



National  
**Indo-American**  
Museum

**PRESENTS**



**E/MERGE**  
ART OF THE INDIAN DIASPORA

**NATIONAL INDO-AMERICAN MUSEUM  
OPENS FIRST BUILDING SEPTEMBER 24:  
Umang and Paragi Patel Center Hosts  
E/Merge: Art of the Indian Diaspora**



Thanks to the generosity of Umang and Paragi Patel, the [National Indo-American Museum](#) (NIAM), which builds bridges across generations and connects cultures through the diverse colorful stories of Indian Americans, takes residence at its first “brick and mortar” home at 815 S. Main Street in Lombard, Illinois. The Umang and Paragi Patel Center opens to the public on Friday September 24, 2021 with an inaugural exhibition, E/Merge: Art of the Indian Diaspora.

With major funding provided by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, E/Merge showcases contemporary, cutting-edge works created by nine renowned Indian-American visual artists from across the United States. Curated by [Shaurya Kumar](#), chair of faculty and associate professor at School of the Art Institute Chicago, the exhibition includes artists who have traversed international borders and adopted the United States as their new home.

In an essay for the exhibition’s catalog, Kumar wrote, “Works in the exhibition challenge the pre-conceptions of what and how diasporic artists represent themselves and their histories and investigates the notions of origins, narratives of dispersal, and cultural differences under the conditions of globalism. Where do we, as members of the Indian diaspora in the U.S. and elsewhere, locate ourselves in a time of globalization and mass migration? How does the work of contemporary artists locate itself in time—past, present, or future? How does the meaning of a work change when an artist or an artwork attempts to unpack multiple and multi-site narratives beyond the binary of master and counter-narratives?” These questions form the premise of E/Merge.





The nine artists whose works appear in the exhibition are:

- [Avantika Bawa](#), Vancouver, Washington
- [Sarika Goulatia](#), Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
- [Sreshta Rit Premnath](#), New York, New York
- [Kaveri Raina](#), New York, New York
- [Nandita Raman](#), New York, New York
- [Surabhi Saraf](#), New York, New York
- [Kuldeep Singh](#), New York, New York
- [Neha Vedpathak](#), Detroit, Michigan
- [Kushala Vora](#), Chicago, Illinois

Artist portraits, biographies, and images of artworks are available [here](#).

Tamara Biggs, director of exhibitions at the Chicago History Museum and a past president of NIAM's board, is serving as producer of the E/Merge exhibition and catalog. She has been instrumental in NIAM's initiative to open the Umang and Paragi Patel Center with a meaningful art exhibition and has guided the process of developing the exhibition and opening the museum.

Monthly programming during the run of the exhibition is in development. Current plans call for artist talks, scholarly panels, family art-making days, and a dance performance featuring art-inspired original choreography.

NIAM has established the following mandatory COVID-19 protocols:

- Wear a mask or appropriate face covering over nose and mouth.
- Maintain six feet social distance at all times.
- Carry proof of vaccination and/or negative PCR test and produce when asked by museum officials.
- Stay home if displaying flu-like symptoms or recently exposed to the virus.
- Use hand sanitizers provided.

NIAM will revise these protocols as necessary per the guidance of the CDC and local officials. For more information, visit [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov).

**“E/MERGE Art of the Indian Diaspora”  
opens Friday, September 24 as the inaugural exhibition  
of the National Indo-American Museum’s new home,  
the Umang and Paragi Patel Center,  
815 S. Main Street, Lombard, Illinois.**

**Museum/exhibition opening hours:  
Saturday and Sunday, 1 p.m.–5 p.m.  
Group tours are available by appointment.**

**Adult admission at the door is \$5,**

**10% discount for groups of 10 or more.  
Student admission is \$3,  
free for those attending art classes.**

**Admission for children younger than 12 is free (except groups).  
Free parking is available. All programming is subject to change.  
For information, visit [niam.org](https://niam.org).**

The [National Indo-American Museum](#) (NIAM) aims to document and exhibit the stories of diverse Indian communities across America, creating an archive of Indo-American history and culture for future generations. Founded in 2008 as the Indo-American Heritage Museum, NIAM grew organically from Chicago's Indo-American Center's Education department. NIAM is the first museum of its kind to combine art, education, and digital technology to preserve the heritage and celebrate the contribution of Indian Americans to America's cultural mosaic.

NIAM is supported in part by the Arts Work Fund, Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events, Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation, Ralla Klepak Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, Studio Institute, US Bank, and many individual donors.

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