

surrey
art gallery

TEACHERS GUIDE

Jagdeep Raina: Ghosts In The Fields

RESILIENCE | LABOUR | FOOD SECURITY



Jagdeep Raina, *Manic Escape*, mixed media (on paper, sewn with bordered fabric, batted, basted, bound into a quilt), 2023. Image appears courtesy of the artist and Cooper Cole, Toronto. Photo by Angela Chen.

WITH BIG IDEAS & CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Dear Teachers,

This guide is a classroom resource designed to support teachers and students visiting the exhibition *Jagdeep Raina: Ghosts In The Fields* on display at Surrey Art Gallery from September 21 — December 15, 2024 .

This Teachers Guide contains an activity that will help prepare your students for their Gallery visit and engage them in classroom discussion, exhibition information, an art activity, curriculum connections, terms & concepts, a resource section, and an image gallery.

The *Art Encounter* workshop offered at the Gallery this season connects to themes of community resilience, the significance of farms, food security, and the relationship between agriculture and art.

We hope this resource enriches your visit to the Gallery, engages your students in the classroom, and that you enjoy making meaningful connections to contemporary art and ideas with your class through the exhibition tour and workshop programs at the Gallery.

Sincerely,

Jinsil Haveliwalla, School and Family Programmer

This Teachers Guide was created with contributions from Surrey Art Gallery staff including: School and Family Programmer Jinsil Haveliwalla, Assistant Curator Suvi Bains, Curatorial Assistant Jas Lally, Curatorial Assistant Zoe Yang, Artist-Educator Claire Moore, and Curator of Learning Chris Dawson-Murphy.

ABOUT SURREY ART GALLERY

Surrey Art Gallery is situated on the ancestral, traditional, and unceded territories of the Salish Peoples, including the ąícăý (Katzie), ąʷɑ:ńłəń (Kwantlen), and Semiahma (Semiahmoo) nations.

Internationally recognized Surrey Art Gallery showcases diverse contemporary art practices including digital and sound art and exhibits by renowned local, national, and international artists. Surrey Art Gallery's mission is to engage the public in an ongoing dialogue about issues and ideas that affect our numerous communities as expressed through contemporary art, and to provide opportunities for the public to interact with artists and the artistic process.

To receive announcements about exhibitions and related events at the Gallery, sign up for our e-newsletters at surrey.ca/12392.aspx. You may also be interested in the City of Surrey's e-newsletter, *Teachers in the Know*.

SCHOOL PROGRAMS

The Gallery's school programs develop an appreciation, understanding, and excitement about contemporary art. Visit the Gallery's website to learn more about our school programs and teacher resources: surrey.ca/galleryeducation.

IN THIS GUIDE



Jagdeep Raina, *Black Widow Spider*, glazed ceramic, 2023. Image appears courtesy of the Artist and Cooper Cole, Toronto.

