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# barbican

**Barbican announces first major survey of pioneering Indian art charting the country's transformations between 1975-1998**

**[The Imaginary Institution of India: Art 1975-1998](#)**

Barbican Art Gallery

**5 October 2024 – 5 January 2025**

Press Preview: Wednesday 2 October



Gieve Patel, *Off Lamington Road*, 1982-86. Collection: Kiran Nadar Museum of Art, New Delhi © Gieve Patel. Courtesy Galerie Mirchandani + Steinruecke and Kiran Nadar Museum of Art.

In the autumn of 2024, the Barbican will present *The Imaginary Institution of India: Art 1975-1998*, the world's first major exhibition of Indian art to explore and chart a period of significant cultural and political change in the country. Organised in partnership with the [Kiran Nadar Museum of Art](#), New Delhi, this significant group show will feature over 25 artists and nearly 150 works from across a range of media, including many that will be shown in the UK for the first time.

The declaration of the State of Emergency by Indira Gandhi in 1975 and the Pokhran Nuclear Tests in 1998 serve as bookends for a time when artists combined social observation with individual expression and innovation. They addressed issues relating to gender and sexuality, communal politics, urbanisation and changing class structures, and engaged with indigenous and vernacular modes of expression. Spanning painting, sculpture, photography, installation, and film, the exhibition will offer a unique view of this shifting socio-political landscape while exploring key practices within Indian art during the late 20th century.

Participating artists include Jyoti Bhatt, Rameshwar Broota, Sheba Chhachhi, Sheela Gowda, Rummana Hussain, Bhupen Khakhar, Nalini Malani, Meera Mukherjee, Madhvi Parekh, Navjot, Gieve Patel, Sudhir Patwardhan, Himmat Shah, Gulammohammed Sheikh, Nilima Sheikh, Arpita Singh, Vivan Sundaram, J. Swaminathan, Jangarh Singh Shyam, Savi Sawarkar, N.N. Rimzon and more.

*The Imaginary Institution of India: Art 1975-1998* will be accompanied by an integral film programme in Barbican Cinemas which will respond to the themes of the exhibition. This collaboration with Barbican Cinema reinforces the Centre's commitment to cross-disciplinary programming.

**Shanay Jhaveri, Head of Visual Arts at the Barbican, said:** “*The Imaginary Institution of India: Art 1975-1998 is a show that looks back to a vital period of bold artistic production from India. Through inspiring and moving artworks, it affirms that in a truly democratic country people and strangers speak to one another, live next to one another, relate to each other on numerous levels, from the exuberantly sexual to the defiantly political.*”

**Kiran Nadar, Founder & Chairperson, KNMA, said:** “*The Kiran Nadar Museum of Art (KNMA), in its ongoing partnership with the Barbican presents the second exhibition focused on bringing visibility and critical attention to the practice of Indian and South Asian artists through selected seminal works highlighting social, political, and artistic transformations in India from 1975 to 1998. We are delighted to have loaned a substantial number of artworks to the exhibition that energise the theme, taking viewers through a spectrum of materials, media, and content.*”

*The Imaginary Institution of India: Art 1975-1998* completes the Barbican's 2024 visual arts programme, forming a season which looks across borders exploring intimacy and queer desire, contemplating and confronting resistance, solidarity and protest, and dwelling on the universal joy of children at play, alongside extraordinary new commissions from international artists transforming Barbican's public spaces and architecture.

### **Full Barbican Visual Arts 2024 programme**

#### **[Unravel: The Power and Politics of Textiles in Art](#)**

Barbican Art Gallery

13 February – 26 May 2024

#### **[Soufiane Ababri: Their mouths were full of bumblebees but it was me who was pollinated](#)**

The Curve

13 March – 30 June 2024

#### **[Ibrahim Mahama: Purple Hibiscus](#)**

Barbican Lakeside

10 April – 18 August 2024

## **Francis Alÿs**

Barbican Art Gallery  
27 June – 1 September 2024

## **Pamela Phatsimo Sunstrum**

The Curve  
18 September 2024 – 5 January 2025

## ***The Imaginary Institution of India: Art 1975-1998***

Barbican Art Gallery  
5 October 2024 – 5 January 2025

Further information and images can be found [here](#).

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## **ENDS**

### **Notes to Editors**

**For further information, images or to arrange interviews please contact:**

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#### **Press images available online**

Further information and images can be found [here](#). Please [contact the press team](#) for any requests.

