

Rajan Krishnan

A Retrospective

Exhibition May 17 – June 23, 2018

Press Preview & V.I.P. Reception: Thursday, May 27, 6:00pm – 8:00pm
35 Great Jones St., New York NY 10012

Aicon Gallery New York is proud to present an important Retrospective of work by the late Kerala-based artist **Rajan Krishnan**. A dear friend of the gallery and a frequent collaborator over the years, Rajan's unexpected passing in 2016, left a void in the contemporary art world of Kochi - which he in large part helped to create - as well as in the broader landscape of South Asian art. Fortunately, for both those who knew him and those who admired his spirit and work, the palpable absence of the artist himself wanes slightly amidst the remarkable body of work he has left behind and his legacy as a pioneer of the uniquely collaborative and welcoming community of artists he nurtured within Kochi and further afield. The current exhibition represents a coming together of important work from Rajan's recent retrospective, organised jointly by the Kerala Lalithakala Akademi and Gallery Beyond, Mumbai, and some of the major works he had created for projects with Aicon over the years.

Rajan Krishnan's art has almost always centered around the natural environments in which he's found himself. Whether these be the idyllic landscapes of his childhood memories, before rampant urbanization began its sprawl outwards from the city centers of India, or more current scenes of environmental degradation and urban decay, the balance (or imbalance) between humanity and its habitats has remained the primary focus of his work. In this sense, Rajan approached his subject matter almost in the vein of a naturalist, yet one seeking not simply to catalog the rich variance of plant and animal life of his native Kerala, but to simultaneously document its degradation in the wake of humanity's industrialization and neglect.

In canvases ranging from the intimate to the monumental, he is able to present us with magnificently lush and detailed scenes of abundantly fruiting plants, and wonderfully stoic portraits and groupings of birds and wildlife, yet almost always staged against a foreboding grey backdrop the color of wet concrete or a thick industrial fog. The images appear as if in a dream, both preternaturally beautiful yet besieged by our ever encroaching man-made urban and industrial world and all of its environmental consequences. No mere painter of the natural world as he found it, Rajan's works, in the words of his wife, writer and journalist Renu Ramanath, "are signifiers of memory that connect/re-connect with history, especially the history of a landscape and a society in transition. They are painted documents of change."



Rajan Krishnan., *The Ancient Mariner*, Acrylic on canvas,
60 x 42 in.



Rajan Krishnan. *Thy Golden Fruits / Plant of Sustenance*,
2012, Acrylic on canvas, 84 x 72 in.

Rajan Krishnan was born in 1967, in the Thrissur district of Kerala. Having completed a Bachelor's degree in Economics, Krishnan decided to pursue his true love and signed up for a B.F.A (Painting) at the College of Fine Arts, Thiruvananthapuram. He then went on to pursue a Master's degree at the Faculty of Fine Arts, M.S. University, Baroda. His international exhibitions include *The Empire Strikes Back: Indian Art Today*, at Saatchi Gallery, London, *The Silk Road, New Chinese, Indian and Middle Eastern Art*, from the Saatchi Gallery London, at Lille3000, France, *India: Maximum City*, at Galerie Helene Lamarque, Paris, *Ancestry*, at Aicon Gallery, New York and many group shows and art fairs in India and abroad.

Please contact Aicon Gallery (Andrew@Aicongallery.com) for more information.

Rajan Krishnan



Rajan Krishnan, *Thy Golden Fruits / Plant of Sustenance*, 2012, Acrylic on canvas, 84 x 72 in.

Rajan Krishnan



Rajan Krishnan, *The Ancient Mariner*, Acrylic on canvas, 60 x 42 in.

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Rajan Krishnan, *Boatman*, 2011, Acrylic on canvas, 84 x 60 in.

Rajan Krishnan



Rajan Krishnan, *Plant from the Grove by the River 4*, 2011, Acrylic on canvas, 84 x 60 in.

Rajan Krishnan



Rajan Krishnan, *Plants of Sustenance 1*, Acrylic on canvas, 36 x 60 in.

Rajan Krishnan



Rajan Krishnan, *Pastoral Bird 1*, Acrylic on canvas, 48 x 36 in.

