

# Dematerialization of Art: Concepts and Its Traces in Contemporary Indian Art

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## Abstract:

This paper explores the concept of “dematerialization” which was introduced by Lucy Lippard and John Chandler in their work on conceptual art that emerged in the 1960s. Dematerialization stands for the dominance of ideas linked with intelligence on materiality linked with sensory perception. So, dematerialization is a kind of process in which ideas take the lead and become primary, and materiality loses its traditional status and becomes secondary. The notion of dematerialization can be reconsidered on these grounds. First of all, the core of the work is the idea or concept, no material form. Secondly, the core of the artwork is not confined to what the viewer “looks at” as an art object as a final product. Thus, the idea permits the process. The concept of dematerialization gave a new vision to Indian artists to explore their feelings and thoughts through concepts and ideas with readymade objects. By interpreting conceptual art and dematerialization, the author concludes that these tendencies share significant similarities, and that is a beneficial and innovative sight in the contemporary art scene in India.

**Keywords:** dematerialization; conceptual art; readymade; ideas and art; art object

## Introduction

Dematerialization stands for the dominance of ideas linked with intelligence on materiality linked with sensory perception. So, dematerialization is a kind of process in which ideas take the lead and become primary, and materiality loses its traditional status and becomes secondary. The notion of dematerialization can be reconsidered on these grounds. First of all, the core of the work is the idea or concept, not the material form. Secondly, this core of the artwork is not confined to what the viewer “looks at” as an art object as a final product. Thus, the idea permeates into the process. This situation can be taken as another interpretation of dematerialization. In conceptual art, dematerialization can be taken as different types of negations. Firstly, it can be taken as the negation of art as aesthetics in the sense that cognitive values corresponding to reflection become primary and aesthetic values corresponding to sensation turn out to be secondary (Schellekens, 2007). Thus, conceptual art becomes the art of the mind instead of being the art of the senses. In the 1967 essay “The Dematerialization of Art,” Lucy Lippard and John Chandler, for the first time, suggest the term *dematerialization* in relation to art. According to Lippard and Chandler, ultra-conceptual art with an emphasis on the thinking process emerges as a response to the anti-intellectual and emotive art-making processes of the 1940s and 1950s. Taking it as a trend, for ultra-conceptual art, they argue that it provokes a profound dematerialization of art *as*

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*objects* and makes a projection stating that if this ultra-conceptual trend will continue to prevail, "it may result in the object's becoming wholly obsolete" (Alberro & Stimson, 2000, p.46).

## **Review of literature**

Critical Inquiry, University of Chicago Press (2006) writes about the representatives of an artistic practice that has been counted as a major contributor to the conceptual art movement of the late 1960s and early 1970s and that has persisted continuously through the varied operation to the present day. It argues for an independent view of the stuff and character of that movement and of its legacy. It critically considers what has come to be accepted as the authoritative account of the art of our generation and of the crisis of modernism from which it is supposed to have emerged.

Ward (1997) states that conceptual art might be considered as work that emphasized the underlying conditions of aesthetic experience: Language was seen as foremost among these conditions. Material form and sensory perception were made secondary to the analyses of their discursive and institutional frames. Performance art, on the other hand, seems relatively straightforward to define,

"as a form of art that happens at a particular time in a particular place where the artist engages in some sort of activity, usually before an audience. The main difference between performance art and other modes of visual art practice, such as painting, photography, and sculpture, is that it is a temporal event or action. The author considers two works of art, the first of which, Ian Burn's *Mirror Piece* (1967), might be described as typically Conceptual."

The second, Vito Acconci's *Step Piece* (1970), might better be seen as an ambiguously conceptual piece of performance art. The juxtaposition helps to reveal the ambiguity imported into the category of the Conceptual with elements of performance, which in turn makes it untenable to view performance art as the bodily counter to a linguistic paradigm within a particular moment of avant-garde history.

Buchloh et. al (1994) discussed three questions that are crucial for the program of Conceptual art, as one, the specific question of how traditional forms of mark-making can be displaced by an exclusively photographic or textual operation of recording and documentation; second, how the legacy of Duchamp was transformed from its first level of reception in the work of Jasper Johns to the second level in Morris- what one might call the semiological or the structural/linguistic axis; and third, and more commonly, the radical dismantling of all traditional definitions of objects and categories-the "dematerialization of the work of art," as Lucy Lippard called it-and its transfer onto the linguistic, the photographic, and the site-specific operations within which Conceptual art was defined. The authors argued that there was not one unified theoretical model of Conceptual art in the mid-sixties but several competing models, only one of which is clearly mediating Duchamp.

