

The Lost Museum

THE LOST MUSEUM

The Fate of World's Greatest Lost Treasures

Opening Reception with the artist, Shaurya Kumar
February 9, 7 pm onwards

Walkthrough with the artist at 7:30 om onwards
February 9 to March 31, 2012

L A K E E R E N
The Contemporary Art Gallery

6/18, Grants Bldg, 2nd Floor, Opposite Basilico Restaurant, Arthur Bunder Road, Colaba, Mumbai 400005,
Tel No : + 91-22 65224179 Email : lakeeren@hotmail.com Gallery Timings : 11 am - 7 am Closed On Sunday

THE LOST MUSEUM

The Fate of World's Greatest Lost Treasures

It is said that the shape of our culture is very much defined by the art of that particular era; that the art and culture are the alter egos of one another. An artwork hence embodies a past, a history in itself. Loss of any art is thus a loss of history, a loss of the spirit of time.

Though there was always a realization of importance of documentation, there are particular reasons, especially in the art realm, for a work to be completely erased from human memory, once it is lost or destroyed. As saying goes - once something is out of sight, it is out of mind.

Despite all the efforts to preserve art, since time immemorial, numerous works of art have been destroyed either during a military coup, or when the ruling regime is in general disagreement with the philosophy of that work itself. In the past century, however, with the advent of technology, there has been a major drive to preserve and learn more about the past than ever before. Robert Adams in his book *The Lost Museum* says —“We know the past better than the past knew itself.” Through the invention of camera, video films, photo copiers & fax, art was granted an immortal youth. It seemed that art and history had finally found a guardian.

Early 1980s witnessed another uproar, a great effort to preserve art, history and vanishing cultures, this time using advanced and highly sophisticated modern technologies. In 1982, a number of museums around the world joined hands to form The Council for Documentation of Lost Art & Cultural Heritage (CDLACH), with the primary aim to document and

preserve record of artworks, particularly those that had been lost or destroyed. Much of the existing documentation was converted into electronic database, forming the largest electronic archive of lost art and culture to date.

While the project is ongoing, the documentation of existing records was soon forgotten, with a belief that it would be available for all times to come. However, only about two and a half decades after the archive was first created, much of the database was found to be inaccessible. While some of electronic files didn't even open, many had changed beyond recognition. “They looked like parts of the old Atari video games, or images that you can see when one tries to open an old CD or a floppy disk” says the head engineer who was rushed to the site after the error was first reported.

This exhibition is a part of the collection of artworks that were found corrupted and stands as an aftermath of the ‘final loss’, for even the documentation of lost art has been lost forever. In response to this crisis and in an attempt to freeze the digital relics without any delay, the CDLACH is now in the process of reproducing their digital archive on paper. Works in this exhibition are part of this ongoing project and showcase various art and cultural artifacts that were lost or destroyed during various wars or conflict situations throughout history.

The council has also initiated a Program for Conservation of Art in Electronic Media (PCAEM) with an aim to retrieve and preserve any possible information from the archive.



*Bamiyan Buddha
8th - 9th century A.C.E.
Cave 620, Afghanistan*

The loss or destruction of art during wars can mainly be attributed to one of the two factors: destruction during international or civil conflicts when the work happens to be present in the affected space; and secondly, as a result of a disagreement with the philosophy or ideology of the work itself. It was the latter that decided the fate of the 7th century colossal sculptures of Bamiyan, destroyed by the Taliban in 2001.

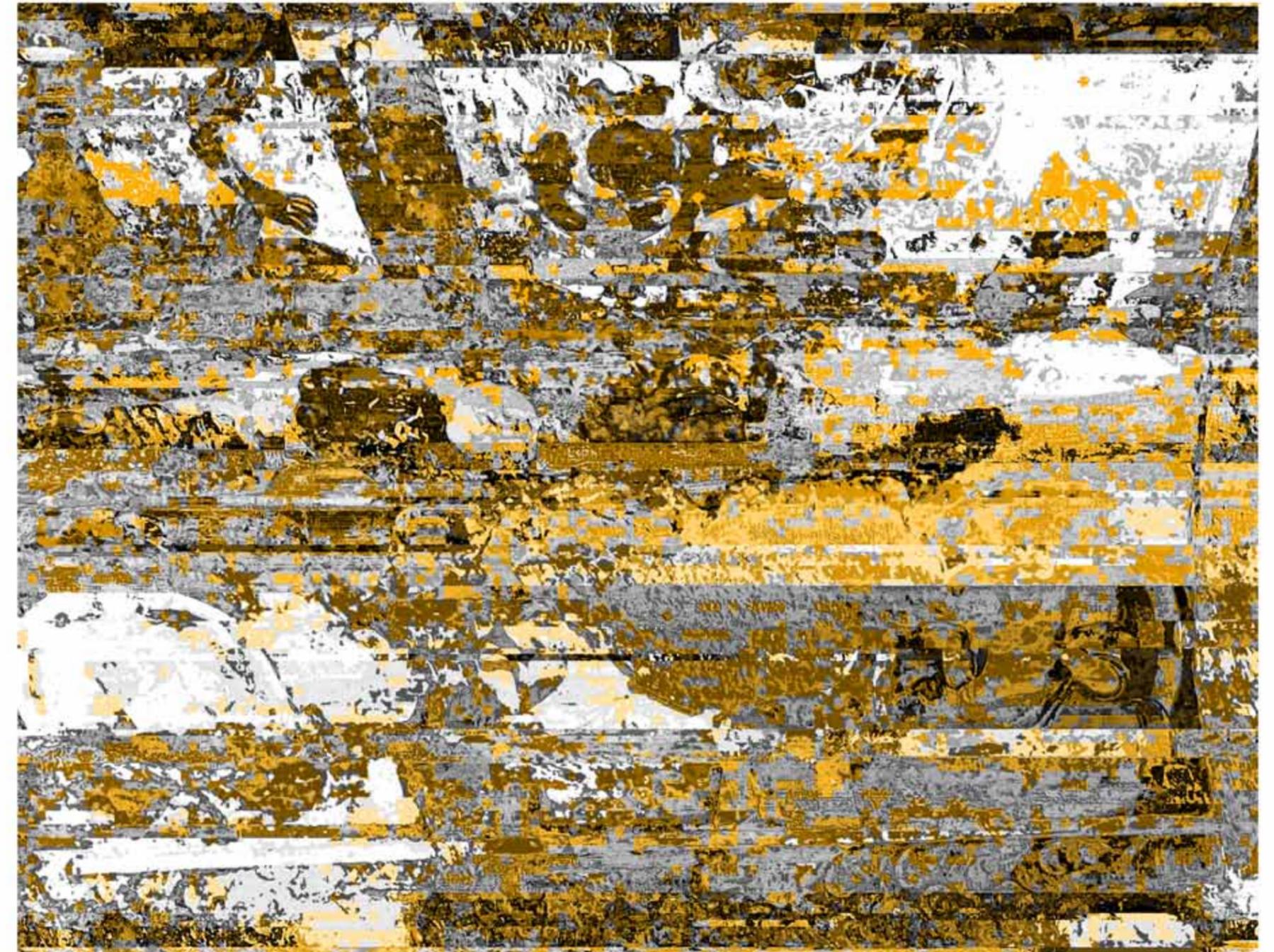
Before 2001, not much was internationally known about Bamiyan and its gigantic sculptures of Buddhas that grandly stood in a broad, hard to reach valley, flanked by high stone cliffs for over 1300 years. But even less known is the fact that along with the sculptures of Buddha, many exquisite murals that were painted in the nearby caves met with the same fate as that of the sculptures. Though some documentation of the statues remains in the form of writings and photographs, no efforts were ever made to document the remains of these beautiful mural paintings before their final destruction.

