

# Rubric



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## ART FOR ONE, ART FOR ALL

### WELCOME TO ISSUE 14.

We can't wait to share with you all that we have been doing. It is **gallery g's** fifteenth year and it's been a thrilling, if challenging journey, one with many joys and accomplishments. Thank you for being a part of it.

### GROWTH PHASE

We've barely had time to celebrate, though, since this is such a busy time for the industry in general, and for us in particular: our site curating for corporate spaces, hotels, hospitals, schools and other establishments just keeps growing so rapidly.

### FINDERS, KEEPERS

People come to us because we — our marvellous curators and team members — have learnt how to get what they want and how to deliver what the clients need. Whatever the considerations — aesthetics, budget, objective (for public collectors, corporates and institutional clients), our professional curatorial team is varied and experienced to provide solutions for clients of all types, no matter how big or small.

The current Four Seasons Hotel and Private Residences project, curating for which is certainly the biggest and most prestigious we've undertaken, is on the home stretch and once completed will be the crowning jewel of our gallery, and for Karnataka.

Acquiring a piece of art is really one for the heart for most of us, and now more and more people are looking to add it to their homes, work spaces and investment portfolios.

Everyone wants art in their lives: not just connoisseurs and knowledgeable collectors, but the newbie, first-time collectors of all kinds. That's been the huge, if incremental, change since the last few years.

It just confirms that art, really is for all, as we've always believed.

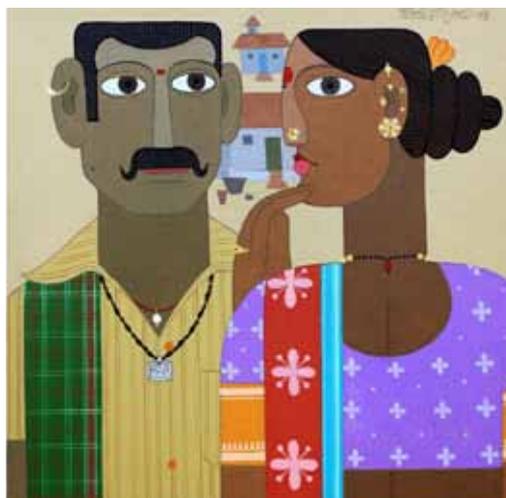
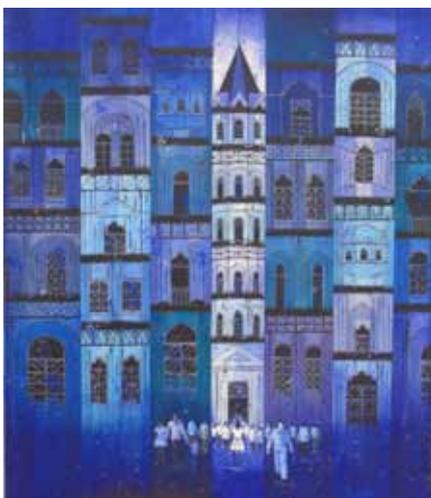
### TALKING WALK-INS

We have a very special place in our hearts for the instinctive collector, the art-lover who walks in off the street on a whim, or just driven by the urge to look at a work of art and maybe even buy it with sparkling spontaneity.

Right from the start, **gallery g** has always been a draw for walk-ins, and we've welcomed every single one. The true art-lover, our walk-in client, is who we respect and work for. This fifteenth anniversary we celebrate you.

Happy reading!

Gitanjali Maini  
Founder & Managing Director.



(Paintings Left to Right: Suresh Gulage, Kandi Narasimulu and Sujata; Watermark: Raghava KK)

# ON OUR WALLS

Art thrives only when artists have the freedom to let their imagination soar and a medium to convey their message; there is a message in every artist's work, some are simple, some are quixotic, yet some are a collage of thoughts.

At **gallery g**, the core essence of our belief is not just to showcase their works but more to the point, promote and popularise the artist. In this issue of Rubric, we bring you an eclectic mix of three artists, whose works are as diverse as they come, yet meaningful and moving in their themes.



