

# Rubric



gallery g

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## ART TO YOU — WHEREVER YOU ARE

We've been working with art since 2003. Apart from the gallery, we've been curating for collectors' portfolios, for their homes and other spaces. Our aim is, thus, also, to bring art to wherever you live, work and play, and the public places you might go to: clubs, gyms and hospitals, anywhere art can enhance the surroundings.

We're now taking this to the next level, continuing to work with more and more of India's best artists and curators. The artists create their masterworks and our curators construct the narratives



(Above) From Ganapathi Hegde  
(Below) Table Etiquette  
Ramchandra Kharatmal

that string them together, match them to your work and company culture, always aware that no two spaces are alike.

We pride ourselves on sourcing the best work, art that will also make the best investments. Not just new work, but heritage art and the masters, the demand for all of which has soared so dramatically it demands a new level of professionalism and commitment to curate effectively.

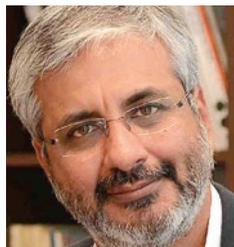
— Ramya Rajagopal, CEO gallery g

## WELCOME ONBOARD

May we introduce our new advisory board, all leaders in their fields who bring their extensive knowledge and experience to this exciting new phase of our journey. They joined us in June and

their presence will be invaluable, providing consultative perspectives as we move forward, ready for a new decade in which art consulting assumes even more relevance in our work. Gentlemen, welcome onboard.

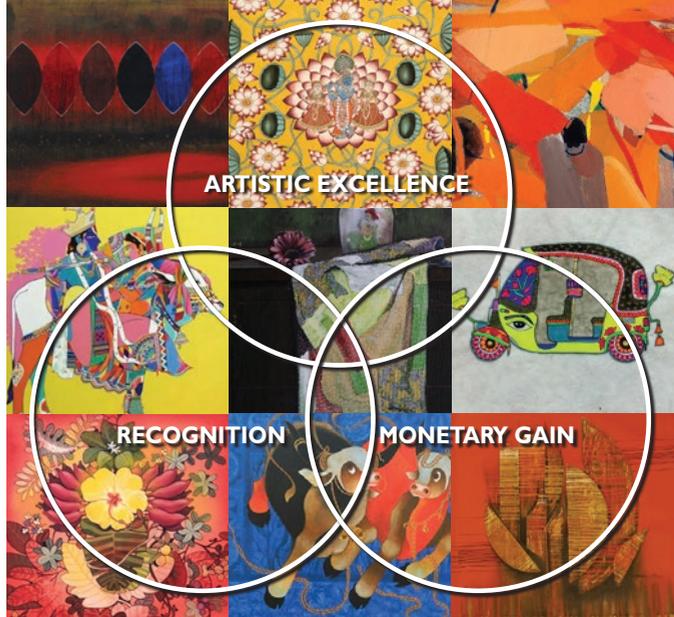
(Left to right) Sandeep Maini, Chairman Maini Group; Prakash Gurbaxani, Founder & CEO QVC Realty; Shesh Kulkarni, President Altissimo Consulting, & Services Pvt Ltd.; Jignesh Bhat, Founder & CEO Molecular Connections Pvt. Ltd.



# A MENTOR SPEAKS

## SUCCESS: WHAT, HOW AND WHY

*Every time I first start working with an artist, I find it's useful — for both of us — if we chat about what she or he wants from an artistic career. This is necessary so that we both know what their goals are and how we can best work together. Quite often, a lot is left unsaid, while being taken for granted. There are certain givens, of course, like about quality, sincerity and commitment, but art is such a personal means of expression and so, aims may differ. I've found that these points below help in establishing a common ground.*



(Above) All images gallery g collection

**B**efore we begin talking about how you build a successful career, we must remember that success means different things to different people.

For some artists, success isn't about money, it's the satisfaction of doing great work. Other artists love to show everyone what they've done and to receive the adulation that hopefully results — the intangible benefits of creativity.

The Venn diagram shows three key motivations that could drive you: artistic excellence, recognition and financial stability. As the diagram shows, they can overlap. Perhaps the biggest success would come to an artist who achieves a balance of all three, but that could take a lifetime.

