

DIAMOND AUCTION
Beau Sancy, a 400 year old diamond in private hands, is expected to fetch up to \$4mn at Sotheby's auction in Geneva on May 14

FEATURES

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Sunita Rajvanshi



Tania Hens



A VIVID CELEBRATION

Artists Sunita Rajvanshi and Tania Hens, showcased their talent in an exhibition titled 'Celebration of Colours'. *Muscat Daily* caught up with them to discuss their art, inspiration and passion for charity

Amartojit Basu
Muscat

Their core vision is the same. The themes for the paintings that were on display are similar. Both artists are equally proficient with the different materials they used to adorn the canvas. Both love to play with colour. Thus the exhibition, 'Celebration of Colours', which ran at InterContinental Muscat last week was the perfect opportunity for like minded

artists Tania Hens and Sunita Rajvanshi to display and sell their paintings together.

"We got the idea to do an exhibition together about a year ago. Both of us have been painting for charitable causes for a while now," said Tania.

The charity receiving proceeds from this exhibition was Petra Oman. "Also, we have created so many paintings in our time here, that we wanted to showcase them together, as our



(From left) 'Guitar' and 'Horse Power' by Sunita Rajvanshi

work is very complementary." "There were more than 70 paintings on display and as the name of the exhibition suggested, the paintings had vivid and vibrant colours. There were different types of paintings as well, with oil and acrylic paints featuring prominently. Mixed media paintings were also on display. "Many layers and textures using materials like sand and silk, give the paintings a depth and make them look dynamic," said Tania.

However now, painting has become more than a hobby for both. "It has become very important to me to express myself. I now paint for a lot of reasons. I even paint to cure my headaches," said Tania.

Another aspect of note at the exhibition was that the artists also showcased different techniques. "I have done some paintings just based on colour drips and splatters," said Tania. This experimentation is a result of getting to know each other's styles "We have known each other for three years now, and I think we have learnt a lot from discussing and observing the other's work. In fact, we have worked on some of the paintings together as well," said Sunita.

They also believe that art is a matter of perspective. "We never paint with any reason other than to paint and create. The fact that usually the paintings are made for a good cause is just an added incentive," said Tania, who had a few paintings on display that were inspired by last year's tsunami in Japan and signified the courage of the Japanese people in dealing with the tragedy.



Muttrah Corniche, oil on canvas by Tania Hens (Muscat Daily)

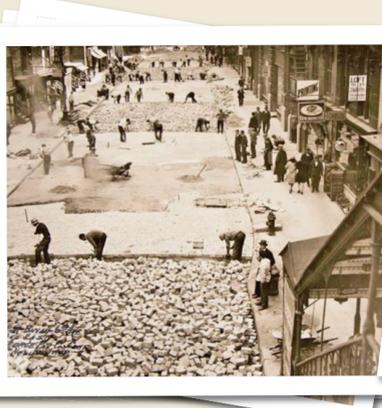


'Tree of Life', acrylic on canvas by Tania Hens

New York City portrayed online in 870,000 images



In this October 7, 1914 photo, painters are suspended from wires on the Brooklyn Bridge



In this October 2, 1930 photo, workers assemble bricks to build the roadway on 28th Street



In this 1890 photo, two girls walk east along 42nd Street



In this May 18, 1940 photo, a man reads a newspaper on New York's 6th Avenue and 40th Street

The two men were discovered dead at the bottom of an elevator shaft in a 12-story Manhattan building, as if dumped there, one man sprawled on top of the other.

The rare crime scene photograph from November 24, 1915, is one of 870,000 images of New York City and its municipal operations now available to the public on the Internet for the first time.

The city Department of Records officially announced the debut of the photo database re-

cently. A previously unpublished link to the images has been live for about two weeks.

Culled from the Municipal Archives collection of more than 2.2mn images going back to the mid-1800s, the photographs feature all manner of city oversight - from stately ports and bridges to grisly gangland killings.

The project was four years in the making, part of the department's mission to make city records accessible to everyone, said department assistant com-

missioner Kenneth Cobb.

"We all knew that we had fantastic photograph collections that no one would even guess that we had," Cobb said.

Taken mostly by anonymous municipal workers, some of the images have appeared in publications but most were accessible only by visiting the archive offices in lower Manhattan over the past few years.

Researchers, history buffs, filmmakers, genealogists and preservationists in particular will find the digitised collection help-

ful. But anyone can search the images, share them through social media or purchase them as prints. The gallery includes images from the largest collection of criminal justice evidence in the English-speaking world, a repository that holds glass-plate photographs taken by the New York City Police Department.

It also features more than 800,000 colour photographs taken with 35mm cameras of every city building in the mid-1980s to update the municipal records, and includes more than

1,300 rarely seen images taken by local photographers of the Depression-era Works Progress Administration.

Because of technological and financial constraints, the digitised gallery does not include the city's prized collection of 720,000 photographs of every city building from 1939 to 1941. But the database is still growing, and the department plans to add more images.

Among the known contributors to the collection was Eugene de Salignac, the official

photographer for the Department of Bridges/Plant & Structures from 1906 to 1934. An iconic Salignac photograph, taken on October 7, 1914, and now online, shows more than a half-dozen painters lounging on wires on the Brooklyn Bridge.

"A lot of other photographers who worked for the city were pretty talented but did not produce such a large body of work or a distinct body of work," said Michael Lorenzini, curator of photography at the Municipal Archives and author of *New York*

Rises that showcases Salignac images.

Maira Liriano, manager of the New York Public Library's local history and genealogy division, said the tax photo collections are of particular interest to researchers.

For example, she said, homeowners seeking to restore their historic houses often go to the Municipal Archives to get images of what the buildings looked like in the 1940s or 1980s.

AP