

Ranbir Kaleka

Artist Statement and Biography

Artist Statement

After a long careful look, the man says, "This is my home"... "Our cows grazed by the Banyan tree."... "over there was a tree which fell in a storm and the children played amongst its branches". We see nothing... he is in the midst of the sea.

The islands of the Sundarbans in Bengal, home to the world's largest mangrove forest, are being swallowed by the ever rising sea-level due to global warming and other man-made calamities.

Sheikh Lal Mohan, whose name is a curious mix of Muslim and Hindu names, took us to the spot on the sea under which lies his submerged village.

He now lives on another island, Sagardweep, and has returned to the site of his abyssal village. But there is no true returning. In a ritual of reclamation, he sculpts a mud map of his village and house as a healing rite. We follow him and enter a feverish dream of loss and desire.

In a kind of overflow from reality, invented events are enacted in fictive spaces which project the imaginary interiority of the protagonist. Binaries of art and documentary are dissolved to point to another kind of truth which goes beyond the informational. My engagement with the man and the island was about being-in-the-world and of opening the world. The man and the island becoming a portal into the rest of the world.

Two wide screen-panels placed far apart on the floor and the third projection in the middle on a wall between them create an immersive ambience with sound.

Note: The seed for this installation was a passage in "Mean Sea Level" by environmentalist/activist Pradip Saha.

Artist Biography

Ranbir Kaleka
India

b. 1953, Patiala, Punjab, India

Education

1985 – 87 M.A. Painting, Royal College of Art, London

1970 – 75 College of Art, Punjab University, Chandigarh

Selected Exhibition

- 2014 Garden of Imagination, 4th International Contemporary Art Gwangju Vision Exhibition, Gwangju, Korea.
Art Alive Gallery, 'When High and Low Art Meet...' Gurgaon; Saffronart, 'Ode To the Monumental' Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi.
- 2013 The Peabody Essex Museum, 'Midnight to the Boomt', from the Museum's Herwitz Collection, Salem, Massachusetts, USA."Expanded Cinema — 3. Mocumentary: Reality Is NotEnough" in the framework of the XIV MIFF Media Forum, MMoMA, Moscow.
Project 35, Independent Curators International (ICI).North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh, USA;
Lalit Kala Akademi, 'When High and Low Art Meet...' Delhi.
- 2012 Ranbir Kaleka, Solo, Arario Gallery, Cheonan, Korea, Seoul
Volte Gallery, 'Your Name is different there', Mumbai
Art Stage Singapore, Special Project, Singapore
Tel Aviv Museum of Art, 'Deconstructing India', Isreal
Volte Gallery & Saffron Art Gallery, "Fables", Solo, Delhi
Lalit Kala Regional Centre, 'To Let the World In: Narrative and Beyond in Contemporary Indian Art', curated by Chatanya Sambrani Chennai, India
- 2011 Guangdong Museum, 'Back to Basics - The Museum Per Se', 4th Guangzhou Triennial, Guangzhou, China
Pearl Lam Fine Art, 'Window in the Wall: India and China – Imaginary Conversations', Shanghai, China
Latitude 28 'In the Illusion of Each Day', Delhi, India
MediaArtLab, 'Expanded Cinema', Moscow
Prague Biennale 5, Prague Blennale Photo 2, 'Crossroads: India Escalate', Prague, Czech Republic
Lalit Kala Akademi, 'Tolstoy Farm - Archive of Utopia', New Delhi

