

ARTIST IN RESIDENCE PROGRAM

INDIA'S FIRST ARTIST COLLECTIVE FOR NEURODIVERGENT ADULTS





PROGRAM OVERVIEW
& PHILOSOPHY

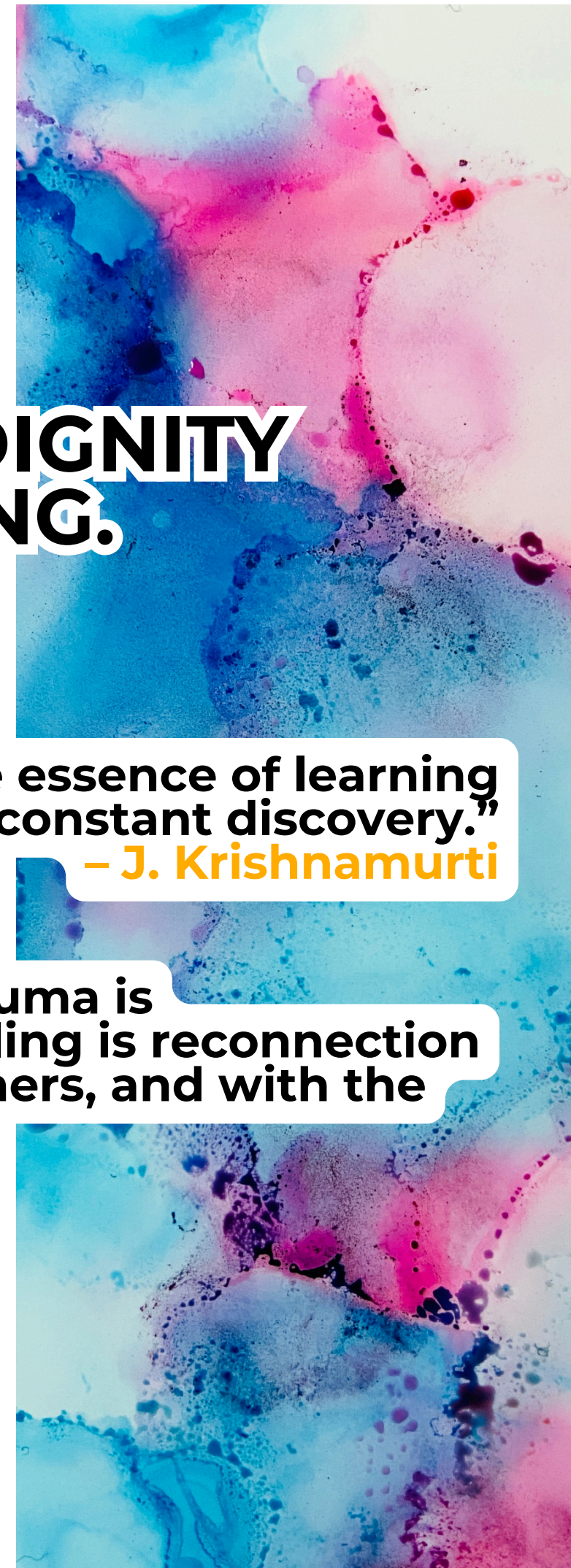
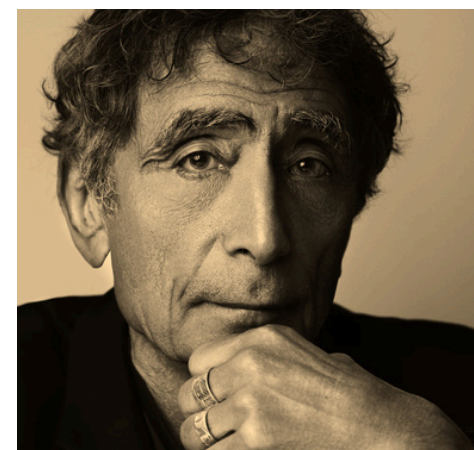
A LIVING RESIDENCY ROOTED IN GROWTH, DIGNITY & BELONGING.



