

## G. R. Iranna

### *The Primordial Ash*

*Aicon Gallery Exhibition October 5<sup>th</sup> – November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2017*

*Press Preview & V.I.P. Reception: Thursday, October 5<sup>th</sup> 6:00pm – 8:00pm*

*35 Great Jones St., New York NY 10012*

**Aicon Gallery New York** is proud to present *The Primordial Ash*, a major new U.S. solo exhibition by New Delhi-based artist **G. R. Iranna**. The work in this exhibition continues Iranna's explorations of the constant struggle between the organic forces inherent in nature - and humanity as part of nature - and mankind's attempts to temper and direct these vital forces in both the physical world and within ourselves through social constructs and systems of indoctrination. Whether through the taming, reorganization, and exploitation of our natural environment, or the subordination of the individual will to political or religious superstructures, Iranna sees this constant human need to dominate and suppress as the root source of much of the environmental chaos and socio-political instability that proliferates today. The exhibition is comprised of a new cycle of large-scale canvases and works on paper, hinging around the recurring motif of roots and branches, depicted either majestically unfurled and in bloom or hopelessly tangled and muted to the point of near total abstraction. This is Iranna's fourth solo exhibition with Aicon Gallery, and his first in its newly expanded New York galleries.



G. R. Iranna, *Light Hidden in Ash*, 2016, Acrylic on tarpaulin, 60 x 66 in.

Raised in an agricultural family in India's Southwestern state of Karnataka, Iranna studied in a Gurukul institution during his youth, which combined a modern education with traditional teachings and spiritual guidance. An emphasis on human virtue and discipline led to an intense contemplation of the conscious and subconscious workings of the human mind. Upon moving to New Delhi to study art, Iranna began to translate his personal investigations into the nature of consciousness to an understanding of human nature at the collective and societal levels. However, the rapidly urbanizing and expanding environs of one of India's oldest population centers presented an array of contradictions and anachronisms, amongst which it could seem impossible to identify any unifying or guiding principles pertaining to the development of shared human ideals, even in a society rooted in ancient traditions. This would be the backdrop against which Iranna would stage a career-long artistic exploration into the structures that human beings design for themselves to theoretically keep the more chaotic and unpredictable manifestations of our nature under control.

Surrounded by the works in this current exhibition, however, it quickly becomes apparent that despite our efforts to tame ourselves and the world around us, the relentless push-back of nature is a force that cannot ultimately be dominated. Despite our millennia-long attempts to impose human order on our environment, the natural realm relentlessly proliferates in ways that range from the stunningly beautiful



**G. R. Iranna**, *Heaven on Water*, 2016, Ashe on paper, 40 x 66 in.

to the chaotically awe-inspiring, both of which - as well as many states in between - can be seen in Iranna's canvases depicting magnificent sprawling canopies and densely tangled roots and branches. In other works, one can see how humanity's attempts to organize itself mirror this range from the natural world. In the past, Iranna has pointed out, through his series of painted monks engaged in nonsensical ritual, how our struggle to control or repress human nature through political and religious structures can go horribly awry, resulting in the very chaos and violence they were meant to contain. Similarly, in this exhibition one can see glimpses of houses literally piled upon one another in a manner that can appear

alternately beautifully abstract or claustrophobically terrifying. In other works, such as *Heaven on Water* (2016), Iranna uses ash as a primary medium to create a completely abstracted landscape, the stillness of which seems not only to remind us of our ultimate ashes-to-ashes fate, but to convey the sense of peace embedded in this fate, when our perpetual struggles to control the uncontrollable in ourselves and the world around us may finally, perhaps blissfully, come to an end.

