

Critic Note

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Reaching Out to Reality between the lyrical, the metaphoric and the literal

It was perhaps a significant factor that the second Karnataka KHOJ again, in contrast to the secluded and idyllic surroundings of Modinagar, took place in a specific urban context. The very immediacy of life happening in its usual, unwrapped ways must have lent itself to the empathy and imagination of the foreign artists for whom an Indian residency always carries a particular impact, one having to do with the newness, particularity and differences as well as with the realisation of links hidden under the initially discovered dissimilarity. Another stimulant towards such a response came from the preference for installation, anyway generally favoured by participants of KHOJ workshops. Its interactive character opens channels of communication between each artist and the environment, between him or her and the temporary community while involving the audience. And so, it was fulfilling to see the foreign artists often acknowledge and deal with grass-roots sights and phenomena of Bangalore, especially that many of them did it through the content and nature of their mainstream work. Sometimes evident and sometimes only intuited, this assured authenticity of their involvement that, in turn, helped generate recognition and engagement in the viewers. In a metropolis not quite yet used to an ample art scene of a contemporary kind, the event had a contributive value testified by the number of people who came to the Venkatappa Art Gallery during the open days. Another aspect of the artists tangible reaction to the site "in aesthetic, social, historical or cultural terms" manifested itself in visual, emotive and thematic approximations to and dialogues with the architecture and its surroundings. The latter gesture could be observed also in the efforts of the Indian artists who otherwise did works stemming from their current preoccupations and also in a manner presenting themselves to their foreign colleagues. Besides the standard slide shows and commentaries, the amicable or heated discussions and the fraternising, even the quarrelling, bonds of better understanding could be shaped thanks to the dual current in which the foreign artists adopted and interpreted the city with its Indianness, while the broadly common artistic orientations bridged their spirit with what the Indian side was working on. As could be expected in this mood, there was hardly any formalism there, each individual addressing valid issues and auras of things found here but seen and formulated from inside his or her individual experience. The largely globalised art language prevailing over its diverse local variants "Indian, western and other Asian" made the meeting possible.

The site provided enough spaces of varied character for the participants to situate the specificity of their work in tune with those even for the three relative seniors concerned about general phenomena. **Tanya Preminger** (Israel) who retrieves basic ducts of unity between nature and the spirited human body, chose an area sheltered by trees yet partly open to the sky. Her untitled triad of earth mounds stood like the breasts of a telluric mother goddess. Their soft, primordial volumes appeared to simultaneously suggest self-manifestation and, as hand-made, her symbolic representation, the potent matrix and the altar for her, thus encompassing the timeless and the present. The flat formica circles inserted into the tops, as though sunk nipples, were milky white, blood-crimson and oil-like black. The shiny surfaces remained densely opaque while acquiring some liquidity, animated and slightly translucent as they reflected shimmering light and leaves. One could

intuit a swelling and brimming and a pervasiveness of what emerged from inscrutable depths, from the immediate and from the conjured feminine icon. A sense of a complementary flow between the ground and the sky could be grasped physically through the body reference allowing also for the material to yield a premonition of the spiritual, nourishing, sustaining forces that lead into death.

If **K.T. Shiva Prasad's** installation was his first, it only brought out the passionate and conscious involvement of his paintings with essential humanity which induces a similar response from the viewer. An immense, dark, double-panel door was attached, nearly let into the centre of an expansive wall, its sloped mounting evoking the presence of a room behind it. At first the door had a single lock wrapped in cloth sealed with red lac, as a multitude of u-clams covered its surface and a pile of padlocks lie beside on the floor. The instruction asked visitors to think about uncomfortable memories, choose carefully, lock them behind the door and throw away the keys where those could not be found. Gradually the flat, matte wood transformed into a massive sculpture, come alive under the uneven bulge of the metallic sheen. The seemingly simple and visual stimulant generated an atmosphere both intimate and archaic. The intimate gesture enhanced in power due to its ritualistic execution. The surprising maybe and non-literal association with church and temple vota underscored the intensity of the emotional aura. One could almost feel a benign inner space opening up in those who symbolically, and yet how tangibly, relieved themselves of burdens and negative energies. Collection of Unwanted Memories was an interactive work whose contemporaneity drew from life's own behaviour. In order to subtly, not cerebrally, touch on things rudimentary as well as complex, personal and universal.

