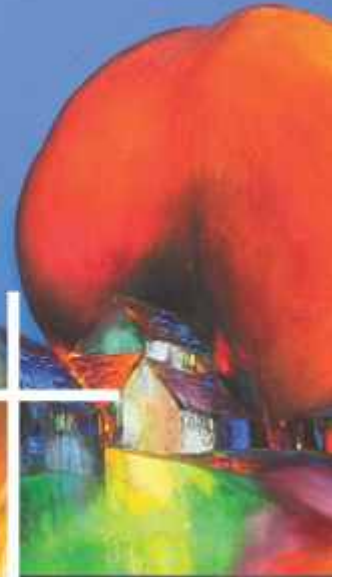
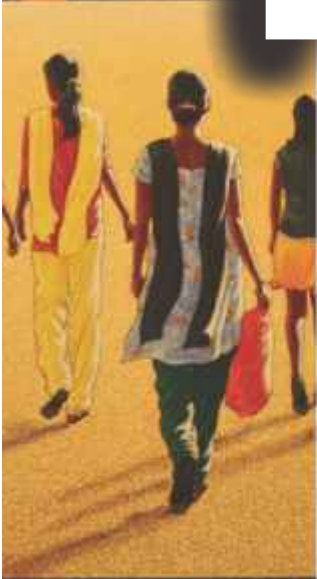


Merging metaphors ...



Indian Council for Cultural Relations



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Merging Metaphors

A group exhibition of new artworks created during India-ASEAN Residency at Darjeeling, India in 2012

Curated & edited by Sushma K Bahl
Jointly with Archana B Sapra



Presented by :
Indian Council for Cultural Relations
2012, Delhi

Artists

ASEAN

- Brunei
Dr. Hj Zakaria Bin HJ. Hamid
Osman Mohammad
- Cambodia
Em Riem
Sareth Svay
- Indonesia
Ivan Sagita
Pupuk Daru Purnomo
- Laos
Nivong Sengsakoun
Saykham Oudomsouk
- Malaysia
Dato S. K. Choo
Sam Karuna
- Myanmar
Min Wae Aung
Zaw Mong @ Win Zaw
- Singapore
Quek Kiat Sing
- Thailand
Nataphon Na Nakorn
Thawul Praman
- Vietnam
Dao Hai Phong
Ngo Van Sac

INDIA

Binoy Varghese
Ganesh Gohain
Pampa Panwar
Pradeep PP
Seema Kohli
Sujith S N
Tapas Sarkar
Vivek Vilasini

'Merging Metaphors' team in Darjeeling, June 2012 ➤



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S.M. KRISHNA



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**MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
INDIA**

July 4, 2012

Foreword

I am delighted to bring to you, Merging Metaphors, an art exhibition as a confluence of creativity by a group of twenty five accomplished artists from India and ASEAN region.

The unique exhibition is a celebration, in a contemporary global context, of the cultural and historical links that have flourished in India and Southeast Asia for more than a millennium. An outcome of a residency initiated and hosted by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, it features new work created especially for the project by artists from Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam who spent a week in the scenic hills of Darjeeling along with their Indian counterparts for creative synergy and dialogue.

Merging Metaphors is a fascinating exhibition that offers an overview of the diversity and vibrancy of contemporary art scene in the region. It includes two, three and multi dimensional creations. The illustrated catalogue accompanying the exhibition gives glimpses of the working and interactive sessions that were part of the program, for networking and bonding. I find the ensemble of fresh art works worthy and interesting. Following its showings in India, the exhibition will be available for touring the ASEAN countries from October 2012 onwards.

I thank all the distinguished artists who made it to the residency and the sponsoring countries for being part of this innovative project. I hope it will help promote comprehensive, understanding amongst our nations as a process towards richer economic and social development of their people.

With best wishes

(S.M. Krishna)

Look East

India commemorates 2013 as the 10th anniversary of summit partnership between India and ASEAN. The relationship between India and ASEAN as well as her bilateral relations with ASEAN members reflect modernity and congruence of interests in many areas, mostly relating to culture, economy, social development, technology and others which all come together to form a strategic framework for these relations.

ASEAN itself is a young organization, just about 50 years of age. India's summit partnership with ASEAN is even younger, completing only 10 years. These have been however, years of great growth and transformation. My own diplomatic career is more or less, congruous with the growth of ASEAN from the days of 1980s when Cambodia added a new dynamism to the regional group. I was then Third Secretary in Singapore. Addition of CLMV countries i.e. Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam to ASEAN more than a decade ago brought greater synonymity between ASEAN and South East Asia. Not only has the composition and the strength of ASEAN undergone radical metamorphosis, relations between India and ASEAN have acquired completely new dimensions with India, having graduated from Hindu rate of growth to becoming today the 2nd fastest growing economy and expected to become the 2nd largest economy in the next one decade. More importantly, India has evolved into a driver of innovation and information, through both ideas and technologies. ASEAN is a driver of industrial growth, service additionalities not just in the region but globally. Today India, together with South East Asia and East Asia forms the centre of the economic world.

The nature of societies and civilizations in India and ASEAN is testimony to the fact that this modern relationship derives not only from contemporary interests but perhaps more importantly is anchored in the historicity of civilizational interactions dating back to almost the beginning of the era of the Christ.

India and ASEAN share a commonality of views on global peace and security. The United Nations announced 2001 as the year of dialogue amongst civilizations to highlight the need for dialogue amongst diverse groups-both religious and ethnic, as a mechanism to prevent conflicts by making this dialogue inclusive. The concept of dialogue of civilizations may be a fresh idea in the western history but it has been central to the living philosophies of Asian people. Historical texts clearly establish the fact that the common history of India and South East Asia grows from benign interactions in trade, economy, culture and social areas, bereft of any prejudices or pressures. Dialogue of civilizations between India and South East Asia began almost two millennia ago.

The very idea of political domination was an anathema. The empires built in South East Asia were South East Asian in their character even if with a predominant Indian complexion.

Therefore, the relations between India and South East Asian countries as defined through the look east policy of India are anchored in our civilizational links, benign and collaborative in character, and our common aspirations for socio-economic growth in the contemporary context.

The Residency therefore in Darjeeling from 11-17 June 2012 represents a very creative interaction between ideas and industry, societies and their representatives by providing a unique environment for creative personalities to come together, collaborate and interact with each other, and produce something which is not just Indian or South East Asian but which truly represents the old ideals of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam". The paintings and installations which are outcome of this Residency reflect this interchange between traditions and thoughts of India and South East Asia.

The Residency brought together almost 20 prominent artists from ASEAN member countries with several Indian artists to produce highly aesthetic and beautiful works of art representing not just the nations from which these artists came but the influences they wove together as artistic community.

Patna was selected as an appropriate location primarily because of its history. As Pāṭaliputra, it was the centre of ancient civilization in India, and the city from which the Third Buddhist Council, under Emperor Aśoka, had taken the decision to send representatives to spread the message of Dhamma to the Land of Gold, the Suvarṇabhūmi, as South East Asia was known in the ancient times.

We have endeavored to put this exhibition in a very broad context by linking it with other important events bearing on our relations with ASEAN.

The International Conference on "Civilizational Dialogue between India and ASEAN" being piloted by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations is a great opportunity for scholars to gather together and investigate the shared history of India and South East Asia in order to develop a new vision for the ongoing Civilizational dialogue amongst these nations. The culture of South East Asian communities is diverse, ranging from tribal to sophisticated that created architectural wonders such as Cham relics in My Son Valley in South Vietnam, Angkor Vat of Cambodia, Borobudur of Indonesia and Wat Phou in Laos. The influence of India and the cultural interchange between India and the South East Asian nations can be seen at many levels including religion, language, ideology, life style, architecture and so on.

The Nalanda University is a prestigious project between India and ASEAN, not merely to reminisce about the old and glorious traditions of Nalanda but to define the concept of Nalanda in modern and contemporary education as it was at the zenith of its glory then, by promoting excellence in academic traditions. The speakers selected to participate in the Seminar include members of the Governing Body of Nalanda University, one of the wonders of the ancient world.

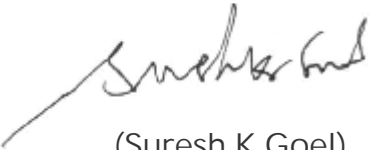
One session of the Seminar is devoted to assessing the impact of the Rāmāyaṇa on the art of Southeast Asia. After its arrival in the Suvarṇabhūmi, the story of this great and ancient Sanskrit epic poem ushered in the tradition of the next thousand years of massive-scale works in the rich diction of regal courts and Hindu temples. It has inspired much secondary literature in various languages. Dance, drama, puppet shows, shadow plays, mask dances, street shows, etc. are the popular mass media in these countries and the favorite themes are based on the Rāmāyaṇa or Mahabharata.

Other sessions focus on the India-ASEAN dialogue in the context of today's world, with an attempt to explore the Cosmopolis and the eco narrative, and the multilayered structures of regionalism. I am sure that this conference will provide the much needed opportunity for scholars to discover new grounds for the meeting of minds and cooperation between India and the ASEAN, and further invigorate one of the most important regional relationships which has grown and developed over thousands of years.

ICCR promotes the global awareness of India's glorious cultural forms in a comprehensive manner but even more importantly it is deeply engaged in promoting cultural collaborations to contribute to relations between societies and nations. Culture builds understandings, it is a strong cement between the bricks which come together to form that relationship and it is the strongest connection between India and South East Asian nations. India and South East Asia were connected in the past by culture. We hope our present efforts will develop these connections into creative projects which will provide strength to our industry, economy and our overall relations.

The national boundaries define countries. Cultures permeate these boundaries by osmosis to create the universal brotherhood. This needs all of us to come together in a common endeavour as very appropriately urged in the shloka:

“AUM sah nau vanatu sah nau bhunaktu
Sah viryam karva vahe
Tejasvinaam avadheetam astu
Ma dvesh vidisha vahe
AUM shaantih, shaantih, shaantih”



(Suresh K Goel)

Dr. Suresh K Goel, post graduate in Physics from Delhi University, is a veteran IFS officer of 1978 batch and currently Director General of Indian Council for Cultural Relations. He has served in various diplomatic positions in Indian Missions at Singapore, Malaysia, China, Egypt and South Africa, and as Ambassador of India in Lao PDR, besides working at the Permanent Mission of India to UN in New York. As Director General of ICCR, he has taken up several initiatives to support



culture in a holistic and an all inclusive manner, encompassing new genres such as Jazz and contemporary dance; joint conferences with interested partners in areas where the cultural traditions of India and host countries interact; development of India Chairs in Universities abroad to encourage and promote India related studies and research which could lead to creation of a resource base of friends and experts. Recipient of an honorary doctorate conferred by the University of Edinburgh for his contribution to building long term international cultural relations, Dr Goel, takes keen personal interest in civilization, history, arts, and contemporary international issues.

Merging Metaphors

The Encounter

The interactive project Merging Metaphors was an open stage where divergent artistic genres merged and metamorphosed and in some cases stood their ground, resulting in this fresh collection of some engaging artistic expressions. Conceived to promote a sense of bonding, solidarity and unity for holistic development within the ASEAN community and India, the art initiative brought together a select group of twenty five artists from across the region, to converge on a single platform, at Darjeeling in India for a week long residency. The creative joint amongst the artists of the countries within Asia region, that have enjoyed geographical proximity and shared cultural roots since ancient times, helped reinforce their mutual understanding and person to person friendship for a peaceful co-existence and all around development.



The forum hosted by Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, facilitated this through sharing of ideas, issues and concepts around contemporary life, global changes, environment, and socio-cultural-political issues of concern to humanity today. The selection of artists made in consultations with experts and Indian embassies in these countries included seventeen ASEAN artists from Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam who were joined by eight artists from India. The group including- painters, new media artists, designers, photo artists, sculptors and others working in varied media - all accomplished and mostly mid career, with good track record and engaged in innovative work, of aesthetic merit- offers an overview of the contemporary art scene in the region with glimpses of its diversity and vibrancy.

The scenic Darjeeling in Eastern India with its rain drenched cool hills, old monasteries and vast tea estates selected for the residency was an apt backdrop. It provided great inspiration to the artists- living, working and interacting with each other in a mix of structured program and open-ended options and informal gatherings. There was time to reflect and relax, to observe and record, to question and collaborate, and get to know about each others' aspirations and apprehensions as well as gains and constraints. With canvases, paints, brushes and all other art material provided by the ICCR, the artists were able to get engrossed in their art- drawing, painting, writing, sculpting and photographing in the mornings. Visits to local sites of art historical and cultural significance took place in the afternoons. The artists got absorbed in discussions, interactions and slideshows in the evenings. There were books and catalogs on display that they shared and discussed. Local public, officials and media took interest in the

goings on and visited the artists to see them at work. And the program got off to a great start, with a press conference in the morning and a dinner reception the first evening hosted by Dr Suresh K Goel, Director General of the ICCR accompanied by Mrs Goel. The spirit of collaboration and bonhomie then continued through the week, with most days ending as fun filled moments with music and dance. All this helped fuel the artists' creativity and reinforced appreciation of each other's aesthetics.

The Art Expanse

The amazing creativity resulting from this project is illuminated in the innovative show and the illustrated catalog that documents the whole project and accompanies the exhibition. Given the diversity of the group, their cultural and social backgrounds, the art expanse they created also varies in its shapes, shades and styles. The training and experiences they have lived through or the ideas and emotions they have nurtured are reflected in each artist's creations. The artists from across the borders found themselves simultaneously at home and abroad, encountering some familiar facets while also stumbling upon some new ones whilst in India. The group from India too presented as diverse a picture as the country itself-given the different schools of art and thought, they come from, though with a cultural thread that strings them all together into merging metaphors. While some of the artists have used the occasion to look at the positive side of things others put the spot light on problems confronting the changing face of democracy, in today's shifting terrain and world order. The artists have employed a range of different techniques and modes, working in different genres, colours, and forms, each re-enacting and re-playing the creators' own experiences, encounters, emotions and thoughts.

