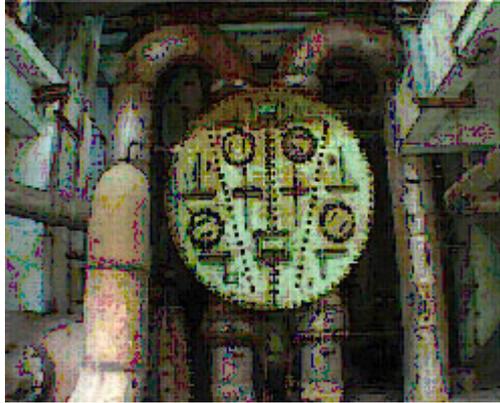


DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES AND ITS IMPACT ON ART AND ARTISTS IN INDIA : A STUDY OF FEW ARTISTS OF NORTH EASTERN INDIA

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Mriganka Madhukaillya and Sonal Jain,
Desire Machine Collective



Mriganka Madhukaillya and Sonal Jain, *Residue (2011)*,

Abstract : *The term 'digital art' is an art movement, virtually transparent which spread so thinly across so many artistic activities in India. Digital technology has ushered in India a new era for the acquisition and integration of widely different source material. My objectives are to study the origin of how a small group of artists of India interested in computer generated painting since 1990 onwards and later has been created some amazing print images, videos, and installations using various digital technologies. In this digital age certainly one's creative and technology skills. With the aid of digital technology, art has been exposed to new tools and materials that the artist can work with. Technology also opened up the realms of creativity that is not only applicable to artists. As a result of making creativity so accessible to everyone in our society, a whole creative industry has emerged while digital technology rapidly developed or one should say, it has exploded. New media on the Indian art scene began in earnest in the early 90s with the wide spread use of computers and the internet that also led to a soft revolution in designing, advertising and digital art and also growing rapidly over the years due to vast network facilities and availability of technological infrastructure not just in the metros but also in North Eastern India. These art-making tools have revolutionized commercial art, photography, television, music, and film and as such. Presently digital art in India has become a popular genre of visual art and also creative expression through a few prolific contemporary digital artist in India as Vivan Sundaram, Nalini Malani, Amar Kanwar, Shilpa Gupta, Bharati Kher, Pratul Dash, Babu Eshwar Prasad, Samar Yusuf, Monika Bijlini, Shovin Bhattacharjee and many more.*

Keywords : *Contemporary, Video art, Digital technology.*

INTRODUCTION

The use of digital technologies in almost every arena of daily life has vastly increased during the past two decades, leading to speculations that all forms of artistic media will eventually be absorbed into the digital medium either through digitization or through the use of Computers in a specific aspect of processing or production. It is certainly true that more and more artists working in different forms of media from painting,

drawing, and sculpture to photography and video are making use of digital technologies as a tool of creation for aspects of their art.

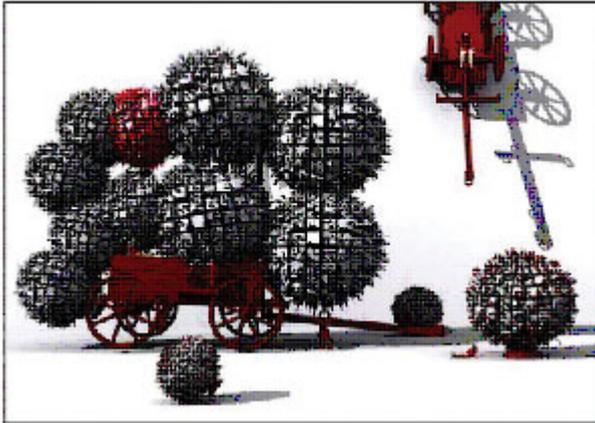
The terminology for technological art forms has always been extremely fluid and what is now known as digital art has undergone to as 'Computer art', then multimedia art and cyber arts (from the 1960s-90s) digital art now is often used interchangeably with 'new media', which at the end of the twentieth century was used mostly for film and video, as well as sound art and other hybrid forms. Digital art is an artistic work or practices that use digital technology as an essential part of the creative or presentation process. Digital art can be defined as any art that is made with the help of a computer. The impact of digital technology has transformed activities such as painting, drawing, and sculpture. While new forms such as net art, digital installation art, and virtual reality have become recognized artistic practices.

