



“TO EXHIBIT  
AND PROMOTE  
ART OF  
THE PRESENT”



Installation view, Gallery Maskara

## FOREWORD

Gallery Maskara was inaugurated on March 15th 2008 with a compelling mission to take a global and multidisciplinary approach to art that responds to the cultural fabric of our time, thus fueling critical dialogue, collaboration and public engagement. Simply put its mandate is to exhibit and promote art of the present.

The project space is strategically located in the heart of downtown Mumbai on 3rd Pasta lane in Colaba, and functions as a hub for the exploration of emerging ideas in contemporary art. This freestanding building served as a cotton godown during India's pre-independent era and has been renovated by noted conservation architect *Rahul Mehrotra* to maintain its historic character. With 45-foot ceiling height and walls that run 100-feet in length, this cavernous space marks a shift from the typical white cube neutral space and is raw yet flexible, making the building extremely well-suited for contemporary art practices.

In the pages that follow, it is my pleasure and privilege to present all that has transpired at the gallery over the past year starting with a month long residency with *Max Streicher* and ending with a solo show by *Narendra Yadav*. During the course of the year, we previewed a seminal work by *Jitish Kallat*, introduced brave new voices like *Peter Buggenhout*, *Fernanda Chieco*, *Felipe Cama*, *Mansoor Ali*, *Nina Pandolfo*, and *T.Venkanna*. These artists were invited from across the globe: Canada, Belgium, Brazil and from various parts of India. While their works found a home with worthy collectors in France, Netherlands, United Kingdom, Brazil, United States of America and India.

From colossal kinetic inflatables to small format line drawings, from sculptures made with household dust to those made with polished steel, from paintings hanging on the wall to installations suspended from the roof, from still images to still moving images, from graffiti on the gallery wall to graffiti on the city wall, we did it all this past year. These works stirred the imagination and stimulated spontaneous reactions from both the six year old as well as the seasoned collector.

You may not have loved everything we showed or seen everything we loved, yet we did our best to touch you, as we moved you through the magic of visual art.

Thank you for being part of this incredible journey and I hope you will join us for another exciting year ahead

Abhay Maskara  
Curatorial Director

MAX STREICHER

**Breathe**

March 15 to June 15, 2008



Silenus, 2002  
Nylon spinnaker, electric blowers,  
Each figure 312 in (792.5cm), edition of six

Collection: Bose Krishnamachari (ed. 4/6), Mumbai



"My intention is to overwhelm the gallery space and impose on the viewer a sense of scale like a toddler might experience. I am attempting to recreate a situation like that of childhood encounters with humongous snow banks or haystacks; structures that invite a physical exuberance which in turn leads the imagination..."

*Max Streicher*

*Silenus (detail)*



Conditional Man, 2008  
Spinnaker, electric blowers, flexible duct  
Each figure 72 in (182.9 cm), edition of six

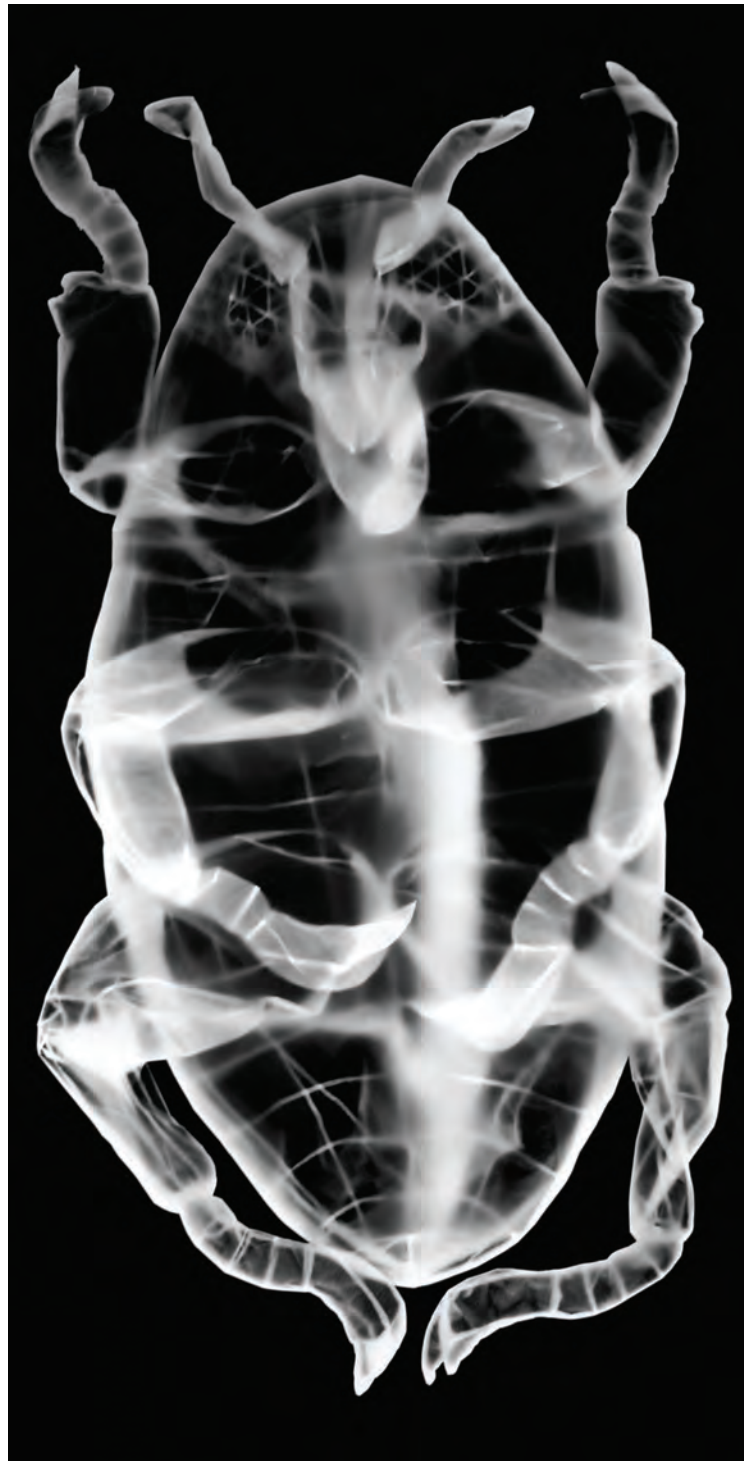


Putti, 2008  
Nylon spinnaker, electric blowers, flexible duct  
36 in (91.4 cm), edition of six

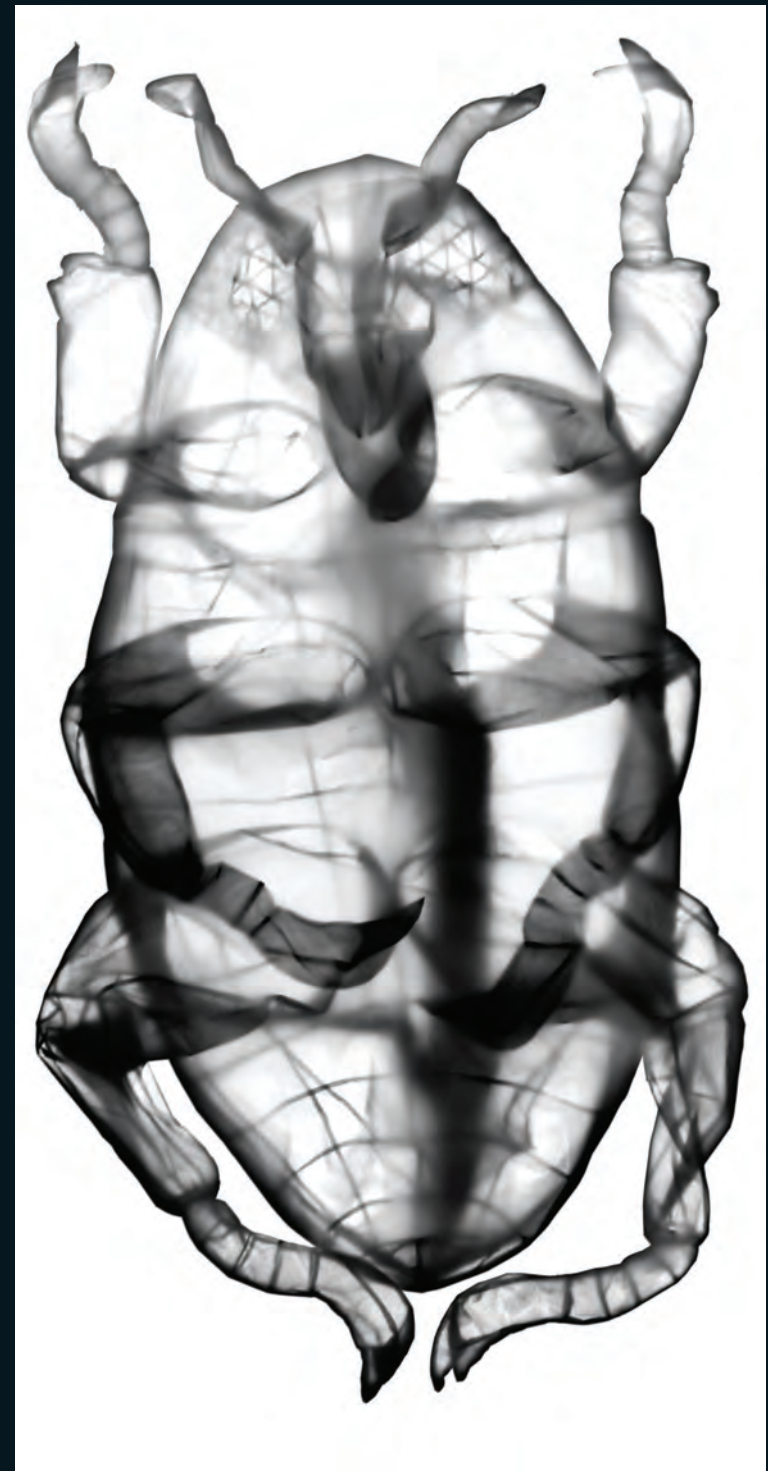
Collection: Stephanie Darty (ed. 1/6), Paris  
Sanjeev Khandekar (ed. 2/6), Mumbai

