

Biography

Ela Shah is an Indian-American contemporary multidisciplinary artist whose work seamlessly blends Indian and Western influences. Born in Bombay (Mumbai), India, she began painting at a young age and later pursued formal studies in fine arts. After moving to the United States, she earned an M.A. in sculpture from Montclair State University.

Shah's artistic journey has included numerous solo and group exhibitions in both India and the United States. Her work has been shown in prestigious galleries and museums, including the Queens Museum, Newark Museum of Art, and Montclair Art Museum. She has also served as chairperson for National Association of Women Artists and curated exhibitions for various art institutions.

A recipient of three fellowships from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, Shah's work often incorporates satire while addressing deeper issues of religion, politics, migration, feminism, and multicultural identity. Although she primarily works in sculpture and multimedia installations embedded with video, painting remains an integral part of her artistic practice.

Artist's Statement

I have been working on burnt wood sculptures embedded with brief looping videos. The videos, usually one to two minutes long, play continuously inside the sculptures, with the video player hidden within the design itself. The footage includes scenes I have filmed during my travels in India and around the world. Some of the animations are created from my own paintings and sculptures, extending my visual language into moving images.

Video is a relatively new medium for me, yet it has become an important part of my artistic practice. It allows me to further explore themes that have shaped my life and work: home, displacement, emotional conflict, cultural identity, memory, and globalization. By combining sculpture, painting, and video, I create layered narratives that reflect both personal experience and collective human journeys across cultures and borders.



"Krishna and I", 2026, Video Player, Bronze and gold leaf, paint on burnt wood, 19"x 24"x5"

<https://vimeo.com/763021941?fl=pl&fe=sh>

Plea for rescue

Bronze, Mixed Media on Wood
and Video Player, 15"x15"x4"



<https://vimeo.com/940980432?fl=pl&f=sh>



Is it the End of the Tunnel, 2023, Paint on Wood and Video Player, 15"x15"x4"

<https://vimeo.com/791745298?fl=pl&fe=sh>



If Fireman Ignites the Fire

Gold Leaf, paint on burnt wood ,toy, and portable 5" HD video player

32" x 18" x 8" (Wall sculpture)

<https://vimeo.com/29769438?fl=pl&fe=sh>



Coming to America

<https://vimeo.com/106003396?fl=pl&fe=sh>