**G. R. Iranna** was born in 1970 in Sindgi, District Bijapur, Karnataka in Southern India. In 1992, GR Iranna acquired his Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree from the College of Visual Art, in Gulbarga. Two years later, he got his Master's degree in painting from the College of Art, New Delhi. Between 1999 and 2000 he acted as artist-in-residence at Wimbledon School of Art, London. He has held more than 20 solo exhibitions in India, New York, London, Germany and beyond. Recently, he has participated in both the 2014 and 2016 Kochi Muziris Biennales. His awards include those at the All India Exhibition in Mysore and the College of Visual Art, New Delhi in 1992-92, the Bansi Parmimu Memorial Committee, New Delhi and the Delhi College of Art in 1993. In the same year, he won the MF Husain and Ram Kumar selection award at *In Search of Talent* by Vadhera Art Gallery, New Delhi. He has also been honored in 1997 with a National Award from the Lalit Kala Academy and the AIFACS Award, at the show *50 years of Art in Independent India* in New Delhi. The artist lives and works in New Delhi.

Please contact Aicon Gallery ([Andrew@Aicongallery.com](mailto:Andrew@Aicongallery.com)) for more information.

G. R. Iranna



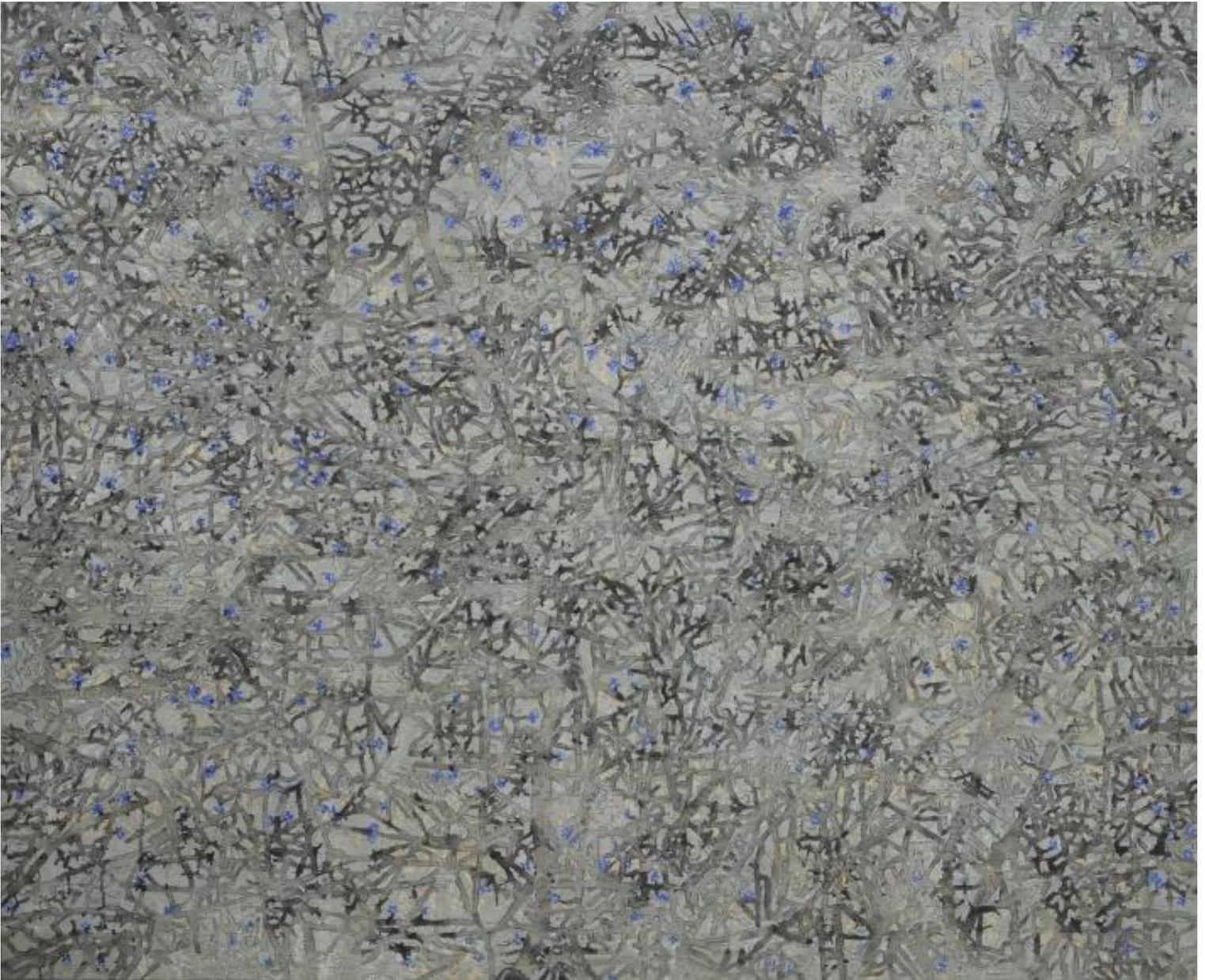
G. R. Iranna, *Light in Hidden Ash*, 2016, Acrylic on tarpaulin, 60 x 66 in.

