

Born 10th March 1934 in Mumbai.

Bhupen Khakhar lived and worked in Baroda.

### **Education**

**1964** Master of Arts (Art Criticism), Faculty of Fine Arts, Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda

**1956** Bachelor of Commerce, Mumbai University, Qualifies as a Chartered Accountant

**1954** Bachelor of Arts, Mumbai University, Mumbai

### **Exhibitions**

#### **Selected Posthumous Exhibitions**

**2013** Grosvenor Gallery, London, UK

**2012** 'Aqua', Gallery Beyond, Mumbai, India

**2012** 'The Calendar Project: Iconography in the 20th Century', Project CINEMA CITY: Research Art & Documentary Practices-National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA), Mumbai, India

**2012** 'Crossings: Time Unfolded, Part 2'-Kiran Nadar Museum of Art (KNMA), New Delhi, India

**2011** 'Modernist Art from India: The Body Unbound'-Rubin Museum of Art, New York,US

**2011** "Ethos V: Indian Art Through the Lens of History" (1900 to 1980)-Indigo Blue Art, Singapore

**2011** 'Masters Ltd: Limited Editions'-Gallery Beyond, Mumbai,India

**2011** 'Anecdotes'-Sakshi Gallery, Mumbai,India

**2011** 'Watermark II'- Galerie Mirchandani + Steinruecke, Mumbai,India

**2011** 'High-Light'-presented by Sakshi Gallery, Mumbai at The Oberoi, Gurgaon,India

**2011** 'Manifestations V'-Delhi Art Gallery, New Delhi,India

**2011** 'Narrations, Quotations & Commentaries'-Grosvenor Gallery, London,UK

**2011** 'Time Unfolded'- Kiran Nadar Museum of Art (KNMA), New Delhi,India

**2011** 'Of Humour, Wit & Satire'-Gallery Threshold, New Delhi,India

**2010** 'Orientations: Trajectories in Indian Art'-Foundation 'De 11 Lijnen',Oudenburg, Belgium

**2010** 'Summer Show 2010'-Centre of International Modern Art (CIMA), Kolkata,India

**2009** 'Lo Real Maravilloso: Marvelous Reality'-20 Years Celebration of Gallery Espace at Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi,India

**2009** 'Long Gone & Living Now'-Gallerie Mirchandani + Steinreucke, Mumbai,India

**2009** 'Progressive to Altermodern: 62 Years of Indian Modern Art'-Grosvenor Gallery, London,UK

**2009** 'Kalpana: Figurative Art in India'-presented by The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) at Aicon Gallery, London; The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR),India

**2009** 'Shifting Shapes, Unstable Signs'-Yale School of Art, Connecticut, USA

**2008** 'Body Chatter: An Exhibition of Contemporary Indian Art'-Walsh Gallery, Chicago,USA

**2008** "Modern India'-organized by Institut Valencià d'Art Modern (IVAM) and Casa Asia, in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture at Valencia, Spain

**2008** 'Moderns'-Royal Cultural Centre, Amman, Jordan organized by Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi,India in collaboration with Embassy of India, Amman, Jordan

**2008**'Multiple Modernities: India, 1905-2005'-Philadelphia Museum of Art, USA

**2007**'India Art Now: Between Continuity and Transformation'-Province of Milan, Milan, Italy

**2007** 'Horn Please: Narratives in Contemporary Indian Art', Kunstmuseum Bern, Switzerland

**2006** 'Inventing / Inverting Traditions', Grosvenor Vadehra, London, UK

### **Selected Solo Exhibitions**

2003 'A Retrospective', organized by The Fine Art Resource, Mumbai at National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA), Mumbai

2003 Sarjan Art Gallery, Baroda

2002 Vadehra Art Gallery, New Delhi

2002 'Bhupen Khakhar', Reina Sofia, Madrid; toured to The Lowry, Manchester.

