

## PORTRAITS OF THE SELF - II

### Parag Sonarghare | Prashant Pandey

Curated by Abhay Maskara

January 14 – 30, 2021

*Portraits of the Self – II* places the human body in focus - revealing not only its strength and passion, but also its vulnerability and sensuality.

Parag Sonarghare and Prashant Pandey - the two artists in this show, come from very different backgrounds and work in contrasting mediums and styles. Yet they are connected, in their practice, through their desire to push the boundary on conventional ways of seeing.

Painted in a larger-than-life format, the male figures that Sonarghare portrays in his works on canvas, are of older men from the lower socio-economic strata. In *Untitled 2017*, three men are seated naked and bear the marks of time – wrinkles, wounds, rough edges and imperfections. Yet they seem unperturbed by their condition. The two *Untitled* portraits from 2016 paint into prominence modern society's most marginalised segments.

Sonarghare is interested in painting the nude body - insofar as to expose the soul through the map of the skin. The choice of subject, treatment and scale of the work - allows the artist to draw attention to ordinary people, with extraordinary sensitivity and skill.

In contrast to Sonarghare's decidedly hyperreal paintings, Pandey's work has a more abstract yet anthropomorphic character. He reawakens perception of everyday life by defying conventional logic when it comes to ways of seeing discarded objects. Through his use of found, recycled and reclaimed material, Pandey uses by-products of human activity in innovative ways, interrupting the utilitarian cycle of everyday life.

If these new works encourage one to trash anything, it is a traditional way of seeing. *Kama*, made from marble stones discarded in the making of deities, takes the form of the female pelvic bone. Playful yet poignant, it reimagines a shrine to which the faithful flock with prayers for fertility.

If you let the works speak to you, they will have an abundance to say. For starters, it invites you to witness a resurrection of all that is forgotten and obscure.

- Abhay Maskara

## **About the Artists**

**Parag Sonarghare:** Born in Nagpur, India in 1987, Sonarghare holds a M.V.A. (Art History and Aesthetics) from M.S. University, Baroda, India and B.F.A. (Painting) in 2008 from Govt. Chitrakala Mahavidyalaya Nagpur University, Nagpur (Maharashtra) India.

Sonarghare has used the body both in performance and in painting. Selected performances include *Being the Other*, KHOJ International Artist Association, Delhi, *AHAMBRAHMASMI* at various locations including Delhi, Nagpur and Baroda. He has participated in various group exhibitions including *Rethinking the Regional*, Curated by Manisha Patil, NGMA, Mumbai, Indian Contemporary Art, space 1858, Chicago, USA, *PARADIGMS & PERSPECTIVE*, Indigo blue art gallery, Singapore amongst others. In 2016 Parag was part of two 2-person group shows titled *TIME* and *Portraits of the Self*, at Gallery Maskara, Mumbai, India. He was also part of *Asia Contemporary Art Exhibition*, Jeonbuk Museum of Art, Korea and *The Young Subcontinent*, Serendipity Arts, Goa. In 2018 he was part of the Pepper House residency in conjunction with Kochi Muziris Biennale. In 2019 he was invited as an artist-in-residence at the Kunstdepot Foundation, Goschenen, Switzerland. The artist works and lives in Baroda.

**Prashant Pandey:** Born in Jaipur, India in 1984, Pandey holds an M.F.A in Sculpture from the Faculty of Fine Arts, M.S. University, Baroda, India and a B.F.A. in Sculpture from Rajasthan University, Jaipur, India. Prashant has received the Lalit Kala Academy Award in 2009 and 2010 as well as the Bhupen Burman Award in the same year.

Pandey's first solo show, *Shelf-Life* was curated by Abhay Maskara in 2010 at Gallery Maskara, Mumbai, India. He was selected by the faculty at M.S. University, Baroda to be an artist-in-residence at Ecole des Beaux-Arts, France for four months until February 2011. In September 2011, he was part of *(M)other India*, Galerie du Jour – Agnès B, Paris, France and was on the longlist for the ŠKODA Prize 2011-2012. In 2012, Pandey participated in the *India Art Fair*, New Delhi and the *ŠKODA Prize* exhibition at the Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi and the *VIP Art Fair 2.0 (online)*. *Shelf Life II* opened in September 2012 and was Pandey's second solo show at Gallery Maskara. In 2013 Pandey participated in the *India Art Fair*, New Delhi, India. In 2014 Pandey was selected by curator Jitish Kallat to participate in the *Kochi-Muziris Biennale*, Cochin, India. In 2016 he was part of a group show titled *TIME* at Gallery Maskara, Mumbai, India. In 2017 the artist was part of a group show *Sculpture Park*, Nahargarh Fort, Jaipur, India curated by Peter Nagy and a group exhibition titled *Waste Land* at Tarq, Mumbai, India curated by Birgid Uccia. In 2018 he was part of the second edition of the group show *Sculpture Park*, Nahargarh Fort, Jaipur, India curated by Peter Nagy. The artist lives and works in Jaipur, India.