



# PEANUTS

AJAY KURIAN



Ajay Kurian

*Peanuts*

7 September - 19 October 2024

Our current age, according to Hindu cosmology, is the Kali Yuga. It is considered hell on earth, and it's meant to last for roughly 432,000 years. We are about 5,000 years in, which leaves us with around 426,000 more years to go before the cycle begins again and humanity, or whatever might be alive, lives in a different kind of paradise. For a single generation, perhaps this sounds pessimistic or doom-laden. But it is also possible that it offers a different way of imagining optimism, a kind of *longue durée* of optimism, where revolution is not here tomorrow (or in an election cycle), but within these 400,000 years there will be many revolutions in preparation for an altogether different existence - unimaginable from the one we endure now.

The notion of Yuga could be understood as markers of time, but we can also understand it as time building on itself, where eras are not simply consecutive, but constructive. These 400,000 some years are here to build a future social crystal more beautiful than the one we currently inhabit. When you think of how to make a crystal, it requires seeding. To my mind, the art, culture, and politics of the present are really seeding a social, biological, and existential crystal of the distant future. A 400,000 year time scale introduces a different kind of stamina, and a different way of thinking about how art might participate in shifting a politic and developing a world beyond this one.

Presented here are two new wall sculptures and three hanging egg sculptures. The wall sculptures began with the cosmic snake Shesha. When he uncoils, time and the universe begin, when he recoils, they are destroyed. Past that particular association is the morphic resonance of the snake throughout cultures and times. Each sculpture has an orb which looks somewhat like a smoldering star. The orb is a simple light fixture covered in melted gummy bears, a treacly and seemingly unnatural material made from the boiling of bones. The gelatin provides an ideal surface for its molten appearance. Sometimes, in order to reach towards enormous questions of existence, I use materials that keep me in my own reality, and embrace the near absurdity of asking such questions.

The hanging eggs, conjuring myths of cosmic eggs and inseparable from birth, are pocked and littered with patterns of holes, sometimes becoming eyes, bones, or thorns. Rattling within each egg are two LED "smiles" illuminating their gold leafed interiors. They are more like grins or sneers. Call it Loki, Wetiko, Kokopelli, Huehuecoyotl, or Krishna, the trickster holds a place in nearly all cultures. It is this energy that lives within these eggs. At the beginning of everything is an energy that wants to turn it all upside down.

In the background, you'll hear Steely Dan's studio album, "Gaucho." Steely Dan are so virtuosic that their music feels both alive and dead at once - so good it's exhilarating, so precise that it drains any feeling of incident or the unexpected. This blurring of the living and the dead seems close to what any real beginning must be like, where the two are indistinguishable, as if eternity and finitude collapse into one another.

