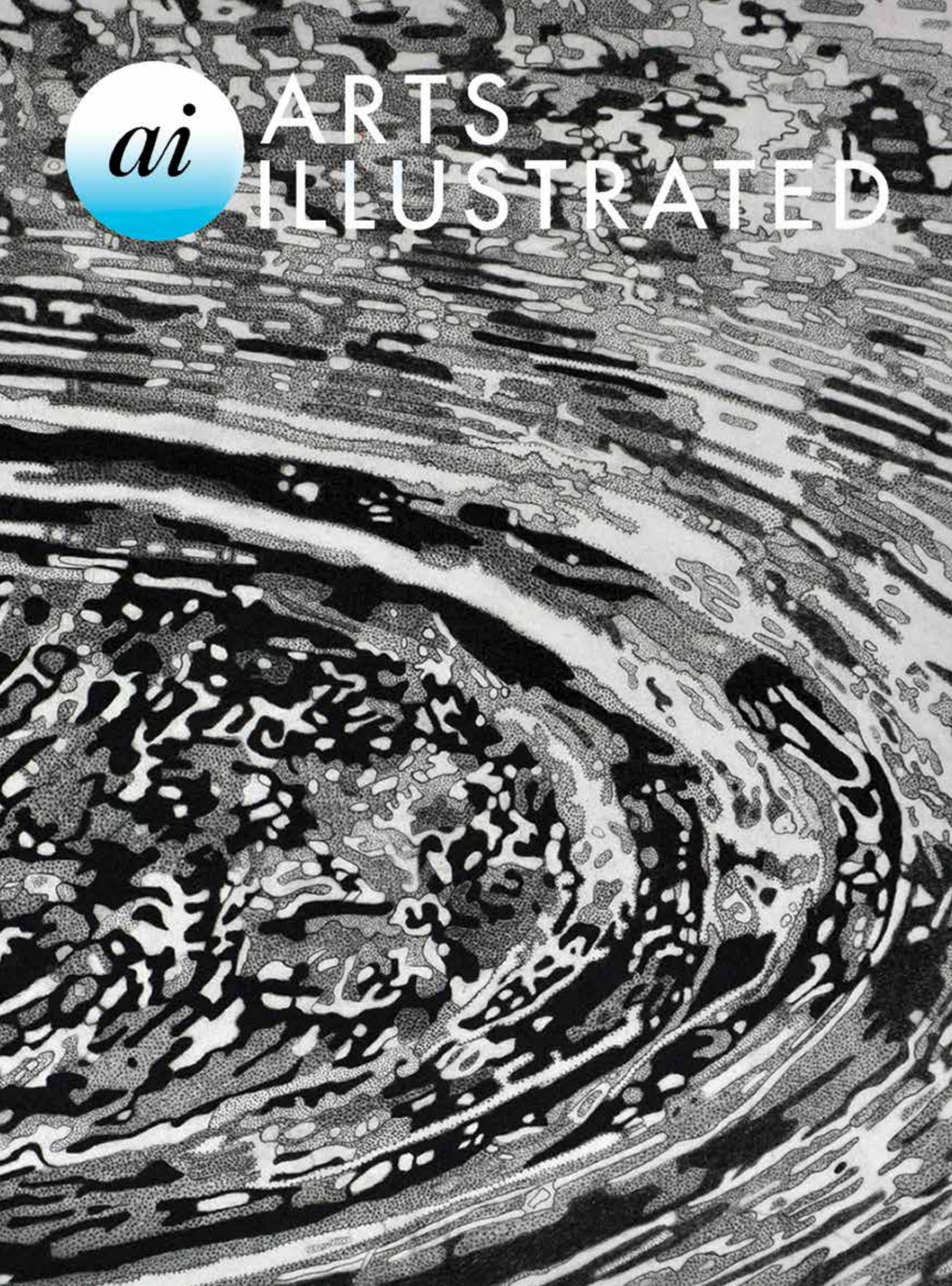




ARTS ILLUSTRATED



Editor's note

At the time of working on this issue and discussing the cover with Parvathi Nayar – on the solo power of water and its environmental implications in a development-hungry country – relentless waters with another kind of hunger devastated the entire state of Kerala. It made Parvathi's cover for this issue frighteningly relevant and our theme that wanted to look at the beauty of solitude, the aesthetic of isolation, and the beginning of things, where one is followed by two, where many drops begin with that first one, always. The Kerala floods reminded us that perhaps destruction too was tied into the idea of solo, a precursor of what is to come, a full stop for the next sentence to begin.

This issue we found that solo resided in each one of us, in its many-hued splendour. It reiterated the fact that just by virtue of something being 'single' or 'alone', it did not do away its complex layers, its narratives and stories and its constant need to dialogue with the world, so something new could then walk its path. Even a literal interpretation – a movie named 'Solo' or a solo road trip – brought with it a surprising charm of its own, unpredictable in where it takes us.

