

## SHEBH CHHACHHI: AN ECOLOGIST AND FEMINIST

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**Abstract:** *As said art is everywhere, even likewise it is developing every single second. From Cave painting to Artificial intelligence it is proving its existence daily. We are surrounded by art in every aspect weather natural or scientific. Today technology become the medium of art as it is reality of contemporary world. All centers of art world from museums to galleries are transforming with upcoming technology. This use of mechanical and digital technologies with conceptual ideas is termed as new media art which is like pool of art forms including photography, videos, installation, computer art, bio art, conceptual art, earth art and many more. In India by mid 90s a new wave started in which artist started using technologies to express their thoughts. Technology has played as a catalyst to develop future art which has challenged space and time. It has merged gaps between art, science, social, politics and cultural aspect of the world. New media art is an interactive way to express oneself which even makes viewer part of itself. Notion of pluralism and multiculturalism infect the artists of the 90's, which is confidently borrowed from all cultures and frequent crossovers. Artists like Vivan Sundaram, Nalani Malani, Ranbir Kaleka, Shilpa Gupta, Sheba Chhachhi, Thukral and Tagra, Jitish Kallat, Tejal Shah, and many more are blurred art with future advanced cutting edge technology. There inter/multidisciplinary approach gave a new broader vision to art. Sheba Chhachhi an artist known as feminist photographer, which was difficult and rarer for a women in her time. Starting using the camera was like a magical world to her, which was experimented and enriched by photo-collages, moving images on light boxes, videos, installations etc. her works are subjected on social, political and ecological aspects of country which is emphasized by her medium which she use. For the need of peace and purity, she use technology nor for distraction and demolition. New media is a key to future lock by not destroying our world.*

**Keywords:** *New Media Art, Photography, Photo-collage, Feminist Art, and Ecological Art.*

“Assumptions about the indexical nature of the photograph continue to pervade the quotidian visual realm. Examining the truth claim of photography opens up vexed questions around objectivity, representation and the nature of the real. Interested in making the subjective and constructed nature of photography explicit, and working with the photograph as fiction rather than as document, I moved from documentary practice to developing staged collaborative portraits”.

Sheba Chhachhi, *Arc Silt Dive: The Works of Sheba Chhachhi* (2016)

### INTRODUCTION

Art is a word that denotes ‘freedom of thoughts’ that are aesthetically represented as to aware of people from generations. We can’t deny art is the source of our existence. It surrounds us in different ways. Histories are written with art sources, future is created with art using science and technology because it is the only language mankind use to know before words were invented. With times and spaces art is changing. 20 year before it was just our imagination what we are living today. digital world is only limited to the doors of labs, but now it has opened doors of world for us. New mediums gave new vision to art, which is more conceptually strong and defined.

New media is a term heard by artist is 20<sup>th</sup> century which is a pool of art forms creating future of art. Artist came out from the barriers of mediums and academic rules to explore, experiment and enjoy their freedom. This made their work more strong and expressive. India is a country with rich traditional and cultural background, and art plays a vital role in its birth. Naturally with different

climate conditions, socially with different cultures, and politically with democracy our country is totally different from others.

## **META-NARRATIVES OF ECOLOGY, THROUGH A FEMINIST LENS**

Sheba Chhachhi an artist from the capital, which is a complex, chaotic, and very vital place to live. A place with its own history, social, and political content that is worth to produce art. She is an eminent photographer, filmmaker, writer, thinker, site-specific artist, and, women's rights activist. She was the first renowned women photographer in India who works for feminism<sup>1</sup> (Tate, 2019). Over the last three decades, Sheba Chhachhi has developed an art practice that is not medium-specific but engages with political and social life primarily feminism and ecology with a desire to offer an alternative imagination that started from the borrowed camera in a magical world of a darkroom.

