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## 19 Artworks We Loved at the 2020 India Art Fair

ART WISE

February 03, 2020 | by Lisa Jain

The 12th edition of the India Art Fair took place in New Delhi from January 30 - February 2, 2020, and it was a visual delight that exceeded expectations. From modern masters to contemporary stalwarts to emerging names in the art world, the fair brought together the best across painting, sculpture, photography, installation and traditional art forms, from Indian and world-renowned international artists. Here is Artisera's pick of 19 artworks (in no particular order), that we loved at the 2020 India Art Fair!

### 1. Laaga Chunari Mein Daag by Girjesh Kumar Singh

Moving and emotional, this collection of works addressed concerns of identity, migration and displacement. Created with a rubble of bricks, and mortar of old demolished walls, the works showed a 'fresh brokenness' – beautiful to look at, but exposing struggles of the past. The artist, Girjesh Kumar Singh, believes that good memories sometimes create sadness because of the realization of their absence, while bad memories create pleasure, as they exist no more.



## 2. Rithika Merchant's Paper Artworks

Rithika Merchant's paper and collage artworks, part of her 'Aerial Women' series, caught our eye with their non-saturated colour tones and intriguing concepts. Inspired by the idea of women being powerful and free, the artist depicted women as being bird-like, linking back to ancient depictions of winged females. The two smaller works in the centre represent the varied landscapes that women have to constantly traverse or fly over, in a world defined by the restrictive gravity of men's wishes and desires.



### 3. Faces by Dhananjay Singh

A series of exquisite sculptures titled 'Faces' by Dhananjay Singh explored the idea of how nature is present in humans, and humans are present in nature. The stunning and larger-than-life sculptures made in stainless steel and bronze, illustrated how plants and trees engrave a strong image in our minds, not because they are a source of survival, but because we see our own lives reflecting in them.



### 4. Anjan Modak's Mixed Media Artworks

Emerging artist Anjan Modak highlighted the conflict that exists amongst humans through his satirical and evocative works. Made on paper with watercolours and graphite, Anjan's artworks spoke of brands and status and gaps between the rich and the poor. The disturbances between classes of society, the shift from rural to urban areas, and the superficial vagaries of society, were all at play in the highly promising artist's textured and fantastical works.





### 5. Burden of Proof by Poonam Jain

A unique and fascinating exhibit, a series of drawings by Poonam Jain were piled together to look like a door and a window. Each brick depicted normal people, caught up in the monotony of their lives. Featuring a measuring scale on the bodies of the figures, the work of art highlighted our compulsive need to quantify everything in life, and how numbers and measurements rule us, even as we try to break free from the 'Burden of Proof'.







### 6. Bronzes by 4 Masters

Giving a third dimension to the masters of 2D art was a brilliant display of bronze sculptures by 4 of India's most eminent artists – Jogen Chowdhury, Krishen Khanna, Ram Kumar and Thota Vaikuntam. Made at the renowned London Foundry, the entire collection of sculptures was breathtakingly detailed and striking in resemblance to the iconic styles that the four artists have become so famous for with their paintings.







### 7. Untitled (Draupadi Vastraharan) by MV Dhurandhar, 1934

The first principal of the prestigious Sir J.J. School of Art, M.V Dhurandhar (1867-1944) was almost as popular for his mythological paintings as his predecessor, Raja Ravi Varma. This brilliant work by him from 1934, displayed at the DAG booth, depicted Draupadi's vastraharan, the genesis for the Mahabharata war, with an unusual and refreshingly realistic poignance for the time period when it was painted.



### 8. Fusion by Vijay Pichumani

This dramatic piece by Vijay Pichumani reflects on man's deep-rooted connect with nature. The human figure is carved out of a single piece of wood from a jackfruit tree, while the multitude of roots, on which the figure rests and finds comfort, were picked up by the artist from the streets of his village.





### 9. Journey of the Ganga - Madhubani Painting

An impactful work of art by acclaimed Madhubani painter A Kumar Jha, this massive painting was exquisitely detailed and beautifully composed. Depicting the journey of the holy river Ganga from its origin at Gangotri to its mouth in Bengal, the painting also highlights the changing landscape and cultures across a vibrant and diverse nation.



