

**August 22 2005**

## **ART**

### **Art for Psyche**

An exhibition titled Multiplicity of Expression at the Chitrakala Parishath between the August 15 to 18 comprised of sculptural idioms assembled by the young artist Udaya Vir Singh. The show reveals various nuances of space, motion, mass and time through a combination of conceptual, metaphorical and spiritual impulses.

The works, though not essentially figurative, retain references to the natural world through the fundamental instances of gravity, volume along with the metaphoric ideas felt by the artist. The fallen twigs hanging in mid-air evoke the tangible qualities of air that propels them. The heavy stone balloons apparently hanging horizontally on the ground demonstrate the interchangeability of space and mass.

Udaya indulges or revels in the potentiality of the medium, the pre-conceived notions of materials and their signifying. He creates 'sculptural' equations with surroundings as in his site-specific video 'recording' of the water space with pottery waste. Featuring different moments in time he 'sets', a link or a span between time, material, water and space... emphasising the situational context.

A sculptural installation such as the fallen twigs hanging above, or the site-specific work which has pottery waste strewn within the circular arena that has a 'spout'-like funnel opening on the circumference, naturally formed on the ground; discusses the relationship between the subject and its surroundings.

The common man could grapple to understand the scope of these art forms, their role in society and their creation or their existence. An explanation could be that the site specific works and installation art first came up as a critique of commodity culture in art, critiquing sellable forms like painted canvases and carved sculptures. Thus in consequence installation art emphasized the conceptual and intellectual process of art making but at the expense of the museum's investment in the production of the art object.

However, since the last two or three decades, these art forms have also become popular in Indian artists' minds as the present-day artists now belong to the globalised, western-oriented world. Thus, individual expressions are universal and it appears that production of site-specific or 'artistic' sculptures works as a response to the experience of the everyday life of an artist. Also, installations or site-specific sculptures appear more as an activity, a process of understanding art and life and conveying it... but in process, also predicted to be a thing or a form.

### **Buoyant weight**

The shimmering finish on the monumental balloons made by Uday gives lightness to the

solid forms, in turn confusing and delighting the viewer. Balloons usually do not weigh and thus can rise or float with strings to hold them. The plain humour is depicted by the visual maneuvering as a result of shifting the entire vertical scenario of balloons rising into a horizontal plane, in effect of the weight of the stone balloons; recites interesting conversations of the subject, of art and the artists' interest in notions of volume and space.

The circlet of flowers springing from the mouth of a gun placed in the centre of the wreath-like formation, utters ideas which demonstrate the end of violence. The flower wreath usually to respect the dead surrounds a gun creating an interesting ambivalence. The gun commonly the signifier for death becomes the signified, i.e. the dead.

A work that gives the primal importance to ears, as what can be a portrait with different features, is all ears - the front, the back, on the top and the sides. Intellectualizing or abstracting the form... in result, the viewer dwells into a different paradigm; illustrating a credence that the sensory perception of what is heard through eyes, lips is the most important...thus what is heard through the senses is what is felt.

### **Art for Heart**

Versatility of reasons to create Art allows it to exist consequently. Either for 'art sake' or a social cause, art finds a place. The show titled Art with a Heart, organised by Maria Seva Schemes, an endeavor through services for social betterment along with Samkrut Art School and Gallery, and Opus featured paintings by professional and amateur artists from Bangalore (Opus Aug 12--21)

The exhibition of 100 paintings by 14 artists included various styles of paintings inclusive of a wide spectrum of contemporary art and also realistic depictions of wild-life, landscape, portraits etc. A special tenor, a tangible force, is felt when art embodies concerns, not literally in subjects portrayed; but when art participates for social betterment. The core of art is emotion, and the individual expression gives momentum to a venture. All artists in the present show are from different backgrounds. For eg, young artists who have graduated recently from the Chitrakala Parishath with artists who are housewives or businessmen by profession have indulged in painting as a hobby have displayed their paintings together in one space. The various genre paintings, hang on the walls in Opus - which is a semi-outdoor lounge that also works as a dance studio. Thus, the show integrates the space and art into a single mission of collecting funds for improvisation.

Shobha Nagendran does landscapes which do not necessarily look different from those of a typical idealistic style. In one of her paintings, the depiction does not represent an attempt to create a photo-realistic portrayal of the picturesque Bandipur. Rather the yellow hue incorporated in the painting which demonstrates a golden path leading to a simple house are all subsumed under the grey serene evening sky, reciting a rhythm in-tune with artists' impression. Also, another work by her titled Path of Vaithreyi revels in textures and retains the same serenity. The reproductions or portrayals of birds by J Ramesh and C P Suresh, reminds one of the British-Company school representations or

illustration of birds, attributed to a colonial legacy. The various techniques and styles include Nithin's playful and colorful entanglements on the white surface of the painting titled 'Snake' creating a unique painterly grid. Acharya's still life consisting of books, a vase etc., under diffused light as if placed or created for the painting. Along with landscape and still life paintings, other figurative genres also participated in the show. Sudha Rao's 'Child Praying' is rendered in an earlier Western realistic style of drapery wrapping the squatting child, who is looking ahead, in a flat brown background.