

# apple in dream mode



([http://artdose.in/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/IMG\\_1915.jpg](http://artdose.in/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/IMG_1915.jpg))

## Mochu

The artist, once a Bohemian figure is now seen in the midst of gatherings, an economy that upholds the artist as a representative of his/her art. To take a break and disconnect from society for short periods, professes a *modus operandi* amongst individuals within busy organizations. Sleep is the only refuge from these regular patterns. The body transforms from the sleep mode into the dream mode through these hibernations; akin to this are machines that are put to sleep or rested after long hours of activity. The bodies are consumed, disengaged, yet don't entirely break away from methodical operations. Machines are but an extension of the human body that is exercised in the absence of physical human activity. Like the human body the machine perhaps feels, it is put to sleep, and also dreams. Sleep and dream become inevitable to the working systems, both biological and mechanical.

"If sleeping is a political act within a neoliberal society, then so is dreaming." Within this conceptual framework, John Xaviers, an artist, academic and curator recently opened his show at the Mumbai Art Room, titled *apple in dream mode*. An apple holds an emotional history, evokes mythological instances, folk tales and fairy tales that have been narrated over and over, orally and textually, to create deep associations with the fruit, he explains. Incidentally, to have the idea of the fruit now used interchangeably with technological appliances: Apple Systems extends the narrative into the digital realm, to

speak of urban histories superimposed over cultural mythologies. From the past through to the future, from a sentient life form to a mechanically conscious digital extension, the apple maintains a collective cultural memory.

Dream divination was a common practice amongst the Greeks, where compilations of metaphoric nocturnal visions were used to evaluate values of the individual. Prophecies and predictions were discerned in accordance to the visuals one remembered with dream and imagination becoming regular conductors of the everyday. Oneirology and oneirocriticism, two branches of the study of dream interpretation, began to take form, simultaneously in many cultures across history. Dreams became a means to experience otherworldly sensations and hear voices of the subconscious. Today, the idea of machines 'dreaming' has made significant progress with Google's Artificial Intelligence creating and generating layered dreamscapes out of images shown to an artificial neural network. This process called 'Inceptionism' mechanically conceives pictures from identifying patterns in white noise, establishing the notion of a consciousness within these machines. The temporal is associated with the perpetual in moments of dreaming; the body and the universe find parallel modes of existence.

Experiencing the psychological through technological art interventions, somewhere defines new-age art. John, exploring multi-dimensionality and balancing them within regular spaces brings together four artists Mochu, Suvani Suri, Gagan Singh and Sonam Chaturvedi to elaborate on this experience. For John, nth dimensions of computing became a significant facet to hold on to, eventually conceiving the rest of the exhibition.

Mochu, coming from an academic background- through art, animation and film-making techniques, brings to focus philosophical questions of the digital in juxtaposition to the cultural. His digital video *Cool Memories of Remote Gods* uses historical instances to trace the journey of hippies in 1960 India and their relationship to the emergence of a digital economy. Using psychedelia, techno-fiction, lens distortions and special effects, he intellectually explores 'cybernetic cultures and spiritual regimens' through this video. Retention and protention (anticipating future events) become regular interventions within this framework.

Within four-dimensional capacities of videos, sound realizes a contrasting purpose. Suvani Suri's sound installation *Prelude to a Puncture in Listening* is an aural experiment with the pouring of binaural sounds from a 'sound shower' –a sound bouncing device hanging from the ceiling- onto the 'disoriented listener' seated below. Intermingling a pre-produced audio loop with live sound feed, the 'aural dreamscapes' affects the listener in its various aspects. Her time-based works explore ASMR (Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response) induced activities, through hypnagogic conditions, sleep and the oneiric state of consciousness.

Gagan Singh's humorous site-specific drawings stimulate one to think about drawing as a speculative tool that creates meaning and dimensions within its otherwise 2D surfaces. Through simple experiments, he poses philosophical questions about the possibilities and avenues line drawings can open, when presented through the various mediums. His *Hand Cut Out*, demonstrates paper-cutouts that throw successive shadows so as to manifest further beyond itself in the form of meta-drawings; *How to Climb the Stairs*, a satirical take on YouTube tutorials, combines drawing and video to further play with lines.

Sonam Chaturvedi's immersive interaction is augmented through her sleep experiment *Esclapse* (a neological term), which involves the artist and spectator in a participatory event. The spectator as a participant receives an automated call during the night, with a voice on the line reciting a poetic text in order to insert spoken visuals into the subconscious of the sleeping individual. The text floats in the sleep state, the near-dream state and subliminally affects the mind, and continues to remain afloat in the conscious memory upon wakefulness.

Another work titled, *Time, Memory, Incoherent* is an expansive display of a personal collection of natural and man-made items that articulates the perpetual somnolence of inanimate objects: functioning as an intangible repository of memories



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Sonam Chaturvedi

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and experiences. The inanimate, yet sentient objects appearing to be in sleep mode, are awakened by the acknowledging energy of the unintended viewer.

Apple in Dream Mode continues till 24th Aug 2018, at the Mumbai Art Room. *All images used with permission.*

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