

One Year of SAC Art Amsterdam

MY VEINS DON'T END IN ME

Aditi Singh
Amina Ahmed
Tanuja Rane
Varunika Saraf

South
Asian
Contemporary
Art
Amsterdam

‘My veins don’t end in me’ is an exploration of the powerful bond between the self and the collective. This all women's group show by Aditi Singh (Mumbai), Amina Ahmed (New York), Tanuja Rane (Mumbai) and Varunika Saraf (Hyderabad) includes works that speak of the artists' individual experiences and also of a larger story of their exploration of art through the realms of identity, protest, resilience, beauty.

The works unfold in quiet, powerful rhythm: the focussed geometry of line, the fluid invocation of water, the tensile strength of thread, and the layered surfaces of time. Together, they offer a vision of beauty.

Marking one year of South Asian Contemporary Art Amsterdam (SAC), this exhibition is also a celebration of friendship, solidarity, and shared growth. Born from an Indo-Dutch relationship shaped by migration, kinship, and care, SAC Art Amsterdam continues to be a space where stories intertwine and collective memory finds form.

ADITI SINGH

Mumbai

Aditi Singh (b. 1976) is a South Asian contemporary artist whose practice has travelled widely—Singh’s works are held in several public and private collections, including the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Bob Davoli Collection, Boston, Reliance Foundation, and the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art, New Delhi. She has been the recipient of a Ford Fellowship and studied painting at the New York Studio School of Painting, Drawing & Sculpture, subsequently earning an M.F.A. at the University of Pennsylvania in 2001.

Her paintings unfold slowly, inviting a kind of attention that listens as much as it looks. “What I’m working with now is the feeling of time, not measured, but felt. Like entering a body of water, where something ancient within us already knows how to move.” Her practice, rooted in meditation and process, brings together precision and presence. Her line is patient, and a quiet strength in the spaces around and in between.

In Singh’s work, time becomes a shared space—fluid, continuous, and intimately sensed. Drawing from breathwork and the cyclical patterns of the natural world, her practice gently dissolves the self into something larger: rhythms, echoes, and interdependencies that stretch beyond the individual. Line, colour, and space move in relation—never fixed, always Becoming. Her drawings offer a kind of stillness that makes room for return, for resonance, for remembering. They remind us that in turning inward, we also open outward—to something vast, connected, and enduring.



SEPERATION

2024

Ink on washi paper

11" x 8"

28 x 20cm

ADITI SINGH

Become Becoming, 2022

Ink on Paper

30 x 50 inches

127 x 76cm

“In recent years, I have come to recognise Time as a presence with its own agency.

My engagement with Time began while looking at a landscape and while working with my Breath in Pranayama. The patterns in the Natural world, where renewal and decay are part of an ephemeral, continuous cycle, to ponder Time’s largeness, its unknowability, and its imperviousness to us, is what draws me into a deeper conversation with the material and immaterial.

And for me, what is more foundational than time? Time is so simple and common, yet anything but. In Pranayama, inhaling, holding, and exhaling one’s breath is how time is fluid in the body and mind. It allows me to remain still, step into a subtle awareness, and create a gap, a distance, between myself and the world, where things can emerge at will.

The painting ‘Become Becoming’ allows me to churn paint, stir it into a density, where line shape, colour, and space are interdependent, not fragmented or compartmentalised, but an invitation for the eye to wander and seek an interplay of relationships, an endless turning of the wheel, allowing for both call and echo to dwell at once.”



AMINA AHMED

New York

Amina Ahmed (b. 1964, East Africa) is a multidisciplinary artist working across painting, printmaking, and textiles. Of Kutchi-Indian, Turkic, and Nubian heritage, she grew up in England and now lives in the USA. She studied at Winchester School of Art and Chelsea School of Art before earning an MA in Visual Islamic and Traditional Arts from the Royal College of Art. Amina's work has been exhibited at Jhaveri Contemporary Mumbai, Nottingham Contemporary (UK), the Latvian Centre for Contemporary Art (Riga), The Showroom (London), Queens Museum of Art (NY), Twelve Gates Gallery and Pearlstein Gallery (PA).

Amina's practice is rooted in geometry and in the alchemy of material preparation—making pigments, inks, threads, and paper as acts of remembrance. She engages with colour as a living language; continually drawing from the patterns witnessed in nature and in folk traditions where making is a form of embodied knowledge. Her work moves through the landscape of the heart, the tree, and the mind—between rhythm and pattern—as a way of remembering, of becoming whole, and of tracing our place within a primordial migratory language. For Amina, the outward process of making—the alchemy of material preparation—is also an inward journey. Her work maps intertextuality; transposing elements into a field of remembering, where displacement, transition, and transformation converge. She moves through these relations as a forest walker.

