

SHRINE EMPIRE

AT THE INDIA ART FAIR 2019

VENUE: A05 | IAF, NSIC Grounds, Okhla Phase 3, New Delhi

PREVIEW: 31st January 2019

ON VIEW: 1st Feb – 3rd Feb 2019

Gallery Booth – A05

‘SLOW’- curated by Anushka Rajendran

Artists: Ayesha Singh | Fariba S Alam | Khushbu Patel | Neerja Kothari | Omer Wasim | Samanta Batra Mehta | Sangita Maity | Sonia Khurana | Tayeba Begum Lipi | Zoya Siddiqui

In keeping with our commitment to cutting-edge and critical artistic practices, Shrine empire brings to its audience a curated booth exploring the idea of ‘slowness’ through a range of exciting new commissions. Speed was the ultimate promise of modernity — with its fetish for anarchic newness while gesturing towards a singular temporality that cannot comprehend non-western histories, indigenous wisdom or ecological backlash. Arguably, rather than concur with the slow pace of Darwinian evolutionary rhythm, impatient progress has cumulatively steeped us in the excesses of technophilic developmental models, rapidly amplifying inequities of capital, and estrangement from sensuality. These blind spots in the dominant narrative of Modernism is perhaps most emphatically revealed in Marinetti’s Futurist Manifesto where valorization of speed is concurrent with the glorification of war and contempt for women — antithetical to politics widely nurtured by contemporary art. How can we formulate a vocabulary of resistance that is aware of heterogeneous post-colonial time, polyphonic spaces and departures from the libidinal post-industrial patterns of consumption? Critiquing modernity would entail a critique of the vocabulary of speed. This exhibition proposes to refract chronological time to reveal the eternities it conceals — to slow down and immerse in liminal spaces, sensorial anomalies, and incommensurable stories.

‘Slow’ is a message in a bottle tossed into the open sea, subject to non-calibrated currents, the steep crescendo of hurricanes and the gravitational pull of the moon. It is attuned to the rhythms of nature, contra-modernities, and a flux of differential phenomena including compassion for the triumphs and detritus of modernity. ‘Slow’, is a sensorial engagement with the modern ethical and ecological problems offered by speed, that is more telling about language, perception and connectedness than the rapidity of a text message in a hyper-networked universe that is defiantly nostalgic of historical err. ‘Slow’ is a sensibility, always relational, in the state of becoming and contrapuntal to the finality of propaganda.

About the artists:

Ayesha Singh (India)

Ayesha Singh's works investigate evidences of colonialism and hierarchy embedded in architectural pastiches that construct our cities and homes. Through photography, drawing, video and installation, and an emphasis on movement and displacement, her works question social hierarchies, political agendas and subconscious value systems placed on ornamentation, design and material. Born in New Delhi, Ayesha Singh completed her MFA in sculpture at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (2018) and BFA from the Slade School of Fine Art (2013) in addition to holding a Fine Art Diploma from Chelsea College of Art and Design, University of the Arts London, UK (2010). She has exhibited at the Mumbai Art Room (2017), Gujral Foundation (2017), Jhaveri Contemporary (2017), Museum of Sichuan Fine Arts Institute (Chongqing China, 2018), and Yorkshire Sculpture Park (UK, 2017) among other places. Singh is the winner of the "Ellies Creator Award" from the Art Centre/South Florida, USA and the "Civil Society Institute Fellowship" at Vermont Studio Centre, USA.

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Fariba S Alam (Bangladesh)

Alam creates large-scale installations that integrate tile, self-portraits and archival photographs. Taking the visuality and indexicality of photography within the colonial and postcolonial imagination, particularly in the Indian subcontinent since the 1840s as her points of departure, Alamminesher family's archival photographs in order to weave in her personal history. An intended effect of her work is to stimulate dialogue and reflection on the dynamic interplay of Islamic artistic tradition with more present and personal inquiries of gender and belonging. A recipient of Fulbright fellowship (1998/1999), Fariba holds a B.A. in Middle East and Asian Languages and Cultures from Columbia University and an M.A. from New York University (2004). Her work has been shown at The Queens Museum, The Asia Society, Exit Art, The Museum of African Art, the Museum of Contemporary Art/Shanghai amongst other galleries in the U.S. and Asia and is featured in prominent collections such as the Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Modena and the Burger Collection.

