



## THE GROWTH DRIVER

Art Fair Philippines becomes the fulcrum for the region's talent

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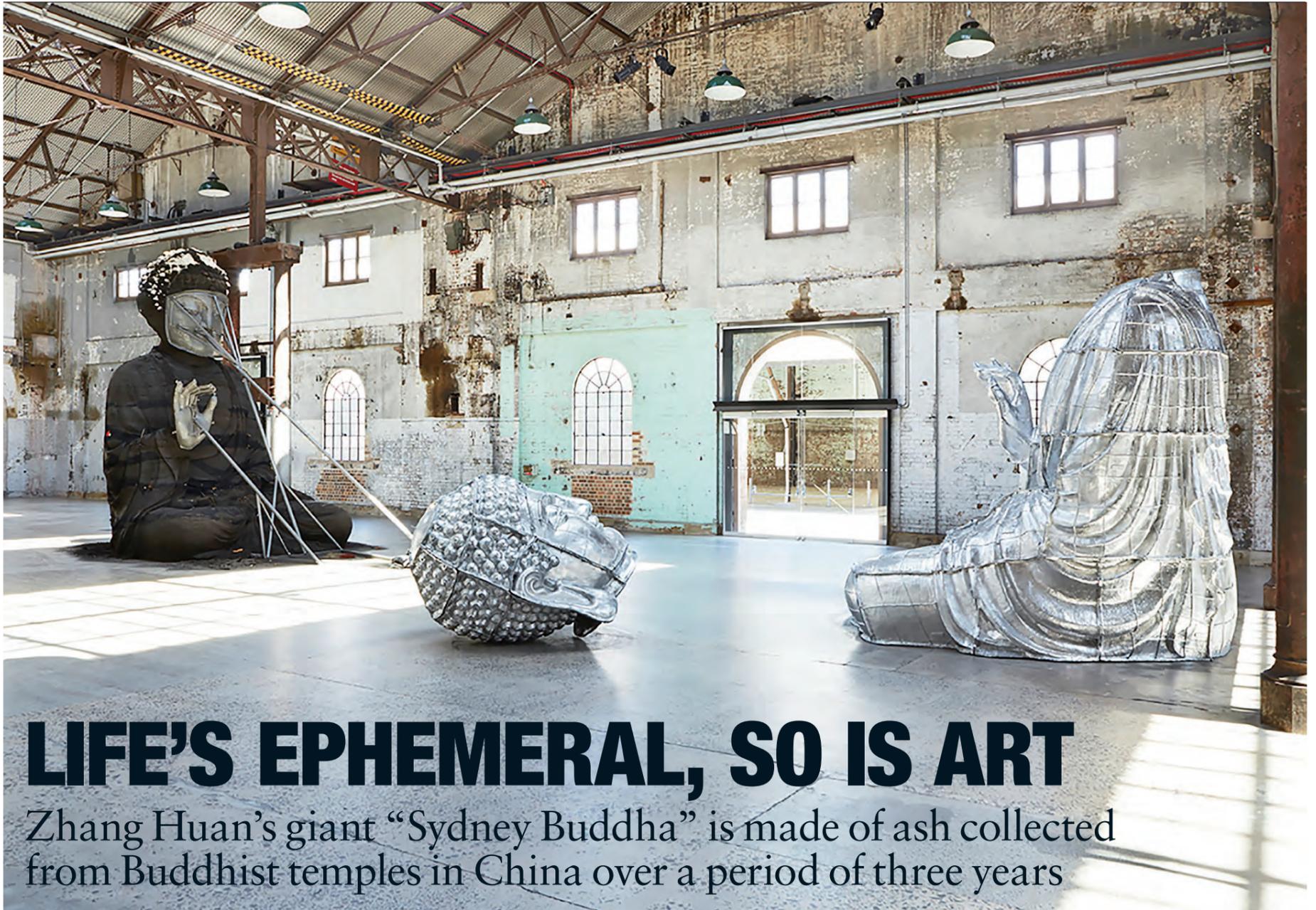
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"REMAINS" CELLULOID, (2015) BY KAWAYAN DE GUJA AT ART FAIR PHILIPPINES



## LIFE'S EPHEMERAL, SO IS ART

Zhang Huan's giant "Sydney Buddha" is made of ash collected from Buddhist temples in China over a period of three years

CHINESE ARTIST ZHANG Huan's "Sydney Buddha," which recently showed at Carriageworks in conjunction with the Sydney Festival, is more than just a powerful and poignant work of art; it is also a feat of engineering.

Standing over five metres tall, the focal point of the two-part installation is an imposing Buddha-shaped sculpture constructed of 20 tonnes of compacted incense ash collected from Buddhist temples in China over a period of three years. Sitting opposite, facing its progeny, is the aluminium mould used to shape the ash, which is held together with nothing other than water and its own weight so that when the mould is removed the work disintegrates over time as changes in temperature and humidity take their toll. Huan

*The ash installation will disintegrate over time with the change in temperature and humidity*

says that he believes that in the moment that the ash Buddha collapses, innumerable groups of souls will be flying back to the east.

"This is not just a Buddha," says Huan. "This is a symbol of the collective memories and hopes of the Chinese people."

The success of Huan's "Sydney Buddha" lies in its ingenuity and simplicity – an elegant simplicity that belies the complexity and endurance of the creation process. Using the humble medium of ash in conjunction with the universal symbols of Buddha and the ritual of lighting incense, Huan crafted

an awe-inspiring object of meditation and veneration that touches on themes of memory, spirituality, renewal, and the ephemerality of life.

"The piece conveys the collective memory, soul, thoughts and prayers, and collapse of mankind. It implies a collective ineffectiveness, arising from taking action when none should be taken, upsetting the natural order of things," Huan explains. The tension between the inherent tranquility of the work and the anxiety of its precarious state of existence, which could change at any moment, is particularly relevant in today's world where the forces of peace are in constant conflict with advocates of violence and terrorism.

Although Huan is perhaps best known for his performative

works, in recent years he has turned to more traditional forms of art such as sculpture and painting, adopting ash as his primary medium. "To me, incense ash is neither 'just ash' nor 'just a material,'" he says. "It represents the collective souls, memories and prayers of the faithful. The prayers offered are all devout and beautiful."

Huan likens the transportation of the ash to his studio to inviting precious guests to his home. "It is not just collecting ash," he says. "Sydney Buddha" was first shown as the "Taiwan Buddha" in the exhibition "Zhang Huan:



Amitufo" at the Museum of Contemporary Art Taipei in 2010 and at the Palazzo Vecchio and Forte di Belvedere Florence in 2013. A smaller 2007 work entitled "Berlin Buddha" was exhibited at the Museum of Old and New Art (MONA) in Tasmania in 2013 as part of the "Red Queen" exhibition.

Huan began using incense ash

following an epiphanic moment at a famous Buddhist temple in Shanghai in 2005, shortly after he returned to China from New York. Although he had visited many Buddhist temples around the world, he had never really felt much. But this day was different. "That day was a significant day for my life and my art career," Huan recalls. "So many people

**Above: The Buddha on the left, over five metres tall, is made of 20 tonnes of compacted ash from Chinese temples. It will disintegrate over time. On the right is the aluminium mould that was used to shape the ash by Chinese artist Zhang Huan**

were praying and burning incense; the whole temple was smoky and I felt it was a different space, a different world. I felt it was so unreal and that these people were, may be, not human beings: they were from heaven, the underworld, the hospitals, everywhere."

Huan says that the people in the temple were so concentrated and could stand for such a long time while they were honouring and touching the Buddha that it was as though they were controlled by something. "I was curious what kind of magic or power was at play," he says. "Finally, I realised that all the people were praying for the future; they were not praying for the past or the present. They were looking for a grand future, sending their blessings through prayer and the burning of incense ash."

When he saw the incense ash burnt in the pot, some completely burnt and others partly burnt, he found that it was a path through life and rebirth and got the idea of making a Buddha with ash. "It is not just a material; it has meaning," he says. Huan found the man who was in charge of the ash and was given two bags which he took back to his studio where he and his colleagues knelt down in front of them. "Suddenly, I found the way, the right path to make these works."

— NICHOLAS FORREST



## COVER STORY

## ASIA'S NEW GROWTH ENGINE

In its third edition, the Art Fair Philippines is ready to look beyond the archipelago to provide better international exposure to local talent

THE ART FAIR Philippines (AFP) has been steadily gaining a cult following among the cognoscenti of Southeast Asian art, who have been seduced by the fair's combination of a less corporatized, more casual DIY attitude (the fair is held in The Link, a shopping mall car park in downtown Makati, Manila), a staunchly loyal local collector base, and young galleries pushing undiscovered talents. Having grown from 6,000 attendees during its first edition in 2013 to 10,000 visitors last year, AFP is set to attract even more art fans to its third edition in February.

Last year, the unfinished, white- and yellow-lined floors of The Link showcased some of the biggest names in Philippine contemporary art including Ronald Ventura, BenCab, and Louie Cordero, in addition to booths organized by 29 galleries that spanned veteran artists to emerging practitioners. Pablo had given over its entire space to a shambolic, jubilantly chaotic assortment of drawings and paintings by senior artist Manuel Ocampo that mingled sacred motifs with profane scribbles, while 1331MABINI presented a focused solo booth of works by Poklong Anading. The latter is a two-time winner of the prestigious Ateneo Art Awards and was one of the participating artists at the landmark "No Country" group show of South and Southeast Asian art held at the Guggenheim in New York in 2013.

As with last year, prominent local designer Kenneth Cobonpue has been roped in again to retain the relaxed but stylish look of this year's fair, which will feature an extra thousand square meters of floor space compared to the 2014 edition. Fair co-founder Trickie Lopa emphasizes that the unusual car park setting helps to give AFP a distinctive atmosphere that is worlds apart from the stark white surroundings of a typical fair.

"The venue plays an important part in our planning — a huge part of our time is spent on the logistics of constructing the fair's physical layout, and re-crafting the space to present something new for each edition is one of the first things we sit down to discuss. For 2015, we've expanded to take over even more of The Link's 7th level," says Lopa.

The expanded scope of AFP this year, however, has been a work-in-progress that Lopa believes should remain relatively gradual. "We talked about how we sought to raise the bar for the



Annie Cabigting's "Girl in Red with Twins"

*The venue for Art Fair Philippines - a multi-level car park in a shopping mall - gives it an atmosphere distinct from the stark white setting of a typical art fair. An extra 1,000 sq m space has been added for this edition*

third edition. We've always believed in growing the fair slowly, introducing subtle changes that will enhance the experience for both participants and visitors, while keeping its original energy intact."

"To that end, we've adopted three things for the 2015 edition. First, we recruited Dr. Patrick Flores, curator of the Vargas Museum at the University of the

Philippines who has also been appointed curator of the Philippine pavilion at this year's Venice Biennale, to put together a series of special exhibits entitled "Level" that will be housed on the 7th level, spread over some 600 square meters." For Lopa, "Level" is a chance for visitors to enjoy a sharply curated section even at an ostensibly commercial event. "We want viewers to

experience the artists' works in a context that is akin to a museum exhibit — or at least as close to that as possible, within the confines of a fair!"

Among the works to be showcased at this section will be Poklong Anading's "Road to Mountains" (2015), a new piece constructed out of recycled tires; Kawayan de Guia's "Remains" (2015), a poignant installation

## AFP At A Glance

**Number of visitors in 2013:** 6,000

**Number of visitors in 2014:** 10,000

**Number of galleries in 2013:** 24

**Number of galleries in 2014:** 28

**Number of galleries in 2015:** 33

**Total area in 2013:** 2,780 sqm

**Total area in 2014:** 3,468 sqm

**Total area in 2015:** 4,423 sqm

## AFP 2015 Highlights

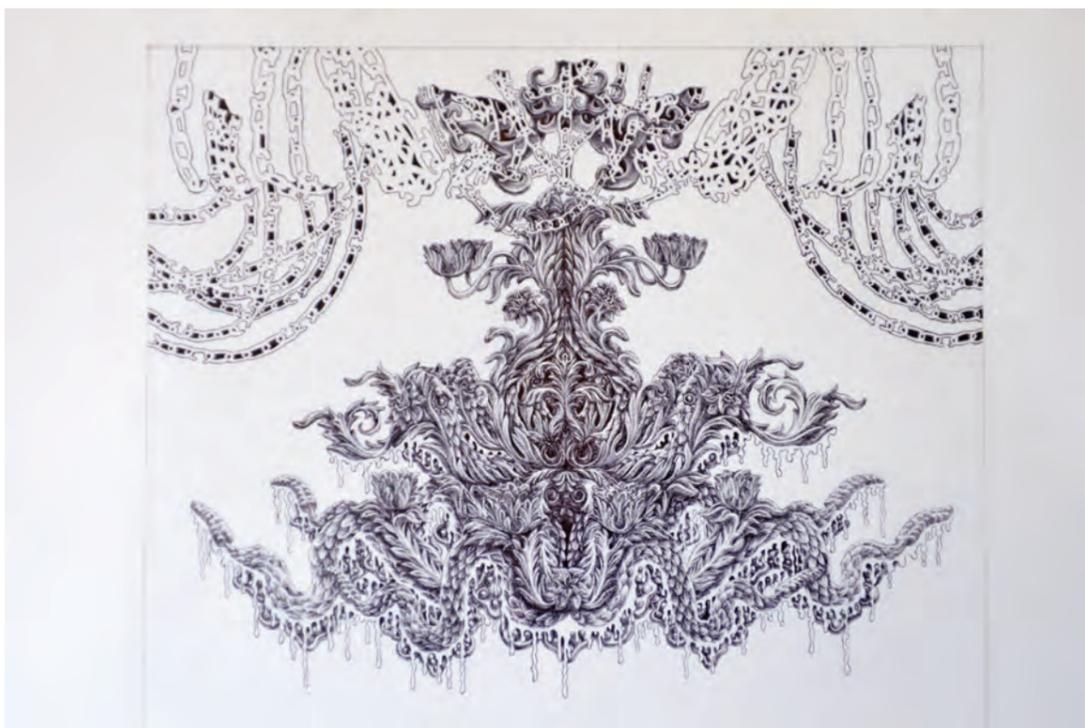
1. Special exhibit curated by Patrick Flores, who will also curate the Philippine pavilion at this year's Venice Biennale
2. More galleries from outside the Philippines (7 out of 33)
3. Special section devoted to veteran artist Roberto Feleo
4. Karen H. Montinola Selection of charcoal drawings by Mike Adrao

made using fiberglass, resin, and 35mm celluloid film that captures the urgent rhythms and urban squalor of metro Manila; and Geraldine Javier's "Let's Talk About Art" (2014-5), a new installation made of embroidered fabric and foam.