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ABOUT THE EXHIBITIONS

Jagdeep Raina: Ghosts In The Fields

September 21–December 15, 2024

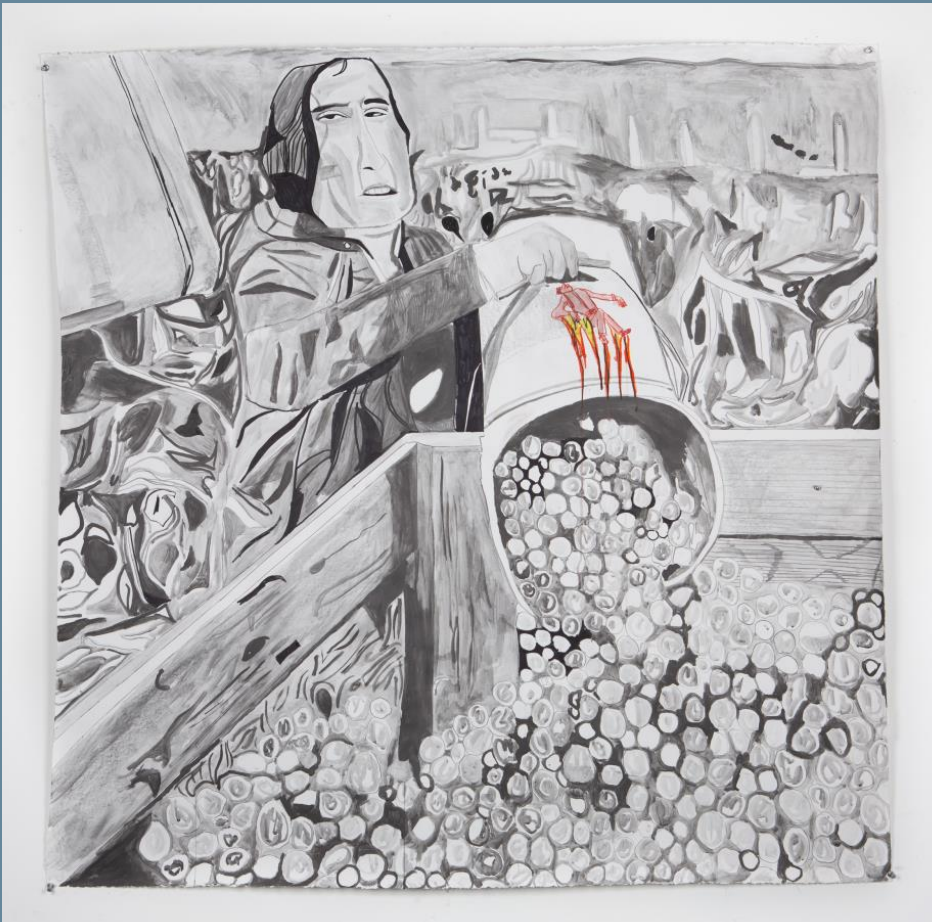
This exhibition marks a significant moment in the geographical, cultural, and political landscape in British Columbia's Lower Mainland. Inspired by archival images and interviews by media artist Craig Berggold and filmmaker Anand Patwardhan, in addition to his own interviews with union organizers, Raina examines the history of the 1970s and 1980s farmworker movements. Migrant workers and union organizers from the Canadian Farmworkers Union protested wage theft, long hours, and exploitative working and living conditions endured by racialized farmworkers on farms and in greenhouses.

Raina's research materialized into a visual narrative depicting the generational experiences of South Asian farmworkers. A stop motion animation positions these historic labour movements against the current backdrop of the Lower Mainland. His black-and-white drawings borrow from Berggold's archival photographs taken in the 1980s. What initially appear as idyllic scenes of farmworkers labouring in fields reveal a fiery red ghost-like figure that disrupts the monochromatic composition. This figure symbolizes violence, exploitation, trauma, and loss experienced by the farmworkers. The drawings serve as ghostly reminders of past lived experiences while also reminding us of the ongoing farmworker movements in India since 2020.

Hand-stitched quilts further share the history of various farming activities, protests, and the pivotal role of women in the labour movement to unionize farmworkers. Women are depicted marching and protesting. One quilt features a poem that Raina wrote that tells the story of a female farmworker. The poem highlights the dangers faced by women in agricultural work. Another quilt translates these words into Gurmukhi and incorporates Phulkari, a traditional Punjabi embroidery celebrated for its intricate geometric designs.

Raina also touches upon the warning signs of climate change. Warmer and drier conditions are impacting the land, people, and animals that make up the fragile ecosystem of the Fraser Valley. Ceramic works like *Black Widow Spider* and *Ocean Sunfish* epitomize these changes, as well as the invasive species that disrupt the natural environment.

Jagdeep Raina: Ghosts In The Fields shares the experiences of the Punjabi diaspora and transnational migration, presenting a living history of farmworkers, unionization, and protests.



Jagdeep Raina, *Seasonal Life*, mixed media on paper, 2023.
Image appears courtesy of the artist and Cooper Cole, Toronto. Photo by Angela Chen.

ABOUT THE EXHIBITIONS

Cheryl Pagurek: Winter Garden

December 8, 2023–April 21, 2024

Using machine learning software, *Winter Garden* mirrors the presence and movement of viewers via a webcam, creating an ever-changing collage composed of motifs of lively indoor plants against a desolate winter landscape. The concept began from a series of still life photographs depicting a small oasis of indoor plants that the artist tended to during the lockdown in winter 2021. *Winter Garden 9*, featured as part of the exhibition, is one of the photographs from the series.

