

## Alone | Together

### Riyas Komu & G. R. Iranna

July 20 – August 31, 2012

Press Preview & Opening Reception: Friday, July 20, 6:00pm – 9:00pm

35 Great Jones St., New York NY 10012

**AICON GALLERY** heralds the first joint exhibition of **Riyas Komu** and **G. R. Iranna** in *Alone / Together*, featuring a selection of iconic paintings and sculptures by two artists long at the forefront of contemporary Indian art. A natural counterpart to one another, both artists turn to representations of the human figure to draw upon the sociopolitical implications inherent in India's post-colonial culture as affected by themes of religion, media, gender and identity. While Komu's hyper-realist portraiture focuses relentlessly on the individual to establish a unique identity, Iranna examines the dynamic tensions between the individual and the societal group, particularly in his sculptural groupings of blindfolded naked figures. Amongst visions of conflict and compromise, both artists incorporate multiple layers of narrative into the rich dimensionality of their subjects, weaving powerful allegories into the threads of memory and identity that bind their art.

As a painter, sculptor, installation artist and cultural commentator, **Riyas Komu** draws inspiration predominantly from manifestations of gender and religion as defining notions of the individual. Komu is predominantly known as a portraitist, having recently completed a series of commissioned large-scale works of prominent South Asian political figures for **The New Yorker**. "The portrait has become the key trope of our time," says the artist, expressing his belief that portraiture conveys the human essence lost by other subjects. Creating allegories of the collective experience, as conveyed by individuals captured in attitudes of waiting, foreboding or memorializing, Komu gives prominence to the faces of his subjects, literally giving expression to the wider hardships – famine, genocide, migration, displacement and desolation – of which they are a part. The theme of globalization and the movement of power from individuals and communities, into the hands of corporations and governments is a central concern of Komu's practice. Presenting an idiosyncratic and fully engaged take on contemporary political struggles, Komu forcefully reasserts the integral importance of the individual in political art at a time when the rise of mass protest movements has increasingly captured the attention of the general media and come to the forefront of recent critical discourses surrounding contemporary art.



Riyas Komu, *Justice Sotomayor*, 2009, Oil on canvas, 48 x 36 in.



G. R. Iranna, *The Birth of Blindness*, 2007, Resin and mixed materials, Dimensions vary

A celebrated sculptor and painter, **G. R. Iranna's** disquieting canvases and large-scale installations are some of the most haunting and captivating works to be found in contemporary Indian art. Like Komu, his predominantly figurative works are concerned with broader sociopolitical subjects. Synthesizing a confluence of varied inspirational strands of thought, Iranna poses interpretations of agrarian life and allusions to Buddhist philosophies alongside imagery evoking captivity and alienation to chart man's problematic journey through life. His shifting focus evokes a fluidity of spatial and social contexts, often questioning the blindness of faith in both religion and the mass-consciousness of teeming societies. His figures are often superimposed against ethereal landscapes, as if separated from any possible existing environment and isolated from humanity at large. Iranna's sculptures follow a similar concept, their tactile quality and submissive postures evoking feelings of empathy, isolation and horror in the viewer.

Steeped in notions of restrained or passive resistance, the works are abstractedly realistic in their minimalist modality. We may empathize with his subjects, however, we can never fully enter into their realm.

Please contact Andrew <[Andrew@Aicongallery.com](mailto:Andrew@Aicongallery.com)> or Amy <[Amy@Aicongallery.com](mailto:Amy@Aicongallery.com)> for more information.

