

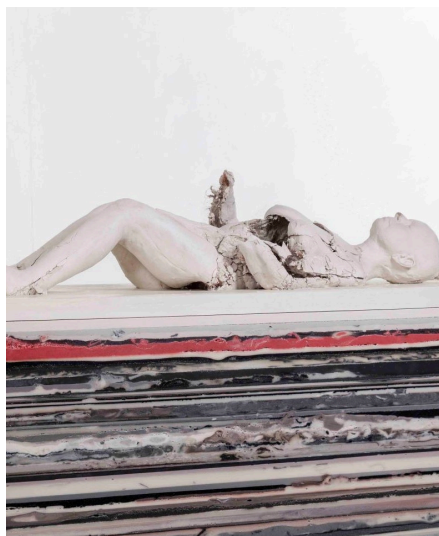
CULTURE & LIVING

10 art exhibitions in India that made us introspect deeply in 2021

From artworks based on personal histories to sculptures, ceramic creations and monochrome photographs, we give you the lowdown on exhibitions that caught our eye in the year gone by

BY HUZAN TATA

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Wandering through familiar, yet alien terrains, group show at The Guild, Alibaug



Baiju Parthan, Chorus - 2B, Animated 3D Lenticular Print, Edition 1 of 6, 2011-15

Featuring works by noted names like Baiju Parthan, Gigi Scaria, Pooja Iranna and Ranbir Kaleka, this [exhibition](#) looked at the familiar and unfamiliar worlds that we inhabit. Each artist, playing around with the ideas of tangible terrains and metaphorical worlds, reimagined the spaces we live in to create artworks that showcase the constantly changing contours of the landscapes around us. As Dr. Chithra C.S mentioned in her curatorial note, ‘Human activities, urbanisation, mechanisation, hyper-connectivity, and chaos echo in these creations. The very familiar terrains turn fictitious, metaphorical and alien’.

On display at The Guild Alibaug until January 2, 2022



***In Thin Air* by Kartik Sood at Talwar Gallery, New Delhi**



Touching the earth and passing the name; Oil, acrylic, metal mesh, archival paper, artist designed cast iron frame, 2019

Artist Kartik Sood's debut solo exhibition at Talwar, this showcase encompasses works from the

last five years of his practice which is inspired by his upbringing in the hilly terrains of Shimla. Featuring [paintings](#), collages, video installations and assemblages, Sood's intriguing [artworks](#) go beneath the surface of everyday situations to reveal the relatively unseen forces that guide our lives and moments.

On display at Talwar Gallery, New Delhi until January 25, 2022

***Bildungsroman (& other stories)* by Areez Katki at Tarq, Mumbai**



Shrine (Still Life with Partially Squeezed Lime), 2018. Cotton thread hand embroidery on cotton khatka. Courtesy Areez Katki & Tarq ASHISH CHANDRA

Based in New Zealand, Areez Katki has exhibited in Europe, Asia and North America in the past. His first solo show in India, which opened in July this year, was a poignant look at his ancestry as a Parsi Zoroastrian, with each artwork traversing themes of spirituality, migrant identity and [sexuality](#). The artist used materials as varied as dust cloths, [khadi](#), glass beads and repurposed textiles to create new pieces of art that merged his identities as a Zoroastrian immigrant and a queer New Zealander.

