



*Bernd Svetnik brings visual enjoyment everywhere*

*Kappari Kishan aspires to achieve inner peace through his art*

*The legacy of art continues*

Master illusionist from Bengal: Mansoor Rahi

2018:3



Shiva Aini: Passionate about humanism

Veteran M. Javed believes: 'Life is incomplete without art'

**IRIS**  
TREASURE TROVE OF THE ART WORLD

Mansoor Rahi.  
2007.



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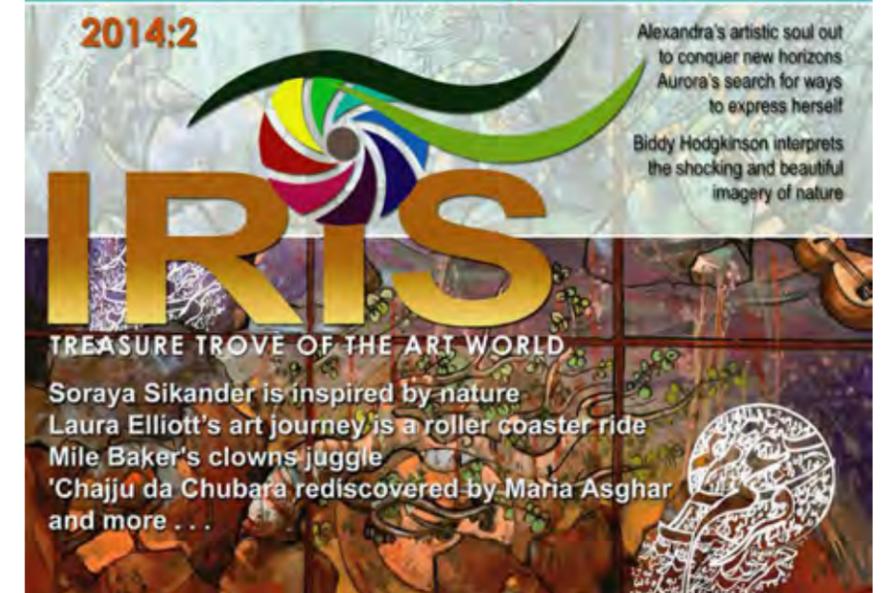


Mohsen Keiany's Paintings of Small Worlds

2014:2

Alexandra's artistic soul out to conquer new horizons  
Aurora's search for ways to express herself

Biddy Hodgkinson interprets the shocking and beautiful imagery of nature



TREASURE TROVE OF THE ART WORLD

Soraya Sikander is inspired by nature  
Laura Elliott's art journey is a roller coaster ride  
Mile Baker's clowns juggle  
'Chajju da Chubara' rediscovered by Maria Asghar  
and more . . .

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# Bernd Svetnik brings visual enjoyment everywhere

**K**LAGENFURT is a lovely city in the middle of Austria. Located at the eastern shore of Lake Wörthersee, it is the capital city of the southern Austrian province of Carinthia. It is where famous artist Bernd Svetnik lives and works. It was a pleasure for the IRIS President Ingeborg Maria Soomro who had gone out along with her daughter Jenny to meet the wonderful self-taught artist who is making this city world-famous.

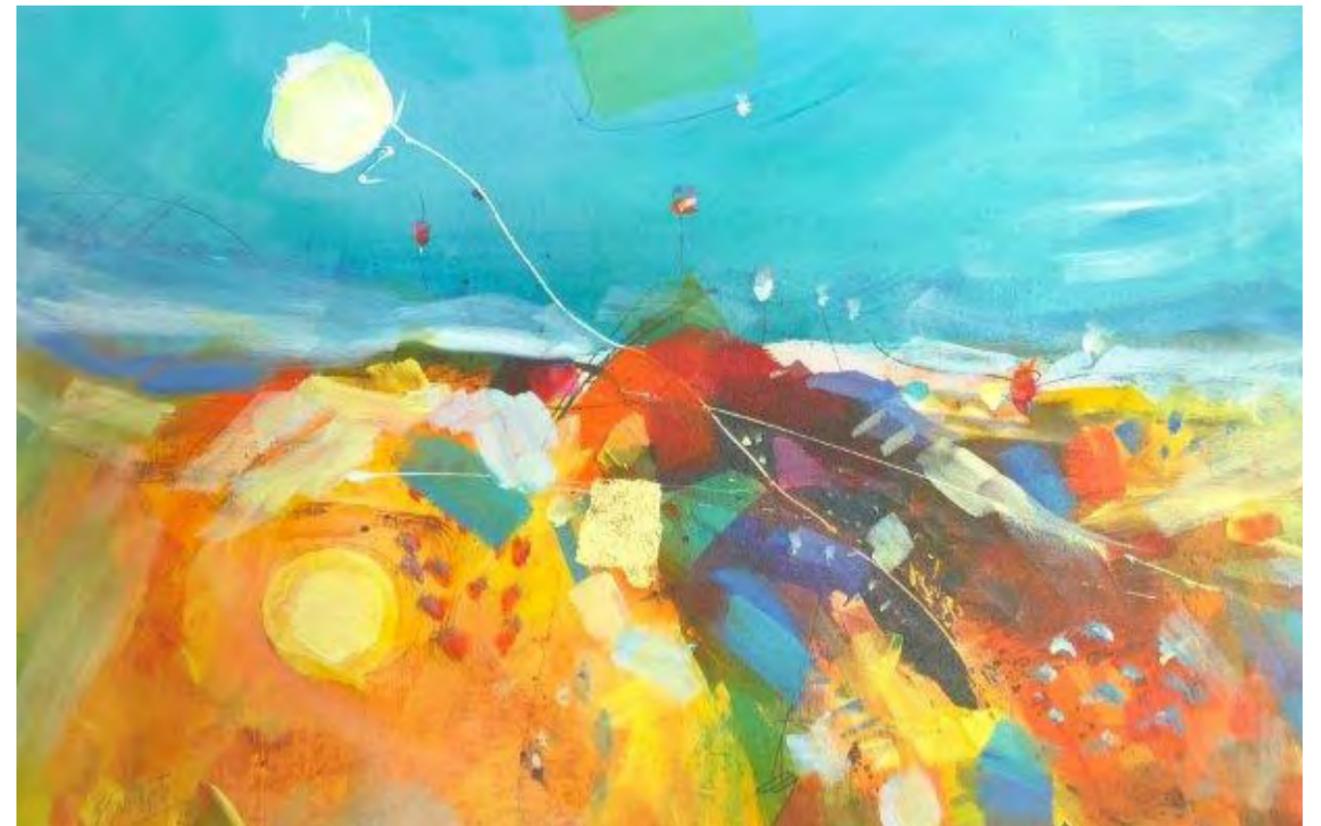
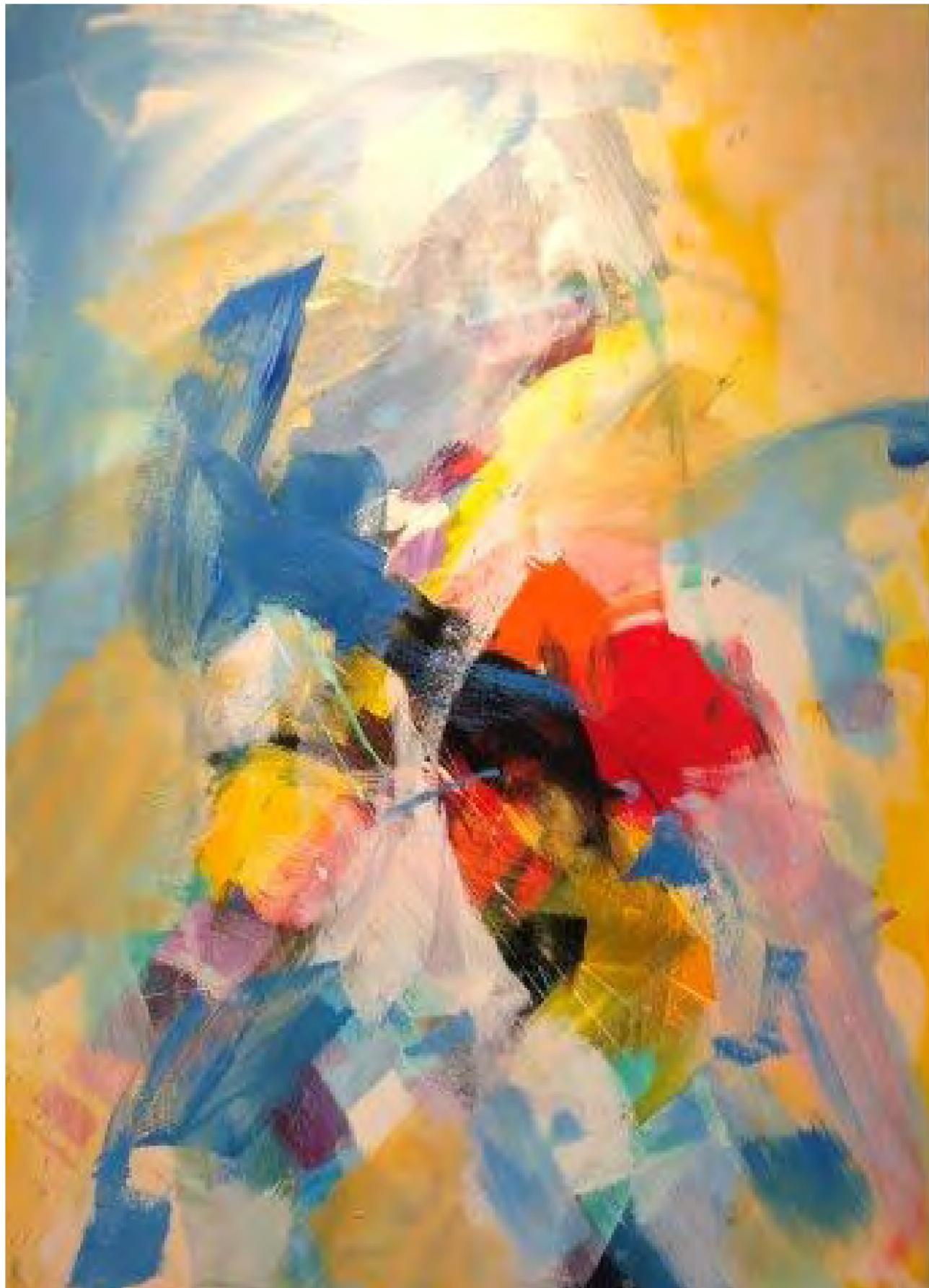
Maria and Jenny were delighted to



Bernd Svetnik along with Jenny Soomro (center) and Ingeborg Maria Soomro sharing a discussion

## EXHIBITIONS

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1981 Stadthaus Klagenfurt, Austria (A)             | Workers High School Beijing (CN)                    |
| 1981 Künstlerhaus Graz, (A)                        | 1990 Galerie Schmidlin -Holzer Basel (CH)           |
| 1981 Art-Graphika Basel (CH)                       | 1990 Foundation - Art. Center Velden (A)            |
| 1982 initiator traveling exhibition (A)            | 1991 Gallery Schmidlin - Holzer Zurich (CH)         |
| 1982 "Atelier am Hof" Keutschach (A)               | 1992 Gallery Arabella Munich (D)                    |
| 1982 Stadthaus Klagenfurt (A)                      | 1992 Arabella Frankfurt (D)                         |
| 1982 Hypo-Burghausen (D)                           | 1992 Gallery Triconomia Rome (IT)                   |
| 1982 Atelier 24 Vienna (A)                         | 1992 Austrian Cultural Institute Rome (IT)          |
| 1983 Austrian Tobacco Museum Vienna (A)            | 1993 Gallery Mendoca Cologne (D)                    |
| 1983 Prom Munich Gallery (D)                       | 1993 Galerie Rathaus Veitshöchheim (D)              |
| 1983 Hotel Interconti Berlin (D)                   | 1995 Int. Art fair, Edt. Bora Bologna (IT)          |
| 1984 Olymp. Winter Games Sarajevo (YU)             | 1997 Zoolog. Staatssammlung München (D)             |
| Gallery Prisma Vienna (A)                          | 1998 ATP Championtour Pörtlach (A)                  |
| 1985 Official. Invitation of the Hungarian Reg.    | 1998 Foundation of Künstlerdorf Koschuta (A)        |
| State Gallery Kialitotterem Budapest (H)           | 1998 Art -cult Austria Tabak Vienna (A)             |
| 1985 Official invitation of the Russian Reg., Int. | 1999 Academie Pompon Sarlat (FR)                    |
| Kunsthau Moskau (RU)                               | 1999 Vicenti Marbella Gallery (ES)                  |
| 1985 Gallery Schnecke Hamburg (D)                  | 2001 ART CULT CENTER Vienna (A)                     |
| 1986 Gallery Prisma Vienna (A)                     | 2002 Int. Artist Sympetit Montmartre Klagenfurt (A) |
| 1987 Gallery Döring Nuremberg (D)                  | 2003 One-man Show Budapest (H)                      |
| 1988 Coconut Grove Miami (USA)                     | 2005 Opening Klagenfurt Gallery (A)                 |
| 1988 Quito Cuenca (EC)                             | 2006 Solo Show Theate Gerits Vienna (A)             |
| 1989 Gallery 97 Hong Kong (HK)                     | 2007 Int.SymposiumMonastier Tunisia                 |
| 1989 Official invitation of Chinese Government     |   |



meet Bernd Svetnik and see his wonderful world of art. He liked IRIS Art Magazine [www.irisartmagazine.com](http://www.irisartmagazine.com) and talked to the two ladies about his work. He is founder and president of the Austrian Art Association as well as founder and operator of the international artist center Velden. He is also the

founder of International Artists' Village Koschuta in Carinthia and a member of the Carinthian Cultural Committee. He has gained great recognition and popularity among art lovers and celebrities in Germany and abroad.

Bernd Svetnik (born 1951 in Klagenfurt, Austria) is an excellent

painter and graphic artist. He works in mixed technique, using oil, tempera, pastel and pencil. He rubs his own colors and even makes his own paper. His characteristic is the transition from the concrete to the hint. Bernd has developed original graphic art on handmade paper. The technique consists of lithog-



raphy, screen printing and original painting, whereby each individual color is developed manually on a hand-held press by the artist himself in collaboration with the lithographer.

Internationally renowned painter Bernd Svetnik brings the visual enjoyment of art everywhere he goes. His art is certainly magnificent and awakening.

He says, "As soon as he reached the state of playful childhood, the work went on by itself. I am then only water heater and am astonished often what happens in my work— everything, if I allow it and not try to control myself!"

He further says, "My pictures are best enjoyed by self-confident people, mainly artistic souls who are more or less aware of their divine soul and who feel the yearning for truth and love in them."

He adds, "When I paint, I play like a child. I am only a medium. It comes



in-goes through my heart; goes out and manifests itself in the picture."

He announces, "Please, give us the power to be different without having suffered and without any doubt."

He adds, "What remains is the great desire to become one with all living, all vibrations, and materials."

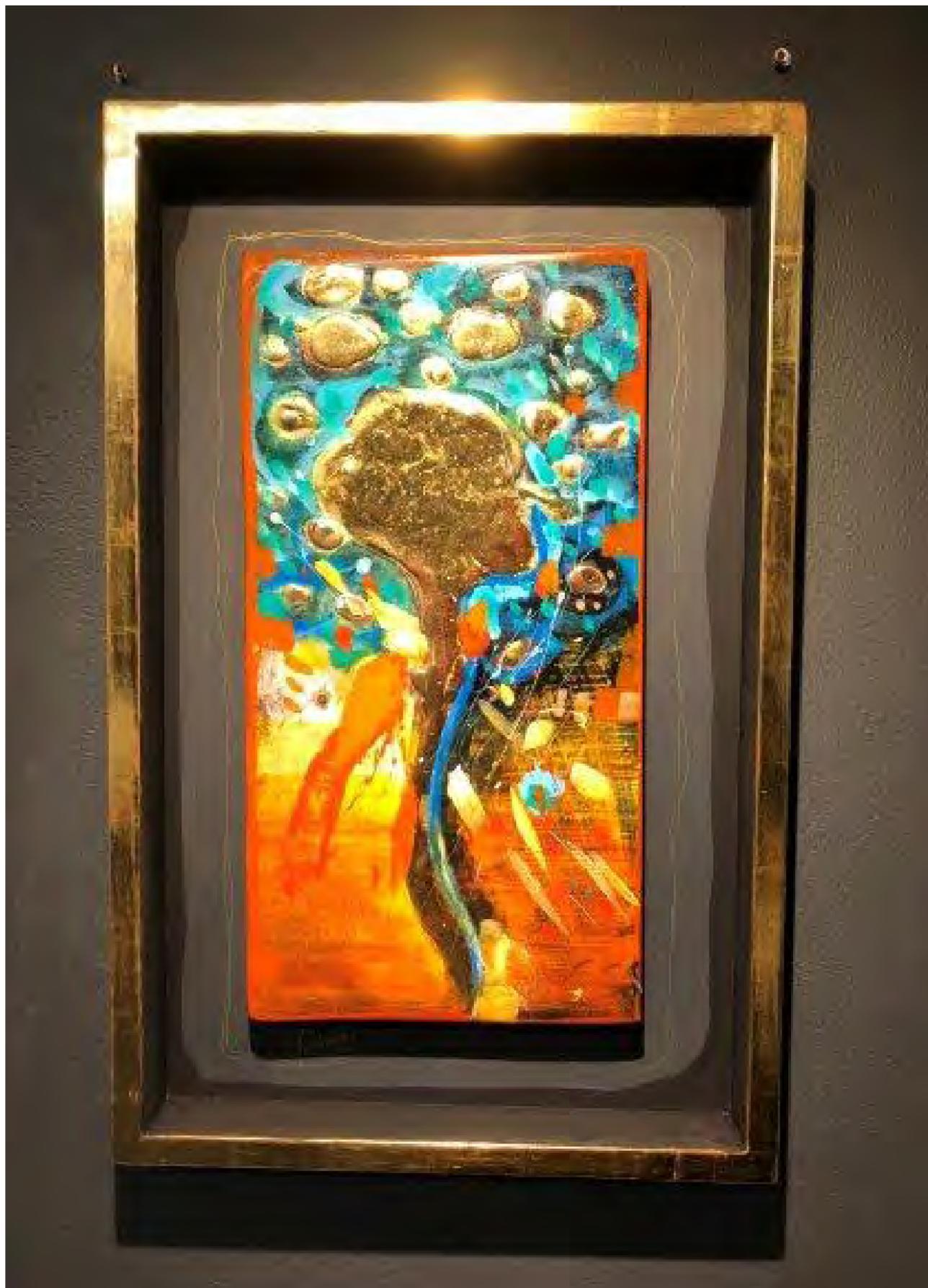
Bernd believes, "Without wisdom

and love, the divine will enhance the man," and adds, "The essence of art is the love and connection with god and not the boundless growth of the ego of the artist, his art mafia and buyer."

He further believes, "The ego has seized contemporary art. The illusions of the mind have driven us out of paradise."

He finds it more important to "touch many people in the soul with my painting than to serve a few egoists. I'm painting for the people I'm borrowing from God."

Maria and Jenny were much impressed when he explained that he started indulging in art in order "to make the beauty of God visible to all of



us through my paintings.”

Ingeborg Maria Soomro asked him to explain what is the most recent change in your art life, and he replied, “I’m currently making modern ikons. I am always playing with art with much curiosity.”

When asked how changes in his life changed his perception about art and its application, he replied, “When I paint, I am independent of external circumstances.”

Would he like to say something about himself, his feelings and his response to how the art world has treated him, his simple answer was: “It is by the jealousy of others that I could see my success.”

“What did you feel about your art fairs?” Ingeborg questioned and he answered, “I don’t care about business; I think it works by itself. I leave everything to God. I do not mind how much people take interest in my work. In fact, I do not mind if any of my art sells or not. I am satisfied with whatever comes. What remains is the desire for identity and harmony, mood and material — without difference between Yin and Yang.”