<http://www.museoreinasofia.es/en/exhibitions/bhupen-khakhar>

2001-02 Optica Gallery, Montreal/ Charles H. Scott Gallery, Vancouver

1998 The Fine Art Resource, Berlin; The Gate Foundation, Amsterdam

1997 Vadehra Art Gallery, New Delhi

1995 Kapil Jariwala Gallery, London

1993 Gallery Ka-Eins, Frankfurt

1993 'The Spirit of India', Galerie Nouvelles Images, Den Haag

1992 Galerie Schoo, Foundation for Indian Artists, Amsterdam

1991,94 Gallery Chemould, Mumbai

1986 Gallery Watari, Tokyo

1985 Kanoria Centre for Arts/ Hutheesingh Visual Arts Centre, Ahmedabad

1983 Knoedler Gallery, London

1983 Contemporary Art Gallery, Ahmedabad

1983 Urja Art Gallery, Baroda

1979 Anthony Stokes Gallery, London

1979 Hester van Royen Gallery, London

1972,81 Gallery Chemould, Mumbai

1967,70 Kunika Chemould Art Centre, New Delhi

1965 Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai

## **Group**

**2003**'Sub Terrain: Artworks in the City Fold'-Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin,Germany

**2002**'Telling Tales: Narrative Impulses in Recent Art'-Tate Liverpool,UK

**<http://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-liverpool/exhibition/telling-tales>**

**2002**'Contemporary Indian Art : Gulammohammed Sheikh, Bhupen Khakhar'-Walsh Gallery, Chicago,USA

**<http://www.walshgallery.com/contemporary-indian-art-2002/>**

**2001**'Century City: Art and Culture in the Modern Metropolis'-Tate Modern, London,UK

**<http://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-modern/exhibition/century-city/century-city-bombay-mumbai-1992-2001>**

**2001**'Abbild: Recent Portraiture and Depiction'-Steirischer Herbst, Graz, Austria

**<http://abbild.steirischerbst.at/abbild.html>**

**2000**'A Global View: Indian Artists at Home in the World'-Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai,India

**1998**'Private Mythology: Contemporary Art from India'-The Japan Foundation, Tokyo,Japan

**1997**'Indian Contemporary Art- Post Independence', organized by Vadehra Gallery, Delhi,India;  
National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA), New Delhi,India

**1997** 'Colors of Independence'-organized by Centre of International Modern Art (CIMA),  
Kolkata, National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA), New Delhi,India

**1997** 'Tryst with Destiny'-organized by Centre of International Modern Art (CIMA),  
Kolkata,India; Singapore Art Museum,Singapore

**1996** 'Contemporary Art in Asia : Traditions / Tensions'-Asia Society, New York,USA

**1996**'Watercolors: A Broader Spectrum III'-Gallery Chemould, Mumbai,India

**1995**'100 Years: From the NGMA Collection'-National Gallery of Modern Art  
(NGMA),Mumbai,India

**1995** 'The Other Self'-National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA), New Delhi,India / Stedelijk  
Museum Bureau, Amsterdam,Germany

**1993** 'India Songs: Multiple Streams in Contemporary Indian art'-Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney,Australia

**1993** 'A Critical Difference: Contemporary Art from India'-Aberystwyth Arts Centre Touring Exhibition, UK

**1993**'Trends and Images'-Centre of International Modern Art (CIMA), Kolkata,India

**1992** 'Journeys within Landscapes'-organized by Sakshi Gallery, Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai,India

**1990** 'Ambassadors Choice'-Contemporary Indian Art from the Collection of H. E. Mrs. E. M. School of The Netherlands, National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA), New Delhi,India

**1989**'The Richness of the Spirit: Selection from Contemporary Figurative Indian Art'-Kuwait Museum, Egyptian Academy, Rome

**1989** 'Open Mind'-Museum van Hedendaagse Kunst,Ghent

**1989**'Artists Alert'-Rabindra Bhavan, New Delhi,India

**1989**'Timeless Art', Chatrapati Shivaji Terminus, Mumbai, Auction by Sotheby's

**1987**Coups de Coeur, Halle Sud, Geneva

**1986** 'Contemporary Indian Artists', Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris,France

**1985** '**East-West Encounter'-Exhibition and Symposium, Jehangir Art Gallery/ Max Mueller Bhavan/ National Centre for the Performing Arts (NCPA), Mumbai,India**