“Drawing is one of the ways I remember.”

Amina Ahmed

Madad Indigo II

2016

Gum tempera on handmade paper

17.7 x 13.3 inches

45 x 34cm

Compelled by the simplicity of old Iraqi script, I practiced the letters in repeated formation—the words read Madad, written with the Arabic letters meem, dal, dal. Madad, though it means “help,” carries a deeper invocation, a fervent call for the extension of saving grace. At times, the formation takes the shape of a body—a head, torso, legs, a woman in a skirt, a procession, birds, fish, a protest—transforming through each marked iteration. The first letter’s sound, mm, is primordial—a vibration between the lips, a sound of comfort, a longing for safety. Only when safety is felt can the sound be released, carrying its essence into the alchemy of invocation. The second letters, d’d shaped by the palate and tongue, create an intimate vibration—connecting breath to heart to body— calling, beseeching with the whole breath.



Amina Ahmed

Underneath Which River Flow II

2016

Medium: Compass and Cobalt blue gum tempera on Indigo paper

17.7 x 13.3 inches

45 x 34cm

In Sufi tradition, Blue is the symbol of infinite mercy, the eightfold pattern symbolises the archetype of the throne, upheld by eight angels, also known as the Star of Bethlehem of Palestine and a fountain at the centre of chahar bagh- a fourfold garden underneath which rivers flow. Four rivers, flowing rivers of milk, of honey, of water and of wine. The eightfold structure consists of a dynamic and a static square; when they overlap, they form the eightfold pattern. The four points of the squares correspond to the cardinal directions—north, south, east, west, and the four elements—earth, air, water, and fire. Indigo and Cobalt blue presently symbolise the duality of burden and beauty, bearing witness to a lasting impact of colonialism and exploitation of communities and environments that continue to haunt Congo's rich earth. I strive to use this majestic blue colour with gratitude and respect.



