

# Kala Samvad

News Bulletin of Lalit Kala Akademi, January 2013



Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tripura Shri Manik Sarkar inaugurating the 54th National Exhibition of Art at Agartala.

## 54th National Exhibition of Art

The Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi, is showcasing the 54th National Exhibition of Art, at Agartala. The exhibition was inaugurated by Chief Guest Shri Manik Sarkar, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tripura, at the Nazrul Kalakshetra Galleries, Banamalipur, Agartala, Tripura on 17th December, 2012. Shri Anil Sarkar, Minister, Information, Cultural Affairs & Tourism, was also present as Guest of Honour. The Exhibition is open to public between 2pm and 8pm and will go on till January 6th, 2013. Various dignitaries like His Excellency Shri Dinesh Nandan Sahaya, Governor of Tripura also confirmed his visit to the exhibition.

The exhibition comprises 124 artworks selected from a

competitive entry of 8047 works, by 3185 artists, from across India and includes the works of 10 National Award Winners of this year, chosen from among the 124 exhibits. The award carries a Prize Money of Rs 1 Lakh, Plaque and a Certificate, each. The awardees are Dharamvir, Malleshi HV, Mrinal Kanti Gayen, Nazima Rangwala Kalita, Pradip Mondal, Prem Kumar Singh, R. B. Holle, Raj Pritam More, Sidharth Madhu Pansari & Yuvraj Panwar. The works were chosen by a Screening Committee consisting of Prof Niranjana Pradhan, Shri Uttam Pacharne, Ms Kiran Rathore, Prof. V Nagdas and Shri Arvind Patel. A second-tier Jury for choosing the ten National Awardees from this selection was done by Shri P. R. Daroz, Prof.



Launch of 54th NEA Catalogue.



Shri Manik Sarkar presenting the National Award.



Cultural programme at the Inauguration Ceremony.

Latika Katt, Shri Deepak Shinde and Shri Rajan Kapoor.

The objective of the 54th National Exhibition of Art, 2012-2013 is to present works of excellence both in terms of material application and aesthetic appeal. The exhibition covers a broad range of artworks of all mediums like paintings, sculptures, graphics, photographs, drawings, installation and multi-media. We received an anomalous number of entries this year, which made the task of the first round of selections much more challenging for our highly competent Jury. All the selected artworks nurture and treasure our cognate culture in a variety of approaches. They concretize and weave together disparate themes in the fabric of our Indian identity. The selection of artworks for the exhibition are made on the basis of the quality of execution, freshness of images, innovative use of materials, novel application of colour and freshness of stylistic markers in the works. These broad-based guidelines thus do not take into consideration any particular school of thought or execution and define contemporary art as a shared human heritage with an Indian orientation. The works in the current exhibition merit attention on account of their challenging content, epitomizing creative features, individual commitment, discriminating quality of methods, materials used and more, so that the exhibition becomes a true representation of the dimensions of contemporary art thinking nationally. Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tripura, Shri Manik Sarkar in his speech said "It is a rare function not only in Tripura but in the entire north eastern region and it would encourage the local artists also to do inspiring works." Shri K.R. Subbanna, Acting Chairman, Lalit Kala Akademi said, "Lalit Kala Akademi is committed to promote, spread and develop Indian fine art culture. The current show of the National Exhibition of Art being held in Agartala has already started generating unprecedented support from the art community." Dr. Sudhakar Sharma, Secretary, Lalit Kala Akademi said, "National Exhibition Of Art has been held annually, since 1955, and is a major public face occasion of the National Academy of Art. In recent years, in keeping with its national character, the choice of venue for this event has been shifted from New Delhi to centres of art located in the Regional Centres of the Lalit Kala Akademi as well as tier II cities pan-India. We are glad to see the tumultuous response from various artists even in these regional centres." To spell out its national character, the National Exhibition of Art, ever since the 44th show held at Ahmedabad, has been held at platforms round the country, such as Hyderabad, Kochi, Lucknow, Bhopal, Chandigarh, Panjim, Kolkata and Chennai. Likewise, the current initiative at Agartala is bound to generate heightened focus on a better understanding of national art aesthetics among the art fraternity of the north-east region.

## Artist Statements

### DHARAMVIR



#### Title of work: Monument Wall

The award winning sculpture is done in brass. This is a medium I have recently resorted to, because monumental sculptures that I work on could not be done in stone. This medium gives me more freedom and I am able to ornament the surface with greater complications and can work on sizes that can go up to six feet. In this current sculpture I have tried to depict a derelict wall of a forgotten monument. It is covered over with mould shown through texturisation of the surface, and there are even birds nesting in its cracks and holes. The playing card motif embedded in the wall is a symbolic inclusion, where the concept of the playing card emphasises the power of the card. The work is a single piece casting planned with care right from the sketching stage. I employ a thorough brainstorming session before going ahead with the casting of the piece to achieve greater compositional strength.

The winning of the Lalit Kala Akademi Award has opened several paths for me. I can now make larger and more monumental looking works as the money that has come with the award has helped me to convert my latent ideas into creating still larger and more expressive works.



Dharamvir, Monument Wall, Brass, 2012, 110x30x52.5 cm

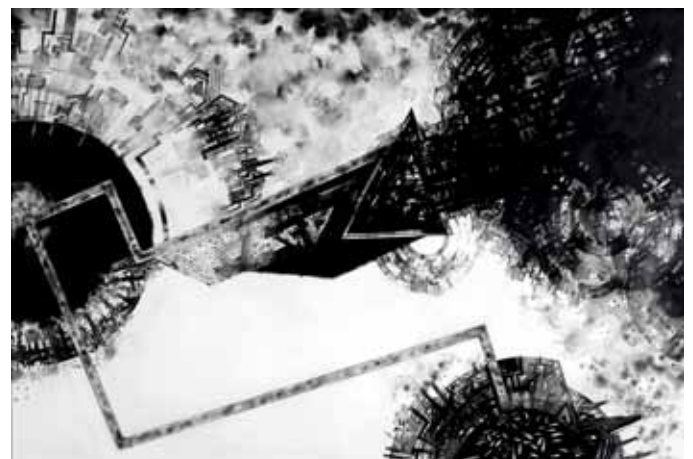
### MALLESHI H V



#### Title of work: Ozone Black

My work is the direct result of my experience of the changes that have taken place in my hometown. A few years ago, this township and its surrounding areas were an agricultural belt, totally green, but now all that has changed. Industries have been set up in and around the town, despite the opposition of the farmers located in this belt. The place has become unhealthy and farmers complain of respiratory complications. The atmosphere is covered with smog from the spill-over of factories. The city is a lifeless space and in my mind it has been silenced. There are no trees left and even the water in the town is polluted by industrial waste. My choice of materials, that is graphite pencil, is linked to this state of affairs. The smog is shown through the pencil work and the blackness of the surrounding is evocative of the silence of the city, smothered over with smog. The polluted water is also shown as black. This water trickles through the farms and offers a bleak image. I have shown it as a black streak hovering round my forms.

The winning of the Lalit Kala Akademi Award has made me free of worries, at least for a year. It is sufficient for buying materials and do work for at least a year.



