Is your signal weak or strong? DAY 3

A broadcast by Surfatial, the collective of Satya Gummuluri, Malavika Rajnarayan and me, 22 June 2015. Watch on YouTube

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I made this transcript by machine from the recording and corrected it against the recording's description and my own records. I have not checked the words by ear. I checked a sample of the speaker names by ear, and corrected those I heard differently. [?] marks a word still in doubt and [unclear] a passage that could not be made out. A speaker is named only where the broadcast's screen or the recording's own words say who is speaking. Fillers such as "uh" and "um" are left out. Times are from the start of the recording.

A name followed by (?) was read from the screen at a moment when it changed from one speaker to the next, so the turn may belong partly or wholly to the speaker before or after.

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00:03 MALAVIKA Hi everybody, welcome back for the third day.
00:08 You can unmute your microphones.
00:12 So we can just begin we can take off from where we left off yesterday. we were talking of artist statements and
00:26 The issue of sincerity surrounding them. So
00:33 ADITYA Can you say us two of what? [?]
00:35 MALAVIKA Sincerity.
00:36 Okay.
00:37 MALAVIKA (?) Because Prayas had made a comment that he feels sad when artist statements are approached in a sincere way.
00:48 MALAVIKA (?) Yeah.
00:48 MALAVIKA (?) Because he said that artist statements are after all conscious constructs.
00:55 Mm-
00:56 MALAVIKA (?) And so they can't be sincere.
00:58 MALAVIKA (?) Okay.
00:59 So I'm taking that as a take-off point and if they are conscious constructs, then can they not be artistic as well?
01:11 ADITYA Because they're conscious constructs.
01:13 MALAVIKA Exactly, and that's what I think even artworks are, you are constructing a certain expression of or articulation of ideas that you compile. So you it is artworks are also conscious constructions. They may have elements of intuitive articulation also, but there is a level of conscious construction in them overall.
01:46 ADITYA But if we were to take for example, just a different tangent of activist writing as sincere, okay? If just to just for the sake of an example.
01:55 MALAVIKA Okay.
01:56 ADITYA (?) So if we were to take activist writing as a example of being sincere because there is an immediate social cause that you're reflecting to and you're supposed to inspire or like stimulate, etcetera.
02:08 SONIA (?) Right.
02:09 ADITYA So do you think then that is the form of sincerity? Because it's also a statement, no? So it's a statement of different kind for sure, but it has a different gravity of immediacy.

02:18 MALAVIKA Right. so the difference here that we were discussing yesterday is the fact that there are two languages that are that can potentially come into conflict when you have an artist statement. One is the artist's artwork which carries its own language, and then the statement, which is in either text or verbal form, which is trying to represent the ideas that the artworks is supposedly carrying. And we were discussing how you don't want to s articulate everything, you a lot is left to the unarticulated, you know, what is not said don't want to explain and or illustrate everything even in the artwork. Leaving room for interpretation. So in from that context the artist statement becomes a kind of fact that's the same. [?]

03:22 PRAYAS I mean also Shini [?] also the difference the I mean the other context that you just presented, the activist writing, right?

03:29 PRAYAS (?) Yeah.

03:30 So th there is from how you speak and how what you speak let's say affects the community that is that it is meant for.

03:41 PRAYAS (?) Mm-

03:42 The their language is not so different. So let's say you're meeting a bunch of activists over coffee and having a discussion and if you're writing this text and for wider circulation, they will not be very different. They might be like for one might be a bit formally constructed and using a bit of references and all that, but largely the language will be consistent. Now

04:06 MALAVIKA (?) What are you doing? [?]

04:06 MALAVIKA (?) Yeah, I mean

04:09 MALAVIKA (?) What will you how would you catch

04:11 SATYA Sorry in the activist scenario there is a huge level of sincerity, otherwise you're not being true to you know, within quotes.

04:19 PRAYAS I mean the sincerity is in the form that the I mean, see, what you are saying is what you is how you speak, right?

04:27 PRAYAS (?) What you get, yeah.

04:29 Yeah, so how you speak is how you speak. So the language remains consistent no matter if it's for public consumption it's or it's for private debate.

04:38 ADITYA No, but the doesn't the it the true that where you're more conscious when you have an immediate public consumption as the predicament when you're actually writing, because the whole point of you writing for example a press release or like a provocative speech or like a speech text is the fact that it has to produce more cathartic kind of reflection immediately, no? You know what exactly?