Amina Ahmed

Reverberations - The Return Journey

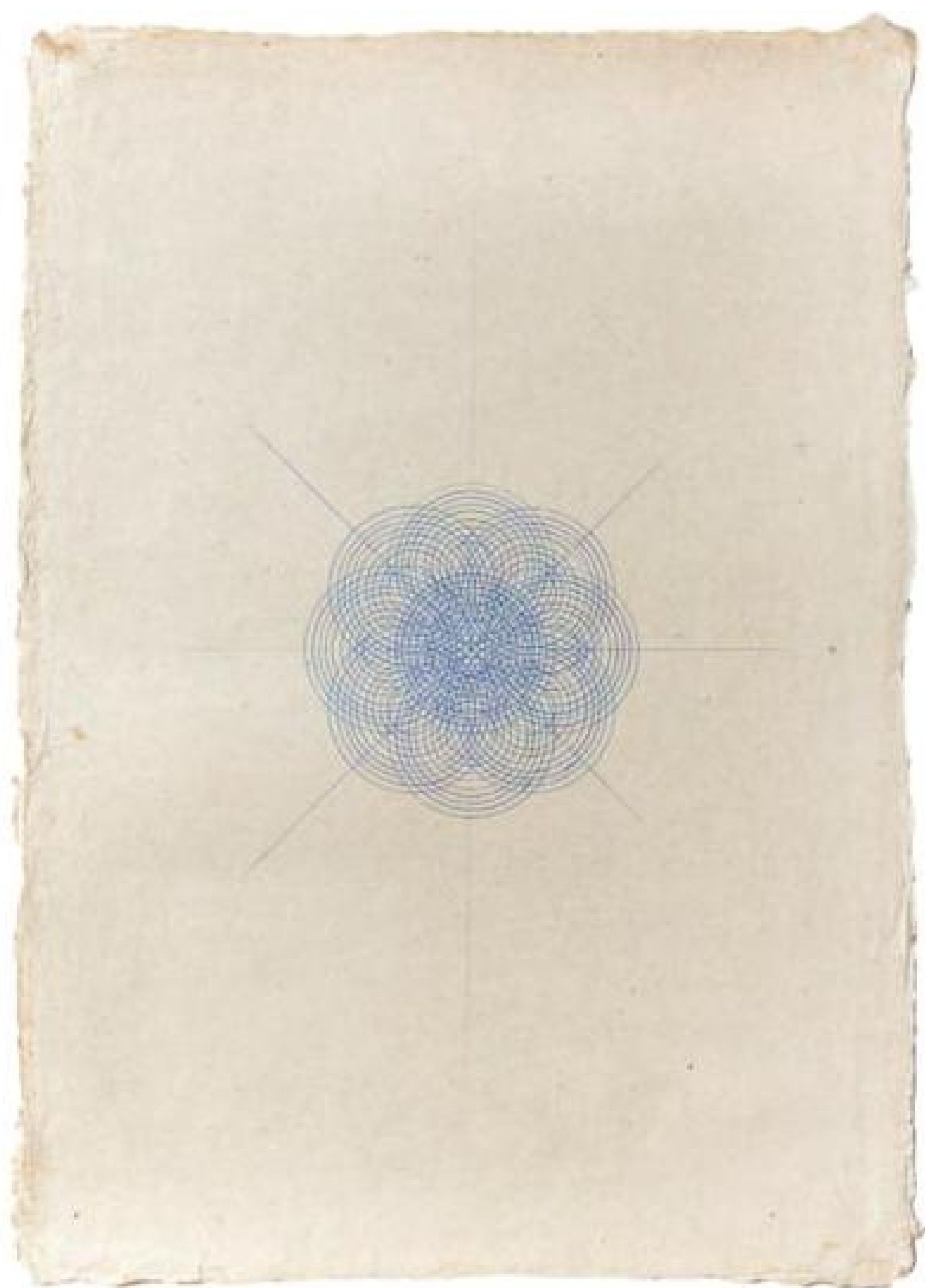
2016

Compass and blue pigment on paper

21 x 15 inches

53 x 38cm

More than half of the human body is composed of water. Creation myths evoke the primordial reality that we are embodiments of whence we come, each of us being nurtured and encased in the protective, membranous, water-filled envelope of our conceptions. These parallels become significant in the perpetual physical manifestation of our post-womb existence, extending deep into the natural world we observe and innately remember. One of these natural scenes is the archetypically romanticised yet profound movement of a drop of water into another body of water. Though the droplet immediately re-assimilates, it strikes a silent frequency upon an axis of contact, realized in the subsequent formation of concentric circles, expanding as a reverberative oscillation ad infinitum. Within a body of water constrained by its shores, these reverberations continue to ripple outwards and inwards from the initial point of impact; the polar source being Divine, and the continual wavering being our own return to the primordial essence. Hence the sanctum suspended over our mothers' plane of gravity, the womb itself, is the destination of our aqueous return; the unrelenting rhythmic memory subconsciously embedded and embodied.



Amina Ahmed

Wewe Na Mimi

1989–2023

Fabric dye on velvet, cotton thread, and kitenge

28.9 x 21.2 inches

74 x 54cm

I don't finish a work—I simply stop. It's a process, much like revisiting paintings. This velvet fabric was painted during my MA; I spent an entire winter break in the studio, playing with paint on velvet. Years later, I found that Ma (my mother) had cut one of my paintings into small pieces and quilted it into a cushion. She was sitting on it—marvellous! A lesson in curbing the ego. We laughed so much that day. I asked Ma to teach me a quilting method she had learned in Congo from her mother. The threads are hand-sewn and knotted, forming small squares as they align. In Swahili, We Na Mimi means 'You and I'. The patterned cloth on the back is kitenge—a textile with African origins and a complex colonial history, a symbol of cultural identity and resilience.



