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城市歡迎誰？ — 阿莫．帕特爾個展

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城市發展的願景，總以「人人皆可追求更好的生活」為名對外發出邀請，高樓燈火與資源網絡被描繪為向上流動的途徑。本展以印度孟買為出發點，揭示城市如何將治理制度，轉化為依階級差異分配資源與權利的機制。由於城鄉發展差異擴大，農民被迫離開家鄉進入城市，多半只能投入低技術、高度勞力的工作，以抵押土地作為換取遷移與就業的代價。加上孟買的老舊社區與非正式居住空間極需整治，政府因此推行了「十年內無貧民窟」的重建政策，將住房、土地與基礎設施整頓後再行分配，而其不平等的分配制度備受爭議。擁有教育資本與經濟能力的中上階級，成為都市優先服務的「正式市民」，享有完整資源與保障；相對地，農民及其社群則易被視為可替換的「新居民」，只獲最低程度的基礎資源，難以取得穩定居住權、完整的市民資格乃至文化認同。由此可見，政府對不同階層的人民所提供的資源與權利並不對等。

本次展覽「城市歡迎誰？」即是以這封城市邀請函的悖論為核心命題，將城市視為一種治理邏輯。印度藝術家阿莫．帕特爾（Amol K. Patil）透過雕塑、繪畫與錄像並非只是再現勞動者的日常，而是從勞動身體、遷徙經驗與文化記憶重新檢視：當城市需要一個人的勞動，卻未同等承認其經驗、權利與主體性時，城市真正接納的究竟是「人」，還是他所能提供的勞動？帕特爾指出，耀眼的都市意象與偏鄉就業不足、公共資源匱乏及人口外流形成鮮明對比，促使許多農民家庭將遷入城市視為改善下一代生活的重要投資，甚至以世代累積的土地作為抵押，支應購屋、教育與創業成本。當工資與就業條件不足以支撐城市生活，這筆投資便轉化為債務壓力，只得透過加班、兼職與借貸來避免財務進一步惡化。與此同時，城市治理多將資源集中於大型建設、商業發展與可量化的硬體成長，對新居民原有的生活網絡、文化認可則缺乏相應的承接機制，最終導致他們難以建立對城市的歸屬。

這些新居民種種的勞動困境，構成作品中呈現的集體生命經驗。帕特爾在雕塑中以印度工人常穿的白色工作服為核心意象，將空置的制服與僅呈現手掌與足部的銅雕及勞動姿態並置，使勞動者在觀看中首先被辨識為具特定職業與階級、具生產功能的勞動力，而非具名的個體。雕塑中空的白色制服宛如被掏空的軀殼，只由鑄成銅雕的手與腳支撐整體形象；作品刻意只留下執行勞動的末端肢體，凸顯勞動者被工具化、被簡化為可隨時調度的產能單位。白色工作服象徵著紀律，同時也指涉階級標記與身體的可被替換性，而服飾內的中空身體則詮釋了長期高強度勞動下主體性被抽離的狀態，只留下一具由制度與勞動關係塑形的外殼。如此被掏空又被規訓的身體意象，與前述被債務與政策層層束縛的處境相互呼應，以雕塑形象將原本抽象的結構性壓力具體化，使勞動者的身體成為體制性不平等的可見性符號。

在本展中，若說雕塑呈現的是新居民在體制中被陳列、被工具化的軀體，帕特爾的錄像則以近乎「第三視角」的詩詞朗誦，將遷徙與夢想轉化為關於城市承諾的寓言性敘事，同時拆解構成都市幻象的核心意象。作品以迴圈與重複的影像結構具體化勞動者難以脫離的城市處境：相似的夜路、燈光與身影一再重現，人們在黑暗中追尋象徵城市承諾的光，那道光既支撐前行，也不斷將未來推向幾近不可抵達的遠方。詩歌在其中構成跨世代的對話場域，承載對自由的嚮往，使原本獨立的生命經驗在共同敘事中相互連結，進而轉化為具有公共性的跨世代文化記憶。 當這些跨世代的記憶化為制度的枷鎖與代代流傳的敘事，城市也從治理與開發的場域，轉化為由勞動者共同書寫的生活場域。於是，「城市歡迎誰？」這句提問也回到我們所在之處，提醒人們在享受城市光景的同時，亦需看見並承認支撐其運作的眾多生命。

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Amol K. Patil: Who is invited to the city?

