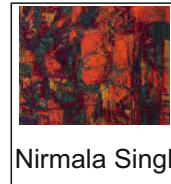
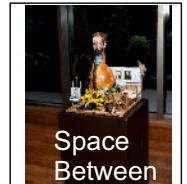




Sumitra Ahlawat

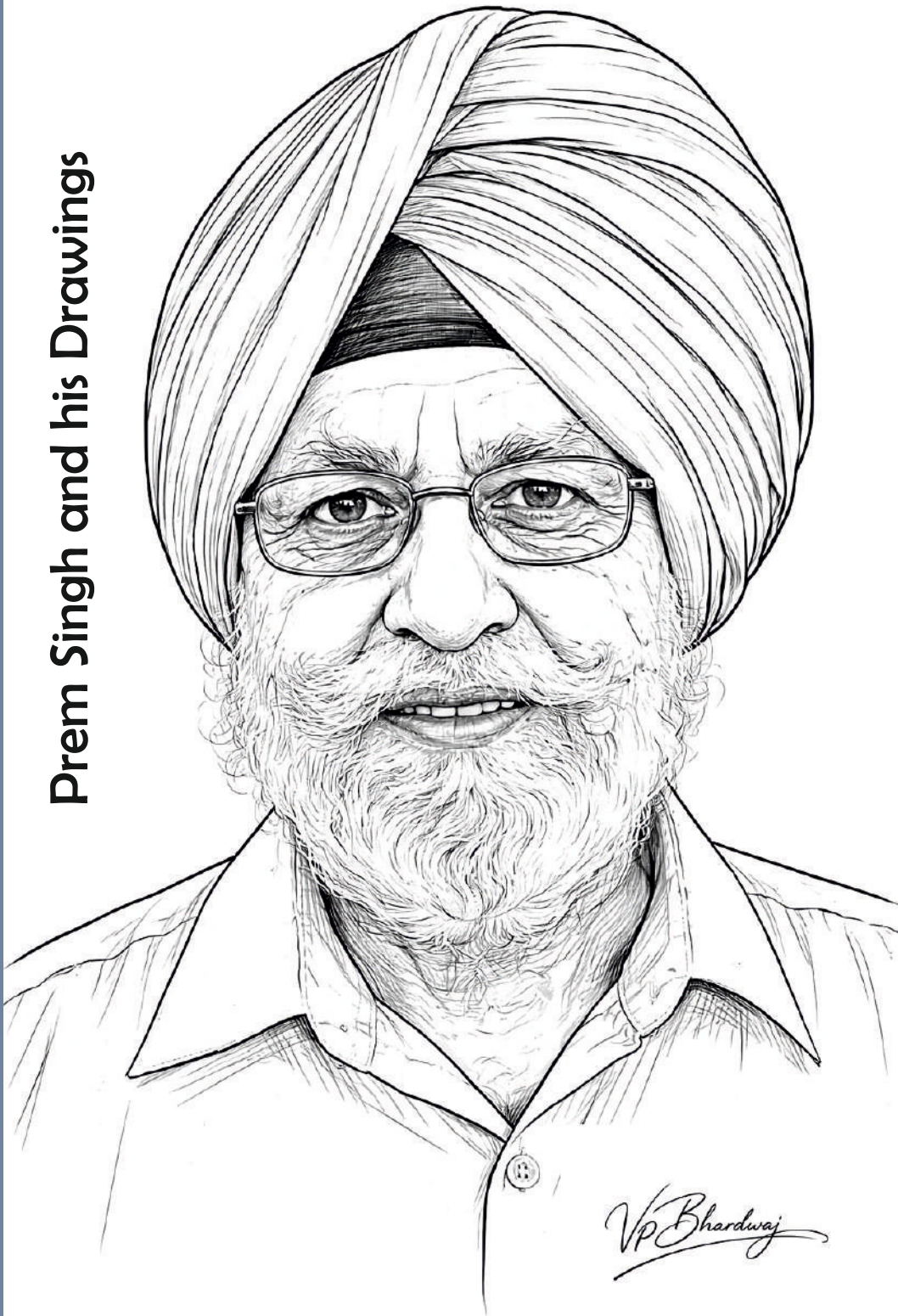


Nirmala Singh



Space
Between

Prem Singh and his Drawings



OTHER STORIES



SMITA JAIN



MAATI - III
EXHIBITION



GAURA EXHIBITION
RAIPUR



'I wanted to make something that had the feeling of both power and vulnerability.'— Lee Bontecou.

Between sculpture and painting, Bontecou builds forms that feel both mechanical and alive. Steel and canvas open into dark, magnetic voids that pull you in. Neither object nor image, her work exists in a space of tension, power, and quiet intensity.

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



The May 2026 issue of *Art News India* magazine is now before you. This issue features an article on a retrospective exhibition marking 50 years of drawing practice by the veteran artist Prem Singh. Additionally, it includes articles on the art of Smita Jain, Sumitra Ahlawat, Nirmala Singh, Kamini Baghel, and others. Accompanying these are reports on art events held in various locations, including Delhi, Mumbai, Raipur, and Bangalore. Meanwhile, the *Art News India* magazine website is also now ready for you. We hope that through this platform, we will be able to successfully deliver even more content on art to artists and art enthusiasts alike.

Dr. Ved Prakash Bhardwaj

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ARTNEWSINDIA

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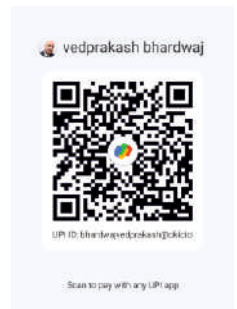
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Editor





The Art of Smita Jain

Pulsating Urban Landscape

It is a city that lives in memory—its exact identity undefined, yet deeply felt. Smita Jain transforms her encounters with architectural forms and urban landscapes, gathered through her travels across India and abroad, into a compelling visual language. Within the dense fabric of the city, traces of human presence occasionally emerge; even in their absence, the pulse of life—the dreams and emotions of its inhabitants—continues to resonate. Recurring forms such as pyramids and triangles appear as symbols of cultural confluence. Through her work, she presents a distinctive vision—an evocative way of seeing and experiencing the city as a whole. An Analysis by Dr Ved Prakash Bhardwaj

A city resides in memory—yet its identity remains undefined. Drawing from her travels across India and abroad, Smita Jain transforms lived experiences into a distinctive visual language. In her work, the city does not appear merely as a physical construct but as a living entity, where architecture, memory, aspiration, and human energy coexist and interact.

The buildings that emerge on her canvas appear realistic, yet they are not bound by realism. Abstraction plays a central role, allowing these structures to transcend literal representation and instead evoke an experiential essence. At times,

forms seem incomplete—as if paused mid-creation or fading within memory. This quality shifts the city from a fixed physical space into a psychological and emotional landscape.

Her visual language is shaped through rhythmic lines, repeated forms, and a carefully balanced spatial composition. Together, these elements create a dynamic interplay between the tangible and the abstract. As a result, her cities feel both familiar and unfamiliar—simultaneously seen and remembered.

The triangular spires of her buildings form a distinctive motif, echoing pyramidal structures.



This is not merely an architectural device but also a cultural signifier—one that resonates across civilizations as a universal symbol. When rendered in gold, these forms transcend ornamentation and come to embody energy, consciousness, and human aspiration.

Colour is a vital component of her practice. Her palette—often composed of blues, browns, reds, and gold—does more than create visual appeal; it constructs meaning. These colours evoke a range of urban emotions: melancholy, mystery, vitality, and hope. Gold, in particular, introduces a symbolic luminosity that reflects the dreams and ambitions embedded in urban life.

In her earlier works, abstraction appears more direct, as she explores existential questions through colour and form.

This abstract sensibility gradually integrates into her urban imagery, resulting in cities that are not merely constructed spaces but complex amalgamations of experience, memory, and imagination.

At times, her cities emerge like blurred recollections—indistinct yet evocative. This ambiguity invites viewers to project their own memories and experiences onto the work. In her recent practice, her square, pillar-like compositions offer a renewed perspective on architectural form, maintaining a balance between structure and abstraction while reflecting a mature visual language.

Ultimately, Smita Jain's work creates a visual world that invites not just observation, but experience—where the city unfolds not outside, but within.





||



||

My painting practice moves between observation and memory, where cities are not documented as they are, but as they are felt. I am drawn to the architecture of streets, terraces, and monuments—not as static forms, but as living structures that hold time, history, and human presence within them.

Through a restrained palette of warm, softened hues and diffused light, I allow these built forms to dissolve into atmosphere. Edges blur, details recede, and what remains is a quiet emotional resonance. I often return to the geometry of cities—the repetition of windows, the rhythm of facades, the layered rise of homes and historic structures—using them as a framework to explore stillness and continuity.

Monuments, in my work, are not grand declarations but silent witnesses. They exist alongside everyday life, absorbing light, memory, and passing moments. Figures, when present, are subtle—almost incidental—yet they anchor the space in lived experience.

Ultimately, my work is about pause. It is about capturing the fleeting dialogue between light and structure, where architecture becomes a vessel for memory, and the city reveals itself not in movement, but in its most intimate, unspoken stillness.