Historically, Bamiyan was strategically located on the silk route linking the markets of China with that of India, Central Asia, Middle East and Europe. After Buddhism was first introduced to the region by an Indian king Asoka the great in 3rd century B.C.E., Bamiyan became a prominent Buddhist center with numerous Buddhist and Hindu monasteries under the patronage of the Kushan dynasty. Two Chinese pilgrims, Fa-Hein

and Hsüan Tsang, visited Bamiyan in 400 A.C.E. and 630 A.C.E. respectively; and gave detailed accounts of thousands of monks inhabiting the rock cut caves that were located around the statues. It is in these caves that the most elaborate Buddhist mural paintings were done.

Though the destroyed Buddha sculptures had an unmistakable influence of the Gandharan School of Art that developed under the Kushan period, fragments of few remaining mural paintings from the surviving neighboring caves show a distinct resemblance to those found in caves of Bagh and Ajanta in central India. Before their recent destruction in Afghanistan, the two colossal statues of Buddha and the cave paintings had withstood the wrath of nature and man for over 1300 years. They were an evidence of the zenith of Buddhism, the splendor of history, and the devotion of pilgrims; and were among the greatest examples of Buddhist artworks created with various artistic influences, as diverse as Achaemenian, Hellenistic and Indian.

Bamiyan is a proof of extremism and outrage of the Taliban. With the destruction of the statues and paintings of Bamiyan, along with countless artifacts from the museums in Afghanistan, the strong link between the Buddhist traditions of Asia has been lost forever and can never be restored again. The damage is irreparable, a loss that will be mourned by generations to come.



“Earth proudly wears the Parthenon as the best gem upon her zone”

- Ralph Waldo Emerson (Poet, Essayist)

Such is the fame of one of the most well know architectural buildings of all times. Built on the Acropolis Hill or ‘the Sacred Rock’ in the 5th century B.C.E., the Parthenon is a major link to the classical aesthetics and forms the basis of the art of the modern western world.

Constructed in the 5th century B.C.E. replacing an early structure that was ransacked by the Persian invaders, the temple was the most significant monument ever dedicated to Athena Parthenos, the patron goddess of Athens.

The most magnificent offering to the goddess till date, the Parthenon was virtually a museum in itself with various Greek myths and stories depicted in beautifully carved high relief and sculptures. The famous sculptor Pheidias supervised the creation of sculptural decorations of the Doric style temple. In fact, the 40 feet high statue of Athena made of ivory and gold, which was erected inside the main complex, is attributed to Pheidias himself.

Though the Parthenon remains as one of the most preserved Greek temples, it is only a shadow of its former splendor. Through the centuries, the ancient temple has been immensely neglected, remodeled, looted and forcefully restored.

A 3rd century A.C.E. fire destroyed much of the temple that was later only minimally restored. In 6th century A.C.E., the temple of Athena was converted to a Christian church and went through a series of architectural

modifications. Unlike the ancient Greek beliefs where a devotee never enters the temple, the new Christian Parthenon was now meant to receive the congregation. To illuminate the interiors of the new church, windows were carelessly carved into the walls; the east pediment was dismantled and most of north, west and east metopes were reworked to adopt the Christian iconography.

In the 15th century A.C.E., the Parthenon was converted into a mosque under the Ottoman rule; and on September 28, 1687 A.C.E., while being used as a storehouse for gunpowder the Parthenon suffered a major destruction when a bomb from the Venetian fleet ignited the gunpowder, destroying most of the interior structure and demolishing the remaining roof. Sculptures, however, suffered the most. Only some records, lacking detail and character, of sculptures destroyed during this explosion still exist in the form of drawings done by a French artist Jacques Carrey in 1674 A.C.E. and are now housed in Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

By the late 18th century A.C.E., the Parthenon fell prey to the hands of aestheticians and collectors who visited the ruins of Acropolis. In the same spirit as Romans, who carried away art treasures, European collectors like Lord Elgin, the British Ambassador at Constantinople and Choiseul-Gouffier, along with a French diplomat made full efforts to carry the fragments of the artistic wonder back to their native countries. As a result, over half the existing sculptures now are in the collection of the British Museum in London, and some fragments exist in numerous other museums like the Louvre in Paris, National Museum in Copenhagen, the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, and the Vatican Museum in Rome.



*Remains of the Parthenon
5th century B.C.E.
Athens, Greece*





Complex of Qutub Minar
New Delhi, India

The Qutub Minar stands as part of the Qutub Complex in Delhi, India; a collection of sacred architectural structures with an engaging, yet checkered past. It has the distinction of being the tallest brick minaret in the world, with an impressive blending of architectural styles that reflect the social and political diversity of its history and location. Qutub Minar may be a breathtaking architectural accomplishment, but its creation is born of iconoclasm.

Initiated by the first Muslim ruler of Delhi, Qutub-uddin Aibak, the 72.5 meter (273.8 ft) architectural wonder began as a circular basement and was realized to full completion by his successor Iltutmish. Inspired by the Minaret of Jam in Afghanistan, the tower was created using red and tan sandstone and features architectural and decorative details drawn on a number of visual styles. With 379 steps leading to the top and a base 14 meters in diameter, it is both impressive and imposing. Scholars believe its imposing form was meant as a statement of victory—a visual confirmation of the might of Islam, an action potentially motivated by politics rather than religion.