G. R. Iranna



**G. R. Iranna**, *Beginning from the End*, 2017, Acrylic on tarpaulin, 54 x 66 in.

## G. R. Iranna



**G. R. Iranna**, *Ephemeral is Eternal*, 2017, Acrylic on tarpaulin, 54 x 66 in.

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**G. R. Iranna**, *Full of Ego*, 2017, Acrylic on tarpaulin, 54 x 134 in.

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**G. R. Iranna**, *Fragile Tree*, 2017, Acrylic and ash on tarpaulin, 54 x 66 in.

G. R. Iranna



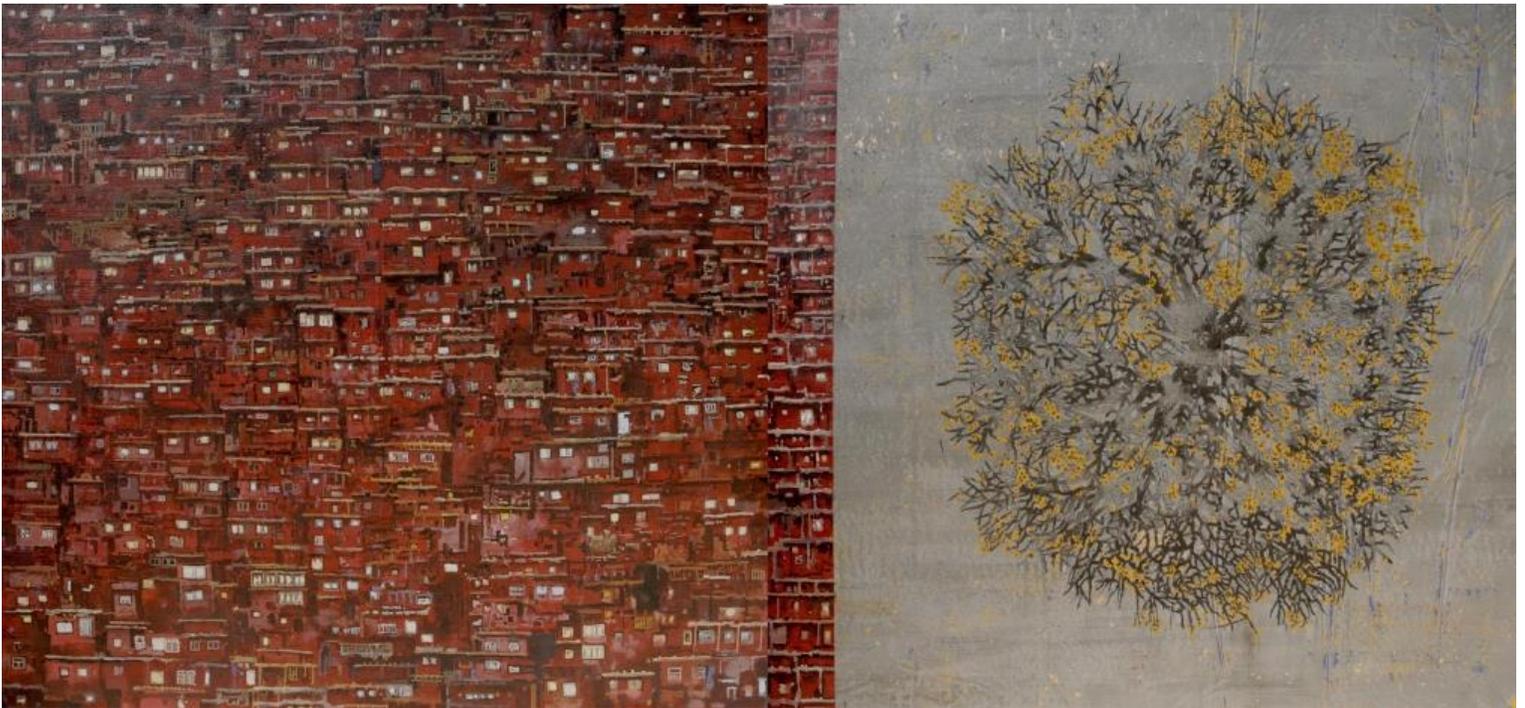
**G. R. Iranna**, *Heaven on Water*, 2016, Ash on paper, 40 x 60 in.

