THREE MODERNS

KRISHEN KHANNA
HIMMAT SHAH
THOTA VAIKUNTAM



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CURATOR: UMA NAIR



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NFA
NAMTECH FINE ART



CONFLUENCE OF TIME

In the coming together of three of India's moderns this mélange of sculptures gives form to the beauty of the human figure/face as well as imagined encounters with the daily rituals of everyday living.

Himmat Shah's vision makes the banal wondrous and the human head unusual, sometimes even curious. 100-year-old Krishen Khanna the "last of the Progressives", with his quartet of Bandwallas is informed by his own position as an artist of deeper intensities and observations. Thota Vaikuntam celebrates the aura of being Dravidian with his patinated bronzes that celebrate exploration, in the everyday idioms of the ritual Telangana folk with festooned foreheads. At the center of all of the works of all three Indian masters, is the absorption of life's lived idioms and the confluence of time in a meeting of modern materials.

KRISHEN KHANNA

100-year-old Krishen Khanna's Bandwallas depiction of four Bandwallas engaged in playing their instruments and synchronising their tunes in their coloured ensembles create their own insignia of individual impact in the hallmark of India's humble occupations. It was in the 1970s that Khanna first explored the subject of Bandwallas, or members of local brass bands engaged to play at weddings and other public ceremonies. While driving out of his Delhi studio at Nizamuddin, the path was blocked by the marching band of a wedding procession- this gave birth to his first Bandwalla portraits. As paintings and now stand as monumental sculptures. The Bandwallas have become a recurrent theme in Krishen Khanna's oeuvre. Khanna's choice of subject has mostly been inspired by the experiences of the daily life and pathos of the common man. Exploiting their cultural and aesthetic dualisms, Khanna's commentary on his Bandwallas becomes an inspiration to draw attention to the human condition. As they play their wind instruments or the little drum these sculptures become a mediation between cultural symbols and the ritual marking of human presence in the hourglass of time.

JITENDRA SINGH BHOPU WAALE
RESINATED FIBREGLASS WITH AUTOMOTIVE PAINT
80” X 52” X 68”







SANTOSH KUMAR BEEN WALLA
BRONZE | 49” X 23” X 27”







PATINDER JI HARAN WALLA
BRONZE | 56” X 32” X 18”







REKHY SAAB DRUM WALLA
BRONZE | 46” X 24” X 20”







HIMMAT SHAH

Alert and sharp, Himmat Shah's suite of stone sculptures made of Emperador marble, brown marble and white marble comes from his lifelong investigation of the human condition. Born of his love for an avant garde language of archetypal forms he created his heads in the Indian sculptural tradition that lead to the paring down of sensibilities. The two marble heads create their own synergy in the spirit of creation. Himmat's heads sprang from an open sensibility, alert and sharp to the mystery that surrounded all things. The sculptures suggest also the impermanence of seemingly immutable objects and the potential of interior space to challenge present day thoughts. Himmat's intuitive explorations are made palpable by the sheer presence of these works. The *Lotus* is a tall work that at once harks back to the beauty of the signature of symbolism within the botanics of nature's bounty in the paring down of imagery. The deeper understanding of convexities and concavities and the impact of textural terrain all created their own synergy for Himmat who created in the solitude of his own universe. Nothing for him was trivia, nothing was junk, everything had its own place and space.



BROWN ROOT MARBLE (TOP)
BHESLANA BLACK MARBLE (BASE) | 52” X 42” X 42”







RAJNAGAR WHITE MARBLE
24” X 15” X 8”





BROWN EMPREDDOR MARBLE
15” X 12” X 12”

