

'History & Heritage'- Govt. College of Art, Chandigarh : A Precious History Book on the Prestigious Heritage of GCA



Aerial view of Govt. College of Art, Chandigarh



Principals of Mayo School of Art, Lahore, School of Art, Shimla and College of Art, Chandigarh

Jang S. Verma (I am thankful to Prof. D S Kapoor for providing me photographs, information in the shape of script, permission to take references of the content of the book and other material required to be included in this article: Jang S. Verma)

Recently a powerful book 'History & Heritage' depicting developments taking place in the growth of Government College of Art, Chandigarh (initially named as Govt. School of Arts and Crafts, Chandigarh but renamed as Govt. College of Art, Chandigarh during the year 1976) and sidelights on its journey of one hundred and forty years ranging from the time of establishment of Mayo School, Lahore to present time Govt. College of Art, Chandigarh was released by Kaptan Singh Solanki, Governor of Haryana in an impressive ceremony organized in Chandigarh. The developments and events of importance, along with references and notes on achievers who have been associated with these institutions or worked for these institutions, have been recorded in this monumental hard bound book of 760 pages on imported paper in the size of 284 mm X 284 mm. The book is authored by Prof. D S Kapoor, former Principal, Government College of Art, Chandigarh, Founder, President, 'Kala Maitri' Alumni Association of GCA, Chandigarh, Dean of University, State University of Performing & Visual Arts, Rohtak and Officer on Special Duty to set up National Institute of Design, Kurukshetra (Haryana), Govt. of India. The compilation of the book was started during the year 2009 and continued up to 2011. The published book was released during 2018.

The laborious attempt of the author is evident from the data and details included in the book after collecting the same from a vast canvas of resources, more evidently an outcome of his forming Alumni Association of Govt. College of Art, Chandigarh. The details collected from the people joining Alumni Association and his personal resources, have been included in this book and which may reflect the events and information up to the period of 2011, as the compilation work started during that year.

The 'History & Heritage' counts the notes on different aspects, almost of all kinds like the originators of the



Late Jagmohan Chopra accompanying Haryana Singh Brar, the then Governor of Haryana....



A scene of book launching at Chandigarh



A Drawing by Satwant Singh included in the book

institution, the principals, staff, its outcome with international, national, AIFACS awardees, eminent artists, representatives of Lalit Kala Akademi, the first entrant of the Govt. College at Chandigarh, the promoters of art, art critics, contributors in the field of films, theatre, art movements and role of artists and other fields, the models, tea wala, stationery mart, sports, cultural and other such events. The personalities who contributed in raising Govt. college of Art, Chandigarh and its furtherance have also been taken into account while scripting the book with abundance of visual images of personalities, places, events art works and other references. The author acknowledges that a major support was extended in contributing and sharing the valuable information used in this book, by GCA's former Principals, Prof. Prem Singh, Prof. Ranbir Dev Lohtia and Prof. Brahm Prakash, as well as by Prof. Balwinder Singh, Dr.

Dayal, Jaiteg Singh Anant, S B Durga and Surinder Mohan Dhani. National College of Art, Lahore (earlier known as Mayo School of Art, Lahore) was established in the year 1875. Lahore was then the country's cultural hub where Indian contemporary artists, sculptors and poets like Amrita Sher Gill, B C Sanyal, Dhan Raj Bhagat, Satish Gujral, Abdul Rehman Chughtai and Krishan Khanna were working together and that led to a change in the outlook of the people of Punjab in respect of art. After partition a college was established at Simla during 1951 on the pattern of Mayo School of Art, Lahore and was named as School of Art, Shimla (now Simla) which became a new centre of art & cultural activities. Being based in the summer capital its lure always attracted masses to the station. Here master craftsmen worked in their original style of working under the Principal S L Prashar who alongwith

traditional styles introduced modernism in art styles. During the year 1962 when Chandigarh was made the capital of Punjab, the college was shifted to Chandigarh. The new placement was shifted to the infrastructure designed by the French Architect Le Corbusier, the planner of Chandigarh City. The college is now situated in the heart of Sector- 10 of the city and is faced against Liesure Valley, providing space to the staff, students and visitors of the institution. Government Museum & Art Gallery and Science Museum are in the same lane in which the GCA is placed. Chandigarh was having a initial stage of art based activities under the leading art lover and promoter Dr. M S Randhawa. Govt. College of Art, Chandigarh has provided platform to many artists and proved to give first generation of contemporary artists particularly in the Northern part of the country. The college is now a big name in the field of art scene of India. Govt. College of Art has celebrated its Golden and Diamond Jubilees during the last few years.