Smita Jain



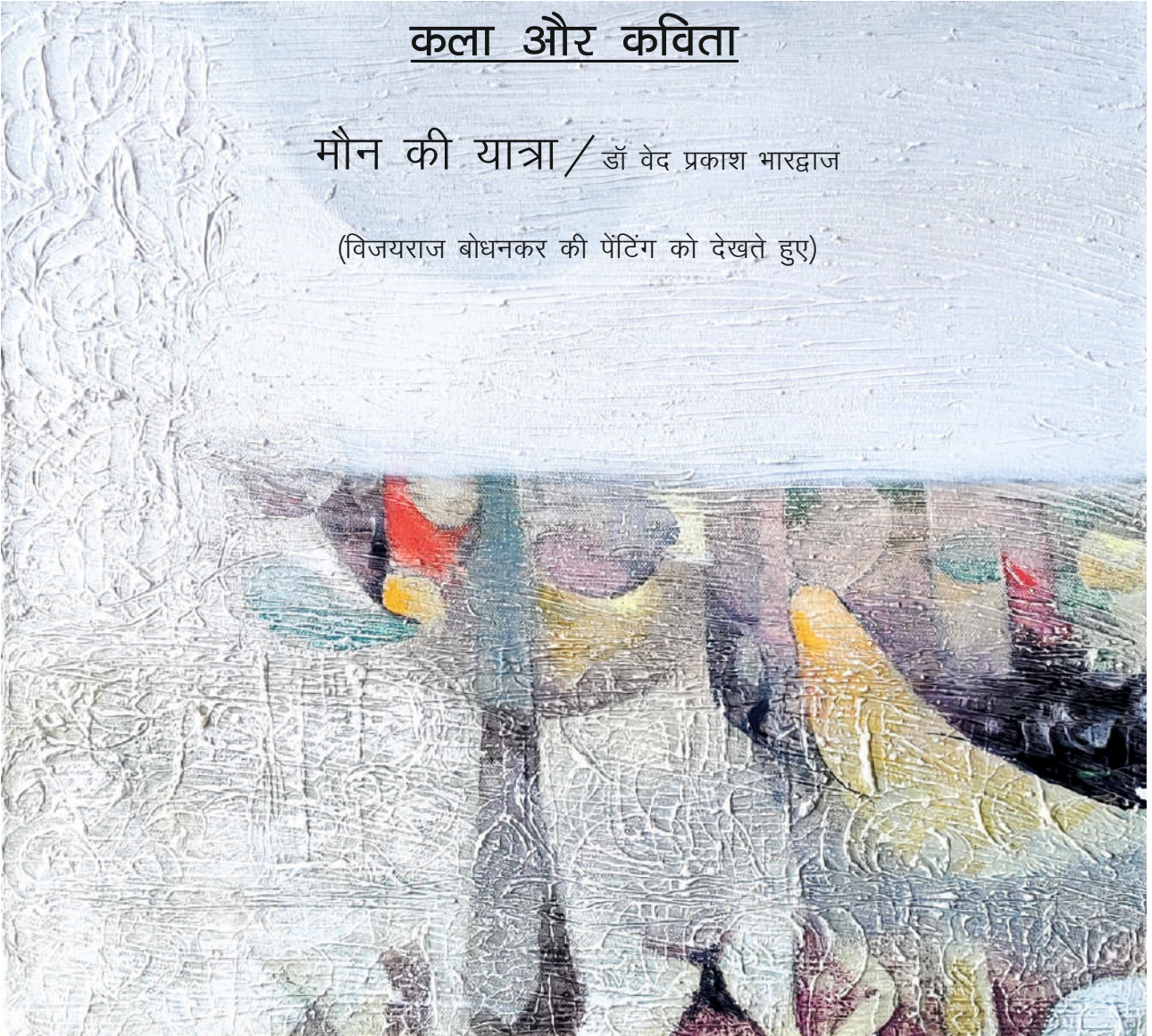
In Smita Jain's paintings, we encounter cities that at times echo our own past experiences, while at others evoke visions of unseen, imagined metropolises. These urban spaces—marked by winding pathways, buildings reaching eagerly toward the sky, and a delicate interplay of snow and greenery—unfold with a dreamlike sensibility. Within them, the symbolic presence of life lingers: houses stand in absolute stillness, yet seem quietly animated from within, as though someone might peer out of a window at any moment. In some places, trees shimmer with golden foliage, while elsewhere, wrapped in a blanket of snow, they appear to rest in a deep, tranquil slumber.



कला और कविता

मौन की यात्रा / डॉ वेद प्रकाश भारद्वाज

(विजयराज बोधनकर की पेंटिंग को देखते हुए)



विजयराज बोधनकर की एक पेंटिंग

रंगों के साथ
दृष्टि की चपलता
और कल्पनाओं की
हलचल के बीच
जो कुछ घट रहा है
कैनवास पर
दृश्य और भाषा की
सीमाओं को तोड़ते हुए
एक मौन
गूंजता है अंतरमन में
दृश्य और अदृश्य के बीच कहीं

ठहरा रहता हूँ देर तक
और फिर निकल पड़ता हूँ
उस यात्रा पर जिसमें
ध्वनि है स्मृतियों की
सपनों की
कल्पनाओं की
और उस अज्ञात को
पाने की आकांक्षा
जो किसी भी
रूप और अर्थ से परे है।



at the opening, Mrs Kanchan Mehra and Jai Tripathi were lighting the lamp along with Shri Vinod narayan Indukar, shri Vinod Bhardwaj and Shri Santosh Shrivastava.

EXHIBITION REVIEW: DR. VED PRAKASH BHARDWAJ

Art as the Clay of the Self

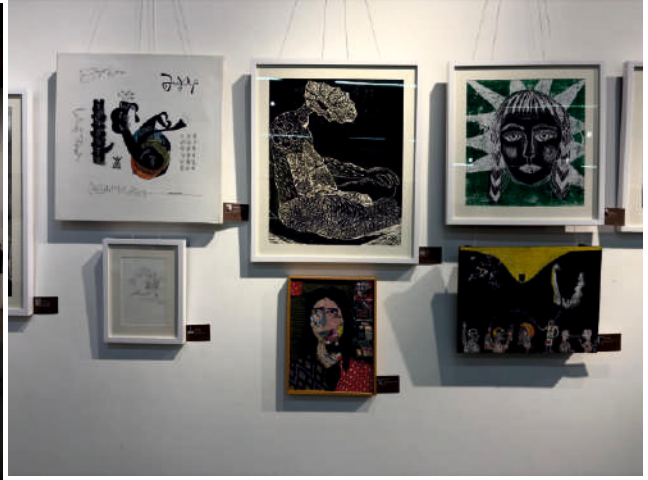
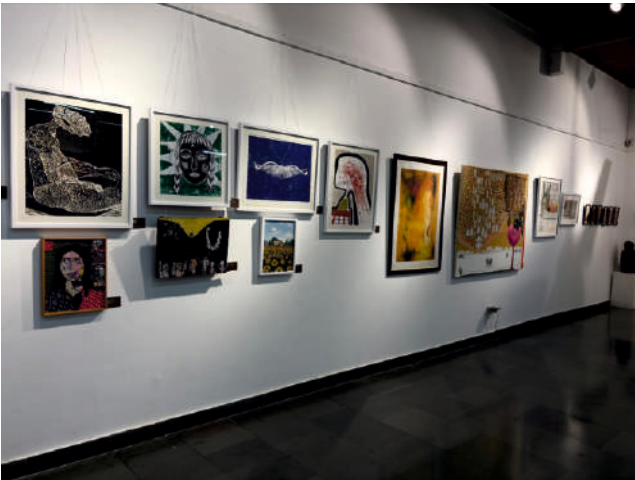
What we create as artists, why we create it, and whether what we create can truly be called art—these are questions that have accompanied artistic practice since its very beginning. They arise not only from the outside world, from critics, viewers, and institutions, but also from within the artist's own consciousness. An artist is often their own first and most relentless questioner. The process of creation is therefore never free from doubt; rather, it is shaped and sharpened by it.

Yet, despite centuries of artistic inquiry, no definitive or final answers to these questions have emerged. This absence of certainty is not a limitation of art but, in fact, its greatest strength. It is what keeps art alive, evolving, and deeply human.

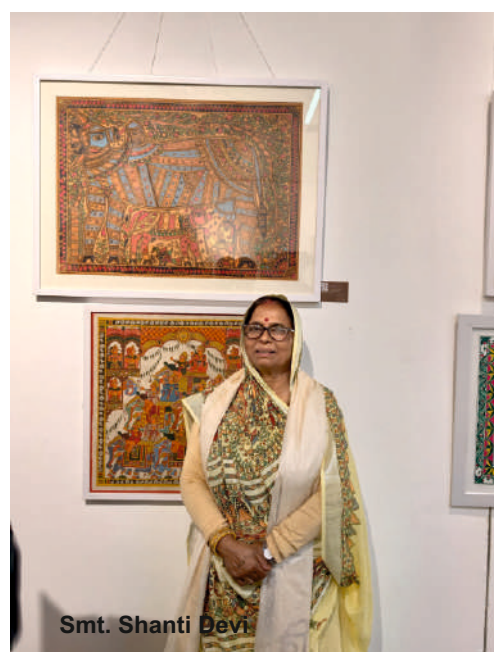
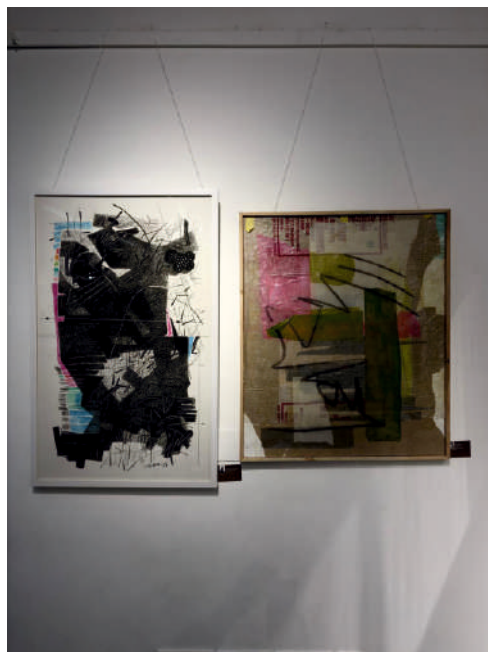
The reason these questions resist final answers lies in the very nature of art itself. Art is, at its core, a search for the self. The “self” here does not simply refer to identity in a social or psychological sense, but to a deeper, more complex inner

existence—the essence of being. Every individual carries within them layers of memory, emotion, experience, and perception. To encounter this inner terrain, even partially, is to arrive at a moment of profound realization. For an artist, such moments become points of creative energy, where the act of making transforms into an act of knowing. In this sense, the journey of art is inseparable from the journey of self-discovery.

