



ROBINAGE

CREATING BRIGHT SPARKS

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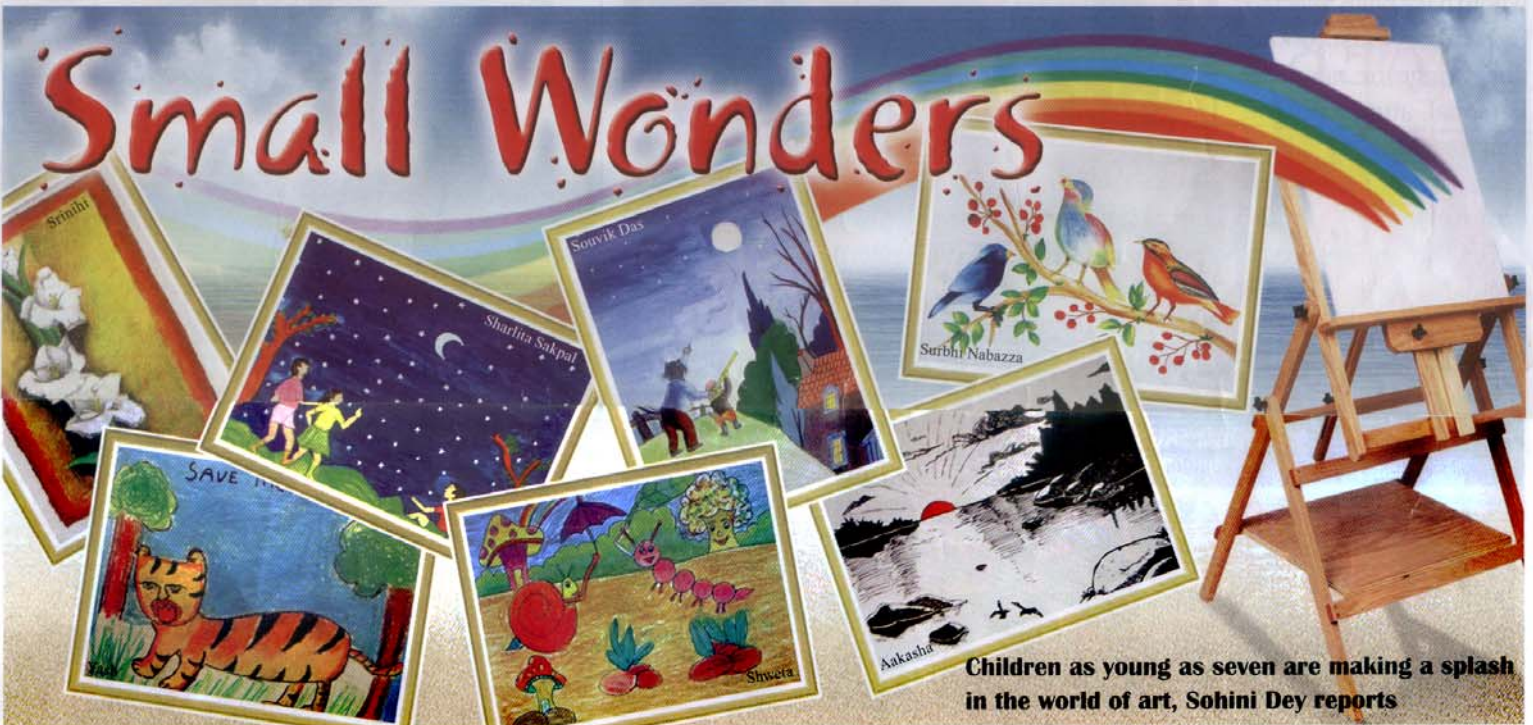
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Children as young as seven are making a splash in the world of art, Sohini Dey reports

Six-year-old Priyam Patel likes to draw crows with rainbow hued feathers and red beaks. Nine-year-old Surya Prakash's favourite activity when travelling on trains is to draw the landscape outside. Seven-year-old Sucheta Krishnan never misses a single drawing class, not even when she's running a fever.

Drawing is an activity almost every child participates in. While some children join painting classes, others

may have compulsory drawing classes in school. There are also some, who despite having no training in art, manage to draw lovely pictures.

In an attempt to find budding artists, Shivani Virani of Artistree has been running a unique initiative since the past few months -- selling paintings by children aged 6 to 16. And it's getting popular. Says she, "My mailbox is always full of requests from children and parents from all over India."

A sunset, an abstract or even a save the tiger campaign, Virani stocks all kinds of paintings. Eight-year old Amaya, whose butterfly painting has recently been sold by Virani says, "I love butterflies and made the painting especially for Shivani aunty's store." Nine-year-old Tisha's abstract art was bought by her grandmother. "I want to be an artist when I grow up and I am overjoyed that my paintings are already selling," she says.

However not everyone finds the idea positive. Says Chandra Sachdev of Gallery 7, "Commercializing children's drawings may actually kill their creativity. Instead of letting their imagination run free, they will actually start worrying about profits."

Shivani Virani however does not encourage the monetary gain from the sale, "I dislike children calling me to ask whether their paintings are sold." And to encourage

children to develop as socially aware citizens, half the proceeds from the sales go to an NGO called 'The Foundation'.

However, there aren't enough buyers rues Virani. People don't see children's drawings as art. But they can be wonderful gifts, especially for children.

Childhood is the right time to start developing your latent talents. RobinAge encourages you to bring out your paints and create your own masterpiece!