



# KNOTS THAT BIND

Selected works from The Sangita Jindal Collection  
& The Red Dress project

THE RED DRESS

*The Red Dress is a special project that weaves together craft and community in a meaningful way. It resonates deeply with causes close to my heart—celebrating craft and empowering women. The pieces from my own collection, displayed alongside the Dress, reflect similar themes. Having been displayed in major museums around the world- I am thrilled to see the Red Dress return to South India, where its journey began. It now returns, not just with intricate embroideries, but with the stories, experiences, and emotions of all the lives it has touched along the way.*

**-Sangita Jindal**

**Founder, Hampi Art Labs  
Chairperson, JSW Foundation**

# WOVEN SOLIDARITY

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Knots that Bind brings The Red Dress project by Kirstie Macleod in conversation with a selection of artworks from the Sangita Jindal Collection. The Red Dress project began in 2009 as a platform to build solidarity, predominantly among women in different parts of the world. The imprints on the dress include the expressions of 380 embroiderers from 51 countries, including female refugees, asylum seekers, survivors of war, and other globally marginalised groups.

Echoing the premise of The Red Dress project, the exhibition Knots that Bind presents an intergenerational dialogue on community and materiality as mediums for our shared futures.

The artists and collectives in this exhibition, such as B. Prabha, Gogi Saroj Pal, Himmat Shah, Chanakya School of Craft, and Shrujan, reflect on the power of art and creative imagination to embody and relay civilisational ethos and conflicts.

From a formal study of roots and branches to mobilising the inherent meanings in materials, from knots simulating the atoms to painting women for solidarity, these artworks address our transitory relationship between nature, culture, and coexistence. Together, they speak of a social fabric connected in more ways than we imagine.

Srinivas Aditya Mopidevi  
New Delhi  
November 2024



# THE RED DRESS

A 14-YEAR, AWARD WINNING GLOBAL, COLLABORATIVE EMBROIDERY PROJECT 2009 - 2023

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The **Red Dress** project, conceived by British artist Kirstie Macleod, provides an artistic platform for individuals (majority women) around the world, many of whom are vulnerable and live in poverty, to tell their personal stories through embroidery.

From 2009 to 2023, pieces of **The Red Dress** travelled the globe being continuously embroidered onto. Constructed out of 87 pieces of burgundy silk dupion, the garment has been worked on by 367 women/girls, 11 men/boys and 2 non-binary artists from 51 countries. All 141 commissioned embroiderers were paid for their work, and receive a portion of all ongoing exhibition fees, merchandise, and the opportunity to sell their work through The Red Dress Etsy shop. The rest of the embroidery was added by willing audiences at various exhibitions & events.

Embroiderers include female refugees from Palestine, Syria and Ukraine, women seeking asylum in the UK from Iran, Iraq, China, Nigeria and Namibia, survivors of war in Kosovo, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Rwanda, and DR Congo; impoverished women in South Africa, Mexico, and Egypt; individuals in Kenya, Japan, Turkey, Jamaica, Sweden, Peru, Czech Republic, Dubai, Afghanistan, Australia, Argentina, Germany, Switzerland, Canada, Tobago, Vietnam, Estonia, USA, Russia, Pakistan, Wales, Colombia and England, students from Montenegro, Brazil, Malta, Singapore, Eritrea, Norway, Poland, Finland, Ireland, Romania and Hong Kong as well as upmarket embroidery studios in India and Saudi Arabia.

Initially the project sought to generate a dialogue of identity through embroidery, uniting people around the world without borders. However, over the 14 years the dress has also become a platform for self-expression and an opportunity for voices to be amplified and heard.

Many of the embroiderers are established professionals, but there are also pieces created by first time stitchers. The artists were encouraged to create a work that expressed their own identities whilst adding their own cultural and traditional experience. Some used specific styles of embroidery practiced for hundreds of years within their family, village, or town whilst others chose simple stitches to convey powerful events from their past. Some of the women are re-building their lives with the help of embroidery, by using their skill or being trained in embroidery to earn a decent and consistent living.