**“The essence of learning
is constant discovery.”**
— J. Krishnamurti

**“The essence of trauma is
disconnection. Healing is reconnection
—with self, with others, and with the
world.”**

— Dr. Gabor Maté





ARTIST IN RESIDENCE (AIR) PROGRAM

**The Artist
in Residence
(AIR)
program at
Sense
Kaleidoscopes
is where
education
meets lived
practice.**

Designed as a professional artist collective for neurodivergent adults, it challenges conventional ideas of learning and inclusion.

This program is built upon a deep philosophical foundation—drawing from **J. Krishnamurti's insights on unconditioned learning**, **Gabor Maté's trauma-informed lens** emphasizing connection and healing through community, and the **Reggio Emilia approach**, where learning unfolds through real-world projects, co-creation, and relational growth.

But AIR is not just about creating. It's about **learning—for life.**

Many autistic young adults face profound mental health challenges. Research shows that Up to **78%** of autistic individuals live with co-occurring mental health conditions, autistics are **4 times** more likely to experience depression and **3 times more likely** to suffer from anxiety and **Suicidal ideation** affects up to **66%** of autistic young adults, often linked to isolation, lack of purpose, and social exclusion. This makes **continuous learning not a luxury but a lifeline.** At AIR, we believe in the **power of lifelong education** to enable **neuroplasticity**, maintain **cognitive flexibility**, and support **emotional stability.**

Our artists are not “finished” upon entering the program—they are **ever-evolving learners.** The structure includes regular skill-building modules, new material explorations, and co-mentoring within the studio. This focus on learning ensures the **quality of their work remains relevant**, their **sense of identity deepens**, and their **contribution to the world is enduring.**

Sense Kaleidoscopes' broader mission anchors the AIR experience. We ignite the full potential of all learners—especially **gifted autistic individuals**—through a community-led, attachment-based environment where **students, parents, and teachers** engage in a **reciprocal learning process.** Our goal is not to create “achievers,” but **wise, self-aware souls** who thrive intellectually, creatively, and emotionally.

This program redefines what it means to be an artist with autism. It is a **living curriculum**—fueled by **growth, earning, connection, and purpose.**





Who Is This For?

The Artist in Residence program is designed for **neurodivergent and autistic young adults aged 18 and above**—individuals who are **ready to grow as creators and as professionals**. It is for those who have **already begun their artistic journey** and are now seeking a **structured, affirming space to deepen their craft and evolve their voice**.

Whether they are emerging from a period of burnout, have disengaged from traditional systems, or are simply looking for a space where they are seen and celebrated, AIR offers a home. A home where learning feels safe, art is taken seriously, and growth is guided with care.

Families who join this journey are **not passive observers**—they are co-participants. We welcome those who are ready to walk alongside their child in a **long-term process of healing, skill-building, and transformation**.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE & OPPORTUNITIES

The AIR program is not a class—it is a **living, breathing artist collective**. Artists are immersed in a **full-time residency** where **creation and learning are inseparable**. Each day blends personal studio time, technical mentorship, and collaborative practice. Artists work on real-world commissions, participate in exhibitions, explore new mediums, and develop their own visual language through reflection and dialogue.

A **dedicated curation team** supports each artist to refine their work, build a portfolio, and gain visibility in the public sphere. Through this collective process, artists learn to **balance creative autonomy** with **professional responsibility**—earning **not only income** but also **dignity, self-worth, and social connection**.

This is a space where artists don't just create—they **belong, contribute, and rise**.



A CASE STUDY

Becoming Seen Through the Kaleidoscopes: The Story That Changed Everything



Rohit Anand: **A Journey Reimagined**

At just 11 years old, Rohit Anand had already been through three schools. Each one had tried to “manage” him, but none had truly taught him. He was verbal, yet echolalic. Literate, but only at a basic level. His comprehension was fractured, and his behavior often misunderstood. When he arrived at Sense Kaleidoscopes (SK), he was struggling with severe cognitive regression, aggression, emotional shutdowns, and a deep sense of isolation. Most institutions had given up on him. SK did not.

Seeing Through the Surface: *THE TURNING POINT*

Rohit did not need more control. He needed understanding. At SK, we saw beyond the label, beyond the behavior. He was offered an autism-specific academic curriculum that integrated visuals, sensory regulation, and emotionally safe learning environments. Here, learning wasn’t about compliance. It was about connection.