Lippard and Chandler (1968) prognosticated a future without objects and described an emerging "ultra-conceptual" art that would no longer require studios as sites of material production. As examples of this trend, the authors discussed now-legendary pieces like Hanne Darboven's schematic serial drawings and Joseph Kosuth's cool, distanced definitions, which have become

examples of Conceptual Art par excellence. Lippard and Chandler dubbed this radical transformation “dematerialization,” a term that has since matriculated into art historians’ lexicons, as well as the annals of art history. Through dematerialization, the critics believed art might escape commodification because dealers could not sell art-as-idea.

Pinkus (2009) describes a rather broad, free-floating consideration of the term “dematerialization.” It is inspired by two poles in Italian theory and praxis: the first is the movement known as *Arte Povera* of the late 1960s and early 1970s, years that correspond to the period of the dematerialization of the art object as defined by the American critic Lucy Lippard, the Italian critic and “father” (Pope?) of *Arte Povera*, Germano Celant, and others.<sup>1</sup> For our purposes, we might think of *Arte Povera* as conceptual sculpture in a pre-digital age. The second pole is constituted by various reflections on narrative, paper, and digital commerce in contemporary Italy. Of course, “dematerialization” is by no means an exclusively Italian concept; in fact, it should be considered as intimately tied to globalization. It does imply a somewhat specific temporality: it is a movement or force that follows a period of materialization. On the surface, dematerialization may seem like a gesture of liberation, a strategy to overthrow the stockpiles of materials left by the previous generation, a break in a trajectory toward a planetary junk pile. Dematerialization is different from an anti-materialist attitude, strictly speaking.

### **Data and Methodology**

In this paper, the author used secondary data. Various sources of data e.g. books, journals, and research papers, have been used. The author used descriptive research methodology to bring into consideration the Dematerialization of Art and its concepts.

### **Objectives of the Study**

- 1) The objective of this study is to go explore the Dematerialization of Art and its concepts.
- 2) The paper examines the relationship between Dematerialization and art.
- 3) The author further exemplifies the contemporary artists’ work in India at the intersection of the Dematerialization of art.
- 4) By interpreting the Dematerialization of art, the author concludes that these both tendencies share important similarities, and that is a very useful and innovative sight in the contemporary art scene in India.

### **Precursors**

On a strict historical reading, the expression ‘conceptual art’ refers to the artistic movement that reached its pinnacle between 1966 and 1972 (Lippard 1997). Amongst its most famous adherents at its early stage, we find artists such as Joseph Kosuth, Robert Morris, Joseph Beuys and Mel Ramsden, to name but a few. What unites all conceptual art of that period is the absorption of the lessons learnt from other twentieth-century art movements such as Dadaism, Surrealism, Suprematism, Abstract Expressionism and the Fluxus group, not to mention the attempt to once and for all ‘free’ art of the Modernist paradigm. Most importantly, perhaps, conceptual art sought

to overcome a backdrop against which art's principal aim is to produce something beautiful or aesthetically pleasing. Art, early conceptual artists held, is redundant if it does not make us think. Yet most artistic institutions are not conducive to reflection and continue to promote a consumerist conception of art and artists based on beauty and technical skill and this, conceptual artists in the mid-1960s to the early 1970s agreed, must be denounced. The job of conceptual artists is instead to encourage a revisionary understanding of art, artist, and artistic experience (Schellekens, 2007).

In conceptual art, the idea or concept behind the work is as important as the work itself. Marcel Duchamp made the first example of conceptual art before world war I, but it only became recognized as a behind distinct art form in the 1960s by the American anti-art activist Henry Flynt to describe his performance art. The term was extended to "conceptual art" by the American artist Sol Lewitt in his 1967 article "Paragraphs on conceptual art" for *Art forum* magazine. This article recognized that a generation of the artist was creating a new form of art that revolutionized the way we appreciate art, to conceptual artists, a work of art was primarily for intellectual-not aesthetic-stimulation and was no longer and beautiful, handcrafted object. It did not have to take the traditional form of paintings or sculpture, but might be photographs, a film, or an installation. It could be made from found objects. Some conceptual artists, such as Joseph Beuys, created performance art to make statements about the pain of human existence or man's relationship with nature. The pioneer of conceptual art was the French artist, Marcel Duchamp. In 1913 he began exhibiting his ready-made, industrially manufactured objects that he had decided were works of art (Dixon, 2008).