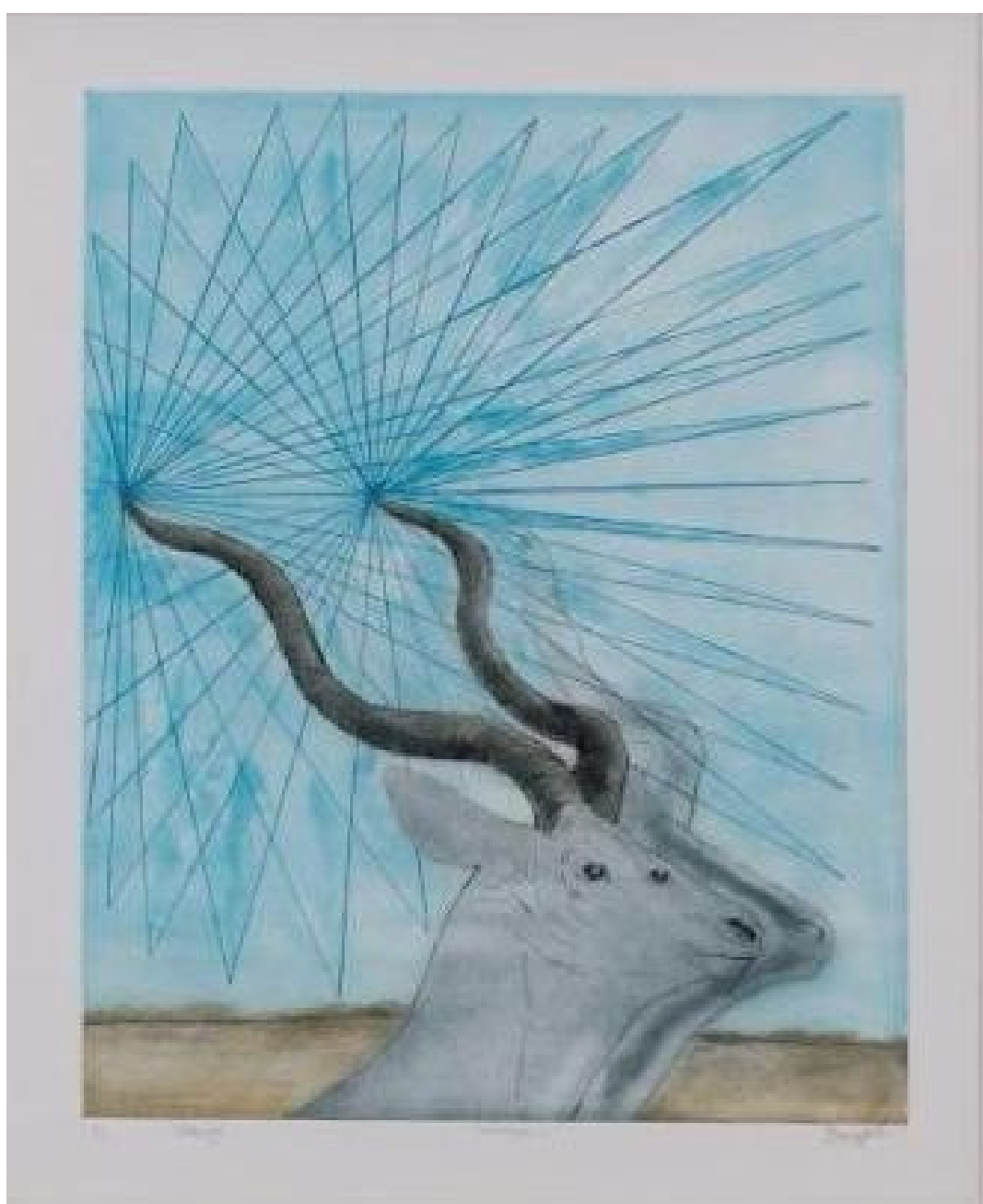
TANUJA RANE

Mumbai

Tanuja Rane's (b. 1976) work transcends the traditional boundaries of printmaking, blending fragility with strength through the delicate etching technique she has honed for over twenty years. She draws on themes of movement, spirituality, and the interplay of internal and external energies. Rane's art is influenced by the chakra system and its focus on energy flow and balance. The works curated for this show weave together a living system of energy, transformation, and symbolism through chakra-animal connections, where the antelope represents the heart chakra.

In the past year, Rane has found herself asking the question, "What is the truth of my birth or my existence, and how will I be able to complete it?" Deeply moving, this sentiment echoes through the complex layers of her work and parallelly through the voices of millions of women as they transition through the different phases and ages of their own lives.

Rane has a BFA Fine Art and MA Fine Art from Sir J. J. School of Art, Mumbai. She worked at the Glasgow print studio on a residency and at Ratamo Centre for Printmaking and Photography, Jyväskylä, Finland. Her printmaking has been widely exhibited at Chemould Prescott Road, Mumbai, the Sharjah Art Museum in the UAE, and at prestigious biennales and international shows, including the Triennale Mondiale De L'Estampe in France and the 16th Biennale Internationale de la Gravure de Sarcelles, the Bihar Museum as part of IPEP's celebration, Bharat Bhavan International Biennial of print-art, Bhopal, the Mumbai Art Fair and the India Art Fair.



