



Kerala on a canvas

From family bonds to politics and nature, this young artist paints myriad shades of his home state

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Ratheesh T, one of the youngest names in the realm of Indian contemporary art, has established a signature in how he portrays Kerala. Most of his works are known to be inspired by the forests and people of Kerala, with lush green backdrops populated by humans, who clearly seem to belong there. The artist is bringing a solo exhibition of his recent paintings to the city, at Galerie Mirchandani+Steinruecke.

Ratheesh was born in Kilimanoor in Kerala and received his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from College of Fine Arts in Trivandrum. Speaking about his works, the artist says, "I think of my work in two ways. One is my personal journey, and the second is the larger world. If I make a painting like 'Saami', it is to paint the culture of the people. In 'Independence Day', one visual that is so compelling speaks volumes about

the nation." He does this interesting spin off on the self-portrait where he makes an appearance in his paintings, and that is because, he sees his art as part of his own personal journey too.

The artist says his process is a private one, where he locks himself in his studio while he works. And it could be for anywhere between a few weeks to nearly six months to finish each work. Of late he has been far too disturbed by the deluge in Kerala. We ask him if that shall find an expression on his canvas, and he says he's too shaken to process it.

Characterised by sensuous colours, his paintings are laced with magic realism as he tries to explore connections between the rural and urban, natural and man-made, family bonds and politics too. "I am part of the culture [of my state], so those visuals appear spontaneously. The cultural environment seeps into my

work. The beauty of art is that each one comes to it with their own problems and experiences and therefore it is open-ended," Ratheesh says. Most of his paintings are on large canvases, we observe. "The colours support the visual, and the scale supports the vision," he says.

WHEN: 11 am to 7 pm,
Tuesday to Saturday, till
November 20

WHERE: Galerie
Mirchandani +
Steinruecke,
Behind Taj
Mahal Hotel,
Colaba
CALL:
22023030