**1982** '**Contemporary Indian Art, Festival of India**', Royal Academy of Arts, London,Uk

**1982** 'Six Indian Painters'-Tate Gallery, London,UK

**1982** '**Contemporary Indian Art'-Hirshhorn Museum, Washington, D.C,USA**

**1981** 'Place for People'-Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai,India and Rabindra Bhavan, New Delhi,India

**1979** 'Narrative Paintings: Figurative Art of Two Generations', ICA, Bristol, London,UK

**1979** '**Focus: 4 Painters, 4 Directions**', Gallery Chemould, Mumbai,India

**1978** 'Six Who Declined to Show at the Triennale', Kumar Gallery, New Delhi,India

**1977** 'Pictorial Space', Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi,India

**1975** **Inaugural Exhibition, Black Partridge Art Gallery, New Delhi,India**

**1974** **Group Exhibition with Nine other artists, Rabindra Bhavan Galleries, New Delhi,India**

**1972** **Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai,India**

**1969 "Art Today I and II"-Kunika Chemould Art Centre, New Delhi**

**1969 'Indian Painters '69', organized by Max Mueller Bhavan, Birla Academy of Art and Culture, Kolkata**

**1967 'Seven Painters', Gallery One, London**

**1965 'ArtNow in India', Royal Festival Hall, London,UK;Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle,UK**

**1963 Inaugural Exhibition, Gallery Chemould, Mumbai**

### **Participations**

**2000 Kwanju Biennale, South Korea**

**1992 Documenta IX, Kassel, Germany**

**1984 Fifteenth International Art Exhibition, Tokyo Biennale, Tokyo**

**1978 Menton Biennale, France**

**1975 3rd Triennale India, New Delhi**

**1972 2nd Triennale India, New Delhi**

**1969 Sao Paulo Biennale, Brazil**

**<http://www.bienal.org.br/FBSP/pt/AHWS/Publicacoes/Paginas/IX-Bienal-de-S%C3%A3o-Paulo---Cat%C3%A1logo---Parte-1---1967.aspx>**

**1968 1st Triennale India, New Delhi**

**<http://www.saffronart.com/artists/bhupen-khakar>**

### **Selected Group Shows**

Groups shows, beginning at the Chemould, Bombay in 1963, and including Gallery One, London, Renwick, Washington, DC, Tate Gallery, London, Japan Foundation, Tokyo and many others to 2003

Returns briefly to Bombay 1964

Works as Chartered Accountant, Bharat Lindner, Baroda, half-time beginning 1964/65 to the 1980s

Solo shows, beginning in the Jehangir Art Gallery, Bombay and including Vadehra in Delhi, Sarjan in Baroda, Knoedler Gallery, London, Gallery Watari, Tokyo, The Gate Foundation, Amsterdam and many others from 1965 to 2003.

Co-editor with Gulam Mohammed Sheikh of VRISHCHIK magazine, a literary, art review, 1969 – 1973

"Portrait of Shri Shankarbhai Patel near Red Fort," painting, 1971

“Portraits of My Mother and My Father Going to Yatra,” painting, 1971

Death of his partner, Shankarbhai Patel, 1975

“Man With Bouquet of Plastic Flowers,” painting, 1976

Teaches at Bath Academy of Arts, Corsham, England, stayed with Howard Hodgkin, 1979

“The Weatherman,” painting 1979

“You Can’t Please All” painting 1981

Padmashree Award, Government of India 1984

“Seva,” painting, 1986

Group Show, Pompidou Center, Paris, 1986

Set of prints for two stories by Salman Rushdie, “Free Radio” and “The Prophet,” 1989

Writes and designs set for a play, “Mojila Manilal,” performed in Bombay, Baroda, Ahmedabad, 1989

Group Show, Documenta IX, Kassel, Germany, 1992

“Gallery of Rogues,” painting, 1993

Group Show, “Contemporary Art in Asia: Traditions/Tensions,” Asia Society, New York, 1997

Poster for Gay Games, Amsterdam, Cultural Program, 1998

Tate Britain purchases “You Can’t Please All” 1998

Publication of book, PHOREN SOAP, story with etchings, 1998

Short stories published in Gujarati languages newspapers and literary review such as “Gadyaparva” [“Celebration of Prose”] He also did six covers for the review and at least one cover for another review “Kshitij” [“Horizon”]

