

**Avid Learning x Art Musings Gallery present the third episode of the Beyond Contemporary Art Series – BCA#3 with a panel discussion on the dynamic and evolving landscape of identity politics and art**

**For Immediate Release**

Identity as a construct is not a stable, constant, inherited social fact, but rather, is fluidly formed, varying with the imaginative and political agency of the individual – In relation to species, race, subjectivity, gender, ethnicity, geographical and cultural location. Contemporary identity, especially in Indian art is transitive and complex.

New generations of Indian artists are interrogating the formation of identity through strategies such as co-creativity and personal histories, resistance to marginalisation, and practices that move beyond mythologizing and stereotypes. Many contemporary artists employ modes ranging from performativity to abstraction, to probe issues of selfhood in the context of culture and globalization, the role of participatory audiences in the creation of meaning, activism and aesthetics and the digital and the mediation of identity.

**Art Musings Gallery** and **Avid Learning** present **BCA#3: Art and Identity in an Age of Transitions**, a panel discussion that will deconstruct issues of individuality in art in this post-Enlightenment and Capitalocene epoch.

Join *Multidisciplinary Artist Raghava KK* and *Artist Shilo Shiv Suleman* in conversation with *Curator, Poet and Cultural Theorist Ranjit Hoskote*.

*The description of the discussion is as below:*

These practitioners, along with the curator of the show, will investigate identity formation and expression in an era of post-identity politics. Through exploring their unique practices, they will speak about finding new meanings of self in conjunction with changing times. How do these artists deal with the intersection of multiple understandings of identity – globalization, social class, gender, hybrid subjectivity – across lines of species (human/ animal/ plant) and levels of consciousness (human/ machine: artificial intelligence), myth and folklore and anthropology.

These speakers will explore larger questions that animate the art world, both in India and globally. How do we as practitioners, curators or viewers think of art beyond cultural identity? How do both artists explore identity in the digital age in which culture is largely mediated by the Internet? What is the relation of objects to their maker, and how do they contribute to the development of selfhood? How are these artists challenging the (arguably hegemonic, western) notion of universality in art? How do curators today allow for self-determination? How do we re-address and reassess terms of engagement for how artists are perceived and how their art functions? How do we parse and unpack identity; what nuances and complexities attend its articulation today; how is it expressed materially and technically, in what contexts and through what media?

*Read on for more about this unique Series of Discussions:*

This talk is the third episode of the third iteration of Avid Learning's **Beyond Contemporary Art Series. BCA#3** is a series of discussions that will examine art making in today's world of exploding media boundaries, climate change, political upheaval, and scientific and technological innovation.

The series continues to extend the invitation to respond to new developments and debates, revolutions and trends, preoccupations and passions of the globalized art world and to reconsider the very fundamental role of art in the world we live in.

Previous iterations of the series probed the condition of the contemporary art through the lens of the Curator, Institution, Artist and Viewer and also looked at Art as Activism, Art and Technology, Art Education and Audience Building.

**Beyond Contemporary Art # 3** addresses topics like Art's evolution into a hybrid practice, Art as a political tool in the age of social media and information proliferation, the role of the artist as environmental activist and the evolving aspects of individuality and identity politics in visual art.

The third edition is presented in conjunction with Art Musings Gallery's ongoing year-long exhibition **The 20<sup>th</sup>** – curated by Ranjit Hoskote – that celebrates two decades of the gallery. Art Musings is one of the earliest galleries to have been established in South Mumbai's vibrant, culturally rich Colaba area. (*Rotating Exhibits will be on view between March – December 2019*).


Join us for an absorbing panel that will examine the ever-changing landscape of identity politics in art in the context of a world in transition and the burgeoning digital age!


**Where:** 1, Admiralty Building, Colaba Cross Lane, opp. to The Mehta International Eye Hospital, Mumbai

**When:** Wednesday, 9<sup>th</sup> October 2019 | 6:00 PM – 6:30 PM – Registrations | 6:30 PM – 8:00 PM – Discussion

**RSVP:** [www.avidlearning.in/](http://www.avidlearning.in/) ; prior registration required

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ART MUSINGS **AVID**  
LEARNING  
An ESSAR Initiative



**BEYOND  
CONTEMPORARY  
ART SERIES**

Convened by **Ranjit Hoskote**

#3





Image Credit: Maite Deltell, Nilofer Suleman and Paresh Maity

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### Art and Identity in an Age of Transitions

