

NEW DELHI

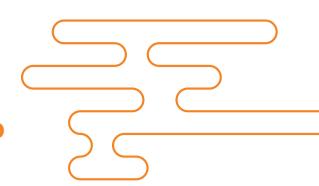
02-28.12.2025

INDIAN INTERIOR

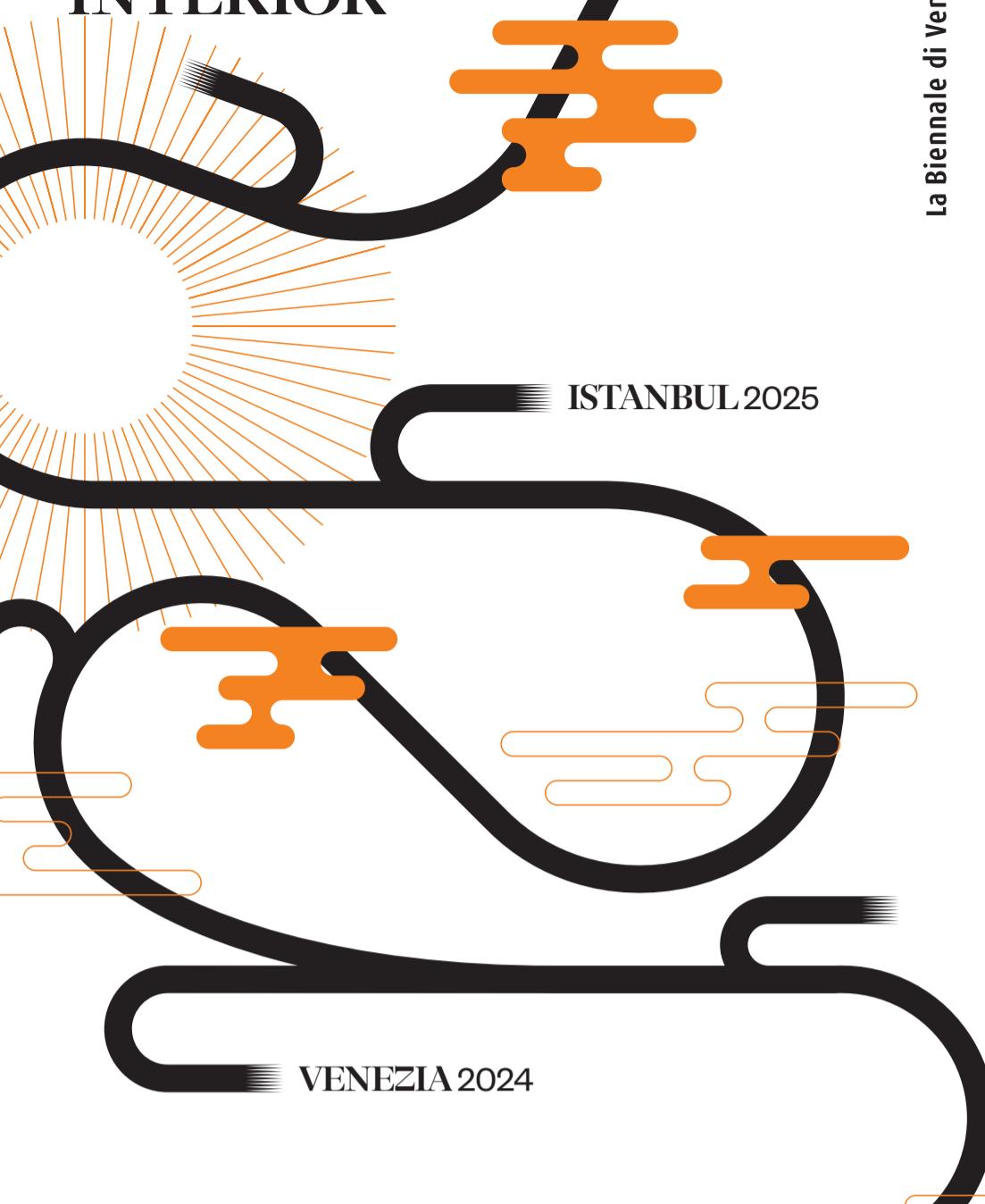


ARCHIVIO STORICO
DELLE ARTI
CONTEMPORANEE

THE WIND
MAKES THE SKY
La Biennale di Venezia
in the Footsteps of Marco Polo



È IL VENTO
CHE FA IL CIELO
La Biennale di Venezia
sulle orme di Marco Polo



风
造就了
天空

THE WIND
MAKES
THE SKY

È IL VENTO
CHE FA
IL CIELO

Indian Interior Interno Indiano

Bikaner House, New Delhi

02–28 December / dicembre 2025

In collaboration with /
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KNMA
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Museum
of Art



**Karishma Swali
and/e Chanakya School of Craft**
(Mumbai, 1977; Mumbai since/dal 2016)

Karishma Swali is an artist and craft practitioner committed to preserving India's intangible cultural heritage. Influenced by the philosophies of Rabindranath Tagore and Jiddu Krishnamurti, she leads Chanakya International and founded the Chanakya Foundation in 2015 to advance cultural sustainability and skill development. In 2016, she established the Chanakya School of Craft, a nonprofit institution dedicated to empowering women through craft and culture. The school's holistic curriculum teaches over 300 hand-embroidery techniques and has trained more than 1,300 women. Swali's interdisciplinary practice situates handcraftsmanship within a contemporary framework, engaging in significant collaborations with celebrated artists including Judy Chicago, Mickalene Thomas, Faith Ringgold, and Barthélémy Toguo.

In 2025 *En Route* was unveiled at the Vatican Apostolic Library. Her contributions have received international recognition, including the Badass Art Woman Award (BAWA, 2024), as well as France's Ordre national du Mérite and the Officier dans l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres (2024).

