

RAZIA BARSATIE

RUCHA KULKARNI

CHOREOGRAPHIES OF COMPLIANCE:
20.02.2026

BETWEEN ALLOWANCE AND ACCEPTANCE
07.04.2026

Choreographies of Compliance: Between Allowance and Acceptance

Bringing together the practices of Razia Barsatie from Suriname and Rucha Kulkarni from India, the exhibition forms a charged spatial threshold, the “space in-between” where bodies carry histories that have travelled through time and distance, transformed, and settled into the present. The exhibition approaches femininity not as a fixed identity, but as a condition shaped through rules and allowances, permissions and acceptances, repetitions and restraints, silences and embodied negotiations.

Within this terrain, the body is encountered as both site and archive. Skin, breath, fabric, gesture, and rhythm register what culture inscribes through ritual, labour, belief, and displacement. Memory is not only recalled but physically held, embedded in cycles, domestic practices, and unspoken expectations carried across generations and geographies. These inscriptions do not dissolve; they accumulate, creating pressure, friction, and moments of pause.

As one moves through the exhibition, the works oscillate between interior and exterior states – both literal and metaphorical. Gendered experience unfolds across borders shaped by migration, colonial histories, and cultural inheritance. In India, femininity is tightly woven into daily rituals of the body and voice. In Suriname, these inherited structures carry strong ancestral traces that didn't shift with distance and time but remained wedged in daily life. Across both contexts, the body remains permeable, allowing subconscious damage, ancestral memory, and emotional residue to surface gradually.

Domestic materials and ritualised actions anchor these negotiations. Gestures associated with care, protection, and belonging hover (too) close to expectation. Agency itself appears permeable – like the works which are translucent, layered and fluid – present but elusive. Stories surface indirectly, through bodies, materials, and collective processes, or remain folded beneath layers of silence. What can be shown, what can be thought, and what one dares to feel is continuously recalibrated and negotiated.

Rather than framing compliance as submission, the exhibition understands it as a lived choreography shaped by culture, displacement, gender, memory and time. Allowance becomes a conscious positioning within existing structures, while acceptance reveals itself as something learned, practised, and carried forward. The space between them is not empty, but resonant and charged - a threshold that holds tension and possibility, where resistance persists quietly through endurance, reworking, and the ongoing act of being.

Razia Barsatie

1982 | Paramaribo, Suriname

Razia Barsatie is a visual artist whose practice explores sensory experience, cultural memory, and the opening up of conversations around taboo subjects. Working with scent, video animation, drawing, and ecological materials, she builds emotional landscapes informed by her Surinamese heritage. Flour (*atta*), which transforms into *roti* (flat bread), along with herbs and spices that sit at the centre of every meal, plays a central role in her work, serving as both material and metaphor to examine the relationship between the conscious, unconscious, and subconscious.