In modern times everything is changing and art is not left alone. Now, this new media of art remind new. Every young artist of India might have tried this medium. All the art colleges are orienting students in this medium or encourage them to try digital painting or print. The computer is neither a tool nor a medium that serves to define an art form. Digital art is created on a computer in digital form. It can be purely computer-generated or taken from an external source, such as scanned photographs or drawn directly on the computer using vector graphics. Digital art can, therefore, be roughly grouped into types: it can exist as a hard copy in the form of prints (digital printing): it can exist as a soft copy on the internet (net art) or it can be cinematic, using digital audio-visual media.

Modern Indian artists have always been inspired to introduce or adopt new media technologies and their expressions. In the late 1980s, and with computer technology becoming more accessible, many artists began exploring the possibilities it offered. M.F.Hussain, S.H. Raza, Manjit Bawa, Navjot Altaf, Atul Dodiya, Akber Padamsee and Prabhakar Barwe experimented with digital printing at the Brahma camp (1990 -91) held in collaboration with the national gallery of Modern Art in New Delhi. Presently digital art in India has become a popular genre of visual art and also creative expression through few prolific contemporary digital artist in India -Vivan Sundaram, Ranbir Kaleka, Nalini Malani, Amar Kanwar, Shilpa Guta, Bharati Kher, Babu Iswari Prasad and Pratul Das.

The digital production of images opened up endless possibilities for visual artists, served their apprenticeship as illustrators, animators, programmers, web designers. The present study is focused on the approach, practice and application of digital media in North -East India contemporary art which had the flexible character in terms of communication the artwork for visual gratification and creative exploration with new possibilities and make a detailed study on few Contemporary Digital artists-Mriganka Madhukaillya, Sonal Jain, Shovin Bhattacharjee, Aditi Chakravarty, Siva Prasad Marar, Dr. Nirmal Kanti Roy, Baharul Islam Laskar, Dr. Meghali Goswami, Kishor Kumar Das, Prabin Kumar Nath.

Aditi Chakravarty was started by solo Exhibition, Digital print State Art Gallery Guwahati,1998. Baharul Islam Laskar was also started by solo Exhibition-cum-workshop,"Computer Graphics" 2003 organized by Assam fine Arts crafts Society, Guwahati. Desire Machine Collective is a group of media practitioners based in Guwahati. Collaborating since 2004 as Desire Machine Collective, Sonal Jain and Mriganka Madhukaillya employ film, video, sound, space, photography, and objects in their installation and works. Their experiments with a wide range of media techniques and strategies with the aim of probing narratives and modes of representations, infused with a political character lend them a uniqueness that contributed to their growth as one of the leading artist collaborative in India's contemporary art scene. Their works have been showcased at some major international festivals and renowned museums.



Shovin Bhattacharjee, Digital Print



Siva Prasad Marar, Digital Print

The digital art exhibition titled 'Why 4' was also a turning point in the new media art in the North East region. It was the department of Visual arts, A.U.S Silchar went on to experiment with digital techniques and tools. Mr. Sivan. G, Dr. Nirmal Kanti Roy, Dr. Meghali Goswami, and Baharul Islam Laskar exhibited a digital art show in Assam State Art Gallery, Guwahati, 2008.

This new media art form within the entire Northeast region, is the Visual arts Department, Assam University, Silchar. Students of this department are experimenting and exploring various possible mediums such as video art, computer graphics & animation. And a good number of these contemporary artists are practicing the new media art forms.

One of the major National Workshop in North East India 'New Media Workshop' 2011 at Silchar, Assam, organized by Lalit Kala Academy, New Delhi held in the Department of Visual Arts, Silchar. There are ten Participants who are famous artists all over India & three artists in the North East region Dr. Nirmal Kanti Roy, Baharul Islam Laskar, Kishor Kumar Das. The first digital art competition and exhibition organized by IGM (Institute of graphics and multimedia) held in 2014 gallery HUE Silchar Assam, this exhibition cum competition was arranged by Baharul Islam Laskar. Now those days there are lots of artists in northeast India who have organised so many digital and new media art exhibitions all over India, and we people are very much influenced by their works.

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Mriganka Madhukailya and Sonal Jain test the limits of the moving image. They reinvent the role it plays in recording social histories. They are the Desire Machine Collective based in Guwahati, Assam, and the centerpiece of Noise Life, their first solo show in Mumbai, mines the various complexities of image construction besides telling a dark story about mental illness. In the 32-minute video projected on a wall, mental illness is personal torment as well as a metaphor for an oppressed society and decaying geography.

Their work, since the formation of the collective in 2004, has blurred the lines between the personal and the political. Their media/video works depend heavily on researching, recording, and archiving sounds and visuals which, to them, reveal the urgent issues of the environment and society they are documenting—largely the North-East. Their earlier works are directly about political identity, the sanctity of forests, the excesses of capitalism, and the implications of a nation-state that exists on the margins of larger world order.

