



# Art for art's sake

■ By AM

Art never got better than this. An art gallery of sorts for all connoisseurs of art and artefacts at Vallabh Vidyanagar has become a cynosure of all with an artistic eye. 'FloArt' is the vision and endurance of Kalpana Amin, its founder, gentle lady with strong tastes. Born in Kenya, this commerce graduate flew down to India for further studies in accountancy and taxation, only to be married and settle here for life. But to the manor born, it was in 'clay-play' that she found her true domain. 'FloArt', savouring its existence since last twenty years is a dream come true for a woman with modest beginnings to a well-

contemporary art styles. Her creations reflect inspiration derived from African, Egyptian and Mexican civilisations to which her projects with big brands like Reliance, Asian Paints and Pan-Parag stand a testimony. Her techniques range from 'wheeling', 'bailing-carving' and 'throwing' of clay. After which the processed clay is baked in a wood-fired furnace and then shaped and designed making the idols come alive. Sure terra cotta personified! Clay used is procured from Morbi a village in Gujarat as it is soft and of good quality as desired. Cement, glass and metal is what she wants to exploit in her future endeavours in pottery. As Lord Ganesha being her personal

finds her comfort and Zen in doing work single-handedly, from designing and exporting to handling finance. Employing unskilled rural folk and training women artisans from interiors of Gujarat in her workshop, she has become an employer and a role model for several localities. "This is my way to help the needy and deserving in society," explains Amin. But this journey was never been a bed of roses. There were apprehensions and criticism about my work initially. People often asked - Why muddle up in something less classy like clay?" But her determination and passion for work has transformed the 'not so chic' to the stylish heritage art supporting many

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established proprietorship in handicraft industry. It houses her distinct and aesthetically done murals; idols, sculptures and other collectibles in clay while rendering it a wooden or metallic look. Perfect finish and unique designs make them desirable. Available in vibrant hues, her earthenware is a class apart with a slight upbeat price tag to go along. "Art and creativity is an expression of oneself and so must continue to flow", says Amin. Clearly evident in her work is a subtle blend of traditional and

favourite, one finds aplenty at her gallery. With over 60-70 exhibitions to her credit, it's a case of 'been there done that'. With business and numerous exhibitions in Australia, America, England and Africa life has come a full circle for her literally! Felicitated by the Gujarat Chamber of Commerce and Industry as 'The lady Entrepreneur of 2000' and many achievements up her sleeve, she serves as a board member to Rotary and Lions clubs too. But feet firmly grounded, the lady

families. Today at fifty, she is still full of zeal and vigour, even after hauling up for 7-10 hours day, keeping up with the zeitgeist in life. To set up a trust in near future is what she intends to do. "This would provide the necessary platform for all struggling artists who dabble in various forms of art, to display their talent which otherwise remains latent and unexplored due to financial and social constraints," says the lady in all her earnestness. Way to go woman!