

DHVANI SE ŚABD AUR CHINH

Exhibition Preview & Inauguration – 21st April, 2018 at 05:00 pm

For Public - 22nd April to 17th June 2018, NGMA, Mumbai

From 11:00 am to 06:00 pm, Closed on Mondays & National Holidays

Sculptures and paintings picked out from the NGMA Archives is an exercise that moves beyond the realms of exploration and intellectual thirst.

In a large number of works that were created within and around the Deccan plateau regions and beyond the Western and Eastern Ghats this group of works is one that defines the many art practices that were born out of European influences and moved beyond to embrace and find deep rooted meaning in Indianesque histories and narratives that explored native elements over time.

"Dhvani se Śabd aur Chinh" curated by Adwaita Gadanayak and his team, speaks to us about Southern sensibilities and singular identities that were forged through scholarly adaptations, multiple skills, and experiments that were seeking to juxtapose the notions of the modern with the traditional. It identifies artists who practiced in Southern states as well as artists who were born here/had family trees and moved up North to become the greatest practitioners and pedagogues. We are looking at a period that just followed the Partition wherein an idea of tradition, was in its genesis-as it oscillated between symbolic fantasy (Madras group) and the knowledge of truths that were generated by pure practice. The czar of the Madras Movement, K.C.S. Paniker – believed that an artist had to foreground tradition and cultural art forms and interpret these within contemporary sensibilities, leading to defining the regional modern particularly in Madras.

Hence, Paniker's regional modern was firmly fixed in the wedge between the visibility and identity of the southern artists nationally, and developing a visual language born of an Indian ethos-the vitality of the Indian spirit.

Historians have noted that the modernity which was established in Madras in the '60s integrated and blended pioneering visions of certain artist-teachers at the Madras School of Arts and Crafts.

The culling also includes Malayali veterans like K. G. Subramanyan the cultural theorist, the philosopher, the art mandarin who taught 7 decades of students as well as A. Ramachandran the scholar, the author, the art historian and the guru who taught a love for the immediate environment to his students.

“I want [my art] to flourish (so to say) in a ‘cloud of unknowing’,” K.G. Subramanyan explained in an interview, when asked about the process of his work. “For a centipede like me

to start counting my legs is suicidal,” he elaborated in that distinctly witty yet acerbic manner of his, “It will freeze me into inaction.” The phrase, “cloud of unknowing”, is the ideal frame through which to look at Southern sensibilities and imagery.

It instantly conjures up that drifting restlessness which typically characterizes the traffic between the earthy and the ethereal in many of these works. Then again, it is the artist’s self-description as an unselfconscious centipede that, more than anything helps one to make sense of the profusion of paintings spread across these galleries at the NGMA. There is indeed an arduous degree of introspection and reflection about Southern sensibility and creativity — as if some artists indulged in a Dionysian ritual that revealed, quite naturally and effortlessly in an endless proliferation of images that cut across time and space to create corollaries in multiple contexts and complexities.

A look at the monumental work by Velu Viswanadhan signifies the truth that abstraction must be born out of the symbolism of a deeper experience—the incandescent flavour of the red hues and the geometry that creates succinct planes tells us that this is a nether journey built on rumination and realization and not superficial reflections of strokes and colour.

While the visual arts in the South charted trajectories that engaged with diverse media, techniques, materials, and concepts allowing articulation of creative expression also from within the social and cultural milieu, the Indian accent born of everyday idioms—was also creating pathways. Between sculptures, paintings and prints we see an offering of possibilities mirroring the symbolic, the sacred and the secular.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF MODERN ART, MUMBAI

The genesis for the starting of the National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA) was mooted immediately post the Indian Independence and the first NGMA was opened in the National Capital New Delhi at the historic Jaipur House, one of the premier architectural edifices of Lutyens' Delhi, by the Vice-President, Dr S. Radhakrishnan, in the presence of Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and artists and art lovers of the city on March 29, 1954. The NGMA is a repository of the cultural ethos of the country and showcases the changing art forms through the passage of the last 160 years starting from about 1857 in the field of Visual and Plastic arts. This is run and administered as a subordinate office to the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, which has two branches one at Mumbai and the other in Bengaluru.

