





GALLERY MASKARA

"TO EXHIBIT AND PROMOTE ART OF THE PRESENT"





FOREWORD

... It has been more than just exciting these past eighteen months. The art market has been through one of the most tumultuous times in recent history with some of the biggest names in art either downsizing or downing shutters. We barely made it ourselves with the skin of our teeth.

Despite the challenges we mounted seven ambitious solo shows, two physically demanding solo performances and two international group shows at the gallery. Our commitment to radical new voices found sixteen artists from India, Pakistan, Japan, U.K., Belgium and France out of which thirteen were participating for the first time in our program.

The spirit of invention was amply evident in the diversity of art practices of these artists that characterize contemporary art today. Pushing the boundaries of material, method and meaning, they attempted to rupture pre-conceived notions about art. Viewers were invited to participate in this process and experience the work without prejudice and with heightened emotion.

While the economic status of works kept shifting and values recalibrated – what remained constant was the magic of art to go beyond the mundane and enrich our lives with new thoughts and new ways of engaging with our own selves and with the world around us.

The history bound in these pages is also 'my' history. It exemplifies personal choices made to show particular works by artists that have touched me and challenged me in one way or another - choices that have hopefully engaged the viewer in new and unexpected ways to radically re-think the role of contemporary art in society.

None of what has transpired in this catalogue would have been possible without chance encounters with certain artists, critics and collectors who stumbled upon the gallery and were moved by the experience. It is only because of the valuable contributions they made with their works, words and wallets that we have come this far.

Thank you for generously embracing the space and for reinforcing our belief in the art of the present. I dedicate this Volume 2 to each and every one of you who participated in this journey and to serendipity!

Abhay Maskara
Curatorial Director

Prashant Pandey
The Red, 2010

AADITI JOSHI
NITYANAND OJHA
TATHEER DARYANI

Moonwalk

April 13th to May 10th, 2008

Curated by Abhay Maskara



AADITI JOSHI
All Untitled, 2009
Fused plastic bags on base of wood and acrylic
Height 65 x 59 x 44 in (165 x 150 x 112 cm)

From the opacity of plastic to the density of bone, from the fragility of glass to the potency of mercury and blood. All the three artists chosen to be part of 'Moonwalk' bring a fresh and exciting perspective to material, matter and method. Through this show we will continue to (re) examine the very nature of how art is viewed and move away from looking at art as an 'object' and move closer to an understanding of art as an 'experience' where all of the senses are actively engaged in a given space and time.

Abhay Maskara



AADITI JOSHI
Suffocation, 2008
Single channel video, 47 seconds, loop, colour, sound
Edition 1/3 + a.p.

Collection: Max Modesti, France

Aaditi Joshi has been working with plastic as a medium for the past seven years. Plastic has raised the walls of debate for it and against it. However Aaditi transcends the controversies by taking the approach of an observer. Mesmerized by the unexplored characteristic and aesthetic beauty of mundane usage, she takes ordinary plastic bags, seals them together after carefully compressing and heating them, until it gets the desired dimensionality and opacity.



TATHEER DARYANI
Untitled, 2009
Glass, mercury, heating plate
60 x 14 x 14 in (152 x 36 x 36 cm)

Collection: Ashiesh Shah, Mumbai



The works of Tatheer Daryani are mostly autobiographical but allow the viewer to (re)interpret them to their own experience and perception. She uses blood and mercury in her work. It is a quality of mercury that once lost from containment it is almost impossible to retrieve, 'mercurial' like its name. She combines in glass vessels, mercury with her own blood – creating a new and fantastical amalgam as industrial material merges with organic bodily elements. This bears the visual qualities of a strange emotive jewel.

TATHEER DARYANI
Untitled, 2009
Glass, mercury and blood
Dimensions variable

Collection: Max Modesti, France

Bone is a metonymy for the body's form stripped down to a bare single essential unit after its inevitable abandonment. Nityanand Ojha addresses the abstract culture contained within, whilst opening up a diametrical plane of thought by decorating it with consumerist fetish for oxidized women's jewellery; both bound to the larger consequence of reanimation.



NITYANAND OJHA
Abandoned Love, 2009
Oxidized jewellery, fiberglass and metal
192 x 55 x 36 in (488 x 140 x 91 cm)

MONALI MEHER

In Determination II

A three hour performance

October 6th, 2009, 6:00pm to 9:00pm

In collaboration with Project 88, Mumbai



"God exists. We don't have to invent Him. Our mouth at least dares to prove God's existence. But alas, peace does not exist on earth. Let us try to invent peace."

Sri Chinmoy





The action of determination is an action of peace. The recent horrifying incident in my home city forced me to manifest the action of determination. I forge this performance not just specifically related to the recent incident in Mumbai but the violence and war in the whole world. This performance has a poignant quality of change and transformation. The world, which is created by us to live in, has the responsibility to create harmony and peace. In determination.

Monali Meher

AVANTIKA BAWA
Mathesis: dub, dub, dub

November 3rd to December 3rd, 2009





Mathesis, Dub dub, dub, addresses the architecture of the gallery, its history as a warehouse and the geography of its surrounding areas. Using simple design principles and approaches; crates, bricks, debris, blue prints and projections are recontextualized in this unfamiliar territory, creating in the process a transformed experience of the gallery space. In this construction, the flawed is perfected and the familiar obscured, rendering an emergent and difficult communication to be examined and relearned.

"My work as such, explores combinations of order and anti-monumentality, wholeness and fragmentation, containment and dispersal to create experiential spaces and interventions. This emerges due in part to my relationship with the legacy of Minimalism and its emphasis on reductive form, modularity and literal scale.

The serendipitous moments when these explorations collide and converse with one another, revealing the history of the time and space they occupy, has served as the fodder for this installation."

Avantika Bawa



Mathesis: dub, dub, dub, 2009
Site specific installation using found boxes, crates,
corrugated tin sheets, aluminum pipes, bricks, latex
and graphite

Audio: Montage with white noise, static, found
sound and Antonio Russolo's Chorale

Video: Single channel, 8 min loop (ed of 3 +AP)
Produced in collaboration with Matt Burge

SEIJI SHIMODA

Untitled performance and lecture

December 7th, 2009, 6:30pm to 11:00pm



Seiji Shimoda's performance work is a combination of action poetry, performance and movement. Here he employs simple found objects like cello tape, plastic bags, flashlights, a whistle and his physical body in unique ways.



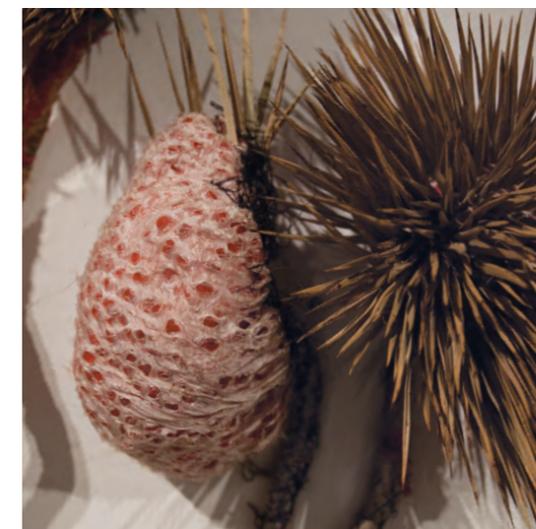
SHINE SHIVAN
Sperm Weaver

December 18th 2009 to January 23rd, 2010

Psycho Phallus, 2009
Cow dung, grass, wood
136 x 72 x 96 in (345 x 183 x 244 cm) each



Empty Spaces Between Desire and Fantasy, 2009
Palm thorns, dried bottle gourd, dried pumpkin,
fabric, cotton thread, aluminum wire
84 x 76 in (213 x 193 cm)



Detail



Used Dicks, 2009
*Baya Weaver nests, human hair, coconut extracts,
grass, cotton thread, natural gum*
48 x 120 in (122 x 305 cm)



Second-hand Pepe, 2009
Used dentures, human hair, bird feathers,
glass lenses, used fabric, semi-precious stones,
aluminum wire, jute, coconut thread
22 x 27 x 20 in (56 x 69 x 51 cm)

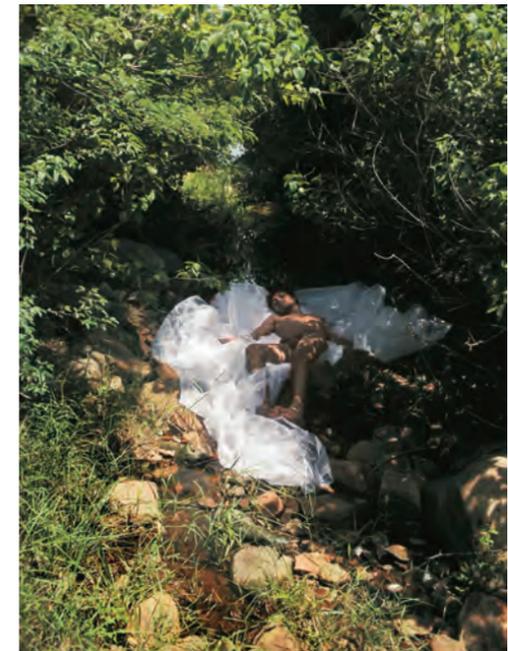
Collection: Max Modesti, France



Rape of Ganymede, 2009
Taxidermy eagle and crane wings,
semi-precious stones, fabric, cotton thread
18 x 40 x 12 in (46 x 102 x 30 cm)

Ganymede is the beautiful young boy that became one of Zeus' lovers. Zeus fell in love with Ganymede when he spotted him herding his flock on Mount Ida. Zeus then came down in the form of an eagle to carry Ganymede to Mount Olympus where Ganymede became cup-bearer to the gods.

