

Nanda Patel

Artist Portfolio

Artist Statement

I am Nanda Patel, an ethnic folk artist whose mixed-media work is shaped by a life lived across cultures and continents. Born in Kenya to British Indian parents, I experienced early displacement during Africanization, moving to India, then to London, and eventually settling in the United States. These layered cultural experiences — Kenyan, Indian, British, and American — form the foundation of my artistic practice.

I work with mixed-media collage, acrylics, oils, watercolor, and fabric to create deeply personal works that explore identity, memory, and healing. My art is informed by observation and lived experience, often incorporating Indian cotton saris—family heirlooms dating from 1949 to the present—which bring cultural symbolism, texture, and color into my work.

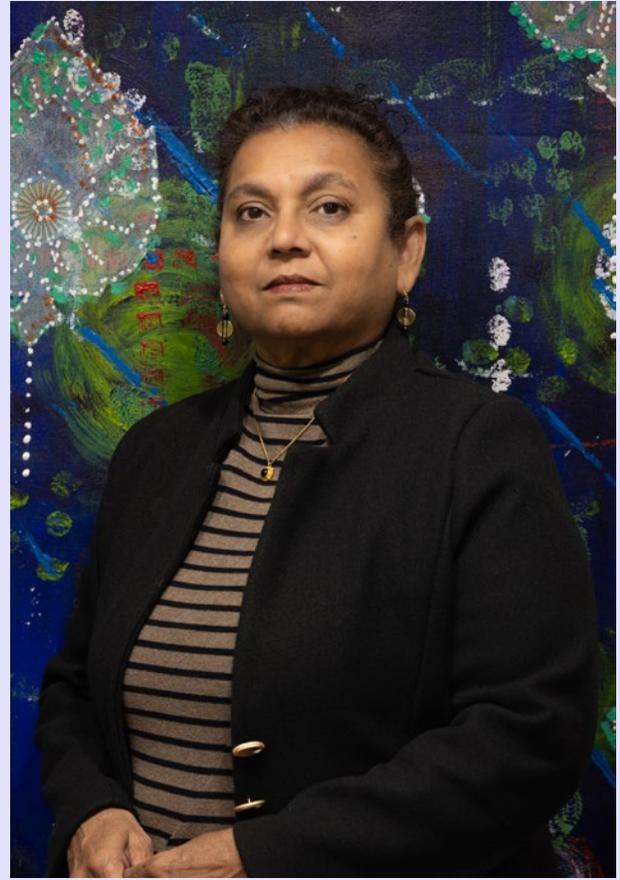
Themes of spirituality, nature, nonviolence, and human individuality run throughout my practice. Through my work, I invite reflection on displacement, resilience, diversity, and the possibility of peace.

Nanda Patel

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Solo Exhibitions

- 2009 ***East-West: My Journey***
Center for Cultural Arts – Gadsden, AL
- 2013 ***East -West: My Journey***
Walnut Gallery – Gadsden, AL
- 2015 ***The Lady in a Sari: The Art of the Sari***
Gadsden Museum of Art – Gadsden, AL
- 2024 ***Nanda's Journey***
Heritage Hall – Talladega, AL
- 2026 ***Karmic Circles***
Gadsden State Community College – Gadsden, AL
- 2026 ***East-West: My Journey***
Talladega College, Harvey Gallery – Talladega, AL
- 2028 ***Nanda's Journey (Pending)***
Carnegie Visual Arts Center – Decatur, AL

Bio

Nanda Patel's formative years were uniquely shaped by a multicultural upbringing. Born in Kenya, she experienced her early life immersed in two distinct cultures before moving to India at 14, then London at 16. These early exposures to Kenyan, Indian, and British cultures, combined with her subsequent life in the United States since 1981, residing in Gadsden, Alabama since 1987 – have profoundly influenced her artistic perspective.

Her passion for art began at a young age, painting with powdered watercolors on sugar paper and continuing through elementary and high school across three continents. This dedication persisted during her time at Indiana University in the USA, where she delved into various artistic disciplines including large-scale canvas painting, art history, and sculpting, significantly expanding her technical skills and artistic vocabulary.