- Vancouver Biennale and Surrey Art Gallery, 'In Transition: New Art from India', Vancouver, Canada
Singapore Art Museum, 'Comtemporary Masterpieces from Private Collection', Singapore
The New Asia Pacific Contemporary Art Fair, Singapore
India Art Summit, respresented by Volte Gallery, New Delhi
- 2010 MOCA Taipei, 'Finding India, Art for the New Century', Teipei, Taiwan
Sakshi Annual Exhibition, Taipei, Taiwan
Hong Kong Art Fair, represented by Sakshi Gallery, Hong Kong
Hangar Bicocca, spazio d'arte contemporanea, 'Urban Manners', Milan
SESC Pompeia, 'Urban Manners 2', Sao Paulo
Arario Gallery, 'Weight of Floating Time', Cheonan, Korea, Seoul
'Project' 35', (selection by 35 international curators, touring internationally), Dec 2010 - Feb 2011
Cervantes Institute, 'Imaging Asia', New Delhi
Volte Gallery, 'Sweet Unease', Solo, Mumbai
Lalit Kala Akademi, Gallery Espace, 'Marvelous Reality', New Delhi
009 Seoul Convention Centre, Sakshi Gallery, Korea
ESSL Museum, 'Chalo! India: A New Era of Indian Art', Vienna, Austria
National Museum of Contemporary Art, 'Chalo! India: A New Era of Indian Art', Korea
Mori Art Musuem, 'Chalo! India: A New Era of Indian Art', Toyko, Japan
Museo Fundación Cristóbal Gabarrón, 'Indi Dialogue. Arte experimental de la India', Valladolid, Spain
IVAM - Institut Valencià d'Art Modern, 'India Moderna', Valencia, Spain
CASA ASIA, 'Indian Narrative in the 21st Century: Between Memory and History', Madrid & Barcelona, Spain
Birla Academy of Art and Culture, 'Astonishment of Being', Kolkata
Bose Pacia Gallery, 'Reading Man', New York
Nature Morte Gallery, 'Reading Man', New Delhi
- 2008 16th Biennale of Sydney, Revolutions-Forms That Turn, Sydney, Australia.
Mori Art Museum, 'Chalo! India - A New Era of Indian Art', Tokyo, (tour: National Museum of Contemporary Art, Korea; 2009: ESSL Museum, Vienna, Austria)
Bose Pacia Gallery, 'Fables from the House of Ibaan: stage - I', Solo, New York
Asian Contemporary Art Fair, New York, 'Simulasian: Refiguring "Asia" for the 21st Century', New York
Devi Art Foundation, 'Still Moving Image', Gurgoan, Harayana, India.
Anant Art Gallery, 'Machanisms of Motion', New Delhi
Soulflower Gallery, 'The Ethics of Encounter', Bangkok, Thailand
- 2007 Kunstmuseum Bern, 'Horn Please - The Narrative in Contemporary Indian Art', Bern, Switzerland

- Spertus Museum, 'Consider', Multi-media installation commissioned for permanent display, Chicago
 Hangar Bicocca, spazio d'arte contemporanea, 'Urban Manners', Milan
 Chicago Cultural Institute, 'New Narratives - Contemporary Art from India', Chicago, (tour: Salina Art Center, Salina, Kansas; Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Art Museum, Rutgers University, New Jersey)
 Newark Museum, 'Public Places, Private Spaces', Contemporary Photography and Video Art', New Jersey, (tour: Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Minneapolis)
- 2006 Art Basel, 'Art Video Lounge', curated show by Michael Rush, Maimi Beach
 Arario Gallery, 'Hungry God', Beijing, China, (tour: Museum of Modern Art, Busan, Korea; Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto)
 National Gallery of Modern Art, 'Edge of Desire', New Delhi, (tour: Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive, Berkeley, California)
- 2005 Venice Biennale, 'iCon - India Contemporary', Venice, Italy
 Bose Pacia Gallery, 'Crossings', New York
 Lalit Kala Akademi, Golden Jubilee, New Delhi
 Osians, 'Revisualising India', New Delhi
 Gallery Arts India, 'Herwitz 100', New York
- 2004 Residency at Sally & Don Lucas Artists Programs, Montalvo Arts Center, California
 Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles 'LA FREEWAVES 9th Biennial Festival of Film, Video and New Media- How Can You Resist?', Los Angeles; (tour: Center for Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv, Israel; cheLA (Corriente Hipermediatica Experimental Latinoamericana), Buenos Aires, Argentina; Huffmans House, Encuentro Internacional de Espacios Independientes; Valparaiso, Chile)
 The Art Gallery Of Western Australia, 'Edge Of Desire', Perth, Australia, (tour: Queens Museum of Modern Art, Queens, NY; The Asia Society, New York; Museo Tamayo, Mexico City; Marco, Monterrey/MX; National Gallery of Modern Art, Mumbai)
 Culturgest-Lisbon, 'Zoom!', Portugal
 Walsh Gallery, 'Visual Performance', Chicago
 Sakshi Gallery, 'After Dark', Mumbai
- 2003 10th Biennial of Moving Images, Centre for Contemporary Images, Saint-Gervais, Genève, Switzerland
 Nation Museum of Modern Art, 'diVERGE', Mumbai
 peejay Media Gallery, 'Liminal Zones', Delhi
 House of World Culture, 'BODY•CITY, Siting Contemporary Culture in India', Berlin, Germany
 Museum of Contemporary Art, Merida, 'Interactive A03', Biennale for New Media Art, Yucatan, Mexico
 Grantpirrie, 'An Apparent Calm', Sidney

