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Meet The

CTY

COLLECTOR'S SPECIAL



ART

FEST

ART

*A Celebratory Issue Exploring
Art Festivals and Festivals through Art.*

VOLUME IV
OCTOBER - NOVEMBER 2016



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An architectural rendering of two modern skyscrapers, Trump Towers Pune, set against a dramatic, cloudy sky at dusk. The buildings feature glass facades with many lit windows, and balconies are visible on the taller tower. The base of the towers is integrated with a landscaped area with trees and a walkway. In the background, the city skyline of Pune is visible.

TRUMP[®] TOWERS

P U N E

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FOREWORD

The festive season is upon us, and what better manner to invoke the gaiety and revelries, than celebrating the influence of Art on our festivities.

In this issue of Meet the City, I invite you to journey with us, as we explore art as an expression of celebration and festivity.

Art can be visual; vibrant as the colours on canvas, or performance based like dance; sometimes epicurean in the manner in which delectable food is plated, and sophisticated as the layers in a flowing dress. Undoubtedly, art in all its glorious forms evokes myriad emotions.

I do hope you enjoy turning the pages of this festive edition of Meet the City as you soak in the joyful spirit of the season.

To each one of you and your loved ones, I extend my warmest wishes for the festive season!

Conventionally, the word festival has religious or traditional overtures. But then again, festivals can also be very communal and harbour a sense of belonging. Festivals are a form of commemoration, a celebration of sorts that bring people together. Among the various festivals that take place around us, the world also celebrates Art festivals – visual, musical, literary and many more.

With the impending festivities, Chaitra Patel, on behalf of Meet the City invites you to celebrate Art as a form of gaiety and celebrations.

We urge you to celebrate life to your fullest; and what better way to do that than to travel. Join us on a unique excursion across some of the most beautiful and distinctive Artist Residencies across the world. In our section on Art, we bring you upfront with the elephant-headed God – Ganesha. Sujata Bajaj's art works on Ganesha are a labour of love, comprising of her innumerable paintings, sculptures and etchings of the deity.

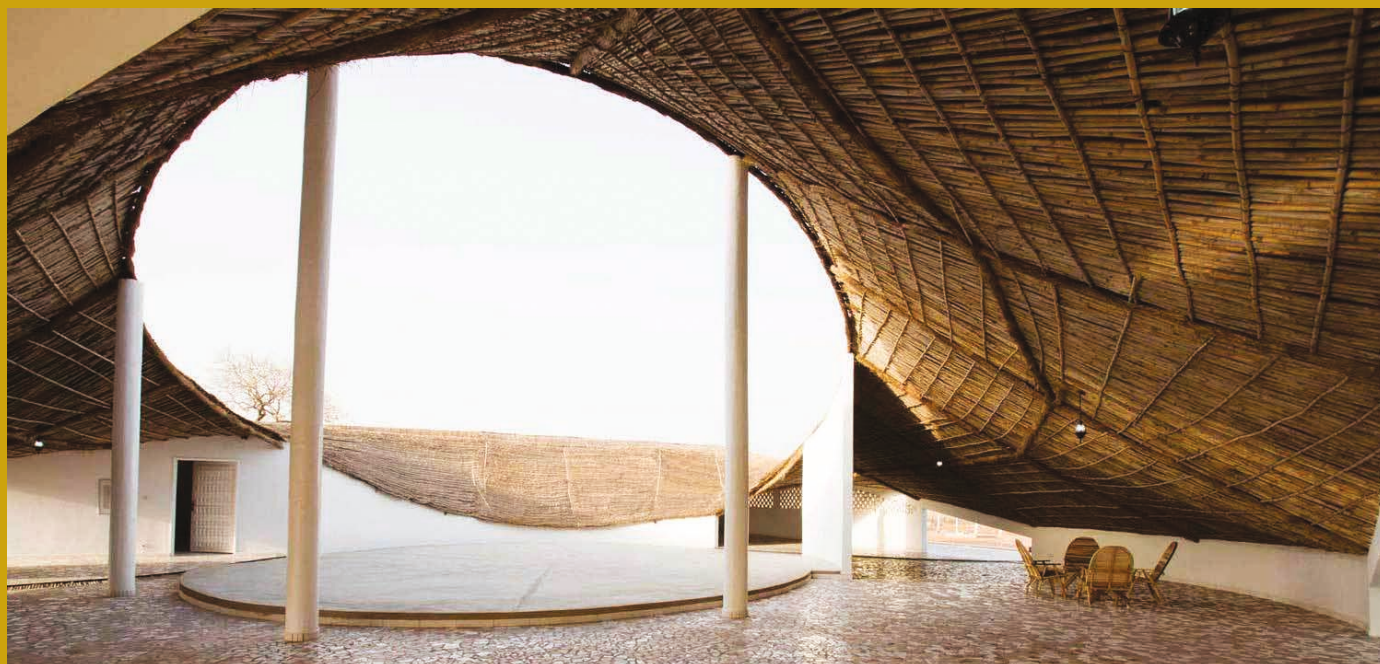
We also focus on some local Art in Pune, and introduce you to Lala, who best expresses herself through vivid colours.

© Pune Street Art by Guru, Rohit & Apporva.



Art

© Thread Art Residency, Senegal.



F I T N

© Pune Street Art by Guru, Rohit & Apporva.



CELEBRATING ART IN ALL ITS FORMS

When our mind and body are at rest, that is when we feel the most fit. Dance is the perfect tonic for the body and soul. And so, in our section on Fitness we explore the world of contemporary dance through the graceful movements of Hrishikesh Pawar.

Art is not always colour on canvas; it can also be vibrant photography. Meet Pushpamala N., a photo and visual artist – a 'performance photographer', who explores topics such as gender bias, history and places as she models for most of her artworks.

Explore the fine art of gastronomical illusions that magically transform tried and tested recipes into nothing short of dramatic theatrics at Farzi Café.

Art is present all around us; in the architecture of buildings too. Architectural designs involve creating shapes, spaces and stunning interiors that are a reflection of human emotions and sensations. In our section on Legendary Workspaces, we take you on a tour of the distinguished Express Towers, in Mumbai.

Meet the City invites you to enjoy the finer aspects of Art in our everyday life – we promise you your celebrations will never be the same again!

Contents



Cover Story

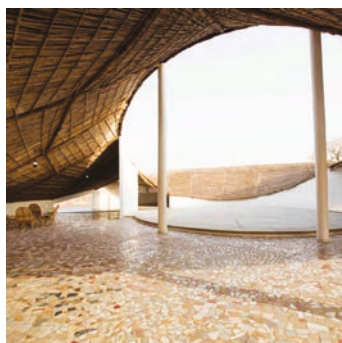
Featuring Artist Sujata Bajaj



Performance Art Pushpamala N.



Art Residencies Brisbane Airport Residency, Thread Art Residency, Senegal And Gunehar Art Residency, Himachal Pradesh



Art In Pune Urban Sketchers

Meet The City - October - November 2016

Fashion

Payal Khandwala



Street Art
Pune Street Art Festival



Contemporary Art
Lala



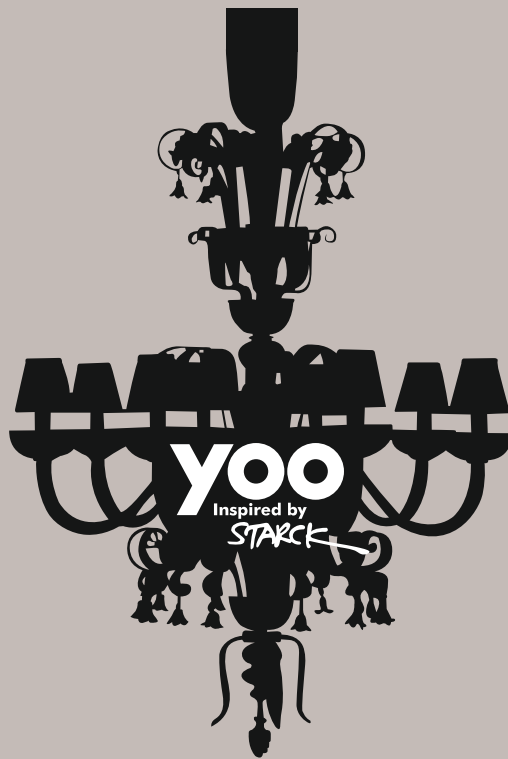
Farzifed

Launch of Farzi Cafe



Legendary Workspaces
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*Sujata Bajaj's fascination for
the elephant headed benevolent god
goes back many decades.*

**Possibly one of the most widely worshiped deities
amongst the almost 330 million in India, Ganesha
or Ganapati is the lord of new beginnings.**

**Considered the *vignaharta* or the remover of
obstacles, Ganesha is worshipped as a patron of
the arts, intellect and wisdom. Ganesha is**

***ananta*; the infinite and
beyond time.**

**Sujata Bajaj's fascination for
the elephant headed
benevolent god goes back
many decades.**

**The allure for Ganesha, for the
immensely endowed
India-born, and now**

**Paris-based artist is much
like the deity – abiding and enduring.**

**Her latest offering to the world of fine art,
'Ganapati' therefore is a labour of love,
resulting from her innumerable paintings,
sculptures and etchings
of the deity, over the years.**

**'Ganapati' offers a selection of Ms. Bajaj's artistic
works on Ganesha, liberally sprinkled with bytes
on Ganapati found in ancient texts and folklore
that only complement the stunning artworks,
and yet stand independent of them.**

Art

Uddanda

Size : 33 x 21, Mixed Media

*The allure for Ganesha,
for the immensely endowed India-born,
and now Paris-based artist is much
like the deity – abiding
and enduring.*



*Meet the City reproduces some excerpts from Ms. Sujata Bajaj's
interview, from the magnum opus 'Ganesha',
and takes you through her artistic journey over the years.*

*Ganesha is 'ananta';
the infinite and beyond time.*





“

*Red is such a powerful colour.
But it has to emerge from
darkness, or else be just another
patch for me. It will not have the
same intensity unless it comes
from black.*

”

Sujata Bajaj

Painter & Sculptor Artist

What does red mean to you?

Everything. It denotes all aspects of human life. It is the colour of passion, of love, of blood, of spirituality...the colour of the universe at its beginning, of our very existence. Red is such a powerful colour. But it has to emerge from darkness, or else be just another patch for me. It will not have the same intensity unless it comes from black. So I also use a lot of black. It offsets the red, gives it a greater vitality.

Tell us about the visual images and colours you associate with your childhood in India?

I was born in Jaipur and have been associated with Wardha, Maharashtra. My exposure to the culture of Rajasthan started very early in life with my mother, Anasuyadevi Bajaj. She made it a point to take me to various local fairs and festivals. I absorbed all those sights, sounds and smells, the riot of colours and the traditions of music and dance. I realize now how they have returned time and again to my palette and canvas.

In Wardha, we celebrated the festivals of Ganesha Chaturthi and Anant Chaturdashi with great involvement. My earliest contact with Ganapati is through prasad, arati, festivities, fun, nice clothes. The deity came home for ten days. We decorated him and gave him a new look every year. Even as children, the ideas and techniques we used for painting and adorning the idols though simple, were unique. It was a learning experience filled with excitement and for us children, it meant an unending feast. My connection with Ganapati grew stronger during my days in college in Pune, which is the Mecca for Ganesh celebrations. I would always be there every year for this huge Ganesh project with my teacher Shri M.R. Kelkar and others from college. Hordes of artists participated in making, decorating and immersion of the idols. In fact, I owe a lot to Pune for forging this very special bond that continues as I bring Ganapati home for ten days even today.

There are a lot of strokes in your work and the lines seem unusually strong...so sure!

I found my artistic vocabulary and language in Paris, where I truly started my work. At the time, I realized I did have something special when it came to lines. I started wondering why I would get into lines with such spontaneity. What was it that gave me such an obedient wrist. I can probably trace it to my college in Pune and my teacher Shri Kelkar. He had noticed my work. I asked for his guidance. The next day, he came home, where I was living with my brother's family, with a thousand large-sized



Mahodara

Media - Acrylic and gold leaf on fibreglass
Size - 97x56x43cm

*To me, Ganapati is endless.
I feel a sense of complete freedom
and liberty
in abstracting his
Image.*



Vishvakarta
Size : 25 x 23, Mixed Media

*No other form lends
itself as vividly
to the abstract as
Ganapati.*

What does red mean to you?

Everything. It denotes all aspects of human life. It is the colour of passion, of love, of blood, of spirituality...the colour of the universe at its beginning, of our very existence. Red is such a powerful colour. But it has to emerge from darkness, or else be just another patch for me. It will not have the same intensity unless it comes from black. So I also use a lot of black. It offsets the red, gives it a greater vitality.

