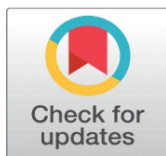
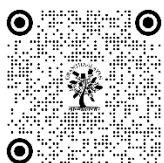


# CONTEMPORARY INDIAN ART FOR THE ANTHROPOCENE ERA: TAKING CHARGE OF A DYING PLANET

Anukriti Bajpai <sup>1</sup>  

<sup>1</sup> Guest Faculty (NCWEB), Mata Sundri College for Women, University of Delhi, India



**Received** 22 April 2022  
**Accepted** 01 July 2022  
**Published** 04 July 2022

## Corresponding Author

Anukriti Bajpai,  
[anukritibajpai98@gmail.com](mailto:anukritibajpai98@gmail.com)

**DOI**  
[10.29121/shodhkosh.v3.i2.2022.124](https://doi.org/10.29121/shodhkosh.v3.i2.2022.124)

**Funding:** This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

**Copyright:** © 2022 The Author(s). This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

With the license CC-BY, authors retain the copyright, allowing anyone to download, reuse, re-print, modify, distribute, and/or copy their contribution. The work must be properly attributed to its author.



## ABSTRACT

This paper analyses how contemporary Indian art responds to the Anthropocene, an era marked by heightened impact of human actions on earth. It seeks to re-establish the role of humanities and arts in the face of an impending disaster by using the theoretical framework of Critical Posthumanism and Anthropocene Studies. Eco art engages with the current critical and philosophical debates on the Anthropocene, catering to the emotion of people and making them sensitive towards the concerns of the Anthropocene, at the same time paving the path for a more sustainable future. The first section of the paper analyses the sculptures and exhibits installed at India International Centre in January 2020 under the title “We are still Alive: Strategies in Surviving the Anthropocene”. A careful analysis of these installations shows that they speak volumes of meaning directly striking a chord with the observers. The second section analyses another form of visual arts which is comics. Rohan Chakravarty’s Green Humor for a Greying Planet is the perfect example of how humor and visual arts can combine to entertain, educate and initiate a big change. Along with Visual arts other formats like Music can also prove to be an essential medium of dealing with the Anthropocene. The third section analyses the Music of a Delhi-based artist Rafoo and how it responds to the Anthropocene. The aim of this research article is to provide critical observations on how artists can take charge to protect a dying planet.

**Keywords:** Anthropocene, Visual Art, Critical Posthumanism, Music, Indian Artists, Eco Art

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Art has always been an essential medium of strengthening our response to the situations of crisis. What makes visual arts so powerful is its ability to convey more than the ordinary forms of communication. Writing about the transformative neurocognitive effects of art, [Preminger \(2012\)](#) remarks, “Art is a medium of inducing experiences. Artistic experiences can be a vehicle to convey meanings, a way to provide pleasure, or means for self-expression and communication. Every artwork leads to a mental experience by the observer, participant, or experiencer.” (p. 1) Art has a transformative potential, and this potential has been used by many artists to talk about issues of importance.

One of the biggest issues that the world is dealing with right now is Climate change and environmental sustainability. The means of engagement with issues like these have always been based on data, statistics, and scientific interventions. Visual arts tread this space in more of an emotional realm. The hardwired programming of humans to solely rely on data to deal with issues like these, has been significantly challenged by visual arts for Anthropocene. According to an article published in *Scientific American*, “scientific information, no matter how solid, is unable to persuade a good many people of the reality of climate change. At the same time, we’re finding that less objective (and less scientifically valid) types of information can affect people’s views” [Art Makes Environmental Change Real \(2014, January 24\)](#). For this reason, visual arts as a medium to deal with crisis, is not only practiced by artists but also by scientists.

This paper engages with different forms of artworks produced in India that play a part in dealing with the monstrous consequences of the Anthropocene era. It analyses comics, music, sculptures, and other artworks as being a potent source of change.