Sheba was born in Ethiopia, Harar in 1958 where her dad was posted by the Indian Army and returned to India at the age of 3 years. She has moved to many places because of her dad's job. She reminds of her teens, when she use to explore world of folksingers before involving with feminist. She had done her studies from Delhi University, Chitrabani, Kolkata, and the National Institute of Design (NID), Ahmedabad. An artist whose name is synonymous with experimentation and innovativeness Sheba Chhachhi began her career in the year the 1980s, documenting the women's movement in India through photography. With time her experimentation with mediums become more complex which created a conceptual language for her works. During 90s she started becoming uncomfortable with 'the lie of objectivity, 'and 'the politics of representation.' Else she moved towards a more collaborative process that turns to the production of the site-specific public art independent work employing pre-cinematic devices multilayered illuminated mobile palimpsests that create a new idiom through which she contemplates the personal and the political.<sup>2</sup> She brings together photography and sculpted objects text, film, and sounds her unique blends of ancient iconography myth visual traditions still and moving images resonate with issues of gender, ecology, violence, and personal, and collective memory through her work she retrieves and chronicles the marginal world of women mendicants and forgotten forms of labors link between the feminine and the environment in Indian religion and mythology, and our disregard towards natural resources<sup>3</sup> (Sheba Chhachhi: Slide Lecture -Chandigarh Lalit Kala Akademi: Amrita Sher-Gil National Art Week, 2013).

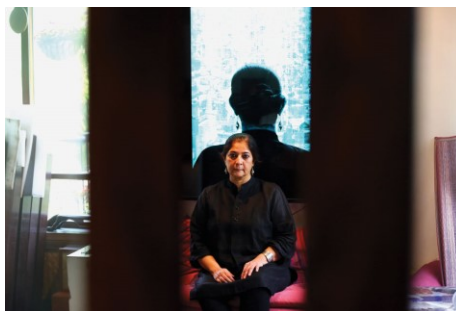


IMAGE: Sheba Chhachhi in her studio

Source: <https://openthemagazine.com/features/sheba-chhachhi-travels-in-hyperreality/>

The evocative titles of some of her solo shows indicate her concerns. In 2000 there was a “when the gun is raised dialogue stopped” that dealt with women in Kashmir, “Ganga’s daughter” in 2004 spoke up about women’s ascetics, and “Hogi Rogi” in 2010 shows the consumption and disease and winged pilgrims is a chronicle from Asia that has evolved from 2007 onwards. Chhachhi has experimented with pre-cinematic devices over several years, developing a new artistic language by creating moving image lightboxes. These mobile palimpsests work with a series of translucent and transparent layers. When viewed the works take on a startling dimensionality as the layers merge in and out of each other to create an almost cinematic aesthetic. Chhachhi creates immersive environments, bringing the contemplative into the political in both site-specific public art and independent works. She has exhibited widely in India and internationally.

### **SHEBA CHHACHHI AN ARTIST OF AWARENESS**

The modern history of photography in India speaks through the vocalization of personal statements and testimonies, a focus on the everyday and a heightened sensitivity towards questions of identity, gender, and race. The idea of enlivening disenfranchised and subaltern voices underlies this concept. Such aspects play out through Chhachhi’s studied consideration of her subjects, but they do so through orchestrated conversational and participatory modes – her interests in researching indigenous forms of feminism, being perceptive of the disconnections with the rural, and even absorbing the poetic/devotional modes of historical figures such as Akka Mahadevi (c.1130-1160), Lal Ded (1320-1392), and Karaikkal Ammayar, contribute to this process. The act of engagement with subjects is a scrutinized, contemplative consideration of how their lives come to bear on and in time; but simultaneously her own place as a documenter, assimilator, constructor of histories, or an enabler of agency – one that is premised on exchange.

Chhachhi’s images perceptibly connect to more global phenomena – the workings of the women’s movement, or rather the feminist engagement with civil liberties and the need for new treatments of testimony and emancipation, fostering larger discussions around how images too can be agents of change; and the portrait, instead of becoming “iconic,” revises the canon of identity construction through an emphasis on the exceptional in the everyday. Chhachhi’s images have community-driven imperatives, evoking social movements everywhere that no longer need to be captured through a conventional reportage – the crowded streets or state brutality – but as staged, meditative moments (in both private and public settings) that arouse poetic and expansive ways in which diverse forms of cultural production in the contemporary, subconsciously lay claim to renewed motivations around image construction. That is how photography can be used to accentuate “positions” as we witness and bear witness to one another.

