

Art Observer

Monthly Art Reflections

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Master of Materials and Texture

Goldy Malhotra

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Satish Gujral, one of the most renowned and celebrated artists of India died recently at the age of ninety four. Born in Jhelum (now in Pakistan) in 1924. He became totally deaf at 13, and this made him extremely sensitive to the external world to break many barriers to create his unique style. He listened to his inner voice and chose a visual medium of expression that could translate his suffering and it started showing on his canvases. Having gone through the suffering of Partition, tragedy became his instinctive theme. We see that inevitable hopelessness writ large on the faces in his painting, 'The Rehabilitated'.



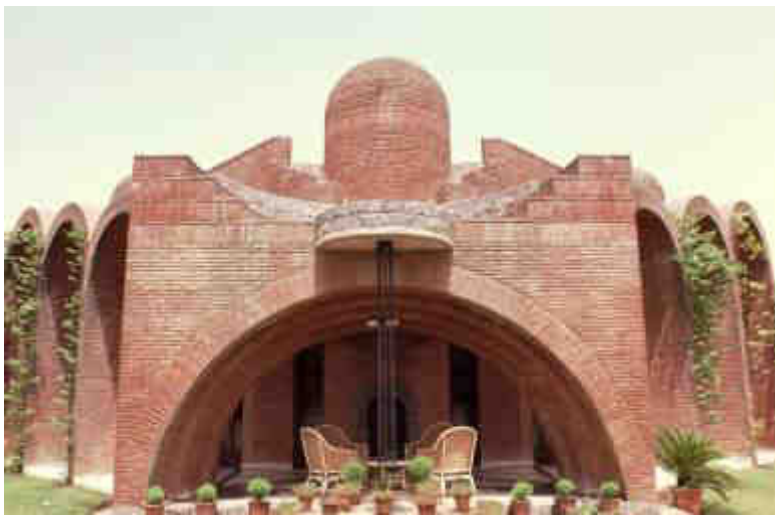
Satish Gujral

Image source: google.com

Unlike other artists who preferred visiting Paris to explore and learn, he chose to spend fruitful years at Mexico. His stay at Mexico brought him close to famous muralist Diego Rivera and he was also under the influence of Orozco. This helped him overcome the mental strain caused by the partition agony and his forms started becoming massive in size. We also find Surrealism in 'Loneliness' done in 1954.

Delhi High Court, Gandhi Bhavan Chandigarh, Baroda House Delhi, World Trade Centre, New York, Jain House Frankfurt, Diamond House, Antwerp and India Culture Centre, Mauritius.

Satish Gujral's dynamism and versatility had no end spanning painting, sculpture and architecture. As an architect, he designed the embassy of Belgium in New Delhi in 1984, UNESCO



Satish Gujral-Designed Embassy Of Belgium, New Delhi

Image source Sarbjit Bahga, worldarchitecture.org



A mural by Satish Gujral at High Court, Delhi.



A mural by Satish Gujral at Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana



Satish Gujral 'Untitled' 42x42 Inches Acrylic on Canvas (www.sanchitart.in)

building in Delhi, Goa University and a summer palace for the Saudi Royal family in Riyadh.

He was awarded the Padma Vibhushan in 1999 for his contribution to art. One person who not only stood by him in his time of struggle and artistic explorations but also inspired him to achieve greater heights, was his wife, Kiran Gujral. No wonder it was her voice that he wanted to hear first of all after his surgery to regain the sense of hearing. Satish Gujral shall always be remembered as an honest, humble and most compassionate artist who could feel the texture with his eyes.

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Finally birds have their wings !

A picture taken near Rajiv Chowk Metro Station located at the Centre of Connaught Place, New Delhi which has an average daily footfall of over 5 lakh. Earlier these pigeons were sighted during morning hours prior to the opening of shops and offices, but during this country-wide lockdown situation it has become a regular feature throughout the day.

Photo by Neeraj Sharma



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Conversation in the grip of Corona

Entire world is in the grip of fear and battling the novel corona virus. In such trying times, with the lockdown, a curfew like environment has taught us a new lesson on social distancing. Confined to stay indoors many are going through strong experiences and artists are on their own explorations. Several writers and poets have started sharing their works on social media. Interaction with some painters in Chandigarh, Delhi and Gurugram has helped us understand the psyche of some that has helped them express their fears, anxiety, hopefulness and inner connectivity. Sometimes to stay home while trying to assess lives vs livelihood as an aftermath of lockdown, creativity provides a natural solace. These artists talk about their feelings through some of their works shown here.



Anil Kohli 'Time' 23x23 Inches Acrylic on Canvas

Anil Kohli, New Delhi

'When time stops, it suffocates and we call it bad time. All sorts of thoughts start troubling the mind. I can feel the wind and see the fire, touch the earth and heat or chill the water. What about time? Why can't I hold it and grab it? Even while trying to paint 'Time', I can see it slipping out of my colours. My efforts continue to hold it. This is what I have to share with you in my painting done during this period.'



