

K. R. Kumaran

Selected Works

PAINTER · ANGAMALY, ERNAKULAM, KERALA

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THE ARTIST

K. R. Kumaran

A dragonfly hovers over cut tree stumps. Ants carry oversized leaves through a landscape of cacti and bare branches. Forests rise above steep red cliffs, while people and animals inhabit the spaces between water, earth and vegetation. In K. R. Kumaran's paintings, the natural world becomes a closely observed and vividly imagined community of life.

Working from Angamaly in Kerala's Ernakulam district, Kumaran places ecological balance at the centre of his practice. His artist statement describes the disruption of natural cycles and its consequences for animals, plants and the wider environment. He approaches this concern as both scientific and cultural, understanding human existence as inseparable from the ecosystems that sustain it. For him, artistic expression carries a responsibility to engage with these relationships through a socially, scientifically and personally committed form of art activism.

His paintings give this outlook a distinctive visual language. Trees gather into dense, rounded clusters; rivers wind between sharply exposed banks; insects, animals and small human figures occupy intricately patterned terrain. Rich greens meet rust-red earth and atmospheric skies. Changes of scale allow a dragonfly, a fish or a leaf to become a commanding presence, drawing attention to forms of life that might otherwise pass unnoticed.

The relationship between abundance and vulnerability runs through these worlds. Luxuriant vegetation shares space with cut trunks, bare trees and exposed land. Human activity remains woven into the landscape: people gather beside rivers, work among plants or fill a schoolyard surrounded by trees. The paintings invite viewers to consider how each part of this inhabited environment depends on the others.

Kumaran studied painting for his DFA at RLV College, Thripunithura, and pursued further study at Karnataka State Open University, Mysore. His professional career includes service as an artist at Kerala Agricultural University, Mannuthy, from 1991 to 2010, followed by work as Chief Artist at the Veterinary College, Mannuthy, under Kerala Veterinary and Animal Sciences University from 2010 to 2019.

A major recognition of his practice is the 59th National Lalit Kala Akademi Award, New Delhi, in 2018. His honours also include the World Wide Art Movement Art Maestro Award in 2018, a Kerala Lalithakala Akademi grant for a solo exhibition that year, and the Sreedarsini Kalaikoodam Star Award, Tamil Nadu, in 2021.

His exhibition history includes a solo show at Durbar Hall, Ernakulam, in 2010 and Reason to Be a Pessimist at the Kerala Lalithakala Akademi Art Gallery, Thrissur, in 2018. He participated in the 59th National Exhibition in New Delhi in 2018 and Lokame Tharavadu in 2021, alongside numerous state exhibitions and group shows. His 2025 programme included Remnants, Ground Forms, Into the Dreamscapes, Uravu, Vaku and Nottam, connecting his work with audiences across several Kerala venues and online.

Art camps and residencies form another part of this sustained engagement. His record includes national painters' camps, a Kerala Lalithakala Akademi residency, flood-relief art activity and painting camps in varied natural settings. His works are held by the Kerala Sahithya Akademi and in private collections.

Across these settings, Kumaran returns to a central concern: the living world is a network of relationships, and its balance cannot be taken for granted. His paintings give that concern a form that can be looked at closely, questioned and remembered.

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Untitled

Animals and tall cacti gather within a dark, densely populated natural landscape. Medium, dimensions, date and price were not supplied. Please enquire for details.



Untitled

A winding river cuts between red cliffs and densely patterned green woodland, with small animals and figures along the slopes. Medium, dimensions, date and price were not supplied. Please enquire for details.



Untitled

A wooded plateau with small animals and figures rises above a red cliff and large hanging flowers. Medium, dimensions, date and price were not supplied. Please enquire for details.



Untitled

People gather beside a broad flowing river, surrounded by steep green banks, patterned trees and animals. Medium, dimensions, date and price were not supplied. Please enquire for details.



Untitled

A richly wooded red plateau rises behind a large wooden structure, with figures and abundant vegetation in the foreground.
Medium, dimensions, date and price were not supplied. Please enquire for details.