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juxtapositions, not only within the photograph but as a series, invite a re-examination of the expectations of meaning and narrative construction of an image. That is, they also bring to light how documentary practices have enabled interdisciplinary exchanges with a focused scrutiny on ethics and methodologies by highlighting artistic motivations and outlays. What her images probe is whether the inclusion of narratives around the activists constructively changes approaches to activism itself, and recast a certain stereotyping of activism as allotted only to the street and not the home or other familiar spaces. This entire complex of associations brings forth different modes of inquiry that have arisen through a careful engagement with marginalized subjects, not only in India, but the subcontinent as a whole – which in turn brings to light Chhachhi’s own placement and position as an enabler<sup>4</sup> (Chhachhi, 2014,p.127).

Sheba was born in Ethiopia, Harar in 1958 when her dad was posted by the Indian Army and returned to India at the age of 3 years. She has moved to many places because of her dad’s job. She recalls her teen years when she hangout with folksingers and mystics before getting involved with the feminist movement. She was educated at Delhi University after which she attended Chitrabani, Kolkata, and the National Institute of Design (NID), Ahmedabad. An artist whose name is synonymous with experimentation and innovativeness Sheba Chhachhi began her career in the year the 1980s, documenting the women’s movement in India through photography. In the 1990s, growing increasingly uncomfortable with “the lie of objectivity and the politics of representation,” as she describes, Chhachhi moved towards “a more collaborative process,” eventually turning to the production of the site-specific public art independent work employing pre-cinematic devices multilayered illuminated mobile palimpsests that create a new idiom through which she contemplates the personal and the political. She brings together photography and sculpted objects text film and sounds her unique blends of ancient iconography myth visual traditions still and moving images resonate with issues of gender, ecology, violence, and personal, and collective memory through her work she retrieves and chronicles the marginal world of women mendicants and forgotten forms of labors link between the feminine and the environment in Indian religion and mythology, and our disregard towards natural resources.

## **ARTWORKS WITH FUTURE VISION SHEBA CHHACHHI**

The evocative titles of some of her solo shows indicate her concerns about the surrounding. In 2000 there was a “ when the gun is raised dialogue stopped” that dealt with women in Kashmir, “Ganga’s Daughter” in 2004 spoke up about women’s ascetics, and “ Hogi Rogi” in 2010 shows the consumption and disease and winged pilgrims is a chronicle from Asia that has evolved from 2007 onwards. Chhachhi has experimented with pre-cinematic devices over several years, developing a new artistic language by creating moving image lightboxes. These mobile palimpsests work with a series of translucent and transparent layers. When viewed the works take on a startling dimensionality as the layers merge in and out of each other to create an almost cinematic aesthetic. Chhachhi creates immersive environments, bringing the contemplative into the political in both site-specific public art and independent works. She has exhibited widely in India and Internationally.

Her work challenges viewership, advocacy, and critique with limitations and over-simplifying the framed object. Her works speak a lot which is looping back to times with turns and twists. She started her work with photography as we discussed before. As a photographer and an activist involved with women's in the early 90s movement (the height of the anti-dowry) where women were out on the street in a way we are seeing nowadays for terrible gang rape 'NIRBHAYA'. But there is a huge difference in the outpouring of outrage because what we are seeing today is urban-educated young people who are quite different from the eighties. Earlier women were not that educated and strong they were murdered by being described as kitchen accidents which were actually for dowry collusion of the police, families, and medical engagement. She tried to expose that collision creating public awareness in multiple ways Street plays a huge demonstration and even small demonstrations by going outside the home where a woman had been killed. She is both activist and a photographer at one time, using a camera and shouting slogans once<sup>5</sup> (an Interview with Sheba Chhachhi, 2020). Writing pamphlets making posters everything she is into. She started photography, not for any newspapers but for herself, it was to try and counter stereotypical representations of women that could either have a beautiful marana kind of image. Victims, or women advertising products but they are not the women of Sheba's work of art. She focuses on ordinary women seeking to change their life to change themselves. According to her, every medium is transparent, and every image and every photographic image is produced from a particular perspective it is subjective and takes a position to imbue with a certain kind of politics the images we receive from mass media s to be objective as the news present itself.

