

JANUARY 29-FEBRUARY 4, 2023

# SUNDAY POST

HERE . NOW



ANCIENT FORMS OF PAINTING

# Fading into oblivion

P 3,4  
COVER  
STORY



# MY SUNDAY

While pursuing his M.Tech in Bangalore, he never thought of making a career in movies or television industry. But fate had other plans. Pradeep Kumar Sahu aka Rishi landed a lead role in 'Shankha Sindoor' and the rest, as they say, is history. He is now a household name in Odisha following the stirring success of this TV show. Rishi, who looks forward to the streaming of Susanta



### Explorer at heart

I am always up for getaways to new places with my friends. To be able to explore the beauty of nature, local food, its history and the architecture has been in my bucket list.

### Odia thali is my pick

I believe being an Odia already makes me a foodie and I love all kinds of food, but authentic Odia thali keeps me satisfied anytime.

### Impulsive choices

I am a little unpredictable when it comes to trying different jobs. I am always inquisitive to trying new things and this is what perhaps made me fall in love with acting.

### Nature believer

I am a huge admirer of nature. I believe when you are happy you need nature to cherish and when you are sad then also you need the help of nature to fight back. It has great healing power.



### Family time

I spend my weekends with my friends and family mostly. Going to the theatres and watching films with them while gorging on good food are my first weekend choices.

SMRUTI REKHA BARIK, OP

## WhatsApp This Week

Only on Sunday POST!

Send in your most interesting WhatsApp messages and memes received to: [features.orissapost@gmail.com](mailto:features.orissapost@gmail.com) And we will publish the best ones

THE BEST MEMES OF THIS ISSUE

- What's the difference between men and pigs? Pigs don't turn into men when they drink.
- Entered what I ate today into my new fitness app and it just sent an ambulance to my house.
- I always feel better when my doctor says something is normal for my age but then think dying will also be normal for my age at some point.
- Why do the French eat snails? They don't like fast food.

## NEED FOR INTROSPECTION

Sir, Last week's cover story 'Wounded Pride' (Jan 22) has aptly highlighted the state-wide dissatisfaction at the exclusion of Odisha from the Republic Day tableau display for the third successive year. For preservation of the federal spirit, it is of utmost importance that all states/union territories get their pride of place in the annual parade and exhibit their artefacts at the grand spectacle. Karnataka's successive representation for 12 years from 2011--2022 vis-à-vis Odisha's participation on five occasions in the same period (2011, 2013, 2016, 2017 & 2020) certainly reek of partisanship. In view of the time constraints, a year-wise 'rotation system' may be put in place to give representation to all the states/union territories for showcasing their cultural heritage and accomplishments in different fields at periodic intervals. For the sake of transparency, the specific reasons/justifications for rejection of the state proposals for the tableau must be conveyed so that appropriate course corrections may be initiated for designing future floats.

AMIT BANERJEE, NEW DELHI

## LETTERS

### A WORD FOR READERS

Sunday POST is serving a platter of delectable fare every week, or so we hope. We want readers to interact with us. Please send in your opinions, queries, comments and contributions to [features.orissapost@gmail.com](mailto:features.orissapost@gmail.com) B-15, Industrial Estate, Rasulgarh, Bhubaneswar - 751010, Orissa. Phone (0674) 2549982, 2549948





**ANCIENT FORMS OF PAINTING**

# Fading into oblivion

MADHUSMITA SAHU, OP

Many art connoisseurs believe that Odisha is short of deft hands that drew mural paintings on various shrines and old mutts depicting the glorious past of the state

**H**ockey fever never gripped Odisha, capital city Bhubaneswar in particular, like it did in the last fortnight. Being the host city, it was given a massive facelift ahead of hockey World Cup to welcome millions of fans and tourists from across the globe.

The varieties of events, eye-catching illuminations, installation of sculptures at strategic locations and other decorations have given the Temple City a brand new look. However, one aspect of this expensive preparation that certainly looks out of sync and that is mindless execution of art works in the city walls.

In a beautification bid, the authorities have engaged over a hundred of artists to decorate the walls. So far, so good, but the images that have adorned the walls in many areas hardly showcase the culture and heritage of Odisha. One can see the pictures of bananas, brinjals, flowers and even images of road side vendors in some walls. Ironically, these were the ones who lost their livelihoods ahead of the event.

