

'THERE IS AN ARTIST IN EVERYONE'

Rouble Nagi is a multi talented artist who has set up an art foundation for children.

Rhea Dhanbhora finds out more...

An artist and a muralist who works in 38 mediums from glass to ceramic, metal to copper, fiber and more, Rouble Nagi recently set up the Rouble Nagi Art Foundation to help underprivileged children discover their artistic selves. A number of celebrities support the foundation, including cricket star Wasim Akram. She tells us about her art, exhibitions and the foundation...

How did you get into the field of art?

My father was from the armed forces so we travelled across India, I was fascinated by the diversity of every state and inspired by it. I've been painting since I was about 5 or 6. I could and still can, spend an entire day with a blank sheet and a box of crayons. Murals and sculptures came later when I started experimenting with materials. I fall in love with every piece I make that sometimes I feel like keeping it for myself.

Why do murals dominate your work?

Murals and wall installations are three dimensional and I like to see and feel my creation as it takes form. Architecture and art always go hand-in-hand and public art is picking up in Mumbai. I have just completed one for Carter Road in Bandra which has been installed.

Art seems to be growing in India, what do you think of it as an industry?

Art is driven by passion and by people who



appreciate it. India still has a long way to go where art is concerned. Of course if you compare us to the '80s and '90s then we are way ahead. I am happy to see new galleries coming up to promote new artists and talent. I believe Indian artists are talented and need a good platform to showcase their work. Lately, I have done a lot of murals and sculptures for multinationals such as Citibank, Bank of Baroda, ETA, Dodsai and such. In times to come, art as a part of aesthetic beautification is going to catch on.

What made you start the Rouble Nagi Art Foundation?

Rouble Nagi Art Foundation (RNAF) was started to help feed a child's creativity which can provide benefits in all areas of life — personal, professional and even spiritual.



>> (Top right) Wasim Akram with Rouble and the children from Pratham (Bottom right) Rouble, Wasim Akram and (Bottom left) Rouble with one of her creations

Children should be encouraged in thought and action. As an artist and an individual, I wanted to give something back to society. And more than anything else I love children and love being surrounded by them.

Tell us a little bit about RNAF?

The objective of the foundation is to extract hidden talent from underprivileged children who don't have the opportunity to showcase their talent in this competitive world. RNAF along with Pratham (an NGO) exposes children, between the ages of 8 and 14, to different aspects of the topic at hand. During the art workshops, they create their own pieces based on specific themes such as scenery, landscape stories and such etc. After every workshop, the children are short



listed and taken for a seven day camp after which the top 50 are given prize money. Their paintings are exhibited and auctioned. The proceeds of are then directed to a valuable cause.

What was your aim with RNAF?

Art is an important medium of communication, I would love for people to support artists and help promote them. Not only RNAF, but any NGO that's doing well for the people has my vote and support. As far as RNAF is concerned, I want to do good work and help children. Art camps are fun and I'm happy with the response.

FACT FILE

- From Jammu and Kashmir, she travelled the country as her father was in the armed forces.
- She did a course in Fine Arts at the University of London.
- She has created over 800 murals using 33 different mediums.
- She sponsors and organises exhibitions in association with Pratham (an NGO).

Tell us about your recent exhibition.

We organised an exhibition recently which unfurled artistic creations of under privileged children from Pratham (NGO). The exhibition displayed 20 of the best works which were open for auction. These creations were produced during the two art camps organised in the previous year, one being at Lonavala and the other at Carter Road, Bandra. The main objective behind organising this exhibition was to spread awareness toward art and artists. I believe that there is an artist in everyone. It is an axiom that in no other occupation than that of an artist does the true nature of the person so readily reveals itself.

You dabbled in theatre... Would you go back to it?

I love art in any form, be it fine art or performing arts. If there's a good script, I will definitely do it.

To find out more visit www.roublenagi.net. Her next kid's camp will be held at Carter Road, Bandra on February 20

