four, and it is all working to keep it as a container, which is really small.

RP: *My immediate thought is that when you conceive of a work, are you deciding the frame in the same moment?*

ZH: Each one is different. Initially I would work on a painting for two years. I would spend a long time with a work.

RP: *So you would concentrate on a work (like Silver Sky 2014-17) without its frame initially?*

ZH: Yes it could read as a panel. I may have many of them going on at once, and then I will choose one in particular I like more, that this is a

good painting on its own. So it has to be good on its own without any help that encourages me to think I could exhibit that on the wall. But then I thought why stop? It is not that hard to make a good painting, it is hard but a lot of people do it, it is interesting, but also it wasn't really enough for me and I wanted to make an object. I wanted to get into geometry and carving, spatial reliefs and to extend the painting. So the painting would have bigger implications outside of itself.

RP: *Thus by implication you are inviting the audience to focus more intently upon your work and its frame?*

ZH: Oh yes, and I think the more I am focused while making it, the more the viewer focuses, or the viewer feels that intensity of concentration as a heightened awareness; as part of a visionaries' kind of tradition. It maybe I like to create part visionary, part religious, part meditative image; for which I am seeking to create an almost psychedelic experience in a painting. We all know when you like an artwork, 'you can't figure it out', 'you don't know what you are looking at', 'it is incredible', 'you don't know how it's done'; and you are just mesmerised for a long time. So that is what I feel like I wanted to experience as the artist and the viewer; because that was the most valuable thing to do for people, and for the world. It is not a political statement, but it is a value that is missing from our present world. (Because of the nature of everything it seems more and more important now to spend time with something.

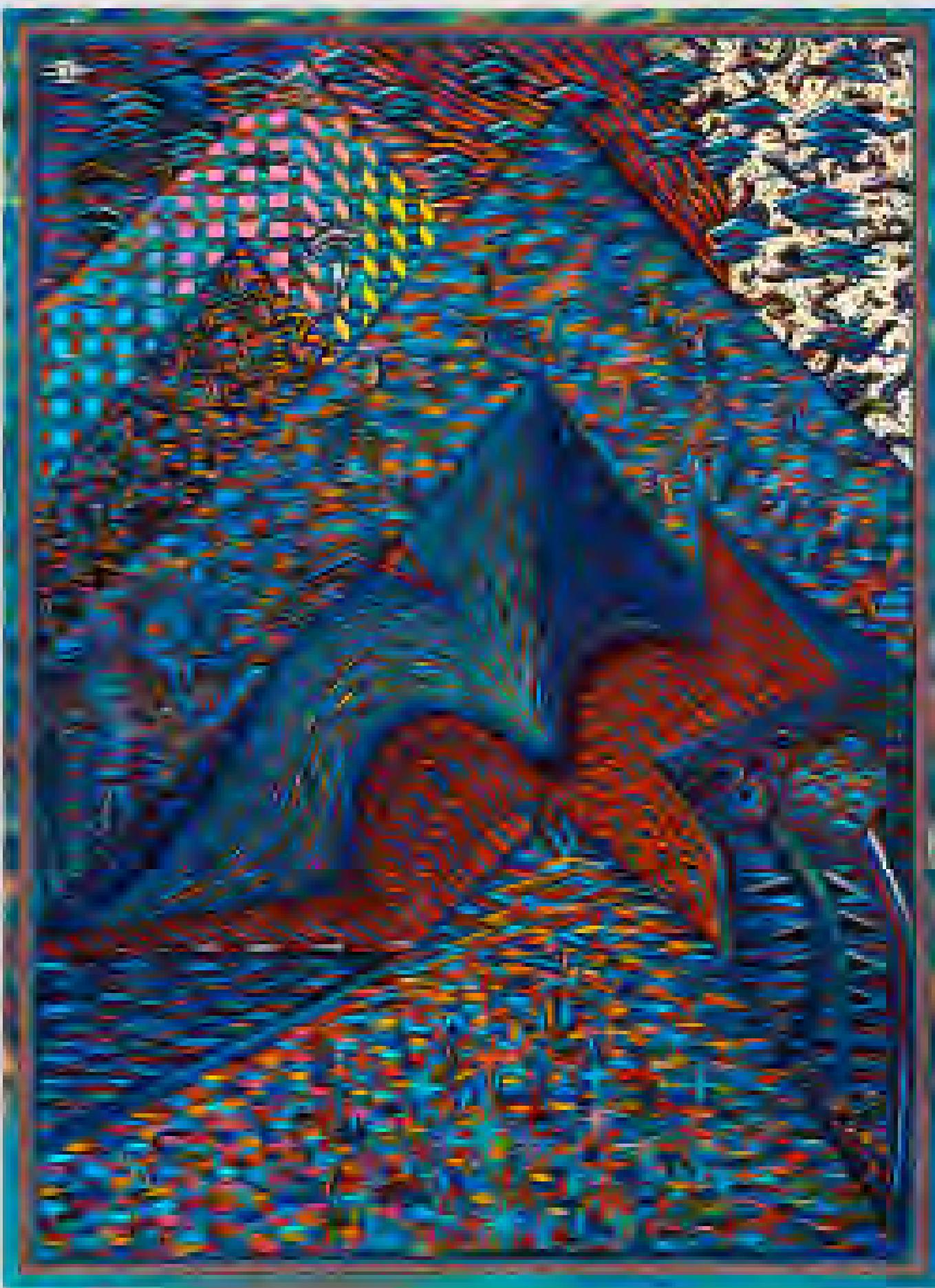
RP: *And how important or possible is that, when we are encouraged to 'live in the moment'?*

ZH: Right, as I mentioned I want to arrive at a more psychedelic spiritual experience, and I think also as a painter you have moments

I have a vision in my head of what will look good. I will draw a little with a woodworking tool that scrapes away from around the figures. And I will proceed to think 'oh this will look good with this', so I see the whole and sort of work towards that. Which proves meaningful because I have so many steps and stages along the way, so many things to do, that I am constantly getting more things done. Which leads me to the final thing.



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Zach Harris, *Double Helix (in 2020)*, 2015-17, Carved wood, water-based paint, ink, 208.3 x 152.4 cm, Photo: Claire Dorn, Courtesy Perrotin



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Zach Harris, *Water on Fire Bird*, 2014-17, Water-based paint, ink, graphite, carved, wood, 208.3 x 152.4 cm
© Courtesy of the artist & Perrotin

Zach Harris, *Detail of Water on Fire Bird*, 2014-17, Water-based paint, ink, graphite, carved, wood, 208.3 x 152.4 cm
© Courtesy of the artist & Perrotin

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of inspiration, and moments when you are confused about what you are doing. I try to cultivate those heightened states, and it is almost like that drives the abstraction and the composition. So certain works are quite simple for me, I have others that have much more geometry, and planning go into them, in order to try and visualise the thing as a whole, and of what it will look like before it is made. Which is really hard to do but I find can be really rewarding.

RP: With this work (*Small Succulent* 2013-17) for example would you have constructed a frame and considered different versions of the final piece?

ZH: Yes I really work it out. In my head I have different ideas, and I create sketches with my eyes closed, and imagine what this thing will look like in real life. I will do lots of drawing and figure out general proportions and whatever, and then I might add a frame around the painting, or a big piece of wood that I carve.

RP: You referenced the Old Masters as an influence, and as someone who is incredibly interested in paintings of the 16th and 17th century, I am becoming more

accustomed to panels or canvases with big heavy frames, that can on occasion compete with the religious or mythological image itself; is that something you are conscious of, of the balance of the 'feature' with the frame?

ZH: Oh yes. It is crazy, it goes through so many phases, that the painting looks good but the frame is terrible. The frame really contradicts the painting, and then towards the end it becomes one entity, which then leads to my working on the whole thing at once.

RP: So a completed work is supposed to be looked at in its entirety, and not as an image with a frame?

ZH: Yes it is meant to be looked at (as a whole). They should exist as an entity, as a painting does as an illusion and as an object.

RP: I am intrigued by the codes and creative languages you apply to each work, in order they become their own universe. I want to understand the imagery within each of the works, and of how you come about determining that?

ZH: I mean it is based on elemental abstract symbols. So it has an abstract power, which is the fundamental and honest thing about it; and the works have a visionary landscape, within a deep space. I really want to create deep space and deep time. So you can go into space, and you go into time, and you spend time in this illusionistic world. I think illusion is something that is the basis of reality, and painting especially, because it is just on the surface where the distortion is happening.

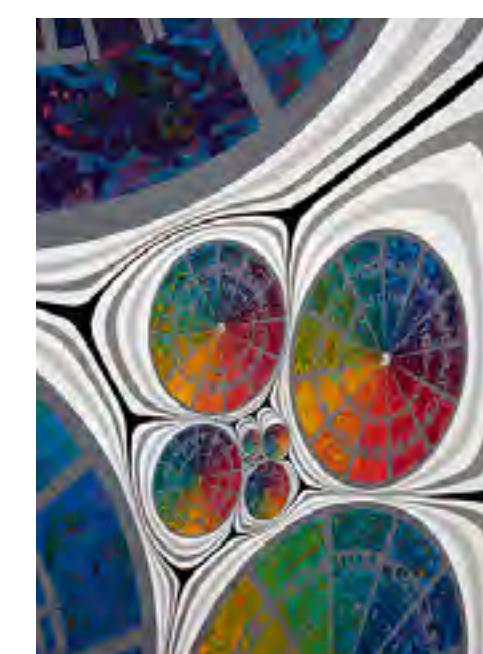
I am playing with ordinary illusion, so in a work like *Water on Fire Bird* 2015-17, there are two birds, a water bird and a fire bird, as an elemental underpinning to the flowers in the



It is crazy, it goes through so many phases, that the painting looks good but the frame is terrible. The frame really contradicts the painting, and then towards the end it becomes one entity, which then leads to my working on the whole thing at once.

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Zach Harris, *Study for 20/20*, 2016-17,
Carved wood, water-based paint,
ink, 172.7 x 120.7 cm, Photo: Claire Dorn
Courtesy Perrotin

Zach Harris, *Detail of Study for 20/20*,
2016-17, Carved wood, water-based paint,
ink, 172.7 x 120.7 cm, Photo: Claire Dorn
Courtesy Perrotin



bottom right hand corner, and also there are these mountains, with a hill on fire, and there could be a plain of water there with a mountain in the middle, and there are bigger mountains going further back into the distance. And then there is a mountain made-up of heads - Do you see the heads? Do you see the city? It is about playing with scale, shifting and suddenly you are within worlds, within worlds, within worlds. Macro focused - of how it looks from up here, resolving one element here and up there, and everything in-between. Like there is something happening. And then there are these big heads, alluding to a big exodus of people. For which I was thinking of Mount Rushmore in the States where the Presidents are carved out of the rocks.

So in this detail they could be carved into a mountain, and then you shift back here it is another mountain, but it is actually much further back, of skulls and Pegasus; and there are these hands everywhere drawing. Just like my hand as the hand of god creating, which becomes a motif. There are a lot of symbols that run throughout the whole show. Then there is a lot of colour theory, juxtaposing these different shapes that have various marks and languages. And it is not just a single image that can be read, there is a landscape, there are birds, there are mountains, there are people. All these different elements, and with anything anthropomorphic, you can't tell (what you are looking at). What is this? How was it made? Carved, and then there is a lot of text, which is random poetic writing, in which I am saying something, or I might describe what someone is doing, or imply the meaning of the story. So there are very different ways to engage with the works.