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## G. R. IRANNA



G. R. Iranna, *The Birth of Blindness*, 2007, Fiberglass, wood, iron, cloth, 27 x 26 x 42 inches each (x10 figures)

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G. R. IRANNA



G. R. Iranna, *Yatri*, 2012, Acrylic on tarpolin, 60 x 66 inches

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G. R. IRANNA



G. R. Iranna, *En-Light*, 2012, Acrylic on tarpolin, 60 x 66 inches

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## G. R. IRANNA



G. R. Iranna, *Blind Celebration*, 2008, Acrylic on canvas, 66 x 104 inches (diptych)

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G. R. IRANNA



G. R. Iranna, *Give Me Freedom*, 2007, Acrylic on canvas, 66 x 90 inches

G. R. IRANNA



G. R. Iranna, *The Boat on Hunger Strike*, 2008, Wood, marble, cotton and metal, 228 x 72 x 24 inches

G. R. IRANNA



G. R. Iranna, *Retired King*, ND, Acrylic on canvas, 54 x 132 inches

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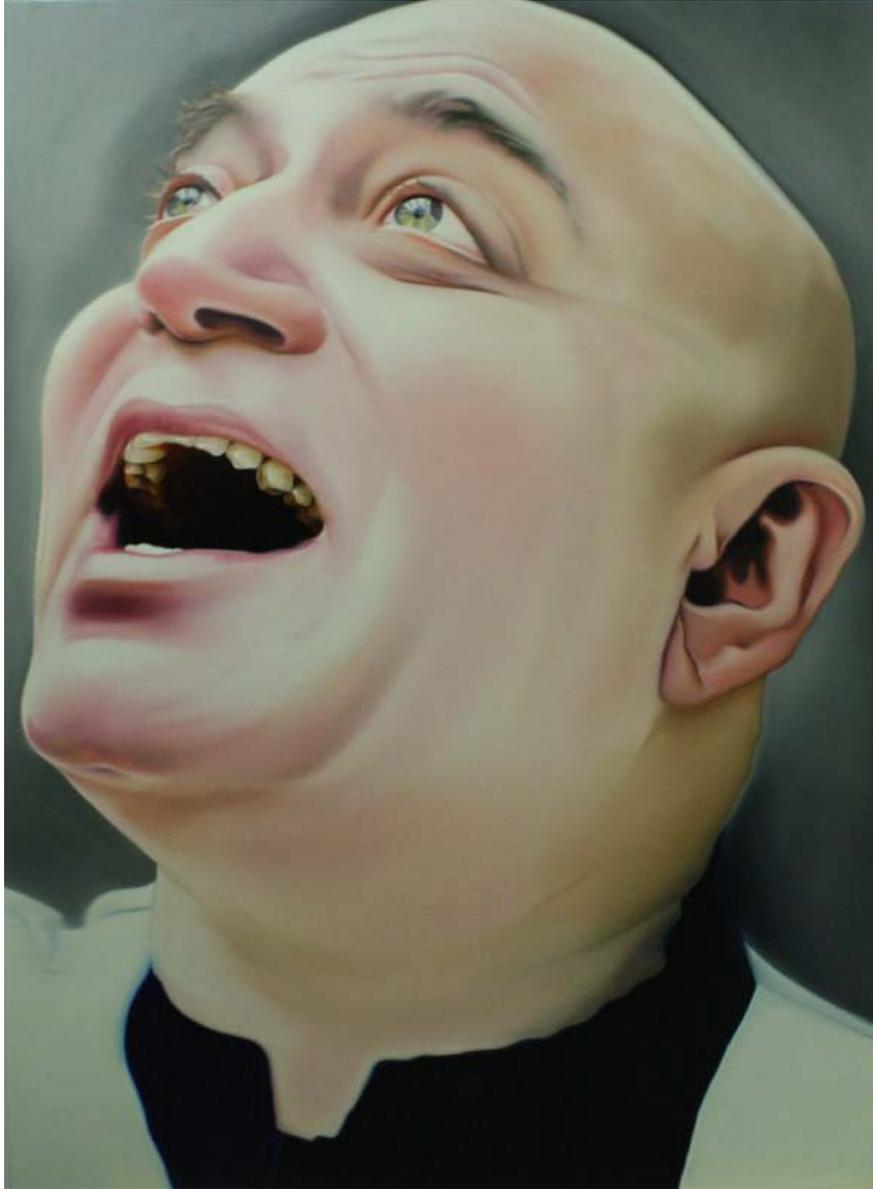
## G. R. IRANNA



G. R. Iranna, *Untitled (Man with Walking Stick)*, 1999, Mixed Media on canvas, 56 x 70 inches

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## RIYAS KOMU



Riyas Komu, *Madan Kataria*, ND, Oil on canvas, 60 x 48 inches

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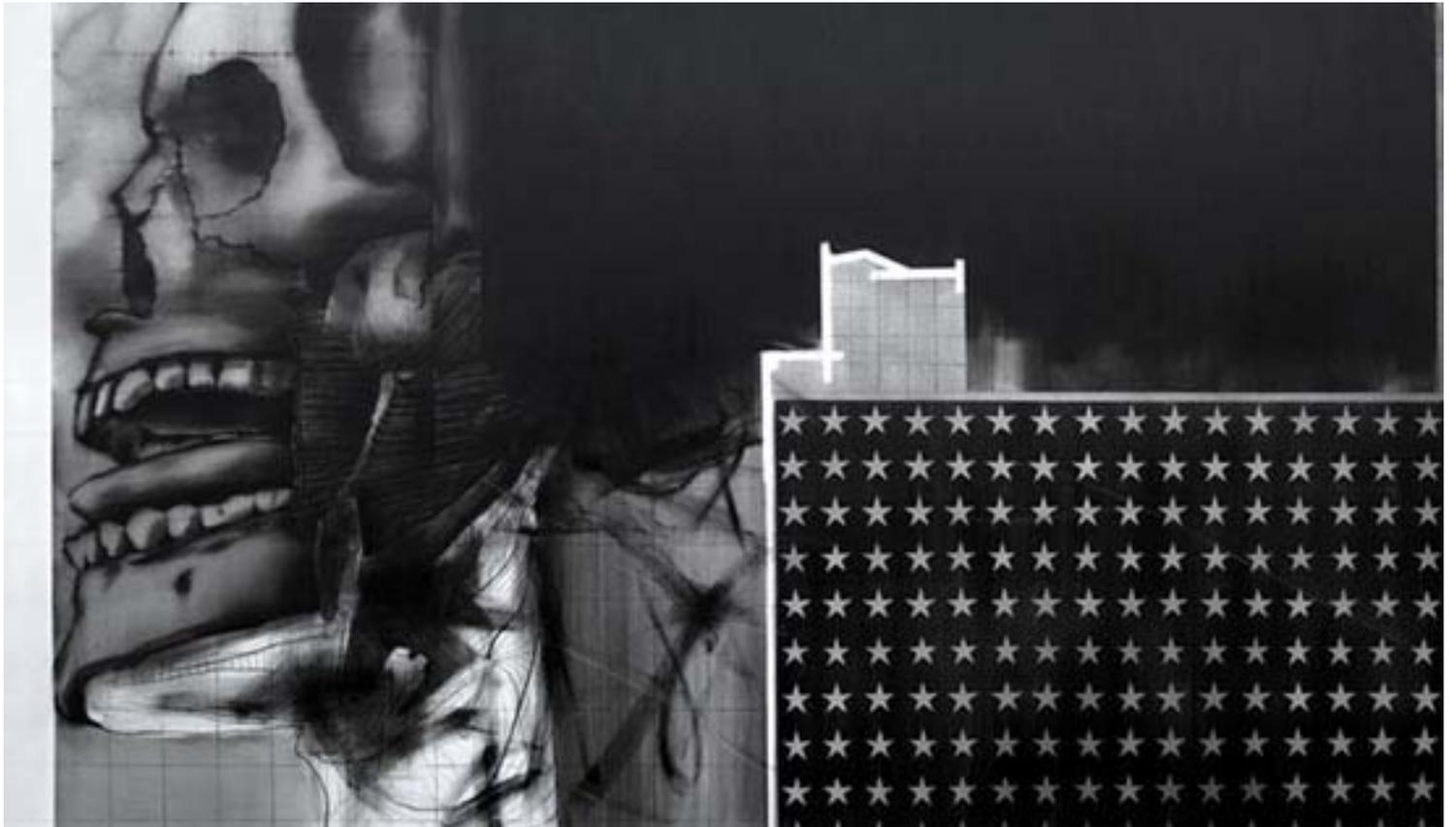
## RIYAS KOMU



