

INDIA INTERNATIONAL CENTRE **IIC** Diary

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August – September 2021

Reviving Art and Narrative

FESTIVAL: *ArtEast Festival 2021: Tell Me a Story*

CURATOR: *Kishalay Bhattacharjee*

COLLABORATION: *New Imaginations, Jindal School of Journalism and Communication*

12 to 14 August 2021

ArtEast 2021: Tell Me a Story was a virtual journey that displayed storytelling elements in India's contemporary and traditional art and craft. Curated by Kishalay Bhattacharjee, the festival's fifth edition aimed to bring to light the dying arts of India.

This year, it comprised three sections: the virtual exhibition, talks/intersections, and the film festival. The virtual experience took the viewer through Isaac Tsetan Gergan's photographs and paintings of Ladakh. These pictures told stories through an anthropological lens with music, food, domestic and cultural spaces. Parasher Baruah, a visual artist and cinematographer, documented a story in pictures, photographing the lives of migrant workers in Mumbai. Visual artist Siddhartha Das displayed his collaborations with artisans in a range of settings from museums, public installations and art galleries. He shared how he created spaces for local artisans to showcase their traditional art. Sentila Tsukjem Yanger, the textile specialist and Padma Shri awardee from Nagaland, talked about how Naga

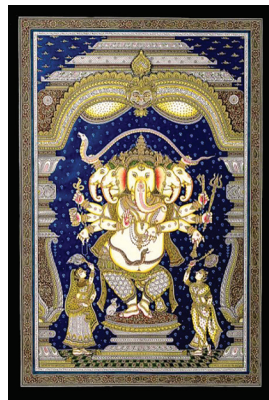
motifs embody history, language and folklore in 'Stories of Warp and Weft'.

Through the play of shadows and light, 'In the Shadow of Time' by Shankhajeet De explored the art of Ravanna Chhaya, or shadow puppets in Odisha. Nina Sabnani's animated film *Hum Chitra Banate Hain* revealed why painting is akin to offering a prayer for the Bhil community. Another of her films, *Tanko Bole Chhe* (The Stitches Speak), documented Kutch artisans and their passion for the Kala Raksha trust. Two other films by her were also showcased, each with its unique theme and story.

A historically ostracised community group—Gujarat's Vaghari community—created a space for themselves through art, as shown in *Mata Ni Pachedi* (Divinity Cloth) by Partha Protim Baruah. Their textile art became their shrine after they were not allowed to enter temples. Nagaland's neighbour, Assam, was the focus of *Janambhumi Charaoli* (Leaving my Motherland) by Parasher Baruah. It is a documentary on the songs of the Adivasi community working in the tea gardens. Their songs revolve around the main themes of displacement and migration that ArtEast is based on, and expresses their identity.

In 2021, the ArtEast Festival expanded its scope beyond the Northeast to art and narrative practices in the rest of the country. Today, many such practices suffer from lack of patronage or support, commercial pressures, or have been forgotten over the years. This festival was an effort to revive interest using the tools of new media to tell stories.

■ SUMEDHA MAHESHWARI



Shared Experience

BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP: *Dusk to Dawn: Poetic Voices on the Current Times—South Asia and Beyond.* Edited by Chandra Mohan; Rita Malhotra; and Anamika (New Delhi: Heritage Publishers, 2021)

DISCUSSANTS: Ashok Vajpeyi; Sanjukta Dasgupta; and Chandra Mohan

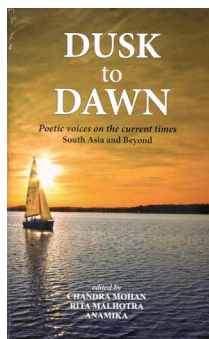
MODERATOR: Malashri Lal

CHAIR: Shri N.N. Vohra, President, IIC

2 August 2021

Dusk to Dawn is dedicated to the late Dr. H. K. Kaul, whose tenure as Chief Librarian, IIC, spanned 40 years. He was a distinguished poet, the Founder of Poetry Society of India, and DELNET, connecting libraries globally.

Shri N.N. Vohra, President IIC, commended the editors for this 'gracious gesture' for all the great work done by Kaul in the past. He commented on how, initially, we did not fathom the depth of the pandemic, and this volume may later be looked upon as a part of COVID-19 literature. 'The anthology evolved from a series of "chain emails", on "changing times", from Chandra Mohan, editor', said Malashri Lal, who also remarked that 'poetry "flowed" in, from all over the world, and a hundred contributors



were selected for this unique anthology... an instrument of healing.' Vajpeyi affirmed 'poetry as witness', saying that we were 'forced into self-introspection and loneliness' during the pandemic. The poems offer a 'wide range of experiences and images weaving together, reaffirming that we are still human; and in this, poetry helps.'

Dasgupta observed 'something mystical' in the 'collective resilience' of these poems on human solidarity, and 'very fine poetry in myriad styles, images, symbols to heal our hearts... poets shall endure', she said. 'Poetry has emerged as the only sacred space', commented Anamika, and asked that the whole book be viewed 'as a bioscope of different landscapes, the younger poets writing in Hindi, living in a modern geography'.

Chandra Mohan reflected on the numerous aspects of the pandemic, composed into varied sub-themes with transformative energy. In honour of Dr. H. K. Kaul, he quoted a few lines from the book: 'In this world there are so many eyes to look at and look through... I need to dive into the third eye to bridge the fathomless.' This was an enlightening discussion on *Dusk to Dawn*, with poems in Hindi, Urdu and English. We are certain of a literary journey that

will transcend the inner dirges we may have bewailed these past 18 months. It is the shared experience of the pandemic in these poems that will console the world.