UNTITLED
2022
Etching and colour intaglio
Edition 2/5
18" x 14"
46 x 36cm



UNTITLED
2022
Etching and colour intaglio
Edition 2/5
18" x 14"
46 x 36cm

Tanuja Rane

AN ANGEL

2009

Etching, line drawing, aqua tints and colour intaglio printed on somerset handmade paper

Artist Print 1 /2 | Edition of 5

56" x 36"

142 x 92cm

Energies are within us – the most intimate and profound. I have always been supported with some energies around me; they are in the form of Angels – disguised, unknown, mystifying always in a new appearance.

Here in this work I have tried to show this intimate energy in the form of an Antelope as it's the animal that symbolises the lightness of physical substance and is also associated animal to the heart chakra (Chakras are psychic centres that lie along the axis of the spine as consciousness potentials. The chakras are not materially real and are to be understood as situated, not in the gross body, but in the subtle or etheric body. Repositories of psychic energies, they govern the whole condition of being. From where the energy flows everyone and everything.

Antelope shown in a very pure form. The choice of the antelope as a representation of lightness and the heart chakra, it is powerful and conveys a sense of grace, fluidity, and connection to something beyond the physical.

Also the antelope, depicted with its skeletal structure visible, gives a sense of both physicality and transcendence. The golden wings and halo reinforce its ethereal, angelic quality, while the desert-like landscape creates a vast, open space that feels both grounding and otherworldly.

The contrast between the dark body and the luminous wings suggests a duality—perhaps between the material and the spiritual, or between seen and unseen energies.

Angels come to us any time and in any form, as ever-changing and appearing in different forms aligns beautifully with the idea that energy is always around us, supporting and guiding us in ways we may not immediately recognise, just awareness is necessary.



Tanuja Rane

Mirroring Minds I

2025

Etching

Edition 1/5

7" x 9"

18 x 23cm

This print explores the connection between the sacral and third eye chakras through a symbolic scene: a crocodile gazing into a mirror, where its reflection appears different, evoking emotional complexity, self-confrontation, and identity shifts tied to the sacral chakra. Hovering above, a moth symbolises the transformative process and intuitive insight of the third eye. Together, they illustrate a journey of inner reckoning and metamorphosis, where raw emotion meets higher perception.

Mirroring Minds II

2025

Etching

Edition 1/5

7" x 9"

18 x 23cm

This etching presents a symbolic encounter between the grounded force of the ram and the airy presence of the hummingbird. Representing the solar plexus and throat chakras respectively, they embody a dialogue between inner will and outward expression — a meditation on strength meeting voice, fire meeting air.



MIRRORING MINDS I



MIRRORING MINDS II

Tanuja Rane

Mirroring Minds III

2025

Etching

Edition 1/5

7" x 9"

18 x 23cm

The crocodiles leaping to meet the moths reflect a powerful union of primal and ethereal energies. Their mirrored gesture in the sky symbolises harmony between instinct and intuition, grounding and transcendence—different forces resonating on the same energetic plane.

