



# diary

## INDIA INTERNATIONAL CENTRE

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July–August 2015

### The Colossus

**TALK: ROSALIND WILSON MEMORIAL LECTURE:**

*Between Nationalism and Internationalism: The Political Philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore*

**Speaker:** Dr. Ramachandra Guha

**Chair:** Mr. Soli J. Sorabjee

Organised by the Rosalind Wilson Memorial Trust  
28 July

Rabindranath Tagore's political philosophy, shaped as it were by events global and domestic, was a theme that resonated with Dr. Ramachandra Guha's lecture to broaden the reach of Tagore.

Guha focused largely on the non-fiction writings of Tagore and his peregrinations across the globe, a quest borne more out of curiosity, unlike that of Gandhi, Nehru or Ambedkar that were taken to acquire an education. Tagore's journeys were those of a restless traveller keen to synthesise the East and the West.

Dr. Guha underscored three landmark events: the Swadeshi movement, the First World War and Gandhi's Non-cooperation. Tagore's reaction to *Swadeshi*, he said, could be best described as ambivalent, quoting a letter



written by Tagore where he says 'patriotism cannot be our final spiritual shelter', and in an essay criticising the tendency of *Swadeshi* to become sectarian, xenophobic and complacent.

Tagore's journeys to Japan and the United States in 1916 were undertaken to exhort them to carve

a path different from Europe, for Japan to emulate the best of the West, and for the USA to be a non-colonial, disinterested global player. However, his pleas fell on deaf ears.

Gandhi's call for Non-cooperation in 1921, Guha recounted, was considered cynically by Tagore. His reaction to Gandhi's essay on the evils of English education led to Gandhi's oft-quoted remark about letting all winds blow by saying, 'I hope I am as great a believer in free air as the great poet is.'

Dr. Guha concluded his lecture by alluding to Tagore's beliefs in constructive criticism, and his faith that Europe's notions of justice and liberty could be used as an ally against Europe itself. Tagore's words written more than 100 years ago are germane, as no system has a monopoly over vice or virtue and could be addressed to the bigots and xenophobes of today.

■ AJAY JAISINGHANI



## Demographic Drivers and the Economy

**TALK:** DR. DURGABAI DESHMUKH MEMORIAL  
**LECTURE 2015:** *Demographic Drivers of Economic Growth: Role of Human Capital*  
**Speaker:** Professor Abhijit Sen  
**Chair:** Mr. Soli J. Sorabjee  
 Collaboration: Council for Social Development  
 15 July

Professor Abhijit Sen's lecture examined the relationship between demography and economics at a time when India remains behind many of its peers in similar stages of development, in the fields of education and health. He provided an overview of how economists looked at demography and human capital to answer why growth in per capita income varied across countries and where India currently stood—not only with regard to the demographic transition, but also to the shift of labour away from agriculture.

Not only have the achievements of the 11th Five-Year Plan (2007–12) been considerably short of target, but the actual expenditure under the 12th Plan (2012–17) has also been much below planned targets, making it impossible to match the expenditure-outlay ratio of even the 11th Plan. It would require much effort and resources than was being expended to make up for shortfalls in reasonable time.

Besides, following higher devolution of taxes by the 14th Finance Commission, the current central government has lowered its spending on the social sector. And, in unveiling some of the ambitious infrastructure plans and the 'Make in India' campaign, the government has shown a greater emphasis on the formation of physical capital, rather than human capital.

Interestingly, the Centre, in a shift of emphasis, has cited the opportunities and compulsions associated with the demographic dividend that India is in a position to harness—the fact that its percentage of the working-age population is rapidly increasing.

■ REETESH ANAND

## 20th Annual Prem Bhatia Memorial Lecture

**TALK:** *India's Aborted Transitions*  
**Speaker:** Dr. Pratap Bhanu Mehta  
**Chair:** Dr. Dipankar Gupta  
 Collaboration: Prem Bhatia Memorial Trust  
 11 August

Dr. Mehta dwelt on the challenges India faces as it comes out of the 'waiting room of history' and attempts its transitions in the social, economic and political fields. He said that the initial euphoria generated with the unleashing of economic reform (1991) appeared to be petering out. He further speculated whether the initial gains, too, were a mere 'flash in the pan', or the growing sense of foreboding justified.

The four transition areas he examined were the concept of social 'tolerance', the economy, the creation of a welfare state and the need to align the national with global economy.

Our traditional sequestered concept of 'tolerance', based on individual liberties and accommodating diversity in all walks of life, was at risk of being destroyed. Instead of a liberal democracy, we find individual liberties being pushed under the yoke of group and community identities (*khap panchayats, ghar wapasi*) that could lead to a regressive social climate.

After the 1991 economic liberalisation, the State's role was curbed and market forces prevailed. However, in 2011, we find 70 per cent of the economy still does not have a credible pricing mechanism.

Similarly, attempts to create a welfare state by distributing 'freebies' to selected sections of society invites failure to establish mechanisms that would usher in a true model of equity. It was concluded that today all sections of society need introspection. A rusty state machinery, and no determined will or intention to change, will no longer do.

■ SIDDHARTH KAK

## Agrasen Ki Sena

TALK: *Lost Culinary Gems: The Bania Repertoire*

Speakers: Dr. Pushpesh Pant, Dr. Babso Kanwar

4 July

Misrani women began the evening with songs that in the past have accompanied auspicious occasions. This was followed by an introductory appetiser by Pushpesh Pant, who ranged far and wide, footloose at times, from tracing the origins of the Vaishya community in Vedic periods, to references in the epic *Mahabharata*, to the patronage of arts and philanthropic work supported by eminent Bania families. Surekha Narain followed with a brief, virtual tour of some *havelis* and Agrasen ki Baoli.

O.P. Jain, a pillar of the community, shared fascinating culinary and cultural memories from the days of his adolescence, inspiring Dr. Y. S. Qureshi to contribute his recollection of life lived harmoniously in the Walled

City until the influx of the Punjabi refugees post-Partition. His statement that the true inheritors to Delhi's culture are only those whose families have lived in the city since the foundation of Shahjahanabad, or were born here before 1947, heated up the evening further, with inputs that even the Banias and Muslims immigrated from elsewhere and have all contributed to its composite culture.

Babso Kanwar, co-curator of the special dinner that followed the talk, also emphasised the multi-layered *paratha*-like inheritance of Delhi. Listeners were enthralled with details of her research, and the infectious enthusiasm exuded by Abhilash Agarwal, Poonam Goila, Chitra Chaudhry and Shuchi Rastogi, who shared traditions and recipes from their homes. A lively discussion had to be nipped in the bud to enable those who were proceeding to dine in the first seating to enjoy their food as it reached the table hot from the kitchen.

■ BABSOKANWAR

## Beyond Borders

TALK: *Salaam Baguette*

Speakers: Mr. Kazem Samendhari and Mr. Cedric Houze of L'Opera Patisserie Boulangerie

Guest of Honour: H.E. Mr. Francois Richier, Ambassador of France

Chair: Mr. K.V. Rajan, 11 July

'Bread is the symbol of peace and sharing', says a well-known baker in France. The baguette, like the Eiffel Tower, has become an icon of France. Although no one is sure how the baguette originated, it is commonly believed to have taken its present size and shape in the early 1920s. Initially meant for the aristocracy, it soon reached the common people who would buy it once a week to have it soaked in sauce. It has now become the *pain egalitaire*, or the egalitarian bread. With large-scale production, this bread soon started to lose its quality. The French government stepped in, and in 1993 made it mandatory for all bakeries and restaurants to serve it freshly made.