■ JAYSHREE MISRA TRIPATHI

Inclusions and Omissions

2 PART DOCUMENTARY: *Olympia Part One: Festival of Nations*

Olympia Part Two: Festival of Beauty

DIRECTOR: Leni Riefenstahl

2 to 15 August 2021

Olympia, a film in two parts, was directed in 1938 by Leni Riefenstahl, a German athlete, dancer and photographer. It showcases the 11th Summer Olympics, hosted in 1936 by Hitler's Germany. Despite the obvious propaganda in the film which highlights German prowess over several sporting disciplines, one cannot but marvel at Riefenstahl's magnificent photography. The first part of this black-and-white film, which lays emphasis mainly on track and field events, begins with the picture of Olympia, the discus thrower. Other than discus, javelin, hammer throw, shot put and pole vault, it covers various sprints. The best photographic coverage is undoubtedly in the depiction of a runner treading his shadows.

The second part of the film, fittingly titled *Olympia, the Festival of Beauty*, lays emphasis on capturing the more aesthetic sports like diving, swimming, gymnastics and equestrianism. The magnificent photography portrays divers looking like birds spreading their wings and flying. The ripple of the athletes' muscles, especially their calf muscles, are shown to perfection in slow motion. The gale at sea during yachting is captured beautifully and in minute detail. So are the lights around the stadium. At the end of the film, and of the Games, the extinguishing of the flame is shown only symbolically by the smoke which lessens until it peters out.

The film is mainly concentrated on events where the Germans won laurels. The notable exceptions to the Nazi angle with which the films have been shot are the American Jesse Owen's winning the long jump event, Glen Morris' victory in the decathlon, and India's gold in men's hockey. The director, while filming these non-German laurels, did not, however, show the reaction of the Führer, who was shown applauding ecstatically whenever the Germans struck gold.

■ SWATI DASGUPTA

Art for All

MEET THE ARTIST: *Art for All: Samuel Courtauld, Collecting and Public Patronage*

COLLABORATION: *J.D. Center of Art, Bhubaneswar*
14 August 2021

This lively online discussion was part of the series 'Meet the Artist'. Deborah Swallow, Mārit Rausing Director of The Courtauld and its Gallery, traced the history of the Institute in the context of how arts and cultural institutions are being questioned on what they possess and do, whose work they portray, for whom they are, as well as their vision for the future.

Swallow mentioned, along with other visionaries behind the project, the role of Samuel Courtauld, who, with his passionate love for art, idealistic conviction and his generosity towards the cause and the project, braved criticism and hostility from the then British art establishment in the setting up of the Institute. With a radical vision of renewing society, and the role of art as a powerful antidote to the degrading effects of capitalism and consumerism, he also played a major role in funding and directing the curating of several impressionist and post-impressionist works of art at the National Gallery of London.

Inspired by the idea of a higher educational institute with its own gallery dedicated to the history of art, Courtauld wished to move the subject into proper academia, rather than merely being a pastime. He countered the concerns within the academic community that radical changes might

compromise the speciality and quality of the works on Western art history, and established the Courtauld Institute in 1932, under the aegis of the University of London. The curriculum at the Institute included courses on Western art history and aspects of Asian art history, art history curating, conservation, heritage management, courses on Buddhist art, etc.

The relevance of the Courtauld Institute in today's world, according to Swallow, lies in its diversifying the social base of the art audience, the student body and staff, despite several constraints of redevelopment. It has succeeded in appropriately repurposing itself for 21st century usage, with the support base of a large group of volunteers. Charges of elitism do not stand ground, and the Institute has taken on challenges like racism, slavery and socio-economic inequality, as seen through its several initiatives. For instance, a recent exhibition curated by the postgraduate students of the Institute focused on a series of vandalised photographs exhibiting traces of internalised racism.

In a quest towards making the subject more accessible by globalising the curriculum, and contemporising its relevance, inserting art not just within history but other disciplines as well, and also bringing in concerns related to future employment in the field, she highlighted a range of the Courtauld's initiatives. Towards this end, various regional partnerships have been taken up as a way to reconnect the gallery to the nation through shared exhibitions and community engagement with the archives. Further, it has organised periodic research festivals in a quest to literally make 'art for all' a reality.

■ PRERANA PURNIMA ROY



Courtauld Institute of Art, London

Horizon of the Republic of Diversity

BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP: *Voices from the Lost Horizon: Stories and Songs of the Great Andamanese*, by Anvita Abbi (New Delhi: Niyog Books, 2021)

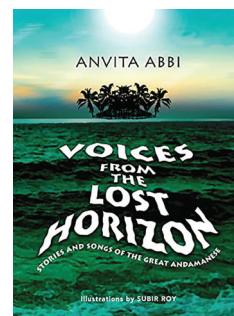
PANELLISTS: Ganesh Devy; Mini Krishnan; and Anvita Abbi

CHAIR: Arshia Sattar

23 August 2021

This programme commenced with a song by a native of the Andamanese family, titled 'Let us go to a cleaner place where we can dance, dance and dance'. Abbi shared her experience of bringing out the hidden structures of life, music, songs and stories among the Andamanese. She talked about the difficulties in preserving a language when it stands on the verge of extinction. With the 'Story of Creation Tale', she got enabled to revive the languages of those Andamanese who were kept apart from the culture of linguistic diversity.

