

Sehgal



**Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts  
Amar Nath Sehgal Private Collection**

*Exhibition*

*'A Life in Black & White - Amar Nath Sehgal'*

**Celebrating Centenary Birth Anniversary of the Legendary Artist**

**Amar Nath Sehgal**

**2<sup>nd</sup> February-16<sup>th</sup> February 2023**



## ABOUT IGNCA

The Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) is an Autonomous Trust set up by the Government of India under Ministry of Culture. IGNCA is visualized as a centre that encompasses the study and experience of all the arts- each form with its own integrity, yet within a dimension of mutual interdependence, interrelated with nature, social structure and cosmology. This view of the arts, integrated with, and essential to the larger matrix of human culture, is as essential to the integral quality of a person, at home with himself and society. It partakes the holistic worldview, that is very powerfully articulated throughout Indian tradition and emphasized by modern Indian leaders like Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore.

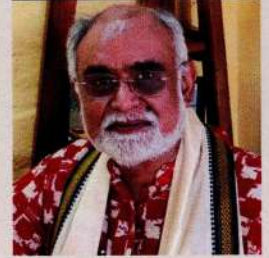
## AMAR NATH SEHGAL PRIVATE COLLECTION

The Amar Nath Sehgal Private Collection is a repository of sculptures and artworks and archives of the South Asian Modern artist, Amar Nath Sehgal. This year marks the centenary year of the artist. We are a single artist museum, the only one of its kind in the country.

The collection is located in the quaint locality of Jangpura, which was the artist's studio. Our rich archives of extensive documentation is the foundation of our museum.

We are here to create a deeper awareness and appreciation of the artist's contribution to the world over 6 decades of his life time. Through scholarships to budding artists, research, documentation and collaborations, we intend to create a dialogue between the art of the past and the future generations.

The Sehgal Collection is dedicated to preserving art and educating the community we are building. We will be turning 4 this year and look forward to your visit!



**Dr. Sachchidanand Joshi**  
Member Secretary, IGNC A

## Amar Nath Sehgal

Amarnath Sehgal, born on 5th February 1922, was an internationally acclaimed sculptor, possessing versatile personality, who excelled in painting, graphics, poetry and tapestries. He was India's cultural ambassador, an artist wedded to the social cause, with reminiscences of partition horror intensely seizing the artist's psyche, which got strong manifestation in his art works. Amarnath Sehgal initially did engineering but his artistic aptitude and urge gave him impetus to join Mayo School of Art. Later he did Masters in art education from the School of Education, New York University.

He came back to India in 1953 and got an important assignment from the Government of India -to organize a pilot project for the revival of folk arts at Jharsa district, Haryana, and was invited to work as an art consultant to the Ministry of Development & Cooperation. For his extraordinary contributions in the field of art, he received many honours, the most prestigious being the Padma Bhushan conferred on him by the Government of India in the year 2008.

It is a matter of pleasure and pride that we are organizing an exhibition- 'A Life in Black & White-Amarnath Sehgal' which will showcase his paperwork, unfolding his artistic expression in a medium less known to the art world. This exhibition is being organized by Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts in collaboration with the family of Shri Sehgal which has Amarnath Sehgal Private Collection, on the occasion of the centenary year celebration of the artist, which commenced in 2022. Besides the paperwork, the sculptures of Amarnath Sehgal in the collection of IGNC A are also being showcased. The exhibition will surely prove to be a visual treat for the art lovers, art connoisseur and scholars.

**Dr. Sachchidanand Joshi**

We are honored to have a part of my father's paperworks displayed at the IGNCA. The institution has been close to the artist's heart. A relationship that continued for many years, transpired into the historic Epic Episodes exhibition in 2004 which President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam inaugurated. His bronze sculptures are a part of the permanent collection and it heartens me to see the prominent display today.

The exhibition of inks and sketches, "A Life in Black and White" is a slice of the prolific creator's oeuvre that we take pride in celebrating during his ongoing centennial celebrations.