05:03 PRAYAS I mean so it might have more lyric, it might have more grandstanding and all that. But I'm saying the core arguments why you let's say why do you want to oppose something happening out there? What is your core argument?

05:19 VEERANGANA (?) No.

05:20 PRAYAS Your argument will more or less remain right.

05:23 VEERANGANA (?) Mm-

05:25 PRAYAS So I mean I mean I think in contrast to this, what you are talking about the artist statement was of course that there is no consistency in what you are I mean in that is the amount that is the sincerity which you are finding slightly troubling. He you know if that is acknowledged as a construction.

05:46 PRAYAS (?) -huh.

05:47 To bol ke manipulate karo

05:55 SATYA But here's the other thing. What if I don't want to tell you, I just want to manipulate you?

06:01 PRAYAS (?) That's fine as well. But then acknowledge that I mean, okay, you don't need to acknowledge but I mean I'm just saying he that would make

06:13 PRAYAS (?) I mean manipulation is of course sincere.

06:17 MALAVIKA What if the artist statement is actually giving you like an example of an interpretation? Is that insincere? What if the artist is stepping outside themselves and writing the statement in a kind of objective way?

06:40 ADITYA Sincerity is also the fact that whether you're talking about sincerity in to in the measure of whether it's biographical, whether it's the closeness that you share with the work as a person because it's so much embedded in the way that you how you function, because you are the one who is making it, and also you're the one who's articulating it. But the point is what is the moment you produce a like a distance between these two, and how does then you locate sincerity in between these? So whether we are saying that it's sincere as long as it sounds like a narrative that's convincing, or do you think are you saying that the that convincing narrative itself is a manipulation?

07:22 PRAYAS No, so I think the point of sin of bringing of using the sincerity was that you know if you are actually referring to yourself, which is what an artist statement does in some ways, if you're referring to yourself and if you're referring to yourself as a very as a as a as something which is before the fact, so b in the sense which i which is natural and you're trying to speak of it in a language which is either logically or philosophically or critically, whatever, opening things up. Then how can you e how can you not acknowledge the fact that you are making yourself into a construct?

08:10 VEERANGANA Sincere.

08:11 You would come in more with depending on what you've written and the way people react to it, about at what level you can respond to that without having to step back and question what you've written. You should be able to respond to that in this in a similar manner to the way you've written it and with as much sincerity as

08:31 ADITYA But I'm confused. How do you ack this is my big question about how do you acknowledge it? How am I going to say oh listen I'm going to manipulate you? So how am I going to acknowledge your ma acknowledge either sincerity or manipulation?

08:46 VEERANGANA I mean say if you put out a statement and then there are ten people who question it's about how you're able to answer those ten people and in a way come to a conclusion with each of them no matter what their questions are, because your qu your statement is sincere enough to allow that. And you've sincerely written it where you can actually tackle all the questions that come your way for what you've written.

09:09 SPEAKER 4 So I can s actually sincerely construct my sincerity.

09:17 SATYA Without acknowledgement. I mean the thing what I'm having trouble with is how can how can anyone know anything? How do I know somebody is sincere or not? It's my interpretation of what they've put out in front of me.

09:27 LINA (?) Totally.

09:29 LINA (?) So even the image of ourselves we have is a construct.

09:34 PRAYAS Yeah, I mean I think it's yeah, I don't know if we can give up our right or access to the knowledge of whether something is sincere or not so easily. Because I think we can debate on at least knowing whether something is being acknowledged as a construct or being or being passed off as a as an element of truth of some nature.

10:00 MALAVIKA That may depend on how one chooses to write or articulate what they are saying. The statement what kind of language they use to write.

10:10 PRAYAS I mean I am basically talking about the self referencing. When you talk about yourself about yourself at all, it's fine. I'm just if you talk about a set of ideas or a set of framework or whatever, that's fine.

10:22 PRAYAS (?) Sure.

10:23 I think when you refer to yourself, how do you do it?

10:26 MALAVIKA Yeah.

10:29 PRAYAS Because in that comes the whole you know, the aspect of either sincerity or acknowledging construction.