Nanda's artistic pursuit continued even as her husband pursued his education, allowing her to paint while working. A pivotal moment in her artistic re-engagement occurred in 2007 when she met her mentor, an art professor at a local college in Gadsden, Alabama. She subsequently completed a three-year internship under his guidance, during which she honed her ability to integrate fabrics and paints to powerfully convey emotion and narrative on canvas. This period saw the creation of her seminal series, "East West, My Journey," a collection of six works that explored not just visual observation, but also the deep emotional resonances of personal and historical trauma, particularly the profound impact of displacement experienced during colonial times. These intense personal grievances found their essential expression through her artwork. The second exhibit she has now is "Karmic Circles". It is series of 10 paintings with mobile structures in a 3d form, that study the Atma, its work and its reasons to take a human form on earth.

Beyond creating art, she is actively involved in the art community. She regularly exhibits her work, undertakes commissioned projects, and teaches painting classes to students of all ages, encouraging them to paint from their hearts and souls. She also hosts unique 'Sari Experiences,' where she educates participants about Indian culture through her personal collection of over 30 heirloom saris, dating from 1949 to the present. These sessions delve into the art, history, weave, fabric types, geographical origins, traditional wearing methods, and symbolic color significance of each sari. Her artistic portfolio, cultivated between 1983 and 2026, comprises approximately 95 pieces. Currently, 'The Gallery at 808' features 65 pieces of her contemporary fine art.



Dharti

mixed media
5' diameter
2007

Our world is a human responsibility. Each one of its citizens is tied to the earth's umbilicus. To get the most out of our earth, we need to look after it as God can only hold it together. That will give the fruits that are deserved to the human race.



Transitions

mixed media

6' x 4'

2008

A Hindu marriage is where the matriarch holds the family together - being ambiguous, staying in the background. The artist has herself in a half drawn 'pardah'. But on the other side, as soon as she places her left foot outside the family she holds herself to serving her country - here, the USA. She shows freedom and focus on her duties. The artist clear of her duties to both, family and community.



Circles of Life

mixed media

30"x 30"

2024

The Atma (soul) comes with responsibilities that have to be fulfilled. The artist shows the duties in a form of a circle and sees it float away as soon as duties are completed.



My Atma and Its Hemispheres

mixed media
6' diameter
2008

In Gadsden, the Artist portrays herself as a culturally diverse body, both east and west as they are part of her! Dogwoods represent Alabama and its spirituality.



The Atma

*Its Karma and its connections
with 7 chakras, yoga, Dev Shakti:
Trimuthi and Bhramand*
acrylics, fabric, cords, and
embellishments on canvas
5'x6'
2026

Atma is the lotus signifying purity. Inherent Karma surrounds the Atma, the reason for it to be on earth. to be free from karmas and reach Bramand . it needs Yoga to help unravel the chakras that exist in the 'body'. To help understand the karmic bonds one has to free the mind for which one has spirituality served by Shaktis represented in the Trimurthi - the Trinity-Shiva, Vishnu, Bramah to cause a spiritual aura of non anger and reaction.. This peaceful environment causes to not react when one faces negative karma and thus free from Karma and achieve Brahmand, heaven.