Riyas Komu, *Justice Sotomayor*, 2009, Oil on canvas, 48 X 36 inches

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# RIYAS KOMU



Riyas Komu, *Onlyness*, Oil on canvas, 69 X 120 inches

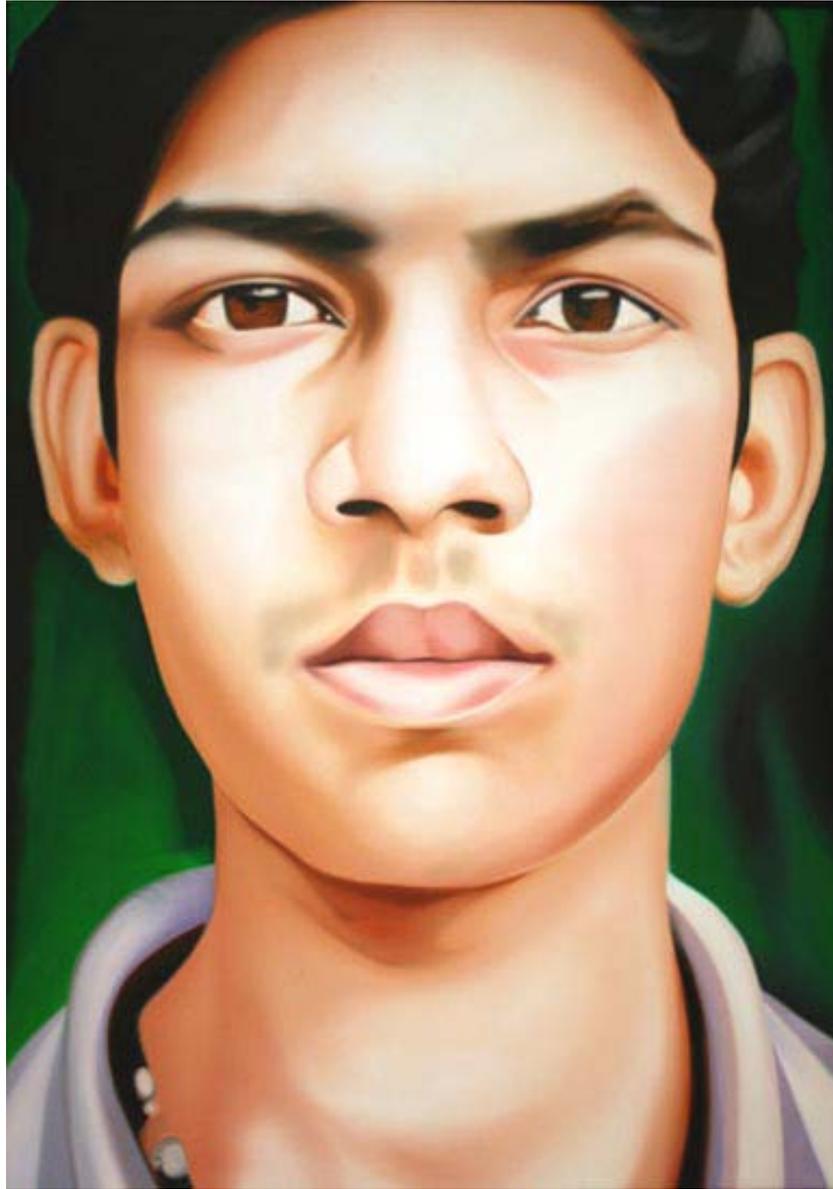
# RIYAS KOMU



Riyas Komu, *Undertakers*, 2007, Wood and iron and automotive paint, 37 x 42 x 23 inches

