ARBIT it happens here...

#EVENT

Elevating the Power of Design

From art installations, paintings and art works to a plethora of home furnishings, the Indian International Design Conclave was a one stop shop for artistes, art lovers and design enthusiasts.



isplay of art works at the Voice of Dunes art exhibition.



n a grand celebra tion of creativity and innovation design enthusiasts students, artists artisans, and professionals from various fields converged at the

illustrious India International Design Conclave (IIDC). The event, hosted at the newly opened Rajasthan International Center in Jhalana, served as a remarkable platform for design enthusiasts, offering a myriad of opportunities for learning, networking, and embracing the captivating world of design. In addition to an exhibition on furniture and home furnishings, there were a variety of interesting happenings that added to the lynamism of the event. Here is a recap:

Voice of Dunes

Captivating the attention of visitors an exquisite art gallery was specially curated for the event, aiming to showcase the malleability of art. architecture, and design. Titled 'Voice of Dunes.' this



Isometric installation by students of Aavojin school of architecture.

exceptional exhibition beautifully blended different art forms such as painting, sculpture, murals, and design. resulting in a harmonious and aesthetic presentation. Featuring approximately 60 artworks created by 30 accomplished artists hailing from cities like Delhi, Bangalore Jaipur, Mumbai, Hampi, and more, this exhibition highlighted the artistic prowess of eminent creators like MF Hussain, Bhawani Shanker Sharma, Dharmendra Rathore, Arpana Caur, Jodhiya Bai, among others.

Students' Creativity

Recognizing the pivotal role of materials in design, students from IDT Jaipur embarked on a creative journey by repurposing surplus design samples into modern furniture. Their thought-provoking art installation, aptly named 'Upcycle Minds,' unveiled the transformative potential of

discarded materials. Plastic bottles sourced from junkyards and waste dumps of cafes were ingeniously trans formed into a mesmerizing chandelier, radiating ambient light. Waste fabric samples found new life as floor runners, while laminate swatches were skillfully repurposed into wall panels, curtain partitions, and coffee tables. This ingenious showcase exemplified the power of sustainable design and innovative think-

Artisan Village

Coloroots, a unit of Kalaneri Art Gallery, brought vibrancy and culture to the conclave by setting up a captivating artisan village. This vibrant space provided a platform for rural and tribal artisans to exhibit their traditional crafts, while also hosting shows, workshops, demonstrations, and interactive experiences for young attendees eager to explore the world of languishing arts. Visitors were treated to aweinspiring displays of Rajasthan's traditional miniature art, alongside demonstrations of other crafts like Tarkashi, Puppetry, Thikri, Clav Pottery, and more. To create a holistic experience, the village also featured a live demonstration of contempo rary art, seamlessly blending heritage and innovation.

Kursi Ki Kahaani

An intriguing installation by students from Vivekananda Global University narrated the captivating story of chairs and their transformative impact on human life. The installation featured an oversized chair surrounded by numerous smaller chairs. each adorned with doodles depicting the evolution of chair design. Symbolically, it also served as a satirical commentary on politics, highlighting the overwhelming ower associated with a sin gle "kursi" (chair) while shedding light on the aspirations of the lesser powerful chairs. This thought-provoking installation sparked contemplation on the dynamics of power and the complexities of democracy.

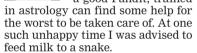
Breaking Stereotypes

In an endeavour to challenge preconceived notions, stu dents from the Aayojan School of Architecture presented a groundbreaking Isometrie Installation. This innovative display explored the possibilities of new-age design by reimagining the use of stone elements, drawing inspiration from the architectural heritage of Rajasthan, Breaking free from conventional norms. the students employed stone not only for foundations and walls but also as a medium for openings and intricate ornamentation. This thoughtfully crafted installation showcased the students





very now and then, as is the case with human life, something or the other goes wrong. May it be illness, bad business deals, poor earnings, Job worries? The causes can be endless, but a good Pandit, trained in astrology can find some help for the worst to be taken care of. At one



"There is a whole colony of Kalbelias on the Jaipur Delhi road called ban talao road settlement. These are proper saperas not the dancers we see at all the fairs." my well-wishing Panditji told me,"Go with someone responsible, in the davtime only. The snake will not drink up all the milk. I have never seen one do so in my whole life, in summer if it's very thirsty, it may sip a drop or two, and that suffices. If it sticks out its tongue, and dips it into the milk, your work is done. Rahu dev will lose some of his poison, just as the snake does after tasting milk".

