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Paris, 29th March, 1983 -

My dear Kekoo + Harshad,

Just this evening, Nisha rang up to inform me that Rudy passed away last Friday in Vienna. I can hardly contain myself. I rang up Rudy, I rang up Vienna, hoping to find Lally. In vain. In my bewilderment, I am writing to you. Only a few weeks back, he recovered the warmth & friendship in Bombay, as was reported by Rangan in his article in the evening news dated 5th February. Last October, we met in Bern, amongst so many old friends when he opened my exhibition. It's indeed difficult to believe the news, it's difficult to reconcile with the loss.

I am hearing "Om Namah Shivaya", while I am writing. This bhajan gives peace in my difficult moments. A whole life long story comes to my mind in several episodes. Our first meeting at the Art Society of India exhibition, at his flat, in Bombay in company of Schelesinger & Professor Walter Laughhammer. It was in November, 1943. My own life was just starting. It is now 40 long years of association & friendship where we have kept ourselves in regular touch. He became a part of the adventure of Contemporary Indian painting - always attentive, passionate & involved - he was prompt to discover any new talent & he spoke & wrote in most candid terms. His views, clear judgement & sense of proportion made him an authority widely respected. And it was not only painting which drew his attention, he felt concerned with all the aspects of Art & culture & his approach revealed the search of intrinsic "life force" in human expression. Contemporary Indian Art was in the making & his presence was a real asset.

So, Pudi is no more with us. A whole generation of our common friends are disappearing - one by one. It's a reminder of the fugitive aspect of life + also of the importance of values felt, defined + lived in the span of time given to us. Pudi has given us an admirable example of the expanse of human possibilities, the possibilities of senses, of intellect, + of devotion, love + action. He lived beyond prejudices of caste, religions, isms + nationalities + entered the field where thought process functions in total liberty + is capable of right perception.

I wish I could come + join the family, the art world of Bombay. I wish I could.

With affectionate thoughts + fond love -

NTA
Janipa