RP: Therefore with any of these works, the viewer is encouraged to come back again and again, as though returning to the altar.

ZH: Definitely, that is the point that you keep looking and to live with it, see more in it, keep discovering. I have spent three years on any one of these paintings, which is a long development.

RP: And by that do you mean you will begin a work, and then return to it? Of slowly building upon what you have until you arrive at an end image.

ZH: Slowly as I start to perceive it, again if I am feeling a greater clarity I can perceive what the next thing to do is. A lot of times I will sit and mediate for a little bit, for an hour or half an hour, just to live with it, and also because each work had a very different pictorial language. Pointillist or impressionistic, another work has hardly any paint marks at all - so they are created in many different ways, and that is part of what I like doing.

RP: So you won't necessarily repeat a pattern or approach?

ZH: I have had comments like 'oh, is this the same artist who did all these different things', which implies a greater vision and a greater sense of history, art history, time and style. I think every piece should be different.

RP: So you wouldn't necessarily be inclined to take an existing idea into a new work?

ZH: Not really, sometimes there will be two or three variations as works, but more or less, especially with a painting, I won't repeat something.

RP: It must be mentally and emotionally exhausting to conceive of a whole set of ideas, only to then have to start again - to begin again. Do you always see yourself arriving at a conclusion, which allows you to move on?

ZH: No, I could keep going on this show (at Galerie Perrotin, Paris) for another year if I wanted to, because there is no such thing as finished.

Nothing is ever quite right.

RP: It must be difficult then to know when to come away from a work, to let go. And by implication is there ever a sense that you have overworked something?

ZH: Oh yes. It happens a lot. I think it happened more to me when I was younger. I think I am more patient now, and say 'okay do the wise thing', wave the day and wait; but definitely you can overload the viewer. So that is something I bear in mind. But I tend to have this, not schizophrenic way of thinking, but of applying many thoughts to a work; so my work becomes especially dense. Pictorially, of content, there is so much to think about. And that is the way I like it. It is almost like being an outsider, of filling the page with lots of content.

RP: Visually what is intriguing about your works, is of how you apply reality, or representational elements to the overall abstraction that permeates your work; why is that? Why are your works not entirely other-worldly?

ZH: Again it is very intuitive, for that it is just what I sense the painting needs. Whilst composing it, of where the energy needs to become a vortex, or tighten. Of where things need to come up and breathe more, and of how all of that works spatially. Creating a contrast of going from one place to another in a work; that comes from a shift in mark making as points of focus. So it is an entirely intuitive experience. That is what I am doing, and that's why I take so long, because all of that has to come naturally. Again I am not repeating myself a great deal, so I haven't figured anything out. I am creating a new painting all the time, which I think is the best way to go, especially when I see so much art, with artists doing the same basic thing for an entire show. I understand that because you get

better each time, so I know I can do one work over and over again and it be more magnificent; but I am not interested in that idea of perfection. So I never quite master anything.

RP: Because of the intensity with which you apply yourself to your work, do you see each work as almost becoming autobiographical, for the 'blood', 'sweat' and 'tears' that go into them- as a reflection of you at any particular moment?

ZH: Right, they do (reflect me) its true. I think in terms of bodies of work aswell, because I didn't have this show by itself; there are other things around. The works for this show represents the last two years, so in that sense it is. But also I got married, I am having a child (there are babies, and two birds). There are things that are almost Freudian in certain works, and then the drawings of hands in a work like Rainy Daze Window 2015-16, holding strings, and drawing, holding cell phones. So it is about letting my mind go, and of my interest in automatic writing.

And alot of the time my warm up in the studio is to draw, because that is what I feel like is the most immediate (thing), and it is like a warm-up for a musician doing scales or something. It calms me down; it makes me perceive space more. It makes everything I do better if I draw for one or two hours at a time.

RP: And do you exhibit any of your drawings?

ZH: Well with the works on linen, a lot of times it is the case that I exhibit drawings as part of larger works.

RP: I am interested in the immediacy of drawing that you have already touched upon, in relationship to your more methodical practice and approach.

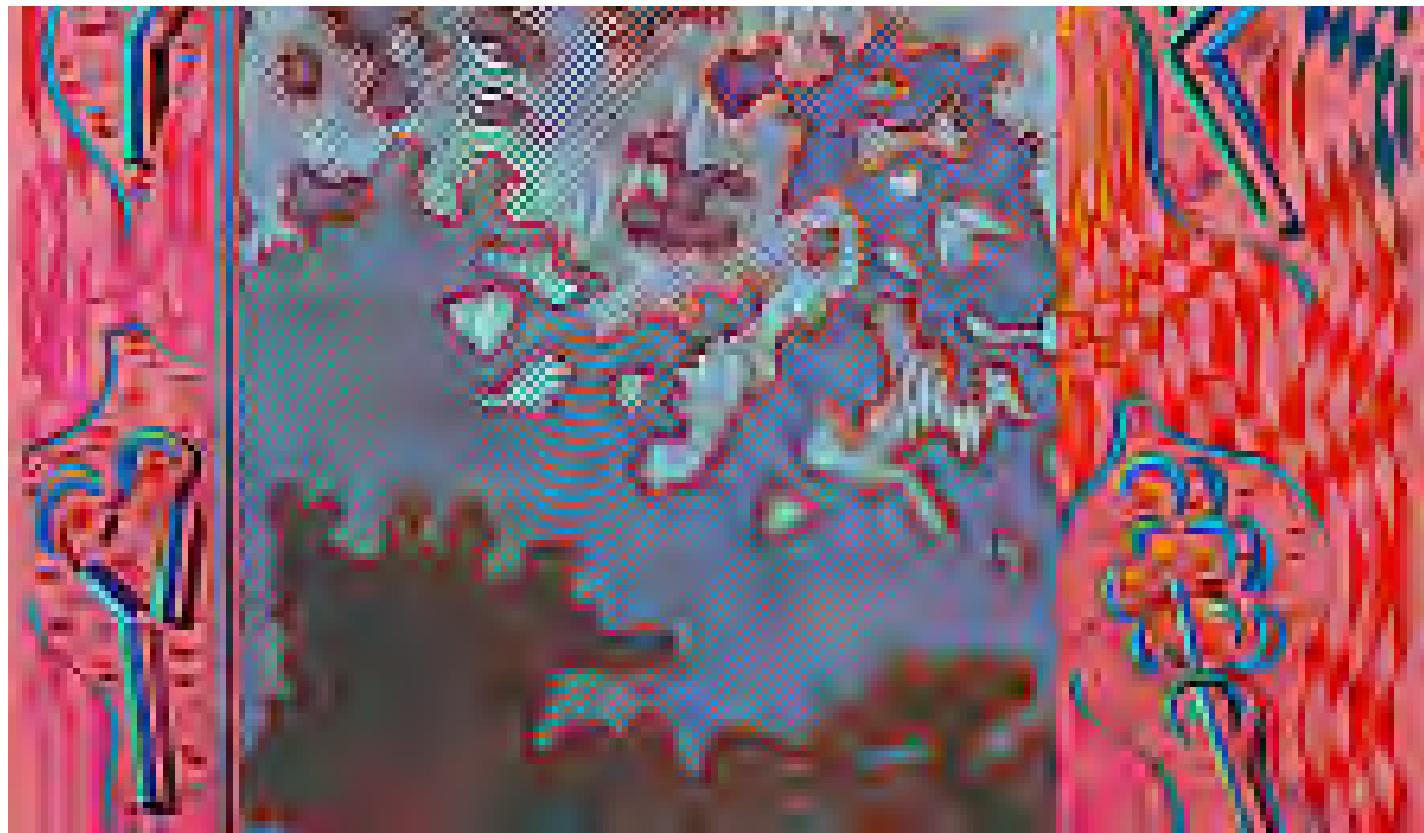
There are a lot of symbols that run throughout the whole show. Then there is a lot of colour theory, juxtaposing these different shapes that have various marks and languages. And it is not just a single image that can be read, there is a landscape, there are birds, there are mountains, there are people. All these different elements, and with anything anthropomorphic, you can't tell (what you are looking at). What is this? How was it made? Carved, and then there is a lot of text, which is random poetic writing, in which I am saying something, or I might describe what someone is doing, or imply the meaning of the story. So there are very different ways to engage with the works.



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**Zach Harris, Philosopher Stone, 2015-17
Water-based paint, ink, graphite, carved
wood, 208 x 152 cm**

© Courtesy of the artist & Perrotin



ZH: Within these works the brush marks are more spontaneous, and the method is pretty loose and not that tight. I like painting and the responsiveness of painting. I really appreciate that.

RP: Do you have an incredible patience about you? Do you want a work complete the soonest?

ZH: No it's hard. It's hard for me.

RP: To allow for that are you working on several works at a time, in order you can feel a sense of perpetual progress?

ZH: I have a vision in my head of what will look good. I will draw a little with a woodworking tool that scrapes away from around the figures. And I will proceed to think 'oh this will look good with this', so I see the whole and sort of work towards that. Which proves meaningful because I have so many steps and stages along the way, so many things to do, that I am

constantly getting more things done. Which leads me to the final thing.

RP: And do you feel with your individual works that you need to explain them to an audience?

ZH: I don't think I can 'explain' a work.

RP: I naturally think of an audience, and how they will reach for an explanation with your works, because there is no obvious route into your reality. And for that are they not likely to want some means of how to manage your works visually?

ZH: And I am playing with that, as another way of entering into the works - of being more curious. And as a device it keeps them looking too. Literally going back and forth, 'What are these hands?' 'What are they doing?' Music notes, a hand pointing to a cell phone, a mushroom cloud. So there is not a clear story going on, it is about getting people to be



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Zach Harris, Detail of Glass Guillotine, 2016-17, Carved wood, water-based paint, 157.5 x 108 cm, © Courtesy of the artist & Perrotin

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Zach Harris, Glass Guillotine, 2016-17, Carved wood, water-based paint, 157.5 x 108 cm, © Courtesy of the artist & Perrotin

ZH: That particular work was made in a different way. I worked the painting as a panel for a while. I developed it and then I conceived of the accompanying frame. There are these rhythms around it, and in terms of detail there is what appears to be a UFO going into the clouds, with a peacock or an animal drinking.

RP: By the nature of your approach, of your physically carving out from the panel, are these works are much sculptural as they are two-dimensional?

ZH: That is the misconception. We have this idea 'this' is painting, but what is painting? Paint can be used in many different ways.

RP: So do you see them as more sculptural?

ZH: I see them as hybrid works, they act as paintings, as you say, but they are for sure sculptural in a way as well. I want them to be neither one nor the other. I want them to occupy their own space, to be indefinable, and for us not to think about labeling them but experiencing them. It is supposed to be entirely experiential. Tricky, confusing even, and then you go to each one and you become more confused. To realise oh this one (Sky Writing Wall 2016-17) is done with laser etching and is therefore composed entirely on the computer. I mean I did a drawing for this work, had it copied onto a computer and then etched with a laser. So this one has a lot more technology, which has its own aesthetic. This work is almost like looking through a building or a gate, or some such structure – as an architectural facade. With a sky, that opens up to show what could almost appear as 'the last judgment'.

RP: The work has me thinking of Dutch 15th century artist Hieronymus Bosch.

ZH: It is sort of like a 'Boschian'

dystopian, apocalyptic vision of the future. It is also commenting on contemporary politics. It is like a projection, which is supposed to create an interesting contrast.

