

# STOP, THINK A A CAR

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**Diesel + Art's new exhibition brings to Mumbai the work of 11 artists who want to immerse and shock.**

As Mumbai's elite arrived at the exhibition, expecting a night spent drinking wine and chatting, they were greeted by a signboard informing them that the exhibition had moved and they should take the shuttle-bus standing below. They then found themselves in an old disused mill with an abandoned Hindustan Contessa Classic car sitting atmospherically center stage for Mukul Deora's performance art - *Break*. He and anyone present could have a go at the car with long handled heavy hammers eventually smashing the car until it was as dilapidated as its surroundings (**check out the exclusive video clip below**).

Deora is inspired by 'theater of cruelty' a surrealist form of performance art theorized by French playwright Antonin Artaud, which advocates an element of cruelty at the root of every spectacle, necessitating a shattering of false reality. While this theory has often been disregarded as hopelessly vague and metaphorical, to Deora, *Break* is the perfect example.

"The art scene in India has become so commercialized," says the artist, who is also a film producer and musician. "I wanted to connect people with

## Mukul Deora's Break



something more primal, honest and true within themselves." Immersing people in - rather than leaving them as passive spectators - was at the core of his project. "I wanted to seduce them with the thrill of knowing they were committing an act of vandalism. The emotions that brought out in people is something I can never erase from my memory."

The documentation of this process along with works from 10 other artists from various schools of thought will be on display at Diesel + Art's new exhibition entitled *Did Anyone Notice?* The works span diverse media, like painting, installation, photography, video, performance and design with the desire to evoke emotion in the viewer tying them all together.

"With incessant redefinition of technology, fashion and media, we are becoming victims of this system, which feeds into mind space until we no longer have the inclination to pause and absorb a moment of penetrated truth," says Kanchi Mehta, curator of the show. *Did Anyone Notice?* is an attempt to help viewers to stop and think.

"In Diesel + Art, the approach is to use Diesel's stunning flagship store in the iconic Juhu neighborhood as a platform for contemporary Indian Art," says Darshan Mehta, Director of Reliance brands. "It is Diesel's way of saluting the rising stamp of Indian individualistic expression."

*The exhibition is on from February 18 – March 18 2012 at the Diesel store, Western Wind Building, opp. Maneckji Cooper School, Juhu, Mumbai. Artists include Ali Akbar Mehta, Maadol Mukherjee, Charmi Gada, Ratna Gupta among others.*

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- Megha Shah

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