CHAPTER 2
Indian society and culture is so varied that sometimes it becomes unbelievable that we belong to the same country. On the basis of religious background also we are living in a hard social sphere. Our male dominated society is very ignorant towards the status of women which makes the condition more complex. In such harsh conditions, if a woman makes her self identity, is a big thing. Everybody does not have the courage to accomplish such an impossible task. Such a great personality has been mentioned here and that great personality is Mrs. Arpana Caur. Here in this chapter her life sketch has been described.

Arpana Caur was born in 1954 in Delhi in a cultured Sikh family who hails from Lahore and got established in Patel Nagar at Delhi after the partition. Her father Late Shri Rajendra Sing Jee passed away when she was just three years old. Arpana grew up in an environment that was rich in art and music. Arpana's mother is an award winning novelist, whose influence resonates in Arpana's very essence. Her mother didn't give her

the name. She gave her all freedom, even the freedom to choose her name and religion since the very beginning. Till the age of fifteen Arpana Caur had no name because her mother wanted her to chose the name and religion for her. At the time of admission for her high school when she had to fill her name and religion she named herself as Arpana and embraced Sikhism as the religion of her mother\(^{12}\). Whatever she is today is because of her mother\(^{12}\). Arpana Caur had the inclination towards painting since the age of three years. She used to paint on the wall using the coal pencils but her mother never scolded her for defacing the wall rather she encouraged her and brought some papers, colours and pencils for drawing so that her artistic nature could come out. She showed her the way of success and always encouraged her. Because of encouragement from her mother Arpana Caur became a famous artist. When her father died in her very childhood she took the colours and brush in order to get rid of the loneliness and started painting on the canvas and making her own world which not only overcome her emptiness but also helped the art lovers all over the world. Her goal was not to become an artist rather she wanted to become a teacher of literature like her mother. For providing her the quality education her mother used to work hard for the earning. Her mother was a school teacher and used to teach Punjabi literature. As a Punjabi literature writer she was getting the fame rapidly and in this field she was not in dearth of the popularity. Inspite of her very busy schedule and the hardships, she was very keen towards the work of Arpana Caur. Although she was not very strong financially, yet she never let it to be felt by Arpana. She always purchased quality paints and canvas for Arpana\(^{12}\). A self-taught painter, Arpana has drawn inspiration from her mother’s writings, Punjabi folk literature, the Pahari miniature

tradition and Indian folk-art motifs. Arpana attended Delhi University and graduated in 1961 with MA in Literature. For this reason she did not prefer to get educate in the field of fine arts. Later she decided to pursue her education in fine arts and hence went to London to join St. Mortin School to pursue one year advance course in Fine Arts but she could not concentrate in the course and came back to her country within one month. There is a very interesting story she narrates about her entry in the world of fine arts. “She says that I still remember the days when I participated in an exhibition organized by M.F. Hussain for the young artists. I sent my six painting for that show and was quite surprised to know that M.F. Hussain has accepted all the six paintings for the exhibition. I got stunned by viewing the paintings of that exhibition. I also got appreciation for my paintings in that exhibition and four of my paintings were sold immediately and in this way I entered in the world of fine arts.”

Although her entry as an artist was unintentional, she didn’t become the artist in a flick of a second. There is long phase of struggle in her life. Her husband Harinder Singh also has an inclination towards paintings and is a good cartoonist as well. He gives full support to Arpana Caur. Arpana Caur likes Kabeer, Sufi songs, love myth of Soni Mahiwal and the Arawali mountains. Above all being an artist she has the appreciation for the paintings done by other artists. This indicates the quality of her character that she has an immense respect for the struggle and work of others also. Struggle is not a new word for Arpana Caur. She is quite familiar with this. She has seen her mother’s struggling for her existence in this male dominated society. Her art is a direct reflection of her personal experiences, inspired by local and world events. Over the years,

\[^{12}\text{L}i^{\text{mesh Verma, Dainik Bhasker, January 10, 1999:}}\]
\[^{13}\text{B}ased on an interview with Arpana Caur.}\]
her main focus has centered on Indian women, and capturing the essence of their day to
day activities influenced by social, cultural and spiritual themes. Arpana Caur knows the
demand of the market for paintings of women.

She never has used women on her canvas for the customers because for them
woman is just a material of entertainment. She has painted woman on her canvas in some
special reference. Her canvas includes mountains, flower valley, nature’s scene and the
dancing men not because of the reasons that these things are alluring to the eyes of the
viewer’s but because of the fact that she has seen the human nature with her eyes and has
tried to identify the reality of the society\textsuperscript{12}.