The National Gallery of Modern Art, Mumbai was opened to the public in the year 1996. It is located in the precinct of the former auditorium the Sir Cowasji Jehangir Public Hall and the Institute of Science. This architecturally marvellous building was designed and built by the famous British Architect George Wittet which has been completely redesigned keeping only the facade edifice that was the Public Hall. It hosts various national and international exhibitions and also has its own art collections comprising paintings, sculptures and graphics with a focus on Indian and International artists mainly from the progressive art group like K.H. Ara, F. N. Souza, V.S. Gaitonde, S.H. Raza and M. F. Hussain. NGMA, Mumbai has a great history and has also been able to host several spectacular exhibitions in the past, which we are continuing today. Some of the recent exhibitions include the highly successful the Bombay Art Society exhibition, which covered the landscape of the historic Bombay Art Society's existence over 125 years. NGMA, Mumbai has also hosted other notable exhibitions, which among others, include Rabindranath Tagore, Amrita Sher-Gil and Jamini Roy, Nicholas Roerich, the Parsi exhibition and a major exhibition on A. A. Almelkar from the collection of NGMA Mumbai.

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National Gallery of Modern Art, Mumbai

Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India

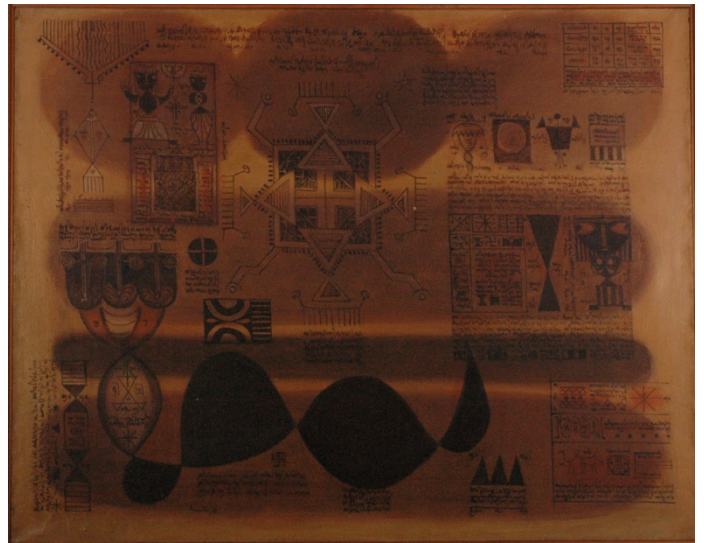
Sir C. J. P. Hall, M.G. Road, Fort

Mumbai – 400 032

Exhibits:



(a) **Roy Chowdhury, D P**
He has a Long Way to Go
Tempera (varnish on wood)
63.5 x 76.2 cm



(b) **Paniker, KCS**
Words and Symbols
Oil on canvas
152.2 x 119 cm



(c) **Vishwanathan, V.**
Red painting- 67
Oil on canvas
120 x 120 cm



(d) **Sreenivasulu, K.**
Poojari
Crayon and water colour on paper
62.5 x 75 cm



(e) **Gopal, K M**
Vision of Ganesh
Metal brass relief
91.2 x 121.8 cm



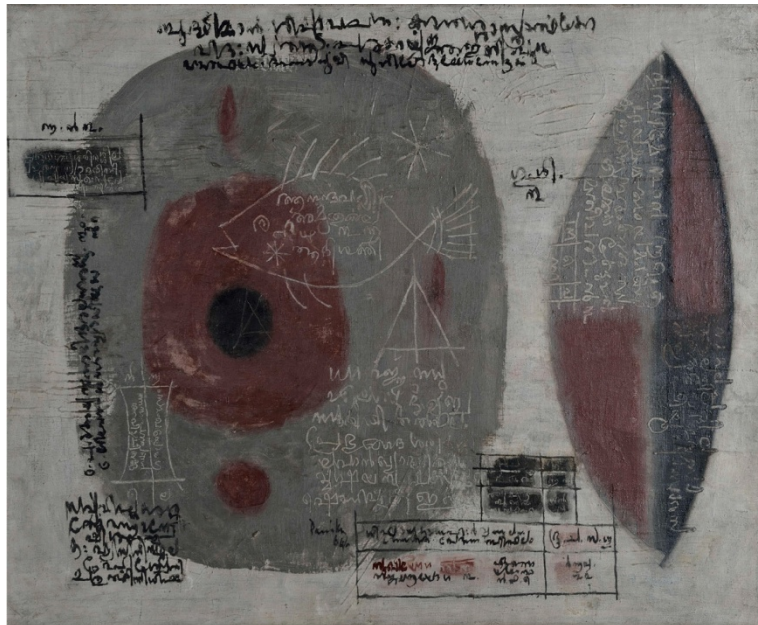
(f) **Bhaskaran, R B**
The Owl & The Moon, 1985
Etching on paper
52.5 x 74.5 cm



(g) **Mookiah, T R P**
Horse with Birds
Bronze
45 x 32 x 10 (h) cm



(h) **Jankiram, P V**
Christ, 1986
Copper Steel Metal
52 x 46 x 13(h) cm



(i) **Paniker, KCS,**
Words and Symbol,
Oil on canvas,
63 x 75 cm