

100 Tributes

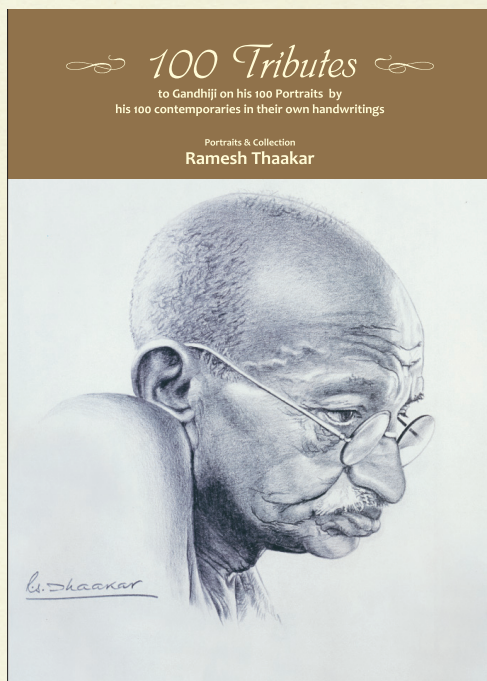


to Gandhiji on his 100 Portraits
by his 100 contemporaries in their own handwritings

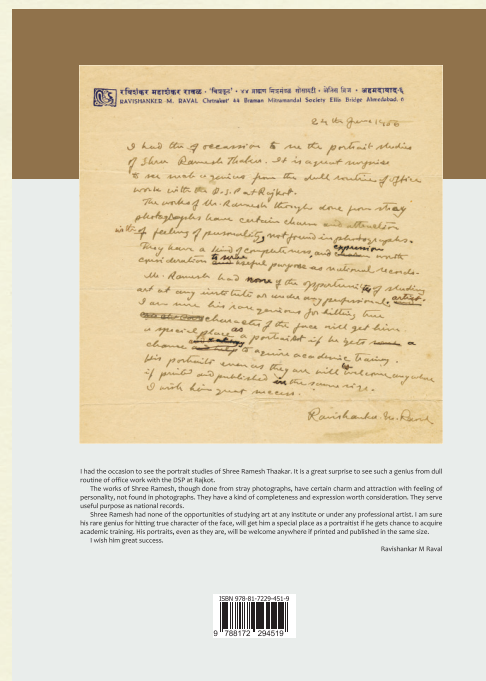
Ramesh Thaakar



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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The title of this volume *100 Tributes* can be interpreted in two ways: these are 100 tributes to the father of the nation by Rameshbhai in form of 100 portraits... It can also be perceived as one tribute each by 100 of Gandhiji's contemporaries... When Urvish Kothari introduced Rameshbhai Thaakar to us, we immediately knew that this was a treasure waiting to be unveiled to the world. The first thought that occurred to us was that this volume must be produced in a manner befitting its great contents and hence the idea of creating classic book with no expenses spared—perhaps deviating from the path Navajivan has taken for years—was born.

This volume contains 100 portraits of Mahatma Gandhi sketched by Rameshbhai along with handwritten tribute by Gandhiji's associate/contemporary on it. Care has been taken to reproduce the original sketches as faithfully as the technology permits. These portraits are arranged in the chronological order of the date on which the tribute was given. The Original sketches are printed on the recto—right-hand page of the book, while the facing left page contains the details like verbatim script of the original write-up along with its translation in other two languages. The page also gives the details like the name of the tribute giver in English, Hindi and Gujarati language; short introduction of that personality; the date on which the tribute was given and the original language in which the tribute is written. The verbatim script of the original write-up is reproduced line by line to match the original so that the reader can refer it conveniently and decipher the complete message without difficulty. *(Sample included on pp. 6-7)*

Out of 100 messages, 45 messages are in English, 29 in Gujarati, 22 in Hindi and one each in Bengali, Marathi, Punjabi, Sindhi and Urdu. In case of the last four languages, the verbatim transcription in Devnagari script is reproduced along with the translations in English, Hindi and Gujarati. At the end of the volume, after all the tributes, short biographical notes about the personalities are presented along with their photographs. *(Sample included on p. 8)*

In all, this rich volume strives to recreate the aura of the Gandhian era and may give insight about Gandhiji and his associates to the younger generation. If we are able to achieve that, we would consider that hundred and first tribute to the father of the nation by us...