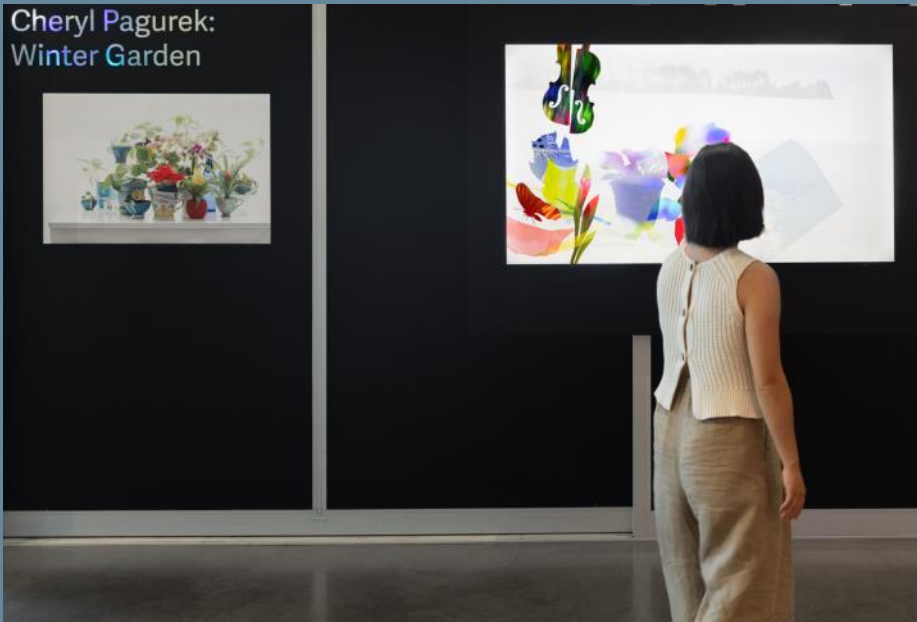
Inspired by the *memento mori* (Latin for “remember death”) theme in classical paintings, *Winter Garden* uses vibrant motifs of flowers and fruits, common subjects in these paintings, to contrast them with the lifeless winter landscape in the background. The juxtaposition between the two reminds the viewer of the cycles of life while evoking a sense of joy and solace.

Winter Garden will be on display in the central part of Surrey Arts Centre where visitors will be in constant flow getting to different parts of the building. The collage is activated by passersby, mirroring their movement through the arrangement and generation of collages that disappear as the person walks away. The viewer thus becomes an active part of the artwork, their presence reflected by the composition generated unique to that moment.

Zoe Yang
Assistant Curator



Cheryl Pagurek, *Winter Garden*, Interactive Digital Collage (video still), 2024.
Image appears courtesy of the artist.



Cheryl Pagurek, *Winter Garden*, Interactive Digital Collage (installation view), 2024.
Image appears courtesy of the artist.

FOCUSED ACTIVITY: DRAWING COMMUNITY GARDENS

THEME: COMMUNITY AND RESILIENCE

OBJECTIVES

Through this activity, students will:

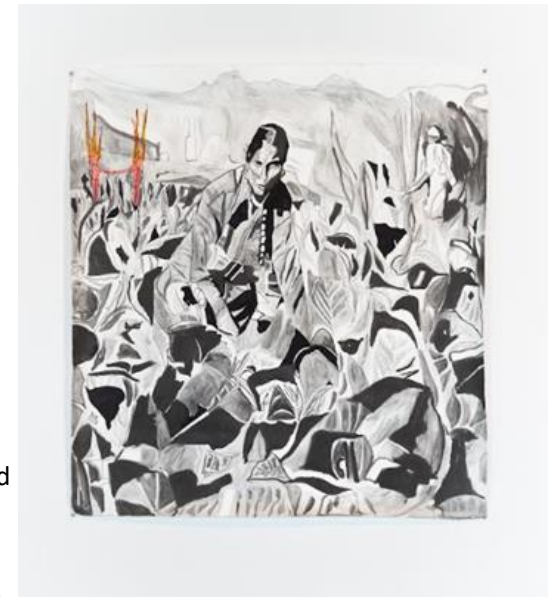
- Engage in a drawing activity that connects their own experiences with historical events and issues in their own communities.
- Develop an understanding of food production. Consider where our food comes from and the labour involved in its production.
- Consider how the art in *Jagdeep Raina: Ghosts in the Fields* reflects on the work of farm labourers in the Fraser Valley and beyond.
- Understand that art documents and examines historical and social issues.

BIG IDEAS FROM BC CURRICULUM

- People create art to express who they are as individuals and community (Art Education, Grade 1)
- Artists experiment in a variety of ways to discover new possibilities (Arts Education 4)
- Experiencing art challenges our point of view and expands our understanding of others (Arts Education 7)

ACTIVITY

Students will create their own drawing. Depending on the resources available to your class this can include a walk to your school community garden, or could simply be a drawing of a vegetable, or plant. Students will participate in a discussion around food, food production, and the labour that is connected with food systems. This activity links students experiences, and observation, to the history, and social justice issues connected to farm labour with students' experiences and observation in community gardens.