- Video Roadshow, Mumbai
British Council, 'Root en Route', New Delhi, Chennai; Sakshi Gallery, Mumbai, Bangalore
- 2002 KHOJ, International Workshop in Mysore, India
Kunsthalle Wien, 'Kapital & Karma', Vienna
Apeeyay Media Gallery, 'Private Mythologies - Sound and video works of the personal and the political', New Delhi
Nature Morte, 'PhotoSphere', New Delhi
- 2001 Art Today, 'Rare and Unusual Paintings', New Delhi
- 2000 Alliance Francaise, 'Silen TV video lounge', (with Michel Mallard, Olivier Reneau & Denis Chevalier), New Delhi
Public Art Project, 'Images for a Hundred Lamp Posts', Ealing, London
Indo-Austrian Art Projects in Public Space, 'Boxwallahs', The DeEgo-Cube, Gurgaon, Haryana
Sakshi Gallery, 'Embarkations-The Millennium Show', Mumbai
Max Mueller, 'Art and Technology', Mumbai
- 1999 Expo 2000, artistic consultant, Basic Needs Pavilion, Hannover Germany
British Council, 'Edge of the Century', New Delhi
- 1998 Public mural for Thames Trains at Southall Station, London commission – Ealing and the European Union Fund
- 1997 Open Drawing Competition Exhibition, Cheltenham and North England
- 1996 Smith Jariwala Gallery, 'Indian Winter', London
Pitshanger Manor Gallery, 'First Sight', London
- 1995 ArtToday Gallery, New Delhi, India
- 1994 Royal Academy, 'Summer Exhibition', invited Artist, London
Gallery Espace, 'Drawing'94', New Delhi
Connaught Brown Gallery, The Affordable Art Company Exhibition, London
- 1988 Gallery Chemould, 'Seventeen Indian Painters', Bombay
- 1987 Robert Hull Fleming Museum, 'Contemporary Indian Art', University of Vermont, Burlington, USA
Halle Sud, 'Coup De Coeur, Festival of Indian Art', Geneva, Switzerland
- 1986 Bucknell University, Contemporary Indian Art, Lewisburg, Pennsylvania
- 1985 Grey Art Gallery, Contemporary Indian Art, New York University, New York

- 1984 Sahitya Kala Akademi, Painting Camp, Sohna, Haryana, India
- 1983 World Punjabi Writers Conference, Exhibition of Painting and Sculpture, New Delhi
- 1982 Lalit Kala Academy, Fifth Triennale India, New Delhi
Royal Academy of Arts, Contemporary Indian Art, London
Museum of Modern Art, 'India - Myth and Reality', Oxford