

Gurminder Sikand

Paintings and Drawings, 1994-2017

August 9th - September 20th, 2025

It is wonderfully fitting that this exhibition sees Gurminder return to TG. Since her sudden death in late 2021, less than three months after 'The Weaver of Songs', her previous show here, her works have attracted a new generation of curators and have been shown in a broader range of contexts than was the case during her lifetime. Thanks in no small part to Tom Godfrey's hosting and documentation of that earlier exhibition, Gurminder's reputation, established in the 1980s and 1990s with her participation in pioneering Black and South Asian exhibitions, has grown considerably.

In addition to the solo show *Gurminder Sikand: Early Paintings* at Maximillian William Gallery, London, 2024, Gurminder's posthumous profile includes her inclusion in the group shows *Women in Revolt! Art and Activism in the UK 1970-1990* (Tate Britain and touring, 2023–25); *Re/Sisters: A Lens on Gender and Ecology* (Barbican Arts Centre, London, 2023-24); *The Goddess, the Deity and the Cyborg* (Women's Art Collection, Murray Edwards College, Cambridge, 2024); *Contemporary Collecting: David Hockney to Cornelia Parker* (British Museum, London, 2024); and *Forbidden Territories: 100 Years of Surreal Landscapes* (The Hepworth Wakefield and touring, 2024–26). Since her death, her work has been acquired by The British Museum, The Contemporary Art Society for Nottingham City Museums, The Hepworth Wakefield, Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, and The Women's Art Collection, Murray Edwards College, Cambridge.

Nottingham is where Gurminder spent the entirety of her career from 1983 to 2021, following her training in Cardiff and Birmingham. Her first solo show was at the Indian Community Centre in Basford in 1984. In the same year, with Sardul Gill and Said Adrus and financial support from East Midlands Arts, she founded the Nottingham Asian Artists Group. The Group had several exhibitions in the city, including at the Central Library's Gallery in Angel Row (1985), and at the Bonington Gallery of Trent Polytechnic (1987), as the institution then was, as well as at the Commonwealth Institute in London (1985).

Local venues that displayed Gurminder's work are too many to list, but among them are Beeston Library, the Byard Gallery, the Castle, Harrington Mill Studios, Nottingham Community Arts and Crafts Centre in Hyson Green, the Lace Market Gallery, Mansfield Community Arts Centre, the New Art Exchange, and the University of Nottingham. Gurminder also enjoyed placements and workshops at city and county establishments. The support she received, together with the collegiality she found in Nottingham's artistic and wider community, was crucial to her sense of belonging. Her development and recognition also owed much to curators, galleries and organisations across the Midlands and nationally.

The current show presents a selection of Gurminder's work from 1994 to 2017. It thus offers a sense of her progression towards 'The Weaver of Songs', which consisted of five drawings, each produced between 2018 and 2021. Despite the apparent differences between those later drawings and her early and mid-career paintings, there are clear continuities that give the exhibition not only a sense of direction but a patterning. She would want each viewer to discern these for themselves: 'the work means what viewers make of it', she would say.

Gurminder remarked that at the end of the day artists just want their work to be seen. We are enormously grateful to all those who have made that happen for her.

Nathaniel Sikand-Youngs and Tim Youngs.

List of works.

Gallery 1. (Clockwise from entrance)

The Unveiling of Drupadi, 2017

Charcoal and pencil on paper

53.5 x 57.5 cm

Conjurers, 2017

Charcoal and pencil on paper

54 x 64.5 cm

Rajasthani Puppets, 2011

Pencil and charcoal on paper

53 x 26.5 cm

Sarmukh Singh, 2010

Pencil and charcoal on paper

43.6 x 31 cm

Untitled, 2009

Pencil and charcoal on paper

58.6 x 83 cm

Gallery 2. (Clockwise from entrance)

Meeting an Angel, 2004

Watercolour, gouache, inks, on paper

40 x 27.5 cm

Four Armed Woman, 1994

Gouache on paper

15 x 10 cm

Fragmenting Face, 1994

Gouache on paper

10 x 14.5 cm

Flowering a Tree, 1994

Oil/gouache on paper

10 x 15 cm

Landscape with Trees [n.d.]

29.1 x 41.3 cm

Dwelling [n.d.]

29 x 41.5 cm

Untitled [n.d.]

29.1 x 41.4 cm