

Mapping the

ആത്മഭാഷണങ്ങളുടെ ഭൂപടം

Inner Dialogue

Participating Artists:

Arun Mangala

Chandana Kothambra

Nandana Amba

Sajeesh Pallikkara

Shyam Aramban

15th November to 31st December 2025

gallery 
ekami

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Maps of Memory and the World Within

Mapping the Inner Dialogue brings together five young artists – Arun Mangala, Chandana Kothambra, Nandana Amba, Sajeesh Pallikkara, and Shyam Aramban – each exploring the universe within, where memory, reflection, and imagination converge. The exhibition is less a showcase than a journey: a way to see how art becomes a vessel for unseen experiences that quietly shape our everyday lives, tracing the delicate forms of feeling and recollection that lie just beneath the surface.

Each artist approaches this terrain in a distinct way. Some return to childhood and place, where the textures of everyday life become layered with recollection and imagination. Others create dreamlike landscapes where forms blend and evolve, unsettling familiar objects and giving rise to strange yet coherent worlds. Symbols and surreal figures appear, shaping unspoken fears, desires, and conflicts, while other works dwell on the subtle balance between intimacy and distance, revealing how closeness and separation constantly redefine one another. Still others open windows into the subconscious, drawing on inner dialogues that oscillate between fear and fracture, vulnerability and healing. In different ways, these explorations reveal how memory and forgetfulness, proximity and distance, fragility and strength coexist within the human condition.

What binds them together is a sensitivity to the inner life we all carry, a universe largely unseen by others. Their works trace moments of transformation, charting how emotions shift, how memory endures, and how the unseen finds voice through colour, line, and texture. These are not straightforward maps but layered cartographies, full of detours, crossings, and unseen routes – closer to the drifting rhythms of thought and dream than to any fixed geography. As cartographers of the inner world, they reveal terrains that echo with earth and sky, reminding us that the maps within are always entwined with the world around us.

To step into **Mapping the Inner Dialogue** is to accept an invitation. These works ask us to reflect on our own unspoken maps – the memories tucked away, the fears that rise in quiet hours, the small joys and silent transformations that shape a life. In witnessing the distinct yet connected journeys of these five artists, we recognise a thread that binds them: a terrain of feeling that is intimate yet universal, robust yet enduring, illuminating the unseen dimensions of what it means to be human.



Arun Mangala

Born in Wadakkanchery, Trissur, Arun Mangala is a young artist whose practice engages with the shifting interplay between intimacy and distance. His works often carry an undertone of darkness, with light serving as a metaphor for the dichotomy of human relationships – moments of closeness shadowed by separation, and distance hinting at the possibility of connection.