## 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: CRITICAL POSTHUMANISM AND ANTHROPOCENE

[Braidotti \(2013\)](#) defines “the critical posthuman subject within an eco-philosophy of multiple belongings, as a relational subject constituted in and by multiplicity”. (p. 49) Critical posthumanism sees the human as a relational being embedded in a networked system with fluid subjectivities. Accepting a critical posthumanist subjectivity is essential if we want the negative effects of the Anthropocene era to stop. The Anthropocene era is the time where human activities start to have a significant impact on the planet. According to [Steffen et al. \(2007\)](#), “Human activities have become so pervasive and profound that they rival the great forces of Nature and are pushing the Earth into planetary terra incognita. The Earth is rapidly moving into a less biologically diverse, less forested, much warmer, and probably wetter and stormier state.” (p.614) Critical posthumanism urges us to rethink human subjectivity and redefine ways of being as our response to the crisis brought in by the Anthropocene era. One thing to note about the Anthropocene is that it is not a sharp shift from the previous era. Humans have always moved towards modernization and development and contributed significantly to the activities of the planet. The intensity with which it is happening now and the life-threatening impact of it is what is worrying in the Anthropocene era. In the words of Julietta Singh, “While as a species and as individuals humans have always been “biological actors”—creatures whose presence affected their environments—we have now emerged as a geological force that is changing the basic functions of the planet.” (p. 19)

Critical posthumanism decentres the human as being the power centre. It goes against the idea of man as the master and believes that man is not a self-sufficient being and depends on organic and inorganic forms. This philosophical current is at the core of the idea of responding to the Anthropocene through visual arts. Environmental sustainability, Climate change, Ecological disasters and the Anthropocene are the topics that have not only engaged scientists and climate change activists and environmentalists but also artists. The framework of critical posthumanism and the realization of the approaching epoch of the Anthropocene is what leads to the production of eco-art. India has also seen a rapid surge in the production of visual arts that fall in the category of eco-art and respond to the Anthropocene. This paper includes an analysis of these visual arts.

Critical Posthumanism and Anthropocene Studies not only influence eco-art but also provide it with the much-needed theoretical base. The installations in the India Art Fair 2020, the music produces as a response to the Anthropocene and Rohan Chakravarty's Visual humour, the three texts analysed in this paper, are inspired by the idea of a shared planet, and advocate a relational subjectivity. In simple terms, visual arts clubbed with the philosophical and theoretical currents of posthumanism and Anthropocene studies, emphasize the ideology that every life form is embedded in an inter-dependent system and the humans need to get off the pedestal of superiority and embrace this idea as soon as possible to make this planet liveable and stop it from the seemingly inevitable decay. This is what eco-art communicates, through its influential form, to save a dying planet.

### **3. ROLE OF ECO-ART FOR A DYING PLANET**

According to [Weintraub \(2012\)](#), "artists typically serve the needs of their contemporaries. In the past, art has awakened devotion in times of spiritual unrest, and it has aroused protest in times of suppression. Now art innovation is including utilitarian strategies regarding pollution, resource depletion, climate change, escalating populations, and so on, because the strategies that sustain us are threatened." (p.6) Eco art gains a new importance in the context of a progressively decaying planet, as artists attempt to tread the space which environmentalists, scientists, legislators, and other experts cannot. The work of these artists is centered on the realization that we have approached the Anthropocene. Eco artists, through their art, give the world a hope that art can help us visualize the path to a more ecologically sound and sustainable tomorrow through a variety of styles spanning from critical enquiry to practical exhibitions and blending into other current propensities such as social praxis, relational aesthetics, eco-activism, and operational research.

Eco art offers us multiple perspectives to view at a problem and opens doors to look at the situation objectively and to come up with workable creative solutions. By widening our debates and providing alternate and practical means of re-doing our everyday acts, the eco art plays a critical role in re-thinking new modes of adaptation and involvement. Eco art when combined with critical posthumanism and Anthropocene studies, narrates stories of othering, of those who have been left unattended, of silence and cries, of those who have been ignored or purposefully suppressed, stories not just of human but beyond human. Creativity offers knowledge and insight to travel into the future fully prepared.

### **4. WE ARE STILL ALIVE: STRATEGIES IN SURVIVING THE ANTHROPOCENE**

Planned and envisioned by Dr. Arshiya Lokhandwala, *we are Still Alive: Strategies in Surviving the Anthropocene*, was a sculpture exhibition at the India International Centre curated in 2020. It involved Delhi artists who had the first-hand experience of dealing with the Anthropocene by experiencing Delhi's polluted air and water. These issues were addressed as a public art project. This was an initiative of MASH Sculptural Space founded by Shalini Passi. The project was a call for action for the people to channelize their energies to bring about the necessary changes in this urgent crisis while we can. Today, we are in the middle of the most serious global catastrophe in history, one that will determine our fate.

