

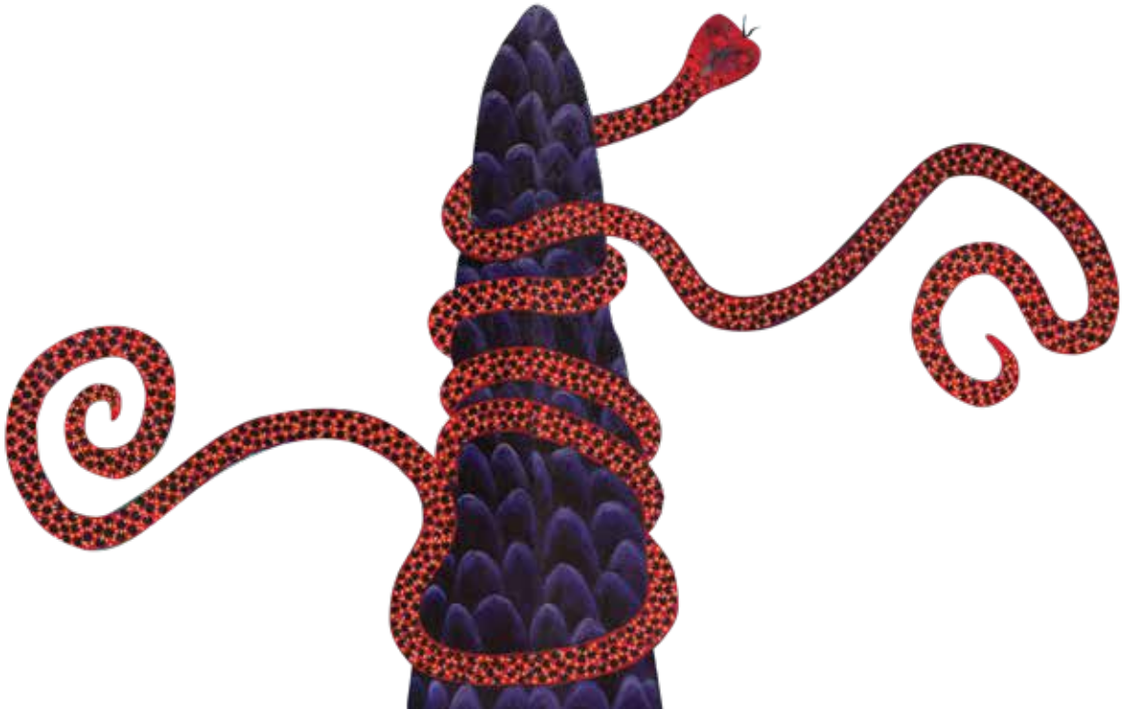
SAMUDRA MANTHAN

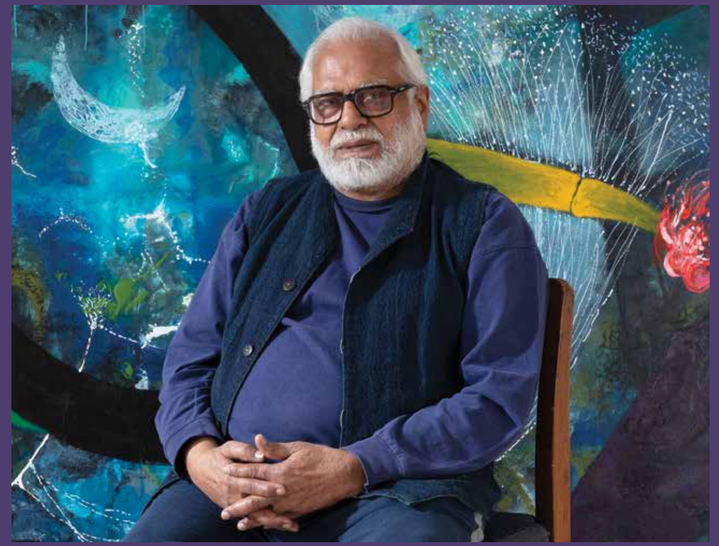
MANU PAREKH



"Where there is faith, there will be the presence of flowers. Life, birth, marriage, and death–flowers will be there. Flowers represent happiness and celebration, and at the time of sorrow, they represent condolence. Flowers do not know any particular religion but represent all religions. I have visited Vatican City, Ajmer, Nizamuddin Auliya's dargah, gurudwaras and Banaras. There were only two things common to all these places: faith and flowers."