Art, then, may be understood as the clay of this inner self. Just



Some displayed artwork





Shri Vinod Bhardwaj and
Mrs Kanchan Mehra



Ravi Ranjan, Ragini Sinha, Arbind Singh and Bipin Kumar

as a potter depends on the right kind of clay to create vessels that are both beautiful and functional, an artist depends on the quality and depth of their inner being. Not all soil can be shaped into pottery; it must possess the right balance, texture, and resilience. Similarly, the artist's inner world must be cultivated, observed, and refined. The potter gathers clay from the external environment, working with a material that is visible and tangible. The artist, however, draws from an internal reservoir—an invisible yet deeply felt substance that forms the basis of all creative expression.

This distinction is crucial. While the potter molds clay into form through physical labor, the artist shapes their inner experiences into forms that may be visual, auditory, textual, or performative. The act of creation becomes a dialogue between the

Shri Vinod Bhardwaj seen and the unseen, the known and the unknown. In the process of shaping this inner clay, the artist does not simply produce objects; they construct meanings, evoke emotions, and open pathways for reflection. Each artwork becomes a trace of the artist's ongoing search—a momentary crystallization of a much larger, continuous journey.

It is within this context that platforms like the Vimala Art Forum acquire significance.

Such spaces are not merely venues for display; they are environments where artists can share fragments of their evolving journeys. The annual exhibition *Maati* embodies this spirit. Now entering its third year as *Maati-3*, the exhibition has grown from its earlier focus on Indian folk and modern art into an expansive, international platform. This transformation reflects not only an increase in scale but also a deepening of dialogue—between traditions, cultures, and artistic approaches.

The title *Maati* (meaning “clay”) itself is deeply symbolic. Clay is a material that is both humble and profound. It is rooted in the earth, yet capable of infinite transformation. It accepts form without resistance, yet demands preparation and care. In many ways, it mirrors the nature of the self and, by extension, the nature of art. *Maati-3*



Shri Vinod Bhardwaj addressing to the artist

The annual exhibition “Maati-III” of the Vimla Art Forum was inaugurated on 3 April 2026 at Arpana Art Gallery in New Delhi. This exhibition showcases not only contemporary artists but also works by folk artists. In addition, artworks by artists from several countries have been included.

The exhibition is coordinated by Mrs. Kanchan Mehra and curated by artist Dilip Sharma. It remained open to visitors until 9 April.

On the occasion of the inauguration, the chief guest, Vinod Narayan Indukar, Chairman of CCRT, referred to the Indian artistic tradition and introduced the Indian perspective on art through the verse:

*"Rupabhedah Pramanani Bhavalavanya Yojanam
Sadrishyam Varnikabhang Iti Chitram
Shadangakam."*

Explaining this verse, he said that in Indian tradition, the six limbs of visual art—Rupabhedha (form differentiation), Pramana (proportion), Bhava (emotion), Lavanya Yojana (graceful composition), Sadrishya (resemblance), and Varnikabhang (use of colour)—are the eternal foundations of art. Along with interpreting the verse, he shared his experience of observing the exhibition, noting that all six elements of art were present in it. He emphasized that, along with the artist's expression, the viewer's perception and response should also be valued. Every viewer is free to interpret art in their own way and express that experience.

Santosh Srivastava, Director of KSKT, said in

his address that art is what distinguishes human beings and makes them superior among all living beings. He congratulated the Vimla Art Forum and praised the impactful works presented in the exhibition.

Padma Shri Shanti Devi described her artistic journey, explaining how she worked through difficult circumstances to achieve national recognition and the Padma Shri award.

Senior critic, poet, and filmmaker Vinod Bhardwaj appreciated the effort of presenting folk and contemporary art together and congratulated the Forum. Discussing the role of beauty in art and contemporary practices, he emphasized the relationship between the two forms with several examples.

Artist and critic Jai Tripathi thanked the organizers for a well-conducted event and appreciated the speakers for their insightful thoughts on art.

On this occasion, Mrs. Kanchan Mehra expressed gratitude to all guests and artists, stating that the Forum always strives to bring all forms of art onto one platform. She also praised curator and artist Dilip Sharma, noting that the event was made possible through collective effort.

Along with the participating artists, several senior artists were also present at the inauguration. Among them were Dharmendra Rathore, Neeraj Sharma, Ritu Singh, Ragini Sinha, Narendra Pal Singh, artist and curator Anoop Kamat, Rajesh Chand, Smita Jain, Shikha Gupta Agrawal, Kavita Rajput, Meetu Kapoor, and others.

continues this metaphor by embracing new artistic forms and ideas, welcoming change while remaining grounded in its core philosophy.

This year's exhibition brings together a diverse group of artists from across the world. International participants such as Anne Michelle Vrillet Diet Mina, Barbara Crimella, Ewa Held, Gina Axlund, Marc Rayner, Jeetin Rangher, Jean Charles Millepiéd, and Martin

King contribute works that reflect their unique cultural contexts and personal explorations. Alongside them, invited Indian artists including Kanchan Mehra, Bipin Kumar, Jai Tripathi, Dilip Sharma, A.K. Douglas, Arvind Singh, Dr. Ved Prakash Bhardwaj, Ravi Ranjan, Deep Manohar, Dr. Priti Samyukta, Dr. Vijay Siddaramappa Hagargundgi, Pradeep M, and Sanjay Kr Singh present works that engage deeply with both

tradition and contemporary practice.

The exhibition also gives significant space to folk art, acknowledging its enduring relevance and vitality. Senior artist and Padma Shri awardee Shanti Devi's work stands as a testament to the richness of traditional practices, while Vinita Devi's contributions to Pidiya painting highlight the continuity of regional artistic languages. Other artists such as



Their works move beyond recognizable forms, seeking to capture the essence of experience rather than its outward appearance. In these abstractions, one can sense a search for new visual languages—ways of expressing the self that are not confined by conventional representation.

Abhiram Das, Anushikha Joshi, Hema Devi, Narendra Kumar Panjiyara, Sajwa Devi, Sandhya Shukla, Sanjay Panhad, and Shivan Paswan further expand this section, demonstrating how folk traditions are not static relics but living, evolving forms that engage with contemporary realities.

In addition, the exhibition features a wide range of other artists, including Afnan Reyaz, Anita Jindal, Deepak, Drishti Gupta, Kuldeep Dogra, Manju Thakur, Ritu Jain, S.D. Johri, and Shailja, among others. Together, these artists contribute to a rich and varied artistic landscape, where multiple voices and perspectives coexist.

When viewed collectively, the works in *Maati-3* create a cohesive yet dynamic vision of art. Despite differences in style, medium, and cultural background, a shared concern with the self emerges. This shared concern does not lead to uniformity; rather, it generates a dialogue where contrasts

become meaningful. The works of international artists often reflect themes such as fragmentation of identity, existential uncertainty, and the questioning of established forms. In many cases, abstraction becomes a dominant mode, allowing artists to move beyond literal representation and engage with more fluid, open-ended meanings.

Some of these artists retain the human figure as a central element, yet even here, the figure is often transformed, distorted, or deconstructed. This approach suggests a shift away from fixed identities toward more complex and layered understandings of being. Life is not presented as a stable structure but as a field of possibilities, tensions, and ambiguities.

In contrast, many Indian artists in the exhibition approach the question of the self through the physical presence of the human body. Artists like Kanchan Mehra, Dilip Sharma, Pradeep M, Deep Manohar, Dr.

Priti Samyukta, and Dr. Vijay Siddaramappa Hagargundgi use the body as a site of exploration, where the visible and the invisible intersect. Their works suggest that the self is not separate from the body but deeply embedded within it.

At the same time, other Indian artists such as Bipin Kumar, Jai Tripathi, Dr. Ved Prakash Bhardwaj, and Sanjay Kumar Singh turn toward abstraction as a means of inquiry. Their works move beyond recognizable forms, seeking to capture the essence of experience rather than its outward appearance. In these abstractions, one can sense a search for new visual languages—ways of expressing the self that are not confined by conventional representation.

A.K. Douglas's work stands at an interesting intersection, where form and formlessness coexist. His compositions suggest that the boundary between the two is not fixed but constantly shifting. Arvind



Artists with Smt. Shanti Devi, Shri Dilip Sharma, Shri Vinod Bhardwaj, and Mrs. Kanchan Mehra.

Singh's installations, on the other hand, create immersive environments that challenge the viewer's perception of reality. By juxtaposing elements of the real and the unreal, his work invites reflection on the nature of experience itself. Ravi Ranjan's black-and-white photographs offer yet another perspective, presenting images that feel almost philosophical or spiritual in their intensity. Stripped of color, these photographs emphasize form, light, and shadow, creating a sense of depth that goes beyond the visual.