10:38 MALAVIKA So what if the statement actually speaks of not the artwork? Because that's what a lot of statements end up doing and I have always found it more beneficial to read statements that give me a little more background about where the artist is coming from, both contextually and conceptually. so, you know, little details about, you know, where the artist lives or the kind of things they've been interested in or something like that ends up giving me a deeper understanding of this person and then I can look at the artwork from a slightly more well rounded lens.

11:24 SATYA I totally agree with what you said, Malavika. Like from a curatorial perspective just seeing a person's images or of their work may or may not be completely useful for me. I if I know more about their intent or what I construct or what their intent is.

11:40 Yeah.

11:41 I agree with you what he said, yeah.

11:44 MALAVIKA Well the statement is not sitting and explaining the works and what the work intends to do, but what they intend to do in a kind of very large abstract sense.

11:55 VEERANGANA (?) And where do they fit and where are they coming from and...

11:58 SPEAKER 1 Yeah, precisely.

12:04 MALAVIKA (?) So

12:06 PRAYAS I mean but those are elements of construction. I mean if I tell you, if I tell you that if I tell you up okay, this is where I come from, this is what I this is how I started working on this thing and all that how do how would you know if I'm telling you something that no, I mean the truth might not even exist, but like let's say how do you know whether I'm telling you something I mean you would obviously know whether I'm telling you something as I mean if I want you to believe it because I'm telling it to you as a truth. Or if I'm telling I'm sharing a yeah, I'm sharing an idea with you and it doesn't matter if this idea is true or false. Or

12:54 LINA (?) How well you're persuading me, how well you're appealing to my

12:59 PRAYAS Yeah, so that is idea specific, right?

13:02 PRAYAS (?) So

13:03 SATYA (?) In each case, yes, it could be.

13:05 PRAYAS It could be the rhetoric, it could be the manner.

13:10 SATYA Yeah. It could it could be the manner. I mean I could j it could be a medium of an artist of one medium but use some other medium to express another kind. But I could fully convince you very well, like that I'm really good at this other thing.

13:27 MALAVIKA I think it's very difficult to construct something that is not entirely true. I mean or rather that is not that doesn't have at least an a small element of truth in it. Supposing I make some very disturbing work and I put out this whole picture that I'm a refugee when I'm not at all a refugee. Somewhere it's not going to all fall into place. It's not going to be convincing enough. Either what I project in terms of my statement or the work. They're not gonna match up.

14:08 ADITYA But what is this coherence? I'm just thinking about whether the sincerity or okay, let's think the coherence that we are talking about of something that we have written and something that's made by us. Yes, artists for instance. Is the fact that there is a necessary perception that there would be a relationship between maybe sometimes very direct, sometimes indirect, sometimes just like the text becomes the second layer of the work. But what I'm not able to is the fact that

14:46 A the fact okay, all of these are constructs, B, the fact that what why is there the perception that we have to have a necessary relationship between A and B? Is what I'm not able to understand. So whether there is a possibility for us to not be not descriptive, illustrative, all those

kind of definitions to something that is already made and created by us, and the necessity to produce a context so that the other person will understand. So it's a it's a given thing, no, it's like the classic Vasarian model of like thinking about how do you give a social context and how do you somewhere locate the artist in a trajectory so that you can describe and understand and make sense of how the artwork is shaped, right? So let's imagine in a situation where we don't have any of these but we have a note and we have a painting, then how do you then engage with that?

15:48 MALAVIKA S so are you trying to say that you look at both independently and not try to relate one to another?

15:54 ADITYA (?) Well I'm saying whether that situation would exist. Because

15:58 MALAVIKA Well that's my question too, whether if you are looking at the written form or the supporting form to either visual or musical form is it would also be a construct. And if it's a construct then can it not be artistic in its own right? So can it not be

16:27 MALAVIKA (?) Created differently by the same person to end up reflecting similar ideas.

16:33 SPEAKER 2 [unclear]

16:40 VEERANGANA (?) [unclear]

16:41 PRAYAS But I don't really understand why what will happen if we don't perceive them if the if you don't perceive the work and the text to be coexisting in the same plane, what will what will we gain by that?

16:59 ADITYA (?) What are you saying? Sorry?

17:01 PRAYAS If we manage to keep those two layers apart, you know, the text and the work.

17:09 PRAYAS (?) Huh.

17:10 What will we perceive additionally? What will be the perceptual difference? What will be the benefit?