These images are created by positioning deflated and flattened figures directly on a large format photographic paper and exposing them to light. The seams, the result of Streicher's inflatable fabrication process, create lines that read as various internal systems - musculature, nerves, and veins. These images have the mysterious and puzzling appearance of some unconventional imaging source, of an ultrasound perhaps, or the x-ray of ancient mummified corpse

*Gordon Hatt*



Dung Beetle Photogram, 2008  
44 x 23 in (111.8 x 58.4 cm), edition of five + AP



Dung Beetle Photogram, 2008  
44 x 23 in (111.8 x 58.4 cm), edition of five + AP

*Collection: Rahul Jhaveri (ed. 1/5), Mumbai*



Romulus and Remus, 2005  
Nylon spinnaker, electric blowers, flexible duct  
Each figure 36 in (91.4 cm), edition of six

Generally inflatables are an expression of naive optimism. In an art context they signal popular culture, anti-art and irony. I play with and against these expectations. The movement of air within them recalls our own sensation of breath and of breathlessness. Thus, the force that animates the work is the same elemental, powerful and tenuous force that animates us. These works are as much about deflation as inflation; as much about absence, shrinking and vulnerability as they are about the robust occupation of space. My work with the inflatable medium is about moving the viewer from a playful and ironic headspace toward a physical connection to his or her most vital forces

*Max Streicher*





"The mammoth 7 meter long sculpture 'Aquasaurus' is a life-size recreation of a water tanker (commonly used in Mumbai for supplying water to those parts of the city that suffer from acute water shortage) with simulated bones, as if it were the re-structured remains of a prehistoric specie and displayed in a Natural History Museum. 'Aquasaurus', with its enormous vertebral column and serpentine tail is placed in the gallery like a dominant monster, yet rendered as a victim, attacked in the crossfire of a sectarian riot; or the abandoned carcass of an antiquated automobile in the fast-changing Indian streetscape."

*Jitish Kallat*

Previewed at Gallery Maskara, Aquasaurus was one of the key works in Jitish Kallat's solo show at Haunch of Venison Zurich that opened on 31st May 2008



Aquasaurus (detail)

## PETER BUGGENHOUT

### Res Derelictae II

July 18, 2008 – September 7, 2008

The Belgian artist Peter Buggenhout started his career as a painter and drawer. In 1989 his paintings exploded into 3D. Since then Buggenhout has been creating sculptures with twisted intestines of cows and horses, sculptures with dust titled *'The Blind Leading the Blind'* and sculptures with "abject" material like blood and hair, called 'Gorgo'.

The intestine-sculptures have a specific texture which reminds subtly to the canvas of painting. These cocoon-like sculptures look as if painting has crawled in itself. Since 2003 Peter Buggenhout has been creating dust-sculptures. They look like ant's nests, textiles in 3D or fragile meteorites that have crashed into the exhibition space. Often the notion of dust is interpreted as a residue or by-product, which is at the same time a vital layer of our simultaneously condensed and elastic 'imagined' reality. Dust connects the danger and violence of repression and the subtlety of transformation in the art of Peter Buggenhout.

Buggenhout's art is a solidification and standstill of undulating, pulsing and swarming movements. It is never clear whether his sculptures and installations, stuck together and expanded, have really got started or already reached their end some time ago. Peter Buggenhout's art presents a nostalgic memory, an imagination of a futuristic and visionary presence, always in extension. He introduces a contemporary approach of the "spirit" on an affective-pre-cognitive and analogue way. Even though Peter Buggenhout's art has been created with abject material, the artwork itself cannot be called abject anymore. The artwork does not reject (something), but it does not create nostalgia or utopia either.

In the legal tradition 'res derelictae' is used for abandoned assets or as Peter Buggenhout calls them: objects owned by nobody. Examples of res derelictae are: waste material, but also inventions and artistic creations, frequencies of the broadcast spectrum, subsurface minerals and orbital spaces.

Excerpts from text 'Peter Buggenhout, Res Derelictae II' (2008) by Sofie Van Loo

Sofie Van Loo is a freelance curator, art critic and guest lecturer at the Higher Institute of Fine Arts (Ghent, Belgium). She is currently a PhD candidate at the Faculty of Sociology, Catholic University of Leuven/Louvain (Belgium) on contemporary art. She curated this show along with Abhay Maskara.

The Blind Leading the Blind # 12, 2007  
Plaster and disposable material covered with household dust  
Height 28 x 24.5 x 64.5 in (71.1 x 62.2 x 163.8 cm)

The Blind Leading the Blind # 15, 2007  
Mixed media and disposable material covered with household dust.  
Height 24.5 x 38 x 48 in (62.2 x 96.5 x 121.9 cm)





Installation view, Gallery Maskara

"Culture is the enormous rolling machine  
that gives order and structure to our world  
by pushing lots of things to the borders.  
This rolling machine leaves masses of rubbish,  
debris and dust behind,  
pushes it to the left and the right.  
It's up to the artist to regenerate and transform debris  
so that it can be handled more easily  
and give birth to hope bringing matter"

*Peter Buggenhout*

The Blind Leading the Blind # 26, 2008  
*Mixed media and disposable material covered with household dust*  
*Height 53 x 65.5 x 59 in (134.6 x 166.4 x 149.9 cm)*

*Collection: Charles Saatchi, UK*







The Blind Leading the Blind #24, 2008  
Mixed media and disposable material covered with household dust  
Height 48 x 76 x 56 in (121.9 x 193 x 142.2 cm)

Collection: Dr. Vivek Tandon, UK



Eskimo Blues 2, 1999  
Specially treated cow's stomachs  
Height 39.4 x 29.5 x 57 in (100 x 75 x 145 cm)

Collection: Charles Saatchi, UK



Gorgo #4, 2005  
Horsehair, blood over a core of disposable material.  
Height 32.7 x 58.3 x 36.2 in (83x 148 x 92 cm)

Collection: Charles Saatchi, UK



Gorgo # 14, 2007  
Blood and hair over a trash structure  
Height 49.8 x 63.8 x 34.7 in (126.5 x 162 x 88 cm)

Collection: Charles Saatchi, UK





The Blind Leading the Blind # 21, 2007  
Household dust and hair over a trash structure  
46 x 41.3 x 72.4 in (117 x 105 x 184 cm)

Collection: Charles Saatchi, UK

MANSOOR ALI  
FELIPE CAMA  
FERNANDA CHIECO  
NARENDRA YADAV  
T. VENKANNA

**Loosentiefirst**  
Sept 24th to Oct 29th 2008



**MANSOOR ALI**

*Dance of Democracy, 2008*  
*Discarded wooden chairs*  
*Height 168 x 96 x 96 in (426.7 x 243.8 x 243.8 cm)*

*Collection: Charles Saatchi, UK*



"The intent behind my sculptural articulations is to engage with questions of faith and violence in an ever intensifying communal climate of the nation. As a result a quest and an urge for humanitarian values were and still are central to my sculptural explorations".