100 Tributes

The book is a unique collection of pencil portraits of Mahatma Gandhi rendered by Ramesh Thaakar. Each portrait is accompanied by a note, a poem or a short statement about Gandhi, by a well-known personality from various walks of life. It is an intriguing and interesting collection which makes you curious to know how the collection was made.

The story of Ramesh Thaakar's initiation into portrait therefore becomes an essential part of the book. At the tender age of eight he accompanied his father, Somnath Thaakar, to see Gandhiji in his compartment, while the train halted at Wadhwan Camp (now known as Surendranagar). His father was an amateur photographer and took two close ups of the Mahatma. The experience of seeing the subject and the photographer at that creative moment was etched in the child's mind and spurred him to five decades of a career in portraits through drawing and photographs.

At 22, he had the opportunity of staying at the Rashtrapati Bhavan and sketching the portraits of Dr Rajendra Prasad, the first president of India on his birthday. What's more, he also sketched the guests who came, including luminaries like Harivanshrai Bachchan and Ramdharisinh Dinkar.

Over the years, Ramesh Thaakar made 1,800 autographed portraits, as he convinced each of his subjects to sign the sketches. The list included leaders, musicians, actors, sportsmen and foreign dignitaries. However there was one major lacuna; he did not have a signed portrait of Mahatma Gandhi. It was impossible to fill that gap as Gandhiji had passed away months before he began his drawing career.

Undeterred, he decided to fill that void by making 100 pencil sketches of Gandhi, at various ages and stages, in different moods and places. Then he got each of the sketches autographed, often with a comment about Gandhi, by people who were contemporaries of Gandhi.

This book brings to us hundred of these sketches and reflections, with as many facets of Gandhi. The comments have been thoughtfully presented in Hindi, Gujarati and English. There is also a pen portrait of each of the 100 individuals who wrote about Gandhi, providing a miniature who's who of Gandhi's era.

It is a book to be read at leisure, browsing a few pages at a time. It is a useful addition to a Gandhian scholar's library and a reference source for the younger generation to know a little about people who knew Gandhi in his lifetime.

Ela R. Bhatt

List of 100 Tributes
[Chronological Order]