“Beauty is Skin-Deep Only,” painting, 2001

Publication of book of short stories in Gujarati, MAGANBHAINO GUNDAR, 2001

Retrospective, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, 6th June to 16 September 2002

Publication of book of water colors VISIT TO SRI LANKA, March 2003 (Baroda: Sarjan Art Foundation, 2003)

Last solo show, Sarjan Art Gallery, Baroda, 2003

Dies in Baroda 8th August 2003

“A Tribute to Bhupen Khakhar,” Tao Art Gallery, 8th – 28th August 2004, Mumbai

Retrospective, National Gallery of Modern Art, Mumbai, 4th to 26th November 2003

“Bhupen Among Friends: A Tribute to Bhupen Khakhar by Friends: Amit Ambalal, Jogen Chowdhury, Anju Dodiya, Atul Dodiya et al” Gallery Chemould, Bombay 29 August 2005 – 5 September 2005

### **See More**

**Overview**-Naughty but nice:Remembering Bhupen Khakhar,Zehra Jumabhoy,Time Out,2005

<http://www.timeoutmumbai.net/around-town/features/naughty-nice>

**Interview**-`When I'm telling the truth, there's no restraint',Sadanand Menon,The Hindu,2003.

<http://www.hindu.com/mag/2003/09/14/stories/2003091400270200.htm>

**Overview**-You can't please all, Sadanand Menon,The Hindu,2003.

<http://www.hindu.com/mag/2003/09/14/stories/2003091400280200.htm>

**Overview**- An Accountant Of Alternate Reality,Sunil Mehra,Outlook India,1995

<http://www.outlookindia.com/article.aspx?200402>

**Essay**-An Art Historian's Appreciation, Shivaji K. Panikkar, Bhupen Khakhar collection.

<http://bhupenkhakharcollection.com/essay/>

**Essay**- Bhupen Khakhar: Sexuality and the Self,Timothy Hyman,Queer Arts.

<http://www.queer-arts.org/khakhar/khakhar.html>

### **Videos**

**Overview or Artwork closeup?**-Modern and Contemporary South Asian Art: Bhupen Khakhar,Yamini Mehta,Southby's,2013

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rh3vIG46PkM>

**Conversation-** Salon | Artist History | Bhupen Khakhar, Atul Dodiya and Timothy Hyman, Art Basel, 2003

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AJiuvCcxZic>

Not Sure- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=atfCjJO8-l0>

**Conversation-** Artist Atul Dodiya pays tribute to Bhupen Khakhar, NDTV, 2003-not sure

<http://www.ndtv.com/video/player/bombay-talkies/artist-atul-dodiya-pays-tribute-to-bhupen-khakhar/12162>

**Text:**

Bhupen Khakhar is remembered as an iconoclast and a maverick, a man who never did what was expected, and who was open about his views on everything – from social sectarianism to his own homosexuality, all of which are reflected in his works. Born in 1934, Khakhar began his career in art fairly late in life, at the age of 38. Then a practicing chartered accountant, he joined the M.S. University at Baroda to study art criticism in his late 1930s, and began his career as an artist creating collages from calendar art. He notes, "I was interested in the expressionistic style, which had no wit and humor. Now I am more involved in wit, painting people, and the environment around me."

Khakhar received international acclaim as an artist much before he got recognition in India, when British artist Howard Hodgkin helped him organize a solo exhibition in the late 1970s. Among his inspirations, the painter counts British artist David Hockney. Like Hockney's work, Khakhar's own initial paintings revolved around the everyday, 'insignificant man' trapped in an unremarkable existence. Khakhar also worked with his contemporaries in Baroda like Gulammohammed Sheikh, to evolve a visual language that combined traditional Indian art elements with contemporary themes.

Khakhar's exploration of homosexuality is quite evident in paintings like 'You Can't Please All' and 'Two Men in Benares', prompting writer and painter Timothy Hyman, in his biography on Khakhar, to say, "He is possibly the most provocative painter in contemporary Indian art." The artist elaborates: "I have chosen homo-eroticism as a theme because I am gay. What is happening in India – social rejection – did happen once in countries like USA and Europe. The police in all societies have beaten up gays and lesbians. But now they have been accepted by society. For me, there is nothing unnatural about homosexuality."

