



SKIB 71



SKIB-71 IN TEXTUAL AND VISUAL MEMORIES

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Abstract

SKIB-71, the acronym of Sashi, Krishna, Indra and Batsa represents a very significant phase in the movement of modern Nepali paintings. These four artists launched a movement in paintings a quarter of a century ago with a view to inspiring young artists and opening new vista of communications with artists using other media and methods. Their personal involvements in art activities couples with their experimentations created a unique atmosphere in Nepali paintings characterised by such features as the gatherings of artists, interactions, exhibitions and, above all the pedagogy of arts. After the sad demise of Indra Pradhan in 1994, three of them continued to work for which they chose to engage in art pedagogy or to work quietly on cultural motifs. Among the many reasons to consider them as part of art activities today is their impact on art education, accentuation of the subject of experimentation and participation in the art activities of present times.

Preview

A massive national exhibition of art was underway at the erstwhile NAFA gallery in the huge hall of the Asian Baroque style building named Sita Bhawan in Naxal in Kathmandu in the winter of 1973. I had organised an informal meeting of writers, mostly poets with four painters Sashi Shah (1942), Krishna Manandhar (1947), Indra Pradhan (1944) and Batsa Gopal Vaidya (1946). Sadly, Indra Pradhan's death occurred in 1994. The loss of this very active artist with great propensity for opening inter-art sharing is deeply felt by his colleagues and poets alike. Indra's help and interest had made it easier for me to bring the poets closer to the artists.

SKIB 71 as the name shows was formed two years earlier. These artists all

being more or less of the same age, it was very easy to communicate with each other. My interest in paintings was already established. Meeting Lain Bangdel (1924-2002) and dramatist and painter Balakrishna Sama (1902-1981) quite regularly had left a deep impact on my mind. My studies of the Western art and literature had given me ample insight and methodology to enter the realms of art and literature. My idea was enthusiastically accepted by SKIB. The meeting went wonderfully well. All I need to mention here is that the poets and artists were equally elated by this idea of seeing each other's works as related works of art.

Most importantly, that meeting opened up a modus operandi of the meetings of painters and poets. The onus lay on my

shoulders that I was happy to carry out with great sense of inspiration and zeal. We had limited access to the media. But I chose a method of writing articles or letters to the editors about the painters. For literature I had no problem. My first book of western criticism was under production at the Academy the same year. I got a letter published about the meeting in the only English daily of that time in reader's column. I could not find the paper cutting to cite here. Anyway, SKIB chose an open path, a flexible way of looking at arts, not least by accepting other genres of art as their own. This trend continued for many years.

I want to use this article written at the suggestion of artist and editor Navindra Man Rajbhandari for his annual art magazine. So the modality of this article is to cite at length the texts I have written at different times about these painters in groups or as individual in their exhibition brochure, and make analyses. I feel very delighted to read them over again, and to realise how we continued to celebrate the confluence of arts.

Uttam Nepali made an exhibition of paintings by bringing poets into his oeuvre itself two years after this inter-art meeting of the SKIB. I wrote the following about Uttam Nepali's exhibition of the paintings and the inter-art spirit of that:

"Uttam Nepali made his first major attempt to bring painting and poetry together in an exhibition of his abstract paintings at NAFA in September 1975. The 32 abstract paintings exhibited on the occasion covered the names of the major modernist poets of his times. Uttam Nepali himself wrote/writes poems. So he recreated the spirit of the works of these poets with a great sense

of closeness and sympathy. His style of representing poetry in art was by directly writing short text along the conceptual dimension of the painting. The title of the exhibition was 'Poet, Poetry & Painting', a straightforward title. He sought to combine these three forms in each painting through the medium of abstract art. He conceptualised the text and style of the poet first, chose a line that struck him as very eloquent about the poet's concepts and craftsmanship in writing and included these lines on the body of the abstract canvas. In other words, the line/lines form part of the *sensa* in the abstract painting. *Sensa* in abstract painting is what the voyeur sees on the canvas, the colours, abstract forms and movements of lines that do not form any figurality." (Across. January – March 2003. Vol 6. No. 4. Pp. 9-13).

Though SKIB did not write, they were great friends of poets and writers. That is the reason why I worked so closely with them. Uttam Nepali kept up writing poetry along with his art works. He continued that spirit of association by executing portraits of poets and writers in later years.

