

About ArtO₂



Art puts us in dialogue with the everyday. It urges us to confront, challenge and question it. To observe it from a distance and engage with it. ArtO breathes in this space, in the gap between art and life. Because art matters...and breathingartworks.

ArtO2 is a Mumbai-based organization whose aim is to increase awareness of contemporary arts practices by promoting thought-provoking art projects in an urban context. By supporting artistic talent and innovative approaches, ArtO2 want to challenge and stimulate our perception of everyday life through artistic practices.



encounters

talking sites in the city of extremes

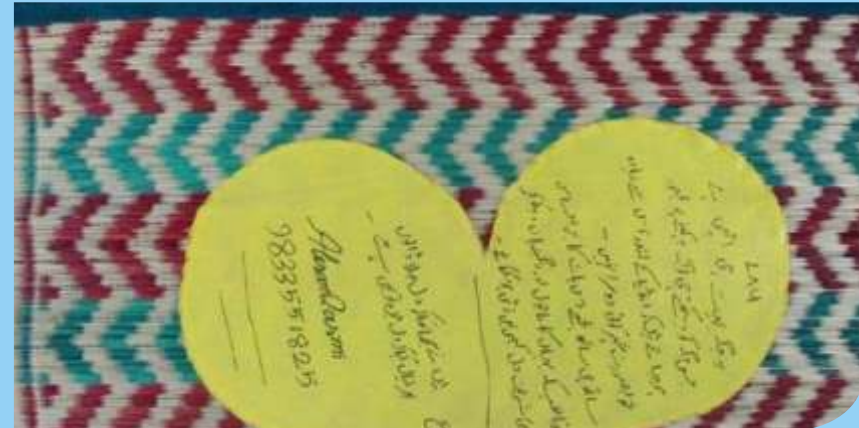


Mumbai - Jan 2010

A public art project exploring the contrasts and dichotomies which

populate the daily life of the city. Bidyut Singha, MSC Satya Sai, Neil Dantas, Pradeep L. Mishra and Uday Shanbhag investigated the life of Mumbai, its people and places by carrying out site-specific activities.

In collaboration with



Haji Ali Dargah

108 Qurbani Caps | MSC Satya Sai



Satya Sai offered 108 caps worn by Muslim devotees before entering holy spaces. This action was performed on the stretch of land connecting the city of Mumbai to Haji Ali Dargah, a place for peace and worship. Inside each cap the artist placed a sign of his DNA, as a means to sacrifice and lose his own identity. Through this act, he urged us to treat each other with respect, integrity and open heart.

Bandra Bandstand

c what u want 2 c in d c | Neil Dantas



Grass-made love seats were distributed to Bandstand visitors, to privately contemplate the sea and the city, to publicly enjoy each other, to celebrate and share old stories connected to the sea – an altar for the auntie pondering God after Sunday mass, the heart broken lover or two love doves.



Crawford Market

Lovable Beings | Pradeep L. Mishra



Crawford Market represents the city in its organic, disordered growth. It is a battleground for space between vegetables, animals and humans. It is a home, too. The artist interacted with shopkeepers to produce roofless cages and drawings later displayed on-site. The project highlighted the existing bonds with the living beings involved and carried a message of mutual respect and understanding.



VT Station - CSTerminus

Foot Soldiers | Bidyut Singha



Mumbai's commuters are the true backbone of the country's financial centre. At rush hour, he invited people to stand on a makeshift pedestal to portray their feet. A reminiscence of the barbaric attacks of 26/11 that sullied the precincts of this historic building, these portraits give a moment of recognition to these faceless Mumbaikars, a kind of mourning action to commemorate all these defenseless victims.

