



# Across the UNIVERSE

**NATVAR BHAVSAR'S** art is famous all over the world and he has received prizes and awards of great honor. He has given an important contribution to the New York Color Field movement, providing awareness on the technical possibilities through the use of color.

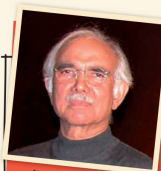
This is not the only factor to raise him up in his world, but it is directly his work to pass on the extreme importance, which makes him a painter who rightfully becomes a part of the history of art. Critics such as Irving Sandler, with his extraordinary importance and ability, have dedicated pieces to him such as the beautiful monographic book, published by Skira, which Natvar has given to me as a gift at the end of our meeting.

I was emotional just at the idea of meeting him. When I went up to his wonderful, large loft/studio in SoHo, in Lower Manhattan I was even more so. He welcomed me there with his wife, Janet Brosious, photographer, who impressed me deeply with her sweet smile and with her eyes which looked at her husband with spontaneous admiration. Speaking with Natvar is like having the chance to speak with Monet in person. The entire time spent with him was very precious to me, he is someone I will always carry, together with his wife, forever in my heart. The level of grandeur to which he has arrived has not taken away **the humility and joy** with which he is able to express his love for what he does. I hope that one day Natvar will be able to come to Italy because I feel that it is an unjust punishment for us to be the only ones in the world to not have ever been able to enjoy the magnificence of his art.

Natvar began showing me his canvases and I must say that I had never had an opportunity to experience such emotion. The universe is found on his paintings. Everything explodes at the same time in a mass of perfection and caos. Each single minute pigment has the same dignity and is visible exactly as that by his side. They resemble molecules which are perfect as single units, but which reach a supreme state as they come together. As I spoke with him I attempted to express all of the emotions I felt and he quietly took pleasure. The only tangible comparison I was able to make was that with **music**. Before those immense canvases I imagined a symphony by Ludwig van Beethoven. That is it, in a split second,

a complex harmony which takes you in your soul and squeezes tight. You feel as if you comprehend the sense of everything. The paintings seem to have been created in a single instant, all of the color added at the same time, instead of an eternal work. His paintings are a praise to slowness, to ecstasy, it is possible to spend the entire time in front of those flowing objects, the creative process for such wonders is **slow**. Natvar is like Monet, he does not get tired of producing sublime beauty for humanity. The universe, the rain, the clouds, it is all there, interpreted by a divine hand which knows how to give the grandeur of nature back to the canvas.

Natvar begins telling his story. I decided to write this interview as a continuous flow without interruptions, in order to give back, I hope, the sensation of enchantment I felt in hearing him speak. There are lives which are marvelous as his, truly worth knowing.

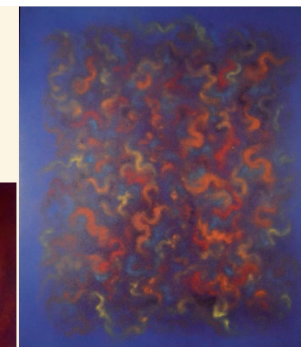
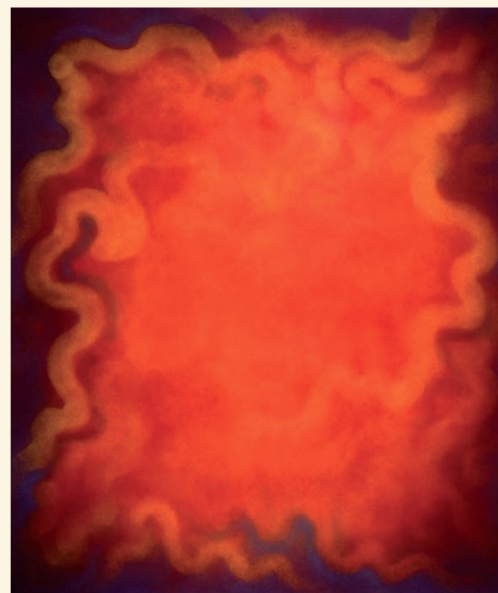


[natvarbhavsar.com](http://natvarbhavsar.com)

Natvar Bhavsar was born in Gujarat (India) in 1934 and he has been living and working in the Usa for over 50 years. His loft looks out onto Green Street, populated with galleries and artists. Natvar and Janet have been living there since the early 70s, before the neighborhood became one of the epicenters of the art world. His art is recognized all over the world and the list of his **showings and awards** is endless. His paintings are found in over 800 public and private collections.

