



The Speaking Image

RESHAL SHAH (126250003)

DESIGN PROJECT II

VISUAL COMMUNICATION

IDC, IIT Bombay, 2013-2014

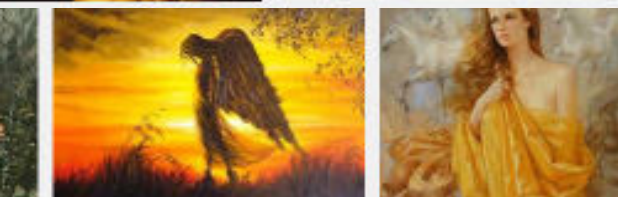
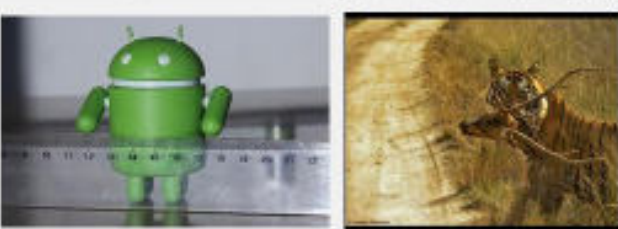




1. INTRODUCTION

DIVING INTO IMAGES ~ SETTING AN OBJECTIVE

THE FUTURE OF THE IMAGE



These questions often hover my mind and I am compelled to ask:
What is my role as a visual communicator? How do I express?

In my view, the most challenging task for a visual communicator is being able to communicate visually. Good images have the power to stay silent, yet convey so much.

*The design is an expression of the purpose.
It may (if it is good enough) later be judged as art.*
- Charles Eames

My objective thus becomes, to bring in images of art and make a study of images relevant to our current times. There is a need to realise the thought of what the purpose of an image is.



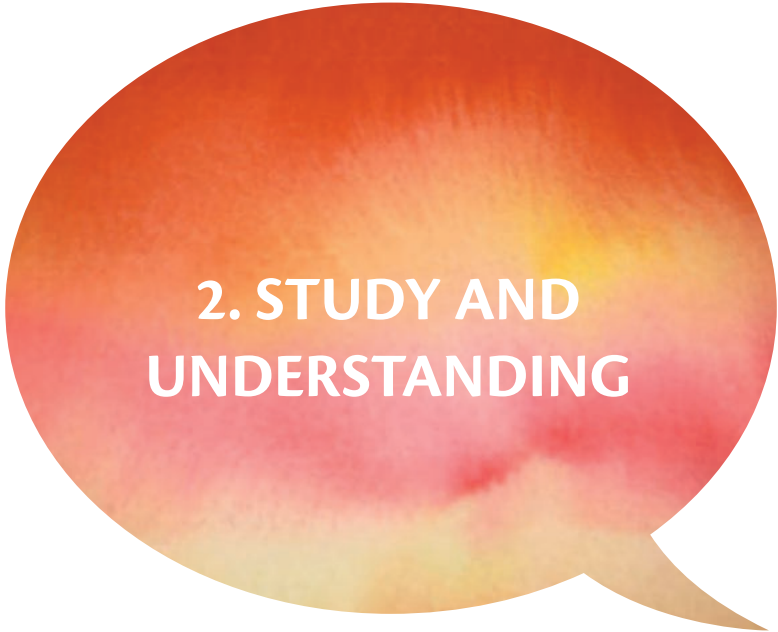
1.2 THE FUTURE OF THE IMAGE

The title is borrowed from the book, **The Future Of The Image** by Jaques Ranciere.

The study of visual imagery in our times needs to take into account the diverse nature of images encountered today.

In these times where media throws a tsunami of images, there arises a question as to what relationship do we have with a still image?





2. STUDY AND UNDERSTANDING

IMAGE - AN UNDERSTANDING

LOOKING AT VISUAL IMAGERY

VISITS



2.1 IMAGE

AN UNDERSTANDING

There are images created with a clear purpose and images that are exploratory in nature.

But both are interested in the same function:
TO COMMUNICATE.

Images describe what the eye might see or might never see. They clarify or suggest an idea.
The image is a vehicle of silent discourse.



