



SHRADDHA BHANSALI

A PROPRIETOR OF TWO PREMIUM RESTAURANTS IN SOUTH MUMBAI, SHE GREW UP DEVOTED TO VARIOUS STREAMS OF ARTISTIC EXPRESSION, WITH A FATHER WHO HAS DONATED AN ENTIRE MUSEUM TO PRESERVE JAIN ART

ART BY OSMOSIS

"I have always grown up with art around me and a really big reason for this is my father's passion for it. Some of the best Sundays from my childhood were trips with my father to Jehangir Art Gallery followed by a visit to the Sizzling Brownie at Cream Center, where we would discuss what we had seen. My father also made it a point that we visited museums and galleries on all our travels. I even took up art as a subject for my final IBDP diploma – this with my father's early encouragement, really gave me a great insight into my personal preferences of the arts."

TRACKING ARTISTS' CAREERS

"My father and I mainly collect and enjoy works by Modern Indian artists so I mainly follow galleries, auctions and museums

which have such works. Some of the artists I regularly track are – SH Raza, Manjit Bawa, Tayeb Mehta, Akbar Padamsee, FN Souza, Jehangir Sabavala and MF Husain.

"In recent times I really enjoy following works by Subodh Gupta and Paresh Maity. When I have a Sunday off, I will still try and make a trip to Jehangir Art Gallery, it's a great way to meet interesting creators. I have discovered some great gems of art this way – one of my favourite being a mixed media artist by the name of Ajay Kumar Samir."

DISCOVERING MAGICAL STORIES ALONG THE JOURNEY....

"I love stories – not just about the artists, but what they were going through when they created their art. With all the works I collect, I also collect their stories. Take SH Raza for example; ▶

"Shraddha Bhansali lounges in her family's living room, in front of colossal works by SH Raza. To the right of frame is a 1976 *Untitled* work, which I interpret is a reflection of his Saurashtra series, and (to the left) a 1999 *Bindu* by SH Raza next to it. I display them side by side in my living room as a reminder of evolution and growth"



Shradha stands in front of an iconic work by MF Husain dated 1970, *Three Horses*. It is an acrylic on canvas with impasto techniques, which make the work one of her favourites



A work in water colours by Badri Narayan, titled *Drama On The Stage*

his style evolved with his living situation. In his early years, his works were inspired by his village in Madhya Pradesh which were represented by his expressionist landscapes. However after his move to Paris in the 1950s, his works became progressively more geometrical, inspired by French architecture. However, it is really interesting that although his style evolved, his theme has always revolved around nature and landscapes. I have a 1976 untitled work by SH Raza which I interpret is a reflection of his *Saurashtra* series and a 1999 *Bindu* by SH Raza as well, and I always display them side by side in my living room because it is a beautiful reminder of evolution and growth."

TUNING INTO INTERNATIONAL ARTISTS, ART BASELS AND IDEAS

"I am a huge fan of modern figurative sculptures by Lorenzo Quinn. The first time I interacted with his work was when he exhibited in Mumbai in 2015 and I've been following his work ever since. I love the simplicity and power in his sculptures which have a very current context. A few of my favourite works from Quinn include



Untitled, 1998, part of Manjit Bawa's *Sufi* series, (oil on canvas), hangs in the Bhansalis' living room

Building Bridges (which I have only seen in pictures, but I am excited to experience it soon) and *The Force of Nature*.

"Another international artist I've been following from my first tryst with art has been



The Last Supper, by Jamini Roy, featuring tempera and body colour on canvas

'I studied Damien Hirst in school and his bizarre installation, *The Physical Impossibility of Death in the Mind of Someone Living* really shook me. It evoked feelings of disgust followed by enlightenment'

Damien Hirst. I studied him in school and his bizarre installation, *The Physical Impossibility of Death in the Mind of Someone Living*, really shook me. It was one of the first times an artwork had evoked feelings of disgust followed by enlightenment. The social commentary in his installations really moves me. In fact his artwork *St Elmo's Fire* inspired a series of artworks I made when in high school."

AN ICONIC WORK IN THE FAMILY

"MF Husain's *Three Horses* from the 1970s! The horses are so iconic of Husain, but what I absolutely love about this work is the impasto technique which give the 2D horses a 3D life. It's been with our family for a while now but every time I see it, there's always something new to discover and cherish."

FIRST SELF-ACQUIRED WORK

"My first purchase was a Jamini Roy painting which I bought along with my father. It is a beautiful representation of *The Last Supper*.

My first solo purchase was a 2x1 feet *Untitled 1996* by SH Raza – he has been one of my favourite artists growing up and to me he represents growth and evolution. Owning one of his works was a big deal for me and I was drawn to this particular work as it has his signature Bindu in an earthy tone which has a very calming and grounding feeling attached to it. I still have it and it's the first piece I put up when I moved into my own apartment."

MY FAVOURITE MUSEUMS

"Exploring the arts and cultural scene are really important to me when I travel. Some of the most memorable museums I have been to include – Uffizi Gallery in Florence, National Gallery of Modern Art in New Delhi, Gagosian Gallery in New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, Louvre Museum in Paris, Vatican Museum in Vatican City and The Palace Museum at Forbidden City, Beijing."

FAVOURITE TRADITIONAL ART FORM

"I love the carvings in Indian temples. I am a Jain by faith and the intricacy of the carvings and artwork in our temples always astonishes me. I have been to a few temples in Udaipur, Rajasthan and Gujarat, and the level of detail and grandeur are a thing of beauty. We also own several sculptures of different Indian deities which are carved from a single piece of sandalwood."

INSPIRATIONAL ARTIST

"Frida Kahlo... she is my feminist icon and an artist who channelled her pain into purpose." ❏

INTERVIEW: SANGEETA WADHWANI
PHOTOS: RYAN MARTIS