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Art Observer

Monthly Art Reflections

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Tribute

Akbar Padamsee

(1928-2020)

Last month saw the demise of Artist Akbar Padamsee, who has been rated in the art world as one of the pioneers of Modern Indian art and who had managed to remain fiercely experimental and individualistic in his output. Known to have excelled in all genres of Indian art, ranging from oils to plastic emulsion to water colour, printmaking, sculpture, computer graphics, and photography, he is known to have excelled in all of them. In his early years, the works of this master were expressed in landscapes that depicted a quasi-spiritual style of depiction. His oils have been noted for their depth and intensity as also luminescence while his drawings exuded grace. Known for his choice of sombre hues, he imbued his works with a rich poetic quality. An artist who has ridden across all genres, Padamsee even tried his hand at film making which were animated with his geometric drawings. His later works were around the human figure.

The late artist was the winner of several prestigious awards both national and international, including the Padma Bhushan in 2010, the Lalit Kala Akademi Medal, the JD Rockefeller Foundation (1965), the Lalit Kala Ratna Puraskar in 2004 and the Kailash Lalit Kala Award in 2010. The artist passed away in Coimbatore at his residence.

Image courtesy : www.cpeart.in

Dev Borem Korum

11 January-9 February, 2020

@ Carpe Diem Art Gallery, Majorde

Dev Borem Korum - a tribute solo exhibition by prominent artist Mohan Naik opened. The concept behind the exhibition was Mohan Naik's way of expressing his gratitude to his fans and well wishers of over the years by dedicating this show to them and ensuring that the experience they have continues to remain both warm and fantastic. His latest collection of around 60 artworks includes oils as well as acrylics and for those familiar with his art, it brings a return of the brighter yellow and orange hues that his older works were renowned for. Detail in each work and his simplistic titling of the art allows everyone to understand and make personal sense and meaning when viewing the show. The event was well attended by supporters, family and by those who have had the pleasure of befriending this extremely humble and down to earth artist.

India's Signature Art Platform: India Art Fair

Art Observer Syndicate
artobserver.in@gmail.com

Photo : Neha Nagpal

The India Art Fair, Delhi 2020 is a reflection of the country's fast-developing art scene. Like other years, the Fair this time, drew together galleries, artists, private foundations, cultural events and art shows both indoors and outdoors. By its very nature, the Fair had brought together local and international art lovers to enjoy the latest developments in Indian as well as South Asian art.

Some of the highlights of this year's showing included the works of Israeli artist Achia Anzi, who is supported by the Serendipity Arts Foundation. He presented an LED project composed of lines. Also, among outdoor projects were works inspired by the poems of Charles Baudelaire's collection of poems, Les Fleurs du Mal or The Flowers of Evil, and Anita Dube's metal sculpture. Aspects of modern life were exhibited in the works of the internationally acclaimed photographer Martin Purr while Farah Mulla presented an interactive installation. Of special interest was Rathin Burman's work 'Defunct Architectural Spaces.'

Photo : Neeraj Sharma

In its show this year, there were 210 gallery participants from 30 countries. Another highlight was that for the first time, visitors had the opportunity of taking guided tours around the exhibition. Offering a public platform for dialogues and discussions, India Art Fair featured a number of artist presentations, memorial lectures and conversations across the art world. Taking place in the newly envisioned Auditorium space, there was a programme celebrating critical experimentation and the incredible work of artists, curators, critics, collectors and institutions in India, South Asia

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Great Masters

Sparks in the Paintings

'I try to apply colors like words that shape poems, like notes that shape music.' - Joan Miró

Goldy Malhotra
goldymalhotra@gmail.com

Joan Miró passed through profound sadness in his youth. He always looked for some kind of tension in poetry, music, architecture and sounds in the environment, such as creaking of wooden cartwheels, footsteps, cries in the night, crickets. Interestingly Miró saw life in every object be it a matchbox, cigarette or a book and thought that these objects contain a secret life much more intense than certain humans. He found a pebble on the beach more in motion than the people bathing there. These kind of movements that he considered endless, were translated on his canvases resembling sparks flying into space.

Join Miró considered his studio like a kitchen garden where like a gardener he pruned to permit the plants to grow. He believed in working with great patience and permitted the things to take a natural course. Grafting, watering and waiting for plant to give fruit and then watch the fruit ripe was a process that he allowed to happen to his creation on canvas. More than the form on the canvas it was the spark that it gave which compelled him to look at his piece of art again and again and enjoy it differently every time. In his words, 'More than the picture itself what counts is what it throws off, what it exhales. It doesn't matter if the picture is destroyed. Art can die, what matters is that it should have sown seeds on the earth. A picture must be fertile. It must give birth to a world'.

One can see this in *Harlequin's Carnival* painted by him in 1924-25, every object in the painting is in a set motion and giving a rhythmic moment that does not permit the eye to rest at all.

According to Miró, you should be able to discover new things every time you see it. But you can look at a picture for a week and never think of it again. You can also look at a picture for a second and think of it all your life. That was Joan Miró whose paintings release sparks when you observe them.

Harlequin's Carnival, 1924-25, by Joan Miró Image Courtesy www.Joan-Miro.net

Riya gets the Prime Minister's National Children's Award

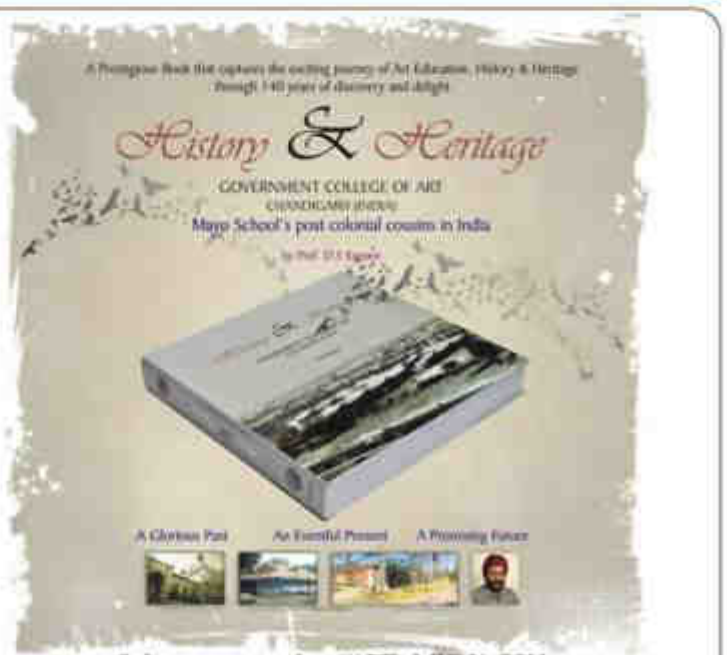
Riya Jain was honored with the Prime Minister's National Bal Shakti award at Rashtrapati Bhavan by Honorable President Ramnath Kovind. She met Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi at the Prime Minister's residence on January 24 and attended the parade in Delhi on January 26.

For this award, 49 children are selected from all over the country, out of which Riya has been selected from Madhya Pradesh. Riya has received this award in the field of arts and culture.

Riya Jain of St Joseph's Co Ed, Bhopal with Honorable President Ramnath Kovind

'I was overjoyed to meet the young budding painter Riya Jain today. Riya has already won global recognition for her work and we wish her all success in the years to come'.

Narendra Modi
@narendramodi Jan 24



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On 26-27 January 2020 Artists celebrated the spirit of Republic Day by holding Live Painting Workshop at Rose Garden Under Pass, Sector-17, Chandigarh, It was organised by Chandigarh Lalit Kala. In Picture : Rajesh Siwach

Live painting by artist Anjali Mittal on 16th January 2020 during 'Triumph of Masterwork: Our National Pride- edition IV' an art exhibition of paintings & Sculptures (3 Jan 18 Jan) by Curator Kishore Labar & NDMC was held at Janpath Subway inner circle, Cannaught Place, New Delhi.
In picture : Anil Tati, Kishore Labar, Anjali Mittal and Gurdeep Singh .