Khushbu Patel (India)

Khushbu Patel's art practice is mainly about looking through the lens of abjection — talking about that which inherently disturbs conventional identity and cultural concepts — the way people have been defining beauty, the stereotypes in society, objectification of bodies and political abjection. Her work questions the kind of revulsion that society holds on to, towards certain individuals, who don't fit into the realm of the collective social idea of beauty. She works with the abject body as an analogy and an opposition.

Her research and meticulous process also holds the state and society accountable for its indifference, and its attitude. A graduate of Surat School of Fine Arts, she completed her MA from the School of Art, Design and Performing Arts at Shiv Nadar University. She has been part of residencies at Sanskriti Kendra, Serendipity Art Foundation, and was part of Khoj Peers Share programme.

Neerja Kothari (India)

Neerja Kothari is an artist currently living and working from Kolkata, India. She holds a B.Com from Calcutta University, India and an MFA from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston / Tufts University, USA. She has been awarded residencies at the Vermont Studio Center, Virginia Center for Creative Arts (VCCA) and the MacDowell Colony. Her work has also been published in the New American Paintings NE#110 journal and the Manifest International Drawing Annual INDA8. Derived from multiple instances and memories her work becomes an accumulation of time, labor, process, memories, marks and numbers. The distilled-down instructional methodology in the work reiterates the eventual process of rebuilding and retuning and relearning.

Samanta Batra Mehta (India)

Samanta Batra Mehta was born in New Delhi, India, raised in Bombay, India and lives in New York, USA. Her work has been exhibited at various international venues including at the Queens Museum of the Arts, the Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts and Aicon Gallery in New York, the Hunterdon Museum and the Visual Arts Center in New Jersey, the Taubman Museum of Art in Virginia, and Artopia, Milan, among others. In 2010 she was invited by Galerie LMD, Paris to exhibit her work and make a 24 foot long site-specific mural at the Salon Du Dessin Contemporain, held at the Carrousel du Louvre in Paris. Her work was included in the 'Reading Room', a partner exhibition at the Kochi Biennale 2014 in Kochi, India. Samanta Batra Mehta's recent work repurposes antiquarian prints from her extensive collection gathered during her research to reflect on contemporary experiences. Concealed within images that inspire nostalgia are subliminal memories that are warm and personal, and at times collective memories that we have inherited.

Sangita Maity (India)

Sangita Maity was born in 1989 in Kanthi, West Bengal lives and works in Kolkata. Sangita completed her post-graduate studies in print making from the Faculty of Visual Arts, Rabindra Bharati University. Her work involves extensive research and she uses photographs, photo-etchings and various other mediums to describe her experience. Maity has participated in Khoj Peers Residency 2014 at Khoj Artists Association in New Delhi. She received the Society

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of Oriental Art Award in 2010 and Certificate of Merit in the Students' Annual Exhibition in 2012 and 2013. She was part of Galerie Mirchandani + Steinruecke's 2014 edition of 'Art for Young Collectors', in Mumbai. Her work was also recognized when she received the Cima Jury Award in 2015. Her recent projects are based on socio-cultural, geographical, political and environmental issues of Barbil iron ore mines area, one of India's largest iron ore mines located in the Keonjhar district of Orissa. She interacts with the land and its inhabitants (mostly indigenous tribes of Orissa and Jharkhand) to understand the region's ecology and politics.

Tayeba Begum Lipi (Bangladesh)

Born at Gaibandha, Bangladesh Tayeba Begum Lipi did her MFA in 1993 at the Institute of Fine Art, University of Dhaka. Tayeba has done a number of solo exhibitions and projects at Istanbul, London, Dhaka, NYC, Hong Kong and Delhi. Her major duos with artist Mahbubur Rahman are 'Artist as Activist' was at Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum (MSU), USA in 2016 curated by Caitlin Doherty and 'Faces of Intimate Strangers' at Modern Art Museum, Shanghai curated by Sandy Hsiuchic Lo.