The title of the exhibition, *we are Still Alive: Strategies in Surviving the Anthropocene*, has a certain immediacy to it which reflects the immediacy of the responding to the Anthropocene which is a result of unmitigated exploitation of the natural resources by humans. The urgency in the title carries the spirit and demand of a quick action. It is almost like a wake-up call and a sigh at the same time, undoubtedly packed with optimism for change, but requiring concerted efforts towards it. "We are still alive", in the undertones says that we are soon going to die but at the same time carries the possibility of reversal of the impending doom. "Strategies in surviving" also tell that it has gone down from living to surviving, this fight is for the bare minimum. It is a fight for survival which adds to the intensity of the crisis of the Anthropocene era.

One of the sculptures exhibited as a part of this project was *Songs of the Street* by Anita Dube (Figure 1). Her sculpture was inspired by the French poet Charles Baudelaire's poem *Les Fleurs du Mal* broadly translated as "The Flowers of Evil". The sculpture was a red coloured flower skeleton that was a representation of lifeless, hollowed out flowers with their pistils hanging out of their skeletal body like fangs of a snake. The sculpture was a representation of anger, exasperation, and rebellion by nature towards a neoliberal, globalized world order that is being ruled by inhuman capitalism in turn leading to ecological destruction. The strangeness of the sculpture is what makes its message more pressing. The use of the colour red for the sculpture added to the emotion of anger and rebellion that she wanted to portray. The snake fangs are a symbol of the presence of poison showing how industrialization is poisoning the nature. The choice of colour and materials used by the artist become very important here to convey the message it wants to convey. Red colour is a symbol of anger and the use of metal wires to carve out the skeletons adds to that anger. The metal wires give the sculpture a complex caged appearance. This appearance itself is a call for freedom from the confining shackles of modernity and capitalism. In spite of using metal wires, the artist manages to give it an elastic, flexible look which is the opposite of mechanical and structured. This shows the presence of life which needs to be protected in this era. Nature striking back is also a critical post humanist idea which questions the human for having disturbed the complex web of co-dependence on which all life exists. This sculpture represents a critical post humanist questioning of the Anthropocene.

Vibha Galhotra, another contributor to the exhibition, gave her message through the sculpture of two concrete slabs with a nest stuck in the middle (Figure 2). Her sculpture was a representation of how nature slips into manmade structures but at the same time is hindered and pushed into nothingness. The concrete slabs which were grey in colour and had nothing extraordinary and fancy about them were a representation of the dryness and darkness of the human developmental projects and the nest stuck in the middle represented a source of life seeping in through the concrete. The use of space in this sculpture becomes very important to analyse. The concrete slabs are congested in a small space representing the lack of space for all the species to co-exist and the habitat destruction of various species. The nest appears to be almost breaking through the concrete slab to find its way. It can also be seen as a fight for existence, almost muted. The idea of the world as a shared space is what lies at the core of critical posthumanism. It calls for a sustainable and shared existence where there is enough for every living organism and humans do not occupy the centre stage. Like, the title of the exhibition, this sculpture also carries within it an element of hope. It gives a hope that nature can find its way through human acts of violence but at the same time emphasizing on an urgent need of action.

**Figure 1**



**Figure 1** Anita Dube, *Songs of Street*

**Source** Taken from exhibition at the India International Centre on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2020 curated by Shalini Passi Foundation; MASH

**Figure 2**



**Figure 2** Vibha Galhotra, *Bird Nest in Concrete*

**Source** Taken from exhibition at the India International Centre on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2020 curated by Shalini Passi Foundation; MASH

Achia Anzi's sculpture *Artist's Breath* (Figure 3) was the most interesting sculpture in terms of generating curiosity and interest. It involved exhibits in an

exhibit, which made it an almost meta-theatrical experience. The exhibit involved class boxes like that in a museum carrying everyday objects for display. The innocence of the objects that masqueraded as expensive exhibits was what created an impact in that artwork. The objects included watering cans, washing boards used in the old times and other objects that almost looked as if staring and waiting for functionality by water. The artwork was a humorous representation of the future where these quotidian objects would turn to non-functional exhibits giving insights about how the planet was, to the future generations. It represented a planet that would be devoid of water and probably civilization in order to cultivate a fear and a need for action in the people who see it. In terms of the formal aspects of the sculpture, it has a very minimalistic look. The artist uses plain white narrow boxes with class. It gives an appearance of a museum which is preserving ancient antiques those are one of their kind. It represents how these everyday things will only be found in museums and will be the last remains of the world we inhabit in the present. It shows the world after the Anthropocene where humans would have lost all they had aspired to gain. It shows the darker side of modernity which our species might encounter if we reject a critical post humanist way of being.

