

**First Vishnu Shridhar Wakankar Memorial Lecture
&
National Seminar on
Theoretical and Cognitive Aspects of Rock Art
(3rd -5th April, 2017)**

The Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), New Delhi under the aegis of its Adi Drishya Department is organizing the First Vishnu Sridhar Wakankar Memorial Lecture (3rd April, 2017) and a national seminar on 'Theoretical and Cognitive Aspects of Rock Art' from 3rd – 5th April, 2017 at Auditorium, C.V. Mess, Janpath, IGNCA, New Delhi. The Memorial Lecture is in the memory of Dr. Vishnu Shridhar Wakankar whose distinguished academic career earned him the title of '*Pitamaha*' of Rock Art studies in India. He carried out extensive field work on rock art in India and abroad - Europe, North America and the Middle East. In India, it is estimated that he discovered and documented some 4,000 decorated shelters. In 1957, Dr. Wakankar discovered the Bhimbetka rock art site which was inscribed as the UNESCO World Heritage Site in the year 1970. In the year 1975, he was awarded Padmashree, one of India's highest civilian honour. He also explored the ravines of the Chambal and Narmada rivers, as well as tracing the basin of the now-dried-up Saraswati river, said to hold secrets of the Indian civilization and carried out archaeological excavations at various sites in India and abroad.

Adi Drishya Department has been organising both national and international seminars from time to time to address different aspects related to rock art documentation, its conservation, dating and its interpretation in order to remain updated with recent trends of researches in the field of rock art and its allied disciplines. The seminar on 'Theoretical and Cognitive Aspects of Rock Art' from 3rd – 5th April, 2017 will therefore, address important issues related to theoretical as well as cultural resources associated with rock art worldwide. It is expected that the papers in the conference would address technical aspects and recent methodologies adopted towards rock art interpretations such behavioral patterns, neuroscience data, cognitive mapping and evolution of complexity in rock art etc. Broadly, the aim is to strive for a comprehensive understanding of the occurrence of rock art as a universal phenomenon.

The Memorial Lecture and National Seminar is in fact a part of the IGNCA's National Project on Rock Art which gives top priority on creating general awareness about rock art, the first creative act of human kind. Rock art is a fascinating saga of human endeavor to translate his aesthetic sensitivity into reality. "From time immemorial the early man started to record his world around him and his activities for the life sustenance and to bring forth his progenies to flourish. He lived in the natural caves and shelters which he decorated with paintings and engravings; the subject matters he could see in nature and life around him. This prehistoric art comes to signify underlying philosophies and the worldview of the ancient people, and tells us about the soul of the community, its thoughts, beliefs and emotions. These records with high maturity as estimated by scholars perhaps go back to 40,000 years" stated Dr. B. L. Malla, Project Director, IGNCA, New Delhi.

The first Memorial Lecture titled '*Dr. V. S. Wakankar - A Versatile Genius*' will be delivered by Eminent Archaeologist and Art Historian Dr. G. B. Deglurkar on 3rd April, 2017 at 5:00 pm in the Auditorium, C.V. Mess, Janpath, IGNCA, New Delhi. Dr. B. R. Mani, Director General, National Museum, New Delhi will be the chairperson on the occasion. The formal inauguration ceremony of the seminar will be held at Auditorium, C.V. Mess, Janpath, IGNCA, New Delhi on 4th April, 2017 at 10.00 AM. The Inaugural Ceremony will be followed by academic sessions which will commence from (4th -5th April, 2017).

Dr. B.L. Malla
Project Director
Adi Drishya Department