Rajan Krishnan



Rajan Krishnan, *Pastoral Bird 2*, Acrylic on canvas, 48 x 36 in.

Rajan Krishnan



Rajan Krishnan, *Plant from the Grove by the River 2*, 2011, Acrylic on canvas, 84 x 60 in.

Rajan Krishnan



Rajan Krishnan, *Plants of Sustenance 2*, Acrylic on canvas, 36 x 60 in.

Rajan Krishnan



Rajan Krishnan, *Peasant Woman*, 2011, Acrylic on canvas, 84 x 60 in.

Rajan Krishnan



Rajan Krishnan, *Plant from the Grove by the River 5*, 2011, Acrylic on canvas, 84 x 60 in.

Rajan Krishnan



Rajan Krishnan, *Bird from the Grove by the River*, 2011, Acrylic on canvas, 84 x 60 in.

Rajan Krishnan



Rajan Krishnan, *Untitled (Curling Branch)*, 2011, Acrylic on canvas, 24 x 24 in.

Rajan Krishnan



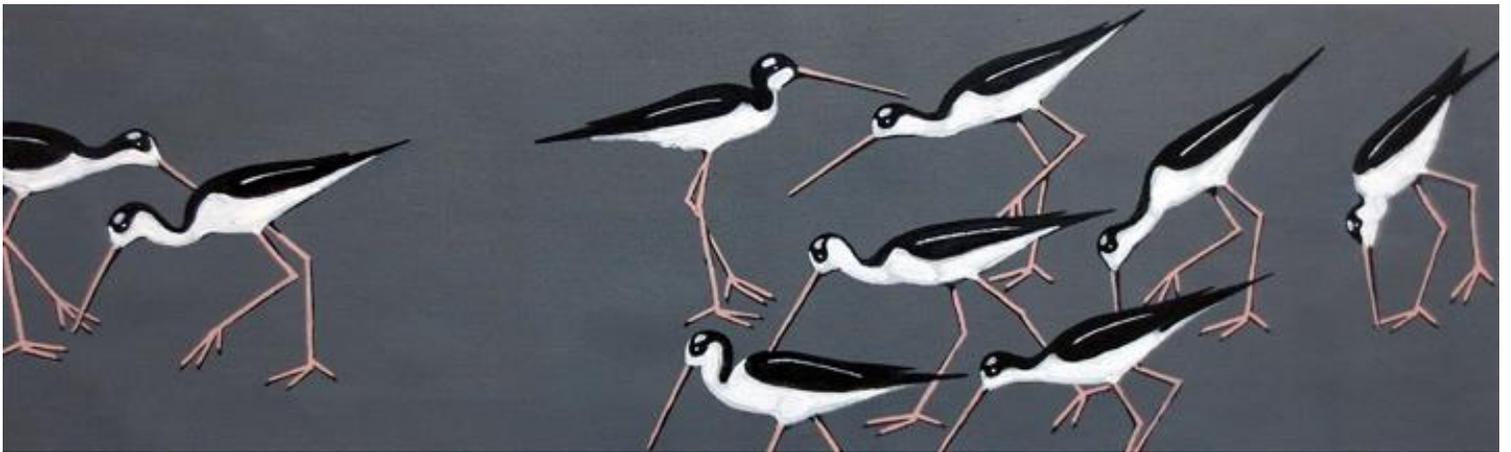
Rajan Krishnan, *Untitled (Plants and Pipe)*, Acrylic on canvas, 24 x 24 in.

Rajan Krishnan



Rajan Krishnan, *Untitled (Monkey)*, Acrylic on canvas, 24 x 24 in.

Rajan Krishnan



Rajan Krishnan, *Pastoral Birds*, 2016, Acrylic on canvas, 10 x 30 in.

Rajan Krishnan



Rajan Krishnan, *Urbane Opus*, Acrylic on canvas, 36 x 48 in.

Rajan Krishnan



Rajan Krishnan, *Untitled (Bamboo)*, 2005, Acrylic on canvas, 48 x 60 in.

Rajan Krishnan



Rajan Krishnan, *Untitled Drawing 1*, 2004, Charcoal on paper, 28 x 20 in.