In the World of Art, Monika Chugh organised her 1st Solo Show of water colours on 17-19 January, 2020 at Artmosphere Gallery, Ludhiana.

Central District Team, Delhi organized a voter awareness programme **'Matdata Mahotsav at Ramlila Maidan'**, Near Delhi Gate, New Delhi on 02.2.2020 prior to the upcoming assembly elections 2020. The programme was inaugurated by the Chief Guest Dr. Ranbir Singh, IAS, Chief Electoral Officer, Delhi and Ms. Nidhi Srivastava, IAS, DM, Delhi. Live painting, kite flying and other cultural programmes were held. The programme was curated by Mr. Kishore Labar. More than thirty senior and upcoming artists participated in the live painting and expressed themselves on canvas highlighting the importance of voting in a democratic process of elections. Their paintings were displayed at the PWD voting booth on 08.02.2020.

Celebrating India-Bangladesh Printmaking

23-31 January, 2020 — Art Observer Syndicate
@ Visual Art Gallery & Open Palm Court, New Delhi — artobserver.in@gmail.com

Printmaking is a fascinating medium of creative expression that has not only survived the test of time but also evolved through many cultural and technological changes. However, this great tradition of art, which requires a high level of expertise, has been largely overlooked by the art world and has been unknown to the Indian public as an autonomous medium of art. It was imperative to bring this medium to limelight and build larger narratives that allow printmaking practitioners from different parts of the world to come together.

This was the idea behind the cross border art project, Confluence: Celebrating India - Bangladesh Printmaking. Organised by The Art Route and co curated by Prof. Nisar Hossain (Dean, Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh) and Lubna Sen, (Art Curator and Founder of The Art Route, New Delhi, India) the project was under the able advisory of "The Multiple Encounters" Group of printmakers comprising Ananda Moy Banerji, Dattatreya Apte, Kavita Nayar, Moti Zharotia and Sushanta Guha.

Nisar Hossain, Dean, Faculty of Fine Art, University of Dhaka and Co-Curator of the Confluence; talks about the printmaking in Bangladesh:

'Printmaking in Bangladesh is profoundly enriched by the contribution of several internationally acclaimed Bangladeshi artists who have carved a niche for themselves in the global art world. We are fortunate today to inherit an aesthetic, which is an amalgamation of the West, the Far East and our own heritage. Along with them several talented upcoming artists have extended the dialogue further through their enquiry into the medium. The show gave the viewer an opportunity to witness this eclectic mix that defines printmaking in Bangladesh today'.

Ms. Shruthi Issac, Director-Collection Museum Initiative said:

'The Exhibition makes possible the extending of educational and democratic opportunities to both, the uninitiated and the enthusiast alike the alternative possibilities in art-making. To the uninitiated, this significant Exhibition of selected works allowed the exploration of various printmaking traditions and the unparalleled contribution to this field by the Bengal Master Somnath Hore'.

Ananda Moy Banerji, India, talked about the project, as a member of the advisory committee:

'True to the word 'confluence', which was a place where two rivers met, this exhibition had a fine selection of 12 artists, each from India and Bangladesh who presented a confluence of body, mind and souls. Art, culture and sports the three major wings of a great flight between any two borders and our 'confluence' of show of prints has certainly opened up a pragmatic and broad perspective'.

'While art can exist without a market, artists clearly can't survive without it. Confluence was a sincere effort from our part to bring printmaking out of its relative obscurity and ambiguity. As thought, leaders of the art world, it is our responsibility to promote artists who, through their lifelong commitment, explored the unique creative potential of this medium and elevated it as an independent art form', said Lubna Sen.

Left to right - Eminent International Printmaker- Anupam Sud, Chairman Lalit Kala- Uttam Pacharne, Minister Press Bangaldesh High Commission - Farid Hossain, Chairman and Trustee Asian Foundation - Rajeev Sethi and Director NGMA - Adwaita Gadanayak

Lubna Sen , Curator from India , Nisar Hossain , Curator from Bangladesh

The Mysterious Strength of Anthropomorphism : A Lighted Installation

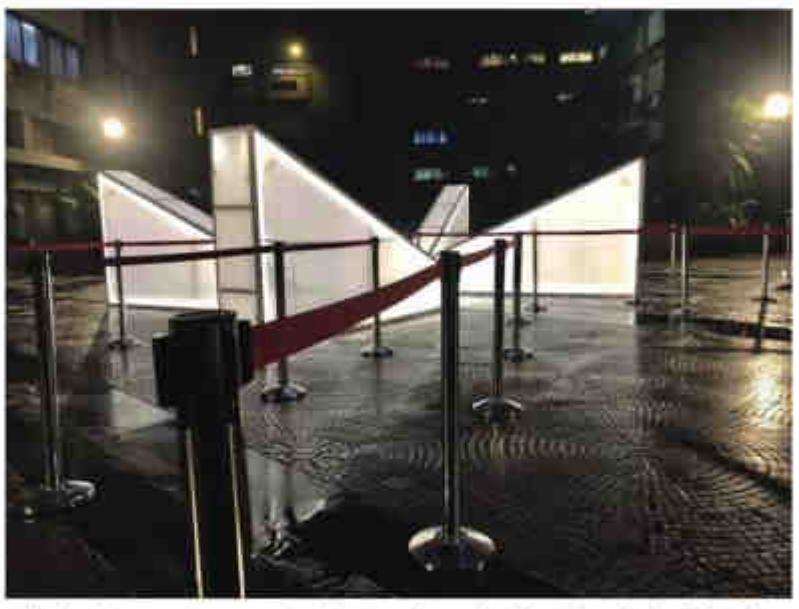
1-10 February, 2020
@ India Habitat Centre, New Delhi

The recent draw at Delhi's premier art gallery was a light installation by artist Kisalay Vora. Translating the concept of 'Improjection' or a method for projecting one's feelings on an environment, Vora had gripped viewers' imaginations with a unique line-based creation that was best viewed under lights, at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi, where it was on view from 28th January till 10th February.

The work examined newer ways of using Art as a therapy for the bruised. In its manifold layers, the artwork reveals the importance of the psychological impact of art. To make his idea clearer to even the lay viewer, the artist has chosen as his art tool, 'The Line' which has been arranged in several configurations with the lines crossing and disseminating, giving the impression of a union of sorts, when actually, the lines lead nowhere.

The artist states that his Muse for his creations is the power of music, artistic sources and literature. Stirred by the idea of bringing art to the public, Kisalay began reaching out to youth through his creations, by adorning the walls of Mumbai's nightclubs, followed by an iconic installation in stainless steel set up at the Essel Group's Fun Republic premises.

An artist who likes his viewers to come back for a re-look at his works, he urges them to view art in relaxed and conducive environments in order to derive its full potential. Vora, a radiate of the JJ school of Art, has made a career for himself in Advertising before turning his sights to his first love, creative art, where he has today, established himself as a master who has been acclaimed both at home and abroad. His current work inspired his viewers with a telling message: 'Lines are there to guide, not divide.'



