

RAGHAVA KK

Exquisite  
Caraver



## Game of One, Game of Many

*The pages found in a secret desk-compartment by an artist, A. Grahav, were a single journal entry of a person from another time and place, which could be ascertained from the damp softness of the paper and the perfect surety of the script that in itself suggested a hand unaccustomed to the quickness of keypads or touchscreens, and that took pleasure in the labor of planning each word and phrase before it found itself on the page. This distant kin relates the circumstances of a particular evening, when in the company of friends, he played with the boundaries of manmade symbols.*

“The exquisite cadaver shall drink the new wine.”

Surely this sentence was never uttered before. It is thoroughly unique in all of its particulars, and threatens never to be understood by any man, in defiance of nature. And yet, that it is a sentence cannot be argued with, for it contains all the requisite elements. Nouns and verbs, actions and objects, articles and punctuation. That these words came together to form this sentence is not a mere trifle, but is the joint work of several, who at random were asked to continue a line of thought, adding word upon word, until an idea was created.

We created “the exquisite cadaver...” by gathering with no preconceived ideas about what we might expect. A single piece of paper was brought out. One by one, we all participated by offering a word. The paper was folded over so that it could not influence subsequent offerings. Thus each word was brought forward, untethered to what came before or after. Separate entities came together to create a beautiful whole, without a thought as to what the final outcome would be.

How exalted is the sense that comes from nonsense! By disconnecting from everything we have learned, and from all the knowledge we have of the world, our selves and language, we have perhaps come upon the greatest discovery of all. Plainly, that a meaning and a wisdom far beyond our own reckoning can be born out of pure chance, by opening up our unconscious minds.

The unconscious depth within us is something to be excavated. It lies beneath the surface, far from our daily notice, but ready to be tapped. There are our true selves, ready to be explored. What we find there is an expression alien to anything we have seen before. Not defined by history, nor the limitations of our birth, here is a place where we may be equal, and where art can have meaning beyond the slight parameters of our education.

The scope for this investigation is limitless. What would a song sound like, that was composed without heed to the previous note? Its tone would ring with knowledge that was unbeknownst to us before. What would a picture look like, where individual parts were fitted together, without any idea of an overall design? We would see with trembling eyes, an apparition of our unconsciousness.

*Upon reading this letter in the elegant scrawl of an unknown man, A. Garhav wondered what boundaries of self-knowledge could be broken through this game. He set about playing, and finding he had only himself as a companion, made it a solitary task, and took to recording his impressions on some device or other. He found that his experience with the game was not in keeping with that of its makers. In fact, it was completely the opposite.*

While undoubtedly apparitions appear before me, are they not of my own making, created by what I have been taught to fear? For how else then, would I know that they were fearsome? How else would I know to call a chair a chair, except by the recognition of having seen one before? Faces can be found within faces, and a grown man is often a distant semblance of what he was as a young boy.

Underneath, there is a Me, fragmented though he may be, made up of the meaning I have assigned him. With myself, I am in an ever-present dialogue, of what I/he should say, and how I/he should be. Within are multiples, entering into a complex relationship, where it is difficult to see where one begins and another ends. How many different selves, competing and incomplete, attach onto one another, creating a dense opacity?

I would argue that I do not need any other to play this game, but can contrive to find within me several others with conflicting viewpoints. Whether I manage to maintain a precarious union is unsure, although sometimes I border on schizophrenic. How many are there within, and how indistinguishable they are. I can perceive them as they act like chameleons, constantly mutating so that soon they are no longer recognizable. There is no grand plan to be found here. The selves we show to the world are fictions, as parts of the past and memory pieced together in a web of gestures with the hope that something whole may emerge.

What we have here is a series of bodies, composed of cuts and pauses, as lovely as an invention of Dr. Frankenstein. They are not free, but bound to the letters of history, told to me by many, and retained by me imperfectly. I am an inheritor of signs and symbols, which I use again and again, in a pastiche of imagery where there may or may not be meaning. To say then that I am a creator is false, for I can only rearrange what has been given to us, in a manner determined by what I have been taught. A colonizing fish rears a mythical horse, and the faces of an Independent India.

