CHAPTER V

IN THE WAKE OF TURMOIL
THE PRESENT GENERATION OF ARTISTS
1985 to the Present

From the early eighties to the present most of the local artists were trained from Institute of Music and Fine Arts Srinagar. The similar tradition was followed in Jammu. The Santinekatan and Baroda tradition of artist-teacher, practionist-educationist or academic professional guided the next generation after Baroda trained artists like Gayoor Hassan, Bhushen Koul, V R Khajuria, Shiban Kaw and IMFA trained M A Mehboob joined the Institute as art instructors. In this way the art Institute became the sole platform in Kashmir for the local aspiring artists to seek a formal training about various aesthetic and stylistic possibilities in modern art practice. But more significantly it provided a certain venue for any ambitious local artist wanting to understand the art-historical knowledge of world art, the intellectual understanding of contemporary issues and a critical understanding of art works by other artists.

By late seventies the Institute had developed almost into a complete faculty after its affiliation with Kashmir University. The apparently provincial academic atmosphere of hobby classes and diploma certificate courses was replaced with a more sophisticated degree courses. These changes prompted the significance of updating the curriculum for which the most representational reference was sought from the academic rigor of Faculty of Fine Arts Baroda. Ever since its affiliation with University the Institute is running a rigorous five year degree program at graduate level in Painting, Sculpture, Applied Arts, Graphics and Art History. Like Baroda the five year pattern is divided in two parts where the first two years are considered as preparatory, which gives...
enough freedom to experiment in all the disciplines and mediums of plastic art. In the next three years the selected students are trained in their respective areas of specialization.

In the historical-memory of Kashmir years that followed 1989 are virtually described as worst ever. Known for its idyllic and heavenly natural beauty drawing thinkers, saints and Sufis from across the globe as well as rulers and oppressors from different clans of civilization; its picturesque backdrop attracting the Bollywood industry, it seemed inevitable that one day it will be subject to such a gruesome envy. Irrespective of the fact that Kashmir’s so-called Kashmiriyat withstood the onslaught of religious divide in the name of bloody partition nothing could stop a sudden call for Azadi in 1989 spreading like a fire. In the wake of the mass insurgency its piece loving people were suddenly transformed into desperate protestors favoring the armed resistance. And with it, for a while it seemed the new wave is determined to wipe away all that intellectually stimulating, spiritually enlightening and visually overwhelming culture Kashmir represented in the minds of the other.

The changing political climate of the Valley had a drastic impact on the every social and cultural sphere of life including its provincial modern art scene. The most visible impact of the political crisis came by way of a sudden disappearance of some of the important artists of the Valley. Kashmir Pundits, which included some of the important artists of the Valley, were forced into exile, which infected their aesthetic preoccupations with the nostalgic memory anticipating a disconcertingly existential stance. The only Muslim artists left behind, out of a certain aporia or apprehension; choose not to be politically direct in their artistic statements. During the profoundly dangerous first decade of militancy the local artists either hibernated or maintained a somewhat clandestine or solitary engagement with their works. The Institute which served as the only available pretext for meeting and exchange was rarely seen busy
with students. Due to the frequent calls for strike, unpredictable calamities and the ever-growing intimidating presence of new laws, new structures like bunkers, barbed wires and make shift army camps the normal routine life suffered to a great deal. However, it took quite a while when some of the artists started showing their works preferably outside the state.

**SHUJAH SULTAN (1946 – 2008)**

Although quite senior to most of the artists of the third generation, but it was during 1995 that Sultan’s distinctively individualistic style characterizes his mature artistic development. For Sultan the artistic vocation came a bit late after he had already obtained a post-graduate degree in political science from Kashmir University. This seemingly unusual development is shared by his two younger contemporaries such as Shabir Mirza and Rajinder Tiku. Sultan, however, had a strong artistic bent of mind since his early adolescence. Possibly because painting did not promise an easy or relatively a secure future as a career he may have decided to consider other disciplines. But it was this adolescent inclination for art that eventually decided his professional career. Like most of the third generation artists he too joined IMFA Srinagar to avail a formal training as a student of painting and later impart the same as a teacher.

Sultan also shares a special multidimensional persona of diverse talents, quite famous in the state as a superb water-colorist, broadcaster and a writer. His position as an Urdu poet has earned him a considerable fame in the Valley. His poem on Leonardo’s Mona Lisa became quite famous in the literary and art circle of Kashmir. Like his aesthetic sensibility these poetic interventions may also have been inspired by his *shish-guru* association with Santosh.

Sultan’s early wandering years oscillate between the wishful-thinking of surreal compositions and the impressionist mode of watercolor landscapes. In
both, virtually contrary, idioms he adapted a highly refined academic approach. His surrealist paintings followed the Italian Renaissance-like laborious treatment of color and a certain submission to dream or wishful-thinking, such as is evident in the untitled works of 1971 (pl.1,2,3 and 4). On the other hand his watercolors reflected the Impressionist immediacy and objective fidelity to nature (pl.5). The similar duality surfaces in his recent works but they have considerably departed from the archetypal realistic renderings of Surrealism towards a symbolic or allegorical imagery.

Among Santosh’s admirers Sultan had the privilege of being closely associated with him. It is understandable that through Santosh he may have been exposed to the conceptual and symbolic connotations of tantric imagery. Sultan’s recurrent involvement with the egg form is implicitly informed by the Universal Egg or Brahmanda. According to the tantric ritual discourse in the Brahmanda, ‘Brahma-Anda’, the totality is represented in the form of an egg. The Brahman (the Absolute) is symbolized as a curve which surrounds the universe and forms the egg (Anda), the Cosmic Egg (Brahmanda). ¹

The iconic monumentality and the overwhelmingly vastness of space; the translucent treatment which alludes to the formlessness of Universal Principle or Brahma and the mirror stance for being a potent metaphor as a reflector and a refractor foregrounds the rigor of a dense tantric imagery as evident in the relatively small body of Sultans works, such as the Egg-series works done between 1995 and 1999 (pl.6 to 13). The works are reflective of the Surrealist’s old masterly technique, a pedantic sense of detail and the virtually infinite perspectives. It is interesting to notice that both Santosh and Sultan share a certain fascination for Surrealism but in former we hardly get to see any discernible manifestation. In this way the tantric element of Sultan’s paintings does not confine itself to its aesthetic rigor and in a surrealist transgressive
stance he incorporates the idioms that are poetically apocalyptic or metaphysical in their outlook. The idiosyncratic juxtaposition of conflicting visual metaphors such as the creation-symbol of Brahmanda and iris,² in its symbolic associations to burial and death, characterizes Sultan’s aesthetic preoccupations.

Sultan often showed a strange sense of fix or entrapment for his recurrent pictorial devices. In a certain desperate outburst he would often confess: “No matter how much I want to get rid of the egg and iris stereotype I find myself ever returning to it. Every time I lay a first mark on a new canvas I kind of drift along the old logic. My resistance wanes soon before I discover the painting as complete.”³ One can possibly attribute this Frankenstein monster-like experience to the inevitable influence of the turmoil that gripped the milieu he was painting in. Yet Sultan’s paintings are anything but monstrous. Besides the symbolic or allegorical associations the pedantically rendered and exquisitely colorful paintings may equally prove to be a visual delight to look at.

Sultan’s body of work, miniature in scale, dwells in the cosmic drama of death and creation. The singularity, monumentality and the translucent mirror stance of the egg is supplemented with the meticulously painted wave-patterns, which are suggestive of the ebb and flow of time, create an aura saturated with cosmic happenings. The provincial idyllic backdrop of the Valley, the chinar tress, the mountains and the lakes provide an actual setting to enact the allegorical and the otherworldly. Sultan’s apparently stereotyped stylistic principles and the somewhat mathematical approach to arrive at a certain compositional balance owes its influence to his association with Santosh. The interwoven wave patterns, the treatment of color and the spacial division all corresponding to a certain movement and countermovement exudes a polyphonic coherence.
The most potent image in his paintings is the egg, which works as a metaphor for creation, sometimes a glass-transparent egg to see the world through and sometimes conceived as a mirror reflecting the world around. The Iris in its sensuous violet-purple accentuated by yellows and possessed of greens usually seen in the grave yards, acts like an obituary to all those undesirable and tragic deaths caused by the turmoil and violence in the Valley. By such conventional pictorial devices, for instance, the linear perspective in the Untitled painting (pl. 6) a large crowd of iris flowers is shown diminishing into the empty sky. The use of iris in a virtually no-man’s land is counterbalanced by the all-reflecting egg standing sentinel on the dense vermilion green strips interwoven in a dynamic movement to suggest the possibility of life after death.

Most of the paintings are in a conventional landscape compositional divide: horizon and the sky, ground and the space, dense and sober, transparent and the opaque. The dichotomy of life and death, vertical and horizontal, yellow and blue are the conscious workings of a mind drunk on the thesis and antithesis of art-historical readings. We can notice a certain artistic challenge Sultan likes to confront in the Untitled (pl.10). For instance, the way he places the blue color, which instead of receding into infinity exerts itself as an opaque foreground. Similarly the opaque yellow occupies the background. The collage treatment to the green trees is a deliberate formal intervention to distort the representational position of working within figurative mode. The wave patterns are accentuated to give the illusion of a tide, which disconcerts the sense of balance on which other forms rest. Equally intelligent compositional device is the little solitary cloud painted in the egg form. These preconceived devices are used to subvert the conventional notions of landscape framework.

Among Surrealists Sultan would often mention Rene Magritte’s aesthetic stance of ‘ascendancy of poetry on painting’. In Sultan the mysterious, the metaphysical presence is of the monumental egg dominating the landscape,
which can be conveniently described as egg-scapes. But Sultan may not be
called a ‘magic-realist’ in the sense Magritte is, there is less of magic in
Sultan’s work than a poetic allegory on the death and birth in the womb of
graceful and grandiose paradise.

The seductive and the thoughtful impact of his visually captivating paintings is
the result of patient and laborious skill, the intelligent and well-wrought
compositional order and the subtle rendering to achieve the desired nuances.
The last visit to his studio in 2007 revealed a certain preparatory evidences of
his much desired departure from the conspicuously and dominating presence of
egg form, such as the *Untitled* paintings started between 2002 and 2006 (pl.14
to 17). The paintings were still in the making when he passed away on 9th April
2008 while working in a hired studio in Jammu.

**MASOOD HUSSAIN (1953)**

Masood Hussain appears somewhat deliberate to relate his work with the
traumatic experience of the turmoil in Kashmir. Sometimes he appears naive in
comparison to Sultan, whose critique at least helped him to be on the safer side
by appropriating the perennial aesthetic paradigm in the immediate and the
local context. However, unlike Sultan he has been quite prolific as an artist to
produce a considerably rich body of work.

Masood did his diploma in Applied Arts from J. J. School of Arts in Bombay
and soon after completing from there headed Applied Art Department in IMFA
Srinagar. His applied art training, however, was limited to commercial based
commission work such as advertisement in the media or creating logos for
various public or private institutions or to train his students in the Institute. But
since Kashmir did not provide much scope in the commercial sphere Masood
perfected his skills as a watercolorist, a tested genre which promised a relatively better professional success as a local artist. Surpassing the British academic realism of Wali his watercolors bear a photographic fidelity towards the picturesque rural life of Kashmir. He translated his applied art training into a direction that is often considered as polar opposite. For instance, he made a significant use of camera which served as a graphic layout to develop his watercolors. Unlike impressionists, a position so religiously followed by Sultan in his on the spot landscapes in watercolor, Masood preferred to shoot around with a camera and later develop them as watercolors. The watercolors such as (pl.18 to 23) may not have been possible otherwise.