17:16 SATYA (?) No, but

17:16 SATYA (?) I feel like it's the intent, right? What is the overall intent of the artist when with the artwork and the statement? These are two separate elements that are coming together and giving some intent. It's projecting the intent of the artist. So

17:33 PRAYAS Yeah, so how I mean I'm I think we can break it down to a we can I mean I don't know. I'm s proposing that we break it down to unhinged from the art context and I think it can be simpli expressed in a simpler way as oh if there is any action being performed.

17:55 PRAYAS (?) -huh.

17:56 PRAYAS (?) And if the intention behind the action is also being articulated.

18:00 ADITYA (?) Huh.

18:02 PRAYAS (?) What do you what would you do with that articulation? What do you I mean, what do you if

18:11 [unclear]

18:13 PRAYAS (?) Okay.

18:14 SATYA The overall articulation is the sum of the action and the projection of the intent, right? So it's not just the action.

18:22 PRAYAS But the intent is not just being projected, it's being s it's being articulated. So that is

18:30 SATYA (?) Articulation is a projection. I mean I could I could project something at you.

18:35 VEERANGANA (?) It could be a projection of the action where the action is the symbol. I mean that's what we discussed yesterday how a symbol is something that creates a larger language.

18:45 LINA (?) Yeah.

18:46 SATYA (?) So it's mostly creation of an image of an image in some way, no?

18:51 PRAYAS (?) Yeah, so if that happens so if I do something and I also tell you in the next instance, Oh I did this because of this. Now would that change what you interpret what you interpreted f as your I mean as your reading of why I did that action in the first place?

19:11 SATYA (?) I would say yes because I'm getting new information. You're telling me something about something. So I have two pieces of something now.

19:22 PRAYAS (?) Right.

19:22 PRAYAS (?) That's just another thing to disbelieve in. I mean what I'm saying is

19:28 SPEAKER 4 I mean what is there to believe? How do you know what to believe in?

19:32 MALAVIKA No, another way of believing is to negate. Like you say, No, I'm not gonna believe this, I'm not gonna believe this you're keeping on negating everything that comes to you. That's

19:41 SATYA (?) You are cynical of everything.

19:43 PRAYAS No, it's a very close parallel to what you're talking about. The whole artist statement thing. It's a very close parallel. So when you have some action and someone reads the action in the light of their own perspective and they form an idea of, okay, this action has this intention. You make that kind of idea. And then you're also faced by the actor telling you that this was my intention. So which one would you believe? Would you believe your own formulated intention or their articulated one?

20:18 SPEAKER 1 You'd have to take a bit of both.

20:20 SATYA Exactly and there's you don't know what to believe to be honest. It's whatever makes sense from the when you join what the artist is doing and the artist is saying that they are doing and the what they are saying they are doing could be a construct.

20:35 PRAYAS Yeah. Yeah. I'm just saying that it's a very close parallel. So because art takes us I mean talking about art takes us in all kinds of circles. So if we unhinge it from art, if you just you know make it like a simple action and intent thing, it's simple enough to do that.

20:53 SATYA (?) I mean at the end of the day really there's no way to know what the action was in the first place. And what the person is saying, there's no way to believe it or not believe it. So it's your own interpretation of what you want to do with the information you've received.

21:08 PRAYAS Yeah, so then the artist statement becomes problematic only because of the significance you give it.

21:15 PRAYAS (?) That's beautiful.

21:16 SATYA If it is I mean, if you give whatever significance, I mean, does it have to be problematic?

21:21 VEERANGANA It becomes about individual perception also then.

21:24 VEERANGANA (?) Yeah.

21:25 VEERANGANA (?) That's with I mean, that's with anything, whether it's an artist statement or something that you read or something that somebody says.

21:33 MALAVIKA Yeah Lina has actually texted another point here, which I think makes sense. It sa she says there is always proxy articulation where a third person takes on the act of framing the imagery in words.

21:50 MALAVIKA (?) So there's another layer of

21:55 LINA (?) Construction happening.

21:56 LINA (?) Yeah.

21:59 Don't know if y'all can hear me, my internet is a bit dodgy today, but

22:04 MALAVIKA Very clear.