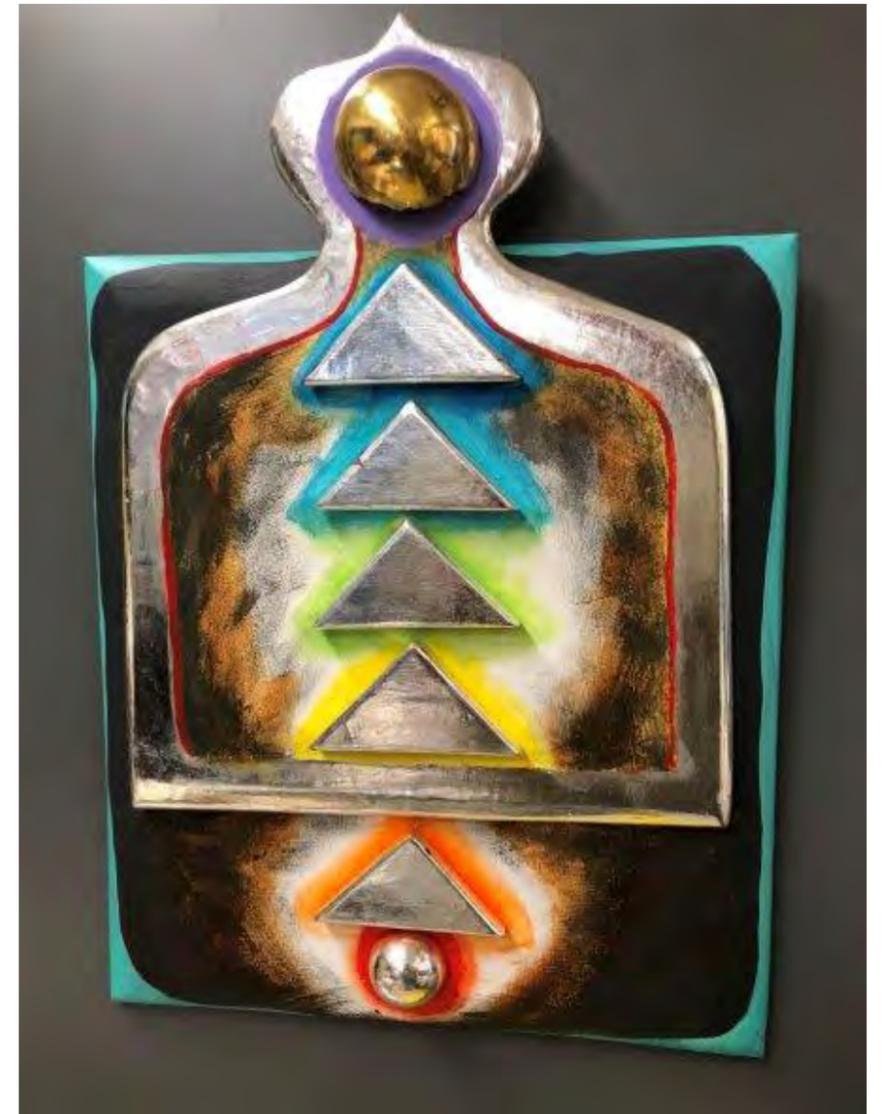
He added, “One experiences an indefinite energy when deliberating the God-given power of creation through art, a feeling so immense that the novice only experiences it fleetingly. It is protective only to discover as much as one is capable of understanding. Pity he who tries, like an addict, to demand more than he deserves. He suffers the pangs of diversification. He gets caught up in his worldly surroundings and is misinterpreted.”

He is certain that “Everyone who understands my meaning is my brother, sister, father, mother. This satisfaction is incomparable.”

He emphasized “REAL LOVE!! That comes from God!” Adding, “Please God, give us the strength to be individualists, without having to experience fear and doubt. That is the solution, the mystery, the fulfilment of all passions. My last wish is to be one with God.”

When asked about his artist statement, Svetnik responded very briefly: “Art comes from the heart.”

At the conclusion, Ingeborg asked Svetnik, “What would be your personal message to art enthusiasts worldwide?” To this he replied, “Trust your heart not your mind.”



# Talented young artist: Marina Rafael

**Y**OUTHFUL Marina Rafael began as a self-taught artist who fell into drawing, painting and sculpting. From as early a childhood as four years, she started painting under her mother's guidance, who was a self-taught artist too. With a great childhood and the support from her parents and her little brother she continued creating art everywhere. Her first creation at this early age was a painting on a porcelain plate. Later on, she painted on wooden boards that her dad brought for her. At primary school, her teachers encouraged and loved her talent. She participated in many art competitions, collecting many awards.

At high school, she was awarded as the title of "First Art Student" for her creative talent. She was selected for a scholarship at Baccalaureate Beaux Arts at Paris and also a scholarship from the China School of Arts in China. However, her mother did not feel comfortable for her daughter to study so far away at the young age of 17 and rejected both the scholarships. She was short-listed for the School of Arts in Greece but she kept waiting for her entry. When no reply arrived, she undertook Public Relations as a course at a private college.

She started working at a Lebanese Bank and stopped art because of she was disappointed for not undertaking any of the two scholarships she was offered. At that specific phase in her life, she met her future husband who discovered her talent and encouraged her to resume painting again. So she joined a local art school and had private lessons. She received excellent comments for her talent from her teacher who led her to think more seriously about not giving up, so she started painting and drawing and participating at group exhibitions with very good comments and feedback for her unique

work. Five years later, while still working at the bank, she entered Aristotelian University Teaching Department, Greece, where her art teacher discovered her talent and pursued her to follow an art school. While studying, she started working as a painter under com-

mission and also decorated the interior space of a restaurant and a music club.

Returning to Cyprus and working as a teacher at primary schools she did not stop creating and collecting many comments for her work while participating in many group exhibitions in Cyprus.



Marina Rafael



Her passion for art, finally lead her to undertake a Master degree in Art and Craft and Design in Education in London, giving her the ability to teach only art at Primary School. She began to create, draw and paint together with the students gaining many awards with them, inspire them and support their creativity. A few years later started looking for an art course that will fulfill her unsatisfied dream and while her husband was studying she undertook an art course for blowing glass, Sunderland and later at Roehampton University a course for "painting cathedral stained glass" where again had excellent comments even from the principal of the university for her art talent. Her last and most important step was when she decided to follow Fine Arts at Central Saint Martins, London. She was soon gaining excellent comments from her teachers about her talent and proposed to stay in London to work but she already had adopt her first child from Sri Lanka who gave her energy, love and passion to fly for her dream, art and reject this proposal, returning back to Cyprus. She had a bad patch for almost ten years when she tried to get pregnant and underwent many therapies which made her very sad and miserable. Finally she adopted her first child and thus again found her spirit. She was glad to create again and having her first solo exhibition. It was called "Exposed" because it was exposed to unknown viewers and had, at that time, excellent comments and reviews. She got good publicity at the local channel, newspaper and magazines. Almost all the paintings were sold out. The Series Red had abstract shapes inspired by the sea and using warm colors such as orange, deep red, brown and gold were dominant to all the paintings. Mixed media and different techniques were used in traditional and modern styles such as glazing and textures with paste.

Later exhibitions brought similar result. The second one was inspired by her visit to the Kew Gardens, London, and there was an exhibition of Chihuly's large glass creations. Having approval from the Chihuly artist as well as his supporting comments for her inspiration and work, she painted large boats and brilliant glass motifs. They were







inspired by what she had seen at the Kew Gardens. Finally, she had eight solo exhibitions with unique themes and techniques focusing on senses and feelings. She told her viewers, “I want to get into as many places I can with my art; and bring joy, happiness, a sense of calmness and euphoria to my viewers.”

Having adopted a daughter filled her life with happiness. She started thinking differently, more positively. She wanted to create happiness and bring joy to all children. So she started painting children’s rooms with great success. For the next 14 years she has been decorating the interior and exterior spaces with wall murals painted with a brush. She did it for hotels, clinics, hospitals, restaurants, schools, houses and buildings. Having adopted her second child, she began to be more sensitive towards children with special needs. Among her actions was the decoration of an institute for children with special needs in Cyprus’ Theotokos Project, Limassol, with the support of Samsung team from Belgium at 2001. With the involvement of an author who wrote children’s books. She created fascinating “Fairytale Corners” at hospitals.

She started decorating the pediatric floors with wall murals at all the hospitals in Cyprus. It was a non-profitable movement. Marina says, “I want to transform the cold white walls of pediatric floors to Disneyland where children will

non-profitable charity program for children with special needs in cooperation with “The Retreat Palm Jumeirah Hotel”.

Her artworks also include limited collections of handbags and hand-painted porcelains as well as the illustration of a fairytale story? She also created and painted stained glass windows, restore and transform old wooden furniture to unique pieces of art and cooperate with a local fashion designer for painting on wedding dresses. She also had love for fashion design. She trained future fashion-designing students to make their portfolio which were going to attend at Milano Universities. The greatest reward for her came about when she gained university entry for their portfolios and received excellent comments as their teacher.

Her artworks have been presented by international galleries in Cyprus, Greece, London, Austria, Germany, South Africa, Dubai, Lebanon and Sweden.

For her, art is life; she believes that an artist paints with heart and soul, and her vision is to support women’s strength, sacrifice, creativity and talent!

**Her artworks have been presented by international galleries in Cyprus, Greece, London, Austria, Germany, South Africa, Dubai, Lebanon and Sweden**

forget their pain and suffering.” She was also invited by Zee Arts at UAE for the project “Little Picasso” in Dubai, in May 2018, to participate as an artist to a

## EXHIBITIONS

### GROUP EXHIBITIONS

1. AMATEUR ARTISTS, 1995, LIMASSOL, SYNERGATIKO TAMIEYTHRIO
2. AMATEUR ARTIST, 1996, LIMASSOL
3. AMATEUR ARTIST, 1997, LIMASSOL
4. AMATEUR ARTIST, 1998, LIMASSOL
6. GROUP EXHIBITION AT ROEHMAPTON UNIVERSITY, SURREY, LONDON, 2005
5. TEXNH DIXOS SYNORA ARTIST WITHOUT BOARDERS, NICOSIA, PYLI AMMOXOSTOY, 2014,
6. TEXNH DIXOS SYNORA ARTIST WITHOUT BOARDERS, LIMASSOL, TRACASOL, 2015,
7. DUBAI WORLD ART FAIR, 2018, WORLD TRADE CENTER
8. TATININS ART FAIR, SINGAPORE, 2018, FPIT BUILDING SINGAPORE

### PROJECTS

- THEOTOKOS FOUNDATION, 2004 LIMASSOL (IN COLLABORATION WITH SAMSUNG COMPANY, BELGIUM)
- INDIA STAR RESTAURANT, 2011, LIMASSOL
- POLYCLINIC YGIA, LIMASSOL, 2012
- LE MERIDIEN SPA AND RESORT, (5 STAR HOTEL), 2012, LIMASSOL
- ST’ RAPHAEL SPA AND RESORT, (5 STAR HOTEL), 2015

### LIMASSOL

- DR ANASTASIOU PEDIATRIC CLINIC, LARNACA, 2015
- POLYCLINIC YGIA, LIMASSOL, 2016
- DR ARGYRIOU PEDIATRIC CLINIC, 2016
- DR CHRISTOU PEDIATRIC CLINIC, 2017
- MEDICAL HEALTH CENTER, 2017
- POLYCLINIC YGIA, LIMASSOL 2018
- PAPHOS PEDIATRIC FLOOR, HOSPITAL, PAPHOS, 2018
- LARNACA PEDIATRIC FLOOR, HOSPITAL, LARNACA, 2018
- DERYNIA PEDIATRIC FLOOR, HOSPITAL, AYIA NAPPA, 2018
- LIMASSOL SURGERY FLOOR, HOSPITAL, LIMASSOL, 2018

### PUBLICATIONS

- DUBAI WORLD ART FAIR CATALOGUE, 2018
- PHILELEFTHEROS NEWSPAPER, JANUARY, 2018
- SYNTHESIS, 2014, INTERIOR DESIGN MAGAZINE
- SEA HORSE MAGAZINE, 2016, ST RAPHAEL SPA AND RESORT
- THLEORES, CYPRIOT MAGAZINE, 2007, NICOSIA

### FUTURE PARTICIPATIONS-EXCIBITIONS

- INDEX EXHIBITION, WORLD TRADE CENTRE DUBAI, SEPTEMBER 2018
- FLORENCE BIENNALE, FLORENCE-ITALY, 2018
- CARROUSEL DE LOUVRE, ART EXHIBITION 2018

# Shirish Deshpande connects soul to soul

**B**ORN in Belgaum, India, Shirish Vasant Deshpande works in oil and acrylic. As a ballpoint pen artist he was listed 9th in top 100 ballpoint pen artists of the world in 2010. He explains, “I have fans all over the world who like my artworks. One of my drawings was chosen for an international calendar by artwanted.com for the year 2010. My artworks are in the collection of various art lovers in India, UK, Germany, Australia, Canada, Singapore, Malaysia and United States.”

He adds, “Art for me is food for the soul. It encompasses my whole being, saturates the soul. Art inspires, illuminates, encourages, surprises, excites, provokes, calms, elevates emotionally as well as spiritually and connects soul to soul. On seeing my art, if the viewer experiences even one of these emotions, then we connect soul to soul.”

“As an artist the process of creating the artwork is important to me but I

---

“As an artist the process of creating the artwork is important to me but I refuse to accept the limitations imposed by rules.”

---

refuse to accept the limitations imposed by rules. I want to work in all styles, mediums and delve through many subjects and then draw conclusions at my own pace. I started to paint with the ballpoint pen. I have found that the simple ball pen with its fine line has a huge potential in allowing the artist to express his or her thoughts and emotions. Unlike painting with brush, where a single stroke can cover a large area with



*Tandav-01 acrylic on canvas*



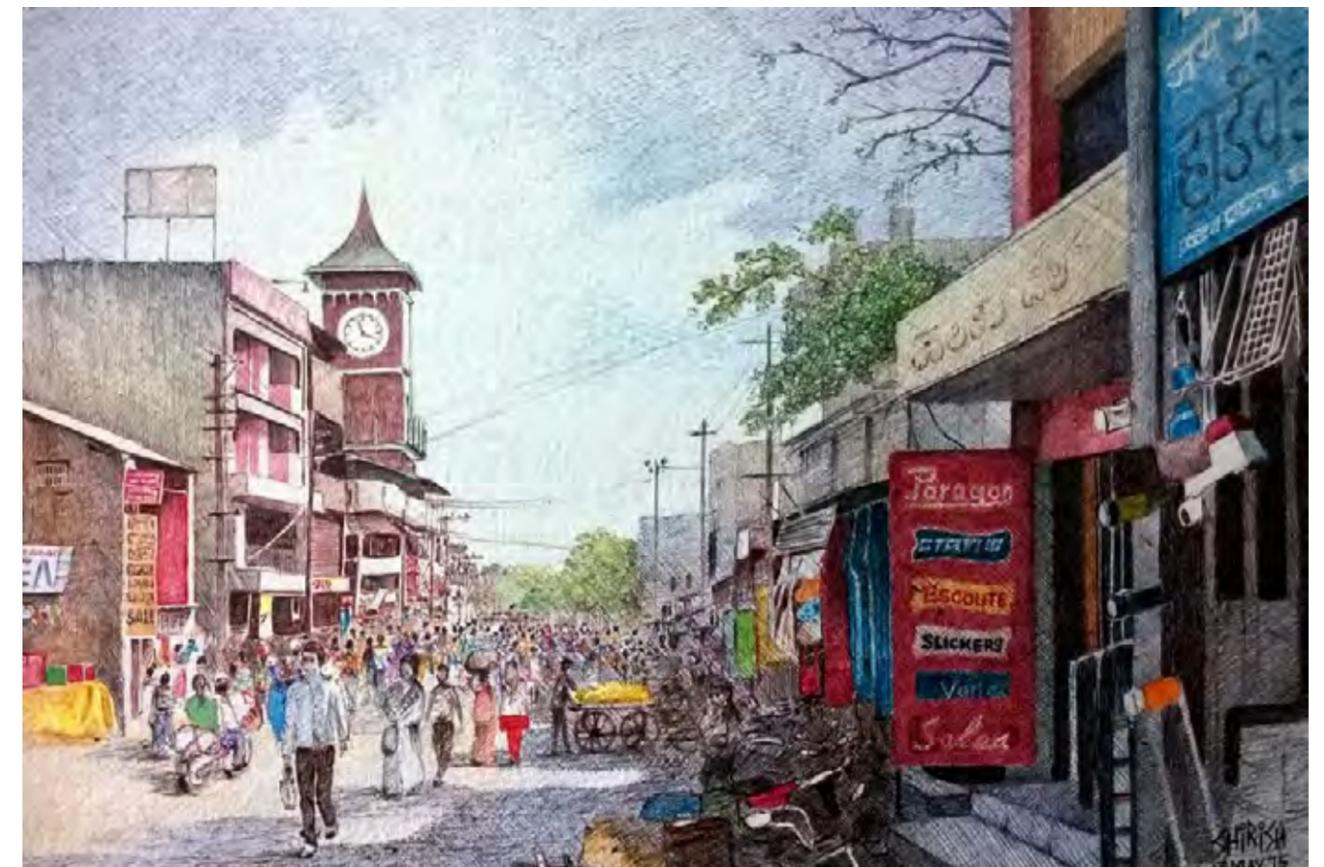
*Composition-05 in-acrylic on canvas*

color, pen lines are very thin and there is a sense of creation at every stroke. It is very challenging to create innumerable tones by combining the limited available colors in ball point pens. I need to draw millions of lines to make my painting come alive!

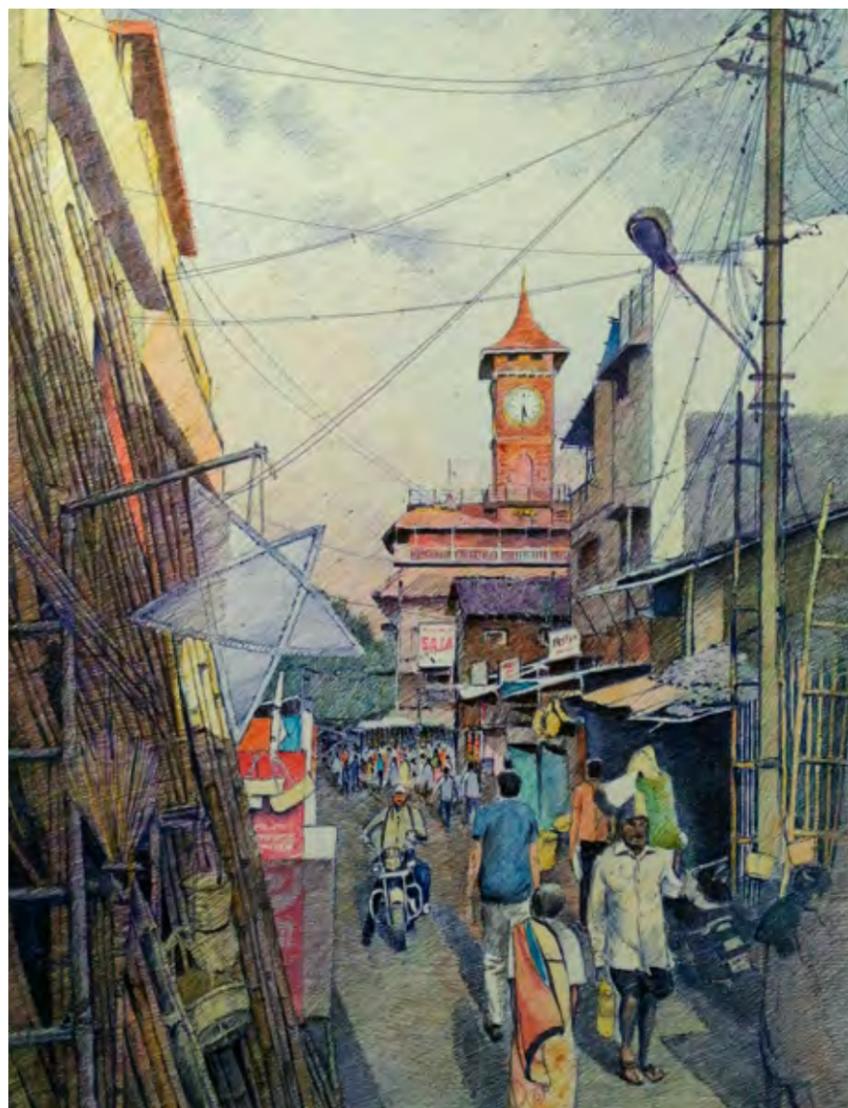
“Due to long hours of standing in a bad posture to make my ballpoint pen drawings, I started developing severe backache. The pain only worsened over time due to travelling and the heavy lifting of my painting inventory. Complete bed rest with some pain killers didn’t help. In search for a permanent cure, I came across a healing program based on Yoga and meditation that required me to focus my attention on the pain by going deep inside to the area where I felt the actual pain and soon I started having some visualizations filled with vibrant energy. Feeling of the immense activity going on inside the body was so overwhelming that the urge to look outside for inspiration became meaningless for me. This made me paint a few canvases just in my imagination. When the back pain