2.1 IMAGE

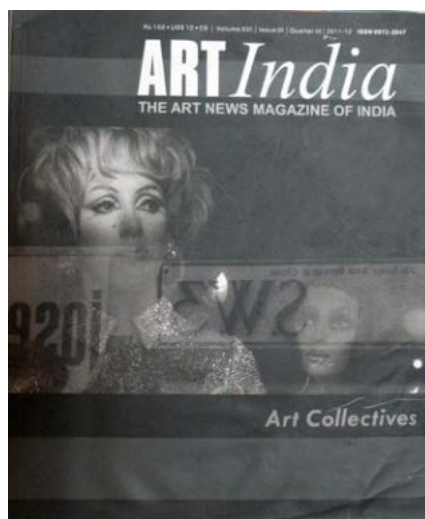
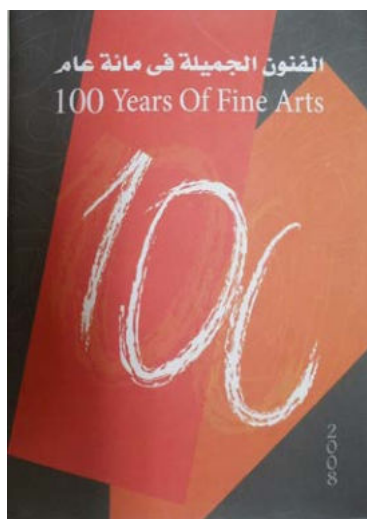
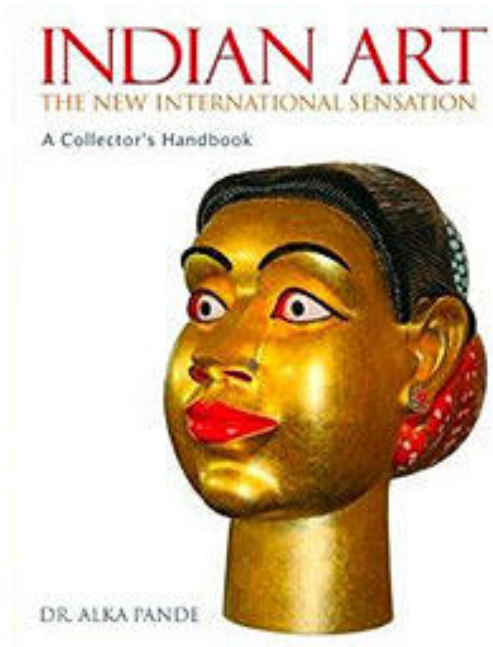
AN UNDERSTANDING

While visual imagery is characterised basically by the *subject, form and style*, there are a number of other aspects, though not obvious to the eyes, that are important in terms of a quality work. These include:

<i>Line</i>	<i>Emphasis</i>
<i>Form</i>	<i>Movement</i>
<i>Colour</i>	<i>Unity</i>
<i>Rhythm</i>	<i>Harmony</i>
<i>Space</i>	<i>Tone</i>
<i>Shape</i>	<i>Balance</i>
<i>Texture</i>	<i>Contrast</i>
<i>Value</i>	

Apart from the subject and form, there is something else, like the notion of *dhvani* in poetry that makes the image interesting.





2.1 IMAGE AN UNDERSTANDING

- *Black Book Illustration*
- *The Art of Hokusai in Book Illustration*
- *Hokusai - One Hundred Poets*
- *100 years of Fine Art - 2008 (Egyptian Artists' Works)*
- *The Future of The Image by Jaques Rancière*
- *Indian Art - The new international sensation by Dr. Alka Pande*
- *Art India (magazine)*
- *Various art exhibition catalogues*
- *A visit to printmaking exhibition at NGMA*

2.2 LOOKING AT VISUAL IMAGERY

The best way to understand what an image is, how strong it is and what does it speak; is by seeing and trying to understand images itself.

I engaged myself into a constant practice of looking at rich imagery and reading about the creator of that image.

This gave me a deeper understanding of the subject he/she dealt with and its reasoning and how the image is transformed into the one that speaks.

The principle of true art
is not to portray, but to evoke.

