

# I Rescued Speed



**Altogether**  
PARIBARTANA MOHANTY

# I Rescued Speed Altogether

PARIBARTANA MOHANTY

SHRINE EMPIRE

21 August - 20 September 2025



## **I rescued speed altogether**

The words of Timeme, stayed with me for some time: “I rescued speed altogether.” His joy in learning through repetition, stumbling, and the eventual pride in achieving to control his bicycle echoed my own experience as an artist. Each brushstroke feels like a pedal stroke—small, deliberate gestures that build over years of seeing and witnessing. For me, painting is an attempt to slow down destruction, to resist the relentless force of bulldozers. A burgeoning desire to rescue speed from erasure. For Timeme, however, bulldozers remain a delight, through Bob the Builder.

I began painting the demolition of the Hall of Nations at Pragati Maidan around 2015–16, when news also broke of the Kathputli Colony demolition. Located in West Delhi, the colony had been home to hundreds of traditional performers: magicians, puppeteers, snake charmers, acrobats, singers, dancers, and healers. Its complex history of rehabilitation in the 1970s ended in erasure by 2017, displacing these communities from the city center to its margins. The event was not only physical but also a psycho-geographic erasure of marginalized artists’ communities from Delhi’s aspirational fabric.

This exhibition brings together eight years of work—twelve large paintings and three moving-image pieces—developed through repeated site visits, documentation, and performances. Using impressionist and pointillist techniques that often verge into digital pixelation and glitch, I try to capture the layered violence and rapid transformation of the demolition site within such a short period.

Slowness, within this accelerated change, becomes paradoxically an act of great speed. The only way I could contend with it was through the slow process of painting, which I learned from the pointillists. My canvases attempt to embody gestures of urgency, aggression, and testimony, while in my videos I use my bare body as an instrument, performing indoor and outdoor spaces in Delhi (Yamuna and East Delhi where my first house-studio was located) – navigating an obsessive aesthetic (or spectacle) of demolition that I could neither escape nor resist, only surrender to, and participate in this absurd act of destruction. My work is persistently driven by a desire to remain with the dust and the ruin, maybe to register what remains ungrievable.

Aesthetically, and in terms of visual language, this marks a departure from my earlier painting practice. This series traces how demolition reshapes landscapes, environments, and the public psyche: I paint ruins that resemble archaeological digs, a cricket field, graveyards, battlefields, landfills, playgrounds, farmlands, and of course construction sites, where the dust settles on distant leaves and debris infiltrates our lungs, embedding itself into our living bodies. Demolition, for me, is not only architectural—it is biological, psychological, and environmental. Having lived and worked in Delhi for the past 21 years, I still ask myself: what does it mean to inhabit this hyper-political and polluted city, and wonder how people survive within its extractive, exclusionary infrastructures? These six by eight feet oil paintings can be framed and perceived within the tradition of landscape painting, yet they also interrogate the very idea or validity of landscape in an urban context.

With biting irony, I, along with others who are able to, witness and observe how popular media celebrates demolition spectacles, framing politicians as “Bulldozer Baba” and unconstitutional destruction as “Bulldozer Justice”—until the machine arrives at doors of the safeguarded majoritarian. The works reveal the rhetoric of “redevelopment” and “smart cities” under the ruling regime. These so-called ‘projects,’ ‘progresses,’ and ‘processes’ have systematically erased human settlements across India, punishing the public, particularly Dalits, Muslims, and Adivasis.

Through painting and performing, I dwell and I resist. My ruins, my dust, and my cracks call for a collective political presence.

*Paribartana Mohanty*  
*New Delhi, 2025*







# The Ethical Dilemmas of Making: Aesthetic Labour in the Age of Demolition

[Paribartana Mohanty and the afterlife of Kathputli Colony]

Dr. Santhosh Sadanandan

Paribartana Mohanty has consistently resisted the stability of medium, genre, and form in his practice. Trained as a painter but refusing to be bound by its modernist legacies, his trajectory – from video essays, performances, installations, to painted forms – has reflected a deeply embodied search for what it means to bear witness to the affective life of the marginalised subject in a violently transforming nation. In his works, the (infra-)structural and the intimate collapse into each other; often evoking not a spectacle of suffering but its residue, its ghostly aftermaths. What distinguishes Mohanty's practice is not simply its formal elasticity but the ethical consistency with which he pursues the unstable life of images, their capacity to hold both ruin and repair in the same breath. Across mediums, he works with an immersive sense of intimacy that refuses distance, compelling the viewer to inhabit the fracture where personal memory, collective dispossession, and historical violence intersect.

This new painting series marks a deliberate yet dissonant return to the pictorial surface, not as a retreat into formalism, but as a site to reanimate material memory, its scatter, and dismemberment.

## **From nomadic spectacle to bulldozed silence: Kathputli Colony**

Kathputli Colony in West Delhi had been home to hundreds of traditional performers—puppeteers, musicians, magicians, acrobats, a community of artists with long genealogies of itinerant cultural labour. As a living archive of performance traditions, the colony held a paradoxical position: largely invisible to the cultural elite, yet consistently exploited as a symbol of India's "folk" vitality.

What makes Kathputli Colony unique, and politically volatile, is precisely its status as a symbol of 'nomadic heritage', a collective memory not housed in state museums or archival repositories, but performed daily in the unruly geography of the urban peripheries of Delhi. The demolition of the Colony in 2017, under the Public-Private Partnership redevelopment model, marked not just an eviction, but a symbolic burial of that nomadic time – a time that could not be surveyed, taxed, or neatly aestheticized.