Her works show the live photography of a person in which you can see the problems, and pain, of that woman. While working she is not attached to the person only till the work is done, but far more complex than the images of them. Those women were sisters in the movement, friends, and fellow travelers. She is not only interested in the struggle but expresses desire, fantasies, and creative aspects with the objects and atmosphere created by the person to describe their lives. In her work, she shows still photos in narrative form. She captures the essence of a person and even their language by adding objects related to them to their stories. Her artwork is beyond her own thoughts because of the subject which could express what was not supposed to happen. Depending upon the conversation in-between both, 'I really have been seeking a different kind of relationship which is to find a place between mine, our and your subjectivity, so that it is not I that is capturing, framing or revealing some essentials truth about you, neither it is you who completely determines how you present yourself but the thoughts we shared to each other with sparkling of emotions and feelings'. This creates crucial stories which are easily understood in our culture and are based on oral mythologies and narratives. It is very easy to describe terrible traumas in the form of a story, which changes from time to time as people tell and retell it. The process of healing, the process of memory is based on the time we live with. She moved away from working only with still photography as she had difficulties that people tend to receive as a kind of bitter image they have a habit of flipping magazines while watching photos as they are all around. Same as they do in a gallery. She slows down people by creating intimate relationships between viewers and artwork, so by doing so she created an installation that actually alters the body of the viewer because things are placed in rounded space which becomes an object in space rather than simply an image. She uses

many techniques to create her artwork like text, objects, and materials in layering. Her efforts to work in another kind of language. Her main technique photography is no longer photography now, conventionally connected with everyday technology. Her works go both ways, initially, she started with basic layering, and light boxes, and there were two layers that changed to four layers that have movements (sometimes still sometimes moving) which gives the effect of a pre-cinematic device. She even goes backward in low-tech experiments with moving images like magic lanterns. From magic lanterns to light boxes she used technology to create equality of time, quality of layering, and a kind of gestalt images fusing together to create a visual experience. She is always in search of new mediums, technology, and new vocabulary for her artwork. On other hand, her interest in reading new things, science, and new developments even in virtual experience is shown in her work. She made a public installation which is about genetically modified foods that use virtual reality that is other cutting edge. For her, it is not technology for sake of technology she uses it when it is useful to it like writing on water. For some, it is a normal object but for her, it could be something that is art. Her artwork sets a regimes of looking, seeing, and being seen, mostly felt in the photo-video installation she made. Her staged images alert us to the process of “making” an image, or setting the stage, which involved a certain conditioning (a certain regime of perception), so as to most powerfully influence the audience.



IMAGE: SEVEN LIVES AND A DREAM, 1990-91 Photographs 19 prints, 11 prints 30 x 20 inches (76.2 x 50.8 cm) each; 8 prints, 22 x 15 inches (55.9 x 38.1 cm) each. Edition of 5.

SOURCE: <https://volte.art/artists/25-sheba-chhachhi/works/3-sheba-chhachhi-seven-lives-and-a-dream-1990-91/>

Her very first images were of the women who lived in the back veranda of a temple that she used to pass every day on the way to Design School in a way it was a precursor to her practice which is not at all a kind of parachuting into a situation making an image and leaving in the early years of women’s movement, she was very passionately involved in it while photographing, recording, as well as campaigning and literally shouting slogans one moment and pointing the camera the next. There were not so many women photographers at that time. ‘SEVEN LIVES IN A DREAM’ was a stage portrait in which she was profoundly moved by the women she met. This work gave her the opportunity to alter the balance of power. She photographed seven women with whom she developed an image that she felt to tell her story, she selected a place, posture, and gaze at a prop object to create a kind of missile send. This is a point of a critical transaction from documenting to the creation of art. She printed transparent images which were layered across the space, combined with historical images, sculptural elements, etc. According to her, working with installation is something that asks you to be extremely rigorous with yourself, it’s a very flexible and elastic form.