There are landscape paintings of the pristine hills and its beautiful flora and fauna that inspired some of the artists. Paintings such as those by Quek Kiat Sing from Singapore, bring alive the bamboo trees, a species found in Darjeeling and in traditional Chinese painting that she practices. Standing still atop the hills, unperturbed by strong winds and heavy snow, she likens the bamboo plant to a gentleman as a symbol of humility and uprightness. Her other painting, features the spirit of the residency and the surrounding atmospherics through portraits of some of the participants. Saykham Oudomsouk of Laos paints 'Jumpa' flower akin to what is known as 'Champa' in India. His love for nature is depicted in this colourful rendering that starts with painting the canvas with a background colour, then overlaid with greens, yellows, blues, reds and black until the enticing imagery of graded blooming flora merges to become one with the background.

The trees in Indonesian artist Ivan Sagita's canvases flash back to the scenic uphill journey that brought him to Darjeeling. The trees in different shades of green mixed with earthy colours, standing in solitude speak to him as people, offering him the metaphor for this work. The vast painterly vista by Hj Zakaria Bin Hamid offers a contrast in his meticulously built canvas with drawing, and painting, inundated with numerous lines and dots. There are plants growing inside bottles, octopus from the sea, sprouts, lotus flowers, rivers, mountains and farms- offering the viewer an eco-touristic bird's view of Darjeeling as encountered by the teacher-artist from Brunei, which also features the British-built UNESCO listed heritage steam locomotive chugging along the hill top.

The notion of nurturing nature or panchtatva the five natural elements that sustain life and lie between the sky and the earth are eluded to, in the impressionistic work by some of the other artists too. Work by Ganesh Gohain from Guwahati/ Vadodara based on the photo of a banyan tree that he took in Baroda, falls in this genre. Painting over the projected imagery, merging layers within layers, and turning the green into yellow overlaid with silver, until reality is turned into abstraction, his metaphoric painterly process involved sculpting over the canvas.

Pampa Panwar on the other hand, revels in the enchanting landscape of Darjeeling hills as her mid-summer day dream is re-mixed within her own surrounding of a picturesque Santiniketan, interweaving it with text and soil that she collected in-situ. And the natural rural landscape could be from here or there, in a scintillating and sensual mix of the real and imagined, in Vietnamese artist Dao Hai Phong's enchanting and colourful art-scape. Sensuousness of curvaceous Indian women that he saw in India was the metaphor for the intense and luxurious ambience intermingled with a soft and tranquil appeal that evolved from his pencil drawing into a lush landscape of his painted canvas.

The theme takes another twist in wood engraving by Sac Ngo Van from Vietnam. He was seen engraving, diligently carving onto the wooden blocks, most of the mornings at the residency. These he subsequently coloured, to present his stand-alone, with no prints, in the picturesque image of floating fishes or may be just fish bones, with a lonesome figure possibly entrapped therein. Representing the continuum of life and death, the work developed from a photograph and a sketch, shows the artist's mastery in graphic work.

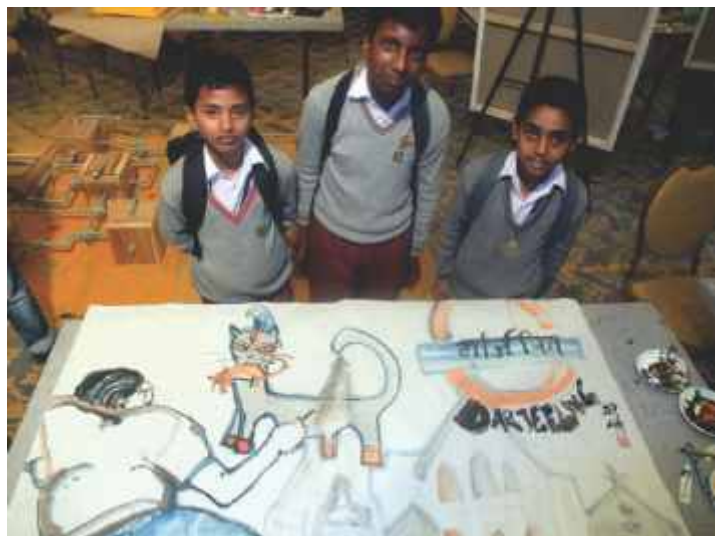
The concept and icon of Buddha, with its tranquil appeal was another metaphor that interested some of the artists. The meditative air of fog covered Ghoom Monastery and the icon of Lord Buddha that was visited by the group, gets differently figured in the sublime work by Nivong Sengsakoun from Laos. The deep rooted spirit of his meditative Buddha keeps mankind afloat despite a dwindling of faith and the all prevalent chaos, as depicted here amidst the engulfing smoke. Another figure of contemplative seated Buddha by Thawul Praman from Thailand features the icon that connects Asia and the world together. His posture and body parts are all positioned to highlight his magical and meditative ambience. The green suggests peace, his hands opening up like a lotus, and the line running around and through the centre of his body and they string together ten blocks or pearls as metaphors for the ten Asian countries participating in the interactive joint project. His colleague from Thailand Nataphon Na Nakorn extends his experimentation in art to incorporate Indian script, besides stenciled forms in his painterly play in gold, yellows and browns, of what could be a man or a woman's portrait. With its focus on the spirit of things, partly covered and closed eyes, the figure appears to try and sift the good from the bad, in search of the elusive peace.

From the spirit of Zen the exhibition moves onto the terrain of reality of life. The two paintings by Pupuk Daru Purnomo from Indonesia recall his memories of childhood. The narrative painting,

featuring his parents' bedroom, comes loaded with hidden emotions of insecurity. The other work with cleverly smudged face as self portrait needs to be seen as a "window to the mind and not just the heart" says the artist. And Min Wae Aung of Myanmar infuses his typical line of walking monks with a new life in this photorealistic painting by bringing into his frame, the young girls he saw walking in a group in Kolkata on his arrival there, instead of the clerics. Worth noting is the variety of dresses, and the feminine gait and the dry sun soaked golden ground on which they are seen to tread towards the distance.

The installation with ten boxes by Sareth Svay from Cambodia made out of locally sourced wood and connected by PVC pipes, with layers of turmeric at its base, aptly represents his expertise in art and design and the concept of merging metaphors, where ASEAN artists come together in India. His painting too connects well with the locale of the residency featuring TV tower and fluttering flags, which he saw on his journeys through the hills. And for sports and football enthusiast Zaw Mong @ Win Zaw from Myanmar, his paintings of a stadium with random numbers, are triggered by his admiration for famous Indian football player Baichung Bhutia. The lines and colours, handcrafted with taping, illustrate the artist's expertise in balance and design.

Narratives running through descriptive paintings by some of the artists have their own stories to tell. The water colour paintings by Dato S.K.Choo from Malaysia are tales around tea. Darjeeling being home to some of the best teas in the world, it is used here as a metaphor, along with some of the featured memorabilia that he had collected during his earlier diplomatic assignment in India, in the depicted narratives. Em Riem reflects in his painting, on shared values of family life and tenderness of mother-daughter relationship that he observed in India which is similar to his home country



Cambodia. Made out of ply wood, his sculpture depicting voluptuous breast with erect nipples appears in a different mood as it speaks of modern woman's obsession and desire for a perfectly shaped figure. The need for openness of mind for the different metaphors to co-exist and merge is mirrored in the work by Osman Mohammad from Brunei. His colourful windows lined with the help of tape for clear cut demarcation, are open to the world for fresh air to blow in and for the inmates to look out and see what is happening in rest of the universe, instead of staying within their boxed compartments.

Tapas Sarkar from Kolkata reroutes his work in a merging of the folk and the contemporary. Taking his inspiration from Kalighat art form, he blends the hand made with heart made. His parrot sitting atop the

black cat watches the kitten being carried, turning it into a captivating sculptural ensemble. The old and the new, and craft and art, also coalesce in waxed and painted imagery on cotton in Sam Karuna's Dyetik creation from Malaysia. The imagery, in a mix of abstraction with landscape involved dyeing and drawing with wax, then painting over it, in hundreds of dots that cover the surface, as it articulates the urgency to preserve the beautiful planet. Delhi based Seema Kohli's three colourful paintings in Golden Womb series re-look at the philosophical notion of cycle of life as propounded in the scriptures. She re-presents the notion to highlight her feminist concerns in today's context through her densely covered imagery. The focus shifts its gear to issues of environmental and social concerns in younger artists Sujith SN and Pradeep PP's work. Both of them from Kerala but now based in Mumbai, stand at cross roads and engage in issues of natural degradation due to human greed. The imagery on their differently delineated lush green and tranquil looking surfaces is an illusion that has undercurrents of impending turmoil for the viewers to look at and take a note of. The subject matter of anxiety moves from environment to notions of migration and identity in work by Binoy and Vivek. Binoy Varghese from Delhi through his lonesome figure of a young girl, sitting alone pensively, amidst the dwindling green, laments the metro culture where the poor with their land forcibly grabbed, are turned into homeless refugees in their own country. Vivek Vilasini from Bangalore looks at the issue in a wider global context through his chance spotting in a reclamation yard on the outskirts of London, of historic symbols from around the world. The image captured through his lense and his perceptive mind, in Night Sea Voyage, brings the notion of migration inside out, as it features a meditating Buddha statue juxtaposed next to a horse possibly Arabian, with a laughing pig imported perhaps from China, American Statue of Liberty holding up a broken flame and a Russian field gun in the background; telling us some edgy stories as merging metaphores from around the world.

The Course Ahead

All these works featured in the exhibition are reproduced in this catalog, which also includes details of the artists and their backgrounds. There are essays and other textural matter to help enhance the viewers' appreciation of the initiative and the resulting art works. The publication also documents other illustrative material including a selection of images of the residency, the artists in action at the workshop and during their various sojourns and informal gatherings, taken mostly by the participating artists. The exhibition, following its inaugural showing in Patna, will be shown in Delhi and then tour some of the ASEAN member countries. Eventually the works will get added to the ICCR's collection for display in its offices in India and elsewhere.

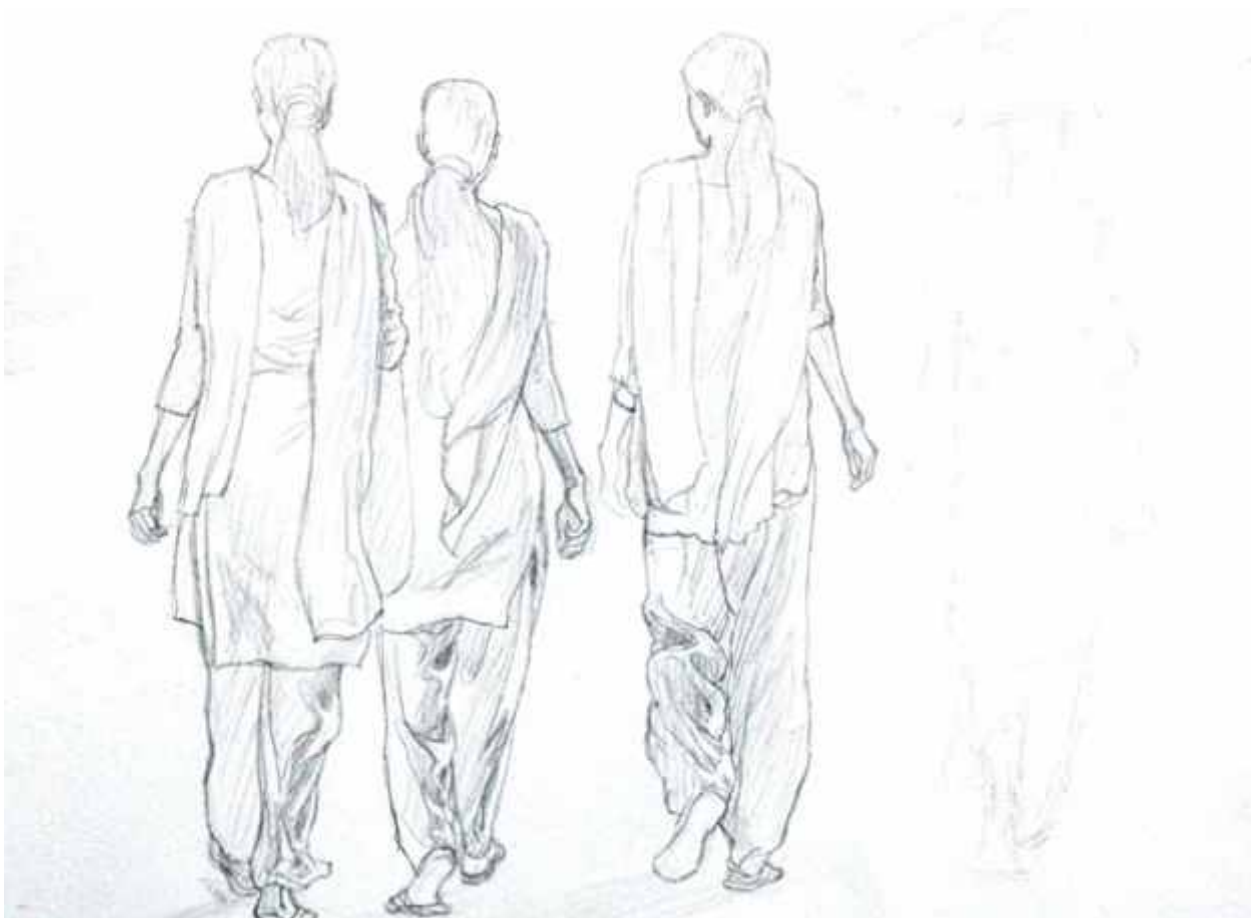
'Merging Metaphors' with 45 fresh art works created by the artists during the residency, each differently delineated, is reflective of the dialogue that they have had with each other. In addition, the artists made sketches and drawings, and took photographs. Seema Kohli in fact also made some video recordings at a temple in Darjeeling. Who knows this might be the subject of her next creative endeavor. And then there were others who plan to develop new paintings and sculptures or video works from photographs and drawings or from images that they have kept in mind, on their return home. The impact of the residency goes beyond the collection, impacted by the dynamics of the curated residency and the surrounding

atmospherics of mutual interest. When asked to list their expectations from the residency, the artistes described it in words such as- to meet, interact, and share, to learn from each other, to paint and draw new work, and to see Darjeeling and something of India. All these aspirations seem to have been fulfilled, judging by what is on display in the exhibition and the catalog.

"Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success.

The project highlights the need for building sustainable networks and illustrates the significance of such interchanges, more so in today's strife ridden world, for a fair and enduring cohesion. The residency is seen as one of the steps in a long chain of successive 'Look East' initiatives that need to be taken with public and private support for mutual benefit and development. And given the unprecedented surge, and prestige and place of contemporary art in cultures of the world, as a continuum of living traditions, it seems appropriate to use this platform to promote cohesion and there by economic and all around development for a better society, and this project, one hopes, is a trigger for that.

Sushma K Bahl



The Art Ensemble

'Merging Metaphors' , group work, acrylic on canvas, 4'x3' ►

Handwritten red text, possibly a name or title, at the top left.



Large vertical Japanese characters: 大吉岭 (Daikiching) and 丸行 (Maru-kyou).

Emotionally THEM 2002 von Sagitta Jan 17 2002



Handwritten red text, possibly a name or signature.

Handwritten text in a non-Latin script, possibly Hindi or Urdu.

Handwritten red text: SWAYI KRETT.



Handwritten text: Pampala 87.



Handwritten red text: MINUTE KUNE.



Handwritten text: SANKU...



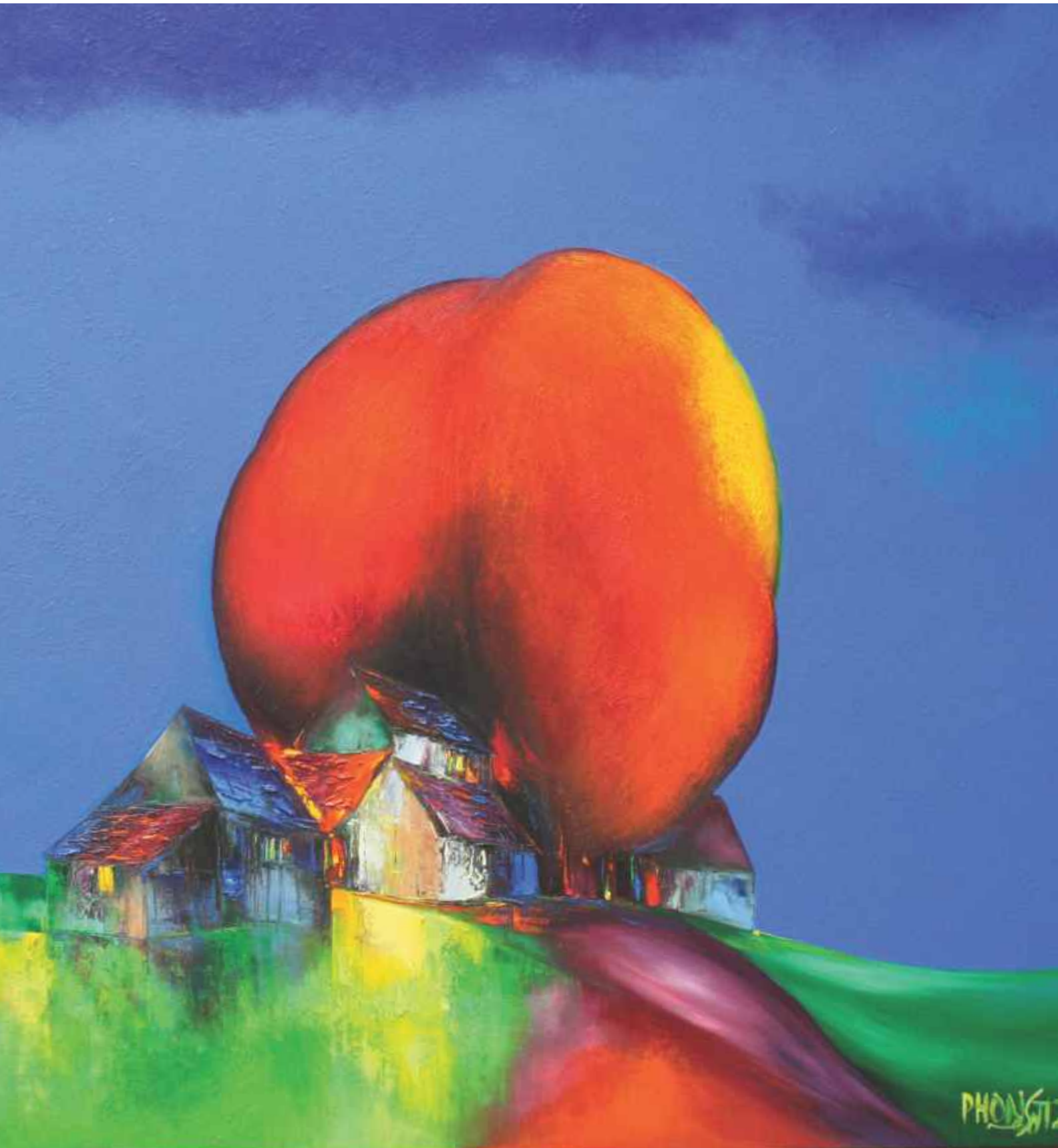
Binoy Varghese / India
Refugee in Own Land, acrylic on canvas, 4'x6' ▶





Dao Hai Phong / Vietnam
'Where Sensations are Intact'
oil & acrylic on canvas, 3'x4' ▶





PHONG



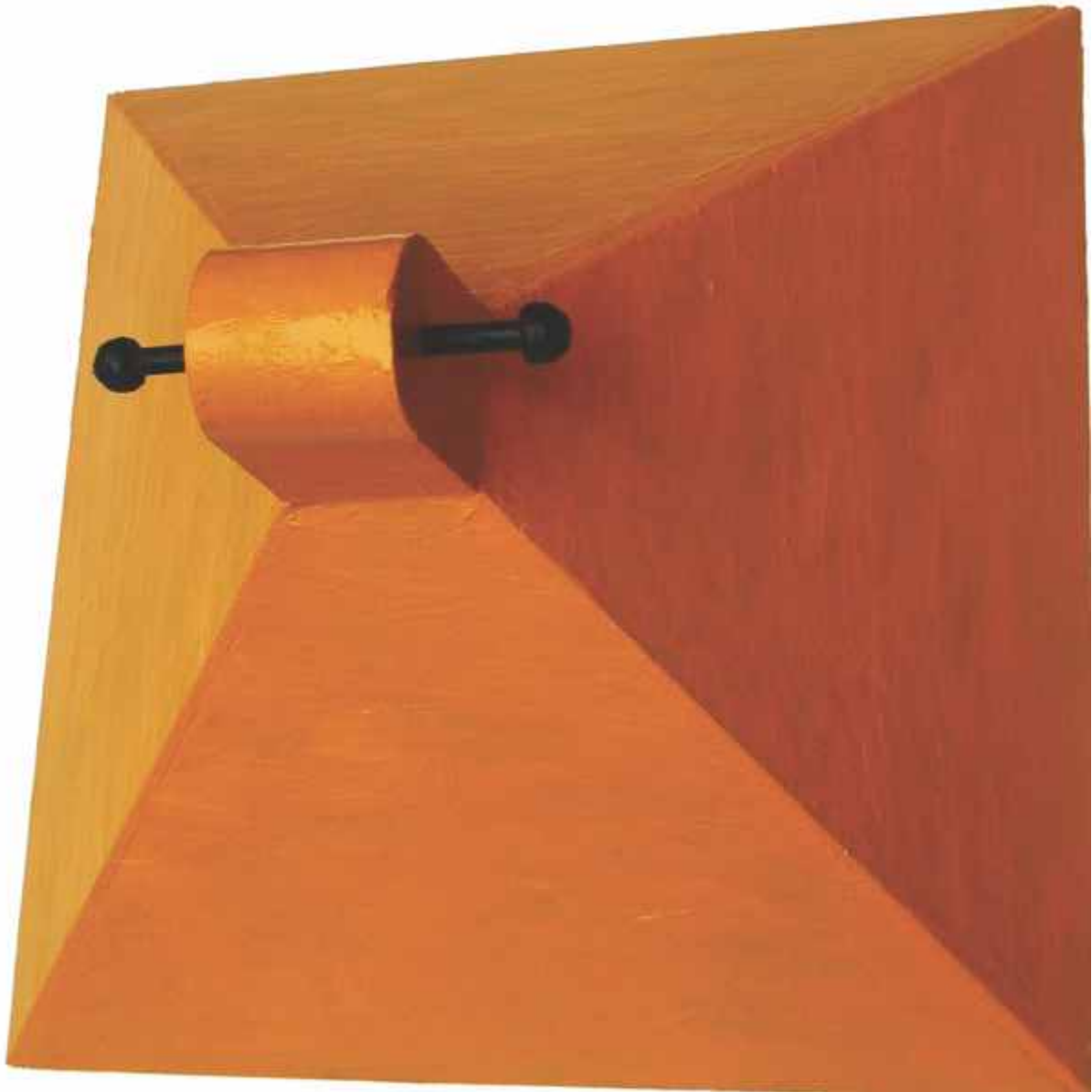
Dato S.K.Choo / Malaysia
'Tea for One', water colour on paper, 71 x 52 cm



'Tea for Two', water colour on paper, 71 x 52 cm



Environ



▲ 'Tenderness II', sculpture in plywood & acrylic, 20"x20"x12"

Em Riem / Cambodia
◀ 'Tenderness I', acrylic on canvas, 4'x3'

Ganesh Gohain / India
'Yellow Behind Silver, mix media on canvas, 4'x3' ▶





Ivan Sagita / Indonesia
'Trees as People- I', acrylic on canvas, 3'x4'



Trees as People- II', acrylic on canvas, 3'x4'

Min Wae Aung / Myanmar
'Indian Girls', acrylic on canvas, 3'x4' ▶





Nataphon Na Nakorn / Thailand
Message from India, acrylic on canvas, 4'x3' ▶



Nivong Sengsakoun / Laos
'Untitled', acrylic on canvas, 4'x3' ▶





Osman Mohammad / Brunei
'Windows & Storyboard' I, acrylic & mix media on canvas, 4'x3'



'Windows & Storyboard' II, acrylic & mix media on canvas, 4'x3'

Pampa Panwar / India
'Mid- Summer Day Dreaming',
acrylic & mix media on Canvas, 3'x4' ▶



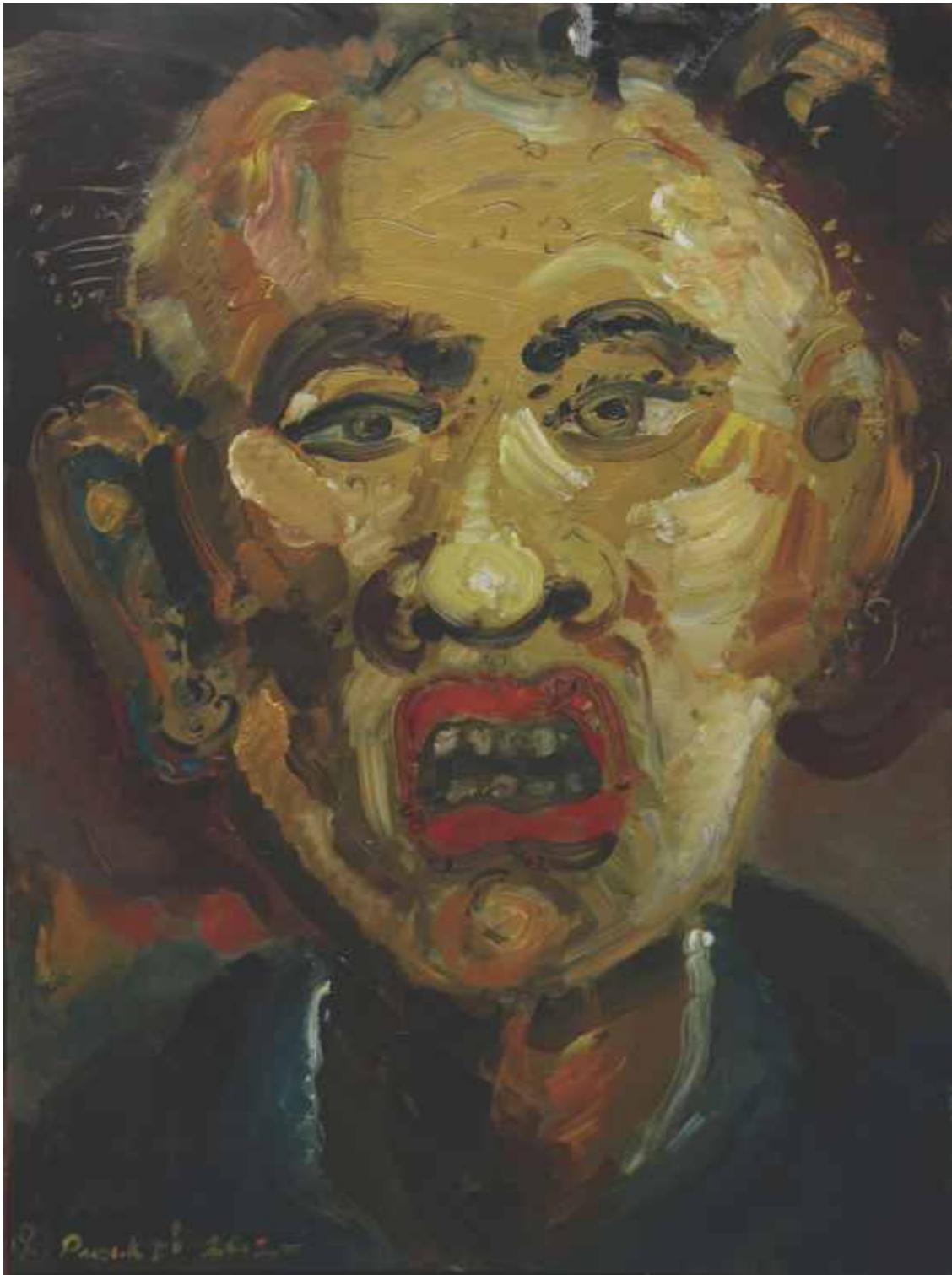


water swirling on a
narrow stream
secretly escaping
into the world of
dream
tangible movement
of time far and near
flight of birds
wheeling round and
round

mid-summer day dreaming

Pradeep PP / India
'Prohibited Fruit', oil on canvas, 3'x4' ►





▲ Pupun Daru Purnomo / Indonesia
Auto Portrait in Darjeeling, acrylic on canvas, 4'x3'