*Mansoor Ali*

Alliance II, 2008  
Wood and steel  
Height 72 x 30 x 36 in  
(182.9 x 76.2 x 91.4 cm)

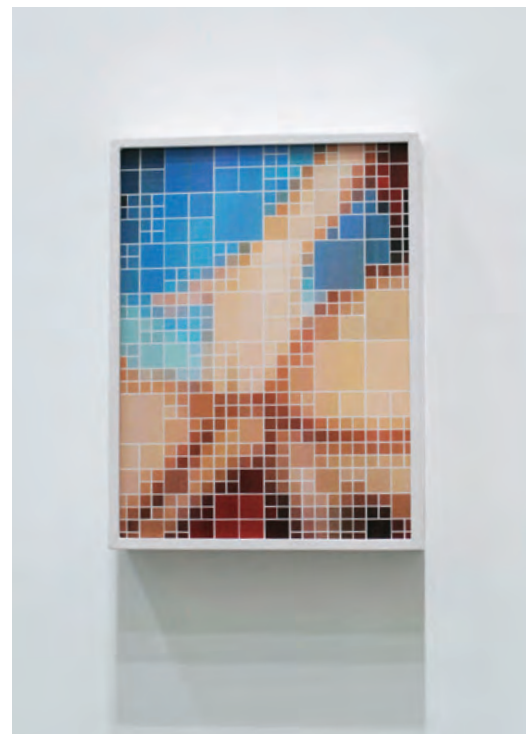
Collection: Jeet Banerjee, Kolkata

Alliance I, 2008  
Wood  
Height 65.5 x 42.5 x 41 in  
(166.4 x 108 x 104.1 cm)

Collection: Sree Goswami, Mumbai

FELIPE CAMA

Clockwise from top left:  
Japa, Honey, Delicia, Baby Doll  
Lenticular prints, edition of three + AP  
15 x 11 cm (38.1 x 27.9 cm)



"My work emerges from images that I receive in my e-mail. Through a special software developed for this purpose, I extract the binary code of a jpeg image. From this 1 and 0 sequence, something like the digital DNA I get this constructive geometric images where you don't know if they came from porno or from original classics paintings."

*Felipe Cama*

## FERNANDA CHIECO

"I write stories or statements using drawings instead of alphabets. Human figures are represented in line drawings.... In my work, the human body is a closed organic system that provides all necessary functions that the environment needs it to perform".

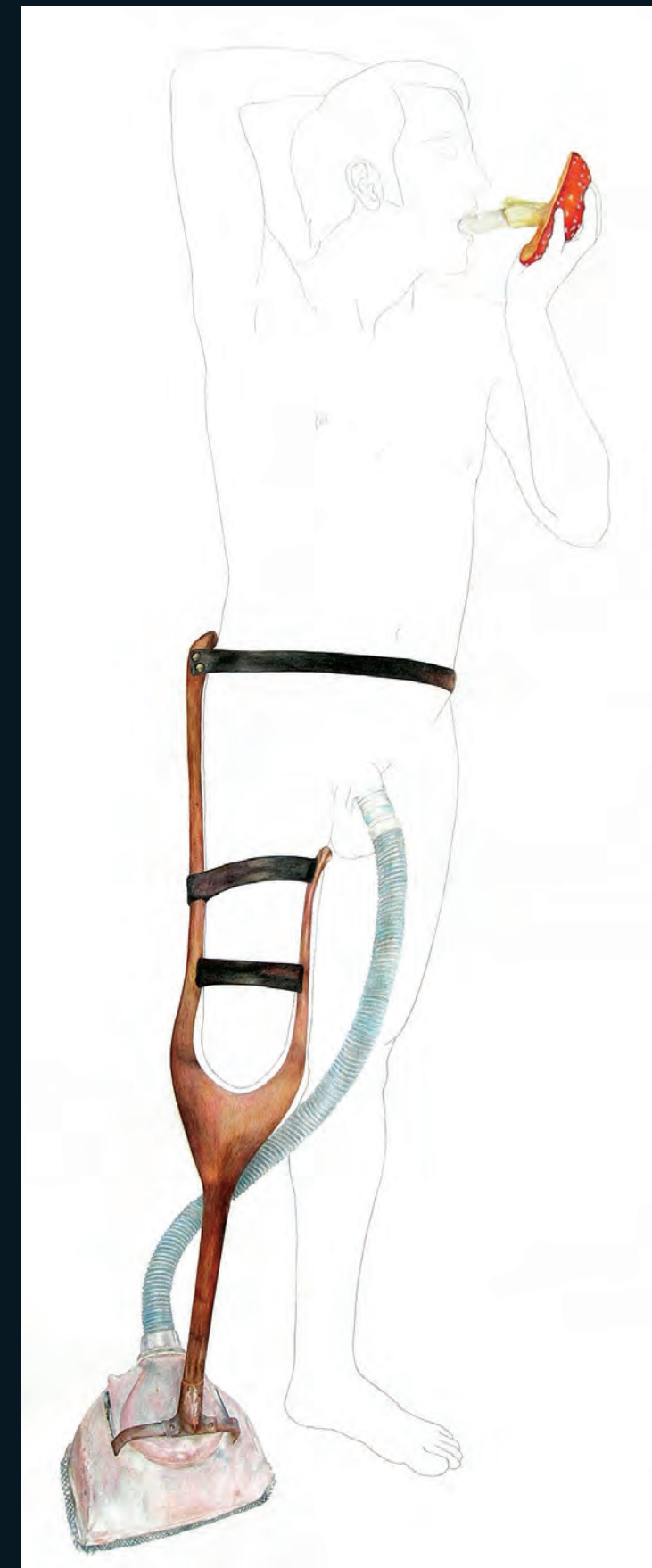
'Professionals' is an ongoing series of drawings that depict people engaged in a given activity as a source of livelihood. A professional is a worker required to possess a large body of knowledge derived from extensive experience and study. S/he can be a person engaged in a specified activity as one's main occupation and sometimes it is also used to indicate a special level of quality of goods or tools. The people presented in this series are all representatives of their professions, each creating a self-sustained system of production. There are four professionals so far presented in this show and each performs a specific function:

*The Mushroomer* is a professional in producing fly agarics: The professional pumps up debris that accumulate inside his testicles and bladder. A body reaction to the debris infiltration makes his oral mucous glands produce a sort of fungus that looks like an egg covered in the white warty material. As the mushroom grows, red colour appears through the broken veil while the cap turns hemispherical.

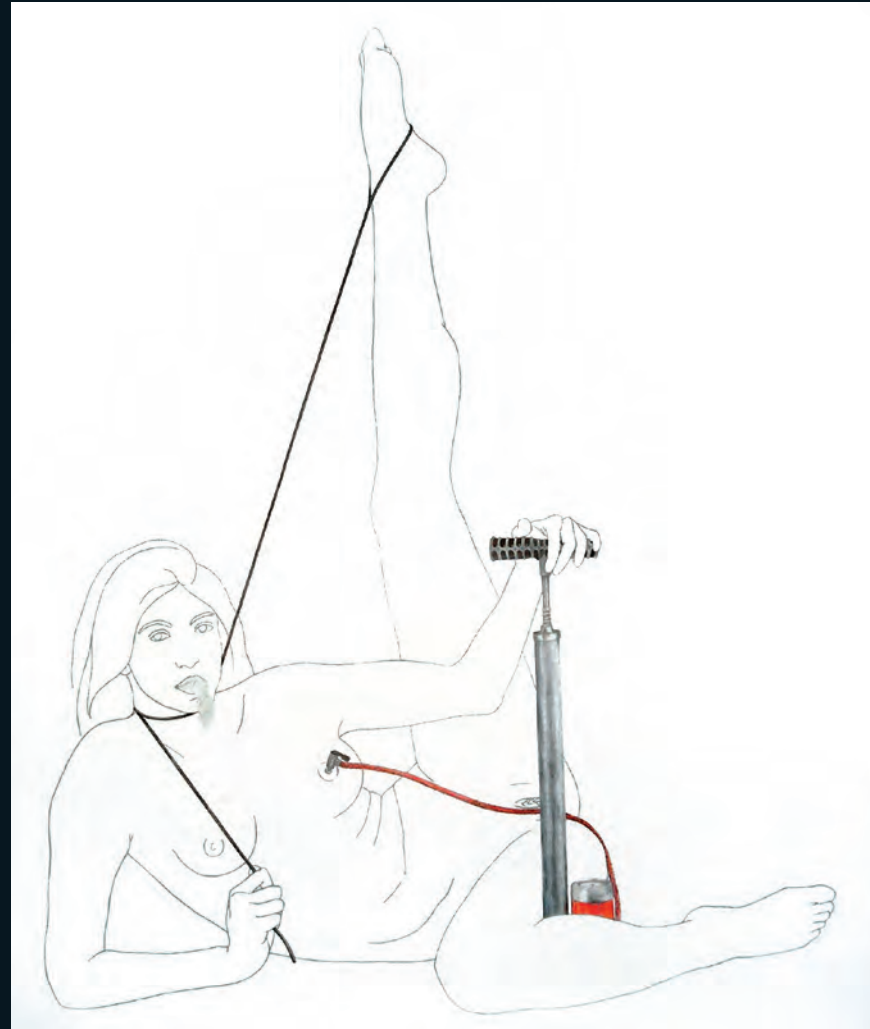
*The Creamer* is a professional in producing whipped cream: A breastfeeding woman strangles herself while pumping up air into her breast. The air pressure added to the carotid sinus reflex pumps soft whipped-cream from her mouth.