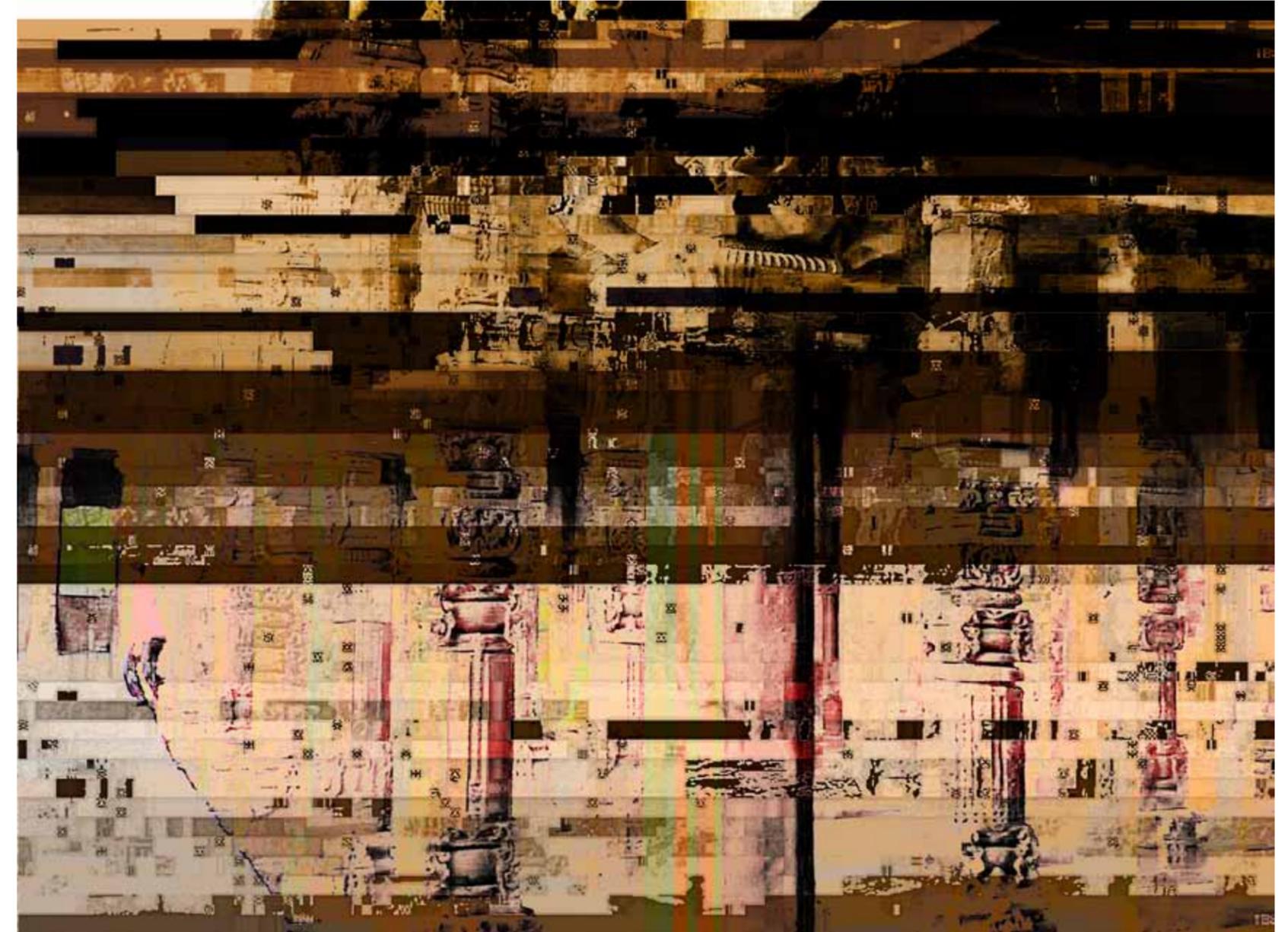
The source of Qutub Minar's building blocks, however, is rooted in political upheaval. The entire complex is built upon the *Lal Kot*, or the Red Citadel—the capital of the last Hindu rulers in Delhi prior to the Mughal period. The tower is covered with relief carvings and inscriptions, some left over from the original religious sites that were destroyed in order to build the minaret and the nearby Quwwat-ul-Islam Mosque. Records indicate

the site originally housed 27 Hindu and Jain religious buildings, which were demolished and used for parts. Remains, both literally inscribed and visually referential, of the Jain and Hindu elements can still be seen today.

The Archaeological Society of India confirms that at least 27 Hindu and Jain temples were deconstructed and re-used. Jain tirthankar figures and Hindu lotuses can be identified on many of the pillars. Beautifully carved reliefs from earlier periods mingle with classical Mughal architecture, showing parallel worlds.

Masonry and stone remains from the original temple complexes are woven throughout, preserved alongside or underneath later Arabic inscriptions from the Holy Qu'ran. In some cases, the original stones have been flipped, so the Hindu or Jain artwork is “behind” and Islamic scripture is engraved on the new “front” of the stone. In other places, Arabic writing is engraved in and around earlier motifs as over-writing. Engravings like *Shri Vishwakarma prasade rachita*, or “conceived by the grace of Vishwakarma,” indicate provenance.

Built from the rubble of temples destroyed in political iconoclasm, the tower has also withstood the ravages of nature and tourism. It has been struck by lightning on a number of occasions, the earliest dating to 1326 CE. Various rulers have repaired the damages, and some of the upper stories have been completely replaced. It has also survived several earthquakes and the interior was once open to tourists—though it is now closed off due to the potential for injury and continued damage.





*Ruins of Stele
Akule Guzai, Eritrea*

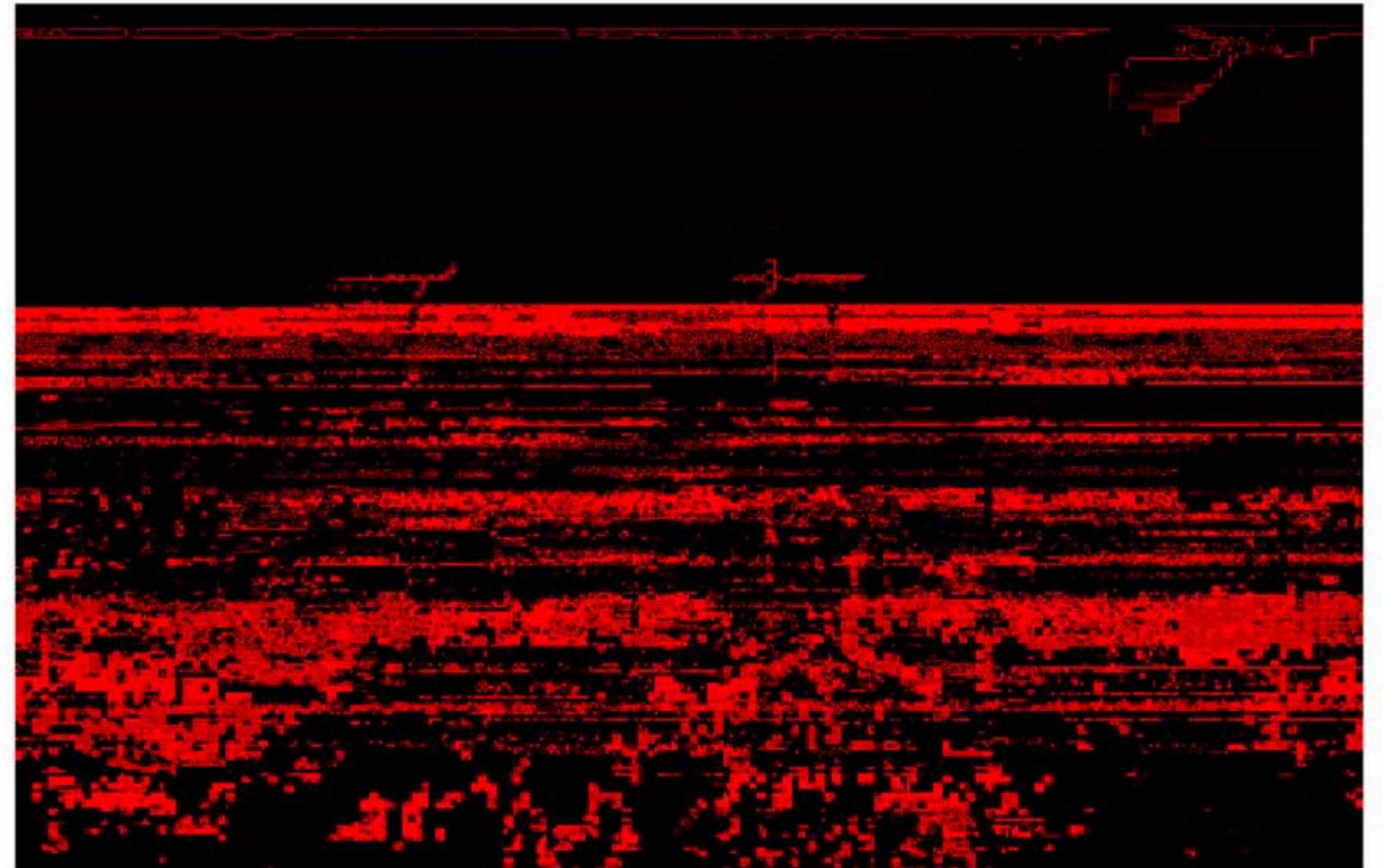
Being one of the four countries that form the famous Horn of Africa, the country of Eritrea is bordered by Sudan in the west, Ethiopia in the south and Djibouti in the southeast. From being an Italian colony to an annex of Britain in the 1940s, Eritrea finally gained independence after a thirty-year war with Ethiopia from 1961 to 1991 C.E.

