

ART EXHIBITION BY  
LICCHAVI HOUSE

# Interdependence

EARTH | WATER | FIRE | AIR | SPACE

OPENING  
27 JUNE  
5 PM - 7:30 PM

EXHIBITION DATES  
28 JUNE - 12 JULY  
11 AM - 7 PM



NEPAL ART COUNCIL



Licchavi House

Kathmandu

# About Licchavi House

Licchavi House is a new cultural space in Boudha, Kathmandu, founded by Dzongsar Jamyang Khyentse Rinpoche. Inspired by the history of the Licchavi era and the rich heritage of the Kathmandu Valley, it is being created as a place for creativity, reflection, and connection.

Opening in 2026 near the Boudhanath Stupa, Licchavi House welcomes both locals and visitors to take part. Our aim is to provide a space where people can explore Nepal's traditions in meaningful and creative ways.

We especially encourage young people to discover and express their creativity, while also offering simple introductions to the Buddhadharma. Licchavi House hopes to support Nepal's journey forward, while continuing to value and celebrate the wisdom of its past.

## About the Exhibition: The Interdependence of the Five Elements

Licchavi House proudly presents The Interdependence of the Five Elements, an exhibition featuring nine distinguished Nepali women artists exploring our elemental world through contemporary art. Curated by Michelle Lama, the exhibition opens on June 27, 2025, at the Nepal Art Council, Babar Mahal, with a special reception from 5:00 PM onwards, and continues through July 12.

This show centers the voices and visions of Nepali women artists. Each artist interprets the five elements — earth, water, fire, air, and space — through a unique lens, weaving together traditional wisdom and contemporary expression. Participating artists include: Sushma Shakya, Bidhata KC, Barkha Mukhia, Rashmi Karn, Vaishali Chhetri, Anjila Manandhar, Meena Kayastha, Sushila Singh, and Tenzin Sangmo.

The exhibition includes an interactive Licchavi House corner, featuring a retrospective of past programs and a “Five Elements Corner” designed for tactile and conceptual engagement with the theme.

Join us for the opening reception featuring a Charya dance performance and opening remarks to set the tone for this reflective, visually striking experience.

Gallery hours: 11 AM – 7 PM daily.

# INTERDEPENDENCE

FIRE | WATER | EARTH | AIR | SPACE

An exhibition that delves into the interconnectedness of the five elements.

Interdependence showcases the creative expressions of nine Nepali women artists. The collection reflects not only the beauty of our natural world but also the intricate balance that sustains it. A delicate balance increasingly disrupted by modern life, industrialization and environmental change.

Through traditional and contemporary perspectives, these artworks weave together rural and urban narratives, capturing the delicate balance of nature, culture, and the human spirit. The elements are usually experienced through different, often separate lenses—not always present in our day-to-day thoughts. Together we invite viewers to pause, reflect, and reconsider their relationship with the elements, how they interplay with one another, our lives, and the environment that nurtures us all.

This exhibition is more than a celebration of creativity; it is a call to action and a meditation on harmony, impermanence, and unity. Each artwork serves as a reminder of our shared responsibility for the planet and the interconnectedness of all things—where every action, no matter how small, sends ripples through the web of existence.

I am deeply honoured to curate this collective journey. It is my hope that this exhibition inspires and reminds each of us to cultivate a more mindful and harmonious relationship with the elements that sustain life and the ever-changing conditions we live in.

Michelle Lama  
Licchavi House

# MEENA KAYASTHA

Meena Kayastha is a visual artist with a Bachelor's degree in Sculpture from Kathmandu University's Centre for Art and Design (2007). Her work celebrates the beauty of discarded objects, transforming debris into poetic, timeless art. By repurposing obsolete materials—mechanical bits, chains, pipes, and wheels—she challenges perceptions of waste, infusing new life and meaning into forgotten fragments.

Driven by a belief that nothing is useless, Meena's hybrid sculptures merge sustainability with creativity, advocating for environmental awareness. Her process is one of gradual accumulation and metamorphosis, where discarded objects evolve into artistic structures with enduring value. Through her work, she demonstrates that art transcends time, proving immortality lies in an artist's vision.

Meena's practice is a quiet rebellion against disposability, urging viewers to see stories in the overlooked. Her sculptures are a testament to the hidden potential in the obsolete, blending artistry with purpose.