Inner Universe is guided by the notion of art rooted in community. The work invites its viewers to engage with it by establishing connections between man and nature using raw threads. The sculptures explore the space between anthropomorphic forms and abstract vessels of knowledge. Primitive in shape yet complex in concept and technique, these sculptures balance the playful spirit of experimentation with a brute, spare physicality.

Karishma Swali è un'artista e artigiana impegnata nella conservazione del patrimonio culturale immateriale dell'India. Influenzata dalle filosofie di Rabindranath Tagore e Jiddu Krishnamurti, dirige la Chanakya International e nel 2015 ha fondato la Chanakya Foundation con l'obiettivo di promuovere la sostenibilità culturale e lo sviluppo delle abilità tecniche. Nel 2016 ha fondato la Chanakya School of Craft, un'organizzazione non profit che si impegna per l'emancipazione delle donne attraverso l'artigianato e la cultura. Il programma didattico olistico della scuola insegna oltre 300 tecniche di ricamo a mano e ha formato più di 1300 donne. La sua pratica interdisciplinare colloca l'artigianato in un contesto contemporaneo e la vede impegnata in importanti collaborazioni con artisti famosi come Judy Chicago, Mickalene Thomas, Faith Ringgold e Barthélémy Toguo. Nel 2025 *En Route* è stata presentata presso la Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana. Il suo impegno è stato premiato con numerosi riconoscimenti internazionali, tra cui il Badass Art Woman Award (BAWA, 2024), l'Ordre national du Mérite francese e l'Officier dans l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres (2024). *Inner Universe* si basa su un concetto di arte radicata nella comunità. L'opera invita il pubblico a interagire, stabilendo un legame tra l'uomo e la natura attraverso l'uso di fili grezzi. Le sculture, in bilico tra forme antropomorfe e contenitori astratti di conoscenza, esplorano lo spazio. Primitive nella forma, ma complesse nel concetto e nella tecnica, bilanciano lo spirito giocoso della sperimentazione con la loro materialità grezza ed essenziale.

