

Jyoti Sharma

**O**ur country has one of the highest populations in the world; theirs has one of the lowest population densities. We inhabit different continents and see the sun rise at different hours. But, we are same. Brushstrokes, while caressing canvas, do not discriminate between Indian and Swedish fingers. They simply lend expression to an ingenious mind.

That's what Fusion, a group show by Swedish and Punjabi artists, at Chandigarh Museum and Art Gallery is all about. Tellus Art, a Sweden-based NGO, has set up this art exhibition.

Here, paintings by 10 Punjabi and 12 Swedish artists are on display. "We had put up the painting exhibition with these artists earlier in Delhi to spread awareness about the global environmental concerns," quips Namrata Tandon, one of the core members of Tellus Art team.

But aren't the environmental concerns, and the level of awareness, in India very different from that in Sweden? "Yes, it might be. For them, the early melting of snow might be scarier. For us, the fast drying rivers could be the alarm bell. But the issue of global warming impacts us all. It unsettles all those who are sensitive and caring," says Harpreet Singh, a participant artist.

To bring all these caring minds together, Tellus Art has planned to take the exhibition to Scandinavian countries, then to Europe and further worldwide, involving the local artists of the different countries.

They are not only using art for a cause but also using it as a means to ignite young minds. Namrata adds, "We wish to involve children through means of workshops to sensitise them about the global environmental issues. So far, the response from children from the Indian subcontinent has been overwhelming. We have also planned to



## Green strokes on EARTH'S canvas

FIVE-DAY EXHIBITION, FUSION, BRINGS TOGETHER ARTISTS FROM PUNJAB AND SWEDEN FOR A GLOBAL CAUSE AT CHANDIGARH MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY

hold a workshop with City students on March 4."

The foreign artists too feel and nurture the connection with students. "Here kids also talk about soul and spirituality. It was an overwhelming experience. I feel a special connection with India," says Gunilla Lofgren, a Swedish artist, looking pretty in a salwar kameez. She directs towards her artwork, saying, "All this is red. This is not a typical Swedish artwork. It has been painted from heart that knows no boundaries. In fact, the Indian mountains remind me of my village in Sweden."

Yes, a boundless territory. That's what 70-year-old Eri-Maria van der Spank thinks: "I am not here just because I am an artist. Being a grandmother, I understand that it is important to save the environment for our further generations. And, I am working towards it."

The exhibition, inaugurated by Chief Parliamentary Secretary Punjab, Harish Dhandha on Sunday, is on till March 5.

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