Kisalay Vora presents an experiential art sculpture that is best viewed when lighted up

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Art Under a Joint Umbrella

A Pan-India Art Show

8-14 January, 2020 Subhra Mazumdar

@ Lalit Kala Akademy, New Delhi subhra.mazumdar@gmail.com

A group show of 25 artists pan-India was held at the Lalit Kala Galleries 1-4, aptly titled 'Contemplative 24x7' displaying an array of talents. Heightening the appeal of the show was an inspiring message by Shri Pacharne, Chairman, LKA. The works of Anjali Thapa had a realistic appeal with strong brush strokes, rendered in a brilliant palette. B.R. Bodade, of Indore showed the tonal strength of white in his graphic forms, while artist Jayprakash Jagtap created unmatched softness of form in his graceful feminine forms, harking back to another era. Kanu Patel essayed in strong horizontal and diagonal canvas division with linear patteran in the forefront of his figurative backdrop. While spatial division marked the latter's intensity, with Kishore Roy, the emphasis was on a fresh take of the Krishna Leela theme in a oblong framework Artist Lomesh Bodhakar of New Jersey USA, added feminine figures with narrative undertone alongside. One must make a mention of artist Madhvi Sharma's mixed media work which exhibited a delightful experimental side. Mukesh Bijole manipulated the miniature art to a new height in the lot of intricasy and abstraction, Nawal Kishore gave rhythm and movement through a cubist style to his merging colourful forms. Ranmachandra Kharatmal's storytelling narrative on canvas had several admirers, as also Artist Ritu Chopra's landscape of mystical largeness. In Prakash Borude's works one witnessed the eternal attractions of city forms even as Shubhada Bhosale managed to glorify youth and femininity with her expertise. The rhythmic content of the works of Sushila Bodade celebrated youth in a flux and Varsha Kharatmal depicted lotus forms with sensitivity. For artist Vijay Jadhav, child forms held a fairytale oeuvre. Kharatmal visualised the many possibilities of the lotus form. The sculptures in wood, stone and mixed media displayed intense malleability and powerful expression even as one witnessed the works of artists Ganesh Sharma, D S Mayoor, Jitendra Sutar, Jitendra Vegad, Umesh Vharkat. While clean lines were visible in Sachin Waikar's work, one admired the composition of Vinayak Rampure, movement in Jitendra Sutan's horses and the rhythm in Kapil Kapoor's polymer and metalic works. The exhibition drew positive reviews from all quarters.

Artist Vijender Sharma and Nawal Kishore

Chairman Lalit Kala- Uttam Pacharne and Participants

Portrait of the Spirited

1 February, 2020

@ Amphitheatre, Indian Habitat Centre, New Delhi

An on-the-spot portrait painting of artists, organized by members of the College of Art Alumni, took the city by storm

Innovation and acumen went hand-in-hand at Amphitheatre, Indian Habitat Centre when a group of established artists who call themselves the 'Cloud in the Box' (CITB) group formed by members of the Alumnae of College of Art, held an on-the-spot portrait painting of famed artists in situ, in a live show, infused with the core objective of initiating and enhancing dialogues between art, its maker and the viewers. This organization has been in the forefront of holding unique art programmes on live stage platforms earlier, but the portrait painting event was a one-of-a-kind, even for the organizers.

This pioneering art initiative held in February, saw famed personalities, such as Sonal Sehgal, actor and author, Subir Malik of Parikarma fame, as subjects for portraits sitting on stage and being painted by a group of chosen artists Amit Srivastava, Vandana Kumari, Tirthankar Biswas, Sandeep Kumar, Kamal Rao, and Javed Mulani, in full view of an admiring public, who too, took up the initiative and began sketching their own masterpieces.

The event had drawn together an audience of doctors, IT professionals, engineers, hotel industry professionals, fashion and finance honchos as also leading art practitioners, such as Anandmoy Banerjee, Niren Sengupta, Abhinav Dhar, Mala Sapra, Jayesh Desai, Naved Akhtar, Prashant Solomon, Naren Kailmal, Adit Dave, Hemant Khandelwal and Probir Dutt, among others.

Following the runaway success of this maiden venture, the organizers have announced that the forthcoming event will be held for a day, across five months , culminating in a five-day Art Exhibition, at the same venue. The event was supported by IHC, Chintels India, Cottons & Satins and Old School Films.

The next event is scheduled for 7th March, 2020, so keep the date free and come and try your hand at discovering your hidden talent.

Photo : Neeraj Sharma

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India's Signature Art Platform: India Art Fair

and across the globe. Also, BMW Group's Head of Cultural Engagement, Dr. Thomas Girst, and Curator of The Andy Warhol Museum, Jose Carlos Diaz, shared lesser-known facets of Andy Warhol for visitors. The iconic 1979 BMW MI Art Car which was hand painted by Warhol, was on exhibition.

The Indian participants who caught a great deal of attention included Sudhir Patwardhan's 'Light Rain (2019) presenting a rain-washed cityscape with an autobiographical figure with his characteristic shoulder droop. The IAF's façade, covering three of its exhibition tents depicted Sameer Kulavoor's work, titled 'This is Not a Still Life'. An interesting input was 'Pichvai Miniatures' that introduced artwork based on Rajasthan's tradition. The other worldly looking sculpture of Olafur Eliasson, from Berlin, carried forward the artist's theme of spatial experiments that prodded viewers to look for multiple perceptions.

Finally, the bookshop and café on the Fairgrounds had something for everyone to savour and for friends and acquaintances to meet and exchange notes with one another.

Mesmerised by the changing colours of Olafur Eliasson

Delhi Crafts Council @ IAF

'We are always excited to be at the art fair, this year too the experience was wonderful. There is a constant stream of appreciative public, including children. The IAF team was as helpful as always'. *-Radhika Bharat Ram, Hon. General Secretary, Delhi Crafts Council*

'We at Shrine Empire had a superb experience at the fair with a great number of people who visited and showed interest in the practice of the artists we were showing. There were a lot of questions, interest and love towards the artworks and it ended up being quite a fulfilling experience'. *-Anahita Taneja,* Director, Shrine Empire

ZOCA-Zone of Contemporary Art @ IAF

'We have been exhibiting at the India Art Fair since long. Our experience with the fair has been very enriching. Art Fair is a good occasion to see a great variety of art, meet professionals from India and abroad and expand our network. It was also good to be on a platform with institutions and museums that share similar visions. It was good to see a great number of public and art enthusiasts from the city making visits'. *-Dr. Chithra K. S, Curatorial Associate.* The Guild Art Gallery, Mumbai & Alibaug

'Our experience with IAF-2020 was indeed great with wide appreciation from Art Fraternity about our Artist selection, works and Display. Also few of our Artist artworks, are innovative and never seen before contemporary works. We would love to see more contemporary artwork focus at the show going forward'. *- Sagar Metta Contemporary*

'Its quite admirable to see how the India art fair is growing every each year, giving a great platform to all sorts of galleries, its artists and the art business in an exceptional way. We are very happy to be involved in such great event and looking forward to grow together with its progress. Wishing every one a great success and already looking forward for the next fair to come'. Cheers! *-Shirin Bagora ZOCA - zone of contemporary art*

The Guild Art Gallery @ IAF

The Symbolism of Artist J. Swaminathan

A retrospective exhibition of J. Swaminathan's exhibits his creative from the sixties to the nineties era

23-30 January, 2020 Subhra Mazumdar

@ Saffronart, New Delhi subhra.mazumdar@gmail.com

Known for his symbolic representation of nature through the basic colours of yellows, reds, greens and browns, Swaminathan plays the game of creation in his art. Known for his geometric forms of mountain scapes, and birds paired down to their extreme finesse, always leaves a deep impression on the psyche of the viewer. The images of birds, flying rock, his most chosen symbols were not idle portraitures, but a symbolic offering of man's urge to free himself from all limitations. Thus the colour of his forms emote a psychological energy through them and appear to be a thrust into space. Besides paintings, Swaminathan was also known for his water colour works. Images of his pen and ink works are also on display at this exhibition. The years that the artist had spent in Bhopal with the tribal art museum and interaction with tribals are featured in oil on canvas works, as well. The exhibition is a select lot of just 32 works but each one of them is iconic and characteristic of all that Swaminathan's art stood for. This exhibition has been sponsored by Saffronart Mumbai and was held at the Saffronart Gallery in Delhi

Jagdish Swaminathan, Untitled, 1971 Image courtesy Saffronart

Editorial

Dear reader,

If India is one of the youngest nations as per number of youngsters in population, let us not ignore the number of creative young minds and hands all set to express. No wonder art galleries are mushrooming all over, particularly in the bigger cities. Many art lovers are not gallery hoppers and we feel, Art that is well presented is better enjoyed and it must reach the true 'Rasik'. Art Observer is one such step in the same direction.

We feature a potpourri of art, artists from past and present, art patrons and art institutions that have created history.

