

ART

# TARQ celebrates its 10 years with a masterful collaboration between 14 artists

Collaborating with Pritam Arts, the gallery—which has championed young artists and collectors for the past decade—presents *Overlaps*, a series bringing pairs of artists together to create a series of seven prints.

By Ela Das

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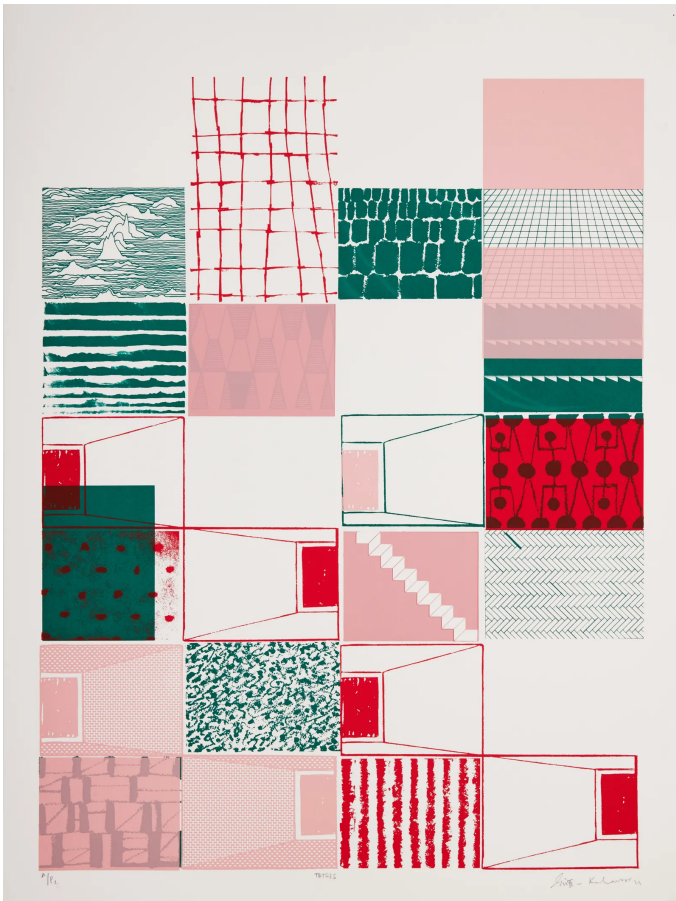


Print Lab with Pritam Arts at TARQ, 2024 Shivani Goel

“If I hadn’t done this, someone else probably would have,” Hena Kapadia points out, when thinking about how at 25 she started her art gallery TARQ, known to spotlight new artists, ten years ago. At the time, the art landscape across the country comprised established galleries representing renowned artists, apprehensive to take on newer, emerging talent after the 2007–2008 financial crisis, save a rare couple of group shows. “It was only a matter of time, and the city needed a space to discover young talent especially for budding collectors. I wanted TARQ to be a warm and welcoming space, where anyone could come together to see, and discuss art. I think that’s a real rarity in the art world, where many come in feeling intimidated by the work that surrounds them,” she explains. Starting completely from scratch, with Kapadia visiting budding artists at institutions to scout talent, today the gallery represents 17 artists—some of whose work has evolved into highly coveted pieces in the contemporary art space.

