

Porosity Kabari

Works by

Trent Jansen
Richard Goodwin
Ishan Khosla

‘Porosity Kabari’ is the result of an interdisciplinary, cross-cultural, collaborative project between Trent Jansen, Richard Goodwin, and Ishan Khosla. The project challenged the trio to produce furniture and object pieces made from materials and craftsmanship sourced solely from the ‘Chor Bazaar’ (thieves market) and ‘Kabari Bazaars’ (junk markets) in Mumbai, India.

10 June → 9 July
Nishi Gallery

NISHI GALLERY
17 Kendall Lane
Canberra ACT 2601

Gallery Hours
Wed to Sun 11am–3pm

HOTEL HOTEL
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India is a place where resourcefulness is part of the everyday. The market neighbourhoods where this project took place are where many of India’s useful objects end up. It is also where they are often given a second life — car panels are transformed into ad hoc cookers and old clothing is quilted into rugs for snake charmers.

The setting and parametres of this project challenged the designers to make do with what was at hand and in doing so ‘Porosity Kabari’ presents an alternative model for sustainable design that is relevant to all of us, living anywhere. It investigates the cycle of use, reuse (and further reuse)—and how we can, quite simply, use one thing to make another thing. The exhibition explores cultural conditions and social structures specific to India but perhaps familiar to many developing nations. The idealised notion of “progress” is put into question, as is the cycle of consumerism and desire in globalized India. ‘Porosity Kabari’ celebrates craft but highlights how craftspeople are undervalued in contemporary Indian society.

The objects produced for ‘Porosity Kabari’ were made outside the industrialised system. Improvisation was the applied technique for making. Ideas were generated and design decisions were made on the fly, shaped by the daily observations and moods of the designers. ‘Porosity Kabari’ champions the ad hoc and builds appreciation of the makeshift. It reminds us to look to and learn from developing cultures where, for many, resources are scare and resourcefulness is a necessity.

‘Porosity Kabari’ is presented by Hotel Hotel.

Works by Trent Jansen

For this project Trent Jansen explored the process of jugaad - doing just enough with what you have on hand and figuring it out as you go. At first it made him nervous. In contrast to his usual thoroughly researched projects, this jugaad process was a free fall.

This new process was based on observations and reactions - generating ideas by improvising forms and using only the techniques and materials that were readily available.

The making process was also improvised — options and workarounds were decided upon as solutions came to mind and were dependent on current mood and state of mind. These reflexive decisions determined the destiny of each object. Jansen made a stool, side table and crockery from terracotta, ‘Jugaad with Pottery’, with potter Abbas Galwani; and stools from metal with a small metal workshop, reshaping a car bonnet, copper panels and copper rivets, ‘Jugaad with Car Parts’. For ‘Dropping a Kubhar Wala Matka’ Jansen pays homage to Ai Wei Wei’s controversial work, ‘Dropping a Han Dynasty Urn’, 1995. In this work, Abbas Galwani, a kumbhar wala (potter) living and working in Dharavi, drops a traditional Indian Matka. With this act, Abbas denounces the cultural structures that restrict his social mobility, impede his ability to gain recognition and respect for his unquestionable skill, and hinder his capacity to provide for his family. The piece is a critique of the traditions and history that underpin Indian social conventions. In India, the kumbhar wala is among the lower castes, meaning that these craftspeople, who make functional objects serving millions of Indians on a daily basis, do not earn the respect that they deserve for their role within Indian society.

- 9

Jugaad with Pottery Stool, [year]
54 × 62 × 55 cm
Terracotta
\$2,160?
- 11

Jugaad with Pottery Bowl, [year]
12 × 40 × 40 cm
Terracotta
\$550
- 12

Jugaad with Pottery Low Tray, [year]
6 × 40 × 40 cm
Terracotta
NFS
- 13

Jugaad with Pottery Vessel, [year]
29 × 22 × 22 cm
Terracotta
NFS
- 14

Jugaad with Pottery High Tray, [year]
Repaired by Guy Keulemans and
Kyoko Hashimoto
12 × 40 × 40 cm
Terracotta and staples
\$1,600
This Jugaad plate broke en route to Australia. It is repaired with hand made sterling silver staples cut from a late Georgian serving spoon. The spoon fragment was annealed and pulled through a half-round draw plate several times until it achieved the right shape and gauge recommended by C.S.M Parsons and F.H Curl, the authors of China Mending and Restoration (1963). This book, perhaps the most comprehensive text on traditional ceramic stapling, was written on the eve of the technique’s almost complete disappearance. It has been made obsolete by the widespread use of petrochemical synthetic glues and, in the West at least, the decline of repair industries and the rise of hyperconsum-merist mentalities of ‘break and buy again’.
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Jugaad with Pottery Side Table, [year]
45 × 40 × 40 cm
Terracotta
\$2,130
- 20

