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06

Manish Pushkale

TO WHOM THE BIRD SHOULD SPEAK?

13 April to 28 August 2024



ASIAN ART MUSEUM • NICE ARÉNAS • FREE ENTRANCE



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DES ALPES-MARITIMES

Manish Pushkale

TO WHOM THE BIRD SHOULD SPEAK?

13 April to 28 August 2024

In partnership with



With the support of



An original exhibition tour between Paris and Nice

Created for the Guimet - National Museum of Asian Arts and designed for two venues, Manish Pushkale's work was exposed in Paris from 18 October 2023 to 4 March 2024.

The artist has reworked the presentation of his monumental installation, imagining an original route through the Buddhist statuary in the Asian Art Departmental Museum's rotunda.



Manish Pushkale (born in 1973) is an autodidact artist who turned to artistic creation after studying geology and archaeology. He joined the Bharat Bhavan, a multidisciplinary arts centre in Bhopal in the state of Madhya Pradesh and it is in the fertile and creative atmosphere of this Indian artistic and intellectual melting pot that he honed his style and sensibility. His serene and contemplative canvases explore the ebb and flow of civilisation and its underlying spirituality through themes such as genesis, progress, and change. Resolutely oriented towards abstraction, he has been influenced by the great masters of Indian painting, such as Sayed Haider Raza (1922-2016). He is a member of the Raza Foundation in New Delhi, where he lives and works as an independent artist. Manish Pushkale exhibits in India and around the world, in group and solo shows.

Manish Pushkale in front of the installation *To Whom the Bird Should Speak?*
© Courtesy of Ākār Prakār Galery and the artist, 2024.

To Whom the Bird Should Speak? is a monumental, delicate, and poetic installation about the inexorable disappearance of indigenous cultures in India.

Created by the Indian artist at the invitation of the Guimet Museum in Paris and conceived in concert for the Asian Art Departmental Museum in Nice, the installation will be on display in the rotunda from 13 April to 28 August 2024. It tells the story of the loss of the Aka-Bo language, the language of the Bo tribe and one of the ten languages spoken in the Andaman Islands. The language, also known as “language of the birds”, died out in January 2010 with Boa Sr., its last speaker.

Whether caused by natural disasters, the impact of tourism or globalisation, the vanishing of the indigenous ethnic groups of the Andaman archipelago takes the form, in Manish Pushkale’s work, of a cocoon into which we enter as if into a forgotten and mysterious sanctuary. The artist has transposed the “Song of the birds” visually and abstractly into a maze of screens three metres high and nineteen metres long. Visitors are invited to wander through this labyrinthine architecture and immersive setting.



To Whom the Bird Should Speak?, gouache, watercolour, and various materials on paper © Courtesy of Ākār Prakār Gallery and the artist, 2024.

The paper, which Manish Pushkale makes himself, is organic, irregular, battered, repaired, perforated, covered in layers and with cracks, black and red in colour from basalt and ochre, covered in mineral pigments taken from the different geological strata of the archipelago. A grid, punctuated by lines, bubbles, and spots, creates the imaginary geographical structure of a distant and forgotten civilisation. A succession of regularly arranged black and white dots evokes binary language or musical notes. Large closed or open lines symbolise the hesitations of the native populations of the Andaman Islands: should they open to the world or close in on themselves?

Metaphorically replacing the absent voice of Boa Sr., hidden birds are scattered throughout the work and make their songs heard. On the outside, a nest of paper twigs protects two eggs, symbols of the Bo tribe's hope of rebirth or reincarnation.



Manish Pushkale in front of the installation *To Whom the Bird should speak?*,
© Courtesy of Ākār Prakār Galery and the artist, 2024.

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Manish Pushkale in front of the installation
To Whom the Bird Should Speak? © Courtesy of
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To Whom the Bird Should Speak?, gouache,
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Manish Pushkale in front of the installation *To
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Detail of the Installation *To Whom the Bird Should Speak?*, gouache, watercolour, and various materials on paper © Courtesy of Ākār Prakār Gallery and the artist, 2024.



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Hours & Admission :

From September 1st to June 30th : from 10 am to 5 pm
From July 1st to August 31th : from 10 am to 6 pm
The museum welcomes the public every day except
on Tuesdays and May 1st.