

## Critic Note

### **C.K. Rajan , Hyderabad**

C.K.'s work comprised of writing the names of a host of students of J.N.U. on small stone pieces, especially of the students from the "School of Arts and Aesthetics". Resembling an almost ritualistic motif the stones were dipped in black paint and allowed to dry. Intricate names were painted on the stones with silver paint. The stones were placed on the base of a flagstaff.

### **Subba Ghosh, New Delhi**

Subba's involvement with the residency was right from the conceptual beginning of the Program. To Quote his statement from the concept note that was circulated right at the beginning "we in Khoj would like to propose in this residency a pursuance of public art where the site specificity transcends from being a mere spatio-physical intervention to becoming an extension of the community within which the project will be situated " almost acted as the curatorial byline and the springboard to locating rest of the ideas and works. Using images of the working staff of J.N.U. and adding their name and designation he printed large (4.5 feet by 3 feet) flex prints, framed them and installed them on the Open Day.

Another piece he created was a video projection piece, which had different persons of JNU (students + staff) giving small opinions to the question " What is Life". The piece had a strong lyrical quality with a whole host of opinions from different personalities pouring out in a movie slideshow. Projected on a screen straight in front of the Central Administrative Department the work spatially subverted the insurmountable institutional control panel with a very human and felt composition.

### **Mandy Ridley, Australia**

Initially quite bedazzled with the campus and it's internal dynamics she finally narrowed down on a very intimate set rocks mostly used by University residents to catch the sun during the winter months. Commissioning a traditional carver to engrave the word intimacy in various scripts like Hindi, Arabic, Spanish, English she created a composition, which was really discreet and meant to be viewed almost accidentally. The work final was of an eternal nature...engraved on granite amidst the peripheral foliage. Also the interface established between the linguistics faculty was a very helpful one in terms of the wider outreach of the program. During the time of the residency since a studio space had been allotted she also carried out a exhibition of her prints that were more of a cross between embroidery and print work executed in subdued pinks, blues and greens of appealing designs. Her initial training as a Graphic Designer basically co-ordinated most of her output, with referrals between syntaxes, fonts, pure design and Space.

### **Probir Gupta, Delhi**

Pulling connections from media, communications and semi pedagogical discourse Probir's work for the display was constituted of some telephone sets.... wrapped in newspaper, erected on stands also covered with newspapers with small framed pamphlets. Being involved with certain activist groups from JNU, Probir's enquiry in issues already had a set history... so the final work/ installation entitled

"Can you hear me" provided a engaging osmotic flux of mass mediatic information literally superimposed on a communication device.

### **Anupam Sud, Delhi**

Anupam utilised the medium of a superbly large canvas to capture the contour of old J.N.U. maternal peon after carrying the Canvas out into a busy gathering ground of the university and asking the students to write in " anything" they wished. From her own personal practice it marked a heavily radical shift to be able to co-ordinate a painterly composition over an entirely "graffiti" covered canvas.

### **M.J.Enas, New Delhi**

Enas from the very start had an agenda to clear to construct a "monumental" Sculpture. Choosing a path running through a huge linking space between various departments and the library he laboriously went about constructing a Bridge, which would run over this path. Literally a bridge was constructed that led to nowhere.... starting from one side the other side rose up into the air again from the ground. Right in the center of this figure was placed a monumentally large and imposing figure holding an open book and looking skywards. With the backdrop of the huge University Library directly behind it produced a very striking icon of the internal confrontation between intuition and existing available knowledge body.

### **Arun Kumar H.G. New Delhi**

In the same Vein as Enas, Arun Kumar's composition was aimed as a full and proper sculpture in the open area of the campus. But using a very unused area filled with overgrowth he constructed a bed of broken construction brick. Employing the strategy of optical illusion the bed appeared as a mysterious, almost pagan, relic amidst the overgrowth and shrubs till one goes close to it. Also unlike a "bed" per se it created more distaste from close quarters with its totally jagged and uninviting contours. The piece also lent itself beautifully to be worked upon by Natural elements like rain and vegetation creating an environmentally and spatially proactive composition, which would evolve with time and climate. It also incited a lot of curiosity from the passing by traffic of people towards the intention and the mind behind such a conceptualisation.

### **Ahmad Nassar, Egypt / Palestine**

Trained as a traditional sculptor and carver ...Ahmed used the residency project to delve in to the use of newer material specific to the area. Deciding on Bamboo a material he had never interacted before he decided on a skeletal structure. The Initial 3 weeks were spent in navigating the campus locating a spot which would aesthetically support such a structure...exploring even some bizarre options like the top a of huge water tank etc. The internal Administrative structure within the University proved to be a formidable monolith, which in a sense finally helped concretise Ahmads final work. In all the administrative departments there was a unique chair model, which was instituted to seat persons waiting for the admin procedure to transpire. Ahmad used this chair and elevated it to a superhuman level using Bamboo stilts. Formalising a solidly minimalist composition harbouring on the absurd...it's final placement during the Open Day straight in front the Central Administrative Block created the perfect subversive element. The image per se was in fact used as an iconic symbol for the outreach literature.

### **Vitaly Pushnitsky, St.- Petersburg**

Though not an artist specifically engaged in the arena of "Public Art" prior to the residency...Vitaly's grasp of the University was quick and precise. His methodology bordered on a cold precise spatial calculative demeanour but the work itself was so sensitively placed and executed that this added an indefinable methodical insanity to the concept.

Vitaly had located the most un-utilised space on the campus. The spot was an architectonic cavity existing at the corner of building running up the entire vertical plane of the 5-storied building. His Composition entitled "Steps to Heaven" was composed through plain tube lights placed as the rungs of a ladder with the main struts re-constituted by steel cables. Plugged from the main power line of the building the composition would come alive after dusk as a hypnotic as steps going into the heavens. Even the formal element of the tube light (when taken out of context of a internal space) serving as a beam of light stuck in a limbo going against the constants of time and space enabled metaphoric imaginings of a visible path to notional heavens using gateway which pauses the inherent values of time and space.

### **Artemio, Mexico city**

Artemio brought in the very contemporary aesthetic of Public Art bordering on the absurd but always incubating a very subversive anti-authoritarian streak. Initially after quickly profiling the University Artemio started with a plan to have a guerrilla sticker campaign. But also simultaneously absorbing the site and sounds of New Delhi he went on to do a project involving Indian currency notes. The message itself was absolutely meaningless derived by literally translating Mexican phrases into the Hindi script, these messages he had made into innumerable rubberstamp, which people could take with them. On the Open Day the work was presented on the entry porch of the Central Library with all the rubber stamps heaped on a mat with plain instructions to the audience to stamp their currency notes. He had researched and discovered the legality of the procedure so the currency itself would still not be dysfunctional after stamping. The intensity and the naivety of the idea was so classic as here was a Artist looking at the currency note as a part of the Public Domain and facilitating a subverted intervention whereby the final recipient of the work can never ever be marked and known as the currency note itself will constantly be in circulation. The idea was classic with the artist looking at the currency note as a part of the Public Domain and facilitating a subverted intervention whereby the final recipient of the work can never ever be marked and known since the currency note will constantly be in circulation.

Hemant Sreekumar