

Exhibition Programs

Asia Society Presents! *Yasodhara*

Saturday, May 3, 7:30 pm

Asia Society Presents! *Sarpa Sutra*

Sunday, May 4, 2:00 pm

Creation Station: Indian Folk Painting

Saturday, June 7, 1:00 pm

Indian Deities Family Writing Workshop

Saturday, June 21, 1:30 pm

Members' Brunch with Artist Manjari Sharma

Saturday, July 19, 11:00 am

Artist's Talk: Manjari Sharma

Saturday, July 19, 3:00 pm

Artist Abhishek Singh in Conversation with Julie Romain, Assistant Curator, Los Angeles County Museum of Art

Sunday, September 14, 2:00 pm

For further details, please visit AsiaSociety.org/Texas/events/upcoming



(Above) *Vishnu-Garud Wahan*, c. 1920, Paper, ink, fabric, metallic thread, Ravi Varma Press, Karlo-Lonavla, Courtesy of Ramchander Nath Foundation, New Delhi

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(Cover) Manjari Sharma, *Lord Vishnu*, from the *Darshan* series, 2013, Chromogenic print, Edition 1/2, Courtesy of Richard Levy Gallery and the artist

TRANSCENDENT DEITIES of INDIA

THE EVERYDAY OCCURRENCE
of THE DIVINE

MAY 2 • SEPTEMBER 14



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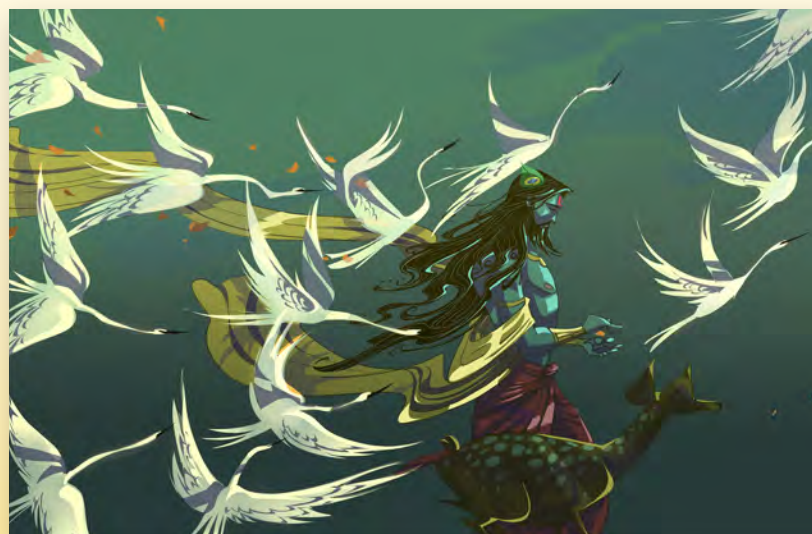
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The gods and goddesses revered in Hindu religious practice in India have populated the art of that region for thousands of years, inspiring worshippers and artists alike. Images of deities continue to demonstrate their power for hundreds of millions of people as part of their daily rituals at temples, shrines, and other settings, within India and in the broader global diaspora. This exhibition focuses on the ongoing impact of classical depictions of Hindu deities on both modern and contemporary artists.

These embodiments of metaphysical and philosophical expressions function as inspiring sources to artists such as Raja Ravi Varma, Manjari Sharma, and Abhishek Singh, not only as classical exemplars to study, but also as grounds for innovation and contemporary commentary. These three artists choose not to preserve the deities in past modes but instead render them current, as an ongoing articulation of densely layered experiences. This deft handling of visual traditions refreshes the images and resituates them in the viewers' frame of reference, ensuring their seamless applicability in new eras.

The exact meaning of "Hinduism" has been the subject of debate, with the term suggesting a shared range of pluralistic practices and emphases, rather than a limited definition of one set of beliefs. The exhibition does not aim to offer strict delineations of what this religion is and is not. Instead, it directs focus onto the pantheon of gods and goddesses that populate the worship of practitioners, and the role they play as a creative source for modern and contemporary Indian artists.

These artists have built upon the visual culture they observed growing up in India, surrounded by images that have been part of a multi-faceted religious landscape. Each of the three has adapted this wealth of imagery to uniquely express their conceptual concerns and offer their own perspectives on the points of contact between the transcendent and mundane. They do this with recognition that religious pilgrims make arduous journeys for *darshan* – to see, and in turn be 'seen by', important images of deities. By drawing out these aspects of religious art and practice, viewers are invited to consider their role as observers, and the effect of their own gaze upon a subject.



(Clockwise, from top left)
Manjari Sharma, *Maa Laxmi*, from the *Darshan* series, 2011, Chromogenic print, Edition 1/2,
Courtesy of Richard Levy Gallery and the artist

Abhishek Singh, *Nataraja*, 2010, Oil and digital, Courtesy of the artist

Chandra, c. 1925, Paper, ink, Ravi Varma Press, Malaviti, G.I.P.,
Courtesy of the Ramchander Nath Foundation, New Delhi

Abhishek Singh, *Krishna – A Journey Within*, "Let Go", 2012, Digital, Courtesy of the artist