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Indian wins Ramon Magasaysay Award



Rahul Gandhi will need to deliver - and fast



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Pranab, a strong partner to America: Hillary Clinton

Washington: Calling Pranab Mukherjee a strong partner to America and the American people, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has congratulated him on becoming the 13th President of India. Mukherjee had worked throughout his career to deepen India-US cooperation on a wide range of issues, she said in a statement Wednesday after he assumed India's highest office. She added,

"I look forward to continuing to work

with the government and people of India. Together we will build on our shared democratic values, strengthen this relationship even more and create a brighter future for both our people."

Mukherjee was sworn in as President by Chief Justice S.H. Kapadia in New Delhi amid pomp and pageantry. The 76-year-old seasoned politician pledged to rise above partisan politics in his conduct of the highest office in the land.



Maha Mahim Pranab Mukherjee, the 13th President of India, pledged to rise above partisan politics in his conduct of the highest office in the land.

Obama calls for measures against gun violence

New Orleans, LA: Speaking three days after the Colorado massacre, President Barack Obama advocated some degree of control on the sale of weapons, but said he would also seek a consensus on combatting violence.

He said some responsibility also rests with parents, neighbors and teachers to ensure that young people "do not have that void inside them."

His remarks came at a speech here to the National Urban League in the light of the shooting in an Aurora, Colo., movie theater that left 12 dead, and scores injured. Obama pledged to work with lawmakers of both parties to stop violence, not only the sudden massacres that have bedeviled the nation, but the steady drip of urban



James Holmes, the suspected shooter of Aurora, CO theatre massacre

crime that has cost many young lives.

Despite the Second Amendment's protection of gun rights, Obama said: "I also believe that a lot of

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India hopes for its richest medal haul at London Olympics

London: Carrying the hopes of a billion plus people back home, Indian athletes are supremely confident of returning with the richest medal haul from the Olympic Games, the sport's biggest showpiece, opening in London July 27.

India can get medals not from one or two sports, but a handful. Their shooters, archers, shuttlers, wrestlers and boxers all look good and they cannot fail for want of effort. They have all done well at international meets in the run-up to the Games. Add tennis to the list, that perennial medal hope.

Impressed by the athletes' performance in the 2010 Commonwealth Games,

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US, China to battle it out for top position...page 25.



Ageing superstar Amitabh Bachchan carrying the Olympic torch in London on Thursday. India has sent its biggest contingent yet of 81 in 13 disciplines for the Games.



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By Parveen Chopra

Haroon Khimani's was a known name in the hal-
lowed art world in the 1980s. He had studied at Faculty of Fine Arts at M.S. University, Baroda, the first to adopt degree course in fine arts in India. He studied under Prof. N.S. Bendre and Prof. K.G. Subramanyan, the latter influencing him the most. "Not only in painting but in lifestyle and ideology as well. I took painting as a conviction, a never ending passion, and a way of meaningful life."

Khimani has stated his manifesto as an artist clearly on his website: "I seek to discover the beauty of nature, mostly in collapsed structures and disasters, natural or man made. Beauty has a new definition for me. My paintings look like landscapes but there is unusual

magnitude of structural juxtaposition, depth, recession and space created by colors perceived through black and white tones.

"We all are habituated to see beauty in limited terms but in disorganized and chaotic nature new beauty forms are created by self-destruction of the existing structures. Nature does this wonderfully but it depends upon our outlook to see the beauty in it. In fact, at such junctures we are emotionally driven to sympathy towards sufferers and dislocated mass, which leads us to see the pathetic and helpless part of it rather than the aesthetic value."

Excerpts from an exclusive interview Khimani gave from Boston to The SATimes:

♦ *You say you were "known in the world of art & painting in the 80s". Does that mean you were away from the scene before resur-*

facing recently?

Haroon Khimani: Yes, for 39 years I could not paint as my time was taken up in earning bread and butter. My career had taken off in 1970 when I held a solo exhibition in Delhi at Shridharani Art Gallery. It was inaugurated by Jeram Patel, an outstanding abstract artist. I was highly idealistic and passionate about my art but in those days art market was not as it is today. My charcoal and crayon drawings received good reviews in the press, yet I could not hit the sell button. I was offered some work meant for export with predetermined themes, which was not my cup of tea. So I returned to Madras where I served in the government as an art designer in the handloom sector. The full time job robbed me of the creative time I could have spent on painting. Then, for 14 years I worked as a designer for cloth mills like Mafatlal, Birlas, Kohinoor & Binny's. Eventually I established my own two companies in hospital-ity business, Artifact in Mumbai, and Rikan in Dubai.

♦ *How has your art changed creatively?*

Khimani: Every healthy (to keep it fresh, not to stink) artist aims at change after working sufficiently on one style. This change must be natural and gradual. It should grow organically like limbs' growth in a child. It shouldn't look like horns of a buffalo pasted on the head of a human being (which happens only

in surrealism, in Salvador Dali). I am heading towards abstracts, but still I feel I must understand the term abstract fully. An artist must be honest on his path to achieve truth in art.