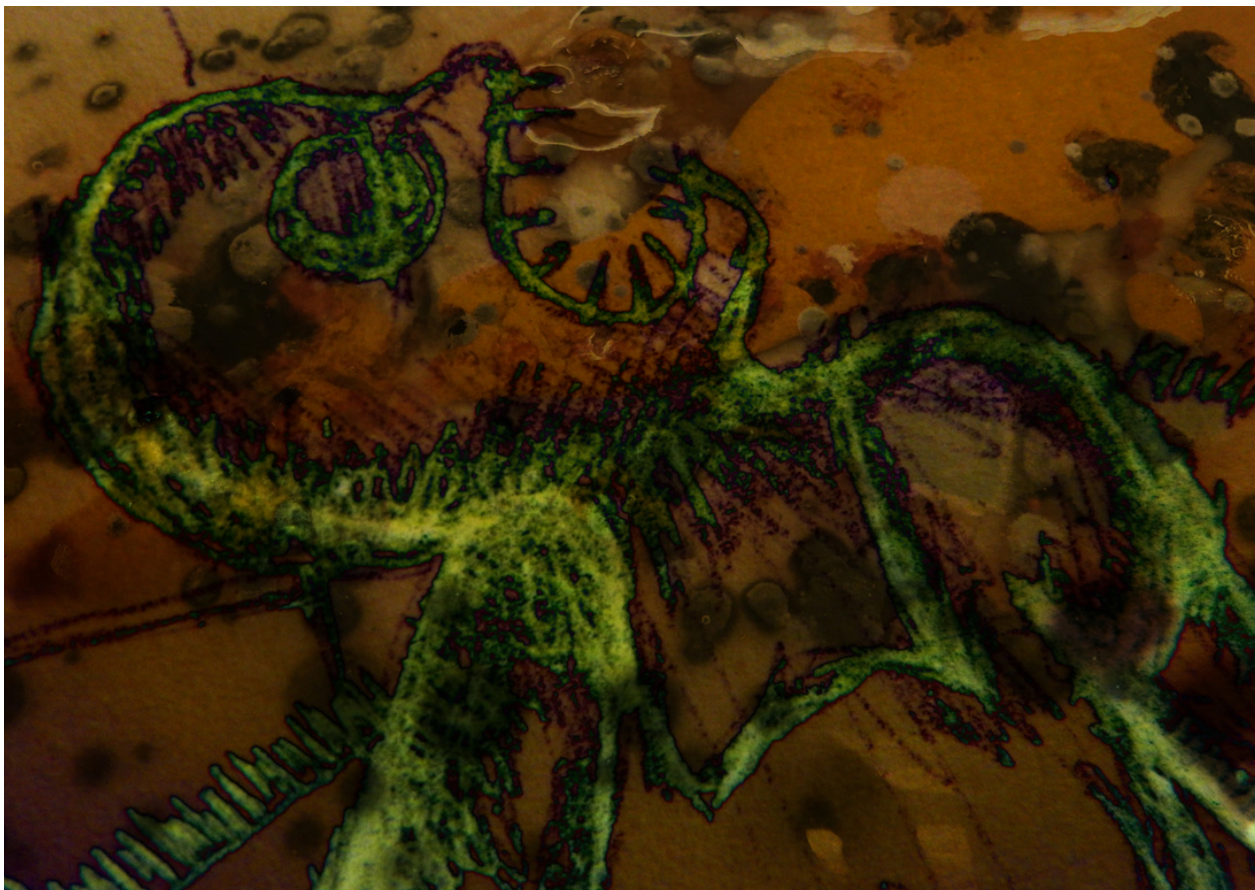
Barsatie's material research includes developing tapioca starch into an environmentally friendly resin, allowing her to create translucent surfaces for drawing and storytelling. Her practice challenges restrictive cultural norms, addressing themes of emotion, gender, and inherited traditions.

She has participated in residencies at the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten (Amsterdam), K.N.U.S.T Kumasi (Ghana), CARMA (French Guiana), the Thami Mnyele Foundation (Amsterdam), and Caribbean Linked III (Aruba). Her work has been shown at the Buro Stedelijk in Stedelijk Museum (Amsterdam), Suriname Museum (Amsterdam), Art in Singlepark (Leiden) and Nieuwe Kerk (Amsterdam).

Barsatie is a graduate of the Gerrit Rietveld Academie and works between Suriname and the Netherlands.

“This body of work emerges from my experience of growing up as a daughter within a religious Muslim household, where obedience and restriction shaped both identity and belonging. Choosing to step outside these imposed structures required distancing myself from loved ones and confronting feelings of guilt, loss, and responsibility. Rather than expressing regret, I take ownership of my mistakes and emotions, transforming them through repetition into a personal mantra that allows healing and release. Materials such as cultivated fungus, transparent sheets, epoxy surfaces, turmeric, and blauwsel mirror this process of exposure and decay. Turmeric is known for its persistent staining, marking surfaces in ways that cannot be fully erased; within the work, it becomes a metaphor for damage within the inner world that may fade over time but never entirely disappears. In Surinamese culture, blauwsel is traditionally used for cleansing and protection; its inclusion reinforces the work’s engagement with purification, responsibility, and farewell. In this work, choosing oneself is not an act of selfishness, but a form of endurance that examines the fragile layers of the inner world and questions how unseen harm comes into being.”

Razia Barsatie



An intimate exploration of bodily and organic transformation.