### 10. Mother by Bharti Kher

The sculpture by Bharti Kher, titled *Mother*, made a powerful statement. Showing a lady gagged and troubled, with a cow's head covered with Kher's signature 'bindis', the piece sheds light on the many emotions and turmoil of a mother, and perhaps the 'motherland'.



#### 11. Untitled Artwork by Jagannath Panda

Highly acclaimed for his impactful works that depict displacement of humans and animals, Jagannath Panda's stunning masterpiece stood out for its layered textures and striking imagery.





## 12. Martin by Ai Weiwei

Cast from giant tree roots sourced in Brazil, the world-renowned artist's awe-inspiring and gigantic sculpture in iron, exhibited by German gallery neugerriemschneider, pushed the limits of the casting process. Entirely man-made, it looked astonishingly realistic with its display of meticulous detail. Elements of the ancient tree roots were hand cast using the traditional lost-wax technique, and the finer details were painstakingly engraved in iron. The piece is inspired by a poem by Weiwei's father, Ai Qing, that talks about how trees communicate with each other underneath the earth.



### 13. Vishnu on Sheshnag by Raja Ravi Varma

Crayon Art Gallery created an unforgettable experience for visitors, displaying just one original masterpiece by the father of modern Indian painting, Raja Ravi Varma. The painting depicts Lord Vishnu with his wives Goddess Lakshmi and Goddess Bhumi on either side, with all of them seated on Sheshnag, the snake king. On one side of the viewing room, the gallery also depicted an **oleograph** (<https://www.artisera.com/collections/oleographs>) (print) of the painting, celebrating Ravi Varma's quest to make his art more affordable.





#### 14. Bronze Sculptures by K.S. Radhakrishnan

At a showcase of bronze sculptures by one of India's most significant sculptors, K.S. Radhakrishnan, we struggled to choose which of the pieces we loved the most. From small and intimate pieces to large and lofty ones, Radhakrishnan had used the two figures of Maiya and Musui - woman and man - through whom his vision of the world unfolded in myriad ways. The sculptures stood out as much for the extraordinary body movements in the figures, as they did for the skilful modelling of bronze.





**15. Untitled Artwork by Puneet Kaushik**

A perceptive artist, Puneet Kaushik used coral and glass beads to create this beautiful artwork expressing the relation between hurting and healing, displayed by the Italian Embassy Cultural Centre. Puneet uses red, which he believes is the colour that unites us all because it is the colour of blood, which remains the same in all humans and animals. The thoughtful artwork depicted a wound which causes us pain, but it is painstakingly made using auspicious Tibetan beads, which represent healing.







#### 16. Sketches and Drawings by Manjit Bawa

One of India's most acclaimed and beloved artists, the late Manjit Bawa is most known for his brightly coloured paintings depicting mythological characters. But at a solo exhibit of Bawa, a gallery also displayed some exquisite and less common sketches and drawings by the master artist, which caught our eye for the fine detailing and precision.



**17. Sweet Days of Summer by Tapasya Gupta**

This is one piece that put a smile on every viewer's face at the fair! Standing tall at 70 inches, this happy sculpture was by artist Tapasya Gupta. Made using fiberglass and metal, it depicted a young girl enjoying the simple joys of life – a swing and some colourful balloons. What is incredible about the piece, is that the weight of the entire sculpture rests on the girl's right foot!

**18. Fragments of the Shunya by Dhasan**

Inspired by silence and the fragmentation of peace, 'Shunya' stands for the silence before a sound, and the zero before numbers. Working with paper on canvas and creating intricate and complex compositions, Dhasan, a Chennai based artist focused on the idea of creating balance between diverging tendencies. As our



society faces more and more upheaval, we all need to find a way to navigate peacefully, and it is this idea that Dhasan addressed through his subtle and calming artworks.



**19. Photo Sculptures by Rohit Chawla**

Ace photographer Rohit Chawla continuously pushes the boundaries of conventional photography, and it was no different with his display of 'photo sculptures'. Adding a physical dimension to a 2D artform, Rohit's photographs featured icons from India such as Zakir Hussain playing against the backdrop of the Taj Mahal, along with other pieces that were recreations of iconic paintings. It is the creativity behind the idea of extending photography to a third dimension, that really caught our eye in Rohit's work.







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