♦ *Your paintings are crowded with shards of glass, piercing forms... they convey human suffering, melancholy... is that your intention?*

An artist couldn't be so cruel as to look at human tragedies sadistically but could depict it in his paintings. What is happening around affects him the most and becomes a theme in his paintings. Artist is hypersensitive to such happenings yet he is an onlooker who can sympathize but can't help. Right from my art student time, I developed a sense of beauty looking at the natural shapes and forms. The scenes of broken phenomena in nature started to attract me and became second love after birds, especially roosters (I did many woodcuts of this bird's movements.) I was never attracted to the human figure like other masters of renaissance--it tempts me as a shape and form but never a subject to paint.

♦ *Art has to be about aesthetics/beauty? Can it still convey reality by transmuting it (because mere depiction will be just documentation)?*

Khimani: Let me quote my guru, my mentor. In an interview Prof. Subramanyan gave to The Times of

India at Shantiniketan in January 2010, he said, "Self-infliction and the like seem to have become a part of art practice. It seems these artists want to change the world with their art but, to me, an artist should keep his own privacy. Essentially all art is a kind of soliloquy and the artist first communicates with himself and then with others he conceives in his own image. Besides, art cannot do many things needed to change the world. Art cannot do what insurrections can do."

Prof. Subramanyan then puts my work in perspective: "He (Khimani) was one of those young artists of that time who responded to local visual facts but represented them in a generalized or near abstract image, avoiding descriptive details and focusing mainly on the dramatic interplay of the visual elements, but attempted nevertheless to preserve a vestigial reference to the sources. And these sources lay in the dynamic visuals of the urban scene, the crowded streets, the chaotic market place, and various categories of public festivals and fairs. At the time Haroon finished his studies and stepped into professional scene public response to art was limited; to make living as a self-employed painter or sculptor was hard. So he was obliged to move into the field of design to earn his livelihood. This took him to Dubai.

"Now, more at peace with himself, he has come back to painting. And has been for a while working

Haroon Khimani

Return of the Artist

He seeks to discover the beauty of nature, mostly in collapsed structures and disasters, natural or man made. Returning to his passion, painting, after 39 long years, Khimani professes that art and culture can build bridges while money and power only create disputes and differences.



Blossoms in Disaster
Acrylic Collage 22X28 inch



Houses Turned into Rags
Acrylic-Collage 24X30 inch



Invisible Through the Window's Frost
Acry-Collage 20X24 inch

like a maniac. Sensibly enough he has started where he left. The urban scene with its contrapuntal variety. Its counter play of order and chaos, drabness and color, shadow and illumination still seems to engage him. His works are no factual records but the recreation of the animation. For this he uses diverse media and visual devices and builds with these eye catching tapestries with a surfeit of details. At a time when a large number of artists choose to see the world from a distance and comment on it with sarcasm and satire, Haroon Khimani does the opposite; producing works that are visceral and celebrative."

♦ Which contemporary painters you admire besides Mani?

Khimani: Gulam Mohammed Sheikh, Jeram Patel, M.F. Hussain, J. Swaminathan, V.S. Gaitonde, Ram Kumar, etc.

♦ Any exhibitions you have planned next?

Khimani: I could not get desired gallery dates in New York. So I opted to show at India Art Festival, Mumbai, from November 28 to December 2, 2012. Presently most of the galleries are overflowing with mediocre works which manage to sell, perhaps due to below average understanding of art by people.

♦ Art, even Indian art, in recent years has been fetching astronomical prices in the global market of Christie's and Sotheby's auctions, etc...

Khimani: At times dramatics are needed to get name and fame, often irrespective of merits of work. Prices go with brand name. But art cannot be judged by the price tag. For instance, impressionism of the 19th century was damned by critics accustomed to realism in art. Now these works fetch millions.

Today, business houses are all for financial growth instead of cultural development. They don't support fields like art as much as they should. We often tend to forget that culture can solve more problems than money. It's only culture that can build bridges while money and power only create disputes and differences.

♦ Why have you kept the home page of your website in black and white?

Khimani: Because my woodcuts of cocks and scaffolding drawings were mainly in B&W, which forms

HOME in my website. Gulam Mohammed Sheikh suggested I go back to woodcuts even as it was a subject of my own choice. He even wrote a line commending me in his book 'Contemporary Art in Baroda' on my interest in woodcuts while in college.

♦ Something about your family...

Khimani: My family is educated and understanding. My two sons are a big support to my activities. My daughter-in-law is the first to criticize my paintings when finished. This was the source of my resuming paintings after 39 long years.

♦ Any other relevant details you want to add...

Khimani: I was very late in each field of activity for want of direction in my adolescent period. Thus I pray for longer life to fulfill my mission and wish that people should give priority to understand their kids in the right perspective instead of dreaming and expecting them to lead the way they choose.

♦ You have three addresses: Bombay, Dubai, and Boston....!

Khimani: All the three are my homes. It is easier to get things done in the US, where I stay during spring and summer. I stay in Bombay at the start of a year, to be in touch with art winds of India. I have studio there too. I also travel through India, which provides source for my paintings. Dubai is a base for family with two grandsons with whom I enjoy.



Reflection of Images
Acrylic Collage 22X28 inch



No Escape
Acry-Collage 24X30 inch



Harmony in Wall Painting
Acry-Collage 20X24 inch



Crash
Acrylic, Collage 22X28 inch



Nature Strikes
Acrylic, Collage 24X30 inch



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