**Art Musings Gallery** and **Avid Learning** present a panel discussion that will deconstruct issues of individuality in art in this post-Enlightenment and Capitalocene epoch. *Multidisciplinary Artist Raghava KK* and *Artist Shilo Shiv Suleman* will be in conversation with *Curator, Poet and Cultural Theorist Ranjit Hoskote*. This talk is the third episode of the third iteration of Avid Learning's Beyond Contemporary Art Series. BCA#3 is a series of discussions that will examine art making in today's world of exploding media boundaries, climate change, political upheaval, and scientific and technological innovation. The third edition is presented in conjunction with Art Musings Gallery's ongoing year-long exhibition *The 20<sup>th</sup>* - curated by Ranjit Hoskote - that celebrates two decades of the gallery. Join us for an absorbing panel that will examine the ever-changing landscape of identity politics in art in the context of a world in transition and the burgeoning digital age!

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## About the Speakers

Named by CNN as one of the 10 most remarkable people in 2010, **Raghava KK** is a multidisciplinary artist and entrepreneur working at the intersection of art, science, technology, education and entrepreneurship. Raghava KK's art explores transcendence for the digital anthropocene without sacrificing the particular. Aside from working with traditional forms (painting, installation and performance) Raghava's art practice involves inventing media to express post-human contemporary realities. His painting exhibitions, instead of asserting identity, disturb the limits of the social and the perceptual self through the friction between found digital elements. His neuro-feedback artworks like *MonaLisa 2.0* and his visual discovery engine *Must#*, anchor digital algorithms in physical space and in the specific locus of the viewer's body and her emotions. His iPad art book *Pop-it*, launched at TED Global in 2011, which presents children with multiple perspectives on the concept of the ideal family, won several awards,

including a Best of 2011 award from Kirkus. Raghava's talk on visioning for 200 years was launched at TED. He has conducted talks and workshops for visionaries such as Tom Hanks, Jeff Bezos, Oprah Winfrey to think about the role of creativity in the future. Raghava was inducted into the National Geographic Society in 2013 as an Explorer for pushing the boundaries of scientific exploration through art. Artistic creativity for him is a deeply decentred enterprise shared with the users of the artwork, which is evident in his numerous collaborations with other artists, technologists, corporations, educationists, scientists, academia. His lectures, including 5 TED talks, are known for inspiring his audiences to expand their socially and psychologically settled selves using art. Raghava has been a keynote speaker at top conferences including Wired, Google, DLD, TIE, TED, Cities Summit, Israel, YPO, UN, NOVUS, etc. In 2019, Raghava was invited to speak at the UN headquarters on the occasion of man landing on the moon to present a vision for the future of art and culture. The popular Netflix show 'The Creative Indians' dedicated an episode on his art and life. Solo exhibitions with Art Musings include *Sublime Machines*, 2018; *Ridiculous Copycats*, 2015; *That's All Folks*, 2013; *Exquisite Cadaver*, 2011; *Brooklyn Bound R-Train*, 2009/10 and *Drawn and Quartered*, 2008. He has also shown with Art Musings in several editions of the India Art Fair, New Delhi. The artist lives and works in Woodstock, NY and Bangalore, India.

**Shilo Shiv Suleman** (born Bengaluru, 1989) is an artist whose work is sustained by commitments to poetry, technology and social justice. Suleman's art combines magical realism, technology and social justice. She articulates her work across several platforms, including exhibitions, festivals and conferences. Shilo is the founder-director of the Fearless Collective, a movement that aims to replace fear with love in public space. She has worked with communities across the world by facilitating and leading public art interventions, for instance, with indigenous communities in Brazil, displaced and migrant communities in Beirut, queer activists in South Africa, and transgender activists in Pakistan. She has created large-scale installations for The Burning Man Festival and apps that respond to human brainwaves, which have been featured on TED. As an INK fellow, her work became known when her talk made it to TED.com, and got over a million views in 2012. She was chosen as one of three pioneering Indian women at TED Global, and has spoken at conferences like WIRED, DLD in London and Munich. More recently, she founded a collective of over 400 artists in India using community art to protest gender violence for which she was featured in a host of documentaries including Rebel Music by MTV. Awards include the Femina 'Woman of Worth', the New India Express 'Devi Awards in 2015 and the Future books Digital Innovation in London. In 2014, Shilo received several grants and residencies – including two honorarium grants from Burning Man for the interactive art installations: Pulse & Bloom, and Grove – for her collaborations with a neuroscientist, aimed at creating art that interacts with human brainwaves and other biofeedback sensors. These biofeedback installations have brought together artists, architects, entrepreneurs, builders and neurotechnologists, and have been featured on international media including BBC, Rolling Stone, MSNBC, Tech Crunch, The Guardian and WIRED, and have been exhibited at the Southbank Centre, London. Shilo's solo exhibitions include '*Beloved*' (2015) with Art Musings. Shilo also showcased her work at the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Art Musings, where she showcased a body of work in various medium including wood cut, embroidery, painting and sculpture.