*The Maggoter* is a professional in producing healthy maggots: Flies breeders place eggs into the incubator, which is the woman's anus. After a while, the egg shells break and little maggots crawl into her buttocks for rest and grow. She then gently pushes her buttock muscles in order to direct the growing maggots to crawl in her legs towards her feet, from where they come out big and healthy.

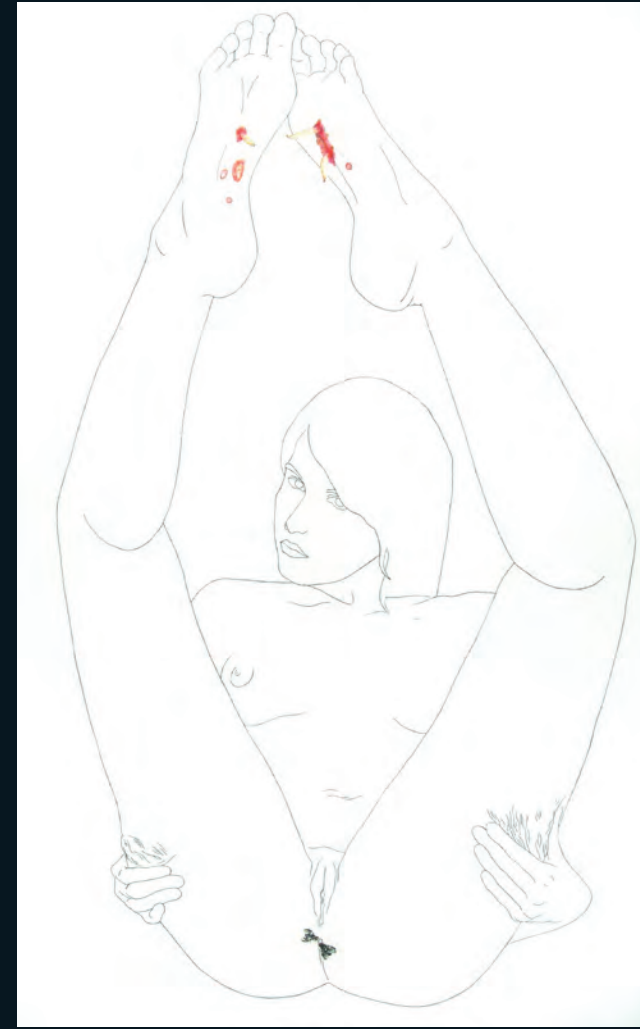
*The Beller* is a professional in producing the sound of a bell: The professional swallows a rope on which a clapper is attached. From the movement of her hips and a proper regulation of the rope's length she produces an accurate sound of the bell.



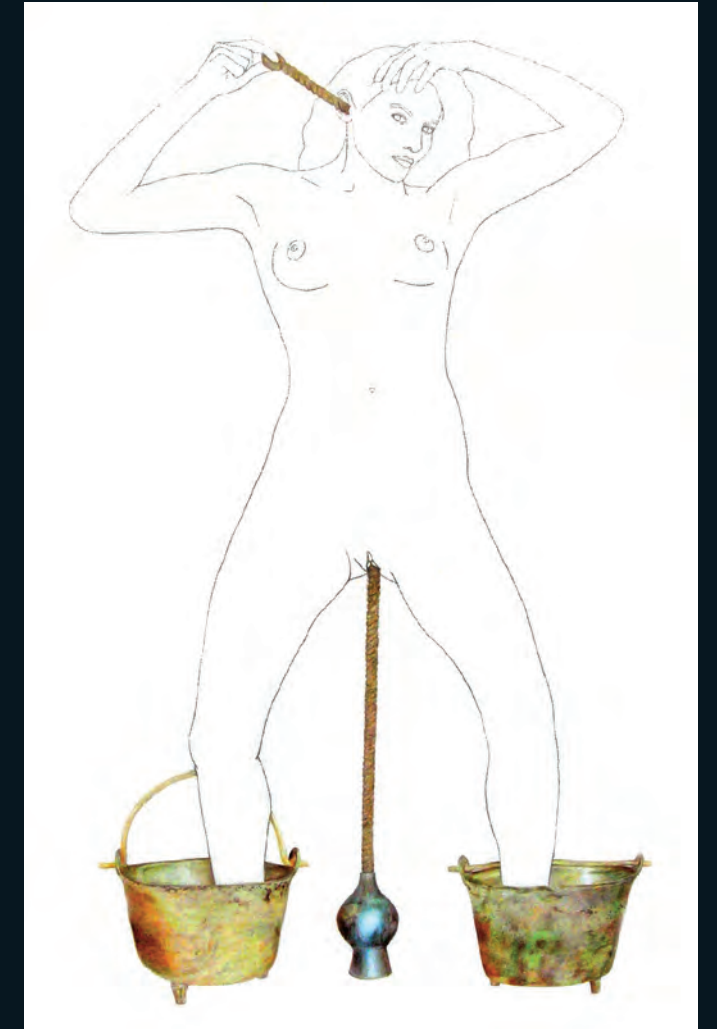
*The Mushroomer*, 2007  
Graphite and color pencil on paper  
77 x 32.5 in (195.6 x 82.6 cm)



The Creamer, 2007  
Graphite and color pencil on paper  
56.5 x 47.5 in (143.5 x 120.7 cm)



The Maggoter, 2007  
Graphite and color pencil on paper  
52.5 x 35 in (133.4 x 88.9 cm)



The Beller, 2007  
Graphite and color pencil on paper  
64 x 44.5 in (162.6 x 113 cm)

Collection: Srila Chatterjee, Mumbai

**NARENDRA YADAV**

In '*Perpetual Need of the Other Even if Virtual*', two fans are placed to depict autoerotism. Paper fan which requires airflow for its movement is rotating in front of a static electrical table fan. Visually it shows that the other is not needed at the same time it gives an indirect suggestion about the presence of 'the other' in an imagined or virtual avatar i.e. in the act of autoerotism itself.

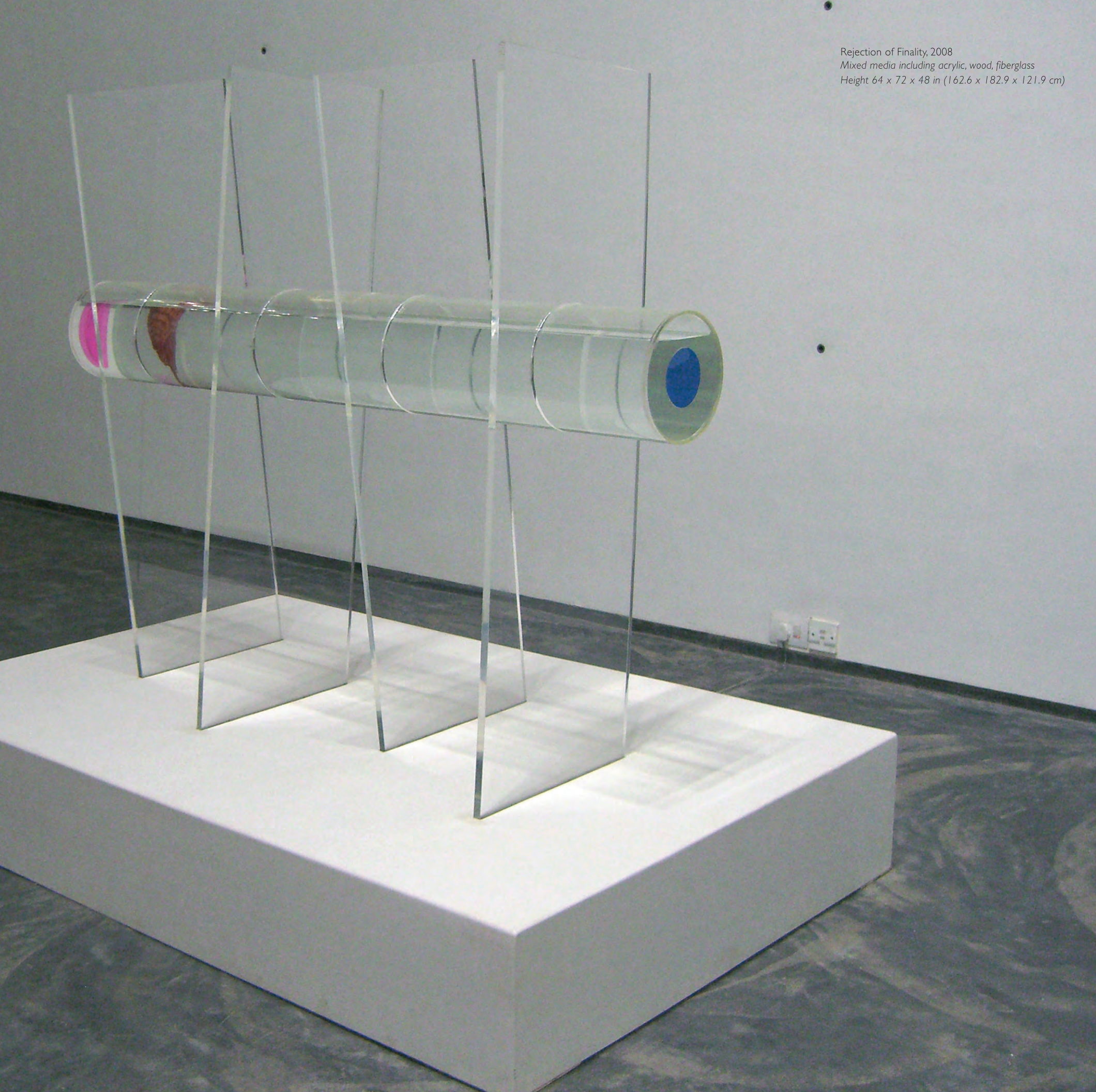
The scientific looking installation in '*Rejection of Finality*' takes a look at the in-between spectrum that exists in real life between two genders while in '*Chickenpox*' the artist explores a phenomenon which typically happens once in a lifetime. A condition similar to love glamorized visually.