*Shirish Vasant Deshpande*



*Clock Tower in Ballpoint pens on paper*



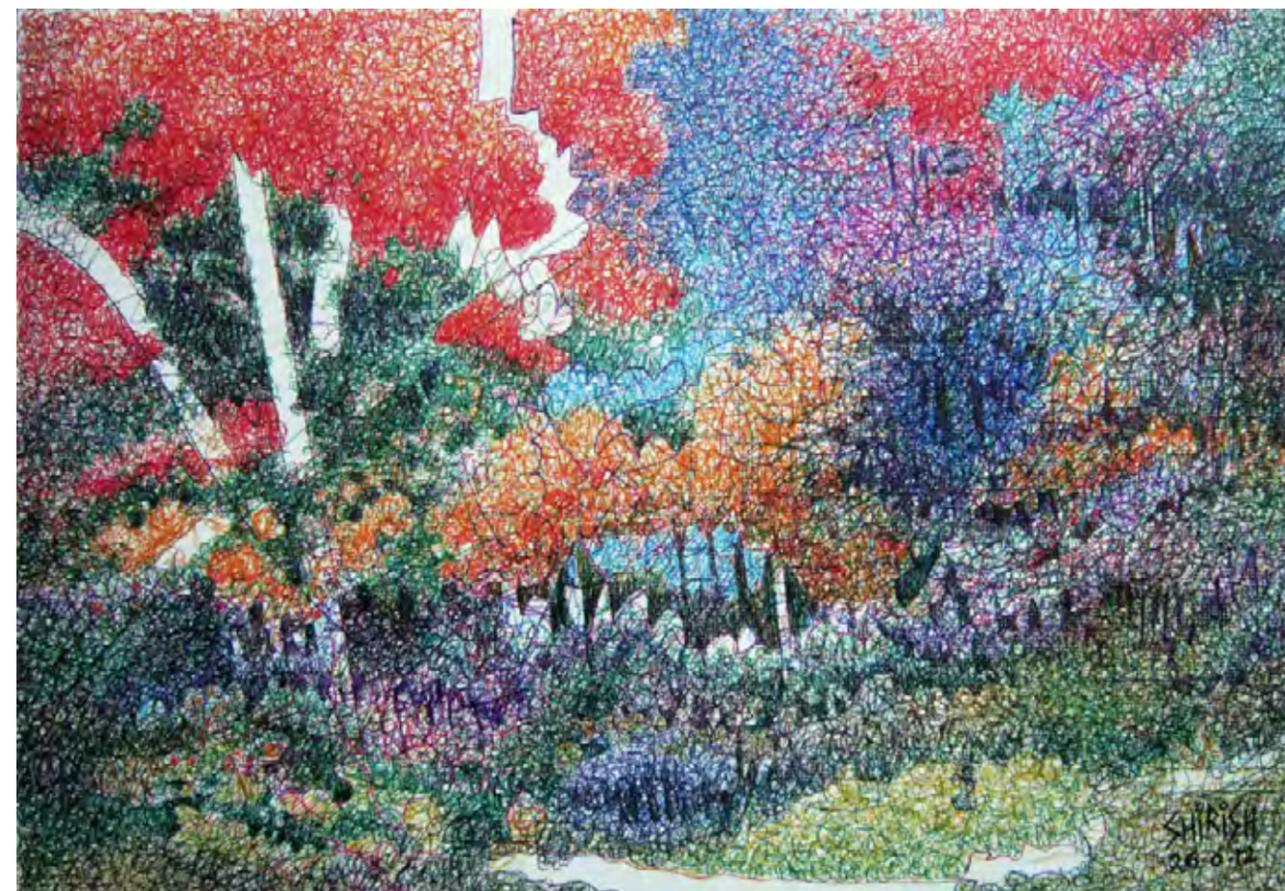
*Burud Galli in ballpoint pens on paper*



*Bijapure in ballpoint pens on paper*



*Gorgeous green in ballpoint pens on paper*



*Gulmohor in Ballpoint pens on paper*

reduced and I restarted my work, my very first work was an abstract of a new style. I did not plan or draw anything to begin with. When I painted, I was just a third person watching it happen. I enjoyed the process of creation. As of now, I feel that I have just found something amazing and I feel an urgency to explore it further. The various pictorial elements in my paintings are energetic strokes of color transition, circular textures, patterns, lines, dots and drips. They depict the vital flow of energy in action. A variety of textures and color overlays speak a language of their own. The creation of each of my painting is a unique journey in itself. Each painting has enriched my inner world of existence. I hope that the viewers take pleasure to pause for the meaning to be revealed.

"I also work with oil colors. In oils, I love the dry brush technique. It allows me to create expressive textures with so much ease.

"My subject matter deals with landscapes, portraits, abstracts as well as

stylizations. Light plays a very important role in creating the required drama to draw the viewer in to my world. It could be a rustic village home or then dancing crops against a dramatic sky-

line. Towering boulders take my breath away. I paint with the motive that I finally achieve the result I initially have in my mind. Simple subject matter, good composition, boldness of forms,



*Entanglement in ballpoint pens on paper*



*Invocation*

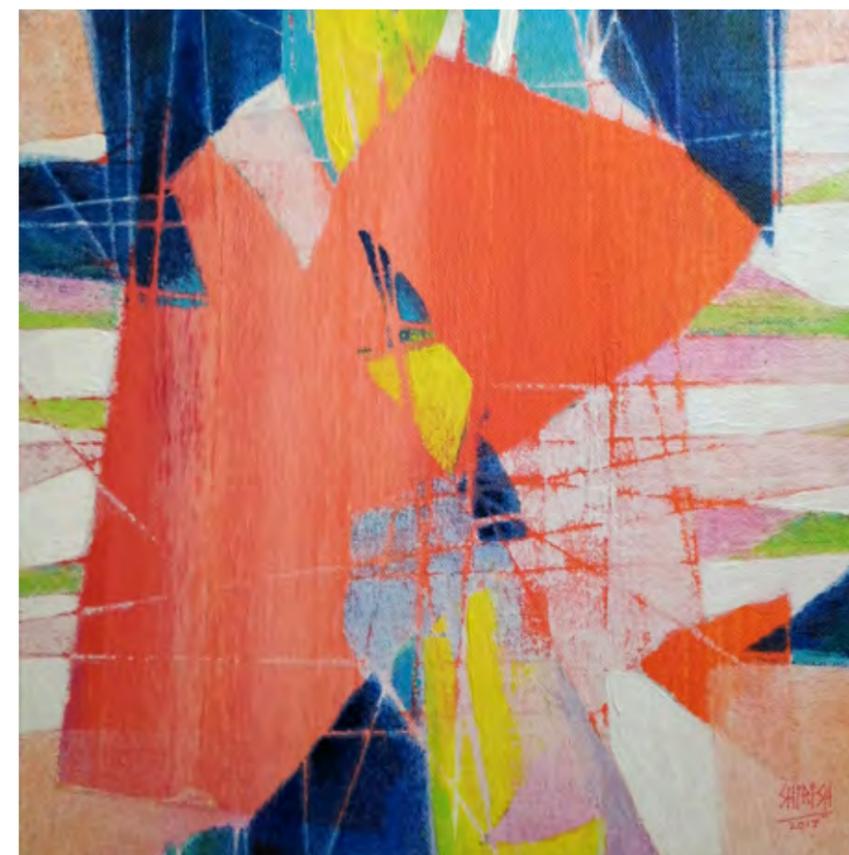
delicate line work and a little dramatization play a key role in the impact, my art has on the viewer.

“In 1979, I passed out with a G.D. Art in Applied Arts from Abhinav Kala Vidyalay, Pune, India. For about 27 years, I worked in the field of Communication Design and applied my creative talent in rendering a variety of art works for a number of clients which included graphic design in all its variety, architectural delineations, 3D models, etc. I was also involved in creating some of the world’s best software user interfaces at Deltra Software. The common theme in all that I have stood out so far is precision.

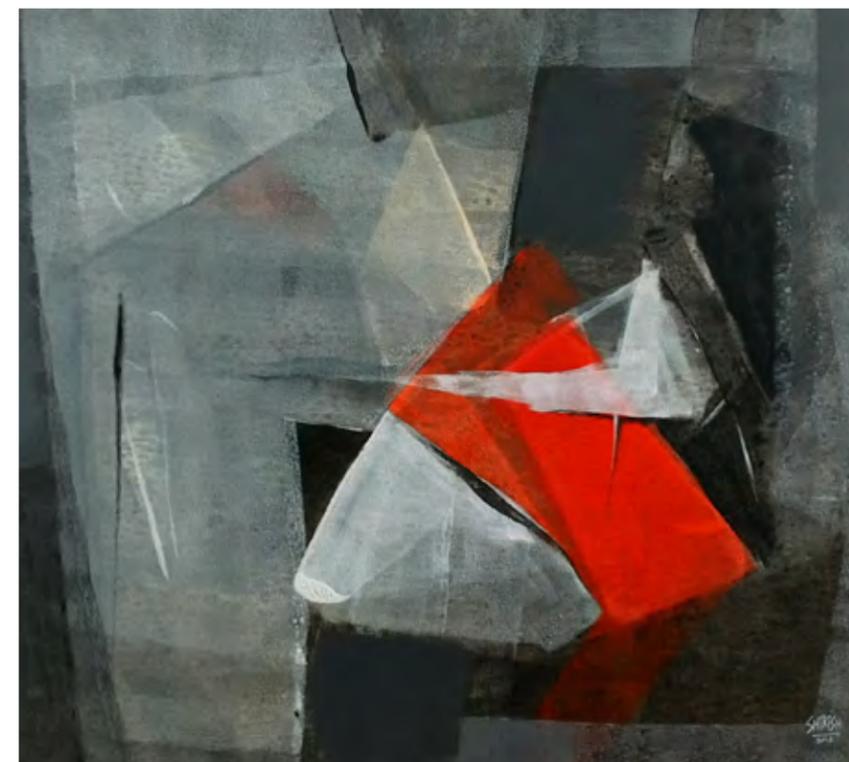
“After years of designing for varied people I came to the conclusion that I needed an outlet that would help me realize my creative potential in a more satisfying way. Art for me like for many other people became the most meaningful part of life and a source of much fun and relaxation. I hope that my paintings serve as a channel of expression and help the viewer understand my inner conflicts, fears, and tensions as well as my aspirations, hopes, and ideals. In the coming years I hope to venture in to every aspect of art and explore all its dimensions. I have just made a small beginning and I’m hoping that the average viewer in the gallery comes out feeling that he has seen something that provokes a reaction. I see a lot of beauty in the mundane things of life and I hope to make people see that as well.

“I still consider myself a student of art and I will remain so forever. Art for me is everything about the miraculous process of creation from the tiniest to the galactic scale and it has a huge impact on how I interact with the world around me. I do not consider I have achieved anything. I believe that it is a journey to be enjoyed and there is no destination.

“In today’s world, good communication skills can make it easier to reach your target audience. Unfortunately most artists are not even aware of this fact. Language is also a great barrier. I wish there were better means to help the artists with the technology than just online galleries. To create more buyers, art awareness programs are a great way.”—**Khalid Rahman**



*Objective reality-01 in Acrylic on canvas*



*Grey Matter 04 in acrylic-on-canvas*

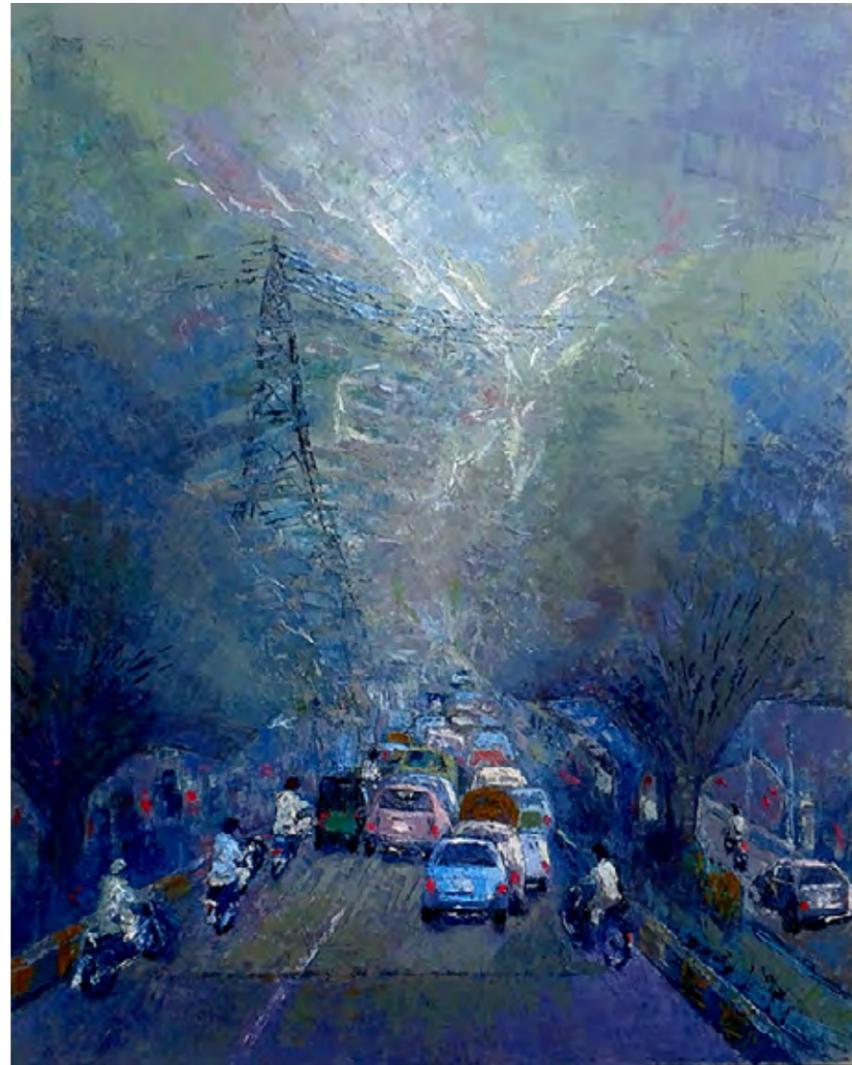
# Veteran artist M. Javed believes: ‘Life is incomplete without art’

**M**UHAMMAD Javed specializes in abstract and semi-abstract art and cubism. He has experimented with bright colors and gradient hues and has drawn strong compositions and haunting ideas. In the words of art critic Dr. Aijaz Anwar, he has “an eye for dividing his picture areas into varying rectangles so as to emphasize and subdue certain elements and make the composition, the subject and his expressions strong enough.”

Thoughtful and soft-spoken M. Javed is an ardent admirer of Professor Shakir Ali who was his teacher at the National College of Art in Lahore. It was then called the Mayo School of Industrial Art. Professor Mark Ritter Sponenburgh was its principal (the news of Professor Sponenburgh’s demise in his Sea Rock, Oregon, home in the United States, was published in Pakistan’s newspaper Dawn on December 12, 2012).

When Shakir Ali took his place, Javed got himself attached to him. A man of few words, Shakir Ali was a competent, kind and affectionate teacher. Muhammad Javed recalls, “Throughout my studies, he remained my teacher and I learned so much from him. His influence on my work is so much visible even in the earliest period of my professional life. My other teachers, Professor Sponenburgh, Professor James Warn and Professor Mary Lewis taught us from 1958 to 1960. The local faculty members Professor Abbas Abidi, Jamila Zaidi, Latif Chaghtai, Niaz Ali Shah, Bashir Ahmad, Ustad Shafi and the miniature painter Haji Mohammad Sharif taught us with much dedication. Professor Shakir Ali had great concern about the placement of students. He was always urging us to improve.”

Recalling his younger days, he says, “I



*The Destiny Oil on Canvas - Palette Knife (60 x 75 cm)*

have struggled all my life to reach where I am now. It surprises me when I recall the tough circumstances I faced when I entered the field of fine art and explored it. In fact, when I was young, no artist I knew could explain his own art or what the actual thought was that urged him produce a specific piece of art.”

Literacy rate in Muhammad Javed’s village, Sheikhpura, was less than one per cent. “Hence, there was no one to teach or coach in basic learning, not to speak of Art. Only three boys were there who went to school but none reached the secondary level except me. My family went to urban areas and I

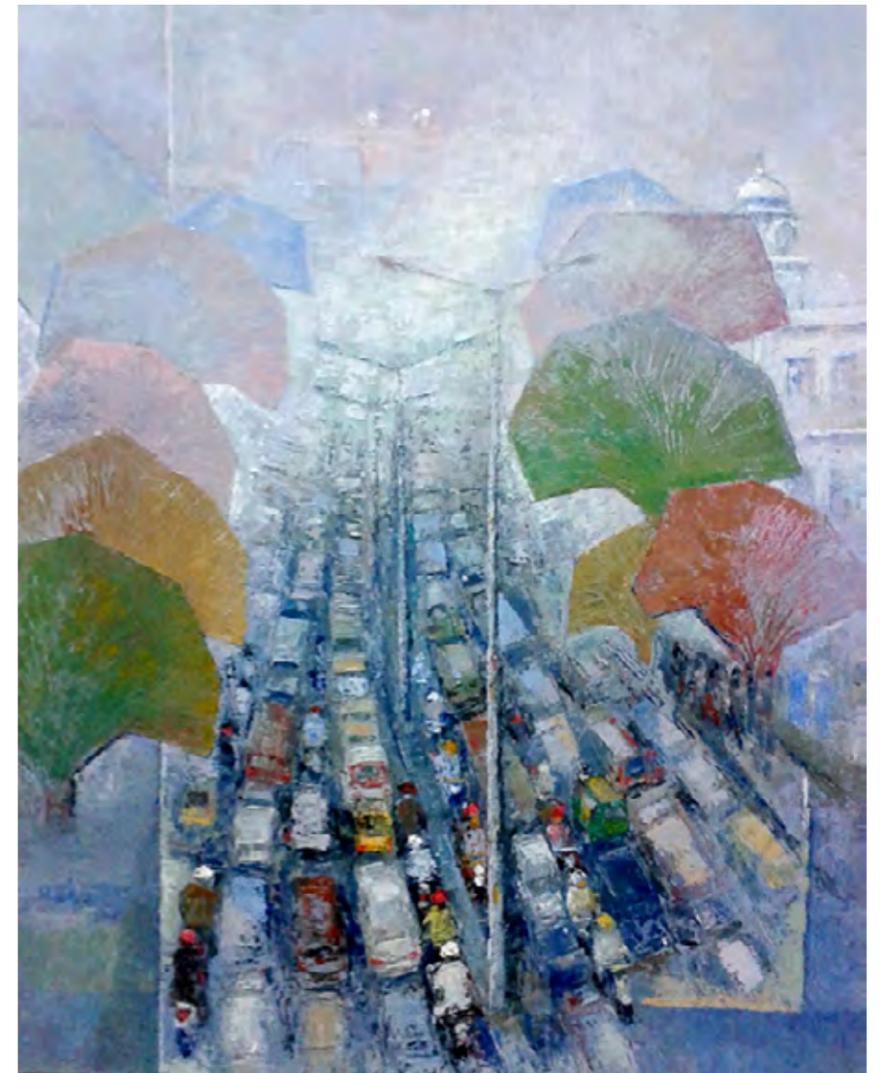
was did get more education. The villagers looked at me with awe when I was in class four as I could read and no one else could.

“I was a simple and innocent kid with a sensitive nature. I would observe and enjoy natural beauty of the fields, trees and plants; flowers, birds and animals; and cultural activities of happy and joyous villagers. When I studied drawing at the high school level, it impressed everyone a lot and I felt that drawing could capture the beauty of the nature. I practiced it according to the tips got from my drawing teacher and enjoyed people around me appreciating it. I was not aware of the correct use of this skill or any study program, which could let me refine my activity. My parents were not happy about this as they wanted me either to enter in to a service or to pursue further education.

Observing my interest in art, a sympathetic relative in Lahore suggested that my parents send me Lahore to study at an art institution. My father agreed half-heartedly as he could not afford the extra expense. But somehow he managed. At last, I reached Lahore to fulfill my thirst for art. Despite financial problems, my parents gave me all support that they could during my study at the National College of Arts. In those days, NCA provided art material to the students free of cost. Since I was a brilliant student, I also got the scholarship. I also got wrote on certificates in an artistic script for and received one rupee for each certificate. This helped me bridge the financial gap. The life was tough but I learnt so much from it.”

