

# NEW MEDIA ART IN ART EDUCATION

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Art is often isolated in our society. People rarely realize its importance and value. I have come across with different periphery of communities after the big roar of the nature. More than nine thousand people have died, millions homeless, billions of properties got destroyed and traumatized the souls of the nation. It became the national and international concern just because it hit the important cities and world heritage sites of Nepal. Major art and artifacts got broken and many of our cultural heritage sites are still in the verge of ruin. Though people feel the loss, Art is still not in the priority.

The Kathmandu valley is one and only valley consists of great numbers of world heritage sites in the whole world. Even after a year and the half the sites are still not being taken seriously by the government. Before the earthquake they used to generate lots of revenues which could have led the better future of the nation. I agree upon the facts that it takes lots of resources and many skillful artists and artisans to rebuild such heritage. But as we look back outside the valley, most of the area is completely destroyed, to build the ecological space is not that big issue for the government but their progress is still so slow. Most of the development progress is now decentralized which I find the positive aspects of devastation. People from the communities are going to serve the communities outside the valley.

Even Art is decentralized to the devastated districts and connecting whole community together.

Earthquake destroyed many schools and colleges including art colleges of Nepal one of them is Sirjana College of Fine Art. For the whole year students have been studying under broken rooms and leaked tin roofs. Studying and learning under the destroyed building is tough. Hopefully new things come with new thoughts. Earthquake is an opportunity for all the Nepalese to grow into new functional ideas. Conceptual norms could grow through these circumstances. It is not trying to destroy the old norms or conventional practices. There are possibilities for new thoughts of new Nepal and new dimensional Art and cultural heritage. Earthquake in Nepal brought new possibilities of contemporary senses. Instead of the renovating the old we could think something new to flourish.

New Media Art is introduced in Nepali Art education in the very recent times. It was a big challenge to break all the norms of conventional practices. Although Sirjana College of Fine Art is well received by established artists of Nepal but somewhere there's a lack on updating it. Art has grown up into different perspective and still the situation is way back to the realistic ideology. Students are taught to learn the skills rather than to create own objectives

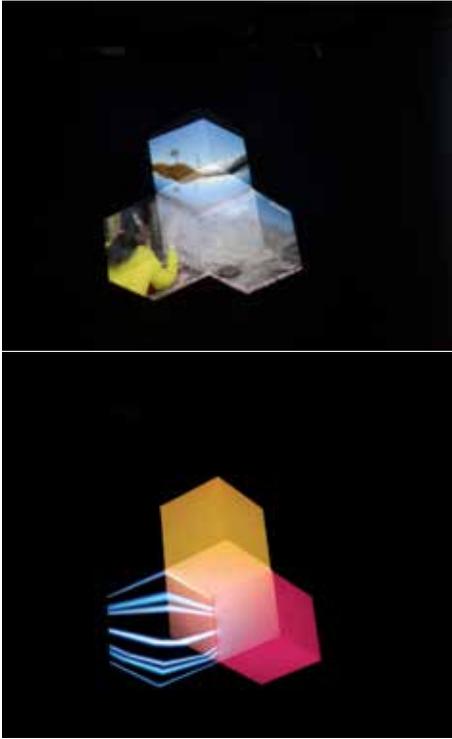


Bibek Shrestha. **Tornado Shape Spiral**. BFA 4th year. 2016.

into reality. Nepal as a whole seem so influential to the western culture. Our lesson on new media is to understand the values of own native ideology and transform them to create the futuristic vision. We started with conceptual practice with an intension not to define a piece as a painting or a sculpture. As in the west new media was started with moving photographic inventions in the late 19th century. Artists then have been using photographic and video graphic tools, computer graphics, light art, digital art, sound art, internet art and technologies to express their norms. In the context of Nepal, the country of major power cuts and load shedding, it is difficult to intervene with the western ideology of using electronic gadgets as a tools to express inner views. So to start new media art is to think with conceptual norms beyond the conventional approach.

Assignments are designed with the individual understanding of the students. The approach is to bring their own vision into reality using different elements and medium than usual materials. We intend to bring interactivity, performativity and spontaneous creative activity to define new media art.

To cite as an example, it was an interesting approach by Bob Benjamin to materialize the native concept into contemporary presence. The installation art of concrete miniature building foundation is to reflect the tremor of the nation. Minimalistic approach on his work could bring dialogue among the viewers. To create an art, process and collaboration are important factors which reflect in his work. To flatten the chair he was collaborating with carpenter in his neighborhood that



Nadim Shakya. **Videos on 3D Form**. BFA 4th year. 2016.

shows the communal interlink. It creates some space for all the viewers to imagine into their own thought process. Rabin kaji Shakya created the work on contemporary issues of Nepal like load shedding and also linked with insecurity caused by the devastating earthquake. Using helmet as material for the work, unlit bulbs and wire was to deliver his concept wisely in the topic insecurity. Installation on tornado shape spiral by Bibek Shrestha created some thought provoking gesture. Yogesh Awale created the installation of solar system through bulbs. Some of the bulbs were colored in black to depict the pollutions and some plants were grown in some bulbs. His concept was to relate environmental issues. Nadim Shakya projected the videos



Rabin Kaji Shakya. **Insecurity**. BFA 4th year. 2016.

on the 3D form he created on the wall. It was an image I found it more associated with technology, computer graphics, wise use of programming; it was the transformation of new media approach.

Despite lots of challenges, we could run the new media art classes. Fundamental structure of new media art should have well - equipped independent studio for the students. Since the new media approach doesn't confine in limited space, it can vary according to the situation and with site specific intervention. New media art practice has lots of potential in the future due to the progressive development of the nation. Social media can be another space to deliver the creative and futuristic tendency



Yogesh Awale. **Solar System**. BFA 4th year. 2016.



Bob Benjamin. **A Useless Chair**. BFA 4th year. 2016.

of new media art practice. As an artist we should protect the freedom of expression through any means and by any method. Why can't an artist talk about the issues, talk about censorship, talk as an activist and empower the community through different means of art?



### **Manish Lal Shrestha**

*Manish Lal Shrestha is a multi-dimensional visual artist. Thirteen solo exhibitions, several workshops and residencies in Switzerland, France, Pakistan, Srilanka, India, USA, Holland, South Korea and Nepal in his credit, made him well received visual artist of Nepal.*

*He has received several awards, including National Fine Arts Award in 2011 from Nepal Academy of Fine Arts. He is Founder/Executive Director of Gallery Mcube, Nepal. He is actively involved in community art practice to empower community in remote villages.*

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