

Manav Gupta – The Legend of the Era

By Neeru Misra

The seeds of artistic talent start flowering at an early age. The divine gift finds manifestation with the stream of time, with indelible impressions as the journey moves on from one post to the other. Manav Gupta is one of the top ten contemporary artists, who started his journey from the Academy of Fine arts at Kolkata under the mentorship of Guru Rathin Maitra and his Guru Vasant Pandit.

Soon after his training, his works become a part of the permanent collection of Birla Academy of Art and Culture in 1996, and since then his flow has been unabated. Winning laurels, admiration, applauds, honors, praises and also veneration, Manav has moved from paintings to sculpture and to installations with ease like a wave in the ocean. His creativity soon blossomed to greater heights next year with a single edition of installations and sculptures at Taj Bengal in 1997. This confluence of his sculptures and installation exhibited his profound creativity using discarded trunks and roots with contemporary miniatures.

Soon, Manav was a known name, and the exhibitions of his creativity at Taj Palace, Delhi established him at the National level. He became the youngest ever member of the prestigious Republic Day Celebrations Committee and was opted on the advisory panel of the National Museum of Natural History. His works started adorning the permanent collection of the luminaries and connoisseurs including US Ambassador, Kumaramangalam Birla and MC Kamath. Manav had his own approach of interpretation of the abstract and Dr APJ Abdul Kalam invited him to translate the National Prayer into painting.

Environment protection and artful fusion of different art forms into single art platform have been Manav's forte. Seeing his creativity and the ease of his imaginative articulation, it would not be a hyperbole if one says that Manav is a prodigy in translating the nature and different art forms with his accomplished genius. Be it music of top performers like Dr. L. Subramanyam, Rakesh Chaurasia, Vijay Ghate, Shubha Mudgal or Anoop Jalota, or troupes of the likes of Pratibha Prahla, Ballet performers, Contemporary dance, Indian Classical, Egyptian Folk Dance, Western Jazz performing on international stage, or engaging with nature on the theme *Copenhagen Wall of Hope*, when he was commissioned by CNN-IBN, Manav has revealed his exemplary versatility.

The memorable Indo Bhutan Friendship Memorial Mega Mural of BIFA and 100 Years of Indian Cinema are unforgettable creations on canvas. Yet, his most adorned creation was yet to come. Arth or translation of pottery into a colossal public display uncover the hidden meanings of the everyday and mundane art of pottery was awe inspiring. His subtle campaigns for water, Ganga, rain, waterfront, and several messages on environment protection have been a service to humanity through his art forms.

Manav has shared his natural gift of creativity with one and all for the benefit of one and all, and has pioneered a new dimension in the world of art. Many feel that several unexplored segments still await to be revealed by this genius.