



Celebrating Krishna

THE MONSOON CHAPTER 10





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SUN 23 – SUN 30 AUGUST 2015 | 11AM-8PM
CLOSED ON 29 AUG FOR RAKSHABANDHAN

ALLIANCE FRANCAISE DE DELHI
72 LODHI ESTATE, NEW DELHI -110003

themonsoonfestival.com

RED EARTH





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Red Earth
www.redearthindia.com
facebook.com/redearthindia
himanshu@redearthindia.com
Tel: 91-11-41671100



Celebrating Krishna: The Monsoon Chapter 10
presents an eclectic collection featuring
contemporary, and traditional artists
in an attempt to uncover the expansive visuality of the blue god.

20th c. and contemporary Pichvai art of Nathdwara, Rajasthan

Cheriyal miniature art from Telangana

20th century calendar art from the Bharany collection

Sanjhi art from Vrindavan by Sumit Goswami

Photography, painting, sculpture and graphic art by
contemporary artists:

ABHINAV GOSWAMI

BIBHU PATTANAIK

GAGAN VIJ

JAGANNATH PANDA

JYOTI BHATT

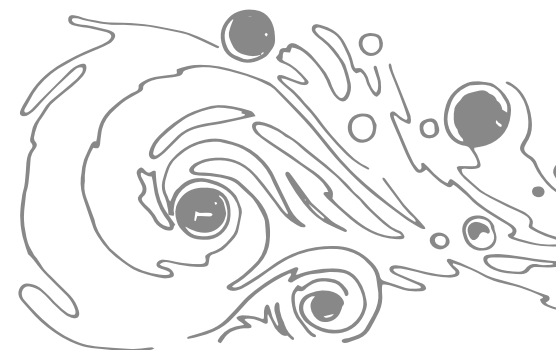
MANDIRA SHARMA

MANISHA PAREKH

RAGHU RAI

SMRUTHI GARGI ESHWAR

WASWO X. WASWO





Curatorial Ideas...

Krishna was born on a dark stormy monsoon night, the skies poured torrential rains on the earth and Vasudev waded through a roaring Yamuna to reach Krishna to Nand. Ever since then, his life intersects repeatedly with the monsoon. When still a child, he lifted Mount Govardhan with one finger to save the villagers from the wrath of the god of weather, Indra, who had unleashed the terrible forces of nature on the Brajvasis since (on the insistence of Krishna) they had stopped paying homage to him, and were paying their respects to mount Govardhan instead. Other childhood stories relate his life to ecology, and conservation: he controlled the Kaliya Naag, an arrogant, venomous snake who was polluting the Yamuna. He killed demons that made the earth unfit, swallowed forest fires – and through his interventions made earth habitable and beautiful again. As a youth, Krishna, again romances the Monsoon in various ways; either flitting around Braj with his favourite companions – peacocks; or indulging in Sawan raas leelas with the gopis; or making the Gopis pine for him in the season of love. His very being epitomises harmony with the elements. There is no doubt that Krishna is the ultimate Monsoon man, his life symbolically connected with the forces of nature so deeply – hence in its tenth celebratory year, The Monsoon Festival celebrates the maker of the universe, the fountain of creativity, and humbly attempts to represent him who can never be represented in entirety.

The exhibition brings together traditional, folk, and popular idioms of painting with the work of leading contemporary artists

- working in the mediums of painting, photography, sculpture, print-making and graphic art.

It presents a darshan of the various forms of Krishna - across time, space and artistic styles - from the vigraha of Shrinathji as seen in Nathdwara pichvais to the Rath-yatra of Jagannath; from the Vishnu Dasavatara iconography to the modern reincarnation of Krishna - Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Each artist contributes to our understanding of this divine personage through their depiction of his various forms, manifestations, stories, and concepts. We also hope to open unusual ways of imagining Krishna : moving beyond just the immediate, and direct representations; we delve into the abstract and natural representations of Krishna, like his association with colour, or natural phenomenon like the Yamuna river, Govardhan hill, and flora and fauna.

Starting on an abstract footing, Raghu Rai's female nude, a lotus leaf - introduces us to one of the sacred emblems of the lord. Manisha Parekh's ink drawings hint at defining him purely through colour and abstract forms - an indigo presence.