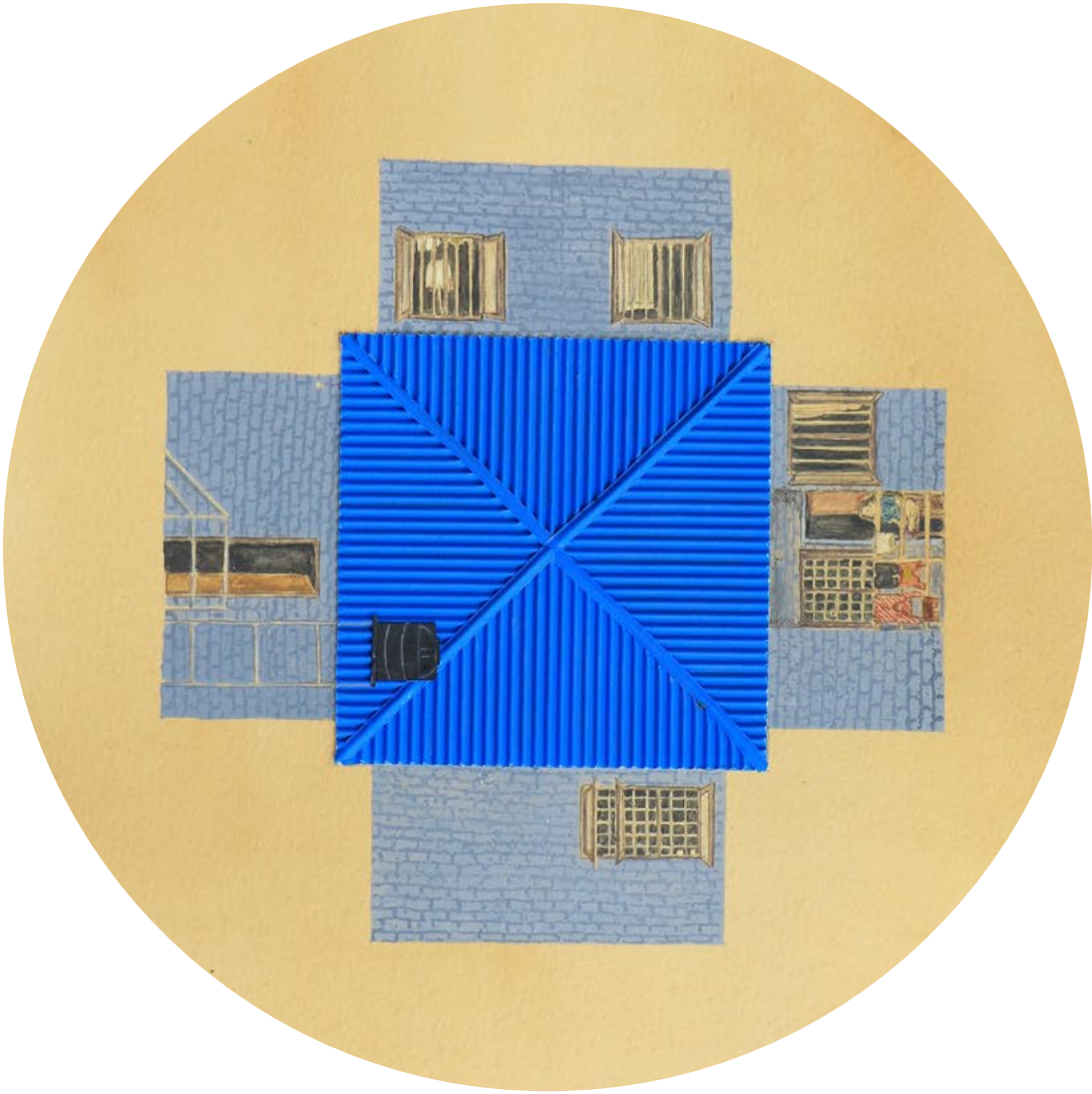
A graduate in Painting from the Government College of Fine Arts, Thrissur, Arun is currently pursuing his first year of MFA in Painting at Visva-Bharati University, Santiniketan. He was awarded the Kerala Lalithakala Akademi Scholarship for 2025–26. His exhibitions include *And I Rise Again*, Kerala State Exhibition 2025 at the Kerala Lalithakala Akademi, Ernakulam; *Niracharthu*, NI-fest 9 National Art Camp Exhibition 2024, Thrissur; *Visualising the First Person* (2023); the *Chola Art Award Exhibition 2024* at Chola Art Gallery, Chalakudy and *Making from the Scratches* (2022), Thrissur. He also participated in *Not What We Seem*, the Degree Show 2025 at the Govt. College of Fine Arts, Thrissur, alongside several camps and workshops that further shaped his artistic sensibility. Arun's practice reflects on the fragile line between proximity and distance, where the structures we create – both tangible and intangible – become defining forces. Boundaries such as walls, doors, fences, or even social codes, operate with paradoxical force: they shelter while they exclude, connect while they divide. In his works, this duality is made palpable, drawing viewers into the friction of human-made separations and opening space to imagine possibilities beyond them.



Chandana Kothambra

Hailing from Kozhikode, Chandana Kothambra is currently pursuing her first year of MFA at RLV College of Music and Fine Arts, Tripunithura, after completing her BFA from the Government College of Fine Arts, Thrissur. Her practice traces the delicate crossings of dreams and emotions, capturing moments of the subconscious and transforming fragmented visions into vibrant compositions. Quite often, she turns inward, using surreal forms and characters to externalise hidden fears, unspoken desires, and inner conflicts. Her works also chart a psychological journey of healing and self-discovery, where symbolic imagery and layered textures evoke metamorphosis as both personal and universal. At the same time, she brings to light the intangible currents that shape human experience.

Chandana has participated in several art camps and exhibitions, including the Chola Art Award Exhibition (2024) at Chola Art Gallery, Chalakkudy; Across Boundaries: Contemporaries Art Show (2023) at Charcoal Art Gallery, Ponnani; Locating Figuration: Our Printmaking Practice (2023) at Govt. College of Fine Arts, Thrissur; Making from the Scratches (2022) at the same institution; Varagreen Interlard 2 Group Exhibition (2022) at Lalithakala Akademi Art Gallery, Kozhikode; and Sneha Varnangal, a group exhibition of women artists at Lalithakala Akademi, Kozhikode (2024). Her creative explorations and experiences underscore the universality of her concerns, offering viewers a space where memory, change, and the unseen dimensions of inner life unfold in vivid, transformative ways.



Nandana Amba

Born in Kakkodi, Kozhikode, Nandana Amba is a visual artist whose practice explores the layered meanings of domestic space. Working across various mediums including watercolour, gouache on paper and ceramic, she reimagines residential structures with a surreal sensibility. Her compositions at times recall the tiny houses along mountain ranges, yet they are transformed through her vision into geometrical spaces that oscillate between the real and the imagined.

