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LATITUDE 28 & SEVEN ART LTD. presents **RE-CLAIM / RE-CITE / RE-CYCLE**

An exhibition of more than thirty works in various media like videos, digital prints, watercolors, drawings, photographs and paintings ‘on the concept of recycling’

Curated by Bhavna Kakar


October 24 - November 15, 2009

Bose Pacia, Stephen Court, 18 Park Street
Kolkata 700071, West Bengal

Curated by Bhavna Kakar, the show includes works by **Chittrovanu Majumdar, TV Santhosh, Tushar Joag, Atul Bhalla, Rajan Krishnan, Prajakta Potnis, Manjunath Kamath, Rajesh Ram, Prajjwal Choudhury, Vivek Vilasini, Prajakta Palav, Ravi Agarwal, Mansi Bhatt, Sharmila Samant, Sonia Mehra Chawla, Bhagyanath C and Sajjad Ahmed.**


Says curator **Bhavna Kakar**: “This exhibition propagates not only the recycling of material things but also the recycling of cultural & spiritual values, human memories, emotions, existence and even sexuality. It is an attempt to analyze and document artistic imaginations and representations of recycling.”


For instance **Sharmila Samant** will display a *saree* installation and the photographs of installations made from Coke and Diet Coke bottle tops. Through her works, the artist interrogates the effects of globalisation on the cultural economy of India. The saree and Coca-Cola, both transcend boundaries geographically as well as culturally within India. The saree cuts across social, economic and religious mappings, while Coca-Cola remains in India an elitist product. Says the artist: “By using the different coloured Coca-Cola crowns I could create the various aspects of the saree like *pallu*, *border* and *motifs*. The saree took me four months; the process was performative, from collecting crowns from bars around where I lived in Amsterdam to sorting, washing and then drying them.”

Similarly, another series of photographs would be showcased by **Ravi Agarwal** whose pictures titled *Passage Rites* are based on the concept of rebirth. He says: “Recycling implies a transformation at the ‘end-of-life’ whether of objects or of living beings. However, there may be no beginning and no end-of-life. The beginning and the end exist only in human perception. Each moment, itself without beginning or end, is only a continuum in time, in eternity. As I pass from this world to another, through cremation rites, these become symbols of my ongoing journey. The cremation *ghat* is the place I rediscover myself.” 

Atul Bhalla's photograph titled *Dhaura Kuan* is yet another very interesting and dramatic compilation of shots of Delhi's slum people trying to find a solution to their

water woes. Mapping through a substantiated local area of the massive terrain of national capital Delhi, Bhalla rather document a veritable reality prevalent in the slums, low-income households of Delhi. If **Atul Bhalla** and **Ravi Agarawal** choose photography for conveying their message, then **Bhagyanath C, Rajesh Ram, Rajan Krishnan** and **T V Santhosh** opt to paint to highlight the concept of recycling. **Rajan Krishnan's** paintings titled *Reconnection* are generated from the process of recycling of memories. Each work arbitrates the individual ability to recollect and reconnect, with geographically marked or defined, time and space. Each work is a frame of reference, a juxtaposition of known and unknown, distance and closeness, of natural and human-made, but placed between remembrance and oblivion. Explains the artist: "Every mark seen in the present is a memoir of the past. Every moment one is engaged in a process of recycling memory in order to connect and identify with the world around. The loss of memories is equal to the loss of the self, of the essential core of being. Hence, the ability to recollect becomes critical, both for the individual, and for a society." But contrary to the idea of human emotions are **T V Santhosh's** watercolors which deal with images resulting from re-using a series of clarifications and deliberations. His imagery is driven impassively, he even calls them 'rational paintings' and not expressive of the personal state of mind.

