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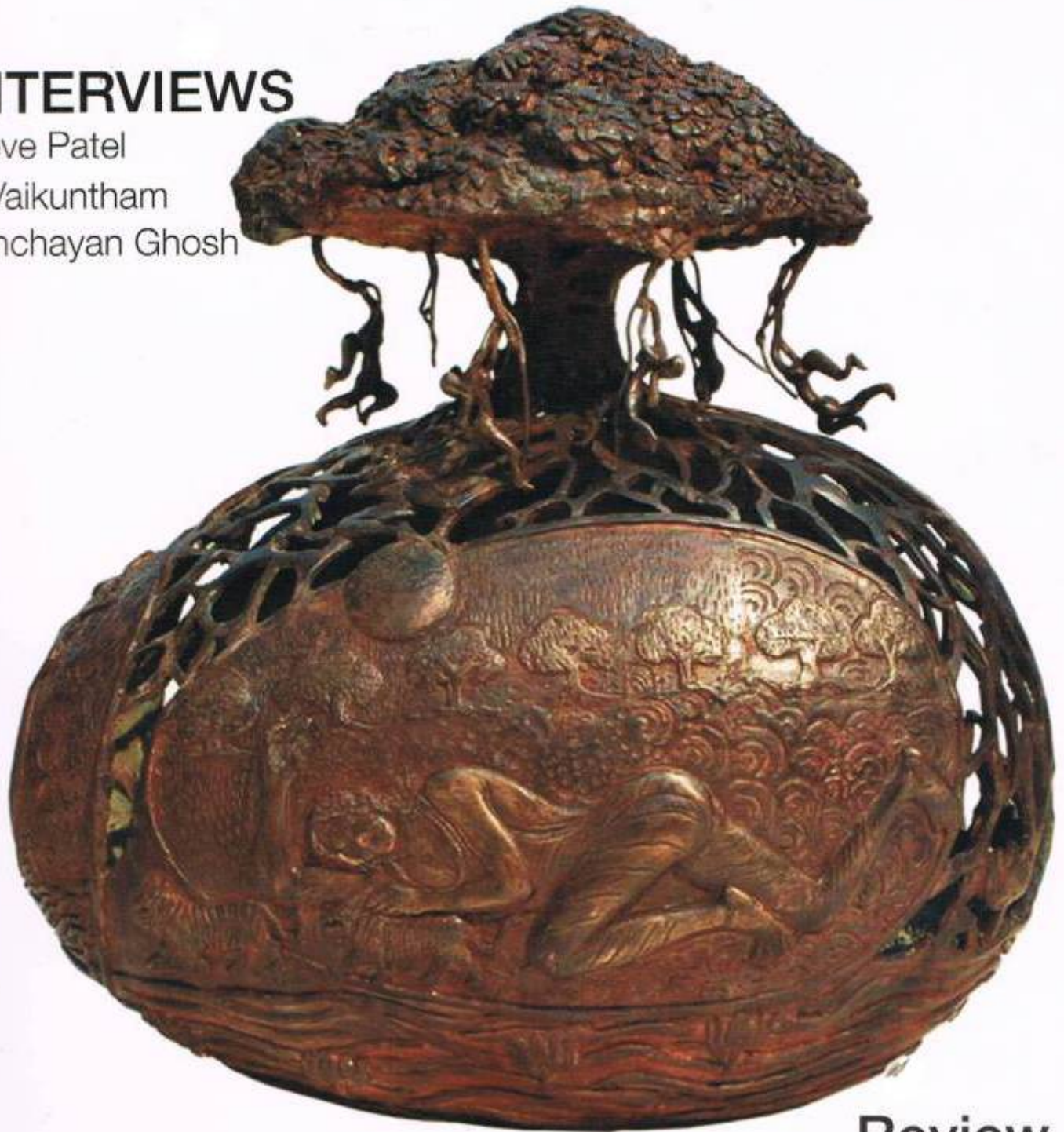
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# THE RISE OF THE PHOENIX

In the show titled 'The Phoenix Turns Ten - From Ashes to Blossom' by Shukla Chowdhury, a philosophy can be heard through eyes

**E**arlier this year, the Mumbai based artist Shukla Chowdhury exhibited her works in Bangalore for the first time. The show titled 'The Phoenix Turns Ten - From Ashes to Blossom' was held at the Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath and was an extension of the artist's earlier projects, where the Phoenix has been a constant in her narratives.

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The Phoenix, representing rebirth and immortality has been a source of inspiration for Chowdhury and a means to narrate her tales of fantasy. In her own words "A few years ago, I heard a mystical tale of the mythical bird, The Phoenix

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inspiration for Chowdhury and a means to narrate her tales of fantasy. In her own words "A few years ago, I heard a mystical tale of the mythical bird, The Phoenix. The rise of the Phoenix from its own ashes symbolises the eternal circle of life. This led me to discover the sutra of karmic evolution

and self-renewal. My creative energy found its habitat in the art of painting, and the Phoenix became an

Shukla Chowdhury,  
After the Storm Has Gone,  
Acrylic on Canvas,  
48 x 36 inches





Shukla Chowdhury,  
Where the Wind Comes From  
Acrylic on Canvas  
48 x 48 Inches

vivacity, a celebration of life; however the thematic symbolism is not immediately evident and is perhaps submerged in the riot of colours. The dynamism of a powerful theme such as the Phoenix with all its glorious implications and the vibrancy of its legends are reflected somewhat inadequately.

The 1954 born artist studied fine arts at Kala Bhavan, Vishvabharati University and at the University of Pune. In her previous exhibitions, Chowdhury has explored other facets associated with the legend of the Phoenix, for instance 'The Phoenix Sings a Song', 'The Dream of the Phoenix' and 'The Flight of the Phoenix'.

There is undoubtedly a sense of continuity and a certain amount of progression apparent in Chowdhury's works as she has been rigorously faithful to a single leitmotif over the last decade, nevertheless the language and the elements of visual vocabulary have remained consistent and perhaps even static.

Shukla Chowdhury,  
Blooming Trees,  
Acrylic on Canvas,  
36 x 48 Inches

Shukla Chowdhury,  
Glittering Evening,  
Acrylic on Canvas,  
48 x 60 Inches



omnipresent motif in all my compositions." Since then, the Phoenix has been a recurring part of Chowdhury's oeuvre, appearing as an abstract motif at times and as a hint of a shadow at others. Essentially, the Phoenix - its mysticism and tales have provided her an outlet for creative expression and an opportunity to step further into unexplored territory.

The artist relies on abstraction to create an imaginary realm, which appears to be a burst of brilliant hues. The mythical bird with its colourful plumage and a gold and scarlet tail materializes on the canvas, rising from its own ashes - symbolising renewal and regeneration. Referring to the multiple legends that surround the mythical bird, whilst drawing from her personal experiences, Chowdhury infuses abundant effort to reconcile the two and create a meeting ground for the real and the mythical. The artist attempts to depict the transience of life, the cycle of birth and the resurgence of the human spirit against all odds. The large expansive canvases highlight the spontaneity of colours and their

