

Press Release

DIVAGATIONS SPACES OF POSSIBILITY

A group show of six Raza Foundation Awardees

Atul Dodiya
Avadhesh Yadav
Jayashree Chakravarty
S. Harsha Vardhana
Sheetal Gattani
Vanita Gupta

Venue : **Art Alive Gallery**
S-221, Panchsheel Park
New Delhi

Show Dates : 1st to 24th February, 2009
(11 a.m. to 7 p.m.)

Every year, the **Raza Foundation** instituted by the legendary artist S.H.Raza gives awards to talented Indian artists. This year, **Art Alive** brings a consolidated exhibition of works of Raza Awardees from 2006 to 2008, namely: **Atul Dodiya and Jayashree Chakravarty (2008), Avadhesh Yadav and Vanita Gupta (2007) and, S. Harsha Vardhana and Sheetal Gattani (2006).**

Raza Foundation is an institution in itself and has been acknowledging names and providing financial help to youth in the fields of fine art, performing arts, poetry etc. Although based in Paris for over five decades now, Raza has always helped young talent in these disciplines.

Prominent poet, Lalit Kala Akademi's chairperson and Raza Foundation advisor **Ashok Vajpeyi**, sheds light on the prerequisites to become a Raza Awardees and states how the following recipients justifies to be one: *"From a vibrant art scene which is justifiably dominated by the young, it is always difficult to choose artists for the annual awards instituted by the eminent master S.H. Raza. We have been choosing those artists who have dared to carve out or search for distinctive visions and styles for themselves."*

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It is widely recognised that contemporary art in India has an amazing plurality of approaches, style and visions. Many of the more talented younger artists have been daring and 'wandering' to evolve visual languages of their own: deeply personal but responding to our times and complex reality in many distinct ways. '**Divagations: Spaces of Possibility**', expresses a desire of the Foundation to raise spirits of itinerant and individualistic artist and trends. A concept borrowed from the great French master *Stefan Mallarme* that proposes that it is through these divagations that spaces of possibility are discovered and made visible. This year's awardees- Atul Dodiya and Jayashree Chakravarty have undoubtedly contributed tremendously to the contemporary art scene in India.

Atul Dodiya is referred as a leader of young generation of Indian artists. Having addressed various methods, spaces and art practices; he has produced an amazingly eclectic visual language. His body of works is majorly explorative in nature, subversive in content with full references from personal life, national history, art history, popular cinema, poetry, literature and so on.

Jayashree Chakravarty is often noticed, capturing fleeting moments in her works. Initially, a figurative-narrative artist, she moved towards abstraction and has now been working to inter-mingle the two genres effectively to portray the chaos of life in subdued tones and abstract expression. She captures biographical details within densely layered surfaces, burying and revoking memories, conscious and unconscious thoughts and encounters. Complicating the notion of time and space are intricate markings of railway lines, heart beats, botanical drawings, graffiti and calligraphy.

Among the former winners of Raza Awardees and part of the present show are: **Avadhesh Yadav and Vanita Gupta (2007) and, Sheetal Gattani and S. Harsha Vardhana (2006)**. Known abstract artists with varied concerns, these four artists have created a niche for themselves in an extremely difficult genre of Abstraction. **Avadhesh** with his mediumistic concerns creates sober patterns reflecting his aesthetic quest. **Vanita** experiments with size and texture in her monochromatic compositions with minimal forms. In complete command over mark making technique, her strokes define the ambiguity between solidity and liquidity.

Harsha is critically concerned with balance in his geometric forms that are seen as representative of ancient symbols of male and female fertility, along with scribbled echoes across the surface make his abstraction both delicate and lyrical. **Sheetal** seems to shed importance to the natural tendency of eruption in the face of over indulgence in her works through layers of colours that chip-off due to their weight.

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