## G. R. Iranna



**G. R. Iranna**, *Tempered Tree*, 2015, Acrylic on tarpaulin, 66 x 144 in.

# G. R. Iranna



**G. R. Iranna**, *Lighted Houses*, 2017, Acrylic on tarpaulin, 66 x 144 in.

G. R. Iranna



**G. R. Iranna**, *Silver Shadow*, 2017, Watercolor and silver foil on paper, 42 x 56 in.

G. R. Iranna



**G. R. Iranna**, *All That Is...Ash*, 2017, Ash on paper, 42 x 56 in.

# G. R. Iranna



**G. R. Iranna**, *Planted Trees*, 2015, Acrylic on tarpaulin, 66 x 216 in.

## G. R. Iranna



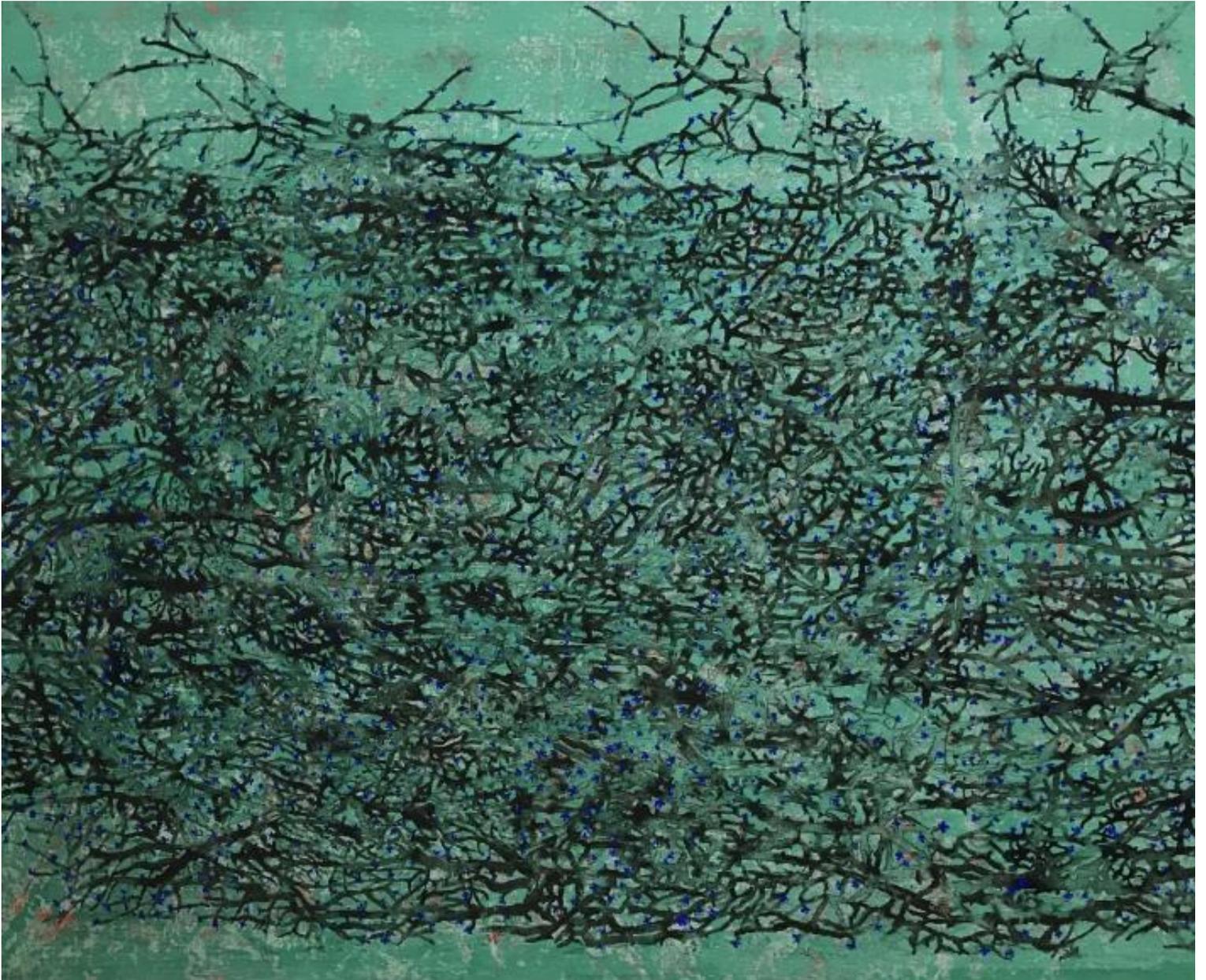
**G. R. Iranna**, *Eternal Forest*, 2017, Acrylic and ash on tarpaulin, 54 x 66 in.

## G. R. Iranna



**G. R. Iranna**, *Burnt Branches*, 2017, Coal and gold foil on paper, 58 x 84 in.

## G. R. Iranna



**G. R. Iranna**, *Eternal Flowers*, 2017, Acrylic on tarpaulin, 54 x 66 in.

## G. R. Iranna



**G. R. Iranna**, *The Body*, 2017, Brick Powder on paper, 42 x 56 in.

## G. R. IRANNA

Born 1970, Sindgi, Bijapur, Karnataka, India.

### Education

1999-2000 Artist-in-Residence, Wimbledon School of Art, London  
 1994 Master of Fine Art (Painting), College of Art, New Delhi  
 1992 Bachelor of Fine Arts (Painting), College of Visual Art, Gulbarga, Karnataka

