

PUBLICATION



installation still
MAN THREADING A NEEDLE 1998/1999
Single channel video projected on 59 x 91 cm, (23.3 x 35.8 inch) oil painting. 6 minute loop with sound



MAN WITH COCKEREL 2001-02
2 channel video, 19 minute loop

BODY•CITY siting contemporary culture in India
(excerpt p71)

published in 2003

The House of World Cultures, Berlin, Tulika Books, India
ISBN: 3-9808851-9-40 (House of World Cultures)

exhibition

BODY•CITY - subTerrain: artworks in the cityfold
House of World Culture, Berlin
Germany Sept 20 - Nov 16 2003

by Geeta Kapur

In exact contrast ... 'is' the video-work of Ranbir Kaleka, whose aesthetic is based on the principle of liminality. The use of the digital medium allows him to achieve a transparency, a hallucinatory quality where the (male) character/person/body is both present and absent, reducible to a pixel-puzzle and conjured as a simulacrum — a copy of that which does not exist in material terms or just enough to throw a shadow and create a contemplative moment of identification. Or, on the other hand, to tantalize vision itself with a fleeting grasp of desire. Whether it is his pock-marked model in a vest, a carpenter threading a needle in a superimposed image, at once painting and video-shot (*Man Threading Needle*, 1998–99), or a placid bald man with the face of the buddha clutching and letting go then clutching and letting go a plumed fowl (*Man with Cockerel*, 2001: (fig. 11), Kaleka presents the body as an index of mortality — at the edge of its dissolution, and disappearance. Precise name, identity, gender and profession are subordinated to a fragile sense of being where no assertion, no action is necessary except that which trusts in a minimal continuum of survival; the form itself resembles a haiku in that the hypothesis it offers is profoundly about a lived life that needs no backing of proof.