# MEENA KAYASTHA

**Title of the overall collection: The Dance of Elements**

**Title: Forms of Becoming (wheels)**

**Title: Elemental Mutation (mixed media sculptor)**

**Title: Breath of Balance**

**Even in chaos, there is harmony.**

**Even in waste, there is wonder.**

**Even in silence, there is song.**

**Everything in this world leans on something else. Nothing truly exists alone. Just as life needs air to breathe, water to flow, fire to burn, earth to stand on, and space to hold it all, we too are a part of this delicate, eternal balance.**

**Interdependence of the five Elements is not just about nature's balance. It is about the deep truth that everything and everyone is part of, one ongoing cycle, an unseen rhythm that connects us all. The works are lyrical embodiments of Pancha Tattva, the five elemental truths that weave the vast tapestry of existence.**

**Born from what was once discarded, the artist's sculptures are not merely physical forms but philosophical expressions, silent hymns to interconnectedness. They invite viewers to pause and notice the unseen beauty within the overlooked, the abandoned, and the broken.**

**Using discarded wires, rusted metal parts, old wheels, and forgotten debris, the artist gives these fragments a new identity, as characters, as emotions, as voices. These materials may have lost their original purpose, but within her work, they find new life. Their imperfections carry stories. Their silence sings.**

**There is a message in this making, that everything is part of something bigger. One cannot exist without the other. Just like us. Just like art.**

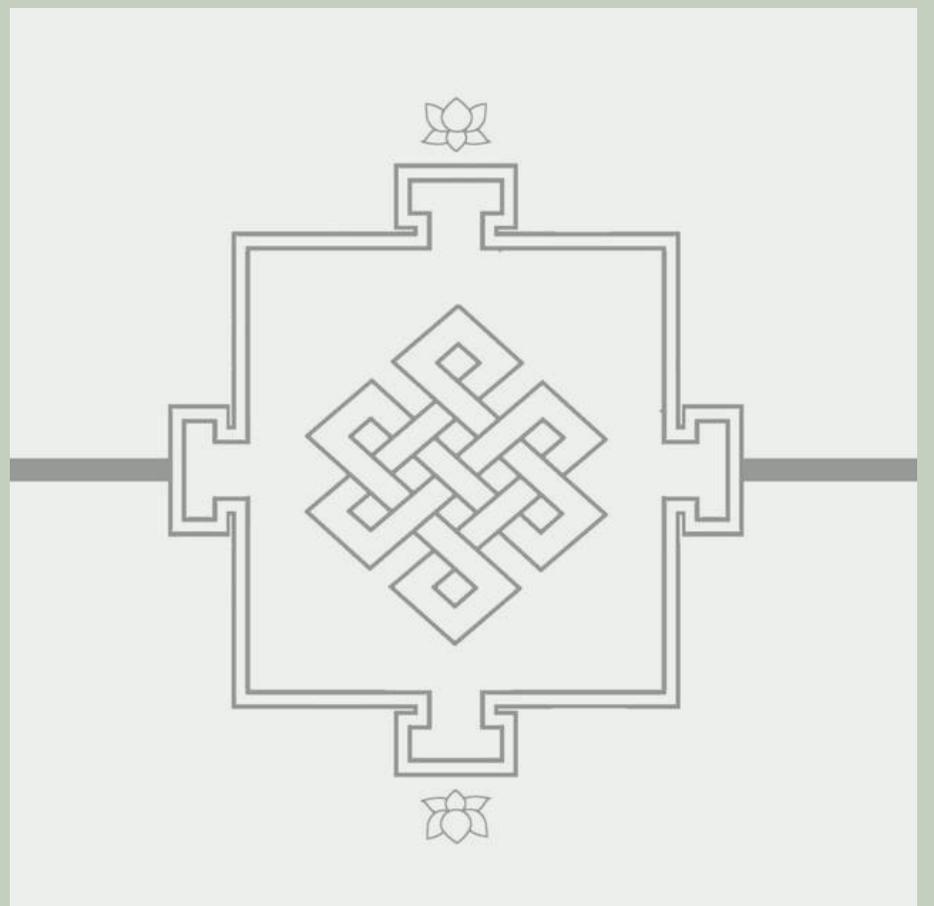
**The work is a reflection of this truth, that interdependence is not just a concept, but a way of being. Through these creations, the artist hopes to evoke a sense of reverence for both the visible and the invisible threads that bind us to each other and to the elements that give us life.**

**Through Breath of Balance, the artist portrays the divine embodiment of balance between Shakti and Shiva, motion and stillness, becoming and being. Their presence reflects the dance of the five elements: earth, water, fire, air, and space.**

# BIDHATA KC

Bidhata KC is a visual artist exploring identity, material culture, and the interplay between tradition and modernity. Her work, rooted in personal and cultural inquiry, examines how native traditions and societal values shape individual and collective existence. Through painting, photography, installation, printmaking, and mixed media, she bridges past and present, capturing their tension and harmony. Her art reimagines heritage as a living force that informs contemporary life, inviting reflection on belonging, transformation, and memory.

