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## Airplanes and aspirations

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Artist Baptist Coelho

*Through a fun workshop of designing airplanes with paper, Baptist Coelho encourages children to rediscover childhood joys*

When was the last time you folded a sheet of paper to make a paper boat or an airplane? Simple joys of childhood compete with factory-made toys and games on mobile phones and tablets. Without sounding judgemental on changing lifestyles, Baptist Coelho nudges children participating in his 'airplane project' workshop to re-discover childhood the way it was.

At Kalpa School, during the recent Hyderabad Literary Festival, Coelho conducted a workshop for children, encouraging them to make airplanes. Through a simple, fun workshop, he introduces origami to children. "I encourage children to ask questions, about origami, its origins, why flying paper airplanes can give wings to their dreams and aspirations and why it's an attempt to rediscover and reclaim childhood," he explains.

The idea was born from an installation he did in 2006 while studying Masters of Arts at Birmingham Institute of Art and Design, UK. "I was exploring ways of using air, stones, glass and wood as media for art. I wondered if I could get the air from my childhood days back and tap

those forgotten memories. I looked at different aspects of my childhood relating to air and remembered making paper airplanes," he says. Coelho designed an installation showing paper airplanes flying into a room from a window. That was the starting point and wherever he conducts a workshop, he asks children to work on the idea and create something new. "The outside space represents the past and the room represents the present. Through this project, I discovered that many children of today haven't made things out of paper," he says.

Coelho doesn't look at art in a tangible form that we are accustomed to — paintings and sculptures. "Art is not an end product. I am interested in the process of working on art," he says.

The artist also showcased 'Under your skin, under my skin,' a collection of his video-based works curated by Lina Vincent Suresh. The videos range from one-minute duration to 30-minute ones on varied themes. "Each one is a part of a project," he says about the videos that attempt to explore notions of identity in an unconventional method. "There are many layers to each video; there are hidden voices to be discovered," he says.

Trained as a graphic designer, Coelho worked as an art director at an advertising agency but soon realised his heart was not in it. "That's a world I could not connect with," he says.

Keywords: [paper boats](#), [airplane models](#), [Baptist Coelho](#), [airplane project workshop](#), [graphic designer](#), [origami workshop](#)

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