

Bombay Notebook



Looked to Nature

HOW would you like to be called upon to count the feathers on a vulture's wing? It happened to Carl D'Silva when he first met 'Birdman' Dr Salim Ali in 1982. For Carl, who was only 19-year-old then, that was to mark the initiation to the wonder-world of Nature.

The lesson that the Birdman taught him has stood Carl in good stead over the years. Today he can view the varied aspects of Nature with a discerning eye. Not only that, he can capture their subtle nuances on canvas with commendable finesse.

Carl, who is the sole artist on the rolls of the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS), has just won a unique honour: 'Clouded Leopard' and 'Scavenger Vultures', two of his oil paintings (shown above), have been selected by the elite international body, Society of Wildlife Artists, for display at its exhibition in London which was on from July 30 to August 9. Affiliated to the Federation of British Artists, the Society has among its members celebrities such as Robert Gilmor, Michael Hampton and Keith Shackleton.

Says Carl: "Wildlife art is scientifically oriented and goes hand-in-hand with conservation, education and natural history studies. Today it is the most popular art form in the West. However, in a developing country like India, where other over-riding priorities give little scope for conservation promotion in the overall context, wildlife art is virtually non-existent." Carl has enough cause for the grouse, because when he produced paintings on wildlife while training at the J.J. School of Arts, they were virtually brushed aside as an illegitimate art form!

There is also a tricky problem with appreciation of wildlife art. Invariably a wildlife art show is juried by a team of experts on natural history or wildlife. The jury rarely includes a member of the fine arts fraternity, because a critic of fine art does not possess the right knowledge to judge such a painting.

Carl took to wildlife painting ever since he got hooked to bird-watching in his early teens. He was fortunate to have as his neighbour Mr S. A. Hussain, a seasoned naturalist who is now the senior curator of the BNHS. Later, when Carl joined the BNHS as a part-time artist while still at the JJ School, Dr Salim ali took him under his wings and goaded him into a proper understanding of Nature.

And what a legacy the Birdman has left behind!

Water brigade?

IN any fire incident, the maximum damage to property is caused by... Guess what? If you presume - and most people are likely to do so - that the arch-villain is the fire itself, you would be completely in the wrong. Believe it or not, the real culprit is water!

SOMEBODY SPECIAL

NAWAB OF NATURE

By Chitra Rao

When Carl D'Silva was acquiring the expertise of brush and pastel at the famous J.J. School of Arts in Bombay, he came up with some paintings on wildlife. But only to be sniggered at and ridiculed as the vain wooer of an art form which could not be rated as 'legitimate' by any stretch of imagination. But Carl persisted and won.



Clouded leopard

From July 30 to August 9, a unique exhibition was on in London. It was organised by the Society of Wildlife Artists, one of the most exclusive clubs ever, having a select membership of only around 90 worldwide. These include celebrities such as Robert Gilmor, Michael Hampton and Keith Shackleton. This time the elite Society selected two paintings of Carl, 'Clouded leopard' and 'Scavenger vultures', for display at the exhibition, which was open to only its members and a few others on whom the Society wanted to confer membership.

Carl's distinction in being the first ever Indian to be bestowed with the honour is, nothing short of extraordinary. Because, despite the fact that the oil paintings are brilliant testimonials to his deep love for Indian wildlife, Carl is just 24 years old! Though,

unfortunately, he could not go to London along with his paintings due to paucity of funds, the niche he has carved out in that international Society, which is affiliated to the Federation of British Artists, has provided a fillip to his chronic love for wildlife.

"I started painting wildlife forms ever since I got 'hooked' on to bird-watching in my early teens," recalls Carl wistfully. "I was most fortunate to be guided by my neighbour and experienced naturalist S.A. Hussain, who is now senior assistant curator of the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS). Later, when I joined the BNHS, I was goaded on by Dr. Salim Ali (the legendary 'Birdman' who died recently)."

In fact, even while training at the J.J. School, Carl joined the BNHS in 1979 as a part-

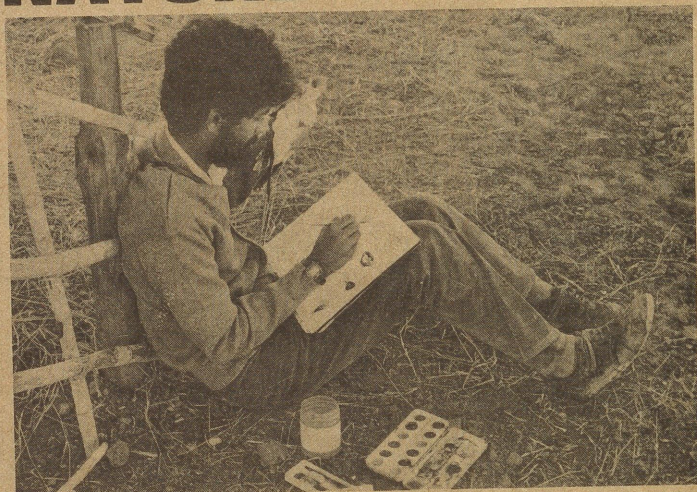
continued on page 39

Oct. 24/1987

SUN PAGE 23

NAWAB OF NATURE

continued from page 23



Carl D'Silva sketching a live bird in the field

time artist. After completing the five-year stint at the JJ, he took up the job on a full-time basis. Today he is the only artist with the BNHS and is in charge of designing, layouts, the cover and illustrations of the Society's magazine.

Such is Carl's craze for wildlife that ever since he took to painting its myriad forms, over a decade ago, he has painted nothing else. The Birdman groomed him well by sharing his understanding of wildlife — its subtle nuances and intricate aspects — with the young artist. "He was such a sticker to the minutest details that once, soon after I met him first in 1982, he even made me count the feathers on a vulture's wing!" recalls Carl with gratitude.

"Today wildlife is the most popular art form in the West. It is scientifically oriented — now-a-days in the West they are breaking all technical barriers to produce the ultimate — and goes hand-in-hand with conservation education and

study of natural history," says Carl. But, sadly though, in a developing country like India, where other over-riding priorities give little scope for conservation promotion in the overall context, wildlife art is virtually non-existent.

The problem is not only of lack of patronage. Even proper appreciation of the wildlife art form is fraught with hurdles. Says Carl: "Who juries wildlife art? Invariably it is done by a team of experts on natural history or wildlife, which rarely includes a member of the fine arts fraternity. On the other hand, a critic of fine art does not possess enough knowledge to adequately judge a painting done by a wildlife artist."

Where would this grave lack of appreciation and encouragement leave him? "Safe and happy in the lap of Mother Nature," chuckles Carl, the artist for art's sake. If the Birdman was the 'Sultan of Nature', Carl seems to have become its Nawab!

GETTING PHYSICAL

Don't tell me I need to attend aerobic classes when I spend my days:

Jumping to conclusions
Overcoming obstacles
Hopping mad
Walking a financial tightrope
Running out of money
Hitting rock bottom
Climbing back to liquidity
Aiming to please

Falling over backwards to help
Beating the gun
Skipping meals
Reaching the end of my tether
Side-stepping issues.
Hitting my head against a brick wall
Rising to the occasion
Twisting arms
Kicking authority
And never lacking punch.

'Wildlife in art' exhibition

PANJIM, November 16 - Goa's first "wildlife in art" exhibition and among the first in the country was inaugurated by Mr. Peter and Sally Harris at the Menezes Braganza Hall on November 14. The informal launching was highlighted by the gift of 40 pairs of binoculars on behalf of World Wide Fund for Nature-India, Goa Division. This generous gift from the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, UK was organised through the good offices of Mr. Harris who earlier this year was impressed by the level of interest in natural history among Goans. He and his wife Sally, a Goan, both ornithologists, are in the process of surveying the birdlife of this State. This information together with their insights into the conservation problems will be shortly published in book form.

This show has on display 43 works by 27 artists ranging from the ranks of the first enthused to the works of professionals including internationally known Wildlife Artist and Convenor of the exhibition brochure, "Wildlife Art is the culmination of first-hand observations of certain life forms, an in-depth knowledge of their behaviour and an uncanny sense of creativity".

D'Silva also suggests that the variation that is new inherent in wildlife art worldwide, is well represented in this exhibition. The 43 exhibits include works in pencil, water colour, gouache, inks, oils, acrylics and metal relief; even an entry of needlework - credit to both artists and organisers. The impetus for this exhibition came from a discussion between the former Conservator of Forests, Goa, Mr. Kishore Rao and Mr. Carl D'Silva as recently as June this year. The qualitative response of contributors at short notice speaks for itself.