James Baldwin said that a civilisation should be judged by the bread it made. France, with its 26 different kinds of bread, then, stands a good chance of being judged highly civilised. The delectable croissant, made by



Parisian bakers to honour Queen Marie Antoinette, is a staple breakfast item in many French homes. Indeed in France, even McDonalds has now been forced to add baguette sandwiches to its menu.

The programme began with a short introduction to the history of French bread by François Richier. Kazem Samendhari explained how the baguette was made, and Cédric Houzé demonstrated how the baguette, the croissant and the *pain au chocolat* were made. After the theoretical inputs, L'Opéra treated the audience to some of its delightful breads and pastries.

■ SWATI DASGUPTA

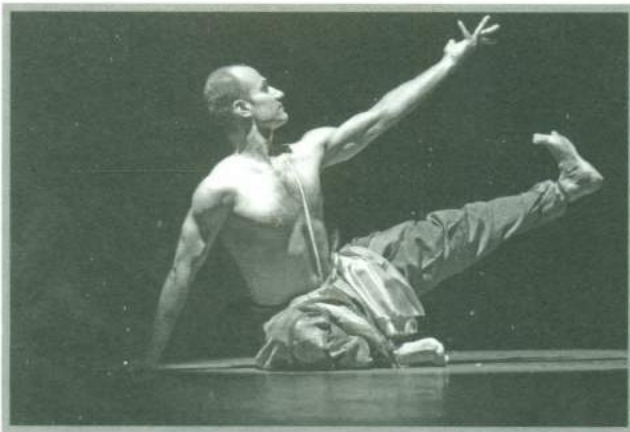
## Bharatanatyam

MOONSOON FESTIVAL OF DANCE: *Purushaakaram: The Male in Bharatanatyam*

Artists: Praveen Kumar; Renjith Babu; S. Vijay Kumar; Lokesh Bhardwaj  
16–17 July

The unprecedented audience response to the all-male two-day Purushaakaram festival would seem to indicate that after viewing a surfeit of female pining/rejoicing *nayikas* in the solo format, experiencing male energy in Bharatanatyam solo proved a welcome change. It was revealing how aptly the strong geometry of the Bharatanatyam technique sits on the male physique. Groomed in restrained sartorial elegance, Praveen Kumar's varied, intelligently designed recital was given a male perspective. Harikeshanallur Mutiah Bhagavata's *Daru Varnam*—*Mate Malayadhvaja Pandya Sanjate in Kamas* as centrepiece visualised Devi manifestations encompassing polarised tones: benign and ferociously evil-vanquishing. The dancer's *teermanams* showed excellent movement profile with immaculate rhythm. If the *Mukhari Padam*—*Ososi*—portrayed the disillusioned *nayaka*, setting out for Kashi on discovering the worthlessness of his paramour, the *Abhogi Devarnama*, instead of the conventional mother Yashoda/Krishna dialogue, saw the father persuading prankster Krishna to play indoors.

Also trained under C.V. Chandrasekhar, Renjith Babu's Bharatanatyam was differently toned—showing the individual in dance. Without the *mritta* aplomb of Praveen, Renjith's Bharatanatyam is softer, the Kalakshetra training showing in the clean dance lines and articulated *araimandi*. His choice of purely devotional items, invoking Nataraja, evoked a monochromatic



mood. The centrepiece, *Papanasam Sivam Natakuranji Varnam*, addressed to Nataraja with the pleading devotion needed lacings of a sharper sense of urgency and wonder, for better impact. The leg stretches and dance lines were good, despite occasionally faltering balance. The protagonist's tone of abject surrender and poor self-respect in *Varugalamo Ayya in Manji* from *Nandanar Charitram*, with the low-born devotee 'without merit of good deeds', begging for temple entry to feast his eyes on the dancing Lord's form, creates discomfort in today's viewer. The finale visualised the splendour of Nataraja's dance based on *Idadu Padam tooki aada in Raga Kamas*.

A disciple of Sujata Parameswaran, S. Vijay Kumar's lively Bharatanatyam sans gender inhibitions, revealed unselfconscious joy in movement, with excellent line and profile, finished leg and hand stretches and *araimandi*. But the interpretative enthusiasm needed expertise in stylised *abhinaya* variations, without *lokadharmi* realistic touches. The dancer's advantages were somewhat squandered by the sub-standard music, but his rhythm, offsetting soft with authoritative tones, had aesthetic gentleness in the toe-heel (*tattumettu*) sequences. After the *Madhyamawati* lyric, *Aadade Asangade Kanna*, imploring Krishna not to move or dance lest he attract the evil eye, the best of Vijaykumar as Hanuman was portrayed in *Kanden Kanden Seethaiyai* in Bageshri, from *Rama Natakam*, conveying to Rama the meeting with desolate Sita waiting to be rescued.

A senior, committed disciple of Justin McCarthy, Lokesh Bhardwaj's Bharatanatyam, with advancing Modern Dance/Yoga involvement, has undergone a subtle change in how the dancer moves. And his unconventional recital based on *keertanam(s)* more associated with Carnatic music concerts became, with a fine set of accompanists, more like a music concert. Justin's selection challenged choreographic abilities. Neither Muttuswamy Dikshitar's *Kamboji kriti 'Kailasa Nathena Samrakshita...'* nor a Tyagaraja *Pancharatna kriti, 'Endaro mahanubhavulu'* in *Sri Ragam*, with the composer paying homage to the many unsung *bhaktas* who, through *raga* and *tala*, have sung the Lord's praises nor Tyagaraja's *Paramaatmudu veligemucbata baaga telusukoore* in *Vagadbeeshwari raga*, dealing with the inner being, lend themselves to visual imagery. The rhythmic punctuation links with unorthodox finishing vowels were competently rendered.

■ LEELA VENKATARAMAN

## Australian Montage

**FILM FESTIVAL:** *Stories from Australia: A Festival of Award Winning Films*

**Introductions by** Ms. Jacqui Park; Mr. Pat Fiske; Mr. Martin Butler

**Discussants:** Mr. Pat Fiske; Mr. Martin Butler; Ms. Liz Jackman; Ms. Safina Uberoi and others

**Collaboration:** The Walkley Foundation  
23–25 July

Australian television networks have a healthy tradition of showing well-crafted, feature-length documentaries on important social issues. Eight films that have won the prestigious Walkley Documentary Award were shown at the IIC in July. Four of them are reviewed here.

*Love Marriage in Kabul* (Pat Fiske, Amin Palangi, 2014) is a witty look at the attempts of a gauche young man in Kabul, working in a home for orphans of the senseless war in Afghanistan between the Taliban and the American forces, in love with a shy, protected girl. The lad's efforts are ultimately rewarded when he marries his beloved, but not before performing the difficult feat of finding a bride for her brother! It is shot energetically and provides interesting insights into contemporary Afghan society ravaged by war and yet clinging to traditional social values.



*Scarlet Road* (Catherine Scott, Pat Fiske, 2011) was by far the most thought-provoking work in the selection. It explores the life of Rachel Wotton, a sex-worker from New South Wales, who caters to the emotional needs of men with disabilities. Without being in any way sensational or judgemental, it shows Rachel's life with great empathy and understanding; she emerges as a truly



exceptional person—deeply sensitive, understanding and humane. The film probes into the very nature of political and hence social democracy and the freedom of choice that a caring, perceptive individual must have.