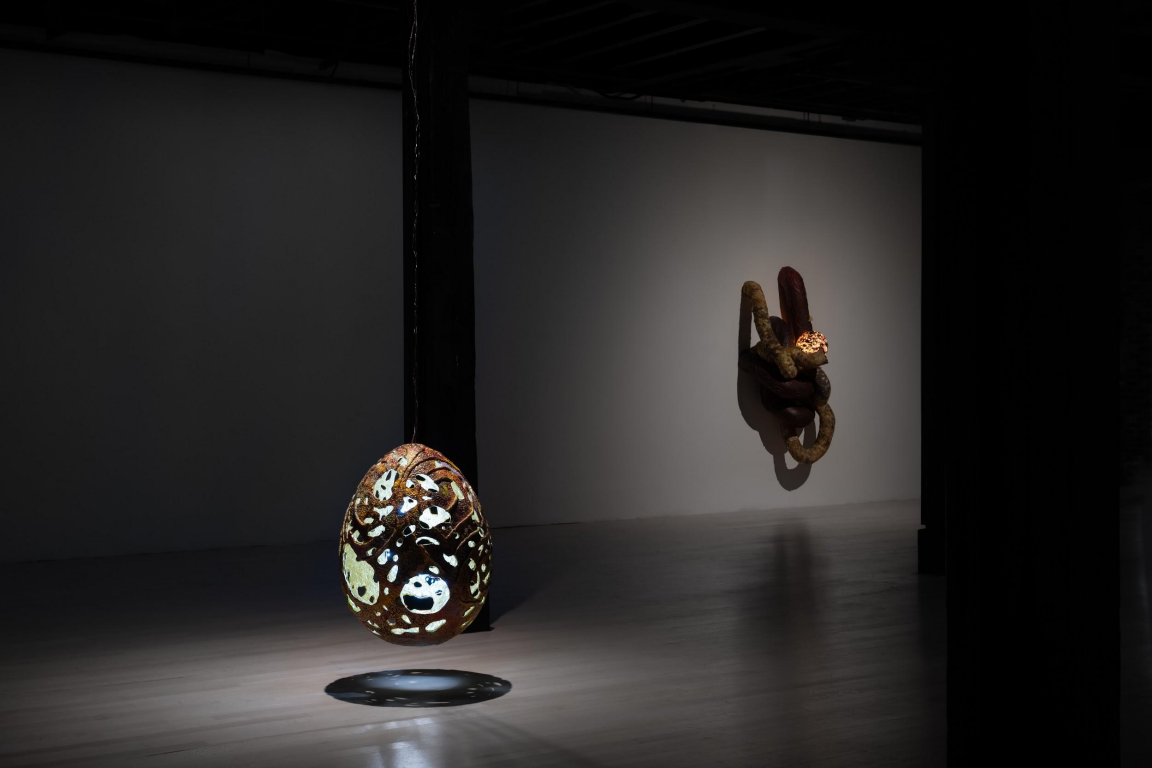
-Ajay Kurian

von ammon co was founded in 2019 in its current Georgetown location. Gallery hours are Saturdays and Sundays, 12-6pm, and by appointment. For more information and image requests, please visit [www.vonammon.co](http://www.vonammon.co) or email [info@vonammon.co](mailto:info@vonammon.co).