The art of Pichvai painting is almost extinct in the temple town of Nathdwara, with only very few artists left practising this art form. We have sourced some rare finds from Nathdwara, very often from studios that no longer make these images, or have started producing cheaper, more popular variants of the Pichvai form. The works are from 20th c. and some more recent, but all



reflective of the traditional idiom of Nathdwara, unlike the more commercial ateliers of Udaipur, Kishangarh and Jaipur where these works are largely being made today. While the Pichvais give us a glimpse of the various manoraths of Shrinathji, a set of exquisite watercolours from a Pichvai artist portray the social aspect of the temple sewa.

Raghu Rai's iconic work *Flute Player* has been etched in our memories since decades, and we included it in this project to highlight how even the figure of the flute player can evoke the magic of the divine flautist. Rai's rendition of Hindustani maestro Hariprasad Chaurasia adds to the rasa.

Jagannath Panda's *Free Fall* shows us a glimpse of a valiant Krishna killing Kamsa. The image is rendered in his typical style, following a contemporary vocabulary of fracture, erasure and the coming together of diverse pictorial ideas. Bibhu Pattanaik brings in the sacred geography of Shri-Kshetra Jagannath Puri, and the churning of *Mahodadhi*. A re-imagination of the Dasavatara compliments this work. Jyoti Bhatt, the legendary print-maker, culls imagery from his prolific oeuvre into a new set of works executed for the exhibition.

Waswo X Waswo's *New Myths*, a set of hand-painted photographs, merge the human and divine and make us smile - a scene of Krishna eating potato chips is bound to add some humour! Smruthi Gargi Eswar etches classic Krishna themes in the graphic art medium - a contemporary representation of Chir-haran shows Krishna eyeing the gopis with binoculars. The Pichvai-inspired *Hiding Seeking* presents yet another unusual way of representing the blue one.

Abhinav Goswami, a young Vrindavan temple priest is also

an accomplished photo-artist. From his archive of life in Braj, we glimpse at scenes of pilgrims in Vrindavan and experience Krishna through their movements. The iconic visage of Bansi-baba with his elaborate tilak makes a haunting image.

We then celebrate Shyam in yet another traditional art form - Cheriya miniatures from Telangana. A scroll illustrates his life story from birth to death, highlighting various endearing leelas and episodes. Sculptor Gagan Vij goes back to the tradition of classical bronzes and forms his Krishna in the magnificent dancing pose. A precious collection of 20th c. calendar art paintings adds to our understanding of how Krishna is imaged in popular art. Featured prominently is Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the 16th c. reincarnation of Krishna.

The Sanjhi art tradition of floor decorations (and later stencils) has been reinterpreted by Sumit Goswami, yet another temple priest from Vrindavan, who calls the arts into action in this special sewa.

Panda's paper works juxtapose Krishna calendar art romanticising the garden and pastoral landscape, with the harsh realities of Gurgaon - skyscrapers and water-shortage. Mandira Sharma presents a work inspired by the graphic novel idiom, in which Krishna (alluding to a super-hero) heals the world of its rampant urban problems.

May this leela live on forever, as we know it will...