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## RIYAS KOMU



Riyas Komu, *Systematic Citizen XII*, 006, Oil on canvas, 84 x 60 inches

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## RIYAS KOMU



Riyas Komu, *Systematic Citizen*, 2006, Acrylic on canvas, 84 x 60 inches

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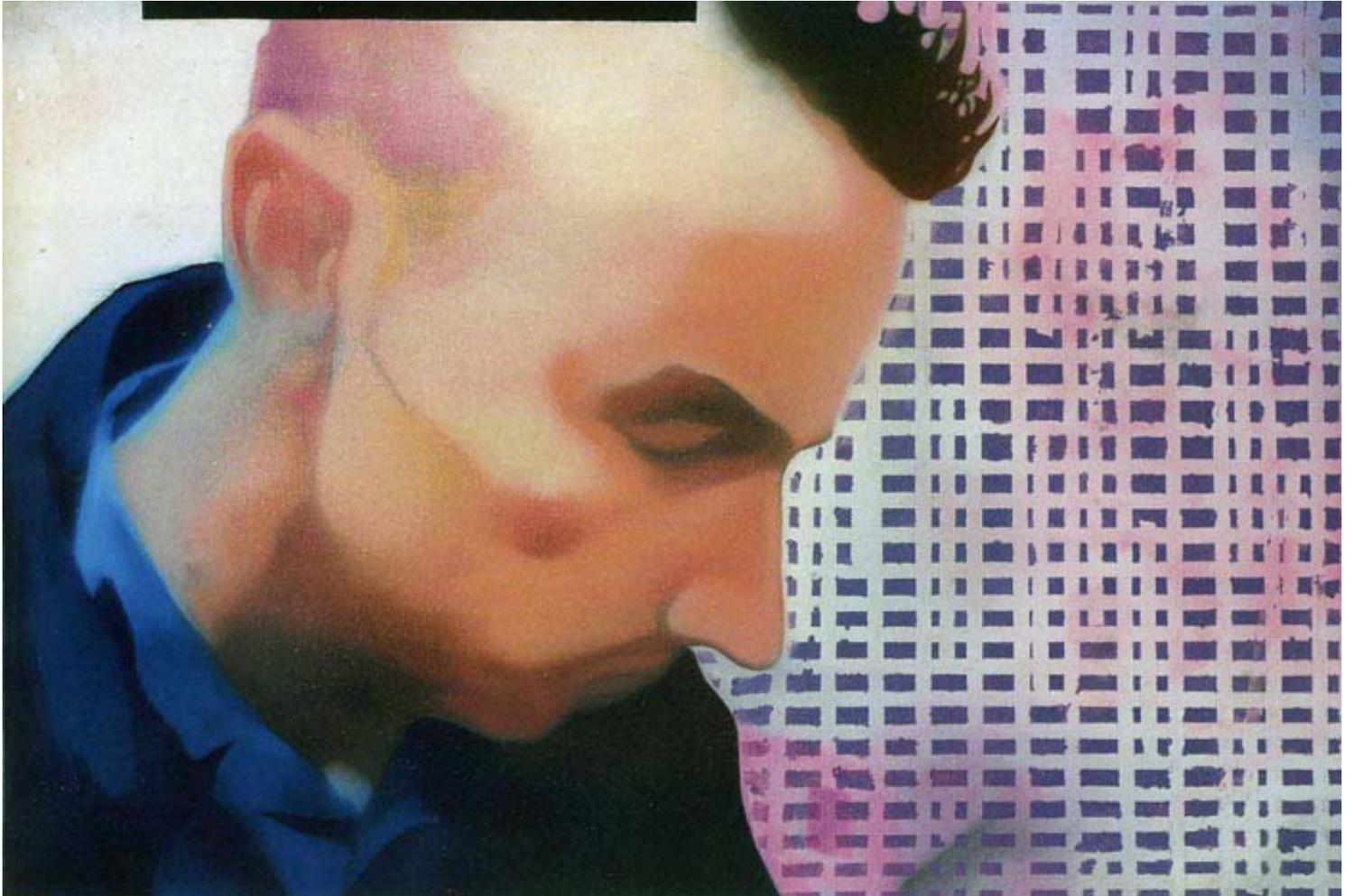
# RIYAS KOMU



Riyas Komu, *Nervous System 2*, 2007, Iron and automated paint, 96 x 24; 54 x 48 inches