Our gallery-trotting contributors have covered The India Art Fair 2020, India-Bangladesh Printmaking Exhibition, Art Fair Spain and many new and notable works, exhibitions and events.

One of the oldest art galleries in Delhi- Dhoomimal has its own rich history that Mohit Jain has shared in conversation. Old masters' works have a lot to inspire, be it Joan Miró's sparks on canvas or Swaminathan's spiritual journey through colour and canvas. An ancient Institution with glorious heritage has been well worded by D S Kapoor.

In this promising year 2020, we can't ignore the younger generation and feel highly responsible to make sure that they are given the right guidance, direction and above all freedom of expression. Child Art will always be of special concern for us.

I hope that this issue inspires you to join us in this exercise of art appreciation. Welcome to our introductory issue of Art Observer!

Goldy Malhotra

Child Art

Teaching Art in Schools

Art has a big role in defining us as human being and it is important to be reminded what it means to be human in present time.

Goldy Malhotra
goldymalhotra@gmail.com

The works of artists have always influenced many and sometimes given a new direction. A question that keeps bothering many is if Art can be taught and how can it be taught in a school. The simple answer is yes, it should be a part of curriculum because it is as important a subject as science and the rest of humanities for the cognitive development of student. Art when integrated with other subjects plays a major rale in making the learning enjoyable and easier. The latest pedagogical skills are using Art appreciation as a tool to be used by innovative teachers.

Art as such connot be taught, but it can be fostered or helped along. Artistic ability includes skills and inborn talent to create fine works of art: painting, drawing, sculpting etc. Creative ability is the skill and talent to use our imagination to create and solve. A better artist is creative but you do not have to be artist to be creative.

The draft for National Education Policy 2019 mentions very significant role of Art integration into all subjects as a teaching methodology. Art appreciation may simply convey that it has something to do with complementing a piece of art, where as art has played very significant role throughout our history. Cave drawing of the early civilizations reveal that without formal written language, a lot was conveyed about everyday life full of struggles and successes.

Art as a subject makes the child aware of new terms of art, art movements, about the artists and their styles. It also develops a habit of exploring to attain more knowledge. Art fires the imagination of young students and they start creating with the help of visual inspiration. The urge to create prepares to handle practical challenges and ultimately boosts the self confidence in a child. Getting socially connected also becomes easier when students start appreciating the artworks of others.

Art education at an early school level is primarily giving basic knowledge of the tools and how to use them, be it a pencil, crayon colour or brush. The child should be given full freedom to explore new way of using these tools to express himself. Teacher should never insist on drawing correctly and be rigid about shapes and colours. Children live in their own world full of fantasy and their imagination is free from any compulsion and purity of their thought process can weave dreams that take solid shape when these children grow up and acquire their own style. In some of the schools that believe in progrcessive education, students are never given any theme or specific instruction before starting their work in art class. The results are amazing. Paul Klee, Joan Miro and many of our established Indian artists have brought the child out of them to express on canvas. Then, why are we making our children get chained in the forms, style and frustrating steps of learning how to draw or paint ? Every subject has formula for problems, where as Art has independent approach to problems. You can teach students about paint and brushes but artists are not restricted to material.

To nurture Art in school, enough exposure has to be given and the key word is 'Freedom' that can make a child bring an artist out of him. Anybody can learn how to draw, how to mix colours and how to handle skills. What can't be taught is the spark of creativity that sets off one artist from another. The only tool for that is total freedom of expression. Set their imagination free!

Suaesha Arora, Raghubir Singh Junior Modern School, New Delhi

Divissha Chandani, Shefali's Art Classes, Mumbai

The Secret of Mandalas

Sumret Singh
paintingsbysimretsingh@gmail.com

A dense cloud of darkness was hovering around the eyes.....soon the cloud grew vast and the darkness enveloped my entire self, transforming into a murky pit in which the mind and body seemed sinking- upside down, like probably the soul must be falling into death.

Witnessing once more, bereavement in the family, the curse of death as ultimate fate of life was cramming the mind...

Being the hand of the artist, it did not fail to mark the dark pit with acrylic on a small canvas, ever ready to be used, on the drawing table. The eye stayed caught in the depth of the pit for quite some while. However, before too long, the fingers of the artist, naturally urging for more space to spread colour, instinctively moved to touch the titanium white empty space of the canvas. The contrast of the pitch dark acrylic spot with the fine, matte whiteness of the canvas caught deep attention... the subconscious was in process of comparing white around the pitch dark dot of death to the vastness of life. The jaw dropped in awe with thought that if the mere spot is the death and the rest of the canvas is life, then how much of it have I lived? And, if this white can be painted gold...

Those moments of realisation about the mortality of life were thus followed by the realisation of life lived dejectedly, in limitation of thoughts and emotions. Wasn't the possibility of engaging in it, absorbing it and breathing it extended through the vast space of sheet and probably beyond...?

The hand had again reached the canvas and drew a circle in gold around the dot, thinking, maybe that's what my state of existence ought to be if I have to cherish life before death a desire flashed in a mind not so ambitious, nor too desirous but a little inquisitive to sense self and the moments more closely than ever...

Simret Singh 'Peacock Feather' Acrylics on Canvas 26x 36 Inches

Simret Singh 'Birth of the Peacock Mind Games' Oil on Canvas 20x26 Inches

Simret Singh 'In Confusion of Eras' Oil on Canvas 25x36 Inches

The space between the circle and the dot seemed gross and uncomfortable there was something in that space which was hindering my being to advance from the dot to the golden circle of seemingly more alive moments of life... A deep, constant and perpetual self-speculation helped reveal and make the mind accept various fears and habits which were apparently hindering the cherishing of present moments and were paralysing capacity or desire to execute the required tasks within them. To document this realisation, the burnt umber was thrown in between the dot and the golden circle.... Thin beams of gold slinked in the burnt umber... those seemed like rays of hope with the idea that clicked mind that overcoming the realised fears and habits was the path to joie de vivre as simple as that.

It's a known fact that fears are nothing but preconceptions formed through known and unknown factors, which if overlooked or ignored can disperse. Fixing mind in framework of this idea recreated mode of interaction with the outer world it became a silent struggle against various limitations - against dismay of routines which seemed to have bound the time in restricted activities and thoughts, against interference and opinions of people who had intentionally or unintentionally bogged down my desire to grow and against pangs of regret about past incidents/present circumstances which had blown out the spark of life.... Overcoming fears was a task; and new ones kept arising as further questions and problems....to be resolved again and again, now and then.

It was understood that if I had to cross the ocean from the dot to the circle, various fears and habits would keep surfacing like sharks and I had to either swim below or beyond them, or to shoot them. Often I would draw designs in the dark patches of circles as steps to jump across the sharks between the circle and the dot - the new desire to live a fulfilled life for once, kept me going on. In the meantime, various other desires had to be discarded for they seemed more of hindrances to growth than a boost...It was like constantly clearing the web of confusion and dilemmas in mind and just moving ahead , totally focused on the islet to reach. The major push was willingness to do so. In a bit, that was the first time I put an art show, something I had wanted to experience since long, but couldn't till now. That was a real moment of living, joy and bliss. That was my first conscious encounter with life moments.

The aspiration had been achieved, the goodness of which became a motivation..... It was time to draw yet another circle beyond the first one, but this time between the first and the second circle, I drew a few lotus petals and some spirals crossing the new circle in rationale that the waters to cross maybe filthy but I have to cross them not fighting with sharks in agitation, but while receiving hindrances in grace - in beauty of the bridges in shape of the petals and in love which connotes the pink of the lotus. The mind felt transformation of personal nature - having grown more patient and calm; mind was adamant to undo the disincentives and grew confident in finding inspirations from within ever surfacing deterrents too. The journey to the outer world seemed to have become more beautiful and for one moment soul felt the awe at the idea of unimaginable extent of beauty that could be existing or could be created in the further space to live... The second circle was stretched...

