



THE PHOENIX'S PARADISE

11th solo show | Shukla Chowdhury



Central Hall | 18 - 24 January, 2012 | 3 pm - 8 pm
The Academy of Fine Arts, 2 Cathedral Road, Kolkata





THE GATEWAY TO PARADISE...





THE PHOENIX'S PARADISE

The Phoenix is a mythological bird. It symbolises death and re-birth as it rises from its own ashes, and takes its living followers on a flight to its beautiful home at Paradise. This imagery distils our longing for joyfulness. In an age of increasing mobility and dissolving social bonds, the yearning for intimacy and emotional bondage is growing stronger with each passing day. Many have started to turn away from reality in search of solitude and hope. In this milieu, Shuklas' works offer a new spirit of realism that singularly longs for beauty and reaches for paradise and fictional, fairy-tale worlds.

With deft strokes, she creates the imagery of a tropical paradise with volcanoes, waterfalls, rain forests, beautiful beaches and sapphire blue expanses of the sea. Pristine palm tree-lined beaches, tropical flowers, huge dormant volcanic craters that lounge in magnificent sunsets, majestic mountains and lurid green rice fields enliven the fantasy of a romantic vacation paradise of plenty.

Behind the dream island lie memories of her childhood. Within this enchanted space, innocence plays in a land of plenty, and ethereal beauty, bathed in freshness, is at her command. This gift of imagination is still unrecognised; it's a gift not fully understood. Time marches on, but the glimmer of imagination remains preserved long after moments have melted into the crevices of continuum.

Who of us has not longed to freeze and hold the moment of transitory pleasure, knowing it will pass? Who has not found the impossibility of doing so, since to live we must really live, not merely imagine ourselves living. In living, we cannot observe the moment in all its richness, while in observing we cannot live the essential experience. The desire to catch mortality fleeing is the essence of curiosity. In experiencing living, we cannot see ourselves vanishing, only feel the flight of time...

When we have captured the sensation of being, and when all voyages seem exhausted, there is, perhaps, one more journey waiting to unfold. In the realms of reverie, it is believed the gates will open at the end. The Angel will embrace the weary, and the Paradise will be filled with love and light.

As articulated to Ushamrita



"There were no staid greys or whites. They were angry reds, fighting greens, dying-to-break-free blues. They did not want to be contained by lines; only to flow into ach other, around each other." Bombay Times | The Times of India



Majestic
Acrylic on Canvas

20" x 20"



I am Free
Acrylic on Canvas

36" x 48"



"The visual information in each painting is dense, yet simple in form. The narrative is intimate, yet vivid in its description. Through Shukla's works, we are drawn into a world that celebrates life in all its varied nuances." Design Today



"Her works reveal to the viewer too, that there is a hidden beauty in everything and everyone. The exhibitions pay obeisance to nature and lay emphasis on the connection with 'the one supreme being'"
Delhi Times | The Times of India



The First Nectar
Acrylic on Canvas

30" x 40"



Ecstasy
Acrylic on Canvas

40" x 30"

"Moods are moving around the sky..."
Samir Aich | Kolkata



*"Shukla's paintings draw their inspiration from the Phoenix... The bold strokes accentuate notions of power, freedom and self-discovery."
Hindustan Times*



*Paradise Regained
Acrylic on Canvas*

24" x 30"



*Interlude
Acrylic on Canvas*

20" x 20"



"Essentially, the Phoenix – its mysticism and tales have provided Shukla an outlet for creative expression... she has been rigorously faithful to a single leitmotif over the last decade..."

*Nalini S Malaviya |
Indian Contemporary Art Journal*



"Shukla has the uncanny ability to relate to the beauty of our surroundings effortlessly through her power-play with colours."
The Times of India | Mumbai



Utopia
Acrylic on Canvas

30" x 24"



One is Great
Acrylic on Canvas

48" x 36"



"All her memories are expressed as dreams, and these transcend into her work. Bengal & Gurudev Ravindranath embody her spirit."
Manmohan Saral | Navbharat Times

"... Chowdhury's exhibition evokes such weighty themes as destruction and regeneration, whose vivacity is represented in the vibrancy of her canvases... The Phoenix underscores the idea of death-and-rebirth..."