The myth found favour in ancient Greece because it appeared to provide religious sanction for homosexual love; yet others state that this is merely a reflection of Greek life at that time.



Counter Clockwise from bottom right:
Sperm Weaver I-V, 2009
Digital print on Hahnemuhle photo rag paper
Edition of 4 + 1 AP
24 x 31.5 in (61 x 80 cm) each

Shine Shivan's works are semi-autobiographical excavations of the nature of masculinity. Through constructions that are both innovative and inventive, Shivan probes and re-defines the psychological tropes, experiences and roles attached to masculinity.

In his works, gender identity and gender typing emerge neither as biologically determined nor inevitable, but as a result of moment-to-moment interactions with the immediate social environment. Inevitably, a spectrum of representations of masculinity emerges - including works that deal with effeminacy, and homosexual and homosocial desires. Masculinity is not just represented as the "simple" opposite of femininity. For instance, his video, photographic and performance works - especially his Sperm Weaver Series, serve to depict an aggressively male, yet gender-bending homoerotic identity.

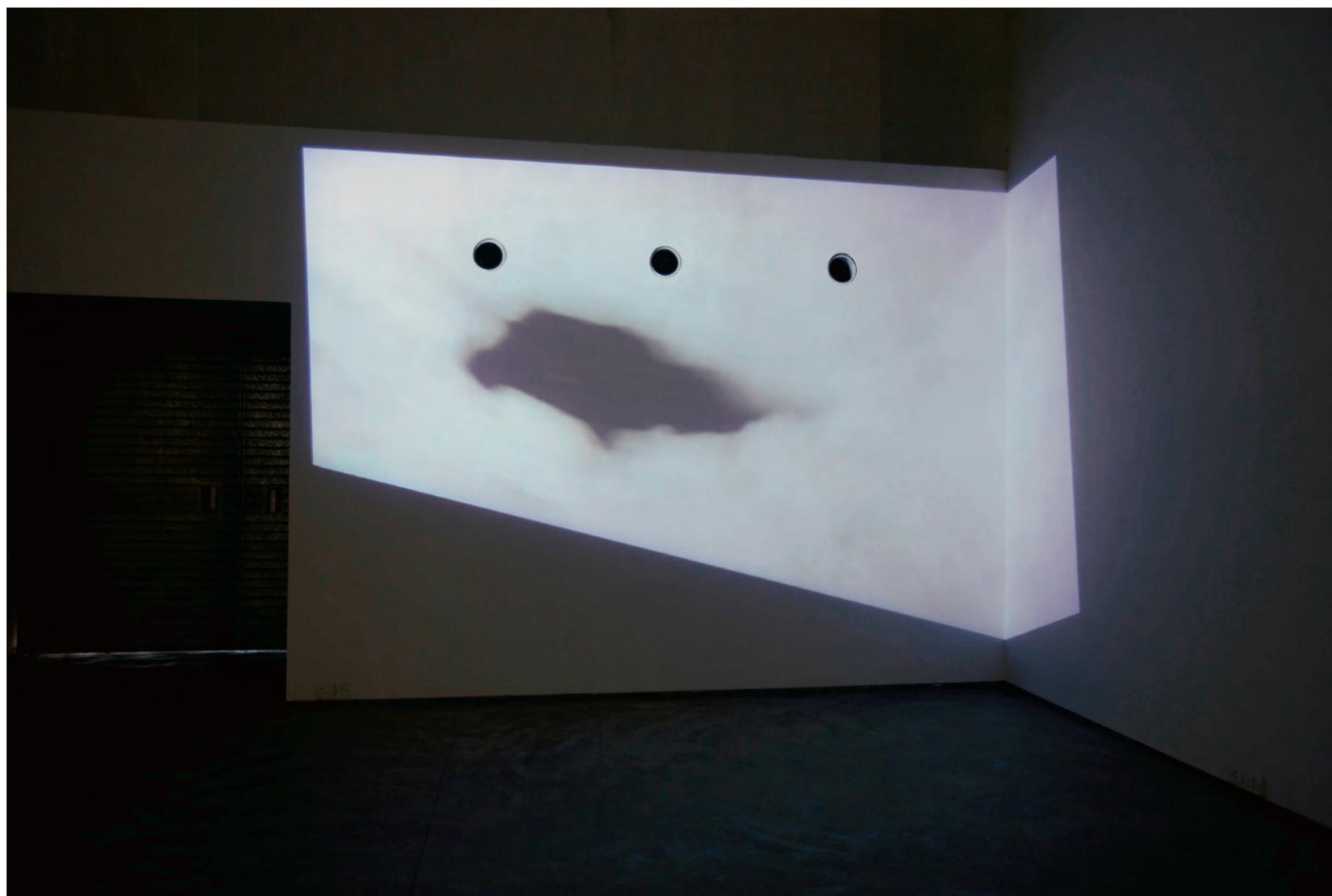
Nature is the reference book to which Shivan turns to explore gender conflicts within himself. In nature's fluidity, he finds as many questions as he does answers. *Used Dicks* is based on an exploration of the nest-weaving habits of the Baya Weaver bird. Although weaving is socially viewed as a feminine act, in the case of the Baya Weaver bird, these roles are reversed. The male Baya Weaver weaves the "cockswing" shaped nest re-created here by Shivan. The realm of domestic industry is entered into and claimed by the male body, raising questions of whether the notion of fixed social identity is desirable or even tenable.

Although the artistic language in which Shivan expresses himself shifts effortlessly between performance, new-media, photography and sculpture, what is consistent is the visual complexity of the work. Found biological elements and sacred materials are painstakingly stitched and assembled to create works like *Empty Spaces Between Desire and Fantasy*, constructed of dried palm thorns, dried bottle gourd, dried pumpkin, fabric, and cotton thread. This appears inviting from afar, but when approached takes on a threatening quality. Another common denominator in Shivan's work is its psychological and physiological potency. For instance, the larger-than-life, *Psycho Phallus* is a complex symbolic structure - phallic in form but traditionally constructed by women. Shine further unsettles gender difference by his deliberate role-playing. Although male he erects a storage structure that would typically be prepared by the female.

In *Second Hand Pepe*, an assemblage of found and used elements, Shivan speaks of the way socialized human beings invent versions of the self - their identities, thoughts and sexualities. Thereby he suggests the instability of gender, implying that it can always be subverted or queered by practices such as drag and cross-dressing.

In representing multiple and changing models of masculinity that undermine all binary oppositions, Shivan's work acts against perpetuated stereotype, thereby liberating fixed notions of identity from their constraints.

Sonia Nazareth



Sperm Weaver, 2009
Single channel video, edition of 3
2 minutes 12 seconds loop, colour, sound
Size variable

NADIA LICHTIG
NEIL HAMON
PETER BUGGENHOUT
RUBEN BELLINKX
SHINE SHIVAN

Everything Is Real: After Life...

February 10th to March 7th, 2010
Curated by Abhay Maskara



NEIL HAMON
Suicide Self-Portrait - Hanging, 2006
Silver gelatin print
49 x 98 in (124 x 245 cm)
Edition of 3 + 2 AP

Neil Hamon uses photography and sculpture to investigate the human relationship to loss. He employs techniques of representation that act as facsimiles of reality. Hamon adopts the role of both photographer and subject in 'Suicide Self-Portraits', a work based on crime scene photography in 1920's America. In re-enactment everything depends on detail but inevitably, reality is trivialised by the fact that the facsimile is only an intricately prepared copy, devoid of truth and substance of the original. Hamon employs the illusion of reality to reveal a deeper truth, one that is more closely linked to the tragedy of the human condition.



PETER BUGGENHOUT
 The Blind Leading The Blind #15, 2007
 Mixed media and disposable material covered with household dust
 24.5 x 38 x 48 in (62 x 96 x 122 cm)

"Peter Buggenhout has been creating sculptures and huge installations with dust titled 'The Blind Leading the Blind', using waste material (iron slag/ polystyrene/ polyester), plastic packaging, rubbish and residue, with "abject", trash and rejected material like blood and intestines. These materials lose their form and meaning once they are removed from their original context. Devoid of any symbols they bring the viewer back to the object itself...."

Sofie Van Loo



SHINE SHIVAN
 Second Hand Pepe II, 2009
 Wool, used fabric, soapnut, animal bones
 72 x 36 x 16 in (183 x 91 x 41 cm)

Detail



RUBEN BELLINKX
Constructing and classifying the animal in order to
make it meaningful to the human, 2009
Stereo Photo with viewer mounted on the wall
14.6 x 18.5 x 16.9 in (37 x 47 x 43 cm)
Edition of 10



Installation view

Ruben Bellinkx is an adventurer and storyteller. His film and video installations and photo works depict a fantastic world of perverse games gently directed by the artist; games where dogs attack and savagely decimate chairs and little tortoises struggle to move large tables. Through these complex and beautifully filmed images, Bellinkx establishes an ambiguous relationship between man-made objects and animals.



