



## **Meera Devidayal | Water Has Memory**

**Preview: Monday, April 16, 2018**

Exhibition view: April 17 - May 12, 2018

My attempt has always been to turn the 'found image' into a visual metaphor, and charge it with new meaning. In this collection the trigger was — an office building surrounded by office buildings; the sea somewhere round the corner, unseen, suddenly appearing as a reflection in a window. As if asserting its presence (quietly) to those who had displaced it by a concrete jungle.

The sea is the protagonist of my exhibition. It has its own mind, its own voice, and its own memory. Man has treated it as an element to bend to his own needs, and indeed, his own greed, by chipping away the ocean to gouge out more and more land to build on; he has turned it into a dumping ground for his garbage. He thinks he is in control. But the planet has been striking back in its own way. Hurricanes, tsunamis, floods, and droughts are very much the result of man's insensitivity to the planet.

Using this broad framework as my canvas, I have used video, photographs, paintings and texts, to tell my story. The grey area between appearance and reality in the human situation, has been central to my work. Here the sea becomes the metaphor for this exploration. The images are from my experience of life around me, as well as from happenings across the world.

In Mumbai, where I live, life seems to revolve around construction and acquisition. Bigger and bigger, more and more, it seems to be an endless chase in the pursuit of happiness. Or is it just a mirage?

This chase also leads me to view the sea as 'passage' — the idea that it has historically been the medium through which people travel and migrate to better spaces. Where will the sea now lead us? Will it be merciful, or cruel, in its infinite wisdom?

Meera Devidayal  
April 2018

Meera Devidayal (b) 1947 in Delhi, grew up in Kolkata

### **Educational qualifications**

BA in English Literature, Loreto College, Kolkata, 1966; J J School of Art, Mumbai, 1971-1974

*Since 1975 I have been exhibiting solo, and in group shows, mostly in Mumbai, but also in Delhi, Baroda, and Kolkata. My gallery is Chemould Prescott Road, Mumbai. Though essentially a painter, I have used a variety of mediums in my art - work, including photography, video, and even objects like taxi doors, and recycled metal sheets. I have taken part in a few public art projects, and the most recent is a 40-foot mural at T2, Mumbai's International Airport, the art project designed by Rajeev Sethi.*

### **Selected Solo Exhibitions**

She has held several solo exhibitions and presentations from 1978 to 2014 with Chemould Prescott Road, Mumbai, Cymroza Art Gallery, New Delhi, Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai, Baroda??, India, Art Heritage, New Delhi

### **Selected Group Exhibitions**

India Art Fair, New Delhi; Field of Vision, Gallery Art & Soul 2014; Beyond the Canvas, Tao art Gallery, Mumbai, 2013; A New Mediatic Realism, Baroda; The Search (Paintings from NGMA Mumbai), Muscat, Oman 2004; Icons and Symbols, CIMA, Kolkata and Delhi, 2002; Kitsch Kitsch Hota Hai, Gallery Espace, Delhi, 2001; Nayika (Heroine), Tao Art Gallery, Mumbai; Lakeeren, Mumbai, 1997-1996; Contemporary Miniatures, CIMA, Kolkata 1994; Artists from western India, Birla Academy, Kolkata, 1992; Artists Alert, SAHMAT, Delhi, 1989; 7 women Artists, Art Heritage, Delhi, 1983.

### **Residencies & Projects**

Art Omi International, Ghent, NY, USA, 2010; Uttarayan, Baroda, 2004; Triangle Artists' Workshop, Brooklyn, NY, USA, 2002

Created a 40 ft x 6.5 ft mural from recycled metal sheets and wood, with mixed media for an art project curated by Rajeev Sethi for the new Mumbai International Airport T2, 2012; Designed a 54 ft mural for Tardeo Police Station, Mumbai, 2007; Painted a train bogey with Open Circle, a group of activist artists, during the World Social Forum, Mumbai, 2004; Worked with children from the Akanksha Foundation to create collaborative paintings for charity auctions, Mumbai, 2003, 2001.

Lives, works in Mumbai, India