Tell us about the visual images and colours you associate with your childhood in India?

I was born in Jaipur and have been associated with Wardha, Maharashtra. My exposure to the culture of Rajasthan

Tungabhuja

Size : 46 x 24, Mixed Media



Shringarin

Size : 46 x 24, Mixed Media



started very early in life with my mother, Anasuyadevi Bajaj. She made it a point to take me to various local fairs and festivals. I absorbed all those sights, sounds and smells, the riot of colours and the traditions of music and dance. I realize now how they have returned time and again to my palette and canvas.

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*Throughout my artistic life,
I have explored different materials in my collages,
mixed media, etchings and sculpture.*



Mushakavahana
Size : 32 x 23, Mixed Media

*When I started thinking about the Ganapati project,
I brought out my treasure of materials that
I have been collecting over time.*

*I have made extensive use of gold foil
in my work on Ganapati. In Paris,
I could only get 16 carat gold.*



Mrityunjaya
Size : 33 x 21, Mixed Media

*I was not too happy with that shade of gold so I had some
people in Jaipur make me the gold foil in 24 carat.
It was very interesting to see how
they make it in the old fashioned way.*

Lambanasika

Media - Acrylic and gold leaf on fibreglass
Size - 79x74x46cm



You know I have used bhojapatra – the white paper-like bark of the Himalayan birch tree – in my mixed media.

My mother collected it up in the mountains in 1948 when she walked with Gandhiji's bhasma visarjan yatra – the journey undertaken in the Himalayas to disperse Gandhiji's ashes.

How did the current Ganesha project begin?

In 2008, Tarana Khubchandani of Gallery Art and Soul in Mumbai brought an eminent collector, Shri Shripal Morakhia, to visit me in my Paris studio. He had heard about my drawings, and upon seeing them, offered to buy them all, as he had a special interest in artworks depicting Ganapati.

I explained to him that the works were not for sale. Everything that I make is not for selling. These drawings, for me, are personal, a part of my life. When he could not get my husband to persuade me to part with them, he requested me to make a new body of works on this subject and made me promise that he would be the first to see these works. At that point, Tarana interjected to say that if that happened, her gallery would be the one to support and showcase the project. It was then that the project of a major Ganapati exhibition was born in my mind. In fact, my husband Rune and my nephew Nirad Mehta had been telling me through the years that I must do something seriously with the Ganapati works, but it all catalysed into concretion after 2008.

I, of course, warned Tarana that I was quite obsessive at work and, like all perfectionists, hard to please. But she gave me practically all that I wanted without compromising on anything and that's how this entire body of work came about.

You combine with colour so many diverse elements in your works, so many materials. Tell us something about them.

The process of materialization starts with visualization. Throughout my artistic life, I have explored different materials in my collages, mixed media, etchings and sculpture. When I started thinking about the Ganapati project, I brought out my treasure of materials that I have been collecting over time.

I have made extensive use of gold foil in my work on Ganapati. In Paris, I could only get 16 carat gold. I was not too happy with that shade of gold so I had some people in Jaipur make me the gold foil in 24 carat. It was very interesting to see how they make it in the old fashioned way.

I have incorporated some old original Ganapati miniatures which I have gathered over the years as well some recent ones. Alongside, I also tried to understand miniature art before I could make use of it. I remember someone saying "see with your ears, hear with your eyes". Colours and music are complementary for me. That is why, I suppose, I have been drawn to using some old music notes in my works. I need to find a rhythm with my colours when I paint.

I have also used clippings of Marathi newspapers from Pune, printed during the time of the Ganapati festival. Newspapers from France and Norway, maps of France and other European countries, maps of the metro, mind games, crossword puzzles, old French documents and wallpaper...these materials reflect my belonging to these worlds, my life in India, France and Norway. When I try and unify these different sources of inspiration by using them in my works, I am, perhaps, trying to unify my own life...trying to make sense of it, harmonizing it.

You speak of an emotional connect to the worlds you draw your materials from. Do you have any stories associated with the materials as well?

You know I have used bhojapatra – the white paper-like bark of the Himalayan birch tree – in my mixed media. My mother collected it up in the mountains in 1948 when she walked with Gandhiji's bhasma visarjan yatra – the journey undertaken in the Himalayas to disperse Gandhiji's ashes. She gave me these precious pieces in 1980 and told me to make good use of them since they carried a very special, positive energy. I used some of the bhojapatra over 20 years ago and now I have used it again in the current work on Ganapati.

Then in 1981, I went to the Himalayas. While I was visiting the temple of Triyuginarayana, I saw many hand-written pieces of paper on the temple walls and I was instantly attracted to them. The priest of the temple helped me collect a good number of these papers, which I have used in my etching collages. These are said to be wish-fulfilling papers. And I can tell you that my wish – to get those papers so that I could use them in my work – has indeed come true!

*For me, often, it's that orange which
overtakes my memory of the idol.
Even now, I like to walk the streets
of Jaipur when I am there, but I visit the
temple only when it is not crowded,
to saturate myself in that colour,
to soak in its calm.*

I have admired the works of Matisse for the last 25 years, particularly his paper cuts. They inspire me a lot and I have often felt a great urge to experiment with coloured paper. Finally, I could bring this inspiration into my etching collage series on Ganapati and it has been a very satisfying experience. Sometimes I have used eight different cut-coloured papers. In one of them I used an old envelop, more than 20 years old for sure, that had interesting folds and faded patina.

Sarvadeva
Media - Acrylic and gold leaf on fibreglass
Size - 66x49x30 cm



As I said earlier, I have grown up with ancient texts from our rich spiritual traditions. So, it came very naturally that I should incorporate words and verses from the Gita and the Vedas in my work. I believe that my role as an artist is to try and combine the past with the present so as to reveal, thereby, the formidable strength of our cultural roots. So I choose my texts, I know their source and their meaning. But they are not there to be read even though they put in place a strong cultural context to the work. They are just one of my colours when I incorporate them in my paintings. Their shade and space becomes a part of the overarching structure of the work.

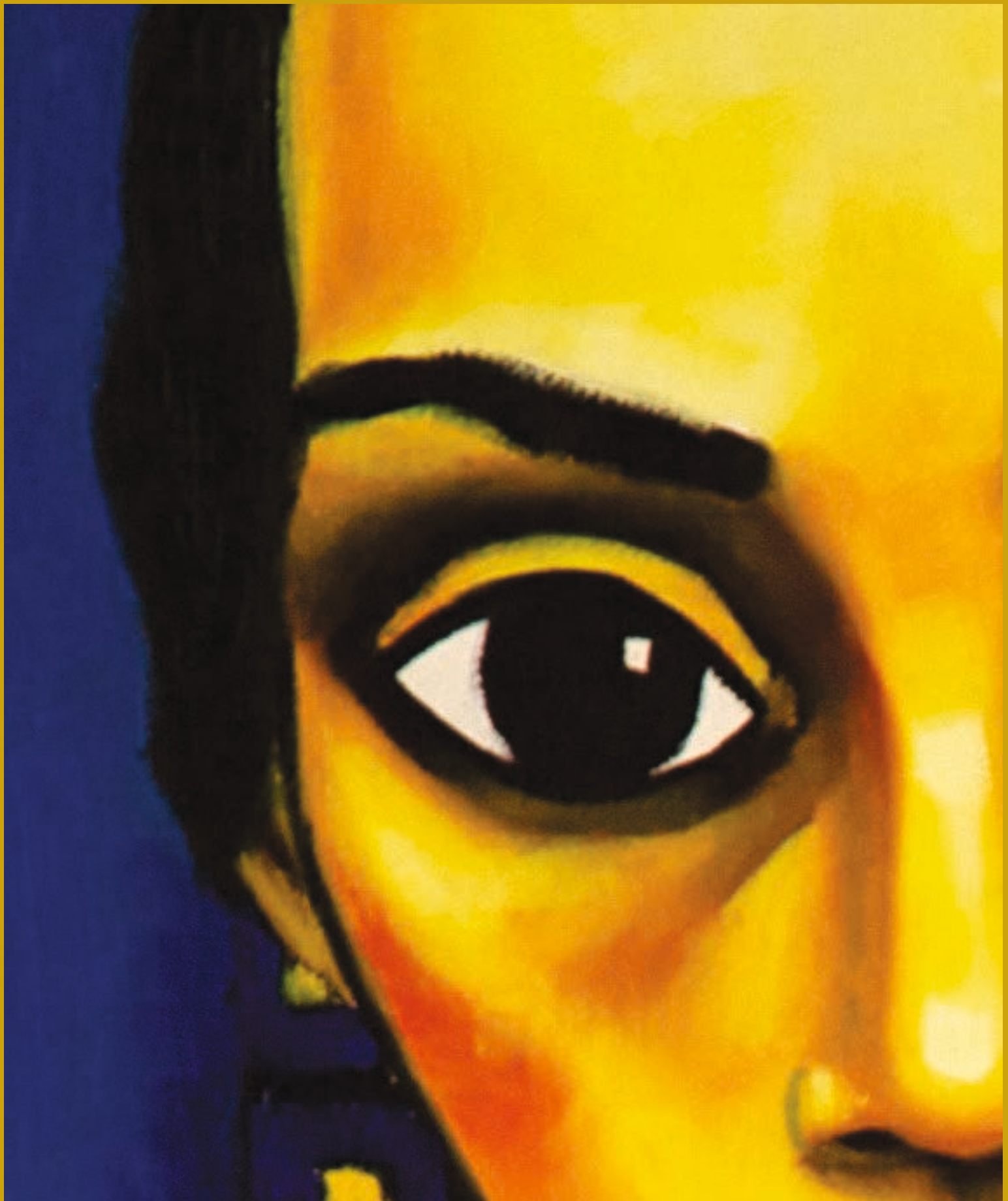
At another level, I have also added horoscopes, bahikhata – ledgers or account books, and lesser known texts which are indicators of our Indian heritage.

That apart, I have been making my own paper – an important material in my mixed media works – in a factory for handmade papers in Pune for the last 25 years.

Art

*The
Flight
of
Lala*

*BY
RASHMI ALEDOOR*





The Flight of Lala

A young Lala, proclaiming to her audience of stuffed animals that she would grow up to become either an astronaut or artist. Young Lala would sit endlessly painting on sheets of paper, never boring of it.

Her art teacher at high school, recognising Lala's precocious talent, would often refer to her as his "Little Escher".



Artist Lala was born of romance. Her Bolivian mother Gloria met Claus, a German man living in America, on the beaches of Miami in the 60s. He was chef to none other than Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton. They fell in immediate love and after having Lala in 1972, the family shifted to Hamburg.

Her parents tell Lala that she was born with a brush in her mouth. They remember a scene from her childhood – a young Lala proclaiming to her audience of stuffed animals that she would grow up to become either an astronaut or artist. Young Lala would sit endlessly painting on sheets of paper, never boring of it. Her art teacher at high school, recognising Lala's precocious talent, would often refer to her as his "Little Escher" and encouraged her passion for drawing, composition, and her bold use of colour.

At the age of 19 Lala signed herself into an art university, but struggled to preserve her sense of artistic integrity under the strict



“

*It was clear to me that I wanted to
discover my own expression the hard way,
by studying the works of my most beloved idols, first of all the
German Expressionists, and the French artists
of the early 20th century.....*

”



Lala's art is reminiscent of scenes from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. "In a certain way, one could say, that our time lacks this inspirational spirit of breaking free of old traditions (Expressionism was a shock for the established artists), of utter elegance (everybody was dressed with style and simple extravagance) and not to forget the musical development - Jazz had just become popular and tango was accepted by the upper class as a respectable form of ballroom dance. As I adore beauty in all its forms this is the perfect scenario for my characters to appear in, on my canvas. I feel it depicts a sense of timelessness perfectly."

The legendary artists Vincent van Gogh and Frida Kahlo also feature quite often in Lala's vibrant artworks. "Frida Kahlo and Vincent van Gogh are both great symbols for all that matters to me as an artist. To express whatsoever you feel inside. To not care of the opinion of others. To follow that strong urge to paint with strong colours, all that holds meaning and energy for me. Frida Kahlo is the most appealing female artist. She is beautiful but in an unconventional way. She is bold but not rude. She is strong but sensitive. She stands upright even though her life was filled with difficulties. She speaks her truth in her paintings. Van Gogh gave himself totally into finding a new expression of how he sees the world; of how he experiences beauty. He was on fire and so are his paintings. He never saw success in his lifetime but he never stopped. This is every artist's quest. To find this unique expression on canvas, that holds the greatest potential of being transmitted to the beholder."

