

# Lekshmi Menon, *the royal* artist

Lekshmi Menon, Founder of Face Palette, was recently appointed as a Fellow at the Royal Society of Arts, UK. Beauty Launchpad engages her in an exclusive tete-a-tete about her achievement and her plans for the make-up industry.

— By Kanishka Ramchandani

*How does it feel to be nominated as the Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts?*

I was extremely thrilled about my unexpected and successful nomination. No words can express the amount of gratitude I feel. Through their fellow network of global visionaries, Royal Society of Arts (RSA) is committed towards enriching the society and I am glad my work and values are put forth in the same direction. I look forward to working with the RSA's network and toward women empowerment.

*Tell us about the entire experience.*

RSA is a 264 years old society whose Patron is Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Based in London and founded in 1754, the RSA was granted a Royal Charter in 1847 and the right to use the term Royal in its name by King Edward VII in 1908. Today, the RSA has Fellows from 80 countries worldwide and previous Fellows have included Stephen Hawking, Marie Curie, Charles Dickens, Benjamin Franklin and Karl Marx. RSA fellows have made significant contribution over the last three centuries to make our world a better place. This honour comes with lot of expectations and I hope that I will be able to use the access, recognition, network and privilege that this fellowship brings to work with women so as to



LEKSHMI MENON, Founder of Face Palette

develop their make-up skills and enable them to earn a sustainable livelihood.

*What inspired you to get into make-up?*

Make-up Artistry came into my life from childhood by mere curiosity. My family is a typical orthodox family and my mother does not even wear a lipstick. My family was into the cashew business. When I was 4 years old, I met a lot of beautiful women at a function. I could not take my eyes off their lipstick shades. It looked beautiful! Back home I tried applying my mother's liquid bindi on my lips. My mom explained to me that lipsticks are used for the lips, and even bought me one. From

that day on my love for make-up artistry grew exponentially.

*What led to the creation of Face Palette?*

I completed my Masters in the UK. I was constantly helping my friends and women online with make-up and skincare advice. After coming back from the UK, I realised that make-up education and industry in India lacked refinement. It needed to have a structure wherein artists are knowledgeable enough and society understands that make-up is an art. Makeovers can truly change lives. This led to the creation of Face Palette



initially as a Facebook page where women could easily connect with me for guidance. Then I started penning down Makeup Artistry Guidelines on my website. Thereafter I started my classes in Kerala, which have become quite popular with women since I teach make-up artistry as a mixture of art and science.

*Take us through your Professional Make-up Artistry course.*

Face Palette's Exclusive Professional Makeup Artistry course is structured to take an artist through four major aspects of training:

- Theoretical Knowledge
- Practical Training
- Coursework and Analysis
- Examination and Observation

Students are taught make-up as a science and how it is formulated, what it does to the skin, how you can mix and match products etc. We train from the most minimal budget but to identify the right formula and work with it accordingly. They are also given guidance on working with high end products and how they can effectively put them to use based on client's skin. We teach our students how to handle a client right, what etiquettes are required by the profession etc. It is a wholesome experience of two months for them. Our course is internationally accredited and certified.

*Which trends do you foresee for Autumn/Winter season?*

For Autumn/Winter season, I see the use of metallic tones such as gold and bronze in make-up including Duo Chromes, Foils, Pigments, Accents and Glitter. Bullet lipsticks have made a huge comeback after liquid

lipsticks dominating the market for a while. Berry and Dark toned sharp lips will be in trend. Burgundy eyeliners and smokey eye using warm tones such as Burgundy, Orange and Browns will be in demand as well. Block eyes and Negative space liners are very much in demand, which will be seen in a lot of runways and editorial shoots. Blue eyeshadow has made a comeback to many artist palettes. The 60's and 80's inspired retro make-up routines are making a huge comeback, too.



*What plans do you have for yourself and Face Palette?*

At Face Palette, we plan to add more courses, both online and offline, which will be of benefit to the rising beauty sector and make-up enthusiasts in the world. We are also planning to release our own range of beauty products. We also plan to have a franchise network of our studios. As the Creative Head of Face Palette, I wish to train more and more artists and release them to the industry confident about their knowledge and skills. Through Induk Makeup methodology, which I have developed over the years, I would like to help my students to study make-up artistry scientifically, help them to understand a product, experience its textures and formulations and apply them to get the best effect after studying their client skin thoroughly. I strongly believe in the beauty and power of colours. Colours can help a human being release a beautiful emotion that can make them feel good from within. I believe every human, irrespective of age, colour, race, gender has the right to experience this emotion and in the future, I wish to make a lot of people experience it through our MakeoverChangesLife Movement.

