

# exibart

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## India Art Fair, mirror of the changing Subcontinent

**From 30 January to 3 February, India's most important (and only) contemporary art fair returns to Delhi. And reflects a change**

*by Maria Teresa Capacchione*



The India Art Fair combines avant-garde visual art with modern masters within a broad program of performances and talks and sees the involvement of the main cultural organizations and foundations of the region. The India Art Fair supports the visual art of avant-garde with modern masters within a wide performance and talk program and sees the involvement of the main cultural organizations and foundations of the region such as the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art (KNMA), the Foundation for Indian Contemporary Art (FICA) and Korean Cultural Center India (all of Delhi), Noida's Swaraj Art Archive that will shed the spotlight on early 20th century works of art in India, while the Kolkata Center for Creativity will have its visibility for the first time in the Fair.

Born in Delhi in 2008 with the name of India Art Summit, the most successful contemporary art fair in India (India Art Fair, IAF) has reached its 12th edition and represents an opportunity to take stock of the situation of contemporary art of the Subcontinent.

This year there will be 81 galleries at the fair, about half of which are Indian. In addition to the most famous and established galleries in the country - including some of international fame - such as the Chemould Prescott Road, Chatterjee & Lal, Project 88 (all of Mumbai), the Gallery Espace and the Nature Morte (of Delhi), Experimenter (from Kolkata), GALLERYSKE (Bengaluru), the fair welcomes young galleries from the Subcontinent, including Art Explore (Delhi) and Gallery White (Vadodara), together with new participants from all over the world such as Marc Straus from the United States , PSM from Germany and Saskia Fernando Gallery from Sri Lanka.

Indeed, over the last ten years or so, there has been a small (in numerical terms) but significant change in the panorama of Indian galleries: the number remains very small compared to the size of the country, but new ones are being opened galleries outside the secure enclosure of the two capitals of contemporary art of the Subcontinent, Delhi and Mumbai.



India Art Fair 2019. Photo © Jeetin Sharma. Courtesy of India Art Fair

## The young Indian galleries

The young galleries that participate in the IAF and that represent the sign of an opening and a more widespread sensitivity that is permeating the contemporary art of the whole Subcontinent with new vitality, can certainly be found in the Emami Art in Calcutta; Art Houz in Chennai; Kalakriti Art Gallery in Hyderabad; ZOCA in Ahmedabad and Gallery White in Vadodara are just a few examples.

The India Art Fair also supports initiatives such as the Kochi-Muziris Biennale, in Kerala, which over the years has established itself as one of the most interesting biennials in Asia,

the Serendipity Arts Festival in Goa and the Chennai Photo Biennale in Tamil Nadu which , born in 2016, has quickly established itself as an authoritative reference point for photography in India and this year will make its debut at the fair.



India Art Fair 11. Photo credit Jeetin Sharma, Courtesy of India Art Fair

## In addition to the IAF, around Delhi

In addition to the main office, IAF PARALLEL involves the whole city of Delhi with collateral events scheduled by the galleries, museums and artistic spaces of the city. In particular, do not miss the opening of the renewed Jaipur House at the National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA) which will show its rich permanent collection; the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art; Bharti Kher's retrospective at Bikaner House; the exhibition by Dhruvi Acharya at the Nature Morte gallery and the exhibition by Ravinder Reddy and Atul Dodiya at the Vadehra Art Gallery.

To enrich the IAF, some outdoor installations by Indian and international artists that will extend through the entire fairgrounds, including the one by photographer Magnum Martin Parr (Live Photography Project, 2020).

The fair program also includes live shows and events and a conference platform which, like every year, puts artists at the center of the stage.