

Rina Banerjee

<http://rinabanerjee.com/resume>

Born

in 1963, Kolkata, India.

Lives and works in Manhattan, New York, USA

Education

1995 Yale University, Yale School of Art, Painting and Print Making, MFA

1993 Case Western Reserve University, Case Institute of Technology, Polymer Engineering, BSc.

Exhibitions

2013 55th Venice Biennale, Berengo Studio , Murano Glass Project, Biennales

2012 7th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art (APT7), Gallery of Modern Art and Queensland Art Gallery/, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia (December 2012- April 2013)

2011 Yokohama Triennial- Our Magic Hour, Japan, Curated by Akiko Miki (August 6- November 6, 2011)

2006 Tsumari-Echigo Exhibition 3rd triennial, Hatchi, Japan, Curated by Fram Kitwaga

2005 Greater New York Show, Ps1 Moma, Curated by Klaus Biesenbach

2000 Whitney Biennial, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, USA

Solo Exhibitions

2014 Disgust LA Louver, Los Angeles, USA

2013 Bowerbirdnest, Future Perfect, Singapore

2013 A world lost, Sackler Galleries , Smithsonian, DC Washinton, USA

2012 Creationism's Kiss, Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Brussels (Sept.7-Nov.3)

2012 A World of Lies, Galerie Epsace. Hong Kong, China (May 16-20)

2011 Chimeras of the India & the West, Musée Guimet, Paris (May 24-September 26, 2011)

2011 Imagining the other half of the world from here, Project room, Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Paris (May 22-July 13, 2011)

2010 Forever Foreign, Haunch of Venison, London. (March 7-April 29) www.haunchofvenison.com (catalogue)

2009 Look into my eyes and you will see a world unexplainable - out of place, Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Brussels www.galerie-obadia.com

2009 Rina Banerjee and Raquib Shaw, Thomas Gibson Ltd., London (catalogue)

2008 Distant Nearness, (with Bharti Kher and Subodh Gupta,) Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City, Kansas

2008 Allure, Gallery Espace, New Delhi.

2007 Foreign Fruit, Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Paris

2007 "Where the Wild Things Are"... is no place at all and all places that cannot be lived in but visited, realized out of our careful, playful and tenacious tourism of others, realized as our mobility wanders too far, Galerie Volker Diehl, Berlin (catalogue)

2007 Shanghai Art Fair, Galerie Nathalie Obadia. Shanghai, China

2006 Fantasies without travel will travel, AMT Gallery, Como, Italy (catalogue)

2002 Phantasmal Pharmacopeia, Curated by Susette Min, Painted Bride Art Center, Philadelphia (catalogue)

2001 Phantasmal Pharmacopeia, Debs and Co., New York

2001 Antenna, Bose Pacia Modern, New York (catalogue)

2000 Auf Weidersehen, Admit One Gallery, New York

1998 Home within a Harem, Colgate University Gallery

Group Exhibitions

2013 White Light/ White Heat , A project for 55th Venice Biennale.

2013 Smithsonian Sackler Galleries,

2013 Tender Mahal- Lifted, Todd Holsfelt Gallery , SF, Ca, USA

2012 , RH Gallery, New York City, (Nov. 14-Dec.)

2012 India: Art Now, Arken Museum of Modern Art, Denmark (August 18, 2012-January 13, 2013)

2012 Look Both Ways ,Todd Holsfelt Gallery, San Francisco

2012 Crossings: Time Unfolded- II, Kiran Nadar Museum of Art, New Delhi, India

2012 Misunderstood, Noga Gallery, Tel Aviv (March 22 – May 3, 2012)

2011 -12 Fragility, Curated by Rakhee Balaram, Art Alive, Gurgaon, India (December 2011)

2011 The Matter Within: New Contemporary Art Of India, Yerba Buena Art Center, San Francisco (October 15 2011-January 29, 2012)

2011 RoundAbout, Tel Aviv Art Museum, Israel (September 2011)

2011 Facets of the Figure, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Quintessentially Art, New York (September 2011)