Mohanty's sustained artistic inquiry into the material and symbolic violence of state-led demolitions can be traced across a decade of practice, from his earlier body of work comprising a series of oil paintings and a multi-channel video installation on the demolition of the Hall of Nations at Pragati Maidan (2014–2018) to his current large-format pointillist paintings on the erasure of Kathputli Colony. These two vastly different sites—one an official architectural remnant of Nehruvian internationalism; the other, a living, breathing commons of itinerant performers—may seem to belong to separate registers of history and visibility. Yet, through Mohanty's practice, they reveal a deeper ideological continuity – of the state's persistent effort to erase heterogeneous temporalities and infrastructures that do not conform to the sanitised futurism of developmental modernity and the exclusionary imagination of nationalism. Mohanty extends these concerns through aesthetic strategies of fragmentation, displacement, and montage; mirroring the repeated violence inflicted both, on the internationalist imagination and on the urban poor.

The demolition of the Hall of Nations, a modernist pavilion once emblematic of India's postcolonial aspiration for international fraternity, reflects a broader tendency in the present regime to reorganise public memory. Through practices such as rewriting textbooks, renaming cities, and dismantling architectural traces, this project attempts to streamline the complexities of history into a monocular narrative. Mohanty's multi-channel video installations from this period register these acts not as a singular loss, but as a dismantling of memory itself; of layered solidarities, architectural testimony, and everyday internationalism.

मेरा काम अब मुझे अमूर्त की तरफ नहीं लेजाते  
अब तो मेरा काम मुझे कहीं भी नहीं लेते  
(My work no longer leads me toward abstraction,  
Now, it doesn't take me anywhere at all)

*Single Channel Video, 5:50 min (loop), 2012-2025*



This earlier engagement folds into the present work on Kathputli Colony, where the violence is more directly inscribed on the bodies and lifeworlds of the urban poor. Through a radically different formal language – vivid, industrial-hued pointillist paintings – Mohanty registers the epistemic and affective fallout of the demolition of a space that functioned as a nomadic archive of performance, memory, and subsistence. In these works, spatial violence is not simply represented; it is formally restaged. Mohanty's artistic trajectory thus not only testifies to the recurring logics of dispossession but also refuses to let these erasures slip quietly into a history of forgetting. His practice makes visible what Jacques Rancière terms 'the part of those who have no part,' reclaiming, through aesthetic persistence, the disavowed durations, disrupted collectivities, and unassimilated residues that continue to haunt the state's violent phantasm of order.

Demolitions in cities like Delhi and Mumbai – whether of informal settlements like Kathputli Colony, Madras Camp, Dharavi, or Yamuna Pushta – exceed mere spatial clearance. They constitute a forcible imposition of linear, nationalist 'homogeneity of time' that disavows other temporalities: those of informal labour, itinerancy, subsistence economies, and performative oral traditions. Kathputli Colony's demolition, as Mohanty's paintings painstakingly register, is not just an act of eviction but an epistemic rupture – a loss of world-making practices rooted in embodied knowledge.

Thus, what is being demolished is not just land, but a chronotope; a lived time-space of survival, circulation, and minoritarian joy. The non-statist historical time that these colonies embody disrupts the linear temporality of progress, casting the city not as a neutral container of modern life but as a contested archive of loss and resistance.

## Complicating the commons: legal anxiety and spatial dispossession

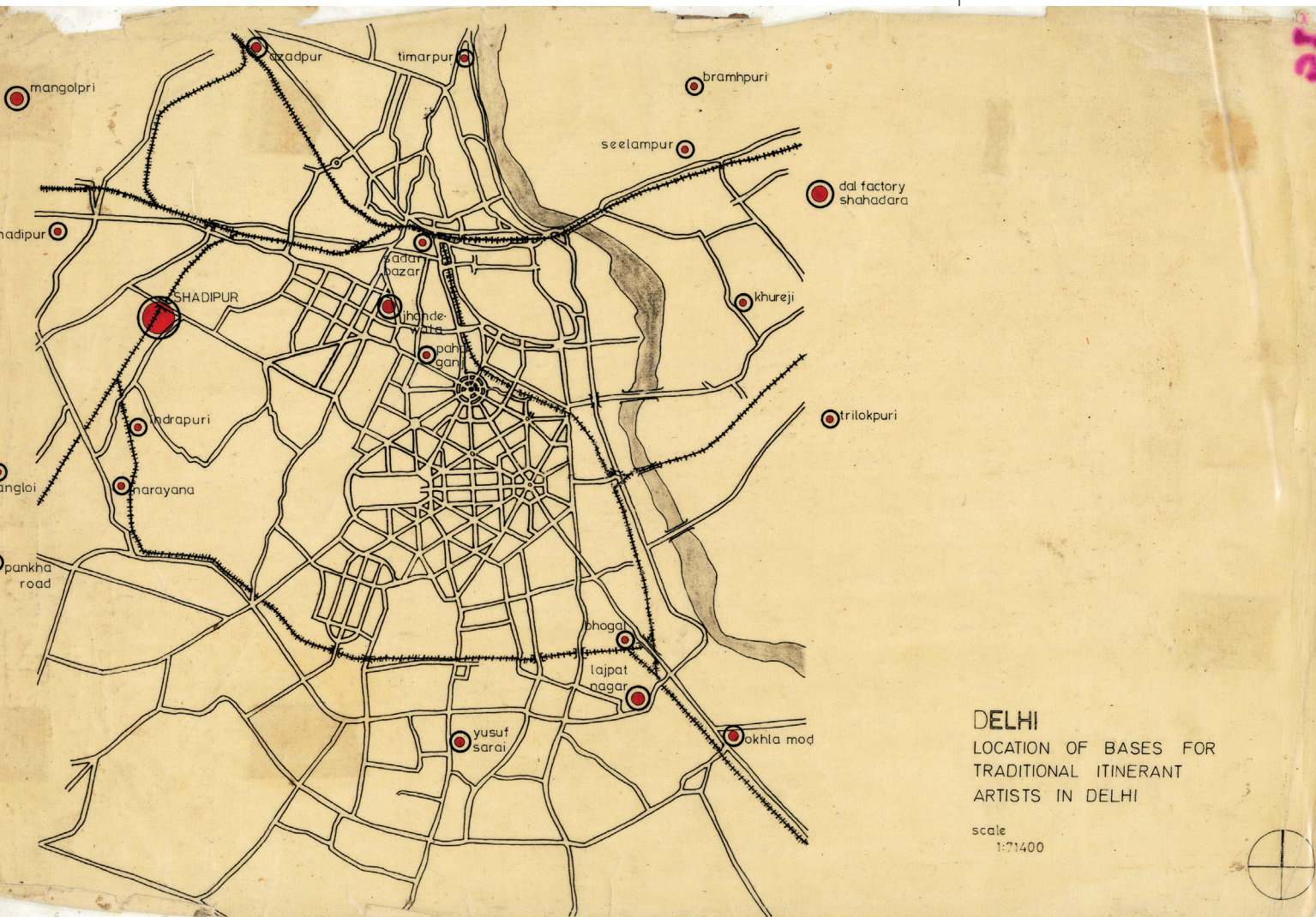
In the liberal-statist imagination, 'slums' are paradoxical spaces; at once criminal and pathetic, invisible and hyper-visible, home to precarious lives but also to 'encroachers.' The claim to the commons here is ideologically weaponized. The state and its bourgeois allies do not view the slum as an occupation of shared land, but as a contamination of it.

