

ART MUSINGS

Baiju Parthan | Raghava KK | Shilo Shiv Suleman | Smriti Dixit

INDIAARTFAIR
2020 30.01 - 02.02

Booth # C 07

BAIJU PARTHAN (born Kottayam, 1956)

Baiju Parthan is a pioneer of new media art in India, his earliest hybrid works combining online and offline technologies dating back to 1999. An inter-media artist, he works simultaneously with painting and digital technology-based installation art. His oeuvre focuses on the collisions and interactions between world-views founded on opposing ideologies, and the effect that these processes have on our consciousness and existence. Parthan shapes his visual vocabulary from symbols drawn from bygone knowledge systems like alchemy, elements from modern science, and motifs culled from metropolitan graffiti and computer games, as well as photographic images.

Parthan's 'Yesterday's Monument - City of Dreams', an animated 3D lenticular print, draws us into the cycles of boom and slump, aspiration and disappointment, innovation and obsolescence that define metropolitan Indian life. What is practically useless becomes a cultural fetish by transmuting the discarded Premier Padmini, once ubiquitous on Mumbai's streets, into a golden trophy. The 'Wheel of Fortune' series borrows the symbolism of the tenth card in the Major Arcana of the Tarot which intimates the arrival of unexpected changes in the present and immediate future. 'Anthropocene', depicting some of the organisms that have gone extinct in the last 150 years or so, speaks about the epoch where human activity driven by the wanton exploitation of the planet, has irrevocably altered the biosphere and the environment. These are presented as an animated flip layer that reveals a framework of high value currency symbols. 'Rabbit Hole' speaks about how the utopian vision of a connected global village has devolved into a rabbit hole that leads not into a wonderland, but into a dystopian panopticon of data surveillance, cyber warfare, and a social media that is dismantling social cohesion.

Parthan has participated in many landmark exhibitions including Kapital und Karma (Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna, 2002) and Under Construction (Japan Foundation, Tokyo, 2002), and has held many solo exhibitions including Source Code (2006) and Necessary Illusions (2016) at Art Musings, Mumbai. Two books have been published on his work: Baiju Parthan: A User's Manual (Afterimage, 2006) and Baiju Parthan: Reset (Afterimage, 2016). He has shown with Art Musings at the 2009, 2013, 2014, 2016, 2018 and 2020 editions of the India Art Fair, New Delhi.



Wheel of Fortune - Anthropocene, 36" x 36" 2019



Wheel of Fortune - Rabbit Hole, 36" x 36" 2019



Yesterday's Monument (City of Dreams), Animated 3D Lenticular Print, 36" x 90", 2019

RAGHAVA KK (born Bengaluru, 1980)

Raghava KK is a multidisciplinary artist and entrepreneur. Apart from painting, installation and performance, Raghava's art practice involves inventing media such as iPad art, neuro-feedback art and algorithm art, by means of which to express post-human existential realities in a time of planetary collapse. Committed to refiguring the notions of transcendence and the Sublime in a historical period when subjectivity is distributed widely both offline and online, Raghava designs and participates in experiments using science and technology. He is a five-time TED speaker and a National Geographic Emerging Explorer. He has lectured at several art institutions and universities, including New York University, Kellogg, Carnegie Mellon, the New Hampshire Institute of Art (Manchester, NH) and the École des Beaux-Arts, Nimes. He is on the advisory board of the INK Conference and NuVu Studios, a radical education program founded at the MIT, Boston.

His paintings, presented here, orchestrate a scintillating interplay between the Dutch still life and the psychedelic proliferation of imagery in the digital media, shot through with quirky tongue-in-cheek adaptations of various genres including the portrait and the history painting, which Raghava updates for the epoch of cyber-surveillance and digital warfare. 'The Impossible Bouquet' series is inspired by the Dutch tradition of still life where flowers are collected from different seasons to create an impossible bouquet. The artist draws parallels between this and the condition of being Indian – an impossible democracy, an impossible bouquet. A space where seemingly conflicting entities like cartoons, memes, historical characters coexist, creating a harmonious impossible sense of beauty. Guernica meets the traditional masks of Bali within a video game culture. Politics, pragmatism, ideologies, beauty, gradients all come together to create this Impossible Bouquet which he celebrates through his artworks.

Raghava has engaged in international collaborations with artists in various genres, including singer Paul Simon and singer/activist Erykah Badu. Raghava's solo exhibitions with Art Musings include 'Drawn and Quartered' (2008), 'Brooklyn Bound R-Train' (2009–2010), 'Exquisite Cadaver' (2011), 'That's All Folks' (2013) and 'Ridiculous Copycats' (2015). He has also shown with Art Musings at the 2009, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2016, 2018 and 2020 editions of the India Art Fair, New Delhi.



