

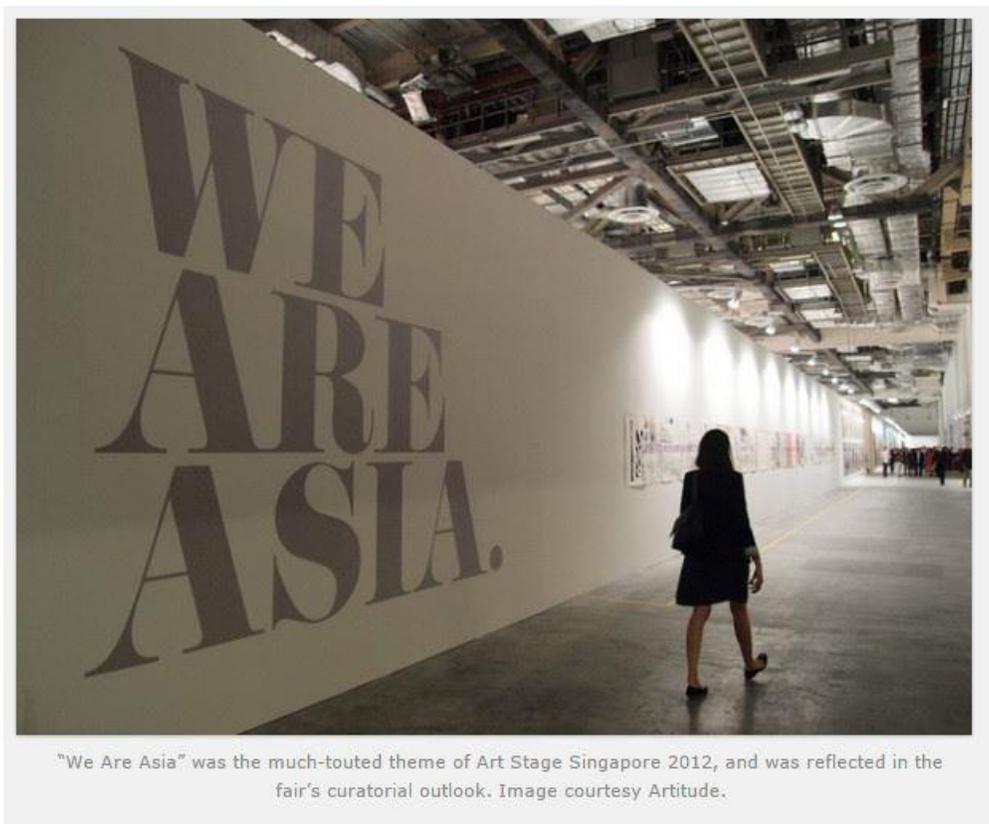
January 16, 2016

## ‘Fair season: Galleries prepare for Art Stage Singapore and India Art Fair 2015’

By C. A. Xuan Mai Ardia

Art Radar catches up with 6 international galleries participating in the first art fairs of the 2015 fair season in Asia.

The art fair season in Asia ushers in a new exciting year for contemporary art, starting with Art Stage Singapore and the India Art Fair taking place back-to-back during the last week of January 2015. Art Radar caught up with 6 galleries hailing from different corners of the world to find out about their participation in both fairs and what draws them to Asia.



Art Stage Singapore (22 – 25 January 2015) has in recent years cemented its status as one of the most important fairs in Asia, featuring contemporary Asian art with a special focus on Southeast Asia. In 2015, the fair returns for its fifth edition, with a three-to-one ratio of Asian and Western galleries including big names such as Arndt, The Drawing Room, Mizuma Gallery, Pearl Lam Galleries, Opera Gallery, Galerie Perrotin and White Cube, among others.

The slightly more seasoned India Art Fair (29 January – 1 February 2015), this year at its seventh edition, has also become an important event in the Asian region, with a strong focus on South Asia and a majority of the

participants hailing from the Subcontinent. Among its exhibitors are galleries such as Aicon Gallery, Chemould Prescott Road, Galleria Continua, Experimenter and institutional participants such as the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art and Asia Art Archive.

Art Radar caught up with six international galleries participating in both the Singapore and the New Delhi art fairs to find out about their expectations, opinions and the importance of being present in Asia now.