I have already written elsewhere. SKIB however continued to foster that spirit, that sense of the confluence of art and literature. But they continued to be painters or artists par excellence. To understand what kind of paintings they executed I want to cite my own texts written for catalogues or elsewhere. First I want to cite my text included in the flier of an exhibition organised by Sirjana Contemporary Art Gallery under the title "A creative journey of 25 years, SKIB-71" in the last week of December 1995 in Kathmandu. Baikuntha Man Shrestha, Chairman of the Gallery quotes me as below:

"It will be relevant to quote here Dr. Abhi Subedi's views on SKIB-71. He writes – "SKIB-71, the acronym of Sashi, Krishna, Indra and Batsa represents a very significant phase in the movement of modern Nepali paintings. These four artists launched a movement in paintings a quarter of a century ago with a view to inspiring young artists and opening new vista of communications with artists using other media and methods. Their personal involvements in art activities couples with their experimentations created a unique atmosphere in Nepali paintings characterised by such features as the gatherings of artists, interactions, exhibitions and, above all the pedagogy of arts."

"Sashi studies the unique dramatic modes of culture in somewhat surrealistic style. There is vision of the apocalypse in his paintings; Krishna has created a changing pattern of experiences in different modes of experimentation over the decades; the late Indra's paintings combine charm with the fragmentation of experience and the disintegration of values with creation of new hopes in the pleasant combinations of forms and media; Batsa views the occult and the sacramental subjects with the openness and readiness for experiments of a modern artist. In short, the SKIB-71 have created impact on the modern Nepali art scenario and all the three artists today are prolific, active and receptive to new ideas and concepts".

Baikuntha Shrestha has quoted my earlier catalogue introduction to the group's paintings, which is missing in my collection. But in these paragraphs I have tried to sum up the quality, style and nature of these three painters' works. Indra Pradhan missed this Silver Jubilee

of the SKIB group that occurred one year after his death. In the following section I want to cite texts I have written about the individual artists for which I have reproduced texts from my earlier writings in papers and catalogues. After presenting my texts and my memoirs of the visuals – their paintings, I will try to review briefly the times that the SKIB-71 saw and responded in their works and how they have remained active up until the present times. I will write more about this aspect of their art towards the conclusion of this essay.

Indra Pradhan

In the following text, cited from my earlier article published under the rubric "SKIB and Art Education", I have attempted to show the picture of the artist and his dedication to art education in the seventies and eighties. Today, it gives me a sense of being even closer to the spirit of this artist and his state of art. It goes in this manner:

"He (Indra Pradhan) was waiting for me in the class studio where students learned paintings with him. Students' freshly painted works were dripping with water and acrylic colours. It was a spacious room at Budanilakantha High School where the painting teacher Indra Pradhan had just finished teaching his students before sending them back to their classes. It was some year in the seventies. Among the students was crown prince Dipendra Shah, ... the tragic young man whose story is cast on the canvas of the nation's history and people's memories in visible and invisible lines made with bold brush strokes, as it were, and drawn with all irregularities. Indra Pradhan, sitting in front of the canvas just left by the crown prince looked as though he was

contemplating a future for the nation, for a simple unassuming royal house and the nonchalant atmosphere that he visualised on the basis of the 'creative gusto and simplicity' seen in the works of the crown prince. He would make a great king with a human heart, compassion and love for a genuine life, the late Indra Pradhan said to me revealing his inner feelings.

"This secret dreamer, this artist Indra Pradhan who painted in both huge and small, horizontal and mostly vertical canvas handled motifs that were based on the artist's experience represented by the simple yet complex forms that filled sometimes the entire field of action with the crowding and competing images that gave the cult of horror but lay pleasantly along the eye paths of the viewer. I can recall that clearly." ("Space Time Today", 7 October 2001).

Indra Pradhan's art works look charming. The cult of violence, dissolution of forms on big scales, the uncanny looking position of images that include the human figurality and other forms turned out to be lucid, not threatening. The painter did not take any stake in creating figures that would speak either of occultism as in Batsa Gopal Vaidya's paintings, or of radical challenges as in Sashi Shah's stallions. Instead, in the impressionist projections of bigger threats or changes, he creates very charming pictures achieved through a very pleasant and inviting combination of colours. His paintings do not show strong movement of brush strokes but the smooth delineation of the images. The overall impact of Indra Pradhan's paintings is one of delight and joy, of friendliness and warmth. Perhaps this comes from his long pedagogic associations with school students and practices, a loving engagement indeed.