- Jerzy Kosinski



NALINI MALANI



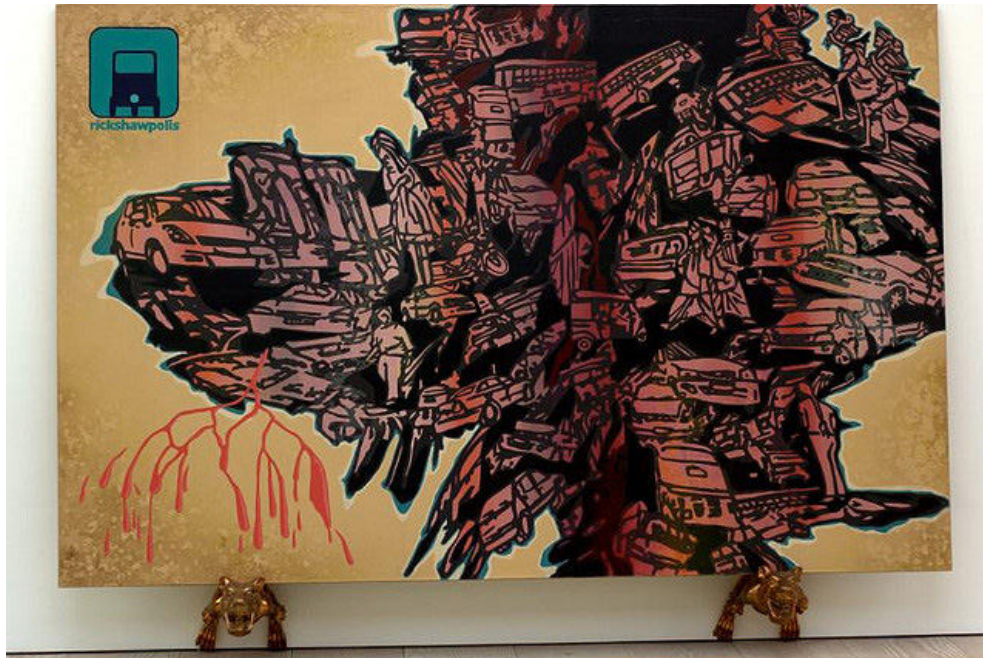
MEDEA III



BROKEN ALICE II



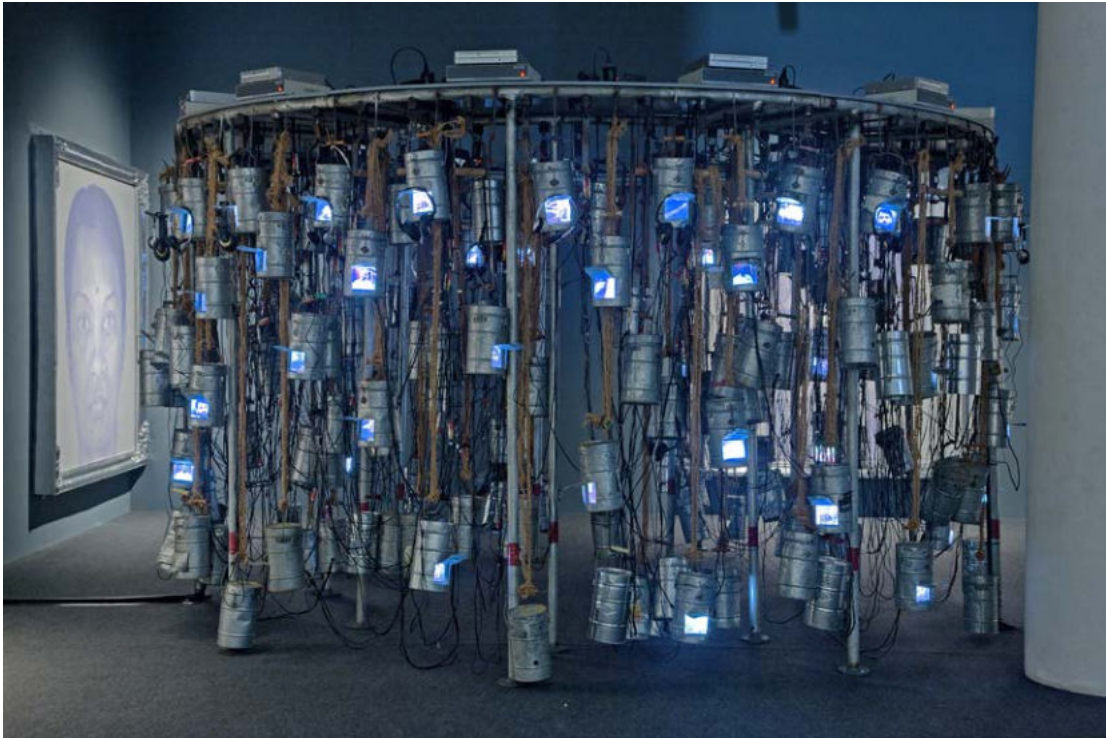
JITISH KALLAT



RICKSHAWPOLIS



BOSE KRISHNAMACHARI



GHOST-TRANSMEMOIR



2.2 LOOKING AT VISUAL IMAGERY ~ PAINTING



JITISH KALLAT's paintings come out as photo-graphic images. His work addresses the classical art themes of birth, death, mortality and ancestry. The viewer is often challenged to locate and decode the pictorial riddle created by him.



ERIN PARISH creates art based on what she stumbles upon in nature. Her artwork responds to nature's continuous circle of flux and tries to capture and preserve a moment that passes too quickly for most of us to see.



ANJU DODIYA's work comes across as bizarre yet lyrical self-disruptive autobiography. Her imagery creates the impression of the artist being trapped within the given frame by art itself.