During the year 1980-81 her painting series ‘Sheltered Women’ (Fig. 139) ‘Starlet
Room’ and ‘Bazaar’ etc. have depicted several aspects of a common Indian woman. Her
artistic talent was recognized in the year 1983. The Hindu-Sikh riots of 1984 become a
big torment for her and she painted the pains and sufferings of these riot victims on her
canvas (Fig. 21) in such a way that the people realized this pain in their heart. Whosoever
viewed her art galleries ‘World Goes On’ (Fig. 142), ‘After the Massacre’ (Fig. 117),
‘Where All Flowers Gone’ (Fig. 107) and ‘Resilient Green’ (Fig. 146) has understood
that she has given a special corner for the sufferings of a common man in her paintings.
She herself says: “I want my paintings to be dedicated for common man and the common
man should have the access for these paintings which are dedicated to him\textsuperscript{5}. She feels
disheartened that her paintings have been limited to the metropolitan cities only but also
feels that an artist has certain limitations as well. It is not possible to organize the
exhibition in small cities without any financial assistance. Moreover, it is not possible

\textsuperscript{12}Umesh Verma, Dainik Bhasker, January 10, 1999
with the security point of view also. Some people say that the paintings of Arpana Caur are beyond understanding. We can see an eccentric use of colours in her paintings. On observing her paintings keenly, it makes a clear picture of the society in our mind. These figures not only talk about the present, they also tell us where we have gone astray. They also remind us of our lacking in the social sphere.

She agrees that women occupy the prominent place in her work. The women shown in her paintings seem to be strong and, homely and social. There is no hint of sexuality. Women and nature are both symbiotically tied up in a circle. She believes women represent the latent force which has not been explored properly even today. They can counter the challenges of industrialization and extreme urbanization. Inherently, they have a power to renew and regenerate. Arpana's source of inspiration is different things at different times. She has been greatly influenced by her mother, who nurtured her talent. She brought her up as a single parent, and she still shelters her whenever she needs her. Arpana Caur has also been influenced by Punjabi literature: that of Krishna Sobti, Amrita Pritam and her own mother's works. In some of her work, she has tried to capture contemporary Indian society. Like 'In Vrindavan' series which had paintings of the Vrindavan widows and the 'World Goes On' series which she did after the anti-Sikh riots in Delhi.\(^4\),\(^5\). She tries to see that her work is rooted in contemporary India. But she has also used folk art motifs in some of her work like Warli (folk art form of Maharashtra) motifs of harvest and the Godhana paintings of tribals from Madhubani in Bihar.

Arpana Caur has always preoccupied herself with the cause that she holds closest

to her heart i.e. the plight of women in India. All her paintings in some way or the other have figuratively narrated the story of Indian women—past and present. They are about human tragedies, emotions and traumatic experiences of life. She has always strongly emphasized humanism. Her humanistic depiction of Sikh Riots earned her much critical acclaim. She is such a good artist who unhesitantly expresses her feelings and views on canvas, and has not even an iota of the fear in choosing the themes of her paintings. She freely expresses her views on canvas. Her various paintings give stability to her expressions. For example the Rape of Maya Tyagi in police custody at Meerut, the assassination of Mrs. Indira Gandhi in which a woman was murdered by torture and the bald headed widows of Vrindavan etc. All these paintings can be easily seen in various Indian museums and in drawing rooms which indicates that with the developing lifestyle the reality of life have also sneaked into our mind easily.

Arpana Caur’s art has evolved along the path that emerged out of the nationalist movement: a blend of modern and folk art. We have the examples like, the Haripura panels of Nandalal Bose, the folk-inspired works of Jamini Roy, and works of M.F. Husain that take up the strong narrative tradition of our folk-scrolls and compress it into a single image or a series. In one of her paintings we can see collaboration between a folk artist, Lakshmi Narayan Pandey, and the modern painter, Arpana Caur, both of whose signatures appear on works they have jointly created.

Arpana Caur's art always had a radical content. Starting with images of the loneliness of the creative person and that of a musician playing around the empty chair, she really came into her own works portraying the indifference of a consumerist society to what goes on around it, with kite-flying figures watching others drown (Fig. 21). These
were done after the Delhi riots of 1984. The trauma of 1984 which was inexplicable and barbaric, gave greater depth to Arpana’s creativity. After that she painted the 'Threat' series, of trigger-happy policemen aiming guns at innocent women. Women again are the subject of the series on the 'Widows of Vrindavan', (Fig. 5, 144) in which we get serial images influenced by Pahari miniatures. These develop an optical character in later works of the 'Body is Just a Garment' (Fig. 124, 139) series, often evolving into graffiti in works with industrial and street imagery.

It is this evolution that has allowed Caur to collaborate with the repetitive and graffiti-like images of the traditional tattooists of Bihar, Godhna art, naturally (Fig. 141). It is something that was emerging in her expression anyway. So the collaboration between the folk artist and the modern is something that has been evolved by the modern that integrates the traditional. But the traditional is not just appropriated. Pandey actually began to evolve images, like the tree-woman, from Caur's imagery. Also, the need to keep certain spaces empty allows the traditional artist to evolve an understanding of negative space as part of a whole composition, something folk art does not apply itself to today, when it is mostly design-oriented.

