

KUMAR GALLERY

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Vintage Gopal Ghose at Kumar Gallery

Gopal Ghose one of India's finest artists and the greatest amongst teachers gets a showing tomorrow in the capital city with 58 works from the 1950s and 1960s. Kumar Gallery puts some fairly magnificent obsessions on display, where they function like traps of history seeped in nostalgia. Step into its suave lit portals, and an unfamiliar area of visual vistas of nature suddenly exert an irresistible force, charging your life.

Few galleries do a sumptuous show as seductively as the Kumars and through the mixed media, a few oils and water colours, here is a show that is relatively precise in focus. Nearly everything on view is worth looking at, with the prevalence of works made by Ghose that goes back in time as well as come forth with plain-spoken modesty and simple handling that gives it a very satisfying coherence.

Sunlight and its nuances on the rice fields, the forests the huts and the planar perspectives can gain an in-depth exposure to widely practiced rustic settings and traditions. The orchestration of colours can grip you and yet you can be regularly jolted by elegant one-of-a-kind demeanour which is so intrinsically done as a brilliant evocation of magical meandering. Ghose's early works had music within. It is like listening to a large chorus singing classic Indian folk tunes while enjoying interruptions from solitary narrators with unusual voices and penchants for improvisation. And his little rustic labourer sometimes Dravidian sometimes a symbol of the worker in lush fields is a sight to behold.



Colour-wise, a great time can be had ferreting out painted notions in the landscapes and the few works that dwell on birds, which blends mystic fervour and savours the way that artists of this century riffed on the idea of moody

grains or peasant motifs. At this show a small collection of flower studies are festooned with hallucinatory strokes in pastel as we look at still life studies in floral splendour — moody momentuousness writ large. The show which runs for more than a fortnight celebrates monumentality, as if mimicking the more demure stenciled idea of mixing the classic the archival and the mundane from later years in modern artistic history.

Kumar Gallery unveils a suite of works from their own collection of the founding master of the Calcutta Group Gopal Ghose. This group is known to be among the first group of modernist painters in India. They haven't got as much limelight as the Progressives from Mumbai. This show is a commemoration of the artist teacher and his works.

These works are a princely collection. They span the breadth and width of the study of the landscape genre in mixed media.

Gopal Ghosh's landscapes—each of them given to his friends of the Kumar Gallery as early as the 1960's reveals much more than just his fascination with the imagination, the dream, or the intangible. Each study done in strokes of feverish fervour establishes an ongoing dialogue about the role of the imagination in a work of art rather than the exact representation of the visual world.

This is where Gopal Ghosh cannot be termed as a classic artist—indeed his very sensibility was one that was truly contemporary for his very technique as well as the grammar of intensities that he created within his exploration of the resonance that grew both within and without. The realms of realism were traversed in the footsteps of quasi abstraction and the urge to move beyond the Impressionist Masters to invent his own orbit.

At the Kumar gallery will be an exercise in understanding the paintings of the master, which were often a reflection of his proximity to the communists against the backdrop of the Bengal famine. Characterized by calligraphic lines, water color, tempera, mixed and pastel mediums, Ghose's paintings exhibited a preference for the power of light and its incandescent fleeting moments. A few works in the show are a reflection of figuration in the neo abstract style, the show represents one of India's greatest artists who was also a great teacher — he was inspired by classical Chinese and Western Impressionism in his application of color. The catalogue and the little sketch book are an in depth study of the master's strokes.

By UMA NAIR