

Indian-origin Singaporean artist's work featured in world's deepest art installation

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Singapore, Mar 19 (PTI) Singapore and Japan unveiled on Wednesday the world's deepest ocean art installation comprising three metal cubes designed by the city state's leading Indian-origin artist Lakshmi Mohanbabu.

Deployed 7 km below the sea, the artwork is by Mohanbabu, local tech firm NuStar Technology and Nanyang Technological University (NTU) here.

"Singapore is now the first country to have an art installation 7,000 metres beneath the ocean," said a media release from the three partners in the project.

The historic milestone, part of Singapore's SG60 (60 years of

independence) celebrations was observed on Wednesday at Gallery ART NOW.

A tribute to all those impacted by natural disasters, these artworks were installed near the Mariana Trench off the coast of Japan by NuStar Technologies in December last year, said the release.

Sharing her sentiments about the project, Mohanbabu said, "But beyond art, this project holds a deeper significance. It illuminates global efforts to mitigate challenges posed by natural disasters. While we cannot avert nature's wrath, we can honour those impacted and highlight the collective global efforts to mitigate it."

"The ocean floor installation is a symbol of that collective effort—a reminder of what we can achieve when we come together for a greater cause," said Mohanbabu, a leading artist, architect and leader of the project.

Each of the three hollow cubes is crafted from corrosion-resistant stainless steel, measuring 10 cm on each side. There are five sides for each cube, showcasing the iconic "Universal Language of Symbols" by Mohanbabu.

One of the cubes was made using a new hybrid manufacturing process developed by NTU.

To accommodate the artwork, specially designed cavities and holders were incorporated into the Long-Term Borehole Monitoring System (LTBMS) equipment bay frame.

The LTBMS was originally developed to monitor seismic activity near tectonic plate boundaries and supports real-time data monitoring for earthquake and tsunami early warning systems.

A specialised ultra-deep-sea camera system was remotely deployed from the surface to the ocean depths to monitor the LTBMS installation and capture video and photos of the cubes at record-breaking water depth.

"Art has the unique ability to connect humanity across physical and metaphorical depths. With the Deep Ocean Interactions Project, we aim to inspire meaningful change highlighting our interconnected existence by bringing people together through a shared journey and purpose," said Mohanbabu.

The 56-year-old Trivandrum-born artist was the first Singaporean to send her artwork into space on the International Space Station in 2022.

"The earlier interaction cubes that had orbited around Earth in space will also be sent to the moon as part of a permanent art installation," said Mohanbabu, who is now a naturalised Singaporean.

"With these two art installations, Singapore is the first nation to have

artworks on the moon and the deep ocean. This milestone is also a testament to Singapore's pioneering spirit and tenacity as we celebrate SG60 this year," she said.

(This story has not been edited by THE WEEK and is auto-generated from PTI)