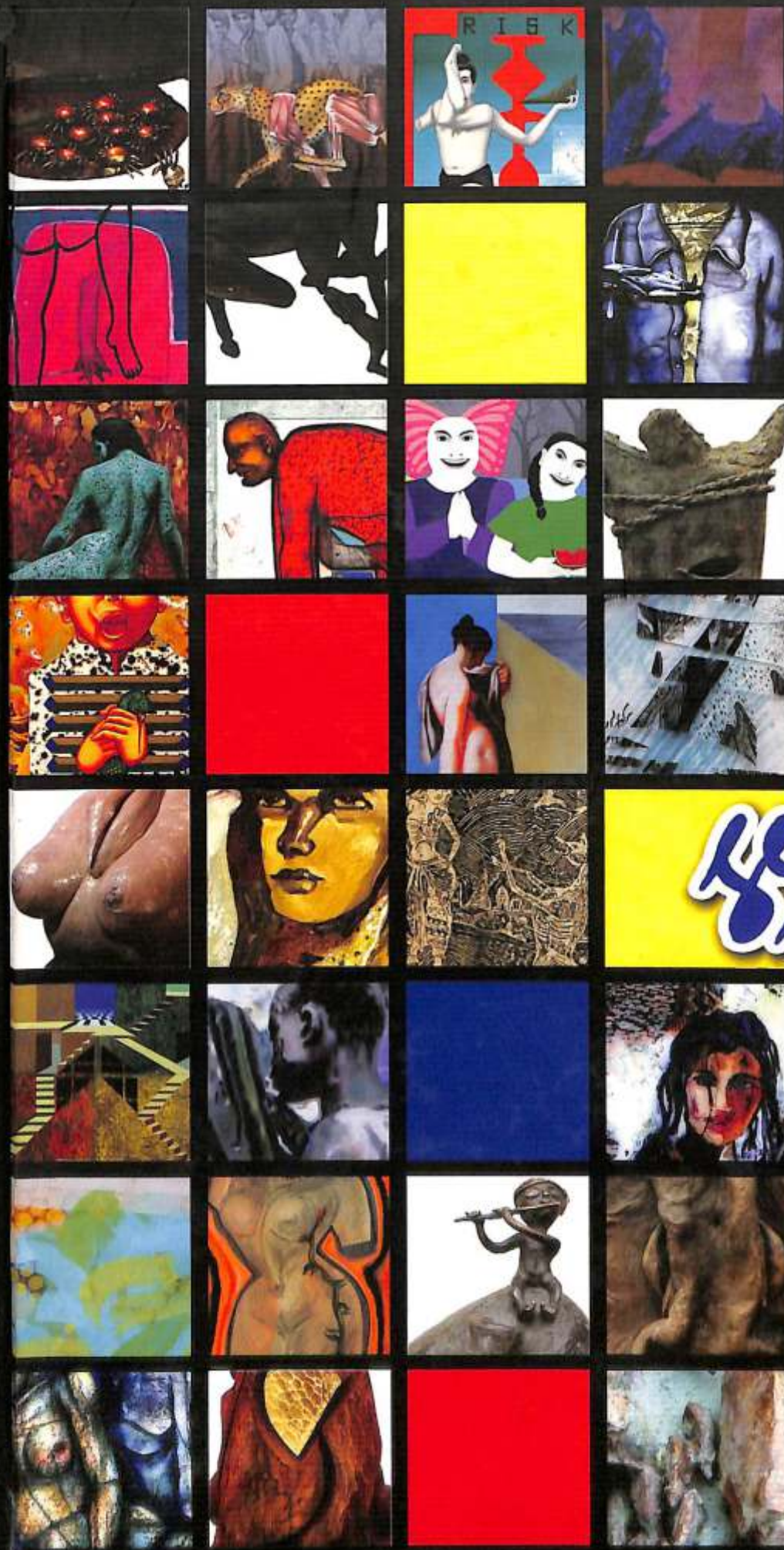




Aakriti
Art Gallery
presents

next

October 1 – 15, 2006

- Akhil Chandra Das
- Barun Chowdhury
- Birendra Pani
- Biswajit Mukherjee
- Debanjan Roy
- Debasis Barui
- Debraj Goswami
- Deepak Kundu
- Dipendranath Pal
- Farhad Hussain
- Jayanta Paul
- Jayanta Kumar Paul
- Jayanta Roy
- Nobina Gupta
- Prasun Ghosh
- Rajesh Bhowmik
- Rajesh Deb
- Ritendra Roy
- Sandip Daptari
- Soumit Gupta
- Soumen Das
- Sourav Jana
- Subrata Biswas
- Sujit Kumar Karan
- Supam Adhikary
- Sutanu Chatterjee
- Tapas Biswas

2 October 2005 – 1 October 2006

Aakriti
Art Gallery
presents



October 1 – 15, 2006

Gen Next showcases works of twenty-seven emerging painters, sculptors and printmakers from Eastern India. The show brings together a mélange of images and expressions that are compelling, engaging and at the same time confrontational in its discourse with its viewers.

These works of art have been selected after careful assessment to give art lovers an enriching experience. Aakriti Gallery has always been a platform where young generation artists are greatly encouraged. Now with its new sculpture gallery opened last month, we hope to engage our viewers with new-age creativity and more exciting works of art, yet to unfold.

-Vikram Bachhawat

The Mission of Art Gallery

Connotations having no apparent relation, the words 'art gallery' and 'mission' seem to be an unlikely combination. Taking a pause and stretching one's thought, one can think of the necessity of public funded art galleries like the National Gallery of Modern Art, the Lalit Kala Akademi galleries and the likes of government museums, of having clearly spelt aims and objectives, transparent policies for realizing the aims and objectives and reviewable functioning. Galleries managed by public trusts and committees with publicly raised funds, like the Rabindra Bharati Society of Calcutta (which lamentably failed to perform its duties), also have similar public (only the concerned segment of the public) accountability. Call this responsibility by any other name, if the term mission seems somewhat inappropriate. But as the word mission connotes a voluntary taking of responsibility, it has to be preferred in connexion with management of art gallery. A privately managed commercial art gallery, however, is altogether a different proposition. A privately managed commercial art gallery, like any other private business organization, is neither a charitable institution nor a social service organization. Its primary aim, like any other business organization's, is sustainability of profit (earning) at increasing rates. Each business however, has to devise business-specific modes of operation for sustaining increasingly profitable returns.

What then are the business specific modes of operation for the privately managed commercial art galleries? The merchandise, on the transactions of which their profits depend, are art objects, paintings, sculptures, fine manual prints, even small installations etc. The galleries have to source them, or get their supplies, from artists. And they have to sell them to people who like to possess art objects for their own satisfaction and/or invest their savings in acquisition of objects which are likely to fetch greater income in future and/or acquire possessions that are likely to act as symbols of status. To maintain at least a steady, if not an increasing, supply of art objects with potential desirability, a commercial art gallery has to strive for, earn and sustain the trust and confidence (from which can follow loyalty) of the art object supplying artists, by time-bound fair play and accounting transparency. A far more difficult proposition is creation and sustaining of demand at increasingly higher levels. It is in this sphere that the art gallery business has to work real hard with innovativeness. A gallery has to constantly strive for creating and sustaining a constantly expanding core of loyal clientele, again by fair deal and assured supply of art objects of their expected quality, regularly.

But fair deal, accounting fidelity and transparency in



transactions, both to suppliers and to the clientele, which are essential for a firm's good will, are never sufficient for the commercial success of the firm. Art gallery management in the presently burgeoning and highly competitive art market has become capital intensive. Not only a high investment in fixed capitals has become a *sine qua non* in the art gallery business, the running capital costs too are rising fast, as more and more saleable artists are opting from, consigning their works to outright sale to the galleries. The lion's share of capital investment is, however, to be reserved for packaging of merchandise. The packaging cost in fixed capitals include : locational and site specific rents, gallery-readiness costs, including expenditure on ever expanding list of lighting and other equipment; and add to these the costs of servicing of the fixed capital regularly to maintain these in spic and span condition; and further add to these, the cost of renovation at certain intervals. The major part of the running capital is needed for packaging of the exhibitions, the cost of which is mounting by day. The packaging, or at least the thinking on packaging, for an exhibition ought to start from the planning stage; transporting exhibits carefully, mounting them properly for display, designing the display optimally, designing of invitations, reaching them to properly selected invitees in time, and designing of exhibition publication (which has become a must do, for record keeping), have to be accomplished with fee-paid help from the specialists in each field. As expert-choice of artists and works are not always available in-house, more and more galleries, now-a-days, are going in for curated exhibitions. Unfortunately, cruoted shows even by seasoned art scribes turn out

to be carelessly assembled anthologies. To be meaningful, a curated show must have a theme, a point to prove. That, however, is besides the point; the point is, for a curated show a gallery has to pay consultation fee. The listed dos and donts are all art gallery specific business practices which are likely to make a gallery earn a reasonable return, in a competitive market. But not so long ago, not to speak of a competition, there was no market for art objects. What was the situation like, then?

Pioneering commercial art gallery owners like Kekoo Gandhi, Dhoominal Jain, Birendra Kumar, Victor Banerjee, Prakash Kejriwal et.al. had other career choices. Kekoo Gandhi could have remained satisfied with his framing business, Dhoominal Jain could have further expanded his crafts trade, Victor Banerjee could have gone into tea industry (he, however, finally made his choice to be an actor and closed down his gallery), Prakash Kejriwal could have remained an academic with Jadavpur University. But as art collectors to start with, and friends of artists, Kekoo, Victor and Prakesh took upon themselves the mission of infecting their friends, relatives and acquaintances with similar love bugs for art. Themselves having been individuals with accomplishments and socially well-connected with people with expendable savings, they could motivate a large number of buyers; some of whom later became avid collectors. The enthusiasm with which they would pursue their relatives, friends and acquaintances to collect art, the pains they would take and time they would spend on educating prospective collectors cannot be termed just as extra services for merchandising. Similarly, their habit of



standing by artists at the time of their distress and need, which they frequently did (not as charity but as emergency relief), would not be considered as sound business practice, *albeit* in the short run, but in the long run that yielded results. These behavioural fall-outs, can be regarded as the resultant effect of regarding art dealing more than a business; a mission perhaps. The enthusiasm with which this author has seen Kekoo Gandhi and Prakash Kejriwal promoting exhibitions of groups of artists from which they themselves had nothing to gain, amply demonstrated that with them art dealing was more than a business. It was a mission.

Missionary zeal, or activity not motivated by promise of profitable return (such activity might, on the other hand, involve one in expenses without return), is not something that one associates with business in any other commodity. One cannot even expect this missionary zeal from dealers who have come into business with the expansion of art market. But in the situation of burgeoning art market some dealers, some galleries, can make some difference by rendering some service, along with transactions in merchandise. The services may include advice and action on mounting and framing to conservation and restoration of works of art, from documentation to insurance of art objects. Over and above everything, the dealers need to educate themselves and gather as much knowledge about art as possible, to educate and persuade art collectors and potential collectors. But a note of caution needs to be sounded here. Neither should a commercial art gallery try to function like an art educational institution, nor should a dealer assume the role of teacher. The best way in which a commercial art gallery can fulfill its educational

function is by constant information gathering, storing and dissemination of information on art. With the advance in information technology, this has become easier than it was quarter of a century ago. Galleries need expert advice on systematic collection, categorization, standardization and dissemination of worthwhile information, by separating chaff from gain. This can be a mission of commercial art galleries in the twenty-first century. This may be a helpful extra for the artists, collectors and researchers alike.

