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Lectures held at Wadia Auditorium during October 1954
"FEW THERE BE THAT FIND IT"
5th October 1954

The Rev. R. Richards ("Bob" Richards), holder of the world pole-vault record, besides being a writer, gave this lecture under the chairmanship of Professor K. V. Iyer, Director of the Vyayama Shala, Bangalore, and a leading Kannada writer. In welcoming the speaker and the Chairman, the Institute's Secretary thanked the U.S. Information Library for making it possible for Mr. Richards, who had come to India to study the problems of Indian sport, to speak at the Institute.

The title of the lecture was taken from the Sermon on the Mount: -

... strait is the gate and narrow is the way, which lead- eth unto life, and few there be that find it. (Matt. 7:14)

Seeing the great athletes in action at the Olympic Games at London and Helsinki, Mr. Richards had pondered on the basic ingredients of success of body, mind and soul and found them the same. Life in all its fullness, greatness and potentiality was before us. How many, however, found physical health, strength and stamina, or deep æsthetic appreciation or knowledge or friendship or love or goodness or real spiritual life? Few had the concern or took the trouble to build friendship, for example, without which no man was rich or really happy.

Each had a conscience, but how many achieved full emotional control and the good life? Communing with the Eternal was possible to every man, but how many made the necessary effort? With our eyes only on the earth we missed seeing the stars. None of these things could be bought; each of them demanded, however, the same price: hard work, fighting the lower nature and expressing the higher, and discipline.

The great ideals had been put forward as goals by the philosophers, saints and sages of all ages. They could be sought by people of any religion. Greater possibilities lay ahead for mankind than men dreamt. The broad gate and the wide way led to mediocrity and to complacency; the strait gate and the narrow way led to Life.

The Chairman brought out how energy developed by gaining bodily control, strength and agility could be used also in mental achievement. Discipline, assiduous practice and conquering the lower nature, high thinking and simple living were the path to achievement, as the lecturer had brought out. In closing, the Chairman expressed warm appreciation of Mr. Richards's magnificent address.

OXFORD TODAY

11th October 1954

At the request of the Chairman, Shri K. T. Bhashyam, Chairman of the Mysore Legislative Council, Dr. L. S. Dora-sami introduced the lecturer, Shri Raghavan Iyer, till recently President of the Oxford Union, as having just returned after four years of brilliant study as a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford.

Oxford, the lecturer explained, was not primarily an English University, but a universal institution and centre of learning, concerned with providing a humanistic education and the independent development of scholarship. Oxford had begun as Nalanda was nearing its end in India, and had carried on that ancient tradition. Comparing the two, one could find a real intimacy between pupil and teacher, about ten students per tutor at Oxford and eight pupils for a teacher at Nalanda, and other, deeper resemblances. The relationship between tutor and students was one of intellectual equality, souls co-operating in a common intellectual endeavour. The earnest student gained a sense of purpose and of dedication.

Three factors in Oxford today had disproved the myth about the never-changing Oxford. Of course, the spirit and soul of the University persisted unaltered. One factor was the overcrowding of the university by maturer students, since the war; another was the Labour Government's creation of a system of wide-spread grants to students from all sections of the British people. These two factors had brought about a greater, subtler sense of inner seriousness and depth, though on the surface a casual carelessness was to be seen. The last change was in the city proper which had become an industrial centre, hectically busy and noisy. These new conditions offered the undergraduate a vast contrast between the calm and cloistered atmosphere within the colleges and the haste and bustle immediately outside.

The undergraduate could join any of the hundreds of societies and clubs of the University, catering to all tastes and temperaments. The Voltaire Society tried to combat the growth of a sectarian religious atmosphere in Oxford. The newly-formed Plotinus Society was carrying on the work of an older group which had attracted some fine minds to the study of the great mystics of all ages so as to discover the common ground of mystical experience.

Oxford could give Indian students great opportunities in its educational facilities, in its Indian Institute, and amongst the priceless Sanskrit MSS. and books of the Bodleian Library. As almost every college of Oxford would welcome one or two Indians every year it would be wise for Indians to take advantage of these opportunities.

Shri K. T. Bhashyam expressed his conviction that soon, with more adequate pay for teachers, the Indian Universities would offer such advantages to their pupils and infuse into them self-reliance. He warmly endorsed Shri Raghavan Iyer's stress on India's continuing need of English.

BHOODAN YAGNA **14th October 1954**

Eight West and East African students now studying in India and present at the meeting were welcomed by the Secretary, Dr. L. S. Dorasami. The President of the African Students Association in Bombay, Mr. Omolo, introduced each of the students to the audience and regretted that they had not been accepted into Indian homes as friends as much as they had looked forward to.

Shri K. Sampathgiri Rao dealt with the subject of Bhoo- dan, the revolution of Vinoba Bhave, in an objective and academic way.

Vinoba had joined Gandhiji's Sabarmati Ashram almost at its inception, but was a silent worker in the background till 1940, when Gandhiji called upon him to be the first individual Satyagrahi or non-violent non-co-operator. On all matters of religion and philosophy Vinoba was Gandhiji's adviser, because of his great scholarship. He was a polyglot. He even learnt Arabic to study the Koran in the original, to cultivate a living contact with the Muslims.