Across the exhibition, one can observe that the search for the self often begins with the

body. The human form, in its physicality, becomes a point of entry into deeper questions. Through gesture, posture, fragmentation, or abstraction, artists attempt to move from the external to the internal. The body becomes both a subject and a medium—a way of navigating the complexities of existence.

Ultimately, *Maati-3* is not just an exhibition of artworks; it is a space of encounter. It brings together different ways of seeing, thinking, and feeling, allowing them to interact and resonate with one another. Like clay that can take on countless forms once it is prepared, art too becomes a medium through

which the self can be shaped, reshaped, and understood.

In this sense, the exhibition reminds us that art is not a finished product but an ongoing process. It is a journey without a final destination, a continuous act of becoming. Each artwork is a moment in this journey—a fragment of the artist's search for meaning, identity, and truth. And in engaging with these works, viewers become participants in this search, encountering not only the artist's self but, perhaps, their own.



In the contemporary art landscape, an important trend has emerged in recent years—the creation of a new dialogue between folk traditions and modernity. This interaction is not merely a stylistic synthesis; rather, it is a profound reinterpretation of sensibilities, symbols, and cultural memory. Modern art—once considered distant from folk life due to its urban and global tendencies—is now drawing renewed energy and inspiration from those very roots. This transformation is not limited to India; across the world, traditional folk forms are being revisited and reinterpreted, offering new



Painting by Shubhangi Singh Thakur

meaning and perspective to modern artistic practices. In the Indian context, this dialogue holds special significance. The country's folk traditions are not only ancient but also immensely diverse, presenting a living continuity of cultural expression. Based on this rich heritage, the exhibition “Gaura,” organized by the Chhattisgarh Progressive Artists Group, emerges as a powerful initiative. It is not merely a collection of artworks, but an active platform where folk traditions and contemporary artistic expressions meet and evolve. Evidence of this can be seen in several works in the exhibition,



where artists have engaged with folk art traditions while incorporating elements of folk culture into their creations. In this regard, the works of Sunita Verma, Keshav Ram, Dolly Sarva, Preeti Soni, Subhangi Singh Thakur, Poonam Chakradhari, among others, are noteworthy.

Jiten Sahu—founder of the Chhattisgarh Progressive Artists Group—along with Curator Dr. Dhruv Tiwari, Anil Khobragade, and Shanti Tirkey, made a significant contribution to the organization of this exhibition. Together with their colleagues, they made this important event possible. In this context, Dr. Dhruv Tiwari states that their objective is to provide a platform for the artists of Chhattisgarh. Jiten Sahu adds

that, through this collective, the group aims to foster an artistic environment within the state by bringing together artists from both Chhattisgarh and beyond.

The title “Gaura” itself is rich with multiple meanings. On one hand, it invokes divine feminine energy (Shakti), and on the other, it alludes to the primordial power of Lord



Painting by Keshav Ram



Dr Ved Prakash Bhardwaj is talking with Anil Khobragade in front of his painting

Shiva. The Gora-Gori festival of Chhattisgarh's tribal communities—where abstract forms of Shiva and Parvati are created from cow dung and worshipped—forms the conceptual core of this exhibition. This tradition highlights an important fact: abstraction is not merely a product of modernism, but has long been an intrinsic and natural aspect of folk expression.

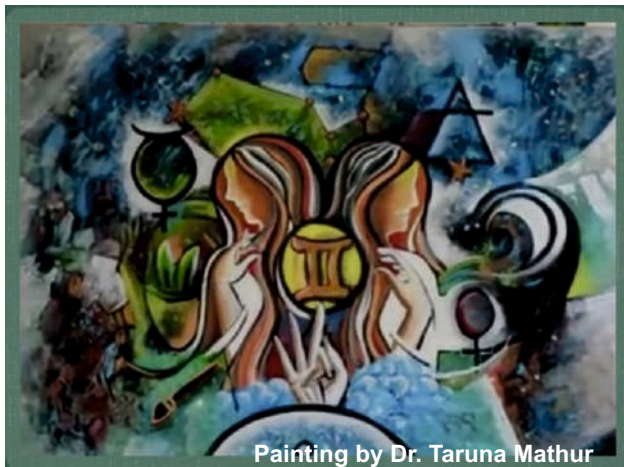
The participation of around one hundred artists from across the country reflects the wide scope of the exhibition. Although the idea of the exhibition is local, its founders and curators—artist Jiten Sahu and curator Dr.

Dhruv Tiwari—have expanded its reach by inviting artists from all over India. Through diverse media such as painting, graphics,

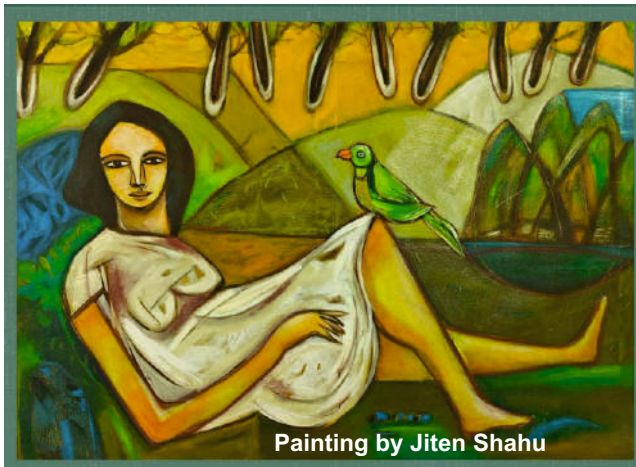


Painting by Shyama Sharma

drawing, and sculpture, the exhibited works create a celebratory visual language. A rich interplay of form, colour, and texture generates a festive atmosphere, while symbolism acts as the thread that binds everything together. This symbolic language serves as a bridge between the expressive depth of modern art and the simplicity of folk traditions. This celebratory energy and sense of connection were clearly visible during the exhibition was inaugurated on April 10, 2026. On this occasion, senior poet and writer Chintamani Kar and artist and writer Dr. Ved Prakash Bhardwaj were



Painting by Dr. Taruna Mathur



Painting by Jiten Shahu

present as guests. In his address, Shri Kar emphasized sensitivity, experience, and expression in art, stating that although art is created individually by an artist, it ultimately belongs to everyone. Art communicates with all and becomes collective—it transforms from the individual to the universal. Each viewer finds themselves within a work of art. Dr. Bhardwaj, on the other hand, stressed the importance of “seeing” in art, noting that an artist's work plays a vital role in shaping society and its environment. To truly engage with art, one must look beyond what is visible and perceive what is not immediately seen.

The works included in the exhibition make it clear that the organizer, Dr. Dhruv Tiwari, has successfully balanced conceptual unity with artistic freedom. Artists such as Ravikant Jha,

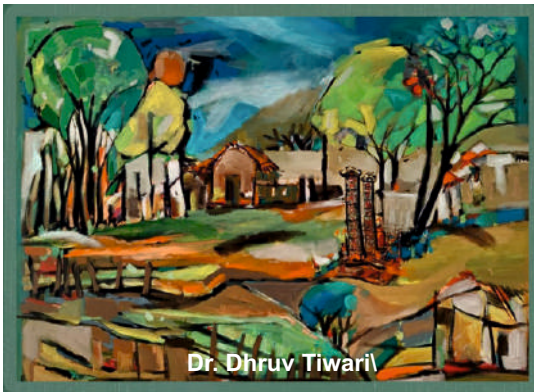
Rajeev Semwal, Shailendra Sahu, Dr. Ved Prakash Bhardwaj, Rajesh Rawat, Mohan Baral, Reena Chaudhary, Ratna Shivayogi, among others, represent the multidimensional nature of contemporary Indian art. While maintaining the theme of “Gaura,” each artist has been given the freedom to interpret and express the idea in their own way. As a result, the artworks move between the tangible and the abstract, the personal and the collective, creating a layered and profound visual experience. This diversity is one of the exhibition's greatest strengths. Rahul Runjhe's terracotta sculptures and Podiyam Ravi's wooden works add a distinctive dimension to the exhibition.

At its core, the exhibition is grounded in the philosophical concept of “Shivatva”—a form of Shiva that encompasses both the manifest and the



Emerging artists from Chattisgarh.





Dr. Dhruv Tiwari



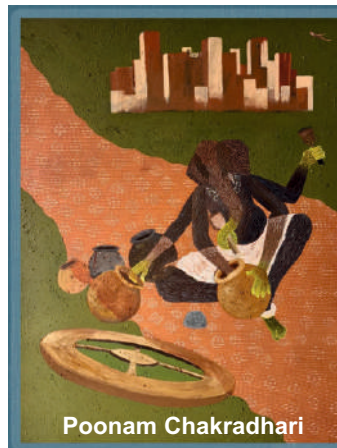
Sarita Shau



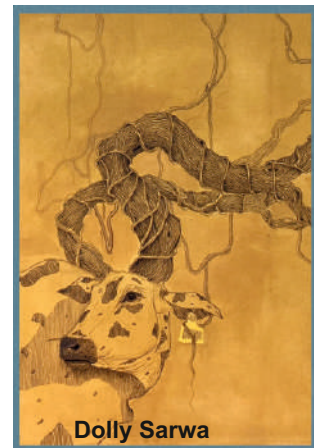
Rakhi Gupta



Harshita Namdeo



Poonam Chakradhari



Dolly Sarwa

un-manifest, creation and destruction, form and formlessness. In tribal beliefs, “Gaura” is not only a protector but also a symbol of vitality and joy. The concept of the village deity in folk traditions resonates with this idea, as seen in the paintings of Keshav Ram. The natural beauty of Chhattisgarh also plays a significant role in the folk landscape, reflected in the works of Jiten Sahu, Dr. Dhruv Shukla, Dr. Taruna Mathur, Preeti Soni, and others. Sunita Verma has beautifully depicted the concept of Gora-Gori. Thus, the exhibition effectively expresses the coexistence of folk traditions and modernity. The displayed works demonstrate how art powerfully reveals the multidimensional structural characteristics of life.