## ART AND ACHIEVEMENT

M. Javed remarked. “In the sixties, an artist would not like to explain his art. He would rather avoid talking about his work, considering that a painting spoke in a visual language of its own. This was necessary to allow the viewers to see and interpret according to their own feelings, which varied from on individual to another. I, myself, experienced this fact when an art lover while looking at one of my painting said oh: you painted my dream, whereas I painted my expressions about an environment with a shady tree in abstraction. Although I explained my point of view,



*A Misty Day on Shahrah-e-Quaid-e-Azam-2015 Oil on Canvas-Palette Knife (60x75cm)*

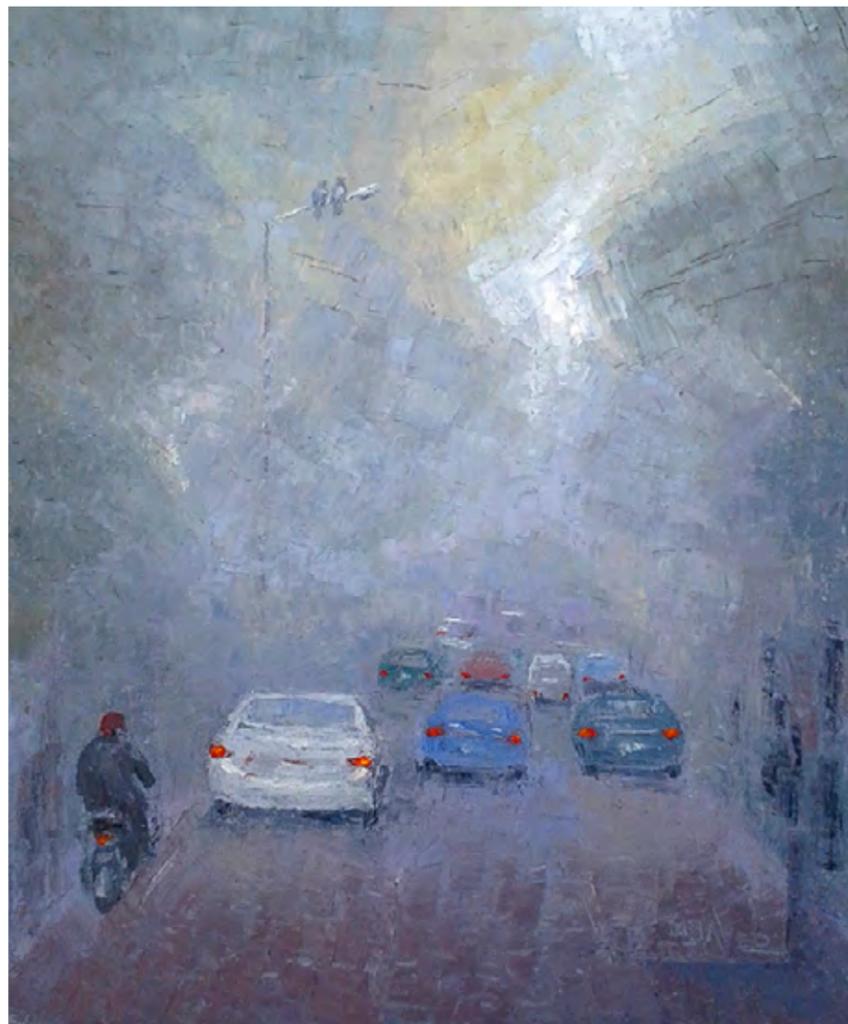
he did not agree. I realized that meaning of a painting could be different in the eyes of different people depending on their knowledge and perception.

“I would, therefore, simply say that I try to capture those impressions of my surroundings which haunt me due to sensitivity of the issues relating to socio-cultural and physical environment. I paint in my own style using my inner strength and knowledge for the sake of art. There is, of course, versatility in my art as I select different subjects, which attract me at different times. My favorite medium is oil colors and palette knife but I have extensively used other material such as charcoal, pastel and mixed medium.

“A progressive person is never satisfied with self-achievement. Such a per-

son always remains in search of better results. For myself, I would say that I have been able to exhibit my work at home and abroad at several occasions and has seven solo shows at my credit. My paintings are also in the private and public collection. I have been receiving appreciation from the art circle especially from the print and electronic media.

“In 1989, M.I.T. awarded me the Annual Distinguished Artist Award on my contribution of a mural done on a large wooden plank. Similarly, in the end of 2013, a book entitled A Man of the Arts—Muhammad Javed, edited by Dr. Shaukat Mahmood (better known as “Maxim” cartoonist) was also published by Pakistan Writers Cooperative Society. The book encompassed more



*A Foggy Day -2015 Oil on canvas - palette knife (60x75 cm)*

than half a century of my work and life and contained views and reviews of prominent art critics and writers. In February 2016, a book entitled *Relevance in Art—Fine Art Masters of 21st Century* was written by K. Hienz Playner in the German language and published in Austria. In this work, I was one of the 39 artists that were covered. I was the only one who was not from the West.

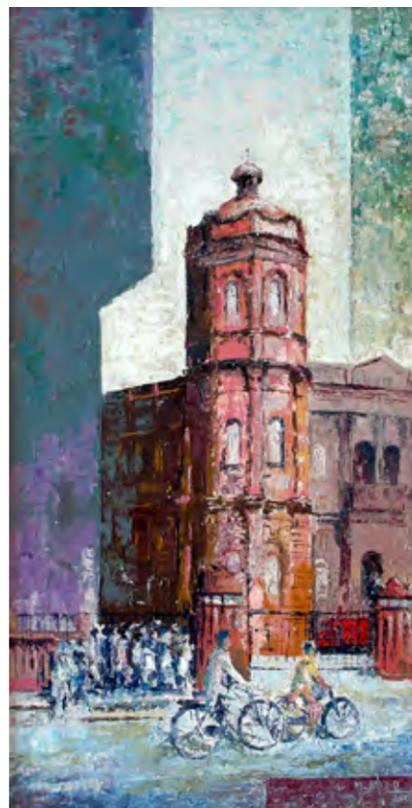
In addition to my paintings, I have done much work to promote appreciation of art and literature through organizing and curating more than 120 art exhibitions displaying young as well as senior artists, and looking after publication work of about 40 prestigious books from the platform of Coopera Art Gallery, Lahore. I have been able to introduce many young artists.

#### MY ART PHILOSOPHY

The values of traditions blended with modernism based on the current socio-cultural and economic conditions of the Society provide directions for creating an artwork subconsciously or consciously. It is the experience of such things, which compel the artist to present his emotional expressions in an art form. I consider a society in a wider term, which also includes physical environment, religion, birds, and animals and so on. Whenever anything struck to my mind, I start thinking about its presentation through the elements, which I see and try to evolve concept and composition in symbolic abstraction easily understandable even by a non-professional. I try to communicate some message, story, or spiritual values as the case may be apart from aesthetics. The decorative element is

not my priority as such work falls in another category, which may be close to craft. I try to avoid using of primary or secondary colors directly in the interest to make the painting vibrant. My focus is always on the application of essence of the colors according to the subject matter close to the life.”

“Childhood is always considered a golden period by every child as he grows up. Each moment of childhood gives pleasure even if ones family is economically unsound. Similarly, I enjoyed my childhood in an area where urban facilities were not available. There was no electricity in my village but greenery and water ponds surrounded it. It was quite stimulating for me. It was thrilling to see buffaloes swim in the ponds and graze in the fields. I still remember green shady trees, pure milk being mulched right from the udders of buffaloes, cows and goats. Youngsters joyfully played games under the watchful eyes of the elderly. My parents wanted me to focus on study. They had financial problems and had a hard time making the ends meet. On the roof of



*The Dominance of Tradition(GPO Building) - 2007 Oil on Canvas - Palette Knife (36x91 cm)*

my house I would study for the most part of night under the light of a lantern. Bugs surrounded the light and no one was there to help or guide me. Those

days are still so memorable.

There are no words for me to explain my joy, which I got from the pets, games and horse rides. An incident of

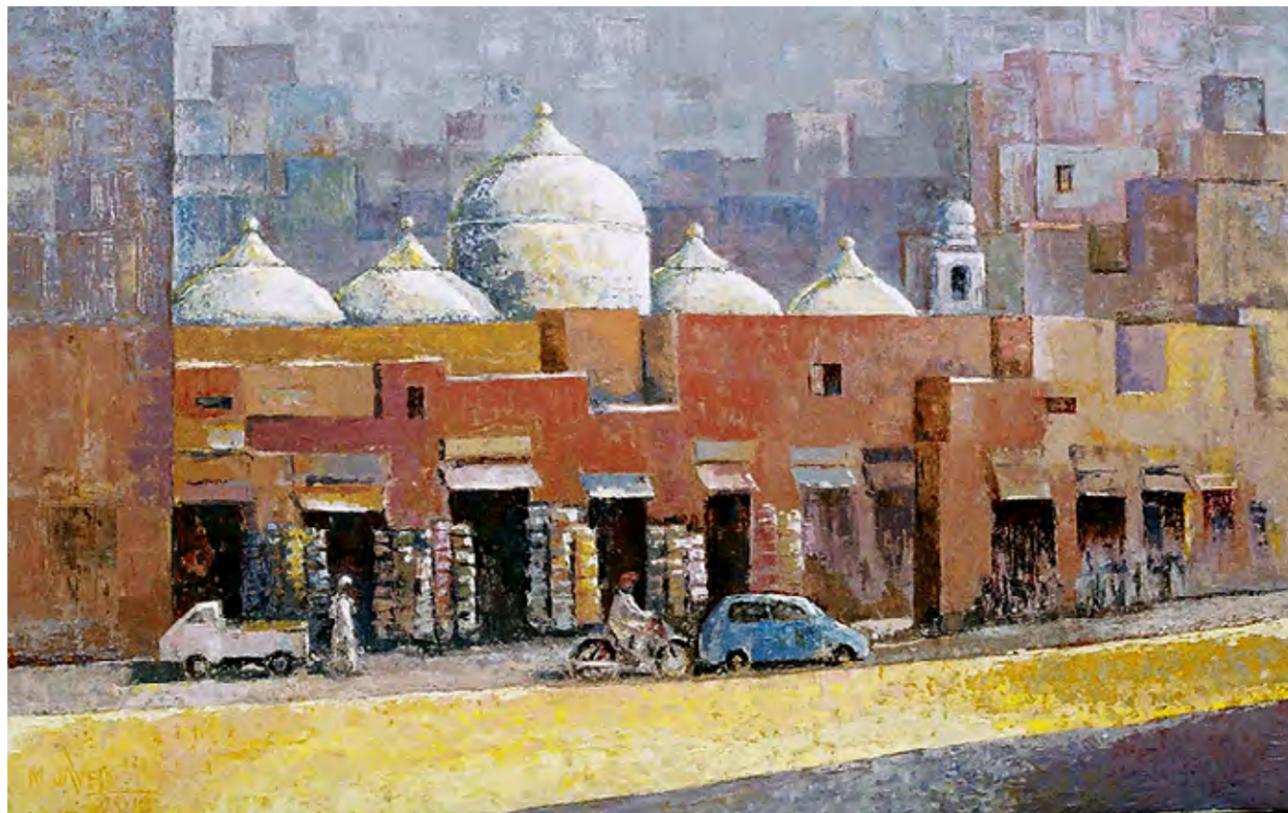
my falling into a watercourse in extreme winters is unforgettable, as I slipped from its bridge and there was no medical aid of any kind except hot milk. My



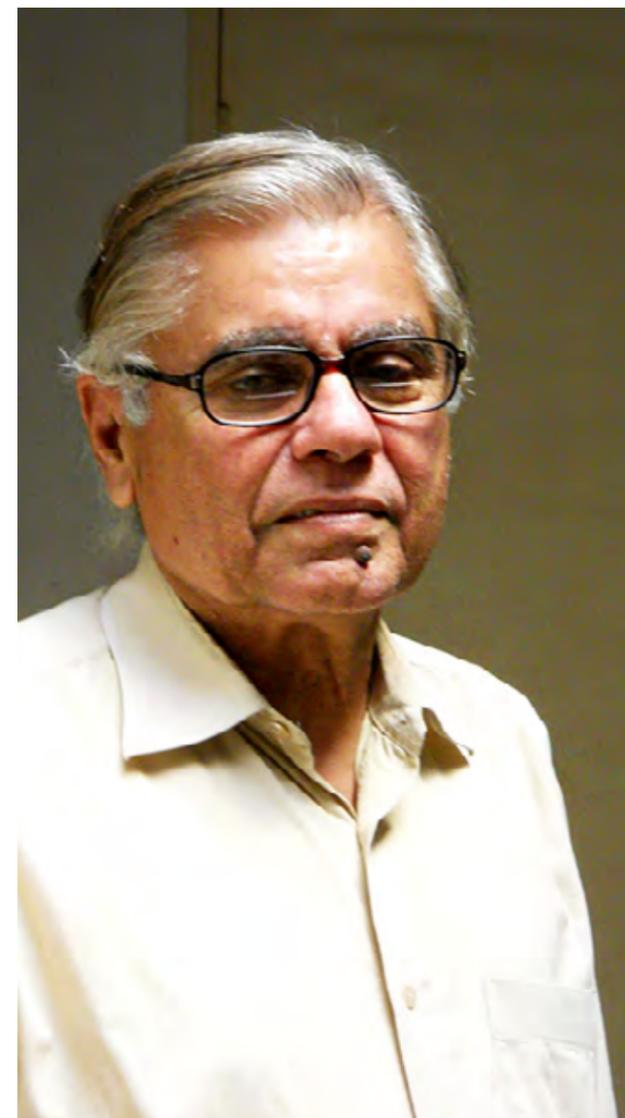
*The Destiny Oil on Canvas - Palettte Knife (60 x 75 cm)*



*Almighty's Blessings-2009 Oil on Canvas - Palette Knife (92x61 cm)*



*On the Fort Road (Begum Shahi Mosque, Lahore) 2011 Oil on Canvas - Palette Knife (92x61 cm)*



*Muhammad Javed*

trend towards drawing and painting was very visible at the beginning as I often draw different shapes and lines on the walls and floors with coal and I felt very depressed when my elders asked me to rubout.

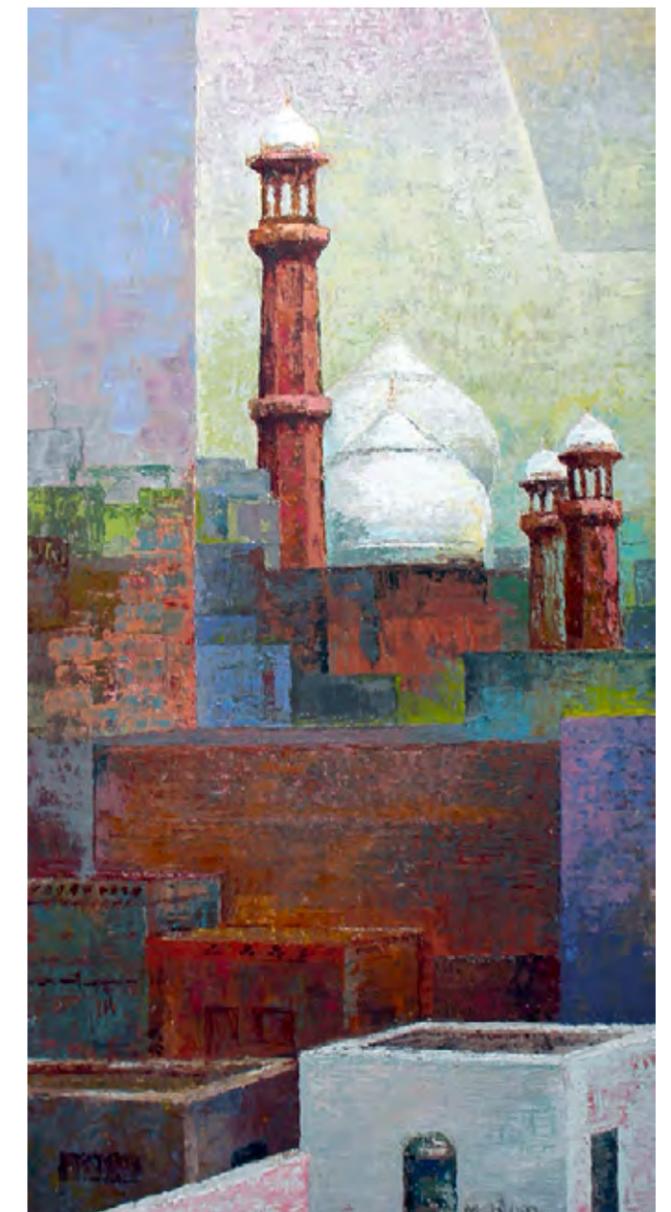
“I was born in a family involved in business of a store and agriculture at small scale. My grandfather was a gentleman and his father was a soldier in the British Indian army. We were two brothers and a sister; I was the only one who was an artist. I have two sons; one is a chartered account and the other is a banker. I kept them away from my art because it was very difficult to pull on day-to-day life in those days depending on painting. However, both have fine aesthetics and like paintings. My life partner has given me a lot of support by giving me time for work. I find my grand-kids taking more interest in art assignments and they sometimes give me very useful feedback when I work on paintings.”

He recalls when he was a kid himself. “I cannot forget to mention about my primary school teacher Khair Din who was also the headmaster. He a friend of my father’s and often paid a visit to him.”

Recalling his art classmates, he says, “Zahoor-ul-Akhlaq, Mahmood Alam and Dilawer Ali were my classmates at the art college. My contemporaries in design department were Bashir Mirza, Ahmad Khan and Mian Salahuddin. Nayar Ali Dada, Iqbal Hassan, Tanveer Ahmad, Abdul Rehman and seven other students were in the architecture department. It is a well-known fact that that most of the students of first batch have reached the highest level in their respective fields and enjoyed much respect.”

#### EARLY PHASE AS A YOUNG ARTIST

He rambled on, “During my studies, Professor Shakir Ali never gave us any idea how to sell the paintings. He always advised us to concentrate on creative work and to create something new. However, the development of the students



*The Grandeur of Badshahi Mosque-2009 Oil on Canvas - Palette Knife (53 x106 cm)*

was such that they were able to handle all type of assignments relating to designing, interior decoration, furniture and even buildings designing, teaching and so on. That is why the students of first batch were very well placed.

“I succeeded in putting up my first solo show after two years of my study in 1964. The show turned out with very good results as my bosses started giving me much respect. It is true that if you had bright ideas, you had an edge over others. I participated in the national exhibition soon after my graduation; and in group shows too. However, as time passed, my responsibilities grew and it became increasing difficult for

me to show up in each art event. But I did engage in doing paintings. My second solo show was held at the American Information Centre, Hyderabad, in 1969. It was highly appreciated. In 1963, Bashir Mirza and Jamil Naqsh were working in the National Advertising whereas I was in the United Advertisers where I worked for only a few months. All three of us met for lunch. Bashir Mirza and I lived in Paposhnagar in Karachi.”

**MY FAVORITE GENRE AND STYLE**

He continued, “My journey in art started with realistic art and then I

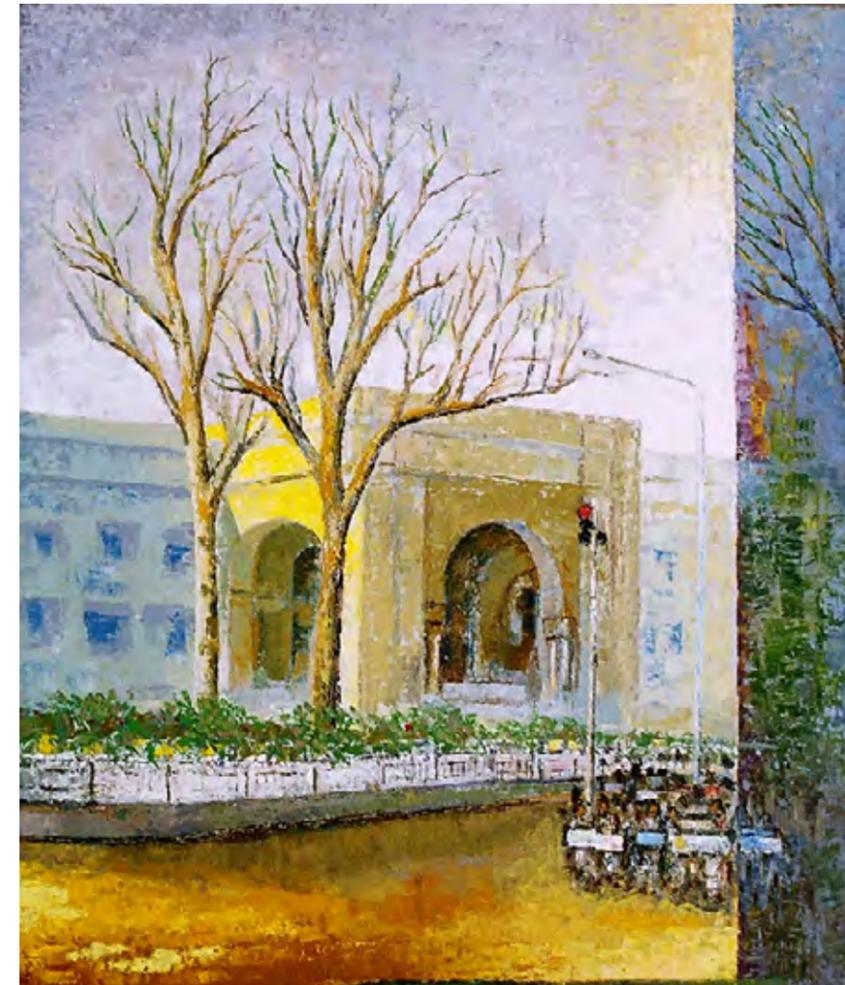
switched over to abstraction in the early years of my life under the influence of Shakir Ali. Soon I felt that my appreciation and understanding were hampered, I made tremendous experimentation to develop my own style blended with realism, impressionism, cubism and abstraction schools of art.

