



The Smile on the Mask

Abraham George

Show Information:

Curator: Abhay Maskara

Preview: Mar 12, 2015, 6:30pm to 9:30pm (*Focus Photography Festival*)

Show Dates: Mar 13 – Mar 26, 2015

Location: Gallery Maskara, 6/7, 3rd Pasta Lane, Colaba, Mumbai – 400 005

Gallery Timings: 11am to 7pm, Tuesday – Saturday

We are delighted to announce the opening of “The Smile on the Mask”, a debut solo by Mumbai based artist Abraham George during Focus Photography Festival.

This series of photochemical drawings by artist Abharam George is the outcome of several years of deliberately working without any overarching framework. It is rooted instead, in a thinking-through-materials approach, to a process that Abraham feels has the potential to create the kinds of surfaces, tones and forms that he is interested in. The mask in the title is a playful reference to the technique of selective exposure or ‘masking’ that is essential to the making of the images. A mask is also literally an interface, suggesting a host of curious binaries - interior and exterior, material and virtual, conventional and idiosyncratic.

So, what dialectics do these masks mediate? Most obviously, they are an uncanny synthesis of abstraction and representation, achieved by the dissolving of drawing in analog photography. They arbitrate archetypical and singular aspects of form - the symbolic and iconic versus the absurd and grotesque. They flatten their inspirations - local and global, contemporary and classical, immediate and third hand - in a manner reflective of a world in which images are recycled instantly and globally.

Simultaneously, the arrangement of works in proto-cinematic sets foregrounds the influence of context on how images are read. The final result is as skeptical of grand narratives as it is drawn to them. *The Smile on the Mask* is an Iconography for a hyperreal data-saturated age, engaged equally with the animated branding that pops up in a browser window and the vague recollection of a crumbling bust in an old textbook.

<< Selected works from the show overleaf >>



Because I am a Wild Animal, 2013

Photogram

59.5 x 38 inches (151 x 96.5 cm)

Diptych



O, 2013
Photogram
59.5 x 38 inches (151 x 96.5 cm)



A Flower Blooms, 2014
Photogram
4.5 x 6.7 inches (11.4 x 17 cm)



Birdsong, 2014
Photogram
4.5 x 6.7 inches (11.4 x 17 cm)



Anxiety (Head), 2012
Photogram
4.5 x 6.7 inches (11.4 x 17 cm)



Tormented (Bust), 2012
Photogram
4.5 x 6.7 inches (11.4 x 17 cm)

About the artist

Abraham George was born in 1984 in Calicut, India. In 2005 he graduated in Visual Communication at Loyola College, Chennai. He holds a diploma in Fine Art from The Julius Macwan Institute of Fine Art and Design, Chennai. Abraham participated in a group show *NEW8* at The Julius Macwan Institute, Chennai in 2003. In 2011 he was part of the group show *Madras Contemporary* at the Art Summit Chennai. In 2012-13 he participated at a group show titled *The Intimate Divine*, Ashvita Gallery, Chennai. The artist lives and works in Mumbai, India.

About Gallery Maskara

Gallery Maskara has a clear and compelling mission to taking a *global* and *multidisciplinary* approach to art that responds to the cultural fabric of our time thus fueling critical dialogue, collaboration, and public engagement. More simply put it is to *EXHIBIT AND PROMOTE ART OF THE PRESENT*.

The gallery is located in the heart of downtown Mumbai between 2nd and 3rd Pasta lane in Colaba, and functions as a hub for the exploration of emerging ideas in the contemporary art. The freestanding 3,250 square foot building served as a cotton godown during India's pre independence era and has been renovated by noted conservation architect Rahul Mehrotra to maintain its historic character. With a nearly 50 feet ceiling height and walls that run 100 feet in length, the 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.

For more information, visit: <http://www.gallerymaskara.com>

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