

ARTIST STATEMENT :

I seek to erode the notion of a self-contained object.

My works exhibit unusual behaviour through a profound transformation of material and by activating their environment unexpectedly. I make responsive entities : toys, tools, devices and installations - which are incomplete without human presence. They remain unfulfilled without human participation.

To this end, I discover, access and restructure fundamental information that is held in the material, phenomenon or situation at hand - glass, spices, the internet, emergent technologies, human movement.

... A wearable, reflective, glass glove comes to life in the moment of a handshake...

...A flexible glass drape collects and disperses one's reflection on its surface with every movement,

... My porous glass invention looks to the human hand to cultivate plants on its charred, sterile surface....

In ways such as these, I develop new ways of thinking about and experiencing our surroundings. I am interested not in what is, but what can be.

STATEMENT ABOUT THIS BODY OF WORK :

The reflective glass works I make are inspired by a small part of architectural history of the Indian subcontinent in the 17th century : the Sheesh Mahal.

In these palaces of mirrors, convex mirrored glass mosaics encrust chamber walls and ceiling in mesmerizing intricate patterns. Each mirror shard acts as a particle contributing to the larger architecture. The effect is cumulative, not fragmentary : whereas modern, flat pieces of mirror dissolve an image by fracturing it, the Sheesh Mahal's convex mirrors miniaturize and multiply a self-image, causing a cascading effect of a person's movement in the space.

The Sheesh Mahal became obsolete with the decline of Mughal rule and the coming of the British era in Indian history due to lack of patrons who would support the labor-intensive process of manufacture. Furthermore, the nomadic community who practiced the craft in contemporary times was disbanded by the Gujarat earthquakes and since then, has no way to sustain the craft. As the history of human vision grew complex with new inventions and devices, the seemingly simple phenomenon of the Sheesh Mahal has disappeared into oblivion, to be witnessed today only in the walls of monuments, ruins. It seems as though the glorious tradition is now dust lying in a corner.

My attempts explore the question follows :

How can I make the obsolete relevant to the here and now ?

The "here and now" is not merely my physical location, but what I see as a definitive condition or pattern of existence today: a sense of simultaneity caused by displacement. We traverse boundaries - geographic, cultural and temporal - constantly. The here-and-now no longer begs a choice between here or there, now or then, one or the other. It is a portable world of information - the simultaneity of here and there, now and then, one and the other.

This simultaneity and multiplicity are reflected in my vocabulary of glass mirror. I create flexible glass surfaces, composed of convex mirrors and elastic substrates. The results are performative, mobile, interactive and self-eroding with time and touch.