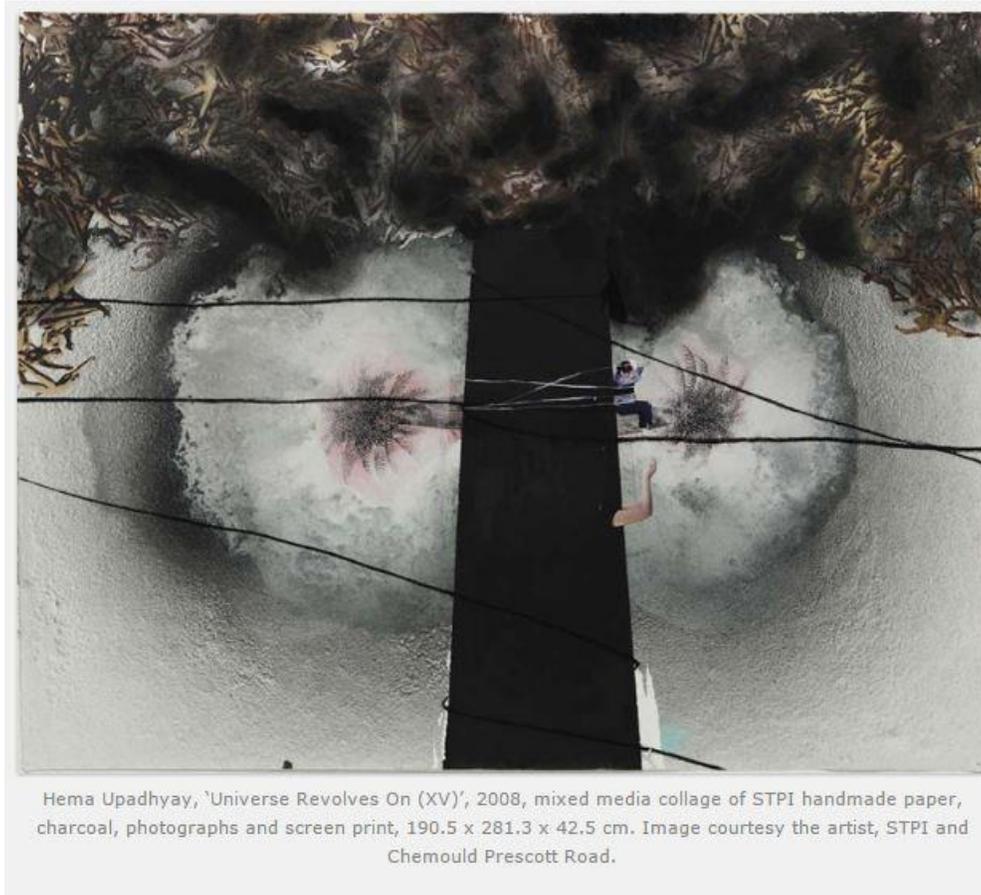
**Shireen Gandhi, Director and Owner | Chemould Prescott Road, Mumbai**

**This year you will be attending two back to back art fairs in Asia: both Art Stage Singapore and the India Art Fair in late January. Have you participated in either (or both) of the fairs before?**

[We] have participated in the India Art Fair, being an Indian gallery. It is our first [time at] Art Stage Singapore.

**What made you decide to apply or re-apply this year?**

We are the primary gallery of an artist, Hema Upadhyay, who had worked with STPI (Singapore Tyler Print Institute) on a body of work. We thought it would be a good opportunity to avail of a booth and show the work during Art Stage Singapore.



Hema Upadhyay, 'Universe Revolves On (XV)', 2008, mixed media collage of STPI handmade paper, charcoal, photographs and screen print, 190.5 x 281.3 x 42.5 cm. Image courtesy the artist, STPI and Chemould Prescott Road.

**What are your expectations for this year's fairs in Singapore and in India? What will you be presenting at both? What do you think are the main differences between the two fairs and the advantages of attending both?**

Never having done Singapore, it is difficult to judge – but it is a focused booth, so we hope that we get good traction from being there with Hema's work.

With India Art Fair, the booth is large and ambitious and we plan to show a large part of our programme with our very strong artists – Jitish Kallat, Shilpa Gupta, Atul Dodiya and several others. We also have a solo booth by Reena Kallat. We are looking forward to getting a good deal of traction as our programme is robust and we hope the collectors will respond to what we have brought there.

**What are the challenges of preparing to attend two fairs back to back in two different locations?**

Singapore has been easy as the work is in Singapore, with STPI. With the India Art Fair, we have had to fine tune our booth as the works are complicated and far more challenging in how we will present them. Logistics, luckily, in India are less [problematic] as we hire a truck and don't need the lead time. So in that sense having a booth in both these cities has not been a logistical nightmare or challenge as such!



