



Edition

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# Artistic Echoes

*Harmonies of Creativity and Inspiration*



SEASON 1



# Artistic Echoes

*Harmonies of Creativity and Inspiration*

IDEATION & CONCEPTUALISATION : POOJA PRASUN  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF FOR PROJECT : POOJA PRASUN  
EDITOR-IN- CHIEF ENGLISH : DR ANAGHA NAIK  
CHIEF CO-ORDINATOR : SUNITA CHAUHAN  
EDITOR : TEAM ARTISTIC ECHOES  
DESIGNER : CREATORS DEN  
PROOFREADER : TEAM VOICE VISTA

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SINCERELY,  
EDITORIAL TEAM



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## Season 1

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## Editorial Note

Welcome to the eighth edition of Voice Vista magazine. In this issue, titled “Artistic Echoes,” we embark on a journey through the diverse realms of art, spotlighting the visionaries who shape our cultural landscape.

From the mesmerizing melodies of Dnyaneshwar Kasar Ji to the architectural wonders of Shrawani Prasad, each artist featured here illuminates their craft with passion and innovation. We delve into the intricate world of Nilesh Deshpande Ji’s Maha Rangoli and experience the grace and elegance of Rekha Nadgauda Ji’s Kathak performances.

Vidya Karanjikar shares her insights into the transformative power of acting, while Mohini Poddar invites us into her world of ethereal creations. Lastly, Dhananjay Govardhane offers a glimpse into his artistic process, painting stories of resilience and beauty on canvas. As you immerse yourself in these captivating stories, may you find inspiration in the dedication and creativity of these remarkable individuals. “Artistic Echoes” is a testament to the enduring impact of art on our lives, reminding us of its ability to inspire, provoke thought, and bring joy.

Enjoy the journey through these artistic echoes, and thank you for joining us in celebrating the richness of human expression.

Warm regards,  
Dr Anagha Naik  
Chief Editor



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Editorial Note

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the eighth edition of Voice Vista magazine, a celebration of artistic brilliance and creativity. As the founder and owner of Voice Vista, and the visionary behind this magazine, it is with immense pride and joy that I present to you “Artistic Echoes,” a special edition dedicated to the luminaries from various artistic realms who infuse our lives with beauty and inspiration.

In this edition, we bring you intimate conversations with seven extraordinary artists, each a maestro in their own right. These individuals have not only mastered their crafts but have also touched countless lives with their passion and dedication.

We begin with Dnyaneshwar Kasar Ji, whose melodious journey as a maestro of melody has enchanted audiences far and wide. His insights into the world of music offer a profound understanding of the harmonies that touch the soul.

Next, we explore the ethereal world of Mohini Poddar, whose artistic creations transform dreams into reality. Her journey is a testament to the transformative power of art and the endless possibilities it holds.

Shrawani Prasad, the visionary behind Ajanta on Wheels, takes us on a rolling journey through history. Her architectural marvels breathe life into ancient art, making history accessible and vibrant.

In the vibrant realm of rangoli, Nilesh Deshpande Ji stands as a maestro of Maha Rangoli. His rivers of color flow with tradition and innovation, creating ephemeral masterpieces that captivate and inspire.

Rekha Nadgauda Ji, the maestro of Kathak, shares her graceful journey in motion. Her dedication to this classical dance form is a celebration of culture, tradition, and the beauty of expression through movement.

We then delve into the world of acting with Vidya Karanjikar, whose passion for the stage and screen has made significant cultural contributions. Her journey through art is a blend of resilience, talent, and an unwavering commitment to her craft.

Finally, we bring you the story of Dhananjay Govardhane, Nashik’s esteemed painter. His brushstrokes of resilience reflect a lifetime of dedication to capturing the essence of life on canvas, turning everyday moments into timeless works of art.

Each artist featured in this edition embodies the spirit of creativity and the endless pursuit of excellence. Their stories are a source of inspiration, reminding us of the profound impact that art has on our lives and the world around us.

As you immerse yourself in the pages of “Artistic Echoes,” may you find not only inspiration but also a deeper appreciation for the diverse tapestry of human creativity. Thank you for joining us in celebrating these remarkable individuals and their contributions to the world of art.

Warmest regards,

*Pooja Prasad*

Founder and Owner, Voice Vista

Concept Creator, Voice Vista Magazine





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"Harmonies of the Soul: An Insightful Conversation with Dnyaneshwar Kasar Ji, Maestro of Melody"

Welcome to another inspiring episode of "Between the Covers." Today, we have the honor of hosting a maestro whose voice has transcended boundaries and touched the hearts of many. A virtuoso in the world of music, his journey is a testament to dedication, passion, and the relentless pursuit of excellence. Join us as we delve into the life and wisdom of Dnyaneshwar Kasar Ji, Maestro of Melody. Together, we will explore his artistic path, the philosophies that guide him, and the profound impact of his music on society.

1. Dnyaneshwar Ji, your voice has captivated audiences and earned you a place among the most renowned singers. Can you share with us the journey of how you discovered your passion for singing and embarked on your musical career?

By fortune, I belong to a musically enriched family. Both my paternal and maternal families have a strong tradition of music. Additionally, the religious atmosphere in both families was very conducive to music education. Music was inherited by lineage, but the environment after birth was so influential that music has been an integral part of our lives since then. Our family is filled with the essence of devotional music, classical music, theatrical music, and film music. The day would start with music and end with music!

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Naturally, music took root. Both the necessary 'ear' and 'voice' for music were being developed. My school truly introduced me to the notes in my voice and brought them to the public. In the third grade, a song I sang during a music class exam was so well-received that I was regularly requested to sing in front of the entire school during prayer time. Over time, competitions and programs gradually built my confidence. I consistently won first place in every competition. My parents started sending me to classical music classes in the fourth grade. Swati Deshmukh, Shubhangi Bhawsar, and Rajendra Puranik of the Gwalior Gharana laid the solid foundation of my primary music education. My uncle, who was well-established in this field, would regularly take me along for his program rehearsals and All India Radio recordings. I was exposed to highly refined music from great artists, which left a deep impression on me. Gradually, I started singing in good programs in the city and at All India Radio recordings. By the time I was in the 10th grade, I had also completed 'Sangeet Visharad.' Later, I had the opportunity to learn from the legendary playback singer Padma Shri Dr. Suresh Wadkar. I stayed at his Gurukul in Mumbai and deeply studied and practiced classical music.

That experience provided me with a new perspective. It was a joy to see, talk, and work musically with those eminent personalities whom I had only seen on TV.

I also graduated in English. However, by then, I had decided that music was my breath, life, and sustenance. Since childhood, I had a strong desire to pursue formal higher education in music. I completed undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in music with special distinction. I also passed the challenging NET exam in music twice consecutively. Currently, I am pursuing a doctorate in 'Music Education' and continuing my musical training under the senior vocalist of the Kirana Gharana, Pt. Dr. Aviraj Tayade. Meanwhile, I became a recognized high-grade singer of light and classical music on All India Radio. I created many excellent works in the fields of playback singing and music direction, which have been acknowledged with several awards from various institutions. I have enjoyed teaching music for over 18 years. Looking back at the journey that started at the age of eight, filled with numerous challenges, consistent efforts, joys, sorrows, successes, and failures, there is certainly a strong sense of satisfaction.



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This journey has brought me here, thanks to like-minded friends, mentors, and family who prioritized and valued music. There's still much work to be done, and I will continue to pursue it!

2. As a celebrated singer, you have touched the hearts of many with your performances. What inspires your interpretation of songs and your connection to the music you sing?

When I sing, I never carry the feeling that I am "singing." Music is a powerful medium of communication. This communication becomes impactful when the emotions you feel are conveyed directly to the listener's heart. Whether it's joy, sorrow, love, compassion, devotion, or peace, the medium of this communication is your voice and melody. This medium must be healthy, robust, relevant, and filled with aesthetic appeal. Consistent effort is required for this. In these efforts, your art becomes so deeply ingrained in your body, mind, and heart that it cannot be separately displayed from your personality. Your art becomes your 'nature,' and your nature becomes your 'action.' The great artists in the history of our artistic tradition have excelled in this manner. The same joy that ordinary people derive from an artist's work is what every music practitioner and artist aims to offer to the audience. Ultimately, only if an artist finds joy in their art can they give it to others, and achieving this balance takes up half of an artist's life. The journey beyond that is quite unique, attainable only by a few artists. I am fortunate to have closely observed many such dedicated music practitioners. Despite the declining physical abilities with age, their love for the art never diminishes; in fact, it becomes stronger. Generally, repeated actions can lead to boredom over time, but an artist is unique in this regard. Only those who are deeply devoted to the vastness of music deserve to be called 'artists.' This is the appropriate recognition.



3: Can you delve into the emotions and experiences that drive your choice of repertoire, and how you strive to imbue each performance with authenticity and depth?

Music is like a vast ocean, with numerous subtopics, and within those, even more subtopics. General listeners and connoisseurs explore these subtopics in their own ways. Some explore music for dancing, some for calming down, some to rekindle sweet and happy memories, and some to forget their sorrows. There are countless reasons to establish music's place in one's life.





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As a singer, I am aware that I cannot cater to everyone. In my practice and pursuit, I try to share the profound beauty, which is eternally beautiful and divine, that I have experienced with the audience. Everyone appreciates pure and heartfelt singing. Now, there is the question of visible beauty and invisible beauty. For example, someone might like a particular song or raga. Hearing that song or raga anywhere makes them joyful—this is visible beauty. On the other hand, someone might never have heard a certain song or raga before but still finds joy in it—that is invisible beauty. In my performances, I strive to bring both forms of beauty to the forefront. The audience enjoys it according to their habits, preferences, and tastes. Sometimes, in the same session, someone might be moved to tears of joy while another person might not react visibly at all. This is all based on previous experiences. As artists, we attempt to capture the essence of truth, goodness, and beauty in our art and try to share it with our audience.

4: Your vocal style is admired for its versatility and expressiveness. How do you approach adapting your voice to convey different moods and genres of music?

I once attended a concert by the renowned santoor player, Pandit Shivkumar Sharma. During the performance, he paused and said, “We no longer bind ourselves to the rules of raga and tala. We don’t consciously study the grammar of music or count the beats. What matters to us now is the ‘emotion’ of the raga. I play the santoor with this feeling in mind. We don’t focus on the number of beats but on the essence of the music.” This was a profound lesson for practitioners like us. The ultimate stage of music creation is the generation of ‘emotion.’ Instead of being entangled in technique and creating ‘dry’ music, an artist should seek different avenues of emotional expression. This approach should be applicable across all genres of music, whether it’s emotional, classical, folk, or instrumental music. I believe that music has been categorized into different genres for our convenience. All music is essentially the same; none is particularly difficult or easy. When singing emotional music, knowledge of classical and folk music is essential. Conversely, while studying classical music, an understanding of emotional and folk music is necessary. I am a fan and practitioner of all these music genres.



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I listen to, immerse myself in, and sing all types of music. It only requires minor technical adjustments, direction of thought, and proper setup. This maturity, however, comes from continuous hard work. I have received such musical influences from all my teachers, friends, and family.

5: Your performances have resonated with audiences across various platforms. How do you engage with your listeners and create a memorable experience for them through your music?