Although initially conceived mostly as a platform for the newest and most incisive trends in the Philippine art, co-founder Lisa Periquet adds that another major goal for AFP has also been to "widen our audience each year by crafting an exciting venue for an art experience. We like to think that apart from being a commercial activity, the fair is a great way for everyone to learn a little bit more about contemporary art in general. So we do try to make it an attractive option with competitive ticket prices, informative talks, and by offering a visual feast."

The AFP 2015 has also taken tentative steps towards a slightly broader international focus. As Lopa notes, the number of applications accepted from foreign galleries has gone up this year. "We've always believed that the fair serves as a great vehicle for expanding and enriching the art consciousness of the local audience. Having works by non-Filipino artists will hopefully increase their appreciation for work being done in the region."

Among the 33 participating galleries this year are seven foreign dealers — Arndt (Berlin/Singapore), Equator Art Projects (Singapore), Taksu (Kuala



Clockwise from top: "Let's Talk About Art" by Geraldine Javier, 2014-2015; Detail of Roberto Feleo's installation piece "Tao-tao ng Aklasang Basi—Ang Hanay ng mga N," 2014-2015; Mike Adrao's "Study for Elegant Beasts Beautiful Decay (Snakes)," 2014.

*A special showcase this year is devoted to the work of veteran artist Roberto Feleo - a somewhat obscure and underappreciated name in the Philippine contemporary pantheon, despite his legendary status*

IMAGES COURTESY: ART FAIR PHILIPPINES/ ALFREDO GLORIA

Lumpur), Edouard Malingue Gallery (Hong Kong), Galerie Michael Janssen (Berlin/Singapore), ROH Projects (Jakarta), and Nunu Fine Art (Taipei), who will exhibit alongside local stalwarts like The Drawing Room, Silverlens, Pablo, Tin-Aw, Finale Art File and Salcedo Private View.

A special showcase this year is devoted to the work of veteran

artist Roberto Feleo — a somewhat obscure and underappreciated name in the Philippine contemporary pantheon, despite his looming influence on an entire generation of younger artists, notes Lopa. "When you talk of successful artists in the commercial sense, Feleo's name hardly ever comes up. But when you speak to critically and commercially

recognized artists like Rodel Tapaya, Leeroy New, Kawayan de Guia, Alfredo Esquillo Jr, or Leslie de Chavez, his name is always mentioned as a crucial influence on their work. Bob Feleo continues to teach at the University of the Philippines College of Fine Arts, and he also previously taught at the Philippine High School for the Arts in Mount Makiling in Laguna, south

of Metro Manila. You might say that he practises under the radar of the mainstream collectors. But he works with such passion and conviction — mainly as a sculptor focusing on Philippine colonial history and mythology. For Art Fair Philippines 2015, we are proud to debut his new work that

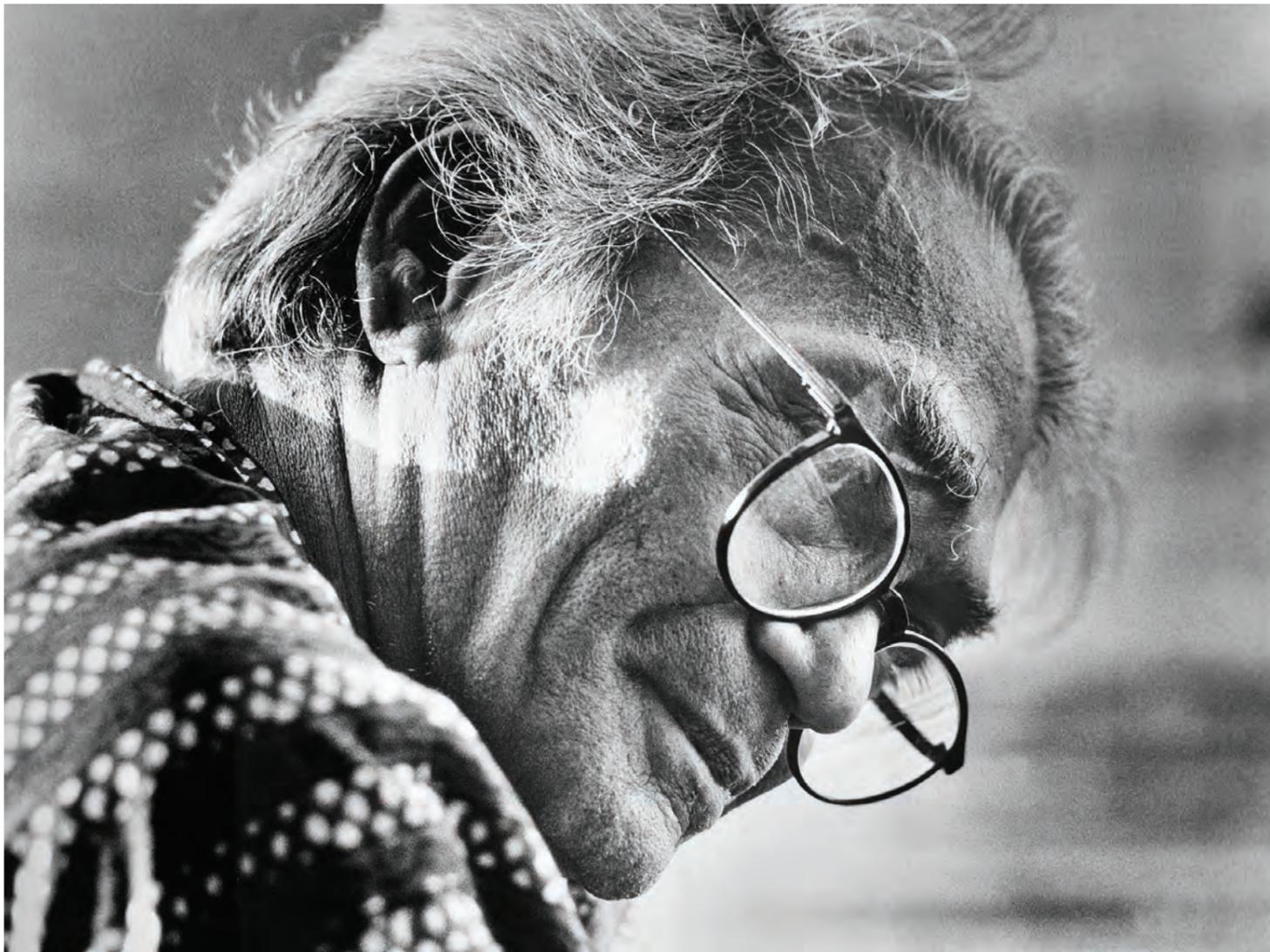
tackles a pivotal point in Philippine history, the Basi Revolt against Spain."

— *Art Fair Philippines 2015 runs through February 5-8 at The Link, Parkway Drive, Ayala Center, Makati City, Manila.*

— DARRYL WEE

# THE GAI WE DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT

Gaitonde's retrospective at Guggenheim NY is a pithy look at abstracts



Left: A photograph of V.S. Gaitonde by Shalini Saran; Top: An untitled ink on paper work (1987) from Ram Kumar's collection; Above: An untitled oil on canvas (1989) from The Lekha and Anupam Poddar Collection

HE WAS POPULARLY known to his friends as Gai. He was a recluse, because he preferred to live and paint like one. It's a pity that he – Vasudeo Santu Gaitonde – isn't around to see that the work he created in solitude has gradually ascended unprecedented heights of recognition since he passed way in 2001, even though he had already become a legend in his lifetime.

Sandhini Poddar, the Adjunct Curator at Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, who has put together the ongoing retrospective on the stalwart of modern Indian art, sums it up succinctly in her exhaustive catalogue published alongside the exhibition. She writes, "...Gai, as

*Through his non-objective paintings, Gaitonde achieved a truly Indian idiom for modern art*

he was popularly known among peers, was an intrepid artist, and yet he remains sorely understudied in the genealogies of twentieth-century world art." In the preface of the catalogue published along with the retrospective titled, "V.S. Gaitonde: Painting As Process, Painting As Life," she writes, "Although Gaitonde has achieved almost mythic status within India and with followers of South Asian modern and contemporary art, few in the country or abroad have had the luxury of being able to consider more than a handful of the artist's works at any given time. Moreover, Gaitonde has not

received adequate exposure within the matrix of the international art world, and his practice merits in-depth analysis, enjoyment, and study." She goes on to call this initiative by the Guggenheim museum as a "watershed in the study and appreciation of twentieth-century Indian art."

That's rightly so, because much is known about his peers such as M.F. Husain, S.H. Raza, Tyeb Mehta, F.N. Souza and many other renowned names of modern Indian art, but hardly any information is available on Gaitonde. That is why, an exhibition such as this has been hailed as a landmark in the study of modern Indian art, not just for Indians but also for the

international art fraternity.

It's a pity the exhibition isn't travelling to India where it should have shown, at least in a few cities, for art students as well as collectors and lay admirers to see a big portion of the master's art in one place. While the exhibition at New York gets over on February 11, it travels to the Peggy Guggenheim Collection in Venice, to be showcased from October 3 to January 10, 2016. The New York retrospective comprises 45 paintings and works on paper.

What makes a Gaitonde canvas an absolute must-have today for any self-respecting collector of

Indian art? There are several reasons, the most important of which is the fact that through his non-objective paintings, he achieved an idiom of modern Indian art that was truly Indian, and was born out of the marriage of the ethos of a newly independent country with the inspiring western ideals. Gaitonde was part of that generation of artists who brought about this marriage; they were all born in the first two decades of the 20th century and attained adulthood around the same time as India's independence.

That was a time charged with a desire to achieve something truly "modern Indian" in every field. Art was no exception. Art academician Geeta Kapur has referred to them as "vanguard artists" in a passage quoted in the catalogue brought out by the museum. That's exactly what they were – V.S. Gaitonde, M.F. Husain, S.H. Raza, Tyeb Mehta, Akbar Padamsee, Ram Kumar, F.N.

Souza, Krishen Khanna and more.

The names of all these masters now form the who's who of modern Indian art, who not only created a unique idiom for their country's art but also amassed a wealth of admirers and followers for their path-breaking works. Most of them didn't attain financial stardom on the platform of international auctions during their lifetimes, but only from the opening years of the new millennium when the Indian economy started bearing fruits of liberalization and high net worth individuals started competing with each other to snap up gems of modern Indian art.

It is important to note that the 25 most expensive Indian paintings ever sold at the auctions have all been bought between the year 2008 and now. Incidentally, the most expensive Indian painting ever sold is an untitled oil on canvas painted by Gaitonde in 1979; it was bought for \$3.7

## Knowing The Master

- V. S. Gaitonde was born in Nagpur in 1924; he was the only son among five children
- He spent early years of his life in Goa and moved to Mumbai thereafter
- Gaitonde graduated from Sir JJ School of Art, Mumbai in the year 1948
- He moved to Delhi in 1972

and ultimately shifted to Gurgaon in 1996

- Fellow artist Ram Kumar, was his lifelong friend
- He lived a low-profile life and never married
- He announced that he was giving up art in 1998, and did
- He was a devotee of Zen Buddhism

million (approx. Rs 23.70 crore) at the first auction of Indian art in India by Christie's, held in Mumbai in December 2013. It was bought by a private collector in the US and came from the personal collection of the late Mumbai gallerists, Kekoo and Khorshed Gandhi.

But it is also important to note that the art of Gaitonde, who had a steady queue of followers even in his lifetime, is only now beginning to attain curatorial, academic and financial interest that has been long overdue, and that still needs to be up-scaled. Arun Vadehra of Vadehra Art Gallery, who knew Gaitonde for several years and spent hours observing his artistic process and has contributed a canvas to the Guggenheim show, says in a chat with this writer, "Even though we are happy with the interest that is being shown for Indian artists' works for the past decade or so, it is not just late but also little. Just compare the art scene of India with that of China and you would know." That is cutting a long story short.

The retrospective, "V.S. Gaitonde: Painting As Process, Painting As Life," is on view at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, until February 11. It will be on view at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice, from October 3, 2015 to January 10, 2016

— ARCHANA KHARE-GHOSE



# CONVERSATIONS WITH THE SELF

Mumbai-based Anju Dodiya explores art in medical illustrations, among other subjects, in her latest solo show at the Vadehra Art Gallery



IT'S A DELIGHT to be led through Anju Dodiya's latest solo exhibition by the artist herself. That's because she explains her canvases so succinctly that she could even paraphrase her art in prose if she so wished. That's rare for artists, who are – and even justifiably so – often better with their art than with the task of having to explain it as well.