Malleshi HV, Ozone Black, Graphite on Paper, 2012, 120x180 cm

## MRINAL KANTI GAYEN



### Title of work: Landscape I

My work directly reflects my background. The Sundarbans area of West Bengal, is my birthplace and in that deltaic landscape it is difficult to travel on foot. One has to cross several rivers as a means of daily commuting. As a boy on my way to school, I was fascinated by the reflections of objects, boats, people, falling on the placid waters of the creeks and inlets and ponds in this area. During the time of the ebbing and flowing of the tides, the shadows that fell on the water surface fascinated me. So when I began to work as a full-fledged artist, all I wanted to depict was this phenomenon of shadows falling on the water surface. But this was a challenge before me...how to reflect that hollow pond? The character of the water? The reflection of the tree so that one can see the change in the contours of the form? Also, the quivering effect of reflections on the surface was another of my concerns. In course of time, I also began to link the physical phenomena with my philosophical reflections. I related the quivering surface to a man's 'chethana' (thinking power). The unrest of questioning minds, the gentle nature of the challenge, the softness of the thought, I found could only be reflected through this technique, wherein the blooms on the banks could form mirror images quivering in the water below. Before long, I improved upon this idea and created the lapping of waters around the plants through a slight bend in the forms. I always use bronze as a medium as I feel, it is impossible to depict the landscape in any other medium. My initial attempts to depict the scene was through forms such as boats, children swinging from mangrove roots, lotus blooms etc. Now my space has moved beyond the physical dimensions and serves as a commentary on the unrest in society and the vulnerability of man within that surrounding.

The winning of the Lalit Kala Akademi Award will support my work a great deal. I will be able to buy material for at least half a dozen more sculptures on this theme. I enjoy experimenting around this theme and even my juniors are happy that my novel ideas have found approval before a prestigious Jury of renowned artists.



Mrinal Kanti Gayen, Landscape-I, Bronze, 2012, 74x56x35 cm

## NAZIMA RANGWALA KALITA



### Title of work: Body without Soul, Modernity without Humanity (Is it the real cost of our time?)

I like working in the woodcut medium and in my Master's studies I had specialised in woodcut. Also, my preference has always been for creating large works as I find the larger space at my disposal challenging. A small surface does not offer that degree of freedom and when I try to depict my ideas within it, the end result is very messy and non-provocative. My work is not at all lady-like and soft although the first slash on the wood is invariably made with a kitchen knife! I do not use woodcut tools as they are far too 'sensitive' for my hands. I use my tools for cutting rather aggressively and put forward my thoughts in the works in a rather forthright and bold way. Incidentally, I do not use the conventional woodcutting tools for my artworks. Instead, I resort to sculpting tools. My style of working is not governed by softness. When I slash and strike in bold strokes, a negative energy is produced from within. Also, the wood used is new packaging wood that gives me the opportunity to create the bigger picture in my mind. My art has a strong geometric compositional strength where the middle part of the space contains the main idea. The sides of the work provide the supporting elements and even a degree of pictorial interest. This gives my works a compositional balance. Another intentional approach in my art is the use of a pixilated form behind the animal form used to give the notion of an imperfect finish. I have experimented with colour and combined with aggressive cuts, the technique gives a bodily vibrancy to me as the artist creator.

The winning of the Lalit Kala Akademi Award has enabled me to experiment further and bring wood into the mix media category of works so that I can enter a bigger arena of artistic practice. But above all, the Award itself is more than its monetary worth for I consider it the biggest opportunity of my life so far.



Nazima Rangwala Kalita, Body without Soul, Modernity without Humanity (Is it the real cost of our time?), Woodcut, 2012, 77.5x160 cm

## PRADIP MONDAL



### Title of work: Nature III

I love doing sculptures where there is patina applied to the surface of the work. As for ideas, I would not go with the idea of a single seed depicting the entire idea of Creation. A single seed does not spell it in its entirety, but rather, a cluster of them brings forth the true message. I depict nature in ninety percent of my sculptures. More than the choice of fruit or flower or human beings, I am concerned with geometric forms that nature throws up. Thus I depict nature's life forms through round, square, oval shapes.

Moving beyond the shape and the form, my other interest is experiments with other mediums. Now I have come to the conclusion that the medium must be chosen according to the subject being depicted.

The winning of the Lalit Kala Akademi Award has given me greater scope to work more on my ideas of forms related to mediums.



Pradip Mondal, Nature-III, Bronze, 2012, 31x23x15 cm

## PREM KUMAR SINGH



### Title of work: White Landscape 1

My work centres around the leaf form. In fact, I use dried leaves coated with acrylic and resort to pen drawings on them. These miniaturised forms can express the world for me. As a student I used to make all my paintings in hues of white and that has continued through my mature years, albeit in an evolved way. My work now looks at the urban landscape around me. I find it a total contrast to the setting of my boyhood years, amidst jungles and open countryside, peopled with animals, and other life forms. In contrast I find the city folk obsessed with cleaning up of their occupied spaces and hence they cut down trees mercilessly creating a barren land out of the cityscape. In short, a modern city, as I view it, is a populated, treeless city. The use of the leaf as my leitmotif requires me to use a lens to work on it. Pen and ink are my everyday tools and the city is shown in the form of blocks of boxed-in structures. The veins of the leaf transform into city roads and the area in it forms the home. The fragility of the city environment is very similar to the brittle nature of the dried leaf in my art.

The winning of the Lalit Kala Akademi Award has been an eye opener for me. I had never expected it and it has strengthened my belief in the idea that if I do anything selflessly, I will surely reap the benefits. I will use part of the monetary award to clear off a few loans I have accumulated and free myself to invest my entire being in my art so that the thread of my thought process remains unbroken, but changing with the circumstances and fresh inputs of creativity.



Prem Kumar Singh, White Landscape 1, Pen & Acrylic on Leaf, 2012, 152x110 cm

## R. B. HOLLE



### Title of work: Untitled

In my art, I am taken in by colour applications. On the canvas, I like to drop blobs of colour and watch the dripping of the coloured spots. Before long, they begin to appear like stars in the firmament, painted on my canvas. The spots can be in several tones and sometimes even in blacks and greys. My all-round favourite colour is the blue tone. Sometimes I consciously start with grey but invariably it turns into a bluish hue. Of course there is more than just colour play in my art. At first, it was the concept of rhythm that I was depicting through these colour techniques. Then I found my mind drawn in towards the 'bindu' concept and finally, at this stage, my colour applications signify for me a depiction of the entire galaxy, where colours denote energy and a burst of light. As a depiction of the galaxy, I imagine every droplet of colour to be the embryonic enclosure of the life form or 'jiva' and each of them thus conveys for me the same emotions as I feel towards a living creature. The inclusion of horizontal lines across the canvas, at first were totally involuntary and unplanned but today, I have found them to be useful as an aesthetic inclusion in my painting. They arrive and place themselves and are not of my volition.

The news of winning the Lalit Kala Akademi Award was conveyed to me telephonically and left me immobile for a while. Even now, I sometimes feel I have got the award too soon. But I realise it is a great responsibility on my shoulders and a warning to work with full concentration and involvement. My dream is to have the viewers fully immersed in my work. Then and then alone, can I claim to be a true Awardee.



R.B. Holle, Untitled, Acrylic on Canvas, 2012, 135x135 cm

## RAJ PRITAM MORE



### Title of work: Oh My God ...!

I like to work with thick layers of acrylic on the canvas. Most of my art is city-based as I am a resident of Mumbai since a long time. This particular painting, 'Oh My God', is based on an aerial shot of Dharavi. The congested slum dwellings, the overhead wiring running across the area, and the clusters fitting into a space where 10,000 people live out their daily lives, reflects in the work. The use of the helmet as a form to contain and express my idea of the life of the slum dweller was because I associate the helmet with a common man's perspective. It is his utility item. Also, the setting within the front of the helmet conveys the idea that Mumbai is a city of contrasts where the white space of the canvas depicts the posh areas of the city where population density is about three people per sq meter whereas it is 3000 people within a 10x10 space in the slum. The reflection of this city of contrasts can be seen in the glazed visor of the helmet. I use the knife for my art and believe in a direct application of colours. Colours in my art are vivid contrasts, beginning with a contrast of black with white. This gives the painting a powerful layout and speaks of the contemporary conditions of the city with vivid emphasis. I believe that what happens in the city around me must find expression in my work to make it a meaningful exercise.

