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# Aāmar (अमर) with Amir!



Aamar in Hindi means immortal and Amir means rich, immortally rich heritage is what was showcased in one of the classiest art gallery named Amir Mohtashemi in Notting Hill, London. The exhibition had some of the most exquisite rare and antique Indian worship silverware and a stunning massive painting by Indians spiritual artist Shri Udayraj A. Gadnis. The show was unveiled by the well-known thinker and philosopher, Teresa Hale, the founder of the famous Hale Clinic at Regents Park, which was created in the 1980's and has offered it's services to many celebrities like Prince Charles, Lady Diana, Tina Turner, Kate Moss etc.

Our art expert Stephen Gal-

laghero delves deep into the minds of the creators who put this show together in conversation with Amir Mohtashemi (AM), the art gallery director and owner, and artist Udayraj Gadnis (UG).

**Q: How did this unique art collaboration come about?**

**A:** (AM) This was a necessary art joint collaboration, mainly because the art world has not yet seen such a great heritage collection under one roof. Indian silverware is the very best of craftsmanship, several generations for centuries have dedicated their lives to refine the art of silversmith. I was fortunate to assemble such great works of art; and Udayraj's wisdom and wealth of knowledge brought it out at the very best.

(UG) This was a unique experience for me, mainly because the audience come and see my paintings in the art galleries, and they just see paintings and nothing else. But when they buy my work they take it to their homes or offices surrounded by their other beautiful objects.

Here I had the opportunity to show my Sun surrounded by rich heritage. Amir has had tremendous experience in collecting unique objects, he knows intuitively what is of value, he is a very gifted soul.

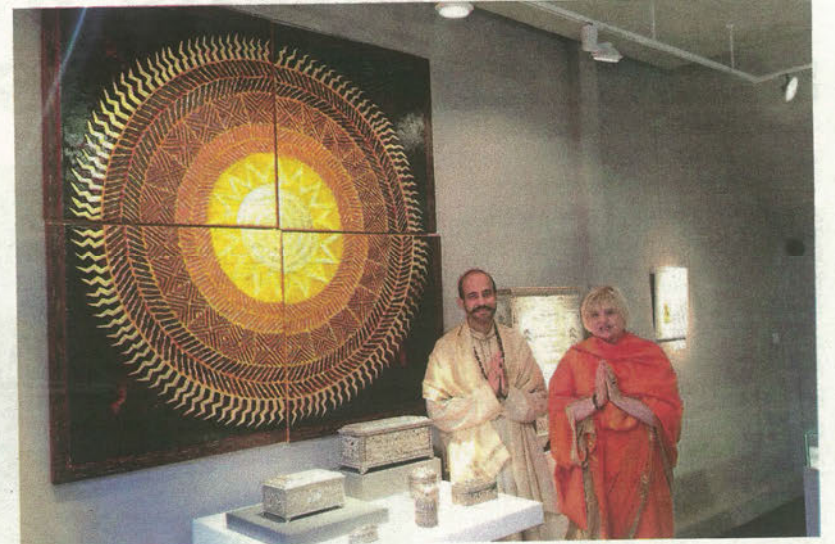
**Q: Many in the art world today feel the need to present their work in a unique manner, is this need valid?**

**A:** (UG) Yes, I do think it's a valid concern, mainly because foolishness is also being copy righted (laughs), junk is also displayed as art. One needs to have a balance, art is a balance between thought and action. I am happy, we achieved it together in this show of heritage.

(AM) As an experienced gallery owner, I do find "display" of art as pretty challenging.

Today's viewer is very well informed and will question when in doubts, I always seek academicians' advice when in doubt, and I also do my independent research.

**Q: UG your Sun series is achieving tremendous international acclaim; how does it feel?**



**A:** I feel blessed by the Sun himself! I have prayed to him since the age of 5 and today at 50 I feel His radiance within. The Sun, I showed at Amir Mohtashemi, took me 3 months to complete, as it was such detailing. Every object that surrounded my Sun was relevant to the painting. The guru padukas (foot ware), guru aasan (seat), guru kamandul (water pitcher),

Gugu himself represents the Sun. I was thrilled to see everything come together so beautifully.

