

Young Artist

The unending academic squabbles of the art-pundits about what is and should be contemporary Indian art is meaningless and will remain so until they begin to make a genuine attempt to understand the personality of the Indian artist—his baffled state of mind

In the face of parochial popular demands and faceless universal trends, his rootlessness—for there is nothing much of an Indian art tradition in a continuous, integral sense. One can only hope that out of the bewildering chaos and frustrating inanity of what passes for art today something tremendously alive, a meaningful identity, will emerge.

There surely are a number of young artists in India now grappling with these problems, groping for a meaningful contemporary idiom. Almost all of them work in obscurity, in desperate financial insecurity. Can those who are seriously interested in promoting an authentic contemporary art movement in India, not scout for such of those dedicated younger ones and give them the encouragement they badly need?

Two of our less known artists held shows of their very impressive work last week in Delhi. Haroon Khimani at the Triveni gallery, of the two is more powerful and striking. The powerful interplay of light and darkness he achieves in his black and white charcoal and crayon drawings stirs one's depths. Khimani paints from nature and what holds his fascination and stirs his creative faculties are ruins and fallen-down buildings. His stark black growths thrusting into a network of construction create a mood of deep silence pregnant with the possibilities of rebirth and activity. His drawings give us a new eye to look at things in disarray. There is a spontaneity and directness with which he responds to a given situation and conceives it in and translates into a powerful arrangement of black and white on paper.

The splendid throw of light in his "After Earthquake" is matchless. Another drawing worth special mention is "CEC Tank". His coloured woodcuts show his mastery in this technique too. The unmistakable individual stamp in the impeccable arrangement of forms is evident here too. Both the coloured woodcuts "A Fort to Dust" and "A Mansion in ruins" stand out.

THE MAIL

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Paintings Show

MADRAS, Sept. 13: Haroon Khimani, a young and promising painter from Baroda, has his own logic about his progress from representational art to abstractions with concrete thinking and concept.

Thirty-six of his works now on view at the exhibition mounted at the British Council, suggest his frankness and sincerity. A graphic artist, whether he works in oil, charcoal, crayon or woodcut, Khimani has sought to explore the medium of woodcut, although this medium is not yet popular with artists.

A student of the Faculty of Fine arts at Baroda University, Khimani's oils show, he is a consummate colourist.