

Jiten Thukral

Biography:

1. **Country** : India
2. **Dates** : Born 1976, Jalandhar, Punjab, India
3. **Lives and works** : The Artist Lives and Works in Delhi
4. **Education** : 1998 BFA, Chandigarh Art College
2000 MFA, New Delhi College of Art
Medium and Technique : painting, sculpture, installation, video, graphic and product design, websites, music and fashion.

Sumir Tagra

1. **Country** : India
2. **Dates** : Born 1979, New Delhi, India
3. **Lives and works** : The Artist Lives and Works in New Delhi
4. **Education** : 2002 BFA, New Delhi College of Art
2006 PG, National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad
1999 Shankar's Academy of Arts, New Delhi
Medium and Technique : painting, sculpture, installation, video, graphic and product design, websites, music and fashion.

Thukral & Tagra blur the lines between Fine Art and Popular Culture, product placement and exhibition design, artistic inspiration and media hype. Their works comment on the globalization of consumer culture and the repercussions of this as it is being experienced in India today. While both playful and humorous, their works express thoughtful questions about the nature of Indian identity as it is articulated by Indians themselves and projected on to India by the rest of the world.

Their practice fuses the current influx of the Western mainstream with India's deep-rooted cultural heritage which their portraits and wall drawings combine in a typically quirky, kitsch and eye-catching way.

Updated CV- <http://www.thukralandtagra.com>

Selected Exhibitions:

Solo

2013-“Windows of Opportunity” – Art Plural, Singapore

2012“Longing for Tomorrow” – Nature Morte, Berlin

2012 “Nosturistic” – Hilgar contemporary, Vienna

2011“Put It On, Again!” – Nature Morte, New Delhi

2011“The Beautiful Game – Foundation Thukral & Tagra” – Project Booth, Art Summit, New Delhi

2011“Science, Mystery and Magic” – BTAP_Tokyo Gallery and Tokyo Art Fair, Tokyo

2011“German Returned” Nature Morte, The Oberoi, Gurgaon

2010“Low-Tech Family Vacations”, Singapore Tyler Print Institute, Singapore

http://www.stpi.com.sg/artist_tt.php

2010“Middle Class Dreams”- “Arario Gallery, Seoul

2010“Match Fixed/Fixed Match”- Ullens Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing

<http://ucca.org.cn/en/exhibition/thukral-tagra-match-fixed/>

2009“Nouveau Riche” – Nature Morte, Berlin

2009“Thukral & Tagra, 315 Sector 23, Opp Bosedk Mall”- Gallery Barry Keldoulis, Sydney

<http://www.gbk.com.au/artists/thukral-tagra/thukral-tagra-315-sector-23-opp-bosedk-mega-mall>

2008“New Improved Bosedk” - Gallery Chatterjee and Lal, Mumbai

2008“Somnium Genero 02” – Gallery Barry Keldoulis, Sydney

2008“Somnium Genero Cafe”- Tokyo Art Fair, Tokyo

2007“Adolescere-Domus” – Art Statements, Art Basel 38, Nature Morte and Bose Pacia

2007“Put it On”- Bose Pacia, New York

2007“Everyday Bosedk,”- Nature Morte, New Delhi

2006“Vector Classics” – Jehangir Nicholson Gallery, NCPA, Mumbai

2006“Vector Classics” – Alliance Francaise, New Delhi

2005“Iconography” bosedkdesigns.com - Nature Morte, New Delhi

Group:

2012“Indian Highway v” UCCA, Beijing

2012“ESCAPE: Reset/Resume” – INDIA TODAY, ARKEN Museum for Modern Art, Denmark is this the name of this exhibition? Isn't it only called India Today?

2011“The Matter Within: New Contemporary Art of India’, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco CA

2011“Indian Highway” Maxxi Museum, Roma, Italy

2011“Paris-Delhi-Bombay” Centre Georges Pompidou – Paris

2011“Indian Highway IV” Musée d’art contemporain de Lyon

2011“Maximum India”- Kennedy Center, Washington D.C

2011“Samtidigt” (Concurrent) – KULTERHUST, Stockholm

2011“Samtidigt” (Concurrent) - Helsinki Art Museum

2010-Bosedk project, Richmond Art Gallery, Vancouver

2010“Urban Matters 2” - SESC Pompie, Sao Paulo

2010“Khoj-in-Context” – Public Art.Ecology, New Delhi

2010“11th Hour” – Tang Contemporary, Beijing

2010“Inside India” – Palazzo Saluzzo di Paesana, Turin

2010Commonwealth Games Exhibition, Lalit Kala Akademie, New Delhi

2009“Chalo! India: A New Era of Indian Art” - National Museum of Contemporary Art, Seoul
Essl Museum, Vienna

