

## Finding a language through various mediums

*by Lipika Bansal*

Koen Taselaar and Sachi Miyachi participated in the CARF residency in Kolkata. Both were enthralled by all the sensory input they were receiving from the city and used drawing as a means to take it all in. Taselaar would spend his days walking, observing and collecting, and then would draw in the evenings, whereas Miyachi drew on the spot, as a part of her daily practice in Kolkata.

Gautam Choudhury spent his life exploring all sorts of different mediums: clay, dust and chalk, which he grinded with his mother's masala 'sil batta'. Ushmita Sahu relates how the legendary Riten Mozumdar - who was trained as artists and sculptor - stumbled into design. He used a contemporary language of practices that tied together architecture, furniture, apparel, interior design, even large-scale public exhibitions.

Taselaar not only created intricate tapestries for the exhibition, but also the room dividers and display tables that are on the top floor at Marres. He explains: "To make the furniture, we sawed, sanded and oiled the various wooden elements in a small room. We had to work on the spot, make quick decisions and even had to invite more people to help us to get it ready in time for the opening of the exhibition. It was with the mentality of Kolkata - 'everything is possible' - that we were able to complete the display structures."



The 71-year-old Choudhury has been drawing all his life, producing thousands of drawings. He makes his own paper, a process through which ideas for paintings emerge. Regarding his work on display at Marres, Choudhury says: "This is my most private work. Although I asked Praneet and Manuel to show other work of mine, they chose this. In the end, I am grateful; otherwise, it would have remained hidden."



Ushmita Sahu highlights Benu Bono ('Bamboo Grove') work by Riten Mozumdar shown in the exhibition. "It is a very interesting story. When Mozumdar was a student in Shantiniketan, his design teacher, Gauri Bhanja (who was Nandalan Bose's eldest daughter), asked that he work with floral motifs. Mozumdar refused, and was sent to the principal's office, where he explained that wanted to base his design off of bamboo instead of florals. Although Bhanja thought his ideas was impossible, Bose ended up helping him accomplish this. I like to believe that the bamboo motif - which is so prevalent in his work - started here."



Miyachi speaks about her series of drawings entitled Practicing Structures: "I hope these drawings give you a spark of Kolkata accompanied by the smell of freshly sharpened pencils. I kept the paper vertically and drew a basic framing line on every paper to start out. It worked as a special viewfinder, or a mini sheltered observatory to instil calmness while in a momentary study zone."



She also noticed the omnipresence of bamboo scaffolding in the city: "People have great skills to build bamboo-scaffolding very smoothly and quickly. The material is flexible, strong and light and great for this temporary usage. It appears and suddenly disappears again in cityscape and looks like a momentary ornament around the building. Bamboo scaffolding evoke excitement regarding the notion of change and spark the imagination of builders' calm but acrobatic movements."