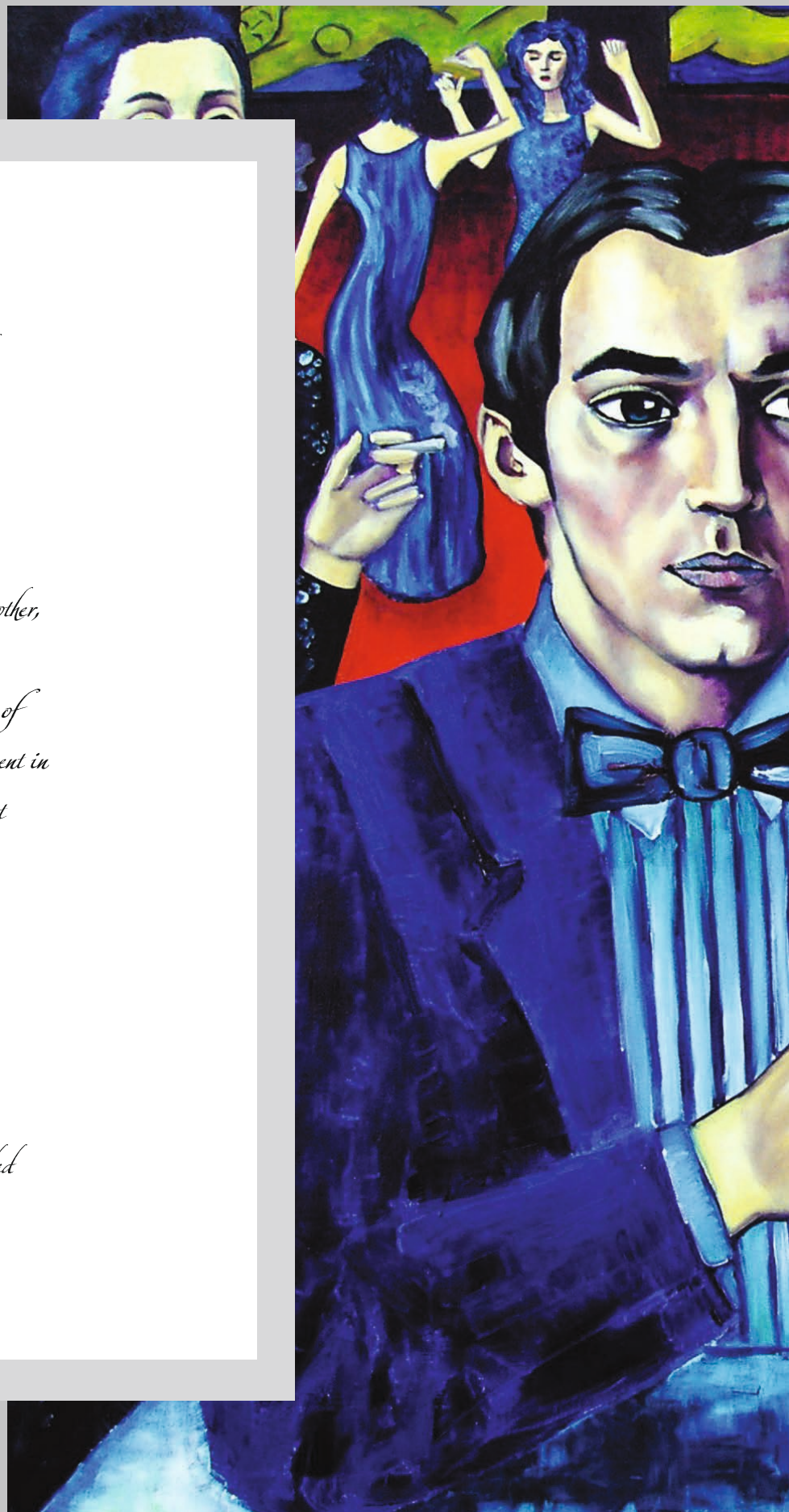
But the most prominent character in her paintings is that of Lala herself. She explains that all of us experience life through our own finite imaginations; that we see the world through the coloured glasses of our opinions. "We can't see the other because we only know ourselves. So we see in the other, ourselves. So in a way part of me is always present in everything I depict on the canvas. And as I love to tell stories in my paintings, stories that concern me, I am often included in them." Her use of colour is most remarkable. In line with her love of expressionism, the colour in Lala's artworks is intense and non-naturalistic. And true to the ideas of Expressionist art and her own being, her work tends to be emotional and thought-provoking. "Through colours I receive energy, they vitalize me, they represent certain feelings as aspects of life. Blue is the most important colour to me. It is cooling but also deep. It is the ocean, the sky, closeness and distance. It is strong but not overwhelming. It is life."

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Meet The Artist

Lala

Icarus was a protagonist of a well-known Greek myth that warns of the perils of complacency and hubris. Icarus was the son of the great craftsmen and inventor, Daedalus who had been imprisoned by King Minos of Crete. Not willing to suffer captivity, Daedalus made two pairs of wings by attaching feathers to a wooden frame with wax. He gave Icarus one pair, and cautioned him to neither fly too low so that the sea's dampness may clog his wings, nor too high so that the heat of the sun may melt them. But Icarus, growing ecstatic at his ability to fly, paid no heed to his father's warnings. He was flying high towards the bright heat of the sun, when the feathers on his wings came loose and he plunged to his death.

Henri Matisse's Icarus tells of a different story – one that is not very tragic as the true tale is intended to be. He depicts a falling Icarus – a scene that is supposedly a tragic moment of

inevitable death and a collapse of hope, yet Matisse creates an almost meditational picture. His art shows bursts of yellow sunlight against a rich blue sky and his Icarus has a bright red spot in place of his heart which seems mysterious and calm, free of panic or fear. It is interpreted by many as Matisse's way of illustrating Icarus' passion for flight! Lala identifies deeply with this interpretation. She has finally painted her own version of Icarus on canvas, as a man who dares to dream big, and does not mind dying for what he believes in. "Painting to me means daring to expose yourself to everybody's eye. Daring to go for what you feel needs to be materialised in colour and form. Daring to distort reality to bring to life your own vision. And doing it unconcerned with public recognition of your merit. Because this is what you have to do. As Icarus had to fly."





Art



Pushpamala N
Yogini, 2002
After Deccani (Bijaour school) miniature painting, circa 16th century
The Native Types – Shoot 9C print on metallic paper
20 x 24 inches

GENIUS OF A CULTURA L PROVOCAT EUR. THE



Pushpamala N
The Spy (after the portrait of Countess Castiglione by Person),
2009
Giclee print,
39.4 x 31.5 inches

The Genius of a

Born in Bangalore, the prolific and iconoclastic artist, Pushpamala N., started her career over twenty years ago as a sculptor. But her true passion lies in subversive photo-and video-performance. Through her artistic devices, she exhibits a keen interest in narrative figuration and critical realism – using symbols of popular culture in a surprising context to bring to the fore, issues related to gender, race, and history.

Pushpamala began creating tableaux and photo-romances in the mid-1990s, always choosing to be the subject of her art, masquerading as ironic personalities. Her work is at once sharp, witty, and entertaining.

The artist's work has been widely exhibited both within India and internationally. Some of her participations include 'New Indian Art', Manchester Art Gallery, UK (2002); 'Ways of Resisting', Sahmat, New Delhi (2002); 'Century City' Tate Modern, London, UK (2001); 'Moving Ideas' Hoopoe Curatorial, Montreal and Vancouver, Canada (2001); and Open Circle International Workshop, Mumbai (2000).

She conceived the experimental film, 'Paris Autumn' (2006), during a residency in Paris. Commenting on her historically informed work, The New York Times art critic, Holland Cotter, said, "Photography and filmmaking made its way in India immediately after their invention in Europe. This is one reason South Asia has a long history of sophisticated and quality work in both media. Pushpamala N. takes account of that history and makes it her own."

Rashmi Alevoor interviews the enfant terrible of contemporary art, Pushpamala N.

CULTURAL PROVOCATEUR

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Holland Cotter
Art Critic - The New York Times





Pushpamala N
Lakshmi, 2001
After oleograph from Ravi Verma Press
The Native Types – Shoot 3C print on metallic paper
20 x 24 inches

Please speak to us about your use of photography to capture fiction. Why is it important to you?

As an artist, and not a photographer – (I work with photographers who shoot under my direction) – I see the photograph as a medium to make art like other art media. I am also interested in the alternate histories of photography which have been neglected. The camera, whether in still photographs or movies has always been used for both recording as well as fiction making, from the very beginning of its history. Man Ray, for instance, created images in the dark room with chemicals and objects and manipulated photographs. The pin hole camera has been used for centuries by painters as a tool for drawing. Fairground panoramas of landscapes were created with early cameras. Colonial ethnographic photographs, seen as scientific records, were actually tableaux created in studios with props and backdrops. When photography came to India, miniature painters used the photograph as a base drawing to paint on. They would paint a fantastical background behind the portrait of a Maharaja for instance. The traditional portrait studios also used painted backdrops to pose their subjects. For a time, photography was seen as capturing the true reality, and it became 'of the moment' in photo-journalism and candid portraits. This idea has been strongly critiqued in recent times as even famous war photographers have been found to have composed and built up their images. But what is so interesting to me is that a photograph can be both a true record of the moment, as well as fictional- when I create a tableau for instance, on location, or in the studio with elaborate sets, it records that moment in history and becomes a document of the time, as well as a work of fiction. This gives it an edge, a here and now feeling, which traditional media do not have.

What do you desire in terms of audience reaction to your work?

There are different layers to my work. I am interested in the idea of entertainment and use humour, irony, emotion, popular culture and cultural memory to catch the interest of the audience and to break the impasse that seems to exist between art and the 'common' citizen. I try to make the work enjoyable and not alienating, while they address serious contemporary concerns. There are also many references to other art



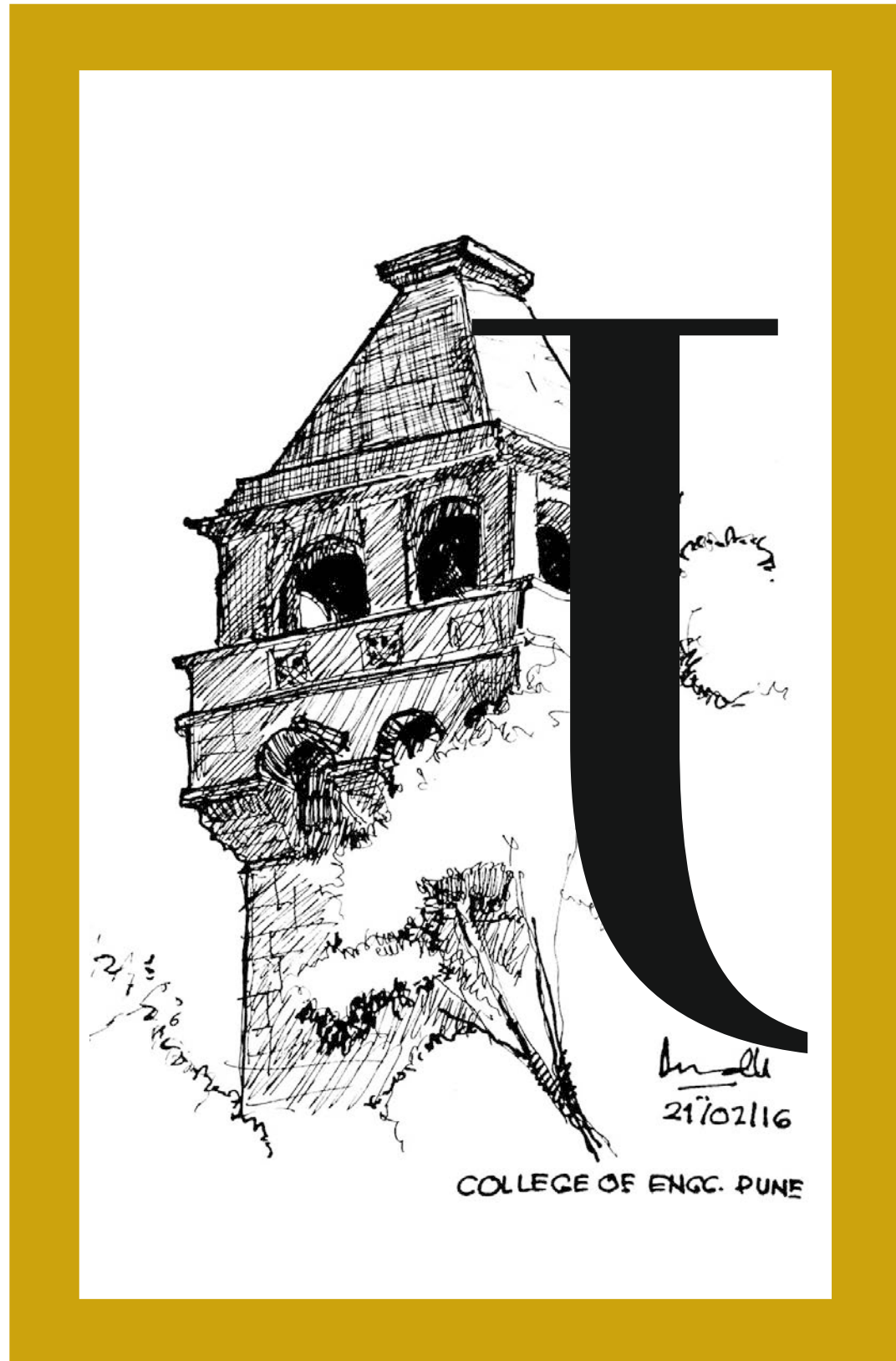
Returning from the Tank
After oil painting by Raja Ravi Verma
The Native Types- Shoot 2
2001

works and familiar resonances from life and experience. History, politics and theory form another layer. So the work can be responded to / unpeeled in various ways. I have very interesting encounters with people who enter the work in their own ways - as autobiography, as events they remember and connect with - sometimes it can be an academic or theoretical interest as cultural theorists, film scholars, feminists have been writing about my work. And curiously, my recreations of well-known images is creating a confusion between the original and the 'copy', the real and the fictional, which is very

