

Shri V. G. Kulkarni (1932-2002)

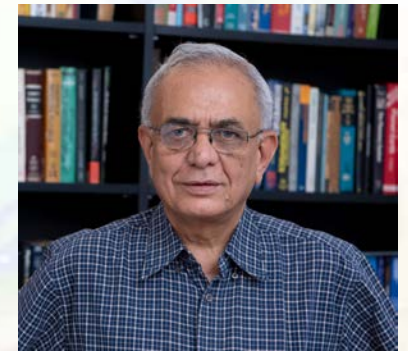
Shri V. G. Kulkarni began his career in 1953 at the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Mumbai. At the peak of his career as a solid state and nuclear physicist, he decided to devote himself to the cause of science education in the country. Under the guidance of Prof. B. M. Udgaonkar, he founded and nurtured the Homi Bhabha Centre for Science Education (HBCSE). He was its Director from 1974 until his retirement in 1994.

During his distinguished career as a scientist and educationist, Shri V. G. Kulkarni was connected with several educational institutions and organizations and was a recipient of many honours and awards including the Dr. Govardhandas Parikh award in 1985. With his students and colleagues he undertook many significant research projects especially for improvement of science and mathematics education of children from disadvantaged sections of the society. The place of language in education was a major focal point of his research. He wrote extensively, simply and convincingly in Marathi and English on science and the need for a scientific culture in society. A lover of books, he was a brilliant orator, known for his scholarship, mastery of words and a refreshing sense of humour. Shri V. G. Kulkarni expired on July 13, 2002. As a tribute to him, HBCSE has instituted a series of annual memorial lectures. These lectures, given by eminent scientists and educationists, deal with central issues in science, technology, education and society.

Abstract of the Talk

Science in Art & Art in Science - An Astronomer's Perspective

There is much beauty in the natural world which the artist and the scientist interpret differently. The artist is concerned with colour, line and form, while the scientist tries to understand the laws of the physical and biological world, the underlying symmetries and mathematics. These two seemingly different interpretations are in fact quite interdependent. The scientist and mathematician need an artistic sense of beauty to be able to discover the deepest underlying ideas. Similarly, the artist is knowingly or unknowingly dependent on the underlying scientific and mathematical concepts to produce ever new artistic interpretations of the world perceived through our senses. In my talk, I will provide some examples of art in science and science in art, with particular reference to astronomy.



About the Speaker

Prof. Ajit Kembhavi

The 24th V. G. Kulkarni Memorial Lecture will be delivered by Ajit Kembhavi, Professor Emeritus, and former Director at the Inter-University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics (IUCAA), Pune, India. Prof. Kembhavi has held distinguished positions as the Vice-President of the International Astronomical Union, President, Astronomical Society of India and President of the Indian Association for General Relativity and Gravitation. He has been a member of the Space Commission of the Government of India and is presently a member of the ISRO's Apex Science Board and the Chandrayaan National Committee. He is a Fellow of the Indian Academy of Sciences and the National Academy of Sciences, India.

Prof. Kembhavi's primary research areas are galaxies, quasars, and high energy astrophysics. Presently he is interested in applying AI to diverse problems in astrophysics. He was Chair of the International Virtual Observatory Alliance, and led the Virtual Observatory-India project for fifteen years, which has made important contributions to data management, analysis, visualisation and the development of tools for statistical analysis. He also headed a Big Data project supported by the National Knowledge Network. He has led the Pune Knowledge Cluster, which works on projects related to environment, sustainability, health, big data & AI. Apart from being a distinguished researcher, Prof. Kembhavi is an inspirational speaker and author of several books published in English and Marathi.

Programme: 4:00 pm

- **Welcome**
Prof. Arnab Bhattacharya
- **Introduction**
Prof. Anwesh Mazumdar
- **V. G. Kulkarni Memorial Lecture**
Science in Art & Art in Science - An Astronomer's Perspective
Prof. Ajit Kembhavi
- **Vote of thanks**
Dr. Deepa Chari



Homi Bhabha Centre for Science Education
Tata Institute of Fundamental Research
V. N. Purav Marg, Mankhurd,
Mumbai-400 008

**The Twenty-fourth
V. G. Kulkarni Memorial Lecture**



**Science in Art & Art in Science
- An Astronomer's Perspective**

Prof. Ajit Kembhavi
Professor Emeritus, IUCAA, Pune

**Tuesday, November 04, 2025
4:00 pm**

V. G. Kulkarni Auditorium
Homi Bhabha Centre for Science Education (TIFR)
V. N. Purav Marg, Mankhurd, Mumbai- 400 088