

SWIMMER'S MANUAL AND OTHER STORIES

Recent paintings by **Natraj Sharma**

8th April 2018 – 11th May 2018

Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Mumbai City Museum in collaboration with Vadehra Art Gallery, presents, 'Swimmer's Manual and Other Stories', recent paintings by Natraj Sharma. The exhibition will be on view at the Special Project Space, Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Museum from 8 April 2018 – 11 May 2018.



Image: Natraj Sharma, 'Swimmer's Manual', Oil on canvas, 66.5 x 119.75 in, 2018

About the Exhibition

“There’s no such thing as purity or perfection. The pursuit of which is at best a fool’s errand and at worst, dangerous. I have always been interested in mixing media, in mixed media, in mixing every damned thing up. And sometimes, if you strike lucky, you might even come close to a divine dissonance.”

Born in Mysore in 1958, the son of a restless, migratory Father, Nataraj grew up in Ethiopia, England and Zambia. The years that were spent as an outlander from the early 1960s to the late 1970s may have given him a permanent sense of the ambivalence, the plurality, and the sometimes shocking variability of the world. His childhood experience of displacement, relocation, re-acclimatisation and revised self-



definition very probably informs his refusal and contrariness to be slotted or defined within a box carpentered for him by ideologues, theorists or fellow artists.. His work is formed and nurtured by a richly hybrid genetic code. Print-making meets Collage, Photography meets Painting, Topography meets Abstraction, the Manual meets the Mechanical.

He savours the interplay of polarities: in his paintings and sculptures, his graphics and new-media works, we observe an expressive interplay between panorama and detail, dream and wakefulness, memory and transformation, planning and improvisation, the works of technology and the workings of nature. His work here is powered by the sense of creative instability and non-closure, the need to resolve the riddles and sort out the arrears and investments of the imaginative process, reverie and detour. His desire to record an interplay between pattern and chance, order and distortion.

Unbalanced in the painful sum of things: such is the artist's location, to deploy Merrill's phrase in closing. Such is the place allotted to the witness who would respond to a plurality of demands and desires: who would seclude himself in his studio to will images into being, but would also participate in life outside the studio; who would protest the horrors of his society, but also rejoice in the majesty of things sensed and proposed from levels higher and deeper than quotidian normality. There is no respite or holiday for such an imagination, no reprieve from the instinct that is also a duty, the mandate that is the source of disquiet and pleasure.”

Ranjit Hoskote. Excerpted and adapted from his essay: In a Zone of Transformation, 2006.

About the Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Mumbai City Museum

The Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Museum 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 art and culture 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 Museum was in a derelict condition and 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 several international institutions to showcase artists and exhibitions including the Victoria and Albert Museum, British Library, Solomon R Guggenheim Museum and Museum of Modern Art in an



effort to facilitate international cultural exchange.

The Museum's education and outreach programme aims to build and diversify the Museum's audiences. 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: www.facebook.com/BDLMuseum

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

Website: www.bdlmuseum.org

E-mail: enquiry@bdlmuseum.org

Telephone: +91 22 23731234

About the Vadehra Art Gallery

Vadehra Art Gallery was established in 1987 in New Delhi at a time when modern Indian art was still considered exotic and its access limited to a privileged few. The gallery was born out of a vision to build an institution dedicated to Indian art, and the need for a professional platform to connect artists with art lovers.

Vadehra Art Gallery stands today as one of the oldest and well respected art galleries in India, while representing a roster of artists that spans over four generations. Modern masters like MF Husain, Ram Kumar, SH Raza, Tyeb Mehta and Akbar Padamsee, who were integral to the founding years of the gallery, find prime spot in the gallery's calendar alongside subsequent generation of modernists like Arpita Singh, A Ramachandran, Gulammohammed Sheikh, Bhupen Khakhar, Rameshwar Broota, Paramjit Singh, Ganesh Pyne, Chameli Ramachandran, Anjolie Ela Menon and Mrinalini Mukherjee. Vadehra's contemporary programme includes some of the biggest names in Indian art today such as of Atul Dodiya, Shilpa Gupta, Anju Dodiya, Nalini Malani, Ravinder Reddy, Atul Bhalla, Praneet Soi, Sumedh Rajendran, Hema Upadhyay, BV Suresh, and Jayashree Chakravarthy. Exciting younger contemporaries include Rakhi Peswani, Zakkir Hussain, Susanta Mandal, Sujith SN, Gopin Varghese and Paribartana Mohanty.

Keeping with its wider role as an institution dedicated to the arts Vadehra Art Gallery paved the way for an active collaboration between private and public art sectors starting in the 1990s. The gallery organized seminal retrospectives with the government-run National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA) of senior artists Ram Kumar, Raghu Rai, Devyani Krishna, A Ramachandran and SH Raza. The gallery has also loaned works to Kunstmuseum, Bern; the Chicago Cultural Centre; the Women's Studies Research Centre, Brandies University; Jardin d'Acclimatation; Singapore Art Museum; and, Mori Art



Museum, Japan, among others.

As a key artistic interlocutor to the audiences in India the gallery expanded its exhibition programme in 2007 to include important names from the international contemporary art scene. This saw the opening of exhibitions like Bacon Freud Mehta Souza: an exhibition of works by Francis Bacon,

Lucian Freud, Tyeb Mehta and FN Souza (2007); Distance and Proximity: an exhibition of works of Bernd and Hilla Becher and their students Thomas Ruff, Thomas Struth and Candida Hoffer, among others (2008); Juul Kraijer: Recent works (2010); Yoko Ono: My Beautiful Daughters, with a parallel retrospective The Seeds (2012); and Wolfgang Laib's Passageway (2012).

Vadehra Art Gallery ventured into publishing in 1996, finding a crucial need for adequate documentation, critical writing, and quality reproduction of images. In the last two decades the gallery has published 10 books and hundreds of illustrated exhibition catalogues and artists' monographs, in addition to coffee table books, picture books for children, and even an art directory. In 2010 VAG entered into collaboration with the international publishing house Prestel to produce monographs on Indian artists.

For more information on Vadehra Art Gallery please visit:

Website : www.vadehraart.com

Email : art@vadehraart.com

T + 91 11 46103550 / 46103551



For Listings

Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Mumbai City Museum in collaboration with Vadehra Art Gallery presents, **'Swimmer's Manual and Other Stories'**, recent paintings by **Natraj Sharma**.

8 April 2018 – 11 May 2018

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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