Principal, Goa College of Art, Prof. Avinash Deo, Mr. Gerard Da Cunha, the renowned architect and Mr. Carl D'Silva selected exhibits for cash awards generously sponsored by Zuari Agro Chemicals (Rs. 4000 for the best professional entry, won by Vidhyadhar Kudnekar for his metal and wood relief of a bird) and the Directorate of Tourism, Goa (Rs. 3000 won by Mr. Jess Luz for the best student entry for his pencil rendering of a group of monkeys). The gallery space was sponsored by Mr. Gurnath Pai of the Field Publicity Office, Panjim.

The exhibition is open to the public up to November 18 from 10

a.m. to 8 p.m. Apart from the exhibits, World Wide Fund for Nature-India, Goa Division has also arranged to screen video films on nature, every hour at the venue. WWF products are also available at the hall.

ZEEAST

THE NAVHIND TIMES
**SATURDAY
MAGAZINE**

SATURDAY, MARCH 15, 1997

Issue 5

IN the fiercely competitive field of wildlife art in Western countries only the highly skilled artists are able to survive. It is an honour to Goans that Carl D'Silva of Caranzalem has carved for himself a niche in this profession. He is now in the UK where he is required to stay for four months finalising his coloured plates for natural history books on birds which had been commissioned some years ago by established wildlife book publishers.

The rise of Goa's wildlife artist to the level of international acceptance is as fascinating as the art itself. It all began when Carl at the young age of 17 took up part-time work at the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) and then soon afterwards he met the renowned Indian ornithologist, Dr Salim Ali. From then on there was no turning back. His association with Dr Salim Ali strengthened his resolve to make a career of conservation and wildlife art.

To those deeply involved in the study of wildlife and intent on making a career of it, there is no substitute for arduous field-work. To nature photographers, illustrators and artists a great deal of their working life is spent in the field. As his first assignment, Carl took up in 1984 a survey of bustards in Gujarat, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.

One of the artist's early successes was the painting of the rare Lesser Florican which he observed in its wild state on one of the bird surveys in Bihar. In the September 1996 issue of the magazine *Inside Outside* this coloured painting was produced. He ventured into the international field in 1987 when two of his paintings, "Clouded Leopard" and "Scavenger Vultures" were selected by the London Society of Wildlife Artists to be exhibited among the works of famous and established wildlife artists.

For the first time in Goa an exhibition, "Wildlife in Art" was held at the Menezes Braganza Hall in November 1992 and Carl was the Convenor. This exhibition was open for five days and it attracted 43 entries mainly from students of art and professionals. Writing in the brochure this is what the convenor said of this form of art: "This art form has now found a place in the mainstream of the fine arts world. True wildlife art is that culmination of first-hand observation of certain life forms, an indepth knowledge of their behaviour and an uncanny sense of creativity."

In 1989 Carl was commissioned to produce the artwork for the latest and enlarged version of Dr Salim Ali's famous, *The Book of Indian Birds*. The work of art was executed with skill and in meticulous detail. The standard of paintings is comparable with the best in the world, and as an ornithological publication and field-guide there is none better on Indian birds.

Reviewing the book on a scientific basis in the September/October 1996 issue of *Newsletter for Bird-watchers*, this is what Andrew Robertson of England writes on the art-work: "The greatest change and most significant improvement from previous editions is the inclusion of 64 totally new colour plates by India's most accomplished bird artist Carl D'Silva, with a single plate by J P Irani. Certainly the artist has captured the "jizz" of most of the birds admirably which indicates a familiarity with the living bird in the wild that is a prerequisite for accurate drawing.

There is a tremendous demand for the work of the artist both in India and abroad. His work has appeared in many leading wild-

life and nature publications and nature societies such as the Gujarat Nature Conservation Society have commissioned the artist to illustrate their cards through the Centre for Environment Education, Ahmedabad.

Carl is in the team of eleven internationally known artists completing the coloured plates for the manuscript for *Birds of the Indian Sub-Continent* to be published by

the world-famous publisher of field-guides: A & C Black of London. This publisher is also releasing *Pheasants, Partridges, Grouse of the World*. The artist features prominently in all these books. While in the UK Carl will also submit his plates to Pica Press a publisher dealing exclusively with naturalistic material.

On returning to Goa Carl D'Silva starts work for a field-guide on the birds of East

Asia. The artist has been commissioned to produce coloured plates on wild ducks and waterfowl of the region technically known as Eastern Palearctic comprising Russia, China and Taiwan.

The excellence of Carl's art has been appreciated by many experts. He has produced numerous coloured paintings of wildlife in their natural setting. Seen here are a few of the plates and paintings adorning the pages of wild bird book publishers.

This bird-lover is also an accomplished, world-renowned wildlife artist. LLOYD RODRICKS profiles the man from Caranzalem.

BirdWatch



One of 17 plates from the Book "Pheasants, Partridges, grouse of the World."

Capturing wildlife for posterity

If you were not fortunate enough to get a glimpse of an Indian Bustard, the large Indian Parakeet or a close look at the endangered tiger, don't be disheartened. Just feast your eyes on Carl D'Silva's paintings of these marvelous birds and wildlife creatures captured first hand on canvas.

By SUSAN FERNANDES

Carl D'Silva is a source of Goan pride. He has come a long way and carved a niche for himself in the world of wildlife artists. His art-work has won world acclaim and is in great demand by established wildlife book publishers and book illustrators in India and abroad.

Locating Carl was very

painting of a tiger starring straight at you. Oil paints and a half done painting lie on the board. Carl is seemingly the proverbial artist type. With a tiny ponytail tapering down his neck, he is a man of very few words. However, it is only when you take a look at his paintings that you realize the unmistakable fiery persona inside that subdued exterior.

As a child Carl was fascinated by wildlife. It was not until he reached the age of nineteen that his art took wings. "I was fortunate to be guided by India's renowned ornithologist, Dr Salim Ali," admits the artist proudly.

Carl later took up a part time job at the Bombay Natural

their behaviour and an uncanny sense of creativity.

In 1989 Carl was entrusted to produce the artwork for the latest and enlarged version of Dr Salim Ali's "The book of Indian Birds." Carl received rave reviews on the artwork produced in this book. He was revered as an accomplished artist "who has captured the 'jizz' of most the birds admirably which indicated a familiarity with the living bird in the wild that is a prerequisite for accurate drawing".

So painstakingly explicit are the details that one wonders as to how the artist manages to capture such intricacies, knowing that birds shy from humans. "The art of wildlife involves a lot of research coupled by field work. Very often the birds in the museums don't give us distinct details about the subject. I do a lot of birdwatching and photography," explains Carl, adding, "however, the difference between a wildlife photographer and an artist is that a photographer has to do with what he gets on the camera but an artist can use his imagination and add originality to his paintings."

Pointing out to a half-done painting on the board he describes his paintings as a reproduction of wildlife intermingled with its natural landscape with a dash of creativity. Carl's paintings also evoke an instinctive empathy which is largely influenced by his love for these birds and animals.

"Very often neighbours bring a wounded bird over. I nurture them, study their behavioural patterns, and if they are well enough set them free," claims he.

Carl is just back from England where he is completing the coloured plates for a manuscript on *Birds of Indian Subcontinent* to be published by the world-famous publisher of field guides: A&C Black of London. This publisher is also releasing *Pheasants, Partridges, Grouse of the World*. The artist features prominently in these books.

"Art abroad is much more appreciated than over here because people there have a better understanding of art. Here, the maturity is yet to



Cloaked Leopard - 1987 - a painting that has won him world acclaim



The arduous task of birdwatching: Carl D'Silva sketching in the field

much like clipping the wings of a bird. For Carl spends most of his time birdwatching. If not flying off to London, he is busy scanning the landscape in far off India to get a vivid glimpse of birds or bringing out the essence of wildlife in its natural habitats.

It was not until I met this wildlife artist in person that I realized the rewards of being close to nature.

Carl's work of art showcases birds in the wild captured in their subtle nuances with deft skill and accuracy.

"I try and get first hand information about my subjects, this involves a lot of field work which keeps me away most of the time," explained the artist when I finally met him at his studio apartment at Caranzalem.

At the apartment you immediately feel the presence of someone watching you. Fixed on to the wall is an impressive

History society. His paintings were selected by an elite international body called the Society of Wildlife Artists for its display at its exhibition in London. "From then on it was no turning back," says Carl.

After completing his formal education at J J College of Art in Mumbai, Carl decided to give his full attention to painting, and what better place to give vent to his creativity than in the serene surrounding of his homeland - Goa.

