

THE TIMES OF INDIA

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'LEONARDO DA VINCI IS MY BIGGEST INFLUENCE'

SHOMBIT SENGUPTA is a Franco-Indian international management strategy consultant and artist. Sen began creating a new vision of art called Gesturism in 1994. He has held art exhibitions around the world

What gives you purpose to get out of bed and face the day ahead?

Another new unpredictable day, new social textures, new colours in nature's lap, tonality of new imaginations finding their impromptu expressions and newer layers of pigments emerging in human interactions, they all give me purpose to look forward to being awake.

What keeps you awake at night?

Jumbled dreams! I even have a theme of paintings called "Jumbled dreams" where my mind's eye responds visually on to my canvas. That's why I love the silence of the night; it's when my brush makes my canvas talk brightly. Darkness adds a punch of purity to my deep concentration, and that allows my work to emerge as abstract art with figuratives hidden inside them.

In recent times, what has been the most experimental art work that you've done?

My admiration for the strength of women's emotion is visually expressed in my painting theme, "Multi-faceted emotion." Here I portray her unique power to radically change emotion from affectionately breast feeding her child to joining her companion for a sexual adventure. I also believe women are in love with nature's creatures, a romantic liaison that's secretive, emulative and stews with irreverent dynamism. In the theme "Rhythm of emotion," I pay homage to women's spirited

resourcefulness to willingly



resourcefulness to willingly nurture our eco-system.

What is your state of mind when you stand in front of a blank canvas?

When in front of a blank canvas, I see an unlimited surface for boundaryless imagination, for my liberty of expression. The more I stare at that rough, woven whiteness of the canvas, a spring of excitement wells from my stomach to reach my brain, making my colours more wanton, more irreverent.



Who is your favourite artist and what is your most favourite art work?

The genius Leonardo da Vinci is my biggest influence, his 1498 mural painting "The Last Supper" is my favourite art work. I love the details hidden in this 13-people painting, the clearly different expressions of horror, anger and shock of the 12 disciples concentrated on Jesus at the centre who predicted he will be betrayed. I also admire Jean Francois Millet of Barbizon School of Art whose 1859 painting "Angelus" was the ignition of Modern Art.

Where do you look to for inspiration?

For an artist, continuous self-urge is key to the ignition of inspiration. I never think I have to paint; I always believe I have to create an imagination trajectory after imagination trajectory. When I discuss a simple subject with my wife, she asks me a lot of questions which translate into trajectory creations for me. That then evolves into instant inspiration.

What are some of your earliest childhood memories?

I remember my mother swabbing our mud house floor with cow dung paste to make it smooth and clean. I always waited for it to dry so I could draw on it with a chalk. In my refugee camp, I was transfixed on the potter's wheel continuously spinning to make clay pots, also on artisans carving designs on shell bangles. Every idol-making step fascinated me: the bamboo frame, hay structure, mud covering to create the surface and painting on it.

What's the most unusual but effective advice that anyone has given you?

One of my professors at Ecole Nationale des Beaux Arts in Paris would often look at my class work and encourage me to focus on my bold gestures in my art work. He would regularly say, "Don't ever get rid of your gallant, impromptu, instantaneous gestures. These dynamic movements make your art stand out." I've always kept this advice in mind as my deliberate artistic move.

A quality that you think will never go out of fashion?

An unseen, unpublished new idea generated in a visual style with a series of artworks will never go out of fashion. These unique series have to have consistency, but not repetition, so that viewers and collectors recognize the artist's artwork even without his or her signature.

A thing about you that surprises people when they get to know you...

I have an extremely focused journey of art that started when I was 5 years old. Without any deviation I have been painting since then. My physical gestures with colours on a canvas give birth to a seemingly abstract form, but on closely watching the painting, hidden figuratives emerge. People may perhaps be surprised that my lifestyle is not separate from my art.