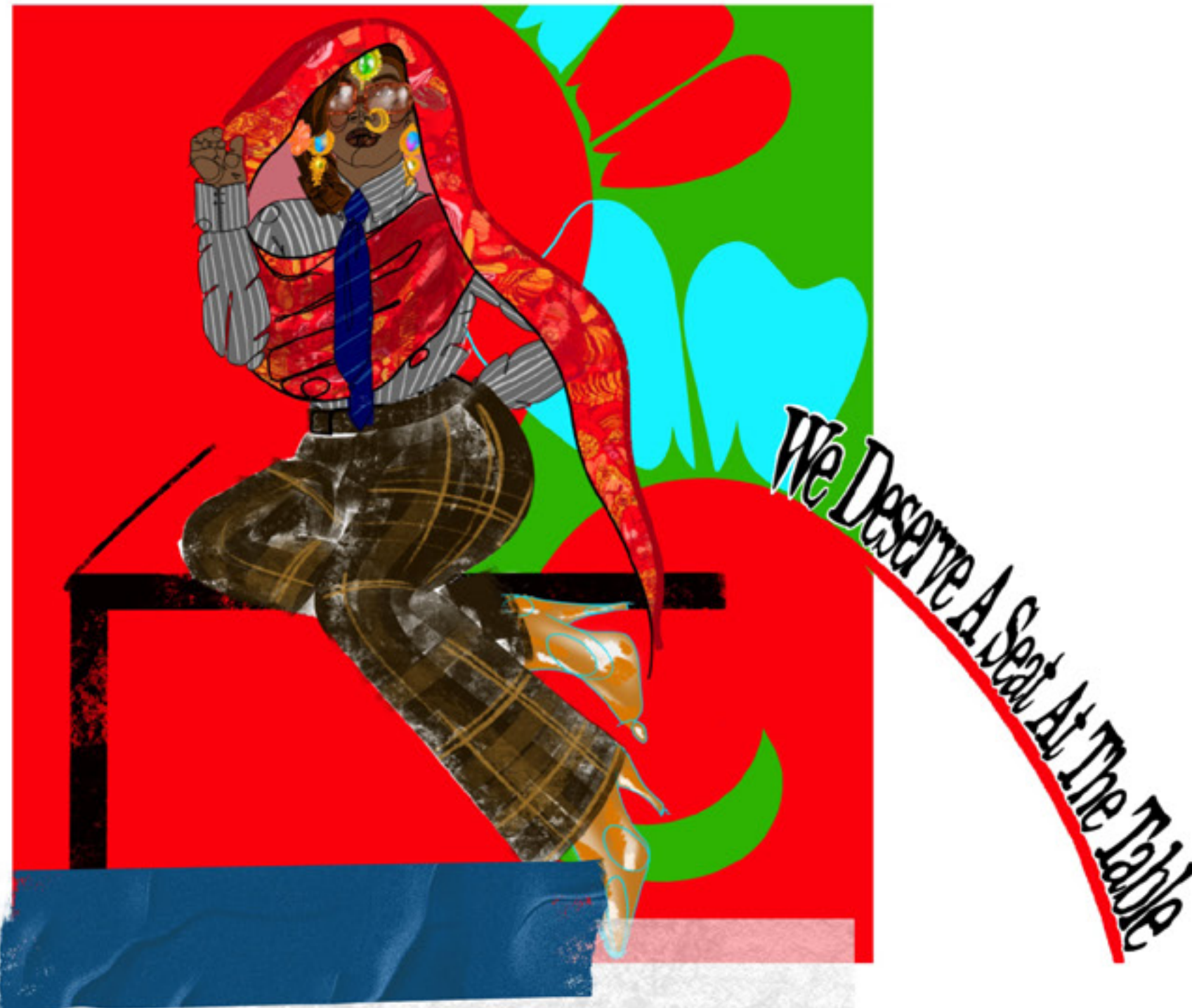


Amiata Vora





By applying their European Power through colonisation, Britain benefited from numerous resources India had to offer whilst being guilty for much of the destruction India faced. In 1947 independence was finally gained. However, the Partition of India uprooted approximately 10 - 12 million people along religious lines. Unimaginable tensions were instigated between Muslims and Hindus; resulting in extensive violence and an overwhelming refugee crisis. Consequently many Indian's immigrated to Britain in the 50s to seek opportunities for a better life for their families. They were known as the three pound generation. With the arrival of Indian immigrants such as my grandparents, many Brits echoed the ignorant and racist beliefs of Churchill who "hated Indians", believing that they were a "beastly people with a beastly religion".

