# ARTISTS' BIOGRAPHIES

## SHEBA CHHACHHI

Born in 1958 in Harar, Ethiopia. Lives and works in New Delhi.

A long-time chronicler of the women's movement in India, both photographer and activist, Sheba Chhachhi moved from documentary practice to developing collaborative, staged photographic portraits with her subjects in the early Nineties. The desire to reinvest the viewing of photographs with time underwrites her use of the photographic image within installation works. Brought together in space with found or "sculpted" objects, text, sound, light, video, the installations address an ongoing concern with women, visual cultures, urban ecologies, memory, violence, the question of personal/political transformation and the play between the mythic and social. Most recently she has been preoccupied with the interregnum offered by the mechanically moved still image. She held solo shows at Nature Morte, New Delhi (2007) and at the University of California, Berkley (2005). She also participated in important group shows including *Thermocline of Art-New Asian Waves*, ZKM, Karlsruhe (2007) and *New Narratives: Contemporary Art from India*, Chicago Cultural Centre**,** Chicago (2007)*; Belief,* Singapore Biennial, Singapore (2006); *Indian Summer*, Ecole des Beaux Arts, Paris (2005); *SubTerrain: Artworks in the City Fold, Body, City*, House of World Culture, Berlin (2002); 7th Havana Biennial, Cuba (2000).

## ATUL DODIYA

Born in 1959 in Mumbai, where he lives and works*.*

Trained in both Mumbai and Paris, Atul Dodiya became known in the Nineties for hyperrealist paintings depicting middle-class Indian life and for his watercolour series on Mahatma Gandhi. Since then he has employed wide-ranging techniques to create powerful works that are intrinsically political, including the vitrine-like museum cabinet installation *Broken Branches,* and several paintings executed on the surface of metal roller shutters. His work poignantly references the history of Western art and myth, the folklore and popular culture of India, and political and social issues. He held solo shows at Gallery Chemould, Mumbai, and the Bose Pacia Gallery, New York (2003 and 2005), and at the Reina Sofia Museum, Madrid (2002). Recent group shows include Documenta 12, Kassel (2007); *India Express – Sacred & Popular*, The Helsinki City Art Museum, Helsinki (2006); *iCon: India Contemporary*, collateral event, 51st Venice Biennale, Venice (2005); *Capital & Kar*ma: *Recent Position in Indian Art*, Kunsthalle, Vienna (2002); *Century City: Art & Culture in the Modern Metropolis Bombay/Mumbai*, Tate Modern, London (2001).

## ANITA DUBE

Born in 1958 in Lucknow. Lives and works in New Delhi.

Anita Dube creates works with a language that valorizes the sculptural fragment as a bearer of personal and social memory, history and mythology. Her works – in a wide variety of media including sculpture, installation, photography and video – explore a divergent range of subjects that address a profound concern for loss and regeneration, both autobiographical and societal. Dube's most recent works comment on war and destruction, creating ensembles that call to mind ruined cities, the clash of cultures and the contemporary spectacle of violence. Recently she held solo shows at Galerie Almine Rech, Paris (2007), Galleryske, Bangalore (2006), and Bose Pacia Gallery, New York (2005). Her work has appeared in important group exhibitions including *Bombay Maximum City*, Lille3000, Lille (2006); *Indian Summer*, Ecole des Beaux Arts, Paris (2005); *iCon: India Contemporary*, collateral event, 51st Venice Biennale, Venice (2005); *How Latitudes Become Forms: Art in a Global Age*, The Walker Art Center, Minneapolis (2003); 7th Havana Biennial, Cuba (2000).

## PROBIR GUPTA

Born in 1960 in Kolkata. Lives and works in New Delhi.

Trained in both India and Paris, for many years Probir Gupta practised a refined form of abstract painting. In the mid-Nineties the artist began to forge a route from which he could address the subjects of human rights, civics, class and communal tensions, and labour relations through forms, materials

and images. In all his recent works, the artist seeks to address serious issues of urgent relevancy to India and the world, while orchestrating a continuum of media that weaves together painting, sculpture, video, photography and installation. Recent solo shows include *At Half Mast* at the Bose Pacia Gallery, Kolkata (2007), and at Nature Morte at Lalit Kala Akademie (2004). He has also participated in group shows at the Borsos Mikolos Museum, Gyor, Hungary (2002) and the Egyptian Cultural Center, Vienna (2002), and in the shows *Ways of Resisting* at Lalit Kala Akademie, New Delhi (2002), and *Beyond the Surface* at the Galerie Espace, New Delhi, and The Fine Art Company, Mumbai (1999).