In November 1992 Carl convened the first wildlife exhibition in the state at Menezes



One of the artist's early successes: The rare Lesser Florida quail in its wild state

Braganza hall at Panjim. The five day exhibition attracted 43 entries. It expressed *True wild life art as a culmination of first hand observation of certain life forms, an in-depth knowledge of*

develop." His advise to wildlife artists here is to go beyond the art of painting, "study the behavioural traits of your subjects, concentrate on their anatomy and do a lot of first hand research."

Now back in Goa Carl is working on a field guide on the

paintings." His speciality is birds of prey like the eagle and the hawk.

"Today the habitat of endangered species have been destroyed and their composition is often overdone through computerized technology. As for me I want to capture wildlife as it is,



Grouse plate for forthcoming Pheasants, Partridge, Grouse of the World - A&C BLACK, LONDON

birds of East Asia. He has been commissioned to produce coloured plates on wild ducks a waterfowl of the region technically known as Eastern Palearctic comprising of Russia, China and Taiwan.

Carl is keen in exhibiting his paintings in Zimbabwe where he has recently been. "I would like to exhibit a series of paintings on African wildlife" says he, adding, "in the future I plan to concentrate more on gallery

for posterity", admits the artist earnestly.

It is said that the health and abundance of birds tell a great deal about the health of our environment and a familiarity with them can, overtime, provide an intimate key to many of the worlds subtler wonders. It is plausible to say that a look at Carl D'Silva's paintings of the untamed world truly opens a door to these amazing treasures of wildlife.

Catching jungle tales on canvas

By Vithal C. Nadkarni

MUMBAI: With his jutting nose, beady eyes and crest tied in a jet black ponytail, Carl D'Silva, India's leading wildlife artist, reminds you of an alert night heron. However, as he looks around his first ever exhibition of oil paintings, 'Conservation on Canvas', which opened in the Bombay Natural History Society premises on Saturday, D'Silva says, "A soaring raptor, an eagle or a hawk, may make a more appropriate comparison."

The similarities of character he lists — being incisive, hard to put down, quick on the uptake, tire-

less, single-minded in quest and with strong, grasping instincts — are also those that go into the making of a successful wildlife artist.

His golden eagle on a crag painted against a vast Himalayan sky reveals why D'Silva's paintings have drawn approving nods from around the world. Unlike static illustrations stuffed into field guides and birdbooks, the paintings capture slices of reality — red in tooth and claw, sometimes, or in repose or contempla-

tion, but always wild.

His own favourite is a painting of the Kashmir stag or the Hangul caroming down a snowy slope. "It reveals the demands this genre makes on the artist," D'Silva says. "I'd feel vindicated if a viewer said, 'I know this. I was there.'" You have to render the landscape in all its depth and detail of course, but not produce a kitschy imitation of a photograph.

The themes and titles of D'Silva's 19-odd paintings show

that a wildlife artist is also a storyteller. His painting of the crested hawk eagle panting in frustration on a leaf-littered forest floor, for example, communicates its intent even without the title.

Even when there is no action, as in the painting of a pair of brilliant kingfishers perched over a stretch of mangrove water, the picture hints at unspoken possibilities, such as lazy Tom Sawyer-like afternoons spent in dodging civilisation.

"With its evocative potential, therefore, wildlife painting is vastly superior to photography," says D'Silva. "We saw a hawk pouncing on a yellow-throated marten in a pine forest. The action was too swift for a camera. But I could go back to my mind's eye to recapture that instant artistically."

D'Silva studied painting at the J.J. School of Art where, he says, his teachers frowned on his choice of subjects. He was, however, adamant in his desire to specialise in wildlife portrayals. "Carl has successfully managed to straddle two different approaches to wildlife illustration," says Shahid Ali, a field ecologist who has spent many years with D'Silva in the field and studio.

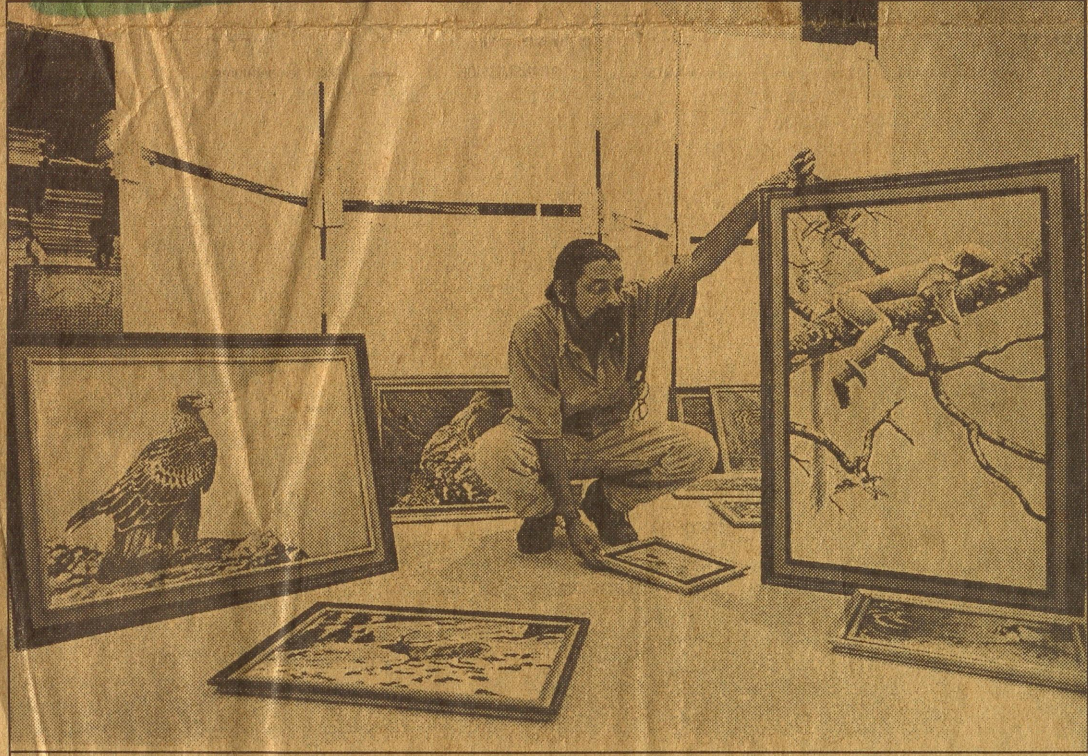
"As the Bombay Natural History Society's staff artist from 1982 to 1989, he had several opportunities to accompany wildlife ecologists on their field studies when his knowledge of Indian natural history grew tremendously," comments Ali. "He also benefitted from the exacting tutelage under the legendary Grand Old Man of Indian

ornithology, Salim Ali, who told him, 'Till you get your feet right, you'd never be able to perfect your bird illustrations.'"

D'Silva got his first major break when two of his paintings — a freshly washed neophron vulture sunning itself in the Karera bustard sanctuary and a clouded leopard hiding behind a log — were chosen by the society for wildlife artists for their annual show in London. D'Silva was the youngest artist in the show. A number of commissions for field guides from publishers all over the world followed.

His magnum opus, a comprehensive guide to the birds of the subcontinent in which he has contributed 34 plates and the covers, is to be released by a British publisher in July. He has also done the illustrations for the new avatar of the Salim Ali classic, 'The Book of Indian Birds', now in its 12th edition.

"Wildlife art has been used in many parts of the world to raise funds for wildlife protection and to increase conservation consciousness," Ali adds. "Carl's paintings can inspire nature enthusiasts who are looking for ways of self-expression and also artists who are prepared to look out in the field rather than copy lifeless material."



ALL THINGS WILD AND WONDERFUL: Carl D'Silva with his paintings

'Creativity in wildlife art is imperative for success'

TUESDAY INTERVIEW

Carl D'Silva

(Wildlife artist)

CARL D'SILVA, India's leading wildlife artist, carved a niche for himself for his field guide illustrations on birds. He received international recognition when he became the first Indian whose paintings were selected by the UK-based premiere wildlife art (Consortium), the Society of Wildlife Artists, at their annual juried show in London's Mall Galleries. He was also associated with renowned ornithologist, Dr. Salim Ali, on his book, 'The Book on Indian Birds'. Mr. D'Silva is currently holding a week-long exhibition of his works, 'Conservation on Canvas' at the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS), Hornbill House. Excerpts from an interview.

almost anywhere, on greeting-cards, calendars, T-shirts, plates, tea-cups, glasses.