Abbi spoke of the process of reviving three languages of the Andamanese family—Onge, Jarawa and Great Andamanese—eliciting 10 stories in her book. It has QR code scanning, by which the reader can access the songs and videos of these languages. Ganesh Devy stated that this work reflects the memories of 'the inter-human stories of evolution from several tribes', contributing to the rediscovery of real Indian history going back to the oldest human sounds and stories. Mini Krishnan stated that this book is socio-cultural capital, and that young people must work on languages as they are a way of processing and understanding the world. 'The lost horizon' is the 'horizon of republic made of diversity'. Languages are worldviews. Discussions stroke the relevance of 'ethno-linguistics'. The grammar of a language speaks to us about the worldviews of the speakers of a community, and their socio-cultural aspects. The discussion ended with the mantra to sustain languages by loving, speaking and using them in every possible domain to preserve their vitality in the long run.



■ DEVINA KRISHNA

Inner and Outer Lives

WEBINAR: *Writing Histories of Revolutionaries*

SPEAKER: Aparna Vaidik, author of *Waiting for Swaraj: Inner Lives of Indian Revolutionaries* (Cambridge University Press, 2021)

DISCUSSANT: Himanshu Prabha Ray

CHAIR: Madhavan K. Palat

20 August 2021

How revolutionary were the interior lives of Indian revolutionaries in the colonial era? How did the revolutionaries' self-making process counteract with the 'ideology-praxis' reductionist binary of Indian political thought? What brought the inner lives of Indian revolutionaries into public visibility? The speaker, Aparna Vaidik, attempted to draw a richly textured narrative of Indian revolutionaries around these questions at the discussion around her recent book. Senior Professor, Himanshu Prabha Ray was the discussant of the programme. The chair of the event was Madhavan Palat, historian, scholar and political commentator.

Madhavan Palat began by drawing on the global phenomena of 'free-floating revolutionary enterprises' like the French

revolution, Narodnik, Nihilist, Bolshevik and other European and Latin American revolutions where disparate groups attempted to unsettle the 'settled' through their heroic activities. Locating pursuits of Indian revolutionaries within the ambit of international revolutionary ideologies set the tone for further discussion on the roles of idea and praxis in the inner lives of Indian revolutionaries.

Vaidik followed by analysing the practice of political asceticism (*Ascetic Kaalyoddha*) in determining the relationship between their inner and outer worlds, as well as its transition to an 'emotional community'. The praxis of that affective community was substantially more than the ideological or 'textual' community. The author discussed how first-hand observations of memoirs, autobiographies, pamphlets and oral history capture their enigmatic interior lives, full of hopes and fears, friendships, affection and loyalty. Ideas and ideologies were replete with the revolutionaries' public visibility. The events that brought Indian revolutionaries into the public sphere were sensational in nature, and those heroic and masculinist narratives were far removed from the world they actually produced through the act of living. Himanshu Prabha Ray enriched the conversation with the colonial context of Gandhian non-violence and the post-colonial context of democratic nation-state formation in the creation of the imagery of revolutionaries in Indian political discourse.

■ SHREYA KUNDU

The Politics of Map-making

Three Part BBC-4 SERIES: *Maps: Power, Plunder and Possession (2010)*

EPISODE 1: *Windows on the World. Director: Rosie Schellenberg*

EPISODE 2: *Spirit of the Age. Director: Helen Nixon*

EPISODE 3: *Mapping the World. Director: Annabel Hobley*

August–September 2021

The series is based on research by British historian Jerry Brotton and the core message is that maps are unique products of different cultures. They offer subjective perspectives on the world around them, rather than a factual delineation, as is often supposed. Maps have always been associated with politics, and examples include the 16th century Mercator Projection, which not only made navigation easier across the seas, but also provided Europe a dominant position, thus paving the way for the Age of Exploration and Colonisation.

A history of maps may be traced to the prehistoric *Bedolina Map* (1000 BCE–200 BCE), engraved on a rock in the Lombardy region of the Alps, which represents symbolic ownership claims over land in the valley. Another is the *Tabula Peutingeriana*, the longest Roman world map to have survived. It was produced in 300 CE and presents an idealised version of Roman roads and towns at a time of decline. In contrast, the *Yu Ji Tu*, or *Map of the Tracks of Yu Gong*, was carved into stone in 1137 CE in Shaanxi province of China, and shows the country's coastline and river systems. Lines drawn

on maps during the colonial period, such as the Radcliffe Line that cemented the Partition of the subcontinent, confirm the power of map-makers to devastate communities. Brotton mentions the redrawing of Iraq's boundaries by the British, with disastrous consequences for the nomadic tribes of Mesopotamia.

The second episode traces the journey of thematic maps from the 13th to the 21st century geospatial maps. The Christian vision of the spiritual world with Jerusalem in the centre is reflected in the 13th century *Ebstorf Map*, made in a convent in Germany. By the 16th century, as European powers colonised large parts of the world, the focus of the maps shifted to show territories under imperial rule, such as the 1542 *Codex Mendoza* created 20 years after the Spanish conquest of Mexico. The end of the 19th century brought with it different challenges of disease, poverty and migration, which led to the development of spatial maps. Through Google Earth, these acquired greater technological accuracy and geospatial maps became the new norm.

The third episode discusses several examples of the use of maps for political control and imperial domination, such as the 15th century world map by the German cartographer Henricus Martellus, which inspired the voyages of Christopher Columbus to find a route to Asia. The Dutch East India Company was founded in 1602, and as it expanded across Asia, maps became an integral part of commerce. The series ends on a positive note to suggest that the 21st century map of the future shows political ownership of the North Pole, thus ensuring orderly utilisation of the Arctic's resources. Two discordant features include the absence of a discussion of maps from India and interruptions by advertisements.