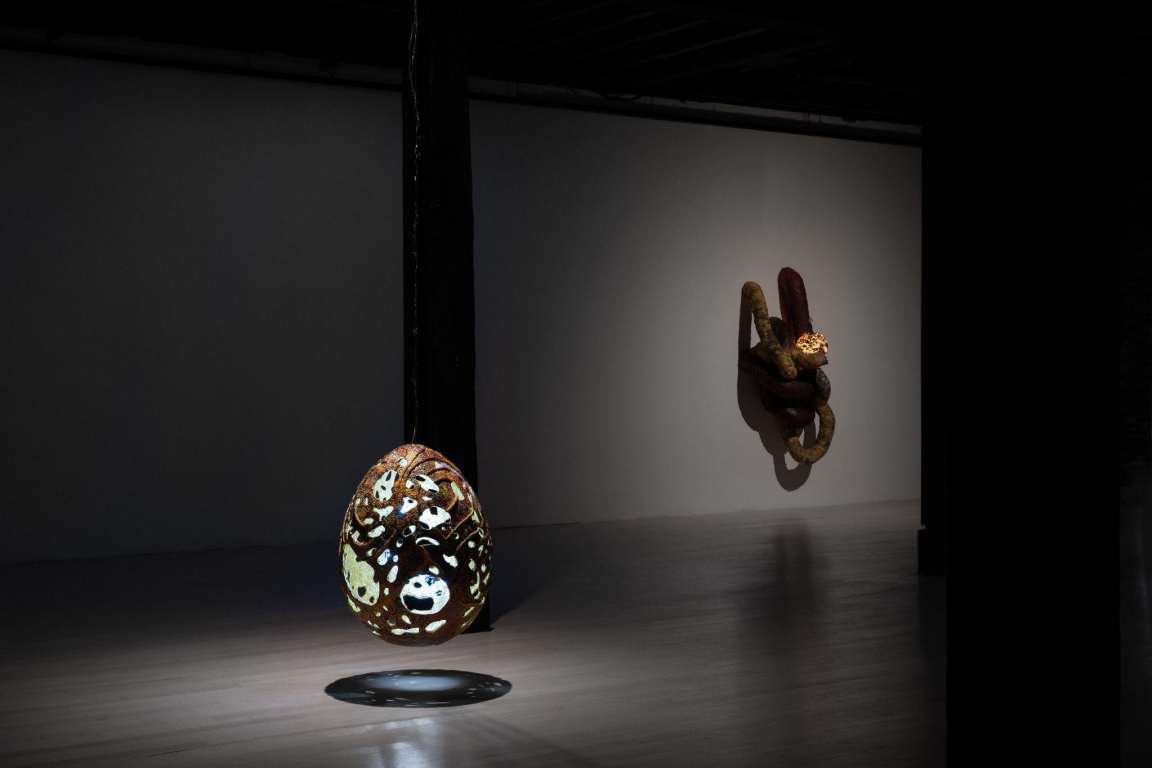




Ajay Kurian, *Hiranyagarbha (Spiral)*, 2024, epoxy clay, fiberglass, aquaresin, LEDs, gold leaf, acrylic, oil paint, hardware, 35 x 20 x 20 in., AKU006



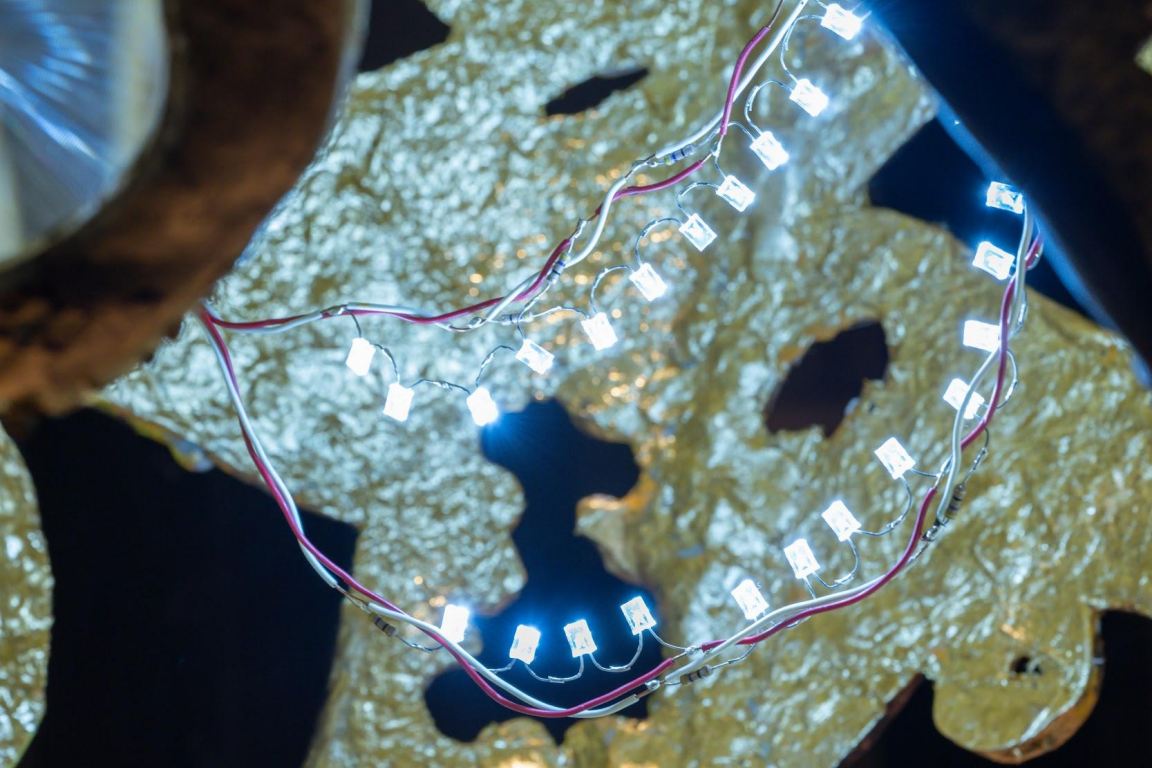








Ajay Kurian, *Hiranyagarbha (Systole)*, 2024, epoxy clay, fiberglass, aquaresin, LEDs, gold leaf, acrylic, oil paint, hardware, 35 x 20 x 20 in., AKU007



