

THE HINDU



EVOLVED: Pratima experiments with new techniques

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January 26, 2010 21:33 IST Bangalore

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Art Pratima Sheth brings semi-abstract and figurative paintings at an exhibition

One could say artist Pratima Sheth is a product of talent and the societal influences that shaped her as the artist that she is today. Pratima was encouraged by her father in her formative years; he bought her art books and also organised a room in the house to be set aside as her studio. After a year at Nirmala Niketan, she joined the JJ School of Art for a five year

course in 1970. "Later the joint family that I married into also encouraged me a lot, allowing me to continue at JJ and then become a full fledged artist," says Pratima with pride.

In '81 she had her first show of abstract landscapes and figurative art.

"Figurative art is my impression of a real object or person as I see it," she explains. She uses water colours or oil on canvas. "This is my 27th solo show," reveals Pratima of the show she had put up at the BIEC centre on Tumkur Road. "As you can see, here too my paintings are semi-abstract and figurative." Over the years, Pratima evolved her own style. She has experimented with brush, knife, rollers and today it's a 'wash' technique that she prefers. "It was in the 80s that I began a new technique where I first put colour on the canvas with a medium of turpentine and linseed oil. Then with a brush or a cloth, depending on the result I am looking for, I add other colours and create my composition. When my art is done, it is not a definite landscape or a figure, but from a distance it resembles a landscape. I use my imagination to fill in the colours, and the title is given much later," she says.

Shades of blue are her favourite and Pratima's inspiration comes from her travels across India and abroad. She has also compiled a book called "A Dictionary of Indian Art and Artist", which is about Indian art styles and techniques. "When I started it was difficult for women in the field of art. But I was determined and I had the complete support of my husband and the family," she reveals.

The artist says recession has hit the art as well. While big names sell through auctions or private sales, it is mid-level artists who find the going tough. "I have had the complete support of Godrej and other private collectors who have appreciated my style and supported me through my career."