Vikram Bachhawat opened his Aakriti gallery, in October 2005 with an initial advantage. His father Manik Bachhawat is a fairly known Hindi poet of Calcutta. Manik has more than a usual interest in contemporary visual arts and has been collecting painting since 1960s. Not only has he been collecting paintings from his contemporary painters, many of whom has been his personal friends. He has written reviews of exhibitions in 60s and 70s, in Hindi, for prestigious publications. Vikram inherited his love for paintings and sculptures from his father and became an avid collector of art and craft objects from early life. Soon he became an expert on blown, cast, moulded and cut glass objects and earned recognition as such from an international encyclopedia on glass. He has been successfully running a business in collectible, before he decided to devote greater energy in building up a business in objects of non-performing visual arts, namely paintings, sculptures and fine manual prints. Vikram could manage capital enough to secure a fairly large gallery space in a prime location in central Calcutta, gear the space up to international standards for holding exhibitions. That Vikram knows



how to plan things big, became apparent when he could convince Prof. K.G. Subramanyan to open the doors of Aakriti gallery in October 2005. Similarly when Jogen Chowdhury inaugurated the Young Bengal show. I curated, on July 9, 2006, with a sketch, it became a unique event. The most remarkable feat, however, has been the acquisition of a slightly larger space in the same venue where Aakriti has opened a state-of-art gallery for sculpture only, the first of its kind in India, before the gallery completed the first year of its existence.

Although a private commercial gallery is not accountable to anybody for its aims, objectives and operational policies (it is answerable to concerned public only insofar as its deals and dealings are concerned), certain policies that Vikram's Aakriti has adopted, as those have got manifested through the exhibitions, need to be noted for their significance. Vikram has realized it quite early, that much as he would like and try to beg, coax and cajole well-known artists to agree to exhibit in Aakriti, for a late entrant in art market, it is extremely difficult to procure the works of market-savvy artists. Even if the gallery is fortunate of getting some minor work from some major artists, once a while, that would be insufficient to manage the gallery operations year round. This stark reality induced Vikram to scout for and hone young talents and project their talents. It is seen good business sense, conditioned by the unavailability of easily saleable and good revenue earning art, that guided Vikram to talent search and grooming of talented youngsters. But what he has done for accomplishing the task is more remarkable. He engaged art connoisseurs with knowledge, experience and judgement for searching talents and

exposing their work in exhibitions curated by them. And he took upon himself the task of convincing his clientele to invest their savings on the affordable works of the young talents. Vikram's risk taking, confidence and efforts at convincing clientele have not gone in vein. What Vikram is doing cannot be termed as missionary work or social service. But nevertheless, it is good business sense converging with missionary zeal that are working in favour of Vikram's Aakriti.

I have been one of the experienced art activists on whom Vikram reposes his faith for carrying out his policies. And I on my part am trying to use this opportunity to project the future art of Bengal and India. I am thankful for the free hand he has been giving.

Pranabranjan Ray



Carrying a backdrop of Govt. Art College, Calcutta and M.S. University of Baroda, I feel the responsibility to become part of a network of creative individuals to shape and continue to shape the cultural surroundings of us all. My work reflects my experience I gather from day dreaming to dreams, from toiling efforts of common people to lethargic postures, from myths to mysteries from the landscapes of the city to the organisation of the cosmos.

Most of my works are in mixed media such as wood and bronze. I found every material has its own character and the idea I conceive blossoms into shapes as an orchestration while receiving different impulses from different materials. It generates a tremendous cross pollination of ideas and exchange of influences.



Akhil Chandra Das, born 1968

A postgraduate in sculpture from M.S. University of Baroda, he has received Junior Scholarship 1999-2000, Lalit Kala Research Grant, 1995 and National Scholarship 1995-96 to pursue his chosen career. He has been a recipient of Bombay Art Society Award, 1996, AIFACS Award 1995, '97 and 2000 and Harmony Show Award in 2002. His first solo show was at Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai in 2002 apart from participation in several group shows like Harmony Show and National Exhibition among others. His works are in several private collections in Bombay, Baroda, Assam, Delhi, Bangalore, Pondichery, USA, Japan and Australia.



"Family", Iron & Bronze, 39" x 23" x 12"

The broader notion of my existence and work revolve around the questions, who are we? Why are we here? And where are we going? I don't pretend to have any of the answers to these questions but I hope that my work can articulate situations and emotions that people can identify with.

My work is related to what I feel, so it tends to become an extension of me. I work with a mixture of found images which are often very personal, autobiographical and photographic. Often I reuse and transfigure these images, manipulating them manually or even electronically, relevant to the intention of each art work - the depiction of male power in context to violence or terrorism. Each small detail has relevance, be it the tie, or the hairstyle of one of the characters of the visual. My earlier works focussed on socio-political issues, fundamentalism, and consumerism, as well as the identity of mankind. In my present work although the concept remains the same as that of my previous works, yet there is a definite and deliberate refinement in the treatment of the visuals, physically as well as aesthetically. These paintings are different in terms of the visualisation. They are more sophisticated and force the viewer to figure out what I'm trying to convey. The change is not to delude the viewer but to get him more involved in the painting. I want to explore my imagination, retaining a certain essence to my works.



Barun Chowdhury, born 1971

A bachelor's degree in painting from Govt. College of Art & Craft, Kolkata and master's degree in graphics from Faculty of Fine Arts, Baroda. Barun had two solo shows - at Nazar Art gallery, Baroda in 2000 and Gallery III, Glasgow in 2003. Some of his selected group shows were at Gallery Gauche, Paris in 1999. 'Graphic Expressions' by Cymroza Art gallery, Mumbai, in 2000. 'Kitch Kitch Hota Hai' in 2001, at Gallery Espace, Mumbai. Art 2003 Arteries Art Gallery, Glasgow. 'Huma Traffic Show- New Communities' Glasgow in 2004. In 2006 his works were displayed in The Saffron Art Online artist of the month exhibition, Mumbai. Barun has won Award for Best Watercolour by Calcutta Information Centre, The Charles Wallace Award to visit Glasgow and The Commonwealth Art and Crafts Award to travel, work and exhibit in UK. He has attended several art camps and workshops. His works are in private collections of RPG, Mumbai, Ecole De Beaux Art, Paris, and Kanagawa Prefectural Art Gallery, Japan and several others.



"People Scape", Acrylic & Oil on Canvas, 36" x 48"



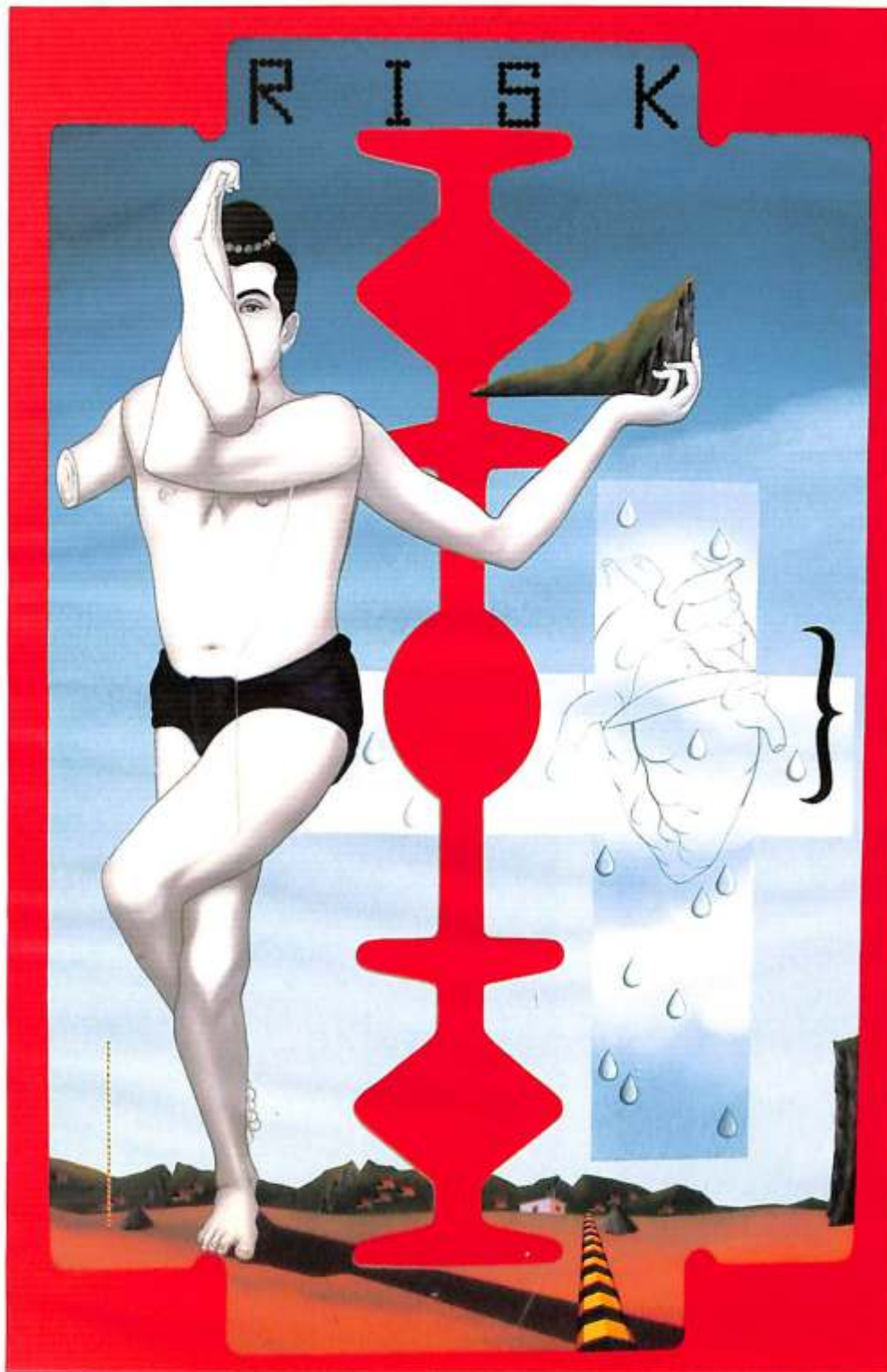
"A Tragic Confrontation", Oil on Canvas, 48" x 36"

The aim of my work is not to define culture in some fixed way; rather its goal is to suggest the changing attitudes towards indigenous cultural tradition, critiques of socio-political conditions and reconsideration of values in the society for the formation of a traditional future in the society and in the globalised world. My works are juxtaposition of visual and conceptual relations to create tension that transcends boundaries of international and local issues influencing each other. I consciously concentrate on imageries and icons of Orissa and juxtapose them with images of gotipua boys and other historical references. The tradition of gotipua dance is unique and vulnerable, with little recognition. Pictorially I have used one boy dancer using different mudras of yoga, balancing the body where body is the place of inscription of all changes. The blade is a conceptual, psychological and contextual space. The dancers commitment to the practice, performance, sexuality, identity and survival, is what I find a striking issue in the present time.



Birendra Pani, born 1969

He has a postgraduate degree with distinction in painting from Faculty of Fine Arts, Baroda. Birendra's solo show 'Risk, The Double Edge of Society' was at Gallery Espace, New Delhi in 2006. Some of the selected group exhibitions in India and abroad are: 'The Indian Art Show', London, 'Metrospective Show', New Delhi in 2006. 'In Short' and 'Divine Inspiration' at Hacienda Gallery, Mumbai, 'Now' Indian Contemporary Artists, New Delhi, Show for Tsunami, Baroda, 'Present and Future' NGMA, Mumbai, 'Use and Throw' installation show, Gallery Sara Arakkal, Bangalore and many more. He has won several awards and his works are represented in several public and private collections.



"The Double Edge", Acrylic on Canvas, 42" x 66"

For me the whole idea of image making takes birth from aspects of everyday life, where the images confront the viewer with all their strength and viability. My works are essentially abstract. I start them in a playful manner and with the advancement of my work the form takes shape on the canvas and the composition surfaces, just like the nature herself which grows into wildness according to her own rule and no statistics can foresee the length of a shoot and no math can scale the desire of a leaf or a bud.



