

Artist-in-Residence Bharti Kher's 'Not All Who Wander Are Lost' debuts on Museum façade



Bharti Kher facade image, June 2015.

BOSTON, MASS.- Born and raised in England before moving to New Delhi, artist Bharti Kher knows something about living amid transience. The concept of home, culture, and identity preoccupy her as an artist who is known for her hybrid cast sculptures and paintings.

Kher is the sixth Artist-in-Residence at the [Gardner Museum](#) who was invited by Pieranna Cavalchini, The Tom and Lisa Blumenthal curator of Contemporary Art, to design a temporary site-specific work for the Anne H. Fitzpatrick Façade. Her installation will be unveiled July 1. Called Not All Who Wander Are Lost, Kher's project reflects on maritime

history, highlights her interest in mapping and typography, geodesy and colonization and references the migration of people in Africa, the Middle East, and Europe.

Kher tells us that “an Atlas lets you hold the world in your hands.” Not All Who Wander Are Lost is based, in part, on a ready-made, historic map from The Larousse International Political and Economical Atlas by Jean Chardonnet, which Kher has appropriated, enlarged, and transformed, filling the image with multi-colored bindi dots. Bindis are a forehead decoration worn by women in India. They represent the third eye, a state of consciousness, and are a central element in the artist’s work. The Hindi word Bindi is derived from the Sanskrit Bindu, meaning a drop or a small particle.

In Not All Who Wander Are Lost, the acid orange colored bindis impart a sense of emergency as they collide with the black. These dots mark places for urgent attention and earnest conversation in our daily lives. They serve as a metaphor for the eye urging us to be aware of the shifting borders of migrant populations, marking the map as a constantly changing flux of truths and leaving a residue of time like a palimpsest.

Born in London in 1969, Kher was in residence at the Gardner Museum in 2013. She studied at Middlesex Polytechnic in London and earned a bachelor’s degree in fine art painting with honors at New Castle Polytechnic in 1988.

Her work has been exhibited around the world at Centre Pompidou in Paris, MAXXI Museum in Rome, the Saatchi Gallery in London, Tel Aviv Museum of Art, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Tokyo, and the BALTIC in the United Kingdom. She has had solo shows in Shanghai, Seoul, Hong Kong, Paris, London, New York and New Delhi. Kher lives and works in New Delhi.

“Our facades are a celebration and expression of our belief and commitment to public art in Boston,” said Anne Hawley, the Museum’s Norma Jean Calderwood Director. “It’s also the sixth time that we have been able to showcase the extraordinary work that goes on inside our building when contemporary Artists-in-Residence are given the gift of time and space to think and create, and can later share their work with the public.”

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