

## An Eternal Artist: Audrey Wallace Taylor

*A Tribute to a fellow artist & curator*

by

*Dharmesh Vikramsinh Jadeja, Auroville*

Audrey's presence in Auroville over last several years has been very inspiring and rejuvenating for many of us who have been struggling with our artistic instincts and periferal engagement with arts. Especially for me, who has been running an architectural practice as my mainstay of work life in Auroville, but have always had close interactions with many an artists through my work at Kala Kendra over last two decades.



*A water colour by Audrey Wallace Taylor, gifted to Dustudio, 2012*

Audrey's moving to Auroville, with her ever youthful, spirited self, that always was radiant with a smiling presence, energetic art works; Always ready to explore and experiment, her artistic endeavours were an amazing, refreshing change for someone like me. We hit off very early after she moved to Auroville and we met often in early years, over a cup of tea at the gallery, or simply casually, discussing the future of art, collective ways of working, exhibiting, contributing to public art of Auroville and just engaging with all other artists. Non judgemental, soft and straightforward was her way. Her art was of course delightful, be it her paintings of landscapes, water colors and sketches, and my favourite was her phase when she was painting cows. She was one of the few artists I have resonated my radical views on art, especially in Auroville context. This was seen prominently when I put up my controversial installation, *The Sleeping Beauty*, for a show RED, which Audrey curated at Kala Kendra. She supported completely and totally, also organising some artists meetings for support, when this work was removed from the Town Hall premises and vandalised during the show at the Gallery. Such was her spirit, open, fearless, strong and yet humble, friendly and all embracing, the diverse ways of art expression..

Fascinated by the forms nature, landscapes, experimenting with colors, textures and techniques, she reinvented herself, almost every few years. Her presence in almost all the exhibitions that we did together or with other artists, was a constant. Always enriching, enlivening, in midst of this complex community life of Auroville, with its diversity of views and aesthetics of arts, Audrey made her point with clarity, and invariably the discussions we had were revolving around art and life one enriches through arts. I will be always grateful for her presence at all our shows and programs, we organised at Kala Kendra, while setting up a gallery space, interactions and collaborative pieces we did for Sri Aurobindo Auditorium's side



entrances with Nele & Audrey will always be my favourite. When she came up a few years ago with an idea of a huge wall mural painting she did with other artists, at the entrance wall of Bharat Nivas, The Indian Pavilion (*now unfortunately gone by works of other artists, when the management changed*), we worked together with a village artisan to create a sleeping calf, amidst the galactic painting she did, that was welcoming with its swirls, fineness and play of colors and textures. Her work life in Auroville as a constant support to anyone who wanted to take the first steps in the art world, by sketching, painting, learning techniques or simply just expressing, will be a unique memory to most of us.

Audrey managed to create her own niche in Auroville, after living a successful full life as an artist in the United States, even in her twilight years. Her energetic presence almost in all the art events, discussions, will be missed forever. Seldom I have seen artists fully devoted and dedicated to their art life, as I saw and knew Audrey Wallace Taylor. My years of connection with her and her work will be eternal. Though in last few years, my personal contact was very little, her presence and smile on Auroville roads, on her moped will be sorely missed. Her making India and Auroville as a playground for the experimental works, classes of art as a therapeutic practice for many young and old, was an immense contribution to make art accessible to all; She made friends with so many of us, with close contact with many of us, by her dedication, consistency and appreciation of art as a life in Auroville. She is an epitome of an ever youthful, never aging youth of Auroville, where she lived a life full of memories, creativity, beauty and pure joy of being. Audrey, Auroville will forever miss you and your beautiful presence on our roads and art shows; We will hold you close to our



*Audrey with many Auroville Artists, A Group Show at Kala Kendra, Yatra, 2004-05*

hearts for ever whenever we will see or learn to appreciate the beauty of daily life in Auroville, in India, be it through a memory of your abstract works of art or your sketches or your adorable paintings of the cows of villages around Auroville, or your work with the ladies and kolam. I am fortunate to have one of your sketches you gifted me with at the opening of my Dustudio, over a decade ago, that was made during your evening walks around your residence, at Creativity. Thank you for leaving us with these wonderful memories. May the Divine hold you close and may your journeys ahead are full of light, laughter and your beautiful presence with which you enriched our lives.

Adieu, Audrey Wallace Taylor. Salutations to your life as an Artist, a wonderful being and making all our lives so special through your presence and works in Auroville...!!

*Forever with Gratitude,  
Dharmesh Vikramsinh Jadeja  
Auroville*