Rajan Krishnan



Rajan Krishnan, *Untitled Drawing 2*, 2004, Charcoal on paper, 28 x 20 in.

Rajan Krishnan



Rajan Krishnan, *Untitled Drawing 3*, 2004, Charcoal on paper, 28 x 20 in.

RAJAN KRISHNAN

Born 1967, Kerala

Rajan Krishnan's art is very sensitive to his immediate natural environment. The fields and villages of the Kerala of his youth play the role of 'principal protagonist' in most of his works, expressing his deepest aesthetic proclivities. His early works are slightly sentimental in their depiction of childhood memories of home, but this phase seems to have given way to a more assertive cynicism that unflinchingly records the sudden and sweeping changes wrought on the landscapes he has known and loved. Rajan Krishnan passed away in 2016.

Education

1996	Master of Fine Arts in Painting, M. S. University, Baroda
1994	Bachelor of Fine Arts in Painting, Govt. College of Fine Arts, Thiruvananthapuram
1989	Bachelor of Arts in Economics, Calicut University, Kerala

Solo Exhibitions

2018	<i>Rajan Krishnan / A Retrospective</i> , Aicon Gallery, New York <i>Retrospective</i> , Durbar Hall Art Centre, Ernakulam, Kochi
2011	<i>Ancestry</i> , Aicon Gallery, New York
2009	<i>Four Paintings</i> , Bombay Art Gallery, Mumbai
2008	<i>RE-VISIT</i> , OED Basement, Kochi <i>Ore / Substances of Earth-I</i> , Bodhi Space, Mumbai
2007	<i>Memoir</i> , Bodhi Art, New York
2006	Art Singapore 2006, Bodhi Art, Singapore <i>Enroute</i> , Bombay Art Gallery, Mumbai
2004	<i>Little Black Drawings</i> , Kashi Art Gallery, Kochi

Group Exhibitions

2017	<i>Land Forms</i> , Curated by Kathleen Wyma, Gallery OED, Kochi
2016	<i>Delicate Bond of Steel</i> , Aicon Gallery, Mumbai
2014	<i>The Contemporary Walk III</i> , Gallery Ragini, New Delhi
2013	<i>Arrival & Departures: The Story of Indian Modern Art</i> , San Francisco, by Aicon Gallery, New York <i>In the Colours of India</i> , J. Bastien Art, Brussels, Belgium <i>Revisit</i> , at the Lalitha Kala Akademy, Thrissur by Gallery OED, Kochi <i>It Matters</i> , Seher, India International Centre, New Delhi <i>Quad</i> , curated by Niten Mehta, Visual Arts Gallery, India Habitat Centre, New Delhi