Sheela Gowda started from a complex position aesthetically and concept-wise, however towards a similar depth, attunement and evocativeness. In a calm, intimate focus she addressed human memory precious for its joy, excitement or sorrow and often preserved with loving care, but inevitably fading away. The artist's effort reflected the elusive, fluid existential aura and dynamics in the happening where emotions are immersed. Different from her cow-dung, sacred powders, needles and ropes functioning as pigment or sculpture and embodying fecundity, desire, bondage and pain, the installation carried nevertheless that flesh-bound evocativeness. One had to bend low with a sense of respectful closeness over the horizontal row of delicate, sombre grey boxes of wood covered with thin metal mesh. Under glass panels there lay many images painted in a faint monochrome - family and childhood scenes, parties, sports events, mourning in death and vegetation. Repeated in a sequence of increasing distance from the original and of diminishing clarity, as Xeroxes from reproduced newspaper photographs and water-colours done from prints or reproductions, the blurring images imbued the brittleness of passing life. The latter quality enhanced with the presence of amorphous, flat pieces of powdered wood among the images on paper which burned slowly throughout to leave ephemeral ashes still holding the shapes but cracking about to disperse through the unlikely support. By aligning the boxes with the architectural structure and colour of the gallery's back wall and by integrating their own and foliage shadows the work gained a vast dimension of reference.

The quotation from Robert Burns which **Aeneas Wilder** (Scotland) used in his installation: To see ourselves as others see us could have served as inspiration for many of his colleagues facing India. Aeneas erects minimal but often complex geometric constructions of simple, planed wood elements only to watch them fall down evoking life's continuous growth, fragile duration and dissolution. Exhibiting in many countries, in particular Japan, he is keenly aware of the tenuous perceptual trajectories influenced by one's background and idiosyncrasies as well as by the temptation to view oneself and the world through the eyes-individualities-conventions belonging to different cultures. Having placed a popular billboard with a couple of local film actors on the gallery fence here, he

opened their pupils. The borderline positioning by itself initiated a confrontation. Visitors went up the steps from inside to look out onto the road through the gaps. Especially when meeting the glance of a passerby, one could not escape absorbing the loud-hued, melodramatic mood set in by the cinematic characters, becoming aware of simultaneously observing and being observed, during which alien conventions of imagining and projecting appeared to approximate a blend. The piercing of the actors eyes, too, heightened the same, as by imitating the instinctive act form street culture, it carried the latter's raw fascination.

Perhaps thanks to Indonesia's being both similar to and different from India on the one hand, and on the other, thanks to his spontaneous and empathic attention to how we interact with one another and with our environs, Pius Sigit Kuncoro as an outsider was able to sensitise us to the external and accept it within. The need for this gesture must have come from his cordial, open personality and the ethos of his quasi-theatrical performances which with intense visuality speak of an urgency to bring people together in love. He restricted himself here to providing a stimulus for others to complete it. With the help of befriended drivers he organised a "Free Ride for Delivery Case" during which participants of the workshop and guests were taken by auto-rikshaws to a destination which was kept secret till arrival. The passengers received only a hand-written message in the driver's name about liking art and artists because they made one smile and feel, then one more from Sigit about his fondness of the drivers suggesting that we enjoy the landscape and just stop and think because that was what art did. More confused than excited, we hardly remembered the content. Still, finding ourselves delivered at an old, modest cemetery we quietly walked through it and gave in to the atmosphere conjured as much by the suspense which took us out of the ordinary as by the melancholic yet raw real charm of the place. As wished and anticipated by Sigit, we saw the familiar refreshingly anew and quietly opened up to ourselves and drivers.