'Simplicity' is a supreme quality in the art of music. The more 'simple' the process of creating music, the more 'beautiful' it becomes. From the perspective of general audiences, this simplicity is highly appreciated. I place great importance on simplicity in my music practice. General listeners are not very aware of the technical aspects of music. They focus on melody, pronunciation, emotional expression, and instrumental harmony. Hence, even if you perform intricate and challenging taans (rapid melodic passages), they may consider it a routine occurrence. Therefore, the creations should be crafted to be appealing, digestible, and enjoyable for them, while still incorporating your difficult conceptual artistry but executed with simplicity!

6: Could you share with us some memorable moments or challenges you've encountered in your journey as a singer, and how these experiences have shaped your artistic expression?

As a singer and music director, I have many memorable moments. From a young age, I have followed great singers who are my idols, not knowing if I would ever meet them. To my astonishment, these revered singers have performed for me, sung under my direction, conversed with me for hours, and praised my work. This dreamlike reality has unfolded in my life. Esteemed artists like Guruji Suresh Wadkar, ghazal maestro Hariharan, classical singer Vidushi Aarti Ankalikar, flutist Ronu Majumdar, senior santoor player Pandit Ulhas Bapat, and South Indian singer Bijay Prakash have participated in music I directed.

A remarkable incident happened with Hariharanji. I contacted him to sing one of my compositions, and his assistant mentioned, "If he likes your song, he will sing it. He is currently on a US tour and will return soon." To



my great surprise, his assistant called me at 8 AM on the third day, saying, "Namaste, Hariji wants to talk to you," and handed the phone to Hariharanji. He spoke to me for 15 minutes, saying, "I genuinely liked your song. I will definitely sing it. In fact, I am already rehearsing it. I listened to it on the plane and started recording early this morning. Did you sing the song you sent? It is so well sung; why do you want me to sing it? You should sing it yourself. How old are you? You sang with great maturity. God bless you." I am still elated knowing that my deity loved my song.

Numerous prominent occasions have blessed me with pats on the back and blessings from distinguished musicians present in the audience. Esteemed artists like Pandit Ulhas Kashalkar, Pandit Suresh Talwalkar, and Pandit Yogesh Samsi have bestowed their blessings upon me. There are many such cherished moments.

7. In your view, what role does music play in enriching and uplifting the human experience, and how do you hope your contributions as a singer contribute to this?

In today's world, the perception of music's role in our lives is often surprising. Music is commonly seen as a source of entertainment and a way to pass the time. While this is partly true, it is not the entire truth. Music is not considered one of the fundamental needs like food, clothing, and shelter. However, if we observe closely, we will see that music has been an integral part of human life since ancient times. Music is deeply intertwined with human existence. The very first sign of life is a sound. When a newborn cries, it signals life, bringing relief and joy to everyone around. The heartbeat and pulse have a rhythm. The sound within the human body symbolizes vitality, expressed through breath. From birth to death, we live in a musical environment.

A newborn baby, who cannot even recognize its mother, calms down when it hears a lullaby or the sound of a rattle. Our journey with music starts from birth and often ends with the rhythmic beats of drums or the sounds of hymns at the time of passing. In our Indian culture, many of the sixteen rituals (samskaras) performed from birth to death have a close connection with music.

The complete development of a personality is possible when there is a balance between cognitive, practical, and emotional growth. Fine arts (music, drama, dance, sculpture, literature, painting) are closely linked with emotional development. The study of arts instills dedication, loyalty, and discipline. Art and literature build cultural values, leading to civilization, morality, stability, and peace in society. Societies with such values lead the world. India stands apart in this regard, attracting people from foreign lands to learn and absorb these values over years.

Given the significance of music, its place in human life is paramount. I have been involved in music education for the past 18 years, teaching school and college students. Many of my students have established themselves in the music field, either as educators or professional artists. There is a pressing need for today's youth to enter and stabilize in this field. Exploring new paths and making music education socially relevant is essential, and I am dedicated to this endeavor.





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8. As a guardian of musical heritage, what aspect of your work as a singer do you find most fulfilling and rewarding?

Among my roles as a singer, composer, and music arranger, I find the role of a music teacher the most fulfilling. If I want to make a substantial contribution or investment for the future of the music field, it is through being a music teacher. In today's fast-paced world filled with distractions, teaching music to the new generation is quite challenging. It involves instilling deep-rooted traditions and meeting rapidly changing expectations and ambitions. This is a challenging journey, balancing high-quality music education and nurturing future music teachers and artists. It is essential to recognize that good music education is a necessary requirement for the future society.

9. How do you stay inspired and motivated to continue honing your craft and exploring new avenues of musical expression?

To stay motivated, I consistently listen to and sing good music, read extensively, seek the company of my mentors, and practice mindfulness. Besides music, I have other interests, such as space, the ocean, animals, cricket, and badminton. I read books and watch videos on these topics. I also enjoy watching comedy shows. Being somewhat tech-savvy, I like experimenting with audio and video recordings using different software. Most importantly, daily practice is my primary source of energy and inspiration.

10. Beyond your performances, are there any other facets of music or projects that intrigue you or that you aspire to explore further in your musical journey?

Certainly. I am always contemplating the fusion of classical music with contemporary fusion music. I have already created several compositions in this direction and intend to explore more in the future.

11. What advice would you offer to aspiring singers who are eager to pursue their passion for music and follow in your footsteps?

I would strongly recommend two things to new singers. First, learn extensively, practice diligently, listen to good music, understand the traditions, and respect them. Second, strive to become a good person. Words like love, compassion, humility, dedication, hard work, and perseverance are not just meant to be read in books; they should be incorporated into daily life. Aim to be a good person first and then an artist. When you surround yourself with good people, you are influenced by positive values, enabling you to discern between right and wrong.

12. Looking ahead, what trends or shifts do you anticipate shaping the future landscape of music, and how do you envision adapting to these changes?





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On a closer look, you'll notice that the world is moving towards specificity and micro-level work. In the future, superficial efforts will find no takers. Whatever field you are working in, you will need to delve deeply into it. Through study and consistent efforts, you will have to master the skills, information, and knowledge of that field. You'll need to contribute your thoughts and knowledge to it. Music is a rapidly changing field, with new trends emerging daily. It's important to analyze these trends, discern the good from the bad, and adapt accordingly, while ensuring the luminous tradition of music remains undiminished. Musicians should remember the high values of music creation. Just because something different has come into the market and people are chasing it doesn't mean we should do the same. Discerning audiences should also keep away from such market-driven tendencies. Just as we choose high-quality products with thoughtful consideration, the same principle should apply here.

13. Can you impart any personal philosophies or guiding principles that underpin your approach to singing and connecting with your audience?

Certainly. I am a religious person by nature, a value instilled in me since childhood. Even though God is an invisible force, it plays a significant role in our lives. This force provides the inspiration needed for practice and the energy to persevere. The success achieved through dedicated practice is also a gift from this force. Therefore, it is essential to dedicate the beginning and end of each action to this divine force. Music is not merely a form of entertainment; it is a subject of inner joy. We should ponder why God has given us the gift of music. The fundamental elements of music, melody, and rhythm, are inherently invisible, untouchable, formless, and attribute-less. Hence, while studying music, we should have a fervent belief that we are attaining divinity. The role of a guru in our lives is invaluable, guiding us to the final destination. It is essential to follow the path shown by them with trust.





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14. Lastly, what message or sentiment do you aspire for your performances to convey to listeners, and how do you envision them resonating with audiences on a deeper level?

'Joy' is the invisible emotion behind every action. Music, as an art form, is a vehicle leading to the land of joy. When performing, we are the drivers of this vehicle, and the audience are the passengers. Our duty is to make them experience joy, provide them a respite from their sorrows and difficulties, and remind them of the joyful moments in their lives. The joyful and satisfied faces of the audience are the true reward for an artist. While doing this, the artist themselves becomes enriched. Hence, the culmination of every artistic endeavor is to enrich oneself along with the audience.

15. How do you see your role as a singer contributing to the cultural tapestry and emotional resonance of society, both locally and globally?

As I mentioned earlier, confidently exploring the realms of art can undoubtedly create works beneficial for societal well-being. I aim to perform every action in a way that sets an ideal example for future generations. If given the opportunity or responsibility to make significant changes or implement established traditions in the cultural sphere, I will certainly fulfill it to the best of my abilities. I will continually strive to instill essential artistic habits in everyone I come in contact with.

As we conclude this enriching conversation, we are reminded of the timeless power of music to elevate, heal, and unite us. Dnyaneshwar Kasar Ji's journey is not just a narrative of musical mastery but a beacon of inspiration for aspiring artists everywhere. His insights and philosophies resonate deeply, encouraging us all to pursue our passions with integrity and heart. Thank you, Dnyaneshwar Ji, for sharing your invaluable experiences and wisdom. To our listeners, may this episode leave you inspired to embrace your own creative journeys with the same fervor and dedication. Until next time, keep the melodies of life alive and ever-vibrant.



**Ideation & Conceptualisation : Pooja Prasun**

**Editor in Chief : Pooja Prasun**

**English Editor in Chief : Dr Anagha Naik**

**Chief Co-ordinator : Sunita Chauhan**

**Proof Reader : Team Voice Vista**

**Designed by : Creators Den**

**Creators Den**  
URBAN SPACE



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## Ethereal Creations: A Journey with Mohini Poddar, Shaping Dreams through Art

Welcome to another inspiring feature in our magazine, where we delve into the captivating journeys of creative visionaries. Today, we are honored to present Mohini Poddar, a distinguished creative art director whose work transcends the conventional and captivates the soul. With a blend of innovation and artistry, Mohini has redefined the boundaries of visual storytelling. Join us as we explore her artistic evolution, the challenges she's overcome, and the inspirations that have fueled her remarkable career.

1. Mohini, your work as a creative art director has touched many lives. Can you share with us what initially drew you to the world of art and design?

For the past 30 years, I have worked in the fields of theater and acting, always staying close to colors. In truth, regardless of your field, you inevitably interact with colors. From a young age, painting was an innate talent for me. I believed that painting and colors were the best tools to express emotions, which is why I decided not to confine my art to just lines, colors, and canvases but to explore all related fields. After completing my education in painting, I started working in stage design for theater and set design for films, as well as costume design.



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2. Throughout your career, what have been some of the defining moments or projects that have shaped your artistic journey?

My career ran parallel in both acting and painting. Often, one job would lead to another. Once, at one of my painting exhibitions, a director from a prestigious company saw my work and selected me as a model for the World Gold Council. Thanks to my painting, I entered the realm of print media. The emotions I depicted in my paintings were captured on my face, and I was thrilled when I was offered that project. That was a memorable moment in my life. Since then, I have worked in almost 150 advertisements.

3. How do you approach the process of translating your creative vision into tangible works of art?

Since childhood, I have had the habit of closely observing small details. We encounter many people, animals, and situations around us, and I enjoyed capturing the simplicity and liveliness in them. This habit helped me portray characters in acting as well as in painting. I strive to make my paintings as lifelike as possible. This observation skill helps me make my paintings and performances realistic and captivating. Most of my paintings are realistic, and I use various mediums to make them more lifelike.

4. Can you walk us through a project that challenged you the most, and how did you overcome obstacles to bring your vision to life?

