

INTRODUCTION TO INDIAN ART

KL LIFESTYLE ART SPACE PRESENTS 3 INDIAN ARTISTS

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Indian art encompasses a variety of forms and originated about five thousand years ago, sometime during the peak of the Indus Valley civilisation. Largely influenced by a civilisation that came into existence in the 3rd millennium B.C., it blends the spiritual and the sensual, making it rather distinctive in form and appearance. However, progressively, Indian art has undergone several transformations and influenced by various cultures, making it more diverse and more inclusive of its people.

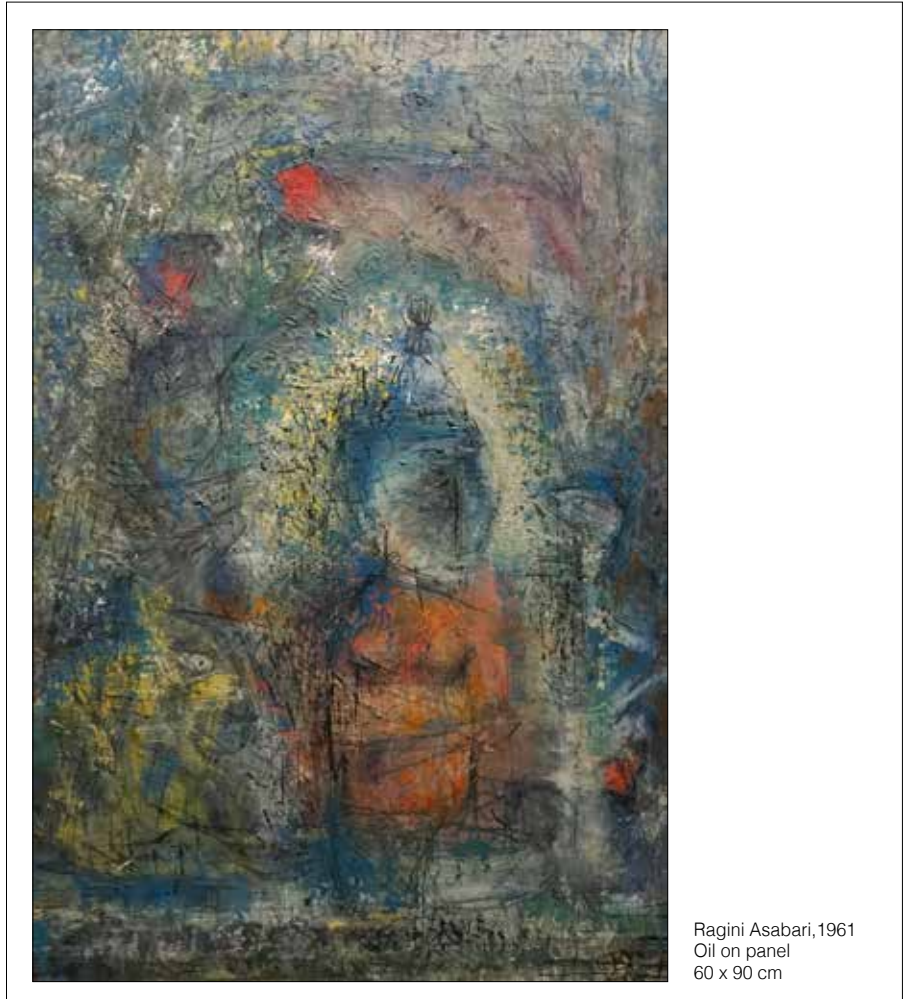
PARITOSH SEN

Paritosh Sen was a painter, illustrator, tutor and writer, who was a part of the world of Indian art, for close to four decades. He was born in Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh on Oct 18, 1919 and was a founding member of the Calcutta Group — an art movement established in 1942 which played an important role in ushering modernism into Indian art. Allured by the pages of the Bengali art journal, Prabasi, Sen ran away to Madras, to learn art.

Graduating with a Diploma in Fine Arts from the Government College of Arts and Crafts, Chennai, Sen moved to Calcutta in 1942, where he and a group of young Bengalis formed the Calcutta Group — an association of artists that sought to incorporate contemporary values in Indian art. In 1949, Sen left for Paris to pursue his passion, attending, among other institutes, the Ecole des Beaux Arts. He received a Fellowship for 1970-'71 from the John D. Rockefeller III Fund. The Indian artist's visit to Paris in 1949 was what got him closer acquainted with European art and its artists. Meeting Pablo Picasso was the highlight of his life.

Sen is recognisable for his caricature works, which strongly reflect underlying socio-political shades, and his female nude drawings. The artist's representation of art is laced with a hint of cubism and traces of modernity from his exposure to Western Modern Art. He used two-dimensional, structured planes but still created an illusion of voluptuousness. One can easily discern the strong lines and bold, stylised strokes in Sen's paintings. Although colour is an important aspect of his paintings, it is the human figure, expressing a myriad of emotions, that dominates his art. A repetitive subject in Sen's works is his depiction of scenes from everyday urban life. These activities were rendered from a cynical and detached perspective, which was typically Sen's viewpoint.

Upon his return to India, Sen survived on teaching jobs that allowed him to stay in



Ragini Asabari, 1961
Oil on panel
60 x 90 cm

Calcutta, from 1956 onwards. This was when a closer and more direct involvement with the city developed, where he witnessed the sufferings of the poor. Fuelled by his emotions, the artist's palette became passionately expressionistic with varying shades of raw umber and earthy brown. Clouds of colour laid on the canvas with the cruel abandon of palette knife replaced the linear depiction of defined forms that resurfaced in his art at regular intervals. He had married in between

and visited Europe, USA, Egypt and Mexico many times.

A prolific writer, Sen published many works in both Bengali and English, including a series of autobiographical vignettes titled, 'Jindabaha Lane'. His works have been exhibited in India and internationally, in Paris, London, Germany, Tokyo and in the US. Paritosh Sen passed away in October 2008.