### ARTISTIC EXCELLENCE

Finding out what motivates you is certainly key. For example, an artist who focuses on artistic excellence may put all her time and effort into her work and, so, spend very little time promoting or selling it. She may then have to supplement her income to support her artistic endeavours.

### RECOGNITION

For someone looking to make a name for herself, the priorities will be different. No artist works in a vacuum, and many'd argue that no work is complete until it's shared with an audience. Art is communication at a

very emotional and elemental level. If this is what drives you, then winning critical acclaim or an award is more important than selling your work.

### MONETARY GAIN

Finally, for those whom I'll call entrepreneurial artists, it feels most natural to focus on creating work that will appeal to a broad audience. They align their passion and promotional efforts and focus not only on creating, but also on promoting the sale of their work as widely as they can.

### PRIORITIZING

Determining what motivates you most can help you direct your efforts to promote your work. If artistic excellence is most important to you, you may focus on showing it only to mentors, critics and museums — you mightn't even try to sell it.

Artists seeking recognition will try and show their work through as many channels as they can and promote it physically and electronically through various kinds of art fraternities and associations and the media. Again, sales may not be the highest priority.

The entrepreneur who wants to build a business with her artworks will pursue opportunities to sell them and so art festivals and gallery representation are likely to be her highest priorities.

Only you can decide what success means to you. I do acknowledge that sales aren't the only worthwhile goal, but as a gallerist, my focus is on selling art and the principles that help you do that better. It's also important to point out that achieving success in any of these three areas takes time, hard work and, often, sacrifices. Use the Venn diagram to help decide your primary motivation and to set your priorities.

## HOW DO YOU SELL WELL?

- Follow a regular work schedule: discipline and commitment are as key to success here, as anywhere else
- Create a consistent body of work
- Organize your business.

## PASSION AND CONSISTENCY

As an artist, you're free to create whatever you want. You express what inspires you, in the medium, the style and technique that excite you. Artists who create work they're passionate about tend to be the most successful.

The challenge, especially at first, is finding what it is you're passionate about. Some artists form a clear vision right away: others must first try different subjects, styles and mediums. This exploration is healthy and necessary in your professional development. As you establish your career and start to sell, building a portfolio of cohesive, identifiable work assumes even more importance.

## CONSISTENCY

Most commercially successful artists have a recognizable style, and a consistency that ties their work together. This doesn't mean that there can't be variety in your work, or that you must do the same thing over and over again. It just means that if you want to sell successfully, you need to develop a style that's identifiably yours.

I look for consistency in an artist's work in at least four of six aspects. These are simple, although admittedly subjective, criteria: subject, style, theme, palette, medium and presentation.

So, if your subject, style, theme and palette are consistent, you can work in several different media using a variety of presentations. Conversely, if your medium, presentation, palette, style and presentation are consistent, you can explore an assortment of subjects and themes. This means that you can have some latitude for variety in your work.

## STRUGGLE & HARD WORK

There's a saying that everything you want wants you back. But it's not going to simply come to you, you must go out and get it. Do you know the difference between struggle and hard work? What you want will take work. And the bigger the goal the harder the work, but there should be no struggle.

To me the difference is resistance. That which is meant to be, will come to you. Roadblocks will present themselves to test your resilience, but you'll overcome them with persistence.

## STRUGGLE: THE WRONG PATH

Struggle can be a frustrating battle. We approach a problem time and time again only to meet with a constant inability to break down the barriers that stand in the way of a solution. We become tired and eventually lose sight of what we are trying to accomplish, through the clouded vision of perceived failure and, mostly, fatigue.

This eventually turns into a downward spiral affecting our self-esteem, focus, drive, determination and overall belief in who we are and what we are capable of achieving. It's not that we are incapable, it's that we are on the wrong path. Struggle depletes and exhausts you. It takes from your life force and makes you less able to contribute in even the smallest ways.

## HARD WORK: THE INTUITIVE VOICE

Never be afraid to go after what you want, but be prepared to work extremely hard for it.