Tayeba's significant Group shows include Taiwan Asian Art Biennale 2017-2018, Kathmandu Triennale 2017, 2017 Asian Art Biennale Taiwan, 'Art Festival WATOU', 2016 Belgium; '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 Hong Kong Center and CCA Singapore; Dhaka Art Summit 2014 & 2012, Colombo Biennale 2012; 14th Jakarta Biennale and 54 Venice Biennale in 2011. Her residencies/fellowships include countries such as Italy, Hong Kong, UK, India, Mauritius, Pakistan, Myanmar, Denmark, Ireland, Germany and Finland.

Tayeba's works are part of the collection of the Samdani Art Foundation, Bengal Foundation, Devi Art Foundation, Harmony Art Foundation, Jindal Foundation, The Solomon R. Guggenheim and National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts, Taichung. Tayeba is the Co-Founder and Trustee of Britto Arts Trust.

Sonia Khurana (India)

Sonia Khurana works primarily with lens-based media, and draws upon diverging practices: photo, video, and the moving image, performance, text, drawing, sound, music, voice, and installation. Her art practice attempts to draw critically on references to cultural and gendered identity, and the psycho-social domain. Working with a discourse of power that is deliberately tangential, she structures the self through states of strangeness, alienation, displacement and embodiment. She strives to engage with constant negotiations between body and language, the self and the world. Through these deliberately poetic intimations, she tries to persistently explore and re-define the space of the political. Sonia studied art in London at the Royal College of Art, where she completed her Masters in 1999, and earlier in Delhi, at the Delhi College of art. In 2002, Sonia did a two-year Residency Programme for practice-based research at the Rijksakademie Van Beeldende Kunsten in Amsterdam. Her works are in notable public and private collections, and have been shown widely and internationally since the late nineties; notably in seminal exhibitions such as 'elles@ Pompidou' (2009/2010), 'Global Feminisms in Brooklyn (2007), Aichi Triennale (2010), the Busan Biennale (2004), Gwangju Biennale (2008), West heavens, in Shanghai (2010), Liverpool Biennale (2010), Haus de Kulturen der welt (2003) among several others. Awards and recognition include: Research grant, Ministry of Education, The Netherlands, Research Grant, Werkleitz, Germany [2006], 2003 Josine De Bruyn Kops Fonds for Artists, the Netherlands, INLAKS Grant for Royal College Of Art, in London. She lives and works in New Delhi.

Omer Wasim & Saira Sheikh (Pakistan)

Omer Wasim & the late Saira Sheikh are visual artists who practice together, and cast a retrospective glance at the present to radically examine and mine contemporary art practices, and recent, albeit superficial, interest of the global west in their region; and also to reconfigure, re-articulate, and disrupt existing and complacent modes of artistic engagement and production. Wasim continues to execute projects that were jointly conceived with Sheikh. Wasim (b. 1988) has a BFA in Interdisciplinary Sculpture and an MA in Critical Studies from the Maryland Institute College of Art

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(MICA), Baltimore, Maryland. He has been teaching and practicing in Pakistan, since 2014, and is currently a faculty in the Liberal Arts Programme at the Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture. Saira Sheikh (1975 - 2017) had a BFA from the National College of Arts (NCA), Lahore, Punjab, and an EdM from Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, New York. She had been teaching and practicing in Karachi, Pakistan, since 2013, and was Associate Professor and Head of the Liberal Arts Programme at the Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture, Karachi.

Zoya Siddiqui (Pakistan)

Zoya Siddiqui (b.1990) is a visual artist based between Lahore and Vancouver, working primarily in video, performance, installation and photography. She has been part of residencies at the Vasl Artists' Collective Karachi, Delfina Foundation London, Theertha Performance Platform in Colombo, In- Situ UK, and is an alumnus of the Triangle Arts Association. Siddiqui has shown her works internationally on platforms such as the Dhaka Art Summit and Lahore Literary Festival, and in cities such as New York, New Delhi, Philadelphia, Lahore, Karachi and Brierfield. Her recent exhibitions include 'The Edge' at Bikaner House, New Delhi and 'Parentheses' at David Nolan in New York.

Through varying routes, Siddiqui's practice seeks to understand the tensions between nearness-farness, insider-outsider, stranger hood-intimacy or public-private. A common denominator between all works is performance; anchored in her voice, shown explicitly through her body, implied in the curation of events etc. She has a sustained interest in the implied eye of the technology used to film or photograph.

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