In 2011, her piece Marginalized Identity won the Special Mention Award at Nepal's National Fine Art Exhibition. She represented the Nepal Art Council at the 2016 India Art Fair and was a commissioned artist for the 2017 Kathmandu Triennale. Honors include Artist of the Year (2018, 100 Most Influential Women of Nepal) and the Australian Himalayan Foundation Art Award. In 2022, she joined the US Social Change Through Art program (IVLP). With seven solo shows, her work has been exhibited globally.



# BIDHATA K C

## **Title: Silent Dependencies**

**In this work, a modest cement shack becomes a meditation on interdependence, a vessel that holds not only shelter, but a deeper truth about existence. Cement, though industrial and commonplace, is born of the five eternal elements: earth, water, fire, air, and space. Each must align for the material to take form, to hold, to serve. In its stillness, it carries the story of all that shaped it.**

**The artist observes how we often forget the elemental. We build, consume, and inhabit, rarely pausing to sense the invisible web that binds us to soil, breath, heat, and sky. This small structure stands as both witness and offering: to the forces that sustain us, and to the delicate equilibrium that holds the world together.**

**These relationships are not temporary; they are infinite, cyclical, and quietly sacred. Like a thread woven through time, one element depends on the other, endlessly. Without one, the others falter. Without balance, form dissolves. As the artist notes, while we shape the material world, it shapes us in return, reminding us that even what seems inert is alive with relationships, resonance, and memory.**

**This is not merely a shack. It is a quiet invocation: that nothing exists in isolation, not the body, not the home, not the earth beneath us. All is bound in a continuous flow, an ancient pattern of becoming.**

# SUSHMA SHAKYA

Sushma Shakya's career as a conceptual artist from Nepal showcases her dedication to exploring profound themes, especially focusing on nature and cultural preservation through a variety of artistic mediums. Since completing her Master's degree in Printmaking from Tribhuvan University, she has been constantly exhibiting her artworks, making the community aware of the individual's responsibility in protecting nature and culture. Her this attempt is not only limited to her native land but are also extended to international communities through various exhibitions that were held across different countries, including Indonesia, Thailand, China, Japan, Canada, the U.S., Australia, Sweden, India, and Bangladesh.

Winning multiple awards, such as the Himalayan Artist Award and recognition from the Nepal Academy of Fine Arts, further illustrates the high regard in which her work is held. Her diverse approach, shifting between painting, printmaking, video, installation, and sculpture, reflects her belief in letting the concept guide her choice of medium, which is a powerful way to approach art.



# SUSHMA SHAKYA

**Title: Pancha-Tattva**

**Medium: Etching and aquatint**

**Size: 24 x 24 cm. (A set of five) Year: 2020**

Derived from Sanskrit terminology, Pancha Tattva translates into the five elements- earth, water, fire, air, and space. The close interrelation among these elements creates an environment for living beings to live in a world based on a mutualistic relationship between nature and living beings, maintaining a good ecosystem, and prolonging the lifespan of this world.

However, the once so beautifully balanced ecosystem has been disturbed by cruel human nature in the race to give priority to oneself. In our pursuit of convenience and comfort, modern lifestyles have embraced materialism while overlooking its consequences. We wear masks to guard against pollution, yet neglect addressing air quality at its source. We consume from plastic bottles casually, discarding them without considering their environmental toll. This cycle of quick fixes and thoughtless consumption reveals our tendency to treat symptoms while ignoring root causes. Similarly, we relish air-conditioned comfort while disregarding its contribution to global warming.

We race to build skyscrapers, sacrificing open spaces in our urban landscapes. This insatiable hunger for larger properties continues unchecked, with little regard for the ecological consequences beyond our private boundaries.

Hence, the artist, through this work, emphasizes the adoption sustainable lifestyle that creates balance between these elements, to reform this world as a happier place to live for all beings and for times to come.