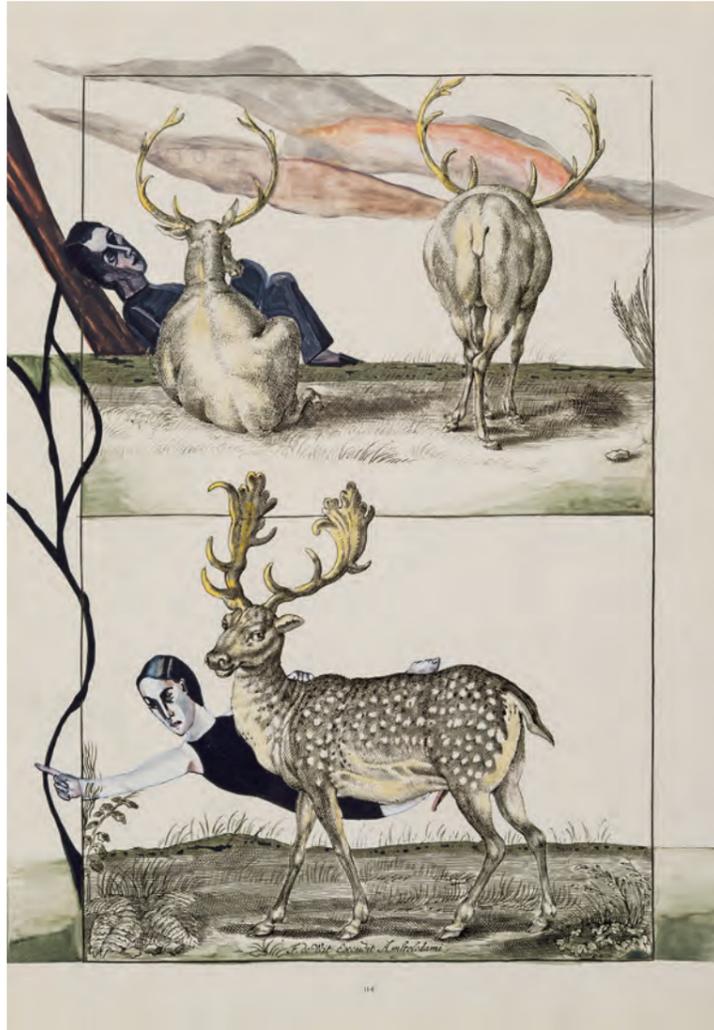
Dodiya's latest solo exhibition, "Imagined Immortals", opened at the Vadehra Art Gallery recently. And this writer was fortunate to catch up with the Mumbai-based artist before the formal opening, thereby getting an opportunity to hear her speak about her art.

"I don't do self images. My works are about 'the self'," Dodiya clarifies at the outset, putting to rest any misunderstanding there might be about her art focussing on herself. She is known for art that has 'self' as its central focus. "My art is not my story but conversations that one has with self when alone, thinking, brooding..." she trails off.

As we start walking along the wall bearing works that marry pure art with the art of medical illustrations of earlier centuries, Dodiya points out that she wanted to take a playful look at the way humans engage with the knowledge about their bodies.

"I had always been interested in this form of art. I was a part of the show that Geeta Kapur had curated in 2013, on the theme of death, and that's when I started looking at the medieval medical illustrations in detail. Those plates have tremendous intimate details about the human body. I've only played along the directions of the plates." Explaining further about the process of this segment of the exhibition, she adds, "It's imagining skull, for instance, as the still life of the 17th century. The whole aspect of the body fits in the concept of 'nature morte'."

Dodiya points out to a mixed media on printed paper, titled "Peach Blossoms," where she has inserted a Chinese plate featuring peach blossoms in the middle of



Clockwise from top left: Anju Dodiya at the launch of her show; "The Road Not Taken," 2014; "Peach Blossoms," 2014; "Bunuel"

medical drawings. In response to this writer's observation that the painting of a human hand lifting some internal blood-red tissue is rather stark for art, she says, "I agree. The whole idea is that... art and our quest to know the human body are intertwined. The peach blossoms are very important for the Chinese as they equalize it with life. I've tried to present the grammar of art juxtaposed with the grammar of the body."

The medical plates' inspired works are an intriguing study of the body and what the 'self' makes of it. A part of the reason is the fact that Dodiya has reproduced the original plates and inserted her art imaginations through the web of intricate anatomical details. She says, "I had wanted to do something with those illustrations for some time for various reasons. The

**"Panic Room (For Bunuel)" is a nod to the artist's interest in surrealist & New Wave films**

anatomy manuals are a part of art history and especially relevant to art students as we also have to learn about human body. Besides, given the times that we live in, it's stupid to be afraid of death. It would be better to deal with it."

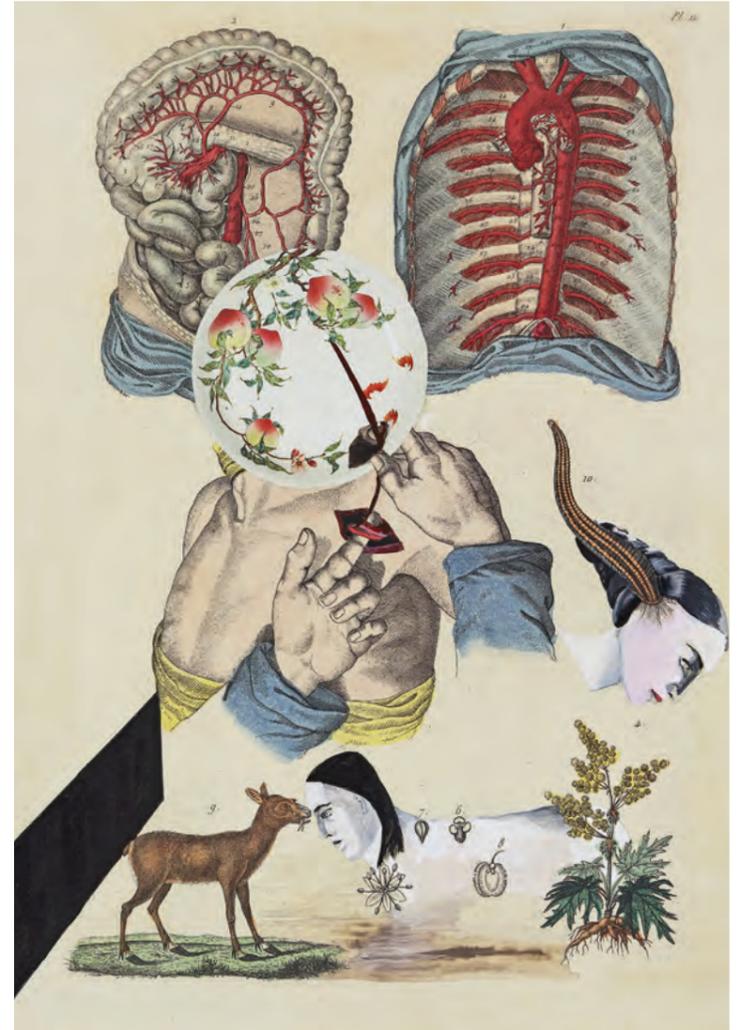
Mixed media works inspired by medical illustrations are one part of an exhaustive exhibition that stands out for the details that each



work brings to the viewer. On the upper floor of the gallery is another absorbing set made in watercolor and ink on cotton fabric stretched on padded board. Even though much smaller in size, they remind one of the tapestry art of medieval Europe when elaborate woven fabrics adorned walls of the palaces and mansions.

More intense are Dodiya's

larger works – the largest of the lot in this exhibition – that are done in watercolor, charcoal and soft pastel on paper. The one with maximum gravitas in this section is a large, 45"X72" work, titled "Panic Room (For Bunuel)". The way it is placed on the upper floor of the gallery draws the viewer to it instantly. It's an ode to the Spanish-born filmmaker Luis



Bunuel (1900-1983) who was not just a leader of the surrealist movement of 1920s but also a filmmaker of tremendous international repute known for films such as "Un Chien Andalou" (The Andalusian Dog), "L'Age d'Or" (The Golden Age), "Los Olvidados" (The Forgotten) and "Viridiana" among others.

"Panic Room (For Bunuel)" leads one to conjecture – and almost accurately – that films are another strong interest for Dodiya. "Yes, reading and films," she says. Besides Bunuel, she likes French New Wave cinema, especially films by one of its founders, Francois Roland Truffaut, and those by the Swedish filmmaker Ingmar Bergman, to name some.

Would she do a film herself someday, given the increasing interest in films done by artists? She is clear she would not. "I don't think I'm capable. I would rather

watch films." Reading, the other interest, is equally strong and she admits she would rather go to bed with a good book than attend an art opening. "I mostly read novels. Amitav Ghosh and Alice Munro are the writers I quite enjoy reading," she says.

But there is no escaping art at home given her husband is the celebrated contemporary artist Atul Dodiya. "We talk about art all the time and watch films but temperamentally we are very different individuals. Even though we are both artists, we like different kinds of art. Of course, we do influence each other and having that push at home has been useful. For instance, I benefit from his open approach towards art," elaborates Dodiya.

What, however, she enjoys most about being an artist is the liberating experience it affords. "When I left art school (BFA, Sir JJ School of Art, Mumbai, 1986), one didn't think we would survive as artists. But later, the market picked up and so far, the prosperity has been good for art even though we could have more art infrastructure in place in the country. What's most important is that it gives you the freedom to put your work before everything else."

— *Imagined Immortals* is on view at the Vadehra Art Gallery, D-53, Defence Colony, New Delhi, until February 14, Monday to Saturday, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

— ARCHANA KHARE-GHOSE



HONGKONG ARTS FESTIVAL/ FEB 27 - MAR 29

# LIFE'S A DANCE, A BEAUTIFUL SONG

Some of the world's best performers are going to be there. How about you?

Ata Wong presents "Dance Off" in the Contemporary Dance section on March 14 & 15, 3 pm, at the HK Cultural Centre



"Planet Egg" is a whacky love story set in outer space. Performances on March 13, 14 & 15. For details, check [www.hk.artsfestival.org](http://www.hk.artsfestival.org)



The Dutch National ballet performs "Cinderella" on March 12, 13 & 14, 7.30 pm at the Grand Theatre, Hong Kong Cultural Centre



"The Tsar's Bride" by the Bolshoi Opera, on March 20, 21 & 22, at the Grand Theatre, Hong Kong Cultural Centre



Gustavo Dudamel and the Los Angeles Philharmonic present concerts on March 19 & 20, at the Concert Hall, HK Cultural Centre, 8 pm



The Cantonese Opera from Hong Kong presents various classics such as "Sworn in Grotto" on March 8, 12, 13, 14 & 15. For details, visit [www.hk.artsfestival.org](http://www.hk.artsfestival.org)



▲ 10-time Grammy winner Bobby McFerrin ("Don't Worry Be Happy") presents a concert on March 13 & 14 at the Hong Kong Cultural Centre, 8 pm



▼ Wayson Poon presents "Fleeing By Night" in the Contemporary Dance section, on March 12 & 15, 8:15 pm, at the Hong Kong Cultural Centre



▼ "The Tsar's Bride" by the Bolshoi Opera, on March 20, 21 & 22, at the Grand Theatre, Hong Kong Cultural Centre

▶ A still from "Cinderella" by the Dutch National Ballet that will be presented on March 12, 13 & 14, 7.30 pm at the Grand Theatre, Hong Kong Cultural Centre

▼ Ping Guai bids farewell in a performance by the Cantonese Opera, on March 8, 12, 13, 14 & 15. For details, visit [www.hk.artsfestival.org](http://www.hk.artsfestival.org)



▲ The Gate Theatre from Ireland presents "Pride and Prejudice" featuring Lorna Quinn and Michael Ford Fitzgerald on March 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14 & 15, at the Lyric Theatre, Hong Kong Academy of Performing Arts

## WEI-LING CONTEMPORARY

## COMPETITION HEATS UP IN MALAYSIA

The new contemporary art space in Kuala Lumpur has ambitious plans



KUALA LUMPUR WELCOMED a new art gallery recently with the Wei-Ling Contemporary moving into a brand new space on the rooftop of the Gardens Mall that sprawls over 9,000 square feet, housing two large exhibition areas and an art foundation.

Owner Wei-Ling Lim hopes for the foundation to showcase selected works from private collections, while the gallery proper will hold larger exhibitions held over a longer period of three to four months.

Wei-Ling Contemporary's inaugural exhibition, which runs through March 1, 2015, is a 20-year survey of Ivan Lam, the veteran Malaysian artist known for his complex compositions made using resin and synthetic polymer Nippon Paint on canvas.

In a city somewhat starved of a more varied contemporary art scene, especially compared with neighboring Bangkok and Singapore, Wei-Ling is a lone exception operating on a sparse playing field, but no less ambitious for it — the gallery is the only Malaysian gallery to be represented at Art Basel in Hong Kong in March. BLOUIN ARTINFO caught up with Lim recently.

**What do you think is particularly distinct in Ivan Lam's latest work?**  
In Ivan Lam's journey over the



An exhibition at the new Wei-Ling Contemporary on the rooftop of Gardens Mall, Kuala Lumpur; Far left: Wei-Ling Lim, the gallery owner

course of the last twenty years, he has always managed to charter new ground with each series. There is always some aspect of resolution or self discovery and an element of "risk" involved. His mantra has always been that his best work is the next one. In this survey exhibition, it is interesting to note, then, that in effect his most resolved pieces to date, the ones that possess twenty years of "blood, sweat and tears," are the latest ones.