Despite painting for 30 years, each painting is a challenge. I work on it until it pleases me. However, a particular incident happened a year ago that posed a significant challenge. It is easier to paint something seen, but depicting something that someone has envisioned or seen in a dream is difficult. A year ago, a practitioner of the Narmada Parikrama approached me, asking me to paint a picture of Goddess Indrayani as they had seen her during the Parikrama. This goddess had no existing photos, and I had to create her image based solely on their description. It was a challenging task as I had to get every detail right. One night, out of frustration, I prayed to the goddess for help. The next day, with renewed energy, I completed the painting. The practitioner was so moved they cried upon seeing it, and that moment made all my efforts worthwhile. Today, thousands worship this image during the Parikrama, which fills me with immense pride.

5. What role do you believe art plays in society, and how do you hope your creations impact those who experience them?





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In my view, having any form of art is essential as it makes us positive and enriched. I started color therapy for many people, especially women, facing mental stress or infertility, to help them gain the positivity I find in my painting. Art shouldn't be limited to creating and selling framed pictures; it should also serve society. Although I am not a doctor, many women, children, and elderly people have benefited from my color therapy. Their blessings affirm that my art has a meaningful purpose beyond just creating it.

6. As a creative professional, where do you draw inspiration from, and how do you nurture your creativity?

Every person I meet, daily experiences, my childhood, and my travels significantly influence my art. These elements inspire new subjects and ideas. To maintain this flow of creativity, I travel a lot. Each journey becomes a canvas where I capture all experiences, people, and nature, helping my art to evolve continuously.

7. In your opinion, what are the key elements that make a piece of art truly resonate with its audience?

Not every painting must resonate with the viewer on a personal level. Many people relate to art, movies, theater characters, or songs personally. However, sometimes, just enjoying the artwork is more important. Every piece of art doesn't have to be relatable, but the emotions within should be conveyed and readable to the audience.



8. How do you navigate the balance between artistic expression and meeting the practical needs of a project?

The more freedom an artist has, the better their work flourishes. However, from a professional standpoint, this is not always feasible, as it's essential to balance the client's needs with the artist's creative expression. Often, managing time, money, and artistic vision can be challenging. From experience, I've learned to align my abilities with the client's expectations while maintaining high standards of work. Correcting initial mistakes and accepting new challenges is the key.

9. Can you share any advice or lessons learned from your journey that you believe would be valuable for aspiring artists and designers?

In art, there's no such thing as winning or losing; every art form is great in its own right. One lesson I learned is that no one taught me painting or acting; I learned through my own mistakes. I accept the consequences of my actions. I advise



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aspiring artists to first accept themselves, embrace their mistakes, and remain true to their art. Do not compete with others; be honest with your work. Each artist should create their unique style, as all great artists became famous due to their distinctive styles. Keep pursuing your goals, and value your creations as priceless treasures.

10. What are your thoughts on the evolving landscape of art and design in today's digital age, and how do you see yourself adapting to these changes?

In this digital era, artists should leverage social media to their advantage. Platforms like YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook are blessings for artists, offering new ideas and expanding the audience. Proper use of these platforms can showcase your work to thousands instantly. During the COVID-19 pandemic, I created eight e-books on painting, making them accessible to anyone at home. Later, Yashwantrao Chavan Maharashtra Open University adopted these books and started a diploma in fine art painting. Using online methods, I now teach painting to students across Maharashtra. YouTube offers various teaching methods, enabling students from all corners to learn.

11. As an artist based in Nashik, how has the city and its culture influenced your work? Having lived in Nashik for 24 years, the city's natural beauty, food culture, historical and spiritual temples have influenced my art. As I mentioned earlier, I love creating realistic paintings, and I've painted many iconic elements of Nashik. Recently, a painting of the famous Nashik Misal Pav was sold to an American buyer. I'm very proud to be part of such a diverse and beautiful city.



12. Are there any particular themes or concepts that you find yourself consistently drawn to in your art?

I am quite spiritual, so I enjoy painting symbolic images. I use various symbols to express different emotions. Many of my paintings feature footprints, representing the significance of every step in life, be it a child's first step, the steps of Goddess Lakshmi, or a bride's entrance. Each step creates new beginnings and new creations, making footprints significant in my work.

13. What role do you believe collaboration plays in the creative process, and how do you approach working with other artists or clients?

Collaboration is a widely popular concept nowadays, and I personally enjoy it. Modern times demand that we take advantage of it. Combining different individuals, thoughts, and artworks can lead to new creations, beneficial for



artists. However, there are exceptions where economic aspects must be managed carefully to avoid exploitation. Therefore, it's essential to be mindful of whom you collaborate with.

14. Looking ahead, what are some of your aspirations or goals for the future of your artistic career?

As an artist, I continue to work as an art director for films and theater, but alongside, I want to expand the concept of 'color therapy' to reach more people. Not many know about this. I plan to establish centers for color therapy in different regions, catering to children, IT professionals, women, and the elderly, to help them overcome mental stress through art.

15. Lastly, what message or inspiration would you like to share with our readers, who may themselves be seeking to pursue their passion for art and design?

Always remain honest with your art. If you immerse yourself in your work, the results will follow. Copying another's art is easy, but you can never replicate their skill and dedication. Develop your unique style, one that cannot be copied, one that is self-made. Great artists are known worldwide for their distinct styles. Therefore, never lose sight of your goals and continuously pursue your art. Consider each creation as a valuable asset and cherish it.

As we conclude this enlightening interview with Mohini Poddar, we are reminded of the transformative power of art and creativity. Her journey is a testament to the beauty of perseverance and the magic of imagination. We hope her story inspires you to embrace your own creative passions and pursue them with unwavering dedication. Stay tuned for more stories of extraordinary talents in our upcoming issues.

## Artistic Echoes

*Harmonies of Creativity and Inspiration*



**Ideation & Conceptualisation : Pooja Prasun**  
**Editor in Chief : Pooja Prasun**  
**English Editor in Chief : Dr Anagha Naik**  
**Chief Co-ordinator : Sunita Chauhan**  
**Proof Reader : Team Voice Vista**  
**Designed by : Creators Den**

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# Artistic Echoes

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“Rolling History: A Conversation with Shrawani Prasad, Architect of Ajanta on Wheels”

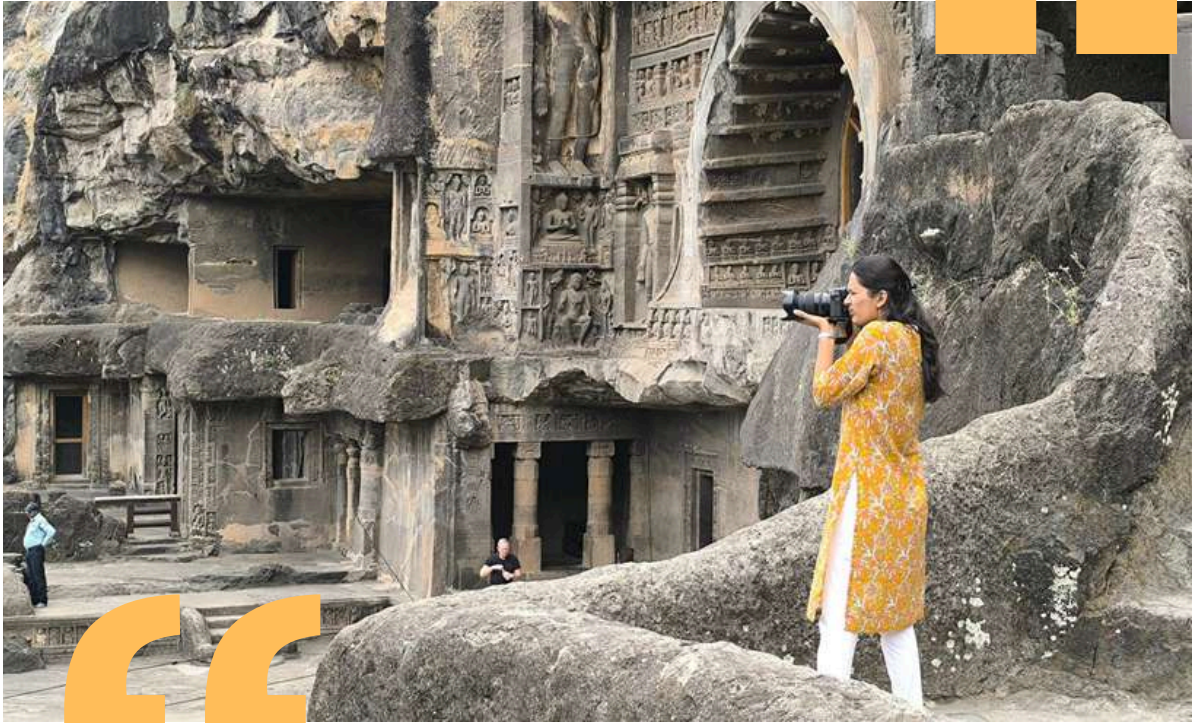
Welcome to another insightful edition of our magazine, where we delve into the stories behind remarkable initiatives that preserve and promote our rich cultural heritage. In this issue, we have the privilege of featuring an inspiring conversation with Shrawani Prasad, the visionary architect behind the groundbreaking “Ajanta on Wheels” project. Join us as we explore her journey of bringing the magnificent Ajanta Caves to the wider audience through an innovative and mobile platform. Discover the passion, challenges, and triumphs that have shaped her mission to make India’s ancient art and history accessible to all.

1. Shrawani, your initiative to bring Ajanta on wheels is both visionary and impactful. Can you share with us what inspired you to embark on this innovative project?

When I was in the 4th grade, I visited the Ajanta caves for the first time. Before that, I had only seen the Padavleni cave near my hometown, Nasik. Ajanta Caves, located 105 km from Chh. Sambhaji Nagar (previously Aurangabad), were a mystery to me. My dad hired a guide who used a torch to highlight the paintings and narrate the Jataka Tales. However, I struggled to see and understand the characters due to the darkness and deterioration of the artworks.

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Later, my dad, Mr. Prasad Pawar, a research photographer and restoration artist, organized a Glorious Ajanta exhibition under the Prasadpawar Foundation. The exhibition brought the paintings and sculptures close to me, and my dad explained them in detail. This experience filled me with happiness and understanding, inspiring me to think about how this could be shared with others.

Realizing that many children face the same difficulties I did, I thought, "If an exhibition helped me, why can't it help others?" This led to the conception of the Ajanta on Wheels project, aimed at bringing this cultural treasure closer to the younger generation.

2. As a young dynamic individual, what motivated you to use mobile platforms to raise awareness about Indian heritage, specifically the Ajanta caves?

The mobile platform is crucial for raising awareness about Ajanta Caves, an Indian heritage site spanning hundreds of kilometers. Traveling long distances to see these monuments can be challenging, especially for students. By bringing high-quality images and interactive exhibits to schools, we can inspire students and make them appreciate this cultural heritage. Understanding the fine art elements in their own environment will help students grasp the significance

of Ajanta better, reinforcing the desire to preserve and celebrate our cultural heritage.

3. Can you walk us through the process of conceptualizing and implementing the Ajanta on Wheels project? What were some of the challenges you faced along the way?

The primary concept of Ajanta on Wheels is to connect every Indian with our history, art, music, and sculpture. We created an interactive exhibition featuring 30 high-quality canvas images, an audio-video projector, and a miniature scale model of Cave No. 1. The exhibition travels to schools, both urban and rural, and includes volunteers to guide students and answer their questions.