2.2 LOOKING AT VISUAL IMAGERY ~ PAINTING



DHRUVI ACHARYA's illustrative works deal with subjects like the continuing denial of equality to women; the blooming cult of violence across the globe; and the rapid deterioration of the environment.



AMRITA CAUR was greatly influenced by her novelist mother's writing, Punjabi literature, the Pahari miniatures and Indian Folk art motifs. Caur responds to the world around her and her work reflects all aspects of life and is centred around women. She reflects human tragedies and emotional trauma.



The reality of the larger world, its history and geography, began invading the play world of Arpita Singh's picture space. Her dream-time had to make space for real time which then elided into imagined times of the past and the future.



2.2 LOOKING AT VISUAL IMAGERY ~ ILLUSTRATION



HOKUSAI made a direct observation of nature and human subjects, rather than portraying birds and flowers, scenes of historic epics and legends. Instead of shoguns, samurai, and their famous geisha, he placed the common man into his woodblocks, moving the emphasis away from the aristocrats and down to the rest of humanity.



SAMEER KULAVOOR is the present generation illustrator. His imagery is graphic-like and often depicts the common people. He has made visuals of places like Kala Ghoda, the dubbawallas of Mumbai, Xerox wallas, and such themes from Bombay.

2.2 LOOKING AT VISUAL IMAGERY ~ ILLUSTRATION



There is a lovely simplicity within the graphic work of Korean artist, Daehyun Kim. These works of illustration are very bold and flat, indeed effective.



MUKESH SINGH's comic book illustrations are full of power and force. There are super-expressive and depict a comic/graphic story.



2.2 LOOKING AT VISUAL IMAGERY ~ FOLK AND TRIBAL ART



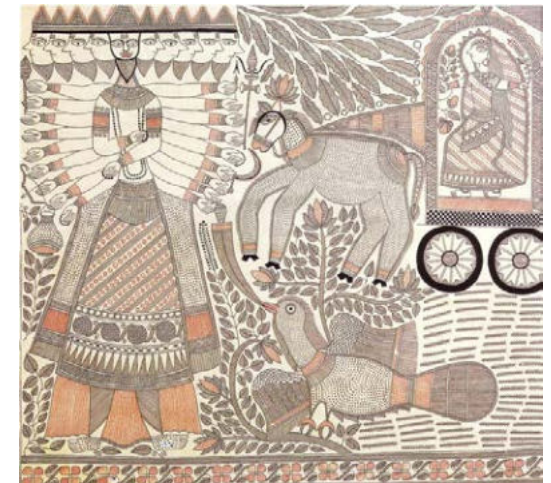
MADHAVI PAREKH's works revolve around themes that are drawn from reality, particularly the rural life and are combined with a stylization. Her work could be called as contemporary folk and tribal.



This is a Gond tribal art by artist JANGHAR SINGH SHYAM. Gond tribal art is beautiful and depicts the folk-lore. It is about the life the artists see and experience, usually about animals and other elements of nature.



These are Madhubani paintings by Ganga Devi. Visually speaking, the paintings are composed of two-dimensional images painted with plant-derived pigments, and they often depict Hindu religious themes, although not always.



LOOKING AT VISUAL IMAGERY - *NEW MEDIA & CONCEPT ART*



Nalini Malani's works are focused on the vulnerable position of women, political dynamics, and on-going globalisation. She has worked with various media including video, installations and theatre plays.



ANISH KAPOOR's work is often simple with curved surfaces. Many of the themes include earth-skies, matter-spirit, visible-invisible, male-female and body-mind. His recent work sees the use of mirror like material.

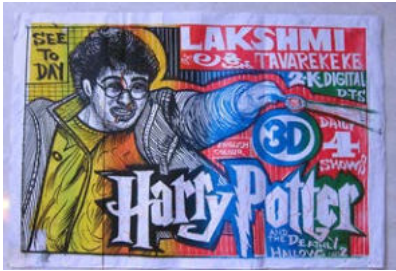


Bose Krishnamachari's work is a fascinating manipulation of photographic elements interspersed with vibrant and abstract spaces. Emphasizing the fact that there is no fixed meaning that an image reflects, his patterns symbolise the impermanence of definitions, signs, signifier and claims of singular truth.

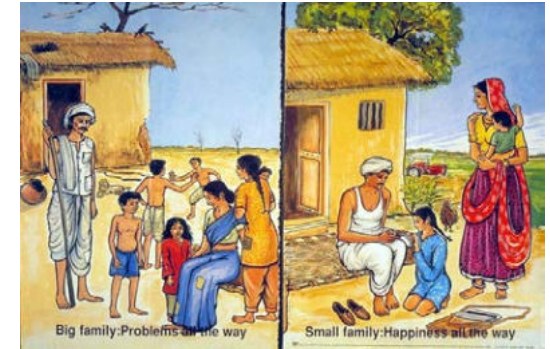


LOOKING AT VISUAL IMAGERY

Apart from looking at different works by image makers, I also came across other forms of imagery that one cannot avoid.



