



# A Dialogue with Shampa Sircar Das

Pursuit of perfection. By Suman Bajpai

Shampa Sircar Das did her B.F.A. (Painting) in 1993 from College of Art, New Delhi followed by M.F.A (Painting) from Jamia Millia Islamia in 1995. The rich Indian cultural heritage and Indian Philosophy inspire Shampa's works. Her latest series is Antardhwani: The inner voice, which will be showcased at Chawla Art Gallery, Saket Place, New Delhi from January 18, 2019 to February 03, 2019. The show brings together



works addressing that oneness is the essence of all; the unity of existence.

**Excerpts from an interview**  
**When did you first realize your aesthetic leanings towards art?**

During my early years I was always encouraged at home and school to pursue and recognize my creative talent in Art. Coming from a Bengali family, I had many creative influences such as, music, watching the process of Idol making by the artisans during festivals, beautiful Alpana designs drawn during any auspicious ceremony and the fabulous imaginary world of folk tales and tales from the Ramayana and Mahabharata, So much variety and diversities all added to my inquisitiveness and creative

development. Art has always been an integral part of my life. Later the impressionable days spent at College of Arts, Delhi had a profound influence on my search for artistic style and identity. I never had thought of becoming an artist when I was a child. But as I grew up I began to recognize my artistic talents with the help of my parents and teachers. Being an artist did not happen overnight, certain situations and circumstances lead me to Art.

**Your paintings depict five elements of universe, what is your idea behind this concept?**

Earth, water, fire, air and ether are the five basic elements that constitute the bodies of all conditioned souls, from Brahma himself down to the non-moving

creatures. These elements all emanate from the one personality of Godhead. All subtle material elements are actually present within their gross effects; similarly all gross elements are present within their subtle causes, since material creation takes place by progressive manifestation of elements from subtle to gross. Thus we can find all material elements within any single element.

**It seems that the rich Indian cultural heritage and Indian philosophy inspires you, any particular reason behind this?**

I draw my inspirations from Indian art, which is so intimately associated with Indian religion, heritage and philosophy. My current artistic inspiration stems from a journey/ search of "Self" or "who am I" and tries to imbibe from the combination of the Indian philosophical tenets. How we understand the self is how we understand the universe, and how we understand the universe determines how we relate to it, what we do about it, and how we combust our lives within it. I try and use a synthesis of philosophy, aesthetics and technique to create my language on the canvas and not to make a statement.

**Figures in your paintings are meditative, is it some kind of soul searching for you?**

My works wield a wand of philosophy and aesthetics, encompassing a vital embrace of layers of consciousness and realized awareness through individual and shared journeys. For as landscapes of the figural and metaphysic, such painterly endeavors' are based upon imagination, fuelled and inspired by mythology, characteristically rich and complex in Buddhist and Vedic pantheons.

**Do you think that for better understanding of art, colour plays an important role?**

Colour plays an important role in defining my language and

expression on the canvas. The works have solid colours, and are juxtaposed to construct a range of hues that sedate and inspire a quiet meditative mood.

**What is your favourite medium for painting?**

I prefer working directly on to the canvas. The acrylic medium facilitates this process and helps me maintain the spontaneity and mystique of a magical experience. The elements are then infused into the work with the help of acrylic paint applied with a thin brush, silver and gold archival acrylic water based pens. The form later emerges and blocks of colour assume shape, to reveal a fluid, untamed work of intricate dimension.

**Do you need that it is necessary to evolve constantly?**

As an artist I decided there is no one road to follow so I am free to make my own. I am free to take what I want from each experience gained and reject what I don't want. An artist should also be in a



state of flux, constantly evolving and rediscovering. Attaching oneself to one path brings in stagnation and leads to death of creation. Art and the creative process should stem from journeys both internal and external, philosophies, emotions, culture and the observations of everyday life. The professional struggle involves putting in the time, year after year; a body of work that demonstrates both consistency and evolution; and an openness to engage with others about both your own work and the work of others. As an artist I am never ever completely satisfied with my work. Some works are always better than others but the pursuit of perfection is only a mirage that keeps me moving on. Each work is a stepping-stone on a much longer journey. We