

Yoga in Contemporary Indian Art

This is a case study of Visual Artist Suresh K. Nair's Covid Contemplations. During Covid, Nair brought his work into small spaces using business cards as his canvas. His work can be seen as a display of yoga philosophy, practicing balance of elements in order to make up the universe; visualizing different limbs of Ashtanga yoga.

Through each card, Nair portrays asana, pranayama, and shunya. His work is about the panchabhutas: earth, water, fire, air, and space. Each card can be seen as a jivatman, seeking its space in the whole, complete paramatman, seen through the coming together of the entire display.

Nair builds a sense of Sangha, or community, through his art, by encouraging the audiences to interact and add to the display.

Nair's work uses eco-friendly, sustainable material which is biodegradable: it is not meant to withstand time; rather, it is in the present, the here, the *now*, teaching us to also be present. Thus, his work introduces the idea of vairagya, or detached attachment: each card can be released individually.

This presentation will include a live, interactive display of thousands of pieces arranged in yogic themes of panchabhutas in asanas and pranayama pieces, and shunya spaces. The presentation will analyze Nair's work along these lines, as well as gender and class.

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