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2. Rasiklal Parikh • रसिकलाल परीख • रसिकलाल परीખ	Sep 13, 1959	4
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4. U. N. Dhebar • उ. न. देबर • ઉ. ન. ઢેબર	Sep 21, 1959	8
5. Neelam Sanjiva Reddy • नीलम संजीव रेड्डी • નીલમ સંજીવ રેડ્ડી	Apr 3, 1960	10
6. Mehdi Nawaz Jung • मेहदी नवाज़ जंग • મેહદી નવાઝ જંગ	May 29, 1960	12
7. Vinoba Bhave • विनोबा भावे • વિનોબા ભાવે	Sep 3, 1960	14
8. Jagjivan Ram • जगजीवन राम • જગજીવન રામ	Sep 22, 1960	16
9. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit • विजया लक्ष्मी पंडित • વિજયા લક્ષ્મી પંડિત	Oct 7, 1960	18
10. Jivraj N. Mehta • जीवराज ना. महेता • જીવરાજ ના. મહેતા	Oct 29, 1960	20
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17. Balwantraji Mehta • बलवंतराज महेता • બલવંતરાય મહેતા	Jun 15, 1961	34
18. Morarji Desai • मोरारजी देसाई • મોરારજી દેસાઈ	Jun 16, 1961	36
19. P. Subbaroyan • पि. सुबारीयन • પી. સુબારોયન	Jul 3, 1961	38
20. Aruna Asaf Ali • अरुणा आसफ अली • અરુણા આસફ અલી	Jul 30, 1961	40
21. N. R. Malkani • एन. आर. मल्कानी • એન. આર. મલ્કાણી	Sep 15, 1961	42
22. Deen Dayal Upadhyay • दीन दयाल उपाध्याय • દીન દયાલ ઉપાધ્યાય	Sep 26, 1961	44
23. Balraj Sahni • बलराज सहानी • બલરાજ સહાની	Dec 8, 1961	46
24. Shankar Rao Dev • शंकर राव देव • શંકર રાવ દેવ	Mar 8, 1962	48
25. Dada Dharmadhikari • दादा धर्माधिकारी • દાદા ધર્માધિકારી	Aug 14, 1962	50
26. Kaka Kalelkar • काका कालेलकर • કાકા કાલેલકર	Sep 3, 1962	52
27. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyer • सी. पी. रामस्वामी अय्यर • સી. પી. રામસ્વામી અય્યર	Sep 28, 1962	54
28. Jayaprakash Narayan • जयप्रकाश नारायण • જયપ્રકાશ નારાયણ	Oct 2, 1962	56
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30. N. V. Gadgil • न. वि. गाडगील • ન. વિ. ગાડગીલ	Dec 3, 1962	60
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34. Gayatri Devi • गायत्री देवी • ગાયત્રી દેવી	May 20, 1963	68
35. Subhadra Joshi • सुभद्रा जोशी • સુભદ્રા જોશી	May 21, 1963	70
36. Kanaiyalal M. Munshi • कनैयालाल एम. मुनशी • કનૈયાલાલ એમ. મુનશી	May 24, 1963	72
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I was lucky to have met Bapu twice as a teenager and sing *Bhajan* for him. Both the times my elder brother Dada Uday Shankar was with me. The Second time in mid thirties Dada asked if Bapu could help him in his project of building an Art & Culture Centre that he was planning! Mahatmaji replied with that lovely smile of his 'The country is full of hungry, clothless and roofless people. We must take care of them first & then for *Gana-bajana*.' etc. ...