Alluding to SKIB's contribution to art education I have written more in this very article. I have further said this about Indra Pradhan:

" To return to the late art guru Indra Pradhan's dream, art education in Nepal can be made a very productive and viable enterprise which can help create as well as perpetuate a tradition by combining the cultural and creative energies inherent in Nepalese arts with free artistic education. The architects of such education can be no other than the artists themselves, like the SKIB, who have dedicated their lives to the promotion of art education in this country." ("Space... 7 October 2001).

Lain Singh Bangdel says this about Indra Pradhan's art:

"Indra Pradhan's cityscapes are very interesting, richly painted and sensuously appealing. The artist seems to be aware of his subconscious mind, which reflects his love for a city where he spent so many years. The lyrical city-spaces have no echo of the mountains and the blue valley of his native land, nevertheless they suggest a veiled allusion or poetic drama". (SKIB Exhibition Catalogue 1971).

What is interesting about this text is that Bangdel's words echo the features of his own paintings in expressions like 'lyrical city-spaces', "echo of the mountains and the blue valley". Anyone familiar with Bangdel's paintings can recognise the echo.

I have always found SKIB as great teachers. Sashi Shah and Krishna Manandhar have been instrumental in promoting art education at the tertiary level in Nepal. Sashi Shah and Krishna Manandhar became principals of Lalitkala



Shahi Shah. *Ramayana*. 1993. Acrylics on canvas.

Campus located in Bhotahity for 12 and 8 years respectively, and of Sirjana College of Fine Arts for over 8 years each. That is a long period of serving as leaders of Arts Colleges. Manandhar was succeeded as principal of Sirjana College of Fine Arts by another senior artist Madan Chitrakar in 2018. That means the SKIB artists' contribution to art pedagogy is very important and noteworthy in the history of art education in Nepal.

Shashi Shah

I would begin with observations about Shashi Shah's art made by Kishore Chatterji in a short review published in *The Statesman* (May 25, 1993). He writes:

"But perhaps the quintessential Nepalese artist is Shashi Shah whose section of canvases with their bemused yogis and apocryphal horses show a mind fully conscious of roots but alive and vibrating with the dance or the topmost leaf. Those who believe that art must emerge from the soil will find Shah an interesting artist". (Cited from the catalogue entitled "A creative journey of 25 years", Sirjana Contemporary Art Gallery, December 1995).

It is very interesting to read that this art reviewer sees the origin of Shah's art as the native soil. But that may not always be the case. Shah has made a unique combination of the Western style of painting, conspicuously seen in Picasso's stallions in his mural "Guernica", foregrounding their sinewy twists and agility, with the Hindu concept of the 10 incarnations of Vishnu; Shah takes the last avatar in the form of Kalki that comes in the iron age, or our times, to set things in order. Shah's stallions are so flexible that he uses this figurality for diverse motifs — cosmogonic and earthly.

I was asked to speak about Sashi Shah and his painting on exhibition at Siddharth Gallery on 25 March 2007. I would like to use some of the arguments I presented in that discourse:

Sashi Shah chose the stallion, a form that he has used for a number of purposes. We should see the subtlety in his horse imagery. A first glance will not reveal much. The immanence of horses is the feature. Not our familiar reading of a so called natural itch of the horse for a rider but the free movement that challenges being tamed are captured in these figures. Shah gives moods to these horses. The sombre, excited, terrified and anguished looks of these stallions show one dimension. Another dimension is the kinetic quality. Shah captures the temporal dimension — the livid times. We can see time by the leaps the stallions take over space. We can measure time through the figures fixed on canvases. Shah creates the nuances of the time through the manipulation of the kinetic avatars of the horses. The space is another very important element in his paintings. He is the visionary artist who knows the sense of space on a canvas. Space on a canvas is both physical as well as psychological creation. The positioning of the central metaphor on the canvas creates both kinds of spaces. Shah is very clever at choosing the space for the horse on his canvas. If you stand in front of each of the painting you become overwhelmed. The horse swamps you. The reasons are his placing of the metaphor and the power of the look and movement of the stallion that dominates your eye-path; it takes your eyes with you. Viewer should allow time to herself. Then one can see the mood. In that sense each horse is different and each time you see his new painting it becomes a mirror to you. The other use of the



Krishna Manadhar. *Composition*. 1975. Oil on canvas. 122 cm x 95 cm.

stallion is in its mythologizing process. Time extends to a larger space and covers the world of myths.

