

Mahmood Ahmad

India

My journey as an artist began very early. As a child I developed a passion for drawing which stayed with me right through my youth. While at school, I would often sit in the last row of the classroom and cover all my exercise books with drawing. This often got me into trouble as I paid little attention to what the teachers were teaching.

During my childhood, I would translate my feelings into portraits. The visages expressing joy or sorrow, screaming with pain & anger or just smiling enigmatically, were an expression of my own inner turmoil and emotions.

My father was the vice Principal of Jamia School, which was adjacent to the Department of Fine Arts, Jamia Millia Islamia. The renowned Department, established by Kalam Sab was a miniature version of Shantiniketan, where he had studied. The diverse culture activities of the department and the richness of its heritage attracted me and I would visit the classrooms secretly and watch, hidden from view, the students Unravel the mysteries of visual art. Later this childhood passion developed into a deep and abiding interest and I eventually graduated from the Department with a Degree in Fine Arts.

As a child I was deeply fascinated by nature. Jamia with its semi wild surroundings was an ideal playground for a young naturalist like me. I would spend hours in the forest gathering caterpillars and their pupae. I would take my collection back home and observe the eggs evolve into butterflies with all their splendid beauty. The fragile wet wings of the butterflies would harden upon emerging from the pupae and the butterfly would eventually fly off giving me immense joy.

Metaphorically speaking, Art is also like a butterfly emerging from a pupae. My encounter with nature and its beauty, finds its way into my work. My paintings be they abstract or figurative are a way of expressing my emotions and a way of liberating myself.

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