My project explores the cruel racism generations of Indian immigrants and subsequently British Indians have endured due to the colour of our skin. From a young girl my Mother has experienced verbal and physical racial attacks. Conversations surrounding these experiences have allowed me to understand one of the fundamental causes of her mental health struggles. Witnessing the pain she has suffered from depression for over thirty years through my childhood, it is important to me that I use my project to draw awareness to the experiences my community face daily.

With the phrase "go back to where you came from" being an ignorant and racially motivated remark ringing in our ears, my concept aims to argue the notion "we are here because you were there" and "you only built a piece of this place... the rest was us." Being under- represented as an Indian woman due to stigma faced within my own community and Britain I want my project to clearly and proudly voice that we deserve a seat at the table and we deserve to be recognised. I want to use this collection as a tool to educate people and celebrate the beauty and intelligence of Indian people.

My fabric innovation will be led by digital print with illustrations to reflect my concept, combined with my love for fine art through expressive painting. Bright colours and bold prints from my Indian heritage will be contrasted with grey checks and pinstripes from British suiting. My silhouettes will be inspired by Saville Row tailoring to represent the rigid British views regarding ethnic minorities; merged with the fluidity and softer silhouettes of traditional Indian clothing.

It is about time ethnic minorities are represented and heard.

Being brown is beautiful.
Being brown is powerful.

Concept Statement



Empower Indian Women

As an Indian woman, the pressures of the patriarch often dictate your future. The majority of Indian women, in the West and East, are forced to become submissive to her husband and his family. Many of these pressures result in consistent degradation and humiliation from the husband's family resulting in many Indian women suffering from mental health illnesses; such as my own mother who tried to take her life just before I was born.

After researching countless inspirational Indian women which includes prize-winning authors, prevalent social activists, fearless journalists, international businesswomen; I believe they are a symbol of hope for Indian women.

I want to portray the multifaceted power that comes from being an Indian woman through my collection.



