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ART

Lyrical art

From the 1950s, Indian Contemporary Art has rapidly expanded, sustained and maneuvered various concepts and traditional norms.

Different artists from various places have intermingled and together have understood - notions of 'modernity'. The result has been the birth of various styles and concepts that differed in imagery, but retained the new ideologies.

The show in Mahua Art Gallery at the Leela Galleria from Aug 26 to Sept 2 featured soft lyrical paintings by Prokash Karmakar. Born in the 1930s, Prokash is the son of Prohlad Karmakar, an initiator of modern printing in India. He inherited an interest for innovation and art. Prohlad died at an early age leaving Prokash to fend for himself

Consequently, he went through hardships - finding shelter in station platforms, city parks and pavements, and in process enriching his creative imagination, making him a bohemian in mind and heart.

These understandings helped his art gain a face-to-face insight resulting in paintings that possessed the quality of pure experiences. A breakthrough in 1968, when he got a Fellowship, took him to study in Paris.

The experiences he encountered then created a full-fledged contemporary artist.

Prokash Karmakar's swaying forms of Krishna or the exotic brightly colored and decorative background suggests the stillness and eternalness of the painting.

The soft hovering forms avoid any angular depiction; giving the feeling of movement, even though the figures and landscape are static in composure. His red-hued mother and child, have an agility and individualness which usually seems subdued when drawings are stylized.

Sinewy lines meander forming a wriggly outline of the simple forms and landscapes he depicts.

Though awkwardly encumbered, the sophistication of the forms, shift his works from clichéd exaggerations to unique painterly expressions.

Visual mythologies

Ajit Dubey's exhibition of prints and paintings (Time & Space Gallery, Sept 2 to 10) exhibits a unique culmination of a certain style in painting which cannot go beyond.

The forms are predicted upon some distant past and an omni-present ideology.

Also, the narrative genre of the forms give the entire work a mythical context as if something individually experienced is narrated, in the recognized surroundings or in the universal space of nature, perceiving or capturing a moment or a frame of time.

The images in his paintings appear as visual manifestations of mythologies.

The Two sisters set against a dull blue hued background portray two busts of young female forms, having a softness in expression and a subtle conversation between them; the rendering gives rhythm which reveals their character.

Most of his figures have headbands, decorations and big but calm eyes.

Images which are highly self-conscious, but contemplative depicting the different world captured in his work.

Another work Reflection is the spreading out of a surrounding space on the two-dimensional surface of the paper, also suggesting plain humour and play.

All the paintings and prints relish the sensitivity of his handling, celebrated by soft lines and forms. The seemingly transparent rendering convey a dreamlike sensibility; while simple recognizable objects emerge and dissolve against the misty or dull background creating a convincing sense of the space the artist intends to depict.

Artistic diversity

The exhibits at the Chitrakala Parishath (Sept 3 to 9) consist of paintings and sculptures by five artists from Chennai.

The show accumulates Srinivasan's self-important bronze busts, the simple transparent monochromatic strokes of paint by Nelson Kennedy; R. Ramesh's canvases depicting orange, blue and white horizontal planes.

Also Bhaskaran paints beautiful landscape scenes seemingly at twilight and Raja the only self-taught artist among them, has skillfully lined iconic figures, with simple decorative elements. Srinivasan's calls his busts Royal Forms believing in the importance of each individual, conveying an alter-ego of the artist.

They are ornamented and carved almost entirely, where no part is welded; give the appearance of folded bronze.

Ramesh's streaks of red, green, blue, expand spreading across the horizontal canvas, creating an optical environment of floating planes and shapes.

Kennedy's work offers traces of painterly gestures, but do not depict any specific subject apart from the plain, visual rhythms and its relationship with the picture field which sometimes extends beyond the frame of the painting. Stylised forms with delicate lines are drawn in parts of the paintings.

Articulating a belief that the natural world can be transformed by the artists' eye and mind. The show brings to mind the present state of Contemporary Art. The diversity and scope of contemporary artists cannot be imagined.

God of sweets

The various forms of Lord Ganesha are a part of this alluring collection of many original contemporary paintings.

The circular and secular image of the Ganesha icons has attained the attention of many artists, who have transformed and retained its dimensions to suit various tastes.

M.S Murthy's Ganeshas, though similar to the commonly and frequently made representations of the deity; are "sweet"; as the haughty cute form of the Ganesha suits the concept of a shop which sells sweets.

These works done in water colours and acrylics on small canvases hang on the rear wall, at the K.C. Das a popular, sweet mart in Bangalore, from Aug 8 to Oct 8. As the myth goes, Ganesha loved sweets and could only get them if he danced everyday, a condition put forward by his worried father. The colours sketching out each of the Ganesha forms have similar lyricism attributed to Ganesha dancing, even on being displayed amidst the busy space.