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EDITOR'S PICK OPINIONS

## Art Shows in London Chase Wealthy Indian Collectors











## Young high-earning collectors are entering the market

South Asian art is on a fresh surge in London with exhibitions and events that build on a boom in sales of Indian modern art. This is being partly fuelled by young high-earning collectors entering the market at a time when India's financial confidence and markets are strong.

ed in the UK 80 years ago by David Hicks, a prominent interior dec batten, daughter of Lord Mountbatten, Britain's last Viceroy. Hicks The profile of Pichwai art was raised in the UK 80 years ago by David Hicks, a who was married to Pamela Mountbatten, daughter of Lord Mountbatten, Britai included Pichwais in arts and crafts he brought back for London's high society.

Originally, the hand-painted tapestries hung as backdrops in shrines behind the statues of Lord Krishna. From that, they have developed for use in various Hindu rituals and festivals depicting sacred cows and other images, but in recent years the works have been little noticed outside India. They are however now beginning at attract attention along with other regional and traditional works, such as Gond tribal art from Madhya Pradesh, as collectors begin to broaden their focus from the modern artists on show at Phillips.



Among prominent buyers are the Ambani family that are credited with giving a significant boost to the artis acquiring gifts for guests at recent family weddings. They also have a collection that includes a 56-foot-tall Pichwai painting Titled Kamal Kunji (2019-20), it is the work of Raghunandan Sharma, a leading artist, and Nathdwara illustrators, and is on show at the Nita Mukesh Ambani Cultural Centre in Mumbai.

Pooja Singhal, who comes from the third generation of a business family that runs a large agrochemicals group (PI Industries), achieved a pr coup for her Pichwai show at the Mall Galleries. Coinciding with the launch, the Financial Times ran a full-page illustrated profile on her Delhi home titled Cultural patron Foc Singhal: Y uant to make Pichwai a household name in its House & Home section on July 5 (July 3 online) Sponsors of evening events included Conde Nast and India's Rajasthan-based RAAS hotel group.

Singhal began to develop a l art form around 2016 and now runs Prichvai Tradition and Beyond which has had exhibitions in various Indi Art Fair in New Delhi. an cities including a big presence at the annual India



r the Rajasthan city of Ud is away, where traditional Udaipur and says she ren nal Pichwai textile paintin

what controversially, Singhal does not have artists' n certificates. Some sellers however do name their leading artists, for example Artisera, a Bangalore-based art centre,, and the providers of the best in the Ambani collection.

"We work as a collective and no one artist does the work," she says, explaining that there is no central atelier for what she calls Atelier Tradition and Beyond (ATB), and that the artists are in various locations in and around Jaipur and Udaipur. "Many modern interpretations are conceived by me, or put on paper by a craftsman, and three or four artists complete the composition". She says that there will be another Pichwai showing at Sotheby's during London's Asian Art Week in November.

is article first appeared on the writer's blog Riding the El

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