

Why seven is more than sin

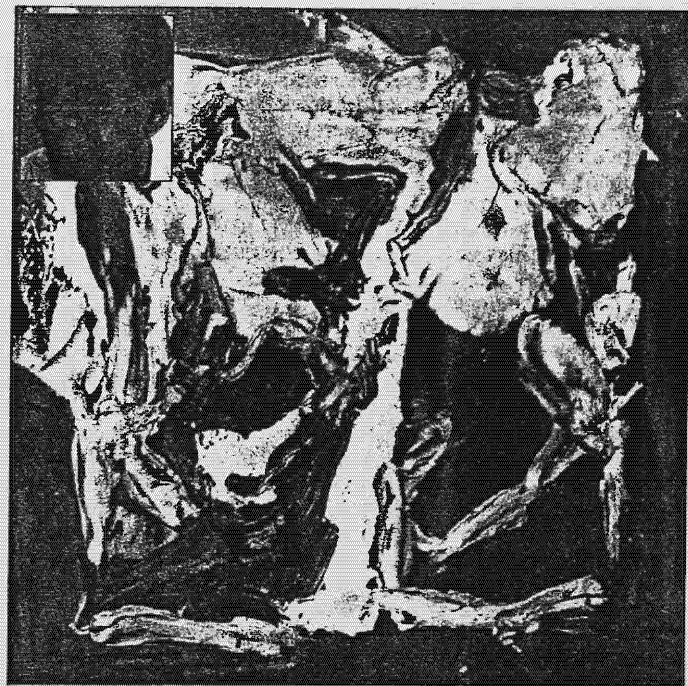
TEAM VIVA

Seven was an important number in ancient India. There are seven oceans, sages, constituents of the body, notes and horses of the sun's chariot. Seven important rivers, cities and nether worlds. Following the old tradition, I wrote about seven contemporary artists," said Ashok Vajpeyi, author of *Seven*. The book launch, true to its character, will be accompanied by different exhibitions at the same time in seven cities all over the world. One of them is on at IHC till March 31.

The concept was initiated by publisher Ravi Kumar, who has been living in Europe for more than 40 years. "But I am a true blue Indian. That's why I have always tried to promote contemporary Indian artists. Now I am back to get in touch with my roots," the art loving publisher stressed.

Like him, some of the artists live in Paris. While Sujata Bajaj, Rajendrah Dhawan and Raza even studied in the French capital, Vishwanadhan, Akhilesh, Seema Ghurayya and Manish Pushkale only left India for showing their work in other countries.

Although all of them devote their space to abstract art, their



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oeuvres differ. Sujata Bajaj, for example, uses Sanskrit and other text fragments. "This provides latent and inherent energy an extrovert space to push on. Largely sacred, they consecrate space, releasing energy and positivity. They allow

the paintings to attain a certain spiritual dimension, where time and the timelessness get integrated into visual continuum," explained Ashok Vajpeyi.

Sujata Bajaj and Sayed Haider Raza share a strong bond. "He gave me his views, appreciation and guided my work," said Bajaj. Raza exposes for instance either colourful, rather regular geometrical shapes or wild abstract landscapes. Explained he, "By starting an inner journey, I transformed the outer world into a new perception of *prakriti*. Colour, the driving force, was both the medium and the means."

On his inspiration, Kumar says, "Nothing serious has been published on Indian abstract painters even though they can compete with any great work anywhere in the world." We agree.