Grandma In Britain

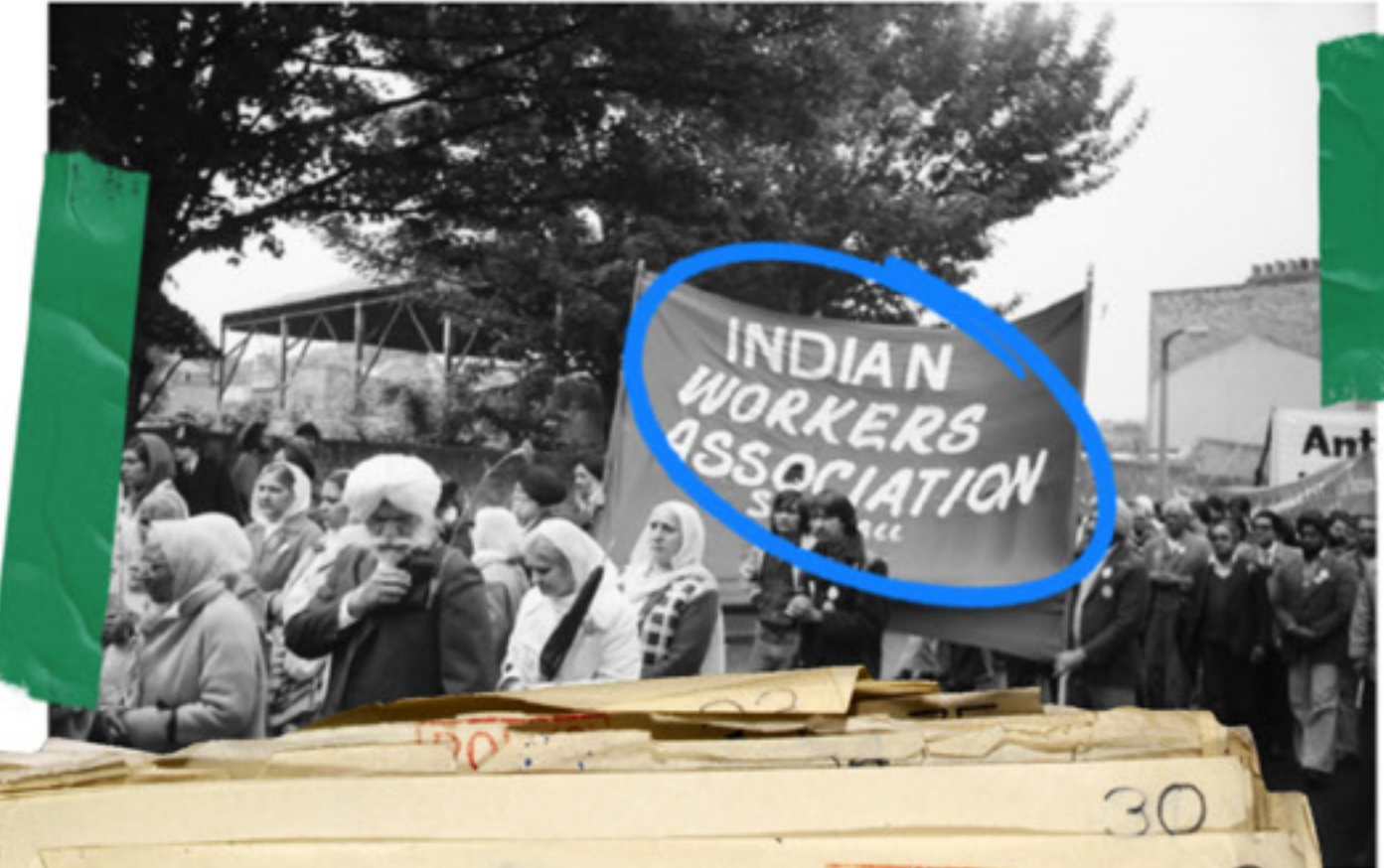
One of my prints will be dedicated to immigrants like my maternal grandmother.

My grandmother came to the country with three pounds by boat. She woke up at 0630 everyday to work; she was subject to severe criticism from my grandfather's family, raised two children and dealt with gruesome racism. My grandmother is one of the strongest and calm natured people I know, regardless of her circumstances.

I was instantly attracted to the irony of these photographs. The Greek statue towering over my grandma and her friends reminding me of the quote by Churchill "the starvation of anyhow underfed Bengalis is less serious than that of sturdy Greeks"; referencing the Bengal Famine. The other photo of my grandmother in a beautiful sari next to a classic British car.

I want these photographs to inspire my print illustration for fabric digital print but instead making the Indian women the subject and the British imagery to be the background noise. To emphasise the positive contribution Indian immigrants made to Britain, whilst withstanding unbearable treatment.





Indian Immigrants

Indian immigrants and other ethnic minorities were tagged with racial slurs and violently attacked.

Kavit Puri's **'Three Pounds in my Pocket'** podcast details the experience of Asians who immigrated to the UK in the 1950s. Those who came from India were only given three pounds, such as my maternal grandparents. Mohammed Ajeed arrived in 1957 from Pakistan. He recounted one of his experiences where he was hurt for being Indian and wearing a turban. "The English boys, they grabbed me and said, "Why you wearing this? You got a sore head." They keep calling you a "black dog" or they took your turban off. We went through a lot of things".

Indians arrived with near to nothing and yet our community have heavily contributed to the UK's economic prosperity. My collection to project the notion that:

We have earned our right to be in this country and be treated with equal respect to our white counterparts.