Sashi Shah says this about his horses:

"Horse and horses are here. Horse is not a new and strange thing. The white horse is the symbol of the vehicle today by Kalki. The other horses here are also symbolic – some sorts of evil and horrifying. They are manic. They are

devastating. They are likely to destroy our world and our civilization. Some are good, some are evil, and some are as terrifying as nuclear weapons of these days. May they all look beautiful – it is my major goal". (From the catalogue of his painting exhibition entitled "Shashi Shah's the Kalki Avatar", January 1993). In this text written by the painter in his free style speaks volumes about his paintings with horse – he also likes to use the plural form horses – as the dominant motifs.

Krishna Manandhar

Krishna Manandhar's style is different from those of his fellow artists. His abstract landscapes sometimes remind of Bangdel's paintings that depict the subtlety and fluidity of the Nepal valley and the Himalayas. Krishna's landscapes are more abstract. His style retains some of the characteristics of the paintings he executed then. He made an important exhibition of his paintings on 23 February 1992 under the rubric "A Journey through Forms and Colours" for which I wrote a catalogue review. After reading that review I have decided to produce several paragraphs of that here for two reasons. One, what is written about Krishna Manandhar is relevant today. Two, he had exhibited diverse paintings there, and the review has, captured that diversity. Here are some excerpts:

"Krishna Manandhar has completed two decades of active engagement in paintings the spectrum of which can be seen in his continuous experiments in styles and in the delineation of the motifs that range from the trivial to the lofty and grand. His modern canvases present a panorama of his development, his tensions and achievements as an artist. ...

"Krishna Manandhar's canvases speak of his inner dynamism, a continuous search for form and modality. They speak through the figures that loom in the twilight of the translucent colour combination as it they represent the mind itself that charges its shape and its colour combination under different conditions of individual inspiration. In his canvases, apart from a set of those that present figures and landscapes in kaleidoscopic forms, there is a unique combination

of colours and forms because in these canvases colour becomes both form and subject. ...

"Krishna's paintings in musical series exhibited at that time create the sonic and melodious affect through a dynamic fusion geometric forms. He has captured the tunes that emerge in them at the time of contemplation. The musical feeling emanates at a point where they dynamism of colours and forms meet by emitting the waves of tremulous colours from the centre whatever that may be in the canvas. The effectiveness of the colour sensation can be enhanced through the combination of colours that produce so many different shades that our linguistic perception fails to describe it in lexical terms and the colours simply represent the atmosphere of the mind. Krishna says that he was experimenting with these immense possibilities of creation in the early phase of the SKIB spirit. The lyrical contemplation of colours was thus a natural outcome of this attitude."

In that catalogue writing I have attempted to review the changing styles of Krishna Manandhar, which functions like a historical assessment of his paintings. The changing styles of his paintings look like this:

"Krishna's paintings in the second phase became coloured blotches which marked a spontaneous development of his earlier lyrical preoccupation with the dynamic fusion of forms and colours. The blotches present a mobile picture through the apparent close-ups and vanishing dimensions of these points on the canvas. As the dynamism of he blotches merges with the dynamism of the sensation the viewer's mind finds its way into the canvases. A certain pointillist surrealism

presents the evanescent forms that appear and die in the mind."

About the third phase of Krishna Manandhar's art, I have taken his paintings not exhibited at that exhibition but the ones I was familiar with. Considering that Krishna has made the architectonic forms as the feature of the style, the following observations I made then are still relevant. I write:

"But his blotches gradually gave way to full-fledged architectural forms and to a perspective that is very natural for a landscape. However, Krishna's preoccupation with the dimension of the mind remains very strong in the paintings that followed the blotches and architectural forms. The vertical shapes produced with single brush strokes as if cutting swaths through the canvas represent the continuous progression feelings that occur and develop with a certain degree of suddenness."

I have mentioned the cultural and mythopoeic forms in his paintings. I have alluded to that element in the following manner:

"These paintings make use of the sacramental value of colour especially in the Hindu culture. The tantric and mystic aura created by these paintings is a matter of interest for the viewers. ... The pancatattwa fire, water, earth, sky and air, need a great deal of creative handling in the paintings. His SKIB colleagues are fascinated by this subject, too. ...

"In fact, his later paintings combine almost all the major tenets of his earlier paintings – the points, vertical forms, horizontal movement of colours and the tense spaces between forms all merge to create what I would like to call

the paintings marking the culmination of his creative life. Krishna says, "My environment, my world of the past chases me wherever I go. I achieve tremendous satisfaction when I am able to transcend them, but the constant awareness of my world and my efforts to overcome its delimitations impel me to create my own world that is my paintings".