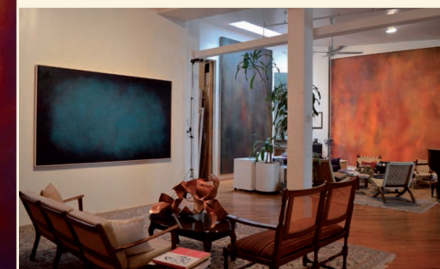
"I came to the United States in June, 1960, I graduated from the University of Pennsylvania. I received a 10,000 dollar 'John D. Rockefeller' scholarship in 1965. I was very young and for me it was a privilege and a great fortune, because if I would have remained in India, most likely, I would not have had this chance which allowed me to buy all the materials necessary to continue creating my pieces. As soon as I arrived in New York I met and frequented a very lively and active community of artists. It was a historically extraordinary period, rich with **cultural unrest** and powerful creative stimuli. I met some very important and brilliant people such as Mark Rothko, Kenneth Noland, Jules Olitski, Adolph Gottlieb, Barnett Newman, today historic icons. From 1965 to 1968 my studio was behind Judson Church and I shared it with a ballerina: Elaine Summers. Personalities like Merce Cunningham came by the studio, therefore the artistic flow embraced each field: from dance to art, to political debates, to events, everything took place there. An overflowing and restless energy invaded the streets and our souls.

I remember that there was a bar, near the University in the Union Square area, frequented



From the top left

"RASEEKA", 2005, 258,32 x 297,7 cm;  
"FREEI", 2014, 278,7 x 233 cm;  
Natvar's studio home in New York, photos by Janet Brosious, his works, PR-KRITEE III '11, BHADRA II '75, KESURA '75 are visible



by many artists, like Willem de Kooning, Robert Rauschenberg, Andy Warhol. The Andy Warhol **before becoming Andy Warhol** was around with Edie Sedgwick just a block away from my studio. I was deeply inspired, all that energy could be felt and it was overwhelming. Mark Rothko and Margaret Newman had an almost ascetic strength. With all of the artists there was a mutual exchange, a way of reciprocally 'nourishing' each other. One day, we had been invited to dinner by Adolph Gottlieb, he entered the room and said he was very excited because he had sold four paintings. We asked him how much he had earned. He said 5,000 dollars. Today he would have earned one million dollars for each painting.

After the 70s Europe began to pay a very high price for American art. One of the contributors to the change in the system was **Leo Castelli**, an American born in Trieste. Castelli, from a wealthy family, was a very skillful businessman who contributed to the explosion of American art. A new artistic horizon was coming about in the United States with Jackson Pollock, Clyfford Still, Mark Rothko. Interest for the material was growing, distancing the scope of nature of Monet and Turner. A strong interest for the beauty and power of color as material began to grow inside me. I began to **use color** as powder, I tried to use it to obtain a primordial impulse. When I was born, color was placed on my hand, it is a tradition with strong symbolism because you are blessed with the color. This is my inspiration, the infinite shades and hues of color and the endless possibilities of

density that color possesses. The paintings have a hypnotic effect because often there are more than 200 layers, the concept of flow and being are created on a macro and microscopic scale. A poetry is created evoking the most intimate sensations, perceiving for an instant to be able to touch the untouchable. We are in a constant search for the instruments to discover an interior reality, all creative people embrace this challenge.

My art has a language which speaks to everyone, it is **universal**. When you look at the clouds which are moving, the rain coming down, the snow falling, who does not appreciate it? The wind moving the grass, the river flowing, they are all universal blessings. I add to this my Indian roots, the colors of India, like the dancers dancing leaving their movements in their wake. Inside me is the red which absorbs the light like the white, and it is full of energy. When I paint it is as if I am walking in the forest, each step I take is a surprise, each instant is precious, you are constantly hypnotized. This is how the dialogue between the universe and me begins. In 50 years **I invented my freedom**. The titles of my paintings bring to mind onomatopoeic sounds. The labor is exhausting, I can go on for 18 hours a day, bent over my canvases, but I never tire, it is all I need".

This cosmic powder imprisoned on the canvases arouses the magic of the eternal and the connection with the universe. Thank you Natvar.