**Rajan Sehgal**

Founder Director,  
Amar Nath Sehgal Private Collection

**Amar Nath Sehgal** (5th February 1922 - 27th December 2007), the celebrated multifaceted artist, made an everlasting impression on the scenario of contemporary Indian art, with his intense sensitive artistic manifestation of the petrified self, having deep roots in his encounter with holocaust which followed partition of India and Pakistan in 1947. The anguish, pain, suffering, trauma which mankind underwent, is felt with a vigour even today in his art works which shakes us with the same intensity, creating empathy with the artist's appalled self. The exhibition- 'Life in Black & White- Amar Nath Sehgal', unfolds a treasure of rare art works of the artist on paper. Black & White series of Amar Nath Sehgal is impinged with poignant abstract idiom, executed with spontaneous, vigorous lines and strokes, with terror- stricken eyes and cries loaded with agony, narrates the partition horrors and possesses sculptural quality as a watermark of the artist. 'Estrangement' manifested with a few powerful strokes is exemplary of the artist's propensity in expressionistic allegory with minimized visual vocabulary

**Prof. (Dr.) Richa Kamboj**

HoD  
Kaladarshan Division  
IGNCA

# A Life in Black and White by Amar Nath Sehgal

## Curatorial Note

To understand the art, one must understand the artist.

Amar Nath Sehgal was born in the colonial era, year 1922. He was witness to the end of the colonial rule, the divide of his home and birth of a new nation, all at a young age. For an artist who takes inspiration from his surroundings, there was chaos, tragedy and loss that would later translate into his work. His sketches from 1946 are a compilation of local and mundane life, which style of art he learnt at the Mayo school of art. He captures the essence of the quiet and the ordinary.

Sehgal took to drawing, not as an artist but an architect with a vision. He built bold forms in his sculptures, from his imagination, that he first delivered on paper. For a poor artist with no studio space, a sketchbook was all he could use. In his travel to America, one can see the landscapes and the scenery he draws all from around him that over the two years there evolves into abstract forms. These abstract forms have been extracted into 3 dimensional forms of various mediums.

Unlike many artists, Sehgal never got fixated or had a muse. He believed his art had a purpose, a greater good to serve. He created lines to inspire its viewers. The boldness in it, the colour of black, with fierce strokes is a language he created by himself for himself. These were made in solitary for his friendship was with the forms he created.

The relationship he shared with the colour was one for a lifetime that grows more confidently over the years. The colour while stark, never wavers in his form. His lines, thick or thin, show no doubt in his deliverance, as though he submitted his conscious thought to his pen. The curated collection for this show has come together for the first time. He had never intended for these paperwork to become his means of income. Most found unframed in his studio after his passing, these works have woven a story that pieces together the larger picture of an artist's life.

"My motivation is that I try to grasp the spirit of humanity in any way I can-either by synthesizing or symbolizing a concept. Once I have the concept in mind, that gives me the form." (Amarnath Sehgal, Famous Sculptor back in Town, The Gulf News, 8th September 1980).

**Mandira Row**

Resident Curator

Amar Nath Sehgal Private Collection

## Amar Nath Sehgal

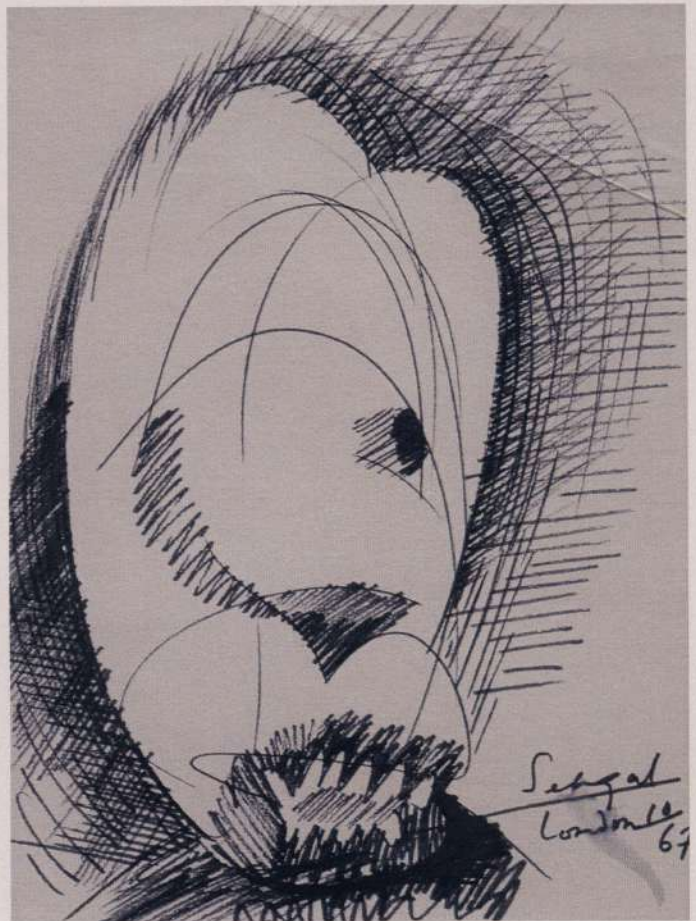
In Campbellpur, Pre Partition India, South Asian Modern artist Amar Nath Sehgal was born on 5th February 1922 to Ram Asra Mal and Parmeshwari Devi, the middle child of the seven children. He had a conventional education that led him to pursue a degree in Industrial Chemistry and Physics. Sehgal learnt to appreciate art as a child, but his conventional education led him to pursue a degree in Industrial Chemistry and Physics.