But the mere provincial commercial success was not all that Masood desired. His real ambitious position is foregrounded in his painted relief works he has been rigorously developing in the past two decades. But unlike Santosh, whose sources went back to the esoteric doctrines of ancient origin, Masood based his artistic engagement on near-past indigenous concept of Kashmiriyat, as manifested in the life and poetry of Kashmir’s two iconic personas like Lal Ded and Nund Rishi. This is after a rigorous survey in the living archives of the Valley that he settled upon a vocabulary, which in the art-historical terms may be called an assemblage of specifically contextual found objects. Among the most recurrent objects are broken windows, doors, and ruined lattice-work found in the debris of broken shrines and the dismantled houses of Kashmiri Pundits. By investing the archetypal mystic aura, reminiscent of the glorious past, he negotiates the agony of Kashmiris since the uprising in 1990. The 1995 relief works such as Mystic Hands, A peep out of the Past, Submission and Thou Knoweth my Misery (pl. 24,25,26 and 27) reflects stance quite common in the Valley in which the anguished face and the gestural hands protruding out of an old latticed shrine beseech for salvation.
Perhaps the most significant characteristic of Masood Hussain’s work lies in its ability to generate interpretations that foregrounds the relevance of a primordial faith in spiritual warmth. In this he shares his conceptual framework with his senior local artists like Santosh and Gayoor Hassan. Like Gayoor he did not simply replicate violence in a representational and direct mode. Masood’s research-oriented explorations to collect various objects and materials guided him towards an aesthetic where the very object or a material is infused with an inherent metaphor. Thus the latticed-windows allude to the glorious Sufi tradition and the supplementations in the form of hands and faces kneaded in paper mache, the use of radiantly contrasting color pigments are reminiscent of Hindu temples and the thread as wish-knots work as a metaphor to safeguard the future of humanity. These works foreground the double edge to address the agony of Kashmiris and simultaneously invest his works with a potent aesthetic aura where a viewer may experience some sense of relief. Unlike the dubious political agendas Masood’s aesthetic agenda of healing touch finds a poetic reciprocation in Keshav Malik’s review of his 1998 show in Delhi:

Masood’s is primarily a feelingful genre of a benign vision,. And this you construe from several works, for instance, Story of an Ancient Scroll, Lonely – 2, Sharika, or Falling of the Black Sky. Artist’s disclose wholes whether an idea, emotion or what have you- but by pin-pointing no more than bare, seemingly insignificant, and ye relevant details in given contexts. And that’s what Masood does. It is these select details that speak volumes. Seemingly casual items from the theatre of life – inner or outer – represent the entire cosmos of proton events. And that same, in the end, makes us share in a sorrow which he had made bearable, so that we reflect on it in the deep solitude of our minds. A specific emotion, then becomes universal your sharing of it only uplifts us from our spiritual sloth, the moral slumber. This particular sorrow is about a valley, once deemed happy.  

From art-historical perspective Masood’s painted reliefs follow the Surrealist’s aesthetic paradigm, especially its later stage around early thirties when Dali
came up with the idea of “surreal objects with a symbolic function”, which
gave a certain functional status to the anti-aesthetic position of readymades
explored by Duchamp prior to Surrealism. The so-called ‘surrealist object’
anticipated Surrealism’s specific contribution to modern sculpture. The chance
factor that Andre Breton describes in his novel *Nadija* became a cornerstone
for surrealists and the phenomena like accidents, encounters, inspirations or
happenings assumed the very structure of the surrealist language.

The surrealists certainly mystified this ‘objective” chance in their choice of
objects, adorning even the most astutely calculated found objects with the
magical air of archeological treasure from the very womb of the earth. But
more than the Parisian surrealist scene it was its American version in the *Boxes*
of Joseph Cornell that Masood indistinctively shares a striking similarity. The
complex conglomeration of familiar and unfamiliar; nostalgic souvenirs of art,
music, theatre, literature. By incorporating ballet photographs, star postcards,
maps, bird-feathers Cornell interlaces the diffused past with the vivid present to
create a poetic metaphor of memory.

However in Cornell’s case it is suddenly found and suddenly found is balanced
by ‘fabricated’, while Masood’s is an outcome of a preconceived idea of the
specific object he is looking for. Moreover, unlike the libidinal undercurrent of
surrealists and the aleatory game-like space of Cornell’s Boxes Masood’s
encounter with the strangely magical and the discarded objects from the womb
of the earth reveal a benign passion to render an emotionally felt experience.
As is so powerfully evident from the mystic aura of works such as the 2004
series called *Story of an Ancient Scroll* (pl.33 and 34). From a certain
different perspective Masood’s windows also appear close to the fetishistic
function of objects such as George Braque’s guitar, Max Klinger’s glove,
Umberto Boccioni’s bottle, Marcel Duchamp’s readymade or Picasso’s so-
called idiosyncratic collection of “visually interesting” material. However, In
Masood’s case it is not essentially visually interesting, rather the preconceived symbolic-ritualistic function the object must serve. The other works incorporating Arabic script and the Persian architectural or design motifs Masood’s encounter with the past is informed by the living testimonies of shrines and Sufi ziarats that occupy an archetypal space in the landscape of Kashmir, which brings alive the historical transition from Hindu dynasties to Muslim dominance in the 14th century Kashmir. As Shujah Sultan describes:

Islamic mystic cults (Sufis) thrived side by side with tantric practices. The cultural transition was slow and the process of conversion of indigenous wooden structures of shrines into genuine Islamic forms was gradual. No original ancient monuments exist today because such wooden structures fire easily. In most of the surviving structures the Mughal style is evident. Those erected over tombs of Muslim saints are equally revered by the other religious groups. These shrines are given a regular geometrical form which, Muslims believe, underlies all forms in the visible world. The outer structures are an amalgamation of Hindu temples and Buddhist pagodas. The interior columns, arches, intricate latticed windows and screens, mirror mosaics and decorative ceilings are all Islamic in character. But lavish as they are, they do not disturb the atmosphere of sanctity.

This lavishness of medium and pattern serves the Islamic concept of the dissolution of matter. Geometric and floral arabesque becomes the expression of profound belief in the immortality of the soul and a disregard for temporal existence. Perhaps that is why one senses a feeling of total surrender on entering a shrine, enhanced by the muted light which filters thorough latticed windows and screens creating a mystical serenity. A strange fear grips the mind of the devotee. He recites verses from the Holly Book, blurts out his wows and wishes, ties colored threads to the latticed screen and makes an offering of a coin or two. This is age-old tradition followed by devotees.

The significant position of Masood may rest on the fact that unlike Santosh, Gayoor or Shujah Sultan, who drew their aesthetic sources largely from the Hindu or Buddhist traditions, Masood’s work foregrounds a somewhat radical aesthetic stance for anticipating a great possibility to render Sufi-Islamic concerns in a sculptural framework. Sultan, being a close friend of Masood
knew the intricacies of his aesthetic sources. The intimate friendship between
the two was further deepened with the fact that Sultan generally wrote for
almost all his catalogues published by various private galleries. Addressing to
his work he further describes:

Masood Hussain’s art emanates from motifs taken from
the unique architecture of these shrines and monuments, combined
with a portrayal of the devotees who visit them. Human misery is
the keynote of Masood Hussain’s view of life, along with a firm
belief in spiritual values. Sometimes there is a complete departure
of representation when the assembled motifs become abstractions
from everyday realities. Latticed window shutters and various
objects are assembled to demonstrate his beliefs in spiritual...
Works like, The Red Sun, How Many More, and The Procession,
define the horror and the pathos of death, claiming innocent lives
like an epidemic attack of bullets... Similarly, How Many More, is
representative of the martyr’s graveyard, where spaces have been
filled in with the bodies of the dead while other vacant spaces
appear open-mouthed to devour still more. There is no
philosophizing of the situation, no agitation and no comment.
Masood merely acts as a chronicler of an unfortunate period of
history.  

In some relief works the hands bulge out from the window for prayer, the
colorful Taveez (amulets) as necklace to guard from evil and witchcraft, the
occult feel of the graffiti of Persian and Arabic letters. Masood’s creative
process involves an extensive survey to locate the motifs. And unlike easy
painterly techniques he prefers a meticulous and laborious process of a
traditional paper mache artist. For him art does not seem to be a hedonistic
pleasure but rather it is more like an archeologist’s endeavor.

The installation Kashmir Unmasked (pl.28) done for the Khoj Delhi in 2001
is explicitly direct in its response to Kashmir. The special feature of the
installation is that while the recurrent format of the window frame stuffed with
mask-like faces and hands is supplemented with a new element scroll collaged
with the local newspaper-cuttings representing the tragic stories from the Valley.

Besides resurrecting the mystic aura of the past to counteract the milieu haunted by the inhuman cruelties, violation of human rights and above all the human misery some of Masood’s works are response to the migration of Kashmir Pundits. For instance, the work called *Exodus*, 2004 (pl.30) is apparently set in a different formal structure. The usual window object is replaced with a wooden dome, possibly a left-out of a sleeping bed. There is a subtle and diffused stylized image of a bird, possibly a migratory bird drifting out of the triangular frame. The other significantly symbolic objects are a gold ornament, which is traditionally worn by Kashmiri Pundit women as a symbol of fertility. The thread is pasted in a way which suggests movement, alluding to the painful flight that doesn’t seem to return back to the nest.

The work *My Grandfather’s Colour Palette*, 2004 (pl.32) is also a departure from the usual thematic and formal structure of Masood’s work. Here the artist unveils an intimate chapter from his autobiographical sources. A broken wooden box reveals a painter's surgical devices and a portrait of his grand-uncle pasted on the inside of the upper lid. This little commonplace encounter is supplemented with a profoundly grim and grave narrative of partition. According to the artist the wooden box is the only surviving treasure from his grand-uncle who was among the Muslims who migrated to Pakistan at the time of partition. In this way the work traverses from the personal sentiment to the historic memory of communal divide and disintegration.

In his professional life perhaps the most significant encounter was with the American based Kashmiri poet Agha Shahid Ali. Shahid is undoubtedly considered one of the significant poets in the contemporary literature of America. Known worldwide for his remarkable collection of poems called *Country Without Post Office*, which in its explicitly political stance remains to
be the first Internationally acknowledged literary response to the agony of Kashmiri. The chance encounter lied in the fact that both Masood’s first series of painted relief works and Agha Shahid’s *Country Without Post Office* were almost accomplished in the same time. As Agha Shahid describes in his lucid response to Masood’s show in Triveni Kala Sangam New Delhi:

In Masood Hussain’s art, we are in the world of destroyed shrines, broken windows, crushed prayers. What uncompromising reminders we are given of ruined lattice-work! Memory is brought to harbor passionately, so it may survive despite threats to it and the history behind it.

On finally seeing Masood’s ravishing arrangements in 1997, I manage to rescue the assurance that the artist indeed matters, and that he does so because he seeks courage by sitting alone by the grave, contemplating the skull, resisting the epic clichés of exclusionary nationalisms for the far more moral sake of the here-and-now. The here-and-now demands of the artist the most stringent lyricism. And Masood meets those demands without shirking.  

Among his other artistic dimensions is taking up relatively huge commissioned projects to install public sculptures in some specific locations of the Valley. The almond shaped fountain sculpture in the Badaam Vaari Park Srinagar is a calligraphic abstraction of the word *ALLAH* (pl.39). The similar public sculptures in a fountain framework exist in other busy public places like Karan Nagar, Babademb and Baba Dharam Dass Temple Chowk Munawarabaad. Since 1998 Masood has been energetically busy in his painstakingly survey based work. He has held many solo and group shows in some of the important private and public galleries across the country. In the recent Khoj Kasheer 2007, the first truly International art event in the Valley, fifteen day Residency of International, National and regional artists in Kashmir Masood Hussain was instrumental for initiating the idea and acting as a coordinator.
RAJINDER KUMAR TIKU (1952)

After his early education in a village school Rajinder Tiku moved to the Srinagar city for further education and acquired a bachelor’s degree in Science, which was followed by a degree in Law from Kashmir University. Like Shujah Sultan, who was already a post-graduate in Political Science, Tiku’s Science or Law degree did not come to much use once he decided to become an artist. Yet his inquisitive nature and a passionate liking for diverse readings certainly surfaced in his artistic engagements. In 1973, when the Institute of Music and Fine Arts was yet to be affiliated with the University of Kashmir, he enrolled himself in the five year diploma program in Sculpture. Under the supervision of Gayoor Hassan and V R Khajuria he remains to be one of the most ambitious students who showed a considerably remarkable performance in later years. In 1979, like his fellow artists, he joined the similar Institute of Jammu as an instructor in sculpture department.

As one can imagine considering the provincial atmosphere of Kashmir where the vocation of an artist was not a safe choice to guarantee financial independence Tiku simultaneously perused a degree in Law while continuing his evening classes in IMFA. Not until his real encounter with the art-history and the world art, which exposed him to the phenomenal success of some of the great artists of India and in different parts of the world, he eventually focused on his career as a sculptor. The institute of Music and Fine Arts, which followed the pedagogical pattern of the Baroda Faculty of Fine Arts, familiarized him with the Western and Indian art history, aesthetics and the critical understanding of various important artists of the world.

Along with Shabir Mirza, Tiku was among the first students who opted for a specialization in sculpture, which reveals Gayoor Hassan and Khajuria’s pedagogic efficiency to encourage their students for a discipline contaminated with orthodox prejudices and taboos. And since Tiku reflected a natural
inclination to render things in a tangible and concrete mode during his early student years was equally an important reason to direct his development as a sculptor. Tiku often recounts his interaction with many Indian artists of repute who attended the Art Camps in Kashmir such as Dhanraj Bhagat, Janaki Ram, B.C. Sanyal, Hebbar, Bendre and M.F. Hussain. Tiku never shied away from introducing himself as an aspiring artist and these encounters proved quite inspiring to uplift his morale as an ambitious artist.