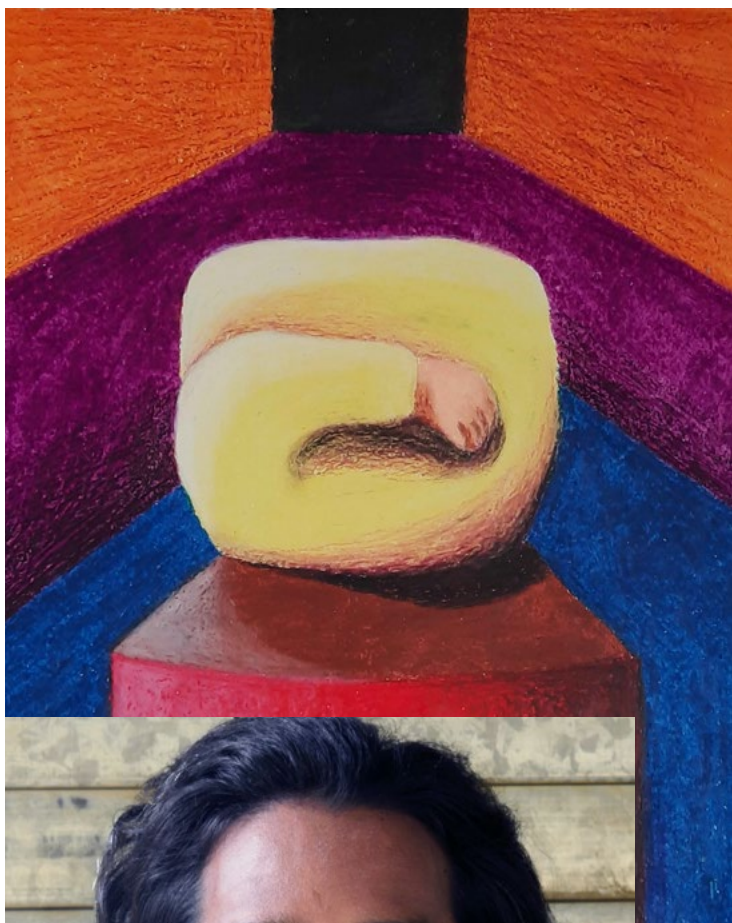
Her work is marked by the perspective she adopts. Instead of portraying the home from within, she often views it from outside, not merely as a silent observer but as part of the intimate, ordinary rhythms of life and the place itself. This position creates a subtle tension, allowing viewers to experience the home both as insiders and outsiders, evoking memories of lived spaces while prompting a rethinking of the borders that define them. In *Inside the Zone*, aerial views of dwellings explore home as a space of comfort, belonging, and transition. It is where innocence gives way to experience, and where ordinary life becomes a record of memory, growth, and transformation. A graduate of the Government College of Fine Arts, Thrissur, Nandana is currently pursuing her first year of MVA in Painting and Expanded Media at the Sarojini Naidu School of Arts and Communication, University of Hyderabad. Her practice underscores how the domestic can be simultaneously ordinary and extraordinary, fixed and shifting, personal and collective.



Sajeesh Pallikkara

The works of Sajeesh Pallikkara unfold like dreamscapes where reality and imagination meet. Animals, plants, and human figures share the same frame, yet rarely remain fixed, assuming new identities. His use of empty space adds depth, blurring the line between the real and the subconscious, and allowing unexpected juxtapositions – predator and prey, or other unlikely pairings, which adds meaning beyond the surface. Familiar objects become strange, yet patterns emerge, inviting viewers to navigate a world that reflects both unconscious impulses and the tensions of society.

Born in Ernakulam, Kerala, Sajeesh completed his BFA and MFA in Painting from RLV College of Music and Fine Arts, Tripunithura. He has received several honours, including the National Award from the Lalit Kala Akademi (2016–17), the Kerala Lalithakala Akademi State Award (2013–14), and the Siddhartha Foundation Award, Kollam (2014–15). Earlier, he was awarded the UNFPA-CMS Art for Social Change Award in New Delhi (2008), alongside scholarships and special mentions from the Kerala Lalithakala Akademi. His works have been exhibited widely, from the Kerala Lalithakala Akademi State Annual Exhibition at Durbar Hall Art Centre, Kochi, to national platforms such as the Lalit Kala Akademi's Cross Country Exhibition in New Delhi. Working with different mediums, Sajeesh creates layered narratives where memory, myth, and social reality converge.



Shyam Aramban

Shyam Aramban's art merges the self and the city in layered, reflective dialogues. His works weave recollection, feeling, and the pulse of life, often dramatised through entwined humanoid figures in surreal landscapes. Shyam's style blends spontaneity with careful execution, using bright colours to capture the tensions of existence. He explores emotional states and the dynamics of interpersonal space, especially in times of crisis. His paintings create an introspective, meditative space where abstraction, figuration, and cultural memory intersect to map shared experiences. Drawing remains central, guiding him into a personal creative realm where art serves as both reflection and release.

Born in Kannur, Kerala in 1994, Shyam holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Painting and a diploma in Visual Communication from Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit, and a Master of Fine Arts in Painting from Banaras Hindu University. He received the National Young Artist Scholarship by CCRT and has exhibited widely, including Kochi-Muziris Biennale, Jahangir Art Gallery, Mumbai, and state-supported solo exhibitions in Lucknow and Kerala. He lives and works in Varanasi.

Shyam has also illustrated Spanish and Malayalam poetry books, and contributed as Assistant Art Director for the Indo-Brazilian films Uma and Echoes of the Silence. His works have been shown both nationally and internationally and are part of private collections in India and abroad.