The mid-twentieth century is generally understood as signifying the 'paradigm shift' from modern to postmodern visual culture. However, as we have already noted, Duchamp's far earlier ready-mades including snow shovels, bicycle wheels, bottle racks and, most famously, an unplumbed urinal – are widely understood as having anticipated some of the major aesthetic trends which became widespread in 1960s. His mixed-media installations, incorporating previously functional objects, established the principle that art could be about concepts and ideas (whether playful or ironic), rather than mimetic or formalist concerns. Duchamp's work has been accorded iconic postmodern status because he believed that theorists should decide what art was, a legacy which has influenced successive twentieth-century avant-garde movements – from Dada, Surrealism, and Russian Constructivism, to Pop, neo-Dada, and the (p-175) neo-conceptualism of the 1960s. Duchamp's work and approach proved formative in many respects, but he did not challenge or question the *hegemony* of the galleries. His ready-mades were typically submitted to galleries for exhibition and display, as were other examples of avant-garde art. In practice, it was the gallery which provided the final authentication of the artwork. Although Duchamp subverted the aesthetic assumptions under which art had operated, the achievement was nevertheless mediated through an established gallery system which played a significant part in sustaining his reputation, many years after he had (apparently) renounced art to play chess. As de Duve notes, the object-centered idea of art and its 'institutionalised value' were among those aspects of Duchamp's legacy that conceptual art deconstructed (1998:413). The 'dematerialization of the art object' – various strategies to escape the *fetish* of the exhibited object and to resist the powerful institutional role and politics of the gallery – has become a central priority of many American and European artists since the 1960s and 1970s (Pooke & Newall, 2008).

"The Critique of Aesthetic Judgment" has been defining the principles behind the idea of art for art's sake and even of concept-based art, whose theorists, like Clement Greenberg in his later years, often invoked Kant. The idea of universality of aesthetic judgment was also invoked (with some intellectual sleight of hand) in that period by Joseph Beuys, to claim that 'every human being is an artist' (Newall & Pooke, 2012). Lucy Lippard wrote about "conceptual art, for me, means work in which the idea is paramount and the material form is secondary, lightweight, ephemeral, cheap, unpretentious and or "dematerialized". Sol Lewitt distinguished between conceptual art (his own work, in which the material forms were often conventional although generated by a paramount idea). Conceptual artists, perhaps more concerned with intellectual distinctions in representations and relationships than those who rely on the object as a vehicle/receptacle, have offered posterity a particularly tangled account (Lippard, 1997). The investigations by conceptual artists into networks of signification and structures of knowledge (which enable art to have meaning) have frequently employed text as a strategic device to examine the interstic between visual and verbal languages as semiotic systems. In this regard, conceptual art is a meta-critical and self-reflexive art process. It is engaged in theorizing the possibilities of signification in art's multiple contexts. In interrogating the relationship between ideas and art, conceptual art de-emphasizes the value traditionally accorded to the materiality of art objects (Shanken, 2002).

### **The Dematerialization of the art object**

In the 1967 essay "The Dematerialization of Art," Lucy Lippard and John Chandler, for the first time, suggest the term *dematerialization* in relation to art. According to Lippard and Chandler, an ultra-conceptual art with an emphasis on the thinking process emerges as a response to anti-intellectual and emotive art-making processes of the 1940s and 1950s. Taking it as a trend, for ultra-conceptual art, they argue that it provokes a profound dematerialization of art *as objects* and makes a projection stating that if this ultra-conceptual trend will continue to prevail, "it may result in the object's becoming wholly obsolete" (Alberro & Stimson, 2000, p.46). Prior to moving into the details of that essay, it will be proper to underscore certain notions used by Lippard and Chandler. First of all, instead of the term *conceptual art*, Lippard and Chandler use the term *ultra-conceptual art* in order to distinguish the art practices taking place in the late sixties from "minimal painting and sculpture, earthworks in the early sixties as abnormally cerebral" (Lippard, 2001). Lippard mentions the difference between conceptual and ultra-conceptual art six years later at the beginning of her 1973 book *Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972*.