#### **Barbican press room**

All Barbican Centre press releases, news announcements and the Communications team's contact details are listed on our [website](#).

#### **Public Information**

Barbican Art Gallery, Barbican Centre  
Silk Street, London, EC2Y 8DS  
[www.barbican.org.uk](http://www.barbican.org.uk)

#### **Opening Hours**

Saturday - Wednesday 10am - 6pm (last entry 5pm)

Thursday - Friday 10am - 8pm (last entry 7pm)

The Curve is open 11am - 7pm

Refer to the website for Bank Holiday hours.

**Please look out for latest information on tickets via our website. Entry to The Curve is free.**

### **About the Barbican**

The Barbican is a catalyst for creativity, sparking possibilities for artists, audiences, and communities. We showcase the most exciting art from around the world, pushing traditional artistic boundaries to entertain and inspire millions of people, create connections, provoke debate, and reflect the world we live in.

We are an international arts and events centre rooted firmly in our own neighbourhood, collaborating with local communities and putting the City of London on the map as a destination for everybody. Central to our purpose is supporting emerging talent and shaping opportunities that will accelerate the next generation of creatives.

As a not-for-profit, we rely on the generosity of individuals and organisations, including our principal funder the City of London Corporation. Every ticket purchased, donation made, and pound earned supports our arts and learning programme and enables the widest possible range of people to experience the joy of the arts.

Opened in 1982, the Barbican is a unique and audacious building, recognised globally as an architectural icon. As well as our theatres, galleries, concert halls and cinemas, we have a large conservatory with over 1,500 species of plants and trees, a library, conference facilities, public and community spaces, restaurants, bars, and a picturesque lakeside oasis.

We're proud to be the home of the [London Symphony Orchestra](#), and a London base of the [Royal Shakespeare Company](#). We regularly co-commission, produce and showcase the work of our other associates and partners including the [Academy of Ancient Music](#), [the BBC Symphony Orchestra](#), [Boy Blue](#), [Britten Sinfonia](#), [Cheek by Jowl](#), [Darbar Festival](#), [Doc'n Roll Film Festival](#), [Drum Works](#), [EFG London Jazz Festival](#), [Human Rights Watch Film Festival](#), [London Palestine Film Festival](#), [Serious](#), and [Trafalgar Entertainment](#).

For more information, visit our [website](#) or connect with us on [Instagram](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#) | [YouTube](#) | [Spotify](#) | [LinkedIn](#)

### **Barbican Art Gallery and The Curve**

Our visual arts programme embraces art, architecture, design, fashion and film. Many of our exhibitions explore the interconnections between disciplines, periods and cultures, and aim to imagine the world in new ways. Designers, artists and architects are our collaborators in this process.

We invest in the artists of today and tomorrow; The Curve is one of the few galleries in London devoted to the commissioning of new work. Through our activities we aim to inspire more people to discover and love the arts. Entrance to The Curve is free. Through Young Barbican we offer £5 tickets to 14 – 25 year olds for our paid exhibitions, children under 14 attend for free.

Our exhibitions are complemented by comprehensively researched catalogues and a

full range of public events. In partnership with renowned museums and art galleries, many of our exhibitions travel to reach both national and international audiences.

The Barbican believes in creating space for people and ideas to connect through its international arts programme, community events and learning activity. To keep its programme accessible to everyone, and to keep investing in the artists it works with, the Barbican needs to raise more than 60% of its income through ticket sales, commercial activities and fundraising every year. Donations can be made here: [www.barbican.org.uk/join-support/support-us/for-individuals/make-a-donation](http://www.barbican.org.uk/join-support/support-us/for-individuals/make-a-donation)

### **About KNMA**

Founded in 2010, Kiran Nadar Museum of Art (KNMA) is a pioneering private museum of modern and contemporary art in South Asia, with branches in New Delhi and Noida. The not-for-profit organization produces rigorous exhibitions, educational and public-focused programs, and publications. Through its rigorous and multiple programs, KNMA emphasises its commitment to institutional collaborations and support-networks for artists and creative communities, while extending its reach to diverse audiences. The museum houses a growing collection of more than 14,000 artworks from South Asia, with a focus on the historical trajectories of 20th century Indian art, alongside the experimental practices of young contemporaries. KNMA was established through the initiative of art collector and philanthropist Kiran Nadar and is supported by the Shiv Nadar Foundation. The new standalone building of KNMA is due to open in the next three to four years, near Delhi's Indira Gandhi international airport.

[www.knma.in](http://www.knma.in)