Jagdeep Raina, *The Dawn Falls on Richmond*, mixed media on paper, 2023. Image appears courtesy of the artist and Cooper Cole, Toronto. Photo by Angela Chen.

FOCUSED ACTIVITY: DRAWING COMMUNITY GARDENS

THEME: COMMUNITY AND RESILIENCE

INTRODUCTION

Tell students that they will be creating their own drawing of a (plant, vegetable, or garden) using pencils and pencil crayon.

Start a discussion with the students around their own experience with food.

- What are their favourite foods?
- Where does their food come from?
- Do they have their own garden where they grow food?
- Do they buy food in a store or market?
- Who grows the food that we eat?
- Do they have friends or family who are farmers?



Archival photograph, *Using kitchen paring knives, farmworkers cut the Brussels sprouts off the stalks at the cutting tables during winter harvest. Aldergrove, British Columbia. November 1983.* Image appears courtesy of Craig Berggold.

DISCUSSION

Discuss that getting food to our tables involves many people and a lot of hard work: farmers plant, nurture, and harvest food; food is packaged and then transported (sometimes long distances); food is then delivered to stores and markets; workers put the food on shelves, where we can buy it, and then someone needs to prepare it.

Many farmworkers gathered to protest, resist poor working conditions, and advocated to be fairly paid, and have good working conditions. With older students, discuss the 1970s and 1980s farmworker movements in the Fraser Valley and B.C. and that farmers gathered together, organized, and held many protests. That there were significant challenges faced by migrant workers in their fight for fair working conditions.

Showing students images in this guide, discuss Jagdeep Raina's work—it documents the resilience of these farmworkers. He looked at old archival photographs, to create drawings, and hand-stitched quilts. How do these artworks show the challenges faced by migrant workers? Ask students:

- Can they imagine what it would be like to work on a farm?
- Has anyone in your family shared stories about their work on a farm?
- Do they think the farmworkers' movement helped make life better in our communities?

FOCUSED ACTIVITY: DRAWING COMMUNITY GARDENS

THEME: COMMUNITY AND RESILIENCE

ACTIVITY

- Ask students to start by looking closely at the source of their drawing: community garden, plant, or vegetable depending on your context.
- Ask them to start their drawing in pencil, and then add coloured pencil to their drawing, choosing a single colour to accentuate elements of their drawing.
- Remind students to consider how the garden, plant, or vegetable came to be there: who planted it? Who harvested it?
- Ask students to add a short sentence to the bottom of their drawing that tells the story of how they imagine the plant or vegetable they drew was grown.

MATERIALS LIST

- Paper
- Pencils
- Coloured Pencils
- Erasers

REFLECTION

Create a sharing circle for students to talk about their artwork and the process they used to create it. Allow students to share their drawings with the class and talk about what they chose to draw, what colour they chose and why, and their story.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- What have you seen growing in a garden?
- How does everyone work together to make the garden grow?
- How does the food we eat get to our table? Who does this work?
- Why is it important that we treat workers fairly?
- What did you learn by creating your artwork?

EXTENSION: CLASS EXHIBITION

Exhibit the student's artworks in the classroom. You could consider the following:

- Write a short introduction to explain the exhibition and the project.
- Have students write a short artist's statement and include these in your exhibition.
- Involve the class in choosing how to arrange and install their artworks.

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS FOR SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Participating in a guided tour, studio workshop, or self-guided tour in conjunction with the exhibitions supports Big Ideas and Learning Standards in the British Columbia Arts Education Curriculum for grades K-12. The exhibitions can be used as a touchstone for discussion relating to themes and concepts addressed in a variety of curricular areas.

K-12 ARTS EDUCATION CURRICULAR COMPETENCIES

Students will be able to use creative processes to create and respond to the arts:

KINDERGARTEN-GRADE 2

- Explore elements, processes, materials, movements, technologies, and techniques of the arts
- Explore artistic expressions of themselves and community through creative processes
- Reflect on creative processes and make connections to other experiences
- Interpret how symbols are used through the arts
- Express feelings, ideas, stories, observations, and experiences through the arts
- Experience, document, and share creative works in a variety of ways
- Describe and respond to works of art

GRADES 3-4

- Connect knowledge and skills from other areas of learning in planning, creating, interpreting, and analyzing works for art
- Reflect on creative processes and make connections to personal experiences
- Explore identity, place, culture, and belonging through arts experiences
- Explore relationships among cultures, societies, and the arts