Although the term *dematerialization* literally implies the loss of apparent physical substance or the process of becoming immaterial, Lippard and Chandler's use of the concept in the context of conceptual art is not identical with its dictionary definition (Alberro & Stimson, 2000, p. 52). Because of its comprehensiveness, in other words several meanings which are implied by the term, Lippard and Chandler's understanding of dematerialization can be evaluated as metaphorical, but the notion of *art*, both in the statements of "the dematerialization of art" and in "the dematerialization of the art object," is decisive for the use of the term in the sense that Lippard and Chandler's usage must be somehow metaphorical because what they talk about as dematerialized objects are not literal objects, but artworks. The metaphorical character of the

term *dematerialization* stems from the notion of *art*. As implicitly being put by Atkinson, examples proposed by Lippard and Chandler for demonstrating the dematerialization are not art objects in traditional matter-states. So, what Lippard and Chandler want to emphasize is not simply any deprivation of material substance, but a change in traditional understanding of the art-work as a shift from material form to the idea.

According to Lippard and Chandler, "conventional art media are no longer adequate as media to be messages in themselves" art works such as words and signs conveying ideas are not things in themselves as end products, but they are representative of. For such artworks, the work as final product is not an end itself, but a medium for transmitting pure ideas (Alberro & Stimson, 2000, pp. 48-49). For Lippard (2001), Conceptual art means a "work in which the idea is paramount and the material form is secondary, lightweight, ephemeral, cheap, unpretentious and/or 'dematerialized". This definition of Conceptual art by Lippard also sheds light on what she might mean via the notions *dematerialized* and *dematerialization* (Alberro & Stimson, 2000, p. 54).

### **Contemporary Artists work; In context of Dematerialization of art**

From the 1960s onward the rapid development of new artistic forms –assemblage, happening, installation (including its various sub-forms such as site-specific installation and video installation), performance, action, conceptual art, process art, inter-media, time-based art, etc., has threaten the centuries-old typology of mediums (painting, sculpture, drawing) because of the sheer fact of the multiplicity of these forms. In addition, if the traditional typology was based on difference in materials used in art practice, the new mediums either allowed for the use of different materials in arbitrary combinations (installation), or, even worse, aimed to dematerialize the art object (conceptual art). Therefore, the new forms were not really mediums in any traditional sense of the term (Manovich, 2001). In the years after 1970, no art tendency achieved such prominence as to thrust itself forward as even a candidate to become the dominant style of the period. Much effort went into promoting the "return to painting," while installation, video, large-scale photography, digital media, and cinematic modes have been ubiquitous in recent years. But nothing has succeeded Minimalism and Conceptualism as art styles. "What is postmodernism?" was a key question of the 1970s that persisted into the 1980s, but it lost much of its punch when it became a taste throughout the culture (Smith, 2010).

By the 1980s, the focus of art had shifted to conveying cultural identity. Gender studies ethnicity, cast and race, religion, fragmentation caused by migration from village to urban centers, mass popularization of the performing arts, all had become critical issues. Contemporary artists freely use technological tools and materials in their works, facilitating artistic dialogue and exchange of ideas, views and expressions. The artists emerging during the 90s also responded to changed conditions within the country ushered in by globalization. They were able to access a greater range variety of mediums with the use of readymade objects. Artists' responses have frequently been issue-based, and developments such as installation art, video, digital photography have broadened the field of artistic expression. Art is now breaking all previously laid out barriers and has diversified into a multitude of media such as installation art, conceptual art, and the new media of art (Sinha, 2009). Great changes were simultaneously taking place throughout the world due to

the advent of the machine age and the new outlook created by modern science and technology. Not surprisingly these revolutionary changes had a manifold impact in India. In 1922, Husain created a highly innovative installation, "Theatre of Absurd" perception of violence and its aftermath presented at the Shridharani Gallery, New Delhi. Other artists who have been contributing towards creative installation and conceptual art include Amar Nath Sehgal, Ved Nayar, Vivan Sundaram, Gogi Saroj Pal and Ratnabali Kant. Vivan Sundaram and Ved Nayar are perhaps the most consistent practitioners of this art form. Such theatrical art or conceptual art firmly lives only in reproduction or photographic documentation; its chief one being its concept (Mago, 2000, p.126).

