



PRESS RELEASE

Kindred Nations: The United States and India, 1783-1947 25th September - 25th October 2015

Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Museum, in collaboration with the U.S. Consulate General, Mumbai, is delighted to announce the opening of *Kindred Nations: The United States and India, 1783-1947* on 25th September 2015.

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

Ties between Americans and Indians existed long before the birth of the Republic of India, dating back to the founding of the United States in 1783. Even without the benefit of full diplomatic relations – possible only after India became free of British rule in 1947 – connections took root and flourished. From an initial preoccupation with commerce grew genuine interest in each other's histories, beliefs, cultures, and politics. Americans and Indians found opportunities to experience and participate in each other's worlds, and to share knowledge and skills. They investigated each other's art forms, and drew on them to expand their own. They shared concerns about the meaning and quality of life in an age of industrialization, global trade, imperial expansion, and rising materialism. In all these arenas, Americans and Indians set great value on the freedom to determine their own paths.

Kindred Nations presents historical images that recall tales of remarkable people – some well-known, others awaiting rediscovery. These stories convey the range of Indo-U.S. interactions across many domains. Though the photographs and documents capture individual experiences, each narrative offers insight into cross-fertilizations between the United States and India that helped shape both countries.

The exhibition opens, as did the U.S.-India relationship, with the establishment of direct contact in the late eighteenth century. Merchant mariners along the eastern seaboard wasted no time in setting forth, eager for the opportunity to trade in India's famed export goods. American merchants preferred dealing directly with Indian commercial agents, a business decision that created opportunities to gain a deeper understanding of the country. After the East India Company lifted its ban on missionaries in 1813, evangelicals took passage on American trading vessels. Once there, many found that the Indian people were committed adherents of their own highly evolved theologies. These Americans turned their focus to other ways of serving, especially through education, medicine, and research.

Later in the nineteenth century, exchanges of knowledge expanded rapidly. Indian students began traveling to the United States for their studies, while Indian intellectuals toured American cities and towns. They shared interpretations of their philosophy and history in hopes of encouraging broader understanding of Indian civilization and the rapidly growing struggle for self-determination. In the arts, despite vastly different forms of expression, Americans and Indians discovered a shared appetite for new genres, mixtures of styles, and modes of performance with broad public appeal. As a result, a remarkable fusion of traditions transpired in music, dance, and cinema.



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As the Indian freedom movement gained increasing momentum in the early twentieth century, more and more Americans – politicians, celebrities, and ordinary citizens – came out in support of independence. In 1947, the United States and India stood together as the world’s two largest democracies with full diplomatic relations, and launched a new era of unprecedented interaction and collaboration.

Tasneem Zakaria Mehta, Managing Trustee and Hon. Director, Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Museum said, "The Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Museum is delighted to host this exhibition of early linkages and interactions between the United States and India, in collaboration with the US Consulate General, Mumbai. Featuring historically compelling photographs and documents that will be on display for the first time in Mumbai, the exhibition captures major events and also little-known moments of individual experiences, providing an insight into the cultural exchange between the two countries."

Thomas Vajda, U.S. Consul General said, "I am delighted to celebrate the historical connections and exchanges between the United States and India. Kindred Nations offers a visual and cultural experience for every Mumbaikar. The photographs, documents, and art on display trace the rich historical linkages between our two great nations, which has culminated in the strong partnership that we enjoy today."

The Kindred Nations exhibition at Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Museum coincides with the first-ever U.S.-India Partnership Day. In 2014, the U.S. Senate declared U.S.-India Partnership Day would be celebrated every 30th September in recognition of the two countries’ contributions to each other and the special and permanent bond between India and the United States.

About Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Mumbai City Museum

The Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Mumbai City Museum was established in 1872 as the erstwhile Victoria and Albert Museum, Bombay. As Mumbai’s oldest Museum, it 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.



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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.

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, and artistic and cultural developments.

For further information log on to www.bdlmuseum.org | [Like us](#) | [Follow us](#)

About U.S. Consulate General

The Consulate General seeks to promote U.S.-India relations and progress towards common goals through information outreach, dialogue and exchange in western and central India, including Mumbai and the states of Maharashtra, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and Goa.

The Consulate General of the United States of America in Mumbai was located in the former Wankaner Palace, built in 1938 by the Maharaja of Wankaner, along the Breach Candy seaface. Called Lincoln House, this building houses the officers of the Consul General, the Consulate's principal officer; the Consular Section, which offers services to American citizens in India and to Indians traveling to the United States; an economic and political section, and a management office.

At a separate facility in the Churchgate district of Mumbai, the American Center building housed four additional Consulate offices: the Public Affairs Section, which promotes mutual understanding through its public outreach programs and exchanges; the U.S. and Foreign Commercial Service, which promotes U.S. exports and trade; the Food and Drug Administration, which promotes food and drug safety; and the Foreign Agricultural Service which represents the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Since November 2011, all sections of the U.S. Consulate General Mumbai are located at a new facility in Bandra Kurla Complex.

For further information log on to <http://mumbai.usconsulate.gov/>

For Listings



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Exhibition Dates: 25th September 2015 to 25th October 2015

Exhibition Venue:

At the Kamalnayan Bajaj Special Exhibition Gallery

Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Museum

91A Rani Baug, Veer Mata Jijabai Bhonsle Udyan

Dr Baba Saheb 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 further details, please contact:

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