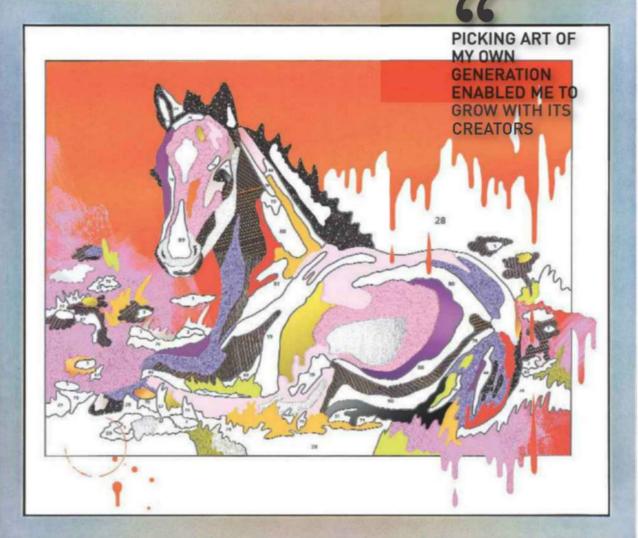
MATTERS OF THE HE'ART'





outh Mumbai resident, the sophisticated Ashwin
Thadani has carved out quite a niche for himself. Born
into an affluent and liberal Amil Sindhi family, he
credits them for their immense support. Breezing
through his school and college education, this acute
collector always knew that art was his life, a passion within him.

On Collecting

Having a fairly good eye, young Ashwin assisted his mother in decorating their Breach Candy apartment. Looking into the smallest details, his interest gained further impetus as Jehangir Art Gallery emerged in the early nineties. Launched in the year 2000 as the first online art portal in India, he began to follow Saffron Art closely as well. A frequent visitor at these galleries, he says, "The first three pieces I bought were the works of Indian artists, namely Jehangir Jani, Samir Mondal and Sudharshan Shetty. Picking art of my own generation enabled me to grow with its creators."

Influences

A self taught collector, Ashwin's folks were not artistically inclined. Drawn towards modern and contemporary art; he visited the world's premier show - Art Basel in the year 2007 with a London based collector friend and was mesmerized. Soon, he was regularly attending fairs across the globe. His collection became more substantial with the addition of a piece by Tunisian artist - Nadia Kaabi Linke, followed by the work of iconic Iranian born British artist Shirazeh Houshiary.

During his travels, many international artists would question him regarding

India not offering a platform to showcase their art. "I wanted to start something in relation to art but the challenges were humongous." Eventually deciding to take the plunge, he connected with German artist Anselm Reyle in Berlin who agreed at once to open his first exhibit on Indian soil. There was no stopping Ashwin then.

Following His Calling

"There is no greater gift you can give or receive than to honor your calling. It's why you were born and how you become most truly alive." The legendary Oprah Winfrey's words have kept him going. In 2011, Ashwin opened "Galerie Isa" in a 300-year-old vintage, colonial structure in Mumbai. This space in his hometown evidently stated a sharp contrast as their theme was to showcase cutting edge modern art. Attracted towards minimal abstraction, his gallery has played host to many young and emerging western contemporary artists namely Angel Otero, Michael Kunze, Martin Eder, and Gregor Hildebrandt to name a few.

Blessed to have encouragement and an overwhelming response from our country's press and collector base, Ashwin articulates, "Over a period of time, I have noticed many among us take art seriously and recognize its value in the form of investments." Every year, he curates three shows and one after another the structure of each of these programs is surely evolving to the next level.

Creativity definitely takes courage and this visionary is highly committed to his work. Recently, he curated the works of Spanish artist Amaparo Sard in an exhibition where her pieces utilized varied and challenging mediums.

Of Art & Beyond

Ashwin admits that even though the concept of art going digital is technologically progressive, it is nowhere in comparison to the real thing. For instance, participating in an auction at a museum is poles apart from an online one. On being asked about his thoughts on two-dimensional art, he expresses, "I love sculptors and installations. During a few of my exhibits I have tried my best to fit them in; but unfortunately this market needs to broaden further."

With a future desire to focus on growth aspects, he is on his way to increase the number of shows per year and participate in more art fairs. Ashwin's immense love for art drives him to travel often, visit artists studio's around the world and continue with his research. Besides being dedicated to his gallery, he also plays tennis and works out regularly!



ASHWIN THADANI, FOUNDER OF GALERIE ISA, TELLS AMAIRA CHHABRIA MORE ABOUT CULTIVATING HIS CULTURAL INTEREST BY INVESTING POSITIVELY IN ITS AESTHETICS

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