



ARTS ILLUSTRATED

Editor's note

Criss-crossing lines
On the inside of your palms
Speak the language of infinity
Old words for crushed souls, a soothing balm

And yet, between the said and the heard
The remains of meaning exist
Floating on the surface like lifeless bodies
Swirling and tumbling through time's ageless tryst

It's telling (yes) of the world we live in
Where updates and hashtags often set sail
Through the open seas of virtual liberation
Along with the 'like', a dog's incessant wagging tail

When beneath the burden of the eye
Memories bump against identities
That bump against invisible visible boundaries
That slip and slide through multiple realities

To create a vortex throbbing with prejudice
Drowning in (un)limiting categories
And, dare we say it, themes
Clutching on to the ends of stories

That reveal as much as they conceal
That surmount as much as they defeat
For if not for words, dead or alive
How would meaning derive its rightful beat?

And when it does
When it stops to pause and breathe
The words, I mean
Then to us, the dance of silence it bequeaths

Because first there was the word
However sandwiched between the walls
Of silence and thereof and hereunder
Wordlessly pointing to truth's buried calls

Much as we discovered this issue
Through, between, with and without words
That between the said and the heard
There also thrives a space, quietly shaken and stirred



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Cover Artist



'I paint with light,' claims Shailan Parker, while we look through his innumerable images on a large-screen Mac at his South Delhi studio, where you manoeuvre around photographic equipment and lights that seem to have taken over the space... stacked on the floor, on the podium and hanging from the ceiling.

Parker began his career as a professional photographer over 35 years ago. He is an alumnus of the National Institute of Design (NID, Ahmedabad) where he trained in Visual Communications, and continues his association with the institute as a guest faculty member. Product photography is at the core of his practice, and Parker is recognised for his ability to design and craft visuals around client briefs. While it may seem like a mundane professional requirement, it has allowed Parker the creative freedom to project the best visual of an object in a controlled studio environment. His resourcefulness leads him to apply this learning to his artistic works. He takes hours to *set up the stage*... placement of the object, working with multiple sources of light and reflection, adjusting the angles and controlling the intensity of the lights. Just as the painter decides which colour and



how much of it should be applied on canvas, Parker controls his imagery by orchestrating the lighting. This is fundamentally different from capturing what exists or is available for anyone to take notice of. Parker *creates* his images.

For this issue as we begin our fifth year, we chose an image of a found silk-cotton flower. Half dried and almost disintegrated, it would normally never attract a second glance. Parker gives it a rebirth, a new voice, an emergence from the silence of the discarded to the silence of the revered. Enhancing the textures, accentuating the undulations, the image allows for a meditative gaze. The back cover is the same image in negative. It looks like a charcoal drawing of the rays of light Parker used to create his image in the first place. The work is consciously left untitled to allow the viewer an absolute and unbiased experience and interpretation.

The words of Georgia O'Keeffe evoke the appropriate emotions of Parker's artistic practice – '*If you take a dry flower in your hand and really look at it, it's your world for a moment.*'

Conceptualisation of the cover and text above by Rahul Kumar.



Shailan Parker



*Diane Arbus: In the Park –
Lévy Gorvy*

On May 2, Lévy Gorvy inaugurated the exhibition of one of the most influential photographers of the 20th century – Diane Arbus. *Diane Arbus: In the Park* featured choice works from Arbus’ oeuvre that were made in Central Park and Washington Square in New York – spaces that resulted in many of the artist’s most striking and original images,



Diane Arbus, **Two ladies walking in Central Park**, N.Y.C. 1963, © The Estate of Diane Arbus.

including *Girl in a beret in Central Park, N.Y.C., 1958*, *Three girls at a Puerto Rican Festival, N.Y.C. 1962*, and *Susan Sontag and her son on bench, N.Y.C., 1965*, that are being exhibited here for the first time. The exhibition, on till June 24, presents works that were made within four miles of where they are now being exhibited.

*Integration –
Jehangir Art Gallery*

Artist Madhavi Kolte is well known for works that use the technique of coiling. She says that the method allows her to counterbalance the lingering feeling of helplessness by transforming negative mental agitation into creations that celebrate our natural world. From June 20 to 26, Madhavi will present her works in a solo show at Jehangir Art Gallery in Mumbai. The show titled *Integration* will deal with our society’s current blindness towards addressing how our actions and inactions are responsible



Madhavi Kolte, **Anthill ‘M’**, 16”x16”x26”, Stoneware, 2016. Image Courtesy of the artist and Jehangir Art Gallery.

for the degrading state of the environment. Her works are materialised moments of a lifelong conversation with Mother Earth, using the most elementary and intimate language: the earth itself.

PHotoEspaña

The 20th edition of PHotoEspaña – the International Festival of Photography and Visual Arts of Madrid – was inaugurated on May 31 and will be open to public till August 27. Analysing the development and implication of photography evident over the past 20 years, the anniversary edition delves further into the fabric of visual arts and its perception.



