

LATITUDE 28

Bhavna Kakar

Presents

JYOTI BHATT: Through the Line and the Lens

Curated by Rekha Rodwittiya

Bikaner House, Pandara Road,
New Delhi - 110011

Preview: 12th April, 2025 | Saturday

Timing: 6 pm

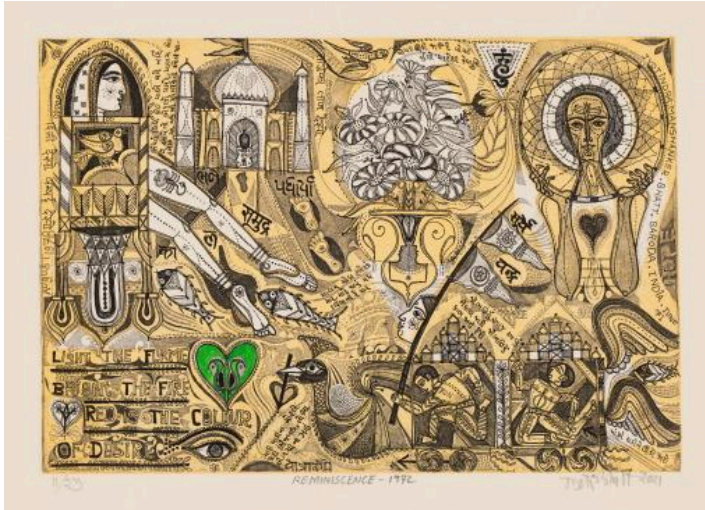
Exhibition Open till: 21st April 2025

Timings: Monday to Saturday, 11 AM – 7 PM

Through the Line and the Lens, Printmaking & Photography

Exhibition continues at Gallery LATITUDE 28 till 25th May 2025

Timings: Monday to Saturday, 11 AM – 7 PM



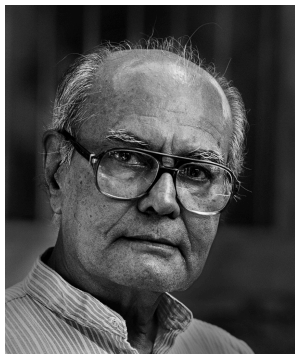
Jyoti Bhatt, *Reminiscence - 1972*, Hand coloured Etching, 9.75 x 14.5 inches, 2021

New Delhi, March 2025 – LATITUDE 28 is proud to present *Jyoti Bhatt: Through the Line & the Lens*, a highly anticipated and the largest printmaking retrospective of recent times, presented by Bhavna Kakar and curated by acclaimed artist Rekha Rodwittiya. This landmark exhibition offers a new reading of the enduring influence of Jyoti Bhatt—one of India's most distinguished printmakers and pedagogues—through an intimate survey of his prolific artistic journey. The exhibition, set to take place from April 12 to April 21, 2025, at Bikaner House, New Delhi, will showcase the entire collection of Jyoti Bhatt from Bhavna Kakar's distinguished printmaking collection. Featuring a rich array of etchings, lithographs, serigraphs, photographs, and personal writings—including diaries and letters—this retrospective presents an unparalleled insight into Bhatt's practice and philosophy. His photographic documentation of the Living Traditions of India has developed a deep conversation with his graphic prints over the decades. Our approach dives into the interconnected nature of Bhatt's multiple practices, positioning them with his pedagogical frameworks.

As an influential figure who has defied any singular definitions seeping into his practice, the iconic artist, printmaker, photographer, and pedagogue Jyoti Bhatt stands as a bridge between modernist and contemporary art in India. During the early post-independence years, when printmaking remained a relatively underexplored medium in India, Bhatt recognized its immense potential. He harnessed its ability to document the fleeting nature of everyday ritualistic art and the evolving vocabulary of popular culture. His mastery of various techniques imbued his prints with a layered visual language, often infused with wit and satire. Beyond printmaking, Bhatt's extensive photographic documentation of rural artistic traditions, vernacular art forms, and the vibrant academic life of Baroda has contributed significantly to the preservation of India's visual heritage. His work in this field has led to the development of invaluable archives, earning him global recognition.