At the same time, like the Worli tribal people Godavari Parulekar writes of the folk artists in the exhibition are integrated not only with historical figures like Mahatma Gandhi and Bhagat Singh but also with global events like the atomic bomb attacks on Hiroshima by the United States. At the same time, they confront their own humanity as the subject of artistic expression, which was essentially reduced to reproducing motifs of gods, plants and animals.
For Arpana Caur, the collaboration represents reforging links with the traditional base of our artistic expression, the folk art of the peasantry, who formed the backbone of the resistance to colonial rule. This base has become increasingly tenuous with a consumerist society emerging in India's urban areas, looking increasingly towards Western Europe and the U.S. This would have created a serious break with the existing artistic tradition and would have resulted in totally isolating those benefiting from economic and social progress from those who only pay for it. With even this tenuous link gone, India of the nationalist movement, of Five-Year Plans, of concern for mass education and rural development would effectively be overtaken by two India's unconcerned with each other. So, contemporary Indian art, particularly the art of Arpana Caur, reminds us that "Two India's" are a dangerous mental construct in a situation where a small minority siphons off the wealth of the vast majority and squanders it on conspicuous consumption, something the "Two India's" model hides effectively.

There is only one India, where the industrial and the agrarian coexist, where both Bhagat Singh and Mahatma Gandhi have their relevance, where women are worshipped as Goddess/devis but are put to the hardest labour in a male-dominated society. The artist brings these dualities together to remind us that they are part of one reality and it is that reality that requires mending.

Like various other celebrated painters, Arpana Caur neither became stagnant nor did she opt to earn money from her paintings. She never remained workless. Her paintings like a musician playing around an empty chair, young woman looking towards her burning house, mother and daughter, bald musician, heavy bearded tailor etc. all these themes have set new examples. In her painting of 1994-95, she has sketched Bombay on
her canvas. In the decades of 90 Arpana has used some metallic instrument, magnifying glass, wood, metal rods and plastic toys etc. and proved that an artist can use anything to express his art. Her emergence in the field of fine arts is nearly 25-30 years old for Delhi and become an important part of the Delhites. She has got so many awards for the fine arts. In 1985 she was awarded an Annual IFAX award. In 1984-85 she was awarded a Garhi Research Grant of Lalit Kala Academy, Commendation certificates, and was awarded a Gold Medal for the exhibition in Sixth Triannual India (1986). Recently, she has made a detailed study of social harassment, particularly for women and has made these as a theme of her paintings. Embroidery is an inner art of women. A beautiful bed sheet is being embroidered from one side and being cut with a scissor on another side (Fig 129).

In such paintings she has presented scissor in different themes and women as a nature. In these pictures Arpana Caur wants to spread the message that nature makes us and devastates us as well (Fig. 143). This way the life cycle goes on. Her painter soul is well familiar with the empty side of the culture which is now exposing the inhuman activities of the Bihar city. In the opening ceremony of a famous exhibition Documenta in Staff Weshale, Cassale, Germany, Arpana painted her painting ‘Tears of Hiroshima’ (Fig. 146) on a 20 ft wall. The painting depicts the horror of Hiroshima and has been painted using charcaol and acrylic colours. This is showing the inhumane use of the Atomic Power. In her painting ‘Tree of suffering, Tree of life and Tree of enlightment’ (Fig. 148) she has shown three pine trees in turmeric colour. In the southern end of the painting, Budha is lying in a posture of dead. She has illustrated three forms of the

humanity; one is the ‘Tree of suffering’ other one is ‘Tree of Life’ and the third one is ‘Tree of Enlightenment’. The painting depicts the hurdles in the way of our success and appears to be a silent warning. She also has a good sense of humour which generally does not appear. This can be exemplified with an electric plug in her paintings. In some of her paintings she has showed the connection of this electric plug to the God (Fig. 114, 115). Artistically too, this process creates an environment with many possibilities. The narrative, motif and intelligibility enter our contemporary artistic expression, while the easy-to-carry scroll or fold-up folio forms also become part of it. As for folk art, it relearns its capacity to narrate historical events and express an opinion on them.

More than that, with the emergence of installation art with a folk element in it, its visual expression is expanded considerably, being freed of the ritual significance of shrine assemblages, like those at the foot of banyan trees. It has entered a new world in which art is art and gets aesthetic appreciation that is quite different from the reverence attached to ritual constructions. Art is to be felt, not valued.

This is very important to note as various forms of post-modernism have pushed back the origins of modernism deeper and deeper into our past. A similarity of forms does not indicate that their content and function are the same. Very often, their evolution is from diametrically opposed poles. If modern art appropriates a folk motif or elements of design from our rural artistic expression, it retains its significance as an original way of putting across an artist's view of life, the world and events. For folk art, on the other hand, the same process represents a radical break from a past of ritual standardization of imagery and its present relegation to the decorative. If modern art gains motifs, folk art

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gains much more in terms of breaking the traditional and commercial boundaries that have held it down so long. Arpana Caur, in her recent exhibition, ‘Between Dualities’ which has been displayed at Delhi’s Academy of Literature and Fine Art and the Cymroza Gallery in Mumbai, serves as a link between the growth figures and actual poverty, progress and backwardness, innovation and stagnation that characterize two faces of the same reality. Her art highlights their inter-connectedness and forces one to assess them as two sides of the same coin and to question them. That, indeed, is one function of art in the contemporary context that is bound to grow in importance in the next century.