Detail of tribal embroidery, Karnataka, India

**The Red Dress** has been exhibited in various galleries and museums worldwide, including Gallery Maeght in Paris, Art Dubai, Museo Des Arte Popular in Mexico City, the National Library of Kosovo, National Waterfront Museum in Wales, Southern Vermont Arts Centre, Fuller Craft & Frick Museum's in the USA, Fashion and Textile Museum, London, an event at the Royal Academy in London, and the Premio Valcellina Textiles award in Maniago, Italy where it won first prize in 2015.

**The Red Dress'** 14-year creation journey around the world is now complete with the garment assembled in its final configuration. Covered in millions of stitches, the 6.8 kg silk **Red Dress** is weighted as much by the individual stories and collective voices waiting to be heard as by the threads and beads that adorn it.

Moving forward, as well as continuing to develop a strong online platform **The Red Dress** will be travelling to many different galleries, museums, and event spaces around the world - with a continued aim to be accessible to all. Kirstie intends to bring the garment to visit the countries of all commissioned embroiderers and exhibit **The Red Dress** alongside their own work in their chosen venue.

Practical and logistical support with commissions for the project was provided by the following charities, self-help development projects, social enterprises and various initiatives providing support to women in poverty: *Manchester Aid for Kosovo* supporting *Sister Stitch in Kosovo*; *Kisany* in Rwanda and DR Congo; *Missibaba* in South Africa; *Kitzen* in Mexico; *Al Badia* in Lebanon supporting Palestinian refugees; *FanSina* in Egypt; the *Swansea Women's Asylum & Refugee Support Group*, Wales, *White Ribbon Alliance*, UK and the *War Childhood Museum* in Bosnia & Herzegovina.

## ARTWORKS ON DISPLAY



### **Anita Dube**

*Be the Change*

2021

Votive eyes on board

Anita Dube embraces the power of words to investigate the relationship between 'erotics' and 'politics.' Through text based provocations, she speaks of the collective resistance of individuals and women against the overarching idea of 'power.'

## ARTWORKS ON DISPLAY



### **Arpana Caur**

*Green Circle*

1994

Oil on canvas

Arpana Caur's artistic journey reflects the social political realities of gender, communalism, and violence in India. Her works refer to her upbringing in a patriarchal society and the need for solidarity between women.

