



**ALL ARE CORDIALLY INVITED**

**Ila Dalmia Memorial Lecture 2016 by Ashok Vajpeyi**

**20 January 2016, 6:30 pm, SAA Auditorium, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi-110067**

Ila Dalmia Memorial Lecture 2016 by Ashok Vajpeyi  
20 January 2016, 6:30pm, SAA-JNU

**The Foundation for Indian Contemporary Art**

in association with

**Yashodhara Dalmia and School of Arts and Aesthetics, JNU**

invites you to

**Ila Dalmia Memorial Lecture 2016**

***Between Hope and Despair***

**by Ashok Vajpeyi**

The discussion following the lecture will be moderated by **Dr. Naman Ahuja**

Date: **20 January 2016, 6:30 pm** | Tea will be served at 6 pm

Venue: **School of Arts and Aesthetics Auditorium, JNU, New Delhi**

In his long public career Ashok Vajpeyi has set up many new institutions, and managed several of them in the fields of culture and education. While creating so many institutions within the fold of the State has been unusual, these initiatives were answers to the need for and significance of State patronage in the fields of music, dance, theatre, visual arts, and education in the country. Although many of these institutions attained national reputation and a certain degree of autonomy, many of them were also misinterpreted and seen as a challenge to the politicized version of culture.

In post-independent India, the relationship between the State and culture has remained at best indifferent, at worst adversarial. It was in this environment that Vajpeyi set about reminding the often reluctant State of its responsibility to researching, evaluating, and preserving culture. Having witnessed the constant struggle between society's need for the growth of culture, plurality in art practice and innovative vision, and the needs of politics to define culture in their own terms, Vajpeyi has walked a fine line in order to set up several such institutions in the country.

The lecture would, on the one hand, trace the long journey at a personal level, and on the other raise significant questions with regard to issues of patronage, public participation, elite passions and passivity as also the dynamics of culture and politics in relation to each other.

**Ashok Vajpeyi** is a Hindi poet-critic and lover of the arts. Besides 15 books of Hindi poetry he has written criticism on poetry in Hindi and English, culture, visual arts and classical music. He got the Sahitya Akademi award in 1994 (which he returned in protest against intolerance in 2015), Dayavati Kavi Shekhar Samman (1994), Kabir Samman(2006) and Samanvaya Bhasha Samman(2014). He has been decorated by high civil awards of France and Poland. He founded the multiarts centre Bharat Bhavan Bhopal and was also its Chairman. He founded Kalidas Akademi, MP Adivasi Lok Kala Parishad, Dhruvad Kendra, Chakradhar Nritya Kendra; he was the founding Vice Chancellor of Mahatma Gandhi International University and Chairman Lalit Kala Akademi (2008-2011). At present he is the Executive Trustee of the Raza Foundation.

**Naman Ahuja** is an art historian and curator, and is Professor of Indian Art and Architecture at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. His research and graduate teaching focus on Indian iconography, ancient and medieval Indian sculpture, temple architecture and Sultanate period painting. He has published widely, and curated many exhibitions including the recent *The Body in Indian Art and Thought* (2014).

**Ila Dalmia Memorial Lecture** is presented in conjunction with **The Ila Dalmia FICA Research Grant**, an annual grant given in support of research in the field of modern and contemporary art with particular focus on Indian art. The research grant and lecture series have been instituted by FICA with the support of art historian and curator Yashodhara Dalmia in the memory of the acclaimed writer and poet Ila Dalmia (1944-2003) and her lifelong support to the arts. For more information on the grant click [HERE](#).

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