What is the secret of these beautiful bodies? It is simply that they are formed from myths, but no originary myths, and all-embodying reality. Not from any ground zero, or black square. These are the myths that were passed down, that were told to me, and come from no known source. They appear to change from generation to generation, with the repetition of layers, in a bricolage of shifty signs which unhinge and reattach to the many flailing tethers that try to hold them in place.

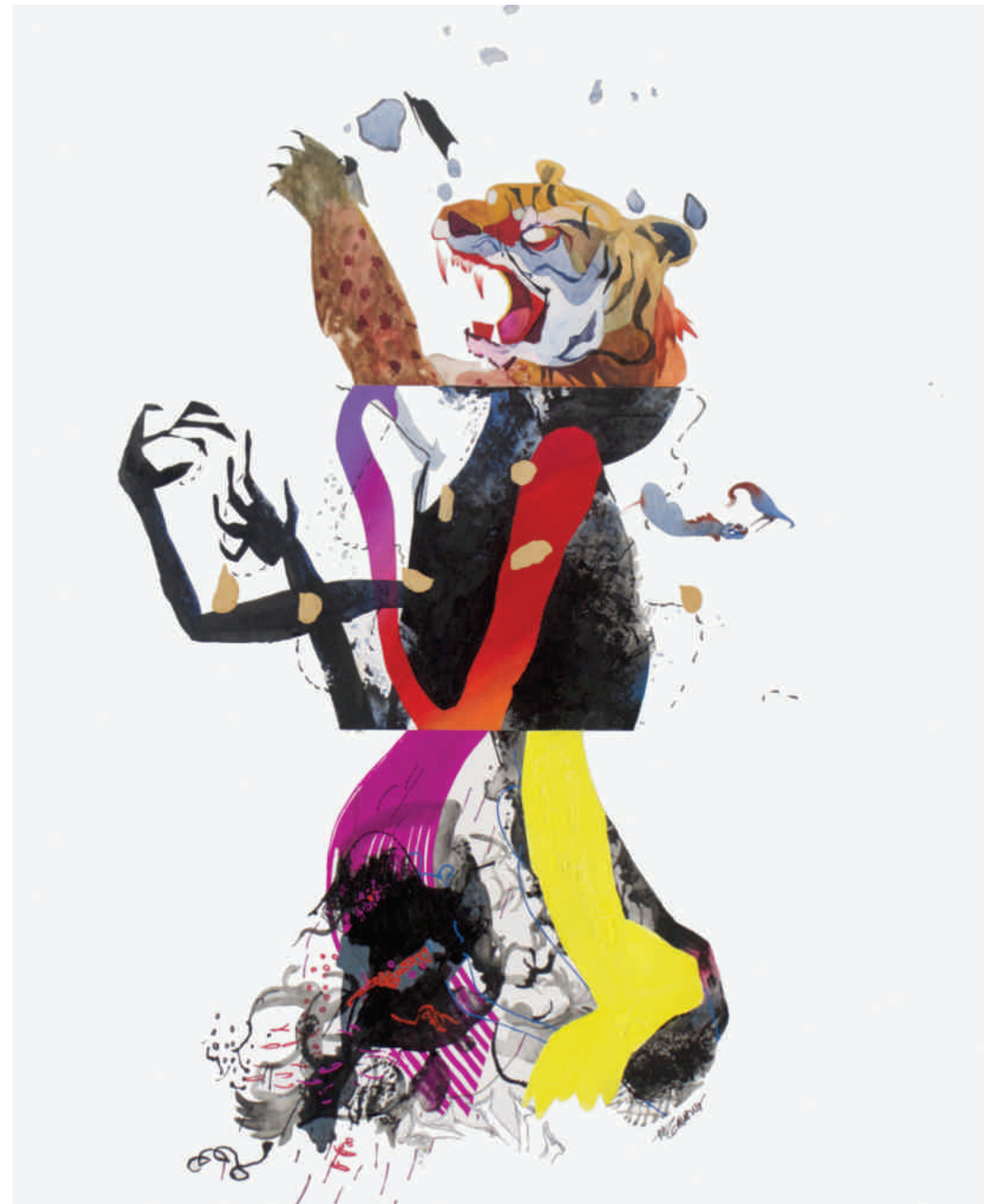
Avni Doshi

**safety belt for the census bureau**  
acrylic on canvas, 70 x 47 inches, 2011





**yellow, after achieving a measure of acceptance**  
watercolour on paper, 42 x 30 inches, 2011



**disciplined by clio**  
watercolour on paper, 42 x 30 inches, 2011



**endangered from the outgrowth of women's history**  
watercolour on paper, 42 x 30 inches, 2011



**remote chord progressions**  
watercolour on paper, 42 x 30 inches, 2011





**avoiding proper nouns**  
watercolour on paper, 42 x 30 inches, 2011



**preferred to the shadow**  
watercolour on paper, 42 x 30 inches, 2011



**in addition to domestic disaster relief**  
watercolour on paper, 42 x 30 inches, 2011



**the six digit fidget**  
watercolour on paper, 42 x 30 inches, 2011



**a grip on philosophy**  
watercolour on paper, 42 x 30 inches, 2011



**whimsical alchemy**  
watercolour on paper, 42 x 30 inches, 2011



**flat, having lived too little**  
watercolour on paper, 42 x 30 inches, 2011



**of higher taxonomic levels**  
acrylic on canvas, 18 x 12 inches, 2011





**the judge and salt**  
acrylic on canvas, 16 x 12 inches, 2011



**24:00**  
acrylic on canvas, 64 x 91 inches, 2011



## RAGHAVA K K (1980, Bangalore, India)

### Significant Solo Exhibitions

- 2011 - *Exquisite Cadavers*, Art Musings, Mumbai, India