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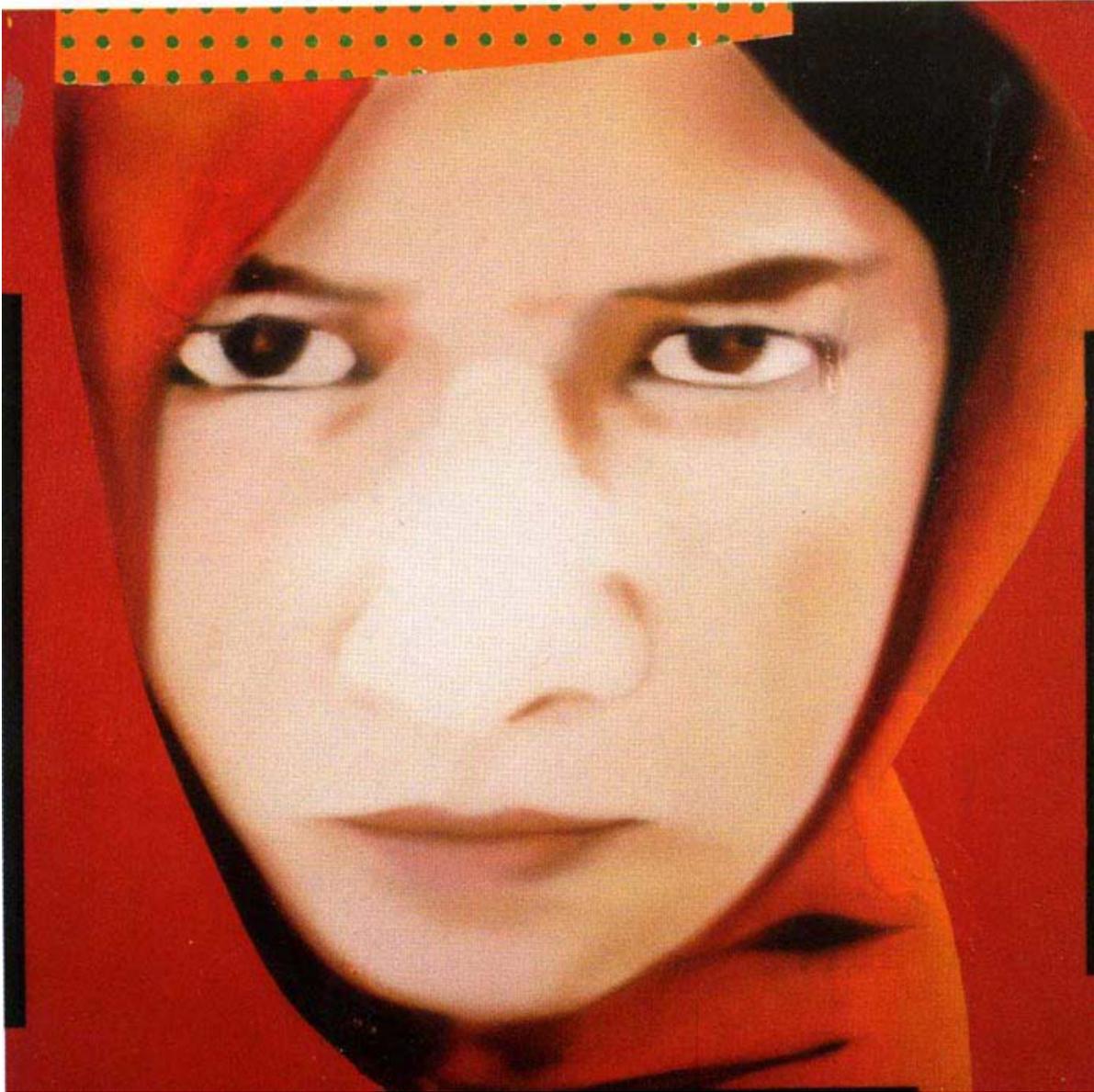
## RIYAS KOMU



Riyas Komu, *My Next Door, But I Can't See*, 2007, Oil, enamel and marble grain on canvas, 24 x 24 inches

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## RIYAS KOMU



Riyas Komu, *Untitled (Red Girl)*, ND, Oil and acrylic on canvas, 24 x 24 inches

## G R IRANNA

Born 1970, Sindgi, Bijapur, Karnataka, India

During his youth, Iranna studied in a Gurukul (a system of education where the student resides with the teacher) and lived in an ashram for almost seven years. This helped to form a strong connection to his cultural roots, which enters his work alongside his exploration of the antitheses of inherent dualities of the world. Iranna endeavors to translate an internal landscape onto tactile surfaces and aspects of Buddhist art influences are evident. Although he began painting oil on canvases, Iranna later developed his range of medium, embarking on his now primary use of tarpaulin.

The artist lives and works in New Dehli, India.

1999-2000      Artist-in-Residence, Wimbledon School of Art, London  
1994            Master of Fine Art (Painting), College of Art, New Delhi  
1992            Bachelor of Fine Arts (Painting), College of Visual Art, Gulbarga, Karnataka

### Select Solo Exhibitions

2012            *Limning Heterotopias*, Gallery Espace, New Delhi  
2011            *Scaffolding the Absent: G. R. Iranna's Phenomenological Interventions*, The Guild Art Gallery, Mumbai  
2010            *Ribbed Routes*, The Guild Art Gallery, Mumbai / New York  
2008            *Birth of Blindness*, Aicon Gallery, London and New York.  
2007            *The Dancer on the Horse*, Berkeley Square Gallery, London  
*Recent Works by GR Iranna*, Berkley Square Gallery, London  
2006            *King of Clay*, Aicon Gallery, New York and California  
*Disorder and Early Sufferings*, Gallery Muller & Plate, Munich  
2005            *Early Works*, Gallery Muller and Plate, Munich  
*Threads of Humanism*, Bodhi Art, New Delhi, Singapore  
2003            The Guild Art Gallery, Mumbai  
*Dream and Perplexity*, Chitrakala Parisath, Bangalore  
2001            *The Enigma of Departure*, British Council and The Guild Art Gallery, Mumbai  
2000            Foyer Gallery, Wimbledon School of Art, London  
                  Gallery Espace, New Delhi  
                  Maulana Azad Center for Indian Culture, Cairo, Egypt  
1999            *In the Shadow of Buddha*, Gallery Martini, Hong Kong  
1998            *Shadow of the Real*, Shridharani Art Gallery and Gallery Espace, New Delhi  
1995            *Edge Dynamics*, Delhi Art Gallery, New Delhi and Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai  
1992            College of Visual Art, Gulbarga