From the very beginning Tiku shares his deep admiration for artists like Brancusi, Moore, Klee and Picasso supplemented with a passionate interest for ancient and traditional cultures such as the Egyptian art or more specifically the sculptural/architectural motifs of medieval Hindu temples or Sufi shrines. Tiku’s sculptural devices are informed by his archeological insights to unearth the cultural heritage of Kashmir by drawing his sources from the architectural remains of the ruins of Avantipora, the Martand Temple; the museum specimens of Buddhist and Hindu sculpture and the living evidences of the geometric motifs of Islamic interiors and architecture. Sharing a certain aesthetic commonality with his Kashmiri contemporaries like Gayoor Hassan and Masood Hussain he too ventures into the archetypal mytho-poetic aura of the Valley. The formal devices such as the vertical and horizontal tomb-stones in their sentinel stillness drawn from the temples and shrines are quite inviting to provide a mystical aura, reminiscent of rituals, to a viewer. But Tiku’s art developed a distinctively different character during his stay in Jammu, since he was appointment as an art instructor in the Jammu Institute where he spent a considerable time developing sculptural vocabulary while training the aspiring sculptors. Lalit Gupta, a Baroda pass out who teaches art history in IMFA Jammu, reflects on Tiku’s artistic development:

The countryside of Jammu is littered with a plethora of wayside shrines, memorials stones, dheris, baolies (springs) with reliefs of nagas and local deities. He saw in his mind the shapes of his sculpture going through a process of metamorphoses. His
predilection for the variable manifestations of the constants in human nature forced him to seek with greater intensity those forms of popular artistic expression connected with living ritual, and in artifacts which were an imaginative synthesis of function and form. For Rajinder, the folk form, whether it be an object of common daily use, such as the earthen vessel with floral reliefs used for storing grain, or the community wooden wash-tubs in villages, or the ritual objects covered with layer upon layer of vermillion and the black soot of votive oil lamps, or sacred threads around tree trunks, or non-descript stones smeared with paint and with offerings of flowers, tucked away in corners of fields – all these seemed to him to have acquired through the centuries formidable presence, developed into symbols of persistence, of memory, of mute permanence. These became the themes he sought in general, and their representation in sculptural terms became his major preoccupation.

Prior to his tenure at the I.M.F.A. in Jammu, he had worked mostly in stone, having learnt the craft of carving from a traditional stone carver. These efforts are exercises in figural abstraction with a marked frontal quality, and were done during the period of his early fascination with the arts of the primitive African and Pre-Columbian societies. Though Rajinder insists that his first love is still stone, he began working in Jammu with wood, plaster and cement, and created a sizable number of reliefs. Some of these incorporated elements of local landscapes, temple Shikaras, and groups of dehris (memorials) with human figures in contemplative and brooding postures. Others reflected a world peopled by spirits, nagas, the sun and moon, faceless human forms, all arranged against a backdrop of calligraphic scribbles, daubed with vermilion and black. These are obviously iconic, representing a world of magic, of timeless recollections, where the viewer is lead beyond appearances to a world-less domain of archetypal and primordial images.

This transition from the formal idioms of abstraction to a rich vocabulary informed by the folk or ritual objects of common use and more specifically the forms and materials of temple space used for ritualistic purposes was inevitable, largely because of the characteristic difference between the cultural landscape of Jammu’s rural life and Kashmir. The difference is further accentuated when we compare the somewhat calm and reposed aesthetic stance Gayoor Hassan, under whose supervision he was groomed, and the dynamic
interplay of the ordinary and the spiritual or sacred and the profane in sculptures of Rajinder Tiku. Tiku’s eclecticism transported his sculptures beyond the traditional use of a stone and incorporated a plethora of mediums and techniques. For instance, the works like The Prison Diary, 1984-85 (pl.40) and Sprout (pl.41 and 42) shows a significant departure from the Henri Moore like anthropomorphic mode of early sculptures such as Untitled (pl.43) or the mixed influences of ancient African sculptures and the terracotta figurines of Harappa in the Untitled (pl.44) or The Site – N (pl.45). By mid-eighties he started incorporating the primordial sculptural mediums such as terracotta. Impressed by the groundbreaking works of K G Subramanyan, whose artistic/pedagogic intervention to incorporate the living traditions and thus bridge the hierarchical gap between artist and the artisan was a seminal contribution of Baroda in the post-seventies. Subramanyan’s most significant contribution as a teacher/practioner was to encourage his students for a craftsman-like hands-on approach to medium. In this way Rajinder Tiku finds a virtual guru in Subramanyan both in terms of incorporating materials such as sand wood and terracotta and more specifically for investing his works with a sensuous feeling of an intimate human touch. The concern that guides the basic aesthetic quality throughout in his body of work.

Tiku’s use of terracotta, however, reveals a certain confrontational problem as he never could get away from his early passion for working with stone. He did not seem comfortable with the quintessentially impermanent nature of terracotta. For him, like a traditional sculptor, the permanence and longevity was the true prerogative of art in general and sculpture in particular. In this way he developed an assemblage vocabulary to give a secure placement to fragile materials. The works such as Spirit Lamp, 1997 (pl.50) reveal his deft and ingenious method to work-out a sculptural possibility were the fragile and the solid, delicate and the concrete material quality can actually contribute to
the aesthetic specificity of the work. Unlike the purely experimental and formalistic approach of various avant-garde examples from the art history, Tiku’s assemblage framework shares a conceptual rigor incorporating the personal and historical. In his statement Tiku describes:

Putting parts, segments or fragments together or at least indicating so in my work is inherent to my nature and also upbringing. Conducting life as such has never been so smooth. There is always a lot of hard work to keep everything including my own self together. The effect manifests in my work in terms of pieces put together, tied, sutured, nailed or placed in a manner to be related to each other.  

Suggestive of a diasporic condition, which in the course of his stay in Jammu he may have felt more strongly, the gesture of piecing together reflects the existential condition of a person who has been expelled from his nativity and is compelled to reconstruct a new home. Tiku’s body of work dwells in this painful endeavor to rebuild a new consciousness from the debris of the old, the broken and the departed. The subtle poetic metaphors implicit in the recurrent use of motifs such as stitches joining broken pieces or a deep cut in the wood, nails and bolts to fix the disjointed, threads, knots or leather strings to tie things together or sew up the wounds and the ritualistic or symbolic use of specific colors like vermilion, black and green are the seminal aesthetic devices evident in the works such as White Bag, Black Bag, Talisman, 1991 and 1993, Legend Flowers, 1997, Spirit Lamp, 1997, Iris Inside, 1997 (pl.46 to 51).

Tiku demonstrates an archeological eye on the memento of debris in museums, temples, shrines, mosques or on the layers of sub-conscious formed by the stories and legends of the past. The other dimension reflects a passionate interest to locate an aesthetic meaning in the things which are normally confined to ritualistic utility. Like Klee, Tiku believes that the artist’s primary role lies in his magical quality to make the invisible visible. There is no such
motivation for documentation; neither do his executions imply so. Unlike Masood, considering the similarities in the subject-matter they share, Tiku invests his sensibility on the making of his language. In this way Tiku appears more in tune with the contemporary spirit of the sculptural vocabulary. Mixture of various materials, mostly such traditional materials which craftsmen have used since primitive times, which makes the whole effect an exotic story told in a sensuous sculptural language. He is more close to his teacher Gayoor Hassan than his friend and batch-mate Mirza. Like Gayoor too has been showing sentiments for the lost culture, and seeking inspiration from sacred and spiritual to manifest a unity in diversity. While as Tiku is more specific about the materialistic nature of his medium, where the manipulation of the form is prior to subject-matter. Tiku is a poet in possession of a concentrated critique; but sometimes the unbalance disconcerts the inherent poetic sensibility. Tiku is unlike Sultan because he ventures to take risks while experimenting with material on different levels. As Tiku reflects on his sources of inspiration:

> Man made shapes attract me much more than the natural ones. Especially those which in one way or the other depicts traces and signs of transition of time right on their surfaces. Be it an extensively used agricultural implement, an ordinary kitchen-ware, a piece of stone with vermilion gathered upon it in layers or even an ordinary thing having acquired a sheen through constant human use.\(^\text{13}\)

Tiku sometimes appears swaying between formalism and symbolic primitivism. In comparison to Klee he is more primitive than child-like. He seems to be at ease with the thought that he is conscious of his unconscious, or might be misreading in his interpretation of personal connotations. The archetypal imagery of a ritual, where threads are tied to the walls or doors of shrines, urges him to re-interpret it by stitching the lacerated wood with leather string which is quite symptomatic of the wounds caused by the turmoil in the Valley. For instance, the disc-like sculpture in wood, sand stone leather string,
Iris Inside is suggestive of an artist’s eye on the dissection table, where all that he has been seen and felt is under microscopic observation, remotely reminiscent of Goya’s war experiences as depicted in Black Paintings. It may sound a bit wild and perhaps too sweeping to state that Tiku’s sado-masochistic tendency, a fact which recalls Theodor Adorno’s stance: “it is barbaric to write poetry after Auschwitz”, and may at the same time apply to almost all the artists who whether implicitly or explicitly respond to the human agony, to render the tragic as beautiful or a pleasing or seductive form which at the same time alludes to the painful or sad. However, such an argument has assumed a certain perennial indeterminateness in the discourse of modernism since the holocaust.

The Spirit Lamp except the formal variations for its alliance to the Brancusian verticality the work dwells around the similar archetypal gestures as is evident from his previous works. The delicately kneaded clay assumes a flame-like radiance after its transformation into a strong brownish-orange glaze, which instills a magical aura in the ordinary object. At the same time the toy-like quality recalls his deep admiration for Subramanyan known for his terracotta murals which incorporates among various visual metaphors a playful imagery of toys. The Legend Flower reflects the similar state of magical intervention to transform the ordinary object into an extraordinary poetic metaphor. Besides stained wood, Tiku utilizes more sensitive materials like paper and gold foil, which reinforces the sensitivity of the theme. The organic and sprouting vitality of the roots and the stem emerging from the earth filled wooden pot; the inconsistent wavy growth altered by a shooting branch and the budding flowers allude as much to the personal experience as it manifests the dynamism of nature. It is the legend of those flowers which grew, bloomed and withered away.
The Grove, (pl.54) is possibly Tiku’s ode to nostalgia; his careless fearless days of childhood hanging around in the apple orchards and the dense forests of the Valley. A relatively large stone in three blocks installed in an unassuming vertical posture. There is not much evidence of the carving and like the expressionist mode of Rodin the work serves as a reprieve from his archetypal methods to work in mixed media. However, the most significant characteristic of Tiku’s body of work is foregrounded in the assemblage framework to incorporate disparate but meaningful materials to create an aura where the viewer is transported to experience the magic emanating from the commonplace day to day objects.

But unlike the assemblage outlook of Masood’s painted reliefs, they are more subtle and poetic. On the contrary, the recurrent motif of such surgical devices and the kind of aura that they exude, instinctually, draw his aesthetic paradigm close to the shamanic position of Joseph Beuys (1921-86). Basing his work on his personal traumatic war experiences and the post-world war German consciousness he produced a large number of drawings of organic matter, plants, animals, and myths which eventually surfaced in his famous installations and performances. In his installations and other sculptural work Beuys included such elements as food, dead animals, wire, wood, cloth and so on. Regarded as one of the most influential artist of the post 60 western art his extensive work foregrounds the concepts of humanism and social philosophy, which anticipated a shift in paradigm from the minimalistic art-for-arts sake position of the most of the twentieth century modernism to the maximalist and intellectually responsible stance of the interactive performances of Beuys. Considering the politically volatile times in which Tiku’s mature artistic development groomed it is viable to imagine a Beuyean intervention, if not less, to negotiate the agony that Kashmiris have been subjected to in the past three decades. In a recent discussion with the artist, however, Tike holds a different view. According to him art does not necessarily need to be a
statement on the socio-political climate in which the artist is brought up. But at
the same time his works evoke potential interpretations to be addressed in their
subtle political stance.

Among the third generation of Kashmiri artists Rajinder Tiku has been
relatively more successful for earning a considerably secure position as a
contemporary sculptor of India. It is also important to consider that due to his
stay in Jammu, both prior to Pundit migration when he was teaching in the
Jammu Institute and even after 1990s, it was relatively more convenient for
him to maintain a constant touch with the art scene in different parts of the
country. Since 1992 Tiku has held four solo shows in the Abraham Alkazi’s
private gallery Art Heritage in New Delhi. In 2002 he participated in the Group
Exhibitions: Ferversinie, Erden Germany. The other notable participations are:
Combine Voices for New Century, NGMA 2002; Volume and Form, Singapore
(1998-99); Exhibition of Sculptures at La-Grenette, Sion Switzerland 1998;
Edge of the Century, Art Today, New Delhi 1998; Major Trends in Indian
Contemporary art organized by Lalit Kala Academy, N. Delhi 1997;
Exhibition, the Indian Contemporary Art – Post Independence, curated by the
Vadehra Art Gallery at NGMA, N. Delhi 1997; Harmony Show, Mumbai
1996-97; Sculpture – 95, curated exhibition of Indian Contemporary Art,
organized by the Gallery Espace, New Delhi 1995; 8th Triennale, India, N.
Delhi 1994; Golden Tribute to Artists of Northern India, the Birla Academy,
Calcutta 1992; 7th Triennale India, N. Delhi; Trembling Images, an exhibition
of works by Kashmiri Artists, organized by the Vadehra Art Gallery, N. Delhi
1991; Bharat Bhavan Biennale, Bhopal 1985; National Exhibitions of Art,
since 1979.