2009“Escape! for the Dream Land” – Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art 06,Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane

2008“The Audience & the Eavesdropper” – Philips de Pury, London and New York

2008“Chalo! India: A New Era of Indian Art” – Mori Art Museum, Tokyo

2008“Make Art Stop AIDS” – UCLA Fowler Museum, Los Angeles

2008“Imaginary Realities” – Max Wigram Gallery, London

2008“Face East”- Wedel Fine Art, London

2007“Animamix Biennial” – The Museum of Contemporary Art, Shanghai

2007“New Delhi New Wave”- Marella Gallery, Milan

2007“Size Matters”- Art Consult, New Delhi

2007Galerie Mirchandani + Steinruecke, Mumbai

2006“Global Edit 06,” - Armani Casa with Wallpaper Magazine, Milan

2005“New Paintings”- Nature Morte, New Delhi

2004“Visual Dialogue” Brooklyn Gallery, London

Awards / Reviews :

101 Emerging Designers of the World – Wallpaper Magazine, Global Edit 2006

D&AD 2005

One Show Interactive 2005

Limca Book of Records 2004

One Show (New York) 2004, 2003

One Show Design (New York) 2004, 2003

Red Hot Ogilvy 2003

Graphis International Awards 2003

London international Awards 2003

SEE MORE:

TEXT

Review-Thukral & Tagra:Windows of Opportunity, Marilyn Goh, Daily Serving,2013

Review-Indian artistic duo Thukral & Tagra's window to the migrant world, Deepika Shetty,The Strait Times,2013

Review-Art duo poke fun at India's obsessions,Helmi Yusof,The Bussiness Times,2013

Interview-Sugarcoating sourness with some sweetness: Indian artists Thukral & Tagra, Patrick Benjamin,Insing,2013

Review-Thukral and Tagra: Windows of Opportunity, Max Ambruster,Muse,2013

Review-Thukral and Tagra:Match Fixed,Jin Simeng,Leap Magazine,2011

Review- Preview: Thukral & Tagra's 'Windows of Opportunity',Gwen Pew,Time Out Singapore,2010

Not sure-<http://www.timeoutdelhi.net/art/features/three-questions-for%E2%80%A6-thukral-and-tagra>

not sure- <http://www.beijingtoday.com.cn/weekend/plight-of-marriage-in-india>

Overview-The maverick mundas, Neelam Raj,TOI Crest,2010

Overview- Bosedk, Which Way Is Punjab?,Nisha Susan,Teheka,2011

Overview-The Creative Duo -Thukral & Tagra, Project Effexx,2012

<http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/jiten-thukral-and-sumir-tagra-two-of-a-kind/1/113849.html>

<http://www.outlookindia.com/article.aspx?239026>

VIDEOS:

Interview- Thukral & Tagra 1 - Working Together, Art Plural Gallery,2013

Interview- Thukral & Tagra 4 - Put it On series, Art Plural Gallery,2013

Interview -Thukral & Tagra 5 – Themes, Art Plural Gallery,2013

Interview -Thukral & Tagra 9 - What is BoseDK?, Art Plural Gallery,2013

Artist Talk-Thukral and Tagra,Chandigarh Lalit Kala Akademi ,National Art Week of New Media,2013

Exhibition Glimpse- Art Plural Gallery, Thukral & Tagra 'Windows of Opportunity', Channel News Asia's AM Live,2013

Artist Talk-Thukral & Tagra: Diaspora In a Bottle | The Matter Within: New Contemporary Art of India,YBCA,2011

Artist Talk- Thukral & Tagra, Samtidigt Kulturhuset,2010

Artist Talk-A Work of Persol - Jiten Thukral & Sumir Tagra,2009

Text:

In **Windows of Opportunity** (2013), a series of paintings and wall reliefs for which the exhibition is named, Thukral & Tagra shift their focus to the **immigration aspirations of young Indians** through the enduring images of **pinball machines, sports memorabilia and the oval outline of an aeroplane window**. Despite their efforts to leave the country, there is no anchoring destination for them, no identifying indicators of skylines or architectural landmarks, merely indicators of the mileage they accrue as a measure of their success. Their side-portraits are triple-framed: by the borders of the canvas, by the small, oval window of a plane, and finally by the confines of a pinball machine. It is a reinforced metaphor of the demarcating limits of their dreams as players who try their luck at a stunted game that consists of seemingly endless circular movements of transit and transience, the end of which could very well be the very beginning. Recurrent motifs of competitive athletics – medals, unreachable targets and more obviously the white-and-orange racetrack that weaves its way around the paintings – seem to reiterate the impossibility of success where the ultimate prize still lies beyond reach.

