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...han and Perween
...ered citizens of
...ainted by Sanki in
...inclusivity, a vision
...Karachi Biennale.

KB17 opened its
of 140 artists from
accessible venues
the Karachi Biennale
artist and visitors
five experiences of

an outreach initiative
periences for art by
their own mohallas. In
ception, Karachiites
on of over 20 reels
s, schools, heritage
the Karachi Zoo, the
Museum.

...itized the spirit
...ing and has been
...ive partner. Kudos
...s of the Karachi

challenges of such a widespread project.

The heroes of this project are the artists, architects and designers who have worked gratis to transform the reels with their creative imagination. Several of them dismantled the reel to re-construct it into complex functional designs while others chose to make it their canvas and transfer ideas with colours and texture.

The act of witnessing the Reel on Hai project evolve has had many dimensions. It has led artists and communities to come together to take ownership of public art, the concept of recycling used reels has spurred ideas that we hope will take on a life of its own. The reels have given visibility to parts of Karachi, that had somehow become excluded due to the city's recent tumultuous history.

Just as electricity cables connect Karachi, *Reel on Hai* with its widespread art has begun to give the city a new cultural map of connectivity.

Nilofur Farrukh



With a population of over 22 million, Karachi is home to a very ethnically diverse population. It has grown in size from a small harbour town to a mega city after the independence of the country to accommodate a large displaced population. Today it is a cultural microcosm of the country, as historically it has opened its arms to all who are drawn here by the opportunities it offers.

Based on a large gallery culture, Karachi boasts a vibrant art scene. It is the aim of KB17 to take this art out of the white cube space into the public domain.

The one object that connects a megacity built on layers of diverse ethnic, cultural and class demographics is the cable reel that provides energy to the millions living here.

Following its mandate to reach out to at least 20% of the city's population, the Outreach Committee of the KB17 has set out to recycle the reel that holds these cables into artworks. Artists, designers and architects have responded to an open call, sending in proposals to transform this industrial waste product into art with creativity and innovation.

The reels have been placed all over the city from Gulshan-e-Maymar to DHA Phase 8, and from Orangi town to the Karachi Zoo. Artists have worked on site engaging local communities, paving the way for open ended discourse.

These artworks have transformed spaces by infusing character into the area and instilling a sense of pride and ownership among residents. With this project, Pakistan Cables and KB17 have been successful in creating an active art scene around Karachi and promoting social connectedness and common experiences that are instrumental in community building.

Masuma Halai Khwaja