Arpana Caur’s paintings seem to be a study of colours. Her frequent use of vibrant and bright colors to depict melancholic scenes shows her maturity in handling colors. The other characteristic feature of her paintings is the “hollow eye”; the sufferings of her subjects are wonderfully projected through their eyes. Their hollowness says more than what words could ever express.

Arpana’s paintings show her mystical temperament. Most of her paintings have a spiritual theme and draw inspirations from indigenous cult movements like the Bhakti culture. The songs of the mystic poet, Kabir and the Baul minstrels of Bengal find echo in Arpana’s brilliantly colored canvases. Her paintings indeed preach the foremost philosophy of the bhakti leader’s tolerance. Between 1975 and 1996, Arpana had 18 solo shows of her paintings, and participated in nine national and international exhibitions and

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15 ‘You’ The Asian Age’ 2000
art festivals, including the First Baghdad Biennale (1986), Algiers Biennale (1987), group shows at Saytama Museum and Glenbarra Museum, Japan, the exhibition 'Imagined City', Museum of Modern Art, Brasilia, Sao Paolo and Rio de Janeiro (1994-95). In 1995, she attended the 'Nature and Environment' workshop jointly organized by the Lalit Kala Akademi, Max Mueller Bhavan and Japan Foundation. In the same year, Arpana executed the commission for doing a large painting for the Hiroshima Museum's permanent collection, on the occasion of the 60th Anniversary of the Nuclear Holocaust. Arpana Caur received the All India Fine Arts and Crafts Society Award in 1985, Commendation Certificate at the Algiers Biennale, and Gold Medal at the Sixth Triennale-India'(1986), and was nominated by the Lalit Kala Akademi as the Eminent Artist (1990, '91, '92). Her works are in many private and public collections in India and abroad including National Gallery of Modern Art New Delhi, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, Bradford Museum, U.K. Kunst Museum, Dusseldorf, Singapore Museum of Modern Art and the Ethnographic Museum, Stockholm.

2.2 WORK STYLE OF ARPANA CAUR

While studying creations of an artist the most important question which arises immediately in ones mind is the theme of paintings. The medium, colour or size of the painting for an artist is not that much important as that of the theme. Theme is the most important part of a painting which points to the fact that what the artist wants to show. Theme gives direction to a painting. Arpana Caur's has a diverse theme for her paintings. There seems to be a great influence of folk art in her paintings. Still one can

see a clear picture of modern art in her paintings. A renowned art critic Shri Valdemer
after viewing her solo exhibition in London in 1982 has said that the work style of
Arpana Caur is a good combination of modernization with emotional theme. Another
critic Suneel Chopra has mentioned in last year in Roli Publishers Pocket Book that
Arpana always tries to make dual influence in her paintings. Men and women, day and
night, land and water, in all these she has always tried to picturise two sides of the
object$^{17}$.

She has highlighted the future in her paintings where the humanity faces the
inhumanity, peace with war and pollution with the environment. Nowadays her themes
also include the political issues$^{18,19}$. One of her paintings indicates to the demolition of
Bamiyan Budha in Afghanistan. Arpana Caur’s painting deals with every aspect of the
life$^{10}$. It gives place to the Lord Budha, Soni Mahiwal and the Indian Women. In her
paintings we can frequently see a labourer, nature’s scene and the Sufism which mainly
depicts Kabeer and Guru Nanak$^{20}$.

**Tree of Suffering, Tree of Life, Tree of Enlightenment**

Arpana Caur has made various paintings on the lifestyle of Gautum Budh. She has more
emphasized the incidence of salvation of Gautum Budh. Budh Ji’s path was full of
sufferings. In his old age he realized the actual form of dead and ailing people. Arpana
Caur is painting Lord Budh and the Tree since the last one decade in her paintings. She

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17 Naam Roop A Tribute to the Divine pp. 68-69.
18 Vinita Faridi A Prayer to Guru Nanak on Canvas, Friday December 19, 2003, Hindustan Times.
20 Painting from ‘Mud Wall to Height of Glory’ p 17. Folk and Travel Arts based on Collection of Arpana Fine Arts
Museum. The Magic Makers. P.C. Jain forwarded by Ajeet Caur. Published by Academy of Fine Arts and Literature
pp. 1-288.
has used an electric plug as an indicator to show the relation of Lord Budha with God to make this important event a bit humorous.

