

## **JMS Mani**

Born in 1949 in Bangalore, Karnataka, JM Subramani, commonly known as JMS Mani, is a highly acclaimed artist. He began learning art in 1974 at Kuvempu Kala Sanstha Ken School of Art, under the tutelage of the school's founder, RM Hadapad, with whom he developed a deep-rooted bond that influenced his art tremendously.

Over the course of his career, JMS Mani experimented with nature-based abstraction and expressive gestural abstraction. He has dealt extensively with physical spaces that surrounded him, creating archetypes of mountains, trees, monuments, and Hampi's landscapes, with which he had a continued fascination. In his 'Mother and Child' series, Mani explored a completely different subject and dimension.

But JMS Mani's most famous body of work, undoubtedly, is the Badami Series, inspired by Hadapad's hometown, Badami. Its' scenic landscapes and people became a lifelong obsession for Mani, and he created many oil paintings showcasing the ordinary men and women of Badami going about their daily activities. From what they wear to what they sell in the market, to the repetition in their stance, Mani masterfully used subtle nuances to highlight the simplicity of their existence. Fruits (especially bananas), flowers, kites, balloons and roosters make frequent appearances in the series, and his brilliant use of the impasto technique makes the vibrant colours of rural South India come alive in vivid textures.

JMS Mani's repertoire extends further beyond, including impressionistic and surrealistic artworks, and various experiments with sculpture, printmaking, watercolour, etching and mixed media works, besides his acrylic and oil paintings.

A recipient of the Karnataka State Award in 2006 and a two-time recipient of the Lalit Kala Academy Award, JMS Mani held solo exhibitions in India, Singapore, London, New York, Hong Kong, and Switzerland. His works are part of many important private and public collections in India and abroad. Besides being an

artist, he taught for many years at his alma mater, Ken School of Art, and served as its Principal until his retirement in 2007. JMS Mani passed away in June 2021.