That was my first encounter with the kalbelias. They were not the glamorous 'Gulabo', I was surprised to see. Their settlement so near the city did not make them a rich lot. The master of the house was not about, but his wife came out, as I was also a woman, she did not hesitate to talk to me. "My husband does not like me to talk to strangers'; she told me, and "so come another day when he is home". I didn't want to go back with the job not done, so I requested her to get her mother-in-law to stand with us while we fed the snake, after a little hesitation she agreed to ask her mother-in-law. The older lady came out to asses me, and satisfied,

she agreed The attempt to get the snake drink up was not exactly a few minutes to say the least. So a conversation started up between us all. She had brought out her basket of snakes for the milk drinking. I was quite nervous, as I couldn't be sure these women knew their job of keeping the snake in restraint. Tentatively I enquired, if they knew

The Lost Snake Charmer

They have a short stay with the family. In promised eleven or twenty one day they will go back to the bushes". This looked such a waste of effort, so I couldn't but help asking;" why do you do that? You have spent so much time and effort to catch one, and then look after them so carefully". The answer was even more surprising;" It is my religion, my Kul- Guru, Kanipa Nath has made it mandatory for us to do so, I cannot keep them in captivity longer then this". "So every twenty one days you go looking for new snakes, and what happens to the ones you leave in the wild?" He told me, they leave the snake near water and soft earth, so they can find cover, preferably near some burrows to get into."

#GONE TO 'GREEN

how to keep the snake within the basket: I didn't want to offend them, but the repercussions could be horrid. They both began to laugh; "We have looked after these babies since we were children. Although very few women are trained to catch snakes, but looking after them is our job too".

New Perspective

"They are more than our children; they provide roti for our families. They occupy the best spot in my lit tle house. If it rains, and all family members can't fit into the house the basket with the snakes gets the non-leaky spot and older members of the family have to brave the elements. If my husband or brother-inlaw fails to catch a mouse or a frog for the snake. I have to buy some pieces of fresh meat for the snakes. even if my children do not get any. I am duty bound to do so by my reli-

The master of the house walked in by then. He took over the job. The snake basket lid was opened, while I held my frightened breath. It was an anti-climax, the snake was peacefully asleep. They sleep through the day; you see and look for food, once in four to five days. This one was caught only two days ago, so he had to be left at home, as he is not calm yet. He will come to know that we are Kalbelia- the people who amuse Kaal, and then he will go out with us to the Amer Fort to show himself to the tourists. The packet of milk I had got with me was cold from the fridge, testing its temperature. Jagdish Nath and Badri Nath asked one of the ladies to warm it up a little. I was a little puzzled. Why this fuss? Maybe this man is more worldly wise and wants make a fast buck off me by including cooking charges, every single man is a thief in small or big measures these days, I was thinking angrily

The next moment I was ashamed to hear him explain that I was not to worry, the chulha was already alight with a small amount of twigs to keep the hut warm for the many baskets of snakes. The milk was brought to us by the young girl who had been playing outside a little while ago. It was January, and I noticed a chill wind outside. "We have to keep the Nag Dev in comfort, see his basket is lined with my grandson's old sweater, with half of the sweater doubling up as cover.

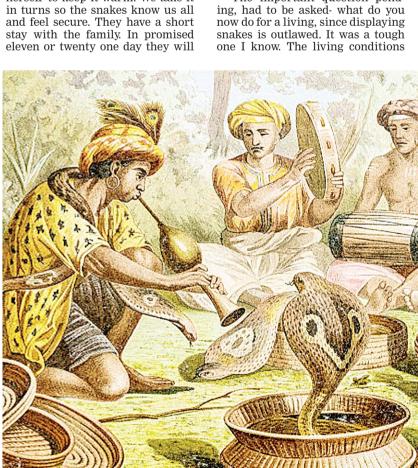
only afford this for our dear 'God' Winters are easier, in summers we find it very difficult to keep them cool. So we have to keep sprinkling water on the basket. We don't have coolers or fans. This has to be done carefully because they can catch a cold very easily, and then their nose gets blocked. It makes them panicked. You see, in the wild, they rub their nose into loose earth which makes them sneeze, and clear the nose. In the basket I have to do this for him by blowing into his nostril