## ARTWORKS ON DISPLAY



### **B. Prabha**

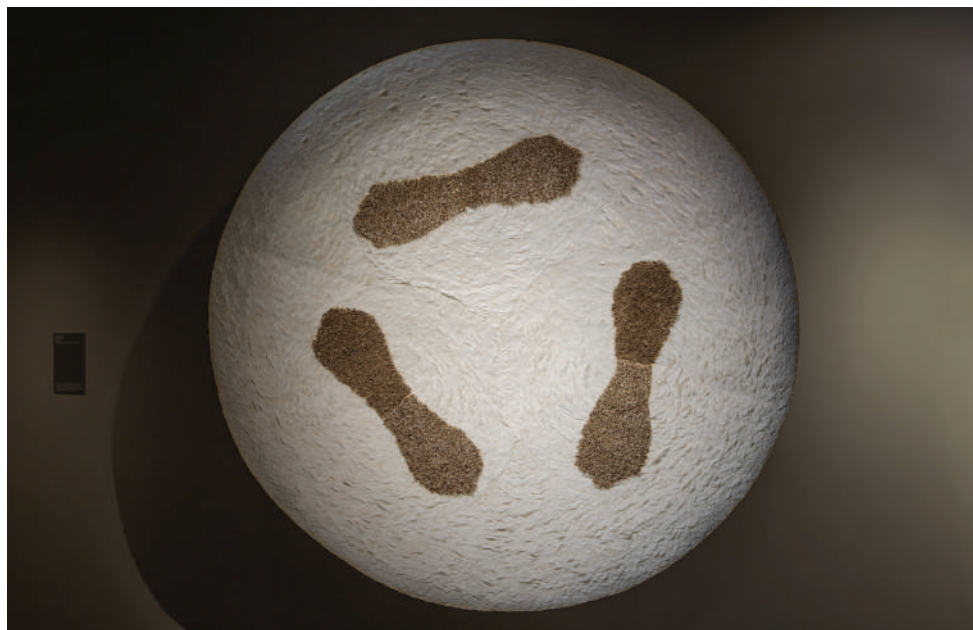
*Untitled (two seated women)*

Circa 1970s-1980s

Oil on canvas

B. Prabha was an anomaly in the modern history of Indian art because of her commitment to painting images of women across the social strata. Her art is an archive of a time when women had limited agency in public life and discourse.

## ARTWORKS ON DISPLAY



### **Benitha Perciyal**

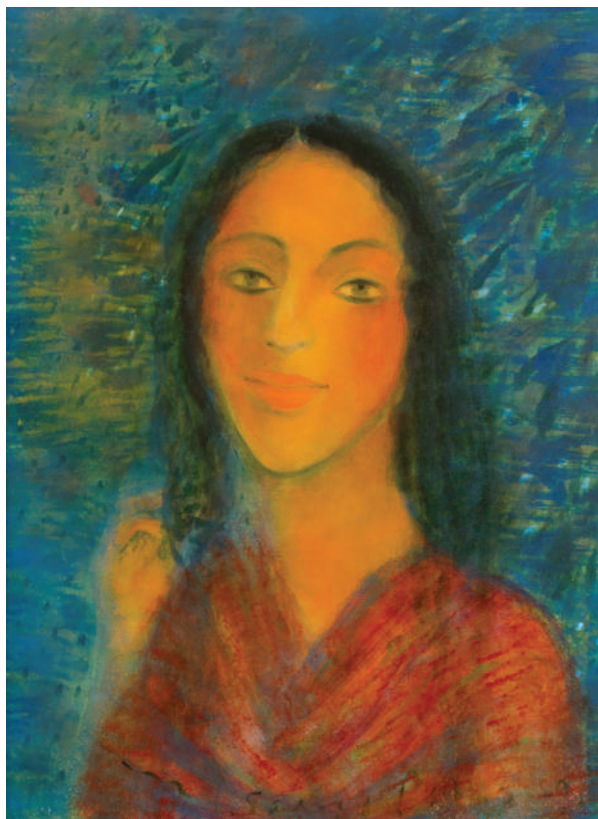
*You can't be alone*

2018-2019

Rice paper, Tabebuia rosea seeds on paper mache

Benitha Perciyal believes that materials embody cultural meanings and narratives. She is particularly interested in the vernacular forms that emerge out of the Christian faith in South India. From found wood blocks to spices, burnt coal to seeds, she uses materials to speak of our intuitive connections with the planetary ecosystem.

## ARTWORKS ON DISPLAY



### **Gogi Saroj Pal**

*Untitled*

2009

Acrylic on canvas

Gogi Saroj Pal's work is rooted in the relationship between history and memory, sensuality and desire. Her painterly evocations speak about the multifaceted role of the feminine in a male-dominated world.

## ARTWORKS ON DISPLAY



### **Himmat Shah**

*Untitled*

2006

Bronze

Himmat Shah's sculptural works across diverse mediums remind us of his upbringing in Lothal, Gujarat, among the remnants of the Indus Valley Civilisation. Together, they reimagine a culturally rich past and its collective consciousness.

## ARTWORKS ON DISPLAY



### Jayeeta Chatterjee

*There is no Holiday I*

2023

Woodcut print on recycled cotton saree, Nakshi kantha (2 layers of saree)

Jayeeta Chatterjee reflects on the monotony of women's everyday life, especially of the lower socio-economic strata of society. This work presents a day in the lives of Koli women at Sassoon Docks in Mumbai, who sell fish day-in and day-out.