In this light, the judicial framing of the 2025 Bombay High Court judgment upholding Regulation 17(3)(D)(2) of the DCPR 2034 offers a legal vocabulary for imagining more inclusive cities, where planning is reparative rather than extractive, and where housing is not ghettoised at the peripheries, but embedded in the urban core. In its order, the Court refused to strike down provisions for in-situ rehabilitation of slum dwellers on land officially designated as 'open space,' articulating an expansive understanding of Article 21 of the Indian Constitution. "A clean city that excludes the poor from access to it cannot be called fair or just," the court held, reminding the state that the right to life includes not only shelter but shelter with dignity. The court clarified that the provision of housing to the urban poor, particularly those living in informal settlements, is not an act of state generosity but a constitutional obligation grounded in Articles 39 and 21. The bench further noted that "providing formal housing to slum dwellers—within the city and not on its outskirts—is a step towards real equality," indicating that justice cannot be territorialized only for the privileged.

While the ethical dilemmas posed by 'slum' occupations haunt the governmental discourse on the right to life, our critique must not be dimmed by the dull light of governmental reason alone. My proposition here is that, contrary to popular belief, what fuels this feverish impulse to demolish is not merely the thirst for land or capital, but a deeper, spectral unease; an anxiety provoked by lives that drift beyond the grammar of control. The urban poor, with their improvised shelters, itinerant rhythms, and fugitive kinships, conjure a time the state cannot measure, cannot master. They are, in Sara Ahmed's words, *affect aliens* – presences that trouble the smooth surface of the national imaginary, that carry too much history, too much hope, too much noise. Each demolition is not just a clearing of



land; it is a ritual of forgetting, a purge of disobedient time. What is dismantled is not only brick and tarpaulin, but the right to opacity, to dwell otherwise. In these cycles of eviction, the poor are not simply removed; they are rewritten, folded into the language of failure: failed subjects, incomplete citizens, living reminders of a dream the nation cannot quite awaken from. And so they remain – suspended in the long shadow of uncertainty, caught in a present that trembles, a future that never quite arrives.



Rajeev Sethi, *Three Stones*, Pages from an unpublished manuscript, 1978. Courtesy: Rajeev Sethi and Asian Heritage Foundation



Rajeev Sethi, *Three Stones*, Pages from an unpublished manuscript, 1978. Courtesy: Rajeev Sethi and Asian Heritage Foundation









## Demolition as dispossession: aesthetic rupture and temporal politics

The demolitions of sites like Kathputli Colony are rarely isolated acts of urban planning; they are part of a broader logic of erasure that simultaneously dispossesses and dehistoricises. As Mohanty shows in his paintings, the process of demolition collapses the past and future; flattening lived history into debris and projecting a dystopic uniformity as the horizon of development. The demolition of the Colony emerges as both a material act and a symbolic operation – a re-inscription of caste and class hierarchies onto the urban fabric under the guise of ‘world-class’ development. The state’s desire for a ‘clean city’ becomes a desire for a city without memory, without dissent, and without surplus populations that trouble the majoritarian aesthetic and political order. This is what Rancière calls the regimented distribution of the sensible – a regime in which the visible, sayable, and audible are policed to produce a seamless consensus around who belongs and who is illegitimate occupants. This is the larger machinery of ideological legitimization that renders populations like Rohingya refugees or Bangladeshi migrants not merely disposable, but sacrificial, so that the state may stage their ‘hunt’ as its most popular national spectacle.

The punitive turn is not limited to what is popularly described as the ‘illegal’ entrants or ‘infiltrators’. In Indian urban governance; what has popularly been dubbed the bulldozer raj, further exacerbates this situation by targeting its ‘regular’ citizenry. Under this regime, demolition has been elevated from a bureaucratic procedure to a moral spectacle. Bulldozers are now sent to raze the homes and shops of ‘accused’ individuals; predominantly from Muslim and underprivileged communities, as a form of instant justice, often bypassing due process and despite court orders prohibiting such actions. The bulldozer has become a symbol of majoritarian vengeance disguised as urban governance. Here, demolition is not only a spatial act but a temporal one, short-circuiting the time of law and replacing it with the immediacy of punishment and public spectacle.