Biswajit Mukherjee, born 1971

A diploma in painting from Indian College of arts & Draftsmanship, Kolkata and a post diploma in graphics from M.S. University of Baroda, Biswajit has been a participant of numerous shows. The major ones are 'West Zone Scholars Festival', Faculty of Fine Arts, Baroda in 1999, 'Their Story' - Mega Show, Ravindra Bhavan, New Delhi in 2000, Art Watch Annual Exhibition, Gallery 88, Kolkata in 2004, The Kolkata Metaphor: a view from the edge, Kamataka Chitrakala Parishad, in 2005 annual Art Show organised by Pegasus Art Gallery and RAD, State Gallery of Fine Arts, Hyderabad, in 2006. He has attended art camp organised by Tata Steel in 2005 and Pegasus art Gallery & RAD at Vishakhapatnam in 2006. Many private collectors from India and abroad possess his work of art. Currently Biswajit stays in Kolkata and works as a freelance artist.



"Untitled", Oil Pastel, Charcoal & Acrylic on Handmade Paper, 21" x 30"



"Untitled", Acrylic on Handmade Paper, 29.5" x 21.5"



"Untitled", Oil Pastel, Charcoal & Acrylic on Handmade Paper, 29.5" x 21.5"



"Untitled", Oil Pastel, Charcoal & Acrylic on Handmade Paper, 29.5" x 21.5"

I always think of making different types of sculptures by doing big experimental work. I have done various outdoor sculptures for Bengal Ambuja to fulfil this innate need. Eminent art critic Pranabranjan Ray has always supported me and motivated me in further developing my work. I am grateful to my family and all the people who help me evolve as a sculptor and I thank god for giving me the power to overcome all odds and continue to follow my dreams.



Debanjan Roy, born 1975

A postgraduate in visual arts from Rabindra Bharati University, he has received "Nirman award" 2004, Lalit Kala Academy Scholarship, 2002-03. He has also received Junior Fellowship from Ministry of Tourism and Culture 2002-04 and Best Sculpture Award by West Bengal State Academy and Rabindra Bharati University. His works have been exhibited in 'New Wave in Bengal Art' curated by Pranabranjan Ray, 2005, 'Tale of two cities' Birla Academy in 2004, "Migration City, home" Lalit Kala Academy, Kolkata in 2003 and Triennale, Japan 2001 among several others. His first solo show was held at Birla Academy, in 2002. Currently he stays and works in Kolkata.



"Pregnant Woman Seated on a Painted Chair", Wood/Colour, 42" x 24" x 30"



"Mother & Child", Wood/Colour, 42" x 24" x 30"

In this complex world, we live in a dilemma, in a melancholic situation. Dilemma of what we want or wish to touch, but cannot. If we could achieve our goal then what would be the situation? What it would look like? What effect it would leave in our mind and life? By nature, a human being always wants to get hold of things that he/she cannot get easily. Our thought process is not one directional. We think and work on various things at the same time. Our life is full of contradictions. I like to travel by an aeroplane but do not like its harsh roaring sound. I have never climbed on the top of Shahid Minar of Kolkata. But if I ever get a chance I wonder what would happen, how would Kolkata would unfold before my eyes, how would it effect my mental and psychological set up? These complex situations in several levels of existence automatically transforms onto my canvases. I try to capture this 'complex situation' in my paintings. In this unreal, yet so real situation, of psychological, associative and visceral pursuit women are my main subjects. I try to observe the world of women, from their point of view. Soft sofa, apple, snake, capsicum and other soft and colourful objects in my painting signify the softness of women as well women as sex symbol. The way the male dominated society look at women, even in today's progressive, hi-tech society smooth, soft, enjoyable 'item' like capsicum, which belongs to the family of chilly, however without its hotness, with eye soothing green colour yet tasty. From this, so called 'soft corner' I try to understand the world of women.



Debasis Barui, born 1975

Graduated from Indian College of Art & Draftsmanship in 1996, Debasis has exhibited his works in several shows. West Bengal State Academy, in 1998, Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai in 1998 Chitrakala Parishad, Bangalore in 2001 and Aryan Art Gallery Delhi in 2004. He has been in the "Young Face in Indian Contemporary Art in 2002, besides being a regular participant at Birla Academy of Art & Culture from 2001- 2006. He has attended camps organised by Oxford Gallery, Kolkata and Orissa festival 2004-'05.



Untitled, Mixed Media on Canvas 40" X 42"



Untitled, Tempera on paper 9" X 10" / 20" X 28" Set of 4



Untitled, Tempera on paper 9" X 10" Set of 12

If you lie and lie again in a convincing way it becomes the truth for the listeners, said Goebbels. In today's world of 'information excess' this statement is becoming more and more significant. A continuous 'feel good' propaganda confuses the world at large, despite the fundamental problems of civilization remaining the same. I see, listen, eat, and sleep with the very idea of the world being in an everlasting state of 'progress'. That we are becoming more and more civilized! Despite this, 9/11, Godhra, Abu Ghraib, Iraq, Best Bakery, the recent explosions in the Bombay trains continue to happen. The very problem of this information boom is that nothing is entirely true or entirely false. Instead, they are 'half truths'. My journey has been in experimenting with these half truths. In fact it is an individual exercise to take myself out of the confusion around me and be able to present /communicate them with 'others'.

The areas I am working with are multi layered. I have thus decided to create my own images through which I can talk about many things at a time. Pictorially my images look absurd, unreal and humorous. It is my intention to make my viewers laugh. But slowly unraveling a layer of it being something other than just funny imagery, I am hoping that the viewer then has reason to re-interpret what is before him.



Debraj Goswami, born 1973

After receiving his art education from Rabindra Bharati University, Kolkata and M.S. University of Baroda, Debraj visited and worked in UK on Charles Wallace Scholarship in 2001-02. His recent solo show 'My experiments with half truth' was held at Gallery Chemould, Mumbai. His other solo show was 'Don't/Please take it otherwise' was held at Gallery Art Resource Trust, Mumbai in 2001. He has had numerous group shows in Baroda, Mumbai, New Delhi, Chennai, Bangalore, London, Glasgow, Paris, Alexandria and Tokyo. His work is represented in several private and public collections in India, UK, USA, France, Sweden, Japan, Egypt, Australia and Cuba. Debraj currently stays and works in Baroda.



*"My Experiment with Half Truth",
Acrylic on Canson Paper, 30" x 22"*



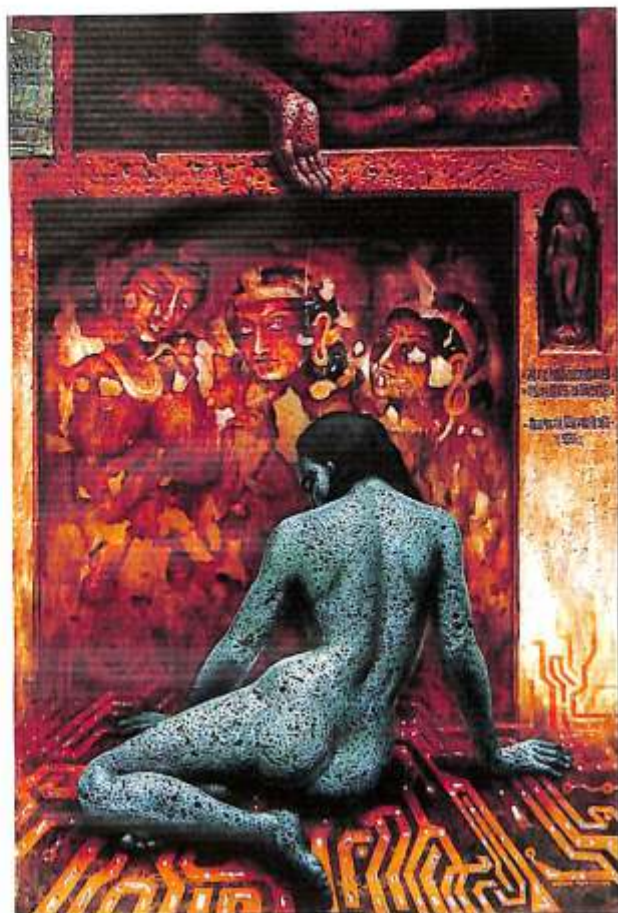
"Father 'n' Sons", Acrylic on Canvas, 45" x 33"

In my painting there is an impact of Indian classical temple sculpture and modern materialistic life. There are textures and rhythm of female nude figure that conveys inner passion, desire, love and erotic sense of feminism. These are dramatic reflection of our life when we experience great excitement in different circumstances. Through the nude figure I have tried to express the harsh reality of existence and its creative nature. As an artist, I always try to express my feelings and emotions by depicting contrasts in life.



Deepak Kundu, born 1976

He is a postgraduate from Rabindra Bharati University and has had two solo exhibitions in the Academy of Fine Arts, Kolkata in the year 2003 & 2005. He has participated in group shows at Dhoomimal Art Centre, Delhi, Chemould Art Gallery Kolkata, Chitrakala Parishad, Bangalore and Birla Academy of Art & Culture, Kolkata. He has attended Ceramics Workshop and 'KalaMela' organised by R.B.U., as well as participated in an Art Camp organised by Aryan Art Gallery, Delhi recently in 2006. He has been awarded with the Best Award in water colour by Indian College of Art and Draftsmanship and Rabindra Bharati University Award. His works can be seen in several private collections in Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and abroad.



"Give Me Peace", Acrylic on Canvas, 60" x 40"



"Devdasi", Acrylic on Canvas, 60" x 40"

In nature all things have their own identity. They exist with their own identification. There is relation among all these things. After a relation maybe a new identity builds up, but the pre-related things do exist in their character or sometimes they don't.

'Relations' and 'expressions' are two subjects that are very much important in the context of my paintings. In the present materialistic world, the relation between the human being and its surroundings are of deep concern to me. We see that day by day the materials we use are changing. As a result the relation between materials and humans are changing drastically. I always observe my surroundings very keenly. We are so involved in our own existence, that in this competitive and material world we are losing our relationship with ourselves. We are busy making the outside surface beautiful and not the inner side. I keenly observe the characteristics of all things in my surroundings and represent them on my painting.



Dipendranath Pal, born 1977

A winner of Merit Scholarship of KalaBhavan, Shantiniketan, Dipendranath is a postgraduate in painting. His solo shows have been at the Academy of Fine Arts in 2001, 2004. He has participated in group shows at Ravindra Bhavan, Lalit Kala Academy, New Delhi, Two Man Show at Academy Of Fine Arts, Kolkata, in 2004, 46th National Exhibition. He has showed in more than forty exhibitions till now. His works can be found with numerous private collectors from Singapore, Holland, USA and India.



"Man with Black Coat", Mixed Media on Board, 28.5" x 38"



"Man & Red Chair", Mixed Media on Board, 29" x 38"



"From Past to Present", Mixed Media on Board, 9" x 38"

As a person I have always enjoyed the inner politics of human relationships and the higher side of it.. After coming to Baroda, my works took a different turn, both structurally and conceptually. They started getting represented in more complex manner. In my recent works, one may find the ambience ambiguous, the appearance of the characters, especially women are provocative, if not shocking. We tend to see the more complex areas of human relationships as it is usually nurtured by a capitalist society. Capitalism survives through alienation and through ideas of consumption. In my work one can see this sort of mystical consumption getting subverted into a different world. Here is where I use humor and sarcasm as my weapons to overthrow the romanticism of consumption that we are happily living with. It brings the areas of conflict into the scene. We don't understand whether to enjoy the images through a voyeuristic gaze or to laugh at them. This is where the ambiguity plays a role. Structurally I have started incorporating various elements from different sources that include miniature paintings, kalighat patas, bazaar paintings, classical and oriental designs, and Japanese prints and also images from the entertainment world. All these languages create an eclectic rhetoric playing a role not only on the surface of the images but also within its concept.

Although my works are highly based on male and female sexuality, they vary in mode of representation to create or explore various layers within it. But the work neither celebrates sexuality nor condemns, it rather brings the disclosed areas into consideration. We see that laughter is accompanied by a deep sense of pathos in some of these works; this is where my intervention seems valid.