The Bhoodan Movement was unpremeditated. At Pocham- palli in Hyderabad State, in April 1951, he heard of the local landless Harijans' need of 80 acres of land. At the evening meeting of the village, he asked if someone with land would not donate the required amount. Shri Ramachandran Reddy offered 100 acres. From that day onwards the direct appeal to the landowner, the rich, rather than to the Government for legislation had proceeded, and the result had been that over 32 lakhs of acres had been collected through voluntary donations to date. Vinoba's philosophy and appeal were simple. The land belonged to God-Daridranarayana, so it should be owned by the one who works on it. Vinoba claimed to be the sixth son of every man and asked for his sixth

share, from the poor and from the rich. The target figure of the Bhoodan Yagna to be achieved by 1957 was the collection of five crores of acres. The reasoning was simple: the estimated cultivable land in India was 30 crores, and every sixth man working on the land was landless. Vinoba's attack against the social maladjustment was fivefold: Bhoodan-gift of land; Sampattidan-money gift; Premdan-gift of love to one's neighbour; Buddhidan-gift of knowledge; and Shramadan— gift of labour. These would awaken the consciousness of the villagers, the vast population of India, and Gramraj-village rule would be born. With Gramraj established, Ramraj would follow.

The greatest advocate of Bhoodan Yagna that Vinoba had won over was Shri Jayaprakash Narayan.

Shri Siddavvanahalli Krishna Sharma, a Bhoodan worker in Mysore, was the Chairman. He pointed out that the idea of our civilization in reference to the accumulation of money was wrong. "One man, one profession" was the way to lessen the confusion. Gandhiji had started a revolution in the very technique of revolution itself, but Vinoba has carried this on in a manner not thought of by Gandhiji, though the seeds were to be found in his writings. Instead of wresting from others what we want, upahara, they must be persuaded to see the need to divest themselves of their excess, aparigraha.

ASIA RATHER THAN EUROPE CONTROLS THE DESTINY OF THE NEXT HALF CENTURY

18th October 1954

Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, Vice-Chancellor of the Banaras and Annamalai Universities, presided over this Open Forum in which three recent Oxford graduates-Mr. Bruce Burton, Mr. Jonathan Boswell and Shri Raghavan Iyer; and a graduate and a student of the Mysore University, Mr. J. L. Arm- strong and Shrimati H. Vasumathi-participated. Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar in his opening remarks welcomed the Oxford graduates; in the furtherance of international amity and concord the exchange of students was of more value than the exchange of politicians, whose ideas had become crystal- lized.

Mr. Burton depicted Europe as being in a confused and blurred state, having but recently recovered politically and economically from the last devastating war, which had left her shattered and morally bankrupt. While Asia was new in nationhood and democracy she already had showed great promise in international relationships. The internal

problems of poverty, hunger and overpopulation would divert her attention from world affairs. One could not make a categorical statement as to whether Europe or Asia would control the world destiny. Europe and Asia were not the only two alternatives, however. America and Russia would also play their parts in the next half century.

Asia's control of the destiny of the world would depend upon the relationship of Asian countries among themselves, especially China and India, said Mr. J. L. Armstrong. Whether China remained a satellite of Russia or altered her relationship to the U.S.S.R., and whether between India and China there was peaceful co-existence were important factors in Asia. Whether India could maintain her neutral position in the world and her conviction that strength did not depend upon military armaments would determine the possibilities of leadership open to Asia in the future.

Mr. Jonathan Boswell pictured Europe swinging from the optimistic, presumptuous hubris of the 18th and 19th centuries to despair and bewilderment as expressed by Sartre and Eliot today. America was experiencing booms and slumps. Russia was committed to Communism, America to free enterprise, and Europe to forming a European unity out of which world unity might come. It was in the free countries of Asia that the greatest movements were to be found and the great question-marks loomed. If Asia could learn from Europe's mistakes and form a synthesis-through such instruments as the Commonwealth-there could be unity and the formation of a fundamental brotherhood of mankind.

The weakest link in the chain controlled the destiny of the whole: Asia was the weakest link in the world today and therefore controlled the destiny of the world, said Shrimati H. Vasumathi. If Asia became strong in love and sympathy, then she could help the world as she had already done in Korea and Indo-China.

Shri Raghavan Iyer brought out that the cosmic process of history as demonstrated by Toynbee showed the idea of nationalism and empire was carried from China, through Persia, into Egypt, Greece and Rome and then into the whole of Europe and England, and today it had reached America. The important question was whether this idea of nationalism would cross the Pacific and enter Asia again in a heightened form or whether Internationalism would be born.

"These are the times that try men's souls," said Thomas Paine at the time of the American Revolution. The great challenge was: Could we come

out of the multitudes and rise above sectarianism, racialism, nationalism, above colour and caste? Could we find those points of harmony necessary to develop the consciousness of Pico della Mirandola's "Universal Man"? These were the questions we must face.

"I do not regard either Europe, Asia, America or Russia as the controller of the destiny of the world. During the last fifty centuries the ideas can be traced which have controlled the destinies of the world," said Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar in his closing remarks. The ideas of Rousseau and Voltaire had predominated at the time of the French Revolution; those of Mill during the Industrial Revolution, and the great reaction later on had been that of Marx--which had made the U.S.S.R. what it was today. Whether we were going to have the ideals of peace and co-operation divorced from race prejudice which had commenced in India--depended on us. If India kept before her the ideals of the Tirthankaras and Lord Buddha, the ideals expressed in her epics and by Mahatma Gandhi, and resolved to live and let live, then she would affect for good the destiny of the world during the next half century.