Radhe radhe,

Himanshu Verma (Curator)
Sawan 2072

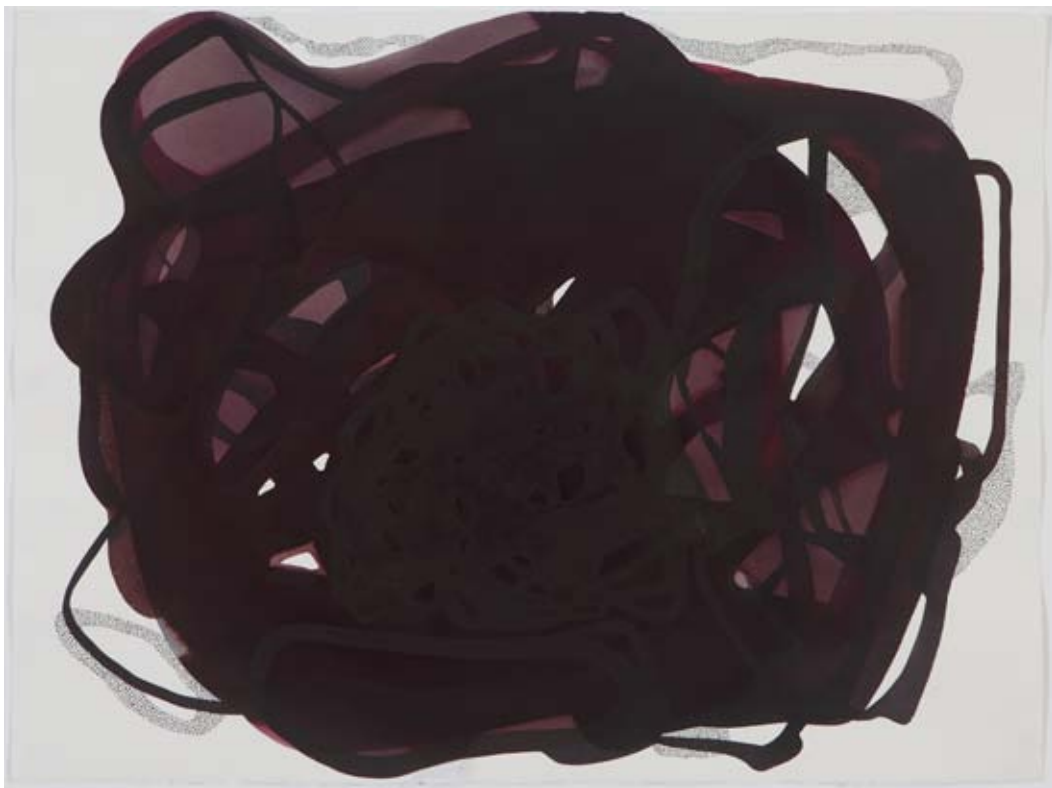




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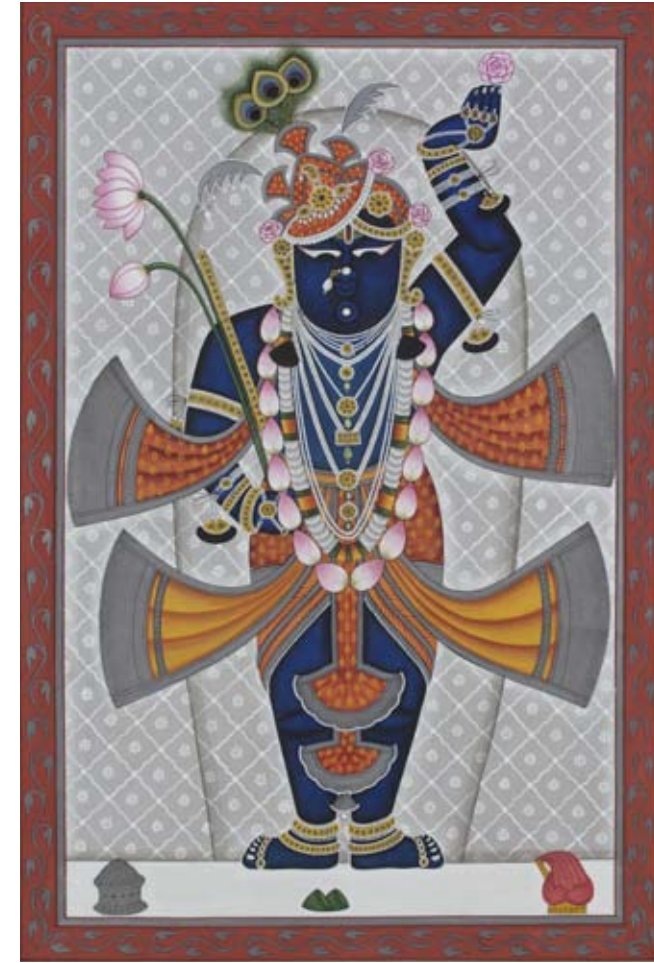