Eritrea and Ethiopia are two countries that are bound together by history, culture and geography. With ongoing disputes and disagreements on the issues of national boundaries and currency, their relationship is like a lengthy family feud between two brothers, with no long-term settlement seemingly possible.

In 1998, a border conflict with Ethiopia over the town of Badme resulted in death of over 19,000 soldiers and civilians, and displacement of more than 750,000 people in Eritrea. The disputed border, that is often referred to as “the geographer’s nightmare” by BBC, was originally fixed in 1902 A.C.E. by a treaty between the Italian government that had colonized the state of Eritrea and the then Ethiopian King Menelik II.

While retreating back to its original borders in 1998, the Ethiopian army destroyed Eritrea’s oldest standing structure dating back to the 3rd century A.C.E. Belonging to the pre to early Aksumite period adorned with beautiful inscriptions, it was among the oldest steles in the region.

An eyewitness states that Ethiopian soldiers used tanks to run over the stele. The destruction of the stele was discovered only after a year of the actual event, as the fear of landmines kept people away from the deserted site of Belew Kelew near Sanafe, just 15 miles from Ethiopian border.





General Dwight D. Eisenhower, Supreme Allied Commander, inspects art treasures looted by the Germans and stored away in the Merkers salt mine.

It would not be incorrect to say that the Second World War was probably the biggest and most elaborate campaign ever executed in the history of mankind to alter the fate of art. German Nazi dictator Adolf Hitler had an ambitious vision to make Germany the strongest country in the West, both politically and culturally. This dream country, according to Hitler, was to consist of massive libraries, sprawling universities and the biggest museums of European art in the entire world. Devout Nazis, according to the taste and personal liking of their leader, confiscated large numbers of works from museums, private collectors and art dealers from all over the Europe and stored them for their future museum. Artworks that were against the taste of Hitler, especially works made by Jewish artists, were classified as “Degenerate” and were again seized, stored and sometimes destroyed.

However, contrary to the common understanding, Nazi Germans did not actually destroy much of the Degenerate art that they seized. Rather, knowing its worth in the international art market, they either traded these works with the ones that they wanted to acquire, or sold them for money. Most of the works they collected were stored

in crates and hidden in mines, churches and tunnels. In most cases, the collection was elaborately documented which still allows us to identify them.

The Nazis however could only acquire movable works like paintings on canvases and sculptures. Much of the art in Europe existed in the form of fresco paintings and architecture, which did not share that fate of preservation and documentation; and were often subjected to the cruelty of war. Such was the case of Palazzo Archinto in Milan that was destroyed in the bombardment during the Second World War, along with its exquisite paintings by artists such as Tiepolo. The detail from the ceiling shown in the work depicts the myth of ‘Apollo & Phaeton’ portraying Juno with Fortune and Venus.

The only documentation of the painting existed in the form of a black and white photograph published in a book Tiepolo, Antonio Morassi, Istituto Italiano d’Arti Grafiche that appeared in 1943 a few months before the ceiling, the palazzo and the entire documentation of the photographer were destroyed in a deadly series of air raids.





Sacred Vase of Warka
3000 B.C.E.
Uruk, Iraq

In the period 5000 – 4000 B.C.E., the Tell or mound of Ubaid, near Ur formed much of the early settlement of Mesopotamia, the culture that is identified by its distinctive style of pottery and the first village system to have existed in southern Mesopotamia. It is unarguably the birthplace of agriculture and civilization where people farmed the land, domesticated animals and fished in the Gulf. This Sumerian culture witnessed great artistic and cultural achievements, including the invention of first slow pottery wheel and the first written cuneiform script.

Many of the important artifacts of this early human civilization were displayed in the Iraq Museum in Baghdad till 2003 A.C.E. when the museum was strategically looted amidst the chaos of the infamous war in Iraq. Out of about 15,000 artifacts that were initially looted, only 35% have made their way back to the museum, and only a few more have been identified or seized by the law enforcement authorities around the world.

Though a few of the most important artifacts like the Sacred Vase of Warka dated 3000 B.C.E. has been returned, other very important historical pieces like the headless statue from early Mesopotamia that has probably the first inscription stating the figure as a king, have not been found. Another piece of great significance displayed here that still remains missing is an alabaster relief, which is one of three fragments from a single stele that dates to the time of the Akkadian Empire in Mesopotamia, circa 2334 - 2154 B.C.E.

Looting of art and artifacts for profit has been

an integral part of the war in the Middle East. Museums in Beirut were looted in the 1970s, the Kuwaiti museums were looted and burnt down by the Iraqi troops in 1991, and the Kabul Museum in Afghanistan was ransacked twice, once after the heavy bombing in 1993, and then in 2001, just before Taliban leaders destroyed much of non-Islamic art. In each case, art objects made their way to international markets, often ending locked up in secret vaults of private collectors and museums. The scrutiny of these stolen art objects in the international market is much more rigorous now than ever before, with museums and collectors refusing to buy such artifacts, or often turning them in to the authorities after acquiring them. But many a time, the loss is severe and irreparable as it becomes increasingly difficult to identify the origins of rediscovered objects and ascertain their authenticity, especially when the archives of the museums, like that of Baghdad Museum in Iraq, were completely burnt down.

Identification of art objects is often problematic, as archives of many art objects did not exist in the first place. Many a time, in order to hide the origin/identity of the artifact, the marauders would saw or hammer down a part of the object and sell it in pieces, thus contributing to the permanent loss of heritage and history.