“I prefer to work with oil colors and palette knife. Apart from focusing on the main forms, I liked to divide the space in such a way that it would extend strength to the composition and create more interest.

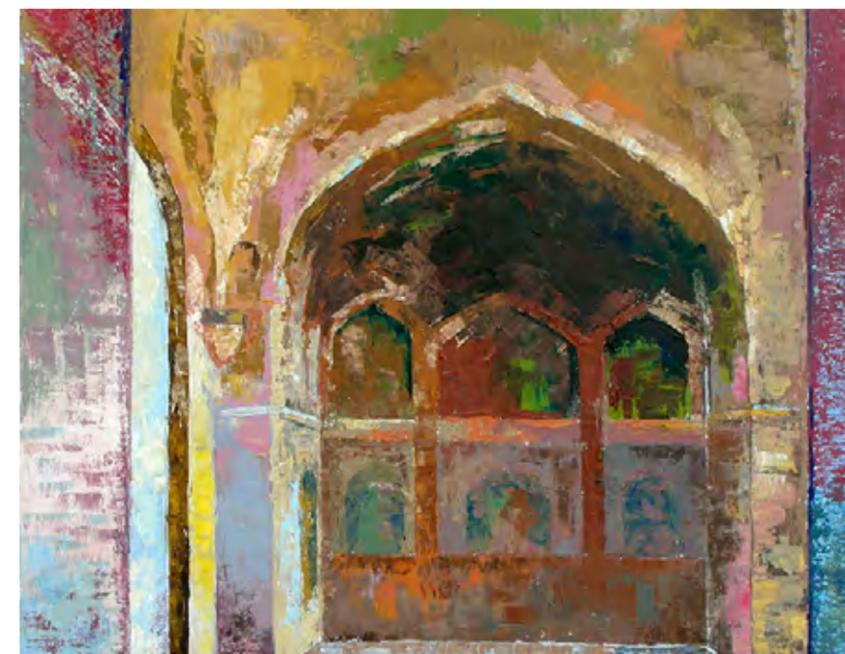
“I try to paint subjects reflecting natural beauty, poverty and pain. I avoid to paint only decorative elements.



*Through an Underpass -2015 Oil on Canvas - Palette Knife (60 x 60 cm)*



*The Red Light(Opposit Assembly Building-In front of Free Mason Hall, Lahore) - 2011 Oil on Canvas - Palette Knife (67x92 cm)*



*The Aesthetics (Lahore Fort)-2008 Oil on Canvas - Palette Knife (61 x 61 cm) Collection M. Asif Butt*

Selection of my subject consumes considerable of my time as against the today’s practice.”

Art critic Marjorie Hussain says about Muhammad Javed: “When Javed was at Karachi, he became one of the vanguards of young artists discovering new methods and ideas. He experimented with cubism, creating paintings of gradient subdued hues or in alternate moods, painted brilliant images of bright colour.”

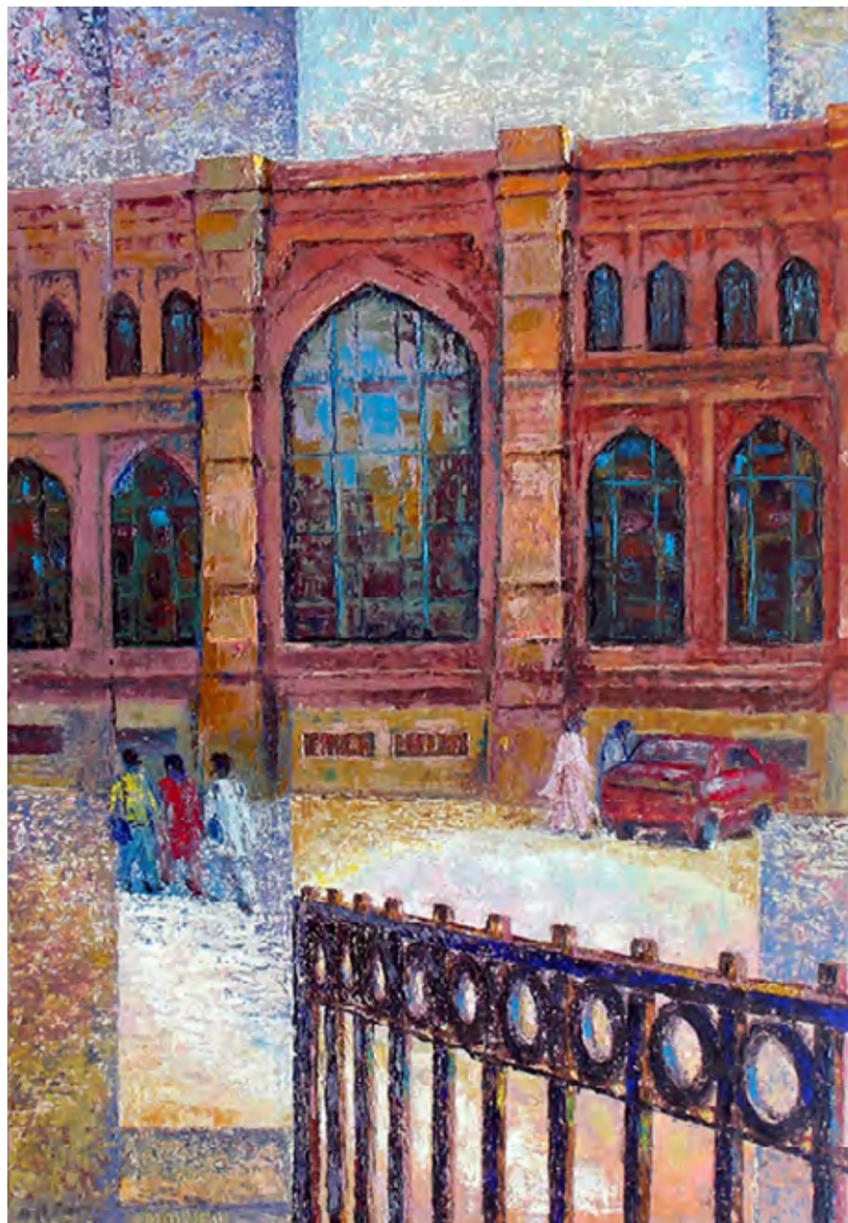
Famous art critic S. Amjad Ali has comments: “He uses purely abstract forms created with fine sense of design incorporating the alphabets of the name. The transformation of the letters has been brought about in an artistic and pleasing manner. What is important is the painterly quality of handling of colors.”

Dr. Khalid Mahmud says: “Javed has painted a number of paintings and each one represents a different subject matter and themes of different varieties whereas the approach retains his own individuality which makes him stand distinct as an artist among this community.”

Iftikhar Ahmad Adani says: “Javed’s



*On the Foot Path - 2008 Oil on Canvas - Palette Knife (53x106 cm) Collection Justic Farukh Irfan Khan*



*The Values (Lahore Museum)-2008 Oil on Canvas - Palette Knife (61x92) Collection M.Asif Butt.JPG*

work is different. He does not invest his ingenuity in producing designs, nor in evolving patterns.... He is primarily engaged in portraying visions and projecting ideas, ideas which haunt him.”

In the words of Dr. Aijaz Anwar: “Javed has an eye for dividing his picture areas into varying rectangles so as to emphasize and subdue certain elements and make the composition, the subject and his expressions strong enough.”

Remarks Saira Dar: “His ‘made on the spot’ authentic renderings are enchanting because of the feeling of a

moving firsthand experience being expressed artistically and impressive because of the formal grace inculcated by the technical expertise.”

Dr. Shaukat Mahmood opines: “His paintings provide us yet another technique. A master painter in this technique was one of my teachers Nasim Hafiz Qazi, but Javed has gone a step further in dry-brush technique.”

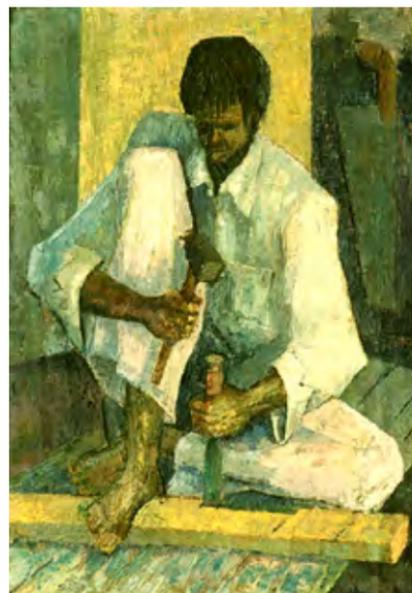
Says Abid H. Qureshi: “Javed’s paintings have beauty of semiabstract style comprising simplification and textural values, which allow the viewers to find out multiple meaning and messages.”

Muhammad Javed himself says: “My aim of art is to highlight and portray cultural and socio-economic activities of the life and capture beauty of the nature as experienced by me to contribute in the history and to provide useful information in decent visual forms.”

#### DIFFERENT PHASES OF ART LIFE

Further, he says, “Soon after completion of my studies, I did a series of large sketches with ink and reed pen, using washes for indicating dimension and shadows. After this series, I used oil paints on paper and painted figures in the sixties. In the seventies, I did lots of work on canvas presenting cultural activities such as market scenes and town fairs. In 1981-83, I painted Islamic calligraphy. Afterward, I did extensive work on canvas with palette and knife and oil colors, highlighting different subjects. In 2005, I did considerable work in charcoal during my visit to Cairo, Egypt.

“Similarly, when I got a chance to visit other countries, I tried to capture their physical and cultural environment. It is a fact that both style and perception change with the passage of time and environment, which one can always notice. Last year, I was inspired from the foggy days and traffic problems in



*The Skill-1977 Oil on Canvas - Palette Knife (61x92 cm) Collection M. Aamir Javed*



*The Poverty and Weakness. Oil on Canvas, Palette Knife (76x92cm) Collection Muhammad Aamir Javed*



*The Need - 1973 Oil on Canvas-Palette Knife (122 x 53cm)*

Lahore which compelled me to paint. Now I am working on the subject of the law and order situation in this city.”

#### TREATMENT OF THE ART WORLD

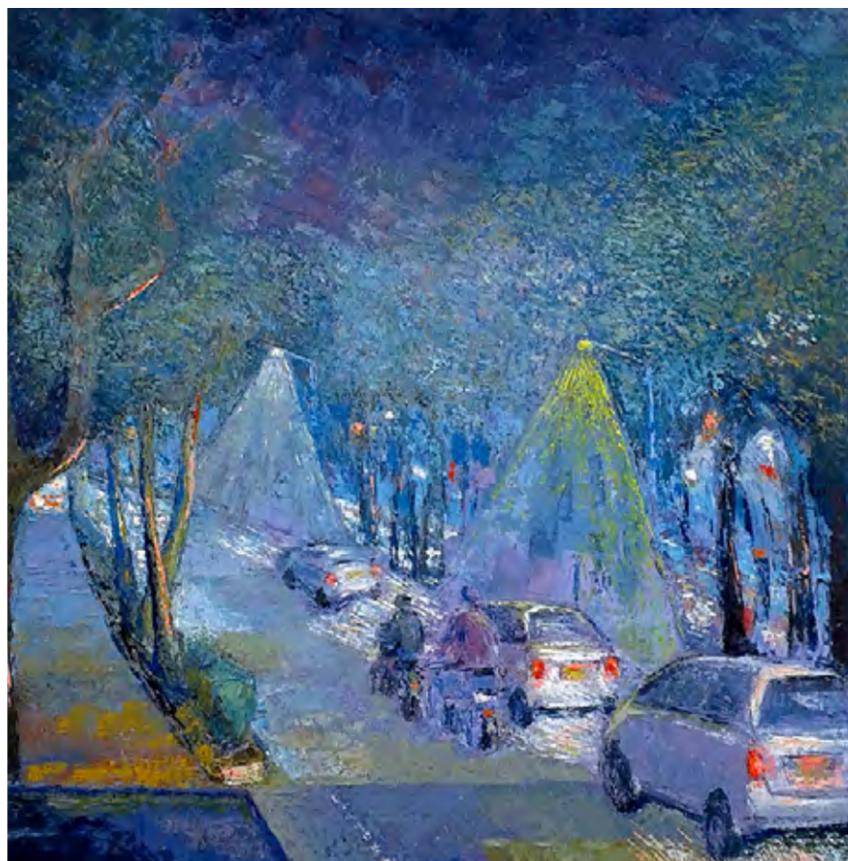
During my phase of experimentation for development of my individual style, there was a mixed reaction. Some people I had known realized that I would be

able to achieve my objective of producing something unusual and meaningful. The appreciation from the artist community was, however, minimal as usually happens with creative people – writers, poets, actors, etc. I was lucky to get appreciation from men of letters, especially from a senior civil servant I. A. Khan, known as Iftikhar Ahmad Adni—a Sufic writer. It may be inter-

esting to quote an example of receiving appreciation from a renowned artist.”

#### EMOTIONAL ACCOUNT OF ART FAIRS

Recalling time he was highly appreciated, Muhammad Javed said, “It was a happy moment when Sayyied Qavi Ahmad, Principal, Sindh Government College of Commerce offered me to sponsor an exhibition of my work which I did in a period of more than four years at Hyderabad. He was visiting me off and on with Professor Qaseem Baig Chughtai who was my friend. Both appreciated my work. They were great art lovers and motivators. They organized the exhibition very well at American Information Centre, Hyderabad, in 1969. Media at that time also encouraged me a lot. So much so that Radio Pakistan broadcast my interview. Prior to this solo show was also held at Hyderabad in 1964. It was organized by Iftikhar Ahmad Adni and inaugurated by Mumtaz Hassan, a renowned scholar and managing director of National Bank of Pakistan where Faiz Ahmad Faiz, S.M. Waseem, Commissioner of Hyderabad Division and Secretary Al-Hamra Arts Council, Hyderabad, were also present among others art fans. Later, five more solo shows were held at Karachi, Lahore and abroad. Art critics, art lovers and the media appreciated my shows, but my family asked me what I made for them. So, after a month or so, feeling of exhilaration started falling down. It was hard to explain my cheerless sentiments.



*A Misty Night - 2015 Oil on Canvas - Palette Knife (60 x 60 cm).jpg*



*The Real Power - 1975 Oil on Board - Palette Knife (120 x 52 cm) Collection Shamim Akhtar*

“A number of commercial art galleries have sprung up during the last decade but one can feel that artists have been influenced due to demand of artworks with vibrant colors and decorative elements which is reducing the creativity aspect day by day. No doubt the directions of art are rapidly changing not only in Pakistan but also throughout the globe. Most of the works being done consume less time due to shortcuts.”

#### OLD AND NEW MASTERS

Since the history of art from the pre-historic age to the twentieth century was taught to the students, the work of old masters such as Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, Rembrandt, Paul Cezanne and Pablo Picasso influenced them. I also learned a lot from their works. Likewise, the work of my teacher Professor Shakir Ali greatly influenced me. Shakir Ali did not allow us to see the works of Ustad Allah Bux and Abdul Rehman Chaghtai, perhaps due to the problems in the anatomy of the figures painted by Ustad Allah Bux and extraordinary exaggeration or stylization in the figures painted by Abdul Rehman Chaghtai. Anyways, I enjoyed the colors used by Ustad Allah Bux and continuous thin lines and wash technique of A. R. Chaghtai. However, Shakir Ali liked the work of Zain-ul-Abideen a Bengali painter, who often visited NCA. Mostly, his art reflected poverty and miserable conditions. Therefore, I too got some influence in selection of the subjects. Although Shakir Ali was not very happy with the

work of Sadequain, he was a very special artist who along with presenting the life and myths produced large quantity of work. He said to me in Karachi about two years before he passed away, “There was still too much to do but the time is running fast.... I had not painted in acres but in miles.”

#### FOREMOST AMBITION IN LIFE

Muhammad Javed has painted a Quranic verse “Am Lil Ansaan-e-Ma Tamna” (Urge of a man never ends) in which he has shown on the right side an image of a fort (the symbol of power) and on the left Taj Mahal (the symbol of death). He thinks it was enough for him that his work is receiving appreciation and he wishes to continue his efforts and contribute in the field of art.

#### ART SELLING AND BUYING

He thinks, “There was almost no room for sale of the paintings until nineties, after that art market gradually started developing but patronization remained lacking. During 2000 onward, although the emotional and literary approach of the artists affected with the establishment of private commercial galleries but, of course, artists facilitated.

“However, with cropping up the disturbances in the law and order situation in the country, the graph of sale has fallen down. Similarly, focus on the frame rather than the artwork also spoiled the situation from art point of view. I think an artist should try to satisfy himself. In this way, awareness will

take place and people will start buying creative work, which also have great aesthetic value.”

#### ARTIST STATEMENT

“I try to portray my emotional sentiments about the sensitive issues associated with social, cultural and economic conditions, physical or hidden in the life as I feel. Efforts are made to create due interest with treatment of colors, texture and strokes in layers together with space division to strengthen the composition and beautify of the painting. One can feel the characteristic of my work as symbolic abstractions and simplification of forms, which may help the art audience to understand at a glance. I do not like to indulge in superficial concepts or emotions in the interest of maintaining the reality of the life. My trend towards spiritual activities some time compels me to high light the meaningful work based on the Islamic calligraphy.”

#### MESSAGE TO ART ENTHUSIASTS

Says M. Javed to art lovers, “Art is essential for the life as it provides pleasure, satisfaction and useful information. Although its direction are changing rapidly, but it is necessary to maintain identity as art contribute and document the history especially socio-economic and cultural values of the regions.

“It is also a fact that any creative activity cannot flourish without due recognition and support, I therefore, wish that the artworks be considered it a very valuable contribution to the history and life.”—*M. Khalid Rahman*

# Master illusionist from Bengal: Mansoor Rahi

It was a big day in the life of this bright child. He was not yet four years old. As was the family custom, he was about to begin formal education this auspicious day. His teacher, parents, close relatives, neighbors and family friends, filled the courtyard of the big house in the green village at the juncture of Kalingari and Mahananda rivers.

As everybody looked on in anticipation, prayers were recited. A slate and a chalk were placed before the child. He was expected to write the first alphabet of the Bangla language in view of everyone. But he looked elsewhere. Firmly holding the white chalk in his little hand, the child went straight to the farthest corner of the courtyard and sat down. He put the chalk on the floor. Then, going round on all fours, he moved on to make a very long and round line as big as the entire floor. Those around him were caught in surprise, wondering what he was up to. Eyes wide open, waiting for him to do something unexpected, they looked on as he moved from one corner to the next and onward, scratching the white chalk on the floor, making a long line – neat and sharp and unbroken.