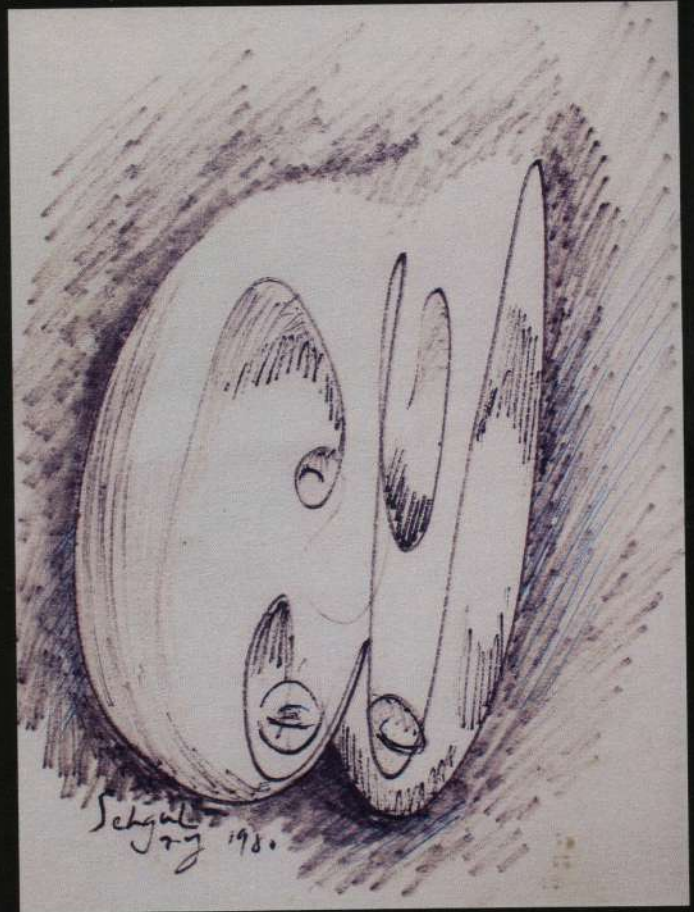
His urge for the artistic pursuit pushed him to enroll in evening classes at the Mayo School of Art in Lahore. B.C. Sanyal was his mentor and teacher. After 1947, he moved to a new India, where he spent two years in the Kullu valley. Soon after, he left for New York, to pursue a degree in art education at the New York University where he studied art education. He worked in 7 jobs to make ends meet. America gave him the opportunity to work with artists such as Jackson Pollock and Tony Smith opened their studio spaces to work out of and further influenced his artistic pursuit.

He returned to India after three years and worked relentlessly for over a decade on the revival of folk art and theatre in rural areas of Northern India like Nilokheri in Punjab and Jharsa in Haryana with the Ministry of Community Development. He spent 10 years of his life in educating and reviving tribal art communities in a post-colonial time.