Scholars are calling this looting of the Baghdad Museum as the single most severe blow to cultural heritage in modern history. “This is like destroying all the museums at the Washington Mall” says Eleanor Robson, an Assyriologist at the University of Oxford, U.K. This is not just a great loss to the legacy of Iraq, but is a much greater loss to the entire human kind.





Terracotta Warrior enclosed in a Glass case in the Terracotta Warrior Museum Xi'an, China

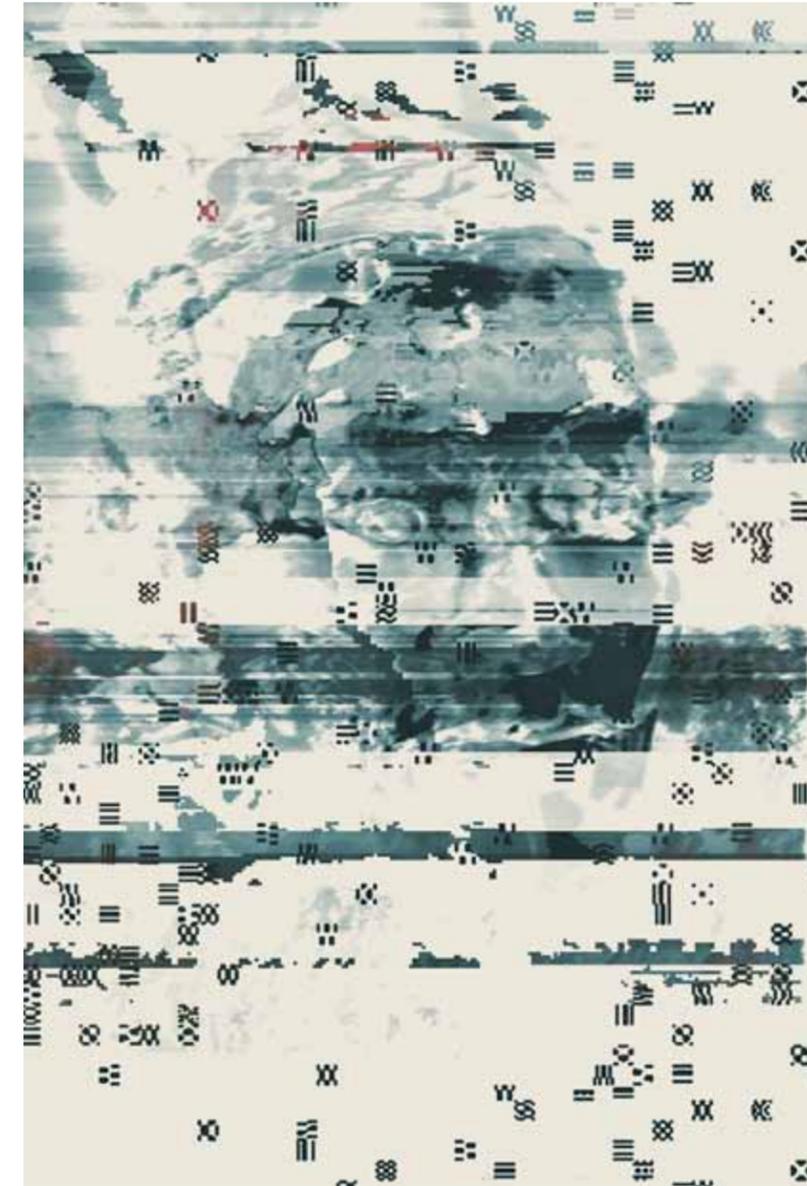
It was a clear spring day in March 1974, when Zhifa, a farmer from Yang village some 75 km north east of Xi'an in Shaanxi Province, along with eight other farmers were digging a well to irrigate their collective farm. At the depth of about 15m, they stumbled across something that would become one of the most important archeological discoveries of modern times. What farmers found was one of over 8,000 terracotta figures, an army of clay warriors each with unique facial features, posture, headgear, armor and weapons. It was indeed an underground army of figures, complete with ranks from Generals, to Captains, horsemen, archers, swordsmen and soldiers on foot, ensconced in a vast, elaborate underground palace that surrounded Emperor Qin Shi Huang's decorated mausoleum. Ever watchful, the sculptures were designed to protect the Emperor in the afterlife, and were the result of over 700,000 skilled hands.

2,000 years of anonymity protected the site from looting, but excavation revealed the installation had been disturbed early on. Only a few years after completion, the warriors and their subterranean environment had been sacked—burned, smashed, broken, and shattered by invading enemies. Few figures escaped harm.

Only the officers were spared, buried in a separate pit. The rest were reduced to rubble, requiring extensive reconstruction efforts. Archaeologists confirmed the pits had been purposefully burned, causing wooden beams to collapse and fire to spread within the caverns.

Contemporary excavation efforts have also caused unintentional harm to the ancient pieces. Previously undamaged figures face oxidation and erosion of their painted pigments when exposed to modern air pollution. The potential for indirect damage has also slowed excavation of the Emperor's tomb, for fear of accidental ruin.

Although a total of three pits are now available for public viewing, our understanding is permanently limited because their true form and context are lost forever. Figures destroyed by ancient enemies can never share their complete story. Hundreds more remain buried, waiting for technological and archeological advances that would allow them be uncovered without fear of new damage. Even in our well-meaning attempts to preserve history, the modern world causes damage, corrosion, and loss—from the erosion of color to the crumbling of detail and meaning.





Castle of Königsberger after the fire

The Amber Room at Charlottenburg Palace was built at the persuasion of Sophie Charlotte, the second wife of Friedrich I, the first King of Prussia. Designed by Andreas Schlüter and crafted by Gottfried Wolfram, the master craftsman to the Danish court of King Frederick IV of Denmark, the construction of the palace started in 1701 A.C.E. and took eight years of meticulous and detailed work before its completion in 1709 A.C.E. To endow the enchantment that the Amber Room was legendary for, both the masters had hired the expertise of the two amber masters Ernst Schacht and Gottfried Turau from Danzig, Poland.

A masterpiece of Baroque art, Amber room was a hall that measured 11 square feet when created. Its walls and ceiling were studded with brilliant ambers and many other semiprecious stones. Legend goes that when lit with candles, the amber walls gleamed with an almost divine aura that bathed every object present in the room, creating an ethereal experience for the viewer. In today's time, had it existed, its value would approximately be around \$142 million. However, it was not the worth of this work of art alone that made it famous but also its most exquisite artistic prominence that helped it attain the unofficial status of the Eighth Wonder of the World in that period.