One major challenge was making the paintings accessible to students at their intellectual level. We researched extensively to develop a teaching method that includes sketches and explanations in simple language. Understanding Ajanta's paintings requires the three R's: Read, Write, and Recall. Overcoming the difficulty of explaining complex art to young minds was a significant hurdle, but we succeeded through careful planning and dedicated efforts.



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4. How do you believe featuring Ajanta on a mobile platform contributes to preserving and promoting our rich cultural heritage?

Education is key to understanding and preserving our cultural heritage. By bringing Ajanta on Wheels to schools, we provide students with a tangible connection to their history. Visual learning is powerful; a single painting can convey the content of thousands of books. Ajanta on Wheels allows young minds to analyze and appreciate the importance of these monuments, fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of our heritage.

5. What significance do the Ajanta caves hold for you personally, and why do you feel it's important to share their story with a wider audience through this unconventional approach?

Ajanta represents joy, happiness, and glory for me. It's like a time machine that takes me back to a beautiful ancient world. As an artist, I marvel at the skill and dedication of the unknown artists who created these masterpieces. Ajanta is a mirror reflecting 2000 years of Indian history, art, philosophy, social life, and rich culture. Sharing this with a wider audience helps them connect with our glorious past and appreciate the extraordinary talent of our ancestors.

6. In what ways do you hope this initiative will engage and educate people about the history and significance of Indian art and architecture?

Ajanta on Wheels uses visual storytelling, a method perfected 2000 years ago in India. By understanding the aesthetics and techniques behind the paintings and sculptures, students can appreciate the rich legacy of Indian art and architecture. Our initiative aims to increase aesthetic knowledge in a scientifically correct manner, ensuring that the next generation maintains this wonderful legacy.



7. As a young advocate for heritage conservation, what role do you see yourself playing in fostering a sense of pride and ownership among fellow Indians for their cultural legacy?

As an advocate for heritage conservation, I believe in making people understand the cultural significance of our heritage. The Archaeological Survey of India does a great job at the government level, but it's also our responsibility as citizens. By organizing cultural programs and promoting cultural literacy, we can instill national pride and ensure that every citizen values and protects our heritage.

8. Can you share any anecdotes or experiences from your journey with Ajanta on Wheels that have left a lasting impression on you?



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One of the most impactful moments was presenting the Ajanta on Wheels project to Dr. Vijay Bhatkar, the Chancellor of Nalanda University and architect of Param Supercomputers. His appreciation for our efforts to engage the next generation in preserving cultural heritage was immensely rewarding. His inauguration of the project on October 6, 2022, was a significant milestone, making me feel blessed and fortunate.

9. How do you envision the future of the Ajanta on Wheels project, and what steps do you plan to take to further its reach and impact?

We plan to reach more schools and institutions, implementing campaigns to nurture cultural heritage. By guiding local communities and raising public awareness, we aim to preserve and promote our cultural legacy. Ajanta on Wheels will be exhibited in multiple locations, engaging student scholars and expanding its educational impact.

10. What advice would you give to other young individuals who may be passionate about preserving heritage but unsure of how to make a meaningful impact?

I encourage young individuals to continue their educational path and share their passion for cultural heritage. By volunteering and providing information to tourists, they can enrich the cultural tradition and support the local economy. It's heartening to see so many young people keen to preserve our legacy. Together, we can make a meaningful impact.

11. Beyond Ajanta, are there any other heritage sites or cultural landmarks you hope to highlight through similar mobile initiatives in the future?

I am currently studying various heritage sites in India and other countries like China, Thailand, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. I hope to highlight the cultural and traditional characteristics of these sites through similar mobile initiatives in the future, showcasing the rich connectivity and shared heritage among these regions.





12. How do you balance the demands of your project with other aspects of your life and career?

I pursued education in fine arts from my school days, aligning my studies with my passion. After completing an Art Teacher Diploma and a degree in Bachelor of Visual Arts, I found happiness and pleasure in my work. My education helped me understand Ajanta's paintings better, making my life and career demands similar to my project's goals. When our dream becomes our life work, life becomes easier.

13. As an advocate for heritage preservation, what message or call to action would you like to convey to our readers?

As young Indians, it's essential to recognize the rich cultural heritage that forms the bedrock of our identity. Preserving our history is not merely about maintaining old structures; it's about understanding who we are, where we come from, and what we can learn from our ancestors. My call to action is simple: get involved, be curious, and take responsibility. Whether through small efforts like visiting heritage sites, participating in cultural programs, or educating others about our rich history, every action counts. Heritage preservation should be a collective effort, one that brings together communities, schools, and individuals to celebrate and safeguard our shared past for future generations.

14. Lastly, what do you hope your legacy will be in the realm of heritage conservation and cultural awareness through Ajanta on Wheels?

Today, I come from a generation where youngsters are prominently interested in past, present, and future activities. Along with modern technologies, we are also interested in the tradition and culture of our own country. Understanding their interest, this is the best time to engage them in this kind of project. This will be the best example of the young generation working for the upcoming generation. I truly believe that this project will inspire many students not only in India but also in other countries. It can be a milestone for every individual to reflect on their culture and

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take steps towards preserving it. The next generation should research and conserve this culture for the coming thousands of years, just as our ancestors have maintained it for thousands of years. The aim of Prasadpawar Foundation is to reach Ajanta to 1 billion people around the world. Ajanta on Wheels is not just a project but a movement or a mission that connects generations of Indian culture together!

As we conclude this enlightening conversation with Shrawani Prasad, we are reminded of the immense value and beauty of our cultural heritage. Her dedication to preserving and sharing the wonders of Ajanta with the world is a testament to the power of passion and innovation in keeping history alive. We hope Shrawani's story inspires you to appreciate and protect our cultural treasures, fostering a deeper connection with our rich past. Stay tuned for more captivating stories and interviews in future editions, as we continue to celebrate the individuals who shape and safeguard our heritage for generations to come.

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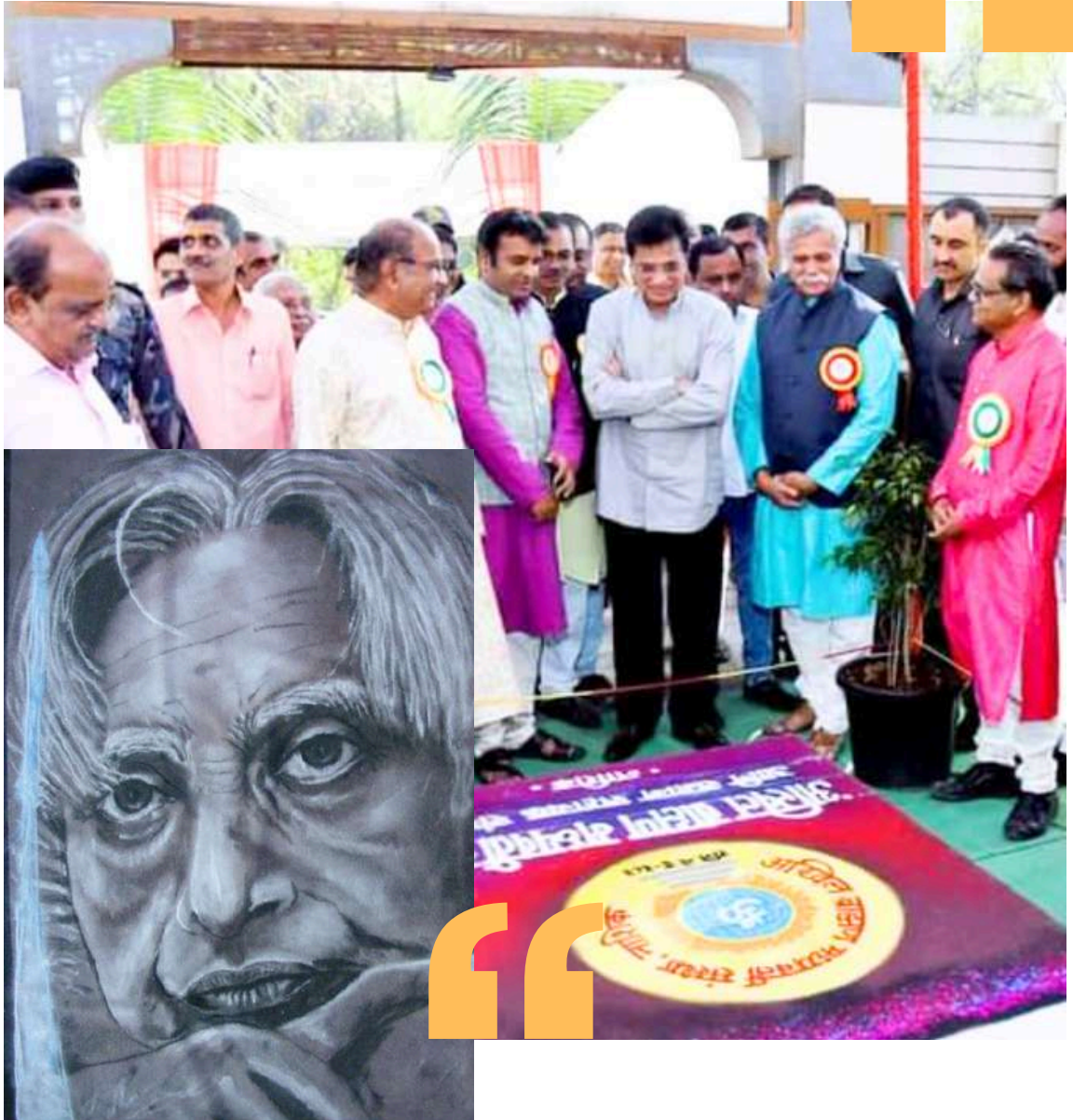
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"Rivers of Color: A Conversation with Nilesh Deshpande Ji, Maestro of Maha Rangoli"

In the vibrant world of traditional Indian art, Rangoli stands as a captivating emblem of cultural heritage and artistic expression. Today, we have the privilege of delving into the journey of a maestro who has elevated this age-old art form to monumental heights. His vision and dedication have transformed simple patterns into breathtaking spectacles that unite communities and celebrate the essence of creativity. Join us as we explore the inspiring story of a true pioneer in Rangoli art, whose work transcends the canvas to touch hearts and minds alike.

1. Nilesh Ji, your expertise in creating large-scale Rangoli art has garnered widespread admiration. Can you share with us how you first discovered your passion for Rangoli and what inspired you to work on such a grand scale?

I had a passion for art since childhood. My education was also in the field of art. While making a living, I always dreamed of doing something different and creating a unique identity for myself. After my education, I came to Nashik. While working in Nashik, I discovered my interest in Rangoli. The inspiration to create large-scale Rangoli came from various festivals and competitions.

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2. Creating intricate designs at such a large scale requires immense skill and patience. Could you walk us through your creative process from conceptualization to completion?

The creative process begins with an idea or theme. Once the theme is finalized, I start planning the design, keeping in mind the size and details. Sketching is the next step, where the entire Rangoli is drawn on paper first. This helps in visualizing the final output. Once the sketch is ready, the actual work begins on the ground. Colors are carefully chosen, and the design is transferred onto the floor. The final step involves filling in the colors meticulously, ensuring that every detail is perfect.

3. Rangoli is deeply rooted in Indian culture and traditions. How do you incorporate traditional elements while also bringing in your unique artistic touch?

While creating Rangoli, I always keep traditional elements in mind, such as the use of specific patterns and motifs that have cultural significance. However, I also like to experiment with new styles and techniques. By blending traditional designs with modern elements, I bring a unique artistic touch to my Rangoli, making it a fusion of old and new.