Jugaad with Car Parts × 6, [year]
45 × 35 × 35 cm
Used car panel and copper
\$1,100
- 24

Dropping a Kumbhar Wala Matka Vessel, [year]
Framed photographs × 3
35 × 50 cm
Vessel × 1
30 × 45 × 30 cm
Terracotta
\$1,815

Works by Richard Goodwin

With his ‘Binary Maquettes’ Goodwin explores the ratio of the golden mean (1:√2 - one as to the square root of two) a mathematical ratio found in nature and used in design to create compositions that are in proportion. In ancient Greek philosophy, the golden mean is the desirable middle state between excess and deficiency. With these maquettes Goodwin investigates the current threats to our existence as human beings.

With his installation ‘1-√2 Charpai For Mumbai’ Goodwin combines a motor scooter and an Indian charpai bed. With this high-rise bed on the move he explores where the body ends and architecture begins. He ponders on the lessons that the Mumbai slums can offer for 21st century architecture — by drawing on its highly developed social constructions, the problems there can be continuously addressed by the people that live and work there.

With his ‘Klein Chair’ Goodwin explores his obsession with the Klein bottle — in mathematics, an impossible vessel that swallows itself, it has no inside or outside.

- 1

Klein Chair, [year]
90 x 40 x 50 cm
chair and synthetic textile
\$5,000
- 2

1:√2 Independent B — Binary Maquettes
Installation, [year]
70 x 60 x 90 cm
Various artifacts
\$3,000
- 10

1:√2 Cabinet — Binary Maquettes, [year]
160 x 60 x 60 cm
Timber cabinet with various artifacts
\$9,000
- 21

1:√2 Independent A — Binary Maquettes
Installation, [year]
75 x 50 x 60 cm
Various artifacts
\$4,500
- 22

Computer Chair, [year]
50 x 35 x 35 cm
Computer and timber folding chair
NFS
- 23

1:√2 Charpai for Mumbai, [year]
105 x 210 x 180 cm
Scooter and charpai
\$16,500

Works by Ishan Khosla

Khosla’s works meditate on his contempo-rary India.

‘Construct/Deconstruct’ is a collection of furniture made from found objects and pieces of wood scavenged from the streets of Mumbai. The work references the cycle of material use and reuse (and further reuse) in India. These naïve objects don’t follow any design principles, choosing instead to emulate or force gestures — for example a stool that forces the sitter to prop one of their feet up (a common sitting pose in India).

‘Partition of the Mind’ represents the division between idealised “progress” and the economy in India versus traditional values and ideals of egalitarianism. With everyday domestic objects — brass thali, lassi glasses and tiffins; Khosla speaks of the endless cycle of consumerism and desire in his globalised India and the increase in the divide between those with plenty and those with nothing.

- 3

Partition of the Mind 3, [year]
23 x 22 x 26 cm
Brass and aluminium
\$950?
- 4

Partition of the Mind 2, [year]
23 x 23 x 21 cm
Brass and aluminium
\$990?
- 5

Partition of the Mind 5, [year]
23 x 23 x 23 cm
Brass and aluminium
\$850?
- 6

Partition of the Mind 4, [year]
23 x 23 x 19 cm
Brass and aluminium
\$850?
- 7

Partition of the Mind 6, [year]
23 x 13 x 20 cm
Brass and aluminium
\$750?
- 8

Partition of the Mind 1, [year]
27 x 36 x 20 cm
Brass and aluminium
\$900?
- 15

Construct-Deconstruct-Construct 2, [year]
69 x 25 x 45 cm
Various types of wood
\$4,500?
- 16

Construct-Deconstruct-Construct 3, [year]
52 x 32 x 33 cm
Various types of wood
\$3,000?
- 17

Construct-Deconstruct-Construct 4, [year]
73 x 46 x 45 cm
Various types of wood
\$4,500?
- 18

Construct-Deconstruct-Construct 1, [year]
82 x 39 x 42 cm
Various types of wood
\$5,000?