Joseph Kousuth and the group "ART AND LANGUAGE" believed that modern art's practices had reached an end by 1966. That is, the conceptualists concluded that the innovative formal development of particular art forms, such as painting and sculpture. Kousuth, titled (Art as idea as idea) universal (1967) all directly rejected modernism's orthodox media, conventions, and expressive devices. In that sense "conceptual art" has been interpreted as indebted to the "ready-mades" fabricated by Marcel Duchamp in the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. using and combining a variety of new representational technologies such as photographs, documents, charts, maps, films and video. Artists have developed a visual language that is both abstract and figurative. It is premised on Indian and other philosophical sources reflecting conceptual concerns (Harris, 2006). Taking an important step in that direction, technology has been a major player in the global impact of 21<sup>st</sup> century artists from India. Interestingly, artists used electronic technology to broaden their own ways and express their ideas conceptual based. This change is developed ten years later, with the inception of video art in India. Around the 1990s Nalini Malani and Vivan Sundaram, broke out of the painting frame and started to present their ideas through the medium of installations with all kind of materials including video, photographs, and more (Seid, 2007). An awareness of and commitment to critical engagement with the state has shaped art practice in India. In the last two decades, marked by political upheaval and social unrest, the need to identify the relationship between the realm of human action and larger institutional forces become more acute, gaining a sense of historical urgency and social responsibility. But the form of address needed a new methodology.

In contrast to the artist- driven intellectual debate around issues of identity, indigenism, communalism, and Indian social policy, variously through the 1970s to the 90s, the terms of reference have changed. Indian art has become increasingly global in its address, allowing curatorial objectives, the effects of new media, international residencies, art fairs, biennales, galleries, and a fluid globalized vocabulary to enter into the discourse. Through new media and installation, there is the reworking of the subjective/political space occupied by the artist. In their essays here, Deeksha Nath and Nancy Adajania plot the progress of installation art, and the complex interplay of materials, technology, and the market forces that foster alternative artistic strategies. Nath's essay analyses sculptural installation as a metaphor

"of India's development and its shifting consumption patterns', reflected in the artists use of the images and materials of mass culture. Thus, we see in the work of Subodh Gupta, Bharti Kher, or Sudarshan Shetty a dynamic view of the found object of everyday use. In tracing the progress new media Adajania foregrounds the role of women in video, photography, and performance. The performative aspect of Indian art also invites analysis

within the contexts of gender and sexuality, and social identity. Technology has also had a powerful presence in Indian popular art. At this moment we are faced with a particular contradiction of technology and its affect within contemporary India (Sinha, 2009).

Although the concept of *dematerialization* was used by Lippard (2001) in order to give a definition of Conceptual art as “work in which the idea is paramount and the material form is secondary, lightweight, ephemeral, cheap, unpretentious and/or ‘dematerialized’, Lippard and Chandler did not point at specific works in order to clarify the concept (Kemel, 2011).

### **Vivan Sundaram**

In 1993 Vivan Sundaram (b.1943), whose earlier practice had been dominated by painting, made Memorial as a powerful response to the communal riots between Hindus and Muslims that followed the demolition of the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya in 1992 by Hindu fundamentalists. In remembrance of those who suffered, Sundaram represented the victims of 1992-93 riots as an emblematic figure entombed within a pyramid-shaped (Sinha, 2009). Vivan Sundaram (1943) belongs to the first generation of post independence Indian artists who witnessed the debates around Western modernism and indigenism; and opened aspects of Third-world’s multiple modernity for further interrogation. Vivan Sundaram has played a pivotal role in consolidating the art fraternity, and infrastructure development of the arts. As part of the Baroda narrative school, he also participated in a phenomenal exhibition ‘Place for People’(1981), conceptualized by Geeta Kapur, which became a point of departure in many ways. Sundaram started experimenting in different mediums in the early 1990s. His Engine oil drawings called ‘Gulf War series (1991) is a critique of territorial claims. By breaking the two-dimensionality of painting, and extending it to the third axis, the ground, Sundaram manages to create deceptive vanishing points that lead to blurring vision of a unified land, and allows misreading of the landscape and cartographs. He was one of the first artists in post-liberalisation India, who gave up painting and started inscribing his work with negation of authoritative authorship, inserting the idea of collaborations. Sundaram moved towards making installation and working with site-specific contexts. In response to Babri Masjid demolition in Ayodhya, his earlier installation work ‘Memorial’ (1993) uses nails, newspaper photographs; his act of involving the viewer to mourn the death of ‘someone’ triggers different forms of association and engagement with the dead. Violence is ritualized through this memorialization (Suri, Lochan, & Rohra, 2010).