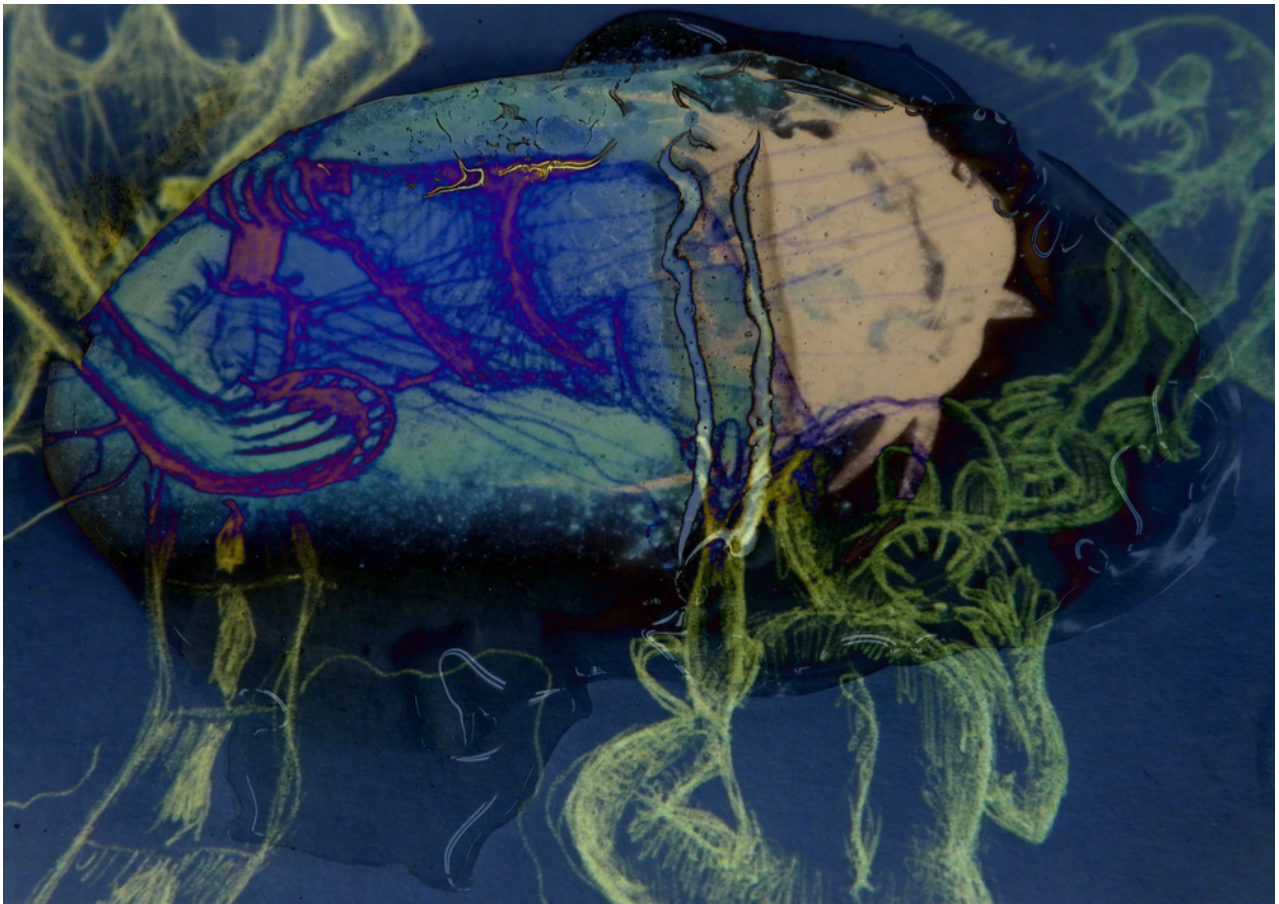
Where the Body Stores Time I

2026

Drawing with digital manipulation, printed on matte paper

50 × 70 cm

Edition: Two-part series (1/2)



An intimate exploration of bodily and organic transformation.

Where the Body Stores Time II

2026

Drawing with digital manipulation, printed on matte paper

50 × 70 cm

Edition: Two-part series (2/2)



The Responsible Guilt

2026

Photo-based work with Oost-Indische (East Indian) ink and handwritten text

50 × 70 cm

Edition: (1/1)



Untitled I

2026

Epoxy, *atta* (handmade flour dough), tumeric, blauwsel inkt (bluing Ink)

30 x 30 cm



Untitled II

2026

Epoxy, *atta* (handmade flour dough), tumeric, blauwsel inkt (bluing Ink)

30 x 30 cm



Untitled III

2026

Epoxy, *atta* (handmade flour dough), tumeric, blauwsel inkt (bluing Ink)