■ HIMANSHU PRABHA RAY

Issues of Epidemic Control

WEBINAR: *Epidemic Control in India: Re-focusing Public Health Services for Better Outcomes*

SPEAKER: *Monica Das Gupta*

CHAIR: *T.V. Somanathan*

1 September 2021

Monica Das Gupta brought an interdisciplinary approach to the issues and concerns of epidemic control in India with her expertise in varied areas such as anthropology, demography and medical research. Combining the energies

from a range of positions as Professor of Research and Population Studies, she emphasised that development is hugely contingent on how much and in what ways countries invest in public health systems. Her talk focused on a systemic approach combining both curative and preventive measures to be significant for health services.

Communicable diseases impose heavy costs on people, becoming roadblocks for the progress of any nation's economic growth. Development infrastructure cannot function without strong public health systems, as a healthy population and a strong productive labour force are pivots for development and progress. Her insights were embedded in both micro and macro features, such as the crucial role of the family in shaping child health, which forms the foundation

for the robust health of adults, as well as a large-scale health awareness drive. With the example of Korea, she explained that higher longevity in Korea compared to India is directly an outcome of low-cost public health structures. The recent spread of COVID-19 has impacted lives and economies, compounded by climate change. Sanitation, control of infection, personal hygiene and accessible medical support are key elements for epidemic control, and have to be inter-sectorial structures for reimagining public health services.

India needs to identify the weak links and provide adequate training for engaging with communities. She concluded with a powerful quote, that 'mere focus on clinical services to reduce exposure to communicable diseases is like mopping the floor while leaving the tap open.' Finance Secretary T.V. Somanathan rightly introduced the speaker with a simple statement: 'no pharmaceutical company or private medical agency would advertise the contents of this talk'.

■ ASHA SINGH

Love and Compassion

PERFORMANCE: *Dara Shikoh and Rana Dil*

Conceptualised, created and directed by Manjari Chaturvedi

Script by Danish Iqbal

With Ekant Kaul as Dara Shikoh; and Manjari Chaturvedi as Rana Dil

The performance was presented on stage and webcast live on the Centre's website and on Facebook@Manjari Chaturvedi

COLLABORATION: *Sufi Kathak Foundation; and Ganga Jamuna Culture Foundation*

26 August 2021



'Dara Shikoh and Rana Dil', Manjari Chaturvedi's latest production in her 'Courtesan Project' premiered at the IIC as a live webcast. The creative visualisation about the forgotten love story of Prince Dara Shikoh and the beautiful courtesan Rana Dil, played by Ekant Kaul and Manjari Chaturvedi, respectively, was conjured and scripted by Danish Iqbal on the basis of available historical records.

The poignant love story, recounted through the eyes of the enigmatic courtesan Rana Dil, brought alive the life and times of the visionary Prince Dara Shikoh, who could have changed the course of Mughal history if he had lived long enough. Constantly confronting his opponents' greed for power and treachery, he challenged them in the 17th century: 'Fighting battles is an old story. This is the age of "Ilm", learning and knowledge. The wars would be won with wisdom now, not swords!'



The opening scene underlined the delicate beauty and art of Rana Dil, who is getting dressed, humming and dancing to a romantic song, interspersed with the *kavita* 'Chandra-vadan, Mrig-lochani...' and a *tarana* in *Drut Teentala* with the *bandish* 'Lat uljhi suljha ja balam', thinking of her beloved Dara Shikoh, the true inheritor of the secular 'Sulahkul' legacy of Emperor Akbar. Dara Shikoh is spotted in the next scene at the shrine of Sufi Sarwat where compositions of Basant were being rendered in Qawwali form. Thus, musical forms like Thumri, Dadra, Ghazal and Qawwali were used imaginatively, along with appropriate Urdu dialogues, taking the story to its climax with the message of love and compassion. The powerful production did full justice to the fascinating love story.

■ MANJARI SINHA

Dialogue between Practice and Academia

WEBINAR: OF BRIDGES & BREAKS—THE CONSTITUTION AT A CROSSROADS

Electoral Democracy in India—From Spectacle to Substance

SPEAKERS: R. Venkataramani and Neelanjan Sircar

MODERATOR: Ritwika Sharma

A new year-long series of monthly conversations jointly curated and presented with Charkha, the Constitutional Law Research Centre at Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy

13 August 2021

This series around the Constitution began with an interesting conversation on electoral democracy which explored the triangular themes of federalism, civil liberties and democracy. Neelanjan Sircar began his speech against the backdrop of the Supreme Court's directions on dedicated special criminal courts for MPs/MLAs, and the harsh statistic

that 43 per cent of legislators have criminal antecedents. Sircar postulated, with the help of graphs and statistics, that wealth actually was the foremost attribute of successful candidates, while their criminality was only incidental. It was unclear, however, whether the research had revealed how clean candidates of equal economic status fared against their more venal colleagues.

In response to the moderator Ritwika Sharma's invitation to discuss the role of the Election Commission and whether there was a requirement for greater protection, Senior Advocate Venkataramani pointed out that all institutions are capable of being held to higher ethical standards, but the Election Commission might be circumscribed by the limits of parliamentary enactments. He drew on his own experience in the Law Commission to share that no political party had agreed to the suggestion that a candidate against whom charges were framed ought to withdraw from the electoral process. The vacuum, he suggested, was in not having a regulatory framework for political parties themselves. Audiences will look forward to more such engagements between practice and academia to help illuminate the way to Constitutional understanding.

■ **GOPAL SANKARANARAYANAN**

Difference and Symbolism

FILM FESTIVAL: A Selection of National Panorama Films

COLLABORATION: Directorate of Film Festivals

SCREENING SCHEDULE: 7 September to 24 September 2021

Film festivals are a vital link in the chain of global film culture. They can consolidate and maintain democracy, peace and freedom. This splendid festival brought together national award-winning films which we perceive as 'different' through the lens of personal and individual relationships, and also the larger picture of community and socio-cultural identity. All the films differed in concept, language and genre, but all had an implicit symbolic connotation.

