



K.G. Subramanyan (1924–2016)

Full Name: Kalpathi Ganpathi Subramanyan

Born: February 15, 1924, Kuthuparamba, Kerala, India

Died: June 29, 2016, Vadodara, Gujarat, India

Nationality: Indian

Professions: Painter, Sculptor, Muralist, Printmaker, Educator, Writer

Website: <https://www.kg-subramanyan.com/>

Education

- Presidency College, Madras – Studied Economics
- Kala Bhavana, Visva-Bharati University, Santiniketan (1944–1948)
- Slade School of Fine Art, London – British Council Scholar (1955–1956)

Academic Career

- Faculty of Fine Arts, Maharaja Sayajirao University, Baroda: Lecturer (1951–1965), Dean (1966–1974)
- Kala Bhavana, Visva-Bharati University, Santiniketan: Professor of Painting (1980–1989), Professor Emeritus (1989 onwards)

Artistic Mediums

- Painting: Oil, Acrylic, Watercolor, Glass Painting
- Printmaking: Serigraphy, Lithography, Linocuts
- Sculpture: Terracotta, Wood, Mixed Media
- Murals: Public and Institutional Spaces
- Design: Toys, Set Designs, Weaving

Artistic Styles and Influences

- Fusion of Indian Folk Traditions with Modernism
- Narrative Figuration and Post-Cubist Language
- Multidisciplinary Approach
- Influences: Kerala's folk art, Kalighat painting, Pattachitra, Santiniketan pedagogy

Solo Exhibitions

- 2024: One Hundred Years and Counting, Emami Art
- 2021: Selected Works, Art Heritage
- 2020: The Self Portrait, Art Heritage
- 2018: In the Honeycomb of Stories, Art Musings
- 2015–2016: Retrospective, Seagull Foundation, Mumbai & Kolkata
- 1955: First solo exhibition at Delhi Silpi Chakra, New Delhi.
- 2003: "K.G. Subramanyan: A Retrospective" at National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA), New Delhi and Mumbai.
- 2005: "Recent Paintings" presented by Sakshi Gallery at Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai.
- 2006: Exhibition at Faculty of Fine Arts, Maharaja Sayajirao University, Baroda.
- 2007: "The Magic of Making" at Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi.
- 2009: Exhibition at Nandan Gallery, Kala Bhavana, Santiniketan.
- 2010: "The Drawings of K.G. Subramanyan" at The Guild, Mumbai.
- 2015–2016: "Sketches, Scribbles and Drawings" at Jehangir Art Gallery and Harrington Street Arts Centre.
- 2024: "One Hundred Years and Counting: Re-scripting K.G. Subramanyan" at Emami Art, Kolkata.

Group Exhibitions

- 1961 & 1979: São Paulo Biennale, Brazil
- 1964: Tokyo Biennale, Japan
- 1966: Indian Art Exhibition, Belgium
- 1982: Tate Gallery, London
- Frequent participant in Lalit Kala Akademi shows and international art fairs
- 1956: Participated in group shows in the USA and UK.
- 1961 & 1979: São Paulo Biennale, Brazil.
- 1964: Tokyo Biennale, Japan.
- 1964: New York World Trade Fair, USA.
- 1965: Commonwealth Art Festival, London.
- 1968: First International Triennale, New Delhi.
- 1982: "India: Myth and Reality" at Museum of Modern Art, Oxford, UK.
- 2005: "Edge of Desire: Recent Art in India" at Queens Museum of Art, New York.

- 2008: "Freedom 2008" at Centre for International Modern Art (CIMA), Kolkata.
- 2014: "Ode to Monumental" at Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi and Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai.

Collections

- National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA), New Delhi & Bangalore
- Victoria and Albert Museum, London
- Peabody Essex Museum, Massachusetts
- Mathaf Arab Museum of Modern Art, Doha
- Salar Jung Museum, Hyderabad
- Numerous private collections worldwide

- Kiran Nadar Museum of Art (KNMA), New Delhi
- Jehangir Nicholson Art Foundation, Mumbai
- Government Museum and Art Gallery, Chandigarh
- Piramal Art Foundation, Mumbai
- Kerala Museum (Modern Art Gallery), Kochi
- Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), New Delhi
- San Jose Museum of Art, California
- The Metropolitan Museum of Art (The Met), New York

Awards and Honors

- 1963: Honourable Mention, São Paulo Biennale
- 1965: National Award, Lalit Kala Akademi

- 1984: Indian National Academy of Art Award
- 1986: Sculpture Society of India Award

- **1970: National Award, All India Fine Arts & Crafts Society (AIFACS)**

- 1975: Padma Shri

- 1998: Sahitya Akademi Award

- 1997: Honorary Doctorates from Rabindra Bharati University
- 2002: Dr. M.A. Dange Award
- 2004: Shilp Guru Award
- 2006: Padma Bhushan
- 2008: Lifetime Achievement Award, Indian Art Summit
- 2012: Padma Vibhushan

Publications

- Moving Focus: Essays on Indian Art (1978)
- The Living Tradition (1987)
- The Creative Circuit (1992)
- The Magic of Making (2007)
- Several volumes of poetry and illustrated books (Seagull Books)

Legacy

K.G. Subramanyan was one of India's most versatile and prolific modernists. His art, writing, and teaching shaped the landscape of 20th-century Indian art. He remains a pivotal figure in connecting folk traditions with global modernism.