The winning of the Lalit Kala Akademi Award was like a fulfilment. I have been a practising artist for over a dozen years. This award is a major recognition of my dedication to the arts and I cherish it as being the highest prize given by the Government of India. Yes, my colours and canvas stock will be enriched with the monetary benefit.



Raj Pritam More, Oh My God...!, Acrylic on Canvas, 2012, 150x150 cm

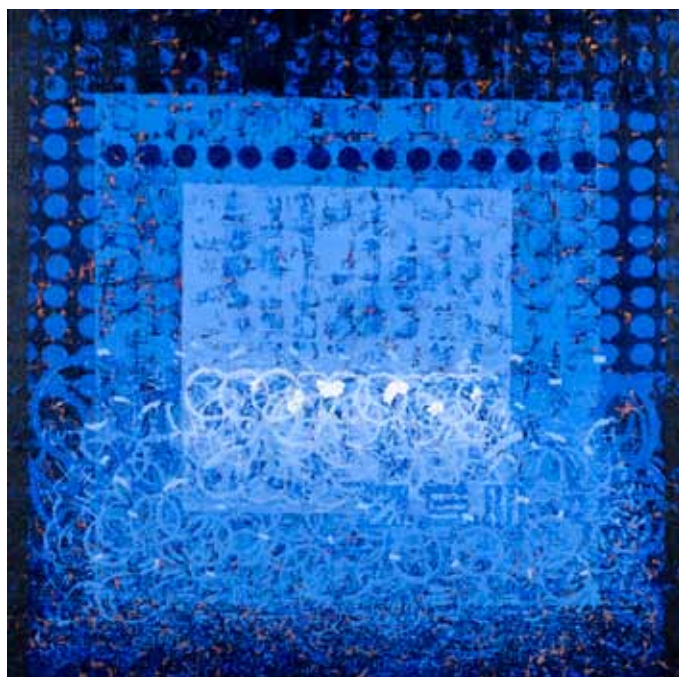
## SIDHARTH MADHU PANSARI



### Title of work: Aavirbhav

A painting is a horizontal space in vertical parts. It is born of my concept that whatever we see, is horizontal but we ourselves are perpendicular. The concept of my painting titled 'Aavirbhav', suggests that anything we see creates a feeling and that becomes the most important aspect of the painting. It creates a vibration, a reality search into the unknown as also searching for one's own thing. I use geometry to depict my ideas as I believe that this is the basis of a harmonious creation born of the vibrations that nature emits. It is the root of creation and for me the science behind my analysis of visual thinking. An artist's search is for liberation through his work and that can be perceived and expressed in terms of the natural world. The colours in my works are in monotonous but I use various tints of it. This is because I want to move into the particular thinking and energy behind each colour for colour is the language of painting. The surface of the pictorial space in a work creates a language, which is my search. It is therefore non-representational going deeper towards an understanding of that colour. When you view the work, a connective vibration, a cyclical response between the artist, viewer and the painting is created, and that element of magic sensitizes the viewer.

The winning of the Lalit Kala Akademi Award has been the best moment of my life. I will buy materials and create larger works because a larger perspective is needed to express my vibrations and for that purpose, one needs huge amounts of money.



Sidharth Madhu Pansari, Aavirbhav, Acrylic on Canvas, 2012, 180x180 cm

## YUVRAJ PANWAR



### Title of work: Unlimited Dreams

My paintings are all about reflecting on Unlimited Dreams. I prefer to use cloud forms along with figures to convey this idea. The faces that I depict on my canvas are of the ordinary man in the street like the auto rickshaw driver. In some corner of the work there is also an attempt to create a self-figure. There is also a strong decorative element included in the canvas. In this award winning work, the decorative element is depicted in the pillows on which the forms are placed. But these are secondary to my art. The main figure reclining or positioned on the canvas is the embodiment of my concept in art, and on that concept the decorative element is woven around. Another important element of my art is Fantasy. I like to refer to it as 'dreams'. As a young artist I am troubled with a barrage of searches about concepts. These are particularly acute when I put my head on my pillow at night. I even like to ponder over today's art scenario in those moments.

The winning of the Lalit Kala Akademi Award fulfilled my idea of how art among young artists should be encouraged. I will use the award money to buy better materials and make enough paintings to hold a solo show and with these steps establish myself as a promising artist in the art scenario.



Yuvraj Panwar, Unlimited Dreams, Acrylic on Canvas, 2012, 90x90 cm

**Dharamvir**, Born in 1974, New Delhi, Dharamvir obtained his MFA in Sculpture from the Banaras Hindu University, Uttar Pradesh and MPhil from the Nagaland University. He has actively participated in group shows at the Kalam Festival, Jamia Millia Islamia University, New Delhi; Dhoomimal Art Gallery, New Delhi; Visual Arts Gallery, India Habitat Centre, New Delhi; Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi, 50th National Exhibition of Art, Chandigarh and the National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi. The artist lives and works in New Delhi.

**Malleshi HV**, Born in 1980, Karnataka, the artist obtained his BFA in Painting from the Karnataka University and a Post-Diploma in Printmaking from the Kala Bhavan, Visva-Bharati University, Santiniketan. He is the recipient of the Lalit Kala Akademi Research Scholarship to work at the Garhi Studios. He has participated in several group shows such as 'The Big Picture II' at Gallery Samukha, Bangalore, 'The Big Baroda Show' at the Priyasri Art Gallery, Mumbai and at the Faculty of Fine Arts, MS University, Baroda. The artist lives and works in Karnataka.

**Mrinal Kanti Gayen**, Born in 1971, Kalkdwip, West Bengal, Mrinal Kanti Gayen obtained his Masters in Visual Arts in Sculpture from the Government College of Art and Craft, Kolkata. He is the recipient of a research grant from the Rajya Charukala Parisad, Government of West Bengal. His works have been exhibited in several National and international exhibitions such as the 46th National Exhibition of Art in 2004, Annual exhibition of the Birla Academy Kolkata, AIFACS Kolkata and New Delhi. He has participated in numerous group shows at the Art Heritage New Delhi, Jehangir Art Gallery Mumbai, Chitrakoot Art Gallery Kolkata and the Zainal Gallery, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh. The artist lives and works in Kolkata.

**Nazima Rangwala Kalita**, Born in 1983, Rajasthan, Nazima Rangwala Kalita obtained her BFA and MFA from the Faculty of Fine Arts, MS University, Baroda. She is the recipient of the Gujarat Lalit Kala Award in 2011 and the Mahua Art Award by the H K Kejriwal Foundation, Bangalore in 2012. She was awarded the HRD Scholarship for young artist by the Lalit Kala Akademi in 2009 and the Bendre-Huain Scholarship by the Mumbai Art Society in 2010. Her works have been exhibited in several group shows such as the 53rd National Exhibition of Art, Chennai, Exhibition of Print Art at the Bharat Bhavan International Biennale, Young Artist's exhibition at the Viewing Room Gallery, Mumbai and at the Faculty of Fine Arts, MS University, Baroda. The artist lives and works in Baroda.

**Pradip Mondal**, Born in 1977, Sonarpur, West Bengal, Pradip Mondal obtained his Bachelors and Masters in Visual Arts from the Government College of Art and Craft, Kolkata. The artist has undergone training at numerous workshops on Dokra art, stone carving, woodcarving and terracotta. Some of his group shows have been held at the Birla Academy, Kolkata; Samanvai Art Gallery, Jaipur; the Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi; Zainul Gallery, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh and the Townhall Art Exhibition, Kolkata. The artist lives and works in Kolkata.

