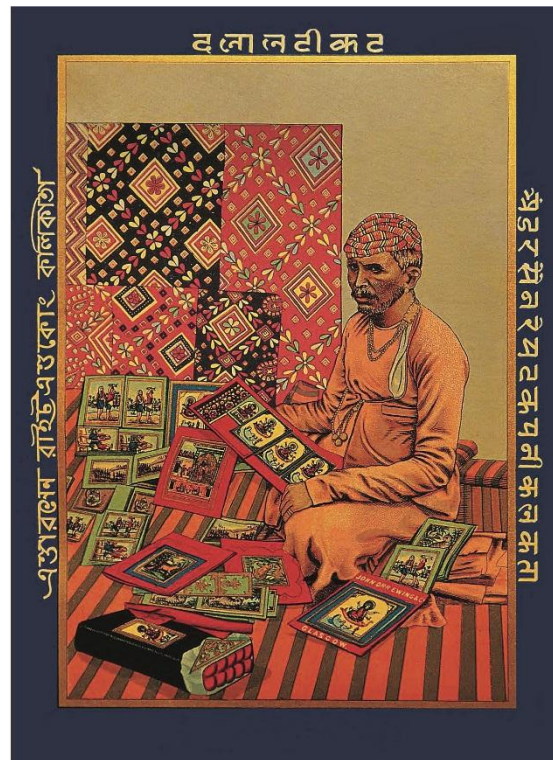


Indian Popular Visual Culture: The Conquest of the World as Picture

curated by Jyotindra Jain

9 April 2017 – 30 April 2017



*A label showing an agent displaying an array of trade label, c.1900.
Private Collection. Courtesy CIVIC archives, NEW Delhi*

The Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Mumbai City Museum, The Sanskriti Foundation and The Marg Foundation present, *Indian Popular Visual Culture: The Conquest of the World as Picture* curated by Jyotindra Jain. The exhibition is on view at the Special Project Space, Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Museum from 9 – 30 April 2017



About the Exhibition

The exhibition offers a critical view of the role played by popular Indian imagery of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in the construction of cultural, social and national identities. Images Nineteenth century India witnessed several major cultural and technological transformations – the pedagogy of the colonial art school; exposure to European pictures circulating in the Indian market; the advent of the techniques of engraving, lithography and oleography; the emergence of photography and the proscenium stage – that led to the growth of a new popular imagery. The colonial art school's emphasis on perspective and realism endowed the idealized, traditional imagery with a more tangible and sensual presence. In combination with influences from the newly introduced proscenium theatre, which used powerful iconic and narrative formations, and from photography, which could depict heightened corporeality and individuality, this engendered a new class of popular cultic, mythological and nationalist imagery. Mass production and circulation of this imagery became a potent instrument in creating and negotiating interstices between the sacred, the erotic, the political and the colonial modern.

Mass manufacture of images transformed the very nature of Hindu belief and worship. Through the work of artists like Ravi Varma, 'classical' Hindu mythology was revived, romanticized and circulated all over the country, providing a nation-wide homogeneity to the visual culture of Hinduism. Images including engravings, chromolithographs, oleographs, photographs, postcards and film posters will be on display. The exhibition demonstrates how printing and mass circulation of images widely influenced the nature of belief and worship in India and eventually acted as a powerful vehicle in strengthening the independence movement and the spirit of patriotism.

About the Curator

Dr. Jyotindra Jain is a member on the Board of Trustees of the Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Museum. He is the Director and Managing Trustee of CIViC: Centre for Indian Visual Culture, New Delhi, and was formerly Director of Crafts Museum; Professor and Dean at the School of Arts & Aesthetics, Jawaharlal Nehru University; and Member Secretary of the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, all New Delhi. He was an Alexander-von-Humboldt Fellow, a Homi Bhabha Fellow, a Visiting Professor at Harvard University and a Rudolf-Arnheim Visiting Professor at Humboldt University in



Berlin. Dr. Jain's major publications, among others, include: *Tradition and Expression in Mithila Painting* (1996); *Other Masters: Five Contemporary Folk and Tribal Artists of India* (1998); *Picture Showmen: Insights into the Narrative Tradition in Indian Art* (1998); *Kalighat Painting: Images from a Changing World* (1999) and *Indian Popular Culture: The Conquest of the World as Picture* (2004). Dr. Jain is recipient of the 1998 Prince Claus Award for his contribution to Indian art and culture.

