

Artistic Connections: My Journey with WMG and Chicago

I am Shelly Jyoti, an Indian visual and textile artist whose deep connection with



Woman Made Gallery (WMG) and the city of Chicago began in 2003. That year, my poem 'The Sad Odyssey' found a place in a juried exhibition themed around 'Women, Trauma, and Visual Expression.' This emotional response to the racial riots in my city marked the start of my international recognition, thanks to WMG, and initiated my artistic journey intertwined with Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy.

In the subsequent years, I continued to collaborate with WMG through exhibitions like 'Here Comes the Bride' (2006), 'Women imaging Women' (2009), 'Reunion' (2017), 'Small Works' (2019), and 'Generations' (2022). Among these, a notable milestone was my solo exhibition in 2008, titled 'Beyond Mithila: Exploring the decorative'. These exhibitions allowed me to infuse my creative expression onto canvas, paper, and textiles nurturing my artistic growth in diverse mediums.

Fostering an environment where meaningful content and artistic expression thrive, WMG exhibitions acted as catalysts for my artistic courage. This platform empowered me to fearlessly explore my creativity and flourish. Opportunities like Invitational Solo Exhibition '10th International Open' introduced me to lecture at the University of Chicago and even led to my work gracing the cover of Loyola University's magazine in 2009, connecting my art with a broader audience. I also met artist Laura Kina during this time and our continued artistic collaboration flourishes in exhibitions that travel many locations across the continent.

My artistic journey in Chicago spans over two decades, with recent ongoing solo show at the South Asia Institute, showcasing the evolution of my artistic expression. I am immensely grateful to WMG for initiating and nurturing my artistic career abroad, providing opportunities for cross-continental exploration and growth.

Chicago's vibrant art scene, coupled with my daughter's residency in the city, allows for frequent visits, immersing me in its rich artistic milieu. The support of patrons together with the appreciation of my work, and exposure to various art forms through museums, galleries and art fairs profoundly impacted my artistic journey, shaping the course of my career as an artist. –Shelly Jyoti, Sept. 7, 2023