

ARARIO GALLERY SEOUL
SUBODH GUPTA
INNER GARDEN



Subodh GUPTA, *Inner Garden VII*, 2024, Oil on linen, 130 x 120 cm
©2024. Subodh Gupta. Courtesy of the Artist and ARARIO GALLERY

Title	: Inner Garden
Artist	: Subodh GUPTA (b. 1964)
Dates	: 4 Sep (Wed) – 12 Oct (Sat) 2024
Venue	: ARARIO GALLERY SEOUL (85 Yulgok-ro, Jongno-gu, Seoul, Korea 03058) 1F, B1F, 3F
Artworks	: Total 15 works (Paintings, sculpture, installation)

[Contact]

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1. Exhibition Overview

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Subodh GUPTA

Zodiacal Light (2024)

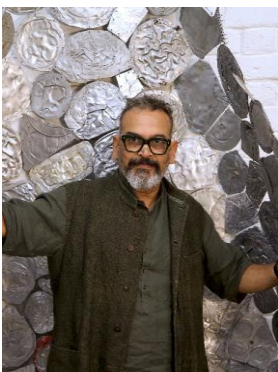
Stainless steel, PU paint

36 x 55 x 88(h) cm

ARARIO GALLERY SEOUL will host a solo exhibition titled *Inner Garden* by renowned contemporary Indian artist **Subodh GUPTA** from September 4th (Wednesday) to October 12th (Saturday), 2024. This exhibition marks his first solo show in Korea in 10 years, following his last exhibition at ARARIO GALLERY SEOUL in 2014. GUPTA has garnered international acclaim in the art world for his unique works that reimagine everyday objects commonly found across India, such as steel lunch boxes, thali pans, bicycles, and milk cans. GUPTA's art explores the dualities of society, raising questions about the coexistence of traditional customs and globalization, economic prosperity and poverty, as well as the social structure, family and religious beliefs. GUPTA's works show that 'the most ordinary is the most sacred', and he transforms mundane items into monumental forms, challenging conventional notions of artistic value and striving to discover new beauty in the process. GUPTA's works expresses his concerns about the sociocultural realities of Asia through

various media, including sculpture, installation, painting, video, and performance, reflecting deeply on themes such as rapid urbanization, globalization, and cultural hybridity. GUPTA's solo exhibition *Inner Garden* will feature 15 new works created this year, including paintings, sculptures, and installations, which will be displayed across the basement, first, and third floor spaces of ARARIO GALLERY SEOUL.

2. Artist Introduction



© Subodh GUPTA. Courtesy of the Artist, Subodh Gupta Studio

Artist Subodh GUPTA was born in 1964 in Khagaul, Bihar, in India, a location centered on Buddhism. After majoring in painting at Patna Art College (1983-1988), he now lives and works in New Delhi. His works have been highlighted in numerous major international biennales and exhibited in many solo shows across Asia, Europe, and America. Notable solo exhibitions include *Le Bon Marché Rive Gauche* (Paris, France, 2023), *Monnaie de Paris* (Paris, France, 2018), *Mead Gallery* (Coventry, UK, 2017), *Hauser & Wirth Gallery* (Somerset, UK, 2016), *National Gallery of Victoria* (Melbourne, Australia, 2016), *Victoria and Albert Museum* (London, UK, 2015), *ARARIO GALLERY SEOUL* (Seoul, Korea, 2014), *MMK Museum of Modern Art* (Frankfurt, Germany, 2014), *National Gallery of Modern Art* (New Delhi, India, 2014), and *Kiran Nadar Museum of Art* (New Delhi, India, 2012). GUPTA's works are

part of collections in renowned museums and foundations worldwide, including the Tate Collection (UK), Guggenheim Museum (USA), MMK Museum of Modern Art (Germany), National Gallery of Modern Art (India), Sara Hildén Art Museum (Finland), Kiran Nadar Museum of Art (India), Centre Pompidou (France), Louis Vuitton Foundation (France), Fukuoka Asian Art Museum (Japan), Saatchi Collection (UK), François Pinault Collection (France), and ARARIO MUSEUM (Korea).

3. Exhibition Theme

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Subodh GUPTA
Inner Garden V (2024)
Oil on linen
200 x 180 cm

Inner Garden (2024)

The *Inner Garden*(2024) series presented in this exhibition comprises of semi-abstract paintings and figurative sculptures inspired by forms found in nature. This series centrally explores the spiritual process of developing an intimate relationship with nature. The paintings visualize emotions derived from reflections on communication and connection with the natural world, drawing upon memories, sensations, and experiences associated with specific objects and places. GUPTA's new paintings show at the center of each canvas, still-life forms depicted in fluid, dynamic shapes, with the distinctive composition and expressive techniques symbolically revealing the resilient power, perseverance, and restorative qualities of nature.