RUBEN BELLINKX
The Table Turning, 2006
Stills from 16mm film, digital pigment print on barite paper
11.8 x 16.5 in (30 x 42 cm) each
Edition of 10



The Table Turning, 2006
16mm film transferred to DVD
Edition of 4
5 minutes 51 seconds
Installation view



(Image when the light is switched off)

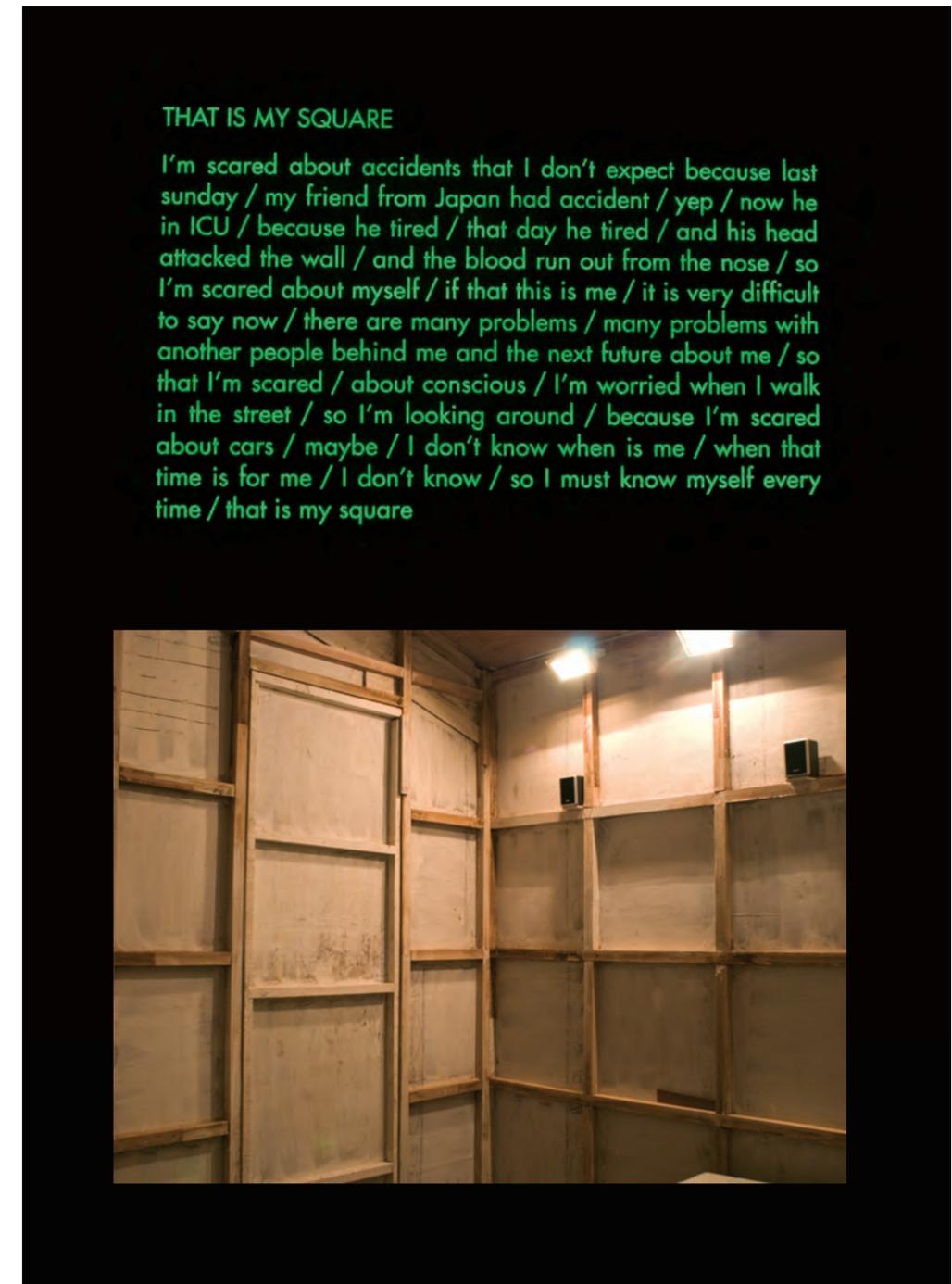
(Image when the light is switched on)

Ghosttrap is a series of testimonies to the question: « what are you afraid of? ». They have been written during a stay in Bangkok, with the help of people met randomly and whose mother tongue is Thai.

When exhibited at Gallery Maskara, the installation was housed inside a especially built traditional Thai-style hut. The audio component of the installation played on a loop heard over speakers placed above the bench.

The room, when entered was brightly lit and set on a timer to switch on and off. When off, the panels, inscribed with photoluminescent ink would glow in the dark, and the individual stories would begin to appear on each panel- enabling the viewer to read along with the audio. After about a minute, the lights would turn on again- rendering the panels blank once more.

NADIA LICHTIG
 Ghosttrap, 2007
 9 silkscreens, photoluminescent ink,
 timer, halogen light
 86 x 63 in (218 x 160 cm)
 Edition of 8



THAT IS MY SQUARE

I'm scared about accidents that I don't expect because last
 sunday / my friend from Japan had accident / yep / now he
 in ICU / because he tired / that day he tired / and his head
 attacked the wall / and the blood run out from the nose / so
 I'm scared about myself / if that this is me / it is very difficult
 to say now / there are many problems / many problems with
 another people behind me and the next future about me / so
 that I'm scared / about conscious / I'm worried when I walk
 in the street / so I'm looking around / because I'm scared
 about cars / maybe / I don't know when is me / when that
 time is for me / I don't know / so I must know myself every
 time / that is my square





T.VENKANNA
Sacred and Profane

March 15th to April 15th, 2010

Installation view, Gallery Maskara

T.Venkanna comes across as an artist who is preoccupied with the idea of exploring newer possibilities in the representation of sexuality. He is discreet in this process and refuses adamantly to take recourse to the conventional imageries and motifs or to conceive loaded metaphors. On the contrary, with great consistency, he shapes his aesthetics, ideas and representational strategies in a peculiar manner where, he persistently locates them at the interstices of sexuality and the erotic. As a result, what is striking in the artworks exhibited in Sacred and Profane is how they foreground questions about both, the relationship between sex acts and sexuality and gender and sexuality.

Characteristically using the act of sexual intercourse as a trope, Venkanna constructs multiple compositional and pictorial strategies that have great aversion to beauty that is purely aesthetic. At one level, his artistic practice might seem to celebrate nudity and the blatant display of male and female genitals but at another level these imageries unabashedly meet the gaze of the viewer and relinquish his/her privileged position to gain immediate pleasure. Even the nude human bodies, studies in dark black outlines, are not perfect and pleasurable but appear raw, yet vulnerable. Devoid of any charm and far from being glamorous they are deliberately over-layered with texts, arrows, black spots and scratches; both to complicate and declaim the socially and culturally constructed notion of sexuality.

Via such visual devices, Venkanna relentlessly defies the notion of experiencing aesthetic pleasure; imparting

uneasiness and discomfort to anyone who confronts his works. There is also a constant struggle by the artist to avoid the limited field of representation which is rooted in the ideas that place the heterosexual male phallus at the centre of sexuality, encompassing images designed to arouse the viewer. In the displayed works, Venkanna transcends the erotic to politicize the representation of sexuality, shaping it in varied and complex manners. The act of sexual intercourse emerges as a metaphor to address the subject of power and violence.

Mixed media serves as an apt tool for the artist to passionately engage with his characteristic style. Sketchy figures, flat forms, pasted newspaper, magazine cut-outs, and text - all dispersed unevenly over the painted surface enhance the tension deployed by the content. The colour black gains centrality to create a world that is no more solely concerned with personal desires and fantasies, but is inhabited with illicit sexuality and sexual violence, that is almost inaudible. On the contrary, attractive colour schemes mask the violence and power relation embedded in the bestiality of the wooden sculptures.

The presented body of works can be regarded as another phase in a quest that has preoccupied the artist since his student days. His formal training in painting and subsequently in printmaking left an impact in terms of the kinds of imagery and technique he employs. Venkanna locates his practice in interstitial spaces between sex-violence-desire-pain to engage with the larger content - sexuality.