Farhad Hussain, born 1975

He has a post diploma in painting from M.S. University of Baroda. During this period Farhad had also won the Nasreen Mohamedi Scholarship in 2004. He has participated in Oriental Art Exhibition 1998,99 Charukala Utsav, Kolkata in 2002, Group Exhibition, M.S. University of Baroda-2004, Group Exhibition, Sarjan Art Gallery, Baroda 2004 and National Exhibition in 2005. In 1998 he had also won the Best Water Colour Award at Indian art College Exhibition. His works can be seen at numerous private collections.



"We too have Pedigree", Acrylic on Canvas, 60" x 48"

I try to sleep in the stone
stone smeared with my touch
hesitates to accept my body

I try to decipher the codex
imprinted, fossilised
and, look
how my own hands are moving
to stab a forest canopy
my own breath absorbing a school of fishes
I go up and go down.
pierce and burn everything
only to pierce my own vestiges...
I come back to you my radiant soil
let me genuflect and sleep
and let me reach my silent mind...



Jayanta Paul, born 1968

A post graduate in sculpture from Rabindra Bharati University, Jayanta has regularly participated in exhibitions from 1989- 1992 at Govt. College of Art. His other participations and group shows has been at Academy of Fine Arts in 1997, Birla Academy, Kolkata in 1999, The Alternative Art gallery in 2000. He has attended wood carving workshop at Kohima organised by Lalit Kala Kendra, Calcutta. He has also received Rabindra Bharati University Annual Exhibition Award in 1994, Emerald Isle Award in 1996 and Award at Annual Exhibition of Contemporary Art in 1997 organised by W.B. State Academy of dance, drama Music and visual art.



"Germination", Brass & Wood, 26" x 5"



"Wound", Brass, 14.5" x 5.5"

The social and cultural entity that I bear controls the thematic entity of the visuals of my paintings. As logic documents intellect, cultural tradition is a factor for me; at the same time I feel a strong fascination for hybridization of all these factors. The 'time' factor with respect to socio-political environment and its 'immediate reactions' with regard to changing environment helps to ignite my thinking. I try to unveil through my paintings, the 'truth' that gets hidden behind the modernization and purification mantra of socio-political and cultural backdrop.



Jayanta Kumar Paul, born 1978

This young painter from Rabindra Bharati University has been regularly holding shows of his works in various art exhibitions since the year 2000. Some of the prominent ones has been 'Four Man Show', Birla Academy in 2004, 'Re-thinking Bengal' Society of Contemporary Art Gallery in 2005, and 'Outsider', Academy of Fine Arts, 2006. Besides, he has attended North Eastern Zonal Art Workshop, in '05 and 'Khoj-Kolkata' workshop in '06.

My works on two-dimensional surface basically portrays a relationship between individual and independent images or shapes put together there. The inspirations for my work emerges out of various mundane references around me and it is all about the juxtaposition of those images on a given surface. Initially on the canvas I put a strong image that gradually helps free roaming of my brush on the surface. For me, the end product does not have to be meaningful always. In other words, I consciously allow it to become 'nonsense'. I believe that nonsense itself makes sense. So, the basic elements used in my work evoke a subtle relationship that is normally beyond our day today knowledge and belief. It is like, a man running with the velocity of light with a mirror in his hand, that eventually creates history in the world of physics.

I firmly believe that there is no fine line between 'nonsense' and things that makes sense. It absolutely depends on the way people think and look at things around them. To a large extent our lives, thoughts and conscience are governed by the elements bearing no meaningfulness. I feel that today art is not constrained to any barrier of genre. I'm not a believer of 'stylization' too. Thus rejecting the so-called distinction between the elitist and non-elitist art forms, my work favors eclecticism, the mixing of images and forms resulting into a celebration.



Jayanta Roy, born 1973

As a Bachelor of Visual Arts from Govt. College of Arts and Craft, Kolkata, Jayanta has been initiated in the field of visual art through sculpture. He is a recipient of AIFACS Award in 1997, State Award in 2000 and Merit Award from Academy of Fine Arts in 2002. Each year he regularly participates in the Annual Exhibition of Academy of Fine Arts, however, some of his important participations have been at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi in 2004, 'New Wave in Bengal Art' in Aakar Prakar Gallery in 2005, 'Art Watch' at Gallery 88 and 'Enigma of Arrival' at Cymroza Gallery, Mumbai in 2006.



"Red-y Made", Oil & Acrylic on Canvas, 48" x 48"



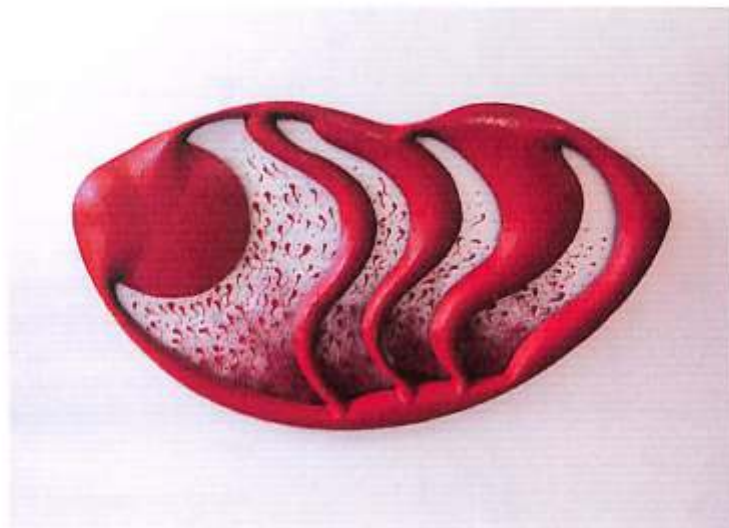
"Look as U Like", Oil on Canvas, 75" x 60"

My works are woven with experiences, memories, dreams, illusions, allegories and metaphors in one pictorial space seeing between definite and indefinite, animate and inanimate, conscious and unconscious world. The metamorphosis takes place while executing the work creating a dialogue between form and space, textures and void, accumulation and dispersion, growth and degeneration. What motivates me are the rhythmic flow of organic life, freedom of evolution, spontaneity of growth, poetry, music, and the outburst and control of emotions. These works are a symbiosis of ethereal imagery capable of rejuvenating your senses. Through a play of hide and seek you must keep travelling into the intricacies to the world beyond searching for scintillating acquaintances and new identities. My vision is to develop a 'signature style' with a unique recognisable penmanship. Every stroke has a specific reason for being capable to evoke states of mind.



Nobina Gupta, born 1972

After completing her post graduation in fine arts from Visva Bharati University, Nobina regularly participated in exhibitions. Some of her major shows were in 1995 at Birla Annual Exhibition, Birla Academy of Fine Arts, Kolkata and Mumbai and a Group show 'Exploration' at CIMA Art Gallery. Other exhibitions have been 'Swarnanjali' organised by World Gold Council in 1996, 'Palash' at Lalit Kala Academy, New Delhi in 1998. Art Camp at Vikalp Art Gallery in 2004 and Tsunami Relief Fund workshop in 2005. She has designed a range of fashion garments and accessories for teenagers for a fashion label from UK and costumes for Steel Ministry of India at Trade fair, New Delhi in 2005-06.



"Cosmic Womb", Alluminium Composite Panel, MFD Board & Acrylic Sheet,
26" x 26"



"Symbiosis", Pen, Pencil & Ink on Paper, 21" x 28"



"A Journey into Space", Acrylic on Acrylic Sheet,
24" x 36"



"Spontaneous", Pen, Pencil & Ink on Paper, 19" x 28"

In recent years I have been gripped by mystic realisation that the innumerable forms of everyday object that surrounds us in our environ, often unnoticed, ignored and unseen due to their common, repeated and overcrowding exposure can be a powerful source for a new aesthetic order and language, where their shapes, textures, colours and material exists only as a catalyst, a reference and a point of departure beyond the realm of their 'universal' and 'known' meaning, which is revealed through a process of creative manipulation - a new form fully freed from its roots and biases, liberating an unknown image from a known icon.

Their fresh presence is also competent to express complex aspects of our lives and its manifestations, either in undertones or explicitly. On exploring, I found that the hidden sensuality of the material played an important role in their depiction in my sculptures. The libidinal ethos of society free from any guilt and indictment even when dealing with body organs unfolds dramatic, at other times incidental results. I find sculpture in ceramics has a large scope and exciting possibilities, and I pursue them by creating larger and more spacious works. If common objects of daily life invariably recede to an allusion, sensual in nature, then my recent large ceramics are more direct using fleshy body parts in dramatised postures moving away from their evident sensual and erotic premises objectifying them as mundane almost in a reverse function compared to earlier process. In both ways it interests my creativity and my contemporariness.



Prasun Ghosh, born 1966

Prasun has graduated in sculpture from Govt. College of Art & Craft, Kolkata. He held one man show at Academy of Fine Arts, Kolkata in 2005 and two men show at Ravindra Bhavan, New Delhi in 1999. His group shows comprise 'Nirman' by B.D. Bangur in 2005, 'Version' Birla Academy of Art, 'Krishna, as a human face' Samokal Art Gallery in 2005, 'Swarnrekha' by Lalit Kala Academy, New Delhi, in 2004. He has participated in 'Nation Caning Camp' at Bhubaneswar in 2006 and National Sculptor's Camp, at Kalagram, Chandigarh in 2005 among others. He has been a recipient of National Academy Award, 2002 by Lalit Kala Academy, New Delhi and 'Nirman' by B.D. Bangur in 2005.



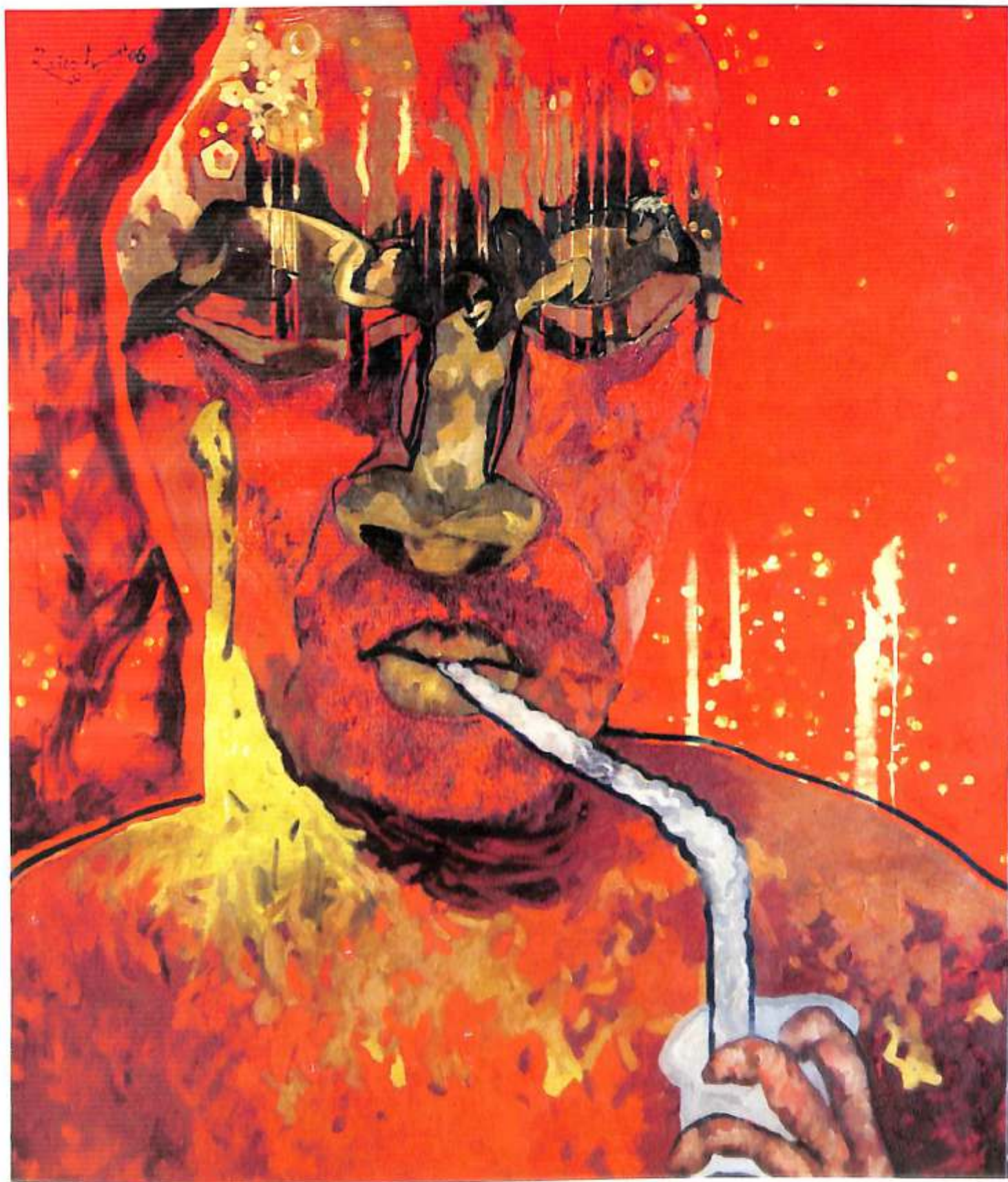
"Untitled", Ceramic, 30" x 18" x 18"