But if you ever find yourself struggling towards what seems like no particular end, stop, reassess and look elsewhere. There are always other avenues, one of which will throw light on what's holding you back. Sometimes you need to listen for your own intuitive voice for a solution, not an inner dialogue of received wisdoms and irrelevant patterns and beliefs.

Hard work, however, will sometimes tire you. But for the most part, you'll be so driven by the constant forward movement towards what you're meant to be and to have, that you'll likely summon up energy beyond what you ever thought possible.

— Gitanjali Maini

# ART ON THE SPOT: SITE-SPECIFIC CURATING

*Over the years, curating for clients' homes, offices and commercial spaces has evolved into a full-fledged professional creative and curatorial facility where a board of eminent artists, scholars and other stakeholders consult for us.*

*Our site-specific curating, too, has grown in scale and extent. This year has seen some completed projects and another making rapid progress these last few months. We've been curating on-site for several clients for their new, residential and corporate buildings. There's been a fascinating cross-section of types and genres: paintings, and sculptures using an assortment of materials and techniques.*

## EMBASSY BOULEVARD

For this development of luxury villas on the road to Kempegowda International airport, the Embassy Group commissioned us to create a collection, *Harmony*, of five sculptures and eleven paintings for the Boulevard Clubhouse.

In it, geometric, human and avian forms express the striving for harmony, and the deconstructing of the conventional ways of attaining it. The results, some shown here, used an assortment of materials: the sculptures being made from bronze, brass and stainless steel; the paintings oils detailed with 23-carat gold leaf.

### THE ARTIST

*Harmony* was created by Sangeeta Abhay, painter, working with sculptor Thomas Kuvor of Studio Sukriti in Jaipur where the sculptures were fabricated. Sangeeta is a regular on our show calendar and has shown successfully in the US, Indonesia, Dubai, London and all over India. Her most popular series of works, one which extends over 12 years, is on the Buddha. Her work is lauded by, among others, the Dalai Lama, poet-filmmaker Gulzar and philanthropist-writer Sudha Murthy.

*(Top) Freethinker; (below from left) Balance; Blooming Harmony; Harmony in DNA; Louvre Insight. All works Sangeeta Abhay*



## FOUR SEASONS BANGALORE

The Four Seasons job is a feather in our cap since it's the first time that this global hospitality entity has entrusted a project of this sort to anyone other than its own regular service providers.

For us, this is an exciting challenge because its scale and complexity will tap into our curatorial expertise, that we've built up since 2003. Leveraging the sprawling network we've built among artists, peer galleries and the Kochi Biennale and other comparable events and entities means accessing the industry's premier resources. Four Seasons is set to become an important archive for contemporary Indian art and its developer, the Embassy Group, thus, a key patron.

The collection of paintings and sculptures salutes "the multi-layered aesthetic of Indian contemporary visual art" moving beyond how art is conventionally curated for hotel spaces. While its theme is eclectic, it pays

## MAINI PRECISION PRODUCTS

Last month Maini Precision Products (MPP) inaugurated its new dedicated aerospace manufacturing plant in Bommasandra. The new building's lines and spaces inspired Dr. S.K. Maini, Maini Group Founder, to sit down with Sangeeta Abhay and brainstorm on ideas for sculptures to complement the facility's overall design. Another objective was to emphasise the need to use leftover and discarded components and pieces in ornamental and practical ways.

On a visit to the MPP factory, Sangeeta put together a plane from discarded components: this also signified the precision that's central to the company's activities.

An installation called *Allure* (below: one of the planes) was



created in the water body in the factory's atrium, which shows a blossoming lotus, standing for nature's precision, with three planes hovering around it, symbolising achievement, soaring, as well as the Founder's three sons, Sandeep,

particular attention to India's cultural history and memory.

The individual practices of over 75 of the most diverse and cutting-edge artists (including Sangeeta Abhay) will create a narrative of original works, a multiplicity of unfolding stories.