# SUSHMA SHAKYA

**Title: Pancha Sutra Medium: Mixed Media Size: 69 x 58 cm (h x w)**

**Year: 2022**

Space, water, air, earth, and fire are the key elements responsible for the begetting of everything, the components that create and bind everything together, including the opposite or the contradicting components. Here, the artist deals with the idea of peace and aggression, tragedies and happiness, and such varied experiences, what binds them is the Pancha Sutra, the essential elements of existence. The artist draws a spiritual connotation from the sutra, as it has its roots in ancient philosophy.

Today, everything appears isolated and disconnected. We might be living, but we may not experience life to the fullest due to worldly distractions. Here, if we understand ancient philosophies proposed by our ancestors, such as Pancha Sutra and bind disconnected experiences together; we might make sense of our lives.

The artist notes how modern existence often feels isolated and disconnected. While people go through the motions of living, she notes how worldly distractions prevent them from truly experiencing life's depth. Through her work, she turns to the ancestral wisdom of the Pancha Sutra philosophy, seeking to weave together these disconnected experiences, suggesting that by understanding these ancient frameworks, we might rediscover meaning and coherence in our daily lives.

**Title: Pancha Tattva II**

**Medium: Etching, aquatint, and embossing Size:**

**Year: 2025**

Harmony in nature emerges from fundamental relationships, like those between earth, water, air, fire, and space. A flower's life cycle illustrates this interdependence: the growth of a seed into a plant, the production of buds from the plant, its blooming into beautiful flowers, and eventually, the inevitable withering, leaving behind new seeds. Disrupt one stage, and the cycle breaks, the flower fails in completing its journey. Likewise, the absence or disruption of one element inhibits the functioning of all other elements to their fullest potential.

It is through their unity and balance that the natural world thrives, reminding us that true harmony emerges only when all parts work together as one.

# SUSHILA SINGH

Sushila Singh is an MFA with a graduate specialization in composition. She learnt art from Babu Raja Dyola and as a student at Lalit Sikshya Academy and Central Department of Fine Arts, TU, Kirtipur.

She is a recipient of Nepal Academy of Fine Arts' Bishesh Purashkar – 2078 for Installation, awarded to the artwork Maa – Shakti & Nepal Academy of Fine Arts' Bishesh Purashkar -2076 for Handicraft, awarded to the artwork Ghat. Listed below are her solo exhibitions over time.





# SUSHILA SINGH

**Title: Mana Pathi**

At the core of *Mana Pathi* lies a tribute to Nepali traditional units of measurement embodied by two exquisite sculpted pots, *Mano* and *Pathi*. *Mano*, known as 'Mancha' in Newari, holds 10 muthi (fistful), while *Pathi*, or 'Pha:' in Newari, accommodates eight Mana. These ancient pots transcend mere vessels; they carry the essence of history and the richness of a time when precision and reverence for tradition were paramount.

The color palette embraces the artist's affinity for a symphony of blacks—a hue resonating with depth and timeless elegance. The choice of black on black invokes a sense of enigma, inviting viewers to unravel the layers of history and heritage concealed within the artwork. A touch of real gold further highlights the importance of these once-customary tools of measurement.

The work embodies earth in its clay construction, water in the sustenance these pots once held, fire in the gold accents that illuminate their surfaces, air in the intangible legacy they carry, and space in the cultural voids they now fill. Two additional vessels - *Golpa* (for ritual grain offerings) and *Taukhola* (for communal meals) - epitomize the fusion of spiritual reverence and practical utility intrinsic to ancient Nepali culture.

This art installation captivates with its unique shapes and forms while serving a critical purpose—preservation. These traditional pots, on the verge of extinction, take many on a nostalgic trip down memory lane, rekindling cherished memories of offerings made with care and devotion, steeped in a tradition that held the essence of respect.

In a world drifting from tradition, *Mana Pathi* asks: How do we honor the traditions and the elements that have shaped us?