My art is a confession of unconscious mind and soul. It's an essence of my thoughts which cannot be expressed in any other form of art. The vibrations that emanate from living nature is captured and translated through the medium of paintings. It is a silent media, which inherits its forms and shades from living movements. We know that a life of a prostitute is quite pathetic, and we also know that they have come to this field not for enjoyment. They are randomly commoditised by those who come from high society. It is seen that they are used like a 'T-shirt' and this attracts me. I tried to make my paintings with some message which I would like to give to the society and would like to get philosophical result by relating it to love. I have used some motifs like squares and arrows, symbolising events which not only occurs in our front but happens in our daily life every moment, although we cannot see them. So these are depicted as silent moments which when examined, reveals the background of those events. That is why I have written 'No U-turn', 'Use condom', 'Clean city' 'Green city' 'Ezee mail' for more impressive communication. In my painting, the dog is shown again and again to portray the sense of the erotic. I therefore, feel that there has to be a certain responsibility to examine problems for bringing about solutions to a particular problem. I sincerely believe that I must explore and expand the horizon of my painting.



Rajesh Bhowmik, born 1973

Rajesh has a master's degree in painting from I.K.S. University, Chhattisgarh. Till now he has participated in eleven solo shows, out of which some of them were at Chennai Lalit Kala Academy in 2002, Ravindra Bhavan, New Delhi in 2003, Agartala Press Club, Gallery Art Folio, Chandigarh, Gallery Pradarshak and Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai in the year 2005. His forthcoming shows are in Indian Academy of Fine Arts, Amritsar in '06, Chitrakala Parishad, Bangalore in 2007 and Bajaj Art Gallery in 2008. He has won numerous awards and has attended several camps and workshops.



"Untitled", Oil on Canvas, 69" x 58"

Well, moral is not my subject, the inconsistency, mischievous in this indiscretion attempt to diversion, does not evade my eyes.

Naturally, incongruous and apparent connectionless relationships flooded my canvas and as a result, the quotations in my paintings become a factor.

Kathamrita, Doha, Meghdoot, Rubai of Omar Khayyam and Mahajataka stories have moved me, influenced me. I have taken after oxidizing it in my consciousness. Sukumar Roy, Jean de LaFontaine, Edward Lear, have instigated my thoughts. Naturally satire, joke, taunt are all present in my work.



Rajesh Deb, born 1979

A postgraduate from Rabindra Bharati University, Rajesh has won numerous awards in relatively short span in his career as a printmaker. Some of the big achievements are R.B.U. Annual Exhibition Award received in 2004 and '05. Nirad Baran Smriti Award in 2006 and University Gold Medal in 2006. Rajesh has displayed his works in Academy of Fine Arts from the year 1999-2003. Other important shows have been CIMA Workshop and Exhibition in 2004, National Exhibition at Mumbai in 2005, 'Re-thinking Bengal' in 2005, and 'Outsider' in 2006. He has participated in National Seminar and Workshop 2004 -05, in Delhi, Khaj International Workshop, 2006 and several others.



Contemporary Krouncha Krounchi Katha Wood Cut, 36" x 60"



The Fall of Bird Wood Cut, 36" x 60"

In the city I am always surrounded by architecture, either new and minimal or old and decaying. The palpable atmospheric space combined with an innate sublime geometry produces a feeling of inevitability and balance, where the human figure may be present or absent. The interior space with its lights and quietness creates a thought-provoking atmosphere, which is further tempered by the possibility of movement within a constricted space.

The contrast between surface texture and space has been an overriding visual concern for me. This has been heightened by distinct colour shifts as I move through different spaces and locations. The intensity of emotion that a 'colour-field' can generate has a profound effect on my psyche. The movement has been induced by creating a pathway (stairs) within the figurative framework of the architectural form. It enables me and the viewer to 'walk through' the structures and the integrated components of light and dark metamorphose as private spaces for introspection. I sometimes feel that if the human figure is removed as subject, then the viewer is no longer contemplating another consciousness, but is invited to become one with the artist and to see the worlds through his/her eyes.

Through my work I desire to understand my own motivations. It is a search for balance, for rhythmic harmony, a desire for movement, and a quest for beauty borrowed from light and colour. This process is an acknowledgement of the environment around me. It is an ongoing personal research, where the creative expression informs my understanding of it and leads the direction of my exploration. The whole concept has been possible through the analysis and control which I exercise over the making process and its role and importance as a carrier of the image, is fundamental to the work and enriches an understanding of my practice.



Ritendra Roy, born 1972

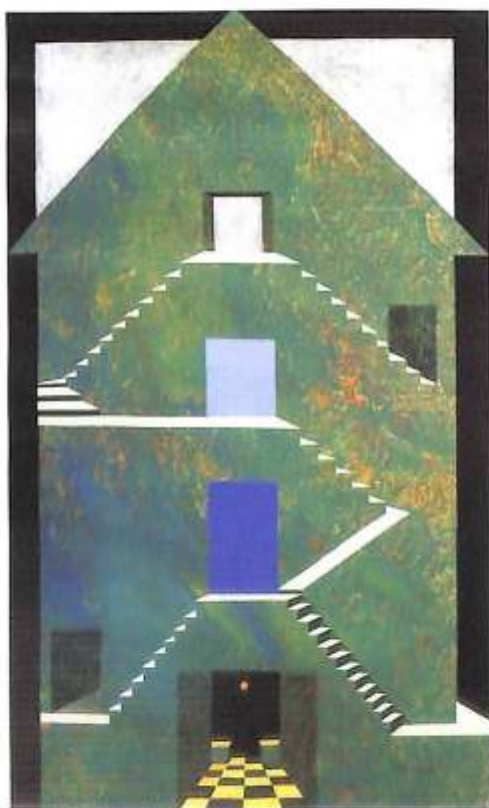
Armed with first class master's degree from Visva Bharati, Shantiniketan, Ritendra's has displayed his works in various national exhibitions and curated shows conducted by private art galleries and organisations. He also had solo shows in Kolkata and New Delhi. He has participated in various workshops and camps organised for social welfare purposes. He has been awarded with Abanindranath Tagore Memorial Medal in painting from Indian Society of Oriental Arts in 1996 and Nirod Baran Memorial Prize from R.B.U. in 1999. He is currently working as a Research fellow in the Department of Painting at R.B.U., Kolkata.



*"The Other Side of Reflection",
Acrylic on Canvas, 40" x 24"*



"Sublime Conversation", Acrylic on Canvas, 48" x 48"



"The Other Light", Acrylic on Canvas, 40" x 24"



"Portrait of a Light", Acrylic on Canvas, 48" x 48"

Painting is a medium that expresses artists own feelings. I try to convey my feelings through my work. My recent works are a study on child psychology. My main motto is to express my deep feelings on childhood activities. In this series of paintings I try to catch the psychology of street children. Their view of the society is contrasting to that of a normal middle class family. My main objective is to develop greater relationship with children of all class in our culture. I would like to portray their feelings and want to have a closer look at their environment and give visual shapes on my canvas...

How they play, how they can continuously engage themselves with an object for hours to end. In a way my works are reflections of my early days. My childhood passion of making paper planes and paper boats recur in some of my recent works either as the main theme of the work or as a subject which act as connecting link to the present. These works show keen sense of balance in terms of colours, space and movement. A fluidity of thought is flourishing. I usually begin my work with just a single image and then slowly build up the entire surface. Space and time plays an important role in my paintings. 'Time' which never returns becomes enigmatic memories. Playing with light, colour, space-time and mainly the desire of childhood yearnings along with maturity to tackle contemporary sensibility, I continue to paint dreams woven in reality.



Sandip Daptari, born 1976

Sandip is a postgraduate in printmaking from Faculty of Fine Arts, Baroda. His solo show of recent works took place at Art World, Chennai in 2006. Other than this he has participated in All India Drawing Exhibition by Punjab Lalit Kala Academy, Chandigarh, in 2002, 76th All India Art Exhibition by AIFACS & Lalit Kala Academy, Gujarat in 2003, 6th Bharat Bhavan International Biennial of Print in 2004, Sense'n'Blend by Kaleidoscope, Baroda in 2005, and 7th Bharat Bhavan International Biennial of Print Art Exhibition, Indian Contemporary Art by Art World, Singapore, An Exhibition of Contemporary Indian Art by Kala Fine Art, at Gallery Lombardi, Austin, Texas in 2006. He attended Water Colour camp conducted by Lalit Kala Academy, Gujarat in 2000. He has also been awarded by Lalit Kala Academy, Gujarat in 2005.



"The Surprising Colours of Reality", Oil on Canvas, 24" x 35.5"

As an artist, interactions with the present world around me provoke a vibrating sensation within my mind and soul. Living in metro cities, among pounding streets, rushing crowds, I have experienced the throbbing life and the profound chaos within. In the quest for time everyone is lost in an empty world. I find my inspirations within the people, the architecture, street signage, models, photography and advertisements. At times any random object could be my food for thought. I feel charged to render this tension of the multifaceted exposure I receive in day to day life. The simultaneity of elements in nature and society drives me to play with images. I am definitely fascinated by women. They serve as mysterious subjects in my paintings, intrigued by their love, power, capacity potential, glamour and their distinctive roles in our lives. The characters inside my mind compel me to understand them, their environments, their thoughts and their circumstances motivating to keep exploring and experimenting till the ultimate drama conveys multiple layers of meaning. It is the viewer who has to extend oneself to extract the ultimate nectar from my works.



Somit Gupta, born 1969

Somit is a postgraduate in fine arts from Visva Bharati University. He was a recipient of Junior Fellowship from the Ministry of Human Resources Development, Department of Culture, and Govt. of India. He has participated in a workshop for Tsunami relief fund at Metropolitan Art Salon, Kolkata in 2005, Art camp at Vikalp Art Gallery in 2004, group show 'Palash' at Lalit Kala Academy, New Delhi in 1998 and 'Exploration' at CIMA Art Gallery, 1995. He is currently working as an Art Director in Continental Advertising Services, Kolkata.



"Page - 3", Acrylic on Acrylic Sheet, 21" x 29"



"Broken Verses", Acrylic on Acrylic Sheet, 24" x 24"

My paintings evolve around my experience with urban landscapes... or

cityscapes... landscapes... interiors...
exteriors...inside...outside...or even an area as a
whole... that I come across either in my immediate
surroundings or through travels.



Soumen Das, born 1969

After completing his art education from M.S. university of Baroda, Soumen has represented his works in several solo and group shows. 'Epiphany/ The Moment' at Sarjan Art Gallery, was a solo show in 2005. As group participant his work has been displayed in Gallery Espace, New Delhi, Asia Fusion Gallery, Asian Cultural Centre, New York also in 2005. His work can be found with several art collectors in India and abroad.