The book 'History & Heritage', Govt. College of Art, Chandigarh is an effort to capture minute details in all aspects. It's very evident from the published book that the author must have struggled a lot to accomplish the job of collecting the data, images, compilation, scripting, designing, editing and finally getting it published. The author has put every effort to include information on variety of trends, techniques, approaches of different personalities and artists in the book. The variety of content is exemplary in its own kind. The classification of artists into various groups deviating on various hues of the artists and contributors in the field of art, as seen from different angles, has made the reading more interesting. The turning points in the growth and furtherance of the journey of the institution has been trailed patiently with elaborate details which reflect the in-depth survey of persons, events and history.

Whereas the details of the artists, events and history are discussed in

detail, the illustrative aspect cannot be ignored. The book is highly supported with pictures and visuals of the artist and events. This pictorial aspect of the book makes the book's look festive. The antique pictures, as is seen from their look in Sepia and B&W colours, have been managed to include in the book. These pictures not only depict the period of the happenings but the traditional and other aspects of life styles, attire and infrastructure available at the time of recording of those events. The mode of sketching patterns, students and artist at work, crafts men at work, students and teachers working with printing machines, the buildings and other infrastructure varying from Indo- Anglian Architecture to modern time architecture of Le Corbusier and other hues taking place at different intervals of time is depicted through these pictures.

Another quite interesting aspect of the book is the 'Humanitarian Aspect'. This is related to the story of 'Chacha Ujagar Singh- The Chaiwala', the tea seller. One chapter is allotted to him. The chapter explores the life style of Ujagar Singh and his dealing with the students. He belonged to Una in Himachal Pradesh and at the age of 23 opened a canteen in the campus of School of Art at Simla and later on shifted to Chandigarh when the college was shifted to Chandigarh. He has seen many generations of passing out of these colleges. Renowned artists like Sohan Qadri, R S Raina, H S Kuler, Ranbir Kaleka, Prem Singh, Balwinder Singh, Shiv Singh, Malkit Singh, Sidarth, Diwan Manna, D S Kapoor were the regulars at his canteen. At the age of about eighty he has been referred to be serving the students regularly. Having the noble heart he sometimes contributes fees of the needy students. In the

Kapoor Family in the Journey of Art Heritage

Three generations of art teachers from the family of Prof. D S Kapoor have been associated with the function of and teaching in Mayo School of Art, Lahore, School of Art, Simla and Govt. College of Art, Chandigarh. Master Sunder Singh (1880- 1964) a Repousse Artist and a teacher at Mayo School of Art, Lahore, the grandfather of the author had been his rolemodel. He was born in 1880 at Lahore. He belonged to silversmiths' family. He became follower of Bhai Ram Singh. He joined Mayo School of Art at the age of 12 years. Under the guidance of famous artist Lockwood Kipling, the founder Principal, Mayo School of Art, Lahore, he learnt skills of copper repousse and enamel work. The training in crafts like woodwork, Lacquer Turning, Jewelry and Copper Beating was popular in those days. He was sent to England to display his art & craft on the entrance door of a museum. His craft works were put on display in 1917 at Central Museum in Lahore. After completing 25 years in his service he retired in 1939 and started training crafts-



Master Sunder Singh, Sujan Singh and D S Kapoor

men in his art. After partition in 1947 the family first shifted to Amritsar then to Gurgaon where he, his son Sujan Singh and some other craftsmen were given jobs under Government schemes to settle the migrated skilled people. During 1951, his son Sujan Singh was recruited as teacher to train the students in allied courses. Later he served at Govt College of Art, Chandigarh also when the college from Simla was shifted to Chandigarh. Prof. D S Kapoor is the third generation to keep the heritage intact. He joined as art teacher and gained the post of Principal of Govt. College of Art,

Chandigarh. During his tenure as Principal he got opportunities to organize big events like Diamond Jubilee Celebrations where an International Art Exhibition of the works of the artists those emerged from GCA were displayed and a lofty illustrated catalogue was also brought out. The third generation of Master Sunder Singh viz. Pardeep Singh (48) is an architect, his great grandsons Charandeep Singh (26) is a product designer from NID Ahmedabad and Ravjot Singh (23) is a visual designer from College of Art, New Delhi. Gurgensingh Singh (23) is pursuing architecture from College of Architecture, Chandigarh.