His early behaviors were intense. If someone cried, Rohit would attack them—regardless of age or relationship. It was raw, unresolved pain playing out in public. He was also being bullied outside of school, deceived by neurotypical peers, and left deeply wounded. In one instance, he was tricked into eating mud and biting a car by a child who convinced him their apartment complex had turned into a “chocolate world.” The betrayal shattered Rohit. These moments were seared into his memory and later illustrated by him in haunting, surreal art.

The Art of *HEALING*

It became clear that Rohit’s mind worked like a surrealist’s—he dreamed in metaphor, processed in image, and communicated in color. His recovery began through structured learning embedded in compassion and purpose. We taught him that he was autistic. That it was not a curse, but a different way of experiencing the world. He clung to his favorite character, Spiderman, and we told him he too would find his tribe.

Through visual art, Rohit found his voice. He began to depict the psychological landscapes of his experiences: betrayal, fear, isolation, but also hope and transcendence. SK built an intensive, tech-enabled, arts-integrated academic program around him. One single literature lesson led to the creation of 1,611 custom slides, using color-coded grammar, visual sequencing, animated GIFs, and an autism-specific dictionary. He learned not just to read but to understand. Not just to memorize, but to reflect.

Transforming Education into EMPOWERMENT

Guided by the philosophies of J. Krishnamurti, Gabor Maté, and Lev Vygotsky, SK crafted a nurturing, neuroaffirmative ecosystem where behavior was not punished, but understood. Over four years, Rohit progressed from a child who screamed at crying to one who now calmly walks away or uses headphones. From a boy unable to sit for more than 10 minutes, to a young man who completed his 10th-grade NIOS board exams without a scribe.



From Pupil to ARTIST

Rohit moved from the academic school into SK's pioneering Art College. Here, his surrealist instincts were honed through training in printmaking, sculpture, theatre, and storytelling. He began earning through live commissions and participating in global exhibitions. His art was showcased at an Art Show in Kochi and **Outsider Art Fair** in **Paris**. He became a **UNESCO Not Just Art awardee** in 2019. His work now sells for ₹25,000 to ₹1,00,000. But more importantly, it tells a story.

The Artist in Residence: BELONGING IN PRACTICE

Today, Rohit is a full-time artist in the AIR (Artist in Residence) Program at SK. He earns a dignified livelihood, mentors peers, and works on real-world projects. He is no longer surviving. He is living—with clarity, purpose, and pride in his identity.



What ROHIT'S STORY Reveals

This is not a tale of sudden genius. It is a case study in what becomes possible when education is redesigned with empathy, structure, and belief. It shows us that:

- Cognitive regression is reversible.
- Literacy and emotional growth are achievable at any stage.
- Autistic individuals do not need fixing. They need environments that adapt to them.
- Technology and neuro-affirmative design can bridge gaps once deemed unbridgeable.

Rohit's story is a roadmap. For educators to rethink curriculum. For funders to recognize scalable solutions. For parents to believe that a thriving future is possible.

This is not just Rohit's transformation. This is a call to transform the system.

Admissions: A Thoughtful, Human- Centred Process



Admission to the Artist in Residence program begins with a simple step: downloading and filling out the application form from our website. Once submitted, families are encouraged to **schedule a visit** to our studio space—to observe, ask questions, and **understand the rhythm** of our collective. This is not just a tour—it's a chance to see whether our environment feels right for your child. Following this, our team conducts a detailed assessment to understand the applicant's readiness, strengths, and support needs. If alignment is found, an official offer of admission is made. Every step of this process is guided by care, respect, and the belief that the right environment makes all the difference.

ARTIST IN
RESIDENCE (AIR)



What Makes AIR Different?

This is **not therapy**.
This is **not daycare**.
This is **not your typical art class**.



The Artist in Residence program is a **professional creative sanctuary**—built for neurodivergent individuals who are ready to do real work, earn real income, and be seen as **real contributors** to **culture** and **society**.

Here, art is not a pastime—it is **purpose**.

Ready to BEGIN?

If this feels like the right step for you or your child, we invite you to start by downloading the admission request form from our website. Our team is here to support you—whether by voice call, video conversation, or an in-person walkthrough.

Let's make this journey one of **growth, dignity, and creative belonging—together**.





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