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Exhibition in Mumbai | Fragmented ruins


A new exhibition at Gallery XXL, Mumbai juxtaposes the artworks of an Indian and a Spanish artist




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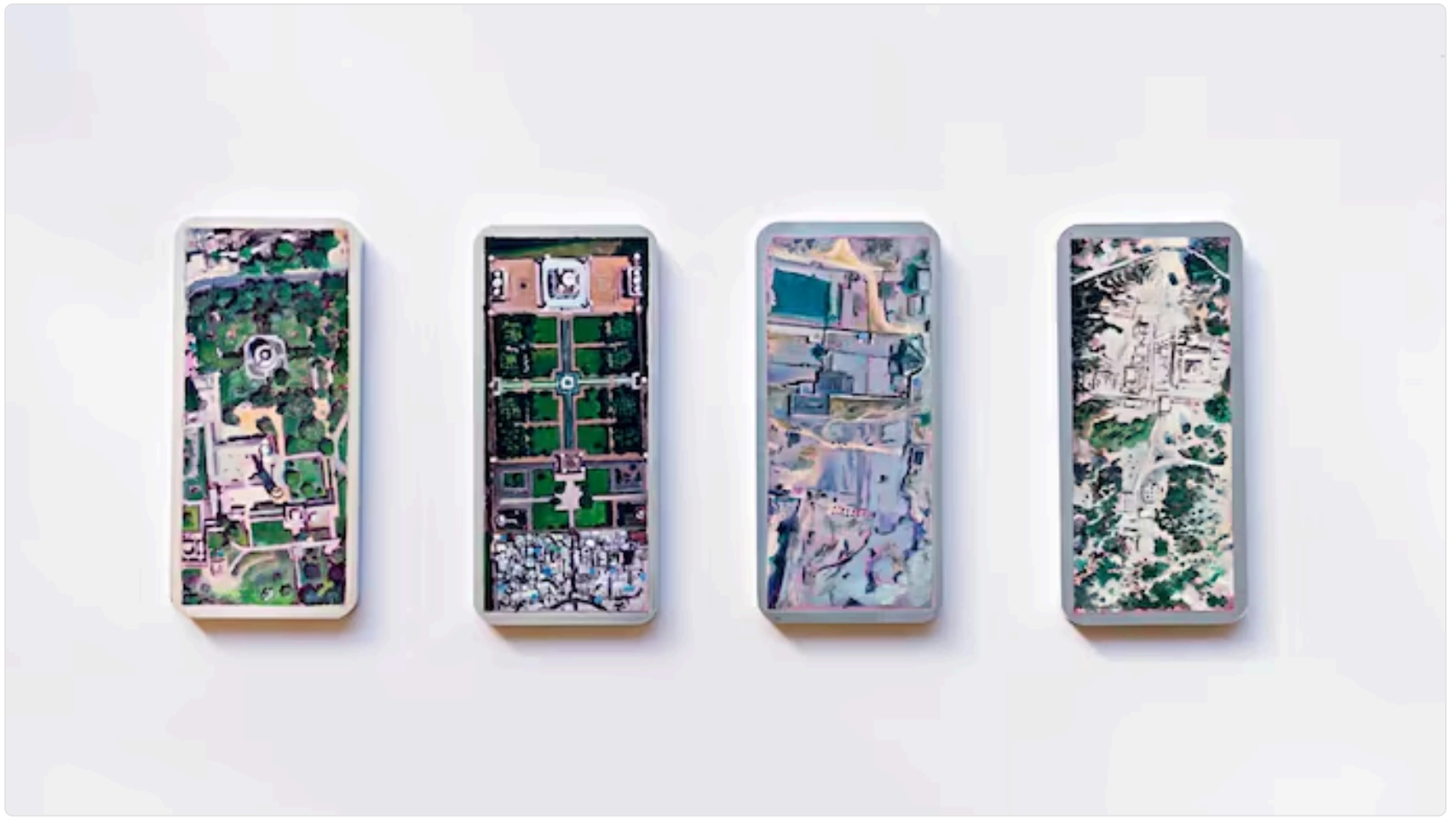
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The 'Digital Ruin' (smartphone) series



Prachi Joshi

ISSUE DATE: Jun 10, 2024 | UPDATED: May 31, 2024 15:26 IST

Chunks of white granite stand on black columns, almost reminiscent of historical fragments displayed in archaeological museums worldwide. Instead of ancient engravings, these blocks feature

aluminium rendered in the scale of a smartphone depict incredibly detailed bird's-eye views of some of the most evocative ruins in the world—from Mohenjo-daro and Hampi to the Parthenon and Colosseum. A common thread runs between the two exhibits, the former presented by Indian artist Sajid Wajid Shaikh and the latter by Spanish artist Jofre Oliveras. Currently on view at Gallery XXL, Mumbai, *Witness and Evidence: deliberations on ruins* by Sajid Wajid Shaikh and Jofre Oliveras is an investigation of the ruins that are around us, and the ruins that are far away but continue to surround us.



Shaikh, a Mumbai-based multidisciplinary artist, and Spanish muralist and painter Oliveras from Girona come from different backgrounds and are guided by different artistic expressions rooted in their respective cultures. “When we were studying the two artists and their processes, we realised that their works seemed to speak together, without the artists ever knowing each other. We saw the idea of ruins as a commonality with both artists’ take on it and that’s how the show came together,” says gallery director Joe Cyril. The works on display, most of which have been created for this particular exhibition, invite the viewer to deliberate upon confusions that emerge from witnessing ruins and explore historical losses that seek preservation.

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The Fall (oil on canvas) by Jofre Oliveras. (Images Courtesy Jofre Oliveras/Gallery XXL)



Shaikh's sculptures made of marble and concrete evoke resilience in materialities, while his observational drawings and found objects invite contemplation on the idea of home. In relation to this, Oliveras' works—whose imagination of digital objects takes physical forms with traditional materials—transport the viewer to the ruins we might encounter in future. Apart from the aforementioned 'Digital Ruin' (smartphone) series, 'The Fall' features (in oil on canvas) classical Greek and Roman busts that serve as a metaphor for the complexities of the present world. Neither artist shies away from the realities of conflict, whether it's the current wars or caste and religion-based violence. "After all, it's war and conflict that create the next set of ruins," says Cyril. n

—The exhibition is on view until June 29. It will be complemented by a weekly programming calendar

Published By: Shyam Balasubramanian

Published On: May 31, 2024

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