Mirroring Minds IV

2025

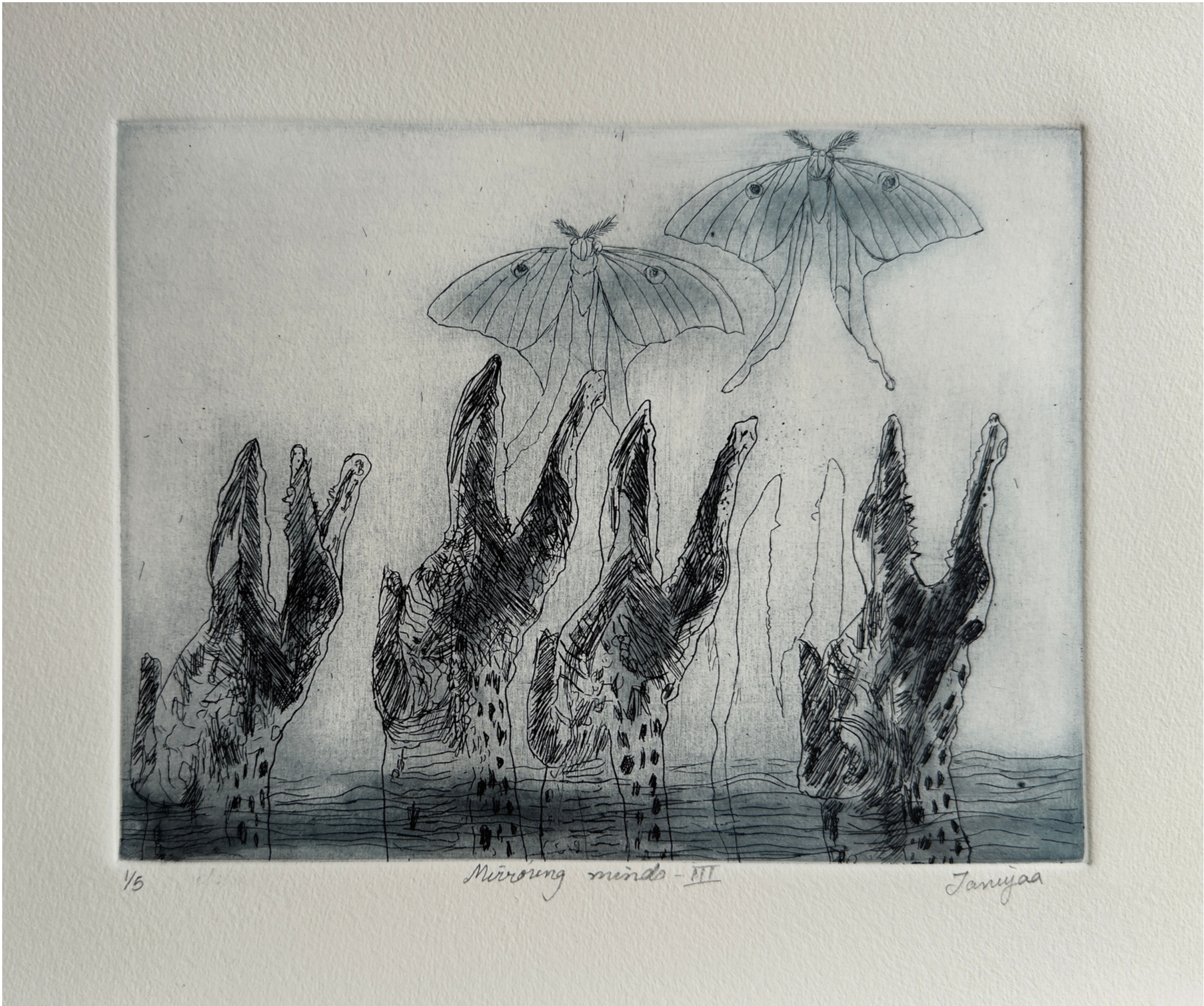
Etching

Edition 1/5

7" x 9"

18 x 23cm

Explores the symbolic bridge between the root and crown chakras. The rhinoceros represents grounded strength and primal energy, while the butterfly evokes fragility, transformation, and higher consciousness. Together, they reflect the union of earth and spirit—anchoring presence while reaching toward transcendence.



MIRRORING MINDS III



MIRRORING MINDS IV

VARUNIKA SARAF

Hyderabad

Varunika Saraf (b.1981) is an artist and art historian who creates multi-layered works that engage with contemporary political and social realities. Her ongoing Jugni series, a tribute to rebellious women, subverts traditional Russian embroidered icons of the Madonna. Working with watercolours enhanced by threads, French wire, crystals, seed pearls, and metallic woven fabric (*gota*), Saraf reclaims the visual language of devotion to illuminate women's agency as active forces of resistance and change. In her hands, beauty becomes a tool for protest—a way to explore resilience, history, and transformation.

Saraf's exhibitions include solo shows such as *Caput Mortuum* (2021) at Chemould Prescott Road, Mumbai, and participation in prestigious international events like the Sharjah Biennale (2023), Art Basel (Basel and Hong Kong), and exhibitions at SOAS, London and in Australia. Her work resonates with collectors and institutions, reflecting the complex interplay between culture, history, and societal change. She has received the Amol Vadehra Art Grant (2016) and was the Summer Research Fellow at the Getty Research Institute, Visiting Fellow at Kunsthistorisches Institut, Florence, NTICVA Visiting Fellow at the V&A Museum and the CWIT fellow at the CSAS, University of Cambridge.

Varunika Saraf

JUGNI

2025

Watercolour and embroidery with seed pearls and metallic thread, woven fabric

10" x 8"

25 x 20cm

This series, a set of watercolours embellished with incandescent threads, crystals, French wire and seed pearls on metallic woven fabric (gota), is a tribute to all the Jugnis – rebels. Subverting the language of Russian embroidered icons of the Madonna, these embroideries play on the language of veneration to draw attention to women's agency. These works emphasise that women are active political and social change agents and highlight that women hold up more than half of the sky.



