

THE SUNDAY READ

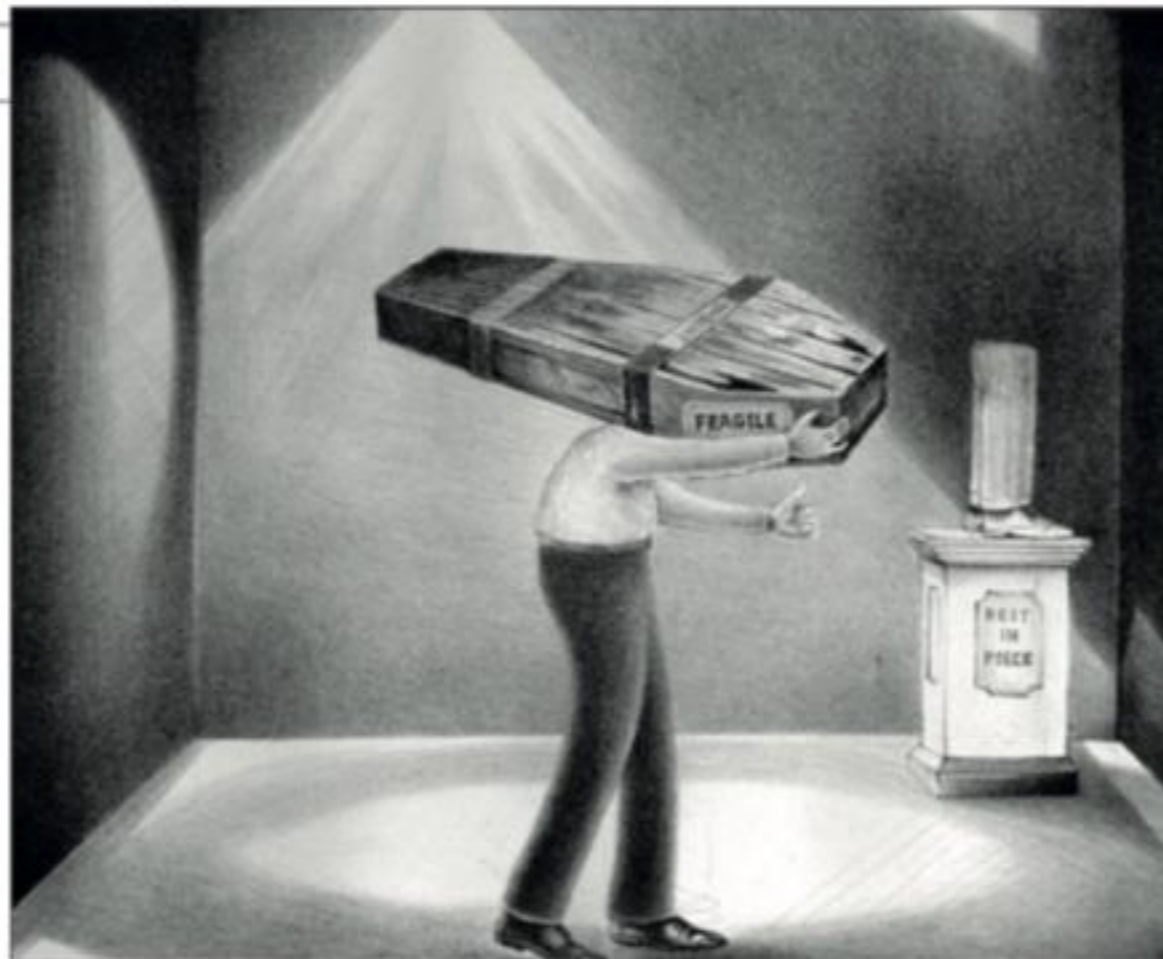
Young artists to watch out for

The Indian art scene is dominated by these dynamic 35 and under, who are pushing boundaries with style and innovation

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Innovation is pervading the country's art scene. Charting new paths with their explorations of everything from history and geometry to elements of everyday life, these are the most exciting talents that inhabit that world today.