ARTWORKS ON DISPLAY



**Kirstie Macleod & 380 embroiderers from around the world**

*The Red Dress project*

2009-2023

Burgundy silk dupion, netting & cotton fabric, embroidery thread (cotton, silk, synthetic, metallic), wool, beads (glass, plastic), black pearls, crystals, sequins, gold metalwork, seashell, scarab beetles, shell, felt, crochet, aida & Nigerian cotton fabric

Kirstie Macleod / The Red Dress project provides an artistic platform for individuals (predominantly women) around the world, many of whom are vulnerable and live in poverty, to tell their stories through embroidery.

## ARTWORKS ON DISPLAY



### **Ki Soo Kim**

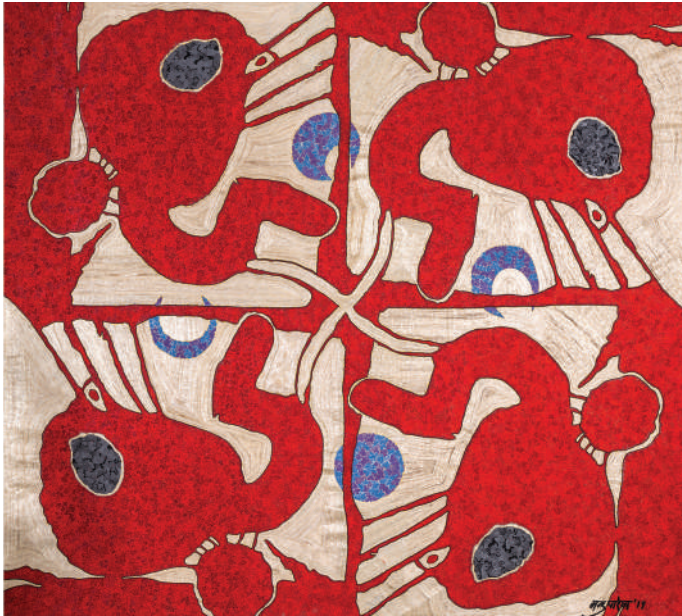
*Moon*

2018-2019

Mixed media

Ki Soo Kim repurposes robust materials such as steel mirrors, aluminum, and iron plates to portray delicate images of cloth wraps and nature. He also uses reflective surfaces to converse with the immediate surroundings.