**The Capsule
(For Our Eyes Only)**

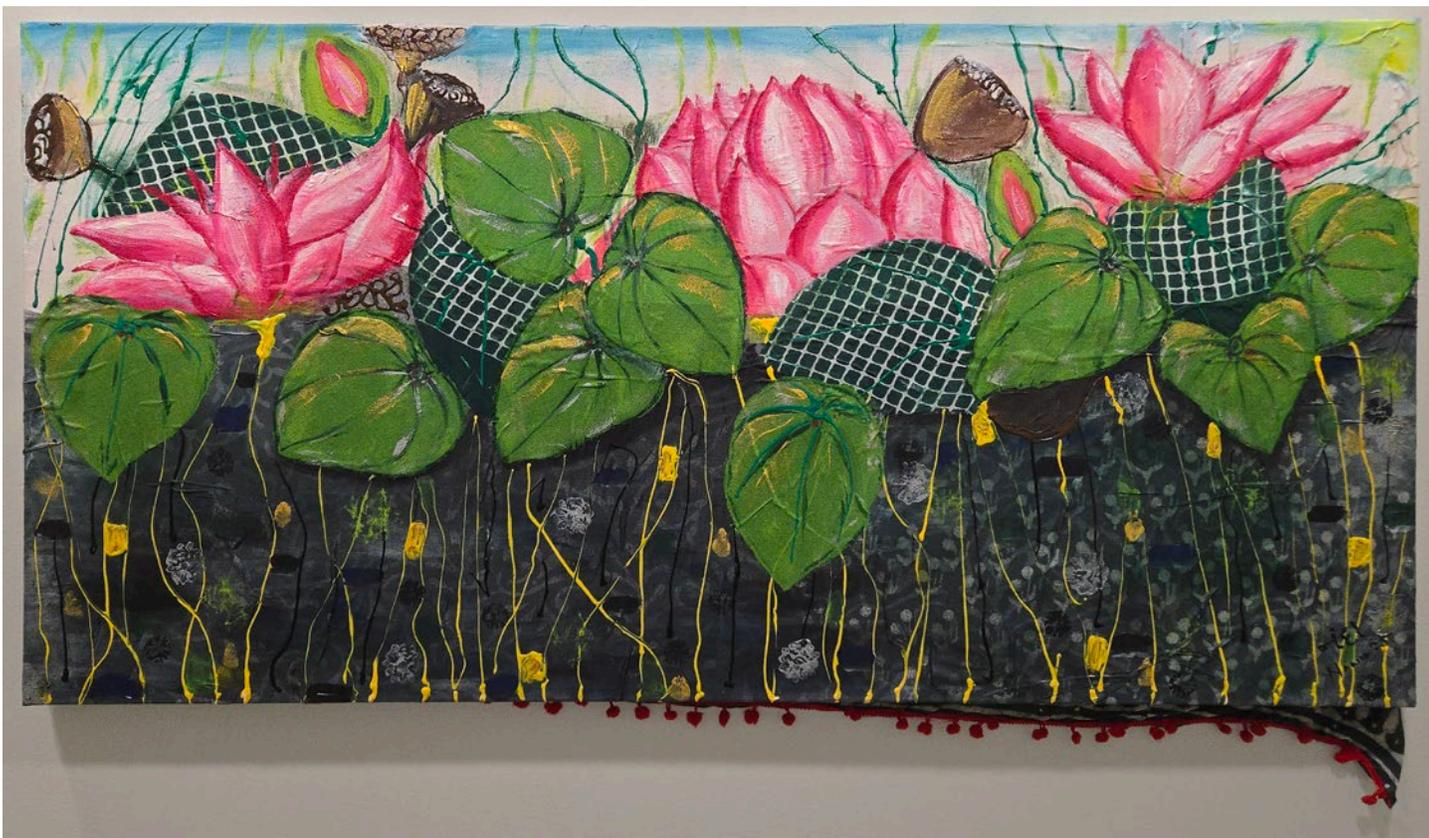
acrylics, gold foil, and fabric
36" x 24"
2025

The artist has taken discrimination and reflected it through the eyes of the people. As different as we are, on this earth, if we could not see the color, creed, size, shape and age, our initial thought of someone as being different goes away. The artist has experienced and felt this to the highest levels.



Angels
mixed media
53" x 64"
2025

Angelic structures carrying the artist-mother's soul



The Pond

mixed media
48" x 24"
2025

This piece represents the muck in which the lotus grows! The plentiful muck, represents the labor force giving the few lotuses - the successful few, the glory of success. The Artist cares to remember the work force with which our world grows and barely gets remembered, thought of, or appreciated. 40-44% of the USAs work force is low paid.



GauMata Grazing on Western Pastures

mixed media
24" x 36"
2024

The artist is represented by gua (cow)/mata (mother) who came to graze in the west but gave as much, if not more, back. The artist reminds the western world that displacement is a part of life over centuries. But the results are that the displaced mostly give back, represented here as greenery, mountains, and beauty.



Layers of Life

mixed media
66" x 64"
2024

The Artist shows Life in a series of layers - the Art starts on the bottom right corner with a green, lush and productive life (flowers, butterflies) which then lead into layers that shed duties and start seeing an emptiness and dependency - medication. At the mid-point, the soul then becomes a number, reaching to where we all go- a hand. To the artist's mind, it is the Brahmand. The artist represents souls moving away in the form of circles.