In this context, Mohanty’s artworks are not just records of loss; they are counter-temporal gestures. His compositions linger in moments







of rubble, repetition, and incompleteness. They reclaim time from the spectacular now of development, drawing us into the slow violence of eviction and the temporal rupture it generates. His work functions akin to what Ariella Azoulay calls an 'unshowable archive'; that which refuses closure, refuses healing, and insists on the ongoingness of violence.

The demolition of Kathputli Colony, then, is a symptom of a deeper crisis in the urban imaginary, where development is weaponised against the most vulnerable, where the state abdicates its redistributive obligations, and where memory is made into rubble. Mohanty's works attempt to inhabit the ruins, forces us to see their life, their temporality, and their refusal to disappear. In doing so, he proposes an aesthetic of resistance; an anti-sublime practice that neither monumentalises nor mourns in the conventional sense, but unsettles. He reminds us that demolition is not the end of a structure, but the beginning of a struggle over visibility, memory, and justice.

#### **Against the expressive self: toward a fraternal ethics of making**

The demolition of Kathputli Colony is not only an act of spatial violence; it is also a psychic event, a rupture that unsettles the ethical foundations of artistic practice itself. For artists like Mohanty, who have persistently located themselves within the uneven terrains of political abandonment, marginal survival, and infrastructural erasure, the question is not merely how to respond to such violence, but how to do so without reinscribing the very tropes of affective authenticity, trauma-capital, or voyeuristic empathy that the art market so often craves.

What does it mean to paint after a demolition? Not in the manner of a reportage or catharsis, but as an ethical engagement with the unmaking of possible worlds? Here, to engage aesthetically is not to merely express, but to reorder perception; to interrupt dominant regimes of attention. The artist, then, is not a privileged truth-teller, but a re-distributor of the sensible, capable of creating dissensus – a rupture in the consensual field of what counts as real.

In Mohanty's case, this rupture is neither declarative nor sentimental. It is a frictional force produced at the site of form – pointillist abstraction, industrial colour schemes, painterly blur, fractured scale. These aesthetic choices resist any easy identification with the politics of witnessing as suffering. They refuse to hand the viewer a digestible meaning. Instead, they install a delay—a lag between affect and cognition, between visibility and recognition, thus enacting what Rancière might call 'a politics of form'.

This positioning is crucial, especially in an era where the artist's 'sensitivity' to the world is often commodified into a brand of authenticity; it is important to resist the overcapitalised trope of the emotionally wounded artist. The problem is not that artists feel too much, but that the structures surrounding art convert these feelings into aesthetic commodities; objects that circulate in elite circuits of taste, detached from the communities whose suffering they ostensibly represent.

How then does one develop a new ethics of fraternal becoming; an aesthetics not premised on affective spectacle or representative empathy, but on shared dispossession? Mohanty's paintings, in their refusal to finalize meaning, might be seen as material nodes in a fugitive infrastructure; objects that do not belong wholly to the realm of commodity, nor to the state-sponsored grammar of visual documentation, but to a zone of excess, blur, and energetic dissonance.

The pleasure of making, then, need not be renounced in the face of structural violence. Instead, it must be reconfigured; not as a bourgeois indulgence, but as a communitarian act, one that foregrounds shared time, attention, and slowness against the accelerated temporality of destruction. The act of painting, in this view, becomes a form of solidarity-work; not a retreat into aesthetic interiority, but an insistence on being with the aftermaths, the residues, the ruins. It is an aesthetics of endurance, of staying with the trouble long after the news cycle has moved on.





## Recuperating aesthetic pleasure: beyond the commodity logic

The historical capture of painting by the commodity-form presents a real impasse. Yet, as Rancière reminds us, the aesthetic regime of art always contains a double movement: it enables art's autonomy from other forms of life, even as it opens up the possibility of its contamination with them. This tension is not to be resolved, but activated. In Mohanty's practice, the painterly gesture becomes an act of stubborn insistence. To paint is to persist; not in romantic defiance, but in a quiet, durational refusal of the erasures that urban violence demands. The optical surface of the canvas becomes a battleground where the dust of demolition, the chromatic vibrancy of performance, and the spectral hauntings of community come into contact – not to synthesize, but to coexist in friction. It is in this friction that aesthetic pleasure is recuperated; not as consumption, but as communal sensation, as the shared labour of seeing, of attending, of staying.

In this sense, Mohanty's paintings are not just about Kathputli Colony. They perform Kathputli's fugitive logic. They occupy the space between image and event, form and force, affect and evidence. They offer no closure, no catharsis. But they do offer a language; tentative, flickering, affectively disjointed, for a politics of presence in an age of erasure.

One of the most compelling aspects of Mohanty's practice is the notion of eventless witnessing; staying with what is not spectacular, not immediately newsworthy. The ruins, the cracks, the lingering atmospheres after a bulldozer leaves; these become sites of inscription, where artistic labour meets the debris of civic erasure. These are paintings that refuse closure, that retain their fugitive force; a refusal to become part of the white-cube imagination of the beautified city.

This is especially significant in a nation obsessed with image management, where beautification serves as a proxy for governance. Mohanty's work acts as a counter-visual archive; it shows us that what is repressed—the slum, the ruin, the dust, does not disappear. It lingers in the affective weather of the city.

In this way, Mohanty's practice resists the entrapment of binaries like beautiful/grotesque or abstract/figurative. What he offers instead is a study in material force, not representation, but intensification. And through this, he reclaims Kathputli not as a lost utopia, but as a living archive of nomadic time: a time that can neither be gridded nor bulldozed.

