

Press Release

Art Alive Gallery, New Delhi
&
Gallery Sanskriti, Kolkata
presents

THE STREET

A solo show of **Yusuf Arakkal**

PREVIEW : 26th April, 2008 from 6.30 p.m

VENUE : **Gallery Sanskriti**
5C, Alipore Park Road
Kolkata

SHOW DATES : 28th April – 10th May, 2008
(11 a.m to 7 p.m)

The street reveals a strange but authentic reality. The street is littered with a million physical and metaphoric allusions. It is a place of many emotions, feelings, and meanings. It touches all the senses. It hides and creates tales: some concluded, many unfinished. It brings out the sham and hypocrisy of city life. And as one writer succinctly put it, street is a mirror calling down shimmering images.

For Yusuf, the street holds special significance. Ever since he, as a young teenager, left home seeking an unknown destination in art, he has had a close association with it. His life and work have owed an absolute allegiance to it. For several weeks after leaving home the street became his home quite actually. As importantly, it doubled up as a classroom teaching some very important lessons that stand etched for a lifetime.

The street scenes painted by Yusuf in this series present compassionate portraits of ordinary people integrated to a murky landscape. Sustained by subtle overtones of inner-city strains and tensions, they articulate a common if silent lingo, not proscribed by any academic vocabulary or scholastic syllabary.

The people in these images might not be the only ones Yusuf encountered in the isolated by-lanes of Bangalore several decades ago as an orphan and an emigrant. They include people he has seen in London, Lisbon, Singapore, and other places in recent times. The locale matters little, though. For, regardless of their residence, they are all inheritors of the same universal feelings, human affiliations and fundamental afflictions.

In two fascinating triptychs, Yusuf presents a lonely kid looking at you with a sharp piercing stare. There is fear in his eye. There is also anger, a streak of protest, a silent defiance. As you look at the multiple images gnawing at you, you start wondering whether the murmur on the street could possibly be the murmur of his heart.

The engrossing depths and enduring perspectives of Yusuf's paintings absorb his ordinariness; his simple bicycle, newspaper, coffee table, mobile phone, crutch... Engulfed by a deep silence and solitude, the burden of loneliness sewed closely to the sweat of his toil, he still manages to hold on to a soft, tender but a firmly affirmative view of life. Knowingly or unknowingly, he also rejoices the sweetness of his freedom and choice.

For more details, pls contact:

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