

S. H. RAZA,
81 Avenue Secrétan,
75019 PARIS.

January, 3, 1979.

Shri Haribhau Joshi,
Minister for Panchayat + Rural Development,
Kashana Bungalows,
BHOPAL.

Dear Shri Haribhau Joshi,

Though my letter is belated, please permit me to say that I was greatly distressed to learn about the demise of your father-in-law, while I was in Bhopal. It made me very sad indeed, as the loss also afflicted my friend V. S. Wankar, whom I have known since the early days in Paris. The present letter is to convey to you my feelings + condolences.

I would have liked to meet you again, present to you my works more leisurely + talk to you about problems of Art + Artists in Madhya Pradesh. The two weeks I spent in Bhopal, Indore + Gwalior, permitted me to survey the art scene, visit artists + art students + talk to various people concerned + involved in Art.

A direct contact was established, I must say, centered on my visit + the exhibition of my latest works shown for the first time in Madhya Pradesh. I was grateful for the kindness, the honour + the hospitality offered to me at the occasion of the "USTAV" '78. I desired earnestly in return that my experience in life + my experiments in the arts could be communicated as reference + perhaps as a stimulation to the artists of this region, where along with religion, poetry, music + arts are a natural part of existence.

The gist of my observation is as follows: There is abundance of talent in Madhya Pradesh. Latent potentialities

are everywhere, life force is manifest in culture + agriculture. Tender + fragile buds + clusters of leaves are appearing everywhere. They need attention + care. The local problem is that we reach certain standards due to natural forces, and then at a point we do not go further.

A thought process has to accompany instincts + intuitions, until these later become supreme. It is in this context that the activities of the Madhya Pradesh Kala Parishad with the inspired guidance of Shri Ashok Bajpeyi seem most timely. I think that the cultural action, with a coherent programme of exhibitions, publications + above all the Annual Multi-Arts Festival "UTSAV" is being implied with understanding, discretion + insight. We need more, for instance a permanent State Gallery of Modern Art, an up to date library + a special attention to the young talented artists who are going to be, if encouraged + helped, the avant-gard of Contemporary Indian Art in the near future.

Art is based on Nature, but Art is also based on ART. As such tangible documents, archives + references of National + world art sources ~~seem~~ indispensable in a city where considerable efforts are being made to create a congenial climate for artistic expression. Bhopal with its two magnificent museums of ancient Indian sculpture, the prehistoric ^{rock} shelter paintings + abundance of talent in the arts, is at the threshold of becoming a living Art Center of which we can all be proud.

It has been my pleasure to be back home on this occasion, my privilege to witness this happening + to convey to you through this letter some facets of my thoughts for what they are worth.

With best regards,

Yours Sincerely.

