

KUMAR GALLERY

ARTslant

Kumar Gallery Presents its Annual Show, Celebration 2011

As India celebrates its 62nd Republic Day - Kumar Gallery, one of Delhi's oldest galleries, brings forth an eclectic exhibition of works by some of the most eminent masters as well as some younger names, in its annual show -'Celebration'. Featuring works in a large format, the exhibition from Kumar Gallery's vast art collection, including works in diverse media by twenty-two artists, will be on from January 25, 2011 to February 9, 2011 at Kumar Gallery, 56, Sunder Nagar Market, New Delhi, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Artists whose work will be showcased are M.F. Hussain, F.N. Souza, Sakti Burman, Paresh Maity, Jatin Das, A. Ramachandran, Ram Kumar, Satish Gujral, K.S. Kulkarni, Seema Kohli, Arpana Caur, B. Prabha, G.R. Santosh, A.P. Santhanaraj, Krishen Khanna, Sohan Qadri, Ashok Bhowmick, Laila Khan, Amit Slathia, Ramu Das, Shampa Sircar and Nabanita Saha.

Sunit Kumar, Director, Kumar Gallery says "Celebration 2011 brings together some of India's most admired post-Independence masters along with younger artists, through a beautiful amalgamation of India's contemporary art scenario with that of the 70's and 80's. The exhibition is a legend in itself, narrating the story of the evolution of Indian art.

Padmashree Krishen Khanna's works engage the political, social and historical landscape of India. His works display a close study of the lives of the ordinary human beings, such as 'Bandwallahs' and the activities they engage in. Krishen Khanna's drawings have a quality of expressionist fervor which captures the existential angst of human beings. Making a gestural impact on the canvas, Khanna's masterful deployment of paint to evoke the human situation is unmatched. His work titled "The Last Laugh" is a similar portrayal of the misery and anxiety of the common man.

Founder member of the Delhi Shilpi Chakra and the Triveni Kala Sangam - Prof. K.S Kulkarni's paintings surrounds the world of the Indian peasant, which reveals his tensions and travails, caught in the whirlpool of this fast-changing world yet stolidly withstanding its blows and buffets. A superb draftsman, Kulkarni was also a master colourist. The fantastic vibrancy he achieved by the soft, light strokes of his brush cast an aura of light through and around the boldly and vigorously delineated forms. The work to be exhibited in the current exhibition is from the artist's Geet Govinda Series, a poetic narration of Krishna's relationship with

Radha and the other Gopis, through his masterstrokes on canvas.

A poet, vajrayan tantrik teacher and master-abstractionist, Sohan Qadri dislikes creating figurative visuals as according to him they destroy the painting. Instead, he uses signs reminiscent of tantrik and ritual symbolism which epitomizes energy or Shakti which moves. Qadri has a unique style of working, wherein he bathes paper in acid-free water and once it is swollen with liquid, rhythmically scores the surface and applies inks and dyes. He carves the paper in stages to achieve a sculptural effect. The repetition of these careful incisions is an integral part of his meditation. Imbued with vibrant hues, the serrated surfaces possess a strong sense of energy and rhythm. In Qadri's hands, the very nature of paper is transformed. It is no longer a flat, two-dimensional surface, but a three-dimensional medium. Over the years his work though has gone through a form of distillation. Colour has become lighter and lines the residue of textures.

One of the most promising young painters of contemporary Indian art, Paresh Maity started out as a painter in the academic style, but over the years began to shift from atmospheric scenery to representations of the human form. Gradually the imagery and form became more and more abstract until the young painter with flourish of a brush laden with transparent colours began to create paintings of great evanescent beauty. His recent 7/800-foot mural at the Terminal 3 of the New Delhi International Airport, probably the longest painting in the country, added another feather to his cap, bestowing on him the glory of creating the largest public art of India. Recognized as a water-colourist, Paresh's watercolour on paper in the current show displays his signature style of using colours.

Young artist Shampa Sircar Das has a unique style where she creates unfinished, serene and mystical human forms. Replete with motifs of animals, scripts, signs, mythology and spiritualism, Shampa's visually narrative works exhibit an element of surrealism in them. Another important feature is the presence of a Lotus in her paintings, which, according to Shampa, is symbolic of man's inner spiritual potential that is waiting to blossom. The artist's palette is strong and vivid, with an extensive use of primary colours in various tones, over which she has excellent control. While most of her works are filled with a riot of vivid colours that vibrate with energy and suggested movement, there are many others which are quieter and introspective with the monochromatic tones of silver and grey.

Sakti Burman's paintings evoke the look of a weathered fresco, depicting figures in hues that the viewer feels were once vivid, but that are now faded. It transports one into a dream-like world, where the perspective and composition is often that of medieval icons. On Burman's canvas, one sees mythical creatures who tell ancient tales of courtly romances. They enliven a magical world - of comely maidens, children astride elephants, flutists, fruit laden trees, exotic flowers, birds and beasts - a lost paradise, where all creatures dwell in harmony. Each work is charismatic for its pure delicacy. Because of his unique ability to blend different influences into a composite work of art, he has been termed as an 'Alchemist of Dreams'. Burman's watercolour on paper painting to be exhibited in the current show further renews this magic.

An artist who worked mainly in oil, B Prabha's graceful elongated figures of pensive rural women, and a canvas filled with a single dominant colour marks her signature style. Her paintings explore the struggle and the inevitable fate of Indian women using ominous symbolism. She sought inspiration from the strength that most Indian women showed under various adversities in their everyday life - Mumbai fisherwomen on the seaside, clad in colorful sarees, women selling vegetables in the market place, women with their babies, women getting married. Her canvas almost always avoided men, and even if they did find a presence, it was more in the background. Rarely seen in group shows, B Prabha's style is clearly evident in her oil on canvas work 'Fish Vendors' presented in this show.

Described as one of the foremost abstract painters, Ram Kumar, was an artist whose works proceeded through an alternation of joyous expressivity and brooding reticence, playing out a crucial polarity of emphasis in the context of Indic culture: that between samsara, the sensual participation in the world of events, and nirvana, the ascetic blowing-out of desire. The severity of the structure and the intensity of the brush strokes evoke the universal rhythm of art creation in Kumar's paintings. The true subject of Ram Kumar's art is perhaps the sensuousness of the beautiful landscapes that he creates in his paintings. His landscapes are usually done in oil or acrylic. His work 'Laddakh Monastery' carries an uncommunicative silence, screaming for the attention of the onlooker at the same time, which clearly distinguishes Ram Kumar's paintings from others.

Amit Slathia, a Master of Fine Arts (Painting) from University of Rajasthan, has participated in many group shows around the country, each, clearly reflecting his brilliancy in figure studies. His love and fascination of the scenic beauty of his home state Jammu is noticeable in most of his paintings. The colours in his paintings vividly recount a pastoral setting, with shades of dry sand. He thus makes his work animate with all its included elements. His work is not illustrative; rather he paints what nature, at core, makes him do and thus communicates a serene mood in varied and changing ways. Slathia appears fascinated by light, and therefore also by the shadows.