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Splendour of line drawing: A special reference to A Ramachandran

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Abstract

Present paper focuses the concept and interpretation of drawing by Indian contemporary artist. Drawing embodies a genuine and an independent way of thinking. The notion of drawing defines the thoughts and power of thinking. Every artist does drawing more or less in his or her life. A line works like a medium through which an artist enters the world of forms and shape, outlines enable the artist to explore those hidden images which are unexplored yet. The elements become essential means, reflecting on certain nuances of the artist's psyche and practices. Contemporary art evolved in accordance with new shifts in paradigm and philosophy or ideas. Indian contemporary artist A. Ramachandran who is revitalized the thrill of inhaling the eternal beauty and perceptual wonders of natural worlds. His art reinterprets his endless desire of infinite vision about beauty and human life.

Keywords: Line, drawing, A. Ramachandran, contemporary

Introduction

Art is immensely intricate phenomenon, is inextricably entwined with numerous aspects of unpredictable human existence that makes life fascinating and so exceptional a subject for the artists analysis and artistic expression. The visual language of painting and drawing encompasses a wealthy and sophisticated vocabulary that artist have created, used to express many contemplation, notion and idea which bring out new aspects of life. Art transcends all barriers and has a language that is intelligible to humanity as a whole. Visual art reveal the inner depth of beauty in human life and thus conveys a very powerful message. India is a small world in itself with various diversities, which have always cultural attraction and interaction. The representation of ornate order has its most significant bequest in India's artistic inheritance. The art of today is primarily inner art and is subjectively oriented. Indian contemporary artist now creates his own myths, transforming his experience and his environment in a new evocative manner.

Indian Contemporary Art Contemporary Indian art has passed through a journey of nearly a century of artistic and creative influences. It developed its own distinct style, giving glimpse of a range of themes, vast spectrum of genre and style, interweaving and simultaneously describing the characteristic of Indian art today. Artist embrace western modern style while maintain the spirit of national identity, amalgamating glorious civilization of the past. Contemporary artists choose to highlight the idea or impulse behind their work rather than concentrate on the medium or method used for experimentation, which shows dynamism and eclecticism. The advent of contemporary art marked the breaking of shackles by artists to move from the conventional inclination towards aesthetic beauty and purity to address subjects such as politics, which affect the layman. Contemporary art is exhibited by commercial art galleries, private collectors, corporations, publicly funded organisation, contemporary art museums or by artists themselves in artist - run spaces. These artists pioneered the concept of setting their audience thinking about the subject as the most important art work. Artists from contemporary period no longer remains in a cocoon while taking cognizance of the tradition of art, he also keeps in the view within the international arena.

A. Ramachandran: Introspection & Exploration

A. Ramachandran has a penchant for linear expression: the vitality of his lines remind the great

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Indian art tradition and contemporary world art. His bold and expressive lines help to project the vital and vigorous aspects of his subjects. His works have a sense of austerity from which they derive their direction and force of expression. He was born to an upper middle class Nair family at Attingal a small village in south Kerala in 1935. He completed his master's degree in Malayalam literature in 1957. Many phases of Ramachandran's life play an important role to shape his artistic life. The magical memories of Kerala temples, sculptures, stunning murals and their loud colours have always engrossed him. A Ramachandran inspired by Indian Miniature painting, Kerala murals, Malayalam literature, Ajanta murals, the Harappan dancing girl, Hoysala sculpture, Nathadwara paintings, Artists from Bengal School, Surrealism movement, Baroque period, Christian theme, Western artists, and Russian writers. Artist influenced by the socio-political situation in Kerala, violence, human brutality, Naxalite movement and Nuclear Explosion in Rajasthan.