Dates｜ 2026.11.27 – 2027.01.23

Opening｜ 2026.11.27 (Fri.) 4:30 p.m.

Venue｜ TKG+ (B1, No. 15, Lane 548, Ruiguang Rd., Neihu Dist., Taipei)



Urban development is often presented as an invitation to pursue “a better life for all,” with illuminated skylines and networks of resources cast as pathways to upward mobility. Taking Mumbai, India, as its point of departure, this exhibition examines how urban governance structures the unequal distribution of resources and rights across different social classes. As disparities between urban and rural development widen, many farmers are compelled to leave their hometowns for the city, where they often take on low-skilled, labor-intensive work, financing the cost of migration and access to employment by mortgaging their land. In response to deteriorating neighborhoods and the expansion of informal settlements across Mumbai, the government introduced redevelopment policies aimed at creating a “slum-free” city within ten years. These policies sought restructuring and reallocated housing, land, and infrastructure, yet their unequal systems of distribution have remained widely contested. Those with greater educational and economic capital are more readily recognized as the city’s “formal citizens,” with broader access to public resources and social protections, while farmers and their communities are often positioned as replaceable “new residents,” granted only limited access to basic resources and facing persistent

barriers to secure housing, full civic status, and cultural belonging. Urban governance thus reveals how resources, rights, and recognition remain unevenly distributed across social classes.

At the heart of Who Is Invited to the City? lies the paradox of this urban invitation, with the city understood as a system of governance. Through sculpture, painting, and video, Indian artist Amol K. Patil moves beyond the representation of laborers' everyday lives to examine the laboring body, migration, and cultural memory. When a city depends on a person's labor yet fails to equally recognize their experience, rights, and agency, what does it truly welcome, the person, or merely the labor they provide? Patil points to the stark contrast between the seductive image of the metropolis and the lack of employment opportunities and public resources in rural areas, which leads many farming families to see migration as an investment in a better future for the next generation. Some mortgage land accumulated over generations to finance housing, education, or small businesses, only to find that inadequate wages and unstable employment can turn this investment into mounting debt, sustained through overtime, multiple jobs, and further borrowing. Meanwhile, urban governance often prioritizes large-scale infrastructure, commercial development, and other measurable forms of physical growth, while providing limited support for social networks and cultural recognition of newly arrived residents, leaving many struggling to establish a lasting sense of belonging in the city.

The labor struggles faced by these new residents form a shared condition that runs throughout Patil's work. In his sculptures, the white workwear commonly worn by Indian laborers becomes a central motif. Hollow uniforms are juxtaposed with bronze hands, feet, and gestures of labor, presenting the worker first through occupation, class, and productive function rather than as an individual. The empty garment resembles a hollowed-out body, sustained only by cast bronze hands and feet. By retaining only, the extremities through which labor is performed, Patil foregrounds the reduction of the worker to a unit of productive capacity, readily deployed and replaced. The white uniform evokes discipline while also signaling class and the replaceability of the laboring body. Its hollow interior suggests the erosion of subjectivity under prolonged, intensive labor, leaving behind a shell shaped by institutional structures and labor relations. This emptied and disciplined body echoes the conditions shaped by debt and policy constraints, giving sculptural form to otherwise abstract structural pressures and rendering the laboring body a visible marker of systemic inequality.

If Patil's sculptures present new residents as bodies displayed and instrumentalized within institutional systems, his video works adopt nearly a poetic third-person narration, transforming migration and aspiration into an allegory of the city's promises while unraveling the images that sustain its urban imaginary. Through loops and repetition, the videos give form to a condition from which laborers struggle to escape night roads, lights, and passing figures recur as people move through darkness in pursuit of a light that embodies the promise of the city. The light draws them forward yet continually recedes into an almost unreachable future. Poetry becomes a space for intergenerational dialogue, carrying aspirations for freedom and connecting individual lived experiences through a shared narrative that gradually takes shape as collective cultural memory. As these memories are carried across generations and shaped by institutional constraints, the city shifts from a

site of governance and development into a lived space collectively written by those whose labor sustains it. The question posed by Who Is Invited to the City? thus returns to the places we ourselves inhabit, asking us to look beyond the city's image of prosperity and recognize the many lives that sustain its everyday existence.

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