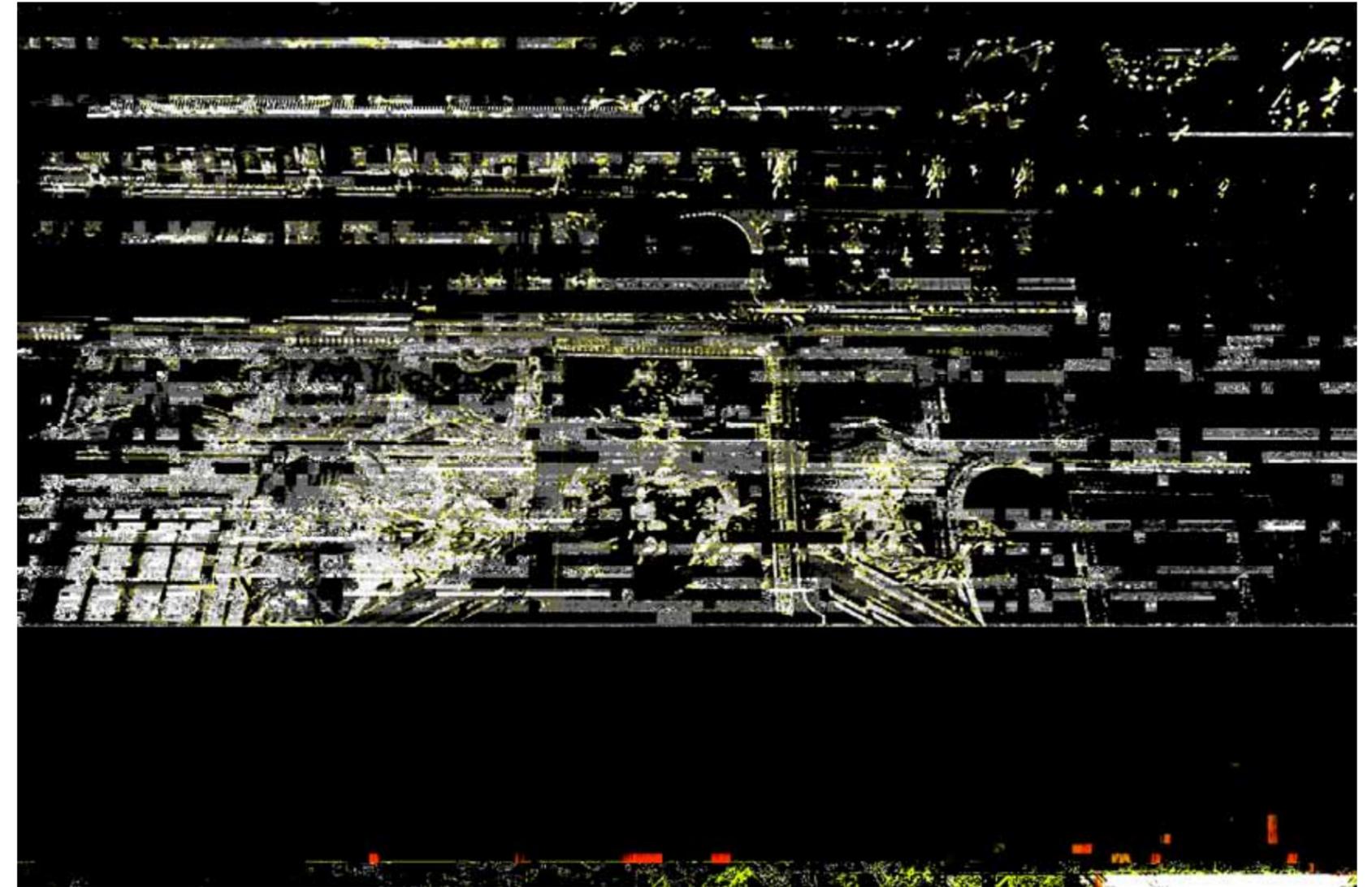
As a gesture of political alliance, the Prussian king presented the Amber Room to his then ally, Tsar Peter, the great king of the Russian Empire in 1716 C.E. In 1755, Tsarina Elizabeth of Russia was so fascinated with the Amber Room that she relocated it first to the Winter Palace and later to the Catherine Palace, a summer residence located just 25 km southeast of St. Petersburg. With a new gift of Baltic Ambers by Frederick II the Great from Berlin, the room was renovated with new designs by her court architect, Bartolomeo Rastrelli. It underwent numerous other

renovations during the course of the century and finally occupied more than 55 square feet of area and contained over six tons of amber.

On the onset of the Second World War, the Russians made myriad efforts to hide the entire room from German Nazis and made several attempts to disassemble the room piece by piece. All attempts to do this were however abandoned as the 250 year old and brittle amber started to crack and crumble. The room was finally camouflaged with wallpaper with the hope that it would remain hidden, untouched by the atrocities of war. The Nazis however dug up the secret of the marvelous Amber Room and shortly after its discovery, the room was dismantled on Hitler's orders and was allegedly moved to Königsberg Castle in Germany, packed in crates.

The room has, ever since, been reportedly missing and its whereabouts are currently unknown. To this day, many versions of unfounded rumors exist about the disappearance of this stunning and breathtaking work of art. Some believe that the room was accidentally destroyed when the Russian army raided and burned Königsberg Castle in 1945; others say that it sank to the bottom of the Baltic sea while in transit through the sea route; and many suppose that the Nazis buried it in a silver mine 100 km south of Berlin where it still lays concealed. Few scholars believe that it was hidden by the Nazis on the shores of Baltic Sea and yet again some hold a view that it was dumped beneath the dark waters of a lagoon near the Lithuanian town of Neringa.

The mystery has inspired various researches, film plots, rumors and hearsay around the world, as the room continues to remain elusive. Against all speculations, search for the Amber Room still continues and is one of the biggest treasure hunts of all times.