Pushpamala N
The slave and Her Slaves
Giclee print
53.9 x 43.3 inches
2009



Harcourt
PARIS



U

Sketchers rban



Sujeev Joshi
Architect & Founder

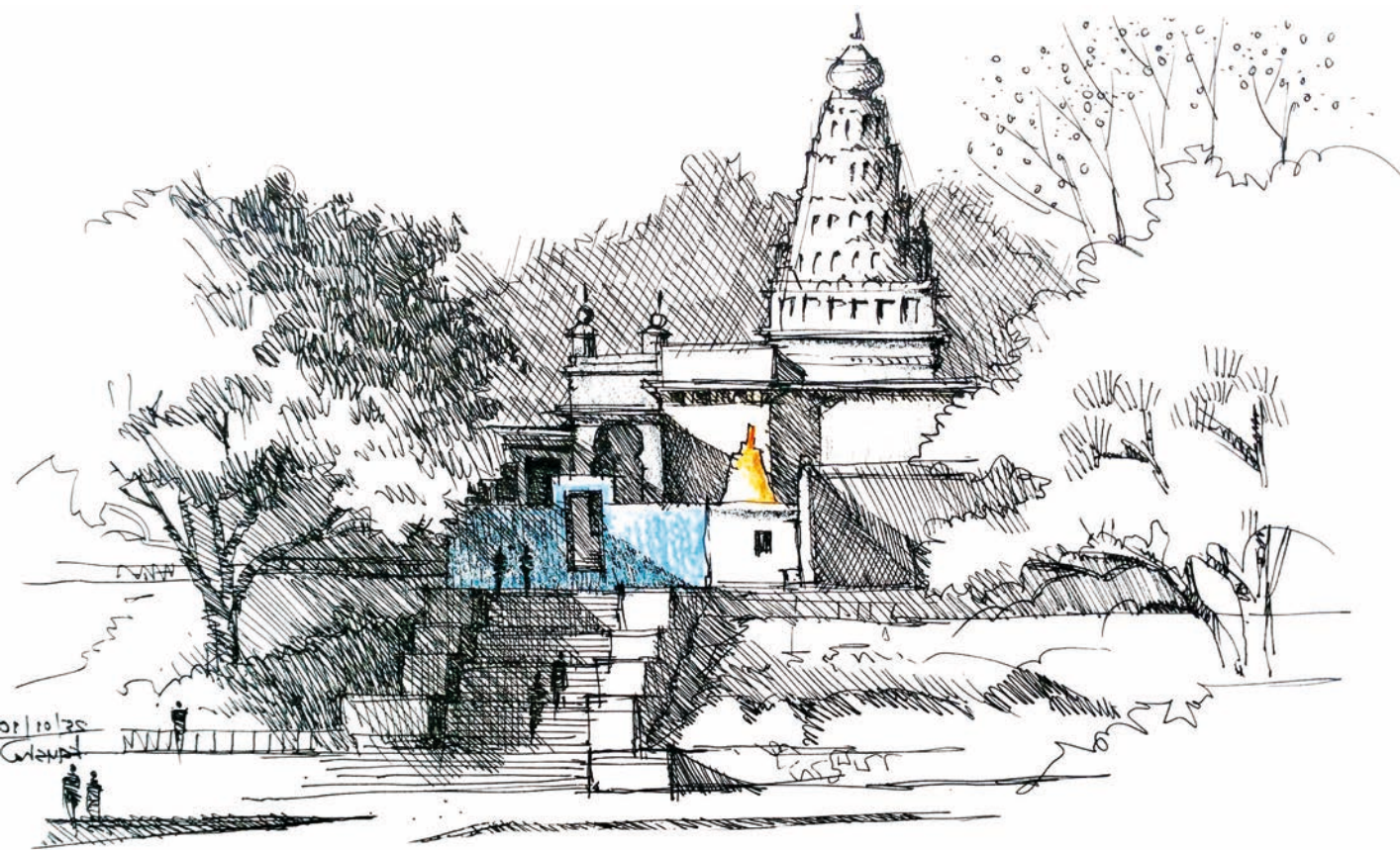


*Urban Sketchers,
a non-profit ensemble formed
by an eager all-volunteer
group of people
committed to nurturing a
world-wide
community of artists
from all walks of life,
practice on-location
sketching.*

members meeting regularly to revel in their passion for drawing.

Speaking about Urban Sketchers in Pune, Sanjeev Joshi, the Indian correspondent says, "The Urban Sketchers community was formed in the United States, and I joined them as a correspondent, sharing my sketches in their blog- blog.urbansketchers.org. I think I have always been an urban sketcher as I sketch

Sumant Joshi caught up
with the India correspondent, Sanjeev Joshi.



The history of Urban Sketchers dates back to 2007. Journalist and illustrator Gabriel Campanario, from Seattle, formed an online platform for the sketchers of the world, asking a group of them to share their work on the blog, and thus Urban Sketchers was born.

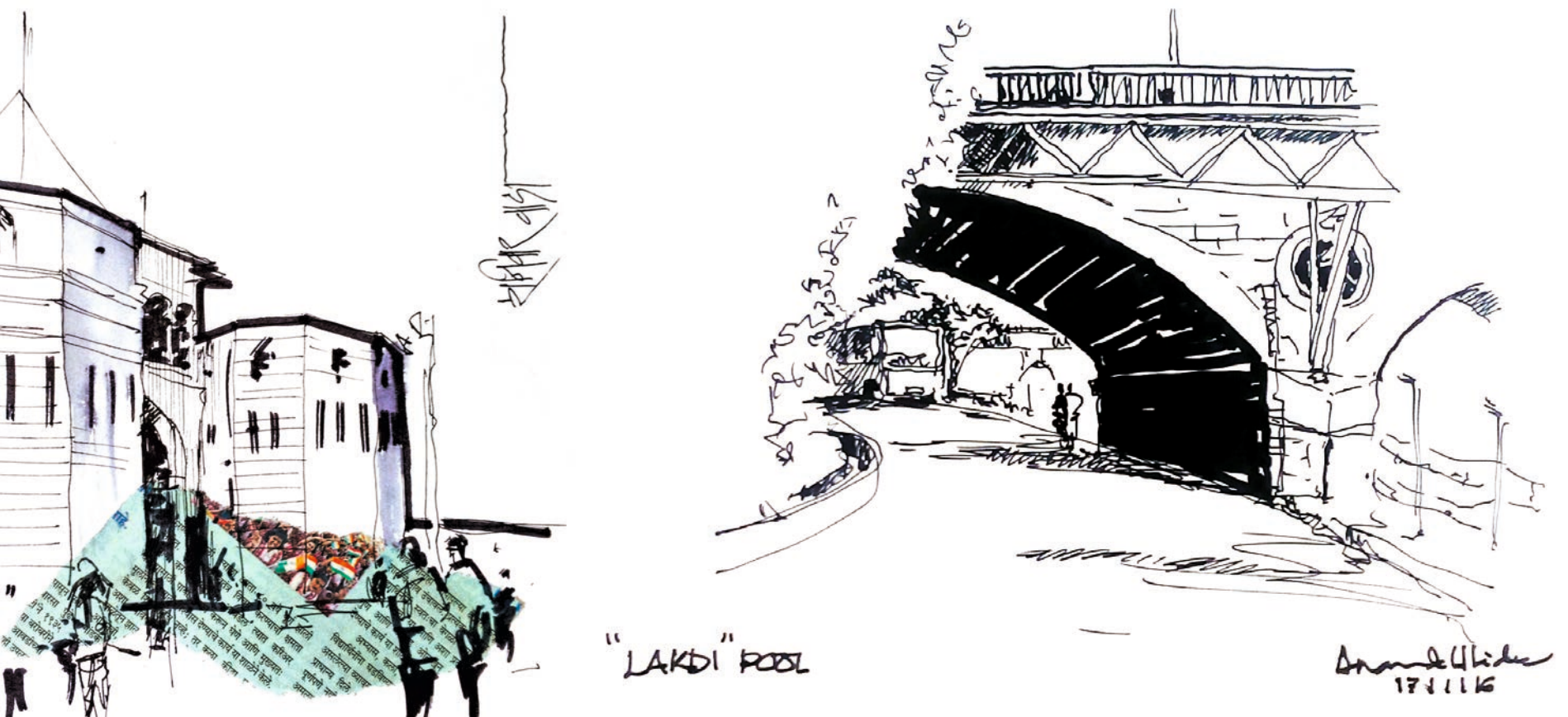
Campanario's Urban Sketchers soon spawned a global community of artists who would interact with each other through their drawings and stories. Today, the city of Pune is one of the Regional Chapters (as they are known) of Urban Sketchers with numerous

a lot within the city, and even when I'm travelling to various countries."

Pune as a city has always welcomed and appreciated art. The city in itself is a near perfect setting for sketching, given its picturesque locales, historic structures, and a mélange of traditional wadas and state-of-the-art urban complexes. So it was only a matter of time that the Urban Sketchers community found a home in the city. "I realised the power of sketching in a group when I was selected to conduct a sketching workshop in an Urban Sketchers

symposium held in Singapore in 2015. That made me think and encouraged me further to form a local chapter here in Pune, the first ever in India," says Sanjeev.

Urban sketchers across the globe are connected with each other through blogs and online media, sharing their work and interacting with each other on a regular basis. Such ardent communications and



interactions is what makes Urban Sketchers a tightly knit community. As Sanjeev puts it, "Since it's a vast community spread across the continents, we use email, blog and Facebook as a means of communication. The community is very helpful. I also host sketchers from overseas, whenever they visit Pune, and they host me whenever I travel abroad."

Apart from group sketching activities, Urban Sketchers also organises the International Urban Sketchers Symposium once a year. An event that takes place in a different city each time, attracts many



Pune Street Art Festival

Seated across multidisciplinary artist Harshvardhan Kadam (aka, InkBrushHome), at Pune's iconic German Bakery, brings you almost face to face with art. Dressed in casual jeans and t-shirt, with stains of his last painting still etched on his clothes, Harshvardhan is passion-personified as he talks about his pet project - The Pune Street Art Festival. Speaking about it, his eyes light up and his enthusiasm beats even that of a child! "I want to make Pune the most painted city of the world", with this profound yet simple opener, he takes us on a journey of art, through the Streets of Pune.

Aastha Dogra
finds out more for Meet The City.



The Pune Street Art Festival has developed social spaces where people come together for a discourse on art.



The Pune Street Art Festival has evolved more into an ongoing community project, rather than merely being an annual festival.



The idea behind this festival was to introduce art in the lives of common people, who are far removed from it otherwise.