Campus and Symposia: Stone – 2002, International Stone Carving Symposium,
Baroda 2000; International Sculpture Symposium, Varanasi 1999; Symposium
– International De Sculpture – Sion – Switzerland 1998; All India Sculptures


**SHABIR MIRZA** (1950)

Shabir Mirza and Rajinder Tiku were batch-mates while perusing a diploma course in sculpture under the supervision of Gayoor Hassan and V R Khajuria in IMFA Srinagar. Both share their academic pursuits, as Shabir too was a Law graduate before joining the fine art Institute as a student of sculpture and later as an instructor. Their early experiments share a similarity for working in different stylistic idioms. But it was the special technical engagement to learn the craft of stone carving that remains to be the most significant similarity between the two. In Kashmir the tradition of stone carving for various constructional purposes was a usual sight. And the availability of a sculptable stone was far more easily affordable. Both Shabir and Tiku utilized this special advantage, however, Tiku had to think of alternative mediums once he left the Valley to join IMFA Jammu as a sculptor instructor. But for Shabir the medium stone became his alter-ego.
Shabir’s sustained and rigorously focused engagement to work in a single medium, and that too a medium like stone which involves a presumed danger of a certain will-o-the-wisp misadventure, is quite daring on his part. His preconceived method involved rigorous preparatory exercises to avoid any possible transition from the cherished position of labor of love to a regretful misadventure. This meticulously calculated working process, which is imperative for any sculptor working in organic and solid materials such as stone, gradually developed into a well-wrought sensuous imagery. And in his more developed phase he was able to transform the rocky and stubborn hardness of a stone into a fluid and seductive object exuding visual delight.

Mirza’s body of work, although not as eclectic as Tiku’s possibly for the reason that working in stone is a far more time consuming engagement than any other traditional or new medium of sculpture, foregrounds a formalistic framework of a traditional modern sculpture. For its formal conformity to the pedestal Mirza’s quasi-abstract sculptures may be positioned somewhere between André Derain’s *Couching Figure*, 1907 and Brancusi’s *The Kiss*, 1912. Derain’s cuboid formal principle with its simple delineations to integrate the human figure and Brancusi’s profound sense for simplification to incorporate the primordial aesthetics of elementary forms set a radical shift from the sculptor as modeller, as in the case of Rodin, to a pure sculptor.\textsuperscript{16}

It is this medium-centered sculptural position of Mirza to utilize the organic material qualities of a stone and, in a certain synchronicity, build up a vocabulary addressing the immediate day-to-day experience and the existential or the metaphysical universal concerns. But unlike, Tiku, his visual references or the kind of aura that Tiku infuses in his mixed media sculptures, does not allude to a ritualistic experience. The subtle marks or contours, oscillating between the identifiably referential figures and the symbolically abstract forms,
often anticipate interpretations that reveal a certain poetic response to the human trauma in the midst of turmoil. As described by Shujah Sultan:

> The main forms are invariably enclosed in rectangles or squares as if opening windows to a melancholic sensation. All this typifies an artist who yearns for security. This compression and distortion is also expressive of anxiety and claustrophobia so characteristic of contemporary society. These may not be merely three dimensional representations resulting from reaction to present-day situation but well thought-out spiritual exercises to understand one’s own self in a particular set of circumstances. 17

Mirza’s existentialist stance to address the human predicament in the wake of despair and desolation finds a poetic manifestation in a work such as Cactus in the Lily Pond, 1993 (pl.55). From the archives of art-history, however far removed from the present context, the title evokes a sudden historical correlative in the event of Donatello among Wild Beasts. Mirza’s work, certainly, has nothing to do with the Fauvist intervention in the discourse of western modern art but the sheer element of contrast provokes an instinctual association. However, the work while alluding to the phenomena of unfavorable interventions or the invasion of the tumultuous in the idyllic or the so-called paradise is counterbalanced by incorporating an occult numerical value of 3, 6, 9, 12 by marked lines in the form of squares and rectangles, which is a sacred formula generally inscribed from an amulet meant to protect from evil.

Mirza’s draughtmanly gestures are evident in his recurrent use of scribbling on his stones with subtle yet vividly defined linear marks. By incorporating the graphic delineation as a significant formal element Mirza’s works is marked with a discernible departure from the works of his senior and contemporary sculptors such as Gayoor Hassan and Tiku. Line, traditionally a graphic delimitation best suited for the two dimensional vocabulary of painting or printmaking, finds a potentially significant use in Mirza’s sculptures. Unlike
Gayoor Hassan or Masood, who spasmodically fluctuate from painting to sculpture or relief, Mirza comes with an alternative to incorporate some of the seminal attributes of painterly or graphic vocabulary within the sculptural paradigm. Mirza’s stylistic preoccupation with the grid-framework is reflective of a conscious engagement to develop a distinctively individual sculptural vocabulary. In a statement Mirza describes:

"Line plays a strong role in nature and its movement shows an expression of gesture. From the logical conclusion of this fact, I sometimes overlay a grid composed of lyrical lines on gray or black 3D surfaces. The grid subdivides the bigger surfaces into smaller and more complex areas, which contribute to the orientation of a flat surface. The main surface which I prefer to call a three dimensional drawing sheet for my sketches is covered with a set of overlapping patches. A separate coordinate system is given to each patch. Some associates lines are systematically drawn through, mutually dependent fragments. With a flowing rhythm, these lines represent a relation between a family of surfaces, which treat space according to their own needs. Subtle structure of geometrical shapes could be seen as forms are somewhere immersed or sometimes embedded in between lighter or darker areas to create stillness of the depths. Distribution and combination of particular elements with, one to one correspondence may be felt between all the points of each projective plane and the interpenetrating forms present in 3D space. A transition of energy through the points to line, and lines to points sometimes gives a feeling of dynamic pulsation from a state of inertia. The fragmented divisions of the square set the geometry of expression floating into another atmosphere, which must essentially either emerge from or behind into the future."

These graphic delimitations assume sometimes a graffiti-like gesture and sometimes act as a delineation to give a desired order to the compositional structure of his sculptures. For instance, to create an expression of a nightingale in her dainty and cadenced symphonic performance may not have been possible without the aid of sensuously refined lines. Invested with a sentient quality the lines appear like organic veins infusing a sense of vitality to the asymmetrical and fluidly spontaneous body of stone. Mirza like Tiku is
fundamentally an exponent of formalism and by nature of poetic kind. A sensibility conditioned by the poetic approach of Paul Klee towards line and colour and the child-like execution of his experience in his personal world. Klee once wrote “symbols comfort the spirit” and was deeply concerned with what he called the mystery of art in a quasi-religious sense. The most characteristic difference between the two is, however, defined by their choice of mediums and the socio-political context.

**Untitled**, 1993, **Portrait of a Family**, 1995 and **Leave the Balcony Window Open**, 1996 (pl.56,57 and 58) incorporate new figurative references to meaningful forms such as blood-proof helmets of the security personals or the human faces peeping from the windows. The calculated spacial execution, the texture of the stone, the inward and the outward thrust accentuate the expressionist mode of the work to address the changed landscape of the times. **The Portrait of a Family** depicts a strange equilibrium of the interior and the exterior. The fear-redden family peeping outside the window presumably alerted by some unpleasant mishap. The wide open eyes wandering in disparate directions look desperate and paranoid. The similar spectacular stance is shared by **Leave the Balcony Window Open**, which is a free-standing irregular square with subtle details to enhance the significance of two heads looking out. The two windows, the foreshortened hand and the graphic delineation by means of lines construct a usual architectural space of a balcony. The wide open eyes gazing in anticipation of someone intimate is a very common but disconcerting domestic expression where usually men go for work and women keep wait for them to return safe, considering the degree of contingency to live and work in the midst of various unpredictable incidents of violence caused by the cross-firing, bomb blasts, cordon and crackdowns.

Mirza is at his best in the poetically titled **Rectangular Deluge in the Silent Lake**, 1996 (pl.59). The deep-cut lines running across the reclined rectangle in
horizontals and verticals assume a wave-like character. It is interesting to notice that Mirza’s sculptural devices are so potentially capable of translating the obstinately hard and stiff material quality of stone into as fluid a substance as water. By his deft methods he is able to perform the artistic magic where stones are virtually transformed into water. At the same time the sculpture dwells in the dichotomy of death and life. The death-like repose of the rectilinear posture, reminiscent of a dead body shrouded in a white coffin, is counteracted with the silent but dynamic vitality implicit in the movement of a water surface. The work has a potential to be interpreted in diverse meanings referring to the given context of post 1990 Kashmir. For instance the force accelerated by the rough and densely perforated texture surrounding the smooth polished surface of the grave like thing in eternal prostration. At the same it may be read as concept in foetal transitions where the outside world is in a dead silence or in anticipation of what may happen next.

**Setting in of Decadence, 1999 (pl.60)** foregrounds a certain departure from the previous works. Except the titles metaphorical overtones the sculpture has more scope to be read diversely. A book-like repose projecting the unevenness of, say, linguistic relativism. The unconscious or chance factor in the making of this sculpture can urge one to discover more profound a meaning than the author might have intended. For instance it won’t be too much a speculation to say that one can see as if the post-structural argument between signifier (spoken word) and the signified (mind’s concept of the word) is manifested here at a symbolical level. The difference caused by the distance between seeing and saying, saying and comprehending. The book projects words as an abstract and inconsistent dimension. It takes an unpredictable dimension as soon as it reaches a cognizance.

In the similar departure mode the **Wild Flowers and the Black Rock, 2001 (pl.61)** is an organic form sliced in a manner that urges both sensory
perceptions and conceptual rigor. It is a delicately compact composition, composed of parts demanding certain kind of preparation to respond to the polyphony. There are no lines but the gap between the broken parts of the flower-like form making a prominent stem to keep the flower erect. Yet the squares made out of intersecting horizontals and verticals still exist but are not assuming as important a space as before. Is this the other half of the flower which is lost or the fruit dissected into flowers where the other half is still missing? Does this absence make it beautiful or an unaccomplished beauty? The double edge stance of the work for being simultaneously referential and non-referential anticipates diverse and disparate interpretations. The New World Order, (pl.62), however, is more referential in its direct incorporation of chess-board. The self-evident title reveals a certain power-play so common in the present day political order. The work also reveals an implicit sense of satirical mode to address the patriarchal hierarchy system that somehow, directly or indirectly, is responsible for the desolation the Valley is subjected to.

Shabir Mirza, however not as actively as Tiku, has shown a considerable presence in the modern Indian art scene as a sculptor. Among his notable participations are: All India Fine Arts and Crafts Society Exhibition Delhi, 1977; Dr. Iqbal Century Art Exhibition of sculptures at Srinagar,1977; Annual Art Exhibition of Sculptures Forum of India, at Bombay, Delhi and Chandigarh,1978; Rashtriya Kala Mela by Lalit Kala Akademi, Delhi,1978 & 1982; Straight Eight Group Exhibition at Srinagar,1982; 33 Individual Exhibition at Srinagar,1986; National Gallery of Modern Art Exhibition at Srinagar,1986; National Exhibition of Contemporary Art Delhi,1993; 6th Bharat Bhavan Biennial Bhopal (invitee),1996; One Man Show at Art Heritage, New Delhi,1997; 10th Triennale INDIA International Art Exhibition, 2001; Festival of India at Germany 2001-2002. Mirza has also attended Art Camps since 1978 and has also been honored with various state and national wards.19
In 2006 he retired as Principle IMFA Srinagar and is still actively involved with his work.

**SHAIQA MOHI** remains to be possibly the first Muslim Kashmir woman sculptor in the history of modern Kashmir, which makes her position even more radically dauntless than Gayoor Hassan. Her artistic career developed almost in a similar way as that of Shabir Mirza and Tiku. Her early works in stone, while reminiscent of Shanko Chaudheri’s early formalistic sculptures, reveal Gayoor Hassan’s sculptural treatments, under whose supervision she did her five year diploma in IMFA Srinagar. But unlike Gayoor, Mirza or Tiku whose work reveal a certain figural reference to the identifiable reality, Shaiqa’s sculptures in stone or wood dwell in a pure formalism of non-referential abstraction. The *Untitled* works of 1980, 1990 and 2002 (pl.63,64 and 65) are more aligned to Constructivists than to his immediate contemporaries, while *Untitled*, 2007 (pl.66) is reflective of Mirza’s grid-framework. Bearing her occasional participation in various exhibitions or art camp she, like many other artists in the Valley, hibernated. Shaiqa has been teaching in the sculpture department of IMFA Srinagar since mid 80s and at present presides as a principal.