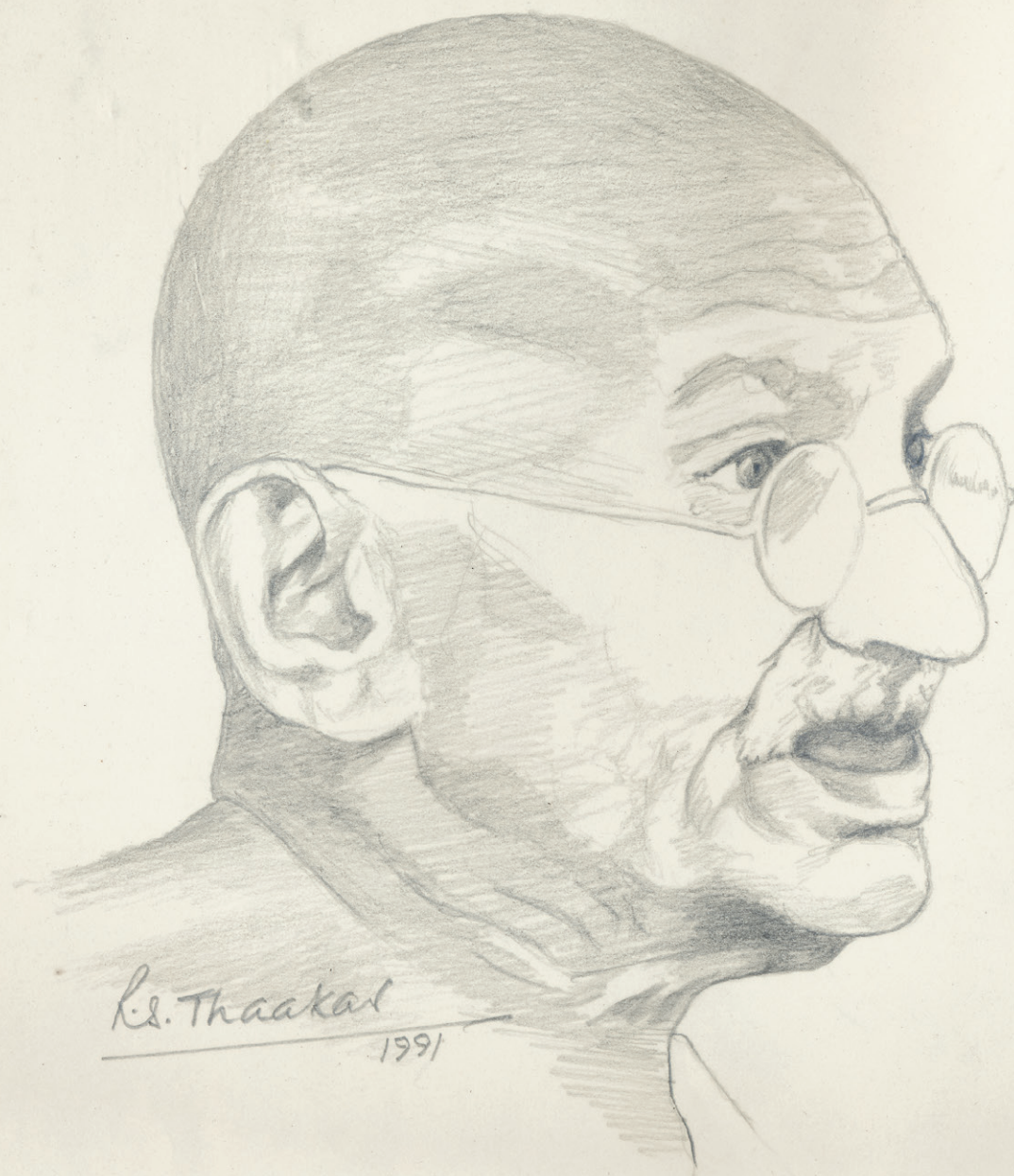
મેં ભાગ્યવાન થા કિ અપની કિશોર-અવસ્થા મેં મેં બાપૂ સે દો બાર મિલા ઓર ઉન કે સામને ભજન ગાણ. દોનોં બાર મેરે સાથ મેરે બડે ભાઈ દાદા ઉદયશંકરજી થે। દૂસરી બાર, તિસરે દશક કે મધ્ય મેં, દાદા ને બાપૂ સે બિનતી કી કિ કલા ઓર સંસ્કૃતિ કેન્દ્ર કી સ્થાપના કરને કી જો યોજના વહ બના રહે હૈ ઉસ મેં બાપૂ કુછ મદદ કરે! મહાત્માજી ને અપને સ્નેહીલ મુસ્કાન સે ઉત્તર દિયા: 'ભૂખે, નંગે ઓર બિના મકાન કે લોગોં સે દેશ ભરા હુઆ હૈ। પહેલે હમેં ઉન કી ચિંતા કરની ચાહિયે, ઉસ કે બાદ ગાના-બજાના ઇત્યાદિ...'

હું ભાગ્યશાળી હતો કે મારી કિશોર-અવસ્થામાં બાપુને બે વાર મળવાનું થયું અને એમની સમક્ષ ભજન ગાવા મળ્યું. બંને વખત મારી સાથે મારા મોટા ભાઈ દાદા ઉદયશંકર હતા. બીજી વાર ત્રીજા દસકાના મધ્યમાં, દાદાએ બાપુને વિનંતી કરી કે પોતે જે કલા અને સંસ્કૃતિ કેન્દ્રની યોજના ઘડી રહ્યા હતા તેમાં બાપુ તેમને મદદ કરે! મહાત્માજીએ પોતાના મોહક સ્મિત સાથે ઉત્તર આપ્યો: 'દેશમાં ભૂખ્યા, નવસ્ત્ર અને મકાનવિહોણા લોકો છે. પહેલાં આપણે એમની ચિંતા કરવી જોઈએ અને પછી ગાવા-વગાડવાનું ઇત્યાદિ...'