GRADES 5-7

- Works of art influence and are influenced by the world around us
- Engaging in creative expression and experiences expands people's sense of identity and belonging
- Explore identity, place, culture, and belonging through arts experiences

GRADES 8-9

- Interpret and communicate ideas using symbols and elements to express meaning through the arts
- The arts provide opportunities to gain insight into the perspectives and experiences of people from a variety of times, places, and cultures

GRADE S 10-12

- Create artistic works that demonstrate personal, cultural, and historical contexts
- Purposeful artistic choices enhance the depth and impact of an artistic work
- Express meaning, intent, and emotion through visual art
- Intentionally select and combine materials, processes, and technologies to convey ideas and justify choices

TERMS & CONCEPTS

Agriculture: The practice of farming, including the cultivation of soil for growing crops and the rearing of animals for food, fiber, and other products.

Composition: The arrangement of visual elements within a work of art; effective composition guides the viewer's eye and enhances the impact of the artwork.

Embroidery: The art or handicraft of decorating fabric or other materials with needle and thread or yarn. It involves various techniques and designs, often including patterns, images, or text stitched onto the material.

Farmworker movement: Organized efforts by agricultural laborers advocating for better working conditions, fair wages, and labor rights; these movements highlight the struggles and resilience of workers in the farming industry.

Resilience: The capacity to recover quickly from difficulties; a characteristic of individuals or communities that enables them to withstand challenges and adapt to changing circumstances.

Labour: The physical or mental effort used in the production of goods and services; often refers to the work done by individuals in industries, including agriculture, to earn a living and support their families.

Landscape: In art, a depiction of natural scenery that may capture images of mountains, valleys, bodies of water, fields, forests, and coasts and may or may not include man-made structures as well as people.

Mixed Media: An art form that combines various materials and techniques, such as drawing, collage, and painting, to create a rich, more dynamic composition.

Monochromatic: Adjective referring to a colour palette that consists of one hue, with variations in chroma, value, and intensity to create an analogous colour scheme.

Narrative: Art that tells a story or conveys a message; in the context of community gardens, narrative art can illustrate the experiences and connections within a community.

Perspective: A technique used to depict three-dimensional space on a two-dimensional surface; perspective helps create depth and realism in drawings.

Phulkari: A traditional Punjabi embroidery technique characterized by the use of colorful thread to create intricate floral designs on fabric, often used for shawls and headscarves. The term "phulkari" literally means "flower work" in Punjabi, and this art form is celebrated for its vibrant patterns and cultural significance.

Representational: Art that depicts images or objects found in the real world. It can have a subject of landscapes, animals, fruit, figures, etc.

Symbolism: The use of symbols to represent ideas or concepts; for example, flowers in a garden may symbolize growth, community, or resilience.

Texture: The visual and tactile quality of a surface in art; artists can create texture through various techniques, adding depth and interest to their work.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Jagdeep Raina (b. 1991) is an interdisciplinary artist and writer from Guelph, Ontario, Canada. He holds a Masters degree from the Rhode Island School of Design and was a 2021 Paul Mellon Fellow at Yale University. Raina currently lives and works in Queens, New York City, USA.



Jagdeep Raina during a residency in Wisconsin learning to farm and grow vegetables. photo courtesy of Jagdeep Raina.

RESOURCES

Jagdeep Raina Website
<https://jagdeepraina.com/>

Surrey Art Gallery exhibition listing
<https://www.surrey.ca/arts-culture/surrey-art-gallery/exhibitions/jagdeep-raina-ghosts-fields>

Photographs from the archive of Craig Berggold (source images for many works in *Ghosts in the Fields*)
<https://flipbook-surrey-ca.cld.bz/PublicationPhotographs-from-the-archive-of-Craig-Berggold>

The Canadian Farmworkers Union Project: *A Time to Rise*
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vb5A4d0dO-8>

Farmworkers: Working People: A History of Labour in BC
<https://www.bctf.ca/classroom-resources/details/farmworkers-working-people-a-history-of-labour-in-bc---labour-history-project-episode-3-lesson-materials-8>

Farmworkers: BC Labour Heritage Centre (includes teacher resources and lesson plans)
<https://www.labourheritagecentre.ca/farmworkers2/>

SFU Library Digitized Collections: Canadian Farmworkers Union Collection
<https://digital.lib.sfu.ca/cfu-2-collection/canadian-farmworkers-union-collection>

Jagdeep Raina conversation with Sahana McCabe:
<https://youtu.be/oenqGDzfs44?si=IxajUbWfYI4DVRwY>

Artist Talk: Jagdeep Raina—Blaffer Art Museum
<https://www.youtube.com/live/hM1UJNRxQG?si=inXsLi5VahNIOAQs>

IMAGE GALLERY



Jagdeep Raina, *Mass movement*, mixed media (on paper, sewn with bordered fabric, batted, basted, bound into a quilt), 2023.
Image appears courtesy of the artist and Cooper Cole, Toronto. Photo by Angela Chen.