**Q: AM your silver collection is of a museum quality, and you are very well known for your research, how do you put a vast collection together?**

**A:** You have to be passionate, you

cannot just jump on to an idea and build a collection overnight, you have to look for the right kind of objects and patience is the key. This collection on display has taken me 3 long years, I am glad, the viewers appreciated it, and the academicians loved it.

**Q: UG with your deep Indian roots what do you think of today's contemporary art world?**

**A:** Today's contemporary art world lacks dedication and consistency, to "impress" is becoming the key word, which is very sad. Indian heritage art is steeped in spirituality and a lot can be learned from the past. I draw a lot of inspiration from the past world heritage collections.

## Sharp with Shapero

How many times you can walk in a grand book store in the heart of May Fair, London and be stumped! As you walk in **Shapero rare books** behind the Sotheby's auction house, you immediately realise you are at the epicentre of high art and wealth, and are taken in by the greatness of this magnificent gallery of wisdom. Stumped and wonder struck!

Suchertra Dasgupta, director Asia wisdom centre and art historian, takes you on a journey. India - books of knowledge - an appropriate title for an exhibition of rare books and paintings.

Shapero rare books in May Fair is known to have some extremely rare and beautiful books in its collection for the last 40 years. Headed by charming and knowledgeable **Bernard Shapero**, it's not surprising that he has built a solid reputation to assemble a collection of books that most of the museums in India would queue up to.

The beautiful invitation card has

a lovely image of 'Dusasmade Gaut at Benares on the Ganga' from the 'Oriental Scenery' by the famous Thomas and William Daniell. Is only an indication of what will be put on display... You definitely need to be "Sharp at Shaperos" or will miss the beauty in the details. Everyone enjoys the details with which Udayraj Gadnis has planned his painting exhibition and book reading. Udayraj is known to create highly uplift-

ing evenings for the mind, body and soul all over the world. He (being a mystic artist, not just a painter but a writer and a poet too) knows that the surroundings matter, no doubts that he selected a brilliant place. As the evening unfolded with the unveiling of his oil painting on canvas by the guest of honour **Shri Vijay Goel, Chairman of the Asian Business Association at the London Chamber**



of Commerce.

The guests were treated to reading by Bernard himself from invaluable books on Indian temple drawings, Indian traditional costumes etc. You would not believe the way Bombay and Calcutta landscape looked a100 years ago...

As Udayraj stood near his Sun painting and started reading passages from his portfolio, **The Sun - In Civilisations**, everybody was spellbound. His deep voice drew the audience closer to realise a simple truth of life. Just look at the sun above and shadows will disappear!

Everyone was left mesmerised and dazzled by the radiance and beam of light from the displayed Sun painting. As the talk ended with everybody rushing to him for a photograph, I am left grounded, as I manage to gather myself for the promised interview with Udayraj. I am at loss of words...

**Q: Why do we get to see just one Sun painting at a time?**

**A:** There is just one Sun in the sky at any given time. There is just one Kohinoor Diamond and there is just one Udayraj Gadnis too. I say it with simplicity, humility and grace. We live in a society of excess hence,

we miss out on details, one helps us concentrate and absorb.

**Q: Many have been left with a feeling of awe and wonder looking at your Sun paintings, is it the paint, the technique, the skill, the craft, the display or is it simply You?**

**A:** It is a combination of all, as a painter I do feel the painting comes out of the painter on to the canvas, it's not like the dance which remains in the dancer. Hence the painting lives on even after the painter has gone. Many past masters understood this hence did not waste their time and talent. I am on a journey inward. I seek the Sun within...

**Q: You always select unusual settings to show your work, what is the philosophy?**

**A:** One must understand that serious art based on research needs a serious setting and a serious audience, it's from these surrounding books of wisdom that I have gained insight and knowledge. My ongoing 3 years of research on Sun is from various libraries in UK. It's my way of paying a tribute to these houses of knowledge. Hence my painting is unveiled here.