Pandit Ravishankar • પં. રવિશંકર • પં. રવિશંકર
Internationally acclaimed sitar maestro

English

Jul 29, 1991



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Ravi Shankar

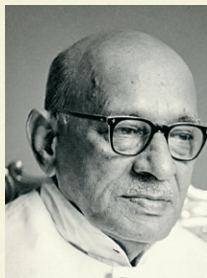
29. 7. '91

5. Neelam Sanjiva Reddy



(19 May 1913–01 Jan 1996–?) Born at Illuru (Anantapur District, Andhra Pradesh); son of Chinnappa Reddy; education: Adyar, Madras and Arts College, Anantapur; Mahatma Gandhi's visit to Anantapur in July, 1929 influenced Reddy, who discarded foreign clothes and took to Khadi as his dress. He gave up his studies and joined the independence movement in 1931. member: Madras Legislative Assembly 1946, Constituent Assembly 1947–49; Minister for Prohibition, Housing and Forests, Madras Government 1949–51; President: Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee 1951–52; elected to Rajya Sabha 1952–53; leader of Congress Legislative Party, Andhra Pradesh 1953–64; deputy Chief Minister, Andhra Pradesh 1953–56; Chief Minister, Andhra Pradesh, 1956–57; President: Indian National Congress 1960–62; Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh 1962–64; Union Minister for Steel and Mines, June 1964 to January 1966, and for Transport, Civil Aviation, Tourism and Shipping January 1966 to March 1967; re-elected to Rajya Sabha November 1964–67; elected to Lok Sabha 1967; Speaker of Lok Sabha 1967–69; President of India July 1977 to July 1982.

6. Mehdi Nawaz Jung



(23 May 1894–28 Jun 1967) Born at Hyderabad (Deccan); joined H.E.H. Nizam Service at Bellary, 1915; met Mahatma Gandhi at Adony, 1916; Divisional Magistrate, 1919–20; entered Co-operative Department and had contacts with its pioneer Vaikunthlal Mehta, 1921; Private Secretary to Maharaja Sir Kishan Prasad, 1926 to 1937; went abroad twice before 1937; Municipal Commissioner, Hyderabad, 1937 to 1944; Agent of Hyderabad state at Nagpur; President: Hyderabad State Scouts and Guides Association; established Hyderabad Nileufer Hospital, Cancer Hospital and Radium Institute; President: Salarjung Museum Committee; retired from service, 1949; joined Indian National Congress, won general election, became Minister of Health, P.W.D., Irrigation & Power, etc., 1952 to January 1960; Governor of Gujarat: 1-5-1960 to 31-7-1965.

7. Vinoba Bhave



(11 Sep 1895–15 Nov 1982) Born: Gagoda Village, Maharashtra; At the age of 10, pledged of celibacy & serving the nation; Education: matriculation; Inspired by Gandhiji's speeches, joined Sabarmati Ashram (1916); Gandhiji said: "He has acquired such high-spiritedness and asceticism at such a tender age that I took years to attain." Gandhiji gave affectionate name 'Vinoba' to this gentle revolutionary Vinayak Narahari Bhave. Gandhiji chose him as the first *Satyagrahi* in his individual Civil Disobedience Movement (1940) and Jawaharlal the second *Satyagrahi*. Thus Gandhiji regarded Vinoba as his spiritual successor & Nehru his political heir. Vinoba set up *Sarvodaya Samaj* (Society for upliftment of all). Undertook *Padayatra* (Tour on foot) to preach love & non-violence in Andhra Pradesh (1951) whence *Bhoodan* Movement (land to landless) was born. Magsaysay Award (1958). Peace mission in dacoit-infested Chambal ravines when hundreds of dreaded dacoits surrendered (1960). Died a sagely death at Paunar Ashram. Awarded *Bharat Ratna* posthumously in 1983.

8. Babu Jagjivan Ram



(5 Apr 1908–6 Jul 1986) Born: Chandwa (Bhojpur, Bihar); Son of Shobhi Ram; education: BSc (Calcutta); Provincial Secretary, *Harijan Sewak Sangh* (1933); member: Bihar Legislative Council & Assembly (1936–39); member: AICC (1948–77); Appeared before Cabinet Mission as leader of Scheduled Castes (1946); Labour Minister, Interim Government (1946–47); Union Labour Minister (1947–52); Nationalized private airlines & founded Indian Airlines & Air India as Communication Minister (1952–56); modernized railways as Railways & Communications Minister (1956–63); resigned under Kamraj plan; re-joined as Labour, Employment & Rehabilitation Minister (1966–67); made India self-sufficient in food as Food Minister (1967–70); Defence Minister (1970–74); Agriculture-Irrigation Minister (1974–77); resigned from congress & formed Congress for Democracy (1977); Deputy Prime Minister & Defence Minister in Janata Government (1977–79); Member of Parliament (1979–86); a valiant freedom-fighter, inspirer of people against oppression, a power orator and a distinguished parliamentarian.

9. Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit



(18 Aug 1900–1 Dec 1990) Born: Allahabad, as Swarup Kumari (after marriage, Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit); Daughter of Motilal Nehru, sister of Jawaharlal; married to Maharashtra lawyer Ranjit Sitaram Pandit of Rajkot; education: tutored at home; Health Minister, U.P., (1936 & 1946); President: All India Women's Conference (1940); Leader: Indian delegation to the Institute of Pacific Relations Conference (1945); Leader: Indian delegations to U.N. (1946–49, 1963); President: U.N. General Assembly (1953–54); Ambassador to Russia (1947–49), U.S.A. & Mexico (1949–52); High Commissioner to U. K. & Ambassador to Ireland & Spain (1954–61); Chancellor of London University (1954); Governor of Maharashtra (1962–64); India's representative at U.N. Human Rights Conference (1978); jailed several times during freedom movement; received 21 honorary doctorates from Indian & foreign universities; Gold Medal from Gottingen Uni., West Germany; special medal from Integral Union for Human Rights; The Dorothea Schlozer Medal for Distinguished Woman; she brought glamour to the posts she served.

10. Dr. Jivraj Mehta



(29 Aug 1887– 7 Nov 1978) Born at Amreli; education: L.M.&S. (Bombay), M.D. (London), M.R.C.P. (London); established London Indian Association; treated ailing Gandhiji in his diseases of piles, pleurisy and bleeding cough during his London-stay, October to December 1914; came in close association with Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu and Kasturba; Gandhiji's personal physician 1920; Chief Medical Officer, Baroda State 1921; married to Mrs. Hansa Mehta 1924; participated in Bombay Salt *Satyagrah*; Dean: K.E.M. Hospital & G S Medical College Bombay 1925–42; participated in Non-Co-operation & 'Quit India' movement and imprisoned for 2 years each in 1932–33 & 1942–44; Director General of Health Services in India; Diwan (Prime Minister) of Baroda State 1948; Minister for P.W.D. in Bombay ministry 1949; Bombay's Finance Minister 1953; Installed Maharaja Sayajirao University in Baroda; first Chief Minister of Gujarat 1960; India's High Commissioner in London 1963; elected to Lok Sabha; Union Health Minister 1971.



रविशंकर महाशंकर रावल • 'चित्रकूट' • ४४ ब्राह्मण मित्रमंडळ सोसायटी • ॲलिस ब्रिज • अहमदाबाद-६
RAVISHANKER M. RAVAL Chitrakut 44 Braman Mitramandal Society Ellis Bridge Ahmedabad, 6

24th June 1986

I had the occasion to see the portrait studies of Shree Ramesh Thakar. It is a great surprise to see such a genius from the dull routine of office work with the D.S.P at Rajkot.

The works of Mr. Ramesh though done from stray photographs have certain charm and attraction with feeling of personality, not found in photographs.

They have a kind of completeness and ^{expression} worth consideration ^{to make} as useful purpose as national records.

Mr. Ramesh had none of the opportunities of studying art at any institute or under any professional artist. I am sure his rare genius for hitting true

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His portraits even as they are will be welcome anywhere if printed and published in the same size. I wish him great success.