Princess Sophia Daleep Singh selling the newspaper The Suppliette



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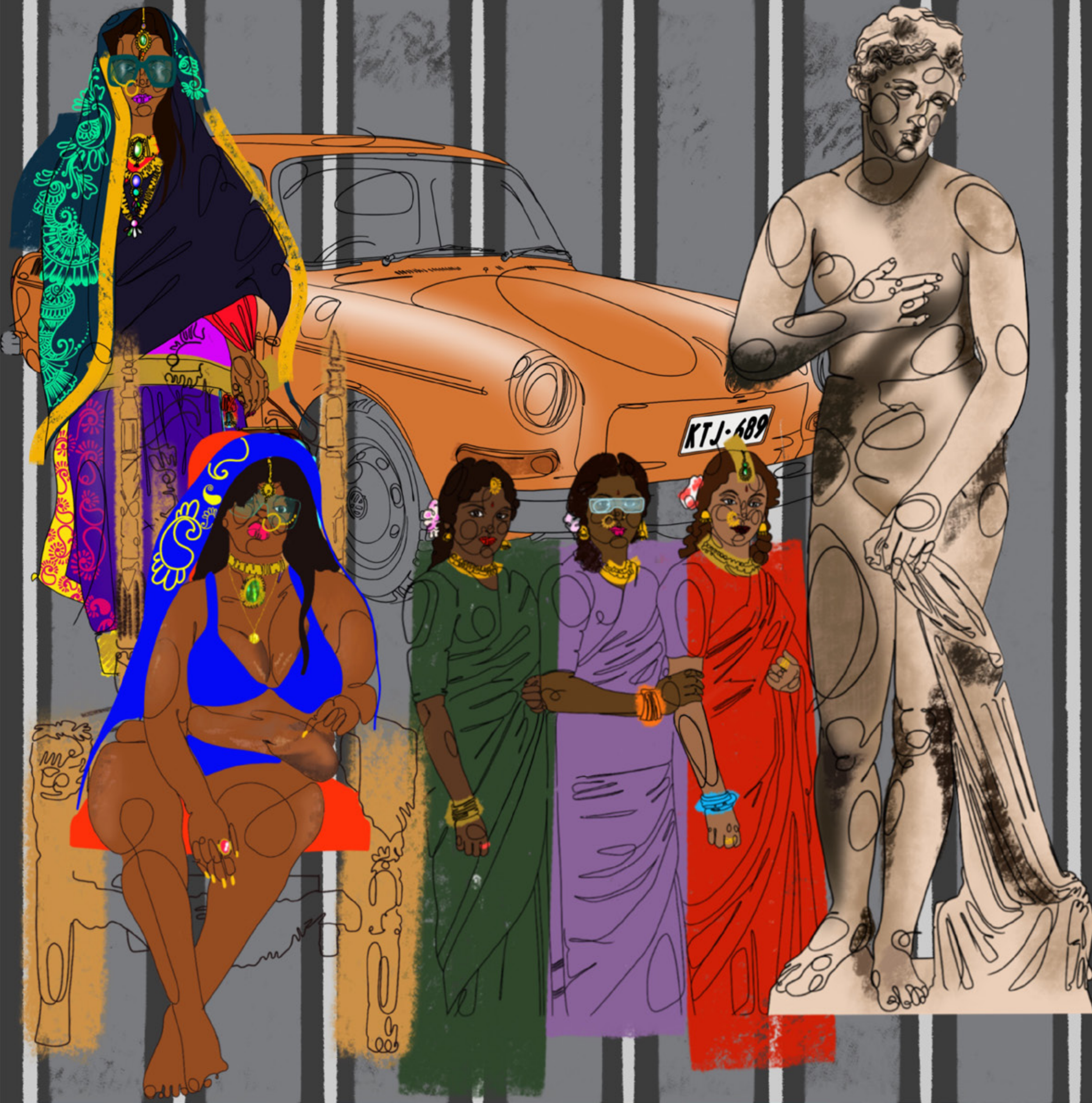
THE INDIAN WORKERS' ASSOCIATION.

