

**World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)
Asian Regional Conference, Tokyo (13- 15 January 2003)**
< <http://www.wsis-japan.jp> >

*Round table on Cultural Diversity in Knowledge Societies in Asia and the Pacific
Organised by United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)*

*(10:30 – 12:15, Kohun Conference Room, PAMIR, New Takanawa Prince Hotel)
Chairperson: Abdul Waheed Khan,
Assistant Director General for Communication and Information, UNESCO*

**“Using Cyberspace as an area for new cultural expressions”
by Nisar Keshvani**

- Abstract -

Using a case study approach, this paper aims to showcase various forms of cultural expressions presented in the online galleries of two pioneering arts/science/technology publications. *fineArt forum* (estd 1987) is the longest running arts publication on the Internet, and the *Leonardo Electronic Almanac* is an online peer-reviewed journal published by the MIT Press for the Leonardo Network (<http://www.leonardo.info>)

Artistic expressions in these online galleries are primarily in two areas

- i) Individual exhibitions of work
- ii) Curated works based on a theme or collective works by various artists

Works to be showcased in this presentation include; Filipino Fatima Lasay's Geo/Centri/City's project, Singaporean Choy Kok Kee's 'Amala', 'cybertribe' curated by Australian Jenny Fraser, and 'Trophies of Honor' curated by Jeff & Donna Hand-Lee.

Relevant URLs:

fineArt forum : <http://www.fineartforum.org>

Leonardo Electronic Almanac: <http://mitpress2.mit.edu/e-journals/LEA>

Amala (temporarily housed on ASTN): <http://www.astn.net/amala>

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Good morning, everyone. It is a pleasure to be here to showcase some work as examples and to display cultural expression on the Cyberspace.

Before I present these works, let me first give you a context. These works are part of an online gallery run by two pioneering arts publications. They are:

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- fineArt forum (<http://www.fineartforum.org>): the Internet's longest running arts publication and,
- the Leonardo Electronic Almanac (<http://mitpress2.mit.edu/e-journals/LEA>): An online peer-reviewed journal published by MIT Press for the Leonardo Network (<http://www.leonardo.info>)

The work you will see today mainly come from Southeast Asia.

The first is a curated exhibition by Fatima Lasay from Manila – the Philippines. She together with a group of digital artists & scientists examined volcanoes and seismology issues. Based on an initial field visit and research, they put together *Geo|centr|e|i|city - **The Earth as Center***,

A web-specific exhibition, Geo|centr|e|i|city explores the understanding and direction of cultural exchange via the Internet. As Lasay explains: "A lot of people don't understand or appreciate net art or even research-focused art or collaborative art that takes on sciences and other fields – even among the digital artists themselves."

The Geo|centr|e|i|city Project is archived on fAf's gallery and can be accessed @ <http://www.fineartforum.org/Gallery/2001/geocentricity>

The second kind of work, we have been able to exhibit are individual new media works. This particular piece is by Singaporean Choy Kok Kee – he is a pioneer new media artist.

His work is called **Amala** (temporarily housed @ <http://www.astn.net/amala>) and based on Consciousness Studies ... and the ninth state of consciousness. This work will accompany the Leonardo Electronic Almanac's special issue edited by Patrick Lambelet themed 'Consciousness Studies, East & West'.

Choy combines very interesting imagery and sounds based on consciousness with interactivity. Notice, the shapes and intensity of sound re-act to where your mouse is placed and its movements. Let me leave this for a moment, for you to absorb.

Since we have a bit of time, and our various panellists today have mentioned indigenous cultures and expressions. This is also an area we are interested in, let me show you what is available online:

'Trophies of Honor' is a well-received showcase of American Indigenous artistic expressions curated by Jeff and Donna Hand-Lee.

'cybertribe' is another online exhibition curated by Australian Jenny Fraser. It is a combination of work by various indigenous artists.

I hope this short presentation in some way has displayed that though the Internet & cyberspace has indeed crossed geographical boundaries, in many ways, there is plenty of room for cultural expression & is a very important area that should be supported.

Thank you!