



NEW YORK

Ajay Kurian

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INSIDE A LARGE aquarium made of green Plexiglas, a wood model of a fantastical city opens and closes vertically, like an oversize pop-up book. The motion makes a menacing sound while creating a green reflection on the gallery's ceiling and exposing the tank's base, full of sand and weeds. Entitled *Pop-Up Baum (Empire)*, this piece directly relates to *Master Slave Complex (Proleptically Speaking...)*—also a tank full of rubble, sand, and greenery that are joined by an inconspicuous monitor showing colorful abstractions.

Kurian's show is dominated by these two installations (all works 2013), along with *Comfort Zone #1*, a busy environment

at the gallery's entrance, lit with LED lights and made of candy, moss, and epoxy. These pieces all reflect on environmental evidence of nuclear waste and the signs our society has developed to warn future generations of its presence.

The rest of the works—holes piercing a wall fitted with kaleidoscopelike refractors, a copper-wire ball placed on the floor, an ostrich egg on a plastic shelf—convey a sense of unease and echo the artist's interest in ecology and materiality. But unlike the large-scale installations, which together form a coherent vision, these pieces make a less lasting impression. Said vision, however, does not lack ambiguity—

never easily decipherable, these sculptures mirror the exhibition's title, "proleptic." Prolepsis means a space between meanings in time, describing a thing before it exists.

One small object is more telling than the others: *Bad Seed*, a circular aluminum plate etched with the words "Danger. Poisonous radioactive waste here. Do not dig or drill." The (beautifully written) press release discusses the creation of the atomic bomb and the extended half-life of nuclear waste—"a promise of time longer than human history may as well be forever"—but the world Kurian draws is not postapocalyptic. Rather, it is weird, haunting, urgent, and still very real. —Orit Gat

Ajay Kurian
Comfort Zone #1,
2013. Plexiglas,
candy, custom
M&Ms, reindeer
moss, branches,
epoxy clay,
tchotchkes,
copper wire, LED
lights, aerogel.
15½ x 51¼ x 11 in.