The exhibition was on view from July 8-August 7, 2021

***Fête Champêtre*, duo show at Art Musings, Mumbai**

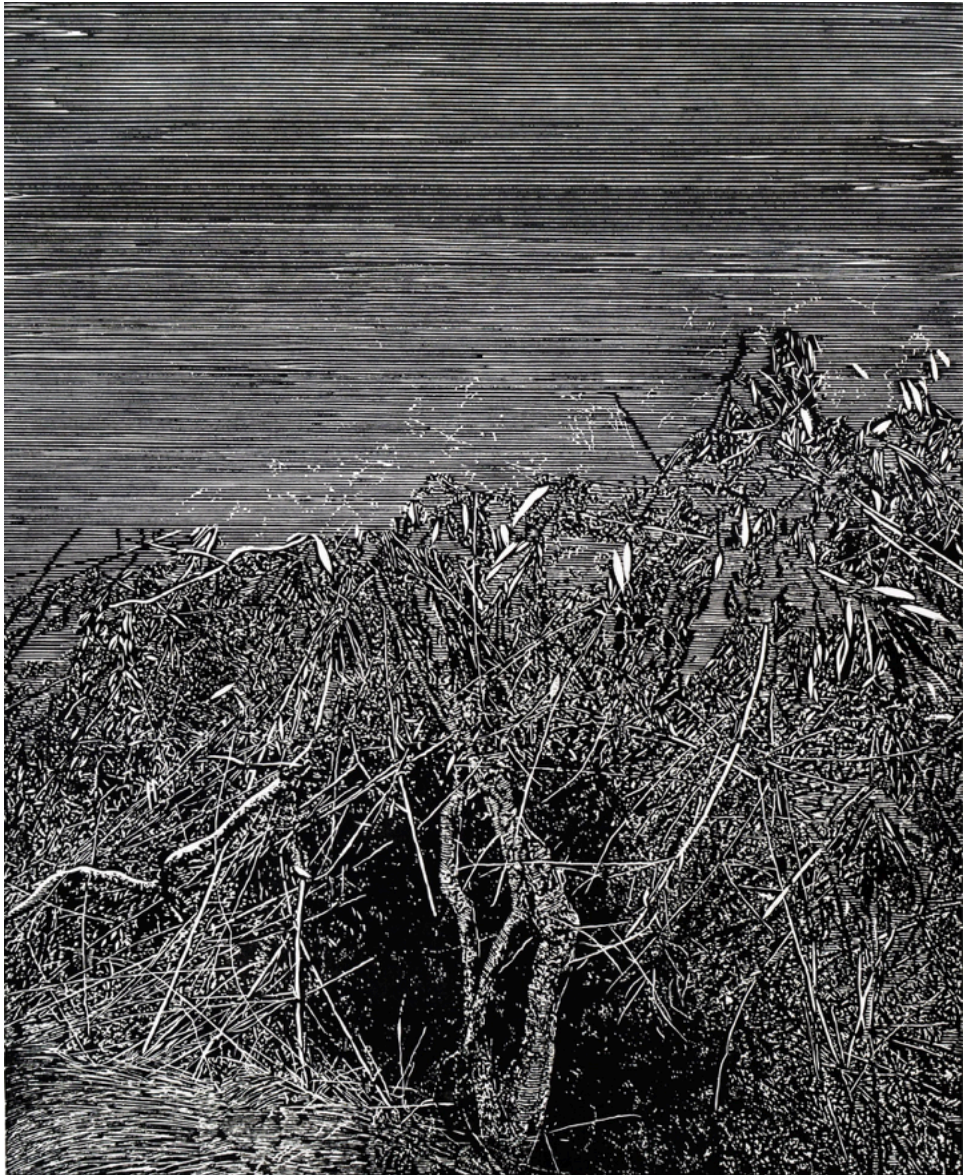


Maya Burman, *The Dance of Life - I*, Oil on canvas, 36" x 28.5", 2020

Many artists draw on personal histories to create their works, and when it's painters from the same family, it's bound to be something even more intimate. Mother-daughter duo Maïté Delteil and Maya Burman, who work between France and India, drew on their respective cultures to create vibrant, dream-like paintings for their dual show, *Fête Champêtre*. With [art](#) running in their blood, Delteil and Burman's creations are both connected by shared inspirations and stand out in their distinctive intricacies, making for a fascinating showcase.

The exhibition was on view from April 16-May 31, 2021

***If A Tree Falls (Somewhere In Northeast India)* by Chandan Bez Baruah at Latitude 28, New Delhi**



Somewhere In Northeast India, pt-II

When we think of forests and nature, verdant expanses immediately spring to mind. But the first thing that hits the viewer about emerging Assamese artist Chandan Bez Baruah's woodcut prints is the starkness and [monochromatic](#) beauty of each creation. Showcased in New Delhi at the start of this year, Baruah's photorealist woodcuts take inspiration from his upbringing in

the lap of nature, where he also developed a love for forests. Curated by Waswo X Waswo, the exhibition was a poignant trip into the land of forests of the Northeast, as seen through the artist's eyes.

