

Catalogue Essay - Excerpt as Press Release

staples, dust and ancestry.

Revati Sharma Singh

A Japanese proverb — Happiness rarely keeps company with an empty stomach.

World Food Programme looks at chronic hunger as directly proportional to the flux in conflict, health, economic shocks and climate crisis.

“To the hungry, God can only appear as bread”, said Gandhi.

1.3 million people around the world, teetering on the brink of famine today.

Hunger, therefore, is a political conversation. It is not an issue of charity, but in fact an issue of justice and well-being. Famines often perceived as natural disasters, when traced back in history, are proven to be calamities caused by humans. They are found to be means of asserting hegemony through organised deprivation. There is a conscious power play that instruments the phenomenon, and those struck by famine suffer because they are ‘unable’ to obtain food - the issue isn’t the existence of resources but rather that of not being able to access them.

Gallery Art & Soul presents a solo **‘Mapping the Infinite : staples, dust and ancestry’** by **Revati Sharma Singh (b. 1973)**, a multidisciplinary artist, who works with several media including ceramics, handmade and cast metal, embroidered tapestries and painting. Her powerful assemblages address the disparity prevalent in the world that govern distribution of wealth and fodder, consequently leading to global hunger epidemics. Singh’s familial roots lie in rural Himachal, the northern Himalayan state of India, where land holdings and sustenance are and continue to be a cause of deliberation. While through the late 19th century, the lush agricultural turf of the Indian subcontinent was marred by colonial invasion and their harsh tax policies. In contemporary times, the artist has witnessed an abundance of crop and clean water fall victim to the detriments of global warming; with local produce such as apples, tea, wheat and indigenous pulses having receded in quality due to adulteration. The organic is increasingly threatened by genetically modified seeds,

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and the waterways are contaminated by chemicals. **Singh** picks her tools of choice to put forth deliberate mark-making through thread, grain, pencil and paint. Each blemish, streak, spot is intentionally and slowly assured onto the substrate, as if they were incantations of a spiritual mantra. She hums foreign tunes while her brush slides lean strokes of vibrant paint, each one next to another, on to the fabric of the canvas. The artist chants for a better world, a fuller world, a content world.

Revati Sharma Singh has completed her BFA from Delhi College of Art, and shuttles to live and work between India and London, UK. She has worked with several NGOs for the last two decades, specifically those involved in planting fruit-bearing trees in a bid to reduce hunger. Singh has presented extensively as part of prestigious large scale exhibitions such as the Venice Biennale (2022 and 2015), Amitabh Bachchan 70th anniversary exhibition, Kala Ghoda Art Festival (2009 and 2010), Jahangir Nicholson 60th anniversary exhibition and art fairs such as India Art Fair, Abu Dhabi Art Fair, Cambridge and Olympia Art Fair. Additionally, showcasing her work as part of selected group exhibitions including *Woven into being*, Latitude 28, Delhi (2023); *Weaving abstractions*, 079 Stories, Ahmedabad (2021) and *Tanya Baxter Contemporary Spring Exhibition*, Tanya Baxter Contemporary, London (2015, 2014, 2013). Her selected solos include *Not waving but drowning* as part of Mumbai Gallery Weekend, Art N Soul, Mumbai (2024); *Colour grain chintz and statue*, Center for Contemporary Arts, Bikaner House, New Delhi (2023) and *Śārvā Śūnyatā, How does everything emerge from nothing*, Saatchi Gallery, London (2021).