His profound engagement with folk symbols and motifs—meticulously recorded in his notebooks—shaped a distinct visual vocabulary that merged local traditions with contemporary sensibilities. With a career spanning over six decades, Bhatt has remained dedicated to pedagogy, championing printmaking not just as an artistic discipline but as a democratic medium capable of mass dissemination and cultural literacy.

About the Artist



Jyotindra Manshankar Bhatt (b. 12 March 1934, Gujarat, India), also known as Jyoti Bhatt, studied painting and printmaking at M. S. University in Baroda. In the early sixties, Bhatt received a scholarship to further his studies at the Accademia di Belle Arti in Naples, Italy and the Pratt Institute in New York, where he was exposed to abstract expressionism. He studied fresco and mural painting at Banasthali Vidyapith in Rajasthan. Bhatt's early works reflected the cubist style, later shifting to pop art imagery, to finally arrive at a style inspired by traditional folk imagery. Though Bhatt worked in a variety of mediums, including watercolour and oils, printmaking ultimately garnered him the most attention. In 1966, Bhatt returned to MSU Baroda with a thorough knowledge of the intaglio

process. During this period, he and his compatriots at the Faculty of Fine Arts in Baroda came to be known as 'The Baroda School' of Indian Art. During the latter part of the sixties, Jyoti Bhatt developed his passion for documenting traditional Indian craft and design work. The disappearing arts of Gujarat became a focus, and Bhatt's investigations into folk and tribal designs influenced the motifs which he employed in his style of printmaking. Throughout Jyoti Bhatt's long career as a teacher at the MSU Faculty of Fine Arts, he photo-documented the evolution of the university, the artistic endeavours of the students and teachers and the architecturally significant buildings of Baroda. Best known for his etchings, intaglios and screen prints, he has explored and re-explored a personal language of symbols that stem from Indian culture: the peacock, the parrot, the lotus, stylized gods and goddesses and myriad variations on folk and tribal designs.

Bhatt's significant contributions to Indian art have been recognized with numerous accolades, including the Padma Shri in 2019 and his election as a Fellow of the Lalit Kala Akademi in 2022. He has also been honored with several prestigious national and international awards, such as Asia Arts Vanguard Award, Kalidasa Award, Dhirubhai Thakar Savyasachi Saraswat Award, an Honorary Doctorate, and multiple Lifetime Achievement Awards, solidifying his legacy as a visionary who shaped Indian modernism.

During his illustrious career, he has had many solo and group exhibitions all over the world. Some of the recent solo shows include, 'Through the Line & the Lens...: A Selection of Prints and Photographs', curated by Rekha Rodwittiya, presented by LATITUDE 28, Bikaner House & LATITUDE 28, New Delhi (2025); 'Revisations: Engaging the Archive', Vadehra Art Gallery, New Delhi (2024); 'Time & Time Again: Jyoti Bhatt', Museum of Art & Photography, Bengaluru (2023); 'The Photographic Eye of

