

DARSHAN  
A Cultural Gaze



axman  
aelay





Pier 36  
299 South Street  
New York, NY 10002

4 - 7 April, 2024  
11am - 7pm

**Booth # 307**

Recent Paintings by



For enquiries:  
[laxman.aelay@gmail.com](mailto:laxman.aelay@gmail.com)

## “Darshan: A Cultural Gaze”: Recent Exhibition of Paintings by Dr. Laxman Aelay

The power of the gaze, in Lacanian sense, is understood as an intertwined process, where ‘one’s subjective self becomes violated under the gaze of the artist.’ Similarly, with the exhibition title “Darshan: A Cultural Gaze”, Laxman’s artworks offer a complex act of ‘seeing and showing’.

The iconic depiction of woman in his painting series, Poolamma (literally means “mother of flowers”) is a representation derived from a native floral festivity popularly known as Bathukamma which is associated with marginalized communities in Telangana, and now declared as an official festival of the state! The artist sees her as his ‘subject’ and represents her as Goddess using his subjective understanding of his native festivity. Viewers in turn, receive the ‘subjective’ representation by the artist as the act of ‘showing and seeing’. Hence, it is a reciprocal experience just as Drashana, which establishes the gaze, positioning of the subject/object and connection between the viewer and the painting. Thus the depiction of a ‘marginalized’ woman from Telangana as an inferential synonym for the Goddess Bathukamma, is result of artist’s subject-turned-object-turned-subject, where Darshan operates from both levels as a cultural gaze. For him, the idea of femininity and the local deity are two manifestations of one entity. If one perceives, the body of Poolamma as a visual text, it is so evident that how the specific types of decorative/visual elements such as jewelry, clothing, accessories, tattoos, makeup, or other embellishments that are associated with woman from subaltern communities in Telangana are consciously exploited. With these visual and artistic traits, the artist certainly proclaims a distinct cultural identity rather than loud decorative appearance of the physiognomies. Thus, in the process of ‘showing’ the Laxman uses the title Poolamma, similar to Roland Barthe’s ‘anchorage’ to restrict/guide the viewer to decipher the native cultural code as part of the Darshan of the Goddess.

His research delved into the rich tradition of oral and visual narratives known as Kulapuranas (caste-myths) which disseminated ideologies associate with occupational castes using folk and traditional art forms as visual aids. His close engagement with these forms influenced his visual vocabulary, particularly drawing from Deccani traditional art forms like Nakashi and Paithani, and juxtaposing the delicate art forms with rough hands of working class men akin to Van Gogh’s depiction of hands of potato eaters!

## Poolamma: Invoked for Darshan or a Cultural Gaze?

The celebration of life and the profound connection with nature are evident in Laxman’s compositions. Women are portrayed as a ‘being’ in harmony with their environment, representing femininity as a source of sustenance and strength. The textile design patterns, most of the times they are imitable, and are embedded within, demonstrate Laxman’s affinity with the weaving community. “Poolamma” symbolizes the genesis of life and carries infinite semiotic possibilities, capturing the essence of femininity. She is a pride assertion of celebration of matriarchy. She is the embodiment the Bathukamma, Goddess of Life, who appear bold, beautiful, and confident against the abundance of blooming pictorial background, gazing at the onlooker with a sense of accomplishment - like a victorious deity, invoked for Darshan!

Anand Gadapa  
Hyderabad, India.



Poolamma Series  
24" x 24"  
Acrylic on Linen Canvas, 2024  
\$ 3,650





Poolamma Series  
30" x 30"  
Acrylic on Linen Canvas, 2024  
\$ 5,650





Poolamma Series  
48" x 72"  
Acrylic on Linen Canvas, 2024  
\$ 21,700





Poolamma Series  
30" x 30"  
Acrylic on Linen Canvas, 2024  
\$ 5,650





Poolamma Series  
30" x 30"  
Acrylic on Linen Canvas, 2024  
\$ 5,650





Poolamma Series  
24" x 24"  
Acrylic on Linen Canvas, 2024  
\$ 3,650



Poolamma Series  
30" x 30"  
Acrylic on Linen Canvas, 2024  
\$ 5,650





Poolamma Series  
30" x 30"  
Acrylic on Linen Canvas, 2024  
\$ 5,650



Poolamma Series  
30" x 30"  
Acrylic on Linen Canvas, 2024  
\$ 5,650





Poolamma Series  
24" x 24"  
Acrylic on Linen Canvas, 2024  
\$ 3,650



Poolamma Series  
48" x 48"  
Acrylic on Linen Canvas, 2024  
\$ 14,460







Left Myths  
30" x 14"  
Acrylic on Linen Canvas, 2024  
\$ 3,200





Poolamma Series  
14" x 14"  
Acrylic on Linen Canvas, 2024  
\$ 1,500



Poolamma Series  
14" x 14"  
Acrylic on Linen Canvas, 2024  
\$ 1,500





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Acrylic on Linen Canvas, 2024  
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Acrylic on Linen Canvas, 2024  
\$ 1,500