**Figure 3**



**Figure 3** Achia Anzi, Artist's Breath

**Source** Taken from exhibition at the India International Centre on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2020 curated by Shalini Passi Foundation; MASH

**Figure 4**



**Figure 4** Arun Kumar H.G., *Timeline of Backwash*

**Source** Taken from exhibition at the India International Centre on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2020  
curated by Shalini Passi Foundation; MASH

**Figure 5**



**Figure 5** Ravi Aggarwal, *have you seen the flowers on the river?*

**Source** Taken from exhibition at the India International Centre on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2020  
curated by Shalini Passi Foundation; MASH

Other artworks in this project involved Arun Kumar H.G.'s *Timeline of Backwash* (Figure 4) and Ravi Aggarwal's *Have you seen the flowers on the river?* (Figure 5) Both these exhibits presented a story spread across time. H.G.'s sculpture, an architectural representation of trees made out of reclaimed wood, represented the changing times. He emphasized the scarcity of resources like sunlight, water, and air which

the human's thought were forever free. The commodification of these resources and their conversion into the products of a capitalist structures shows how monstrous the Anthropocene can be. Apart from this, the tectonic trees also represent a hybrid of organic and inorganic forms. This hybridity is a visual representation of critical posthumanism where the boundaries between the organic and the organic blur giving way to a fluid existence. The use of the colours black and brown almost intermingling with each other contribute the representation of this hybridity. The colour black is associated with machinery while brown is the colour of soil, of trees, of nature. The mechanical and structured form of the trees and the absence of leaves signals towards a future where the inorganic might take over the organic. This is kind of future we must be worried about.

Aggarwal's series of pictures presented a timeline of Marigold flowers which are grown in abundance, serve a religious and festive purpose, end up in water bodies to pollute them and serve their final purpose of acting as debris. This shows the life cycle of pollution raising an awareness about the need to stop it. It shows how the planet has just become a dumping ground for our waste in the Anthropocene era. It also calls for attention towards our innocent everyday activities that do not have positive consequences. It calls for going beyond what seems every day and normal to see how it impacts the planet we live on. This mutual caring of species is what critical posthumanism asks for.

## 5. VISUAL ARTS AND HUMOR: GREEN HUMOR FOR A GREYING PLANET

Rohan Chakravarty's collection of comic strips titled *Green Humour for a Greying Planet* [Chakravarty \(2021\)](#) is one of its kind. The book uses visual art and humour for communication and conservation. Chakravarty's book shows that art does not police issues but provides a ground to engage creative and critical thinking to get at a solution. It is said that what cannot be conveyed directly can be conveyed through humour and sarcasm. This is what Chakravarty makes use of. His book is like a huge comic joke-book which deals with many pertinent issues of the time. His detailed and satirical view on the Anthropocene era provides an ease of approaching the topic and conveying complex issues with maximum effect. Through art and humour, he deals with issues like Climate change, global warming, pollution, depletion of resources and Covid-19 among others. Chakravarty believes that animals, birds, and nature as a whole can teach us the art of sustainable living. He raises awareness about pressing topics of the day using his unique tools of art and humour.

His graphics are not only engaging but easy to understand. They almost have children's comic feel to them. He does not attempt to make his characters feel life like. His cartoons convey way more than realism. He uses animal characters like penguins and frogs and makes them speak in his comic strips. Visual Humour proves to be a great strategy for Chakravarty to initiate discussions on ecology, survival, and change-making. His approach of using cartoons and humour almost alienates the reader to convey more than what is portrayed. One of his comic strips includes penguins who comment on global warming, giving a first-hand experience. He generates humour by creating a pun on different penguin breeds which are Royal, Emperor, King and then showing them hardly being able to balance on a melting iceberg. The penguins remark that there is nothing emperor like, king like or royal about this feeling. [\(Figure 6\) Chakravarty \(2021\)](#) At the literal level, it is a commentary on climate change and rising temperature that is one of the most devastating consequences of the Anthropocene. At a deeper level, by creating a pun



---

on the words that are power symbols and which humans have somewhat bestowed upon the other species through the process of naming, again putting them in an authority position, it actually shows the powerlessness of humans when viewed through a critical post humanist lens. Human activities are leading towards the end of their own species, the acts of gaining power become the acts of losing it completely. This is what critical posthumanism stands for, a shared existence and not an ignorant, all-powerful state of complete superiority.

