

THE AGE ON Sunday

TO BE TOTAL IN YOUR WORK IS NOT ADDICTION, IT IS A KIND OF MEDITATION. WHEN YOU ARE TOTALLY IN YOUR WORK, YOUR WORK HAS A POSSIBILITY OF PERFECTION, YOU WILL HAVE A JOY ARISING OUT OF A PERFECT WORK. IF YOU CAN BE PERFECT AND TOTAL IN WORK, YOU CAN BE TOTAL IN NO-WORK. YOU KNOW HOW TO BE TOTAL.

— OSHO

THE ASIAN AGE ■ 29 MARCH 2009

AN OTHER
REALM 34



Happiness in
times of crisis

HEARTTITUDE
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Women men don't
want to be with

TRAVEL 36

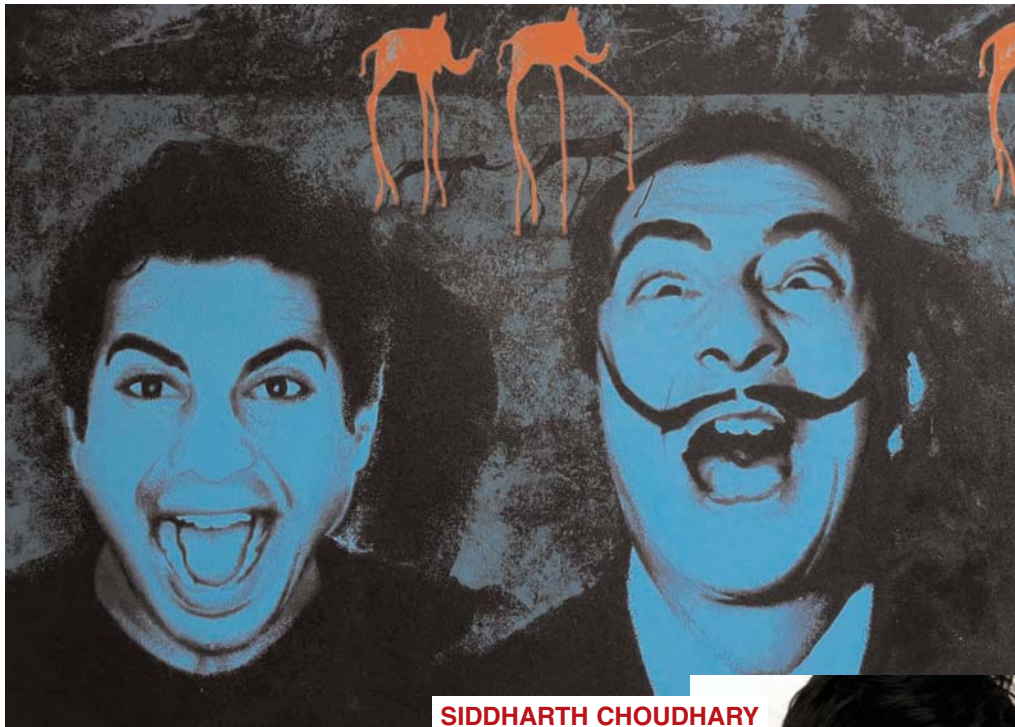


Cruise to the
white continent

SHOWBIZ 40

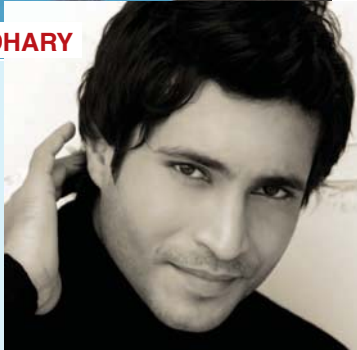


Sallu can't keep
away from Kat



SIDDHARTH CHOUDHARY

Cameraman-turned-actor Siddharth Choudhary has taken up painting as a career. "My paintings are always about me. I developed a dramatic style, with a pinch of comedy. It was personal, but others happened to like it too."



■ ■ HASSAN M. KAMAL

Lawyers, accountants, ex-Army men, stewardesses, journalists, ... Interestingly, professionals from such diverse spheres of work have one thing in common — a passion for art. And they don't just dabble with colours as a hobby. They are serious enough about their artistic calling to take it up as a career.

