

In the Sharjah Arts Museum

By Maray Al Halyan

The Six Exhibition and Discussion on the Concept of Art

Mohammad Ahmad Ibrahim, Vivek Vilasini, Mohammad Kazim, Hussain Sharif, Hassan Sharif and Jos Clevers were six artists. They succeeded in displaying together their experiences in art in the Six Exhibition currently run in the Sharjah Art Museum. These works enter into what its producers term as conceptual art, a type of art doing away with the richness in painting and colour to facilitate reaching the core idea. Works that strike the viewer urge his irony and satire response; but finally it represents fine art in the U.A.E as a whole.

Since 1982, started Hassan Sharif and later on some of his colleagues to formulate and expose their ideas in a series of exhibitions; and since that start their experiences were highlighted in discussions and at each time the viewers were confronted by new ideas. They evoke same question, what is the use of this type of art and its significance? And why do its leaders adhere to it to such an extent?

Last day and after the inauguration an improvised discussion meeting was held in the Hall of Sharjah Art Museum. A number of Artists, Pressmen and others took part in the discussion and the same questions were reiterated about this type of Art...Speakers were Talal Moualla, Abdel Latif Al Smoudi and Jos Clevers, a Dutch artist invited by the Department of Culture and Information in Sharjah to participate in the event...this is beside other participants in the exhibition.

Artist Hassan Sharif considered to be the leading figure in this type of Art and achiever of its first experiments said in a statement- he wrote to the exhibition Guide Book: These works do not represent a void or negative gesture. Also, they are not doomed to ambiguity, but they are straight forward, plain and frank, some sort of an abbreviation or being precise...he added that the function of these works is the continued erasing of the conventional understanding to art in the viewers mind...the purpose of the art concept as they all have dealt with drawing and especially "painting" at the very beginning of their career. But after discovering the limitations of the painting they explored new horizons after achieving maturity in optical and conceptual terms.

Hassan Sharif indicates in his article that the concerned artists try to give used substance its independence by abstaining from any techniques likely to alter the nature of substance used unlike the case in fashionable art style and represented by the use of material like cardboard or clay. Such material is treated in a way to give you the impression of a stone or copper, a false optical impression, that means the substances used reveal only their authentic nature.

And in another part of his article he says: The experiences that were exhibited in this exhibition were the outcome of the meditations of their owners into the nature of art since

a reasonably long time being anxious and persevering, the above experience is self and group coordinated . That is each one among this group of artists has distinct or personal style. Everyone creates a cause into an art context; this is beside the existence of a private common concept to all that their persisting agony to the function of art.

As for Jos Clevers the Dutch Artist – he says about his own experience: Art is in need of a soil to breed and for me the best way to fertilize this soil is to travel to new experiences and to learn from various cultures sentiments like love, anger, happiness, distress and hope. Such feelings are difficult to materialize and make tangible, we do not only express them through tears or smiles but also through expressions and poetry texts as well as the artist's hand.

Six Artists, one from India, another Holland and four from the Emirates. There is only one common denominator between them that they all work within the framework of an idea far from colour and painting. Their views are shared as well as their ambitions and view regarding the function of art. Mohammad Kazim a participant in the exhibition with a new experience says: I witness things, behaviour and movement all around me in my daily life and I get influenced by them. I ask myself the question, why am I affected by such things and objects?

This question persuades me to the conclusion that I have the feeling of capturing things through vision and not just sight. He adds that Modernism and post – modernism lie in our search for new ways to dialogue with artworks of Leonardo Davinci and Michael Anglo. This type of a reading must be different in the sense that when I familiarize myself with a contemporary artwork. I can also read an artwork going back to the Renaissance or before it that is before history, in a new optical language and here is the difference.

In the foreword of the Department of Culture and Information to the exhibition Guide Book we read: The joining of 4 U.A.E artists to artists from Netherlands and India in one big effort reflects clearly the extent of a deliberate act that is well prepared in advance to say its word on art and crises to be suffered by the mind more than any other thing. Again it illustrates the significance of taking a position vis- a –vis the Black Irony that watches us as we cross into a new century or millennium lacking in analytical tools and capabilities vis- a –vis intricate issues as well as our ability to view the whole universe as it had been imagined by artist in the past.

**AlBayan,
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Translated by Dr. Hassan El- Rayah