

MEDIA INFORMATION

Reena Saini Kallat: Deep Rivers Run Quiet

Kunstmuseum Thun, 10 June – 3 September 2023

Openings: 9 June 2023, 6:30 p.m., with children's opening

[Press previews on request](#)

The Kunstmuseum Thun is dedicating its summer exhibition in 2023 to Reena Saini Kallat (born 1973 in Delhi, lives and works in Mumbai). “Deep Rivers Run Quiet” is the artist’s first solo exhibition in Switzerland.

Reena Saini Kallat deals in her multimedia works with themes surrounding national and geographical boundaries, focusing for example on geopolitical border conflicts and their impact on humans and the environment. Disputes over water come to the fore, with water scarcity arising from human habitation in frontier areas and cultivated landscapes. The artist moreover arrestingly demonstrates the consequences of colonial history on the fates of people living in border regions, leaving “scars” that still persist to this day in Pakistan and India. Kallat sheds light here not only on contested territorial boundaries but also on social and psychological barriers. She herself experienced a split in her family through emigration from Lahore (Pakistan). Using materials such as electrical wire, she makes this violent separation palpable, while also highlighting the connective function of that same wire.

In a group of works entitled *Siamese Trees* (2018–19), electrical wire forms the basis for woven tree objects that symbolise “green lungs”. Here, wire is primarily a metaphor for how nutrients are conducted in a hybrid plant species, just as blood vessels nourish the human body.

In other work groups, the artist explores how the typical flora and fauna of nation-states that stand in conflict with each other, such as India and Pakistan and the USA and Mexico, are sometimes lent absurd meanings as national symbols. Hybrid animals and plants figure for example in the multi-part, multimedia series *Hyphenated Lives* (2014).

Kallat has reinterpreted one of her best-known works, the large-scale installation *Woven Chronicle*, expressly for Thun, adding additional layers of meaning:

“The new version of *Woven Chronicle* at the Kunstmuseum Thun illustrates the impact of humans on the environment using a colour code for the carbon footprint of each country. When a population’s carbon footprint exceeds its biocapacity, the region has a biocapacity deficit. [...] With this visualisation of ecological debtors and creditors, the Global Footprint Network intends to initiate a dialogue on the increasing importance of biocapacity. The map distinguishes between the high standard of living in the north and the lower standard in the South, whereby the traditional roles are reversed: The south does relatively well here, while the footprint of the Global North significantly outstrips its biocapacity,” the artist says.

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Biography

Born 1973 in Delhi, painting degree from the Sir J.J. School of Art in Mumbai (1996), lives and works in Mumbai.

Selected solo exhibitions: Common Ground, Compton Verney, England (2022); Leaking Lines, Firstsite, England (2022); Deep Rivers Run Quiet, Norrtälje Konsthall, Sweden (2021); Verso-Recto-Recto-Verso, MNAAG – Musée national des arts asiatiques, Guimet, Paris (2020); Blind Spots, Chemould Prescott Road, Mumbai (2019); Earth Families, Manchester Museum (2017); Woven Chronicle, Vancouver Art Gallery – Offsite (2015); ZegnArt Public Project, Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Mumbai City Museum (2013); Falling Fables, John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts (2011).

Participation in biennials: Sharjah Biennial 15 (2023); 14th Bienal de Curitiba, Museu Oscar Niemeyer (2019); Vancouver International Sculpture Biennial (2011); Asian Art Biennial, Taiwan (2009).

Kallat's work is represented in many public and private collections, including Le Musée des beaux-arts du Canada, Ottawa; Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney; Manchester Museum; National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts, Taipei; Vancouver Art Gallery; Sharjah Art Foundation, UAE; Norrtälje Konsthall, Sweden; Burger Collection, Hong Kong; Fondazione Golinelli, Bologna; Pizzuti Collection, Ohio; Chau Chak Wing Museum, University of Sydney; Kiran Nadar Museum of Art, New Delhi; Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Mumbai City Museum, Mumbai; and National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a catalogue published by Hatje Cantz, Berlin.

With texts by Diana Campbell and Helen Hirsch, 120 pages, CHF 49.

Selected events

- 11/06: Artist talk with Reena Saini Kallat and Felicity Lunn, Head of the Division of Design & Fine Arts, HKB, 11:15 a.m. (in English)
- 21/06: Public guided tour with Director Helen Hirsch, 6:15 p.m.
- 25/06: Concert and dance with Udhai Mazumdar & Friends, in collaboration with Schlosskonzerte Thun. Guided tour with Director Helen Hirsch preceding the concert, starting at 4.30 p.m.; tickets: schlosskonzerte-thun.ch.
- 27/08: Open drawing for anyone who likes to sketch, with Julia Rosenberg and Urban Sketchers Thun, 10 years and older
- 30/08: Workshop "Interwoven Identities" – Kunstmuseum Thun visits Robinson's playground in Thun. A playful and creative exploration of identity. For children, youth & adults, 2:00 – 5:00 p.m.

For the entire programme, see: www.kunstmuseumthun.ch/agenda

Media contact

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Photo material

When using the photographic material, we ask that you always include the captions provided and indicate the source of the material. We will be happy to provide printable image data on request.



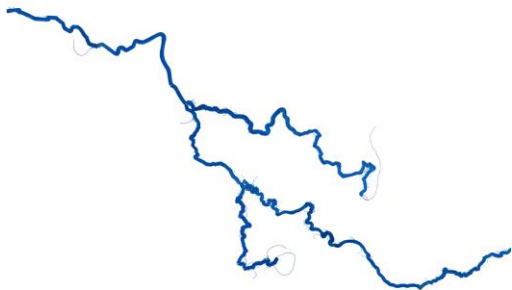
Reena Saini Kallat (*1973)

Siamese Trees (Pine-iscus), 2018-2019

Metal, electric wires, circuit boards, fittings

26 x 20 in.

Private Collection



Reena Saini Kallat (*1973)

River Boundaries Break the Sound of Silence Between Them, 2023

Electric wire, metal, 12 parts

114 x 396 in.

Studio Reena Kallat



Reena Saini Kallat (*1973)

Deep Rivers Run Quiet, 2020

Gouache, charcoal, and water-soluble pencil on deckled edge paper and Arches paper

43 x 30 in. each

Burger Collection, Switzerland



Reena Saini Kallat (*1973)

River Drawings, 2021

Gouache, charcoal, graphite, nails and electric wires on laser cut and embossed Arches paper

66 x 50 in. each

Studio Reena Kallat



Reena Saini Kallat (*1973)

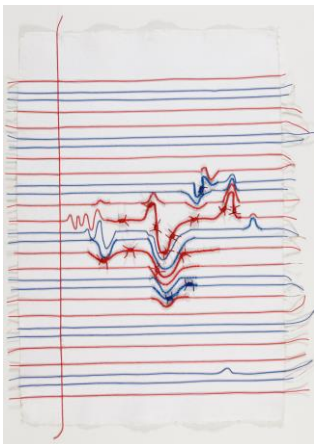
Chorus I, 2015-2019

Painted FRP, metal, speakers,

5 mins 11 secs single channel audio

96 x 68 x 56 in.

Studio Reena Kallat



Reena Saini Kallat (*1973)

Ruled Paper (Red, Blue, White), 2015-2022

Electric wire on deckle-edge handmade paper

43 x 31 in. each

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