

Art Exhibition on

# Lives and Livelihoods of Fisherfolk

16 - 23 October 2011





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Fisherfolk

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Labernum and Indigo Gallery  
Cholamandal Artists' Village, Chennai





V. Jaya Raj

## The world of fisherfolk through the eyes of an artist

The fast increasing world population is placing unprecedented demands on the global resources. Touching 7.0 billion in July 2011, the world population is expected to reach 9.2 billion by the end of 2050. To meet the demands of the exploding population, food supplies have to be sourced from all food production sectors, and one such promising area is fisheries. Our water resources, both fresh and marine offer good prospects of providing fish food, if maintained and harnessed sustainably. The oceans that cover almost 70 percent of the land mass are the future food baskets and to ensure food supplies from this resource, we must also ensure their sustainability.

Sixteen October is celebrated as the World Food Day and it reminds us of our obligations to provide food for the billions that inhabit the Earth. The aim of the Day is to heighten public awareness of the world food problem and strengthen solidarity in the struggle against hunger, malnutrition and poverty.

We at the Bay of Bengal Programme Inter-Governmental Organisation (BOBP-IGO), Chennai have been engaged in securing the livelihoods of fishers in countries around the Bay of Bengal for the last 33 years. The fishers and their families are going through challenging time – dwindling resources, increasing pollution, competing interests with other user groups, climate change impacts are some of the adversities faced by this sector.

The sea is not only a source of sustenance for people living on the coast, but since time immemorial the sea has also been a source of inspiration for artists. This is evident in this art exhibition where eminent artists of Chennai will exhibit works inspired by the sea and the people associated with it. The life of fisherfolk will also be the theme for the ‘live painting event’ organized along with the exhibition where emerging artists from Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Karnataka will participate.

We feel that the excellent work of the artists would contribute in raising the profile of the poor fishers who toil in one of the world’s most dangerous occupations to bring back nutritious and wholesome food for all of us.

The BOBP-IGO cordially invites you to come and see the works of the senior artists that would be on display in the Labernum & Indigo Gallery of the Cholamandal Artists’ Village and also encourage the budding artists who would be exhibiting their painting skills in the ‘live painting event’ organized from 10 am to 5 pm on 16 October 2011.

The exhibition will continue at the Labernum and Indigo Gallery until the 23 October 2011.





## Alphonso Arul Doss

b 1939



Alphonso Arul Doss's paintings express an interesting dynamics between the surface of the painting and the figures represented on it. While the outline of the forms is as permeable as water, the glowing patches of colour separated by brilliant areas of unpainted canvas evoke the effect of looking from underwater at the light filtering through the surface. Through these evocations of a marine space, Alphonso Arul Doss infuses his figures with a new meaning; they no longer remain ordinary human beings but become mythic sea creatures or souls of fishermen and women that have been elevated to mythic proportions because of their enduring spirit.



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## Asma Menon

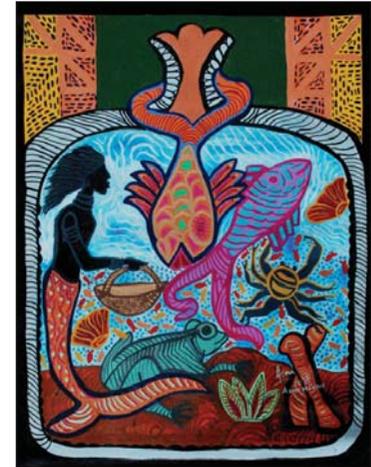
b 1961



Asma Menon's works are known for their personal interpretation of myths and legends. Similarly, in her paintings for this exhibition she creates an alter ego as a mythical creature of the water, a mermaid or a siren. Through these personas, she not only delves into the veiled mysteries of water but also explores an aspect of her own self that is as mystifying and deep as the ocean. The exuberant and spontaneous details of these works also have a resonance with the nature of water- filled with the vitality of life, both are hard to contain within a limited space.

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S Jayaraj  
b 1962



S Jayaraj's works are the result of his experience as an artist who has been associated with the Bay of Bengal Programme and other development sectors for the past two decades and has been voicing his feelings for the rural poor through his drawings and paintings. Hence, there are two tendencies within his work, which incidentally are manifested in terms of the two mediums that he uses - his charcoals, done in quick broad lines, capture the rugged life of fisherfolk and his oils portray specific aspects of their lives. While one oil painting depicts a technique of fishing used in the Maldives, the other work speaks of the plight of the fishing community, where the brown barren thinly painted landscape they inhabit is a metaphor for their poverty.