**Prem Kumar Singh**, Born in 1976, Dhanbad, Jharkhand, Prem Kumar Singh obtained his BFA and MFA from the Faculty of Fine Arts, MS University, Baroda. The artist has received the Ila Desai Scholarship and the Human Resource and Development Scholarship in the field of Visual Arts. His works have been extensively displayed in numerous exhibitions held in Kolkata, Mumbai, Baroda, Ahmedabad and recently in an international showing at Lithuania. The artist lives and works in Baroda.

**R.B. Holle**, Born in 1973, Pune, R B Holle obtained a Diploma in Art from the Abhinava Kala Mahavidyalaya, Pune. He is the recipient of the Lalit Kala Akademi's National Scholarship, Junior Fellowship from the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India and an Award by the Pollock-Krasner Foundation, New York. He has had several shows in India and abroad. Important group showings by the artist include 'Melange' at the Pundole Art Gallery, Mumbai; 'Abstracts' at the Apparao Galleries, Chennai; 'Indian Contemporary Art in Ghana' organised by the Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi; 'Action' organised by the Indo-American Art Council, New York and numerous times at the National Exhibition of Art organised by the Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi. The artist lives and works in Thane, Maharashtra.

**Raj Pritam More**, Born in 1974, Raj Pritam More pursued his graduation from Sir JJ School of Art, Mumbai and subsequently did a Diploma from the Pune University. He is the recipient of the Young Artist Award and Scholarship from the Department of Culture, Ministry of HRD, Government of India and the 2010 Asian Art Award by EM Art Gallery, Seoul, Korea. He has had several shows and participations in India and abroad. Some important showings by the artist include 'Urban Acrylics' at the Art Heritage, New Delhi; 'Lifeline 786' at the BMB Gallery, Mumbai and 'B 4 Mumbai' at the Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai. The artist lives and works in Mumbai.

**Sidharth Madhu Pansari**, Born in 1986, Muzaffarpur, Bihar, Sidharth Madhu Pansari obtained his BFA in Painting from the Banaras Hindu University and subsequently pursued MFA in Sculpture from the College of art, New Delhi. In 2008, he received the Spic Macay Scholarship to study under eminent artist Ghulam Mohammed Sheikh. Specialising in abstraction, he has shown his works at various exhibitions such as 'Sublime Expression' at the Art Gallery, Pune; 'Dristikone' at the Lalit Kala Kendra, Lucknow; 'Banaras' at the International House, Goa, 'Dristikone' at Kala Dirgha, Faculty of Visual Arts, Banaras Hindu University and 'Distilled Duality' at the Creativity Art Gallery, New Delhi. The artist lives and works in New Delhi.

**Yuvraj Panwar**, Born in 1986, Uttarakhand, Yuvraj Panwar obtained his BFA from Jamia Millia Islamia University and MFA from Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi. He is the recipient of the National Scholarship conferred by the Ministry of Culture (HRD), New Delhi and the Garhi Grant Scholarship given by the Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi. The artist has actively participated in numerous camps and workshops in India. His works have been on display in various exhibitions in Delhi held at the Dhoomimal Art Gallery, AIFACS, India Habitat Centre and the MF Husain Art Gallery. The artist lives and works in New Delhi.





The artworks on display at the India Pavilion in the Fifth Beijing Biennale.

## Future and Reality

### Indian Special Exhibition at the Fifth Beijing Biennale, 2012

The Lalit Kala Akademi in association with the China Artists Association, Beijing, organised a special exhibition from India at the 5th Beijing Biennale. India was accorded the special honour of holding the Indian Special Exhibition at the venue. The event was inaugurated on 28 September, 2012, and was open for public viewing till 22 October, 2012. The occasion saw the participation of 84 nations with around 1200 artworks, from all over the world, of which India was one of the four honoured countries who were invited to hold exclusive displays in a specially created pavilion.

Dr. Sudhakar Sharma, Secretary, Lalit Kala Akademi said, 'India's participation at Beijing was the outcome of a Ministerial level Chinese delegation to India in December 2011, with the proposal for holding reciprocal art events between the two nations, as a reiteration of a symbiotic relationship. In response to the Indian exhibition at the Beijing venue, China will bring a similar, strong contingent of contemporary art from China to the forthcoming Triennale India, in 2013. Thus the Indian Special Exhibition being a privileged invitation is a step towards art cooperation of a very high order, with far reaching outcomes.'

The Indian Special Exhibition showcased 26 newly commissioned artworks by 11 contemporary artists from India. The participating artists were: Anju Dodiya, whose facility

with watercolour is the hallmark of her expertise. Chittrovanu Mazumdar created a video installation that echoes with a strong cross-cultural significance. Deepak Govindrao Shinde's art is specially renowned for his ability to use animal motifs to liberate from compositional bindings. K. K. Muhamed examined and depicted the multiplicity of concerns amidst contemporary societal pressures. N. N. Rimzon offered a radical view on socio-cultural issues while Poosapati Parameshwar Raju exploited the calligraphic medium to recreate Indian mythology in a minimalistic, suggestive manner. K. S. Radhakrishnan sculpted his forms into a forceful conglomerate that holds deep meaning within their discreet arrangement. Riyas Kommu's video work drew a critique on socio-political issues, while Seema Kohli offered a multi-coloured butterfly installation where the forms were not just decorative in nature but also expressed deep-seated metaphysical precepts. Suman Gupta's compellingly realistic work examined the life of the ordinary individual. Vijay Bagodi offered etchings that show a command of both technique and expression in his art. It was absolutely mesmerizing to see the multitude of mediums employed by these artists in order to give a glimpse of their artistic dexterity. The exhibition comprised of two video works, one installation, four sculptures in various mediums, three specimens of printmaking, and 17 works done on canvas. All these works



Venue of the Fifth Beijing Biennale.



Indian delegates with the Beijing Biennale authorities.

were unique and highly expressive of each individual creator's artistic persona. Besides their intrinsic Indian character, the works also had universality as their core element so that visitors to international venues such as the 5th Beijing Biennale were able to savour the delights of Indian contemporary art in these representative offerings.

Shri K.R. Subbanna, Acting Chairman, Lalit Kala Akademi said, 'The exhibition has provided an opportunity to give a glimpse of Indian art and its vibrations, on a prestigious global platform. Besides attracting record crowds to its venue, the India Pavilion was also a popular draw among the youth for its innovative and topical video works, while the eye catching installation of stylized butterfly forms was the favourite shot for the mobile-friendly Chinese public.' India's participating presence at the Beijing Biennale has made room for poignant viewing of the myriad hues of Indian art. It was extensively praised and publicised by the international media, propping up the confidence of our artists. Several of the participating artists and officials of the Lalit Kala Akademi were approached by television channels such as China News, CNN and National channels for personal interviews, giving Indian exhibits the publicity and appreciation that they richly deserved.

Some of the highlights of the Indian participation at Beijing were:

a) The Indian Special Exhibition for the Beijing Biennale made it the only special exhibition from the Asian continent, a singular recognition bestowed to contemporary Indian art. The other three countries accorded similar honours were Italy, Mexico and Romania.

b) As a follow-up for fulfilling this covetous role of being a special invitee for the international event in Beijing, the Lalit Kala Akademi had carried out a meticulous process of artist selection on a nationwide basis and with the international perspective in focus.

c) Artists of repute both nationally and internationally, were shortlisted by the Lalit Kala Akademi on grounds of pure merit and were directed to create fresh works in consonance with the thematic directive for the exhibition, namely 'Future as Reality'.

d) The success of this showing is a proof of the professional competence of the Lalit Kala Akademi. The teamwork and effort behind its success is a proof of the stringent standards that it has set as its benchmark and belies the recent attempts to downgrade its competence through pernicious coverage in certain quarters.

e) In accordance with the privileged invitation, the Lalit Kala Akademi oriented the display strategy in a manner that made the Indian Special Exhibition pavilion a show stopper, attracting a large number of footfalls to the display area. The exhibitors had chosen a composite approach to display tactics in that they exploited the potential of the large display area with eye catching captions written in bold and noticeable lettering, and overall publicity in the national and international media and individual interviews given by artists, officials and Members of the LKA Executive Board.

f) Related logistics, such as lighting of the displays, assistance by the hosts for mounting the exhibition, a knowledgeable interpreter who had hands-on understanding of Indian art trends, professional guards from the China National Museum to ensure the safety of the artworks were the special courtesies that went a long way towards the success of the India effort.

g) Conclusively, the organisers of the Lalit Kala Akademi on carrying out an in-house analysis of the success of their show vis-à-vis the participation of India at the Venice Biennale, were of the view that this event was highly cost-effective, provided a larger basis of participation, with 11 Indian artists on view,



'Rising of the Kundalini' Bronze by Seema Kohli.

expressed an ethnic overlay examining the contemporary socio-political and international scene through Indian sensibilities, and stressed the Asian identity that Indian contemporary art enjoys with Chinese art through a long historic link dating back centuries.

