

PRESS RELEASE | 2 December 2023

Exhibition Opening

VHC
VIDA HEYDARI
CONTEMPORARY

Scratch Beneath The Surface

Group Exhibition

2 December – 31 December 2023

Opening: Saturday, 2 December 2023, 5 PM – 7 PM



Richa Arya
Threaded lives
2023

Hand Stitched With Iron Sheet, Brass Wire
134.5 x 139.5 cm (53 x 55 in)

VHC is pleased to announce the opening of our latest exhibition, **Scratch Beneath the Surface**, which brings together works by four contemporary artists - **Anshu Singh, Birender Kumar Yadav, Richa Arya, and Thamshangpha Maku.**

Scratch Beneath the Surface makes space for the representation, regard, and acknowledgement of marginal communities and their experiences. With each artist speaking from and for the communities to which they belong, the works express their negotiations with normative conditions, identity and agency, the nature of labour, and the struggle of belonging.

The exhibition will preview on **Saturday, 2 December 2023, from 5 pm to 7 pm** at **VHC | Vida Heydari Contemporary**. It will run through 31 December 2023.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

ANSHU SINGH

Anshu Singh was born in 1989 in Varanasi, India and has obtained both a Bachelor's and Master's degree in Weaving and Textile Design from the Banaras Hindu University. Her artistic journey took root in her mother's boutique, where she was exposed to the weaver's community that frequented the establishment. As a contemporary artist, her work embraces the intersection of traditional crafts and contemporary contexts. Inspired by the craftsmanship of the marginalized communities traditionally employed in embroidery ateliers, Anshu explores the possibilities afforded by unconventional materials.

Anshu has most recently participated in Fault Lines (2023), a group exhibition at Conflictorium Museum, Ahmedabad, and participated in Art & Soul Foundation's display at the 2023 India Art Fair, New Delhi. She was awarded the Young Artist Scholarship in Visual Art (2014-2015) by the Ministry of Human Resource Department, Government of India, New Delhi.

Anshu Singh lives and works in Varanasi, India.

BIRENDER KUMAR YADAV

Birender Kumar Yadav was born in 1992 in Ballia, India and is a multimedia artist, with a Bachelor's degree in Fine Arts from Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, and a Master's degree in Fine Arts in 2015 from the College of Arts, New Delhi. As the son of an ironsmith, he initially studied art as a way to help his father upgrade and develop new techniques. While completing his Master's thesis he began documenting the lives and stories of a group of itinerant brick kiln workers in Varanasi, an experience that has shaped his current practice. Born out of his childhood experiences of growing up in the primarily coal mining district of Dhanbad, Jharkhand, his recent works involve the same clay, as the 'bricks are the representations of the fundamental structural blocks of exploitation and erasures in our community'. He draws from memories and his personal interaction and understanding of the world around him, often collaboratively working with his family and friends who still work in these industries.

Birender had his first solo show "Idhar-Udhar" (Here -There) (2017) at Clark House Initiative. He has participated in the 12th Berlin Biennale (2022) Germany, and the 13th Bamako Encounters - African Biennale of Photography (2022), Bamako. In 2019, Birender was the recipient of the Pro-Helvetia Studio Residency, Switzerland, and the India Residency at Darling Foundry, Montreal.

Birender Kumar Yadav lives and works in New Delhi, India.

RICHA ARYA

Born in 1997 in the village of Panipat, India. Richa completed her Bachelors in Sculpture from Kurukshetra University in 2018 and her Masters in Sculpture from Delhi College of Art in 2020. The move from village to a metropolis made Richa aware of the regressive attitudes with

regards to women still prevalent in her hometown, and others like it. Richa's use of an unusual material like iron, which she painstakingly pierces and embroiders might be poetically seen as the struggle to make something out of the hard life that is the norm for the women of the village.

Richa had a solo presentation of her work at Triveni Gallery (2021), New Delhi, supported by the Raza Foundation. Most recently she has participated in several group shows like at The Lexicon Art Gallery (2022), New Delhi, and with Carpe Arte (2022), Mumbai; as well as multiple artist camps and workshops. Richa has been the recipient of the Imaginarium Emami Art Award (2023) and the Prafulla Dahanukar All India Merit Award (2021). In 2022, Richa was a resident artist at Serendipity Arts Festival, New Delhi/Goa, and at Khoj Peers, New Delhi.

Richa Arya lives and works in Noida, India.

THAMSHANGPHA MAKU

Born in 1999 in Chandel, India, Thamshangpha Maku completed his Bachelors in Painting from the College of Art, New Delhi in 2020, and a Masters in Painting from the Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda in 2022. In native communities the relationship with nature is that of coexistence and sustenance, rather than exploitation and alienation. Living away from his Naga community, Thamshangpha feels acutely the alienation and discrimination, located as he is on the periphery to the centre, i.e. the rule makers. It is these encountered experiences as well as the notion of living at the periphery that has created a dialogue within his artistic process.

In 2022, Thamshangpha participated in group shows at Anant Art Gallery, MASH India in partnership with Khoj and Priyasri Art Gallery. He was also a fellow at Immerse 2023 at Somaiya Vidyavihar University, Mumbai. In 2022, he was awarded the FICA Emerging Artist award in Delhi.

Thamshangpha Maku lives and works in Vadodara, India.

ABOUT VHC | VIDA HEYDARI CONTEMPORARY

VHC | Vida Heydari Contemporary is an international art gallery in Pune specialising in contemporary art and representing established and emerging artists with diverse backgrounds, across a variety of mediums and genres.

Founded in 2020 with an emphasis on authenticity, quality and innovation, VHC aims to contribute to the cultural fabric of the city. The gallery is committed to fostering the careers of its artists and sharing their work with a global audience, providing a platform for under-represented artists, presenting pioneering museum-quality exhibitions, positive collaborations, price transparency and offering a very hands-on and tailored high-quality experience.

In less than three years from its inception, VHC has mounted significant exhibitions featuring local and international artists. It has also participated in some of the most prestigious art fairs, such as Art Basel Hong Kong, India Art Fair and India Design ID.

In addition to the gallery program, VHC hosts talks, performances, workshops and educational programs to create engaging and enriching artistic experiences that capture the essence of life.

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/1KKJxB7isBFGbPUFxmtu_IUT-E-IKbwz?usp=sharing

Interviews can be arranged with the artists and the gallery director Vida Heydari.