### CURATORIAL MASTER

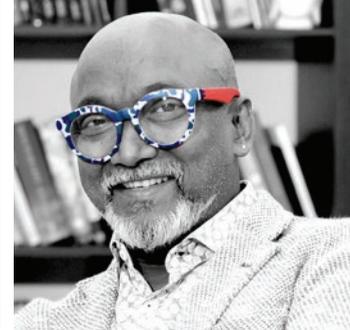
Curating it on our behalf is Riyas Komu, Kochi Biennale founder, and internationally-admired artist and sculptor whose own work has shown at the Venice Biennale, and in galleries and art fairs in Asia, Europe and both the Americas, apart from, of course, all over his native land. In 2015, British magazine *ArtReview* listed him (and Bose Krishnamachari: see next page) among the top 100 most influential people in contemporary art.



Gautam and Chetan. Sangeeta called it an essay in planet biomimicry, which is using design principles to emulate natural processes and systems, or evoke the possibilities of aligning the geometry in nature's and science's aesthetics.



And in a slight departure, was the sheep (above) also highlighting the aesthetic potential in assembling everyday leftover production line parts.



# BOSE KRISHNAMACHARI: A POLYMATH'S POLYCHROMES

**15-22 JUL 2017** Bose Krishnamachari held his first solo Bangalore exhibition *Colour Code* here. The show, one in his *Stretched Bodies* series, was a riot of his signature polychromatic abstracts.

Bose has lived and worked in Mumbai since 1985. Born in Kerala in 1963, he studied painting at the Sir JJ School of Art, Mumbai, and is an MFA from Goldsmiths, University of London. His abstracts, figuratives, sculpture, photography, multimedia installations and architectural design show all over the world. He's also widely feted for the Kochi-Muziris Biennale which he and Riyas Komu founded in 2012 which, three successful editions later (and the fourth due in December 2018), has made Kerala an international artistic crossroads. We work with him in both his capacities, the Biennale Foundation being an organisation we support and are closely involved with.

His work has garnered many awards and accolades: last year when the Museum of Contemporary Art in Yinchuan, China held its first Biennale, it asked Bose to curate.

## SHOW AND SHOWMAN

In *Colour Code*, over forty primary and secondary hues jostle for the eye, resonating, like many of his canvases do, with memories of watching Kathakali and Koodiyattam. "At Goldsmiths, my professor's advice about painting abstracts was to 'get into the extreme aspect of it'. I realized that I had to add a performative element to my abstracts to make them my own."

He often paints in front of an audience, as he memorably did for us at a YPO event in Goa in 2015, people thronging around the table he painted on (which he prefers to an easel) in the midst of a social Saturday

evening's bustle and finishing in about an hour (*right*). "My works in *Stretched Bodies* are in acrylic and I can't paint gradually, layer upon layer, like with oils. I have to finish rapidly; I generally take a day to finish a work."

One of India's most respected abstract artists, Bose loves the genre's freedom. "These abstracts take from life itself, where extremes co-exist. I paint what I feel like painting. And the paintings don't have any narratives either. The viewer can interpret them however he wants to. The buyer can also display a painting however he wants to — horizontally, vertically, on the wall or the floor."

## INSPIRED

Why *Stretched Bodies*? "Piet Mondrian (a pioneer of 20th century abstract art, whose style was refined to the most basic geometric forms), when asked why he painted one line over and over, sometimes up to 100 times, said he was trying to 'stretch the line'. I wanted to do something similar: your body is the closest thing to you and that fascinated me."

Though busy with the Biennale, Bose makes time to paint. He's a firm believer in the curator's role. "We don't have enough museums or gallery spaces (for) contemporary art in India. Our students don't recognise what art is and what it isn't. But you can learn to appreciate it by experiencing it"





# MORI ARTY

*Art for all being our credo, we welcome the views of everyone who encounters it and not just of those in the business: that can get limiting. It's wonderful when people not involved in its workings take time to look at art and tell us about it. The more who do, the better it is for us; more differences of outlook mean a widening of the ambit: new growth.*

A friend of **gallery g**, Jayakrishnan Veluthakkal has been working in engineering and infrastructure in Muscat for over twenty years. His work takes him to interesting places, one of which he shares with us here.

I was in Japan on work in August and, during the weekend, when my colleagues and I went sightseeing around Tokyo, we made sure we stopped at the Mori Art Museum for contemporary art.

The real estate developer Minoru Mori's dream project, the Museum is in the Mori Tower in Tokyo's Roppongi Hills complex, which he built. It's right at the top of the central Tower — a landmark visible from anywhere in Tokyo.

