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https:// acuadsconference.com.au/ transhuman-saunter-the-other-tree-the-other-human-and-other-

TransHuman Saunter: The *Other* Tree, the *Other* Human and *Other* Stories of a City.

Natasha Narain, Agapetos Aia-Fa'aleava, & Kavita Gonsalves.

ACUADS 2022 Conference | Public Pedagogy: forms of togetherness.

In the TransHuman Saunter project, the *other* activates the streets and the city botanical gardens at Meanjin/ Brisbane. They develop multispecies storytelling centred around South Asian, Banyan (*Bangad*) Trees and make these stories accessible via geolocative technology. The *other* here refers to four women of colour as artists who create a place and a sense of belonging by nurturing their relationality to the Banyan tree. Thereby counteracting intersectional marginalisation while also imparting agency to the Banyan, usually seen as a nonhuman resource.

The project opens multiple portals from culturally diverse standpoints of Samoa, India, Vietnam, and Thailand, woven with visuals, stories and sound as the creatives and the audience engage in wayfinding and pondering. These portals connect multitudinous presents with the past, layering cultural, historical, colonial, feminist, spiritual, artistic and ecological themes into a pluralistic and collaborative work.

The project created participatory processes to overcome the isolation and silencing of the COVID-19 pandemic. Technology helped to situate artists' works in various locations and to

interconnect and weave together a robust and emerging commentary of *other* histories with audiences, domestic or afar. A viewer can journey to these sites and be surprised by new and multidisciplinary interpretations, accompanied by technological activations that blur the physical and the virtual, the human and the nonhuman. The project contributes to *other* ways of knowing: the trees become sites for connecting and gathering multiple interpretations and stories while encouraging cyclic returns.

In this presentation, Natasha (India-Australia) and Agapetos (Samoa-Australia) present vignettes of their portals, combing through sections of the walks guided by the Bangad/ Banyan with Kavita presenting a project overview. The presentation will mix and remix storytelling and performance with theoretical perspectives to deliver an experience of togetherness.

The Transhuman Saunter is accessible via a smartphone or a computer at: https://research.qut.edu.au/morethanhuman/projects/thsp/

Biographies:

Natasha Narain is an Indian Australian visual artist and PhD graduand in 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 creation of new work in multiple mediums.

Agapetos Aia-Fa'aleava is a PhD student in 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.

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.