*"From a terrace garden -2",
Casein on Canvas, 60"x24"*



"The walk", Casein on Canvas, 60"x24"



*"View from a Kolkata terrace -2",
Casein on Canvas, 60"x24"*

Indian mystery apparently laid emphasis upon the dynamic principle, Shakti, which is integrally connected to Shiva. Shakti is the moving principle and Shiva is calm. In this doctrine, Prakriti has been considered the consort of Purusa. This dual action is worshipped in various ways by the great Indian sadhaka, in which cosmic relation also emerges.

It is our belief that the playful spirit of Purusa and Prakriti is the inscrutable ways of God; which is presented by our mythologies. And my thought is deeply moved by this mythological spirit of love the 'lila', which is revealed in my artistic language.



Sourav Jana, born 1974

As a sculptor and painter, Sourav's works have spontaneity in form and versatility of the medium. In 1995 he had participated in All India Casting workshop for Dokra process, organised by Govt. College of Art & Craft, Kolkata. Besides, he also participated in the workshop of Mask and Printmaking in 2000 to expand the dimension of thought process. His participation in group shows includes Annual Exhibition at Govt. College of Art & Craft in 1997 and Birla Academy of Art & Culture in 1998, Sculpture 2000 Gorky Sadan, Gallery Lombardi, Austin Texas in 2002 and more recently in Folk in Modern at Aakriti Art Gallery in Sept. 2006.



"Maya", Mixed Media on Canvas, 30" x 30"



"Sap Khela", Mixed Media on Canvas, 30" x 24"

My response to forms, volume, and mass directs me to look into rich reservoir of folk traditions in art. Here, the representational forms are in their basics and clearly convey the logic of construction and the nature of materials. Almost all forms are conceived in terms of volumes and lines. The practice does not only explore the potentials involved in formal construction, linear orientation etc, but also makes an attempt to strike a balance between the two. Formal, linear concerns with a focus on volume and mass lead me to conceive the content of my work.



Subrata Biswas, born 1972

Subrata, more popularly called 'Pakhi' is a postgraduate in sculpture from Rabindra Bharati University. He has regularly participated in exhibitions at Birla Academy of Art & Culture, Kolkata from 1998-2005. He has shown his works at AIFACS, 2004 and National Exhibition in year 2000. Many of his works are in private collection. He has also won West Bengal State Academy Award in 2002 and Lalit Kala Award in year 2000. Currently he is a guest lecturer in the sculpture department of Rabindra Bharati University and works from his studio in Howrah.



"Flute Boy", Bronze, 14" x 13" x 6"



"Kite Brothers", Bronze, 19" x 25" x 5"

After completing my art education in sculpture from Rabindra Bharati University in 1998, I have been working in different media mainly terracotta, stone and bronze. The basic aim of my work is to reduce the visual reality and give preference to beauty of the form within the reality of the abstract ideas rather than a combination of visual reality and abstract uniformity. My subjects vary from human figures to any forms that we see or feel in nature. The medium terracotta helps me to handle soft clay to depict soft emotional experience and expressions of my subjects in the environment of the present generation.



Sujit Kumar Karan, born 1968

A gold medallist in sculpture from Rabindra Bharati University, Sujit is a member of Calcutta Sculptors' Group. He has participated in exhibitions of Kala Mela, 1995, Young Faces in Indian Contemporary Art, 1996, Open Air Sculpture Exhibition, 1998 - all organised by Birla Academy, Kolkata. He has also shown at Eastern Regional Art Exhibition in CIMA Art Gallery at 2002, Ideas Art Gallery in 2004-05 and Sculpture Gallery in 2005. He has been the recipient of AIFACS Award and Academy of Fine Arts Annual Exhibition Award in 2002. He has participated in several group exhibitions in Mumbai, Delhi, Lucknow and Kolkata. Participated in traditional Gamira mask making workshop, as well as workshops in stone carving, wood carving and metal casting. Currently he is working as a freelance artist and part time lecturer in Rabindra Bharati University and College of Visual Art, Kolkata.



"Metamorphose - I", Terracotta, 16" x 11"



"Metamorphose - II", Terracotta, 16.5" x 11"



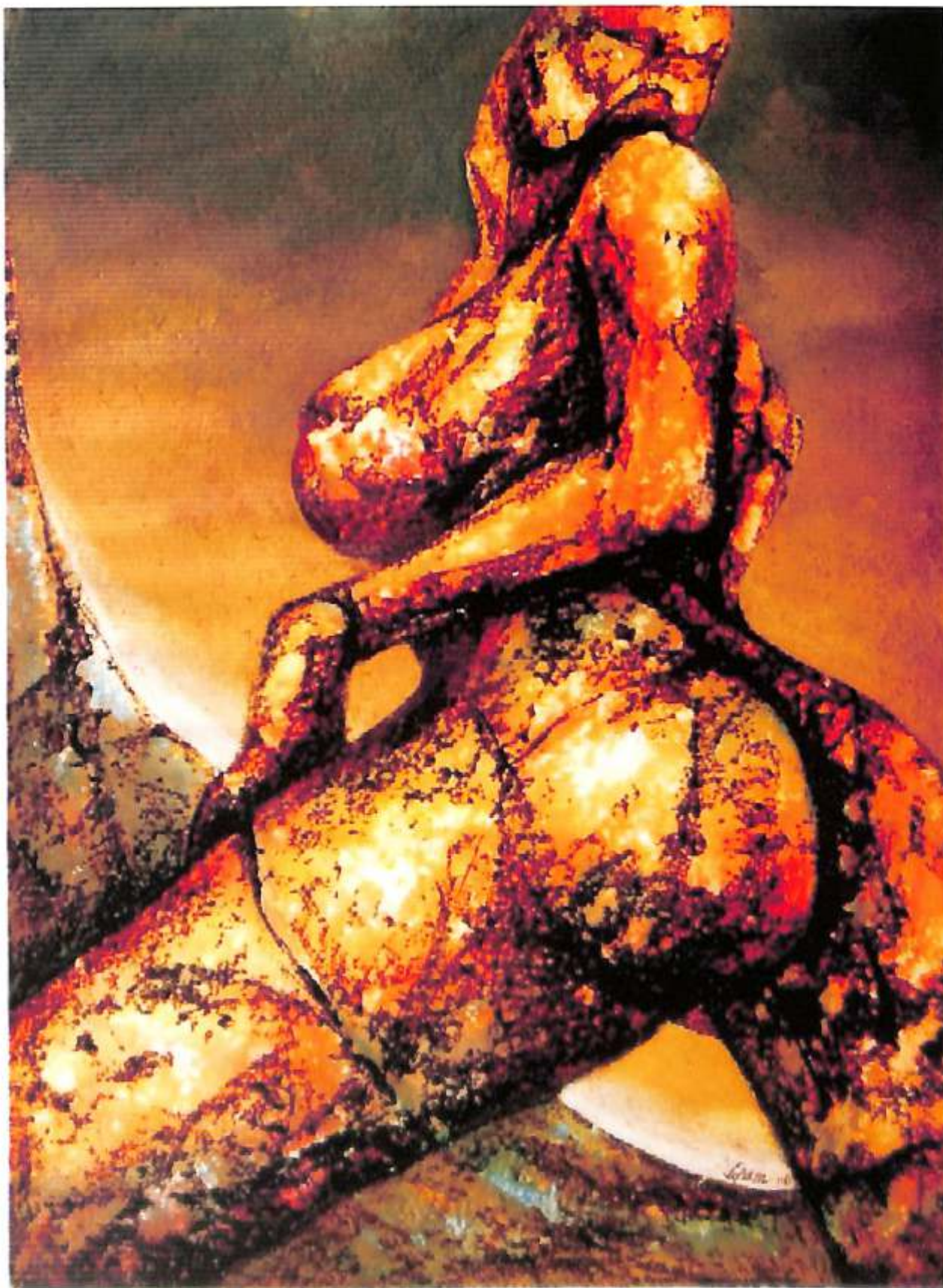
"Metamorphose III", Terracotta, 13" x 11"

I have been treading many a path in my youthful fancy to become a painter. Diversity indeed is the name of the game. One might argue that this flair for 'many-ness' is a symptom of fickleness. But believe me, I am very excited to often retire to this world of ancient monolithic monumental images. To reach here, I really needed a travesty of sorts like painting female forms, or doing cute sundry images. It is my firm belief that the structure is an important factor in a work of art. I also believe that the human form is the ultimate reality to a painter. When it is pitted in isolation against a blank backdrop, the form assumes the connotation that human beings are the best and most formidable source for an artist.



Supam Adhikary, born 1972

He is a young and upcoming painter, with a Diploma in Fine Arts from Indian Society of Oriental Arts. He has had a couple of solo shows 'Super cognition' at the academy of Fine Arts, Kolkata, 2001 and 'An Eloquent Silence' arranged by Gallery Chemould, Kolkata, in 2002. He has won Lilabati K. Shah Memorial Award from Indian Society of Oriental Arts in 2001 and has also participated in several group shows, 'Rapport' in 2002, INFOCOM Exhibition, Kolkata in 2005 as well as in Art Camp in 2005.



"Untitled", Mixed Media on Paper, 31" x 23"

A work of art is an interactive process between optical reality and the reality of the material (the way it behaves and the way it is constructed). So a visual reality is equally a combination of the real and the abstract. I believe, in a sculpture this experience of the real grows through an intimate dialogue between space, surface, construction and the image. I always feel an urge to retain a sense of plasticity through the interplay of concave and convex planes to create a diffusion of positive and negative space within a sculpture. I am inspired by the graceful interplay of form, surface and light in the sculptures of Konark. The idea is to achieve a coherent relationship between the narrative space and the image. There is always a structural balance that is equally simple and intricate. So my sculptures reflect a three dimensional configuration which is equally vibrant with the dynamics of everyday life and a balanced, disciplined network.



Sutanu Chatterjee, born 1968

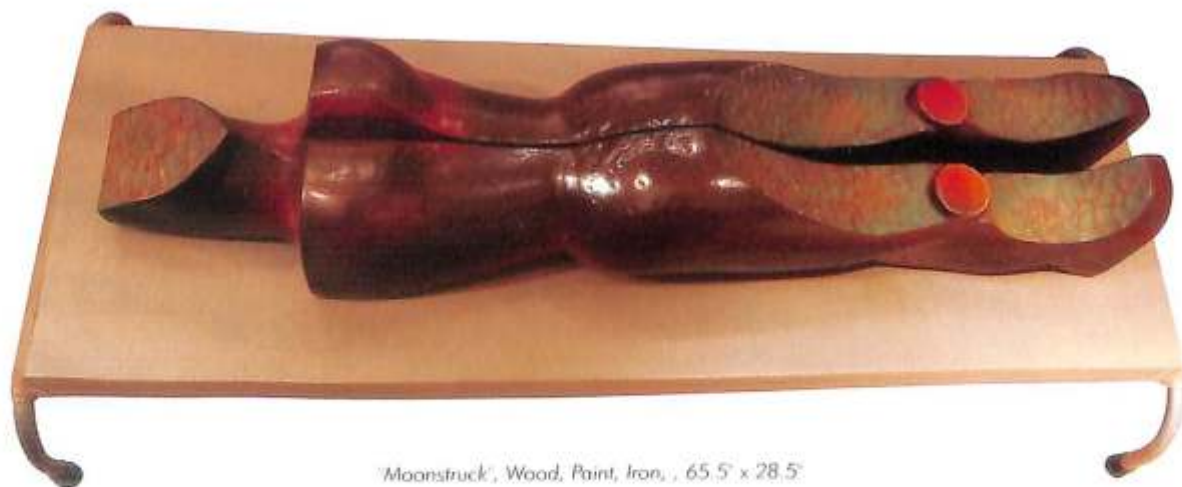
A post graduate in sculpture from Visva Bharati, Sutanu showcased his works in a solo exhibition at Birla Academy of Art & Culture in 1996. He participated in National Exhibition of Lalit Kala Academy, New Delhi in the year '95, '02 and '04, "Open Air Sculpture Exhibition by Charukala Parishad, Govt. of W.Bengal from 2004-2006, 'Joint Art Exhibition' organised by Silpakorn University, Bangkok and & Visva Bharati in 2006, and 'Artists care for children' organised by Sishutirtha, Shantiniketan and Academy of Art & Culture in 2006 among numerous other shows. He has won Indian Society of Oriental Art award in '99 and '06, Calcutta Sculptor's Award in '94 and 'Rajya Charukala Pradarshani Award in '95 and '96. He is into making monumental sculptures and has made 12ft -17 ft concrete sculptures for Bengal Ambuja, 15ft. & 20 ft. bamboo and paper sculpture in Nandan and Pous Mela, Shantiniketan. Currently he is engaged in making a bronze statue of Tagore for the National Library, Kolkata.