In another comic strip, he shows a seagull mesmerized by the “pristine greenery” of the place it is flying above from, only to realize later that it is Antarctica. (Figure 7) This comic strip is a commentary on the people who still think “climate change and the Anthropocene are just media hoaxes and youth delusions.” Another comic strip shows the conversation between a duck and a tortoise where they discuss about a plastic straw and its use. (Figure 8) When the duck tells the tortoise that it is meant to suck drinks, the tortoise mockingly remarks that he thinks it is actually made to “suck the life out of this planet”. They refer to the human as an advanced parasite, “an evolutionary marvel” that has a special device to suck. This comic strip is more than just being a sarcastic commentary. It captures the true spirit of critical posthumanism. It mocks the self-aggrandizing label of “evolutionary marvel” that humans have proudly owned from the time of Renaissance Humanism. To top this, it calls the human a parasite which is considered to be the lowest of species. Carrying the critical post humanist spirit, it puts the human down from the pedestal of a master-subject and a superior bring to show how in the era of Anthropocene, humans are disturbing the complex relationality of beings in a networked system for their selfish interests.

This collection of comic strips is too vast to be discussed exhaustively within the scope of this paper. But one thing that is common to all comic strips is the anthropomorphizing other species. Although, this in itself is an act of imposing authority but what it does is actually give agency and voice to the species which get undermined in the Anthropocene era. Animals speaking for themselves and mocking humans, unlearns and rethinks the arrogant centring of humans under a liberal humanist ideology. It shows a shift from liberal humanism to critical posthumanism. It shows a shift from a self-righteous, arrogant state of being to a more relational, co-dependent state. These comic strips thus not only offer a witty, tongue in cheek commentary on the Anthropocene but are also fairly critical post humanist in their approach.

Visual arts also call for a discussion of the formal elements of the work. This work resembles old-school comic strips with a focus on the “funny” aspect of it. The work has been thematically structured into eleven chapters ranging from Climate Change to Human-Animal Conflict and The New Normal in the Covid Era. His focus is on keeping it simple and yet effective. He does not use unnecessary jargon, crowded panels with complex visual ideas and sad metaphorical monochromes. Most importantly, he does not preach. By giving a very casual, breezy look to a serious topic, he takes away the seriousness of it and lets the readers focus on the way forward. He uses bright colours, clean panels with ample space, casual font and basic drawings and shapes to convey the message. This gives the topic a certain everyday-ness and makes it easily approachable. It gives a lot of headspaces to actually think about the topic rather than spending that time in understanding the visuals.

