

KUMAR GALLERY

THE HINDU

[The real through the imagined](#)

Fantasy is aided by humour on the canvas of Ramu Das



For Ramu Das becoming an artist was a childhood dream. “My grandfather was an artist and I grew up watching him draw and paint as a young boy. Since then I think I always wanted to be an artist myself, I wanted to do what he was doing” says Ramu. The student of fine arts from the Visva Bharti University in Santiniketan, Kolkata, recently put up his latest collection of works, ‘Re-encountering fantasy and humour’ at New Delhi’s Kumar Art Gallery. The exhibition consisted of 20 paintings, all acrylic on canvas. These included a series of untitled works and another series called ‘The Lotus Pond’. Explaining the title, he said, ‘For me, everything that I am attached to lives in the natural world, and is therefore in crisis. From this, I receive the impetus to paint a fantasy world that I have been fostering within my mind. This fantasy world is filled with images from my life experiences, combined with a satire to the metaphysical matters of life - thus creating a mixture of fantasy and humour.’

The paintings are narratives of a dramatic life. There is an extensive use of pictorial forms, figures and colours as metaphors. The figures are caricature-ish and evoke laughter. ‘The Modern Family’, Ramu has shown a family of monkeys sitting on a sofa, in the backdrop of what looks like a balcony of a posh house. Despite being descriptive of a fantasy world, Ramu’s work does present a reflection of the society.

As an artist, Ramu likes to provide insight about his paintings to the viewers. The curator of the exhibition, Sunit Kumar, elaborated ‘Most contemporary artists

refrain from sharing their own perception of the paintings or art they create themselves. They don't share the artists' insight. They let the audience or the viewer do so for themselves in order to satisfy each individual viewer's ego. They are afraid of disappointing the viewers, lest the two interpretations be different from each other. But Ramu is different - he has very clearly put his inside out into his work. His work is still developing and he is shifting from the very serious kind of art to lighter forms. Ramu agreed and said, 'Under the guidance of Sunit Ji, I have grown as an artist. I remember my first exhibition in 2007 and I look at these works today. It's like he has given me a new spot for my art!'