I seek to create an awareness in the minds of the people on the importance of wildlife conservation by bringing forth my experiences. They have got to know that a given life-form should not be allowed to become extinct. After all, all the creations are interlinked.

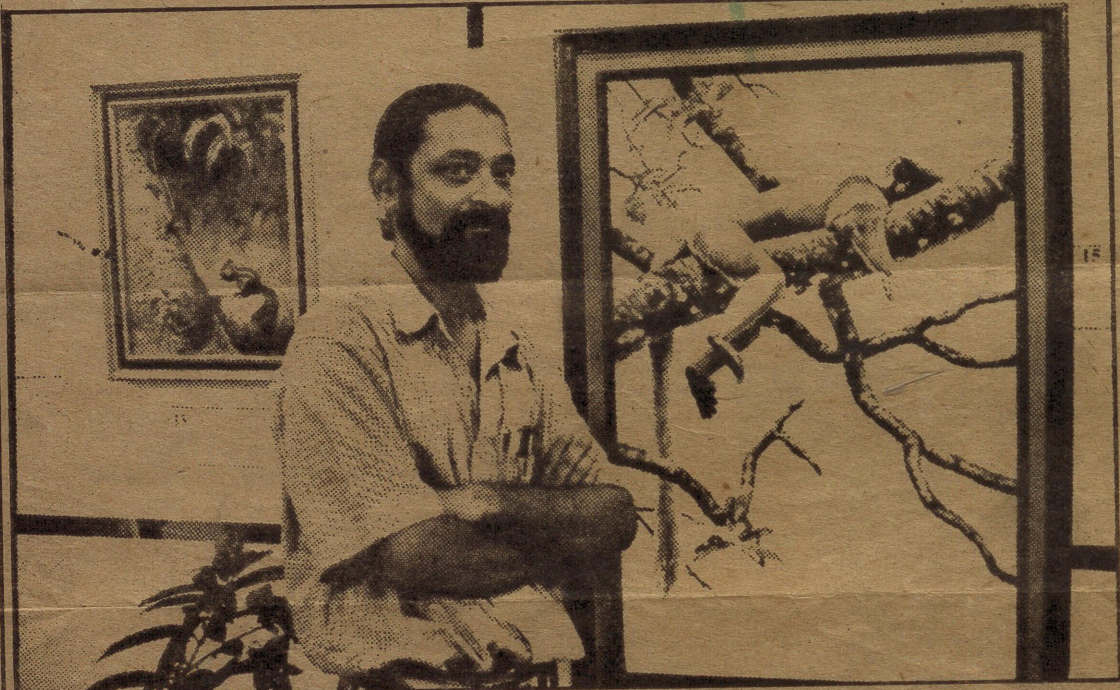
My exhibitions are like education programmes. When you look at my works of art, they will strike a chord. You will feel nature is precious and invaluable and that it should not be disturbed.

■ Do you have enough scope for your art in India? Don't you feel disturbed in view of the growing deforestation and extinction of species?

□ Of course, the destruction of nature bothers me a lot. But I am also quite comfortable with the situation. I do not have any sort of competition in this country. My nearest competitor is in Japan. Hence, I can pick and choose what I want to do.

■ How much is the common man interested in wildlife art?

MISQUOTE
Carl



■ Why did you choose wildlife as the chief theme of your paintings?
□ I was always fascinated by birds and nature. I was also a topper in my school painting

competitions. Later, I started working with the BNHS as a staff artist. I worked on many BNHS projects like migration of the birds, endangered species etc. Mine is an exclusive art stream. India does not have a wildlife artist to boast of. I thought I could fill the gap.

■ But why only wildlife?
□ For the same reasons as other things interest other people, whether it is sports or any other activity.

After joining the BNHS, I realised that one should understand his subject with a better perspective. A wildlife artist has to know the habits and manners of the animals he seeks to paint on his canvas. Wildlife art deals with an in-depth knowledge of life-forms, their behaviour, combined with an uncanny sense of creativity.

■ How does wildlife art help in the conservation of nature?

□ Wildlife art is one of the few art genres which can be merchandised. No other art form has this potential. A wildlife painting can be accommodated

What kind of response have you received for your exhibition?

□ In fact, a lot more people are interested in wildlife today, thanks to the wildlife programmes of the 'Discovery' channel. There is lot more awareness today.

■ What is the status of wildlife art in the west?

□ It is a billion dollar activity in the west. It is raising millions of dollars for environment conservation. Of course, there are hundreds of wildlife artists there... but only a handful are good. My paintings have been highly acclaimed in Europe.


■ How has been your association with Dr. Salim Ali?

□ If it wasn't for his sharp criticism, I might not have got off in this field. He severely admonished me that I had no right to be in business if I had no knowledge about the anatomy of the animals. I took it as a challenge. I wanted to prove him wrong. The results are there for all to see.

— Gaurang R. Balwally

Wild men and wilder animals

So, aren't you wishing you were out there in the wild with the flora and fauna and wildlife all around you. Well, **CARL D'SILVA** is doing all this for you and more. He's



been painting his escapades on canvas and receiving recognition far and wide. Not only in India but Europe too. His forte is the real life richness of detail that he brings to his bird plates and canvasses. Check it out at BNHS, Hornbill House if you've got a yen for the wild. You will surely acknowledge him as India's leading wildlife artist.

After close 'brush' with rhinos, artist captures wildlife on canvas

By OUR CORRESPONDENT

Mumbai, March. 25: He has been chased by rhinoceros' in the Kaziranga thickets. He has had the awesome experience of facing a herd of stampeding tuskers.

Most city-slickers would have given up their 'love' for wildlife, but not Carl D'Silva, India's foremost wildlife artist.

"You cannot love wildlife sitting in the comforts of the city, you've

got to be out there," he says. Thumbing his beard, he adds it is only because of the media that the authorities have given wildlife its due.

Patience and aesthetic sense are the prime requisites for the wildlife artist who is presently exhibiting his collection of paintings *Conservation on Canvas* at Hornbill House, near Regal Cinema.

"At times, even after weeks of trekking you hardly sight anything.

It is depressing, but that is the way nature is. It has its own way," says D'Silva pointing to a painting of a three snow leopards. "This is a once in a lifetime experience." According to him a painting holds an edge over a photograph.

"At times things happen too swiftly to capture on film. A falcon swooping down on its prey is one such example. While we can recreate the image. The aesthetic sense gives the painting that extra edge

over the photograph. A photograph describes what you see, a painting goes beyond the realms of imagination."

D'Silva, whose other field of

CALL OF THE WILD

activity is illustrating field guides on bird, is depressed with attitude shown by Indians to wildlife. He blames the policy-makers for this mess.

"Like all issues in the country, wildlife too has been efficiently mismanaged. Conservationists are not morons. They too have a very valid point. Unless both sides sit together and a consensus is evolved, we will have to persist with the mess."

Speaking about his paintings, he said the technical details in them were his forte.

"The research involves the measuring of a bird's wing span, their

colours, the study of their habitat. All these elements go into the making of the painting close to perfection. The subject should gel with the background." Big cats are his favourites; "It's the grace they possess. The sense of secrecy. There is nothing quite like them." Having worked with Dr Salim Ali and others, D'Silva admits that he does not have any idols. "I am a self made man. I've learnt from others. But it has been much hard work."

Carl

Wildlife Artist

A2 Ashiyana, Caranz

After Mumbai, exhibition on Houses of Goa goes to Delhi

GERARD da Cunha and Architecture Autonomous launched the book *Houses of Goa* in July. They have now taken a step further. Not content with honouring the houses of Goa with the book, they are taking an exhibition of photographs, sketches, water colours, panels and models on the subject to Mumbai and Delhi.