4. Your Maha Rangoli works are often featured at significant cultural events and festivals. What are some of the most memorable experiences you've had while showcasing your art at these events?

One of the most memorable experiences was creating a large Rangoli at a major cultural festival in Nashik. The appreciation and admiration from thousands of visitors were overwhelming. Another unforgettable moment was when my Rangoli was featured in a national competition, and I received an award for the best design. These events not only provided a platform to showcase my work but also gave me the opportunity to meet and interact with other talented artists.

5. Rangoli is often seen as a transient form of art, as it is typically created for specific occasions and then erased. How do you feel about the ephemeral nature of your work, and do you document your creations in any way?

The ephemeral nature of Rangoli is indeed a unique aspect of this art form. While it is created for specific occasions and doesn't last long, the joy it brings to people and the cultural significance it holds are invaluable. I do



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document my creations through photographs and videos, which help preserve the memories and also serve as a portfolio of my work. Sharing these documents on social media also allows a wider audience to appreciate and be inspired by Rangoli art.

6. What advice would you give to aspiring Rangoli artists who wish to pursue this art form and perhaps create large-scale works like yours?

My advice to aspiring Rangoli artists is to practice regularly and be patient. Start with small designs and gradually work your way up to larger ones. Pay attention to details and always be open to learning new techniques. Don't be afraid to experiment and bring your unique touch to your creations. Most importantly, enjoy the process and let your passion for Rangoli shine through your work.

7. How do you see the future of Rangoli art evolving, especially with the advent of digital media and changing cultural practices?

The future of Rangoli art is bright, especially with the advent of digital media. Digital platforms provide a great opportunity for Rangoli artists to showcase their work to a global audience. While traditional practices may change, the essence of Rangoli will remain. I believe that with innovation and creativity, Rangoli art will continue to evolve and gain recognition as a significant form of cultural expression.

8. Maha Rangoli offers a platform for artists and enthusiasts to come together and celebrate the beauty of Rangoli art. How do you engage with the community and encourage participation in this cherished tradition?

The most important aspect of creating Maha Rangoli is the spirit of 'we' instead of 'I'. Even if someone is just distributing water or working on a portrait, the feeling of 'we' remains strong. Maha Rangoli is a team effort. Before starting Maha Rangoli, I established my identity through my art. My exhibitions on various themes, the long queues at my displays, the recognition from local and national media, and the blessings and compliments from many great personalities all contributed to this. I have three world records in Rangoli to my name. Achieving all this was a result of my dedication to the art of Rangoli. My intention was never to pursue personal gain through this art, and it never will be. Through this art, I find it easy to connect with people from various fields. While creating Maha Rangoli, I always try to involve people from my field. I try to share the joy and satisfaction I get from my artistic journey. This art allows me to communicate effortlessly with people of all ages and backgrounds, from children to distinguished individuals.





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9. In addition to Maha Rangoli, you also create large-scale Rangoli art in various other settings. What challenges do you encounter when working on such monumental projects, and how do you overcome them?

When something happens in society, I always feel the need to respond through my art. The impact and result of such responses are significant. From this concept, I have created various large-scale Rangoli pieces on themes like 'Greetings for the 2015 Kumbh Mela', 'Symbol of Female Power - You are Durga', 'The 1857 Uprising', 'Ayurveda through Rangoli', 'Ganpati Festival', and many more. Artists constantly need to prove themselves and are always looking for opportunities. I believe art is an excellent medium for social service and enlightenment, or that artists are born for this purpose. I often face challenges like finding space, materials, and other resources for my projects. Despite this, the cold response from the audience can be very disheartening.

Once, I visited a scholar for eight days in a row for a beautiful project. They gave me their time and discussed the topic thoroughly. Although their colleagues praised the idea, they remained unenthusiastic until the end. Overcoming such obstacles is possible with the help of many of my associates, notably my brother Yogesh Bakshi and Vrindali Lavate.

Another time, I approached a prominent businessman for sponsorship. He initially dismissed Rangoli as insignificant, asking me to draw his logo as a test. Believing it was worth a try, I drew the logo. The next day, he was traveling to Mumbai, where he saw a news report about my exhibition, including the logo in the Rangoli. He immediately called and sent 15-20 employees to visit the exhibition. Upon their return, he invited me, honored me in front of his staff, and handed me a check.

10. As a leader in the field of Rangoli art, what legacy do you hope to leave behind through your contributions to events like Maha Rangoli?

Rangoli, as a traditional art form, is for everyone. It brings pure joy. I see Rangoli as a medium of unity because it is a beloved art form for many women. Through this art, we have conducted various experiments. I always believe that art can have a more profound impact on society than any sermon or discourse. That's why I



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have always chosen themes that can enlighten people. An artist's journey involves ups and downs, but if your intentions are pure, even a piece of stone without eyes and nose can evoke reverence in people because it embodies emotion.

11. How do you stay connected to the cultural roots of Rangoli while also incorporating innovative techniques and designs in your work?

Staying updated is the primary duty of an artist. However, I believe in not compromising the essence of art for the sake of money or fame. In the field of Rangoli, there is often more effort put into eliciting 'wow' reactions than in the actual subject matter. Once an artist understands the strength of this art, they uphold its values. This requires in-depth study, not just surface-level knowledge. The time and material availability for Rangoli often necessitate new experiments.

12. What advice would you give to aspiring Rangoli artists who may be inspired by your achievements and wish to pursue a similar path?

When learning any art form, your intentions should be pure. You should be ready to work hard. To become a great artist, it's important to first become a great connoisseur. Keep learning constantly and always strive to use your art for the betterment of society.

13. Beyond Maha Rangoli, are there any other projects or initiatives you're involved in that promote Rangoli art and culture?

Along with Maha Rangoli, I am also responsible for the decoration of Nashik for the Sanskar Bharati organization. Through the organization formed from Maha Rangoli, we run various initiatives. We create Rangoli to welcome the Palkhi at Shegaon and Paithan every year. Recently, for the 2024 elections, we created large Rangoli artworks throughout Nashik city to raise voter awareness, collaborating with Art of Living and Sanskar Bharati. Rangoli is seen everywhere.



Even ancient India can be depicted through art. Different states have different styles of Rangoli, but the emotion and purpose remain the same. In the future, these styles will be seen everywhere, and there will be new experiments.

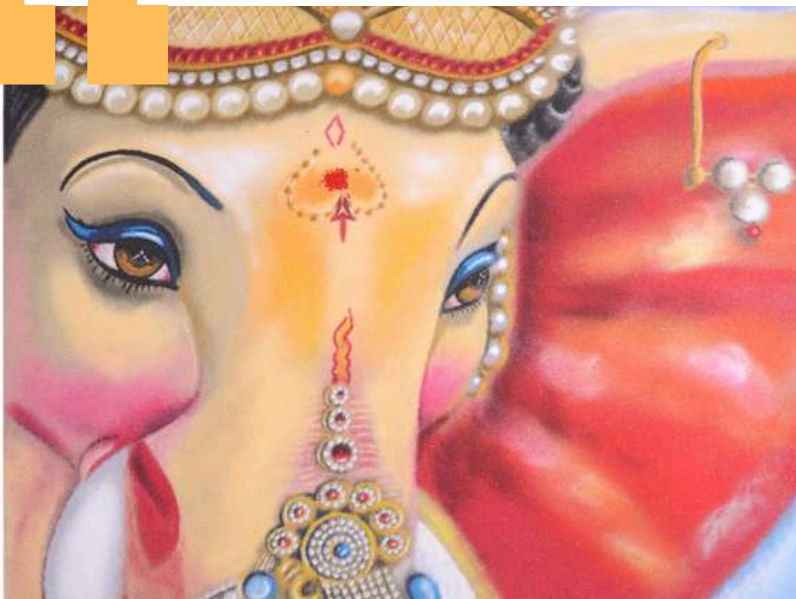
14. How do you envision the future of Rangoli art, both in traditional settings and on a larger scale like Maha Rangoli?

Maha Rangoli is perhaps the only grand Rangoli in the world created in just two to three hours at sunrise. Its success lies not in the art, artists, or materials, but in the planning of Maha Rangoli. With such planning, this tradition, which has become a symbol of Nashik, will continue. The significant change might be in the medium of Rangoli, such as using millets for this year's Maha Rangoli.

15. Lastly, what message or sentiment do you hope Maha Rangoli conveys to participants and spectators, and how do you envision it evolving in the years to come?

For the women participating in Maha Rangoli, it's most important to understand that this is an artistic journey. However, it also leads to personal growth in all aspects. Whether it's the purpose of Maha Rangoli, planning, division of work, or the transition from 'I' to 'we', it enhances your mental, intellectual, and spiritual heights. Enjoy and spread pure joy.

As our conversation draws to a close, we are left in awe of the profound impact that art can have on society. Through his unwavering passion and innovative spirit, our esteemed guest has not only preserved a cherished tradition but has also breathed new life into it, inspiring countless others to follow in his footsteps. His journey is a testament to the power of art to transcend boundaries, unite people, and create lasting legacies. We look forward to witnessing the continued evolution of Rangoli art under his visionary guidance, and we are deeply grateful for the insights he has shared with us today.



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“Grace in Motion: A Conversation with Rekha Nadgauda ji, Maestro of Kathak”

In the world of classical dance, few names resonate with the same grace and dedication as Rekha Nadgauda ji. A maestro of Kathak, Rekha ji’s journey has been one of passion, perseverance, and profound artistry. From her early days as a young girl captivated by the rhythms of dance to becoming the founder of Kirti Kala Mandir Dance Academy, she has illuminated the path for countless students and enthusiasts. In this exclusive interview, we delve into the life and legacy of Rekha Nadgauda ji, exploring her inspirations, challenges, and the indelible mark she has left on the world of Kathak.

1. Rekha ji, your journey as a Kathak dancer and founder of Kirti Kala Mandir Dance Academy is truly remarkable. Can you take us back to the beginning and share what sparked your passion for Kathak?  
I must have been eight or nine years old. My mother took me to a singing class. I started learning, but after four or five months, I told my mother that I didn’t want to learn singing; I wanted to learn dance. My mother found a class taught by Ustad Haider Sheikh, and my joyous journey began. In 1969, this journey took a new turn, and I saw a new path. I wanted to learn dance under Nataraj Pandit Gopi



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Krishna. Through Vinod Kumar, an associate of Gopi ji, I got the opportunity to start learning from him. From 1969 to 1975, those were golden days. I would stay with my aunt or uncle in Mumbai. Every day, practice would start at 9 a.m. Gopi ji was busy with many film choreographies, but he would be at the class door at 8:45 a.m. So, I never dared to be late. Despite his busy schedule, he set aside specific time for teaching. I learned something new every day and practiced diligently. Every day was heavenly, and I was very happy.

2. As a renowned dancer and educator, you have influenced countless students through your academy. What inspired you to establish Kirti Kala Mandir, and how do you feel it has contributed to the preservation and promotion of Kathak in Nashik?