Ek je Chillo Raja (2018) is a Bengali drama directed by Srijit Mukherji. The film is based on the intriguing real-life incident of the Bhawal case, an extended court case about a possible impostor who claimed to be the prince of Bhawal,

and who had been presumed dead a decade earlier. The performances were brilliant to say the least.

Hellaro is a 2019 Gujarati period drama directed by Abhishek Shah. The film revolves around a group of women living in Kutch in the 1970s. The film has the rare quality of being a convincing period film, while also being deeply in touch with the stark reality of female oppression. The film was universally acclaimed by critics.

House Owner is a 2019 Tamil action-drama film, written and directed by Lakshmy Ramakrishnan. An unexpectedly moving story of unconditional love in the time of calamity, set against the backdrop of the Chennai floods (2015), the film tells the poignant love story of an elderly couple during the natural disaster. The story goes back and forth, narrating the present and the younger romantic moments of the couple, with rain and water playing a dominant role in the entire film.

Iewduh is a Khasi/Garo/Nepali film, directed by Pradip Kurbah. The film is about making the journey from the margins of human experience to the core where strength and hope lie. *Iewduh* is set in Shillong and takes its title from the large market in Meghalaya's capital. The film is set entirely within the winding alleyways of *Iewduh*, also

known as Bara Bazar, and explores life's big and small truths through a handful of working-class characters.

Mai Ghat: Crime no: 103/2005 is a 2019 Marathi film directed by Ananth Narayan Mahadevan. The film is based on the real-life story of a Kerala woman who won a 13-year legal battle for her son who was killed by the police in 2005 in Thiruvananthapuram. This is a beautifully made film that ends in euphoria, not just on screen, but in the hearts of the audience as well.

A Dog and his Man is a 2019 Chhattisgarhi drama directed by Siddharth Tripathy. The title of the film sounds like



Still from *Eigi Kona*

something out of a fable or a folk song. The film is the tale of a man who, after being evicted from his home, wanders the streets, adrift with memories of better days. The film examines the human consequences of industrial development projects. The underlying theme of exploitative coal mining in Jharkhand and the attachment of a man to his dog are metaphors for his stubbornness in the face of threats by the mighty and powerful. In brief, Shoukie and his dog Kheru are being displaced from the village due to coal mining, but Shoukie's unconditional love for Kheru makes him adamant to stay with him. The film is superb at every level: writing, casting, direction and cinematography.

Eigi Kona is a Manipuri film directed by Bobby Wahengbam and Maipaksana Haorongbam. Thawai, a young boy, loves to play polo, riding his pony Stallone. Stallone is a descendant of the horse Thawai's famous grandfather rode when playing polo. Falling on hard times, Thawai's father is forced to sell Stallone. Unable to bear being separated from his pony, Thawai falls seriously ill.

Kalira Atita is an Odia film with English subtitles, directed by Nila Madhab Panda. A man returns to his home village hoping to reunite with his family, only to find it under water due to a cyclone. Now, with another cyclone coming, the man struggles to survive.

■ ONAM VAID

A Holistic Approach to Defence

WEBINAR: *Towards Progressive Defence Reforms*

SPEAKER: *General Bipin Rawat, CDS*

CHAIR: *Shri N. N. Vohra, President IIC*

15 September 2021

The appointment of the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), General Bipin Rawat, and the creation of the Department of Military Affairs on 31 December 2019 is arguably the most transformational structural change in military affairs in India in the recent past. These steps are progressing in the form of doctrinal, procedural and structural shifts that will facilitate the creation of unified geographical theatre commands, functional commands for logistics and training, and bring about the much-needed jointness in the functioning of the armed forces.

Introducing the talk, Shri N.N. Vohra not only enumerated past attempts at seeking integration, but also highlighted reservations from all quarters, including the armed forces

themselves. He reinforced the need for synergy between all constituents of the government in the face of both external and internal challenges.

General Rawat provided an in-depth perspective of reforms that are underway, including the setting up of theatre commands facing Pakistan and China, and to cover the Indian Ocean Region. He also shared information on initiatives being taken to integrate training, logistics and operational planning. He gave a clarification regarding the





General Bipin Rawat, CDS

envisaged chain of command and the role of the Service Chiefs. It was also indicated that joint planning and execution would include the Central Armed Police Forces, given the challenges of terrorism being faced by the country.

General Rawat felt that the changing character of war demanded a change in how future wars are envisaged and fought, with special emphasis on non-contact warfare, to include cyber and space as well. The major takeaway from the talk was the inescapable need for integration and jointness, not only within the services but an all-government approach to security issues.

■ VIVEK CHADHA

Possibilities of Non-violence in our Times

AHIMSA CONVERSATIONS: *The Seville Statement on Violence*

Ashis Nandy and David Adams

MODERATOR: *Rajni Bakshi*

23 to 29 August 2021

The Seville Statement on Violence was drafted in 1986 by a group of natural and social scientists from several countries. It marshalled scientific evidence to show that violent behaviour is not generally programmed into human behaviour. The Seville Statement was adopted by UNESCO at the 25th Session of the General Conference, on 16 November 1989. Political scientist Ashis Nandy from India, and psychologist David Adams from the USA, were leading academics who played an important role in drafting the Statement. In this conversation, they reflected on the possibilities of non-violence in our times.

In reply to the moderator's question whether they had experienced violence in their youth, Adams said that he had participated in student protest movements against the Vietnam war. He was studying brain mechanisms and aggression. After pursuing it for 25 years in a laboratory, he realised that aggression had nothing to do with war. Soldiers are not aggressive, they are afraid. Heads of states and generals are not angry. They are in war for profit. So, he began studies on the great peace activists like Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King and many others. Their motivation was injustice, righteous indignation. Anger is necessary for peace, not for war.