There were several ancient forms of art that were synonymous with the identity of erstwhile Utkala. Instead of making them come alive on the walls, the painters were engaged to draw pictures of flowers and fruits.

Connoisseurs of art believe that we are

short of deft hands that drew mural paintings on various shrines and mutts depicting the glorious past of the state while several forms of paintings have either disappeared or on the brink of disappearance. Are some famous forms of painting really vanishing from the scene?

“Yes, it is true to some extent,” affirms **Ramahari Jena**, a leading light of Odia art scene.

“Government is largely focusing on cities like Puri and Bhubaneswar with other parts of the state remaining neglected. This results in younger generation not getting proper education and skills to carry the legacy forward,” he pointed out.

Though several ancient forms of paintings are dying with the advent of digital revolution, here’s a look at some of the prominent art forms which needs immediate attention.

**Mural paintings**

Talking about one of the major forms that has really suffered, the award winning painter continues: “Mural paintings which are found in the old mutts are among the many forms of art that are on the verge of dying. In these mutts you could find historical paintings reflecting our tradition, our past, and our culture. The palace of Dharakote in Ganjam district houses a Jagannath Temple which speaks the beauty of mural paintings.



MURAL PAINTING

artistic creations in the erstwhile princely states where the rulers patronised these forms of painting and the painters.

In these cards, several paintings are seen just like pattachitra, and were related again to Ramayana and Mahabharata. People in the past used to play these cards during their leisure.

These cards are now printed and not hand painted like the older times, says Jena.

Nowadays, these cards are only prepared by some artists residing at Raghurajpur, Digapahandi and some places of Dharakote. Natural dyes made from lacquer, limestone, coal-carbon, and tamarind are used to paint the cards but now they use wood polish, he adds.

Similarly, Biranchi Narayan Temple, located in Buguda of the same district, has mural paintings depicting Ramayana and Mahabharata. But due to lack of proper upkeep, the invaluable work are gradually fading into oblivion.”

**Ganjapa cards**

Art work on Ganjifa is known in Odisha as Ganjapa cards, one of the traditional card games, are also on the brink of disappearance.

Ganjifa derives from Ganjifeh, a Persian word, was believed to have been brought to India and popularised during the Moghul era. These playing cards were the foremost



GANJAPA CARDS





PATTACHITRA PAINTING

**Saura painting**

Jena, whose work has been displayed at numerous national and international exhibitions, further says, "There is also a form of painting called Saura, made by the adivasis which is vanishing fast. At a first look, a Saura painting has striking resemblance to Warli art.



SAURA PAINTING

However, they are different in their styles and treatments of subjects. People of Saura community are best known for their traditional wall paintings, which they call ikons. In today's time Saura paintings have vanished. The work looks like Saura paintings seen on roadside walls are hybrid paintings, not the original ones."

In the past the government tried to revive this form of painting but couldn't properly identify the problem and the people involved in the profession. The officials just asked the painters to copy the Warli paintings which in return took the sheen away from the original form, lamented the former visiting fellow of Glasgow School of Art, Scotland.

Because of the commercialisation, many products and colours used for the paintings are losing their quality which plays an important

role in vanishing forms of art, Jena says.

"A wrong impression is being created that the younger generation is not interested to carry forward the legacy of the painters because of money. But the fact is they are not groomed properly to take painting as a profession. It is not just the painting, many other forms of traditional art forms like Brass Fish, Gobara Kandhei, Mukha Kandhei are also perishing," he adds.

**Santhal painting**

Another art work that will perhaps be not seen in future is Santhal painting. Originated in Mayurbhanj district and popular among the people of Santhali community, this form is facing government apathy, says artist **Kesu Das** who has several national and international awards to his credit.



"The government should identify the Santhal painting and its painters, like the other painters in Odisha and accord them the special tag they deserve," adds Das.

The government is only recognising the painters who are famous across the state and not the ones who are not known or little known, alleges Das.

A few days ago, he had invited 30 educationists for a seminar on Santhal painting to make people aware about the form and give them the distinct identity they deserve in the state, claimed Das.