Critics say that during his homoerotic phase, the artistic observations that made Khakhar a chronicler of ordinary beings had been pushed into the background. In contrast, his most recent paintings are more assured, more settled than those he created during what he describes as his 'gay period'. "I feel much lighter now. My personal tensions have been resolved. At 64, you no longer have the feeling that you will never die. One leaves the ambition to become a great painter and accepts whatever one is. Earlier, I worried all the time about my position as an artist," he recounts. Khakhar's later canvases explore Kerala landscapes, Tamilian dhabas (roadside hotels), and the religious iconography of everyday life in India.

<http://www.saffronart.com/artists/bhupen-khakhar>

### **Bhupen Khakhar**

**Bhupen Khakhar** was born in Bombay in 1934. He is a self-taught artist, having qualified as a chartered accountant before moving to Baroda in 1962 to join the Art Criticism course at the Faculty of Fine Arts. It was here that he started painting and became involved with the seminal Narrative Figurative movement

He held his first solo exhibition in Bombay in 1965 and has had fourteen solo shows since, in Bombay, New Delhi, Baroda, London, Ahmedabad, Amsterdam, Den Haag, Paris and Tokyo. Khakhar has also been widely represented in numerous group exhibitions including Art Now in India, London, Newcastle and Ghent (1966), IX Biennale de Sao Paulo, and the First Triennale - India, New Delhi (1968), Pictorial Space, New Delhi, and Menion Biennale (1977), Six who declined to show in the Triennale, New Delhi (1978), Narrative Painting, London (1979), Place for people, Bombay (1981), Six Indian Painters, Tate Gallery, London (1982), Contemporary Indian Artists, Center Georges Pompidou, Paris (1986), Documenta IX, Kassel (1992), A Critical Difference: Contemporary Art from India, UK (1993), India Songs, Sydney and Amsterdam (1994) and Traditions/Tensions, the Asia Society, New York and tour, 1996. Khakhar's work has been characterized by a rare irreverence and a lack of inhibition about his lack of formal training. Indeed, he has been able to evolve his own mode of address that harnesses this lack of training to provide an edge to his expressions. His early work made use of ready-made images of deities from popular oleographs which were collaged and painted over, sometimes with graffiti. Khakhar's interest in 'degenerate' forms of art led him to an exploration of artistic conventions in hybrid traditions that operate in the interregnum between classical miniatures and European illusionism. A deliberate naivete is visible in his paintings from the 1970s, coupled with a deeply felt sympathy with his subjects, who are often ordinary folk caught in an existence they do not quite understand. There is also biting comment on the gentle stupidity of petit bourgeois life: a quality of being frozen in time permeates several of these representations of common people in all their vulnerability. The vulnerability argument is taken a step further in the early 1980s, when Khakhar's homoerotic concerns come to be openly declared, often with self-referential figures. The 1980s also bring a move away from the blown-up-picture-postcard painting to spatial arrangements of greater complexity and articulation. Observation of the everyday plays an important role in Khakhar's work, and he is able to zero in on 'typical' characters that the observer can often locate within his/her own experience. He seems to have taken on a project of devising a way of representing the marginal seeking to show that which is always there, but never gets looked at. Khakhar has devised a way of rendering the body with an unusual plainness, like a bone-less structure, that highlights the twin arguments of vulnerability and invisibility that he maintains. His recent forays into watercolors and ceramics reveal a great deal of freedom in handling the material. Even in the occasionally macabre examples of his recent work, there is the evidence of joy and a sense of play in dealing with the material.

Bhupen Khakhar lives and works in Baroda.

[http://www.contemporaryindianart.com/bhupen\\_khakhar.htm](http://www.contemporaryindianart.com/bhupen_khakhar.htm)

His first exhibited works presented deities cut from popular prints, glued on to mirrors, supplemented by graffiti and gestural marks. He achieved international recognition in 1967 and was proclaimed as India's first Pop artist. Over the next few years he plundered other Indian genres – miniatures, Company paintings, temple maps.