M. F. Husain, 'Untitled (MENAXI)', not dated, oil on canvas, 29.5 x 22 in. Image courtesy Aicon Gallery.

**Harry Hutchison, Associate Director | Aicon Gallery, New York/London**

**This year you will be attending two back to back art fairs in Asia: both Art Stage Singapore and the India Art Fair in late January. Have you participated in either (or both) of the fairs before?**

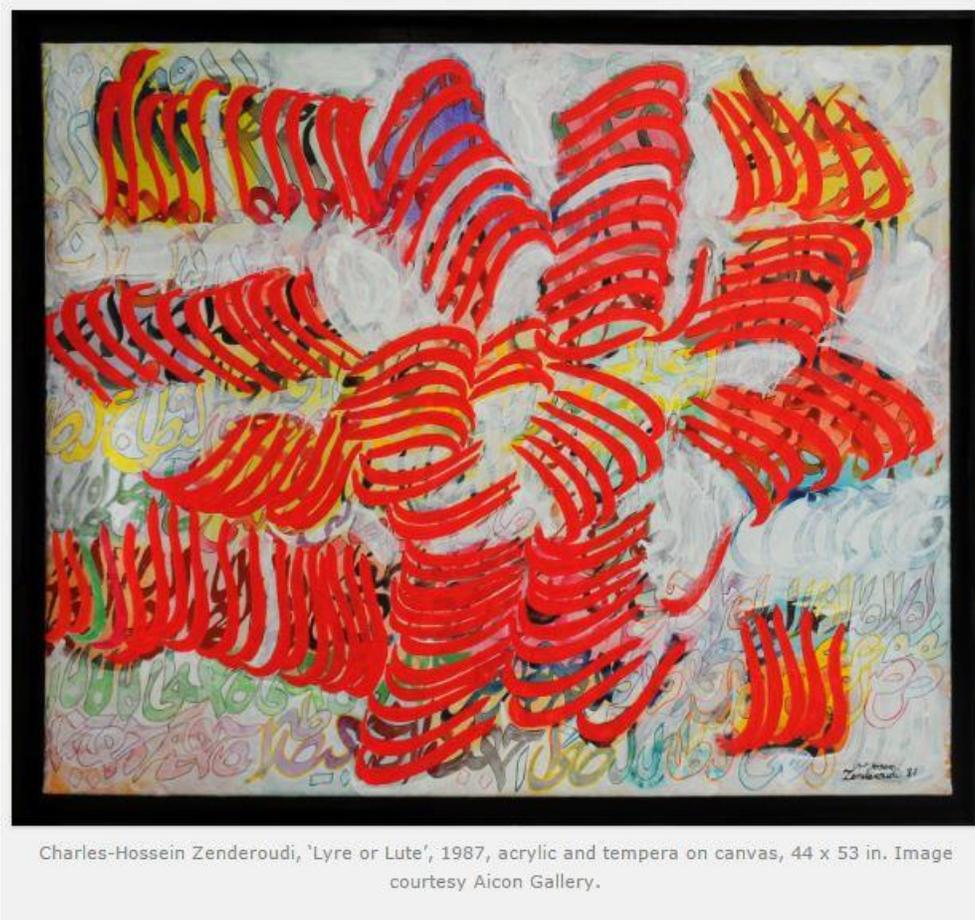
We have participated in the India Art Fair since its inception and this will be our second time at Art Stage Singapore.

**What made you decide to re-apply this year?**

As we are primarily a gallery that focuses on South Asian art, India is particularly important for us, hence our continued support of the IAF in Delhi. We exhibited at Art Stage in 2014 and were very impressed with the collectors they brought in, and look forward to taking part once again.

**What are your expectations for this year's fairs in Singapore and in India?**

We have built up a client base in both the regions, so we are expecting good things to come from the fairs. But the aim of art fairs is to also meet new clients and for that to happen there is always an element of luck.



### **What will you be presenting in Singapore and in India?**

Some of the artists will be represented at both fairs, but we will exhibit different canvases by these artists – M.F. Husain and Charles-Hossein Zenderoudi, for example. We are also bringing a number of site-specific pieces for each fair: Abdullah Syed has created a dome made from prayer caps for Singapore, and Adeela Suleman has been working on some magnificent steel sculptures for Delhi.

### **What would you say are the main differences between the two art fairs? What are the advantages of attending both?**

Let's be honest here – Singapore is a little more organised than India! The main difference is the logistics between the two fairs: Indian customs are notoriously fond of red tape. The advantage of attending both fairs is simply to keep expanding our collector base.

### **What differences in collectors, visitors, participating galleries and programmes do you expect at the two fairs?**

Having done the India Art Fair from the beginning, we know what to expect. Singapore is more of an unknown, but has a number of prestigious international galleries and they are building Art Stage into something great. The collectors at all art fairs these days are knowledgeable and come prepared with the right questions to ask.

### **What are the challenges of preparing to attend two fairs back to back in two different locations?**

As we send different works to each fair, it's not really a problem. However, it is tiring for our staff, who hop from Singapore to Delhi having travelled all the way around the globe from New York.



Christiaan Lieveise, 'Morpheus Mist', mixed media on canvas, 180 x 150 cm. Image courtesy Villa del Arte.