It is not possible to write about every work exhibited. During the inauguration, there was an opportunity to interact with several artists about their work and creative processes. It was encouraging to see that young artists participating in the exhibition are very clear about their artistic vision and ideas. Many young women artists demonstrated a strong sense of

social awareness, which inspires confidence in the future of Indian art. In this context, artists like Poonam Chakradhari, Dolly Sarva, Subhangi Singh Thakur, Shyama Sharma, and Shweta Indoriya Jain deserve mention. Artists such as Anil Khobragade, Shanti Tirkey, and Diyanishu Devangan open new possibilities by addressing their surroundings and contemporary challenges. Among those expressing women's consciousness, Dr. Taruna Mathur, Vandana Parganiha, Sarita Sahu, Jayashree Bhagwanani, and Priyanshi Verma are noteworthy. A distinctive feature of their work is the use of both human forms and abstraction to articulate female identity. This exhibition establishes that folk traditions are not static remnants of the past, but living and creative forces that continue to influence and enrich contemporary art. By illuminating the timeless aura of the folk within modernity, this exhibition points toward an evolving artistic direction—where tradition and innovation come together to create a vibrant cultural continuity.

-Dr Ved Prakash Bhardwaj

EXHIBITION

space that is less seen and more felt

The exhibition “*Space Between*” presents, in a compelling and nuanced manner, the idea that within every work of art there exists a space between colour and form—a space that is less seen and more felt, less visible and more experiential. This is not merely a physical emptiness but a realm of meaning, sensation, and perception, where art reveals itself in its most intimate and essential form. *Space Between* is presented by Matters of Art and curated by Anoop Kamath. The exhibition is opened on 4th April and will continue until 9th April 2026 at The Stainless gallery, New Delhi.

It is in this intermediate space that all that remains unexpressed through colour, line, and form

begins to find articulation. This is the domain of the unspoken—where the artist's sensibility and the viewer's experience enter into a subtle dialogue. In this sense, the space is not an absence but an

active presence—a field charged with possibilities of meaning.

The 'empty' spaces between forms and compositions on canvas or



Paintings by Somya Satsangi



Paintings by Shobha Nagar



Paintings by Dolly Dhillon



Paintings by Dr Ved Prakash Bhardwaj

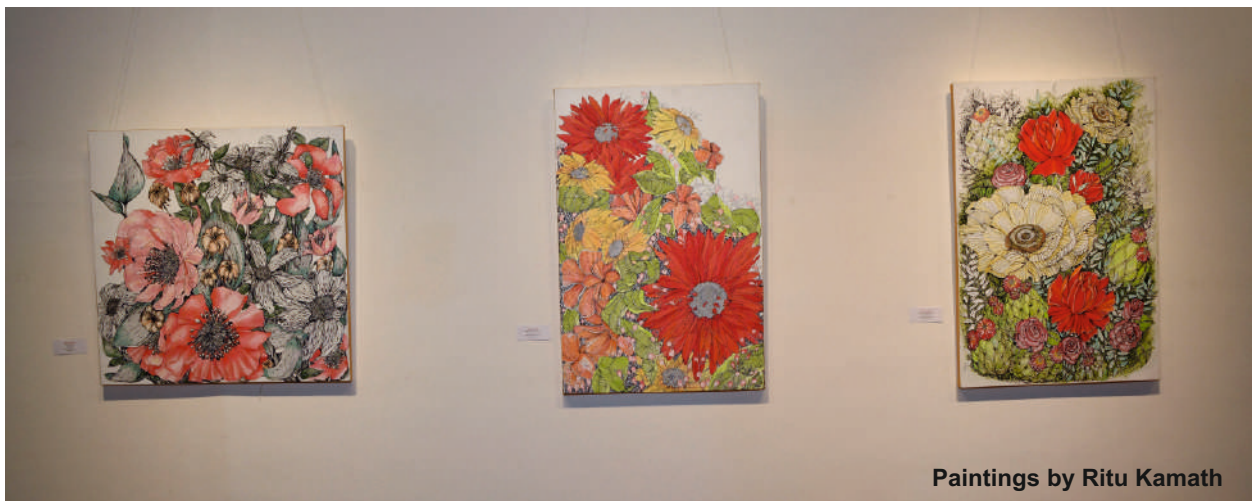


Sculpture by Ashish Arora

paper are never truly vacant; they hold infinite potential, just as the void is never truly empty and silence resonates with unheard echoes. What

transpires within them is not immediately visible; it must be perceived through sensitivity, intuition, and inner awareness.

In poetry, the intervals between words play a crucial role in the construction of meaning—pauses, silences,



Paintings by Ritu Kamath



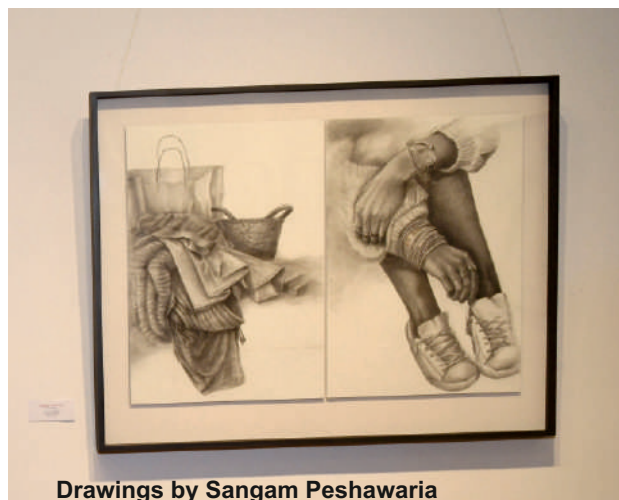
Paintings by Dr Vikram Kumar

and moments of stillness themselves become a form of language. A similar phenomenon occurs in visual art, as well as in theatre and music, where silence and pause carry expressive weight. Thus, the 'space between' is not merely a structural element but a powerful medium of meaning and experience. Often, it is this very space that becomes more profound and evocative than the areas that appear visibly occupied.

The works included in this exhibition—both figurative and abstract—explore and articulate these interstitial spaces in diverse and distinctive ways. Each artist, through their own sensibility and artistic vision, lends a unique dimension and interpretation to this 'space'.

Shobha Nagar's works engage with layers of memory, filling these intervals in a way that suggests a dialogue between past and present, evoking a sense of wholeness in lived experience. Soumya Satsangi's paintings reflect an attempt to bridge emotional voids, where colour itself becomes a carrier of feeling.

Ritu Kamath, through her renderings of natural landscapes, presents visual beauty and seems to bridge the subtle gap between emotion



Drawings by Sangam Peshawaria

and the material world. In the works of Dr Ved Prakash Bhardwaj, what remains unspoken and unheard within the expressed resonates like an echo—suggesting that the image continues to speak even in silence.

Dr Vikram Kumar creates a unique space through the confluence of folk and contemporary artistic traditions, transforming cultural intervals into sites of creative energy. Ashish Arora's sculptural works appear to bridge the distance between history and the present, where time itself becomes a medium of expression.



Paintings by Ashish Arora

The works of Dolly Dhillon, Sangam Peshawaria, and Vandana Krishna seek to articulate that which remains unexpressed between the physical and emotional dimensions of human existence. In their practice, the 'space between' emerges as a site of complex human experience—where both word and form fall short, and yet

meaning persists.

Ultimately, "*Space Between*" is not merely an exhibition but a proposition for a new way of seeing, understanding, and experiencing art—one that invites us to engage not only with what is visible but also with the silent, the empty, and the unseen dimensions that lie in between.



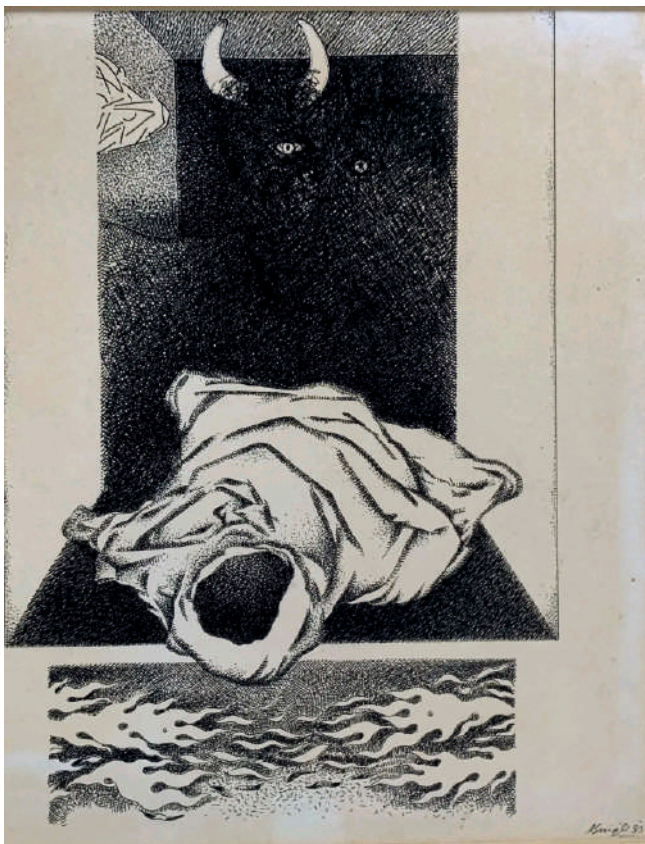
Prem Singh and his Drawings

Life in Lines

Drawings are where creativity first takes root. They are not mere preparations for a finished painting, but living fragments of thought and imagination. In each line, an artist discovers something new—an idea, a feeling, a vision—quietly shaping the soul of their art. For senior artist Prem Singh, drawing is the germination of his creativity. Over more than fifty years, he has produced

countless drawings in diverse media, including ink, pen, pencil, charcoal, and collage. Most of these works are in black and white, though some incorporate colour. While many drawings present clearly defined figures, others reveal signs of abstraction that later develop more fully in his paintings. His recent works demonstrate how drawing has evolved into a powerful and independent mode of expression.