Once, there was a program at Shanmukhananda Hall. My father was always with me at my performances. I always told my parents that I wanted to dance a lot, and they were determined to fulfill my dream. After a beautiful program at Shanmukhananda, my father told me that I should stay in Nashik and work on dance there. He suggested that I should groom girls in Nashik and make the city's name known in the world of Kathak

through their performances. On February 23, 1976, I established Kirti Kala Mandir Kathak Dance Academy in Nashik. Kamalabai Sarda, Neelam Tai Kirloskar, Kumud Tai Abhyankar, Radhika Rajpathak, and I started this venture together. Since then, I have continued to teach and create new dance compositions, keeping in mind that this art form is for the stage. We have performed these compositions all over India and abroad, including Mauritius, London, the US, and Norway.

3. Throughout your career, you have performed in numerous shows and venues. Can you share with us some of the most memorable performances that have left a lasting impact on you?

In 1984, through Kirti Kala Mandir, I performed the entire Ramayana dance drama. There is a saying that "What grows here doesn't sell here," but we performed 16 shows of the Ramayana in Nashik from August 1, 1984, to January 4, 1985, all of which were houseful. On January 4, we performed at Birla Kreed Kendra in Mumbai, organized by Sur Singar Sansad. Renowned dancers Sachin Shankar and Sitara Devi praised and blessed my students. This houseful



performance in Mumbai was a moment of immense joy for me. Another memorable event was in 1987 when we performed a dance interpretation of Kusumagraj's poems for his 75th birthday. He was present for the first performance. When Kusumagraj received the Jnanpith Award, Delhi Doordarshan broadcasted our program, dedicated to him, after the award ceremony. People all over Maharashtra and India watched the program, and it highlighted Nashik's name across India. In 1991, Pandit Gopi Krishna himself attended our Raga Mudra program, and that was an ultimate moment of joy.

4. Kathak is known for its intricate footwork, expressive gestures, and storytelling. How do you approach the process of interpreting classical stories and themes through dance? Classical dances often include acting out mythological stories. When presenting scenes from the Ramayana or Mahabharata, it's essential to maintain the audience's preconceived images of the characters. Modern lighting, sets, costumes, and makeup can also be used effectively to make characters more prominent and clear. The timing and speed of footwork should enhance the story's flow. In short, balancing rhythm, pace, and emotion is crucial.

5. Can you share any anecdotes or experiences from your journey as a Kathak dancer that have shaped your understanding of the art form and its significance?

As I mentioned earlier, a new influence entered my dance journey in 1994 in the form of Shama Bhate. Her dance is complete music to me. Her thoughts influenced me and gave a new life to my dance.

6. What challenges have you encountered along the way, and how have they influenced your growth as a dancer and teacher?

Whenever one embarks on a journey with a goal, there are always many obstacles to overcome. However, I never considered these obstacles as challenges but as natural parts of the journey. I remained positive, and because of this, everyone around me stayed positive as well.

7. As a Kathak exponent based in Nashik, how do you see the dance scene evolving in the city, and what role do you hope to play in its development?

While studying any art form, one should also appreciate other related arts. In Nashik, compared to Pune and Mumbai, there are fewer music programs. I thought there should be at least one continuous music festival. In 1994, I started a three-day festival of music, dance, and singing in memory of my guru, Nataraj Pandit Gopi Krishna ji.





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For thirty years, I have been organizing this festival. I invite many renowned artists and give opportunities to emerging artists as well. I believe this has contributed significantly to the cultural preservation of Nashik. Today, Nashik residents eagerly await this three-day festival. The audience is always excited to see new presentations from Kirti Kala Mandir. This festival, which includes a male dancer every year, is a well-planned, fresh, and innovative event that has always received positive feedback from the audience.

8. What advice would you give to aspiring dancers who may be embarking on their own journey in the world of Kathak or classical dance?

Today, many dancers in Nashik conduct classical dance classes. I believe they should come together to exchange ideas and support each other's programs. Senior artists should encourage the younger generation, and the young should respect senior artists, invite them to their performances, and seek their blessings and opinions about their programs. Open-minded exchange enriches the art.

9. Can you describe the atmosphere and philosophy of learning at Kirti Kala Mandir Dance Academy, and how it differs from other dance institutions?

Although I haven't observed the environment of other classes, at Kirti Kala Mandir, my first principle is to teach each student until they understand the lesson. There is no time limit. Instilling confidence in the students is my duty, and I ensure that each student gains it. Punctuality is essential, starting with me. I follow any rule I impose on the students. Students should leave the class happy, and I take responsibility for that. The guru-student relationship at Kirti Kala Mandir is one of closeness, affection, and care.



10. How do you balance the traditional elements of Kathak with contemporary influences and innovations in your choreography and performances?

In addition to traditional Kathak stories from the Ramayana and Mahabharata, we have explored themes beyond these myths, like Unity, Nupur, Katha Stree Janmachi, Kusumagraj's poetry, Aami Marathi, and Pasayadan. While choosing and presenting these themes, I maintain the essence of Kathak. I work continuously with experts in music, lighting, costumes, and sets to keep the balance between tradition and innovation.

11. Are there any specific Kathak compositions or styles that hold a special place in your heart? If so, what makes them particularly meaningful to you?



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The Rasayatra of Kusumagraj's poems, which I created in 1987, is a unique experiment in dance interpretation. Each poem in this Rasayatra provides a new message every time it is performed. Creating new hand gestures and choreography for each performance gives me fresh energy and strength. The most heartwarming memory is that Kusumagraj himself selected the poems and witnessed the performance. This special connection makes Rasayatra my favorite.

12. What do you hope audiences take away from your performances, both in terms of cultural appreciation and emotional resonance?

Whether it's a traditional Kathak performance or an innovative dance composition, the audience always appreciates the new concepts and presentations from Kirti Kala Mandir. After each program, everyone leaves with a sense of visual and auditory delight. My performances are seen as joyous festivals by the people of Nashik.

13. How do you stay inspired and motivated as a dancer, especially during times of challenges or creative blocks?

I believe true creativity is spontaneous. When nothing comes to mind, I don't get disappointed. I trust that new ideas will come naturally. Continuous practice and teaching keep me engaged.

14. Looking ahead, what are your aspirations for the future of Kirti Kala Mandir and your own artistic journey?

My aim is to instill a love for Kathak in every student at Kirti Kala Mandir, to preserve and enrich this classical Indian dance tradition. The next generation should continue the work with the same dedication. Ashwini Kalsekar is beautifully managing both learning and teaching through Kirti Kala Mandir in London, while Aditi Panse handles it in Nashik with the inspiration of my goals. I am proud of this.





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15. Lastly, what message or words of wisdom would you like to share with our listeners who admire your work and are passionate about classical dance?

I believe that if one follows any art form with dedication and a genuine heart, it will surely yield beautiful results. For those passionate about classical dance, I encourage you to be patient and persistent. Remember that true art comes from a place of devotion and love. Stay connected to your roots, respect your teachers, and always be open to learning and evolving. Let your journey be filled with joy and continuous growth. Thank you for admiring my work and supporting the art of Kathak.

As we conclude this inspiring conversation with Rekha Nadgauda ji, we are reminded of the timeless beauty and transformative power of Kathak. Her dedication to the art form, her students, and the cultural heritage of Nashik stands as a testament to what passion and perseverance can achieve. Through her journey, we see not just the story of a dancer, but the embodiment of grace, resilience, and an unwavering commitment to preserving and promoting the rich traditions of classical dance. May her words inspire aspiring artists to pursue their dreams with the same fervor and dedication. Thank you, Rekha Nadgauda ji, for sharing your extraordinary journey with us.



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**English Editor in Chief : Dr Anagha Naik**  
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## A Journey Through Art: Vidya Karanjikar on Her Passion for Acting and Cultural Contributions

Welcome to our exclusive interview with Vidya Karanjikar, a prominent figure in the Marathi entertainment industry. With a career spanning both television and film, Vidya has left an indelible mark on Nashik's cultural landscape. Today, she shares her inspiring journey, challenges, and aspirations as an actress. Let's delve into the fascinating world of Vidya Karanjikar and uncover the stories behind her success.

1. Vidya Tai, your journey in the entertainment industry spans both television and Marathi films, leaving an indelible mark on Nashik's cultural landscape. Can you take us back to the beginning and share what initially drew you to it?

Hi, Namaskar! I participated in cultural programs in society when I was a little girl. At that time, my parents realized that I could act. When I was in the 2nd standard, my play "Ati Tithemati" was telecasted on television on a program called "Kilbil" on Doordarshan. During my school and college days, I participated in many competitions and won prizes. After I went to college, I took part in solo acting competitions. Mr. Prakash Budhisagar, a well-known director of professional Marathi drama, asked me to act in his new play

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"Aaishapath." My co-star was Mr. Nana Patekar, who played my father's role. I was only 19 years old. The drama "Aaishapath" was highly acknowledged and appreciated by people and media alike. This play earned me recognition as an actor.

2. As a senior artist, you have contributed significantly to television serials and Marathi cinema. What inspired you to pursue a career in acting, and how do you balance your roles across different mediums?

After acting in many professional dramas, I got married and moved to Nashik. In 1987, it was impossible to continue acting while living in Nashik and doing shows in Mumbai and other places, so I stopped working in professional dramas. I started a new job as a marketing manager at Sakal Papers Ltd in Nashik. After 13 years, we moved to the USA for my husband's job. There, we found CALAA for performing arts and started doing plays with this organization. We stayed in the USA for almost 10 years before returning to India. After a 23-year gap, I returned to acting. Despite the long hiatus, the drama and film industry offered me many roles, for which I am grateful. Upon returning to India, the Marathi television industry was booming, and I

began working in Marathi serials. I have acted in 19 serials across various channels. Performing a character doesn't depend on the medium; it's the challenge of portraying different roles that I enjoy. While serials require daily performances and script changes, which can be arduous, I love my work and do not find it burdensome.

3. Can you share some memorable experiences or milestones from your career that have shaped your journey as an actor?

I have done many serials, films, and dramas, but my favorite is the serial "Tula Paahate Re," which aired on Zee Marathi. This serial brought me immense joy, respect, and love from audiences worldwide. My character, AAISAHEB, was highly appreciated and became very popular. This character has given me values in life, teaching me to think positively even in difficult situations. Some characters become part of your identity.

4. What challenges have you faced along the way, and how have they influenced your growth and development as an artist?

When you do a good job portraying a character, there is a risk of being typecast. I deliberately avoided repeating similar roles. I have portrayed



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a variety of human character shades—cheerful, negative, and grey. Grey shades are particularly interesting and challenging because they are not entirely black or white. This diversity helps in developing and growing as an artist.

5. Nashik is known for its rich cultural heritage. How has your connection to the city influenced your artistic choices and roles over the years?

I am delighted to live in Nashik, a city with a beautiful climate and rich cultural heritage. However, restricting oneself to Nashik limits opportunities and progress. I have always maintained my connection to Nashik while ensuring I do not confine myself to the city.

6. You are currently working on several television serials. Can you share with us what motivates you to continue exploring new characters and stories in the ever-evolving world of television?

Acting is my passion. When a new role comes up, I ensure it brings me joy to perform. The story and my character's role are crucial. The production house and director must also be competent. I prefer positive roles because repeatedly playing negative roles can be challenging.

7. As an actress, what do you believe is your unique contribution to the Marathi entertainment industry, and what legacy do you hope to leave behind?

It's difficult to say, as every human is always learning. I am still striving for perfection. However, I aim to be a successful and well-known actress.

8. How do you approach immersing yourself in a character, and what techniques do you use to bring authenticity and depth to your performances?