*Jabbed: Love, Fear and Vaccines* (Sonya Pemberton, 2013), gives a detailed overview of various vaccines that have come to be an integral part of modern life, and considered absolutely essential in protecting children from dreaded diseases such as small pox, diphtheria, polio, and others. It examines the prejudices of people of various nationalities against having their children vaccinated and then living to rue the day. Two stories are intercut with the discoveries of life-saving vaccines, including the initial, inevitably extremely costly failures resulting in deaths, and worse, irreversible damage to

human lives. The first, an unvaccinated baby boy of immigrant Afghan parents, just manages to survive an almost murderous attack of diphtheria, thanks to expert, devoted medical care provided in Australia; the second is of a young English nurse who successfully fights a prolonged battle against

measles, not having been vaccinated in childhood.

*The Sunnyboy* (Kaye Harrison, 2013) is a moving story about Jeremy Oxley, lead guitarist of The Sunny Boys, once the leading pop group in Australia, and his heroic struggle against schizophrenia.

■ PARTHA CHATTERJEE

## Perspectives Aged Eleven

**FILMS:** *Delhi at Eleven (My Lovely General Store; Why Not a Girl; My Funny Film; Children at Home)*

**Produced by** Mr. David MacDougall (The Childhood and Modernity Project), 8 July

The screening of *Delhi at Eleven* was a culmination of a journey begun two years ago.

Four films made by 11-year-olds gave us an insight into the lives and perspectives of children from families with limited resources.

The children picked subjects of their choice and were taught basic camera skills, after which they started filming life around them. Some filmed it from a distance; some were a part of their own perspectives; and some were fascinated by life around them.

These films must be viewed with the knowledge that they are both academic inquiry and research work. This

project gives us an insight into the children's thought processes and how they are influenced by society and surroundings, what attracts and impacts them, and the factors which influence their choices, preferences and tastes. It does not necessarily resolve anything, but does provide us with data that must be examined by policy-makers and sociologists.

The children who were then behind the camera are now 13–14-years-old, and when they saw their younger self on screen, some were not very comfortable. Nevertheless, because their unprejudiced, younger selves put forth such ideas and captured scenes that were unbiased, the films become relevant.

The audience was a mixed bag—IIC regulars and academic researchers, but some friends also strolled in. My observation was that only a few understood the point of the study and the workshop. The films were well received and touched everyone as they were unique.

■ KAJRI AKHTAR

## Path-breaking Elections

**BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP :** 2014 : *The Election That Changed India* by Rajdeep Sardesai (Penguin, 2014)

**Panellists:** Dr. Yogendra Yadav; Mr. Nalin Kohli; Mr. Manish Tewari

**Chair:** Dr. Dipankar Gupta, 21 August

The title wasn't quite right, nearly everybody agreed, with even author Rajdeep Sardesai volunteering he wasn't part of the christening. Like many other titles, it is an attention-grabber, and Sardesai himself remembered the impact of polls in 1952 and in 1977, when the Congress first learned the meaning of defeat. There was near unanimity amongst the discussants about 2014, a cracking good effort and also, a path-breaker. India's biggest *tamasha* hasn't quite excited too many scholars, social scientists or even serious journalists, one exception being Myron Weiner's book on the 1980 parliamentary polls.

Whether it changed India or not, it certainly changed elections in India, booth-level overseeing from the party war-rooms (*panna pramukhs* were appointed by the BJP, said Sardesai) and the use of technology being two major developments. Still, 2014 was all about Narendra Modi, said Yogendra Yadav, voters trusting him to fill

the leadership vacuum of a decade and helping them through an 'identity crisis'. Assessing the first quarter of the Modi era, Yadav spoke of creeping authoritarianism, the overtly pro-business policies and the threat of communal tensions, points made by Manish Tewari.

Tewari called 2014 a victory for corporate India and lamented that Modi had shrunk the liberal spaces, whether it was the right to privacy or LGBT issues. Importantly, he admitted to his party's failures, particularly the mishandling of the economy and the inability to respond to charges of corruption by the Comptroller and Auditor General.

Nalin Kohli spoke of Modi's star-quality and his energy, the confident whispers of a BJP sweep during the campaign among journalists, and the way the BJP successfully gave the Westminster-type election an American twist, knowing that the Modi vs. Rahul Gandhi battle in 2014 could have had only one winner.

Dipankar Gupta, a distinguished author, had the last word. After Sardesai's admission that he wrote 2014 in four months because he was between jobs, he said, almost astonished: 'He had nothing to do. So, he wrote a book? That's rich!'

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## The Memory and the Land

EXHIBITION: *Inside*

Artists: Ms. Luz Blanco and Mr. Ludovic Bernhardt  
11–24 July

The obscure and the blurred are common undertones for artists Luz Blanco and Ludovic Bernhardt. Only, they treat them in ways that can't be more unlike each other. For Luz Blanco, it is memory, which in itself is abstract, while for Ludovic Bernhardt, it is the most physical of things—the land—that is revealed through lines and dots, open to change and a variety of readings.

Luz Blanco's stippled, pixellated drawings, sometimes in the form of a series of tiny drawings or as scrolls with sparse, graphic compositions have references and citations from films, photography, travel, and most significantly, memories. The slow, processed method of working with pixels, dots and stipples aids the process of

pulling in slowly from one's past, the boundless resource for an artist. A scroll is not what one might think of whilst viewing Blanco's work and the skills employed to make them. But in a friendship of opposites, the geometric, strictly-placed pixels lend themselves to long, rolling panels.

Ludovic Bernhardt's drawings are like anti-maps—maps viewed as images that are subject to interpretations. The large pixels reveal more than they hide, contrasting with the size of the paper, the wall and then finding their way into a set of artist books, entitled *Global Zoviet Atlas 1 & 2*. What he reveals—also quietly political at every instance, painterly without painting at all, like the series of works based on the various lakes in India—is his love and wistfulness for the land. Global citizens like Garry Davis would have been pleased.

■ NITYAN UNNIKRIISHNAN

## Creating Illusions

EXHIBITION: *Flight to Freedom: Harmony through Synthesis*

An exhibition of Chigiri-e paper art

Artist: Mr. Jyotirmoy Ray  
17–23 July

Far from the inspired whimsy of Nandlal Bose's collages of scraps of paper, far from the jewel-like architectonics of Farhan Mujib and the vibrant space that Shakila creates, visitors witnessed a show of charm and quiet craftsmanship. Composed of over 50 works, mostly a mode of catharsis for an 82-year old that surfaced at the time of his wife's terminal illness, here was a stylised craft of collage-making that, breaking free of its traditional Japanese origins, nevertheless remained a tribute to its aesthetic.

Chigiri-e has been used conventionally to represent bouquets, gardens and landscapes, with scraps of washi paper often creating the illusion of dream-like water colours. Over time, it has lent itself to abstract composition and other variations. While only one of Ray's works belonged to the more traditional genre of torn rather

than sheared paper, the use of a variety of printed and even glossy paper marked Ray's assembling of colours and forms. Flowers and butterflies, birds and trees, and landscapes all come together in works that handle negative space with great ease. The work does not aspire to craft new metaphors or achieve great abstraction. It chooses not to focus on disrepair, but to restore wholeness and serenity to the self via an aesthetic that resorts to familiar symbols, remaking one's world.



■ PUNAM ZUTSHI

## India's Coastal Heritage

**SEMINAR:** *Maritime Cultural Heritage of the Western Indian Ocean: Bridging the Gulf*

**Chairperson & Convenor:** Dr. Himanshu Prabha Ray

**Organised by** IIC-Asia Project

28-29 July

The IIC-Asia Project began in 1997, under the stewardship of Dr. Karan Singh, to highlight the historical and sociopolitical diversity across Asia. It continued under Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan with thematic work in archaeology, art history, literature and medicine, with international participation.

The workshop and seminar examined all aspects of the maritime cultural heritage of coastal western India and the Arabian Gulf, while highlighting the multi-layered coastal culture and heritage to both local communities in India and overseas, and their relevance to local and foreign interests.