RP: Do you feel an intention with your approach and practice to become more focused with each new work, and for your panel paintings to take on a greater complexity; in order they elevate the audience to a higher plain?

ZH: As you look at them, that's for sure what I have tried to do in order to keep you going.

RP: You have already talked about depth, and of drawing the audience into the work; is that something to strive for with everything you do?

ZH: Yes, I am thinking about it all the time; which is something I learnt from Old Master paintings. They were so good at where you enter the painting – of where it takes you, where it brings you out, and our point of reentry, or where it brings you back in again; leading to a cyclical view of the painting. So I am always trying to think about those perspectival notions when making the works.

RP: So you are suggesting there is a sense of duration to seeing a work that requires the audience to look and to look again – something more meditative than immediate.

ZH: Right, because that is where you see more, and where you learn more. Precisely where you have more experiences. Which is where you remember great and more powerful art experiences.

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Zach Harris, *Calendar Cloud* (in 2020), 2016-17, Carved wood, water-based paint, ink, 190.5 x 134.6 cm, Photo: Claire Dorn
Courtesy Perrotin





The work itself not only draws from, but utilizes the magic of the natural world. Tessa Farmer's materials include found items such as animal bones, insects, plants, marine creatures and more. The majority of her materials have been sourced from the British Hedgerow; however she receives insects and other creatures from as far as South Africa and America. A finely tuned process has been developed to draw this plethora of curiosities together into these miniature worlds, enchanting the viewer into an alternate reality.

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Tessa Farmer, *The Perilous Pursuit of a Python* (detail) 2013. Taxidermy, bones, insects, plant roots.
Photo credit: New Art Gallery, Walsall, Image courtesy: Tessa Farmer

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Tessa Farmer, *The Hunt* (detail) 2010. Bones, insects, plant roots, Image courtesy: Tessa Farmer

FAIRYLAND

IN CONVERSATION WITH TESSA FARMER

INDIRA LAKSHMI PRASAD



My first experience with the works of Tessa Farmer was pure enchantment. Gazing into the vivarium which housed her work in the Saatchi Gallery collection, I was introduced to her miniature world of skeletal 'fairies' enacting a great Tolkien-like epic. Tiny skeletal creatures, so detailed and organic you could swear that they were real, riding on the backs of what are the actual bodies of bumblebees, dragonfly's and a host of other insects. It was an immediate awakening of the child in me who would look for fairies in the brambles at the bottom of the garden, and a re-kindling of the belief in magic. Farmer's fairies are a deliberate subversion of the diluted fairy imagery which we see in Disney and other modern

representations. Her practice harks back to the sinister original fairy folklore of times long gone. In her myth making she has created folklore of her own, one which blends elements of the mischievous fae folk of mythical legend, and elements which reflect the human condition in its destructive reality.

The work itself not only draws from, but utilizes the magic of the natural world. Tessa Farmer's materials include found items such as animal bones, insects, plants, marine creatures and more. The majority of her materials have been sourced from the British Hedgerow; however she receives insects and other creatures from as far as South Africa and America. A finely tuned process has been developed to draw this



plethora of curiosities together into these miniature worlds, enchanting the viewer into an alternate reality.

Tessa Farmer invited me to her North London Studio, which is akin to an extraordinary cabinet of natural curiosities, and is as captivating and multi-layered as her work itself. In conversation, the artist candidly discusses the origins, processes and themes of her work.

She has recently released a new book 'In Fairyland: The World of Tessa Farmer' which is a comprehensive collection of essays regarding the work of Farmer and folkloric fairy history.

Interview

Indira Lakshmi Prasad: I know you have a baby daughter which must be taking up most of your time these days. But is there anything you're currently working on?

Tessa Farmer: Yes I do have a commission for some work in Northampton in November, for a gallery called NN Contemporary, which is a public space. So that's what I'll be working on somehow! Fitting it around my young daughter I mean. I can't do much around her in the day; she's pretty full on and doesn't really have much down time.

I.P: Do you find that your creative process has changed at all since the arrival of your little one?

T.F: I think it has, thought I've not processed it yet. I think it will be interesting to see, because I think it will change the way I work, perhaps due to time constraints, perhaps it will make me more efficient. You don't have as much time to sit around thinking.

I.P: I suppose with any kind of major life altering experience, it

will always affect the way that you process the world around you and that in turn will filter into your work.

T.F: It will be interesting as she grows and becomes more inquisitive, due to her experiencing my work as a child. My work is very much at that level, of imagination, play and possibilities. As she discovers the world around her it will be lovely to see her fascination with everything.

I.P: It's almost like through her you'll have a new pair of eyes. Could you tell me about your own background and childhood?

T.F: I grew up in Birmingham as one of three children. I had a fairly nice and normal inner-city childhood. I grew up in a suburban environment, but we had a lot of parks and a big garden. I think as a child I learnt to love nature being outside in Dorset where we went on holidays; it was

lovely having the freedom to play.

I.P: I can relate to that, as a child growing in an inner-city environment in some ways makes you crave the natural world even more, if you've had a taste of it while being away on holiday it really sparks that fascination with nature, and you always want to go back and revisit it.

T.F: I think it becomes much more magical, because it's something you're not used to you don't take it for granted.

I.P: I must admit I was a little surprised to hear that you grew up inner-city because your work contains so many elements of the natural world, but it does make sense.

T.F: I think that's where it must come from, though we did have a lovely garden. I asked my mum

how she coped with three children and she said 'Well there was the playroom and the garden and the neighbors children...you just entertained each other really' so there was always lots of play in the garden, and of course magical summers in Dorset.

I.P: I can imagine that being left to your own devices at times as a child really fueled the imagination

T.F: Yes and the fact there was no television or phone in our house in Dorset as well, it was quite cut off, up a chalky track in the middle of nowhere. My mum had gone there when she was a girl as well, the place had been rented by the family for quite a long time and there are a lot of really good memories of that place.

I.P: The term fairies appears in your work a lot, these fairy characters, I'm so curious to know



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Tessa Farmer, *A Prize Catch* (detail) 2009.
Taxidermy, insects, plant roots, hedgehog spines, Image courtesy: Tessa Farmer

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Tessa Farmer, *Little Savages* 2007.
Taxidermy, bones, insects, plant roots,
Image courtesy: Tessa Farmer



what inspired that. Your work has a real folkloric element to it, in a way you're creating your own folklore.

T.F: I think that does have its roots in childhood, I was interested in flower fairies as a child (Mary Barker's 'Flower Fairies') they're beautiful illustrations of these pretty fairies surrounded by different plants. I was also obsessed with the 'Sylvanian Families' toys as a child and making these miniature worlds, I remember at Christmas I used to make little presents for them to give to each other. My sister and I would make them food by mixing talcum powder with water into a kind of 'gloop'. I was also into making little models out of Styrofoam, always obsessed with miniature things and creating little worlds and creatures and collecting little animal ornaments.

I think I have Ms. Pink somewhere... Yes here she is. This is my mum's little

toy, she had it as a girl and passed it onto me. She's lovely isn't she?

I put it in a piece (of sculpture) recently, which I sold to a museum in Tasmania, but I couldn't let her go. I had a conversation with my mum about it, talking about whether I should leave her in the piece and what would happen to her. I'm so glad that she didn't go because I would have regretted it.

I.P: I can imagine, she's such a precious piece of your family history. And she looks so at home in your studio surrounded by all the other little bits and pieces. Could you explain the process of how you create your work? Especially the fairies, they're so miniature yet so detailed when you take a close look. I was wondering how you've mastered that.

T.F: Initially I started making

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Tessa Farmer, *An Injured Herring Gull* (detail) 2012. Taxidermy, bones, insects, plant roots, Image courtesy: Tessa Farmer

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Tessa Farmer, *The Perilous Pursuit of a Python* (detail) 2013. Taxidermy, bones, insects, plant roots. Photo credit: New Art Gallery, Walsall, Image courtesy: Tessa Farmer

the fairies at university, largely influenced by studying human anatomy which we did in the first year of the art course which is where I got really interested in skeletons. I started collecting things and making skeletons out of branches and twigs, and even before that I was working with natural materials (although not bones and insects at that time) mainly flowers and leaves. I wanted to make a human skeleton as it was challenging to comprehend the structure. What we were doing at university was beginning to understand anatomy by starting off with the skeleton then drawing the muscular structure so you'd understand the form and positioning of the body. It was a very in depth way of learning. I think to really understand the human body you need to study anatomy; it was really fascinating and pretty disgusting at times! We had to go and draw a dead body. The art school had its own

body which they stored at the local medical school. It was a bit of a shock at the time, but fascinating. There's an initial horror and squeamishness. He didn't even look like a corpse any more; the body was so old and so preserved that it was a grayish color. He had a cross sectioned arm and leg, and half of the face so you could see what was underneath.

I.P: I bet that would break down a lot of perceptive barriers, being so close to death. Perhaps more profound than the technical drawing would be the fact you're facing a reality which we don't often see.

T.F: Yes, and useful for me in terms of then going onto handle a lot of dead objects and work with dead things... which seems really morbid doesn't it?

I.P: I suppose if you think of it in light of it being a natural

process, it really isn't so morbid at all. The move from working on natural found objects like twigs and branches, to animal and insect remains; was that a natural progression of the work or was there something in particular which inspired it?

T.F: I think it was a natural process which came from collecting objects. I started off with twigs and branches to make human skeletons which gradually decreased in size, to fairy size. It was that shift in scale which brought my focus from the human world to the insect world. I think some fortuitous finds while I was at university inspired the shift too, I found some dragonflies and butterflies and began to incorporate them into work. I was frustrated that the fairies weren't to scale. I wanted them to be the size they are now, and it took a few years to get there. It took lots of practice and finding the right materials.





I.P: What do you make them from?

T.F: They're made from plant roots. Originally they were made from twigs, and then I made smaller ones with the wings made from leaf skeletons. Then I started using the veins from the leaves to make the fairies and after that I began using plant roots. Over the years I experimented with different kinds of roots until I found the perfect root in my mum's garden. Roots from a Birds Nest Fern, you get some really fine strands. I use pieces of Birds Nest Fern root to build up the skeleton using different thicknesses of the roots to build up different bones. The skulls are made from little bits of earth which I soak in superglue and carve, and build on it with bits of root for the facial bones.

I.P: It's really fine work isn't it? How long does it take to make one?

T.F: Initially it took around five hours to make one but I've got faster, now it's maybe an hour and a half to make one. It used to depend on the skulls; there were good skull days and bad skull days. Now I've got the hang of that and it's less of an exploratory process. It was exploratory for many years, trying to figure out what would work. Now it's almost meditative. I can think about the piece with the narrative developing in my mind while I'm making them.

I.P: Speaking of narrative, there's a real element of storytelling in your work. Could you tell me about how that develops? There's so much going on in each piece, it's almost like each one is a mini Epic.

T.F: I suppose the stories started when the fairies emerged. It wasn't intentionally a storytelling process,

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Tessa Farmer, *The Depraved Pursuit of a Possum* (detail) 2013. Taxidermy, bones, insects, plant roots,
Image courtesy: Tessa Farmer

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Tessa Farmer, *Captive Bumblebee* (detail) 2010. Insects, plant roots,
Image courtesy: Tessa Farmer

I suppose looking back it's obvious, but at first it was my ambition to make them as small as possible. I think it started once I had established that they were fairies, and not typical fairies. I was doing a lot of reading about the history of fairies. It's interesting because traditionally fairies are quite sinister, that tied in quite nicely with these skeletal forms. Initially my fairies were mischievous, not particularly bloodthirsty back then but they were definitely inclined to wreak havoc. Over the years they've become more sophisticated, more sinister and ambitious. I say 'bloodthirsty' but perhaps they're just very successful at surviving. There's an element of humanity in them that enjoys the hunt and the kill, has ambition and wants to take over the world.