INDIA IN THE INTERNATIONAL WORLD 19th October 1954

This lecture by Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, Vice-Chancellor of the Annamalai and Banaras Universities, was under the chairmanship of Shri B. P. Wadia.

America, seeing the increase of armaments and the amass- ment of deadly weapons threatening her way of life--the economic system she has built with such great effort--had become fearful, nervous and hysterical, said Sir C. P. Rama- swami Aiyar. On the other hand India irritated America and was a baffling picture of strange persons apparently preferring poverty and talking of renunciation and yoga.

India likewise was jittery and confused, due to an inferiority complex which was a legacy of foreign domination. It had been manifested in her fear of foreign aid because of the possibility of strings being attached, and in her desire to discard English because it was the language spoken by the country that ruled over her, though English was now the international language. This hysterical attitude on the part of America and India's complementary attitude made for India's unstable relations in the International World.

There existed a peculiar notion that spirituality and philosophy made a people inept for industry, commerce and independence. History proved otherwise; the description given of Ayodhya in the first chapter of the

Ramayana and also Asoka's reign showed that there was no incompatibility between the two. When India was mighty in spiritual knowledge she was at the same time the greatest exporter and trader, doing business with Egypt and Persia.

There were three great ideas, which if Indians made them their own, they could give the world. First, what was taught by Buddha and recorded by Asoka on his pillar in Orissa: "The victor is always the vanquished." War was never a solution, as the last two world wars had amply shown. Secondly, the rich man had his place in society but it was not the topmost place; "money power" was not the summum bonum. The learned and the spiritual come before the plutocrat. Thirdly, the doctrine of the Vedas, that people must come together, discuss with each other and understand one another, which was an anticipation of the U.N. procedure.

India's neutrality, to be effective, had to be based on great strength; then she might be a third power to check the exuberant feelings which might run riot.

Shri B. P. Wadia in his closing remarks said that India had been kept alive, vibrant and vital through the centuries to teach these lessons to the world. To rise to the occasion India should not merely give this message by tongue and pen but Indians would have to assimilate the truths, making them part of their heart and daily living.

HUMAN RELATIONS AND INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS

21st October 1954

Professor N. A. Nikam, at the request of the Chairman, Shri B. P. Wadia, explained the origin and purpose of this Symposium which Dr. Richard McKeon, of the University of Chicago was going to initiate. Professor Nikam said that when the source book for the Document of Human Rights was being prepared he had stressed the different approach of India towards rights, namely that "Duties well done are the condition for there being rights," as expressed by Gandhiji. Dr. McKeon, Leader of the Unesco Delegation to the All-India Philosophical Congress to be held at Ceylon, was collecting ideas on international obligations and using Unesco's Basic Document on this subject.

Dr. McKeon referred to Unesco's task as being twofold; the immediate aspect being the instituting of fundamental education and technical assistance programmes, helping out in the settlement of disputes between peoples, etc. The second task was to arrive at world opinion by enquiring from groups of people what they mean by freedom, justice,

law, obligation and democracy, so that the mind of the people might speak either through their government or over their government. The important questions relating to the subject under consideration were: Are all people equal? In what sense are people neighbours? Is violence ever justified? Is there a possibility of a universal appreciation of art being achievable? How are a people constituted, by race, tradition, nation? What is Humanism? Lastly, whatever you answer to the previous questions, how can it be achieved?

Mr. Justice B. Vasudevamurthy spoke from the legal point of view and said it was necessary to have a few simple fundamental rights granted to all men: The rights to live and have property in any part of the world, and to travel freely, as and where men pleased. In the enforcement of Civil Law and Private International Law one experienced hardly any difficulty, but in Public International Law, because there were no sanctions, difficulty arose. The International Court of Justice needed to be strengthened.

Shri D. V. Gundappa spoke of the Hindu ideal of Dharma which recognized infinite goodness, truth and justice which had to be brought down into the finite relationships. Indian thought did not discard violence entirely, it had its Raja danda-the kingly instrument of "regulation" or punishment. Preventative and repressive measures were sometimes necessary and not any more violent than a surgeon performing an operation.

Mr. Philip Spratt who was also to have spoken gave up his time to Dr. McKeon, who agreed with the needs expressed but asked how all this was to be achieved? Behind international and national failings there lay an attitude of mind; how was this to be altered? He agreed that education was the answer, but what kind of an education? Shri Gundappa suggested a comparative study of literature, art, music, philosophy, etc. Dr. McKeon agreed but pointed out that Germany had been considered superior in these acquirements, yet she had made war.

The meeting ended with the questions still awaiting answers, but the seeds of thought had been planted and would grow and develop, Shri B. P. Wadia said.

DEMOCRACY LOST AND REGAINED

25th October 1954

Dr. Eugene P. Link, Fulbright Professor of Sociology and Humanistic Studies, now at Annamalai University, speaking under the chairmanship of Professor K. Anantharamiah of the Central College, Bangalore, defined democracy as "the right of men, women and children to participate in the decisions which affect their lives."