GANAPATI HEGDE



BHARTI PRAJAPATI



RAGHAVA KK

Think floral and the first name that pops up in the mind is Ganapati Hegde. The outrageously talented artist has a way with flowers like none other. The colours, be it the green, red, purple or yellow, they leave you dazzled with his renderings. His eye for detail is exemplary and forces the viewer to stop, gaze, linger and study his works to understand and assimilate the beauty of the work.

The 43-year-old artist is a master of this genre; works primarily with acrylic on canvas and his depiction of flora and fauna, and at times, even the starkest bird of them all — the crow — is spectacular. The manner in which Ganapati Hegde makes his art transcend the surreal and turn it almost lifelike is unique. His clever and stunning depiction of Lord Ganesha amidst the flowers and leaves, leaves us spellbound, wondering at the imagination of this creative genius, who dabbles as a creative designer in a software firm.

First and foremost, Bharti Prajapati focuses on women. Many artists follow the theme but where Prajapati stands out is in her depiction of figurines, the jewellery, and the colours on her canvas. It's not beauty of the woman that she aims to translate, it's not the oohs and aahs of ethereal beauty that she aspires for; far from it, it's the poignancy and deep impact of the rural womenfolk that she brings out in her stunning works.

Prajapati, 56, has evolved from the stick figurines that she used to depict in the past, yet, stays in tune with her portrayal of long limbs and elongated necks. Feminine issues and the role of women is, quite obviously, close to her heart and as she transforms her imagination and memories of the people of Kutch onto a broader canvas, the significance and her purpose becomes crystal clear. A contrast of detail and flat expanses give a harmonious blend to her work, making her one of the most appreciated Indian artists today.

This vibrant artist with an infectious smile can put anyone at ease with his demeanour. Soft-spoken and polite to a fault, Raghava has transcended his passion for painting and the Indian God Ganesha into a visual delight. Moving to New York in mid-2000s, Raghava, 38, has moved on to 'Experimental art' and has seen him hobnob with Hollywood celebrities during his near 10-year stay there. A cartoonist, a photographer and an artist, the versatile Raghava is a top draw in NY, be it his talks at the TED forum or at the NY University. Deciding to relocate back to his roots in Bengaluru earlier this year, Raghava has set out to widen the horizon of his 'experimental art'. In a first, this genial, yet, maverick artist has taken on the role of curating a part of one of **gallery g's** prestigious projects. He is curating the original image bank for 492 art works at Four Seasons and with the project set to be complete in a few months time, it will be another feather in Raghava's cap. Four Seasons has the complete copyright to the image bank. ■

# TALKING TEMPERA - TRENDING NOW!



It's one of the earliest forms of art; Tempera style dates back to the 12th century. Oil replaced Tempera as the preferred form of medium given the challenge the artists face in getting the required consistency, but the methodology and the manner in which they are done is unique.

In the early part of the 20th century, a large number of Indian artists, notably of the Bengal School took up Tempera as one of their primary medium of expression. Artists like Gaganendranath Tagore, Asit Kumar Haldar, Abanindranath Tagore, Nandalal Bose, Kalipada Ghoshal and Sughra Rababi were foremost in their use of Tempera.

In tune with our endeavour to promote and project varied and diverse artists, **gallery g** is hosting an exhibition of exclusive Tempera work from the Bengal School of Art between May and June. Selected works from artists under the tutelage of the celebrated Ajoy Ghose, whose style is as unique as they come, are being exhibited as are several sculptures by Suvajit Samanta; back in 2015 **gallery g** had held a solo exhibition of Ghose's highly acclaimed works.

A brief profile on the five artists whose works are on display:

## KAUSHIK COOMAR

An exponent of the Indian style of painting, the artist is a student of Ajoy Kumar Ghose and experiments with Tempera to express his vision. He depicts scenes from rural India - busy markets, daily village life and his work also includes two works in classic Tempera forms of popular Indian deities.

## PARTHA SARATHI BHATTACHARJEE

The artist is doing his PhD under the supervision of Dr. Somnath Mukherjee and Prof. Ajay Ghose, working towards his thesis titled "An analytical study of the Mother's (Mirra Alfassa) creation: A voice in silence". He is also the proud recipient of the Abanindranath Tagore and Nandalal Bose award for art.