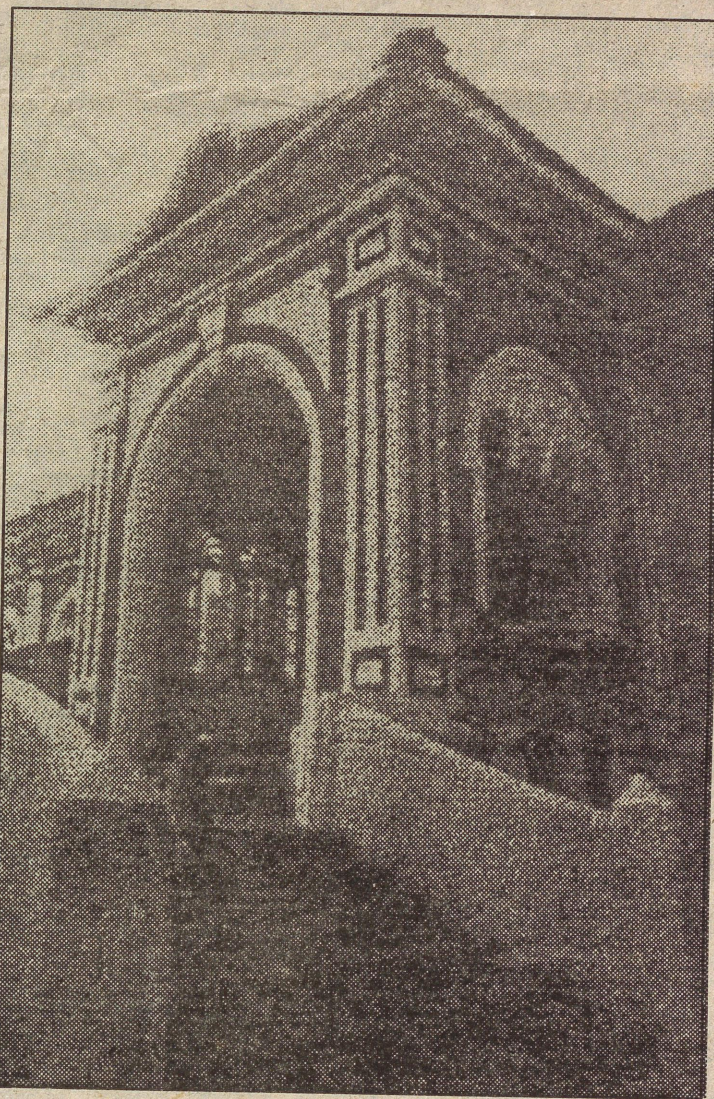
The exhibition, generously supported by Fundacao Oriente, Goa was held at Cymroza Art Gallery, Bhulabhai Desai Road, Mumbai from December 20 to January 4. The show was visited by over 200 people over the holidays. It now goes to Delhi for two weeks before it comes back to be housed in a permanent venue in Goa.

The exhibition, first shown at the Fundacao Oriente in the historic precinct of Fontainhas in Panaji in December 1998 has since been upgraded to include more panels and blow-ups of Goan house interiors. What promises to be exciting is the participation of watercolourist Dr Subodh Kerkar who brings 20 exclusive watercolours of Goan houses to the exhibition. Ms Sunita Dalvi, an architect by training, will also exhibit her pen and ink sketches.

Renowned artist Carl D'Silva who has done some specially conjured themes with houses, birds, small animals and artifacts will also be displaying his work. All three artists have executed work especially for the exhibition.

The photographs have been taken by Ashok Koshy, winner of the UNICEF certificate of merit for his picture of the Indian girl child and who has several exhibitions to his credit, including one on the Portuguese presence in Kerala. The bulk of the writing of the book is by Heta Pandit, who is on a Homi Bhabha fellowship and working in Goa on the work of artisans and craftsmen in Goan domestic architecture.

When asked what the significance of taking the exhibition to Mumbai and then to Delhi was, Gerard da Cunha said, "When I first came to live in the land of my forefathers 16 years ago and began discovering the Goan house I did not quite know what to make of it. To my mind, averse to conforming to orthodoxy, these houses seemed formal and pompous. Their proportions had a solidity which just did not seem to fit into my manifesto of architectural thought. But as these houses grew on me I realized that I was living amidst a treasure trove of architectural endeav-



our. I want the whole country, and especially Mumbai and Delhi, where heritage awareness is so high, to see this treasure trove. We have been most fortunate that a prestigious organization like the Fundacao Oriente had the understanding and the foresight to appreciate the houses of Goa enough to support our effort."

The story of the Goan house begins in antiquity and like all vernacular architecture, it begins with the deployment of locally available materials within the Framework of a local climate. Goa was generous to its house-builders. It offered bamboo, coconut palm, a variety of hardwoods, laterite blocks and boulders, soil ideal "for rammed earth and shell lime from its estuarine waters. Its monsoon was fierce and protecting oneself from it was the basis of architectural form. The Portuguese conquest of Goa in 1510 changed all that. The new colonists decided to use religion to make inroads into their new colony and they did this through large, impressive religious buildings. In an

attempt to separate the newly converted Goan Christian from his cultural roots, an European lifestyle was encouraged. Large agricultural holdings and a feudal system, together with a free flow of expatriate earnings from Portugal, Portuguese-Africa and other colonies, helped sustain an ostentatious lifestyle in which the house played a vital role. And then an unexpected phenomenon took place! The new Goan Christian adopted an European stance but he did not cut himself off from his Indian roots completely. The outcome of this cultural amalgamation gave birth to a hybrid culture that became over time richer and more innovative in form and meaning than the original. This in turn affected the design of the houses owned by wealthy Goan Hindus.

What is it that makes Goan houses, both Hindu and Catholic, so special?

For a start, it is their perfect placement in the landscape. And then, the variety that Goan houses have to offer in each of their elements of style is astonishing. Through the exhibition

and the book, da Cunha's team has made an attempt to encapsulate some of these elements in photographic panels. The book that accompanies the exhibition takes one farther into this world. The exhibition invites visitors in with its first panel on doors in Goan houses. The doors featured in the exhibition range from simple strip boards attached with batens at the back to elaborately panelled doorways with fretwork door hoods as entrances to master bedrooms.

As for the windows ... what are windows? Face a Goan house up front to find out. Functionally an important frontier for communication and transition, windows allow streams of sunlight into houses and a little of Goa's clear blue skies. Simple, functional or heavily ornamented, these impressive apertures lend charm and grace to the houses of Goa in their own inimitable way. Large and ornate windows transform busy solid-looking houses into delicate filigreed boxes changing one's outlook of the world without and the world within. The windows featured in the exhibition vary from simple frames fixed with mother-of-pearl shell to windows glazed with coloured glass. Through these panels one can trace the evolution of windows, the history of glass as shattering material and evidence of the Portuguese influence in window design.

Gateposts and compound walls: They draw one's attention to the house within and in a typical Goan paradox intimidate you from entering without permission. No one can say for sure where the original design for a particular gatepost came from. Each one is so unique in form and motif that one begins to wonder how they have been ignored altogether! The pillars, piers and columns featured in the exhibition range from simple masonry to elaborate works of art and are a veritable display of Goa's indigenous craftsmanship. Some of them are open invitations into a house. Some simply function as display cases.

And colour in architecture ... what did the Goans do for colour? Take a bit of the blue Goan slay and mash a few fleecy white clouds in? Borrow the pale yellow of the champaka flowers in bloom and add the scent of the Queen of the Night? Crush the green from the leaves of the hibiscus and rut in the foam from the early morning surf?

ARTIST OF THE WEEK

Carl D'Silva

● FREDERICK NORONHA

Tucked away in a small building of Caranzalem is the home-cum-studio of India's leading wildlife artist. One can hear birds nearby in this fast-getting-urbanised former village outside Panjim, in a place where Carl D'Silva worked on hundreds of wildlife sketches.

Mumbai-returned Carl made Goa his home some 13 years back. Few, however, may have realised his skills here. But his talent in illustrating field guides on birds has been in great demand in Europe and elsewhere.

How did he get into this unusual field? "Oh, that's the old story. I was interested in watching birds at about the same time I started painting... One thing led to another. The rest is history."

Today, Carl D'Silva is widely acknowledged as India's leading wildlife artist. His outgrew a conventional art school education from JJ's in Mumbai, and is credited with introducing world-class standards in modern wildlife art in India.

Recently, the way this writer ran-into Carl only goes to give a hint of his reputation and talent. UK-based Richard Thomas, the Editor of *World Birdwatch*, was struggling to get through a message to Carl. Finally, stumbling across this writer, Thomas sought assistance via the Internet, from this writer whom he happened to chance upon via the Net. Writing in from Cambridge, Thomas infact wanted permission for BirdLife to reproduce some of Carl's paintings in its forthcoming *Asian Red Data Book*.

"This important book for conservation of Asia's threatened birds is soon to go to

print..." wrote Thomas, seeking permission to reproduce the Yellow-throated Bulbul (*Pycnonotus xantholaemus*), the Nicobar Bulbul (*Hypsipetes nicobariensis*) and the Grey-sided Thrush (*Turdus feae*).

Carl was the Bombay Natural History Society's staff artist from 1986-89. From here came the chance to accompany wild-

Art for the bird's sake

life ecologists on field studies, from which his knowledge of India's natural history sprang.