Nandy said that he was brought up in an atmosphere of violence due to the Second World War and the man-made famine of Bengal in which three million people died. It was man-made because Churchill had purchased rice grains for England, and left people in Bengal to die. India's Partition saw a great deal of violence, and Gandhi's famous fasts at Calcutta curtailed it. Nandy was attracted to the ideology of the Left in which violence was glorified. Violence and non-violence are not equally balanced in human nature. One war journalist told Nandy that archaeological findings have revealed that war was institutionalised centuries after those communities came into existence. It is difficult to teach someone how to use gadgets to kill.

The Seville Statement is a scientific statement. A number of prominent scientists discussed various issues concerning evolution and genetic behaviour for several days and nights, and concluded that there was no basis for war; it is not inherited from animals. That was the scientific base. Two members, Ashis Nandy and Santiago Genoves, biological anthropologist from Mexico, wanted to address genocide and colonialism. They, along with Adams, added the second paragraph to the Statement: 'Misuse of scientific theories and data to justify violence and war is not new but has been made since the advent of modern science. For example, the theory of evolution has been used to justify not only war, but also genocide, colonialism, and suppression of the weak.'

The culture of war relies on secrecy and false information. Julian Assange became a hero because he exposed the secrets of the culture of war. We need radical institutional change in global governance. Till the countries with nuclear power are also in the Security Council, there will be no culture of peace. We need a new declaration for a culture of peace, said Adams.

Nandy said that India is the only country where lynching is

alive. Crimes are highest in India, which remains a country at war with itself. There is a new hostility to Gandhi. Hatred is a powerful motive. Once the seed of hatred is planted, a few fanatics can create a huge wave of hatred. Now, the media has changed, states have become more authoritarian. When a country is engaged in war, individuals become more violent. Adams added that over the centuries, states monopolise war; they have the right to make more. The

worst comes when states adopt religion. It is disastrous. Conflicts are reconcilable, but there should be political will.

Adams' advice to young people is to struggle for justice and be patient. Great changes are not televised, but change is coming. Nandy's advice: the real enemy is social Darwinism. Civilising is the message for peace.

■ VARSHA DAS

Sonic Connections across Two Continents

INTERNATIONAL COLLOQUIUM: *Afro-Asian Musical Imaginaries: Interconnected Histories across Continents*

COLLABORATION: *Re-centring Afro-Asia Project, University of Cape Town, and Ambedkar University Delhi*

16 to 17 September 2021

This colloquium was the brainchild of the International Research Division of the IIC. The colloquium, for the most part, showcased the impressive work of a collaborative project titled 'Re-centring Afro-Asia' undertaken by the University of Cape Town and Ambedkar University, New Delhi. Most of the participants were part of the project, and presented important conceptual and empirical work to deepen our understanding of sonic connections across two continents. In the process, they asked searching questions about the status of arts-based research in universities, about the challenges of excavating traces, and of persistent epistemic biases in our understanding of Africa, and indeed of non-Western music. The interventions also alerted us to the importance of listening, and to be aware of the politics that impact the ear as an organ of listening and reception.

The colloquium foregrounded some critical and generative conceptual interventions. The agenda at hand was to excavate how music connected regions at different times and in different ways, and the traces it left behind. One immediate way, it was suggested, was to engage with the 'sounds alike' exercise and to think, through that, about the experience of reception and circulation, and by extension to undertake myriad kinds of archaeology. Another important insight of the conference, thanks to serious empirical work done by younger scholars associated with



the project, was to actually and actively think through artefacts and assembled archives to reflect and speculate on musical imaginaries, and what these have stood for in the past and what these stand for in the present. Virtually everyone at the colloquium concurred that Eurocentrism and nation-oriented perspectives distorted and flattened historical experiences, one fallout of which was the staging of canons, and which embodied the institutionalisation of select musical elements to the detriment of others. What was perhaps not adequately referenced was how recent social-historical research of music in South Asia has in fact offered a very strident critique of the nationalist cultural project.

The two crucial takeaways of the colloquium were: first, the rich and meticulous research on musical practices, instruments and transmission across Africa and coastal western India; and second, the pressing need to think about arts' practice research in universities across the world and more so in the global South. Brett Pyper hit the right note when he pointed out how relying on quantifiable outputs for music-making in university departments often erased the larger value of pursuing the limits of an elusive truth which is also a vital component in knowledge production and transmission. Viewers of this webinar can look forward to the contents of the colloquium in published format.

■ LAKSHMI SUBRAMANIAM

The Chariot and the Cart

INDIAN ARCHAEOLOGY: Chariots of Sanauli—
Shedding Light on the Chariot and Cart Controversy

ILLUSTRATED LECTURE by Sanjay Kumar Manjul

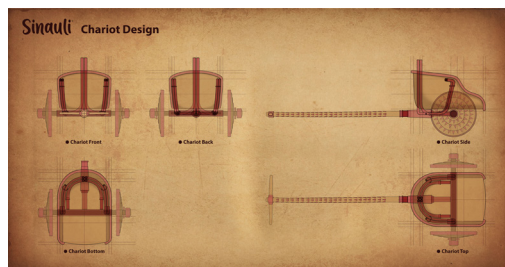
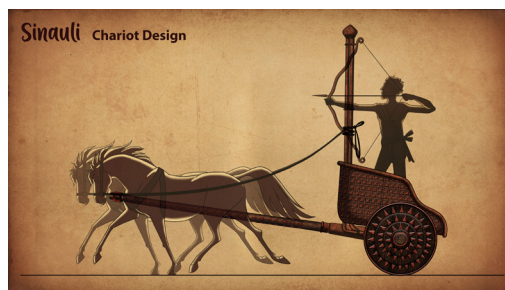
CHAIR: B.M. Pande

6 September 2021

Sanjay Manjul's recently excavated site, Sanauli in Baghpat district, Uttar Pradesh, has become a sensation due to the remarkable finds—war chariots, copper decorated shield, whip and torch, antennae sword with hilt, bow, helmet and unique coffin burials, all belonging to the Ochre Coloured Pottery/Copper Hoard period dating back to c.2000 BCE.