The opening of the Beijing Biennale, coincided with a festive mood as the nation was celebrating a week-long Chinese Autumn Festival, coinciding with the National Day holiday, and a time for travel, when families and friends gather to appreciate the moon, a universal symbol of beauty, and express their appreciation of good feelings. Besides a record attendance of the art fraternity of the country, the presence of a strong contingent of the diplomatic community in Beijing, including the Ambassadors of India, Jamaica, Switzerland, Poland, Sri Lanka, Italy, Syria, Ecuador, Bangladesh, Greece, Mexico and others, was proof of the wide interest this event generated in all quarters. Welcoming the guests and visitors, the organisers stressed that as the host country, the Beijing Biennale was evidence of the Chinese cultural and civilisational role striving towards the future, as was seen in the telling theme of the exhibition: 'Future and Reality'. The overwhelming response that the event received globally was proof of the enthusiasm and aspirations of contemporary artists that the Beijing event had fostered. The vigour, vitality with which countries had come forth, particularly the threshold expression of contemporary art from India, demonstrated the relationship of the arts vis-a-vis attitudes and behaviour and an appreciation of the future reality. The wide choice and submissions from around the world was evidence of how Art was 'building towards a harmonious future where the mission of art was to promote contemporary artists' expression through the works of individual artists'. This was the keynote message that the China Artists Association in their capacity as the organisers of the Beijing Biennale, 2012, conveyed from the 'warmth of their hearts'.



Visitors freezing the artworks in photographs at the India Pavilion.

Another of the hosts mentioned that the current Beijing Biennale wherein more than 1000 artists' works were on view, had evolved through the years into a high profile 'influential art envision containing the reality and dreams of our future conveyed through artworks that really touched viewers' minds and sensibilities'. Besides this nuance-like outflow of the Beijing platform, representatives of the organisers stressed on the new opportunities to develop the art industry that Beijing Biennale has introduced. Individual artists from around the globe could use this venue to start their art business and communicate with their counterparts elsewhere.

In conclusion, the hosts said that through the Beijing Biennale they wanted to convey to the art fraternity the message of the power of beauty through a high-profile event and the title had been chosen by them to allow artists to voice their deep concern for the future, express their ideas and deepen friendships among nations through the medium of contemporary art. The event reflected the seamless flow of contemporary vibrations alongwith the present-day, situational stimuli shaping the trends of a future reality.





Hon'ble Union Minister of Culture at the Inaugural Ceremony of Multiple Encounters II: Indo-US Print Exhibition.

## Multiple Encounters II: Indo-US Print Exhibition

An Indo-US collaborative printmaking exhibition, 'Multiple Encounters', was held at the Lalit Kala Akademi Galleries. The Hon'ble Union Minister of Culture, Kumari Selja, inaugurated the show and graced the occasion by interacting with the participating artists and curators. She also went around the exhibits and showed a keen interest in their creations. Speaking on the occasion she expressed her views by saying, 'This is a virtual treat for art lovers, specially since we don't usually get to see so much of art in the printmaking form in India.' Speaking of the work of the US artists who were joint collaborators in this show, the Hon'ble Minister remarked, 'There is so much to see in the way of techniques and forms of printmaking from our Indian artists as well as artists in the USA and the large Indian diaspora who are showing in this exhibition. What they bring with them is their own rendition of art in the printmaking form. Besides the work of artists of US origin, there are several artists who are from different parts of the world and who are now residing in the US. I am sure all the viewers will enjoy this show and the works of art in it.'

Commenting on the overall perspective of an event of this nature, Chairman, Lalit Kala Akademi, Shri K.R.Subbanna remarked, 'Printmaking has grown rapidly in the last forty years, and has earned popularity due to the efforts made by institutions and individuals. The Lalit Kala Akademi is one of the most significant institutions that continues to promote the art of printmaking, and has organized series of printmaking workshops in different parts of India.' Referring to this exhibition he added, 'With this meaningful initiative by the Akademi, the richness of this medium will be shared by one and all, especially by the art lovers. Stressing on the specialist nature of the display, Secretary, Lalit Kala Akademi, Dr. Sudhakar Sharma said, 'The cohesive nature of the exhibition as an exclusive printmaking display is praiseworthy. The curatorial task of procuring and

featuring the works of several master printmakers on a single platform deserves special mention. It gives the viewers an exposure to the intrinsic refinement, subtlety and imaginative excellence with which such works are invariably endowed.' The exhibition would travel to our regional centre in Lucknow after its immense success in Delhi.

There were more than 120 works of art exhibited in this show with about 60 prominent printmakers of India. An almost similar number of US participants exhibited alongside. Hence the exhibition provided an opportunity to see quality printmaking from both these countries on a common platform. Among the Indian participants were veterans such as Jyoti Bhatt, Jai Zharotia, K G Subramanyan, Laxma Goud, Paramjeet Singh, Sanat Kar, Deepak Banerjee as well as important printmakers such as Anupam Sud, Arpana Caur, Jayanti Rabadia and Subba Ghosh to name a few. The US artists were selected from an equally illustrious group. The show was curated by Dattaraya Apte, Ananda Moy Banerji, Kavita Nayar, and Sushanta Guha from India, and Vinay Kumar and Nicholas Hill from the USA. The meticulous selection of works gave the art fraternity in the capital an opportunity to see firsthand the latest developments in the medium, as well as a large body of exhibits in a genre less visible yet extremely developed and highly innovative.

For the Lalit Kala Akademi, where printmaking has been constantly encouraged, this maiden show of Indo-US artists is an opportunity to enrich the Permanent Collection of the Akademi. The acquisition of a single work from every participant at this show has empowered the Akademi with scholarly and artistic access that will be of immense benefit for our archives, future research and display potential. The Akademi has successfully raised the benchmark of display of prints with this meaningful exhibition.

## Contemporary Polish Printmaking Exhibition

An exhibition titled, 'Contemporary Polish Printmaking', featuring 160 works by eminent printmakers, was held at the Lalit Kala Akademi Galleries from 2 - 15 May, 2012. This was the largest exhibition of contemporary printmaking that has ever been assembled and was a remarkable exposure on the trends in contemporary Polish printmaking.

This exhibition was a part of the Cultural Exchange Programme (CEP) between the Polish Institutions who organised this exhibition and the Lalit Kala Akademi. Under this programme there will be a reciprocal art initiative taken by the Lalit Kala Akademi in Poland, following the Polish exhibition in India. To give this exhibition the fullest coverage possible, there are plans for this exhibition from Poland to travel to other Regional Centres of the Lalit Kala Akademi throughout India.