Thukral and Tagra
(Delhi, working together
since/lavorano insieme dal 2003)

Thukral and Tagra over these two decades have engaged with questions of migration, displacement, and ephemerality through painting, archiving, publishing and gaming. Delhi-based artist duo comprising Jiten Thukral (1976, Jalandhar, Punjab) and Sumir Tagra (1979, New Delhi) develop new formats of public engagement that expand the threshold of what art can do. Their initiatives include a non-profit foundation addressing social issues through education and art; Pollinator.io, a collaborative learning lab fostering cross-disciplinary exchange; andArchive, a publishing and distribution platform that reimagines the potential of print and the archive; and Sustaina India, founded with the think tank CEEW, positions the arts as a catalyst for climate action. They also curate "Multiply" at the Serendipity Arts Festival, an immersive program of multi-sensorial participatory installations designed to bridge gaps between audiences and exhibitions, making art accessible across diverse backgrounds and approaches while breaking away from conventional spectatorial protocols of "high art". An arboretum is a type of botanical garden that focuses on the cultivation of trees, shrubs, and other woody plants. *Arboretum* is a series of pixels and paintings where a community of trees take over the dream and imaginary compositions the artists are known for. They infuse meticulous realism with glitches provoking us to see the real as glitch and glitch as the real. Un arboretum è un tipo di giardino botanico dedicato alla coltivazione di alberi, arbusti e altre piante legnose. *Arboretum* è una serie di pixel e pittura in cui una comunità di alberi prende il sopravvento sulle composizioni oniriche e immaginarie per cui gli artisti sono noti. Il meticoloso realismo infuso in queste opere è accompagnato da *glitch* che ci spingono a vedere il reale come *glitch* e il *glitch* come reale.



photo Lokesh Dang

Asim Waqif
(1978, Hyderabad)

Asim Waqif studied architecture at the School of Planning and Architecture in Delhi. After working as an art director for film and television, he turned to independent video and documentary production before moving into a dedicated art practice. His recent projects mark a crossover between architecture, art and design, often referencing urban ecologies and the politics of occupying public spaces. Rooted in ecological and anthropological inquiry, Waqif's works draw from vernacular systems of managing water, waste and architecture. Known for his painstaking manual processes and use of reclaimed materials, he constructs immersive environments that are sometimes designed to decay. His major projects include *Bordel Monstre* (Palais de Tokyo, Parigi, 2012), *Salvage* (Vancouver, 2017), *Improvisé* (Kochi Muziris Biennale, 2022), *Venu* (Hayward Gallery, Londra, 2023), *Assume the Risk* (Mattress Factory, Pittsburgh, 2023) and *Min Rukam* (Islamic Arts Biennale, Jeddah, 2025). In his work he brings together two very different building elements: an aluminum composite panel that's been precision cut by a CNC router and then hand folded, and a bamboo scaffold erected with traditional, non chemical seasoning techniques. Bamboo scaffolding, once a common sight on construction sites, has since been outlawed by CPWD regulations and replaced by industrial steel. In other words, a renewable, locally sourced technology was pushed aside in favor of mass produced, heavy duty material. Rooted in ecological and anthropological curiosity, his practice turns this piece into a poignant metaphor for the slow erosion of vernacular knowledge under the weight of modernization.



photo Richa Sahai

Asim Waqif ha studiato architettura alla School of Planning and Architecture di Delhi. Dopo aver lavorato come Art Director nel cinema e nella televisione, si è dedicato alla produzione indipendente di video e documentari, per poi passare alla pratica artistica. I suoi progetti più recenti segnano un punto d'incontro tra architettura, arte e design, spesso con riferimenti all'ecologia urbana e all'ecologia dell'acqua, dei rifiuti e dell'architettura. È noto per i suoi processi manuali meticolosi e per l'uso di materiali di recupero con cui costruisce ambienti immersivi che a volte sono progettati per deteriorarsi nel tempo. Tra i suoi progetti principali figurano: *Bordel Monstre* (Palais de Tokyo, Parigi, 2012), *Salvage* (Vancouver, 2017), *Improvisé* (Kochi Muziris Biennale, 2022), *Venu* (Hayward Gallery, Londra, 2023), *Assume the Risk* (Mattress Factory, Pittsburgh, 2023) e *Min Rukam* (Islamic Arts Biennale, Jeddah, 2025). Nel suo lavoro, l'artista unisce due elementi costruttivi molto diversi tra loro: un pannello composito in alluminio, tagliato con precisione da una fresatrice CNC e poi piegato a mano, e un impalcatura in bambù costruita con tecniche tradizionali di stagionatura non chimica. Le impalcature in bambù, un tempo comuni nei cantieri edili, sono state messe al bando dalle normative CPWD e sostituite dall'acciaio industriale. In altre parole, una tecnologia rinnovabile e locale è stata messa da parte a favore di un materiale resistente prodotto in serie. Fondata su una curiosità ecologica e antropologica, la sua pratica trasforma quest'opera in una struggente metafora del lento deterioramento delle conoscenze tradizionali sotto il peso della modernizzazione.