It is especially noteworthy that in Mohanty's paintings, the scene is never singular. A demolition site also resembles a construction yard, a work-in-progress, an archaeological mound under excavation. Each frame holds the ambiguity of both ruin and emergence. This productive ambivalence in the pictorial semiotics turns the image into a temporal hinge; at once the prehistory of the present and the present-continuous of an uncertain futurity. At times, a secondary screen seems to shimmer through the painted surface – an 'extra vision' that recalls the estranging juxtapositions of René Magritte, or what Hito Steyerl in *The Wretched of the Screen* describes as the uncanny layering of images that refuse to settle into a single register. Objects proliferate – tools, masks, ornamental fragments, musical instruments, talismanic devices – drifting between the symbolic, the instrumental, the performative, the magical, and the spectral. They coalesce into an elegiac visual field, charged with both pathos and latent resistance.

The sources that feed these compositions are equally nomadic: the popular poster, the cinematic frame, the faded photograph—each bearing its own grain of history. These elements give the paintings a spectral luminosity, where ruinous landscapes seem less like passive backdrops than active forces; their debris morphing into vectors of unsettled meaning. The land itself becomes figurative—a frozen remnant of monuments to faith, isolated and abandoned, yet still a witness before its own disappearance. Sometimes, these landscapes resemble a nucleus without an orbit, suspended in the abundance of destruction. Elsewhere, the phantasmagoric and the cosmic collide with the dense materiality of dwelling, rupturing the conventional pictorial logic of ground, figure, and action. In these moments, the canvas becomes a gravitational field, generating both black holes of loss and the unbearable weight of matter itself – an image-world simultaneously consuming and conjuring.





### **From scientific optics to affective debris: reorienting pointillism**

Nicholas Mirzoeff's provocative essay "How To Deanaesthetize Monet" offers a compelling critique of how Western visual regimes – particularly Impressionism – were complicit in constructing what he terms 'White Sight': a racialized mode of seeing that aestheticises domination while disavowing the structural violence underpinning colonial modernity. In Mirzoeff's reading, the soft optics and ephemeral atmospheres of Monet's landscapes were not merely formal innovations but visual accompaniments to imperial expansion, spatial enclosure, and the erasure of non-white presences from the pictorial field. White Sight, in this sense, is not simply a matter of representation, but a political sensorium that naturalizes inequality through aesthetic pleasure. This conceptual lens offers a critical opening into rethinking Mohanty's use of pointillism; not as a revival of impressionist vision, but as an attempt at its reorientation and critique.

Mohanty's return to the dot, the pixel, and the fragment, across his paintings on the demolition of Kathputli Colony, deliberately unsettles the legacy of pointillism as a 'scientific' or dispassionate form of visibility. In place of light and leisure, he renders dismemberment, debris, and dislocation. The chromatic intensity and surface density of these works do not coalesce into idyllic harmony, but instead evoke what might be called affective debris: a painterly register of broken lifeworlds, unsettled ground, and incomplete mourning. In this gesture, Mohanty subtly disorients the visual pleasure often associated with Euro-American modernism, opening the optical field to a different kind of engagement; one that implicates the viewer in scenes of ruin, displacement, and unresolved histories.

The debris of demolition, the dust in the air, the affective smog of a razed commons; all are registered through this dispersive materiality. Mohanty's dots do not resolve into form; they hover in suspension, much like the unresolved afterlives of eviction.



The monumental scale of the paintings of Georges Seurat, the pointillist par excellence, marked a deliberate shift from the intimate scale of Impressionist works to a public-oriented canvas. Its size declared itself as history painting of a new sort, bringing the temporality of bourgeois leisure into the realm of collective address. Mohanty, too, adopts large-scale painting not to monumentalise but to memorialise. The paintings install the unrepresentability of certain kinds of collective loss; the erasure not just of people, but of the memory-worlds they inhabited.

In this, Mohanty's choice of scale can also be read as a political one. It counters the invisibilisation of subaltern spaces by giving them both a monumental materiality and a fragmented perceptibility. The size of the canvas is not about mastery over the subject, but about staying with the ruined surface; extending the time of attention, resisting the amnesia that accompanies every bulldozer's movement.

### The ethics of friction

Paribartana Mohanty's version of pointillism can be considered as a frugal attempt to trigger a redistribution, a dissensual rupture in the optical regime of urban beautification and developmental erasure. These paintings enact such a dissensus not through shock or figural horror, but through the instability of surface, colour, and form. His palette, often composed of fluorescent, synthetic and 'cheap' colours, does not *represent* the 'slum'; it materialises its volatility. His surfaces are not *about* ruin; they *perform* ruin, in its refusal of resolution, in its durational sedimentation of time.

In this sense, his paintings do not so much *depict* the destruction of Kathputli Colony as they *detain* it; hold it in a time-loop that refuses narrative closure or visual mastery.

Painting, in Paribartana Mohanty's hands, is no longer a stable vehicle of either critique or expression. It becomes a fugitive medium, torn between the pleasure of form and the impossibility of justice. It is a practice haunted by its own aesthetic complicity, and yet persistently driven by a desire to remain with the ruin; to register, however obliquely, what remains ungrievable in the eyes of the state.

### Postscript

Despite the promises, the dream of in-situ settlement of nearly 3,000 families of the erstwhile Kathputli Colony remains perpetually 'in-progress' – a progress without arrival. For the poor and the marginalised, progress always comes hedged with an endless list of caveats and ifs and buts, as if dignity itself were a negotiable clause. One might say that the city builds its monuments of inclusion not in stone, but in the bureaucratic poetics of perpetual deferment.