- 2010 - *The Last Child in the Woods*, KYNKYNY, Bangalore, India
- 2009 - *Brooklyn Bound R Train*, Art Musings, Mumbai, India
- 2009 - *The Issues of Chronic Abstraction*, Skotia Gallery, Santa Fe, USA
- 2008 - *Drawn and Quartered*, Art Musings, Mumbai, India
- 2007 - *Not Another Wedding in Goa*, Gallery Art Chamber, Goa, India
- 2007 - Carre d'Art: Musee d'Art Contemporain, Nimes, France
- 2007 - Gallery 27/Visua Art UK, London, England, UK
- 2007 - Venice Suite, Crimson Art Gallery, Bangalore, India
- 2006 - ARTANA Gallery, Boston, USA
- 2005 - Time and Space Art Gallery, Bangalore, India
- 2004 - *Atypical Attitudes*, Ashvita Gallery, Chennai, India
- 2004 - The Gallery at the Courtyard, Mumbai, India

### Significant Group Exhibitions

- 2011 - Delhi Art Summit, Art Musings, New Delhi, India
- 2011 - Artstage Singapore, Singapore
- 2010 - LA Art Fair, Skotia Gallery, Los Angeles, USA
- 2010 - *Public Space/ Private Face*, Giacobetti Paul Gallery, NY, USA
- 2010 - *Crow Moon*, SKOTIA Gallery, Santa Fe, USA
- 2010 - Contemporary Artists, Art Musings, Mumbai, India
- 2010 - ART TIGER, Rashtrapathi Bhavan, New Delhi, India
- 2009 - *Transformation*, BAG Art Gallery, Brooklyn, NY
- 2009 - Delhi Art Summit, Art Musings, New Delhi, India
- 2009 - *Goddess*, Under Minerva Gallery, Brooklyn, NY, USA
- 2009 - *Purdah-EnGendered*, New York, USA
- 2008 - Gallery Art Positive, New Delhi, India
- 2008 - *Purdah-EnGendered*, Lincoln Center, New York, USA
- 2007 - *Art in Step*, Gallerie Ganesha, Habitat Centre, New Delhi, India
- 2007 - Mahua Art Gallery, Bangalore, India
- 2007 - Young Masters, Galeria de Belas Artes, Goa, India
- 2006 - *1001 Art Money*, Øksnehallen Gallery, Copenhagen, Denmark
- 2006 - *Spectra*, Gallery Katayun, Calcutta, India
- 2003 - Peter Louis Arts, Chicago, USA
- 2002 - Peck Gallery, Providence, RI, USA
- 2000 - Gallery Zen, Bangalore, India