A Democracy had to respect the contribution of every person, because the common man in a country, though illiterate, had a wisdom superior often to a walking encyclopædia. Democracy provided for the right to make mistakes and learn from them, therefore the processes of democracy required time, and impatience at the slowness or at the errors committed was an expression of an undemocratic attitude.

Then the lecturer traced in terms of the American Revolution the uprising of true and pure democracy in 1775 embodied in men like Thomas Paine and Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, Samuel Adams, and Dr. Rush. But during Washington's Presidentship the star of democracy waned due to vested interests and the atmosphere created around Washington by Hamilton that he was sacred and infallible. The third election of a President-Thomas Jefferson-was a great surprise, but it indicated the rise of the star again. This election brought him to the White House by the vote of the ordinary people, the farmer and tinker and smith, who in their taverns and "ordinaries" debated political problems and saw democracy being lost. William Manning, an illiterate farmer, wrote a manuscript about this which was not published due to its spelling and grammatical errors. Today it was a greatly prized document of democracy. He suggested that the farmer and the working men should unite and have their own newspaper to give the truth and express their ideas and wishes. Democracy was not perfect; it could only be extended, and its price was eternal vigilance.

Professor K. Anantharamiah felt that a man with any self-respect would only consent to be governed by a Democracy. But at the same time it was the most difficult form of government to run successfully.

THE INDIAN INSTITUTE OF CULTURE BOOK REVIEW MEETINGS, 1954

During 1954 eleven meetings were arranged by the Institute for the discussion of a variety of valuable additions to the library. All these books were orally reviewed by competent critics.

The first of these meetings was held on April 8th when Mr. Philip Spratt considered *The Men Who Ruled India* (Vol. I—*The Founders of Modern India*, Jonathan Cape, London. 30s.) by Philip Woodruff, pen-name of a retired Indian Civil Servant. The reviewer felt that the book, taken as a whole, dealt only with politics and those Britishers who were the author's heroes. But the less creditable and some of the worst incidents and instances of British rule were not glossed over. Mr. Woodruff ridiculed the evangelical, religious fervour of some British administrators, while recognizing the effect this had on their rule. More attention should have been paid to the Mahratta Empire and its conquerors, to the rivals of the British rulers and to the Indians who were more than mere "subjects."

The Religion of the Hindus, edited by Kenneth W. Morgan (Ronald Press Co., New York. \$5.00) was analyzed and commented upon on May 18th in a written review which was read out by Shri H. G. Narahari. The book consisted of 7 essays by Indian scholars and selections from Hindu sacred writings. The selections could have been more representative; no extracts from a Rig-Vedic Upanishad were given. The Bibliography was not exhaustive and some definitions in the Glossary were not accurate. The contributors should have been less Western in their outlook. On the whole, this was a good book even if it did not entirely fulfil the Editor's ambition or satisfy the modern Hindu.

Professor A. N. Moorthy Rao had found Mikhail Naimy's *Memoirs of a Vagrant Soul* or, *The Pitted Face* (Philosophical Library, New York. \$2.75) fascinating, and his review on May 27th was full of praise. The author had the ability to turn one's mind to abstract ideas. He enjoyed the beauty of Nature, had seen much of the world and understood what man was. He did not give an ordered four-square philosophical doctrine but stray bits of wisdom which came from all his characters. It was difficult to understand his concept and treatment of love. "Pitted Face" was a man of deep thought and much self-respect who felt that to buy and sell was to trade life away for a pittance; to give and take with a large heart was to enter the portals of Love, Peace and Immortality.

On June 12th *Studies in Proto-Indo-Mediterranean Culture* by the Rev. H. Heras (Indian Historical Research Institute, Bombay. Rs. 175) was reviewed by a leading Indian historian, Professor K. A. Nilakanta Sastri. The reviewer confessed that he was unconvinced by the author's theories, although the prodigious learning and industry of the author were undeniable. The methods used in deciphering the inscriptions were not understandable. The book set out to prove ten postulates but in many cases the postulates became their own conclusions without sufficient proof. The main thesis was questionable and not satisfactorily substantiated, the contention that the remains of Mohenjo-Daro were most likely Dravidian and that the people spoke a Dravidian language.

Van Wyck Brooks's *The Writer in America* (E. P. Dutton & Co., New York. \$3.00) was reviewed by Shri K. Sampath-giri Rao on July 17th. Brooks attacked those modern literary critics in America who based all their criticisms on analysis of form and style. He also spoke of the insecurity and silence as a result of the second World War which led to a debunking of all heroes and of all spiritual values. The true voice of the writer was silent while only crimes and detective stories were profusely produced. The "weakly cosmopolitan" American was urged to develop a pride in his people, art, architecture and literature.

On July 29th two books by Ana M. Berry were reviewed by Dr. B. K. Kottar-*Art for Children and Understanding Art* (The Studio Publications, London & New York.) Unlike the author, the reviewer did not favour pushing good pictures in front of children as æsthetic appreciation could not be taught. A child's art was often intuitive. If we are to become sensitive to form and colour, all personal and intellectual notions must be kept in abeyance. We must reach that state of calm contemplation in which perception is direct. Dr. Kottar praised the universality of the selections of art reproductions in Ana Berry's books.

