

## **Artists Statement Peers 2004**

### **Aastha Chauhan**

Munch, I heard the scream

Munch, we heard the scream

Munch, I felt the scream

"The scream" by Munch, has stayed in my head ever since I first saw it. It seemed to resonate the lunatic laughing in my head. I believe that we all have that paranoid Scream tucked away in our heads, we just choose not to acknowledge it. The painting disturbed me, it still does. I simply wanted to contaminate everyone around me with that disturbance.

### **Benitha Perciyal**

I came to Delhi with preconceived ideas in my mind and found that if I did what I had planned it would be just another replica of what other artist had already done...so the first week I spent visiting places and getting accustomed to the work environment.

At the studio, the space was very interesting to work with. The creepers surrounding the building, the trees with honeycomb, and wall corners with tiny spider webs were inspiring and I took images from them for my work.

I made a self-image of myself using sponge and rubber casting and fixed them over the tube light and then covered them with a layer of sponge and cotton to give the feel of a mothers womb as well as a coccum.... On the glass window, I fixed a self portrait of mine painted on handmade paper using glass colour, alongside pasted pasta with fevicol, which gave the feel of larvae. The daylight passing through the material was interesting and the variation of light depending on whether it was morning noon or night enhanced the picture....

I also stuck cotton on trees around the studio. Basically my work at KHOJ was a reflection of the connection between a mothers womb and a coccum, in the sense that that both are a safe and secure place and also a place of new birth to life ahead. It also draws a connection with the natural spider's web in the room and the cotton stuck on the trees, to say that the cycle maybe the same, but their manifestations are different as portrayed in the work.

### **Pradeep Mishra**

About the work: "Eternal love for eternal peace and harmony."

### **Sujoy**

During the Peers 2004 residency, besides interacting with fellow peers, getting to know each other's views, even literally fighting at times, and getting in touch with the artist community of Delhi I did four works using the book format, unfurling it for viewing (using the logistics of the folds as a pictorial strategy to hide things- an inherent part of my work) and at the end of the display closing it like a book and dismantling it from the wall (though not without a bit of trouble). I chose my working table as my site for installing my works. There was one calendar like comic book, a reconstructed endless column a book made out from cut outs of cold drink bottles and the left outs acting as stencils or moulds which carries a counter narrative to the sequence of bottles that unfurls as the endless column in the background (which are basically pages of the book that fits into the mould while closing) wall rising up from the table top that acts as the base creeping into the roof to create the neck movement, the physical aspect of looking associated with any huge object of the scale of the endless column (the limitations of the room negotiated to conceptualize the monumentality of the column), Mera Barat Mahan (issued in public interest) to Taste aisa chaya ki character fiska jaye? and the Banyan Tales hanging before my door.

Well my first book RED LIGHT revolves around the question of encounter the first encounter with a place, the unfamiliarity of it and the resulting confusions that it leads to and the resolving of it at the very end of the book- the folds acting as disguises which the viewer has to unfold to get to what is inside. The book revolves around the very misconception of thinking of a Red Light as a Red Light Area instead of a traffic signal (because in Kolkata we don't call a traffic signal as Red light), taking the very characteristic of linguistic signifiers, the arbitrary nature of naming objects as a slip to strip open my very own male gaze as made evident in the series of thoughts associated with it- of a Red Light Area near Garhi studios that got revealed in the book and also to point out to the Insensitivity of calling it (traffic signal) as Red light.

But there was another part to the whole story, by using Hindi dialects written in Bengali that made it undecipherable to the majority a way to consciously project my identity, and the very act of it (Hindi words in Bengali script) pointing out to the negotiations of talking in Hindi (reverting it because of that transference Hindi in Bengali script) and through that act bringing in myself the story teller donning the mantle of an interpreter (dobhasi) and use it as a platform to voice my concerns of retaining the hegemony of Hindi as a national language that at times seems to ignore the very diversity the multilingual aspect of our country which I try to discuss with my viewers in the guise of the interpreter while interpreting the Hindi dialects of my book to them. Instead of documenting this conversations giving it a permanency which written text or videotaping does leading to a certain kind of museum-ification, rather I want to keep it in SRUTI as a baithaki adda to the conjectural whims of the reader and just that.

### **Ashutosh Bharadwaj**

'MATRIX\_ - WE LOVE AMERICA , AMERICA LOVES US'

(an installation with a six minute looped animation projected on a news paper pasted wall, ladder, lights, ropes, painting on walls and floor, collage, digital prints.)

This installation tries to represent a situational dilemma of new emerging economies, ideas of nation and selfhood and an individual's struggle in trying to devise an identity, out of on the one hand, superficial promises of globalization, which is leading us towards a new global, imperialist, capitalist world and the other, leftovers and remembrances of the formation of a national identity keeping in mind the idealist alternatives of leaders like Gandhi. The paradox on the one hand of movements in nation building like non-cooperation and the other, the movement towards a globalized economy.

In trying to represent the process of globalization, and its visual vocabulary wherein one is constantly bombarded with images via the media, on the entrance gate I used a digital print with an image of a dog with binoculars around the neck with a red scarf. The dog is of the breed known as the 'pug' which suddenly became popular after the ads by a cellular phone company. The title of the installation had the reference from Joseph Beuy's performance 'I love America, America loves me'. The word Matrix refers to a craftfully created illusion which in light of the remaining title sets the tone and intention of the installation.

After entering through a silver passage you are led to a silver ladder lit up with a spot light at the bottom, but hanging from a thread and leading no where with the backdrop of three very subtly painted American flags over the band of parallel lines created with ropes. As you move on the left an optical design made by rope on an iron armature with silver painted wall in the background accompanies the six minute animation which is projected on the opposite wall pasted with newspaper. The animation features conceivable regular happenings on a daily basis on a crowded railway platform anywhere in India. As the viewer turns from here, the fourth wall is completely crimson with strips of paper on which pictures of fragmented legs running are pasted over in a pyramidal order against the parallel ropes and American flags. Here an old torn history book page can be seen in dim light depicting Gandhi's spectacles.