Poolamma Series  
14" x 14"  
Acrylic on Linen Canvas, 2024  
\$ 1,500





### Laxman Aelay

Born in 1965  
BFA., JNTU, College of Fine Arts, Hyderabad  
MFA., JNAFAU, Hyderabad  
Ph.D. in Film Studies and Visual Culture,  
English and Foreign Languages University,  
Hyderabad

### Solo Shows

1999: Images of Kadirenigudem at I.C.C.R. Art Gallery, Hyderabad  
2004: Drawing Show Charismatic Contours, Gallery Threshold, New Delhi  
2005: Song of the Village at Apparao Galleries, Chennai  
2006: Moods and Colours at Fida art gallery, Singapore  
2008: The River Underneath at India Fine Art, Mumbai  
2012: Song of the Village 2, Alliance Francaise, Hyderabad.  
2013: fellow travellers, kalakriti art gallery, Hyderabad.  
2013: fellow travellers, jehangir art gallery, Mumbai.  
2015: Song of the village, New Jersey, USA  
2018: Euphonic Myths, Art exposure, Kolkata  
2019: Weaving the light – A journey through making of Malleshm,  
Chitramayee State Gallery of Art, Hyderabad  
2021: Inked Image, Kadari Art Gallery, Hyderabad  
2022: POOLAMMA, The Goddess of life, Chitramayee State Gallery of Art, Hyderabad  
2022: POOLAMMA, The Goddess of life, Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai  
2023: DARSHAN: A Cultural Gaze, Chawla Art Gallery, New Delhi  
2024: DARSHAN: A Cultural Gaze, Artexpo, New York

## Group Shows within India

1998

- Street Show for Human Rights Commission, Hyderabad

1999

- Contemporary Deccan, A New Generations of Artists at C.C.M.B, Hyderabad

2000

- 7th Annual Group Show at Surya Art Gallery, Hyderabad
- Two Man Show at Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai
- Regional Art Exhibition at Cochin conducted by Lalit Kala Academy

2001

- National Art Exhibition at Ahmedabad conducted by Lalit, Kala Academy

2002

- International Group shows with Indian and Danish Artists CROSS
- CURRENTS in Mumbai, New Delhi, Hyderabad and Chennai

2003

- Hyderabad Artists at India Art Gallery, Pune
- Sarjan Art Gallery, Baroda
- Gallery Ganesh, New Delhi
- National Art Exhibition conducted by Lalit Kala Academy at Cochin

2004

- Sponsored by Art Pilgrim at Indian Habitat Centre, New Delhi
- 1st Anniversary Exhibition Gallery, Sara Arakkal, Bangalore
- A Charity Show Art for Vision curated by Sushma K. Bahl at Ravindra Bhavan Galleries, New Delhi
- Harvest 2004 Art & Poetry Exhibition conducted by Arushi
- Art Gallery at Visual Art Gallery, Indian Habitat Centre, New Delhi
- Hyderabad with Love, an exhibition of Five Artists from Hyderabad presented by Indian Fine Art at Mumbai Art Gallery and L.V.Prasad Eye Institute, Hyderabad and Nehru Centre, Mumbai
- Two Man Show MOODS, Art Alive Gallery, New Delhi
- Black & White, White & Black show at Cymroza Art Gallery, Mumbai
- A Charity Art Show for Passages Art & Soul Art Gallery, Mumbai
- Art for Concern auction conducted by CHRISTIE'S, Mumbai

2005

- STILL WATERS RUN DEEP, January, 2005 Hocienda, Mumbai
- Graphic Port Polio of 20 Artists show organized by Gallery Space, Hyderabad
- Harvest Show at Kalaghoda, Mumbai
- In Short at Hocienda Gallery, Mumbai
- Divine Inspiration show at Hocienda Art Gallery, Mumbai
- Art for Concern Auction conducted by CHRISTIE'S, Mumbai
- Gallery Space, Hyderabad
- Mapping the South at Lalithakala Academy, New Delhi organized by Vinnyasa Premier Art Gallery, Chennai

2006

- Mapping the South at Karnataka Chithrakala Parishath, Bangalore organized by Vinnyasa Premier Art Gallery, Chennai
- Mapping the South at Regional Centre, Lalithakala Academy, Chennai organized by Vinnyasa Premier Art Gallery, Chennai
- Reflections Group show at Art Elements Gallery, New Delhi, curated by Nemiraj Shetty
- Deccan Command at Sridharani Art Gallery, New Delhi organized by Shrishti Art Gallery
- National Art Exhibition conducted by Lalithakala Academy at Bhopal
- Tryst With Telangana Group show at Sarjan Art Gallery, Baroda.