**Ranjit Hoskote** has been acclaimed as a seminal contributor to Indian art criticism and curatorial practice, and is also a leading Anglophone Indian poet. He is the author of more than 30 books, including *Vanishing Acts: New & Selected Poems 1985-2005* (Penguin 2006), *Central Time* (Penguin/ Viking 2014), and *Jonahwhale* (Penguin/ Hamish Hamilton 2018); and the monographs *Zinny & Maidagan: Compartment/ Das Abteil* (Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt/ Walther König 2010) and *Atul Dodiya* (Prestel 2014). Hoskote curated India's first-ever national pavilion at the Venice Biennale (2011). He co-curated the 7th Gwangju Biennale with Okwui Enwezor and Hyunjin Kim (2008). He was co-convenor, with Maria Hlavajova, Kathrin Rhomberg and Boris Groys, of the exhibition-conference platform *Documents, Constellations, Prospects* (Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin, 2013). He co-curated, with Rahul Mehrotra and Kaiwan Mehta, the exhibition-conference platform *The State of Architecture: Practices and Processes in India* (National Gallery of Modern Art, Bombay, 2016).

## About Partners

**Art Musings** is one of the earliest galleries to have been established in South Mumbai's vibrant and culturally rich Colaba area. Founded in 1999, well before the emergence of the area's 'gallery district', Art Musings has been a trailblazer both in terms of the artists it represents and the exhibitions it has organised both in its own space and at such major venues as the city's Jehangir Art Gallery. Over the years, Art Musings has nurtured a spectrum of artistic practices, working across generations and choices of medium and vocabulary. It has presented the work of such legendary Indian modernists as SH Raza, MF Husain, FN Souza, KG Subramanyan, Ram Kumar and Satish Gujral, all members of the first generation of post-colonial Indian artists. The gallery has also enjoyed a long-term relationship of collegiality with stellar practitioners of distinctive approaches such as Anjolie Ela Menon, Sakti Burman, Baiju Parthan, Paresh Maity and Jayasri Burman. Art Musings is also proud to be associated with an artist renowned in the domain of global contemporary art, Nalini Malani. Among the younger artists with whom

the gallery works are Raghava KK, Shilo Shiv Suleman, Smriti Dixit, Gopikrishna, Maya Burman, Ajay Dhandre and Nilofer Suleman, their trajectories encompassing many diverse directions on the compass of contemporary art. In 2017 Art Musings exhibited the works of Sakti Burman in a retrospective at the esteemed National Gallery of Modern Art in Mumbai, entitled 'In the Presence of Another Sky' featuring over 300 works from the artist's illustrious career, curated by Ranjit Hoskote. In 2006, Art Musings emphasized its commitment to sustaining the knowledge infrastructure of the Indian art scene by inaugurating its publishing initiative, Afterimage, which has for over a decade published a series of high-quality art-historical monographs that are extensively researched, elegantly written and beautifully produced. These include Sakti Burman: In the Presence of another Sky; SH Raza: Nirantar; SH Raza: Vistaar; Maité Delteil: Enchanted; Baiju Parthan: A User's Manual, and Baiju Parthan: Re-set. It is the endeavour of the gallery to take the works of the artists it represents to a viewership and a collector base that is spread across Asia, Europe and North America. The gallery recently celebrated their 20th anniversary in February 2019 with an exhibition at the iconic Jehangir Art Gallery featuring works of an inter-generational ensemble of 20 artists who have enjoyed a continuing association with Art Musings.

**Avid Learning**, a public programming platform and cultural arm of the Essar Group, has conducted over 1100 programs and connected with more than 130,000 individuals since its inception in 2009. Driven by the belief that Learning Never Stops, AVID's multiple formats like Workshops, Panel Discussions, Gallery Walkthroughs, and Festival Platforms create a dynamic and interactive atmosphere that stimulates intellectual and creative growth across the fields of Culture & Heritage, Literature, Art and Innovation. Facebook: [www.facebook.com/Avidlearning](http://www.facebook.com/Avidlearning); Twitter: [www.twitter.com/Avidlearning](http://www.twitter.com/Avidlearning); Instagram: @avidlearning

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