His latest four works, titled the "Dichotomy of Opposites," negotiate new boundaries for the artist in his quest to provide a "vessel"

that is aesthetically and visually captivating, yet is conceptually profound and layered. Some of the questions he poses are, "How does one listen to the sound of a painting?" and "How does one visually depict sound?"

**How do you see your two spaces, in Gardens Mall and the old one in Brickfields, working together?**

Wei-Ling Contemporary will host larger exhibitions running for a prolonged period of time, between three to four months to allow for the general public to find the time to visit the exhibition and to hopefully be enlightened by what they

see. The exhibitions we hope to present on this platform will be mid-career surveys, special exhibitions by both local and foreign curators, and those by foreign artists. With a much larger area, we will host more ambitious projects and installations.

Wei-Ling Gallery, our gallery at our first space in Kuala Lumpur, will continue with its monthly program of solo, group exhibitions and projects by its stable of Malaysian artists.

**What are you taking to Art Basel Hong Kong next month?**

It will be our third excursion to

Hong Kong. We will be presenting a solo project by Anurendra Jegadeva in a room installation that he has conceived for the fair. The work will be loosely based upon one page which has been extracted from the Malay annals (a romanticized history of the origin and evolution of the Malacca Sultanate, 15th-16th centuries) which gives a brief description of how Islam allegedly arrived in the Southeast Asian region.

*Wei-Ling Contemporary is located at RT01 Sixth Floor, The Gardens Mall, 59200, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia*

— DARRYL WEE

## ART BASEL HONG KONG

## OUT OF THE SHADOW OF VENICE &amp; NEW YORK

The fair shifts on the calendar from mid-May to March

Having previously had to jostle with Frieze New York and the Venice Biennale in order to claim a precious, mid-May sliver of the global art world calendar, Art Basel has decided to hold the third edition of its Hong Kong fair two months earlier than usual.

Former director Magnus Renfrew, who orchestrated the new March dates, saw the change as a key to helping the fair "reach its full potential as a key fixture on the international art calendar. We are confident that the new March dates will lead to an even stronger presence of collectors,

curators and museum directors from around the world."

Although Renfrew's departure in September last year to become deputy chairman and director of fine arts, Asia at Bonhams left the fair without an active head for several months, Art Basel found a replacement right around the new year in Malaysian-born art adviser and curator Adeline Ooi, who has extensive experience as Art Basel's VIP Relations Manager for Southeast Asia. Earlier, Ooi also used to direct the program at Valentine Willie Fine Art Gallery in Kuala Lumpur before co-found-



Above: Xu Bing's "Men, Nursery, Women" (2000) at Eslite Gallery; Right: Markus Oehlen's "Untitled" (2014) at Gerhardsen Gerner

ing art advisory firm RogueArt.

Said Ooi, "I am delighted to have been given the opportunity to apply my knowledge of the art scenes and markets within Asia as well as the experience I have gained from working across the art world — with galleries, artists, collectors, institutions, curators and critics — in my previous roles in this new context and to be an active part in further developing



what is considered the leading international art show in Asia."

Since launching in Asia in 2013, Art Basel Hong Kong has become a vital stop on the international art fair circuit: for 2015, a total of 237 galleries from 37 countries

and territories, around half of which are from the Asia-Pacific region, will participate. First-timers this year include Mehdi Chouakri (Berlin), Eleven Rivington (New York), Herald St (London), Kamel Mennour (Paris), Raster (Warsaw), 1331Mabini (Manila), Michael Ku Gallery (Taipei), Taro Nasu (Tokyo), and Shrine Empire (New Delhi).

Chinese curator Li Zhenhua returns as the producer of the Film sector that debuted last year, while the Encounters section of large-scale installations will be overseen by Alexie Glass-Kantor, executive director of Sydney's Artspace.

*Art Basel Hong Kong will be held from March 15 to 17*

— DARRYL WEE



INTERVIEW/ PATRICIA CHEN

# THE BULWARK OF INDONESIAN ART

## Documentary filmmaker Chen trains her lens on Dr Oei Hong Djien

RECENTLY, THE DOCUMENTARY “The 24 Hour Art Practice” premiered at the Singapore Art Museum’s Glass Hall. It is an intimate portrait of the prominent Indonesian collector Dr Oei Hong Djien by documentary filmmaker Patricia Chen.

Chen, an art writer and former manager of Singapore’s Sculpture Square, made her directorial debut only last year with “Uli Sigg, China’s Art Missionary”, which took a similar approach to profiling the legendary Swiss collector who accumulated one of the world’s most extensive holdings of Chinese contemporary art, before deciding to donate most of it to Hong Kong’s M+ museum in 2012.

As the title of her new film suggests, “The 24 Hour Art Practice” documents the unflagging devotion and effort that Dr Oei has poured into building up his extensive holdings of modern and contemporary Indonesian art. Shortly before its premiere, BLOUIN ARTINFO caught up with Chen to talk about the controversial nature of her film, as well as the challenges faced by the culture of patronage in emerging Asian art scenes.

**Your first film was a portrait of Uli Sigg, the Swiss collector who built up one of the world’s most important private collections of contemporary Chinese art. How did that experience lead to the choice of Dr Oei Hong Djien as the subject of your second film, “The 24 Hour Art Practice”?**

Actually, I started thinking about this series with Dr Oei as the first candidate way back in 2009, but thought that I would only proceed if I could find patrons who represent other parts of Asia, so that I could build a series of human interest stories revolving around Asia’s first collectors — those who collected historical works, much like museums and individuals whose collections have social values. Most collectors tend to focus on one artist or a group, while very few actually set out to build a collection that mirrors the history of artistic production. In a way, you could say that both Dr Oei and Uli Sigg lent themselves naturally to the parameters that I had set.

**Although there is growing global recognition for Indonesia’s contemporary art, with major Western galleries now representing the likes of Heri Dono, Christine Ay Tjoe, Entang Wiharso and Eko Nugroho for example, the general**

**impression is that the country’s domestic gallery and museum infrastructure remains weak. And yet the amount of support for artists coming from private patrons and collectors such as Dr Oei is impressive. Is this a sustainable model?**

It’s not only the museum infrastructure that is lacking, but also facilities for art history and education, and investments into research and scholarship. In an environment where state support is virtually non-existent, individual patrons come forward to fill the gap. Every last effort counts. I would say that the Indonesian scene gets by with a kind of collective strength and a certain level of cohesiveness.

But when questions crop up over issues of authenticity and the provenance of modern paintings, these same individuals have reactions, opinions and solutions — which they show energetically and passionately. You can see this clearly demonstrated in my film, where more than 10 art aficionados from Indonesia join art historians from Singapore, Germany, and the Netherlands in this heated debate over certain works from Dr Oei’s collection and museum. Is this model satisfactory? The audience will have to make their own judgment.

**What is the film’s main thrust?**

It tells the story of a collector, set in the emerging art scene of Indonesia. He is adventurous and extremely passionate about sharing his collection, and thinks that opening a museum with ticketed public access would be a great way of securing an income stream to help with the upkeep of the paintings and the operations of the museum. When the museum finally opens to the public, however, Dr Oei opens himself up to an entirely different level of accountability and expectations, as well as demands to authenticate the provenance of the exhibited works. Private

**“I risked many things in making this film, including my reputation,” says the filmmaker**

museums are a new development elsewhere in Asia, too. I think that Dr Oei’s case raises pertinent issues about accountability, authenticity, and provenance that are applicable to private museums in Asia as a whole.

**What have been some of your reflections over the course of making this film?**



Filmmaker Patricia Chen poses with Dr Oei Hong Djien, a leading Indonesian collector of modern and contemporary art of his country

“The 24 Hour Art Practice” has been an incredibly difficult film to make. Various members of the Indonesian art world have had such emotional reactions — most have been well meaning, while others have been antagonistic. Interestingly, none have seen the film yet, but many still have such deep and fiery reactions!

I had started documenting Dr

Oei’s collection and his museum way before the scandal over the alleged fakes had broken. When the allegations surfaced, I decided that I could not ignore them, and made an effort to document their development and include them in the film. To be honest, this was a dramatic shift from the original focus that I had planned.

Some have said that my film

isn’t being fair to Dr Oei, as most films on art collectors tend to be celebratory — they would never have included such “scandalous” matters. Others assumed that the film would end up defending Dr Oei or endorsing his collection, thereby “authenticating” works that they think are questionable. Still others thought that I should have left out the modern works entirely until their authenticity had been verified one way or another, and just focused on living artists in the meantime. But really, the heart and soul of Dr Oei’s collection is modern Indonesian art.

In the end, I decided to document and portray his collection as it is, warts and all, and risk provoking all these public disagreements — I believe that they help to throw light on the problematic issues facing the Indonesian art scene.

At the same time, the film is a cautionary tale to us all, and one that is pertinent to the growing number of private museums in the wider Asian region. How should private museums be held accountable over issues of authenticity and provenance, especially in an environment with minimal arts infrastructure?

I risked many things in making this film — funding, my time, my reputation, and my friendships. I cannot say that I have not been affected by how certain members of the art community had prejudged the film even before they saw it. But the story needs to be told — it offers different perspectives on the Indonesian situation. I’m looking forward to the discourse that might be generated. At this stage, I want to urge everyone who has an opinion to first watch the film!

— DARRYL WEE



INDIA DESIGN ID/ FEB 13-15

# A NEW DISCIPLINE FINDS ITS WINGS

The last decade has been seminal for design in India with professionals pushing the envelope and tastes evolving for residential projects



INDIA'S COME A long way since the swirling logo that popped up on television screens twice a day, in accompaniment to doleful, anaesthetic music. A quarter of a century, to be precise, since the advent of Cable TV in 1990. Much changed over the next two and a half decades; the country discovered the luxury of choice, moved onto the monotony of excess, and ended up with the cultivation of taste.

We now have festivals, ceremonies, fairs and symposiums devoted to the celebration of fashion, art, cinema, music and literature. One such event is the India Design ID, a platform that seeks to observe and encourage good design in the country across a range of fields – interiors, architecture, product design, textile, graphics and more.

Entering its third year, the India Design ID will be held this year between February 13 and 15, at the NSIC Grounds in Delhi. The event comprises three parts – Exhibit ID, an exhibition space to showcase the finest in home decoration, with high-end luxury and corporate brands as well as



**Top: A design work by architect B.V. Doshi; Above: Archana Pillai, co-founder of India Design ID**

cutting-edge designers using this forum to unveil their latest designs; ID Symposium, a series of conferences seeking to inspire the design fraternity in India and allowing networking with other professionals in the field of design; and ID Satellite, a series of offsite events aimed at discovering emerging design districts in Delhi and highlighting the same to the masses through launches,

previews and parties organized across lifestyle stores, restaurants, malls, bookstores, galleries and certain private locations.

Archana Pillai, CEO of Ogaan, and one of the founders of India Design ID, gives an insight into the event and its scope.

**What is your vision for the India Design ID? Does it in some way aim to shape design in Delhi or on a larger scale in India?**

Our vision is to provide the world of design in India a platform to showcase creativity, forge creative connections and generate business, much in the same way as fashion week does for the fashion industry. We use three verticals that make up India Design ID, to achieve these ends. The ID Symposium is the intellectual and networking part, the Exhibit ID is the creative and commercial spirit and ID satellite is the offsite vertical that blends fun, creativity and commerce.

**In the three years of its existence, how has the event grown?**

Each year, we grow in scale but in a measured way, to ensure we

don't compromise on the quality of the show. It's not about chasing numbers alone, but the relevant numbers, both in terms of speakers, exhibitors as well as visitors. Of course, in pure numbers, we doubled visitors from year 1 to year 2, and hope to repeat that this year as well. This year we also have 100 exhibitors for the first time, 40 speakers/moderators and 100 ID Satellite

***"Embellishment and color is intrinsic to India and the multiplicity in design vocabulary due to the country's diversity is good," says Pillai.***

participants. That's quite an accomplishment in three years. Also, as it's a relatively new event, we tweak the format each year based on feedback from the participants, visitors and our advisory board. So each year, the event better represents the needs of the design industry. This is reflected in the varied showcase options you'll see this year, and the topics that the symposium will cover.

**How would you describe the Indian design vocabulary, in your**

**experience of heading "Elle Decor" magazine for so many years and having been constantly in touch with designers, artists, creative leaders all this time?**

Like most things Indian, there is diversity in the Indian design vocabulary as well. We're certainly a far cry from the 'less is more' style of the Scandinavian or Japanese designers, as embellishment and colour are so intrinsic

to India, but simultaneously there is a growing appeal for more clean, simple design as well. In a country as diverse as India, this multiplicity in design vocabulary is a good thing.

**What are the key aspects driving the design market in India?**

The construction boom of a few years ago was the initial driver, as people aspired for more in terms of both size and amenities in the apartments they bought. This in turn led to the need to decorate



the spaces accordingly as well. While the boom may have slowed, the interest it evoked among the consumer has stayed, leading to the mushrooming of design brands. Of course, a lot of the consumers are still centered in the metros. The tastemakers remain the interior designers and architects, who carry great influence.

**Would you say modern Indian design has evolved in the last ten years? If so, in what ways?**

On the one hand, application of craft-based techniques remains our calling card and unique strength, and on the other, a generation of designers with global exposure is also pushing the envelope with technique, form and materials. Residential architecture is one standout area where people are doing great projects, and product and furniture design have seen great changes over the last 10 years as well.

**Is it okay to say that small accessible brands and young designers (for instance Happily Unmarried, Playclan, Chumbak, etc) are a new force in the modern Indian design market? We would certainly wish this for them, but perhaps that's a bit pre-**

***"The construction boom, that initially powered the design market in India, has slowed but the design brands that it gave birth to have stayed."***

mature. Right now, the reality is we have a surfeit of design talent emerging from design schools with not enough avenues open to them, whether with their own brand or as part of a design studio. We hope to use our platform to build the avenues for these designers to one day become this force.