JUGNI I

2025

Watercolour and embroidery with seed pearls
and metallic thread woven fabric

10" x 8"

25 x 20cm



JUGNI II

2025

Watercolour and embroidery with seed pearls
and metallic thread woven fabric

10" x 8"

25 x 20cm



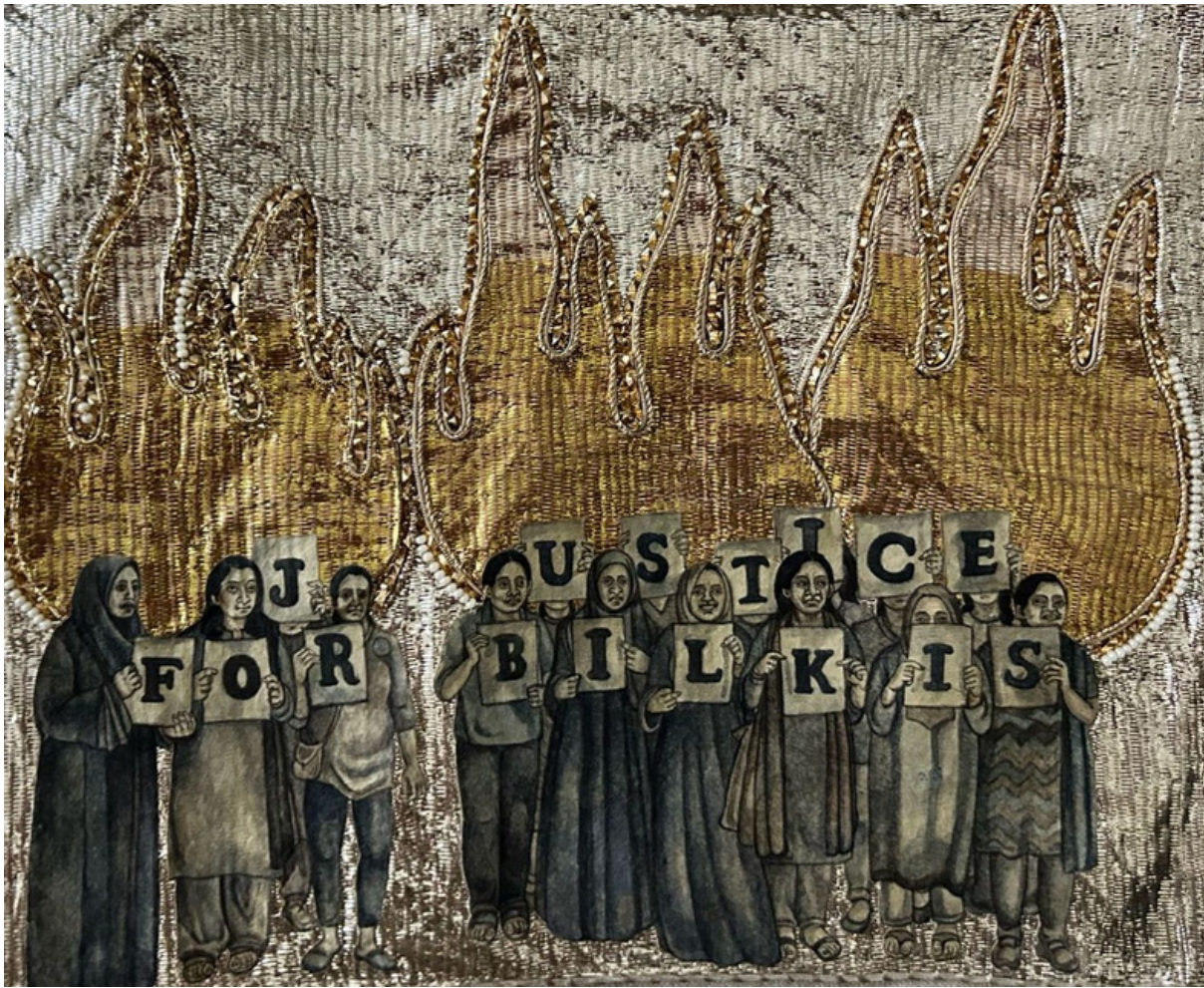
JUGNI III

2025

Watercolour and embroidery with seed pearls
and metallic thread woven fabric

10" x 8"

25 x 20cm



JUGNI IV

2025

Watercolour and embroidery with
seed pearls and metallic thread
woven fabric

10" x 8"