30 x 30 cm

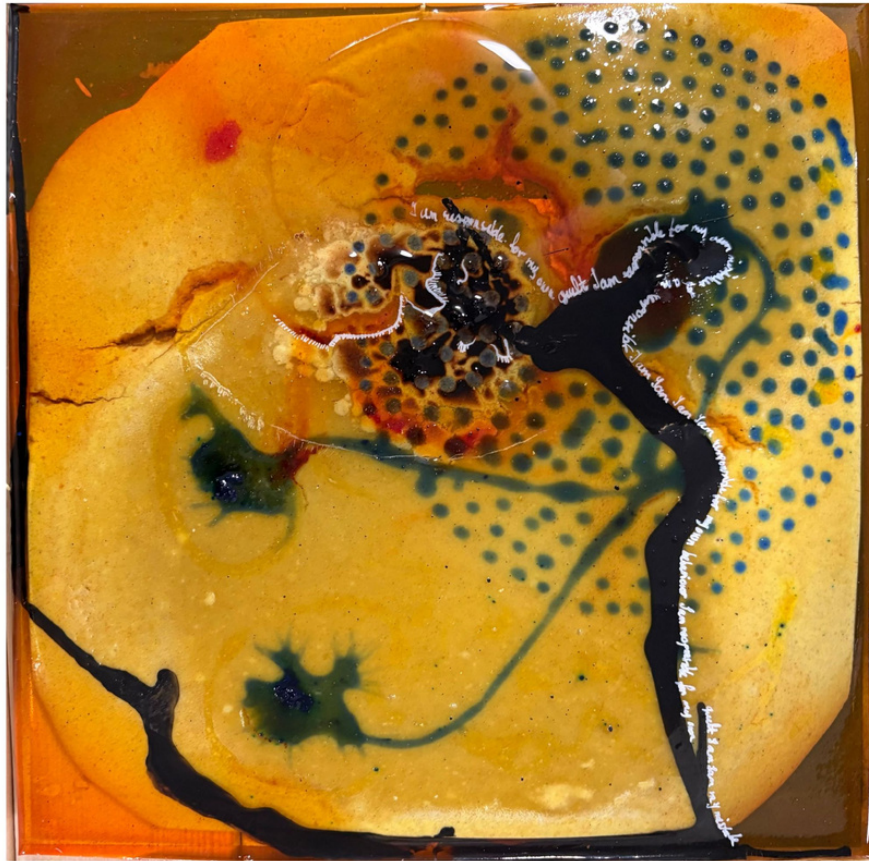


Untitled IV

2026

Epoxy, *atta* (handmade flour dough), tumeric, blauwsel inkt (bluing Ink)

30 x 30 cm



Untitled V

2026

Epoxy, *atta* (handmade flour dough), tumeric, blauwsel inkt (bluing Ink)

30 x 30 cm



An interpretation of an eye that chooses silence as a form of protection.

The Muted Observer

2026

Epoxy, *atta* (handmade flour dough), tumeric, transparent sheets, blauwsel inkt (bluing ink)