Time Out Delhi

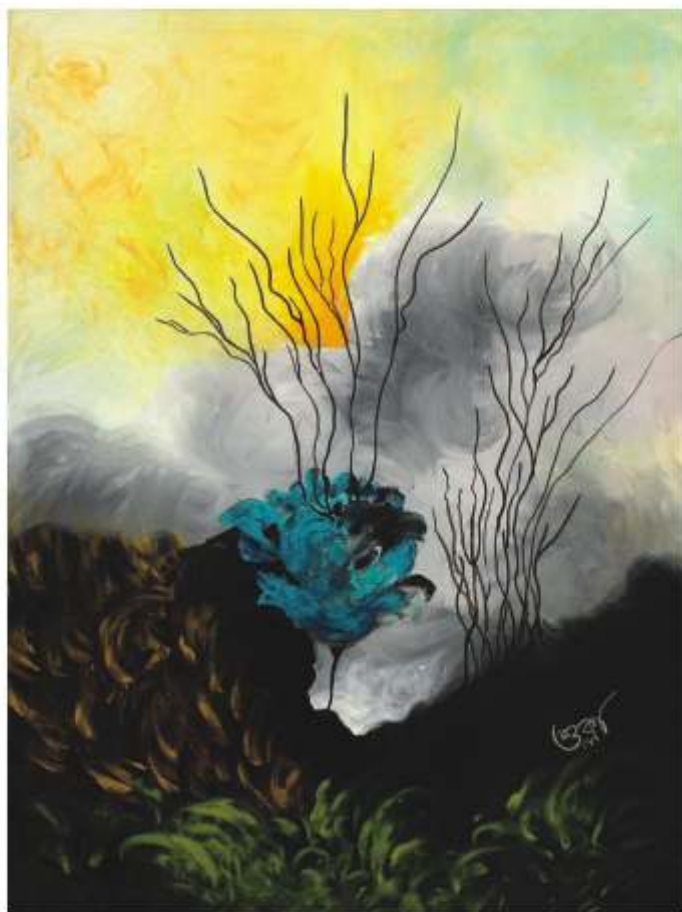
"For Shukla Chowdhury, the Phoenix is her constant companion, an alter-ego that goads her to relentlessly explore the vastness, the plurality of nature's beauty... The Phoenix, Chowdhury promises, shall inspire us to rise above the ordinary and mundane, and gift ourselves ideas of verve and expression."

The Telegraph



Into the Deep Blue Sea
Acrylic on Canvas

48" x 48"



Beyond the Sky
Acrylic on Canvas

36" x 48"



"Her colour palette, like her thought process, remains unbounded by the parameters of modulation or restraint. Her strokes are spontaneous and their expressive forthright and catchy. The works show great maturity in their presentation."

Subhra Mazumdar | Creative Mind



Path to the Himalayas
Acrylic on Canvas

30" x 40"

"You have brought flowers for the viewers, much needed in our troubled times. I have liked the display, the lights, and of course, the colourful works."
Prayag Shukla | Eminent Art Critic – New Delhi

"... Shukla Chowdhury is known for her spontaneous portrayal of her thoughts and imagination. Her paintings are a riot of colours, exploring and emphasising the moods of nature and complexities of the human mind."
Seema Sreedharan | BBC Good Homes

"Her works bear a distinctive style. I am very impressed with some of the works she has displayed..."
Shuvaprasanna | Kolkata

"... Shukla's overwhelmingly large canvases seem to be passionate celebrations of nature's beauty. It's probably this very uninhibited approach towards her craft, which makes Shukla's canvases stand out."
The Indian Express



Gangotri
Acrylic on Canvas

30" x 40"



Velvet Wings 1
Acrylic on Canvas

24" x 30"

"Shukla's technical expertise and 'self-realisation' resulted in a spectacular blend of bright hues. The works spell magic with their brightness. They fuse into each other peacefully."
Rana Siddiqui Zaman | The Hindu