**Bert van Zetten, Director | Villa del Arte Galleries, Barcelona/Amsterdam**

**This year you will be attending two back to back art fairs in Asia: both Art Stage Singapore and the India Art Fair in late January. Have you participated in either (or both) of the fairs before?**

Yes, we have participated in both fairs before. It is important for us to be present in the Asian art circuit since it is constantly growing and evolving and, therefore, it offers a great opportunity not only to showcase our artists abroad, but also to soak up the culture and artistic trends present there.

**What made you decide to re-apply this year?**

Art Stage Singapore and India Art fair are excellent fairs. They're both edgy and they're committed to a very high-profile artistic understanding. Besides, we've had very good experiences in the past years, so we're looking forward to going back.

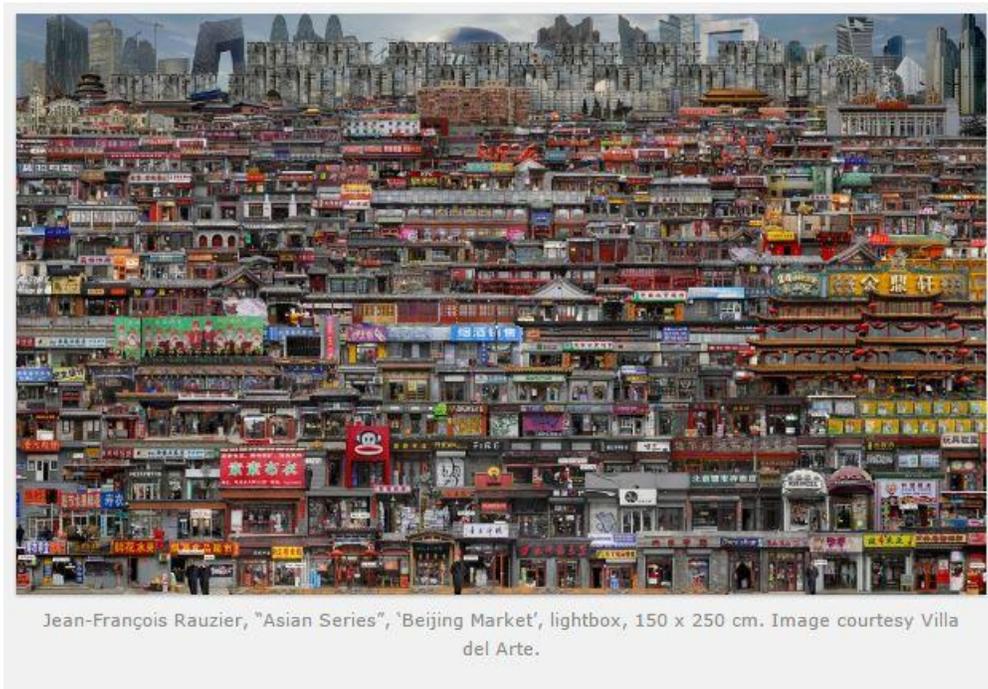
**What are your expectations for this year's fairs in Singapore and in India?**

We have great expectations for this edition of Art Stage Singapore and India Art Fair. As mentioned before, we've had very positive feedback from the fairs and their visitors in the past and even if we have high expectations, it is very likely that we will meet them.

### **What will you be presenting in Singapore and in India?**

We'll be exclusively presenting two new works by Jean-François Rauzier – one of them features La Alhambra of Granada and the other La Mezquita de Córdoba. Both of the works depict perfectly the magnificent Arabic beauty of these two monuments. Besides these pieces, we'll be showing the Asian series, in particular, the piece Beijing Market, since Jean-François got really inspired by and awakened by this city. David Datuna's Singapore flag will be present at Art Stage Singapore as well.

We're also excited about our collection for India, where we will be showing pieces by Montse Valdés, Christiaan Lieveerse, Jean-François Rauzier, Victoria Kovalenichikova, Martí Bofarull and Gavin Rain. All of them are outstanding artists, so we are convinced that we have excellent collections for both fairs.



### **What would you say are the main differences between the two art fairs? What are the advantages of attending both?**

Art Stage Singapore focuses on Asia: Asian subjects, artists, curators. The Eastern flavour is very palpable in this fair. India, on the other hand, stands for more general high quality contemporary art. Both of them are a good opportunity to explore new options, new collections, new artists.