I.P: So there are elements of

folklore and fantasy but they're also representative of the human condition. Having done some research into British folklore, it seems that our modern perception of fairies being these feminine creatures that go about doing nice things is a very recent idea.

T.F: I think Shakespeare was one of the first writers to miniaturize fairies. Before that fairies were like small humans and then were shrunk down to insect size.

I.P: Even in Shakespeare's 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' the fairies are quite mischievous creatures, and there's the concept of 'changelings' where the fairy folk would snatch a human child and replace it with a fairy creature.

T.F: Yes absolutely, the Victorians

beautified fairies quite a lot; they used fairies and fairy paintings to represent the ills of man and behaviors that weren't approved of. Disney has a lot to answer for as well... but mind you, even Tinkerbell was a bit of a bitch! Fairy folklore has just become more and more diluted in recent times. I think it was much more interesting when the fairies were sinister, and for me that ties in much better with the natural world.

I.P: Absolutely, I think it ties in with the fact there are no absolutes of good or evil in the natural world.

T.F: Yes, it is what it is.

I.P: Where do you source your materials?

T.F: So these [Tessa shows me



a container of insect parts] are Tsetse flies (a species of fly which inhabits much of tropical Africa) that were given to me by a scientist in Liverpool, who was researching Tsetse flies, specifically how to eradicate a disease called 'Sleeping Sickness' which they transmit. We're working on a funding proposal together. These flies are culturally viewed as being demonic; there are similarities between the fairies and these flies. They drink blood and the illness transmitted that way, from person to person, it's a really horrible disease.

This is a box of snake ribs [she takes another box from her desk and shows me the contents] this was part of a collection of someone at St. Mary's university. She was moving to Luxembourg and had some items which couldn't take with her, so she asked me if I wanted them, that included snake ribs and lots of other things. These bumblebees [she shows me another box full of large bees] are all locally found by me. I just walk around and spot things. It's extraordinary what you find when you're looking out for things. Bumblebees really stand out, because of their markings, the black is so very black, it's like I have radar for spotting bees now. Other people do the same as well; my family looks out for things for me.

These are wasps from Tasmania which were originally inside a wasps nest. I was out there in 2013 doing some work using wasps nests. These were found by a family friend in South Africa, they're the float bladders of Portuguese man o' war and they're similar to jellyfish. These bladders are filled with gas and the organisms float underwater, they cause pretty serious stings.

There's a guy in Belgium who provides me with a lot of marine stuff, which is collected by a fisherman there as a byproducts of their fishing activities.

I.P: *There's such a wealth of fascinating materials here, for how long have you been collecting?*

T.F: Since university I guess, so around twenty years.

I.P: *And what influences the materials you choose for a particular piece?*

T.F: There might be a vague idea there, but it's more about the narrative. It's a mixture of thinking about how I want the fairies to develop and what they would do. It sounds ridiculous but I try and inhabit their mindset as a species.

I.P: *It's almost like you've created this imaginary species...*

T.F: Yes, I create them and then I let them get on with it.

I.P: *Do you think the fairies have quite unique and distinct characteristic?*

T.F: Not individually necessarily, but as a species yes. I sometimes call them evil, but then I debate with myself whether they actually are evil, suppose they are just very good at surviving. They're a mixture of humans and insects; they do enjoy things and have a sense of humor. There's also the aesthetic element and the excitement for me of working with materials I haven't worked with before and seeing how it goes. It's a very organic process. You know when you're making art and you know when something's going to work? Or there's a moment where you just fall in love with something you've made? It doesn't happen very often but I'm striving for that.

I.P: *So you're also appealing to your own sense of aesthetic. What does the future hold, in terms of your work?*

T.F: Hopefully it won't be halted by having a baby! It's the first time in a

long time that I've had an extended break from making work. Part of me thought that I could carry on working, and another part of me thought that if I take a break from making work that I can spend time doing research, but I don't have the brain capacity for that even! It takes over your life.

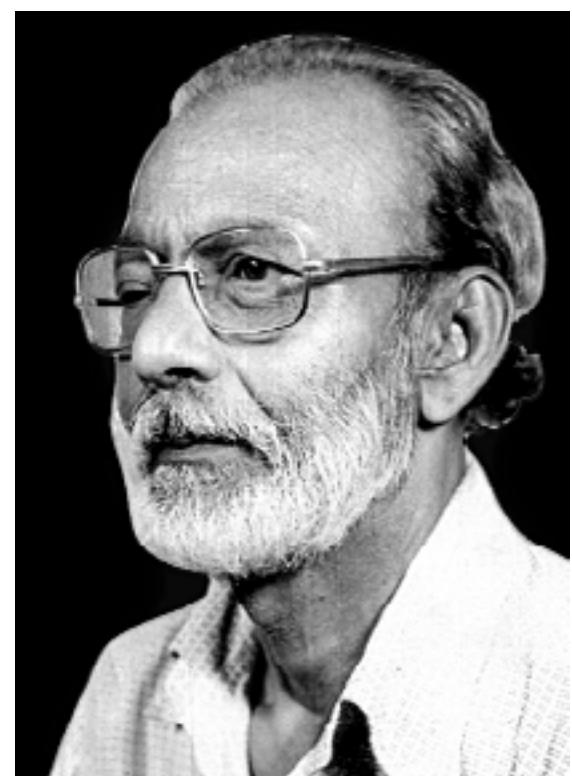
I.P: *Has anybody questioned the ethics of your work? Given that you use a lot of taxidermy and animal parts in the work.*

T.F: No I haven't really. I did receive a death threat through email once, but it wasn't anything to do with my work... It was just some teenager who didn't believe my fairies were as small as they are, very bizarre! I did make work for a commission in 2010, using lots of squirrels, I was playing with the idea of grey squirrels being an invasive species and causing the decline of the native red squirrel population. The curator said that there were complaints but she didn't tell me at the time because she didn't want to upset me, I can understand her thinking in a way, maybe she thought I was sensitive. Maybe I was then, but not so much now.

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Tessa Farmer, *Captive Butterfly* (detail)
2011. Insects, plant roots,
Image courtesy: Tessa Farmer





Asudev wouldn't have taken up the challenge to traverse his journey into the realms of visual art unless he had the whole hearted support of his wife, Bela who had her schooling at Kala Bhavana Santiniketan. It was because of her efforts that Asudev could create such huge work that we are able to see even today.

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Ashutosh Deb

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Ashutosh Deb, *The Contenders*, 1978, Oil On Canvas, 97 x 70 Cms

ASHUTOSH DEB: LIFE AND TIMES

ANUTOSH DEB

Ashutosh Deb "nom de plume" as 'Asudev' is a pioneer Visual Artist of Assam. Asudev was born on 13 December 1917, in a small town of lower Assam, Dhubri, to Kadambini and Umesh Chandra Deb.

Umesh Chandra Deb worked as a Revenue Shrestadar under the British Government in the undivided Assam, was also a scholar and researcher on Srimanta Sankardeva, the 15th–16th century Assamese saint-scholar, poet, playwright, social-religious reformer of Assam. He had published his research work in Bangla on Srimanta Sankardeva, in 1327 (Bengali Calendar) i.e. 1920. Umesh Chandra Deb, permanently settled and resided at Newfield (West) Mohd. Shah Road, Guwahati where the joint family lived till the early 2004.

Asudev completed his schooling at the Cotton Collegiate School, Guwahati, and his interest in the textile design, took him across the undivided India, in Textile Mills in Ahmedabad, Surat, Calcutta and Khulna. His fascination towards textile designs, took him through to the Weavers Service Centre in Dimapur, Nagaland where he served a five year contract from 1973.

A self-taught painter, his involvement with the intricacies of weaving and creating minute textile designs on the graph papers, might have played an intense surge of his experiments with dots, which most of his admirers now often call 'pointillism'. Asudev's experiments with dots or 'pointillism', dates way back to 1930's. With his brilliant water colour tempera, which even today are as vibrant as when first created. Asudev did not stick to the confines of dots and dabs but often experimented with strokes and washes. Often we see his work in the whole of a period, we come across not only that he worked on some of his canvases with his dots but simultaneously also working with strokes and wash techniques, without confining himself to only the dots. Asudev's paintings are images made up of tiny little dots we can relate as pixels and his paintings have an application of different levels of dots or pixels. None of his dots or strokes have any repetition in either size or form. The subtle details are clearly visible in his paintings. Yes, as he very often remarked "...all that you see around in life is a cluster of tiny dots..."

Asudev's career as an artist could be split-up into four major time periods. The formative years: 1930-1940 followed by the period 1940 to 1960, 1960 to 1970 (The peak of his creativity) and 1970 to 1983. Asudev accomplished his first solo show in Guwahati in April 1952 and also in Shillong (then undivided Assam) in December 1958 a record for organising the first ever One Man Show held in both the cities: Asudev had 9 solo shows and participated in 13 Group shows.

Asudev lived a very simple and traditional life, and this simplicity



reflected immensely through his works. His favorite subjects other than virgin nature, were particularly of Meghalaya and tribal working women of different ethnic groups that he mingled with during his stay at the different places. Santhals, Khasi, Bodo, Kachari and the Naga women folk, have been depicted respectfully in almost all his works. The daily chores of these working women, their innocence and yet robust, fishing, harvesting, weaving or doing their daily chores were boldly represented in his canvasses, at locations which fascinated the creative mind of the painter, often in his naïve approaches, creating timeless pieces of art that still charms the observer even today. The period of artistic travail that Asudev had undergone found his

innate relationship juxtaposing with his work through which he has frozen a period through his unceasing interpretation through small and big frames, mostly oil on canvas.

Dr Birendranath Dutta, an eminent Educationist in one of his reviews had quoted "...One of the foremost things that come to my mind while surveying Asudev's paintings is that there is a kind of sensuous quality about them, whether in the choice of subjects or in the manner of treatment. As it is, earthy female figures predominate in his paintings. (I have noticed only two with male figures). What is more, nude female figures, plump and rounded and voluptuous, form the subject matter of a number of his

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*Ashutosh Deb, Birth of a New Life C. 1962
Oil on Canvas, 92 x 71 Cms*

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*Ashutosh Deb, Life Moves On C.1973 Oil
on Canvas 93 x 71 Cms*

paintings spanning his entire career... That brings us to Asudev's almost complete commitment to this part of the country—the land where he was born and which had given him sustenance. Thus it is that the entire range of his landscapes represents the hills and plains of this region and his life-studies almost invariably feature the traditional rural milieu of Assam or what formed parts of Assam till the other day. The very fact that he was the pioneer in discovering the practical potentialities of the traditional paintings of this region—he was indeed the first artist to transfer Chitrabhabgavat miniatures into large-size mural's—bears testimony to the whole some truth that Asudev did not have a merely "romantic" attachment to the nature and the people of this region, but also

had a genuine love and respect for its artistic traditions. That also includes his concern with the textile designs which form such a significant part of the art heritage of the region."