<http://dailyserving.com/2013/03/thukral-tagra-windows-of-opportunity/>

With their signature style of **“Punjabi baroque,”** Indian artistic duo Thukral & Tagra transform UCCA’s Middle Room into a playing field on which **marriage, tradition and global ambitions collide**.

The concept is playful – the ancient Indian sport of **Kabbadi** being played in a middleclass living room – but the subject matter is intensely serious. **Match Fixed** is a **biting satire of arranged marriages in India’s northern state of Punjab**, where many young men emigrate abroad to establish successful careers and return home briefly to enter into arranged matches with “suitable” local girls. All too often, these unions result in the groom running off with the dowry and the wife left at home, to the chagrin of her family, awaiting a visa and plane ticket that never arrive.

Featuring **life-sized “human trophies,”** gilt-wrapped television sets playing interviews with abandoned wives, ceiling fans hung with paternal pagri (turbans) and “runaway husbands” glimpsed through airplane windows, **Match Fixed** is a rococo rendering of real-life sorrow.

- Jérôme Sans, UCCA Director

They eloquently mix high art with **low art, design with formal art standards, and ornate objects with everyday products in this “dream-come-true” of commercial culture.**

Jumbled together with the **tragic plight of young brides, the artists paint a fascinating portrait of the new exploding middleclass of India**. Their exhibition serves as a heartbreaking case study of how **international dreams have deteriorated the fabric of hometown culture.**

Playful, fascinatingly colorful, attractive by all aesthetic standards, yet biting in the story it has to tell, this exhibition is not a passive discourse, but an argument, a proposition, a conversation and an environment that transforms the viewer into an interlocutor of globalized India.

<http://ucca.org.cn/en/exhibition/thukral-tagra-match-fixed/>

Designer and artist duo Thukral & Tagra's works are executed in a **wide variety of media including graphics, videos, music, interiors, product design, paintings, sculpture and installations**. Their quirky, kitsch, pop art-like works focus on the influence of popular western ideologies on India's deep-rooted cultural heritage. However, the duo's approach to the subject is refreshingly stylish. Although **vibrant and energetic, their compositions raise serious questions about the loss of identity** experienced by Indians in their own sub-continent and its repercussions worldwide.

<http://www.saffronart.com/artists/thukral-and%20tagra>

At Singapore Tyler Print Institute (STPI), T&T concocted an irresistible assortment of works on paper for the exhibition **"Low-Tech Family Vacations"**, featuring a seductive mix of beautifully composed graphics that animate with specially designed digital components.

T&T's frequently used typographic element, **"Bosedk"**, a **Punjabi language expletive**, pops all over the artworks like flowery slogans, "Children eat free", "Open 24hrs", "Beautiful Bosedk", "Family weekends", offer tongue-in-cheek critique of banal consumption ostensibly served up for viewers delectation. Thukral and Tagra added, **"We live in time of "McDonaldisation" and we are responsible for our children's future that is explicitly "Disneyfied". In most cases we act like we are motorised and novice, repeating the same actions every day."**

T&T started their **careers as graphic and product designers**, their practice a reflection of the dynamism and ambition of India's rapidly growing economy. "We are influenced by the global nature of aesthetics and its prevalent existence, thus we portray our fascinations through a distinctly Indian lens which results in a beautiful clash of sorts," said the dynamic duo.

http://www.stpi.com.sg/artist_tt.php

Thukral & Tagra 315, Sector 23 (opp. Bosedk mega mall)- Thukral & Tagra **blur the lines between fine art and popular culture, product placement and exhibition design, artistic inspiration and media hype.**

The work focuses on the dream-come-true **burgeoning of consumer culture and a newly prevalent postmodern architectural style** that can be found throughout India and is commonly referred to as **"Punjabi Baroque."**

Vulgar and ostentatious, confused and desperately misguided, the style has been propagated by builders without the assistance of architects, reflecting the jumble of sensibilities that come together to create the new exploding middle-class of India.

T&T pump up the volume to **turn these suburban homes into surrealist castles, sugar coated and floating on clouds of flowers**. In paintings and sculptures, they **explore this aesthetic of the proudly bastardized, the boisterous Mamma's boys** who pretend to be gangsters, the teenage farmers who dream of making it big in Bollywood.

<http://www.gbk.com.au/artists/thukral-tagra/thukral-tagra-315-sector-23-opp-bosedk-mega-mall>

This cultural influence is also felt in their **choice of graphics and colors that have a Bollywoodian exuberance: floral patterns, equestrian ribbons and pink rooftop**.

