

✓ A seamless merging of spirituality and satire, is probably the best way to describe designer and painter Jenny Bhatt's ongoing series of paintings titled *Moksha Shots*; the twelfth episode of which is currently in a popular gallery in the city. Creating her own deities from modern principles such as "consumerism" and "thinking", Jenny's work deals with providing viewers of her art with what she calls small doses of Moksha or salvation.

Starting out as a design visualiser after her degree in Visual Communication, Jenny has dabbled in many domains ranging from spirituality to stand-up before entering the world of art. Her present project, *Moksha Shots* has been ongoing for over five years and has gained popularity as a series of collectibles.

"It offers glimpses of salvation," says Jenny about *Moksha Shots*. She adds, "Everybody today is struggling to find salvation. First religion gave us idols and paraphernalia as a source of salvation and in modern society all things popular, right from actors and stars to luxury cars are replacing this. So my work, while it is heavily inherent with philosophy and spirituality, is at the same time a satire about this present predicament when it comes to finding salvation."

According to Jenny, finding salvation in this day and age is nigh impossible, so her work is an attempt towards providing the philosophy of Moksha, which recurs in Hindu and Buddhist philosophy in minor doses. "It can be anything and anywhere. It can be in a song, a bar of chocolate or even in a Ferrari," adds Jenny.

"It started when I visualised and created five different deities that people today can easily relate to and made them the background of my work. I call them MokshaPets," says Jenny. She elaborates, "For example, the deity MokshaBuy symbolises consumerism while the deity MokshaBum symbolises thinking or thought. They all have

Shots of satire and salvation

Through her symbols, designer Jenny Bhatt takes a closer look at her contemporary society – its passions and defects – evoking nostalgia and spirituality



their own distinct characteristics: Such as MokshaBum does only thinking, he doesn't have a job and is lazy and just sits and thinks."

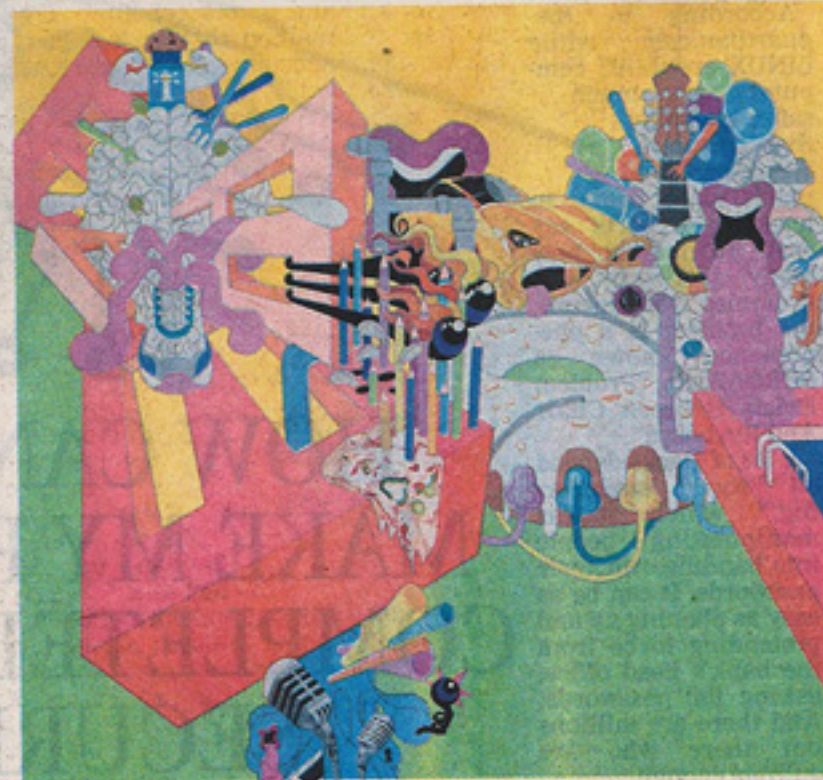
"My works brings out these distinct characters. I have incorporated various elements of spirituality in them as well. The *Nostalgia Mandala*, which is a part of the current exhibition is all about making satirical allusions to trivial and popular items or things. The *Nostalgia Mandala* would have the famous shoe from Kamala Nehru Park or the once famous Phantom cigarettes and the like. It is all about inducing nostalgia," adds Jenny.

While treading on the tricky turf of adding modernity into tradition and spirituality, her work, says Jenny, is often inspired from her own journey and life. "My inspiration for this concept comes from my own experience and knowledge of



spirituality. In my early 20s my mother had become very ill and I took to the concept of alternate spirituality. And also when I started out in design, I was working with Lintas (now Lowe) and there they had this huge library. I used to sit there for hours on end and read up on design. I remember they had this huge book on Andy Warhol and concepts of PopArt and I used to sit and read it for long durations. It was quite a testing time. But the culmination of all of these experiences are what made me realise that I belong in art and not in advertising and also helped me come up with the concepts that I am working on today," explains Jenny.

On the response to her work, which has been exhibited at a popular gallery in the city and also displayed for sale at The Bombay Store, Jenny says, "It has been excellent. I am very



much into design and as far as I know this is the first time that something like this is being tried. So there is a fair amount of curiosity among the youth. It would be too soon to say if the trend of art collectibles in picking up in India like in the US and in Europe, but there is definitely a lot of scope in this field," Jenny concludes.

Till February 1, 10.30 am to 7.30 pm at Gallery Art and Soul, 1, Madhuli, Shiv Sagar Estate, Opposite Nehru Tarangan, Dr Annie Besant Road