Navpreet Kaur Chandigarh /Greater Noida

'Loneliness is very scary. No sound, no hustle bustle but one thing is good that we are able to listen to our inner voice that has become audible. I have been working on 'Dream Series' and my work shows how the reality is very different from our imagination or belief at times. There are figures with wide open eyes gazing in wonder and at the same time there is a ray of hope bringing happiness. There is no gloom in my work, I believe in positivity and that is what I have expressed on paper in acrylic'



Navpreet Kaur 'Abstract', Acrylic on Paper, 14x10 Inches



Goldy Malhotra 'Lockdown in Gurgaon' 24x36 Inches Oil on Canvas

Goldy Malhotra, Gurugram

'No one had ever dreamt of this long, compulsive hibernation. Imprisoned in our own homes for the survival of others and self, has gradually brought a change in our behaviour. This will be felt and realized by many sooner or later. This situation reminds me of the old prisons in Mexico, that had one window facing the road, these were known as Road Prisons. Probably for me the view from the window has helped me interact with nature. New leaves are appearing on trees and the birds are more free than ever before to hop on the tree and chirp to express that sky belongs to them.'

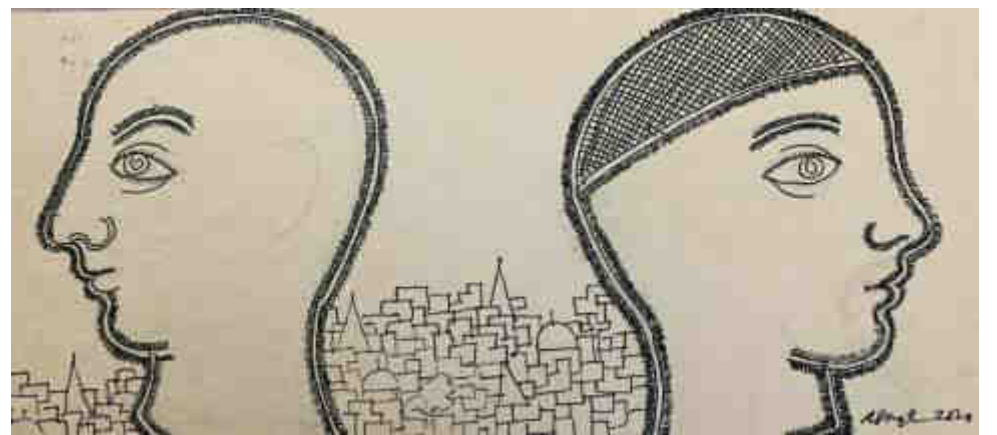


My painting 'Lockdown in Gurgaon' reveals the empty roads, houses with inmates locked inside witnessing the nature smiling at them to teach - look within and learn.

Yes, this is the time for introspection. The more a person limits himself, the more resourceful he becomes.'

Prem Singh Chandigarh/Greater Noida.

'Art begins and ends with human experience. Today in state of isolation and social distancing, one can imagine the plight of a human being striving for survival. In such a turmoil, one desires to look for some hope somewhere. I have shown Social Distancing in one of my sketches. Two heads are looking in the opposite direction, together, yet lonely. In the second sketch, I am expressing how when confined to your own world, you love for interaction with the surroundings to avoid loneliness.'



Radhika Surana, Gurugram

'The lockdown has been a quiet time to reflect and appreciate the beauty around us and how we have lost touch with nature and started taking it for granted. It is our duty to show sensitivity towards our surroundings. This epidemic is an indication that nature needs to reboot. My paintings are an ode to nature and its beauty. All the artworks have been done during the lockdown period'.



Radhika Surana 'Nature in its full Glory' Acrylic on Canvas 36x24 Inches

Radhika Surana, Watercolour on Paper



Viney Vadhera 'Sketch' Ink on Paper

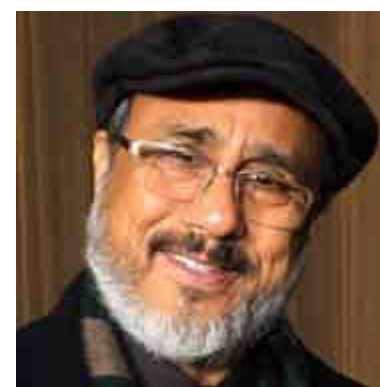


Sangeeta Singh, Gurugram

'This painting 'Conversation' created in this lockdown period is a conversation with self, a time for introspection. This 'Me Time' reinforces connection to eventually forge better ties with the world outside. The lines here again get blurred. The lady in the floating sheet and the layout of two cups, exhibit exactly that. The floating pattern in the painting signifies the ease and calm in the surrounding'.



