

Vijay Shinde has over the past 37 years revitalised the spiritual form in paintings through a radical investigation of the self a place of memory and transformation. "I am not interested in the body", he says, "but the emotions it evokes, when you feel frightened, when you feel excited, happy, depressed somehow the body registers it." Shinde has explored the relationship between the divine and the human in solo exhibitions such as *The Birth of the Universe*

(1997), *Spiritual Journey* (2000) and *Awakening*

(2006). *Darkness at Noon* (1999) his most celebrated works, were exhibited in a 2 person show with M F Husain a landmark in contemporary Indian Art.

He has participated in major group exhibitions, including the 16th Triennale, India (1985), Chile Biennale (1987 - 1989), 17 Indian Painters, Mumbai

(1988), *The Dance of Death*, NGMA, Mumbai

(1999), *Sacred Space*, Mumbai (2000) and *Power of Peace - Unesco*, Bali (2007). He was awarded theist Biennale Award - Contemporary Indian Art, Bharat Bhavan, Bhopal in (1986) and National Award Lalit Kala Academy, New Delhi (1984). His works are in the Wilberding Collection and Chester and David Herwitz Collection, New York. Shinde was born in 1958 in Kurduwadi, Maharashtra and graduated in painting from Sir J J. School of Arts, Mumbai (1982), he now lives and works in Pune.

M.E. Husain has been a strong influence on Vijay for many years now. They have several things in common. Both are men of few words. And their works speak volumes of philosophical thoughts and beliefs. Vijay considers Husain, who he fondly addresses as "Baba", his Guru, maintaining thereby, the ancient Indian tradition of the Guru-Shishya Parampara.

Husain and Shinde shared space in a joint exhibition entitled *The Imprint of Instinct* in 1999. The diversity of tones, enriched by the power of individualistic lines, the strong influence of impulse and sensitivity sucked the viewers into a world completely distanced from the one we live in. History and emotion assume different shapes, notions, suggestions and definitions narrowing the generation gap between two creative artists and also among the audience.

Not all of Shinde's paintings have been exhibited. This is because as soon as he finishes one painting, he keeps it aside and begins his next work. He does not feel the compulsion of repeating a work that has been successful in a commercial sense. His definition of art remains what it was in the beginning and he follows it religiously.

He often says that Bhakti is the feeling of being one with God. He admires spiritual people who neither complain nor suffer from frustrations of any kind.

Though Vijay Shinde is better known for his brilliant abstracts, he is no less brilliant at portraits. "Art," he sums up, "is an endless journey. There are no short cuts. I have blind faith in Art and do not expect anything in return.