**ZAHOOR ZARGAR** (1950) is among the immediate contemporaries of Tiku and Mirza, who after completing his applied art specialization in Baroda in the 70s, joined the Jamia Millia Islamia University in Delhi as a teacher, where at present he is presiding as a dean Faculty of Fine Arts. And ever since he has been living in Delhi and teaching in the applied art department of JMI. But like Masood he too identifies himself as a painter. Since Delhi provides a great opportunity to exhibit in the numerous private art galleries, Zargar has been showing a considerable participation as a post-romantic painter. Basing his
landscape mode on the impressionist/expressionist idiom, often informed by his deep and passionate fascination for Turner, he however comes up with a fresh and unassumingly gay nostalgia of the ‘picturesque’ and the ‘idyllic’ Kashmir Valley, as is evident in his series called Impressions from Kashmir (pl.67 and 68).

**AFTAB AHMAD** (1954) completed his diploma in painting from I.M.F.A. Srinagar in 1978. His relatively small body of work reveals a certain conflicting juxtaposition of formal lyricism and surreal outlook haunted by nightmarish apparitions in the form of exaggerated faces, horses, birds. A nightmarish view of the Kashmir where the seer and the demon inhabit the landscape. Aftab may be referred to as a non-psychedelic surrealist who dwells in the convulsive and the disconcerting aura stuffed with conflict-redden associations, as is evident in the work *Nuclear Holocaust*, 1998 (pl.69). Considering his thematic preoccupations loaded with human agony one can guess the reason for his meager artistic productivity.

**IFTIKHAR JAFFAR** (1965) completed his graduation in applied arts from IMFA Srinagar in the early 80s and joined the same Institute as an instructor. Jaffar, in his relatively provincial scale and a small of body of work, reveals certain aesthetic preoccupation to juxtapose the sacred associations of Islamic script, the symbolic character of Islamic patterns in a way that is at the same time symptomatic of abstract vocabulary, especially, foregrounded in the mystical stance of artists such as Malevich and Mondrian (pl.70 and 71).

Among the other artists of the generation, as discussed earlier who often find a mention whenever there is a discussion about the development of modern art in Kashmir but are seldom discussed, **SHORA BASHIR** remains to be the most obscure and yet shrouded in mysterious and romanticized anecdotes, often,
recalling the equally mysterious obscurity of S N Butt. There are literally no references to his artistic career anywhere in nay published from and most of the oral accounts from various living artists are too speculative to be trusted. However, bearing a few passing references such as by Muneeb Rahman, a noted Kashmiri poet and literary critic and an editor of a Kashmir literary magazine Naeb, who mentions of Shora in his online blog Kashmir Writing Today:

The issue number 18 of Neab is finally out. Size octavo, 68 pages in all on a thick paper. The cover is pretty. The name of the magazine Neab (design by late G R Santosh) is in blue color on a pure white background of glossy art card. In the center, in a box, Shora Bashir's water color (Muneeb's possession) depicting a horrified mother with a child clung to her chest. Shora Bashir, one the talented painters of Kashmir died in an accident on Jammu-Srinagar road a few years ago.30

The single image of his painting such Untitled (pl.72), possibly done in 1977, which interestingly bear a vivid influence of M. Sadiq’s compositional order and a certain abstractionist simplification to the landscape motifs. However, it would be too inappropriate to analyze his artistic preoccupations by referring to a single image of his work.

As mentioned earlier, since my main focus is to consider those Kashmiri artists who showed a sustained engagement with their work without leaving the Valley. Of course with an exception of Rajinder Tiku for a simple reason that he was relatively well-connected with the artists of the Valley by paying frequent visits in spite of the fact that during his artistic career he spent most of his time in Jammu before as well as after the migration of Pundits in the early nineties. Among the other living artists of the present generation Shafi Chaman shares a sustained, if not really prolific, involvement with his work. Being youngest among the artists discussed so far his body of work, which however is
quite miniscule at present, has the potential to develop a distinctively individual vocabulary as a future painter of Kashmir.

**SHAFI CHAMMAN** (1964)

Shafi Chaman the youngest of all the painters discussed, saturated with a passion for art left his village to join the art college in Srinagar. He learned his basic grammar from teachers like, M.A. Mehboob, A.R. John, Shujah Sultan and Gokal Dembi. Soon after completing his graduation in 1986 he joined the same Institute as an instructor in the painting department, which he still continues.

Chaman’s world of art, although a very small world, draws largely from the literary or mythological sources. His works are reminiscent of Ganesh Pyne’s delicate silhouetted forms, the mild careful tonalities in handling the shafts of light and dark, well-defined sharp thin strokes to delineate foliage, the incongruous movement of color and lines once together recede into a kind of fairy dream world. But more intimately he shares Chagall’s nostalgia of a dream-like rural life, where his miniature world of interpersonal togetherness dwells in a carefree dreamscape. The little yet suffused with a certain sensuous rendering the man-woman corporeal existence are set free to relate with the motifs from nature in an unassumingly poetic encounter. The trees, waters-bodies, foliage and flowers assume a Wordsworthian like earthly delights. Child-like figures, distorted in scale and often floating in the space in elastic elongation free from the conventional gravitation of earth dominated his early paintings, such as the work called *Beyond All Telling*, 1989 (pl.73).

Chaman in his somewhat elliptical poetic wit is often heard saying that it is not the most but the best that counts. He would be content to have produced a canvas in a year, with the pride glittering in his eyes. To his mind painting is
not a work but an exclusive profound realization, which may take a year of observation and research. Chaman’s scholarly-like pursuits in search of allusions to enrich his pictorial vocabulary are often evident from his sketchbooks as a repertoire of various chance encounters, light bulb moments and artistic inspirations. Like diary Chaman’s sketchbooks reveal an artistic rigor, which proves a very significant exercise guiding his artistic development.

Among the most palpable sources that Chaman draws refers to the mythological past of Kashmir. The popular legend holds that the Kashmir Valley was once the great lake Satisar (the place where Sati, also known as Durga, took the shape of a lake). The lake was inhabited by the abominable and ferocious demons. Responding to the penance of the great sage Kashyap, Brahma’s grandson, the gods killed the demon with a pebble divinely caste, which today stands as the hill upon which towers the fortress built by the Mughal Emperor Akbar known as Hari Parbat. The water of Satisar was drained through a breach in the mountains at what is now the mouth of the Valley beyond the northern town of Baramula. However, Chaman’s aesthetic or conceptual associations are not strictly guided by historical or mythological doctrines or traditions. Unlike the scholastic rigor of Santosh, Chaman shares a playful or intuitive alliance to the sources he draws from. In the past decade or so Chaman has been using the triangle as primal form to negotiate his aesthetic link with the cultural ethos of his nativity. In a certain poetic delimitation he explains his conceptual framework:

Beyond all Telling I have been told that everything which has been experienced is firstly seen secondly touched and finally half understood. Beyond all telling the telling and understanding of the experience which I directly knead, observe slipping through my right hand fingers, triangle my aesthetical and cultural rapport to communicate it to one self and to The Society (relative term) at the arrow root level, when the situation was watery, demonic, damp and dreadful. The mother had to offer their sons at the Demons order.
Dreadful demons who used to reside on the triangle peaks desired to digest an experience as regular as old as humanity itself. The demonic three-dimensional aspect of conceiving the necessity of the triangle of necessity. It is just from here where from my pursuits begin. The origin of the triangle, the silence, silence which speaks the primordial truth about the human matters, the culmination of all sorts into silence, which germinates, sprouts, and flourishes within three sided geometrical figure called the ‘triangle’.

The triangle of punishment, trimorphous punishment which exists in the distinct forms; Body – Spirit. My hermaphrodite subjective process may not be universally comprehensible or explicable but the assignment of the punishment needs to be dealt by the objective punishment of the conceptual trigonometry; 1 – the conscious, 2- the intellect, 3- the vision (the inner vision). The modeling of silence in three dimensions, the Perfect Triangle (the relative term) of human knowledge. The punishment of being a painter – the base for my fabric is the direct result from the conflict of attractions, the influence of an essential triangle, no, not the two men and a women, neither the two women and a man but only one man and the all women, the all men of earth, water and fire.\(^{21}\)

Chaman’s allegorical triangle is conspicuously identifiable in some recent paintings, such as the Verinag Pool, vertical pyramidal triangle weaved in a net of straight lines amid a lyrical tree and huge flames of fire behind and whirling lines inside a hexagonal flat in the foreground. Verinag is a famous resort in Kashmir, but it is the legendary significance that attracted Chaman. As traditionally believed that it was Verinag through which gods drained the water-ridden Valley. The work called Anantnag, 2002 (pl.74), the place where Chaman lives, the triangle formed after joining the diptych shows the linear perspective, the point vanishing behind the man treated in abstract expressionist mode, occupying the nightmarish space in the right part of the canvas, with hands hanging in sheer helplessness. The act of supplementing punishment with being is an ontological question foregrounded in the existential philosophy of Sartre and Camus, which surfaces as a haunting
presence in the work, especially, for its compositional alliance with the iconic work such as Munch’s *Cry*.

In the recent years his paintings have adopted a relatively lesser contrast than his previous works. The painterly outlook has also considerably shifted from a morose or robust expressionist mode to the more subtler grayish and pleasantly low key undertones. The paintings reveal a far greater tendency towards abstraction. However, the previous aesthetic engagement with the triangles still preoccupies a seminal formal/conceptual paradigm. The paintings such as *Untitled*, 2006, *Trimorphous Triangle*, 2006, *Untitled*, 2007, *Pissing on the Triangle of Morality*, 2008, *Iron in the Apple*, 2010, *The Rustic*, 2010, *Adams Apple*, 2010 (pl. 76 to 82) while still dwelling in the old shrewd tactics of wit and satire they are also characteristically different for incorporating an assemblage of well-wrought visual transformations; abstracting the identifiable commonplace motifs of nature into a plethora of visual metaphors of disparate variables.

The triangle assumes more palpable presence in *Bul Bul + 1*, 2002 (pl.75). Here the triangle is a concrete but empty road to infinity, the *Bul Bul*, Indian nightingale, is an archetypal symbol for a good omen, which however, is looking downwards in despair for the sheer emptiness of the bridge-like triangle. At the same time this bare triangle in a countermovement reciprocates with the fatality of communal triangle; Hindu, Muslim and Sikh stretching their hands out from in an outcry to demystify the politically rendered religious divide and once again revive the peaceful traditions of the past.

Chaman does not show a fair level of participations as compared to the artists discussed before him. However, he has won State Akademi Awards in 1983, 83, 85, 87 and 2002. He has also participated in All India Painters Camp in the Valley in 1987, 95, 99 and 2002. More recently he was selected as one of the local artists in the fifteen day Residency Khoj Kasheer 2007 organized by
Khoj, International Artists Association, New Delhi. At present he is teaching in IMFA Srinagar and working and living in Anantnag Srinagar.

VEER MUNSHI (1955) and INDER SALIM (1965) are among the immediate contemporaries of Chaman, who however never lived in Kashmir throughout their artistic career, are in fact more significant in terms of their aesthetic relevance to the radically redefined and new forms of art-making. Munshi, while continuing the traditional studio practice, foregrounds a new stance that aims at revitalized or redefined painting as a language to address the personal and the political contemporary concerns. In a certain artistic alliance to the conceptual/postmodern painters such as Atul Dodiya he has evolved a vocabulary loaded with politically charged appropriations, negotiating the personal identity, history and dislocation.

In the Indian contemporary art scene Munshi remains to be the most prolific and engaging artist to represent the aesthetics of diaspora and dislocation. The works such as Fate of a Kashmiri Pandit, 1995, Untitled, 1997, G-&-J-father-of-nation,2005, Dialogue, 2005 (pl.83,84,85 and 86) dwell in the haunting stories of partisan and at the historic tragedy that has engulfed Kashmir, Munshi's homeland that he was forced to vacate, like most of the Hindu Kashmiris, in the early nineties. As Ranjit Hoskote describes:

Veer Munshi's art approaches the political, not only through an intellectual cognition of oppressive structures and conditions, but also through the emotions of grief, loss and bewilderment that attend the predicament of exile. To his credit, the volatility of such emotions is tuned to a fine pitch of poignancy, the restrained cadence of the elegiac.22

Inder Salim shares a more radical position for his art-practice emerges out of the dramatic change that has taken place in contemporary Indian art in the recent years. Informed by the shifts in paradigm in the western art-practice
since 1960s, especially by means of the emergence of new mediums like installation, performance, site specific, video art and digital art, the post-90s Indian art-practice too witnessed a certain transformation of the traditional studio into a “hybrid, expanded and mutated space.” Inder Salim, often represented as multi-faceted activist-artist from Kashmir, is largely known for his provocative performances. Incorporating mediums such as documentation, photographs, of assemblages, painting, performance, video, text and so on he attempts to explore notions of self ‘otherness,’ the idea of ‘Kashmir’, and its demography and politics. Unlike Munshi, Inder Salim is a self-taught artist who grew up in the small town of Kashmir. It was only after coming to Delhi in early nineties that he showed a certain interest in painting. But, drawn by a natural instinct for activism, he later switched over to more interactive and radically new mediums like installation and performance art. Among some of his notable performances are Evoking Nazir held at Open Studio at THE LOFT, Mumbai in 2009 (pl.87) is a 45-minute slide talk supplemented with a performance and a presentation of documented work done over the past few years, which he describes in a blog:

Nazir, a friend, in Kashmir, who doubly disappeared, first when we grew up, and then by the political growth in Kashmir. May be Nazir is still alive, but how to by-pass memories and touch that past, again.....So, memoires, personal and historical, blended by a conflict, by a love, and hate even; by a politics and violence even, by an ethics and the absence of it even; and by a present which is in the making and which is a read-made even. Evoking the sound NAZIR has a childhood embedded inside it, a smell of opium and charas, and a multifaceted affair between the self and the other, which manifests the being, and a nothingness even, so an attempt to evoke...

