

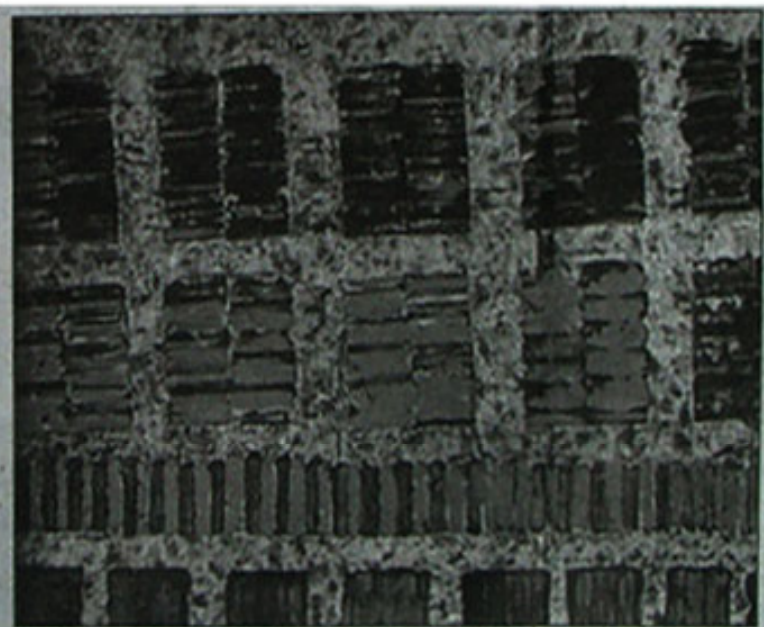
The challenge of true art

Is real, rigorous art being pushed to the background by market factors, wonders
Aruna Bhowmick

A plethora of shows, most of them by women, some impressive, even visually pleasing, but not very convincing. Most artists work hard, because the process of art making is a very demanding exercise if undertaken for the right reasons, for at least some of the time spent in the entire course of the artist's career. Both painting and sculpture are visual expressions, in a language coined and developed by the individual artist as his or her personal vocabulary.

The questions that remain prime most in my mind while appraising abstract or non-figurative art, are three. Firstly, what did the artist wish to convey? Second, is what is visible an actual/successful depiction of what the artist wished to convey? And thirdly, did he wish to convey anything at all, or just made a composition (in itself quite justified

Art if that is all he intended)? Questions such as these are important in the case of artists who have not proven their mettle in portraying visible, recognisable realities, going through the entire exercise of sketching, drawing, study of light, shade, form, volume, distance, perspective, and so much more. Where then is the testimony of their picture making abilities? True, their sales, and consequently their popularity chart may be soaring, but is what they make real, rigorous art? But these are not comfortable questions in the art circuit of today, particularly on the market front. It is all a question of 'pulling off' with an artist, a gallery, a set of buyers, and so on. Then there is also the factor of manipulation, operation and positioning.



Concordance IX by Sangeeta Gupta

Sangeeta Gupta, by now well known for her prolificacy, is currently showcasing her works at Kumar gallery. She indeed has come a long way from her days of painting cactus flowers. Going from abstract to abstract, this time round, her paintings are immensely engaging compositions of colour that spell great taste and expertise in painting.

An official with the Indian Revenue Service, Sangeeta divides her energies between office, poetry writing, painting, travel and participation in gender issues. Prior to the present series she had shown an inclination towards spiritual, medi-

tative abstractions. This time the works are more geometrically inclined, with excellent play of colour and an intensely textile/wall paper quality, reminding one of Vishvanadhan's works.

Of superb decorative value, supported by an awesome gallery space and a hefty catalogue to boot, there is little doubt that there will be no dearth of takers for her art.