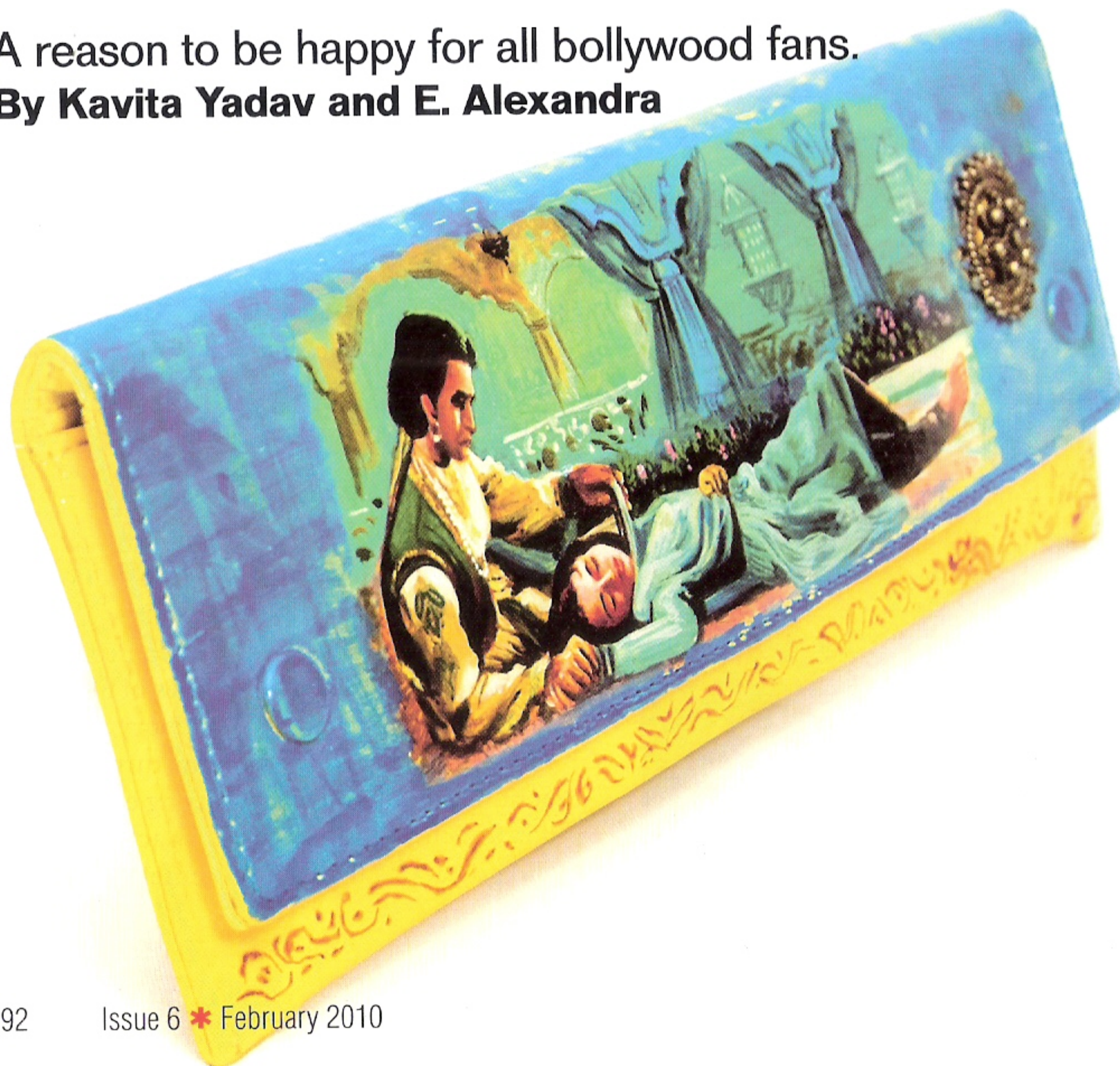


# INSPIRED BY BOLLYWOOD

A reason to be happy for all bollywood fans.  
By Kavita Yadav and E. Alexandra



**H**inesh Jethwani recreates classic old Bollywood film posters that are almost forgotten and found only in private art collections, and gets them hand painted on to fashion accessories. Here, in an exclusive interview with Red Carpet, he reveals all about his art and craft, and his attempt to revive this dying art by giving these artists a chance to continue their creativity.

