



Art & Heritage Collections

Cultural Celebration

CHHAAP: Baroda Printmaking Workshop

Chhaap is a colloquial Indian name for 'Print Making' or 'Printing'. CHHAAP-Baroda Printmaking Workshop was established on a cooperative basis in 1999 with a mission to create and promote a wider appreciation of original prints and print making techniques. CHHAAP is a not-for-profit organization that, with the help of local artists, has created print portfolios, conducted workshops on bookmaking, etching, drypoint and monoprints, held artist talks and exhibitions and promoted printmaking techniques.

Kavita Shah has a Masters in Printmaking from the Faculty of Arts, MS University, Baroda. She has had many solo shows and participated in a number of international print biennales. She was invited to print and show at Le Mois de L'estamps, Paris. After working with Robert Blackburn she returned to India and started the CHHAAP print workshop in Baroda in 1999.

Artist talk with Dianne Longley

11.30am – 12.00pm

Thursday 17 September 2009

Ira Raymond Room, Barr Smith Library
The University of Adelaide
North Terrace Campus

image various artists
Ganjifa Playing Cards, 2008, detail
hand printed on paper
each 24 x 17 cm

Ganjifa Playing Cards: An International Folio of Prints

Curated by Kavita Shah

31 August until 20 September 2009

Ira Raymond Room, Barr Smith Library
The University of Adelaide, North Terrace Campus

Ganjifa Playing Cards

In 2008 Kavita Shah, from the Chhaap Printmaking Workshop in Vadodara invited print artists from around the world to participate in an international folio of 'Ganjifa', or playing cards. Each artist was to print, and send to India, an edition of 60 prints using a range of printmaking techniques. In return they received 54 hand-printed playing cards, packaged in a wonderful wooden box and a quality catalogue of all the printed playing cards. Six sets of the Ganjifa playing cards remained with the Chhaap Printmaking Workshop to be exhibited in various galleries.

Ganjifa playing cards were first referenced in the early 16th century, when the game was popular at court, but the game later spread to the general public. Most Ganjifa cards made in India are circular, and sometimes hand-painted rather than printed.

Origins of Playing Cards

I have found it fascinating to collect sets of playing cards, as they are so diverse and each set of printed images reveals a miniature world of patterns and cultural history. Playing cards illustrate social history, the history of costume, touch on politics and religion, and feature wars and revolutions. Cards in recent times have been used to promote sporting teams and popular television shows.

Theories about the origins of playing cards are diverse. One belief is that both chess and cards were first played in China. Other theories site India or Persia as possible sources. However, there remains no irrefutable evidence of European cards having any historical connection with China or India or Persia. It is still a possibility that playing cards may well have originated in Europe, and there is much continuing debate as to which European country might be credited with the invention.

As a printmaker, my own interest in playing cards stems from their history in Europe, which parallels the history of printing. My personal deck of playing cards, *Cats, Cakes, Clothes and Cups*, included in this exhibition, celebrates the notion of chance and also the social interaction that is a wonderful aspect of card-playing.

Dianne Longley 2009

For further information and to RSVP please call Sally Foster on 83033086 or email art.heritage@adelaide.edu.au