Several of the pictures of the early 1970s resemble shop signs for tailors, barbers, watch repairers, with vividly and crisply realised props. Implicit in paintings is a humorous acceptance and celebration of a culture previously disregarded, a hybrid, half-westernised culture of lower-middle class urban Indians, for whom Khakhar could act as spokesman.

In *You Can't Please All* (1981; London, Knoedler's) a life-size naked figure, a self-portrait, watches from a balcony, as father, son and donkey enact an ancient fable, winding through the townscape in continuous narration. The picture was conceived as a declaration; henceforth the artist spoke as a homosexual (another unregarded constituency in Indian culture).

Khakhar's sexual explicitness has gone hand in hand with a deepening sense of the religious, and a convincing monumentality, often achieved through powerfully flattened colour. In *Yayati* (1987; priv. col.) the myth of the old king who asks his son to give him his youth is transformed into an extraordinary sexual statement. Khakhar's unwavering commitment to subject-matter in preference to stylistic concerns or avant-garde strategies has been important to younger artists. He is the central figure of the Baroda School, the loose grouping of figurative painters that includes Gulam Sheikh and Sudhir Patwardhan.

biblio

T. Hyman: 'Indian Views', *London Mag.*, n.s., xix/4 (1979), pp. 46–60

G. Kapur: 'The View from the Teashop', *Contemporary Indian Artists* (New Delhi, 1979), pp. 149–77

*Six Indian Painters* (exh. cat. by G. Kapur, London, Tate, 1982)

M. Desai: *A Man Labelled Bhupen Khakhar Branded as Painter* (Baroda, 1983) [by a business associate of Khakhar; good colour pls]

*Bhupen Khakhar* (exh. cat., intro. A. Jussawala, interview with U. Beier; Paris, Pompidou, 1986)

<http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artists/bhupen-khakhar-2406>

Described in a biography as 'possibly the most provocative painter in contemporary Indian art', Khakhar evolved a visual language in his vibrant panoramic paintings that combined elements of traditional Indian art with contemporary themes. His works were a personal signifier of his confrontation with desire, anxiety, suppression, joy and sensitiveness caked with wry humor which at the same time exemplified a reverent accuracy for his subjects.

<http://www.latitude28.com/index.php/artists/artistdetail/41/about>

Bhupen Khakhar is remembered as a nonconformist and an iconoclast, a man who never abided by society norms and never shunned away from expressing his views. Whether it was social sectarianism or his own homosexuality, he translated them in his paintings. Throughout his oeuvre you can see real-to-life figures that display the very real aspect of their personas. He sketched a lot and this had basically helped him keep a record of his surroundings and observations. His inclination to the life of people in general gave an authentic feel to his works. He would sketch while travelling

to small village towns and pilgrims, or just while day dreaming at home or his studio. His sketches portray his vulnerabilities at its best and are done with captivating simplicity and directness.

Most of Khakhar's works are figurative in nature that primarily focused on the human body and its identity. A homosexual himself, he mainly focused on the homosexual themes in his paintings. Many of his works also showed references to several mythological themes on the basis of his learning's of the Indian Mythology over the years.

In the painting such as Factory Strike, Man with Bouquet of Plastic Flowers and Janata Watch Repairing, you see the un-academic treatment of the figures in his paintings. The large heads, thin and stiff bodies wearing heavy clothing was the style used in these figurative works that reflected his iconic presence. He used vivid, sharp and contrasting colors in bright and dark hues. You could see the stiff and sharp tonal gradations in his painting. The smoothed floating shiny surfaces of his paintings gave a feeling of somberness, sadness and emptiness.

Many of his early paintings were created from poster images of Hindu Gods and deities that were collaged and painted over occasionally with graffiti. He was very much interested in degenerate forms of art and it led him to explore artistic gatherings in hybrid traditions that function in the period between classical miniatures and European illusionism. In the later years, many of his paintings showed his hidden gay desires, the deprivations faced by homosexual men and also the repressions and deprivations faced by them in our society. His observations on everyday events and the real world are very evident in his works. He systematically portrayed the world of the common man through pictorial themes. This could be seen in his paintings such as "The Barber Shop" and the "Parsi Family".