**Scenic art**

In old days, when plays were staged in villages, actors used to perform in front

of hand painted scenery, images of gods and goddesses and textures drawn by scenic artists. The practice is no longer in vogue. One can get such sceneries and painting only in the walls of parks, museums and on the road side walls, says **Atasi Basu Jena**, a well known female painter of the state.



**Tha Jhoti**

In the late 60s, when the capital city was in its infancy, when a person visits his in-law's place he was welcomed in a grand manner and is served with a hearty meal, and the place he is served at is decorated by a painting/jhoti known as "THA". This tradition is no more in practice in any household of the city, adds Basu Jena, an alumnus of BK College of Art and Crafts.



THA JHOTI

However, she observes that traditional paintings have undergone changes from time to time. Changes don't mean only changing the natural colours, it is all about updating

forms with new techniques to represent Odisha's tradition and culture, she further says.

**Osakothi painting**

Osakothi, a combination of two Odia words - Osa (penance) and Kothi (house) - is a tradition of mural paintings of Ganjam district. Once nurtured under the patronage of royals, the flourishing art seems to have been lost in oblivion, says visual artist **Firdausi Tabassum**. There are only a handful of artists throughout the district who are struggling to keep it alive.

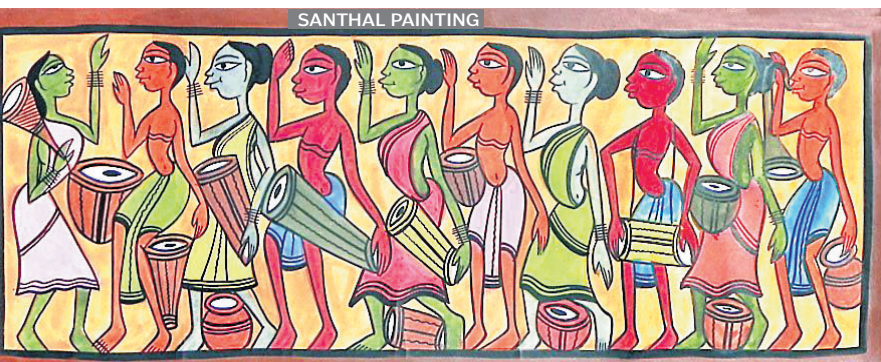
This apart, a few other forms like Jatripatti, Pattachitra, Sadheikala, Talapatra Chitra are also dying forms, adds Tabassum.



Asked what could be the reason behind the vanishing form of painting? Pat came the reply. "Reason is simple. Art is, in the present time nowhere in a common man's day to day life. Art teaches the art of living and it needs patronage what we lack these days. Another reason is we are keeping the art farther from nature and natural ingredients which has made our unique forms of painting waning day by day."

The survival of ancient forms of painting depends on the strong resolves of the artists and attitude of social patrons. If fail to find solutions to these problems, it will vanish in course of time, she predicts.

Then, money also matters for the sustainability of an artist. If an artist's creation doesn't fetch his family two square meals a day, one shouldn't expect his successors to carry the legacy forward, concludes Tabassum.



SANTHAL PAINTING



OSAKOTHI PAINTING



After starting off in a small town like Cuttack, celebrity designer Tarina Sen has traversed a long journey as her creations are now being worn by the most prominent names of India

SMRUTI REKHA BARIK, OP

**S**he picks from the most mundane and makes it high-fashion and eye catcher. Her creations have been worn by the most prominent names across India. A dynamic designer whose personal style is ethereal, Tarina Sen is a name to reckon with in the world of fashion, ethnic wear in particular.

The Bhubaneswar-based fashionista hasn't looked back since she started off in the early 1990s. Tarina rejuvenated the country's fashion sense like never before. According to her clientele that boasts a galaxy of celebrities, Tarina's collections are not only timeless and expressive; they are created to be personalized by the customers. No wonder, House of Tarina by Tarina Sen is now one of the biggest brands of eastern India.

Apart from retailing across the country with multi-brand stores like Ogaan, Origins, Studio, Saks, Zenon and featuring in fashion and lifestyle magazines like *Hello* and *Verve*, Tarina also hosts shows in Mumbai, Kolkata, New Delhi and Bhubaneswar.

In one such recent show in Bhubaneswar, the celebrity designer who also owns clothing brand House of Tarina paid homage to the past and present in her new collection 'Charkha' on Odisha handlooms.