## SUBODH GUPTA

Born in 1964 in Khagaul, Bihar. Lives and works in New Delhi.

Subodh Gupta expresses himself through different media such as paintings, sculptures, installations, performances and videos. As a point of departure he takes the everyday, using traditional materials and common objects. In particular, the artist uses certain emblems and products of India, such as cow dung, milk buckets and kitchen utensils, casting them in different materials and combining them into ensembles that often refer to and question the current state of India's shifting society, migration, and the effects and frictions caused by a rapidly globalizing society. He participated in the Venice (2005), Moscow (2005), Havana (2003) and Gwangju (2003) Biennales. Recent solo shows include *Start.Stop,* Bodhi Art Gallery, Mumbai (2007); *Silk Route,* Baltic, Newcastle Upon Tyne (2007); *Hungry Gods,* Nature Morte, New Delhi (2006); *Jootha*, Galerie In Situ, Paris (2005). He also participated in important group exhibitions including *Sequence 1 – Painting and Sculpture in the François Pinault Collection,* Palazzo Grassi, Venice (2006); *Nuit Blanche*, Paris (2006); Lille3000, Lille (2006); *Hungry Gods*, Arario Gallery, Beijing (2006).

## RANBIR KALEKA

Born in 1953 in Patiala, Punjab. Lives and works in New Delhi.

Ranbir Kaleka's installations introduce a new point of departure for the understanding of painting, video and new media art practice. The use of digital media coupled with painting techniques allows the artist to arrive at an image – which is both absent and present – in which the character is conjured as a simulacrum that exists momentarily, only to vanish under close observation. In his works, Kaleka presents a visual exploration of fleeting impulses and desires in human nature that are often difficult to categorize. His work was exhibited at the Bose Pacia Gallery in New York in 2007. Recent group shows include *New Narratives: Contemporary Art from India,* Chicago Cultural Institute, Chicago (2007); *Hungry God: Indian Contemporary Art*, Busan Museum of Modern Art, Korea (2006); *Edge of Desire: Recent Art in India*, NGMA, National Museum of Modern Art, New Delhi (2006); *iCon: India Contemporary*, collateral event, 51st Venice Biennale, Venice (2005); 10th Biennial of Moving Images, Centre for Contemporary Images, Saint-Gervais, Geneva (2003); *Capital & Kar*ma: *Recent Position in Indian Art*, Kunsthalle, Vienna (2002).

## JITISH KALLAT

Born in 1974 in Mumbai, where he lives and works.

Jitish Kallat's work, oscillating between the twin codes of pop and agitprop, addresses classic themes of survival and the endless narratives of the human struggle. In the highly populated city of Mumbai, where he lives, the enterprise of daily existence is pushed to the extreme and this continually percolates his practice. He has had solo shows at Gallery Chemould (Mumbai), Arario Gallery (Beijing), Albion Gallery (London), Nature Morte (New Delhi), Bodhi Art (Singapore), Walsh Gallery (Chicago) and Gallery Barry Keldoulis (Sydney), among others. He has participated in numerous key exhibitions, including *Thermocline of Art – New Asian Waves*, ZKM, Karlsruhe (2007); 6th Gwangju Biennial (2006); 5th Asia Pacific Triennale, Brisbane (2006); *Passages*, Palais des Beaux Arts, Brussels (2006); *Indian Summer*, Ecole des Beaux Arts, Paris (2005); *Zoom! Art in Contemporary India,* Culturgest Museum, Lisbon (2004); *The Tree From The Seed*, Henie Onstad Kunstsenter, Oslo (2003); *Century City*, Tate Modern, London (2001); 7th Havana Biennial, Cuba (2000). He writes frequently on the subject of contemporary art.

## REENA SAINI KALLAT

Born in 1973 in New Delhi. Lives and works in Mumbai.