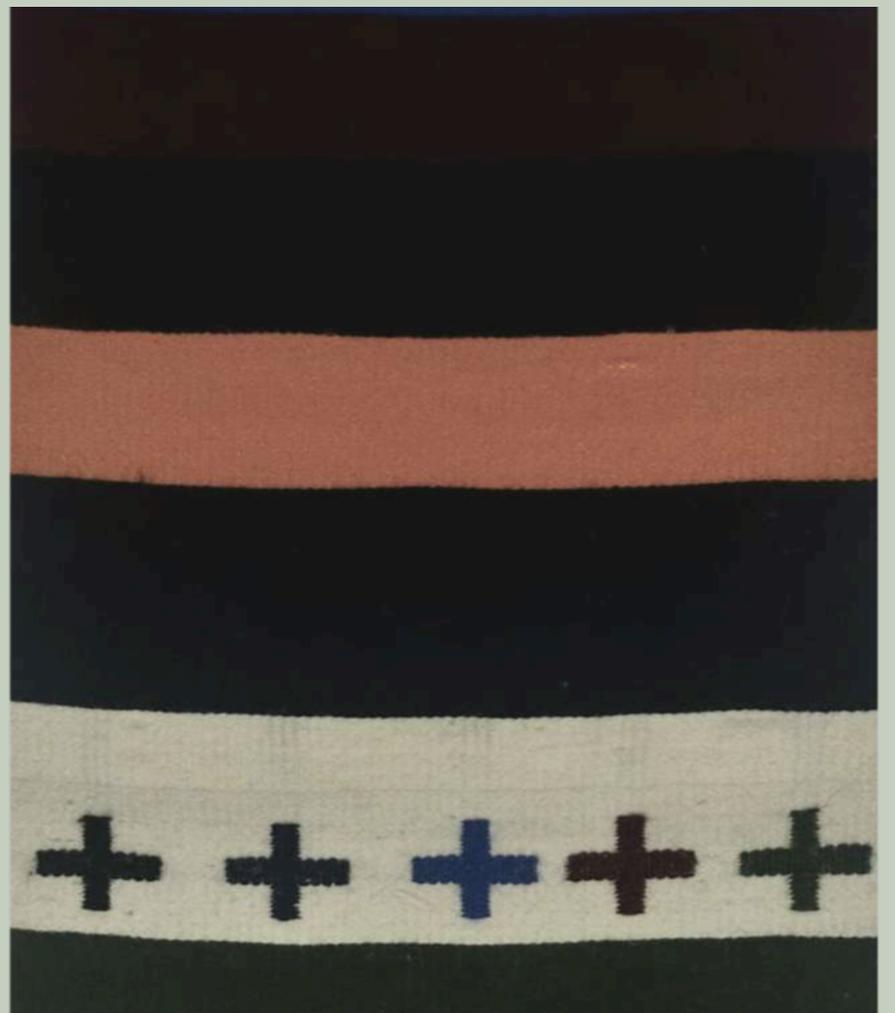
*Mana Pathi* is more than an exhibition; it's a call to honor our cultural heritage and the humble yet profound vessels that bore witness to traditions, beliefs, and memories. It's an invitation to celebrate the beauty of our heritage. Like the five elements, these vessels are fragile yet enduring as silent witnesses to a vanishing equilibrium.

# TENZING SANGMO

Tenzin Sangmo is a 35-year-old textile artist from the village of Komang in Upper Dolpo, now based in Kathmandu. A single mother, she balances her work with raising her young daughter while striving to bring her mother to the city.

Her work centers on traditional Himalayan textiles, with a special focus on crafting pangdens—vibrant aprons worn by Dolpo women. Through her weaving, Tenzin preserves the cultural heritage of her homeland while sustaining her family. Each piece reflects the artistry and resilience of Dolpo's women, blending ancestral techniques with the realities of contemporary life in Kathmandu.

Driven by both necessity and devotion, Tenzin's craft is more than a livelihood—it's a bridge between generations and geographies, honoring where she comes from while weaving a future for those she loves.



# TENZING SANGMO

Fifteen distinct woven textiles and a keti (a traditional apron worn by Dolpo women) are presented, each telling a different story on the interdependence of earth, water, fire, air, and space. In these works, the artist transforms traditional Dolpo weaving into a language of elemental harmony, where color and pattern echo the forces that sustain life in the high Himalayas.

For generations, the women of Dolpo have passed down the art of weaving in an unbroken lineage, their looms weaving intangible heritage into tangible being. The artist now holds this thread of tradition, with hopes for her daughter to learn the craft, to safeguard what might otherwise fray into memory, yet prays she will not need it to survive.

Her work draws from the Himalayan landscape, using an array of wool and muted, earthy colors that honour the elements: the deep browns of soil, the flowing blues of mountain rivers, the warm reds of fire, the fresh greens of wind-swept pastures, and the expansive whites of the open sky. Intentionally chosen, the blues, browns, and greens mirror the seasonal cycles of planting and harvest, a quiet nod to the agricultural traditions of her community. Meanwhile, the whites and fading browns carry a more contemporary meaning, hinting at the slow but steady disappearance of ice from the high peaks. Through her weaving, she subtly documents both the enduring rhythms and the changing realities of life in the Himalayas.