The exhibition was on view from March 25-31, 2021

***A View From Nowhere* by Julian Segard at Experimenter, Kolkata**



Silent Spring, Charcoal and chalk on found paper and wood, 2021. Courtesy the artist and Experimenter, Kolkata VIVIAN SARKY

French artist Julian Segard, who mostly lives and works in Goa, spent the better part of last year in a remote cabin in France. Taking inspiration from his time in solitude, Segard's latest exhibition reflected upon themes of [interiority](#), the passage of time and the fragility of our relationships with the outside world. Stark in their imagery, the artworks in Segard's showcase presented to viewers the coexistence of familiar interiors against the vast, unknown outer worlds that we inhabit.

The exhibition was on view from April 21-July 31, 2021

***Strange Attractors* by Bharti Kher at Nature Morte, New Delhi**

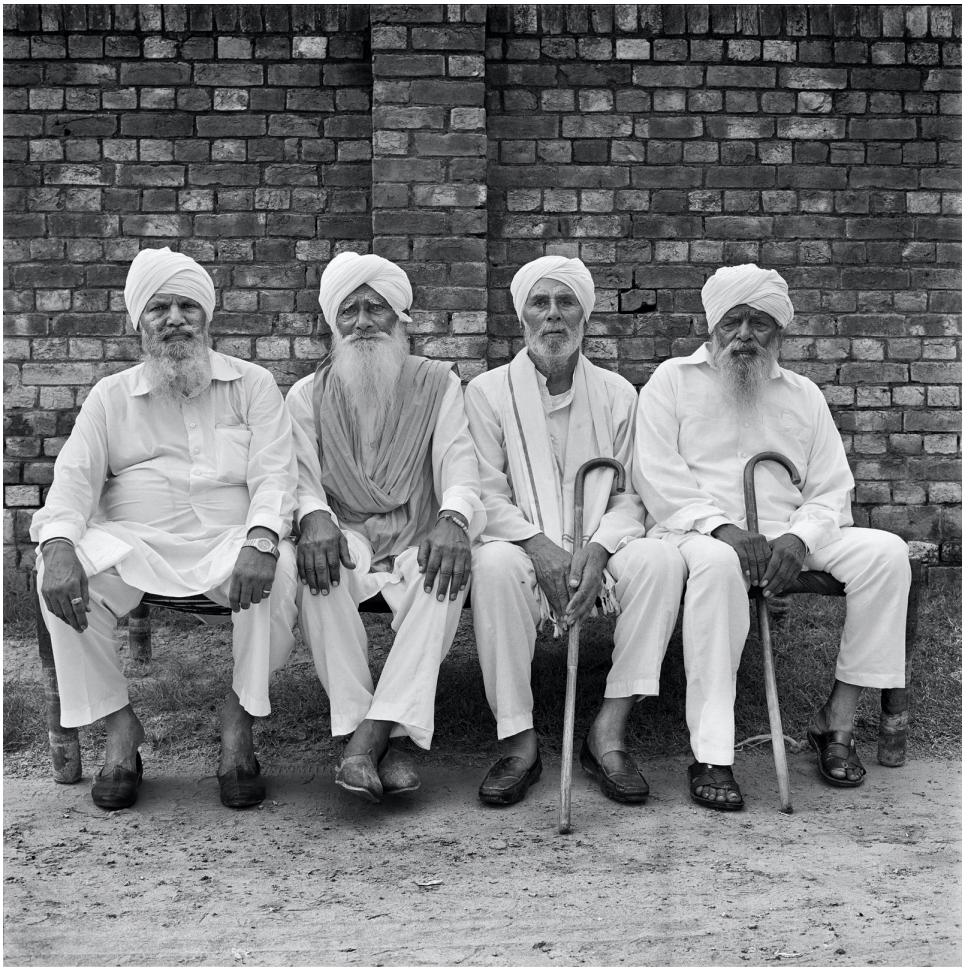


Animus Mundi, Sari, resin, metal, 2018

The title of this show is derived from a mathematical concept elaborated within Chaos Theory, that 'strange attractors' remain constantly in motion. And so it is, with the sculptures on display in this exhibition by the internationally-acclaimed artist Bharti Kher. Created between 2017 and 2021, each [artwork](#) is a 'configuration of material and object creating its own universe and dialogue', and is Kher's response to how we, as individuals, react to life's myriad experiences.

