

SUDARSHAN SHETTY

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Folk art: sculptor Sudarshan Shetty boards the Rolls-Royce Art Programme

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Artist Sudarshan Shetty is to create a mixed-media sculpture and video work for the Rolls-Royce Art Programme. *Courtesy Rolls-Royce*

When he was young, Indian artist Sudarshan Shetty went to see an exhibition featuring four Rolls-Royce cars belonging to the late Maharaja Bhavnagar, Governor of Madras from 1948 to 1952. 'It's a memory that has stayed with me,' recalls the 55-year-old. 'It sparked an interest in looking back to different times in India's history.' Lucky then, that Shetty is the first Indian artist to be commissioned for the Rolls-Royce Art Programme, which to date has worked with the likes of Angela Bulloch, Isaac Julien and Ugo Rondinone.

Shetty's work, which will be unveiled in Mumbai on 5 November before moving to New Delhi, consists of a two-channel film anchored by two wooden sculptures, inspired by a folk tale from South India. It's sure to be a hit in country where, says the artist, 'owning a Rolls is the pinnacle of luxury'.

This month, Shetty took a research trip to Goodwood in Sussex, to Rolls-Royce's headquarters. 'The people who work there are masters of their craft, working both with their hands and with the latest technologies,' he says. 'I was inspired by how

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many parts come together on the assembly line in the creation of one car.' Shetty draws parallels with his own work; he has spent three decades creating sculpture, film and mixed media works out of a huge range of materials, both new and found.

Shetty is also curator of this year's Kochi-Muziris Biennale, which takes place in Kerala this December. Now in its third year, 25 artists, as well as poets, dancers and musicians are involved so far.