### Performance Art Shows

- 2010 - Performance piece with Mandeep Raikhy for the Engendered Dance Festival, New York, USA
- 2007 - Collaboration with Flamenco singer Pepe Linares, Nimes, France
- 2005 - Anthropomorphism: When Paintings Dance, San Jose Convention Center, San Jose, CA, USA

### Significant Collaborative Projects

- 2011 - Paul Simon (Musician) - New York, USA
- 2011 - Erykah Badu (Musician) - New York, USA
- 2011 - Morley (Musician) - New York, USA
- 2010 - Yann Vasnier (Fragrance artist) New York, USA
- 2010 - Dan Barber (Celebrity chef) - New York, USA
- 2007 - London Fashion Week - *Ravage Bricolage* - collaboration with designers (Ravage) to create an art-inspired fashion line
- 2006 - In the Moment - Collaborative dance, music, acting, painting with artists from Europe, Australia, USA & India  
Time and Space Art Gallery - Bangalore, India
- 2005 - Created Sand Installation with artist Andres Amador  
San Francisco, CA, USA
- 2003 - Created mural with artist Farid Belkahlia - Bouznika, Morocco



### Significant Lectures and Talks

- 2011 - Speaker at DOT conference - Toronto, Canada
- 2011 - Speaker at TEDGlobal - Edinburgh, Scotland
- 2011 - Speaker at Saatchi & Saatchi Conference - New York, USA
- 2011 - Lecturer/Coach at NuVu studios, MIT - Cambridge, USA
- 2010 - Lecturer/Coach at NuVu studios, MIT - Cambridge, USA
- 2010 - Speaker at Khosla Ventures conference- San Francisco, USA
- 2010 - Speaker at The INK conference - Pune, India
- 2010 - Panelist on BBC's panel on creativity- New York, USA
- 2010 - Lecture at STERN School, New York University - NY, USA
- 2010 - Speaker at TEDxCMU - Carnegie Mellon University - Pittsburgh, USA
- 2010 - Panelist for #class at the Winkleman Gallery - New York, USA
- 2010 - Speaker at TEDxEast - New York, USA
- 2010 - Speaker at 'Dhak Dhak Dili', Young Presidents Organisation - New Delhi, India
- 2007 - Lecture at Ecole des Beaux-Arts - Nimes, France
- 2006 - Lecture at New Hampshire Institute of Art - Manchester, New Hampshire, USA
- 2006 - Speaker at Copenhagen Business School, Copenhagen University - Copenhagen, Denmark
- 2006 - Lecture at Changing Perspectives, Paper on the pedagogy of art Stella Maris College - Chennai, India
- 2004 - Speaker at Arts India West Gallery - Palo Alto, CA, USA
- 1998 - Speaker at Habitat Center- New Delhi, India

### Significant Art Auctions

- 2010 - IAAC auction, Sundaram Tagore Gallery, New York, USA
- 2008 - Indian Art, Bid and Hammer Auction House, Bangalore, India
- 2004 - Christie's, curated by IAAC, Lincoln Center, NY, USA
- 2004 - Summer Gala Auction, Queens Museum, Queens, NY, USA