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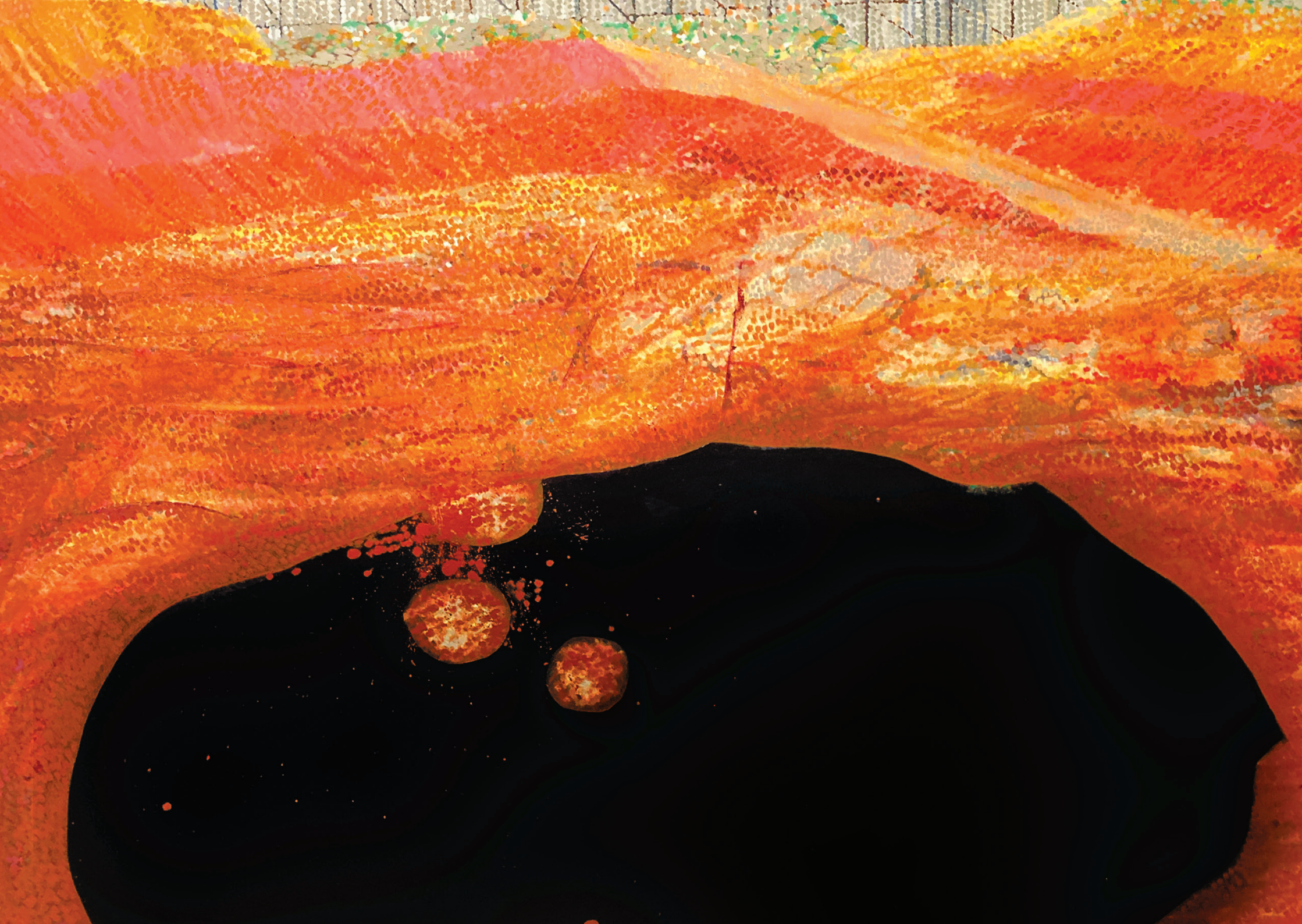
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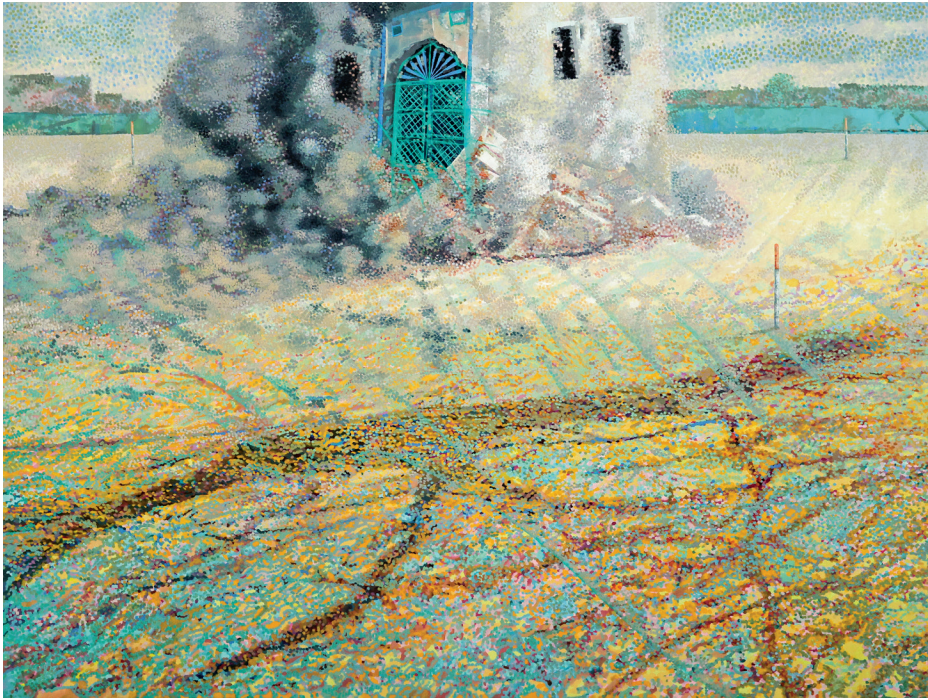
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(My work no longer leads me toward abstraction,  
Now, it doesn't take me anywhere at all)