Understanding the project's story is essential. I learn about my character and discuss it with the writer before performing. Observing people who resemble the character helps—how they talk, react, and present themselves. The "look" is vital in this industry, as it influences how the audience perceives you. For example, my character AAISAHEB in "Tula Paahate Re" became popular, and people copied my costume and jewelry. Studying a character's mental state, behavior, mannerisms, and personality is crucial.

9. Can you share any advice or insights for aspiring actors navigating their paths in the industry?

Passion for your work is essential. Learn every aspect of the industry, work hard, and don't







give up. This industry is fragile, so having a second job is advisable. Completing at least a primary education is important.

10. Beyond acting, are there any other aspects of the entertainment industry that you are passionate about exploring or pursuing in the future?

I am not ready yet, but I would like to direct a movie and start an acting school academy.

11. What role do you believe television and cinema play in reflecting and shaping societal norms and values, particularly in the context of regional cinema like Marathi films?

Television and cinema significantly impact societal norms and values. Marathi movies are now more content-driven and reflect societal values. Films can influence social behavior, and filmmakers have a moral duty to present values positively.

12. How do you stay inspired and motivated in an industry that can be demanding and competitive?

It's challenging, but I try to stay motivated. At my age, it's tough to keep focused, but I strive to stay inspired by others.

13. Are there any specific themes or genres you find yourself particularly drawn to as an actress?

While watching films, I often think about how I could have performed a role. I am drawn to roles that suit me and feel a bit envious when I see characters I wish I had played.



14. Looking ahead, what are your aspirations or goals for the future of your acting career?

I want to do a good web series and explore significant characters in future films and serials. I also wish to venture into the Hindi television industry.

15. Lastly, what message or sentiment would you like to convey to your fans and admirers who have supported you throughout your journey as an actress?

I am grateful to all my well-wishers, supporters, fans, and followers. I also thank the people who helped me enter this industry. I am proud to be part of this industry. A big thank you to all my fellow artists, friends, and colleagues for their blessings and good wishes for my future projects.

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Thank you, Vidya Tai, for sharing your incredible journey with us. Your dedication, passion, and resilience in the entertainment industry are truly inspiring. We wish you continued success in all your future endeavors and look forward to seeing more of your captivating performances.

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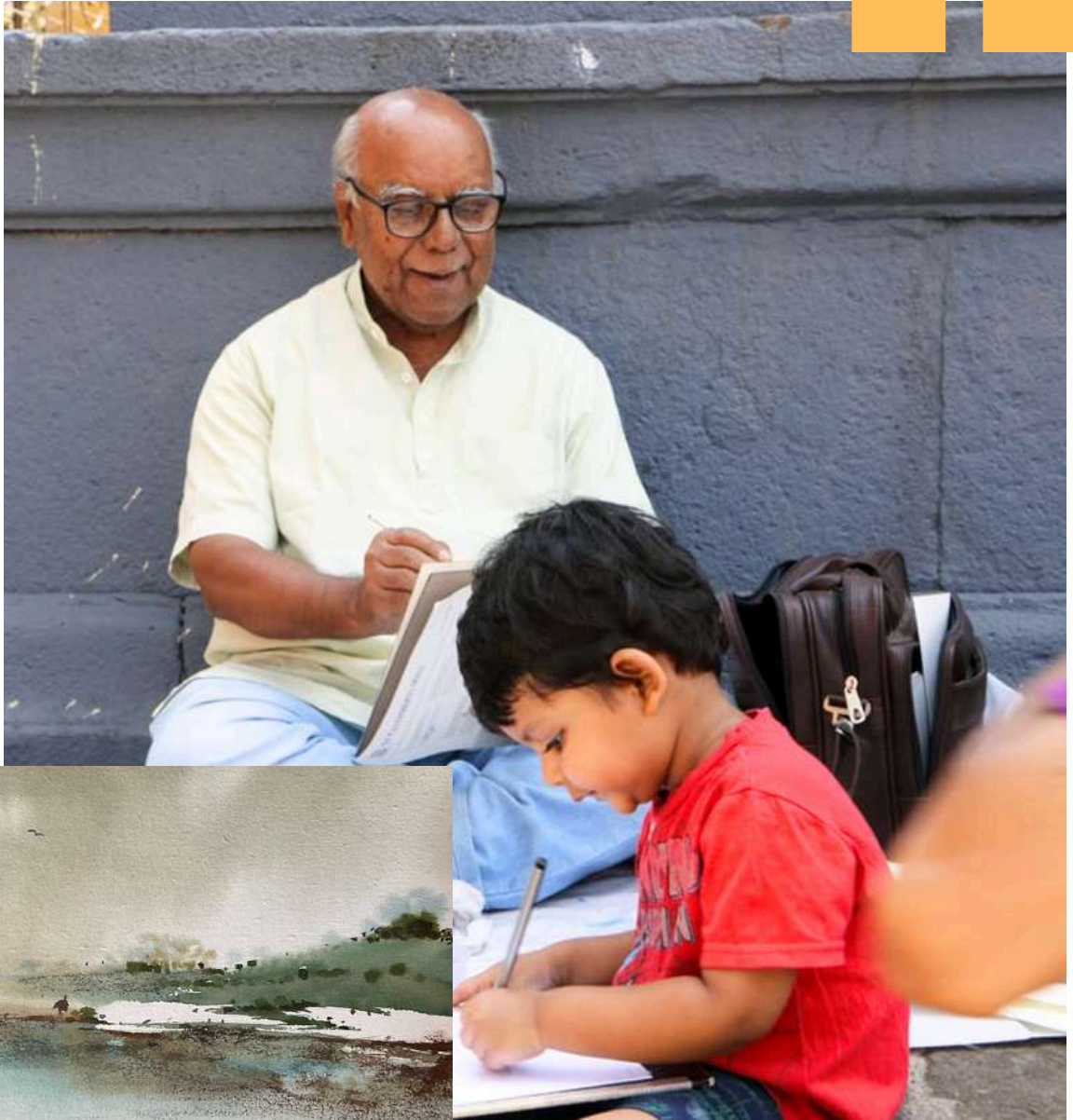
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# Artistic Echoes

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“Brushstrokes of Resilience: A Conversation with Dhananjay Govardhane ji, Nashik’s Esteemed Painter”

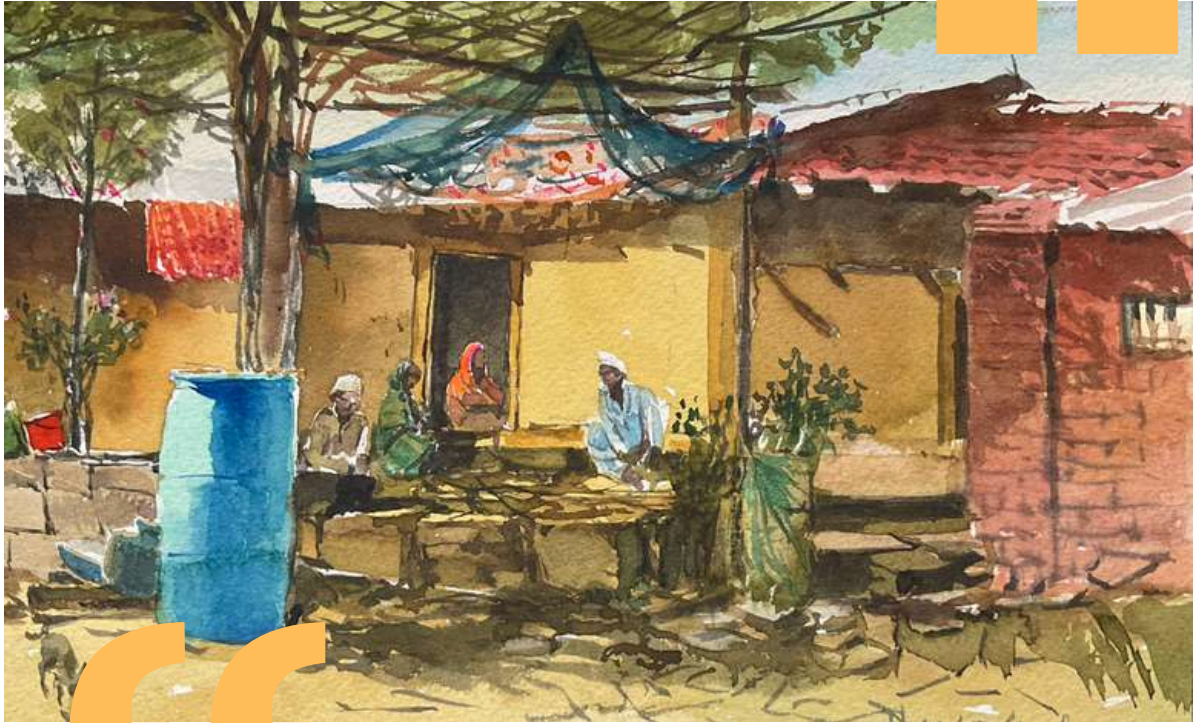
In the vibrant city of Nashik, where tradition meets modernity, there resides an artist whose journey is a testament to the power of resilience and the transformative nature of art. Dhananjay Govardhane, a distinguished painter, has dedicated his life to capturing the essence of his surroundings and emotions on canvas. In this exclusive interview, we delve into the heart of Dhananjay ji’s artistic odyssey, exploring the inspirations, challenges, and triumphs that have shaped his remarkable career.

1. Your journey as a painter is an inspiring tale of resilience and passion. Can you share with us what initially sparked your love for painting and how it has sustained you through life’s ups and downs?  
Since childhood, I was fascinated by painting. About fifty or sixty years ago, the times were tough for artists, and it wasn’t feasible to make a living solely from art. Despite my desire, I couldn’t pursue formal education in painting due to circumstances. However, as they say, “Where there’s a will, there’s a way.” I learned by observing the works of various artists. For me, art is a runway – a way to escape



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worries. I have a habit of expressing my feelings through paintings. When that's not possible, I express them in words, but sometimes even words fall short, and colors come to my rescue.

2. As a senior painter in Nashik, you have undoubtedly witnessed the evolution of the city's art scene. How do you feel your role as an artist has contributed to this transformation?

Every artwork reflects the artist's emotions and serves as a record of the times. Just as English artists' nature paintings document their era's environment, many of my works capture the essence of Nashik from decades ago. Through my paintings, people can see how Nashik looked sixty or seventy years ago, including landmarks like the Ram Setu and Gadge Maharaj bridges before they existed.

3. Throughout your career, what have been some of the most memorable moments or achievements that have shaped your artistic journey?

One significant moment was after the 1993 Latur earthquake, which devastated many lives. Ram Takvade, the Vice-Chancellor of YCMOU, asked me to help uplift the spirits of the affected people.

I created posters that were displayed in the earthquake-affected areas, and seeing my art give people hope was incredibly fulfilling. Additionally, my work has been recognized by esteemed institutions like the Padma Shri Vikhe Patil Foundation, and I have received honors such as the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Pramod Koparde Foundation, Satara.

4. Can you describe a particularly challenging period in your life or career, and how painting helped you navigate through it?

During the 1992 Mumbai bomb blasts and subsequent riots, I created a series called 'Riot Chronicles,' which was exhibited across Maharashtra. It was a challenging time, but expressing my experiences and emotions through art helped me cope with the turmoil.

5. What themes or subjects do you find yourself drawn to the most in your artwork, and what do they represent to you personally?

