

Ramteke Sir

The vast body of work by Ramteke Sir speaks for itself. Art has been a way of life for him.

His work manifests multiple layers of experiences, keen observations and a deep understanding of 'Life'. His oneness, dedication and involvement with art for years together have carved an intimate relationship with his medium of expression. The natural and unpretentious openness with which he embraces the canvas is akin to the relationship with an old friend with whom one can be himself without bothering about being judged and can relax in the comfort of being accepted wholeheartedly.

Similarly, closely knit to his entity- is his passion towards teaching the intricacies of art to his students. During the final year of graduation of my batch Ramteke Sir taught Portrait painting to us. We got a chance to interact with him as a teacher and an artist, and understood that both aspects seamlessly amalgamate and define his persona. Known for his regard for discipline, he taught us to be particular about punctuality which was to be followed as a tradition in the classroom and work was to be done with dedication similar to worship.

He masters the details of anatomy and drawing like the back of his hand. Whenever we saw his impeccable rendering of portraits we would imagine him getting everything right even if his eyes were closed, his mastery was obvious and as much as it fascinated us, it undoubtedly also inspired us. On the other hand, his paintings opened doors towards vast expanses of personal connotation and emphasised on the importance of individualised dialect and a distinct perspective. He made us understand that art is a continuous quest about excavating one's own language, words and forms of expression.

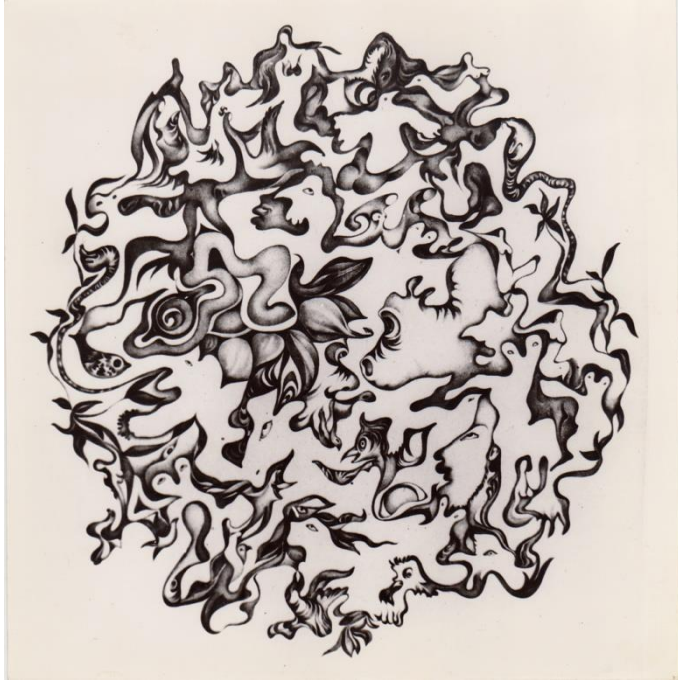
His body of work exemplifies one such journey where his unwavering passion gave impetus to the process. His creative explorations are based on the foundation and study of realistic drawing. Like it is said, that one

must know the details of realistic drawing to mould, create, distort and assimilate a personalised visual language; Ramteke Sir's work draws inspiration and strength from his deep set and unsurpassable study of anatomy and impeccable draughtsmanship.

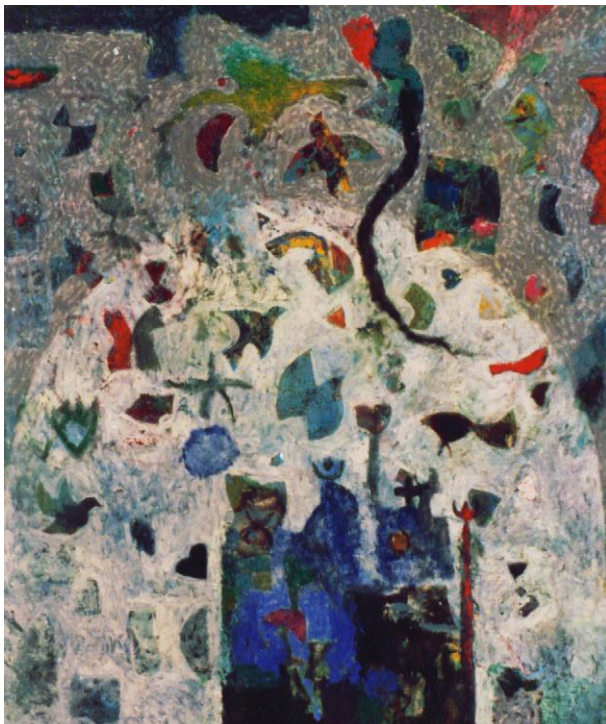
Some of his earlier works done during 70's and 80's manifest semi representational depictions, where the flora and human figures get recreated in a stylised manner. The forms are symbolic and simplified and there is an impression of abstraction in the diction. Geometric alignment, combination of flat and textured colour application, altogether emanate an Indian essence.



One of the black and white drawings depicts a lyrical and free flowing trail of forms, similar to the ripples that get formed in water when stirred. As natural and spontaneous as the stimulus on the surface of water, these forms move harmoniously on the picture surface. Interconnected, the myriad forms imbibe a unanimous spark. In a metaphorical manner these reinstate the presence of Universal energy, which gets distributed into various beings and processes.



Gradually by the 90's the forms became more simplified, with soft edges and with the mention of few details. Floating freely they imbibe a sense of weightlessness and a primeval chastity. In some works he composed the abbreviated forms inside a compact geometric shape. Intricately textured by multiple layers of colour applications, the rich surface contains granular, tactile quality to it.





Some of his recent works are more minimalistic and the artist concentrates upon the relation between the form and the surrounding space. The abstract shapes imbibe verve and spark of being 'alive', of encompassing a streak of energy within their entities. The space and the form are closely interconnected and at times one feels that the space has evolved from the forms and at other times as if the forms have emerged from the space.



One aspect which constantly got retained in his work is, his love to create something new and different from the earlier composition. Without a preconceived idea about the final outcome or a well ascribed path the artist allows the medium to respond to his conversations in a natural flow without interrupting or disturbing the momentum and pace in which the work evolves. Through his work he connects to the inner self and explores the myriad forms that get reflected in the wide space of a textured canvas. His work evolves from layers and layers of application wherein he playfully creates a space filled up with lines, colour, texture and forms. The forms are abstract and abbreviated and create a faint impression of a course, a being or an instance. These shapes seem to be in a process of transformation, of mutating and changing their avatar, manifested in their transitory, ethereal stance.

He searches for forms as a worshipper selects flowers to be offered at the feet of his God. He then neutralizes the surrounding space and brings the form in spotlight. By diminishing and muting the background with controlled yet vibrant application he accentuates some sections. Each search, each excavation is different and eventually manifests a novel series of imagery.

Art, for him is a pleasant process of searching for the unexpected. Quite similar to his favourite play during childhood days when with friends he

used to search for forms in clouds. He says that throughout his life he has tried to be as simple as that in his creative endeavours. And that he has looked for that kind of content and innocent happiness while painting. Rightly so, while looking at each one of his work closely the viewer gets an opportunity to explore a wide space filled up with many forms. After all, it's quite a fulfilling experience to become a child and look for images veiled inside the soft, fluffy clouds treading on a clear blue sky.

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