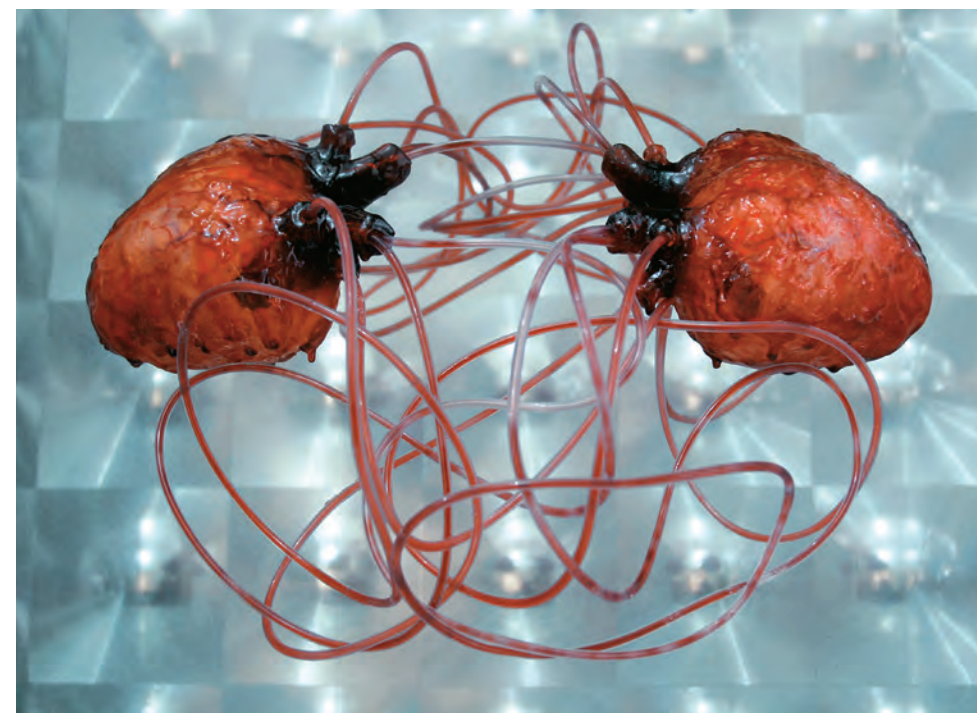
*Perpetual Need of the Other Even if Virtual*, 2008  
Stainless steel, motor, celluloid print, electric wire  
60 x 42 x 15 in (152.5 x 106.7 x 38.1 cm)



Rejection of Finality, 2008  
Mixed media including acrylic, wood, fiberglass  
Height 64 x 72 x 48 in (162.6 x 182.9 x 121.9 cm)



Rejection of Finality (detail)



Chickenpox (detail)

Chickenpox, 2007  
Mixed media including fiberglass, wood, motor  
Height 61.5 x 32.5 x 29 (156.2 x 82.6 x 73.7 cm)

Collection: Private, Mumbai

T. VENKANNA

The predominant subject in Venkanna's works has been sexual imagination, which questions and confronts the stereotypical ways in which sexuality is understood and defined. Continuous persistence with this subject has stimulated his interest to explore image-making in all kinds of medium. Venkanna's most important linguistic device is the integration of the personal and the social using material/medium as per the subject's requirement with complete freedom and ease.

"The sexual behavior of human beings is habituated by the societal norms and conditions. I believe it is due to this, that sexual fantasy gains importance in a human being's life and an individual achieves extreme pleasure out of this simple act of day-dreaming, wherein s/he escapes from the harsh realities of this world/society via an undisturbed and uninterrupted flight of imagination.

In this endeavor of mine, I also have been (re)presenting certain imageries/ motifs taken from artists of yester years [like Hockney, Rousseau, Mondrian etc.] as well as from specific forms of traditional art. The political and social contexts underlying these works are quite different. I represent these imageries according to my idea, in the process critically evaluating the norms and terms that exist within contemporary society"

T. Venkanna



Golden Hair and Black Hair, 2006  
Mixed media and pubic hair on canvas  
72 x 48 in (182.9 x 121.9 cm)



I Made an Innocent Frog, 2007  
Mixed media on canvas  
36 x 48 in (91.4 x 121.9 cm)

Collection: Private, Mumbai



David Hockney  
A Bigger Splash, 1967



Henri Rousseau  
*The Sleeping Gypsy, 1897*

**T. VENKANNA**

*Dream in Dream, 2007*  
Oil on canvas (diptych)  
60 x 102 in ( 152.4 X 259 cm)

Collection: Charles Saatchi, UK



MY DREAM NEVER COMES TRUE

BUT MY PESSIMISM

Dream in Dream





Henri Rousseau  
*The Sleeping Gypsy*, 1897

**T. VENKANNA**

*Two Moon*, 2007  
Oil on canvas  
72 x 60 in (182.9 x 152.4 cm)

Collection: Charles Saatchi, UK





Garland, 2006  
Mixed media on canvas (diptych)  
48 x 96 in (122 x 243.9 cm)

Collection: Private, Mumbai





I am Inside not Outside, 2007  
Mixed media on canvas (diptych)  
60 x 72 in (152.4 x 182.9 cm)

Collection: Dr Vivek Tandon, UK



Untitled, 2006  
Mixed media on canvas  
60 x 36 in (152.4 x 91.4 cm)

Collection: Private, Mumbai

NINA PANDOLFO

**Between Us**

November 14th to December 31st 2008



The Other Side of the Rainbow, 2008  
77 x 63 in (195.6 x 160 cm)  
Spray and mixed media on canvas

Clockwise from top:  
Fruit Salad, 2008  
Close Your Eyes, 2008  
Thank You for Flying With Me, 2008



Spray and mixed media on canvas  
each 77 x 63 in (195.6 x 160 cm)





Untitled, 2008  
33 x 50 feet (10 x 15.2 meters)  
Graffiti and mixed media on gallery wall







Graffiti on pump house  
 (From left Apnavi Thacker, Nina Pandolfo, Os Gemeos)  
 Nov 19, 2008. Marine Drive, Mumbai, India



Graffiti on facade of Gallery Maskara  
 Nina Pandolfo  
 Nov 11, 2008. Mumbai, India



T. VENKANNA

For Identity

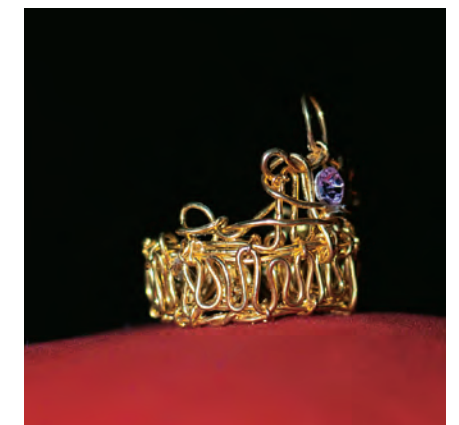
January 14 to February 22, 2008



Too Big too Small, 2008 (installation view, Gallery Maskara)  
Papier maché and gold  
25 x 9 feet (7.6 x 2.7 meters)



Too Big too Small, 2008 (front installation view)  
Papier maché and gold  
25 x 9 feet (7.6 x 2.7 meters)



Golden crown on pedestal  
2 cm diameter



A maiden glance at T.Venkanna's works leaves the viewer bewildered and bemused. Such a feeling arises primarily, owing to the fact that, he effortlessly oscillates between the two dominant pictorial modes, the *aggressive* and the *lyrical*, which in critical art language have come to connote masculine and feminine.