## PAYAL ACHARJYA

She received the prestigious Abanindranath Tagore Memorial Award in 2016 and has experimented with painting in various mediums. Her series on Nature is inspired by what she sees around her. Three paintings are inspired by Miniature works that were popularised by Mughal rulers in India - her version in Tempera style. ■

## SABYASACHI BOHRA

Having studied at the Government College of Art & Craft, Kolkata, the artist was keen to explore an unusual medium like Tempera that is typically associated with the Bengal School of Art. In this exhibit he showcases four different pieces, on themes ranging from Nature, Mythology and People.

## BUDHADITYA BANERJEE

Apart from being an exemplary artist, he is also an art restorationist and has worked on several private projects preserving old paintings. His works in this exhibition showcase a mix of Hindu mythological figures, a subject that is much favoured in the Tempera medium.

(Above: Tempera paintings by Payal Acharjya and Partha Sarathi Bhattacharjee.  
Right: Suvajit Samanta's sculptures in bronze, wood and steel)



# FOUR SEASONS: A LUXURY ARTISTIC EXPERIENCE

It's a project of iconic proportions, a feather in the cap for gallery g. Four Seasons Hotel and Serviced Residences, ready for occupancy come August 2018, promises to be one of the most artistically refined and tastefully designed hotels in India.

The public spaces of the hotel will showcase work by some of the most talented artists in the country — it's a perfect amalgamation of known names, as well as up-and-coming mavericks. The project has been curated by Riyas Komu, one of the best known artists and top three curators in the country. With his keen artistic eye and backed by the experience of having founded and put together the Kochi Muziris Biennale, Riyas proved to be the perfect choice to curate art for this project as he envisioned a story board from day one that narrated a clear Bengaluru story.

The lobby or focal point of the hotel holds iconic art—the whimsical Musui and Maiya— by master sculptor KS Radhakrishnan, his signature characters that are archetypal figures of man and woman through whom the artist's vision of the world unfolds in myriad ways. There is freedom and fluidity in KSR's work, an opportunity to elevate one beyond the mundane.



Musui by KS Radhakrishnan



Maiya by KS Radhakrishnan

Saju Kunhan, known to translate his artistic vision onto wood, depicts his version of the Map of Bangalore, a massive work crafted in wood that holds pride of place in the main lobby of the hotel.

Manjunath Kamat's forte lies in creating fantasy out of the ordinary. He works in moulds and clay and segments, building on his vision each day to ultimately arrive at a suitable expression of his narrative. Two exquisitely detailed sculptures, visible on two walls of the lobby, are his contribution to this project.

Another striking work — in this case, the word used to describe the creation most aptly would be raw or potent—is a bronze wall sculpture by master artist Laxma Goud. His work is dramatic, balancing the yin and yang of the human body, hence its strategic placement in the main lobby.

In keeping with the Bangalore story, G R Iranna's work is a must-have for the hotel. Of intense texture and deep thought, Iranna's creation has always been far removed from logic, yet, his creations tell a warm story of Bangalore's



Saju Kunhan's wood craft

Blossoms as an abstract force. His use of colour and texture is arresting, and breathtaking.

The lobby level restaurant proudly displays Thukral and Tagra's critically acclaimed exhibit titled 'Walk of Life.' The Thukral and Tagra's work was built upon the ancient Indian game called *Ganjifa*.

Originally played with a set of 120 cards, the artists turned it into a board game depicting Dashavatara, the ten earthly incarnations of Lord Vishnu, the Hindu god. The 10 plates of Dashavataram will be on display.



Sumedh Rajendran's sculpture

Sumedh Rajendran's experimental sculpture, through which he juxtaposes contradictory societal values using a wide range of mediums like leather, metal, tin, rubber and cement is another eye catching piece in the restaurant.