The keti anchors Sangmo's collection. With warm, deep tones and geometric motifs echoing ancestral symbols, it is both functional and sacred, carrying the weight of history in its patterns with confidence and pride.

Every woven thread is an act of preservation, yet never a perfect replication. The deliberate asymmetries and fleeting improvisations in her work bear the mark of her hands, a quiet defiance against mechanical repetition, echoing nature's own imperfect harmonies.

Together, the textiles form a visual display of the harmonious relationship intertwined between the elements.

# RASHMI KARN

Rashmi Karn is a Mithila artist and electronics engineer based in Imadol, Lalitpur. Hailing from Janakpurdham, her art is deeply rooted in her cultural heritage, blending tradition with contemporary expression. Initially painting for familial and cultural purposes, she honed her skills over time, taking on commissioned work while completing her studies.

In her final year of engineering, Rashmi transitioned her passion into a profession, establishing her gallery in Lalitpur after six years of working from home. Today, she is a full-time artist dedicated to preserving and promoting Mithila art while empowering others. Her initiative provides employment to over 10 women artisans from her hometown, who work remotely, and supports five local artists, including students, in Lalitpur.

Through her work, Rashmi bridges tradition and modernity, fostering economic opportunities for fellow artists while keeping the vibrant legacy of Mithila alive. Her journey reflects resilience, creativity, and a commitment to uplifting her community through art.



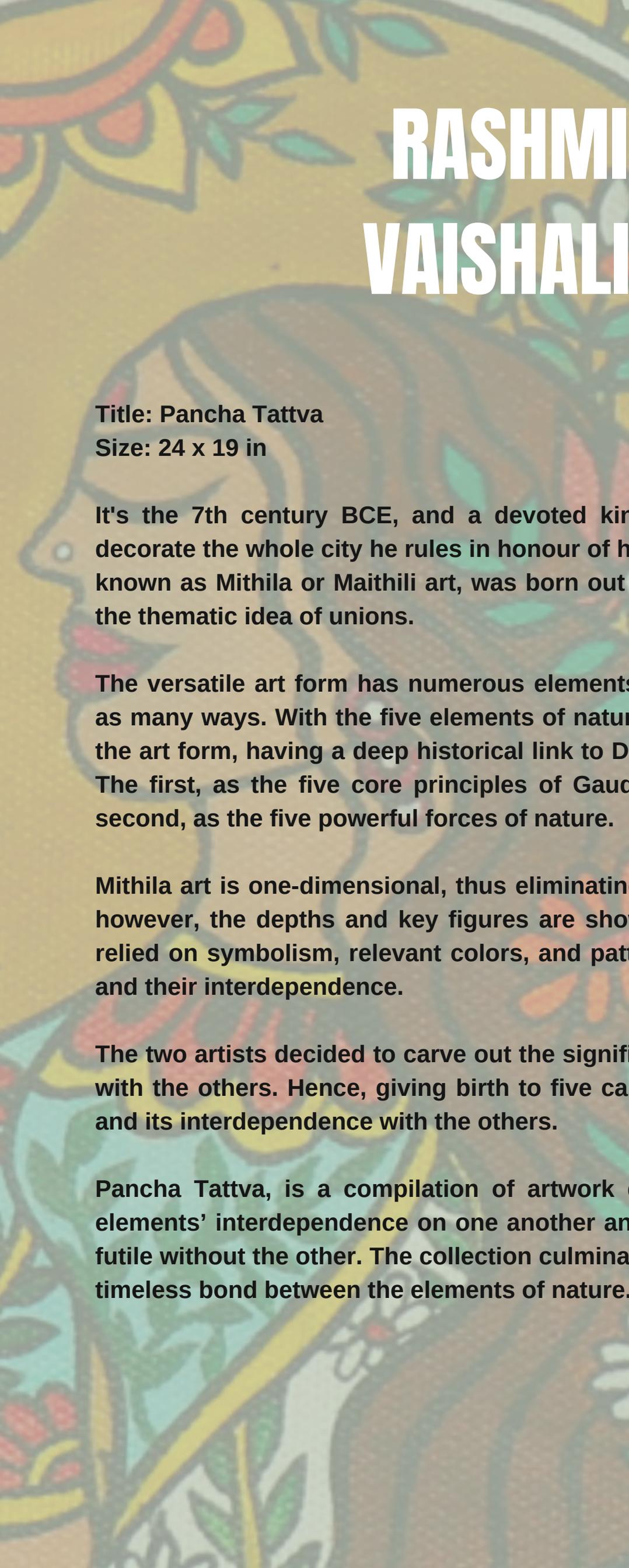
# VAISHALI CHHETRI

Vaishali Chhetri is a 26-year-old painter based in Kathmandu, Nepal. Originally from Kalimpong, India, she spent most of her life there. Her mother is Nepali, and her father is Indian. She moved to Kathmandu in 2017 and earned her bachelor's degree from St. Xavier's College, Maitighar.