Café Leopold

Identity Crises | Uday Shanbhag



A speaking metal detector raises questions of place and belonging. The innocent blabbering of "Are you human..." blurted out in different languages to those who pass through it, critiques the hurting of regional sentiments by asking us whose Mumbai it really is. Thus, it demystifies the notion of pure race, pointing out that we are all migrants, all invaders and Mumbai really is an amalgam of many cultures, religions and identities.



encounters

On-site Lectures



During the public art project, the following Lectures were organized:

- ◉ *Mumbai Express: A Journey towards Alienation & Assimilation*, by Dr. Ruby Maloni & Dr. Usha Raman (Mumbai University) - CST Terminus
- ◉ *Polyphonous Voices in the Sea*, by Dr. Marie Fernandes (St. Andrews College) - Bandra Bandstand
- ◉ *Fountains of the market: a re-looking of a historic & architectural legacy*, by Dr. Varsha Shirgaonkar (S.N.D.T University) - Crawford Market
- ◉ *Art & the City – Renegotiating a dialogue*, by Prof. Jeroo Mulla (Sophia Polytechnic)- Leopold Cafe'



Outside In



encounters
Outside > IN

Mumbai - Feb 2010

The five site-specific projects were shifted within the white-washed walls of a gallery. Outside, they were generated on-site through a continuous process of negotiation with the nature of space and people. Indoors, their interdependence became physically visible

In collaboration with

THE 
VIEWING
ROOM



Outside In



Outside In



iamumbai



iamumbai

Mumbai, June 2010

A cultural campaign investigating the city's diverse nature and many selves through the involvement of its inhabitants, *iamumbai* takes its title from a conceptual work by Uday Shanbhag, an allusion to the spirit of inclusiveness of the city and an assertion to the fact that we are all immigrants and intruders.

Inspired by a piece of poetry written by an anonymous author longing for his/her village house and found on the Western Railways, the project was developed in two phases. First, designer Corrado Cotignano re-interpreted posters which regularly appear on the city's roads substituting the faces of





politicians with those “mumbaikars” portrayed by photographer Binaifer Bharucha, trying to find their space in the city. In each poster, the text was written in the original language of the portrayed people. Thereafter, the posters were placed at sites interpreted as catalysts and recipients of migrants and their identities. Secondly, a performance of artists Georgina Maddox and Neelima Aryan summoned the people to partake in their social rally through their narrative technique. Along with the song, onlookers were invited to place their thumbprints on an *iamumbai* signboard as a sign of belonging and as a mark of proclaiming their individual identity in Mumbai.

My house is far behind me,
an ocean of eyes and smiles
walks around me, inside my heart,
the deepest hope and desperation...
Are you mine Mumbai?
Do you love me or hate me?
(Jasrajyima, Western Railway)

घर मुझसे है कहीं पीछे
खैर खी है सागर की लहरों में
आस-पिआस की आँखों में
जिन में सबसे अन्तरों के साथ...
मुझे—क्या तुम मेरी हो?
तुम मुझसे प्यार करती हो या नफरत?
(एक अजनबी, पश्चिम रेलवे)

माझी घोंबट लगेचून आली दुरावर मी,
सगळ्यांचा सागर, हास्य,
साजसजवण झाल्या सभोवतारी लवले मी,
इतकाच पाहण मरलो आहे आस आस पिरावा...
मुझे तु माझी अहेल कः?
तुझे माझापस ट्रेप कितः लग आली कः?
(अज्ञात कवी- पश्चिम रेलवे)