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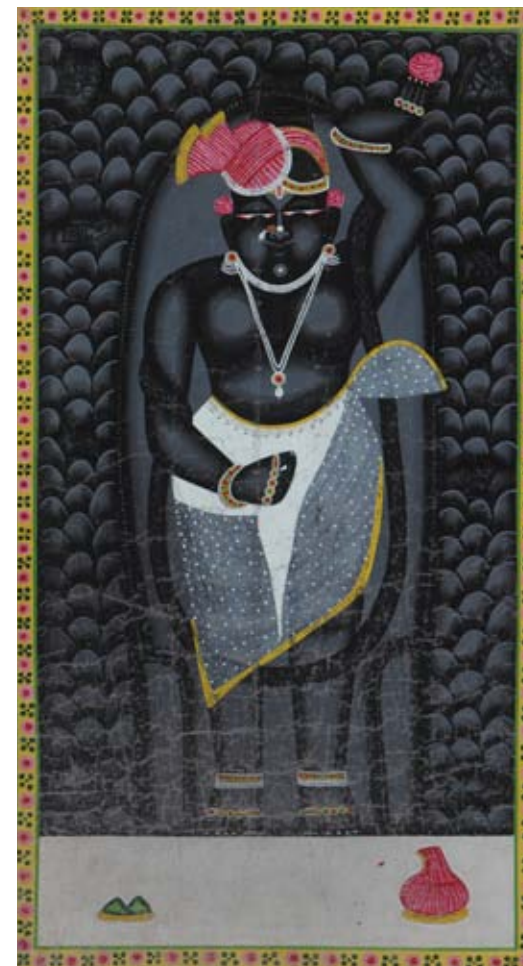
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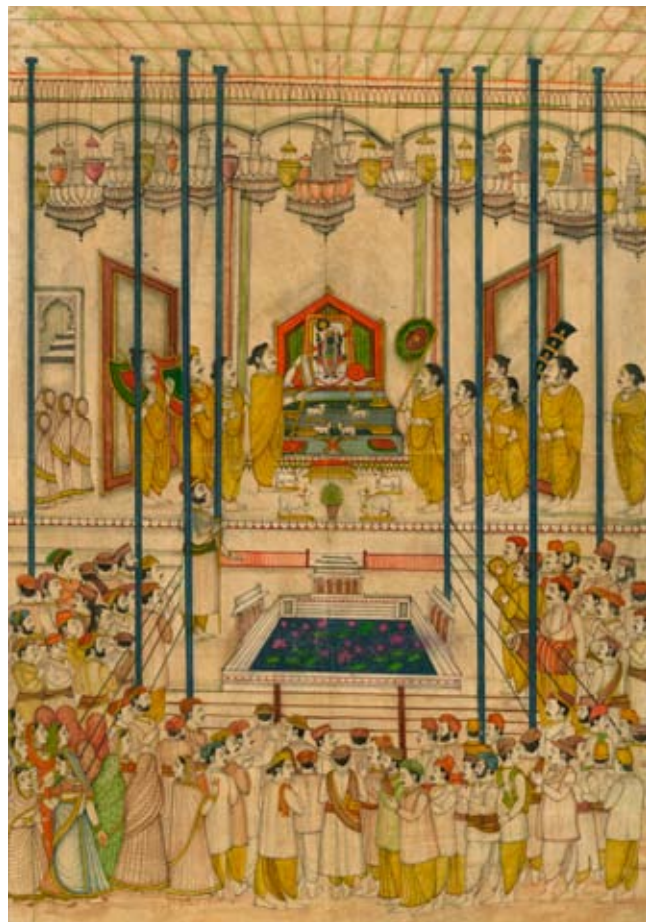