A self-taught artist, Vaishali has been painting professionally for eight years. Most of her work consists of murals, many of which can be seen across Kathmandu. These murals are among her most notable works. While she hasn't settled on a single signature style, she practices Mithila art professionally through Mithila House and experiments with other styles that interest her. She draws inspiration from various art forms, blending them into her own creative expressions.

She enjoys exploring different artistic styles and incorporating them into her work. For her, art is a limitless escape—a belief that inspired her to become an artist.





# RASHMI KARN & VAISHALI CHHETRI

**Title: Pancha Tattva**

**Size: 24 x 19 in**

It's the 7th century BCE, and a devoted king and father in Mithila province decides to decorate the whole city he rules in honour of his daughter's wedding. The art form, popularly known as Mithila or Maithili art, was born out of naturally obtained pigments for paints and the thematic idea of unions.

The versatile art form has numerous elements and motifs, which can be interpreted in just as many ways. With the five elements of nature: fire, earth, water, air, and space in its core, the art form, having a deep historical link to Dharma, interprets these elements in two ways. The first, as the five core principles of Gaudiya Vaishnava, as the “five Truths”, and the second, as the five powerful forces of nature.

Mithila art is one-dimensional, thus eliminating the concept of foreground and background, however, the depths and key figures are shown with design and color. For our works, we relied on symbolism, relevant colors, and patterns to show the importance of the elements and their interdependence.

The two artists decided to carve out the significance of each element in their co-relationship with the others. Hence, giving birth to five canvases, each depicting an element in its core and its interdependence with the others.

Pancha Tattva, is a compilation of artwork done by the two Mithila artists to show the elements' interdependence on one another and how even one of the elements' existence is futile without the other. The collection culminates in a vivid portrayal of unity, reinforcing the timeless bond between the elements of nature.

# ANJILA MANANDHAR

Anjila Manandhar (Anjie) is a visual artist from Bhaktapur who has lived, worked, and explored across the three valleys of Nepal. Through her art, she continuously discovers herself, blending various mediums to express her evolving perspective.

She graduated with a Bachelor's in Fine Arts from Kathmandu University School of Arts (2019). Her works include collaborations with Kaalo 101, Alliance Française Kathmandu, and Hospital and Rehabilitation Center for Disabled Children, along with college murals and upcoming community-based projects. She has exhibited at Nepal Art Council, Siddhartha Art Gallery, CISA Delhi, Millerntor Gallery Hamburg, and Gallery Mcube. Her creative contributions extend to music, having designed album covers for Discord Band and Shree 3 Band, as well as merchandise artwork for Mosh ma jaam Vol. 2. With a group of friends Anjie also runs a studio called the Tattoo Circus.

Anjie's art remains deeply rooted in experimentation, connection, and the spaces where personal and collective narratives intersect. Anjila's practice merges contemporary aesthetics with grassroots narratives, fostering dialogue through accessible, public-facing art.



# ANJILA MANANDHAR

Title: Floating 0 kg.