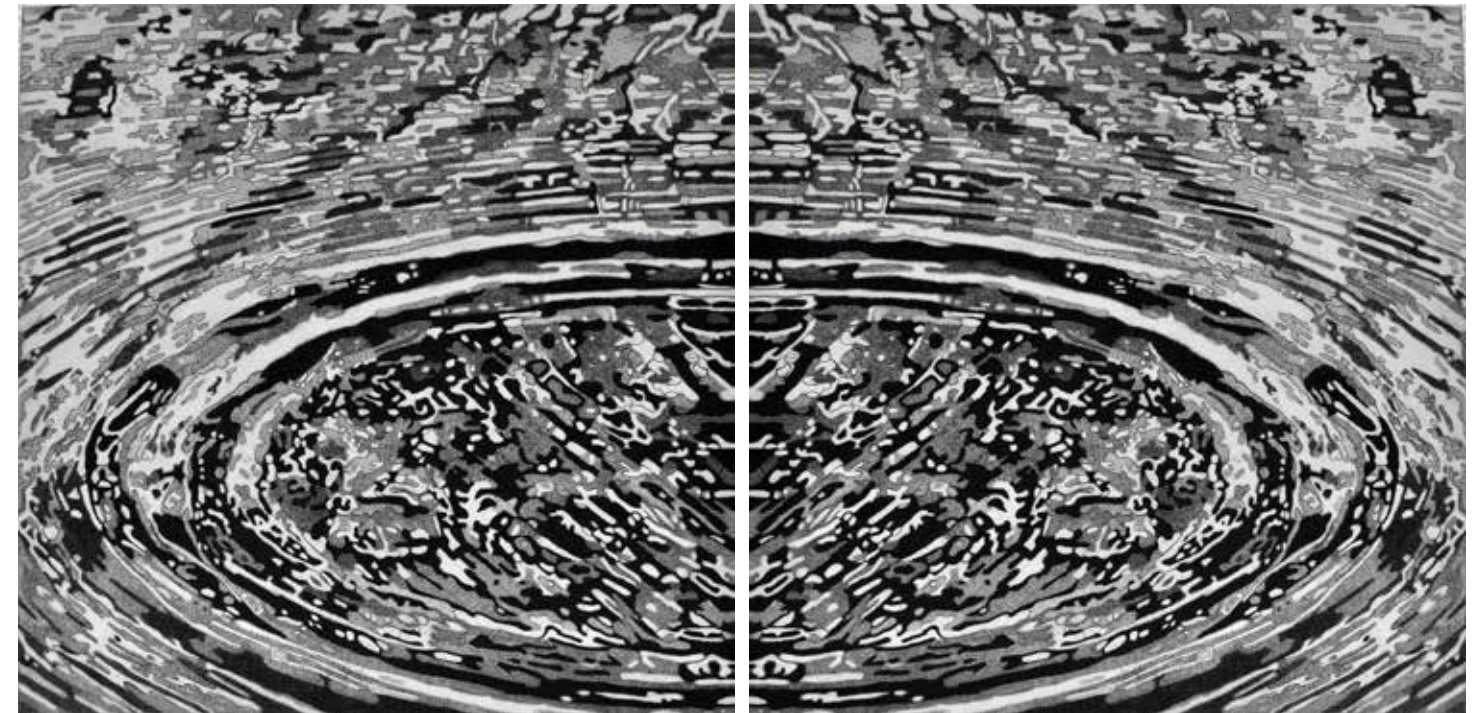
But, perhaps, the one thing that really stood out while we put this issue together and one that truly resonated with the theme for me was the Supreme Court verdict on September 6 that finally scrapped Section 377, an archaic, pre-colonial law that criminalised same-sex relationships, allowing the colours of the rainbow to reclaim its rightful place in the sky.

Our pages, too, this issue, bring a piece of that rainbow – resplendent in its alone-ness, multi-layered in its manifestation, and full of shining light for the future. And a reminder that every journey begins with someone, somewhere, over the rainbow.



Praveena Shivram
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Cover Artist



The solitary event. A singularity from where life itself emerged. But equally, one pebble in the pond. Perhaps, then, another. And another. The butterfly effect. One event collides with a neighbouring one, influences that episode. And moves to nudge the next. A cascading series of causes and outcomes.

It's what I dream each drawing will do – be an idea moving outwards, whose form is both fluid and frozen, meaning one particular thing but also many different things. A ripple that will find new shape in the minds of its viewers.



Parvathi Nayar



- CALM
- SURPRISED
- HAPPY
- NOSTALGIC
- EXCITED

ART MAKES ME FEEL.....



