

Lalit Kala Akademi Inaugurates the 64th National Exhibition of Art with a Historic Push Towards Artist Empowerment

For the first time, award-winning artworks are available for sale, strengthening India's commitment to cultural mapping and supporting artistic livelihoods

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The 64th National Exhibition of Art (NEA), organized by the Lalit Kala Akademi, India's National Academy of Art, was inaugurated on August 5, 2025, in New Delhi with a grand ceremony that celebrated both India's rich visual heritage and its dynamic contemporary art landscape.

The prestigious event was graced by Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Union Minister for Culture and Tourism, Government of India, as the Chief Guest. He was joined by Shri Vivek Aggarwal, Secretary, Ministry of Culture, Government of India, Ms. Amita Prasad Sarbhai, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Culture, Shri Nand Lal Thakur, Vice Chairman, Lalit Kala Akademi, and Shri Rajeev Kumar, Secretary, Lalit Kala Akademi.



In a landmark move, the Akademi announced that the award-winning artworks at this year's NEA will be available for sale, a first in the event's history. This bold initiative aims to directly benefit artists and foster a culture of art acquisition in India. It is aligned with the Government of India's National Mission on Cultural Mapping, which seeks to identify, support, and sustain artistic talent across the country.



In his keynote address, Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Union Minister for Culture and Tourism, Government of India stated, “The exhibition is not just a display of artworks, but a vibrant cultural platform showcasing the talent of emerging and established artists from across the country. It beautifully brings together contemporary, traditional, folk, and tribal art, reflecting the diversity and richness of Indian artistic expression.”



He further said, “It gives me immense satisfaction to note that this year, the Akademi has taken a significant step by encouraging the sale of artworks. This forward-looking move promotes self-reliance among artists and strengthens our creative economy. In today’s time, where art, culture, and economic development are increasingly interlinked, such initiatives are both timely and visionary.”



He concluded by saying, “Art is no longer confined to galleries and museums; it is a medium of social transformation. From education and tourism to employment and inclusion, the role of art is expanding rapidly. Therefore, empowering our artists and connecting their work to sustainable opportunities must be a core part of our cultural policy and I am glad to see Lalit Kala Akademi leading that change.”

Shri Vivek Aggarwal, Secretary, Ministry of Culture, shared, “The 64th National Exhibition of Art showcases a rich collection of exceptional artworks from across the country, created in diverse mediums. This not only reflects the vastness and diversity of Indian art but also provides a meaningful platform for creative dialogue among artists. The Akademi’s initiative to bring emerging and established artists together through such exhibitions is truly commendable.”

“This prestigious exhibition stands as a testament to the vibrant creative spirit of our nation and reflects the Akademi’s steadfast dedication to fostering artistic innovation and excellence. The diverse and dynamic range of artworks on display showcases the evolving narrative of Indian art, while remaining deeply anchored in its rich cultural traditions.” remarked, Ms. Amita Prasad Sarbhai, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Culture.

This year’s NEA features a curated selection of 283 artworks, chosen from over 5,900 submissions received from across India through a rigorous two-tier jury process. The mediums on display span painting, sculpture, graphics, installation, photography, and more showcasing the diversity and depth of Indian artistic expression.

The evening also witnessed the felicitation of 20 Lalit Kala Akademi Awardees, celebrating their innovation and excellence in the visual arts. In addition, veteran artists Shri Krishen Khanna, Shri Ram V. Sutar, and Smt. Ira Chaudhari were honoured for their unparalleled lifetime contributions to Indian art and culture.

Two major publications were unveiled during the ceremony:

- The 64th NEA Exhibition Catalogue, documenting the featured works and artists
- A special book titled “Printmaker for All Seasons”, celebrating the life and legacy of Padma Shri Shyam Sharma

The exhibition was formally inaugurated at the Lalit Kala Akademi Galleries, Rabindra Bhavan, through a

ceremonial ribbon cutting and lamp lighting, followed by a walkthrough led by the dignitaries.

The 64th National Exhibition of Art is now open to the public from August 6 to September 15, 2025, daily between 11:00 AM and 7:00 PM, offering audiences a rare opportunity to engage with and own a piece of India's vibrant creative future.

About Lalit Kala Akademi

Lalit Kala Akademi the National Academy of Arts is an institution that has rendered service to the arts in the nation long before the world woke up to the global impact of Indian Art. Through the leadership of its members and staff, the Lalit Kala Akademi manifests a commitment to the service of the visual arts by establishing, preserving and documenting visual art of the highest order that in turn reflects the vitality, complexity and unfolding patterns of ancient, modern and contemporary art in India.

As a cultural body that hovers above the entire Indian subcontinent, it plays a role in inter-linking the diverse cultures of India to weave an aesthetic spread that is noted for its colourful threads of creative genius and brilliant designs that delineate fascinating features of Indian life. Perceiving Indian culture comprehensively with all its artistic impulses, conflicts, contradictions and limitations, the Akademi has been functioning with the panoramic view of involving all genres of creativity in its activities. It has a vision that takes care of the traditional art of India as well as of helping artists to imbibe many of the contemporary happenings in the international art scene.

Lalit Kala Akademi, National Academy of Art, New Delhi was set up by the Government of India as an autonomous body, on 5th August, 1954. The Akademi was given statutory authority in 1957, under the Societies Registration Act 1860. Since its establishment it has been serving the entire country by promoting the creative endeavors of Indian artists and bringing their arts to bear upon a large number of people, thereby playing an important role in defining and redefining the sensibility of an entire culture, falling under the visual arts spectrum.

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