

SAM PITRODA



Sam Pitroda – Unveiling the Invisible

Sam Pitroda lives in the eye of the mind. An indomitable intellectual force, his global thinking and perpetual curiosity have helped revolutionize India's infrastructure, leading the country well into the 21st century. Pitroda is renowned for his pioneering work in engineering and telecommunications, and his public service has thrown a light on cultural dignity and its inherent power to elevate the human condition. Such is the yield of this rare mind – one that is not only rigorous but panoptic, elastic and reflective. But Sam Pitroda's evolution and creative spirit extends beyond governance and technology policy. This trailblazing inventor, entrepreneur and cultural ambassador is also an artist, maintaining a vigorous studio practice for over four decades as a painter, collagist and gifted draftsman.

Variouly fantastical, introspective or wholly abstract, Pitroda's imagery hovers between the objective and the intuited, celebrating an internal vision that glides across genres and methodologies.

His compositions are lucid and visceral, and they migrate from the figurative to labyrinthine abstractions that possess a refreshing expressive power. Ranging from dreamscapes such as *Chip*, 1975, in which crystalline facets coalesce in an icy perspectival tunnel to the broad expanse of *Floating*, 2005, its surface a cacophony of autumnal hues that weave through a grid incised across the canvas, the artist subverts observable fact, reshaping it as he desires. In embracing subjectivity, instinct and expressionism, Pitroda invites reality to function like a rebus – not unlike the musing surrealism that often inhabits his imagery. Among his oeuvre, females morph into arabesques, deep space flattens into geometric mythologies and, as in *Woman's Lib*, 1972, subject matter disintegrates and recomposes within the bright turbulence of his brushwork.

In his art, Sam Pitroda is poised at the intersection of the self and the world – where humanness resides – and where a convergence of precision and spontaneity has been met with uncommon painterly finesse.

Dorotea Culjkovic
Art Director,
Navaneetha Art House

Biography

Mr. Sam Pitroda is an internationally respected telecom inventor, entrepreneur, development thinker, and policy maker who has spent 49 years in information and communications technology (ICT) and related global and national developments.

Credited with having laid the foundation for India's telecommunications and technology revolution of the 1980s, Mr. Pitroda has been a leading campaigner to help bridge the global digital divide. During his tenure as Advisor to Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, Mr. Pitroda led six technology missions related to telecommunications, water, literacy, immunization, dairy production, and oil seeds. He was also the founder and first Chairman of India's Telecom Commission. In these plural roles, Mr. Pitroda helped revolutionize India's development philosophies and policies with a focus on access to technology as the key to social change.

As a way to induce the second phase of India's technology revolution, in 2005 Mr. Pitroda headed India's National Knowledge Commission (2005-2009), to provide a blueprint of reform for the knowledge-related institutions and infrastructure for the 21st century in the country.

Currently, Mr. Pitroda is Advisor to the Prime Minister of India on Public Information Infrastructure and Innovation, with the rank of a Cabinet Minister. He serves as the Chairman of the Smart Grid Task Force, the committee to reform public broadcasting, modernize railways, deliver e-governance, and other developmental activities. He is also a founding Commissioner of the United Nations Broadband Commission for Digital Development and Chairman of the International Telecommunication Union's m-Powering Development Board that looks to empower developing countries with the use of mobile technology.

In addition, Mr. Pitroda holds close to 100 worldwide patents and has published and lectured widely in the United States, Europe, Latin America and Asia. He currently holds over 15 honorary PhD's.

Unbeknownst to many, Mr. Pitroda has been painting, doodling, and developing his artistic personality the entire length of his career. His work serves as a playful outlet for feelings, thoughts, and curiosities triggered by the shapes, silhouettes, and schematics that form the landscape of his professional life. Even though he has previously exhibited his work in Chicago and London, this is his first major show. In spite of tempting offers, so far, he has never agreed to sell his paintings.