Figure 6

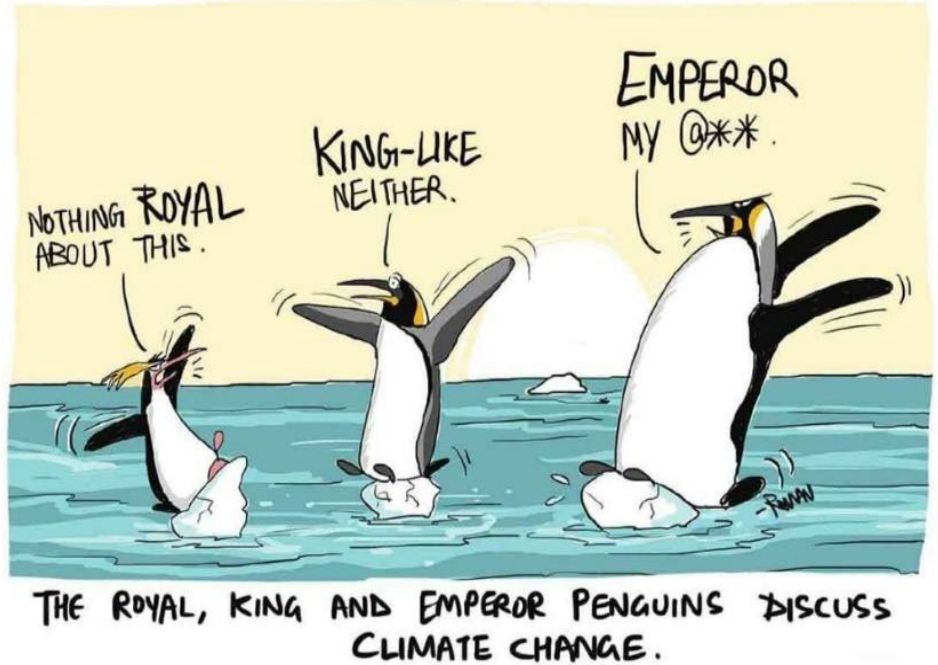


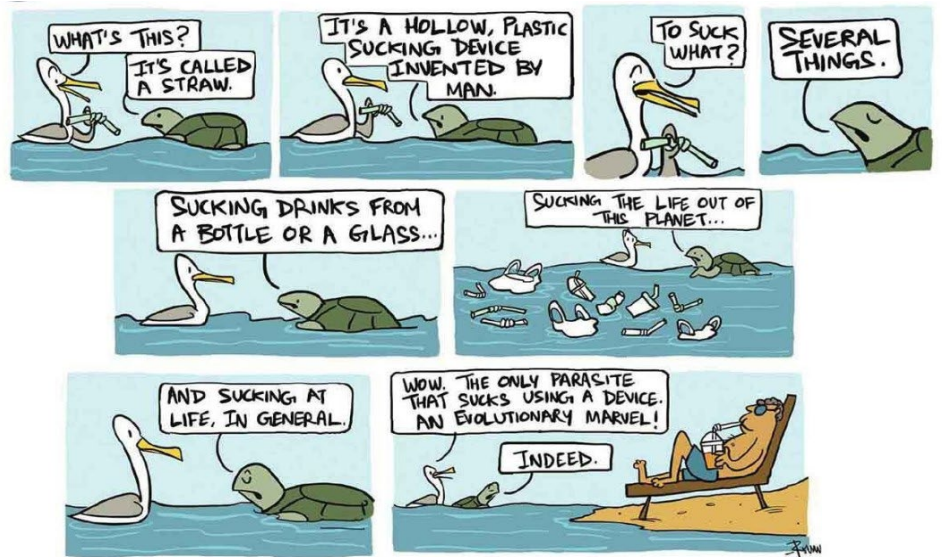
Figure 6 Retrieved from e-version of Green Humour for a Greying Planet by Rohan Chakravarty, comic strip no. 33 pg. no. 32  
Source [Chakravarty \(2021\)](#)

Figure 7



Figure 7 Retrieved from e-version of Green Humour for a Greying Planet by Rohan Chakravarty, comic strip no. 32 pg. no. 32  
Source [Chakravarty \(2021\)](#)

Figure 8



31

**Figure 8** Retrieved from e-version of Green Humour for a Greying Planet by Rohan Chakravarty, comic strip no. 31 pg. no. 31

Source [Chakravarty \(2021\)](#)

Chakravarty offers a creative and different perspective to look at the problem. Art here becomes a tool for easing out the tension and the same time creating an urgency of action. He uses visual art and creative imagination to give a direction to our current unsustainable ways of being. This is way of expanding our conversations beyond science and data to reach a point where our mind can capture the emotional aspect of it and actually come up with tangible solutions. Presenting case-studies on how comics have changed the mindset of children on the ecological front, an article written for Economic Times remarks, "By providing information in a more accessible way, these studies highlight the potential for eco-comics to increase environmental literacy and promote conservation." [The Economic Times \(2022\)](#) Art, in any form, is the way to bring about a change in the world and offer alternative ways of restructuring the world.

## 6. PERFORMING ARTS: MUSIC

Emotion management can be done either outwardly by taking action or inside by using logic. Playing, singing, or writing songs are all activities that can be used to consciously absorb feelings and life experiences. Music stimulates cognitive processes by eliciting ideas and imagery in listeners. In a discussion of Art for Anthropocene, Music holds a very special role due its ability to not just influence but completely move the person experiencing it. Music generates extensive emotional responses because of the beautiful amalgamation of sounds and words. Music feeds the soul. One way music makes such a huge impact is because it does not work in isolation but in relation to something. According to an article published in Teacher's Climate Guide [Singh \(2018\)](#), "Experiencing lyrics or music doesn't happen in a vacuum but in the wider cultural and communal context. A critical approach to

environmental issues can be activated and consciously adopted when listening or making music.” Music’s impact is such that it can change the way we view the world.