2011 Fabular Bodies: New Narratives in the Art of the Miniature, Harmony Art Foundation, Mumbai (August 2011)

2011 What is Sculpture, CRG Gallery, New York (July 2011)

2011 Avant Première, Art Plural Gallery, Singapore (3 June to 3 September, 2011)

2011 EAST EX EAST, Brand New Gallery, Milan (9 June- 30 July 2011)

2011 Pangea: Art at the Forefront of Cultural Convergence, Frey Norris Modern & Contemporary, San Francisco

2011 Roots in the Air, Branches Below: Modern & Contemporary Art from India, San Jose Museum of Art, San Jose, California

2010 Fantasmagoria, le monde mythique, Curated by Pascal Pique, Les Abattoirs, Toulouse, France

2010 Wild Flowers, Kunstallen Brandts, Odense, Denmark, Curated by Lene Burkard (catalogue) www.bradts.dk

2010 Roundabout, City Gallery Wellington, New Zealand www.aboutroundabout.com (catalogue)

2010 The road of marvels, path of elegance, Boghossian Foundation, Villa Empain, Brussels (catalogue) <http://www.villaempain.com>

2010 Bring Me a Lion, Hunt Gallery, Webster University, St. Louis, USA (catalogue)

2009 Lo Real Maravilloso: Marvelous Reality, organized by Gallery Espace, New Delhi and held at Rabindra Bhawan Galleries, Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi, India (catalogue)

2009 Anomalies, Curated by Jaishri Abichandani, Rossi and Rossi Ltd. London, (catalogue)

2009 Wonderland, Curated by Robert Roos, Kade Amersfoort, Netherlands (catalogue)

2009 Pretty is as pretty does, Curated by Laura Heon, Site Santa Fe Contemporary Art Center, New Mexico (catalogue)

2009 Mythologies, Curated by Ben Tufnell with James Putnam, Haunch of Venison, London (catalogue)

2008 Dyed Roots: the new emergence of culture, Curated by Camilla Singh, Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art, Toronto (catalogue)

2008 Les Fleurs du Mal (The flowers of Evil still Bloom), Cueto Project, New York (catalogue)

2008 Everywhere is War (And Rumours of War), Curated by Shaheen Merali, Bodhi Art, Mumbai (catalogue)

2008 Evolution, Curated by Marc Wellman, Max Lang Gallery, New York

2008 Indian Focus, Espace Claude Berri, Paris, France (catalogue)

2008 Exploding the Lotus, Co-curated by Jaishri Abichandani and Jane Hart, Art and Culture Center for Hollywood

2007 *I fear I believe I desire*, Curated by Gayatri Sinha, Gallery Espace, New Delhi (catalogue)

2007 An Archaeology, The Zabłudowicz Art Collection, London (catalogue)

2006 John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, Wisconsin (catalogue)

2006 Black Moon Island: Contemporary International Drawing, One in the Other Gallery, London

2005 Greater New York Show, PS1/Moma, Queens, New York, Curated by Klaus Biesenback and staff, (catalogue)

2005 Agra, Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Massachusetts, Curated by Karina Corrigan (catalogue)

2005 Looking in the Eye of the Beholder, Rotunda Gallery, Brooklyn, New York, Curated by Janine Cirincione

2005 *Fatal Love: South Asian American Art Now*, Queens Museum of Art, Queens, New York (catalogue)

2005 Suspended Ornament, Suite 106, New York

2005 Sunset Sunrise, Curated by Courtney Martin and Amanda Church, Smack Mellon, Brooklyn, New York (catalogue)

2004 *Open House*, Curated by Charlotta Kotic, Brooklyn Museum of Art, Brooklyn, New York (catalogue)

2004 Specificity, Curated by Donald Odita, Riva Gallery, New York (catalogue)

2003 Yankee Remix, Curated by Laura Heon, Massachusetts Museum of Modern Art, North Adams, Massachusetts (catalogue)

2003 5X5 Contemporary Artist on Contemporary Art, Curated by Shamin Momin, Whitney Museum of American Art, Phillip Morris Space, New York (catalogue)

