

NATURE MORTE

BHARTI KHER: STRANGE ATTRACTORS

December 5, 2021–February 6, 2022

Nature Morte is pleased to present an exhibition of sculptures by the artist Bharti Kher.

Bharti Kher has consistently explored ways of art-making through a wide variety of materials since the beginning of her professional artistic practice in the 1990s. Her life-size sculpture of a dying elephant, entitled “The Skin Speaks a Language Not its Own” and created in 2006, remains one of her most iconic works and endures as a benchmark of maturity for contemporary art from India.

On view will be a selection of recent sculptures from 2017 to 2021. Kher usually ruminates over materials, found objects, and works-in-progress in her studio for many years, allowing their final avatars to coalesce at their own pace. The title of the exhibition, “Strange Attractors,” refers to a mathematical concept elaborated within Chaos Theory, that all matter is unique and non-arbitrary. Never closing in on themselves, strange attractors remain constantly in motion. The artist aligns her process to this idea, and approaches the making of sculpture as dynamic encounters. For Kher, the object is a composite of opposites and contradictions, sitting both somewhere and nowhere simultaneously, a configuration of material and object creating its own universe and dialogue. The artist calls this a “push and pull of material and meaning,” the fluctuations between time and space akin to the flow of breath in and out of the body.

Kher has chosen to exhibit these works together precisely because they reference and relate to the body, albeit the body in multiple manifestations, and the spaces both outside of and within the body: physical, psychological, and mythical. Bodies, human, magical, and animal, are present, reconfigured, hidden, compressed, and extrapolated. Where in the past we would have interpreted these strategies of collage and juxtaposition as having a Surrealist pedigree (pertaining to the domains of the subconscious and the irrational), today they appear as something similar to Realism. The works are Kher’s responses to how we move through life and its multiple experiences, both personal and political.

The artist has stated: “The way we move through the world isn’t random or un-noticed, I want to believe that it is connected to all things and everything. The body is a transmitter and a receiver and all things are seen. The wind sees the trees and the tree sees the cicada who sees the sun that sees you sleeping. Space inside and space outside are all connected by threads that weave the stories of the universe.”

Bharti Kher (b. 1969, London) Lives and works in New Delhi. Kher studied a Foundation Course in Art and Design at Middlesex Polytechnic London, and received a fine art BA in painting, with honors at Newcastle Polytechnic, United Kingdom. Kher’s recent solo exhibitions include: *A consummate Joy* Irish Museum of Modern Art (2020), *Chimeras*, Centre Pasqu’Art, Biel (2018), *Dark Matter*, Museum Frieder Burda, Berlin (2017), *This Breathing House*, Freud Museum, London (2016), *Matter* Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver, *In Her Own Language*, Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery, part of The University of Western Australia, Perth (2016), *Misdemeanours*, Rockbund Art Museum, Shanghai (2014). Her recent group exhibitions include: *Tantra: Enlightenment to Revolution* British Museum (2020), *RELATIONS: Diaspora and Painting* PHI Foundation (2020), *Contemporary Female Identities in the Global South* Johannesburg Contemporary Art Foundation (2020), *In the Company of Artists* Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum (2019), *Desire: A revision from the 20th Century to the Digital Age* Irish Museum of Modern Art (2019), *Facing India* Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg, Wolfsburg (2018), *Like Life: Sculpture, Colour and the Body (1300-Now)*, The Metropolitan Museum, New York (2018).

For press related inquiries and high resolution images, please contact outreacha@naturemorte.com

287–288 The Dhan Mill, 100 Feet Rd, Chhatarpur Hills, New Delhi 110074. 11 AM–7 PM. Tuesday–Sunday

www.naturemorte.com | info@naturemorte.com | sales@naturemorte.com