His illustrated talk was mainly aimed at addressing the ambiguity in the identification of three life-size chariots unearthed, which subsequently led to the controversy that what has been identified as a chariot is actually a cart, which indicates a continuity of Harappan culture.

Focusing on the extraordinary finds, Manjul elucidated the peculiar features of the chariots unearthed at the site. All the three chariots are two-wheeled, and this open vehicle might have been driven by one person. The wheels are



Findings at Sanauli

rotated on a fixed axle that is linked with a long pole which has a small yoke. The chariot was probably yoked with a pair of animals. The axle is attached with a super structure consisting of a platform protected by side screens and a high dashboard in the front. The wheels, pole and yoke are made with solid wood and are highly decorated with copper triangles.

He further clarified the fundamental difference between a cart and a chariot by citing functional features. He specified that a cart is basically designed for a mode of transportation that is often hauled by a bull, mule or horse. A cart would have a frame with a large space that is attached with a yoke to place on the shoulder of the animal.

The chariot is designed for faster movement, and often used only in the battlefield or for royal processions. A chariot is of light weight, with a chassis, and with or without a yoke. It is predominantly horse-driven, allotting space for a single person.

The presentation gave a detailed account of chariots in the Puranic literatures and the depiction of them in various art and architectural specimens, which has helped in understanding the various types of chariots and their usage throughout the ages.

Manjul asserts that the chariot at Sanauli is a unique discovery that has thrown light on a complex society with social hierarchy that existed around 4,000 years ago. It has also revealed a plethora of information on warfare, technological advancements, and the arts and crafts of contemporary society.

■ NIHILDAS N.

Sustaining a Legacy

FILM: *Kekee Manzil: House of Art (2020; English)*

DIRECTOR/EDITOR: *Dilesh Korya*

PRODUCER: *Behroze Gandhi*

The film was introduced by Shernaz Cama; Behroze Gandhi and Adil Gandhi

COLLABORATION: *Parzor Foundation; and Jiyo Parsi Friday Forum*

1 October 2021

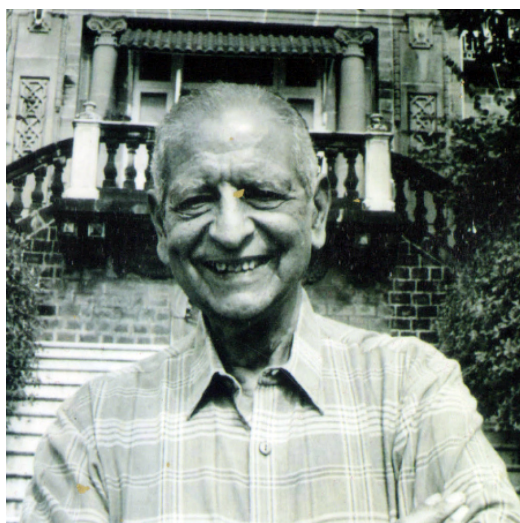
CONVERSATION: *Catalysts for Creative Spaces: Kekoo and Khorshed Gandhi*

Shernaz Cama in conversation with the Gandhi siblings—Rashna, Behroze and Shireen

Zoom recording of the Jiyo Parsi Friday Forum held on 24 September 2021

COLLABORATION: *Parzor Foundation and Jiyo Parsi 4 to 10 October 2021*

On 24 September 2021, the 8th anniversary of Parzor, the Friday Forum, introduced the 'Catalyst for Creative Spaces—Kekoo and Khorshed Gandhi', associated with the Chemould Art Gallery. Cama said it is very important to acknowledge the contribution of the family to the arts in post-Independence India. Getting together their children, Cama stated that they created and provide a space for the arts to flourish in Independent India.



Kekoo Gandhi

The screening of *Kekee Manzil: House of Art* started with Cama welcoming Adil Gandhi, who had stayed the longest time with his parents and continued the Chemould Art Gallery. He related anecdotes about his parents' work in creating a space for the world of art, and the problems faced by the framing business when plastic replaced wood for frames. He related anecdotes about his father—when his mother discovered the pao missing from the dinner table, she found it in her husband's hands, wiping the oil paintings with it!

The 90-minute film starts with Kekee Manzil, the family home and memories of childhood—the three siblings playing on Juhu Beach at birthday parties, usually with a

missing father who was totally involved with the art gallery. Realising his parents were responsible for the spark that ignited the modern art movement in Bombay, art that gave voice to a new nation, post-partition India, he realised the importance of recording this for posterity.

The film then introduces Behrouz Gandhi, who named the house after his son Kekoo, born in 1920.

Against the background song, 'Gori Gori, Bankey Chori', Bombay's multiculturalism comes alive as Kekoo takes charge of his gallery for the love and passion for art. Helped by a Belgian man who was in the picture-framing business, he started the Chemould Shop and it became the largest picture-framing factory in Asia. A tear away from his father's tobacco business, it employed hundreds of people, and became very popular as pictures of many gods and goddesses were framed.

In 1944, an Austrian artist came to the shop and taught them how to select a frame to highlight a picture, and the artist would sign the frame. To the background song of 'Yeh Hai Bombai Meri Jaan', he leads a discussion on the cave murals of Ajanta and Ellora to the great interest of young painters Raza, Husain and Souza.