2003 Broken Mirror, LeRoy Neiman Gallery, New York

2000 Exoticism was for sale, Project Room, Debs. & Co., New York

2000 Good Business is the Best Art, Curated by Lydia Yee and Marisol Nieves, Bronx Museum, New York (catalogue)

1999 *Bodies of Resistance, R.A.W., Connecticut and Durham, South Africa*, Curated by Barbara Hunt (catalogue)

1997 Artist in the Market Place (AIM), Curated by Lydia Yee and Marisol Nieves, Bronx Museum, New York (catalogue)

1997 *Out Of India*, Queens Museum of Art, Queens, New York (catalogue)

1997 Hybrid Harem, Colgate University, Dana Arts Center, New York

1997 Research Revision Reconstruct, Old Dominion University, New York

1997 Fermented, Arason Gallery, Parsons School of Design, New York

1997 Seeking Beautiful Indian Girls, Gallery 401, Toronto Art Fairs

2012 Solo Show, Hong Kong International Art Fair, Gallery Espace, New Delhi, India (17-20 May 2012)

2012 The Armory Show, New York, Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Paris/Brussels (March 8-11,2012)

2012 Art Dubai, UAE, Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Paris/Brussels (March 21-24, 2012)

2012 India Art Fair, Gallery Espace, New Delhi and Sakshi Art Gallery, Mumbai (January 25-29, 2012)

2012 Art Stage, Singapore, Lehmann Maupin Gallery, New York (January 12-15, 2012)

2011 Art Dubai, Dubai, UAE, Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Paris/Brussels (March 2011)

2011 Armory Art Fair, New York, Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Paris/Brussels

2011 India Art Summit 2011, New Delhi, Gallery Espace, New Delhi

2010 Without face: cultivating the foreign, Armory Art Fair, New York (Solo), Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Paris/Brussels

2010 ARCO Madrid, Spain, Haunch of Venison, London

2008 Art Unlimited, Art Basel 39, Switzerland, Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Paris/Brussels

2007 Shanghai Contemporary Art Fair, China (Solo), Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Paris/Brussels

2006 Silver pearl girls and Gardens, Art 37 VOLTA Basel, Switzerland (Solo), Newman Popiashvili Gallery, New York

2006 Frieze Art Fair, London, Galerie Obadia, Paris/Brussels

2006 Berlin Art Forum, Berlin, Galerie Volker Diehl, Berlin

2003 ARCO Madrid, Spain, Curated by Omar Chahoud Lopez, Debs &Co. of New York

Select Public & Private Collections

Centre Georges Pompidou

Fondation Louis Vuitton pour l'Art Contemporain, Paris, France

Claude Berri Collection, Paris, France

Mont Blanc Collections

Center Pompidue

Foundation of Contemporary Art Daniel and Florence Guerlain, Les Mesnuls, France

Boghossian Foundation, Villa Empain, Brussels

Anita Zabludowitz Art Trust, United Kingdom

Les Abattoirs, Toulouse Museum, France

Kiran Nadar Museum, New Delhi, India

Devi Art Foundation, New Delhi, India

Whitney Museum of American Art

The Brooklyn Museum

Chazen Museum of Art, University of Wisconsin

New York Public Library

Vera List Center, New School

Richmond Center for Visual Arts, Western Michigan University

Picker Art Gallery, Colgate University

Yale University Art Gallery

RISD Museum of Art

Art, Design and Architecture Museum, University of California, Santa Barbara

University of California, Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive

Queens Museum

University Museum of Contemporary Art, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Williams College Museum of Art

Hammer Museum, University of California, Los Angeles

The Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center, Vassar College

Zimmerli Art Museum, Rutgers University

San Francisco Museum of Modern Art

Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts

Mills College Art Museum

Tang Museum

Neuberger Museum of Art, Purchase College

Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas, Austin

Ackland Art Museum, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Palmer Museum of Art, Pennsylvania State University

Bard College, Studio Arts Department

INTERVIEWS

<http://artforum.com/words/id=28485>

Rina Banerjee's iridescent sculptural installations—full of silky fabric, feathers, beads, and tiny, tinkling shells—as well as fragile drawings of birds, beasts, and floating demigods, are about journeys, real and imagined. Her offerings weave their way around ancient Asian artifacts in “Chimeras of India and the West,” her latest exhibition, which is on view at the Musée Guimet in Paris until September 26.

