



EMBRACING ONCE AGAIN THE SMALL FORMAT FOR WHICH JAI IS BEST KNOWN, HE EXPLORES THEMES OF FREEDOM, ACCEPTANCE AND EQUALITY IN THIS LATEST SERIES, USING THE HORSE AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO MAN.

Jai Zharotia's

Equestrian Rhapsody



JANUARY 2020

“When I see grass, I see milk”

Having the ability to seamlessly maneuver between multiple mediums and across time Jai Zharotia is a master of comprehending not only his own intellectual and emotional self, he is able to keenly observe and tease out the emotions of others. Jai is a voyeur of the human condition, a communicator of intention.

The horse, his protagonist is not a new entrant into Jai’s lexicon of images and fantastical worlds. He has been exploring the creature for the last 30 years, reinventing and reincarnating them from his series of female jockeys astride circus horses to his erotic centaurs.

Embracing once again the small format, he explores themes of freedom, acceptance/rejection and equality he uses the horse independently or in relationship to its human companion. In past renditions, the horse was full-bodied, alert, well-behaved and precisely delineated through colour, a static entity. Here Jai’s horses are in constant motion, unrestrained, with prancing, fluid movements and flailing limbs.

A significant part of the sense of motion comes from Jai’s reimagined approach. These drawings are purposefully made Jai says, so as to “reduce the horse to” ‘line and limb’ and ‘liquify it’. Such a minimal approach has permitted the animal to be a more malleable entity, unconstrained from its own body, and

with contorted fore- and hind limbs that give the appearance of weightlessness. His creature is free to jump, dart away or bolt. The sheer boundless energy created with a few precise strokes of his pen, liberate his thoroughbreds so they can run wild – be free.

Jai's black and white drawings also show a clear bond between man and horse. He notes "the horse listens to man, and man listens to the horse. They have been together since the dawn of time...they have a long history together". Viewed sequentially these drawings reveal a gradual progression of a growing relationship between these companions, from distant admiration, to companionship, resulting in the two figures metamorphing into one.

Interspersed among the stark black and white drawings are Jai's acrobats and horses. In his sketches spontaneity is pervasive, while here the artist is precise and deliberate, divisions are highlighted. Beast and mortal are clearly performing acts of mimicry, the resulting 'mirror effect' poses leading to questions – Are the horse and human representing a sense of balance and harmony? Are they engaged in a productive dialog? Are they sorting out their differences and arguing? Either way, horse and man appear to communicate as equals.

Art Heritage, New Delhi, January 2020



Jai Zharotia (b. Delhi, 1945)

Education

- 1971 National Diploma in Fine Arts, New Delhi
- 1967 Diploma in Art, New Delhi

Solo Exhibitions (abbrev.)

- 2018 Bihar Museum, Patna
- 2016 Art Heritage, New Delhi
- 2011 Shridharani Gallery, New Delhi
- 2008 Anant Art Gallery, New Delhi
- 2006 Delhi Art Gallery, New Delhi
- 2002 Art Today, New Delhi
- 1997 ARKS Gallery, London

- 1997, 98 Kumar Gallery, New Delhi
- 1996 Vedanta Fine Arts, Chicago
- 1996 Gallery Espace, New Delhi
- 1995 Art Today, New Delhi

Collections

- The Alkazi Collection of Art, New Delhi
- National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi
- Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi
- Sahitya Kala Parishad, New Delhi
- College of Art, New Delhi
- The Centre of Cellular and Molecular Biology, Hyderabad



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