

27 February 2008

iPak – 10,000 songs, 10,000 images, 10,000 abuses

A seminal, insightful and interactive science-art work developed by Goldsmiths academic and artist, Ajaykumar, will be launched on the US-based global online art gallery www.turbulence.org on 14 March 2008. The project has been commissioned by Turbulence and funded by the National Endowment of the Arts (USA), and will be viewable until 13 March 2010.

'iPak – 10,000 songs, 10,000 images, 10,000 abuses' is a series of three interconnecting evolving internet art works exploring themes of art as medicine, mental illness and racism.

'iPak – 10,000 songs, 10,000 images, 10,000 abuses' will display a plethora of art works by Ajaykumar and other contributing artists. The pieces will reflect artistic responses to recent scientific research that indicates that black people are several times more likely than white people to suffer from mental illness, and that the causes are social rather than genetic. The research indicates that racism engenders mental illness. In a BBC interview, one of these researchers, Professor Robin Murray of the Institute of Psychiatry, stated that the very experience of living in the United Kingdom almost drives black people mad. With increasing migration and multiculturalism in many of the world's countries, racism and its engendering of mental illness is becoming a significant global phenomenon. Consequently, it is anticipated that the work will also be available in several languages in the future. Critically, the submitted works will also explore art as therapy and healing, a way of channelling insight from madness.

Innovatively, the art works will be displayed in three continually changing forms – 'chaos,' 'jukebox' and 'platform.' 'chaos' will be a generative art work, a constantly shifting, random interplay of video, still images, poetry and music, creating a transforming montage eliciting new meanings, ideas and emotions. The 'jukebox' component will offer the user playful interactivity, allowing her/him to choose the sounds and music to accompany the ever-changing collage. Finally, 'platform' is composed of a gallery to which anyone can upload their art work and create blogs/forums on the themes of the project. Art works will also be available as podcasts.

Artists and all individuals are invited to submit material related to the themes of the project by uploading items onto the 'platform' component. This material will also be fed into 'chaos' and 'jukebox,' thus continuing its evolution into a relational art work. The prospective participation of hundreds of individuals offering their submissions over the next few years will bring the three art

forms fully into being, feeding into a work that both transforms second by second and evolves over a number of years.

Curator and founder of the project and Lecturer at Goldsmiths, Ajaykumar says: "The work combines conceptual originality, playfulness, and original engagement with disturbing cultural and social themes. It explores possibilities of generative art as re-generative force."

Notes to Editors: Ajaykumar is an Artsadmin Bursary artist. The research and development and realisation of this project is supported by Artsadmin and funded by Arts Council England and National Endowment for the Arts (USA). 'iPak' has also been supported by Re-Active (It). It is a research project of Goldsmiths, University of London.

Ajaykumar is a critically acclaimed artist – initially in performance – but now spanning multiple media, including internet art, installation, site-specific art, film, video, design, architecture, creative writing, dance and live art. He lectures on Technology, Art and Philosophy at Goldsmiths; and he is a member of the Transnational Art, Identity and Nation (TrAIN) research centre at the University of the Arts, London.

Founded in New York in 1996, www.turbulence.org has commissioned, exhibited and archived over 150 networked art projects. It is a project of New Radio and Performing Arts, Inc. (NRPA). For further information contact Jo-Anne Green: jo@turbulence.org

Ajaykumar will be giving a talk about the project at an event organised by Shape at SPACE Studios 129 - 131 Mare St, Hackney, London, E8 3RH, on 27 March. For more information about this event contact Theresa at Shape: Telephone: 020 7 619 6165 Minicom: 020 7619 6161 Fax: 020 7619 6162 Email: theresa@shapearts.org.uk

More information is available at www.ajaykumar.com or www.iPak.org.uk

Press images are available on request.

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