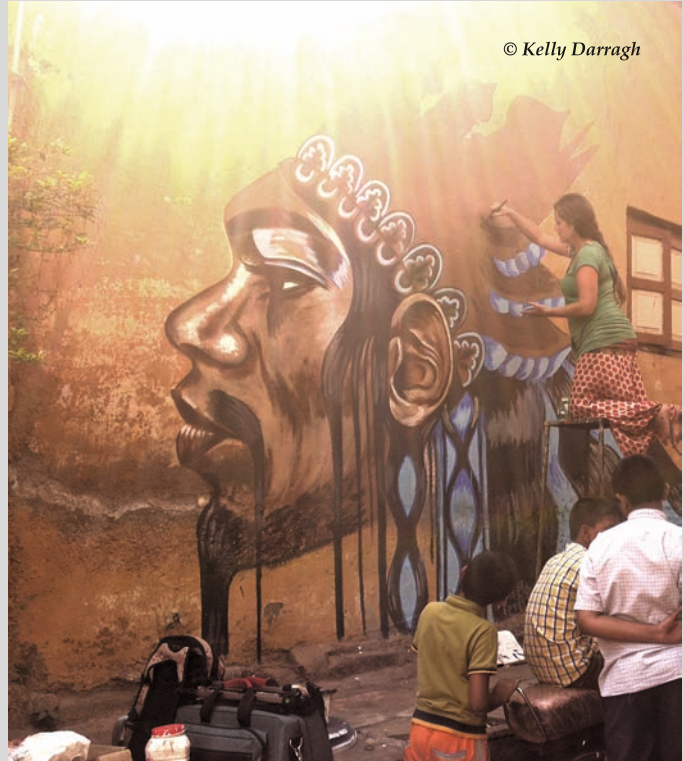


Kasba Peth was chosen as the commencement point for the festival, owing to the fact that it was from here that the historical city of Pune originated.











The Pune Street Art Festival started in the year 2012, from the city's oldest neighbourhood, Kasba Peth. The idea behind this festival was to introduce art in the lives of common people, who are far removed from it otherwise. As Harshvardhan puts it, "The world over, art is confined to art galleries and is the prerogative of a select few. The common man is kept away from it and thus loses a great opportunity to learn from it. With the Pune Street Art Festival, we wanted to change this. Art was brought directly in front of the locals through the festival, giving them the freedom to look at it closely, interpret it according to their own sensibilities and get inspired from it simultaneously." Unlike art galleries, public spaces can't be defined and limited. Art Galleries are niche but public spaces are much more interactive and thriving, making them the perfect backdrop for an art festival.

Kasba Peth was chosen as the commencement point for the festival, owing to the fact that it was from here that the historical city of Pune originated. Kasba Peth is one area in Pune, which has a surprise element woven into its each and every corner. At every turn, one comes across a house, window or a door which has that comforting, old world charm. It is in Kasba Peth, more than any other

city area, that one finds true blue Pune-kars. It is a goldmine for archaeologists and artists alike as it has so many temples, antiques and other interesting things buried in its womb. It is an epitome of Pune's history, where everyone knows everyone!

The Pune Street Art festival has evolved more into an ongoing community project, rather than merely being an annual festival. There is no particular theme that is chosen for the paintings. And every artist is given a freehand to paint whatever he or she wishes to. Artists from different countries, cultures and ethnicities, lend their unique vision to the walls of Pune city. The result is for everyone to see - some of the most unique, rare, living works of art, sitting pretty on the city walls.

The Pune Street Art Festival has lent an aesthetic appeal to the otherwise old, worn out lanes of the city. The festival, now an art movement of sorts initiated by Harshvardhan under the aegis of his studio Inkbrushnme, in collaboration with the Pune Municipal Corporation as well as a few private sponsors, creates a bank of open spaces and walls where artists can come and paint, all year round.

The purpose of the movement is to inspire and facilitate street art in all its forms, and turn it into a sustainable, participatory movement which stands the test of time. Harshvardhan recalls, "When the artists began painting on the old city walls, within no time it became a community activity. The local people approached the artists with refreshments and the local kids showed them surfaces on which they could paint."

The Pune Street Art Festival has developed social spaces where people come together for a discourse on art. It is an art movement that has inspired, affected and created a unique community.

Artist Residencies

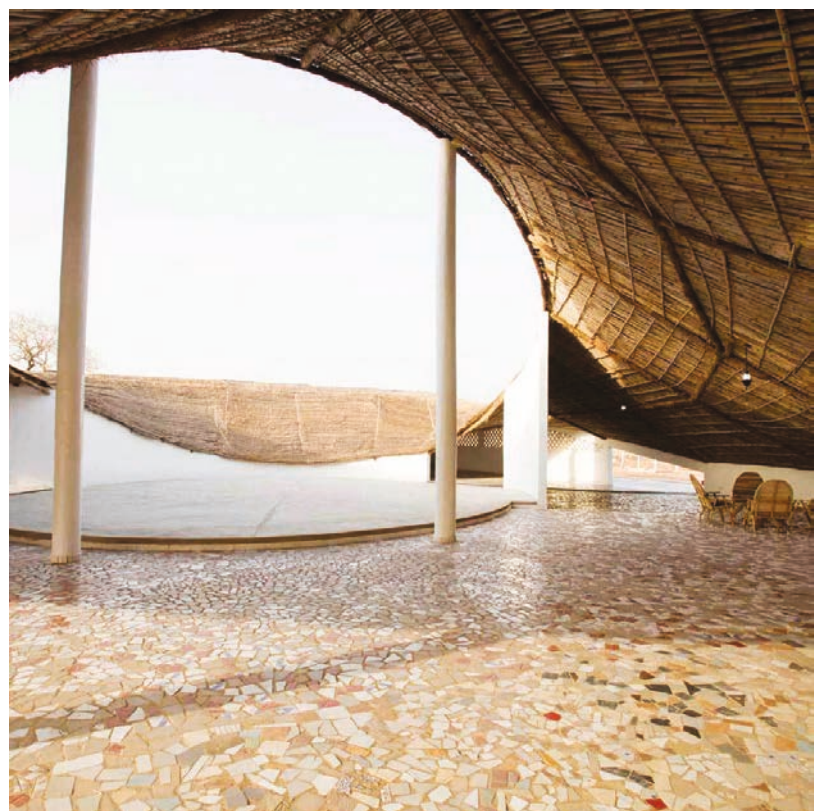
Art Beyond Galleries

One good thing that art can do is, it can allow people to see the world through their eyes and see the world in a whole new way. Art is an unceasing effort to compete with the beauty inside you and the beauty outside you, and never succeeding. Every work of art connects the observer with the creator of the art, and subsequently with all those who receive the same artistic impression. And what inspires the creators of art can be as wide and unpredictable, as the stretch of their unimaginable thoughts.

Artists fall in love with strange things. For them a great image or a scene astride a broken tree reluctant to let the light fall through it, is far more enchanting than a hundred neat clichés.

Connecting the 'unusual' vibes of artists with 'usual' inspirations, Artist Residencies are the next big inspirations in the art world. Taking little everyday things, these residencies upend the common notion of art. Artistically more open and even experimental, these retreats are the incubators of inspiration for artists, offering them a wider and focussed environment to connect with their surroundings.

Maheep Singh Rathore whisks you off on a travel sojourn to the hermitages of art, across some of the best artist residencies around the globe.



© Thread Artist Residency, Senegal.



© Brisbane Airport Residency, Australia.



© Gunehar's Makeover Mela, Himachal Pradesh, India.

Thread-Artist Residency and Cultural Center
Senegal



All Images © Thread Artist Residency, Senegal.

All Images © Gunchar's Makeover Mela, Himachal Pradesh, India.



*Thread is a socio-cultural centre open to artists
who solely believe in art without barriers of
language and countries.*

Gunchar's Makeover Mela
Himachal Pradesh, India.



From local Gujjar fashion to the communicative story seeds from all over the world in 'Gujjar Pop', the artists have efficiently engaged the villagers in turning the entire village into a vibrant canvas.



Brisbane Airport Residency

Regular visitors to the Brisbane International Airport might have spotted an artist sitting in a dimly lit immigration area or the crowded departure lounge, with a sketchbook and pencil in his hand, doodling the activities that abound the airport. This is Robert Brownhall, an Australian artist, the first artist-in-residence for the Brisbane International Airport

All Images © Brisbane Airport Residency, Australia.



(January-June, 2016). Adding to the art and culture of the city of Brisbane, the Airport Corporation initiated the Artist-in-Residence Program in January 2016. The residence has facilitated intimate encounters between artists, corporations and the dynamic environment of airport, to produce the art and drama of everyday events on canvas.

While most people see airports as a centre of human bustle, Brownhall views it as a thing of beauty and

introspection. "The airport is inspirational to me because it is a place of great visual stories and hard edge modern architecture. It is such a futuristic place," says Brownhall. "It also has great personal stories unfolding constantly. There are farewells, greetings and energetic crowded scenes. In contrast to this the tarmac becomes a mysterious and lonely place late at

symphony orchestra will present six 'pop-up' performances in the international and domestic terminals, with three of these performances taking place before the end of the year.

With the sound of wind brushing against the dry hay grass, mixing with the loud take-off of airplanes, the



night." The airport's flat open spaces, dark long runways and large glass windows, opening up to the blue Queensland sky playing with the shades of light, fascinate Brownhall who is well known for his streetscapes, immensely.

Australia's Brisbane Airport (BNE) recently announced that a team from the Queensland Symphony Orchestra (QSO) will be the new Artist-in-Residence after renowned realistic artist Robert Brownhall. The

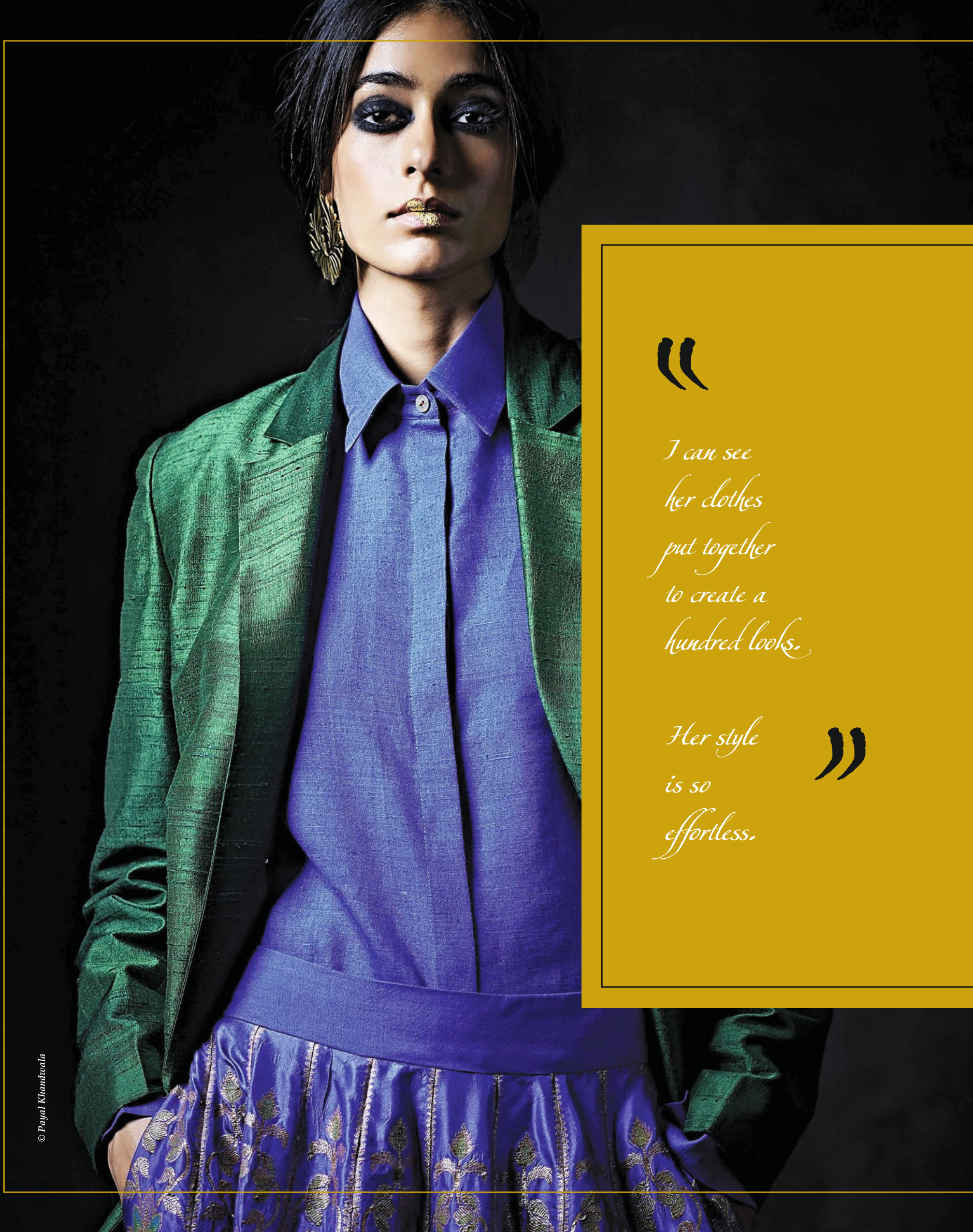
airport can go from tranquil open scenes at the window to a beehive of activity, with people racing in every direction. Brisbane International Airport presents myriad subjects and stories, and depicting these through the magic of art is indeed timeless. In fact, Art is the achievement of stillness in the midst of chaos.

