

UNLOCKING ART

Museums and galleries are closed, but art certainly isn't. In this edition of 'Unlock Art', we have picked virtual fundraisers, exhibitions and sales that are happening in India and abroad. There's something for everyone here — a tutorial spanning 250 years of art history; exhibition-quality photo prints to get your art collection kickstarted; a homage to the great Indian master, Raja Ravi Varma; and, a sale of affordable works of art. All you need is your phone or laptop and your sense of curiosity.

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(Clockwise from above) Works titled *Coast is Clear*; 'Autopolisphilia Series #6' by Parag Tandel; *Blued 3* by Sameer Kulavoor; *Skin VIII* by Soghra Khurasani | Image courtesy: Tarq

RESURGENCE

Mumbai-based gallery Tarq's first online exhibition asks viewers to acknowledge the collective feeling of uncertainty and stillness that we have been catapulted into due to the pandemic. Titled 'Resurgence', the exhibition strikes its emphatic note through works by Apnavi Makanji, Aaditi Joshi, Clare Arni, Nibha Sikander, Parag Tandel, Ronny Sen, Sameer Kulavoor, Savia Mahajan, and Soghra Khurasani.

Thane-based Tandel draws from his background as a member of the Koli community to create eternal circles of fish in *Coast is Clear* (2020). Khurasani's landscape *Skin VIII* (2018), a woodcut print on paper with deep jewel tones, evokes the intimate connections between human bodies and nature. In *Blued 3* (2019), Kulavoor picks the colour of the ubiquitous tarp that springs up in cities during the monsoon to convey the practice of *jugaad*. In these works and the rest, the exhibition explores the balance between humans and nature, suggesting that uncertain times can also work as a healing interlude.

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Goethe in the Roman Campagna (1787) by Johann Heinrich Wilhelm Tischbein from the Städel Museum collection

ART HISTORY ONLINE

To walk through the Städel Museum in Frankfurt is to pass through 700 years of art under one roof. The same can be said of the museum's digital collection, where you can spend hours browsing through the works of old masters and contemporary pioneers.

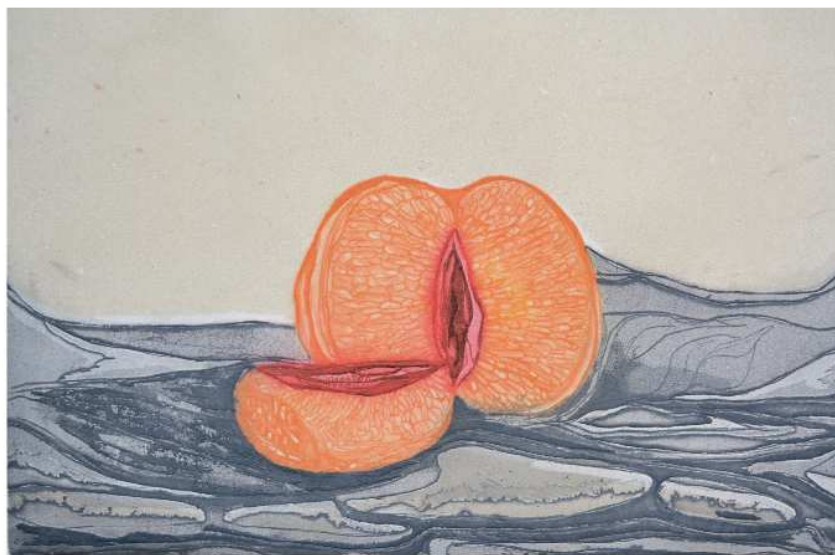
What's also recommended is signing up for the museum's free online course. A password and an email address, and off you go! Art History Online — The Städel Course on Modern Art uses 250 works from the museum's collection, taking learners from 1750 to the present. It manages to do so while keeping modules engaging, light yet informative, with some homework thrown in. The course owes some of its liveliness to Sebastian Blomberg, a stage and screen actor, who guides learners through each module, walking through the galleries and animatedly offering pointers. His original German is dubbed over in English, but that's hardly a problem. In any case, the battle against the virus must not deepen existing social fissures.