Ravishankar M. Raval



Ravishankar Raval, 1972

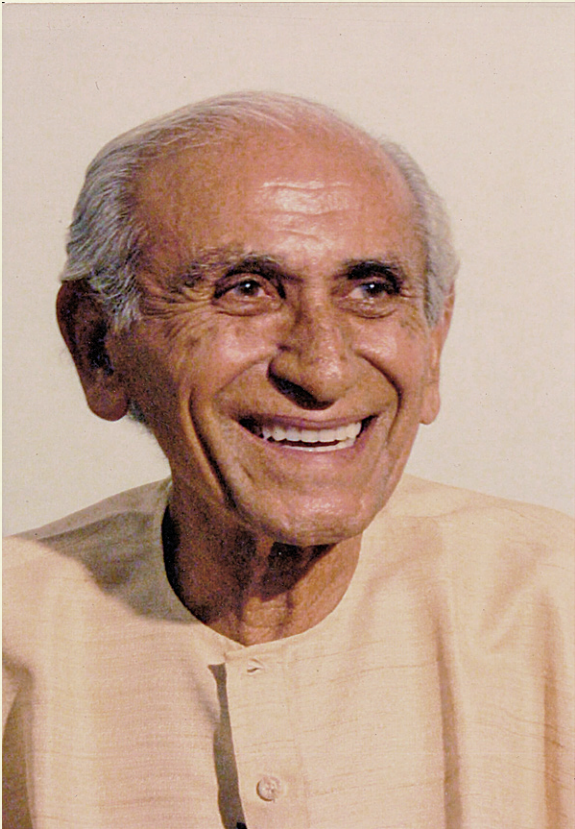
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Ramesh Thaakar (Born 27 June 1931, Vadodara)



