

Forgotten Figures

Figurative Female Modernists from the Herwitz Collection

Featuring Nandini Goud, Rekha Rodwittiya, Shrilekha Sikander, and Anupam Sud

December 19th 2013 – February 1st 2014

Press Preview & Opening Reception: Thursday, December 19th, 6:00pm – 8:00pm

35 Great Jones St., New York NY 10012

Aicon Gallery, New York presents *Forgotten Figures: Figurative Women Modernists from the Herwitz Collection*, an exhibition of works by overlooked female Indian modernists. Featuring works by Nandini Goud, Rekha Rodwittiya, Shrilekha Sikander, and Anupam Sud these works showcase everyday contemporary Indian life.

Nandini Goud, daughter of renowned artist Laxma Goud, lives and works in Hyderabad. Goud's paintings and graphics reflect her preoccupation with Hyderabad, the place she unequivocally calls home. Goud's work tries to capture the day-to-day profile of a typical street in Hyderabad. "My effort to come to grips with the aesthetic issues involved in painting the Indian city focused mainly on the role of space in pictorial organization," she says. "Sitting in my studio I would go over all that I had learnt and seen (at the MSU, Baroda); that process of thinking things through, opened my eyes to the tremendous amount of visual material which I could use in my art," says Goud.



Shrilekha Sikander, *Rainbow Over the City*, 1996, Oil on canvas, 60 x 60 in.

Rekha Rodwittiya's work explores the complexities of life and living, touching upon themes of alienation, belonging, discrimination, acceptance, accord and discord. It is of paramount importance to Rodwittiya to react pragmatically to socio-political attitudes that surround her. Rodwittiya has always been concerned with the representation of the female figure in her quest to find the vocabulary to represent women without objectifying them, without allowing the viewer to play the role of voyeur. Rodwittiya represents large clothed Gauguinesque women as the archetypal figure in their daily work rituals, dwarfing their tools and objects that surround them, in a celebration of the female protagonist. The artist draws on a heritage of elemental imagery, tempered by psychological insights, portraying women through the prism of personal experience and day-to-day realities. As she has noted: "Caught within the intricacies of adult angst where the undercurrent of pain was recognized though not fully understood by me, the drawn or constructed image became very early a means of deciphering all that I accumulated from observing....My sense of empathy with the drawn image was that it offered a physicality, and established a concretizing of the otherwise intangible. It became a method, as I perceive it in retrospect, of creating a dialogue that gave meaning to a psychological realm."

Shrilekha Sikander's paintings are about people; about "their hopes and their dreams." Living in Mumbai, where the hub of the Indian film industry or 'Bollywood' is located, Sikander has learnt the language of films, and paints the many characters that make up their fantastical stories – both real and imaginary. The good, the bad, and the evil are featured along with the humorous and the tragic. "This city is a patchwork of contrasts and contradictions, of hope and despair, of tragedies and comedies, of love and hate, of good and evil, of real and pretence, of mock fights and real fights, of fake lovers and real



Rekha Rodwittiya, *Untitled (Pink Head)*, ND, Ink and watercolor on paper, 12 x 16 in.

lovers...They are about the time I live in – not past, nor future but the present – the here and the now, trying to capture the quality of life”, says the artist while referring to her works inspired by the city of dreams – Mumbai.

Anupam Sud's work has evolved in phases. From the rather architectural forms, limbs and human figures in the mid 1970s to largely feminist subjects in the late 1970s. As one of the founder members of GROUP 8 (1968), Anupam, with her printmaker colleagues, worked through this association to promote and sustain printmaking as an independent, expressive art form. Working mainly with intaglio prints, Sud fuses her knowledge of different intaglio processes with lithography and screen-printing. While her sympathies

and concerns are often feminist, a recurring theme in her work is the common human predicament, drawing our attention to the general human situation. Her subjects are often introspective and fatalistic - existing in a world that is falling apart. More metaphorical than direct, her work is different from that of traditional printmakers in that she does not rely on the monochromatic quality, inherent in this medium, to make a statement.

Rekha Rodwittiya has represented India in several prestigious art shows internationally apart from a series of workshops and lectures on Indian art. She has held solo exhibitions at Cymroza Art Gallery, Mumbai, Art Heritage, New Delhi, Sakshi Gallery, Mumbai, Bangalore, and Chennai, Seagull Foundation for Arts, Kolkata, the Gallery 678, New York. She has also participated in the 2nd Biennale, Havana and in "Six Young Contemporaries" in Geneva.

Please contact Aicon Gallery (Andrew@Aicongallery.com) for more information.