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PREVIEW

Here and Now

**Sundaram Tagore Gallery
Today-Apr 26**

Art historian Sundaram Tagore's doctoral thesis looks at Indian artists' response to European modernisation from the 1940s to 1980s.

As a curator, however, his focus is more on the here and now. Hence the title of his gallery's latest group exhibition by 18 international artists, which opens today at the Sundaram Tagore Gallery's Hong Kong branch.

A proponent of east-west exchange and intercultural dialogue, Tagore decided to establish a gallery in Asia to help ensure that world art isn't only exhibited in the west. And it is here in "Asia's World City" and through this show by artists hailing from a range of backgrounds, he says, that he aims "to bring people together first and [then] ask the question of what's important now, at this moment".

Through their creations, some artists are questioning what really matters in the wake of the global economic crisis. Tagore considers this development as logical. "Because through art, we question who we are and why we exist in the universe," he says.

Inspired by shanty town dwellers in Mexico City, Bombay and Southeast Asia, Israeli-Uzbeki painter-sculptor Nathan Slate Joseph creates art out of discarded materials such as galvanised steel and tin sheets. His works highlight the usefulness of recycling.

Hiroshi Senju shares a concern for environmental issues and a fascination with water, including (left) *Day Falls/Night Falls VI*. The Japanese painter is preoccupied by the cleansing and spiritual aspects of water. "He creates very powerful imagery of gushing waterfalls, day falls, night falls, in coloured forms," Tagore says.

Themes of spirituality also course through the works of tantric yoga practitioner-cum-painter Sohan Qadri. The Indian artist's works "convey the rhythmic expressions of colour energies".

Abstract expressionist Natvar Bhavsar is another Indian artist whose works have spiritual themes. "He uses paints like granules, dropping paint like a Tibetan mandala painter", says Tagore.

In contrast, American artist Susan Weil looks to represent the state of our world rather than offer up answers to what should be our key concerns. "She deals with the idea of sequential movement in time because the modern age, the 21st century, is all about everything [being] in flux," concludes Tagore. The show's other exhibitors include Stan Gregory, Ken Heyman, Fré Igen, Hosook Kang, Vittorio Matino, Ricardo Mazal, Judith Murray, Bruce Porter, Anil Revri, Joan Vennum, Merrill Wagner, Lee Waisler and Robert Masao Yasuda.

Yvonne Teh

**Opening reception, today, 7pm-9pm.
Mon-Sat, 10am-7pm, Sun, by
appointment, 57-59 Hollywood Rd,
Central. Inquiries: 2581 9678**