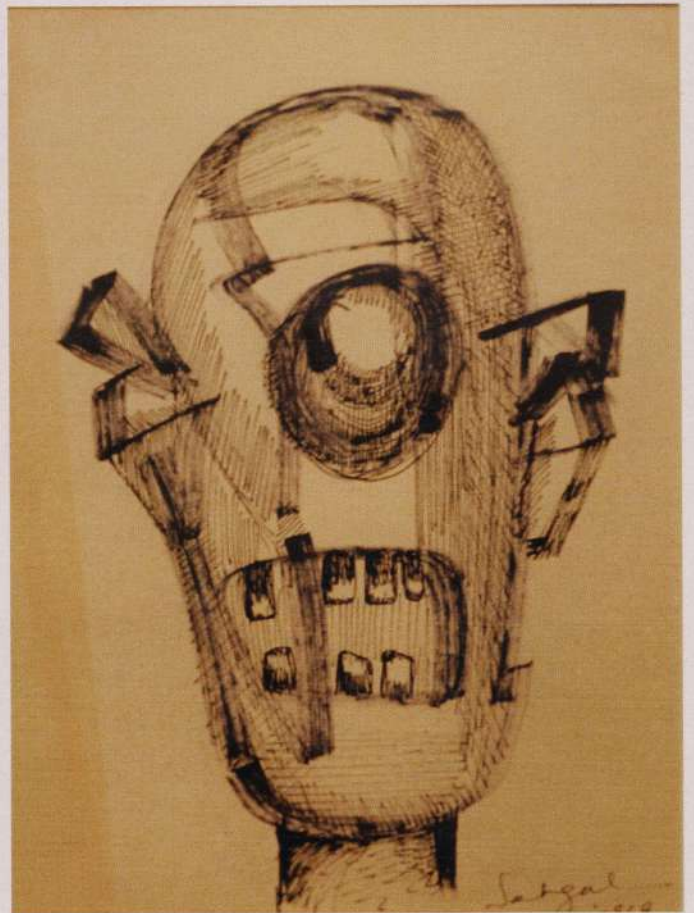
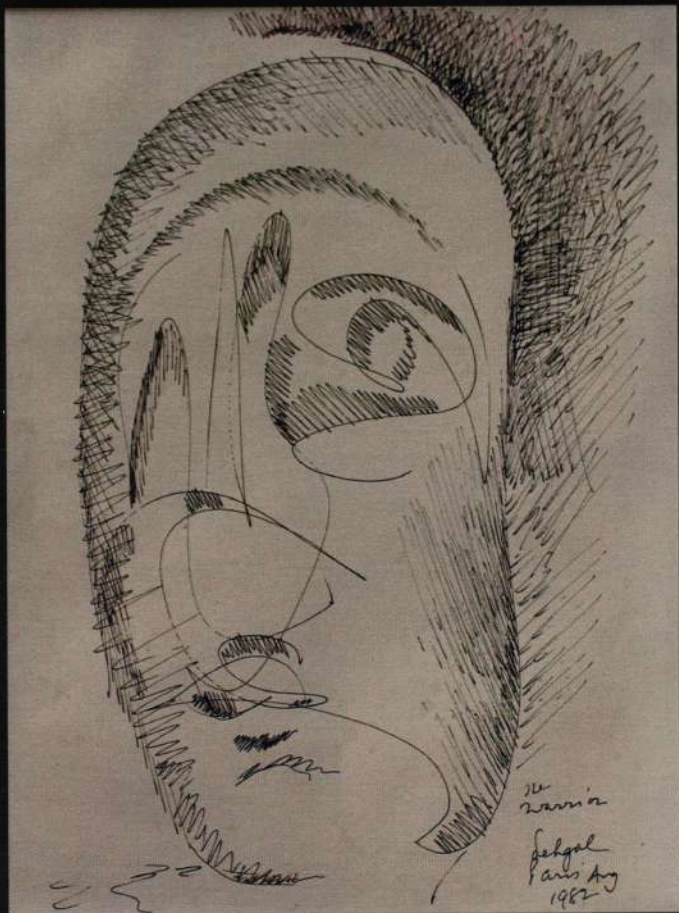
Sehgal travelled extensively both in India and abroad. The artist's sensitivity was quick to respond to the victims of natural calamities, wars, and poverty. The remembrance of the tragic events he had witnessed during the Partition is stamped on his works. Most of his works with their simple but highly expressive forms portraying human emotions – be it anguish, helplessness, oppression or a yearning for hope – vibrate a perceptible pathos.

Amar Nath Sehgal's artistic versatility extends to sculptures, paintings, poetry, graphics and tapestries. His works can be found in public and private collections all over the world like the Musée d'art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, the 20th Century Museum of Vienna and Berlin, the Israel Museum, the National Gallery of Modern Art and the White House among others.