The second circle sketched, surged in mind the fade images of mandalas. It was a eureka moment the moment of discernment of the meaning of Mandalas , till now known to me merely in their literal meaning in Sanskrit language as

Continue on Page 7

In Conversation

The Art Patrons

The Dhoomimal name is now touching eighty -three years of promoting contemporary Indian art, in this capacity a flagship enterprise within the fraternity, having witnessed the evolution and growth of art and institutions from their very inception within the country.

Goldy Malhotra
goldymalhotra@gmail.com

Established in pre-independence India by Ram Babu, the Dhoomimal was supported by stalwarts of the time, like B. C. Sanyal, Jaya Appaswamy, Jamini Roy, Sailoz Mukherjee and Nand Lal Bose and host of other, to be followed by generations after them.

Son Mohinder Jain with wife Sushma carried forward the same passion, standing steadfast in their dedication and support as major players in the capital's art world. Young artists of the sixties and seventies, recognised as Masters of today, had all been given their first solo shows at Dhoomimal. This is true of painters, sculptors and graphic artists, all of who were given equal sway in what was probably the most alive art hub of the country at the time.

As the third generation, Mohit Jain, Director DAC, recalls how the art scenario of time was a passion engendering investment at altogether different levels, instead of being beleaguered by solely economic concerns.

Q. 1. *When did you understand the nature of your father's profession?*

Mohit Jain : I was 5 or 6 years old when I started visiting the gallery and found the environment amazing but as I grew older, I saw the artists getting loud in a group, arguing, smoking, drinking and that put me off. I never wanted to run my father's business. Destiny had something else in the store for me. My father's demise, when I was only 16 made me rethink and I started joining my mother at work and got into this Art world.

Mahender Jain

Mohit Jain

Dhoomimal Art Centre, New Delhi

Image courtesy DAC

Q. 2. *How do you see Dhoomimal different from the Art Galleries of that period?*

M. J. : Well, in Delhi there were not many galleries at that time and one of them was owned by a close relative only. In those days Art and artists mattered a lot and were the prime concern. The commercial side of it did not surface much, it came later.

Q. 3. *Name the trait that has helped you in running the family business.*

M. J. : My father had another business as well and through Art Gallery his main focus was on the upliftment of the artists. He always gave moral and financial support to many without making them feel needy. He was a kind of patron and encouraged them to continue their pursuit to attain certain goals.

My exposure to art and artists has sensitized to me on similar lines. I had the rare opportunities to meet great artists like G. R. Santosh, S. R. Bhushan, B. Prabha, B. Vitthal, Swaminathan, M. F. Husain, Shanti Dane, Bikas Bhatacharya and many more.

Q. 4. *Selling art is very different from selling any other commodity. Do you try to understand the psyche of an artist while buying and selling his art ?*

M. J. : I am the third generation in this line and from my grandfather's time, we have been compelled by the environment to understand the need of promoting younger artists who look for an opening. I make myself approachable and try to help the lesser known and upcoming artists to give them an appropriate platform.

Q. 5. *Do you remember any artist who has left an impression on your personality and made you a better collector or art dealer ?*

M. J. : Yes, G. R. Santosh. He was a very different kind of an artist, extremely humble, down to-earth and used to guide me in a very subtle manner.

Q. 6 *In the changing times, art has evolved a lot. How do you relate to the Contemporary Art ?*

M. J. : Well, it is taken long time for me to appreciate it, I believed in the principles of art in its creation and I found old master's works skill based. Lot of efforts were taken in establishing those individual styles, whereas now its all sacrificed. Some of the new works are also amazing but my favourite ones are still old works.

Q. 7. *Several Art Galleries are mushrooming, what is your reaction to this fast growth ?*

M. J. : It has both positive and negative impact, the positive side is that it is giving chance to many new artists and spreading awareness of art appreciation. The negative side is that due to the commercial angle it is misleading in the name of art. It has to be done very professionally with a deep passion for art and also understand it well. It has to be based on learning about Art.

Q. 8. *What should be the code of ethics in your trade ? Give a message to new gallery owners.*

M. J. : Be selective, do not rush to exhibit for the sake of running in a rat race and more importantly, never ridicule the work of any artist on display in another gallery. Always put passion before the commercial benefits.

Q. 9. *You have a rich collection from your grandfather, father and your own purchases. Mention your favourite piece in the collection.*

M. J. : It's a small work by Ram Kinker, an animal figure (monkey/dog). I have displayed it in my room at home.

Q. 10. *With so many art events, festivals and camps, how do you see the future of art in India ? Where do we stand at the international level ?*

M. J. : We have arrived at the international level. Last year (2019), we had our Indian Pavilion at Venice Biennale. The works of artists impressed the crowd. The best was that the works were dominated by the Indian ethos. We have made a massive impact and that is both satisfying and encouraging.

Bilash Bhattacharya

R K Raij

G R Santosh

M F Husain

Journey into the Artist's inner world

Suneet Madan
neet_k@yahoo.com

Aesthetically captivating piece of art has the power to evoke a stimulating dialogue with its audience, celebrating each moment of engagement and elevating it to a different metaphysical level, observes Suneet Madan

Freedom of expression is the paramount premise on which all forms of art thrive. An extension of the artist's inner world, canvas and colors take up various shapes and forms that are brought to life by the invisible threads that connect the audience with the thoughts of the artist. This emotional connection is a powerful way to convert the visual information into a lasting impression in the minds of the audience.

A constant, consistent and continuous flow in a painting is like those free-flowing evocative verses that have the capacity and capability of teleporting the viewer into an exploratory journey with enriching experience into a realm that is not entirely familiar to the creator of that piece of art. Everyone connects to art in a manner entirely dependent on their personal situations, experiences and emotional or physical limitations, oblivious of their presence and impact. These define their perspective, which could deviate from or align to the vision with which the artist approached the creation.

Maria Popova mentions "This is the power of art: The power to transcend our own self-interest, our solipsistic zoom-lens on life, and relate to the world and each other with more integrity, more curiosity, more wholeheartedness."

An artist, thus, should be more passionate about creating an empowering and intuitively creative experience, than to get distracted in the technique of execution.

It is common knowledge that art empowers the artist to express what cannot be conveyed with words. According to Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Germany's most famous poet and writer, "Art is the mediator of the unspeakable." Rightly so, there is a lot that can be said through art that cannot be put across through words. There are innumerable emotions that can be expressed through the canvas, which might not be entirely possible to verbalize.

A great deal is left to the imagination of the audience to interpret even while conveying one's own intent through the painting. For that matter, even the title of the painting holds huge scope for intense deliberation for its correlation with the painting. Many a times, the title is kept more self-explanatory, but it could also be a little abstruse or esoteric, depending on the intent of the artist. For instance, the title Fire and Ice, for the painting done by the author, is neither too leading nor too divergent.

Large-scale commercialization of art industry has been counter-effective to creation of a meaningful connect. Somewhere in the pursuit of generating larger numbers in shorter span, the soul of most artists is found to be amiss on their canvases. Very few contemporary artists have been able to reach the pinnacle, to share the platform with the likes of Raja Ravi Varma, Jamini Roy, Abanindranath Tagore.

Marshall McLuhan, known for his aphorisms stated "Art is anything you can get away with." There are a large number of modern day creations that are intellectually distant. There are even those that carry little aesthetic appeal, but their creators are able to slant their explanations with well-conceived theories to present themselves in the best possible light. Without the verbal explanations, they hold little emotional or cognitive value. At the same time, a masterpiece resonates with its audience and invites invigorating discussion and thoughtful engagement.

Suneet Madan 'Fire and Ice'
Mixed Media on Canvas 18 x 18 Inches

Examining only the process of creating an artwork, there is immense benefit that one can derive. As evidenced from numerous researches, art stimulates the neural pathways, raises the serotonin levels and thus enhances brain wave patterns and emotional development. Eric Jensen, in his book "Arts with the Brain in Mind", suggests that art nourishes the body systems and enhances the motor capacities, which are the driving forces behind learning.