A film poster.



Educational Illustration.



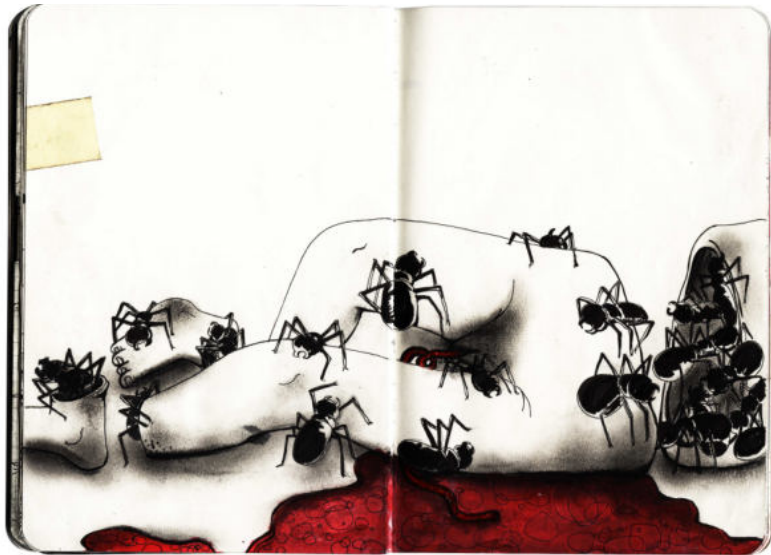
Images of images inside HDTV.



Government posters on sanitation / family planning for public welfare awareness.



ILLUSTRATION BASED PROJECTS FROM IDC



MANAS MITHIYA by Tarana Gupta is an art journal where she has explored personal emotions and experiences. She has depicted life of a female through her eyes.

Shilpa Beura's graphic novel was a good attempt to illustrating a story but in my opinion, there was a lack of maturity and finesse in her illustrations.



Arun Prabhakar's project showed illustrations that weaved a story of two people exploring the city of Mumbai. The illustrations were fresh and exploratory in nature.

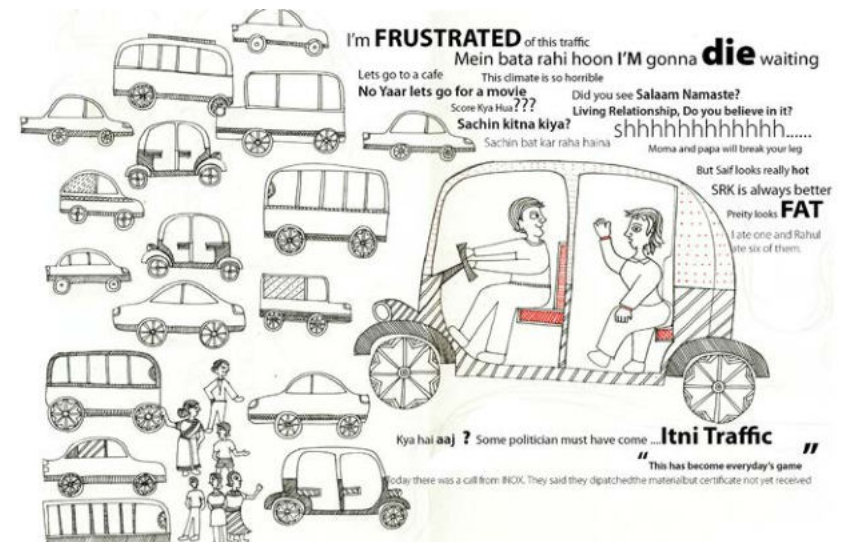


ILLUSTRATION BASED PROJECTS FROM IDC



Narendar Singh's book about urbanization is set around the example of a wood block carver from Pethapur. The narrative is concise and the text has been printed using screen printing technique. He has used wood etching for his illustrations.



Sheetal Barge's project is about storytelling using mythology to convey the concern for environment in an animated film. She has made use of illustrative visual imagery in this film..



OUR NON-VEG COW is an illustrated story of Mahaswetadevi. Like the stories incidents, the illustrations had to bring out the quirky feel of the story. Ruchi Shah has tried experimental illustrations. The text is hand written and integrated with the illustrations.