As its website says, the Mori Art Museum strives to be a place

for enjoyment, inspiration and discussion — where what's important in global culture and society is openly debated, through its exhibitions and a wide range

of learning programmes. The visitors included young schoolchildren, students and senior citizens, locals, people from all over Japan and from around the world.

We were told that since its opening, the Mori has been critically acclaimed for its wide variety of original exhibitions, many of which have been curated around universal themes.

On the 52nd floor where the Observatory also is, the Gallery extends over 1,000 square metres. It also shows an assortment of other exhibitions, of important artworks from traveling exhibitions of precious works from art museums around the world.

Though I'm not into art that much, I still enjoyed seeing what the gallery had. Much of the art was for children too. It was definitely a good place to broaden your art horizons. One unmissable feature of the Mori is that you can get a panoramic view of the skyline without going to the CityView sky deck next door.

My favorite art work (*above*) was the evolution of the beam of light. Standing inside a darkened room, one could see the timespan of light's evolution, and be eloquently reminded of how small we human beings on earth are, and the magnificence of the universe. Very humbling!

— Jayakrishnan Veluthakkal



**FIVE TOP-SELLING INDIAN ARTISTS** Raja Ravi Varma *Radha in the Moonlight* Rs. 23 crore Pundole's 17th November 2016 • Tyeb Mehta *Untitled (Woman on a Rickshaw)* Rs.22.98 crore Christie's 20th May 2017 • Akbar Padamsee *Greek Landscape* Rs.19.19 crore Saffronart 8th September 2016 • Manjit Bawa *Untitled* Rs. 4.02 crore AstaGuru 22nd August 2017 • Jogen Choudhury *Story of Woman* Rs. 3.19 crore AstaGuru 22nd August 2017

## ART'S RISE

The heartening news from *livemint.com* in September seems to still hold good. The article I'm quoting from says that art sales in the country "showed no signs of a slowdown." About 47 new Indian artists have sold at record-breaking prices in the secondary art market between March 2016 and August 2017.

This was despite demonetisation. In the secondary market transactions are by cheque as Hugo Weihe, CEO of Saffronart, said in the article, so demonetisation hasn't affected it.

That apart, as market research firm Artery India said, it hasn't stopped the serious collector – 27 of those records were set after demonetisation and, in the private market, four records were set after January, one of them ranking among the five highest-priced Indian artworks ever sold, according to Artery's CEO Arvind Vijaymohan.

What this means, he went on to say, is that while overall things had slowed, it was business much as usual in art.

(Not everyone agreed. Amal Allana, director of the Delhi Art Heritage gallery, said during the India Art Fair in January that in the primary caution market, caution was prevailing, and she felt that there was "no real sense of recovery".)

The sale of really major works is usually impervious to economic ups and downs; in fact some authorities contend that they tend to improve when the outlook seems more uncertain. More and more are they seen as safer bets at those times.

### GOING, GOING UP

Especially the modernists: at the auctions, 29 of the 47 record prices were for them. Collectors rushed to pay — even overpay for more than a dozen of them, according to Vijaymohan — high amounts. Of the 47 record prices, 29 were for modernist works. Tyeb Mehta's *Untitled (Woman on Rickshaw)* was auctioned at Christie's in May for Rs. 22.98 crore, the highest ever for his work.

### VARMA SUPREME

All this is borne out, as I'm very

happy to share with you, by what happened last November. Just after demonetisation, at Pundole's auction house, Raja Ravi Varma's *Radha in the Moonlight* sold for Rs. 23 crore, Rs. 19 crore more what his *Untitled (Portrait of a Young Woman in Russet and Crimson Sari)* went for: Rs. 3.9 crore, at Sotheby's in March 2016. Raja Ravi Varma is in demand, more than ever.

*With acknowledgments to [www.livemint.com/Leisure/Eef25EEyFsb9VGlC7d4wK/Indian-art-sales-show-no-signs-of-a-slowdown.html](http://www.livemint.com/Leisure/Eef25EEyFsb9VGlC7d4wK/Indian-art-sales-show-no-signs-of-a-slowdown.html)*



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