- Sands of Colour, ART N SOUL Gallery, New Delhi

2007

- Deccani Parlance an Exhibition of Drawings by Andhra Artists at Kaleidoscope, Baroda
- Paper-Love India Fine Art, Mumbai
- Beyond Boundaries at Mahua Art Gallery, Bangalore
- Kaleidoscope Organised by Ayya Art Galleries at Kitab Mahal, Mumbai
- Art for Prabhat a Charity Show, New Delhi
- Nouveau at ITC Marriot, New Delhi
- Nouveau at Hyatt Regency, Kolkata
- Nouveau at Leela Kempensky, Bangalore
- High on Hyderabad Organised by Jamaat Art Gallery, Mumbai
- Annual Show at The Sara Arakkal Art Gakllery, Bangalore
- Inaugural Group Show Sounds of the Brush at Gallery Hues, Bangalore
- Inaugural Group Show Figurative Aesthetics at Hyderabad Art Gallery, Hyderabad
- Convergence organised by the Art Pilgrim, Gurgaon
- By The Waves in MES Gallery, New Delhi
- Organised by Art Elements Gallery in Association with BNP PARIBAS, New Delhi
- Oranised by The Galleria, New Delhi

2008

- Group Show of Contemporary Art Symphony of Colours organised by Art Panache & ABN AMRO, Gurgaon
- Colours of Hyderabad at Canvas Art Gallery, Kolkata
- Collection of 37 Indian Artists Awakening the Spirit at the Art, New Delhi
- Contemporary Artist Group Show at Mystic Strokes, Pune
- Deccan Hues at Suruchi Art Gallery, Noida
- Rendezvous Hyderabad at Birla Academy of Arts & Culture, Kolkata
- 4 Ging Ahead at Open Palm Court Gallery, India Habitat Centre, organised by Gallery, Joie, New Delhi
- Odyssey a Group show at Epicentre, Gurgoan, India Habitat Centre,
- Open Palm Court organized by Art Panache, Gurgoan
- Colours of Hyderabad – II at Samanvai Art Gallery, Jaipur
- Across the Threshold at Mahua the Art Gallery, Bangalore
- Windows a Glimpse into Contemporary Indian Art at Prakrit Arts and Ayya Art Galleries, Chennai
- Souls in Surfaces Epicentre organized by Dhoomimal's City Gallery, New Delhi
- Pro/Con – a study in Contrast between Process Art and Conceptual organized by Ochre India USA, Hyderabad
- PRAVAH presents Art PILGRIM curated by ARCHANA B SAPRA, New Delhi
- Rustic Heart group show at Alankrita Art Gallery, Hyderabad

2009

- Entity Group show at The Visual Art Gallery, India Habitat Centre organized by M.E.C Art Gallery, New Delhi
- People and Places at Art Pilgrim, Gurgaon invited by Suneet Chopra
- State Level Art Exhibition at Telugu University on special Invitation
- On High Ground of Indian Art, Eastern and Southern Dimensions at
- Ganges Eternal Art, Bangalore and Samokal Art Gallery, Kolkata - invited by Somadas
- Also in Hyderabad at Studio Napean, Mumbai
- Expressions – Our Times Group Show at Visual Art Gallery, India Habitat Centre, organized by Art Eterne, New Delhi
- Rendezvous Hyderabad Group Show presented by Birla Academy of Arts & Culture, Kolkata
- People and Places Group Show presented by Art Pilgrim, curated by Suneet Chopra Gurgaon
- Deccan Hues organized by Suruchi Art Gallery, Noida
- Expressions – Our Times group Show organized by Gallery Art Eterne at Visual Art Gallery, India Habitat Centre, New Delhi
- Multiversal at Muse Art Gallery, Hyderabad
- Title - 1,00,000 at Hyatt Residency, New Delhi organized by TAD Arts Pvt.Ltd.