2.3 VISITS

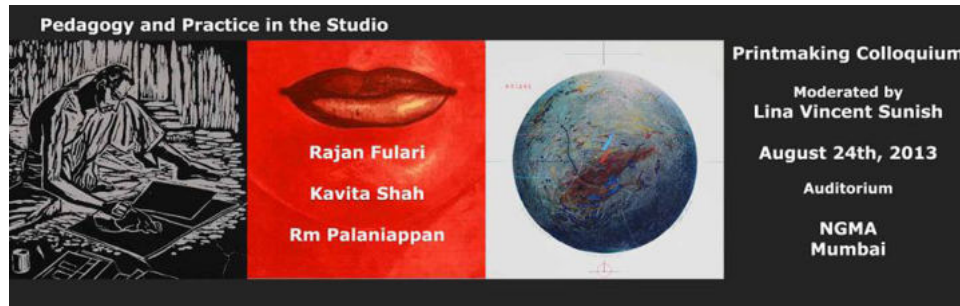
I attended a few talks and exhibitions which definitely enriched my thoughts and opened up new windows in the way of looking at images. It was a first hand knowledge that I received from artists themselves.

I visited exhibitions at NGMA, Tao Art Gallery, Chemould Presscott Road, Jehangir Art Gallery and many others.

I came back and wrote a detailed report of my visits and the talks I attended. This was a good reflection on what I heard and indeed, my way of looking at subject and images changed quite a lot.