Hinesh has recreated the classic old film posters on wallets, handbags and furniture; and film titles on to belts. It wasn't easy for him to get his artists to recreate those huge portraits of stars of yesteryears on to such

small items, "We faced many problems in recreating those huge film posters and the portraits of the actors on to small wallets due to the difference in scale.

Initially our team of handmade poster artists, that were used to painting on huge posters, went through a lot of trial and error until – after almost eight months – the artists managed to retune their scale and deliver the original version on a very small canvas, as earlier they were used to working with much bigger brushes that were used to create the larger-than-life film posters."

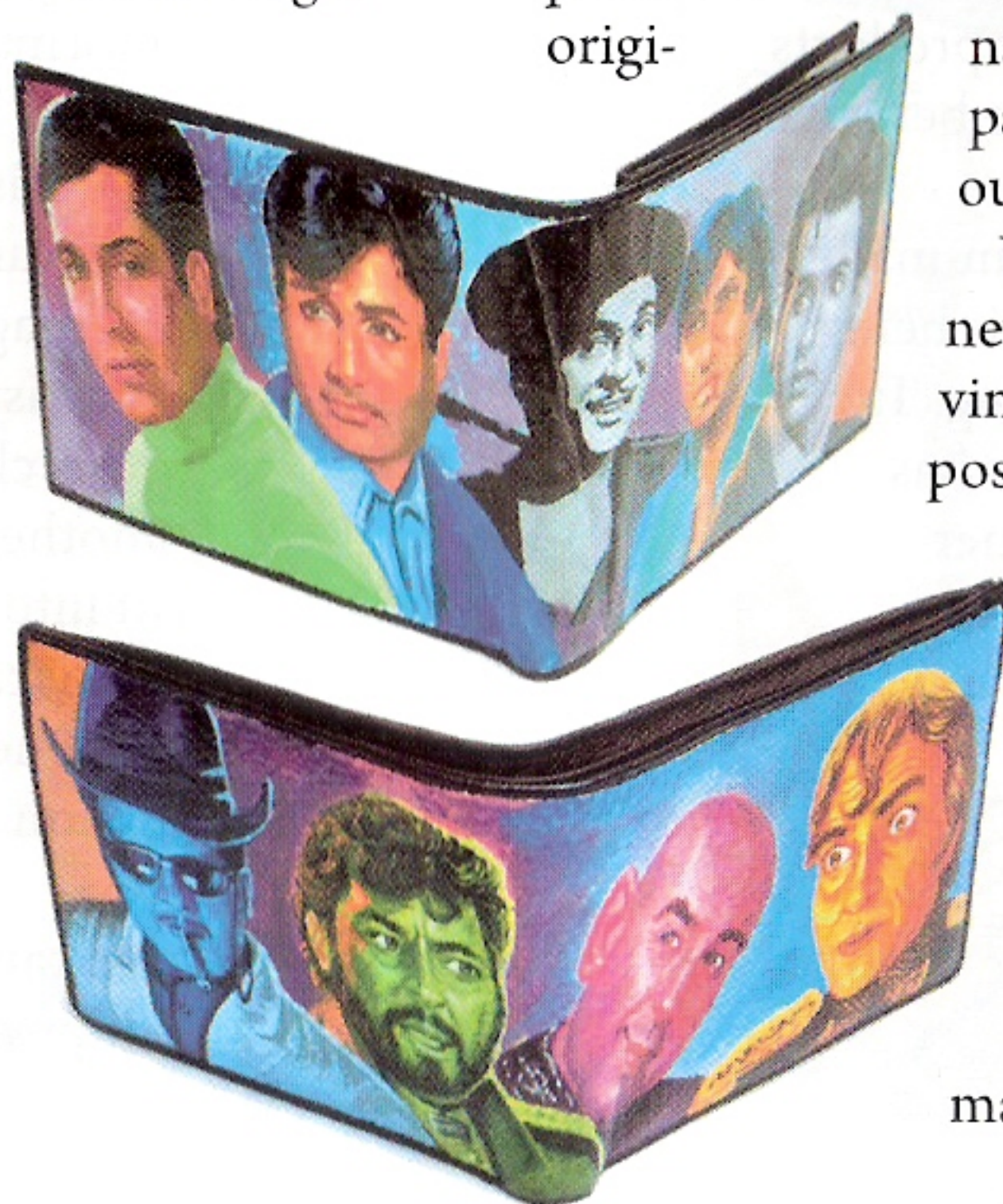
What were the barriers that he had to face to make this Bollywood-style statement happen? "We had earlier planned to draw these posters on leather wallets, so the first hurdle was to draw freestyle, as one