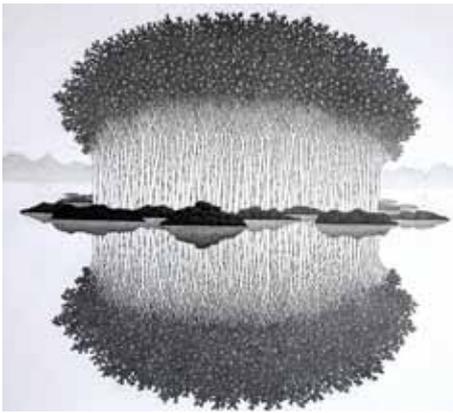
Walk of Life by Thukral and Tagra



G R Irrana's work



Manjunath Kamath's fantasy



Even the lift lobbies, a widely ignored space in hotels, have been rendered an artistic touch through Sucheta Ghadge's brilliant wood relief prints. The spa is the domain of Prakash Ghadge's soothing black, grey and white works, adding an aesthetic element to the pristine lines of its design.

Choosing to give equal importance to rooms, gallery g commissioned internationally acclaimed artist Raghava KK to create original pieces of artwork for all 492 rooms at the Four Seasons Hotel. In keeping with current art trends and in an effort to create something out of the box, the artist has conceptualised a series of original abstract works that will elevate the stay experience for guests at the hotel. Every work has been carefully planned and created to meet with the hotel's exceptional standards of quality and luxury.

The art for Four Seasons Hotel and Serviced Residences is a project entirely conceptualised and executed by gallery g.

- Archana Shenoy

(All images are visual representations of each artist's work. Pieces commissioned for this project are original and currently under production.) ■

(Left: Prakash Ghadge's 50 shades in gray)

## CURATING ART TO TRIGGER CONVERSATION

RIYAS KOMU

Riyas Komu is one of the top-3 curators in the country, and one of the first to break away from the cosmopolitan art scene. Primarily given to painting, with a strong message, the artist champions the cause of fellow artists with the bi-annual Kochi Muziris Biennale. Riyas dons the curator's hat for our biggest and most prestigious project — the Four Seasons Hotel and Serviced Residences.

**Is curated work different from what you would do yourself?**

Normally, in curated and exhibited projects, I try to reflect my political concerns; I engage in discourses with different kind of artists. When we did the first edition of the Kochi Biennale, the whole curatorial attempt was to celebrate the location, the history, the cosmopolitan legacy and send a message about diversity, and also celebrate art by triggering new narratives in the context.

Curation has multiple possibilities; curation can be about the shape of an object, about history, about conflict, it can also specifically be about any topic because artistic calibre is available. The job is to choose the right kind of artist and trigger a conversation.



Laxma Goud's work



Sucheta Ghadge's wood relief works

**Tell us how comfortable you are doing such commercial projects?**

I don't look at these kind of sites as commercial spaces at all; these are spaces which are growing. Historically, corporate houses, institutions have always had this love for art and I see it as a continued gesture from such places. The role of art is also to accommodate those kind of spaces. I'm not looking at it as a commercial venture, I'm more interested in doing such projects in my capacity now where I feel I'll be able to help the young generation.

**Is this your first time in this kind of a 'curation' zone?**

Personally, as an artist, I've done projects for Mumbai's Terminal 2, Hyatt in Mumbai and many commissioned projects for different institutions and corporate houses. But stepping into the field of curation, this is the first project where I'm getting an opportunity to curate the public spaces for this hotel.

**Do you plan to do these kind of projects more often?**

I'm interested in finding new platforms for art to exist, which makes opportunities for artists to survive, because India is a very difficult place for artists to survive financially. They don't get enough opportunities to exhibit their work, sell their work; we (barely) have any patronage. So, institutions like the Four Seasons coming forward to accommodate art should have original work and then push the artist to experiment more. Such kind of projects allow better art to come out, better avenues, and we should also use the rules set by the government— Corporate Social Responsibility— for spending on art. We should accumulate all these resources to have better art infrastructure in this country. ■



# SCULPTING A NEW EXPERIENCE

We're not just an art gallery that buys and sells art, gallery g has always been known for more: from fostering young artists, to growing the artistic ecosystem and furthering its employees' knowledge and appreciation.