Jyoti Bhatt' at Guild Art Mumbai, Gallerie88, Kolkata (2017); 'Roop- Swaroop', Exhibition of Photographs at Satya Gallery, Ahmedabad (2017); Exhibition of Photographs at Rukshaan Art Gallery, Mumbai (2017-18); 'Re-Incarnations', Mini – Retrospective show of Paintings, Prints and Photographs at ARK Gallery, Vadodara (2018); Print show at Bihar Museum, Patna (2019); 'The Indian Portrait-xi – Jyoti Bhatt's Photographs of His Contemporaries,' Amdavad ni Gufa (2020); 'Parallels That Meet: Paintings, Prints, Photographs', DAG, New Delhi (2007); and 'Shows of Prints and Paintings,' Pratt Graphic Art Center, New York, USA (1964–1966). His recent group exhibitions include 'India Art Fair' with LATITUDE 28, New Delhi (2023); Group show at Sunaparanta Goa Centre for the Arts (2019); 'Show of Photographs', KIPF Kolkata International Photography Festival, Kolkata (2019); 'Show of Photographs' curated by Nancy Adajania, Serendipity art festival, Goa (2019); 'Digital book and accordion book,' India Art Fair with LATITUDE 28 & TAKE Editions, New Delhi (2022 & 2020), including in selected curated exhibitions such as 'Body Transformed: Contemporary South Asian Photographs and Prints,' Smithsonian's National Museum of Asian Art, Washington, D.C. (2025); 'The Imaginary Institution of India: Art 1975–1998,' curated by Shanay Jhaveri, Barbican Centre, London (2024–25); and 'Around the Table: Conversations about Milestones, Memories, Mappings,' curated by Roobina Karode at the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art, New Delhi (2022); 'Six Indian Photographers' curated by Ebrahim Alkazi, Modern Art in Oxford, UK (1982). His work is also part of prestigious national and international collections, including the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art, New Delhi; the National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi; the Museum of Modern Art & Photography, Bengaluru; the Museum of Modern Art, New York, USA; the British Museum, London; Tate Britain; the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.; the Uffizi Gallery, Florence; and the Gaur Collection, New Jersey, U.S.A.

At 91, he continues to work in his studio in Baroda, Gujarat, creating new artworks with unwavering passion and dedication.

From the Director's Desk:



"Some of the most defining years of my life have been spent in Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, as a young aspiring student of art history, who has seen and listened to the printmaker Jyoti Bhatt in diverse critical artistic discourses. Over the years, I have cultivated an enduring bond with him—one rooted in deep pedagogical values and artistic admiration. From my early academic days, his printmaking practice captivated me, sparking a lifelong reverence that has only intensified over the many decades now. Collecting his artworks has been more than a pursuit of passion; it has been a means of anchoring my own journey as a gallerist and publisher. It rightly served as a springboard to take initiatives to contribute to relevant research on his profound influence on Indian modern art. One of the most striking aspects of Jyoti Bhatt's work is his ability to merge different artistic traditions. Influenced by the

European avant-garde movement, but he never lost sight of his roots in Indian art. He amalgamated two diverse worlds to create a distinct style that was a ubiquitous feature of his practice. It is a privilege to present his illustrious oeuvre in our retrospective exhibition, 'Through the Line and the Lens,' meticulously curated by Rekha Rodwittiya, a long-admired distinguished artist. Her decades-long association with Jyoti Sir lends a rare depth to this curation that allows us to illuminate upon the unexplored facets of his artistic vision. Together, we celebrate not just the legacy of a pioneering printmaker in India but also position him as a cultural historian and pedagogue whose humanistic vision continues to influence contemporary art.

As a gallerist, editor, and art historian, my engagement with contemporary art extends beyond exhibitions to fostering critical discourse and research. Through **Latitude 28** and **TAKE on Art**, I have worked towards creating platforms that support emerging voices in art and writing. Initiatives like the **Art Writing Award** reflect this commitment, enabling new perspectives to shape the

evolving art landscape. I am particularly excited to see how this exhibition will contribute to a renewed appreciation of his work and open the world of intellectual curiosity about the inevitability of art in society. Along with the technical dexterity of his prints, the exhibition is a profound recognition of the incisive social and cultural commentary that underlies the surface of each print. The retrospect is an opportune moment to reminisce about his contributions to Indian modern art to lend a spotlight on the contemporary conversation that we are all a part of.”

– **Bhavna Kakar, Founder-Director, LATITUDE 28**

Note from the curator: Though he would perhaps himself refuse to acknowledge this, Padmashree Jyoti Bhatt has been a path-breaking figure in our cultural history, yet strangely was never too aware of this himself. His approach is always to objectively distance himself to consider all things without the hindrance of sentimentality, before creating an opinion or defining a choice. This attitude has offered him a unique ability as an artist to examine his curiosities unfettered by normative practices, and thereby structure his pictorial linguistics without prescribing to any prevailing trend.