**If you had to pick three brands/labels/designers who at this minute epitomise Modern Indian Design, who'd you name?**

For this, I'll pick the last three EDIDA designers of the year: 2011 Raseel Gujral Ansal, 2012 Gunjan Gupta, 2013 Ayush Kasliwal, watch out for the EDIDA designer of the year 2014 to be announced at India Design ID 2015 on February 12.

**What are you most looking forward to in this year's India Design ID fair?**

This year we introduce the new format of pavilions curated by style: Decoration, Trends and

Design. As the names suggest, we've grouped the exhibitors based on what you could expect to see in those pavilions. You'll see a lot of products you'd love in Decoration, cool trends in the Trend Pavilion, and some really creative designs in the Design pavilion.

For international speakers, I'm keen to catch Janne Kyttanen whose specialty is 3D printed products, and the trends session with Guilio Cappellini, as well as and craft revival with Patricia Urquiola, and cross border creativity with Pritzker architecture prize winner Fumihiko Maki from Japan.

In the Indian speaker sessions, Ambrish Arora with BV Doshi should be a good opening session, and I'd not miss the one on building a design business moderated by Swapan Seth.

Among onsite events, the Asian Paints Colour Next launch would be fun, and the Roca Wrap session Pecha Kucha has some great names presenting on the topic "How my house drove me mad". Offsite, as part of ID Satellite,

**Above: The Charcoal Project by Susanne Khan; Below: Rollercoaster Tables by Janne Kyttanen**

I always love the Portside Studio party and this year Klove Studio is also having a bash that should be interesting.

**Since India Design ID is held in Delhi (as are various other high-profile art and fashion events), do you feel the city exerts a strong cultural influence on the creative landscape of the country?**

We took a decision to make it India's definitive design week, and for this we felt we need to pick one city and stay the course there, making it an annual destination for people over time. Delhi is often touted as the cultural center of India, and it is true that there appear to be more design-centric people and places here, but for us, the decision was also based on the availability of centrally located exhibition grounds.

Both Mumbai and Delhi exert a cultural influence, so it was practicality that made us choose the latter.

*India Design ID will be held at the NSIC exhibition grounds, Okhla, New Delhi, February 13-15*

— AMETA BAL



## KALA GHODA ARTS FESTIVAL

## ENTERTAINMENT ON THE HOUSE

Events have been created around the theme of ‘Sparsh’ (touch) this year

COME FEBRUARY AND the excitement starts building up in Mumbai for the renowned Kala Ghoda Arts Festival (KGAF), hosted at Kala Ghoda, the art district of South Mumbai. Organized by the Kala Ghoda Association in this upscale locality, the vibrant festival thralls the city for nine days every year. The KGAF, from February 7 to 15, enters its 16th edition this year with the theme of ‘Sparsh’ (touch). (For those not clued in, Kala Ghoda in Hindi stands for ‘Black Horse’)

The KGAF is all that an arts festival should be - there is almost nothing that it doesn't offer; from all categories of performing arts and visual arts, to literature, heritage walks, architecture, workshops and food, with themes decided by the section curator based on the festival theme. Even the upcoming fields of art, such as stand-up comedy, tattoo and urban cartooning, find a place at KGAF.

The first KGAF was organized in 1999 by a group of citizens that was rather ‘elitist’, drawing only the ‘artistic’ people, says Brinda Miller, the KGAF Director. “It began as an initiative to create awareness about the area and to make it more lively an art district. However, over the years, we have managed to make it extremely vibrant. Today, it has become all-inclusive, crossing the barriers of class and age. Even people from Bollywood come,” she adds.

This year, the line-up is studded with jewels like Amit Trivedi, Indian Ocean, pop vocalist Tejas Menon and Symphony Orchestra of India, along with artistes from France, Germany, Israel and Poland. Even children have a special section dedicated to them that will host workshops on the theme,

*“Kala Ghoda locals voluntarily offer their space to host our events,” says Brinda Miller*

‘Touch of Joy’. Besides, there will be theatrical performances in 20 languages. “Our theatre section is dynamic; replete with so many plays in so many languages. And here, you watch it all for free,” says Miller, who takes pride in offering over 450 free events.

The literature festival of KGAF, titled ‘Watermark’, will feature Kaiwan Mehta, Sudeep Sen, Devdutt Pattanaik, Kiran Desai and Dilip D’souza among others.

The Kala Ghoda Short Film Festival, organized in association with Pocket Films, is another attraction. The fraternity of the budding filmmakers has been keenly anticipating the results of the contest for which submissions were made. Miller confirms that the response has been ecstatic and they have received 337 entries. The



Above: A retro ambassador car on display at last year's Kala Ghoda edition; A classical dance recital at the festival

winning movies shall be screened during the festival. Interestingly, one of the two themes of short films contest is ‘Swachha Bharat’, a nod to the ‘Swachha Bharat Abhiyan’ (Clean India Campaign) of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. This section is also a part of the Kala Ghoda Association’s ‘Clean Mumbai’ campaign.

Kala Ghoda art district is fringed by extremely compelling architecture with the finest con-

centrated collection of heritage structures in the city. The Victorian neo-Gothic David Sassoon Library is the venue for literary programs and the Indo-Saracenic Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya, formerly the Prince of Wales Museum, hosts cinema events, children’s workshops and art installations. The famous neo-classical Jehangir Hall, which is now the National Gallery of Modern Art, hosts theatrical performances.

Besides indoor venues, Rampart Row is one of the most happening streets lined with outdoor galleries and hosts many events. And all the venues are located within walking distance of each other.

Miller informs with pleasure that local establishments voluntarily offer support. “A lot of places in



Kala Ghoda lend their space to us which is extremely overwhelming. For instance, Westside allows us in for cooking workshops which have become very famous, adding to the oomph of the festival.”

However, the number of stalls and events has come down this year because of the instructions of the Bombay High Court to the Kala Ghoda Association to follow the guidelines set by them for the festival in December 2014. A petition was filed against the festival

by Berges Malu accusing it of creating ‘inconvenience and nuisance’.

Says Miller, “It’s a tough part in this journey; there is a lot of stress while organizing it. One thing that really deters us is people who don’t allow us to do the festival. They don’t have a problem with Ganpati, Dahi Handi or Diwali but complain against a cultural festival. Every year there is some speed breaker but we sail through.”

Long ago, the members of the

Kala Ghoda Association decided to preserve the heritage of the area. Miller, a core member of the association since 1991, informs that the funds from the festival since its first edition in 1999 have been used for the area’s restoration.

“Indians take everything for granted because we have so much heritage around us. And we, at the Kala Ghoda Association, make sure that the funds are used for the prime purpose. For instance, we helped in the repair of the Elphinstone College and the lawns of the David Sassoon Library & Cross Maidan, among many others. We are constantly at it.”

In fact, the Kala Ghoda art district has become so popular that the state government proposed to turn it into something like the Times Square of New York, which drew flak from Mumbaikars.

“One, they don’t have a concrete plan and second, no one is going to allow them to turn such a beautiful place into Times Square. If at all it must be inspired by any model than it could be some European Square that would keep its heritage and historical significance intact,” she says.

“Beautiful place, amazing show and all for free. Where else will you get such an offer? Come all,” signs off Miller for KGAF 2015.

*The Kala Ghoda Arts Festival runs from February 7 through 15, at Kala Ghoda, Mumbai.*

*For details, visit [www.kalaghodassociation.com](http://www.kalaghodassociation.com)*

— HEMANI BHANDARI

TRANS-PACIFIC

# CLAY VESSELS & DISTORTED VISUALS

LA couple Jonas Wood & Shio Kusaka get their first solo at Gagosian HK

GAGOSIAN HONG KONG opens the first solo show in Asia of recent works by Los Angeles-based artist couple Jonas Wood and Shio Kusaka.

Sharing a studio located on LA's Blackwelder Street, Wood and Kusaka have a mutually inspirational, symbiotic relationship that infiltrates every aspect of their creative output. Kusaka's classically restrained but highly ornamented porcelain vessels offer a muse-like counterpoint to Wood's depictions of spare, flattened interiors and semi-imagined Los Angeles landscapes rendered in impulsive color choices.

While Wood's paintings deploy unsettling compressions of space and distorted perspective that recall Matisse or Hockney, his interiors and landscapes also demonstrate a peculiar sharply contoured cut-out quality. Kusaka's porcelain and clay pieces, on the other hand, draw on ancient Japanese traditions while also invoking the repetitive, geometric motif making of Minimalism, combining them with eccentric flourishes like brontosaurus-shaped handles.

*"Jonas Wood and Shio Kusaka: Blackwelder" runs at Gagosian Hong Kong through February 28*  
— DARRYL WEE



Left: Jonas Wood's "Red Studio Pot" (2014); Above: Shio Kusaka's "flower 1" (2014)

## KISHIO SUGA OPENS MUSEUM RETROSPECTIVE IN TOKYO

VETERAN Mono-ha artist Kishio Suga opened "Situated Latency," a much-awaited retrospective of his work at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo, on January 24.

Born in 1944, Suga studied at Tama Art University in Tokyo, graduating in 1968. Along with other seminal figures like Lee Ufan, Nobuo Sekine, and Susumu Koshimizu, Suga soon became associated with what is called the Mono-ha (school of things) movement, which sought to examine the physical substance of objects and things in relation to their conceptual associations.

Although occasionally given over to obtuse and repetitive turns of phrase, Suga's writings often provide a valuable supplementary insight into how he perceived and constructed his precariously balanced installations made using stones, pieces of wood, metal plates, and other materials both natural

and industrial. "Mono exist perpetually in the present. If one is not conscious of the present-ness of mono, it cannot be seen or perceived. Accordingly, one must confront the present-ness of mono when one is trying to look at them. To look at the hidden reality of mono is also to know how the world is constructed."

This exhibition focuses on the 1970s, an incredibly fertile and prolific period for Suga, during which his work demonstrated an unusually insightful and conceptual rigor. Of particular interest are his working notebooks, which he started keeping in 1967. Here, Suga's notebooks and the writings contained within are shown to possess an almost equal value and significance in terms of his artistic and creative process.

*Kishio Suga's "Situated Latency" runs at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo through March 22*

— DARRYL WEE



Kishio Suga's "Izonsa (Separating Dependence)" (1973/2013)



Professor Alec Tzannes AM, Dean of UNSW and Judith Neilson, philanthropist and founder of Sydney's White Rabbit Gallery

## JUDITH NEILSON DONATES \$10M TO UNSW FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING RESEARCH

JUDITH NEILSON, philanthropist and founder of Sydney's White Rabbit Gallery, has donated \$10 million to the University of New South Wales's (UNSW) Faculty of Built Environment to research ways of improving the living conditions of some of the world's most vulnerable people. The \$10 million will fund the Judith Neilson Chair in Architecture which the UNSW says "will take the lead in researching the design of affordable housing for the tens of millions of people displaced by natural disasters, geo-political conflicts, and economic and environmental factors."

Dean of UNSW Built Environment, Professor Alec Tzannes AM, described the endowment as an "extraordinary act of philanthropy" and said that he

acknowledges Judith Neilson's long-term vision and commitment to support the betterment of society through architecture. "UNSW Built Environment is honoured to be entrusted as the custodian of Judith's vision to build new knowledge in architecture and to promote the education of future generations of architects," he said.

Ms Neilson described the growing number of displaced people around the world as "one of the most pressing issues of our time" and said that architecture and design can help restore the safety, dignity, and hope of some of the world's most vulnerable people. "Architecture is often the domain of the very privileged, but it's much more than that. We're talking about socially transformative design and bringing about policy change," said Ms Neilson.

— NICHOLAS FORREST

CROSS-BORDER TRANSFER

# TEXAS ART GOES ON A JAUNT

Artists from the American state come to India with their works



THE FIRST EVER exhibition of contemporary art from the state of Texas in the United States of America to be hosted in New Delhi got underway at the Lalit Kala Akademi (the national gallery of art) in the last week of January.

The exhibition, titled "Texas!", features works by 13 artists from five cities across the state and has been put together by The Lone Star Alliance, an organization founded by Texas artists Bill FitzGibbons and George Tobolowsky, with the goal of sharing the arts and culture of Texas on an international stage. The exhibition is the result of a collaboration between the Lalit Kala Akademi, The Lone Star Alliance based in San Antonio, Texas, and The Crow Collection of Asian Art based in Dallas, Texas.

The artists whose works are being featured in "Texas!" are Ricky Armendariz, Amita Bhatt, Bill FitzGibbons, Wayne Gilbert, Christy Karll, Sharon Kopriva, Catherine Lee, Charmaine Locke, Rahul Mitra, Sherry Owens, George Schroeder, James Surls and George Tobolowsky.

Bill FitzGibbons, a co-founder of The Lone Star Alliance, said, "One of the goals of this important exhibition is to establish the India/ Texas artist exchange. Our hope is that "Texas!" is just the first step in an ongoing dialogue."

A reciprocal exhibition featuring artists based in India will debut at The Crow Collection



Clockwise from top: Rahul Mitra's "Box City"; Sharon Kopriva's "A History of the World in Dog Years"; James Surls' "Stairway to Heaven II"; Wayne Gilbert's "Delicate Fragrance"; Amita Bhatt's "A Fantastic Collision of the Three Worlds"; Charmaine Locke's "Dancing On The Water Together Making Magic"; Ricky Armendariz's "Dame Dame Dame..."

of Asian Art, Dallas in Texas in 2016-2017 and tour some other cities in the state. Amy Lewis Hofland, executive director of The Crow Collection of Asian Art said, "The promotion of the arts and cultures of Asia is integral to the work we do here at the

Anubhav Nath of the Nath Foundation, New Delhi.