Anders Petersen, **From the series Cafe Lehmitz**
© Anders Petersen. Image Courtesy of PHotoEspaña.

The Spanish photographer Alberto Garcia-Alix, known for his raw portraiture and involvement with the ‘La Movida Madrileña’, has been given free rein to curate PHotoEspaña’s 20th edition. Celebrating ‘work that lives outside the norms because it feeds off what is most intimate and passionate in the author’, the festival turns a keen eye towards cult and, sometimes, obsessive projects.

*Shadows on Arrival –
Experimenter*

From March 4 to April 29, Experimenter presented *Shadows on Arrival* – artist Prabhakar Pachpute’s second solo at the gallery that followed Pachpute’s continued interest in the exploitation of land and mineral resources in which he imagined the future of a post-mined and post-industrial landscape



Prabhakar Pachpute, **Under the Crust**, LED light, gypsum sculpture on gypsum plinth and charcoal drawing, 2017. Image Courtesy of the artist and Experimenter.

through paintings, sculpture and installation. *Shadows on Arrival* could be thought of as Pachpute’s personal quest to find answers to his own encounter with land and mining challenges in his hometown of Chandrapur in Central India that has been witness to aggressive open cast mining over decades, and an imagination that seeks to empower the inanimate and the animate to emerge from the shadows of their past.

Presence in Absence – Gallery Threshold

From March 25 to May 10, Gallery Threshold in New Delhi played host to Delhi-based textile artist and weaver Priya Ravish Mehra's solo exhibition titled *Presence in Absence*. Mehra's long-term engagement in unravelling the threads of ancient darning technique or *Rafoogari* sat at the epicentre of the show, wherein the mixed media works on display



Priya Ravish Mehra, **Untitled**, Plant fiber with paper pulp, 11.5" x 9", 2016. Image Courtesy of the artist and Gallery Threshold.

combined natural fibres from paper and from cloth. In a symbiotic enunciation of fabric, cloth fibres disappeared into paper and paper fibres vanished into cloth – inhabiting, hosting, embedding, rendering and ultimately subsuming each other. Over the years the focus of Mehra's practice has shifted to the concept of preservation – what the artist describes as a 'symbolic reaffirmation of the place and significance of the act of repair in the fabric of life itself'.

Masterpieces of Indian Modern Art II – DAG Modern

DAG Modern's second edition of *Masterpieces of Indian Modern Art* forms the focus of its exhibit at the gallery in Hauz Khas Village. The iconic works (100-strong selection of paintings and sculptures) presented here have been especially chosen to represent an important oeuvre of the artist, or a radical work in a defining period of India's art history. Among the significant artists featured are Ram Kumar, Krishen Khanna, Avinash Chandra, S. H. Raza,



George Keyt, **Untitled (Two women amid plants)**, Oil on board, 48" x 65", Signed and dated in English (upper right) 'G. Keyt / 47', 1947. Image Courtesy of DAG Modern, New Delhi.

Ambadas, Sohan Qadri, Prokash Karmakar, K. K. Hebbar, Gopal Ghose, Zarina Hashmi, Jeram Patel, K. S. Kulkarni, Himmat Shah, Sunil Das, Dharamnarayan Dasgupta and Paritosh Sen. The exhibition is on till June 30.

A(void) – Gallery Espace

From April 12 to May 13, Gallery Espace showcased *A(void)*, a unique exhibition featuring the works of two Indian contemporary artists – Dilip Chobisa and Tanmoy Samanta. The show explored the complex nuances behind the concept of a void through the prism of memory. The empty spaces that evolved in the process of their art making were deeply layered, introspective, open-ended and



Dilip Chobisa, **Memory of empty basement - 2**, Graphite on paper, colour dust, digital print on canvas painted wooden frame & acrylic glass, 60" x 36", 2017. Image Courtesy of the artist and Gallery Espace, New Delhi..



Tanmoy Samanta, **Nocturne - V**, Canvas with pasted Nepalese handmade paper, Powder pigment and acrylic, 48" x 54", 2016. Image Courtesy of the artist and Gallery Espace, New Delhi.

revelatory, comprising layered mixed-media canvases, works on paper and assemblages in subtle monochromatic palettes. While Chobisa compared the process of beginning a work as one of birthing a void, Samanta preferred to subtract sentiment or nostalgia in favour of a more complex evocation of belonging.

Don't Pressure Me – ION Art Gallery

Artist Rajul Mehta opened her solo exhibition on April 19 at the ION Art Gallery in Singapore, illustrating the everyday pressures which define the lives of most women. Drawing on a relatable theme that often finds pictorial representation in the more obvious presentation of womanhood, Mehta, through her latest body of works, portrayed the many lives of women from all walks of life.



Rajul Mehta, **Shalini - Pink and Perfect**, 100cm x 100cm. Image Credit: Mita Kelder. Courtesy of the artist and Amador Arts Projects.

A benchmark to reflect on where women stand in the globalised world, the show dealt with women who face multiple constraints, whilst simultaneously tracking the trajectories of successful women.