'Chair', Painted Wood, 53.5" x 19"



'The Bird', Brass, 11" x 6.5"



'Moonstruck', Wood, Paint, Iron, 65.5" x 28.5"

In my recent work stress is mainly given on the technique of the metal casting. I'm trying to find out a way to maximize the use of metal. The main contents of my works are the use of horizontal and vertical lines. I have developed the form and contents of my work through continuous search of lines and movement. I have even used figures horizontally and vertically along with the lines to make the textures in my works. In short the root of the work lies in 'line to line, 'shape to shape' and 'line to shape' and vice-versa.



Tapas Biswas, born 1972

A post graduate in sculpture from B.H.U. Tapas has been awarded the 'Young Emerging Artist in Sculpture' at Harmony Show, Mumbai, 2006. He had also won the 'Governor's Award' for best exhibit in Annual Exhibition of Govt. College of Art & Craft in 1997-98 and 'Dhoomimal Memorial Award' in 2001 among several others. He had a solo exhibitions at- Kalakriti Gallery, Hyderabad in 2005, Gallery Alternatives, Gurgaon, 2002 and Gallery Ganga Tat, Varanasi in 2000. He has shown his works in group exhibitions of Aakriti Gallery, Kolkata in 2006, 'Summer Show' 2006 at CIMA Art Gallery, Kolkata, 'Young Faces of Contemporary Indian Art' Birla Academy and Group Exhibition in ABC Gallery, Varanasi, in year 2000, apart from Harmony Show 2005 & 2006, in Mumbai. He has attended workshops on Dokra Sculpture and has numerous works collected by public and private collectors in India and abroad.



*"They have their own Shape",
Bronze, 20" x 26"*



"Landscape in Bronze", Bronze, 16" x 8"



"In Playing Mood", Bronze, 12" x 8"

"Aakriti" : The faith in curated shows

Since the inception of Aakriti Art Gallery, my visits to Kolkata have become more cheerful, and I would say more meaningful also; as I look forward to see the works displayed in the Gallery and meet the artist and critic friends in its premises. Thanks to Vikram and Priya, and the energetic staff and ambience of the Gallery, there is not a dull moment in the vicinity. One learns about the future plans, listens intently to what has happened in the past few days, and what is going to emerge in due course, in terms of exhibitions, catalogues and publications- shares one's experiences viewing over and again the works on the walls and floors; gets enthused, and likes to spend as much time in the Gallery as one possibly can. The tea and snacks are offered warmly to feel you at home, the ideas keep pouring; and thoughtful as well as hurried discussions, keep us engaged.

In less than a year Aakriti has kept its promises, has fulfilled them, and its new wing Sculpture Gallery having special programmed lighting, and specially designed pedestals, is there to vouch for the fact Aakriti means what it says. This definitely gives a pleasant feeling to all those, who have been

associated with it since the beginning. Aakriti was inaugurated by celebrated artist K.G. Subramanyan; and well-wishers like painter Jogen Chowdhury also graced the occasion. I feel honoured that I was given the responsibility of curating the inaugural show for Sculpture Gallery. To start with, Gallery organised a meeting of the local artists (Sculptors specially) for me, where the Bon hommie persisted, and I got full support from the old friends like Bipin Goswami, Bimal Kundu, Tarak Garai to younger ones like Sujit Kumar Karan and others. It was heartening to note that the sculpture scene in Kolkata is vibrant, innovative, and exploring newer themes and materials. I was happy in presenting the new generation, along with the older and better-known ones with the full support of Aakriti and the warm response of our show, and the catalogue of the show, got in art-circles throughout the country, will remain with us a very pleasant memory. We presented works from the Kolkata and Shantiniketan and from other art-centres like Vadodara, Varanasi, Lucknow, Jammu and New Delhi. I believe the show was able to focus on the sculptural scene, with an emphasis on Bengal, in a meaningful way. The



coverage the show got was also a proof that Aakriti had its point in opening such a Gallery, in fact the very first one for the sculpture in our country. Senior sculptor Nagji Patel, whom we fondly call Nagji Bhai, was there to inaugurate the Gallery on 12th August, and has also participated with two works in the show. The show was inaugurated by eminent painter Ganesh Haloi. Nagji Bhai had especially come for the event from Jaipur, where he was attending an artist camp. He had already heard about Aakriti and the warm welcome he got from the Gallery and Kolkata artists, was a sight to watch and rejoice. We were overwhelmed to find that the inauguration was attended by about three hundred artists and art-lovers.

I feel that I belong to Kolkata, as I was born and brought up here, and my Kolkata connection has remained somewhat intact. I keep coming to Kolkata hence it gives me immense pleasure, that with the opening of Aakriti, this connection has been strengthened further. I have known Vikram since his childhood. He is the youngest son of my dear friend Manik Bachhawat, himself a poet and a writer on Art. I fondly remember that in his early teens, Vikram used to stage plays in his ancestral house, with friends from the vicinity. He would sell tickets, make all the arrangements for the staging of the plays on the terrace and would keep chairs for the audience. I was among the selected ones to whom he would

come with the tickets, priced at twenty-five paise. His organizational skills have blossomed fully and with sincerity and complete transparency he has given Aakriti a profile, which he can be truly proud of. He gives his opinions on different issues humbly, yet assertively, and keeps himself open to discussions. With good humour and perceptive comments, he is able to make his point in a lively manner. His true regard for art, artists, critics, art-lovers and art collectors has earned him many friends. Supported by his elder brother Amitabh, he has been able to set up the Sculpture Gallery in a most professional manner. So far the solo and group shows the Gallery has mounted have been mostly curated ones. This again proves that the Gallery is conscious about its role in presenting the art works properly.

I wish Aakriti all success in the future as well.

Prayag Shukla



Art Galleries in Kolkata and 'Aakriti'

'A gallery is a place where art is displayed for commercial purposes'. This is how a recently (2006) published 'Dictionary of Indian Art and Artists' defines art gallery. This linking of commerce with art with reference to 'gallery' is a late development, probably after 1960-s, at least in our country. The Readers Digest Great Encyclopedic Dictionary in its 1964 edition speaks of 'gallery' thus: 'long narrow room, passage, corridor; room or building used to show works of art'. There is no mention of commerce. The 1965 edition of 'Penguin English Dictionary' also does not mention commerce. It mentions gallery as 'building for exhibition of works of art'. In 2001 edition of 'Pocket Oxford English Dictionary' there is an alternative between art and commerce. It says, gallery is 'a room or building in which works of art are displayed or sold'. Similar is the case with 2002 edition of 'Little Oxford Dictionary', where the definition is: 'a room or building for displaying or selling works of art'. The linking of gallery exclusively with 'commercial purposes' as in the first mentioned dictionary of art is a recent phenomenon, possibly an outcome of economic globalization.

In Europe art gallery activities with a purpose of selling art objects started since late nineteenth century. In our country first commercial gallery was 'Dhoomimal art Gallery of New Delhi established in 1936. In Kolkata organized art gallery activity started with establishment of 'Academy of Fine Arts' at Cathedral Road in 1960. It started its journey with an exhibition of 50 paintings of Nandalal Basu on 11 September 1960. Though completely non-commercial in nature in the sense that its only purpose is not selling of art works, this gallery is very much active till today giving opportunities to senior or junior upcoming artists through out the year.

First commercial gallery of Kolkata was 'Ashoka gallery' established in October 1960 at 21, Theatre Road under proprietorship of Himani Khanna. During 1960-s number of galleries came into being like 'Arts and Prints Gallery' at Park Mansions, 'Artistry House' at Park street, 'Kumar Gallery' at Grand hotel. Besides this a gallery named 'Chitrakoot' (not the present well known 'Chitrakoot Gallery' of Gariahat Road) was opened at Park Street in 1965, 'Gallery Chemould' in 1966 also at Park Street, 'Chitram Art Gallery' at Tollyganj in 1967. But all these were temporary ventures and were closed after some time since there was no economic or commercial environment for selling art works. Only 'Birla Academy' established on 9 January 1967 has been very much active as an important art institution of the country and still continuing with glamour and glory.

Art Gallery as a complete commercial project started appearing in full swing in Kolkata since 1980. Victor Banerjee opened 'Calcutta Art Gallery' at Harrington Street in 1980. It could create a new environment in art activity but could not continue after 1985-86. 'Chitrakoot Art Gallery' of Gariahat Road, which is still active, appeared in 1983. After this commercial galleries started appearing one after another. Some of them are 'Genesis Art Gallery' at Middleton Street, 'Gallery 88' at Shakespeare Sarani, 'Gallery Katayun' at Auckland Square, 'Gallery Chemould' in a new way at Park street, 'Gallery BF14' and 'Gallery CB56' at Salt Lake, 'Rachana Art Gallery' at Elgin Road, 'Sanskriti Art Gallery' at Alipur, 'Center Art Gallery' at Park Street, 'Art Age Gallery' at Palm avenue, 'Gandhar Art Gallery' at Gurusadaya Datta Road, 'Gallery shivam' at A.J.C.Bose Road, 'Calcutta Art Foundation' at Wood street,



'Art Age' at Lenin Sarani, 'Emerald Isle Gallery' near Park Street. But most of these galleries have been closed down after a few years, which indicates commerce of art was not very congenial till the middle of 1990-s.

Emergence of 'CIMA Gallery' in 1993 is an important landmark in gallery culture of Kolkata. CIMA was started with an exhibition titled 'Wounds' in February of that year, which represented the 'the response of India's leading artists to the trauma of our times'. It may be recalled that Babri Mosque was demolished on 6 December 1992. A trail of communal violence and destruction followed. The exhibition recorded the spontaneous reactions of the artists against this inhuman violence. The gallery could connect commerce with commitment. CIMA is still maintaining its outstanding standard.

Emergence of new galleries continued unabated since then. Few of them are 'Gallery Staircase' near Gariahat, 'Gallery Caps' at Jatin Bagchi Road, 'Seagull Art and Media Resource Centre Gallery' at SP Mukherjee Road, 'Akoar Prakor' at Hindusthan Park, 'Kanishka Gallery' near Gariahat, 'Ideas Gallery' at Dover Lane, 'Artists Circle Gallery' at Circus Avenue, 'Vikalpa Art Shop' near Salt Lake, 'Metropolitan Art Gallery' at Esplanade, 'GC Laha Centenary Fine Arts Gallery' at Chittaranjan Avenue, 'Samakal Gallery' at Gol Park, 'Sculpture Gallery' at Jadavpur, 'Charnock City Gallery' at Salt Lake, 'Gallery Royal' at Judges Court Road, 'Gallery 79' at Basanta Roy Road, 'Gallery Rosa' at New Alipur, 'Gallery 52' at Hindusthan Park. A few of these galleries are not very active now. Some five star hotels like Grand hotel, Park Hotel, ITC Sonar Bangla, Taj Bengal etc are now hosting prestigious exhibitions. With all these the gallery world of Kolkata is very much active and vibrating now.