By using the aggressive mode, like in the charcoal works, he invokes feelings of anxiety together with eroticism. While, in the pen and ink drawings he employs the lyrical mode, which also carries, implications of the sensuous and the sinuous. He completely subverts these categories and compels the viewer to restructure the way they engage with and read his works. By juxtaposing these linguistic modes, he flouts the notion of aesthetic taste and aesthetic pleasure derived from works of art.

By the time, one comes to terms with this aspect of Venkanna's works; one feels once more 'deceived', by the fact that, the artist thwarts any desire on the part of the viewer to understand the works by reducing them to one single meaning. Even though the works, primarily, revolve around the subject of sexual imagination, sexual fantasy and the perpetual, unbounded desire for such pleasure, they also, subtly question the socially constructed notions about masculinity. The artist plods the blurred line between voyeurism and the hidden fantasies of the male. To fully identify with

this observation one has to engage with the multiple pictorial tactics he employs in his works.

Venkanna locates the medium of drawing as an appropriate idiom via which he can express his artistic concerns. Further, his 'self' and 'body' serve as the central trope by which he articulates this. He neither poses himself as an objective observer nor romanticizes thematic anxieties. He brings into play de-formed bodies and uses rather in-significant appearing motifs as substitutes of erotic symbols. This assemblage of innumerable images, layered one upon another, implicate the complex nature of his artistic inquiry.

In fact, by means of the labyrinthine character of his pictorial world, he does not accommodate the viewers or grant them an easy condition to consume his works. The camouflaged surfaces map the massive detour of our sexual fantasies and the desire to escape the constraints of a repressive society.

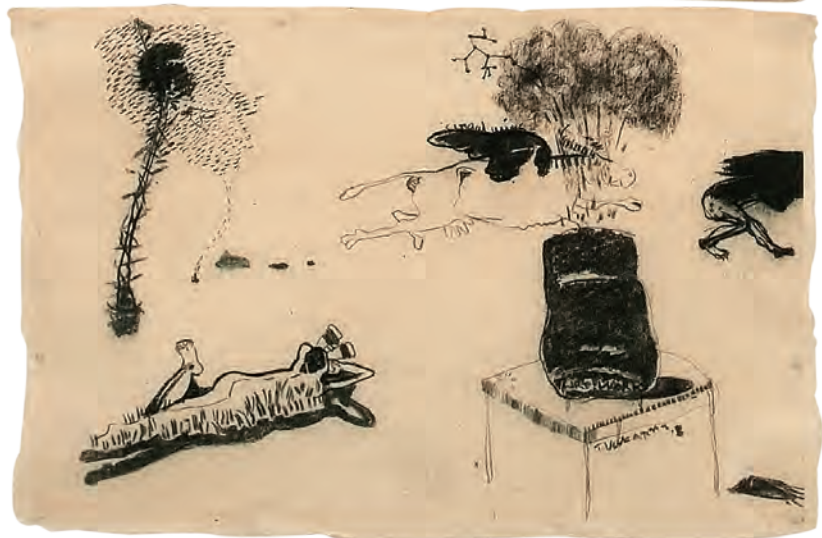
For instance, the installation consisting of a small and a big crown has no functional value. Yet it traps the onlooker's imagination by its sheer scale and materiality. It is here that the relevance of his work is exemplified; an attempt to (re)present sexuality outside the ambit of hegemonic contention, and to problematize the structure of power operating through representation itself.

Abha Sheth  
Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi



For Identity, 2008  
Charcoal and ink on rice paper pasted on canvas  
83 x 62 in (210.8 x 157.5 cm)

Collection: Maximiliano Modesti, Paris



From top left to right:  
Virus  
Star in the Day  
Spicy Bottle  
Flame  
Boat in Hand  
Fire Box

All charcoal on rice paper, 2008  
21 x 32 in (53.3 x 81.3 cm) each

Collection: Various Private, Mumbai



Hybrid, 2008  
Charcoal and collage on rice paper pasted on canvas  
63 x 43 in (160 x 109.2 cm)



\*art not F\*\*\* 2008  
Charcoal and collage on rice paper pasted on canvas  
27 x 70 in (68.6 x 177.8 cm)



Suck Fuck, 2008  
Charcoal and ink on rice paper pasted on canvas  
45 x 63 in (114.3 x 160 cm)



C Bond, 2008  
 Charcoal on rice paper pasted on canvas  
 45 x 63 in (114.3 x 160 cm)



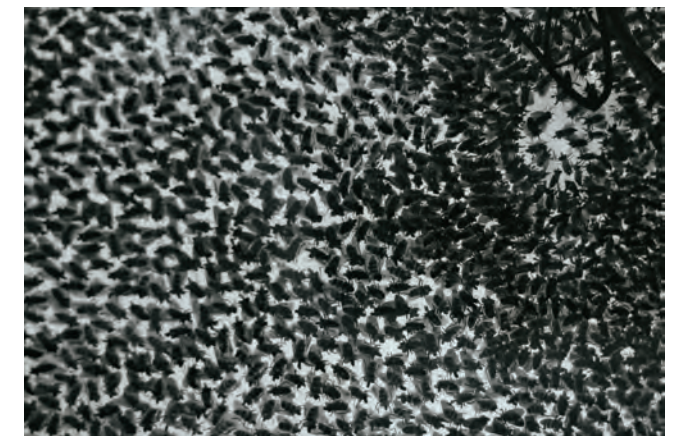
Naughty Nighty at Night, 2008  
 Charcoal on rice paper pasted on canvas  
 63 x 42 in (160 x 106.7 cm)



Ketchup in Kitchen, 2008  
Charcoal and ink on rice paper pasted on canvas  
63 x 44 in (160 x 111.8 cm)



I am Not a Fly, 2008  
Indian ink and gold leaf on paper  
90 x 66 in (228.6 x 167.6 cm)

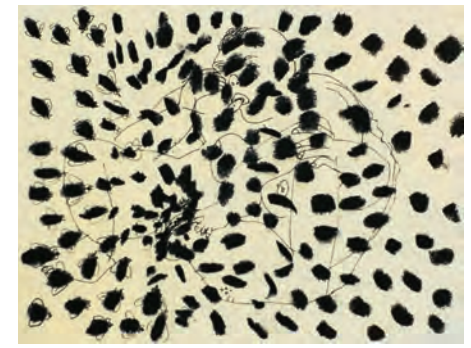
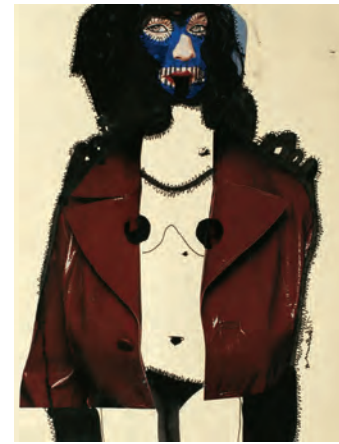
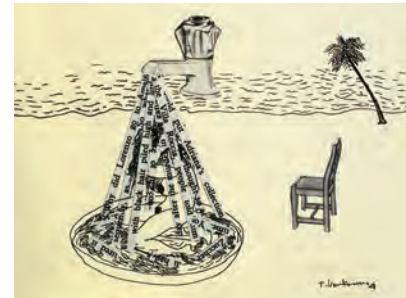


I am Not a Fly (detail)



All Untitled, 2008  
Pen and ink, mixed media on paper  
5.5 x 4 in (14 x 10.2 cm)

Collection: Various Private





NARENDRA YADAV

Pavlov's God

February 27th to April 4th 2009



Faithful Accident, 2009  
Crashed car parts partially chromium plated  
60 x 180 x 18 in (152.4 x 457.2 x 45.7 cm)

Narendra Yadav's works are in the nature of thought experiments, instruments for the investigation of belief and the calibration of doubt. His constructions convey the sharpness and elusiveness of the koan: they act like Zen telegrams, riddles, small and elliptical enlightenments.

