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ART

Art on tandem

Visual art is first and foremost a visual experience, in the process, acknowledging that the exhibiting factors impinge on the status of an artwork. Hence, it is necessary that the display aspect in an art exhibition should be given paramount importance.

The show titled 'Mindscape' at the Chitrakala Parishath (4th to the 10th of January), unfortunately depicts an unguarded poise in this aspect, in consequence to the amateur display of the various art works.

The show is cluttered with crafts/skills and artistic endeavours by artists from Kolkata, a few of whom have worked at the studios in the Valley School, Bangalore. Others include artworks by Shivanand, Ravi Shah and K T Shiva Prasad from Karnataka, all displayed incongruously together.

Conceptually, the show displays no preferences and no ideologies. It highlights the need for a proper curatorial genre, engaging the artists, art persons and viewers in an understanding that the lack of exhibitional proficiency dents the performance of art forms and ideas.

However, individually, some works do succeed in fuelling an interest. Two paintings by Shivanand are interesting as they play with elements of balance and equilibrium against the earth's gravitational force on the two-dimensional surface of a painting. There is quirkiness in the shadow supporting the form, steering a balance into the painting.

The other art works include paintings, prints, ceramic artifacts and wooden sculptures by various artists. Also an installation work by K T Shiva Prasad, a door which 'locks' bad memories, calling the viewer to participate.

Swapan Jana and Mukta Dey's well-crafted ceramic artifacts and tea-sets consume a lot of space perplexing not only the display in the gallery but also the 'sorts' of art in a single show.

Shanta Roy, a graphic artist, uses the recurrent form of an owl in her conventionally executed artist prints; and Saumya Kanti Mukhopadhyay speaks of relationships, mythology and our social environment in his brightly coloured paintings.

Along with Jaganath Sarkar's well-rendered water colour works are Apurba Biswas paintings in the next hall, which portray a strong kitsch element in the simplified village women he paints.

Ravi Shah's wooden sculptures demonstrate the greatest strength. The still figures with an 'axe effect,' build up suspense amidst the drama of the different art works around.

These figures speak as the mysterious and their deep contemplative forms evolve from a background as they suggest a hope or hopelessness, questioning the will to continue, to exist. Ravi Shah's works express in their posture a need to be persuaded to be present in a surrounding familiarity.

The show performs as a critique to the excessive existence of conventional forms of fine art, kitsch art, craft and installation together on the same platform spelling out a need to reflect on the present-day art genre and its display.