I handle various mediums, but I particularly enjoy working with watercolors for their transparency and the way colors blend seamlessly. I've created over a thousand book covers, each tailored to the narrative's essence.



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6. How do you approach the process of translating your emotions and experiences onto canvas, and what techniques do you use to convey your message effectively?

Sketching is a quick process, but I love working with watercolors. The transparency and the way colors merge into each other appeal to me. Sometimes, the colors don't cooperate with my vision, and it can be frustrating, but I wait for the right moment when they do.

7. In your opinion, what is the significance of art in today's society, and how do you hope your paintings impact those who view them?

In earlier times, art was highly esteemed, often supported by royalty, which allowed it to flourish. Today, unfortunately, art education is being sidelined, depriving many young people of the benefits of art. Art is essential for societal well-being, and it provides a necessary balance to life.

8. As a highly respected figure in the Nashik art community, what advice would you give to aspiring painters who may be facing their own challenges or doubts about pursuing a career in art?

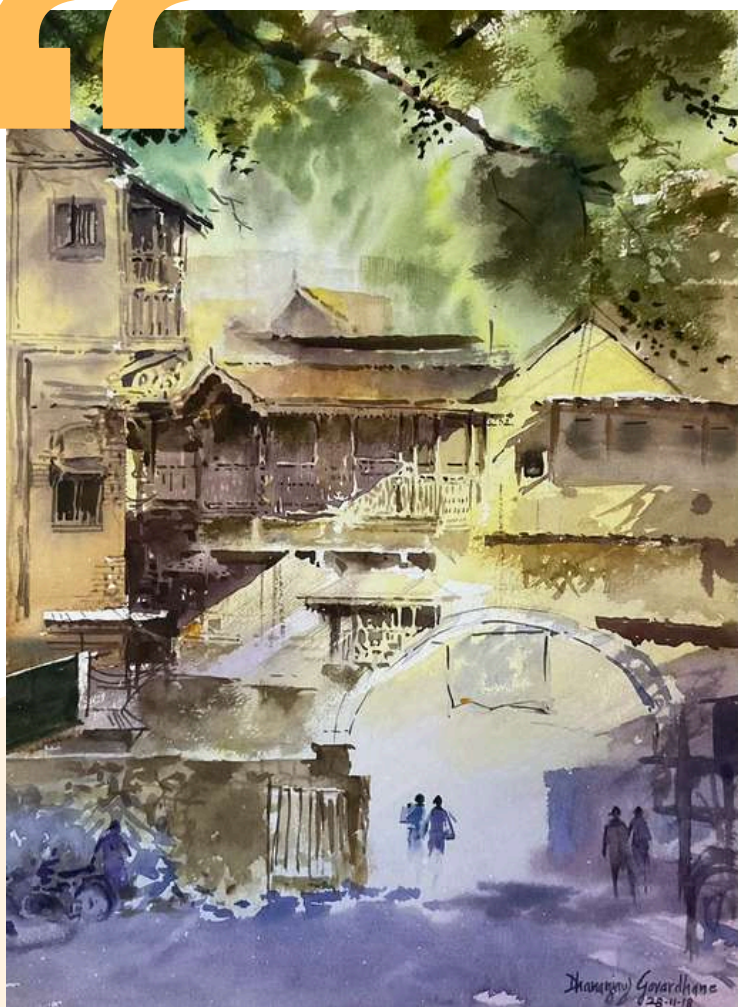
Art schools teach the grammar of painting, but artists need to express their own thoughts and emotions. Reading and learning from the world around you are crucial. Just like a photographer's skill is more important than the camera, an artist's vision is what truly matters. The advent of computers has opened up many opportunities for artists.

9. Are there any specific artists or influences that have had a profound impact on your work and artistic style?

Every artist is influenced by contemporary artists and art movements. It's natural to emulate others, and through this process, one finds their unique voice, much like a child holding an adult's hand until they can walk on their own.

10. Looking back on your journey, is there a particular painting or series that holds special significance to you? If so, can you tell us about it?

Several series hold special significance. For example, I created a series on AIDS awareness for the SOS Foundation and a series on women's legal rights for the Women's Rights Protection Committee. I also did illustrations for many notable literary works, and the appreciation from these authors has been particularly meaningful.





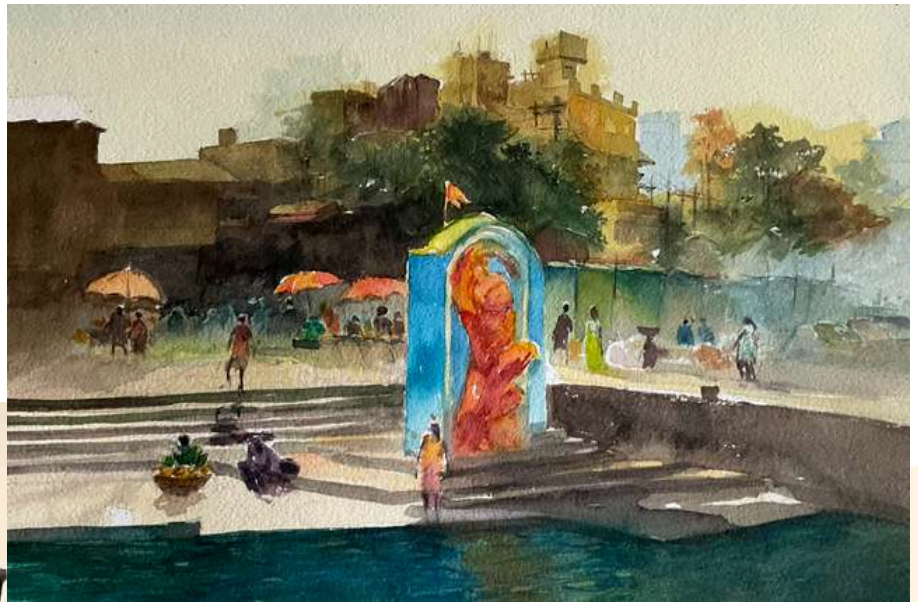
11. Lastly, what message or words of encouragement would you like to share with our readers, who may find inspiration in your story and your art?

Nashik has a rich tradition of watercolor painting, and many local artists are now recognized globally. This is a matter of pride for Nashik. My advice is to keep exploring, keep creating, and let your art speak your truth.

As we conclude this enlightening conversation with Dhananjay Govardhane, it's evident that his journey is a beacon of hope and inspiration for many. His dedication to art, despite numerous challenges, underscores the profound impact creativity can have on both the artist and the community. Dhananjay ji's story is a reminder that through perseverance and passion, art can transcend barriers, offering solace and sparking change. We hope his words and works inspire you to pursue your passions and create with all your heart.

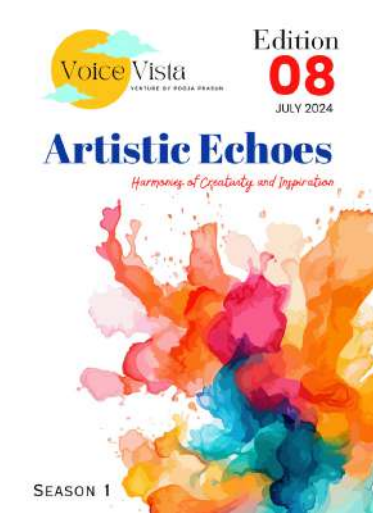
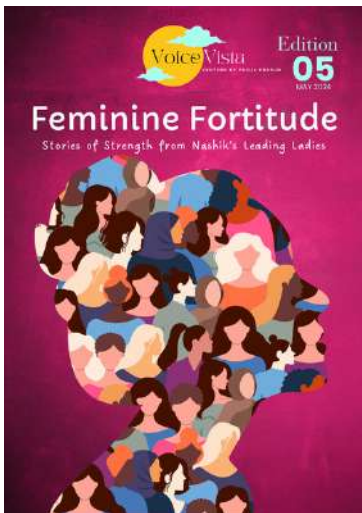
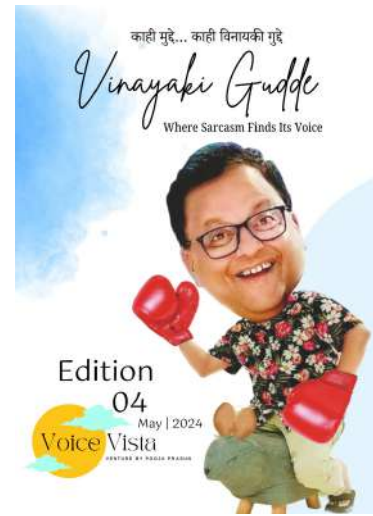
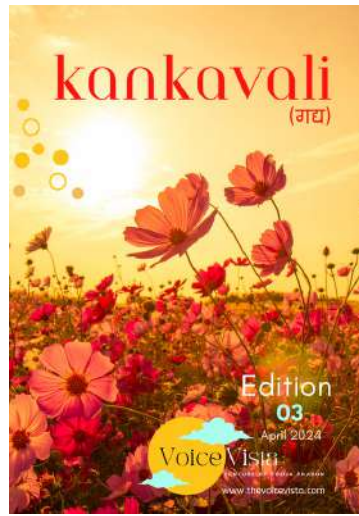
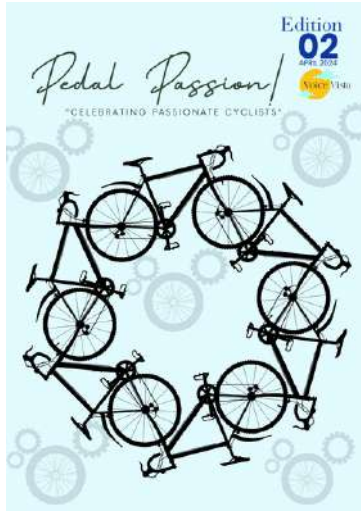
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# 2024 Recent Publications



DELIGHTED TO SHARE THAT VOICE VISTA MAGAZINE, HAS SUCCESSFULLY PUBLISHED EIGHT CAPTIVATING EDITIONS IN JUST FIVE MONTHS! FEATURING THREE SPECIAL EDITIONS AND FIVE INSIGHTFUL INTERVIEWS, EACH ISSUE CELEBRATES THE VIBRANT WORLD OF CREATIVITY AND STORYTELLING. THANK YOU FOR BEING PART OF OUR JOURNEY. HERE'S TO MANY MORE INSPIRING STORIES AHEAD!



To be a part of the upcoming Voice Vista Magazine, feel free to contact us at [www.thevoicevista.in](http://www.thevoicevista.in)



## Voice Vista Magazine: Artistic Echoes

Welcome to the eighth edition of Voice Vista magazine, where we explore the profound impact of creativity in “Artistic Echoes.” Delve into the captivating journeys of visionary artists who enrich our cultural tapestry. From the enchanting melodies of Dnyaneshwar Kasar Ji to the intricate designs of Shrawani Prasad’s architectural marvels, each artist featured illuminates their craft with passion and innovation. Experience the vibrant colors of Nilesh Deshpande Ji’s Maha Rangoli and the graceful movements of Rekha Nadgauda Ji’s Kathak performances. Vidya Karanjikar shares insights into the transformative power of acting, while Mohini Poddar invites us into her world of ethereal creations. Lastly, Dhananjay Govardhane paints stories of resilience and beauty on canvas. Join us as we celebrate the richness of human expression and the enduring legacy of artistic echoes in Voice Vista magazine.