The installation has a kind of embodied viewing where the sensorium of the participant or the viewer participant is also involved in what is happening. Today art is inundated with images and sounds that are showing the crisis of the environment affecting society. Time of great violence, violence between people, violence between humans and nature.

Her works deal with contemplation which is something that is removed from the hustle and bustle of daily life, withdrawn, space away definitely disengaged from political, stress and strain of daily life, even with inhabitation of an emerging economy and troubled democracy. Contemplative is also a space where the subject of contemplation is to be something removed from ordinary life, the soul the spirit, higher aspect of the mind these are all the associations related to the contemplative state which is attained in monks, nuns, or people who have withdrawn from ordinary life. Politics on another hand as we all know is a heated constantly changing ribbon with contestation, complex charged and uncomfortable space. So when both politics and contemplation combined it meant the current economic, cultural, and social-political regime is a major shift in a way as we experience time, space is already distributed in public space, privately owned space, already almost completely territorialized. The space is owned and securitized, the shift from vast shared space to increasingly fragmented private/state ownership is what we are watching in our families' cities and in our time. But time is in the process of becoming terrorized and securitized in the senses administered in a special way whether it is in the advent of new communication technologies, or the sense of the way we received information today is altering rapidly with time. Art in this situation offers a possibility to create another kind of temporality, so according to Sheba art interventions actually give the potential to create a site contemplation one in which another kind of temporality is evoked thereby offering resistance to one aspect of the kind of political change we are facing today. A lot of her early works were more political, documentary photographs, in which she was engaged in the women's movement and a lot is issue-based work, she moved from that into creating photo-based installations.



IMAGE: Neelkanth Installation with one LCD projector, 174 aluminum boxes each with light bulb, photographs, four light dimmers, four translites. Installed structure in mandala form, projection on central floor platform

SOURCE: <https://indianexpress.com/article/lifestyle/art-and-culture/meanings-accrete-over-time-sheba-chhachhi-4752199/>

NEELKANTH: POISON/ NECTAR (2005-08): An ancient, still popular story, Shiva swallowed the flaming mass of poison which threatened to destroy the universe, keeping it in the throat, becoming the blue throat one of the 'neelkanth'. This work relocates the archetypal/mythological figure of Neelkhanth, the contemporary Indian city/ info-space where each of the five elements (earth, fire, water, air, and ether) the five senses (smell, sight, hearing, taste, and touch) and the power of the word itself is poisoned.

It's a work that looks at the apparent binary between poison and nectar based on the story "Churning of the samundar to extract amrit but it turns into poison which Shiva swallows rescuing the world from annihilation". This situation is faced into the Indian urban areas, which horrified Sheba by the kind of hyper-urbanization, the production of toxicity, and the manner in which we are all being turned into unwitting Neelkanth. We are swallowing the poison but not thinking about the ways to transform, containment.

The space of the installation is very vast around 25 sq. /fit. When the viewer looks into a work it has a series of 260 tiny aluminum towers each of them turned into a miniature light box arranged like four section of mandala (yantra). Which is basically a form of concentration that draws the attention of viewer to the center. By going close to the aluminum light box an image of one of the five senses which are associated with the five elements of the earth is depicted. One even has a sense of fragmentation and even re-harmonizing in broader patterns. The entire installation plays with the conventional boundaries that are fragmented and harmonized like a mandala, destroyed city, and bodies. Explains that today's beauty lies on grotesque. The images on light box shows colonization and beautiful gardens that are constructed on the landfilled with the biggest garbage. This takes viewer to the center to look down at a video which is more ambiguous with a combination of painting and projection on the body. It shows a visceral movement of the throat, the sense of struggle to ingest, sometimes failing sometimes succeeding but the endless cycle of the struggle which persists changes. The throat is revealed as human according to mythic. Sheba in her practice looks at how the mythic and social conjoin to open up new forms of precipitation and reflection on our current condition. By seeing these installations viewers were prompted into rethinking the seal between these binaries as sometimes in trying to produce nectar we produced poison and perhaps we know we are in the condition of poison. So we can find ways to create nectar.