Indeed, this world is tense and it pulsates with life. He is also engaged in executing some, what he calls saleable abstract paintings, and seems to be occupied with the mural blow-ups as well. I have met him at the Studio sitting in the middle of the mural narratives and extending his narration left and right like the unobtrusive narrator in a story. He is an active artist, and it is a matter of great satisfaction to him sit growing and experimentation with the spiritual dimension uses the world, its forms and colours to merge with the ones that emanate from the mind and create a fusion of the two in these complex and yet pleasant canvases".

Krishna shifted his focus on art pedagogy, which also influenced his style of working and the selection of the motifs. It is so very good to see him still working and active.

Batsa Gopal Vaidya

Now I would like to turn to Batsa Gopal Vaidya. For that as in the case of Krishna Manandhar I would like to use a catalogue review that I wrote for his exhibition of paintings under the rubric "Ganesh Mandalas" in February 1993. These paintings capture the essence of his style and choice of themes, which are little tantric, esoteric and calm at the same time. Batsa brings out the world around



Batsa Gopal Vaidya. *Buddhism.* 1980. Oil on canvas.

him, the place where he was born and where he grew. The confidence, the gusto and the sheer joy permeated through the yellow, light green and vermilion type pigment that we find in his paintings

give Batsa a unique character as an artist. I would like to take excerpts from my review that appear equally relevant today. I write:

"It's indeed a Ganesh Mandala that he is creating. A hundred yards or so to the east of the monuments of consummate art and architecture in the stones, woods and metals, in the precincts of Mangal Bazar in the old part of Patan city. Batsa Gopal Vaidya was painting his Ganesh Mandalas on the fourth floor of the back wing of his house now attached to his old one. Most of these Ganesh mandalas are in exhibition at the Sirjana Contemporary Art Gallery...

"Batsa Gopal is a senior artist, who is an active member of the SKIB-71... They have developed their individual styles and have clearly left some impact on the contemporary artists. Batsa Gopal discovered his interest in the Hindu religious motifs principally in the Ganesh. Now he is the worshipper and lover of Ganesh. To him Ganesh is an icon, a motif and now a Mandala, a symbol of the expansion of consciousness. ... But the most important questions are how does he treat this dominant image? How does this image influence the atmosphere of his mind? How does Ganesh fit into his modernistic art? ...

"The Ganesh Mandalas have a rigid and studied order. Batsa has not allowed any randomness to appear in his paintings. Similarly his field of action is defined in terms of the canons of the painting of a modern classical order. The enclosure of the canvas, the Ganesh's Mandala, is defined. But the most important point about these Ganesh Mandala is that he has transcended the defined field of action. ...

"The balance of these Mandalas is carefully constructed, however, the symmetrical balance is achieved through the canonically defined position the trunk and body and the head of the deity. But the artist has symmetrically balanced the painting by placing the conic shapes of what he calls the Nepali Himalayas at the bottom of the canvas, on either side of the Ganesh.

"The lines appear in the form of contours making up the three dimensional perception of Ganesh. But some lines are invisible the paths of which should be followed with Batsa's very balanced and expressive brush strokes. Such brush strokes mark the motion of the Ganesh. The gentle motion is suggested by the unbroken and defined lines. The diagonal lines marked by the trunks show the Ganesh image in action. The colours, mainly secondary and even tertiary, and some primary ones, and yellow merge smoothly.

"Each Ganesh image is closer to the everyday experience of spiritual awareness. Such nearness is unmistakable because the colours are warm and there is lightness and brightness in them. ... A certain sense of idealisation dominates the artist's sense of proportion in these paintings. The surface is smooth and fine with only the... textural structure. But in the implied texture there is simplicity and charm. In fact, his Ganeshes are warm, lovely, comic, friendly and serene. Batsa Gopal successfully combines these various moods in his Ganesh Mandalas."

I have indicated a number of times about the canonical rigidity demanded by the Ganesh image, and the artist's treatment of that. I have mentioned about an

important tension between rigidity and fluidity in paintings that utilise motifs from myths and other iconic matters. I have presented this tension in the following manner:

"... Batsa does not allow the Ganeshes to radiate their energies freely. That is a disadvantage. But on the other hand, his successful balancing of the lines, figures, colour tinctures and the suggestion of the motions within the paintings create a psychological impact on the viewer who begins to view each painting in terms of the aesthetic sense the source of which is the combination of the primordial feelings and perception of the Ganesh image as an aesthetic construct."

I have drawn this conclusion at the end of the review:

"Batsa's paintings create an energy of a different order. It is an energy that the viewer has to experience within him or her. The consummate and mature canvas gives the viewer the experience of a detached yet intimate perception of the archetypal image of Ganesh".

