

BIRLA ACADEMY OF ART & CULTURE.  
SOUTHERN AVE, CALCUTTA-29

open daily  
from 4 to 8 p.m.  
till april 15  
1973 except  
9 & 14

HEMANTA **MISRA**  
paintings

HEMANTA MISRA : Born 1917. Educated at Cotton College and St. Edmunds College, Assam. Student of late John Hassall R. I. Commissioned by the Army as a staff Artist in 1943 and was attached to the staff of the Directorate of Information and Publicity, Government of Assam. Worked as the art adviser to the first Assam Hills and Plains People's Exhibition. At present teaching art in the Queen of the Missions School, Calcutta.

Ex-member of the Calcutta Group. Works exhibited in the Calcutta Group shows and All India Exhibitions in Calcutta and New Delhi. Held one man shows in Calcutta in 1952, 1959, 1967, in New Delhi in 1965, 1969, in Bombay 1970 and in Moscow in 1965, 1966 under the auspices of the Union of Painters, USSR. Paintings exhibited in the first Triennale of Contemporary World Art in New Delhi in 1968.

Paintings are in permanent collections in the National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi, the Museum of Oriental Culture, Moscow and other important collections in India and abroad.

Misra's drawings showed the stamp of his uneasy and restless mind trying to force a way of expression which can be termed as violent. On the extraordinary strength of his drawings alone Misra was elected as a member of the Calcutta Group. The gleam of the promise in him justified this election.

The rigours of the academic methods of the British School of that time helped build up the foundation brick by brick and layer by layer.

His colour compositions of this period were mostly of scenic views—bare landscapes or workers shown with a backdrop of landscape where the figures were subordinated to the environmental situations and treated as objects like trees and stones complimenting each other and finally merging towards a harmonious whole...His rock is stony hard, clouds feathery light and water as liquid as that of a summer lake.

The second phase of Misra's artistic career started in the so-called cubist manner, which is more akin to Gaganendranath's paintings of the later phase, although with a difference. Both were mystic in their approach and both revelled in going beyond the reality and searching for something in the unknown world.

From 1959 this background of seemingly cubist style handled in a mystic manner gave him a new impetus in a synthesised form to depict mutilated or encrusted objects in nature in their utter clarity with meticulous detail which actually became meaningful symbols when integrated into the natural phenomena. They created a sense of poetry, a deeper and mystic meaning through the association having a direct psychological impact on the beholder. This inner meaning is often inexplicable, but invariably the image creates an uncanny, eerie feeling. This kind of delineation has a surrealist meaning. Surrealist expression is anti-reason and thus anti-rational. According to surrealist philosophy, the absurd is ordered in a poetic or in a romantic way—poetry is suggested in the atmosphere where the objects are used as symbols. Thus a piece of stone can have a pair of wings to fly with, a decaying tree can have a pair of hands to embrace, a headless figure can play a flute.

His flights of fantasy are boundless. Yet the juxtaposed objects painted in luminous colours and placed in the atmosphere always carry with them a pictorial meaning of their own which is image-bound and poetry-oriented. Misra's application of colours for creating such an expression of surrealism is unique. His colours merge into the atmosphere without crying out for separate existence of their own. This abstracted harmony of colour plus the inner content of a mystic message build up his painting to a fruitful meaning.

The early revolutionary urge which was the starting point of Misra's artistic career and noticeable in his drawings was subdued and energised through a more sympathetic and constructive policy and found its ultimate repose in his paintings of surrealist nature. Here Misra's identification has been sincere and complete.

1. Yearning of the soul
2. Tossed yet we weave the Tapestry of life
3. Extinguished Flame
4. Transmutation into Green Gold
5. Heritage and Hybrid
6. Plucking the Dream blossoms
7. A forgotten verse
8. Cracked mirror
9. Echo of a song
10. A mirage from absent skies
11. Within and Without
12. The speech of the voiceless air
13. Tameless wings
14. Silent spring
15. Vapours from the Great Alchemist
16. In the bosom of time Rose is blue forever
17. Spring steps
18. Black Moon
19. Reminiscences
20. Fury and White Dove
21. Radiant Tidings
22. Of million and billion years
23. Totem on fire
24. A leaf from the Almanac 71
25. Thoughts upon the silent air
26. Pilgrimage
27. Global Tension
28. Ever so far from here
29. A Process of Transformation
30. Improvisation

Price on enquiry