The Spirit of India

India is not just a country. It is a sub-continent. It was secluded

from the rest of the world by the Himalayas on the north and

lower ranges on the west, north and east. The Indian Ocean

secured the south. The only way to get into the Indian sub-

continent was the Khyber and Bolan passes on the western

border, which the Aryans and the Moghuls used.

ecologies and regional costumes.

and fought each other and stole one another's kingdoms, but

socially, nothing changed. We built our temples, mosques and

churches, we share all the festivals. Our civilisation has

The closest we got to one nation, was during the reign of

Ashoka, the Guptas, the Moghuls and the British. Then came

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, the Mahatma, the Great

Soul. He preached non-violence and peaceful protests. India

followed his path to Independence and democracy. Suddenly we

States were defined on linguistic lines, which also have their own

The way we dress, the food we eat, the festivals we celebrate, how

we dance, marry, punish and award, are as variable as our

Bharat Mata ki Jai!!!!!

languages. But, in all our hearts, we are Indians.

survived.

were one country.

cultures. But they are still Indians.

Our beautiful country is blessed. It has

mountains, rivers, deserts, forests and fertile

plains. It has many languages, different

cuisines, assorted festivals and many cultures,

For centuries we were not one nation. Many

kingdoms, large and small, were ruled by Sultans,

and Maharajahs. We had our little disagreements

Dear Friends,

Many of us, myself included, don't know much about our own country. Most people live in one state and visit a few other states. For myself, I have not been to some of the eastern states, and have been to only three southern states. Come to think of it, I haven't been to some of the central states!

In school, I learned about things that effected the whole country, but very little about the individual states, their culture, their politics, their history.

India, the whole sub-continent, has been one country for less than 100 years. Many of the contemporary states are less than 40 years old. There is a spirit that binds us together.

So I decided to dig into this and here is what I found. I hope you will be interested - and educated - and enjoy these little histories.

In this Calendar I present The Spirit of Inglice

Pradip Burman

Burmay

ABOUT THE ARTIST



Gautam Partho Roy

We told him that we were showcasing the variety and beauty of the costumes of our country, from Kashmir to Cape Comorin. That's all we said. He asked, "Which states?" We gave him a list and he disappeared for a month.

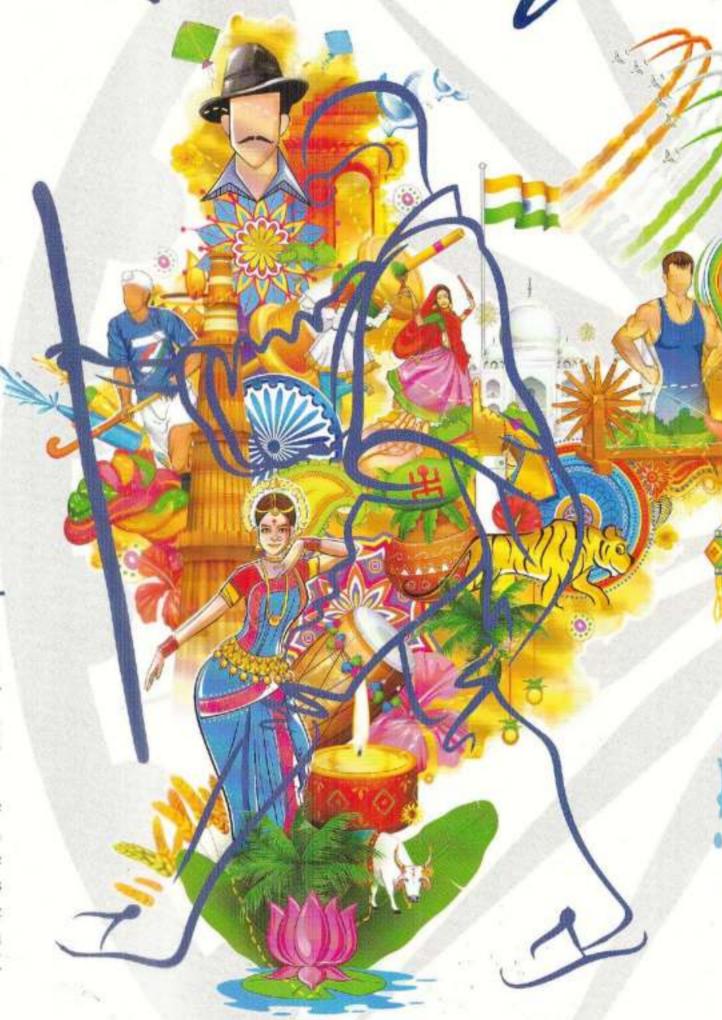
He came back with painted costumes, but not like models in magazines. No. Not him. He paints a girl, wearing a salwar kurta, on the cross bar of a bicycle and a young man, wearing a turban, riding it. That's not all. He then decides to put in meaningful, historic structures of the State and relevant countryside. You

know. The Jallianwala Bagh Memorial, wheat fields and other Punjabi icons. He makes the state fit the costumes.

We are now thinking about the next calendar, trying to figure out what we can choose that he CAN'T paint. Suggestions welcome.

Gautam Partho Roy holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Rabindra Bharat University, Kolkata.

Contact: e mail: artgautamproy@yahoo.co.in



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