Special Feature

Art Within Reach

As the 9th edition of the Singapore Affordable Art Fair gears up for its big moment in November, we take a look at how such avenues offer young, up-coming talent a platform to showcase their work and how it broadens the horizons of contemporary art

RAHUL KUMAR



Part of a new collection inspired by the mythology of different cultures, this specific work derives its energy and geometric expression from *Ra*, the Sun God in Egyptian mythology. The work is at once a tribute to the majesty of the Sun, as it is to the Egyptian iconography of *Ra*. Thus, antique gold and shades of blue feature prominently in this work. The intricacy and exactitude of ornament-making – manifests as a metaphor in the precise folds of Origami.

- *Ankon Mitra*



A lot of my works is inspired from my days growing up in a small town in the Thiruvallur district of South India. To me, the works created within the series *Child Happy* symbolise my childhood. The happiness, the times spent playing and running around with friends, all those memories take shape within these sculptures. Though they seem still, I try to capture a sense of energy in them, a sense of movement that is both physical and metaphorical.

- *Arumugam TN*



I try to merge cultural and agricultural philosophies in my work, as agriculture is one of civilisation's founding components. I am from Uttar Pradesh and believe that living close to nature can make one more creative. There is so much to learn from the fields where we grow rice, wheat, mustard and pulses.

- *Harish Ojha*



My works explore the idea of the self. And it struck me that the body is not very different from a bird's nest. When I observed the form of the nest more closely, I found several parallels with the human body because both are built up in layers; layers that are sometimes perceptible to the eyes and at other times not. This idea of physical absence/presence fascinates me and I translate this concept into my work.

- *Janarthanan R.*



My present works are titled '_____' (approach without your pre-conceived knowledge). Do we really need visual images to be translated as an explanation in text form? We approach everything in our life with our gained knowledge. We have blocked our instincts/senses so much that we have totally forgotten to react to our senses and instead already begin questioning in our head. My enquiry is what exactly do we see without that knowledge? Do we really need an interpretation for what we see?

- *Ganesh Selvaraj*



It is said that the triage, that of the creator (artist), the created (art work), and the beholder (viewer), is integral and essential for completion of the very purpose of art practice. While the first two legs remain within the confines of the personal space of the artists, it is of paramount importance that the art work is taken out and allowed to engage with the audience. The works may then be accepted or rejected, liked or disliked, but that closure of the third leg to complete the triangle is important. As a practising artist, I know the significance of viewer engagement, to see how they react to a body of work, and offer interesting interpretation of a work.

In contemporary times, viewers have multiple opportunities to see works of art. Art shows

hosted by private galleries are probably the most popular avenue. While most often these are open to the public, the uninitiated are intimidated to enter the space, let alone engage with works and educate themselves. A friend recently commented that a typical art gallery in the city is unwelcoming to those who lack knowledge of the subject. This may be far from true; it certainly seems to be a perception creating an entry barrier. In contrast, the format of an art fair has gained tremendous interest in the past decade in the country. Galleries and art dealers gain by sharing the costs of a larger space and setting up a professional display. There is a natural cross-pollination of audience. Viewers too stand to benefit from this construct. For starters, a large fair

environment is far less unapproachable. It is easier to be in the flow of a crowd and enjoy works at one's own pace. A fair also provides an opportunity to see representations of various galleries under one roof, providing for a larger collection to view and also potentially have a price comparative. Art districts in Delhi and Mumbai, for instance, have launched innovative ways to join hands to collaborate for an increased viewer interaction. Mumbai Gallery Week and Delhi Contemporary Art Week are now annual events towards this endeavour. Monthly art nights provide access to the galleries till extended hours.

An affordable art fair is yet another ensemble that has formed a niche within the larger ecosystem of the arts.

The streets of India are unique and beautiful in their own way. When you walk down the streets you can see roadside shops filling up the sides, and dogs and cows sharing the streets with people. For an artist it is a fantastic feast for the eyes. I usually capture the light that pass through the streets and the people on them, whether it's summer or monsoon. My paintings speak both to me and others about the beauty that exists in the daily life of people.

- *Nadees Prabou*



I find meaning in things and events around me and it is this that is expressed in my works. I draw inspiration mostly from nature – be it the fibres in fruits that seem to form some sort of connectivity or a spider's web. I am intrigued by the minute forms present in nature. In my works, I take these forms and somehow enhance the experience of seeing them through the added aspect of my imagination.

- *Saravanan Parasuraman*



I express myself through both abstract and figurative works. In my abstract works, I feel ideas flow through colour on paper. Different colours indicate different pictures of life. Figurative paintings help me give shape to ideas and be inventive and expressive, while religious paintings are my source of positive energy. Painting is my meditation, my path to self discovery. I try to keep on experimenting, and the more I use mixed media, the more I experiment.

