

PUBLICATION

ZOOM! Art in Contemporary India
(catalogue excerpt p43)

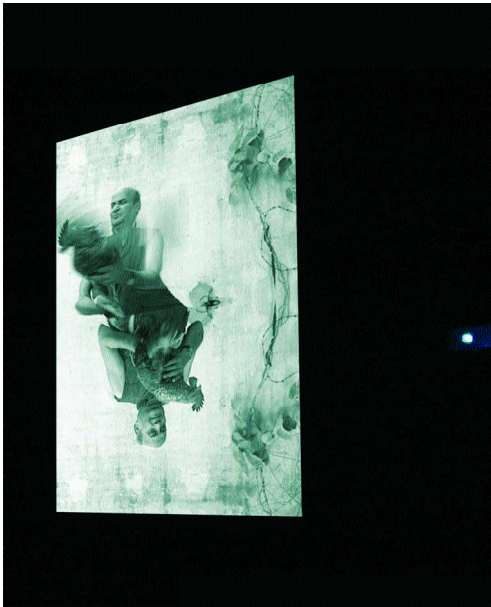
Culturgest-Lisbon, Portugal
Apr 7 - Jun 6 2004

by Nancy Adajania

...the painter and installator Ranbir Kaleka retains the sensuous quality of painterliness in his video installation, *Man with Cockerel*. Rendered with the hypnotic aura and pace of a black-and white silent film, the video operates with a minimal narrative, calibrated gestures. The action of the loop is simple, yet rewards phenomenological scrutiny: a man enters the frame, holding on to a cockerel, perfectly mirrored by his reflection,, He look at the viewer, as though for confirmation of his existence, his possession of the bird. At this point, his image breaks up; but as suddenly, reappears, while the cockerel makes good its escape. The synchrony between person and reflection breaks down, as the man pursues the runaway cockerel, leaving his reflection behind. A moment later, the reflection breaks down, as the man pursues the runaway cockerel, leaving his reflection behind. A moment later, the reflection follows the person in slow motion. The man returns, both bird and reflection under control: the sequence of escape and capture repeats itself. Why are these insistent images so lucid, yet difficult to grasp? Buddhist in desires that enslave the self to the object of its passion, turning existence into a chain of pursuit, possession, frustration and renewed pursuit. The brief point of choice, when the cycle might be broken, is perhaps indicated by the time lag when the reflection momentarily refuses to play mirror.

Nancy Adajania

curator and art critic, Adajania is also a cultural theorist and film-maker



MAN WITH COCKEREL 2001 (installation still)
2 channel video, 19 second loop
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