

Exhibitions galore: from Raghbir Singh, to Sacred Spaces, 'The Primordial Ash'

By **Sujeet Rajan** (<http://www.newsindiatimes.com/author/sujeet>) - September 28, 2017

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(<http://www.newsindiatimes.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Raghbir.jpg>)

Raghbir Singh, Pavement Mirror Shop, Howrah, West Bengal, 1991, Collection of Cynthia Hazen Polsky. Photograph copyright © 2017 Succession Raghbir Singh.



(http://www.newsindiatimes.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/EMPIRE-CITY_Layout-1.jpg)**NEW YORK** – You know it's the season for a plethora of exquisite exhibitions as fall descends to cloak the city in beautiful, temperate weather, bright sunshine, cool days, chilly nights. It's the time of the year when you step out of work evening, find the sky dark, perhaps the daylight saving time having kicked in, or

about to; ambiance perfect for a nice glass of wine, mingle with the crowd, take in art from around the world. Not that it's not so the case, the rest of the year, be it day or night, for purveyors and aficionados of art.

For photography enthusiasts, The Metropolitan Museum of Art – which for a record third year in a row has been named the #1 museum in the world by TripAdvisor – will exhibit a retrospective of works by the late Raghbir Singh, who died in 1999 at the age of 56, entitled 'Modernism on the Ganges', from October 11, through January 2, 2018.

The exhibition, which has been made possible by Nita and Mukesh Ambani and the Reliance Foundation, will feature 85 photographs by Singh, a pioneer of color street photography, in counterpoint with the work of his contemporaries—friends, collaborators, fellow travelers—and with examples of Indian court painting styles that inspired him.

According to the Met, the exhibition will trace the full trajectory of Singh's career from his early work as a photojournalist in the late 1960s through his last unpublished projects of the late 1990s. Using a handheld camera and color slide film, he recorded India's dense milieu in complex frieze-like compositions, teeming with incident, fractured by reflections, and pulsating with opulent color.

Singh, who grew up in an aristocratic family in Rajasthan, embraced color as part of a continuous Indian aesthetic tradition that reaches back to the miniature paintings of the Mughal period. He was also deeply influenced by the work of Henri Cartier-Bresson, filmmaker Satyajit Ray, and American street photographers such as William Gedney and Lee Friedlander.

Accompanying the exhibition will be several eclectic programs, including talks with filmmaker Mira Nair, photographer and screenwriter Sooni Taraporevala, and photographer Ketaki Sheth about Raghbir Singh's influence on their work; the award-winning Carnatic vocalist Abhishek Raghuram will perform; and chef, author, and restaurateur Yotam Ottolenghi, along with chef and author Madhur Jaffrey, will share a lavish banquet, Feast of India, with a menu curated by Floyd Cardoz.



(<http://www.newsindiatimes.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Kailash.jpg>)

Mount Kailash. Courtesy: Rubin Museum.

The Rubin Museum of Art, in its next iteration of its ongoing ‘Sacred Spaces’ exhibition, will invite visitors to confront contemporary artists’ perspectives on pilgrimage to holy sites. Featuring artist Ghiora Aharoni’s series ‘The Road to Sanchi’ and two video works by artist Arthur Liou, the ‘Sacred Spaces: The Road To... and the Tibetan Buddhist Shrine Room’ – from November 17, through October 15, 2018 – engages time as a medium and challenges viewers to consider the sacred and think about their own experiences with meaningful journeys.

Aharoni’s series of sculptures, which are being shown for the first time, reimagines vintage taxi meters, now obsolete, from India. Video screens embedded in the meters capture the artist’s rickshaw rides in India to sacred sites for Hindus, Jews, Muslims, and Buddhists. Each sculpture, whose form simultaneously references a time capsule and the silhouette of a stupa, becomes the oculus of a pilgrimage.

The videos ‘Kora’ and ‘Saga Dawa,’ created by Liou, explore aspects of Tibetan Buddhist ritual and celebration as they take place in the breathtaking environment around Tibet’s holiest mountain, Mount Kailash.

Mount Kailash holds personal meaning for Liou, who journeyed to Tibet’s sacred mountain to mourn following the loss of his daughter. Pilgrims believe that by circling Mount Kailash by way of an arduous 34 mile-long path, one can cleanse the sins of a lifetime.



(<http://www.newsindiatimes.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Iranna.jpg>)

Light in Hidden Ash by G. R. Iranna.

Aicon Gallery, the premiere private gallery in Manhattan for exhibiting top notch South Asian art, will exhibit 'The Primordial Ash', a major new US solo exhibition by New Delhi-based artist G. R. Iranna, from October 5, through November 10, 2017.

According to Aicon, the work in this exhibition continues Iranna's explorations of the constant struggle between the organic forces inherent in nature – and humanity as part of nature – and mankind's attempts to temper and direct these vital forces in both the physical world and within oneself through social constructs and systems of indoctrination.

The exhibition by Iranna, who was raised in an agricultural family in Karnataka, is comprised of a new cycle of large-scale canvases and works on paper, hinging around the recurring motif of roots and branches, depicted either majestically unfurled and in bloom or hopelessly tangled and muted to the point of near total abstraction.

(<http://www.newsindiatimes.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Grand-e1506637545993.jpg>)

Light installation of Dr. Sudha Maniam, on ceiling of Grand Central.

In New York, art comes in various forms, including through an animated light show on the ceiling of Grand Central: last week, the exhibition 'Unseen Stars,' sponsored by GE last week, projected the faces of 12 female scientists emerging out of constellations, on a blue zodiac mural.

The scientists were honored for their contributions to STEM fields, and included the Indian American Dr. Sudha Maniam, Technology Leader of Clinical Systems and Signal Processing at GE Global Research, who's studying new ways to build medical devices. In 2000, she co-patented a new and improved detector system for cardiac MRIs.

Other women included Millie Dresselhaus, the first woman to receive the National Medal of Science in Engineering; Laurie Leshin, a geochemist who investigates the possibilities of life on Mars; and Hadiyah-Nicole Green, a physicist who created a cancer treatment using lasers and nanotechnology.

(Sujeet Rajan is Executive Editor, Parikh Worldwide Media. Email him: sujeet@newsindiatimes.com (<mailto:sujeet@newsindiatimes.com>) Follow him on Twitter @SujeetRajan1)