Jang Singh Verma AIFACS Awardee: An Explorer with inspired Imagination

'He treads the path untraveled and ends up leaving behind a new trail'



Jang S. Verman

The artist, like a scientist, keeps on exploring and experimenting to evolve new and unique ways of expressing his perspective of things. Painting is usually seen as a visual art, not associated with any particular language. But, the work of the internationally acclaimed artist, hailing from Jammu, Jang S Verman, speaks volumes through the perspective lines drawn to express life on the canvas in vivid colours. Today, on the zenith of his creative best, Verman, even after devoting his whole life to art and giving life to thoughts, still keeps exploring new avenues. As quoted widely by renowned artists, 'With a creative and an imaginative mind, Jang S. Verman is known for his 'uniqueness and perceptions' clearly speaking on the canvas and as a creative form, most of Jang's works are as intangible as life itself, leaving the viewer with a whiff of something delicate, insubstantial, yet very much there for the viewer which can't express but the viewer itself feels the difference.' Verman was born in 1954. Admirably, this artist with a philosophical bent of mind hails from the family of army officers. Diving deep into the sea of his memories, Jang S Verman, shares that his journey as an artist and as a painter evoked deep from his mind right from his childhood. The patterns of lines fascinated him. As a child, he would wonder and jumble with lines, trying to draw sketches and drawings. Initially they appeared raw but slowly and gradually they became clearer and distinct. Though, following the culture, he graduated from Chandigarh College of Arts, in Philosophy and Literature, yet the artist inside him showed him to attain the Diploma in Painting. Pertinent to mention, he also had studied psychography from Dehradun, pursued B. Ed from Jammu University and later obtained a Master of Arts Degree in English from the Jammu University. 'For me, painting is about

fitting to portray the state of the human mind with imaginations. Jang Singh has also worked as the Assistant Exhibition & a Programme Officer at Chandigarh Lalit Kala Akademi. He did illustration work for the Zooloogy Department of Panjab University, Chandigarh. A short documentary film on Jang Singh was telecast on Door-darshan National Channel. He has been associated with different bodies related to Literature, Theatre, Photography and other cultural activities. He has also had the honour of being a member of different art & cultural societies like 'Individuals', 'Jammu', 'Solids', 'Chandigarh', 'Aperture Camera Club, Jammu', 'Punjabi Sahit Sangham, Jammu', 'Punjabi Lekhak Sabha, Jammu', Executive Member, J&K Centre for Creative Arts, Jammu, International Society for Development of Films & Arts, Chandigarh; Associated with Viraj Kala Kendra, Jammu etc. Besides that, he has interest in Psychology, Philosophy, Face Reading, Body Language, Palmistry, Naturopathy, Homeopathy, Concentration & Meditation, Clairvoyance, Magic and Music.

Honours & Awards All India Fine Arts & Crafts Society (AIFACS), New Delhi- 1978; Punjab Lalit Kala Akademi Award -1980- 81; (Regional Exhibition) 1990-91; HP State Museum (All India Exhibition) 1992; Centre for Cultural Resources & Training, New Delhi- 1988; KVS National Incentive Award by Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan-2011; Merit Certificate-1977; Honored at Kala Kendra-2006; Honored by Jammu & Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture & Languages- 2010; Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan, Jammu-2011. Shows held at Government Museum & Art Gallery, Chandigarh-1980 &1981; Punjab Lalit Kala Akademi, Chandigarh- 1991. He has participated in all International, National and Regional Exhibitions of Art; all Exhibitions organized by Academy of Fine Arts,