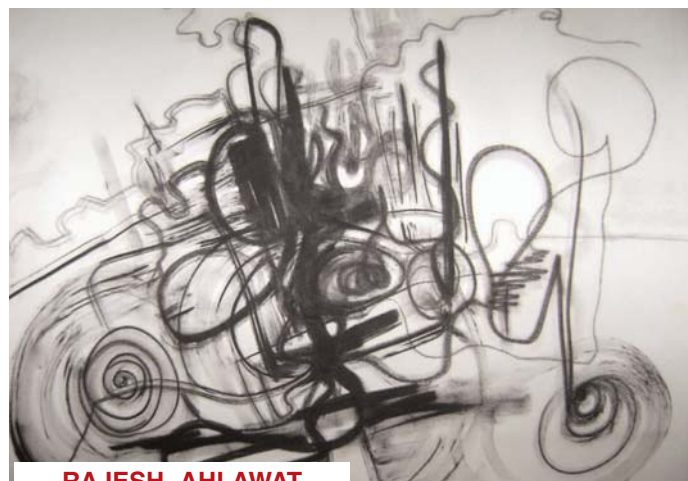
Cameramen-turned-actor Siddharth Choudhary always had an aesthetic leaning but not recently did he decide to take it up as a full-time profession. "My paintings are always about me, and my experiences as an actor and a cameraman. I borrowed from them and developed a dramatic style, with a pinch of comedy in it. It was very personal, but others happened to like it too," says Choudhary. He plans to go to Paris soon to strengthen his artistic foundation, gain exposure and meet new artists.

His first show "Her Moods and Moments" was sold out by the end of the fifth day. His latest show "I Wish..." was born out of his experience as an actor and artist. "It was about the characters I would have liked to play, all the people I would have liked to interact with — sometimes being pompous, sometimes ridiculing myself, and sometimes both. I did it because it was fun and wishful," he says.

An urge for creative freedom made successful car designer Dilip Chhabria take up the easel and palette. At the preview of his first art show "Art of DC", Chhabria said, "I am a painter at heart. I have always been painting. It's just that the designer in me has taken a driver's seat. Today I have opened up to the outside world and shown my creativity in terms of paintings and sculptures," said Chhabria.

His show won the critics' nod with its futuristic paintings and sculptures. His works were an extension of his love for cars and each painting and sculpture was a magnified image of a reflection or an edge of a car's body. "Today, as an artist I feel liberated. I don't have any limitations — technological or creative, which is always there while designing cars," he says.

Neena Singh, a Mumbai-based civil servant and painter, feels both the professions complement each other. "I can't imagine myself without painting for a



RAJESH AHLAWAT

Lieutenant Rajesh Ahlawat uses his brush to express his experiences in the army. "Painting makes me feel more evolved, it liberates my thoughts."

day, and at the same time the job of a civil servant keeps me in touch with reality. Both professions influence my perception, while bringing new characters and inspirations to work on. When I started painting, I never had to think about supporting myself. I had something to fall back on. And this helped me express freely, my paintings were not dictated by the market," she said.

When Singh started painting she felt the need for a formal training, but now she doesn't see any disadvantage in it. "One doesn't need training to become a good artist. You can always find a new technique or develop one on your own through practicing — and it will be your art style," says Singh, adding, "Some of my artist friends had to actually delearn the techniques they learnt at art school to make their work look different."

After 20 years of working with words as a journalist, Prakash Bal Joshi decided to enter the world of colours. A full-time artist for the last 10 years, Joshi has developed his own style of painting. His artwork 'Igatpuri Rains 1995 and Deep Blue' has been selected for inclusion in International Contemporary Masters 2009, to be published by Omma Center of Contemporary Art. Joshi says, "I never painted for the audience. I always did it for myself. I think this came to me because I never went through any formal training. The lack of rules allowed me to express freely."

He feels the lack of a formal

training in art results in better originality. "There have been several successful artists like Krishnaji Howlaji Ara who were self-taught. More than training, an artist needs passion to express his feelings. Art training can only help you identify a technique, and imitate one which already exists, but it cannot teach you to express your feelings, which is the soul of any art," he adds.

For Nawaz Modi Singhania, fitness expert and wife of industrialist Gautam Singhania, it was the constant quest for something new and fresh that made her turn to art. "My debut exhibition titled 'Body Art' was an elaborate collection of paintings that

reflected a varied style ranging from realistic, semi-realistic to semi-realistic abstract. The human body never ceases to be an inspiration for me. Much of my current work is based on the human anatomy, so the theme 'Body Art,' says Nawaz who runs a fitness centre called Body Art.

Did it matter that her vocation might be dismissed as a rich man's wife's little hobby? She says, "Kishen Khanna was a banker before he was an artist. Ram Kumar is a trained economist and a writer. Husain used to design furniture and toys. Subodh Gupta worked with a

theatre before he turned to fine art. Sudhir Patwardhan is a practicing radiologist. Bhupen Khakhar was a CA before he got into fine art. That doesn't mean it affects the credibility of their art. Yes, I am the wife of an industrialist, but I have always been serious about what I otherwise am and do. I've been in the fitness industry for 17 years now. That's nine years before I was married, and eight years post marriage. That speaks for itself."

