

RAJIV MENON

CONTEMPORARY

Info@rmcontemporary.com

1311 N Highland Ave. 90028

rmcontemporary.com

MUNTHE ART MONDAY

SHIVY GALTERE

Please introduce yourself and tell us about what you do.

I'm Shivy Galtere, a British-born South Asian mother and artist represented by Rajiv Menon Contemporary in Los Angeles, the city I now reside in. My work references intimate self-portraiture in my paintings, exploring the complexities of identity, grief, and motherhood, while often engaging with the ways in which consumer culture and the exoticization of my heritage intersect.



Shivy is wearing [FIKALY VEST](#).

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Could you explain more about how being a woman has affected your career?

As a woman of color, my experiences have been shaped by the way society views both my gender and my race. I started my career working in luxury fashion in London over a decade ago, and back then, the spaces I worked in were far less inclusive than they are now. They were more tolerant of toxic behaviors, with less emphasis on creating safe, inclusive, and supportive environments for their employees. I felt like I had to prove myself more because of this.

I also remember someone once telling me that I was 'too nice' in the workplace, like it was a weakness. There is an underlying expectation for women to be perfect - polite yet firm, approachable yet professional. The difficulty lies in finding that balance, because any deviation from the ideal can invite judgment, even when the same traits in men are praised. Thankfully, I didn't listen to that advice and soon realized these roles weren't serving me anymore.



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Shivy is wearing FINAZ blouse.



Shivy is wearing FENELLA T-SHIRT.

What has been the most challenging aspect of being a woman in the arts?

In the art world, I've been lucky to find that my points of difference have offered a new perspective in both my creative practice and in what people want to see in my art. I think working with a gallery that really celebrates this has been integral. However, as a mother and an artist, there's the constant balancing act of nurturing my family while pursuing my passion for art. It means balancing multiple roles—motherhood and my career ambitions. Being a present mother while maintaining a creative practice can be

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challenging, as sometimes those creative waves emerge at inconvenient times, and I am unable to fulfill that impulse, such as when my toddler is unexpectedly home sick. I don't have a family support system to step in and help. My husband's role is less flexible, so it's really on me to prioritize painting during the set hours my son is at preschool and to be a dedicated and loving mum when he is home. I think the societal pressure to be both an ideal caregiver and a successful professional is a struggle, as people don't always realize what you're physically, emotionally, and mentally juggling on a daily basis. These challenges, though difficult, have also made me more determined to carve out a place where my voice and art are seen and valued even more.



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Can you name some other female artists that inspire you and explain why?

One of my all-time favorite artists is Amrita Sher-Gil, one of the greatest avant-garde female artists of the early 20th century, who was truly a pioneer for modern Indian art. At a time when female artists were underrepresented and confined to domestic spaces, she traveled across Europe and India as a young woman, creating works that challenged societal expectations. Her exploration of the human body, particularly in her depictions of women, was both bold and revolutionary for the time. It still is. I also love how she was influenced by European modernism but adapted her paintings to reflect the themes and context of Indian culture. This is something that really resonates with me and my practice.

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What would you like people to notice in your artwork?

Honestly, if people can find any point of resonance with my painting, I would be happy. My art isn't just about presenting my vision but about creating an experience where other people can see themselves reflected in my work. I want people to look at my art and feel understood, as if it's telling their own story in a way that's personal yet collective. Art is so personal, and I want my work to spark reflections that are unique to each viewer. What it makes them think or feel - a moment of personal introspection or emotional engagement, is what means the most to me.



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