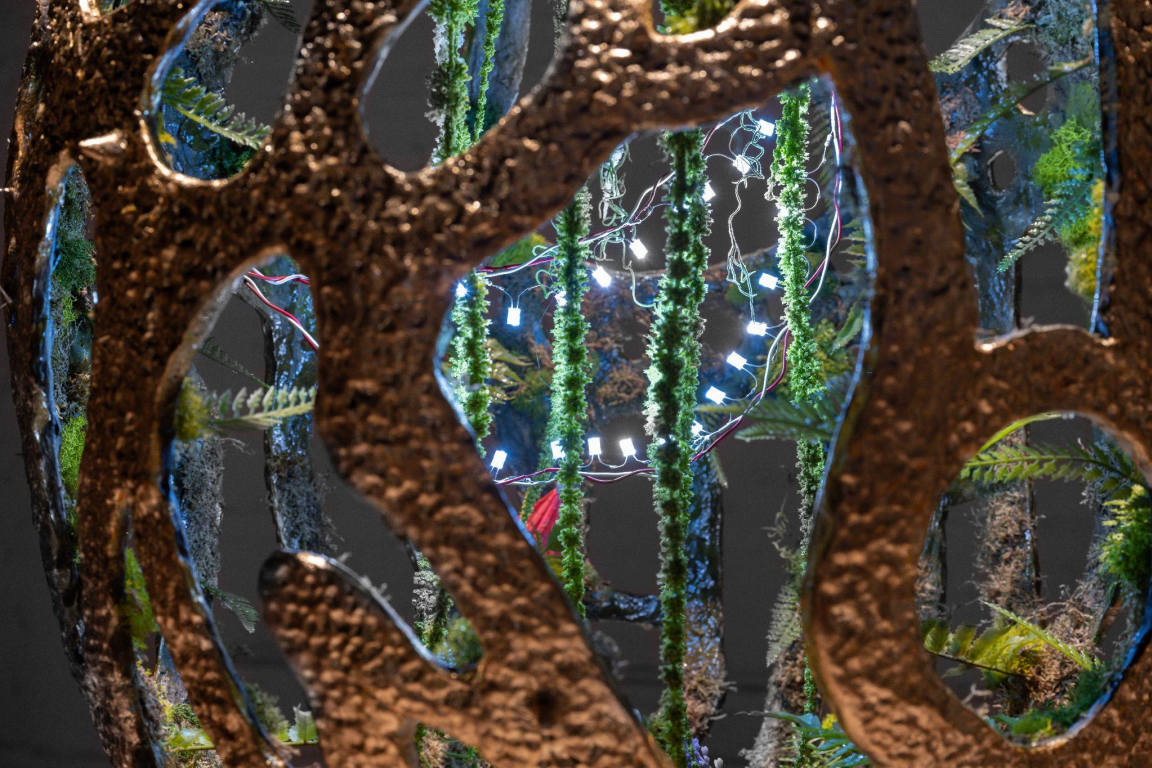








Ajay Kurian, *Hiranyagarbha (Back Again)*, 2024, epoxy clay, fiberglass, aquaresin, LEDs, gold leaf, acrylic, oil paint, hardware, moss, plastic greenery, stone dice, stone miniature owl, 35 x 20 x 20 in., AKU004











Ajay Kurian, *Rainbow Serpent*, 2024, aluminum conduit, epoxy clay, epoxy putty, fiberglass, resin, laser cut canvas, turmeric, oil paint, acrylic, glass light, gummi bears, gold leaf, 73 1/2 x 36 x 19 1/2 in., AKU008











Ajay Kurian, *Shesha in Love*, 2024, aluminum conduit, epoxy clay, epoxy putty, fiberglass, resin, laser cut canvas, turmeric, oil paint, acrylic, glass light, gummi bears, cocktail umbrellas, 60 x 30 x 25 in., AKU009









## Ajay Kurian

Born 1984 in Baltimore, MD, lives and works in Brooklyn, NY.