नाम: जसराज
पता: मुंबई
पेशा: पश्चिम रेलवे

नाम: अरुण
पता: मुंबई
पेशा: अरुण

नाम: अज्ञात कवी
पता: मुंबई
पेशा: अज्ञात कवी

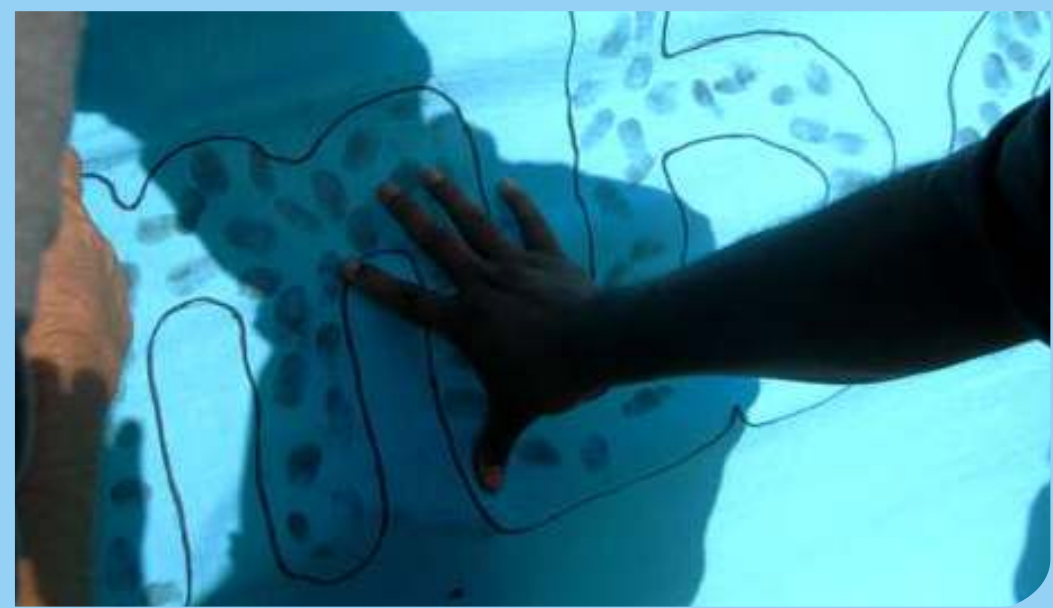
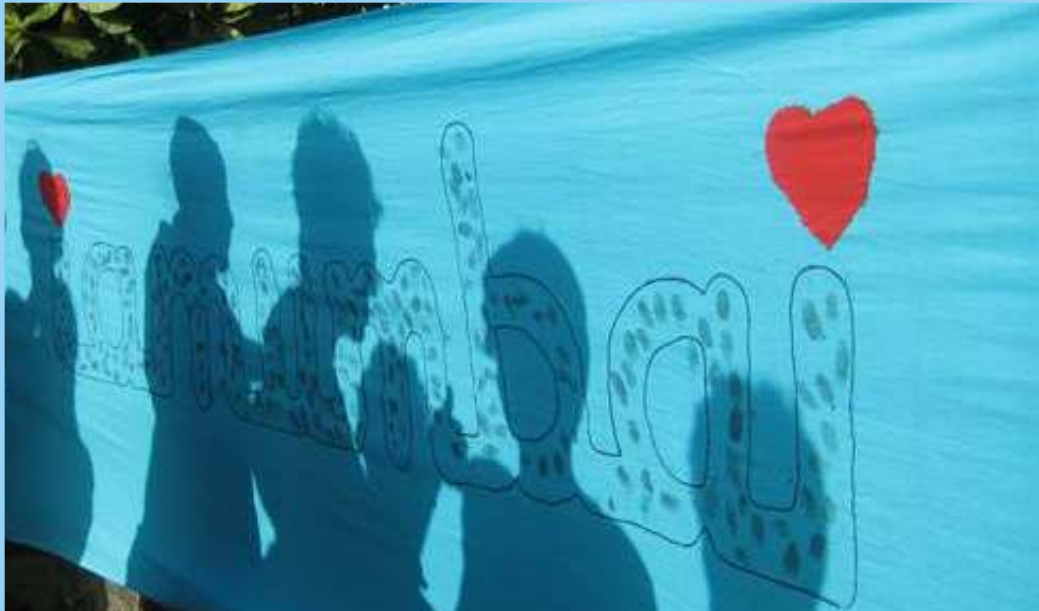
iamumbai
Street portraits



iamumbai Posters Campaign



iamumbai
Music & Participatory Rally



encounters

The Fluid City



encounters

the fluid city

Water is an element which has spiritual, religious and mythological significance. In Mumbai, water plays a contradictory role, being it scarce and abundant at once. It surrounds the city and is an integral part of its landscape; yet access to it is limited. During the monsoon, the city becomes a hotbed of disease. There is a constant tussle between desire, denial and rejection of water, which is felt and lived as both a blessing and a curse. It is also through this special relationship with water that Mumbai, the ever-transforming, fluid city, has acquired its unique identity.

mumbai | 6 > 9 january 2011

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Marine Drive, Parel, Dadar, Bandra Carter Rd.