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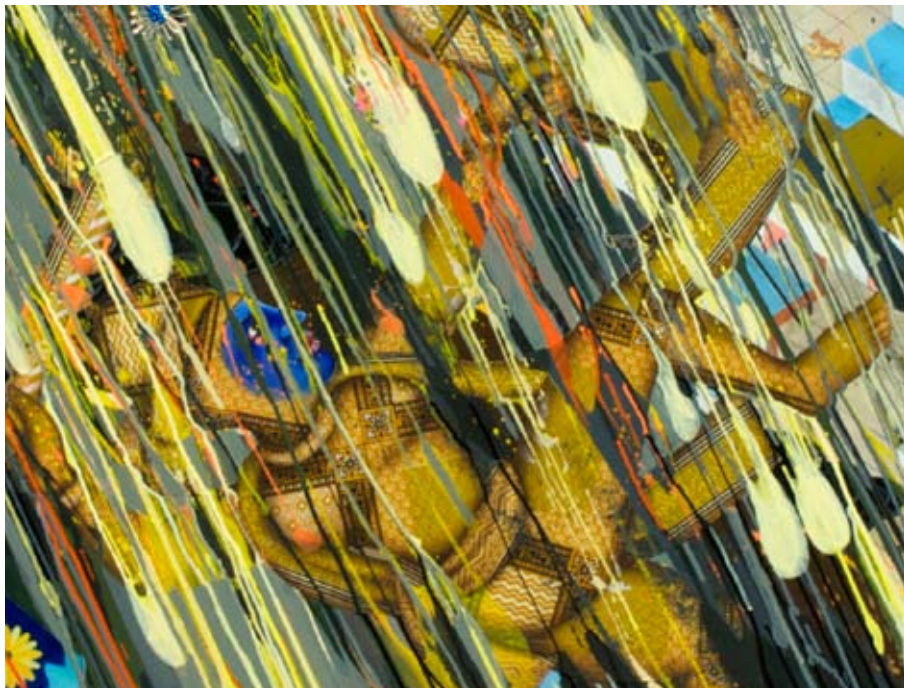
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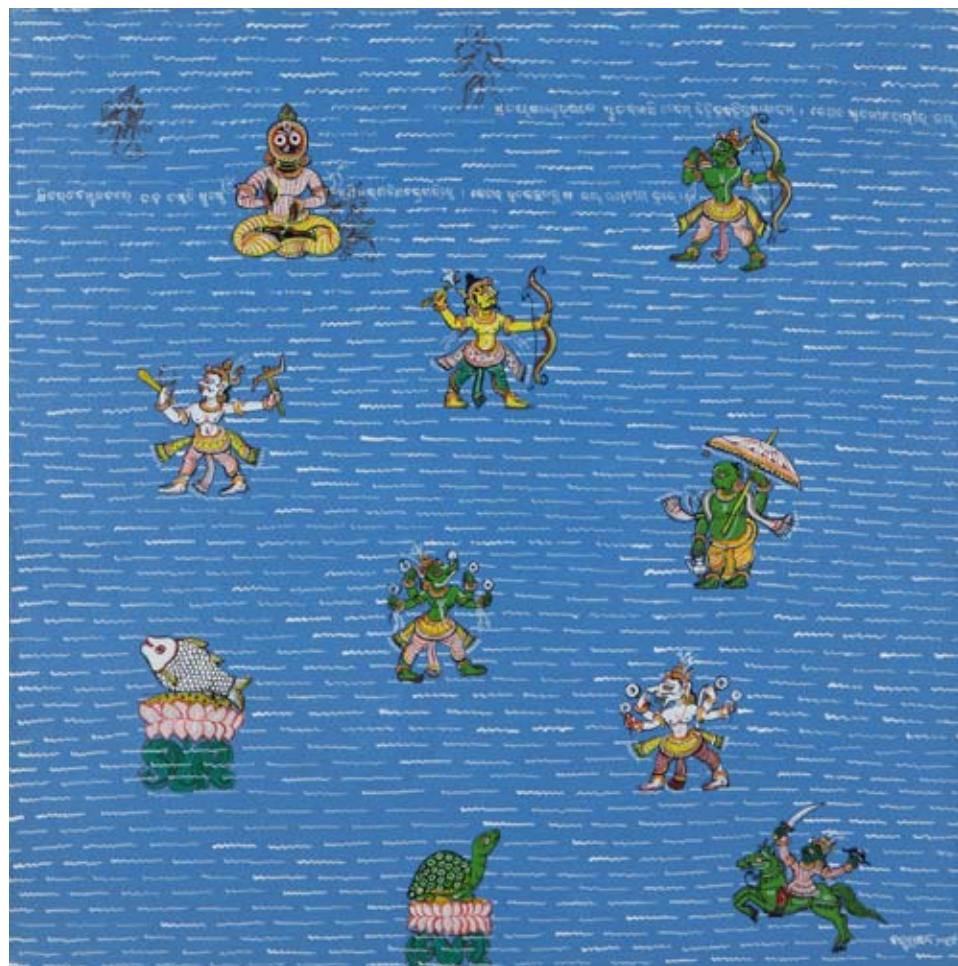
