The creatives' works in the exhibition *Indian Interior* move in new scenarios of thought, analyzing the socioeconomic forces of production, reimagining scrap materials, and redefining the notion of the value of goods. Their language is in constant evolution, pushing beyond the limits and blending design, architecture, landscape, and research. The interiors they have designed are intended as instruments for decoding today's world, opening new scenarios that appear to lead to updated interpretations, even for the old world. The Indian interior created by the designers who have been invited to participate in the exhibit recount the ongoing changes in the country, but, in its dual accepted meaning, it also suggests the idea of a scenario we are all called upon to rethink on a global level, freeing our gaze from any type of semantic construct and considering concluded a phase of industrialization that has led to a disconnection between the applied arts and the other fields of creativity. As *The Wind Makes the Sky* continues its journey retracing the stages of Marco Polo's expedition, a special project by La Biennale di Venezia's Historical Archive, it touches one of the lands where he stopped as he returned to Venice by sea in the late 13th century and navigated along its eastern coastline. Marco Polo was struck by the area's flourishing spice market, its abundance of raw materials, and the extraordinary variety of its nature: India's coast was his last memory of the Orient before returning home through the roads of the Middle East.



Gunjan Gupta
(Mumbai, 1974)

Gunjan Gupta has earned a Master's degree from London's Central St. Martins College in 2006. That same year, she founded Studio Wrap, a New Delhi based luxury interiors, furniture and product design studio that conceptually looks at how wrapping imbues any object or space with a new identity and set of values named after an obsolete Indian craft. Wrap is committed to sustainable materials and principles as well as high-end handicraft. The studio works with traditional craft communities in India to develop a range of contemporary furniture and accessories. Gupta describes her work as a playful blend of Indian forms and rituals transformed into contemporary handmade objects having universal appeal that are functional and sculptural at the time. Her recognizable designs have been showcased at leading design fairs, blurring the boundaries between art and design, she was invited to exhibit her work at the Triennale Design Museum in Milan as well as in many Biennales. Making a bold statement in its grand stature and form, her artwork is part of Gunjan Gupta's world-famous bicycle throne series that captures the everyday sighting of bicycle vendors in India into a sculptural seat. Appearing luxurious and opulent, the chair is composed of one of India's most common objects—the bartan (cooking brass vessel) hand crafted by the thatheran community in India.

Gunjan Gupta ha conseguito un master presso la Central Saint Martins College di Londra nel 2006. Nello stesso anno ha fondato lo Studio Wrap, uno studio di design di interni, mobili e prodotti di lusso con sede a New Delhi, che si occupa di studiare come il wrapping possa conferire a qualsiasi oggetto o spazio una nuova identità e una serie di valori, prendendo il nome da un'antica arte indiana ormai in disuso. Wrap si impegna a utilizzare materiali e principi sostenibili, nonché artigianato di alta qualità. Lo studio collabora con comunità artigiane tradizionali indiane per sviluppare una gamma di mobili e accessori contemporanei. Gupta descrive il suo lavoro come una miscela giocosa di forme e rituali indiani, trasformati in oggetti contemporanei fatti a mano dal fascino universale, funzionali e scultorei al tempo stesso. I suoi iconici oggetti sono stati esposti nelle principali fiere di design; rimanendo sempre sul confine tra arte e design, ha ricevuto inviti per esporre le sue opere alla Triennale di Milano e in diverse Biennali. Imponendosi con la sua forma e mole monumentale, l'opera esposta fa parte della famosa serie di troni bicicletta che cattura l'immagine quotidiana dei venditori ambulanti di biciclette in India racchiusi dentro in un oggetto a metà fra una sedia e una scultura. Pur avendo un aspetto lussuoso e sfarzoso, la sedia è composta da uno degli oggetti più comuni nel Paese: il bartan, un recipiente di ottone per cucinare, realizzato a mano dalla comunità thatera.



