

Mirror**Title : ART AROUND THE CORNER - Home is where the art is****Author : Reema Gehi****Location :****Article Date : 11/09/2016**

When people often ask Gieve Patel if he paints in his bed room, his reply to them is always, “No, I sleep in my studio,” smiles the 76-year-old. Located inside an old building in the heart of busy Colaba, where Patel also lives, the studio is a synonym of a peaceful haven. The artist also paints out of another space in Nepean Sea Road, “and there is no restriction; it's quite fluid,” he says. “Though I like the high ceilings here. It gives the room the spaciousness.”

Incidentally, a small typewriter sits at the corner of the room. Patel has used this to type all his plays, Mister Behram, Princes and Savaksa, and poems such as On Killing A Tree and From Bombay Central. “It still works and I still use it. All my first drafts are on the typewriter and then on the computer,” he says. At his Colaba studio currently, the artist, playwright and poet is in the process of preparing for his upcoming solo show, which opens on January 18 next year at the Galerie Mirchandani + Steinruecke. Pointing to a painting titled Footboard Rider -the work itself yields the title of the show -Patel remarks, “Here, you see a sleeping figure juxtaposed with a man riding the train on the footboard. A common sight we see at the railways.”

The Mumbai Railways has always been a favourite subject with Patel. “I have always been fascinated by the inside and the outside and how the figures lend into each other and how the landscape changes when we travel by train,” he continues. The upcoming show also includes the theme of looking in to a well (also a recurrent subject in Patel's oeuvre), mourning figures as well as of those consoling mourners. “I have only one more work to complete the series,” he informs.

With a show in the offing, Patel finds it hard to quantify how much time he might spend at the studio. “Some days, it could be for half-an-hour, but sometimes it is the entire day pondering over my work,” he says. “I consider my presence around the painting also essential studio time. For instance, glancing at the painting when I pass by, or simply sitting and quietly looking at it for long hours is also important.”

While spending time with his work, listening to both, Western and Hindustani classical music is a daily ritual. Patel enjoys listening to stalwarts such as Bade Ghulam Ali Khan, Beethoven and Mozart. “They are very important to me. Before I begin -not while I am painting -I listen to music and look at the painting for about half-an-hour. And that kind of calms me down and makes me more focused. Once I actually start working, I put the music off,” he shares.

ART AROUND THE CORNER**MIRROR MAKES A FORTNIGHTLY VISIT TO THE STUDIOS OF SOME OF THE FINEST ARTISTS****Artist: Gieve Patel****Location: Colaba**

Artist Gieve Patel at his Colaba studio, where he is working towards his upcoming solo show, *Footboard Rider*



Patel uses both oils and acrylics to create his work



The artist, playwright and poet's bookcase



The typewriter Patel used to pen his plays such as *Mister Behram*, *Princes* and *Savaksa*