

## **‘Art does not Imitate Life. Art Anticipates Life.’ \***

The modes of perception of every artist and the environmental traits in a work of Art differ as today’s artist bears a consciousness that is ‘individually’ nurtured. The multi-lingual, multi-faceted contours of art allow the artist to choose from a variety of nuances.

V.B. Venu’s works could be assessed beyond any cultural facts or environmental influences present in this era. But is included within the framework of the new ethos in ‘Art’; subverting the notion of being different, as it is done in today’s post-modern era. The works are an amalgam of ‘slippery’ human forms, contemporary designs and also suggest mythical narrations.

The forms imply a ‘fantastical’ story of some previous era. What we frequently see in these paintings are floral designs or animal forms especially cows.

The human figures, mostly women appear to be masquerading in their subtle nudity, involved in some activity. Venu spins out forms..., ‘herds’ of cows along with herds of women. It seems to be a symbolic representation of the artist’s state of euphoria. He retains a lightness of feeling, where these forms appear to be ‘rafting’ in space, intermingling with clouds in the background. They seem as motifs embedded into the background having a narrative stance.

The ‘presence’ of these forms, and the unique handling of the structure or composition of the painting, which sometimes has a spherical framework and where the figures appear to float, gives an eternal flavor to the work of Art.

His compositions are unique in the way he excludes and includes narrative elements in a painting. A certain part of a painting is ‘lifted’ from where it belongs, giving it the task of conversing with the viewer. But all the elements in the work are within the premises of the artist’s ideal or function of narration. The figures seem lost in themselves and the viewer is an outsider, grasping the joys of their simple but sublime life.

In today’s fast-paced world, the magnitude and excess of communication, creates a strong divide between the practical mindset and the individual desire. Sometimes both are intertwined and sometimes they are poles apart. And, as globalisation is upsetting the cultural and social fabric of our nation, the artist too is a product of an ‘alienation’ due to several societal and cultural changes. Venu through his pictures appears to reinstall an earlier ethos in Art, which is deeply connected to the cultural landscape of the region, but yet balanced with the new trends in art practice. It seems as if, the picture has an appearance that is long lasting...like a legend!

Venu’s paintings display an interface between a ‘certain’ sort of mythical symbolism, with a design-oriented appearance. It appears as if the figures represent an episode... standing still before the viewer to contemplate. Balancing between their objective beauty and subjective idealism. A poetic expression of a pure state of being.

\* Winterson Jeanette, *Art Objects: Essays on Ecstasy & Effrontery*, Vintage, NY, 1995