MY MOTHER TOLD ME that my first name is special because it is not typical in India—it is spelled differently. Hence, I was free to be what I wanted, or so I presumed. I was born in Calcutta, but I grew up in London and, then, New York, where I now live. Growing up abroad [as we called it] was a strange experience in the 1960s; there were so few Indians in the West. My parents saw themselves as international citizens. Maybe they imagined a future that we are just beginning to glimpse. I dream of this willingness to close the gaps between cultures, communities, and places. I think of identity as inherently foreign; of heritage as something that leaks away from the concept of home—as happens when one first migrates. Even my interest in science embodies an awareness of other worlds, worlds that coexist with us, but which we cannot experience or know. The sky, the stars, and the earth contain so much more than we think. This is why, when I finished my degree in polymer engineering at Case Western Reserve University in Ohio, in 1993, I quietly moved toward art.

I could never be a Minimalist artist: I am interested in corrupting fine art with everything I wish for. I want adventure and to feel the same sense of command that I imagine an explorer or a scientist would—like a visitor trespassing. My art is about the value of our desire to travel. I am not interested in being wrapped around any country or community so tightly that it cannot allow this; the need to travel is psychological, intellectual, and emotional. Freedom is the most expensive commodity; nature the most dangerous beauty. My work examines both. My art depicts a delicate world that is also aggressive, tangled, manipulated, fragile, and very, very dense. My first installations were made between 1997 and 1999 for exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Queens Museum of Art, and the Bronx Museum of the Arts. Like my early paintings, they contained pigment, shells, feathers, textiles, saris, lightbulbs, suitcases, umbrellas, and eyelashes. The point was that these objects could be remade each time, could traverse language and be massaged into new meanings.

“Chimeras of India and the West” was the brainchild of Jacques Gies, the director of the Guimet. Globalization means that we no longer need to go on “expeditions” the way Victorian explorers did. The East has arrived. I think Gies believes that the Guimet should reflect this. My exhibition is one of the projects in “The Manufactory of Contemporary Art in Asia” series, which explores the interaction between heritage and contemporary creativity. The show offers works made between 2005 and 2011.

Curator Caroline Arhuero orchestrated a dialogue between them and the museum's permanent collection. One of my favorite sections is the library, which houses the elephant chair, as we call it. I love it. The chair is a symbol of power, and a peculiar growth emerges from it like a trunk—as if it were giving birth to the Hindu elephant-headed god, Ganesha. It represents the violence that is involved in transformation. This is very apt, given that the library is a place where knowledge is kept and controlled and representations of the other are formulated.

In many ways, the show is about examining cultural production. I get a real charge from ancient Tibetan, Himalayan, and Indian art. I am obsessed by the clouds in Chinese and Tibetan paintings and their representation of strange creatures and mystical worlds, where protagonists enact battles and falter in ways that lead to horrific tragedies. In my drawings, red trees grow upside down and bear dark fruit, and beasts with multiple heads walk or swim [rather than fly] in the sky, spilling fruit like tears. At the Guimet, one of my sculptures conjures a figure with a ram's head, wearing a red dress and a nose ring. I have also included black buffalo horns, from America, and Kenyan gourds. Both Eastern and Western references are deposited in this work.

Where you live impacts who you are. I am a Non-Resident Indian, living in New York. I think it is important to ask what this means.

<http://cocreatenow.org/2012/07/rina-banerjee-art-commands-a-magnetic-awareness-of-our-humanness/>

Rina Banerjee is an Indian born, New York based artist of international repute who contributes to the 'India: Art Now' exhibition at Arken Museum of Modern Art in Copenhagen, Denmark, from 18 August 2012 to 13 January 2013.

In this interview, Rina Banerjee explains about her artwork, transformation processes and politics of identity.

By Mathias Ussing Seeberg

“Who decides what we are? How you are identified can become so important that people believe in it to the point of a religion. A navigation of people's identity allows those who rule a kind of safety away from those who do not.