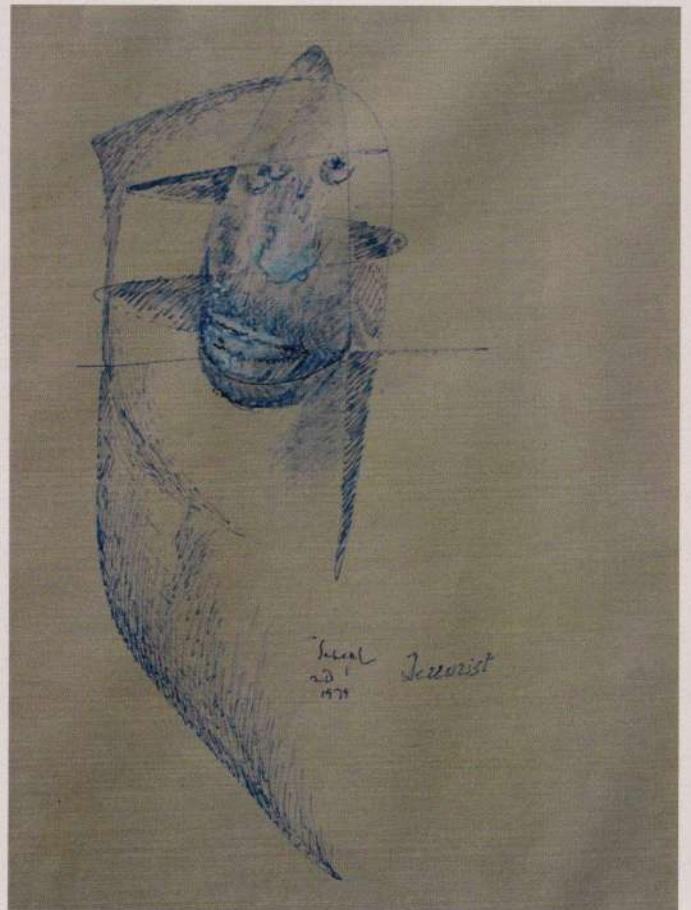








