

Press Release:

as we become

curated by meenakshi thirukode

artists: arshad hakim, mariam ghani, jaishri abichandani, gopi gajwani,

morehshin allahyari, sudarshan shetty, amba sayal-benette

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Exhibition ongoing until 15th September 2018.

as we become looks at the notions around a conceptual practice and its placement within the frameworks of different, temporal political conditions. How do we understand Trump's walls being pushed into popular imagination as a "conceptual practice" or Anish Kapoor's 'Bean' sculpture being co-opted by the National Rifles Association (NRA). How do we think through the aspect of seeing - of how memory, pasts, presents and futures of an image coalesce, get co-opted and how might we maneuver through that as cultural producers. And as a viewer/ participant/ audience, how would someone who engages with the work produce a certain kind of interpretation that leads to a new set of 'referents' outside of known iconographies, symbols and myths.

The show is an attempt at a set of relations, of juxtapositions, with an intention. These intentions are articulated by Annett Busch in her reading of Akomfrah's essay-films as ones that "create a refusal of producing certain knowledge." In thinking of a *moving away* from neoliberal, late capitalistic conditions, that demand an "artwork" to be an illustration of a certain "concept" (co-opted and otherwise), what one encounters in the show is a disconcerting portal to be entered; a seductive Deluzian operation. But disconcerting portals, ones that seem all too obvious and 'overdone', could be a first proposition for thinking beyond – as a possibility for something new to emerge from within late capitalism's 'cramped spaces' of articulation and being. New strategies might allow for a shift from what Ernest Bloch describes as 'contemplative knowledge' to a 'theory-practice'. This might deny say, an imagery of 'activism', of 'identitarian politics' and produce instead "a reading that has to be invented and contains its own fiction." How do we think through the co-options of the 'minoritarians' that occur today and how do we recognize and place this in current political urgencies and conditions, knowing well that any or many moments of 'recognition' are already biased, already corrupted, already co-opted.

Works in *as we become* consists of a series of affinities produced between lost object, movement on surfaces, speculation, "somewhere between there and not-there" and the realization that the dead might not be gone.

Arshad Hakim's work reconfigures narratives and image-making taking on the form of an essay film titled '**at the overturn**'. As a set of departures that incorporates greco-roman myths and cult sci-fi films 'at the overturn' explores notions of parasitic time, of nihilism and subjectivity and shifting POV's that de-center a set of provocations around the notion of image-making. For Hakim, technology is both a mediation as well as philosophy.

Mariam Ghani's 'speculations' series, which has been ongoing since 2006 looks at the way capital flows on the surface of things, particularly the way in which urban landscapes are re-constructed following economic or political collapses.

Morehshin Allahyari's 'Material Speculation' is a digital fabrication and 3D printing project that inspects Petropolitical and poetic relationships between 3D Printing, Plastic, Oil, Technocapitalism and Jihad. **'Material Speculation: ISIS'** focuses on the reconstruction of 12 selected (original) artifacts (statues from the Roman period city of Hatra and Assyrian artifacts from Nineveh) that were destroyed by ISIS in 2015. The project creates a practical and political possibility for artifact archival, while also proposing 3D printing technology as a tool both for resistance and documentation. It intends to use 3D printing as a process for repairing history and memory. In this show, her object file for King Uthal will be made openly available to anyone for 3D printing.

Gopi Gajwani's charcoals and watercolors are often times talked of as a set of gestures and compositions that respond most closely to music. In relation to the juxtapositions within the show, Gajwani's composition of layers might reveal in its form, a complex mediation of an aesthetic of time – of historicized time and assumed linear art historical chronologies that now shift in a subtle way, so that we might pause to reevaluate who and what occupies the space of the 'contemporary'.

Jaishri Abichandani's series **'Signs of the Times'** focuses on the current conditions of violence in society from her particular gendered and racial perspective. This work resists the male- dominated rhetoric of war through the inclusion and examination of the various roles women are playing, whether as passive spectators, politicians, avid protestors or perpetrators of violence themselves. The real and imagined bodies of women in this series moves from soldiers to bombers, veterans to victims using a variety of mediums. Approached playfully and sculpturally, the paintings combine art historical references and popular imagery from the West as well as the South Asian subcontinent.

Sudarshan Shetty's 'every broken moment - piece by piece' is an installation of reworked surfaces. One part of his large scale panels, is made of wood found in second hand markets which belonged to various dismantled structures in and around Mumbai. The other is made with marble dust and polyester resin and made to look like a marble slab. The three pieces of broken furniture are from Shetty's collection of once functional but now disused objects. The work is a multilayered effort at representing a basic human need to recall and preserve our own pasts and the subsequent futility of such a desire and includes stories in each of the panels that play out a fictitious past written by the artist.

Amba Sayal-Bennett is concerned with what the viewer does or makes with the drawings and sculptures. Her work refers to common diagrammatic systems such as architecture and design, which doesn't have prior referents. Instead by making simulacral drawings, drawings which simulate a signified or appear to refer to real objects, she explores how, through the interpretive process, a referent is created.

