



"Crossing the Bridge" is part of the Revitalization show that will be opening Aug. 6 at Venvi Gallery. PHOTOS BY BRINDA PAMULAPATI

Venvi's silk thread

Brinda Pamulapati gives new life to heirloom sarees in 'Revitalization'

Amanda Sieradzki Council on Culture & Arts

Artist Brinda Pamulapati's fingers pull apart slivers of silk. She carefully places them in long strips on canvas and begins to paint around their edges. A symphony of colors spirals outward from the silver and gold brocaded borders.

These 50-year-old sarees once belonged to her mother and are now the repurposed focal points of her "Saree Series." These mixed-media works will be featured at Pamulapati's solo show, "Revitalization," at Venvi Art Gallery this August.

The title of the show is a nod both to the recycling of a family heirloom as well as her re-emergence from the COVID-19 pandemic's quarantine.

"It is sad that the pandemic has put people at home, made people sick and put the nation in an economic crisis, but it also gave people more time to think through the present state of their lives," Pamulapati says.

"COVID meant having to take breaks and slow down at home, and I revitalized myself and my thoughts. I was given a different perspective of the world, and it gave me time to meditate."

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Brinda Pamulapati poses with her husband, Veernag, in front of 1965: Mixed Media - Acrylic paint, Saree on Board (Kanchi Saree).



Saree series 2: Mixed Media - Acrylic paint, Saree on Board (Kanchi Saree).

Revitalization

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Revamping Venvi's online gallery

The Venvi Art Gallery, like other cultural organizations worldwide, closed its doors for the first four months of the pandemic and cancelled several shows. During that time, gallery owner and founder Pamulapati says that very few people would call to book appointments to see or buy featured artwork.

Together with the help of her husband, Veernag, she brainstormed how the gallery could make the art viewing and buying process easier for all involved. That's when Venvi began to re-vamp their online gallery.

Updates included simplifying the website's interface and adding a viewing room where interested patrons could view the price and size of the artwork. Another feature resizes the work so that it is shown in proper proportion on the virtual "wall" and can give viewers an accurate idea of how it might look in their homes.

"The best part is, we can reach thousands of people, enabling both new and mature collectors to shop from the convenience of their home," says Pamulapati. "If the show is in a physical gallery, we take pictures of the physical gallery and upload. If the show is online, we resize the work in proportion to the wall and curate it online and publish the walls so that viewers can have a proper perspective of the size and can understand how it will look on the wall."

In person shows, online viewing room

Pamulapati says the "Viewing Room" will soon move to a "Current Shows" tab on the homepage of the website, making access to the artwork even easier for online visitors. There will also be a rotating banner that displays every work of art in the show along with its finer details.

Beyond work in the physical gallery space, this virtual pivot has allowed Venvi Art Gallery to be a platform for artists both locally and outside of the Big Bend region. Pamulapati is excited to curate shows that will only exist in the online space.

The gallery will simultaneously host in-person shows like Mark Messersmith's "The Lost Garden of Hesperides" in September.

"We curate the physical space according to how one artwork interacts with another artwork," says Pamulapati. "The artwork will speak for itself and will ask for

If you go

What: Revitalization

When: Opening Reception 5-8 p.m. on Aug. 6
Exhibit open Aug. 6-25

Where: Venvi Art Gallery, 2901 East Park Ave.

Cost: Free

Contact: For more information, call 850-322-0965 or visit www.venviartgallery.com.

where it wants to be, and we try to accommodate that. It's a visual language."

Solo show a celebration in red, yellow

For her upcoming solo show, Pamulapati continues speaking that language by using movement, textures and patterns of acrylic paints. She is also taking the opportunity to branch out with her mixed media work and create dynamic paintings inspired by her upbringing in India surrounded by colorful clothing and fauna.

In a two-dimensional photograph, "Saree Series #4" is a celebration of reds, yellows and blues that build and cascade in shocks of filigree and flowers. In person, Pamulapati incorporates a third, textural dimension by layering the paint so that the canvas becomes just as tactile an experience as feeling the silky saree between fingertips.

Her triptych, "1965," uses the saree in Rothko-like contrast by focusing on big blocks of color bordered by the fabric's vertical and horizontal columns.

Pamulapati says that when she is in the studio working on these pieces, it feels as if she's fallen down a rabbit hole, losing all sense of time and her surroundings. Painting feels different from her daily meditations where she feels wholly present.

In the studio, minutes turn into hours and she finds herself transported into another realm altogether. Continuing on these creative explorations, Pamulapati remains optimistic about the future and her goals for Venvi Art Gallery.

"Learning the business has been an undertaking and learning experience the past six years, and I could only do it because I've had a lot of community support and people guiding me," says Pamulapati.

"The Tallahassee community has so many resources. We want to continue being a platform for artists to be creative and motivate the younger genera-



Brinda Pamulapati's "Saree Series" mixed-media works will be featured at Pamulapati's solo show, "Revitalization," at Venvi Art Gallery this August.

BRINDA PAMULAPATI

tion to pursue art."

Amanda Sieradzki is the feature writer for the Council on Culture & Arts. COCA is the capital area's umbrella agency for arts and culture (www.tallahasseearts.org).