

Visual inspiration

of artists and their work currently on display in the Capital by Aruna Bhowmick



M Krishnan

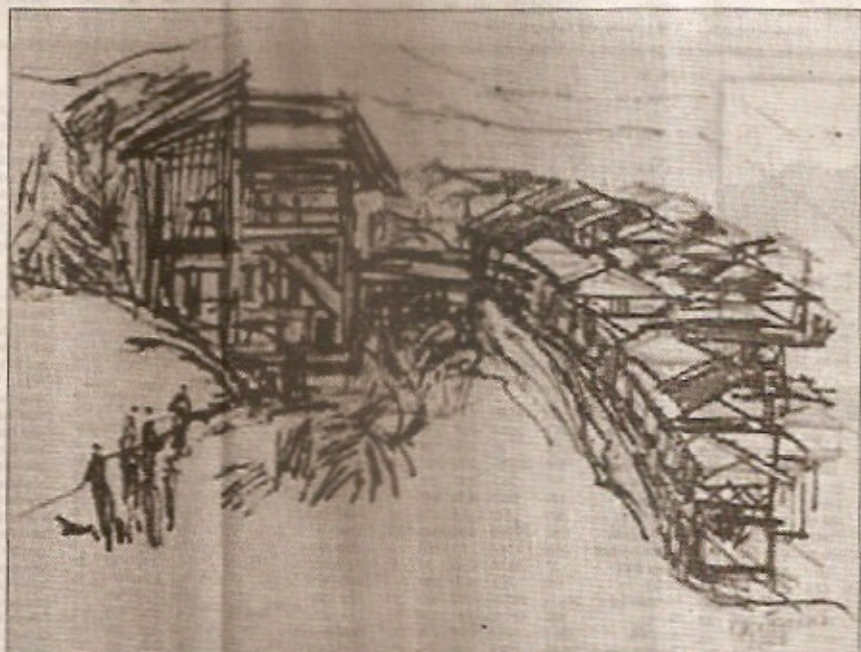
ation of paintings not previously shown to public draw- exhibit at the Delhi through the month, accom- a handsome book, the the artist. Whereas earlier retrospective show Gallery at the Visual Art C carried mostly his m the Asha Hans period, how conceived and con- by Roobina Karode ntings from different peri- th drawings and sketches. latter adds considerable value to the show, inclu- drawings within the pages might have furthered its as a man of free will, who e way he believed it should though he travelled wide- for a moment considered me for himself out of his e. In his lifetime, he forged

strong ties with Korea, showing artists from the east and giving exposure to our own artists in Korea. But at heart and in his art Khemraj remained an unspoken patriot who would retain and develop his Indian identity unflinchingly through his art as indeed his life—holding aloft the adage of *atithi deva bhayo* to its hilt. No one visiting Khem can forget the spread laid before his visitors between him and wife Nirmala. The large hearted Khem made large paintings, monumental in character, regal yet distanced in their jewel like colours and truth to his visions. On the contemporary art scenario of the country Khemraj is not as unsung as exclusive, as indeed is the best way to be in art.

Md Feroz Khan is a 1978 born self-taught artist, who apprenticed under Manjit Bawa for several years. Having come into his own since 2004, Feroz

Art

does the most delightful pictures of ordinary people and their lives. While his colours are vibrant and characteristically Indian, his major strength is in capturing the ethos and nuances of the subjects he portrays, not least the simplicity in the entire exercise. As such, I would find it most unfortunate to have Feroz compared either to Bhupen Khakkar or Manjit Bawa, for indeed he is his own master. His works are most certainly "pretty, figurative and literal". There is absolutely no reason to apologise for that. They are instead, his strength. The *rickshaw wallah*, the woman selling corns, the *bhishti*, the tailor are all as real as our abominable politicians. They, fortunately or otherwise, are still the real India. Just by the dint and force of his colours and his choice of subjects can one address Feroz as a patriotic artist, painting what appeals to him without forced intellectual pretensions. Honesty



Oil on handmade paper by P Khemraj

itself is patriotic enough, and to that extent intellectual, too!

Suruch Gallery at Sector 26, Noida, has organised a show with a difference,



Untitled work by Md Feroz Khan

putting together works on paper by artists with variant flavours. Somehow, for all the diversity in their current show *Papernsires*, they manage to make it cohesive, too. Though the thrust on the south is coincidental, the works gel well, perhaps specially so because of the near anonymity of some of the artists included. As I just said, mystique and exclusivity is almost a precondition to valuable art.

TM Aziz, Srinayani, Sreekanth Kurva, Sonia Rodrigues Sabharwal, Sanjay Ashtaputre, S Bharath Yadav, Ranjana Banerjee, Rajan M Krishnan, Priti Vadakkath, Poosapati Parameshwar Raju, Nikhil Ranjan Pal, MS Baoni, Koeli Mukherji Ghose, K Narendranath, Jaya V Baheti, cheeroth Murali, Bhagyanath, Babu Xavier, Baby Eshwar rao Prasad, B Nagesh Goud, B Akshayanand Singh, and Abhimanyu BG participate in the show. Sonia Sabharwal's are high order works, as strongly composed as finely executed, and definitely outshine a lot of the others. Goud's collage portraits are charming and Abhimanyu's *By Hand and Made in Korea*, heavily-loaded commentaries of our 'post-modern' world.