

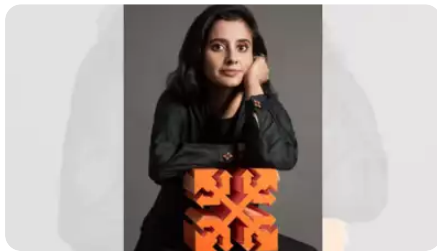
Indian-origin artist Lakshmi Mohanbabu creates world's deepest ocean art installation

TOI World Desk

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Singapore and Japan have launched the world's deepest ocean art installation, featuring three metal cubes by Indian-origin Singaporean artist Lakshmi Mohanbabu. Deployed 7,000 meters below the sea near the Mariana Trench, the project honors natural disaster victims and highlights global mitigation efforts. A collaboration between Mohanbabu, NuStar Technology, and NTU, the installation integrates with seismic monitoring systems.

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Lakshmi Mohanbabu (Image credits: lakshmimohanbabu.com)

Singapore and Japan have unveiled the world's deepest ocean art installation, featuring three metal cubes designed by prominent Indian-origin Singaporean artist Lakshmi Mohanbabu. The historic deployment, which took place 7,000 meters beneath the sea, is a collaboration between Mohanbabu, Singaporean technology firm NuStar Technology, and Nanyang Technological

University (NTU).

Marking a significant milestone for Singapore's SG60 celebrations—commemorating 60 years of independence—the achievement was highlighted during an event at Gallery ART NOW on Wednesday. "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, news agency PTI reported.

The installation, positioned near the Mariana Trench off Japan's coast in December 2023, serves as a tribute to individuals impacted by natural disasters. "Beyond being an artistic endeavor, this project carries a profound message. It acknowledges global efforts to address natural calamities. While we cannot prevent nature's forces, we can honor those affected and highlight the collective commitment to disaster mitigation," said Mohanbabu, an artist, architect, and leader of the project.

"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," she added.

Each of the three cubes, measuring 10 cm per side, is constructed from corrosion-resistant stainless steel and features Mohanbabu's signature "Universal Language of Symbols" across five sides. One of the cubes was developed using an advanced hybrid manufacturing process pioneered by NTU.

To accommodate the artwork, specially designed cavities and holders were integrated into the Long-Term Borehole Monitoring System (LTBMS) equipment bay frame. Originally designed to monitor seismic activity at tectonic plate boundaries, the LTBMS aids real-time earthquake and tsunami early warning systems.

A high-tech ultra-deep-sea camera system was remotely deployed to capture images and footage of the cubes at their record-breaking depth, allowing for ongoing observation of the installation.

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"Art has a unique power to connect humanity across both physical and metaphorical depths. Through the Deep Ocean Interactions Project, we strive to inspire meaningful change by emphasizing our interconnected existence and fostering a shared sense of purpose," Mohanbabu remarked.

This latest achievement follows Mohanbabu's historic milestone in 2022, when she became the first Singaporean artist to send her work into space aboard the International Space Station. She revealed that the interaction cubes that once orbited Earth will also be sent to the Moon as part of a permanent art installation.

"With these two projects, Singapore becomes the first nation to have artworks placed both on the Moon and in the deep ocean. This accomplishment reflects Singapore's pioneering spirit and resilience as we celebrate SG60," she added.▼



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