I had the opportunity to observe my father during his work during my childhood and few of his paintings attracted me because of the vivid colour and swirling magical effect. His painting 'The Harijan' c.1965 were he had portrayed the early morning sweepers doing their 'Swachh Bharat' duty even today keeping our environment clean, but socially remain untouchables. The vivid strokes that swirled around the two figures, all round could be a reflection of the inner state of the artist's empathy towards his subjects. This empathy and anger is vividly

expressed through beautiful imagery with the bright application of colours glorifying the theme with a beautiful feeling far from their reality. This treatment is also felt in 'Humanity Uprooted' c.1968 were he had portrayed a family traumatized due to the periodic ethnic cleansing, and was witness to that dark movement in this part of the country during his lifetime. The inner turmoil against the cataclysm, moved by the leftist ideology that played deeply in the inner mind of the Artist, giving birth to these remarkable paintings. The identical and forceful strokes with an application of bright colours, and uniform strokes or dashes are two big canvasses on oil.

Asudev wouldn't have taken up the challenge to traverse his journey into



the realms of visual art unless he had the whole hearted support of his wife, Bela who had her schooling at Kala Bhavana Santiniketan. It was because of her efforts that Asudev could create such huge work that we are able to see even today.

In another review by Subroto Ghosh a close associated "...Asudev was an artist of solitude and nature. He found his free self were the canopy of the sky borders on the horizontal line, where the cataracts reverberate the tranquility of the solitude, where the stratus of the wood raise its mellifluous chorus with the blowing of wind; and all these reaction of his sincere artistic mind came out in bold-relief vibrant with life on his canvas ...Asudev's paintings speak volume of his robust attitude towards life and no classical fetish idea could overwhelm his set idea about life. While the world of Indian artists is taken by storm of so many revolutionary ideas about life Asudev secluded himself in the placidity of solitude and in apron string of sylvan love far from the rat race of modernity. He painted the guileless life of simple man and women in the lap of nature by drizzling dot—a medium exclusively of his own. Banality and the inscrutability of modern world of art could not attract him much and this was because of his sympathetic acquaintance with and feeling for common men and women in drudgery of life. Common men and women find themselves in lively relief on his canvas. In the world of art, Asudev was independent with his own technique bearing no signature of any hierarchy and tradition. He stood out as a sole revolutionary in his own way Independent of any criticism. He was not guided by any school of thought; he was guided by his own spontaneous urge and as such the technical aspects of his paintings sometimes suffered the call owed-ness of un-education in the eyes of educated exponents. His outlines were well trimmed but without any sharp and distinct

demarcating bordering line which created an illusion on the retina. He painted full-canvas; he left no blank space for outer border-frame as he believed in the boundlessness of nature's canvas. He completely identified himself with the world of his own philosophy, theme and with the idiom and attitude towards life. Drift of his mind cannot be gauged by The urban norms...

The enigma of Asudev being non-academic however could not change his conviction and extraordinary innate approaches that he had accomplished to conceive about two hundred and fifty artworks in diverse mediums to his credit. He also designed numerous textile design motifs and layouts, and his inclination towards filmography weaved screenplays.

Asudev's collection of paintings are with several organizations viz. Assam Oil Division, Assam State Museum, Guwahati, Birla Industries, Kolkata. Consulates of Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Romania and U.S.S.R in New Delhi. Directorate of Cultural Affairs, Government of Assam for the State Art Gallery Guwahati, Gauhati Artists' Guild, Guwahati, Government of Meghalaya, Gauhati University Library, Guwahati, Handique Girls College, Guwahati, House of Soviet Culture, New Delhi, Oil India Limited, Duliajan, Sibsagar Assam and several private collections in Bangalore, Duliajan, Sibsagar, Guwahati, Kolkata, Mumbai, Nagaland, New Delhi, Shillong, Thiruvananthapuram, USSR, UK and USA.

Asudev breathed his last on 06 February 1983, in Guwahati.

To commemorate Asudev's birth centenary the artist's family set up a trust, 'ASUDEV ART FOUNDATION' in the memory of Asudev and also initiated the 'ASUDEV ART SCHOLARSHIP' from the birth centenary year, awarding a scholarship every year to one student,

domicile of Assam, and pursuing Post Graduation in Visual Arts, outside the state of Assam, in any UGC/ Government of India accredited Art Faculty, enrolled as a regular student. The scholarship carries a financial grant of Rs 50,000, a citation and a memento. The scholarship presented in collaboration with Gauhati Artists' Guild a premier art organization of North East since 1976, of which Asudev was a founder member. The first scholarship was awarded to Shri Seemanta Bhagawati, a final year student of Kala Bhavana, Viswa Bharati, Santiniketan, pursuing his Master in Fine Arts (Graphics), was presented to him during the inaugural function of 'ASUDEV CENTENARY RETROSPECTIVE' organized by Gauhati Artists' Guild on 13 December 2017.



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Ashutosh Deb, *The Cage*, Oil on Canvas, 1958, 102 x 65 Cms





A RARE INDIAN DISCOVERY IN SCOTLAND

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND (HES)

A century-old collection of photographs of India was discovered in the archive of the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS). This organization is now known as Historic Environment Scotland (HES).

The rare and fragile glass plate negatives, which date back to around 1912, show life on the subcontinent at the high point of the British Raj.

The 178 negatives were stored in their original five-by-eight inch plate boxes and wrapped in copies of the 'Statesman' newspaper dating from 1914. Founded in 1875, the 'Statesman' is one of India's largest circulation English language newspapers, and is still published today.

It is unknown how the photographs arrived in the archives of HES,

All images credited to the collection of the Historic Environment Scotland (HES)

and the identity of the photographer is also a mystery. The photographs can be roughly dated by the fact that they feature the visit of King George V to Calcutta in 1912.

Highlights from the imagery include celebrations for the visit of King George V and Queen Mary to Calcutta in 1912 – the only visit by a British monarch to India while it was still part of the Empire – with the city's buildings lit up at night in tribute; ships arriving at the Chandpal Ghat, the main landing place for visitors to Calcutta along the Hooghly river; pilgrims gathered for a religious festival on the Maidan, the large urban park at the centre of Calcutta; and merchants selling their wares outside the eleventh century Jagannath Hindu temple in Orissa.

All 178 negatives have now been digitised, and you can browse a selection of the best images on the HES website at <https://canmore.org.uk/gallery/887455>

These are not the only images of India in the archive collections, archivist Clare Sorensen is currently in the process of scoping other international material from the historic photo albums and more broadly within the collections for digitisation. Digitisation will allow HES to share more of its images of India. As the archive mostly relates to Scotland this is not a huge amount of material, but the Scots went everywhere and took photographs, and a digital copy is the way to share these images which are part of the shared heritage of both countries.



In 2015 RCAHMS and Historic Scotland came together to form a new lead public body charged with investigating, protecting and promoting the historic environment. This organisation is called Historic Environment Scotland.

As well as the Indian photographs, HES has a wealth of other archive material, much of which can be viewed online at <https://canmore.org.uk/>



VOICING THE FORGOTTEN STORIES OF THE MILLS IN BOMBAY

TANISHKA D'LYMA

The Mythologies of Mumbai Project tells us a story more than 300 years in the making.

It begins with King Charles II handing out the islets of Bombay to the English East India Company for the 50,000 sterling pounds he borrowed from them. That's when Bombay became the Company's west coast headquarters for colonial industrialization.

From there, it chronicles the rise of the mills in Bombay, the influx of people from all over the country in search of labour, the increase in population and production of one of the most important commodities - cotton, and ultimately the fall of this industry. With that the stage is set for the heart of the project that is the people who've seen these mills through its life.

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Images from Girangaon, Mumbai. They're filled with faces of the mill workers or their children, some are glimpses of the life they live. Image Courtesy: 'HELM Studio (Hands-on Education, Law & Media)

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Images from Girangaon, Mumbai. They're filled with faces of the mill workers or their children, some are glimpses of the life they live. Image Courtesy: 'HELM Studio (Hands-on Education, Law & Media)

Three centuries ago, in search of work and being attracted by the incentives provided by the British government to lure labourers to the mills, they arrived in Bombay from various parts of the country and pushed the economy upward. These mill workers today now have their lives being encroached upon by high-rises.

The project archives and tracks the evolution of Bombay from an industrial centre to a metropolis, thus leading us to the protagonists - the mill workers. It aims to give us a detailed and very human documentation of the people of Girangaon, the industrial centre of Mumbai, and Dharavi, supposedly the city's biggest slum area, from a perspective that is true to these communities.

Three centuries ago, in search of work and being attracted by the incentives provided by the British government to lure labourers to the mills, they arrived in Bombay from various parts of the country and pushed the economy upward. These mill workers today now have their lives being encroached upon by high-rises. In houses built for them and that are unfit for living, they struggle to survive the process of gentrification. The people of

Girangaon have their history and culture being bulldozed in front of their eyes by a metropolis that closes in on mill lands, leaving not enough space to breathe.

Girangaon meaning the 'village of mills' is still home to thousands of mill workers. This is their story.

Narrated using 360 multimedia production techniques, the project puts up a platform that talks about the past, present and future of the mill workers. And in order to do just that it begins with the factors that contributed to their history.

The medium used to tell the bigger picture combines photographs and interviews with virtual reality to bring the past and current conditions of the mill workers closer to our minds. It's surprising how closely involved our lives are and yet how distant the thoughts we have towards them.





Archiving The Mill Lands: The Mythologies of Mumbai Project was hosted by Columbia Global Centers for a five-day exhibition beginning on November 20, 2017 in Mumbai, designed by the HELM Studios and based on the work by the Partners for Urban Knowledge, Action and Research (PUKAR). PUKAR's "community-based participatory action research" democratizes the process of research, and so the researchers were those living in the communities in Girangaon itself. "With the tools to understand how to shape a research idea, these young Mumbai citizens will go out in the world with a capacity for gathering evidence and using that evidence to make arguments about their future and becoming a problem solver for the future

of their city." - Arjun Appadurai, founder of PUKAR.

Being voices from the topic of study themselves, they were able to bring out the truth filled with nuances that can only be perceived by one who lived and breathed the same days. The project is thus concluded with a result that reflects the true nature of the experience being communicated.

With a community losing its place in the city, and the mills slowly becoming just a story, its life was one that shaped and still imprints the city. But for the people who made the success of an economy a reality, their problems remain stark as ever. Let them tell you their story at www.mythologiesofmumbai.org.

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Images from Girangaon, Mumbai. They're filled with faces of the mill workers or their children, some are glimpses of the life they live. Image Courtesy: 'HELM Studio (Hands-on Education, Law & Media)

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59TH NATIONALEXHIBITION OF ARTS at LALIT KALA AKADEMI

HIMANSHU DABRAL

The Lalit Kala Akademi's National Exhibition of Art is held every year to exhibit works of brilliance and to give appreciation and recognition to outstanding artists. The 59th National Exhibition of Art was inaugurated by Minister of Culture Dr Mahesh Sharma. The exhibition features artwork from an extensive series of mediums, for example paintings, sculptures, graphic work, photographs, drawings, installation and multimedia, over three different floors. The Exhibition opened before a large audience of art practitioners, artists, art collectors, art lovers and critics from all over the country. The catalogue for the 59th National Exhibition of Art was also been released by Minister of Culture Dr Mahesh Sharma.