Dwight MacDonald's *The Root Is Man* (The Cunningham Press, Alhambra, California) was considered by Mr. Philip Spratt on August 26th. The author had expected a great deal from Marxism and found he had been let down; the Marxian doctrine was ethically invalid. The reviewer felt it was also historically unfulfilled. The ultimate conclusion of Mr. MacDonald's pacifism was the refusal to be conscripted or to pay taxes during wartime. A Gandhian nation could understand this viewpoint. The Appendix of the book suggested that the author was not now so vehemently pacifist as before.

Professor V. Sitaramiah declared in his review of M. N. Chatterjee's *Out of Confusion* (Antioch Press, \$3.00) on September 16th that the whole book breathed a spirit of warm humanity. In a chapter on "Man and Society" a formula was provided for daily living. But, more significantly, the difference between a higher standard of life and a better standard of living was elaborated. Similarly, a careful distinction was made between religion and institutionalism. The ideal of social co-operation was best worked out in the American democracy.

The Century of Total War (Doubleday & Co., Inc. New York. \$5.00) by M. Raymond Aron was reviewed on September 30th by Mr. P. M. S. Pinto. This book showed, according to the reviewer, a blend of the brilliance of the Jewish race and the lucidity of the French mind. His analysis of the facts showed that the twentieth century was one of total war; "the soldier" and "the citizen" have become interchangeable terms. A war today would be the defence of a half-truth against a total lie. The French title of the book was more appropriate "Wars in Chain Reactions." The book did not deal with India at all. Monsieur Aron thought that the cold war could prevent a real war.

Reviewing on the 26th of October Ambassador's Report by Chester Bowles (Harper & Bros., New York. \$4.00), Shri M. Ramaswamy said that the book was really a discussion of the Democratic and Communist ideologies. Mr. Bowles had fathomed the spirit of India as seen in the hearts of her common people. The success or failure of India as an exemplar of the Democratic way of life and of China as a young Communist nation would be significant, and all possible help should be rendered to India. The book showed great sympathy with and knowledge of India's customs, traditions and present outlook. Mr. Bowles seemed to have understood both contemporary and ancient India.

The last Book Review Meeting was held on December 16th when Dr. M. V. Gopalaswami reviewed C. G. Jung's *Psychology and Alchemy*. (Pantheon Books, New York, for The Bollingen Foundation. \$5.00). Jung in his studies of myths, legends and symbols and by his analysis of dreams had deciphered the language of the unconscious, revealing the inner spiritual self while Freud had stopped at a lower level. Self was the central fire, our individual share in God. Ego was that consciousness turned towards the outside world and Persona was the mask we wore before the world. The inner world was divided into the personal and the collective unconscious. From a state of collective consciousness we strove eternally towards individuation, becoming Self or restoring

wholeness to life. This process was described as a spiral which moved inwards towards the centre, which was unknowable. Dr. Gopalaswami showed two of Jung's numerous mandalas on the screen with the epidiastroscope. Jung's psychic alchemy raised the personality from its lower animal constitution of lust, greed and hatred to its sublime reality, the divine aspect of human nature. This was the message of Jung's great work.

The attendance at these Book Review Meetings, ranging from 42 to 120, indicates the importance of this activity of the Institute. The seminal ideas of new books of value were thus spread and the audience was encouraged to acquire a greater familiarity and a more intimate acquaintance with the minds of eminent writers. Also, books published in the West became better known in India when they were orally reviewed in terms of Indian thought and experience. This line of activity of the Institute could be considerably developed if publishers, both Eastern and Western, would donate their most important publications to the Institute's large and growing library.

World Culture Reading Circle - September 2026

By Lalith Krishnan

For the first session of September 2026, the World Culture Reading Circle explored three texts under the theme Heaven on Their Minds - Of Travellers and Faith. Together, we looked at pilgrimage not simply as an expression of belief, but as a journey capable of changing the believer. Through Diana Eck's writing on India's sacred geography, Bashō's travels through the sacred mountains of Japan, and Malcolm X's account of Mecca, we encountered three very different traditions of sacred travel. Our discussion moved through landscape and bodily hardship in Bashō, while Malcolm X and Diana Eck opened up questions of memory and transformation: what happens when an idea carried in the mind is tested against physical experience, and what changes - or remains - after that encounter?

Our second session, Teach Your Children - Of Classrooms, Teachers and Troublemakers, turned to education and the uneasy relationship between learning and discipline.

Robert Kanigel's account of the young Ramanujan -from his award-winning book *The Man Who Knew Infinity* - gave us a student whose extraordinary mind simply would not fit the educational system built around him, leading us into a wider discussion of colonial education, its continuing legacy, and more radical ideas about how young minds might be cultivated. René Goscinny's inimitable *Le Petit Nicolas* transformed the classroom into comic disorder, while Muriel Spark's *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* complicated the picture further by making the teacher herself the troublemaker. Together, the readings allowed us to ask where education ends and conformity begins, and whether the most interesting classrooms might be those in which authority, of any kind, occupies a far more circumscribed place.