The Mexican background must have helped also **Betsabee Romero** who reshapes and subverts old, reused cars in to expressions of the human spirit and its existential determinants. Inevitably, she was attracted to the city's ubiquitous auto-rikshaws, their unique ways with movement and their capacity to manifest and literally carry the world of their owners. Her pieces were the result of several ventures into the traffic and to an auto repair shop whose workers eventually helped executed her ideas. Safety Veil for Urban Traffic had three rikshaw tops immersed amid the greenery filling the shallow moat behind the gallery. Betsabee must have felt a motherly quality in the naive macho exuberance of the auto phenomenon. Those vehicles external strength and resilience appeared to her to derive from the sheltering ambience of their interiors which resemble humble but ornate homes. Hence, she wrapped them in femininity pasting the roofs with bright ikkat fabric and painting the windshields in the delicate intricacy of mehndi patterns. At night, when lit from inside the interiors glowed a dim, pastel green-ochre, the floral mehndi arabesques enmeshing with the live leaves and shadows. "Road Tattoo of a Journey Back" let the masculine tyres slow down their spinning and metamorphose into a woman's delight, the organic rangoli carvings on them stained the sacred red of blood and desire over the carpets of kunkum and crimson flower petals.

For **Melina Berkenwald** (Argentina) the auto-rikshaw indeed epitomised a mobile home transported by drivers everywhere they go, as the necessity to earn a meager income prevents them from enjoying their domesticity at length. Her Dreams and Landscapes was an actual little house made of auto-rikshaw rexine and decorated with a multitude of small bazaarish paintings that normally figure on such vehicle's backs. The coarseness and the chaos on the roads where they ply was a striking contrast to the idyllic and tranquil scenes depicted in the pictures, thus indicative of human aspirations. In fact, the house on the move became for her a container of real-illusoric reveries. A loop

projection of a video shot from auto-rikshaw paintings ran inside it. Seated on low stools spectators could watch as though a continually dynamic and changing painterly image which had a value on its own. For a moment being a casual presentation with conventionally endearing motifs of serenity, like sunset sceneries with cute cottages or boats on the sea, the next moment the camera zoomed on details so close that it created heavily textured abstractions. The liquid and recurring transition from the obvious to the oneiric reflected the state of the human mind.

The playful seriousness of those works persisted with the German couple **Dagmar Keller and Martin Wittwer**, as did the uncertain threshold between the real and the dream-born, between responding to a new environment and accommodating it within the familiar. The context of globalisation became a binding factor and an aesthetic filter here. The artists who deal with deceptive promises of commercial ideals for a prefabricated paradise, saw the metropolitan Bangalore as another merger of the actual and the imagined, the local and the appropriated, internalised from elsewhere. The architectural basis combined, superimposed and blurred the aesthetically harmonious with dreamland kitsch. A three-dimensional collage of flat photographic cut-outs had dense, concentric rows of grand as well as somewhat pretentious buildings rising upwards to the centre, interspersed with signboards and advertisements. The imaginary megalopolis of an Indian-international blend departed further into fantasy, as the visitor manually turned the two straddled, round table tops starting a video projection of this physical image of "The Tower of Babel". A minute reproduction from Thomas Cole's ideal city painting "The Dream of an Architect" (1840), inserted amid the skyscrapers and naive cottages reminded about the utopia's timelessness.