2.3.1 *Between the lines*, August 24, 2013



LADIES COMPARTMENT BY PREETI AGARWAL

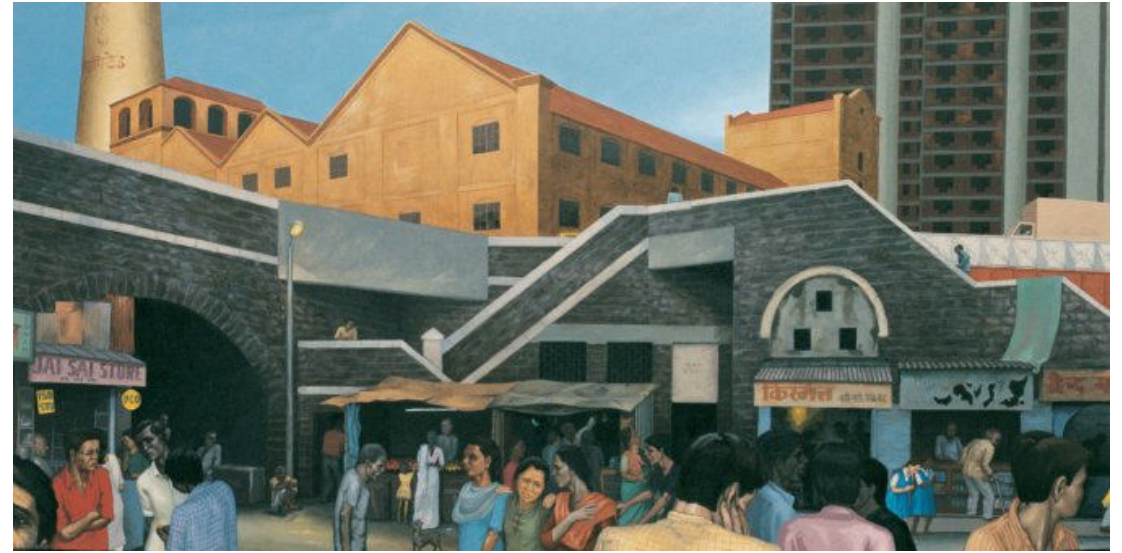
FISHING BY HAREN DAS



2.3.2 The Art India Colloquy with Shanta Gokhale and Sudhir Patwardhan, Sept. 27, 2013



THE EMERGENT



LOWER PAREL



SAINIK



NOSTALGIA



2.3.3 Looking at paintings: *Busting some myths by Indrapramit Roy, Oct.11, 2013*



NOCTURNE II



GREY DAWN



AFTERMATH WITH GAS MASK





3. POSSIBILITIES

NATURE


MOTHER AND CHILD

URBANSCAPES



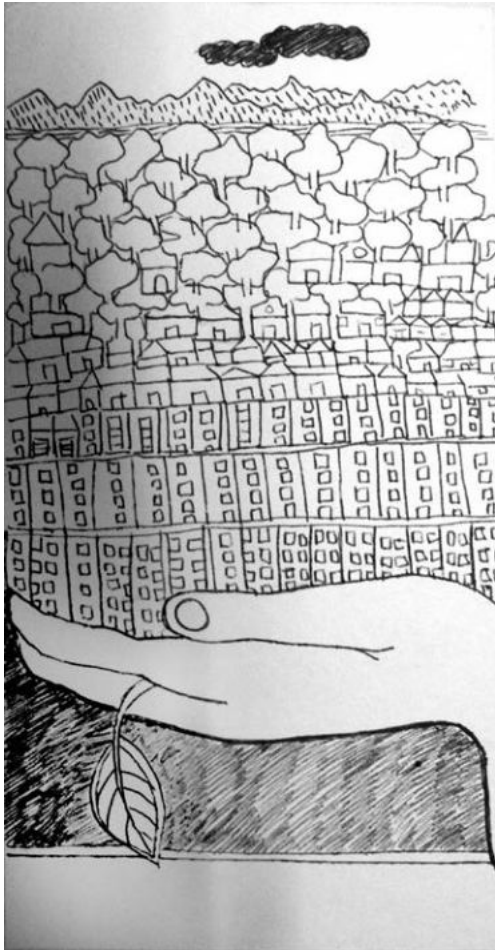


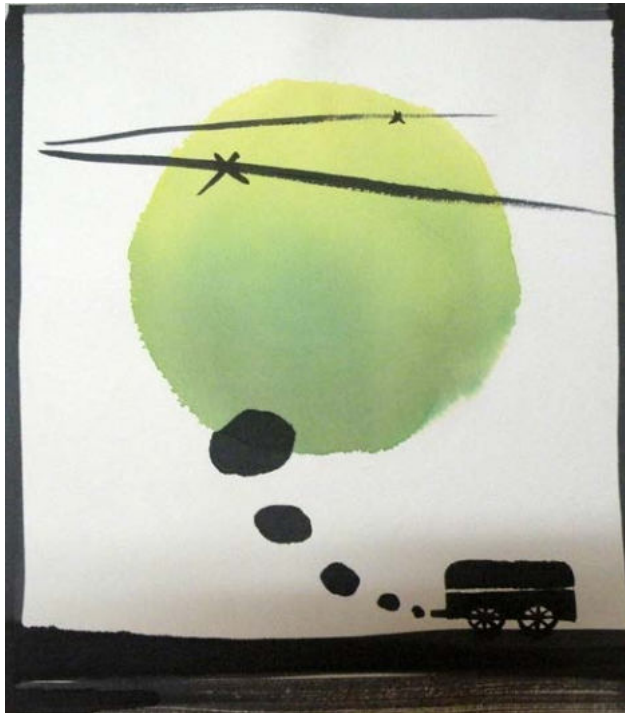
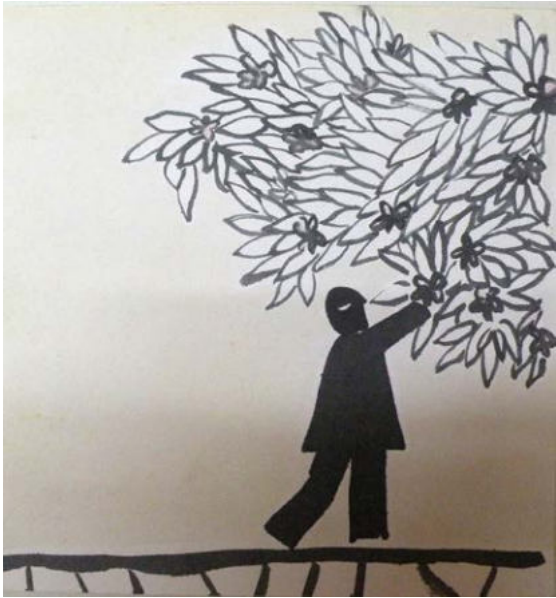
4. EXPLORATIONS



Imagination is the beginning of creation.
You imagine what you desire, you will what you imagine,
and at last, you create what you will.