This is also among one of the best painting series of Arpana Caur. Arpana Ji is very much influenced by the Punjabi love stories. There are numerous love myths in Punjab e.g. Heer-Ranjha, Shashi-Punno and Soni-Mahiwal. In 1984 Arpana Caur started the series of paintings like ‘World Goes on’, since then she has more emphasized on water in her paintings because she loves painting water. Since water plays an important role in the love myth of Soni-Mahiwal, she decided to paint this love myth. The reason is that she compares Soni with every woman. She represents all of us because to get something, we have to sacrifice something. We cannot achieve anything without struggle and sacrifice. Arpana Caur considers Soni as a symbol of ‘Human Spirit’ because Soni doesn’t prefer to lie down near the shoe rather she jumps in the sea.\(^1\)

\(^1\)Naam Roop A Tribute to the Divine by Arpana Caur and Shailendra Gulhati. Pp. 1-83
Guru Nanak

Another painting of Arpana Caur is based on the life of Guru Nanak in which he has seen in water. Once upon his life Nanak submerged him in water and then came out after sometime and spread the message that we all are single human beings and none of us are Hindu or Muslim.21

Fig. 3

Body is just a Garment

She has painted 33 painting series on Kabeer Das which was displayed in Tagore Bhawan in 1993. This painting is named as ‘Body is just a Garment’. Kabeer Das Ji used to say that our body is like a cloth which is changed every time once we die. The soul remains the same. In this painting a different thing is that this has been painted by the folk artist Satyanarayan Pandey and Arpana Ji jointly.

Fig. 139

21Nanak' Arpana Caur The Passion with Time. Ernst W. Koelnperger 2004 Translated by Dr. Ernst E. Fuchs.
This was the first report in Indian history that a single painting had the signature of two individual painters. The background for these paintings was made by Satyanarayan Pandey that was washed using cowdung. Since he is a Tattoo artist, he does so in order to match the colour of the background to our skin. After this he does the black and white tattoos. Lastly Arpana Caur made painted the sketch with varied colours and made traffic light or Budha on the paintings. These paintings were named as the 'Between Dualities' because of the reason that Budh Ji was also confused while making a decision. Arpana Ji has symbolized the traffic lights as trees in Delhi because the trees are being cut and frequently being replaced by the traffic lights\textsuperscript{21}.

**Widows of Vrindavan**

In Vrindavan, Arpana visited most of the religious places. In this painting an old lady with a vacant look dominating her face has been depicted. The paintings show the expression of helplessness.

\textsuperscript{21}Arpana Caur The Passion with Time. Ernst W. Koelnsperger 2004 Translated by Dr. Ernst E. Fuchs.
Subjects of Arpana Caur's Paintings

Here a detailed analysis of the presence of human figures in Arpana Caur's paintings has been done. Expression of the figures in these paintings has a determinant role. Most of her paintings contain these figures, particularly female figures. Arpana likes to make huge human figures. Most of her paintings are more than 4-5 ft in length. Some of them are 9-10 ft also. She has a unique style for her paintings and never copies others style in her paintings. Her figures in paintings are free of the body ratio. The reason for this is that she has not learned paintings professionally nor she joined some fine arts college. The figures in Arpana's paintings symbolize her thoughts. All these figures look much beautiful. These human figures have been categorized as follows:

I. Paintings resembling the human figures

II. Figures depicting the real expressions

III. Figures depicting the formlessness

I. Paintings resembling the human figures: Such figures have very close resemblance with the human body. The facial structures for these figures are very similar to human figures. Here the description has been started with the women figures.

1. This female figure has a close resemblance to a woman. The body ratio of this figure is appropriate. The facial structures such as eyes, nose and ear of this figure seem to be very realistic. Eyes in this painting are big and look like a piscine eye. This facial expression shows that she is creator
of the world. With the exception of a hand, the ratio of rest of the body is quite appropriate. The right hand of this figure appears to be one and a half times larger than its real size. The extended length of this hand depicts the objective of the painting which is serving the purpose effectively. The fingers and toes of this female figure have been made as soft and flexible as rubber.

2. This figure was made in the year 1998 and has a close resemblance to the human body which can also be seen at the lower corner of a painting named ‘Between Dualities’. The facial expressions for this painting are also very strong and clear. The toes of this figure are wavy giving the expression of flow of water. This is strongly depicting the expression power of the artist. In a number of Caur’s paintings the woman’s exaggeratedly extended hand, whether she is lifting, carrying or, particularly, embroidering that immediately strikes the onlooker.

3. This figure of Lord Budha also has a close resemblance to the human body. This figure is present in the painting of Tree of suffering, Tree of Enlightenment. The body ratio of this figure is very close to the body ratio of human body. In this figure two faces of Lord Budha have been shown. One face is looking like a face of common man before becoming saint and another face has been painted in blue once the knowledge is acquired. The previous face has been given a normal facial structure with a
melancholic expression on the face whereas the next face is showing an angelic expression. The hands have been made like a flowing wax. One hand is clear in painting but the other hand is in the back.

4. This figure is of Lord Budha which has been taken from the ‘Great Departure’ The body structure of this figure is very close to the human structure. Eyes are semi-lunar with an elongated nose and clear lips. The ears are comparatively larger than the actual size. The figure has a calm expression on its face. The waving hands symbolize departure from home. The body structure resembles to free flowing water on the earth.