1. The Hindi (or Hindustani) Mazdur Sabha, now more usually referred to as the INDIAN WORKERS' ASSOCIATION (or IWA) has come gradually into being as a result of war conditions. In the two years preceding the outbreak of war a number of disaffected Sikhs - some of them with Ghadr Party contacts - who had come to the United Kingdom to work as pedlars decided to start, if possible, an organisation of Indians which should give all possible aid to the movement for Indian independence. At first the only practical steps towards carrying out this decision were the secret collection and remittance to India of sums of money for payment to the dependents of political prisoners. The fund in India which received these sums of money was created by the Ghadr Party in California and there can be little doubt that the Indians in the U.K. who were chiefly interested in these collections were actuated by motives and by a long-range policy which were identical with those of the Ghadr Party. Some of them were in receipt of the Hindustan Ghadr until the close watch of the postal censorship succeeded in imposing an effective check on the entry of the paper into the U.K.

2. From the very beginning Coventry was the headquarters of the movement, for it so happened that the Indians chiefly interested were pedlars who sold their goods in the Coventry area. As the defence programme developed Indians throughout the U.K. found that they could secure more lucrative employment by working as casual labourers than by hawking haberdashery. Some of them secured work on the construction of militia camps and aerodromes, others were admitted as unskilled workers into some of the big factories in the Midlands. Hundreds of Indian seamen who had abandoned their maritime calling and were living precariously in the East End of London and in other big ports, similarly found themselves in a position to earn good money in some industrial capacity. The result was the aggregation of Indians into groups, at Glasgow, Newcastle, Manchester, Sheffield, Bradford, Birmingham, Coventry and other industrial centres. The largest of these groups was at Birmingham, where the Indian community is believed to number some six or seven hundred. Many of these Indians have already married or otherwise set up house with English women and there are the beginnings of a social problem which will not become fully apparent until after the end of the war when industrial conditions return to normal.

3. Obviously the conditions were ideal for setting on foot a movement for the political education of the Indian worker in the U.K. provided leadership of the right quality were forthcoming. Such leadership was, however, lacking; the will to act was there, but not the ability to carry plans into execution. The task was in any case not an easy one, for the average Indian worker in this country is very ignorant and unless his feelings are worked upon he does not lend himself quickly to political agitation. Moreover, any plans that may have been under consideration were shattered by the intensive air-raids which disorganised private life and made self-preservation a more compelling motive than Indian politics. It was not until the summer of 1941 that it became quite clear that an INDIAN WORKERS' UNION was actually in process of formation. A branch was found to be in existence in Bradford under the name of the "Indian Workers' Association". The regular membership subscription was fixed at one shilling per annum, but it was generally understood that subscriptions for specific purposes would be collected from time to time. Branches were also formed at

The Indian Workers' Association was founded to promote the struggle for Indian independence and campaign to protect workers' rights and welfare.



Print Illustration

Through my prints I want to flip the script. My prints aim to show the Indian community in Britain as powerful and celebrate our incredible impact in Britain—through culture, the economy and intelligence. With the bold colour palettes and illustrations referencing the Indian community standing out against the muted background of the grey pinstripes and checked shapes.

I want my illustrations to evoke a feeling that all ethnic minorities can relate to. Our countries involuntarily contributed to the UK during colonialism and our people who reside in the UK have contributed unparalleled success.

We deserve equal respect.



Print Illustration

This illustration was created to tackle a number of issues; the stigma within the Indian community towards Indian women being educated, powerful, dominant and in charge of her sexuality due to the patriarchy. Another is colourism, I have illustrated throughout my prints women of all shades to show all brown women are beautiful.

The next issue I aimed to confront within this illustration is that 'we deserve a seat at the Table' referring to racial discrimination in the work place towards Indian women and ethnic minorities. Our race should not limit our opportunities yet it does.

Therefore, I am speaking up for Indian women like myself hopefully instilling my wearers to celebrate these woman and make these women feel confident.