Woman's Lib
Acrylic on Canvas
24in x 30in
1972



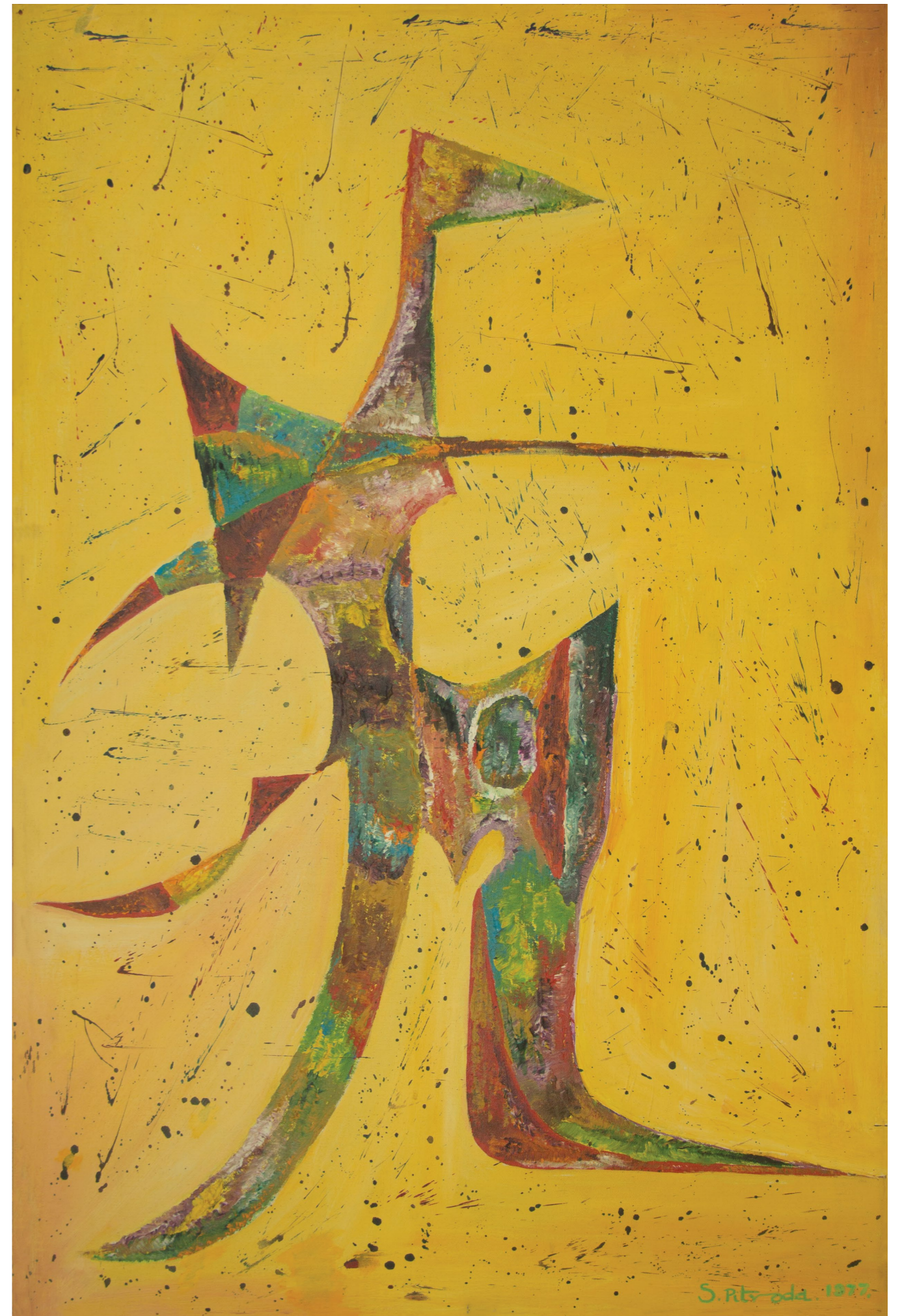
Chip
Acrylic on Canvas
36in x 36in
1975



Listener
Acrylic on Canvas
24in x 36in
1976



Lady Bird
Acrylic on Canvas
24in x 36in
1977

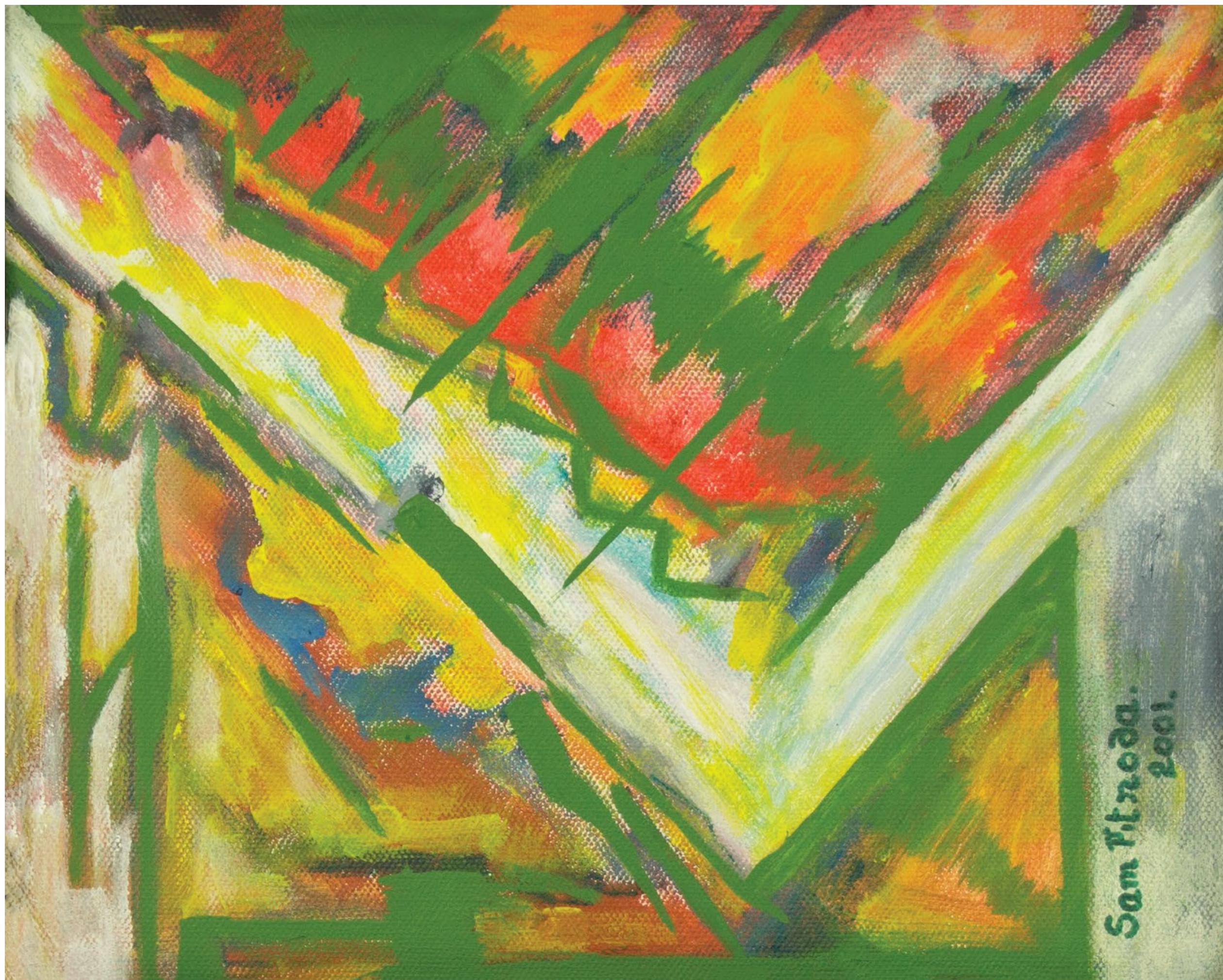




Autumn
Oil on Canvas
24in x 30in
1978

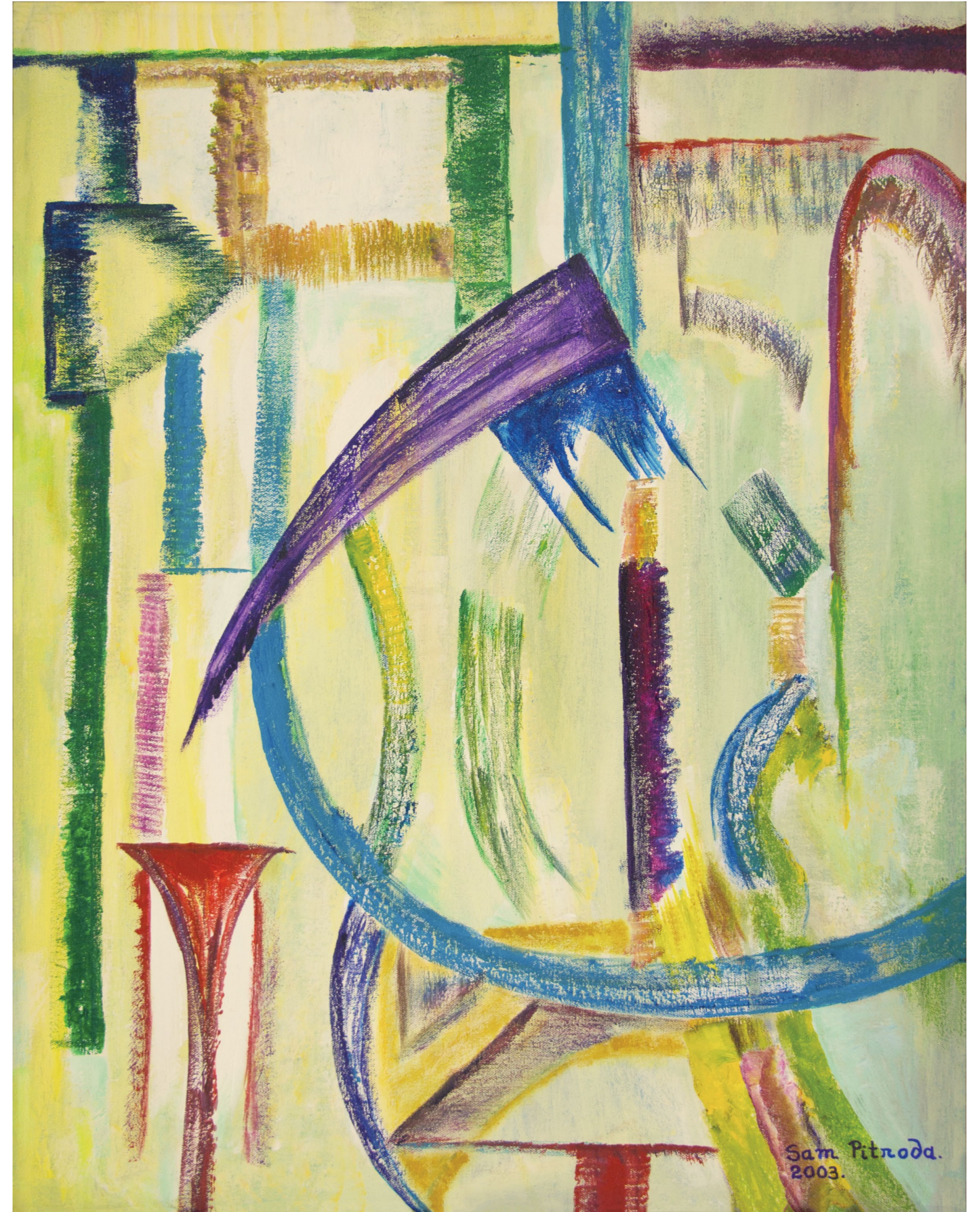
Turmoil
Acrylic on Canvas
24in x 29in
1997





M
Acrylic on Canvas
8in x 10in
2001

Construction
Acrylic on Canvas
22in x 28in
2003





Floating
Oil on Canvas
36in x 48in
2005

Sam Pitroda – A Question of Balance

Well known in the fields of scientific research and economy, Sam Pitroda is also devoted with lots of generosity to philanthropy. Sensitive to different aspects of the human nature, he tries to balance the rational approach and emotional impulses in facing reality. He was fortunate enough to find the way how to express his sensible and humanist understanding of the world - through art, that is, abstract painting, to be precise.