In 1993 Vivan Sundaram (b.1943), whose early practice had been dominated by painting made (memorial) as powerful response through the communal riots between Hindus and Muslims. As one of the first example of installation art in India (Memorial). That was what Sundaram made in 1991, with engine oil and charcoal used to protest the gulf war. By using oil, the very material the gulf war fought over, he connected the medium into a metaphor, reinforcing both the topicality and contemporaneity of his forms (Sinha, 2009). In this context the artist uses technical materials and reflects conceptual concerns. and mass media, various materials and found objects in the production of art (Sinha, 2009). For Sundaram’s work too, neither artistic material nor medium is conventional. Already in this sense, Sundaram’s work is dematerialized one.



## Subodh Gupta

Subodh Gupta is best known for transforming the icons of Indian everyday life into artworks that are readable globally. Born in Khagaul, Bihar, India, 1964, studied B.F.A. in Painting at the College of Arts & Crafts, Patna, India 1983 – 1988. Lives and works in New Delhi, India, incorporated everyday objects such as the steel tiffin boxes used by millions to carry their lunch as well as *thalis*, pans, bicycles, and milk pails in his works. Gupta's strategy of appropriating everyday objects and turning them into artworks that dissolve their former meaning and function brings him close to artists like Duchamp; *The Guardian* called him 'the Damien Hirst of Delhi.' He succeeds in finding an art language that references India and at the same time can be appreciated for its aesthetic throughout world; as Gupta says: 'Art language is the same all over the world. This allows me to be anywhere. Subodh Gupta works in a wide range of mediums from sculpture and painting to installation, photography, video and performance. He elevates the status of found objects from everyday items to artworks; using the products of rural India such as cow dung, milk buckets, kitchen utensils, scooters, guns and *gula* powder as his materials (Sultana, 2015). In this manner Subodh Gupta (b.1964) use of cow dung is an act of exploiting the meaning we gave to things and ideas. In Gupta's installations (Pure 1999) we enter a semi-circular room made of cow dung cakes (a material and form used widely in rural India for construction and fuel) and watch a video of Gupta in his tiled shower washing off dung which is slathered on his body. Gupta highlights the distinction between notions of purity and impurity through the material he uses, and thus satirizes the Indian obsession with caste boundaries (Sinha, 2009). Moreover, the presence of the (art) object is a means of conveying this idea. In this respect, because of the deprivation of conventional materiality on aesthetic grounds, Gupta's work is a dematerialized art object. In Gupta's work's concept is also supreme and the "idea" is behind the artist's work. Gupta has incorporated found objects and everyday materials-cow dung, milk pails, kitchen utensils, tiffin boxes, bicycles and scooters (Seid, 2007). He creates anti monuments to both work and dematerialized items. Famous sculptor of India, Subodh Gupta gave immense contribution in the field of installation art and he creates anti monuments to both work and dematerialized items. He also pays tribute to the everyday objects of his youth-mostly the trademark stainless steel *thalis* and *dabbas* (containers) in which most middle-class families served and ate their meals. He used kitchen utensils and dematerialized the general utility objects in art work. Mushroom Cloud (Line of Control), This is Not a Fountain, Very Hungary God and All in the same Boat are some famous art installations made by Subodh Gupta in which the materiality is deprived and the idea of artworks become primary.



