



Sculpt jaunt... by Kalpana Amin

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IMAGINATION IS her first name. Whether it be a co-passenger in a train, a child crying, observing a stranger, or simply two stones... Kalpana Amin promptly does a mindsketch of the subject. And back home, gives her imagination a shape.

"Even if I am simply looking at the sky, the clouds form colourful patterns, and I get the idea for a new sculpture or painting," she says.

Kalpana even sees art in stone. "Arrange two stones aesthetically, and it is art."

"I love to paint and decorate any blank thing," she confesses. "Whether it be a lady, or a wall, or a garden, I like to give it a new look."

Her works are for the common man. As she draws her inspiration from her subjects. The reason why the lady from Ahmedabad is in the metrop with 150 pieces. Priced between Rs 700 to Rs 3000, the one to five ft tall clay sculptures are the result of her travels.

CLAY PLAY

Lumps of clay are transformed into beautiful figurines. Thanks to Kalpana Amin's magic fingers

"The main inspiration is from the culturally rich and diverse civilisations of Egypt, China, Greece, Africa, India and the Far East."

The works could be anything. From a figurehead to a bust to statues, animals, idols of gods and goddesses, tribal masks... et al but they all have a distinct Indian touch.

Hardly the style you'd expect from someone whose forefathers had settled in Kenya. "After completing my 'A' level Cambridge, I had come down to India to study commerce at Vallabh Vidyarnagar, Gujarat." There she met Sharad Amin, an engineering student. The duo

were bound by a common interest — painting. And Kalpana Amin returned to her roots, India and settled in Ahmedabad.

"For 10 years, I was just a housewife." But the creativity in her couldn't stay dormant for long. She had dabbled with painting: that is, portraits, landscapes, picture composition and still life, tried her hand at needlework and photography, and even run a beauty parlour and dress designing.

"My father used to paint portraits of Rabindranath Tagore. I started painting ever since I was five. In Kenya, she

had taken part in a lot of competitions and won. "So after 10 years here, I tried my hand at claywork. Soon, people started appreciating them."

Trips to Ajanta where the sculptures inspired her, to Khajuraho where the Gods came alive... and visits abroad where she saw many an artwork... "Good art always inspires me. I started doing small three-four inch sculptures."

In six years, she had graduated to five ft sculptures. "Three years ago, I started my own studio. It was my father's old house which I have converted into an art studio and

workshop."

Painting, sculptures, dress designing, needlework and embroidery... all under one roof in the name of Flo Art. "I feel that art should go on flowing and never end."

Kalpana does five sculptures at a time. "They have to be made layer by layer. I have to wait for them to dry, not under sun or fan, but naturally. After a week, they are baked in a furnace at 1000 ° C." Kalpana then paints them with special mud paint, and gives them a new lease of life.

They can be put in the garden, decorate verandahs, or simply kept indoors or outdoors. But her works always go in pairs or a family. "They are never single," she smiles. "That's because I am a family person. So, the closeness to the family is always there."

Kalpana's large 'family' visits Bombay this time - there are 150 sculptures on show. So be there at the Bajaj Art Gallery from June 7 to June 13. To view them for yourself.