The recent history of visual art has witnessed a great upsurge as a cultural industry accommodating experts from diverse disciplines to launch collaborative projects of global concerns. The old elitist or exclusivist position
of an artist is replaced by a new eclectic paradigm. At the academic level the emergence of ambitious cultural theorists has triggered a professional seriousness in art criticism and scholarship, in whose crucible the meaning of art is subject to a persistently rigorous trial. Confronted with the ever challenging socio-political world order the aesthetic engagement of an artist was transformed into an intellectual responsibility. The revolution in information technology, while making the dissemination of knowledge incredibly easy, questioned the very language on which the ego of modernism was established. The traditional methods and means of artistic expression, which for quite a long time were held as absolute, seemed suddenly redundant and obsolete. The influx of new media like photography, text, video, performance, installation transformed the nature of visual art; the relationship between artist and art, art and society. Whether we call it reduction or expansion the identity of an artist, a perennial concept until some time back, became an insignificant specialty.24

From the art-historical perspective these shifts in paradigm were foregrounded by such perennial examples as Joseph Beuys. In his characteristic Shamanic stance he would go as far as to announce: “every sphere of human activity, even peeling a potato can be a work of art as long as it is a conscious act.” The similar radical shifts are being strongly realized in the past two decades of Indian contemporary art. It is in this context that the first ever truly international art event of fifteen-day Residency workshop organized by Khoj in Srinagar in 2007 requires a mention. Khoj is a Delhi based artist led International Artists' Association which provides an alternative forum for experimentation and international exchange. Part of the global Triangle Arts Trust, Khoj sees its role as an incubator for art and ideas, artistic exchange and dialogue in the visual arts. Its focused initiatives aim to assist and develop, forms of art such as media art, performance, video, environmental, public and
community based art, sound and other experimental modes of cultural production. It would be conveniently fitting perhaps to conclude the final chapter with a monograph on the Khoj Kasheer 2007 event, which as felt by Ranjit Hoskote who was a critic in residence, anticipated future prospects of the representation of Kashmiri artists.

In the recent history, just a few decades before the insurgency took the artillery form; Kashmir enjoyed quite a privileged position for providing a venue for national art camps. However, due to various socio-economic reasons the Valley could not generate the means to build any sustainable infrastructure to encourage cultural movement among the regional artists. Except the J&K Academy of Art, Cultural & Languages and The institute of Music & Fine Arts nothing much happened in the visual culture of the State. The Valley lived an economic deprivation and cultural disconnection until the call of insurgency established a new culture, what locally came to be called ‘gun-culture’.

It is interesting to imagine the existence of an art college training students in the spirit of modernist experimentation and innovation. During the first decade of militancy the Valley experienced the greatest human loss, displacement of Kashmiri Hindus and a near-absolute disconnection with the rest of the world, for being considered the most dangerous place in the world. It is in this context that it is important recall a relatively minor cultural event in the midst of political upheaval.

Provincial in scale and juvenile in spirit but uniquely dauntless in its pragmatic initiatives, a group of like-minded students of IMFA Srinagar joined together in 1995, the most violent years of militancy, and formed a group what they named as Contemporary Art Foundation, Artists’ Commune. Since there was not much happening in the studio-practice due to the frequent strikes they sought an
alternative space to work together, discuss and plan exhibitions. Inspired by the passionate stories of art camps in the Valley and the stimulating discoveries and innovations in the western art history they had their most vicarious encounters with global modernism, however, by virtual means. Oblivious of a gallery space where one could get to see the originals their obsessive indulgence into art books where the undersized glossy images and the eloquent, and at times overstated, interpretations appeared always a bit more than original and almost more than live.

The group remained actively engaged in organizing exhibitions on regular basis in makeshift galleries throughout the four politically violent years between 1995 and 1998, which is quite a span for anything of the kind to sustain in such times in particular or any such group anywhere in general. However, there was no manifesto or any underlying ideology or even any strict criteria for being a part of the group, but if there was anything that connected each and inspired others to join, it was to re-initiate the tradition of sharing art with the society. It did create the stir; local newspapers covered it with enthusiasm selling it as hope, some literary organizations approached for sponsorship, and ironically army officers became the best buyers.

The group was dominated by painters where some of them were still undergoing training at IMFA; some had done their graduation and were teaching in private schools as art teachers; some were self-taught; some possessing writing skills and some included even enthusiasts from other disciplines like literature, physics and journalism. It is quite predictable to imagine the overall ambience of their paintings but most of the aspiring artists reflected an abstractionist orientation, a legacy which can be traced back to Santosh and Triloke Kaul and other artists like Gayoor Hassan, Shuja Sultan, Rajinder Tiku, Shabir Mirza. The abstractions of the main members of the group were saturated with a raw, rugged and somewhat primordial naivety.
sharing a certain sensibility with the Fauvists, the German Expressionists and the De Kooning like Abstract Expressionism.

Disillusioned with the constant efforts to impress the political and bureaucratic authorities to launch a public art gallery in the State and upgrade the IMFA to start post-graduate program in Fine Arts, the group disbanded in 1999. Some of them left to join art institutions in other parts of India while others resumed anonymity. The group’s significance lies in the novelty of the simple idea and their unflinching efforts to break the ice.

**KHOJ KASHEER 2007**

In November 2007, Khoj International Artists’ Association organized the first ever International Residency in Srinagar called Khoj Kasheer 2007. The participation in the workshop included artists from Iran, Germany, England, Mozambique, Nepal, the different states of India and the local artists. The residency studios were set up in the uninhabited three-storied house of the British times on the banks of Jhelum adjacent to the Shri Pratap Singh Museum. Some of the artist used the rooms for site-specific installations while others chose to incorporate the open area in front of it. At the end of the fifteen day workshop the abandoned building and the area surrounding it fenced with stone walls was transformed into a complex of varied images and associations; a matrix of symbols and metaphors layered with discreet or incommensurable meanings. The location assumed a sense of festivity of a different kind the people of the Valley had ever experienced where diverse cultural/aesthetic sensibilities from across the globe shared their individual artistic responses to the Kashmir conflict in particular and their specific formal/conceptual
understanding of the new ways of interaction between art and its audience and to communicate the different spaces and conditions in a more effective way in general.

Most of the works were site-specific or installation oriented with a single performance, which had the essential ingredient to provoke and provide a physical experience to the viewer to enter the work space to encounter and negotiate with a range of meanings, associations and interpretations. The predominant force that motivated most of the artists to work in the public space was partly because of the politically loaded specificity and partly it provided great possibilities for some artists to seek a certain transition from the emotional/psychological liability of personal histories and re-negotiate the past and the present.

For most of the artist it was their first visit to the Valley and their shock of the new did not come by way of the picturesque but the political. The fifteen days of the workshop did not see any unsavory incident of violence but somehow everybody felt that somewhere something is not right here. The creepy presence of the people in camouflaged uniform often outnumbering the civilians, the deserted roads with the setting sun, the ruined houses turned into bunkers and barricades, the fresh and the dense graveyards, the empty houseboats and shikaras, sullen faces numbed with the long years of dodging death and waiting became recurrent images as the artists took a stroll looking from a local motif, an inspiration or an idea.

YOUR MEMORY GETS IN THE WAY OF MY MEMORY

Gargi Raina (Baroda)

Gargi’s site-specific installation called Tehkhana, which literally means a cellar, (pl.88) is imbued with an aura of a nocturnal past, which instigates the
urge to seek a dislocated meaning hidden in the archival debris. It is interesting to counter-see her sustained interest with the abstractionist idiom, the minimalistically structured paintings, and the randomly organized three-dimensional space. She chose the dark cellar of the house as an inclusive metaphor to enter into the pitch-dark world and encounter the exclusive and the unpredictable. The presence of torches hung right in front of the door is as much a sign of caution as they signal a sense of warning. The door under the Kashmiri embroidered curtains presents itself as a veiled ethnic identity, which promises a certain sense of warmness and hospitality.

The work invites the viewer to enter its intimate space, descending the grid of staircase with a torch in one hand and heart in the head, where the persistence of memory is somewhat challenged as soon as you project the light and things suddenly appear alive. Under the spell of the torch-light a red colored candle-wax alludes to the immediate memory of a life melted into blood while the kangris appear cold and abandoned; few nails tucked on the mud-walls bear the stigma of an empty wardrobe suggestive of the state of being driven homeless, an unpredictable collage of a few black and white photographs pasted on the other wall are suddenly discovered to be the photo-portraits of the disappeared persons in the Valley. Near it is a wooden book lying awkwardly in a vertical position suggesting the inaccessibility to the clues behind the dead and the disappeared. And as one move one we feel the dry chenar leaves whispering beneath our feet to greet the somewhat meditative poise of seven stones piled on one another while the photocopied image of the fasting Siddhartha stands as a testimony to human journey and the worldly wisdom. The seven stones have a symbolic significance to Gargi’s ethnic history referring back to seven generations when her family migrated from Kashmir.

One of the walls shows a life size charcoal portrait of a middle aged woman in firan confronts and confounds you as the viewer’s own shadow – or a shadow
of a wandering mother. Another wall is marked with a simple drawing and a
flower of the graveyard. Gargi used an array of materials, like nails, torches,
candle-wax, photocopied images, charcoal, drift stones, threads while
accommodating the existing spaces materials in the given site like the hanger
above the charcoal portrait and the basket beneath it, the lattice, the shelf and
the grid of the window, she is able to explore the possibilities inherent in the
site specific medium and create a sense of familiarity by means of her artistic
intervention as adaptive strategy.

Her empathic sensibility on the one hand to evoke catharsis and her minimalist-
oriented discipline on the other hand constructs an alternative space that can be
inhabited. The overall ambience has a hypnotic influence on the viewer- quite
suggestive of a stream of consciousness experience if given a torch and the
entry to the subconscious. This journey, this entering into the cave bears a
testimony of a spiritual inquiry into the mechanics of time and memory and by
aesthetic means she ventures to re-construct a new alternative reality from the
archive of absence and silence.

Nikhil Chopra (Mumbai)

Fed on the lullaby of the tales from a great-grandfather who settled or migrated
from Kashmir, Gargi Rania and Nikhil Chopra share, more or less, a common
liability of time and memory. Although far removed from the condition of the
present day plight of the Kashmiri Hindu community they negotiate with the
memory they were not physically a part of. However, they differ potentially in
terms of formal/conceptual choices, modes of narration and the use of mediums
and materials.

Nikhil shares the space involving the irony of an ever-migrating exilic
condition anticipating a certain sense of loss, perhaps a feeling of being
betrayed, and a yearning to return home. His artistic endeavors to negotiate this
existential condition of cultural dislocation, this state of homelessness in the
course of shifting homes from one place to the other, came by way of
interventions into imagining the past and creating the fictional characters drawn
from his ancestral past.

Nikhal’s live performance, **Yog Raj Chitrakar** (pl.89) became somewhat of an
extension to the fixed venue-bound site, making a kind of bridge by walking
down to Lal Chowk, which is in the heart of the city. He used his body-self as
the most vital material for an array of makeovers by masking/unmasking
himself to evoke a specific narrative. Recalling an evolutionary consensus to
the conceptual/formal position enjoyed by the performance art in general and
Joseph Beuys in particular, Nikhil’s first act involved shaving a few months old
beard he was growing for this performance. In the premises of the main venue
he chose the chenar tree, one of the iconic image of the picturesque old
Kashmir, as an offstage space for makeup, turning it into an onstage
performance enacting the whole process or preparation from undressing to
putting on a new costume. The royal costumes of his grandfather who enjoyed
an elitist life during the British times became a new skin Nikhil masked himself
with.

Transformed and transposed into an oriental gentleman of two generations old
Nikhil took a steady walk, crossing the new bridge over the Jhelum, passing the
crowded streets and settled right in front of the Ghunta Ghar in Lal Chowk.
Shocked, bemused, intimidated, perplexed the people reacted strongly but with
mixed responses as something familiar and yet strange. Some even giggled and
thought of him as weird or a sophisticatedly dressed mad man. But the
predictable was yet to happen as it took a while until the crowd became
noticeable enough for the security people to declare alarm. It was only after the
intervention of some officials that Nikhil was allowed to move on to his final
act to draw the image of the Ghunta Ghar on the road. The police had to block
the roads seeing the ever-growing crowd circling around the performance, which apparently involved nothing dramatic than an artist drawing the on the spot picture of Ghunta Ghar with a charcoal and a white chalk. After roughly a two hour drawing session Nikhil returned back to the main venue with the same steadiness, and receiving as much as leaving behind a mark, a gesture, an image on the wall of this landscape, which somehow recalls the images created by the cave man infused with magic.

