

MASTERS IN AUCTION

A grand Opening Night, congregation of top artists and art galleries from across India and abroad, residential art conclaves and Luxury Art Auction. The stage is all set for the fourth edition of Art Bengaluru



Jayanthi Madhukar
bmfeedback@gmail.com

Come this weekend, art lovers will be treated to the fourth edition of *Art Bengaluru*. The festival is slowly gaining momentum mainly due to two factors: one, a diverse range of galleries come to the venue (a mall) with their works, making art more visible to the public and, it culminates with an art auction, which will have the works of masters and senior artists. The theme for *Art Bengaluru 2013* is Reflections. Uzma Irfan, co-founder of the festival, says the idea behind the theme is that "all forms of art are a reflection of our being and portray our emotions, be it joy, sorrow, turmoil or anger. The festival will have all the usual trademarks – a grand Opening Night, artists and art galleries across India and abroad under one roof, residential art conclaves and of course, the much-anticipated Luxury Art Auction as its culmination."

Though the format is the same, the benchmark has been raised as Uzma points out, making *Art Bengaluru* "a success despite the present-day art scenario".

KEY ATTRACTIONS

The first edition of *Art Bengaluru* in 2010 saw the jeep installation by ace artist Yusuf Arakkal. This year, there will be an installation by top art director Thotta Tharani, who

