

Art is Here, Now, Everywhere and Forever

Though the Surrealist painter Salvador Dali called himself a creator, he always confessed that there was a supreme power. Much in the Platonic mold, he was of the opinion that it was impossible to create without an original. ("Those who do not want to imitate anything, produce nothing", to quote him exactly).

Warren Turner's 'art works' also stem from this powerful ideal that has preoccupied artists for centuries now. But with a little twist. For a young contemporary Indian artist, reality is no longer an unmediated experience that can be accessed in the world out there. It has multiple manifestations, forcing the artist to ask _ what is real really? Warren's way out of this impasse is to create 'paintings' in today's world that negotiate with everything, that use everything as 'source material' for his images. The world that inhabits his canvases is surreal, 'real'/super real, materialistic/metaphysical and so on. Diverse forms of images, concepts and philosophies that proliferate human imaginations, also co-exist comfortably/uncomfortably in the mind. How does the contemporary day artist situate himself to associate/disassociate from these dreams/philosophies and surroundings?

In the present times, everyone sees art differently. A result of the convergence of disciplines/ideas technology and artistic freedom... modern day aesthetics do not involve behavioral patterns of the past. The new artist seems to have an unflinching urge to explore various mediums, diminishing the formerly prominent medium of paint, allowing total autonomy of the self and its choice. Previously art though an individualistic expression, had to perform in more or less similar patterns. Ironically, today, with the "boom of medias", the freedom of the artist to express, results in 'taking for granted' or 'taking anything' to express the idea, overlooking the essentiality of the media... but not so with Warren.

He executes universal, ageless themes in a contemporary, trendy way. Where history recalls the strict prominence of conventional medias executed by hand on a canvas surface and exhibited in a gallery space as Fine Art, Warren's art counters this. He executes his art on the computer using design software, to render the desired 'contemporary effects'. The possibilities here are endless and one can play around with the hues and specific areas of the image both, by reaction or by preconception.

This format also holds a possibility of multiple reproducibility of images (though this freedom is the choice of the artist) that he transforms on to a canvas surface and displays at a design store with other 'objets d'art'. Along with the attempt of combining a conservative love of art first through paint and hand, he then renders the images in the digital format itemizing the present time. This is breaking polarities or divisions. It is the call of the times to combine and Warren dismantles the precision of a medium through the process he renders. He firsts draws with pencils or charcoals... which provides the texture, light and shade and sets the mood

for the painting. He sometimes even adds color at this stage with color pencils or acrylics. This image is then scanned at a resolution high enough to achieve the right size of texture graining in the final output. Once digitized, the final finishing is done. The endless possibilities, allow playing around with the hues and specific areas of the canvas. These digital prints are so individualistic and painterly that they could be called paintings in the conceptual sense.

Today, even with the so-called 'exclusivity' of a gallery space, one needs to reconcile to the inevitable forces of materialism seeping into this space and in consequence diminishing its very aura. Warren Turner makes no attempt to negotiate but instead his works are displayed at common grounds in 'the design store' in Bangalore between January 19th and February 25th. 2004. He re-establishes (through this gesture) a traditional idiom, that art is not exclusive from other exclusive artifacts.

But paradoxically this notion is questioned, as the works situate themselves in an 'elevated realm' though exhibited along with other designer objects. Warren Turner started his professional career in Bangalore doing architectural and interior design projects. Then he did a long spell in Mumbai working on interiors, graphics, backgrounds for animation films, outdoors and movie publicity and posters. Many years of experience with the digital medium and imaging software combined with a love, 'inquisitiveness' and dedication to drawing saw the birth of a new style of art.

The themes are lyrical; 'Against the Sun' creates a transcendence of the form bonding with the strongest force in nature. "Against" describes the process of this binding. Of man's futile attempt of combating, but in process creating a space for a sublime revelation. So nothing is lost or more appropriate 'all' is gained.

'Reflect', 'One', 'Day and Night' are all necessities for a better life. Metaphysics/philosophies that make us realize our existence, our relation to our creation and an omni-present Supreme Being. 'Misspout' which confuses a divine form as in a human form makes us realize the supremacy in ourselves. It is just a matter of realization and faith.

Warren wants us to know that life is more in understanding our existence... in imagination, imagination that spins dreams. Imagination that provides us the foresight, to see with our eyes closed.