



Ice storm



Swan in the mist

SERENE STIMULATIONS



Delhi's artosphere is in for a divine intervention! Literally. The XII Tai Situpa, known as the next Buddha, will be showcasing his rare paintings in Delhi for the first time ever, writes **Supriya Sharma**

Two-year-old Tai Situpa's nanny had a tough time washing his clothes thanks to his infantile fetish for painting on the floor with charcoal. Her chiding wouldn't have been necessary had she known that this mini calligrapher would later transform into a renowned Buddhist priest, scholar, poet and artist.

As the month of December draws closer, the Kumar Gallery will be travelling back in time with the Tai Situpa, an reincarnation of the Bodhisattva Maitreya, the next Buddha, as per the Buddhist tradition, to an age where artists were reclusive creatures, cut off from all worldly trappings and oblivious of any profit-making practices.

We wouldn't have got this rare opportunity to see Tai's art if it wasn't for his disciples. They broke the norm of 'reclusiveness' and approached a gallery in Italy around 15 years ago to exhibit his work. Tai's union with the official world of art has continued ever since.

Like any other artist, Tai too needs to de-stress once in a while to get the creative process rolling. A good meditation or a month-long spiritual retreat is enough to

tickle the senses and prepare him for some exuberant display of talent.

But if he isn't totally satisfied with the outcome, he doesn't take long to destroy it and start afresh. "I need to feel nice about my paintings, otherwise there's no use," he informs. Another overpowering feeling while at work for Tai is of Déjà vu. "I often feel 'familiarity' with many places and things," he explains.

Shadow of Inner Light, however, is surprisingly Tai's first ever show in India, his motherland. It will showcase a monk's propensity for art in forty different versions in acrylic, water colours and red pearl ink on silk, archaic paper and rice paper, works in mixed media including gold, leaves, petals, stems and seeds of lotus. His canvases are serene portrayals of natural entities like the sun and moon in their myriad shades, pristine Himalayan landscapes, majestic pagodas and the tranquil flora and fauna.

It will be wrong to label an artist's work who doesn't believe in the 'realist' and 'abstract' tags. "There are no demarcations in art. It all depends on the times you are painting in," says Tai, adding, "Painting is



Environment

something that gives me clearness in life, not confusion!"

Tai is the twelfth in the line of the successive incarnations of the Tai Situpas that span over six hundred years and whose history is integral to the religious and scholastic

development in Eastern Tibet. The eighth period in this lineage was replete with famous Tankha paintings, which has had a great influence on Tai's work.

At Kumar Gallery, 22, Western Avenue, Sainik Farms. From December 1.