

The ART and SPIRIT of K.P. SINGH

Uniting India, Indiana
and the World through
Life and Art

ASIAN ACCESS NEWSMAGAZINE

MARCH 2007 • Volume 1, Issue 3

The Collective Voice of the Asian-American Community in Indiana

Celebrate Asian Festivals in March!



Bangkero Festival
Philippines



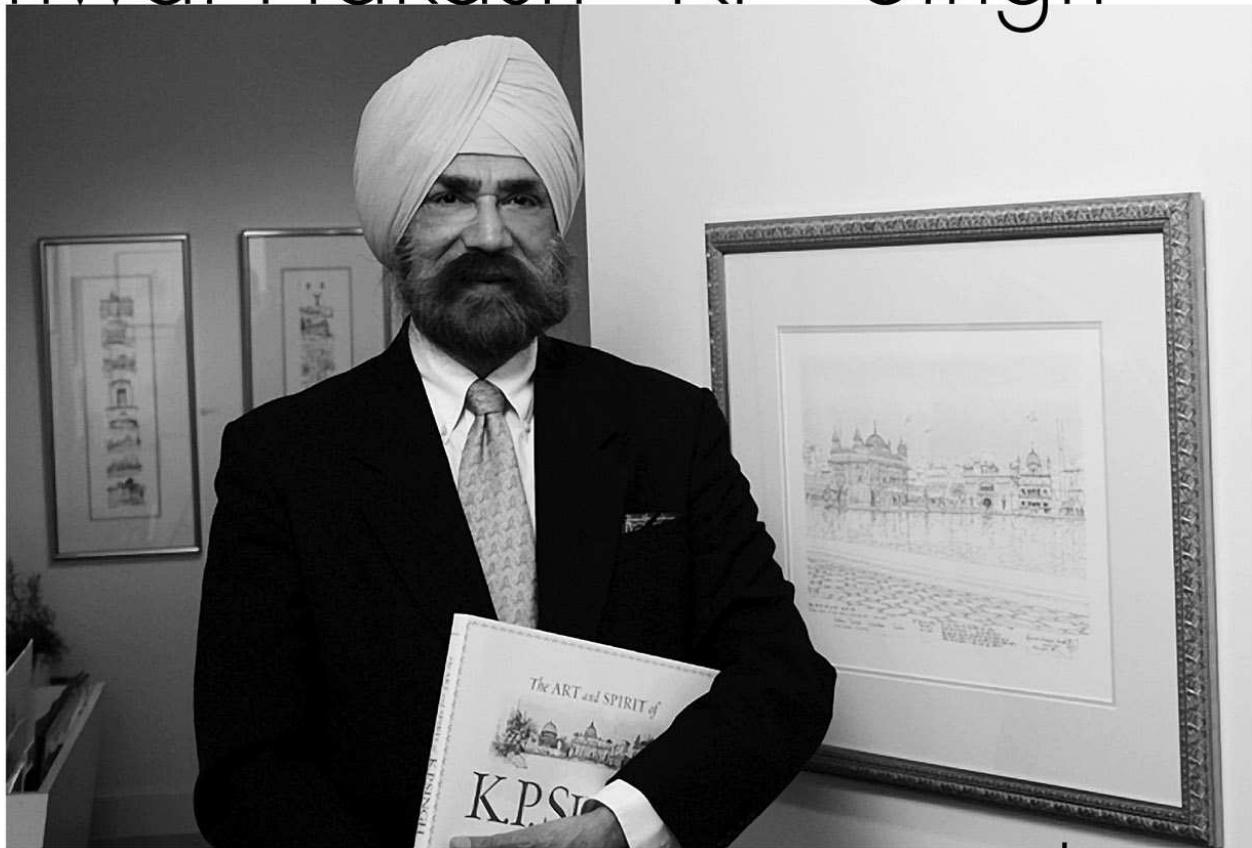
Dajia Mazu Festival
Taiwan



Holi Festival
India

WHAT'S INSIDE
**Chinese New Year
Celebration Pictures**
10 winter woes &
how to deal with it
fashion & beauty tips
St. Patrick Day Special
Community & Asian News,
Viewpoint, Health, Travel, Food
and **MORE...**

Kanwal Prakash "KP" Singh



India-born KP Singh is an architect by profession, but an artist and advocate by avocation. He came to the US in 1965 to pursue a master's degree in city planning at the University of Michigan, after getting degrees in architecture and regional planning in India. He distinguished himself as an architectural artist and set down roots in Indianapolis in 1967. A known and respected member of the Sikh community, he writes about his passion, which is all about cultural integration, spirituality and tolerance for diversity in faith. He has also been called a tireless advocate and supporter of historic preservation, cultural diversity, and the importance of arts to life and human spirit.

A look at some biographical notes on this man reveals both his accomplishments and the nature of his commitment to building literal and figurative

bridges in the greater community in which he lives. A founding member of the International Center of Indianapolis, he has received distinction as an architect, artist and community figure (the Daverman Award in Architecture from the University of Michigan -1965; ; Sagamore of the Wabash (State of Indiana -1992); International Citizen of the Year (International Center of Indianapolis -1995); and Award of Excellence: Arts (Asian American Alliance - 2002). He has served his community as a volunteer on many committee-chaired events as a civic leader and voice for his Sikh faith as part of the fabric of bearing responsibility and sharing with others.

His line drawings of architectural landmarks have been collected privately and publicly, in the US and elsewhere in the world. The interpretations of his artistry, which include notable Indiana courthouses,

campuses and other landmarks, hint at the deeper underpinnings of his commitment to preservation and documentation of outstanding historical landmarks in the architectural and cultural landscape.