Tarina Sen with a showstopper

# 'Effortless elegance has been my forte'

On the heels of the show, **Sunday POST** caught up with Tarina on a winter evening at her Bapuji Nagar residence for a brief chat about her style and journey.

*Excerpts from the interview:*

■ **How did you begin your journey?**

■ I just loved clothes. As a kid I never liked to wear what was available in the market. So I decided to design my own outfit and while designing I used to make 20-30 pieces to put in exhibition. The journey began and there was no looking back.

■ **How long have you been in the industry and what are the major challenges that you have faced?**

■ I have been in the industry for 30 years. Being from a small town like Cuttack it was tough at the beginning because I had to source everything from the local shops of this town. I began all by myself and eventually we are now a team of 30. All my workers are from across the country which gives my work more versatility. Timelessness and effortless elegance has been my forte taking my craft to the colosseum, from laidback Cuttack to the metropolis.

■ **What all fabrics have you worked on and which do you think has been able to capture the market more consistently?**

■ I started with Odisha handloom Ikat in 1993, as a part of the Society Collection, one of the biggest lifestyle exhibitions in Mumbai. The collection contemporised Odissi fabric with techniques like crushing and zardosi work. It was a sell-out back then, and after 30 years I did a show January 12 with the same collection and like my old show it was a hit. It had a great response.

■ **Every country has a distinctive touch of Ikat. Would you want to explore the states of India or do you have plans on exploring the designs of other countries as well?**

■ Yes you are right. But unbelievably India has a lot to offer. So, I would like to do what my country is good at.

■ **Please tell us about your newest show 'Charkha'.**

■ Charkha or spinning wheel is a device that charged the freedom struggle and became a symbol of Swadeshi movement. Similarly, I believe that my show 'Charkha' will usher in a new era Odisha's fashion scene, an era of revisionism to find out where we come from and where we have arrived at in restoring our heritage. 'Charkha' is where authenticity meets festivity, where handmade details and exquisite finishing in Odissi weaves sourced from the artisans of Sambalpur, Nuapatna, Berhampur, Bargarh and Sonepur are at the centre of collection.

■ **How do you see the fashion scene in Odisha now?**

■ It's time to draw attention and appreciation to the incredible craftspeople of Odisha. I hope I can do that through my designs as well as the relationships we build with different artisans and collectives. I hope the fashion industry starts to appreciate the craft, time, cost of the resources, labour



and looks at fashion not just as an everyday thing, which it is, but also as a collective practice.

■ **Where House of Tarina sees itself in the global market in the next few years?**

■ I am just hoping and praying that I work hard enough in order to make a mark in the global market. I'm hoping someday to go to the far west. There may be many places where the 21st century Indian dream started, but Odisha is where that dream is going to be fulfilled.

■ **Which books have influenced your design philosophy?**

■ To be honest, I haven't read any book on fashion per say. I just get inspired looking at a flower, a shoe, colour. I get fabric shaded directly from them. The journey from nature to workshop has been commendable.

■ **Out of all designers you've worked with, who do you yearn to be like?**

■ From Indian designers I find Anamika Khanna very stylish. And JJ Valaya had great handwork to showcase. I also like Tarun Tahiliani.



# Nani Ma: A defence of diversity

ATRI PRASAD ROUT, OP

How does one process separation? Make sense of suffering? If you ask people today, chances are they will show you some Spotify playlist or any number of self-help books. But once upon a time, when there wasn't such a thing as Spotify and influencers didn't preach self-improvement, people also had to deal with the same things that people today deal with, things like loss, longing, failure and regret. And what helped people then deal with all of these was songs and stories, loosely referred to as folklore, these were passed down generations not through the written script but through the grandmothers, and other gifted storytellers, of many communities.