Untitled

Oversized fish occupy a world of trees, cacti, flowers and smaller creatures, merging aquatic and terrestrial imagery. Medium, dimensions, date and price were not supplied. Please enquire for details.



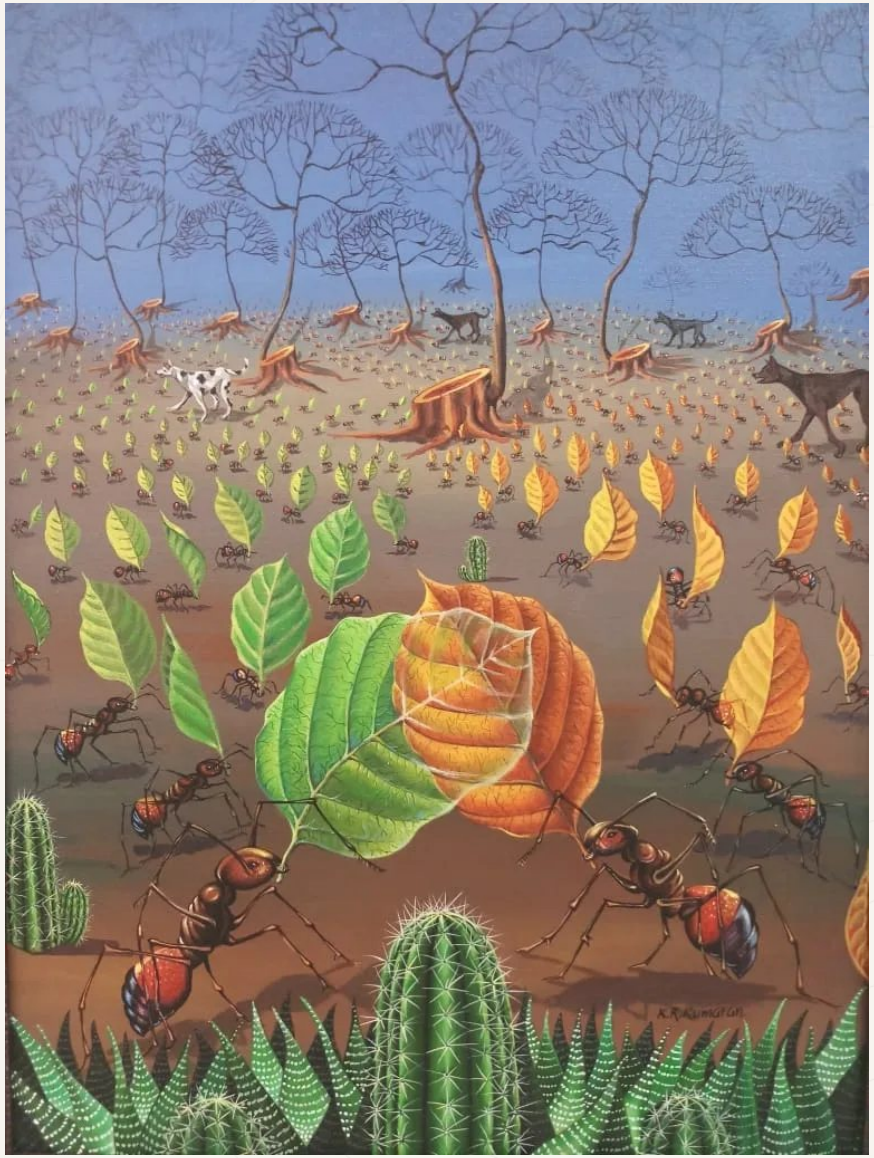
Untitled

A large dragonfly hovers above cut tree stumps and bare trees, with smaller flying insects across a muted sky. Medium, dimensions, date and price were not supplied. Please enquire for details.



Untitled

A school building and a busy gathering of people sit within a broad landscape of trees, rocky hills and small white animals.
Medium, dimensions, date and price were not supplied. Please enquire for details.



