



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

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Installation Art in the 1990's p228
 by **Robina Karode**

There have been a few exceptions where installation art in India has been used for playfully phantasmagoric and even a surreal experience such as Sudarshan Shetty's *Tiger Lily*. Or else, for technical quizzing and representational questioning as in Ranbir Kaleka's recent installations, using video projection, a DVD player and amplifier. In his *Man Threading A Needle* the physicality of the painted image and the aura of the image created with light (video projection) are gelled into a single form, the result of which sensitises some dormant faculty of perception in us. Playing with the immobility of the painted image and the mobility of the video image, Kaleka fuses a dual experience. He summarises this as 'painting living within time and time living within the painting'. A man, absolutely still, concentrating on threading the needle occasionally blinks his eyes. Sometimes he gulps or begins to breathe heavily when he hears a peacock or the sound of a police siren. The image continuously forming acquires its finished form only in the observer, thus remaining innocent of any overt symbolism.

Different types of inter-activity have been explored in recent installations. Kaleka's *Powder Room* installed for the *Boxwallah* Project (2001) at a highway petrol pump near Delhi, shared its venue with an installation by artist/photographer Satish Sharma. Kaleka's simulated powder room with a pink ambience, red floor and cheap rose perfume smell was functional—with a washbasin and cosmetic items on the shelf. Viewers could enter the room, use the make-up items looking at the mirror installed on the wall—to be suddenly disturbed by music and encounter one's reflection replaced by other images that the mirror threw back at you. Satish Sharma, occupying the outer space of the cube, painted a house with trees, a backdrop to his photo studio similar to the ones seen in small towns or at funfairs and *melas*. A bunch of hats and a gun were available as props. So, once out of the powder room having retouched your make up, you could sit in front of painted backdrops and have your picture taken from the still camera placed on a stand.



BOXWALLAHS, The DeEgo-Cube, Indo-Austrian Art Projects in Public Space, Gurgaon, India 2000
POWDER ROOM 1999/2000 (installation still)
 Single channel video/sculpture installation
 3 minute with sound