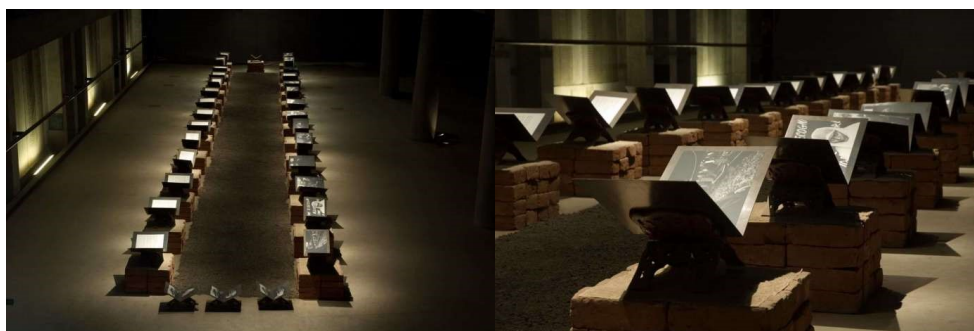


Image: With Sonia Jabbar: 'When The Gun Is Raised, Dialogue Stops...' Women's Voices From The Kashmir Valley, 2000  
SOURCE: <https://volte.art/artists/25-sheba-chhachhi/works/29-sheba-chhachhi-with-sonia-jabbar-when-the-gun-is-raised-2000/>

WHEN THE GUNS ARE RAISED DIALOGUE STOPS.....: This work is a result of many years of engagement with Kashmir Valley, where Sheba was part of a women's group in 1995. The problem was that there was no representation of women in the valley. It was dominated by men with guns who were patriots battling for the nation or militants seeking their own autonomy and secession from the country. The whole debate was completely polarized with Hindu-Muslim, India-Pakistan, military militants, etc. This shows when one had no sense of what women felt how they perceived the situation, and how they survive. This work is in a 50feet long space which has a bed of earth in



the center on either side of which brick platforms each of them has a small bed of rice and carries a wooden Rehal (a wooden stand used for holy books) which is inserted with rustic iron sheets, is a kind of decorative book of war. Each iron sheet carries a photograph and a testimony. As a viewer walks in the sides of the installation, two things happen: one is that those who normally encounter image and text which is the most common conventional form of communication and representation would fairly fast by not reading the text, but secondly if the person bends down and reads the text a kind of procession starts. As they encounter the 36 books they see the categories of women who have been sexually violated by militants, women who have been sexually violated by the army, women who have fought back, women who have succumbed, mothers, and sisters, and a number of women who have to find a way of living through this crises. For those women, there is no difference between one man with a gun to another man with a gun. Those women don't have any space to talk about their lives and experiences. The strong, courageous women who are living in the midst of a 22-year-old undeclared war have no rights. The testimony shown in this installation took 6 years of research. This work is too political on a heated issue but after some time it is exhibited under the umbrella of "WOMEN'S CONFLICT IN SOUTH ASIA". This was first exhibited in the visual art gallery Habitat Center, Delhi. The organizer was very nervous and removed their name as this was a period in 2000 when there was a lot of attack on artworks. Very interestingly an extraordinary response came from the audience which made the gallery open at 10 am which was scheduled to open at 2 pm... Unfortunately, the work is absolutely still relevant today.



Image: Winged Pilgrims: A Chronicle From Asia, 2006/2008

SOURCE: <https://volte.art/artists/25-sheba-chhachhi/works/201-sheba-chhachhi-winged-pilgrims-a-chronicle-from-asia-2006-2008/>

**WINGED PILGRIMS: A CHRONICLE FROM ASIA (2006-2008):** This is a work that uses elements both material and metaphoric: the figure of the pilgrim, the figure of a bird, and the street toy called the plasma action TV of a Chinese manufacturer that is flooding the markets of India. These TV have imagery of landscapes like the golden gate bridge, dolphins, fighter planes, Dubai, and skyscrapers all collage together into some kind creating utopic vision. A lot of utopic visions are pastoral and have a fantasy of nature.

