

## **Dhruva Mistry**

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It is natural for humans to gather, assemble, hoard and accumulate to save, harvest, conclude and deduce ideas and pleasure. Those with resources and commitment can develop a life long interest in their chosen interest to refresh liberal enlightenment with perceptive mind and a discerning eye.

Collections have been part of earliest civilizations with precious objects which were stored in temples, tombs, sanctuaries, and palaces. Taste for collecting as such developed in Greece in the 4th–1st century BC. Great collections grew out of private collections of royalties, aristocracies, and the wealthy. Collectors of the 18th century donated their holdings to the public and constructed buildings to house them like the Louvre in Paris, Uffizi in Florence and British Museum in London. The 19th–20th century saw an unprecedented flow of masterpieces from Europe filling U.S. museums where wealthy industrialists played a prominent role inspiring private collectors and philanthropy of art and culture.

Great Collections denote accumulation, reservoir, an assemblage, a selection, compilation, miscellany, donation, contribution, and gift for people and posterity. Art collections reveal a kind of passion, leisurely activity, recreational entertainment and amusement with love for things, often as an obsessive preoccupation with enthusiasm that fascinate as well as enlighten their addiction of their subject.

Sculpture is known to be 3Dimensional work of art in space, produced especially by forming hard or plastic materials into objects, usually by carving or modeling. It is a freestanding object, as relief or in round in environments, and a variety of media may be used like clay (could be fired or glazed low or high temperature as terracotta or ceramics), wax (for casting in utilitarian alloys and metals). Carving is a reduction process in stone, wood or plaster. Moreover, there is fabric, rubber, and found objects, natural or manmade. Materials may be carved, modeled, molded, folded, cast, wrought, cut and welded, riveted, sewn, extruded, assembled and combined. Sculptors share and reveal joy as they explore individual aptitude and personal interest of form, content and materials as makers and creators of their own work.

Until end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century sculpture was considered to be representational art. Then, Modernism brought in a radical break with the past with concurrent search for new forms of expression. Modern sculptors produced increasingly wide range of nonrepresentational works opening up scope of sculpture in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Present-day artists use any materials and methods of manufacture that suit and serve their purpose. Hence the art of 'sculpture' can no longer be identified with any special materials or techniques. This has also blurred boundaries of the subject and the object of a classical discipline creating crises of modernity leading to the criticism of the object begun by Dada. In the age of international Postmodernism it is close to self-destruction of the artistic thing, painting or sculpture as a conventional kind of material object made with

classical materials like stone and bronze. In the celebration of the act, the ceremony, the happening, the gesture there is a loss of definition of visual values and appreciation of form against prevalent norms.

Contemporaneity of art in the post colonial democracies like India infers modernity and advocate modishness of international styles and isms begun since World War I. Works of art as creation of artist's products are distinguished by its design, craft, technique and ability denotes its artifice, deceit and artfulness that meet and fulfill artistic aims and taste. Post modern or other isms offer novelty of ideas, forms and materials. People working in the same time and age do not define contemporaneity until awareness, intention and necessity reveal secrets of time. Art dominated by obsessive modishness of thought and material reflect excess of our time which could be called celebrity art. Today's occupational art and promotional culture reveal outsourced skills and crafts fuelling commercial demands. Art reflect material exuberance of existence verging upon boredom of progress.

Reality of Indian Sculpture is part of its lack of popularity against easier option of painting and pictures. However, it is tangible and realizable by its youthful history. Sculpture is an independent discipline proved by few and practiced by many. Recent realism in the art market brought in by financial meltdown of 2008 offer buyers and cognoscenti better opportunities to collect sculpture. Like a gardener, collector nurtures taste for life to nurture, grow and hone their taste as they discern artifacts, trends, art activity and learn about dedication of artists.

One may begin to collect with, small and medium works like drawings, studies, prints, reliefs and smaller 3D studies and models or maquettes. Variations on theme, scale, materials and techniques are thought to be as unique as individual works by artists. Sculpture reproduced as limited editions may not mean loss of quality, it rather suggests appreciation and desirability allowing shared pleasure, like seeing works of Brancusi, Degas, Rodin in museums and collections the world over. Artist's proof suggests satisfactory state of quality approved for reproduction. Proof of originality of reproduction may come from the artist and bonafide dealers. For some works editions above handful of pieces could make the reproduction work economical.

In the age of merging boundaries of art, it is time to discover endangered species of working sculptors. Genuine sculptors explore innate interest and aptitude with their chosen area of work with forms and materials to define their existence and expression of interests. Like ethical consumer and elite retailer of their ability and awareness sculptors remain to be practical practitioners of their art. Despite my dedication to sculpture overriding my relative interest in painting, printmaking and photography, I would not promote myself to be a painter or else. Passage of time may provide time tested way of learning values to appreciate instinct, reason and responses of creative commitment.

A collector ought to be above cacophony of individual and group expression with a discerning interest in his/her response to appreciate work of art, ideas and rationale of visual pleasure. Post colonial modishness yield alter modern options of freedom diluting

ideas of identity of form reflecting cerebral interests and issues of floating concerns of an art world. Art appreciation of Indian art and culture require vagaries of taste to comprehend self evident disparities of languages, culture, education, development, skills and people of the Indian sub continent.

Artists need to be appreciated, assessed and commended for their dedication, merit, excellence and contribution in their chosen medium, materials and work before appreciating their auxiliary genius of using novel forms, materials and opportunities. It is crucial to understand the subject before embracing breadth of views and accepting responsibility of knowledge and understanding the subject of instinctive study. Among innovators, there are better known masters of novel ideas and forms like, Ramkinker Baij, Sankho Chaudhury, P.V. Janakiram, Adi Davierwala, Pilloo Pochkhanawala and Meera Mukherjee and others.

As seniors practitioners of significance there are sculptors beginning from 1960-1970s like Sarabari Roy Chaudhury, K. Kunnairaman, Raghav Kaneria, Nagaji Patel, Himmat Shah, S. Nandagopal, Ramesh Pateria, Ram Chhatpar and Balbir and Latika Katt and others.

Among my generation of committed sculptors 1980s many of them have worked to widen range of forms, materials and contents in contemporary Indian Sculpture. There is Mrinalini Mukherjee, Ravinder Reddy, Trupti Patel, Madan Lal, Valson Kollari, Prithpal S. Ladi, Enaz, M.N. Rimzon and Radhakrishnan.

Moreover, there are some younger artists with promising future with fresher ideas and energy to choose from to suit taste, space and affordability of art lovers to be assessed in course of time.

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