Kedar Mathema writes these comments about Batsa Gopal Vaidya's art in general:

"Batsa Gopal blended medieval tantric images with modernism. They showed commercialism. They come a long way since the 70s. Although little poorer since they lost Indra, they are still today among the few in the forefront of contemporary art movement of Nepal".

To art critic Banshi Shrestha — "Vaidya, appears as an occult painter."
(Both extracts taken from the catalogue entitled "A Creative Journey of 25 Years", Sirjana Contemporary Art Gallery, December 1995).

Retrospectively

When SKIB-71 launched their easy and free movement, it was clearly a post-Bangdel period. Uttam Nepali had been going strong at that time. Laxman Shrestha had exhibited his paintings at NAFA in 1967 with brochure written by Balakrishna Sama. Creating a native scenario and taking that to the audience was the main need of the day. These SKIB artists did that. They saw school, training, and most importantly, joint forum with the writers especially poets as very important things to perform by artists, cultural karmis and writers. That is how we met them. Exuberance became their main thrust. Teaching became the main goal. Except for Batsa Gopal Vaidya who retired from a government job, all formally became teachers of art colleges and school.

SKIB were looking for icons and metaphors. They had in different ways created their styles and their own icons. Search for metaphors became their main forte. Batsa kept on experimenting with Ganesh and occult forms. He still does. Indra and Krishna's search for icons was fluid. They moved from one icon to another. Movement, or kinaesthetics in what may appear as a rigid form, is the feature of Krishna Manandhar's paintings. Indra chose the transparent, subtle and natural forms with very light and charming combination of pigments. Krishna's main metaphor was nature and abstract mountains. Indra's metaphor was the pattern cast by the mellow sun filtering through foliage to the leaves at the lower level, patterns like bird droppings, tendrils and stretches of rainbow, cult of darkness which is not that in reality. Masks appear in his

paintings but they do not represent gloom or darkness Mask is power achieved through love and lucidity, and at times embellishment to some degree in some of the paintings.

Essence and Conclusion

SKIB-71 were not seeking to be fixed in their different stylistic spheres. They had common goals, which was to achieve fluidity. But as their search for metaphor covered many areas including poetry and sculpture and works with other contemporary artists like Sashikala Tiwari and others, their images were amorphous. They did not limit themselves to any fixed forms. Even Sashi Shah's recurrent stallions are metaphors of diversity. Batsa Gopal's icons assume new meanings when they are handled with the techniques of modernist art.

How do we view SKIB-71 today? The answer is not easy. But to seek the answer we should look at two things – a common spirit and confidence of launching something new in Nepali art, and continuity. I have encountered questions like what brought them together though their styles do not represent any closely shared styles of art like that of, let us say, Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque in France. SKIB worked with different ways and they had different world visions. But what is important is their common recognition of the transition of times in Nepali art. At least, they found a common motif to work on, and that was, to repeat, the recognition of the changing time in Nepali art. Their place is not relegated to history; they are still working. I strongly believe that SKIB-71 have successfully linked the fin de siècle, if I may use the term mostly used for the end of the 19th century, to the 21st century

in terms of activism and sharing of art works. To me, the greatest contribution of SKIB-71 is their art pedagogy, which they fostered not as a routinized programme but as a challenging yet motivating educational culture.

I would like to close by repeating that SKIB-71 has become an important landmark in the history of modern Nepali paintings.

Let us commemorate our inter-art meeting of NAFA gallery of that afternoon in 1973 at some other gallery because that gallery has collapsed in the big earthquake of April 2015. But such a meeting space should combine paintings, poetry and the neo-Baroque architectural spirit to reminisce that moment. That will also be a fitting tribute to Indra Pradhan.

Cheers, friends! Your contributions to the Nepali art of the modern times is unique and very original. The models that you have created for education, production and dissemination of arts warrant more careful studies and applications.



Dr. Abhi Subedi

Born in Terathum of eastern Nepal, Dr. Abhi Subedi received his higher education in Nepal and Britain. He is an essayist, critic, linguist, playwright and poet. He has over two-dozen books on different subjects to his credit. Among his over 10 plays, strong theatre groups in Nepal and abroad have performed several of them.

Professor Subedi has taught 43 years at the Central Department of English.

He has written extensively about Nepali arts and artists. He is involved in a number of interdisciplinary study groups and a prolific writer on issues of freedom, culture, literature, arts and social transformations. His essays and seminar papers are published in Nepal and outside.