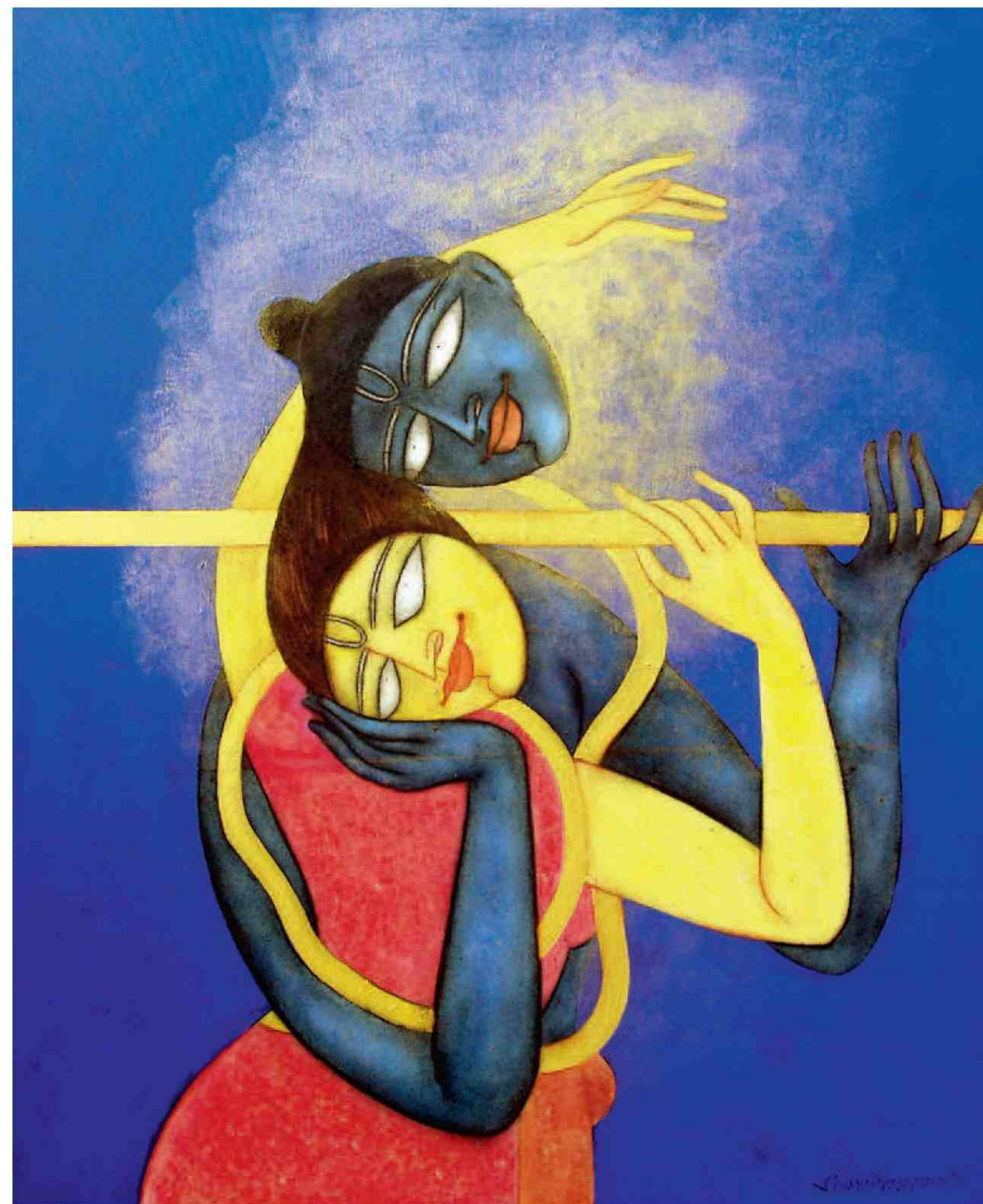


created the piece exclusively for the festival. According to the artist, the sculpture is in line with the festival's theme. The participating galleries this time are from places all over India, including ispaceart, The Purple Turtles and ART Alinda (Kolkata), The Artsalon.in and Progressive Art Gallery (Delhi), Soul Art, Gallery Artequest and Rangkunchala (Mumbai), Ayya Art Gallery (Chennai), Deccan Art Gallery (Hyderabad), Gallery 'ethnicartofindia.com' (Baroda), Savi3 Studio (Hosur), and Puttarangachar Art Gallery, Third Eye, Sublime Galleria and Art Chutney.

"By getting galleries to display good artworks, we hope to boost the art market," says Uzma. "We were hoping to have a sculpture park this year, but unfortunately time constraints made us to postpone it to next year."

LUXURY ACTION

The closed-door auction on August 23 is already garnering a great deal of interest among art patrons all over the country. Art Chutney's Raj Bagaria, co-founder of the festival, says: "This is our fourth auction. We usually have the Spring Auction in March which has many works by up-and-coming and senior contemporary artists. But the Luxury Auction has masters. This year, we have M F Husain, Ja-



mini Roy, Francis Newton Souza, Ram Kumar, Paritosh Sen, K K Hebbar, VS Gaitonde, KS Kulkarni, Rabin Mondal, Abani Sen, Jogen Chowdhury, T Vaikuntam and many such illus-

trious names. It is tough to get authenticated works of Jamini Roy, but we have managed to get two such works. The auctioneer this year is Bob Hayton (of the Indian Badminton League auc-

tion fame), who is a global personality." Last year's August auction saw the sale of M F Husain's painting from the Mother Teresa series for Rs 26 lakh.

The artworks are sourced directly from artists or from galleries barring the works by master artists which are culled from private collectors. "We are working to have an event of international standards and we are addressing all issues," says Bagaria. Glitches from the past auctions have been sorted and issues like payments have been streamlined, adds Bagaria.

Uzma says the success of the auction can be understood by the people who turn up (about 600 last year) and the revenue collected. "This year part of the proceeds collected will be given to *Janaagraha*," says Uzma, adding that they were impressed by the city-based non-profit organisation that is working consistently towards improving the affairs of the city. "This is our way of thanking them," she says.

The previous festivals saw participation from children in art competitions held at the mall. But this year, steps have been taken to invest in the potential of young creative talents. Sublime Galleria is organising *Berserk* which will shortlist 60 children (8-12 years) from 15 city schools. Four children will be selected after a three-day residential course to be trained in one of the four verticals that include dance, theatre, music and art. "They will have expert mentors from institutions like Jagriti, Lourd Vijay Dance Studio, Taaqademy for Music and 3 Peel for art," says Uzma.

Art Bengaluru 2013, UB City, Aug 16-23