"Extended sojourns across the country also allowed him to sharpen skills through technically demanding renditions of wildlife in its natural environment," explains a bio-sheet of Carl, released at a week-long exhibition at the BNHS' Hornbill House office a couple of years ago. This exhibi-



tion was titled 'Conservation on Canvas.'

Currently, he's working on a pocket guide of the birds of India, which is in its "last stage." As he narrates: "This work originally intended to use photographs. But they (the editors) simply enough photographs, and so they said it would be easier to get Carl to do the work."

Carl became the first Indian to have his paintings selected for exhibition by the UK-based premier wildlife art consortium, the Society of Wildlife Artists, during their annual juried show at the London's Mall Galleries. Earlier based in Byculla, Carl moved to Goa because he was "fed up of Bombay." "The atmosphere here helps

(to do my type of work)," Carl says, but concedes that his work has little link with this state. But, he's happy that Goa allows him to do work "without the mad rush, or (stressful) commuting."

Is it difficult for him to get accurate figures of the birds and animals, some of whom he may have not even seen? "Not any more. It was difficult earlier," says Carl, recalling the tough times he had to struggle with in the early part of his career.

When asked what is his work-day like, the artist quickly shoots back:

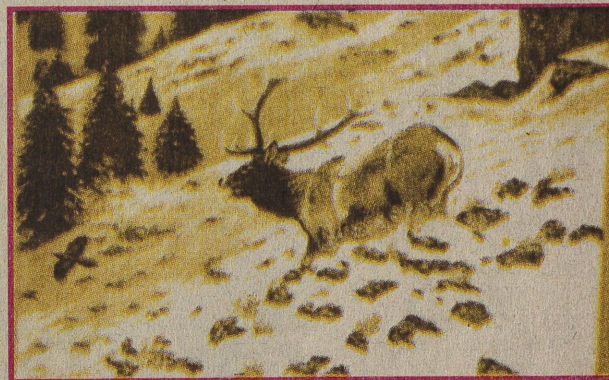
"*Sossegado*." But he then adds that on a good day, he can put in at least seven full-fledged illustrations.

Carl's name prominently adorns the cover of some major books on birdwatching. For instance, 'A Guide to the Parrots of the World.'

Where all has he been published so far? "One day I have to sit down at a stretch and sort out all my life's work, who's got what, and all the prints," he says, appearing more caught up with putting out good work rather than resting on laurels.

Carl says drawing a bird he has not seen is not a headache. He needs to interact with someone who has seen the bird, and who can describe it. "Then, I can go on from there," he adds. Just looking at museum-skins can be a little difficult, because those may not give the proportions in life.

HERALD INSIGHT - 3rd MAR 2001



Since the early 'nineties, Carl has been illustrating field guides on birds, and his work has been in great demand in Europe and India. One of his prominent works in this country was a completely new set of 64 colour plates depicting 538 pieces of towering ornithologist Salim Ali's revised edition of 'The Book of Indian Birds.' Besides parrots, he has also been a major contributor on pheasants, partridges, and grouse.

Carl's forte is his accurate and real-life richness of detail he brings to his bird plates and canvasses. He is today one of the most sought-after artists for high-quality illustrations.

"In India, there's nobody else competing with me," he says confidently. But he adds that 'anybody who can do something

that can be identified as a tiger claims to be a wildlife artist.'

Of late, he says, books seem to be tapering off. "Many books (on the subject) have been published. All topics that needed to be covered, have been covered. Perhaps the next batch of work may come out in 20 years," he adds. So, for now, he's focusing more on gallery work.

He took time off to show a canvas displaying a magnificent mountain hawk eagle spread its wings, as a marten (from the weasel family) scurries off below. "That scene lasted for only a few seconds, when I was at the Corbett National Park," says he.

Carl feels "there's enough to be done in South Asia" itself for now, and "later on we'll talk of Africa and North or South America if needed." His work means he has to travel "all over the place" in the country, though hot favourites are the central and eastern Himalayas.

What does he think about the potential of birdwatcher-tourists? "They're serious, high-spending guys. But we don't have the proper infrastructure for them," he adds.

For instance, government-run agencies like forest departments open their gates lethargically during 'office hours.' As Carl points out, birdwatches need to get into such places early in the morning to "be with the birds before the sun's up."

Does he get the recognition he deserves?

"It doesn't really bother me," says Carl (37). But he admits that "more people know me in the UK than in India." Often, if he talks a walk to the Carambolim area, he would run into a foreign visitor who has heard his name, or is using a field guide that features his work, says he.

Any regrets for moving down to Goa? "Things like power failures, one learns to take in one's stride. Once you get geared for it, that is..." he says. Carl next plans to go in for 3-D (three dimension) work. Two more books are in queue for printing too.

Enjoy the after-sundown Saturday shopping fiesta



SUCHETA POTNIS

SATURDAY NIGHT BAZAARS

For those of you who don't know about the night markets, let me tell you the background. Decades ago, the hippies started a small beach side bazaar. They would sell trinkets bought from their journeys in the hills, including Manali and Kathmandu. Then there were several who would bring freshly baked breads and brownies (no doubt, at times laced with more than just rum and raisins) and cookies etc. It used to be a laid back affair — under the palms, in touching distance of the sea. There would be music



of a variety that was strange and soothing at the same time. By sunset the flea market would disperse.

Then the idea of a smaller, more select Night Market was started a few years ago. In the absence of the sun, the shopping becomes a pleasure. In both the markets, the central area is reserved for performances — Tai Chi, Yoga and of course music, including some great jamming. Handmade lamps of paper and cloth, designer footwear and handbags, funky hats, curios and handicrafts, jewellery. The Arpora market now has an Art Lane where you can find Subodh Kerkar, Art House and Silvio Ciancia of Colonial Photo. He has a large collection of colonial photographs/postcards, portraits and mainly, Bollywood memorabilia from 1940s to 50s. Fearless Nadia, I.S. Johar, Mehmood, Shammi Kapoor are all right there. So if you are an old times buff (like I very much am), you can buy the prints or the originals from him. He either sells the originals or gets them print-

ed for you on paper, canvas or in large poster size formats. His collection is truly mind-boggling. Silvio's main showcase is his large house at Arpora. He can be contacted at silviogoa@yahoo.com. And of equal importance to me are the various food stalls — Sushi platters, German breads and cookies, calamari and fish, Chinese noodles and the Goan sausage pau. So remember, from now on, if you are in Goa over the weekend, make it a point to visit the Saturday Night bazaars. Mackey's is in Little Baga, en-route to Lila Café and J & A's Little Italy. The second one, and my favourite is in Arpora — where the Haystack used to be.

WILDLIFE ARTIST

The other day, our dear friend, fashion photographer Denzil Sequiera walked into our house with a friend. I almost fell off my chair when I realised who the friend was — Carl D'Silva, the wildlife artist who lives in Goa. If you are a wildlife enthusiast, you already are familiar with the name. For those of you who aren't, let me tell you.

Carl D'Silva is the artist who made those hundreds of beautiful drawings in Salim Ali's centenary edition of *Book of Indian Birds*. These drawings in minute detail, are a delight. Their colours are so true, so vivid that they make invaluable reference material for any birdwatcher.

And there was this guy, sitting relaxed in our home! Carl is now getting into doing some beautiful paintings of the Goan wildlife on good quality T-shirts. There are bisons, butterflies, dolphins and of course many of the hundreds of birds that make Goa their home. In case you would like some specially commissioned paintings of our beautiful wildlife, contact Carl at: cbeedee@goatelecom.com



A drawing by Carl D'Silva

GREAT NEWS

And whilst we are talking of (yet another) of my favourite subjects, wildlife, I have a GREAT news to impart. As you may know, the quiet beaches at Morjim and Mandrem are the place where sea turtles come to hatch. Well, with the un-erring biological

clocks that they have, the turtles arrived this year too. At Mandrem beach, the first turtle mama deposited her eggs a few weeks ago and guess what? Two days ago, the eggs hatched — and almost a hundred and forty baby turtles came out and made their floundering way to the sea! Does that call for a celebration or what? Den-

zil Sequiera who has an ancestral house on the beach has a tonne of admiration for two hardworking and dedicated Forest Department guys. Apparently these two guys kept nightly vigil to ensure the safe incubation of the eggs. So, if you are on the beautiful and quiet beaches of Mandrem, Morjim and you

see a small sign saying, *Turtle's Nest, do be careful* and in case you see someone playing loud music nearby, please politely tell them to stop and explain why. May the baby turtles grow into large and stately creatures, and may they come back to their birthplace time and again to continue this wonderful cycle of life.