Circular, Ø 50 cm

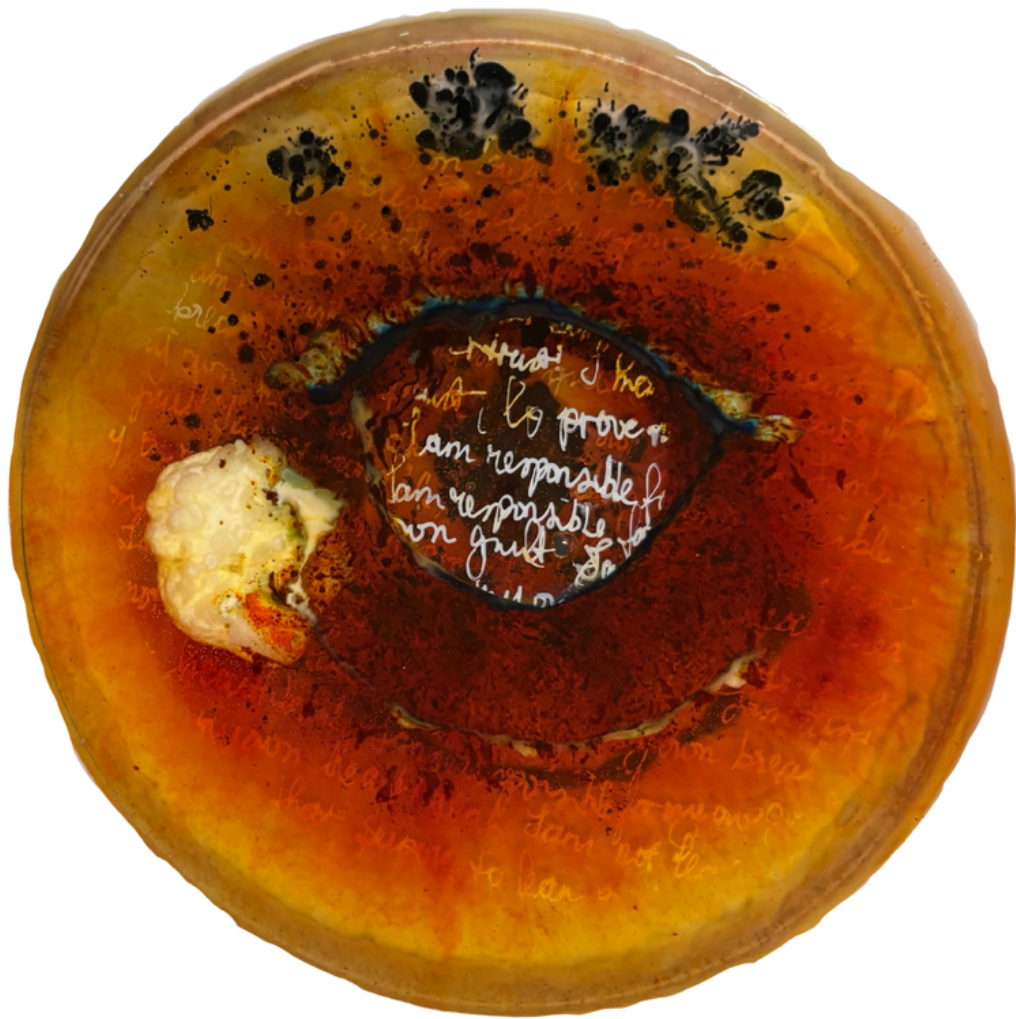


The Innocent Damage

2026

Epoxy, *atta* (handmade flour dough), tumeric, transparent sheets, blauwsele inkt (bluing ink)

Circular, Ø 20 cm



The Ongrown Observer

2026

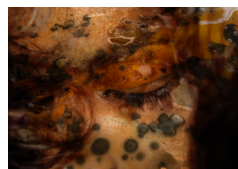
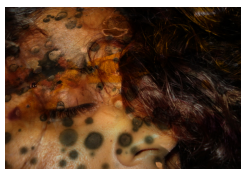
Epoxy, *atta* (handmade flour dough), tumeric, transparent sheets, blauwse
inkt (bluing ink)

Circular, Ø 20 cm

“This series of works unfolds as a field of tension between what is permitted to be seen and what stubbornly resists visibility. In the images, the face does not function as a stable anchor but as a permeable surface: a membrane through which the subconscious slowly seeps, placing pressure on the conscious mind.

The layering within the works is not an aesthetic play, but a necessary disturbance. Transparent layers of skin, chemical discolourations, mould-like structures, and liquid inclusions suggest a body that stores memories against its will. Silence here is not restful but charged—an absence heavy with meaning: the muteness of what is too painful, too guilt-ridden, or too complex to be named directly. This silence compels the viewer to remain, to take responsibility for what is seen as well as for what one would rather ignore. Vulnerability does not manifest as something soft, but as something raw and inescapable. Feelings of guilt do not appear as personal confession, but as a collective inheritance: who carries the burden of errors that are systemic, yet felt on an individual level?

The works appear contaminated, not by illness, but by knowledge: knowing refuses absolution and redemption. What takes place here is not a passage, but a confrontation—a moment to pause and reflect on my own role, my own mistakes, and my own choices.”





Fermenting the Self I

2026

Photo-based work

50 × 70 cm



Fermenting the Self II

2026

Photo-based work

50 × 70 cm



Fermenting the Self III

2026

Photo-based work

50 × 70 cm

“The hands in the installation symbolise not only the tools connected to the subconscious and the conscious through which the work is created, but also, for me, attempts at comfort and reassurance, reaching out—gestures that suggest care when words fall short. At the same time, they remain ambiguous: they do not soften what cannot be softened, but make visible how closeness and responsibility are inextricably intertwined.”



Ritual of Responsibility

2026

White paper, white clay, white wall filler and *atta* (flour dough)

55 x 50 x 20cm

Rucha Kulkarni
1986 | Pune

Rucha Kulkarni is a visual artist and social art practitioner whose oeuvre spans painting, quilting and embroidery on textile, and installation art. Her interdisciplinary practice explores the themes of female-rights, identity, migration, memory, and community through collaborative and process-based methodologies. Grounded in traditional craft and feminist pedagogy, her projects engage the techniques of storytelling, care-giving, and harnessing embodied knowledge as tools for collective authorship and dialogue.

