

# Metaphors of Physical & Emotional Spaces

Photostories



Published by  
**ART KANARA TRUST**

# Contents

<b>Editorial Note</b>	1
Shalmali Shetty	
<b>Moments that Never Happen Twice</b>	4
Mariyam Rasheeda KM	
<b>Divinity of a Pingara</b>	18
Murali M Abbemane	
<b>Nature and Inclusivity</b>	30
Neel Kote	
<b><i>Na Kanda Aghanashini Suggi</i></b>	38
Pranam Shreedhar	
<b>Spaces and Places</b>	46
Shravya Manjunath	
<b><i>Payana: Teeradhinda Doorakke</i></b>	56
Sowjanya Jogi & Likhith Raj	
<b><i>Pili Vesha: A roar to be remembered</i></b>	66
Vivek Gowda	
<b>Participant Bios</b>	74

## Editorial Note

Shalmali Shetty

In the real world, something *is* happening and no one knows what *is going* to happen. In the image-world, it *has* happened, and it *will* forever happen in that way.

~ Susan Sontag, *On Photography*

The regions of Karavali, Malenadu and the northern part of Kerala across the South-Western coastal belt and the foothills of the Western Ghats, share a multitude of similar traditions, cultures, histories and ecological concerns. Undoubtedly, the coast is rich with histories shared across the ancient trade routes established between the Arab, African, European and South East Asian countries, resulting in the exchange and intermingling of cultures, traditions, languages and food-systems. Although much of this history is lost and/or has been rewritten in response to the frequent political upheavals, many overlaps are still evident in the living traditions of this region.

With the first iteration entitled ‘Metaphors of Physical & Emotional Spaces’, our aim was to encourage young creative practitioners to foster a dialogue with their immediate surroundings, and draw out new meanings and associations within the current socio-political conditions; to bridge their fleeting present with habitual structures of the past, and anticipations for a future. Rather than direct image-making and writing, we were keen to receive reflective responses showcasing the urban and rural lifestyles; highlighting the vibrant and diverse linguistic, ritualistic, religious and socio-cultural communities; and further contrasting these aspects with the geography, ecology and wildlife of this landscape.

As part of this contest, we received photo-stories from both individual practitioners as well as a duo—comprising a photographer and a writer—written both in English or Kannada (the latter also used to write the Tulu, Byari, Konkani and Kodava languages in this region). In so doing, making the platform accessible for a diverse group of creatives to think and interpret in their own visual language, retain expressions in their local tongue, and ease collaborations.

This contest was juried by a visual artist and filmmaker Babu Eshwar Prasad and photographer and filmmaker Prakash Braggs, who after much thought and consideration, shortlisted seven stories and picked four awardees. The selection was made not only on the basis of technical aspects employed, but also on their affinity for the proposed theme; sensibilities and thought processes behind their artistic choices; their use of suggestive and metaphorical elements; attention to detail, and the presentation of the same. The process of doing so, has brought about numerous inquiries and conversations around approaches to the medium of photography and writing itself; the subjects of photojournalism, documentation,

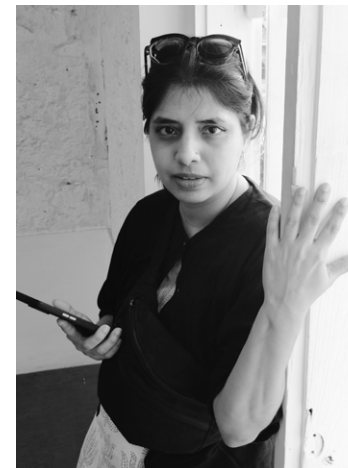
memory, archival research and methodologies; the relevance of physical publications in an increasingly digital world; and further discussions around language, translations, representations and interpretations.

Two stories are written in Kannada—Pranam’s story entitled *Na Kanda Aghanashini Suggi* (the Aghanashini harvest festival as I have seen) opens with an impressive tableau, showcasing the distinct celebrations and practices of the harvest festival observed by the fishing and farming communities living on the banks of the Aghanashini river in Uttara Kannada. Sowjanya’s photographs accompanied by Likhith’s story titled *Payana: Teeradhinda Doorakke* (Journey: from the coast to beyond) takes on a more lyrical narrative, as they take a short walk on the beach. They capture life and activities on the coast from unconventional angles, and respond with thoughts travelling from the very coast to places beyond the seas.

Murali’s *Divinity of a Pingara* (arecanut flower), Neel’s *Nature and Inclusivity* and Vivek’s *Pili Vesha: A roar to be remembered*, examine local traditions originating in Tulunadu (Tulu-speaking regions of Udupi, Dakshina Kannada and Kasaragod), through their photographic documentation and writing. While Murali chronicles the intricate process of weaving the arecanut flowers—a customary practice among the Havyaka Brahmins; both Neel and Vivek explore the folk dance tradition of *Pilivesha* (tiger masque/ impersonation), pertaining to the communities’ long-established relationship with the local ecology and environment, celebrated irrespective of caste and religion.

Meanwhile, in *Moments that Never Happen Twice*, Mariyam interweaves her stories and images, sensitively allowing the reader into her world replete with memories of her mother. She further uses colloquial words, terms and phrases to familiarise the reader with the Mapilla language spoken in her community living in Kasaragod. Shravya’s *Spaces and Places*, composes images of built and occupied environments affected by the material cultures of her grandmother’s home in Malenadu—along with scenes from Mangalore. She sustains an emotion within these spaces and places throughout her narrative by introducing the reader to familiar everyday objects through the use of Kannada terminologies, along with their corresponding English translations and transliterations.

As the editorial coordinator for this edition, I found the process, the exchange and conversations with each artist a very rewarding experience. There was much to learn from their wealth of knowledge, the freshness each one delivered to these subjects, and their dedication to integrating and experimenting with the different mediums. Having received an eager response to this year’s contest, we plan to continue making this opportunity available to young practitioners on an annual basis. Further, through projects, workshops, talks and collective sharing, we are aiming to unearth parallel histories, rewrite stories, study and document ideas to build an alternate archive of this region for the public to engage in; in the process, growing and evolving as we try to meet the needs and dialogues of the hour.



Shalmali is an artist, curator and writer working between India and the UK. Her research interests include themes of archives, memories and material culture studies. She completed her BVA in Painting from the Faculty of Fine Arts, MS University of Baroda and a MA in Arts and Aesthetics from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. She is a recipient of the Charles Wallace India Trust Scholarship that supported her MLitt in Curatorial Practice at the Glasgow School of Art, Scotland. Working on various projects, she is currently the Project Advisor for Mindcraft Studios, Mangalore; Supporting Producer for Body Remedy, Glasgow; on the Board of Trustees of Outpost Gallery, Norwich; and former committee member of Transmission Gallery, Glasgow. She intends to coalesce her backgrounds in art practice and theory in the production of the curatorial.