The participants were members of the archaeology faculty of Stanford University, pre-historians and representatives from the Abu Dhabi Tourism and Cultural Authority, the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI); Deccan College, Pune; the Indian Naval Academy; the National Monuments Authority, among others.

Dr. Ray's welcome address touched on the scope of coastal cultural heritage projects in the context of the monuments along coastal India and across the seas in collaborative ventures. Mention was made of the significance of maritime interconnectedness, the importance of balancing the developmental pressures



of urban expansion on the overall coastal heritage architecture and institutions, the need to involve local communities in this process, and the impact of UNESCO-status and protection afforded to these heritage institutions. Mention was made of the importance of the excavations at the site of Berenike, Sukotra, the many languages whose ancient graffiti has been found, the incense markers and cave markings by the many residents and travellers to these places. Excavations at Patan were also described in some detail.

The first day featured Dr. Anjana Reddy L. (TCA Abu Dhabi), Dr. Andrew Bauer (Stanford University) and Dr. Rukshana Nanji (independent researcher), who presented findings from their study of the archaeological evidence: in particular, the ceramics, pottery and artefacts from archaeological sites in India and West Asia that have helped reconstruct the likely trade patterns between the regions. Dr. Abhijit Dandekar (Deccan College, Pune) presented findings of the excavations of the trade between India and West Asia, while Dr. Ashok Rajeshirke (independent researcher), spoke on the ancient navigational techniques of Arab and Portuguese sailors derived from a study of the Gujarati *pothis* preserved at the National Museum in New Delhi. Dr. M. Nambirajan (Director, ASI) drew attention to the ancient port towns of Naura, Tyndis, Muziris, Bacare and Balita along the coast of Kerala which have all disappeared, but remain as memorable references in the ancient literature of that time.

The following day, Dr. Lynn Meskell (Stanford University), Dr. Kirit L. Mankodi (Deccan College, Pune), Dr. Alaa El-Habashi (Consultant, UNESCO) and Dr. Janhwi Sharma (Director, ASI) spoke on the economic benefits and mutual advantages to India and UNESCO from the declaration of UNESCO heritage sites. Mention was made of the field work at world heritage sites, the quantitative and econometric work, the work of cultural economists and the manner in which economic interests impact voting patterns. It was concluded that much of the work done does not reflect the complex reality of the powerful lobbyists and interest groups, and the conflict of economic and political interest.

■ MEKHALA SENGUPTA

## Shakespeare Inspires Bollywood

TALK: *Bollywood Does Shakespeare*  
Illustrated Lecture by Dr. Pravina Cooper  
27 July

Shakespearean storylines have long inspired cinema across the world, with Shakespearean twists in local settings. *Hamlet* inspired Sohrab Modi to direct *Khoon ka Khoon* (1935) and Sanjay Leela Bhansali, too, sought inspiration from Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* for *Goliyon ki Raseela: Ram Leela* (2013). Another film maker inspired by Shakespearean tragedies is Vishal Bhardwaj. His trilogy—*Maqbool* (2003), *Omkaara* (2006) and *Haidar* (2014)—is his paean to Shakespeare's mastery.

Dr. Cooper has a Doctorate in Comparative World Literatures and Film Studies from UCLA and currently teaches comparative literature, theatre and film at the Comparative World Literatures Department, California

State University. She has written on cinema and contemporary television.

A lively discussion followed the visuals which examined the moral and ideological impact of bringing Shakespeare into Bhardwaj's three films. Macbeth's dilemma in the Scottish highlands differs from that faced by Maqbool in the Mumbai underworld; Iago's jealousy, fanning insecurity in the 'Noble Moor' in *Othello*, varies from the tribal rivalry scenario in *Omkaara*, while *Haidar* in Kashmir is the desolate backdrop for the protagonist's attempts to memorialise his father in contrast to Prince Hamlet in Denmark.

According to Dr. Cooper, with due respect to Shakespearean content, Bhardwaj's work deviates from the conventional texts and from the central, moral dilemmas at the heart of Shakespearean texts. Despite the deviant storyline, Bhardwaj's historical, political and social treatment of the characters, juxtaposed in the rewritten storyline of traditional Bollywood genre, is unique and exceptional.

■ MEKHALA SENGUPTA

## Imperial Architecture

TALK: *Sinan: Architect at the Centre of the World*  
Speaker: Dr. H. Masud Taj  
Chair: Dr. Nalini Thakur  
10 July

Dr. H Masud Taj, an authority on the renowned architect Sinan, took the audience on a journey through time from Constantinople to Istanbul. He spoke about the life and works of Sinan, which were accentuated by his own art, poetry and calligraphy. Sinan was the imperial architect at the height of the Ottoman Empire and is credited with designing more projects than any other architect. His works ranged from mosques, mausoleums and *hamams*, to aqueducts and bridges. Dr. Taj showcased three of Sinan's works from the three stages of his life as an architect: Şehzade Mosque from his years as an apprentice; Süleymaniye Mosque from the period where he considered himself to be a journeyman; and Selimiye Mosque from his period as a master.

Dr. Taj highlighted the evolution of Sinan's design through these stages. As Sinan evolved, the geometry and the proportions of his mosques evolved too, starting from a square courtyard to a rectangular one, allowing better visibility to the *mihrab*, which also became increasingly more ornate. He illustrated Sinan's design, highlighting his skill at manipulating scale, working with both human and monumental scale, simultaneously; Sinan's masterful use of light that utilised lateral, diffused and divine (dome) light; and his astute understanding of structural design.

Dr. Taj also drew extracts and references from Corbusier's book, *Journey to the East*, in which he mentions Istanbul and Sinan and their impact on his works. He talked of how, in his years of service to the Ottoman royalty, Sinan's magnificent designs not only altered the skyline of many a city, including Istanbul, but to this day influence architectural design the world over.

■ MANECK TANDON

## Tribute to Charles Correa

**FILM:** *Volume Zero: The Work of Charles Correa*

**Director:** Mr. Arun Khopkar

**Introduction by** Mr. Ram Rahman

4 August

Louis Kahn searched the 'Volume Zero' of history books to trace the very origin of history. Arun Khopkar derived the title of his film from there and deftly uses the cinematic medium to trace the life and work of India's most important modern architect, Charles Correa. However, Khopkar goes beyond the mere visual presentation of built form through the moving images of cinema and traces the meaning behind Correa's architecture. Relying on dynamic combinations of first person narrative, interviews with Correa, drawings and animation of building plans, he creatively captures the processes of architectural production of five decades in just 58 minutes.

Through selected projects, the film invokes the questions that Correa raised about the built environment, and

responded to, through his designs. Correa uniquely applied principles of modern architecture to the Indian context to address issues of equity, identity and energy—themes that echo throughout the film. Khopkar ably demonstrates how Correa deconstructs the modernist 'box' in favour of open spaces, addresses the need for passive climatic control in both low-income housing as well as high-rise apartments, establishes identity through cosmology, and argues his vision for more livable cities.

Drawing on archival footage, the film also offers a rare glimpse of the man behind the architect—the support of his family, his mother and wife, the influence of his childhood interests in toy trains and film making, and his training in the USA—all of which shaped his creative thinking.

The film is a testimony to the importance of Charles Correa, who passed away this year, and, as biographical narrative, equates the history of the architect with the architectural history of modern India.

■ VIKRAM LALL

## Architecture and Modernism

**TALK. THE INDIAN MODERN AND NEHRU:** *A view of Delhi's architecture and design-1947-1985*

**Speaker:** Ram Rahman

**Collaboration:** Sahmat, August 29

The search for an architectural identity that could suitably represent the spirit of a new nation, brought together political leaders and designers into a memorable relationship, soon after India's independence. Nehru envisioned a new India through modernism and forged a period of cultural imagination where architects, sculptors, writers, photographers came together to give shape to that vision which got manifested in the architectural designs of several important buildings of Delhi.