Sexual Imagination, acrylic on canvas, 4'x3' ▶



Impression - Darjeeling, 2012



Quek Kiat Sing / Singapore
'Profile of Passion at Darjeeling', Chinese ink on rice paper, 3'x6'



'Profile of the Mountain Spirit at Darjeeling'
Chinese ink on rice paper, triptych, 69 x 47cms each



Sac Ngo Van / Vietnam ▲
'Distance', wood engraving, 4 panels, 50x40cms each



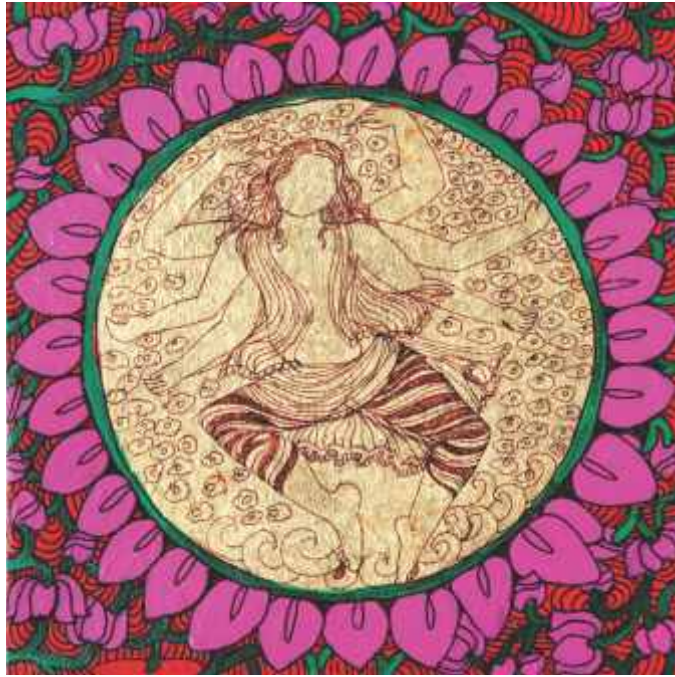
Sam Karuna / Malaysia
'Destiny', Dyetic (Batik) on cotton cloth, 43.5" x 43.5" ►



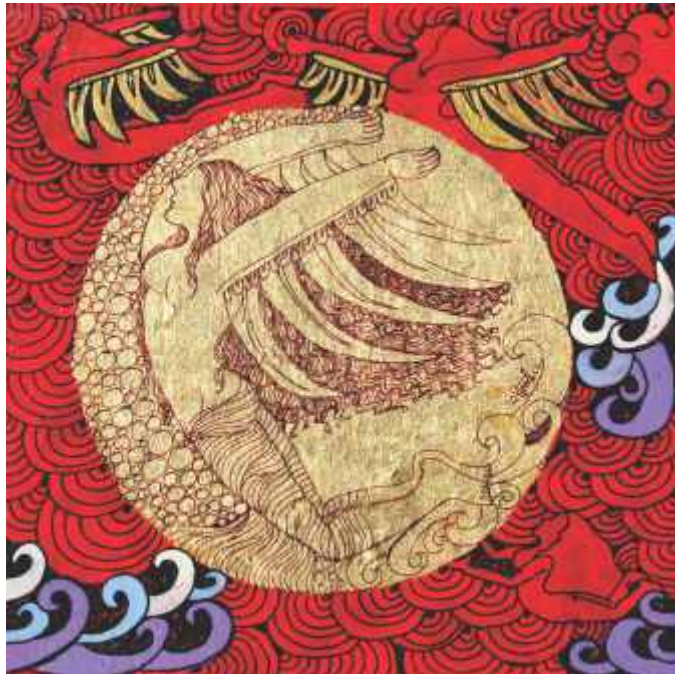
Saykham Oudomsouk / Laos
'Champa flower', acrylic on canvas, 4'x3' ►



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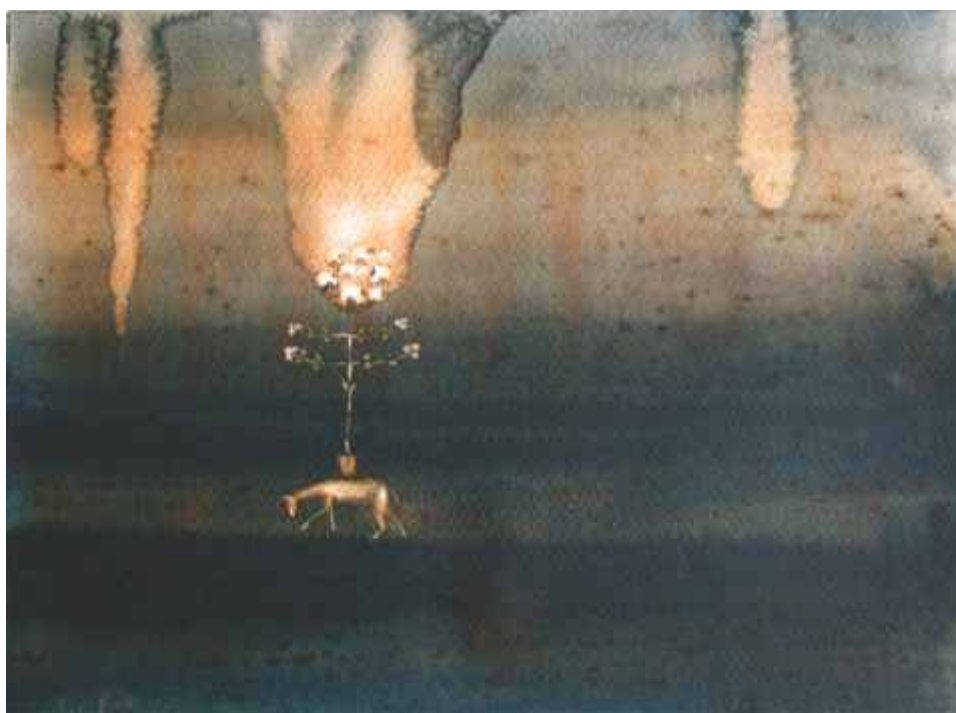
Golden Womb II, acrylic on canvas, 10"x10"



Golden Womb III, acrylic on canvas, 10"x10"

Seema Kohli / India
Golden Womb 1,
acrylic on canvas, 48"x37"





Sujith S.N / India
'Psalms of Silence of Dark' I, water colour on paper,
a set of six paintings, 14"x10.5" each



'Psalms of Silence of Dark' II



'Psalms of Silence of Dark' III



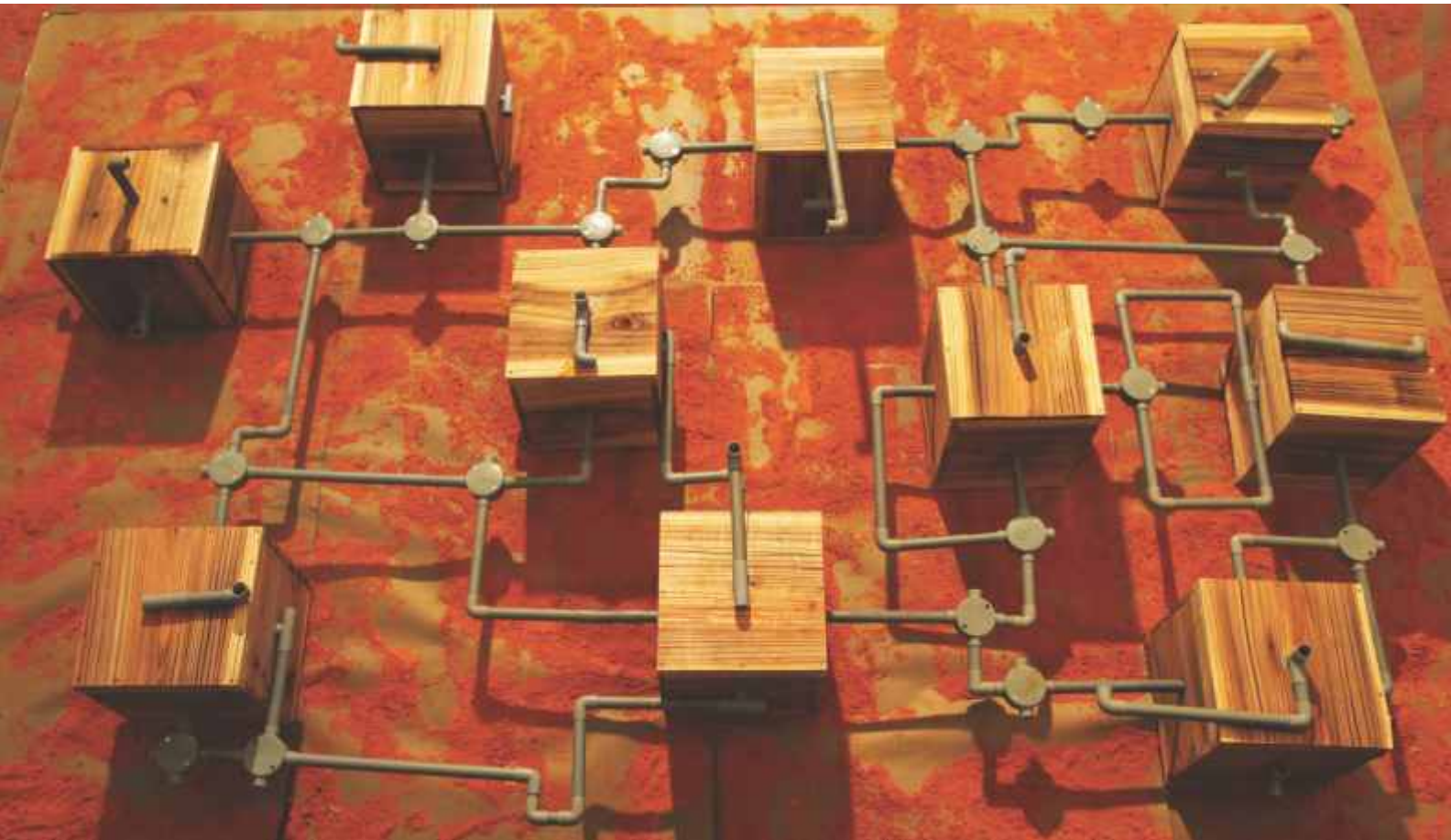
'Psalms of Silence of Dark' IV



'Psalms of Silence of Dark' V



'Psalms of Silence of Dark' VI



▲ 'Dust'
wood, P.V.C tube, turmeric
Installation, variable size (10 cubes, 24 x 24 cms each)

Svay Sareth / Cambodia
'A Word from UNIVERSE'
dry pastels, turmeric & oil on canvas, 4'x3' ►



ARTIST'S MARK

Tapas Sarkar / India
'Parrot looking at Kitten of the Black Cat'
sculpture in acrylic on fibreglass, 48" x 42" x 14" ►



Thawul Praman / Thailand
'Untitled', acrylic on canvas, 4'x3' ▶



Vivek Vilasini / India
Night Sea Voyage-II
archival print on Hanemuhle photo rag, 40"x60" ▶





Zakaria Bin Hj Hamid / Brunei
'Darjeeling Encounter', acrylic on canvas, 3'x4' ▶





Zaw Mong @ Win Zaw / Myanmar
Gymnasts-I, acrylic on canvas, 4'x3'



Gymnasts-II, acrylic on canvas, 4'x3'

So they said

The week long ICCR hosted India ASEAN artists' residency at Darjeeling offered us a great opportunity to meet, chat, discuss, network and interact with creative people from around the region and beyond the borders. The spirit of comradeship meant any socio-cultural or language barriers were no longer an issue or impediment to a meaningful discourse. We conversed through our artistic expressions. And the brief statements and snippets below are my edited versions of the flow of some of our conversions, almost random spontaneous thoughts throwing up a few fresh ideas and solemn comments.