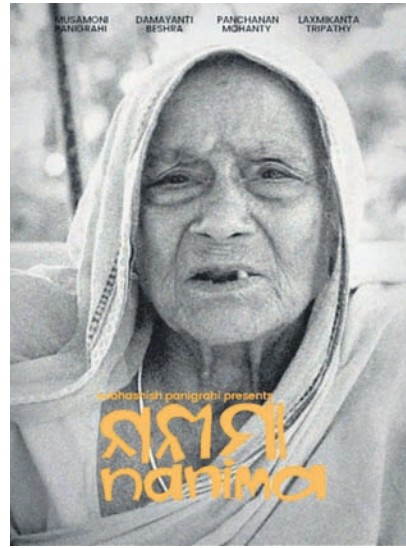
In his documentary *Nani Ma*, Subhashish Panigrahi takes a snapshot of this folklore, available to him through his grandmother, Musamoni Panigrahi, born in the Balasore district of Odisha in the 1920s, who carried the lore from one century to another.

Initially, partly with an aim to document

memory loss Subhashish had started interviewing his grandmother. But with time emerged new dimensions. As the folktales Musamoni narrated were distorted, with her brain erasing parts of her memory, and imagination stepping in to fill the gaps. Eventually, broadening the scope of the film to include language, how it flows, across ethnographic boundaries, evolves, absorbing new expressions and abandoning old customs, and how people attempt to exert control over that flow and evolution.

In Odisha, people speak many languages, many tongues, many dialects. Those who live in the districts that border West Bengal, Jharkhand and Andhra Pradesh speak a tongue that's heavily influenced by the languages of the those states. People also migrate, for markets, and for marriage, and with them they carry their languages.

But for some, this intermixing, this diversity, is confusing, and



**FILM REVIEW**  
 Title : Nani Ma  
 Genre: Documentary film  
 Director: Subhashish Panigrahi

unacceptable. These are the aberrations they want to see get eliminated, that's why they separate the 'suddha' (pure), from the 'apabhhransa' (corrupted). "People differentiate between suddha and apabhhransa because it gives them a sense of superiority, exactly like the caste system. These are only extensions of Brahminical supremacy," says Subhashish,

who argues that the effort to standardize language is a mistaken pursuit. "We won't become inferior if we use loan words, say medical or scientific terms from English," he says.

Though these issues of language and culture are politically polarising, Panigrahi's choice of human subject, his grandmother, seems more personal than political. He captures her with a kind of tenderness and compassion that you only reserve for a loved one. There is also a sense of impending loss, that's irreversible, as Musamoni, her generation and their wisdom confront the cruelty of time, death and decay.

But by picking a simple structure--interviews with Musamoni interspersed with exposition from experts--Panigrahi gives the stage entirely to his grandmother, leaving her to narrate her own stories, with her own voice, in a society that hesitates before giving agency to women. And this choice yields good results, as the subjective prevails over the objective, as the film becomes something more than a mere documentation of Baleswari Odia or regional folktales. Hopefully this will inspire documentarians, historians and academics from all linguistic and ethnographic backgrounds to preserve, record, what has been gradually disappearing, beneath our eyes, in the tide of time.



## 'Fan-following shouldn't be yardstick to get work'

Actor Shriya Pilgaonkar reacted to actors getting work merely on the basis of the number of followers they have on social media handles. She said fan-following should not be the yardstick to help them get work. Many fans agreed with

what she said, and wrote their opinions in the

comment section.

Taking to Twitter handle recently, Shriya wrote, "Actors should not be made to feel that they NEED to have a certain social media following to be considered for projects."

Actor Suzanne Bernert commented, "Very true...but it seems to be reality... Many times, I feel my audition is not even shown."

Swastika Mukherjee wrote, "That's what is happening. I hear from so many places that casting is being done on the basis of Instagram following. Shocking but true."

Reacting to her tweet, one of Shriya's fans wrote, "Yes that's a rubbish yardstick to be honest." Another fan commented, "They need to have acting skill-please remind them."

Shriya is the daughter of actors Sachin Pilgaonkar and Supriya Pilgaonkar. She has starred in several films such as *Fan*, *Jai Mata Di*, *House Arrest*, *Bhangra Paa Le*, *Kaadan* among others.

AGENCIES

## Nora on red flags in a relationship



Actor-dancer Nora Fatehi has been in news for her association with Suresh Chandra Sekhar, who is involved in an alleged Rs 200 crore money laundering case. Now, in a new interview, Nora has opened up about what she thinks is the 'biggest red flag in a guy'. Nora also revealed what is the 'pettiest thing' one can do after a breakup.

