

## 3. Photography

### Synopsis

This module provides an introduction to photography. It emphasizes that it is important to develop a worldview and extend this into the realm of photography. Basic exercises for understanding the camera and certain aspects of the history of photography are addressed in the appendix.

### Lectures

- 3.1 The Increasing Popularity of the Camera
- 3.2 Going beyond Pretty Pictures
- 3.3 Creative Imagery through Photomontage
- 3.4 Rumi Under the Palas
- 3.5 The Camera as an Extension of the Eye



Fig3.4.00

### 3.4 Rumi Under the Palas

Installation art was a movement started by artists to resist the commodification of art. The logic of the marketplace appears to have permeated our thinking to such a great extent that it often seems that

there is nothing under the sun, that marketers have not sought to profit from. Art and commerce have been closely linked but there is an essence to art that cannot be measured with a commercial index. When auctioneers and corporate bodies look upon art as investment, they deny to a work of art, a value that is beyond measure. A simple way to understand this value is the joy that comes from expressing oneself.



Fig. 3.4.01

The work began with the surprise of seeing the palas tree flower in the month of December.



Fig. 3.4.02a



Fig. 3.4.02b



Fig. 3.4.02c

The initial bit of photographing the palas flower in its natural surroundings extended to images that sought to engage with light and composition.

In order to defy the buying and selling of art, some artists started making works that were ephemeral. 'Rumi Under the Palas' is one such work that pays homage to the Sufi poet, Rumi and to the Palas flower. Photographs of the palas flower carrying selected verses from the translated works of Rumi, were scattered amongst real palas flowers under the palas tree, one afternoon along a corridor at IIT Bombay.





Fig. 3.4.03a



Fig. 3.4.03b



Fig. 3.4.03c



Fig. 3.4.03d



Fig. 3.4.03e

Images from the 'site-specific-installation', 'Rumi under the Palas' next to the corridor outside the computer science department at IIT Bombay.

People passing by were invited to read the verses and take away one that they liked. The 'art-work' was to be regarded as flowers that the tree created with much care and then gave away without a sense of ownership or possession. In a matter of a few hours the 'poetry-photography-art-work' disappeared as viewers took away the framed prints.



Fig. 3.4.04a

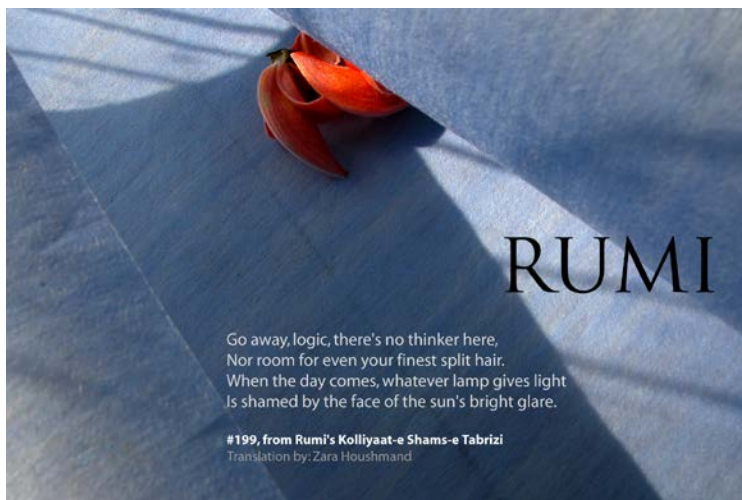


Fig. 3.4.04b

This work began as a response to the early flowering of the palas flower, in the winter of 2003. I was reading a book of Rumi and gradually the idea for the installation took shape. It is useful to keep in mind that photography derives much from a way of seeing things around us.





Fig. 3.4.04c



Fig. 3.4.04d

A few of the images from the installation.