photo Eshwarya Grover

Studio Raw Material
(Jaipur and/e Makrana,
working together since/lavorano insieme dal 2016)

Studio Raw Material is a design practice based in the desert plains of Rajasthan, working at the intersection of objects, spaces, and culture. Grounded in the framework of situatedness and regionality, its work engages deeply with the material, craft, and people of its environment. The practice begins with what already exists, transforming remnants charged with history and place. Emerging from this landscape where vernacular craft practices have existed outside urban center sand formal design systems, the studio observes and documents these approaches. Here, thinking and making merge through a slow, investigative rhythm of the hand. Through this lens, Studio Raw Material reframes conventional notions of value and makes space for new ways of seeing and working. Their latest series, *Khokhar*, is represented by Friedman Benda Gallery. In 2021, Studio Raw Material was named Emerging Design Studio of the Year by Dezeen Awards. Their research is an acknowledgment of the place where they are based, its ground and the geological reserves that form the crux of the practice. Their series reflects the scale of the quarries they draw from, formed centuries prior and running kilometers long in the landscape. A study of a deep history and material tradition, approached with a contemporary poetic sensibility that displaces value from the whole to its fragments and gaps.



photo Richa Sahai

Indian Interior Interno Indiano

Bikaner House, New Delhi

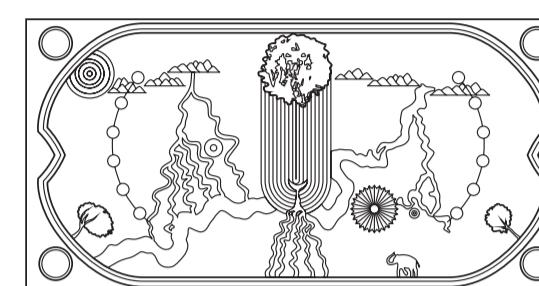
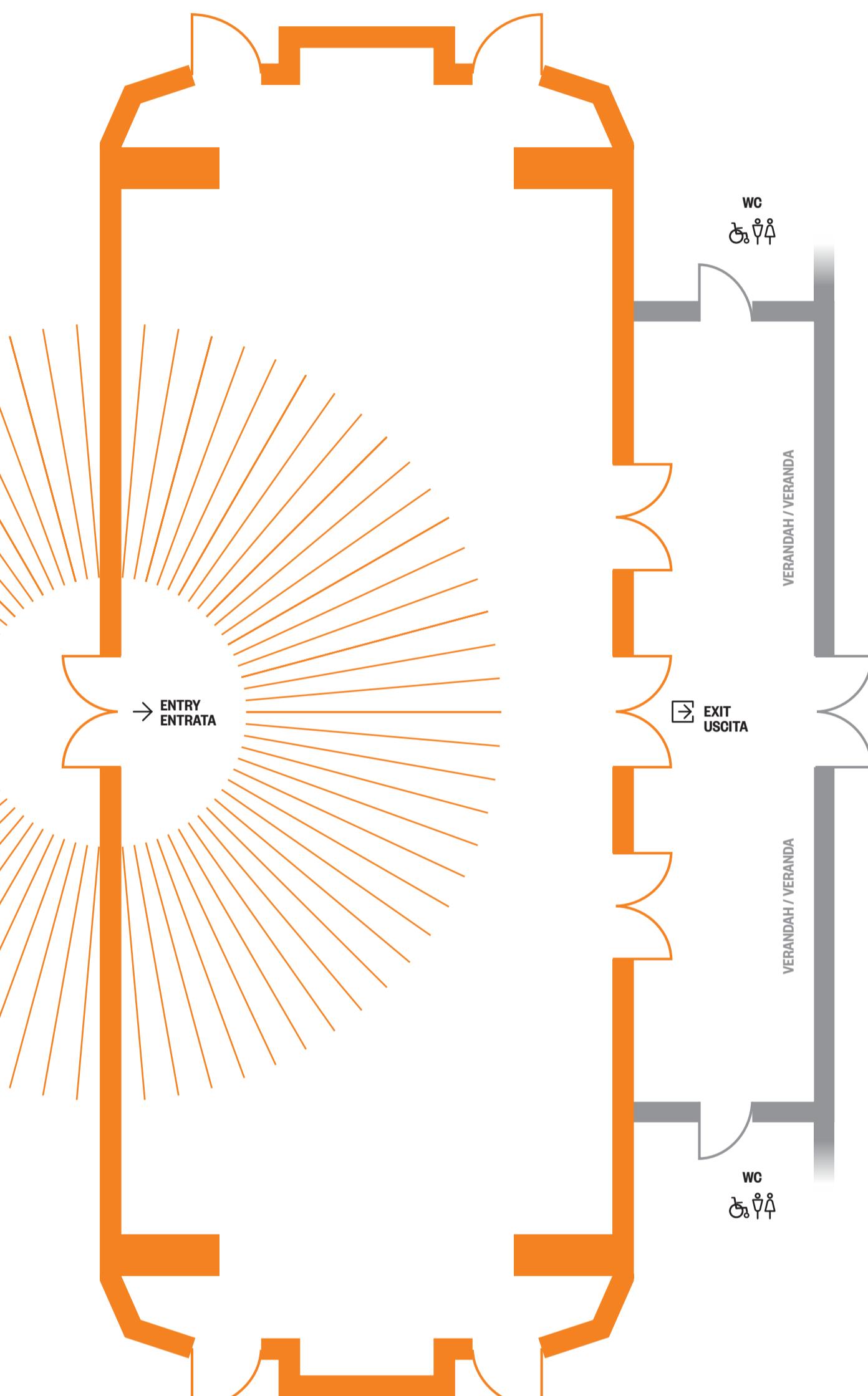
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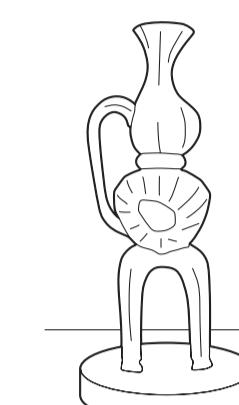
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La Biennale di Venezia

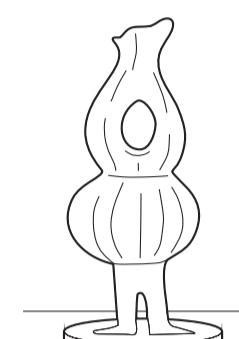


Aantrik Vishv (Inner Universe)
2022

organic cotton, linen, raw silk,
ajute thread on cotton textile
cotone biologico, lino, seta grezza,
filo di iuta su tessuto di cotone
275 × 560 cm



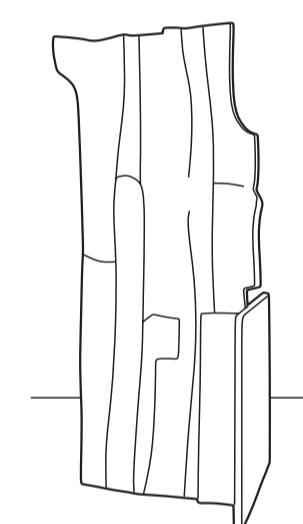
Uma
2024
hand-sculpted bamboo sculpture
with organic cotton thread and raffia
scultura in bambù scolpita a mano
con filo di cotone biologico e rafia
66 × 180 cm



