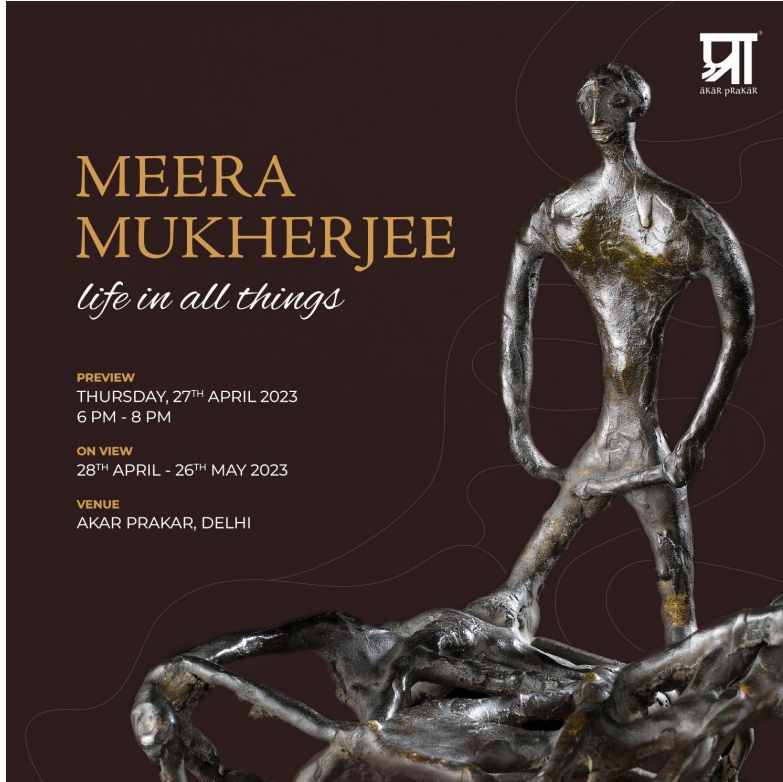


Meera Mukherjee: Life in all things

28th April – 26th May 2023

Akar Prakar, Delhi

Reception: Thursday, 27th April 2023 | 6-8 PM



“I belonged to a country which also had a great tradition of its own. It was the heritage which had in a thousand ways folded me. And, so though I was at the moment living, learning and growing in the West, I should still find my own way to myself, rooted in the great Indian tradition.”

- Meera Mukherjee

On the occasion of the 100th birth anniversary of artist Meera Mukherjee, Akar Prakar presents ‘Meera Mukherjee: *Life in all Things*’ to celebrate her life and works.

Even though we never had the honour of meeting this brilliant artist, we seem woven into her world in mysterious ways, so much so, that for several years now, it has led us to gather information on her life through family, friends, people and patrons who knew Meera closely, and of course through the many writings, books, photographs, we found, both by her and by others on her.



Meera is unravelled as “the woman behind the metal”, as a woman of flesh and blood. In the initial years of trial and toil, she started turning each pebble to a new path and no trouble seemed enough for her at one time. This exhibition is dedicated to remembering Meera and her genius, her commitment to her art, through the various mediums that she used during her journey as an artist, from wooden dolls to ceramic tiles, plaster of Paris to carvings on marble and terracotta works both large and intimate, drawings and paintings and finally her sculptures in Bronze which defined her artistic practice and which she struggled to create inspite of her financial constraints. She would often plough back the funds she received from her sale to create more sculptures. We know that Meera often gave these away as gifts and was shy of asking for the price of the work, and would sometimes use the weight of the bronze to define the price of the sculpture! Such was the simplicity of Meera. With passion and love, Meera brought rhythm and music, devotion and dedication, into everything she created. Through her art, she sings to us the theme which is life.



Artists' Bio

Meera Mukherjee

Born in Calcutta in 1923, Meera Mukherjee drew her inspiration for her work from the common man, with ordinary people doing everyday things. In her art, the fishermen, the weavers and the women stitching were her subjects. Known for her bronze sculptures, Meera experimented with various media including painting, drawing, ceramic and wood. An ardent researcher, she extensively presented her research on folk metal castings and classical Indian Sculpture castings. Her journey, lead her to develop her own unique technique for making wax sculptures. Her interest and love for music, dance and Bengali calligraphy also found their way into her work as themes and subjects.

Meera Mukherjee began her studies in painting at the Indian Society of Oriental Arts School, College of Art New Delhi. Later she enrolled at the Delhi Polytechnic to study sculpture in 1947. Later, she spent two years in Chennai and studied under Vysamsthapathi and Srinivas Achari. Her European sojourn with its diverse art forms, both ancient and modern, opened her eyes to the suitability of one's own culture as a personal idiom. She lived with the tribes in Bastar, Chhatisgarh, India and Dhokra(West Bengal), where she learned the lost wax casting technique. With her studies of bronze casting in Chennai, she developed her own technique which is an amalgam of the folk, South Indian and the Western method. Her close contact with the rural world crystallised in her sculptures as women repairing fishing nets, stitching and embroidering, grading wheat and generally toiling away. Her imagery also included objects from myth and folklore, refer the lost wax process, cire perdu, and casting.

There are two distinct features that represent the spirit of Meera's work. The first is the celebration of humanism and the other is an ardent desire to break free from a routine and enjoy freedom.