

Metrolife on the move

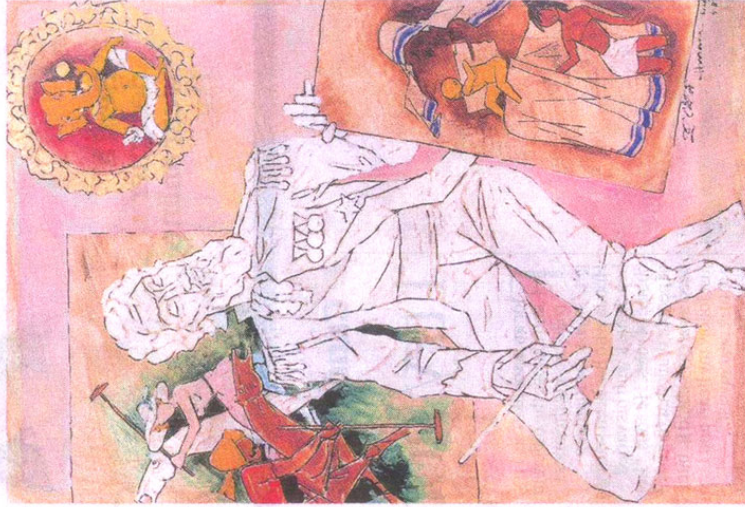
● Group show

The oeuvre of modern Indian masters

An important 1958 FN Souza's work, which was included in the catalogue of Kumar Gallery's "Six Modern Masters" catalogue, has the remarks "Passing the millennium and millennium passing" inscribed by the artist himself in 1999. Then there is a 1969 self portrait by M F Husain which is shown for the first time. These, along with a series of rare works of modernists like FN Souza, M F Husain, S H Raza, Ram Kumar and Krishen Khanna are displayed at the gallery to celebrate its 60 years.

"The show is focussed on early masters so that viewers can understand how each one of them became artists of international repute. These artists belonged to post independence movement and how each one of them developed their own style makes for an interesting observation," Sunit Kumar, director, Kumar Gallery, tells *Metrolife*.

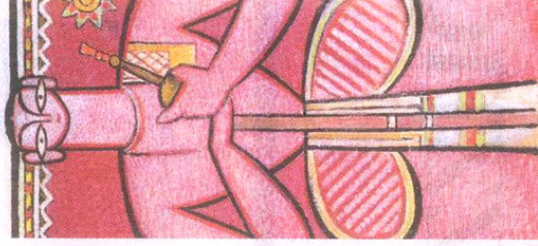
"All of them were young, worked hard and devoted a lot of time to create their own identity in the artistic landscape of India. And a testimony of their repute is the way their art is being appreciated in the world today," he adds.



A collateral event of India Art Fair 2016, the group show titled "Celebration" is also accompanied by a comprehensive book that not only includes artworks from the show and essays by art critic Keshav Malik, but also archives some of the early shows of these masters at the gallery between 1950's and 60's.

As Malik explores the "blunt" and "crazy" style of Souza in the catalogue, he describes him as "a child of this century". He writes, "... warts and all, but his head will just not bow. No wonder his figures look straight at you, unabashedly. And when he is not self-imitating, this painter's imagination is seen to be working at a high, insane tension."

The focus in this exhibition is on six masters: Husain, Souza, Satish Gujral, Tyeb Mehta, Krishen Khanna and Ram Kumar. Malik writes that "the ones here are sound ones, without the shadow of a doubt, and deserve the title. They have deserved it by the dint of hard work, and much application."



"They make a bit of modern India history, and we the viewers, have been witness to its making through the years," he says.

The exhibition *Celebrations* is on till February 5 at Kumar Gallery.

Shilpa Raina

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NOSTALGIC Around 45 works of modernists are displayed.