FA SH ON

“I think of fashion as an art form as well as an industrial product - and something that has to be sold well and has to be of high quality” said Hussein Chalayan MBE, one of Britain's most innovative designers. And like Chalayan, there seems to be a growing breed of young designers, in India too, for whom the worlds of art and fashion seem to fuse with great ease, leading to a blurring of lines between fine art and dress designing. Payal Khandwala is one such designer whose approach to clothing and dress making is in many ways an extension of her first love – fine art. Seeking inspiration from the world around her, at times from her daughter's geometry homework too, Payal approaches clothing much the same way as she does her art – as a shift in canvas. Deftly orchestrating colours and textures to create silhouettes that are in a sense clutter free, yet at the same time luxurious, Payal marries the splendour of brocade and hand-woven silks with real-world minimalistic designs.

Chaitra Patel talks to Payal Khandwala, about her eponymous label and what inspires her as she creates timeless attires for the intelligent, non-conformist woman.





“

*I can see
her clothes
put together
to create a
hundred looks.*

*Her style
is so
effortless.*

”

I try to keep things simple. I prefer my clothes to be clutter free so I make sure they are lightweight and practical. I don't like my clothes to be heavy and cumbersome so I keep the silhouettes streamlined. We use a lot of brocade because it is luxurious and in my opinion is the king of textiles. We also use a lot of hand-woven silks for their drape and texture. So, I try to tow a fine balance with a combination of traditional techniques and textiles but craft them in modern silhouettes. I keep it minimal in my approach, I retain the drama but also keep it sensible.



*Issey Miyake, Sabhyasachi,
Pero, Botice... all teamed
with finds from flea markets
and a good pair of
boyfriend jeans.*

As an artist turned designer, how do you perceive the world of fashion – what are the similarities and differences in the two forms of art, in your opinion?

Both are a study in colour and proportions. Both are art forms and great ways to channel creativity, but to me fashion is a team effort, it is a business and constantly needs back-end support. To me art is more freeing, more insular. I have more control and it is so much more personal. When I make clothes I'm aware that it is a product and it must meet certain requirements. When I paint however, I have no rules.

Having said that, my training in colour theory, the human body and composition informs a lot of the choices I make when I design clothes because I look at fashion through a different prism.

Why the shift from fine art to fashion – what was the inspiration for this shift?

It was not a strategic decision at all. An opportunity presented itself to showcase at the Lakme Fashion Week and I was struggling on my return from New York because I could never find clothes that I wanted to wear. I had studied design and I thought this would be great shift in canvas for me. I figured maybe I should design some clothes and perhaps there were other women like myself that had trouble finding well priced clothing that was stylish, comfortable and luxurious. And if there were, they would find the label. And indeed there were, because the label grew organically from there but also quite quickly.

Also, I hope it is not a complete shift, I haven't had much time to paint since, but it's not that I've abandoned it either, painting will always be my first love.

You represent the present lot of young designers known for their line of ready to wear clothing. How do you marry the sumptuousness of traditional craftsmanship with your real-world and minimalistic designs?

I try to keep things simple. I prefer my clothes to be clutter free so I make sure they are lightweight and practical. I don't like my clothes to be heavy and cumbersome so I keep the silhouettes streamlined. We use a lot of brocade because it is luxurious and in my opinion is the king of textiles. We also use a lot of hand-woven silks for their drape and texture.

So, I try to tow a fine balance with a combination of traditional techniques and textiles but craft them in modern silhouettes. I keep it minimal in my approach, I retain the drama but also keep it sensible.

Where do you seek inspiration from, for your designs?

It really does come from all quarters, travel, a painting, a photograph, sculpture, architecture. It could be as simple as the colour palette of a beautiful rug, or abstract as the repetition in a piece of music, or like my SS'16 collection, inspired by something as banal as my daughter's geometry homework. I think you just have to be open to be inspired.

What is "fashion" to you?

I'm more interested in style than I am in fashion. I like to make clothes that I can wear, clothes for real women. I think fashion can be a little more frivolous which is great, it's a flight of fancy and a beautiful way to express yourself, but I'm more concerned with creating something that is realistic, practical and beautiful. To me this is more challenging. It's also more gratifying than making something that focuses on trends or based on seasons. I like to make clothing that can be timeless, but still relevant. To me fashion is more temporary but style lasts much longer.

*In your own words, how would you describe your style?
How is your style a reflection of yourself?*

I'm not a very formal person by nature and I don't take myself too seriously. My clothes are relaxed but I like beautiful things, I like details but I also love my comfort. I think my design philosophy is an extension of this.

With (Indian) fashion going "global" these days, how important do you believe it is to preserve the crafts and handlooms of India, and in what manner does your style reflect the same or follow this principle?

It is integral. In the quest for being current I feel we must not leave behind what makes our country so unique. Our comfort with colour, our ability to play with drape, our plethora of hand-woven textiles. This is what makes our fashion landscape so special. We must support this industry and help it grow. If we make clothes to appease the West, reference what is happening on international runways, we will be left with a design voice that is homogenous and just add to the clutter. I hope that my style straddles a voice that is relevant but rooted in our cultural legacy. And not in a way that is overt. It doesn't need to be validated by the West, or stuck in the nostalgia of our past. It is global in its spirit, but with an Indian soul.







Art + itecture

*"I believe Art and
Music separates
us from being animals.
They bring out the finesse,
the delicate nature of
human beings.
A person without
art or music is just a
cash register."*

- Aijaz Hakim



Aljaz Hakim © The Loft, New York

Out in the snow without my father's umbrella.

Fall Semester, 1987, I was on the way to the Promised Land. Real life began once in the US. I was around twenty-one, alone, no friends, no relatives, no uncles, aunts, no Indians on the horizon.

The first semester was tough. In Northglenn, I remember walking in the evening 10 blocks from the last bus stop, the only guy on the pavement and scared of my own shadow. There was also a sense of freedom, a caution to the wind kinda (sic) freedom.

By the end of the second semester I had made it on the dean's list. They bumped me up to the post professional degree and waved off a year of credits. The third semester I stood first in my class in architectural design. Cameron Kruger was sniffing my tailpipe and I had been bumped up for the second time. During this time, I was made a teaching assistant to Dr. John Hoag who was considered the foremost historian on Islamic architecture. I was also assistant to Dr. Mark Gelernter who was the historian in charge of illustrations of "Sir Banister Fletcher's - the history of architecture- 18th edition". This was one of the turning points of my life. By this association, my roots of architecture spread deeper, my sense of buildings more permanent, my history of architecture richer.

The greatest life altering moment of my life.

Just before graduation, Cabell Childress Architect selected me to apprentice. Cab as we all called him was one of the last greats of American architecture. It has been an honor of my life to serve under him. For the next two and half years, my entire complexion changed. The Bombay boy disappeared, the guitar was left behind. I was consumed by the act of building. Cab was relentless, the more I performed, the more he gave me responsibilities. I learned a lot from him and I drew a lot, sometimes sleeping in the office for days. The old man did not let up. During those days we were commissioned for the "Eagle County Government Center"; I remember every weekend I would drive his Beemer 125 miles to Vail, Colorado and discuss plans with the The Eagle County Planning Commission.



There was music in the wind.

In the summer of 1990 I moved to Los Angeles. The first sight of the Pacific Ocean and I knew I was home. The LA scene was vibrant and so was the sunshine.

During the good old days, LA was free and open, and inviting. While waiting to get a job I would borrow my room mates' expired IDs and attend classes at SCI-ARC. This went on for months and I was dropped off by friends on their way to work, while I attended school. SCI-ARC introduced me to a whole new world that I didn't know existed. From formal architecture to experimentation and exposure to Antonio Citterio and Terri Dwan; Craig Burdick; Craig Hodgetts and Ming Fung, Thom Mayne and Morphosis to name a few. Time flew by fast and money dried up quickly.

I got myself a little beat up Honda Civic and landed a job at Van Tilburg and Partners. The office was located on 3rd Street Promenade, Santa Monica. Those were fun days, work day long and party all night. Repeat 5 days a week. The weekends were special. Orange Juice and omelettes on Redondo Beach with a new found California friend from the night before.

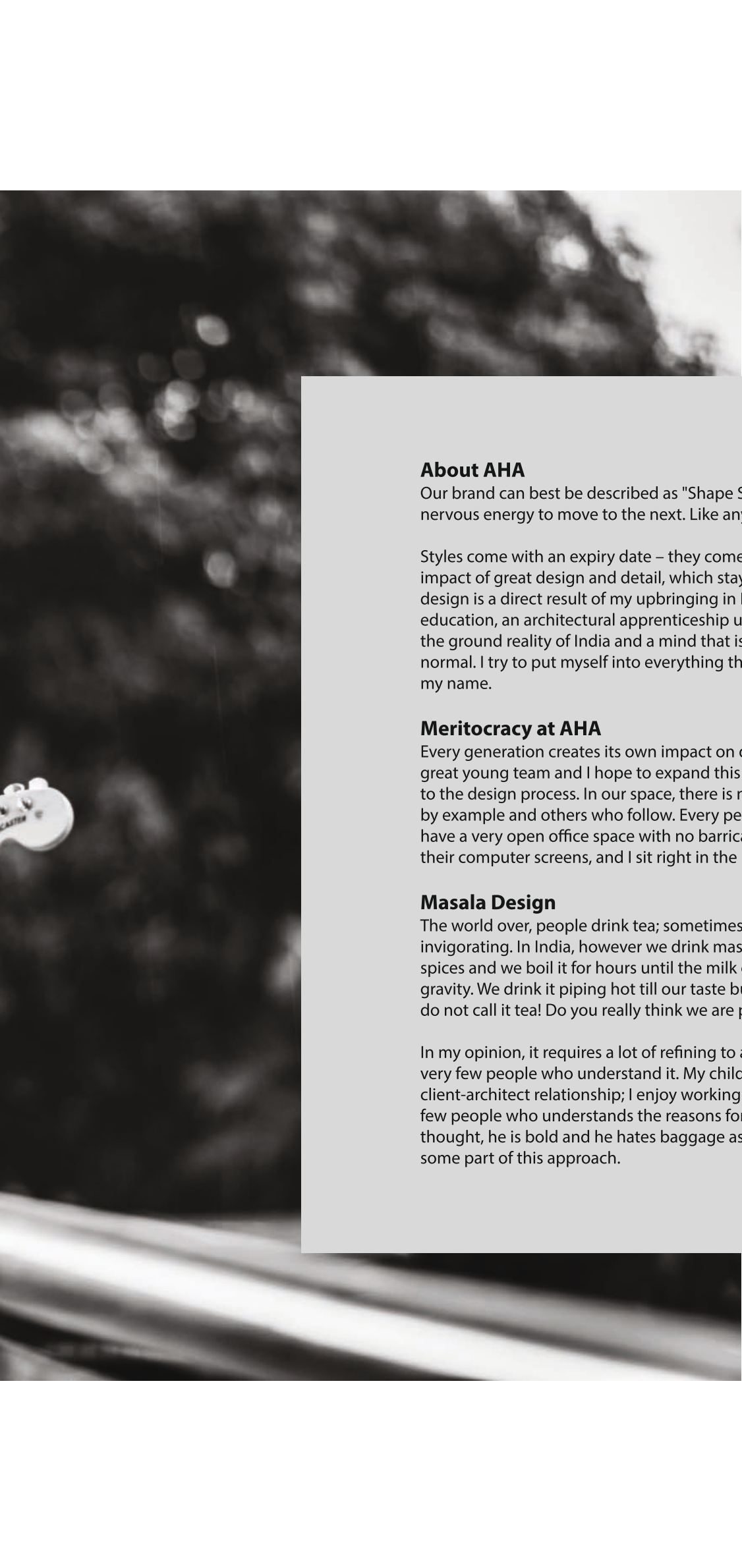
I graduated then to Altoon + Porter; a firm specializing in mall design and known worldwide for their expertise in this arena. I was also broke as a result of an expensive lifestyle. It was time I put my head down and clocked up some serious work hours. During the day, I would draw, draw, and draw.

Aijaz Hakim © The Loft, New York









About AHA

Our brand can best be described as "Shape Shifting". We never sit still, there is always a nervous energy to move to the next. Like any brand, we are constantly evolving.