Reena Saini Kallat graduated from Sir J.J. School of Art in Mumbai. Working across a wide range of media, her works often chronicle themes of contemporary reality via a complex confluence of the private and the public, the domestic and the fantastic, the tranquil daydream and the turbulent nightmare. Some of her works deal with politically charged subjects through poetic evocations, drawing generously from Indian mythology and religion. Her narrations are often veiled in beauty, through the liberal use of craft and artisanal skill, to create compelling installations. She has participated in numerous exhibitions that include *New Narratives: Contemporary Art from India*, Chicago Cultural Centre, Chicago (2007); *Thermocline of Art – New Asian Waves*, ZKM, Karlsruhe (2007); *Bombay Maximum City,* Lille3000, Lille (2006); *Hungry God – Indian Contemporary Art*, Arario Gallery, Beijing, and Museum of Modern Art, Busan (2006); *India Express – Art and Popular Culture*, Helsinki City Art Museum, Helsinki (2006); *Zoom! Art in Contemporary India,* Culturgest Museum, Lisbon (2004); *The Tree From The Seed, Contemporary Art from India*, Henie Onstad Kunstsenter, Oslo (2003).

## BHARTI KHER

Born in 1969 in London. Lives and works in New Delhi.

Bharti Kher's work collects a wide range of images culled from her daily life and surroundings, and traces the contours of her urban and immigrant experience. The artist questions our notions of race, identity and origin, and addresses a number of issues such as class, consumerism and feminism, as well as the relationships between tradition and contemporaneity. Kher is also known for her resin-cast animals, life-size sculptures of deer, elephants and hyenas, often covered in bindi, the tiny decoration applied in India to women's foreheads. Her most recent solo shows include *Do Not Meddle in the Affairs of Dragons, Because You are Crunchy and Taste Good with Ketchup,* Gallery 88 and Ske Gallery, Mumbai (2006); *Hungry Dogs Eat Dirty Pudding*, Nature Morte, New Delhi (2004); *The Private Softness of Skin,* Gallery Chemould, Mumbai (2001). She also participated in the group shows *Indian Photo and Media Art: A Journey of Discovery,* FLUSS – NÖ Initiative for Photo and Media Art, Weinviertel (2007); Asia Pacific Triennale, Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane (2006); *Hungry Gods,* Arario Gallery, Beijing (2006); *Indian Summer,* Ecole des Beaux Arts, Paris (2005).

## NALINI MALANI

Born in 1946 in Karachi, Pakistan. Lives and works in Mumbai.

Nalini Malani is a multimedia artist with an extensive exhibition history. Her practice encompasses drawing and painting, as well as the extension of those forms into projected animation, video and film. Committed to the role of the artist as social activist, Malani often bases her work on the stories of those who have been ignored, forgotten or marginalized by history. Malani's work reflects in particular a deep commitment to women's issues, particularly with regard to those dense areas of social and familial relationships. She held recent solo shows at the Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin (2007), Bose Pacia Gallery, New York (2004), and the New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York (2002-2003). She has participated in important international group shows, including *New Narratives: Contemporary Art from India*, Chicago Cultural Centre, Chicago (2007); *T1 – The Pantagruel Syndrome*, Castello di Rivoli Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Turin (2005); *Edge of Desire*, The Asia Society, New York (2004); *Unpacking Europe*, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam (2001); *Century City*, Tate Modern, London (2001), and in the Venice, Shariah, Istanbul, Havana and Gwangju Biennales.

## RAQS MEDIA COLLECTIVE

(1991) http://www.raqsmediacollective.net

Raqs Media Collective (Jeebesh Bagchi, Monica Narula & Shuddhabrata Sengupta) has been variously described as artists, media practitioners, curators, researchers, editors and catalysts of cultural processes. Their work, which has been exhibited widely in major international spaces and events, locates them squarely at the intersections of contemporary art, historical enquiry, philosophical speculation, research and theory – often taking the form of installations, online and offline media objects, performances and encounters. They live and work in Delhi, based at Sarai, the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (www.sarai.net), an initiative they co-founded in 2000. They are

members of the editorial collective of the Sarai Reader series. Raqs has exhibited, among other places, at Thyssen Bornemisza Art 21, Vienna; Bose Pacia Gallery, New York; PM House Museum & Gallery, London; the Guangxhou Triennale; the Taipei, Liverpool and Venice Biennales; Documenta 11, Kassel; Nature Morte, New Delhi; ZKM, Karlsruhe; Palais des Beaux Arts, Brussels; the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; the Mattress Factory, Pittsburgh.