The **'windows of opportunity'** they seek are referenced in portraits of young individuals framed in airplane windows, waiting patiently for escape. Another witty choice of imagery hints that a difficult reality belies this dream: these portraits look to be encased in **pinball machines, likening the process of getting a visa or living abroad to a never-ending game where one is thrown back and forth, jostled between reality and fantasy**.

http://www.artpluralgallery.com/2-en-art-a21-img_thukral-and-tagra:-windows-of-opportunity.html#.UbAgvUCkzw

Thukral and Tagra's **humorous yet provocative works** address the harsh realities of Indian society today while mirroring its fantasies and aspirations. Thukral and Tagra's fantastic universe is a dreamscape based in the everyday world, where man's heroes and vices collide. Playful paintings in their signature **saccharine colors** tease our ideas of reality and desire in today's technological context. Rife with meaningful paradoxes, the art of Thukral and Tagra pulls the issues of our time out from under the carpet and throws them into the open, creating an experience that is both aesthetic and reflective, both tongue-in-cheek and brazenly seductive.

Windows of opportunity- For an added element of fun characteristic of Thukral and Tagra, a site-specific installation of a running track will meander through the first storey of the gallery. Not only will it tease viewers' experience of the gallery space but will expand on the idea of "gaming" to also include the act of viewing contemporary art.

http://www.artpluralgallery.com/catalogue/doc_exhibitions/a21/TT-press-release-Art-Plural.pdf

You're bombarded by **baby blue, neon-pink, tangerine, fuchsia and every other effervescent shade** of candy. The whole effect can be slightly dizzying - and might distract you from the social message embedded in the artwork. masters of eye-popping colours and wacky compositions. But they're also keen observers of the rapid social changes taking place in their homeland of India. the duo **tackle issues ranging from consumerism to migration to safe sex to bureaucratic myopia**.

Thukral and Tagra's airplane window-cum-pinball machine is an apt visual metaphor for the social phenomenon.

On the second floor of the gallery, there are heads and upper bodies of young men jutting out of the wall - in the same way that animal trophies are displayed by hunters. The artists say they are poking fun at the way Indian families glorify their kids who study or work abroad, by turning the children into wall trophies.

So kitsch or not? Peter Nagy of Delhi's Nature Morte gallery who was the first to exhibit their work in 2005, says, "One man's sublime is another man's kitsch. It depends on how much the artist does with it, to create a philosophical or critical paradigm that is worth examining." **T&T's work seen live speaks to you on multiple registers in a way kitsch is never going to. The airiness of their work is misleading.**

Take **Match Fixed, their elaborate 2009 installation in Beijing**. First, a kabbadi maidan in a faux Punjabi living room where NRI boys are the goldplated trophies. It is a 360 degree installation planned to the last detail over seven months: lush upholstery, airplane windows through which you see faces of departing NRIs and looped video interviews of grieving women left behind by NRI grooms. Pathos for a community that's almost always a comic stereotype.

This is the direction in which T&T's work is headed — **large-scale, obsessively planned, installations about social themes.**

The installations T&T favours are still rare in India and almost impossible to sell. When foreign museums invite them to create such large-scale installations, they embed individual objects and elements, which can be sold separately. For instance, their 2009 work *Escape for a Dream Land* explores the world of the Punjabi diaspora. In a plush room, a dining table is see-sawed towards the sorrow of parents living without their children. There is something a bit PC Sorcar about the levitating table legs — a lightness of touch, an exuberance that is characteristic of all T&T work. The carpet is silken phulkari. **Curator Ranjit Hoskote** adds, "One of the basic gestures in T&T's oeuvre is that of embellishment, which connects their work with tapestry and embroidery. Through this, they signal their engagement with the world of the **domestic interior**, the mingled comforts and disquietudes of homeas- enclosure. And since this forms one of the basic assumptions of their installations, it destabilises the default whitecube expectations of many viewers."

<http://tehelka.com/boosedk-which-way-is-punjab/>

"Longing for Tomorrow"-T&T's latest Solo Show

In this, the latest of their works, Thukral & Tagra explore the bizarre mix of sentimentality, nostalgia and clichéd futurisms that are epitomized by the rising Indian middle class and especially in the burgeoning new city of Gurgaon, a suburb of New Delhi where the artists live and work. Gurgaon, a rising hub of manufacturing and information technology, is also a sprawling **residential community characterized by faux-classical mansions, towering apartment blocks decked out like colonial bungalows, mega-malls** dominated by globalized food courts, and steel and glass behemoths connected by dirt roads.

