

:: For Immediate Release::

*ART MUSEUM ANNOUNCES VIRTUAL EXHIBITION  
AND PANEL DISCUSSION: "MITHILA ART IN THE TIME OF COVID"*



Vinita Jha, *Corona and Our Society*, 2020. Courtesy of the artist

Syracuse, NY-- The Syracuse University Art Museum is pleased to present *Mithila Art in the Time of COVID*, a virtual exhibition focusing on contemporary Indian art. Curated by Professor Emerita Susan Wadley (Department of Anthropology, Maxwell School of Citizenship & Public Affairs), who has worked closely with Mithila artists for over a decade, this exhibition features recent work created in the past six months from over twenty artists working in the watercolor and pencil mediums. This exhibition represents some of multiple ways in which Mithila artists, ranging in age from late teens to late 50s, have sought to cope with the realities of COVID 19 through their art.

Now on view on the museum's website, [museum.syr.edu](http://museum.syr.edu), the virtual exhibition features over thirty works of art alongside statements from the artists describing the highly detailed paintings. Additionally, select artists have recorded short videos that explains their process and creative output that is presented in the exhibition alongside their work of art. A virtual panel discussion featuring Susan Wadley and four of the exhibition Mithila artists, Prerna Jha, Shalini Kumari, Rani Jha, and Avinash Karn, will be held on Saturday, November 7 at 9:30 a.m. EST. They will discuss their art practice in the time of the COVID pandemic. To register for this virtual discussion, please visit the museum website for details.

The exhibition and accompanying panel are co-sponsored by the South Asia Center in the Maxwell School of Citizenship, the Art & Music Histories Department in the College of Arts and Sciences, and the Humanities Center.

### **About the exhibition**

In rural Bihar, India, Mithila artists are using their distinctive style of painting to depict the new world in which they now live, with new rules and regulations such as masking and home confinement in the wake of a lockdown mandated by the Indian government. While this art reflects the radical changes in their world since March, it is also a call for help.

As folk artists who must depend on tourist markets both foreign and domestic, they are now left without a current outlet for their work. This virtual exhibition builds on the Museum's long history of engagement with Mithila artists, including two recent major exhibitions based on the Museum's collection of some 100 paintings from the 1970s through the early 2000s.

For information on upcoming virtual programs such as gallery talks with the curators of virtual exhibitions and close looking object sessions with museum staff examining artworks from the permanent collection, as well as additional virtual exhibitions and activities, make sure to check the website, [museum.syr.edu](http://museum.syr.edu), as well as follow the social media platforms Instagram, Facebook and Twitter @SUArtMuseum.

### **About the Syracuse University Art Museum**

The Syracuse University Art Museum is the campus art museum of Syracuse University and is part of SU's Coalition of Museum and Art Centers. It strives to be a place of rigorous interdisciplinary research, creative thinking, and mindfulness, as well as an inclusive space that serves as a forum for a broad range of discussions that bring people together, uniting the wider community with students, faculty, and staff. The museum presents up to 20 exhibitions annually, scores of public programs, and an active schedule of class visits. It also manages the Palitz Gallery at the Syracuse University Lubin House in NYC where up to 6 exhibitions a year are presented. The museum's permanent collection of 45,000 artworks from 3500 BCE to present day includes important holdings from many areas of the world. Over the past 35 years, the museum has shared much of its art collection with peer institutions across the country through its traveling exhibition program.

#### **MEDIA CONTACT:**

Emily Dittman, Associate Director  
[ekdittma@syr.edu](mailto:ekdittma@syr.edu) | [museum.syr.edu](http://museum.syr.edu)