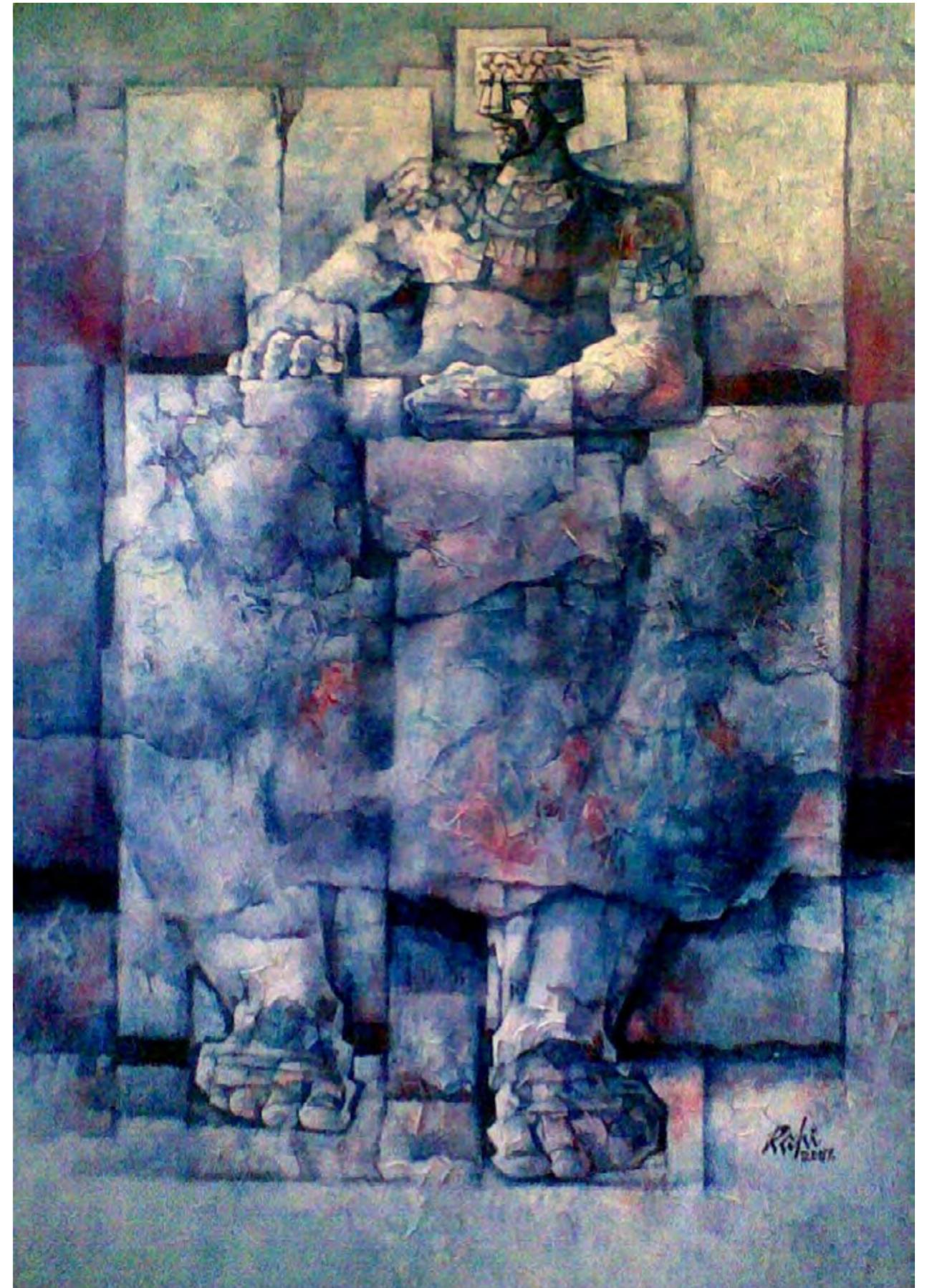
He took the piece of chalk – not the elongated round piece used now but a hard lump of calcium carbonate – and, despite the waiting crowd's urging remarks, dabbled with that white piece of soft rock, ignoring all the encouragements. His favorite uncle, Ziauddin Ahmed, who was the younger brother of his mother, and already an accomplished artist, observed something that others could not understand. He went upstairs and from the balcony, watched him with an amused expression. He could make out from there what the child was trying to do. He sort of did a running commentary on what Mansoor was doing. Mansoor was now drawing a circle in the courtyard. Then he drew

a straight line, stretching it to make an enormous figure. His uncle cried out with joy when the child completed his drawing: "Look, what a beautiful alphabet Mansoor has drawn!"

Little Mansoor had actually drawn the first Bangla horf (alphabet) thirty feet by twelve feet. The crowd echoed with a resounding applause as they real-

ized what a feat he had done. And that was just the beginning.

Mansoor loved and idolized Ziauddin whose paintings hung on the walls of the big house. He viewed them with fascination, engrossed in the lines and colors that made the paintings come alive. At that time, no one could expect that he actually aspired to be like his





uncle one day.

He played with slates and chalks. He drew pictures on one slate after another and hanged them one by one at the side of his uncle's paintings. As the number of his pictures grew, more slates appeared on the wall. It may have been the first black-and-white art-on-slate gallery that a young artist might have set.

The child is now known as 'Mansoor Rahi' and his paintings in cubism and rayonism styles are seen with much respect by connoisseurs in all art centers the world over.

Mansoor was born in 1939 in the watery green village of Maldah in West Bengal. In the wake of Partition of British India in 1947, his father, Muhammad Younus, migrated to East Pakistan's sleepy town of Rajshahi where he got his schooling.

Mansoor fell in love with the paintings of his art teacher, Suresh Babu, a soft-spoken artist whose paintings had been hanged high on the walls. Mansoor would keep looking at those paintings. He paid little attention to what was happening in the class, and was often reprimanded for his "carelessness" and "absent-mindedness".

He might have been thinking: "Why can't I hang my slate paintings beside those paintings?" One day, he came to school much before the bell rang. He went straight to the empty classroom and made a big drawing on the blackboard. When the class began, they saw the drawing but no one could guess that he had drawn it. The teacher too wondered as he wiped the blackboard clean. He must have thought that the cleaning lady did not clean the board that day.

The next day, again, the teacher saw a fresh drawing on the blackboard. He asked who had done that. The class kept mum. In a huff, the teacher went to the headmaster's office and complained. The cleaning woman was called. She explained that she had cleaned all the desks and blackboards as usual. She did not know who wrote on the blackboard.

Someone must have done the mischief before the school began. The class-teacher took the responsibility of catching the culprit, and Mansoor was caught making a drawing on the blackboard when no one was there. He was



called in office of the headmaster where he got a big lecture on how to behave properly in the class. At the end of the lecture, the headmaster asked him if he understood what he was told, and he meekly admitted that he could not listen to the lecture because he was totally absorbed in viewing all the paintings of Suresh Babu which were hanging on the walls, and he had never seen before.

Everyone respected Mansoor's father so it was decided that instead of reprimanding the little mischief-maker, it would be



better to go to his father and request him to control the little imp. The drawing teacher, Suresh Babu, a diminutive old man but an impressive artist from Calcutta, took this responsibility upon himself. He went to Younus Babu (Mansoor's father) and explained the episode that had upset the entire school staff. The drawing teacher said, "Take good care of your son and let someone like the great artist Zainul Abedin, for one day Mansoor is going to become a great artist too."

Craze for art made young Mansoor draw on any surface that he found convenient, and with anything, chalk, coal, pencil.

When he was a ninth class student at a private school, he went to the small town of Bogra in northern Bengal to spend his vacations with his sister's family who lived there. She took care of her dearly beloved little brother. Her husband was a doctor, and a stickler for cleanliness. Theirs was a very spacious house with natural green all around.

The house was surrounded by a huge boundary wall that was all done in whitest white. A look at that and his little heart jumped with joy. So much of white was there to be

filled with charcoal black and grey! Without having a second thought, he took a big piece of coal and began to draw a huge mural, a landscape that no other artist may have done. He completely filled the outer wall. Passersby saw his gigantic drawing and stopped to look on. It took him almost all day to cover the wall, and by the time he had done the wall, a great crowd had gathered. It was meal time and a servant came to call him in.

Evening time and his brother-in-law came together. The



doctor was shocked to see the graffiti all over the white wall that he had ordered painted recently. "Who did this? Who has blackened the wall?" He shouted. "Mansoor did it; who else?" replied his sister, "He is the only artist around."

Recalling this story, Rahi laughed and said, "There was a large crowd outside, appreciating my art and inside there was my brother-in-law steaming and wondering how to get the wall cleaned. The wall was washed away in heavy monsoon showers the same night."

His sister was not too happy with this. "At least, we could have taken photos of the composition that everyone had praised so much," she muttered.

Drawing teacher Suresh Babu's prophecy came true when, at the age of 14, Mansoor won the first prize in a painting competition. He studied at the Rajshahi Collegiate School where he entered two 2x3-ft paintings, one showed cows going homeward at the end of the day, and the other was that of two boatmen sailing the calm waters against the setting sun.

Mansoor found his walking feet in East Bengal which

became East Pakistan in 1947, and Bangladesh in 1971. He experimented with various art forms. In large cities, in small towns and villages where you find nature so close, he would roam with his sketchbook. He saved images done in pencil, later to be transferred on canvas or board.

The land of many rivers, Bengal is a fertile land. Music and art have been a way of life since the beginning of civilization. Its history is replete with artistic endeavor. In its golden era, the Paal paintings (Puthichitra) of the eleventh century reflected an aesthetic finesse which is the trademark of Bengali art. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Abanindranath Tagore (1871-1951), the principal artist and creator of 'Indian Society of Oriental Art', founded the influential Bengal school, a new style that was a combination of the Mughal miniature art and Oriental styles.

Calcutta was the center of art in the entire South Asian subcontinent. Dhaka rose as the center of Muslim Bengal's cultural manifestations after 1947. Eminent artists Zainul Abedin, Kamrul Hassan, Shafiuddin and Anwarul Haq migrated to Dhaka from Calcutta and founded an art school. They were followed by Muhammad Kibria, Syed Shafiqul Hossain and Khaja Shafique in 1950. Thus the Institute of Fine Arts in Dhaka was established in 1948 and the academic practice of the fine arts began with this institute.

It was in 1962 that Mansoor Ahmed Rahi graduated in Fine Arts in first division from the Government College of Arts and Craft in Dhaka. A top-ranking student and a favorite of his teachers, he was lucky to have in his younger days the patronage and tutelage of such greats as Zainul Abedin, Ghulam Kibria and Aminul Islam. He remembers them fondly.

Bengal, where he spent his early years, had great natural magnificence to hold Mansoor's fascination. Impressionable as he has always been by nature, he still recalls great stories from that land of the golden fiber, jute, and loves to tell them to interested listeners. He is a great art teacher and also an extraordinary storyteller.



# This is how Rahi describes his technical points

**A**CADEMIC Period (1957-1961). It was purely the revaluation of the mystery of God, the discovery of Nature, the Realism.

Cubical Fractionism — Analytical Period (1970). Attitude for searching three-dimensional quality in form which leads to fractional appearance of form. The analytic period starts with the human forms.

Organical Mysticism (1975). The formality and stiffness of analytic forms bonded by bold lines created a hard look in paintings. So Rahi endeavoured to break the stiffness and enter into soft and delicate world of Organical Mysticism, which creates a dreamy effect and fantasy in painting. The delicate blending value — light and integrated elastic lines — leads to Organical Mysticism.

Cubo-Rayonistic Formalism (1982). This period of Masoor Rahi is a golden achievement in his art life, and has reached its climax of fame. In this genre that he created, his involvement of light and shade values was an “open violence of Picasso’s Cubical Discipline”. This period in Rahi’s art life can be called an offshoot of Cubism, when he explored many new elements, experimented with delicate synthesis of Capital Forms and Void Area. His sensitive integration in the entire painting to establish a singular unity with high-grade transformation of leading forms crowned Rahi with his golden achievement.

Neo-Cubo Precisionism (2000). It is when Rahi wanted to come back to Realism, entering into the period of Neo-Cubo Precisionism with a mixture of Cubical Tension in a Psychedelic Illusion. The Kings and Queens Series is an evocative message of this period.

Resurrect Rock Series (started in 2002 and still continues). Rahi was born with the love of mountain and

huge rock forms. He travelled extensively to heavenly highlands of northern Pakistan, where he was deeply inspired by fantastic rock forms which enhanced in his human figures with majestic Cubical Track. Rahi calls this

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**Mansoor Rahi is one of the leading abstractionists. He is known for his Cubical Expressionism. With images and subjects that embody a symphony in gorgeous colors and elegant hues in geometric forms, his inimitable artistic approach is rooted in his awesome observation of Nature and study of natural forms as they get created and transform under various light conditions, as perceived by the artist’s eye.**

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period Resurrect Rock. In this series, Rahi made numerous drawings in pen and graphite with illusion and fantasy.

Thematical Period (1969). Rahi is a philanthropist. He believe in humanism. He produced innumerable paint-

ings and murals in countless series — all based on human sentiment and themes. In this period some of the famous series are: World Food Crisis, Bengal Cyclone, Tornado, Protestation of Dead Soldiers, Matador, The Leader, Abduction and Arrow of Peace, and Black Terror (latest 2014) as well as Black Dream.

A large number of his marvellous paintings line up the walls in Mansoor Rahi Art Gallery. He has produced a huge number of masterpieces which are proudly displayed around the world in art galleries and palaces, homes and offices. His disciples and followers collect every scrap upon which he makes a mark. King and Queen Series appear in evocative manner during this period.

Artists use seven elements of art as the basic components of art-marking: Line, Shape, Form, Value, Space, Colour and Texture. The principles of art generally deal with the way the elements of art are composed within a work of art. So, the principles of art deal with composition. Opinions vary on what the principles really are. It is thought that seven elements of art along with eight concrete principles of art and art fundamentals — Balance, Proportion, Unity, Harmony, Variety, Emphasis, Rhythm, and Movement — are used a piece of art is created. Artworks are also analyzed according to the use of the elements in a work of art. When an artwork is analyzed in this manner, it is considered a Formalist approach to art criticism.

The master artist Rahi has created an innovative technical analysis. He has introduced a total of eleven elements of art:

Iconoclastic: Independent proceed of contour impression without support of any other element.

Design Value: Declaration in specific status of track.



Balance in Creative Proportion and Unity: Maintenance of creative and specific track.

Balance in Axis: Should not be falling or tilting in any odd side.

Continuity of Track Spontaneity: Control in specific school of thought.

Control of Synthesis: Balance in defining specific area and composition.

Sustentation of Declared Track & Medium: Medium used must be liberal in its nature and maintain a specific school of thought.

Control of Perspective Devise: Perspective devise of near, far, capital and interval area must be controlled.

Maintenance of Integration in Forms, Supporting Areas, Used Value, Surface Texture or Impression.

Pure Drawing is a strong evidence of Artist’s crafty calibre in study and research of Nature and Realism.

Drawing Is Itself an Open Signature of the Artist.

Mansoor Rahi’s awareness of humanitarian global subjects such as anti-nuclear issues and quest for peace reveal the inspiration behind his work. For him, the idea comes first, followed by colour and composition. He has been teaching and practising art for many decades. Has had a large number of solo and group shows and won several prizes including the Shakir Ali Award (1987), at the First International Biennale Show. He has also won the President’s Award for Pride of Performance. The awards that he has received in recognition of his services are:

- First prize: Government College of Art & Craft, Dhaka - 1961

- First prize: All Pakistan National Exhibition (PNCA) - 1969

- First Prize: Asian Art Expo sponsored by ILO - 1974

- First prize: All Pakistan National Exhibitions (PNCA) - 1981

- Shakir Ali Award: First prize in International Biennale Show (PNCA) - 1987

- President’s Pride of Performance Award - 2008

Other national social contributions apart from this are:

He organized an Art School and Art Classes in Karachi as well as Peshawar, Abbottabad and Islamabad.

He was given Birth Artist Generation of Modern Vision in Pakistan.

He established the concept of understanding of modern art in wider range through television programmes for six years regularly on PTV.

He introduced Pakistani painters abroad by taking group exhibitions and slide shows in Great Britain (London), France (Paris), Germany (Bonne, Bad Godesberg, Dusseldorf and Cologne), Turkey (Istanbul), India (Mumbai), Hong Kong, Japan (Tokyo) and United States (New York).

He created prestigious Impression of Pakistani Painters in abroad by reading papers in seminars, talking to critical press conference and international television channels.

## HIS GIFTS TO THE WORLD

Mansoor Rahi has given seven outstanding periods, or schools, to his art life during the last 55 years, comprising a precise period of Post-Cubical School, and his exquisite research in drawing comprises (1) Iconoclastic, (2) Volume, and (3) Synergy. All of this can be seen at his elegant art studio and museum in Islamabad where one can observe his lifetime work, both paintings and drawings, in evolutionary phases and appreciate them. This is certainly his great gift to the art world. He is a valued speaker on new thoughts and theories in art, and art criticism. His educational videos have been recorded and broadcast by Pakistan largest television network PTV. Noted litterateur and broadcaster, Mustansir Husain Tarar, has mentioned him with pride in his travelogues. World media too have given good coverage to his art and exhibitions.

# The legacy of art continues

By M Saeed Kureishi

**M**INIATURE paintings, with their ancient origin, bear focal significance in the history of regional art in the south Asian subcontinent. This discipline evolved from the early rock paintings, the petroglyphs found in such locations as Bhimbetka and Daraki-Chattanrock shelters in central India, nearly 30,000 years ago. Later, the Buddhist writings indicated the use of paintings by military elites and the noble class.

However, the paintings of the Ajanta caves (200 BC to 500 AD) in Maharashtra are considered most noteworthy. This period may have had manuscripts and smaller paintings. However, the earliest surviving examples were found during the middle ages (500 AD to 1500 AD). There was a blend of Persian miniature and the ancient Indian traditions that emerged as Mughal paintings which, after the 17th century, was adopted by most of the royal courts of the region, evolving newer local styles. Though during the 19th century British raj, there were traces of modern paintings; however, miniature art kept reverting to its traditional roots.

It was at the National College of Arts in Lahore that Haji Muhammad Sharif, once a miniature painter at the court of Maharaja of Patiala, gave a firm foundation to the teaching of the fading art of miniature painting. His successor was Sheikh Shujauallah, who continued the miniature tradition. When he passed away, he left behind his devoted pupil Bashir Ahmad to carry the esteemed legacy forward. Today, Ahmad is the most prized representative of the art of miniature across the globe with numerous acclamations by elite international art authorities.

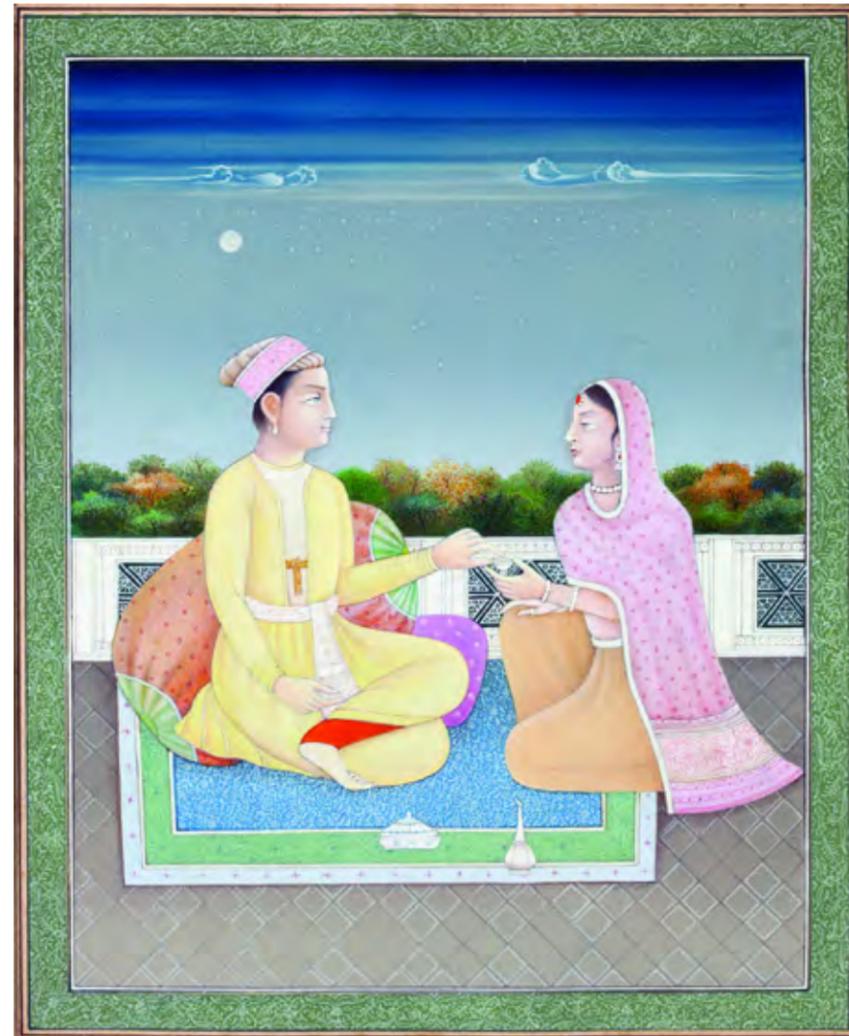
According to Ahmad, "Miniature painting, as we know it today, provides an artistic variety that hails from the early civilization to the present day, and has evolved over the years to become a

combination of several cultures and traditions."

He elaborates, "The genre of miniature painting took a major turn during the mid-sixteenth century when the regal Mughals urged their court painters to shift their imaginative acumen into high gear, and resort to a more baroque form of illustration. This may have been because of the trending global art which was moving towards fantasy and realism. The necessary change of expression gave miniature

painting its much needed rejuvenation which resulted in revolutionary concepts (as we have seen in the contemporary works of one of my illustrious student, Shazia Sikander), improved compositions, better modeling and a subtle addition of perspective."

With nearly four decades of extensive painting behind him, Ahmed has discovered countless variations of miniature painting by pushing the discipline's customary boundaries. However, he always remained with-



*Couple in Love Gouache on wasli 10.5 x 8.5 inches*

It was at the National College of Arts in Lahore that Haji Muhammad Sharif, once a miniature painter at the court of Maharaja of Patiala, gave a firm foundation to the teaching of the fading art of miniature painting. His successor was Sheikh Shujauallah, who continued the miniature tradition. When he passed away, he left behind his devoted pupil Bashir Ahmad to carry the esteemed legacy forward. Today, Ahmad is the most prized representative of the art of miniature across the globe with numerous acclamations by elite international art authorities.