Subodh GUPTA
Inner Garden I (2024)
Stainless steel, brass, PU
Paint
63 x 55 x 131(h) cm

The sculptures in this series, with the same titles embodies potted flowers crafted from materials such as spoons, ladles, and stainless steel bowls. While preserving the inherent characteristics of these mass-produced industrial objects, they are harmoniously reconfigured and arranged to form the delicate shapes of natural flora. The collective assembly of these items aims to create a meditative garden landscape, where branches, stems, and petals symbolize endurance, strength, and resilience in the face of adversity. GUPTA envisions the structures of society, the intricate networks of blood vessels and nerves within the human body, and the interconnectedness of nature and the universe through these organic forms sculpted from inorganic materials. By applying industrial pigments to imbue the surfaces with radiant colors, he seeks to reveal a paradoxical beauty.



Subodh GUPTA
Proust Mapping II (2024)
 Aluminum, stainless steel,
 found objects
 140 x 24 x 195(h) cm

Proust Mapping (2024)

The relief series titled *Proust Mapping* (2024) reveals the artist's process of deeply exploring everyday objects. The title of the work is derived from the "Proust Effect," a term inspired by French philosopher Marcel Proust's long novel *In Search of Lost Time* (1913-1927). The Proust Effect refers to the phenomenon where a specific sensory stimulus triggers the retrieval of memories buried deep within the consciousness.

Utensils, each bearing its own history, memories, and traces of life, evokes long-forgotten memories in those who view them. Gupta recontextualizes ordinary objects as symbolic elements that evoke cultural memory and spiritual resonance. The ***Proust Mapping*** series arranges objects on a flat surface to evoke the emotions, memories, and histories inherent within both individuals and communities. By presenting everyday materials, the artwork establishes a dialogical relationship between the viewer and the piece, further reinforcing the inevitable connection between humble domestic labor and the structures of industrial mass production.



Subodh GUPTA
Stupa (2024)
 Aluminum, plaster
 Dimensions variable

Stupa (2024)

Subodh GUPTA's new installation work ***Stupa*** (2024) transforms the basement exhibition space into a meditative and sacred place. A "stupa" is one of the traditional architectural structures in Indian Buddhism, with its origins traced back to the monument built to house the relics of the Buddha after his passing. Stupas serve as objects of worship and symbols of devotion, often involving Buddhist pilgrims circling the stupa in a clockwise direction. Originally designed to enshrine relics, over time, stupas have come to symbolize repositories for all kinds of sacred items and tombs of revered beings.

GUPTA's stupa presented in this exhibition is more accurately classified as a "Chorten," a type of stupa associated with Tibetan Buddhism and commonly found in the Himalayan region. The form of a chorten is rougher and more rustic compared to stupas typically found in other Asian regions, such as Thailand, Myanmar, and Japan. The chortens scattered across the barren high-altitude deserts of Ladakh, India, particularly embody a more natural and wild feeling, existing somewhere between the realms of nature and human creation. GUPTA's chorten faithfully follows the form found in Ladakh, with a stepped structure rising to a dome, crowned by an ornament at the top. The body, finished in white plaster, is embedded with kitchen utensils made of aluminum and stainless steel. These utensils, once used in households, bear traces of life accumulated over time. GUPTA's ***Stupa*** stands as a reliquary for the living and a humble monument to the transience of time.



Subodh GUPTA
Within this vessel are the seven oceans and unnumbered stars I (2024)

Plaster, copper, steel, patina
 61 x 14 x 85(h) cm

The work titled *Within this vessel are the seven oceans and unnumbered stars I* (2024), displayed in a corner of the basement exhibition space, is a relief sculpture created by splitting a single vessel in half and positioning the halves top and bottom, with their openings facing each other, then embedding them in plaster. The inner surface of the exposed vessel is coated with a patina, resembling the antique bronze hue, which GUPTA mentions evokes the stars in the cosmos. The title is borrowed from a poem by Kabir, an Indian philosopher, saint, and poet, which celebrates the idea that an everyday object like a vessel holds within it the entire universe. This idea closely resonates with GUPTA's artistic vision.

4. Artist Notes

"My new paintings and sculptures are about a spiritual process that help me develop a closeness with Nature, My career long practice incorporates everyday objects that are ubiquitous throughout India, and such as steel tiffin lunch boxes, thali pans, bicycles and milk pails. From such ordinary items, how these same objects can be used to transform spaces of silence, minimalism, shape and line, form, visual aesthetics and structure, to reveal the inner qualities of these natural elements and convey emotions through their arrangement. Some of small works are based on the harmony of simple linear constructions and the appreciation of the subtle beauty of flowers and natural material, such as branches and stems. They convey endurance, strength, and resilience in the face of adversity."

– Subodh GUPTA (2024)

5. Installation view

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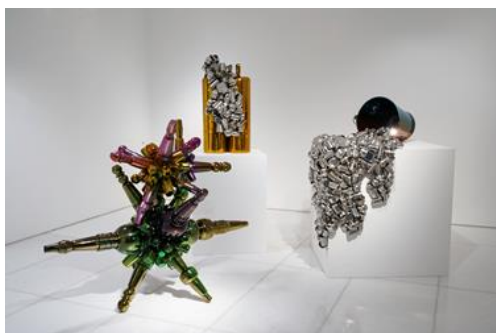
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Installation view at ARARIO GALLERY SEOUL (1F)



Installation view at ARARIO GALLERY SEOUL (1F)



Installation view at ARARIO GALLERY SEOUL (3F)



Installation view at ARARIO GALLERY SEOUL (B1F)