

# IN\_DIA\_LOG

B h a s k a r H a n d e



Century Union  
The Hague

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**Bhaskar Hande**

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# **Where Culture Meet**

Time to time artist keeps on changing himself as well as his pursuit of creativity Quest of eternal integrity, complexity of the relations, crisis of generations, brings his ideas to the facts of living forever as universal values The process of change keeps on decades and centuries Systems get mixed with unanswered revolutions, so does mind and thoughts wonder on the collectiveness of human where cultures meet

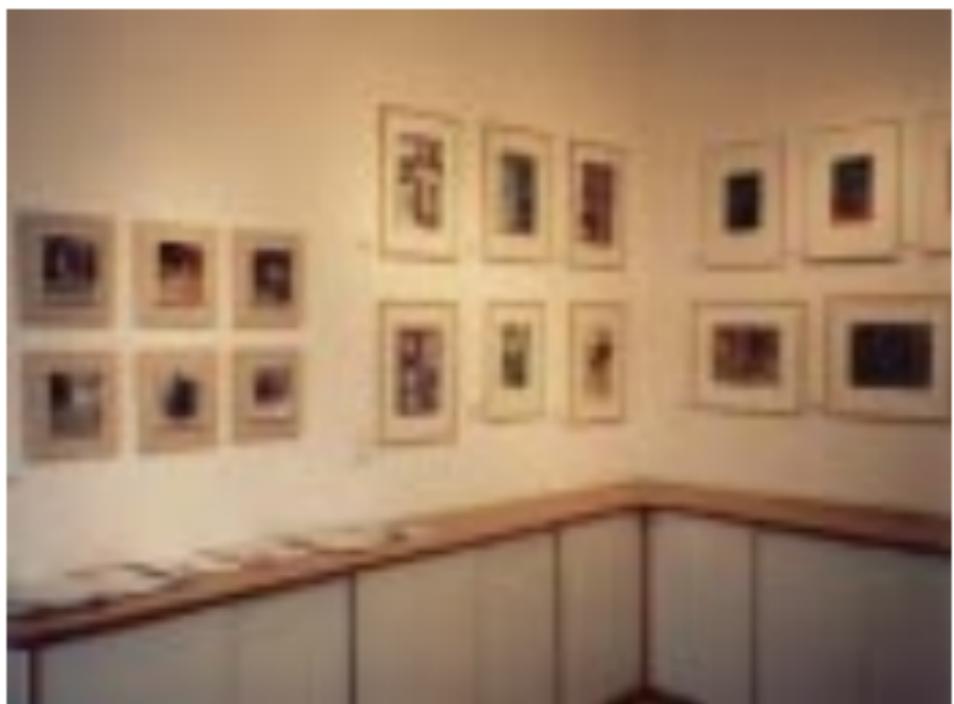
Culture evolves within creative mind of the community artists, writers scientists and the common men They are the sect of culture Who's soul stands for their existence, who's feelings tried almost to do events pleasurable Collection of all that certain moments become rich cultural treasures Who gave his existence to the culture or time, it stands behind of new personality of new generation But many cultures wiped out by landslide of thoughts Civilizations are lying in ruins, leaving their rich discoveries behind like Maya, Inca from American Continent, Mesopotamia, Babylonia from the Continent, Egyptian, Greek, Roman from the Mediterranean, Mohen-Jo-Daro, Harappa from Asia, etc, etc. Surviving sources of culture is in the hands of changing time