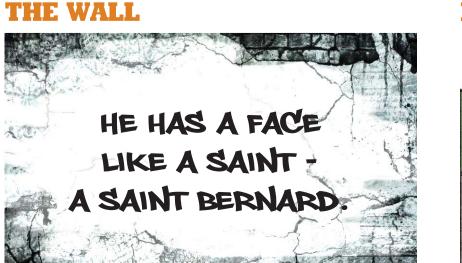
We are very poor people, and can

is really miserable thing for the snake' It was a kind of catharsis, in my life I had at best looked after my children with this amount of care or, in a much less careful way, had looked after my pet dog. But never did the dog get the meal and my children get the leftovers. I was forced to look at the Kalbelia family anew and with respect.

with the help of a small pipe. A cold

"Tonight it's my wife's turn to keep the basket with her; she will keep the basket in her raiai with herself to keep it warm. We take it





BABY BLUES



go back to the bushes". A Sacred Duty

all harmless.

mandatory for us to do so, I cannot

Colour TV Dav

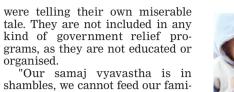


here is an innovation that many of us take for granted every day. Whether we're sitting at our computers, watching television with the family, or even playing with our handheld games, we are inundated with a bright parade of colours. Colour TV Day reminds us that this hasn't always been the case, when Television was first introduced we had nothing but black and white images, really more of a myriad shade of grey. In 1951, an event came to pass that changed the future of broadcast entertainment forever.

This looked such a waste of effort. so I couldn't but help asking;" why do you do that? You have spent so much time and effort to catch one. and then look after them so carefully". The answer was even more surprising;" It is my religion, my Kul-Guru, Kanipa Nath has made it

keep them in captivity longer then "So every twenty one days you go looking for new snakes, and what happens to the ones you leave in the wild?" He told me, they leave the snake near water and soft earth, so they can find cover, preferably near some burrows to get into." You don't milk them for their venom?" was my next surprised question." We do take some venom to make surma for our eves, but we don't milk them completely, as it can make them list less. Only four kinds of snakes are poisonous- Shankhchood, Cheetal,

Naag, and Kaalganda, the rest are The important question pend-



shambles, we cannot feed our families so how can we go to sarkari offices to fight for our rights, which also have to be paid for by greasing hands, which we are incapable of since we don't have the money or the clout for it"

"Earlier we used to earn money Shivratri or Naagpanchmi when people look for saperas to do their pooja. Now days we do this pooja as ordained by our Guru by ourselves every year, without any nonitory help from other people." The worst that has happened to them is the loss of any dignity. I caught with a snake in a public place they will be fined, although the sum may look a puny amount to us for them it's the difference between a dal with the roti or none. The fine is two hundred and fifty

one rupees each time. "We are not thieves, my greatgrand-father, Rugga Nath ji was appointed by Maharaja Mansingh ji as a Sapera for the Amer Forte. I have photo of his to show you. You see we are respectable people, but our poverty has closed all doors for us. We cannot even feed our children any more leave alone educate them. The books, copies, everything costs money which we no more have. I make about a thousand- fifteen hundred in a month, with a family of fourteen people. I have to usually look for a job as a labourer these days."

He was a defeated, sad man. Pleading to show the one person who had visited his home, in his capacity of a sapera, which he remembers with pride.

This incident has for long troubled me and my sad observations of the pitiable poor conditions of these people who used to be respectable at one time if not rich And I have to share this surprising ly sensitive moment in my life with other ready to be sensitive people although not in the established green traditions.

Our 'Green' men and women have so overtaken the imagination of the educated and so, now sensitive people, that their green simpli ïcation of wild matters cannot be challenged by rationalists of any colour, at least not when they are animals. One need not be categorical in our rejection of their various stupidities, because after all they did a veo-man's job at one time to take up an almost untouched matsnakes is outlawed. It was a tough ter of cruelty to beings unable to fight for themselves. All this while



another equally meritorious but helpless being was being created for

future cruelties unappreciated or heard. Our mettlesome activists have read the first 'Green' book. never to go back for any further research that may deviate from their original teachings; quite like a die-hard extremist. At the peril of finding myself at the receiving end of a barrage from the zealots, I have- with trepidation- tiptoed into the unthinkable. To take stock of what was never factored in by the activist- could it just be possible that we need to rethink our 'Green' notions, and to take note of the harm that some 'activists' actually cause to wildlife in their misplaced zeal to protect it. The protection and preservation of a snake, for the sapera or the snake-charmer caste is a sacred duty, enjoined upon him by his caste's religious rituals and mores

