

an WHERE ONE LIFETIME OF DISCOVERY FALLS SHORT

INDIAN

Journey

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**Churches and
Convents of Goa**
UNESCO World Heritage Site

**Paragliding in
Bir-Billing**

**Indian
Contemporary Art**
Alive and kicking

New Year, New Beginnings



I Want to Live the Glamorous Life!

Manish Pushkale, Jayasri Burman, Paresh Maity, Thukral & Tagra, Sujata Bajaj, GR Iranna, Binoy Varghese, Farhad Hussain, Rohit Bal, Manish Arora, Rajesh Pratap Singh, JJ Valaya and M by Madhu Jain and Milind Soman were the participating artists here.

Here, we can also mention US-based artist of Indian descent Uday K. Dhar, who presented his first solo show in India, curated by Dr Alka Pande, titled *The Exquisite Corpse*. He uses kitsch elements such as mobile downloads, fashion advertisements, newspaper articles and flashy web content to highlight the consumerism overdose that afflicts the entire world today. Using portraits of Marilyn Monroe, altered imagery of human profiles and much more, he creates interesting collages of pop culture and global human decay. Speaking about this exhibition, Dhar, who is also a member of the Asian American Arts Alliance, said, "One might call them 'self-portraiture' without the portrait. It comments on how identity is forged through the consumption of specific images, products that define who we are, and what we are engaged with. It is the nature in the age of globalisation and information access, that where one is located does not restrict the exploration of other experiences at other locations. i.e geography is not a restriction as it was

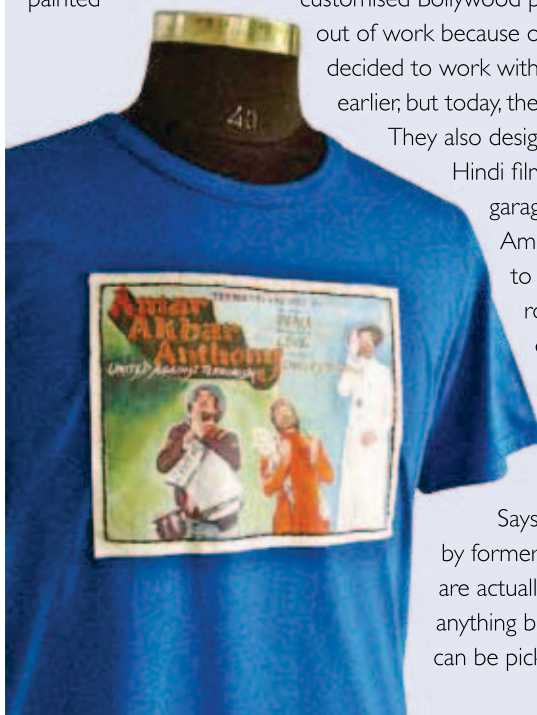
before air travel, internet." He further adds, "My art focuses on the common ground between diverse cultural experiences and backgrounds. The works are the result of research into various things, Indian and American magazines, survey of fashion ads, research and reading of newspaper article, art history books and so on. One theme links all my works - a deep conviction about translating my Indian heritage and reinterpreting that for a new context with new feeling."

In another ongoing exhibition titled *Let the Brain Fly*, Nandita Kumar charts a surreal course of a psyche's evolution within the invisible neuron-scape. In her paintings, the white cube encompasses a labyrinth of manifestations in terms of mixed media works on canvas, animated video and installations. A visual story-board, created in tandem with the movement of the defining premise, 'the brain' leads through processes of evolution and mutation, beyond the constructs of the material world. The artist, through these renditions, culls collages of the timeless world and poetically draws inherent correlations between the self and the various dimensions of the cultural spectrum. 🌟

*Top: I want to live the glamorous life (Exquisite Corpse Series) by Uday K Dhar
Below: Limited edition T-Shirts by Indigreen*

Bollywood Calling!

Bollywood is the biggest kitsch flavour that 'brand India' has in its big bag of goodies. Posters of old film hoardings find place on the walls of select art galleries in Delhi and Mumbai. Mumbai-based Hinesh Jethwani started Indian Hippy, providing hand painted



customised Bollywood posters. He says, "I read a news report on billboard artists who were out of work because of posters going digital. I managed to source a few of these artists and decided to work with them to keep the art alive. Film posters may have served as advertising earlier, but today, they are considered art. We get orders from within India as well as NRIs."

They also design hand painted bags, clutch purses, wallets and so on, all painted with Hindi film motifs and costing ₹5,000 upwards. Next on the list are wall murals and garages, which will soon get a kitsch facelift. New Delhi-based Julian Parr's old Ambassador's shows his love for Hindi movies. The car exterior is devoted to movie memorabilia and this has certainly earned him a few stares on the roads. In fact, he was once stopped by the police for commercial advertising on his vehicle. Another name that must be mentioned here is Indigreen which tries to put across a social message through kitsch. Last year, their theme was 'Going green Bollywood style' with cheesy lines and posters hand painted on t-shirts, tunics, belts and bags. For instance, a belt reads, "Piya tu ab to aaja, global warming se earth bahke, Ab to bacha ja!"

Says co founder Nidhi Singh, "The poster art in all our collections is painted by former Bollywood poster painters. Our t-shirts grace the walls of people as they are actually pieces of art." Their limited edition Bollywood poster art tees can cost anything between ₹2,400-2,800. A dialogue tee can be sold for ₹800-1200 and belts can be picked up for ₹1,500-2,400.