[SIGN UP FOR THE COURSE HERE:](#)



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Artwork (above, left) by Malabika Barman and Pranoti Malkute (top and right)

CARPE ARTE SUPPORTS

If you have been meaning to build your art collection, then start here. Carpe Arte, a Mumbai-based group that conducts free art walks and gallery hops, is running an online sale of artwork, each priced under Rs 5,000. The sale supports independent artists without gallery representation.

The affordable price range should be rather tempting, given that a startling variety of media is on offer — watercolour, acrylic, woodcut, aquatint and even tea. Purchasing these works is a series of simple steps, right from browsing them to directly paying the artist, all of which is explained on Carpe Arte's Instagram page. Payments have to be made within 24 hours, with dispatches expected when courier services resume fully. Carpe Arte has connected 25 artists with buyers and helped them sell 127 works till date.

The sale also seems to have a work from every genre imaginable — cityscapes and landscapes, still life and satire, abstract and figurative — but all of them with a quirkiness that will be essential to your art collection.

VISIT CARPE ARTE ON INSTAGRAM AT:

@carpearteofficial

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PRINTS FOR INDIA

Support the worst hit by the pandemic through 'Prints for India', a fundraiser that runs till May 22. The initiative comes from Guannan Li, Samuel Beech, Sigga Marrow, Verity Fitzgerald — four photographers who met during a Magnum workshop with noted photographer Martin Parr in New Delhi. The fundraiser has a collection of 70 images of India, as seen through the lens of a diverse set of photographers. Documentarian, artistic and poignant — the collection comes from photographers such as Akshay Mahajan, Deepti Asthana, Paromita Chatterjee, Vasantha Yoganathan and Arati Kumar-Rao, among others. The exhibition quality prints are priced at ₹80 each. Printing and shipping is managed by theprintspace in London. The net proceeds will go to the Rahat-19 program of GOONJ, which is currently running a pan-India aid mission for daily wagers, migrants, and the most vulnerable affected by the lockdown.



©Paromita Chatterjee/ Prints for India (top); © Marc Ressayg / Prints for India

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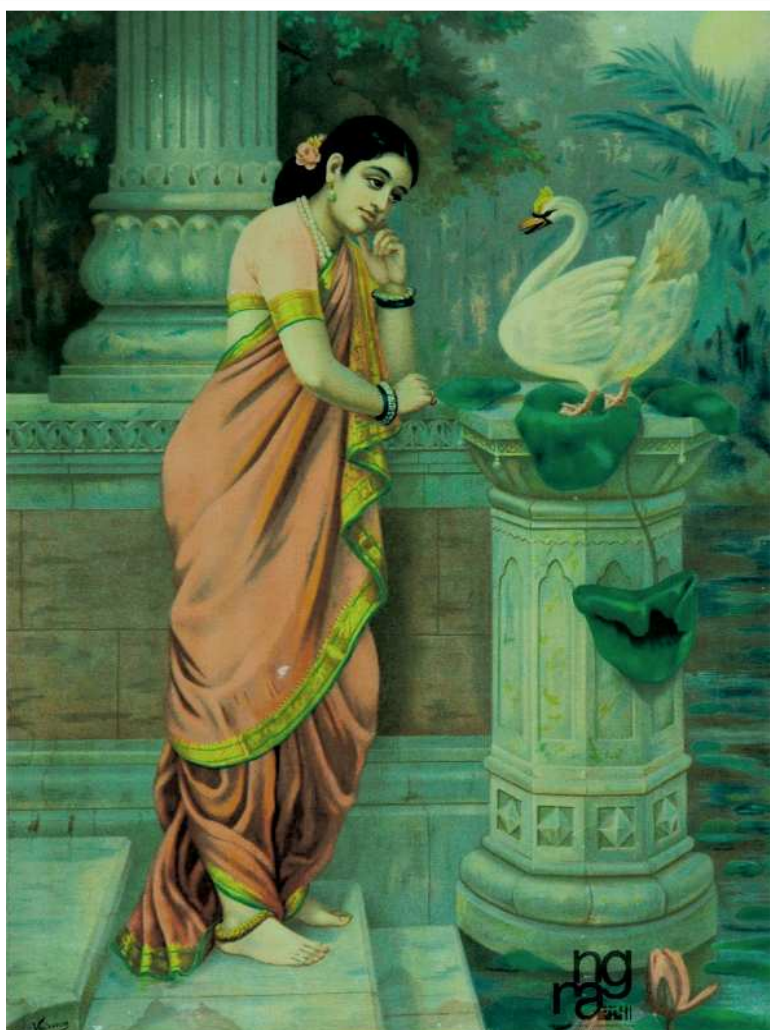