In the Indian context, Climate Change and Anthropocene music is being produced by Rafoo, a Delhi based singer, songwriter, and producer. Her debut single *Gaia* Singh (2020) and its companion piece *Anthropocene* Singh (2021) are a commentary on rampant capitalism and its negative consequences on the planet. For an article in First post Gurbaxani (2021, February 1), she shared that *Gaia* “is a commentary on capitalism and its exploitative consumption of nature and the proletariat. And also, on my relationships.” Talking about *Anthropocene*, she remarked, it is “one part an expression of my exasperation with the status quo and onepart, a slice of my turbulent mind”. Both these tracks comment on a world order that is exploitative and makes the human vulnerable. Her music is borne out of anger and helplessness for where the world is going and a desperation for the need of a co-dependent critical post humanist subjectivity.

*Gaia* is the Greek Goddess of Earth, mother of all life. The title of the track itself carries a certain sense of longing for the past, a nostalgia for what is lost, a tribute of sorts. It takes us back to the time when the lyrics of such a song wouldn’t have made sense. She chooses the name very wisely to refresh the memory of a pure untainted world in the mind of the listeners before dealing with what is to come. The title of *Anthropocene* is fairly direct. It is for a time when human activities have almost destroyed the planet and changed it beyond repair. *Anthropocene* represents an era where *Gaia* wouldn’t dwell anymore because Anthropocene signals a loss of life and earth. Both these songs, thus, work together as companion pieces signalling a shift, a change, a journey that earth has covered and reflections of both the past and the future while commenting on the present.

*Gaia* is also a theory given by James Lovelock in 1979 that proposes that Earth is a massive structure that has to keep the basic conditions for the sustenance of life constant. This theory justifies man’s indifference towards the planet and goes against the very grain of the Anthropocene. Although, Bondi (2015) looks at it differently. He remarks,

Lovelock “believes” in *Gaia* and therefore believes in the ability of Mother Earth to restore the constantly threatened balance using her “children,” the living beings that proliferate on her surface. Hence the term “*Gaia*”, which refers to the pre-Greek cults in which the Earth was deified. (p.131)

Rafoo’s Music, however, puts human under the question mark for a decaying planet. Filho (2011) writes, “both Lovelock’s ‘*Gaia*’ and Crutzen and Stoermer’s ‘*Anthropocene*’ convey the sense of a co-evolutionary process engaging ecological and human-social systems at global scale.” (pp. 83-84) Rafoo’s music and the production of two companion pieces by with these titles might also be suggesting a co-evolutionary subjectivity as discussed under posthumanism.

A part of Rafoo’s *Gaia* goes like, “You breathe in all your poison, Keep faking you’re illusioned.” (Singh (2018)1:04) This is a clear warning to human beings especially the people at the centre of exploitative capitalist structures to take responsibility and own the situation that these structures have led the planet into. Carrying great music by Rafoo and powerful lyrics by Tarang Singh, the song further goes, “You said you’d change, but you’re all the same” (Singh (2020), 1:44), again emphasizing the need for change and the unacceptable delay in the process. The opening of *Anthropocene* which starts with “Take what you want, you had what you needed, walking around, a king undefeated” (Singh (2021), 0:55), is a commentary on how the people in power are still not realizing the immediacy of the situation and the need to accept and mend. Taking the example of a Dog who has been taken to

the park to play, she ends the song with a foreboding of monstrous future where there will be no grass for the dog to run and fetch.

Her dark style, minor chords and dead-pan style of delivery is what makes her songs so relevant to the current state. The Anthropocene, like her songs, is also associated with greyness, gloom, darkness, and monstrosity. Music doesn't only please the ears but reaches the heart and then the soul. It inspires and makes us aware of our own feelings. The things that a scientific language cannot communicate effectively can be conveyed through music. Dana Da Silva (2013), in an article written for the *Africa Renewal*, remarks, "the combination of the right lyrics, rhythm and instruments can build a group identity, stir strong emotions, engage audiences, and amass people to take action. This makes music the perfect partner for social change." Music for Anthropocene has a transformational power and Rafoo's music plays a part in bringing about that change in the Anthropocene era.