5. This horizontal figure shows Lord Budha which closely resembles to a human body. The body ratio is also appropriate. This figure has been depicted in the painting ‘Connection’ The facial expression of this figure shows that the figure is in concentration. Eyes look like as if the eyes are closed but they are open downwardly. Nose is straight with a large lip size. Ears are two times bigger in size.

6. This figure is cited in the painting ‘Yogi’. This
also has a close resemblance to human figure. Its body ratio is also quite appropriate. This figure shows a saint standing with its one leg. Well shaped mustaches and the lips bear a calm expression. His body is lean and legs are flexible. One leg is bent backwardly and the other one is not straight rather slightly bent in the middle and does not show toes\textsuperscript{21}.

\textbf{Fig. 11}

7. This figure has been quoted in ‘Time Image’. This is a figure of a lean old man. Arms, legs and neck are cylindrical. There seems to be a clear cut expression of sorrows on his face. The nostrils are equal to the length of the nose. He is holding a book in his hand. Fingers are straight. This human figure is shown to be standing with the support of a tree. Bright colours are used in painting this human figure and the figure depicts the old age.

\textbf{Fig. 12}

\textsuperscript{21} Arpana Caur The Passion with Time. Ernst W. Koehnsp Berger 2004 Translated by Dr. Ernst E. Fuchs.
8. This is the figure of Guru Nanak. This figure is present in the ‘Foot Step of Guru 2002’. The colour of this figure is like a beam of light in the dark. The facial expressions of this figure are quite impressive. The shape of the leg in this figure is showing the expression of journey. Fingers of leg are flexible as a rubber.21

![Fig. 13](image)

9. The figure of a musician. The facial expressions in the figure are perfectly illustrating the objective. The figure of playing musician here seems to be giving a message of serenity to the rioters.

![Fig. 14](image)

10. This figure is showing the old stage and has been taken from the figure ‘1947’. The figure is carrying some load and Guru Granth Saheb on its shoulder. The facial expression of this figure is very prominent. Facial expression is sad. The bent structure is indicating as the figure is carrying some load on its waist.

21 Arpana Caur The Passion with Time. Ernst W. Kochsperger 2004 Translated by Dr. Ernst E. Fuchs.
11. This figure has a resemblance with a woman. The figure represents towards night. All the facial structures are clear. The large eyes which are closed showing the sleep stage. Closed lips and sharp nose have the calm expression. This is mentioned in the ‘Day’ painting of Arpana Caur.

II. Figures depicting the real expressions

Another type of paintings of Arpana Caur contains the figure depicting real expressions. In such figures anatomy is not as prevalent as in other. These figures look like as if we are in a dreamland. Either the figures are big or small in size. The body ratio is quite opposite to the human body. Still these figures are quite expressive. Some of such figures are explained as under:

1. This female figure has a close resemblance to a woman and has been taken from the painting ‘Day and Night’ The body ratio of this figure is appropriate. The facial structure for this figure seems to be very realistic. Eyes in this painting are big and look like a piscine eye. This facial expression of female figures shows that she is creator of the world. With the exception of a hand, the ratio of rest of the body is quite appropriate. The right hand of this figure is one and a half times larger than its real size. The extended length of this hand depicts something and this is serving the very purpose
satisfactorily. The fingers and toes of this female figure have been made as soft and flexible as a rubber. For this reason the women in this figure looks like a dream women. However, the expressions are very clear.

2. In her ‘Day’ painting a figure has been mentioned. The figure represents the night mode. The black coloured figure is incomplete. Forehead is protruded. The figure has an exclamatory expression on its face. In spite of the absence of eyes, the figure is quite expressive. The body ratio of the figure is quite disproportional and seems as if the figure is made up of the mixture of cowdung and the clay. The whole body has some type of roughness.

3. This figure has been taken from the ‘Day and Night’ painting of Arpana Caur\textsuperscript{21}. A giant woman has been made in this figure. In this figure the body size is somewhat big as if some devil in a nightmare. The hands and feet are somewhat big in size compared to the face. The fingers are made of wood. Legs are also giving the expression of stagnant water. The leafy eyes are white in colour. The black hairs of this lady are giving the expression of a flowing river as like the Ganga emerging from the head of Lord Shiva\textsuperscript{13}.

\textbf{Fig. 17}

\textsuperscript{21}Arpana Caur The Passion with Time. Ernst W. Koelnspäger 2004 Translated by Dr. Ernst E. Fuchs.
4. This figure is depicted in between dualities of Arpana Caur’s painting. Eyes are like a diving fish. Only the hands of this figure have been made properly. Rest of the body is somewhat immobile. One leg is large whereas the heal of the other leg is thick and toes are flexible.

![Fig. 18](image1.png)

5. In her ‘Juggler’ painting, Arpana Caur has painted a figure in which face is shown to be hidden by hands. Body structure is like semi-kneaded dough. The fingers are soft and small. Legs are rounded and as flexible as a rubber. Although the facial structures have not been made, still it is clearly depicting the expression.

6. The figure represents the drowning of Soni which is present in Arpana’s painting ‘Plunge’. In this figure of Soni there is complete lack of body ratio. It is like a dream figure. The figure has no expression on its face. The facial structures which give the expression are looking like that of a dead. Hands are long and thin. In this figure the part of the body extending till knee are somewhat disproportional. The entire figure shows the expression of turbulent water.

