
PRESS RELEASE

The Desired Scaffold

- *The Desired Scaffold* opens at Gallery XXL on July 27, 2024
- Presenting the works of Akash Joshi, Anikesa Dhing, Ashima Raizada, Bhuwal Prasad, Harisha Chennangod, Harnoor Juneja, Kapil Jangid, Sabiha Dohadwala and Vikrant Kano
- On display will be mixed media artworks that reflect on associations with and meanings of spaces we inhabit and work in, and in that question the power structures inherent within different architectures

Gallery XXL is pleased to announce the opening of *The Desired Scaffold* on **July 27, 2024** at 21, Arsiwala Building, Wodehouse Road, Colaba, Mumbai. Presenting the works of Indian artists **Akash Joshi, Anikesa Dhing, Ashima Raizada, Bhuwal Prasad, Harisha Chennangod, Harnoor Juneja, Kapil Jangid, Sabiha Dohadwala and Vikrant Kano**, *The Desired Scaffold* is a proposition for unearthing desires that are hidden, barely understood or spoken about, but exist and continue to unfurl in our engagement with architectures we inhabit. At the same time, the exhibition highlights those desired acts of building, maintenance, repair -- of shelters, offices, homes -- that rarely find an articulation, and through the display asks one central question:

What kind of acts are required to create structures we desire to live in? Structures we work within, spaces we cook food in response to our hunger, architectures that become spaces for finding solace as moments of public, private, personal – sometimes secluded from one another, intermingle as desires within and outside unfurl.

The Desired Scaffold inquires into the foundational structures of architecture and its relationship with bodies that desire. From the rarely explored and talked about corners, doors, windows and indentures that surround us to the functional but hierarchically nether spaces of the kitchen and the toilet room, as well as the entries and exits into familiar and unfamiliar spaces that we encounter, the exhibition offers a plural imagination of architectures of culture, shelter, belonging, isolation, longing, and nostalgia. The display supported by an exhibition design – serves to carry a narrative which subverts different associations to meanings of home, the street, the intimate, the private and the public.

At times fluid, at other times porous, the curation leads from works by Sabiha Dohadwala, Harisha Chennangod and Bhuwal Prasad, who explore the macroscopic landscapes of how we see space and time from a panopticon or from a bird eyes view to the works of Kapil Jangid and Vikrant Kano who through personal histories of conflicted ancestral land comment on the politics of migration and demolition. As the design uses novel scaffolds which allow the viewers to experience a moving through the expanse as well as compact closures, the entangled nature of the display is interspersed through photographic works of Harnoor Juneja visibilising the street. A following into the mixed media works of Anikesa Dhing, Akash Joshi and Ashima Raizada reaches a threshold within *The Desired Scaffold* wherein gendered occupations are brought to the forefront through interiors, stretching spaces of intimacy wide open for eyes to view, and footsteps to find what they seek – a proposals for safety, liberation, and listening. In this closure, the desire, in this desire, the opening to the desired scaffold.

The exhibition will be on view until the first week of September and the weekly programming calendars will be posted on Gallery XXL's instagram page.

Address

21, Arsiwala Mansion,
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Artist Bios

Akash Joshi

Akash Joshi is a self-taught photographer forging a journey in the medium and existing in the space(s) between a practitioner and student of the craft. Telling stories through images, and often supplementing them with text in the fashion of a photo-essay, Akash began making images: of spaces within and without, wanting to capture a fleeting moment, a daily occurrence, a spot of light; of the spaces that had been sites of violence in the past, of areas they found and continue to find refuge in; of people who exist and lead parallel and sometimes converging lives in the same space; of memory-relics that although attempt to provide nostalgic comfort often open windows to years of trauma.

Akash's photographic series have been featured in a variety of online publications and exhibitions which include "finding my way Home" in LensCulture, "Images of Resistance" at Vantage Point Sharjah 9, 2021, Sharjah Art Foundation, UAE, The Future of the Past, A Night at 367, The Gnamma Collective, New Delhi, "A Photo Story from Bageshwar, Uttarakhand: Not Just Ram's Lila", The Quint. And in 2018, they were awarded the Street: Honourable Mention (Amateur) in the Monochrome Photography Awards.

Anikesa Dhing

Anikesa Dhing completed both her undergraduate and postgraduate studies in Fine Art from MS University, Baroda. Dhing's works are a vibrant panorama of objects, painted and weaved into a variety of mediums and scales stripping them off of their specificity. Dhing investigates the sentimental tendencies materialism holds and the transactional values of an object-oriented universe. The visual bombardment of the images mimics the anxiety of transitoriness and desire, in such a manner that narrates the story of an object as a prime protagonist.

Anikesa's works have most recently been exhibited at *Mute/Unmute* at Method India and *Lost Fragrance of Infinity* held at Space 118, Mumbai and at a solo exhibition titled *Ice-Cream Melting at the Bouncy Castle* at Anant Art Gallery. The artist currently lives and works in Baroda, Gujarat.

Ashima Raizada

Ashima Raizada is an artist based in India who experiments with diverse artistic mediums. Her practice involves an experimentation with the mediums of photography, painting and drawing, primarily rooted in everyday observations and concepts of philosophy. Through her practice, she likes to translate her experiences into material form while employing different mediums to highlight the dimensionality of a singular concept/idea. Over the years, she has worked on multiple series which take into account a singular idea of the self and its possible representations using photography and mixed media. The spectrum of exploration is further enhanced by the use of technological interfaces and the idea of "play".

Ashima has recently been part of India Art, Architecture and Design Biennale at IAADB 2023, nominated for Mash India Young Artist Exhibition and Award 2023, participated in Experimental Photo Festival, Barcelona in 2023, and held a solo exhibition titled *It all leads to the same place* in association with Terrain.art (parallel IAF event) in Delhi. She was chosen by Hindustan Times as one of the Top 30 under 30 young achievers in 2018.

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Bhuwal Prasad

Bhuwal Prasad is an artist from Azamgarh from the district of Uttar Pradesh who is currently based in the National Capital Region of India. Trained in Visual Arts from the College of Art in Delhi, Bhuwal's practice holds broken lines and bold colours at the center of the pictorial surface. Devising a unique form of abstraction that takes cues from his study of indigenous art forms and readings of the Indus Valley civilization, Indian prehistoric rock art, Mesopotamian scrolls and Egyptian art, the scattered figures that appear in his otherwise abstract works reference the evolution of culture. His approach to painting is guided by instincts, which are not mediated by intellect but driven by the pleasure emanating from his thoughts. While employing a multitude of materials like acrylic and oil paints, charcoal, ink, and automotive paint along with fibreglass and MDF, Bhuwal reflects on mediums to create an assimilation of stories of shared histories.

Over the past 15 years, Bhuwal's works have been showcased at a variety of group and solo exhibitions around India some which of include *Solitude in my Cacophony* a solo solo exhibition curated by Rahul Kumar and supported by Sangita Rajani and Kalyani Chawla at TAQ, New Delhi, 2024; *Between the Line* a solo exhibition at Eikowa Art Gallery and LDH in Hyderabad, 2023; *Melting Metamorphosis* at Dhoomimal Art Centre, New Delhi, 2019; group exhibitions *Spectrum of Spring* at AWG Gallerie New Delhi in 2024; *Soliloquy* and *The wonder of it* at Gallery Nvya, New Delhi, 2023; and *Gajanana* at Gallery Nvya, New Delhi held in 2022. And in 2018, Bhuwal was awarded the Junior Fellowship by the Ministry of Culture Government of India.

Harisha Chennangod

Harisha Chennangod is a contemporary artist hailing from Kerala, who is currently based in Vadodara, Gujarat. Harisha's artistic journey is an exploration of the interplay between order and chaos, expressed through vibrant colors, intricate lines, and the deliberate use of space. His paintings are built upon a foundation of horizontal and vertical lines representing the complexities of life and the constant tension between structure and freedom, often constructing 12 to 18 layers of traversing lines which appear as a visual reflection of a textile. Harisha utilises a vibrant palette of colours that evoke raw emotions and a sense of wonder which is a response created by the dynamic tension within the canvas, mirroring the ever-changing energy of the world around us. The repetitive nature and meticulousness of the process weaves a visual tapestry, guiding the viewer's eyes in and out through spaces between the lines that represent the unknown. The paintings transcend a visual experience providing a sense of intrigue drawn from the layers of memories embedded within the lines, colours, and spaces becoming an invitation to contemplate on the complexities of existence, to find beauty amidst the chaos, and discover something new with each encounter.

With an MA in Museology from the MS University of Baroda and a BFA in Painting from CAVA College Mysore, Harisha has exhibited extensively across prominent galleries and exhibitions worldwide. Noteworthy showcases include *Iterations* at Vida Hyderi Contemporary, Pune in 2024; *Phantasm* curated by Veeranganakumari Solanki at Srishti Gallery, Hyderabad in 2024; Space Studio Alumni Show at Space Studio Baroda, Vadodara in 2024; *Contextual Cosmologies* curated by Bose Krishnamachari at the Trivandrum Fine Arts Gallery, Thiruvananthapuram in 2023; *Permateriam* at Latitude 28, New Delhi in 2022 and *HOME - an irrevocable condition* at Pepper House, by Kochi Muziris Biennale in 2021. Furthermore, Harisha has participated in residencies and camps such at the Kochi Muziris Biennale, 1Shanthiroad, Bangalore and at Niracharthu in Trissur, Kerala.

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Harnoor Juneja

Harnoor Juneja is a freelance photographer based in India, splitting his time between Ahmedabad and Mumbai. Taking from a hybrid practice across documentary and fashion photography, Harnoor observes moments from a distance, while feeling a sense of attachment for the split second that he captures. There is a moment of introspection that enhances Juneja's perspective of portraits outside of fashion photography and in his artistic work, visually depicting parts of the body that hint towards a narrative that is open to interpretation. The artist says that photography grows into his skin, where documentation of everyday life is where he tries to find the calm in the chaos (or vice versa).

Harnoor has previously worked as an Assistant Director with the ABP Network. His works have also been exhibited virtually by the The Holy Art Gallery, London for Emulsion Chapter II.

Kapil Jangid

Kapil Jangid is an artist based between Baroda and New Delhi who has a deep interest in the social, architectural and environmental landscapes of urban and rural India. Kapil's work is conceptualized based on his responses to architectural imagery and urbanisation of cities. Coming from a family that migrated from Rajasthan to Gujarat in search of better opportunities, his family settled in Bajwa, a small village on the outskirts of Vadodara where Kapil was born and raised. Growing up in an area which was surrounded by three enormous industrial units of oil corporations, the stark contrast between the precise construction and sterile planning of industrial townships and the informal and unplanned mushrooming of structures in Bajwa led Kapil to study the human conditions and socio-political realities of those who inhabit these architectures. Working primarily with found materials, objects, concrete, collages, photographs, and drawings, the artist builds works that reference his father's occupational background as a carpenter. The composition of the objects that he creates act as a collection of small structures that pose a puzzle for him to navigate and understand social stratification.

Kapil completed a BVA and MVA from the Faculty of Fine Arts at the Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda and has been showcasing his works across galleries and foundations since 2015. His works were recently exhibited at Immerse for the Young Collectors Programme, a group show curated by Satyam Yadav and supported by India Art Fair 2024; *Permanent Conference* curated by Shristi Sainani at Gallery Nvya in New Delhi, 2023; *Embark* at Ark Foundation for the Arts in Baroda, 2023; *Surface 07* at Artbuzz studio in New Delhi, 2022; *The Elephant in the Room: neutral infrastructure/s of 'signaling' in the arts*, a joint publication by Conflictorium - Museum of Conflict, India and Stroom Den Haag, Netherlands in 2022 and IMMERSE, a group show curated by Shaleen Wadhvana and supported by Somaiya Vidyavihar University in partnership with Carpe Arte and Young Art Support held in Mumbai in 2022.

Sabiha Dohadwala

Based in Mumbai, Sabiha Dohadwala approaches textile as a site of integrating and disintegrating memories, images, and histories. Her works address the human tendency to forget over time and advocate a renewed way of understanding memory. Sabiha captures cultural histories and lived experiences through the act of weaving. The tactile materiality of textile is ingrained with acts of remembering in the face of erasure.

Sabiha has a BFA with an emphasis on Fiber and Material Studies from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. She has previously worked as a Collections and Exhibitions Assistant at the Swedish American Museum in Chicago, US, and at Intuit: The Center for Intuitive and Outsider Art; and as a Textile Designer for BiYuu, Mexico City.

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Vikrant Kano

Vikrant Kano is a practice-based researcher and artist whose journey in the arts began with a Bachelors and Masters of Fine Arts from the College of Art, New Delhi. Vikrant's art practice centers around the "idea of home" through the investigation of his family history and archives. His practice is following the interlinked dual aspects of home and homelessness, migration and land ownership, physical and mental boundaries, memory and trauma, and fact and fiction. As Annalisa Mansukhani writes in 'The Impulse to Remember: On Vikrant Kano's' In Search of Home' for ASAP Art, " Kano's artistic practice follows an engaged archival process with objects, memories and sentiments, building a vocabulary-in-progress to accommodate multiple acts of intergenerational remembering and recollection. In this work spanning several years of making, Kano chose to delve into his existing family archive of orality, images and memories to create his own point of entry. Through observations archived after conversations with family members and artistic exercises undertaken by him, Kano attempts to define a sense and trajectory of home."

Throughout his career, Vikrant has been actively involved in the arts taking on roles as an art educator and artist at The Creat Studio and later as a Research/Artist Assistant under the guidance of Delhi-based contemporary artist, Mr. Atul Bhalla. These experiences have enriched his artistic expression and exposed him to various contemporary art practices.

Vikrant's work has earned recognition through solo and group exhibitions both nationally and internationally. Notably, his solo display *Lost In Translation* was showcased in the esteemed PRAF Discover Series, supported by the Prameya Art Foundation in 2021. Additionally, he has participated in prestigious exhibitions like *Transitions and Transformations: The Constant Flux of Our Personal Structures*, curated by Geraldine Ondrizek, in the exhibition *Personal Structures* at the European Cultural Centre, Palazzo Bembo, Venice, Italy held during the Venice Biennale in 2022. His works were shown in 2019 at *Call to Disorder: Experiments in Practice and Research* was showcased at the curated by Vidya Shivadas at the Serendipity Arts Festival, in Goa and *Brief Parables of Dystopia* at MOMus: Museum of Contemporary Art, Macedonian Museum of Contemporary Art and State Museum of Contemporary Art Collections which was held in Thessaloniki, Greece. As an artist with a global perspective, Vikrant's artwork has garnered attention from publications and media outlets worldwide. His work has been featured in notable platforms such as "IL FOTOGRAFO" Album Di Famiglia in Italy and '47 & BEYOND', a blog dedicated to South Asian art. His involvement in thought-provoking projects like "In Search of Home":1939-2021 (present), Gathering of Memories curated by Grazia Peduzzi for Emergent Art Space has showcased his ability to use art as a medium for profound reflection. Beyond exhibitions and workshops, Vikrant has also participated in art camps and residences, further immersing himself in the creative process and connecting with fellow artists. Notably, he was selected for the "Peers Share" initiative as part of a Peers Residency Programme 2023 by KHOJ, New Delhi.

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About the Gallery

Established in 2023, Gallery XXL is an urban contemporary art gallery based in Mumbai, India. The gallery represents and showcases a roster of Indian and international artists whose practices are rooted in a variety of disciplines that broaden the understanding of established categories and catalyse diverse exchanges through processual exhibitions, treating the gallery as a fluid institution which presents dynamic negotiations to the idea of a 'white cube.'

With its name echoing Jean-Michel Basquiat's city walk from Downtown 81 (Dir. Edo Bertoglio,) when he described his medium as "extra large," Gallery XXL extends a desire for imaginations to be XXL, an abbreviation for 'extra, extra, large' and brings it to the city of Mumbai in order to examine the ambitious scale of visuals and conversations prevalent in urban art.

Arjun Bahl, Giulia Ambrogi, Thanish Thomas and Hanif Kureshi, the founders of St+Art India Foundation joined hands with Joe Cyril (Director, Gallery XXL) to start the space-time for Gallery XXL. Founded in 2014, St+Art India has been supporting street art in the country through public art projects. With the experience of creating artistic interventions in public as well as private spaces coalescing in order to widen engagement with urban art, aesthetics and culture work in the Indian context, St+art extends its vision to facilitate institutional representation for urban contemporary artists through exhibitions at the newly founded Gallery XXL.

Team

Giulia Ambrogi, Hanif Kureshi, Arjun Bahl, Thanish Thomas, Joe Cyril, Vidur Sethi, Sarah Malik, Faraz Khan, Akhil Kattamanchil, Guru Pednekar, Ashu Khanna, and Babu Gundanoor.

Annexures

The attached drive link consists of the artist's profile images, artwork captions, high resolution images of the artworks and the invite. For any more information, please contact sarah@galleryxxl.com.

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