

## Critic Note

Making drawings like minor jottings, single frame narrative combining text with the image, like a visual diary, the project somewhat autobiographical for Ise. Purchasing wholesale cardboard packing boxes from the local market, unpacking ideas, seeking the primary reason to do a residency at KHOJ Studios. The key found in opportunity and the probable spaces that might open in due course of time. Unfolding the packing box laying flat contouring shaping painting the insides with the narrative. Ise sees himself as a consumer/traveler; a cultural collector of labels, of posters, of plastic bags, tickets, chewing gum wrappers, packing boxes, of bottles anything that defines the contemporary identity of a place. His vocabulary improvises by accepting the space he works in. Like in a comic book/video game a viewer enters the white cube through a window, progression of the project 'the lord of the key,' begins behind the door. Further graffiti reads 'road block'. Cut out shadow contours, crafting the alphabet, he takes the alphabet for a walk.

Ambitious fantasy underlining the play of good verses the bad, in a victory of self as against the suppressor. Graffiti one liners, word balloons anti establishment in gesture, the act of filling the white cube by nailing the wall, the ceiling, the window the door with sketch notes held together with binder clip. To subvert set notions of high art aesthetics Ise places self as a protagonist plans a strategy by placing self and the others in a near animated battle of alien star ships, dragon monster, alligator/chameleon, devil door guardians, bad clouds, good clouds, dark shadows, dead sun etc.

Stance that points towards his ethnicity, Ise installs self in the garb of superman, the American notion of success. 'Lord of the key' is in a sense a comic mythical battle with globalization, its promises which uses a visual code that is stranded in the contemporary homogeneity and the tradition. Of boyhood dreams of voyages to far away lands succeeding in spite of codes. Ise also works as a set designer, this work uses a 2 dimensional compositional movement, contrasting scale and colour, a frontal dramatic in the play of the narrative, the viewer at once senses the entire act before seeking the detailing. A residency studio for 6 weeks, white cube for two days, the work dismantled some disposed off some packed in packing boxes labeled cello taped ready to be mailed back home.

### Therapeutic Intervention

By locating Masooma Syed's work in a historical continuum, we look at the colonial past in the creation of India and Pakistan. The work table is a map of Delhi. Historically Delhi has been a seat of power, 'to sir with love', is a construct placed on a narrow black pedestal. The terrains we walk on, the gaze of history in arriving to New Delhi to Khirkee, a historical village can be investigative into political/cultural overlapping. Past is requisite necessity to understand the present. The work involved the act of making the object form with pebbles found on the way to KHOJ studios to the work space, rolling the same with glitter. The work, self conscious is a glittering pebble on pebble 'crown'. She read into the metaphor of tasting her first sip of alcohol, as hot and spicy as her retake of the colonial past. Old monk, fashioned as a necklace was a result of this adventure.

She collaborated with Inder Tikoo a Delhi based kashmiri who has been a victim of the consequences of the partition and contested territory. The poster uses the aesthetic proportions of glossy black and white archie posters of unknown people conveying sentimental 'utopia.' 'Unknown sister unknown

brother', a portrait restrained in gesture, mood, posture recasts notion of a relationship in unknown siblings who meet one day to pose together for a picture. Beyond borders are human relationships that happen Masooma, articulated issues by spatially placing the same in a time and space that is at once about common past and about a strained relationship between the countries.

'Nao' shapes a sculptural image of the five residency artist who makes the same boat, is fragile narrative into the tactile nature of the journeys undertaken together. Curly locks, strands, tuft cut given, pressed stitched glued varnished to make a linear boat. Young hair soft/dense visible dark brown/black point out the differences, the similarities in the way the hair texture grows, it was while getting to know the coded other, it was negotiating the 6 weeks together. By spot lighting the scale of the objects made the act of doing exquisite, a careful involvement in making these subtly inscribed. Having worked on jewelry making projects Masooma converted the white cube into a display/exhibit space reminiscent of a jewelry shop.