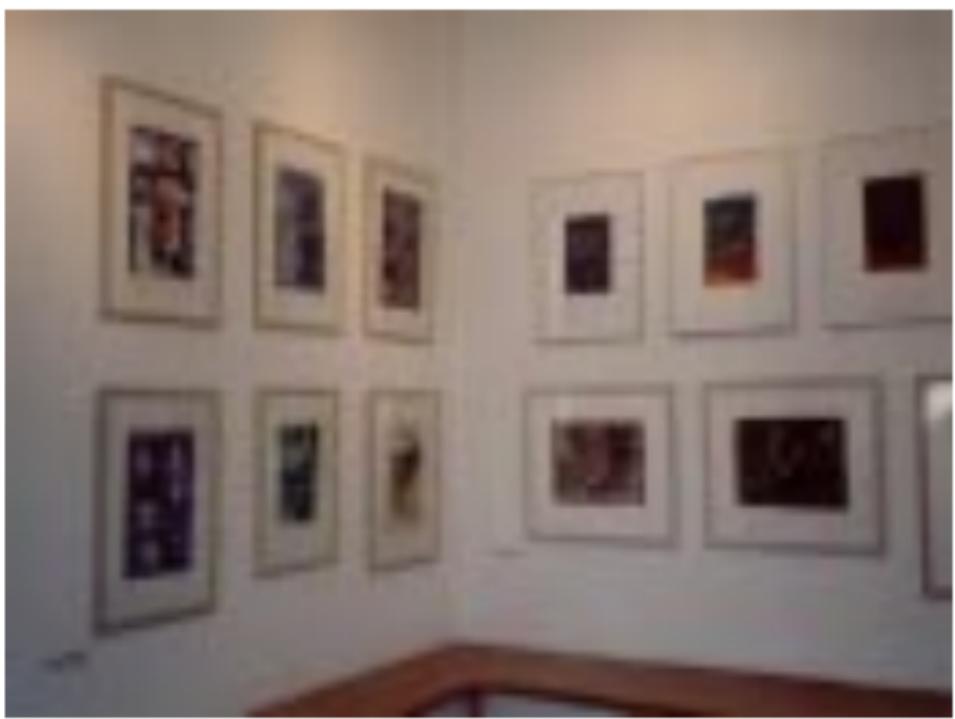
Since the evolution of war strategy, weapons and industrial revolutions took place in history, human soul and brain emerged as much as together for searching their place within their circumstances All the factors of existence moved towards the decline of

unity But understanding the inner opposition in selfdeclimng status one has to come to point, integral part of the culture is human mind He is individual and united in the mass Nowadays the exchange of thoughts become more broadly than ever Media are playing a much larger role in the bringing of cultures together Exchange of thoughts are implementing systems, applied ideas are the tools of mformative universe Travelling to the one corner to another corner of the world is developing global travel culture Meetings of the international trade fairs is the business culture Breaking traditions of the belonging culture is the revolutionary thought of culture Setting new world record is making gesture of recorded culture Philosophing anti art or pro - art by the aesthetic value is academic culture The body of the culture is moving mysteriously We won't see when we are the organs of it Since I tried to understand my culture, I am in the thinking process of another developing culture My belonging culture is hidden in my childhood. In conscious I carry cultures on my back and painting out to another culture What I owe to my childhood, it becomes a nice scenario in the last fifteen years by writing poems and painting canvases I come to de-solve myself in another culture while translating poems Deep into soul, where I am only an alone stand, there is a world of visual fantasy, enormous space, packaged volume, heavy loaded black clouds and gangways through into the blue ocean and green fields

I am facing half globe India to Europe is quarter distance of the earth circumference It might be a radius of art, but culturally it is long distance that I am trying to reduce in my ordinary everyday life Process is going on, so the creativity is in my paintings, sculptures, poems and visuals Differences can be measured in metres and litres scale can be laid on from India to Holland There are always similarities and differences so culture has its identity and personality with its original qualities Still it can be seen as you go deep into it Living in another culture is a question of personal interest, matter of broader views, circumstances of survival and freedom of mind. How much you observe and reproduce while experiencing and practising the time. When you meet the people you exchange the thoughts, If you see the things you communicate with the soul. We seem to be separated culturally but Europe and Asia are under one astronomical roof The sun, the moon, the star positions are equally nearby. The myths, the immigration roots are laid by centuries along with the evolved roots of our culture, so it has basic roots.

Only today we are divorced more in the numbers. Buddha to Christ, Marco Polo to Pamni, Alexander to Dzenghis Khan, Marx to Gandhi Those are the milestones of our cultured continent Where cultures meet