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The saperas render a service-a great service in fact-to both society and serpents, when the two species come into conflict. The instinctive. pathological dread that snakes excite in human beings on being sighted almost always leads to their extermination-whether a human being has or has not been bitten by them. A sapera, if one is nearby, is almost always willing to come forward to trap and take away alive a cornered snake. Of course, there is an incentive in it for him for doing so-he extracts the venom, if the ensnared snake is carrying it, and likely makes money from the various medicines he can make out of this venom. The snakes captured by the saperas are always, as a kind of religious duty, released in the wilds once their venom storing glands are about to fill up again. There is a very practical reason too for the sapera to let the snakes go; he is able to extract the precious venom from the snake only if there is one living. Never is it in his interest. neither religiously nor practically to kill the dreaded reptile. While performing this very useful func tion for society and for snakes, the only concessions that the sapera seeks from Authority is that the snake charmer be regulated and that he be permitted to display, the collection of snakes in his 'custody to the public at large to earn a livelihood, and some respect as the tamer

of the untameable. He asks for the two indulgences only to eke out a living.

But the busybodies, the animal rights activists, will have none of it. The moment they hear of a snakecharmer at work in his tradition they are up in arms. All hell breaks loose and the Forest Department is wilv nilly made to intervene and penalise the delinquent, earning some publicity, and, questionably, some piety. They are blind to any rational and humanitarian arguments that, if translated into positive action, they could provide succour to both the hunted and the hunter, the prey and the predator and help preserve the traditions of the saperas as well-that ancient and venerable folklore that is peculiarly Indian and once upon a time defined India-the land of the snakecharmer

With the now lost snake charmer, some of India's mystery is also lost to the World. No more are we a land of the rope trick, the madari, or the snake charmer. These professional animal trainers can no more educate our children about these beings of the earth: they are no more accessible to the close viewing of our growing children to learn any kind of co-existence. We have to be living in villages or cities, and they have to be seen in a zoo if you must. Not-with standing how good for the animals that may be.

Pride In Speciality

The one kind of animal care professional has taken over, to set aside another, who carried away with him our wild life lores, our religious beliefs, and mystique. One could argue that there could be no better taking over of a land then to kill its special people. This has been better achieved by the 'Green' ter rorists than any British Raj. No more are the snakes to be revered; they must only be feared. Though how this can be a safeguard for them is quite unclear

It may be argued by some patriots, that there is no pride in being a land of the snake charmers, or rope climbers. Why cling to it. Well just as much pride in a nation being the land of the acrobats, who win the Olympics, or a land of people who have the ballerinas to dance their stories, or even a land of the people



who make the best football players. There is pride in speciality. We just have to throw off the 500 year old yokel of finding perfections in ther 'places' to emulate.

In our zeal to copy people who have made it in to the 'buddy-hood of advancement, we have without hought sacrificed our own. The Sapera is no more respectable, even himself. He either hides away rom official eyes or takes on anoth er kind of job. They now dance, for he tourists or at public functions, ike 'Gulabo'. Some are good at it, some not, but their self-pride does take a beating, as some Kalbelias tell. "We have to shift from our traditional jobs to do this-but we make sure our women are not touched by eople". This sentence alone car reak any sensitive human beings heart and I hope the pseudo doooders to our civilized, new exisence have their eyes open to this slaughter that has successfully aken place.

They would again argue that the hing to do is to re-educate these poor people to fit into other jobs. To what end one may ask. To help protect the snake? But when was it in langer? Not while the snake charmer needed it alive to milk some venom from to help cure some hapless fellow bitten by one. Not when the people revere it like a God to be left to go away when seen. Possibly not even then, when a couple of them are seen at close quar ers within the safe company of a Kalbelia, demystifying some of the fears of common public. raieshsharma1049@gmail.com



"Snake Charmers," A Chromolithograph

By Alfred Brehm

The early 20th century proved something of a golden age for snake charmers. Governments promoted the practice to draw tourism, and snake charmers were often sent overseas to perform at cultural festivals and for private patrons. In addition, the charmers provided a valuable source of snake venom for creating antivenins. Today, cultural changes are

threatening the profession of the snake charmer in India. One reason for this is the rise of cable television; nature documentaries have extinguished much of the fear and revulsion once felt toward the animals and thus demystified the snake charmer. In addition, many people have less spare time than they once did, especially children, who in previous decades could watch a charmer all day with no commitments to school. Animalrights groups have also made an impact by decrying what they deem to be the abuse of a number of endangered species. Another factor is urbanisation and deforestation, which have made

the snakes upon which the

Myths

Several myths are prevalent about snakes, their behaviour, dietary habits, habitats, etc. among the tribal, rural and even in urban masses of Rajasthan. Tribal people relate the snakes so much with themselves that they consider some snakes good and some snake bad for example Ptvas mucosus is the totemic snake of the Bhurias which is a clan of the tribe Bhil. Similarly, Python molurus is considered an esteemed serpent by the Bhils. Similarly, another snake species,

Xenochrophis piscator, locally called as Dindu is considered as ancestor of the Dindor clans of Bhil: hence their name Dindor, i.e off springs of Dindu. Bhil and Garasia tribes also conserve the snake Python molurus as they think that killing of the snake wil cause drought in that year. A snake temple, locally known as Gatodji ka Devra situated in remote areas of Raiasthan is used as lie detector. Some Devras are especially dedicated to treat snakebite patients.