### **Enclosures for Empathy**

Twilight zone is a subjective rendering of Aruna Shanbaug story by Mithu Sen, arrived to via Pinki Virani investigative reporting she came across as a news report recently. Mammoth darkness made, the white cube closed into an enclosure for a viewer to enter the private hell, of being in-between emotive surfaces.

When we speak about art and social activism we are often caught in the futility of even addressing these. By empathizing with victim of rape in a public space, using a visual language Mithu Sen returns to feminist concerns using self, a vulnerable body. To make a reading into the installation, we deconstruct Aruna's experience by feeling into, entering, a twilight zone when the escape is a story intellectual in a strict sense of the term. A wooden bed, hand made the silk of the black mattress sewn with blue, green, brown silken threads. The density of darkness, transparent. The motif artificial hair, the pillow silken small, of unfulfilled dreams and happiness. The wall of the studio white when received in the beginning of the residency.

The image was realized while empathizing with Aruna. A dot and then a line is a human intellectual ability to shape form, the grammar learnt at the art school. When subverting notions of image making Mithu uses Aruna's story as a release in the way to mark the unconscious / conscious impulses. Automatism intended to express a process of thought Mithu marks the wall, the ceiling the work table in dot in lines spiraling circles joining separating mentalscapes. Immediacy of doing covering the entire surface of the studio space has a gaze and the gaze of the work encloses you, the context real.

Soja raj kumari sooja..... the haunting strains of KL Saigal, a parental lullaby for a loved one. Of choosing a context to layer and form a relationship with an individual in another time in another space, the installation reveals error/horror in the incident and the consequences by opening up of the twilight zone to the gaze of the public never becomes a violation of privacy rather a presence.

### **Between the Easel and the Stretcher**

Jimnah improvises, availability of mediums can change the visual language of form that he has been involved with. In the beginning of the residency, he wished to work with metal, the potential of the medium had already been explored in his earlier works but when he realized that KHOJ does not have in house facility for welding he chose not hire services simply because he prefers to use the machine himself to shape the form. He explored paint, working simultaneously on canvas, paper and

a paper pulp sculpture. A visual diary made in the process of painting, repainting, layering uneven, even, palming brushing outlining or erasing or once more marking then signing in Hindi.

Observations of day to day life in Delhi and of feeling foreigner were some of the driving impulses behind the content of the works he made. The affinity and pleasure of a surface painted, organic human form gestural but contained within the edge of the frame. Composing a work in response to the place you are in and where you come from, similarities dissimilarities, experiencing self in a flux therefore once again reminded of home. In the production of meaning, this picture identity retained. On the open studio day the public space made by opening the privacy of the studio to the gaze of the Delhi public, by showing the pictures as hung on the wall with a sculptural figure form on the floor .The paper pulp sculpture expressively twisted turned with a linear volume took in the entire space of the studio.

### **Worktable and the Image**

Transforming a body/class into a sign indicates a correlation of a class ridden Indian society, Sumedh intended a project that highlighted this networking of how designated labour shares city building. The studio, with a permanent work table where partial ideas are realized in the proto type paper machetes and measured drawing of the sign, ordinarily called pig, boot, bridge, funnel, pipe, and bottle. Sumedh hired the services of (unknown) welders, iron smith to cut industrial sheets of iron, and then weld together the shape of the ordinary and the implied meaning. The meaning inset within the whole unit engineering by these skilled workers who are local practitioners at khirkee village. The construction: a digestive bridge cut hollow, the mouth of the pig sign makes crossover to the sacred studio/gallery space where art production is made. Sumedh has worked out strategies to bridge gaps.

Hierarchical welding of the image, fit reconstitutes the distance between Sumedh and his work. Iron is a metal that rusts when subjected to moisture. In self contained sculptural units projected outwards on the wall contains the conceptual schema of welding into the sign –possibilities and aims the various levels of meaning literal, social ,political. Each unit is a signifier, a visual to this correlation. The conceptual bite of the work lays the entire process of reaching the image in its material shape.

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