Ruins of Nalanda University
Nalanda, Bihar, India

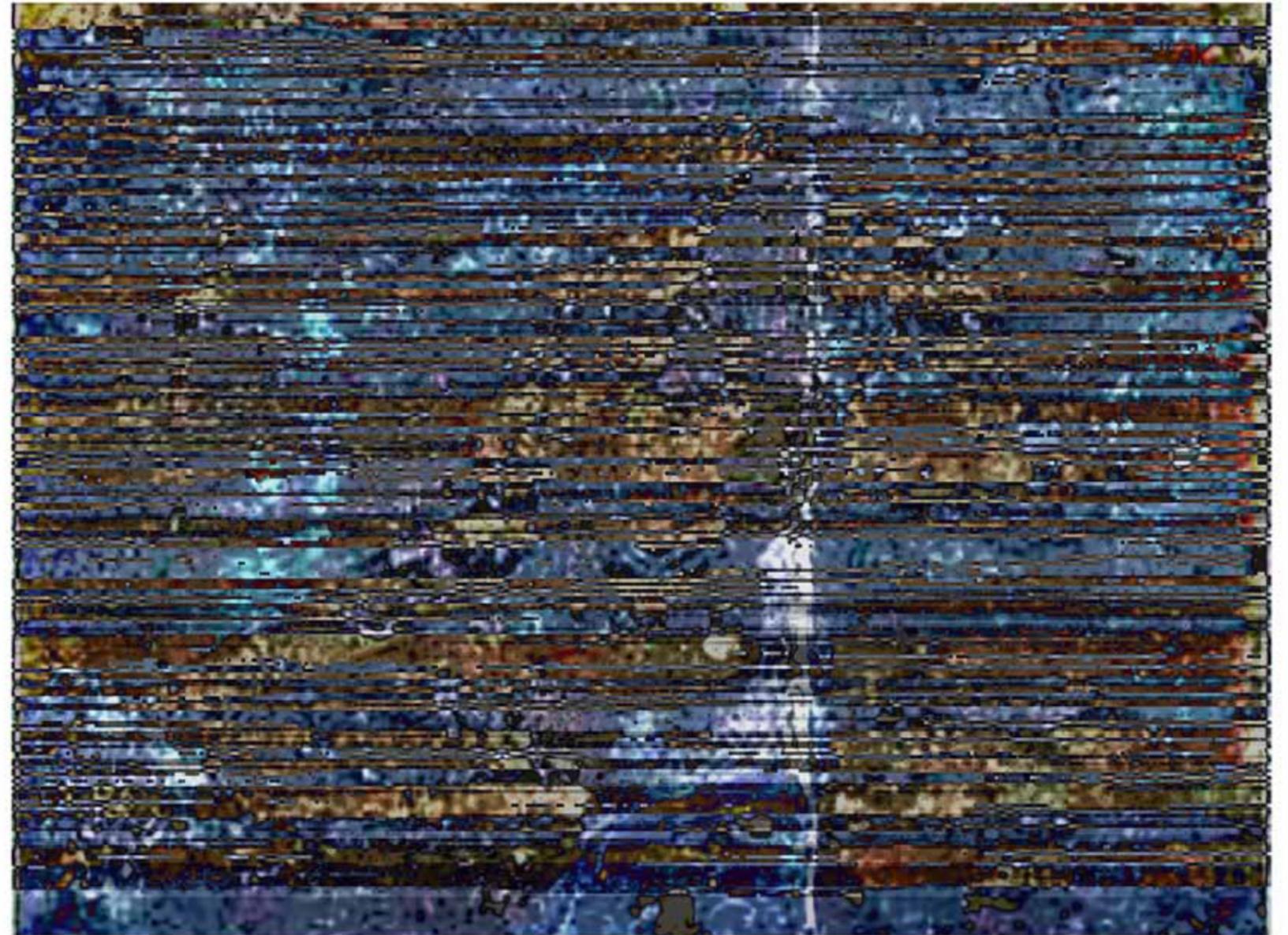
Long before the University of Oxford was founded in the 12th century, there existed a university in the Far East that was an epitome of higher education and scholarly works during its golden days. Though the exact dates of its foundation remain obscure, the ancient university of Nalanda is believed to date back to the time of Gautama Buddha, the founder of Buddhism and Lord Mahavira, the founder of Jainism in India in the 4th century B.C.E. One can find their elaborated descriptions in memoirs of the famous Chinese pilgrim Hsüan Tsang who spent considerable time at the university studying Buddhism in the early 7th century C.E. The university by that time was the most important center of learning in Asia and housed more than 10,000 students and over 2,000 faculty and scholars in the world's first residential university.

With eight separate compounds, numerous temples and meditation halls, the university offered a dynamic curriculum that included lessons in scriptures of the *Mahayana* and *Hinayana* Schools of Buddhism, the *Hetavidya* (logic), *Sabdavidya* (grammar), *Chikitsavidya* (medicine), *Tattvavigyan* (metaphysics) as well as purely Brahmanical Hindu sacred texts such as the *Vedas*. The university, according to the descriptions of Hsüan Tsang, also housed a nine stories high library where meticulous copies of some of the most important texts of that time were produced.

The art of painting and sculpture formed a very important part of the Buddhist education. The monks would often meditate upon an image of Buddha and, through the medium of painting or sculpture, imbibe the qualities of the deity. Nalanda University, along with being an educational institution of high repute, was thus also a very important center for the arts. Numerous examples of sculptures and palm leaf manuscripts produced by monks and students of Nalanda still exist in various museums around the world, and are some of the finest examples of Buddhist art.

Like numerous other Buddhist sites, the *Chaityas* (worship halls) and the *Viharas* (the monasteries) at Nalanda were often covered with most exquisite mural paintings. The tradition of these mural paintings can again be traced to the caves of Ajanta and Bagh in central India.

There is however, not much left of those murals or the university today. The revival of Hinduism by the 8th and 9th century C.E. resulted in a weak hold of Buddhism on the Indian soil. The invasion of a Turkish ruler, Bakhtiyar Khilji, was the last severe blow to Buddhism in India. In 1193 C.E., Khilji ransacked the university, destroyed most of the campus and ended the glorious era of Buddhism from its birthplace.





Detail, "Man at the Crossroads".
Mural depicting Lenin that caused
the destruction of the work

1930s America faced an identity crisis of epic proportions. The Great Depression threw millions into squalor. Global enemies waited around every corner. Communism was on the rise; a threat to American morality and identity, igniting paranoia at the highest levels. Tremendous growth in media brought frightening images, information and possibilities to the table.

By 1933, the Rockefeller family emerged as the hub of the new communications network. They commissioned a mural for the RCA Building in Rockefeller Center, New York, with the vision of reflecting a sense of forward-looking achievement - an idealized America emerging from confusion. The commission was awarded to none other than Diego Rivera, a prominent muralist originally from Guanajuato, Mexico.

Given a theme by the family, "looking with hope and high vision to the choosing of a new and better future," Rivera composed a gritty, expansive image drawing on his trademark social imagery. Focused on universality, the design included elements of Communism, community, growth, and science. The center of the mural featured an "everyman" in work clothes, a figure in control of war, life, agriculture, work, growth, and technology. The "Man at the Crossroads" fearlessly depicted sensual women, day workers, soldiers, disease, political thinkers, laborers, drunks, ordinary people, and uncensored naturalism. Agriculture and machine-age symbols worked in harmony as he artfully blended past, present, and a directed future.

The 63-foot painting also included a portrait of Vladimir Lenin actively joining the hands of people of various races. The portrait of the Communist thinker, and

the "shocking" qualities of the image caused a deluge of negative press. Newspapers roared about the pro-Communist sentiment. Criticism was lobbed at the mural for being anti-capitalist, Anti-American propaganda, which, according to the Rockefellers, contradicted the aim of the mural they had commissioned.

Rivera described the mural as an image representing two visions of civilization—the world of debauchery, corruption, war, and unemployment where the wealthy crushed the poor—and an idealized, socialist space where workers sang and danced as Lenin joined the hands of a black American worker and a white Russian worker in harmony.

In response to public outrage, Rivera offered to balance the mural with an inclusion of Abraham Lincoln. Rockefeller, however, met this with insistence that the portrait of Lenin be removed, or changed to an anonymous worker.

Standing on artistic integrity, Rivera refused to alter the portrait and Rockefeller ordered the painting to cease and the mural to be destroyed. The original mural was never completed. After the outrage, the mural was initially covered and finally destroyed in February of 1934. Some accounts say it was smashed to pieces with mallets and hammers.

One of Rivera's assistants managed to photograph the unfinished image before it was obliterated. These photos were later used by Rivera to compose and complete "Man, Controller of the Universe," the revised version of "Man at the Crossroads," which is still on view in Mexico City.





Twin towers of the World Trade Center under attack on September 11, 2001

Even if one yearns to go back much further in the past, when the twin towers stood majestically and defined New York City's skyline, the memory of World Trade Center towers seems to only go back to September 11, 2001 when the towers crashed after two airplanes hit them as projectile missiles. As a day in history, 9/11 will always be associated with the new face of global terrorism, the annihilated grandeur of the twin towers, and with the screams of people shouting for their lives, and for that of others.

