

## Kolkata Centre for Creativity & The Raza Foundation

Jointly Organizes

### RAZA FESTIVAL 2021

- *A Multi Arts Festival celebrating legacy of the eminent Artist S.H. Raza -*

**Kolkata, 17 December 2021:** Kolkata Centre for Creativity (KCC), a multidisciplinary art space in collaboration with 'The Raza Foundation' is organizing an exclusive art exhibition "The Raza Festival" to celebrate the life and spirit of Sayed Haider Raza. This Festival will bring together distinguished artists and eminent scholars from various disciplines to approach the concept of abstraction from the perspective of their respective disciplines. The exhibition will be held from 12<sup>th</sup> December 2021 to 18<sup>th</sup> December 2021 from 11:00 am to 6:00pm on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor at KCC and will be open to all.

Late Sayed Haider Raza is widely acknowledged as the master of modern Indian art. The Raza Festival, is a cultural festival which will focus on several artworks of the celebrated painter. A total of 21 printed artworks and 8 original artworks will be exhibited. While the exhibition Raza Veethika will showcase prints of Sayed Haider Raza's artworks and selected originals from the collection of Emami Group of Companies; dance and music performances (Raza Valay) and talk sessions (Raza Varta) will seek to explore the concept of abstraction in the works of S.H. Raza and otherwise.

"It is indeed a matter of great pleasure to be able to celebrate the life and legacy of a stalwart artist like S.H. Raza at KCC. This festival has been conceived in collaboration with the Raza Foundation. The Raza Festival has been curated to include interesting talk sessions and performances, apart from showcasing some exquisite artworks of the artist to hold a special appeal for the city's art lovers and enthusiasts" says **Richa Agarwal, Chairperson Kolkata Centre for Creativity.**

Raza Varta will feature dignitaries like Dr. Geeti Sen (Art and Cultural Historian and former Chief Editor at India International Centre, New Delhi), Ms. Jesal Thacker (Founder & Director, Bodhana Arts & Research Foundation), Mr. Nanak Ganguly (Eminent curator and art critic), and Mr. Udayan Vajpeyi (Renowned Hindi poet and writer). Performances by Vidushi Priti Patel (Esteemed Manipuri dancer) and Pt. Uday Bhawalkar (Distinguished Dhrupad vocalist) as part of Raza Valay will add to the ambience of the Raza festival.

"This multi arts Festival is a tribute to the iconic master Sayed Haider Raza who was deeply interested in other arts as well. The Festival aims to bring together experts to perform, talk and celebrate a master on his centenary year. Raza Foundation is lucky to have the dynamic Kolkata Centre for Creativity to collaborate with it. All said and done, continuing creativity, vibrant dialogue and exploration of relevance are the best tribute to an artist and a noble, generous person" says **Ashok Vajpeyi, Managing Trustee, The Raza Foundation.**

### **About the artist:**

Sayed Haider Raza (1922 - 2016) is considered one of the most prominent Indian painters of his generation. He is the most well-known Indian abstract painter till date. Born in Babaria, India, Raza studied art from an early age, before moving to France in 1950 to study at the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris. After studying in Paris, Raza continued to travel throughout Europe, exhibiting his work.

Raza was a co-founder of the revolutionary Bombay Progressive Artists' Group (PAG), along with Indian artists Krishna Hawlaji Ara (1914–1985) and Francis Newton Souza (1924–2002). This movement sought to turn away from the influences of European Realism—which dominated much of the academic art of India—and embrace *Antar gyan*, a uniquely-Indian inner vision. His early works include landscapes, and later moved towards abstraction as he became increasingly influenced by Modernist principles. 1970 was a turning point in Raza's career, when he developed the concept of *Bindu* (a personal rebirth) in his art.

The works from this period are more intricately linked to Indian roots and cultural themes, and were influenced by his trips back to India. Raza is a founder of the Raza Foundation in India, which gives away the Annual Raza Foundation Award to emerging artists. In 2010, Christie's sold his work *Saurashtra* for US\$3.4 million, a record-breaking price for a living Indian artist. His work has been exhibited at the National Gallery of Modern Art in New Delhi, and is part of many international collections.

### **About Raza Foundation:**

The Raza Foundation is a non-profit organization devoted to arts, culture and ideas established in 2001 by the widely acknowledged master of modern Indian Art Late Sayed Haider Raza. He set an example where fame and glory are not lonesome attainments but things to be liberally shared with the broader creative community. The foundation has been instrumental in creating dialogic spaces for various arts, poetry, ideas etc. through a series of talks, panel discussions, shows and concerts etc. and publications and fellowships to the younger talent for carrying serious research into the works of masters and contemporary issues of culture.

The Raza Foundation organizes a large number of activities, nearly a hundred in as many as 20 cities every year. It provides a lively platform to recuperate and embrace the essence of various Indian classical dance forms, music and literature besides contemporary art. Keeping alive the legacy of the master, regular exhibitions of the paintings of Raza, his friends and contemporaries are also organized. A number of festivals, conferences, publications etc. relating to arts, literature, architecture, etc. are provided financial support.

Through its vision the Raza Foundation engages in extensive programs that promote emerging artists and writers. It aims to broaden the audience for art, literature, classical forms of music and dance, enhance opportunities for young artists, and explore and revitalise the connections between arts. The initiative enables the Foundation to respond to what is current in the art world, both nationally and internationally and to embark on interesting projects as they emerge in the cultural field.

**About Kolkata Centre for Creativity (KCC):**

A unit of Anamika Kala Sangam Trust (AKST), Kolkata Centre for Creativity (KCC) is a multi-disciplinary interactive art and creativity Centre located in Kolkata, West Bengal. It is the first in Eastern India to make Art accessible to visually impaired and differently-abled under their 'Art for All' initiative. Spearheaded by Richa Agarwal as its Chairperson, the 70,000 sq. ft. The centre champions the art and cultural landscape of contemporary India since November 2018. It comprises an Amphitheater, Exhibition & Learning Spaces, Dance studio, Conservation Lab, Books & Materials Library, Creative Culinary space, Craft & Design outlet and a Skill Development Maker's section. Integrating several expressions of art and design to highlight their common creative core – KCC encourages visitors to explore, interact and design ideas on various art forms. KCC works in the areas of Capacity Building, Well-Being, Conservation & Restoration, Craft & Design, Culinary, Visual and Performing Art. It acts as a catalyst for Artistic enhancement through Displays, Presentations, Fellowships, Laboratories, Residences, Conservation, Research and Discourses.

The programs at KCC are designed on the principles of Cultural Diversity, Gender Equality, Conservation of the Environment and Inclusion of people with different abilities.

The Centre offers free entry to the public and is open between 11 am to 6 pm from Tuesday to Sunday. For more information about exhibitions and the conferences, please visit [www.kolkatacentreforcreativity.org](http://www.kolkatacentreforcreativity.org)



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