Yadav's works are neither sculpture, nor assemblage, nor sculpture-installation. They are provocations to reassess oneself and one's conditions; and, indeed, one's conditioning. For Yadav's principal concern is the manner in which we construct, or distort, the world in accordance with our religious, philosophical and social assumptions.

Does our selfhood depend on our untested beliefs, Yadav asks. Do we spend our lives subscribing like robots to a script someone else has written? Or can we abandon it in favour of 'freedom from the known', to invoke J Krishnamurti's memorable phrase?

Yadav is especially fascinated by the divisive politics of religion. In *'Faithful Accident'*, Yadav playfully compares belief to an accident, the result of "absorbing incorrect information". Taking the debris from a car crash, he divides it into two: one half chromium-plated and memorialised, the other preserved in its 'original' form, roasted and impact-crumpled. Not a 'before/after' scenario but a 'yes and no' argument.

The 'scientific' appearance of Yadav's objects allows him to subordinate the expressive possibilities of his art to the nature of the work as argument or provocation. Yadav does not work with colours extraneous to his chosen materials; his palette of greys, browns and off-white simply articulates the thingness of steel, wood, plastic, fibreglass and mirror. Like the classic muji sketchbook, Yadav's works achieve chromatic presence by renouncing it.

Yadav dedicates himself to rendering invisible processes visible, often using the metaphor of the signal as a clue from a distant source that acts across the boundaries of territory, period and paradigm. In *'Celestial Bodies in Conversation'*, Yadav tunes his radios to cosmic waves from outer space, bringing signals to us from many light-years away. And *'Sound of Eternal Hope Ticking'* captivates us with its deceptively simple logic of layering sound, movement and image together: Is the pendulum static while the projection swings; is the pendulum swinging while the projector is still? Or is it only the mind that is moving?

Ranjit Hoskote

*Celestial Bodies in Conversation, 2009*  
Fiberglass, wood and mixed media  
15 x 38 x 5 feet (4.6 x 11.6 x 1.54 meters)



YOU WANT TO  
KNOW WHAT  
COMES  
BETWEEN  
HANDS AND  
FINGERS?  
WRESTLING



Celestial Bodies in Conversation (detail)



Cosmic Reflections Before Mortality Strikes, 2009  
Stainless steel and mixed media  
54 x 54 x 14 in (137.2 x 137.2 x 35.6 cm)



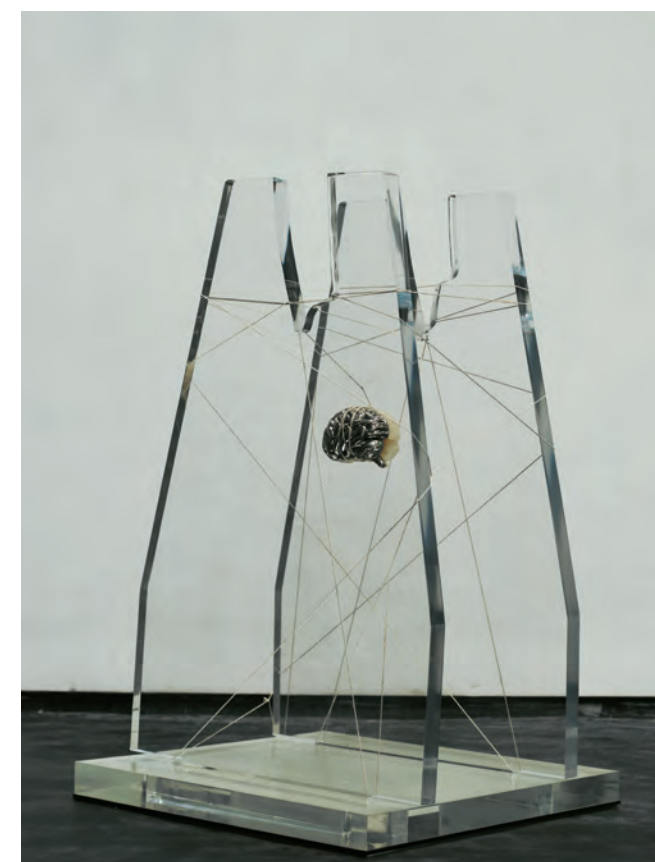
Cosmic Reflections Before Mortality Strikes (detail)



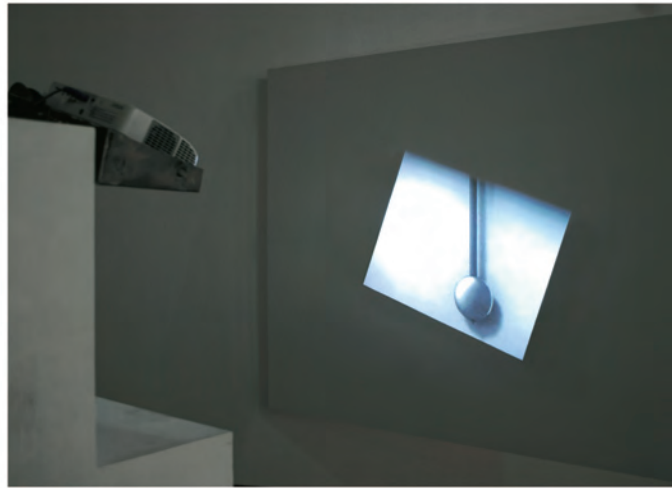
String Theory, 2009  
Stainless steel, mirror, hardbound book and string  
66 x 11 x 11 in (167.6 x 27.9 x 27.9 cm)



Rearranging Misunderstandings, 2009  
Fiberglass, hdpe, saw dust, syringe, needle and used underwear  
42.5 x 30 x 32 in (107.9 x 76.2 x 81.3 cm)



Divisive Habit, 2009  
Chromium plated fiberglass, rubber, acrylic and string  
41 x 24 x 24 in (104 x 60.9 x 60.9)



Sound Of Eternal Hope Ticking, 2009  
Looped pendulum video  
Size variable



Paper Plane, 2009  
Stainless steel and paper  
102 x 32 x 11 in (259 x 81.3 x 27.9 cm)



Paper Plane (detail)





Stories, 2009  
Stainless steel, wood, carpet and pop up books  
33 x 144 x 102 in (83.8 x 365.8 x 259.1 cm)



Stories (detail)



## END NOTE

The building is squeezed between apartment blocks, barely afforded a glance by passers by. If one happened to stop and scrutinise it from across the narrow street, a sloping roof would be apparent, but its gradient would not seem so unusual as to excite interest. It is only on pushing past the metal-clad door designed to simulate a godown's rolling shutter that the peculiar shape of the construction becomes fully apparent. Beyond its low entry point, the space rises steeply and reaches a height that seems out of all proportion to its breadth. What goods, after all, could be piled so high into such a narrow area? Consider the question carefully, and the answer becomes evident. Raw cotton, the material that made Bombay a metropolis, was stored here many decades ago. Before the city had cotton mills, it had cotton warehouses, holding the fluffy crop till time and price were right to ship it to Canton and Manchester.

Colaba's Third Pasta Lane, named not for the Italian culinary staple that has gone global in our lifetime, but for a Bombay trader who made it big in the nineteenth century cotton boom, was once a row of warehouses. Only two now remain, abutting each other. One's been converted into a multi-level office, occluding its template. The second has been redesigned in a manner that respects its original form. The shed remains largely bare, but is equipped to showcase a variety of art forms.

Remodelling the abandoned warehouse into an art gallery proved an ordeal for the man who dreamt up the plan, Abhay Maskara. Bombay's municipal authorities, who couldn't care less about innovatively preserving an important element of the city's history, kept him waiting months for each of the permissions required for his enterprise to fructify. Abhay's passion for the project remained undimmed through repeated postponements. His spirit was buoyed by artists who stuck with him through the harrowing time. When Gallery Maskara opened in March 2008, it represented an opportunity as well as a challenge for exhibitors and prospective collectors. The former had to cope with gargantuan scale, while the latter were encouraged to shed insularity and conservatism and embrace new kinds of art from around the globe.

The Canadian Max Streicher set the perfect tone with his inaugural show of inflatables and photograms. The centre of the gallery floor was occupied by Silenus, consisting of two enormous babies rocking gently this way and that, reversing the expected size ratio between adults and infants. The sculptures were simultaneously light-hearted and thought-provoking, and unlike anything that had been exhibited before in Bombay. Gravity took over from levity with Peter Buggenhout's *Res derelictae II*, following an interlude that showcased Jitish Kallat's Switzerland-bound fossil truck for his considerable home viewership.

Buggenhout located his 'dust sculptures' at a point between form and formlessness, hardness and softness, abstraction and representation. Evocative of objects dredged up from the sea, or abandoned for decades, his works seemed to bear the visual imprint of time. They bore, also, a greater resemblance with sights immediately outside and around the exhibition space than Buggenhout had encountered in previous displays. Viewers leaving the gallery felt a more

intense engagement with aspects of Bombay they would normally have ignored.