- Remaking the Modern*, London Summer Exhibition, Aicon Gallery, New York
Up to the Nines, Gallery Beyond, Mumbai
Card-O-Logy, Curated by Jasmine Shah Varma, Samsara Art, Mumbai
Between Darkness & Magic, CIMA Gallery at Visual Arts Gallery, India Habitat Centre, New Delhi
- 2012
The Embedded Landscape, Religare Art Gallery, Delhi
Between Darkness & Magic, CIMA Gallery Kolkata
Concrescence, Gallery Beyond, Mumbai
Big is Small, Miniature art show, Curated by Anoop Kamath, Durbar Hall Art Centre, Kochi
1341 AD, Gallery OED, Kochi
Art for Humanity, curated by Pranali Daundker, in aid of citizens for justice and peace, Mumbai
- 2011
Video Wednesday II, curated by Gayatri Sinha, Gallery Espace, Delhi
Lateral Insertions, Gallery Bluespade, Bangalore
Palimpsests, Gallery Beyond, Mumbai
Reprise 2011, Aicon Gallery, New York
Adbhutam: Rasa in Indian Art, Centre of International Modern Art(CIMA), Kolkata
The Lost Sparrow, presented by Gallery Threshold at Visual Art Gallery, India Habitat Centre, New Delhi
Between Seasons, Gallery Beyond, Mumbai
At Walden Pond, Gallery Beyond, Mumbai
Space-Untitled, David Hall, Kochi
Art Chennai, Gallery OED, Kochi
Art Dubai, Aicon Gallery, London
India Art Summit, Delhi
- 2010
The Silk Road, Saatchi Gallery, Lille (Lille 3000), France
Earth, Gallery OED at Indigo and Labernum Galleries, Chennai
Earth, Gallery OED, Kochi
Alt+Refresh, Pigment Art, Delhi
Who has seen Gandhi, Tangerine Art Space, Bangalore
Creating CommonWealth, Gallery Ragini, Delhi
Nature Revisited, Gallery Sanskriti, Kolkata
The Empire Strikes Back: Indian Art Today, Saatchi Gallery, London
- 2009
Vicissitudes of the Constructed Images, Tangerine Art Space, Bangalore
Evidentia, Gallery Sumukha, Bangalore
RE-CLAIM / RE-CITE / RE-CYCLE, Latitude 28, New Delhi & Bose Pacia, Kolkata
Group Show, Threshold Art Gallery, New Delhi
Group Show, Gallery Kolkata, Kolkata
Group Show, Gallery Beyond, Mumbai
Group Show, Triva Contemporary, Thiruvananthapuram
Facets of A People, Gallery OED, Kochi
Metamorphosis – Change and Continuity in Indian Contemporary Art, Phyllis Weston Annie Bolling Gallery, Cincinnati, USA
- 2008
The Hot Shots, The Viewing Room, Mumbai
Works by Various Artists, Bodhi Art, New York
Video Wednesday, Gallery Espace, New Delhi
The Drawing Show, Gallery Beyond, Mumbai
Keep Drawing, Gallery Espace, New Delhi
Triva 2008, Triva Contemporary, Thiruvananthapuram
Art Beat, The Shrine Gallery, New Delhi

- Hong Kong International Art Fair, Bombay Art Gallery
 Art Chicago, Bodhi Art
 Art Cologne, Italy, Bodhi Art
 2007 *Kashi – 10 Light Years*, Kashi Art Gallery, Kochi
Representation, Triva Contemporary, Thiruvananthapuram
 Gulf Art Fair, Dubai, Bodhi Art
 2006 *A Compensation for what has been lost*, Travancore Art Gallery, New Delhi
Take Two - The Chennai Chapter' Group Show, Gallery Sumukha
Real, mattersofart.com, New Delhi
Summer Rites, Gallery Beyond, Mumbai
 Group show, *Open Eyed Dreams*, Durbar Hall Art Centre, Kochi
Four by Four, Kashi Art Gallery, Kochi
 Group show, Shrishti Art Gallery, Hyderabad
 Group show, Visual Arts Gallery, Hong Kong, presented by Gallery Sumukha
 2005 *New Colours of Sumukha*, Gallery Sumukha, Bangalore
Double Enders, at Jehangir Art Gallery & Museum Gallery, Mumbai, Vadehra Art
 Gallery, New Delhi, Gallery Sumukha, Bangalore, and Durbar Hall Art Centre,
 Kochi
 2003 *Remembering Bhupen*, Kashi Art Café, Fort Kochi
Regional Art Exhibition, Lalit Kala Akademi Regional Centre, Chennai
 2002 *Monsoon Show*, Daira Centre for Art & Culture, Hyderabad
Tree Festival, Kashi Art Cafe, Fort Kochi
An Album of Drawings, Draavidia, Fort Kochi
Cross Currents, Daira Centre for Art & Culture, Hyderabad
 2001 *Annual show*, Kerala Lalithakala Akademi, Durbar Hall Art Centre, Kochi
 2000 *Chingamela*, Kerala Kalapeetom, Kochi
 1999 *An Album of Drawings and Paintings*, Draavidia Gallery, Kochi
 1998 *Substances on Black Moon*, Galleria Mareechika, Kochi
Miniature Format Show, Gallery Sans Tache, Mumbai
 1997 *Gift for India*, SAHMAT, Ravindra Bhavan, New Delhi

Related Experience

- 2010 Curator, *Earth*, Gallery OED, Kochi. Artists: Gulam Mohammed Sheikh, Sudhir Patwardhan, N Rimzon, Rajan Krishnan and Sujith S N
 2009 Curator, *Let It Happen*, OED, Kochi. Artists: N Rimzon, Reghunadhan K, and Rajan Krishnan