## 7. CONCLUSION

The examples dealt with in this paper are just some of the many interventions being made on the ecological front by artists in India who have taken this upon themselves to not just raise awareness but to offer alternate ways of being in this Anthropocene era. The critical post humanist philosophy underlying the work of all these artists provides an alternate form of subjectivity where humans realize that the world belongs to them as much as it belongs to other million species in this webbed existence. In an article written for The Medium, Ashley Zukowski (2018, May 15) remarks,

"Art creates empathy. I believe art is one of the strongest ways to make society see injustices and, consequently, to make a change. People come together for art, no matter their backgrounds, political ideologies, or religious beliefs. In this coming together, there are opportunities for research, learning, raising awareness, persuading, communing, and mobilizing for change."

Art caters to the emotional aspect of dealing with a crisis. It might not offer to-the-point practical solutions, but it channelizes the moving power of colour, sound, and creativity to create a farther-reaching impact and to leave an indelible impression on the minds of people who engage with it. In the debate of reason and emotion, reason tells us what the problem is, but emotion gives us the inspiration to move forward. Keeping this in mind, both are equally important to fight the negativities of the Anthropocene era. This paper in no way attempts to demean the power of science, data, statistics, and reason. It rather puts forth the idea that art shouldn't just be seen as a means of pleasure. It can prove to be an important medium to deal with issues of world importance. If art and science, logic and emotion, data and colours work together in harmony then the world would be better prepared to deal with the Anthropocene.

## CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

None.

## REFERENCES

- Art Makes Environmental Change Real (2014, January 24). Scientific American. New York : Munn and Co.
- Bondi, D. (2015). Gaia and the Anthropocene; or, The Return of Teleology. *Telos*, 172, 125–137. <https://doi.org/10.3817/0915172125>.
- Braidotti, R. (2013). *The Posthuman*. Polity Press.
- Chakravarty, R. (2021). *Green Humour For a Greying Planet*. Penguin Books.
- Filho, W. L. (2011). *The Economic, Social and Political Elements of Climate Change*. Springer.
- Gurbaxani, A. (2021, February 1). The Groovebox Jukebox : From Semwal's elephant in the room to anthropocene by Rafoo, music for the New Year-art-and-culture news, Firstpost. Firstpost. Retrieved April 22, 2022, from <https://www.firstpost.com/art-and-culture/the-groovebox-jukebox- from-semwals-elephant-in-the-room-to-anthropocene-by-rafoo-music-for-the-new-year- 9253151.html>
- Preminger, S. (2012). Transformative art : Art as means for long-term neurocognitive change. *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience*, 6. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fnhum.2012.00096>.
- Silva, D. da. (2022, April 22). Music can change the World | Africa Renewal. United Nations.
- Singh, J. (2018). *Unthinking mastery : Dehumanism and Decolonial Entanglements*. Duke University Press.
- Singh, T. (2020). Gaia [Rafoo]. On Album Gaia.
- Singh, Tarang. (2021). Anthropocene [Rafoo]. On Album Anthropocene.
- Steffen, W., Crutzen, P. J., & McNeill, J. R. (2007). The Anthropocene : Are humans now overwhelming the great forces of nature. *AMBIO : A Journal of the Human Environment*, 36(8), 614-621.
- Teachers Climate Guide (2018, March 7). Climate Change and Music. Retrieved April 22, 2022, from <https://teachers-climate-guide.fi/music/>
- The Economic Times (2022). Comics Influence Behaviour Change, Prove Helpful In Disseminating Info on Health And Green Issues. Retrieved April 22, 2022. From <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/magazines/panache/comics-influence-behaviour-change- prove-helpful-in-disseminating-info-on-health-and-green-issues/articleshow/89456724.cms>
- Weintraub, L. (2012). *To life ! Eco art in pursuit of a sustainable planet*. University of California Press.
- Zukowski, A. (2018, May 15). The world changes through art, but can art change opinions ? Medium. Retrieved April 22, 2022, from <https://medium.com/hecua-offcampus/the-world-changes-through- art-but-can-art-change-opinions-582acc3e7697>
- Zukowski, A. (2018, May 15). The world changes through art, but can art change opinions ? Medium. Retrieved April 22, 2022, from <https://medium.com/hecua-offcampus/the-world-changes-through- art-but-can-art-change-opinions-582acc3e7697>