 **Prajwal Choudhury** perceives the process of recycling as an all-pervasive phenomenon, spreading right from one's desktop to the bottles and writing pads. His art moves beyond the confines of canvas or sculpture and rather attempts at framing within his aesthetic space, uncanny phrases and visual assortments of the outproducts of recycling. On the other hand, **Prajakta Potnis'** installation consist decaying objects like dustbin with sediment of mustard seeds in a fungus-like formation. Clinical and voyeuristic, her oeuvre truly exposes the contemporary urban physical and psychological landscape where almost everything that exists is oozing decay and death but paradoxically suggesting a new revival rather than permanent disappearance. She seems to have stepped into the role of a curious kitchen scientist, when she decks up these mundane objects with ephemeral materials like bubbly pearls and mustard seeds and turns them into fantastical tools that force the viewers to reconsider the materiality of the objects and their metaphorical associations.

Using the medium of digital printing is artist **Sajjad Ahmed's** work titled  *A Capitalist Hit* and *This is Not a Photo Opportunity*. Explains the artist: "Events, species, geography, individuals, religion, philosophy, economics, everything is constantly in a circle, which has a common key point to start and end. All our lives, we keep on re-inventing that point. Be it a naïve infant turning in to a sophisticated astronaut or a bedside lamp sharing its visual structure with that of a nuclear mushroom cloud, the start and end point is shared as one. That's where the life breathes." Artist **Tushar Joag's** work titled *Crawford Market* is another noteworthy digital print inspired from Crawford Market of South Mumbai. Says the artist: "The Crawford Market which is also a heritage site is on the anvil for reconstruction. The redevelopment of the market has been mired in controversy in the recent past. I will use the architectural elements from the market to create a recycling machine that produces packaged real estate."

Chittrovanu Majumdar creates his installation titled “**Ice Cream Factory Chill Tubes And A Love Song**”...where refrigeration coils of a small-scale ice cream factory become columns of air through which sound is transported, to end in a bell of brass instruments as an acoustical coupling.


The love song, a popular song from an Indian film *Love in Tokyo* (1966) plays from the installation. This song like many others is played during religious processions by local bands on the streets of Kolkata. Interpreted with a very local approach - with dissonances, broken structures and changes in pitch, timber and dynamic levels, it becomes another genre of music.

For **Sonia Mehra Chawla**, "re-cycle" implies "re-birth" and "re-generation" through purging. *Transient Water* deals with ideas of emergence, fragility, transience, decadence and dissolution. The forms carry within themselves the vitality of the living and the vulnerability of decay.

Manjunath Kamath in *Overdose* and *Art in the Historical City* plays up the notions of authenticity and reproducibility of images in his narrative by consciously citing art historical references within it. He looks at history as a waste material with an embedded possibility of its coming back to the centre stage. The history of images, which is pushed to the margins, is reclaimed, recited in his work through an aggressively playful recycling mode. While on the other end, **Vivek Vilasini** has critiqued official and tyrannical ideologies with images of sarcasm and everyday pun. His photographs particularly point to the already evident carnivalesque existing in the midst of our everyday life. Through the images of traditional *Kathakali* Vilasini posits a subversive stance by making his photographed subjects perform contemporary dilemmas and political tensions. He brings in the politics of the locale with all its polyphonic variations.

Prajakta Palav traces out using the historical journey in conjunction to urban referents of the traditional motifs and their situated recycling and reclamation in the process. The vibrant Indian motifs like paisley and floral patterns have traveled from being revered as the fabric, jewelry designs to signifying their minor presence interwoven and molded as decorative *jaalis* in the urban households, which like their diminutive presence in the concrete jungles become the object of trivial mass productions.

In his uncanny proverbial style, **Rajesh Ram** in *Jahan dhad wahan ghar* overplays the complex reality suggested by this parochial phrase meaning ‘Body is home’. The artist believes that when people move to metro city, they not only follow the culture but also as a simultaneous process adopt the living style and way of thinking. In the work the artist has used some books and plastic gun, which symbolizes the way of thinking, people observe and make a part of their home. Through *Buri najar wale tera mun kala* critiques the Indian household vis-à-vis the way they protect their kith and kin from evil eye but not bothering to protect the country from anti-social forces.

 Just in case you thought recycling was only about paper, check out this show!