- *M. Singh*

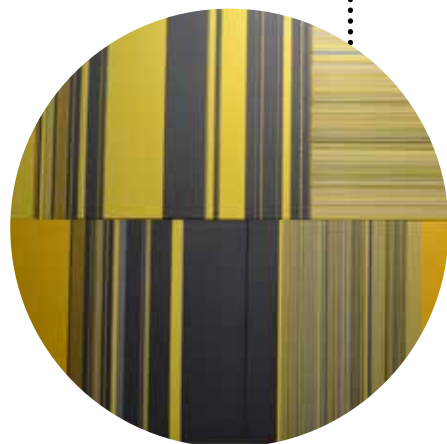
My new works are all about what happens in a particular period of time. When we are in the midst of things, engrossed in it, we tend to lose ourselves in it. At that moment we feel connected to the entire universe. We only realise this when we recall the experience. Often, my art approaches a similar thought, but through form. It relates to all forms of connections we experience all around us – an almost out-of-body experience where we look back at that one moment that made complete sense.

- *Vijay Pichumani*



My ideas come from nature; the layers that one gets to see inside the cut-wood I use, for instance, to make a work of art. It starts as a small circle and the next circle and the next one, and in the process it does not remain a circle but becomes something else. There are small variations that build the bigger picture, much like the behaviour of nature or friendship or even love. Small incidents gather over a period of time and become what it is at the end of the day. However, we sense it in its totality! Earthquakes, tsunami and other natural phenomena too have a similar way of operation, although we get to only see it as a total event.

- *Yuvan Bothysathuvar V.*



GET#ARTHAPPY
AT THE

Affordable
Art Fair

It is a fair that is focused on upcoming and mid-career artists for new buyers. The Affordable Art Fair (AAF) in Singapore, now in its ninth edition, for instance, has seen a rise in local gallery participation this season and will represent 22 galleries from Singapore (up from 18 last year). 'The essential synergy which exists between the local and international aspects of the Affordable Art Fair has been a large part of our success in the art and lifestyle market. As a brand which strives to cater to the globalised tastes of our art loving audience in Singapore, our loyal patrons are excited not only by new artworks developed by returning and established artists but also express an increasing appetite for fresh creations by new and emerging artists,' said Fair Director, Alan Koh.

It is this thrust on new talent that makes spaces like these exciting. AAF, this year too, is partnering with ION Art, a unique proposition of ION Orchard focused on the exhibition of modern and contemporary art and design for an integrated mall

experience, to bring the Young Talent Programme (YTP) that cultivates young talented artists from Singapore. Initiated in 2012, the objective of YTP was to recognise the potential of the next generation of artists. 'We have always been passionate about showcasing the region's best and it gives us great pleasure to continue our support for this meaningful initiative in partnership with Affordable Art Fair Singapore. With every edition of the YTP comes fresh perspectives through the artists' creative presentations of the works of these emerging young artists, each with a unique story to

tell,' says Yeo Mui Hong, CEO of Orchard Turn Developments.

In the upcoming edition at Singapore, we are especially proud that our gallery, Art Houz, will be part of the AAF, representing a selection of upcoming and mid-career artists. The gallery has participated in the past two editions and believes that platforms such as these give artists and the galley wider exposure and an exciting peek into what is fast becoming a big part of the contemporary art landscape. Since its inception in 1999 (the

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 9TH EDITION OF THE SINGAPORE AFFORDABLE ART FAIR

- Regional and international talents featuring 80 galleries
- Art priced between \$100 and \$15,000, with 75% of the art offered at under \$7,500
- Hands-on advice, and educational guidance to newbie art lovers
- Multimedia art on display, including photography, painting, sculpture, drawing, edition prints, street art, contemporary calligraphy, assemblage, new media, performance art, and interactive installations
- An evening of art talks, demonstrations and performances
- Specially curated activities for children



Affordable Art Fair was founded in London by Will Ramsay, over 2.3 million people have visited the Fair, and over £331 million (SG \$580 million) of art has been sold, demonstrating a growing demand for quality and affordable, contemporary art. Ramsay's vision was to make contemporary art accessible to everyone, and to show that you don't need to be an art expert or a millionaire to enjoy and buy art. The fact that it has now become a truly global brand with 13 fairs annually on three continents, in 10 cities from Hong Kong to New York, Milan to Brussels, is a testament to his belief.

And if it redefines the boundaries of that triage between artist, artwork and viewer, then, in this case, it truly is more the merrier.

Images from the *Affordable Art Fair, Spring 2016 edition*. All images Courtesy of the Affordable Art Fair and the Amador Arts Project, Singapore.