Having personally experienced the healing capability of art on a number of occasions, there is strong acknowledgment of the transformative power of engaging in artistic pursuits. It can be challenging in the beginning, but with every passing minute, art acts as elixir and alleviates pain and stress, and replaces with inspiration and hope.

It may be worthwhile to keep a tab on your mental framework and the overall experience when you pursue an art activity, or while browsing through the displayed works of art, on what impresses or engages your senses next time you visit an art exhibition.

ART GALLERIES

Crayon Art Gallery, The Claridges Hotel, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Road, New Delhi-110011 www.crayonartgallery.com

Creativity Art Gallery, 6, Ground Floor, Hauz Khaz Village, New Delhi-110016 www.creativityartgallery.in

DAG
11, Hauz Khas Village,
New Delhi-110016
www.dagworld.com

Dhoomimal Art Centre, A8, Connaught Place, New Delhi-110001
www.dhoominalartcentre.com

Gallerie Alternatives, 102, DT Mega Mall, DLF City, Phase - I, Golf Course Road, Gurgaon-122002
www.galleriealternatives.com

Galerie Art Eterne, L 1/1A, DDA Flats, Kalkaji, New Delhi-110019
info@gaeindia.com |

Gallery Art Positive, F 213/ B Lado Sarai, New Delhi-110030
www.galleryartpositive.com

Kumar Gallery, 11, Sunder Nagar Market, New Delhi, India, 110003
www.kumargallery.com

Lokayata Art Gallery, No. 1, Hauz Khaas Village, New Delhi-1100016
www.lokayatart.com

Nature Morte, A-1, Neeti Bagh, New Delhi-110049
www.naturemorte.com

Space118, Locally known as Kirti Warehouse
118, Wadibunder Road, Mazgaon, Mumbai-400010
www.space118.com

The Guild, Alibaug
1028, Ranjanpada, Mandwa Alibaug Road, Alibaug-402201
www.guildindia.com

Gallery Art.Motif
A1-178, Safdarjung Enclave Fourth Floor New Delhi 110029
www.galleryartmotif.com

Uchaan Art Gallery, Gold Souk, Sushant Lok Phase I, Sector-43
Gurgoan 122002
www.uchaanarts.com

Vadehra Art Gallery D-40 Defence Colony, New Delhi 110024
www.vadehraart.com

Visual Arts Gallery, India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road,
New Delhi 110003
www.indiahabitat.org/vag

ART CLASSES

Aarkids
AC / 158-D, Shalimar Bagh,
Delhi 110088
M. 9999812841

Anupama's Art & Craft Centre, New Delhi B-45, GK 1
New Delhi 110048
M. 9873410009

Art Garden
701-A Plot No. 91-92, Shiv Kripa Co-op. Hsg. Soc. 4 Banglows, Andheri (W)
Mumbai 400053 M. 9821355088

Be Creative in Creative Work Shop
F 104, Sarita Vihar
New Delhi 110076 Delhi
M. 9810617117

Creative Art Institute
169/C, Rajguru Nagar
Ludhiana-141012
M. 9878023860

Dream Art and Dance School
Siddhi Ashram (Nr. Badherghat H/S School
PO : Siddhi Ashram
Agartala 799003 M. 9436557100

Ignited Minds, New Delhi
B 1 / 29 A, Gyan Shakti Mandir Marg
Shalimar Bagh
New Delhi 110088 M. 9899107737

Images Art School & Studio
B-908, Sector 49, Sainik Colony,
Faridabad 121001
M. 9711408922

Kala Vriksa Art & Craft Classes
21, Pandit Chawl, Prabhat Colony Near Yoga Institute,Santacruz (E)
Mumbai 400055 M. 9969688723

Kalakrit Art Studio
2035 A (Basement), D-Block,
Palam Vihar
Gurugram 122017 M. 8800818186

Kalakriti Hobby Classes
160 (Ground Floor),
Gujarawala Town, Part II,
Delhi 110009 M. 9891084925

ART CLASSES

Little Artist
C-15, Phase 1, Alliance Kingston Estate
Rudrapur 263153
M. 9759959151

Meetart
H. No 876, Sector 15,
Faridabad 121007
M. 9818477700

Painting Skill
3B-114, G C Grand, 2C Vaibhav Khand,
Indirapuram,
Ghaziabad 201010 M. 9540003889

Rangtulika
Flat-501, Tower-G GPL Eden Height
Sector-70, Durbaripur Road
Gurugram 122101 M. 9910048145

Sanskruti Kala Acadami
207 / B, Nr Yashwant Bank, Navjeevan
Hospital, Somwar Peth
Satara 415002 M. 9657515693

Shefali's Art Classes, Mumbai
1/7 Shanta Sadan, 10th Road, JVPD
Scheme, Sainath Nagar, Vile Parle (W),
Mumbai-400049 M. 9820504648

Swarangsparsh Art Class
Flat No. G-302, C-58/24, Stellar Park
Appartment, Sector 62
Noida 201301 M. 9999107117

The Vibrant Strokes
142 1st Floor, Vardhmaan Sunrize Plaza
Mkt. Vasundhara Enclave,
New Delhi-110096 M. 9873818807

Thoughts on Canvas Arts
703 / T9, Sushant Estate, Sector-52
Gurugram 122003
M. 9999972733

Uma Tirumalasetti Art Classes
B 340, Janaprya Arcadia Kowkoor, Alwal,
Bolaram
Secunderabad 500010 M. 9989381860

Visual Art Class
B Block 608 Platinum City, HMT Road,
Nr. CMJ, Yashwantpur
Bangalore 560022 M. 9663700434

A centre for learning art and craft

Faridabad based Art Studio offers a wide range of lessons for beginners and professionals in all age groups exploring in different mediums.

Enrollment at
MEETART, # 876, Sector 15, Faridabad
M. 9818477700.

Share Events, Exhibitions or any Art Information with us for the NEXT ISSUE of Art Observer
artinfoindia.com@gmail.com

EXHIBITIONS

4-6 December, 2020
Kala Spandan Art Fair' Dec. '20
@ Nehru Centre, Mumbai, Mumbai

8-11 April, 2020
World Art Dubai 2020
@ Dubai World Trade Centre, Dubai

5-7 April, 2020
Solo Art Exhibition by Sarabjit Singh
@Batala, Punjab

25-28 March, 2020
Art Dubai 2020
@ Madinat Jumeirah Conference & Events Centre, Dubai

20-22 March, 2020
Faridabad Art Fest
@ Chaupal, Surajkund, Faridabad

26 February-2 March, 2020
ARCOmadrid 2020
@ IFEMA Feria de Madrid, Spain

22-23 February, 2020
Rising India @ Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya, Bhopal

20-23 February, 2020
An Exhibition of Fine Jewellery by VAK
@ Saffronart, The Oberoi, New Delhi

EXHIBITIONS

18-28 February, 2020
20-20 @ Birla Academy of Arts & Culture, Kolkata

15-18 February, 2020
Galleria-Creative Showers
@ Punjab Lalit Kala Academy, Chandigarh

18-20 February, 2020
Spritual Journey
Convention Foyer Gallery, India Habitat Centre, New Delhi

15-18 February, 2020
Galleria-Creative Showers @ Punjab Lalit Kala Academy, Chandigarh

11-17 February, 2020
102nd Annual Art Exhibition
@Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai

10-19 February, 2020
10th All India Digital Art Exhibition
AIFACS, New Delhi

10 February-28 March, 2020
The Sixties Show
DAG, Mumbai

28 January-29 February, 2020
Aaghaz-The New Beginning
Creativity Art Gallery, New Delhi

For Your Collection

Kamal Devnath
Nayika
Acrylic on Canvas
33 x 33 Inches Rs. 70K
Contact 9358324104

Manjot Kaur
The Red Wine
Acrylic on Canvas
30x40 Inches Rs. 24K
Contact 9910999689

Kamal Devnath
Saath
Acrylic on Canvas
27x 30 Inches Rs. 70K
Contact 9358324104

Amita
The Transition
Acrylic on Canvas
30x40 Inches 24K
Contact 9910999689

Sanjeev Varma
Untitled
Acrylic on Canvas
48 x 48 Inches Rs. 120K
Contact 9910999689

