

Art & Craft – The Visible and the Invisible

Conversations with Chai

LAILA TYABJI

26th JULY 2018

Tea: 6 PM

Lecture: 6.30 PM

Library,
Goethe-Institut / Max Mueller Bhavan
Mumbai
K. Dubash Marg, Kala Ghoda
Mumbai 400 001



Laila Tyabji will talk about the visible and invisible differences, dynamics and perceptions of Art and Craft. How does the single vision and 'signature' of the Western cultural tradition march with the anonymity and continuity of Indian folk art? Does collective work rather than a single vision and signature diminish the value of a piece of art? Is craft a product rather than pure art because it is also functional?

In Ancient India, Craft and Art were one - both anonymous, both an integral part of home, worship, and everyday life; not segregated into gallery displays or marketplace commerce. In contemporary India the age-old debate of Craft vs. Art has an especial poignancy, since it carries with it so much of the baggage of caste and social prejudice.

As the works of Indian artists break national and international records, craftspeople remain marginalised, suffering the advent of international brands and GST. Yet India possesses handskills that the rest of the world has lost. Is Indian craft truly a sunset industry or is it a goldmine we've forgotten about?

Laila will be illustrating her talk with anecdotes and experiences of her and Dastkar's work with craftspeople and folk artists over the last 40 years.



Laila Tyabji is a designer, writer, and founder member and Chairperson of the NGO DASTKAR, a Society for Crafts & Craftspeople. It provides a variety of support services to traditional artisans including training, credit, product development, design and marketing. She has worked in the craft and development sector since 1978. She received the Padma Shri for her work in 2012.

Laila speaks and writes regularly on craft, design and social issues at both national and international forums. Her book *THREADS & VOICES – Behind the Indian Textile Tradition* was published by MARG in 2007.

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2018

Conversations with Chai is a series of lectures initiated by the Tyeb Mehta Foundation. They promote innovative ideas and perspectives and initiate dialogue and exchange within and between various disciplines to enhance understanding of artistic traditions and contemporary art practices.