

“Aquarius” by Janavi Mahimtura Folmsbee

About the Artwork



“Constellations in the night sky remain a constant through time and art. The same is true for the fish in the seas, and all the other flora and fauna in our oceans, all of which have been depicted in art for millennia. No matter where I am traveling in the world, the familiarity of the night sky and the world underwater is something that comforts me and keeps me grounded. These constants are the same for everyone around the world. To me, they make every new place I visit feel connected to the others in big and important ways.”

“For this tunnel, I want to create a space that reflects the way all of us are internationally connected. This is a work of art that also reveals who I am as a global citizen: a proud Houstonian, a worldwide scuba diver, a marine conservation artist, and a woman who was born and raised in Mumbai, India. The title of the work comes from a constellation in the very night sky that connects us all, the water-bearer named Aquarius.”

“Aquarius is a multidisciplinary sensory installation inspired by the title itself. By taking the word “Aquarius” and breaking it down, I read “aqua” for water, I see the Hindi word “Humari,” which translates to “ours,” and then of course the word “us.” Aquarius speaks passionately about how water is ours and for all of us. That is my mantra and the very concept behind this installation. The tunnel is a space that will showcase multiple artistic techniques through a vibrant explosion of color. It also will be educational. Upon walking past the title Aquarius, travelers are transported into an aquarium tunnel, a visual and sensory experience with one-of-a-kind original works of art. The design is inspired by the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary right off our Texas coast in Galveston Bay. To welcome visitors, the word “aqua” will appear in multiple languages, in vinyl lettering, strategically

placed by the Terminal D doorway. This welcoming gesture for all to understand is intended to remind us how we are all connected through water.”

About the Artist



Janavi Mahimtura Folmsbee wants to live in a world where everyone can experience the beauty of the ocean. Folmsbee draws inspiration from scuba diving all over the world. She was born in 1987 and raised in Mumbai, India, in a home overlooking the Indian Ocean. In 2005, she moved to the United States and graduated from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago (S.A.I.C) in 2009. She currently lives and works in Houston. As an international artist, Folmsbee has shown her work in India, Beijing, Europe, Dubai, and the United States. Her works have been featured in international fairs like Kunst Rai, Art Rotterdam, The Indian Contemporary Art Fair, Texas Contemporary Art Fair, Arte Dubai, and in print media such as *Harper's Bazaar* (Malaysia edition), *The Times of India*, the *Houston Chronicle*, *Houston Modern Luxury*, and *Verve* (India), along with television interviews on ABC News and KRPC Houston.

Folmsbee has been creating large fine art murals. Works like *Rail To The Sea* are landmarks that can be found on Google Earth, some are even Poke Stations on Pokemon Go. Her public works also include an important commission from the Red Cross Society in Mumbai, India.

Folmsbee's current work continues to grow and evolve into a series related to marine conservation. She works with marine organizations such as the Galveston Bay Foundation, Correa Lab of Rice University, Mar Alliance, and the Coral Restoration Foundation to help the fight to preserve our oceans. Recently she has created work that is used in scientific papers and is being published in the *Global Change Journal*. The work will be used in further scientific labs for research and will be studied by Doctoral students in universities all over the world. Her interdisciplinary art practice allows her to bring her work to broad audiences and educate them about the marine world. She engages the general public through her official artwork for the 2019 Houston Chevron Marathon, the NFL 2017, and the FIFA World Cup 2024