



For Immediate Release, March 2008

India's first Biological Art Workshop run by Symbiotica

India's first Biological Art Workshop will be run by Symbiotica in Bangalore from 10-14 March 2008. The intensive five-day *Symbiotica Biological Art Masterclass* is an introduction to biological techniques and issues surrounding the manipulation of living systems. The masterclass takes place in conjunction with the Srishti School of Art, Design and Technology at the National Centre for Biological Sciences, in Bangalore. The masterclass empowers participants to not only carry out, but to also critique the manipulation of living systems from an informed practical perspective.

Symbiotica: the art and science collaborative research laboratory is an artistic laboratory dedicated to the research, learning and critique of life sciences. Symbiotica is the first research laboratory of its kind, in that it enables artists to engage in wet biology practices in a biological science department. Symbiotica activities include exhibitions, conferences, workshops and regular open meetings. The Bangalore masterclass continues the series of workshops Symbiotica has run internationally in cities such as Los Angeles, Barcelona, Toronto and London. This is the first time Symbiotica has been invited to conduct a workshop in Asia.

Demonstrating the tools of modern biology through an artistic engagement, the masterclass explores biological technologies and the life sciences through practical and 'hands-on' methods. Led by Symbiotica's Director Oron Catts and his scientific collaborator Greg Cozens from the School of Anatomy and Human Biology, the masterclass is a theoretical and practical introduction to the basics of biological techniques and the creation of biological art.

The masterclass engages selected artists and researchers from various disciplines from India and nearby South Asia countries who take away the basics of new techniques and knowledge to utilise in their practice as researchers and artistic practitioners. Scientists from India will also be involved in discussing the ethical issues raised by artists' work in this area in conjunction with a visit to the NCBS laboratories.

The *Symbiotica Biological Art Masterclass* strengthens the newly formed relationship between the Srishti School of Art, Design and Technology, the National Centre for Biological Sciences, and the School of Anatomy and Human Biology, the Faculty of Life Sciences, and The University of Western Australia. The masterclass capitalises on the relationship established in India by Professor Arunasalam Dharmarajan of the School of Anatomy and Human Biology.

The masterclass has been proudly supported by the School of Anatomy and Human Biology, The Faculty of Life Sciences at The University of Western Australia and Srishti College of Arts, Bangalore.



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