

Unveiling the Influence of Multifaceted Visionary Rudolf von Leyden on in Bombay's Cultural Tapestry and Modern Indian Artistry

“Rudolf von Leyden, a German geologist, and émigré assimilated fully into the cosmopolitan times of 1930s Bombay...he is remembered today for the critical heft he brought to the fledgling modern art scene, by his writing on art and his close association with the Progressive Group at the time.”

- **Ratan Tata**, Industrialist and Philanthropist

Rudolf von Leyden was a significant figure in the post-independence Bombay art scene. Originally from Germany and arriving in India as a refugee, he played multiple roles in fostering the growth of modern Indian art. His influence extended beyond criticism; he also engaged in public relations efforts to promote young artists, facilitated art education, and contributed to the establishment of art institutions like the Jehangir Art Gallery and the National Gallery of Modern Art in New Delhi.

Additionally, Rudi was deeply involved in the social and cultural circles of Bombay, regularly hosting gatherings where artists and intellectuals would convene to discuss art. Through his writings, lectures, and institutional initiatives, Rudi von Leyden played a crucial role in steering Indian art toward modernism and fostering international exchange, leaving an enduring legacy on the trajectory of Indian art history.

National Gallery of Modern Art, Mumbai, Ministry of Culture, Government of India, Avid Learning, Bombaywalla, and Speaking Tiger present **Rudi's Bombay: An Era of Cosmopolitanism**, an engaging panel discussion celebrating the legacy of a true renaissance man who contributed to and epitomized the spirit of multicultural Bombay with *Gallerist and Co-founder, Chatterjee & Lal Mortimer Chatterjee, Art Historian and Writer, Dr. Pheroza Godrej, and Artistic Director, QTP Entertainment, and Co-director, Literature Live! Quasar Thakore Padamsee*. The conversation will be moderated by *Editor, Art India | Author, The Catalyst: Rudolf von Leyden and India's Artistic Awakening Reema Desai Gehi*.

This program continues Avid Learning's enduring connection with the **Maximum City!** In the past, Avid Learning has presented **Multipolis Mumbai**. This series decoded the past while looking to the future and finding novel ways of engaging, interacting with, and reenergizing the city that we love.

Join us in commemorating the indelible contributions of Rudolf von Leyden to the vibrant art scene of Bombay's yesteryears.

When: Wednesday, 3rd July 2024

6:00 PM - Registrations

6:30 PM - 8:00 PM – Panel Discussion

Venue: National Gallery of Modern Art, Mumbai

Register: www.avidlearning.in

For Press: Ayeshah Dadachanji (ayeshah.avid@gmail.com)

About Speakers:

Mortimer Chatterjee along with his wife, Tara Lal, co-founded Chatterjee & Lal in 2003. Based in Mumbai, the gallery is focused on contemporary and historical material focusing on the disciplines of art and design. The founders also consult for major corporate collections, including the Taj Group of Hotels. Chatterjee has authored several publications including one on the artworks of the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR). He is editor of an evolving series of publications on disciplines across the arts spectrum, the first of which was focused on modern Indian art.

Dr. Pheroza Godrej is an art-historian and a Ph.D. in Ancient Indian Culture. She founded the Cymroza Art Gallery and authored various publications and curated highly acclaimed exhibitions for leading National and International Museums. She is Chairperson of the Museum Society of Mumbai; former President of the National Society of the Friends of the Trees for 17 years, President Emeritus since 2016. Dr. Godrej is on the Executive Board of the Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology (ATREE) and the Mehli Mehta Music Foundation; Director of Asia Society India Chapter; and a Trustee of Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Museum and the Sea Cadet Corp India.

Pheroza is on the Board of the Oxford India Centre for Sustainable Development International Advisory Council. She is an ardent promoter of the Cornelia Sorabji Programme, and supports the Cornelia Sorabji Scholarship at Somerville College, Oxford. She is a Member of the Advisory Council for the JCB Prize for Literature, and a fellow of the Royal Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufacturers & Commerce (RSA), U.K. The Asiatic Society of Mumbai conferred her with the Society's Honorary Fellowship for her outstanding contribution in the field of art and culture. Dr. Godrej is the Chairperson of the Godrej Archives Council.

Quasar Thakore Padamsee is a theatre-holic and lover of all things theatrical. Since 1999, he has directed and produced over 25 plays with QTP, including Every Brilliant Thing, A Peasant of El Salvador, Project S.T.R.I.P., So Many Socks, Minorities and many others about contemporary social concerns. Internationally, he has worked on Tim Supple's A Midsummer Night's Dream, and the aerial drama Mind Walking.

He is a founding member of Thespo - a youth theatre initiative that trains and promotes emerging artists in India. And at present, he is also serving on the festival committee of Tata Literature Live! The Mumbai International LitFest.

Reema Desai Gehi is an arts writer, researcher, and cultural facilitator based in Mumbai. For over a decade, Reema has written on the arts and culture scene for the Mumbai Mirror, India Today and Hindustan Times. She has recently joined Art India — India's longest-running art magazine — as its editor.

Reema is an alumna of Cardiff University, UK, where she completed her Masters with a special focus on arts journalism.

Her first book, 'The Catalyst: Rudolf von Leyden and India's Artistic Awakening', traces the life and legacy of a seminal art critic, who was instrumental in shaping the careers of many artists belonging to the Bombay Progressive Artists' Group.