A sampling of his visual artistry and written work is contained in his recently published book, *The Art and Spirit of K.P. Singh* (Guild Press-Emmis Publishing, 2003).

"My life is a living testimony that American "promise" rewards many visions and endeavors. Each immigrant that arrived on these shores over the past five centuries was a dreamcatcher, a

discoverer, an explorer, and a trailblazer. Our generation is no exception. We are all sons and daughters of those daring souls," says Singh, in his essay on "Discovering Reflections".

The average person unfamiliar with his work and his life, would do well to read this man's work, which reflects a conciliatory and inclusive stance when it comes to building communities brick by brick, person by person. One cannot change prejudices and eradicate ignorance instantly, when it comes to battling stereotypes and misconceptions about people perceived to be "the

Drawing the Light into Art and Community Advocacy

others next door"; Singh wishes to serve up his work and words towards this purpose.

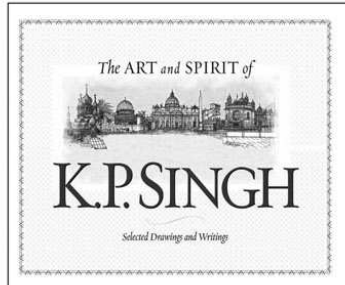
Says Singh, "We have carried their dreams and dared our own to unimagined dimensions and abundance. Yet, we all know that there is much work ahead to make Life beautiful for all God's children. God Almighty has entrusted us with boundless gifts, an adventurous spirit, and spacious skies. Each of us can contribute towards our shared dreams, destiny, and peace and make a difference."

In his ink renderings of memorable structures and edifices of Indianapolis life, he conveys through his skill, a reverence for creativity and a passion for detail. It is in those details also, of his written work, that he tells the reader to incline towards greater understanding between culturally diverse groups, taking what is needed towards uniting communities and making America what it should be, a land of many peoples with common freedoms.

"In this Space and Information Age, ever-changing interconnected world, we need to redefine our national visions and direction. Discover and preserve peaceful cultural "sanctuaries" and build new enlightened "bridges" that best link our stars to our present reality," shares Singh. He is aware that technology has helped redefine the landscape of communities, making information and culture more accessible and understandable to many who are disconnected by geographic or time differences, and he makes use of his website at www.KPSinghDesigns.com to be an accessible and visible example of how an immigrant can build enlightened bridges literally and figuratively.

Singh advocates unity and tolerance for diverse expressions of faith and community. "Each of us must ask "what am I willing to share and sacrifice for my cherished expectations from life"? If the ideas in my book resonate with yours, then let us combine energies and gifts at many levels to enlarge the "canopy of hope" for all who share this time and space with us. We may discover friendly convergence and similar visions in many areas. Other fronts may offer distinct differences and sound alternatives. We cannot simply ignore or dismiss unfamiliar perspectives."

"Let us search for common elements amidst our cultural uniqueness and diversity, work towards reconciling differences, and carefully integrate the best ideas into our shared visions. What we do at this moment in history may leave some lasting imprints on the future shape and strength of our national fabric."



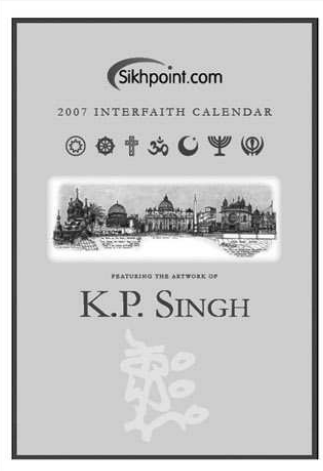
◀ The Art and Spirit of K.P. Singh: A new book containing the artist's drawings, essays and photographs:

▶ Indiana State Capitol: The drawing shows the Indiana State Capitol building in the heart of downtown Indianapolis.



◀ University of Notre Dame: KP Singh's finely executed pen and ink composite drawing of the Notre Dame University Campus in South Bend highlights some of the outstanding architectural landmarks that reflect the spirit and culture of the campus.

▶ 2007 Sikhpoint.com Interfaith Calendar: Featuring artworks of K.P. Singh.



◀ Purdue University: Pen and ink rendered artwork of the Purdue University campus in West Lafayette.

"My life is a living testimony that American "promise" rewards many visions and endeavors. Each immigrant that arrived on these shores over the past five centuries was a dreamcatcher, a discoverer, an explorer, and a trailblazer. Our generation is no exception. We are all sons and daughters of those daring souls."

In these times of pressure on communities with diverse ethnicities, Singh points out that there is a greater need than ever to understand and concentrate on common goals of integration and inclusion, to better the lives of people and ensure that one's community is safe and peaceful.

Below is an excerpt from KP Singh's prayer, "A Bridge to Hope"

*"I am hoping, praying, imagining
We will recognize, understand
The higher purpose in all things,
Strive to transform universal hopes
Into answered prayers:
Where the unfair burdens, darkness
That destroys human spirit do not intrude.
Where sanctity of basic rights, freedoms
That lift human spirit is a solemn pledge.
Where blessed peace in every land, hamlet
Culture across the Planet is a natural state.
Where embracing of new songs for living,
A culture that fosters friendliness across
Unfortunate divides is a moral mandate.
Where discovering common interests,
Collective strengths, shared humanity;
A major passion, powerful unifying force.
Where the seeking of a Higher Guidance,
Serving and celebrating all Life, Creation,
All sacred affairs are our highest prayer."*

The voice and ink contributions of this remarkable man embody what is good about America: that this country can nurture creativity and foster connections between people of different backgrounds to bring light into community life. As the poet Robert Frost put it, in one of his poems, "Two tramps in mud time", the object in living is to unite one's avocation and vocation, as our eyes make "one in sight". Singh has sought to do just this with his book and his advocacy.