Unlike that perspective, **Sakarín Krue-On's** converged on the smallness of the inner, spiritual symbol which, nonetheless, could bear on the wholeness of the human ethos. The Thai artist known for his installations, environments and video work which with an intensely emotive visuality layer contemporaneity and mythical tradition, chose the lotus for its ingraining in his country's culture and for its Indian origin. An abundance of merrily and garishly coloured plastic pots was cut by him so as to unfold in a tenderly mock-imitation of water lilies. This "Blooming", they were let to float on the surface of the moat in the gallery garden and mingle with real lotus leaves and flowers. The natural surroundings induced a certain clash and artificiality, underlining the synthetic modernity of the artistic blossoms. The sheer strength of the contradiction and the weight of the commercial hues in the end acted against the first impression and attracted the spectator to the dichotomy only in order to allow for an overcoming of the same, as one recognised a true potential in the artifice and the plastic blooms began to mutually react with the live ones, the tremulous reflections of both kinds of flowers looking quite similar. Sakarin hoped that those reflections would make people introspect and that would show on their faces.

Direct but interpreted response to the location through the means of reflection came also from two other artists. **Ranjani K. Shettar** wished to approach a subtle yet fundamental balance between the architecture and the open space around it including the plants and light. To bring about the effect of comparing and, more so, reconciling, their diversity she resorted to formally allude to both through a merger of two alien, but often largely overcome, categories of art and craft. Drawing on her earlier experience with evoking feminine emotions and sensuous adornment in a bond with the organic world and women's handiwork, she construed a flat as well as voluminous spiral of jute cloth suspended tentatively on a metal frame which echoed somewhat more forcefully the soft curve of the building. The silhouette and its smooth, sculptural aspect linked with the man-made arching structure, whereas the rough surface of the fabric held residual pulses and tactile sensations inherent in vegetation. The permeability of the dual reference was conveyed yet more effectively by the teeming pattern of mirrors

stitched onto the fabric, as though it was a swirling folk skirt with shiny embroideries. The helix "Reflecting what is around" shook slightly in the wind and the uncertain scraps of tree leaves, grass hues and the luminous airy expanse visible in the mirrors shifted hazily mutating their sizes and angles.

H.D. Manjula Priyadarshana (Sri Lanka) appropriated the whole moat as his mirror inducing people to walk around and watch the fluid reflections of the colonial time museum standing higher up on the other side. The wall lining the moat with large granite stones looked like a symbolic separation between the two architectural styles and the two seemingly irreconcilable eras represented by the Victorian building with its fluted pilasters and little tympanons and the provincially modernistic gallery also partly stone-clad. History, however, in India as well as in Sri Lanka is not treated with hatred by contemporary life, instead being matter-of-fact, even affectionately, accommodated into reality. Hence, Manjula decided to make the symbiosis optically evident. His "Reflections" were goaded to enhance and continue further than the mirror image on the surface of the water, as the artist hung long stretches of terracotta-hued cotton cascading over the walls vertical. Its colour being the same as the old building's, it appeared to pull it down and let it move in a mild progression, merge at the bottom and even out in hesitant tremors on the horizontal flat again. The bulky earthen pots tied among the hanging cloth lengths participated in the monochrome hinting at the indigenous rootedness of the place where both the foreign past and the present could meet and be united.

Kazue Sato (Japan) weaves long, organic or iron containers which frame, probe and shelter life's matter and spirit, its structure and space, the man-made and the natural, the urban and the vegetal. Always in conversation with the inherent character of the particular surroundings, she desired to mediate between the individuality of the gallery and its immediate vicinity in the open. At first glance, the result of this active contemplation may have looked like a purely aesthetic and abstract intervention despite the use of freshly flayed bamboo stripes whose smell let one recall pristine tropical forests, refined even in the roughness of the raw-green surface. The 33 feet length of the two narrow, rectangular baskets imbued their geometry with a mild, animated undulation. On the rigid rectilinear volume of the concrete balcony the forms positioned at an almost converging angle reacted both to the stable, heavy architecture and to the immense, fanning out bamboo tree in the garden which could be seen from there. So, the weave admitted the building's structure with its function of housing-enclosing, while simultaneously picking up rhythms of organic growth. It ventured to resolve the dichotomy of comprising things, building them and of opening out and accepting the outside and its space. The intent was equally clear at night, when a basket corner illuminated from inside made the weaving prominent on the bottom covered by sap-full peepal leaves.