### Education

2006 BA, Columbia University 2006, Visual Arts, Art History

### Solo Exhibitions

- 2024 *Peanuts*, von ammon co, Washington DC
- 2022 *Missing Home*, 47 Canal, New York
- 2020 *Polyphemus*, Goucher College, Silber Art Gallery, Baltimore, MD
- 2019 *Possessions*, Sies + Höke, Düsseldorf, Germany
- 2018 *Nine Flags*, 47 Canal, New York
- 2017 *American Artist*, Sies + Höke, Düsseldorf, Germany
- 2016 *incubator*, CAPRI, Düsseldorf, Germany
- The Dreamers*, 47 Canal, New York
- The Childhood of Jesus*, White Flag Projects, St. Louis, MO
- Unilateral Educational Disarmament*, JOAN, Los Angeles
- 2015 *Work Harder Under Water*, Rowhouse Project, Baltimore, MD
- 2014 *Tapetum Lucidum*, Artspeak, Vancouver
- 2013 *Proleptic*, 47 Canal, New York
- Ajay Kurian*, Jhaveri Contemporary, Mumbai
- 2011 *Petrichor*, Audio Visual Arts, New York
- The Sheltering Sky*, Callicoon Fine Arts, Callicoon, NY





## Group Exhibitions

- 2023 *Focus Group 4*, Von Ammon Co., Washington D.C.  
*And the Moon be Still as Bright, Harpers*, New York  
*Drawings by Sculptors*, Helena Anrather Gallery, New York
- 2022 *Water Works*, The International Studio & Curatorial Program, New York  
*Concrete Spiritual*, Morán Morán, Los Angeles
- 2021 *On Nationalism: Borders and Belonging*, The James Gallery, City University of New York, New York
- 2019 *A Field of Meaning*, Callicoon Fine Arts, New York  
*FOCUS GROUP*, Von Ammon Co, Washington, D.C  
*Horology*, organized by Elizabeth Jaeger and Silke Lindner-Sutti, Jack Hanley Gallery, New York
- 2018 *100 SCULPTURES*, Anonymous Gallery, Mexico City, Mexico  
*GWTW*, Martos Gallery, New York  
*Pine Barrens*, Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York  
*Emerald City*, K11 Art Foundation, Hong Kong
- 2017 *The Trick Brain*, Aishti Foundation, Beirut, Lebanon  
*Lodgers*, Curated by Veit Loers, Haus Mödrath - Räume für Kunst, Kerle, Germany  
*Citizen X - Human Nature and Robot Rights*, Øregaard Museum, Copenhagen, Denmark  
*Vertical Gardens*, Antenna Space, Shanghai  
*2017 Whitney Biennial Exhibition*, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York  
*Back to Mulholland Drive*, La Panacée, Montpellier, France  
*Worlding*, Richmond Center for Visual Arts, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI  
*30th Anniversary Exhibition: Attics of My Life*, Jack Hanley Gallery, New York
- 2016 *Freud's Mouth*, Cooper Cole, Toronto  
*Goulding the Lolly*, Gavin Brown's Enterprise, New York
- 2015 *Greater New York*, MoMA PS1, New York



- 2015 *In Appearance of Order*, curated by 247365, Water McBeer, New York  
*A Rare Earth Magnet*, Derek Eller Gallery, New York  
*The Visitors*, curated by Tom Eccles and Ruba Katrib, Art CommissionsGI, Governor's Island, New York  
*Finally Every Dimension of the Soil*, American Medium, New York  
*Open Source: Art at the Eclipse of Capitalism*, curated by Lisa Schiff, Leslie Fritz, and Eugenio Re Rebaudengo, Galerie Max Hetzler, Paris and Berlin
- 2014 *Flet*, SpazioA, Pistoia, Italy  
*Elusive Earths*, Etablissement d'en face, Brussels  
*Human, Evolution, Machine*, Galerie Hussenot, Paris  
*Flat Neighbors*, Rachel Uffner, New York  
*Rockaway!*, MoMA PS1, Fort Tilden and Rockaway Beach, NY  
*More Material*, Salon 94, New York  
*nature after nature*, Fridericianum, Kassel  
*Memory Palaces*, Carlier Gebauer, Berlin  
*Border Food*, Loyal Gallery, Malmö, Sweden
- 2013 *Desert Plains and Internet Memes*, Galerie Art:Concept, Paris  
*Stigmergy*, Ajay Kurian and Maria Antelman, 247365, New York  
*ProBio*, EXPO 1: New York, MoMA PS1, New York  
*do it (outside)*, curated by Hans Ulrich Obrist in collaboration with ICI, Socrates Sculpture Park, New York  
*Weird Science*, Jack Hanley, New York  
*Let it Come Down*, Hannah Barry, London  
*The Fifth Dimension*, Ricou Gallery, Brussels  
*Great Skin*, BODEGA, Philadelphia