Amritsar 1978, 81, 82, 84, 85 and 1988-91; J&K Academy of Art, Culture & Languages, Jammu, Srinagar; 'Kumbh' an International Exhibition New Delhi-1991; 2nd International Art Exhibition by Society for Development of Films & Arts at Chandigarh -2012; All India Fine Arts and Crafts Society (AIFACS) Exhibitions, New Delhi-1978, 79, 80 and 82; Exhibitions of Graphics by Bharat Bhavan, Bhopal in Aid of Earth Quake Victims; RashtriyaLalit Kala Kendra, Lucknow; College of Art, Chandigarh; Museum & Art Gallery, Chandigarh; Himachal Pradesh State Cultural Department; Individuals Shows at Jammu, Chandigarh, New Delhi etc. He has attended Workshops & Camps organized by United State Information & Communication Agency; AIFACS; Punjab Lalit Kala Akademi; College of Art, Chandigarh; Chandigarh Lalit Kala Akademi, Chandigarh; 125th Birth Anniversary of Nicolas Roerich at his Art Gallery, Naggar, Kullu, Himachal Pradesh; PGI, Chandigarh; Solids Group of Contemporary Artists, Chandigarh; Virsa Cultural Group, Amritsar; NZCC; Academy of Art, Culture & Literature, at Jammu, Patni Top, Kargil etc. His works figure in the Collections like Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi; Government Museum & Art Gallery, Chandigarh; Bharat Bhavan, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh; Himachal Pradesh State Museum, Shimla; RashtriyaLalit Kala Kendra, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh; J&K Academy of Art, Culture & Languages, Jammu, Srinagar; Nicholas Roerich Art Gallery, Naggar, Kullu, Himachal Pradesh All India Fine Arts & Crafts Society (AIFACS), New Delhi; J&K Tourism Development Corporation, Jammu; Zonal Institute of Education & Training (ZIET), Gwalior; Post Graduation Institute, PGI, Chandigarh; Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan, RO, Jammu; Viraj Kala Kendra, Jammu; Sanskar Bharti, Jammu; Seeds Multiplication Plant, Gajansoo (Indo- Pak Border area).

The Author of the book: Prof. D S Kapoor

A Third Generation of Art Institution



Prof D S Kapoor

Prof. D S Kapoor has been a link between the two offshoots- Mayo School of Art (now known as National College of Art, Lahore) and Government College of Art, Chandigarh. A third generation teacher serving in the college as a student, faculty and Principal, D S Kapoor has proudly carried forward the family legacy of art and aesthetics started by his grandfather Sunder Singh, an alumni of Mayo School of Art. Master Sunder Singh also later taught in the school before Partition and then his father Sujan Singh, who, after passing out from Mayo School, taught in Government College of Art, formerly at Shimla and later in Chandigarh. Born in 1957 in Gurgaon, D S Kapoor had his primary education at Lady Irwin School in Shimla. As a child, he used to visit the Govt. Art School at the Summer Hill after his school, where his father was a teacher. The students would doodle his portrait in their sketchbooks. In 1964, Art College was shifted to its own building in Chandigarh and the family also shifted along with. His father wanted him to become an architect. He joined the Government College for Boys for pre-university classes. His fine arts teacher, Balwinder Singh, helped him a lot by influencing his father to accept the young boy's decision. Eventually, he earned a seat in the Art College, Chandigarh. He used to study for a BA (graduation course) in the evening. He also taught art in private schools on a part time basis. He ended up completing his five years National Diploma with distinction in 1978 and later did a Postgraduate Diploma in Public Relations & Advertising from Daya Nand College of Communication & Management, Mumbai. In his very first interview, he was appointed as an artist in the Central Government run 'Tractor Training Centre' at Hissar in Haryana, where he was asked to paint the sign board. He was not very happy with this. He returned home with one-month's salary. Immediately, he was selected in St. John's School for the Art Teacher's post. In 1982, he joined the Directorate of Industries, Government of Haryana as Commercial Artist. His career in art progressed very smoothly and he designed a number of publications, calendars, and especially the prestigious industrial journal 'Udyog Yug'. In 1990, he was selected as a faculty in Government College of

Art, Chandigarh which indeed was his dream to life. He too now had the same platform where his father and grandfather had served. He played an instrumental role in setting up the computer department in the college and introduced Computer Graphics as a subject. He himself emerged as a versatile graphic designer of exceptional merit. To keep alive the family history, D S Kapoor has introduced 'Sujan Singh Memorial Award' since 1995. He has accomplished the Herculean task of founding 'Kala Maitri', the registered association of the alumni of the Government College of Art and has the credit of organizing the historic exhibitions of art. In 2009, D S Kapoor was nominated as the Principal for this college. The college got more labs, Wi-Fi and photo studios during his tenure. He removed the central wall in the main corridor, which divided the institution into two parts and supervised the beautification of the campus. During his tenure as a Principal, the Institution celebrated its Diamond Jubilee. D S Kapoor was honoured with state awards by the Governor of Punjab-cum-administrators Chandigarh on the eve of Independence Day and Republic Day functions thrice in 2002, 2005 and 2008. He also received an award of honour on 'Teacher's Day'. He was awarded for his work by Chandigarh Lalit Kala Akademi in 2004; honoured with the First Friday Forum Prestigious Award for Creative Excellence in 2006, Tata Steel Selenium Award for Innovative Design and won best Award and was also presented with a Special Award of Honour by the Vice Chancellor during the World Punjabi Conference in March 2008. He won the Best Award of Rs.25000/- and Appreciation Certificate in the National Contest for designing a logo & motto for India's first BPS Mahila Vishwavidyalaya at Sonapat, Haryana in 2008. He has contributed many logo designs for various organizations and has won prestigious awards. The attention-catchings logos of Handloom & the Handicraft Corpo-