### Select Group Exhibitions

2010            San Jose Museum of Art San Jose California  
*Group Show*, Museum of Contemporary Art Taipei Taiwan, by Sakshi Gallery.  
*Indian (sub) Way*, Grosvenor Vadhera Gallery, London, curated by Yashodhara Dalmia.  
*Go See India*, Contemporary Indian Art at Gothenburg, Sweden. Curated by Amith Mukhopadya & Oscar Aschan.  
2009            *Signature Art Prize Singapore Show*, Museum Singapore.  
*Culture Popular India*, Maspresidenta de la Comunidad de Madrid Museum, Madrid. Curated by Shahin Mirali.  
*Retrieval Systems*, Curated by Ranjit Hoskote. Visual Arts Gallery, India Habitat Centre; Art

	Alive Gallery, New Delhi
	<i>Astonishment of Being</i> , Birla Academy of Art & Culture, Kolkata curred by Diksha Nath.
	<i>Think Small</i> , Art Alive Gallery, New Delhi
	<i>Big Dreams</i> , Crimson Art Gallery, Bangalore.
	<i>Zip Files</i> , Tao Art Gallery, Mumbai
	<i>Moderns and More</i> , Aicon Gallery, Palo Alto
	<i>Life is A Stage</i> , Institute of Contemporary Indian Art (ICIA), Mumbai
	<i>Signs Taken for Wonders: Recent Art from India and Pakistan</i> , Aicon Gallery, London
	<i>Threshold: Forging Narratives in South Asian Contemporary Art</i> , Aicon Gallery, New York
2008	<i>Keep Drawing</i> , Gallery Espace, New York
	MiArt 2008, Fiera Milano International Spa, Milan represented by The Guild, Mumbai
2007	Asian Contemporary Art Fair, represented by Aicon Gallery, New York
	<i>Keep Drawing</i> , Pundole Art Gallery, Mumbai
	<i>India 20</i> , Rabindra Bhavan, Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi
	<i>High on Art</i> , Visual Art Gallery, India Habitat Centre, New Delhi
	<i>Telling It Like It Is: The Indian Story</i> , The Gallery in Cork Street, London
2006	<i>Confluence</i> , Aicon Gallery, New York
	<i>The Human Figure</i> , Gallery Threshold, New Dehli
	Contemporary Istanbul Fair, Istanbul
2005	<i>We Are Like This Only</i> , Vadehra Art Gallery, New Delhi
	<i>Paths of Progression</i> , Bodhi Art/Saffronart, New Delhi, Mumbai, Singapore, New York
	Arad Biennale, Romania
2004	<i>Untitled</i> , Gallery Espace, India Habitat Centre, New Delhi
	Peter Muller Gallery, Munich, Germany
	Gallery 27, Oslo, Norway
2002	<i>Words and Images</i> , National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA), Mumbai
	Jehangir Art Gallery Golden Jubilee Show, Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai
2001-02	<i>Palette</i> , Visual Art Gallery, India Habitat Centre, New Delhi
2001	Apparao Galleries, Chennai
	<i>The Human Factor</i> , Guild Art Gallery, Mumbai
	<i>Kaleidoscope</i> , ISU International Art Gallery, Singapore
	<i>Engendering – Images of Women</i> , Guild Art Gallery, Mumbai
2000	<i>Black &amp; White</i> , Art Today, New Delhi
1999	<i>Icons of the Millennium</i> , Gallery Lakeeren, Mumbai
	<i>The Creative Process</i> , Guild Art Gallery, Mumbai
	<i>Edge of the Century</i> , New Delhi
1998	Vedanta Art Gallery, Chicago, U.S.A
	Gallery Espace, New Delhi
	Guild Art Gallery, Mumbai
1997	<i>Four Artists, Diverse Talents</i> , Guild Art Gallery, Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai
1995	Schoo's Gallery, Amsterdam, Holland
1994	Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai
1993	Shridharani Art Gallery, New Delhi
1992	Award Winners Exhibition SCZCC, Nagpur-Bangalore-Indore-Hyderabad-Pune
1990	Venkatappa Art Gallery, Bangalore
	Chitrakala Parishat, Bangalore

### **Awards and Scholarships**

2008	APB Signature Jury Award, Singapore
2004	Harmony Show Artist of the Year, Harmony foundation, Mumbai
2002	K K Hebbbar Foundation Award
2001	State Award, Karnataka Lalit Kala Academy, Bangalore
1999-2000	International Scholarship from Charles Wallace India Trust, British Council
1997	40 <sup>th</sup> National Academy Award, Lalit Kala Academy, New Delhi
	AIFACS Award, New Delhi, 50 years of Art in Independent India

1996-1997 National Scholarship from Ministry of H.R.D., Government of India  
1995-1996 Garhi Research Grant from Lalit Kala Academy, New Delhi  
1993 In Search of Talent, M.F. Hussain & Ram Kumar Selection Award, Vadhera Art Gallery, New Delhi  
Bansi Parmimu Memorial Committee, Dhomi Mall Art Gallery, New Delhi  
Delhi College of Art, New Delhi  
1991-92 College of Visual Art, Gulbarga  
All India Exhibition Mysore Dasara, Mysore  
1990 4<sup>th</sup> All India Exhibition SCZCC, Nagpore

### **Collections**

National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi  
Bharat Bhawan, Bhopal  
Lalit Kala Academy, New Delhi  
Singapore Art Museum  
Private collections in Mumbai, Delhi, Hong Kong, Germany, Holland, Austria, Croatia and Herwitz Collection, U.S.A.; United Kingdom; Singapore.