The works for this exhibition were sourced from 100 of Poland's best printmakers. Seven of the Polish Academies of Fine Art from the cities of Gdansk, Katowice, Krakow, Lodz, Poznan, Warsaw, and Wroclaw were represented in this exhibition. Also, Schools of Higher Learning in the cities of Lublin, and Torun were on this show. The works were executed by instructors at the seven Polish Academies and thus represent all fine art techniques, along with an abundance of traditional methods of Printmaking. Anna Tryc-Bromley, First Secretary, Cultural Affairs Section in the Polish Embassy, Delhi said, "Posters were very strong in the 60s and 70s and was the main medium of communication on the streets announcing films, theatre, events, even abstract ideas such as a famous series celebrating the art of circus."

"Five years ago as a tourist in Poland I searched for and visited the Poster Museum, the only one in the world. We grew up with a heavy dose of Polish posters and to have seen it in flesh is a privilege," says Arpana Caur, eminent contemporary artist who was the chief guest for the inauguration of this exhibition. Caur, who is primarily a painter says she taught herself printmaking over the last 32 years and she keeps going back to the Lalit Kala Studios and has produced a total of 35 etchings.

His Excellency Piotr Kodkovsky, the Polish Ambassador in India, inaugurated the exhibition and said, 'I really could feel that energy (urja) when I saw the exhibition of Polish printmakers at the Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi. Poland is extremely proud of this kind of art as posters and printmaking form an important part of the Polish art scene. In the days before, under Communist rule, we in Poland were not allowed to say what we wanted to express. Art provided a wonderful outlet to express these suppressed ideas and people viewing the posters and printmaking works could read between the lines



His Excellency Piotr Kodkovsky, the Polish Ambassador in India inaugurating the show.



His Excellency Piotr Kodkovsky and Prof. Christopher Nowicki.



Chief Guest artist Arpana Caur viewing the works.

and find a source for their feelings and pent-up thoughts. In fact, this lack of personal freedom in speech helped the development of art in a big way. As freedom of speech was denied and people took to expressing themselves through art and Poland 's artists created some wonderful art. These are now our proud national treasures that we have brought to India for this exhibition. As an ambassador from my country I often say that art promotion for me is a very enjoyable task as it is a totally 'duty free' product from my country. After I learnt that some of the works on display have taken more than six or seven months to create, I am even more pleased with this exhibition that has been brought by our artists for our friends in India.'

He added, 'The works also are a reflection of the ancient principle of education practised in India, namely the guru-shishya parampara. According to the curators of this show, the works are by distinguished professors of the Eugeniusz Geppert Academy of Art and Design, Wroclaw, as well as artists who were students under these academics and who are now showing alongside their teachers. The exhibition comprises works done by both guru and shishya and this common platform gives all of us an opportunity to respect the works of both categories here.'

His Excellency, also acknowledged the Akademi by saying, 'Lalit Kala Akademi has extended wholehearted cooperation to us for the exhibition and we look forward to collaboration in Poland with the Lalit Kala Akademi as part of the CEP that the two governments have signed. Such initiatives help us to mutually cooperate and learn from each other and there might come a time when Indian art will combine with European techniques to produce a new genre of printmaking works. After all, everything is possible when the inspiration is there. For the present I wish for '(Polish) Kala ka prachar purey desh mey (The spread of (Polish) art in the entire country).'

Lalit Kala Akademi's Regional Centre Garhi, in collaboration with the Eugeniusz Geppert Academy of Art and Design in Wroclaw, Poland, The Embassy of the Republic of Poland organized a talk and slide presentation by Prof. Christopher Nowicki, Curator of Contemporary Polish Printmaking on 1 May, 2012. Prof. Nowicki is an eminent printmaker and his choice of technique is Mezzotint. He has had over 40 solo exhibitions in Europe and abroad and participated in more than 100 international exhibitions and his work is in numerous collections. At Garhi, Prof. Nowicki actively discussed the Mezzotint technique through a lively presentation and discussion with practising printmakers. "Printmaking is always evolving as artists continue to challenge themselves and society continues to change giving new inspiration and subject matter," says Nowicki.

## Regional Painter's Camp, Lucknow

The Lalit Kala Akademi Regional Centre Lucknow organized a seven-day Regional Painter's Camp (15-21 March) in collaboration with the Culture and Tourism Department, Government of Uttar Pradesh. The camp was held at the Tourist Bungalow, Rahi Triveni Darshan, at Kydganj, in the historic city of Allahabad.

The event received enthusiastic response from artists and art lovers as visitors gathered at the camp's site to watch the process of making art. According to Shri Vinod Aggarwal, Secretary, Regional Centre Lalit Kala Akademi, Lucknow, the artists had taken it upon themselves to give off their best and thus the sculptures and paintings produced by the group received much acclaim from the fraternity. The events of the camp were widely reported in the media.

The nine participating artists were: Ganga Singh, Shiv Nath Ram, Rajib Chowdhary, Badar Jahan, Raju Patel, Vishal Yadav, Umesh Saxena, Mayank Sharma and Sudipta B. Bhushan.

Ganga Singh's, use of vibrant colours, makes his art an unfurling chronicle of a memory. His tumbling-over thoughts are used as a primary resource for the pattern play of the painting. With a touch of minute details and geometrical patterns used in an unconventional way, the work becomes a record of the artist's life contained in his work. Shiv Nath Ram's, abstract studies depict teeming emotions with splashes of vivid colours that hang over his work, to create a mysterious surface. Exhibiting a complex combination of drizzles, resists, controlled flows, and finished with totally flowing brushwork; the finale on exhibit is both vivid and deep-rooted. Rajib Chowdhary's, use of colour on a flat surface provides a decisive shift from the realistic to the graphic effect on canvas. Broadened by his artistic perception, the initial charm of his paintings focus on a daily ritual at establishing individual identities through thumb impressions and the finished image, thus loaded are her statements on system and systematic. Badar Jahan's, works attract by their brilliance of colours, strangeness of figures and ethereal brushwork. She uses intricate, profound and expertly crafted images with texture. It is her leitmotif 'Juxtapozed', that is the centre of her artistic vision. Raju Patel, the artist has picked discarded objects and made them a central and focal point of his work. A similar sort of ideology is found in the selection of colour which processes into a wash effect technically and a worn-out, used impression evocatively. Vishal Yadav's, use of colour on the flat surface of the background, with vibrant colour depictions for figures, delicately rendered, establishes the poetry of colour and theme in its final resonance. A delicate choice of pastel, a panoramic spread of mountain stretches and a conscious graphic outline of



Artist at work at the Regional Painting Camp.



Artist at work at the Regional Painting Camp.



Artist at work at the Regional Painting Camp.

peaks and foothills makes the works of Umesh Kumar Saxena, dramatic. The layered arrangement emerges as a translucent image of chimeric grandeur; wherein each slope appears in one's vision with the serenity of a veiled presence, half-hidden and charmingly visible on the mind's eye. The agility of the stick-like form reflects the flexibility of thought in the art of Mayank Sharma. The spruced form, undisturbed backdrop and clarity of vision give the work a spontaneity and elasticity that remains evergreen visually. Her figures concise a world of possibilities and there lies the charm of the works of Sudipta B. Bhushan. She has captured the visible within her framework. The artist has then blurred the obvious into an inner domain of mystique where the 'Thirst of Life' can only be quenched after a studied look at her creative excellence.

### National Printmaking Camp, Baroda

The Lalit Kala Akademi in collaboration with the Faculty of Fine Arts, Maharaja Sayajirao University, Baroda, organised a National Printmaking Camp from 28 August to 3 September, 2012. The department of Graphic Arts, Faculty of Fine Arts was the venue for this event. Eminent artist Shri P.D. Dhumal inaugurated the Camp. The twelve participating artists were: Yogesh Raval from Mumbai, Jayant Naskar from Kolkata, Priti Tamot from Bhopal, Ms. Kumudi Prajapati from Chandigarh, Ms. Manika Devi from Guwahati, Naba Kumar Das from New Delhi, Anjali Goel from Kurukshetra, Soghra Khurasani from Baroda, Maripelly Praveen Goud from Hyderabad, Aditi Pande from Nainital, Dushyant Patel from Baroda and Balaji Ponna from Vishakhapatnam.

