



SACHI

Society for Art & Cultural Heritage of India

October 10, 2021

Dear SACHI Members,

SACHI completed its twenty-fourth financial year on September 30, 2021, and heads resolutely into its twenty-fifth. The organization has stayed committed to its founding mission and vision of promoting the art, culture, and heritage of the Indian sub-continent. What an incredible achievement, to meet one's goals, despite the challenges and changes that a quarter-century inevitably brings. We remain humbled by your steadfast support and are sincerely grateful to each one of you.

Our virtual webinars through the global pandemic expanded our horizons as we included speakers and audiences from beyond the San Francisco Bay Area. SACHI hosted a three-part series focused on Deccan Heritage. *Glimpses of Nauraspur* offered a magical evening of vocal music, poetry, and historical narration on the court of Ibrahim Adil Shah II of the Deccan. Renowned vocal artist Neela Bhagwat from Mumbai and scholar Elroy Pinto from Toronto collaborated to create a mesmerizing and memorable evening for an enthusiastic SACHI audience. Marika Sardar, Curator at the Aga Khan Museum in Toronto, explained how clothing, jewelry, and seemingly minor details in the portraits of the monarchs and courtiers of the Deccan Sultanates of Central India all served to reinforce a desired image of the person depicted. Helen Philon, co-founder of Deccan Heritage Foundation in the UK and in India, concluded the series with a striking presentation on the Islamic architecture of the Deccan Sultanate. She drew attention to the cross-cultural influences that make these distinctive monuments a reminder of the multi-cultural and pluralistic nature of the medieval Deccan.

Earlier in the year, scholar Kay Talwar spoke to us on the history of a devotional sect, the *Pushtimarg*, and the tradition of exquisite paintings they inspired in adoration of Krishna, in Nathdwara. Vijaya Nagarajan, Theology Professor, in her beautiful illustrated talk on the ancient art of *Kolam*, demonstrated how the practice went well beyond a daily ritual of goddess worship and served ecological and social purposes. Delhi-based ceramic artist and art-journalist Rahul Kumar chronicled the journey of contemporary ceramics in India, sharing the works of noted ceramic artists including Ray Meeker, Jyotsna Bhatt, Ira Choudhary, PR Daroz and Vineet Kakkar. More recently, contemporary artist Shahzia Sikander spoke to us about her journey as a young artist, sharing the many influences that shape her brilliant art: from Persian miniatures to gender issues and from post-colonialism to being an immigrant.

Our long-anticipated conversation between celebrated novelist and travel writer Pico Iyer with Paula Arai, Buddhist Studies scholar-practitioner, and Robert Mintz, Deputy Director, Asian Art Museum, took place in June. It focused on Pico's recent books *Autumn Light* and *A Beginner's Guide to Japan*, and combined elements of his quintessential humor, quick wit, and philosophical outlook on life. The event was, of course, a tremendous success.

In the post-vaccination world, SACHI friends ventured beyond their homes and enjoyed a sumptuous outdoor lunch at Amber Restaurant in Los Altos followed by Bay Area Drama Company's live performance based on the life and story of Nobel Prize winning Indian-American astrophysicist, S. Chandrasekhar. The well-chosen script adapted a complex story of scientific research and combined human-interest aspects to make the performance both informative and engaging. SACHI was privileged to have distinguished guests and leading black hole scientists from Stanford University's faculty join our group and participate in the post-event talkback.

SACHI's programming continues to explore and celebrate the vast landscape of Indian art, including modern, contemporary, and traditional visual arts. We hope you have enjoyed our enriching programming this year.

Our Annual Meeting is on Sunday, November 14, 2021, at 1.15 p.m. PST and we invite you to join us. The Annual Event speaker is biomedical researcher Annamma Spudich who shares her research into the "Hortus Indicus Malabaricus" ("The Garden of Malabar"), which documents the rich legacy of Indian botanical medical traditions. On October 19, 7 p.m. PST, please join a webinar with contemporary artist Seema Kohli and distinguished Religious Studies scholar Dr. Linda Hess in a discussion of Hariti, an ancient Goddess in a new Avatar.

SACHI thanks you for your support and we request you to renew your membership at this time. We will continue to adapt our programming to public health guidelines, seeking to engage with the community in the safest way possible: in-person and online.