![Fig. 19](image2.png)

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21 Arpana Caur The Passion with Time. Ernst W. Koeinsperger 2004 Translated by Dr. Ernst E. Fuchs.
7. This figure of Soni has been taken from the ‘Connection’ painting of Arpana Caur. The figure lacks the common body ratio. Facial expressions are more realistic in this figure. Nose and lips are sharp with a piscine eye. Although the figure is erroneous, still is depicting the expressions clearly.

Fig. 20

8. This figure is from ‘Widows of Vrindavan’ The extended length of hand is giving the impression of a flowing wax. The facial expressions are gloomy. The upward looking eyes are giving the expression for the want of help. The skin is wrinkled and the neck is made like a dried stem. The nude figure is covered with black shawl on its shoulder. The figure is clearly depicting the objective (Fig. 5).

9. This has been taken from a painting ‘River of Time’. This figure completely looks like a dream figure. The entire figure is made with combining different human figures. In between the hands and legs men and women are lying in various postures.

Fig. 21

21 Arpana Caur The Passion with Time. Ernst W. Koelnsperger 2004 Translated by Dr. Ernst E. Fuchs.
III. Figures depicting the formlessness

The third type of figure in Arpana’s paintings has formlessness. Though these figures are formless, still they clearly fulfill the objective. The forms of these figures are quite unclear. In some figure the eyes are missing whereas in some hands and legs are missing. She has not much emphasized on such paintings.

Fig. 22

1. This formless figure has been taken from Arpana’s ‘Body is just a Garment’ Different human figures are made in a single figure with a traditional Indian art. Some faces do not bear the eyes. Some are in standing posture and some are sitting on the various parts of this giant human figure. All these human figures are based on the legs of a giant human figure.

Fig. 139

\footnote{Arpana Caur The Passion with Time. Ernst W. Koelnsperger 2004 Translated by Dr. Ernst E. Fuchs.}
2. In her painting ‘Great Time’ figure of Lord Budha has been depicted which is also towards the formlessness. In this figure the body of Budha contains numerous other human figures. The expression has not given to the body of Budha. Face looks like a shadow. To give the impression of hand, a thread like structure has been placed on the shoulders. The portion extending from the neck upto the waist is thin. The figures which are inside this figure are quite expressive.

3. This figure has been taken from ‘Compassion’ painting. This figure shows only the facial structure of Lord Budha. This face is formless. Face is a bit long. The ears are extremely large. The figure bears numerous piscine shaped eyes on its face which gives an impression of the swimming fish. There are some black eyes also along with the white eyes. A big tear is coming out continuously from one of the white piscine eye.

![Fig. 23](image)

4. The figure is shown at the lower extreme of one of the Arpana’s painting namely ‘Between Dualities’. Only the facial part has been depicted in this figure. The facial structures are clearly portraying the objective of the figure. The figure in itself is quite expressive.

### 2.3 Exhibitions

Exhibitions

1975  Solo exhibition, Shridharani Gallery, New Delhi.

1979  Solo exhibition, Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi.
1979  Solo exhibition, Gallery Arts 38, London.

1980, 82, 84  Solo exhibition, Jehangir Art Gallery, Bombay.


1982  Solo exhibition, Chapter Gallery, Cardiff.


1984  Solo exhibition, National Museum, Copenhagen. 1984 Group exhibition in Athens and Delphi

1985, 88  Solo exhibition, Art Heritage, New Delhi

1985, 89  Solo exhibition, Cymroza Gallery, Bombay

1986  1st Baghdad Biennale, Baghdad

1987  Participated in the Algiers Biennale, Algeria and Cuba Biennale, Cuba

1987  Exhibition of Woman Artists, Festival of India, USSR. 1987 Solo exhibition. Academy of Fine Arts, Calcutta

1990  Solo exhibition, Collins Gallery, Glasgow

1993  Solo exhibition, LKA, New Delhi

1994  Participated in Osaka Print Triennale, Osaka

1994  Asian Art Show, Hiroshima Museum, Hiroshima

1994-95  Imagined City

Selected Solo Exhibitions

- 2006  Indigo Blue Art, Singapore

- 2005  Mahua Gallery, Bangalore

- 2004  Birla Academy of Art and Culture, Kolkata
- **2003** Academy of Fine Arts and Literature, New Delhi
- **2002** Cymroza Gallery, Mumbai
- **2001** Academy of Fine Arts and Literature, New Delhi
- **1999** ‘Rites of Time’, Bose Pacia Modern, New York
- **1999** Centre for International Modern Art (CIMA), Kolkata
- **1998** Foundation for Indian Artists Gallery, Amsterdam
- **1998** Fine Arts Resources, Berlin
- **1997** Arks Gallery, London
- **1996** Sakshi Gallery, Mumbai, Bangalore
- **1994** Cymroza Gallery, Mumbai
- **1993** Rabindra Bhavan Gallery, Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi
- **1991** Collins Gallery, Glasgow, Scotland
- **1987** Academy of Fine Arts, Kolkata
- **1985, 89, 94, 98** Cymroza Gallery, Mumbai
- **1985, 88** Art Heritage, New Delhi
- **1984** National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen
- 1984 Ethnographic Museum, Stockholm, Sweden

- 1982 Chapter Gallery, Cardiff, Wales, UK

- 1981 City Hall Gallery, Ottawa, Canada

- 1980, 82, 84 Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai

- 1982, 87 October Gallery, London

- 1979 Gallery Arts 38, London

- 1979 Rabindra Bhavan Gallery, Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi.