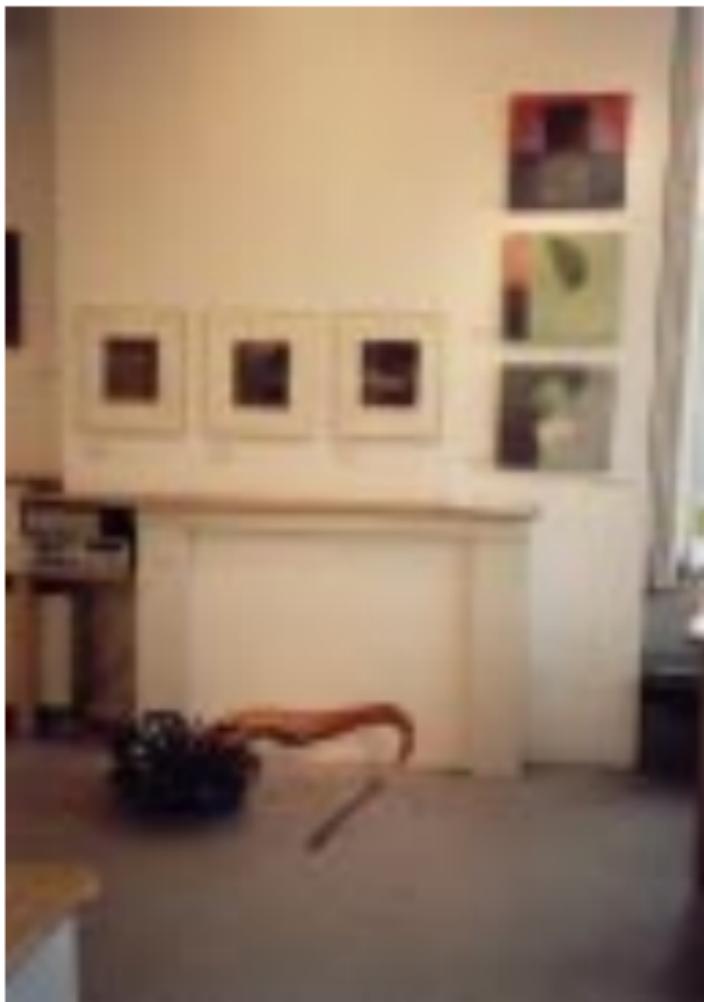
# Merging Colour

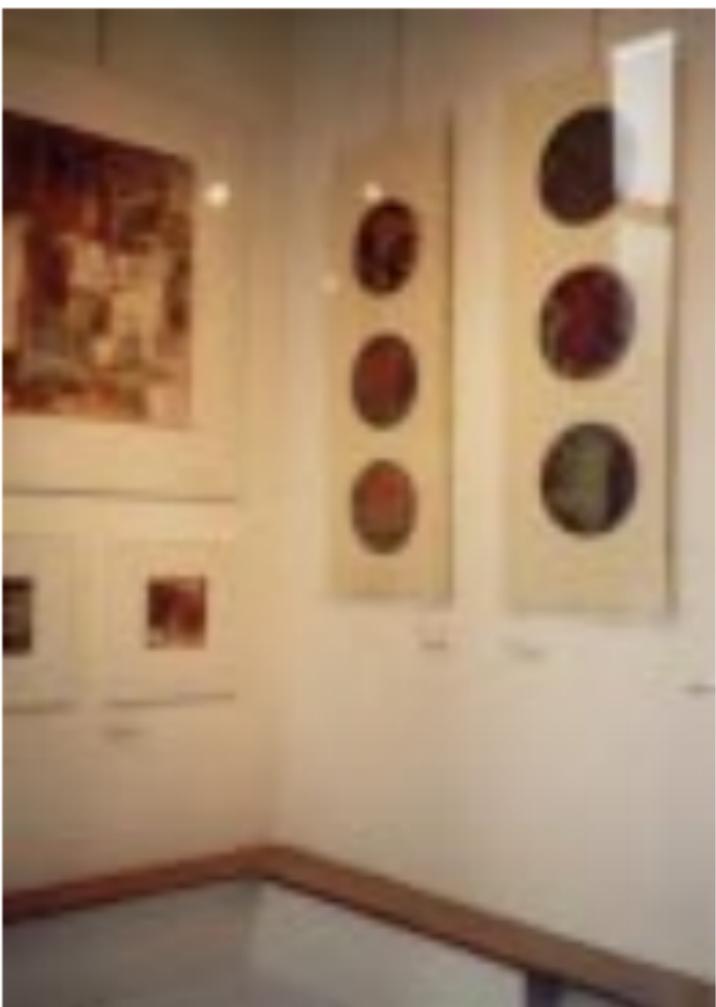
Civilized cultures had been absorb many colours to decorate their spiritual space, living rooms, public places, or even their inner fantasy world in and out Colours always in sight all around you, where ever you see them or blinks get into your imagination These colours are merging in the everlasting process of flowery civilizations.