Through the line & the lens, is a curated selection of the artist’s graphic prints and photographs.

In the graphic prints we see how Jyoti Bhatt often uses subversive inflections as a means by which he positions his politics, and the critique he has of establishments that he views as retrogressive to the ideals of pluralism and liberal thinking. In many instances he operated as a visual artist ahead of his time, presenting language constructs that use texts, and referencing from art as a quotational strategy, which can be seen as the doorway to a post-modernist articulation that was to follow many years later.

Jyoti Bhatt’s black and white photographs presented in this exhibition are of his friends and colleagues. These photographs evoke an era where the climate of cultural change within India was charged with passionate discourse, and where the implementation of newly formed governing modules for national platforms of art activities were being strategized. Many of the people photographed in these images were engaged in articulating ideas of modernity, and its newly phrased implications. Jyoti Bhatt places these moments of personal struggle and collective enquiry before us, without any desire to underline its historical importance, but instead offers it as a personal journey he has been part of. In his usual self-effacing way, he underplays his role as a visual orator who has immortalised an era of seminal change within Indian contemporary art through such documentation.

- **Rekha Rodwittiya, Distinguished artist and educator**

About the Curator:



Rekha Rodwittiya is an artist of international repute. She is an alumnus of the M.S. University of Baroda with a B.F.A in painting from the Faculty of Fine Arts in 1981. She was the first recipient of the prestigious Inlaks Fine Arts Scholarship awarded to study painting in the M.A. program at the Royal College of Art in London, from 1982 to 1984. She has held thirty-seven solo exhibitions and is widely travelled as a professional, with her work being shown extensively in India and abroad. She has undertaken numerous residency projects and site-specific works and has contributed as an artist of significance to the post-independence cultural history of India. She has been actively involved in art teaching through alternative non-institutionalised methods, as well as being a guest faculty at art colleges in the UK, France, Italy, Sweden, Australia, Japan and India; and is the founder and CEO of The

Collective Studio Baroda. She is actively engaged in funding for the arts. She lectures on contemporary Indian art and cultural practices, feminism, curatorial methods and other subjects of concern within

an Indian/Global engagement with the arts. She is highly regarded within the space of feminist discourse and is a champion of women's empowerment and equal rights. She is an independent curator and maintains a blog space.

About LATITUDE 28:

Established in 2010, LATITUDE 28 has redefined contemporary gallery practice with its lateral, avant-garde approach. The gallery stands as a vanguard in nurturing and showcasing emerging South Asian artists by championing experimental material-based practices while fostering meaningful connections among stakeholders -artists, collectors, patrons, arts professionals, and enthusiasts. By prioritising mentoring and capacity building, it shapes creative practices, through programs that drive cultural discourse across the region and beyond.

The gallery's commitment to inclusivity and accessibility makes it a critical nexus for cultural exchange, connecting artists with leading institutions worldwide. Through curated exhibitions that weave together art, history, and socio-political narratives, LATITUDE 28 facilitates an understanding of the forces shaping contemporary society. This approach ensures that each exhibition is a dynamic, immersive experience that engages and challenges audiences.

As an incubator of innovative artistic expressions, the gallery facilitates dynamic exchanges through site-specific artworks, artist talks, and immersive curatorial experiences, setting new standards for what galleries can achieve. Its influence in shaping artistic discourse and inspiring collections is felt across continents, making LATITUDE 28 an essential player in global cultural conversations.

Under the strategic leadership of Founder and Director Bhavna Kakar—also the Founder and Editor-in-Chief of TAKE on Art, South Asia's premier contemporary art publication—LATITUDE 28 has cultivated a robust network of collectors and patrons. This network extends deeply into the Global artistic ecosystems, bridging continental divides and enhancing cross-cultural dialogues.

SOCIAL MEDIA HANDLES

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/GalleryLatitude28>

Instagram: @latitude_28 @bhavz15 @takeonart

FOR MEDIA QUERIES

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