

MEERA SETHI



Born in India, Canadian artist Meera Sethi is a self-taught graphic designer, that transitioned to full time visual arts only after completing her education. She earned a BFA in 1998 and MA in Interdisciplinary Studies at York University (2001). After graduating Sethi began to experiment with acrylic paints as well as various other materials in her studio.

MEERA'S WORK POSES QUESTIONS ABOUT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MIGRATION, DIASPORA, HYBRIDITY AND BELONGING.

Many of Sethi's projects represented her interests in South Asian identities and paved the way for the contemporary art that represents the culture of India. She is inspired by the diversity and evolution of South Asian clothing, gender norms, and societal expectations. Most of her work is vivid and a mix of paintings and graphic pieces. She examines and emphasizes the individuality of her subjects and provides insight into the diversity of South Asian culture.

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Meera works hard to look beyond border for artistic inspirations. She is inspired by artists such as Shirin Neshat and Mona Hatoum. Her regular travels between Canada and India form the basis for her art and inform her work through everything from Indian miniature paintings to hip hop. Bringing together politics, culture, and spirit.

Meera Sethi's work is in the permanent collection of the Royal Ontario Museum and the Wedge Collection (one of the world's largest, privately owned contemporary art collections focusing on African diasporic culture), and has been exhibited at the Art Gallery of Ontario, the Art Gallery of Mississauga, and L'Oréal Melbourne Fashion Festival, among other venues.

Recent work includes Upping the Aunty, a multidimensional project comprised of street fashion photography, a coloring book for adults, and a series of paintings that place the figure of the "Aunty" at the center of fashionableness. And #Unstitched, an ongoing, multi-year project investigating the possibilities and tensions of creating community using a single garment, a sari, across multiple diasporic sites. Sethi's work has been featured by many media outlets, including CNN, MTV, NBC, NPR, VICE, and VOGUE India.

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YOGA: A SARATORIAL GUIDE
OFFERS A WHIMSICAL TAKE ON YOGA ATTIRE WHILE DRAWING IN A WIDE RANGE OF CONTEMPORARY AND HISTORIC FASHION REFERENCES.



त्रिकोणासन

Trikonasana (Triangle Pose)

Practiced wearing a shortened jama over dance leotards, knee-high tabis paired with padukas and a tucked-away inlaid dagger.

उत्तरासन

Ustrasana (Camel Pose)

Practiced wearing moon and stars tights, a quilted Ikat sleeveless pullover layered on a turtleneck, single-tone Kashmiri floral gloves, and a delicate sheer cotton handloom sari.



ਪੜ੍ਹੀ



'Upping the Aunty' is an acrylic and fabric on canvas (35 in. x 60in.) series made by Meera that really stood out to me. It is so vivid and bold the way that she navigates the nuances and uniqueness of Indian American identity. In India and other South Asian countries Aunties are older women whom we look up to throughout our lives, calling elders by their first name is considered disrespectful. This exhibition explores the style, attitude, and iconic nature of South Asian aunties.

Meera used this series to present these aunties as fashion icons blending Eastern and Western cultures and styles. Some of the aunties are wearing leather jackets and saris, others are wearing baseball caps with bindis. Each painting is embedded with varying textures, she adds real fabric to the canvas to give each piece shape and depth. This series is vibrant in color, has a lot of figurative imagery and a lot of pattern.

"I NEVER SEE MANY ARTISTS TODAY FOCUSED ON SUCH IDENTITIES; WOMEN OF COLOR IN PARTICULAR. AS WOMEN OF COLOR WE DON'T GET THAT EXPERIENCE VERY OFTEN, ESPECIALLY THE OLDER GENERATIONS."

"This series represents aunties and, in a way, gives them strength. These paintings are stories from South Asian communities, particularly, histories of migration, the global flow of capital and colonization that expresses the current complex experiences of people today. By expressing myself through working with the materials I know best and my own life, I am able to draw connections that make world-making possible".



"I AM ALSO INTERESTED IN EXPLORING MOMENTS OF TRANSITION AND BEING IN-BETWEEN PLACES, IDENTITIES, & LOCATIONS IN A WAY THAT OPENS UP QUESTIONS RATHER THAN PROVIDE ANSWERS"
-MEERA SETHI

Sethi develops her work organically as her process involves preliminary sketches, research, documentation, and written reflection. This is very similar to the way I address my design projects and personal artwork. A lot of my graphic elements are organic pieces made by different mediums that I then photograph and transpose into a graphic element. The human touch in my eyes has a much more unique look than something that is rigid and artificial in design. Her work is very experimental, and she utilizes her history and memories in a personal way.

And she sources her materials from her community for example recycling fabrics and textiles. As she tells interviewers at Femme Art Review, "I find myself curious about new mediums such as durational sculpture, textile, and performance".

This really resonates with me; I tend to create elements from scratch from various mediums and try to create an overall meaning that draws from my identity and experiences. She reflects deeply on the world around her and communities that she is a part of. She says, "My work is about the undoing of myself through working with the materials I know best and my own life, I am able to draw connections that make world-making possible".