In a recent interview, without taking any names, or confirming that she was speaking from personal experience, Nora said 'disappearing' was the biggest red flag in a guy.

The *Thank God* actress explained how 'disappearing' was different to 'ghosting'. Speaking to an entertainment portal, she said, "The biggest red flag in a guy is disappearing. Not ghosting, like he will talk to you a lot today and tomorrow, and then for five days he is quiet, and then he will come back again and talk to you, like intense, and then he disappears again. Then you know he is talking to more than one girl."

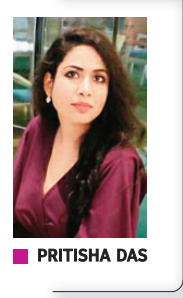
In the same interview, Nora was asked what she thought was the 'pettiest thing' one can do after their breakup. The actor said she herself had 'not done anything petty yet', although she hinted that she did come close to it. "I have not done anything petty yet. I was thinking of doing one (petty thing). I think something petty is telling people the business, the person's private business. I think that is really petty," Nora said.

AGENCIES



# Sweetmeats of Odisha

One of the many things people reckon Odisha for are its sweetmeats. The cravings for desserts is evident in every household. You travel to any part of the state and you'll get a good and unique dessert that would be full of raw flavours and so rustic starting from Chhenapoda to Kheera Manda. For people who have a sweet tooth, they will forever be unsatiated

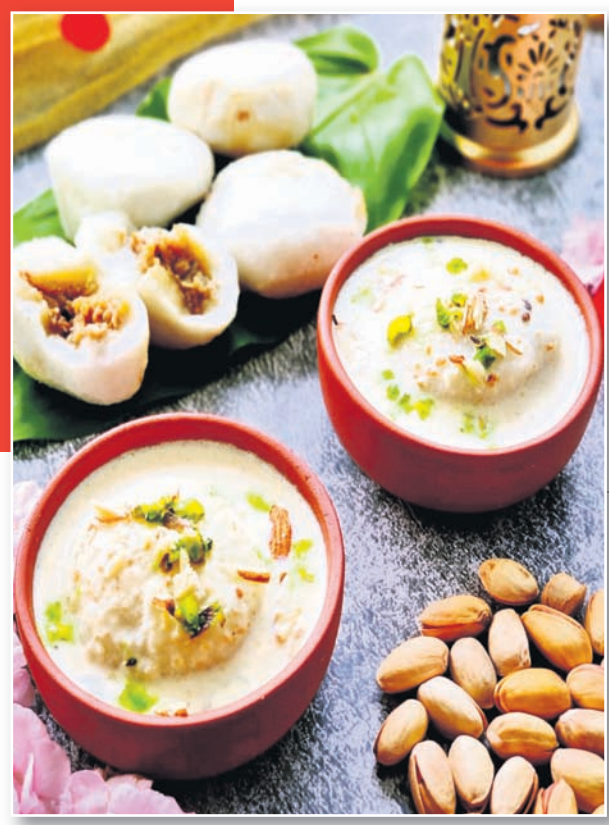


PRITISHA DAS



## Chhenapoda

Chhenapoda or roasted cottage cheese is the desi baked cheesecake with very minimal ingredients like cardamom, sugar and curd cheese. You can make a decadent dessert for your loved ones. The technique is to bake the cake with right temperature and for right amount of time. Nayagarh is the place where you'll find the authentic Chhenapoda. The makers bake it in wooden fire until it gets caramelized to that perfect golden brown colour.



## Kheera manda

Kheera manda is a delicious traditional recipe of Odisha. It is nothing but rice dumplings with sweet chhena/coconut stuffing which is then boiled in milk. I don't think there's any sweet shop which is selling this dessert anymore. This is a delicious recipe from Odisha that dates back to several hundred years. My granny used to say that this is one dish Lord Jagannath loves the most.



## Kheeri

Kheeri, the one classic dish you'll get in every household of Odisha for any special or random occasion. The flavour of this classic dessert is somewhat like rice pudding where small and fragrant Basmati rice is cooked in full fat milk with sugar, khoya and ghee. Of course without dry fruits there won't be any kheeri. To me a bowl of kheeri is like bliss to my heart.

The author is a popular food blogger of Odisha





**AMBIKA**

PHOTO: KUMAR SHARAT, OP