

PRESS RELEASE

Muziris Contemporary presents *Grammar of Bodies*, featuring works by Latheesh Lakshman and the late C.N. Karunakaran.

Opening: 9 October, 2025 | Muziris Contemporary, Colaba

Muziris Contemporary is pleased to announce its second exhibition, *Grammar of Bodies*, opening on 9 October, 2025 at our newly inaugurated space at 21, Arsiwala Mansion, Colaba.

True to the gallery's rooted identity and contemporary spirit, the show brings together the works of eminent modernist C.N. Karunakaran (1940–2013) and contemporary artist Latheesh Lakshman (b.1979), exploring the enduring presence of human figuration and portraiture across two distinct generations, contexts, and visual languages.

From the earliest cave paintings to the most experimental canvases of our time, the human body has remained art's most vital subject – never only an anatomical study, a vessel of memory, myth, and meaning. *Grammar of Bodies* extends this lineage by placing two distinct voices side by side: Karunakaran, whose figuration drew deeply from Kerala mural traditions and Indian classical aesthetics, and Lakshman, a contemporary artist whose distilled, iconographic forms reframe the body in bold contours and chromatic spaces, reminiscent of design movements like Suprematism and Constructivism.

Karunakaran's practice, forged during a time when Indian modernism was defining itself, merged tradition with reinvention. His archetypal women, rendered with flowing lines, ornamental detail, and an arresting sense of grace, situate him alongside contemporaries such as M.F. Husain in shaping the language of Indian modernism. In Karunakaran's works, ornamentation becomes language, colour becomes musical, and the body becomes a site of transcendence. His canvases evoke both the frontality of murals and the poise of Chola bronzes, while also carrying forward the rhythms of Southern India's performance traditions.

Lakshman, also an internationally acclaimed visual designer who shaped the visual language of the Kochi-Muziris Biennale, approaches figuration with a bold, minimalistic style, a reflection of the times he inhabits. His visual language distills the human form into graphic silhouettes and vivid fields of colour. Deceptively simple meditations on

society, human interactions, and identity, balancing critical depth with beauty and precision –a sensibility perhaps rooted in his lineage of goldsmiths.

Where Karunakaran's figures are suffused with a lyrical stillness, Lakshman's works vibrate with immediacy, at once contemporary and timeless. Together, their works inhabit a shared terrain: the human form as both subject and language, a ground where two generations meet and expression endures.

ABOUT MUZIRIS CONTEMPORARY

Muziris Contemporary is a South Asian art gallery with permanent spaces in Colaba and Fort Kochi-Mattancherry, and an artist residency in Vagamon, a hill station in the Western Ghats of Kerala. The gallery seeks to create a space rooted in identity yet contemporary in spirit, serving as both a platform and catalyst to bring underrepresented art movements, voices beyond the fine art world, and narrative based contemporary practices from the region to the larger art market and beyond.

With a growing presence across key cultural locales, Muziris Contemporary showcases both emerging and established artists, fostering conversations on how cultural histories and influences continue to shape and expand contemporary art practices in the country.

Through its curated exhibitions, the gallery proposes to be a space for engagement, discovery and learning for coddwompling travellers and new collectors alike.

For media inquiries, images, or interview requests, please contact:

indu@muziriscontemporary.com

Ph: +91 8928069236

Instagram: [@muziriscontemporary](https://www.instagram.com/muziriscontemporary)

Website: www.muziriscontemporary.com