

Sri Chinmoy: Paintings for World-Harmony, at the United Nations

A special exhibit of twenty-five acrylic paintings by Sri Chinmoy opened at the UN Secretariat Lobby on 11-22 August on the ideal of world harmony. This significant exhibit will travel around the world. The exhibit has inspired reflections on the theme from world figures, UN staff and others.

At the exhibit reception on August 19, a special programme honoured museums for their contribution to *world harmony* through the arts. In the words of Ranjana Ghose, curator of the exhibit, “We are grateful to those who act as the guardians of culture, the preservers of these finer aspects of civilization of mankind. In so doing, they attempt to enhance the aesthetic quality of life for all humanity. This exhibit honours their endeavours.”

Sixteen of the world's museums were present: The Smithsonian Institution, Arthur M. Sackler Gallery/Freer Museum of Art and The Cooper-Hewitt, The MET, MOMA, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, The Whitney Museum, Philadelphia Museum of Art, The Rubin Museum, The New Museum of Contemporary Art, Princeton University Art Museum, Brooklyn Museum, Asia Society Museum, Newark Museum and Children's Museum of Manhattan.

Curator of the exhibit Ranjana Ghose notes, “As is most often the case of Sri Chinmoy's painting, here also, there was no drawn-out mental deliberation in the artist's painting technique, but rather a spontaneous expression of goodness, a spiritual ignition of energy, unleashed with a free and abundant use of vibrant colours which play with the light....”

Sri Chinmoy is a prolific artist who has long been known for his drawings of birds as well as his joyfully coloured abstract paintings. A number of respected cultural institutions retain an original of his paintings in their permanent collections, including the Victoria and Albert Museum in London; UNESCO in Paris, the Palais des Rosi de Majorque in Perpignon, France; and the Museum of Modern History of Russia in Moscow.

The “Paintings for World-Harmony” Exhibit is expected to travel the world after its inaugural showing at the United Nations and was sponsored by the United Nations SRC Film Society.

Messages of support for the “Paintings for World-Harmony” Exhibit have been received from such figures as President Nelson Mandela, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, President of the 62nd session of the United Nations General Assembly H.E. Dr. Srgjan Kerim and Mikhail Gorbachev.