

# SHRINE EMPIRE

## Vanity Fair

Recent works by Tayeba Begum Lipi  
Curated By Anushka Rajendran

SHRINE EMPIRE, D – 395, Defence Colony, New Delhi - 110024

PREVIEW: 28 January, 6 pm onwards

ON VIEW: 29 January – 2 March, 2019

### **About the exhibition:**

Tayeba Begum Lipi's recent body of work that is part of 'Vanity Fair' addresses the irony embedded in the commodification of art, especially, art that represents movements that are staunchly critical of the economic circuits that they are likely to traverse. Known for her feminist art practice that has over the years called into question the brutal ways by which overarching patriarchal structures have confined women, and subjected them to physical as well as psychological violence, the artist is also self-conscious of the way her own work, as well as the work of other explicitly political artists are being subsumed and appropriated by the logic of the capital in an art context that is undeniably yet to shake off deeply rooted sexism. While the presence of such work is subversive in itself — to be seen, recognized and heard — making emancipatory dents in the system, this exhibition goes a step forward in acknowledging the toxic masculinity that is easily able to appropriate and divert resistance movements to its own benefit. And art is not alone. This logic of technocratic late capitalism seeps into civilian movements as well. In the current context that we occupy, who is able to completely ameliorate cultural production to a position where it is completely untouched by the neo-liberal patterns of production and consumption that unconsciously inform our thoughts, behavior and aspirations? The exhibition is an introspection of this conundrum. During 'Vanity Fair' the gallery becomes a shop, in the most literal sense of the word. Come, browse for a brand of resistance.

### **Artist Bio:**

**Tayeba Begum Lipi** (b.1969, Bangladesh) is a visual artist, who through a creative range of media explores feminist issues of marginality and representation of the female body, addressing societal contradictions, often questioning the sexual stereotypes that dominate women's lives around the world.

Tayeba's significant group shows include Taiwan Asian Art Biennale 2017-2018; Kathmandu Triennale 2017; 2017 Asian Art Biennale Taiwan; 'Art Festival WATOU', Belgium 2016; 'SONSBEEK 2016' at Arnhem Museum, the Netherlands; 'Frontiers Reimagined' a collateral exhibition at Venice Biennale 2015 at Museo di Palazzo Grimani; 'CiCLO (CYCLE)' at CCBB Sao Paulo, Brasilia and Bello Horizonte, Brazil; 'No Country' at Guggenheim NY, Asia Society

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Hong Kong Center and CCA Singapore; Colombo Biennale 2012; 14th Jakarta Biennale and 54th Venice Biennale in 2011.

Lipi has had solo exhibitions at Sundaram Tagore Gallery, NYC; Bengal Gallery, Dhaka; Shrine Empire, Delhi; Pi Artworks Gallery London and Istanbul. She most recently had a retrospective at the Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum, Michigan, USA Lipi was awarded the prize at the 11th Asian Art Biennale in Bangladesh 2003, Dhaka. She was the commissioner of the Pavilion of Bangladesh, 54th Venice Biennale and has curated exhibitions and festivals such as 'The Memoirs' at Kuandu Museum of Fine Arts in 2017; Kathmandu International Art Festival (KIAF) in 2009 & 2012; Videozoom Bangladesh at Sala1, Rome in 2010; Britto New Media Festival 2009.

Tayeba is the Co-Founder and Trustee of Britto Arts Trust. Her works are part of the collection of the Samdani Art Foundation, Bengal Foundation, Devi Art Foundation, Harmony Art Foundation, Jindal Foundation and the Guggenheim.

Tayeba Begum Lipi recreates everyday objects, such as bathtubs, baby perambulators, picture frames, and handbags, appearing as if they are encased in their own suit of metallic armor. Closer inspection reveals that their polished surfaces are comprised of gleaming stainless steel razor blades, carefully welded into these rigid yet fragile structures.

In a complementary series of works, Lipi fabricates items of clothing, such as bikinis and nightdresses, from gold plated safety pins through a process of interlinking them into a mesh as pliable as fabric.

Tools of precision and security, the safety pins and blades transform quotidian objects into items imbued with luminosity and an atypical beauty. Yet, the implication that they have become a protective armor for their implicitly female users adds a sinister and at times, melancholic undertone. The air of danger embedded within these objects as a result of their sterile material is further enforced by titles such as *The Stolen Dream* and *Trapped*.

Lipi's relationship with her materials date back to the artist's childhood, during which the ever-growing families of her eleven older siblings preoccupied her life. Her work reflects her visceral memory of purchasing and cleansing sparkling new razor blades and pins, as the crucial, often only, tools available to the midwives assisting with the arrival of each new addition to the family.

## **About Shrine Empire:**

Shrine Empire was created in December 2008 from a merger of two existing entities. Prior to this, both had worked together on exhibitions in India and Singapore separately, known then as The Shrine Gallery and Empire Art. Shrine Empire is based in New Delhi and its directors, Anahita Taneja and Shefali Somani have envisioned the gallery as a platform for presenting and promoting contemporary visual art practices. Since its inception, Shrine Empire has consistently focused on encouraging a dialogic approach with a range of emerging and eminent artists with sustained, innovative and engaging practices, and curators in order to produce exhibitions and special commissioned projects. The mission of Shrine Empire is to promote artists, curators and art-writers who are invested in redefining the boundaries of contemporary art practice. The various curatorial narratives that have emerged from the space over the years have made Shrine Empire known for its critical engagement with political and social concerns of the contemporary.

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