can not scale when one is painting on such small objects, as can be done on a larger canvas, so the paintings that we recreate on these wallets are completely freehand.

Secondly, we had problems with the colour dye that we used on the wallets, as the colour mixed with the chemicals in the tanned leather had affected its final colour. So while doing extensive research on the net, I learnt that we can remove the chemicals



that affect colours. This enables the artist to correctly match the colours to that of the original poster."

Will the paint not peel off? "Our hand painted wallets go through rigorous testing, our wallets were tested for six months of normal use in a trouser pocket and the paint still retained their colour as a varnish applied dries hard and prevents any scratching, or peeling of colours."

But what is his unique selling proposition (USP)? "Our artists' use water-based acrylic paint to recreate an image of the legendary film stars of yesteryear onto very high quality dry-mill leather that has been deglazed. These colours can not be duplicated as our artists' mix and match their own colours on a trial and error basis till they have managed to get the same colour that went into the creation of the original poster. origi-

Thus, it is the skill of our nal artist that created the paintings on hoardings is our USP."

What's his take on the new-look techno-savvy vinyl posters? "These new posters are slick, but detractors say that they do not have the same magical charm that the handmade posters had. For example, when the creator of handmade posters had to show budding romance he could paint the

heroine's face with a lovely shade of pink; when he had to portray envy, the actors face was a delicate shade of green, and the villain was painted in a dark shade of blue."

But why movies? "We want to revive this art and create a new fashion statement in the form of a very beautiful art, an art that lets you carry your favourite movie poster with you, wherever you go."

Our retrospective poster art is not distorted, it is the same as it was done three decades ago. The only difference here is that the scale is very small when compared to the original poster that was around 15x30 feet."

Affordability was one of his main criteria while deciding on the price, yet he did not want to discount the artist. A proponent of Free Trade, Hinesh believes in letting the artists decide on what they believe should be the price of their labour, however, he cautions them on the dangers of pricing themselves out of the market by explaining to them the intricacies of business on how to account for the cost of the product and the dealers margin that is required to be factored into its final pricing.

Is there a market for old film posters? "Today, an old classic film posters of 'Mother India' in the size of say 12" x 18" inches could fetch Rs1,50,000 and since not every one can afford that kind of money we have decided to use these master artists to recreate the classic film poster by hand painting it on small objects so that one can carry it around as a form of mobile art that is not only affordable, but could also turn out to



be a conversation piece."

February is the month when cupid strikes the darts. Does he have any Valentine's Day gift for couples in love? "We have thought about it and have come out with a unique plan, we let a person select their favourite movie handmade poster, of times gone by, and then we could replicate it as a handmade poster for them, but in this case we could replace the actor, or actress's face with the purchaser's face, or that of their loved one. For example, one could select say a poster of "Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge" and instead of Shah Rukh Khan and Kajol we could paint in your face and that of your loved one! This makes it a unique, one-of-a-kind, mobile art that you could carry with you and flaunt it wherever you go, for all the world to see. Or imagine a hand painted wallet with a portrait of your family that you can carry around, or a handbag with a portrait of your loved one all styled in the classic Bollywood films poster format."