George Tobolowsky, a co-founder of The Lone Star Alliance and a participating artist in the exhibition, said, "It is important for me to travel to other countries, not only to study and under-

*A reciprocal exhibition featuring Indian artists will be held across Texas in 2016-2017*

museum in Dallas. We are delighted to support our local Texas artists and help build the reciprocal relationship between museums, artists and institutions."

The other organizations and institutions supporting the exhibition "Texas!" include the embassy of the United States of America in India, the Texas Commission on the Arts in Austin, Texas, and

stand their cultures but also to visit with their artists. One of my pieces in this exhibition is titled "Cultural Globalization" and depicts the concept of travel and its importance. Another piece, titled "The Indian Wedding Dance," was inspired by my interest in the Indian movies that we see in the United States."

Another participating artist



Rahul Mitra said, "My first on-site installation of social art practice, "Box City," outside of the USA was in New Delhi and that led to other cities in Europe. As an artist practicing in America and dealing with global social and political issues, this exhibition is

very important to me to show my work to artists in India and to engage in a dialogue with them."

"Texas!" is on view at the Lalit Kala Akademi, Rabindra Bhavan, 35, Ferozeshah Road, Copernicus Marg, New Delhi

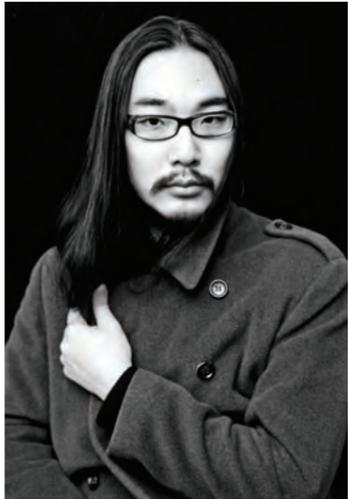
— ARCHANA KHARE-GHOSE



## THE TASTEMAKER

## POTTERING AROUND IN TOKYO

There's a lot one can soak of the Japanese capital, whose 13 million citizens live in a harmonious blend of high rises and nature, says renowned shoe designer Noritaka Tatehana



Noritaka Tatehana says the best thing about Japan is *omotenashi* or hospitality

BORN IN THE Kabukicho district of Shinjuku, where his family used to run a traditional Japanese public bathhouse, renowned shoe designer Noritaka Tatehana is an ideal guide to navigating the myriad delights of the Japanese capital.

For Tatehana, Tokyo is a contradictory fusion of natural and urban habitats. "Even though Tokyo is a massive metropolis of high-rises that is home to 13 million people, it's also a rare example of a city that coexists with nature. The presence of all these Shinto shrines and Buddhist temples within this symbiotic environment is also extremely important in recounting the history of Japan. Since ancient times, this country has experienced many wars and natural disasters that have made it necessary to rebuild our cities often. What the Japanese have tried to maintain is a certain sense of spirituality that can be found within the beauty of nature and traditional culture," he feels.

Here is what Tatehana would recommend to a new tourist in Tokyo, to experience the essence of the city and absorb it for all times to come.

## THE IMPERIAL HOTEL

Top on Tatehana's list of places to stay in the Japanese capital is the Imperial Hotel, which was originally built during the Meiji era to welcome foreign guests, using stone materials personally selected by Frank Lloyd Wright. "One of the attractions of the Imperial Hotel is its traditional Japanese spirit of *omotenashi*, or hospitality — something that I think you can only experience in Japan."

## OKURA HOTEL

Another outstanding choice is the Okura Hotel, which Tatehana



Jaume Plensa's sculpture is one of the biggest attractions on Toranomon Hills, which one can gaze at while dining on the terrace of the restaurant at Okura hotel, says Tatehana



sees as embodying a certain unique Japanese aesthetic. "What I like best here is to have breakfast on the terrace of the hotel restaurant while gazing out at the Japanese gardens. It's also quite close to the newly built Tokyo landmark, Toranomon Hills, where you can find many works of public art, including the one by Jaume Plensa."

## PARK HYATT

And of course, no list of stellar hotels in Tokyo would be complete without the Park Hyatt, located to the west of Shinjuku, where Tatehana was born. "The Park Hyatt gives you a real taste of the sprawling metropolis that is Tokyo, and the views from its heights are simply stunning. Located nearby is the Kabukicho entertainment district, which is

also where you'll find the legendary Golden Gai, home to an amazing variety of small bars, each offering an intimate, authentic glimpse into a Tokyo that is rarely seen. The range is quite overwhelming — from quiet, reserved watering holes to raucous girly bars and places where comedians hold court."

## HOUSE

In a famously Michelin star-studded city, Tatehana prefers dining out in Tokyo's more intimate, cozy establishments. One of his favorite haunts is House, a concept eatery in Nishi-Azabu that specializes in dishes cooked using Staub Dutch ovens from France. "I recommend the hamburger steak made using Japanese beef. One of the other charms of this restaurant is the



Above left: Night view of the Kabukicho entertainment district which one can soak in from the heights of the Park Hyatt nearby; Above right: Shinjuku, where Tatehana was born, is also close to where Park Hyatt is located



Right: House, a concept eatery in Nishi-Azabu, is one of Tatehana's favorite haunts



The inside and outside view (above left & right respectively) of Irving Place, located in a quiet corner of the residential Shirokanedai district, that boasts of a tree house inside the restaurant and is ideal for an intimate date; Below and right: Views of the seminal Hara Museum of Contemporary Art, which is housed in a residence built during the Showa era



wide selection of natural wines. The staff is always ready on hand to advise you on which bottles will best bring out the flavors of the ingredients being served.”

**KANA-UNI**

Another favorite is Kana-uni, a venerable institution with a 50-year history. “The staff that works there comprises extremely unique characters. The way they carry themselves, and the manner in which they bring your food to the table, makes you feel as if you’re watching an impeccably rehearsed performance. One of my favorite things to order here is the French onion gratin soup that Yukio Mishima is said to have loved as well.”

For an unusually intimate date, Tatehana also endorses Irving Place, located on a quiet corner of the residential Shirokanedai district. “I come here because it feels like an urban oasis, surrounded by greenery. There’s even a treehouse inside the restaurant! It’s designed by the well-known F&B producer Uichi Yamamoto, a trendsetting pioneer of the casual café dining concept in Tokyo.”



**HARA MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART**

Even in art, Tatehana prefers the more discreet and unassuming. His favorite museum is the Hara Museum of Contemporary Art. “Located in a quiet residential quarter of central Tokyo, the Hara was converted from a private residence built in the early Showa era. It’s an indispensable, important indicator of what’s happening in the world of contemporary Japanese art.”

**OMOTESANDO**

Tatehana is also a firm admirer of Tokyo’s well-known parade of

contemporary architecture along the shopping drag of Omotesando. One of his favorites is the Prada flagship designed by Herzog and de Meuron, built using glass imported from Italy, “giving it a presence that strikes me as being more akin to sculpture than architecture. Just opposite the Prada building on the other side of the road is the new Miu Miu boutique that’s currently under construction, also designed by Herzog and de Meuron.”

**TRADING MUSEUM COMME DES GARÇONS**

Despite Tokyo’s profusion of



(Left & above) Omotesando shopping district houses stunning architecture, like that of the Prada flagship store designed by Herzog and de Meuron; (Far left) Meiji Shrine is the best place to begin the tour of Tokyo

high-concept boutiques with stringently selected offerings, Tatehana’s favorite store remains Trading Museum Comme des Garçons, located in the Gyre Building on Omotesando.

“Filled with items that Rei Kawakubo herself has selected from all over the world, it wouldn’t be an exaggeration to describe this place as her own wardrobe. Here, you’ll find lots of pieces that you won’t be able to see anywhere else in Japan — and you might even bump into Rei herself, since she goes there to shop! I actually also exhibit an installation piece here every year.”

**MEIJI SHRINE**

With its embarrassment of riches that would challenge any first-time visitor, what advice would Tatehana give to the novice Tokyo explorer?

“Start your tour of Tokyo at Meiji Shrine, located at the heart of the city. There, you’ll find a piece of history and come into contact with a part of Japanese culture that has been handed down since ancient times — surely an indispensable key to getting to know this city.”

— DARRYL WEE

IMAGES COURTESY (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP): DARRYL JINGWEN WEE; HARA MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART; PRADA; TOKYO CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU

ART CENTRAL/ MARCH 14 - 16

# HONG KONG GETS ANOTHER FAIR

The fair directors feel it would bring more world class fare to the city

ART BASEL HONG Kong is around the corner (mid-March) but preparations are also well underway for the much-anticipated inaugural edition of the new Art Central fair.

It features a roster of just over 75 galleries to be housed in a specially commissioned structure designed by the London-based architecture firm Stiff & Trevillion on the Central Harbourfront.

BLOUIN ARTINFO speaks to Art Central co-directors Eve Share Banghart and Maree Di Pasquale on the highlights of the new fair.

**You're both seasoned fair directors: Eve, you joined ART HK in its early editions before becoming Gallery and Project Manager for Art Basel Hong Kong; and Maree, you have served as assistant director of the Melbourne Art Fair and the first Sydney Contemporary. What were the challenges you faced with the Art Central?**

Maree Di Pasquale (MDP): Art Central takes place on Hong Kong's new Central Harbourfront in a 10,000 sq m structure, the likes of which have not been seen in Hong Kong before. One of the greatest challenges has been navigating the operational considerations of this site, which have now become some of the most positive aspects of the fair.

The unconventional nature of the venue has also provided real opportunities for food and design. We will be working with one of the city's newest eateries, The Continental, to create a special pop-up restaurant and bar at Art Central. Executive Chef Rowley Leigh will oversee the kitchen.

**Would you say that the art market in Hong Kong has developed to a point where it can accommodate a satellite fair like Art Central?**

Eve Share Banghart (ESB): Hong Kong is undoubtedly the art hub of Asia. No other Asian city can rival its zero tax on the import and export of art, little censorship, and great infrastructure. From the influx of galleries and the establishment of Hong Kong as the third largest auction market in the world, to the organic development of the not-for-profit scene with the addition of organizations such as the Asia Society Hong Kong Center and the plans for the new West Kowloon Cultural District, the Hong Kong art world is booming. The creation of ART HK by Art Central's founders and its development following the sale to Art Basel has helped to cement Hong Kong's place on the international stage.

**With just about 75 galleries, Art Central will provide an intimacy lacking in bigger fairs**

Just like the parallel art fairs alongside main fairs of the world, Art Central expands the art offerings in Hong Kong public. We are proud that Art Central will be bringing yet more world-class content to Hong Kong Art Week.

**What niche do you envision for Art Central alongside the looming shadow of Art Basel Hong Kong?**

MDP: With just over 75 galleries, Art Central provides an intimate and friendly atmosphere that the larger fairs sometimes find hard to achieve. It is this accessibility that is a key differentiator for Art



Willi Siber's "Floor Sculpture Light Blue" (2013) to be showcased at the debut edition of Art Central

**What are the highlights of the Rise section that you're excited about?**

ESB: It is difficult to pick a few highlights from work by over 400 artists. However, contemporary ink will be a highlight and famed Chinese ink painter Lan Zhenghui's new site-specific installation from Ethan Cohen Fine Arts will be fantastic.

Galerie Du Monde are bringing Stella Zhang to create a site-specific work that has developed out of her "0-Viewpoint" series. We are also looking forward to the sculptures by American artist Rona Pondick (Krampf Gallery), whose work has been collected by the likes of the Whitney Museum of American Art and the Los Angeles

County Museum of Art.

The Rise sector will be seminal for those looking to add emerging artists to their collections. A highlight is the Enrico Bach solo presentation by WEINGRÜLL, who skillfully works on shapes between abstraction and realism. Rehana Mangi, presented by Emerge Gallery in Paris, is also one to watch. Mangi's work is based on Persian miniature paintings.

Another highlight is the dual artist presentation from London gallery Rook & Raven. Their booth brings together the work of Vivien Zhang and Yun Kyung Jeong with the aim of challenging perceptions of cultural identity.

— DARRYL WEE

VITAMIN CREATIVE SPACE/ MIRRORED GARDENS

## EXPERIMENTAL ART GOES TO THE VILLAGE

New gallery to explore relation between art & farming practices

LEADING CHINESE contemporary art gallery Vitamin Creative Space has unveiled Mirrored Gardens, a new experimental space in the village of Panyu, located on the outskirts of the city of Guangzhou.

Designed by the innovative Japanese architect Sou Fujimoto, known for his "forest"-like stacked configurations of small dwellings and houses that recall the dense urban structure of Japanese cities, Mirrored Gardens is a curious and fascinating transposition of Fujimoto's organic metaphors onto an actual rural environment.

Planning, research, and construction began in 2011 and took three years, drawing inspiration

from the surrounding villages of Guangdong province. Extensive use was made of old roof tiles and Qing dynasty grey bricks, giving the project both a contemporary character and the textural veneer of local tradition.

Rather than positioning itself as a gallery, Mirrored Gardens, according to Fujimoto, is an attempt "to construct a 'field'". Here, contemporary art, quotidian life and a kind of farming-oriented life practice meet and overlap with each other."

Ongoing through the end of February is Mirrored Gardens' inaugural exhibition by Lee Kit, who represented his native Hong



A view of the studios at Vitamin Creative Space in Panyu village, outside Guangzhou

Kong at the Venice Biennale in 2013. Located near the cloistered urban spaces that often inspire his work and set against the verdant, subtropical greenery that surrounds the Gardens, Lee's

meditative, challengingly innocuous installations and paintings, which are inspired by domestic objects and settings, have found the space and air that they require to be fully appreciated.