When the Sculpture Park was inaugurated at Madhavendra Bhawan at Nahargarh Fort in Jaipur, the gallery sent a few of its employees to not just enjoy the newly curated artistic space, but to learn and understand more about what was on display.

Curated by Peter Negy and Saath Saath Arts' co-founder Aparajitha Jain, the Sculpture Park not just showcases different forms of art, it offers a deeper and meaningful insight into the future of Indian art. The venue is a curious mix of traditional art and contemporary design.

Three of the pieces we saw were of stellar quality and we've highlighted them here.

## ARRESTED IMAGE OF A DREAM BY THUKRAL & TAGRA



The most attractive piece of work is at the entrance by young Gurugram-based artistic duo Thukral and Tagra. Titled 'Arrested Image of a Dream', the work recreates the imagery which came as a sequence of images in dream. "The realisation was kind of introspective; where the very desires of mankind are expressed but cannot be achieved. This reflects our desires which cannot be fulfilled, which are so heavy that cannot be lifted, cannot fly," Jiten Thukral explains.

The piece is carved from faux stone - to symbolise the desires that are so heavy they cannot be lifted. A pair of footprints on the floor lead up to the sculpture; the viewer can stand and capture the moment on a camera lens or more popularly as a selfie.



## VERTICAL CHRONICLE OF A TURBULENT EQUILIBRIUM BY JITESH KALLAT

It appears to be a basic ladder made of bamboo poles. But on closer inspection you will find tiny miniatures carved onto the poles. There is an abundance of flowers and leaves carved into the poles that are not even bamboo - they just appear to be so. This work by Kallat is an offshoot of a much larger body called Circa made by the artist in 2011.

The work is meant to resemble building scaffolding that one sees through the country at construction sites. The question Kallat is attempting to pose is one of humour and of deep thought. "Would a labourer's work be considered an object of art" is what is he attempting to ask through this work?

## UNTITLED (COBWEB) BY REENA SAINI KALLAT

Call it a spider web or a safety net; artist Reena Saini Kallat is trying to emulate a 'trap' through her artistic language. It's a web made of colourful rope bits, rubber stamps and handles. A colourful installation that is attractive to the eye, it is only on detailed inspection that one notices the other elements included into the body of work.

According to the artist rubber stamps are symbolic of authority - like the stamps on a passport. The colourful wooden handles woven into the web symbolise the flags of other countries. The web is like the visual trap the artist is attempting to show. The entire work has political overtones, makes a strong democratic statement and also has clear social significance.

We next aim to visit heritage sites like Hampi in 2018. As a team, our constant endeavour is to improve our curation and raise the bar on the art of space management. ■

# LURED BY THE BEAUTY OF ITALY



A friend of gallery g and an avid traveller, Jayshree K. Menon takes in the sights and sounds of this impossibly beautiful country and comes away feeling charmed, nostalgic and aching to go back once again.

Visiting Italy is like walking through an open air museum. The only hitch is that with my limited knowledge of art and its history, I was not always sure of the significance of what I was looking at. Instead of having a long list of 'must see,' madly dashing from one beautiful venue to the next famous statue, I assumed all of it was important and enjoyed wherever I went. Not hard to do: the architecture is beautiful, there are statues and fountains everywhere, and I did a lot of walking.

It's very, very crucial to walk, considering how incredibly good the food is in Italy!

The list is nowhere near complete, but here I list my Fab-5.

## MILAN - THE LAST SUPPER



This work reflects Jesus' Last Supper, at which he revealed to his disciples that one of them would betray him. Although it is easily one of the world's and Da Vinci's best-known paintings, it's housed in a convent in Milan. I have to admit a shiver ran up my body as I stood transfixed looking at the painting.

## BREATHTAKING FLORENCE

With its beautiful buildings, and breathtaking Duomo and Palazzo Vecchio, Florence is a feast for the eyes. Inside those buildings, even more beauty awaits, from Michelangelo's David (*right*) in the Accademia to masterpieces by da Vinci, Raphael, Titian, Caravaggio, and more in the Uffizi.