The politics of identity govern our lives, constrains and colors our achievements. A colored person in a white world still worries about being plucked off into the deep hole of persecution and violence. We are a socially, economically segregated community. We believe there is not enough for everyone that some shall have and others will suffer. Can we escape this assumption? Can we evolve out of this structural disability?

It takes a valuable amount of time and patience to reach out and contemplate these things.

My artwork is about a fiction that looks real, feels concrete. Art commands a magnetic awareness of our humanness, describes an awkward evolving beauty.

I think by having art around us and supporting the movement of art in the global world we try to create a reality that there is something real that is bigger than what we understand or can see. The bigger is a destination we come near to, a location where hope lies.”

Your sculptures comprise a vast number of different objects. What are your thoughts on the objects and materials you use?

“People’s relationship to materials and objects is sometimes dissimilar and it is in this lost translation that my thoughts about objects dwell heavily in. The world of miscommunication is a creative gray area, where ideologies can be tested, submerged and new ones emerge. I am interested in the gap between cultures and disagreements within a culture or community. Both physical dislocation through migration away from motherland and homeland as well as a clinging to this space as a longing, as if a death had occurred. The materials and objects I choose often have archaic, nostalgic, romantic, sentimental baggage attached to it. Like barnacles they leave residue – even time and migrations weather their very existence.

The meaning of objects never finds stability, because as long as people continue to migrate, travel away from their homes, look away to see new perspectives, the objects they once knew become unhinged, live.

People are naturally full of tricks and when the powerful world presses hard, people get more oily, inventive and what was a terrible itch can become a triumphant molting. This is how we manage to transform. I am not what I appear to be in my own reflection and inquiry. Can objects continue to be the same. Sameness is imagined, fabricated. Difference is also imagined.”

You are not only a sculptor of materials, but very much also a sculptor of words. Your titles are often long poem-like sentences, that seem as much “the work” as the actual sculpture and not something added afterwards to be able to tell two crates in a storage apart. Could you explain your understanding of the relationship between sculpture and title in your work?

“I like the sound a text makes when we are mouthing the words. Like colors they can contrast, harmonize, create dissonance, cacophony or stray away from the language being used. Text is trusted to mean what it is saying and hence you cannot easily deny its voice, its direction. We, as a culture here, have grown to become averse to the intellectual and art. Initially, I thought of this as an American phenomena, but lately we have seen an Americanised India. We are suspicious of lengthy anything. Minimalism and Pop culture is the rage, new tradition, is dominant. I am very aware that I speak the English language, because I am Indian, and that it’s not mine, so I like toying with it, making it bend, stretch, reach.

I sometimes think that impatience and clever convenience dominate most titles. I am interested in sharing something I think or feel that adds to the image or sculpture you see before you, neither directs it or commands it, and certainly does not explain it.

My corruption of the English language is not just a small rebellion but my attempt to massage it to speak for a vast number of people who use it sparingly, awkwardly, creatively under the pressures of globalisation, colonisation and commercialisation of English culture. I am laying ownership to this language to make it cooperate with my vision and imagery. I work my titles to do somersaults, acrobatic feats and create a space that is imprecise.”

ARTICLES

<http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2009/mar/25/rina-banerjee-mythologies>

Artist of the week 34: Rina Banerjee

Rina Banerjee's art is a quixotic universe of gods and monsters. She manipulates swans' wings, luminous beads, light bulbs and dribbles of red paint into sculptural assemblages that look like shrines, or religious offerings left for an unknown deity. It barely seems surprising that a catalogue for a recent exhibition began with the words: "Once upon a time in a land far away, where the wild things are ..."

Born in Calcutta in 1963, but raised in London and New York, Banerjee could easily be described as facing both east and west. She confronts Orientalism and the legacy of British colonial rule in paintings and sculptures, lacing her semi-erotic pictures with pseudo-spiritual imagery that could allude to Hindu mysticism. The sculptures she creates are assembled out of cheap knick-knacks, many of which are holiday souvenirs. Peacock fans, feathers and paper parasols are splayed out like headdresses on a Mardi Gras float; shards of glass or crystal are scattered like confetti. The result implies a distinctively American love of spectacle.