Exhibitions held at Art Gallery during September 2026

By Prithvi Prabhu

Kalaa Darpan: A Reflection of Artistic Journeys Aikya Group presented Kalaa Darpan, a collective art exhibition featuring the works of six artists, at the Art Gallery of the Indian Institute of World Culture, from the 3rd to 8th of September 2026. True to its title, Kalaa Darpan—a mirror of art, offered glimpses into the individual artistic journeys, interests and evolving visual languages of its six participating artists.

The exhibition brought together a remarkably varied selection of subjects and techniques.

Indian cultural imagery occupied a significant place, with works depicting Shiva in Kerala mural style, Kalinga Mardhana, Buddhist deity Tara, Saraswati standing upon a white lotus, Krishna and cows in Kalamkari, and Shiva and Parvati in Kalamkari. Other works portrayed a Bengali woman holding a lamp, a Kerala woman in a mundu carrying a traditional umbrella, Rajasthani women including one playing the dholak, and a Lambani flower seller accompanied by a goose. An intricate two-tone depiction of Krishna and a recreation of actress Samantha as Raja Ravi Varma's Coquette demonstrated the artists' engagement with both classical imagery and contemporary popular culture.

Spiritual and contemplative themes appeared throughout the exhibition. Buddha was represented in several evocative compositions, including a face emerging amidst a waterfall and lotus, Buddha surrounded by lotus flowers, and a young girl holding a white lotus before Buddha. A Nataraja painting incorporating relief added a tactile dimension to the exhibition.

Alongside these were landscapes, including a Venetian scene and tranquil images of boats moving across water, sometimes accompanied by a distant house. One of the most distinctive sections explored chess as a metaphor for life, choices and human relationships. Numerous works featuring chess pawns and pieces presented philosophical interpretations of the game.

Game of Intentions, depicting a finger flicking a knight, reflects on intention as a means of resetting old world views that may hold us back. Another striking work, Creation of Knight, draws inspiration from Michelangelo's iconic image of hands reaching toward each other.

Here, only the hands are depicted, with a knight placed between them, creating a reflection on power, restraint, strength and the unseen

decisions that shape both the game and life.

The exhibition also featured an extensive collection of mandalas and sacred geometric designs.

Among them were the Mahasudarshana Yantra, Panchabhoota, Aishwarya Lakshmi Kolam, Jagannatha Ji Mandala, Om Chakra, Shri Ashtavinayaka and Nakshatra Mandalas representing

Bharani, Ashwini, Kritika and Rohini. The mandalas ranged from monochromatic and duotone compositions to vibrant multicoloured works. Further adding to the diversity were vintage car

paintings featuring the Fiat, Daimler, Austin 1933, Jaguar 1951 and Buick 8 Convertible; a childhood nostalgia series featuring cats, birds, trees and flowers; Indian-inspired King and Queen card portraits; an antique Indian sculpture of a woman writing a letter; a vintage

American woman applying lipstick; botanical studies; and delicate pencil drawings of butterflies, beetles and dragonflies.

The exhibition concluded its visual journey with imaginative and contemporary works, including a mother-of-pearl mermaid holding a pearl, line illustrations of Indian women, and a

pop-art composition featuring a radio, mixtape, MTV on television and vinyl. Kalaa Darpan thus brought together tradition, nostalgia, spirituality, symbolism and contemporary visual

culture, offering visitors a multifaceted reflection of the artists' creative evolution.

Vakratunda Mahakaya – A Celebration of Ganesha in Art

The fourth edition of “Vakratunda Mahakaya – A Ganesh Chitra Mahotsav,” presented by Akanksha, was held from 11th to 16th September 2026 at the Art Gallery of the Indian Institute

of World Culture, Basavanagudi. The exhibition was inaugurated on the morning of 11th September in the presence of distinguished guests Dr. Choodamani Nandagopal, Sri Babu

Jattakar, and Sri P. V. Bhaskaran Achari. The inauguration marked the beginning of a vibrant celebration of Lord Ganesha through diverse artistic traditions, techniques and contemporary interpretations.

Spread across the gallery, the exhibition brought together a fascinating range of representations of Ganesha, demonstrating how a single divine

form can inspire an extraordinary variety of artistic expressions. Traditional Indian art forms featured prominently, with works in the Mysore style, Kerala mural tradition, Assam style and Maithili style, alongside modern, abstract and pop-art interpretations. The Mysore style works were particularly notable for their intricate detailing. One painting presented the entire story of the Shyamantaka Mani in a single elaborate composition, with multiple episodes woven together into one visually rich narrative.

Other Mysore-style works included a ten-handed Ganesha and delicate line-art interpretations.

The exhibition also featured a striking Hoysala Nritya Ganesha in watercolour, as well as a depiction of the Sasivekalu Ganesha of Hampi, bringing celebrated sculptural traditions into the realm of painting.

The variety of mediums added further richness to the exhibition. Visitors encountered watercolour and acrylic Ganeshas, realistic works, miniatures, textured compositions and paintings executed on unconventional surfaces. One Ganesha was rendered in bright, warm colours against a black textured sheet, while another combined shades of blue and orange with a brilliant yellow flower. A realistic silver Ganesha was accompanied by roses and jasmine,

creating a sense of both material splendour and devotional intimacy. Several works explored imaginative relationships between Ganesha and nature. One depiction showed Ganesha playing the flute, with intricate textures of flora and fauna incorporated within his form. Another presented Ganesha sleeping upon a koi fish, while others placed him within or upon peepal leaves, including one geometric interpretation created entirely through shapes. There was also a depiction of Ganesha cradled within hands, suggesting a deeply personal and intimate relationship with the deity.

