



Hari Ram Adhikari (BFA 3rd year). Bust.
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SIRJANA COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS: IN A NUTSHELL

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A History of Fine Art Education in Nepal: A Brief Outline

Formal Art Education in Nepal started in AD 1935 with the inception of Nepal Art School by the initiation of Master Chatur Ratna Udas. At that time the school was run in the ground floor of Tri-Chandra College. The eminent and pioneer art teachers of the country like Kalidas Shrestha, Jiv Ratna Shakya and Chandra Bahadur Manandhar were the first products of the Nepal Art School.

In 1938 Nepal Art School was renamed as Juddha Kala Pathsala. At that time two levels of certificates known as *Kalā Kushal* and *Kalā Pravin* used to be awarded from the school. Besides, students were provided with the monthly stipends along with art materials. In 1942 Juddha Kala Pathsala was shifted to its own building at Bhotahity.

In 1968 Juddha Kala Pathsala was renamed to Nepal Lalit Kala Mahavidhyalaya under the aegis of the Ministry of Education. Later, during the implementation of the National Education System, Lalit Kala Mahavidhyalaya was merged with the Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences, Tribhuvan University in 1974 renaming it as Lalit Kala Campus.

In the academic year 1977 the two years Bachelor's level program was introduced at this campus. In 1995 the

program was upgraded to the three years Bachelor's program.

After a long period, other two additional art institutions came into inception – Sirjana College of Fine Arts in 2001, affiliated with Tribhuvan University and Centre for Art and Design in 2003, under the aegis of the Kathmandu University.

Although the formal Art Education in Nepal carries a long history of about eighty-one years, till fifteen years ago there was only an art institution in existence. Many major changes have taken place in most of the other sectors during these years, but art education was taken as neglected sector. In course of time, education in many of other social or technical fields have mushroomed and multiplied by leaps and bounds within a very short period of time. However, Art Education on the other hand is left languished in a most pathetic condition.

The entire concerned stake-holders, including the governing authorities apparently have never felt a need to adjust with the changing times.

Today, when we tend to think of Art Education in a broader spectrum in par with international standard a physically sound infrastructure becomes a major pre-requisite apart from up to date curriculum, teaching methods and materials.



The day when Sirjana College of Fine Arts came into inception with a number of seven students, August 24, 2001

Inception and Evolution of Sirjana College of Fine Arts

Sirjana College of Fine Arts was established in August 24, 2001 in affiliation with Tribhuvan University. The College is an outcome of a common aspiration and vision shared by a group of prominent artists and art enthusiasts of Nepal. Above all, it holds the pride of being the first Fine Arts college in Nepal established by the community.

This is a non-profit and community college, running under the course outline and curriculum framework of Tribhuvan University.

Mission

Our mission is to provide aspiring artists, illustrators, designers, sculptors, vocalists, instrumental artists and performing artists with

career preparation combined with academic excellence for the +2 levels in Fine Arts (Painting, Sculpture, Applied Arts, Music and History of Arts) and Bachelor's Degree in Fine Arts (BFA) in Painting, Sculpture, Graphic Communications, Music and Dance.

Imparting a strong academic program to the students in the fields of Fine Arts has been the main aim of the college. We look forward to bringing out the best in each student, helping the birth of talented and creative minds required for human resources in the field of Visual Arts and Performing Arts.

Initial Academic Program

For the two initial years (2001-003) the College was granted a permission to run the Proficiency Certificate Level (PCL) in Fine Arts

under the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of TU. Moreover, the three years Bachelor's program has been introduced since the academic session 2003-004 at the college.

The Later Developments

Implementation and dissemination of curriculum on new courses as per the special decision made by Tribhuvan University to phase out the PCL from the academic session 2010/011, the college was entitled to commence the +2 level in affiliation with Higher Secondary Education Board (HSEB), Nepal. At present, the new courses on +2 level in Fine Arts (Painting, Applied Arts, Sculpture, History of Arts, Music and Dance) have been run by the college in full swing. However, with special reference to Music course, the same curriculum has been offered at the +2 level in compliance with the provision being made for the previous Proficiency Certificate level of TU.

Moreover, as Tribhuvan University initiated the four years Bachelor's degree in Fine Arts with a new curriculum from the academic session 2012-013, Graphic Communications, Music and Dance were also introduced by the college at the BFA level since then. As a matter of fact, Applied Arts is said to be an art that is basically applied to socio-economic needs of a modern society. However, this very discipline was found to be significantly neglected and was being kept in shadow and in a state of isolation for a long period of time in our education system. Consequently, Graphic Communications, as an Applied Arts was introduced by TU as one of the core subjects in the four years Bachelor's degree from the academic session 2012-013. In

addition, the integration of Traditional Nepali Painting and Traditional Nepali Sculpture was made into the curriculum of BFA as the major subjects. It can also be considered as a breakthrough in the history of Art Education in our country.

Most remarkable achievement has been made in implementation and dissemination of the curriculums on the following new elective courses of Fine Arts at the higher secondary level (Class 11 and 12) and the major subjects for 4 years Bachelor's degree :

+2 Level

- Painting
- Applied Arts
- Sculpture
- History of Arts
- Music

Four Years BFA

- Painting
- Graphic Communications
- Sculpture
- Traditional Nepali Painting
- Traditional Nepali Sculpture
- Music (Instrumental and Vocal)
- Dance (Kathak and Bharat Naatyam)

Strength and Weaknesses

The average pass percentage at Sirjana College of Fine Arts has been 95%. Students from the college have topped the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of Tribhuvan University at the Bachelor's level for seven times till date. A remarkable number of our +2 graduates have been able to enroll themselves successfully in the Bachelor's degree programs at the various art institutions of India under the Indian Government's scholarship program and abroad.



Celebrating the 3rd Anniversary of the college - September 2004

Team Work: For effective implementation of the educational activities under Sirjana College of Fine Arts, its team spirit has been found to be significantly harmonious. The College Management Committee operates and coordinates with the Principal, Program Coordinator and the Faculty Members as well as non-teaching staff at the college.

Student Strength: The college had begun its academic journey with only ten students in 2001. Till date about 60 students have completed successfully their BFA degree from our college. So far, a total number of 18 graduates from our college have passed Master's degree from TU. Presently, about 240 students are pursuing their art education at this college at various levels including class XI, XII and Bachelor's level. It should be noted

that with each passing year more and more students are being enrolled at the college. The college feels proud to produce efficient human resources in the field of Fine Arts in a remarkable size.

Positive Aspects: By and large, it is worthwhile to mention some of the major achievements that have been made by the college in the process of implementing academic activities:

- Realization of need of creative and innovative activities on Fine Arts and their related matters are found to be high among the faculty members.
- Appreciation and positive attitudes towards innovative and creative processes are found to be significantly high among the students.

- Good communication between teachers and students with respect to imparting knowledge is found.
- Extra curricula activities, e.g. art workshops, exhibitions, symposiums, events, advocacy campaigns are organized frequently in collaboration with national and international communities.
- No standardized monitoring system for the particular educational programs.
- No provision of sensitizing/ incentive programs (inter country exposure visits) for teaching staff, focal person/heads of the Institution.

The Biggest Constraint: Lack of College's Own Building

Looking back for the last fifteen years, the journey of Sirjana College of Fine Arts has not been without obstacles. In absence of our own building, the college has to be run in rent premises, which makes the financial security of the college a difficult enterprise. Due to the lack of college's own building, we have not been able to offer a sound infrastructure that exactly suits to a Fine Arts institution.

Issues and Problems:

- Lack of innovative programs for motivating and encouraging the faculty and the students at large.
- Inadequate supply of teaching learning materials required for Fine Arts.
- Limited capacity of orientation and advocacy materials/ equipments.
- No provision of exhibition gallery for displaying artworks and auditorium for musical/ dance performance.
- Lack of funds for inter-country skills exchange program of Fine Arts.
- No funds for translation of resource materials being developed by neighboring countries and leading international agencies/ communities.
- No provision of special funds for undertaking action researches, mini researches and impact studies on effectiveness of Fine Arts education curricula and materials.



