

galleria nazionale d'arte moderna

The Last Harvest
International Exhibition of Paintings by Rabindranath Tagore

(29 March – 27 May 2012)

March 28, 2012
Press Preview 12:00 noon
Inauguration 6:00 pm

The Galleria nazionale d'arte moderna in Rome exhibits for the first time a huge number of artworks by Rabindranath Tagore. The exhibition opens on March 29 and closes on May 27. It has been organized by Tagore Archive of Rabindra Bhavana and by Kala Bhavan Museum of Visva-Bharati in cooperation with National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi.

Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) was one of the most charismatic figures of Indian culture. Today, 150 years after his birth, his vast outpouring of works in diverse fields of music, literature, art and education remains as relevant as they were when created.

The entire world remembers Tagore as the first Asian recipient of Nobel Prize for literature in 1913, subsequent to publication of the English translation *Gitanjali: Song Offerings* in 1912. But Tagore was not only a poet, he was an author of short stories and novels, a play writer, a composer, an essayist and also a painter whose contributions still remain a milestone in the history of culture. Through his writings he conveyed his ideas and thoughts and helped to shape modern Bengali literature and language. He influenced many writers, not just in Bengali but in other Indian languages as well. His works were in essence experimental modern and unconventional.

Tagore left his footprint in each cultural area he cultivated and he skillfully combined images and shapes intelligible to both East and West. His synthesis of ideas and thoughts was a hallmark of all of Tagore's

creations that extended to his involvement in the field of education as well.

Thanks to his commitment in the initial phase of the Indian Freedom Movement he contributed to the socio-political and economic transformation of India.

Through his paintings, like in his poems, songs and literature Tagore searched for a unifying theme or universal “truth” that ran as a common thread through all his creations.

Tagore started painting after the age of 60, nevertheless, though he came to drawing and painting towards the end of his life span, in many ways these spontaneous creations demonstrate immense skill in the use of technical means all along the huge body of his works, synthesizing, in an original and personal style, the suggestions coming from his poetic inspiration, thus creating an elegant complicity and a charming and rather sophisticated synesthesia.

When shown in India for the first time, the paintings evoked perplexity, and were termed incomprehensible even by the modern Indian artists of that time; despite this Tagore was the first Indian artist to exhibit his works, in 1930, across Europe, Russia and the United States of America, where his paintings and drawings aroused great public consensus, continuing to elude any kind of categorization under the narrow boundaries of art movements.

The exhibited artworks as well as the archival materials mainly held at Rabindra Bhavana and Kala Bhavan Museum at Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan and are on display for the first time in Italy. This exhibition, thus, will give viewers the chance to enjoy a rich and varied collection of works and discover Tagore, the ‘painter’.

The exhibition is curated by Professor R. Siva Kumar of Visva Bharati University and held under the aegis of the Ministry of Culture, of the Government of India. The National Gallery of Modern Art of New Delhi is the nodal agency responsible for organizing the exhibition in Rome as well as in other European capital cities.

Maria Giuseppina Di Monte
(Internal Commissioner for the exhibition at Galleria Nazionale d’arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Rome)

Catalogue:

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Technical Information

Place

National gallery of modern and contemporary art
Viale delle Belle Arti 131, Rome
Entrance for disabled: Via Gramsci 73

Opening hours

from Tuesday to Sunday 8:30 to 19:30
(ticket office closes at 18.45)
Closed on Monday

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