Artist is the evergreen product of producing colours out of notion with his identity of being part of his society He places the views in and out. His integration with solitude drives smoothly in the field of colours. The edges become colourful borders of the personality, the patterns are more harmonious, though he lays sometimes contrast schemes

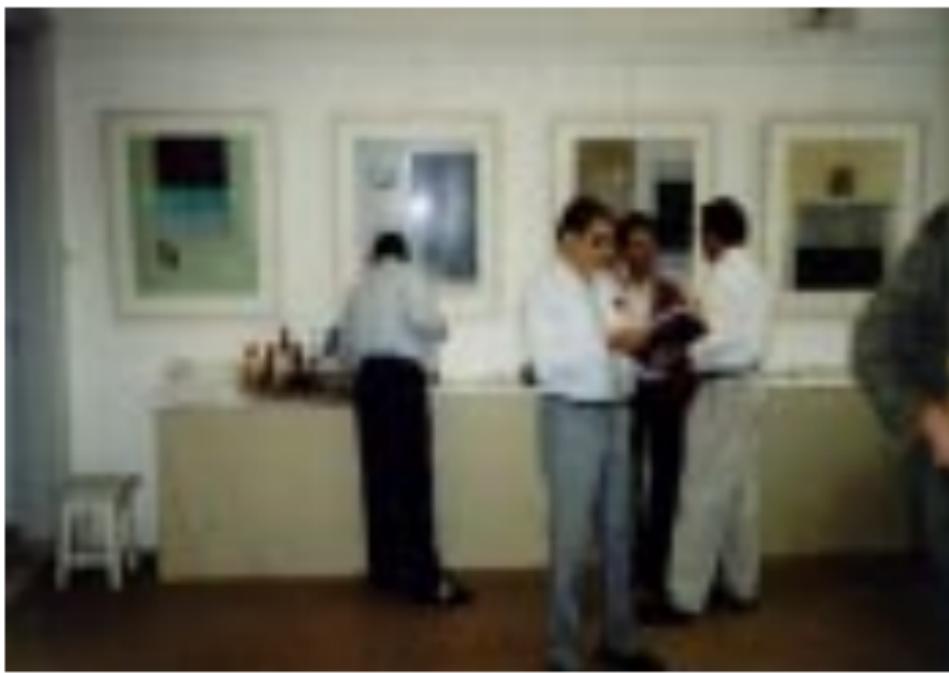
Artists are travelling around the globe these days in a great interest of fulfilling their emptiness and desire What do they carry with them. What are they looking for, why do they displace themselves is there search for rest, the answer is never ever incomplete. Artists spread the colours all over. It dilutes in time. Shades, tone, shadows try to identify somebody's deep quest of being In this exhibition artists are developing phenomena and varnishing their colours after emerging in different cultures They have been having burden on their shoulders in the sack filled with many colours They place themselves in different positions, places and countries on their will They travel in the interest of searching inspirative colourfields in each others cultures In Holland there are many green fields are very flat. The rest of Europe shows a great deal of spectrum, cloudy skies, misery

mist, dark woodlands and snowy fields, but many artists look for greys In India yellow, orange, red, magenta, flower valleys and deserts are to be seen as well as blue sky and green mountains with purple moonlight Within the differences in culture artists









# **GIVE AND TAKE IN ART 1**

Since time immemorial, culture has thrived on artistic give and take. Even if we go as far back as Mohen-jodaro or ancient Egypt, we find artists travelling to other lands in order to further develop their art. We find that the artist has always thrown himself into the tumult of new ideas. The entire span of the history of art consists of the rise of variegated cultures. The history of art is hidden in the nooks and crannies of cultural traditions. During my stay in Holland, I discovered this not only in Indian culture but also in the culture of other countries. When archaeological investigation uncovers layers beneath layers of the past, pages of history can only then be filled. As we read those pages, we see before our eyes like moving pictures, the images of a society, its customs, and their transformation into a cultural tradition. These provoke us to think further. We start comparing looking for resemblances, contrasts, differences, equivalences and endlessly discuss them. As we go on exploring these at innumerable levels, we recall at times the prayers sung at school, the speeches made about the struggle for freedom at elocution competitions, the glorious careers of freedom-fighters, the teachings of the saints, stories and tales from history and mythology, schools of philosophy and ideology and so forth. At the same time, one sees that in the countries of Europe, there are tourists and students who undertake long journeys in order to see different cultures for themselves. They make efforts to understand other cultures and to extend their own

knowledge. They try to study the finer aspects of different cultures. The present experiment was conceived while exchanging ideas on Indian democracy and fifty years of independent India with contemporary fellow-artists. Out of these discussions emerged some concrete ideas: enabling young artists from Holland to work in Pune for a period of two months during which they would interact with young artists in Pune and discuss topics of mutual interest with them. Similarly, to arrange an exhibition of artists from Pune in the city of the Hague in Holland. In this last decade of the twentieth century, the work of Indian artists is being regularly exhibited in Europe and cultural exchange is increasingly taking place. There is economic give and take, and there is interpersonal give and take. These signs indicate that in the twenty first century Europe and

India will come even closer. This has been a significant decade for trade. In terms of cultural exchange, too, progress is being made. When we look at the work of contemporary artists we find convincing proof of this.

In this process of artistic give and take, emphasis has been given on the younger generation because they will play the vital role in any such exchange. Most of the artists in this project are in their thirties. Only such artists have been selected who, after completing their academic training about four or five years ago, have accepted the challenge of an

uncertain future and have committed themselves to the profession of being painters, sculptors, or artists. They have dedicated their future life to art. Their selection has been made with care, bearing these points in mind. Artists from India have also been selected with the same criteria in mind. The only exception is Shri Dilip Chitre. Shri Chitre was born before India became independent. He has experienced the full

period of fifty years since independence In his work, poetry as well as painting, all these five decades are fully reflected Things that emerge in discussions with him provide guide lines to the new generation and in particular to the young artist of today

The rationale of this experiment is that if young artists travel abroad, they are able to see their own culture through the eyes of other people Even before this happens as they experience an unfamiliar world, they have to face some critical incidents and events, and the experience they go through moulds them differently Since the Middle Ages of European history, Holland has had a glorious tradition of painting India has a rich heritage in all the fine arts For the last fourteen years, I have been living in Holland myself I studied European Art for two years and obtained a diploma Each one of the past fourteen years, I have spent four to five months in India This being my profession, I love to exhibit my work in different countries I have taken steps in that direction with some definite ideas that have been turned into decisions Exhibitions had to be planned

so that there would not be sameness in action, no repetition One must make one's own experience available to others One must introduce one's culture to younger people One must unravel one's own tradition to others In such a process, one has to constantly swim among currents of changing thought

This exhibition shows different aspects of art The new

generation of artists in Holland does not like to be restricted to traditional oil painting So rather than be content with conventional graphics, sculpture, or painting they lean more towards the new school whose credo is to explore by going off the beaten path Enk Jan Lightvoet and Jessy Rahman are two artists who explore new ways Jessy loves nature He tries not only to bring out the unique flavour of fruit but also to project its natural aspect Both these artists have studied different aspects of sculpture Exploring new ways in painting are Harold de Bree and Jose den Hartog The medium chosen by Harold is completely Indian He has used the instrument used for engraving names on metal utensils On the other hand, the woman-artist Jose has used a saree to paint a human silhouette Torn Vink is an imaginative who does not get bogged down in problems of the medium His stress is

on imaginative arrangement of his visual subject to reveal its inner character In this exhibition he has dealt with animals, especially the dog The woman-artist Marolijn van der mey has drawn children. After

her arrival in India she was struck by the expressive faces of children and she has paid special attention to their innocent staring eyes. Among the Indian artists from Pune selected for this exhibition is Sharad Kapuskar who shows a control of technique far beyond his age His hand has great facility and he is equally capable of delicate as well as rugged work His sculptures should have a special appeal for his European fellow artists Swati Kapuskar's term cotta miniatures convey the sheer joy and exuberance of form that attract artists to this medium The graphics of Ashok Patil and Sphuriti Patil bear the mark of both the Indian tradition and the universal tradition in print making Their skill is conveyed in their use of their medium The work of Sandip Sonawane displays a use of colour, shades, and tonalities that belong to the image of the cosmos in the Marathi cultural tradition Sandip Sonawane uses texture on different surfaces such as canvas and paper to convey different nuances of feeling in his application of paint









# **Why this belonging**

In India I have been asked very often: how did you get interested in Tukaram? This question came from common persons, reporters, critics and enthusiasts who know the subject and were surprised.

My journey led me from Umbraj to Bombay and thence to The Hague (Holland). I stayed in Umbraj for sixteen years, nine years in Bombay and fourteen years in Holland. All these years I dwelled among different peoples, struggling to survive.

I led a restless life. but never stopped reading and writing. There were many byways beside the highway. In the process I continually kept memories of my village, seeming so attractive in the rat-race of city life and the absence of my mother-tongue among different peoples in foreign surroundings. These reasons caused me to become introverted. But the distance made me more aware of the impressions, of my childhood memories from the countryside, my culture and religion, which became more prominent in my thoughts. So they entered into my writing. My first collection of poems DASHAK (decade) was partly influenced by these impressions.

Tukaram's roots are deep in this earth. When I first realised this I was in a period of growing understanding, my eyes began to see, my mind was getting impressions, I was breathing fresh air. I saw Tukaram Dyaneshwar in the theatre, in kirtan performances, in the pilgrimage to Pandharpur by my parents. A small statue of Vitthal and Rukhmini standing by the God Khandoba, paintings and statues of varkari's and saints inside and outside the

temples. These impressions were engraved in my mind from childhood.

At first when I read Tukaram, his work was very hard to understand for me. I kept on trying regularly. At the time I was beginning to apprehend the power of writing. This was in 1979, as I was taking lessons at the Art Academy. My visuals where accompanying the words, or the other way round. Now it seems difficult to decide which was first, the visuals or the words. I was interested in drawing, but did not practice much. I was mostly doing stage performances. In my secondary school examination I choose Art History than Mathematics. I was not sure of further academic education, so to make a living I joined a firm producing film posters in Bombay. With my natural talent for fine arts I began to draw large faces of movie stars, and painting them in oil paint. At the same time I was admitted to the Art Academy. I supposed to attend evening courses of literature. I was avidly reading all kinds of new writing. In my applied art, literature and the visual arts became more elaborate, supporting each other. I won State Awards and people took an interest in my work. Drama, cinema, world trade fairs, literary publications and new circles of friends occupied me day and night. After five years of advertising course I obtained my diploma of Applied Arts. Now was the time to begin to understand Tukaram's Gatha. I went through an unstable period of my life, hopes and confidence. I had come to know another world. Advertising was a glamourous field, but I wanted to

obtain a more complete knowledge of my capacities and intellect. I began to study advanced arts in foreign cultures and made a move in that direction. This is how I came to Holland. From 1983 to 1987 I stayed in a completely different culture, with a different language and atmosphere. There were shocks on several levels. In the village I was a farm-boy, in the city I was a country bum and in that foreign country I was an Indian. I became conscious that I was nowhere, not among my own and my state became increasingly pinched. Whenever I got a chance I visited the farm. Why is this longing? I thought over and over. Where on this earth will I not get the feeling of being a stranger? I tried to fill an answer to this question. Slowly I began to understand the spiritual harmony between Tukaram and Vithoba. I began to see the meaning of not to belong to people or places. This is not enjoyable or unenjoyable. neither to be a devotee or an atheist. Then I started to believe in my being. During the last fourteen years I have been travelling between Europe and India. I have seen many aspects of life, but I cannot answer the question why I live in Europe and not in India or other way around. One might say this is a dual situation, but I do not consider it as such. I search for meaning in the paradox of these traditions. They become a mixture of philosophies, cultures and traditions, out of which grows a new meaning of my life. Devotee and deity will stand on one level, like Tukaram and Vithoba.

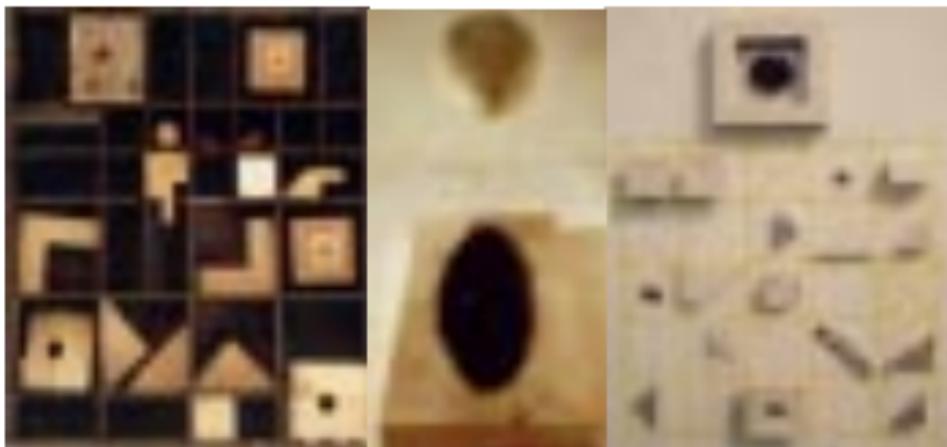
Visual and poetry together, this concept comes out when I present DASHAK (Decade) with exhibition. I had selected ten poems to make painting out of them. One of the poems, ! realize the form of Vitthal. In the process of reading Tukaram's Gatha, the form grown up vividly. Images, forms, symbols and metaphor which Tukaram described in his work comes again and again. It inspired me. 1 produced drawing, paintings, sculptures, in graphics: litho's, silk screens. I have worked regularly under certain circumstances.

I live in Europe last fourteen years. Europe is developed in visual art since fifteenth century. Holland is land of Rembrandt, Vermeer, van Gogh, Piet Mondriaan and many other masters. I work here and exhibit works simultaneously. The cultural face of Europe is changing. The art world come to the point to nowhere. All the ism turning themselves around. Flashing power emerging universally than continentally. Malevich, Paul Klee, Picasso, Miro, Dali, Henry Moore, have passed by. They have brought people to the museums to have spiritual experience. Now art scene desperately seeking new streams.

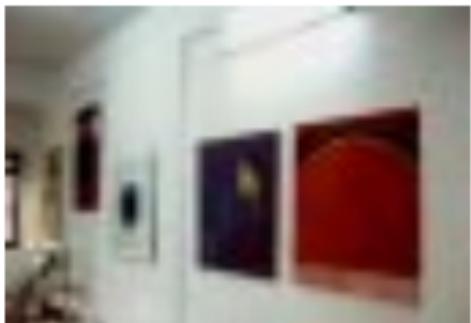
I saw many images and forms in the dialogue between Tukoba and Vithoba. Those images and forms I put together with the colour in the project "Your form is my creation". It does not belong to any particular ism or styles it stands for its own. It is process of meditation of a visual world. Visual art developed in Europe over five centuries, as

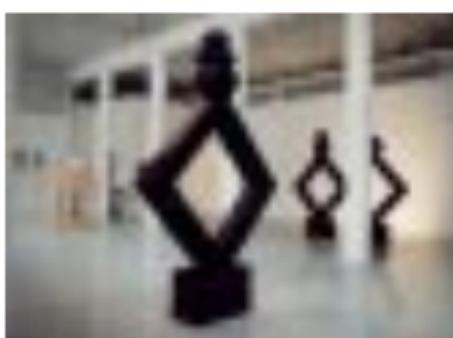
per development and growth, it has up and down. Somewhere change takes place, we never know about in our life time but we walk near by.



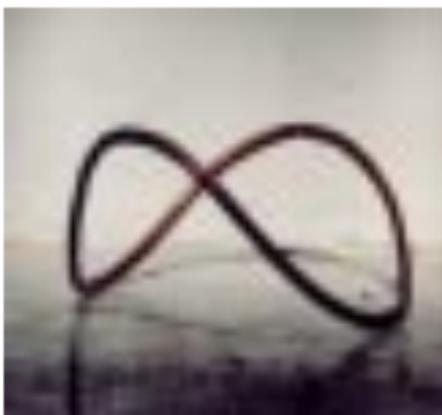












# **Give and Take in Art 2001**

## *A Reawakening*

## A Reawakening

I graduated from high school in 1974, with art history as one of my subjects in the final grade. Along with several other students I had chosen art history instead of mathematics. Before that time, art history was probably not part of the curriculum. This suggestion by my art teachers turned out to be the most important one in my life.

My primary schooling and my vocational training in art were in India. I then did my degree course in art in Holland. I've been a student of art history for nearly thirty years, and a practising artist for twenty-five. And occasionally, I've put things into words. I recall this today because I saw on television how the Taliban in Afghanistan had destroyed a statue of the Buddha, sculpted in the Gandhara style. Generally speaking, the cultural assets of many countries are in the embrace of just such a destructive mindset. Instead of preserving these valuable artifacts for posterity, these reactionary rulers and religious fanatics carry out insensitive acts of destruction. Do these people commit such acts because they don't fully understand what they're doing?

When you walk through museums in countries around the world, you realize at once how important this cultural legacy is for the coming generations. These dated places and artifacts keep shedding light on the details that make up the life of those periods. A single man's life amounts to several decades at most. That life, caught up in its own development, seems so limited when compared to a cultural legacy.

When thinking has a limited horizon, it can be transformed into a cruel and destructive force the Buddha statue incident makes that clear A cultural and intellectual vacuum forms in the wake of events like these. The impetus for further such actions and reactions remains alive.

What creative human energy must have gone into making this statue. That effort has been giving joy to enthusiasts for centuries. Doesn't this unfeeling act against an ancient culture prove how degraded in the name of religion-man has become?

The Ajanta, Ellora, Karla and Elephanta caves in western India were carved - with the Gandhara style as a background - under the influence of Buddhist, Hindu and Jain religious traditions. In the last two months I've come to realize how inspiring these ancient sculptures can be.

I was depressed after seeing that barbaric act in Afghanistan this year. I'd never seen the caves and sculptures near my birthplace. It has been a long journey since I left India some twenty years ago to gain recognition in the art world. But, as I set out to take an overview, I fell witness to the wanton destruction of centuries old works of art; I was saddened. And so the thoughts that were crowding my mind during the past four months moved me to go and see the Ajanta-Ellora caves with my now mature eyes.

Large sculptures of the Buddha, Siva-Parvati, Vishnu-Laxmi, and huge statues of elephants and lions, tales of the chatak (a bird), colorful paintings of

courtesans-all these gave lustre to my ideas about the ancient. A saddened mind was heartened, strengthened once again.

My inspirations are many. But it seems as though my work today is slowly emerging from a fog and taking shape, fashioned from an inchoate mind and inspired by these artifacts. I became more aware of this while seeing the Ajanta-Ellora caves. It's hard to fathom what is hidden at the root of consciousness, which makes one draw, paint and create sculpture. As one makes one's way through the reaches of time, one keeps looking for outlines hidden from our view for centuries. One sees the banks of rivers, exposing what countless floods have left behind. In 'a poem one can give voice to the clamor of emotions. A painting is made with life's experiences. A sculpture can bring transcendence into being. With me are one Dutch and one Flemish artists. Their experience is different. Their ability to look searchingly at people is evident in their drawings. The pictures they drew after seeing the Ajanta, Ellora and Karla caves are highly expressive. The mind of an artist was the same in ancient times. It was the same throughout man's history. And it is the same even in modern times. Only his method is different. The flow of knowledge and experience through works of art awakens an artist's impulse, and gives rise to new creations. The flow starts once again. This process keeps recurring. One becomes a vehicle for culture, man's nature, his thoughts and ideas. In this exhibition you'll see how three artists,

expressing themselves in different styles and contexts, have come together. For two months they've traveled and produced their work. The viewer can decide what is being manifest in this experiment.

Bhaskar Hande

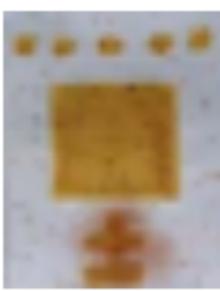
(Trans-creation from the Marathi by Jayant Deshpande)























Bhaskar Hande was born in 1957 in Umbraj, district Pune, India. He lives and works in The Hague, The Netherlands since 1983. He is a versatile artist. His ambitions to be busy with various disciplines of art, identifies him as the poet, painter, sculptor and graphic designer. He published three books of collection of poems in 1990, 1995 and 2001. The project "Your form is my creation" is his visual tribute to seventeen century Bhakti poet "Tukaram" has become first in it's kind of Indian history. Hande's Indianness is not ethnicity worn on the sleeve; it is the very substance of his cultural identity in multicultural global community of artists. Hande has been living many years in Europe, his cultural signature has remained the same. Apart from his development Hande thinks day to day life, living and working in another country and culture than where he grew up. This process gives him creative impulses; every year he lives a couple of months in India, vice versa in Europe. He exhibits in India and in Europe. The change in surrounding keeps his thoughts constant in process. His works represent meditative fall of his merging colours and changing environments. The colours become brighter and brighter, forms are clear than ever and words are more mysteries.