Archana B Sapra, India

Migration and different forms of displacement, I see all around- be it India or Turkey or America. My interest in this theme is perhaps due to childhood experiences as I moved out of Kerala to find a place for myself under the sun. with a girl child or another figure, featured amidst lush green landscape, I try to present the problem in a sugar coated way.

Binoy Varghese, India

At this artists' residency, I have sought to maintain my painting style and visual motifs. The emotions however have changed. Back in Hanoi, I was still experimenting with gray and Vietnam yellow as dominant colors. That intention disappeared as I experienced the feel of Indian weather, the sight of Indian women and the taste of Indian cuisine. This painting is my attempt to transcend through the canvas, the vitality, dynamism and serenity of life in Asia.

Dao Hai Phong, Vietnam

In my drawings and paintings, I like to depict the unspoken thoughts and feelings of people in a particular situation or at certain moment of their existence. For the India- ASEAN art residency, I have done two paintings, a diptych. The first if titled 'Tea for One' and the second 'Tea for Two'. The theme of this residency being 'Merging Metaphors' I thought the word Darjeeling could well be a metaphor for tea.

Dato SK Choo, Malaysia

I work in street art style- with graphite. The contours of the hills, with women picking tea leaves carrying their babies in the farms, struck a chord with me as there are similar scenes in Cambodian rice fields. The poor in Asia live a difficult life but they enjoy love and family bonding. We share some connections and I would love to show some Indian art in my gallery.

Em Riem, Cambodia

I have a positive attitude to life and like to depict good things, as enough bad is happenings around us. My art reflects my thought process and the title of the work itself is abstracted or metaphoric, as is the process. It is reality to abstract. The image is symbolic representation of a vision- a fossilized image of a particular time and space, both poetic and enigmatic, a window to see through the vision of infinity.

Ganesh Gohain, India

I love photography, sketching and painting and like listening to music while I paint. I often start by drawing a dot on the canvas and pick up any subject to build up stories around it, using different tools- brushes, knife, and sometimes even a broom, that make their way into my canvases. There is always an underlying struggle or issue in my paintings. But teaching the young is what I find most exciting. It keeps me in touch with things.

Dr. Hj Zakaria Bin HJ. Hamid, Brunei

People in India and my country understand nature. Trees reflect nature, its solitude and the notion of growing up. To me, they look like people. One can be studied from the other. The metaphor and idea for this work came to me during the journey to Darjeeling. I mixed the green with black and white, earthy tones and blue. I see Indian faces and features in these trees.

Ivan Sagita, Indonesia

I like tranquility and movement in my work and paint monks as are embodiments of peace of mind. I also paint landscapes based on my travels in my country. The flow of my forms in figurative work, and their costumes and colours reflect their character. For this residency, I decided to paint on an Indian theme, and the women I encountered in Kolkata, with their colorful sarees and different kinds of dresses, attracted my attention and I brought them here captured in my camera. My process involves working from photo to drawing and then painting.

Min Wae Aung, Myanmar

The work comes from my experience of the visit to India. Before I came here, I had apprehensions about the country, its people, food etc. My mind had blocked and I was afraid of being able to find my way around the place, but once I landed here and had an opportunity to explore, meet and talk to the locals, eat the different food, soaked into the atmosphere and landscape, I felt relaxed and happy. My experience emphasizes the fact that it is important to open our minds without carrying any preconceived notions. Connecting and merging with other cultures makes it easier. The spiritual feel of the country is reflected in the use of earth tones in my work. I have tried connecting with India also by using the symbols and characters of the Hindi script.

Nataphon Na Nakorn, Thailand

I am a believer and like to paint the meditative icon of Buddha. He is the one idea that unites us all in Asia.

Nivong Sengsakoun, Laos

I dabble in various genres. The art scene in Brunei is vibrant though the market is dull! Most of the artists also do other jobs to sustain themselves. My art is like a story board and I like to incorporate patterns and design elements in my mixed media work.

Osman Mohammad, Brunei

I like experimenting and working in mixed media. I have used sand for the first time, in the residency work, playing with creativity of the surface, and its relationship with colours to add a touch of emotions and sensitivity in my work. I also use text and poetry to extend the reach of my expressions. Water, earth and air are three prominent elements that co-exist in my work about nature, and flow of life. Different from previous works, I now use a softer palette, as I have loosened up enjoying my freedom within an orderly existence. My life and work run in parallel and I am enjoying the current moments of discovery, with no pre conceived notions of what it is going to be next.

Pampa Panwar, India

As life patterns and values change, in the face of consumerist ethos and greed, I worry about the resulting degradation of the environment and hence human life that I see all around. Indiscriminate use of pesticides, and harmful fertilizers along with genetic mutation of plants and animals, is rampant all around in my village in Kerala. The radiation emitted by electronic towers, are killing butterflies and bees, plants and trees are turning dry and babies are born with genetic diseases. Living and breathing the polluted air and eating junk food, resulted in me falling seriously ill and bed ridden for over three months with little prospects of getting back on my feet, I know how deadly all this can be. Hence the subject continues to be at the centre stage of my artscape.

Pradeep PP, India

Born and brought up in a refugee camp, I have been on my own since I was 13. Art is my passion and I consider my work as another life form. My thought process for the work in the show had started during the first journey itself from Bagdogra to Darjeeling. I wanted to respond to the environment here, so have used wood for my installation. Wood has significance- it has life just like people. When we die we go back to the earth. I liked the graphic marks on the wood which reminded me of the contour tea farming on the hills. The ten boxes may be signify the ten countries here, the pipes our interconnecting cultures. And I like the smell and colour of haldi. My painting is a direct result of my visit to tiger hills. The checks have been taken from a traditional garment of Cambodia.

Sareth Svay, Cambodia

My work is about hidden emotions, drawn from human physiology and psychiatry. Some are good emotions and others are bad, harmonious or contradictory, but always present in one form or another in one's mind. Human beings are not always stable. They have their moments of insecurity, and panic. Often not consistent or reliable; emotions can change every moment, depending on various surroundings and circumstances. Much of it is sub-conscious and therefore uncontrollable. The inner aspects of the hidden emotions are the main subject of my imaginary. And I like to draw and paint faces, which as part of the head, are certainly closer to the brain compared to the rest of the body. The face betrays one's thoughts and understanding about things in life.

Pupuk Daru Purnomo, Indonesia

On the way up to Darjeeling, I saw many bamboo plants in the mountain. Bamboo is a gentleman plant in Traditional Chinese Painting symbolizing humbleness and uprightness against adverse circumstances, tide, strong winds and heavy snow. In this Indian –ASEAN Artist Residency I encountered many great artists from the participating countries. I lived among artistic giants. There are many but yet one spirit – the spirit of mountain.

Quek Kiat Sing, Singapore

The recurring fish bones in my wood engraving, represent the past and death, the forward-moving train counters and repels them both. Past and future, life and death; polar opposites yet un-separable. As human beings, we find ourselves entrapped by such extremities, and strive to seek our own ways to perceive them.

Ngo Van Sac, Vietnam

A beautiful planet ravaged by natural disasters. Is it an omen? My painting depicts the various calamities this planet has been enduring. The earthquakes, the tsunamis, the floods with a huge loss of life and properties. Is it our destiny or are we to be blamed???

Sam Karuna, Malaysia

I am an artist and also a book illustrator. This flower from my country looks similar to what I have seen in India.

Saykham Oudomsouk, Laos



The ASEAN Camp organized by ICCR was a surprise. As I had never had the idea of the beautiful place that Darjeeling turned out to be. The misty clouds, the mysterious pathways in the hills, the sloping tea gardens, the quaint fragrance of tea hanging in the air, the monasteries....all added to the artistic mood that all of us were in. Though my main purpose was to meet and interact with the artists from our neighboring ASEAN countries whose friendly disposition and seriousness at work was amazing. Sushma K Bahl and Archana B Sapra on the one hand brought about the atmosphere of a collective art team and made sure that the artistic activities are interactive and take us a long way in being connected even later. ICCR on the other, made sure that we all were comfortable and taken care off. During the day the space which was looking like a serious studio with all the facilities of colors, easels tables and the hustle and bustle would become a party space with music and dance by evening. Another thing which was a surprise was a discovery of Mahakal temple, where I did some interesting photography. This has been one of the most memorable camps which I will not be able to forget for a long time to come.

Seema Kohli, India

I draw my inspiration from the work of Hans Holbein. In a mix featuring manmade constructions amidst a vast open landscape allow me to play with scale and balance that I enjoy. Beneath my lush green landscape, there is always lurking violence, and tension. My experience of having worked in the construction industry, has given me the ability to compress and portray big structures within small sized works that I prefer to work in.

Sujith S.N., India

My parrot with his elongated head comes from the zoo in Darjeeling. The anatomy looks of cat and kitten and their colours tare inspired by Kalighat style. Legendry Indian artist Jamini Roy has been my inspiration. My work with image maker and potters of Bengal, my contact with masters such as Devi Prasad, Sarbari Roy Choudhury, and Meera Mukhrjee, and the work I did with Indian museum in Kolkata, have all impacted on my work. I enjoy sculpting in all forms and sizes.

Tapas Sarkar, India

Buddha connects Asians together, and I like to draw and paint the smiling meditative icon in different compositions and mediums.

Thawul Praman, Thailand

I am inspired by Michel Eyquem de Montaigne, a French philosopher who talks about Skepticism and everyday life. Non places or places in transit coming into our lives such as airports, interest me and I see them as microcosm of vibrant and potential stories. Stories, that don't open up immediately until we begin to take note of them. My images are mostly triggered by an idea and based on research and involve collaboration with others. Sometimes they are shots of a reality but could also be staged in some other cases. Built on layers of juxtaposition of images, using complex cameras and computers, I enjoy working in large scale.

Vivek Vilasini, India

I start by working on my idea digitally with the help of computer and like working in large sizes and in acrylic, dabbling in landscape, figurative work and on architectural subjects. I love sports and football, and decided to paint a stadium and work around the spirit of sportsmanship which is important in life.

Zaw Mong @ Win Zaw, Myanmar

Artists' Profiles

BRUNEI

Dr. Hj Zakaria Bin HJ. Hamid

Born 1955, Dr. Hj Zakaria Bin HJ. Hamid did his Master's in Art Education and a Bachelor's Honours' Degree in Fine Art from the University College London. He studied further at Bristol University followed by a PhD from Exeter University. A painter par excellence, he also taught art education at the University of Brunei until last year. His expertise in drawing and painting comes through in his densely rendered imagery. Built in layered drawings with carefully measured brush strokes, mostly in oils and larger format, captivating stories begin to emerge through his colourful pictures. A keen photographer and music lover, his art work marked for its spontaneity, has been exhibited in London, at Norwich, Bangkok, Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia, Philippines, Malaysia, and in Washington and at Brunei Museum, besides the 3rd Asian Art Show at Fukuoka in JAPAN and at venues across Brunei. His work is held in collections at the Universities of East Anglia, Bristol, and Central England in the UK and at University of Brunei in Darussalam besides the Museum and Ministry of Education in Brunei and with private collectors in UK, Malaysia and Philippines, and Brunei amongst others.



Osman Mohammad

Born 1955 at Darussalam, Osman Mohammad completed his MBA from the University of Brunei. He also learnt theater design at the Central School of Art and Design in London and Manpower Studies at the University of Manchester. A multi talented versatile artist, he works in varied forms and media, and his repertoire ranges from art and design to media, broadcasting, management and development. He creates paintings in oil, acrylic and water colours, makes murals and designs, illustrates children's books, and works in woodcarvings, copper and relief sculptures, amongst others. His art often in dots and lines rotates around themes of ecotourism and society. It has been exhibited in solo and group shows by the Brunei Artists Association in Darussalam, at the Brunei Museum, National Gallery in Singapore and at the Sheraton and Empire Hotels besides the 14th Asian Art Biennale in Bangladesh and in an exhibition at Tokyo. Various museums that house his art works include Brunei Museum, University of Brunei in Darussalam, ASEAN Square at Fort Canning in Singapore and Shell Company, besides corporate and private collections. Founding member of the Brunei Artists Association, he is currently the Vice President of Brunei Art Forum, credited with organizing several art competitions, exhibitions and national events including the ASEAN Art Awards. Osman Mohammad is actively engaged in promoting Brunei art and artists' in his home country and abroad.



CAMBODIA

Em Riem

Born 1977 in Cambodia, Em Riem specializes in contemporary art and design. A degree in graphic art from the Royal University of Fine Arts in Phnom Penh was followed by further training in France at the Saint-Etienne Ecole des Beaux-Arts and then at the Ecole Nationale des Beaux-Arts Decoratifs in Paris. A resourceful artist whose creativity is a reflection of his peasant background and experience of the Khmer Rouge, incorporating some European influences, he works in painting, sculptures, ceramics, furniture, lighting, and product design. Given the limitations of available gallery space in Cambodia, he took the initiative to set up X-EM Deign- La Galerie for contemporary art and design on his return from Paris, to exhibit his own and his contemporaries' work. With a passion for painting since childhood, he has refined his skills through persistent practice and experimentation. Em Riem's work that includes a series of paintings on jute, old rice bags and mostly in charcoal as historic recollection of the victims of the Khmer Rouge, features precise almost photo realistic, faces and portraits. Other subjects that engage his art include the exuberant nature of his land and the changing face of Cambodian society with its new consumerist ethos. His eclectic work that has featured in many shows held across the country and internationally has found its way into several important private and public collections.