This work is based on the 2005 bird flu which was called the Asian avian flu. For the first time in history, a huge no of birds was actually culled and migratory patterns of the birds were sought to be controlled. This cause a clear implication for the panic over Asian migration into the West, the first bird that was killed is the white swan as it entered Scotland. This provoked a series of thoughts about the Huns which in our myths embodies the power of discrimination that can separate the milk

from the water. Seems by murdering this bird we are also metaphorically destroying that capacity in ourselves. Birds have always stood for a more elevated aspect of the human. Throughout history, we have stories of bird legends, parables, and folk tales, which describe a kind companion to human aspiration. So placing the metaphor of the bird on one side and the other with a mediator landscape fusing all this together into a mapping of Asian cosmopolitan of what globalization means at this time. This work was created with several complex layers, 11 light boxes, and 5 sculptures. The robes evoked the absence of pilgrims, who were traditionally represented as carriers of the first text (the sutras) from India to Japan, but here they are holding a kitchen toy like a light lamp. These light lamps are projecting layered images of bird flu and the landscape described above. Each lightbox draws multiple landscape traditions from the Chinese classic branch brush painting of Sang dynasty that brings them into juxtaposition with the Pre-Sanskrit text is the oldest extant form of the sutra and garuda from a South Indian sculpture that moved in lightbox. These images are like videos one still translucent light box moving on one another, making more meaningful relations while fusing with the ground. There are 11 boxes with elements taken from worldwide, from history till today. One light box has been drawn with several miniatures in its background but gives the look of a completely constructed image. Crows in this light box have the historically metaphoric meanings of bad news and on the other hand, it has a shamanistic figure from Indonesia. The video has music which is taken from Central Asia. She flags many layers that constitute a newly imagined landscape which speaks about a rich history exchange with the pain of freedom i.e. birds.

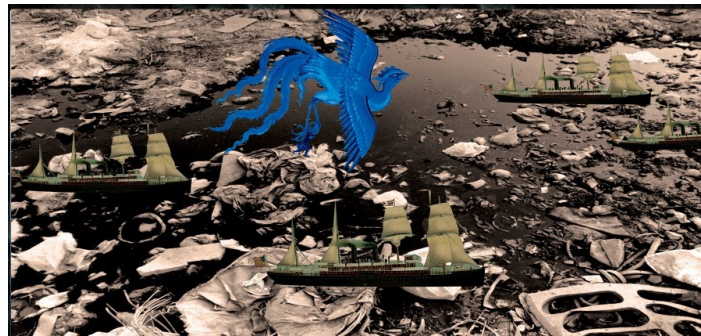


IMAGE: Kaha Bird, Moving image lightbox from "Winged Pilgrims: A Chronicle from Asia"  
 Digital prints on duratrans/clear films, 3 layers 100×48×7cm (39×19×3")

SOURCE:<https://naturemorte.com/exhibitions/wingedpilgrimsachroniclefromasia/selectedwork/2389/>

One of the most interesting lightbox that devastated Yamuna in the city of Delhi, colonial ships, and the kaha bird, each of the birds embodied a story that is repeating itself in Persia, India, Japan, and Thailand everywhere. The story is of a kaha bird and a fisherman who was so poor that he is not able to provide food for his family. One day he was sitting by the river bank when a beautiful blue kaha bird came and sit next to him. Bird asked why you are so sad he replied he can't feed his family tonight. So she blessed him by saying your basket will be full and he prospered. This news was heard by the king that a magical bird came and offer all these boons to the fisherman, so he announce an enormous prize to catch this bird. The fisherman is tempted and colluded with soldiers to catch the kaha bird and they kill it while catching which is a greedy story of human creatures, that we lose what is a treasure. This tells us that what we have done to the environment and to the non-human world is worst for us only. At the end of the enclosed space we came to the image

playing a track sung by Vidya Vidyarao, it has no instruments so it works with patterning at displaying wing pilgrims.