*Freedom Acrylic on canvas 48 x 34 inches*

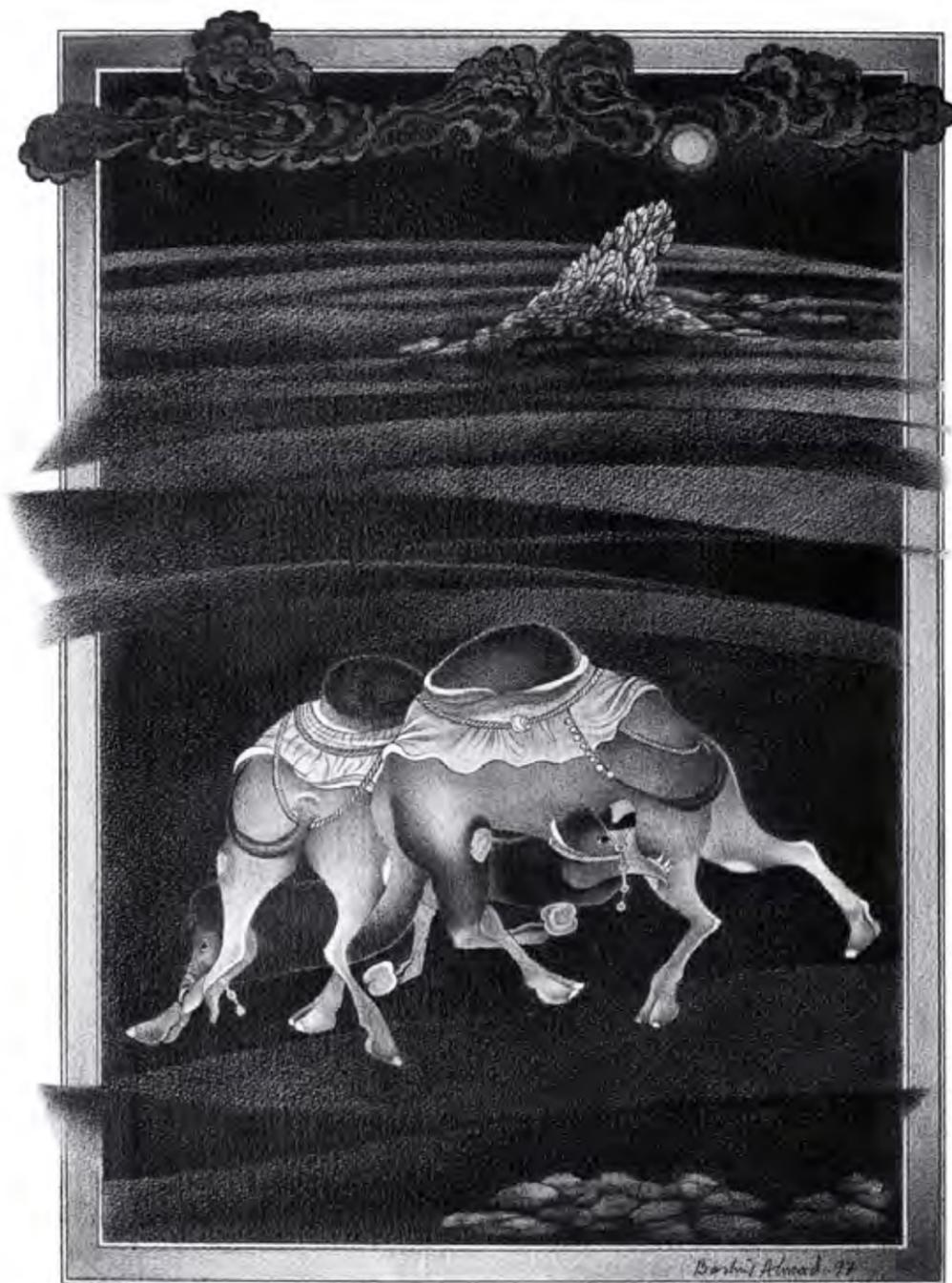
in the traditional spirit of miniature painting and its essential rituals, which he perpetually kept passing on to his students during his tenure at Lahore's National College of Arts. Notwithstanding the strict discipline that Ahmed maintained during college tutorials, he ensured that the students also understand the significance of emancipation, innovation and improvisation in the field

of miniature painting.

Bashir Ahmad's exhibition 'The Legacy Continues' at Clifton Art Gallery in Karachi (22 Sep-2 Oct 2016), comprising of four distinct genres — Miniature Painting, Acrylic Painting, Graphite Drawing and Landscape Painting, was a culmination of many years of persistent work. Struggling through the trying vicissitudes of life, weathering occasional acrimony and

criticism, Ahmed continued to move ahead unflinchingly, shouldering the responsibility entrusted to him by Haji Muhammad Sharif and Sheikh Shujauallah.

During the 80s, while working with various textural experiments on canvas, he discovered that acrylic paints have a certain glazing quality which with their quick drying ability, facilitated the layering process. Exploding



*Camel Fight Graphite on paper 22 x 30 inches*

the format of Akbarnama, for instance, with traditional characters and elements, utilizing tantalizing hues and ‘macro’ pardakht strokes, gave the canvases a blazing impact. Thereafter, students and artists started to explore further possibilities, and soon enough, it became a fervent trend across the world of traditional art.

Drawing is where it all begins, and Ahmed never missed a day when it came to flexing his imagination through

graphite. The level of maturity and finesse is evident from the drawings which Ahmed has produced over many years. The meticulous rendering in a medium that is so fragile, and to build it up in layers to achieve the delicate tones, is an arduous task. However, backed by the undeterred passion, Ahmed has lived up to the undertaking he gave to his guru, Sheikh Shujauallah, and has taken the legacy forward.

More recently, while travelling across

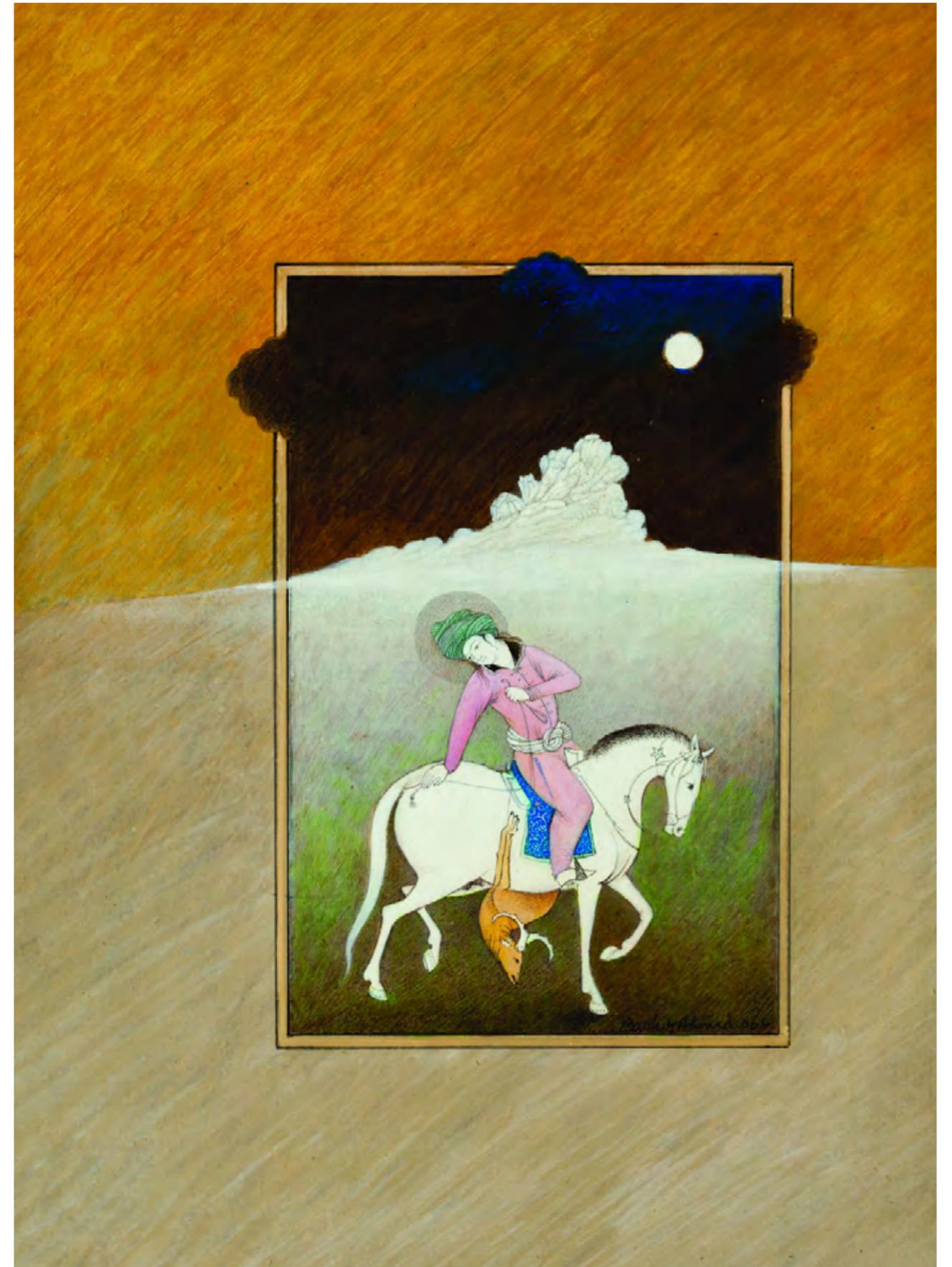
country, Ahmed was inspired by the unblemished and natural landscapes of the hinterland, particularly the outback and rural habitats. He chose to document these in mixed media, in a manner that would bring out the intrinsic soul of the view. An offshoot of the acrylic technique, Ahmed has selectively simplified the landscapes by utilizing only the essential elements. The major ingredients of these landscapes remain to be the composition and color. Granting a certain rhythm



*Kangra Figure Gouache on wasli 8 x 4.75 inches*



*Persian Prince Mixed media on canvas 26 x 34 inches*

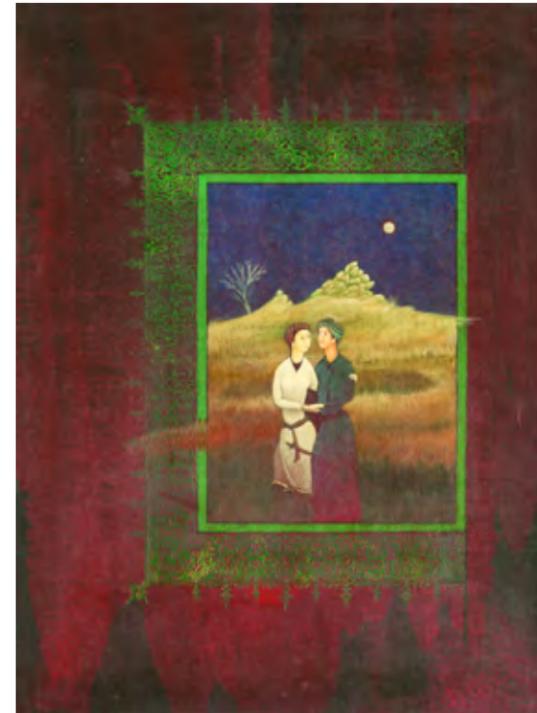


*Hunter Acrylic on board 10 x 14 inches*

“.....mindset endured in Pakistan, until Bashir Ahmad evolved a contemporary genre of miniature painting using traditional techniques. Ahmad’s eight years of Mughal Period style apprenticeship under the tutelage of two hereditary court painters came to fruition in 1983, when he created the first curriculum and syllabus for a degree program in miniature painting at the National College of Arts in Lahore, Pakistan. It is the only program of its kind anywhere, India included.” —Extract from Professor Marcella Sirhandi’s work: *Contemporary Miniature Painting in Pakistan: Bashir Ahmad and his Legacy*



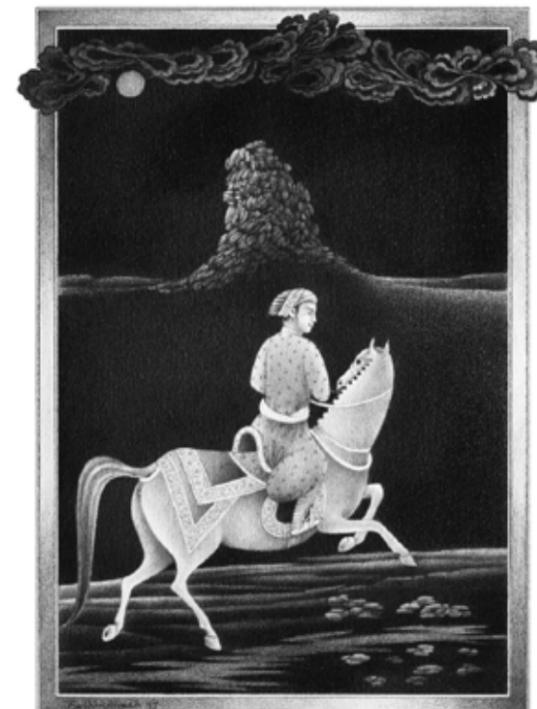
Zeb-un-nisa Gouache on wasli 9 x 12.5 inches.jpg



Friends Mixed media on canvas 24 x 32 inches



Young Akbar Gouache on wasli 5 x 7 inches



Polo Player I Graphite on paper 22 x 30 inches



Polo Player II Graphite on paper 22 x 30 inches

to the occurrence of colored clusters creating a harmony, stands testament to Ahmed’s seasoned visual judgment.

Ahmed has exhibited extensively in the country and abroad, and is recognized worldwide for his exceptional command

over traditional techniques of miniature painting. In 1983, he constituted the Bachelor’s Degree Program for Miniature Painting at Lahore NCA by creating the first ever curriculum in the world which, to date, continues to produce good artists.

Having started from scratch, through this easy-to-comprehend syllabus, the graduates demonstrate rich genres of the miniature regime that brim with diverse subjects and styles which have been acclaimed worldwide.

# Kappari Kishan aspires to achieve inner peace through his art

**L**ike Buddha, Kappari Kishan aspires to achieve inner peace and harmony but through his paintings. Buddha's meditating face attracts the viewers. It is the images of Buddha which are at the core of Kishan's work as they achieve inner peace and harmony through his paintings. Some of the major themes and aspects of Buddha's life that Kishan enumerates through his paintings are Dhyani Buddha and Maha Parinirvana. The association of Buddhism with the spirit of nature, flora and fauna find prominent place in his works. From the deep and mysterious Telugu-speaking land in the heart of India comes this wonderful young artist, Kappari Kishan. Born of a hard-working laboring couple—Kappari Achaiah and Kappari Bamma, Kishan was destined to become an expert artist. He got interested in art and painting since he was a class-five student and drew his first Amoeba. At this young age, he began to dabble in art and hence became a good artist. He would paint on canvas as well as other surfaces. In 1993, he joined Jawahar Bal Bhavan as a junior art instructor and worked with Thota Vaikuntam who creative seductive, sensuous and voluptuous dark-complexioned Telangana women draped in their colorful sarees, and with their omnipresent vermilion beauty spots (bindis).

“I thought I had to do something different. So I focused on composition that attracted my attention most. While teaching in my class room I observed girls' mood and postures, and drew them in different compositions.

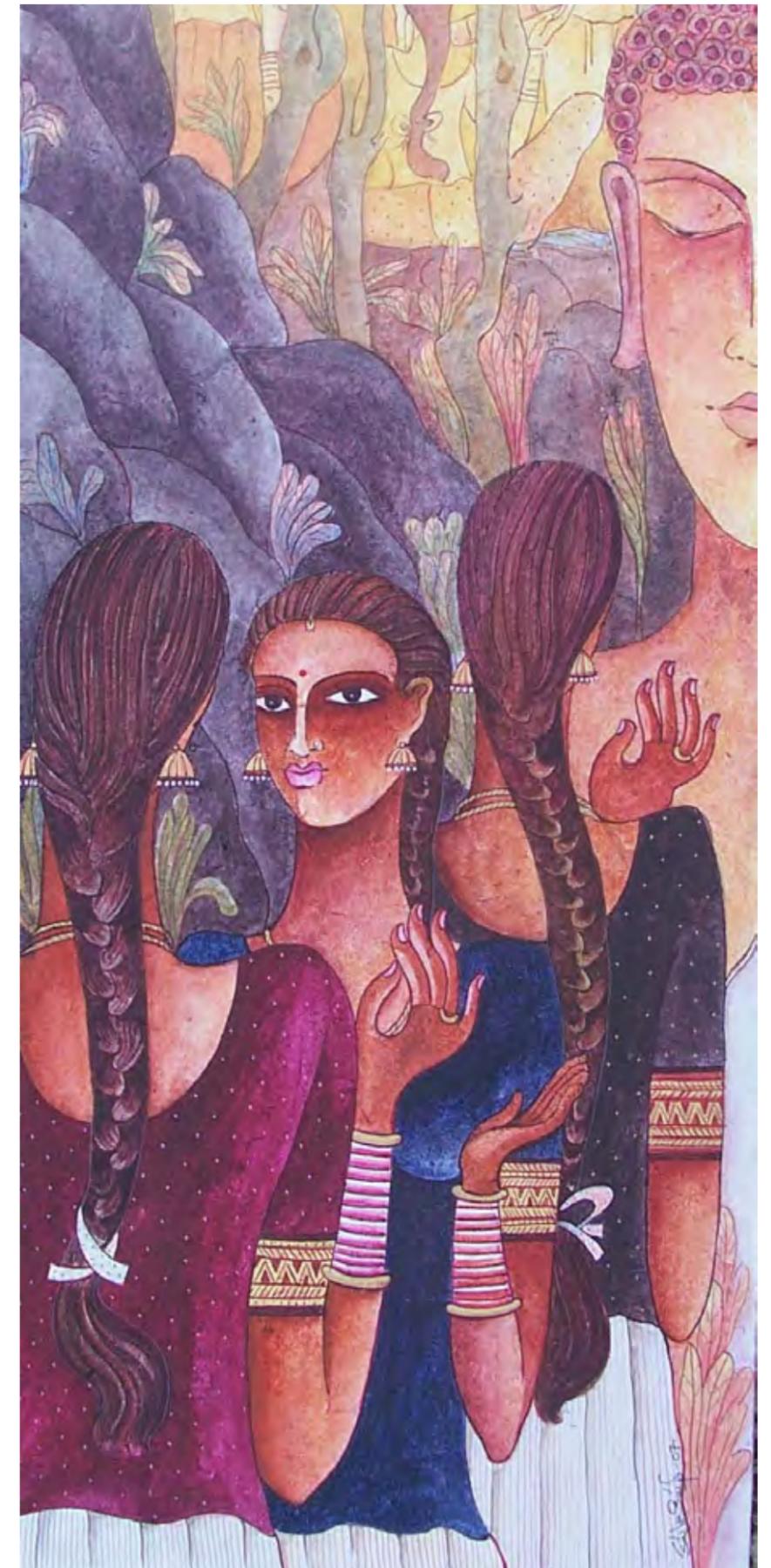
“In 1989, I passed a certificate course in drawing issued by the government of



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“For IRIS ART MAGAZINE readers, I want to explain that it is my firm desire to establish my own art gallery and name it after my mother, Kappari Bamma. I would ask that governments should take care of artists as they are history makers. Artist welfare is very important and every country should take care of its artists. Artist should also work genuinely for social service through art.

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Self portrait

## SPIRITUAL LEANINGS

Kappari Kishan introduces a marked degree of novelty in the contemporary representation of images focusing on Telangana. The main protagonists however, remain the same—women and/or girls. He also tries to transcend regional concerns in a way when he incorporates images of the Buddha in his works. The layout of the paintings often show large human forms in the foreground, while the background serves as a backdrop where the storyboard is elaborated to be read against and in relation to the images in the fore.

‘Batukamma’ is one of the works in which Kishan portrays a very important festive ritual of Telangana. Women make floral arrangements and place

them in the centre on the ground in order to sing and dance by going around it. Usually the spectators face the back of the women engrossed in their activity facing the Batukamma. Interestingly, in most of Kishan’s working women are seen with their backs towards the viewers. This makes them rather susceptible to the gaze of the artist/viewer. He has also painted frontal view of women. A case in point is the work titled ‘Snehitulu’ where in Kishan tries to depict a conversation between friends. Their attire and the pastoral lifestyle shown in the background provide the rural context to the work.

Image of the Buddha appears in the work of Kishan not by chance but by

choice as he aspires for inner peace and harmony. Dhyani Buddha and Maha Parinirvana are some of the themes and aspects of Buddha’s life that the artist incorporates at times in his paintings. The association of Buddhism with the nature spirits, flora and the fauna make their way in the artist’s works leading him in a spiritual quest.