On view at Nature Morte, New Delhi until January 5, 2022

The Tale of Time: Survivors of the 1947 Partition of India and Pakistan by Serena Chopra, presented by SepiaEYE

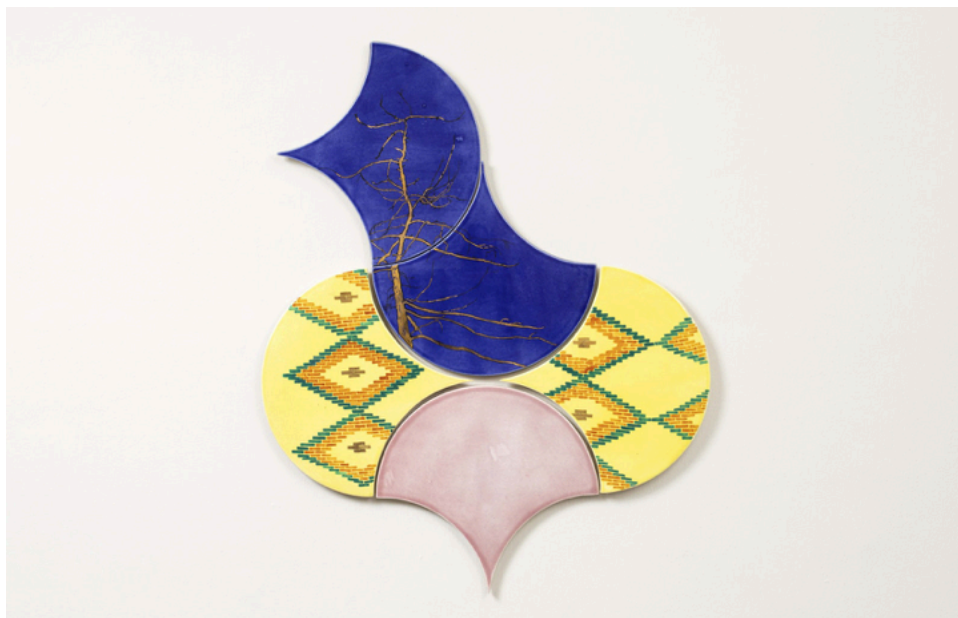


© Serena Chopra, Left to right: Om Prakash, Banta Singh, Narli, 2017

Even as we live through the 75th year of our independence, it's important never to forget the cost we paid for this freedom—the [Partition](#) of India into two countries leading to loss, displacement and a lifetime of longing for millions of people. Photographer Serena Chopra, commissioned by the Partition [Museum](#) in Amritsar, captured the realities of the era for this exhibition, resulting in a heart-tugging showcase of monochrome portraits of those who lived through the momentous event. Chopra, whose mother was born in Pakistan, managed to capture both on camera and in writing by way of interviews, the trauma and history of a partition that affected the socio-political journeys of two countries forever.

The photo exhibition can currently be viewed online [here](#)

Migrations by Praneet Soi at Vadehra Art Gallery, New Delhi



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artisans and craftsmen of Kashmir, and he continues to be inspired by his time in the valley of Srinagar. Soi's explorations took shape in his [creations](#) for this exhibition, where he showcases his ingenuity with form and pattern in each striking artwork. As the press note for the show explains, 'Soi's narratives are open-ended. Patterns serve as the ground upon which images, wrought in different registers, are laid out. Washes, patterns laid out in low relief and drawings, often executed en plein air mark a return to materiality, to the primacy of the hand'.

On view till December 31, 2021

Painted Stitches, Woven Stories, online show by MAP, Bengaluru



A kantha made by the maker 'kalachand' depicting scenes of daily life which was stitched in the 1980s under the guidance of Meera Mukherjee. Image courtesy of the Museum of Art & Photography (MAP), Bengaluru

The repurposing and recycling of old clothes or textiles isn't a new phenomenon—women from Indian households have been practicing this for years. The Museum of Art & Photography's online exhibition on kantha quilting practices, which opened in April this year, gave viewers a small glimpse of the history and delicate intricacies of this art. Co-curated by Arnika Ahldag and Vaishnavi Kambadur, the [exhibition](#) delved into the museum's own collection, showcasing interpretations of 19th and 20th-century kantha techniques along with works by modern and contemporary Indian artists. The exhibition included audio recordings, providing viewers with a multi-sensory experience as they discovered hidden secrets and fascinating stories of an almost-forgotten art form.

The exhibition can be viewed online [here](#)

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