

# *a Beautiful* **CHAOS**

*By Lucinda Penn*

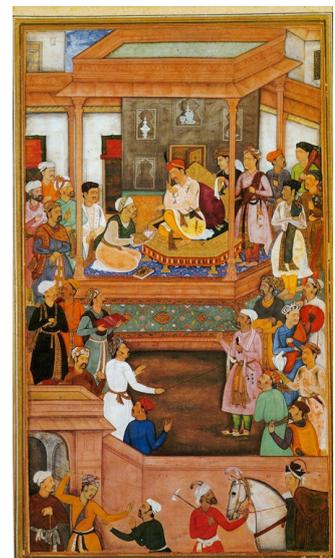
India is bursting with exuberance and culture, yet at the same time it is overwhelmed by poverty. I spent 4 weeks in India at the start of this year traveling and serving those under-privileged by disability, socio-economic background and location. As a starting point, I asked myself what I brought home from India. My findings include perspective and the power of presence. The contrast of the 'glitter and the slums' has been channeled through my painting as my personal and emotional perception of the essence of India.

Exploring the contrast of content and colour has enabled me to mimic the mesmerising crazy-busy-ness of India which is completely different to the ordered culture of Australia. Like Futurist Gino Severini's 'Untitled' (1919), I aim to communicate a 'visual noisiness' through vigorous colour and composition. The overlapping subjects and scenes project a loud and arresting assault on the senses.

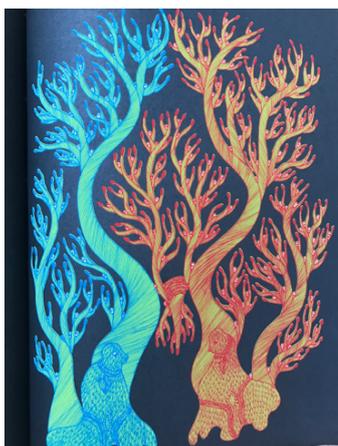
My placement of random imagery creates an asymmetrical balance with the two main portrait focal points being isolated through scale and positioning. The smaller elements lead the viewer on a journey through the painting as a conversational pattern is formed between them. The unknown girl is not inspired by one of my photographs; instead she is constructed from my imagination. She symbolises the voiceless majority of India as the voiceless are faceless. In school uniform she represents who I could have been if I was born in India and all the girls like us whom we met along the way.



Gino Severini  
*'Untitled'* 1919  
Oil on wallboard



Mughal Painting  
*'Untitled'* 1600s  
Acrylic on paper



Gond Art  
*'The Marriage of Desire and Intoxication'* Date unknown  
From the book *The Night Life of Trees* by Shyam, Durgabai and Urveti



Traditional Hindu Painting  
*'The story of Krishna'*  
2017 from Chennai Markets  
Acrylic on paper



Martin Bell  
Part of the 'Skull Gully' series 2010  
Ink on BFK Rives Paper

The intricate detail and authentic meaning in traditional Mughal, Gond and Hindu narrative art have also inspired me. Every element of my painting has a story, which in symbiosis with careful composition, creates an illusion of 3-dimensional depth, like Martin Bell's hectic composition in his 'Skull Gully' series.



Grayson Perry  
*'The Annunciation of the Virgin Deal'* 2012  
Woven tapestry

I chose to paint on a door to be as resourceful as the Indians themselves. The exaggerated scale captures the attention of the viewer like Grayson Perry's great tapestries. Up close, both our panoramas fill the viewers' peripheral vision as they cannot escape its 'in your face' energy. Both Perry and Bell find a balance of scale and detail, which I have also explored. To me, Indian culture is 'a feast for the eyes,' and I have illustrated this as my painting shouts for attention; from its intricate and imperfect detail to the mesmerising whole.



David Hockney  
*'Beverly Hills House Wife'* 1966  
Acrylic on canvas

I have also drawn upon David Hockney's contrasting tonal techniques in his 'Beverly Hills House Wife' (1966) by using bold house paints. This, in combination with the broken up tones of Cubism seen in Picasso's 'Weeping Woman' (1937), has influenced my own tonal separation technique, combined with elements of realism and abstraction. From afar, the divided tones merge together, but the minimalism is important as it softens the chaotic juxtaposition of seemingly random imagery. This technique allows me to express my imagination, as the painting becomes an assortment of memories from my trip. Using colourful contrast, I have captured my own month long experience of the 'beautiful chaos' that is India.



Pablo Picasso  
*'Weeping Woman'* 1937  
Oil on canvas