22:07 LINA Oh great. That's why I was typing it out. Because for me as a as a curator the kind of falsity let's say of written words, if they are not actually expressed by the person themselves comes across very clearly. I'll just give you an examp an example, short example of a few days back somebody sent me some works, a person whom I know very well and whose works I really do understand and follow. And then along with that a very conceptually framed statement

which went along with the works and I was shocked and then I wrote back and said, Well, you know did you write this? And then he said, No, actually I sort of mentioned this to somebody else and they wrote it for me. But I'm using it as my statement. That's one aspect that I speak of and I and a second aspect is more of a mutually understood position like that of a curator.

23:09 LINA (?) Well.

23:10 Who begins to enter into that imagery and the voice of the image maker and then creates some kind of truthful articulation out of it. So I actually yes, there are there are many ways in which to look at it.

23:29 ADITYA (?) Then the curator does the curator then become the interlocutor in a context where the artist cannot articulate is that what you're saying or you're saying something?

23:41 SONIA (?) In the sense like

23:43 LINA Cannot, will not, has a different language, there are many concerns that come into it.

23:53 ADITYA Yeah. No but what I'm trying to understand is that there are two ways of like I would like to understand the curatorial because for some reasons I happen to look at a lot of artists who don't prefer to talk about their works in the public domain.

24:09 Okay, when they make presentations, they don't usually talk about their work, but they talk about something else that are more conceptual relations in the field of art, how to perceive art, how to look at art, etcetera. So let's imagine a context because for them talking about art is an illustrative okay, we are representing the practice that we make in a kind of a discussion forum or in a writing forum. But for them, the text or the speech stands by itself and has a different layer dimension to the other kinds of practices that they make. So it would be n it's not like a detachment, of course it could be another layer. But it would be interesting also to think about why certain positions are taken, no? Like in the sense, like why is it that they're trying to move away from the biographical, from the from the position that's illustrative in the artist statement that you more often see? Or something else. Or they're actually taking the curatorial role in that thing.

25:16 MALAVIKA I'd like to add to that there's I'm wondering if the if it's a third person writing on the artwork is there a possibility of that itself being in enhancing the piece without I mean beyond one what one could imagine. So

25:42 MALAVIKA (?) Very much.

25:43 SPEAKER 5 That does happen.

25:45 MALAVIKA So if that does happen then I'm just wondering why we shouldn't accept that. And if we're accepting that I mean there

25:57 VEERANGANA There are several artists who are more comfortable articulating through their works and may not be able to articulate in the same manner.

26:05 VEERANGANA (?) Right.

26:06 MALAVIKA (?) In the form of words, which is where a third person would come in, whether it's a writer or curator, I mean

26:11 VEERANGANA Yeah.

26:11 A friend who may be able to articulate it better for them.

26:14 VEERANGANA (?) Yeah.

26:15 LINA (?) To be able to convey it to the audience or the viewers of their works.

26:20 VEERANGANA (?) Yeah.

26:21 SATYA (?) But then there's also the place where the I doesn't want I don't want somebody defining what I'm doing. So I just may not appreciate someone else talking about me, but unfortunately if I don't talk about it and s someone else has to talk about it, they are framing me. But that's the only way I can be heard.

26:42 ADITYA (?) Then I'm stuck with that.

26:45 MALAVIKA Then there's also this thing that if it's being framed by somebody else as long as it's projecting them well it's fine. So like everybody wants good advertisement. So it doesn't come up.

27:00 VEERANGANA Where it would be say a critic or somebody who's reviewing something where you don't have control over the way somebody's articulating something they've understood.

27:09 Yeah.

27:09 As opposed to somebody who's writing for the artist or for somebody whom you are articulating for along with I'd say in a more collaborative manner where they're also approving or disapproving of the way it's being written. So a very well edited piece.

27:27 MALAVIKA (?) Yeah.

27:29 LINA Chapter of the piece. [?]

27:33 MALAVIKA So it does end up becoming a finely constructed piece in itself.

27:37 MALAVIKA (?) Yeah.

27:38 MALAVIKA (?) Yeah. Regardless of who's writing it, even if it's written by the artist an artist is gonna take into consideration all these things.

27:47 MALAVIKA (?) Or do you think w one is less I don't know, I've I did

27:51 VEERANGANA Constructed. It's very well I mean you have any artist statement to go look at it you always know that it's been constructed because somebody's thought through how they're gonna write it or even if it's by a third person it's been referred to with the artist for whom they're writing it and then constructed and then approved by the artist so that it becomes the artist statement.