Malkit Singh
Untitled
Acrylic on Canvas
40x30 Inches Rs 60K
Contact 9910999689

Salvador Fernades
Universe
Acrylic on Canvas
48x36 Inches Rs 52K
Contact 9910999689

Unnati Singh
Untitled
Acrylic on Canvas
48x36 Inches Rs. 42K
Contact 9910999689

Dalip Chandolia
Devotion
Pen and Ink on Paper
27 x 33 cm Rs. 20,000/-
dalipchandolia@gmail.com

Mukesh Kumar
Fantacy Landscape
Acrylic on Canvas
48x36 Inches Rs 40K
Contact 9910999689

A Painter with a Mission

Rajpal Kalia, an established artist has been helping fellow artists at his teaching-cum- exhibition centre, where the needy are given art materials as well

"We would not appreciate good days without the bad," is what Rajpal Kalia has to conclude about his journey in art. Born into a family of traditional potters, in a small Haryana village, his early life provided him with no scope for honing his skills as his father the sole earning member of a large household needed a helping hand in son Rajpal. Undeterred by circumstances the boy Rajpal would sketch and draw when other children played around. Thus, he caught the attention of his Art teacher at school, Mr Ramesh Bhandari, who in turn, introduced Rajpal to Artist Somdatt Sharma of Jind, Haryana to guide him. Fired by the urge to excel, Kalia had packed his baggage and left for Jind to be under the tutelage of Mr Somdatt, his true Guru.

By 1993, Rajpal had enough confidence in his abilities to establish a small studio primarily to instigate among the people of his town an understanding of Art. Meanwhile, conditions at home had taken a turn for the worse as his parents were ill and he was the family's sole earning member. But luck dawned on his life in the form of his wife, Santosh Devi, when the couple were married on 14 July 1997. Santosh shared his artistic interests and the couple along with

Rajpal Kalia

the Chaya Arts Academy. With the assistance of a few close friends he also established an NGO for cultivating needy but talented student and even businessmen came forth to join his efforts with financial support.

With his main dream fulfilled, Rajpal Kalia has now taken to spiritual pursuits His art continues to be honoured by University, Academics and Art Promoters who have extended invitations to him to join in art camps. His moment of glory includes being awarded. Rajpal Kalia is thus a man who has discovered the true meaning of art: sharing and caring for society by using one's own talents to the maximum potential. their sons, opened.

Rajpal Kalia 'Vishva Main Gunje Hamari Bharti' Acrylic on Canvas 30 x 24 Inches

N P Pandey has mastered the art techniques of modern art with great finesse over the years

N P Pandey

N P Pandey Untitled-6 Charcoal Acrylic on Canvas 36 x 48 Inches

Academician and practising artist N P Pandey, an alumnus of Vishwa Bharati University, Santiniketan, is a versatile master who has exhibited his skills across a variety of mediums, ranging from mixed media, oil on canvas, acrylics, to the lesser used mediums, such as charcoal, crayons, and lithographs. Of all these, the artist claims that his mastery lies in graphic prints where he has heightened his feminine figures in all its glory. The prints, which display the facial features through a play of light falling on the features, contrasted with deeper undertones at the edges, creates a narrative of many possibilities. In his own assessment Pandey adds: **'Being originally trained in Graphics, my paintings tend to be confined to linear beauty, and the power of line and texture. At other times, I work with pen and ink and charcoal, or acrylic colour for my canvases. I am much inspired by the Indian mural paintings of Ajanta. My other inspirations are the oils of Amrita Sher-Gil and the works of the well-known modern Indian painter Jagdish Dey.'**

The artist's other subjects of choice are the nature-life relationship which he has presented with great sensitivity. As the winner of the award of 'Outstanding Exhibit' of the Department of Language and

N P Pandey 'Untitled'
Pen and Ink on Paper 13x9 Inches

Culture, Himachal Pradesh, he has also been an awardee of the prestigious award of the Lalit Kala Akademi, Himachal Pradesh, All India Exhibition of Prints by Government College of Art, Chandigarh and the All India Fine Arts and Crafts Award (AIFACS) among others. This artist has been recognised both at home and abroad. He was also a visitor to the UK under the British Council Cultural Exchange Programme. The artist lives and works in Agra

N P Pandey 'Untitled' Charcoal Acrylic on Canvas 36 x 48 Inches

Amit Srivastava, born in year 1977 based in New Delhi loves to paint and has been drawing portraits since the age of nine. An IIT-Delhi alumnus, he quit his rewarding career in IT in pursuit of his long-standing passion for Arts. His artistic yearnings took him to The Ryder Studio (USA), where he studied under master painter Anthony Ryder, with classical realistic style of painting and life drawing as the focal points of his learning. His works have been selected at some of the most prestigious National and International Art Competitions, featuring amongst some of the best contemporary realists in the world.

His work is a synthesis of keen, careful observation and classical painting techniques; stemming from his belief that when you pay enough attention to something, it opens up to you. He likes to experiment with his style as he

Amit Srivastava

moves on to becoming more narrative in his artwork. Figurative works are his forte but he loves doing still life and landscapes as well. His works are in private collections in India and the US. He currently works from his studio in New Delhi

Amit Srivastava 'Waiting' Oil on Canvas 12X18 Inches

Continued from Page 4

The Secret of Mandalas

'circles', and in simple awareness that they were used as a spiritual tools of meditation in Hinduism, as much in few other cultures like Buddhism, but with no clue as to how…

The drawing had revealed the sense in said connotation of the mandalas as 'essence' of the being by uncovering the state of the inner being in connection to the outer world, connecting the conscious to subconscious; the whole diagram of the innermost to the exterior space of an individual…. Voilà, there it was – the cosmos!

'Since then, as an individual, it has been interesting to practice creating mandalas as a tool to self-discovery, reaching most latent personal thoughts, healing unwanted habits and developing more inspirational and constructive practices, planning of the next day/s/ or planning and executing projects, setting of goals and attaining them and so on; but most significant of all, as a methodology of consciously going through a thought process to discover most latent ideas to create works of art.'

As an artist, it has been an extremely successful and interesting experience to have held workshops around the idea of mandalas with school students,

Simret Singh 'Mandala Abstract'
Acrylics on Canvas 14x16 Inches

convicts, aged and even with more wiser than myself individuals at various private and government setups. It has been interesting for most to comply with the mandala machinery and yield good results from it discovering self and balancing personal shortcomings and strengths to move ahead in life more consciously and systematically.

One valid reason for emphatic acceptance and effectiveness of the exercise probably comes from the fact that the form, interpretation and analysis of mandalas as circular designs and spirals with symmetrical geometry is a quasi-replica of the basic design of all natural world: From the very fundamental bricks of existence of the being the atoms and chromosomes to the universe and beyond, seen and unseen, all goes in circles and spirals holding various objects, items, frequencies in a movement identical to development and design of mandalas. Mandalas represent designs of natural patterns which have taken into trance any mind which has focused to meditate upon them. In everyday life, each mind has now and then been captivated by the intricate interplay of shapes and patterns of , for example, circles in the citrus fruits or spider webs, spirals in shells, and such very visible nature forms.

Circles and spirals are the patterns which dock an individual at various levels of existence. All frequencies enabling and developing physical being and all random thoughts go in circles, and spirals, ever connecting past to future. Merely creating the mandalas through various forms and colours enables to catch an ever fugitive present moment, to sense and live the reality at a deeper level, creates a conscious effort and willingness to move beyond from any grade of indolence to a more vivid level of living.

Knowing, creating and meditating upon mandalas has been a realisation that life is capable of moving in full circles, of opening into spirals of infinite time and space…..that life is capable of living...