Photographer Ram Rahman, as the son of a senior government architect of post colonial India, Habib Rahman, was a witness to those times and in his talk, 'The Nehruvian Modern Movement', presented an insider view of the world of architectural design that emerged during that period.

Ram illustrated the narrative of modern architecture in Delhi through the works of several architects -- starting

with the pioneering work of Habib Rahman and Achyut Kanvinde, whose designs emerged through the confluence of the Nehruvian vision of modernity and their own Bauhaus training in the US. He traced the contributions of others who followed, such as Joseph Allen Stein, Charles Correa, J.K. Chaudhary and Raj Rewal, each expanding the narrative. Building designs such as the Rabindra Bhawan, Gandhi Memorial Hall, India International Center, Indian Institute of Technology and Hall of Nations are testimonies to the distinct design consciousness of that period.

The spirit of shaping a new world sparked a synergy that went beyond the boundaries of architecture and brought diverse design disciplines together to share the creative moment. Artists such as M. F. Husain and Satish Gujral collaborated with architects producing murals and paintings on building facades, while photographers Madan Mahatta and Sunil Janah brought architecture into sharp focus.

The expanding discourse on design also led to the founding of two important magazines—*Design* by Patwant Singh and *Marg* by Mulkraj Anand. The collaborative spirit was not limited within the nation but fanned out at a cosmopolitan scale.

■ VIKRAM LALL

## Two Significant Documentaries

**FILM:** *Dammed*

**Directors:** Ms Kavita Bahl; Mr. Nandan Saxena

**Discussants:** Ms Chittaroopa Palit; Mr. Anupam Mishra

7 August

**FILM:** *Songs of the Blue Hills*

**Director:** Mr. Utpal Borpujari

**Collaboration:** Centre for Cultural Resources and Training, 13 August

*Dammed* is about forcibly displaced villagers protesting against the building of the Omkareshwar Dam in the Narmada Valley in Madhya Pradesh. Both the central government and the state government completely ignored the wishes of the people to whom the land has belonged traditionally, and still does, to build a dam whose benefit to the local populace is dubious. The protestors in this documentary have been deprived of their fertile lands, their villages and, indeed, their roots.

The protestors have submerged themselves in neck-deep water released from the dam, following the heavy monsoon. Many of the villagers are close to collapse; they say on camera that their legs are rotting away, after being submerged in water for 16 days. They do not want to be treated like flotsam by the state government and seek a decent financial compensation apart from comparably fertile land surroundings. Their legitimate demands have been ignored by the authorities. Compensation, if any, has been niggardly. A female protestor, speaking on behalf of her fellow sufferers, says that their creed is non-violence and their way of protesting is the same. Another says if the government is not willing to give them their dues, they are willing to die in the water.



Saxena and Bahl have shot *Dammed* with elegance, and have marshalled the music to go with the images, with a degree of sensitivity.

*Songs of the Blue Hills* is about the folk music of Nagaland and the interesting and even exciting possibilities it is opening for other kinds of music in the state. The director and his team have travelled extensively to seek out the roots of Naga music and how it is enriching emerging musical forms practised, particularly by the young. A talented young Western classical pianist, with funky hair, demonstrates the techniques of incorporating Western harmonies with traditional local melodies and transforming them into something unusual and beautiful. There are other choral groups in churches in various parts of the state, which have incorporated melodic and rhythmic elements from the traditional music of the various tribes—15 or 16 in number—to make unusual music full of interesting aesthetic possibilities.

The music of the many tribes of Nagaland was mainly percussive, used in various ways to denote activities such as hunting, gathering, seasonal festivals and social occasions. The melodic lines were unusual, sometimes jagged, sometimes in surprising short curves. Piercing cries, too, were an important part of it. It was the music of a tribal society that sang, danced and celebrated in the open. Western music made its inroads with the advent of Christian missionaries from England and the USA. Nagaland and other parts of the north-east undoubtedly gained a lot from this introduction to Western music. Today, there are talented musicians who are creating unusual and pleasing music. The film is a tribute to them.

■ PARTHA CHATTERJEE

## Artistic Stories

**PERFORMANCE:** *Storytelling with Frescoes and Dance Illustrated Lecture* by Mr. M.V. Bhaskar  
**Bharatanatyam Recital** by Mr. Justin McCarthy  
 6 August

This event explored the tradition and practice of storytelling through mural painting in Tamil Nadu and the classical Indian dance form of Bharatanatyam. It began with a lecture by graphics and design specialist, M.V. Bhaskar, on the restoration of the murals on the ceiling of the Venugopala Parthasarathy temple at Chengam, Tamil Nadu. The decaying Ramayana murals at the temple were first photographed in different parts, which were then combined to make a high-quality composite picture. This image was then traced and reconstructed using vector graphics. To ensure accuracy, the missing parts were interpolated through references from religious texts, traditional iconography and nearby temples, and completed by traditional *kalamkari* artists

trained in narrative painting. These were then peer-reviewed by a team of conservators, art historians and artists, and experts. These reconstructed paintings were also replicated on cloth, which was dyed using an ancient technique to ensure their longevity.

Another part of the project focuses on the recurring theme of processional music in these murals. The team has created an audio archive of 16 musical instruments, such as the long *tarai* and the conch trumpet, which are depicted in the painting and still remain in use. Finally, the murals are also being brought to life through short, animated videos using leather puppets.

In the second part of the event, Bharatanatyam dancer Justin McCarthy performed a dance recital, *Mobini*, accompanied by a slideshow of *kalamkari* paintings and Carnatic music. The 35-minute performance comprised three stories revolving around Hindu god Vishnu's transformation into his female avatar, Mohini.

■ SONAM JOSHI

## Music and Lyrics

**MUSIC APPRECIATION PROMOTION:** *Thyagaraja: His Conversations with Rama*  
**Presentation** by Ms Usha R.K.  
 10 July

'*Sabityamu Mukhyama Swaralayamu Mukhyama?*' (Are lyrics important, or are only melody and rhythm significant?), to paraphrase one of composer-saint Thyagaraja's well-known pieces, and highlight one of Carnatic music's perennial debates. In this talk, lyrics assumed centrality, because the focus was on translation. We learned what the *vaag-geya-kaara* (poet-composer) was actually saying; whom he was addressing; the occasion for the musical outpouring; choice of raga vis-à-vis *saabityabhaava*; the emotional aptness of elongating certain words; *vidvaans'* views on rendition; and much else.

Thyagaraja's oeuvre is known for the personal, familiar way in which the composer addresses the Lord, as if talking to a close friend. They are conversations as much as compositions, with deceptively simple language disguising a profoundly philosophical and

deeply spiritual thought. Thyagaraja had said his works were meant for ordinary folk, such as women who cut grass, homebound after a long day. (Interestingly, '*Maa Janaki*' and '*Sari evvare*' brought women to the forefront again, saying that Rama's greatness was enabled by Sita, emphasising her agency and choice even in serving him.)

The link between music, the Vedas and yoga was brought out. I liked in particular '*Nannupalimpa*', composed when someone brought him a portrait of the Lord on his birthday and he responded, 'Didst Thou actually walk all this way just to see me?' Part-biography, part-translation and exposition, part-cultural history, the talk provided much substance, establishing that a *vaag-geya-kaara* thought was as much about words as about melody, marrying them inseparably.