Speaking on the occasion Dr Mahesh Sharma, Minister of Culture

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Artworks on display at 59th National Exhibition of Arts at Lalit Kala Akademi

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Artworks on display at 59th National Exhibition of Arts at Lalit Kala Akademi

“Contemporary art is reaching out to a larger audience and globally evolving. The artworks highlight the signature style of each artist, depicting the current cultural and global influences on Indian art, thus creating a deeper interest in art today. The works of the 59th NEA are shining examples of quality and innovation.”

- Sh. C. S. Krishna Setty.

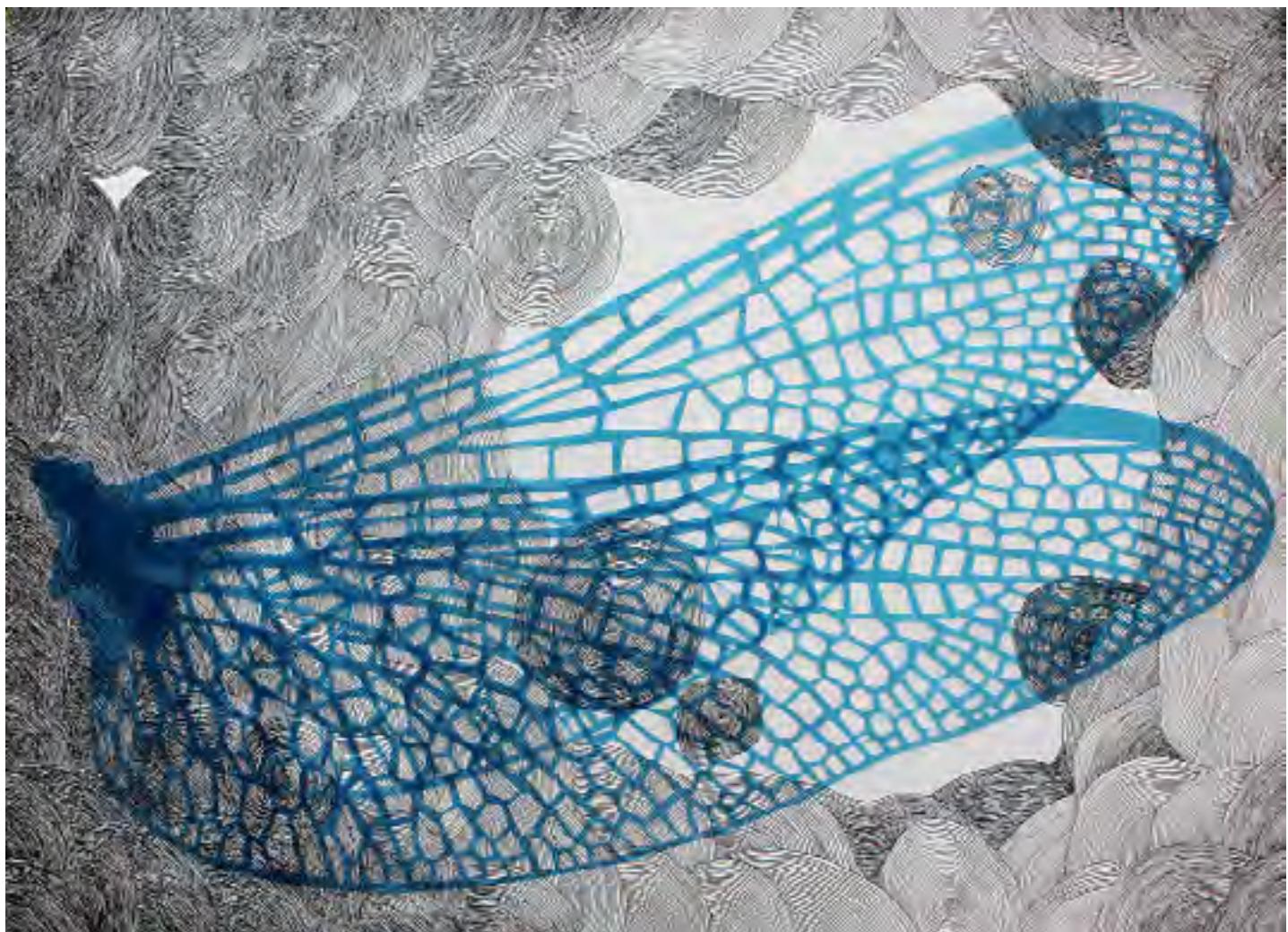
said “The 59th National Exhibition of Art is a platform for young, upcoming, known and famous artists to display their talent and creativity. It is a portal where the entire country can view various mediums of art by innumerable artists.” He also said “A person who does physical toil is a labourer, a person who utilizes his brain to work can be an engineer but it is only artists who works with all their heart. Let us help all these artists to get a platform to display their art and creativity.”

The inauguration ceremony was attended by several eminent personalities such as Adwaita Gadanayak (DG, NGMA), Vijay Kumar, Katerine Kumar, Pravesh Khanna, Mukul Pawar, Gogi Saroj Pal, Ananda Moy Bannerji, Amit Dutt (Awardee) to name a few.

“Contemporary art is reaching out to a larger audience and globally evolving. The artworks highlight the signature style of each artist, depicting the current cultural and global influences on Indian art, thus creating a deeper interest in art today. The works of the 59th NEA are shining examples of quality and innovation.” Is another notable quote, from Administrator of Lalit Kala Akademi Sh. C. S. Krishna Setty.

The Akademi had received 3644 entries submitted by 1433 artists throughout the country. The selection jury unanimously selected 172 exhibits in different disciplines by 171 artists for the National exhibition. Out of 172 exhibits, the jury selected 15 National Academy Awardees for the 59th National Exhibition of Art.





THE POLITICS OF HAIR

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

"I feel there is something unexplored about a woman that only a woman can explore." —Georgia O'Keeffe

Ritu Kamath's studio is a hive of activity as she prepares for her upcoming solo exhibition. In the studio one notices the meticulous way she conducts herself while working.

There are large format works on which the artist has drawn hair and there are others, where she has drawn strands of hair using ink and layered them with multi-coloured translucent material.

In her solo show titled 'i-seek', scheduled to open on February 21, 2018, the artist is exhibiting over 40 works that include drawings, mixed media works and three-dimensional works. She uses different hues of material that is hand-cut in different shapes and layered on paper to create a translucent effect. She says that layering has always intrigued her and she finds solace in working patiently drawing cutting and

Delhi-based artist Ritu Kamath is preparing for her solo show titled 'i-seek'. A tête-à-tête with the artist at her studio.

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Ritu Kamath, *Untitled*
Ink and Polycarbonate on Paper, 20 x 30 inches

>
Ritu Kamath, *Restless in Neverland*
Ink and Polycarbonate on Paper, 30 x 42 inches



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Ritu Kamath

fixing layer upon layer. Patience was never a virtue otherwise, but while working it definitely is!

Along with drawings on the paper, the layering creates a unique perspective and depth. These mystify and mesmerize the viewer.

The artist uses images of human hair and wings of different species of birds as a metaphor to represent bondage, freedom, wildness, fury and beauty.

She ponders: "I, as an artist, am deeply curious and interested in hair as a part of the human body... as from my childhood I have heard the command of 'tie your hair!'; or the order "go and tie your hair!" often enough if not more.

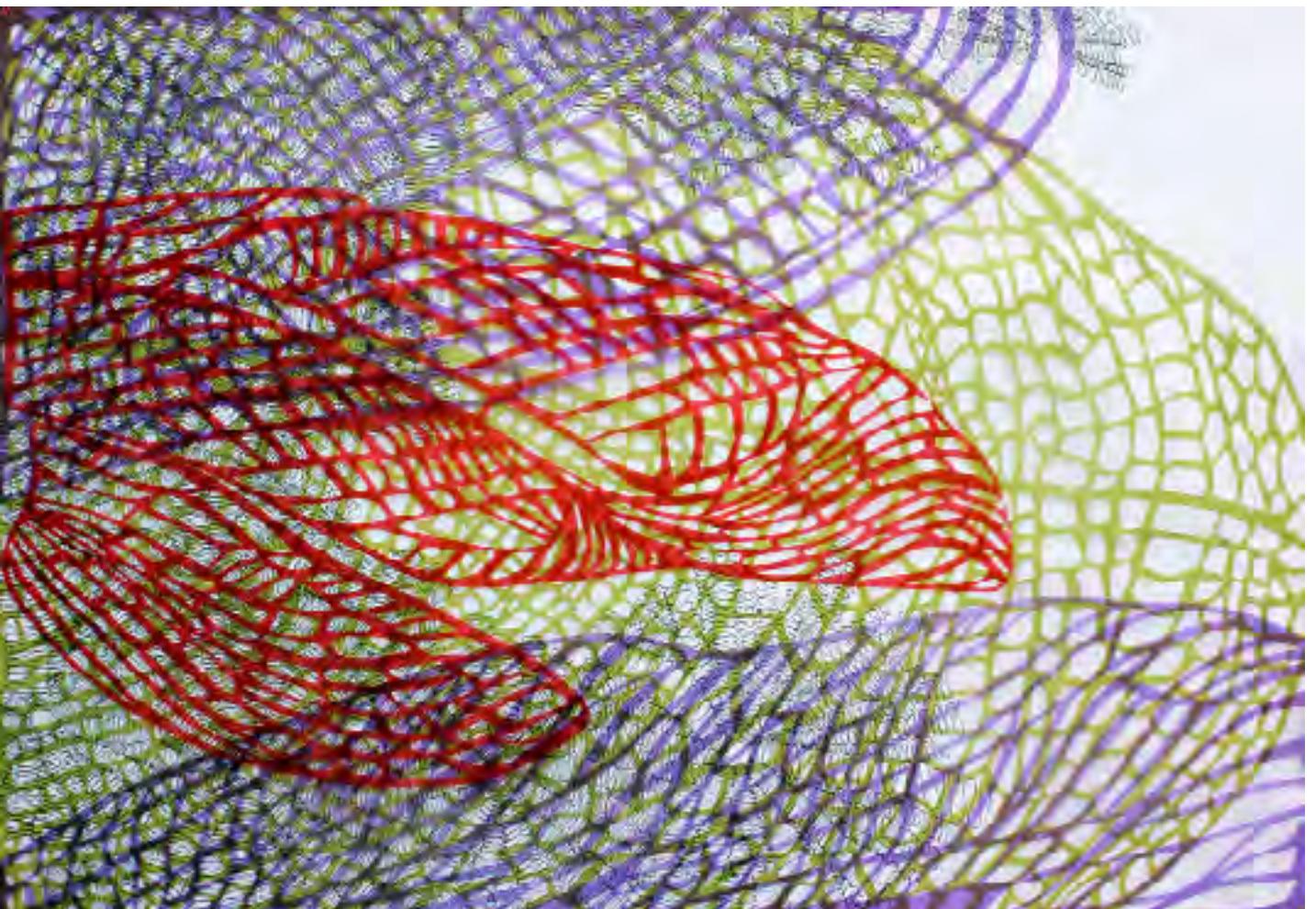
The politics of hair conveys multiples of emotions in the way it is maintained.