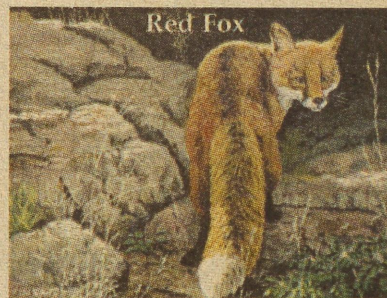
Carl with a wolly-necked stork

NAVHIND TIMES
June 25th 2005

Wild Strokes!



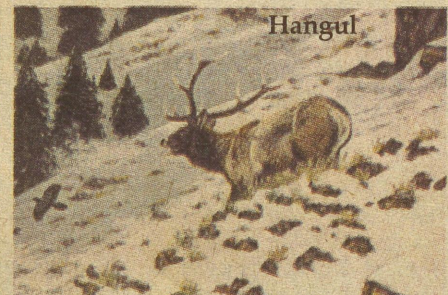
Golden Langur



Red Fox



Five-striped Palm Squirrels



Hangul

Glaxy Fernandes takes a walk into the wild with India's leading wildlife artist and Goa's pride, Carl D'Silva

Carl D'Silva, India's leading wildlife artist is intensely passionate about his work. A resident of Caranzalem, he has many firsts to his credit. He became the first and as yet only Indian to have his paintings selected for exhibition by the UK-based premiere Wildlife Art (consortium), the Society of Wildlife Artists at their annual juried show in London's Mall galleries. He was also included in *Asia's Who's Who* as the only professional wildlife artist in the country. His efforts at introducing world-class standards in modern Wildlife art for the first time in the country has also received acclaim from around the world.

After obtaining a conventional art school education in Bombay, Carl became the Bombay Natural History Society staff-artist from 1986-89 and accompanied wildlife ecologists on various field studies. This increased his knowledge of Indian natural history tremendously. The interest grew when one of the researchers of Dr Salim Ali who resided in his building introduced him to various research books on wildlife.

In 1989 Carl decided to do something different. He decided to use his talent in illustrating field guides on birds. So beginning with a completely new set of 64 colour plates depicting 538 species for Salim Ali's revised edition on the *Book of Indian Birds*, he also made technically demanding renditions of wildlife

in its natural environment in a British sponsored field-guide to *Birds of the Indian Sub-continent* as also illustrations in research guides like *Birds of Bhutan*, *Birds of Nepal*, and *Birds of South India*. He also contributed immensely to specialised monographs like *Parrots of the World*, and *Pheasants, Partridges and Grouse of the World*.

Carl's work is currently exhibited in several collections in India and abroad and in Goa at the Acron Arcade in Sinquerim.

seller in India. Carl is currently working on illustrations for *Birds of Asia*, another book on birds. Be-

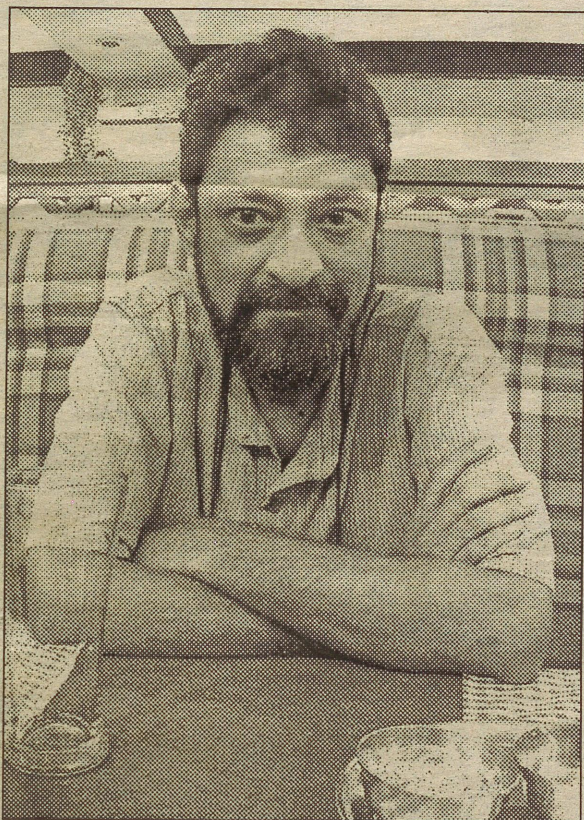
sides birds, he has also illustrated painted shells and flowers in other publications. "Knowledge of anatomy is a must for any wildlife artist," he informs.

Carl also has a penchant for taxidermy and sculpture and has even sculpted an owl for one of Booker Prize winner Arundhati Roy's movies.

Carl's forte lies in the accurate and real life richness of detail that he brings to his bird plates and canvasses. The wealth of experience that he has acquired through his extended sojourns across the country and abroad like US, UK and Africa has catapulted him to a position where he is one of the most sought after artists for high-quality illustrations that have come to be expected of field guides. In his extensive research he has come across around 750 different species of birds, he reveals.

Carl's work is currently exhibited in several collections in India and abroad and in Goa at the Acron Arcade in Sinquerim.

Protecting the eco-system, garbage disposal, recycling of plastic waste have always been issues close to his heart. Having interacted with people from different parts of India at the grassroots level, Carl feels that "as far as government's efforts towards conservation are concerned, the framing of policies is very wrong."



CARL D'SILVA is widely acknowledged as India's leading wildlife artist. Being the only professional one too, he's included in 'Asia's Who's Who' and his work is exhibited in several collections in India and abroad. Over a meal of Masala Fried Squids, Prawn Tikki and an alluring Mutton Thali at Konkana Restaurant, he speaks to REEMA KAMAT over mouthfuls of 'grub'.

“ He told me I had no business painting birds if I couldn't paint their eyes and feet properly ”

Bio beginnings

A naturalist, conservationist; call me what you may. Basically, I'm a wildlife artist. I have formally trained in the field from JJ School of Art, Mumbai. I was born and brought up in Mumbai; I came to Goa about 19 years ago.

At the same time that I started pottering around with brushes and paints, I got interested in wildlife. I was never interested in the domestic kind of art. I

was always doing something or the other to do with wildlife, animals etc. You would find me fooling around with toy binoculars, watching bird nests in tree tops while other boys my age would go around with a catapult trying to knock them down. As college happened, I also joined the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) and things took off from there. I also got in touch with overseas biologists, authors on the subject, so that I could broaden my knowledge on the subject.

Working under 'The Grand Old Man'

Salim Ali is considered the pinnacle of ornithology in India and I have done the 64 colour plates depicting 538 species for the revised version of his *Book Of Indian Birds*. I was immensely fortunate to have for a neighbour, Salim Ali's junior. He used to supply me with books, materials, advice etc. Later on, I also had the opportunity to work under him. I actually met him in his twilight years; in '85-86, and he passed away in '91. He was a stickler for work as I remember

him. He had a wicked sense of humour, but was a no-nonsense chap. No shoddy work was tolerated. Because of him, I took an extra interest in anatomy. When I first showed him my work as a beginner, he told me I had no business painting birds if I couldn't paint their eyes and feet properly. So, I took it upon myself to actually and actively study anatomy. The rest, as they say, is history.

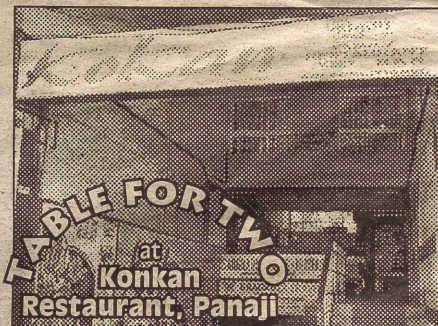
The art of criticism

Anybody who can paint a bird or copy the picture of an animal, today, says its wildlife art. But 99% of those people who claim to be wildlife artists haven't even been to the field to have a firsthand knowledge of what they are talking about. Wildlife art is a very specialised kind of art; it is an art as well as a science, in fact. You need to know the basics of art as well as have additional knowledge of behaviour, anatomy of certain life forms that you can't pin down and get to pose for you. You hardly see them, so it's essential to train your mind's eye to retain all the features; you need to have a photographic memory. From a critique point of view, the worst thing about wildlife art in this part of the world is that most art critics don't have the requisite knowledge to criticise art correctly. Wildlife art can only be judged and criticised by biologists and scientists in the field because of the specifics involved.

