

PRESS RELEASE | 17 January 2023

Exhibition Opening

VHC
VIDA HEYDARI
CONTEMPORARY

Umbartha

Solo Exhibition by Monali Meher

17 January – 5 March 2023

Opening: Tuesday, 17 January 2023, 4 PM – 8 PM



*Monali Meher
Tracing the threads
2017*

*Faux leather, wool, printed canvas, shoes, cloth, metal
Size: variable, big piece 148 x 243cm, small piece: 65 x 138 cm*

We are pleased to invite you for the opening of the latest solo exhibition, **Umbartha** by contemporary artist **Monali Meher** on Tuesday, **17 January 2023, from 4-8 pm** at **VHC | Vida Heydari Contemporary**.

This exclusive preview gives you access to an immersive experience with an interactive performance installation at 5 pm, followed by an artist walkthrough at 7 pm. The exhibit will run through **5 March 2023**.

“Umbartha, the artist’s first exhibition in Pune, the city she was born in is a homecoming of works that explore transitory notions of the threshold. In the context of the large oeuvre of works on display, *Umbartha* ensues *Falling Star* (2019) an exhibition that encompassed fifteen years of Meher’s journey as an artist. Wrapped objects, residual performances, drawn

emotions and photographs thread mediums across space and time. Self-portraits, scale and installation extend the viewers eye beyond looking and into experiencing.”

-Veeranganakumari Solanki (excerpt)

ARTIST STATEMENT (excerpt)

Umbartha, a Marathi word that translates into the doorstep or threshold, is layered metaphorically with implications of home, travel, crossovers, change, time and memory. In my first solo exhibition at VHC, the works on display range from earlier works when I had just left India in the early 2000s and build up to more recent ones from 2017.

Creating new identities, reshaping belongings, intimacy, a dialogue of matter and memory – all these constitute the language of my work. Furthermore, the aspects of continuity, repetition, vulnerability, duration, temporality, awareness, situation and public involvement are also inherent qualities that inform my oeuvre. The process witnesses my quest for defining the trace of time, its territory and extensions into the real world. Beyond this, I draw an ontological thought of time influencing human essence and evolution. Two different spaces interact in a self-reflecting process of transit, change and affected repetition. I elaborate a philosophical exploration of the human, in order to point out its process of construction, through the antithetical notions of private versus collective memory, feeling of longing versus belonging, intimacy versus conflict and familiarity versus unfamiliarity. I try to merge these processes into my work, so that the viewer gets a notion of time through a process of dilation and re-connection.

ABOUT ARTIST MONALI MEHER

Monali Meher was born in 1969, Pune, India. She completed her Bachelor’s degree in painting at Sir J.J. School of Arts, Mumbai in 1990. Time’ as a factor, is central to her practice, whether it’s a wrapped object or a performance. She uses time as medium, which is extended, assembled and captured in her atmospheric and ritualistic performances showing the cyclical circles of destruction and renewal. Involving various disciplines, Meher’s art practice reflects decay, hybridisation and transformation.

She has received ‘Unesco -Aschberg’ international artist residency, Vienna in 1998. She has performed and exhibited internationally at Tate modern, Sinop Biennale Turkey, Rijksmuseum Twenthe, Art Dubai, ‘Rebelle’, MMKA Arnhem, NRLA Glasgow, Prague Biennale 5th, MAXXI museum Rome, Guangzhou Live, China, IPA Istanbul Modern Museum, 4th Thessaloniki Biennale and Venice International cinema. She has received prestigious ‘*Golden Chimera Award*’ for innovation and originality at ICASTICA 2013, 1st Arezzo Art Biennial in Italy. Besides Monali has been part of various residencies and funded projects.

Monali Meher lives and works in Ghent, Belgium.

ABOUT VHC | VIDA HEYDARI CONTEMPORARY

Established in 2020, VHC is Pune's newest contemporary art gallery. VHC celebrates art by partnering with artists, promoting their work, and connecting them to art lovers. The gallery showcases works by local and international artists and contributes to the cultural fabric of Pune city through its collateral programs. VHC endeavours to create a platform to encounter and engage with relevant contemporary art practices from around the world.

VHC was founded by Vida Heydari, a curator and gallerist with over 14 years of diverse experience in the global art world. She has worked with accomplished Indian, Iranian, and Chinese contemporary artists and has also consulted for various private and public collections.

VHC | Vida Heydari Contemporary | Marvel Alaine, Lane 8, Koregaon Park, Pune, India.

Web: <https://www.vhc.art/>

IG: <https://www.instagram.com/vhc.art/>

FB: <https://www.facebook.com/vhc.art/>

For interview requests and additional information please contact

E: info@vhc.art | T: +91 85308 60888

Press kit:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1kwQSBIID2z8Fktsaeubec3Zby1pGf97n?usp=sharing>

Interviews can be arranged with the artist and the gallery founder Vida Heydari.