Sareth Svay

Born 1972 at Battambang in Cambodia, Sareth Svay is a painter, sculptor, designer and multi-media artist. He studied art in France, and obtain a certificate from Fine Art de L'école des Beaux-Arts de Beauvais, then a Bachelors' Degree from L'école Régional Supérieur des Beaux-Arts de Caen, followed by a Master's with honors from National Supérieur d'Etude des Arts Plastiques, also in Caen, France. Proficient in Khmer, French, and English, he works as Director Artistique for artisans at d'Angkor Siem Reap, Cambodia besides carrying forward his own practice as an artist that includes experimentation with performance, new media, design and ephemeral art. Founder member of the artistic and cultural center, PHARE Battambang in Cambodia, he was professor of arts plastic and in-charge of communication department of Phare for several years. His eclectic creations incorporate painting, sculpture, design, and light to give it a distinct look and engage the viewer. His work has featured in significant solo and group exhibitions including those held at Hotel de la Paix Arts Lounge Siem Reap, French Cultural Centre Phnom Penh, at galleries in various French cities including Paris, and at the United Nation office in Geneva. He also organizes artists' talks, workshops and performance art events across his country and in Southeast Asia. Sareth Svay lives and works at Siem Reap in Cambodia



INDONESIA

Ivan Sagita

Born 1957 in Malang, Ivan Sagita studied Painting at Indonesian School of Arts and then at the Faculty of Art and Design, Indonesian Institute of the Arts, Yogyakarta. This was followed by further study as an Artist-in-Residence at Vermont Studio Center in the US with a fellowship. His paintings and drawings focus on the uncertainties of the common man's everyday life through a play of somewhat unrealistic figurative imagery. Using realistic techniques he highlights the struggles that the poor Javanese have had to deal with. Much of his work meanders around repeated portrayal of the human figure with a shift in the facade within the same work to put the spot light on suicidal tendencies amongst the marginalized due to their extreme poverty and dismal state. Besides paintings, he has also worked in sculptures using different materials. Winner of awards at Biennale Seni Lukis Jakarta – Indonesia, Silver Medal at The Osaka Triennial in Japan, and the Mainichi Broadcasting System Prize, his work has featured in solo exhibitions at Duta Gallery in Jakarta, Gallery Darwin in Australia, Red Mills Gallery in Vermont – US, and Pulchri Studio in Den Haag – Holland. Some of the selected group shows where Ivan Sagita's work has been exhibited include Biennale 1 Yogyakarta, Biennale VII Jakarta Arts Council, traveling exhibitions in Asia and the US, ASEAN Festival of Art Yogyakarta, Queensland Art Gallery in Australia, The National Gallery, Jakarta, Asian Water Colour Bangkok, Singapore Art Museum, Singapore, Osaka Triennale Japan, The Pretoria Art Museum and Ipopeng Project, South Africa, The Second Beijing International Art Biennale, and Shanghai Art Fair in China, Art Asia, Miami USA, and Crouching Tigers and Hidden Dragons in London and Singapore.



Pupuk Daru Purnomo

Born 1964, in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, Pupuk Daru Purnomo did his graduation in art from the Faculty of Art and Design, Indonesian Institute of Art there. A painter and sculptor, his work rotates around architectural buildings, personal journeys and encounters and simple earthy themes of daily life in modern day contemporary society. Somewhat autobiographical in its genre much of his work entwined with psychology of hidden emotions, is based on his memories of an insecure and difficult childhood having to face up to a disciplinarian and demanding father and gentle and loving mother. His faces, portraits and other work in drawings, paintings and sculptures appear surrealistic and loaded with emotions, given their bold lines, in thickly textured paint with scratches. Pupuk's work has been exhibited widely, in solo and group exhibitions in museums and galleries across Indonesia and other Asian countries. Winner of several awards including as the finalist for Phillip Morris Award, his work has been widely collected and written about, and he has contributed significantly to the development of Indonesian art.



LAOS

Nivong Sengsakoun

Born 1985, Nivong Sengsakoun trained at the National Institute of Fine Art in Laos and majored in painting. The young artist has been actively engaged in children's book illustration and is a trainer in children's book making and publishing. He has conducted many illustration workshops and his engaging work in this domain has won him several awards including the first prize at the Mitsubishi Impression Gallery Festival. He also creates paintings in acrylic often around Buddhist themes that reiterate and propagate notions of meditation and spirituality. His contemplative iconic imagery helps to re-affirm people's faith in Buddhist spirit, a theme that seems to be losing ground in today's fast paced world. His colourful work has been exhibited in many solo and group shows in his own country and abroad and has found its way in important collections besides getting featured in various publications.



Saykham Oudomsouk

Born 1979 at Xiengkhouang in Laos Saykham Oudomsouk trained as an under graduate at the National Faculty of Fine Arts, later obtaining his graduation degree in Fine Arts from the same national institute, where he continues to work, paint and teach as of now. An accomplished painter, his imagery rotates primarily around nature and its flora and fauna. Buds and flowers, trees and wild life, in numerous forms and colours, some realistic and others imagined, appear in much of his art-scape. Often intricately drawn and painted in layers, using a range of brushes, this young artist's work has a distinct appeal and it has featured in several exhibitions held in different parts of Laos and some of the neighboring countries.



MALAYSIA

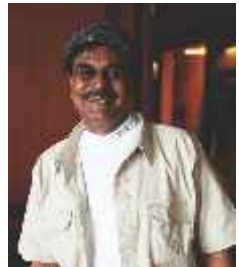
Dato S. K. Choo

Born 1944, Dato SK Choo is a former diplomat and a water colourist of repute. Meticulous in his approach to art, he takes photographs and makes sketches in self designed and hand-made sketchbooks that fit into his pocket. These images are often used then as studies for his paintings. Working in water colours on paper, his compositions feature people and places and their emotions, as narratives of the goings-on and in some cases his personal encounters across the globe that he has traversed in the course of his diplomatic career. Winner of the Putrajaya National Competition organized by the National Gallery Malaysia, and first prize for Spirit of Japan in Asia Regional Art Competition amongst others, Dato Choo has also led two groups of water colour painters on art expeditions to Sweden and India and he is actively associated with several artistic initiatives in his country. Since his first exhibition in 1983, his work has been exhibited across Malaysia in various solo and group shows as well as in Japan, US, India, Sweden and Singapore with good sales including a collection for the National Art Gallery in Malaysia.



Sam Karuna

Born 1945 in Bagan Serai Village in Perak State of Malaysia, in a family of Indian origin, Sam Karuna trained in fine art in Australia, and is a self taught practitioner in batik, an age old indigenous tradition practiced widely in South East Asian countries. He has successfully adapted the medium to evolve his own distinct form that he calls 'dyetik' through which he captures the spirit of Malaysia, its landscape and people. Starting by sketching with wax on a piece of cloth, his motifs and sections of the imagery merging in one another, his painting method involves patience to apply colours in fine brush work. Using dot technique, he builds up a depth and a glow that lends the work a mystical appeal, with white lines less prominent. Recognized for his contribution in bringing batik and dyetik into contemporary art domain in his country and out of the confines of a folk or craft form, his work has been shown extensively in exhibitions held in different cities of Malaysia and in Australia, Japan, Singapore and Thailand. He has conducted several batik training workshops and is engaged in discussions with universities in Indonesia and Malaysia about introducing courses in batik and dyetik, to popularize the art form.



MYANMAR

Min Wae Aung

Born 1960 at Danubyu, a delta town in Myanmar, Min Wae Aung studied traditional landscape and portrait painting, at the State School of Fine Arts in Yangon and obtained Bachelor's and Master's degrees in art, working with and learning from some leaders master artists.

His paintings of Buddhist monks, often walking in an S shaped line and holding fans or umbrellas, have their backs rather than faces exposed to the viewer. Featured in a photorealistic genre, and set against a golden background, they seem to head for the eternity and make striking compositions.

These as well as his pristine landscapes seem to symbolize the Buddhist ideology of renouncement, with a focus on spirituality and inner peace of mind. The virtuoso artist's work ranges across figurative paintings and landscapes, has been exhibited in numerous solo and group shows across Myanmar and in significant international shows including Burmese Masters at Hong Kong, Asian Art in London, and 4th Asian Art Exhibition at Fukuoka Art Museum in Japan, besides in museums and galleries at Singapore, Shanghai, Switzerland, Paris, USA, Germany, Indonesia, Netherlands, Vietnam, and Malaysia. Reviewed and featured in local and international journals and other publications, his work has been picked up for private collections and museums in London, Japan, Singapore, Hong Kong, USA, and Malaysia and of course Myanmar. Jointly with his wife he has set up the New Treasure Art Gallery in his home town Yangon, to show his own and his contemporary's work.



Zaw Mong @ Win Zaw

Born 1960, in Ava, an ancient city in Myanmar, Zaw Mong @ Win Zaw is a graphic artist and painter who studied civil engineering at Rangoon Institute of Technology and journalism at the Royal University of Phnom Panh in Cambodia. He started his career as a cartoonist, illustrator and book cover designer. An invitation from Japan Foundation gave him an opportunity to participate in 6th Asian Cartoon Exhibition, in Tokyo. He worked for local magazines for several years, including as the Art Director of Today Magazine for three years, before turning a full time freelance painter and graphic artist. An element of fun and play underlines much of his creativity that also involves hand work and craftsmanship, besides design. His work has been published and exhibited extensively including some of his cartoon creations such as Errors, and Sweet Cartoons. His canvas paintings in acrylic of horses and flowers, and his water colours works have been exhibited in shows across Cambodia and elsewhere, from where they have been picked up by discerning collectors.



SINGAPORE

Quek Kiat Sing

Born 1972 in Singapore Quek Kiat Sing graduated with an Honours Degree in Political Science from the National University of Singapore and gained her Degree in Fine Arts with Distinction from Curtin University of Technology in Australia. She also trained in theology, and learnt Chinese Ink Painting under the guidance of her Mentor Chua Ek Kay and teacher Tan Siow Aik and received the Freeman Fellowship at Vermont Studio Centre in USA. Winner of Sovereign Asian Art Prize, Hong Kong and Dr Tan Tsze Chor Art Award, Singapore, she tasted success early on when she won her first ever international award, from India's Shankar International Children Art Competition, at the age of fifteen. She has continued to win other local awards such as the United Overseas Bank Painting of the Year Competition. Having represented Singapore at the ASEAN Cultural Week in Vietnam, 2004, her work also featured in the China ASEAN Youth Artwork Creativity Contest 2006. Her drawings and paintings, that feature landscape, people, and narratives; are painted in delicate lines and subtle colours using Chinese ink on handmade rice paper with specially made goat hair brushes. She works using a restrained palette and wash technique around contemporary themes. Her work has been exhibited in several solo and group exhibitions across Singapore and in USA, UK, China, Thailand, Vietnam, and Japan, the latest being 'Poses and Movement' held at the Luxe Art Museum in Singapore. She is represented by Asian Art Options and Art-2 Gallery in Singapore; Michael Goedhuis Gallery in London, and Artist's Proof Art Consultancy, Colorado and Washington, USA.



THAILAND

Nataphon Na Nakorn

Born 1965 Nataphon Na Nakorn from Thailand did his initial studies at the College of Fine Arts in Bangkok and the his graduation in graphic art from the Faculty of Painting, Sculpture and Graphic, Silpakorn University also in Bangkok, majoring in lithography. This was followed by a Master's Degree in digital art from the School of Art & Design, Pratt Institute in New York. His multifarious training has clearly impacted on his art and work formerly as designer and Art Director with renowned design companies and institutions in America and Bangkok, including Oglivy & Mather and subsequently in his creatives as a freelance writer, painter, photographer, illustrator and designer. Interested in experimentation, he has also worked for travel magazines - sketching, drawing, writing and photographing for them. The focus of his layered and colourful imagery is the spirit of the work and the landscape it features. His work has appeared in many publications and exhibitions including those held in Chiang Mai and Bangkok in Thailand, and at Pratt Institute in New York.



Thawul Praman

Born 1965, Thawul Praman, a native of Nakorn Sawan is the eldest of four children. He studied at Silpakorn University and majored in Fine Art. The Cobalt Blue Group that he set up with four classmates has now grown to include nine artists. Passionate about new music and western films, the artist lives in the present and is credited with having painted the backdrops of the Hollywood martial arts cult classic film for computer geeks - Motal Kombat, besides the elegant river murals that grace the ballroom of Bangkok's legendary Oriental Hotel. His art presents a fine assimilation of his diverse interests and experience. His style and technique is marked for its sun-dappled rock-grain and contrasted textures, often used also on the fames in his meditative Buddha series. Adept at flat brush and spray work, he works with linear precision, though not in a geometric symmetry. Adorning a realistic mode, his colourful imagery inspired by Buddhist philosophy fits equally well with Thailand's vibrant era as one of Asia's burgeoning Tiger economies. Exhibited widely, some of his work graces Bangkok's top hotels and banks – The Oriental, The Shangri-la, The Grand Hyatt Erawan, The Imperial Queen's Park, The Marriot Riverside Resort & Spa, The Peninsula, Bank of Ayudhya and Krung Thai Bank. Overseas, his works hang at Thai Olan Restaurants in Sydney and Grand Bank in Washington DC.



VIETNAM

Dao Hai Phong

Born 1965 in Hanoi, Dao Hai Phong, son of well known Vietnamese artist Dao Duc trained in art. Graduating from the Hanoi Academy of Theatre and Cinema, he took to designing for the Vietnam Film Studio. Winning an award for his outstanding designs at the Vietnam Film Festival, he was elevated as their Chief Designer. Painting since childhood, he has evolved his own distinct style working in oil on canvas. His bold and luminous palette depicts rural landscapes and scenes reminiscent of his childhood. Often devoid of people, his detailed canvases are marked for their serenity and emotional glow that comes from his play of light and shade at different times of the day and night through a depiction of the sun and the moon. His measured and controlled compositions featuring trees, huts, boats, sky, streets in the rain, and mountains, are evocative of joy and bliss in some cases and emptiness and melancholy in others. A prolific painter, Dao Hai Phong's work has been exhibited in group and solo shows throughout Vietnam, as well as in Britain, Hong Kong, Laos, the United States, Italy, Singapore, Israel, Korea, Japan, and Switzerland amongst others. An artist of considerable repute, his work is collected by enthusiasts all over the world.