Image: Ganga's Daughters (Meetings With Women Ascetics ), 1992 -2002 photo-video installation.

SOURCE: <https://volte.art/artists/25-sheba-chhachhi/works/25-sheba-chhachhi-ganga-s-daughters-meetings-with-women-ascetics-1992-2002/>

*GANGA DAUGHTER MEETINGS WITH WOMEN ASCETICS* (1992–2004): Ganga's Daughter is a chronicle of a decade-long association of Sheba Chhachhi with the women ascetics of the Juna Akhand in Allahabad. She was documenting the women's movement in India in the 80s when she came across this Shaivite sect, where women had stripped themselves of the markers of gender, often becoming androgynous. Their initiation meant the death of their social self, identities, sexuality, and rebirth as ascetics into a parallel culture of influential Akhadas in Allahabad. Curious to the glimpse of this universe, Chhachhi followed them like a fellow nomad. The camera came in much later and she photographed them only when they allowed it and in the way they wanted to be seen.

Ten years later the body of work of Ganga's daughters emerged, narrating the story of these mystical women belonging to an alternate sub-culture within orthodox Hindu society. An extraordinary part of Ganga's daughter is a set of black and white photographs called Initiations. It documents the three-day initiation process dating back to the 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C., which involves shedding all layers of



IMAGE: GANGA'S DAUGHTERS (MEETINGS WITH WOMEN ASCETICS), 1992 -2002

SOURCE: <https://volte.art/artists/25-sheba-chhachhi/works/25-sheba-chhachhi-ganga-s-daughters-meetings-with-women-ascetics-1992-2002/>

Identity one by one, including clothes, hair, ornaments, name family lineage, caste, and even gender. Their new identities are given new names usually related to the sacred river Ganga, where the initiates take the ritual bath making an end to their transformation.

Hence, Ganga daughter are reborn after performing the death rites of their old identities. These women ascetics lives a life that is an antithesis of the normal way of living for Indian women. They are not wives, mothers, daughters, or even females. Her photographs show a radical psychological transformation, which leads the ascetics to break all the social norms. Interestingly enough, Chhachhi couldn't bring herself to photograph the most powerful women ascetics she met. This is enough to challenge the parameters of looking at this seemingly small community of women sadhus of India. Ganga Daughter is a series that grows out over many years stretched over 10 to 12 years of spending time words traveling being with women ascetics from several streams from bites too shocked us mainly in the north and eastern India I grew up fascinated by women who stepped out of the family

## CONCLUSION

The bold image of Sheba Chhachhi as a feminist photographer and ecologist gives a wakeup call to us. The mad rush which is created through technology to uplift urbanization is on alarmed stage. We have to use technology for better and great future for our future generations. Sustainability needs to be focused. It's time to take care of our feminist power both as a women and earth: as they are source of creation.

As we are moving forward with brilliant experimentation we are effecting the world which we and our generation has to suffer. Now earth has started taking its revenge which will finish our existence as we are hurting this plane. So we should stop and think wisely before taking any decision. The main aspect of life earth and women is beautifully depicted by Shebha in an experimental form with new technology. Her work evolves intersectionality of aesthetical concepts and critical frameworks that bolstered alternative exhibitionary and artistic practices across regions and communities, and these alternative modes for visual expression and viewership can be traced back to the pre-digital era which expresses herself differently.

Some women have the luxury of taking that position today because feminism fought all these battles for them," But the battle against patriarchy continues. There is briefly the illusion that equality is real and then you only have to step out at night and get sexually harassed to be reminded. Kind of 'consumer feminism', where the fantasy of the liberated woman is used as a marketing tool and a lot of young women are growing up with these images. The 'freedom' offered is very much linked to sexuality and consumption, and the buying of consumer goods, which does not in itself change social conditions." expressed by chhachhi in her works.

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