



penumbra

Hanuman Kambli & Kathryn Myers
International Center - Dona Paula, Goa



Kathryn Myers "Second Story Witnesses" oil on wood, 15 x 10" 2009



Kathryn Myers "Without Refutation" oil on wood, 15 x 9" 2009



Hanuman Kambli Untitled, mixed media on paper, 12x8" 2010



Hanuman Kambli, Untitled, mixed media on paper, 12x8" 2010

Art has no boundaries. It constantly seeks to touch new frontiers in space and life. It becomes eventful in every sense of the word, in the sense that it makes its manifestations to be experienced and thus enrich our very state of consciousness.

The present exhibition titled 'PENUMBRA' comes as an apt epithet to the project the two artists, Kathryn Myers and Hanuman Kambli are engaged in, hailing from diametrically opposite and diverse cultural and geographical backgrounds. Obviously they don't share the 'Umbr' simultaneously but partake alternatively in celestial experience of cosmic order. The penumbra thus coaxes a vision of moon offering illumination for an 'imaginative flight'.

'PENUMBRA' that has been shaped now is not an isolated phenomenon but a sequel to an earlier project 'Junctures and Constellations', a joint exhibition by these two artists which was showcased in 2008 in India and the United States. The inspiration for such a collaborative adventure came in the wake of Kathryn's sojourn to India as a Fulbright Scholar in 2002 wherein places, people and events profoundly affected her perceptions and an illuminated awareness of serendipity. With her single minded and persuasive zeal she has made herself intimately familiar with the arts, culture, scriptural writings and philosophical wisdom of India becoming unassumingly a voyager adventuring and exploring new horizons.

Kathryn breathes in the atmosphere that she lives in. With the deep set knowledge and perceptual alacrity she captures the quint essence of the observed reality through her works. Nothing seem to be evading her sharp eyes making even a visibly insignificant small dent or mark come alive to tell its own story or history. The human figures which inhabit the pictorial space within an architectural construct or in the open have a pronounced singularity of stance and gesture reflecting cultural ethos and ritualistic intent. The most striking feature of Kathryn's work is the miniature format of painting which seemed to have been inspired by Indian miniatures and painted manuscripts. It is through miniature that she found the humility of an artist and at once renounced the passion for bloating canvases of bloating ego. Now in her work the 'Anant' (endless, infinite), macrocosmic 'Vishva' (universe) is seen through microcosmic form. The 'Anand' (aesthetic joy) has nothing to do with size but form! Kathryn amazingly minimizes three dimensional reality into a well orchestrated geometry of forms, colours and textures expressing poignantly her intent and language of picture making. By the geometrizing of pictorial elements she effectively imparts a sense of calmness, loneliness and tranquility to the subject matter. Be it an architectural façade, a single human figure or an empty lonely boat in the painting she transports and transposes the viewer to a moment of eternal stillness and a peaceful expanse.

It is interesting to see through this project how the two individuals reflect their artistic sensibilities contrastingly different in pictorial parlance and subjectivity asserting thereby their own individuality. Kathryn renders her experiences of India as though a seeker on a pilgrimage whereas Hanuman Kambli reflects his affectations as a pilgrim of his own land with obstacles on his path to pilgrimage.

Kathryn Myers & Hanuman Kambli would like to thank Indian Ateliers and the International Center, Goa, for hosting this January 2011 reunion exhibition. This event would not have been possible without support from the Fulbright Foundation and the United States India Educational Foundation which in 2002 initiated the first meeting of Kambli and Myers for a workshop facilitated by Art Chamber Gallery in Calangute Goa.

Subsequent exhibitions and workshops were held at Fundacao Oriente and Ruchika Gallery in Panjim, Dakshinchitra Gallery in Chennai and the Jorgensen Gallery, at The University of Connecticut in Storrs.

Hanuman Kambli is a Professor of Printmaking at the Goa College of Art. In 1999 he received a Fulbright Scholarship in printmaking at Western Michigan State University in Kalamazoo.

Kathryn Myers is Professor of Art at The University of Connecticut. In 2002 she received a Fulbright Scholarship to lecture at the Government College of Arts-Chennai. She currently has a Fulbright Regional Scholarship to study contemporary South Asian Art in India, Sri Lanka and Nepal.

Om Prakash is a lecturer in Art History and Aesthetics at the Goa College of Art.

Hanuman has constantly taken recourse to Indian myths to express his ideas and the immediate experiences of life. His imagery is intricately woven around a myth or an age old ritualistic practice or some immemorial theme and the power that looms around behind every act related to humankind. The symbolism involved in the works portends alarmingly a perilous condition awaiting a disaster and human tragedy. The themes in his paintings are presented in subdued hues almost monochromatic and devoid of light suggestive of the darkness that has befallen on humanity.

The shady spaces in the paintings are contrasted with bare minimum blots of natural hues of reds and blues coming in the form of flickering light in a faint attempt to illuminate or highlight momentarily the prevailing darkness. The minuscule dots and blotches of reds here and there are spotlights of power zones demarcated in geometric shapes which also transcribe in pictorial form the objects involved in ritualistic practice of 'oracles' associated with the traditional worship of 'Santeri' (the mother goddess) symbolically represented by an anthill. He juxtaposes the idea of sacredness of power with the personalization of power. The former ordained by way of personal surrendering and the latter from personal desire.

The pictorial space in Hanuman's work is populated with flora and remote architectural structures superimposed by linear geometric forms. The flora with its typified foliage project in various directions as though shrieking in pain pleading an urgent attention. Could it be that these shrieks may be heard? There is no immediate answer. May be we are used to waiting for GODOT...
OM PRAKASH, Lecturer of Art History and Aesthetics, Goa College of Art
On the Eve of New year 2011



Indian Ateliers
sublime expressionsSM