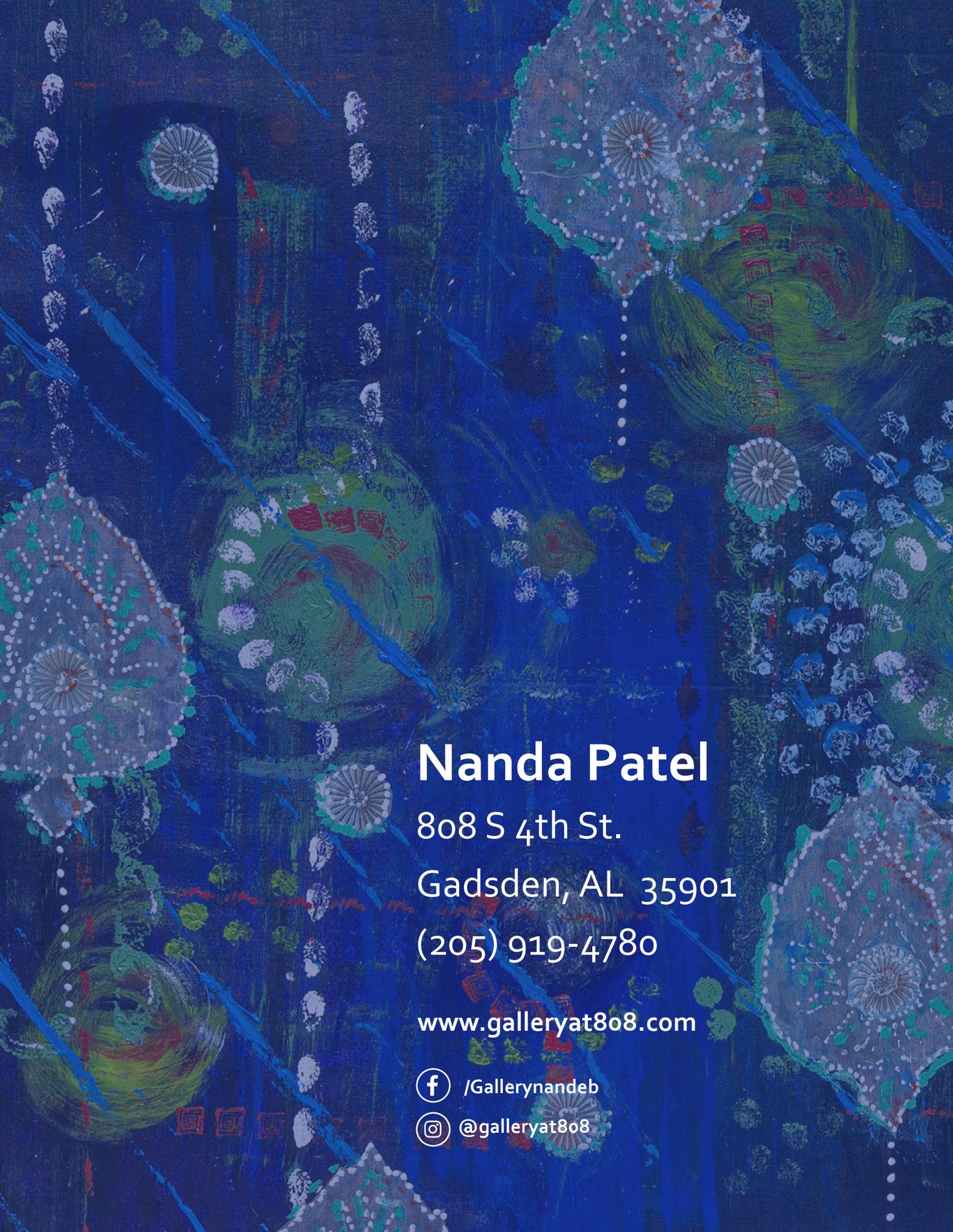
Human Grid

mixed media

48" x 36"

2023

A social circle, small or big has a tendency to clone (the grids), to continue belonging, which is a known phenomenon, but if one was to leave that group in which one wants to belong and become independent of others, one finds one self being like an amoeba (the free formed collage)- free to reflect (mirrors) and learn from what one's true self is.

An abstract painting featuring a dark blue background with vibrant green and white circular motifs, some resembling sunbursts or flowers. The composition is layered with various textures and colors, including streaks of blue and green, and small white dots. The overall effect is a rich, textured, and somewhat chaotic visual field.

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