Hypohydro hyperhighrise | Tushar Joag



A human fountain plays on the dichotomy between urban development and the quality of life illustrated by the construction of high-rise towers projecting a new style of living, but with no access to water. By recreating a festive spirit, he deconstructs the notion of modernization where luxury living is the new mantra exposing the entrapments of consumption that have today become the new paradigms for affluence.



Sewri Fort

flowingfreedom | Pradeep L. Mishra



Sewri Fort overlooks a mangrove forest and is renowned as a watchtower for exotic birds sightings. Along the fort's boundary walls, the artist placed a series of flags embroidered with red images of birds and other sea creatures. The flags then became "guardians" protecting both the architectural heritage and the natural landscape that surrounds it. The work is a questioning of the dichotomies and the imbalance created by urban development versus the natural environment.



Thane - Siddheshwar Talao

Tracing a Disappearance | Prajakta Potnis



Shrunk by the concrete development and poisoned by excessive chemical pollutants, the district of Thane today runs almost barren. In one area a lake relic remains, the Siddheshwar Talao: there, Prajakta's intervention aimed at mapping the original lake's boundaries on what is now the new, 'developed' area and she retraced the lake's original contours With stenciled powder.



Mankhurd - Kalaghoda

Mrigjal - The Mirage | Sharmila Samant



With a forked rod, Sharmila Samant took on the role of magician and, along with a water diviner, investigated the existence of water treasures hidden in the city's underground. Her tracking path took her through various sites that include a slum, and gentrified areas. At each place, she left a sign indicating the existence of water which, as ineffable mirages, appear and disappear.



Goregaon - Flora Fountain - Asiatic society

Paaninama - Stories from the City | Vijay Sekhon



Vijay Sekhon staged multiple *nautanki* performances in different urban spots. His street-based actions were aimed at questioning Mumbai's inhabitants' perception of water – its value and function in their everyday lives and how this integral yet rare resource has led man himself to lose his dignity. The artist closed his project with an audio-visual projection, juxtaposed with sound recordings of water collected in various sites around Mumbai.



Juhu Beach

Kuberanige Niru Beku | Uday Shanbhag



Focusing on the symbolic and functional meaning of water for the Kolis, Shanbhag inscribed the invocation 'kuberanige niru beku' (The Sea God wants more water, in kannada) at dawn and dusk on the sands of Juhu beach.

Through this auspicious incantation, he pleaded to the Sea God for good weather and good catch for the fishermen as they embarked on their daily journey.



Thane - Calwa Creek

Big Catch | Parag Tandel



A member of the Koli community, Parag Tandel ventured out to Thane Creek with fishermen, collecting not fish but garbage.

He then applied the waste caught in the net on to steel armatures with fish shapes, to make sculptures.

Parag's is a symbolic gesture of allegiance to his community, as he highlights how several species of fish have become extinct and how, along with them, the kolis threatened.

The Fluid City - On-Site Lectures



- ⦿ *Following the Water Diviner* - Simpreet Singh (activist) | Mankhurd - Annabhau Nagar
- ⦿ *Mumbai Mega city 2050 - An End to Ecology?* - Darryl D'Monte (environmentalist) | Juhu Beach
- ⦿ *Forest Tales: A story on the Mangroves of Mumbai* - Laxmikant Deshpande (Environment Management Centre) | Sewri Fort
- ⦿ *The Receding Line* - Sulakshana Mahajan (Researcher on Urban Issues) and Madhuri Mulay (Maharashtra Jeevan Pradhikaran) | Thane - Siddheshwar Talao
- ⦿ *The Creek that Ran its Time* - Fleur D'Souza (St. Xavier College) | Thane - Calwa Creek
- ⦿ *The Dried Sea: Dreams and Deprivation in the Fluid City* - Jeroo Mulla (Sophia Polytechnic) | Marine Drive