★ Traditional fabric does not work with illustrated prints, make more contemporary



Mum's Sari Colour Manipulation

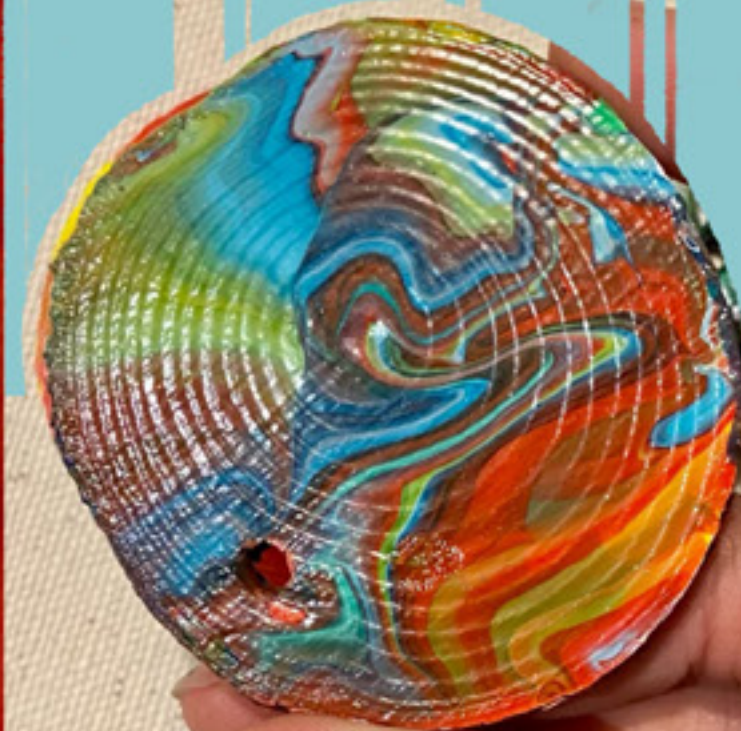
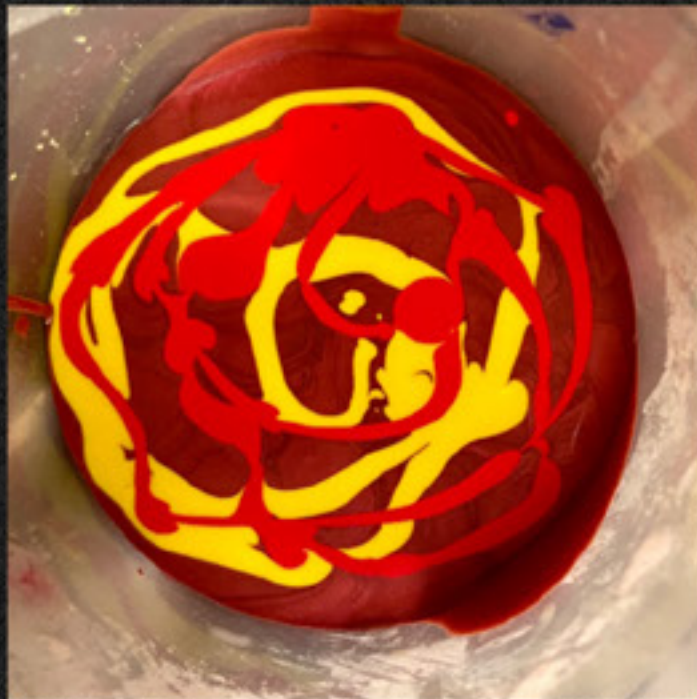
I was adamant to include traditional sari fabric due to the beautiful print and nod to my heritage. They were going to be paired with denim, wool twill and organic cotton pieces.

Taking my Mum's wedding sari, and two other gorgeous saris, all from India with traditional artisan Indian prints I was in love. However, something wasn't right, the colours were slightly off to be paired with my prints and the fabrics were too juxtaposing to my modern and Western aesthetic.

I photographed the fabrics and began to alter the colours and sizes of the prints. This allowed me to digitally print these new prints onto any fabric of my choice. My modern take paired with heritage and tradition.

The Times of India

BOMBAY: FRIDAY, MAY 16, 1957



Pouring Painting

Using the technique of pouring paint I have experimented with wooden and acrylic circles to create oversized buttons and sari ends for strings to tie up the corset for instance, in the collection. I will be using the acrylic material due to the cleaner finish and shape for these embellishments.