Narayan Verma's lithography, 'A Game of Permutations & Combinations' (set of 15)

Abhishek Narayan Verma, 30, Baroda

Abhishek Narayan Verma, a gold medalist, who received a scholarship from the Ministry of Culture in 2014, completed his undergraduate education in fine arts from the College of Art in New Delhi in 2012. Three years later, he also acquired a Master's degree in visual arts (having majored in graphics) from The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda (MSU). The artist's solo show *Diary of an Idler*, at Baroda's Faculty of Fine Arts, was a part of the Purushottam Annual Merit Award ceremony for Printmaking for the 2015-2016 cycle. Narayan Verma had a humble upbringing in Bihar. His pursuit for heroes and ideals is visible in his work. "These can be those who live in myths, epics, and folklore — the stories one's grandmother shared," he says. "Although these stories end with a happily-ever-after to show others the 'right path', along the way, all the heroes of these stories struggle and experience feeling totally lost."



Rajyashri Goody, 29, Pune

Rajyashri Goody's art practice follows an unusual trajectory. She completed her BA in Sociology at Fergusson College in Pune, and received a Master's degree in visual anthropology from the Granada Centre for Visual Anthropology at the University of Manchester. Her practice is informed by her academic background and her Ambedkarite roots. Through a variety of media — writing, ceramics, video, photography and sculptural works made with found objects and food items — she attempts to make visible instances of everyday power and resistance within Dalit communities in India. Goody has been part of a powerful group exhibition *Sumata Samanta* at Delhi's Devi Art Foundation.



Bhagyashree Suthar, 29, Baroda

Born and brought up in Jodhpur, Rajasthan, in a family of furniture makers, Bhagyashree Suthar moved to Baroda where she completed undergraduate as well as postgraduate programmes in Fine Art at the Maharaja Sayajirao University. In Suthar's exquisite solo exhibition *Fields of Eros and Enchantment*, which opened earlier this year at Akara Art in Mumbai, it is evident that the artist's works are heavily influenced by architecture and robust geometric patterns in nature, which present a reflection of herself. She depicts utopian, fantastical worlds through beeswax sculptures, drawings and wax paintings, and is excited by the possibility of a future in which forms are idealistic.



Tanya Goel, 35, New Delhi

One of the unique aspects of Tanya Goel's work is that she makes her own pigments from assorted materials including charcoal, aluminium, concrete, glass, soil, mica, graphite and foils, many sourced from sites of architectural demolitions in and around New Delhi, where she lives. Goel is interested in the textures of her pigments as well as their colours, which is a direct result of how they reflect light. Having studied at the Faculty of Fine Arts, MS University, Baroda, and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, before completing her postgraduate education in fine arts from Yale University, Goel has had one solo show with Nature Morte in New Delhi (2017) and two with Galerie Mirchandani + Steinruecke in Mumbai. The artist, who participated in both the Sydney and Gwangju Biennales in 2018, is interested in the idea of the screen, which painting has always been analogous with. Her work also features in the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, PA.

Saubiya Chasmawala, 30, Baroda

Her second solo exhibition, *Batin* at Tarq in Mumbai (2019) was the result of an intuitive, almost meditative mark making process. The recipient of the prestigious Nasreen Mohamedi Scholarship Award and Inlaks Fine Art Award, Chasmawala currently practices in Vadodara at her personal studio. Her unique approach to abstraction, form and texture may have been the result of the combination of a desire to specialise in painting and a Master's degree in visual arts (from Baroda's Maharaja Sayajirao University). Chasmawala has interned under the paper-artist Anupam Chakraborty in hand paper-making at the Nirupama Akademi, Kolkata. She has also participated in various group shows such as *In letter and spirit*, TARQ, Mumbai (2016); 'Reading Room,' which was a travelling exhibition curated by Amit Jain, Winchester School of Art, University of Southampton, United Kingdom (2015) and New York (2016).



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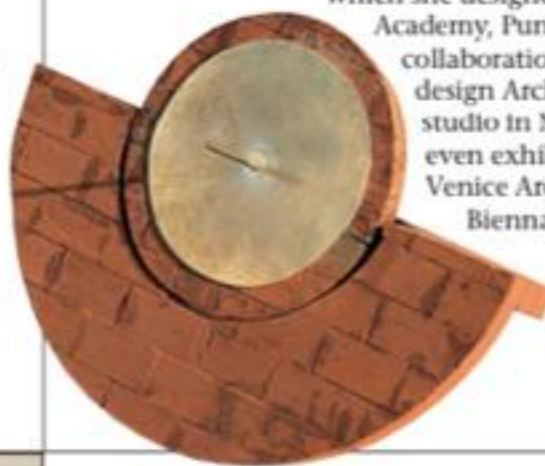


Ayesha Singh, 29, New Delhi

The cityscape of New Delhi was Ayesha Singh's muse when she created works for her 2019 solo exhibition *It Was Never Concrete* at Shrine Empire Gallery in New Delhi. The artist, who holds a Master of Fine Arts degree in sculpture from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and an undergraduate degree from the Slade School of Fine Art, London, peeled the city she had spent her childhood in through architecture. Singh's interdisciplinary practice lays emphasis on movement and displacement. Her work questions social hierarchies, political agendas and subconscious value systems placed on ornamentation, design and material in architectural pastiches that construct our cities and homes.