*Single Channel Video, 5:50 min (loop), 2012-2025*









परछाइयाँ (Shadows)



पीढ़ा (Platform)





सामान (Luggage)



फव्वारा (Fountain)





सतह (Surface)



मैदान (Field)





नक्शा-I (Map-I)



Finn, the Human



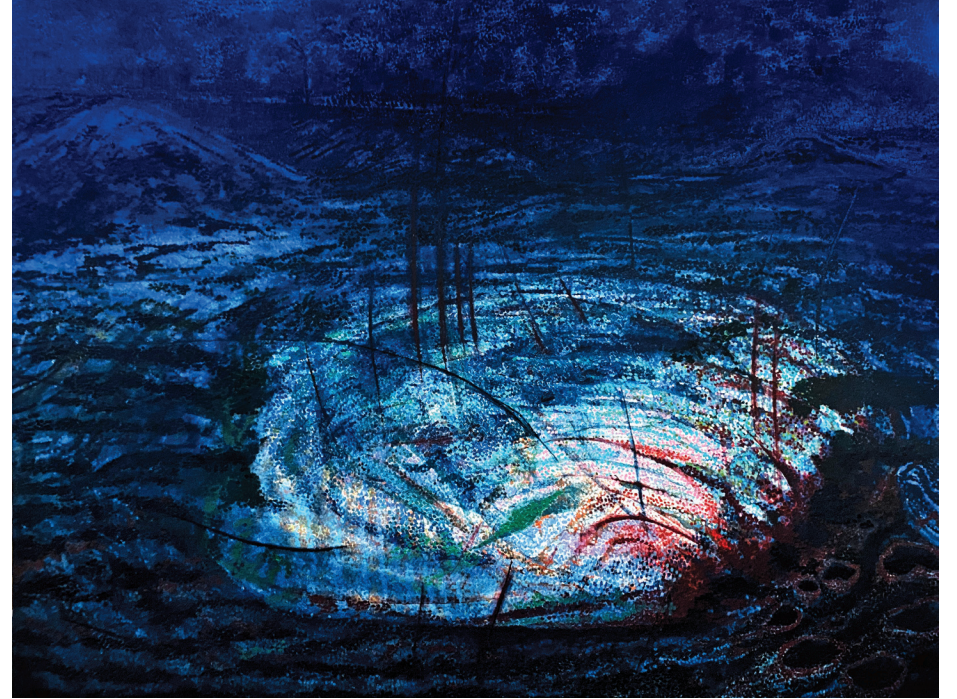


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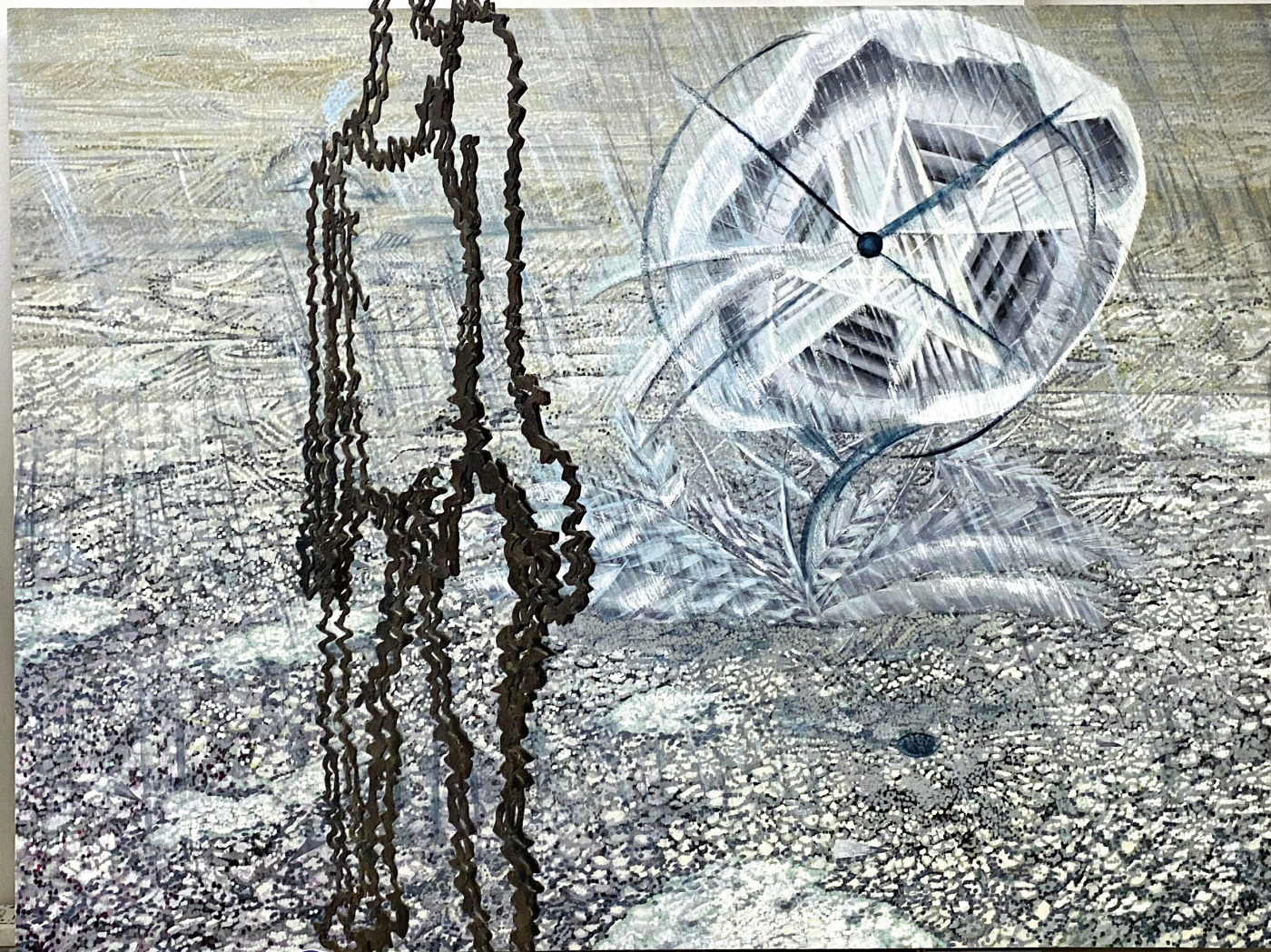
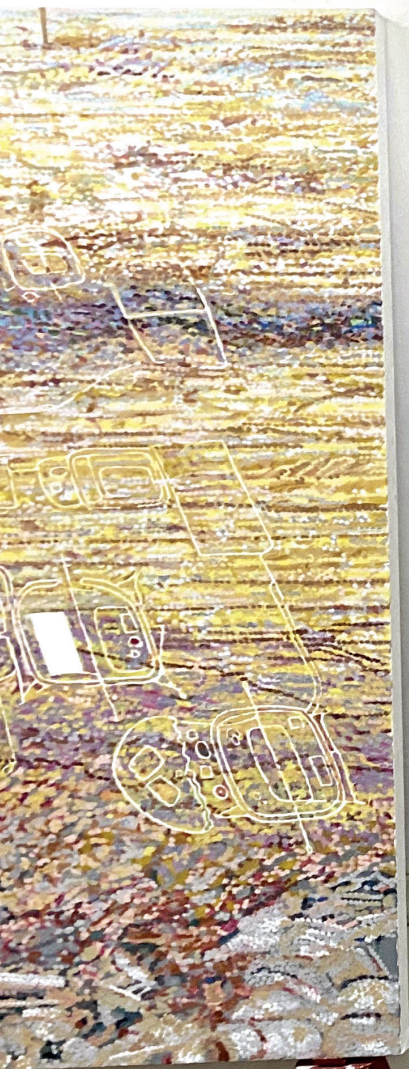


