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## New from the old | Time travel

Sukanya Ghosh straddles past and present by transforming old discarded photographs into works of art at her show at Cymroza Art Gallery in Mumbai



MEMORY REWIND: Artwork on display at Sukanya Ghosh's 'The Parting of Ways'

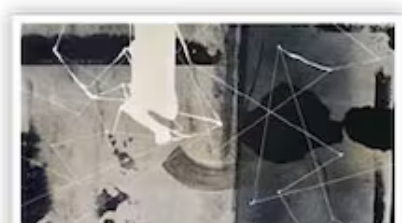
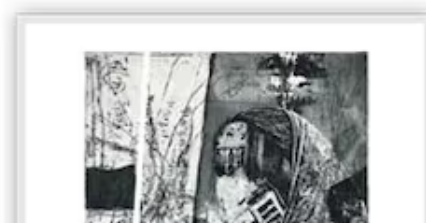
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According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, the term 'bricolage' is derived from the French verb *bricoler* (meaning "tputter about") and is related to

*bricoleur*, the French name for a jack-of-all-trades. Quite in keeping with the English usage of the word since the 1960s, Sukanya Ghosh—whose exhibition (curated by Rahab Allana) titled *The Parting of Ways*, is on at Cymroza Art Gallery in Mumbai till October 17—makes creative use of leftovers and cobbles together disparate parts as well. Her work can also be described as a bricolage of the past and present, as the artist, who is based in both Delhi and Kolkata, attempts to put her imprint and mark on things that belong to a period long before her time—in this particular case, discarded bromide prints from her family archive—turning these inside out, upside down, tearing them apart, sewing fragments together digitally, adding splashes of colour till only traces of the original photographs remain. Elements of the original shots are still recognisable, but have been manipulated in strange and even bizarre ways when juxtaposed with scraps of totally unrelated images. So, the viewer may feel as if s/he has walked into the artist's personal memories or dreams that have evaporated with the passage of time or during the waking hours—like mirages, which one realises are illusions as one comes close to them. Time and space are scrambled as boundaries melt away in her work, which Ghosh described as “transdisciplinary” and “transmedia” in a telephone chat.

Ghosh's most outstanding work is an animation (she terms it “optical collage”) titled ‘A Chair Walks into a Landscape’. Playing on a loop and projected on a 5ft-high cupboard and muslin cloth, animated drawings, photographs of a seaside vacation and grids are spliced to spring visual surprises.





*MEMORY REWIND: Artwork on display at Sukanya Ghosh's 'The Parting of Ways'*

Trained in fine art at the MS University, Baroda, and in animation at the National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad, Ghosh has, for the first time, made good use of scale as some of the works are life-size and the “portraits”—their facial features replaced with, in one instance, India’s most famous tourist spot—staring back at visitors can have an unnerving effect. They twist the familiar in an aberrant manner, reminding one of René Magritte’s paintings depicting everyday objects in unfamiliar contexts, which provoke questions about reality and representation.

Ghosh says her artistic practice has been around found images, which is why she collects old books, photographs, posters, boxes and papers, aided by her mother and, earlier, her grandmother. She “investigates memory” and explores “How can we create new fictions from a set of photographs?”, and “What does the image mean if I remove it from its context, time and location?”

She does so by using “multiple processes” like printmaking, digital collage, dark-room experiments, switching from digital to analogue, replicating the idea of colouring photographs, as the situation demands. Ghosh is breaking boundaries all the time.