

Thursday September 23, 2010

Artists hope to make an impression

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Sunday, November 01, 2009 12:05:01 AM Oman Time

MUSCAT — A group art exhibition, "First Impressions" celebrating the best of the contemporary canvasses of 20 artists from across the world opened at the Indian embassy here yesterday.

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Rashad Mohammed Al Zubair, vice-chairman, the Zubair Corporation, inaugurated the exhibition which has been brought to Muscat by Art Select in association with the Indian embassy.

The "never seen before" works of the artists from India, Bahrain, Germany, the Netherlands, Oman and the UAE will be on display today at the embassy between 10am to 1pm and 5pm to 8pm.

Of the 20 artists, Jaideep Mehrotra, one of Asia's biggest names and Murali Nagapuzha, an emerging talent from India, are in attendance in Muscat with their works.

Speaking to media persons, Anil Wadhwa, Indian ambassador to Oman said, "The Indian embassy has always endeavoured to promote such initiatives for the benefit of art lovers in Oman.

Exhibitions such as these bring together expatriate communities together under a common platform of passion and admiration for good art, thereby enhancing harmony in society."

Rising star

Jaideep Mehrotra who is exhibiting a selection of his works, adds a special dimension to the show. A self taught artist, he has a unique style, developed from an abiding introspection and mystical exploration.

Mehrotra, believes art has a universal appeal.

Saying that art has a language which is very neutral, Jaideep Mehrotra said, "It is completely universal. Whether the person is from India, Netherlands or Oman, you know what he is trying to say from the visual language. Art can evoke something from within you."

Jaideep Mehrotra called for collaborative work between Omani and Indian artists. "We can forge partnerships in installation art, paintings and calligraphy.

"That is the way we can get to know each other's culture," he said, adding that Oman is an artist's paradise.

Murali Nagapuzha's artistic terrain addresses environmental issues.

"Man believes he is the superman in the world. However, I feel that every being in the world including the leaves, flowers and animals have their right to live in this world. But as human beings we are not conscious about them. That is why even the discarded leaves play a major role in my paintings. My paintings appeal to the children in a major way," Murali added.

Works of Amiya Bhattacharya, Dibyendu Ukil, Diya Bhalla, Ganesh Haloi, Gaurav Bhattacharya, Gurjeet Singh, Hussain Fateel, Lalit Vikamshi, Meena Deora, Mohsen Ghareeb, Nasr Warour, Jan Jacobs Mulder, Leena Alasfoor, Jogen Chaudhary and Richa Navani will also be featured.

"First Impressions, is in essence an investment in the belief that these men and women from Southeast Asia, Europe and Middle East have risen in stature," according to the organisers.

Quality art

Amitabh Subberwal, director, Art Select said that it was the endeavour of his organisation to position itself as a valuable resource for a substantial range of quality art, to advise, consult and assist clients in understanding art as an investment and the significance of building private and corporate collections.

"It is indeed a pleasure for Art Select to act as a launch pad for younger artists who have the potential to rise in the world of art and establish strong reputations among the region's art and culture aficionados," he said.

He also informed that though Art Select is now concentrating on group exhibitions it will look at hosting solo exhibitions soon.

"In stage two we will bring in solos. That will definitely happen," he said.

Art Select is a Dubai based Indian initiative launched by Sahar Enterprises on the strength of a private passion which today is a strong and successful international business format.

The module is based on establishing alliances internationally with established and recognised entities, sharing values and together showcasing contemporary art and the culture it represents in its best form.

Hosting high calibre exhibitions together with providing a platform for emerging artists has given Art Select a definite edge in making art more accessible, thereby strengthening their association with clients from various cities, including Dubai, Muscat, London and Singapore.

The art exhibited range from the masters to emerging talent from India, Europe and the Middle East.

This exhibition is being handled by NPA Events.