The exhibition embraced contemporary experimentation as well. An abstract Ganesha, a popart interpretation, and a composition of three smaller circular canvases placed upon a larger circular canvas explored the deity through colour, geometry and fragmentation. The latter work used hues of purple, pink and violet to depict different aspects of Ganesha's face, trunk and lotus. Other memorable works included Ganesha playing a tambura, a sculptural panel, a sleeping Ganesha on a swing, and a powerful red monochromatic face whose raised trunk led into the sacred form of Om, with a crescent moon resting upon his head.

A realistic painting of a priest worshipping Ganesha, with a monumental form of the deity appearing behind him, brought a striking sense of scale and devotion. The exhibition also celebrated regional visual identities through an Assam-style Ganesha wearing the traditional gamosa and a Maithili-style Ganesha. Alongside these were depictions such as Rinamochana Ganesha and Sri Ganesha, each offering another interpretation of the beloved deity.

“Vakratunda Mahakaya” ultimately stood as a celebration not merely of Ganesha, but of the remarkable diversity of Indian artistic expression. By bringing together traditional techniques, regional styles and contemporary experimentation, the fourth edition demonstrated how the familiar form of Ganesha continues to inspire artists to discover new ways of expressing devotion, imagination, culture and creativity.

Asia and Africa Enter the Stage of History

The history of the twentieth century was profoundly shaped by the emergence of Asia and Africa as independent voices in international affairs. The photo exhibition “Asia and Africa Enter the Stage of History: The Non-Aligned Movement and BRICS”, held at the Art Gallery of The Indian Institute of World Culture, Basavanagudi, from the 17th to 27th of September,

2026, brought together a remarkable visual record of this transformation.

Presented as part of the Intercivilizational Dialogue Project, the exhibition traced the evolution of solidarity among nations of Asia, Africa and the Global South—from the anti-colonial movements of the 1940s and 1950s to the Non-Aligned Movement and, subsequently, the emergence of BRICS.

At the heart of the exhibition were photographs documenting the historic Bandung Conference of 1955, where leaders and representatives from Asian and African nations gathered to articulate a shared vision in the aftermath of colonialism. Images of Jawaharlal Nehru, Sukarno,

Gamal Abdel Nasser, and other leaders evoke a period when newly independent nations sought to establish an international identity independent of the competing power blocs of the Cold War. Photographs of the first Non-Aligned Summit in Belgrade in 1961 similarly recalled the roles of Nehru, Kwame Nkrumah, Nasser, Sukarno and Josip Broz Tito, principal figures associated with the founding of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The exhibition also revealed that this history extended well beyond meetings of heads of state.

Photographs of Asian-African writers, journalists, artists, students and cultural figures demonstrated how intellectual and cultural exchange accompanied political solidarity. Images relating to the Afro-Asian Writers movement, the Lotus magazine, writers' conferences, film festivals and women's conferences illustrated the breadth of these interactions. The photograph of Mulk Raj Anand with W. E. B. Du Bois, for instance, belongs to a larger story in which literature and ideas became instruments of dialogue across continents.

India's role emerged repeatedly throughout the exhibition. Indira Gandhi's meetings with leaders such as Fidel Castro and Yasser Arafat, her participation in Non-Aligned gatherings, and images concerning the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace reflected India's engagement with questions of sovereignty, peace and international cooperation. Other photographs connected the movement with the struggle against apartheid and with liberation movements across Africa and Asia.

The exhibition then carried the narrative forward to the contemporary era through photographs of BRICS—from the first BRIC summit in 2009 to the BRICS gathering in South Africa in 2018. These images suggested a changing international landscape in which emerging economies increasingly sought platforms for cooperation and dialogue. Among the most compelling aspects of the exhibition was its juxtaposition of celebrated leaders with lesser-known moments: protests, press agencies, writers' gatherings, student conferences and cultural encounters. Together, these photographs transformed political history into a human narrative.

Rather than presenting history as a succession of isolated summits, "Asia and Africa Enter the Stage of History" revealed a continuing story of nations and peoples seeking greater agency in

shaping the world around them. From Bandung and Belgrade to BRICS, the exhibition offered a visual journey through several decades of political, cultural and intellectual encounters

between Asia, Africa and the wider Global South.