The alteration may have been temporary, but then *Res Derelictae II* was about decay and mutability. Gallery Maskara shifted gears after the magisterial contributions of Streicher and Buggenhout with the agglutinatively-titled group show *loosentiefirst*, which presented the first fruit of Abhay's search for relatively new Indian and international voices. The Brazilian Fernanda Chieco's images were particularly striking, connecting with a tradition of delicate line drawing alive in India, but crafting a mix of eroticism and horror seldom registered by Indian artists. T. Venkanna's appearance in this show was followed up by a debut solo a few months later. Not yet thirty, Venkanna has already made it to the prestigious Charles Saatchi collection, as has another young artist who featured in *loosentiefirst*, Mansoor Ali. Venkanna, trained in painting and printmaking, is versatile in medium, style and subject matter. He shifts from ironic art historical citation to intellectually-oriented sculpture to expressionist charcoal drawings that are violent and lewd in a manner that evokes F. N. Souza. His show proved one thing conclusively: the magnitude of a work of art is not about brute size. Small format drawings can hold up well within a massive space if they are imbued with density and intensity.

Narendra Yadav, a name more familiar to Bombay art lovers than Venkanna or Mansoor Ali, rounded off the year's programme with *Pavlov's God*. Yadav's idiosyncratic constructions tackled big issues – birth, death, faith and reason – approaching them at an angle rather than head-on to gain the advantage of surprise.

Between *loosentiefirst* and the solos of Venkanna and Yadav was Nina Pandolfo's *Between Us*, a show of murals and canvases. The Brazilian graffiti artist covered a long wall of the gallery with one of her characteristic naïve girl portraits. Jeff Koons and Takashi Murakami have made modified forms of sentimentality and kitsch acceptable in the most exalted museums of contemporary art, in the process opening doors for artists like Pandolfo. She, in turn, opens the gallery up to the street. Not only could viewers enter the Warehouse on 3rd Pasta and watch her at work up on a scaffolding, the artist herself ventured into the city, painting a pump house at Marine Drive alongside fellow graffitiists Apnavi Thacker and Os Gemeos. Pandolfo also robbed the gallery of the inconspicuousness mentioned to at the start of this piece: on the façade, she depicted a girl dangling upside down from a branch.

The world of art, along with many other worlds, turned upside down around that time. Boom went to bust, and speculators fled after having squeezed out many serious collectors in the price frenzy of previous years. Gallerists like Abhay were more threatened by the new risk-averse environment than those content to hang a few canvases on a wall. However, even as shows of blue chip names were being peremptorily cancelled, he kept to the course he'd plotted, underwriting ambitious installations in unconventional media. For the courage and conviction manifest in this, as for his success in attracting such a fascinating range of talent, I salute him.

Girish Shahane

## ARTISTS BIOGRAPHIES

### MAX STREICHER (b. 1958)

Max Streicher is a sculptor and installation artist from Alberta, Canada. He graduated from York University in 1989 with a Masters in Fine Arts. Since then he has worked extensively with kinetic inflatable forms. Streicher was a founding member of the Nethermind collective of artists who organized four large exhibitions in alternative spaces in Toronto between 1991 and 1995. He has shown in solo exhibitions in museums and public galleries across Canada and abroad, including the Mendel Museum in Saskatoon, Centro Cultural de Belem, Lisbon and the Edmonton Art Gallery, Edmonton. Streicher has completed numerous site-related projects in such places as the Ludwig-Forum für Internationale Kunst, Aachen, Germany, The Art Gallery of Ontario in Toronto and the Winnipeg Art Gallery. The artist lives and works in Toronto.

### JITISH KALLAT (b. 1974)

Jitish Kallat and has had over twenty solo shows in such leading galleries as Chemould Prescott Road (Mumbai), Haunch of Venison (Zurich), Arario Beijing amongst others. His work has been exhibited at galleries and museums across the world including Tate Modern (London), Martin Gropius Bau (Berlin), Gallery of Modern Art (Brisbane), Kunst Museum (Bern), Serpentine Gallery (London), Mori Art Museum (Tokyo) and the Henie Onstad Kunstsenter (Oslo) amongst many others. Jitish Kallat is on the Board of Trustees of India Foundation for the Arts (IFA) and is member of FICCI's newly formed Committee on Art. He writes frequently on the subject of contemporary art. The artist lives and works in Mumbai, 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 other in Europe. Peter Buggenhout lives and works in Ghent, Belgium.

### MANSOOR ALI (b. 1978)

Mansoor Ali was born in Jasmatpur (Gujarat, India) and did his Masters in Fine Arts (Sculpture) from the Faculty of Fine Arts, M.S. University of Baroda in 2004 and Bachelors in Fine Arts in 2002 from the same institution. His works were previously seen at the Durbar Hall Art Center, Ernakulum, Kochi (2008), Faculty of Fine Arts (2008), Sandarbh Artist Residency – Partapur, Rajasthan (2007). His works are in important collections in India and abroad including the Charles Saatchi collection. He will be one of the featured artists in the upcoming Saatchi show in 2009 *Empire Strikes Back: Indian Art Today*. The artist lives and works in Baroda, India.

### FELIPE CAMA (b. 1970)

Felipe Cama was born in Porto Alegre, Brazil. He did a course in Extensão em Artes Plásticas at Fundação Armando Álvares Penteado, São Paulo (2004) and BA in “Comunicação” at Escola de Comunicações e Artes da USP, São Paulo (1992). He has had several solo shows at museums and galleries including at Centro Cultural São Paulo (2007), Museu de Arte de Blumenau, Brazil (2007), Museu de Arte de Ribeirão Preto, Brazil (2007), Galeria Leme, São Paulo (2005) amongst others. The artist lives and works in São Paulo, Brazil.

### FERNANDA CHIECO (b. 1976)

Fernanda Chieco was born in São Paulo and holds an M.A. in Fine Arts (2003), a postgraduate diploma in fine arts (2002), and a certificate for postgraduate studies in fine arts from Goldsmiths College, London. She has shown extensively around the world and more recently at The Process Room, IMMA, Dublin (2007), York Art Gallery, UK (2007), Galeria Leme, São Paulo (2007), Ecole Nationale des Beaux Arts de Lyon (2007), The Hospital, London (2007), Basement Gallery, Dundalk (2007). She is the recipient of several bursaries and awards including from the British Council, São Paulo, Brazil (2008), International Bursary from the Arts Council of Ireland at Belmont Mills, Ireland (2007), acquisition prize, Programa Anual de Exposições de 2007, Centro Cultural São

Paulo amongst others. The artist lives and works in São Paulo, Brazil.

### NARENDRA YADAV (b. 1964)

Narendra Yadav was born in Ratnagiri, India and did his B.F.A. (applied art) from JJ 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 to amuse. His object based works successfully straddle conceptual art, sculpture and installation. His first solo show in 2006 was at the Museum Gallery, Mumbai and he has shown previously at Sakshi Gallery, Mumbai, Lalit Kala Academi, Kerela (2008), Sakshi Gallery, Mumbai (2007), Lalit Kala Academi, New Delhi (2006). The artist lives and works in Mumbai, India.

### T.VENKANNA (b. 1980)

T.Venkanna born in Gajwel, India did his Masters in Fine Arts (M.F.A.) in printmaking from the Faculty of Fine Arts, M.S. University of Baroda in 2006 and Bachelors in Fine Arts (B.F.A.) in painting from J.N.T.U, Hyderabad in 2004 where he was awarded a Gold medal. He has participated in several shows in India including at the Faculty of Fine Arts, Baroda (2008), Kitab Mahal, Mumbai (2007), Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai (2006). Venkanna's works are in major collection in America and Europe including the Charles Saatchi collection. He will be one of the featured artists in the upcoming Saatchi show in 2009 *Empire Strikes Back: Indian Art Today*. The artist currently lives and works in Baroda, India.

### NINA PANDOLFO (b. 1977)

Nina Pandolfo was born in Tupã, São Paulo and is one of the country's pioneers in street art. She started to graffiti the city's walls in 1992 and is part of the group that led graffiti to art galleries and museums. Some of her more recent work include projects at Galeria Leme, São Paulo (2008), Galeria Melissa, São Paulo, Brazil (2006), Wholetrain Project, Brazil (2007), Kelburn Castle, Glasgow, Scotland (2007), 9th Havana Biennial, Havana, Cuba (2006), Museu de San Juan, San Juan, Puerto Rico (2006), Örebro Museum, Sweden (2005), New Image Art Gallery, Los Angeles, USA (2005), Gaze Cultural Center, Athens, Greece (2005) and several other projects and shows around the world. The artist lives and works in São Paulo

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