

**PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**

**“Dhanraj Bhagat (1917-1988): Journey from the Physical to the Spiritual”,
Exhibition Inaugurated at NGMA, Mumbai**

Exhibition opens For Public – 04th July to 14th August, 2018

Mumbai, July 03, 2018

A special exhibition titled “Dhanraj Bhagat (1917-1988): Journey from the Physical to the Spiritual” has been inaugurated at National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA), Mumbai yesterday. The exhibition is being organized to pay tributes to the great pioneering artist, this being his centenary year. At a time when artists were trying to break away from the shackles of academic realism, Dhanraj Bhagat carved his own niche above the rest, with his true versatility in handling various unconventional mediums whether it is clay, wood, metal or cement, all mixed generously with his sincere dedication towards the craft.

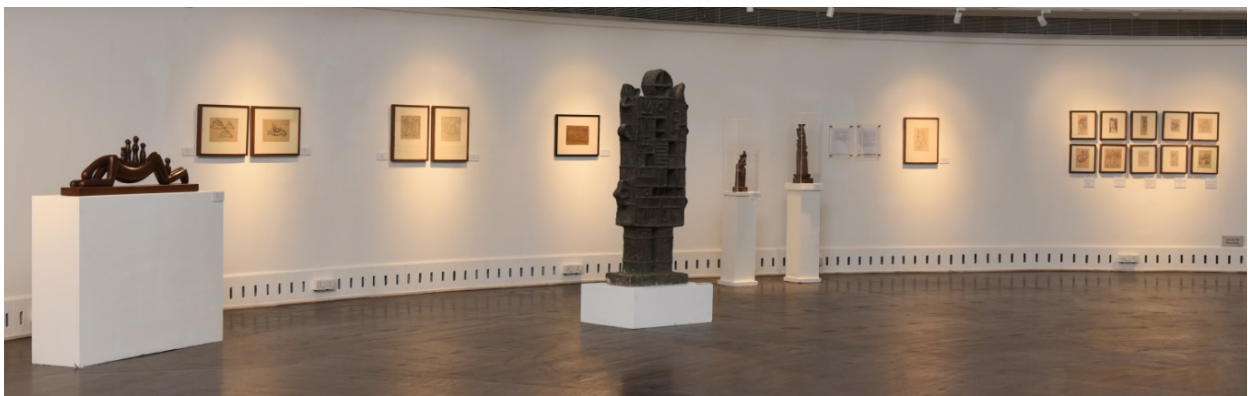


The exhibition and celebration of the birth anniversary was inaugurated by Joint Secretary, Ministry of Culture, Ms. Nirupama Kotru; the exhibition has been curated by Director General, National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA), Shri Adwaita Gadanayak.



The public are invited to visit the exhibition at NGMA, Mumbai during 4th July to 14th August, 2018, from 11 AM to 6 PM (on all days except Mondays and National holidays).

The journey of Dhanraj Bhagat is an inspirational one. Born in 1917 in Lahore (undivided Punjab), he was born in a very austere condition which made him drop out of school and apprentice with a commercial sculptor at the age of sixteen doing all kinds of work which were way below his artistic potentialities. He saved up money and joined the Mayo School of Arts in Lahore to train in clay modelling. His dedication and his pure artistic expression was soon discovered and won him a scholarship to study for another year. After completion of his course, soon he was inducted to teach in the school. In the year 1946, his sculptures were exhibited at the International Exhibition in New Delhi, which impressed the Principal of the Delhi Polytechnic Art Department, who offered him the post of a teacher in his department. Awarded with many prestigious awards for his works and contribution to the field of art, he was bestowed with the fourth highest Indian civilian honour of Padma Shri by the Government of India in 1977.



The exhibition focuses on a few significant works of Dhanraj Bhagat as well as highlights the moods and styles of the artist from his initial years to the later simplified geometric forms and icons. Music and lyrics were always present in the sculptures of the past, especially in the bronze icons of Southern India. Dhanraj Bhagat brilliantly evokes the inner music in his take on the iconic Nataraja or Dancing

Shiva, in the elongated lyrical limbs of the Lord as though swaying in the tune of the music. Music also translates in his flowing sketches of women and musicians with almost ethereal quality. In the beginning, his subjects and depictions were men and women involved in daily activities, the ones he saw around him in the country side. The plasticity in moulding the bull reflecting the virility and the power of the beast and the birds perched on a branch in the security found in familiar warmth of each other's bodies shows the perfect balance of his style in inducing the right sprinkle of romanticism to an objective subject. In his later years, simple geometric forms dominated his style to form strong images of Monarchs and Gods. His spirituality took shape in his sketch studies of mythological episodes to ethereal *apsaras* (celestial beings).



“DHANRAJ BHAGAT (1917-1988): Journey from the Physical to the Spiritual” exhibition intends to acquaint the public with more than 400 works of Dhanraj Bhagat on the theme of ‘**Journey from the Physical to the Spiritual**’.

The 100 Birth Anniversary Exhibition and Celebration
DHANRAJ BHAGAT
1917 - 1988
Journey from the Physical to the Spiritual

Exhibits:



(a) **Shiva dance**
Plaster of Paris and oil colour, 1956
188 x 132 x 92 cm



(b) **Mahakala**
Painted plaster of Paris, 1958
106.7 x 34.3 x 35.6 cm



(c) **Musician**
Concrete, 1965
137 x 33 69 cm



(d) **Burden**
Reinforced Concrete, 1953
115 x 47 x 49 cm



(e) **Dual Personality**
Reinforced Concrete, 1953
137 x 77 x 46 cm



(f) **Cry**
Painted Wood, 1975
69 x 32 x 70(h) cm



(g) **Comic Man**
Concrete and Plaster of Paris, 1963
171 x 81 x 22 cm



(h) **Image Triangle**
Wood & Oil Paint, 1971
82 x 9.5 x 40 cm



(i) Monarch
Wood, 1976
117.5 x 13.5 x 28.5 cm



(j) Queen
Welded Metal Sheet, 1967
161 x 99 x 23.5 cm



(k) Family horse,
Wood
30.5 x 15.5 x 119 cm