reciprocal repay he is respected by all. A big example was established when he was made chief guest to inaugurate the Photo Art Exhibition organized in connection with foundation day of the college in 2009. The chapter displays full page photograph of inauguration of the exhibition among the dignitaries. What a 'Great Humanitarian Gesture!' The document in the shape of this book titled 'History & Heritage: Govt. College of Art' authored by Prof. D S Kapoor is a wide canvas of the visuals of the life sketches of artists, art promoters and contributors of art activities in the history & heritage of Govt. College of Art, Chandigarh. One can readily have a glimpse of these people from the pages of the book. Here are some of the names of these personalities: Mayo Richard (Founder), John Lockwood Kipling, W F H Andrew, Percy Brown, Bhai Ram Singh, Lionel Heath (Hugh), Samarendra Nath Gupta, Mian Mohd. Hussain, Ghulam Nabi Malik (Principals of Mayo School of Art), S L Prashar (Principal, School of Art, Shimla), Sushil Sarkar, N K Dey, Jagmohan Chopra, Vidya Nand Singh, Ranbir Singh Lohtia, Prem Singh, Brahm Prakash, Archana Shastri, D S Kapoor, Manohar Lal and Rajesh Sharma (Principals of Govt. College of Art), Dr. M S Randhawa, Art Promoter, Legendary Artists like Master Sunder Singh, Bhabesh Chandra Sanyal, Dhanraj Bhagat, Pran Nath Mago, Krishna Khanna, Amarnath Sehgal, Satish Gujral, Ishwar Chitrakar, Kartar Singh Sumer, R K Verma, Imroz Inderjit Singh, Abdur Rehman Chughtai, Ustad Haji Mohd. Sharif, Ustad Alla Baksh, H S Brar, Chiranjy Lal Sharma, Jagmohan Lal Dhani, faculty members of Mayo School of Art to College of Art, Chandigarh, Art historians and Critics like K C Arya, Mulak Raj Anand, Keshav Malik, Dr. M S Randhawa, Dr. B M Goswami, Richard Bartholomov, K G Subramanyam, Dinanath Pathy, Dr. S S Bhatti, Dr. D C Bhattacharyya, Prem Singh, S D Sharma, Malkit Singh, Balwinder Singh, Dr. D S Gupt, Madhur Kapila, Nalini Malani, Alka Pandey, Nirupma Dutta, Aditi Tondon, artists like Baldev Raj Rattan, Kanwal Nain Kotra, Sunirmal Chatterjee, Sujan Singh Kapoor, A C Gautam, Jit Singh, Sohan Qadri, Gurcharan Singh, Ranbir Kaleka, Shiv Singh, Sukhvinder Singh, Surinder K Bhardwaj, Jodh Singh, Jagdeep Singh Garcha, Gautam Kar, Jyotika Sehgal, Diwan Manna, R S Raina, H S Kular, Avtarjeet Singh Dhanjal, Amaraaj Singh Nairobi, Amaraaj Singh Gill, Gulzar Singh, Sidharth, Bhawani Katoch, Kanwal Dhalwail, Raj Jain, S K Sharma, Ram Kumar Sharma, Jagdish Ahuja, Viren Tanwar, Satwant Singh, Vijay Ojho, Jang S. Verma, Prabhinder Lall, Jaskanwajit Kaur, Bhup Singh Gullia, Rajesh Behl, Sarvjit Singh, Madan Lal, Bheem Malhotra, Subhash Shorye, Tejinder Kanda, Satish Kaushik, Joginder Pal Singh, Promod K Arya, Kamal Nain Bhan and a very long list of other artists and contributors. The readers would be able to know about what had been really happening in these institutions at different times at different places. The document is a precious treasure of information in the hands of the artists, art lovers and readers. (This Article by Prof. D S Kapoor is included in the book 'History & Heritage' on pages- 394 and 395)