

AND SO THEY MERGED, LIKE SUGAR AND MILK: ...HER HEARTBEAT (A VANISHED SOLDIER) I HAD NOT HEARD FOR WEEKS, BUTTERFLIES...CHAFED MY THROAT, SAVING ME FROM DISGRACE. SHE KNELT BEFORE ME, WOVE SPIDERWEBS AROUND OUR EYES, (AS ALWAYS, THE JUGGERNAUT) RATTLED BENEATH HER BONES...



d.e.n. contemporary art

Chitra Ganesh's "Sugar and Milk" bears the artist's words.

Visions and voices of artists from India

LOS ANGELES art dealer and curator Patricia Hamilton points to a decadent and colorful two-frame Indian cartoon with English-language text. "It's like a surreal drama," she says of the work of the artist Chitra Ganesh. "She gets a cartoon, photographs it, draws into it and then adds all the text. She adds the drama."

It would be easy to label Ganesh the Indian Roy Lichtenstein or Max Ernst. A bit too easy. But Indian artists like her are leading their country's unique boom in the global contemporary scene. Through "Contradictions and Complexities: Contemporary Art From India," curators Hamilton and Peter Nagy will bring the work

of Ganesh and five other female Indian artists to d.e.n. contemporary art and Western Project in Culver City starting Saturday.

Such graphic novel-esque pieces by Ganesh will be featured alongside video art by Anita Dube, whose high-profile video work has included a piece for which she cross-dressed as a Muslim man alleged to be her own assistant. Photographer Sheba Chhachhi will show her series of large color portraits, "Ganga's Daughters (The Rogues Gallery)," depicting Indian ascetic women.

Mithu Sen will show drawings and mixed media photographs embellished by embroideries, beading and human hair. While the aforementioned will exhibit at d.e.n., work by the show's two abstract artists, Shobha Broota and Santana Gohain, will be seen at Western Project.

Hamilton, who owned a

'CONTRADICTIONS AND COMPLEXITIES: CONTEMPORARY ART FROM INDIA'

WHERE: d.e.n. contemporary art, 6023 Washington Blvd., and Western Project, 3830 Main St., Culver City

WHEN: d.e.n.: opens 5-8 p.m. Sat., runs 11 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Tue.-Sat. Western Project: opens 6-9 p.m. Sat., runs 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Tue.-Fri., 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Sat. Ends Aug. 2.

PRICE: Free

INFO: (310) 559-3023, dencontemporaryart.com, and (310) 838-0609, western-project.com

gallery in New York, says she has always been an advocate of celebrating the work of female artists. She and d.e.n. contemporary owner Donna Enad Napper connected on the idea

for the show after Hamilton helped get her into ArtTable, a women's arts organization that she helped found.

Though the exhibit consists of the work of women only — ranging in age from 30s to 60s — the curators made a conscious choice to focus on a culturally defined, rather than gender-based, theme.

Hamilton had been exposed to Indian artwork for years through an old friend who collected Indian miniature painting and sculpture. But she has become steeped in the growing contemporary niche in more recent times and through her fellow curator, Nagy, who is the director of Gallery Nature Morte in New Delhi (and formerly of Nature Morte in New York).

"It took a Westerner to promote... Indian art, and Peter really did it," she says.

— SHANA TING LIPTON
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