Abha Sheth

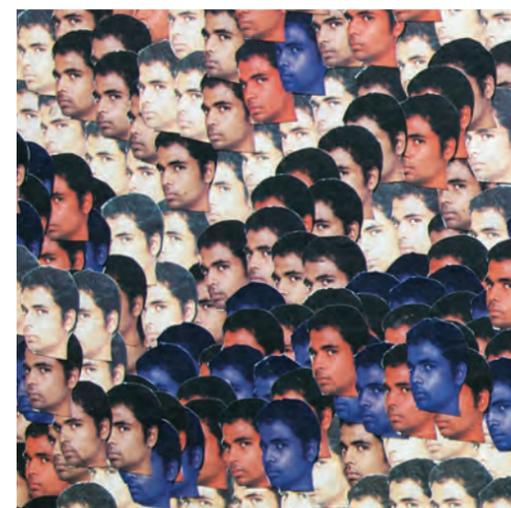
Man Playing With Two Pipes, 2009
Oil and photo transfer on canvas
90 x 66 in (229 x 168 cm)

Burger Collection, Switzerland





The Real Self Portrait, 2009
Collage on canvas
72 x 84 in (183 x 213 cm)



Detail



Surviving, 2009 (double-sided, free standing work)
Digital print, charcoal, graphite on canvas,
leather sculpture with enamel paint
64 x 76 in (163 x 193 cm)

Burger Collection, Switzerland

Surviving, 2009
Side two



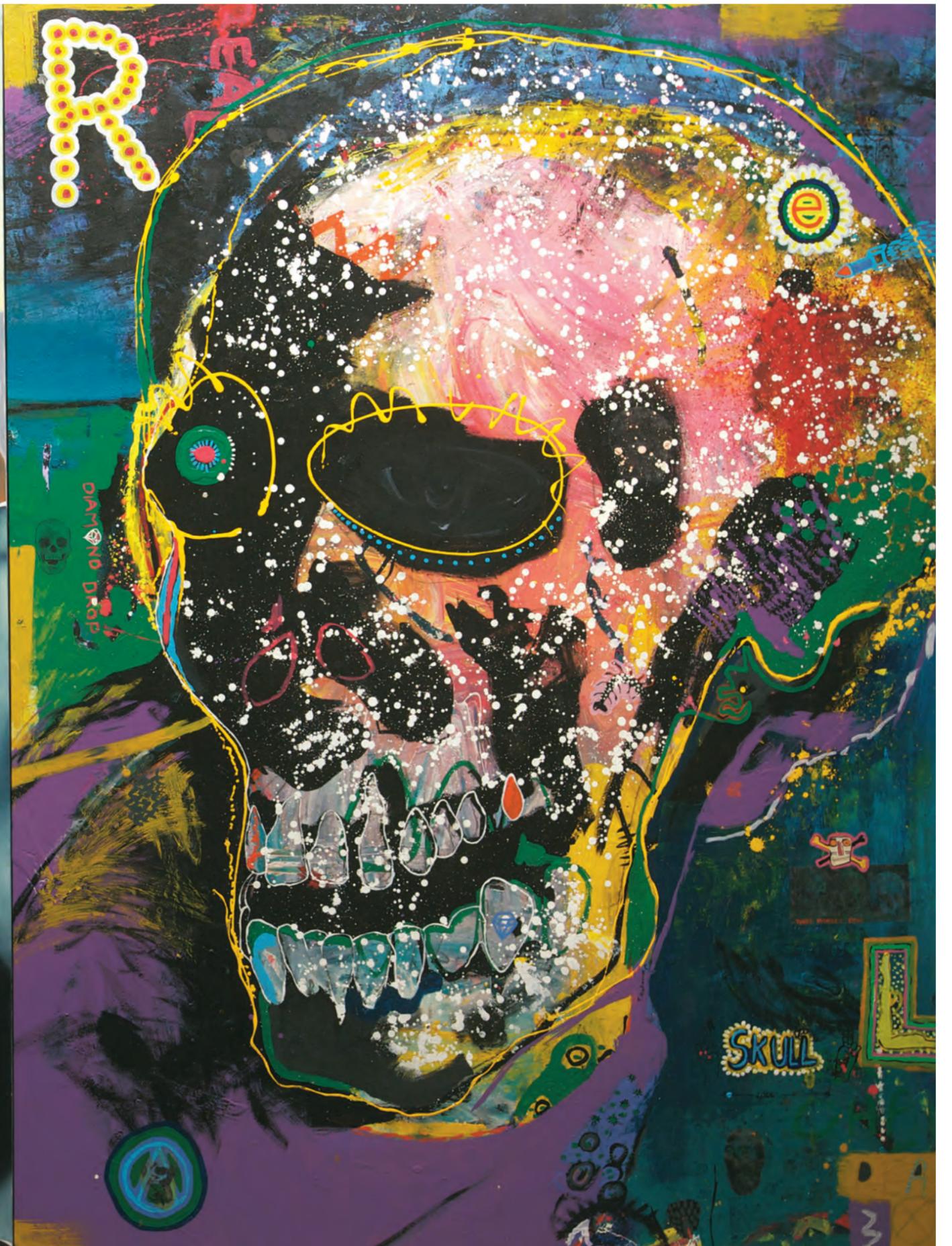
Too Hungry Lion, 2009
Oil and acrylic on canvas, acrylic on wood
encased in individual acrylic boxes
72 x 168 in (183 x 427 cm)

Burger Collection, Switzerland



Too Hungry Lion, 2009
Detail of acrylic on wood encased in
individual acrylic boxes





Untitled Beauty 2009, Oil and acrylic on canvas, 96 x 144 in (244 x 366 cm) (Diptych), Collection: Henri Swagemakers, The Netherlands



In Hope For Love, Venkanna uses the act of sexual intercourse as a trope to address the subject of power and violence. Through this work, Venkanna talks about the absurdity of war - its justification and consequences that are easily masked by media and society.

At the beginning of the installation stands a ceramic urinal spilling and gushing with soldiers that are clogging the system. He has repurposed Marcel Duchamp's 'Fountain' and graffitied it with various anti-war slogans, symbols and phrases such as 'War Will Never Bring Peace' and 'Fuck The Brain Follow The Heart'. On the reverse side of the urinal we see a demonic head of a man - the spout takes the form of the mouth and gushes with blood that spills onto the table and floor beneath.

Dolphins and turtle, frogs and squirrels, snakes and hedgehogs engage in bizarre sex acts. It is nature's revolt to pervasive violence and a call to restore the natural order of things as suggested by 'The Garden of Eden' with a couple in loving embrace.

Hope for Love, 2010
Ceramic urinal, acrylic, wood
51 x 244 x 48 in (130 x 610 x 122 cm)



Hope for Love (detail)



Hope for Love (detail)
All images

NARENDRA YADAV
Memory Minus Me

April 20th to May 21st, 2010





Memory Minus Me (detail)



Nostalgia-laced Memories,
I'm abandoning you,
For fresh food on clean plates.

Sonia Nazareth



Memory Minus Me, 2010
Anonymus Pictures roughly from 1913 till 1970
Pasta maker, glasses, kaleidoscope moving with motor,
wooden table and variable projection
36 x 168 x 42 in (92 x 427 x 107 cm)



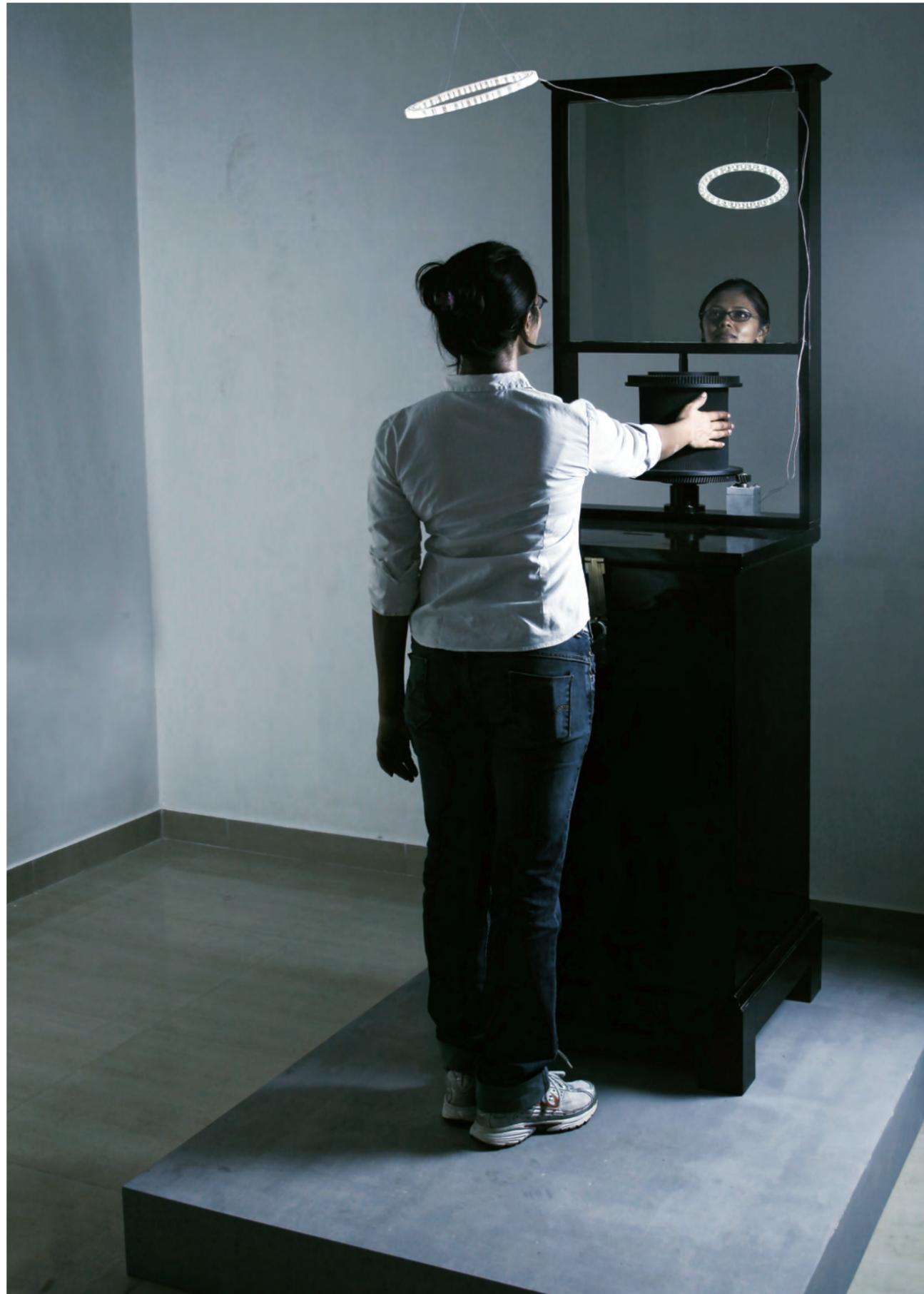
and Naren said, let the world be provoked through an act of poetic creativity and so it was. Three headless parts were brought into conjunction and it became impossible to disregard this surveillant dog with a constantly moving hand with a camera where its neck ought to be.