## SCHOOL OF ATHENS

(Vatican Museum, Vatican City)

The School of Athens represents all

the greatest mathematicians, philosophers and scientists from the classical period gathered together, sharing their ideas and learning from each other.

## ECSTASY OF SAINT THERESA



Another breathtaking piece that showcases Bernini's fabulous work is the *Ecstasy of Saint Theresa* statue, located in the Santa Maria della Vittoria Church.

It depicts Teresa of Avila, a mystic and Carmelite nun, during a moment of religious ecstasy with an angel in which she felt a "pain... so great that it made me moan; and yet so surpassing... that I could not wish to be rid of it."

The statue is admired for its sensuality. I didn't know of its existence until I did a 'Dan Brown's Angels and Demons tour.'

## SISTINE CHAPEL, AN ABIDING MEMORY

I must have been seven, living in Chennai when my parents went on a holiday to Europe and sent me postcards from various cities. The one that has stayed in my mind forever is of the Sistine Chapel. I had to wait 43 years to fulfil that dream. I don't know why, maybe a calling! I experienced a private viewing of the Vatican Museums and the chapel. To any visitor at Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel, the frescoes which span the entirety of the ceiling are breathtaking (*Below*). Not bad for an artist who insisted he was not a painter! ■



# GLOBAL ARTSCAPE

## ART WORLD RIDES THE CREST

To put it succinctly, the art world has had a phenomenal first quarter, and we're not just talking about financials here. It's not often that one hears of blowout bids, but auction houses Christie's and Sotheby's shattered the glass ceiling.

Leonardo da Vinci's *Salvator Mundi* gave the art world a gigantic boost with a little known Saudi prince (Bader bin Abdullah bin Mohammed bin Farhan al-Saud), making a stunning, superfluous, yet successful \$450.3 million coup at the Christie's bid in November.

*Salvator Mundi* (*below*) dates back to the 1500s and is one of the rare few works of the great artist that's available, yet, the staggering world record bid for a 500-year-old work is unprecedented. No work of art has ever commanded the price of *Salvator Mundi* and no work of art has ever been researched, debated, and looked at in awe as *Salvator Mundi*, triggering what could well become an era of intense, out of the world buys.

It has prompted Artprice, a reputed art house in market information, to boldly predict that the market is fast approaching, hold your breath — the \$1 billion mark — rising in a way not seen since the past three decades!

The newly-established Louvre Abu Dhabi is set to exhibit the painting that has garnered attention like no other work.



## SHOPPING SPREE

Christie's continued to grab the eyeballs in March as art firm Gurr Johns had the collectors and artists in a flutter, making successful bids for 13 works of Picasso in the space of two days. Gurr Johns which buys and sells on behalf of clients, bought the artworks of the master painter (9 from Christie's and 4 from Sotheby's) forking out \$155 million in about 48 hours!



## TILOTTAMA'S CHARM

Closer to heart, if not home, Sotheby's Modern and Contemporary South Asian Art auction in New York, fetched a whopping price for Raja Ravi Varma's work. The untitled *Tilottama* went for \$795,000 indicating that the famed Indian artist, whose works have become most sought-after in the last decade, is on the upswing.



"The excellent result achieved in the sale tells us that the market for (the) artist has no signs of slowing down," Yamini Mehta, international head of South Asian Art at Sotheby's said.

## AFRICAN MONA LISA

A long-lost portrait of a Nigerian princess described as the 'African *Mona Lisa*' (*left*) sold for \$1.7 million, exceeding estimates and setting a record for the artist at Bonhams auction house. The painting of Adetutu 'Tutu' Ademiluyi, by Ben Enwonwu, a Nigerian artist, which turned up at a London flat recently, was expected to fetch up to \$400,000 when it went under the hammer at Bonhams auction house.



## QI BAISHI BREACHES \$100M

The painter Qi Baishi has become the first Chinese artist to join the \$100 million club. A set of Qi's ink-brush panels, *Twelve Landscape Screens* (1925), sold for \$140.8 million (931.5 million yuan) in December. It is the highest price ever paid for a work of Chinese art. ■

- Ravi Chakravarthy