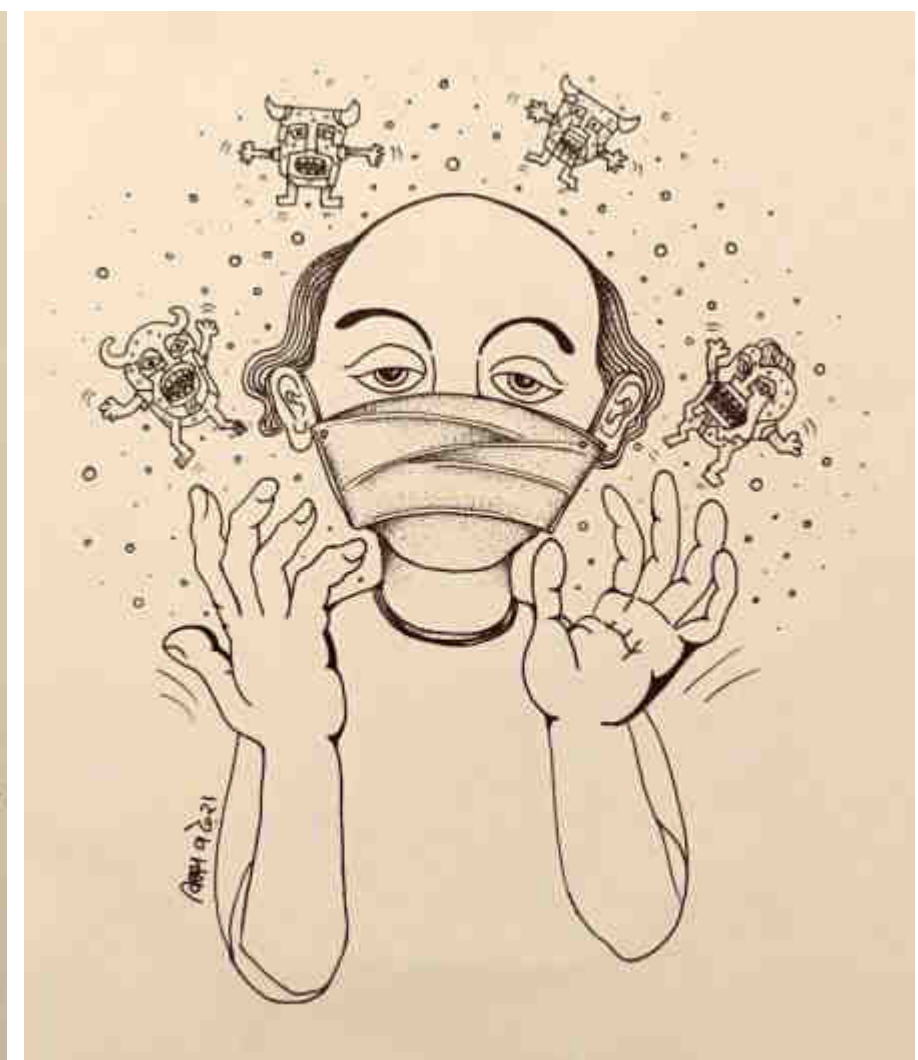
Sangeeta Singh 'Conversation' Oil on Canvas, 16 Inches



Viney Vadhera, Chandigarh

'Experiencing lockdown has enabled me to realise that social distancing has a definite meaning. Have we ever realised that one has to be cautious of people? Man is the most dangerous to another man. This is what I have tried to show in a figure wearing a mask. In my second sketch, the lockdown in India to save humanity is highlighted. It is very symbolic 'Jaan hai to Jahan hai'!

Viney Vadhera 'Sketch' Ink on Paper



Editorial

The opening article of this issue is a tribute to Satish Gujral, a legend whose life was not a normal journey but he set milestones of destination at every bend of road. There can never be another artist like him, an institution in himself.

The 'Real' in painting - an essay deals with thematic and stylistic presentations following norms of art principles understanding artists' imaginative consciousness.

'Ghare Baire' an exceptional Art Museum in Kolkata is a real treat to be shared with the readers and so is the Sweden's TellusArt Residency at a village in Uttarakhand.

'WOW' (white on white) show' forcefully displays mono colour challenges expressing less is more. In Suryastnata Mohanty's words there is the possibility of seeing all colours in white. It takes us closer to Physics dealing with light.

In these trying times, Corona warriors are doing their best to make the country Corona free. The lockdown period has not been easy for anyone, but artists

sometimes give their best under stress. Here, we share some of the works of artists from different cities who are working in the grip of Corona and talk about their creativity and experiences. Another article on Child Art also mentions the art activity as a great stress buster for children during this period of social distancing.

Creativity can never be locked, art is flowing from all directions. Paintings, collages, sculptures and articles on art are being shared like never before. Planning for post lockdown is also in full swing as many galleries have already prepared their calendars, waiting for the world to start normal life. It's another matter that the 'normal' will never be the normal life. We shall carry the heavy load of unprecedented phase on our shoulders for lifetime. This will definitely show in the works of artists to become part of Art History.

Hope to share our next issue in better times.

Goldy Malhotra

Visuals of the Month



'Thoda Sambhal Ke'

Photo : Alka Chadha Harpalani, Bangalore



An elderly passer-by crossing the road in the time of Pandemic (April 13, 2020) near Block-B at Connaught Place (the Heart of Delhi) often abbreviated as CP which is considered to be one of the busiest place.

Photo : Neeraj Sharma, Gurugram.

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Child Art

Art – A Great Stress Buster for Kids in COVID-19 Pandemic Time

Pooja Gupta

pooja2607@gmail.com

The world is going through one of the greatest 'crises' ever! The COVID-19 pandemic has quickly spread over the world affecting most countries and has taken a toll of lives worldwide. This has led to lockdown of many countries, including India. This has brought people's lives to a standstill, with all confined to their homes for a long time. The schools were in the first place to shut down much before the lockdown was imposed. The children are at home for quite some time now. With the spread of novel coronavirus, there is a lot of awareness about its prevention, spread and precautions to take, coupled with generation of a lot of misconceptions, fear and anxiety, especially among children. Every day, every hour, every minute of the day, we are keeping an update on its spread, but we also unknowingly bring many apprehensions, questions and doubts in the young minds. While we as grown-ups can handle some, if not all, our anxiety, our children are very small to handle this. To let not our stress



Nivaan Arneja, Kalakriti Hobby Classes, Delhi

do not give instructions, give suggestions but do not command and praise them but do not criticise. No matter however and whatever they make, it is very important to appreciate them for their efforts. Rather than focussing on their final creation, their endeavour should be given more significance. It would have a great impact on their emotional well-being which is very

moral values to the kids.