As I complete my term on SACHI's board, I know that SACHI remains in committed and experienced hands. I am truly grateful for the enriching and rewarding experience that serving on the board has brought and look forward to the 25th year of celebratory programming.

Please stay safe and see you soon at an upcoming SACHI event!

With sincere and warm thanks,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "A. Johri". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Aarti Johri
President, SACHI

SACHI Overview – October 1, 2020 - September 30, 2021

The Society for Art & Cultural Heritage of India, an educational nonprofit based in the San Francisco Bay Area, was formed to serve as a forum for promoting an understanding and appreciation of the rich and diverse art, culture, and heritage of India. The Society completed twenty-four years in September 2021.

SACHI Board

The Society Board of Directors include: Aarti Johri (President), Mary-Ann Milford-Lutzker (Vice-President & Advisor), Aggie Brenneman (Secretary & Chair of Nominating Committee), Pragna Mehta (Treasurer), Neaera Baer (Membership), Gita Vaish (Fundraising & Community Outreach), Jennifer Kao (Fundraising & Community Outreach). In addition, Kalpana Desai, Former President & Founding Member, generously offered her guidance to programming needs.

Sponsors and Patrons

SACHI's continuing dedicated membership and generous patron support enables outstanding programs. The SACHI Board expresses great appreciation to all its members and patrons.

A very special note of thanks to our Sponsors and Patrons:

Betty & Bruce Alberts, Neaera & Edward Baer, Michelle & Jared Baird, Lynne Brewer, Arthi Britto Dorai, Helen & Raj Desai, Kalpana & Tushit Desai, Monica Desai-Henderson & Stephen Henderson, Vinita & Naren Gupta, Yumi Iwasaki & Anoop Gupta, Joan & Jeffrey Hart, Aarti & Sandeep Johri, Anjali Joshi & Sanjay Kasturia, Jennifer Kao-Williams, Omar Khan & Kamini Ramini, Barbara & William Kinsey, Manish Kothari & Carmen Saura, Sheila & Ketan Kothari, Lata Krishnan & Ajay Shah, Poornima & Arun Kumar, Pravin & Mythili Kumar, Prithvi Legha & Shivi Singh Legha, Anu Luther Maitra & Tom Kailath, Matra Majmundar & Raj Mashruwala, Forrest McGill, Greta & Peter McKinney, Mary-Ann Milford-Lutzker, Pragna & Madhukar Mehta, Vinati Mishra, Sonia & Ashish Patwardhan, Namita Paul & Hari Govind, Sonya Pelia & Matthew Lutzker, Priyanka Rana & Navneet Dalal, Rekha & Prakash Rao, Louise Russell, Naishadh & Saroj Saraiya, Merrill Randol Sherwin & Stephen Sherwin, Rekha & Bipin Shah, Anna & James Spudich, Charita Thakkar, Gita & Ashok Vaish, and Meena Vashee.

SACHI extends special thanks to the Krishnan-Shah Family Foundation for their generous program support and longstanding association with SACHI.

SACHI Collaborations with Partner Organizations:

SACHI thanks its partner organizations for their collaborative efforts:

Asian Art Museum, Public Programs & Education, San Francisco, CA
Bay Area Drama Company, Palo Alto, CA
Deccan Heritage Foundation, New York, NY
3rd i Films, San Francisco, CA

To leaders and supporters of partnering organizations, SACHI extends warm thanks and appreciation:

Asian Art Museum: Dr. Jay Xu, Dr. Robert Mintz, Deborah Clearwaters, Dr. Forrest McGill, Abby Chen, Allison Wyckoff, Indra Mungal.
Bay Area Drama Company: Basab Pradhan.
Deccan Heritage Foundation: Helen Philon.
3rd i Films: Ivan Jagirdar.

SACHI Programs: October 1, 2020 - September 30, 2021

October 4, 2020

Making the Desert Bloom: Paintings of Nathdwara

Scholar Kay Talwar introduces the history and philosophy of a devotional sect, the *Pushtimarg*, which inspired a distinctive tradition of paintings in adoration of Krishna.