### Select Solo Exhibitions

2017 *The Primordial Ash*, Aicon Gallery, New York  
*Ether is All That Is*, Gallery Espace, New Delhi  
 2016 *And the last shall be the first: G R Iranna Works 1995-2015*, National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA), Bengaluru  
 2014 *Tempered Branches*, Aicon Gallery, New York  
 2012 *Limning Heterotopias*, Gallery Espace, New Delhi  
*Thought of the day*, Kashi Art Gallery Cochi, curated by Tanya Abraham  
 2011 *Scaffolding the Absent: G. R. Iranna's Phenomenological Interventions*, The Guild Art Gallery, Mumbai  
 2010 *Ribbed Routes*, The Guild Art Gallery, Mumbai / New York  
 2008 *Birth of Blindness*, Aicon Gallery, London and New York.  
 2007 *The Dancer on the Horse*, Berkeley Square Gallery, London  
*Recent Works by GR Iranna*, Berkley Square Gallery, London  
 2006 *King of Clay*, Aicon Gallery, New York and California  
*Disorder and Early Sufferings*, Gallery Muller & Plate, Munich  
 2005 *Early Works*, Gallery Muller and Plate, Munich  
*Threads of Humanism*, Bodhi Art, New Delhi, Singapore  
 2003 The Guild Art Gallery, Mumbai  
*Dream and Perplexity*, Chitrakala Parisath, Bangalore  
 2001 *The Enigma of Departure*, British Council and The Guild Art Gallery, Mumbai  
 2000 Foyer Gallery, Wimbledon School of Art, London  
 Gallery Espace, New Delhi  
 Maulana Azad Center for Indian Culture, Cairo, Egypt  
 1999 *In the Shadow of Buddha*, Gallery Martini, Hong Kong  
 1998 *Shadow of the Real*, Shridharani Art Gallery and Gallery Espace, New Delhi  
 1995 *Edge Dynamics*, Delhi Art Gallery, New Delhi and Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai  
 1992 College of Visual Art, Gulbarga

### Select Group Exhibitions

2016 *Forming in the Pupil of an Eye*, Kochi Muziris Biennale, Curated by Sudarshan Shetty, Kochi  
*Delicate Bond of Steel*, Chaterjee & Lal / Aicon Gallery, Mumbai  
*The Eye and The Mind: New Interventions in Indian Art*, NGMA, New Delhi

- 2015 *The Eye and the Mind: New Interventions in Indian Art*, Guangdong Museum of Art, Guangzhou, China  
*The Eye and the Mind: New Interventions in Indian Art*, Minsheng Art Museum, Beijing, China  
*Continuing Traditions*, Musée de la Toile de Jouy, Paris
- 2014 *Incidents of Phenomena*, India, Italy, Myanmar, Curated by Veerangana Solanki  
*Unmarked*, collective project at BC Gallery Cochi Biennale
- 2013 *When High and Low Art Meet*, Curated by Rupika Chawla, Art Alive Gallery, Gurgaon  
*Living Walls*, Art Alive Gallery, Gurgaon