Ngo Van Sac

Born 1980 in Hanoi Ngo Van Sac with a Bachelor's and Master's degrees in fine art is an active member of the Vietnamese Fine Art Association and a lecturer in fine art. A painter and graphic artist, he grew up in a family of artists. Known for his fine and intricate wood engravings, he plays with textures and stories. His engravings are presented as such and not used to make prints. An accomplished artist and winner of the second prize at the National Fine Art University Students' Exhibition, in the early stages of his career, he makes sketches from photographs before starting to engrave. His work has been exhibited in solo and group shows across Vietnam including the National Fine Art Museum in Hanoi and in other parts of South East Asia and Europe. His work has featured in the 6th Malaysia International art Expo at Kuala Lumpur. He also participated in a workshop and exhibition as part of an International Symposium in Hungary. Exhibited also in Malaysia, South Korea, Japan, and China, his work has been picked up for numerous collections in his home country and by overseas collectors



INDIA

Binoy Varghese



Born 1966 in Kerala, Binoy Varghese did his National Diploma in Fine Arts from R.L.V. College, Thripunithura. He worked as artist-in-residence at Madhavan Nair Foundation India in Kochi, at Cholamandal in Chennai, Kanodia Centre in Ahmadabad, Apparao Galleries in New Delhi and then at the Banff Centre for Arts in Canada and with Aicon Gallery in New York, before settling in Delhi. Known for his skills in portraiture, his subject matter comes in a mix of landscape and a photo-realistic rendition. The colourful imagery on paper and canvas, often in larger format, focuses on issues of displacement capturing posing protagonists, often women and children, in their new found domains against a background of made-up environment of thick foliage interspersed with bright flowers ready to engulf and overpower. Their social-political-gender realities are highlighted by the dress they wear or the sharpness or softness of the background and foliage in the work. Winner of several accolades including the Artist of the Month by Max Muller Bhavan and Arnawaz Vasudev Trust, both in Chennai, Kerala State and National Art Academy awards, Binoy has participated in several national and international art camps and workshops. His work has been exhibited by well known galleries in solo and group shows held in different Indian cities and abroad including Canada, USA, Singapore, Hong Kong, Dubai, Thailand, London, South Africa, Denmark, and at Chianciano Art Museum Biennale in Italy and 11th Asian Art Biennale in Dhaka, Bangladesh amongst others. Featured in the India Art Fair, and auctions, his work is held in important collections including The National Gallery of Modern Art, and Apollo Hospital in Delhi. He has also designed a stamp for the Postal Department, Govt. of India. Binoy lives in Ghaziabad and works out of his studio in the city.

Ganesh Gohain



Born 1967 in Khunsa, Arunachal Pradesh, Ganesh Gohain did his Bachelor's degree in Fine Art from the Government College of Arts & Crafts, Guwahati, Assam, and his post diploma in sculpture with a first class and distinction, from the Faculty of Fine Arts, M.S. University at Vadodara. He subsequently worked there as a visiting faculty for a couple of years before taking up artists' residencies at Glasgow School of Art, then at Bellanderi Sculpture Workshop in Wales, followed by Ecole Superieure Des Beaux Arts in France. The varied exposures have helped refine his skills and versatility. A melding of the past and the present congeal in his multi-media graphic work that appears as sculptures, paintings and drawings mostly in an abstract genre. Different and subtle hues weave new classic forms in his expressions be these in metal or stone or wood sculptures or dense canvas paintings or nature-scapes in pastels, pencil or silver foil on paper or canvas or board. Numerous subtle forces seem to play beneath the surface of this accomplished artist's work, who is also an able organizer. Recipient of the French Government Scholarship, and the Charles Wallace Fellowship Award, amongst others, his work has been shown in group exhibitions across India and overseas, including solo shows at the State Art Gallery in Assam, the Nehru Centre in London, the Kelvin Grove Museum and Art Gallery in Glasgow, and the L'Ecole Superieure Des Beaux Arts in Le Mans, France. Aside from exhibitions, he has also participated in numerous artists' workshops. Ganesh lives and works in Vadodara.

Pampa Panwar

Born 1965 in Kolkata, Pampa Panwar studied for her Bachelor's Degree in painting from Kala Bhavana Visva-Bharati University Santiniketan and Master's in Printmaking from Fine Arts Dept at M.S. University in Baroda followed by another Master's from Slade School of Art in London on a Commonwealth Scholarship. A residency at CAMAC, Centre d'Art, Marnay-sur-Seine, in France with a French Scholarship and a Research Residency at the School of Art & Design, Lucerne University in Switzerland, with Swiss Arts Council grant were useful in taking forward her interests in experimentation. Her work in mixed media meanders around nature, and changing cycle of nature and time in a fine assimilation of landscape, narrative and abstraction. Making extensive use of collage and text, her colorful work also plays around with the frame that encases the imagery besides raising some questions about the gap between human perceptions of reality. She has participated in several artists' camps and workshops and the exposure to both the Indian and Western art traditions has helped her evolve a distinct vocabulary which is both refreshing and sensual. Besides her own work Pampa has also conducted art workshops at the Leeds City Art Gallery, Yorkshire in UK, and Vasant Valley School in Delhi, besides working as a resource person with Krishnamurti Foundation in Varanasi and illustrating children's books. She also taught art at New Delhi Women's Polytechnic. Her work has been exhibited in many shows held at Delhi, Mumbai, Bhopal and Kolkata, besides in the UK, France and at AICON Gallery in New York. Pampa lives in Santiniketan and is currently working from her studio at home on a Senior Research Fellowship awarded by the Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India.



Pradeep PP

Born 1981 in Kerala, Pradeep PP graduated with a first rank from Sri Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit, Kalady in Kerala and later did his MFA from Sir.J J School of Art in Mumbai. His colourful paintings, often featuring cityscapes, indirectly depict the deterioration of traditional life, in the face of fast changing social and cultural ethos. The loss of innocence and human values due to an overpowering invasion of metro culture and life style, are recurrent themes in his work. A Scholarship recipient from Sri Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit, and the Kerala Lalit Kala Academy award winner, Pradeep has participated in National and South Indian Arts Festivals. The young artist's has attended several workshops and his work has featured in many group shows around the country including a recent show at Art Musings Gallery in Mumbai. Pradeep now lives and works in Mumbai.



Seema Kohli

Born 1960 at Delhi, Seema Kohli studied philosophy followed by a Diploma in Applied Arts. She trained in Lithography working with Devraj Dakoji and subsequently learnt painting at Triveni. She also did a brief residency at Bharat Bhavan, Bhopal. Playing with varied materials in a range of mediums her art is steeped in Indian philosophy, scriptures and mythology. It explores themes around procreation and feminine concerns in a mix of portraiture, narrative and landscape. Her colourful swarming work in layers of dense drawing and painting, that she often sprays over with hands, covers the whole surface in a strange blend of the real and imagined. There are floating figures, part human part from the outer world, often women appearing in semi-anthropomorphic forms accompanied by flora and fauna. Keen on experimentation, this print maker and painter also works in drawing, ceramics, murals, sculptures, installations, photography, video, performance art and film making. Seema's work has been exhibited in several solo and group shows in various Indian cities including Delhi, Hyderabad, Mumbai and Bangalore and overseas at London, Dubai, Johannesburg, Hong Kong, Nepal, Italy and Paris, amongst others. Featured at the Arco festival in Spain, her work has won her the LKA women artist's award, besides Gold Medal at the Florence Biennale and FICCI FLOW women achievers' award. Her work can be seen at the new airport terminal in the city besides numerous other corporate and private collections including Rubin Museum in New York. Seema lives in Delhi and works from her studio at home.



Sujith SN

Born 1979 at Baroda, Sujith SN spent his formative years in Gujarat and moved to Palakkad in North Kerala later. His father who worked in Indian army died young while in service and there was family pressure for Sujith to follow the same profession. But army was not his calling and he took to working in the construction industry following a two year IIT course in draughtsman-ship. But with a burning passion for art he changed his course and studied for BFA from the College of Fine Arts in Trichir, University of Calicut, and later MFA in painting from SN School of Fine Arts, Performing Arts and Communication, University of Hyderabad. The impact of his experience and work as a draughtsman is evident in his art, as his creativity maps out modern urban landscape to address the relationship between politics and architecture and the way it impacts societies, cultures and behavior of people. Having grown up in various cities first in South India and subsequently in Gujarat and now in Mumbai metropolis, he has been a witness to varied forms of spatial transformations and rapid urbanization. His art practice is informed by these encounters. The young artist's work has already been exhibited in various significant group shows across the country and abroad, including The Map is not Territory, Relative Visa at Bodhi, Indian Subway at Grosvenor Vadehra, London, and at Gallery OED amongst others. His first solo exhibition The City and the Tower was held at Sakshi Gallery in Mumbai in 2008. Sujit participated in Khoj Kolkata Artists' residency in 2009, and last year's Skoda Prize Twenty exhibition. Recipient of various awards including the Kerala Lalit Kala Academi State Award, Merit Scholarship from the University of Hyderabad, and FICA Emerging Artist award; he lives and works in Mumbai.



Tapas Sarkar

Born 1952 in West Bengal, Tapas Sarkar, graduated from the Govt. College of Art in Kolkata. Founder Member and Secretary of 'Calcutta Sculptors', he worked as a modeler and headed the studio at the Indian Museum in Calcutta for several years but gave that up to take to his passion as a full time artist. His work is inspired by Kalighat tradition of Bengal painting which he re-interprets as contemporary narratives in his evocative and colourful sculptures that he makes using varied media. Credited with executing several giant metal sculptures ranging from 10 to 55 feet for important institutions and in public places including some for NTPC, SAIL, IFFCO, State and Central Governments, he has also worked in smaller sizes and varied materials- terracotta, plaster, glass- wool, aluminum, bronze, and scrap. His work has featured in over 20 solo and 50 group exhibitions across India as well as overseas including the recent India Art Fair. Tapas has attended many national and international camps. Recipient of the Ministry of Culture's Senior Fellowship, he has also been honoured with state and national awards including the Governor's Gold Medal, Academy of Fine Arts, Rabindra Bharati University and M.P. State Lalit Kala Academy Awards. The artist lives and works in Kolkata.



Vivek Vilasini

Born 1964 at Trichur, Kerala, Vivek Vilasini trained as a Marine Radio Officer at the All India Marine College in Kochi, followed by a Bachelor's degree in Political Science from Kerala University before turning to his passion for art. He trained in art and sculpture learning from traditional Indian craftspeople. This versatile artist's work explores our existing social structures and issues around cultural identity in today's continually changing global scenario. His paintings, sculptures, large-format photographs, digital work, and mixed media research based art, soaked in conceptual language, make telling visual expressions around socio-cultural and political issues. The differing ideologies, influences and interests are layered with irony to evoke the consciousness of the viewer. With solo and group shows at Trivandrum, Delhi, Bangalore and Kochi, his work has also featured in important shows abroad including those held at the Art Chicago Fair 2009 and an exhibition at Cincinnati, besides the prestigious 'Indian Highway' exhibition held at the Serpentine Gallery in London and at Astrup Fearnley Museum of Modern Art, Oslo, Norway, 'Arco 08' at Madrid, and Gandhi show in London. Vivek lives and works in Bangalore.

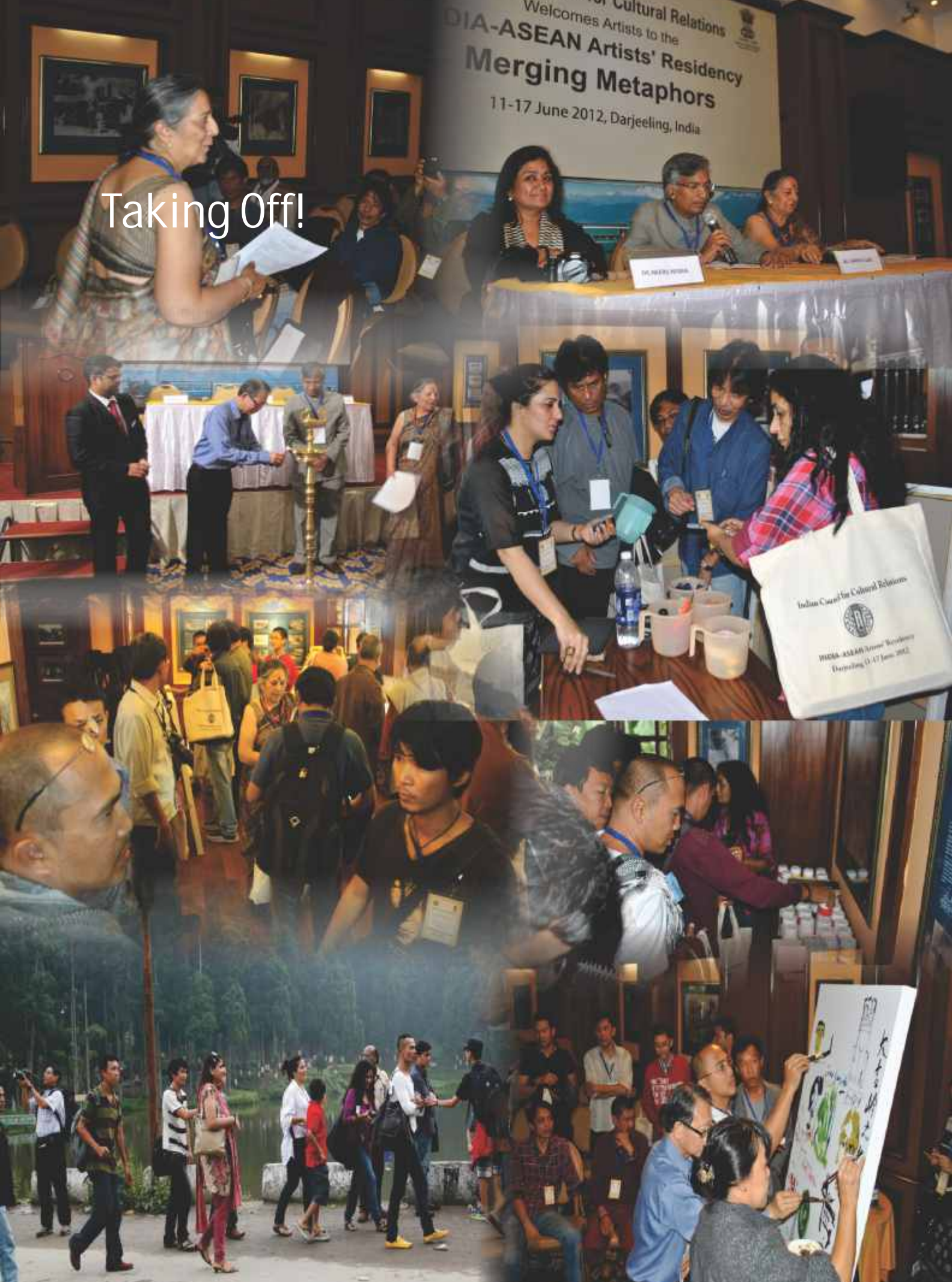


Snapshots of the Residency

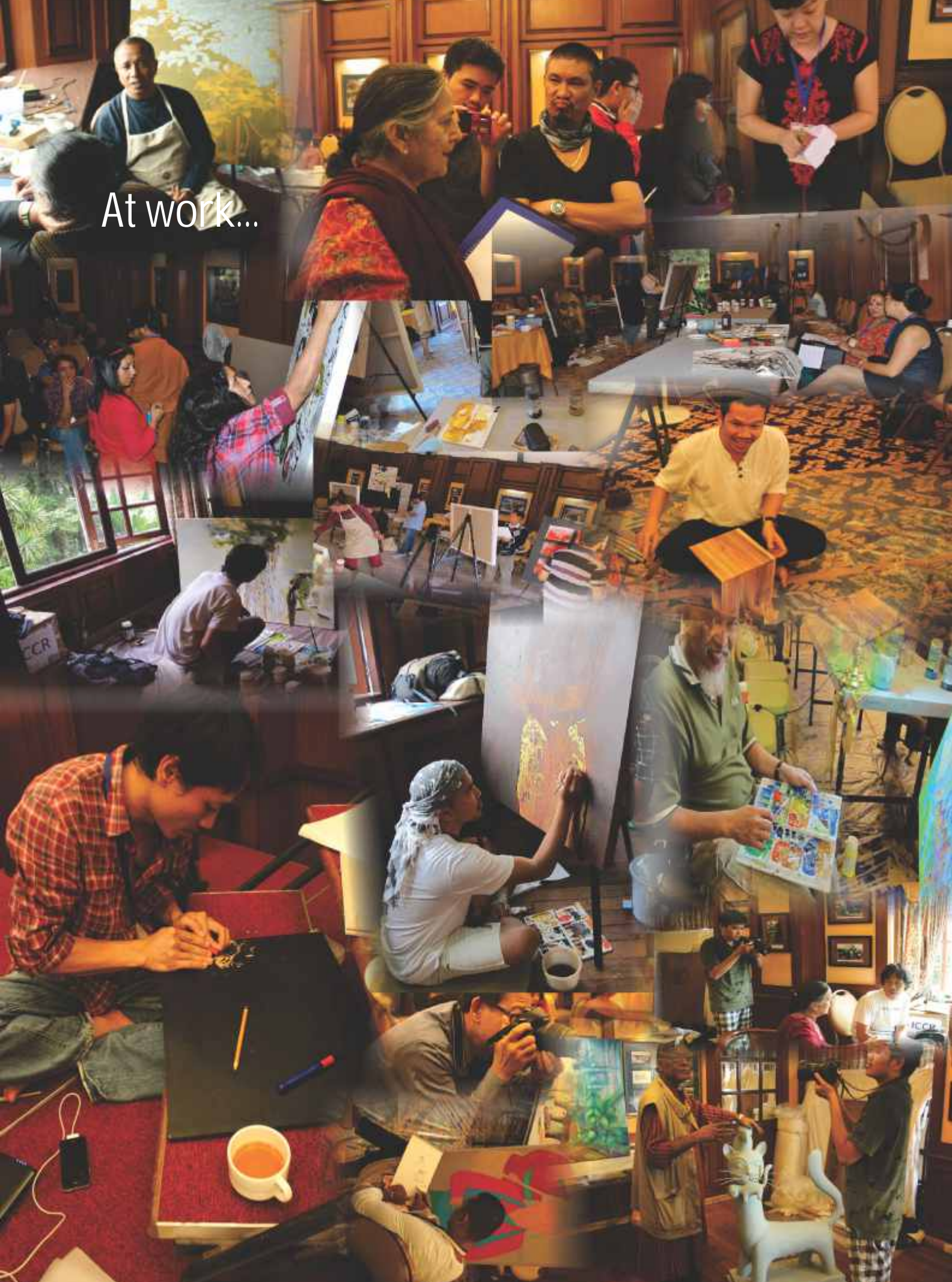
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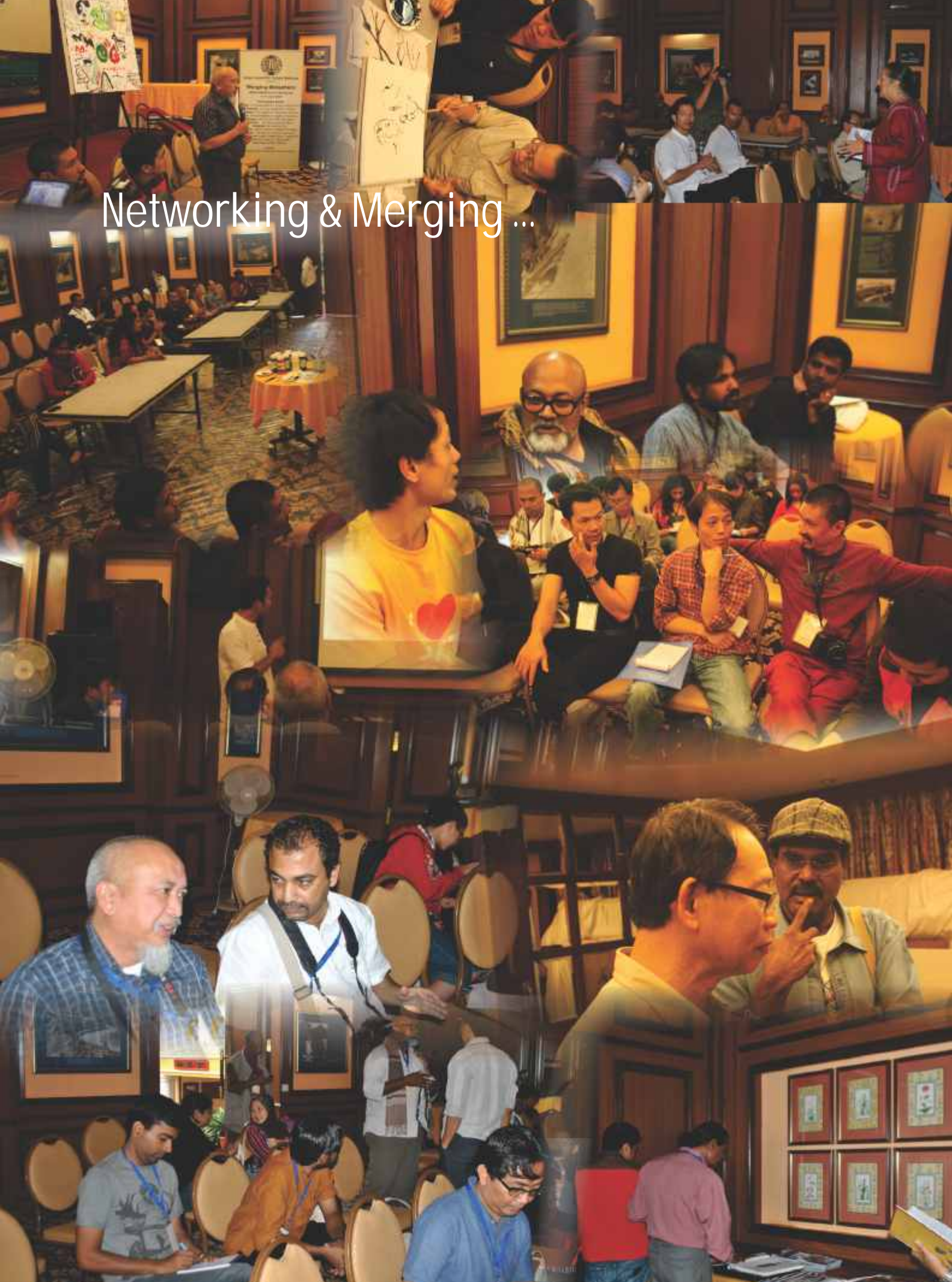
Indian Council for Cultural Relations
Welcomes Artists to the
DIA-ASEAN Artists' Residency
Merging Metaphors
11-17 June 2012, Darjeeling, India

Taking Off!



At work...





Networking & Merging ...

Chilling...





Memorabilia...

The Finale!



RAJASHREE BHATIA

Indian Council for Cultural Relations
Welcomes Artists to the
INDIA-ASEAN Artists' Residency
Singapore

Curators

Sushma K Bahl

Author of *5000 Years of Indian Art*, and former Head, Arts & Culture, British Council India, Sushma K Bahl is an independent arts adviser, writer and curator of cultural projects, based in Delhi. She led on the festivals of India in the UK and South Korea besides artists' residencies and collaborative cultural projects in India and in South Africa, Germany, U.K. and Bangladesh amongst others. She has conceived and curated a series of art exhibitions including *Fair & Furious* based on the theme of women, *Contemporary Chronicles in Miniature Art* that included work by artists from India and Pakistan, *Ways of Seeing* that won the best curated group show IHC Art India Award, *Vistaar* and *Convergence* that focused on an interface between art & craft/design and *Annanya* an overview of contemporary Indian art. Sushma was an invited speaker at the Opening Asia Seminar and working group meeting at Seoul, South Korea in 2003 and spoke at the Asian Critics Conference held there in 2006/7. She was the Guest Director for XI Triennale-India 2005, Project Consultant for Bharat Rang Mahotsav X11 and a Jury Member for the 14th Asian Art Biennale Bangladesh in 2010. She has edited and written for catalogs and artists' books including those on Thota Vaikuntam, Paresh Maity, Satish Gupta and Shuvaprasanna. Sushma Bahl is a trustee and advisory board member of a select few cultural institutions in India and abroad including the National Gallery of Modern Art Delhi and Florence Biennale in Italy.



Archana B Sapra

A qualified architect, designer and independent Delhi based arts consultant Archana B Sapra is Founding Member of Arts4All Trust- an NGO that aims to promote dialogue across cultures and the Founding Director of Sakaart an architectural, interiors and arts consultancy. She is also on the Editorial Board for *Creative Mind* quarterly art magazine. Her career span includes curating art exhibitions and cultural projects, writing on art, and researching, besides designing home interiors, and corporate offices. Her curatorial repertoire includes *Forms & Figurine*, *Art for Vision*, *Keep the Promise*, *Satrang*, *Continuum*, *Pravah*, *Far & Wide*, *Living Art Expanse*, *Games Artists Play* and *Eclectic Ensemble* exhibitions for various art galleries. She also takes up arts management initiatives and some of the international projects to her credit include *Variable Strokes: Eye Within*, an exhibition resulting from an art camp in Turkey, and co-curation of *CrossOver* a residency and exhibition at Dhaka and Delhi for invited artists from India and Bangladesh. She is currently putting together *Sadhaar* a three day multi arts festival including interactive workshops between folk and contemporary arts, to be held in Assam in November/December 2012. Amongst her other forthcoming projects is co-curation of an art exhibition in 2014 for the Museum of Sacred Art (MOSA) in Durbuy Belgium, which is also expected to tour other European Museums.





Indian Council for Cultural Relations

The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) was founded in 1950 by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the First Education Minister of Independent India. The prime objectives of the Council are to:

- ◆ participate in the formulation and implementation of policies and programmes relating to India's external cultural relations
- ◆ foster and strengthen cultural relations and mutual understanding between India and other countries
- ◆ promote cultural exchanges with other countries and people
- ◆ establish and develop relations with national and international organizations in the field of culture
- ◆ take such measures as may be required to further these objectives

ICCR facilitates and promotes a communion of cultures and a creative dialogue with other nations. To further the interaction with world cultures, the Council has strived to articulate and demonstrate the diversity and richness of the cultures of India, both in and with other countries of the World.

The Indian Council for Cultural relations prides itself on being the pre-eminent institution engaged in cultural diplomacy as the principal sponsor of intellectual and academic exchanges between India and partner countries. It is the Council's resolve to continue to symbolize India's great cultural and educational efflorescence in the years to come and develop cultural collaborations with societies abroad and in India to promote the objectives of cultural diplomacy.

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