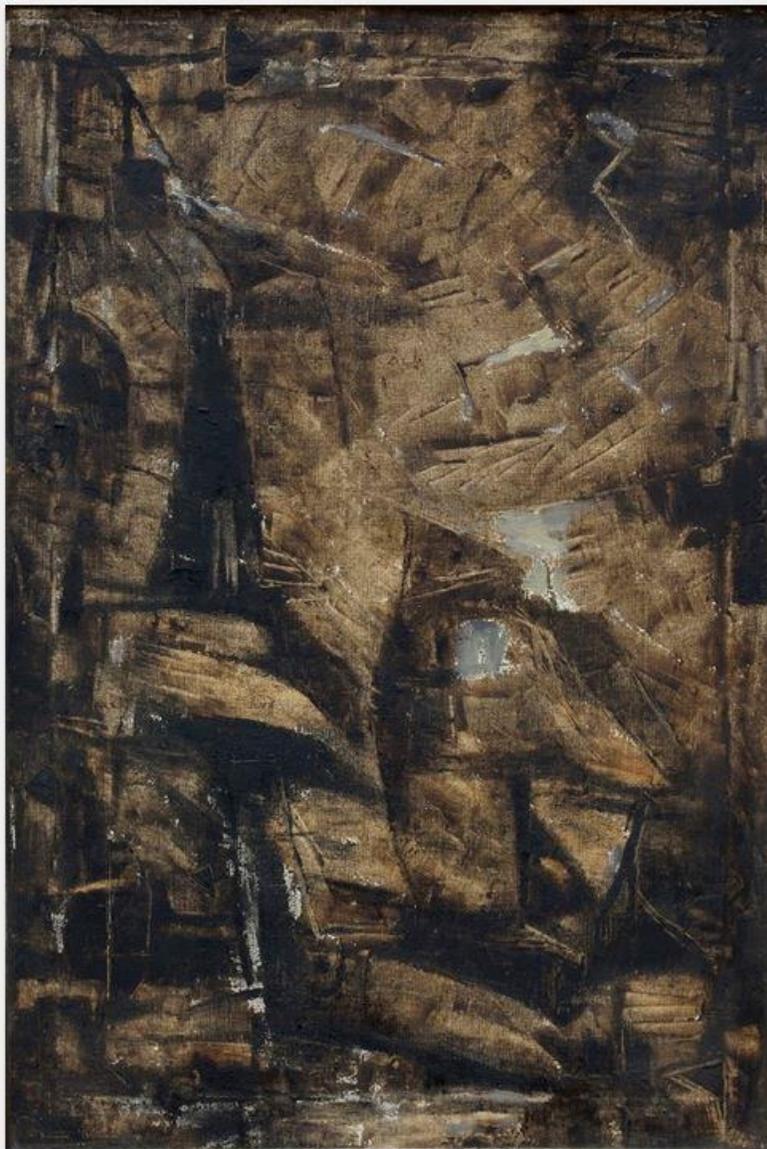
### **What differences in collectors, visitors, participating galleries and programmes do you expect at the two fairs?**

Since we've already been to both countries, we have experienced the differences between them. Basically, India and Singapore are very different places and have very different cultures. As a consequence, the character of the fair, its visitors and collectors are also different.

### **What are the challenges of preparing to attend two fairs back to back in two different locations?**

In 2006, after concentrating our focus on Spain, we participated in our first international art fair. Following this success we have since continued our international trajectory with numerous exhibitions, boutique fairs and renowned art fairs all over the world.

This constant travel has become part of our essence as a gallery since the international presence has brought us where we are now. Even if being in two different fairs at the same time can be a little tricky with the shipments and the logistics in general, we're always happy to give it a try.



Ram Kumar, Untitled, 1960, oil on canvas, 81.5 x 55 cm. Image courtesy Sanchit Art Gallery.

**Sanchit Joshan, Director | Sanchit Art Gallery, New Delhi/Agra**

**This year you will be attending two back to back art fairs in Asia: both Art Stage Singapore and the India Art Fair in late January. Have you participated in either (or both) of the fairs before?**

Yes, we have participated in both the fairs earlier. We have been participating in India Art Fair since 2013 and Art Stage Singapore since 2014.