The visual expression beyond any figurative allusion concentrates on formal and chromatic harmony to become the only content of the image. Inventing signs that become symbols, the elements of a continuous discourse of imagination which doesn't demand any further explications is the search that defines the work of numerous non-figurative painters. Sam Pitroda is certainly among them, moving in both time and space. The complexity of his experience is materialized in the moves of the brush, in relationships between the colored surfaces coordinated through specific rhythms of the painter's thought. So the memory becomes shape, the interior reality shows up, what belonged to strictly personal experience enters the field of the visible, accessible to everyone. And it is from this point that the artist's message is being generated, articulated as support of significations to be discovered in his paintings.

In this perspective, what is given to be seen is the act of painting as such and not the work in the traditional sense of the word, it is by its' authenticity and not by the beauty of the object that the image is to be judged as successful or not. The fluidity, the movement, the shining, the immanent energy are the notions related to the art of Sam Pitroda. The travelling of the eye across the picture surface becomes in this way the permanent visit to those "invisible cities" so poetically described by the Italian writer Italo Calvino in the equanimous collection of short stories – the absent cities, we can add, because among the brushstrokes on the canvas we don't identify their contours neither their hidden treasures.

What we see is just the subtle play of the shades of color, the transparent flow that makes us feel the existence of a reality of which we don't know the material facts. All it remains us is to perceive the pictorial appearance being realized, transformed and disappearing in front of our eyes the same way it is born from the artist's imagination and, after being visualized in the pictorial body, vanishes to be replaced by the following image.

Brane Kovic
Art Critic





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