Founded in 2002 and co-directed by Hu Fang and Zhang Wei, Vitamin Creative Space is one of China's most experimental and progressive contemporary art galleries, functioning as both an independent art space and as a "commercial" gallery. With Mirrored Gardens, Vitamin seems to be scouring around for a third pillar to complement their activities: agriculture and the "cultivation" of rural life as a metaphor for — or counterpoint to — the practice of art.

*Mirrored Gardens is located in the Hualong Agriculture Grand View Garden, Panyu, Guangzhou, China. Lee Kit's "We'll never go back again" runs through February 28, 2015.*

— DARRYL WEE



## WHEN IN/ NEW DELHI

## INDIA WITHOUT HEAT, COLD, DUST

If you're looking at visiting New Delhi this year, February is the month

THE INDIA DESIGN Fair, being held in New Delhi from February 13 to 15, promises to be an inspirational space for all that's design. The event will host presentations, panel discussions, interactive sessions, debates and dialogues. Luminaries from the field, and creative and design professionals from across India and the globe will engage, inspire and share experiences.

## STAY

## THE LODHI

Pragati Vihar  
Delhi-110003  
TEL: +91 (011) 43633333  
Formerly The Aman, this hotel was rechristened The Lodhi in 2013, a throwback to its former name when it was a government property. It's come a long way from being a Socialist-looking red brick structure in the '60s to its present cosmopolitan elegance.

The Lodhi, in its new form, epitomizes contemporary India and boasts all modern-day amenities such as a world class spa, an outdoor swimming pool, a business centre, a library, a cigar lounge, an art gallery and plush suites with plunge pools. Its patrons include politicians and a young crop of jet-setters.

## THE MANOR

77 Friends Colony West  
New Delhi-110065  
TEL: +91 (011) 43235151  
Located in an upscale residential neighbourhood, The Manor is a luxury boutique hotel with classy modern décor, a spa and an acclaimed restaurant. A 1950s Lutyen's Delhi bungalow, with 15 stylishly furnished rooms and manicured gardens, this property brings the luxury of a five-star hotel into its cozy yet understatedly elegant confines.

The rooms are relatively small but have hardwood or Italian mosaic floors, granite showers, dark wood furnishing, Murano glass lamps and minimalist art prints on the walls. Some rooms have their own private courtyards or balconies. Another reason this boutique hotel is often counted among Asia's Top 50 restaurants, is its modern Indian cuisine restaurant, Indian Accent, which is known for its innovative menu featuring 'masala miso' or 'paneer lasagna'

## NEEMRANA FORT PALACE HOTEL

122nd Milestone, Delhi-Jaipur Highway  
Rajasthan-301705  
TEL: +91 9310630386

A 15th century heritage hotel spread out over 25 acres of land, the Neemrana Fort-Palace is a restored historic fort, which was



Above: The Lodhi Hotel epitomizes contemporary India and boasts all modern-day amenities; Right: Dum Pukht, a restaurant at the ITC Maurya Hotel, derives its name from 'dum', a form of slow pressure cooking

opened to the public in 1991. Built in 1464, it once served as residence for kings, the descendants of Prithviraj Chauhan III. The seven palace wings that were reconstructed over a period of 14 years lie on a hillside, ensuring stunning views of the neighbouring countryside from most rooms.

Located 100 kms from the airport, on the Delhi-Jaipur highway, near the Aravalli mountain ranges of Rajasthan, this property falls within the Golden Triangle, and turns into a weekend getaway for the city slickers. It has about 50 rooms, many of which have an attached terrace or balcony overlooking the hillside or the other wings of the fort. There are two swimming pools, hanging gardens, an Ayurvedic spa and a zip line!

## EAT

## DUM PUKHT

ITC Maurya Hotel, Sardar Patel Marg, Chanakyapuri  
Delhi-110021  
TEL: +91 (011) 26112233  
The restaurant derives its name from 'dum', a style of slow pressure cooking in a heavy bottomed, tightly sealed 'handi', creating one-pot dishes cooked in their own juices, flavours and aromas. Dum Pukht is an Indian fine dining restaurant serving Awadhi cuisine. A special treat is the Royal Repast, a set menu of five courses with a choice of Shorba, Kebab, Qorma, Qaliya, Salan and Nehari, Biranj and Naan.

They are also known for their outstanding Kakori Kababs and Shahi Tukra. Complementing its cuisine is the Mughal-themed



décor of this restaurant. Marble floors, 'pankha' or hand-held fans, royal blue and gold furnishing and crockery and a traditional 'Dastarkan place setting' add a touch of opulence.

## UNITED COFFEE HOUSE

E 15, Inner Circle, Connaught Place  
Delhi-110001  
TEL: +91 (011) 2341 6075  
The mother of café culture in Delhi, the iconic United Coffee House also serves as a 175-seater restaurant. Their menu covers everything from Continental and Oriental to Indian dishes. As much a tourist destination as an eatery, owing to its 72-year history, this restaurant is frequented by locals, expats and tourists.

United Coffee House is famous for its Chicken A'La Kiev, Chicken Alexander (chicken steak cooked in egg dip served with Italian sauce and mushrooms), Punjabi Samosa Chaat, United's Special Grilled Cheese and Club sandwiches, and most importantly for its old world charm.

You will be served with veteran serve staff who are always ready

with a suggestion and smile.

## ORIENT EXPRESS

Taj Palace Hotel, Sardar Patel Marg  
Delhi-110021  
TEL: +91 (011) 26110202  
This restaurant romanticizes the fabled train plying from Paris to Constantinople during the Belle Époque era, the Orient Express, in its décor and cuisine. This dining room is laid out like the dining car of the train and the four-course European menu is inspired by the cuisines of the countries it passes through on its celebrated route. This very exclusive restaurant is a constant on 'Best of' lists and justifiably so. It is populated by tourists, well-heeled locals and is a favourite with visiting dignitaries and celebrities.

The Rack of Lamb; Normandy Butter-Poached Prawns with Runner Beans and Shitake Mushrooms; Kobe Rib Eye with Roasted Shallots in a Béarnaise; Canadian lobster Thermidor with Parsley Rice; the Caviar menu; Camembert Soufflé are particularly inspiring picks off the dazzling menu.

## SHOP

## EMPORIO MALL

4 Nelson Mandela Marg, Vasant Kunj  
Delhi-110070  
TEL: +91 (011) 4611 6666  
A luxury shopping mall that only houses designer labels and premium merchandise, Emporio is the extravagant shopper's dream. This palatial complex decked out in Italian marble, burnished wood and gleaming brass accents, is spread out over four floors and features around 170 brands.

Under its roof, you can find the finest Indian and international signature labels, the most exclusive designer brands and a range of high-end lifestyle products. From Cartier, Louis Vuitton and Jimmy Choo to Vertu, La Prairie and Porsche, this mall offers a shopping experience that rides high on exclusivity and aesthetics.

## GOOD EARTH

Shop No.9 A.B.C. Ground, 1st & 2nd Floor, Khan Market  
Delhi-110003  
TEL: +91 (011) 24647175  
A stylish interiors store and luxury lifestyle brand that sells beautiful dinner and glassware, linen, furniture and other home accessories, Good Earth's design aesthetic is minimalist yet opulent. Stylized Indian motifs of native birds, animals and trees find themselves on the gilt borders of exquisite bone china, pottery and porcelain; the hand block-printed bed sheets, quilts and cushion covers; and the intricate colour patterns on platinum-tipped glassware.

The designs you find in this store are inspired by the heritage of the Indian subcontinent yet every one of their luxurious products would be right at home in a stylish designer apartment.

## SUNDER NAGAR MARKET

Sunder Nagar, Mathura Road  
Delhi-110003  
The best market for antiques, traditional artwork, handicrafts, silver jewellery and fine Indian teas, Sunder Nagar has a quiet, lazy charm. Since a vintage four-poster bed is not a weekly requirement on most shopping lists, this market retains an air of aloofness within its peaceful tree-lined confines.

Whether you're a browser or a serious shopper, this is the perfect place to find carved wooden furniture, brass and marble figurines, metal and ceramic handicrafts, silver ornaments, semi precious stones and excellent teas from Assam and Darjeeling. There are also a few art galleries in and around the upmarket residential area surrounding the market.

— ROBERT MICHAEL POOLE



# AROUND TOWN

The top galleries across Asia are dressed up with new shows. Check out.

## NEW DELHI

### NATIONAL GALLERY OF MODERN ART

Jaipur House, Dr Zakir Hussain Marg, India Gate New Delhi

<http://ngmaindia.gov.in/Transfigurations>

On till March 29

This exhibition, curated by Peter Nagy, presents sculptures by Mumbai-based artist Mrinalini Mukherjee.

### NATIONAL GALLERY OF MODERN ART

Jaipur House, Dr Zakir Hussain Marg, India Gate New Delhi

<http://ngmaindia.gov.in/UntimelyCalendar>

On till February 15

Untimely Calendar

This is a retrospective of Raqs Media Collective's oeuvre that spans over two decades. The exhibition showcases the group's mixed media works that are intended to be a conversation about time and the constant state of flux that we live in.

### VADEHRA ART GALLERY

D - 53, Defence Colony New Delhi

<http://www.vadehraart.com/ImaginedImmortals>: Anju Dodiya

Till February 14

Anju Dodiya's solo show presents works created by the iconic artist in the last few years and comprises a set of mixed media elements, with gouache and collage works that have been worked out on printed pages of the reproduction of old medical illustrations.

### DELHI ART GALLERY

11, Hauz Khas Village New Delhi

<http://www.delhiartgallery.com/KingdomOfExile> - A Rabin Mondal Retrospective

Till February 14

Belonging to the post-Independence generation of modernist artists in Bengal, Rabin Mondal grew up with experiences of the Bengal Famine, debilitating childhood illness and the strife and suffering of the violence-torn years in Calcutta of the 1960s and 1970s.

### INDIRA GANDHI NATIONAL CENTRE FOR THE ARTS (IGNCA)

1, Central Vista (CV) Mess, Janpath, New Delhi

<http://ignca.nic.in>

Folk Archive Exhibition by the British Council

Till February 27

An exhibition by Jeremy Deller and Alan Kane, "Folk Archive" presents works made over the past six years by community groups, Notting Hill Carnival troupes, protestors, pop fans, teenagers,



Hetai's Patel's four channel video installation from "The Other Suit" 2015 (above); "Baa's House 2" (2015) (right) at Chatterjee & Lal, Mumbai

villagers and the homeless in order to highlight the role of everyday creativity.

### NATURE MORTE GALLERY

A-1, Neeti Bagh, New Delhi

<http://www.naturemorte.com>

Q: The Lighthouse, Thukral & Tagra

Till February 28

The exhibition of new works by the artistic duo of Thukral & Tagra continues the development of the film entitled "Q," the first scene from which served as the centerpiece of the artists' exhibition at the Famous Studios in Mumbai in November 2013 and will be part of this exhibition. A second scene of "Q" has also been finished for this exhibition, which will be rounded out by new paintings and sculptures.

### EXHIBIT 320

Lado Sarai, F-320, Old Mehrauli Badarpur Rd, New Delhi

<http://www.exhibit320.com>

Scapelands

Till February 18

Sonia Mehra Chawla's new body of works comprises photopolymer etchings, videos, and paintings in mixed media. The exhibition presents the artists' continuing engagement with the natural and organic world and the works are a result of several years of research and documentation of 'sites' in diverse locations.

### GALLERY SPACE

16 Community Centre New Friends Colony, New Delhi

<http://www.galleryspace.com>



Postponed Poems: Manjunath Kamath

Till February 28

"Postponed Poems" is a solo show of terracotta sculptures and drawings by Delhi-based Manjunath Kamath. The works are the aggregate of Kamath's distinctive imagery rich with the narratives of everyday life, interwoven with mythologies and intimate stories.

### TALWAR GALLERY

C-84 Neeti Bagh, New Delhi

<http://talwargallery.com>

Alwar Balasubramaniam: Layers of wind, lines of time

Till May 2

Alwar Balasubramaniam deepens his exploration of the natural forces around us. "Layers of wind, lines of time" creates an environment of life-in-formation: forms receding into the depth of the walls, or stalactites seeming to grow spontaneously out of them.

### MUMBAI

#### CHATTERJEE & LAL

Arthur Bunder Road, 1/18, Floor 1, Kamal Mansion, Mumbai

<http://chatterjeeandlal.com>

Hetai Patel: The Other Suit

Till February 28

This new exhibition introduces the artist's fascination with the mass communicative powers of Hollywood and the entertainment industries. From the intimacy of his family home to the online public broadcasting of YouTube, Patel reveals a space where devotion to pop culture and art making are one and the same.

### CHEMOULD PRESCOTT ROAD

3rd floor, Queens Mansion, G. Talwatkar Marg, Fort Mumbai

<http://www.chemouldprescottroad.com>

Anant Joshi: Masquerade and other Apologies

Till February 14

Anant Joshi's new work is a series of paintings and watercolours. In this series, carefully collected toys become actors for incendiary circumstances that have been part of an ongoing real life politics.

### DR. BHAI DAJI LAD MUSEUM

91 A, Rani Baug

Veer Mata Jijbai Bhonsle Udyan Dr Baba Saheb Ambedkar Marg Byculla East, Mumbai

<http://www.bdlmuseum.org>

7000 Museums: A Project For The Republic Of India

Till February 10

The exhibition is a continuation of the Museum's curatorial series, 'Engaging Traditions', which encourages contemporary artists to engage with the Museum's history and collection. "7000 Museums: A Project For The Republic Of India", curated by Tasneem Zakaria Mehta, presents Dodiya's comprehensive body of artworks, with oil paintings,

water colours and sculptural assemblages.

