

## Reflections on Contemporary Art

### REVISITED NATURE

#### Rakhee Roy

Contemporary art represents an evolving set of ideas among a number of painters, sculptors, writers and performers or any one of them creating alone or in a group sought for new approaches of art making, keeping in mind their geographical placement and political conditions.

Recently I had the fortune to be part of a three day program in “Experimenter curators hub 2018” who invite foremost curators of the world to present their practice with reference to recent exhibitions curated by them.

Artist like Rasheed Areein who works on city scape stories, Andre Pierre who works on the subject of women army, another artist showed video art on their life conditions in Syria and a portrayal of their thoughts. I met another artist who dwelled on open landscape using found materials from its environment. The reason I am referring to these is because contemporary art has expanded and its diverse approaches do not confine it to paper and canvas anymore, reaching out to modern lifestyles, finding place in its quotidian palette. Art differs and impacts the artistic outcome with regard to its locales, race, class, political patriarchy etc.

As for me, in contemporary settings I paint for the love of nature. We are all aware how nature is getting exploited in the name of development , something that concerns our environment. Human overpopulation leading to an all-pervading threat on fast disappearing species of flora and fauna deeply concerns me. Animal and plant life naturally locate themselves in my work and the woman at the centre of it all as a symbol of nature. I try to stretch my own ideas about appropriate ways to depict women mostly in their expression which is sometimes kind and coming, other times expressive, jubilant and cheerful, or women who close eyes to show their unbearable pain while seeking security; sometimes she is like a warrior woman standing up to fierce male forces as zealously as possible. I have come to realise that canvas and paper confines the wilderness of intentions, which is perhaps why artists move out to other forms or media.

In contemporary art, we see much more variety with diversity, some of which is understood and some misconstrued or completely lost. The ceaseless displacement and uprooting of people from their sources of sustenance - homes, countries, locales and environs is causing this to a great extent. Our anchoring on the ground is losing hold and life is assuming the form of an artificial social or political commentary, which is far from lived experience. I ask myself at times why there is an abandon of animals in my work. Emotivity is escaping us, making reaching out and embracing people, touching their soul, a difficult task. Residents of concrete jungles crowded with malls and rows of uncouth brick-cement structures cannot help relate to the softness of the mud and green of nature. Hence the swarm of animals as metaphors of calm and peace.

Contemporary art is witnessing diversification which is good and hopes to bring more emotional connection with the masses. Art needs to be expressed out of passion, desire, capturing the aesthetics of our surroundings and enthralling the world around. In my particular case, I want to reflect the wondrous, romantic beauty of nature, which we need to preserve for posterity and get our brushes and chisels to continuous task.



**Art by Rakhee Roy**

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