Pranisha Gurung (BFA 3rd year, Painting). Life Study, 2016. Oil on canvas, 122 cm x 100.5 cm.



Display of the works by BFA 4th year students, 2016

From the very beginning, the college has been running its operations in a rented building at Uttar Dhoka Sadak, Lazimpat, Kathmandu-2. But the devastating earthquakes that struck Nepal in April and May, 2012, destroyed livelihoods, infrastructure as well as educational institutions like ours. Our college has also been badly affected by the last earthquakes. The upper stories of the building have turned unsuitable for running classes. Therefore, the classroom activities are being carried out in a temporary truss built in the courtyard of the college building.

In spite of all the obstacles, we stand our ground as ever. No one can deny the invaluable contributions that we have made as the only single community art institution across the country.

Proposed Building for the College

With a view to develop the college

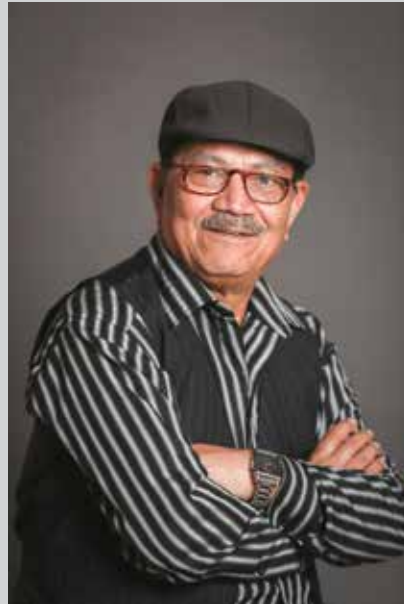
as a full-fledged art institution in the nation, we are planning to build our own building as earliest as possible. For this very purpose we have already purchased about 1183.5 sq. m. area of land at Sita Paila, Nagarjun Metropolitan, Kathmandu. The college is quite obliged to its members, well wishers, patrons, art lovers for their invaluable cooperation and generous support in purchasing its own land. We are now more enthusiastic to turn our dream of running our college under our own premises. This would be definitely a most significant milestone of our academic evolution. This new building will be well equipped and furnished with all amenities and the physical facilities required for a modern college offering higher education in Painting, Sculpture, Graphic Communications (Applied Arts), Music and Dance. Consequently, the college would be proved as a highly esteemed model institution of Fine Arts of its

own outstanding nature with this infrastructure in the country.

However, looking at the financial constraint of the college, we look forward to receiving every possible support from all the concerned authorities, well wishers and donor agencies to turn this project into reality. As Sirjana College of Fine Arts is, obviously, a non-profit making community college, the college itself cannot make available the required fund for construction of the aforesaid physical infrastructures. In this connection, the college avails itself of this opportunity to make a special request to the donor agencies the assurance of its highest consideration for their cooperation and generous support to this project of constructing a building for nation's one and only community Fine Arts college.

Expected Outcomes after Having Accomplished the College Building

- A model art college of international standard, well equipped with all the needed amenities and the physical facilities that is suitable for higher learning in Fine Arts (Painting, Sculpture, Applied Arts, Music and Dance)
- Quality art education comparatively at a low fees
- Increase in extra curricula activities, e.g. art workshops, exhibitions, symposiums, events, etc.
- An access to the art education for big number of target audiences/ stakeholders
- Sufficient space for undertaking various activities related to Visual Arts



Baikuntha Man Shrestha

Baikuntha Man Shrestha is the Founder Chairman of Sirjana College of Fine Arts. He is a premier art activist with four decades of experience. He began his foray into art as a sculptor, and he has been playing a pivotal role in mobilizing and encouraging young artists. He has contributed greatly to the Nepali art scene, organizing large scale art events. He has been awarded the Rastriya Pratibha Purashkar by the Government of Nepal in 2003.

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