- 2012 *The Secret Life of Plants*, Exhibit 320, Curated by Maya Kóvskaya, New Delhi  
*On a Journey*, Art Alive Gallery, Gurgaon  
*Alone/Together*, Aicon Gallery, New York
- 2011 *Reprise*, Aicon Gallery, New York  
*Giant Elephant: Indian Contemporary Art*, Gong Art Space, Seoul
- 2010 San Jose Museum of Art San Jose California  
*Group Show*, Museum of Contemporary Art Taipei Taiwan, by Sakshi Gallery.  
*Indian (sub) Way*, Grosvenor Vadhera Gallery, London, curated by Yashodhara Dalmia.  
*Go See India*, Contemporary Indian Art at Gothenburg, Sweden. Curated by Amith Mukhopadyya & Oscar Aschan.
- 2009 *Signature Art Prize Singapore Show*, Museum Singapore.  
*Culture Popular India*, Maspresidenta de la Comunidad de Madrid Museum, Madrid. Curated by Shahin Mirali.  
*Retrieval Systems*, Curated by Ranjit Hoskote. Visual Arts Gallery, India Habitat Centre; Art Alive Gallery, New Delhi  
*Astonishment of Being*, Birla Academy of Art & Culture, Kolkata cuted by Diksha Nath.  
*Think Small*, Art Alive Gallery, New Delhi  
*Big Dreams*, Crimson Art Gallery, Bangalore.  
*Zip Files*, Tao Art Gallery, Mumbai  
*Moderns and More*, Aicon Gallery, Palo Alto  
*Life is A Stage*, Institute of Contemporary Indian Art (ICIA), Mumbai  
*Signs Taken for Wonders: Recent Art from India and Pakistan*, Aicon Gallery, London  
*Threshold: Forging Narratives in South Asian Contemporary Art*, Aicon Gallery, New York
- 2008 *Keep Drawing*, Gallery Espace, New York  
MiArt 2008, Fiera Milano International Spa, Milan represented by The Guild, Mumbai
- 2007 Asian Contemporary Art Fair, represented by Aicon Gallery, New York  
*Keep Drawing*, Pundole Art Gallery, Mumbai  
*India 20*, Rabindra Bhavan, Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi  
*High on Art*, Visual Art Gallery, India Habitat Centre, New Delhi  
*Telling It Like It Is: The Indian Story*, The Gallery in Cork Street, London
- 2006 *Confluence*, Aicon Gallery, New York  
*The Human Figure*, Gallery Threshold, New Dehli  
Contemporary Istanbul Fair, Istanbul
- 2005 *We Are Like This Only*, Vadehra Art Gallery, New Delhi  
*Paths of Progression*, Bodhi Art/Saffronart, New Delhi, Mumbai, Singapore, New York  
Arad Biennale, Romania
- 2004 *Untitled*, Gallery Espace, India Habitat Centre, New Delhi  
Peter Muller Gallery, Munich, Germany  
Gallery 27, Oslo, Norway
- 2002 *Words and Images*, National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA), Mumbai  
Jehangir Art Gallery Golden Jubilee Show, Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai

2001-02	<i>Palette</i> , Visual Art Gallery, India Habitat Centre, New Delhi
2001	Apparao Galleries, Chennai
	<i>The Human Factor</i> , Guild Art Gallery, Mumbai
	<i>Kaleidoscope</i> , ISU International Art Gallery, Singapore
	<i>Engendering – Images of Women</i> , Guild Art Gallery, Mumbai
2000	<i>Black &amp; White</i> , Art Today, New Delhi
1999	<i>Icons of the Millennium</i> , Gallery Lakeeren, Mumbai
	<i>The Creative Process</i> , Guild Art Gallery, Mumbai
	<i>Edge of the Century</i> , New Delhi
1998	Vedanta Art Gallery, Chicago, U.S.A
	Gallery Espace, New Delhi
	Guild Art Gallery, Mumbai
1997	<i>Four Artists, Diverse Talents</i> , Guild Art Gallery, Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai
1995	Schoo's Gallery, Amsterdam, Holland
1994	Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai
1993	Shridharani Art Gallery, New Delhi
1992	Award Winners Exhibition SCZCC, Nagpur-Bangalore-Indore-Hyderabad-Pune
1990	Venkatappa Art Gallery, Bangalore
	Chitrakala Parishat, Bangalore

### **Awards and Scholarships**

2008	APB Signature Jury Award, Singapore
2004	Harmony Show Artist of the Year, Harmony foundation, Mumbai
2002	K K Hebbbar Foundation Award
2001	State Award, Karnataka Lalit Kala Academy, Bangalore
1999-2000	International Scholarship from Charles Wallace India Trust, British Council
1997	40 <sup>th</sup> National Academy Award, Lalit Kala Academy, New Delhi
	AIFACS Award, New Delhi, 50 years of Art in Independent India
1996-1997	National Scholarship from Ministry of H.R.D., Government of India
1995-1996	Garhi Research Grant from Lalit Kala Academy, New Delhi
1993	In Search of Talent, M.F. Hussain & Ram Kumar Selection Award, Vadhera Art Gallery, New Delhi
	Bansi Parmimu Memorial Committee, Dhomi Mall Art Gallery, New Delhi
	Delhi College of Art, New Delhi
1991-92	College of Visual Art, Gulbarga
	All India Exhibition Mysore Dasara, Mysore
1990	4 <sup>th</sup> All India Exhibition SCZCC, Nagpore

### **Collections**

National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi  
 Bharat Bhawan, Bhopal  
 Lalit Kala Academy, New Delhi  
 Singapore Art Museum  
 Private collections in Mumbai, Delhi, Hong Kong, Germany, Holland, Austria, Croatia and Herwitz Collection, U.S.A.; United Kingdom; Singapore.