Suresh Jayaram in his dual identity as an art historian-artist handled his address to the place quite in terms of signs or nearly verbal comments in a wider perspective on the processes occurring in Bangalore and himself in it. His personal approach to the task translated into the "Portrait of an Artist and the City". A large photograph of Suresh's face was framed with an awkward grace by a yellow folding garden chair and hung on a granite clad side wall of the gallery. Alluding to the popular middle-class way with decor pieced loosely together of diverse and not always harmonious decorative elements, the architectural evocation was completed by a reference to the adequately artificial stereotype of ready greenery. The miniscule lawn underneath seemed as prefabricated as the hollow blocks framing it. Suresh's video dwelled on the aesthetic and empathic values of the Hindu mythical tradition as revived by K. Venkatappa's paintings which are preserved in the gallery, and which were juxtaposed to scenes from the recent events locally when the politicised aggressiveness of religious

fundamentalism roused its head. Ventappa's studies came as a protest from the classic heritage's "Eye for an Eye" of violence.

Jehangir Jani took a metaphorical approach to the same upheaval the country has been undergoing. Its gravity, scale and ominous prospects came all the stronger that the artist opted for the restraint of minimal, geometric forms. Out in the park of the gallery he erected three low, rectangular platforms of a tomb severity. After the modest interior red in the first one, they turned black oxide, while an open pit next in the line was dug into the ground like a fresh grave. The monument to Indian post-Independence 1947 - 2002 ending with the date of the Gujarat riots uncomfortably merged an aura of domesticity and of wounded social memory. The earth-embracing platforms among trees could have invited a visitor to sit down and relax casually without, however, allowing that to happen comfortably. Likewise, the upright wall of raw concrete blocks standing at a short distance from the platforms introduced an intuition of home, safety and intimacy only to expose it to a premonition of death since it reminded also of the walls at Muslim cemeteries. One knows Jehangir for his sculptures and sculptural installations basing on body casts where impassioned, ironic frankness bares the personal and the divergent against the dominant and the immediate. The self-imposed formal reduction admits the enormity of the subject addressed which goes beyond the descriptive capacity of figuration.

Karl Antao too comes from Gujarat, and his Christian background allows him to internalise the condition of the victims of the Hindu pogroms. Even he must have found his usual figural focus insufficient in the face of it. Thinking about how Muslim refugees in relief camps must be feeling, he delved into a space of acute vulnerability and exposure experienced by the private need for comfort invaded by external violence, formulating it however metaphorically. Placed on a rectilinear platform, his sculptural installation "Rest in Peace" assumed a deliberate lack of clarity to vacillate between evoking a bed and a grave. Through the use of colour and substance translucency and visual contradiction carrying self-erasing meaning, Karl conjured an ironic-lyrical image of an impossible reality. It contained on par and in interpenetration signs-symbols of sham help and of solace not possible to experience, the help having come too late and too scarce in order to shelter and console. An inflated mattress lay suspended uncertainly on upright knives cutting through a transparent sheet underneath it, as a ritual Hindu vessel with water was bound by barbed wire of cotton. The eyes painted over the surface of the bed were pierced by weapons and each bled a silver tear. Numbed by brutalisation, the eyes could sense only harshness in otherwise soft, beautiful flowers and leaves which turned leathery. The whiteness of it all suggested nevertheless that despite the odds there survives a yearning for purity and goodness.