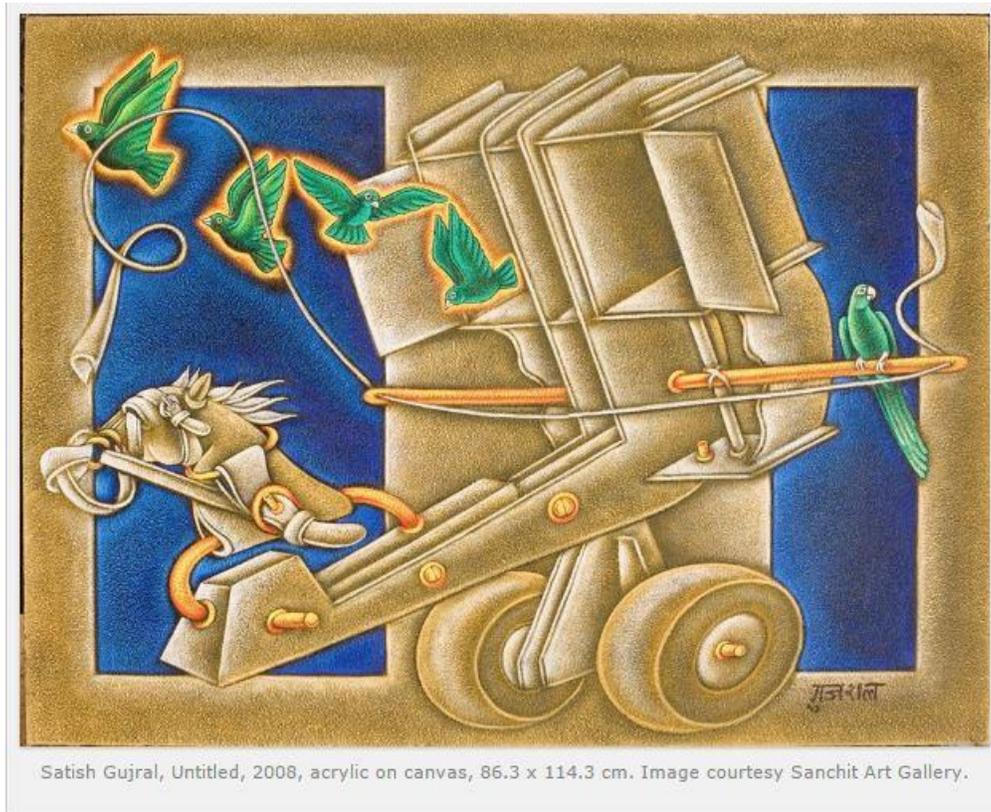
**What made you decide to re-apply this year?**

India Art Fair is the country's leading art fair and it is important for any active gallery to have its presence there since everyone from the art world makes it a point to visit this fair. It provides good visibility and opportunities.

Art Stage, on the other hand, has a distinctly international and particularly Asian flavour. Apart from some leading western galleries, the fair also has the best Asian galleries and that brings a varied set of visitors to the fair as compared to India Art Fair. We feel that exposing our artists to such audiences will enhance their international appeal.

### **What are your expectations for this year's fairs in Singapore and in India?**

Our expectations are to have a commercially successful exhibition as we are taking two of India's best known masters – Ram Kumar (India Art Fair) and Satish Gujral (Art Stage Singapore).



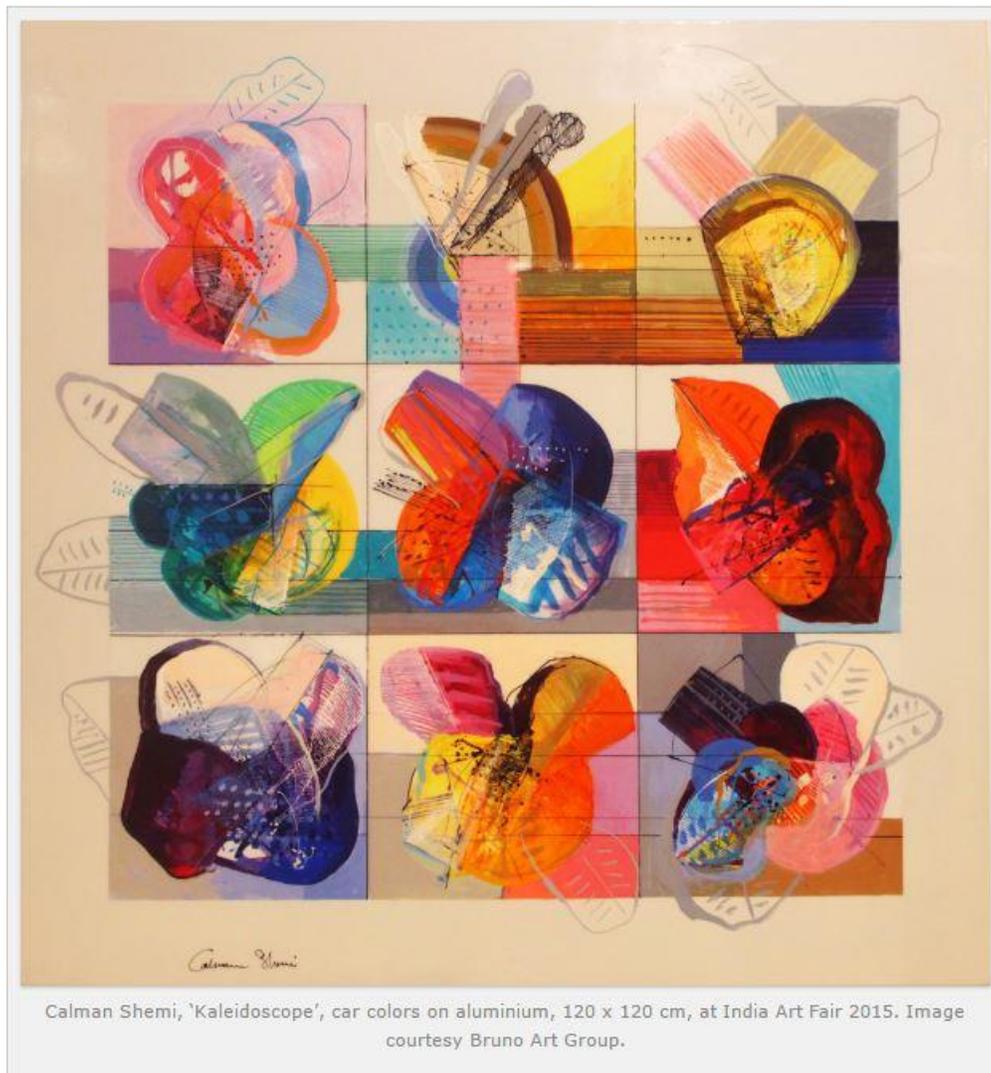
### **What differences in collectors, visitors, participating galleries and programmes do you expect at the two fairs?**