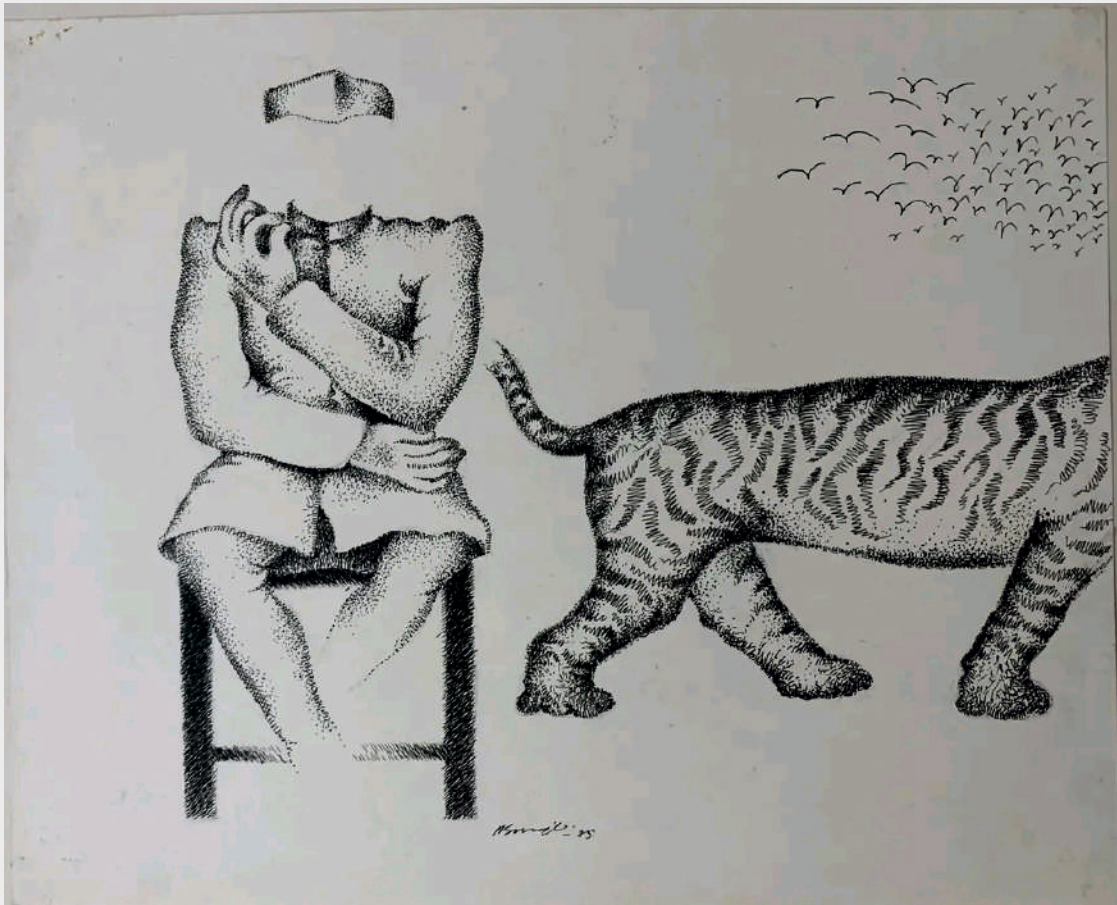
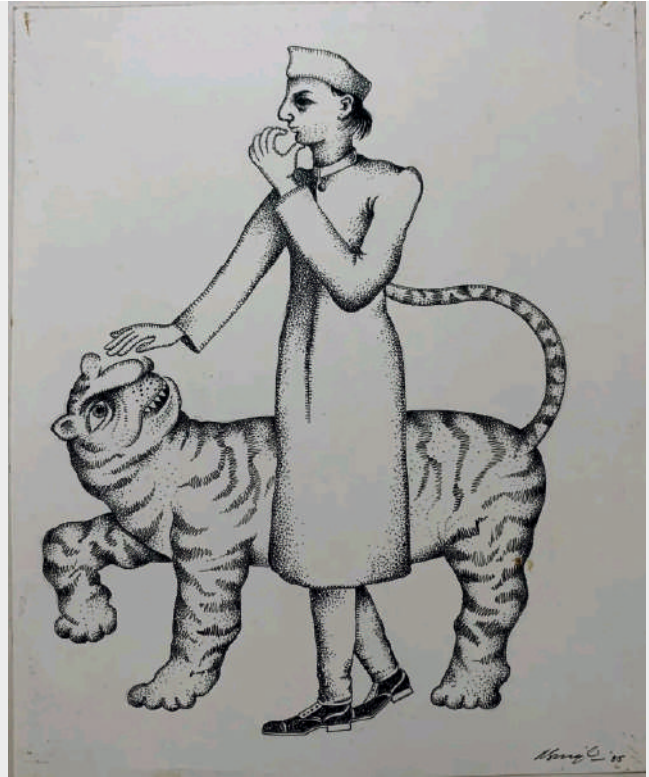


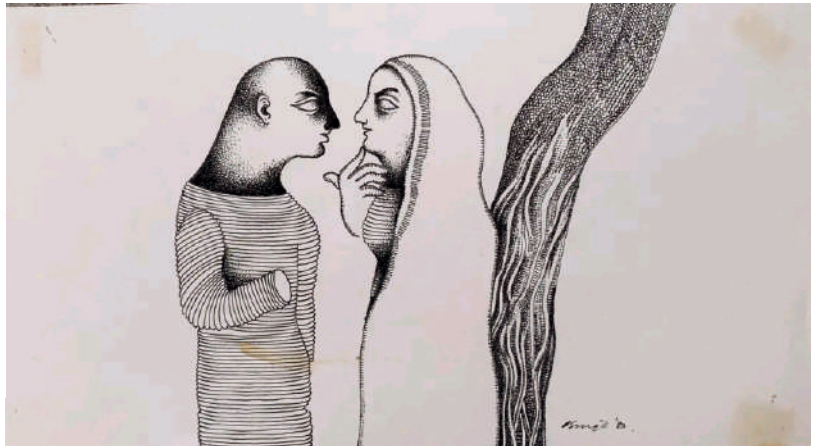
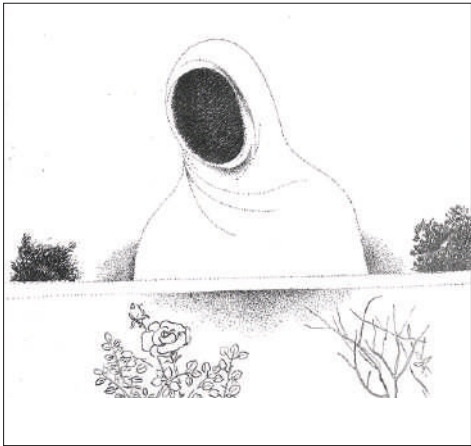
The roots of Prem Singh's artistic journey are deeply embedded in his village in Punjab and his domestic environment. This early experiential world appears in his work not merely as subject matter, but as a foundational sensibility. In his early paintings, rural women, their labour, daily routines, and the surrounding socio-cultural environment emerge vividly. Over time, this realistic approach extends beyond visual representation to express the deeper structures of society. This tendency is also visible in his later abstract works, where fleeting images of light emerge through colour. These luminous impressions may evoke the shimmering fields and glistening crops of Punjab's rural landscape.

Parallel to his painting practice, Prem Singh has developed drawing as an autonomous medium of expression. The thousands of drawings created over nearly six decades stand as evidence that, for him, drawing is not merely preparatory but a complete and mature articulation of thought and emotion. These works convey immediacy, spontaneity, and inner impulse—qualities that at times feel even more direct and intense than his paintings.

A significant exhibition featuring a selection of his drawings spanning fifty years opened on







Drawing for me

Drawing is fundamental to art. It is the basis of all visual arts. Pencil, chalk, charcoal, crayon or ink are used to produce images usually on paper. In my journey into art which now spans more than five decades drawing has been my companion all through. It not only stimulates my creative thinking but also helps in developing a visual language. Today when I look at drawings done in a variety of mediums I see not only my growth as an artist over the years but also the germination of my creativity. It's quite a revelation to encounter images stating the different states and situations over the years. At times I feel while reading my drawings like the pages of my diary and getting acquainted with the voices and sounds coming from around. To be in a world of hues and shades, feeling and emotions, ideas and thought, hopes and dreams, failures and successes, trials and tribulations, pain and pleasure, conflicts and confluence, desires and aspirations - all this and much more add to my understanding of life and the significance

of drawing in expressing one's self in time and place. Rummaging through these drawings is like living life all over again. In all my humbleness I owe my happiness to this accomplishment gained through my rigorous working in harmonising my inner voice with the visual voice. Here is a popular phrase - 'Love is in the air'. To me it seems like 'Drawing is in the air'. It's such a breath-taking experience, when one listens to the voices of images, and gets stimulated to express in all their purity.