Untitled

Ants carry large green and yellow leaves through a landscape of cacti, bare trees and distant animals. Medium, dimensions, date and price were not supplied. Please enquire for details.



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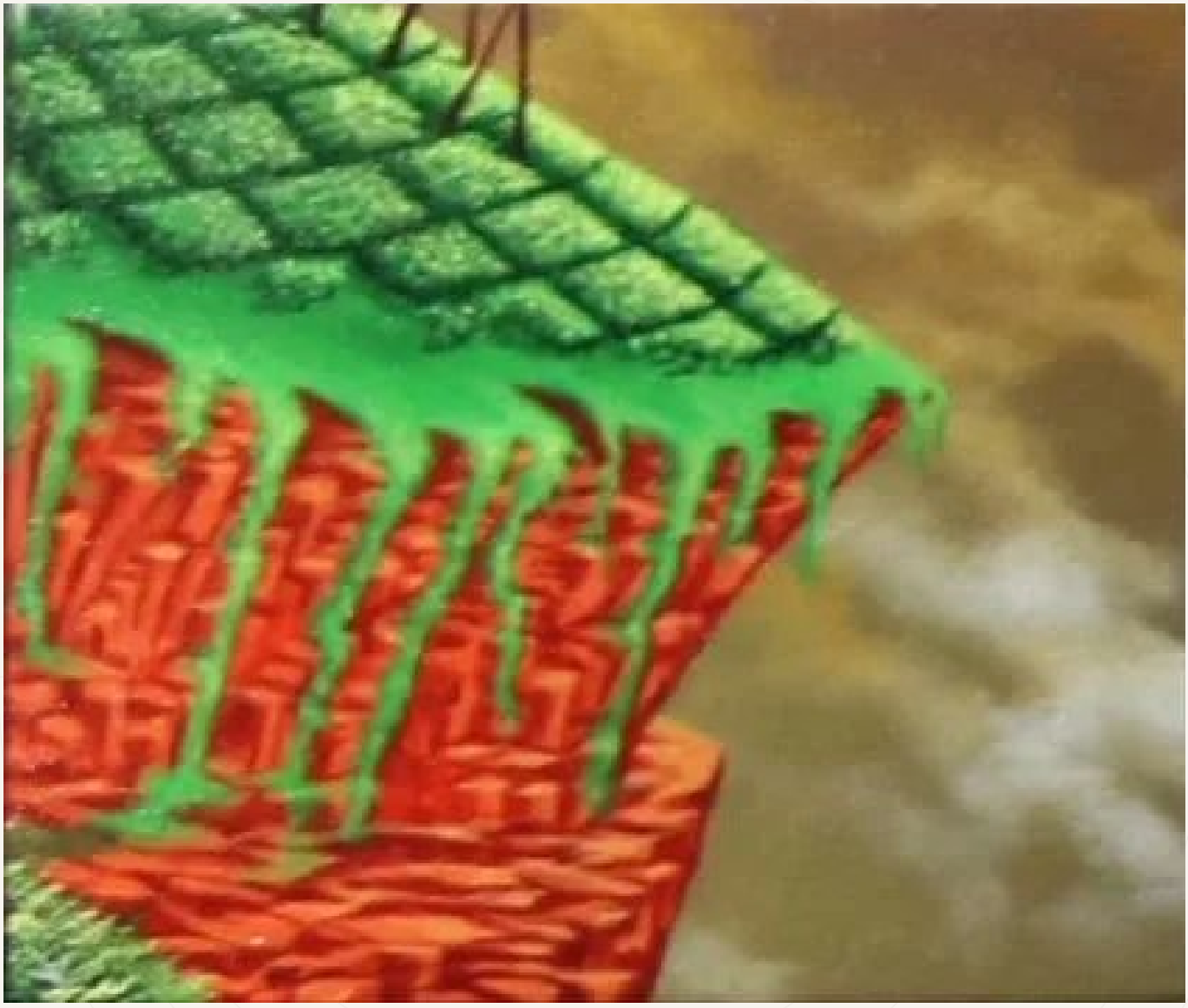
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BY AJI NAYAR

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