## RIYAS KOMU

Born 1971 in Kerala

The artist lives and works in Mumbai and Kerala, India.

### Education

1999 Masters in Fine Arts (Painting), Sir J.J. School of Art, Mumbai  
 1997 Bachelors in Fine Arts (Painting), Sir J.J. School of Art, Mumbai

### Select Solo Exhibitions

2010 – 2011 *Oil's Well, Let's Play!*, Fondazione Arnaldo Pomodoro, Milan  
 2010 *Subrata to Cesar*, Gallery Maskara, Mumbai, with Guild Art Gallery, Mumbai  
*Safe to Light*, Azad Art Gallery, Tehran  
 2009 Sakshi Art Gallery, Mumbai  
 2008 *Related List*, Bodhi Art, Berlin  
*MARK HIM* (Second half), Gallery 88, Kolkata  
 2007 *MARK HIM* (First half), The Guild Art Gallery, Mumbai  
 2006 *Systematic Citizen*, Palette Art Gallery, New Delhi  
*Faith Accompli*, Sakshi Gallery, Mumbai  
 2005 *The Third Day*, Rabindra Bhavan, Lalit Kala Academy, New Delhi, by Sakshi Gallery, Mumbai  
*Grass*, photography show, The Guild Art Gallery, Mumbai  
 2003 *Sarasu*, photography show on Raja Ravi Verma Press, the Guild Art Gallery, Mumbai  
 2002 – 2003 *Ambulance*, Sakshi Gallery, Mumbai; Renaissance Art Gallery, Bangalore  
 2002 *Unconditional*, Sakshi Gallery, Mumbai

### Select Group Exhibitions

2011 Inde, Centre Pompidou, Paris, France  
*Contemporary Art from India*, Helsinki Art Museum – The Tennis Palace, Helsinki, Finland  
*Tech-Cut-Edge-Revelations*, Ashna Gallery, New Delhi  
*Myth – Reality: Constructing Culture*, The Guild, Mumbai  
*Concurrent India*, Helsinki Art Museum Tennis Palace, Finland  
*Of Gods and Goddesses, Cinema and Cricket: The New Cultural Icons of India*, Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai  
 2010 *Inside India*, Palazzo Saluzzo Paesana, Turin  
*Midnight's Children*, Studio La Citta, Italy  
*Looking Glass: The Existence of Difference*, by Religare Arts Initiative, New Delhi, with American Centre; British Council; Goeth-Institut/Max Mueller Bhavan, New Delhi  
*Indian (Sub)Way*, Vadehra Art Gallery, New Delhi; Grosvenor Vadehra, London  
*Third Dimension*, Sakshi Gallery, Mumbai  
*A. SYCO*, the Viewing Room, Mumbai  
*By George*, by Cherry Art Foundation at Alliance Francaise de Delhi, New Delhi  
 1x1 Art Gallery, Dubai  
*Contested Space – Incursions*, Seven Art Limited, New Delhi  
*India Awakens: Under the Banyan Tree*, Essl Museum, Austria  
 2009 – 2010 *Sculpture*, the Guild, Mumbai  
 2009 *The Dark Science of Five Continents*, Gallery BMB, Mumbai  
*Indian Summer*, Galerie Christian Hosp, Berlin  
*Multitudes*, Goeth-Institut/Max Mueller Bhavan, Bangalore; with Zen Studio Gallery: Artflute.com  
*India Contemporary*, GEM, Museum of Contemporary Art, Hague  
*In the Mood for Paper*, F2 Gallery, Beijing