So what do you feel when you come under the watchful gaze of an object that subverts the obviousness and naturalness of a classic toy, that is as compelling as the chance encounter between a microwave, a lipstick and wild strawberries on a dissecting table? Do you move in or out of its path? Under or over its gaze?

Sonia Nazareth

Awareness, 2010
Resin, handy cam and motor
62 x 60 x 42 in (158 x 153 x 107 cm)

Sculpture photographed on location
at Gorai beach, Mumbai



As Far As I Remember, 2010, bicycle dynamo, LED lights, wood, rubber, mirror, 83 x 42 x 62 in (211 x 107 x 152 cm)

Is invitation to look at the censored chapter in the history of the individual subject - the unconscious.

is instigation to question the relationship between the rotation of the wheel and the emergence of the halo.

is inspiration to inquire within - is the halo obtained at the cost of symbolic castration worth the rotation?

Sonia Nazareth

That which looks back to you
...may not be grace
from above

Ravi Khoté



Gathering Dust From Memories, 2010 (detail)
Gears, ear-buds, injection bottles, acrylic and motor
53 x 72 x 16 in (135 x 183 x 41 cm)

We value and maintain all our senses to the sharpest we can. But every mind is the black box that never gets found, when the airplane of consciousness crashes.

Amer Jaleel



Rotate the wheel a little and change occurs.
Coloured threads unravel. New objects form.
The process is never complete. As soon as the
threads began to take the shape of one form it
implies the loss of other potential identifications.

Sonia Nazareth

Holding Back the Tears, 2010
Woolen sweaters and hand drill machine
75 x 192 x 12 in (165 x 488 x 27 cm)



The focusing and defocusing of the projector mimics the human mind which is as condemned to remember as it is to forget. It is the self-portrait of unreliable memory doing its quintessential shimmy for you

Sonia Nazareth



Second Death, 2010
Technically reconfigured slide projector, slides,
wooden chair and table
38 x 48 x 48 in (97 x 122 x 122 cm)



A slap in the face of public taste, in its rejection of both common sense and good taste, ceci n'est une peur, honours the audience by refusing to make any concessions to the viewer.

Even at its most surrealistic and difficult this self-conscious work retains its potent truth content that hints as the fact - toast we are and to toast we shall return.

Sonia Nazareth

Ceci n'est pas une peur, 2010
Toaster oven and resin
8 x 15 x 9 in (21 x 38 x 23 cm)



That Original May Also be a Reflection, 2010
Kinetic installation with mirrors and motor
96 x 168 x 96 in (244 x 426 x 244 cm)

The viewer enters a darkened room where two mirrors are affixed adjacent to each other. Time-regulated and powered by a motor, the mirrors begin to move toward each other. The viewer starts to see his/her reflection multiplying from two to eight. The mirrors stop and begin to move apart and to their original positions, the corresponding reflections also decrease. Finally all reflections vanish and the viewer is left alone in the darkness.

RIYAS KOMU
'Subrato to Cesar'

June 11th to July 13th, 2010
In collaboration with
The Guild Art Gallery, Mumbai





Untitled, 2010
Cast iron footballs encased
in wood framed glass boxes
12 x 10 x 10 in (30 x 25 x 25 cm) each
Part of a larger installation

As the biggest football festival begins it is time to introspect what the FIFA World Cup brings to the millions of football fans in the country. This show is an attempt to revisit memories of one of the oldest sport in the country. The language of football is one of the colonial legacies whose lexicon is devoid of any contributions that the country can be proud of. In fact the vocabulary is bereft of any Indian flavour.

We have just indulged in passing the ball amongst ourselves in our own half without making much progress even when much of the opposition to our soccer advances have come from within.

It is therefore time to move back into the locker room and take a fresh look at the game that most of us love. Our own footballers are a forgotten lot. When we join the world to celebrate world cup dreams, much of which would be played out on the television and other media, we must open our eyes to other realities that are immediate to ourselves.

Here is an invitation to an effort that in some way would be able to make a beginning. This show is as much about art as it is about a game and also about the art of football. When the players from various nationalities join their fans in scoring their own goals in the history of the sport using a new match ball that has been specially created for the World Cup we could also look at creating our own Jabulanis. When we root for the likes of Julio Cesar we could move backwards a bit and try to appreciate our own Subratos. Subrato to Cesar can just be the starting point.

Riyas Komu



Untitled Photograph, 2010
Ilford gold fibre silk
14 x 9 in (36 x 23 cm)
Edition of 11



Untitled Photograph, 2010
Ilford gold fibre silk
14 x 9 in (36 x 23 cm)
Edition of 11

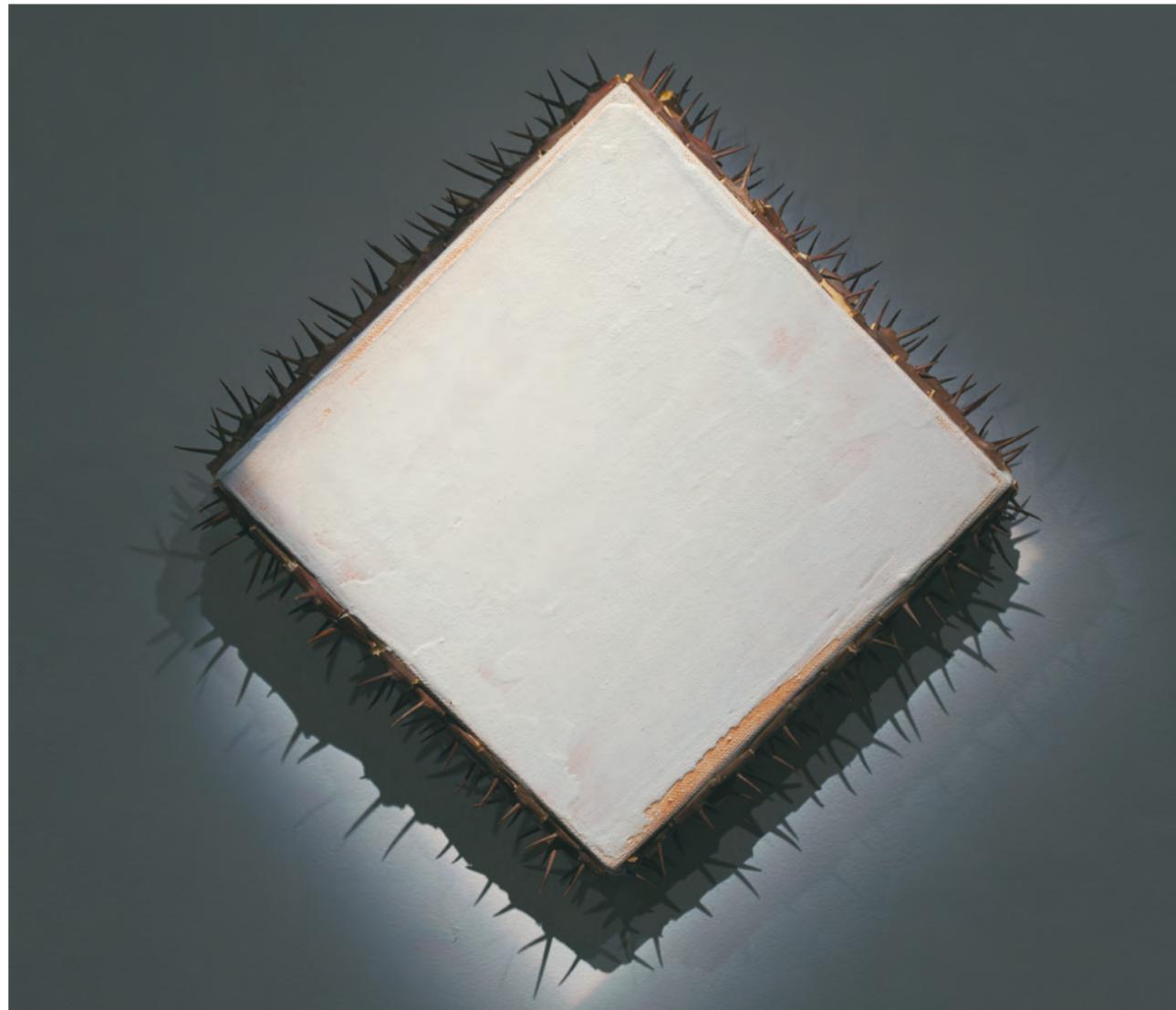
2 of 11 prints by the artist, photographed during the 2010 World Cup, South Africa

PRIYANKA CHOUDHARY
NUL to Now

August 2nd to 23rd, 2010



Pubic, 2010 (detail)



Untitled, 2010
Plaster, thorns, red clay and adhesive on canvas
11 x 11 in (28 x 28 cm)

Collection: Sanjeev Khandekar, Mumbai



Detail

What began in Dusseldorf and quickly developed as one of the most significant avant-garde art movements of the 20th century finds a new take in Delhi based Priyanka Choudhary. Her works unwittingly echo the concerns first voiced by German artists Otto Piene and Heinz Mack, who formed the 'Zero Group' in 1956 and were joined later by Günther Uecker.

