

experimenter

KRISHNA REDDY

To a New Form

18 Jan - 31 Mar

Opening Preview: Friday, 18 Jan, 2019

6 pm - 8 pm

Experimenter - Hindustan Road

2/1 Hindustan Road, Kolkata 700029

Experimenter presents *To A New Form*, a solo by the late Indian master printmaker and sculptor, Krishna Reddy (1925 – 2018). Reflecting on a continuous exploration of form that fed into a practice of over seven decades, the exhibition will show rare drawings, zinc and copper etching plates and corresponding prints. Keeping impression-making at the core of his discipline, the exhibition draws attention to Reddy's pursuit in new ways of seeing his environment and an immersive lifelong practice of drawing and activating the sculptural surfaces of his metal etching plates.

Krishna Reddy drew from a plethora of experiences and was inspired by several divergent conceptual ideas to develop his own language. In the process, he used drawing as an almost obsessive practice that in turn significantly informed and structured his work, but rarely showed his drawing practice alongside. The exhibition threads a deep connection between Reddy's drawing, printmaking and sculptural practice. Initially trained in Tagore's Santiniketan under the tutelage of the influential Ramkinkar Baij and Nandalal Bose, whose guidance would be significant throughout Reddy's career. In 1949 he moved to London studying sculpture at Slade School of Fine Art in Henry Moore's class. Thereafter, he spent over two decades in Paris, first at the studio of Ossip Zadkine and then eventually directing Stanley William Hayter's Atelier 17, which was at the time, a thriving hub for stalwarts like Joan Miro, Constantin Brancusi, Pablo Picasso, and Alberto Giacometti, with all of whom Reddy closely worked. At Atelier 17, he developed and invented the process that he is most well known for – simultaneous multicolor viscosity printing, and broke new ground in intaglio printmaking. In the cafes of Montparnasse, Reddy would discuss how the spiritualism he had learned from his first teacher, the philosopher Jiddu Krishnamurti, had blended with European modernism. Underpinning his ideas was a technical knowhow that produced several innovations in the medium Reddy made his own. Reddy's studio practice was spent in developing and mastering the technique of multicolor viscosity printing and in the process he experimented with form, technique and application.

On view at the exhibition is a series of Reddy's well known work *The Great Clown*, which truly elaborates the mastery of his technique. Combinations of colors were separately applied to the same metal printing etching plate, each paint mixed to a different thickness with linseed oil so that it did not contaminate the others and resulted in a spectacular range of unique prints, each different from the other. An overwhelming array of studies and drawings take center stage at the exhibition, rooting the practice to repeatedly looking at human form, nature and the relationship between the two, an interest which was developed since his early years in Santiniketan. At another section of the gallery, a selection of early prints are on display alongside corresponding etching plates, revealing how the sculptural deeply engraved surfaces of his plates birthed his prints that were as dimensional as they were resplendent.

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In 1976 Reddy moved from Paris to New York. Thereafter, establishing the Color Print Atelier, Reddy became director of graphics and printmaking in the Art Department at New York University, a position he held until 2002. Pedagogy was a way of life for Reddy, his studio, lined with hundreds of tools and piled high with printing plates, became a haven for young artists from all round the world, especially those new to the USA. Over the years Reddy's influence on generations of artists, some of whom were his students, left an indelible impression. Nature particularly fascinated Reddy. Butterflies, trees, waves, spiders' webs and blossoms were frequent subjects, depicted in dream-like compositions that took their references from abstraction and surrealism. As he constantly pushed the boundaries that were not only confined to the formal process of printmaking but a revolutionary way of looking at his environment, Reddy found sanctuary in experimentation with sculpting, printmaking and drawing in a lifelong pursuit to understand form.

Krishna Reddy (b. 1925 Nandanoor, India – d. 2018 New York, USA) trained in sculpture at Kalabhavana, Santiniketan (1949), followed by Slade School of Art, London (1951). He was director of Atelier 17, Paris and the founder of Color Print Atelier, New York. Reddy was director of the Printmaking department at NYU since 1976 and thereafter founded the Cooper Union Printmaking department, NY. Reddy's work has been shown at numerous exhibition and print biennales all over the world. Recent exhibitions include *Bauhaus Imaginista*, curated by Grant Watson and Marion Von Osten, Tokyo & Kyoto (2018-19) and *Workshop & Legacy*, curated by Navina Najat Haidar, The Metropolitan Museum of Art New York (2016-17). Reddy's work is in the permanent collections of The Tate Britain London, The Metropolitan Museum of Art & MoMA New York, The Kiran Nadar Museum New Delhi, Cincinnati Art Museum and MPlus Museum Hong Kong among others.

For further information and press related enquiries please write to admin@experimenter.in or call [+91.33.4602.6457](tel:+91.33.4602.6457).

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