The residue (2011), a film projection that features an abandoned thermal power plant in Guwahati, illuminates the beauty of the ruin and its existence as a memory of a period of heavy industrialization.



Temsuyanger Longkumer, Digital print



Aditi Chakravarty, Digital print

Trespassers Will (Not) Be Prosecuted (2008), their most traveled work, is a result of recording, over four years, the sounds deep inside Mawphlang, a forest considered sacred in Meghalaya. *Daily Check Up (2005)* looks at the everyday violence "experienced in a region of imposed geographies, and pushed into the periphery of a nation's imagination". The recurrent motif of this video is a visual shot of a security check at the airport. *In Alfa Beta (2005)*, they question the representation of the North-East in mainstream media. Textual puns punctuate footage of the Hindi film *Tango Charlie* to deconstruct the stereotypical representation of people from the North-East.

Shovin Bhattacharjee completed his Bachelor of Fine Arts and his Master Degree (Painting) in Fine Arts from Assam University Silchar. To his recognitions, he has done a number of exhibitions both in group and solo. He is experimenting with painting, new media art, digital installation, video art and with this medium he has achieved a number of awards, workshop and is an international exhibition. 1st All India Digital Art Exhibition, A.I.F.A.C.S., New Delhi. 2011. He was the award winner in the digital art exhibition. Shovin Bhattacharjee digital works to construct a three-dimensionality with primary geometry. In spite of all experiments, Architecture still relies on primary geometry that can easily withstand the power of the elements and gravity. Unconsciously, scale, space and sizes that loom large in artworks come in here too as three-dimensional entities, installing impermanence. This is the primary nature of the installed. Actual space acquires photo-real importance. reference points like Milk Cane, teacups, Globe, Bullock Cart, Indian bed, Sleeper, keyboard. In some, the top angle does it as in the photo Shovin Bhattacharjee was different types of experiment works in the field of Indian contemporary art. He was live in New Delhi.

Temsuyanger Longkumer born in Nagaland, India, is a contemporary British Indian artist active in London. He has worked in media including drawing, print, sculpture, installation and video. Longkumer attended the Royal College of Art, from which he holds an M.A. in printmaking. The work reads like a contemporary trophy to the savagery of man as each skeletal head is betrothed to the high ceilinged walls of the billiard-room. It is that relationship between the historical and the contemporary that illuminates these works where many of Longkumer's other works appear less resilient to the pertinence of contemporary art. Part of a series of works, portraits of remarkable people I have met, Longkumer decorates these macabre skeletal heads in more and more futile skins that effectively critiques the historical treasure of these trophies.

Longkumer is an Associate Member of the Royal Society of Painter-Printmakers at the Bankside Gallery, London, and has been artist-in-residence at the Cité International des Arts in Paris and the Fondazione Pistoletto in Biella, Italy.

Aditi Chakravarty born in Guwahati, Assam, Completed her Bachelor in fine Arts (Graphics) from Govt. College of Art & Crafts, Assam. Guwahati University. She her experimenting with Graphics, digital print, new media art and with this medium achieved several international exhibitions, workshop, and international exhibition.

Siva Prasad Marar was born in 1972, Biswanath Chariali, Assam, India., completed his Bachelor of Fine Arts (Sculpture)from Govt. College of Art & Crafts, Assam. Guwahati University and further did his Master of Fine Art (Specialization in Sculpture) From Indira Kala Sangeet University, Khairagarh, Chhattisgarh, in 2002. To his recognitions, he has done a number of exhibitions both in group and solo. 2nd All India Digital Art Exhibition, A.I.F.A.C.S., New Delhi. 2012. He was the award winner in the digital art exhibition. He is experimenting with the new media art world and with this medium he has achieved a number of awards and workshops.

Conclusion

Digital art practice and concerned digital artists in North-Eastern India. These new media and internet technology are certainly tools for the global art movement that we see today. Most artists are adept at adopting emerging technologies and they have welcomed its advent, relishing the play of popular media and new communication technologies- the web, internet, webcams, surveillance cameras, wireless, computers, sound systems, and GPS devices to innovate and explore their art. With digital intervention, skilled artists are able to expand, and retain the uniqueness of their work. Large numbers of creative people are seen pursuing courses in multimedia, animation, mass media, applied art, web design, film, television, and audiovisual media as creative technologies are increasingly getting integrated into our educational system and art practice in North East India. The digital revolution is clearly here and has come to stay as an integral part of contemporary art practice in the North East region.

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