Square surfaces that appear monochromatic and textureless reveal upon closer examination small holes, needles, bulges, and patterns. Many of the canvases are cut and slashed as if calling attention to the poetic violence of modern life. This act of putting knife to canvas is reminiscent of Italian painter and sculptor Lucio Fontana, an ardent supporter and member of 'Zero'. In 1958 Fontana created his most famous series, *Concetti Spaziali - Attesa*, where he cut through the canvas to create an actual dimension of space. Half a century later, this action is just as spontaneous yet controlled in Priyanka's hands.

Her work is anchored by natural material such as thorns, dried twigs and branches. She rarely uses paint choosing plaster and red clay instead. Interspersed with the surface, the push-and-pull of material characterizes the energy of the canvas. In one work Priyanka has planted thorns around the edges of a heavily textured 'diamond' as if in homage to *Das gelbe Bild* (1957-58) by Uecker. In another work, dried branches thrust into the viewer's space with distinctly menacing force. The result of these bold gestures is to draw the viewer to experience the work with unpredictable emotion.

Line and shadow play is an integral part in Priyanka's visual vocabulary. Highlighted by the stack of logs against a stark white wall, this highly charged assemblage is set in contrast with the wall opposite that holds the smaller format works. They seem to rest unceremoniously until the viewer is confronted by these relief sculptures riddled with nails. Is this act of violent hammering some sort of protest by the artist?

The answer to this question may lie in the installation titled *Pubic*. Set against the far end of the gallery and encompassing the entire back wall. The 2x2 grid pattern formed by the bamboo scaffolding creates a symmetry that is at once overpowered by hundreds of harpoon-like protrusions. "Abstraction retains the expressive content in my work," says the artist. "Structures are pubic. Their vertical emptiness is awkward, confused, ugly and beautiful at the same time. My personal anxiety is pubic. It is a conflict between the rational and the emotional."

Abhay Maskara



Untitled, 2010
Thorns, red clay and adhesive on canvas
8 x 8 in (20 x 20 cm) each



Untitled, 2010
Plaster, thorns, red clay, adhesive and muslin on canvas
8 x 8 in (20 x 20 cm) each

Top left: collection Ashiesh Shah, Mumbai



Untitled, 2010
Red clay, plaster, gesso, dried bush with thorns on canvas
40 x 40 in (102 x 102 cm)



Detail



Untitled, 2010
Iron nails on untreated log (detail)



Top: Woods shaving and iron nails on untreated log
Center: Iron nails on untreated log
Bottom: Nails, muslin and adhesive on untreated log

All untitled, 2010
107 x 4 in (272 x 10 cm)
Variation of 3, each

Center and bottom, Variation 1
Collection: Amrita Jhaveri, Mumbai



Detail



Pubic, 2010
Site-specific installation using
bamboo, burlap, rope
28 x 33 x 30 feet (9 x 10 x 9 meters)

PRASHANT PANDEY
Shelf-Life

August 30th to September 26th, 2010





Prashant Pandey reawakens perception of everyday life by destroying conventional logic when it comes to ways of seeing discarded objects. Through his use of recycled, reclaimed and found material like abandoned industrial containers, cigarette butts, cane trash, urine and blood - Pandey uses by-products of human activity and discarded material in new ways, interrupting the utilitarian cycle of everyday life.

The distortion of form slows down the act of perception between the audience and the object. In this manner, his work serves the poetic function of promoting seeing as opposed to recognizing something that is already familiar and known.

Although his medium is constantly shifting, his basic concern remains the same – a critical commentary on modern society. For instance through his sculptural work "Gift" - an infant's mutilated skull constructed out of a mosaic of pouches filled with urine, sweat, tears and formaldehyde, he protests the killing of unwanted girl fetuses, who like urine and sweat are easily flushed out by the system in which they live. In his untitled sculpture that takes the shape of a boy made of expired chocolate, the melting form reflects lives in their endless process of becoming rather than being.

As you experience Pandey's work, keep in mind the words of John Baldessari who once famously said, "Look at the subject as if you have never seen it before. Examine it from every side. Draw its outline with your hands and saturate yourself with it."

If you let the work speak to you, it will have something to say. For starters, it questions the meaning of "shelf life" through the use of material that is long past its supposed expiry date, inviting you to witness a resurrection of all that is forgotten and obscure.

Sonia Nazareth



Universe, 2010
Used and discarded cigarette butts, wood, thread
64 x 64 in (163 x 163 cm)

Detail



Untitled, 2010
Expired chocolate and stainless steel
24 x 12 x 12 in (61 x 30 x 30 cm)

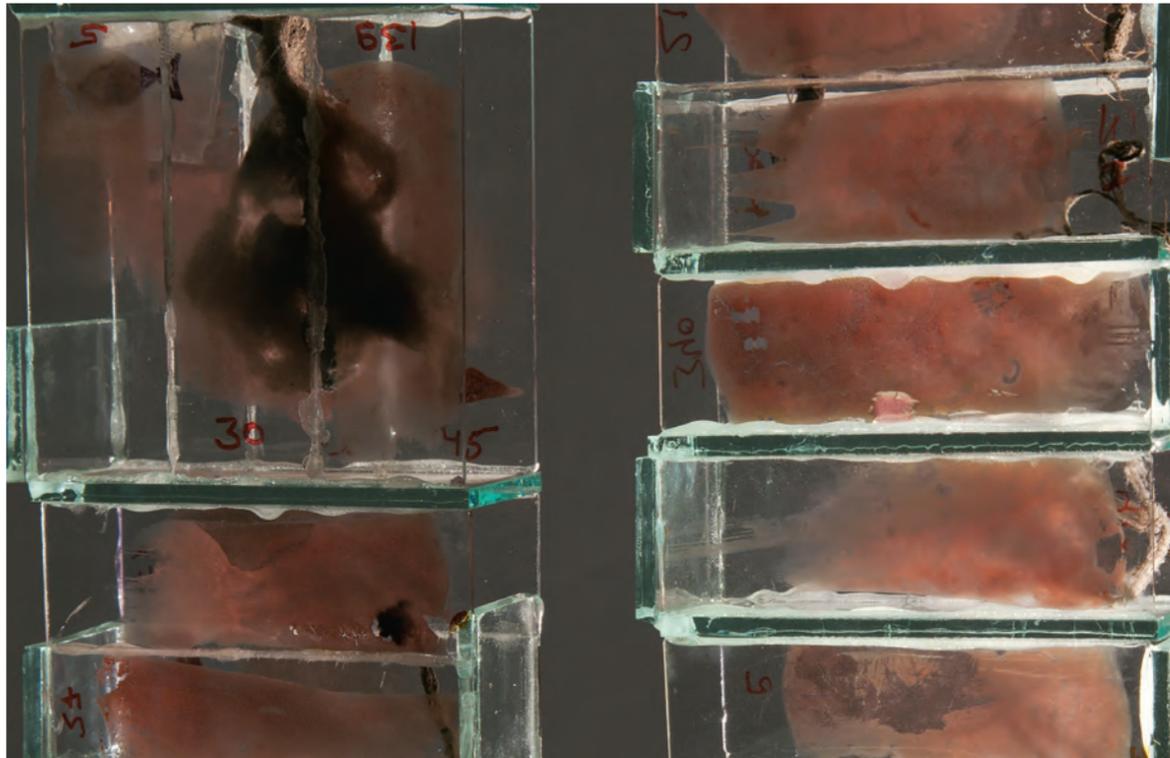


Untitled, 2010
Expired chocolate and stainless steel
24 x 12 x 12 in (61 x 30 x 30 cm)
(24 hours later)

