



# INDIA CANADA FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE

*...forging close ties among Canadians with an interest in India*

**In collaboration with  
The College of the Humanities, Carleton University  
ICFC announces its lecture event**

## **Art and Indian Nationalism in the 20th Century**

**by Dr. Geeti Sen from New Delhi**

**on Sunday, 16 October 2016, 3:00 – 5:00 PM**



**Synopsis:** 20th century Indian nationalism was driven as much by politicians as painters, poets as well as patriots. This talk with visual images and some text traces India's nationalist movement from 1905 to 2000, in paintings and popular posters, and what is described as 'calendar art'. In 1905 a painting titled Bharat Mata (meaning "Mother India") by Abanindranath Tagore offered a new vision of India, where the country is embodied as both a woman and also as Goddess of the Nation. This conflict in her identity (woman or goddess?) continues to haunt pictorial representations through to Indian independence in 1947. Increasingly she is rendered not as a figure, but as a map, sacred territory, and this becomes an obsession in the 1940s with the fear of being a divided territory. This holds equally true in the second temple built to Bharat Mata, in 1982 in the holy city of Hardwar, where she is imaged as a map, and in this temple she is also absorbed into the pantheon of Hindu deities where she becomes an amalgam of all the goddesses of Indian culture. Does

she represent the nation of different sects and communities, or does she now represent the majoritarian religion of India?

**About the Speaker:** Dr. Geeti Sen is a cultural historian, professor, art critic and editor trained at the Universities of Chicago and Calcutta. She is a prominent figure in the Indian art scene and has lectured in many parts of the world. In the 1970s she was the art critic for the Times of India, Bombay and for India Today, Delhi and Assistant Editor at Marg, the prestigious art journal from Mumbai. From 1990 to 2006 she was the Chief Editor of publications at the India International Centre, New Delhi. In 2009 Dr. Geeti Sen was selected by the Government of India to assume charge as Director of the Indian Cultural Centre in Kathmandu.

She is the author of many books which include: *Feminine Fables*, *Ganesh Pyne*, *Bindu*, *Your History Comes in The Way of My Memory*, *Paintings from the Akbar Nama – A Visual Chronicle of Mughal India*, among others. Each of these books interprets art with an interdisciplinary approach, integrating art practice with the wider concerns of ethics and social values in India. Her awards include the Smithsonian Fellowship, the Homi Bhabha Fellowship, the Jawaharlal Nehru Fellowship and a grant from the Asian Cultural Council in New York. She has lectured at six national institutions in India, and has been invited to lecture in the United Kingdom, Ireland, Canada, the United States, Egypt, France, Spain and Russia. In 2006 she was invited for talks as Fulbright Visiting Specialist to teach at Mary Baldwin College in Virginia, USA.

**Location: Rockcliffe Park Community Centre Hall, 380 Springfield Road, Ottawa**

### **About India Canada Friendship Circle**

India Canada Friendship Circle (ICFC), a non-profit Canadian organization, operating in Ottawa since 2004 and conducting lectures by prominent speakers, encourages dialogue on India in a non-religious, non-partisan and harmonious environment. The words "friendship" and "circle" in its name, convey an explicit desire to forge and maintain close ties among Canadians with an interest in India.

ICFC's mission is to promote an intercultural relationship between India and Canada in the areas of philosophy, history, literature, the arts and sciences through prominent speakers.

*For further details and online registration, please visit our website: <http://icfc.ws>*