

# Akriti to Sanskriti

## *The Journey of Indian Forms*



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**Harsha V. Dehejia**

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## *The Journey of Indian Forms*

India is a civilization of many images, a culture of many visual feasts, a tradition where the visible and the palpable are as important as the oral and the occurrent, where our highest truths are embodied not only in our erudite texts but in our *kathas* (stories) and *gathas* (songs), *akritis* (visual forms) and *rachanas* (compositions), rich with a variety of forms, shapes, designs and motifs.

*Akriti to Sankriti: The Journey of Indian Forms* explores some *akritis* that adorn both majestic and grand monuments, as well as common and ordinary spaces, and which through their purely visual language are pointers to not only our culture, but equally to *brahma jnana* or transcendental knowledge.

These beautiful visual representations of both the ordinary people and artisans, are not individual expressions but that of the shared experiences of the community and the preserve of the family, passed down through endless generations. They are neither mere designs nor decorations, nor meant only for rites and rituals, but in their own unpretentious way become sources of visual knowledge and have a culture of their own.

*Akriti to Sanskriti*, a unique analysis and repository of Indian visual forms, is a collector's tome.

**Harsha V. Dehejia** has a double doctorate—one in medicine and the other in Ancient Indian Culture, both from Mumbai University. He is a practising physician, and Professor of Indian Studies at Carleton University in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. His main interest is in Indian Aesthetics. A widely respected aesthete and art collector, he has written extensively on Indian art and culture, including *Parvati, Goddess of Love* (1999); *Despair and Modernity: Reflections on Modern Indian Paintings* (2000); *A Celebration of Love: The Romantic Heroine in the Indian Arts* (2004); *Celebrating Krishna: Sensuous Images and Sacred Words* (2005); *Gods Beyond Temples* (2006) and *A Festival of Krishna* (2008).

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