Impossible Living Machines, Acrylic on Canvas, 82" x 140", 2020



The Impossible Bouquet V, Acrylic on Canvas, 60" x 36", 2020



The Impossible Bouquet VI, Acrylic on Canvas, 60" x 36", 2020

SHILO SHIV SULEMAN (born Bengaluru, 1989)

Shilo Shiv Suleman is an artist whose work is sustained by commitments to poetry, technology and social justice. She articulates her work across several platforms, including exhibitions, festivals and conferences. Shilo is the founder-director of the Fearless Collective, a movement that aims to replace fear with love in public space. She has worked with communities across the world by facilitating and leading public art interventions, including indigenous communities in Brazil, displaced and migrant communities in Beirut, queer activists in South Africa, and transgender activists in Pakistan. She was chosen as one of three pioneering Indian women at TED Global, and has spoken at conferences like WIRED, DLD in London and Munich.

In this series of paintings and wearable sculptures, artist Shilo Shiv Suleman imagines a safe and sacred space for women far above the earth. She begs the mythical creature – 'Buraq, take me with you'. The Buraq (Arabic: البراق al-Buraq) means lightning – to sparkle. She is a mythical creature in Islamic tradition that was said to be the vehicle of the prophet to the seventh heavens. She only travels at night. Her name is derived from برق —barq meaning to beam, flash, glimmer, glisten, glitter, radiate, shimmer, shine, sparkle, twinkle. She comes with a jewelled throat, a lustrous mane, the legs of a horse, the wings of an iridescent impossible bird. A thousand years after the prophet's ascent to revelation – we live in a country for no women. Here in her works, the women, unsafe, begin to evolve to grow wings to fly into another place far away from here.

Shilo has received several grants and residencies – including two honorarium grants from Burning Man in 2014 for the interactive large-scale biofeedback installations: Pulse & Bloom, and Grove. These biofeedback installations have brought together artists, architects, entrepreneurs, builders and neuro-technologists, and have been featured on international media including BBC, Rolling Stone, MSNBC, Tech Crunch, The Guardian and WIRED, and have been exhibited at the Southbank Centre, London. Shilo's solo exhibitions include 'Beloved' (2015) with Art Musings. She has also shown with Art Musings at the 2018 and 2020 editions of the India Art Fair, New Delhi.



Suleman, Buraq (let me fly with you), 12" x 36", 2020



The Throne Verse, Acrylic on wood, 60" x 36", 2020



Winged Immortal Girl, Acrylic on wood, 80" x 58", 2020



Wish Fulfilling, Acrylic on wood, 80" x 58", 2020

SMRITI DIXIT (born Bhopal, 1971)

Smriti Dixit has long been committed to processes of recycling in her art, incorporating fabric, found objects, plastic price tags and other elements of the detritus of everyday life into her art-works. She insists in giving visibility to the techniques and processes of women's work, to labour that has long been rendered invisible in patriarchal systems of production, which remain premised on an artificial division between the home, regarded as domestic (female) space, and the workplace, sacralised as the proper context for (male) work. The cosmic drama of birth, dying and regeneration are performed through her artistic activity and its outcomes, and the space that it occupies and extends even as it extends itself.

Dixit presents 'Seri' a trilogy of works, each achieved through a process of meditative slowing down - in defiance of the current obsession with speed. 'Silkworm' consists of cocoons made from plastic price tags, suggesting the gestation that produces a fine fabric. Using the knitting process, price tags are once again the raw material for 'Ripening', a homage to the Lodoicea, a precious tree that flowers only after it has reached 80 - 100 years. 'Red Pupa' is the product of intensive stitching, and is a hymn to the cocoon. 'Seri' is Smriti Dixit's passionate yet reflective celebration of the natural processes of creativity, and their connection with human initiatives of generation and production.

Dixit's iconic work can be seen on permanent display in a site-specific installation, 'Web' at the Jaya He GVK New Museum. Her solo shows at Art Musings include 'Exile from Symmetry' (2007), 'Feasting and Fasting' (2012) and 'Memory of Red' (2015). Among her international exhibitions are a solo at the Galerie Stephan Witschi, Zürich (2014) and the St Moritz Art Master at the Andrea Robbi Museum (2014). She has received the S H Raza Award for Art (2004) and the Pollock Krasner Grant (2013). She participated in the Bharat Bhavan Biennale (1994, 2016) and her installation, 'Hibiscus River' featured in the 2018 edition of the Serendipity Art Festival in Goa. She has presented solo projects (2013 & 2015) and shown with Art Musings at the 2009, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2018 and 2020 editions of the India Art Fair, New Delhi.



SERI III- Red Pupa, slowed down process of stitching cloth, thread, synthetic wool



SERI II-Ripening, slowed down process of knitting, poly(prop)ylene



SERI I-Silkworm, slowed down process of knitting and stitching, poly(prop)ylene, synthetic wool, recycled cloth

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