2012

- Urban Decay, International Photography Exhibition at Ravi Photo Gallery, Hyderabad
- Art Bangalore
- RESONANCE, at Dhoomimal City Gallery, New Delhi
- ART BEAT, Nirmala Birla Gallery, Modern Art of Hyderabad
- ART FOR CARE charity show, Muse Art Gallery, Hyderabad
- Eclectic Reflections Group Show at Alankrita Art Gallery, Hyderabad

2013

- Strokes for Stripes, sponsored by Aircel – Save our Tigers, Exhibition and Auction
- Kala for Vidya, The Taj West End, Bangalore
- The Collectibles, organized by Dhoomimal.com at Triveni Gallery, New Delhi
- Bulls Group Show at Alankrita Art Gallery, Hyderabad
- Concurrents group show at Alankrita Art Gallery, Hyderabad
- Expressions, A Studio of Contemporary Art, Group Show, Pune

2016

- 'KARA' by Dr. Reddy's Foundation, Hyderabad

2017

- 'NOUVEAUX', Chitramayee State Gallery of Art, Hyderabad
- 'KARA' by Dr. Reddy's Foundation, Hyderabad

2018

- 'KARA' by Dr. Reddy's Foundation, Hyderabad
- World Art Dubai
- MANTHAN at Visual Art Gallery by The Lexicon Art, New Delhi

2019

- 'KARA' by Dr. Reddy's Foundation, Hyderabad
- Art Dias, Chitramayee State Gallery of Art, Hyderabad

2020

- Sanguine, Chawla Art Gallery, New Delhi
- 'Gaja' curated by Nagesh Goud, Hyderabad

2021

- Moods, Moments and Memories by Chawla Art Gallery, New Delhi
- An exhibition of Intaglio

2022

- 'Lagaav' art exhibition by multiple distinguished artists
- Art from Heart 2.0 – A charity show by The Lexicon Art, New Delhi
- Kurma' curated by Nagesh Goud, Hyderabad
- 'Chithram' curated by Annapurna, State Art Gallery, Hyderabad, India
- 'Avatar', Kynkyny art gallery, Bangalore, India

2023

- 'Scale', Gallery Artisera, Bangalore, India
- Functional art show curated by Ratna Rao Sekhar, Hyderabad, India
- 'Spectrum', Arches Art gallery, Ahmedabad, India
- Oorjakriti, Pardarshi Art gallery, Raipur, India
- Madras Art festival organised by Prakrit Arts and Krisala arts, Chennai, India
- Narratives of the Here and Now', curated by Fawad Tamkanat and Atiya Amjad, State Art Gallery, Hyderabad, India
- 'Artix' - India's first hotel art fair, organised by Arushi Art Gallery, New Delhi, India
- 'Out of the Box', Functional Art show curated by Ratna Rao Sekhar, The World, Hyderabad, India.
- 'Small is Beautiful', 105 Arts, Chandigarh, India.
- 'Lines of Insight', Nexus Art in collaboration with Hutheesing Centre, Ahmedabad, India.
- 'Value beyond art show', Organised by The curators art and Artistique, The Oberoi, Gurgaon

2024

- 'The Art of India', An initiative by The Times of India, Curated by Dr. Alka Pande, New Delhi, Mumbai, India.
- 'The News Art Fest', Organised by India Fineart Gallery, Curated by Manvinder Dawer, Laxman Aelay and Bolgum Nagesh Goud, State Art Gallery, Hyderabad, India.
- 'A Black and White Love Story' 105 Arts, Curated by Mehak Bhan, Chandigarh, India



## Art Collections

Padmashri Jagdish Mittal  
Anju Poddar  
Coromandal Fertilizers  
Lanco Industries  
Byrraju Foundation  
Manvinder Dawer  
Many private collections in India and abroad

## Awards and Accolades

1987: BRONZE MEDAL in the Painting Competition conducted by Amateur Artist Association, Nalgonda, Andhra Pradesh  
1993: GOLD MEDAL in the Painting Competition conducted by Konaseema Chithrakala Parishath, Amalapuram, Andhra Pradesh  
1995: Appreciation Award from Hyderabad Art Society Annual Painting Competition

## Films

- Hole - 3 Minutes
- Jatara - The Spirit of Indian Carnival, 9 Minutes
- Patam Katha - The Story of Caste Genealogy, 60 Minutes
- Bathukamma - The goddess of life, 11 Minutes
- Mandahechula Katha - Story Telling for the growth of the Herds, 1 Hour 25 Minutes
- Production Designer and Actor for "Malleshham" 2019
- Production Designer for "8 am Metro" 2022
- Production Designer for "Yevam" 2023