On the closure of the Camp eminent artist and former Head of Dept. of Painting, Prof. Jyoti Bhatt delivered the valedictory address in the presence of the Secretary, Lalit Kala Akademi, Dr. Sudhakar Sharma and the Vice Chancellor, MSU Baroda, Prof. Yogesh Singh, who was the Guest of Honour.

### National Ceramic Camp, Bhopal

The Lalit Kala Akademi in collaboration with Bharat Bhavan, Bhopal, organized a National Ceramic Camp from 6–14 October, 2012. Bharat Bhavan, Shyamla Hills, was the venue for this event. Chief Secretary to Chief Minister, Madhya Pradesh, Shri Manoj Srivastav inaugurated the camp. The ten participating artists were: Arun Sharma from Shantiniketan, Devilal Patidar from Bhopal, Prithviraj Singh Dev from Bhuj, Jaya Rawal from Mumbai, Brahmswaroop from Varanasi, Tripti Patel from Baroda, Ajay Kumar Kanwal from Baroda, Priyatma Nayak from Rourkela, Rajesh Kumar Srivastava from New Delhi and Aarti Paliwal from Bhopal.

## Creative Confluence

### Indian Participation at the 15th Asian Art Biennale, Bangladesh, 2012

The Indian participation at the 15th Asian Art Biennale, Dhaka, marks another chapter in the ever-growing artistic closeness between our two countries under the aegis of our respective National art bodies. The first of these initiatives, namely the joint celebration of the 150th Anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore had seen the Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi, and the Shilpakala Academy, Dhaka, jointly collaborate on an art initiative, co-hosted by the heads of our respective states. In the second of these art initiatives, at the venue of the 15th Asian Art Biennale, Dhaka, once again, the Lalit Kala Akademi, India's National Academy of Art, has come forward to feature a unique amalgam of art experiences through an exhibition specially collaborated for this prestigious platform. This convergence of art, even as it strives to present the latest interventions of Indian art trends, also pre-supposes a level of reciprocity being carried to the next level, with Bangladesh coming forward to participate in the forthcoming Triennale, India, at Delhi.

The current showing of representative Indian contemporary art bears in its brushstrokes, its imprints, its digital takes and its sculpted forms the physiognomy of the two neighbouring lands. Though each of the Indian artists' works on one plane are distinct evocations of the artists' creative sensibilities, at the final venue of this deltaic land of Bangladesh, there is a conjoining as of our rivers, into a 'deltaic' platform where their individual stances, expressions, sensibilities and cohesions, cleave into a common purpose, of showcasing a unique cross pollination of art ideas that is as much Indian as it is universal. Whether it is the studies in black and white, or the riot of colours bearing on the imagery, the physical details of a sculpted form, the euphemistic realism of a city, mapped on a video screen, the tracery of a line in a drawing, the exactitude of a grooved



'Common Things' by B. Manjunath Kamath.

etching, or the moulding of paper into a cast, and much more, what is uncanny is the discourse of extra-sensory perception that the works evoke. Needless to add, they were shortlisted from the diverse choices now on the radar of contemporary art in India so that the experience of looking at them becomes a pointer towards the human heart.

Moved by the overwhelming response that this exhibition has received from all quarters, we acknowledge that the success of this endeavour would not have been possible without the kind cooperation received from the Ministry of Culture, India, the High Commission of Bangladesh in India, the High Commission of India in Bangladesh, the Shilpakala Academy, Dhaka, the members of the Lalit Kala Akademi, among others. We extend to them our sincere gratitude for making the event come to a successful fruition. Our gratitude also goes out to the Asian Art Biennale Authorities, who have brought to fruition a pan-Asian art platform where Indian art in its multifarious expressions can be arranged, showcased and documented credibly.



Indian Pavilion at the 15th Asian Art Biennale, Bangladesh





## Contours & Volumes

To mark the centenary year of the famed sculptor Prodosh Das Gupta and the 80th year of sculptor Sarbari Roy Choudhury, a landmark exhibition containing more than a hundred specimens of the works of the duo, was showcased for the first time at the Lalit Kala Akademi Galleries. This event had on view iconic works by the two artists forming the centrepiece of the display. Known for their ingenuity in confabulating sculptures around the plasticity of form, the show derived its name, 'Contours and Volumes' from this essential start point of the creative force behind the sculptures.

The bronze works ranged across a variety of dimensions from classical human-figure sculptures as in Prodosh Das Gupta's 'Surya Mukhi' to that of table-sized formats in the works of Sarbari Roy Choudhury. In all of these works the artists have given full rein to a sculptural idiom born of western and Indian norms of art making. This approach has placed the works into a genre of historicity where the tenets of academic realism, cubism and abstraction, are examined through sculptural creations. While the human form is representative of humane values and love in the works of Prodosh Das Gupta, in the musically inspired works of Sarbari Roy Choudhury, such as the bronze head of Ustad Bade Gulam Ali Khan, one can discern a sculptural ability of depicting music visually.

The display must be saluted for bringing to the public eye so many of their legendary masterpieces. Commenting on the importance of this display, Dr Sudhakar Sharma, Secretary, Lalit Kala Akademi, commented: 'To my knowledge sculptural works in such a large quantum has seldom been on view at the LKA Galleries. Besides, it is also a centenary show for paying tribute to Indian sculpture's great master artist, Prodosh Das Gupta. Showcasing the works of Sarbari Roy Choudhury in his 80th year is a step towards bringing to the current



'Loopholes' bronze by Prodosh Das Gupta.



'Mother and Child' bronze by Sarbari Roy Choudhury.

generation the thought-provoking art developments that these two masters had introduced in the 60s and 70s, and who are justifiably hailed as artists much ahead of their generation.

Art Critic Keshav Malik says, 'Sincerity, passion, devotion to craft, an open mind to all discoveries, serving to extend and enrich the means of artistic expression, were faithfully embodied in the art of Prodosh Das Gupta. He had wondrous capacity for the close 'reading' of artworks as well as the gift of synthesizing ideas that proved helpful in his own creations. Though he had a clairvoyant insight into art and aesthetics, these crystallized into no narrow theory. Rather, what he made of ideas were highly original formulations.' Eminent art critic Uma Nair, also elaborates on Prodosh Das Gupta's practice, 'Sensitively chosen compositions, subtly encrusted in the cosmic egg shape, breathing a harmony that at once enables instant connoisseurship of traditions whose famous impact on modern art, via Henry Moore, Giacometti and Brancusi, is incidental to their quality and infinitely better than any modern art, by and large.'

On the relatively smaller format of the majority of the works, the principal coordinator of the exhibition Reena Lath of Akar Prakar, Kolkata, said: 'These works though visually small reveal a great profundity. They are intimate works with great monumentality. They are the works of two very significant Indian artists and who have made a tremendous impact on the younger generations of artists after them.' The fortnight-long exhibition was inaugurated by the noted sculptor and artist, Acting Chairman Lalit Kala Akademi, Shri Balan Nambiar on the 31st of March 2012 and concluded on the 13th of April 2012. Accompanying the exhibition was a well-produced catalogue compiled by graphic designer Ishaan Das Gupta (grandson of Prodosh Das Gupta), containing artworks and personal essays penned by well-known art authorities.

## Germany: The 'Days of India' exhibition

The Days of India exhibition has travelled to Germany in November 2012. The exhibition of 'Moderns' with 40 paintings, prints and sculptures, of the most important artists of the late 20th century, is being shown in the main exhibition hall of the Zitadelle fortress. It also has some contemporary artworks. The exhibition is open for viewing from 8 December 2012, and will continue till 3rd April, 2013, at the Zitadelle.