25 x 20cm



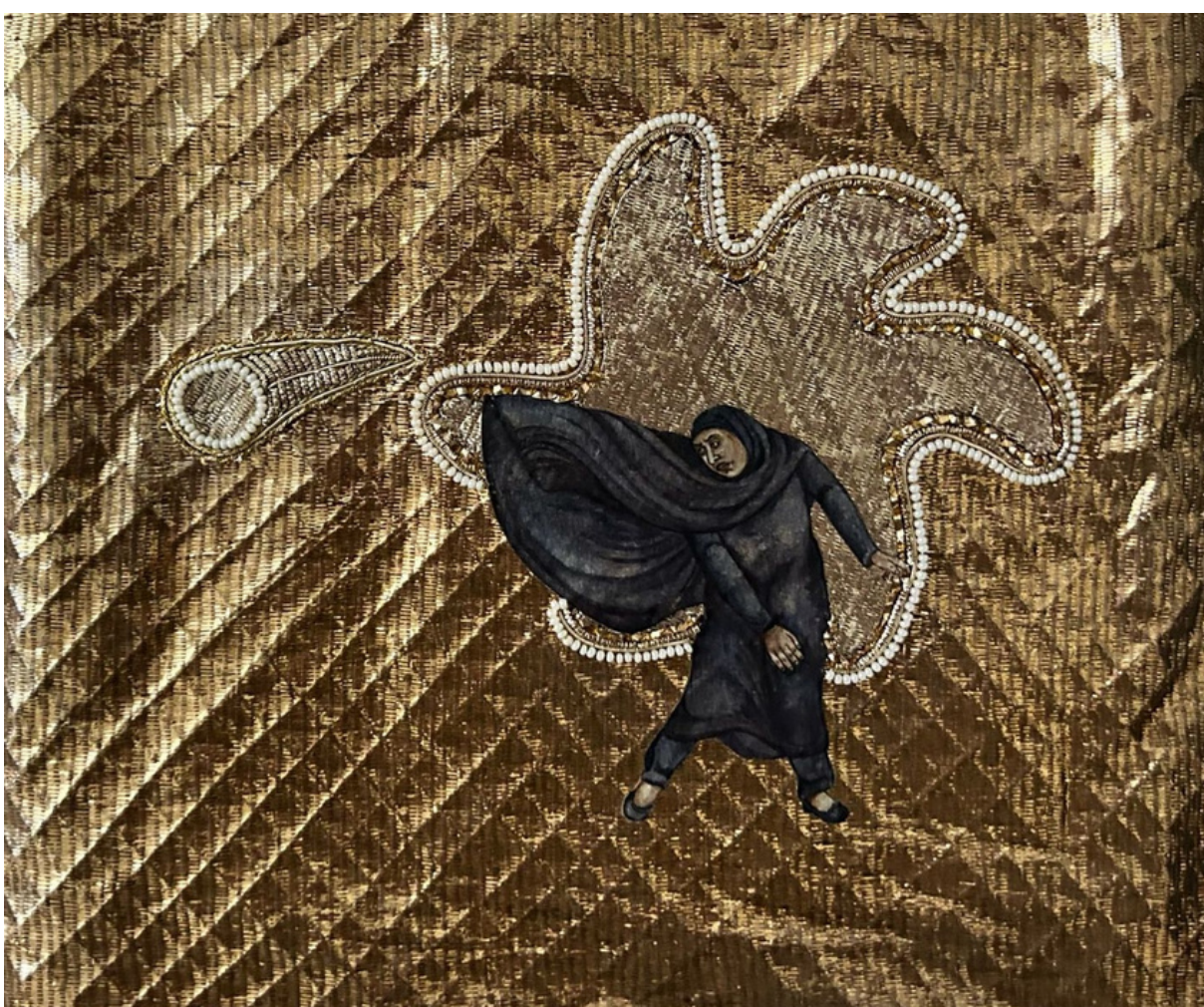
JUGNI V

2025

Watercolour and embroidery with
seed pearls and metallic thread
woven fabric

10" x 8"

25 x 20cm



JUGNI VI

2025

Watercolour and embroidery with
seed pearls and metallic thread
woven fabric

10" x 8"

25 x 20cm

This catalogue features content from SAC Art Amsterdam, showcasing the work of the gallery and its exhibitions.

Established by Tasneem Hatimbhai in June 2024, SAC Art Amsterdam specialises in modern and contemporary art from India and South Asia, aiming to raise awareness and foster international recognition for artists from South Asia and its diaspora and its diaspora.

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Designed by Rhea Susan John.

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