■ MAHADEVAN RAMASWAMY

## Surprising Indonesia

**TALK:** *Beyond Bali: From Temples to Jungles in Surprising Indonesia*

**Illustrated lecture by** Ms. AshaRani Mathur

**Chair:** Mr. Deb Mukharji, 1 July

Writer, music producer, traveller, indeed a woman wearing many hats, AshaRani Mathur's wanderlust took us on a spectacular journey. Her illustrated lecture was replete with stunning images of 'Surprising Indonesia': of exotic Bali and quaint, surrounding islands such as Ubud, Kalimantan and Java, and stories, some amusing, some informative and full of the history, tradition, religion, art and cuisine of the region.

Ubud, considered the cultural heartland of the island, boasts sacred monkey forests, a number of Buddhist and Hindu temples, terraced paddy fields and a highly efficient system of water cooperatives—the *subak* system of irrigation. Prevalent since the 9th century, five major Balinese temples control and channelise its water, ensuring equitable distribution. Kalimantan (the Indonesian portion of the island of Borneo) is home to

the rainforests and is the habitat of the elusive orangutan.

Mathur's odyssey then took her to Jogkarata (often called Jogja), in Java, renowned for its traditional arts and cultural heritage, such as the exquisite Batik. Wayong Wang, a type of classical Javanese dance theatrical performance with highly stylised movements reflecting Javanese court culture still thrives here, patronised by the Sultan. The grand 18th century royal complex, Kraton, encompasses the still-inhabited Sultan's palace.

But Jogja's crowning glory is the monumental and majestic Borobudur temple—the world's largest Buddhist temple with a complete ensemble of Buddhist reliefs and listed as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1991.

And, finally, Mathur recommended the Ramayan Ballet at Pramabanan, the largest Hindu temple site in Indonesia. The extremely delicate movements of the dancers at the Trimurti, an open-air stage performance against the backdrop of this magnificent temple, on a full moon night, is indeed an ethereal experience.

■ GAURIKA KAPOOR

## Celebrating Eminence

**EXHIBITION:** *The World of His Holiness: To Celebrate the 80th Birth Anniversary of His Holiness the Dalai Lama Exhibition and Panel Discussion*

**Inauguration of Exhibition:** Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan

**Chair:** Mr. Shyam Saran

**Panellists:** Mr. Geshe Dorjee Damdul; Mr. Lalit Mansingh; Mr. Shiv Shankar Menon; Mr. Arun Shourie

**Collaboration:** Bureau of His Holiness the Dalai Lama  
1-7 July

'This is my simple religion. There is no need for temples; no need for complicated philosophy. Our own brain, our own heart is our temple; the philosophy is kindness.'  
— *The 14th Dalai Lama*

A galaxy of eminent speakers expounded, with rich personal experiences and anecdotes, on the Dalai Lama's unique and multifaceted personality on the occasion of his 80th birthday. Shyam Saran held it to be a great blessing to have a person as highly respected and honoured as he to have made India his home.

Geshe Dorjee Damdul likened Buddhism to modern science which encourages scientific and logical thinking in understanding the world around us. Nalanda, that

great institution that flourished in India, nurtured great thinkers, logicians, philosophers and epistemologists who were instrumental in the development of the Buddhist thought of interdependence.

Lalit Mansingh observed that His Holiness believed that India was the only country in the world where all the major religions have peacefully coexisted for more than 1,000 years. Much of His Holiness' energies are expended in interfaith dialogues, and he holds that all the religions, which practice *karuna*, should join together to make this a century of peace.

Shiv Shankar Menon viewed His Holiness as the epitome of leadership firmly rooted in strong discipline, selflessness, and compassion, even for his enemies, and a desire to see a world where everyone coexists peacefully. His ability to use logic and reason to convey his thoughts makes him unique.

Arun Shourie believed His Holiness' contribution lies in rooting ethical conduct in the principles of basic human needs and not merely religious texts. The Dalai Lama's interactions with the scientific community and Nobel Laureates aims to understand and promote meaningful changes worldwide.

■ RISHI JINDAL

## Aesthetic Artefacts

EXHIBITION: *Devrai Rock Dhokra*

Presented by: Devrai Art Village, Panchgani

Inauguration: Ms. Laila Tyabji, 19–25 August

*Dhokra* art as we know it, evolved from the post-independence craft initiatives of the Indian government, inputs from many cognoscenti, but the artist Meera Mukherjee in particular, becoming established as an art form capable of great experiment and creative expression with Jaidev Baghel.

'Devrai Rock *Dhokra*' presented a paradigm shift in the balance between technique, materials and aesthetic that define a craft, availing undoubtedly of the larger category of lost wax casting, but causing visitors to wonder where



the *dhokra* they came to see was. The Devrai Art Village, set up in 2008, a laudable

collaborative effort with Adivasi craftspeople from Gadchiroli showcased its patented Rock *Dhokra*, where brass and stone are fused together to create both large brass bulls and small seated animal figures. Gone was the striation and detail of *dhokra* aesthetics. The other inclusion—the 'organic casting' of branches, leaves and seeds—led to some interesting results.

A plethora of artefacts and aesthetic styles jostled together: classic *dhokra* was represented by large bells, horns and tortoises; brass combined with wrought iron: monkeys clambered on molten brass swathes of vegetation; then came the deities—Kali and a sleek, elongated Hanuman in dramatic black and gold, and a frieze bearing Buddha's meditative visage, a market favourite.

Experimentation—clearly a positive in the Devrai endeavour—is necessary to innovate; but without the ballast that dreamtime, or the anchor that the grammar of craft practice provides, we get a kitschy black wrought iron nature deity: a leafy stalk emerging from the neck of a headless female bearing a lantern. The molten brass 'murals on canvas' also appeared rudderless. If the aim is to nurture Adivasi identity alongside their economic self-sufficiency, the legacy of the craft will need attending to, along with a vision for its future.

■ PUNAM ZUTSHI

## Through Their Eyes

EXHIBITION: *Sapnu Salis: Dreamland*

Artists: Mr. Gintautas Vysnjauskas and Mr. Arijeet Chanda

Inauguration by Mr. Paresh Rawal

Collaboration: Embassy of Lithuania, 5–11 August

This exhibition, a *jugalbandi* between two artists, an Indian depicting Lithuania and a Lithuanian portraying India, was an interesting one. How these two very different cultures come together was worth a view.

Lithuania's culture combines an indigenous heritage, represented by Nordic cultural aspects and Christian traditions, resulting from historical ties with Poland. A small country in the European Union, it is supposedly one of Europe's 'best-kept secrets'. Well, no longer! Arijeet Chanda, so charmed by the 'captivating imagery' of the country, decided to capture with his art the beauty that reached out to him.

A former businessman, Arijeet, with dexterity, has captured images of this beautiful country



executed in charcoal, oil, acrylic and water colours. He has effectively rendered some sculptures reminiscent of the Nordic, Germanic and Slavic cultures that have influenced Lithuania.

On the other hand, we have Gintautas Vysnjauskas, a practising architect, with a deft and easy sketching hand. The strokes are casual, yet effective. On view are charming depictions of the various scenes encountered by him, some with Buddhist influences with prayer flags serenely fluttering in the wind, but mainly of Goa.

■ POONAM B. SAHI

## Accessible Museums

**TALK:** *Museums and the Present: Issues of Community, Locality and Contextual Relevance*

**Speaker:** Dr. Karen Exell

**Collaboration:** South Asian University  
6 August

As stated on the blog site of the Department of Sociology, South Asian University and reiterated by Professor Sasanka Perera at the start of the lecture, 'much of the analyses of our problems, situations, histories and dynamics emanate from Euro-American academia; this is certainly the case when it comes to conceptual formulations and theoretical approaches that are being employed in exploring the region's social and cultural complexities, often without much self-reflection.' The objective of the lecture by Dr. Exell, organised jointly with the Department of Sociology, was to challenge

colonial paradigms with reference to the museum and to suggest workable models for the region.

