

VRINDAVAN SOLANKI

Artist Statement



Vrindavan Solanki's artistic journey began in the 1960s at MS University, Baroda, where he studied under stalwarts like KG Subramanyan and NS Bendre. Encouraged by his mentors, Solanki held his first solo exhibition at Mumbai's Jehangir Art Gallery in 1969. With every painting sold, that moment marked the beginning of his lifelong devotion to art. "Mumbai made me an artist," he often says, crediting the city for launching his career.

Solanki is best known for his poignant depictions of the Rabari tribals—nomadic cattle-rearers of Gujarat and Rajasthan. He is deeply inspired by their "innocence and purity," portraying both men and women with dignity and strength. In his eyes, Rabari women are central to their communities—confident figures who manage businesses and ensure survival through hard work and resilience.

His creative process is deeply intimate. "You have to talk to your work," he says. Sometimes the canvas resists, demanding a pause before returning with renewed energy. Parting with finished works feels like saying goodbye to family, pushing him into an emotional lull—one he escapes by starting a new piece. "There is no end to creativity," Solanki believes, a sentiment that fuels his admiration for Picasso.

Working up to 12 hours a day, Solanki produces around 30–40 pieces annually. While Rabaris remain his muse, his subjects also span the urban and rural—capturing the life of New York, the old quarters of Ahmedabad, and the vibrant street workers of Mumbai.