IMAGE GALLERY



Jagdeep Raina, *Seasonal Life*, mixed media on paper, 2023. Image appears courtesy of the artist and Cooper Cole, Toronto. Photo by Angela Chen.

IMAGE GALLERY



Archival photograph, *Using kitchen paring knives, farmworkers cut the Brussels sprouts off the stalks at the cutting tables during winter harvest. Alder-grove, British Columbia. November 1983. Image appears courtesy of Craig Berggold.*

IMAGE GALLERY



Jagdeep Raina, *Her Bag of Bones*, mixed media on paper (sewn with bordered fabric, batted, basted, binded into a quilt), 2023.
Image appears courtesy of the artist and Cooper Cole, Toronto. Photo by Angela Chen.

IMAGE GALLERY



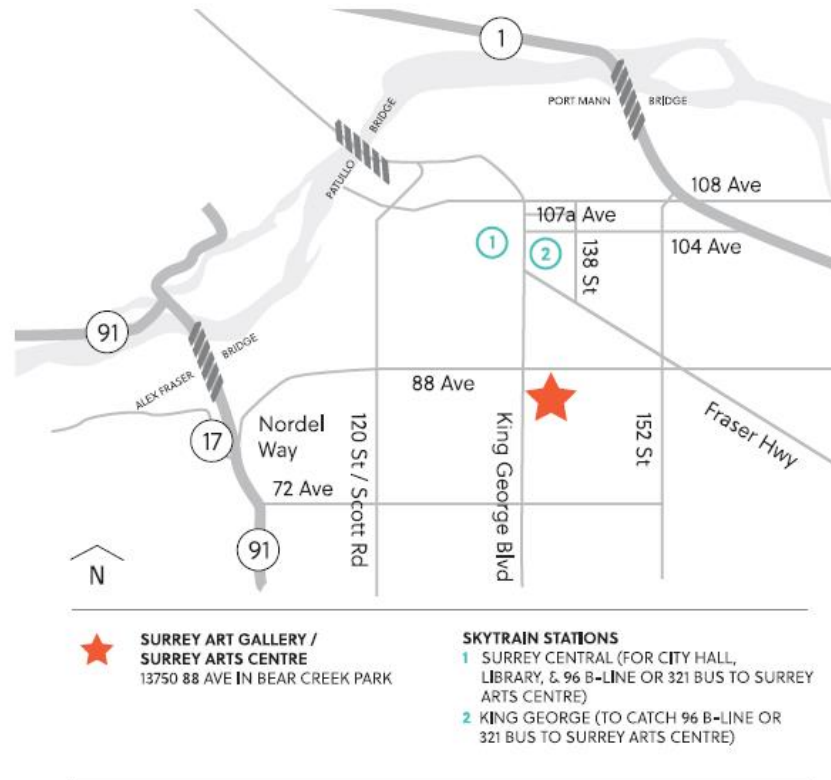
Jagdeep Raina, *Ladies of the bunkhouse*, mixed media on paper, 2023.
Image appears courtesy of the artist and Cooper Cole, Toronto. Photo by Angela Chen.

IMAGE GALLERY



Jagdeep Raina, *The Mother We'll Love*, glazed ceramic, 2023.
Image appears courtesy of the artist and Cooper Cole, Toronto. Photo by Angela Chen.

INFORMATION / MAP



- 40 minute drive from downtown Vancouver
- 2 km walk from King George Station
- Catch Bus #321 or R1 at Surrey Central Station and get off on King George Hwy at 88 Avenue.

SURREY ART GALLERY

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Surrey, BC V3W 3L1

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artgallery@surrey.ca
surrey.ca/artgallery

GALLERY HOURS

Tue, Wed, Thu: 9am–9pm
Fri: 9am–5pm
Sat: 10am–5pm
Sun: Noon–5pm

Closed on Mondays & holidays

Admission by donation

SIGN UP FOR OUR E-NEWSLETTERS

Visit surrey.ca/arts-signup to receive gallery exhibition and program updates.