

Eclectic shades: Fairs, legends and religion

A variety of art shows were opened this week in the national capital even as India finalised plans for the second edition of its official art fair, which will be held in 2009.

Summit summons

The curtain has just gone up on the blueprint for the second edition of the India Art Summit 2009, which will be held in the national capital in August next year.

The fair is a private initiative supported by the government and a host of global art platforms, including international auctioneer Sotheby's and art finance guru Philip Hoffman's Fine Art Fund. The first edition of the fair was held in August this year amid fanfare and media hype.

The first fair logged more than 10,000 footfalls with more than 550 contemporary and modern art works on display. The scope and participation, say organisers, will be bigger in 2009 with South Asian art as the focus.

'This time we are looking at more than 60 galleries, both national and international. We are expecting more cooperation from the Indian and the global art fraternity and participation of almost all the top-notch galleries from across the country,' Sunil Gautam, managing director of host Hanmer MS and amp;L, an art and culture promotion firm, told IANS.

Seminars and talks apart, the fair in 2009 will include a sculpture park, art films, curated projects, education series and social events.

'We want to tell the world that the art summit has established itself as a brand like the Hong Kong and the Dubai art fairs,' said Neha Kirpal, director of the India Art Summit.

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Picasso, Dali come to Delhi

Salvador Dali and Pablo Picasso were stuff of drawing room conversation in the national capital till last week. But now the European legends are in town, along with a host of old and new contemporary masters from the continent.

An exhibition of European contemporary and modern art opened at the Marigold Fine Art Gallery at the Claridges Hotel in [New Delhi](#) Nov 22.

'Owning a painting by a European contemporary master, even if it's a limited edition print, is like possessing a slice of history. We are also trying to make European art affordable to masses. The limited reproductions of works by Pablo Picasso and Salvador Dali cost between Rs.900,000 to Rs.2.5 million,' Marigold Fine Arts chief executive officer Gaurav Assumull said.

The show stealers are a series of three self portraits by Picasso, titled 'Portrait Imaginaire', and two surrealist sculptures by Dali, called 'Space Elephant' and 'Space Venus'.

One of the 350 limited editions available worldwide, 'Space Elephant' has an etched (moulded) signature by the artist and is certified by the Dali Foundation in Barcelona, which own the copyrights of the master's works. The Picasso reprints too are duly authenticated by the Picasso family.

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Pilgrim's progress

Nearly 80 photographs, coloured as well as black and white, and water colour frames of Austrian artist Krajanek Andreas are on display at the Indian International Centre (IIC) in the capital till Nov 28. The works focus on Indian shrines and holy towns.

The show titled 'Water Colour Paintings and Photo Documentary on Art at Indian Pilgrimage Sites' has been brought to India by the Austrian Cultural Forum.

'I started my work in 1989 at the Amarnath shrine in Kashmir. My work was influenced by Buddhist thangka painting and Vietnamese art. For the lotus patterns in my paintings, I used a Japanese designs and motifs that I found at the Mahabodhi temple, at the Gangotri glacier and in nature,' the artist said.

The paintings are subdued, but loaded with spirituality and metaphors. The spartan photographs are almost childlike in compositions.

Madhusree Chatterjee (© IANS / India eNews)