

03.05.2025 – 31.08.2025

Opening Saturday 03 May 2025 | 16.00 – 23.00

**GALLERIA CONTINUA** is delighted to welcome Shilpa Gupta back to its San Gimignano space. Widely regarded as one of the most significant international artists of her generation, Gupta presents an exhibition featuring a compelling and varied selection of works, each rooted in her ongoing critical engagement with themes of mobility, control, and acts of resilience. Among them is a newly created installation for the auditorium of the former cinema-theater.

The exhibition opens with a large embroidered piece that meditates on the limitations of state-sanctioned borders. This concern unfolds into smaller works that line the side galleries of the former cinema-theater. Using a delicate, fine thread, Gupta reimagines symbols of national identity through densely layered forms inspired by flags, subtly questioning the state's role in imposing order and uniformity within societies shaped by the fluidity of cultures and the mutability of belonging.

This exploration of borders and liminal thresholds continues in *Untitled* (2020), a river stone collected from a border region and a lightbulb engage in a delicate dance, almost like a conversation. As one rises, the other lowers; when they meet, the light briefly illuminates the stone's shimmering gray surface. Though they come close, they never quite touch—their exchange remains precarious and fragile, underscored by the ever-present risk of destruction if the stone were to collide with the delicate bulb.

Gupta's interest in lines, drawn or enforced, are revisited *Untitled* (2023) explores how authority seeks to limit mobility of bodies

and voices. The kinetic installation is part of a series in which Gupta uses inverted wired microphones to reflect on censorship and silenced truths, prompting us to consider how political structures can evolve into systems of control and repression. A lone voice recites the names of 100 poets from different geographies and eras, along with the years they were detained or imprisoned by their respective states. *"Poets, like writers and artists, are dreamers who speak of the world's nightmares. This work is about the persistence of beliefs and dreams—the things that make us who we are as individuals,"* says Gupta.

A fragmented, poetic stream of evocative phrases in constant motion—this is the essence of *Sound on My Skin* (2010–2025). The work features a classic mechanical split-flap display, once a familiar fixture in airports and train stations, used to announce arrivals and departures. Here, its flipping panels instead generate a continuously shifting sequence of words, forming a poetic text that is both layered in meaning and in a perpetual state of transformation.

For Shilpa Gupta, art is both a refuge and a reckoning a space where the sensory gives way to the conceptual, and where poetic gestures probe the scaffolding of our realities. The violent upheavals of the early 21st century, ushered in an era of sweeping security regimes. Airports, once portals of possibility, became sites of suspicion—rituals of surveillance lingering into the present. In *There is No Explosive in This* (2007), Gupta presents a collection of everyday items deemed potentially dangerous and been

confiscated, each meticulously wrapped in fabric and arranged with a uniform syntax. The work prompts reflection on the psychological and social toll of these measures, and how they have fed into a pervasive atmosphere of collective anxiety.

*"Sometimes by chance, sometimes deliberately, after looking at the same construct from a different perspective, a new narrative emerged," says the artist. She continues, "It might be slightly different or even quite contradictory, forcing me to reconsider and rework what I thought I knew and how I knew it. This process can be frustrating, rewarding, and sometimes even unsettling. Perhaps that's why I am drawn to relationships that feel almost distant—where focal points shift, and you move together with the audience, turning and rotating in unison."*

*Truth* (2022–2025), the large-scale walkable installation that Gupta inhabits in the auditorium, invites the audience to rethink their perception of space and time, experience shifting viewpoints, and reconsider the relationship of power over narratives.

About the artist:

**Shilpa Gupta** (b. 1976) lives and works in Mumbai, India. She earned a BFA in Sculpture from the Sir J. J. School of Fine Art at the University of Mumbai in 1997. Over the past two decades, her work has been exhibited at major international institutions, museums, and biennials. Recent solo exhibitions include Ishara Foundation, Dubai (2025); MOCA, Madison (2024); Centro Botín, Santander (2024); Amant, New York (2023); National Gallery of Singapore (2023); MAXXI, L'Aquila (2023); Dallas Contemporary (2022); Barbican, London (2021); and Neuer Berliner Kunstverein, Berlin (2021). Her work has also been featured in major group exhibitions at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago (2023); Museum of Contemporary Art Antwerp (2022); Collection of Frac Franche-Comté, Fundación Proa, Buenos Aires (2021); McMullen Museum of Art, Boston (2020); 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa (2019); MoMA, New York (2018); Mori Art Museum, Tokyo (2017); Devi Art Foundation, New Delhi (2017); Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York (2014); Centre Pompidou, Paris (2011); Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk (2009); Tate Modern, London (2001); and the National Gallery of Modern Art, Mumbai (2000). Gupta has participated extensively in biennials across Europe and Asia and was included in the 58th Venice Biennale (2019). Her work is part of the permanent collections of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Mori Art Museum, Tokyo; M+ Museum, Hong Kong; Louis Vuitton

Foundation, Paris; Astrup Fearnley Museet, Oslo; National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne; Queensland Art Gallery, South Brisbane; and the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art, among others.

About the gallery:

Founded in 1990 in San Gimignano, Italy, GALLERIA CONTINUA has expanded its locations to Beijing, Les Moulins, Havana, São Paulo, Rome, and Paris. GALLERIA CONTINUA represents the desire for continuity between eras and the ambition to write a contemporary story. In thirty-five years of activity, thanks to its commitment to revitalizing and breathing new life into forgotten and unconventional spaces, the gallery has developed a strong and unique identity. Located within a former 1950s cinema-theater, GALLERIA CONTINUA San Gimignano has hosted numerous exhibitions over the years, offering artists the opportunity to create memorable site-specific installations and tailor-made exhibition projects for these distinctive and character-rich spaces.

#### **GALLERIA CONTINUA / San Gimignano**

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From Monday to Sunday: 10 AM–1 PM | 2 PM–7 PM;

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