



Elke Schäfer

METAPHORIC ALLEGORIES

Ratnadeep Adivrekar's work is not a reverence to media, styles, or art discussions, but it seeks to explore the very relationship between painting and reality

Ratnadeep Adivrekar's first solo exhibition in Germany is an insightful opportunity for seeing the unique art scene from Asia. After a host of several artists from the region which is often dominated by the Chinese contemporary scene, and which recurrently depicts constraints that come from political structures; with an artist coming from India, which has a rich cultural history, art that often carries the weight of tradition is

expected. But one can see several changes. Sometimes the change may be noticeable on a large scale, but often it is very localised.

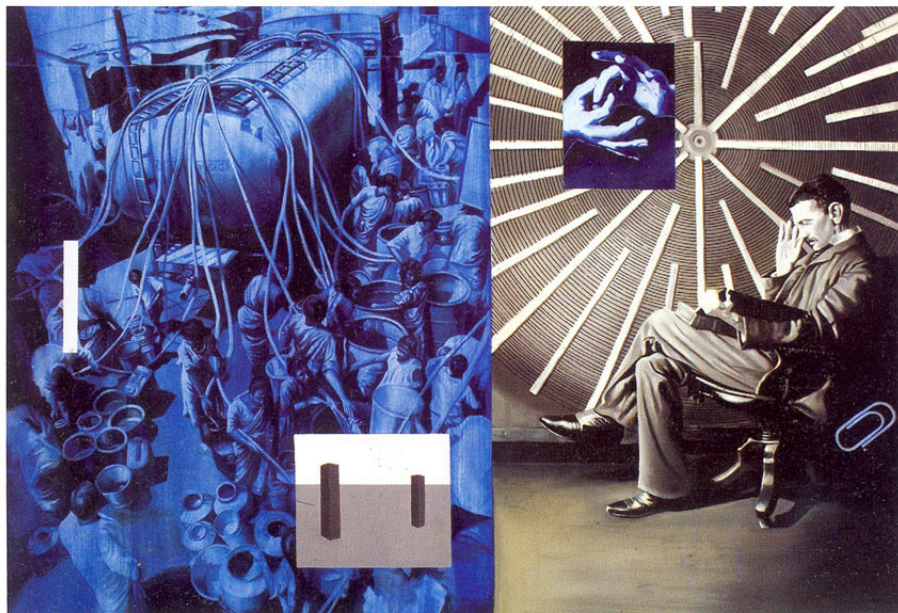
A graduate from the colonial established Sir J.J. School of Arts in Mumbai, Ratnadeep's work is based on

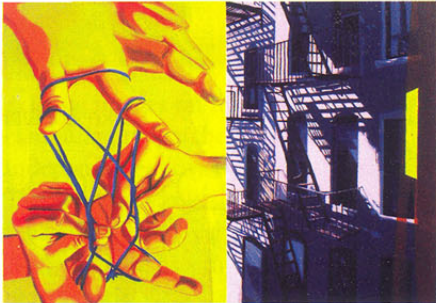
Ratnadeep Adivrekar,
Allegories of Talking Road 1,
Oil On Canvas,
48 X 68 Inches, 2010

concepts of time, journeys, cities and people. Upon a dialogue with the artist he explains that he especially enjoys working with found photographic images and other public historical records, renewing the fact that contemporary art can never be delimited by any single historical reading.

Ratnadeep agrees that as a student he was inspired by German Neo-expressionist artists like Sigmar Polke and it is evident in his work. In the composition, all the methods of image generation from photography, film, and painting, as well as painterly reproduction techniques are used; his painterly technique uses all the artifice of art history: the specific styles of Vladimir Tatlin's photomontage, Marcel Duchamp's colors, and surreal ideas of Max Ernst.

The artist was not concerned about locking down while his film-like, moving and compartmentalised images resemble the works of Man Ray interpretation with rigid symbolism. Sometimes it is compelling whether we as viewers require a detailed understanding of the particular iconography before fully grasping it, but again they are visually entralling; the meaning ascribed to any piece of art





Ratnadeep Adivrekar,
Allegories of talking road 2,
Oil on Canvas,
48 X 68 Inches, 2010

rests in the chemistry between the piece and the viewer.

Ratnadeep's skillful technique is broadly evident in his latest series 'Allegories of Talking Road' exhibited at Galerie Sylvia Bernhardt. Let us turn to an analysis of the general compositional characteristics of the current suite of artworks. What is striking is that in this interesting scheme of interaction and exchange between visual codes as "signs" and "referents", not surprisingly, though many of his paintings were made up of several found images, his technical ability to exert control over proportion provides a sense of balance to his pleasant images.

Although the artist uses a highly personal iconography, a metaphor is like a mental encounter; it can produce a flash of insight. On further discussions with Ratnadeep there were more revelations in the work like in the work "Allegories of Talking Road 1"; some viewers may identify the portrait of the famous Nikola Tesla, with Ruđer Bošković's book *Theoria Philosophiae Naturalis*, sitting in front of the spiral coil of his high-frequency transformer. Tesla demonstrated "the transmission of electrical energy without wires" that depends upon electrical conductivity in 1891. The box on the right side of the work has the image of the word

"connection" in sign language. The critically growing population of a metropolis like Mumbai has irreversible changes in the landscape, while a versatile artist like Ratnadeep does not always treat his subjects with pure cynicism. On the left is typical truck seen in some parts of Mumbai, which supplies water. This very dilemma of the painting itself brings together two contrasting qualities - the transparent and the opaque, that which admits light and that which excludes light. On the whole, both parts of the works deal with transfers of energy. Transfer occurs when past learning influences the acquisition of new learning. Energy then is not simply the stored ability to do work, but change itself.

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While Ratnadeep Adivrekar's paintings are representational, they still manage to downplay the discussions of autonomy, representational function, or abstraction in painting that had been raised in the modern era. Since they make use of all the means of the medium without representing them, they have left behind them the circling around the issues of its potentialities. Therefore, his work is not a reverence to media, styles, or art discussions, but creates a new relationship between painting and reality, one that has to be determined anew, and whose point of reference is the viewer's own experience.

In this sense, Ratnadeep's paintings pay tribute to the quality that images can offer. Their "virtuosity," however is very discreet, keeping the paintings themselves and their contents in a delicate balance; in our existence, Bollywood, Michaelangelo and Warhol are all relevant and of equal value.

Ratnadeep Adivrekar's solo exhibition Allegories of Talking Road was shown at Galerie Sylvia Bernhardt, Wiesbaden in October 2010.

Ratnadeep Adivrekar,
Allegories of Talking Road
Continuum of facts 1,
Oil On Canvas,
33 X 33 x 68 Inches, 2010