Stories of Kanipa and Gorakhnath

told about the rivalry between him And

Gorakh Nath, which indicate a rivalry between two Nath schools. Although Kalbelias are popularly supposed to be youngest at that time. Followers of the left hand path, black magicians. "There were Nine Naths and eighty-four siddhas. ..." so the storyteller begins. Jallandhar Nath, Machindra Nath, Gorakh Nath and Kanipa, all these are guru-bhal and so is Hanuman because their Father is Shiva and they

goes like this- Machindra Nath's two disciples/sons. Nim Nath and Paras Nath went to the village in Bhartrihari where they had reached after a long and tiring journey to reach their destination where Machindre Nath's deciple Guru Gorakhnath had organised a very large Bhoi. Instead of Gorakh Nath they went to the village for bhiksha to collect food for the Bhoj, since they were the

There was a Jain house in this village, and a big dinner was being held in that house, so the two boys went there to beg for food. To make the boys work in return of alms, the householders asked them to remove a dead cow which everybody had refused to remove for them. Because they were young and ignorant, they agreed to remove the dead cow. Nim Nath put a cloth over his mouth because the dead cow was stinking When he returned to the Jain family's house in the village the cloth was sticking so tightly to his mouth he was unable to remove it. In return for taking away the dead cow the boys were given food. In the meantime Gorakh Nath predicted to Machindra Nath that the boys were returning but bringing only blood. When they arrived and their bag was opened, there was only blood.

Gorakh Nath strongly complained to Machindra Nath that these disciples should be sent away, but Machindra Nath refused. He said to the boys. "Go and take your bath and then tell me what happened." The slink was so great that the boy

who had covered his mouth, tied the cloth more tightly, and the other

Machindra Nath, Gorakh Nath, Jallandhar Nath and Kanipa were together once in Nagarkot, and Gorakh Nath invited all the disciples to stav for dinner afterwards. Tradition decreed they bring hollow gourds to eat from, and Gorakh Nath instructed them to cover their gourds and wish for the food of their choice. Everyone wished for delicious food, except Kanipa's disciples who were angry with Gorakh Nath and wanted to put him to test. They asked for snakes and poison, thinking it would be impossible for Nath to fulfil this, but that was not so, and their gourds were filled with poisonous snakes. Gorakh was annoved and cursed them. From that day forth they would have to carry poisonous snakes and use them to be for their food. "You will go to jungles and hunt, you will beg from all castes!" So from that day to this, the followers of Kanipa have to carry the snakes and poison in their bags.

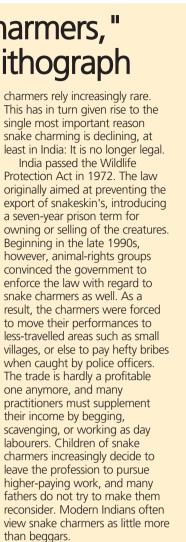
By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



were all born from Anjani: Kanipa From the ear. Jallandhar Nath from water Machindra Nath from fish, and Gorakh Nath from cow-dung. Kanipa's disciples were the Kalbelias. Within this part of The Nath sect, the 'pa' sect is also known as the 'penance' Panth. There is an intresting story, which

he Kalbelias say they are descendants of the followers of Kanipa, said to be one of the Nine Naths one of the eighty- four siddhas (vogic adepts]. Kanipa is the guru of the Kalbelias. There are many stories





finding blood on his clothes, threw them away. After their bath they related the whole story, and while they were doing so the Jain family's kitchen was magically sprinkled with blood. The Jain family realised the two boys, whom they had requested to remove the dead cow were not ordinary boys, but saints. So the Jair family came to Machindra Nath to ask for forgiveness. Machindra Nath said, "The boy who put a cloth over his face, he is your guru. And the boy who threw off his clothes, he is also your guru. One is Jain guru and the other is Sarowgi guru." (Jains of different sub-aroups).

By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman