

100 Rare Maps are being exhibited for the first time and will be displayed at the Asiatic Library, Mumbai from 1st April till 30th April, 2022

Priyasri Patodia, Chairperson, Urban Heritage Committee of Rotary Club of Bombay under presidentship of Shernaz Vakil In Association with The Asiatic Society of Mumbai under presidentship of Vispi Balaporia

Is delighted to invite you to a rare experience of hundred rare maps that are going to be displayed for the first time at the Asiatic Library.

This exhibition is designed and ideated by Deepti Anand, Co-Founder, Past Perfect Heritage Management and the maps have been conserved by Amalina Dave, she is a Conservation Consultant and has restored these gems of maps.

The maps would be on display for the whole month for public viewing from

Duration - 1 April to 30 April, 2022 at the Durbar Hall, Asiatic Library

Timings – 11 am to 7 pm Monday to Saturday and 11 am to 5 pm on Sunday

“Meandering Through A Mapped Canvas” is an exhibition in collaboration with The Rotary Club of Bombay and The Asiatic Society of Mumbai

“Maps are like cryptic love letters. They make anything seem possible.” – Mark Jenkins

As physical objects of aesthetic and historical interest, maps can be interpreted not only using the data they were envisioned to capture, but also the technical prowess and ability using which they were made. Early explorers, travellers, and mapmakers were limited by indigenous navigational tools, distorted spellings, underdeveloped printing techniques, and factual inaccuracies (as a result of little or no first-hand information).

In the words of cartographic historian R.A. Skelton, cartographers worked at “the uncertain boundary between knowledge and ignorance.”

Over the last few years, the Asiatic Society of Mumbai, aided by the Rotary Club of Bombay, has been working on conserving rare maps from its rich and diverse collection. A select 30 of these conserved gems will, for the first time, be displayed in a month-long exhibition, open to the public between 1st April to 30th April, 2022.

This exhibition invites you to explore the visual artistry of map makers and their composition of India. Curated to draw attention to maps as works of art, 'Meandering Through a Mapped Canvas' evaluates cartographical records in the modern sense of aesthetic design and in the older sense of craft and skill.

On display, will be a wide range of maps spanning over a period of 300 years. As years advance in the exhibition's narrative, an evolution is seen in terms of map-making techniques, the commissioning powers, the changing lengths and breadths of the Indian sub-continent (literally or erroneously), and the materiality of maps, which includes original handmade maps as well as prints that were hand-painted or hand-coloured at the time of or after printing. Moreover, the colours, engraved strokes, ornamental inscriptions, minute detailing of physical features, all prodded us to question why there was a need to make maps look attractive. While the older maps feature rather abstract forms of unknown lands, the ones from the later years start giving a linear view of the country, state or city.

In addition to the above, one critical narrative in 'Meandering Through a Mapped Canvas' will be that of the process behind conserving invaluable treasures such as these. Using this lens, we explore the complexity attached to conserving each map without obscuring its obverse! The conundrums and achievements of a map conservator also come through as one sees changing inks, strokes, materials and colours.

Ideators –

Past Perfect Heritage Management has attempted to articulate not only what one sees within each map, but also the journey of this particular collection of maps. What fascinated Deepti Anand the most as a researcher, was the emergence of India as a vague nation in the 1600s to a more defined landmass by the 1800s, as curators they have tried to bring forth the conundrums of restoration that custodians or conservators often face.

Conservation Consultant, Amalina Dave strongly believes that each map mapped a different conservation story, a series of choices, and multiple processes. Conservation is a very complex field but asks a rather simple question: Have we done what it was in our power to do to extend the lifespan of an object? Thanks to the Rotary Club of Bombay and Asiatic Society – we have. And hope to see these maps enjoyed by several generations to come.

The Urban Heritage Committee of the Rotary Club of Bombay was formed three years ago as a result of a deep interest in conserving the historical and cultural heritage of the city. One of the first goals undertaken by Rotary's Urban Heritage Committee was to upgrade the Conservation Laboratory so that rare and irreplaceable archival material could be restored. Age-old maps stored in damp basements found a new home that would protect them from further climatic deterioration.

About Priyasri Art Gallery

Priyasri Art Gallery is a contemporary art space located on the seafront in Madhuli, Worli. Founded in 2004, Priyasri Art Gallery has been responsive to the evolving language of art and is nurturing a gamut of artistic practices and expressions. The gallery is dedicated to its

role of exhibiting modern, contemporary and experimental artworks. Besides being committed to promote young artistic talent, the gallery represents veteran artists such as Akbar Padamsee and Jogen Chowdhury. Priyasri Art Gallery also provides artists with a studio facility in Baroda called AQ@Priyasri. The artist studio in Baroda has been providing space and housing for young artists since 2003. It has recently launched a separate printmaking practice wing.

Social media handles -

1. Facebook: Priyasri Art Gallery
2. Instagram: @priyasriartgallery
3. Twitter: @artgallery42
4. LinkedIn: Priyasri Art Gallery
5. Website: www.priyasriartgallery.in www.priyasriartgallery.com

6. Rotary Club of Bombay @rcb1929

7. Asiatic Society of Mumbai: <https://www.facebook.com/AsiaticMumbai/>

Best Regards,

Team Priyasri Art Gallery

AQ@Priyasri - The Artist Studio