खेत (Farm)



गड्ढा (Pit)







**Dr. Santhosh Sadanandan** is a cultural theorist based in New Delhi, India. He is one of the founding members of the School of Culture and Creative Expressions, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar University Delhi, where he teaches. Drawing on his training as an art historian, his work critically examines the structural dynamics of the institutionalisation of culture from a minoritarian perspective. He writes on contemporary cultural politics in India, with an emphasis on deconstructing technologies of visibility and the affective dimensions of the political.

**Paribartana Mohanty** is a visual artist and storyteller, primarily working with video, text, lecture-performances and painting. His recent work explores environment disaster landscapes and deep impacts of man-made and so called natural forces. He has received many international residency, grants and fellowships including Honorary Mention at State of the ART(ist) Initiative, Ars Electronica Festival, Linz (2024), Sharjah Art Foundation Production Grant 2022, Prince Claus Mentorship Award for Cultural & Artistic Responses to Environmental Change (2022-23), a residency at Triangle Arts Association, New York, funded Asian Arts Council (2023), Winner of Serendipity Arles Grant 2023-24, Awards of Excellence, Experimental film festival 2022 Emami Art, awarded 'Best Film' at ARKIPEL Jakarta International Documentary (2024), one of the five production grantee of 4th VH Award and EYEBEAM residency (2021) among others.

He has presented two solo exhibitions at the Vadehra Art Gallery, New Delhi, in 2012 and 2018, and a solo exhibition project at Rencontres de la photographie d'Arles in 2024. His work has been exhibited in many group exhibitions and film festivals, including, MACAN Museum, Indonesia; Ars Electronica Festival, Linz (2022); New Museum, New York (2022); Chennai Photo Biennale 3 (2022); 35th European Media Art Festival at Osnabrück (2022); 4th VH Award and EYEBEAM (2021); Goethe Institute, Mumbai (2022); Transart Triennale, London (2016); 45th International Film Festival Rotterdam (2016); 59th BFI London Film Festival (2015), Institute of Contemporary Art Singapore (2015); and Institute of Contemporary Art, Lyon, France (2013).

Paribartana is currently working as Visiting Faculty, Department of Art, Media and Performance, Shiv Nadar University. Lives and works in New Delhi and Bhubaneswar.



This booklet was conceived on the occasion of the exhibition  
'I Rescued Speed Altogether' by Paribartana Mohanty,  
on view at Shrine Empire, 21 August – 20 September 2025.

Essay: Dr. Santhosh Sadanandan  
Design: Rahul Juneja  
Printing: Naveen Printers, New Delhi

Exhibition Title credit: Master Timeme Mohanty  
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Exhibition Acknowledgement:  
Anahita Taneja, Shefali Somani, Aishwarya Kaur  
and Shrine Empire Team

Akansha Rastogi, Anish Cherian, Kush Badhwar and Friends

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मेरा काम अब मुझे अमूर्त की तरफ़ नहीं लेजाते  
अब तो मेरा काम मुझे कहीं भी नहीं लेते  
(My work no longer leads me toward abstraction,  
Now, it doesn't take me anywhere at all)

*Single Channel Video, 3:56 min (loop), 2012-2025*



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