**Sonal Jain** (Shillong/Assam)

“I will leave Kashmir with box full of (someone else’s) memories,
I found scavenging through abandoned houses and heavy hearts ...”

Sonal’s documentary oriented installation *Box Full of Someone else’s Memories* (pl.90) engages with the absent and the bereaved by dislocating the remained presences in the abandoned houses of Kashmiri Pandits. She visited some of the houses standing out as ruins in the midst of densely populated area of the old city called downtown and collected whatever she could find lying untouched in the cob-webbed darkness of the rooms. By means of her intervention she turned the empty houses into a site of excavation unearthing the relics pregnant with references, associations, memories and histories. After giving a certain archeological-oriented arrangement to the found things she displayed her collection in one of the residency studios. Her work space created an aura of a public museum where the viewer was somewhat left alone to encounter an assortment of socio-political narratives.

A protective gesture to negotiate with someone else’s memories is explicitly obvious in Sonal’s handling of the found things. The viewer is tempted to indulge into the empirical existence of the house owner by encountering the newspapers and magazines, some of the them placed in the rust-ridden tin-
trunk with its open lid and some scattered around, exerting a new visibility of the dates, images and the text, the empty bottles of medicine, notebooks with children's drawings. Everything is laminated in the transparent plastic sheets and specified with captions, with a clinical care, creating an atmosphere of a forensic lab where the specimens have to go through legal/medical investigation.

Laminated and annotated, the specimens anticipate an experience of transit to negotiate different spaces like archeological excavation, public space of information and the medical/legal investigation.

Sonal’s collected leftovers are supplemented with the sound recordings of the local people, mostly neighbors of the displaced, making a reference to the immediate and the nostalgia of the communal brotherhood. The installation as a testimony picks the very moment of the fear-ridden hasty decision by which the homes were rendered homeless like a parchment inscribed with the marks on the skin of time and memory.

LANDMARKS OF DYSTOPIA

Sujan Chitrikar (Nepal)

The significantly potential use of the ‘actual’ and the ‘found’ gives a definite contour to Sujan’s concept in his work *Barbed Wire Coaxes the Boat When It Tries To Fly* (pl.91). Redefining the sculptural space the work incorporates organic surfaces, the dug-out hollow of the earth, and the open sky.

The sudden, the impaling and the erect boat enmeshed with the barbed wire confront the viewer as a half lived conspiracy. It is in this materially visual encounter with the deeds of the dark, the custodial and the killings, the ghost of
the disappeared, half alive and half dead, that Sujan’s work makes a political intervention.

Image of the boat alludes to the metaphor of life, movement, and transport while evoking the memory of the exotic and the sumptuous lakes and rivers of the Valley. The process involved in Sujan’s work created the ambience of a grave-digger; in which the dislocated boat is left frozen in the split of a moment anticipating a paradox - as it recalls simultaneously the image of resurrection and the grave. The bed of flowers acts as a tribute, an obituary, an elegy. At the same time the work assumes a certain play of subversion by showing a mirror image of the iconic text-image ‘if there is Paradise on earth, It is here, it is here, it is here’ written in Persian scrip on both the sides of the boat.

It is through Bollywood cinemas that I had my first introduced to this paradise on earth during my early teens. Since then Kashmir was imprinted on my subconscious as the most scenic and serene location on earth with the imagery of houseboats on Dal Lake, snowcapped mountains, the unimaginably exotic valleys and its charming people.

When I received the invitation for Khoj Kasheer it rang as an alarm to my well-wishers and implored that I shouldn’t be going. However my conviction to visit the place of my childhood fantasy was more intense than the discouragements I received from others.

My artwork is an outcome of this strange yet very strong emotional connection with Kashmir and her people. The “shikara” (boat) as an image satisfied me with its metaphorical lineage to Dal lake and the people, the props from old Hindi movies and most importantly the freewill of people while barbed wire, as always, makes a discomforting presence. The work is a tribute to the people of Kashmir for their determination and hope for the best future.²⁸

Rambali (New Delhi)

Rambali’s installation Global Free Gift addresses the irony of capitalist commoditization of tragedy. The corporate media’s market strategy to
sensationalize violence in return makes it repetitious and de-contextual by reducing it to a palpable object ripped apart from any value but commercial. He transformed the corridor with a graveyard where the little white graves cast in plaster of paris are made into a gift by tying them with a red ribbon. All set in a minimalist grid-like repetition making a monotonous row of white bricks nullifies any sentimental/emotional value attributed to the phenomena of death.

The under-sized grave denies the iconicity attributed to it. The work makes a symbolic reference to the economy of human loss, the phenomena of desensitization in the process of over-exposure to the violence and the media hype (pl.92).

**APPROPRIATING THE IMAGINARY/ALLEGORICAL AND THE IMMEDIATE/LITERAL**

**Tooraj Khamenehzadeh (Iran)**

The Iranian artist Tooraj like Herbert used photographic medium to translate the specificity of his artistic experience in the given space. But while Herbert negotiated with the immediate and the existential Tooraj’s work was primarily motivated by a conceptual framework to re-locate the shared cultural and spiritual assimilations between Iran and Kashmir. With a background book, referring to the golden age of the Valley when Sufi order replaced the religious determinism with the transcendental mysticism, he sought his visual testimony by visiting the shrines and *khankahs* of the great seers of Persia. His methods involved a meticulous labor of the Photoshop, virtually kneading the photographic image into any desired effect, which is a real possibility with the digital art.

By means of digital intervention Tooraj created allegorical appropriations by juxtaposing the imaginary portraits of the Sufi seers canonized by the famous
Persian masters like Reza Abbasi and Behzad with the architectural interiors of
the shrines alluding to that specific aura. The selected images went through a
rigorous editing process and the final printouts were hanged on the branches of
Chenar tree. Seven photographs showing the seven portraits juxtaposed with
the local architectural motifs found a fitting space on the seven branches of the
Chenar standing sentinel in the centre of the site. This photo-installation, which
he titled as Seven Boughs of the Chenar, makes a symbolic reference to the
seven hundred year old cultural/historical memory. Tooraj speaks of his
significant use of ‘seven’ by referring to the various sources from historical,
coincidental to the spiritual.

Seven hundred years ago, great Sufis and Sages such as
Seyyed Bulbul Shah Sohrevardi and Amir Seyyed Ali Hamedan,
along with seven hundred Sufis migrated to Kashmir. And
interestingly the Chenar in center of the garden had seven boughs.
The number seven has also an esoteric/holy significance. 29

Tooraj’s thematic position and a well defined formal execution created an
interactive space for a culturally specific communication resurrecting the good
old times in the present politically violent landscape. One could sense a
metaphorical relation between the technical process of editing the images, by
means of diffusing or layering the shafts of virtual colors to elucidate the image
of a rich and peaceful past, and the history of Kashmir smudged and submerged
by the layers of oppressive regimes (pl.93).

Herbert Grammatikopoulos (Greece/Germany)

Herbert a photographer/artist with a mixed background of Greece and Germany
spent most of the fifteen days hunting for images in the nearby places of the
city. He was only seen in the evenings unloading his camera in the laptop. By
the end of the workshop his photo-installation included more than hundred photographs and snapshots printed on a single sheet making it a twenty five meter long scroll.

He constructed a hexagonal space by means of wooden-blocks and pillars where the scroll is mounted in a way to run along both the inner and the outer wall, suggestive of a somewhat transparent gallery space, so that a viewer could experience the non-linear narrative in circular time. From a distance this little structure looked somewhat like a post-demolition construction – a little shelter abstracted from the debris. However, Herbert tried to bring in the ambience of homely warmth by making a little fireplace in the centre of the construction. A similar strain runs through the selected photographs as not all the images negotiate the political but encompass a landscape narrating stories from the obvious to the hidden, from the apparent dissolution to the implicit hope for peace and some are tinged with a sense of irony and wit (pl.94).

The actual door, as a found object, standing between the two ends of the scroll and placed as open plays a significant role in creating a sense of an inside outside experience for the viewer. Herbert speaks of the possible encounters a viewer may experience by making the whole and the parts into a single specific narrative where the private and the public oscillate like an indefinite pendulum.

To walk inside and outside the house is a symbol of inner and outer view on one and the same subject, as well as to go in and out a door, from public open to private inner space, using a door as a border in between. I wanted to express with this, that there are always at least two points of view on something, and when reaching the door at the end a third time, there maybe will be a third point of view, like a coin has not only two faces, but a third, its thickness. The door is always open to see and change fixed opinion on something.”

Herbert’s reference to home anticipates a promise beyond the political and the existential and works its way out of the dilemma alluding to a more open-ended, transparent and a holistic experience.
Hannah Matthew (England)

Hannah Mathew a photographer/artist from England made a photographic documentary oriented work by taking portraits of houseboat workers. Her experience as an ambitious tourist, for having travelled extensively in India, brought her to address the socio-economic condition of tourism in the conflict zone of Kashmir.

She frequently visited houseboats and interacted with people whose lives were dependent on the simple trade of renting houseboats to the tourists. She made a selection of portraits set against the decorated and well furnished interiors of the houseboats, which narrate a telling story of a lavish investment left to despair and emptiness (pl.95).

It is interesting to notice how Hannah’s photographs allude to the effect of economic loss by encountering the portrait image as a disconcerting metamorphosis where the backdrop is the same old luxurious home while the image in the foreground, ironically, appears strange and undesirable. all the preparedness for the guest, which involves the everyday cleaning and dusting of the possessions acquired after a hard long years, remains in a stagnant state of preparation like a bejeweled bride waiting for the groom. It is like a home never visited.

Speaking about her presumptions Hannah, on the contrary, discovers a certain sustained optimism shared by the houseboat owners for finding alternative means for survival.

My presumption was that due to the conflict, these intimate hotels were under threat, but after speaking to the houseboat owners I discovered that this was not necessarily the case. I had presumed that as there had been a reduction in Western tourists, that this was true of domestic tourism also. Although many families could no longer rely on a steady flow of tourists for
income from their boats, others were successful businesses that managed to attract many Indian tourists.  

Hannah chose the mantelpiece in one of the rooms of the building as a pedestal to place her photographs made into an open album. Being the first room of the building her work kind of guided the viewer from the intimate experience of looking into the family album to the more expansive and impromptu experience in the other rooms.

AESTHETIC/FORMALISTIC POSSIBILITIES IN THE MATERIAL – A RETREAT

Fiel dos Santos Marques Rafael (Mozambique)

Rafael has a sustained preoccupation of working with the junk material. He is known for his association with the Transforming Arms into Tools project (TAE), where arms are swapped for useful objects like farming equipment or sewing machines. His process of work involves transforming the decommissioned weapons from the Mozambican civil war, which lasted from 1976 to 1992, into sculptures.

Rafael’s presence in the Khoj Kasheer, as an artist who grew up in the midst of violence, assumed a fitting participation as how he would address the given context. However, he could not find the arms or the weapon to transform and rather decided upon making a wild goat. He made a skeleton out of the copper wire and covered the body of the goat with the rubber door-mate perforated with the shoe marks, which gives a sense of volume, movement and transparency. The sculpture is left hanging and swinging on a seesaw made out of the rubber door-mate (pl. 96).
Shafi Chaman (Srinagar J&K)

Chaman’s preoccupation with the painterly space remains integral in his installation Celestial Triangle for incorporating the visual dynamics of color and its chemistry. His body of work is predominated by a sustained alliance to the formalist vocabulary of modernism where the identifiable is metamorphosed into the allegorical or the abstract.

The triangle or the triangular forms, a recurrent image dominating his body of work, finds an alternative from the painterly flatness and the virtual texture by incorporating the actual method and the materials to create the three dimensional space of the installation. The brushes are replaced with the handmade craft of the weaver, involving the local ‘living tradition’ of dyeing silk, wool and staple into colors to weave shawls, carpets and namdas, the representational icons of traditional art practice Kashmir is known for (pl.97).

Chaman modelled his work on the method of carpet weaving. The triangular mirror became the basic frame on which he weaved the seven layers of the yarn dyed deeply in the seven colors of vibgyor. The center is further enhanced by the details like a pomegranate-like pattern on the paper mache bottle, the thorn-laden nipple, chestnut tied with a copper wire, all doubled by the mirror.

It is interesting to notice that Chaman’s work does not meditate or seem to be influenced by the political environment he lived in. As if on the contrary Chaman likes to create puns out of the mysterious and the mundane and sometimes his deliberations sound like a mathematical equation and sometimes an occult science anticipating a retreat into a cocoon defined by the aesthetic, conceptual and the romantic.

