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Transhuman Saunter: Multispecies Techno-Entanglements in the Brisbane City Botanic Gardens

Creative Producer: Kavita Gonsalves. Artists: Agapetos Fa'aleava and Natasha Narain

TransHuman Saunter is a digital geolocative artwork created in Brisbane on the Indigenous land of the *Turrbal* and *Yuggera* people. It involves four women artists of colour who invite one to saunter alongside the “non-human” Indian Banyan tree. The project deploys participatory design as a research method. It uses digital media such as audio, images, and poetry to reflect on ecology, mythology, social, cultural, postcolonial, and personal narratives creating an accessible space for unknown histories. The artists are Agapetos Fa'aleava of Samoa, Lan Thanh Ha of Vietnam, Naputsamohn Junpiban of Thailand, and Indian-Australian Natasha Narain. Creatively produced by Kavita Gonsalves, the iteration for the Conference on Memory at COVA focuses on Agapetos' and Natasha's work in the form of a combined performative presentation. Agapetos' work explores her relationship with the Banyan Tree through the traditional Samoan tattoo called the Malu- shelter/protection. The malu's motif is a map of her ancestors navigating through the ocean to find land and opportunity. Like the Banyan tree, the malu has travelled far and wide to settle on Australian soil. Natasha's work offers a polyphonic pilgrimage invoking the earth goddess of Bengal while exploring the colonial history of botanical gardens, trade, and indenture, revealing memories etched into barks and speaking for the tree as having feelings and forming new friendships. The works contribute to pluralistic ways of knowing through an evocation of unseen narratives: the “lesser”-beings and the “non”-beings. The project is accessible via a smart phone or a computer on <https://research.qut.edu.au/morethanhuman/projects/thsp/>

Kavita Gonsalves is an architect, design strategist and PhD Candidate with QUT Design Lab. In her research, she focuses on using low-tech augmented reality and interactive storytelling as tools for marginalised communities to engage in creative placemaking. She is the Creative Producer of TransHuman Saunter.

Agapetos Fa'aleava is a PhD Candidate within the Creative Industries at the Queensland University of Technology. She is an independent Brisbane-based *Pasefika* Producer and a proud Samoan woman. She creates stories using film, still images and her voice to reimagine her ancestors' journey.

Natasha Narain is an Indian Australian visual artist and PhD candidate with the School of Creative Practice at QUT. Passionate about her maternal heritage of the Kantha (narrative embroidered quilts from Bengal) ideas of cultural continuity, a re-examination of history from feminist and indigenous lenses parallels her creating new work in multiple mediums.