

# THE PHOENIX SINGS A SONG



8<sup>th</sup> Solo Exhibition of Paintings by  
Shukla Chowdhury

India Habitat Centre  
Open Palm Court  
Lodhi Road, New Delhi: 110003

19<sup>th</sup> - 24<sup>th</sup> May, 2010





After the Storm Has Gone  
(Kal Baisakhi)  
48" x 36"



# THE PHOENIX SINGS A SONG...

Some years ago, over a sprightly conversation, a close friend narrated the mystical tale of the life of the mythical bird, the Phoenix. What caught my fancy was the rise of the Phoenix from its own ashes, symbolic, to me, of the eternal circle of life. At that moment, I discovered the sutra of karmic evolution and self-renewal. My creative energy found its habitat in a series of paintings, and the Phoenix became an omnipresent motif in all my compositions. Thus, came into being 'The Flight of the Phoenix', my first solo exhibition of paintings.

Over the years, the Phoenix assumed the role of my alter ego. Its constant accompaniment inspired the subsequent body of my work, and hence, followed my other exhibitions, with the Phoenix acting as a narrator of my experiences. 'The Flight of the Phoenix 2', 'The Phoenix in Celebration of Life', 'The Dream of the Phoenix', 'The Search of the Phoenix', 'Glorious Days of the Phoenix 1' and 'Glorious Days of the Phoenix 2' were the themes I worked with. Each theme was a depiction of the myriad thoughts and emotions that coloured my world.

Thus, the Phoenix journeys, enthusiastically, through the supreme creation. It flies over glens, plays under the warm cascades of sunlight, and basks in the glory of nature. Whenever it encounters this richness of nature, 'The Phoenix Sings a Song'. From its experiences, pleasant and unpleasant, the Phoenix realises that the strong and the weak, and the beautiful and the unattractive, are only contrasting visages of the collective whole. It is this duality, possessed by every entity that inhabits the living world, which adds to the splendour of the universe.

The songs the Phoenix sings are in commemoration and appreciation of the diversity and duality of nature. Through its colourful melodies, the Phoenix conveys that the union between man and nature is a divine confluence in an otherwise conflicted environment.

As the Phoenix discovers the magical universe, it sings songs of joy, sorrow, love and peace—songs in praise of the harmony that exists in the intense and mesmerising natural world. The Phoenix's songs capture an emotional perspective in which even the unattractive reveals its beauty to the beholder.

Come, sing along with the Phoenix...

As articulated to Ushamrita





Light in the Morning  
48" x 60"





Light Over Darkness  
48" x 60"





Inside My Mind  
48" x 60"





Glittering Evening  
48" x 60"





Bright Horizon  
48" x 48"





Moment of Celebration  
48" x 48"





Valley of Flowers, 24" x 18"

## THE PHOENIX – SHUKLA'S MUSE

All of us long to have wings which can make us fly. All of us have a wish to have an eternal life. But, we have been ordained to live in a universe that has set its own rules upon us. Our innate free spirit rebels against these bonds. We break free through our creative energies. These take varied expressions. For Shukla, a part of this expression comes through her work in brilliant colours. The legendary, mythical Phoenix is Shukla's muse. One could take the liberty of poetical freedom to assert that the Phoenix mirrors the artist. As for the Phoenix itself, it may be appropriate to quote the French writer Voltaire, who said:

It was of the size of an eagle, but its eyes were as mild and tender as those of the eagle are fierce and threatening. Its beak was the colour of a rose, and seemed to resemble, in some measure, the beautiful mouth of Formosante. Its neck resembled all the colours of the rainbow, but more brilliant and lively. A thousand shades of gold glistened on its plumage. Its feet seemed a mixture of purple and silver; and the tail of those beautiful birds, which were afterwards fixed to the car of Juno, did not come near the beauty of its tail.

Shukla's exhibition, 'The Phoenix Sings a Song', is a true reflection of her muse, the Phoenix, in all its glory...

Anil Sharma  
Journalist, New Delhi



8<sup>th</sup> November, 1954

B.F.A (Painting)

Santiniketan

University of Pune

(Stood 1<sup>st</sup> in the University of Pune)

● PREVIOUS SOLO SHOWS:

The Flight of the Phoenix 1, Kolkata, 2005  
The Flight of the Phoenix 2, Mumbai, 2006  
The Phoenix in Celebration of Life, Mumbai, 2006  
The Dream of the Phoenix, Mumbai, 2006  
The Search of the Phoenix, Kolkata, 2007  
Glorious Days of the Phoenix 1, Mumbai, 2009  
Glorious Days of the Phoenix 2, Mumbai, 2009



● WORKSHOPS:

'Spirit of India' Artists' Camp, Alibagh  
'Prarambh' International Artists' Camp, Shimla  
10<sup>th</sup> Kalavart International Art Festival, Ujjain  
'Kalavart' National Art Fair, Indore  
National Art Festival, Kalavart Nyas, Ujjain  
India Art's Oil & Water Colour Workshop, Pune

● GROUP SHOWS:

'Nandan' by Santiniketan's Alumni Association, 2009, 2007  
Artists' Centre Annual Show, 2009, 2008, 2006, 2005  
Group Show at AIFACS, New Delhi, 2008  
Group Show at D.D Neroy Art Gallery, Mumbai, 2008  
Birla Academy's Annual Show, Kolkata, 2008, 2006, 2005  
Jagriti Art Foundation's Annual Show at Birla Academy, Kolkata, 2007  
Western Regional Art Show at Birla Academy, Kolkata, 2007  
Gallery Sanskriti, sponsored by Art Space India, Kolkata, 2006  
Kitab Mahal, sponsored by Indiaa.net, Mumbai, 2006  
Monsoon Show, sponsored by Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai, 2005  
Maharashtra State Painting Exhibition, Pune, 2003, 2001  
India Art's Exhibition on Oil & Water Colour, Pune, 2002  
Chitari Academy's Annual Art Show by the Atur Foundation, Pune, 2005, 2001, 1999  
Pune Women's Association by Chitari Academy, Pune, 1998





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