Ramachandran's art journey of one and half decades was more thoughtful rather than artistic. A. Ramachandran paintings were devoted to sketching. The first half of his career is devoted to a monumental exploration of the hopeless state of modern man. These works were reaction to human sufferings which have the mixture of surreal content. The images are bleak, physical and literally represent men as headless body. The second half of his career is its exact reverse; a celebration of people of rural India who still lead a life untouched modernism. The later work is decorative, colourful and shamelessly seductive. Many aspects of Indian Classical art have been included like motifs, decorative elements along with the energetic forms and bright colours. The evolution of the form in his work finds a parallel with the development and state of his mind. As an artist, he is not pleased to simply characterize the world of natural phenomena as observed by the human eye. He transfers the visible reality into images conveying a personal philosophy and vision of ideal world. Artist thought provoking drawings classified in to three periods

Drawings from period of 60s are vehicles for visual thinking which are mostly related to records of the seen world around him, which associate from his inner thoughts, exploring the main concept it was the human sufferings, agony and urban chaos. He perceived that in the early sixties poverty is dehumanizing in this drawing En-masse [figure 1] artist interpreted formulations in his mind about the big human tragedy and strain. This work comments on the human predicament with delineation of distortion and decapitated bodies. Several headless figures are lumped into each together, no breathing space at all, these squeezed together in to misshaped flesh, and these are distorted and graceless, showing as if they want freedom and more space in their life. Drawings from the series of Encounters [figure 2] characterized his early social realistic period. He organized

the interplay of figures and spaces in groups within borders of various frames. He formulated visual and pictorial drama for freedom and restraint. Ceiling [figure 3] The area is composed of a sequence of a common circle and various limbed figures are inscribed in this circle, title of work denotes that space is a dome and the human figures are climbing. In this work artist tried to raise tall dome through monumental figures but dome is not so strong. Due to this all figures are falling apart. This is effective depiction of our faith on society whether it is impressive from the outside but it is not helpful in raising the status of mankind.

Drawing from the period of 70s to 80s are the transformations of headless figure to female figure In earlier half of the seventies The Nuclear Ragini series [figure 4] gave the new way to explore his anger and disgust to sorrowful incidents of nuclear test at Pokhran in his favourite city Rajasthan. In his works he infused with general sense of fear and threatening in spite of joyful subjects of Indian Miniature painting. The mid- seventies, artist all work related to his visual experiences in Rajasthan, the stunning drawings started to connect with his paintings and infuse it with a touch of reality. The eighties showed the artist work of Yayati. Yayati is a work that was formed by personal and social tragedies. Artist reinterprets the myth in contemporary context which was followed by Urvashi and Pururavas.

Drawing from the period of 90s In his multi layered vision of nature, artist worked with Lotus Pond [figure 5] in various moods and in many seasons. The sophisticated, graceful, splendid beauty of its form has haunted his imagination. Lotus Pond represents purity as its flowers grow on long stalks in mud. It also represents purity and cosmic renewal. This depiction shows the artist's versatility with visual language. In drawings from 1998 the Lotus pond is shown as an independent ecosphere and birds and insects that live in it. The period from 2000 onwards, has wonderful watercolour sketches of lotus pond. According to Buddhist texts, the lotus leaf is linked to the creation of the universe.

Conclusion

Artist is able to bring an immediate and indirect sensuous awareness of the picture of the world he was created. In Ramachandran's work the principal issue is drawing. A versatile creative genius, his enthusiasm inspires him to experiment in varied combination and create art that makes one wonder. His works address many issues, while others translate their own experience in creative expression. There is kinetic energy in his figure so he use thin lines using a pen for his drawing rather brush. Ramachandran metamorphosed all the sensational elements of the outer world into pleasing motifs. Ramachandran's art is submerged in the sea of various stories that flow out of the great Indian narrative tradition, his astonishing work insists on an engaged response from the viewers.



Fig 1: En masse Ink on paper, 1965 22 x 15 inch



Fig 2: Encounters Pen & Ink on paper 15 x 9 inch



Fig 3: Ceiling Ink on paper, 1967 22 x 15 inch



Fig 4: Nuclear Ragini Ink on paper, 1975 28 x 38 cm



Fig 5: Lotus Pond Ink on paper, 1990 75 x 55 cm

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