Styles come with an expiry date – they come and go. What does matter however is the impact of great design and detail, which stay on forever. Having said that, my way of design is a direct result of my upbringing in Bombay (as it was known then); a strict ICSE education, an architectural apprenticeship under one of America's greatest architects, the ground reality of India and a mind that is constantly in conflict with accepting the normal. I try to put myself into everything that goes out of our studio, after all it carries my name.

Meritocracy at AHA

Every generation creates its own impact on design. Currently in our 23rd year, we have a great young team and I hope to expand this team to our new office. They all contribute to the design process. In our space, there is no great or small. There are some who lead by example and others who follow. Every person who occupies a seat has earned it. We have a very open office space with no barricades; everyone cooking something up on their computer screens, and I sit right in the middle of the kitchen!

Masala Design

The world over, people drink tea; sometimes with a spot of milk. The tea is light and invigorating. In India, however we drink masala tea, infused with all kinds of herbs and spices and we boil it for hours until the milk changes its composition and its specific gravity. We drink it piping hot till our taste buds are numbed and until that happens, we do not call it tea! Do you really think we are prepared for minimalism?

In my opinion, it requires a lot of refining to achieve a pure minimalist design. There are very few people who understand it. My childhood friendship has developed into a client-architect relationship; I enjoy working with Atul Chordia because he is one of the few people who understands the reasons for minimalistic design. He encourages new thought, he is bold and he hates baggage as much as I do. Our projects together reflect some part of this approach.

A7HA for SPAZIO

© LEMA for Spazio, Pune.



Your views on Spazio, as a brand that now makes international luxury furniture available in Pune?

Spazio is a bold statement. There was only one person in Pune who could have made this, and he has done so unapologetically. Like everything else, he boldly treads where no one has been before.

Aijaz Hakim
Architecture on
SPAZIO
at Trump Towers
Pune

© LEMA for Spazio, Pune.



Any of your personal favourites (furniture/ accessories, etc.) at Spazio?

I have known these brands since more than two decades now. They are one of the best in the world. I particularly like the MAXALTO range. The furniture has been designed by one of my old teachers Antonio Citterio. Truly it defines minimalism. It exemplifies the fact that design cannot be weighed by the kilo.

I find the brand LEMA to be a real winner for the Indian subcontinent. Its products are value for money in a price sensitive market like Pune. The construction of the furniture is at par with the other known Italian brands. I find that their wardrobes are without frill, modular, modern and elegant, they suit the Indian clients' insatiable appetite for storage.

Spazio Spices

*Truly it defines minimalism.
It exemplifies the fact that design cannot
be weighed by the kilo.*

*I find the brand LEMA to be a real
winner for the indian
subcontinent.*

*LEMA wardrobes
are without frill, modular, modern
and elegant, they suit the Indian
clients' insatiable appetite
for storage.*

© LEMA for Spazio, Pune.



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from the regions
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Fitness



The dance circles of Pune
By Hrishikesh Pawar

The dance circles of Pune have been resonating with the sound of rhythmic tapping feet keeping time with the background score, always in sync with something new, something unconventional. And, the person behind much of this avant-garde influence on the Pune dance circuit is the young danseur Hrishikesh Pawar.

Chaitra Patel met Hrishikesh Pawar, not just a dance guru, but someone who has essentially been helping people celebrate life through the subtle and artistic movements of the human anatomy; through dance.

*There comes a time in our lives,
as we grow in age and intellect that we realise
the purpose of our existence
is not merely to follow the
crowd in pursuit of a mainstream profession.*

*The inclination to
pursue not just a career,
but to celebrate life and our very existence
and being, is what pushes
artists to collaborate,
with the sole
purpose of creating something
beautiful –*

*A Fine Work Of
Art.*





"When I look back at my past, I think there was nothing else other than dance that I could have thought of doing. I was fascinated by the stage, performances, backstage thrills, props; there is so much energy involved in creating something beautiful; hence dance because I believe that is what I was destined to do", says Hrishikesh. Always 'a lost soul' as he describes himself, Hrishikesh found meaning in music and dance. After trying out various forms of dance for a perfect fit, he chose Kathak under the tutelage of Maneesha Abhay, before he went on to study under the legendary Guru Pt. Rohini Bhate. "I think Kathak resonates my personality and I also think there is a masculine quality to it as a male dancer. There are very few male Kathak dancers and I felt that there was a need for me to move differently". And, it is precisely this urge to do something different that set Hrishikesh off on an adventure to Dresden and later Berlin, in a quest to learn Contemporary Dance and express himself through this medium.

Dance is an artistic form of human expression, and India has never been an outsider to this art form. Dating back to the Vedic ages, classical dance, music and theatre in India have been well documented in ancient texts such as the 'Natya Shastra'. Contemporary or modern dance in India on the other hand has a relatively younger history and is not classified in a manner similar to that of classical dance forms. The result - originality, creativity, growth, and a whole new dimension to the

"We not only celebrate ourselves but also help others come together for the sole purpose of creation".

*"I think Kathak resonates my personality
and I also think there is a
masculine quality to it as a male dancer.
There are very few male Kathak
dancers and I felt that
there was a need for me to move differently".*







"I believe dance has magical powers but how does one talk about it in an academic curriculum. Hence I started the Dance for Parkinson's project which is affiliated to the Mark Morris Group, New York. I wanted my dancers to understand the effect of dance on a human body and its value through this project. It also looks at why dance education is important in our society",

body, listen to it or even push its creativity. A human body is and will always be moving because that's how we are built". Dance according to Hrishikesh serves as a perfect vent, especially for city dwellers who are more often than not trapped within the confines of their professional lives. Speaking of how his dance school serves as a perfect haven to his students, Hrishikesh says, "A dance class is a constant to their daily lives and gives them enough energy to get back at their desks".

At The Centre for Dance, Hrishikesh and his graceful team of dancers believe that people deal with stress in a number of ways; our movements routinely depict a pattern which prompts us to set fitness oriented goals and reach out and listen to our bodies. And therefore, The Centre for Dance offers a variety of courses, specifically tailored for different age groups and requirements. One such programme that Hrishikesh passionately immerses himself into is 'Dance for Parkinson's disease'. "I believe dance has magical powers but how does one talk about it in an academic curriculum. Hence I started the Dance for Parkinson's project which is affiliated to the Mark Morris Group, New York. I wanted my dancers to understand the effect of dance on a human body and its value through this project. It also looks at why dance education is important in our society", he explains. Dance for Parkinson's is supported and conducted in association with the Sancheti Institute for Orthopaedics and Rehabilitation and comprises of body movements borrowed from both Classical and Contemporary dance forms. Hrishikesh describes this class as an 'aesthetic experience', where narrative, imagery, music



Legendary Workspaces

EXPRESS TOWERS

The history of Mumbai dates back many centuries. Once a small fishing village, Mumbai has witnessed a growth story like none other, eventually transforming into the financial capital of India. And, the story of this eclectic city's growth is best told through the development of its phenomenal architectural landmarks.

Mumbai's skyline is dotted with a variety of architectural styles that have been influenced by the times — some reminiscent of a bygone era, others contemporary and futuristic, and yet some others that are timeless masterpieces.

While many of the city's iconic heritage buildings today were constructed in the art deco style of the 1920s and 1930s, it was not until the 1960s and 1970s, when the city made its debut as a key player on the world economic stage that it gave rise to the need for contemporary office spaces.

One such building in the 1970s was the Express Towers at Nariman Point, which was planned and constructed with a vision to be the most modern building of its kind in the country.

*Four decades on, under the guardianship of its new owners -
Panchsil Realty and PE major Blackstone,
the legacy of Express Towers continues to hold strong.*



*Only this time, it tells a new story — one of new
beginnings and makeovers;
all the while retaining the promise to take the heritage
and asset value of
Express Towers to newer heights.*

**Join Chaitra Patel on a tour of the very
distinguished Express Towers.**

A Lasting Legacy

An office building that rises from a terrace garden above a 3-floor high podium, emphatically sets itself apart by offering one of the best panoramic vistas in town – the view of the mighty Arabian Sea! Indeed, a luxury not common to many in Mumbai's madding corporate world. This is Express Towers, an architectural landmark that for over forty years has been providing a unique business edge to international and domestic corporates.

A Heritage Landmark

Express Towers has always been a valuable edifice, and even more so because it was the only high-rise building that its legendary architect Joseph Allen Stein designed, making it also the only example of his work in Mumbai.

Stein's designs and work encapsulated his philosophy, i.e. "urban needs balanced with natural features", making it a Green Building by reducing the overall impact of man-made construction on human health and environment. In his own words, Stein wanted to raise "an example of international urban environment at an office and institutional level that demonstrates the form and means to restore ordinary urban life with orderliness..." If Stein's architectural vision and skill have influenced the building's sublime layout and assured occupants best-in-



Express Towers has always defined Nariman Point's identity as a premier commercial business district in Mumbai.

Built in 1972, Express Towers was commissioned by the Late Sri Ramnath Goenka – founder of the Express Group, who was keen to construct a building that would be the tallest in South Asia. Upon completion, the 105 metre-tall Express Towers was in fact the tallest in South Asia then, ending the 9 years long reign of the 101 metre-tall Habib Bank Plaza in Karachi. Notable about this iconic construction is that it was also the first major building to be constructed on reclaimed land at Nariman Point.

class amenities, then the ceramic mural by reputed Kalamkari designer Nelly Sethna that adorns the ground floor lobby walls of Express Towers has only enhanced the aesthetic and heritage value of the building, over the years.

A New Era in Corporate Workspaces

Circa 2014, with the acquisition of Express Towers by Panchshil and Blackstone, a new chapter unfolded in the story of this larger-than-life structure. This is the story of an exceptional transformation, one that enhances the legacy of the building, while at the same time making it more relevant to current times and the needs of its occupiers and modern-day corporates.

Under the new guardianship, Express Towers is in the midst of being given a state-of-the-art facelift; upgrades to the building utilities as well as services and amenities that mark an exciting phase of new beginnings for patrons, while ushering in eminent new occupiers.

Express Towers is one of the first commercial buildings in India to undergo a complete makeover both inside and outside, not just in terms of enhancing the building's aesthetic value, but also involving a complete overhaul and replacement of the old utilities, with brand new state-of-the-art MEP (mechanical, electrical, and plumbing) facilities. All this, without the original structure being disturbed, or inconveniencing the building's 3000 odd occupants! The on-going upgrades, which involve contemporising the façade with the use of energy



efficient double glazed monotone glass, lobby renovations, landscaping, enhanced amenities by way of centralised facility and business management systems, air-conditioning and new elevators, all contribute to making the building relevant to the business cultures of the 21st century, along with a host of support services such as a restaurant, banking services and a concierge desk that contribute to further elevating user experience at the refurbished Express Towers. In keeping with Green Building designs, Express Towers is now a recipient of the LEED Silver Certification under the category of 'Existing Buildings O&M- version 4'.

FOOD, THE FARZI WAY!

If there were a definition of art, Farzi Café would certainly fit it. Everything from the innovative and tasteful interiors to the carefully created, mind-boggling dishes to their sinfully delicious drinks, is a specimen of art.

Priyanka Chordia visits the city's latest culinary addition and gets #Farzified.

© All Images Farzi Café

After creating a buzz in the metropolitan cities of Mumbai, New Delhi, Bengaluru and Dubai, ace restaurateur Zorawar Kalra brings his fifth venture, Farzi Café to Kalyani Nagar, Pune. In the few short weeks since its launch, this contemporary Indian restaurant has taken the city by storm. And while Pune has seen a drastic increase in the number of bars and eateries in the recent past, the city was yet to experience this level of culinary sophistication. Its inimitable dishes, classy interiors, lively vibe and ideal location have made Farzi Café somewhat of a sensation in town.

Conceptualised by the dynamic duo in the culinary world of India, Jiggs and Zorawar Kalra, Farzi Café is very evidently the result of an undying love and passion for food and keen business acumen. Considered as the 'Czar of Indian Cuisine', the illustrious chef, Jiggs Kalra has created a different genre of culinary art in the industry. And along with his father's mentorship, his MBA from Bentley Business University and his entrepreneurial flair, Zorawar Kalra has soon become one of the youngest and most successful restaurateurs in the country. So distinguished is he that he will also be one of the three judges on the upcoming season of Masterchef India.



Under the umbrella of Massive Restaurants, the father-son duo have established a total of five award-winning restaurants and bars across India. These include some of the country's favourite dining destinations like Pa Pa Ya, a modern pan-asian bistro concept, Made in Punjab, a smart-casual dining restaurant and Masala Bar, a unique scientific laboratory-style bar experience. Their first venture, Masala Library by Jiggs Kalra in Mumbai, is said to have revolutionised the Indian fine-dining experience with its global take on local flavours, and Farzi Café is doing it yet again.