THE INDIAN INSTITUTE OF WORLD CULTURE

No. 6, Sri B.P. Wadia Road, Basavanagudi, Bengaluru - 560 004. © : 26678581

CULTURAL PROGRAMMES OCTOBER - 2026 PROGRAMMES WILL BE HELD IN WADIA HALL

October 2nd Friday 10:30 AM : On the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti
Discussion on Martin Luther King Jr. And the fight for Peace against American
Empire Speaker : Dr. Anthony Monteiro
(African - American Scholar and Peace Activist)
Followed by Musical tribute : Dr. K S Vaishali
(Accomplished Hindustani Vocalist)

October 2nd Friday 6:00 PM : In collaboration with Higher Life Institute
"Where Silence Becomes Song" - A Journey into the World of Rumi
Mystical poetry recitation in Persian rendered in English blended with dance

October 3rd Saturday 10:30 AM : Lecture Program
Character, Situation and Narration in Indian Cinema and Literature
Speaker : Sri M K Raghavendra (Indian Film and Literary Scholar,
Critic and Writer)

October 13th Tuesday 6:00 PM : Sri C V Nagendra and Shri B. G. Rudrappa
Memorial Lecture Programme Film Screening and Panel Discussion on "E-
waste" Speaker : Sri Rohan Massey
(Sustainability Professional at Saahas Zero Waste)
Collaboration: Smt. Parimala Rao and Smt. Manjula Nagendra

October 21st Wednesday 6:00 PM : Sri Sultur Vidya Shankar,
Smt. Lalithamma And Smt. M. R. Indira Memorial Programme
Carnatic Instrumental Concert
Flute : Sri Aditya Srinidhi Thayur
Mandolin : Sri Abhinav Srinidhi Thayur
Collaboration: Sri Ramakrishna S.V and Family

OTHER PROGRAMMES : OCTOBER - 2026

October 1st Thursday 6:00 PM :

Smt. Ratnamma Sundar Rao Memorial Programme

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October 3rd Saturday 6:00 PM : Hindustani Vocal Concert

October 11th Sunday 10:00 AM : Aarohana Trust – 8th Year Anniversary Celebrations

October 11th Sunday 6:00 PM : Sapthak Presents – Hindustani Vocal Concert

October 14th Wednesday 6:00 PM : Lecture Program

Topic : Tribute to Dr. S K Kareem Khan

October 15th Thursday 10:00 AM : Aantarya Gurukula, Mysore Music Concert

October 16th Friday 6:00 PM : Sri M A Narasimhachar Music Foundation Carnatic Vocal Concert

October 17th Saturday 6:00 PM : “Sahitya Sahavasa”

Cultural Program by Azim Premji University

October 17th Saturday - October 23rd Friday (1st Floor) :

Azim Premji University - Gallery Show

October 18th Sunday 6:00 PM : Gaana Loka Presents

Karaoke Music Program

October 23rd Friday 6:00 PM : Drama Program

October 24th Saturday 10:00 AM (1st Floor) : Repair – Reuse Workshop by Saahas

October 24th Saturday 6:00 PM : Karaoke Music Program on Bollywood Songs

October 25th Sunday 6:00 PM : Nrityaankur Academy Annual Day Celebrations

October 30th Friday 6:00 PM : Sri Suswaralaya School of Music Music Programme

October 31st Saturday 10:00 AM : Sri Suswaralaya School of Music Music Programme

ART GALLERY SHOWS - OCTOBER - 2026

October 2nd Friday - October 11th Sunday : “Mahatma King and Mahatma Gandhi : Humanity's Democratic Struggle” Gallery Show

October 13th Tuesday - October 18th Sunday :

“Re-claim Constitution” – Gallery Show

October 20th Tuesday - October 25th Sunday : Duarte Haus Presents

“The New Heritage” - Group Gallery Show

October 28th Wednesday - November 7th Saturday : Group Exhibition –
Sri T D Suresh and Team

ALL ARE WELCOME

The other Programmes are by external individuals or organizations and are only hosted on the premises of the IIWC. IIWC does not necessarily endorse the views/opinions of the sponsors or the proceedings of the programmes and IIWC does not take any responsibility for these programmes. **WH: (Wadia Hall)**

Holidays :

October 2nd Friday- Gandhi Jayanthi

October 10th Saturday - Mahalaya Amavasya

October 20th Tuesday - Ayudha Pooje

October 21st Wednesday - Vijaya Dashami

BOOKS SALE

Sunday, November 1st Used Books, Magazines Sale

At Attractive Discounted Prices 9 AM to 6 PM

ALL ARE WELCOME

***Our Recent Publications Transactions List
available in the Library / Office***

SPECIAL CLASSES

- ART CLASSES : Directed by Sri T.K.N. Prasad, Dr. Ramaa, Ambuja Rao and Prithvi Prabhu Meets every Tuesday and Thursday between 4.30 pm to 5.45 pm
- ART CLASSES : Directed by Sri Sanjay Chapolkar meets every
(SENIOR BATCH) Friday, Saturday and Sunday between 10:30 am to 1:30 pm and 3:30 pm to 6:30 pm

ACTIVITIES

- Library has a collection of about 80,000 volumes on culture, history, literature, philosophy etc.
 - Reading Room receives about 200 magazines and periodicals from all over the world.
 - Children's Library has about 20,000 books in a separate building and caters to the needs of students and youth.
 - Behanan's Library has a special collection of important works and reference books.
 - Publication consist of a monthly bulletin, transactions, books and reprints. Sale as well as exchange arrangements are welcome. Programmes are held each month consisting of literary, visual and performing arts. About 15 to 20 activities are planned every month.
 - Bequests, donations and endowments enjoy 80G Concession. Inquiries invited.
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OFFICE WORKING HOURS

WORKING DAYS	:	Tuesday to Sunday (Monday Holiday)
OFFICE TIME	:	10.00 a.m. - 5.00 p.m.
Library	:	9:30 a.m - 7:00 p.m.