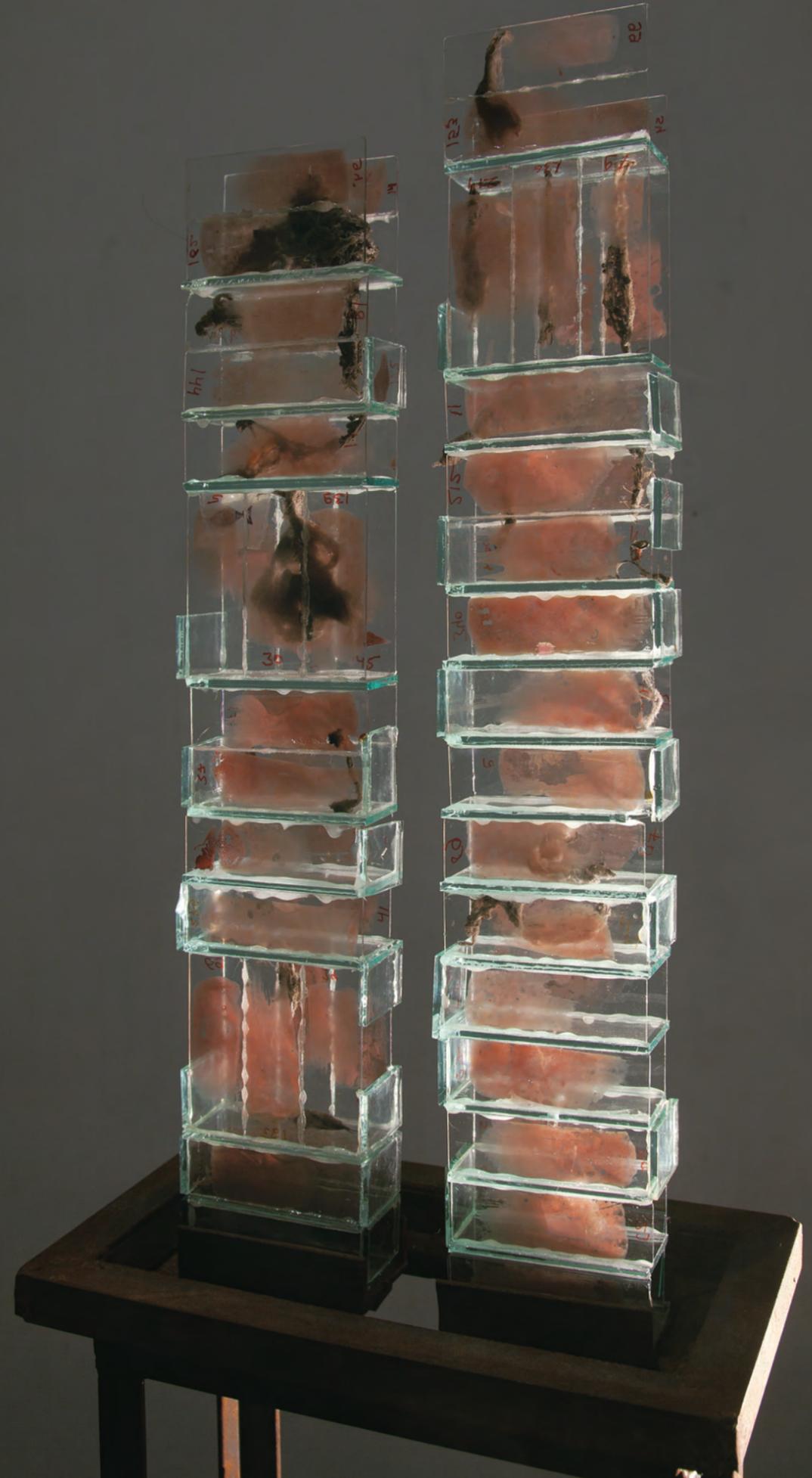


Detail

Stopped, 2010
Shredded banknotes, iron, electrical light
62 x 27 x 9 in (157 x 69 x 23 cm)



Detail



The Red, 2010
Blood slides, cobwebs and iron
18 x 11 x 1 in (46 X 28 X 2.54 cm)



Gift, 2010
Urine, sweat, tears, formaldehyde and iron
40 x 96 x 90 in (102 x 244 x 229 cm)

AADITI JOSHI (b. 1980)

Aaditi Joshi was born in Mumbai, India. She holds a Diploma in drawing & painting from L.S. Raheja School of Art, Mumbai. Her first solo show, 'Zero Opacity' was held at the Jehangir Art Gallery in Mumbai in 2005. Other group shows in which she has participated include 'Moonwalk' curated by Abhay Maskara in 2009 at Gallery Maskara, Mumbai and 'Present-future' curated by Dr. Sarayu Doshi in 2005 at the NGMA in Mumbai. Aaditi will be featured at The India Art Summit (Art Fair) in 2011. She lives and works in Mumbai, India.

AVANTIKA BAWA (b.1973)

Avantika Bawa was born in Ootacamund, India. She has an MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, USA and a B.F.A from the M.S. University of Baroda, India. She is an artist, curator, and academic. Her work explores combinations of order and anti-monumentality, wholeness and fragmentation, containment and dispersal, to create experiential spaces and interventions. She has exhibited widely in the USA and had a solo show, 'Mathesis: dub, dub, dub' in 2009 at Gallery Maskara, Mumbai, India. Other noteworthy exhibits include; solos at The Columbus Museum, Columbus GA; Saltworks gallery and the Atlanta Contemporary Arts Center, Atlanta, GA; Lalit Kala Academy and Nature Morte Gallery, New Delhi, India; Portland State University, Portland, OR; and juried group shows at The Drawing Center and Smack Mellon, NY; The South by East Biennial, Boca Raton, FL and the Museum of Contemporary Art, GA. In 2004 she was part of a team that launched Drain - Journal for Contemporary Art and Culture (www.drainmag.com). She is currently Assistant Professor of Fine Arts at Washington State University, Vancouver, WA and resides in Portland, USA.

MONALI MEHER (b. 1969)

Monali Meher was born in Pune, India. In 1990 she graduated from Sir J.J. School of Arts, Mumbai with a B.F.A. in painting. In 1998 she received the 'Unesco-Aschberg' Residency by Vienna Federal Chancellery for the Arts and Science. For the last seven years she has been working with performance, video, photography and installation. In 2000–1 she was accepted

at the Rijksakademie Van Beeldende Kunsten, funded by the Dutch ministry of foreign affairs and has also received the Huygens Grant. Her work has been published in various books and magazines including 'Student Body' by Marina Abramović. The artist lives and works in Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

NADIA LICHTIG (b. 1973)

Nadia Lichtig was born in Germany to Czech and Serb parents. She is interested in how sound and images relate to the past, our environment and our collective and individual memories. Her works derive from situations found in everyday life; these are modified and turned into short fictions. She explores the domain of performance through projects that question the universality of language. Nadia has exhibited in France, Austria, Italy Thailand and India. She has taught at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts de Valence in France, Srishti School of Art and Technology in Bangalore, India, the Rachna School of Art, in Mumbai, India and the Ecole Supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Montpellier, France. Nadia lives and works in Paris & Montpellier, France.

NARENDRA YADAV (b. 1964)

Narendra Yadav was born in Ratnagiri, India and holds a B.F.A. (Applied Art) from J.J. School of Art, Mumbai (1987). Through his work, Narendra Yadav directs the viewer to re-look at the obvious in delightful and satirical ways that never fails to surprise or amuse. His object and video based works successfully straddle conceptual art, sculpture and installation. He will be represented by Gallery Maskara at Artissima 17 (Art Fair), Turin, Italy in 2010. He has had two consecutive solo shows at Gallery Maskara in 2009 and 2010. His first solo show in 2006 was at the Museum Gallery, Mumbai and he has shown previously at Sakshi Gallery, Mumbai (2007), Lalit Kala Academy, Kerala (2006 and 2008), Gallery Maskara (2008). The artist lives and works in Mumbai, India.

NEIL HAMON (b.1975)

Neil Hamon was born in Jersey, UK. He holds an M.A. in Fine Art from Goldsmith's College in London. Hamon uses photography and sculpture to investigate the human

relationship to loss. He employs techniques of representation that acts as facsimiles of reality. Hamon has shown extensively throughout Europe and the Americas including galleries in the UK, Germany, Spain, Belgium, New York and Brazil. In 2007, he was featured in The 52nd International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia in Venice, Italy. In 2003 Hamon received the BOC Emerging Artist, Finalist Award. He lives and works in London, UK.

NITYANAND OJHA (b.1982)

Nityanand Ojha was born in Bhubaneswar, Orissa. He holds a B.V.A. in Sculpture from Utkal University of Culture in Bhubaneswar Orissa and an M.V.A. in Sculpture from M.S. University Faculty of Fine Arts, Baroda. Group shows in which he has participated include 'By All Means Necessary' at Latitude 28, New Delhi in 2010, 'Moonwalk' curated by Abhay Maskara in 2009 at Gallery Maskara, Mumbai, India, and shows at the Academy of Fine Art in Kolkata in 2005 and AIFACS, New Delhi in 2003. Nityanand won the Alice Borner memorial award in 2002 and the A.B.B. Scholarship from G.C.A.C., Kolkata in 2005. He lives and works in Baroda, India.