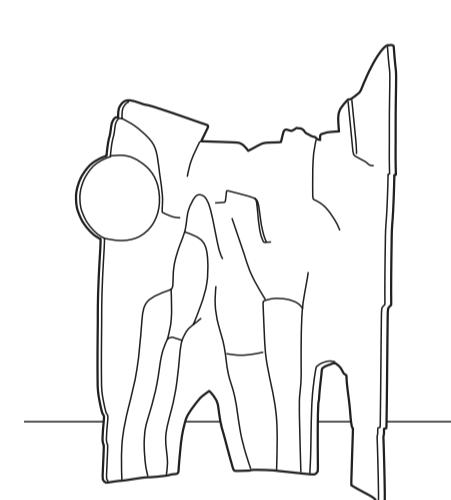
Rati
2024
hand-sculpted bamboo sculpture
with organic cotton thread and raffia
scultura in bambù scolpita a mano
con filo di cotone biologico e rafia
72 × 175 cm



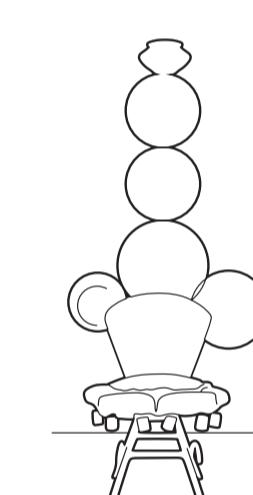
Soma
2024
hand-sculpted bamboo sculpture
with organic cotton thread and raffia
scultura in bambù scolpita a mano
con filo di cotone biologico e rafia
66 × 180 cm



Untitled Gray Screen
2025
gray quartzite and sandstone fragments
frammenti di quarzite grigia e arenaria
206 × 110 × 64 cm



Khokhar Screen
2024
dune yellow marble fragments
frammenti di marmo giallo duna
203 × 153 × 81 cm



'Bartan Walla' Bicycle Throne
2016
steel, bicycle parts,
handbeaten brass vessels, leatherite
acciaio, parti di biciclette, recipienti in ottone
battuto a mano, similpelle
93 cm × 95 cm × 195 cm
editions / edizione 18

Gunjan Gupta

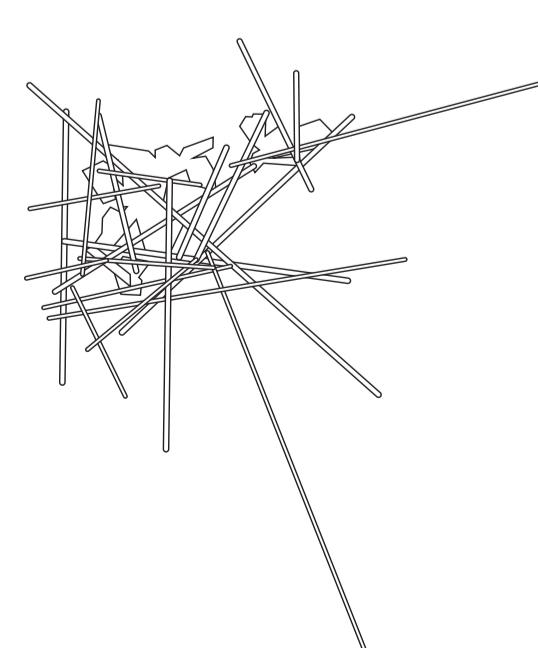
Studio Raw Material



Arboretum 26
2025
oil on canvas
olio su tela
106,7 × 213,4 × 2,5 cm

Arboretum 22 - Cassia Fistula 2
2025
oil on canvas, artist-made
wooden stretcher
olio su tela, telaio in legno
realizzato dall'artista
228,6 × 200,7 × 5,1 cm

Thukral and Tagra



Collapse - Scaffold
2019

aluminium composite panel worked on with CNC router folded by hand
and mounted on bamboo scaffold. Bamboo harvested and seasoned
in 2012 as per artist's directives using non-chemical vernacular techniques.
UV resistant cable ties rated for use between -40°C and 80°C
Pannello composito in alluminio lavorato con fresa CNC, piegato a mano
e montato su impalcatura di bambù. Bambù raccolto e stagionato
nel 2012 secondo le direttive dell'artista, utilizzando tecniche tradizionali
non chimiche. Fascette resistenti ai raggi UV, adatte all'uso tra -40°C e 80°C.
225,3 × 192 × 63 cm

Asim Waqif

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