B.F.A [Painting] | Santiniketan | University of Pune
Ranked first in B.F.A at the University of Pune

● SOLO SHOWS

- ~ The Phoenix Turns Ten | From Ashes to Blossoms... , Karnataka Chitrakal Parishath, Bangalore, April 2011
- ~ The Phoenix Sings a Song... II (The Eternal Harmony), Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi, August 2010
- ~ The Phoenix Sings a Song I, India Habitat Centre, New Delhi, May 2010
- ~ Glorious Days of the Phoenix II, Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai, October 2009
- ~ Glorious Days of the Phoenix I, Museum Art Gallery, Mumbai, September 2009
- ~ The Phoenix in Celebration of Life, Le Meridien, Mumbai, November 2008
- ~ The Search of the Phoenix, Academy of Fine Arts, Kolkata, October 2007
- ~ The Dream of the Phoenix, Artists' Centre, Mumbai, December 2006
- ~ The Flight of the Phoenix II, Nehru Centre, Mumbai, April 2006
- ~ The Flight of the Phoenix I, Birla Academy of Art & Culture, Kolkata, December 2005

● HONOURS & ACHIEVEMENTS

Jury-cum-Member of the Executive Committee appointed to judge the National Painting Competition on Energy Conservation organized by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency, in association with the Ministry of Power A Government of India initiative

● WORKSHOPS

- ~ Lalit Kala Akademi's National Art Camp 2010 at Aizawl
- ~ National Art Festival, Kalavart Nyas, Ujjain (2010, 2004)
- ~ Spirit of India Artists' Camp, Alibagh, February 2007
- ~ Prarambh International Artists' Camp, Shimla, April 2006
- ~ 10th Kalavart International Art Festival, December 2005
- ~ India Art Oil and Water Colour Workshop, Pune, 2002

● GROUP SHOWS

- ~ INFAC's All India Exhibition of Art, Bangalore, January 2012
- ~ Art Bazaar by Sublime Galleria, Bangalore, December 2011
- ~ Sublime Galleria's Inaugural Art Show at Bangalore, November 2011
- ~ Art Bengaluru 2011 through Sublime Galleria, Bangalore, June 2011
- ~ Airawat Art Gallery's Charity Show for Bharatratna Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Sanstha, Mumbai, April 2011
- ~ Airawat Art Gallery's 'Art for Living' for Cancer & Aid Research Foundation, Mumbai, March 2011
- ~ Women Art Foundation's Lotus Art Show at Coomaraswamy Hall, Mumbai, March 2011
- ~ INFAC's All India Exhibition of Art at the Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi, November 2010
- ~ Artists' Centre Annual Show, Mumbai (2010, 2009, 2008, 2006, 2005)
- ~ Nandan by Santiniketan Ex-Students' Alumni, Kolkata (2010, 2009, 2008)
- ~ Artists' Centre Annual Show, Mumbai (2009, 2008, 2006, 2005)
- ~ Group Show at D.D Neroy Art Gallery, Mumbai July 2008
- ~ Group Show at AIFACS, New Delhi, April 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 of Art & Culture, Kolkata, 2007
- ~ Gallery Sanskriti sponsored by Art Space India, Kolkata, 2006
- ~ Kitab Mahal, sponsored by Indiaa.net, Mumbai, 2006
- ~ Annual Monsoon Show, Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai, 2005
- ~ Annual Show by Bharti Vidyapeeth at Bal Gandharva Kala Dalan, Pune, 2004-05
- ~ Maharashtra State Painting Exhibition, Pune (2003, 2001)
- ~ Exhibition on Water Colour and Oil, India Art, Pune, 2002
- ~ Annual Show by Chitari Academy, Balagandharva Kala Dalan, Pune (2005, 2001)
- ~ Pune Festival Exhibition, Nehru Hall, 2000
- ~ Atur Foundation's Annual Exhibition, Nehru Hall, Pune, 1999
- ~ Pune Women's Association by Chitari Academy, Nehru Hall, Pune, 1998
- ~ Art Exhibition through Academy of Fine Arts, Kolkata, 1974





Enchanting
Acrylic on Canvas

30" x 40"

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