As a participant I shared an adventure of trigamous relationship with (man, material & mystery) the triangular struggle of a man, to live to love and to loathe. In presence of various probable’s, parables and fables my magical triangle emerged as a structural beauty in silence and meditation. The local medium staple played both the suggestive and symbolist conglomeration of
charisma and touching human psyche and the colors of the vibgyor
bestowed life to the saplings of life.32

REVOLT IS A PAGE CRUMPLED IN THE WASTE BASKET
EXISTENTIAL RUPTURES, AESTHETIC STANCE AND THE
INTERVENTION INTO THE POLITICAL

Showkat Kathjoo (Srinagar J&K)

Showkat Kathjoo is more direct and politically articulate to address the
testimony of his local experience. His installation Viewfinder (pl.98)
incorporates the images loaded with the metaphorical layerings of conflict and
desolation and the inherent play of irony evoking a space where the viewer is
transposed to re-negotiate his experience of the immediate and the experiential.

Kathjoo’s work shared its sense of sensationalism with Nikhil’s performance
but while the later was received as the shock of the past the former exuded an
intimidation of the present. Being as provocative and disrupting as any ultra-
Dadaist would dare to be in Kashmir – the Bunker as an inescapable view and
an inevitable view-finder worked as the most beautiful metaphor for dystopia.

The installation draws its primary sources from artist’s subjective experience
and creates a metaphorical allegory by re-constructing the architectural space
of the bunker, a sign of discomfort and a disconcerting experience in the
presence of a metamorphosed landscape. However, the most invigorating
response to the installation was no response, which recalls the minimalist
paradigm of ‘repetition ad deletion’, while negotiating the day to day
experience numbed and perforated with such disquieting and intimidating
constructions. In the changed and changing landscape the installation becomes
a viewfinder to witness and be witnessed by.
The bunker turned into a viewfinder invites the viewer to a series of encounters where the space is emptied from its actual constant to incorporate the temporal experience of inhabiting the impossible. The only view inside, which normally works as a target for the soldier where the gun is placed to keep the watch, is blocked with the TV playing a CD running a specific loop defined by the exotic and the picturesque landscape of Kashmir. It is important to notice that the chosen images were taken from the travelogues, photo-albums and books published by the European travelers. Beginning with the text-image from the popular couplet of Jahangir (If on earth there is a Paradise, it is here, it is here, it is here) the viewer is transposed to a hedonistic experience of the pleasures of an imaginary paradise. The view becomes as much of a desired trap as an escape from the true and the ugly.

Kathjoo likes to play with the irony implicit in the polarities like insider and outsider by taking into account his negotiations with the victim, victimizer and victimized victimizer. The sense of claustrophobia, the human frozen into a sentinel guarding the gun, makes a scarecrow out of this makeshift image of the conflict as much sympathized as feared.

Wasim Mushtaq Wani (Kupwara/Srinagar J&K)

Wani as a local artist was battling with a different kind of unease. He couldn’t somehow subdue the feeling that in being a Kashmiri he had to cut through the stigmata of overdosed metaphors and punctuated annotations. Wani reflected a certain reluctance to represent violence as violence that he seemed to be contesting within, which he calls a battle that will perhaps outlive the artist.

Wani’s installation Choose Yourself (pl.99) proposes the triangular trap where there is no exit from the given choices – the ritual/spiritual in the act of tying a wish knot; the visceral/material engagement with the Kangri; the camouflaged hangman's noose anticipating the empirical/political/psychological gesture in
the contemplation of suicide. And from an actual/aesthetic distance the overall ambience or gestalt, in contention with the elements it is made of, comes as a disguise evoking a delightful complacency. As the evening approaches all the temptations for warmth, implicit in the presences like Kangri and the colorful threads pregnant with unfulfilled wishes, is ignited by the counter-presence of the light-bulbs. The only thing that remains more or less the same is the subtle fear-ridden presence of the hangman’s noose hiding behind the branches and green leaves of magnolia – camouflaged and lurking.

Instead of the picturesque chenar he chose the magnolia tree for its local associations to the legends, alluding to the economic prosperity and vice versa. In the recent political history of Kashmir the evolution of signifiers/perceptions like Kangri adopted new meanings where it ceased to be the sign of warmth and became an instrument of protest. The work addresses the local psyche and traverses through the existential accesses like submission which finds recourse into the spiritual resistance by visiting shrines, wailing, tying knots; saturated with the monstrosity of abortive political negotiations, the cathartic resolutions in the supernatural and disillusioned with the paralysis of the present the man looks upwards contemplating the Hangman’s noose.

The uniformity in design and the circular movement of the installation is suggestive of a Tawaf-like ritualistic experience in which the viewer is permeated to undergo a trance of the fabulous and the monstrosity of the monotonous.

Each artist brought into play her or his own specific ideas about communicative engagement, the relationship between artistic endeavors and the assumptions of audiences, the evolution of a shared language of performance and understanding in interactive settings; and, vitally, they developed ways of addressing one another’s very different and distinctive formal and conceptual choices. Within the workshop, our conversations flowered at diverse tangents, wove into surprising tapestries.
Ranjit Hoskote, a noted Indian poet and cultural practitioner, described the event as a promise to look forward to the much anticipated revival of Kashmir’s glorious cultural traditions, which in the course of recent history has been somewhat white-washed by the political.
Footnotes


2. Iris albicans, also known as the Cemetery Iris, White Cemetery Iris, or the White Flag Iris, is a species of iris which was planted on graves in Muslim regions and grows in many countries throughout the Middle East and northern Africa. It was later introduced to Spain, and then other European countries. [1] It is a natural hybrid.

It grows to 30-60 cm tall. The leaves are grey-green, and broadly sword-shaped.[2] The inflorescence is fan-shaped and contains two or three fragrant flowers. The flowers are grey or silvery in bud, and are white or off-white and 8cm wide in bloom. It is a sterile hybrid, and spreads by rhizomal growth and division, as it cannot produce seeds. Cited from: accessed March, 29, 2011 <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iris_albicans>

3. Cited from a conversation with the artist in his studio/residence Srinagar (Kashmir), June, 22, 2011


6. Ibid., p 463


13. Ibid.,

14. Cited from a conversation with the artist, April 1, 2011.

15. Cited from the unpublished resume of the artist.


18. Cited from an unpublished statement of the artist, December, 2004

19. Cited from various catalogues and through direct communication with the artist.


21. Cited from an unpublished written draft by the artist during a meeting at Institute of Music & Fine Arts, Srinagar, June 20, 2008.


27. Cited from the text as part of Sonal Jain's the Installation.

28. Cited from an Email communication with Sujan Chitrikar, January 17, 2010.

29. Cited from an Email communication with Tooraj Khamenehzadeh January 8, 2010.

30. Cited from an Email communication with Herbert Grammatikopoulos, January 2010.

31. Cited from an Email communication with Hannah Matthew, January 2010.

32. Cited from an Email communication with Shafi Chaman, January 2010.

LIST OF PLATES

CHAPTER V

IN THE WAKE OF TURMOIL
THE PRESENT GENERATION OF ARTISTS

SHUJAH SULTAN

1. Untitled, 1971, Oil on canvas. Collection: IMFA Srinagar (p 212)
2. Untitled, 1971, Oil on canvas. Collection: IMFA Srinagar (p 212)
4. Untitled 1973, Oil on canvas Collection: JK Academy, (p 212)
6. Untitled, 1995, 83 x 104 cm. Oil and acrylic on canvas, Collection: Artist - (pp 212/14,)
7. Untitled, 1995, 83 x 104 cm. Oil on canvas, Collection: Artist (p 212)
8. Untitled, 1995, 83 x 104 cm. Oil on canvas, Collection: JK Academy (p 212)
10. Untitled, 1996, 104 x 83 cm. Oil and acrylic on canvas. Collection: Artist (pp 212/14)
11. Untitled, 1996, 83 x 104 cm. Oil and acrylic on canvas. Collection: Artist (p 212)
12. Untitled, 1997, 83 x 104 cm. Oil and acrylic on canvas. Courtesy: JK Academy, Catalogue, Exhibition from the collection of JK Academy at IGNCA New Delhi (p 212)
13. Untitled, 1999, 83 x 104 cm. Oil and acrylic on canvas. Collection: Artist (p 212)
14. Untitled, 2002, 120 x 120 cm. Oil and acrylic on canvas. Collection: Artist (p 215)
15. Untitled, 2002, 120 x 120 cm. Oil and acrylic on canvas. Collection: Artist
16. Untitled, 2006, 120 x 120 cm. Oil and acrylic on canvas. Collection: Artist [incomplete]
17. Untitled, 2006, 83 x 104 cm. Oil and acrylic on canvas. Collection: Artist (p 215)

MASOOD HUSSAIN


43. Untitled, Dever Stone. Collection: IMFA Srinagar (p 226)
44. Untitled, (p 226)
48. Talisman, 1993, 125 x 70 x 30 cm. satained wood, stone, vermilion and thread. Collection: Art Heritage Foundation, New Delhi (pp 226/27)
49. Legend Flower, 2005. 250 cm Approx. stained wood, paper and gold leaf. Collection: private (p 227)
51. Iris Inside, 1997, Iris Inside, sand stone, wood and leather string, Collection: NGMA New Delhi (pp 227/29)
52. Blue Dome, 2000, 65 x 50 x 47 cm. Stone, wood and paint. Collection: Art Heritage Foundation, New Delhi
53. Water is the Element, 2002, 120 x 114 x 22 cm. stained wood, leather strings and mirror. Collection: private
54. The Grove, 65 x 50 x 47 cm. Stone, wood and paint. Housing Dept. Govnt. of Madhya Pardesh, Ayodiah, Bhopal (p 230)

SHABIR MIRZA

56. Untitled, 1993, Catalogue (p 236)
57. Portrait of a Family, 1995, 17 x 51 x 17 cm. Stone, Collection: Lalit Kala Delhi (p 236)
59. Rectangular Deluge in the Silent Lake, 1996, 79 x 46 x 15 cm. Stone, Collection: private Delhi – sold out in Art Heritage Delhi (p 237)
60. Setting in of Decadence, 1999, 68 x 65 x 18 cm. Stone, 10th Trienalle. Collection: Artist. (p 237),
62. The New World Order, 2003 Kashmiri Marble, Collection: Artist. (p 238),

SHAIQA MOHI

63. Untitled, 1980 (p 239)
65. Untitled, 2002 (p 239)
ZAHOOR ZARGAR


AFTAB AHMAD


IFTIKHAR JAFFAR

70. Untitled, 2001, 81 x 91 cm. Acrylic on Canvas. Collection: Artist (p 240)
71. Untitled, 2001, 32x36 in. Acrylic on Canvas, Collection: Artist (p 240)

SHORA BASHIR

72. Untitled, 92 x 83 cm. Oil on canvas. Courtesy: JK Academy, Catalogue, Exhibition from the collection of JK Academy at IGNCA New Delhi (p 241),

SHAFI CHAMMAN

73. Beyond All Telling, 1989, 102 x 89 cm Oil and acrylic on canvas. Collection Ifthikar Jaffar. (p 242).
74. Anantnag, 2002 Oil on canvas. Collection: Artist (p 244),
75. *Bul Bul* + 1, 2002, 93 x 104 cm. Oil on canvas. Collection: JK Academy. (p 245),
76. Untitled, 2006, 118 x 118 cm. Oil and acrylic on canvas. Collection LKA New Delhi (p 245),
77. Trimorphous Triangle, 2006, 112 x 119 cm. Collection: Artist (p 245),
78. Untitled, 2007, 93 x 104 cm. Collection: Artist (p 245),
79. Pissing on the Triangle of Morality, 2008, 98 x 106 cm. Collection: Artist (p 245),
80. Iron in the Apple, 2010, 152 x 121 cm. Collection: Artist (p 245),
81. The Rustic, 2010, 110 x 148 cm. Collection: Artist (p 245),
82. Adams Apple, 2010, 98 x 105 cm. Collection: Artist (p 245),
VEER MUNSHI

83. Fate of a Kashmiri Pandit, 1995, (p 246),
84. Untitled, 1997, 92 x 112 cm. Oil on canvas. Courtsy: JK Academy, Catalogue, Exhibition from the collection of JK Academy at IGNCA New Delhi (p 246),
85. G-&-J-father-of-nation, 2005, (p 246),
86. Dialogue, 2005 (p 246),

INDER SALIM


KHOJ KASHEER 2007

88. Gargi Raina, Tekhkhana, Site-Specific Installation, Khoj Kasheer 2007, Srinagar, (pp 252/3),
89. Nikhil Chopra, Live Performance, Yog Raj Chitrakar [duration 3 hrs]. Khoj Kasheer 2007, Srinagar, (p 255),
90. Sonal Jain, Installation, Box Full of Someone else’s Memories. Khoj Kasheer 2007, Srinagar, (p 256),
91. Sujan Chitrikar, Installation, Barbed Wire Coaxes the Boat When It Tries To Fly. Khoj Kasheer 2007, Srinagar, (p 257),
93. Tooraj Khamenehzadeh, Photo-Installation, Khoj Kasheer 2007, Srinagar, (p 259),
96. Fiel dos Santos Marques Rafael, Sculpture-Installation. Collection: IMFA Srinagar. (p 263),