

## KUMAR GALLERY



### Poetry in art

Artist Ashok Bhowmick talks to Girija Duggal about his work in the past decade.

#### **What does it feel like standing amidst your best works?**

It's as if I am visiting someone else's exhibition.

#### **Any changes you have noticed moving from paper to canvas?**

The technique remains the same, but canvas gives me more opportunity to work with freedom. My earlier works were more prosaic. Now probably there's more of poetry (in my paintings) than prose. TS Eliot is a poet I enjoy reading. You can see his presence in my paintings. I also like Muktibodh and Neruda.

#### **Cross-hatching is a technique that Souza and Jogen Choudhary are known for, and it is something that you have mastered too.**

I was doing traditional water colour and oil paintings. But I was attracted to cross-hatching as I was working with black and white colours. Later, around the early '90s, I shifted to cross hatching. I still do it with black waterproof ink and traditional dip-ink nib.

#### **Do you think art has a social role to play?**

Art will never change society, but it'll have an important role. My concern is to represent my time - all the contradictions, all its beauties, though not very consciously .

#### **The bird is a frequent symbol in your paintings.**

It has different purposes and roles (in different works) - recording time, having a lifetime dialogue with a girl, telling stories of misery and continuance to women folk.

The bird is a creature I find has a life of a few thousand years. But sometimes it is just a technical requirement of the painting. The bull is a favourite (symbol) now.

#### **Any other solo shows planned in the near future?**

In some time. To have a one-man show is very difficult, as I don't curate my own work. - The Retrospective is on throughout January at Kumar Art Gallery.