Kulkarni's work considers the public sphere as a space for participation, inspiration, and self-reflection. Her ongoing engagement with local craft traditions, particularly through the project Quilt Culture, involves collaboration with *godhadi* craftspeople (quilters) from Maharashtra. This micro-financing initiative examines the intersection of traditions, skills, labour, and the rights of women – reflecting on survival, agency, and authorship within an increasingly consumer-driven world.

Kulkarni has exhibited internationally at institutions including the Wereldmuseum (Rotterdam), Amsterdam Museum (The Netherlands), the Museum of Modern Art, Salvador (Brazil), and the Asia Culture Centre, Gwangju (South Korea). Her work has been supported by the Mondriaan Fonds, Stimuleringsfonds, and the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF).

Kulkarni currently lives and works between Amsterdam and Pune.

Kulkarni's current practice is rooted in quilting and embroidery on rescued textiles to create social, cultural, and embodied archives. Working primarily with reclaimed fabrics, she engages materials that already carry traces of use, care, and domestic labour. Her process includes the use of layering and quilting techniques such as godhari and bojagi, learned over extended periods of social practice with traditional quilt makers. These slow, repetitive methods hold collective knowledge and the memories that are passed into the textiles through hand-work of (mostly) female labour.

Growing up in India, Kulkarni was introduced to embroidery as a young girl, a skill commonly taught to girls as a preparation for marriage. This training culminates in rukhawat—a Marathi term describing a set of embroidered and decorative textiles taken to the husband's home, signifying discipline, virtue, and cultural compliance. Kulkarni draws directly from this visual and symbolic language to develop her Un/Wrapped series where familiar stitches, motifs, folds, and seams recall the aesthetics of rukhawat, but are unsettled by Kulkarni's interventions of layering, concealment, and exposure.

Within the curatorial framework of *Choreographies of Compliances: Between Acceptance and Allowance*, her works inhabit a liminal zone - one that lies at the cusp of belonging and becoming, where textile becomes both shelter and constraint. Through indication rather than declaration, Kulkarni's works trace how female agency is quietly reclaimed within inherited structures, reworking what has been shaped by expectation, and allowing resistance to emerge.