About the Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Mumbai City Museum

The Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Museum first opened to the public in 1857 and is Mumbai's oldest museum. It is the erstwhile Victoria and Albert Museum, Bombay, that showcases the city's cultural heritage and history through a rare collection of fine and decorative Arts that highlight early Modern Art practices as well as the craftsmanship of various communities of the Bombay Presidency. The permanent collection includes miniature clay models, dioramas, maps, lithographs, photographs, and rare books that document the life of the people of Mumbai and the history of the city from the late eighteenth to early-twentieth centuries.

The Museum, once in a derelict condition, underwent a comprehensive five-year restoration by INTACH supported by the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai and the Jamnalal Bajaj Foundation. The project won UNESCO's international Award of Excellence for cultural conservation in 2005. The Museum re-opened in 2008 with an extensive exhibition programme and is committed to promoting contemporary art and culture.

The Museum hosts an extensive exhibitions programme which explores the importance of the collection and includes a strong focus on contemporary art and culture. A series of curated exhibitions titled, 'Engaging Traditions,' invites artists to respond to the Museum's collection, history and archives, addressing issues that speak directly to the traditions and issues that underlie the founding of the Museum, yet evoke the present by challenging orthodoxies and questioning assumptions. Several distinguished contemporary artists have participated in this programme such as Sudarshan Shetty, Jitish Kallat, Atul Dodiya, L. N. Tallur, Ranjini Shettar, Sheba Chhachhi, CAMP, Thukral and Tagra.

The Museum has partnered with international institutions to showcase artists and exhibitions including



the Victoria and Albert Museum, British Council, British Library, Dresden State Art Collections, Solomon R Guggenheim Museum, Museum of Modern Art, Ermenegildo Zegna Group and Guild of the Dome Association in an effort to facilitate international cultural exchange. The Museum has expanded its curatorial initiative to invite external curators, institutions and organisations to present exhibitions related to the focus areas of the collections.

The Museum's education and outreach programme aims to build and diversify the Museum's audiences, encouraging repeat visits and engaged participation with its permanent collections, contemporary exhibitions and activities. On offer is a rich selection of programmes including film, music and courses and lectures on history of art focused on providing stimulating, participatory experiences that respond to different age, interest and language groups, and recognize a diversity of backgrounds. These experiences are aimed at encouraging critical engagement with Mumbai's history, art and cultural developments.

For more information on Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Mumbai City Museum, please visit:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/BDLMuseum>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/BDLMuseum>

Website: www.bdlmuseum.org

E-mail: enquiry@bdlmuseum.org

Telephone: +91 22 23731234



About the Sanskriti Foundation

Sanskriti Pratishthan, a registered Public Charitable Trust, was founded in 1978. The activities are guided by a Board of Trustees. Sanskriti literally means ‘the process of cultivating’, and the Pratishthan (or Foundation) has continuously been working towards an environment for the preservation and development of artistic and cultural resources in India and across the world. Since Sanskriti views culture as an intrinsic part of everyday life, the Pratishthan views its role as that of a catalyst in revitalizing the artistic and aesthetic sensitivities of the Indian people. This has led to the establishment of the Sanskriti Awards and Fellowships for young talent in various fields. The Sanskriti Kendra reflects the diverse facets of India’s vibrant pluralistic culture through the Museum of the Everyday Art of India; the Museum of Indian Terracotta and the Museum of Indian Textiles. In addition Sanskriti has also created India’s first international artists’ and writers’ Residency Programme that hosts creative people from across the globe.

About the MARG foundation

Marg was founded by Mulk Raj Anand in 1946, with the agenda of developing a forward-looking and socially active language of art, while engaging with India's rich cultural heritage. Marg's publications are internationally acclaimed for their high standards of production, excellent editorial content, striking and informative illustrations. Over the years, Marg has pioneered many regional studies and Marg believes that a cross-regional understanding of the subcontinent's collective inheritance is vital as our nation continues its growth in the global arena. Today Marg continues this legacy under the editorship of Jyotindra Jain and Naman P. Ahuja.



For Listings

The Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Mumbai City Museum, The Sanskriti Foundation and The Marg Foundation present,

Indian Popular Visual Culture: The Conquest of the World as Picture
curated by Jyotindra Jain.

Exhibition Dates: 9 April 2017 – 30 April 2017

Exhibition Venue:

The Special Project Space
Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Mumbai City Museum
91A Rani Baug, Veer Mata Jijabai Bhonsle Udyan
Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Marg,
Byculla East, Mumbai 400027

Timings:

10:00 am to 6:00 pm | last entry 5:30 pm
Closed on Wednesdays and certain public holidays

For press enquiries, please contact

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