Her titles are frustratingly childlike – long, garbled and misspelled sentences that seem to veer off on tangents that undermine the fairytales she alludes to. One reads: "Goldielocks, when and where can our desire to reach be? In the larger world she can roam and not be still ... then does temptations turn to know and curiosity can rock – leaving her cut, cut free." This use of folklore implies that Banerjee is attempting to find connections between cultures – her artworks representing a collective cultural confusion brought about by immigration and exile. Yet ultimately her paintings and installations are seductive constructions. The gold leaf, the watery dribbles of hot pink, the hybrid forms – all are as infatuating as sirens, offering the lure and terror of the exotic.

Why we like her: For Take Me, Take Me, Take Me ... to the Palace of Love, a burning pink Taj Mahal made from rose-coloured Reynolds plastic wrap, which was inspired by a souvenir Banerjee picked up in India in her twenties.

An alchemist's dream: She originally trained as a material science engineer at Case Western Reserve University – good grounding for a sculptor who likes to mix chemicals and burn plastic.

<http://www.hosfeltgallery.com/index.php?p=artists&a=Rina%20Banerjee>

RINA BANERJEE

[news](#) - [exhibitions/press](#) - [biography](#) - [website](#)

For her first project at Hosfelt Gallery, Rina Banerjee brings together a monumental, pink, Mughal-inspired sculpture and a group of her delicate and sensuous paintings on paper, in a paean to the potential of the 21st century love.

Banerjee, who was born in Kolkata, India and lives in New York, works with a cosmopolitan eclecticism that reflects both her transnational background and her sophisticated understanding of the narrative power of objects. Using trinkets made for the tourist trade, horn, bone, feathers, shells, textiles, glass bottles and antiques - she assembles rapturous sculptures that are mystifyingly shamanistic, yet overflowing with connotation. Her works are hyper-ornamented and lushly seductive. Conjoining rarities with cheap, mass-produced bric-a-brac, she appropriates extravagantly while rejecting hierarchies of material, culture and value.

The sculpture at the center of this installation takes its form from the Taj Mahal. Often cited as the most beautiful building in the world, it is the epitome of Mughal architecture - an amalgam of elements of Islamic, Persian, Ottoman Turkish and Indian styles - a design hybrid born of two thousand years of incursions, migrations, invasions and colonization. The Taj Mahal is also the world's most famous monument to romantic love - a lavish and unabashed public display of affection.

Banerjee's palace is rendered in pink plastic rather than white marble. It's decorated with fake pearls, cowrie shells and florist's moss rather than jade, turquoise and carnelian. A marriage of high and low culture, it is a mutation - emblematic of a world constantly in flux - of societies continuously reshaping their belief systems. It is a refusal to make judgments based on traditional notions of beauty, importance, worth or usefulness. For the first time in history, Banerjee argues, humanity has an opportunity to consider love outside concerns of reproduction or patrimony and beyond issues of race, gender or religion. This exhibition is a tender tribute to the emergence of love for the sake of love.

Rina Banerjee received a BS in Polymer Engineering and worked as a research chemist before completing her MFA at Yale in 1995. Her work was included in the 2000 Whitney Biennial, the 2005 Greater New York Show at PS1/MOMA, and will be in the upcoming 2013 Venice Biennale's Murano Glass Project. The Smithsonian Museum's Sackler Gallery will present a solo exhibition of her work opening July 6. Her work is in the collections of the Centre Georges Pompidou (Paris), the Whitney Museum of American Art, The Brooklyn Museum, Berkeley Art Museum, SFMOMA, the Hammer Museum (Los Angeles), and many others

VIDEOS

[Dans les coulisses de "Rina Banerjee : Chimères de l'Inde et de l'Occident"](https://vimeo.com/24605077)

vimeo.com/24605077

[Rina Banerjee: Disarming the Goddess Durga on Vimeo](https://vimeo.com/31393482)

vimeo.com/31393482

[Rina Banerjee: Chimères de l'inde et de l'occident](#)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=4F931zNd48U

[Rina Banerjee: Chimères de l'inde et de l'occident](#)

vimeo.com/25449921