

## UP-CLOSE AND PERSONAL

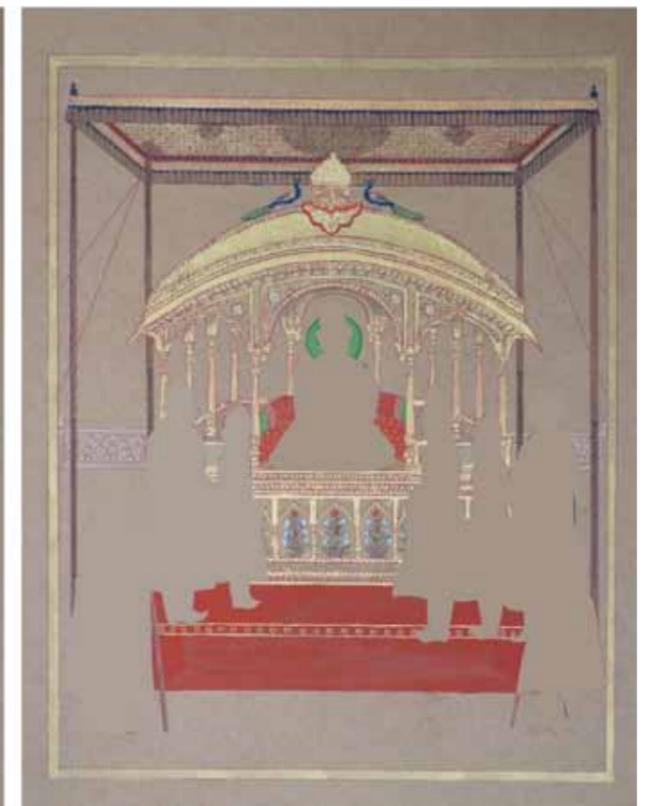
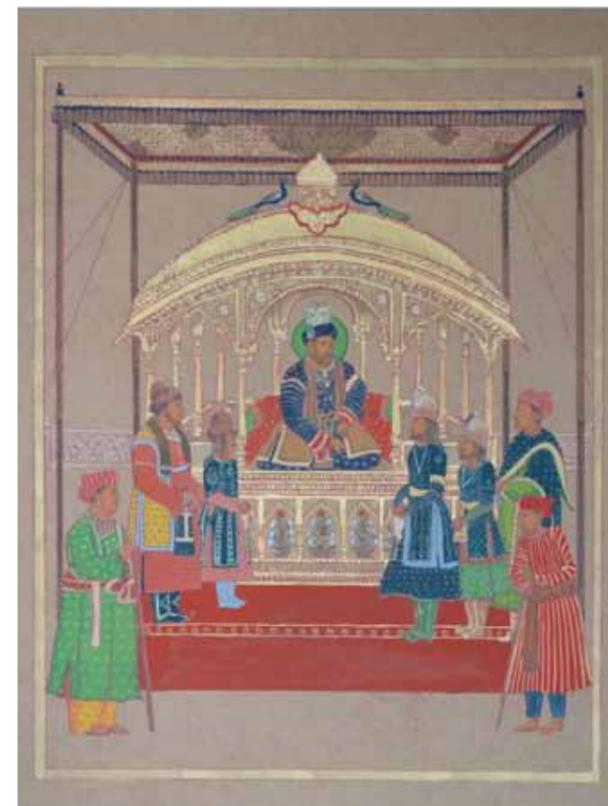
- LINA VINCENT

**H**ello, this is Lina Vincent here – I hope you can hear me... In speaking as though I am on a zoom call – I am extending my current experience with steps of learning and accommodating interactions within this wholly virtual era.

While separating us physically, this period of the pandemic does not prevent us from continuing to engage with art work and what artists are doing – in fact it seems quite the opposite. The cultural industry is certainly battling the odds but it is heartening to see and understand innovative ways in which galleries and artists together are creating these possibilities and using updated technology available to us in order to

^ Sanket Viramgami,  
*Jungle queen in the Urban Space*,  
Acrylic on Canvas, 30 x 30 inches, 2020

> Aniruddha Parit,  
*Story of a Lost Kingdom*,  
Tempera on Board, 16 x 12 inches, 2018



*The world has flattened into these screens on which we are viewing everything. In terms of seeing and being seen, it changes perspectives. There is something fundamentally interesting about using the framework of miniatures as a premise – theoretically, it creates a sense of familiarity and comfort because it is one of the most visible forms of classical Indian art, and in viewing, the intimate space and connection relates to the immediate and intimate action of scrolling.*

continue rather than apply a full stop. Similarly, I am happy to join in this innovative space as curator and writer – with this review of a sensitively curated exhibition of five artists.

New Stories in Old Frames is an ongoing exhibition curated by Samedutta Mallick for Dhi Arts pace, Hyderabad; featuring the works of Aniruddha Parit, Mainaz Bano, Poushali Das, Ravi Chunchula and Sanket Viramgami.

The curator mentions “The schools of Mughal, Rajasthani, Pahari and Deccani miniatures have continued to amuse and inspire the artists of the generations that followed. And in the present art scenario, a great number of artists have developed their art practice by taking considerable inspiration from the element, style and theme of miniatures. Their works talk about the social, political, economic, environmental and other concerns of the contemporary time even though they are executed in a manner that has its origin in the distant past.”

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has been exploring techniques of Tempera painting on various surfaces such as paper, wood and 'muga' silk. Her work often uses a combination of text and image, harking back to the manuscript traditions. The subjects refer to mythological and historical subjects but relate to her contemporary understanding of the world and all its complexities. As seen in her 'Tales from Letters' series, she masterfully juxtaposes textile patterns with delicately balanced compositions on wasli paper.

Humour and irony are devices used by Ravi Chunchula in his painted narratives, which constantly open up interpretations for the viewer. Using a highly skilled methodology of drawing and composing space in sequential or broken formats – he processes current experiences through metaphors and symbols. Works like 'Reminiscence of Daily Musings' and 'Corridors of contemplation' are in essence studies of everyday experiences. He is also studying and recording moments of change during the pandemic and brings his observations of social hierarchies into his visual records.

If you look at "Dancing girls' by Sanket Viramgami, the final artist in the compilation - it represents his distinctive visual language that uses inspiration from

Indian miniature paintings and also the 'kantha' traditional embroidery technique, especially in spatial arrangements. Poetically placed figures amidst flora and fauna, and vast topographies of saturated colour define his large format works that celebrate the innate grace and jewel like essence of Rajasthani miniatures.

This is a time when we are juggling with moments of optimism and pessimism, and the artists' engagement with these subjects and histories takes us into myriad different planes of thought. Art has this capacity to open out new worlds and now even though we cannot get up close and personal with work in a gallery – the galleries are bringing it to us in different ways.

It is an exercise for me as well in interpreting and analyzing work purely in image form, and quite a meaningful process of learning to live in a post-covid world.

^ Aniruddha Parit,  
For Him and Her, Mixed media on Board, 22 x 28 inches, 2015



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