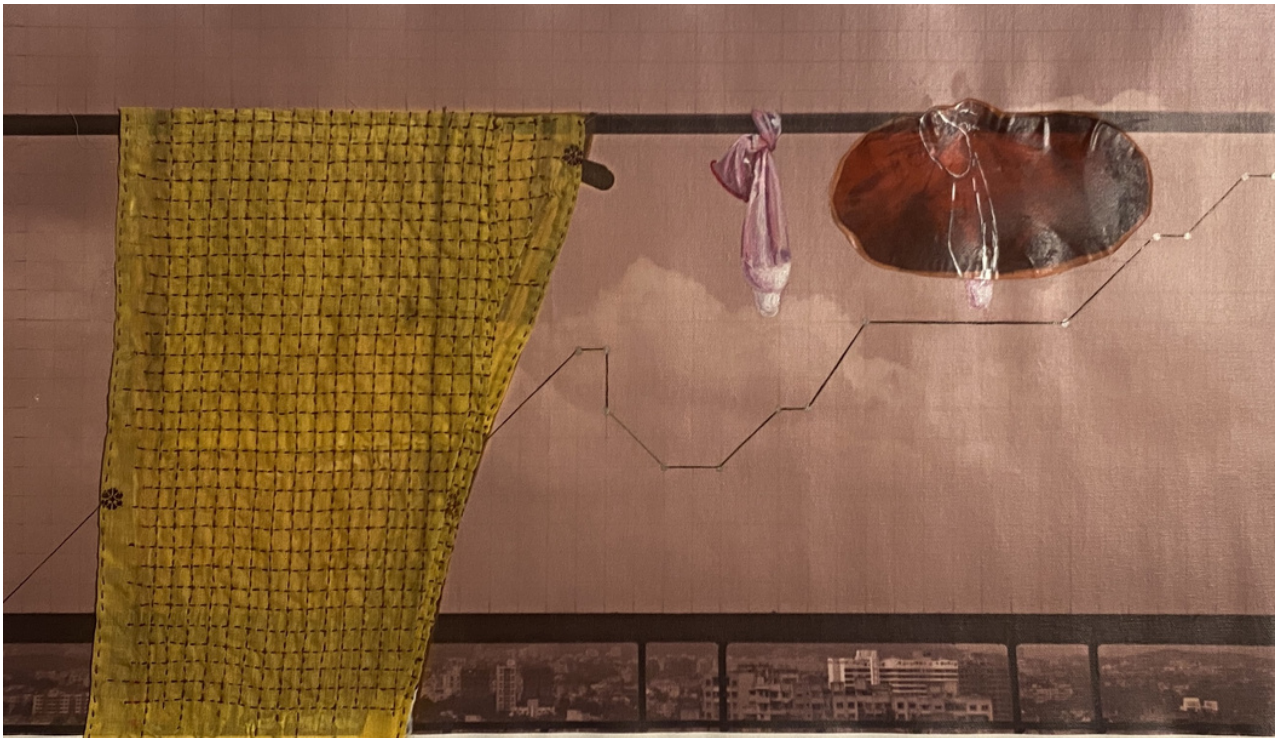
Defiance as Muscle Memory

2025

Textile paint & sublimation print, silk threads on layers and patches of reclaimed fabric (using *godhadi* quilting techniques)

190 x 150 cm

'Resistance lies latent in the body, while its stance is practised by repeated negotiations with invisible limits'. Persistent 'guidance' and 'allowance' trains posture and response; strength gathers albeit unevenly, and what began as a latent survival instinct, emboldens into habit until. Finally, resistance is no longer an act, but a condition carried by the body, and endurance is held between support and strain.