28:14 PRAYAS (?) So it comes I think in that sense it goes towards so one is your one is your stump [?], one is your one is the way you sound and one is the way you want to sound like right? So and if you I mean I personally don't see any problem in third, fourth, fifth, sixth party writing for you if you choose to not write for whatever reason. You know? Because that only becomes a that is only become that is only considered a problem because of the expectation from the artist to be presenting themselves in this in this form on the public stage, which is what I was referring to as sincere. So you know if for example if there were PR companies did this packaging for artists. And if that was very transparent, ha wo PR company ka kaam hai, wo ka kaam hai [?]. Like we are used to doing in you know our rest of our rest of our let's say social avenues like in the like in the media. Now who would really be so I mean who would really want to believe that what Hrithik Roshan is saying in an interview has not been guided by that guy's PR strategist.

29:44 SATYA But you know the in this case we know that the PR str we know that the this is being done for PR by a PR strategist.

29:53 SATYA (?) There is that transparency. But at least you've heard about that this thing is happening. But you know, I'm trying to think of a PR company that represents artists in a very standard format, this name, age, whatever, very specific questions and advertising in that sense and it doesn't make any statements. So the PR company constructs the artist thing.

30:18 VEERANGANA Say if you're in a room where you've overheard a conversation that maybe between two people whom you know are very close and you know, that'll be more private as opposed to something you hear in public.

30:30 And it's the level at which I think each of us communicate, whether it's in a very private situation, a public situation, or somebody with whom you have a different comfort level, the way we communicate is also different.

30:43 VEERANGANA (?) Well, I think even the whole I mean, the language, the construction of it, all of that differs within the level of how comfortable you are with whom you're communicating with.

30:54 PRAYAS Yeah, exact and you know and PR strategists construct either a intimate sounding voice or a or you know, like they construct different kinds of voices. Now I don't I wouldn't re-

ally try and say that Kangana Ranaut's voice or you know, any one of these voices which seem to be distinct in terms of their character is not constructed. Now these are positions which are strategized and constructed. Which and it doesn't take away anything from what they are for me. It doesn't take away anything because why should it? I mean so if you if you are c if you go closer home as artists, as in musicians who I mean musicians who are like releasing on the big stage take anyone like Nicki Minaj is such a brilliant construction. Now she's not you wouldn't no one would ever think that she is who she pretends to be. But what does that take away from the from what you get?

32:00 MALAVIKA You know this brings me to the other question I had for today, whether an acute consciousness about language or how we construct ourselves can actually lead to a construction of our self awareness. Because what is happening is everything is becoming i in this case like you were just saying, i it becomes a construct of some s a persona without actually revealing what that person is not. They're only looking at what is being projected.

32:44 ADITYA (?) But isn't it the case with everything? It's all about the projection and not actually the person.

32:49 PRAYAS (?) Exactly.

32:50 VEERANGANA (?) Yes.

32:51 MALAVIKA That's because the definitions and the constructions are so well defined. Is there any room for you know, blurring that definition where you don't have to show every form so clearly? where there is a little of the vulnerabilities or the

33:15 ADITYA (?) But what I'm trying to say is that even the vulnerability is also a projection because you're actually choosing to have a specific kind of conversation as opposed to the other one. So then the point is it's that vulnerability that there's a lot of personal details that a lot of artist statements have. But I also feel that it's a specific kind of project what projection to justify that there is some kind of intuitive relationship between the form and the content that is being produced, right? So that in some way, in some cases it's spectacularly true, but in some cases it's just spectacularly made up, where you are forced to see a signification through somebody's personal like intuitive articulations that you're reading, you know. So in that way, it's an it's a very strategic image that one try is trying to make and which is reiterated in so many forms, even when it's like gone to different

34:17 LINA (?) What about the negative space?

34:20 SPEAKER 2 Negative space of

34:22 MALAVIKA Of what is being constructed. That is not conscious.

34:28 ADITYA That's the unpredictable. Like if you ha if you like ask a newsreader to read a artist statement on the television, so that's the negative space because half of it you will not know how is it going to be perceived. Sometimes it can be like taken so spectacularly well, sometimes it might be what is what is this kind of expression. Like it's not about necessarily like it's badly written. I'm not talking about the quality of it, but the unpredictability of how certain situations will be produced around it. But somewhere it's also the curatorial comes in there because the curatorial is going to actually make the relation for it to exist in a constellation like with other works, with the other artists, big etcetera.