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CELEBRATING THE MASTER

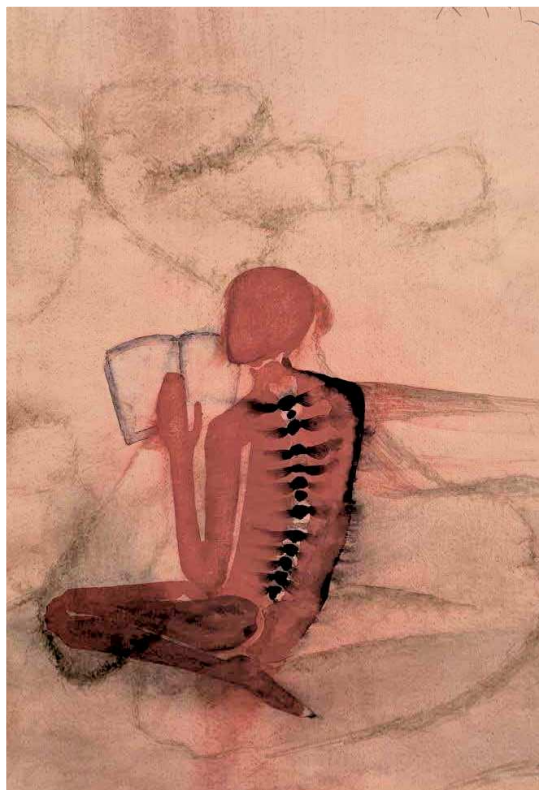
To mark Raja Ravi Varma's 172th birth anniversary on April 29, the National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA) is presenting a digital retrospective of his works from its reserve collection on its website. The showcase spans multiple mediums, from oleographs to oil on canvas, of the artist often described as 'The Father of Modern Indian Art'. "While Raja Ravi Varma stood at the transitional stage between Indian painting tradition and the emergence of Salon artists well-versed in European academic naturalism, he reconciled the aesthetic principles of both in his style," reads the concept note. The viewers are introduced to the numerous engagements of Varma and the wide array of his works, from portraiture, with works such as Portrait Of Rumbha and Vasantsena, to mythological depictions such as Menaka With Shakuntala and Kirat With Bhilmi On Mountain.



An untitled oleograph on paper by Raja Ravi Varma

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Atul Dodiya's watercolour and gouache on paper titled *Man Reading*

SHARING ART

FACILITATED BY the Foundation for Indian Contemporary Art, online fundraiser 'In it Together' has galleries and artists from different generations coming together to create an "art pool" where donors who contribute to the fund will receive an artwork in return. The artist-led initiative requests donors to contribute an amount in the given brackets, ranging from Rs 25,000 to Rs three lakh and above. A set of

works have been assigned for each bracket, and among the 55 artists who have pledged their works are Anju and Atul Dodiya, Nilima Sheikh, Manu Parekh, Vivan Sundaram, Sudhir Patwardhan, Shilpa Gupta, Jitish Kallat, Atul Bhalla and LN Tallur. A special online event will signal the end of the initiative, and the funds collected will be directed towards COVID-19 relief campaigns by Goonj and Karwan-e-Mohabbat.

FOR MORE DETAILS

