

INDIA

# DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA 4 JANUARY 2019

## 'SEN'sationally ARTISTIC

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Sen at his  
Bengaluru  
studio



Ruminating



Her power above all



# 'Sen'sationally ARTISTIC

**Shombit Sengupta** is the man behind Gesturism, and we trace his journey so far...

**SEONA SHAJI**

DECCAN CHRONICLE

✓ The first-ever Indian to start Gesturism, an art movement, Shombit Sengupta who goes by the name Sen Shombit, has an incredible and inspiring story. From being born and living in a refugee camp in Kolkata to living in utter poverty till 14, Sen's journey towards art has been motivated by his passion to become an artist.

His works will be exhibited at *Irrelevant Colours* from January 14 to February 6.

In a chat with DECCAN CHRONICLE, he lets us in on his life, his love for art and what we can expect from the exhibition...

"Since 1994, I started the experimentation of Gesturism Art. In the early years at Ecole Nationale des Beaux Arts, the world's oldest and most renowned school of art which is in Paris, one of my professors used to continuously encourage me to focus on my bold gestures in drawing, sketching and painting. From Western schools of art, particularly Western modern art that started from 1870, I've

learnt about individual artists who have created different types of artistic narratives with a conceptual form. So when I make gestures on the canvas with colours and brushes, charcoal or water colour that are seemingly abstract, hidden figuratives get generated and I don't know where the painting finishes." Sen recalls when asked what inspired him to become an artist.

To find solace in art at a time when life seems most challenging has an impact that is rather long-lasting. Having lived in difficult conditions himself, Sen says, "Local handicrafts and clay-pot makers in the refugee camp that was my childhood home outside Kolkata have had a huge influence on me. When I lived there in poverty, there was unnecessary political activity all around our refugee camp home. So I felt relieved to pull myself away from it all and recklessly left for France at the age of 19, even though I had no money and knew nobody there. The imposing buildings and remnant cultures of Victorian and French Bengal have also contributed in my understanding of global fine art. Today, the seemingly unorganised markets and colourful social activities in India are a big inspiration to me."

He draws inspiration from authors like Baudelaire, Victor Hugo, Proust, Verlaine, Jacques Prevert, the kick-off of Modern Art movement in 1870, then Impressionism, Expressionism, Cubism, Dada movement for Surrealism, etc.

Elaborating on what we can expect from the exhibition, he says, "My paintings for this exhibition bring forth the emotional connect that woman have with different creatures and how they live in wild abandon in our eco-system. It's a link that's totally natural, a romantic liaison that's secretive, emulative and stews with irreverent dynamism. Through my Gesturism Art strokes, I pay homage to our magnificent women who in league with the Earth's creatures, struggle quite naturally to nurture us and our environment for a beautiful tomorrow."

He signs off saying, "Being an artist I cannot paint only for the purpose of selling. My expression on the canvas goes beyond everything. It is to bring an unpublished ideology which has passion, dynamism, energy and provokes the imagination to move society in a different manner. I believe the unique power of imagination can sell by itself."