India's independence, and the tragedy of partition, led to the setting up of the Progressive Art Group and their deep engagement with art. He recalls meeting a range of artists—Krishen Khanna, who made him stand before a canvas and asked him what he thought; Husain, interested in horses always, asked him 'Ghoda kaisey chalta hai?' These were the early years of struggling artists and the Chemould Gallery, the first commercial art gallery of India.

The film takes us through the 1960s, the Emergency of the 1970s, the changing Bombay of the 1980s, the communal tensions of the 1990s, and in 1993, Husain's controversial painting of the Hindu goddess Saraswati in the nude.

Awarded the Padma Shri, his father died a year before the 50th anniversary of Chemould, and his mother died soon after the 50th year. The legacy is inherited and sustained by the three siblings; ideals and values to hold on to in difficult times.

■ AMRITA BHALLA

DEPARTURES

We are deeply saddened by the passing away of the following Members of the IIC family, and convey our heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved families.



DR. DEEPAK GAUR
A-6406



MS. TINA WHIG
A-4090



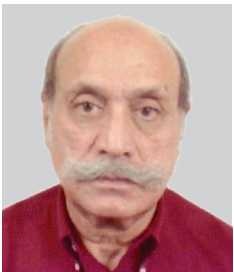
SMT. MANORAMA BHALLA
A-1823



SHRI RANJIT SETHI
A-2911



**SHRI DEEPAK MOHAN
SPOLIA**
A-6793



**SHRI LALIT MOHAN
KHOSLA**
A-1867



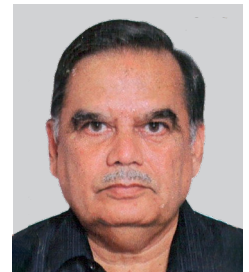
JUSTICE ANIL KUMAR
M-3649



SHRI S.K. SINGHI
M-0670



SHRI AVTAR SINGH RIKHY
M-3832



**SHRI SUSHIL CHANDRA
TRIPATHI**
M-3436



PROF. RIYAZ PUNJABI
M-2719



SHRI KESHAV N. DESIRAJU
M-3654



SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES
M-3725



AVM SAMIR K. SEN
M-3218



SHRI S. V. GIRI
M-2673



SMT. PRIYO BATRA
A-1083

Flag Hoisting on Independence Day (15 August 2021)



Second Covid-19 Vaccination Camp For IIC Employees & their families

(15-16 September 2021)





Director's Note

We draw a breath of relief as the devastating second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic seems to be coming to an end. However, we shall continue to closely comply with the COVID regulatory guidelines. With the gradual easing of restrictions, we are witnessing an increasing number of our Members and their guests visiting the Centre. We have started holding physical programmes and, all going well, also plan to revive the IIC Festival, even though on a modest scale.

Amongst our varied activities in the past months, the International Research Division-IIC convened an online international colloquium on 'Afro-Asian Musical Imaginaries: Reconnecting Histories across Continents'. This programme brought together more than a dozen scholars and musicians from India, South Africa, Italy and Tanzania. The papers presented and the demonstrations reminded us how, in the centuries past, trade and migrations had led to the evolution of common musical traditions in far located countries of Asia and Africa.

With an increasing number of Members visiting the Centre's catering facilities the Lotus Lounge, which had remained closed due to the pandemic, was refurbished and reopened in mid August; it now serves an attractive range of nutritious new dishes. The Annexe catering outlets were also reopened for Members in the end of August. To conform to pandemic-related safety precautions, QR coded menus have been provided at all the eating places.

The weekend speciality cuisines, selected from across the country, have been very popular. Over the past two months, we have catered 'Chettiar Delicacies', 'The Parsi Table', 'The Maharaja's Recipes: Sailana', and Kayastha, Maharashtrian, Bengali and Awadhi cuisines, all of which were greatly appreciated by our Members.

The sale of STAM application forms, which commenced on 10 June 2021, was closed on 30 September 2021. The last date for accepting filled-in forms is 31 October 2021, whereafter these will be scrutinised by the STAM Selection Committee. We hope to finalise admissions by the end of February, 2022.

The air conditioning units (FCUs) in the President's office, installed in October 1959, have worked amazingly well for over 60 years. The technical advice was to discard the old system and replace it with two split a/cs. If this advice was followed it could have involved breaking one of the walls to install the air conditioning units. We regretted this approach as it would have been an affront to our architect Stein's aesthetics. Also, the new split a/cs would have consumed much more energy. We are happy to report that, with the keen support of one of our architect Members, we have replaced the old system with a similar new one, continuing it on a customised basis.

The heat of the summer months, coupled with the worst phase of the second pandemic wave, did not favour the Centre's lawns and gardens. However, we have managed to have a very pleasing blossom of Calendula, Kale, Marigold and other flowers; our early winter flowers—Chrysanthemum and Hollyhock—have also started showing up. Our Members are able to enjoy the pleasing sight of our green lawns and the upcoming winter blooms.

As the outsourced arrangements for running our online programmes and webinars involved considerable recurring expenses, we have acquired the necessary equipments and trained our staff to conduct all our on-line programmes without having to carry out our programmes through contractual agencies.

In mid September, in collaboration with the Government of NCT of Delhi, we organised yet another COVID-19 Camp for vaccinating all our employees, and their family members, who had been left out in the earlier round, as well as to deliver the second dose; 261 vaccinations were done in this camp.

Conforming to the COVID-19 guidelines, we celebrated Independence Day on 15 August. The Director hoisted the Flag, followed by Tea for the participants.

■ **K. N. SHRIVASTAVA**