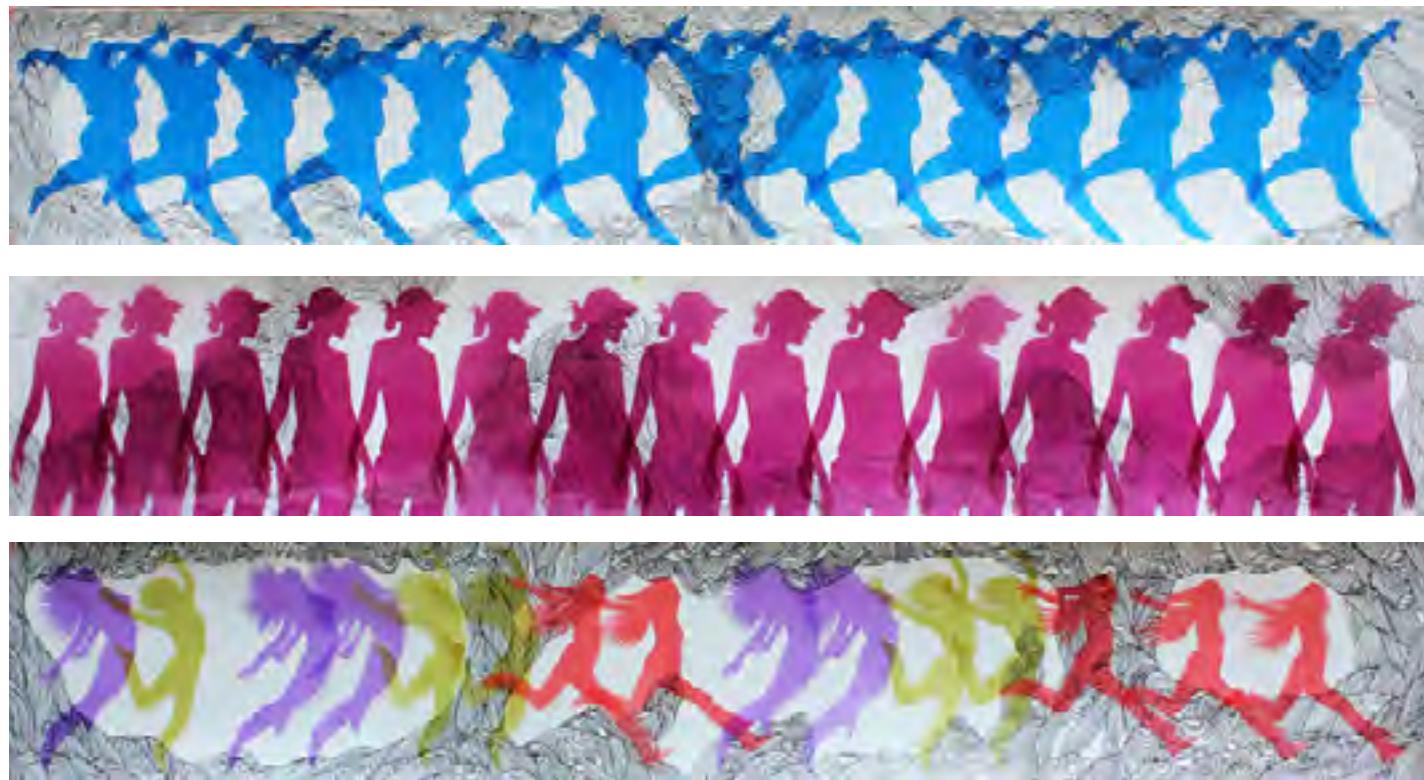
She continues to say: "The dramas played about on my various works are in sought of an unfathomable release. The release from pressures we face and endure all through our lives."

The artist also remembers how anecdotes from Indian mythology have inspired her into starting the series of hair inspired works.

"In India's culture and history, human hair and hairdos have been a never-ending subject of declamation for moralists. The hair being an important part of the body, a reflection of how one feels, mentally and physically, and communicates this to our peers," she says.

Hair is a powerful metaphor in the Hindu mythology. By definition, the myths represent traditional sacred stories, typically revolving around the activities of





gods and goddesses and heroes that purport to explain natural phenomena or cultural practices. Tracing back the importance and significance of human hair to the dawn of civilization of the Indian subcontinent, we find that all the Vedic gods and goddesses have used hair to convey a message."

In a recent article in online journal 'Dailyo', Damayanti Dutta writes: "Consider Draupadi's hair and what happened after that. When Dushasana pulled apart her triveni (triple braid) at the dice game, the Kauravas did not just defile her, they tore apart familial ties and the dharmic order, say scholars. Hair-binding in Indian culture has been traditionally associated with femininity, her role in society, her duty and deference to her husband."

For the next 13 years, she kept hers unbound, signifying that the Pandavas lost their marital rights to her. Neither Draupadi nor the world could be pure until dharma was restored."

Ritu is in complete agreement with

this. She also references Kali who embodies shakti. This goddess is most often represented as a fearful fighting figure with unbound and uncut hair.

Ritu has penned down a few lines while working on this series...

My hair is thick.
It grows in pencil-sized spirals and tiny crinkles
My hair grows out, not down.
It springs out from my crown
My hair is in tangles
You can't run your fingers through it, or a comb it
My hair is rebellious.
It resists being smoothed
It puffs.
Its strands escape;
They are impenetrable
They can't be tamed.

While preparing for this show, Ritu has been extensively reading on hair and its politics and she states what she is unable to forget. "My hair is part of my identity as much as it is aesthetics, I use my hair as part of my dress but I was also born with it, and so its texture is a part of my

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(Top to bottom)
Ritu Kamath, Untitled
Ink and Polycarbonate on Paper
7 x 42 inches (Top and middle),
7 x 30 inches (bottom)

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(Top to bottom)
Ritu Kamath, Untitled (Neverland series)
Ink and Polycarbonate on Paper
7 x 30 inches (each)

identity. My whole life I've had long hair and then about 15 years ago I decided to just cut it, and that made me feel so liberated. My kith and kin were appalled. I couldn't stop hearing about why I had cut my hair. Individuals immediately connected with me said that they would disown me if I cut my hair any further," says Ritu. A good girl has long hair. When you're an Indian girl you're supposed to have long hair, and keep it tied either into a severe plait or a bun. "I decided sometime ago to let it down and loose. My hair isn't that long and sometimes people look at me as if I'm a strange woman because it is always wild and alive. I'm Indian and my hair is left open and it is my choice whether I choose to tie it or leave it in total abandonment. I often hear comments and I don't enjoy it, but I really enjoy keeping my hair the way I want. If, my hair was a person, it would be a really fierce, defying and warrior type person. I feel each woman has the right to decide that. There should not be and cannot be any kind of dictatorship in the way a woman wants to keep her hair or wear what she desires to wear."

Hair is deeply socialized and

politicized — especially for women. The feminine aesthetic is strictly binary and coded—and enforced by the society at large. This struggle for emancipation from social bondage is not only understood by Ritu but other contemporary visual artists who also feel the same way.

In 2016, she had created a two-minute video, showing a woman managing to eventually loosen her hair from a tight bun sighing in deep relief.

Ritu is also working on canvases in small format, but with a difference. She does not want to reveal much of these works at this point, as she thinks that this will provide the surprise element to the viewers who will see her show.

She is an artist of different moods that swing back and forth between seriousness and humour. She says this is how she entertains herself.

Life in the studio can get tedious day after day meticulously drawing and cutting away, but for a few laughs that are an essential part of not only her nature but even her work. She could somehow never get rid of her

quick sense of humour as well as the deep sense of melancholia.

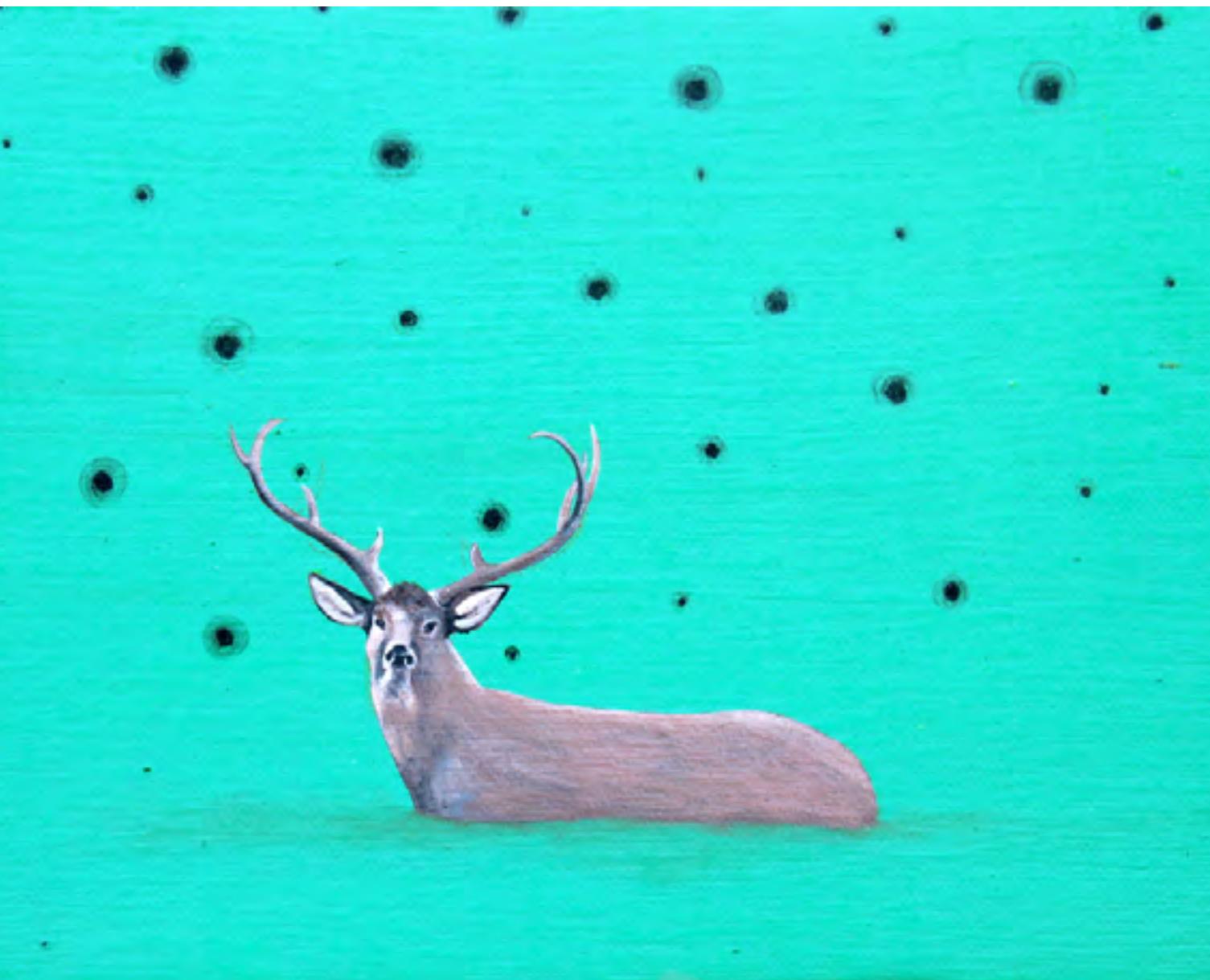
Even while talking about her works she doesn't like to give away everything and wants the viewer to exert their imagination. Therefore most of the works are also left untitled.

Suneet Chopra, eminent art critic, writer and poet, who has mentored, curated and exhibited several of Ritu's earlier works comments: "Ritu Kamath has experimented with several métiers and forms in her career as an artist. Her primary concern has been to create beauty and impact whether she is exploring the feminine form or exploring satires or themes of urban breakdown..." he writes.

As one leaves her studio, I am almost as energised with the infectious enthusiasm of this artist, whose work reflect innovation and sincerity, which is obvious in her works.