Create happy memories!

Like all times, this shall also pass! Keep a positive approach, and this will help inculcate hope and happiness in the kids too. Get involved with the kids doing the artwork, and have a good time together. Try to make long-lasting memories that can be cherished for



Shanay Mehta
Shefali's Art Classes, Mumbai

pass to them we need to keep them busy in good activities. Engaging them in art is the best way out to reduce their anxiety and to relieve their stress. Children enjoy doing art the most right from a very young age. Art is an integral part of their learning and education. Asking them to do which is their favourite activity would be a bonus for them. It is one of the best ways out to keep them off-screens too, which is a real challenge these days.

Lower the 'pressure'

Engage them in fun-filled and easy to do activities that they might be able to do on their own. This will serve dual purpose. It boosts their self-confidence, and strengthens their thinking and problem-solving skills. It will also help building self-reliance in them. All these are very necessary in the current situation as the kids might feel insecure, doubtful and unsure of themselves. A number of studies have also shown that the cognitive skills of children develop more in the absence of adult's instructions. Children find joy and opportunity to self-explore when they express themselves in various forms of art.

Be supportive and encouraging

Support them in all their tasks, but do not contradict, guide them but



Meera Atolia, Kalakrit Art Studio, Gurugram



Vihaan Singhal
Lotus Valley Int'l School, Gurugram

crucial during this time. Constantly working on a piece of art for long hours would teach the child to be hard-working, patient and optimistic.

Make it a 'family activity' / Develop 'Family bonding'

With all the family members being together during this lockdown period, it has come as an added advantage. Parents and even grandparents can spend quality time and engage themselves with the kids. It can help develop family bonding and also teaching some

lifetime!

Build an 'Emotional' factor

The children are going through a tough time not only physically, but also emotionally. On one hand, they are missing their school, teachers and friends, on the other hand, they are also asked to maintain social distance from their neighbourhood friends. They are not meeting any cousins either. Drawing / painting / sketching related to their near and dear ones would help them feel that they are still connected, along with other modern technological means. They can also make say, a painting or a card, for them which can be gifted to them later and that can be kept as a treasure.

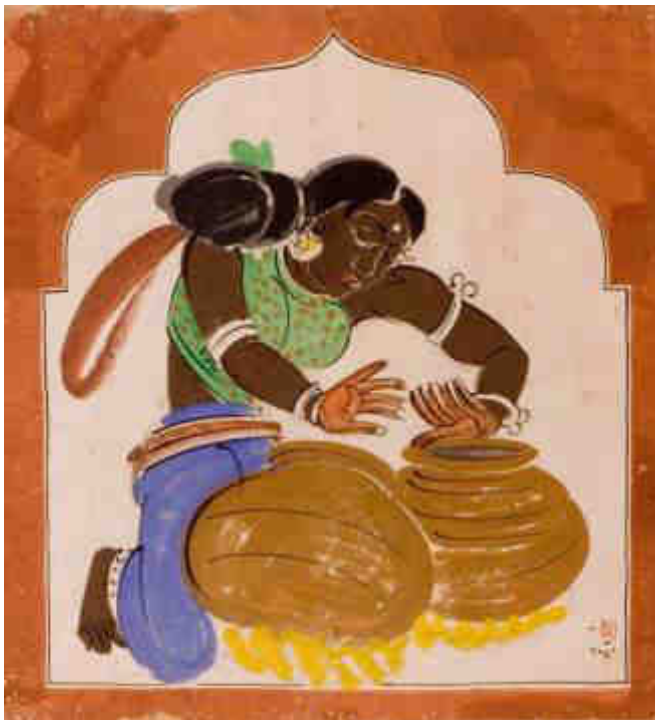
Enhancing learning skills

The children can best utilise this time to learn something new. The children can hone their hidden talent; improve their existing skills, as well as master new techniques. The creative and innovative instincts of the children get sparked up when they are given a suitable platform.

While they enjoy doing their art work, the parents can get joy by looking at them, getting involved with them and learning from them too! Wish us all a happy learning and a safe time ahead!



Abanindranath Tagore 'Purush Prakriti Shiv Parvati'
(www.pinterest.com)



Nandalal Bose 'Gharavadan' Tempera on paper
59.5x 63 cm 1937 www.artsandculture.google.com



Abanindranath Tagore (1871-1951) 'Shiva-Simantini'
Watercolor and Wash on Card 1920 (www.christies.com)

The 'Real' in Painting

Simret Singh

paintingsbysimretsingh@gmail.com

Real, naturally, first of all connotes the tangible, existent, factual; and a painting too, first of all, is a visual representation. It is a real object, created by some material residue – charcoal, ink or colours on paper, canvas, etc. though brush, knife or other artistic mediums. The method of application of the medium or 'technique' used on a surface is instrumental in developing particular type of texture, inducing 'value' or hues in shapes sketched through lines and colours. Lines, colours, shape, value, texture put on space of a given surface are technically called primary elements of a painting, instrumental in creating a composition.

