

# Feminist artist reimagines Nirbhaya as a superheroine

*Pritika Chowdhry launches a new art project that reimagines Nirbhaya as a superheroine character, who has the superpower to eradicate rape and sexual violence.*

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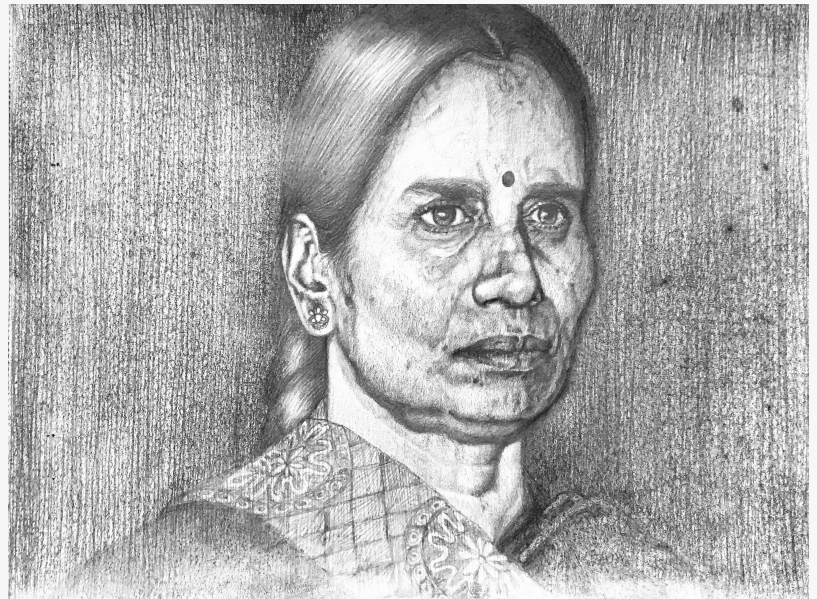
EINPresswire.com/ -- 9 years ago, a 23-year old woman was brutally gang-raped in a moving bus by 6 men. The whole country of India was shaken out of its apathetic stupor as facts about the brutal rape trickled into the media. Within a few days, there young women and their male allies were marching in the streets, protesting the rising

incidence of rape as a crime against women. The massive and widespread protests at India Gate and Rashtrapati Bhavan were unprecedented. This was India's Occupy Movement and Arab Spring combined. The young woman was dubbed "[Nirbhaya](#)," the fearless one, by the media, and the whole country rallied to get her justice.

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We are the Anonymous Nirbhayas. We are legion. We do not forgive. We do not forget. Expect us.”

*Pritika Chowdhry*



Drawing of Asha Devi, Nirbhaya's Mother at a vigil.

Socio-political artist and curator Pritika Chowdhry of The Partition Memorial Project has launched the Nirbhaya Project to memorialize the memory of Nirbhaya. Chowdhry reimagines Nirbhaya as a superheroine in a series of drawings. The drawings have been enlarged and printed on fabric to create an experiential art installation.

"A fitting memorialization for Nirbhaya would have to be an anti-memorial, so that she may never be forgotten," says Pritika, who is an expert in counter-memories and specializes in creating anti-memorials to traumatic geopolitical events. "In my anti-memorial for Nirbhaya, I reimagine her as Superheroine Nirbhaya, whose superpower is that she can eradicate rape and sexual violence in all its forms," Pritika continued.

The Nirbhaya Project also pays tribute to [Asha Devi](#), who Pritika calls the real Shero, the real Superheroine of Nirbhaya's story. The grieving but stoic and brave figure of Nirbhaya's mother, Asha Devi, has come to embody the new Mother India. Women flocked to her, to support her, to tell her their own stories of sexual violence, to stand with her. Nirbhaya was called India's daughter, and she herself said that while she lost her own daughter, she gained thousands of daughters in her fight for justice. Asha Devi and Badrinath Panday have founded the Nirbhaya Jyoti Trust to help other rape victims get justice.

The other Sheroes honored in the Nirbhaya Project are Seema Kushwara, the determined activist lawyer who worked pro bono to fight with Asha Devi to get justice for Nirbhaya; and Yogita Bhayani, the founder of PARI, People Against Rape in India, who supported Nirbhaya's parents in their fight for justice.

And lastly, the Nirbhaya Project pays tribute to the hundreds of thousands of demonstrators and protestors, who took to the streets to demand justice for Nirbhaya.

Pritika has appropriated the Anonymous mask which is an iconic symbol of protesters in the West and the Middle East, and to depict Nirbhaya as representing an anonymous multitude of Indian women who have experienced rape and sexual violence. Nirbhaya's mask is distinctly feminine and Indian, adorned with a bindi, kohl, nose stud, and lip color, compared to the Anonymous mask in the West which is male with a prominent mustache and Imperial beard.

"Imagine all the Indian women who have experienced sexual violence," Pritika says. "Now imagine if that multitude of women, hundreds of thousands of Anonymous Nirbhayas were to rise up, and give an ultimatum to the nation-state of India, what would that look like?" she asks.

"We are the Anonymous Nirbhayas. We are legion. We do not forgive. We do not forget. Expect us."

Knowing the dynamic, untapped potential of Indian women, expect a revolution.



Installation comprising of sheer fabric printed with large-scale drawing of Nirbhaya Superheroine.

Pritika Chowdhry

Nirbhaya Project

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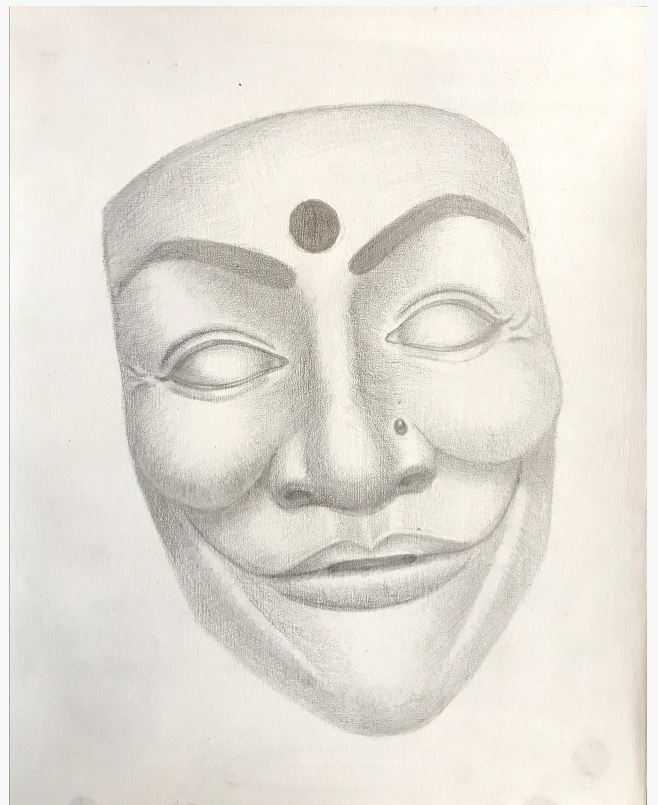


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Superheroine Nirbahaya's Mask

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