- Zip Files*, Tao Art Gallery, Mumbai  
*Inaugural Show*, Sakshi Gallery, Taipei  
*Shifting Shapes, Unstable Signs*, Yale School of Art, Connecticut  
*Bapu*, by Saffronart, with Berkeley Square Gallery, London  
*Pulse New York*, presented by Aicon Gallery, New York
- 2008 – 2009  
*Signs Taken for Wonders: Recent Art from India and Pakistan*, Aicon Gallery, London  
*Hot Shots*, the Viewing Room, Mumbai
- 2008  
*The Ghost of Souza*, Aicon Gallery (inaugural show in Bowery), New York  
*Uncovered*, Sans Tache Art Gallery, Mumbai  
*November*, 1x1 Contemporary, Al Quoz, Dubai  
*Everything 2008: 12 Artists from India*, Willem Baars Projects, Amsterdam  
*Six Degree of Separation Chaos, Congruence and Collaboration in South Asia*, by KHOJ International Artists' Association, at Anant Art Gallery, New Delhi  
*Urgent Conversations*, Visual Art Gallery, India Habitat Centre; Art Alive Gallery, New Delhi  
*Everywhere Is War (and Rumors of War)*, Bodhi Art, Mumbai  
*Link*, Sakshi Art Gallery, Mumbai  
*Frontlines: Notations from the Contemporary Indian Urban*, Bodhi Art, Berlin  
*Shifting Terrains: Altered Realities*, the Shrine Gallery, New Delhi  
*India Crossing*, Studio La Citta, Verona  
*Affair*, 1x1 Art Gallery, Dubai
- 2007 – 2008  
*Swarovski Crystal World*, 1<sup>st</sup> exhibition, Tirol-Österreich, Austria  
*India Now: Contemporary Indian Art Between Continuity and Transformation*, Provincia di Milano, Milan, Italy  
*Face East*, Wedel Fine Art, London  
*Similarities*, Lansdowne Gallery, Mumbai
- 2007  
*Kashi: 10 Light Years – Anniversary Show*, Kashi Art Gallery, Kochi  
*Think with the Senses – Feel with the Mind*, La Biennale di Venezia, 52<sup>nd</sup> International Art Exhibition, Italy  
*India Time*, Galleria Paolo Curti/Annamaria Gambuzzi, Milan, Italy  
*Frame/Grid/Room/Cell*, Bodhi Art Gallery, Mumbai  
*New Wave: Contemporary Indian Art*, Aicon Gallery, London  
*Photographs*, Guild Art Gallery, Mumbai, India  
*Other*, with Peter Drake, Aicon Gallery, London  
*I Fear, I Believe, I Desire*, Gallery Espace, New Delhi
- 2006  
*Young Guns*, Institute of Contemporary Indian Art (ICIA), Mumbai  
*Bronze*, sculpture show, Rabindra Bhavan, New Delhi  
*Drawing Show an Act of Art II*, Priyasri Art Gallery, Mumbai  
*Art on the Beach, Made by Indians*, St Tropez, Gallery Enrico Navarra, Paris  
*On Difference #2* (represented Korea), Wurt, Kunstverein Stuttgart, Germany  
*Maarkers*, Bodhi Art Gallery, Mumbai  
*Red Earth And The Pouring Rain*, Lanxess ABS Gallery, Baroda  
*Strangeness*, Ananat Art Gallery, Kolkata  
*Tangibles*, Priyasri Art Gallery, Mumbai
- 2005  
*Kaam*, Aicon Gallery, New York and Palo Alto  
*Span*, Sakshi Gallery, Mumbai  
*Endless Terrain*, Rabindra Bhavan, Lalit Kala Academy, New Delhi  
*Double Enders*, Mumbai, New Delhi, Bangalore, Kochi  
*Present Future*, National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA), Mumbai  
*Configurations*, Ananat Art Gallery, New Delhi  
*Are We Like This Only?*, Rabindra Bhavan, New Delhi  
*Whose Space Is It Anyway?*, Gallery Espace, New Delhi  
*Mannat Jali*, Marine Drive, Mumbai
- 2004  
*Public Art Project*, Gallery Chemould, Mumbai  
*Anticipations*, Museum Gallery, Mumbai  
*Bombay Boys*, Palette Art Gallery, New Delhi  
*A New Mediatic Realism*, Bayer ABS Gallery, Baroda, India  
*Generation I*, Saffronart Gallery, Mumbai  
*RED*, Palette Art Gallery, New Delhi  
*Mumbai x 17*, Kashi Art Gallery, Kochi

- 2003 *Crossing Generations: diverge* (40 years of Gallery Chemould), NGMA, Mumbai  
*Highlights*, Sakshi Gallery, Mumbai  
*2D/3D*, Visual Art Center, Hong Kong  
*Ideas and Images*, National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA), Mumbai  
*Art for Art/ Switzerland Meets India*, Kala Ghoda Festival, Mumbai
- 2002 *Ways of Resisting 1992- 2002*, Sahmat, Rabindra Bhavan, New Delhi  
*Words and Images*, the Guild Art Gallery, and NGMA, Mumbai  
*Creative Space*, Sakshi Gallery, India Habitat Center, New Delhi  
*Crosscurrents*, Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai  
*Harmony Shows (2004-1999)*, Nehru Centre, Mumbai  
*Debt*, the Guild Art Gallery, Mumbai  
*Tribute to Picasso*, the Guild Art Gallery, Mumbai
- 2001 *The Human Factor*, Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai  
*Engendering Images of Women*, the Guild Art Gallery, Mumbai  
*Excerpts from My Diary*, Fine Art Company, Mumbai
- 2000 *Mumbai Metaphor*, Tao Art Gallery, Mumbai  
*Exile Longings*, Lakeeren Art Gallery, Mumbai  
*Memos of the New Millennium – Artists from the Moulting World*, Birla Academy of Art & Culture, Mumbai  
*Ideas and Images* (video installation), National Gallery of Modern Art, Mumbai
- 1999 *Critic's Choice*, Ideas and Images, National Gallery of Modern Art, Mumbai
- 1998 *He Used to Believe That EMS Planted Coconut Trees in Kerala* (installation), Sir J.J. School of Art, Mumbai  
*Essays in Time – Kinetic Sculptures* (audio-visual installation), Nehru Centre, Mumbai

#### **Awards and Honors**

- 2010 Fellowship from Lalit Kala Academy, Kerala
- 1996 Hebbbar Foundation Scholarship  
Bombay Art Society Award, Mumbai
- 1995 Maharashtra State Award