Ritu Kamath's solo exhibition – 'i-seek' – will open at Lalit Kala Akademi Galleries 2 and 3 on February 21, 2018. The show will be on view till February 27, 2018.





SHADES OF GREEN: ABHIJIT SAIKIA

ART&DEAL CORRESPONDENT

Arts4All Gallery in Greater Kailash hosted the solo exhibition of Abhijit Saikia, aptly titled 'Shades of Green'. It is the artist's first ever solo exhibition which consisted of 14 works, including sculpture, painting and wall installation. The work itself is utterly dreamlike in nature, with a surrealist backbone and a subconscious desire to portray the socio-political state of our society.

The artist's works delve into nature, space and time itself,

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Abhijit Saikia, *Black star*, Acrylic on canvas, 8 x 6 inches

>
Abhijit Saikia, *Intellectual Speaker*, Fiber Glass and
Ducopaint, 40 x 6 x 22 inches

utilizing a palette of tranquil greens paired with animal forms playfully arranged across the expanse of the canvas. At a glance much of the work appears to be minimalistic, yet on closer inspection one finds a world of detail encapsulated in sporadic sections of the canvas. The element of open space is deliberate, in order to give the viewer space to create his/her own narrative. This surreal world incorporates different aspects of the artist's identity, dreams, relationships and memories.

The artist's belief in Taoism has also heavily influenced the work, an ancient Chinese belief system which promotes achieving harmony or union with nature and self development. Each element in the work represents the artist's thoughts and experiences pertaining to time, and relating to a particular stage of the artist's life in terms of surroundings, period, and situation

– these things tend to take on character of their own on canvas.

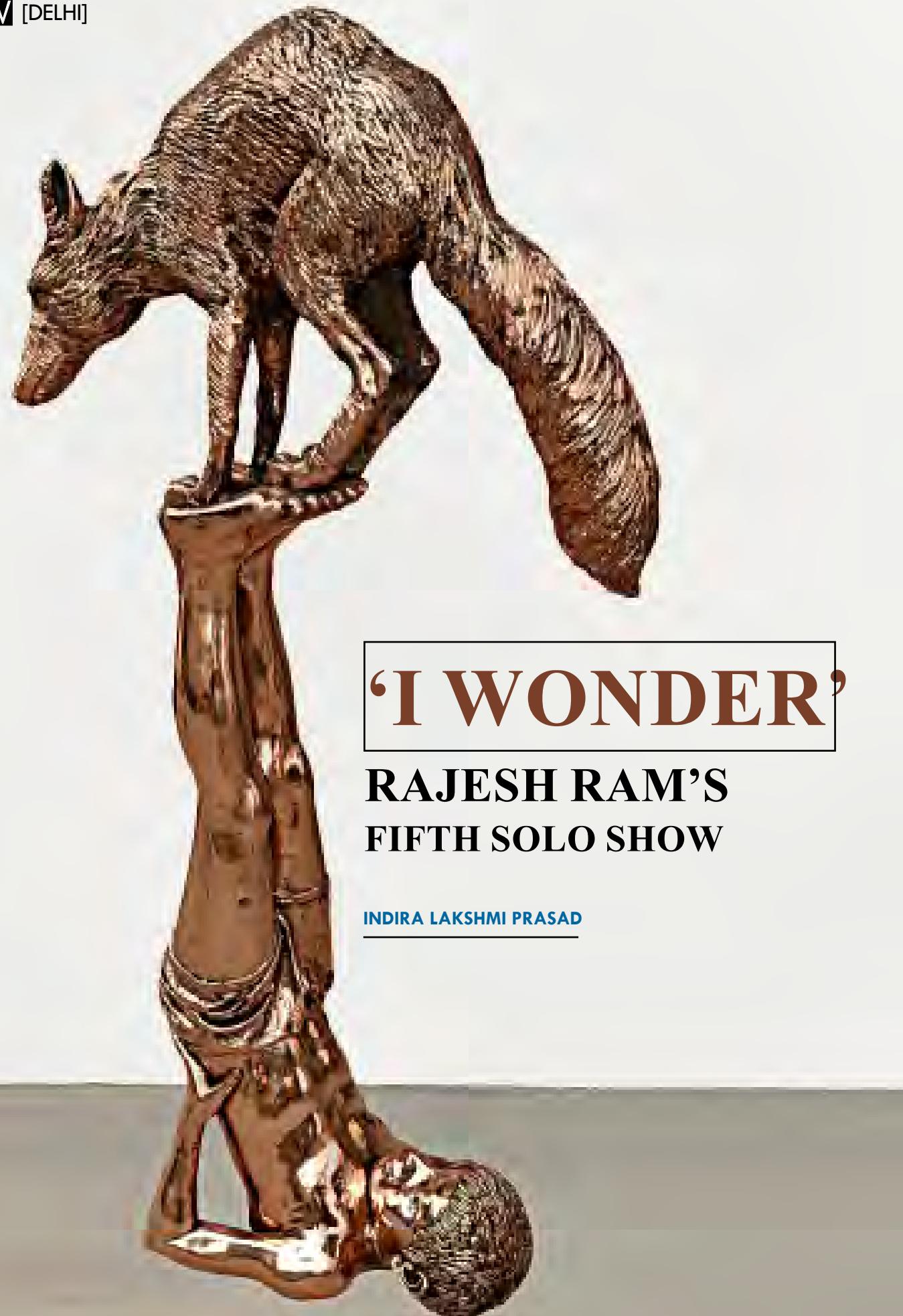
The artist's upbringing lends itself to the work, as he spent the first part of his life in his hometown of Dibrugarh in Assam, a land of extraordinary natural beauty which evidently informs the motifs and color palette which he uses. The creation of these surreal scenes which are steeped in nature is also a temporary escape from the hectic urban metropolis in which he currently lives.

The socio-political aspect of Abhijit Saikia's work is tactful but in no means concealed. The very inception of the surrealist movement was developed as a philosophical and political movement, in the words of Salvador Dali "Surrealism is destructive, but it destroys only what it considers to be shackles limiting our vision." And thus we see the natural order

of time, space and scale subverted as the artist challenges not only our perceptions but also subtly and powerfully highlights the environmental degradation we face today.

Arts4All is a self-sustaining not-for-profit foundation with Archana B Sapra and Puja Bahri as the founding trustees, it is a multilevel arts forum currently based in GK2, New Delhi. It invites, mentors and funds emerging artists from various regions and genres, to create and exhibit their work and help strengthen their careers. Since its inception in 2011, Arts4All has grown to housing artists in its residency programs, conceptualizing and executing public art projects, conducting art workshops and curating exhibitions. Arts4All within its sphere has an Arts Experimental & Research Center and Exhibition Space & Baithak.





‘I WONDER’

RAJESH RAM’S FIFTH SOLO SHOW

INDIRA LAKSHMI PRASAD



Rajesh Ram’s fifth solo show ‘I Wonder’ came about after a hiatus of nine years, consisting of the artist’s most recent body of work. The water color and life-size bronze sculpture works are informed by the Panchatantra tales, and encapsulate the artist’s interest in storytelling and use of proverb to portray the state of the human condition as we see it today.

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Rajesh Ram, Pageant-I

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Rajesh Ram, Man in action-I

Rajesh Ram has succeeded in the amalgamation of perhaps the most ancient collections of fables in the world, speculated to have risen from oral traditions ‘older than we are able to imagine’. This exhibition is a visual retelling of these animal stories, and placing them into the context of the modern age, drawing from his own experiences and memories of growing up in a rural village in Jharkhand and relocating to the bustling metropolis as an adult.

The use of the animal form to portray the human condition has been used throughout the world since time immemorial, with morals being conveyed in the form of proverbs and rhymes which would implant into our memory. Rajesh Ram's introduction into this world of fable was through his own childhood, with his grandmother narrating the stories to him. The messages held within them become clearer as one matures into adulthood, and we begin to connect the fables with the complexities of human relations with one another and the world around us.

The artist's use of the motif of animals and children also communicate the concept of innocence lost in an age of rapid urbanization. Just as in the fables which are read to us as children, Rajesh Ram uses animal motif to re-tell the stories of a world on the brink of self destruction. The human and animal form are hybridized, and this is no whimsical coincidence. Moreover it is an ode to the animal nature inside each of us which the rapid urbanization of society pushes beneath the surface. Perhaps the loss of identity we have with the animal/natural world is part of the reason we see environmental crisis occurring at unprecedented levels. The collective unconscious of humanity has assigned meaning to animals in our folklore and culture, a concept which transcends language itself, therefore a poignant way to depict the global crisis which humanity faces.

In the water color piece 'Hiding Yourself, 2017' we see a small boy riding an ostrich who proceeds to hide from its problems by burying its head in the sand, perhaps an idiom for society riding on the back of a government who refuses to look at the bigger picture. We are each encouraged to draw from our own consciousness to assign

meanings to the images, and find our own interpretations of the stories depicted.

There is a marked vulnerability in many of Rajesh Ram's works, especially so in his life sized sculptural works of children. The image of the child is a poignant representation of innocence, a time before one learns the concept of malice, and in this way animals also serve as a reminder of inherent vulnerability and purity. The polished bronze of which his sculptures consist somehow connotes an immortalization of the paragon of innocence, even when the stories themselves are lost, the meaning of the proverb remains.

The use of the animal form to portray the human condition has been used throughout the world since time immemorial, with morals being conveyed in the form of proverbs and rhymes which would implant into our memory. Rajesh Ram's introduction into this world of fable was through his own childhood, with his grandmother narrating the stories to him.



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Rajesh Ram, *Mask off*, Watercolour on Paper

>

Rajesh Ram, *Heart on tree-II*





LAYERS OF THE GAZE, ANDRÉIA DULIANEL, SOLO EXHIBITION

ART & DEAL CORRESPONDENT

The exhibition 'Layers of The Gaze' by the Brazilian plastic artist Andréia Dulianel was organized by the India International Center and exhibited in the Art Gallery in the Lodi Garden area during the month of January 2018.

This series of monochromatic abstract works was a visual representation of the multi-layered visual experience of the artist while she was travelling, and consisted of drawings on fabrics as well as sketch books and travel journals. The works on display are part of the artist's research for her PHD in Visual Arts at the University of Campinas (UNICAMP). The exhibition also featured plastic works which the artist created while on an artistic residency in India which was sponsored by the Brazilian Embassy in New Delhi between December 2017 and January 2018.

The works in this exhibition are a direct result of the artist processing and representing her experiences and concerns which arose from her immersion into Indian culture and her adjustment to a new environment. Thus we have a unique representation of the culture which surrounds us, as depicted by an individual experiencing India from a different social context.

We experience the world around us through a collection of senses, which the mind processes in layers. 'Layers of the Gaze' is a window into the process of construction and deconstruction of form and image which takes place as we process our external environment.

Andréia Dulianel was born in Vinhedo, São Paulo (Brazil) in 1982, and graduated in Fine Arts from the State University of Campinas (UNICAMP, 2005) and

Master of Arts (2010) from the same university. She is currently a professor at the Faculty of Visual Arts at the Pontifical Catholic University of Campinas (PUC-Campinas) and PhD researcher in visual arts (UNICAMP). She also develops poetic research in contemporary art, with drawings, artist's books, diaries of drawing and painting

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Andréia Dulianel, *Limbo I, II, III, IV, 2017*
Nanquim, carvão e lápis conté
sobre tecido, 74.5 x 142 cm (each)

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