

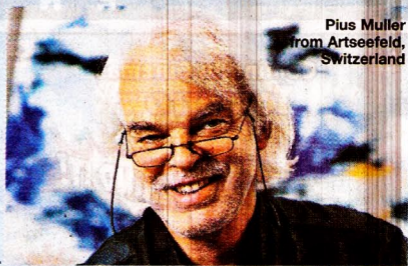
The potential of Indian Art

Gallerists across the country are visibly excited for the upcoming Art Expo India

The Art Expo India, to be held at the Nehru Centre from September 25 to 27, will have galleries from all over the country exhibiting at the fair. Obviously, Mumbai is India's biggest market for contemporary art where collectors are willing to pay top dollar prices for quality works. A survey of participants gave different reactions, but the underlining sentiment was one of excitement. "Location, location, location," said Bangalore-based gallerist Sara Arrakal, who will be exhibiting at the Art Expo India. "Most of my key clients are located in Mumbai and it will be a great opportunity to showcase new art." According to her whenever there is a downturn in the economy it always has an effect in the art market like everything else.

Uday Jain of Dhoomimal Gallery agrees that an event like this will bring together collectors, galleries, artists and people generally interested in art on a common platform. He feels that what Indian art needs apart from good documentation is places where people can work freely and get an idea of a large spectrum of good quality art.

Priyasri Patodia, a Mumbai based gallerist feels that Mumbai has a lot of discerning buyers and for her the Art Expo is a great opportunity to introduce new talent. Renu Rana, another participant says that there is a perceptible shift in the market and collectors have once again resurfaced. "There is a certain stability and this is the best time for us to establish a foot hold in the Mumbai market," she



Pius Muller
from Artseefeld,
Switzerland

'It's a challenging time in a market that's undergoing a reflective movement'

— Pius Muller,
Gallerist

says. Roberta Bullbear, a Swiss based art collector and consultant, is coming to source and buy art for friends and galleries in Europe and Miami. She feels that contemporary Indian art is slowly but surely entering the international art arena, but still has a long way to go. Mumbai based gallerist Vibhu Kapoor says the recent financial crisis has had its effect in the art market like any other business. There has been a flattening out and this is the best time for artists to return to their studios and re-invent themselves if they still want to be in the reckoning.

Echoing the same sentiments, Delhi-based Bhavna

Kakkar feels that the fair is a wonderful platform to showcase their new art venture — Latitude 88. Sangeeta Chopra of Art Musings also feels that the art fair will bring back the old collectors and also open the market to new buyers. It's a great platform for buyers and sellers to connect with each other. Pius Muller from Artseefeld Switzerland says that their work is a continuous search for excellence in art and that is the kind of art they are bringing to Mumbai. "We are also looking forward to encounter art that would enrich the program of our Zurich gallery, thirsty for modern art from India. It's a challenging time in a market that is undergoing a reflective movement."