

Mirroring worlds

Twenty-two Korean and Indian artists come together in this virtual display that is a mix of unusual mediums

By GOWRI S

Choi Ji Young's translucent canvases of people walking up an alleyway and waiting for the subway leads this vast display. Click, zoom and scroll through adjacent walls to find surrounding works spanning mediums: from Korean rice paper to fabric and thread on canvas, there is a lot to see. In a virtual, pristine white, cursor-enabled "navigable" box, stand 22 such works – 11 from India, and 11 from Korea – by young, emerging artists. After a pandemic-induced break last year, this collaborative art show by In-Ko Centre in association with the Indian Art Museum in Seoul, titled Emerging Canvas is back for its seventh edition.

Curated by Cupid Lee from Seoul and Vaishnavi Ramanathan from Chennai, the show had over 50 artists send in their portfolios. From this, 11 each were selected for the final display. The show that focusses on artists working with two-dimensional media (painting, drawing, printmaking and so on), attempts to identify talent that is yet to find a formal platform in the art world. There is no definitive running theme that ties the works together. But the spotlight was trained on "hopeful works" that look back on daily life lost because of the pandemic, or the dream of a bright future in an uneasy reality, says Cupid who curated the Korean section of the display.

Vaishnavi, who curated the Indian section of the exhibit, adds, "Both of us focussed on young emerging talent while taking into consideration the larger social, political and artistic backdrop against which they work." The possibility of refreshing ideas is what Cupid was specifically looking

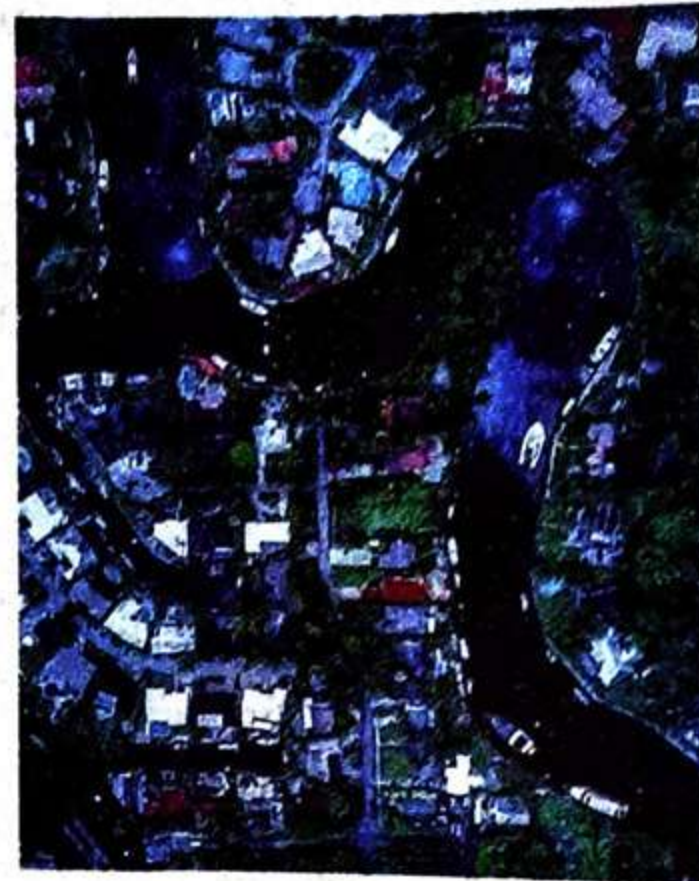


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for: "Art is always craving a fresh start," she adds.

The collection is a mix of abstract, realist and surreal works. Gimesoo's *Forgotten World 1* catches attention with its dark blue and green tones, depicting a beautiful street view veiled in the night. A few canvases away is V Saranraj's *Oppari Singers' Portraits* – realistic etchings on the musical instrument, *parai*. Whereas Sagar Naik Mule's *Mind Of My Father* is an unusual portrait that uses river mud, red soil, fish scales, dry mushrooms and pen on paper as mediums.

"Saranraj from Tamil Nadu captured my attention for the way he engages with the people he portrays in



Young talent (From left) Arpita Dey's *Fragrance from Home*; and Gimesoo's *Forgotten World 1*

■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

his work. I was also impressed by the way he uses materials and techniques that organically emerge from the life of the people he portrays, to convey a broader vision of humanity," says Vaishnavi. Vishwanath Kuttum on the other hand connects present day incidents, both from everyday life and larger socio-political events, with his childhood in the Andaman Islands in his work. And, Bang Gyu Tae, an artist who overcame developmental disorders as a child, paints his world with simple yet bright colours on canvas.

How did a completely virtual display affect the show's curation? Cupid says that high definition photos are used for the show – "So you can check the details of works that cannot be seen with the naked eye. The virtual art museum lets you appreciate works without being restricted by time and region."

In a physical show one has to be mindful of whether the works can be transported easily or accommodated within the given space. "In an online show, there is considerable freedom with regard to these aspects," Vaishnavi adds.

On display till January 7, at www.inkocentre.org/Virtual_Connect_Infotainment.html