Each of their ventures has proven to be unmatched in the experience, ambience and quality of food and drinks they offer. So, while almost everything at Farzi Café can surprise you, there's one thing you know for sure, that you're in for a great time!



every diner an extraordinary, exciting and fascinating experience of modern Indian fine-dining. This is done by not only using influences from international palates, but also by using ultra-modern techniques, molecular gastronomy, artistic plating and advanced cooking styles to create a unique amalgamation of global and local dishes. While the concept of 'contemporary Indian cuisine' has become quite common today, the kind of finesse that Zorawar Kalra brings to his restaurants, remains unrivalled. Here, each dish is not only cooked to perfection, but every effort is taken to present it in the most unusual and aesthetically appealing way.

Adding to the impeccable dining experience are the chic interiors and the vibrant yet warm ambience of the place. Set over a mammoth space of 7500 sq. ft., the restaurant seats more than 170 guests over two floors. In the pursuit of maintaining a freshness, the interiors of Farzi Café Pune are designed to allow for seamless movement of almost everything inside. The restaurant can be arranged in seven different ways, making the Farzi experience unique almost every time you dine there! The lower level, indoor area has a variety of seatings for family nights, business dinners or even for a few drinks with friends. The

ambience, the setting and the music are ideal for a fine-casual dining experience. This area also boasts of the longest bar the city has ever seen. So, at Farzi Café, you can always count on getting 45 feet of incredible drinks. Moreover, since the restaurant only opens by five in the evening, you can also enjoy your dinner and perhaps indulge in a few drinks on the scintillating open-air terrace. Strategically designed with a mirrored island bar in the centre, this outdoor area is lit up with only the reflections of table lamps and candles. The shimmering of the light combined with spectacular food and drinks certainly make for the ideal night out.

Get #Farzified

Karela Calamari, Pinenuts and Scallion Puduyaki, Tandoori Soy Chops with Cheese and Nut Fudge and Buhrani cream, Spaghetti Alio Olio e Cocco with tamatar ka kut, Khandvi Gelatos, Chuski Margarita, Santa Banta... these are just a handful of the many bizarre-sounding dishes in this offbeat menu.

Created by few of India's best chefs, the Farzi menu is not something you see everyday. Every dish on the menu has been

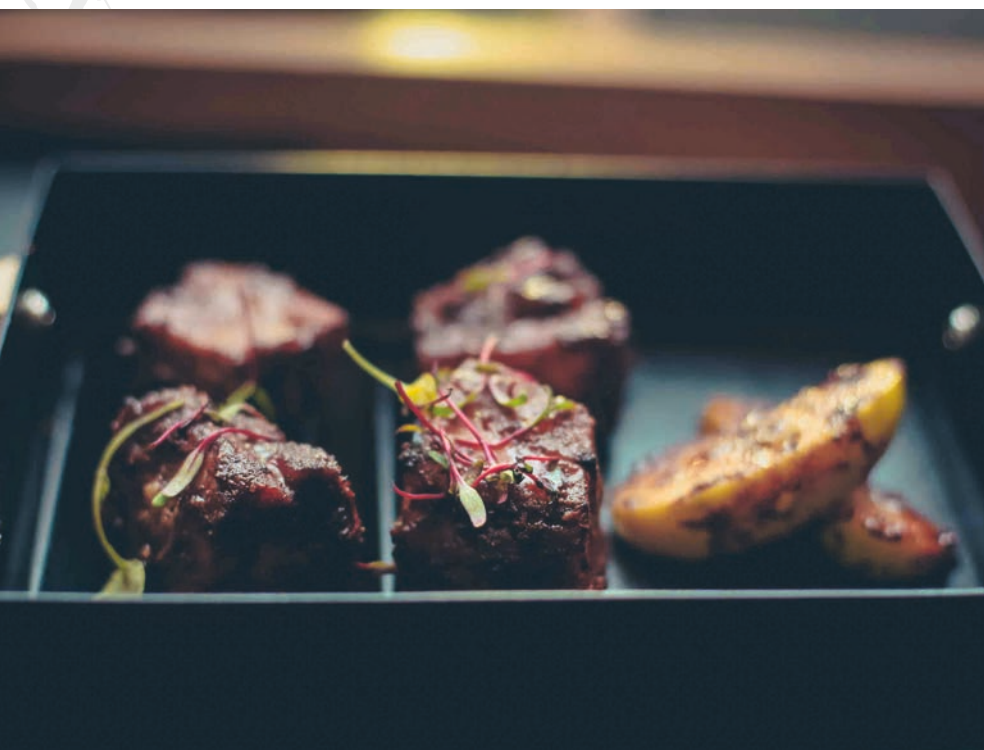
carefully thought-out, experimented with and prepared using cutting-edge cooking styles. Their presentation creates a fascinating gastronomic illusion, the dishes are artistry on a plate and the food a symphony, serenading your palate. The chefs have made a concerted effort to use the plethora of techniques, styles and combinations that cuisines from all over the world have to offer whilst staying rooted in the richness of Indian food.

As soon as you're seated, before you decide your order, the courteous staff welcomes you, Farzi-style. You are greeted with the mist of dry ice dancing on the tabletop, and hiding under it, are delicate white spheres of mishti doi with a sweet touch of strawberry gel, looking almost magical. There's a tingling excitement of popping this quirky version of a favourite Bengali dessert and revelling in the burst of flavours amusing your tastebuds. However, the Mishti Doi Amuse Bouche, is just the beginning of an exciting dinner and drinks to follow.

With the longest bar in town, it is no surprise that Farzi Café is also known for its splendid drinks. The mixologists here have created a sensational array of concoctions presented in the most creative of ways. The Apple Foamtini is their take on an apple

martini. Served with the theatrical mist of dry ice, the Foamtini is a perfect mix of green apple, lime and vodka with a hint of elderflower. The cocktail is topped with a delicious mint foam adding a different kind of freshness to the whole drink. The 'Chai Pani', on the other hand, is a vodka-based mix with an innovative blend of flavours. While it is served in a glass kettle and the typical 'cutting chai' glass, this tea is not your everyday tea-time drink. In Chai Pani, the tea decoction is infused with a dash of coffee liqueur to balance the sweetness of apple juice and is served with earl grey fumes making it look like a hot cup of tea.

One of their star appetisers, the Mini Raj Kachori, takes the sheer joy of eating chaat to a gastronomic level. The crispy shells are filled with a sweet and sour pumpkin mash and topped with a light and flavourful foam chutney. The fresh, juicy pomegranates sprinkled on top add a delicious burst of sweetness and the thin slices of crispy fried okra on the side tie the entire dish together. Another interesting recreation of a favourite Indian snack is the Chilli Duck Samosa. Stuffed with confit duck, this samosa is tossed in a sweet and sour plum sauce that perfectly complements the tender meat. The Daal Chawal Arancini, on the other hand, is an unusual twist on the staple food of every Indian home. Inspired by the Italian dish

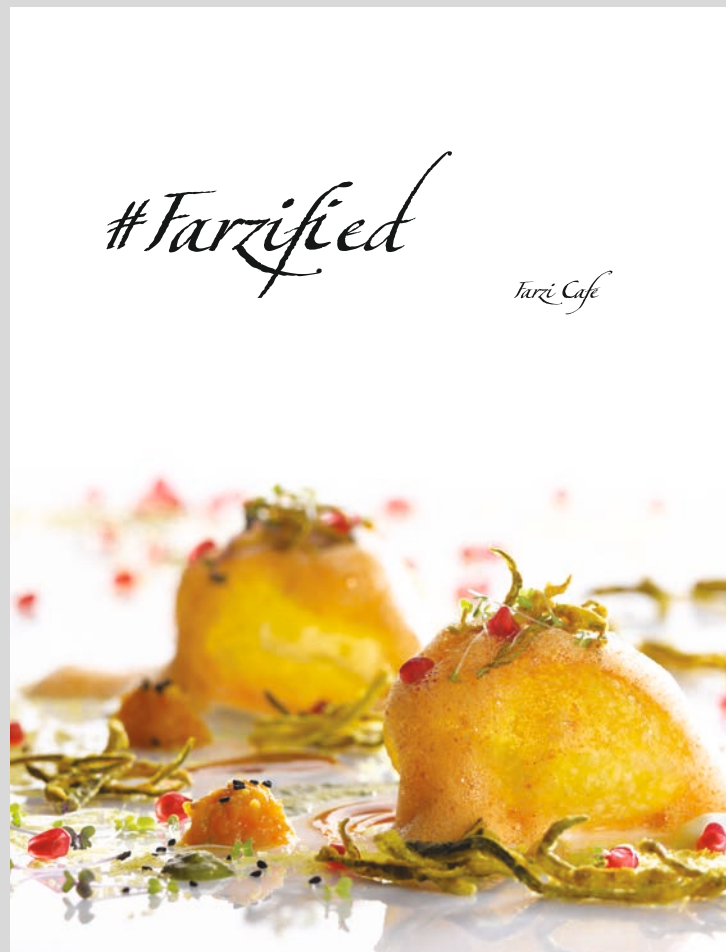


made with risotto rice, the chefs have created balls of white rice and lentils with a crispy coating, served with a tangy tomato salsa, mint chutney and crunchy papad to accompany it.

Just as your tastebuds are getting used to the quirkiness of the food, you are presented with the most bizarre-sounding palate cleanser. Their refreshingly different Khandavi Gelatos, make for the ideal mid-meal break to prepare you for the delicious main course to follow.

Farzi Café has an expansive selection of vegetarian and non-vegetarian mains. The highlights from the menu, however, are the CTM (Chicken Tikka Masala) and the Water Chestnut and Asparagus Appams. While it is little known, chicken tikka masala is a traditional British dish and Farzi Café has stayed true to its English roots. The CTM here is served with a naan in a typical red British telephone booth! They have maintained the mildness of a traditional Chicken Tikka Masala and served it with a soft and delicious cornmeal naan to complete this unique British yet Indian dish. However, the Asparagus and Water chestnut Korma with Appam truly knocks it out of the park. Inspired by traditional South Indian dishes, the korma is abounding with rich flavours. The crunchy water chestnuts add the slightest sweetness and give the creamy curry a new dimension and when had with the coconut flavoured, fluffy appams, this dish is a real winner.

After the mains, one can indulge in the sinful goodness of the delectable choice of desserts at Farzi Café. Served atop a unique tree-like holder, the Bailey's Lollipop is a sweet reminder of the child within you. The chilled chocolate lollipop is filled with a



mouth-watering mixture of baileys and condensed milk. The luscious combination of chocolate and baileys instantly melts in your mouth, leaving you wanting for more. The Rasmalai Tres Leches, on the other hand, is not only delicious but it looks pretty as a picture. The delicate caramel mesh on top of the dessert shimmers under the light as it approaches the table. The little yellow cakes are soaked in three different types of milk and garnished with pinkish-red rose petals that not only add a hint of sweetness, but also brighten up the dessert. This is a dessert that makes you hesitate before digging into it. But when you do, there's no looking back! The rasmalai is fluffy and light, the caramel mesh adds an enjoyable element of crunch and the wholesome combination of different milks is soaked into the cakes ensuring that every bite is just as scrumptious as the last.

As most Indian meals end, this too didn't end with the dessert, but rather with India's iconic post-meal essential, paan. However, the Farzi paan is nothing like your corner *paan tapri* (paan shop). They bring you a white, semi-circular, paan-flavoured cotton candy that is light as air and melts as soon as you put it in your mouth. Then, there is a pleasant burst of *mukhwas* (a traditional Indian after-meal digestive snack). The Farzi paan is a delightful reminder of eating *buddhi ke baal* (cotton candy) as kids as well as the most atypical mouth fresher to bring an amusing gastronomical journey to an end.

Dining at Farzi Café is so much more than eating a meal, it is about experiencing it. It is like a journey back to childhood and at the same time it's like trotting the globe with your palate. It is about creating novelty by exposing traditional food to contemporary styles. It is about getting #Farzified.



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...comes with all the answers. From inception of a design idea, to its outcome as a
...elegance. The idea of 'You define, We design' brings elevated style to every
...The other approach is to



...do something well and make a difference.' says Roheena Nagpal, the owner and

Infuse your spaces with warmth and energy, introducing darker, richer tones to your home. Go for the lighter white or blue or splash some art decor flair for a soothing touch. Accentuate the sitting areas with vintage chandeliers while hanging lanterns flank the fireplace and sofas upholstered in fine leather. Take the refined route with warm hues curtains, pillows, furniture and rugs. Delve into the Atelier archives to receive a sumptuous makeover for your living space.

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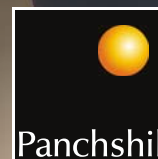
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