Within this environment 'Aakriti Art Gallery' on Hungerford Street or Picasso Bithi has started its journey one year earlier. It is managed by Vikram Bachhawat, an expert on art of glass and an avid collector and connoisseur of art. Its first or inaugural exhibition was held in October 2005

showcasing paintings of most of the major artists throughout India. 'Aakriti' has added some new dimension to the gallery culture by incorporating professional attitude regarding space orientation, display of art works, lighting arrangements, documentation etc. It invites important personalities from the art field, art critics and historians, to curate exhibitions on its behalf, which adds new dimensions to its presentations.

After the first show the gallery has mounted a number of important shows one after another like a retrospective of Kartik Chandra Pyne, solo of P.R.Narvekar, a group show on 'Figurative Works', another show titled 'Young Bengal' featuring the works of upcoming artists. This show was curated by eminent art historian Pranabranjan Ray. With this show the gallery has posited that one of its principal aim is to encourage and promote young and upcoming artists. It has chalked out its future plan in this line.

In August 2006 'Aakriti' in its own premise has opened a new wing specially designed and solely devoted for exhibition of sculpture. After the modest endeavor of the eminent sculptor Tapas Sarkar in conceiving his 'Sculpture Gallery' exclusively for encouraging sculptural art which has been the first of the kind in Kolkata, 'Aakriti's' venture in a larger scale to promote sculpture through its sculpture wing is an exemplary event in Kolkata. The first show of sculpture in this gallery titled 'Shilpakriti', curated by renowned art critic Prayag Shukla held in August 2006 featuring works of 29 sculptors, both senior and upcoming, from all over India, has been dedicated to the memory of Ramkinkar Baij on his birth centenary.

After the sculpture show, the gallery mounted another very important exhibition of paintings titled 'Folk in the Modern' featuring works of 22 painters throughout India. Our folk art has been instrumental in building up an indigenous identity of our modernity. The purpose of the show was to present and examine how the influence worked and gradually transformed from 1940-s till the present time. The show was curated by the present scribe. It was a pleasant experience for him to work with the management of the gallery, whose cooperation at all levels of planning and execution has been very effective for its proper presentation.

During the last one year through all these exhibitions 'aakriti' has proved that it has a different kind of commitment to art and art dealing. It has combined art and commerce in a refreshing bond. This is where it has made its presence felt in the gallery culture of Kolkata.

Mrinal Ghosh



A Gallery With a Difference

After the pioneering efforts of P.C. Kejriwal back in 1968 to set up a truly meaningful art gallery for the benefit of both artists and collectors, a whole host of myopic endeavours on similar lines have been outlived by the more imaginative and resourceful few gallery owners who joined the fray subsequently. The paucity of local collectors/buyers as well as the burgeoning inrush of outside buyers into Kolkata to buy art objects of relatively high resale value gradually smartened up the city's artists and gallery owners alike to try and counter what they clearly saw a losing game. Some ambitious young artists shifted to Delhi to make their presence felt there, while a few enterprising gallery owners of Kolkata have started setting up outlets in the commercially vigorous metropolises, often extending their reach abroad as well.

This, by and large, was the kind of the scenario involving even the finest of artists in this part of the country. However, with the sudden unprecedented upswing in the art market, newer gallery owners have been ingressing into Kolkata fortified with spacious exhibition areas and other commercial appurtenances. Evidently, the changing scenario is already proving beneficial for both signature artists as well as for the less known yet promising younger painters who

would have to wait much longer to make their mark or else recede into oblivion much like many of their worthy predecessors. Kolkata's artists are destined to carve a niche through the efforts of these highly professional galleries. But it must be reckoned that the trail blazer of the new-look gallery culture is Vikram Bachhawat who has the distinction of carrying the mantle of his father who studied ancient Indian history before aspiring to acquire objects of art as a self-styled connoisseur per se. The junior Bachhawat imbibed his father's laudable passion, but subsequently mulled the idea of marrying art to money in tune with the unfolding commercial prospects of his time. For one thing, he began selling his almost unwieldy collection when there was precious little storing space to maintain it. For another, he did not compromise his connoisseurship for lure of the lucre. Yet, what Vikram has proved in his belated commercial venture, starting out first with a sizeable gallery for exhibiting choicable paintings by both older and newer hands, and then increasing his gallery space by adding two more equally large rooms (one for the exclusive display of sculptures), speaks volumes for his imaginative venture. He thus stands apart from the general run of his predecessors in terms of his resourcefulness as well as space consciousness.



Vikram Bachhawat is an art connoisseur with a difference, who emerged on the scene exactly a year ago. His first show comprised his own collection of paintings by Kartick Chandra Pyne. Being inspired by the instant response of the cognoscenti on the occasion, Bachhawat organised a few more solo and group exhibitions, curated with an eye to accommodating some less known artists too, in the joint shows. He proved his point once again by being able to sell the latter works at a commendable price. Bachhawat does not believe in mounting frequent exhibitions – a rare trait of today's gallery culture, which far too often turns out to be a mere money-spinner. On this occasion of the first anniversary exhibition, Aakriti Art Gallery deserves to be hailed by aficionados and others for reasons of its novelty.

Most collectors begin by acquiring works by established artists and slowly become more adventurous, moving tentatively into contemporary/unconventional art. The process offers an opportunity to contemporary viewers to meet and talk with artists about their work and to hear their opinions about the work of other artists – young and old – who were influencing their vision. It was through such conversations with Koons, Bickerton, Halley, Sherrie Levine, Heim Steinbach and other young artists that Dakis Joannou came to collect works of Dan Flavin, Donald Judd and Edward Ruscha. The collection took place at a juncture when the tougher and more conceptual artists of the 1960s were still unappreciated by the mainstream mid-1980s art market. The course of contemporary art history had not yet made

the 1960s works of Flavin et al as essential as they are now. Now that the works of Koons and other artists of the mid-1980 generation have themselves entered into art history, the historicising presence of the radical 1960s works is no longer necessary in Dakis Joannou's collection. These works are being sold as the collection's focus is changing to emphasise the connections between the 80's and 90s generations and today's emerging artists.

The above, somewhat outlandish story of past artistic events may throw important light on the shape of things to emerge on the still less adventurous, if sluggish contemporary Indian art market. A set of new-look paintings by K.G. Subramanyan, K. Murlidharan, Jogen Chowdhury, Haku Shah, Biswapati Maiti, P.R. Narvekar, Partha Pratim Deb, Manjari Chakravarti, Sourabh Jana, Tapas Konar and Madhvi Parekh, slated for a September 2006 exhibition "Folk in Modern" at Aakriti Gallery, along with a bunch of old style paintings by other artists, may turn out to be a minor yet important harbinger of an informed art market involving a new breed of aesthetically percipient art collectors.

Samir Dasgupta



The Story Begins

The Art market is buoyant with a new wave of sales happening in galleries and auction houses all over India. Currently, the contemporary art market is seeing action building up around seasoned painters who were lying low for past 2-3 years. This phenomenon also encompasses a large number of artists spread out countrywide. By a rough estimate, the rise in prices of such works is pegged at 2-10 fold. According to an art market source, "quite a few senior painters whose prices were hovering at modest levels 2-3 years back, has shot up in the last three years. Artists like Krishen Khanna, Ara, Gade, Paritosh Sen, K.G. Subramanyam, Shyamal Datta Ray, Manjit Bawa, Hebbbar and K.C.S. Panicker now have their equity spiralling".

Here is a rough estimate of the increasing price trends prevailing in the art market. Take for example, a large Krishen Khanna canvas which was worth Rs 2 lakhs in 2002, has now catapulted to around Rs 20-25 lakhs. Similarly, Ara has risen from Rs 2-3 lakhs to about Rs 8-12 lakhs. Gade's big works priced at Rs 2-3 lakhs three to four years ago have now improved to Rs 15-20 lakhs. A large creation by Paritosh Sen has gone up from Rs 2 lakhs to Rs 10-15 lakhs in 2006. Manjit Bawa's canvases have jumped from Rs 5 lakhs to Rs 25 lakhs. Triggering the fever, a watercolour by Shyamal Datta Ray now fetches Rs 8 lakhs which is a five-fold increase, while his acrylics and oils sell at Rs 10 lakhs a steep rise of 9-10 times!

There is a sudden spurt of interest around sculptures too. This could have been sparked by the growing number of sculpture shows at galleries and their inclusion in illustrious auctions houses. Although limited, one is also coming across a few publications on well-known sculptors.

Here again, according to the art market source, "over the last one year, we have been witnessing a burgeoning interest among art buffs to collect sculptures. This has triggered an increase in demand, which in turn has pushed up sculpture prices. Till now, the focus was only on paintings, in spite of the fact that we have had top-notch sculptors like Ram Kinkar Baij and Somnath Hore".

The source also added, "the sculptures are really undervalued compared to the price levels of sculptures in the West. However it's heartening that the number of sculpture shows at galleries has gone up. Besides, they are also fetching tidy prices at the auctions. All these factors combined are playing a vital role in popularizing the sculpture medium".

Around 2-3 years back, bronze sculptures were being sold at a price range of Rs 15,000 to Rs 2 lakhs, while fiber glass pieces were hovering at Rs 10,000-40,000 and terracotta sculptures as low as Rs. 3,000-7,000.

The appreciation in prices of sculptures has been actually visible in the last 8-9 months when the price levels have risen 5-10 times on an average. On the higher end, a bronze sculpture which was earlier worth Rs 1-1.5 lakhs, has now increased to approximately Rs 6 lakhs.

It is interesting to note that much earlier the equation was not very different for paintings too. But somehow it always had an edge over sculptures as far as commercial viability was concerned. That is, they managed to fetch a better price than their counterpart.

Against the backdrop of the current turnaround in the sculpture market, a bronze work may be worth between Rs. 30,000 to Rs. 15 lakhs, while a fiber glass sculpture is likely to be pegged at Rs. 1 to 25 lakhs. "Of course, prices hinge on the artist's brand name and naturally the quality of the work," the source added.

In the present scenario, some sculptors who have hit the growth curve are Ravinder Reddy, K.S. Radhakrishnan, Daroz, Himmat Shah, Mrinalini Mukherjee and Laxma Goud.

Alternatively, painters who were fetching not-so-fancy prices around 2002, like Prakash Karmakar, Laxma Goud, Rabin Mandal, Suhas Roy, G.R. Santosh, Kartick Pyne and Manu Parekh, have appreciated phenomenally today. Prakash Karmakar who was selling at Rs 1.5 lakhs is now valued between a range of Rs 5 lakhs to Rs 10 lakhs. Rabin Mandal has touched Rs 5 lakhs-plus. For a large canvas of Laxma Goud, the price has swelled from just Rs 50,000 to Rs 5 lakhs. Manu Parekh is hitting Rs 5 lakhs and G.R. Santosh has appreciated 10 times to Rs 10 lakhs.

In tandem, a work by Jogen Chowdhury which was selling at 2 lakhs is now fetching 20 lakhs. Sanat Kar has shot up from Rs. 35,000 to 3 lakhs. Suhas Roy is up from Rs 4 lakhs to Rs 10 lakhs, Kartick Pyne is scaling Rs 4.5- 6.5 lakhs while till last year he was selling at not more than Rs 50,000/75,000. Other artists like Arindam Chatterjee, Chhatrapati Dutta, Samindranath Majumdar, Tapas Konar and Amitava Dhar are seeing varying degrees of demand with prices ranging from Rs 1-4 lakhs. Partha Pratim Deb too is enjoying a fair bit of demand.

According to the art market source, "several artists who are or were active for the last 30-40 years are seen to be competing at market value in their own ways. The popularity of their work depends on exposure, luck and the collectors' whims. But, the market normally catches up with quality painters who have not appreciated for some reason." The source also added that "people are now looking for a variety of artists' labels, with the frontline painters touching astronomical levels".

In conclusion, Indian contemporary art has arrived as a credible capital asset. A time may come when financial institutions will be willing to invest in art as part of a diversified portfolio! However, it is essential for an art lover or art collector to come to grips with the subject, do one's homework and buy an artist who has a resale brand value.

- ART BUFF