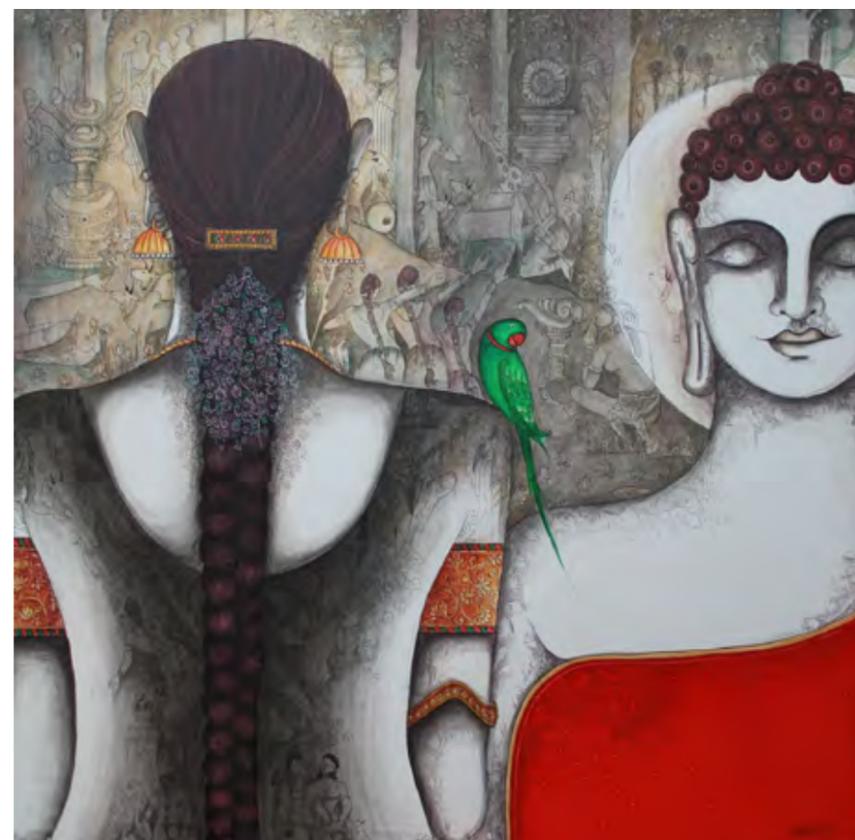
His experiments with different paint media are diverse. He also paints on wooden structures. Multiple faces of wood cuboids assume new vitality due to the paintings and in turn the paintings gains different vantage points on the 3D surface. Thereby the viewers are motivated to look on at his works.—**Rohini Iyengar**







“I thought I had to do something different. So I focused on composition that attracted my attention most. While teaching in my class room I observed girls’ mood and postures, and drew them in different compositions.”



Andhra Pradesh. Later, I finished my Bachelor of Fine Arts in Painting, and Master of Fine Arts in Modern Art from the Karnataka University in Mysore. My teacher was Shivanand, former curator of National Modern Art Gallery in Bengaluru, and the founder and Principal of Bodhi College of Fine Arts.

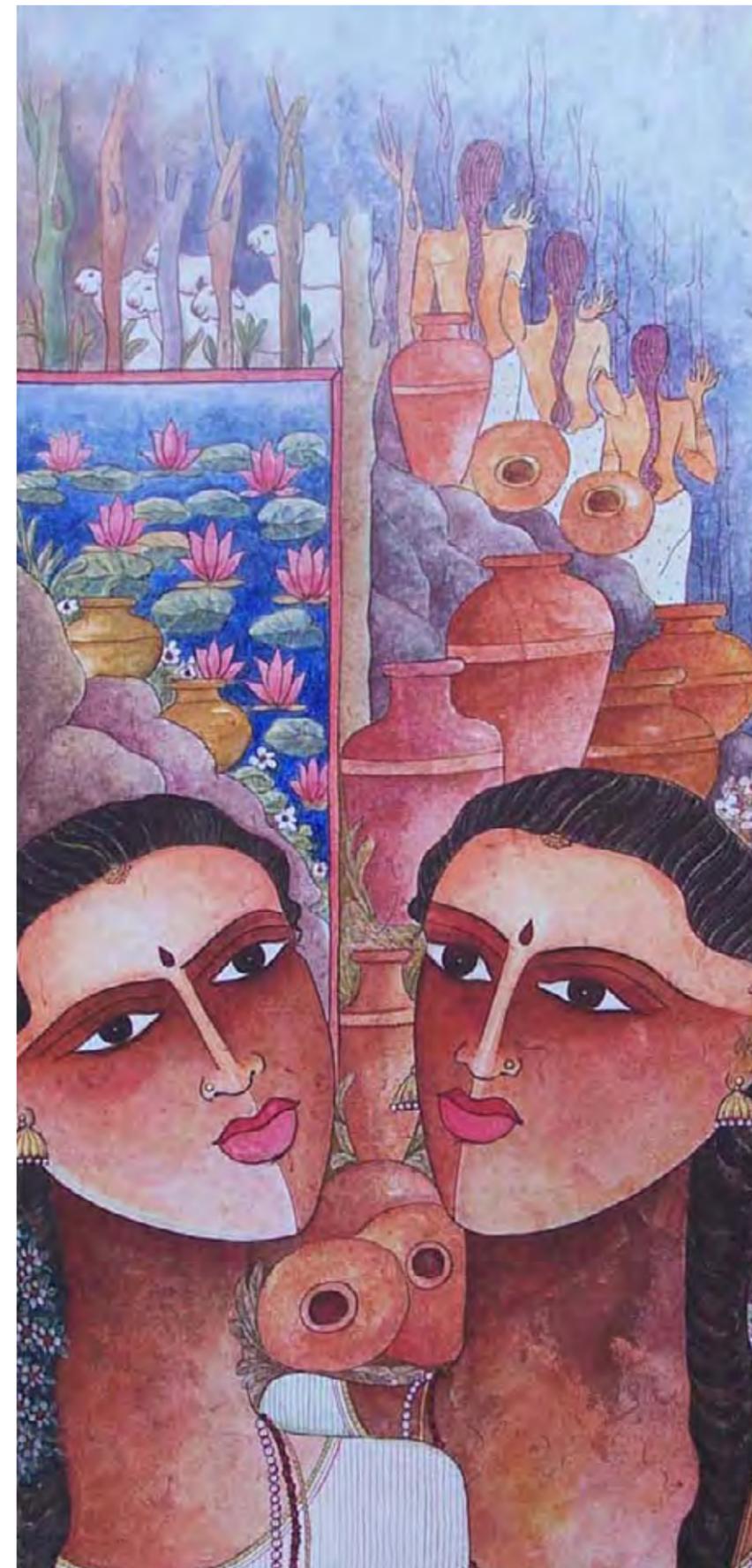
I would observe around the place where lived and focus on the local colorful festivals and rustic characters. I would roam around in the streets and observe the local women. My paintings showed girls and women in different moods and compositions, especially their traditional hairstyles.”

Kappari Kishan is so fond of reading the philosophy of Buddha and visiting Buddhist holy and historical places. He says, “I was much inspired by the Nagarjuna Sagar Buddha sculptures and Amara Vathi, Sanchi Stupa and other references. When I am doing a Buddha painting, I feel much happy and peaceful in my body and soul—in meditative sense.”

His works are well known in India and the world over. Much has been written on him and his works. He has participated regularly in art exhibitions. The most recent was the World Art Dubai through Art Zest, and a group show in 3rd Athens Art Fest, 2016. Other shows will be displayed in Moscow and Singapore. In fact, his life is dedicated to painting. Every year, he holds Buddha painting exhibitions because he considers Buddha his guru and soul.

“For IRIS ART MAGAZINE readers, I want to explain that it is my firm desire to establish my own art gallery and name it after my mother, Kappari Bamma. I would ask that governments should take care of artists as they are history makers. Artist welfare is very important and every country should take care of its artists. Artist should also work genuinely for social service through art. Had art collectors around the world cultivated this habit, the entire world will become beautiful and all artists should work sincerely and they should believe on their work. My personal message to art enthusiasts round the globe is: ‘Dear artists! Believe your work; work sincerely and honestly. Be helpful to the poor and needy. You must definitely set your goal and try seriously to achieve that.’”

— M. Khalid Rahman



# Shiva Aini: Passionate about humanism

**P**owerful strokes make her artwork come alive with an unusual force. She grips a colored chalk or a paint-laden brush and makes stroke after stroke to transfer her feelings on canvas. Like a magic wand, the movement of her hand brings to life the themes she is most concerned about—child abuse and violence against women. Though she spent a loved and protected childhood in a family of music lovers, her concern for child abuse and violence against women grew with time.

When she was just a child, Shiva Aini played with line and color.

Talking to IRIS ART MAGAZINE, she said that when she was only six, her mural that she named ‘Ant War’ appeared on a wall of her kindergarten nursery in *Akhtyarm*—a simple, art work. Describing it, she says, “I drew my first large painting in kindergarten. They allocated one of the yard walls to me and I started painting.” From that fledgling stage, she continued painting and today she is known as an accomplished artist. Here’s what she told us:

“I’m a 32-year-old Iranian artist adoring art. I have done my best to create artworks. I love working, being seen and criticized. All my works root mostly in my own country—the human issues, and in particular those of women. I try to paint conceptual pieces in which you can see and feel that pain in my paintings and I actually put myself and my pains the subject and express that overwhelming feeling.”

About her art philosophy, she says, “Humanity matters to me, and making the humanity seen could be my philosophy. I may portrait men, women or children; however, regardless of gender, it’s humanity I’m after. I want the person to be seen as a human with his/her dilemmas and happiness. If, say, I choose a woman to paint I’d like to state that ‘although I am pretty and seducing but after all I’m a human, see



*Aini as a young artist*

this not my gender.”

About what inspires her most, she had this to say: “My community inspires me and I’m annoyed these gender issues in society really. A woman is always viewed sexually and her human values are generally ignored. Perhaps many disagree with me for now and they would say women today have had great achievements, but in the end, there’s that traditional look towards women. That’s why I’m trying to express her suffering so that this sexuality is detached from her and she is seen as human.”

4-I love painting and have always worked for it. I got my associate degree from Russia زنونر University in Iran initially. Then I went to Science and Culture University to get my B.A. in painting. I learned stone sculpture by Italian master Luca Marovini and earned its certificate. I’m also interested in interviewing with masters and art people and therefore I became Art journalist for monthly magazine, *Qalam* and I’m currently their art editor. 5-There’s this memory from my kindergarten,

one day a nanny took me to the yard and put me on a stool so I can paint on the wall. I started painting something I even called it “The War of Ants”. I have a photo of that day too. After that, she asked my family to care for my painting and have me register in painting classes. As long as I recall, I’ve always had a pen in my hand and had enjoyed painting and seeing other paintings too. Everyone in the family knew my passion and my parents always encouraged and supported me. 6- I’m not done yet. I feel there’s a long way to go. I’m experiencing for now and many things catch my eyes. It’s too soon to answer this question and I just don’t have any response for it. 7-Lines and drawing are dominant elements in all my works. I express myself through lines, even if it’s a structured piece, I add some coal lines at the end. Sometimes, they are rough and sometimes soft. Sometimes I scrawl the whole painting and sometimes only keep the main lines. Generally, my inner feelings are seen throughout the lines according to the theme. I’m an expressionist for sure.

This is obvious from the lines and dull colors and even the subject of my art.”

About herself, she admits, “I’m not very talkative, I’m rather introverted and ever since I knew myself, painting was my only means of communication. The issues of my country, society and generally on the earth and related to people, have always hurt me. I’m not into politics though and I can’t discuss to draw some conclusions. I just watched and pained and sometimes cried. Human suffering scratched my soul: children labor, broken families, innocent children being murdered in wars, injustice, child abuse, betrayal and hypocrisy etc. Paint, line and canvas are my only way of communicating. Drawing multiple figures melt into each other and tear apart leads to human unity. My figures are suffering and the humans fuse into space and dismantle. Humans turn into animals and vice versa. All I can express through painting. I did it by sculpture too for some time but I did not have the appropriate place to continue.”

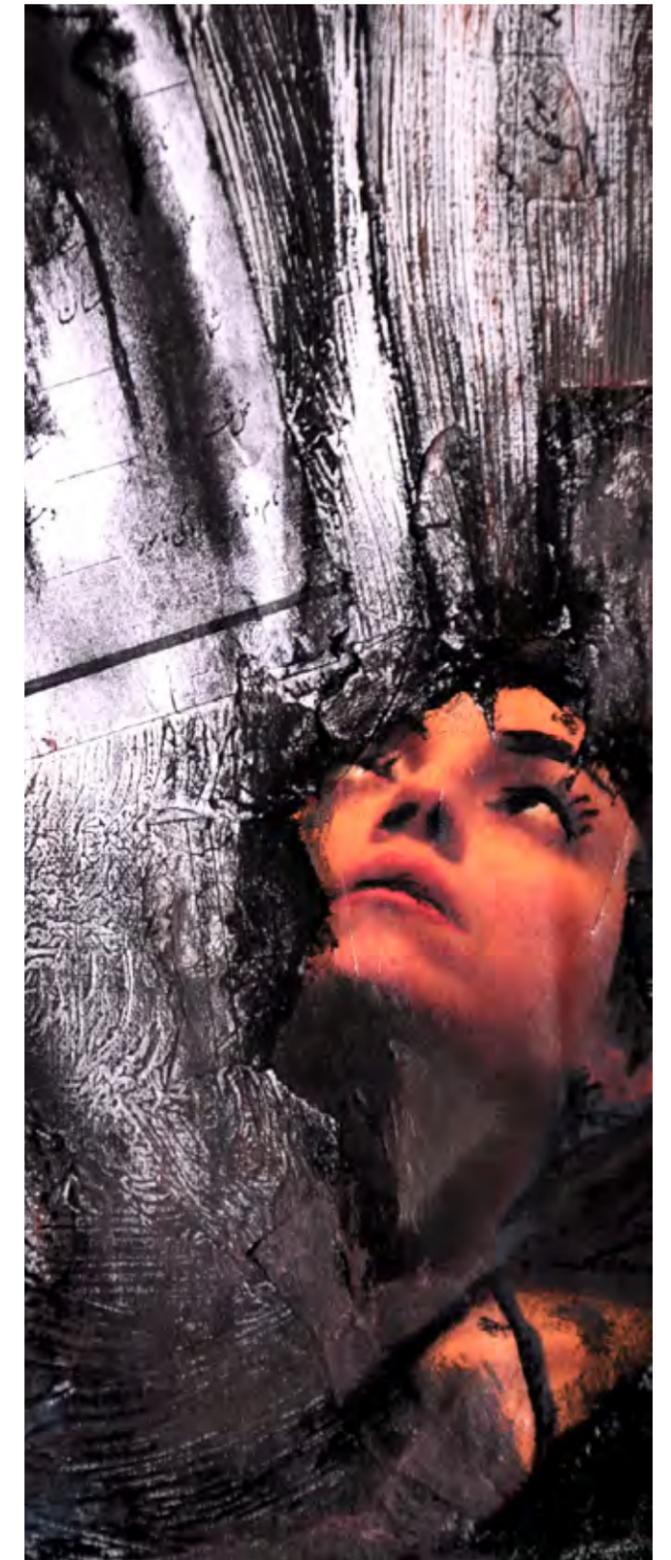
About how have she and her art will change over the years, she said, “Probably won’t be much change. However I can say that there was a time when my subjects were surrounded by lines as if I was mad at both people and the world but now I’m in more peace with humanity. I think he’s the dominant element to transform the earth. It made me feel better and less angry. That madness had limited me. Definitely this won’t be the last change and I’m still experiencing new things.” When asked how does she foresee her own art in future, she replied, “You mean the different phases of my life as an artist? Well as I said before, otherwise began from kindergarten and it became serious when I went to university. At Varounj, they thought us the Russian style which was magnificent. At Elm-o-Farhang University, things were different. I did learn a lot but it had it had difficulties too. Every term there was new. So were professors and new methods. But I almost received what I had wanted. At Professor Zakeri’s classes I found what I was looking for. I worked with stones. They were small but very educational. I’ll definitely continue that if I ever can find the appropriate place. Another period in my art career was when I worked in a gallery for three years. At first it was amazing meeting with artists and setting up domestic and international exhibitions. I would see a lot of works but the downside was holding my painting. After quitting I picked up my pallet again and I’m still painting.

Any comments on connection between painting and feelings? “Well, painting is all about feelings. A person’s emotions may be pinpointed by colors and lines. If anything unusual happens in life, it will underpin an artist’s art for sure. Whether you are depressed, cross or preoccupied, it’ll all be in your artwork. Sometimes, a busy mind wouldn’t even let you go around the canvas because you are not focused. It has happened to me that what I would do in a month took me six to eight months to finish. There’s no way fleeing from problems but they can be managed. You can even create a good series at these times.

How do your critics deal with your art? “I should say the whole world likes my art except my own country. They simply say it’s not Iranian. There are two reasons for it. First, I don’t have someone to recommend me in galleries because it’s very conventional in Iran to be introduced by a curator.

Another reason is that, curators are only concerned about money. The art and culture aspect is gone. Despite all these, I keep painting.

Are you impressed by your teachers? “The master who taught me really important points was Professor Ali Zakeri.



*Identity — 120x80cm. Photomediapainting*



Even after the university, I took a course with him and I carried on by myself afterwards. I remember I used to skip all drawing classes at college but I fell in love with how he taught drawing. His lines took over me and my paintings. He taught me the colors and finding out what to paint. I really owe him all that I know.

So you are not happy with art dealers, I asked. "I agree with art dealing and I believe it's necessary for art market but in Iran only masterpieces are being traded. The question is what about the young artists? Don't they need to be supported? How long will this trend continue? Unfortunately in Iran most of the so-called curators are only capable of selling famous artists' works and the art of young ones do not get presented appropriately to convince collectors."

You are not happy with curators, I inquired. "I complain about curators. I wish they would give the young artists some credit. If you ask, they'll probably say most buyers are looking for masterpieces but in the end it's the curator who persuades the buyer without thinking about money. That's how they become professionals. Otherwise, it's not an art gallery but a mere place to be rented. If it's going to stay this way, I advise the young artists to show their works in their own studio, show some self-confidence and do not simply give in to the curators.

How do you think this can be corrected? "I hope there comes a day when curators do not only pursue their own benefit and realize that without artists there's no gallery. They should back each other up and set up a cultural event regardless of financial concerns."

Can you give an artist's statement for our readers? "My art statement would be that to paint as much as I can, it doesn't matter how many times I trip and fall, I get up and paint again. I'm a painter and painting is my life."

What advice would you like to give to art collectors and art lovers?

"I insist that they should come to see young artists. Master artists have gone all the way up there and they don't need that much support, they should assist the young ones to reach up."

— **Khalid Rahman**



*Artist Aini in action*



*Identity — 120x80cm. Photomediapainting*

# Shiv Aini No More

There is a sad part to Shiv Aini's story. I had sent this story to Sylvia Villabos, a dear friend in Philippines, who told me that Shiv Aini is no more alive. She had found that on Shiv's Facebook page. That was a shock to her as well as me.



**Sylvia Villabos had written:**

## THE ARTIST

Her art has shown us the artists' expression that looked inward to the soul and psyche. She explored her own emotions, her own passions and terrors. She has drawn images based on her own anguish to express her feelings about a world in which there are sufferings and brutal deaths. She herself endured much personal grief and empathized with the fears and miseries of those around her.

## THE PAINTING

In the painting we can see a figure of a child lying down against the left side of her face. The artist strips away all background details and presents the child as a gaunt figure, brooding, almost monk-like—totally introspective, totally isolated. A painting sifted through memories, emotions, mental torments and life experiences colored by self-image that she wanted to express her artistic message to the world. So powerful, more intimate with a lugubrious lightness of touch. Nothing could be more striking than the contrast between the open right eye and totally violently shut down left eye, aloof, hidden behind the barricade of bruises where the artist unleashed the arrows of a deadly irony of her time, where

mankind are both aware and impassive at the same time to all the violence that is happening around the world and the dread felt by all creatures facing their own mortality. The handling of paint is breathtaking in its variety and suggestiveness of touch: for example the details shows considerable range of colors employed in a relatively small space. The face has been drawn in burnt-umber-brown or reddish-brown. A charcoal black impasto was vigorously brushed over in rich thickly applied blanket. The girl's face is thinly painted with traces of umber and streak of charcoal black to articulate the folds while touches of pale white delicately suggesting tears in the eyes. The painter has conveyed the feeling of the girls' distress demonstrating the artists' ability to express an emotion in a brief moment. The left side of her face is painted in darker tone and without the degree of definition given to the right side, this creates the area of greatest contrast of both color and tone and provides an immediate focus for the eye which is further strengthened by the strong modeling and close attention to the descriptive details. This reduction in the intensity of the colors from lighter to dark has been used for reason of pictorial unity than to indicate recession.

The paintings expression is so universal: children everywhere continue to be preyed upon and often they intimidated into silence.