Fundamentalist backlash cannot be dissociated from the slow and hidden militarisation of the country, one occurring in tune with the global tendencies, and which results in infiltrating ordinary human sensibilities in daily experience. In order to relate to the phenomenon and to subvert it, **Baiju Parthan** opted for an interactive installation using digital technology instead of his mainstream painting mode. The choice, in fact, came directly from his preoccupation with the impact that mass media and public information conduits exert on our view of the world. He relied on an evocation of continuous image streams arriving mainly from television, fortified by newspapers and film where scenes of military actions mingle with and actually penetrate every-day reality to eventually become accepted and absorbed unquestioned as normal, hardly distinguishable from the rest. The feel of their normalcy is injected by omnipresence and repetition, by being inserted into everyone's automatic daily occupations. This sense was generated by involving the viewer's familiar reaction to the computer. Feed what you see is what you get invited the spectator to click the mouse on a large, red dot ever moving on the projected screen. Depending on its momentary location each click produced a never

quite predictable image of soldiers marching or fighting, of violence and speeches by uniformed dignitaries. The addictive engagement one was drawn into only heightened the inconspicuously ingrained real process.

Nanaiah C.R.'s paintings deal with the architectural and organic landscape of the city and suburban regions reshaped by the influx of commercial advertising, information technology and synthetic substances which restructure human sensitivity away from its naturalness, innocence and authenticity. His installation in one of the gallery halls referred both to such deformation and to his own thinking about those in his mainstream art. The vehicle of connection was found in the mundane custom of ritual reverence bestowed on photographs of dead senior family members. The leitmotif and the physical means towards musing around the phenomenon arrived from adopting the device of multiple departures from the original. "The Death of a Flower" had a digitally reproduced photographic print of a large, lush blossom transforming its once held brightness into a granular, slightly pixelated black and white monochrome. Exchanged for an ancestor's bust, the image was mounted in an ornate, cheap gold frame and garlanded using a string of plastic white jasmine petals. Literally following the middle-class short-cut to purity and durability, the washable, synthetic substitute for the organic deprived it of its warm delicacy and fragrance for the sake of convenience. The absence of those qualities spoke of an emotive deficiency in the people we know.

The need for a direct link to existential processes common to all the participants of the workshop and typical of contemporary art on the whole, was driven by some to the extreme by literally working with real life in a way closer to the activist than the aesthetic. In the case of **Laura Martin**(France) and **Inder Salim** this approach was adopted as programmatic and persistent, which was underscored by their frequent collaboration. Before even arriving in India Laura arranged to interact with the women's organization in Bangalore Vimochana. Like any westerner, in particular a western woman, she reacted to the commodification of marriage in this country, the dowry questions and the advertising of martial offers. Her artworks were deliberately conceived in the manner of commercial enticements billboard-size posters hung out on the external gallery walls and in a miniaturised form were distributed among the workshop visitors and on the streets. A vivacious, pretty bride bedecked in sumptuous finery and a glimmering silk sari stood surrounded by icons of possessiveness and greed, like the cars and refrigerators that prospective in-laws demand. The intentionally obvious character of the work included slogans as well as the presence of the artist dressed as the bride. The gesture on her part expressed her identification with the issue and the pitch of her protest.

The element of performative involvement in the actual which Laura enacted, informed entirely the efforts of Inder Salim. Furthermore, Inder refuses to admit any kind of borderline between himself, his convictions, feelings or gestures and artistic activity. The total identification begins with his having adopted the hybrid name "half Hindu and half-Muslim" symbolic of the wish to overcome the belligerent divide in his native Jammu and Kashmir, at least on the personal plane. This became the matter of his posters where he had himself photographed as anonymous and exchangeable with his Hindu and Pakistani friends. All his participation in the workshop, art-wise as well as on the human interaction level, embodied the ideology. He helped Laura in the making and distributing of her posters. Displayed his own photography-based poster at the entrance to the venue in which he appealed, rather aggressively and with a premeditated tone of challenge, to "Generate less art garbage" which ignores reality, its inuring hierarchies, boundaries and injustice. The presentation of his work during the events aimed at mutual familiarising, instigated a heated argument which was meant to shake every one up by its accusatory drasticity. Desiring to discover the precious in the

lowliest, he undertook a journey through the city carrying the "Primordial Icon" of his own excreta on the palm of his hand, and engaged in a self-revelatory washing of the lavatory together with Laura.