## ARTWORKS ON DISPLAY



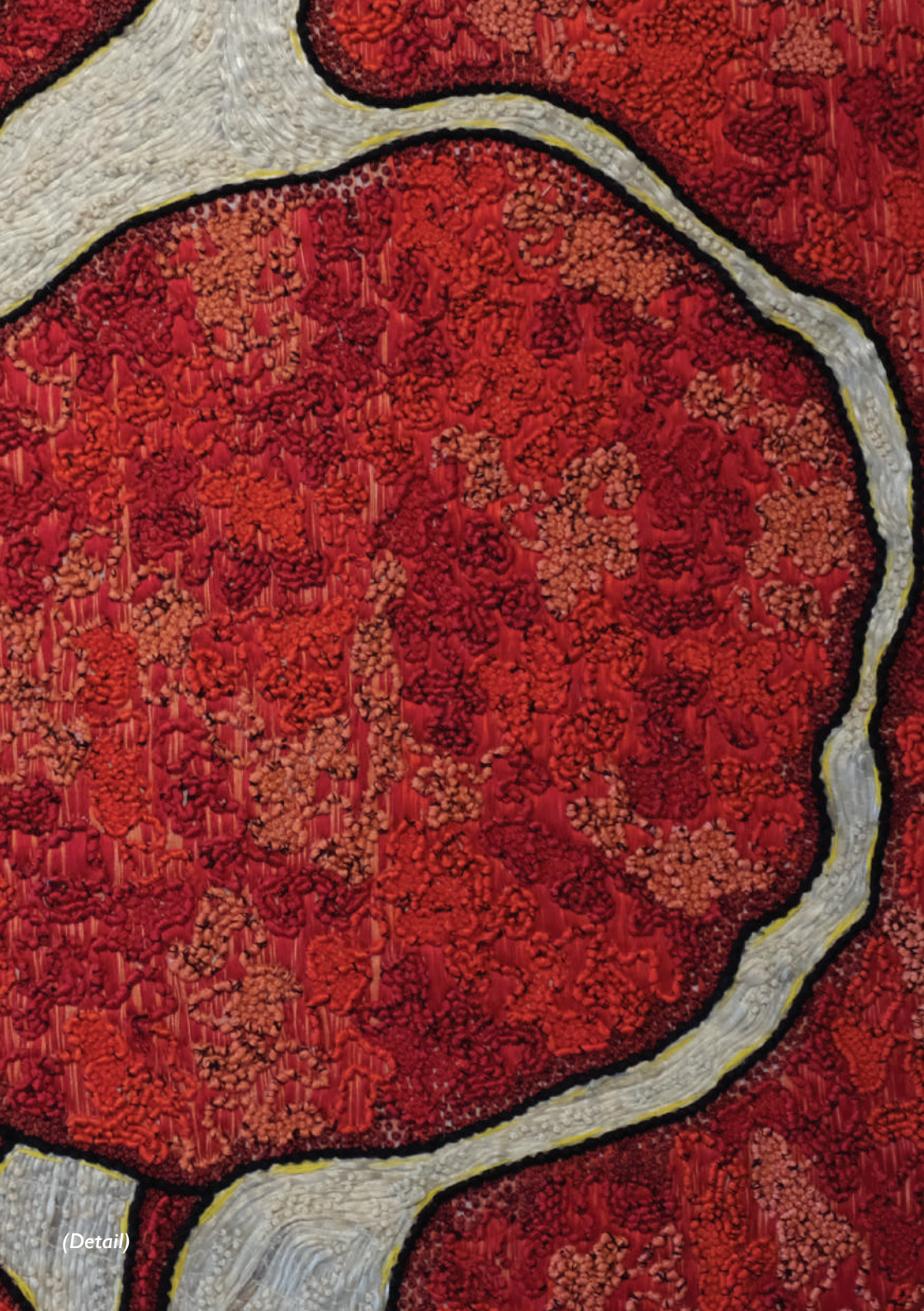
### **Manu Parekh, Karishma Swali & Chanakya School of Craft**

*Chanting Sutra*

2021-2022

Embroidery

Led by Karishma Swali, the Chanakya School of Craft is a space to 'celebrate the culture of craftsmanship & the interconnection between us all.' This collaboration builds on the spiritual abstractions of the visionary artist Manu Parekh. With open & closed knots, from low to high density variations of knotting, these forms resemble atoms that configure our universe.



(Detail)

## ARTWORKS ON DISPLAY



### **Sarika Bajaj**

*Roots*

2018-2019

Ropes & jute threads

Sarika Bajaj highlights the transitory relationship between humans, nature, and other species. Through a formal study of flora, fauna, roots, and tree branches, she speaks of how all beings are one unit, linked in more ways than we imagine.



(Detail)

## ARTWORKS ON DISPLAY



### **Shrujan**

*Mother earth*

2023

Cotton, dupion silk and poplin cotton

### **Techniques & Artists**

Natural dye Ajrakh block print: Adam Abduljabbar Khatri - Dhamadka & team

Hand applique: Gauriben Pratapbhai Udani & Bhagvatiben Nehalbhai Bhati

Running stitch embroidery: Manjula Jitendra Rathod

## ARTWORKS ON DISPLAY



### **Shrujan**

*Janani - Life*

2023

Cotton, dupion silk and satin silk

#### **Techniques & Artists**

Hand block wax batik: Shakil Ahmed Khatri - Neel Batik team

Hand applique: Bhagvatiben Nehalbai Bhati

Led by Chanda Shroff, Shrujan is a community of women in Kutch who collectively revive their traditional hand embroidery and Ajrakh block printing techniques. In these works, they speak of the primal forces of earth and life.