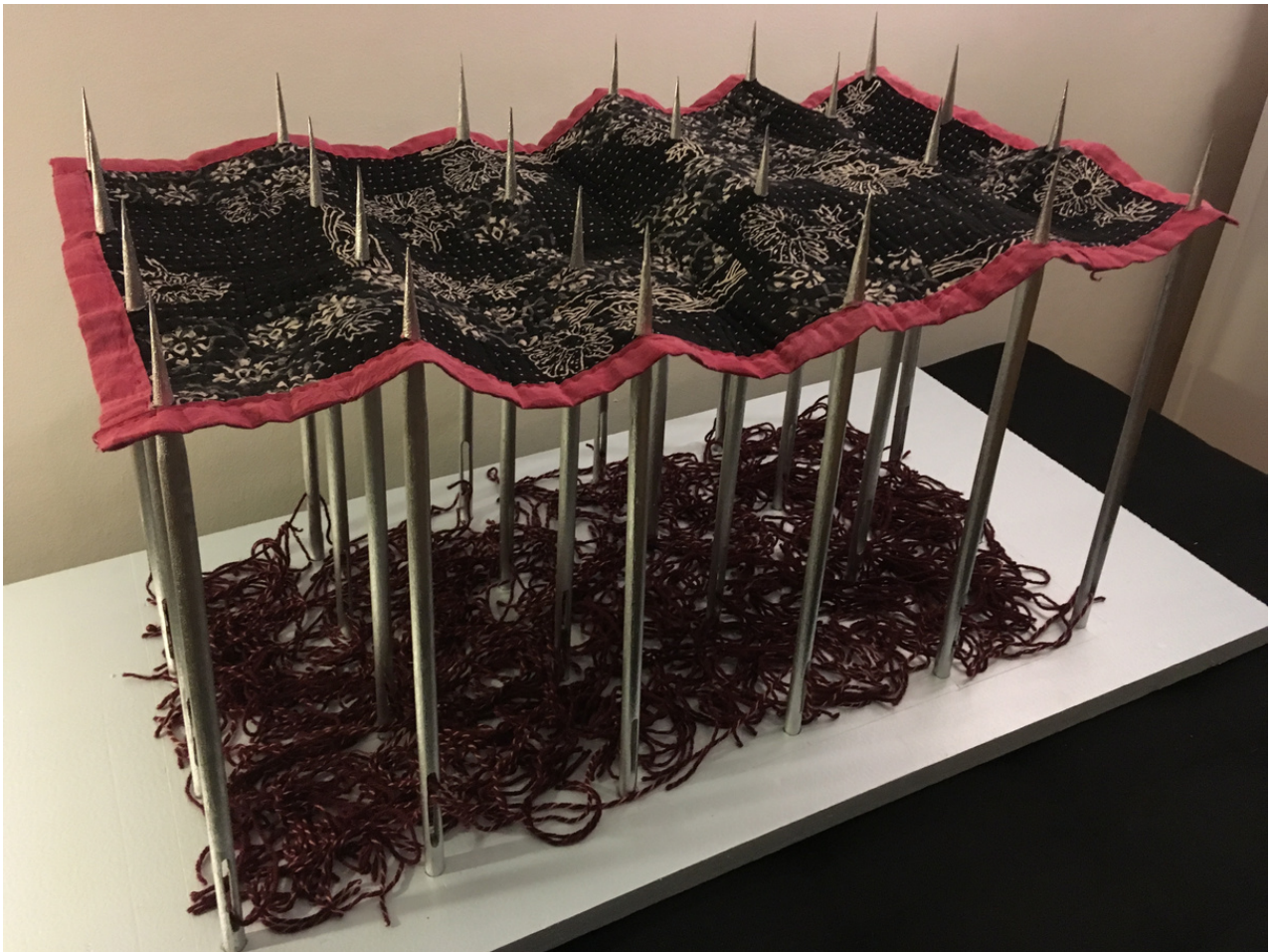
Transitional Independence

2026

Digital print on canvas, textile paint and silk threads on reclaimed saree fabrics

38 x 70 cm

This work speaks from a place of ongoing negotiation, where independence is experienced not only as freedom, but as a mandatory condition, an identity. In conjunction, the body and mind register quieter needs, those of care, rest, intimacy and motherhood – demands that resist alignment with capitalist structures of growth and productivity. The work jostles with this dilemma without offering resolution, revealing a state of becoming where strength and vulnerability coexist, and where balance is never reached but only constantly recalibrated.



The Feel matters

2019

Wooden needles, threads and quilts made up of reclaimed fabrics

38 x 70 cm

The Feel Matters investigates fragile contradictions that are intrinsically woven into daily emotional experience. The quilt – a symbol of comfort, warmth, protection, and care, lies heavily pierced by multiple needles, their threads tangled and irrevocably knotted. This unabashed and scathing resistance is the visual language of this piece. The labour of its making, seemingly tender in intention, tips into excess. The weight – physical, metaphorical, literal and desperate- collapses inward, and the textile, needles, threads, knots and pain become inseparable in this work.



The balancing act

2026

Silk threads, textile paint and sublimation print on layers and patches of reclaimed fabrics

110 x 80 cm

The Balancing Act exists in a state of continual adjustment. Using the methods of traditional godhari quilting, hand-embroidery, sublimation printing and drawing, the work powerfully holds the tension between the acts of slow and fast, internal and external, old and contemporary – as something that is actively unfolding. Time moves at different speeds across the surface of this work as slow, repetitive handwork and as quicker contemporary processes, each vying for presence.



Un/Wrapped — Public Intervention / Interactive Art Project

2015

Digital print on flexible PVC substrate

240 x 400 cm

Documentation Video: 3min 43sec

Un/Wrapped was conceived as an interactive public intervention supported by Alochana, addressing deeply poignant women's issues through visual art. Centred on a 2.4 × 4-meter digital flex print installed in the workshop space, the work used the 'face' as a symbolic site of sensory perception and social vulnerability. Over the course of the day, 34 women encountered the image intermittently, with interpretations unfolding alongside the workshop. In the collective dialogue that followed, responses emerged as first-person testimonies, secondary narratives, and imagined scenarios. The image acted as a mediating surface, easing the discomfort of direct speech and enabling difficult realities to be voiced indirectly yet collectively.



Un/wrapped-I

2026

Silk threads, Textile paint & sublimation print on layers and patches of reclaimed fabric (using *bojagi* and *godhadi* quilting techniques)

58 x 59 cm



Un/wrapped-II

2026

Silk threads, textile paint & sublimation print on reclaimed saree fabrics (using *godhadi* quilting techniques)

45 x 45 cm



Un/wrapped-III

2026

Silk threads, Textile paint on layers and patches of reclaimed saree fabrics (using godhadi quilting techniques)

38 x 32 cm



Un/wrapped-IV

2026

Silk threads, textile paint & sublimation print on layers and patches of reclaimed saree fabrics, mixed media on paper

50 x 50 cm

Un/wrapped is a series of works that emerges from sustained negotiations with systems of control—social, cultural, and internalised—that regulate expression through politeness, gendered conduct, and unspoken codes of belonging. Responding to the disciplining of gendered expression under the guise of propriety, the works articulate a resistant subjectivity shaped by experiences of censorship.

Through acts of withholding, exposure, and tension, Un/wrapped foregrounds the fragile boundaries between compliance and defiance, revealing how selfhood is continuously shaped—and contested—within regimes of control.

This catalogue features content from SAC Art Amsterdam, showcasing the gallery's exhibitions and artists.

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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.

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