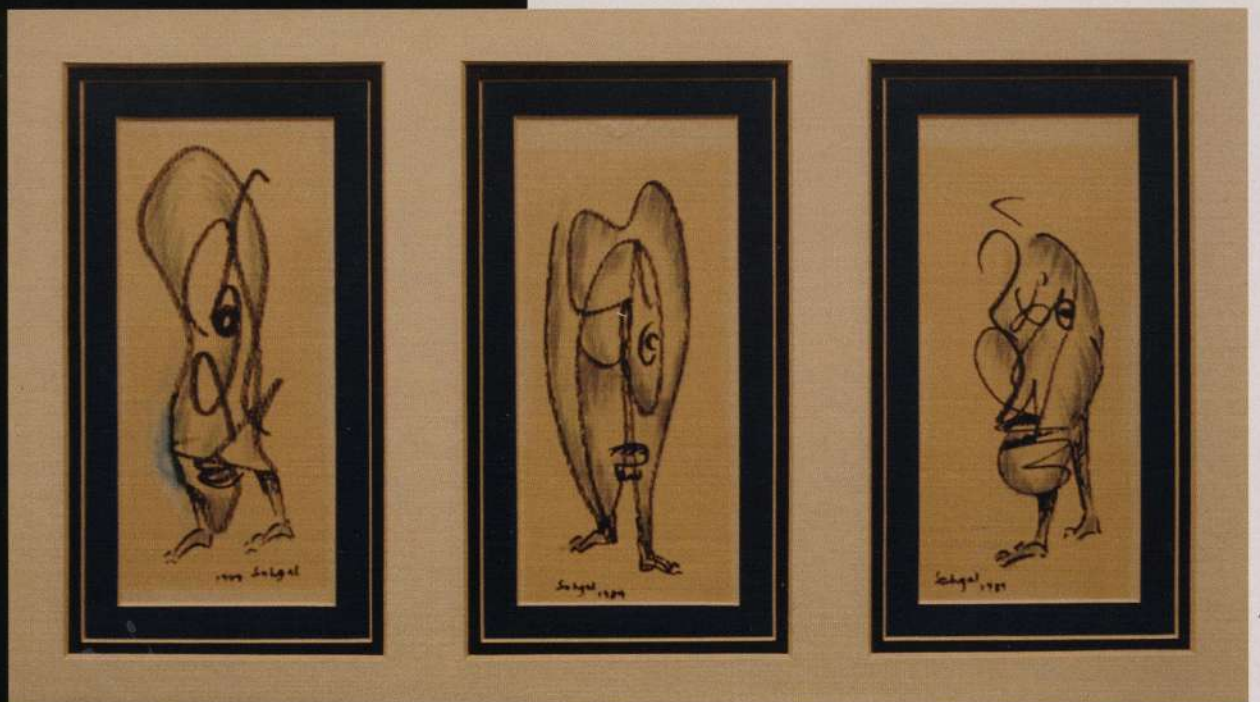
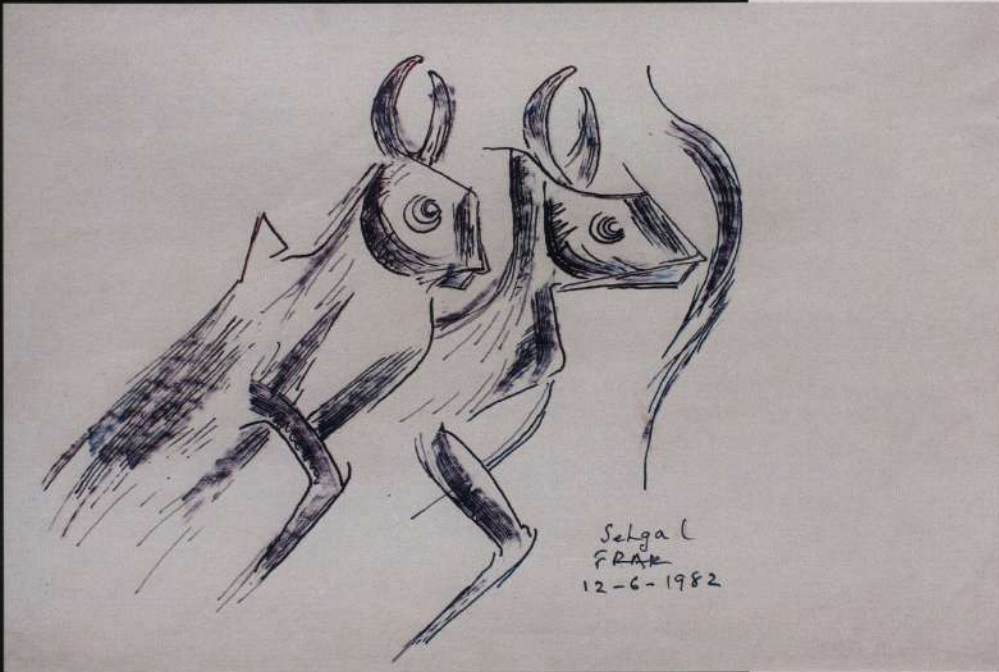