A composition is an opus within which varied combinations and associations of diverse primary elements produce nuances, called the secondary elements of a painting - these could be a movement, a rhythm or dynamics produced by a particular arrangement of the primary elements; or nuances of balance or imbalance, a space illusion or a focal area and so on. This is the making of a painting.

The painting at this point stands as a work of art. The mastery of the medium, which determines visual effect on the canvas, is the criterion to evaluate the formal order of beauty, value and worth of the work. The lack of apparent dexterity required to employ a medium of expression forms a major criterion of condemnation of art in contemporary criticism.

The work of art, considered real, aesthetic object is also evaluated in function of its appropriateness for decoration and for enhancement of the point where it is meant for display or created for any other purpose such as activating psychosomatic upshots in the mind of the audience, as subtext of meditation or for spiritual purposes, education, study of the subject, healing etc. As such, it remains a creation, real and pure, with no intention of fulfilling any purpose other than the function of the moment - the purpose of extracting pure pleasure within the process of creating it and within exercise of displaying or using it as an aesthetic object.

The art nouveau and the postmodern critics consider an art work 'complete' at this level of construction and perception while exalting the idea of 'art for art

sake'. To ponder upon the meaning of 'real' further in context of painting, it needs to be scrutinised beyond its existence as a mere object of aesthetic value. It would be interesting to highlight that objects depicted on the canvas are not mere picture of external objects as perceived by the naked eye. They are depictions of the intimate perception of the same by an individual, in the sense that the

can be in conscious application, wherein an individual gives to the external objects, a new and unique framework of dimensions of space and time in his mind by arranging them in a particular way, depending on subjective perception. This process is the basis of human imagination and is technically called 'imaginative consciousness' (ref 2*). A visual artist goes a step ahead to catch the fleeting mental objects by re-creating them as images and objects through material residue like wood, canvas, colours etc. in a new and actual



Nandalal Bose 'Sati' (www.tallengestore.com)



Abanindranath Tagore 'Bharat Mata' (www.engage.in)

images depicted on the canvas are arrangements of objects which have passed through the mental world of the artist. They have been 'seen' anew, in sense of having been understood, conceived and visualised through various angles of emotion and sensitivity in the mind of an individual depending on his past experiences, knowledge and awareness about those objects. While the objects exist in the mind, they are called 'unreal objects' (ref 1*). They may stand alone or in relation with other mind objects as an idea, enjoying a framework of time and space in the mind itself. This is the process of 'thought', a feature and facet of human consciousness. Thought process may be an involuntary, perpetual process, or

framework of time and space. The objects depicted by the artist as a work of art, are therefore not mere external objects in the sense of being real, but also hold some deeper reality of the mind of the artist - a perception, an understanding, an emotion etc., surged from his awareness / knowledge about, and sensitivity towards those external objects. It is in this sense that a painting of any style or genre, from plain realism to the apparently most unrecognisable or ambiguous depictions in modern, post modern and contemporary art cannot be considered meaningless or absurd - on the contrary these works hold a deeper reality to ponder upon. In words of Rabindranath Tagore: "what is art? It is the response of



Rabindranath Tagore 'Piyali'
Pen and Ink on Paper 1940
(www.sothebys.com)



Rabindranath Tagore 'Portrait of a Woman'
(www.pinterest.com)

explicitates the 'form' of a painting by comparing it to the phenomenon of life in living tissues:

'Living tissues are composed of various elements like carbon, nitrogen and many other rudiments utterly unlike life, but never life itself. Life is a phenomenon in itself - 'apart from' material elements it is composed of. Similarly the form of a work of art has a meaning apart from the various elements used to create it'. The appearance, emergence, manifestation of the form has been considered a unique phenomenon: just like the artists perceives the eternal truths, objects, events according to their understanding, awareness, and emotions, and reconstruct it into paintings of their own style/genre; similarly the viewers, in an exaltation of perception, understand a work of art in their own capacity, knowledge, sensitivity and sentimentality, and 'recreate' the work of art in their understanding - each giving it a meaning of his own according to own subjective perception and finding the 'real' in the same.

This aspect is the basic connection between the artist, artwork and the viewers - In words of Rabindranath Tagore, 'An artwork is incomplete unless hung on the wall and appreciated by the audience.'

While the artist studies the objective world and illustrates the 'real' according to his subjective perception, the viewers, at next level, study the work of art to extract a deeper reality and thus the real in it. This may also outline the importance of a viewer and logic behind the artist ever searching to display art, beyond all commercial aspect involved.

Ref, quotes by Rabindranath Tagore, *The English writings of Rabindranath Tagore: a miscellany, The meaning of art, Rabindranath Tagore, Vol III Sahitya Academy, New Delhi*
Ref 1, 2: *The Psychology of the imagination, Jean Paul Sartre, Routledge / Taylor&Fransis.*

man's creative soul to the call of the Real".

At the same time, there remains to consider, a yet another level to the reality of the painting - to extract the 'real' in the same, from the fact that a painting becomes more than a subjective creation by an artist and converts into an object in itself, once perceived by the audience. It is in here, yet another element of painting, the 'form', plays the key role.