35:12 MALAVIKA Has anybody ever done that? Read artist statements or proposals like it's being presented in the news?

35:21 SATYA It's actually reminding me of things that go viral. I mean why do some things go viral? It's something has been presented. I mean not like a piece of work itself, but what is said about something and it's like a how a rumour spreads.

35:37 VEERANGANA Yeah.

35:38 SATYA (?) It's like the expression of something. It's not the thing itself.

35:44 LINA Right.

35:49 LINA (?) I think to a large extent we go by what is predictable.

35:57 MALAVIKA Yeah.

35:59 LINA It seems like that. I mean to a larger extent things are predictable.

36:06 LINA (?) Is that because

36:07 And are constructed within those predictable patterns.

36:14 SONIA (?) For sure, for sure, yes.

36:17 ADITYA And therefore

36:18 SATYA Some

36:18 Statement is not put within a predict in a sort of an understandable common framework, the person who's seeing that cannot predict or understand what it is about and therefore it becomes sort of like an obscured thing which they are not able to understand. And that takes away from the artist's work unfortunately. It's like if you are able to define yourself very clearly then it is something that's predictable

36:46 And for a person who's

36:47 And it makes it easy.

36:49 SATYA (?) Yeah.

36:53 MALAVIKA (?) So people are only l are comfortable with clarity.

36:59 SPEAKER 5 [unclear]

37:01 ADITYA Comfortable with the clarity I would say. I would say comf comfortable with the syntax that is familiar.

37:07 ADITYA (?) And

37:08 And it's not necessarily about the of course clarity for sure, but it's about something f it's about more about familiarity and saying the predictable. The predictable is also the familiarity. Suddenly you see some fictional like no suddenly some artist is displaying his artist statement as a newsreader is reading it. People will say, What the hell is this? No, like there's a whole possibility

37:30 ADITYA (?) No precedence to it.

37:32 Right, but

37:32 And some people might say this is seriously cool because it actually punctures the very idea of the artist statements as truthful document because it is making it news and like showing all this kind of fabrication kind of things involved in it and so on so forth. So the meanings are multiple of how the gesture is perceived. But I agree with the predictable and the fam more than the predictable I would say it's the exactly the relation to it is the familiar. So as long as we are in the familiar terrain, you're like happy. It's like an e-flux announcement every day, which no one brings in the reads in the words [?], they just read the sub the line in the subject box. Because it's a familiar, because you think there is no need to it, you f you have the feeling that you already know what it will be inside, no. So maybe there are exceptions to it, but this is some familiarity that I'm talking about.

38:32 SONIA So how you can do away with the artist statement.

38:35 LINA Is of more comfortable because

38:40 Sorry. Otherwise one's knowledge can be questioned. And again, for the person who is on the understanding side, it is a it's an uncomfortable feeling to not understand something fully. Or

39:02 Or one feeling inadequate in that situation. So that again comes down to familiarity and common syntax.

39:12 VEERANGANA (?) Exactly.

39:14 MALAVIKA Why would you want to do away with the artist statement?

39:22 SONIA Sometimes when a person writes, it's not always that you need illustrations to support the writing. Similarly, when a person makes an artwork, it's not always that you need text to support the artwork.

39:38 So

39:39 SONIA (?) But the text

39:41 VEERANGANA (?) Well from an artist's statement, wouldn't it? [?]

39:45 SONIA When a person I'm looking at the artist statement and the artwork as two separate forms.

39:54 SONIA (?) Yeah.

39:55 So s when something is said in one particular form and then you have writing to support that particular form, it doesn't completely support it because they are two different languages.

40:09 SONIA (?) But why does it have to play a supportive role?

40:14 PRAYAS (?) I mean it can be

40:15 SPEAKER 1 Yeah.

40:15 PRAYAS It can be a parallel artwork. So I mean

40:19 SONIA (?) Parallel artwork but then the artist who makes the artwork should have a choice to do away with having another form alongside what they make or what they're trying to say.

40:33 PRAYAS Yeah, of course yeah. I mean if they don't want to do like if they don't want the icing on the cake, why do they need to put it?