Teja Gavankar, 34, Mumbai

Teja Gavankar's interest lies in using drawings to aestheticise and transform mundane spaces. The artist says, "I want to question perception, identity and psychic situations like attitude, memory, fear and change." Gavankar earned a postgraduate degree in visual arts from the Faculty of Fine Arts, MSU Baroda was awarded the Nasreen Mohamedi award for her MVA display at MSU Baroda, in 2014. She had her first international solo show at Optica in Montreal, has been part of several group shows since. The educational instruments (based on astronomy), which she designed for Avasara Academy, Pune in



A miniature sundial model for Venice Architecture Biennale 2018



Biraaj Dodiya, 27, Mumbai

With her debut solo, *Stone is a Forehead*, which opened early this month at Experimenter Gallery in Kolkata, the daughter of the contemporary art world's superstar couple Atul and Anju Dodiya, Biraaj Dodiya, carved her own mark in this sphere. Armed with a postgraduate degree in fine arts from New York University, and an undergraduate degree from School Of The Art Institute Of Chicago — with an emphasis in painting and drawing — Dodiya is interested in metaphors that develop through modes of making (processes of breakdown and repair), where erasure of meaning becomes a process of negotiating with time.



Rithika Merchant, 33, Mumbai and Barcelona

Rithika Merchant's works explore epics and myths. The artist is fascinated by the common thread that runs through different cultures and religions. She writes on her website: "Each piece is a totem that invites the viewer to stitch together their own narrative, drawing on collective memories and signifiers to generate meanings." After graduating with a Bachelor's Degree in fine arts from Parsons — The New School for Design, New York, Merchant has exhibited her works extensively. Her Mumbai solo show 'Where the Water Takes Us', was held at TARQ in 2017. Recently, Merchant collaborated with the French fashion house, Chloé, to create a series of illustrations, which formed the print identity of the brand's collection at Paris Fashion Week.



Utkarsh Makwana, 31, Baroda

Last year, Colaba's Akara Art marked their 10th anniversary celebration with a debut solo show *The Wonder Journal* by artist Utkarsh Makwana. Mainly comprising watercolours and gouache on paper, the exhibition depicted the wonder of everyday realities, drawing inspiration from myths and folklore in the form of colourful geometric compositions. Makwana, who holds a Masters' degree in visual arts (with a major in painting) from MSU Baroda, takes reference from miniature traditions. His works question everyday realities while navigating through philosophy and comedy. The artist explores the wonder that's to be found in the ordinary and mundane. Historical and mythological references also make it into his thought-provoking works.



Prabhakar Pachpute, 34, Pune

Ever since his debut solo at Clark House Initiative in 2012, Prabhakar Pachpute has steadfastly emerged as one of the most important artists of this generation. Raised in a family of miners in Maharashtra's Chandrapur district, his work — stunning charcoal drawings, paintings and sculptures — reflect on complex relationships between human, social, economic and political crosscurrents that are at play in the battle for resource, ecology and power. *Beneath The Palpable*, his show at Kolkata's Experimenter Gallery in January this year, reflected Pachpute's on-going interest in mining politics, farmers' movements and of the man-nature conflict. Pachpute has also shown his work at Kochi Muziris Biennale and Bunkier Sztuki, Krakow Poland.



Behera's lithography & watercolour in paper

Subrat Kumar Behera, 31, Baroda

Subrat Kumar Behera takes inspiration from religious tales, mythological stories, folk tales, and day to day news. As evident in the the last group show he participated in at Delhi's Gallery Latitude 28, *The Print: Matter in Matrix*, the artist examines the making of myths, the subjectivity of which borrows from early modern to contemporary history. His work oscillates between using art to tell a personal story and using it to establish universal credence. This comes from his childhood experience of listening to his grandmother's stories of Indian mythology, and Panchatantra tales.

