

Prameya Art Foundation

Presents

A Time for Farewells

Curated by Premjish Achari

On View till 10th August 2019

Atul Bhalla | Gigi Scaria | Julia Christensen | Markus Baenziger | Michal Martychowicz | Omer Wasim | Sumedh Rajendran | Tushar Joag | Vivan Sundaram | Zoya Siddiqui

The youth are waiting, day after day. They wait for their time; as do the workers, even the old. They all wait, those who are discontented and who reflect. They are waiting for a force to arise, something they will be part of; a kind of international that will not make the same mistakes as the previous ones. They wait for a chance to get rid of the past once and for all - for something new to begin.

We have begun.

- Anonymous

There is a common saying in the leftist circles which is attributed to the seminal theorist Fredric Jameson, but he has actually recollected what was shared by someone else, which goes like this, "It is easier, to imagine the end of the world than the end of capitalism: and with that the idea of a revolution overthrowing capitalism seems to have vanished." Nevertheless, the left has largely resigned to a fatalism by losing its courage to fight for large abstract goals, to launch counter-attacks against the empire, and lacking the imagination to think of a political programme or utopia. Instead, a tragic politics has replaced the agile vanguardism of modernity. The Enlightenment's people have been locked behind with an apologetic attitude. Post-modernism's outcome has been the intellectual thought of "no-futurism" surrendering to the fate of the impending catastrophe. The future is cancelled is what they say.

The remains of the future lie in the ruins of modernity, unfulfilled and unrealized, buried beneath the debris of its disastrous course, waiting to be excavated. In the beginning of the 20th century there was collective hope about a different tomorrow; humanity believed that we were progressing towards a future awaiting us with the open doors of a technologically determined paradise. The historical force of progress, like that speeding train that was carrying us to the distant land of emancipation and advancement, was fuelled by wars, machines, and speed as the Italian Futurists claimed. Nonetheless, during the first quarter of the 20th century, hope in the future shattered with two cataclysmic world wars; subsequently, humanity woke up from the nightmare of "progress." The future was dead and from a future oriented society humanity has moved ahead, charting its journey nurtured by two imaginations. One is fuelled by the nostalgia for a distant past, the good old days, which were pristine and authentic: a paradise lost forever in our attempt to modernize ourselves. The second is a cautious imagining of the future as a modified version of the present, rather than a radically different world.

How have we abandoned the future so easily? What happened to the dreams of the new world of no-work, cosmic communism, afro-futurism, and the post-gender liberation? These dreams still seem possible with the

developments in automation, progress made in medical technologies to alter gender and sexual identities, and with the advent of copyleft and open-source platforms. Are we ready to forfeit the game? This exhibition attempts to create a constellation of views on the future. Rather than offering a recipe for the politics of the future, my vision establishes some ground rules to rethink time, future, history, and life. The visions offered here are indexical of the antagonisms and the contradictions to showcase the multiplicity of imaginations about the future and the history of the idea.

The future is not cancelled.

References:

- Sarah Resnick, *Speculations ("The Future Is ----")*, 2015.
- Nick Srnicek and Alex Williams, *Inventing the Future: Postcapitalism and a World Without Work*, 2015.
- Lee Edelman, *No-Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive*, 2004.
- Peter Frase, *Four Futures*, 2016.

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