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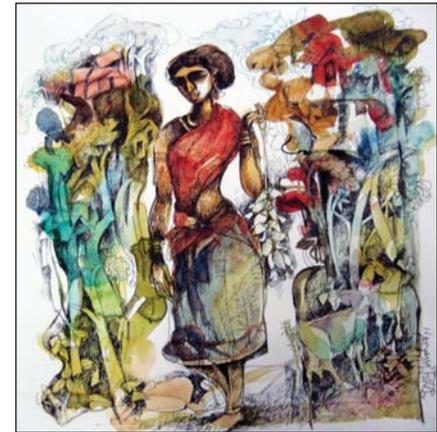


## Manohar Natarajan

b 1957



Fishermen returning home after their day's work, women selling fish in the market, etc. are sights associated with the life of a fishing community. Manohar Natarajan is one artist for whom these moments hold fascination. The rustic beauty and earthiness that he sees in them is evident in the way he elongates the figures while stylising the features and in his technique of combining watercolours with pen and ink to create a tonal interplay between the figures and the background.



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SPNSI India  
2011



## V Ravindran

b 1976



V Ravindran's sculptures could be read as a narrative of a fisherman on his daily venture into the sea and returning with a once in a life time catch. Angular and solid, the form of the fish speaks of the majesty of its being and of the vastness of the sea from which it has come. Yet the fisherman, although comparatively frail in physical terms, due to his persistence and endurance, becomes as colossal as the creature he captures. Ultimately, Ravindran's work is reminiscent of Hemingway's 'Old man and the sea,' speaking of the strength of man and the power of nature to bring out the best in him.

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B O Shailesh

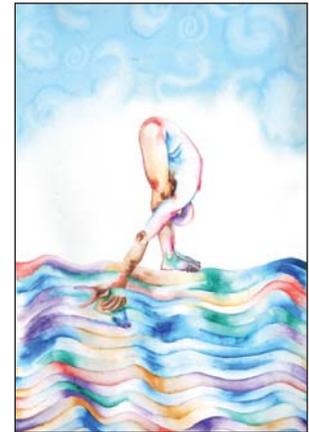
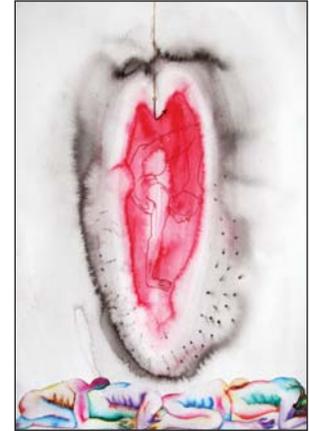
b 1970



BO Shailesh's concern in recent times has been to discover the physical and spiritual possibilities of the human body. In this show, he explores this potential as manifested in one of the five elements of the universe- water. In paintings such as the *Magical Fisherman* he brings out the timeless power of this element by referring to the mythical/mystical powers associated with it. On the other hand, in works such as the *Universe*, by placing visual emphasis on the wash effect in the centre of the painting, he creates a tension between water as a mundane physical medium, used to produce a picture and as a form of energy, vital to the balance of the universe.

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## *Meet the budding artists*

*Twenty-one budding artists, pursuing their degrees from eminent Art Institutions in Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Karnataka, will exhibit their painting skills in the 'Live Painting Event' coinciding with the Art Exhibition on 16 October 2011. The Event is also a part of the ongoing Sketching Club activities of the Arnawaz Vasudev Charities at Cholamandal Artists' village.*

*Using different media, these young artists will paint the lives and livelihoods of fisherfolk and their environment. We hope that each artwork will be a fitting tribute to the brave fishers who toil against all odds to harvest nutritious fish food from the oceans.*





**First Row**  
**College of Arts – Kumbakonam**  
 (Left to Right)

- A Ananda Kumar
- S Durga
- R Haribabu
- K Kalaivanan
- G Maiazhagan
- T Nannai
- R Ramadoss
- B Siva



**Second Row**  
**College of Arts – Puducherry**  
 (Left to Right)

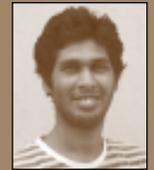
- S Babu
- V Guru Balaji
- P Lalithalakshmi
- R Raveenthara
- R Santhosh
- A Uma Maheshwari



**Third Row**  
**College of Arts - Chennai**  
 (Left to Right)

- R Dhiyaneashwaran
- N Lavanya
- G Ravivarman
- S Sakthivel
- L Sridhar
- S Vignesh

**Last Row**  
**DMSLKMS College - Mysore**  
 Selva Senthil Kumar





**BAY OF BENGAL PROGRAMME  
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