

S T I L L

M O V I N G

I M A G E

looking towards the next... Kiran Subbaiah discontent. This discontent drives desire to create further excess. Kiran Subbaiah frames his photographs in the series 'Doing Without' (2003) as a cyclic paradox in which objects have a heightened presence by their very absence. Absence gives texture to the object and provides a frame for thinking about how the form of our lives is provided through an investment in things. Subbaiah performs the power of deliberate action even in the face of absence and its capture becomes a moment of heightened possibility.

The opposite of excess is lack and society provides a framework within which each individual attempts to negotiate a balance. Space has become a precious thing in cramped modern metropolis' and as we flip open the shutters of Baptist Coelho's photograph 'Neighbour 2' (2007) we are assaulted by the lack of visual breathing space. The private indoors is suffused with the crowded outdoors and Baptist's photograph captures the suffocation of rampant building activity, the greedy desire of 'development'. *Squashed in we crave privacy...we shut the world out and peek through our shutters with suspicion...*

Tushar Joag's three-part video 'Jataka Trilogy' (2004) combines the techniques of animation, performance, brief sketches or vignettes to initiate narratives on the apathy of the rich and middle-class in India towards the poor, the disabled, the depressed and lonely who equally inhabit the city-space. This apathy accompanies the euphoric pride of economic growth and the country's participation in international trade and political relations. In an honest formulation of this duality, Chakravarthi Ram Prasad wrote in 2007:

BAPTIST COELHO

TITLE:
NEIGHBOUR #2
(MUMBAI- MALAD WEST)

MEDIUM:
ALUMINIUM, GLASS
& DIGITAL C PRINT
ON ARCHIVAL PAPER

2008

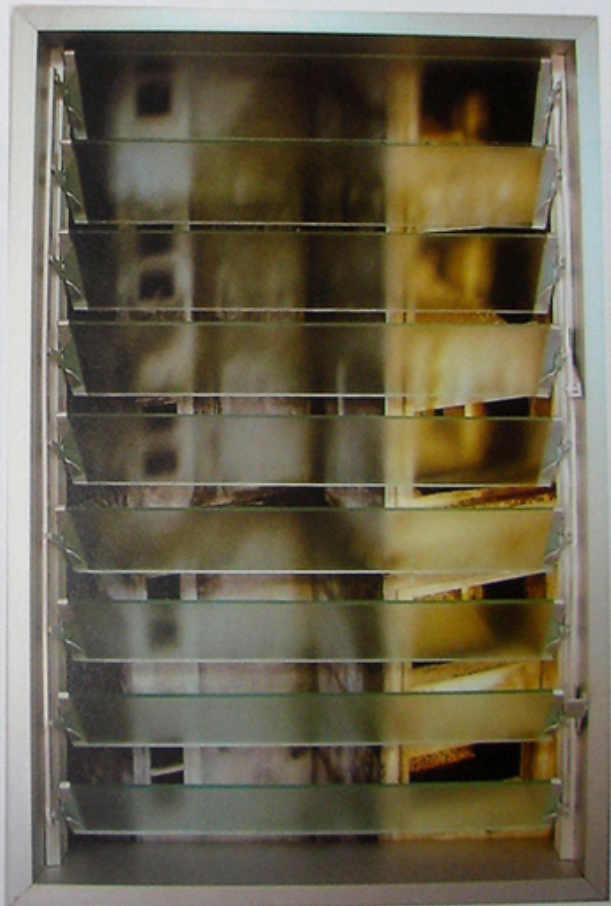
SIZE:
24.4" x 35.6" x 5.1"

Mumbai (Bombay) is the most densely populated city in India, with over eighteen million people living and working within a small stretch of land. This growing metropolis has witnessed many urban changes which have physically transformed this overgrown island. As a "Mumbaite", the perception of *Cityscape* and its effect on people are important issues to explore. We are all connected to each other and as Mumbai continues to develop, our very nature of how we coexist is challenged. While reflecting on *Cityscape*, the following works: *View*, 2005-07; *Neighbour*, 2007 and *Clang-Bang Clang-Bang*, 2007 were created to explore how we respond to and define ourselves through public and private space.

The fine line between public and private within the *Cityscape* is brought into focus by the series *Neighbour*, 2007. The viewer looks out onto the ever-changing city from his own private space and is invited to explore further by manipulating the shutters. As the louvers open, this private space turns into an uncomfortable public one. In Mumbai, this experience becomes common; where the lack of space and unplanned construction forces us to live closer together. Our window view often converts into our neighbour's living, private space; where public and private becomes undefined. In this large urban city, the view of open space, where personal space is still private, becomes a precious commodity for the privileged few.

This work in progress will be photographed in various neighbourhoods around the world. Through juxtaposing these images, I reflect on this growing concern of public and private space within our developing urbanized spaces.

STILLS



1977

BAPTIST COELHO

Baptist Coelho (b. 1977) studied at L. S. Raheja School of Art, Mumbai and the Birmingham Institute of Art & Design (BIAD), University of Central England, UK. His recent solo presentation was 'air(edge)air', BIAD Gallery, UK (2006).

His group shows include 'Click! Contemporary Photography in India', Vadehra Art Gallery, New Delhi and Grosvenor Vadehra, London, UK (2008); 'Urban Changes', curated by Andrea Kuenzig, travelling exhibition to India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka (2007-2008); 'Autoportraits - Queering The Lens', curated by Sunil Gupta, The Attic, New Delhi (2007) and 'The Peace Project', curated by Judy Hussie Taylor, Museum of Contemporary Art, Denver, Colorado (2007).

Baptist was awarded the 'Promising Artist Award' by ART India and the Visual Arts Gallery (India Habitat Centre), India (2007) and the 'Johnson Prize Fund' by BIAD, UK (2006). His community art projects include 'Paper Airplane Project', Mumbai (2008); 'You Can Reuse this Envelope Again' (2008) and 'Mumbai-Berlin Public Art', conducted by Open Circle, Mumbai and Skulpturenpark Berlin-Zentrum, Berlin (2007).

Baptist lives and works in Mumbai.

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