PETER BUGGENHOUT (b. 1963)

Peter Buggenhout was born in Dendermonde, Belgium and he studied Installation art from Sint-Lucas in Ghent, Belgium. Peter Buggenhout started his career as a painter and drawer. In 1989 his paintings exploded into 3D. Since then Buggenhout has been creating sculptures and huge installations with dust and rejected material like blood and intestines. He has shown his work extensively in leading galleries and museums including Herzliya Museum of Contemporary Art in Israel, Museum Dhondt-Dhaenens in Belgium, SMAK, Ghent, Belgium, The Garage, Mechelen, Belgium amongst several others in Europe. The artist lives and works in Ghent, Belgium.

PRASHANT PANDEY (b.1984)

Prashant Pandey was born in Jaipur, India and 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. Pandey's work reawakens perception of everyday life by destroying

conventional logic when it comes to ways of seeing discarded objects. Through his use of recycled, reclaimed and found material like abandoned industrial containers, cigarette butts, cane trash, urine and blood - Pandey uses by-products of human activity and discarded material in new ways, interrupting the utilitarian cycle of everyday life. Prashant has received the Lalit Kala Academy Award twice as well as the Bhupen Burman Award. He had his first solo show, 'Shelf-Life' curated by Abhay Maskara in 2010 at Gallery Maskara, Mumbai, India. He was selected by the faculty at M.S. University, Baroda for a residency at the prestigious Ecole des Beaux-Arts, France where he will be an artist in residence until February 2011. The artist lives and works between Jaipur and Baroda, India.

PRIYANKA CHOUDHARY (b.1976)

Priyanka Choudhary was born in Delhi, India and holds a Bachelor of Fine Art from Delhi College of Art, Delhi, India. Her visual vocabulary spans Arte-Povera, Minimalism and contemporary practice. Line and shadow play is an integral part in her work that is anchored by material such as thorns, iron nails, dried twigs and branches. In 2010, her first solo show, 'NUL to Now' was curated by Abhay Maskara and was held at Gallery Maskara, Mumbai, India. The artist lives and works in Delhi, India

RIYAS KOMU (b. 1971)

Riyas Komu was born in Kerala, India. He holds Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Fine Art from the Sir J.J. School of Art, Mumbai. The artist's oeuvre, spanning several different media and genres, is particularly noticed for its strong political overtones. Komu has shown widely throughout India and was a participant in the 52nd Venice Biennale, 2007 curated by Robert Storr. His other prominent museum shows include Milan Museum show, curated by Daniella Polizzoli and 'India Contemporary', GEM, Museum of Contemporary Art, Hague. He has received various awards including the K.K. Hebbar Foundation Society Scholarship, the Bombay Art Society Award and the Maharashtra State Art Prize. The artist lives and works in Mumbai.

RUBEN BELLINKX (b. 1975)

Ruben Bellinkx, born in Wilrijk, Belgium and is an artist, adventurer and storyteller. His film, photo works and video installations depict a fantastic world of perverse games directed by the artist. Through these complex and beautifully filmed images, Bellinkx establishes an ambiguous relationship between man-made objects and animals. Bellinkx has had shows in The Netherlands, Belgium, Germany and India. He is a guest professor at KASK, the University College in Ghent, Belgium in the department of Fine Arts (Drawing). The artist lives and works in Brussels, Belgium.

SEIJI SHIMODA (b. 1953)

Seiji Shimoda was born in Nagano, Japan. One of Japan's most active, well-known and respected performance artists. His performance works are a combination of action poetry, performance and movement, employing simple objects like chopsticks, a chair, a table and his physical body in unique ways. He is currently the Director of NIPAF (Nippon International Performance Art Festival) and he lives and works in Tokyo, Japan.

SHINE SHIVAN (b. 1981)

Shine Shivan was born in Pandalam, India. He has a Masters in Visual Arts from Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar University, Agra, India, and a Bachelor in Fine Arts from the College of Arts, Delhi. He has previously shown at Khoj studios, Delhi, India and was the recipient of a Lalit Kala Academy Scholarship in 2008. Shine creates works that are semi-autobiographical excavations of the nature of masculinity. His works act against perpetuated stereotypes, liberating fixed notions of identity from their constraints. Through his sculptural and performative works he attempts to excavate and redefine the psychological constructs, experiences and roles attached to masculinity. Shine debuted with a solo show, 'Sperm Weaver' curated by Abhay Maskara in 2009 at Gallery Maskara, Mumbai, India. His video work was recently shown at the Tate Modern, London, UK following the success of 'Move on Asia 2010', at Gallery Loop, Seoul, Korea. His work will be part of an exhibition at MOCA Taipei, Taiwan in November 2010. The artist lives and works in Faridabad, India.

TATHEER DARYANI (b.1980)

Tatheer Daryani was born in Karachi, Pakistan. She holds degrees in sculpture from the Faculty of Fine Arts, M.S. University Baroda, India (2009) and the Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture, Karachi, Pakistan (2006). Group shows in which she has participated include 'Moonwalk' curated by Abhay Maskara in 2009 at Gallery Maskara, Mumbai, India, and 'Emerging Talents' at the VM Art Gallery in Karachi in 2007. In 2006 she designed a metal relief structure for the entrance to the headquarters of SUPARCO – Pakistan Space & Upper Atmosphere Research Commission. Tatheer has received the Best Thesis Award from the Foundation for the Museum of Modern Art. She lives and works in Karachi, Pakistan.

T.VENKANNA (b. 1980)

T.Venkanna was born in Gajwel, India. He holds a Masters in Fine Arts (M.F.A.) in printmaking from the Faculty of Fine Arts, M.S. University of Baroda and Bachelors in Fine Arts (B.F.A.) in painting from J.N.T.U., Hyderabad where he was awarded a Gold Medal. He has participated in several shows in India including two solo shows at Gallery Maskara, Mumbai in 2009 and 2010. He was the youngest artist to be featured in the Saatchi Gallery show 'The Empire Strikes Back: Indian Art Today' (January-May 2010). The predominant subject in Venkanna's work is sexual imagination, which questions and confronts the stereotypical ways in which sexuality is understood and defined. In this endeavor he appropriates certain imageries from artists of yester years and (re)presents them in new contexts. In this way Venkanna critically evaluates the political and social norms and terms that exist within contemporary society. In November 2010 his work will be part of an exhibition at MOCA Taipei, Taiwan. His first European solo show titled 'NERO' opens at Gallery Luce, Turin, Italy in November 2010. He will be represented by Gallery Maskara at Artissima 17 (Art Fair), Turin, Italy. Venkanna's works are in major collections including the Burger Collection (Switzerland), the Charles Saatchi collection (UK), Swagemakers collection (The Netherlands). The artist lives and works in Baroda, India.



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

As hard as we try, we still cannot fathom your wizardry with camera and lens. You captured the nuance, detail and unique strength of each work with an artists eye. Thank you David for all that you do, we remain in awe of your skill and indebted for your generosity.

These artists gave me a part of their life and in return I made them part of mine. A warm embrace to Aaditi Joshi, Nityanand Ojha, Tatheer Daryani, Monali Meher, Avantika Bawa, Shine Shivan, Seiji Shimoda, Neil Hamon, Ruben Bellinkx, Nadia Lichtig, Peter Buggenhout, T. Venkanna, Narendra Yadav, Riyas Komu, Priyanka Choudhary and Prashant Pandey. A special mention for Uday Tidke who thinks and works like an artist and is as much part of the space as any other.

A good writer can convey the emotions of artists but Sonia Nazareth unraveled creative complexities and won the hearts and minds of audiences as diverse as the Professor and her 12-year-old niece. Thanks also to Abha Seth, Amir Jaleel, Kiran Khalap, Raja Mohanty and Ravi Khote for making the works come to life with their words.

I appreciate all the critics, journalists and media personnel who took time to engage with the works and write about our shows with candor and wit. You made us feel like we had a million PR rupees even though we could afford none. Thank especially to Abhay Sardesai, Anna Holm Hansen, Avni Doshi, Deblina Chakrabarty, Deepanjana Pal, Elvis D'Silva, Georgina Maddox, Girish Shahane, Gitanjali Dang, Jigna Padhiar, Nayantara Kilachand, Pronoti Datta, Sita Wadhvani, Susan Haggood, Vishwas Kulkarni, Zeenat Nagree and Zehra Jumabhoy.

It was a real pleasure and a rare privilege to share the joys of collecting with brave budding collectors as well as those equipped with experienced eyes. I tip my hat to Amrita Jhaveri, Ashiesh Shah, Henri Swagemakers, Maximiliano Modesti, Max and Monique Burger and Sanjeev Khandekar.

To say we run a tight ship would be a gross understatement - From curating gigantic shows to installing small works, from sending bulk invites to personalized walk-through's, from answering the phones to applying for fairs, from image management to managing individuals...all this and much more gets done everyday and with a smile. I depend upon the dedication of Dinesh - my Man Friday since inception and the diligence and charisma of Urshila Mehta - my associate for the past one year. I am also delighted to welcome Rivka Sadarangani to the 'A' team of two.

The emotional support from fellow gallerist and friends both within and outside the art world will be hard to repay and the love from my family impossible to quantify. You came to my rescue when the chips were down so I know I can count on you anytime.

To the unconditional love and effortless smiles of Ananya and Ariya. You are the most beautiful girls in my world who continue to inspire me from afar. Because of you I can create everything...

Abhay Maskara

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