- 2012 *Ur*, Room East, New York  
==, organized by Matt Keegan, Michèle Didier, Paris  
*Born Digital*, CAM Raleigh, Raleigh, NC  
*Cave In*, organized by Ramekin Crucible, Cueva Arcillas, Puerto Rico
- 2011 *White Columns Annual*, organized by Nick Mauss and Ken Okiishi, White Columns, New York  
*Harvest Moon*, organized by Ryan Foerster, Brighton Beach, NY  
*Drawings, Drawing, Photographs*, Rachel Uffner, New York  
*HOW DO YOU DO*, NOMA Gallery, San Francisco
- 2010 *Which Witch is Which? And/or Summertime*, organized by Ajay Kurian, White Flag Projects, St. Louis, MO  
*Now or Never*, Rincon Projects, Bogota  
*Structures Within an Intervention*, curated by Meenakshi Thirukode, The Guild Gallery, New York  
*And so on, and so on, and so on...*, organized by Matt Sheridan Smith, Harris Lieberman, New York
- 2009 *The living and the dead*, organized by Darren Bader, Gavin Brown's Enterprise, New York
- 2008 *SINGULAR FRIENDS: Heaving up on one another's shoulder's*, Gresham's Ghost, New York
- 2006 Senior Thesis Exhibition, LeRoy Neiman Gallery, Columbia University, New York Projects
- 2013 *A Proposition by Ajay Kurian: The Persistence of Gardens - Nuclear, Digital and Otherwise*, The New Museum, New York
- 2011 *No More Presence and Robert Filliou*, The Artist's Institute, New York
- 2010 *Beneath the finest silks and the coarsest stuff, he calls*, edited by Elena Bajo and Warren Neidich "INPUT Magazine" #2



### Curatorial Projects

- 2012      *GRAN PRIX*, in collaboration with Nudashank, Nudashank, Baltimore, MD
- 2010      *PROLEGOMENA: a collaboration between Shifter Magazine and Gresham's Ghost*, Jack Hanley Gallery, New York  
*Which Witch is Which? And/or Summertime*, organized by Ajay Kurian, White Flag Projects, St. Louis, MO  
*No More Presence...Corinne Jones and Leigh Ledare*, online project and forthcoming book project, New York  
*No More Presence.. Jacob Kassay and Amy Granat*, Enid's 560 Manhattan Avenue, Brooklyn  
*No More Presence. Liam Gillick and Uri Aran*, USA Bar, New York
- 2009      *CAVE PAINTING: Installment #2* organized by Bob Nickas, Gresham's Ghost, New York  
*CAVE PAINTING: Installment #1*, organized by Bob Nickas, Gresham's Ghost, New York  
*Unaddressed Circumventions: Folds From a Failed Suicide*, Gresham's Ghost, New York
- 2008      *SINGULAR FRIENDS: Heaving up on one another's shoulders*, Gresham's Ghost, New York

### Published Writings

- Kurian, Ajay, "Revisiting the Studio Visit," *Discovery*, Spring 2023
- Kurian, Ajay, "A Progress Report from Titus Kaphar's NXTHVN," *Frieze*, August 23, 2021.
- Kurian, Ajay, "The Ballet of White Victimhood: On Jordan Wolfson, Petroushka, and Donald Trump," *ArtSpace*, November 15, 2016.
- Kurian, Ajay, "Ajay Kurian on Jordan Wolfson and the universal body," *e-flux conversations*, November 17, 2016.
- Kurian, Ajay, "Artists and Identity," *Artforum*, Summer 2016.
- Kurian, Ajay, "How Making Public Art Almost Broke Me — and Why Everyone Else Wants to Break Public Art," *Artspace*, September 11, 2015.
- Asega, Salome; Bhabha, Homi K.; Bordowitz, Gregg; Kee, Joan; Kurian, Ajay; Kuo, Michelle; and Satterwhite, Jacolby, "Cultural Appropriation: A Roundtable," *Artforum*, Summer 2017.