

ART

# At Singapore Art Week, an all-women show confronts exclusion

Sundaram Tagore Gallery's show, *A Room Of Her Own*, features Anila Quayyum Agha, Tayeba Lipi, Lalla Essaydi, Karen Knorr, Miya Ando, Neha Vedpathak, Jane Lee and Susan Weil

By Uma Nair

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*Bangladeshi installation artist Tayeba Begum Lipi's 'The Rack I Remember' will be on view at Singapore Art Week*

Sundaram Tagore Gallery Singapore opens the year and Singapore Art Week, 2022 with a show that spotlights 8 pioneering women artists from around the world. 'A Room of her Own' features an immersive large-scale light installation by Anila Quayyum Agha, sculpture by Tayeba Lipi, new work from photographers Lalla Essaydi and Karen Knorr, and paintings by Miya Ando, Jane Lee, Neha Vedpathak, and Susan Weil.

## Room Of Her Own: Politics And Installations



*Anila Quayyum Agha's All the Flowers Are For Me*



Inviting the aura of a spectacle is Agha's immersive light installation, 'All the Flowers Are For Me', a laser-cut, 3 dimensional cube pierced with geometric patterns. When lit, the cube creates 35-foot shadows which allude to the ornamented public spaces Agha was excluded from as a young woman growing up in Lahore. "This project is meant to uncover the contradictory nature of all intersections; which are simultaneously boundaries and also points of meeting," Agha explained in 2017, when her work was shown at the India Art Fair.

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Two works by Bangladeshi installation artist Tayeba Begum Lipi cock an eye on a woman's wardrobe and a pair of stilettos, all created out of stainless steel razor blades. Lipi's 'The Rack I Remember' (seen in the featured image) is at once fragile but rooted in global fashion orientations; the glinting steel blade couture has about it a life that coaxes conversations out of onlookers. Lipi uses blades to speak directly to us about the endemic violence against women in Bangladesh, also referencing tools used in childbirth in the underdeveloped parts of the country.

## Room Of Her Own: Opinionated Images

Two photographers create imagery that is both filled with layers of history and architecture and literature in the works of Lalla Essaydi and Karen Knorr.





### *Lalla Essaydi's Reclining Odalisque*

Essaydi links Arab women's personal histories with segregated spaces. Essaydi's large-scale photographs revolve around the harem, the odalisque and the veil—recurring themes that have dominated the European imagination of the Arab world. Unlike the nude odalisques in Orientalist paintings, the women in Essaydi's photographs are often clad in flowing and formless garments with any exposed skin covered in handwritten Arabic verses.



*The Queen's Room, Zanana, Udaipur City by Karen Knorr*

In her London-based practice, Knorr examines the meaning of place, drawing from ancient myths and allegories. ‘The Queen's Room’, Zenana, Udaipur City Palace, 2010 is a heady jade tinted room with a handsome peacock while ‘Faithful Companion’ at Samode Palace is an image that hints at reincarnation. Knorr employs grand interior spaces of palaces, temples and museums across Asia and Western Europe to frame issues of gender and class rooted in cultural heritage.

## Room Of Her Own: Mediums and Materials

Miya Ando, Jane Lee, Neha Vedpathak and Susan Weil are among the quartet of winsome creators exploring a melange of mediums and materials to create paintings that span the expanse of ingenuity — Japanese paper is favoured as much as fiberglass here.



During the 2020 lockdown, New York City-based American artist Miya **Ando** created a calendar of moon drawings based on her observations of the night sky. The drawings inspired a larger body of work, which she produced using the only materials she had on hand: Japanese Kozo paper, pure silver powder and natural indigo to create an ephemeral context of space and form.







*Sitting In Space by Susan Weil*

The sumptuous paintings created by Singapore artist Jane Lee are often conceived to engage with the surrounding space. For Lee, walls are important—not merely as a backdrop or support, but as an activating space carrying subtle energies and possibilities.



*Neha Vedpathak, Untitled, 2019*

Neha Vedpathak, a Detroit based artist is represented by tactile paintings made from plucked Japanese paper, drawing on imagery formed from explorations of her physical environment. She creates abstracted moody grams with different materials and creates a corollary that incorporate the urban landscape into finely nuanced abstractions that define the beauty of form and finesse in an amorphous aura.

One of the most revisited themes throughout American artist Susan Weil's groundbreaking 70-year career is her exploration of space. Weil fractures the picture plane into different dimensions. In deconstructing and reconstructing images, she invites the viewer to contemplate multiple perspectives in a single gaze.

*Room Of Her Own will be on view during Singapore Art Week, from January 14 to 23, 2022.*

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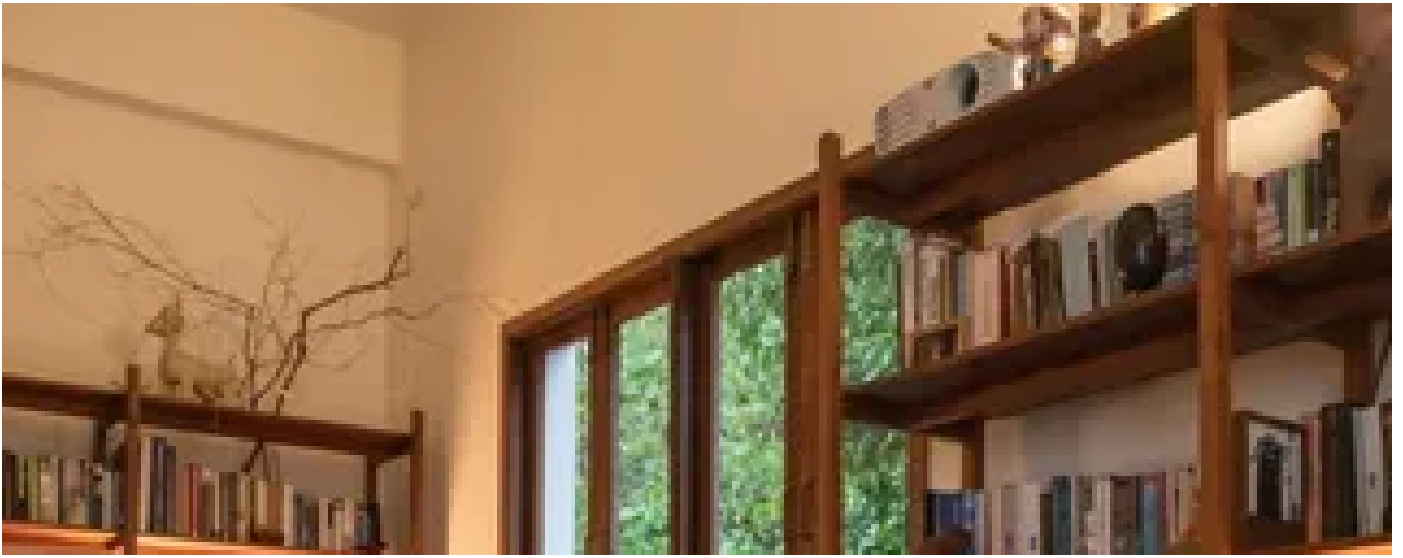
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