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Art & city

Sunday, 02 February 2020 | Navneet Mendiratta



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Even though the India Art Fair concludes in New Delhi today, there is a lot of art waiting to be explored in the city for the entire month, writes Navneet Mendiratta

Even as curtains come down on the 12th edition of India Art Fair today evening, this year has been extraordinarily special. The fair had as many as 81 exhibitors participating from as many as 20 global cities with cutting edge art on display. In the last two years, the IAF has focussed extensively on building gallery participation, public programming and creating a spotlight on South Asian and Indian art. As Jagdip Jagpal, Fair Director of India Art Fair, shared: "In these two years, we have looked to strengthen the programme to highlight the artists, as well as make a visit to the fair accessible for all ages and abilities." Modern and contemporary South Asian art remains the focus of the fair, with 70% of the floor space dedicated to Indian galleries, and an esteemed line up of artists not seen in India presented by international galleries, she added.



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For a lot of people, visiting Delhi for India Art Fair, there really is a lot to see beyond the fair. Clubbed under IAF Parallel, collateral events programmed by galleries, museums and arts spaces around the city add a festive vibe to the otherwise very individual art scene. Many of these shows continue well into the month, allowing the visitors who are staying back some more time to reflect on the art and interact with the artists. We bring you some of the must visit shows that extend into the month.



You will know me, Art Alive Gallery



You will know me: Migration Stories is about migration and displacement featuring artists from the US, Germany and India and has on display, works by artists including: Ayisha Abraham, Golnar Adili, Tomie Arai, Barbara Beisinghoff, Janet Goldner, Cheryl Goldsleger, Leslie Jean-Bart, Tatana Kellner, Mohammad Omer Khalil, Karen Kunc, Sarojini Lewis, Berette Macaulay, Lavanya Mani, Larry Millard, Veer Munshi, Roger Rigorth, Tara Sabharwal, Ritu Sarin & Tenzing Sonam.



“Tara started working on this project about two years ago and from then to now a lot of change has happened in the world around us, with the statistics numbers only going up. For us, the show has grown as the migration crisis has grown and intensified. I find this issue compelling and wanted to stand with the artists who are coming together and trying to draw attention to this urgent issue and instigate a dialogue,” says Sunaina Anand, Director, Art Alive Gallery. The show is on till February 10.



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Bhoomi and Bhurukuwa : A two-part show by Shambhavi, Gallery Espace and Shrine Empire Gallery

For the first time, Shambhavi is presenting a two-part solo showcase at Gallery Espace and Shrine Empire Gallery as part of IAF parallels. Her earlier series *Maati Ma* was on view at the 2018 Kochi Muzuris Biennale, curated by Anita Dube.

Drawing inspiration from her roots in rural Bihar, Shambhavi's work explores the relationship between man and nature, specifically focusing on the connection between the farmers, field and their ceaseless struggles. *Bhoomi* at Gallery Espace features a collection of her signature paintings and large-format installations in iron, that are primarily abstract and aim to intuitively foster a sense of nostalgia for a way of life that most of us no longer remember.

From metal to paper pulp, she extends her story to depict dawn or *Bhurukuwa* in part two of her show at Shrine Empire Gallery where she explores the subtle interplay between man, nature and art in varied textures. Shambhavi brings to life the textures, colours and forms of rural life: whether in the mud-and-hay textured walls of their houses or the grey mist that rises from the field on winter mornings. The show at Gallery Espace is on till February 24 and at Shrine Empire Gallery till February 28.

Stammer in the Shadow by Atul Dodiya, Vadehra Art Gallery

Atul Dodiya's *Stammer in the Shade* is a presentation of his world-renowned shutters along his consistently evolving romance with the solitary figure and landscape in his canvases. These shrines include some of his photographs of paintings by the great masters, made during his travels around the world. These photographs form not the entire painting but a portion of the work. *Darshan*, or epiphany, is an implied experience here, as the viewer waits to see what the shutter will reveal when it rises, except that the darshan has already been granted. The show is on till February 29.

Soma by Ravinder Reddy, Vadehra Art Gallery

Famous for his gilded female heads that take inspiration from ancient temple idolisations while channeling the bold spirit of the contemporary woman, in this exhibition of nude sculptures, Ravinder Reddy turns to the undraped body with a similar intent. In doing so, he undertakes an intricate exploration of the body, which for decades has not been considered important or appropriate as a subject of study in the Indian cultural context. Reddy's dalliance with the nude form began in 1979, and *Soma* includes his consistent and controversial portrayals from the eighties up to the present, giving viewers the opportunity to track the artist's developing oeuvre in response to ever changing climes and contexts over the years. The show is on till February 29.

Memory's cut; Its Deep Embrace by Remen Chopra W. Van Der Vaart, Gujral Foundation



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In collaboration with Outset India, this exhibition is a personal account of the artist's journey of migration. Using personal objects to punctuate the exhibition, Vaart delves into the history of personal spaces and its memory using writings, maps, objects, poetry and sculptural works to respond to the emotion and idea of home.



'The exhibition is a poignant chronicle of the artist's life that interweaves personal archives, notions of home and memory. Her work is a unique assemblage of intimate moments, poetry and personal objects that were passed on from one generation to the other,' says Reha Sodhi, Curatorial Advisor, about Vaart's works. The show is on till February 24.



Materiology 2.0, STIR Gallery



This is the second show of Stir's *Materiology* series, curated by Pramiti Madhavji and Amit Gupta. Cutting across disciplines, the show brings installations by some of the leading designers including Paola Navone, Sumant Jayakrishnan, Matteo Cibic, Rooshad Shroff, Samira Rathod, Manish Maheshwari, Sandeep Sangaru, Soumitro Ghosh, Hanif Kureshi, Shiva Nellaperumal, Banduksmith Studio and Ankon Mitra. Through installation art and design, these designers highlight a simple, productive things that we did in the past, that were educational, made us think and learn, that have now taken a new avatar. The show is on till February 22.



The Exodus of Eternal Wanderers by Sudipta Das, Gallery Latitude 28

Through collections and assemblages of her now-iconic doll-like paper sculptures, Sudipta Das dives into personal history and family narratives to explore themes of exile, refuge and temporariness of life. Meticulously crafted from layers and layers of handmade Hanji paper, her chosen medium is fragile, yet resistant. An unsuspecting medium, paper has long been a hidden protagonist in the narratives of placelessness. Without paper, one has no form of identification. Without identification, one loses the freedom to move from place to place. One loses their proof of belonging.

"Das' work presents melancholic verse of individuals who have lost their roots, but still, for a time, have each other, raised above their homes and the places they hold dear, as if on the tide of a flood, to be deposited ... somewhere else," says Bhavna Kakar, Director of Gallery Latitude 28. The show is on till February 28.

The Hand Painted Textile by Ajit Kumar Das, Gallery Art.Motif

Gallery Art.Motif presents hand-painted textiles made using natural dyes and the kalam by the master artist Ajit Kumar Das. In his work spanning four decades, Das picks up strands from diverse repertoires, simultaneously however, evolving a distinct vocabulary quite his own. His works have been a part of the Vishwakarma exhibitions curated by the late heritage conservationist Martand Singh, and are in important textile collections around the world, including the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. The show is on till February 15.