

College of Art students create collaborative art

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NEW DELHI: Students of College of Art created installations depicting the UK-India cultural relationship after a collaborative workshop. The workshop, conducted under the Erasmus teacher exchange programme, was steered by Dr Andrew Connor, Teaching Fellow, MSc Design and Digital Media programme at the University of Edinburgh. The three-day workshop saw students of the college's MFA students work in groups to create mixed art projects reflective of the cultural collaboration between the two countries.

The three-day workshop com-

prising interactive lectures saw the students make efforts to juxtapose elements of the two cultures to depict their synergy. For instance, Himanshu Joshi and Yogesh Sharma, students of MFA at the college created a photo montage using images of an ancient map, the Gateway of India and the Glasgow bridge to depict the earliest trade relations between the two countries being conducted by sea routes.

Another group of students juxtaposed a traditional Rajput miniature paintings against an idyllic English landscape to suggest that women across cultures dreamt of being free from the shackles of patriarchal restrictions. Using traditional motifs of decorative

folk, another group used the peacock blue and green colours to present a fusion image of the Indian surahi (clay pot used for storing liquids) and the tea pot.

According to Connor, India has been a traditional partner of the UK for cultural exchange thanks in part to shared cultural commodities such as the English language.

The roots of the programme lie in an initiative Connor led with his students at Edinburgh where they explored similarities in Indian and Celtic art. "That exercise involved creating a unique typeface reflective of the cultural synergies between the two nations and was informed by the studio practice of Indian artist

Ishan Khosla,' said Connor. The result was an interactive installation of a broken egg made of the 3D printed letters displayed against a screen containing the visual of concentric patterns denoting the Indian concept of a mandala.

Through the various workshop sessions, students also explored the different meanings encapsulated in an image. For instance, Connor explains that some students wished to use the Gateway of India as a sign of harmony between the two countries but through subsequent discussions the students were able to re-look at the iconic building as representative of a colonial regime.