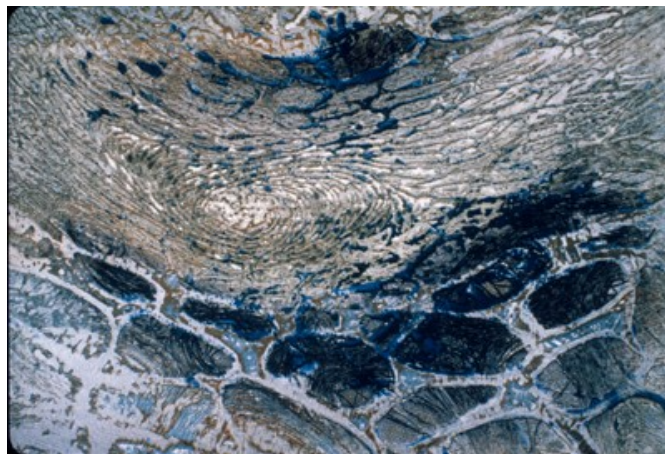
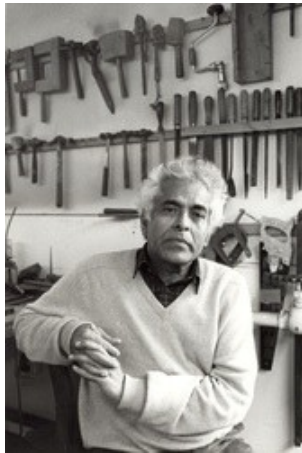


## KRISHNA REDDY : A RETROSPECTIVE AT IGNCA



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### **Concept Note/Overview:**

The Retrospective Exhibition titled *In Search of the Unknown: The Art & Life of Krishna Reddy* to be held at the IGNCA in November 2011, marks the journey of Krishna Reddy as an artist, taking us through various locations that became instrumental in developing his unique position as an internationally acclaimed Indian artist and a pedagogue who has contributed to art education for more than fifty years.

Born in 1925 in Chittoor in Andhra Pradesh, Krishna Reddy went to Santiniketan to study Art under the master guru Nandalal Bose. Later, with the help of J. Krishnamurthi (who remained a lifelong friend), he travelled to Europe where he spent his most impressionable years in London, France, Rome and Milan, studying Sculpture and working with Henry Moore, Ossip Zadkine and Mario Marini. He also had intimate contacts with great artists such as Brancusi and Giacometti, and all these encounters had a profound impact on his work. Ossip Zadkine introduced Krishna Reddy to Stanley William Hayter, a formidable innovator and printmaker who had founded the widely influential print studio - Atelier 17 in Paris in 1927.

It is at Atelier 17 in the early 1950s that Krishna Reddy through his experimental rigour, endless adventures and tremendous patience arrived at the most important developments in his printmaking techniques. It was here that he began to experiment with colour viscosity printmaking - a process that was to revolutionise intaglio printing and ensure his place in the world history of Graphic Arts. The discovery that numerous colours could be printed at one time on a single plate was his greatest achievement in the area of print making and a boon to all creative printmaker artists all over the world. Reddy eventually joined Hayter as co-director of Atelier 17.

Trained as a sculptor, Krishna Reddy worked on the plate like a sculpture, carving contours of relief with tools in addition to etching with acid. He worked with a variety of hard to soft rollers, rolling out one colour of ink at a time. As each ink was possessed of a particular viscosity, Krishna Reddy showed that several colours could be superimposed, yet kept at different levels of the etched and carved plates. Thus some colours would mix, while others would repel one another. This technical breakthrough effectively eliminated the need to print one colour on the plate at a time, allowing the artist greater freedom and control over his work.

One of the most significant Indian artists widely respected both in the East and the West, Krishna Reddy besides winning many other awards, has been honoured with a "Padma Shri" in recognition of his significant contribution to contemporary Indian art.

It is important to stress here that though Krishna Reddy has been residing outside India for more than five decades, His work and life has been consistently shaped by his early formative years in India and the integrated philosophy of life, where nature and culture are not perceived as binaries but co-exist in enriching the experience of the cosmos, the universe that is the utmost gift to mankind.

#### Curatorial Plan:

The Retrospective Exhibition intends to do the following :

1. Through the designed display plan, we intend to highlight the historical landmarks of Reddy's artistic journey.
2. We would give emphasis to his early years and learning in Santiniketan, his movement to the South and then to London, Paris and New York, amalgamating artistic learning, bringing together East and West sensibilities to arrive at his distinct imagery.
3. The exhibition will highlight the attitudes of science and art, two streams of consciousness embedded in his printmaking via his philosophy and processes. For instance, how the mysteries of Nature and cosmic rhythms are observed and distilled in the structuring of his visual form.
4. Images and text will be interfaced throughout the exhibition to make it educational and to evoke meanings for the viewers to engage with.
5. His work in various techniques- sculpture, drawing, etching, watercolour and viscosity will all be juxtaposed in places to highlight his recurring themes and preoccupations with the visual image.

6. Archival material in terms of letters, quotes from eminent artists and writers, his colleagues from the West, his personal photographs will all be put on display in designed vitrine boxes and pedestals.

The exhibition will be the first of its kind in paying its tribute to a contemporary master-artist who has sustained his passion and commitment to art and education for more than sixty years, initiating a dialogue between the East and the West around the making and viewing of Art.

Roobina Karode

Curator, Krishna Reddy Retrospective