Dr. Exell mentioned recent advances that focused on audiences and their requirements rather than on collections, which had been the primary concern in the colonial period. Current trends aim at making museums accessible where knowledge is produced, debated and shared. The concentration is on building inclusive communities by underscoring personal narratives. The speaker discussed several examples from Doha, Kuwait and Abu Dhabi, as also from India. It is thus a welcome initiative, but needs to address the issue of why people collect through a wide-ranging response, drawing on a mixture of historical, ethical, anthropological, psychological and art historical perspectives. Museums are institutions that express and support the activity of collecting, yet collecting is by no means restricted to them.

■ HIMANSHU PRABHA RAY

## Celebrating Ashoka

**FRONTIERS OF HISTORY**

**TALK:** *Struggling with History, Living with Ashoka: My Encounter with Biography*

**Speaker:** Dr. Nayanjot Lahiri, author of *Ashoka in Ancient India*. Published by Permanent Black

**Chair:** Dr. Rūdrangshu Mukherjee, 31 July

Nayanjot Lahiri's biographical tryst with *sutradharic* Ashoka was a tour de force, traversing multiple genres—archaeological, epigraphic, historical and archival. This illustrated lecture's *raison d'être* was the desire to flesh out, contextualise and recover Ashoka's life and times, while listening to the Emperor's own voice, passionately articulated through his inscriptions and edicts, representing a kind of 'historical daybreak'.

Dr. Lahiri crafted a sensitive profile of the monarch by choosing archaeological resonances of antiquity mined out of the many Indian landscapes associated with his early princely years and dovetailing them with the tapestry

of legends, lore and texts. She foregrounded minutiae and trivia within the contours of a compassionate and caring Ashoka—his courtship and marriage to Devi, a Buddhist and the daughter of a merchant of Vidisha—their marital residence in Ujjaini, the construction of Vaishya Tekri and the carnage in Kalinga, the gory details of which were immortalised by Ashoka. This reversal of the most hoary narrative tradition—a weeping Ashoka instead of a swaggering one, marking the advent of a self-reflective ruler and his quest to arrange his narrative of kingship by inscribing royal epigraphs (the very quintessence of Ashokan greatness)—was eulogised.

The metamorphosis of Devanampiya—making grassroots contact with his subjects, the creation of a shared moral universe for his people and their gods—thereby being a pioneer of proto-secularism and his ardent communiqué to his administrators was detailed. The warp of Ashoka's life and the weft of his spirit weaves a memory both gossamer and eternal.

■ BEEBA SOBTI

## Remembering Partition

**DISCUSSION:** *The Partition Museum Project – Presentation on Need for Proposed Museum*

**Coordinator:** Lady Kishwar Desai

**Collaboration:** The Arts and Cultural Heritage Trust  
August 29

The Partition Museum Project, under the aegis of The Arts and Cultural Heritage Trust, seeks to fulfill a long felt need to memorialise the greatest ever mass transfer of population in history; and one which was attended by horrific violence. The Partition was an event in which over ten million were displaced, lost, raped, or killed.

The programme included a presentation on the proposed museum-- a physical space that will commemorate the event, and preserve and present the memories and stories of those who lived through the Partition. The museum will include displays as well as a memorial hall. The project welcomes public participation, through financial

donations, as well as contributions of oral histories, art, artifacts, film, photographs, etc., related to the people's experience of the Partition.

An important part of the programme was the sharing of a few personal stories of the Partition, and a discussion by an eminent panel, of some issues relating to people's experience and memories. It was pointed out that while many people suffered traumas of violence and separation, the majority came through it not only with resilience, but with surprisingly little bitterness. An important factor in this was the recognition that no one side was at fault, and that there were victims, aggressors and many instances of compassion, on either side.

The panel as well as the large audience appreciated that the presentation of these complex narratives will be challenging, but important, particularly for how younger generations view this important event in the history of three nations.

■ SWAPNA LIDDLE

## Obituary

L-0346 Dr. Ram S. Tarneja  
HM-021 Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam  
M-0694 Mr. C.R. Alimchandani  
OA-170 Prof. Ajit Singh  
M-2286 Prof. Ninan Koshy  
M-0058 Mr. M.L. Dhawan  
M-1900 Shri K.C. Sivaramakrishnan  
M-2140 Prof. P.R. Chari

M-2461 Shri Altaf Ahmed  
A-4303 Prof. K.M. Shrivastava  
A-1613 Mr. Ashok Jaitly  
M-2153 Justice Y.K. Sabharwal  
A-1943 Dr. N.P. Gupta  
A-2230 Dr. Ashok Kumar Chakravarti  
A-4057 Mr. Deepak C. Shriram

## Notices

**Car Parking Facilities at IIC:** Limited parking facilities have been created outside the Kamaladevi Complex (New Conference Block) inside the IIC Premises.

It has been decided that the car-parking facility will be made available to self-driven cars of IIC members. The cars should have IIC Car Stickers. No overnight parking is allowed unless specifically authorised for residents of the Hostel by the Administration Officer.

Members using chauffeur-driven cars may alight in front of the Multipurpose Hall and the cars driven away immediately for parking outside the premises.

In case of VIP commitments, these instructions may be modified at the behest of Police / SPG to meet the security-related mandates.

Security staff at IIC have been instructed to ensure strict compliance. Members are requested to please cooperate with Staff/Security Staff on duty and follow the directions.

Kindly show your IIC Membership Card to IIC staff/IIC Security Staff on request.

In case of any clarification, please contact the Administration Officer.

The Centre lost a prominent member, and an inspiring personality for the country, especially the youth. Former President, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, passed away on 27th July 2015. The country has lost a great human being.



## The IIC Experience: A Festival of the Arts

30th October to 4th November 2015

### PROGRAMME

#### PERFORMANCES

30th October

**'Bais Khwaja ke Chaukhat': Celebrating the Sufi Heritage of Delhi**

Ustad Chand Afzal and his group will present an evening of Qawwalis from the Sufi shrines of the city

31st October

**Jazz Concert**

By Chrystal Farrell from Goa

1st November 11.00 am

**From Tanjavur, With Music**

Carnatic Vocal presented by Sikkil C. Gurucharan, grandson of Sikkil Kunjumani, disciple of Shri S. Gnanaskandan



Accompanists: V Sanjeev on violin; and Mannarkoil J. Balaji on Mridangam

1st November 6:30 pm

An Episode from the *Mahabharata*  
Presented in Kathakali style

(Collaboration: Sangeet Natak Akademi)

2nd November

**Premier of Quijote Wallah**

Presented by Yellowcat Theatre

Directed by Sukesh Arora

To mark the 400th anniversary of Miguel de Cervantes' Don Quixote

(Collaboration: Cervantes Institute, New Delhi)

3rd November at 5.00 pm

**Release of the IIC Quarterly: Autumn 2015**

Edited by Omita Goyal, Chief Editor IIC

To be released by President IIC Mr. Soli J. Sorabjee

Venue: Gandhi King Plaza

3rd November

**Concert of Baroque Music**

Presented by the Haydn Baryton Trio Budapest – Balázs Kakuk (violoncello, viola da gamba and barytongamba); Anna Magdalena Kakuk (violin); and András Kaszanyitzky (violoncello)

(Collaboration: Hungarian Information & Cultural Centre)

4th November

**Ateetki Parchaeyen** (Reflections on the Mahabharata Saga)

Dance drama directed by Dr. Shama Bhate, Nad-Roop, Pune

A scholarly reinterpretation of the great Indian epic, in the language of our classical dance idioms