- 1975 Shridharani Gallery, New Delhi

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2008 'Dus Mahavidyas: Ten Creative Forces', presented by Gallerie Nvya at Visual Art Gallery, India Habitat Centre, New Delhi

- 2008 'Baisakh 08', Polka Art Gallery, New Delhi

- 2007-08 'Polyphonies', Gallery Hosp, Tirol-Österreich, Austria

- 2007 'First Person Narrative', Hasta Gallery, Hyderabad

- 2005 Preview in Tate Berlin

- 2005 Indigo Blue Art, Singapore

- 2004 Smithsonian Museum, Washington
2001 ‘Indian Contemporary Art’, Los Angeles; Singapore; San Francisco

2000 Art Forum Gallery, Singapore; Australia

1998 ‘Indo-Austrian Group Show’, Austria

1998 National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA), New Delhi and Mumbai

1998 Rotunda Gallery, Hong Kong

1998 Centre for International Modern Art (CIMA), Kolkata


1997 Bradford Museum Exhibition, Bradford

1997 ‘Indian Women Artists’, National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA), New Delhi

1995 ‘Indian Women Artists’, UK

1995 Noma Book Exhibition, Tokyo

1994-95 Satyam Museum, Japan

1994-95 Glenbarra Museum, Japan

1994-95 ‘Imagined City’, Museum of Modern Art, Brazil; Sao Paulo; Rio de Janeiro

1984 ‘Group show of Indian Artists from National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA), New Delhi to Fukuoka Museum, Japan
1984 First Indo-Greek Cultural Symposium, Athens; Delphi

Participations

2008 'Harvest 2008', organized by Arushi Arts at The Stainless Gallery, New Delhi

2007-08 'From Everyday To The Imagined: Modern Indian Art', Singapore Art Museum, Singapore and at Museum of Art, Seoul National University, Seoul

2007 'Tiger by the Tail'. Women Artists of India Transforming Culture, Part 1’. organized by Women’s Studies Research Centre (WSRC), Brandeis University, USA in partnership with Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), New Delhi

1994 Asian Art Show, Hiroshima Museum, Hiroshima

1994 Osaka Print Triennale, Osaka

1987 Exhibition of Woman Artists, Festival of India, USSR

1987 Algiers Biennale, Algeria

1987 Cuba Biennale, Cuba

1986 1st Baghdad Biennale, Baghdad

Collections

National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi.

Chandigarh Museum, Chandigarh.

Ethnographic Museum, Stockholm.


Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

Deutche Bank, Mumbai and Chandigarh.

Rockefeller collection, New York.

Kampany Collection, San Francisco.

Mohinder Tak collection, Washington.

Peter and Erica Mueller collection, Munich.


2.4 Awards and Honours

1984-85 Research Grant from Lalit Kala Academy for painting in Garhi Studio
1985 All Indian Fine Arts Society Award
1986 Gold Medal in VI Triennele (International)
1986 Curated Women Artist Exhibition for Festival of India, USSR
1991-92 On the purchase Committee of National Gallery of Modern Arts
- On jury of Republic Day Committee, Govt. of India for 2 days and on
  Selection Committee for Republic Day Tableaux for 4 years
- Founder Member and Secretary General of Academic of Fine Art and
  Literature
- Only Indian artist commissioned by Hiroshima Museum of Modern Art to
- do a work for the 50th Anniversary of the Holocaust
1989 Jury of National Exhibition

Collaborated with Godna tribal artist Sat Narain Pande and for the first time in India.
co-signed works with him.

1991-92  
**Purchase Committee**, National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi.

1992  
**Invited by USIS** as international visitor of the year, USA.

1995  

1995  
**Commissioned by Hiroshima Museum** to execute a large work for its permanent collection on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the Holocaust.

1995-98  
**Selection Committee**, Republic Day Pageants for Ministry of Defense, Govt. of India, New Delhi.

2001  
**Advisory Committee**, National Gallery of Modern Art, Lalit Kala Akademi, Sahitya Kala Parishad, New Delhi.

**Founder Member and Secretary General**, Academy of Fine Arts and Literature.

1984  
**AIFACS Award**, New Delhi.

**Commendation Certificate**, Algiers Biennale.

1986  
**Gold Medal for painting**, 6th Triennale India, Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi.

1989  
**Eminent Artist**, Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi.

1989-92  
**Eminent Artist**, Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi.