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VITA NOVA - A NEW LIFE, COMES TO DELHI WITH MAGIC, MYTHOLOGY & MYSTERY

7 APRIL, 2022, NEW DELHI

Vita Nova exhibition comes to New Delhi on 28 April at the Italian Embassy Cultural Center. The exhibition opens with an exclusive preview & reception on 28 April and opens for the public on 29 April. The project is produced by the Italian Embassy Cultural Centre and curated and conceived by Myna Mukherjee and Davide Quadrio. It is presented as a collateral exhibition to the India Art Fair 2022.

Italian Embassy Cultural Center <i>Exclusive Preview & Party (by invite)</i> 28 April 2022, 7pm Nyaya Marg, Chanakyapuri, New Delhi	Italian Embassy Cultural Center Opens to Public 29 April-31 May 2022 Nyaya Marg, Chanakyapuri, New Delhi Monday – Sunday, 10am-5pm
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Inspired by Dante's Literature, Vita Nova is an exhibition exploring transformations, connections and departures in contemporary craft & art between Italy & India. Vita Nova is the title of the poems by Dante, composed in honour of his lover and muse, that shapes the history of poetry in Italy and worldwide. The curation called six artists from India and Italy to be challenged by this literature hero's extraordinary body of work and explore the territory of "new life (vita nova)" or the transformative life that Dante wrote about. The resulting exhibition lets us enter a realm of the mystery and metaphor; the arcane and the magical; nature and humanity; mythology and memory; transformation and preservation; and ultimately the manifestation of something new.

Contemporary craft or conceptual art or artisanal design?

All six artists, Andrea Anastasio, Francesco Simeti, Marta Roberti, Puneet Kaushik, Raghava KK, and Shilo Shiv Suleman blur several distinctions as they work with a range of 'handmade' techniques from wood cuts, block prints, embroidery, tapestry, metal forging, blue pottery, miniatures, bidri, ceramics, clay and even cardboard making. Together they create a hothouse of new works that expose the conjunctions and disjunctions inherent in these contemporary hybridized artworks. They generate questions about the role of craft in their evolutionary shift to the 'dematerialized' and conceptual while retaining their historical and cultural significance.

Silent bowed heads of women embroidering, men sweating in iron foundries, the continuing fragility of craft communities in contrast to the privilege of taste and 'high art' ... concept, craft or design are inseparable from the flows of production and consumption under global capitalism. This exhibition also allows for playful subversion, and curatorial reflection on craft within the conditions of extreme material and economic disparity; a renewed focus on labour and materiality in contemporary art and practice; the political dimensions of craftivism, neoliberalism, and power; efforts toward urban renewal and sustainability; ecology, the use of science & technology; and craft's connections to gender, race & cultural identity across continents. These works claim contemporary craft as a dynamic critical position for understanding the most immediate political and aesthetic issues of our time. Encompassing tapestries, carpets, sculptures, miniatures, textiles & artisanal objects, moving from magic realism to metaphors of political protests, 'Vita Nova' is an eclectic immersion into the "conceptual craft futures" referenced and celebrated by artists promoting new ways of thinking about the role of craft in contemporary art and the significance of the 'handmade' within conceptual art making practices.

Artists Bios

Andrea Anastasio: Andrea Anastasio was born in Rome in 1961, he lives between Italy and India. After training in Oriental studies and philosophy, he embarked on numerous collaborative projects as a designer, a field in which he still works, for Artemide, Danese, Foscari and Memphis, before moving to India in 1991. Alongside his professional activity, he devotes his time to his artistic practice. His research focuses on the manipulation of objects, consumer goods and materials linked to the domestic context, in order to generate linguistic short circuits, while sabotaging their conventional meaning. He is interested in the potential convergences of conceptual art with design. He was artist in residence at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston, in 2005 and 2008 and has exhibited in solo and group exhibitions in various Italian and international museums, including: Grand Palais, Paris-France; Museum of Modern Art and Architecture Dallas -USA; MART Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Trento-Rovereto-Italy, la Triennale, Milan-Italy; Hangar Bicocca, Milano- Italy; MIC Museo Internazionale della Ceramica, Faenza-Italy; Wexner Center for the Arts, Ohio-USA; Achille Castiglioni Foundation, Milano-Italy; Palazzo Reale, Milano-Italy, Yuz Museum Shanghai - China, Foundation Darat Al Fanun, Amman-Jordan; MANN Museo Archeologico Nazionale Napoli, Italy.

Francesco Simeti: Francesco Simeti (b. 1968, Palermo, Italy) is an artist known for his site-specific installations, which aesthetically present enchanting scenes that reveal a more complex subtext upon closer inspection. His work often appropriated photographs from newspapers and magazines to raise questions about the role of images in contemporary discourse. Public Art is a fundamental aspect of his practice, he has worked with Percent for Art and Public Art for Public Schools in NYC, the Multnomah county in Oregon and has created permanent additions to subway stations in Brooklyn and Chicago. He has had solo exhibitions at venues such as Assembly Room, New York, (2019); Open Source Gallery, New York (2017); Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Palermo (2012); and Artists Space, New York (2009). His work has been included in group exhibitions at Museo Civico di Castelbuono, Palermo (2019); ICA Singapore (2017); Palazzo Reale, Milan (2016); and Castello di Rivoli Museum of Contemporary Art, Turin (2014). He has also exhibited work at the Triennale di Milano (2014 and 2013). Simeti lives and works in New York. He works with the gallery Francesca Minini in Italy. He is involved in ongoing design collaboration with Maharam, New York.

Marta Roberti: Marta Roberti lives in Rome. After graduating in Philosophy in Verona, she graduated in Cinema and Video at the Academy of Fine Arts of Brera. Drawing is the main medium that she uses in installations and animated videos, through which she explores the relationship between East and West, studying and reworking the myths and their representation. Her artistic production has always found inspiration in the idea that the ego has no boundaries and that it is not only human. In 2020 she won the public call Cantica of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Italy and Ministry of culture of Italy and her work has entered the collection of the National Institute for Graphics in Rome. Recently she exhibited in the gallery Z20Sara Zanin a solo exhibition entitled In metamorphosis. She has participated in international exhibitions and festivals including Dante Alighieri and the Italian Artists, IIC Paris, Encounter of Imagination: dialogue between The Divine Comedy and Classic of Mountains and Seas, Pearl Museum Shanghai(2021), AlterEva, Strozzi of Palazzo Strozzi, Florence (2021),,, Io dico Io , Galleria Nazionale di Arte Moderna Rome (2021), Ladder to the moon , Galleria Monitor Rome (2021), Visions in the Making Italian Cultural Institute of New Delhi, (2020); Wall Eyes (Johannesburg, Capetown 2019 and Auditorium Parco della Musica Rome 2020); Something Else Biennial Off Cairo (2019), Portrait Portrait, Taipei Contemporary Art Center (2017), Scarabocchio Kuandu Museum of Art Taipei (2015). She lived a few years in Asia, where she participated in several residencies between China, Taiwan and Vietnam.

Puneet Kaushik: Puneet Kaushik is an artist-anthropologist who evokes, through his choice of mediums and techniques, the cultural history of the Periphery. Kaushik has been traveling across the Indian subcontinent for the past three decades to document art and craft making techniques and cultural histories of the artisanal communities in South Asia. His studio is best known for his investigations into gender, identity, through canvases, drawings on paper, mixed media and monumental installations that have appeared in numerous exhibitions in galleries and museums worldwide.

Raghava KK: A multidisciplinary artist, storyteller and curator, Raghava KK has pioneered a ground-breaking body of diverse works that explore transcendence through the lens of the current digital era with a client roster that includes the

likes of Erykah Badu, Paul Simon and Jeff Bezos. Featured on CNN's list of ten fascinating thinkers, authors and provocateurs in 2010, Raghava's work traverses traditional forms of painting, installation and performance, while his practice embraces new media (artificial intelligence, neuro-feedback, biohacking, board and video games, crypto currencies etc), to express post-human contemporary realities. His lectures, including 5 TED talks, are known for inspiring audiences to expand their social and psychological selves, using art. Raghava has mentored several creative entrepreneurs by infusing his philosophy into their processes and products. Raghava co-founded and chaired The INK Fellowship.

In 2021, Raghava was the first Indian to launch an NFT at Sotheby's, New York in partnership with BurningMan - a collaborative artwork created using brainwaves, AI and painting robots. Raghava has also worked on a collaborative AI art piece created with Harshit Agrawal and 64/1 - an art collective dedicated to blurring the lines between art, art criticism and art education that he started with Karthik Kalyanaraman) called Strange Genders. He currently lives and works out of New York and Bangalore.

Shilo Shiv Suleman: Shilo Shiv Suleman is an award-winning Indian artist whose work lives and breathes at the intersection of Magical Realism, Art, Technology and Social Justice. Her work is unapologetically embodied weaving together the sensual and sacred, past and future- through paintings, wearable sculptures, interactive installations and public art interventions. Her collaborations with a neuroscientist on creating art that interacts with your brainwaves and other biofeedback sensors made her recipient of several grants including the honorarium installation- Pulse & Bloom at Burning Man. She has been featured on TED, BBC, Rolling Stone, MSNBC, Tech Crunch, The Guardian, WIRED, and has exhibited her work at the Southbank Centre in London and the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam. Most recently her work was sold at an auction at Sotheby's for 57,000 USD in the "Boundless Space" auction. She is also the founder and director of Fearless Collective, a growing movement of hundreds of South Asian artists reclaiming public spaces from Fear. She has painted over 40 murals in 15 countries, including notably representing India at COP26, Scotland and some of the first public feminist art in Pakistan. Her newest body of work- "Semiprecious" explores the forces of nature- rivers, mountains, the movement of tectonic plates, wind currents, photosynthesis, rocks, moss, minerals and all kinds of invisible, microcosmic and macrocosmic love stories.

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