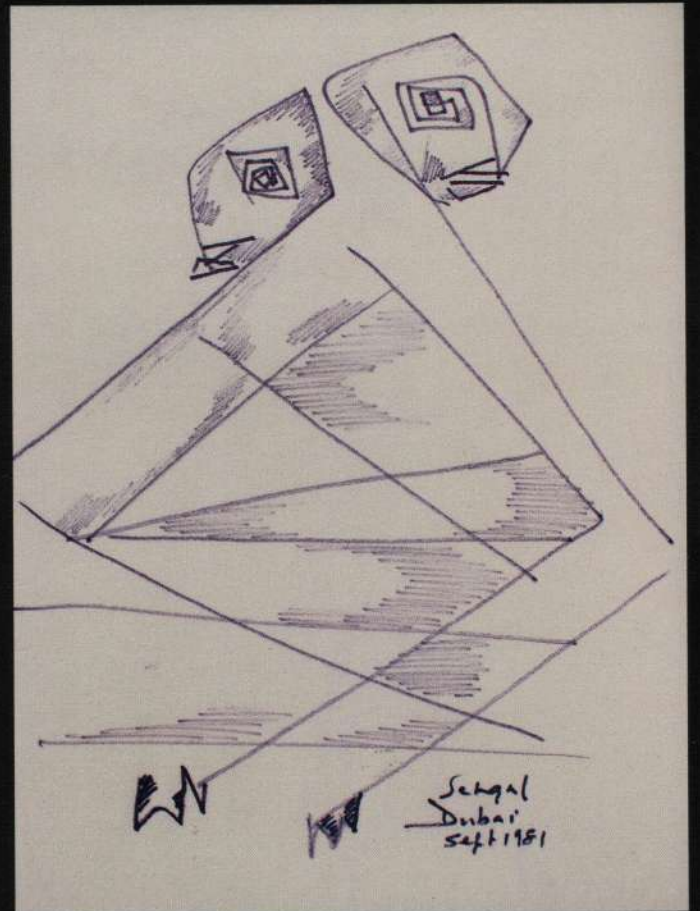
















Sehgal  
13/1/61



Sehgal  
Jan 1961



**Hunger,**  
Bronze, 1962,  
Permanent Collection, IGNC



**Floating,**  
Bronze, 1970,  
Permanent Collection, IGNC



**The Dragon,**  
Bronze, 1963,  
Permanent Collection, IGNAZ MOTHER

1922

Campbellpur, Attack District, Pakistan

On 5th February, Amar Nath Sehgal was born to Indian parents settled in Pakistan. A family of artisans and businessmen - amongst the four brothers, he was the artistic and adventurous one.

1941

Lahore Pakistan

Graduated in Science (B.Sc. with distinction in physics) from Government Collage, Lahore followed by studying industrial Chemistry in Benaras.

1944- 1945

Lahore, Pakistan

Worked as in Engineer in Lahore

1945-1947

Lahore, Pakistan

Studied art at Mayo School of art and Lahore school of Fine Arts.

1947

New Delhi, India

Migrated to Free India.

1948

New Delhi, India

First exhibition: Participated in a group exhibition at All India Fine Arts and Craft Society, New Delhi.

1949

New York, USA

Scholarship at NYU

1950

Employment: Completed Masters in Art Education from School of Education, New York University. Began working in his studio at 543 East 6th street, New York, USA

Solo Exhibition at Public Library, New Rochelle, New York.

1951

New York, USA

Sculptures by Amar Nath Sehgal, Arthur U. Newton Galleries, October 16- November 2, 1951, 11 East 57 Street, New York.

1952

Solo exhibition of India's Dance Form. Left New York on a study travel across Europe and Africa  
Solo exhibition in Paris (France) at Galerie Breteau, rue de Bonaparte.

Traveled extensively from West to East Africa.

Solo exhibition at Kampala Jirya, Uganda, East Africa.  
Commissioned to create the bust of His Highness Aga Khan.

1953

New Delhi, India

Artist moves to India and begins teaching in Modern School.

Organized a pilot workin revival of folk arts at Jharsa district, Gurgaon for Government of India.

1954

New Delhi, India

Open Air Show at Modern School, New Delhi

1955

Was appointed by UNESCO to study and survey folk arts in India.

Appointed Art Consultant, Ministry of Development and Cooperation.

1957

New Delhi, India

Awarded Sculpture Award by Lalit Kala Akademi work 'Onward March'.

1958

Awarded Gold Plaque (President's Award) for the work Cries Unheard, National Exhibition of Art by Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi, 1958.

1959

Participated in a seminar on Cultures of SouthEast Asia, organised by UNESCO, Madras. Participated in a seminar on Architecture, organised by Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi.

Voice of Africa presented to Dr. N'Krumah, President of Ghana by Prof. Humayun Ksbir, Minister of Cultural Affairs, India

1960

Punjab, India.

The bronze statue of mahatma Gandhi was Commissioned by Amritsar Municipal Committee to be installed in Ram Bagh Garden, Punjab.

1961

New Delhi, India

A Cricketer presented by Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru to the Pakistani cricket team as a gesture of good will.

1962

New Delhi, India

Amar Nath Sehgal completed the bronze mural in India International Conference building, Vigyan Bhawan covering 2000 square feet of wall area. (project began in 1957)

1963

Visited U.S.S.R. at the invitation of Union of Artists. The 7 feet bronze sculpture, To Space Unknown was presented by the Government of India to the Government of USSR.

Began work on the statue of late S.R.W.D. Bandaranaike, Colombo. Busts of late Lala Lajpat Rai,

late Ballabh Pant, late Ajay Ghosh, late Shri Sri Ram, President of India, Dr. S. Radhakrisnam, Vice President of India Dr. Zakir Hussain and Shri Krishna Menon were completed. Donated Gold Plaque (President's Award) to the national Defence Fund.

1964

Germany

Received fellowship to travel to U.S.A., Scandinavia, Germany and France from the Ford Foundation.

Solo exhibition at Belgrade.

One man show at Paulskirche, Frankfurt.

1965

Solo exhibition: Amar Nath Sehgal-sculpteur indien, Musée National d'Art Moderne, Paris, January 15-February 15, 1965

1965

Amar Nath Sehgal - Skulpturen, Haus am Lützowplatz, Berlin, Germany, August 8 - August 29, 1965.