His paintings often violated the thin socially recognized line between the decorous and the obscene. In fact his works have been distinguished by a rare impertinence and lack of inhibition about himself having no formal training in the field of art. He taught himself art and therefore evolved his own mode of art style.

<http://www.itsaveer.com/artsmart/articles/art-style-of-famous-indian-artists/bhupen-khakhars-painting-style>

## Style

Bhupen Khakhar was a self-taught artist. He fashioned scores of oil paintings that often reflect his life. His creations also hold cultured references to themes related to mythology of India. His paintings feted the everyday scuffles of the common man of India. He specially made efforts to bring rhetorical sense to nature which was linked to the identity of human body. His artworks are specially noticed because of use of unusual themes and that were of homosexuality. That was the time when homosexual relations were addressed in India in very rare cases. Homosexuality was depicted in way

of love and happenstance from an idiosyncratically perspective of India. His paintings have some resemblance to that of David Hockney. Khakhar has touched the implications of the culture and also the erotic expressions of homosexuality. The artist had a profound impact of the pop movement of the British, at the same time he knew that the Pop Art versions of Western countries will not receive the same reverberations in India as they have in the West. The artist began to try hands more with watercolors in the last decade of the past century. He increasingly gained buoyancy in method and articulation.

<http://www.itsaveer.com/artsmart/articles/well-known-master-painters/achievements-of-bhupen-khakhar>

He held his first solo exhibition in Bombay in 1965 and has had several solo shows thereafter, in Bombay, New Delhi, Baroda, London, Ahmedabad, Amsterdam, Den Haag, Paris and Tokyo. Khakhar has also been widely represented in numerous group exhibitions including Art Now in India, London, Newcastle and Ghent (1966), IX Biennale de Sao Paulo, and the First Triennale – India, New Delhi (1968), Pictorial Space, New Delhi, and Menion Biennale (1977), Six who declined to show in the Triennale, New Delhi (1978), Narrative Painting, London (1979), Place for people, Bombay (1981), Six Indian Painters, Tate Gallery, London (1982), Contemporary Indian Artists, Center Georges Pompidou, Paris (1986), **Documenta IX, Kessel (1992)**, A Critical Difference: Contemporary Art from India, UK (1993), India Songs, Sydney and Amsterdam (1994) and Traditions/Tensions, the Asia Society, New York and tour, 1996.

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The vulnerability argument is taken a step further in the early 1980s, when Khakhar's homoerotic concerns come to be openly declared, often with self-referential figures. This decade also brought a move away from the blown-up-picture- postcard painting to spatial arrangements of greater complexity and articulation. Observation of the everyday played an important role in Khakhar's work, and he was able to zero in on 'typical' characters that the observer can often locate within his/her own experience. He seems to have taken on a project of devising a way of representing the marginal seeking to show that which is always there, but never gets looked at. Khakhar devised a way of rendering the body with an unusual plainness, like a bone-less structure, that highlights the twin arguments of vulnerability and invisibility that he maintains. His foray into watercolors and ceramics revealed a great deal of freedom in handling the material. Even in the occasionally macabre

examples of his later work, there is the evidence of joy and a sense of play in dealing with the material.

<http://grosvenorgallery.com/artists/khakhar-bhupen/>

Khakhar is known as India's first Pop artist, though relationship to Pop art more complex. His engagement with the bright colors usually confined to calendar art and middle-class homes and shops opened Indian art to an expanded range of colors. In the earliest stage of the artist's career, figures are designed and stylized in a manner akin to traditional and early modern Indian miniature painting. Aside from his lives as accountant and artist, Khakhar was also a well-known writer in Gujarati, crafting plays and stories inflected with the same humor and irony seen in his paintings.

After 1971, Khakhar began to paint deadpan imagery drawn from daily life in urban and small town India, focusing especially on workers engaged in middle-class professions. He drew not only on a modernist Pop style, but also from the late 18th-19th century Indian tradition of Company painting in his renderings of ordinary trade laborers - which included watch repairers, weathermen, and barbers. He was among six artists who participated in the landmark 1981 exhibition "Place for People." At that time also, Khakhar began to incorporate the experience of his own homosexuality into his artistic practice, which would be a central theme for the rest of his career.

<http://www.gallerychemould.com/artists-about/bhupen-home.html>