Do you have any marketing strategy in



place? "What we have created is pioneering in terms of marketing and branding. Thus people in the film business may take a note of our hand painted accessories like belts or handbags for example, and use them as a medium to embed marketing, or product placements! The traditional filmmaking model in India is slowly waking up to additional revenue generation concepts that are trickling in, from Hollywood. Embedded marketing, or product placement is one such concept that holds tremendous untapped potential in Bollywood. Our products are an interesting example of how everyday products like belts and handbags can be turned into a mobile billboard of sorts – a fact that advertisers and in turn filmmakers can greatly benefit from."

The Indian film industry, most notably Bollywood, has probably made the highest impact on the fashion industry in recent years. Some of the leading designers in the country today are responsible for 'trending' unique designs through new movie releases. The success of this confluence can be seen from the fact

that fashion trends projected in recent films no longer carry a mass market appeal, but rather are inching towards the haute couture, or high fashion segment. Bollywood is a hotbed of ideas and inspiration for the fashion industry. Some of the newer films are tilting towards younger cinema, thanks to a young generation of directors and artists, who ensure that these films are infused with fresh ideas and characters that provide an excellent platform for showcasing trends and styles. Designers can learn so much from our film industry and it's only a matter of time when international designers will begin to take note of this, and start looking for ideas within the Bollywood film industry.

What is the tagline for his brand? "The return of retro with a vengeance! Hand painted Bollywood film posters have a very unique retro appeal that is impossible to replicate with computers and graphic print designs that are used in mass market manufacturing today. Our brand is a unique mix up of two basic elements: 'retro' and 'art'. The colours and painting styles used in the designs remain exactly the same as they were decades ago, thus lending a very retro feel to our products. Our art borrows heavily from classic Bollywood films and depicts the beauty and splendor of some of the most magical moments of Indian cinema, for example

we could replicate the timeless beauty of Madhubala in all her finery.

Another interesting aspect of our art is that since everything is hand painted, no two products rolled out from our stables are giving individuals the uniqueness that they are looking for."

Are your products competitively priced? "Leading fashion brands today are diluting the value of their offerings by creating a zillion copies of each design. When everybody around you is wearing the same clothes and carrying the same accessories there is no longer pride of ownership or individual appeal. As such, more and more people are turning towards custom products each day. Needless to add custom products are not for the price conscious buyer, as there is a marked difference in prices between mass-market designs and a custom design made specifically for you. As far as the prices of our products are concerned, they range between Rs1800 to Rs 6000.

"Worldwide, the custom-made fashion products market is being touted as the next big thing. The need for custom products has risen from strong consumer demand by individuals who want to stand out from the masses buying off-the-shelf products, and purchase unique

products that are a true extension of their individual character. Early adopters and trendsetters are quickly turning away from off-the-shelf brands towards one-of-a-kind custom products that they can truly call their own.

"Manufacturers can not produce standard products that fit the unique needs of multiple individuals – it is simply impossible to please everyone through a one-size-fits-all blanket approach. This is where custom products step in and are taking the market by storm. Customised products lend pride of ownership and extension of character to the individual, something that mass-market products fail to deliver."

Every time he talks about posters, there is passion in his eyes, confidence pouring out of his voice and the love for the art that even makes him skip a heartbeat. Hinesh can't even hold a paintbrush, as his forte is Information Technology, but

his love for protecting this dying art makes him want to ensure that the magical fingers of these artists continue to revive this classical art. He is not just another businessman who has got into handmade posters business, because they are rare, but because he seems passionate about his mission and has a social cause to fulfill. ♦

Hinesh can be contacted on:  
hippy.in@gmail.com  
www.hippy.in