Pen & ink drawing 10.5 x 9 Inches

The transcendental air and its swift movement when inhaled and exhaled at the 'decisive moment' culminates into a visual art work. Such moments though a few and far in between are most precious to me while I am in the act of drawing in consonance with my heartbeat. How the lines breathe on the paper like the veins in the human body and transports one to a blissful state. It's like the communion of the soul in complete unison

with the sound of water falling from the spring. For me it's like life breathing. It's an experience beyond the expression in words.

Prem Singh



April 15, 2026, at the Art Pilgrim Gallery, located within the Triveni Kala Sangam. This exhibition includes several works responding to the tragedy of the 1984 anti-Sikh riots, in which the artist gives voice to human suffering through the anguish of women. These drawings also offer a sharp critique of political and administrative failures, presenting a visual archive that spans from his early period to the present.

A key aspect of his drawings is the layered and continuous portrayal of women. Here, the female figure is not merely visual but deeply social—her roles, constraints, struggles, and silences coexist within the same frame. The deliberate obscuring of faces becomes a significant formal and conceptual strategy. This concealment suggests both the erasure of individual identity and the transformation of the figure into a universal symbol, creating a dialogue between the personal and the collective.

The nature of his line—deep, bold, and dynamic—functions not only to construct form but also to convey emotion and energy. These lines carry restlessness, tension, and movement, revealing the inner state of the subject. His careful attention to women's clothing goes beyond aesthetics; garments become markers of identity, status, and cultural context.

Alongside his women-cantered works, Prem Singh's drawings also offer a sharp and compelling engagement with broader social, political, and systemic realities. Here, the artist emerges as a conscious witness, documenting contradictions, inequalities, and tensions of his time. In several works, a tone of satire sharpens this critical perspective and encourages viewer reflection.

The ink and collage-based drawings created during the COVID-19 lockdown, which are not the part of this exhibition, demonstrate how the artist adapts his medium and visual language in response to changing circumstances. These works present a sensitive exploration of psychological and emotional states—loneliness, fear, uncertainty, and fragmentation. The use of collage becomes particularly effective in expressing a fractured reality.

Prem Singh himself has stated, “Art is extremely important to me; it gives visual form to my inner voice.” This “inner voice” is layered with memories of his childhood in Punjab, experiences of rural life, and the trauma of the 1984 riots. His art thus becomes more than personal expression—it is a complex interweaving of memory, history, and social reality.

In this context, Prem Singh's drawings can be understood as a visual language that bridges past and present. This bridge is not only about remembrance but also about introspection, re-evaluation, and reconstruction. Through his drawings, the artist continually revisits and reinterprets his experiences, transforming them into new fields of meaning.





Negotiating Space, Memory, and Material

In the shifting terrain of contemporary art practices, artist camps have increasingly emerged as sites of critical exchange—spaces where artistic production extends beyond the solitude of the studio into a shared, discursive environment. The International Painters' Camp 2026, hosted by the Krishna Setty Foundation, Bengaluru, from March 28 to April 1 at Nature Knots, exemplified such a convergence. Bringing together eighteen artists across diverse geographies,



Jatin Das

the camp unfolded within a temporally bound yet conceptually expansive framework.

Set amidst the serene and verdant surroundings of Nature Knots, the venue itself became a vital collaborator. Its natural beauty offered a befitting context, enabling artists to engage deeply with space, material, and environment, transforming the camp into an evolving creative ecosystem.

Artistic Dialogue and Participation



At the core of this constellation was Jatin Das, the Padma Bhushan awardee, whose presence functioned as both anchor and axis. His engagement extended beyond the creation of significant works to a form of embodied knowledge transmission, where process, discipline, and intuition intersected.

Equally significant was the participation of veteran artist Krishna Setty C.S., who, in addition to being an active artist in the camp, played a pivotal role as the organiser. His vision and professional approach ensured that the camp unfolded seamlessly, fostering both

artistic freedom and structural coherence.

The international



G. Subramanian

dimension of the camp was articulated through artists such as Clemens B. Sou (Austria), Julia Chubutkina (Kazakhstan), Achala Gunawardhana, Sudath Abeysekara (Sri Lanka), and P. Gnana (Singapore). Alongside them, artists including Kariyappa Hanchinamani, Basuki Dasgupta, Rama Suresh, Vijay Dhore, K.K. Gandhi, Praveen Kumar, Mintu Deka, Prabhu Harasur, Madan Lal, Kandan G., G. Subramanian and Krishna Setty contributed to a diverse and dynamic field of practices. Together, they engaged with questions of



memory, materiality, identity, and spatial negotiation.

Chitra Parishe and Public Engagement

The convergence expanded further during the one-day Art Mela, Chitra Parishe, held on March 29 and inaugurated by Jatin Das. With the participation of over 120 artists from Karnataka and other states, the event dissolved boundaries between the camp and the public, creating a vibrant and inclusive space for artistic exchange.

Live art interventions by Dimple B. Shah, Jeetin Ranger, Monica Nanjunda, Shivaprasad K.T., Smitha Cariappa, and Sridhara T. Gangolli activated the landscape through performative gestures. An added attraction was the graceful dance performance by Roopa Ravindran, which inspired spontaneous

sketching sessions by artists at the camp site, creating a dynamic interplay between movement and visual expression.

Interdisciplinary Evenings and Exhibition

The evenings further enriched the camp's interdisciplinary spirit. The world fusion music performance Svava, led by Martin Dubois from France and his ensemble, offered an immersive sonic experience, complemented by contemporary fusion dance performances by Shweta Vinyas and Niranjana.

The works created during the camp were later exhibited at Dwija Art Gallery, Bengaluru, from April 17 to 26, extending the dialogue into a public exhibition format and attracting significant engagement from visitors.

Closing Ceremony and Acknowledgements

The camp concluded with a closing ceremony on April 1, where all participating artists were felicitated and presented with a beautifully crafted bronze memento, marking the culmination of an enriching artistic journey.

The successful coordination of the camp was ensured by Ganapathi S. Hegde, Ganesh Doddamani, and Mamta Bora, whose dedicated efforts facilitated the smooth execution of the event. In its totality, the International Painters' Camp 2026 resisted closure. It remained open-ended—an accumulation of encounters, negotiations, and transformations—proposing not unity, but coexistence as its central ethos: a field where difference is not resolved, but sustained.

-Mamta Bora



Sumitra Ahlawat's Art Beauty and Dignity of Woman

Sumitra Ahlawat is a senior painter in the contemporary Indian art scene, whose work reflects both thematic diversity and emotional depth. Two major dimensions clearly emerge in her art—first, the depiction of women with dignity, beauty, and inner strength; and second, the powerful and expressive portrayal of mythological characters. Both these aspects remain equally active in her creative world and evolve together.

The depiction of women is the central aspect of her art, and within this, she adopts two distinct approaches. In the first, she presents women in traditional Indian attire and adorned with jewelry, in a grand and regal manner. These works not only

highlight external beauty but also bring forth a woman's dignity, confidence, and cultural identity. The fine



detailing of garment folds, the sparkle of ornaments, and the subtle facial expressions demonstrate her technical mastery.

The early phase of her life was spent in Maharashtra, where she received her art education. The cultural richness of Maharashtra, especially the diversity in traditional attire and jewelry worn by women, left a deep impression on her. From childhood, the images of beautifully adorned women became permanently embedded in her memory and later became an integral part of her artistic expression. This is why her paintings display a remarkable harmony between tradition and beauty.

For a long period in

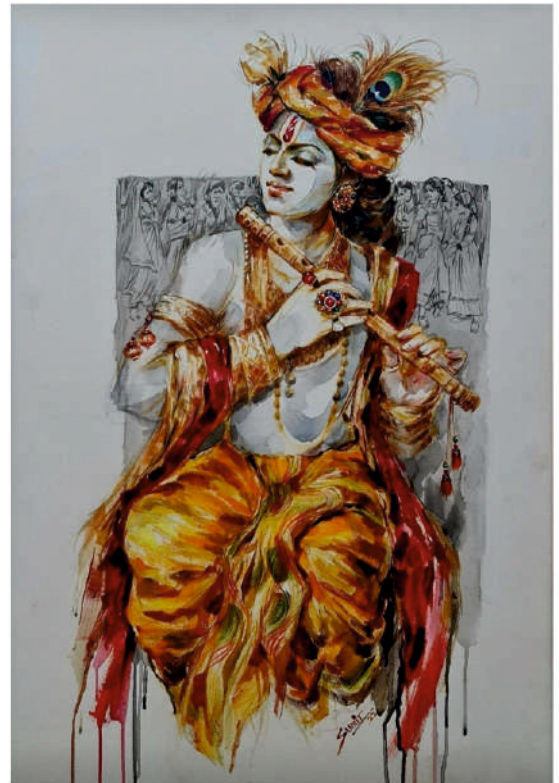


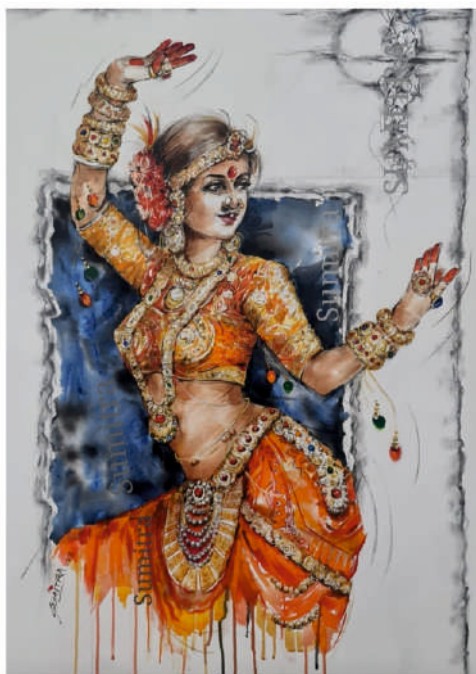
her life, she remained away from active painting due to familial and social responsibilities. This phase marks an important turning point in her artistic journey. Later, she began working as an illustrator artist and designer, which significantly enhanced her command over line, structural balance, and the ability to render fine details. This experience is clearly reflected in the balanced compositions and realistic representation in her paintings.