with wife Kantaben



Mulk Raj Anand



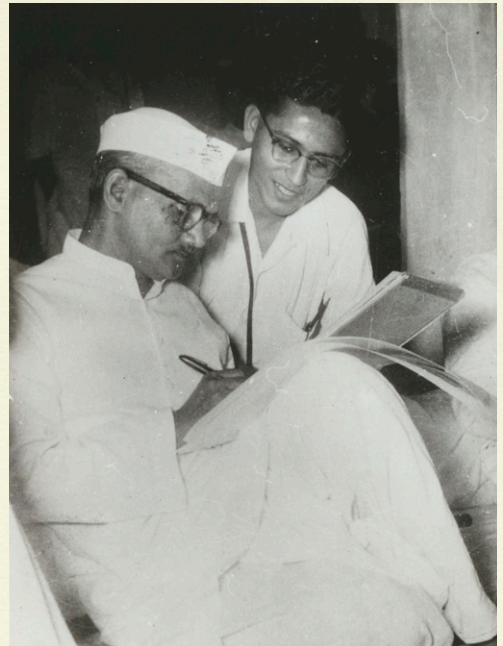
R Venkatraman

APJ Abdul Kalam and Sonia Gandhi at exhibition at NMML, 2004





Dr. Zakir Husain



Lal Bahadur Shastri



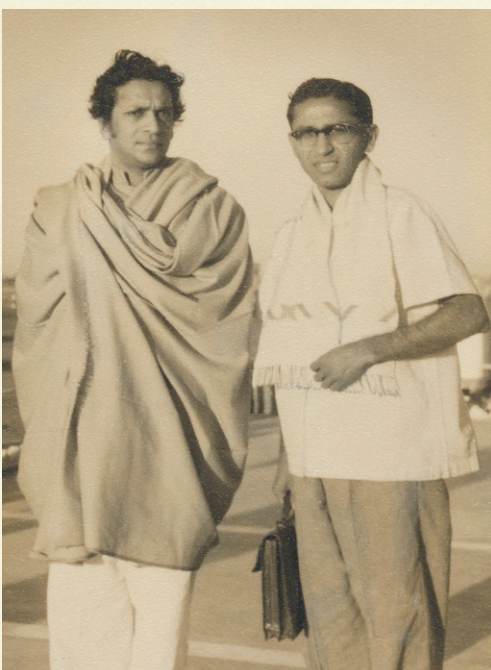
Mohammad Rafi



Dr. Salim Ali



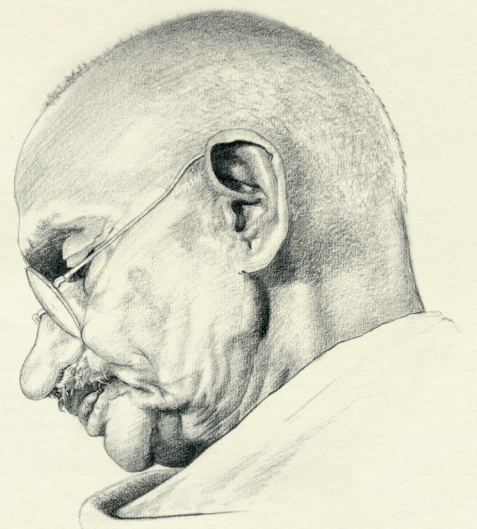
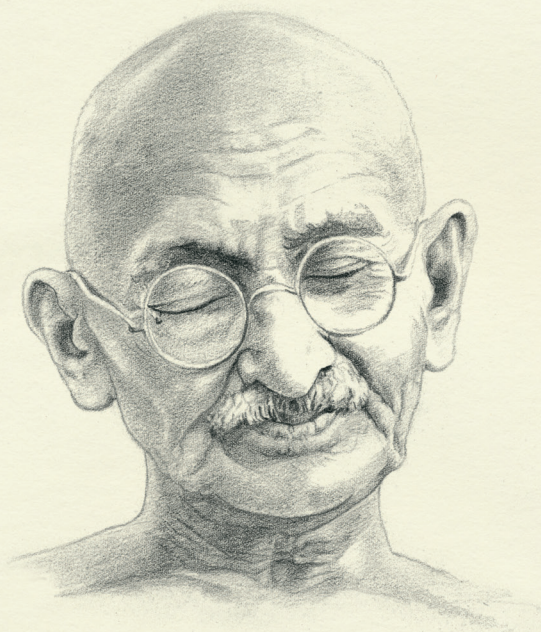
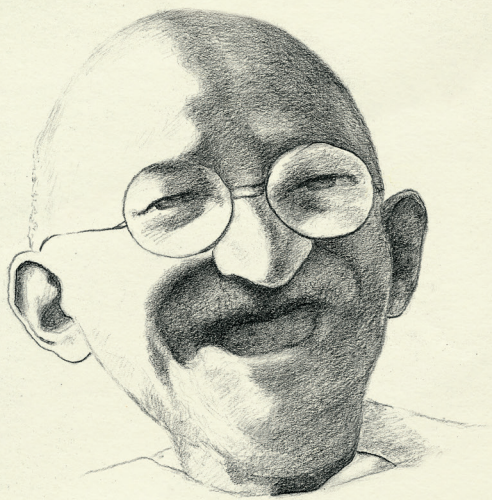
Mother Teresa



Pt. Ravishankar

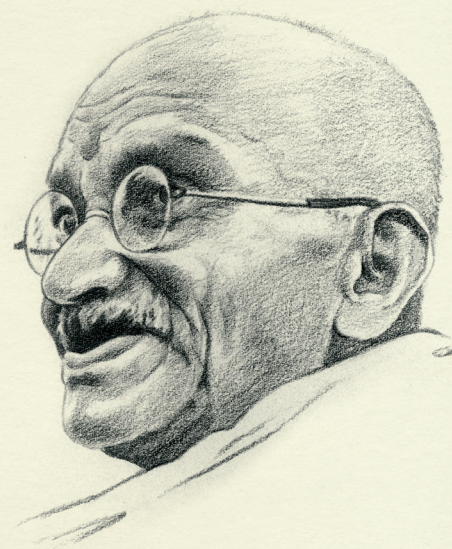


Sundaram



MY ARTISTIC JOURNEY

Creating a portrait, be it with pencil, crayon, oil or camera, has been a life-long passion for me. During my artistic journey of past six decades, I have had the privilege to draw more than 1,800 portraits of personalities from almost all walks of life. Not being the one to be content with just drawing a portrait, I have each of these 1,800 creations autographed by those luminaries. But nothing has been more satisfying than creating one hundred crayon and pencil portraits of Mahatma Gandhi, each one bringing out a different facet of this towering personality. Equally fascinating has been the vast and varied experience of getting not just the autograph but also the tribute to Bapu on these portraits from hundred different personalities in their own handwritings. This endeavour of mine to pay homage to Bapu in my own humble way, spread over a period of five decades, has not been easy. But the fact that it has led to creating a unique collection which in turn has made this book possible, has been worth the effort.



R. Shaakar

(Ramesh Thaakar)