His wild world

Goa has really helped in pursuing my work because of its conducive ambience; it's an artist's place, not stifling like a mega city. Generally speaking, I've been doing this professionally for the last 25 years. I've been all over the country, physically handled stuff like

bird migration work; feeling them, observing each detail, measuring the parts, handling casualties. Taxidermy and sculpture are the other things that keep me busy. I am also associated with the World Wide Fund (WWF), I was on their board for ten years. I am also quite involved with the nature education



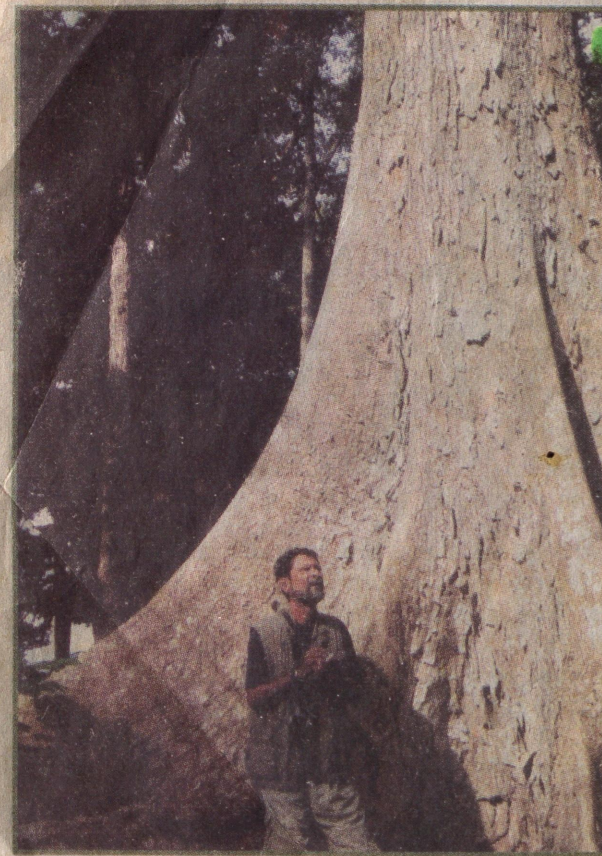
scene here, teaching college or school kids. Whenever I can, I try to help the organisers of wildlife workshops with my expertise. I also participate in the Annual Waterfowl Census of the Asian Wetland Bureau.

Why Konkana?

The ambience is good, the grub is excellent. I come here very often, the last I came here must've been barely 3 to 4 weeks ago. I've been coming here ever since the place started. I first came here with a couple of friends and really liked the place because it's easy on the customer. My favourite has remained their 'Mutton Thali'; it's a patent with me, I don't venture into anything more complicated. I also enjoy the fish here, their seafood is quite good. I'm a foodie and to put it succinctly, I eat anything that doesn't bite back!

Reproducing Wildlife's Wonder through Paintings

HERALD 29th JUNE 2012



Carl D'Silva has observed and painted fascinating pieces of birds and wild life for over 30 years. With his experience, it takes just a glimpse and a bird is portrayed with its traits. HERALD speaks to the ornithologist about his experience of bird watching in the Andaman Islands and his upcoming talk on Friday

DOLCY D'CRUZ

goasheartbeat@herald-go.com

"I was asked 'Are you ready to come to the Andaman Islands for a five day trip? We are leaving in the next 48 hours?' I had hardly any time in hand but I quickly packed all the equipments and paints and everything I wanted to carry, arranged the grub for the pets and I left for Andaman Islands. It was my dream to travel to the place for the last 30 years of my career and I was finally there to see the birds and illustrate them," says Carl D'Silva, a Goa based ornithologist and wildlife artist, with great excitement.

"I had painted hornbills on the cover of a book in 1992 and then again on another cover in 2002, those species are only spotted in Andaman Islands. I was waiting to see those hornbills. We arrived in Port Blair and traveled up north for bird watching. We required special permission to travel to some areas as it passes through regions where one of the most hostile indigenous tribes of Andaman Islands lives. I did four paintings



PHOTO BY SIDDESH MAYENKAR

per day for the five day stay and yet there is so much more to see. I am planning my next visit to the islands very soon. To travel to the north of the island and observe the wild life and birds will require at least two months. I also intend traveling to Narcondam Islands which is a barren island and I will have to carry along with me everything that is required right from food, clothing to gas to cook food," says Carl who is India's leading wildlife artist and has worked from Goa since 1989.

Carl started paintings from a young age and by the time he was in class VIII, he knew he would become a wild life artist. "I joined college and by second year, I gave the professors a run for their money. I was only painting wildlife."

Carl will share his experience of bird watching on the Andaman Islands at 'Pages from a wildlife artist's sketch book' at the International Centre Goa (ICG), Dona Paula on June 29 at 6 pm in col-

laboration with Bookworm. "It is a difficult task to put together and explain 30 years of work in a short duration. I have prepared 90 slides so far and it will have technical details too. I hope it doesn't get too heavy for the audience to understand the details. I will include a few of my anecdotes of my on field experience and a few colour plates which were used for the books," says Carl.

Carl worked at the Bombay Natural History Society and has worked with Salim Ali for his revised edition of 'Book of Indian

Birds'. His works also feature in bird guides like 'Birds of Mumbai', 'Birdwatcher's Guide to India', 'Birds of North India' and 'Parrots of the World'. He has worked with the best wild life artists of the world and yet feels that even though high end cameras are used, the field of photography is very different from illustrating wildlife. "There is no competition at all. There is always demand for illustrations."

Carl has his own way of working with birds and painting them to perfection. "On the field, I observe and record details like the posture of the bird, the wind direction, how the feathers were looking and the remaining are all experience of hand and eye coordination. I have worked with birds for so long now that I can immediately recognise the species and note down details before anyone can even check the birds through their binoculars," says Carl who uses different mediums to illustrate wild life and birds like acrylic, watercolours and even gouache.

Carl runs though his works done over the years and can even criticise it to improve himself. "There is a huge difference in my work and sometimes I feel the earlier works were more immature. But now I feel that my eyes and hands will not be able to keep up with the paintings," says Carl as he shows his magnificent colour plates used for Salim Ali's books.

LIMELIGHT



HAPPENINGS

Bird watching Paintings of Andaman Islands

PHOTOS BY SIDDESH MAYENKAR

HERALD FEATURES

goasheartbeat@herald-goa.com

One could easily recognise the curiosity and enthusiasm on the faces of the audience as they walked in for wildlife artist Carl D'Silva's presentation on 'Bird watching in the Andaman islands'. The hall at the International Centre Goa turned out to be smaller for the audience as the venue was shifted to the adjoining larger hall at the complex to accommodate the audience. Carl shared his experience of the five day stay of bird watching at Andaman Islands through slides and his paintings. He also explained how he keeps a visual diary for just jotting down finer details to complete a painting of the sighted bird.



Carl D Silva



Sujata Noronha



Nandini Sahai



Leio and Jennifer D'Souza



Nandita D' Souza



Luisa Almeida and Carole Gomes



Adolph and Monica Castellino

Taking wings at the Campal creek

HERALD FEATURES

cafe@herald-goa.com

Goa ForGiving and Goa Birders are organising a Birders Walk by the Campal Creek. A press conference recently held at Gonsalves Mansion, Panjim was addressed by Edson Martins, Board Member, Goa ForGiving Trust; Shaeen Gomes, Project Coordinator, Goa ForGiving Trust; Parag Rangnekar, State Coordinator BNHS IBCN-Goa/GBCN; Rajiv D'Silva, Conrad Pinto and Mandar Bhagat - Members GB/GBCN; Pankaj Lad and Pronoy Baidya, eBird India Editors, Goa State Reviewers and Members GB/GBCN and Shaheen Sheikh including a student representing Hamara School who will also be a part of the event to be held on June 1.

Parag Rangnekar, State Coordinator BNHS IBCN-Goa/GBCN maintained that the aim of having this programme is to popularise birding and get a proper data on the birds along the creek and

also to create awareness about the birds among the youth.

Pronoy Baidya, eBird India Editor, Goa State Reviewer and Member GB/GBCN spoke about how bird watching can make a difference in the restoration of the Campal Creek for the simple fact that the data collected on the bird species can be an important set of data for the conservation activity of the Creek as it is a natural habitat to a variety of organisms, animals and birds.

Shaheen Sheikh, a student of Hamara School, expressed her desire to attend the event as she and her school friends are very keen to see the birds along the creek. She also requested the Government on behalf of the youth to clean up the Campal Creek and make it look beautiful.

The Birders Walk will take place by the creek on June 1, 2014 from 6.30 am onwards.



From left Pankaj Lad, Rajiv D'Silva, Parag Rangnekar, Conrad Pinto, Pronoy Baidya, Edson Martins, Mandar Bhagat, Shaeen Gomes and Shaheen Sheikh