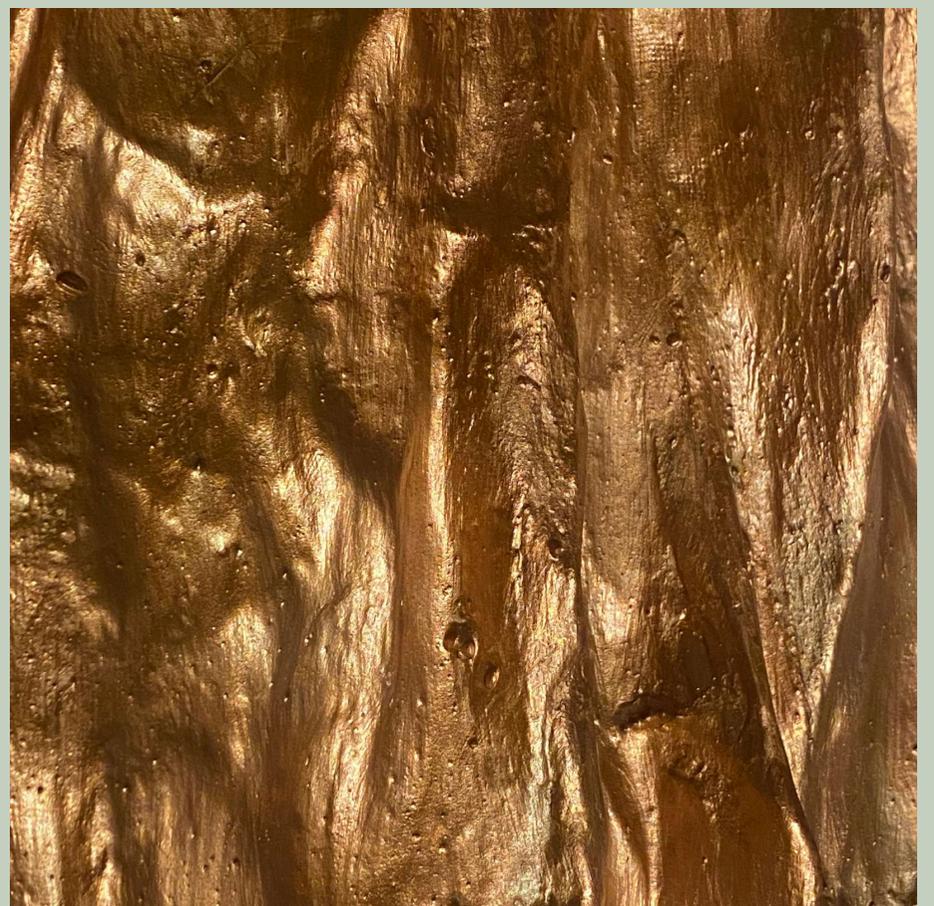
The weight so pleasant  
floats with you;  
the beauties of the wide void.  
And I see you.  
You travel a fine rain drops to my skin.  
I smell you that fine red dot flame.  
And my glitter fan,  
winding its play.  
Loving my brain finely quiet.  
My brain, it be glittering with the wind.  
With its 0 kg weight inside the 0 kg body.

The vacuum of that weight,  
Having a fine time.  
And I feel you.

# BARKHA / BAYOMI

Barkha/Bayomi is a visual storyteller based in Kathmandu. Her pursuits center on employing multimedia techniques to depict human experiences from a distinct vantage point shaped by her experiences. In 2019, she earned the esteemed Film South Asia Fellowship, followed by the British Council's "Gender Grant" in 2020. For the past decade, Barkha has assumed roles as a writer, director, DOP, digital artist, and editor across numerous documentaries, ad films, films, and music videos.

Her inaugural short film was screened at Pinewood Studios in the UK, Raleigh Studios in Hollywood (part of the First-Time Filmmaker Sessions), and the Museum of Creative Minds (Shanghai Shorts - Shanghai, China). Notably, her feature documentary had its premiere at FSA22'. Presently, she remains engaged with her multimedia collective situated in Kathmandu.



# BARKHA / BAYOMI

**Title: Kharing – Museum of the Parallel Earths**

**Welcome to an exhibition within an exhibition.**

**"Trapped and Strapped on a Rock" is a fictional artist created by Artist Barkha/Bayomi to guide you through this interdimensional journey. This show is part of a larger sci-fi comic series under development. The artist, Trapped and Strapped on a Rock, is not human, but a traveler across dimensions and parallel worlds.**

**Each piece in this exhibit tells the story of a different parallel Earth, offering a glimpse into their lives, systems, and experiences. Yet, across every world, one absolute truth remains: we are made of the five elements. When we cease to exist, we remain a part of them forever.**

**For the artist, understanding the interdependence of the elements is a way of seeing that maybe one never truly dies. Maybe our consciousness shifts—takes on new forms and purposes: the roots of a tree or weed, the leg of a cockroach, a glowing bacterium, maybe even a reishi mushroom. Still bound, always, by the five elements—as one.**

**In the words of the artist, “this work stems from a deep disappointment— both in myself and in the human race. Despite being the most connected and technologically advanced we’ve ever been, our sense of superiority and ego continue to blind us to the harm we cause to all life on this planet, including our own. In the face of these machines and systems that thrive on human suffering, that makes us forget our interdependence with the five elements, how can we rediscover empathy and compassion?”**

**Head to the audio sections to hear the stories of each parallel Earth, told by the Artist themselves.**