This representative collection is a landmark collective as it marks India's maiden appearance on German soil during this Millennium. While exposure to western European art has been a part of the Indian learning process, with this expose at the Days of India in Berlin, Germany, it is felt that a process of reciprocity gathers momentum. With that intention in mind, the selected works under the 'Moderns' umbrella embrace a discovery of India's roots, a conscious, directional movement linked to national development, and a transmission of these visions in forms and colours decidedly individualistic and forthright. Linking this panoramic spread of Indian creativity is a brilliant application of techniques, garnered from the philosophical and contemporary character of India that configure into strong pictorial vocabularies; into spaces denoting complexities in the most astute ways, and stories and themes that palpate through their chosen mediums. In short, the vision in the exhibits wafts the trendsetting qualities of Indian art. It envisages the ideas and struggles of generations of master artists whose work today is a living testimony of their pioneering buoyancy that is now privy to the universal artistic soul within every human being.

The selection of 40 works from the glorious LKA collection was a difficult task. Emphasizing on the selection, Art critic Uma Nair, explains, 'These works espied so many years hence present to the viewer a vintage vitality and a virtuosity rarely seen in the modern millennium. This show is about the power of the human essence – contemporary Indian artists have since the genesis of modernism played with illusion and reality with a trembling poignancy.'

The selection comprises of the following artists: LKA National Awardee, 1963 Amba Das specializes in non-representational work based on his concept of nature and his work shows a preoccupation with getting beyond the surface into an abstract formless reality. One of the highest selling women artists, Arpita Singh's work presents energy-filled visual imagery teamed with motifs of an underlying narrative. Painter, writer, illustrator of children's books, Badri Narayan's work has an illustrative and a self-reflective quality. Self-taught artist Bhupen Khakhar's art deals with struggles of daily life for ordinary folk. His work reminds us of the intriguing (tiger)



'Vigil' by M.F. Husain (1960).

within the mundane (bus ride). LKA Fellow, (2003), Bikash Bhattacharjee is known for bringing back a realistic style of painting and his work expresses the authentic milieu of his city, Kolkata. Abstract and non-figurative painter, Bimal Dasgupta explores the richness of the oil medium by creating structural



'Cathedral' by Reddapa Naidu (1963).

spaces and interlocking the colour to create a pictorial unity. Pioneer modernist, Biren De depicts the universal male and female energies through geometric, symmetrical, design-like diagrams. Dilip Kumar Das depicts a commonplace theme with a restricted palette and a strong portrayal of figures. Founder Member of Progressive Movement, F N Souza's bold compositions are both sacred and profane. Regarded as India's iconic Tantric artist, G R Santosh, in his quest for individuality and culture, reflects the spiritual mystification of art in his works. Ganesh Haloi prefers to call his works 'inner-scapes' and not landscapes. His paintings have a highly introvert quality and are influenced by the trauma of migrating from his home in Bangladesh during the Partition. J Swaminathan's work has a strong pictorial vocabulary with elementary motifs and an ethereal colour scheme. K G Subramanyan's characteristic blue colour palette not only has a witty angle but also bears the quality of concealment and play in his work. Drawing inspiration from folk and primitive art worldwide, K S Kulkarni's art denotes the complexity of life. K K Hebbar's rhythmic drawings use angles, domes and lines to define the image and create an association of the object in our mind. Combining European Modernism with thematic reflection, N S Bendre depicts the feminine form in true academic style. Ram Kumar's work has a topographical quality depicting the life of the common urban folk. Another LKA Awardee, Rameshwar Broto works with a satirical slant on masculinity and his technique shows the use of oil with a graphic print look. Ramkinker Baij's several prominent sculptures dot the premises of Santiniketan and the force and vitality of his modelled forms can be seen in his paintings as well. Marked by strong surface decoration, S G Vasudev's work in metal and enamel reflects the many forms of the Kalpa Vriksha. Soft dreamy quality rendered through fine application of colour as if yearning for an uncomplicated life is a characteristic of Sailoz Mukherjee's art. V S Gaitonde's

work is highly meditative where the feeling of silence is exuded by an abstract quality. Jayasri Burman's mythical and dream like touches are inspired by folk elements, motifs of fish and water and minutely woven patterns on the surface. Pioneer of the colour viscosity process in printmaking, Krishna Reddy uses the plate as a painting surface for his semi-abstract work. A sombre mood is reflected in the highly textured work of Sanat Kar. Somnath Hore

has had a lifelong concern with the anguished human figure and he expresses this through his inventive etchings.

Bringing this mammoth exhibition to fruition would not have been a reality without the kind cooperation of several agencies and individuals. Mention must be made among others of the Zitadelle Museumsleitung and BA Spandau von Berlin, FB Kultur, the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, the Ministry of Home Affairs, for their support and cooperation in making a success of this Indian art endeavour.

## Shimla Guest House

The Lalit Kala Akademi Regional Centre, Shimla, located in the wing of the Gaiety Theatre, Shimla, is a much-visited heritage site in the city. Apart from its inherent attraction as an art centre, The Lalit Kala Akademi, Shimla, has now acquired two fully furnished and functional Guest Houses for use by the art fraternity for holding art camps, artist-in-residency programmes and sundry activities of the LKA. Set amidst a pristine 150-year-old pine forest in the Sanjholi area of Shimla, the place is highly accessible from Shimla's Mall. These independent bungalows located in close proximity to the Himachal Pradesh Secretariat complex and have been painstakingly renovated and made functional by the NBCC, over a period of three years. The bungalows, erstwhile official residences of HP Govt officials of the rank of High Court Chief Justices, comprise single room accommodation for use by senior artists. The adjoining bungalow provides accommodation, dormitory style, for use by younger artists, and is ideal for holding art Camps. The Members of the Executive Board of the LKA made time out to see the premises for themselves and were unanimous in their praise of the above premises. The Acting Chairman, commented: 'The Guest Houses are a great service done to the art community.'



Seminar on Rabindranath Tagore at Kaustubh Auditorium

## 150th Anniversary Celebrations of Rabindranath Tagore

Celebrations of the 150th Anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore were held at the Lalit Kala Akademi on 7 May, 2012. To mark this event the Akademi released a portfolio of reproductions portraying Rabindranath Tagore. These portraits of Tagore were executed during an Artist-in-Residency Art Camp of eminent artists from Bangladesh, organised by the Lalit Kala Akademi, in May 2011.

A seminar titled 'Rabindranath Tagore: A Global Pioneer', was also organised by the Lalit Kala Akademi on this occasion. The panel of speakers was drawn from a coterie of eminent scholars and academics who have been addressing international meets on Rabindranath Tagore worldwide. The speakers on this occasion were: Dr. Nilanjan Banerjee, Dr. Sukanta Choudhury, Dr. Shyam Prasad Ganguly, Shri Sunil Gangopadhyay, Ms. Bhaswati Chakravorty, Dr Arun Ghose, Dr. Indra Nath Choudhury, Dr. S S Biswas and Shri Rattan Parimoo. The event was held over two sessions and took place at the Kaustubh Auditorium, Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi.

A coveted recognition conferred on the LKA in connection with the above event reached the Akademi just recently. A portfolio of the works produced during the Camp was released in May, 2012, to mark the closure of the Anniversary



Dr. Sudhakar Sharma releasing the Portfolio on Rabindranath Tagore.

celebrations. For its excellent standards and benchmark status as a document the All India Federation of Master Printers have awarded the National Award for Excellence in printing 2012, for the portfolio of Paintings – Rabindranath Tagore. This distinguished award establishes the fine quality of workmanship and printing excellence displayed by the LKA in its productions.