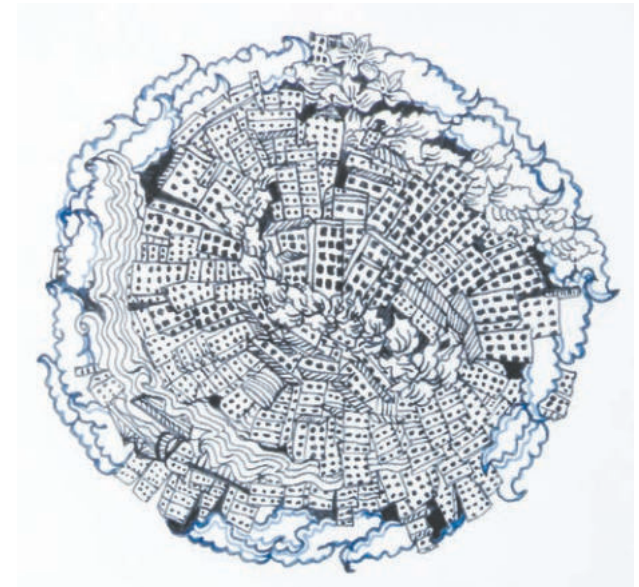
-George Bernard Shaw

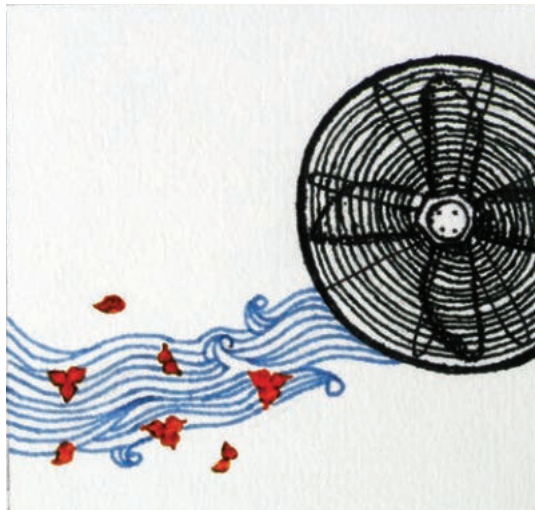






FURTHER EXPLORATIONS





Looking at my pen and ink miniatures, I was suggested by my guide to try my hand at **etching**. Etching would give me a different degree and quality of line work.

I was very excited to learn something new called **aqua-tint** in etching, using aqua-dust. Aqua-tint uses acid-resistant resin to achieve tonal effects.

The experience with etching was a nice one, but at the same time I realised, one needs good practice and understanding of this form of image making. One needs to be continuously at it to achieve the desired quality in the line work.





5. MY THOUGHTS

A few thoughts that evolved after looking closely at the works of Sudhir Patwardhan and Indrapramit Roy and understanding their views. Of course, the initial study of wide range of works by several artists of different era too developed a lot of rich knowledge. While exploring in practice, one realises the real possibilities and the needs of a good image, the one that speaks.

These thoughts became very important in further shaping my project. Some of my understandings or thoughts that came out of these are:

- **Great art reflects it's own times.**
- **Art should have it's local touch and roots, and then it becomes universal.**
- **An Image does not make you laugh or cry; rather it speaks very softly.**
- **An image need not say anything new, but it needs to say it in a new way.**



It was mid-October by now. And I wanted to make up my mind as to what shape would I wish to give to my project. For this, it was important that I chose a theme and medium and worked towards it.

I had been trying etching simultaneously till now and also letting my thoughts evolve.

There are possibly two routes towards making images:

- 1) The Visual Route
- 2) Deliberately Designed Images



Urbanscapes

While creating pen and ink drawings, I had a more generalised view of urbanscapes; where I showed the increasing number of concrete buildings, shrinking nature, etc.

However, the insights that I realised after attending the talks by artists of today changed way of looking at these. The direct connect to MY Urbanscape was missing.

Thus, now came the realisation that even though I work with the same theme, as an image maker of today, my work needs to reflect the current times. I needed a more direct connect to the urban life I belonged to and experienced. Only then the images would have a soul and they might start speaking. This was another important point that shaped this project.





**6. FINAL WORKS
OF
IMAGE-MAKING**

AN ATTEMPT AT WRITING

THE SPEAKING IMAGES



And this is just a beginning...





7. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

'Cheshire Puss,' she began, rather timidly, as she did not at all know whether it would like the name: however, it only grinned a little wider. 'Come, it's pleased so far,' thought Alice, and she went on; 'Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?' 'That depends a good deal on where you want to get to,' said the Cat. 'I don't much care where--' said Alice. 'Then it doesn't matter which way you go,' said the Cat. '--So long as I get somewhere,' Alice added as an explanation. 'Oh, you're sure to do that,' said the Cat, 'if you only walk long enough.'

(from Alice In Wonderland by Lewis Carroll)

I must thank Prof. Raja Mohanty for his support to my belief in a project full of experience and a journey of learning through the wonderland. The choice of this project would not have been possible without his discussions and his fascinating insights.

I am what I am because of mumma from whom the love for art has been inherited and papa who has been ever enthusiastic and supportive of my work.

My gratitude and appreciation goes to the IDC faculty for their constant advice and exposure to various thoughts and ideas. Here I have a chance to explore the project in the medium I love, a chance to be able to express what I wish, thanks to IDC.

An extended note of thanks to friends who have been a constant support and believers in my work as well as critics. They have constantly reminded me of the madness that one needs to stay alive; in order to live and not just survive.

Special thanks to all those people and events in life that have constantly reminded me of my passion for art and design; without whom I would have been lost in the not so much of wonderland.

*'How do you know I'm mad?' said Alice.
'You must be,' said the Cat, 'or you wouldn't have come here.'*

(from Alice In Wonderland by Lewis Carroll)



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THANK YOU