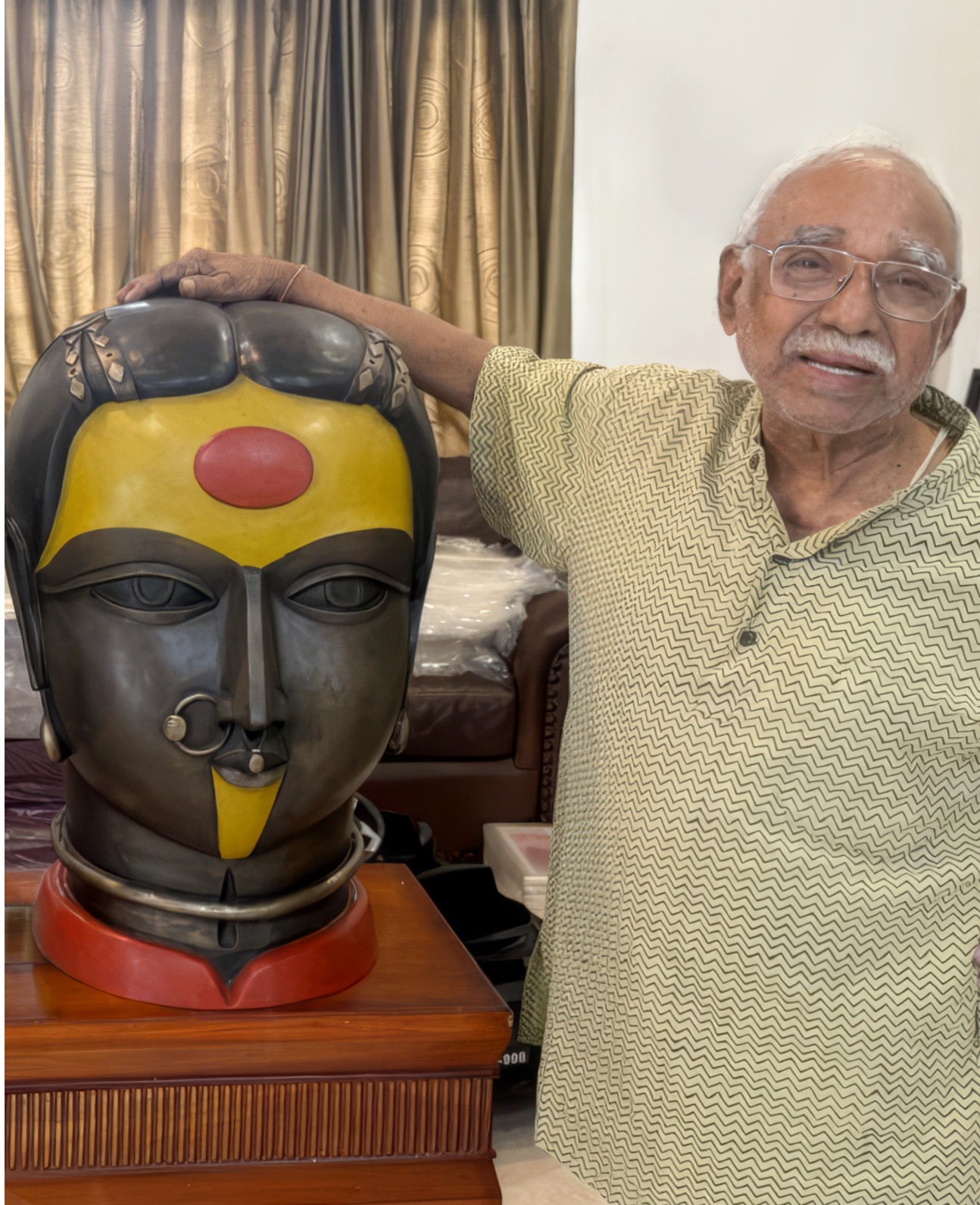
BRONZE | 33” X 8” X 7”





THOTA VAIKUNTAM

Thota Vaikuntam's quartet of a single large head and a trio of smaller heads come together as his personification of the Sacred Gaze series. His love for folk idioms and the power of the everyday ritual all create their own narrative in terms of the beauty of Dravidian dignity in tone and tenor. The patinated bronzes in smaller size are a treat to behold. These three heads are creations that are informed by Vaikuntam's own position as an artist located between geographic and social milieus in the land of Telangana. Translated as imagery from his famed canvasses, his way of working is exploratory, between his own observations to his love for bringing to attention the overlooked world with its everyday acts, such as applying the bindi/tilak in Indian culture, capturing the rustic ritual and then re-assessing its meaning, as it repositions the viewer's relationship with the object. In the larger monumental painted resinated feminine identity, we sense layers of references to what is ritualistic as well as physical and psychological.



BRONZE | 25” X 18” X 22”







BRONZE | 25” X 17” X 24”







BRONZE | 25” X 17” X 24”







RESINATED FIBREGLASS WITH AUTOMOTIVE PAINT
92” X 71” X 80”, PEDESTAL: 12” X 54” X 48”, OVERALL HEIGHT: 102”







ABOUT KRISHEN KHANNA ART LLP

Krishen Khanna Art LLP is dedicated to preserving and celebrating the artistic legacy of one of India's most distinguished modern masters. The LLP engages with the presentation of Krishen Khanna's artworks across diverse media, including sculpture and large - scale public art, ensuring his vision continues to resonate with contemporary audiences. Through exhibitions, publications, and cultural collaborations, the LLP works to expand the reach of his enduring themes - humanity, memory, and collective experience - bringing them into dialogue with new generations. It also serves as a platform for institutional partnerships and curatorial projects that honour Khanna's lifelong contribution to Indian modernism and the evolving story of art in the public realm.

ABOUT THOTA VAIKUNTAM ART LLP

Thota Vaikuntam Art LLP is established to preserve, promote, and extend the legacy of eminent Indian modern artist Thota Vaikuntam. The LLP organises with the artist the production, presentation, and promotion of his artworks across multiple forms, including bronze and fiber resin sculptures, signed prints, and collaborative projects that reinterpret his vision through allied mediums such as embroidery. Each initiative reflects the depth, dignity, and distinctiveness of Vaikuntam's artistic language, rooted in the cultural ethos of Telangana. Through its activities, Thota Vaikuntam Art LLP provides a structured platform for the artist's works, ensuring their authenticity, accessibility, and sustained engagement with audiences in India and abroad. The company is committed to fostering long-term institutional collaborations, supporting scholarly research, and broadening the reach of Vaikuntam's practice for collectors, curators, and cultural institutions alike.

More information is available at www.thotavaikuntam.in

ABOUT NAMTECH FINE ART

Namtech Fine Art is committed to fostering a wider appreciation for Indian Modern and Contemporary Art through thoughtfully curated publications. With a focus on producing high-quality books, catalogues, and critical writings, the initiative seeks to document, preserve, and illuminate the diverse practices and legacies of Indian artists. Through its publishing efforts, Namtech Fine Art cultivates a rich dialogue between artistic heritage and contemporary thought, offering a platform that connects scholars, collectors, and wider audiences to the evolving narrative of Indian art.