## ARTWORKS ON DISPLAY



### **Vinod Daroz**

*Benevolence II*

2023

Ceramic

Vinod Daroz works with clay to speak of the spiritual connection between nature and humans. In this work, he presents the collective wisdom of artistic communities across generations and geographies as they reflect on their relationship with art.



## ABOUT | SANGITA JINDAL

Sangita Jindal, Chairperson of JSW Foundation, has significantly impacted India's social and cultural landscape over the past three decades. Under her leadership and strategic direction, JSW Foundation, the social development arm of the JSW Group (one of India's leading conglomerates) has an established track record and a legacy of enabling holistic change across communities around India.

A visionary who believes in the transformative power of art, Sangita set up the Jindal Arts Creative Interaction Centre (JACIC) at the National Centre for the Performing Arts (NCPA) in 1994. She also publishes Art India Magazine, a chronicler of the Indian art scene since 1996.

As one of India's most prominent philanthropists, patrons and collectors, she has supported art and heritage through numerous projects, both at home and globally. Her efforts to preserve heritage for future generations led to extensive restoration work at the Hampi temple complex in the southern Indian state of Karnataka, and the Keneseth Eliyahu Synagogue and iconic David Sassoon Library and Reading Room in Mumbai, Maharashtra. The projects received conservation awards and an award of merit respectively from UNESCO. She has recently restored the Shalimar Bagh - the world- renowned Mughal Garden in Srinagar, Kashmir.

Sangita founded Hampi Art Labs, an art residency and exhibition space aimed at nurturing artists globally. She encourages and invests in art as a practice. She supports the AD x JSW Prize for Contemporary Craftsmanship and is supporting the next edition of The Indian Ceramics Triennale.

Sangita is an Eisenhower Fellow, serving on the Board of Trustees of the World Monuments Fund - India Chapter & as an Advisor on the Khoj Board. She is a member of the Tate International Council, the UN Women Business Sector Advisory Council (BSAC), a Governing Board Member of Mumbai First & a global trustee of 'Asia Society'. She has also been elected as Chairperson of the Asia Society India Centre in 2024. She has recently been brought on as a member of the India Advisory Council of the British Asian Trust, UK. Vogue India recognized Sangita as 'Heritage Keeper of the Year' in 2019 in recognition of her work preserving cultural heritage in India. She also received the Golden Peacock Award for Social & Cultural Leadership, in 2019.

# ABOUT | HAMPI ART LABS

Hampi Art Labs is an arts centre located near the UNESCO World Heritage Site Hampi in the South of India, opened in February 2024. Set across 9-acres of landscape, the centre offers artists unique production facilities, an environment to creatively retreat in and galleries for world-class display. The site comprises exhibition spaces, studios and apartments for residencies, gardens, and a café.

Evolving from a legacy of supporting art and heritage in India for over 30 years and founded by Sangita Jindal and her daughter Tarini Jindal Handa, Hampi Art Labs is an initiative of the JSW Foundation - the social development arm of the JSW Group, one of India's leading business houses.

Located near the last capital of the last great Hindu Kingdom of Vijayanagar and UNESCO World Heritage Site Hampi, the centre is founded on an ethos of building an interdisciplinary institution inspired by the ancient temple city where art, architecture, and literature flourished from the 14th to 16th centuries. Uniquely born of place where art, heritage and nature intermingle, Hampi Art Labs sits in a spectacular setting dominated by the river Tungabhadra, craggy hill ranges and intriguingly large boulders that dot the landscape.



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