Form is the upshot of a composition, created by amalgam of all primary and secondary elements mentioned in initial paragraphs of the text. It connotes an immediate idea, revealed by the work of art or idea that is discerned by the audience.

The aesthetic theory of Tagore

An Artist Who Gave a Creative Solution to Paper Waste - Neelu Patel

Practicing Paper- mâché, and Paper coil to the sustainability



The circle of life - The circle of life series showcases the human's evolving process. It reflects the process of expanding human's very being to the spiritual level. In some of the pictures as we can see, she's shown energy flowing towards the center.

Artist Neelu Patel has done all. She lives in Ahmedabad and has been practicing paper mâché all her life. Paper -mâché is 'pulped paper', or 'mashed paper'. It is a composite material consisting of paper pieces or pulp, sometimes reinforced with textiles, bound with an adhesive, such as glue, starch, or wallpaper paste. Two main methods are used to prepare paper-mâché. The first method makes use of paper strips

glued together with adhesive, and the other uses paper pulp obtained by soaking or boiling paper to which glue is then added. With the first method, a form for support is needed on which to glue the paper strips. With the second method, it is possible to shape the pulp directly inside the desired form. Paper coil is an art form that involves the use of strips of paper that are rolled, shaped, and glued together to

create decorative designs. The paper is rolled, looped, curled, twisted and otherwise manipulated to create shapes. These artifacts are long lasting and sustainable because of the paper pulp and Glue. Recently, Neelu Patel had an exhibition showcasing her skills. Her artifacts tell different stories altogether. Not only, She gave a solution to paper waste but also it reflects life's philosophy.

Journey of a Self-tought Artist - Sushma Rishi

Sushma Rishi is a self-taught artist who completed her education from Welham Girls High School Dehradun and later graduated from Lady Shriram College. She is the youngest among her 6 siblings and hails from a rural backdrop of Gopiganj, Varanasi. Her late father was a veteran Congress Union Minister, and she has stayed in Delhi all along. She was brought up with a strong belief in family tradition which reflects strongly in her work, even today.

She did a course in Commercial Art which prompted her into painting and thus began her career with a series of Ganesha Exhibitions which were well received, acclaimed and sold out in various parts of the country and abroad. There was a time when anyone who thought of getting a Ganesha painting, Sushma Rishi came to their mind.

Over the years she has evolved as an abstract artist focusing on the beauty and marvels of the Universe and her work talks about the interconnectedness of life. Her paintings are usually in acrylics or mixed media with Impasto work on them. Another close subject to her heart is Women! Her paintings showcase happy women in vibrant colours, which is absolutely breathtaking. She has held many exhibitions in Australia, Singapore, the UK and



Sushma Rishi 'It's Fun Tog'
Acrylic on Canvas 120x120 cm



Sushma Rishi 'Cosmos'
Acrylic on Canvas 120x120 cm

India some of which had been inaugurated by then Culture Minister Vasant Sathe and late Sheila Dikshit. She has had much media acclaim about her paintings & artwork whether in print or the television medium.

A 30-Day Online Art Challenge Beating the Lockdown

That the corona lockdown has not been able to lock creativity down is good news flowing in from all art quarters. Among varied responses, artists across the world are giving shape to their thoughts, feelings and emotions engaging in their art practices while all galleries and exhibitions have shut down indefinitely. However the art world

has found online ways to showcase its response to this crisis. Among these, a 30 days online art challenge was initiated by a Gurugram based artist Minisha Bharadwaj, at no cost to the artists. The goal is to keep people, especially children, busy during these difficult times and help them not slip in to boredom or mental

crisis. Originally meant for residents of Delhi NCR, the challenge gathered pace to start getting entries from other cities in India, Dubai and Germany. As it grew, budding and established artists have also joined in. The challenge has not only engrossed children and adults alike, but also sent a positive and reassuring message to doctors, nurses and policemen who actually face the pandemic challenge on ground.

Every week, awards are sponsored by Prozakindia, Elite Stationary, Shabari and Pallavi Cake box who have come in support of art during this crisis.

To motivate these artists, well known curator Jyoti Kalra, founder of Uchaan Art Gallery, has announced a plan to exhibit all the winning entries at Uchaan for a grand finale after the lockdown is lifted and art world comes back to normal life.