**VOLTE GALLERY**

202, Sumer Kendra, Floor 2, PB Marg, Worli, Mumbai.

<http://volte.in>

**Art at the Four Seasons**

Till February 10

“Art at the Four Seasons” is a group exhibition featuring the works by Anish Kapoor, Govinda Prasad Sah, Manjunath Kamath, Ranbir Kaleka, Suhasani Kejriwal, William Kentridge, Yamini Nayar and Rohit Chawla.

**PROJECT 88**

BMP Building, Ground Floor

N.A. Sawant Marg,

Colaba, Mumbai

<http://www.project88.in>

**Earth Bound**

Till February 28

This is a group exhibition that intimates how nature too has become manmade, featuring the works of Raqs Media Collective, Tejal Shah, Sarnath Bannerjee, Neha Choksi, Pallavi Paul, Prajakta Potnis, Sandeep Mukherjee, Shumon Ahmed, The Otolith Group, Mahesh Baliga and Huma Mulji.

**SAKSHI GALLERY**

N Parjekar Marg,

Colaba, Mumbai

<http://www.sakshigallery.com>

**A Journey of Secrets**

Till February 14

Featuring prints, drawings, installations and photography, the exhibition features the works of Samanta Batra Mehta, showcasing her interdisciplinary practice.

**GALERIE MIRCHANDANI + STEINRUECKE**

2, Sunny House

16/18 Mereweather Road

Behind Taj Mahal Hotel

Colaba, Mumbai

<http://www.galeriems.com>

**C.K. Rajan – Classified: For Your Eyes Only**

Till February 26

This exhibition presents a series of 81 small works. Each includes the same basic elements – a painterly background suggesting some type of context or scenario onto which the artist has inserted an element of figuration. The figurative elements consist mostly of singular details, beautifully rendered, sketchy, but at the same time just about legible as something: a figure, a structure, or a word.



Above: Alwar Balasubramaniam's "Bloom" (2014) at Talwar Gallery, New Delhi; Right: Rabin Mondal's "King Dethroned" (1976), at Delhi Art Gallery, New Delhi; Manjunath Kamath's "Antique Makers Dog" (2014), at Gallery Espace, New Delhi

**SITARA STUDIO**

Near Tilak Bhavan, Kakasaheb

Gadgil Marg, Dadar West

<http://www.goethe.de/ins/in>

**Helios Theater**

On February 16

This performance directed by Barbara Kölling, featuring Michael Lurse, Marko Werner, and Holger Queck, takes inspiration from the power of water, an element that has an enormous effect on our existence.

**PHILIPPINES**

**GALLERIA DUEMILA**

210 Loring St.1300

Pasay City, Philippines

<http://www.galleriaduemila.com>

**Edwin Coscolluela: Images**

Till February 24

In “Images”, Coscolluela takes his practice in the domain of kinetic abstraction, offering digitally rendered, process-reliant, and design-oriented compositions.

**BLANC GALLERY**

145 Katipunan Avenue,

St. Ignatius Village, Quezon

City 1110

<http://blanc.ph/exhibits/>

**Melted City 2**

Till February 7

In “Melted City 2”, over more than 50 artists from the US and the Philippines are gathered to produce works that are made within a 9 x 12 inch frame.

Artists from the Philippines include Poklong Anading, Nona Garcia, Paul Mondok, Manuel Ocampo, Roxlee and Romeo Lee



to name a few. While artists from the US include Melinda Beck, Alex Lukas, Paula Searing, Georganne Deen, Rich Jacobs, and Eric White.

**BLANC GALLERY**

145 Katipunan Avenue,

St. Ignatius Village, Quezon

City 1110

<http://blanc.ph/exhibits/>

**Nothing To Lose: Jordin Isip**

Till February 7

This is Brooklyn-based artist Jordin Isip's first solo exhibition in the Philippines. As a native of New York, he traces his roots from the Philippines, having migrant Filipino grandparents. The indigenous figures in Isip's illustrations hold their own unique presence inside each work.

**FINALE ART FILE**

Warehouse 17, La Fuerza

Compound (Gate 1),

2241 Chino Roces Ave.,

Makati City,

<http://finaleartfile.com>

**Surrounded by Water**

Till February 26

This exhibition presents works by the now defunct Surrounded by Water, a Manila-based arts collective. Members of the group include visual artist Jonathan Ching, who ran an alternative art space of the same name, and Wire

Tuazon, among others.

**ART INFORMAL**

277 Connecticut Street,

Greenhills East,

Mandaluyong City

<http://www.artinformal.com>

**Blue: Olivia D'Aboville**

Till February 14

“Blue” is a poetic homage by Olivia D'Aboville to her ongoing fascination with the ocean. Sculpting with textile, she translates the movement and the dance of water. At times, the surface is just a tremble, at other times it is more agitated or even chaotic.

**ART INFORMAL**

277 Connecticut Street,

Greenhills East,

Mandaluyong City

<http://www.artinformal.com>

**I Went to the Forest to Live**

Deliberately

Till February 14

The works in the exhibition look at how place occurs within the remit of objects, and perhaps it is in this mode that becoming requires exactitude: Thoreau's exercise of living deliberately is transposed onto the material life.

**MO SPACE**

3rd Level, Mos Design Building,

Bonifacio High Street,

Bonifacio Global City, Fort



**BLOUINARTINFO.COM**

**THE EUROPE EDITION**

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Marie-Kathrin Krimphoff  
Romina Provenzi  
Kathrin Ritter  
Jean Ruffin  
Anne-Laure Schuler

**ASIA**

Inna Kanounikova

**Scott Bauer**  
GLOBAL DISTRIBUTION

**Dawn Fasano**  
GENERAL COUNSEL

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Taguig, Metro, Manila

<http://mo-space.net/>

**Rewind: Drawings, Lithographs & Paintings (1983 – 2008)**

Till February 15

Fernando Modesto's latest solo exhibition 'Rewind' is a partial survey of the artist's drawings, lithographs, and paintings done within a period of 25 years. A raconteur who spins tales through his art, Modesto has created a body of work that is colourful, witty, irreverent, naughty, humorous, and at the same time, pensive and full of melancholia. This exhibition charts these qualities that have long been associated with the artist and reflects a

practice grounded on the immediacy of direct visual experience.

**LIGHT AND SPACE**

53 Fairlane St., West Fairview  
1121 Quezon City  
<http://lightandspacecontemporary.com/portfolio>

**Ernest Concepcion**

Till April 5

Presented in collaboration with the Deutsche Bank Programme's Appreciating Art, it showcases recent works by Philippines-based abstract artist Ernest Concepcion.

**KUALA LUMPUR**

**TAKSU**

17 Jalan Pawang  
54000 Kuala Lumpur  
<http://taksu.com>

**Locals Only 2015**

Till February 28

"Locals Only 2015" is a showcase of new works by popular Malaysian artists. Held annually, it will feature works by Meme, Najib Bamadhaj, Khairi Shamsuddin, Gan Tee Sheng, Hisyamuddin Abdullah, Sabihis Md. Pandi, Shafiq Nordin, Khairul Izham, Khuzairie Ali, Azizi Latif, Nizam Abdullah, Nizam Rahmat, Dhavinder Singh, Rini Hashim, Fawwaz Sukri, Cinta Ayuandrea, Tan Lu Man, Mohd Fuad Arif, Zulkifli Lee and Chong Soon Leong.

**GALERI PETRONAS**

Level 3, Suria KLCC  
Jalan Ampang, Kuala Lumpur  
<http://www.galeripetronas.com>

**MAESTRO - World's Modern and Contemporary Art Masters**

Till March 22

This exhibition showcases a collection of key graphical works that put together trends of modern and contemporary art within the international art landscape. There over 200 works by 76 masters, which have been selected from the Arte 10 collection.

**WEI-LING CONTEMPORARY**

6th Floor, The Gardens Mall  
Lingkar Syed Putra  
Mid Valley City

Kuala Lumpur-59200

[www.weiling-gallery.com](http://www.weiling-gallery.com)

**Ivan Lam: Twenty**

Till March 1

This landmark retrospective, bringing together 45 pieces from two decades of the artist's career, also marks the opening of the new Wei-Ling Contemporary gallery in Kuala Lumpur.

**THE EDGE GALLERIE**

G5-G6, Mont'Kiara Meridin

19 Jalan Duta Kiara

Mont Kiara

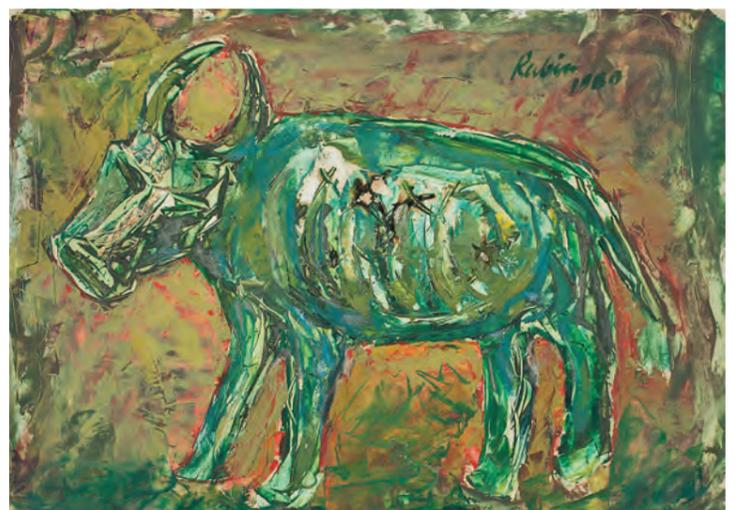
Kuala Lumpur

<http://www.theedgegalerie.com/>

**Shared Passion**

Till February 13

The exhibition presents iconic artist Yusof Ghani's works from a private collection and his own personal collection. Several works in the exhibition have never been showcased in public before.



Clockwise from top: From a walkthrough with Lawrence Liang at "Untimely Calendar" by the Raqs Media Collective at NGMA, New Delhi; Rabin Mondal's "Untitled" (1980) at Delhi Art Gallery, New Delhi; Yusof Ghani's "Siri Topeng, Drawing - #27-97" (1997), from the collection of Datuk Seri Kalimullah Hassan, showing at The Edge Gallerie, Kuala Lumpur

**SEKEPING SIN CHEW KEE**

3 Jalan Sin Chew Kee, Pudu  
Kuala Lumpur

<http://www.sekeping.com>

**Making Space: We Are Where We Aren't**

Till February 9

This exhibition presents works by Kontak!, Sharon Chin, Saiful Razman, and Goh Lee Kwang and is the final exhibition of the Japan Foundation's Young Curator programme.

**MUZIUM TEKSTIL NEGARA**

26 Jalan Sultan Hishamuddin  
50050 Kuala Lumpur

[www.muziumtekstilnegara.gov](http://www.muziumtekstilnegara.gov)

**The Batik Sarong Exhibition: A Legacy for Today and Tomorrow**

Till March 31

This exhibition showcases batik collections according to the designs of batik artisans through branding and the use of techniques that have interchanged with technology over time.

**JAPAN**

**SCAI THE BATHHOUSE**

6 Chome-1-23 Yanaka, Taito,

Tokyo 110-0001

<http://www.scaithebathhouse.com/en/exhibitions>

**Tomoko Shioyasu: "Cosmic Perspective"**

Till February 21

Tomoko Shioyasu evolved her practice from the experience of cutting out veins from a tree leaf

**WAKO WORKS OF ART**

Japan, 106-0032 Tokyo,

Minato 3F

<http://www.wako-art.jp>

**Drawings**

From February 14 to March 28

This exhibition presents drawings

by Joan Jonas, Yuji Takeoka, Luc

Tuymans and Henk Visch.

**MIZUMA ART GALLERY -**

**ICHIGAYA TAMACHI**

2F Kagura Bldg., 3-13

Ichigayatamachi Shinjuku-ku,

Tokyo 162-0843

<http://www.mizuma-art.co.jp>

**Yamamoto Masao**

"Shizuka=Cleanse"

Till February 7

Active mostly outside Japan, Yamamoto is primarily known for his poetically tranquil black-and-white photographs and photo-based installations. This long-

during her school years. Outlining images from close observation in natural matters such as water, bubbles and organic cells, Shioyasu applies a meticulous transposition of these patterns to a scroll of synthetic paper. In this exhibition, Shioyasu delves into the shapes of spheres, circles and swirls that are common in nature and traditional crafts.

awaited solo show will mainly feature works from the artist's recent "Shizuka (Cleanse)" series.

**MISAKO & ROSEN**

Kita-otsuka, 3-27-6, Toshima-ku,  
Tokyo, 170-0004

<http://www.misakoandrosen.com>

**Yuki Okumura: Measuring**

**Roman Ondák**

From February 8 to March 8

This turns Roman Ondák's

original piece, "Measuring the

Universe," a work in which the

domestic custom of recording

children's heights on door frames

is turned into a public event,

referring through its title to

humankind's age-old desire to

gauge the scale of the world, into

a consideration on the nature of

author / viewership.

**TAKE NINAGAWA**

2-12-4-1F, HigashiAzabu,

Minatoku

Tokyo 1060044 Japan

<http://www.takeninagawa.com>

**Tsuruko Yamazaki: un/untitled**

From February 21 to April 11

The exhibition presents a series

of recent untitled works by Japanese

artist Tsuruko Yamazaki. The

works in this exhibition include

drawings, paintings, installations

and mixed-media projects.