In India, we find mostly Indian collectors – although the fair authorities are working hard to attract international attention. With Art Stage, it already has a lot of international attention being in Singapore. The visitors at Art Stage are a more varied mix as Singapore has a lot of professionals from all over the world working there.

Art Stage also has certain curated platforms, which is an initiative appreciated by many, while India Art Fair has a strong platform for discussions and talks.

### **What are the challenges of preparing to attend two fairs back to back in two different locations?**

Many challenges! Firstly the logistics: too much of inventory has to move rapidly without much gap. So there has to be absolute precision. Secondly, our presence has to be at both places without a break, so it becomes a bit hectic. Usually there is a bit of a gap between the two fairs, but this time they are almost back to back. We hope that at the end of both we'll be very relieved with the outcome.



**Motti Abramovitz, CEO & Owner | Bruno Art Group, Tel Aviv/Grand Turk (USA)/Singapore**

**This year you will be attending two back to back art fairs in Asia: both Art Stage Singapore and the India Art Fair in late January. Have you participated in either (or both) of the fairs before?**

Bruno Art Group joined Art Stage Singapore in 2014, and attended India Art Fair in 2013 and 2014.

**What made you decide to re-apply this year?**

Regarding Art Stage Singapore, Bruno Art Group is pleased to join this fair for the second time since it takes place in Singapore, where we have our Bruno Gallery. We are happy to offer our collectors and friends the possibility to enjoy our art at this main event in the city.

Bruno Art Group is really proud to join the India Art Fair for the third time since our relationships with India are increasingly positive. In the past three years, Bruno Art Group has showed its art five times in Delhi. In 2014, we had an exhibition in Delhi [entitled] "Israeli Pop Art" that amazed us with the great response we had from the public and institutions.

**What are your expectations for this year's fairs in Singapore and in India?**

To improve the results of the previous years and to develop relationships, ventures, connections.



### **What will you be presenting in Singapore and in India?**

At Art Stage Singapore, Bruno Art Group will present international artists Yaacov Agam, Zhang Dali, Suh Jeong Min, Roy Yariv and Andy Warhol.

At India Art Fair, Bruno Art Group will present international artists Raphael Abecassis, Yaacov Agam, Dganit Blechner, Simona Bocchi, Uri Dushi, Charles Fazzino, David Gerstein, Slava Ilyayev, Suh Jeong Min, Yuval Mahler, Anu Malhotra, Arnaud Nazare-Aga, Ophear and Calman Shemi.

Our artist Uri Dushy will also be present in person at the Bruno Art Group booth at India Art Fair.