Sushma Rishi 'Interdependent Cosmos'
Acrylic on Canvas 122x91 cm

Take it Forward

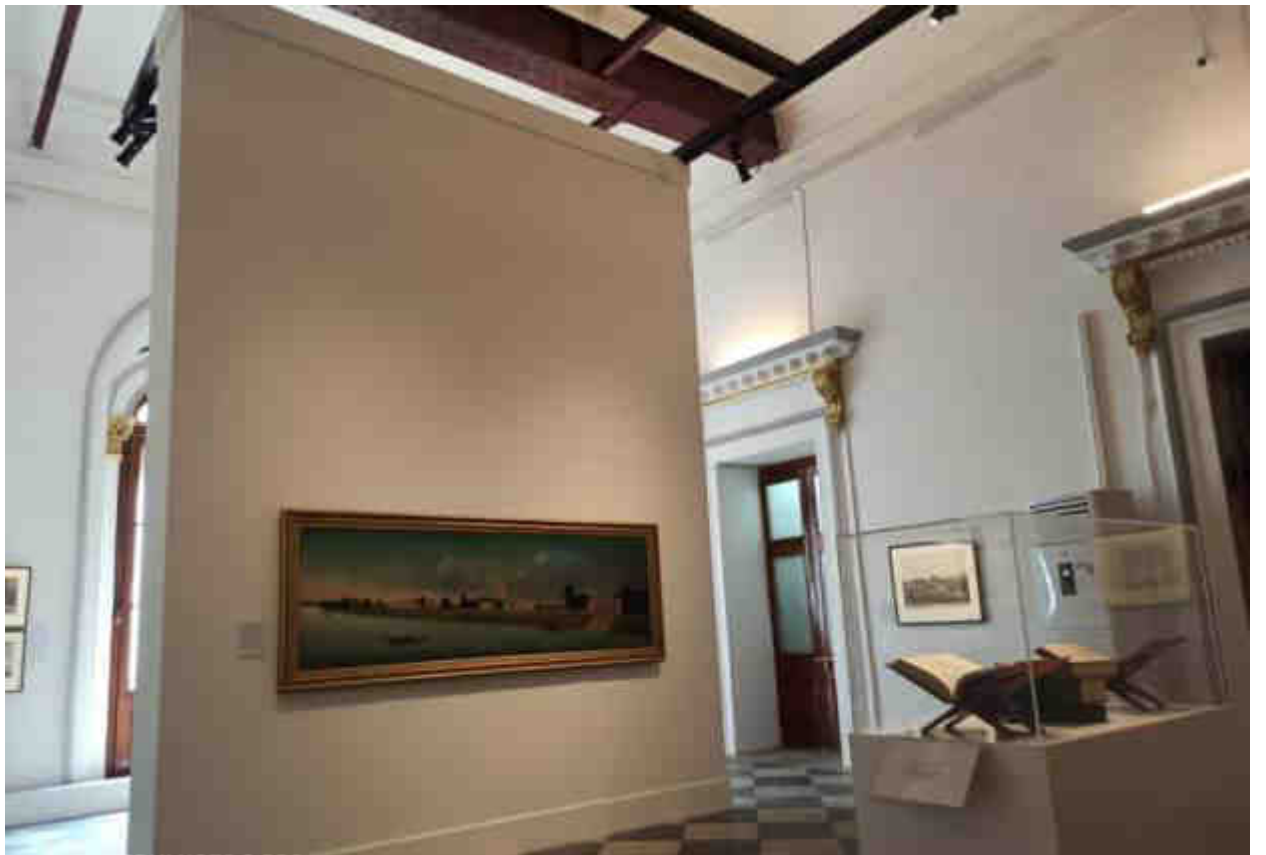
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Travel Back with 'Ghare Baire' Art Museum in Kolkata

Joyita Basak

sweetjoy2101@gmail.com

Being an artist since childhood, I have always evolved a prosperous view to appreciate art and its solidarity. I have always visited so many art museums around Kolkata but this one is very special to my heart. I visited 'Ghare Baire' Art Museum last month which is situated at Dalhousie Square in Old Currenry building and it portrays few rare artworks from the era of 18th century

.Ghare Baire the name articulates the beauty and artistry of collection of Bengali art, famous artists and a variety of themes covering from well-known period like Bengali Renaissance and

movements during British Raj. Organized and curated by DAG in collaboration with NGMA, Delhi, this art museum has engaging and enthralling recollection of diverse forms of art. From Kalighat Patachitra to Ramkinkar Baij's magnificent sculptures, from Nandalal Bose to A.P. Bagchi, from Abanindranath Tagore to D.P. Roychowdhury the museum showcases wonderful and exceptional handiwork by some prominent and celebrated artists from the golden era in the past.

If you are a true fan of art, fond of Kolkata and its golden culture, you must have a visit to the museum to



The Ramp by K. S Radhakrishnan



Satyajit Ray clicked by Nimai Ghosh

feel the authenticity it beholds. It starts with few ancient paintings of old Calcutta and through the time it shows the magical change in the beauty of this city of joy. Kolkata has always been the cultural capital of India, so the amount of nostalgic and grand elaboration it contemplates through years and years now is the main attraction of this place.

No doubt, 'Ghare Baire' art museum is one of the significant addition to the artistry of Kolkata, it will surely enrich the prospect of any aesthete throughout the world.

Here are few notable creations of few renowned artists from the museum.

A White Delight

8-28 March, 2020

Gallery Art Pilgrim Live, 227, South Point Mall, Gurgaon

Art Observer Syndicate

artobserver.in@gmail.com

An Art Show in White Showcases More is Possible in Less

Just as the corona pandemic struck to change in a few days not just our world but also our worldviews about how much less is actually needed to survive as we remain locked-down to our homes, eminent visual artist and educator Shobha Broota curated an art show to underline the essence of less and the minimum in imagining the world with a single colour or actually with no colours, without missing the wow element though!

Aptly titled WHITE ON WHITE (WOW), the group show at gallery ART PILGRIM LIVE, South Point Mall, Gurgaon showcases the paintings, mixed media and installations of 24 women artists of ORIGIN group, all made in white colour. The show took off from 8 March until the lockdown.