**Picture (1) This is not a Fountain**



**Picture (2) All in the Same Boat**



Picture (3) Line of Control



**Picture (4) Very Hungry God**

### **Shilpa Gupta**

Moreover, artists have applied the conceptual approach to exploring ideas with their works. Artist Shilpa Gupta (b.1976) successfully captured the new media with the invention of videos and computers and incorporated this new medium in their work. Through her work involves the extensive use of technology it is not to isolate or highlight the importance of technology but rather is a means to the end of shedding light on the experience. Another vital message encoded to her work is how technology has percolated our lives and caused us to be ever so dependent (Suri et al., 2010). Mumbai based Shilpa Gupta created an interactive installation (*Your kidney Supermarket*, 2002) where one could hypothetically buy the ideal kidney via the internet. In her installation/performance '*Blame*' (2002), in response to the 2002 communal riots in Gujrat, she sold little bottles of "*Blood/Blame*" on the Mumbai local trains which read "blaming you make me feel so good. So I blame you for what you cannot control, your religion and your nationality. I want to blame you, it makes me feel so good" (Sinha, 2009).

Shilpa Gupta's art is transcultural in its address, even when inflected with a regional specificity. Her work has been presented in numerous biennales and triennales over the last decade, as well as through several international solo exhibitions and collaborations. Gupta's projects and productions occupy multiple contexts: those of post-feminist art, new media art, artistic anthropology, the biennale condition, and trans-disciplinary collaboration across the arts, sciences, psychology and activism. She employs interactive video, found objects, photography, sound and public performance to probe and dramatize the themes of desire, belief, terror, and the tenuousness of the human condition in the epoch of surveillance and militarisation.



**Picture (5) Blame**

Gupta's art ranges across the domains of psyche, society, polity and nation to articulate their repressed contents. The repressed contents of Gupta's work manifested themselves in spectral form – spectral yet strangely substantial – as a play of shadows and certainties in the interactive video projection 'Untitled (Shadows I, II & III)', 2006-2007. I would contend that Shilpa Gupta's real medium is audience perception itself, and that her works function more as props for her disclosures. This observation holds especially true of her series on singing microphones ('Singing Cloud', 2008-2009): her artistic quest has been directed towards the manifestation of the audible but immaterial surplus of experience, a surplus of affect and reason that eludes easy consumption (Sultana, 2015, p.31).



**Picture (6 ) Singing Cloud**

In this sense, formal characteristics of the artwork that are substantially based on its materiality lose their primacy and the concept or the idea beneath the materiality gains importance. Thus, ideas become paramount. So, what Lippard and Chandler want to emphasize is not simply any deprivation of material substance, but a change in the traditional understanding of the artwork as a shift from material form to the idea (Alberro & Stimson, 2000, p. 49).

## **Conclusion**

From the forgoing description, it is depicted that art has many modes of expression. In India it has always enjoyed an esteemed position. It is not just confined to drawing, sketches, portraits, brush and paints. One of the most expressive approaches of art is sculpture, installation and performance installations. As a medium, sculpture in India opened itself out in variously manifested as sculpture-installation with elements of performance and video art, assemblage involving the use of found and readymade objects, it revolved around of artists that rapidly expanded throughout Europe, producing visual arts, theatre productions, literature and design all with a strong underlying anti-war sentiment. Dadaists went out their way to reject the establishment and traditional aesthetic theory in a way that had not previously been seen. Dadaism was arguably one of the premier and most important movements that lead to dematerialization. Lucy Lippard was the first writer who recognized the dematerialization at work in conceptual art. Marcel Duchamp who introduced the concept of readymade objects into art, gave new direction to contemporary art. Through his famous installation "The Fountain" he recognizes the concept of dematerialization. The installation in which a general utility object, the urinal was used, was not merely showing an object but giving transformation towards an art of concepts because a concept was hidden behind the object.

Marchal Duchap's work changed the ideology of art not in India but throughout the world. Now the meaning of art has changed. Many Indian artists being inspired from Duchamp's work introduced the concept of dematerialization in to their work and this concept give the direction to those artists who were curious to show their feelings as an object. Dematerialization of art objects bring many new phases into Indian art and now art was not confined to only paintings but it has an idea behind this and several new things with an idea came in to existence i.e. "Art as Idea" and "Dematerialization of art objects".

The concept of dematerialization gave a new vision to India artist to explore their feelings and ideas through concept and ideas with readymade objects. It gives new direction and dimension of art in the form of installations, installations performance and sculpture-installations with elements of performance and video art. Thus, we can say that the concept of dematerialization of art objects transits traditional art towards an art of ideas.

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