40:40 SONIA Exactly. So sometimes even in the case of the co the problem is when an artist consciously chooses not to say anything and just have the artwork. Sometimes galleries and certain systems make catalogues and there should be text. So my question is there a possibility to have catalogues without text?

41:02 PRAYAS No, but why so anti why so anti

41:05 SONIA I'm not anti, I'm just considering the possibility of the absolute necessity to have that.

41:13 PRAYAS (?) Want to do I would want to do away with the images.

41:16 MALAVIKA No one sec, I have a I have a question. Like for instance when you when you pick up a book from a bookshop all these books have a blurb at the back. So why should the bl so can why d why do these texts these artist statements become blurbs in text form for visuals? Why can't you have a visual b blurb?

41:40 SATYA Part of the reason is also the marketing unfortunately to use the word marketing and I hate that, but there is a format that is expected of an artist to present themselves and if they don't do that then they are not even considered to be in the running. So I mean if you

41:55 MALAVIKA The only expectation from the artist should be their artwork

42:03 MALAVIKA (?) Ideally, yeah. Ideally

42:06 PRAYAS (?) Exactly.

42:08 PRAYAS (?) This is twenty first century, that's fifteenth century. They were

42:11 I mean I had a dramatic statement to make.

42:15 ADITYA (?) No, I'm saying I'm just saying that because it's a I don't know, I've had these conversations before and I want to in point of the

42:23 ADITYA (?) Fact that there is a field of relationship that

42:27 The same thing of the familiarity here because the understanding that somebody else will know the text language is more higher than the understanding that somebody will understand your visual language as well because they're not trained to understand the visual language.

42:42 MALAVIKA That's the point I mean because

42:45 PRAYAS (?) The dramatic statement I was making was that because art doesn't work

42:52 PRAYAS (?) We need to say it because I mean, no one is going to let's say, if I can't access the work, [unclear]. So at least I should have a one-liner to roll through my head.

43:08 LINA No, I disagree there, absolutely.

43:12 I write text for shows but I think it's actually not necessary. Works have to speak on their own. And the number of people who run away from reading text and not reading the text. Maybe they like titles because titles are easy. But nobody really nobody likes to read text.

43:35 ADITYA People also run away from that's where I'm actually bringing the newsreader idea is that people also may be running away the text because the writing of the text and the positioning of the text in a curatorial format is not radically reinvented over the past ten years of exhibition making or fifteen years.

43:52 Right.

43:52 Yeah. If you see the possibility for you to reinvent the relationship between the image and the text and not necessarily looking at an A four sheet on a sunboard on a curator on a exhibition, then actually talking about a different set of relationships.

44:08 PRAYAS The and the language, right? And the texture of the language. I mean people are people are really I think at this point they've lost their patience with trying to reach den r read dense academic text that they that they don't know how to make sense of because they haven't read all these books and they don't want to be made guilty for not having read all these books.

44:33 LINA (?) It's not they, it's we. I mean it's me. I can say very honestly that I myself turn away from very large words and complex sentences. So

44:45 SPEAKER 3 Yeah, so

44:47 VEERANGANA Exactly.

44:48 PRAYAS (?) No, I mean

44:51 VEERANGANA No, it's also when you're looking at something new in terms of a visual say an art piece, you're trying to understand that and if you have to take out time to understand the text that's going along with it, you want things to simplify it and not to complicate it more.

45:05 ADITYA For sure, for sure, yes. That's what I'm saying. So then maybe also of course the language and also the ways in which this language is simplified and also communicated. Maybe a little more innovative ways of thinking about this would be nice, then the whole kind of disjuncture that you're producing between the text and the image can be

45:27 PRAYAS (?) That's too fundamental a thing because it's like

45:33 PRAYAS (?) Yeah, because eventually images are text, right? I mean so you can't take out one from the other because it's all text.

45:46 SPEAKER 2 Yeah, and text is an image and images it's the same kind of

45:52 MALAVIKA Okay, we are

45:55 I think we need to wind up. this has been fantastic. Thank you everybody for coming for all the three days. And let's hope to continue in other forms and we'll keep you all posted about that.

46:12 LINA Great. Yeah. Thanks.

46:16 SPEAKER 1 Bye.

46:20 SONIA Thanks, bye.