The Fluid City - On-Site Workshops



Flow/Cut - March 2011



Mumbai | 15 > 24 April 2011 |



flow/cut collected and inserted the works produced during *The Fluid City* project. The single projects came together, allowing us to contemplate new ways of seeing, experiencing and interacting with the element of water. The exhibition was opened by a panel discussion entitled *The Paradoxes of Water in the City*, with the participation of art historian Tasneem Mehta, social critic Jeroo Mulla and activist Simpreet Singh.

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Flow/Cut - March 2011



Flow/Cut - March 2011



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[en]counters - January 2012 | land(of)mine



a project by



MOHILE PARIKH CENTER
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What values are attached to the idea of land in an overpopulated and anarchic city like Mumbai? How does the city, with its extremes, contradictions and dichotomies affect our perception of what art can be? And how does art, in turn, actively contribute to a better understanding of the world we live in?

In *[en]counters - land(of)mine* (January 7 to 14) a group of artists will undertake these issues and explored how notions of space and identity, borders and sharing, possession and cohesion, strife and solidarity, neglect and appropriation define the city's everyday life and its social environment.



Navi Mumbai
Ghar - Home | Anupam Singh



Ghar / Home by Anupam Singh aims to explore the dreams/ideas of a home and the aspects of security, permanency, land, shelter, comfort and belonging associated to it that we all carry within us.

Where and what is a home? How do we associate with the idea of home through our own experiences? How does this city become our home? In this project, the artist explores the many experiences of migration and the human need to belong and settle. The participants were invited to a brick kiln in Navi Mumbai to transfer their drawings on the raw bricks which were baked later, thus having their drawings or writings permanently on it.

Juhu Beach

Your Consumption Has Increased | Hema Upadhyay



The artist collected tales from city dwellers in the form of sound verses. Their stories were then compiled in an archive of narratives on how living spaces have been transformed over time, how aspects of Mumbai have become but a fragment of one's memory. Taken from different areas in the city, the records were broadcasted in Juhu beach, where passers-by were invited to tell their own memories and stories...In this way, the artist intermingled the past and the present, private with the public in a poetic dance on the shores of the beach

Andheri West, Juhu Junction In/Out | Justin Ponmany



in / out brings to the streets a dummy in a comical allusion to the 'old man'. Ponmany will parade the city, carrying with him a prototype of a drifter. And just like a puppet, his character will do regular daily chores: read the paper, drink *chai*, sell his wares, chat with the other vendors, wash clothes..

By mimicking the behavior and actions of actual beings that live on the periphery of this city, Ponmany positions his protagonist as a city hero, a liberal recluse with no strings attached living in a wandering condition, on the fringe of society and unaffected by social rules and conventions. The work also interrogates the emotional ties and attachments people place on notions of home and space.



Azaad Maidan
Bulldozer Yatra | Mansi Bhatt



Seated within a bull-dozer, Mansi Bhatt disguised herself and began her journey from Borivali towards Azad Maidan in South Mumbai, in a symbolic journey from her private residence to a public space known for its political function in the city. On the way, she stopped at selected locations that have been redeveloped and handed out an ironic certificate awarding the developers for the job done. Her *bulldozer yatra* then ended at its final destination, from where she dug a patch of earth. Placing herself in the same spot, she invited passers-by to cover her with soil, to symbolically return inside the earth womb.



Sanjay Gandhi National Park
HomeLand | Pradeep L. Mishra



After a nature trail led by BNHS, a workshop with students from different schools of the city was held with the artist, in which participants were asked to build their own idea of home with materials available in the park.

Similarly, after the workshop the artist built his own idea of home with the students' help: after digging a round, tomb-like hole on the ground, Mishra filled it with rose petals, a symbol of love and blood.

The use of these elements represent the inner relationship binding humans and nature, in the endless cycle of life and transformation.

