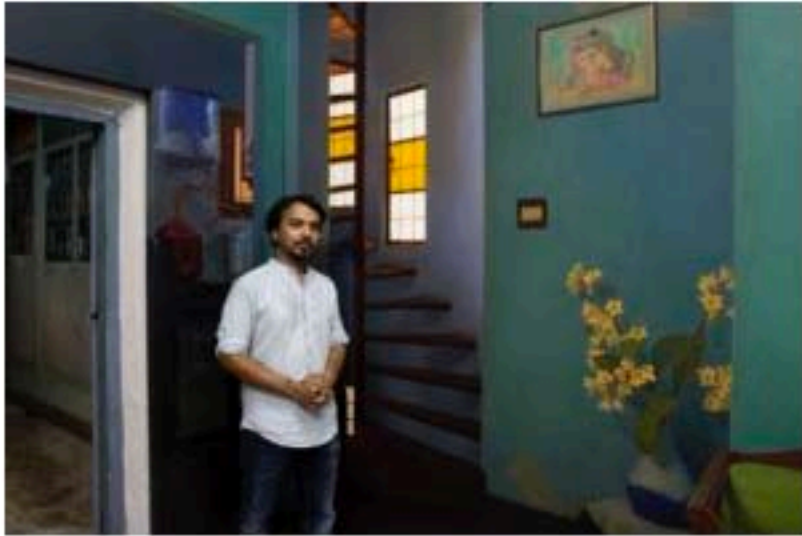


# Biennale Artist Abir Karmakar Wins Coveted Asia Arts Award

## KOCHI:

Kochi-Muziris Biennale (KMB) 2016 participating artist Abir Karmakar was one of three 'game changers' honoured at the inaugural Asia Arts Awards India held on Wednesday night in New Delhi.

Karmakar received an 'Asia Arts Future Award' at the awards gala held in the Taj Mansingh hotel in the national capital



that saw more than 150 global artists, curators, collectors, arts professionals and patrons in attendance.

Noted art collector and KMB patron Radhika Chopra presented the award – given to visual artists who are innovators that broaden existing understanding, perspectives and perceptions of contemporary art – to Karmakar.

Among the attendees was eminent artist KMB 2016 curator Sudarshan Shetty, who noted in a felicitation speech following the award presentation that Karmakar's work "resonates with our collective sense

of an 'existential emptiness' as represented through an abundance of images".

"The measure of success for an artist is how the craft meets or even comes close to the intention of the subject matter.

Abir's craft and the subject matter cannot be seen in isolation or in binaries. They are not separable. Through Abir's work, I think there is a case to be made for a rigour in 'making'. I believe that making too can be a means to production of knowledge," said Shetty, who added that he had a painting by Karmakar in his Mumbai studio.

The Baroda-based artist is currently exhibiting 'Home', a photorealistic installation featuring oil-on-canvas paintings that are stretched out to illustrate the contents and spaces inside an average Indian middle-class home, at KMB 2016 venue Kashi Art Gallery in Fort Kochi.

"It is indeed an honour to receive this prestigious and much coveted award for my work. It is a recognition of my entire artistic practice in addition to the work being displayed at the ongoing Biennale. When Sudarshan first invited me to participate in the exhibition, I knew I had to come up with something special. I am glad that people are enjoying 'Home'," Karmakar said.

Karmakar is known for casual, voyeuristic self-portraits that sees him place his naked body in intimate settings. Through provocative body language and eye contact with viewers, h

e offers a contemporary interpretation of sexuality and the fluid nature of identity.

"In 'Home', I explore questions of identity, rootlessness and place. By confronting visitors with a familiar setting located within an unfamiliar space, I ask them to ponder about what home means to them," Karmakar said.

The event marked the first time the Asia Awards gala – instituted by the Asia Society five years ago – was held in India.

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