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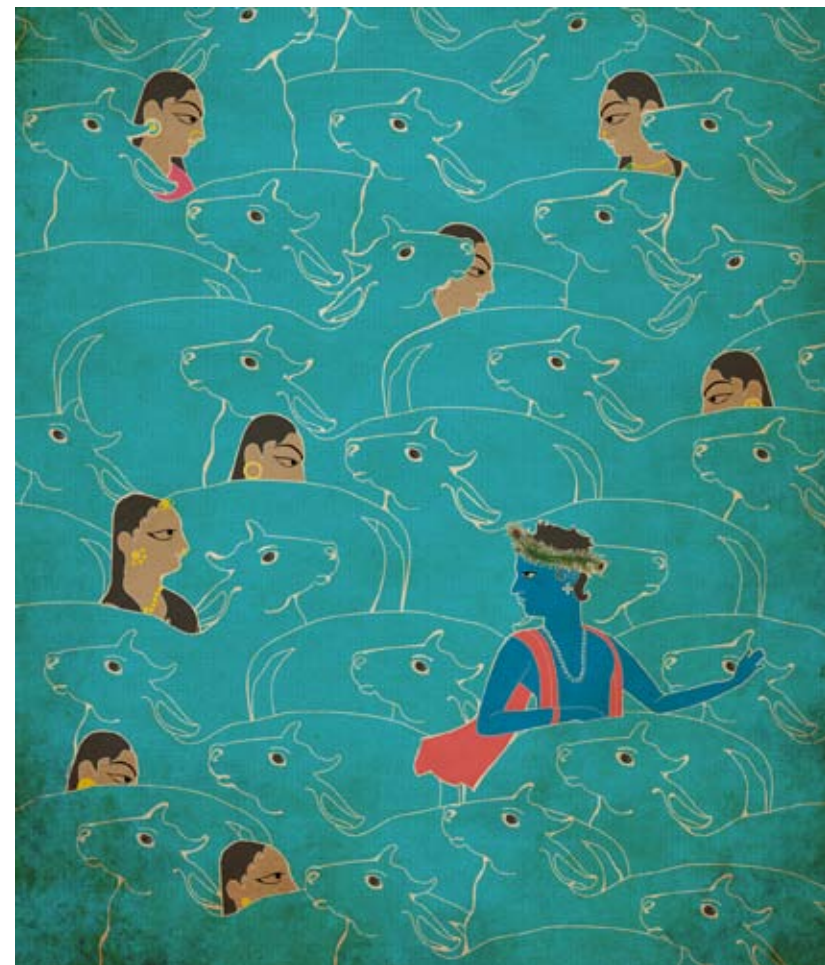
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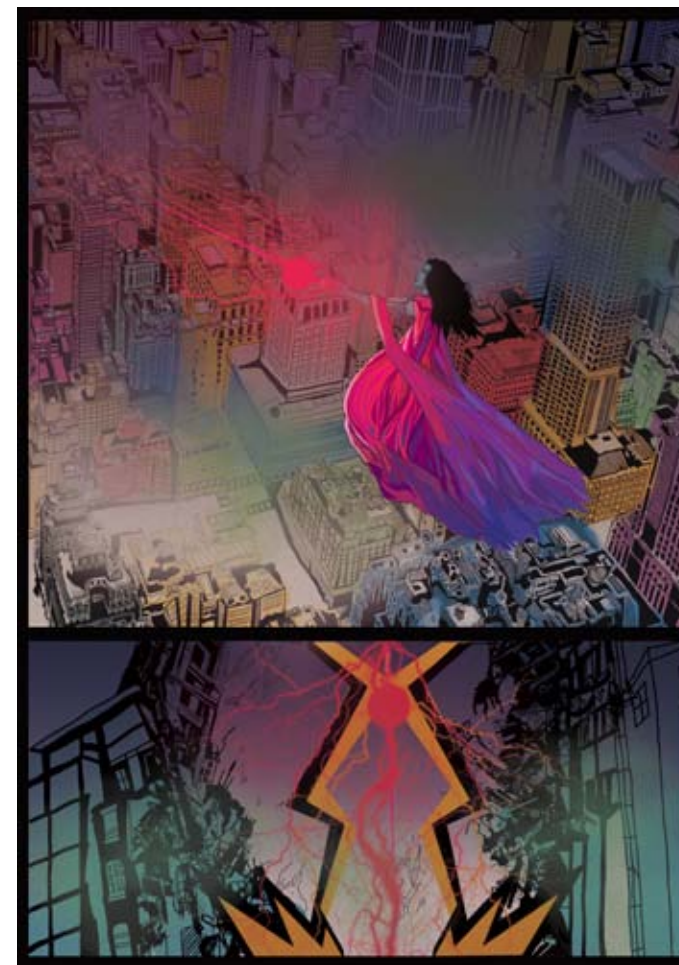
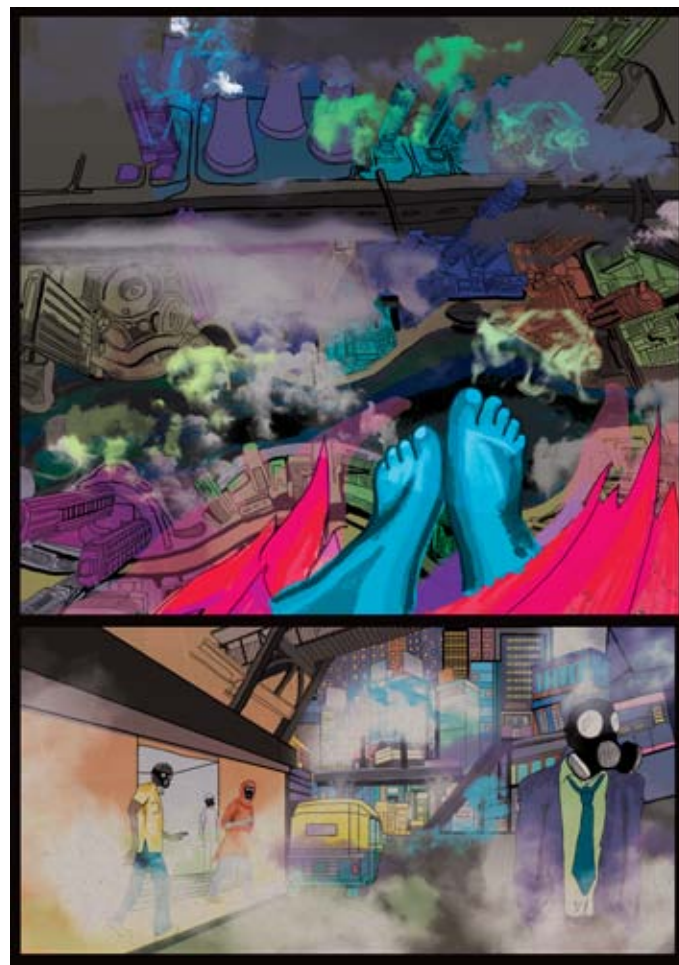




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Art Details

1. Raghu Rai; Female Nude: Lotus Leaf; Digital print on photo rag pearl archival paper; 14 x 20"; 1975
- 2-4. Manisha Parekh; Indigo Cloud 1,2, and 3; Ink and watercolour on arches paper; 22x30" each; 2015
5. Shrinathji Pichvai; painting on cloth; 34 x 23"
6. Shrinathji Pichvai; Utsav Swaroop; painting on cloth; 56 x 37.75"
7. Shrinathji Pichvai; Sharad Poornima; painting on cloth; 57 x 34.5"
8. Shrinathji Pichvai; Gopashthami; painting on cloth; 67.5 x 46"
9. Shrinathji Pichvai; Annakut; painting on cloth; 54 x 34"
10. Shrinathji Pichvai; Diwali Annakut Sewa; painting on cloth; 46.5 x 29.75"
11. Shrinathji Pichvai; painting on cloth; 37 x 24.75"
12. Shrinathji Pichvai; painting on cloth; 47.75 x 29 inches
13. Shrinathji Pichvai; painting on cloth; 58.5 x 34.25"
14. Shrinathji Pichvai; painting on cloth; 56.5 x 31.25"
15. Birth of Shri Vallabhacharya; painting on cloth; 32 x 24.75 inches
- 16-23. Shrinathji Watercolours; watercolour on paper; Approximate size: 23.5 x 15.5" each (variable)
24. Raghu Rai; Pandit Hariprasad Chaurasia; Digital print on photo rag pearl archival paper; 20 x 30"; 1988; Ed. 7/10
25. Raghu Rai; Flute Player (Varanasi); Digital print on photo rag pearl archival paper; 20 x 30"; 2002
26. Jagannath Panda; Free Fall II; Acrylic, fabric, glue on canvas with wooden frame; 73x97"; 2013
27. Bibhu Pattanaik; Mahodadhi; Acrylic on canvas; 71 x 58"; 2015
28. Bibhu Pattanaik; Homage to Sri Jayadeva; Acrylic on canvas; 24 x 24"; 2015
29. Jyoti Bhatt; Gokul Malhar; Archival Inkjet; 20x24"; 2015; Edition of 10
30. Jyoti Bhatt; Kalindi Malhar (Naag Prabandh); Archival Inkjet and acrylic paint; 20x24"; 2015; Edition of 10
- 31-33. Waswo X. Waswo; New Myths 1, 2 & 3; Archival hand-coloured photo; 20 x 30"; 2009 ; Ed. 1/2 (2 APs)
34. Smruthi Gargi Eswar; The Lotus Bath; K3 pigment print on Hahnemuhle paper; 43 X 23.9"; 2015; Ed. 1/5 (2 APs)