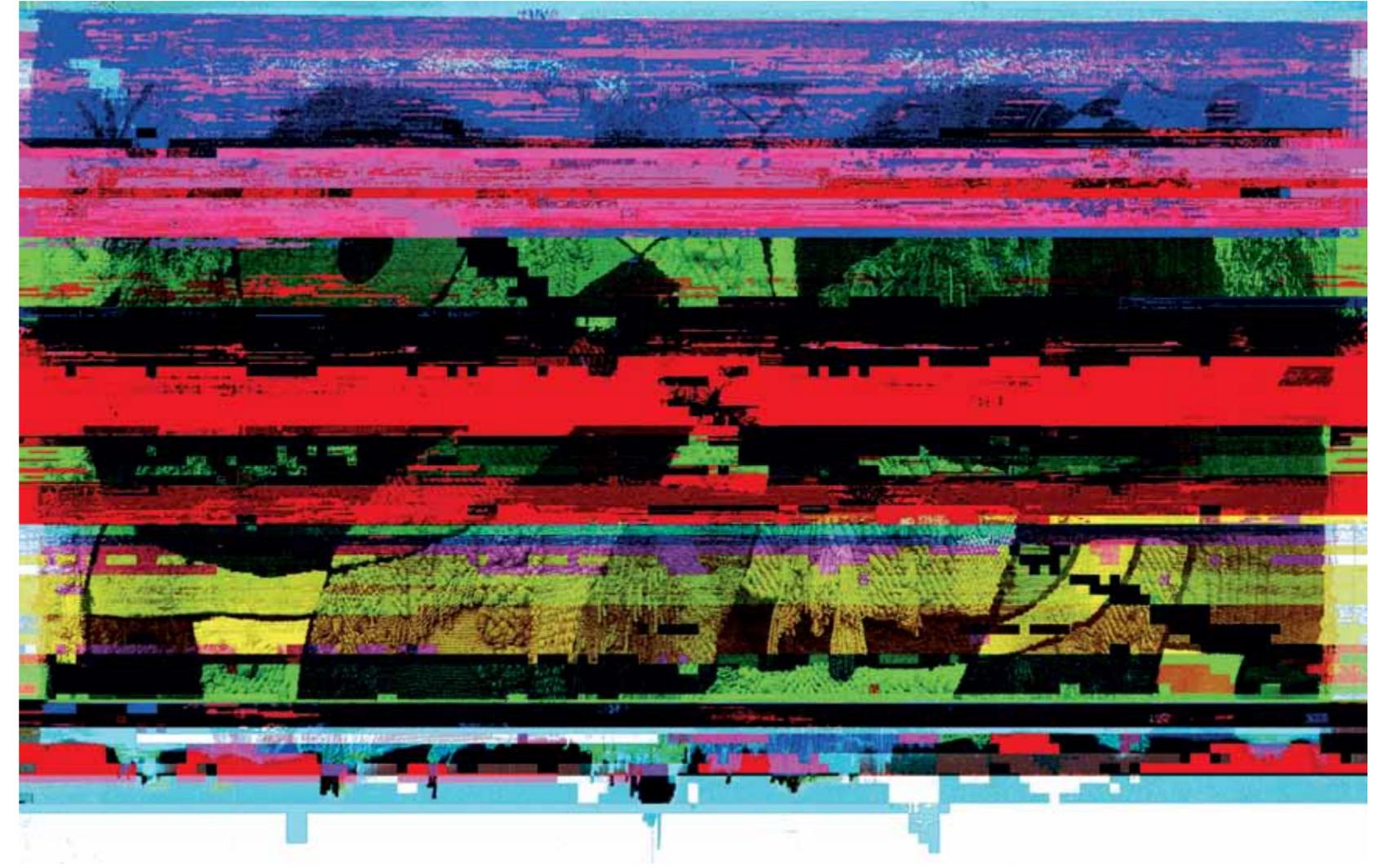
The United States of America had sustained much bigger losses during the Civil War and the two World Wars than what was inflicted on 9/11. However, it was the shock that was more overwhelming than the above-mentioned wars, for there was no notice of the lurking terror attack. Not even in their remotest thought was anyone prepared for such a catastrophe, both physical and emotional. Moreover, it did not happen in the wilderness of a battlefield or at a faraway city under war threat, but in a peaceful city that had woken up to a beautiful but ordinary day.

The loss of life of thousands of innocent civilians is incomparable and bigger than any other, but almost all

the industries suffered immensely due to this tragedy, art being just one of them. Dietrich von Frank, the then President of the art insurance firm AXA Art reported that art worth of at least \$100 million was destroyed in the attack, if all the private and corporate collections installed in the various offices in the Twin Towers are evaluated. In fact, the art displayed in the public areas would alone value more than \$10 million. The loss of so many art works in one blow is tremendous and irreparable.

Works destroyed during the 9/11 attacks included a painted wood relief by Louise Nevelson that was displayed in the mezzanine of One World Trade Center; a painting by Roy Lichtenstein from his famous "Entablature" series from the 1970s that was installed in the lobby of Seven World Trade Center; a bright-red 25-foot sculpture by Alexander Calder on the Vesey Street overpass at Seven World Trade Center; and Joan Miro's "World Trade Center" tapestry from 1974.

The 20' x 35' tapestry was one of the best works of Joan Miro, a Spanish surrealist painter, sculptor, ceramicist and printmaker (1893-1983) and was displayed in the mezzanine of Two World Trade Center.



Shaurya Kumar

Bio

A native of Delhi, India where he studied printmaking and painting at the College of Art; Shaurya Kumar graduated with his MFA from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville in 2007. Since 2001, Kumar has been involved in numerous prestigious research projects, like “The Paintings of India” (a series of 26 documentary films on the painting tradition of India); “Handmade in India” (an encyclopedia on the handicraft traditions of India); and digital restorations of 6th century Buddhist mural paintings from the caves of Ajanta in Central India.

His current work deals with the analysis of methods of digitally archiving cultural and historical artifacts. Collaborating with scientists and engineers, his work questions how we are experiencing the world that is becoming global, but is mediated through the computer screen.

Kumar’s work has been exhibited in numerous national and international exhibitions across the US and in countries including India, China, Korea, Thailand, Belgium, Poland, Finland, U.K., Sweden, Australia and France among many others. His one person shows have been installed at venues including Lakeeren Gallery, Mumbai; Museum of Fine Arts, Georgia; The New Art Center, N.Y.C.; Miami University, OH; Schneider Museum of Art, OR; Los Angeles Center for Digital Arts, CA; Charleston Heights Art Center, Las Vegas, NV; University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR; and University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

Kumar has presented various research and scholarly papers on contemporary aesthetics and challenges in printmaking at many national & international conferences including CAA, MACAA, SGC International Conference and iDMAa (International Digital Media Artists Association) and has curated numerous national and international exhibitions.

Kumar currently lives and works in Albuquerque, NM where he also teaches at University of New Mexico.