## RAGHUBIR SINGH
Born in 1942 in Jaipur, India – Died in 1999 in New York, USA
Raghubir Singh is considered a pioneer of colour photography and one of the most important photographers of his generation. In the Seventies he was one of the first photographers to reinvent the use of colour at a time when colour photography was still widely dismissed. Singh's work spans both Indian and Western pictorial traditions. In his early work he focused on the geographic and social anatomy of cities and regions of India. His work on Mumbai in the early Nineties marked a turning point in his stylistic development, and on contact with the metropolis, his visual language acquired a new complexity. His photographs, acclaimed for their organization of space and controlled use of colour, reflect the multiple aspects of contemporary India and provide us with unique testimony of the changes experienced by Indian social and urban structures. His works are included in the permanent collections of museums such as the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York, the Art Institute of Chicago and Tate Modern, London. They have been widely exhibited in international venues including Espace Louis Vuitton, Paris; Whitechapel Gallery, London; The Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington DC; National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi and Mumbai; and Fondazione Querini Stampalia, Venice.

## VIVAN SUNDARAM
Born in 1943 in Shimla. Lives and works in New Delhi.
After his involvement with historically conscious figuration in the Eighties, Sundaram's recent work remains concerned with social and environmental protest, and with an "archaeology" of the recent past. Several of his recent projects – involving the use of photographs, found objects, video and three-dimensional constructs in a variety of materials – are expressly collaborative. His role here becomes that of the arranger, the conductor, who probes identities in the contemporary international context and constantly reinterprets the role of the artist and the values of authorship and creativity. He has had numerous solo exhibitions in New Delhi, Mumbai, London, Montreal and Vancouver. Important group shows include *New Narratives: Contemporary Art from India*, Chicago Cultural Centre, Chicago (2007); *Early Drawings: 1950s-1970s*, The Fine Art Company, Mumbai (1999); *Private Mythology: Contemporary Art from India*, Japan Foundation, Asia Centre, Tokyo (1998); *Artists for a Sustainable World*, Gallery Chemould, Mumbai (1998); *Major Trends in Indian Art since 1947*, Lalit Kala Akademi, Rabindra Bhavan, New Delhi (1997). He also participated in the Havana, Johannesburg and Gwangju Biennales.

## HEMA UPADHYAY
Born in 1972 in Baroda. Lives and works in Mumbai.
Photographs, graphite drawings and gouaches are the media used by Hema Upadhyay, who often refers in her works to "home", not as a place of security but rather to address a sense of dislocation, of people wanting roots yet being violently pulled and pushed out. The artist's works speak strongly of Mumbai (to which she moved from Baroda), a multicultural city that attracts people in pursuit of their aspirations. Her works – sensitive and deeply introspective – pull in different and often contradictory directions, reflecting an inner state of rootlessness within a fragmented period of time. She held solo show at Grosvenor Vadehra, London (2007), at Viart Gallery, New Delhi, and Gallery Chemould, Mumbai (2004), and at the Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane (2002-2001). Upadhyay also participated in the group shows *New Narratives: Contemporary Art from India*, Chicago Cultural Centre, Chicago (2007); *Bombay Maximum City*, Lille3000, Lille (2006); *Parallel Realities*, Asian Art Now, The 3rd Fukuoka Asian Art Triennale, Blackburn Museum, Blackburn (2006); *Indian Summer*, Ecole des Beaux Arts, Paris (2005); *Have We Met?*, Japan Foundation, Tokyo (2004).

## AVINASH VEERARAGHAVAN

Born in 1975 in Chennai, Tamilnadu. Lives and works in Bangalore.

Avinash Veeraraghavan is a young artist who studied under the Italian designer Andrea Anastasio and worked for short periods at Studio Sowden and Studio Fronzoni in Milan. Avinash's work engages with a range of visual media from photography to installation. The book *I Love My India: stories for a city* – an ironic and poetic visual journey through urban India – marks his interest in popular culture and in exploring the nature of the psyche that produces it. He held solo shows at Project 88, Mumbai (2006), at Galleryske (2004) and Sakshi Gallery (2001) in Bangalore. He also participated in the group exhibitions *I Fear, I Believe, I Desire*, Gallery Espace, New Delhi (2007); *Watching Me, Watching India*, Fotografie Forum international & Kommunale Galerie, Frankfurt (2006); *Around Architecture*, Colab, Bangalore (2006); *Indian Summer*, Ecole des Beaux Arts, Paris (2005); *Dispelling Asian Stereotypes*, Public Art Project, Denmark (2004); *City Park*, Project Arts Centre, Dublin (2003).