Principal artists - Dr. Kannan : Kathakali (Bheeshma); Ramli Ibrahim: Odissi (Yudhishtira); Gopika Varma: Mohiniattam (Gandhari); Vyjanthi Kasi: Kuchipudi (Kunti); Vaibhav Arekar: Bharatnatyam (Karna); Rakesh Saibabu: Chhau (Duryodhana); and Ameera Patankar: Kathak (Draupadi)

*The Great War is over now; the main characters are at the end of their journey. They look back and reflect on the events that led up to this great devastation. They try to understand what transpired in their minds and in their interactions with the other actors which ineluctably determined the course of history. The dance drama focuses on the differing perceptions of the main characters of the epic*

**EXHIBITIONS**

Conference Room I

**India's Best Kept Secret: Sarasvati Mahal Library, Tanjore**

Manuscripts and text from the collection of the Library  
Curator: Pradeep Chakravarthy



**On 31st October 2015 at 4 pm talk on Treasures of Sarasvati Mahal Library**

Illustrated lecture by Pradeep Chakravarthy and Rajah Babaji Bhonsle

(Collaboration: Sarasvati Mahal Library, Thanjavur)

Gandhi-King Plaza

Children

An Exhibition of bronze sculptures

By Christine Margolin, French contemporary artist based in Delhi

Main Art Gallery

**Printmaking And Anupam Sud**

Prints and print making exhibition including a walk through with a special focus on the work of Anupam Sud, artist, teacher and mentor

Curated by Dolly Narang and Ananda Moy Banerji

Annexe Art Gallery & Lecture Room II

**Contemporary Photography from Germany**

An exhibition of photographs curated from the Ostkreuz School of Photography, Berlin

Photographers – Aras Gakten; Torben Geeck; Yana Wernicke; Katarzyna Mazur; and Katharina Ira Allenberg

(Collaboration: Max Mueller Bhawan)

**FILM FESTIVAL**

**When Comedy is King: A Festival of Films**

The festival will include a special focus to mark the 400th anniversary of the publishing of the second volume of Miguel de Cervantes' novel *Don Quixote*



**FOOD FESTIVAL**

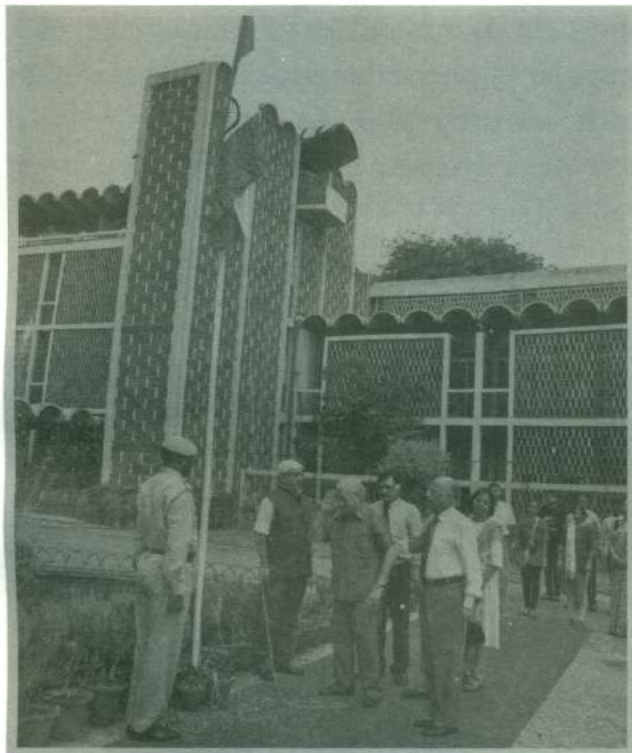
Details will be announced later

## Independence Day Celebration

The 69th year of India's independence of India was celebrated by the flag-hoisting ceremony at the IIC main centre. The President of the IIC, Mr. Soli J. Sorabjee, unfurled the national flag in the presence of Air Marshal Naresh Verma, Director of the IIC; Cmde. R. Datta, Secretary, IIC; Ms. Hema Gusain, OSD to the President; Mr. Arun Potdar, CMD; Mr. Vijay Kumar, Executive Chef; and members of the staff of IIC. Before the flag-hoisting, the President garlanded the bust of late Dr. C.D. Deshmukh, Founder-President of the IIC. The Secretary Cmde. Datta also addressed the gathering and eloquently expressed his sentiments.

Mr. Sorabjee stated that as time flies, people tend to forget significant events and personalities in the life of the nation. However, he cannot forget the thrill which he experienced when, at the age of 17, he heard the unforgettable words of Pandit Nehru:

*At the stroke of the midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom. A moment comes, which comes but rarely in history, when we step out from the old to the new; when an age ends, and when the soul of a nation, long suppressed, finds utterance.*



Today we remember with gratitude and honour the memories of our freedom fighters and the founding fathers of our Constitution, thanks to whose efforts and sacrifices India became a Sovereign Democratic Republic. Our nation has kept the banner of democracy flying since independence, except during June 1975 to March 1977. This is indeed a matter of legitimate pride.

We got political freedom but are yet to achieve economic freedom. Social justice eludes us. We still face the problems of wide disparities in wealth and income, poverty, unemployment and child malnutrition. We are faced with the scourge of intolerance which results in misunderstandings and violence against certain sections of society. Debate, discussion and dialogue are the essence of democracy but they are spurned by forces of intolerance.

We should remember that the primary aim of the IIC is to 'promote understanding and amity between the different communities of the world...'. IIC plays an important role in realising this aim by organising seminars, debates, discussions and dialogue with various sections of society which is conducive to harmonious relations with all groups in our country. Today we should resolve to do our bit, however small, in the service of the nation by combating the forces of intolerance and to make India a country where every person can enjoy and lead a life with dignity.

The President expressed disappointment at the absence of several heads of department of the IIC and its functionaries on this important occasion.

## A Note from the Director

It is an honour to write as the new Director of the India International Centre. Since its inception, it has been nurtured by the Life Trustees, successive Directors, Members, staff and others who have worked hard to maintain the spirit of this great institution. It will be my endeavour to follow the same path in the time I have. I only hope that I can live up to the bar set by my predecessors. I would also like to thank the management and Members for welcoming me so warmly.

Over the past two months, I have met several members of the staff and intend to meet each and every one, to get to know them and their valuable contributions to the Centre. It has been my privilege to interact with members of this prestigious institution that is the bedrock of intellectual and cultural life.

While I am no stranger to the wonderful programmes held here, I have now seen the inner workings and the immense energy required to maintain the quality that has come to define the Centre. It is not just the staff but the members who are part of various advisory committees who carry this forward. I look forward to sharing my ideas as well.

This will be my first 'experience' of the IIC Festival, to be held from 30 October to 4 November. Do block the dates! Preparations are underway and, as usual, there will be something for everyone. This year, the IIC Experience will focus on some literary traditions of India and the world, with the performances largely based on poetic and literary texts. Among them will be the spiritual works of some of the mystic poets of Delhi, rendered in qawwali form; hymns composed by the Carnatic Music Trinity—Muthuswamy Dikshitar, Syama Sastri and Saint Tyagaraja—in conjunction with an exhibition on the Sarasvati Mahal Library; scenes from the *Mahabharata* depicted by Kathakali artistes; a dramatic adaptation of Cervantes' *Don Quixote*, and much much more in films and exhibitions. The ever popular dinners that follow at the end of each exciting day include international cuisine, a diversity of Indian fare, and street food.

I look forward to welcoming everyone to this much awaited annual treat.

■ NARESH VERMA