"To demonstrate the beauty of less, the joy of simplicity and the calm of white is not just the idea of this show, but its purpose," states Shobha Broota. The results are astounding. While Broota herself shows the way in her twin-panel mixed media work using folds of white fine net, Dr. Suryasnata Mohanty has responded to this artistic experiment by painting abstractions of ancient temple structures in sublime shades of white. Standing out amid the wall, the paintings The Last Resort and Beyond the Arch, her acrylic palette knife works on canvas,



(Left to Right) Shobha Broota, Gayatri Singh and Suryasnata Mohanty



Suryasnata Mohanty 'The Last Resort' Acrylic on Canvas 30x40 Inches

invite the viewer to a philosophical reflection of the inner spiritual quest and journey, but also offer a subtle yet powerful demonstration of how the everyday visual culture can be reimagined without any

colour. The mixed media work of Anuradha Saluja brings out geometry and abstractions with clay and beads, while Sarla Chandra's banyan tree is an eye

capturing thread and paint work on canvas. Sujata Mehta uses diya baati to create a cactus like ecology, Divyani Kashiva's playful fishes bring out the cheer of marine life in mixed media. There are intricate

patterns and shapes like that of Shiv Shakti in Sarita Chaudhari's panel and flower motifs in Manisha Agarwal's embroidered white. An imaginative installation by Shakshi Broota, a spider web in front of a glass mirror, poses a web puzzle to the viewer who looks into.

Monocolour is a challenge for artists as they all grow up with the idea of colours as the essence of art. Suryasnata Mohanty describes it as a 'mysterious thrill' to make paintings just out of white. "As it took place, it expanded my horizons of thinking and creating, being able to see all the colours in a single white is really vision-opening," she explains.

The artists participating in WOW had to learn to slowly eliminate color from their palette in search for white. "This required them to cross many hurdles, to simplify, resist and finally enjoy working with one pure colour. Experimenting, simplifying and playing with light and shade are important while working with white," Broota says.

Founder of gallery Art Pilgrim Live, Gayatri Singh who has hosted the show feels that WOW is a show of possibilities. "During difficult and complex times this stunning yet quiet show celebrates the purity, simplicity and calmness of white. It hopes to connect with the audience, washing as Picasso said "the dust of daily life off our souls!", Singh added.

Home is where the art is: Sweden's TellusArt hosts art residency at Uttarakhand village

Sudeshna Banerjee Rao

It's no secret that a retreat into nature and a great piece of art—both can add a fresh breath of air into our life. Many artists dream of taking a break from the hustle-bustle of city life and set off to a quiet stretch of nature where they can focus on creative work. Sweden-based Ajmer and Nisha Sandhu have taken charge of making this dream come true by turning their farmhouse at Kaliyanwala village, Jaspur, into an international artists' residency. Surrounded by lush green valleys, just 40 km from Corbett National Park, Uttarakhand, the program TellusArt Home offers a nurturing space for artists to try a change of scene, and have a rich taste of authentic Indian village life.

The program made a splashing debut with 'My Village, My Nation' workshop for ceramics, murals and sculpture, held on 6–15 March, 2020, featuring an interesting diversity of work. Going along with the delights of the season, Indian and European artists had a dazzling celebration of Holi—the festival of colours. TellusArt Home, the residency, is part of TellusArt, a Sweden-based NGO, led by Ajmer and Nisha, who have been supporting art and culture, as well as funding empowerment programs for children and women. The selected artists at the workshop were: Benny Ekman, Carina Åkerman, Fia Kvissberg

from Sweden, Dieter Kunz from Austria, Nisha Sandhu, representing Sweden as well India, India's maestro Yusuf from Bhopal, Sonam Sikarwar, Vijay Dahiyan, Chhaya Dubey, Manisha Jain from Bhopal, Punkaj Manav, Dipti Gupta, Naresh Kumar, Ashish Bose from Delhi, L.N. Naga from Jaipur. Applications are accepted on an on-going space-availability basis, from established and mid-career artists, as well as newcomers. The workspace is equipped for murals, ceramics, installations, and paintings. The quaint cottage has a mix of laid-back vibe and a sense of community. Soothing earthen scent comes from their mud-painted walls. Empty whiskey bottles have been recycled into a splendid lighting panel. The in-house kitchen maintains hygiene and food safety standards. When not working, resident artists can grab



traditional-style, nutritious meals, interact with locals, learn about the state's rich culture and traditional art forms, and enjoy swimming. As the evening

approaches, they can chill out by the bonfire or, simply stargaze into one of the clearest night skies of the country, lying on their charpai, traditional hand-woven bed.

Ajmer, being a trained artist himself, understands the need for dedicated time and space, and also inspirations drawn from new surroundings for making new work. The India-born Swedish art enthusiast has always been on the go, to support the cause of art, by organising workshops and exhibitions across the world. Most of his earnings are spent on TellusArt Academy—a school at Kaliyanwala, committed to educating underprivileged children of the same region. Teachers at the school have been trained by a Scandinavian professional. Increased earning through art can result in better facilities such as teachers' training, books and resources to make TellusArt Academy run.

Resident artists at the TellusArt Home not only enjoy a unique space for creation and inspiration but also get to contribute to education of the needy children, as a result, in the prevention of child labour, and thus become part of the change that helps heal the world.



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