### **What would you say are the main differences between the two art fairs? What is the advantage in attending both?**

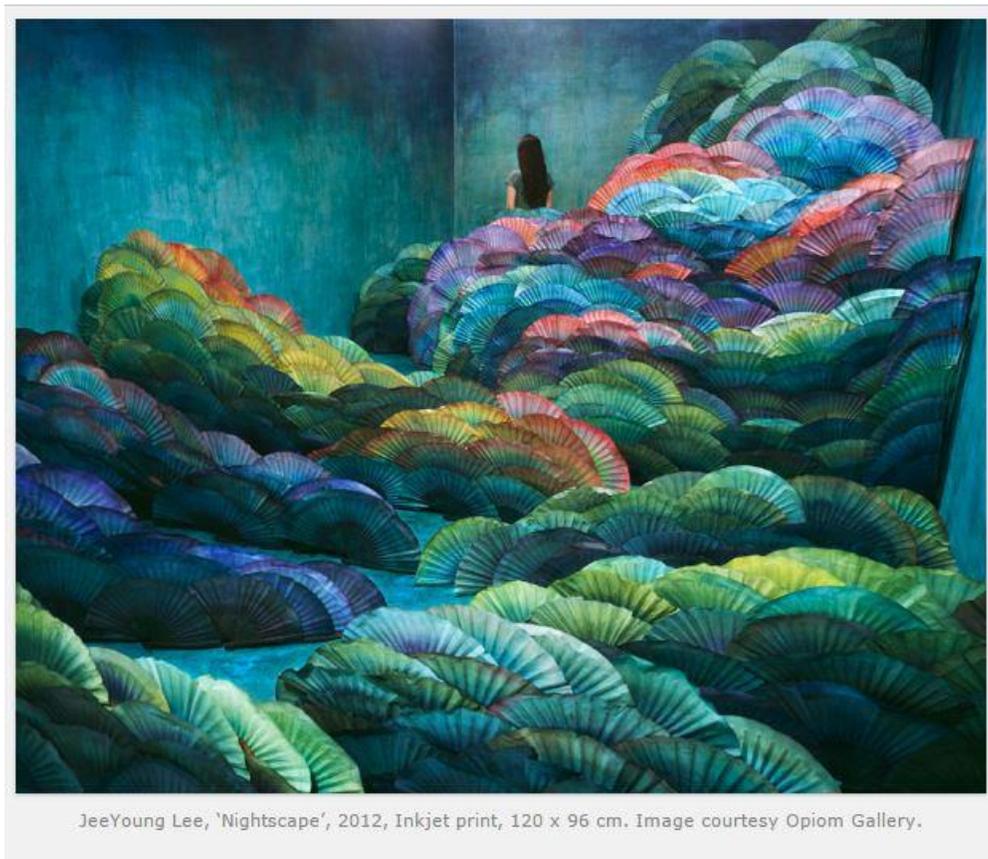
Bruno Art Group is really boosting its presence in Asia, so it's important for us to be active on these main stages of the art world in Asia – Singapore and Delhi. Singapore and India are of course different, but for Bruno Art Group they are part of a common wider project.

### **What differences in collectors, visitors, participating galleries and programmes do you expect at the two fairs?**

It seems that Art Stage is a more intimate fair, targeting a certain niche of art collectors. India Art Fair is larger and attracts a wider range of art lovers.

### **What are the challenges of preparing to attend two fairs back to back in two different locations?**

Logistics and communication are the aspects where we have to concentrate more.



JeeYoung Lee, 'Nightscape', 2012, Inkjet print, 120 x 96 cm. Image courtesy Opiom Gallery.

**Eve Janprasert, Director | Opiom Gallery, Opio (France)**

This year, you will be attending two back to back art fairs in Asia: both Art Stage Singapore and the India Art Fair in late January. Have you participated in either (or both) of the fairs before?

We only opened a year and a half ago, so this is our first time participating in both of these fairs.

**What made you decide to apply this year?**

Both the quality of the exhibitors and the collectors have made Art Stage and India Art Fair essential shows in Asia.

**What are your expectations for this year's fairs in Singapore and in India?**

We hope to give our artist JeeYoung Lee exposure to a yet untapped pool of collectors, as well as respond to existing demands.

**What will you be presenting in Singapore and in India?**

Both booths will be solo shows featuring photographs by Korean artist JeeYoung Lee's series entitled "Stage of Mind".



JeeYoung Lee, 'LoveseeK', 2014, Inkjet print, 130 x 87 cm. Image courtesy Opium Gallery.

**What are the challenges of preparing to attend two fairs back to back in two different locations?**

It is almost impossible to ship the same artworks from Singapore to India due to the short time frame between both fairs. We are therefore exhibiting two different sets of photographs.

**As a young gallery, what made you choose to present a young Asian artist at both art fairs? What is the importance of promoting Asian art right now? Do you expect to have an important and engaged audience at both fairs for your presentation of artwork?**

The fact that she is a Korean artist didn't particularly influence our choice, even though I am always amazed by the creative drive of this country! In fact, JeeYoung Lee's work has had such a broad echo in 2014 that it seemed important to us to continue what we had triggered with her first solo show.

We know for a fact that Lee's work always gets very positive reactions: at first sight, it is colourful, fun, and people are amazed by the incredible work it requires to create these installations. Yet, if you dig further, you soon realise that her body of work is deeply personal and culturally branded as she sometimes depicts Korean proverbs or sayings, which she renders through the prism of her own life experience.

The series is entitled "Stage of Mind" as each and every scene can be interpreted as an illustrated facet of her memory. It is her own catharsis. Still, it transcends cultural borders as every onlooker views it from his personal/cultural angle and consequently reads it differently from his neighbour. Whether in Singapore, which is very multi-cultural, or in India, we are confident of the fact that Lee's body of work will resonate with the audience – in each person, in its own way!