Venue: Online Webinar

Sponsored by SACHI

October 24-25, 2020

San Francisco International South Asian Film Festival 2020

SACHI supports three films: *LUCKY*, *Road To Ladakh* and *Knock, Knock, Knock*

Venue: Online

Co-Sponsored by SACHI and 3rd i Films

November 22, 2020

Feeding A Thousand Souls: Women, Ritual and Ecology in India: An Exploration of the Kolam

Dr. Vijaya Nagarajan, author and professor of Theology and Religious Studies. brings into conversation different knowledge traditions – ritual art, beauty, history, gender, literature, religion, anthropology, mathematics, and ecology- associated with the art of *Kolam*.

Venue: Online Webinar

Sponsored by SACHI

December 10, 2020

Contemporary Ceramics of India: From Clay to Cutting-Edge Art

Ceramic artist and art journalist Rahul Kumar gives an overview of contemporary ceramics in India, and dives deeper into a few select practices that have propelled the ancient clay tradition into a futuristic art form.

Venue: Online Webinar

Sponsored by SACHI

February 26, 2021

Glimpses of Nauraspur

A musical adaptation and interpretation of *Kitab-i-Nauras*, compositions of poetic verses by Ibrahim Adil Shah II. These verses are set to classical music and performed by Neela Bhagwat, renowned senior musician of the Gwalior Gharana, and are accompanied by an illustrated presentation and commentary by scholar Elroy Pinto.

Venue: Online Webinar

Sponsored by SACHI

March 27, 2021

Portraits and Identity in the Deccan, India

Marika Sardar, Curator, Aga Khan Museum Toronto, examines the details of the portraits of the monarchs and courtiers of the Deccan Sultanates of Central India, explaining how the backgrounds, clothing and various “props” included in a painting all served to reinforce a certain image of the person depicted.

Venue: Online Webinar

Sponsored by SACHI

April 27, 2021

Cultural Encounters: The Innovative Islamic Architecture of the Deccan

Dr. Philon’s discussion on the architectural heritage of the Bahamanis and the Adil Shahis illustrates how the complex cultural environment of the Deccan, with a Hindu and multiethnic Muslim community, was a place where Persianate and Hindu traditions were reciprocally re-interpreted and shaped the identity of the Sultanates.

Venue: Online Webinar

Sponsored by SACHI

June 10, 2021

An Evening with Pico Iyer

Celebrated Essayist, Novelist and Travel Writer Pico Iyer in conversation with Paula Arai, Buddhist Studies scholar-practitioner, and Robert Mintz, Deputy Director, Asian Art Museum. Pico’s conversation features two most recent works on his adopted home country, Japan. These include *Autumn Light* and *A Beginner’s Guide to Japan*.

Venue: Online Webinar

Co-Sponsored by SACHI & Asian Art Museum, San Francisco

August 22, 2021

SACHI Afternoon with Lunch & Theater, The Square Root of a Sonnet

A special weekend brunch at Amber Restaurant in Los Altos followed by Bay Area Drama Company’s Live Production of *The Square Root of a Sonnet* based on the life and story of Nobel Prize winning scientist, S. Chandrasekhar (1910-1995). The performance is preceded by a short introduction to the history and science of black holes by Prof. Raja GuhaThakurta, Astronomy & Astrophysics Dept., UC Santa Cruz.

Venue: Sunnyvale Community Theater, Sunnyvale

Sponsored by SACHI

October 3, 2021

Shahzia Sikander: Extraordinary Realities

This talk presents Sikander’s powerful oeuvre, creative process, and multidisciplinary work, illuminating her critical role in bringing miniature painting into dialogue with contemporary art practice.

Venue: Online Webinar

Sponsored by SACHI

Upcoming Events

October 19, 2021

Transformations of a Goddess: Hariti in the Art of Seema Kohli

Contemporary artist Seema Kohli and distinguished Religious Studies scholar Dr. Linda Hess in a transforming discussion of Hariti, an ancient Goddess in a new Avatar.

Venue: Online Webinar

Sponsored by SACHI

November 14, 2021

SACHI Annual Event: Indian Botanical Medicines in Early Modern Europe

Biomedical researcher Annamma Spudich shares her research into the "Hortus Indicus Malabaricus" ("The Garden of Malabar"), which documents the rich legacy of Indian botanical medical traditions.

Venue: Samsung Hall, Asian Art Museum, 200 Larkin Street, San Francisco

Co-Sponsored by SACHI & Asian Art Museum, San Francisco