35. Smruthi Gargi Eswar; Hiding and Seeking; K3 pigment print on Hahnemuhle paper; 35 X 29.7"; 2015; Ed. 1/5 (2 APs)

36-39. Abhinav Goswami; Untitled; Digital print on archival paper; 60 x 40" each; Edition of 4+1 AP

40. Krishna Katha (Cheriyal Miniature); Pigments on canvas cloth; 73 x 34" ; 2015

41. Krishna Janam (Cheriyal Miniature); Pigments on canvas cloth; 17 x 23" ; 2008

42. Govardhan Leela (Cheriyal Miniature); Pigments on canvas cloth; 17 x 23" ; 2008

43. Kaliya Mardan (Cheriyal Miniature); Pigments on canvas cloth; 17 x 23" ; 2008

44. Gagan Vij; Mayura; Copper, Blue Patina (Base: mild steel, aluminium); 32 h x 23 w x 10" d; Base: 36 h x 15 x 15" d

45-47. Calendar Art works from the Bharany collection; Acrylic on paper; Size variable, 20th c.

48. Sumit Goswami; Radha Raman; Oil on board; 18x28"; 2015

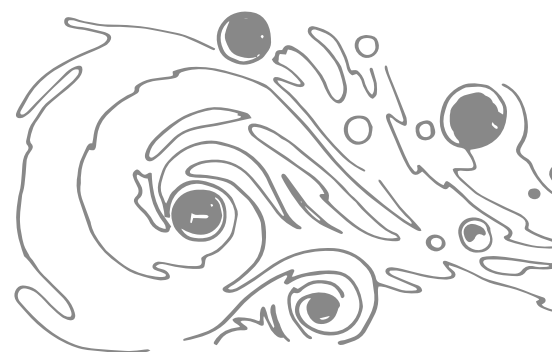
49. Sumit Goswami; Sanjhi; Water colour on paper; 21x21"; 2014

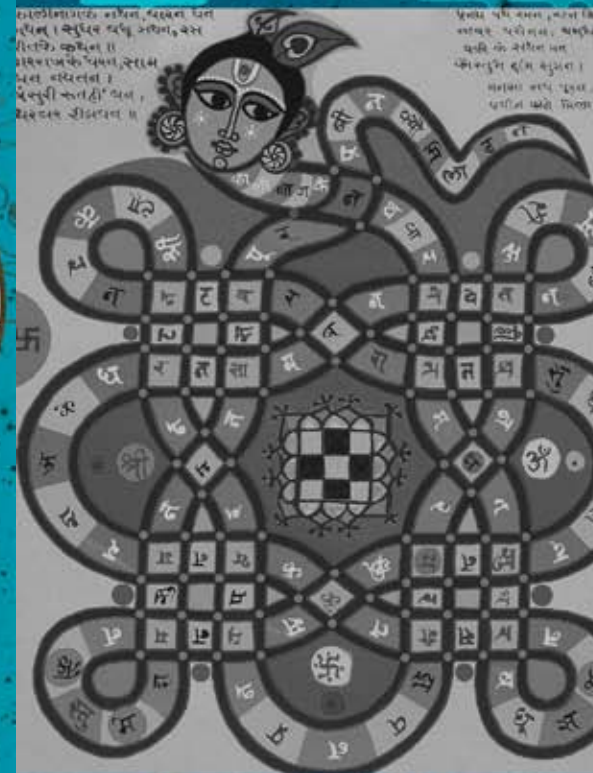
50. Sumit Goswami; Naag Leela; Water colour on paper; 24x24"; 2007

51-52. Jagannath Panda; Endless 1 and 2; Mixed media on paper; 30 x 23" each; 2011

53. Mandira Sharma; 2070; Digital print on archival paper; 4 panels of 15 x 22" each; Edition of 10

To enquire about works, contact himanshu@redearthindia.com / Tel: 91-11-41671100







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