



Press Release

## RELIANCE FOUNDATION GETS TRADITIONAL PICHVAIS ART FORM TO GLOBAL AUDIENCES

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LEAD SPONSOR FOR 'GATES OF THE LORD: THE TRADITION OF KRISHNA PAINTINGS' AT THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

MRS NITA AMBANI, CHAIRPERSON, RELIANCE FOUNDATION, AND ISHA AMBANI ATTEND GALA OPENING AMID CHICAGO'S LEADING LIGHTS

### MUMBAI, September 14:

As part of its core pillars of promoting art, culture, and heritage, the Reliance Foundation showcased the traditional Indian art form of *Pichvais* to global audiences in Chicago. Reliance Foundation is the lead sponsor of the exhibition 'Gates of the Lord: The Tradition of Krishna Paintings' to be held at the Art Institute, Chicago from September 13, 2015, through January 3, 2016.

Speaking at the inaugural reception, Mrs. Nita Ambani, Founder & Chairperson, Reliance Foundation, said: "The artists of the temple town of Nathdwara are renowned for having preserved their painting traditions in an unbroken legacy for more than three centuries. Reliance Foundation has supported this exhibition to provide the US

audience with an opportunity to celebrate these living traditional artists who have remained unrecognized for far too long."

Thanking the Reliance Foundation for its support, President and Eloise W. Martin Director, Art Institute, Chicago, Douglas Druick said: "The patronage of Mrs. Nita Ambani and Reliance Foundation has allowed us to showcase this collection of *Pichvais* paintings. This vibrant art form is sure to enthrall discerning US audiences. We at AIC are proud of our historic relationship with India, and we welcome Mrs. Ambani as an honorary member of the President's Council of the AIC."





## NOTE TO THE EDITOR

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**ABOUT PICHVAIS:** *Pichvais* (Sanskrit for back and hanging) art is an old and living artistic tradition of India. It involves intricate paintings on textiles that are hung behind the idol of Shrinathji. The themes of these paintings are Shrinathji, a form of Lord Krishna as a child, and his exploits. The paintings depict scenes of Lord Krishna lifting the Govardhan mountain on his little finger, playing with the gopis (milkmaids), or pastoral scenes with cows and forests. The *Pichvais* art form, which developed in the 17th century, is a tradition of the Pushtimarg sect, founded by Sant Vallabhacharya about 500 years ago.

**ABOUT THE EXHIBITION:** The Exhibition at AIC features drawings, paintings and historic photographs. This exhibition of the Pushtimarg sect of Hinduism is the first of its kind anywhere in US. The Exhibition is an outcome of the Lead Sponsorship of Nita and Mukesh Ambani and the Reliance Foundation. It comprises paintings from two prestigious and rarely exhibited private collections, the Amit Ambalal collection from Ahmedabad, and the TAPI collection, Surat.

**ABOUT AIC AND INDIA:** India has a historic connection with the Art Institute, Chicago (AIC). It was here that Swami Vivekananda delivered his famous “Sisters and Brothers of America” speech in 1893. Since 1890 AIC has collection of Indian art including Himalayan, Islamic and Southeast Asian art that goes back to Indian art forms from 1890. For the last eight years, it has been developing this field with a full-time curator. In 2010-11, the museum did the first Indian contemporary installation by a major Indian artist, Jitesh Kallat’s Public Notice 3. AIC was the first museum to receive a grant from the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, to set up the Vivekananda Memorial Program for Museum Excellence in 2012 to retrain Indian museum professionals.

**ABOUT RELIANCE FOUNDATION:** Reliance Foundation is an initiative of Reliance Industries Ltd. Among India’s largest social initiatives, it is focused on addressing the nation’s development challenges in domains of Rural Transformation, Education, Health, Sports, Urban Renewal, and Arts, Culture and Heritage. Its hands-on approach has directly impacted over 5,500 villages across India.

Led by Founder and Chairperson Mrs. Nita Ambani, Reliance Foundation reaches out to the marginalized sections of the population living in remote corners of the country, to provide them with sustainable livelihoods. Reliance Foundation audaciously inspires and facilitates transformative change to ensure higher quality of life by developing the nation’s social capital.

Since its inception in 2010, Reliance Foundation has impacted over four million lives through its work.

[www.reliancefoundation.org](http://www.reliancefoundation.org)

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