Sometimes art comes as a stress-buster. For lieutenant Rajesh Ahlawat, art was exactly that. His work in the armed forces didn't stop him from fol-

Neena Singh is a civil servant and a painter, and she feels both professions complement each other. "I can't imagine myself without painting for a day, and the job of a civil servant keeps me grounded in reality."

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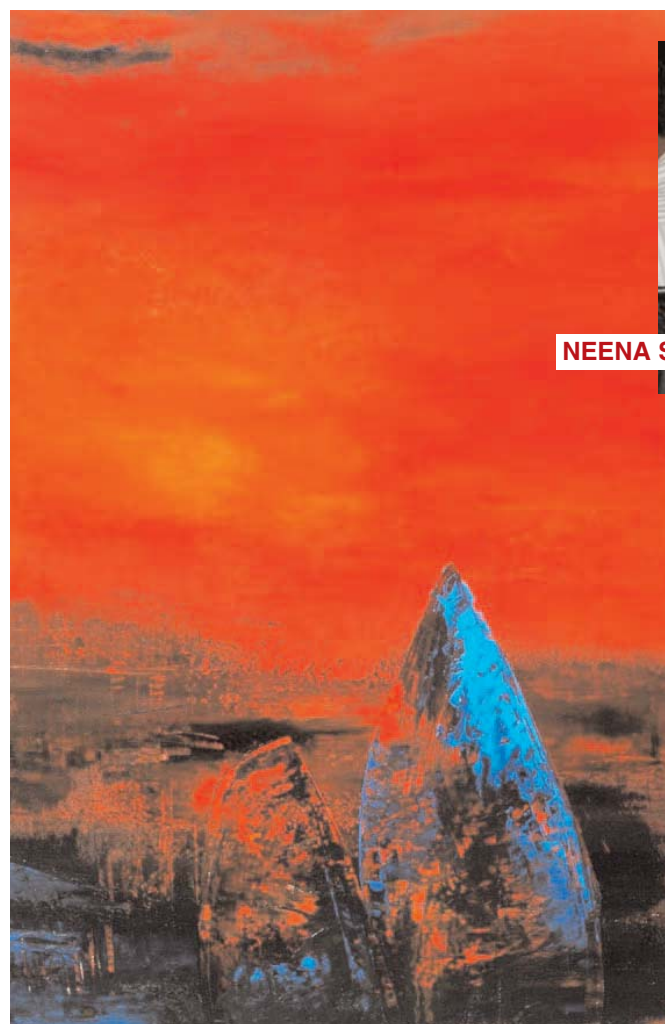
lowing his hobby of painting. However, he didn't take it seriously until his wife arranged a show of his paintings. "Painting makes me feel more evolved as a person. It fulfils my need to express the things I faced in the army and the places I visited. Painting liberates my thoughts, it has always been about my journey as an individual, and it's not over yet," says Ahlawat.

A rather young self-taught artist is Maaria Sayed. Till 16, Maaria was known simply as politician A.R. Untulay's granddaughter. Most expected her to pursue academics or eventually delve into politics herself. In two years, this Mumbai collegian has carved an identity for herself. She held her first art exhibition recently, is also a published author and wants to study filmmaking after her graduation. She says, "I don't paint because I have to. Sometimes I paint two canvases in a day; sometimes I don't do any for two months. I see art as a mode of expression, and I don't want to limit myself to only one mode."

The urge for expression and creative freedom attracts everybody with an aesthetic bent of mind, even if they belong to diverse spheres of work. And often, they find their final answer in the calling of art.

Art of the Matter

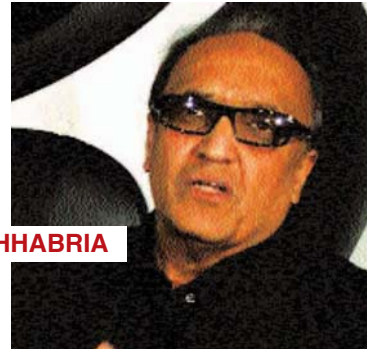
PROFESSIONALS FROM DIVERSE SPHERES OF WORK ARE HEEDING THEIR URGE FOR CREATIVE FREEDOM. AND MANY OF THEM ARE FINDING THEIR ANSWER IN THE CALLING OF ART.



NEENA SINGH



DILIP CHHABRIA



Car designer Dilip Chhabria took to the easel and palette to satisfy his creative yearn. "Today, as an artist I feel liberated. I don't have any limitations — technological or creative."