The very diversity of the engagements allowed again for a passage to poetry and a difficult but overwhelming longing for communion with nature. **K.V. Raghavendra Rao** conceived here of as though an act of turning the building's fragment inside out until it bonded with the space and growth around it as well as with the human desire for this unity. Along the gentle curve of its side exterior he constructed a tiny room which induced the visitor to enter. Once inside, one found oneself in a fluidity of being tightly enclosed and simultaneously opening out. The plywood walls slightly tapering inwards were painted in the hues and lightly synthetic shapes evocative of a dense forest with tall trees and foliage pervaded by sunshine. The atmosphere at the same time let one experience being surrounded by greenery and being inside a live tree trunk. Through the peephole on the wall ahead one could see a realistic drawing of a glade with a mutilated tree stump. The plasticity of the rendering and the intimate act of looking through the peephole enhanced the illusionistic realness of the scene. This, together with the closeness evinced before in the enclosed room-forest, made the viewer-actual person feel in a dual enhancement his or her own ingrained nostalgia for the pristine organic world and in a clash become aware of its endangerment.

Prabhavathi Meppayil transposed this desire into an act goading nature to an almost spontaneous cooperation, which became in fact the consequence of her enduring effort in painting. In a mode of minimal subtlety she reaches out for the traces and vectors of the mutual striving for closeness between people, birds, animals and vegetation. Her delicate, unfinished figures, tentatively brushed in natural pigments, minute over the compartive expanse on the white, palpably throbbing gesso plates, appear to yearn for one another and sometimes acquire hybrid forms of emotive togetherness. On the lawns of the gallery Prabhavathi used the same plates covered with photosensitive solution, and placing dry leaves on them exposed those to sunlight. Mediating her intuition and the elemental forces, she let illumination paint its own images. The gesture impregnated with its lyricism and the process could be sensed in the permeability of the so created hues, half-indicated shapes, stained textures, lines and translucent tonalities of radiance and shadow. Displayed on the rough external wall, the fluid images "almost abstract and yet gently material" induced the viewer to look into them from an intimate proximity, while at the same time suggesting their being part of an unbounded but intimately experienced space, as the unframed gesso white extended onto the wall, and the foliage of the trees growing nearby cast its hesitant shadows on it.

An unexpected, revelatory nevertheless, and consoling equivalence here came from **Nan Khushiya Sham**. The Bastar painter, although friendly and freely mixing with the artists on the social plane, worked quite in isolation in a canon that seemed alien to the rest. Her images with tribal deities, animals and the tree of life in an inconspicuously present-day manner continue the archaic tradition of tribal mythology around creation, fertility, sustenance and re-absorption. Her shapes give in to the dynamism of rounded, undulatory pulses that participate in the underlying rhythms of everything binding mundane humanity and its daily occupations with organic vitality and the cosmic regularities anthropomorphised as the gods and their deeds. The waving silhouette design is reverberated to a tighter effect in the throbbing plentitude of parallel arching patterns, each strand teeming under colourful dots and abbreviated strokes. The nuanced repetitiveness and regularity here echoes an intuition of cosmic and immediate pulses of living. The holistic impression and the exuberantly innocent tone of it, within the evident difference of the convention, exuded an authenticity and a feel of wider connectedness which are not at all unlike what contemporary artists are striving for. Even the

fact that she was throughout helped patiently in the execution of these works by a relative, let the spectator get the aura of the same ancient bond.

The sense of connectedness enabled by the installation medium and the liveliness generated around many artists working together in fair proximity frequently passed on to the directness with which the rather numerous visitors to the final display responded. Its effectiveness could be seen in the surprise installation done by **K.R. Krishnappa** the director of the Department of Archeology and Museums, executed in secret and disclosed at the last moment, especially that it dealt with the coarse yet enigmatic moods of public retiring rooms, thus proving again the capacity of installation to delve into the behaviour of reality.