The second important aspect of her art is the portrayal of ordinary women. Here, she moves away from regal opulence and focuses on women from

everyday life. In these works, her perspective becomes more sensitive and humane. Particularly, images of women dancing from Haryana appear prominently in her work. Since Haryana is her home state, its folk culture, lifestyle, and the natural grace of its women are expressed organically in her paintings. These dancing figures capture energy, rhythm, and collective joy in a vivid manner.

Additionally, she also portrays women who lead very simple lives—women without any external grandeur, yet possessing deep dignity and inner strength. In this way, her art presents a





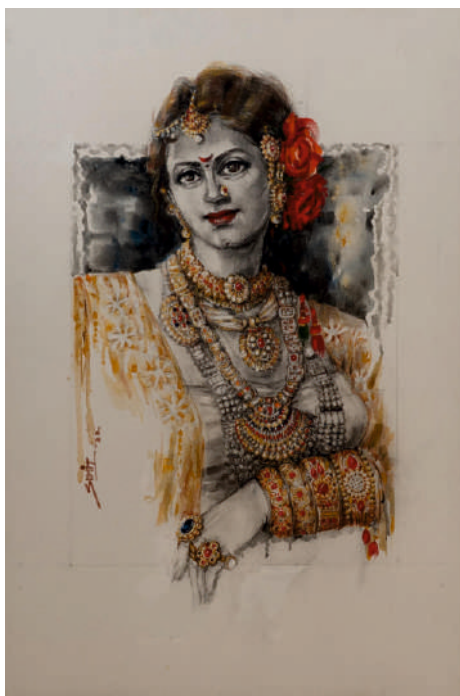
multifaceted image of womanhood—at times ornate and regal, and at others simple, natural, and grounded in reality.

In terms of medium, she primarily works with oil colours, which allow her to build layers and achieve depth and richness in her work. This medium is especially effective in highlighting the shine of jewellery, the texture of fabrics, and the nuances of skin tones. Besides this, she also works with Acrylic, charcoal and mixed media on paper, where the strength of her lines and the

intensity of expression are clearly visible.

Overall, Sumitra Ahlawat's art presents a balanced and powerful portrayal of various dimensions of women's lives—beauty, dignity, tradition, sensitivity, and reality. Her works not only offer visual delight but also introduce viewers to the multifaceted nature of Indian womanhood.

-Dr. Ved Prakash Bhardwaj





“Hues of Womanhood”

Kamini Baghel's Solo Exhibition in Mumbai

Artist Kamini Baghel's solo exhibition “*Hues of Womanhood*” was held at the Jehangir Art Gallery in Mumbai from April 6 to 12, 2026, and was widely appreciated by art lovers in the city. On the occasion of the opening, several prominent figures from the art world were present, including senior artists Ramesh Pachpande, Ramesh Awasthi, and Pushpa Pachpande. All the guests praised the exhibited works and congratulated Kamini Baghel.

Kamini Baghel's art primarily expresses the diverse dimensions of women's lives. Her works clearly reflect women's familial worlds, emotional depth, and their struggle for an independent identity. She mainly works in oil paints, where her use of

transparency and texture lends a distinctive depth to her art.

In her paintings, women are rarely depicted in isolation; instead, they are

shown within their relationships and surroundings—where their connection with not only humans but also animals and birds emerges vividly. Despite working in a figurative style, she often renders forms in a blurred manner, creating a mysterious atmosphere that hints at the social condition of women.

Her work is a sensitive exploration of human relationships, evolving within the broader contexts of nature, family, and society. Her paintings arise from everyday experiences and transform relationships—such as mother and child, man and woman, and friendship—into profound visual metaphors.

Her art is deeply rooted in the cultural milieu of small towns and rural India. Her protagonists are



Freedom in Motion | Acrylic on Canvas | 24" x 36"



Fragile Dreams | Acrylic on Canvas_24" X 24"

often women, portrayed with quiet strength and self-awareness. Through them, the artist reflects on women's identity and their changing roles in contemporary society. A balanced harmony of colors, along with simplicity and restraint, defines her style. Her works establish a balance between realism and abstraction, creating a subtle sense of mystery and emotional depth.

The titles of her works—“*Feel of Hope*,” “*Thoughts*,” “*Attraction*,” “*Atmosphere*,” and “*Gossip*”—serve as poetic gateways into her visual world. Through these titles, she offers viewers an opportunity to reflect on contemporary culture, especially the inner lives



Silent Bonds of Nature | Oil on Canvas | 20" x 26"

and social realities of women.

At a time when many artists are influenced by Western techniques, Kamini Baghel prioritizes her commitment to her own experiences and surroundings. Her approach resonates with the belief of Henry Moore that the human body is the most powerful medium for expressing emotions. This exhibition by Kamini Baghel is not only an important milestone in her artistic journey but also takes viewers into an emotional and contemplative world where beauty, sensitivity, and cultural memories come alive together.

-Dr Ved Prakash Bhardwaj



Silent Companions | Acrylic on Canvas | 24" x 24"



Gossip | Oil on canvas | 24" x 27"



Hope | Oil on canvas | 20" x 26"



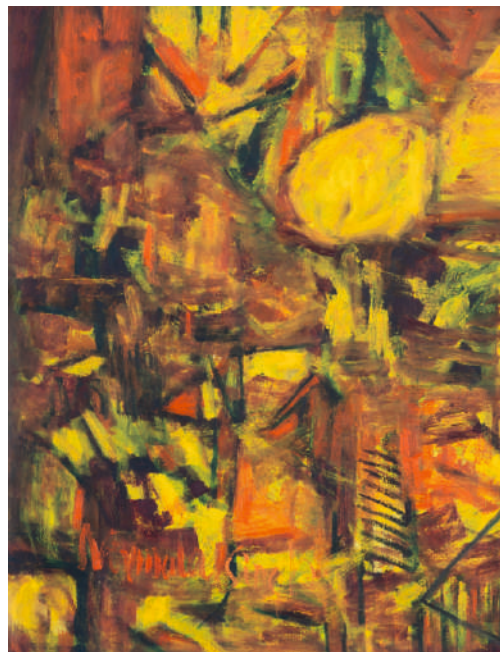
Nirmala Singh

Life & Hope

When an artist immerses themselves in the process of creation, they are not merely composing colours or lines—they are shaping the very pulsations of life. Each work carries within it the interplay of time's light and shadow, the silhouettes of memories, and the subtle whispers of emotions. Life itself is a

vast rainbow—filled with the bright hues of joy, the hazy layers of sorrow, the glow of hope, and the profound darkness of despair. There is the silence of solitude, and there is the melody of relationships. A painting gathers all of this within itself and becomes a silent narrative.

The abstract art of Nirmala Singh is a



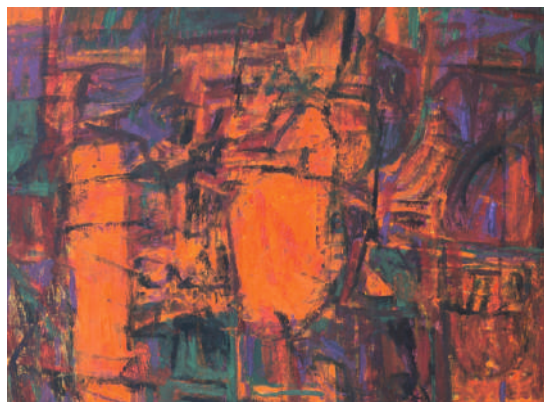
luminous chapter of this silent narrative. From the countless colours of life, she chooses the colour of “hope” and “life” weaves it onto her canvas in such a way that it transcends being just a colour and becomes an experience. There is a delicate rhythm in her palette—an unspoken music that gradually seeps into the viewer's inner world. No definite forms emerge on her canvas, no familiar shapes settle; instead, one encounters a deep interweaving of colours, within which the heartbeat of life can be distinctly felt even in silence.

Standing before her works, the viewer does not merely see—they also listen, feel, and perhaps begin a quiet dialogue with some unknown emotion hidden within them. This experience cannot be fully expressed in words; it can only be lived—like the first resonance of an unseen melody.

Her solo exhibition opens on 28 April 2026 at Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai. This exhibition is not just a display of paintings, but an invitation to engage in a profound dialogue with the many colours of life. Each canvas here is like a window—through which the viewer not only witnesses the artist's vision, but also reaches an untouched corner of their own sensibility.

Perhaps this is the most beautiful truth of art—it brings us back to ourselves, but with a new light, a renewed sense of hope.

-Dr Ved Prakash Bhardwaj



आगामी पुस्तक

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