1966

Austria

Resigned from the post of Art Consultant, Ministry of Community Development, Government of India.

Left for Europe. Exhibited at the sculpture Biennale, Rodin Museum, Paris.

Solo exhibition at Haus Am Lutzowplatz, Berlin.

Solo exhibition at cultural Centrum, Ghent, Belgium.

Solo Exhibition at Musée D'Histoire et D'Art, Luxembourg, 1966

The artist moved with his family to Brussels, Belgium

1967

Europe

November 24- December 5: solo exhibition at Galerie Brassau, Luxembourg. Solo exhibition at Flemish Akademi of Art, Antwerp, Belgium

1968-1969

Installation of Rising Tide at the Ford Foundation, New Delhi  
Installation of Conquest of Moon at the White House, Washington.

Began work on Peace and Nonviolence Martin Luther King and Mahatma Gandhi; completed Monument to Communal Unity and Conquest of Moon Tribute to Astronauts (New Delhi, India)

1971

Berlin, Germany

Inaugurated the monumental Anguished Cries in West Berlin.

1972

Solo exhibition, Amar Nath Sehgal-selected Sculptures, Graphics and Drawings 1947-1972, National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi, 1972.

One man show at Siemens House, Munich, Germany.

Installation of the Monument to aviation on the Palam Airport, New Delhi.

Solo exhibition at NGMA (1947-1972)

1973

Tokyo, Japan

Participated in the Tokyo International Fair.

1974

Paris, France

Took part in the World Seminar on the Role of Art in Contemporary Society, Organised by UNESCO, Paris.

1975

Group exhibition as part of Retrospective Aerogolf, Luxembourg. Der Innere Rhythmus, a Collection of the artist's poems was published.

1975

Exhibited at City Hall, Ottawa, Canada.

1976

New York, USA

Exhibited at India House, New York

1977

Germany

Exhibited at Rathaus, Frankfurt. Exhibited at the Frankfurt Airport.

Organised International Children's Art Workshop for UNESCO in Paris.

The Government of India gave orders to dismantle the 2000 feet bronze mural at the India International Conference building, Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi without informing the artist.

1978

USA

President Jimmy Carter unveils the artwork "Rising Spirit" at the White House, Washington DC

1979

Exhibited in Baden Baden, Germany.

1980

U.A.E.

Exhibited in Abu Dhabi and Dubai

1981

Jeddah

Exhibited in Jeddah

1982

Solo Exhibition, Amar Nath Sehgal: sculptures, Peintures et Gravures, Chaux de Fond, Switzerland, October 1 - October 23, 1982

Established his studio in Luxembourg

Inaugurated Bust of Gandhi in Municipal Park,  
Luxembourg city.

1984

Mexico

Inauguration of Crushing Burden at the 2nd World  
Population Conference, Mexico.

1958

USA

Received U.N. Peace Medal.

1986

Established The Creative Fund in Luxembourg

Created Head with Horns to Celebrate International  
Year of Peace. (New Delhi, India)

Inauguration of Captive at U.N. Conference on  
Sanctions Against South Africa, Paris.

1987

Luxembourg

Form and Music, Cercle Muster, Luxembourg, 1987

1991

New York, USA

Exhibited in New York

1993

Presented with the Copper Plaque by Lalit Kala  
Akademy on february 5th.

1999

Amar Nath Sehgal- Exhibition of Graphics And  
Sculpture, Arpana Art Gallery. March 12- march 20,  
1999

Geneva, Switzerland

Installation of 'The Captive' at Palaris Wilson, office of  
the UN high commissioner for Human Rights.

2001

Installed the sculpture 'Captive' at Robben Island.

2004

New Delhi, India

The artist left Luxembourg and came to live and work  
in the New Delhi.

Epic Episodes an exhibition on Ramayana and  
Mahabharata at IGNCA, New Delhi, Inaugurated by  
President Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam.

2005

Delhi, India

Creative Perceptions, India International Center,  
August 6 - August 13, 2005

2007

New Delhi, India

The Artist Passed away following a cardiac arrest in  
New Delhi after a long period of illness on 27th  
December.

2008




Mrs. Shukla Sehgal, Widow of the artist received the  
Padma Bhushan at the Rashtrapati Bhawan, New  
Delhi.



इन्दिरा गाँधी राष्ट्रीय कला केन्द्र  
INDIRA GANDHI NATIONAL CENTRE FOR THE ARTS

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