An Ancient Art Institution with Glorious Heritage

(Mayo School's Post-Colonial Cousins in India)

D. S. Kapoor
kapoords@yahoo.com

The Government College of Art is one of the oldest Institutions of our country. It was set up under the name of Mayo School of Art, Lahore (Now in Pakistan) in 1875, during the reign of the British. Its palace type building was adjacent to the Central Museum, Lahore near Anarkali. John Lockwood Kipling was the founder Principal of this premier Institution. The City of Lahore, was the hub of commercial and cultural activities in northern India and always welcomed the new ideas brought by the invaders and immigrating people from time to time. It witnessed the painful partition in which people and institutions were separated.

At Lahore the Mayo School of Art was full of glory. It was the institution where children of the elite were sent for their basic education and training in the field of Fine Arts. Among the members of teaching faculty who served the institution were such luminaries as B.C. Sanyal, Dhan Raj Bhagat, S. L. Prasher, Munshi Miran Baksh, Abdur Rahman Chughtai.

Sumarendra Nath Gupta became the first Indian Principal of this prestigious Art Institution in the year 1930 who was successor to British Principal Lionel Heath. He never cared for degree or diploma as a scroll to be a teacher, looked for an artist in a teacher. Thus, he gathered many creative persons who were not having any degree or diploma but a flair for teaching Fine Arts. Ram Singh and Mian Mohammad Hussain were the most notable among them. Painting and Sculpture sections were indeed a matter of great pride for the Art lovers of Lahore. Some of the contemporary artists, then practising in Lahore were M. A. R. Chughtai, Hussain Buxe, Allah Bux, Thakur Singh, Abdul Aziz Din, B. C. Sanyal. D. R. Bhagat, Amrita Sher-Gill, Ishwar Singh, Brij Lal, Amarnath Sehgal Roop & Mary Krishna.

The School had excellent crafts teachers. Haji Saheb, Sarder Sunder Singh, Sadhu Singh were the most eminent craftsmen. After the foundation course students opted for Painting, Clay Modelling, Wood Work, Lacquer Turning, Jewellery Designing and Copper beating. Sardar Ram Singh, Mian Mohammad Husain, S. L. Prasher later served the institution as Principals.

Mayo School of Art Lahore, Pakistan
Setup in year 1875

Government School of Art and Craft, Shimla
Established on 16 August 1951

Government College of Art Chandigarh
Shifted in Year 1962

After the partition in 1947 the Mayo School of Art was also bifurcated into two, one part of the school was left in Pakistan (now known as National College of Art, Lahore), other part of the school was set up in Shimla, the then capital of Punjab. The school was given a new name Government School of Art and Craft, Punjab. After persistent persuasion and pressure on the government by Satish Gujral, S. L. Prasher and a few others, it was finally established on 16 th August 1951 nearly on the same pattern as it was in Lahore. S. L. Prasher, an alumna of the Mayo school of Art, was asked to organise the Art school. He was the Vice Principal of Art School in Lahore at the time of partition. He was appointed as the first principal of this institution and was given free hand to work, but with very limited financial resources to restructure the institution. His search for teachers continued and he succeeded in getting creative people of his choice to join hands with him. P. N. Mago, Satish Gujral, Baldev Raj Rattan, Kanwal Nain A. C. Gautam, Sunirmal Chatterjee, P. R. Trivedi, , N. K. Dey, were the illustrious teachers. They were trained by different teachers under different centres of Art, like Calcutta School of Art, Mayo School of Art Lahore, Viswa Bharti University Santiniketan, Sir J. J. School of Art, Mumbai and Delhi College of Art.

So many master craftsmen like Pritam Singh, Jit Singh, Master Hazara Singh, Master Sujan Singh, Maghar Singh, Beli Ram were recruited to impart training in allied courses like jewellery designing, repousse work, lacquer work, ivory and inlay carving, sheet metal work with the aim to maintain a sound tradition of craftsmanship. They were the celebrated masters of their trade.

The Art school started functioning in a modest way at the fairly large cottage just below the Rashtrapati Niwas (Now known as the Institute for advanced studies) at the Summer Hill.

S. L. Prasher retired in 1959 and Sushil Sarkar replaced him as Principal in the year 1960. He was an eminent Artist and a protagonist of the Bengal School of Art. He promoted Art and Culture through various artistic pursuits and activities. When Chandigarh came up as the new Capital of Punjab, the school of Art shifted here in 1962. Situated in the heart of the City, the campus has been beautifully designed as a composite Cultural Complex by the great French Architect Le-Corbusier, the building is surrounded by vast green lawns along side the leisure valley against the beautiful back drop of Shivalik Hills. We must salute the efforts of Dr. M. S. Randhawa the then first Chief Commissioner of Chandigarh. He was a great Art lover and he further laid the foundations for the scenic beauty of this college.

The Institution has big studios with a natural light and infrastructure facilities where the students can be seen doing their creative exercises. Following the reorganisation of the Punjab State with effect from 1st November 1966 the control of this institution had come over to Chandigarh Administration with a new name Government College of Art and Craft Chandigarh. Mr. Sarkar was taking lot of interest in the college with a view to carrying forward precious legacy to the future generations. First Ved Prakash Ghai and later Raj K. Jain joined the faculty and made substantial contribution to the teaching of Painting. In the late 60's a host of teachers like R. C. Singla, R. D. Lohtia, Prem Singh, B. M. Chugh, H S Jagdev, Pratibha Rastogi, Surinder Sharma, H. S. Kular, Ram Kumar Sharma, M. S. Sidhu, Jagdish Ahuja, Inderjit Gupta, Madan Lal Arora were recruited to the college as teachers, most of them had their training from this collegE.

Today, this College of Art stands as a majestic tree which has a glorious past, an eventful present and a promising future

International Scene

ARCOmadrid 2020 returns to consolidate its role as a fair for discovering Spanish and international creative talent

26 February to 1 March 2020
@ IFEMA - Feria de Madrid, Spain

The Fair continues to attract top-tier international galleries and is increasing its support for innovation and research with the addition of new galleries at this year's edition. The 39th edition of the Fair will see 210 galleries from 30 countries, of which 171 make up the General Programme. In addition to this, the curated sections will see: It's Just a Matter of Time celebrating the work of Félix González-Torres and featuring a selection of 13 artists from 11 galleries; Dialogues, with 10 galleries, and Opening, with 21 galleries. To continue ARCO's focus as a leading platform for the research, discovery and understanding of artists, 35% of galleries will present projects by individual artists or multiple artists in dialogue on their stands. For the first time, visitors will have the opportunity to take part in professional guided tours.

ARCOmadrid 2020, organised by IFEMA present its 39th edition from 26 February to 1 March. Under the new direction of Maribel Lopez, this year will see an increased support for innovation and research and will take It's Just a Matter of Time as its central theme, analysing artistic practices through the work of Félix González-Torres. As a result of last year's success and the growing strength of the Spanish art market, ARCOmadrid has seen a rise in gallery applications to the Fair this year as well as bolder exhibition project submissions. With a strong focus on high quality content, ARCOmadrid, is placing emphasis this year on artist participation, creating a prominent platform for artists as well as presenting talks, guided tours and further artist projects taking place across the city of Madrid.

Picture : https://artforumnisn.com

Curated by Alejandro Cesarco, Mason Leaver-Yap and Manuel Segade and consisting of 13 artists from 11 international galleries It's Just a Matter of Time is this year's chosen theme. Running concurrently, as part of the Curated programme, ARCOmadrid will present, Dialogues, an exhibition featuring 10 galleries selected by Agustín Pérez Rubio and Lucía Sanromán, analysing contemporary creation by focusing on the dialogue of two creators, paying special attention to artistic practices of female Latin American artists and common links between artists from different generations. Once again, the Opening programme will be a place for discovering new initiatives at ARCOmadrid. The 21 galleries selected by Tiago de Abreu Pinto and Övül Ö. Durmusoglu, will represent works from the young and up-coming international art scene.

Tools and Techniques

Camel Heavy Body Artist Acrylic Colours -The Quality Product for Artists

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- Revolutionary transparent acrylic binders ensuring 'no colour shift' on drying.
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