The vivid colours represent the beautiful colours of India.

Photos of my Grandparents and Mother in Britain



I have had to understand and experience racism and will, unfortunately, have to continue to do so for the rest of my life. I have grown up listening to the horrific stories my Mum has experienced and grandparents living in Crystal Palace amongst skinheads.

The first racial experience my Mum encountered was at the age of five. My Mum and her brother (five years older) were walking home from school, and a group of skinhead boys surrounded my Mum and Uncle. My Uncle aged ten put my Mum in the corner and was beaten up by the group of boys as a racial attack. On the way home, my Uncle said "don't tell Mum and Dad", a scared five-year-old girl had to bury the trauma of her first racial experience. The next occurred when at aged five her head was flushed down the toilet. Painful experiences continued, including glass bottles being thrown into my grandparents' house.

Although I am so lucky to have the privilege of growing up with access to an incredible education and not experiencing anywhere near that extent of racism, my skin is still brown.

I have grown up to finally realise my skin is beautiful, being brown is beautiful but it also unfortunately means that many ignorant people look at my skin and think I am inferior. If people stare at me I automatically think it is because of the colour of my skin. When I have been called the p-word it is because of the colour my skin. When my dad has been stopped and searched more times than the average white man and for no reason it is because of the colour of his skin. When my mum has been beaten up and had disgusting racial slurs hurled at her it is because of the colour of her skin- never having to feel this anger or understand this pain is white privilege.

For everyone: speak up when your friends and families make racist comments. For ethnic minorities: speak up when your friends make racial comments towards you no matter what the tone. These uncomfortable confrontations have to happen.

Through
My
Eyes



★Add MORE bangles (as scarf loops), add MORE rounds of hand embroidery stitch



Coat Development

This is the final silhouette of the toile. I have made sure to allow the coat to compliment all figures, using a balance between structured and soft e.g. draping mixed with strong shoulder pads. The draping will be created in Wool Twill, therefore I used a substitute to capture the same effect for the toile.

Dial up the drama.

The coat will be made from a full vibrant coloured print, long fringing will be added to the bottom of the coat, a double sleeve with a regular sleeve underneath and on top a sleeve with fringing just below the elbow line; thicker belt with large acrylic buttons to decorate, more bangles and more layers of hand embroidery to move forward.



'Kurta' Shirt Dress

I have developed this dress by adding large amounts of volume. I think the impact of the dress come from the vast amounts of volume with the corset to compliment a woman's figure.

I have played with draping and loved the effect of the drape on the dress, however with the wool twill fabric i am unsure and organic cotton wouldn't go with the look. I am hesitant to add the drape as I don't want to cover the volume of the dress - it almost makes the dress a large canvas displaying the print proudly. During manufacturing I can make that final decision.

As for the drape across the corset... again I am reluctant to cover the cut created by the corset over the dress. Play around when manufacturing - simplicity may speak volumes for this outfits as the prints are loud, and there are lots of details.



Indian Sartorial Blazer

With this Indian sartorial inspired blazer I stacked up shoulder pages to extenuate the shoulders. Going forward I want to create a shoulder pad which goes along the top of the back to create a strong shoulder line.

Scientifically proven that open body language makes an individual confident and that's how I want my customers to feel.

Pair with super wide leg trousers



Pair shirt with straight leg trousers

Draped Shirt

The draped element on this shirt is the focal point, therefore this is where draping is most successful out of the four toiled outfits. Creating a shirt in ONE print - (draped wool twill and denim are the same print) emphasises the impact of the garment. Through the projects I have experimented with pairing this shirt style with different trousers/skirts. I want to create a simple pair of well made straight leg trousers.

The trousers will be lined... they may be denim but I want to portray the denim as a formal fabric due to the garment silhouettes themselves.

Through linings e.g. pockets I want to add a pop of colour. However the cut and main colour way of the fabric I want to create a clean and classic trouser for a sophisticated look.

