

RAJIV MENON

CONTEMPORARY

Rajiv Menon Contemporary Presents *Why Did I Say Yes?*

Solo Presentation of Viraj Khanna

India's Top Young Artist Celebrates and Satirizes the Big Indian Wedding



Viraj Khanna, *Photoshoot time*. Embroidery on Cotton. Image courtesy the artist.

(Los Angeles, CA — June 16, 2025) — **Rajiv Menon Contemporary** is pleased to announce ***Why Did I Say Yes?***, a solo exhibition by **Viraj Khanna**, opening **June 27, 2025**. From one of India's most exciting young artists, *Why Did I Say Yes?* examines the global phenomenon that the Indian Wedding has become. At once sharp, sensitive, and stunning, the exhibition playfully satirizes the rituals and motivations that drive this celebration. It is on view until **August 30, 2025**.

One of the top artists under 30 in India, *Why Did I Say Yes?* marks Viraj Khanna's first solo exhibition on the West Coast.

The Indian wedding encompasses the personal and political; a lavish and maximalist setting for family and cultural ambitions to collide and combine. The son of major fashion designer Anamika Khanna, Viraj Khanna grew up immersed in the Indian fashion world, with a front row seat to how the big Indian wedding has become a site of aspiration, consumption, and identity-making across South Asia and its diasporas. Viraj Khanna approaches his subject in *Why Did I Say Yes?* with the familiarity and satirical eye of an insider. His satirical lens critiques the industry that this celebration has become, maintaining that art can be humorous without losing its sense of cultural insight.

“Indian Weddings have become a global fixation point, an aesthetic aspiration amplified by social media,” says artist **Viraj Khanna**. “Wedding culture is the perfect playground for me to explore the topics that I have always been the most intrigued by in my work: excess, conspicuous consumption, and self-mythologizing in the age of Instagram.”

Why Did I Say Yes? features vibrant and maximalist embroideries, tapestries and textile works, which recreate scenes from Khanna's life navigating the wedding circuit. Khanna collaborates with artisans trained in *ari* and *zardozi*, traditional embroidery techniques which date back to twelfth century India, to bring the power, pressure, and performance embedded in these celebrations to vivid life. In using these materials associated with wedding fashion, Viraj creates a comical visual language that is the perfect vehicle for exploring the Indian wedding.

“This show is arriving at an inflection point in the culture,” says Rajiv Menon, founder of Rajiv Menon Contemporary. “We’re seeing Indian aesthetics dominate pop culture, but *Why Did I Say Yes?* is the chance to see a South Asian artist analyze this dynamic from an insider’s vantage point, with a sense of fun and joyfulness as well as sharp creative perspective.”

Why Did I Say Yes? is the fourth major exhibition mounted at Rajiv Menon Contemporary’s permanent space in Hollywood, which is spotlighting the talent driving South Asian contemporary art today and bringing Indian perspectives to the forefront of the global art scene. This latest presentation is globally resonant, drawing attention to the changing face of a society as it is shaped by new forms of desire, aspiration, and self-identity.

ABOUT VIRAJ KHANNA

Viraj Khanna (b. 1995, Kolkata, West Bengal, India) is a visual artist from India who primarily works with the medium of textile. He studied Business Administration at the University of Southern California, Los Angeles in 2018. Khanna's works have been exhibited in solo shows at the LOFT, Gallery Art Exposure, Kolkata (2021); Tao Art Gallery, Mumbai (2022) ; the India Art Fair (2023) and recently at the National Gallery of Modern Art Mumbai (2023). He is currently pursuing his MFA at the Art Institute of Chicago. A two-time Forbes 30 Under 30, Khanna is included among the Susan and Michael Hort Collection, the Bunker ArtSpace, and the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art.

ABOUT RAJIV MENON CONTEMPORARY

Rajiv Menon Contemporary is an art gallery program based in Los Angeles, California. The gallery launched its new permanent space in Hollywood in February 2025. As one of the few galleries in the US focused on South Asia and the diaspora, Rajiv and the gallery have been featured in Interview Magazine, Vogue India, Harpers Bazaar India, and the Art Newspaper, among others. The space aims to help shape the next generation of collectors, empowering new voices to advocate on behalf of artists. From making contemporary art more accessible to new art collectors, to placing emerging artists into major museums and private collections, Rajiv Menon Contemporary aims to start a movement and shift our collective culture from all directions.

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rajivmenoncontemporary@culturalcounsel.com