

The Museum of Modern Art

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART AND THE KIRAN NADAR MUSEUM OF ART TO CO-ORGANIZE A LANDMARK EXHIBITION OF WORK BY INDIAN PAINTER NILIMA SHEIKH

***Nilima Sheikh: Fractured Skies* Will Be the Artist's First Solo Presentation in New York**

NEW YORK, July 22, 2026 — The Museum of Modern Art announces ***Nilima Sheikh: Fractured Skies***, an exhibition devoted to the work of Indian artist Nilima Sheikh (b. 1945) organized in collaboration with the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art (KNMA), New Delhi. On view at MoMA from September 27, 2026, through June 13, 2027, this first solo presentation of Sheikh's work in New York showcases the artist's visionary practice through a selection of works from the past two decades, including a new site-responsive set of paintings making its debut at MoMA and commissioned by KNMA.

Nilima Sheikh: Fractured Skies is co-organized by Cara Manes, Associate Curator, Department of Painting and Sculpture, MoMA, and Roobina Karode, Artistic Director and Chief Curator, KNMA, with Elizabeth Wickham, Curatorial Assistant, Department of Painting and Sculpture, MoMA, and Avijna Bhattacharya, Senior Curator, KNMA.

Sheikh has said, "The artist's role is to bear witness—to both the past and the present." *Fractured Skies* explores this enduring project through a selection of major works, anchored by selections from *Each Night Put Kashmir in Your Dreams* (2003–14), a groundbreaking series of suspended, double-sided painted scrolls each measuring 12 by six feet. Executed in casein tempera on unstretched canvas—Sheikh's signature medium and format—the works unite imagery and text in an immersive sequence of interconnected scenes. The series reflects the artist's sustained engagement with the culturally rich, politically complex, and historically contested region of the Kashmir Valley. To evoke the layered histories and lived realities of the region, Sheikh draws from her own experiences and research, as well as a vast array of historical accounts and literary sources.

"Over the course of her distinguished career, Nilima Sheikh has developed a singular approach to art making, drawing on literary, historical, and vernacular traditions to create layered visual narratives that connect the past to the present," says Cara Manes, Associate Curator, Department of Painting and Sculpture, MoMA. "Her paintings confront histories of violence, displacement, and erasure with deep sensitivity and formal invention. Centering lived experiences, particularly those of women, her works bear witness to the enduring power of human connections across time and space. Through her visionary practice, Sheikh has become a touchstone for artists following in the path she forged."

Roobina Karode, Artistic Director and Chief Curator, KNMA, adds, "Nilima Sheikh's practice occupies a significant place in the contemporary art world, offering a profound South Asian lens to the shared complexities and predicaments amidst geopolitical conflicts. With a nuanced artistic sensibility, Sheikh works through an aesthetic of slowness, combining the

tragic with the poetic, intricately weaving texts and images to meditate on states of longing and loss. By bridging local inheritance with urgent universal dialogues, this co-organized exhibition marks a defining moment in our ongoing mission to present South Asia's visionary voices on the global stage."

Making its debut at MoMA is *Shahid (Witness)* (2025–26), Sheikh's most recent reflection on the Kashmir Valley region. Commissioned by KNMA and comprising 10 monumental, suspended painted scrolls, the work responds to the distinctive architecture of the Sue and Edgar Wachenheim III Gallery. A selection of works from *Home, Land* (2023–25), a series of tempera paintings on paper in which Sheikh addresses the ongoing precarity and displacement experienced by the nomadic Bakarwal communities of Jammu and Kashmir, will also be included. Positioned between the two suspended installations, these works will serve as a connective passage within the exhibition—a bridge between earth and sky.

ARTIST BIO:

Based in Baroda, India, Nilima Sheikh (b. 1945, New Delhi, India) is one of the most consequential artists working in South Asia today. Sheikh studied history at Delhi University from 1962 to 1965. In 1971, she received a master's in painting from the Faculty of Fine Arts at the Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda. Founded after Indian Independence, the school was an important center for artistic and intellectual exchange, and fostered a community that challenged inherited cultural and pedagogical frameworks. There, alongside her peers, Sheikh played a key role in shaping contemporary Indian art.

Sheikh's recent solo exhibitions include Asia Art Archive, Hong Kong (2018); Gallery Espace at Bikaner House, New Delhi (2018); Chemould Prescott Road, Mumbai (2017); the Art Institute of Chicago, Illinois (2014); and Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi (2010). Sheikh is the recipient of the Nandjunda Rao Award by Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath, Bangalore (2021), and the Gagan Aban Puraskar Award by Visva Bharati University, Santiniketan (2011).

Selected group exhibitions include Barbican Centre, London (2024); Sharjah Biennial 15, Sharjah (2023); Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya, Mumbai (2022); Pera Museum, Istanbul (2020); Dhaka Art Summit, Dhaka (2020); Kochi-Muziris Biennale, Kochi (2018); documenta 14, Athens and Kassel (2017); and Singapore Biennale, Singapore (2016).

Sheikh's work is in the permanent collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Art Institute of Chicago, Illinois; the Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane; the Leicester Museum and Art Gallery, Leicester; Sharjah Art Museum, Sharjah; Guggenheim Museum, Abu Dhabi; and Kiran Nadar Museum of Art, New Delhi.

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