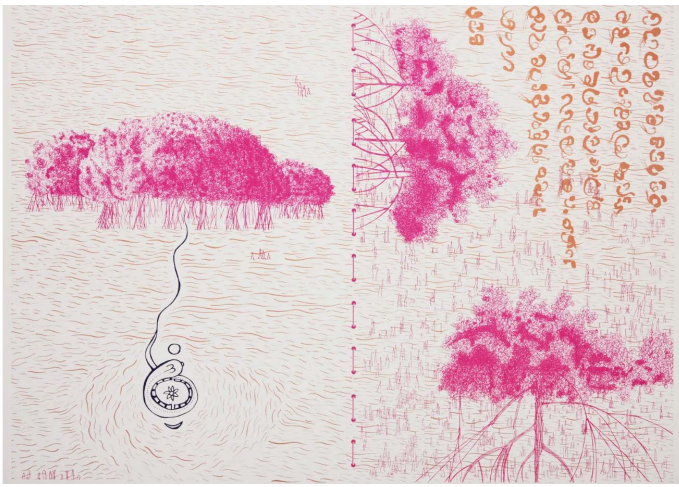


To celebrate the gallery's decade-long milestone, a show titled *Overlaps* brings together 14 artists who've worked in pairs to create a series of seven prints that echoes the spirit of collaboration and communities coming together, which has defined what TARQ is over the years. "The collaborators were chosen primarily based on some commonalities across their individual practices. Some of the artists had already worked together, while others were eager to collaborate. We began working together on the idea many months ago, probably around January," Kapadia recalls, "starting from the logistics and then delving into each pair's working process." The series was produced in the gallery during its annual Artist Week, where the space was converted into a print lab by Pritam Arts, a 38-year-old screen print studio based in Lower Parel, Mumbai, run by father-son duo, Prabodh Mendon and Prajval Mendon.



*Tetris*, 2024 by Sameer Kulavoor and Vishwa Shroff. Image courtesy of Sameer Kulavoor, Vishwa Shroff, and TARQ. Courtesy of Sameer Kulavoor, Vishwa Shroff, and TARQ

"TARQ's Annual Artist Weekend has been quite a unique tradition, which Hena and the team put together every year covering a range of practical topics that are useful for us artists—workshops and sessions on art writing, conservation, use of archival materials and mediums, cyanotype, grants and residency applications, art law, screen-printing, and more. Most artists have practices that are highly solitary pursuits and this becomes a great excuse to come out of our shells; talk, engage, collaborate and learn with each other," shares artist Sameer Kulavoor, who collaborated with artist Vishwa Shroff on a print titled 'Tetris', displaying both their styles of depicting architectural forms.



Archaic kin, 2024 by Savia Mahajan and Parag Tandel. Image courtesy Savia Mahajan, Parag Tandel, and TARQ. Courtesy Savia Mahajan, Parag Tandel, and TARQ

For artists Parag Tandel (who sculpts personal narratives of the Koli community) and Savia Mahajan (whose ceramics build on the themes of resurgence and materiality), their collaboration felt “very multidimensional, as we were conversing through an online portal,” recalls Tandel, adding, “We are both plastic art practitioners, and it is always a ritual in sculpture and ceramics to realistically plan things before starting. We stuck to this clear process because Savia was in Hampi Art Labs and I had to improvise my drawings on the spot.” For their print, the duo agreed on using bright metallic and pop colours, which began with Mahajan responding to a drawing of mangroves Tandel shared via email. She recalls visiting ancient temple sites at Hampi, and “adding the iconographies I had been observing during my travels in Karnataka. We love our print, especially since we don’t look at colours when starting an artwork as sculptors—and decided to have fun with this new medium.”



The Great Indian Bustard, 2024 by Garima Gupta and Nibha Sikander. Image courtesy of Garima Gupta, Nibha Sikander, and TARQ. Courtesy of Garima Gupta, Nibha Sikander, and TARQ

Garima Gupta and Nibha Sikander have very different working styles as artists, but shared a common interest—birds. “For a long time, I’ve wanted to do something about the diminishing number of the great Indian bustard—once destined to be our national bird—and Nibha agreed we could try to bring this interest to a new medium and see what comes up. I struggled a bit because my work in pencil doesn’t fit well with screen printing’s requirements; and tried something new—a more graphic look with bold lines that trace the wave of a bustard’s call,” says Gupta. “I cut out a negative stencil using abstract body parts of the bustard, with a light-to-dark gradient, which was juxtaposed against Garima’s print depicting the frequency of the bird’s call,” adds Sikander.



*(she's a witch), 2024 by Areez Katki and Rithika Merchant. Image courtesy Areez Katki, Rithika Merchant, and TARQ. Courtesy Areez Katki, Rithika Merchant, and TARQ.*

A year ago, TARQ moved from its space within the verdant complex of Dhanraj Mahal in Colaba to a new more contemporary-styled gallery with cleaner lines, taller ceilings and starker interiors housed in the century-old Navsari Chambers at Fort. “It’s been the best decision I’ve made so far. I think the new space has allowed us to expand what we show, and also works much better for us operationally,” muses Kapadia. She looks back at her decade-long journey, proud of the fact that the gallery has become “exactly the space we wanted it to be! We’ve welcomed in artists who’ve gone from being a young collector’s first buy, to now create artworks that hang in homes alongside works by other renowned artists.”

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