Manu Parekh





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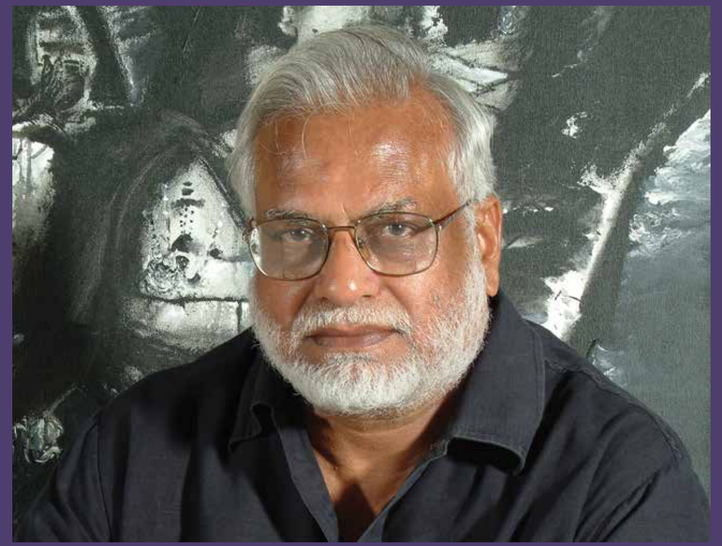




Samudra Manthan, or the Churning of the Ocean, is a significant episode in Hindu mythology found in ancient texts like the Bhagavata Purana and the Mahabharata. According to the legend, the gods (Devas) and demons (Asuras) collaborated to churn the ocean of milk (Kshira Sagara) to obtain valuable treasures, including the nectar of immortality (Amrita).

To facilitate the churning process, they used Mount Mandara as the churning rod and the serpent Vasuki as the churning rope. As they churned, various divine and mystical objects emerged, such as Lakshmi (goddess of wealth), the wish-fulfilling cow Kamadhenu, and the moon. However, the process also released a deadly poison (Halahala) that threatened the cosmos. Lord Shiva consumed the poison to save the universe, which caused his throat to turn blue, earning him the name Neelkanth.

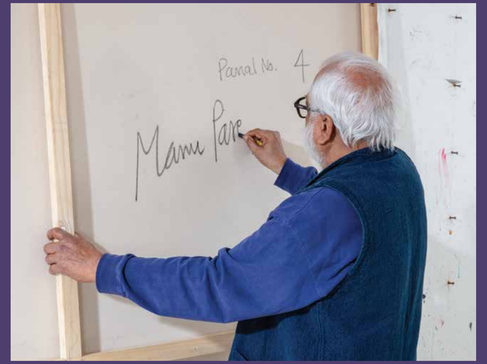
Finally, the nectar was obtained, leading to a dispute between the gods and demons, culminating in a battle for its possession. Ultimately, the gods succeeded in drinking the nectar, gaining immortality. The Samudra Manthan symbolizes the pursuit of enlightenment and the balance between good and evil.

Manu Parekh's representation of the Samudra Manthan is a continued exploration of faith through his paintings in this monumental, 42 feet masterpiece. The presence of flowers where there is faith and the beauty of the vastness of the universe that embraces all that there is without any bias on the fulcrum of faith. The purity of faith is not tarnished with what emerges from the ocean, it remains untouched always. Manu Parekh's artworks are simply an offering of his own devotion to the practice of painting.

"I used to worship the Deity in the Kali Temple. It was suddenly revealed to me that everything is Pure Spirit. The utensils of worship, the altar, the door frame - all Pure Spirit. Men, animals, and other living beings - all Pure Spirit. Then like a madman I began to shower flowers in all directions, Whatever I saw I worshipped."

Ramakrishna Paramhansa





SAMUNDRA MANTHAN | ACRYLIC ON CANVAS | 78" X 504"

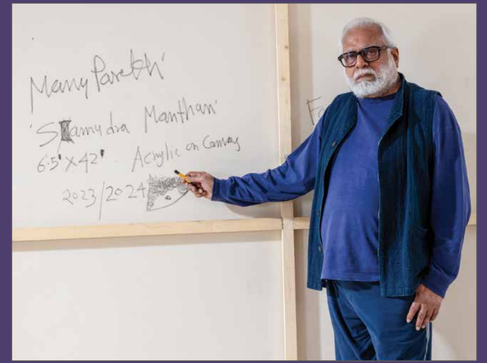




I was only dreaming
Namdeo and Vitthal
Stepped into my dream
"Your job is to make poems,"
said Namdeo,
"Stop fooling around."
Vitthal gave me the measure
And slapped me gently
To arouse me
From my dream
Within a dream.
"The grand total
Of the poems Namdeo vowed to write
Was on billion,"
He said,
"All the unwritten ones, Tuka,
Are your dues."

Tukaram

Translated from the Marathi by Dilip Chitre



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ABOUT ICIA

Nestled in the heart of Mumbai's art district, Kala Ghoda, the Institute Of Contemporary Indian Art, also known as ICIA Gallery, takes forward the legacy of establishing Indian art in the mindspace of art patrons and enthusiasts. The gallery was set up by Mr Vickram Sethi in the year 2007 with a vision to redefine the orthodox infrastructure not only with regards to the curating and viewing process but also to acquire authentic and prime artworks.

ICIA is one of the largest grassroot galleries in India and has been actively enhancing 'The Exhibition Experience' for the viewer. Over a period of ten years ICIA has exhibited works of revered Modernists and established contemporary artists. The gallery has deftly carved a niche for itself by representing India's art culture with a balanced approach, showcasing the seminal attributes of the masters in tow with the experimental and disruptive vision of contemporary artists from within the country. AstaGuru is a part of ICIA.

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