Kandiwali West

Walking the Jungle | Prajakta Potnis



The artist drew white-sand made lines indicating areas in the city where public and private, individual and collective use of space overlaps and clashes.

Mapping out how much of public space is appropriated, the work also questioned developmental projects by urban planning bodies of the city.

By placing a robot-toy in the demarcated areas, Potnis showed how people of Mumbai are so used to zigzagging on the streets, where footpaths are converted for commercial use leaving narrow roads for people, cars and animals.



Colaba - Radio Club
Bombay Dowry | Tushar Joag



Joag replicated a matrimonial procession on Mumbai's streets, as a reference to the historical inception of the city – Bombay was gifted by the Portuguese as dowry and subsequently leased to the East India Company.

The work is an appropriation that illustrates how today land is still gifted away by charity acts that benefit only the upper classes and further marginalizes the bulk of the city.

In the procession from Gateway of India to Radio Club, one square foot of soil from different localities of Mumbai with the price tags of the prevailing property rates were carried as dowry. Joag incorporates popular festivities and rituals into his performance as a way to mask the political potency of his works.

Andheri West | Kamdhenu Mall
How to Milk the Holy Cow | Uday Shanbhag



Taking inspiration from the recent case of the Kamdhenu commercial centre in Andheri, built on an area initially meant for recreational use, Shanbhag performed the milking of a holy cow.

By juxtaposing a traditional icon to a contemporary construction, the project intends to be an explicit yet ironic critique to the many cases of land misuse regularly appearing on local press.

The project equally points out the distance existing between shared values and individuals' interests.



Metro - St. Xavier's College
Right to Open Spaces | Vijay Sekhon



Right to Open Space was a collaborative project between artist Vijay Sekhon and the students from St. Xavier's college.

It took the shape of a street intervention exploring the notions of open space and its social, economic, political, and historical implications.

The performance was an attempt to spark off a public campaign to re-claim lost places and commented on how land previously allocated for open spaces has been misappropriated. At a different level, the project was also an occasion for the students participating to find a place in the open for themselves, giving voice to their inner thoughts and desires.

Workshops and Educational activities



- ⦿ *St. Xavier's College* - Introduction to street theatre techniques (Vijay Sekhon & Manjul Bharadwaj, Experimental Theatre Foundation);
- ⦿ *Salaam Baalak Trust* - Nature trail at the Sanjay Gandhi National Park and workshop by Pradeep Mishra where students used the natural materials from the Park to make their dream homes;
- ⦿ *Rachana Sansad & Thane College of Art* - Workshop by Anupam Singh during which students were were asked to draw their notion of home on to bricks. Each brick was then baked and will be used to help build a classroom of a governmental school in Navi Mumbai
- ⦿ *Social Communications Media, Sophia Polytechnic* - Lecture on history of public art, [en]counters and land(of)mine



Trespassers Only - April 2012



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Trespassers Only is a shifting of the city, where the unnoticed peripheries of Mumbai become the new centre, provoking new ways to imagine our living and lived spaces. Migration, belonging, identity, dislocation, possession cram together as they clash, devour, rot but also negotiate, engage and blossom into an opening of new discourses.

Trespassers Only - April 2012



Trespassers Only - April 2012



Trespassers Only - April 2012



Neo-Monster - April 2012 | Vibha Galhotra



Neo-Monster is a travelling project exploring how environmental and urban planning policies affect our cities and daily lives.

Brought to Carter Rd. promenade and Phoenix Mills in Mumbai, Neo-Monster is a gigantic balloon in the shape of a earth moving machine.

The size of the work and its shiny gold finishing turn the machine into a playful yet threatening toy, a metaphor of how irresponsible development can negatively affect our surroundings.

Along with the balloon, a video portraying the destruction of a field records the regression of the color scale, from green to grey, similar to the 'progression' of our developing cities.



Neo-Monster - April 2012 | Vibha Galhotra



Neo-Monster - April 2012 | Vibha Galhotra





thank you

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