

Artistic impressions

Kalpana Banerjee's first exhibition, 'Glimpses', reflects her sojourns around the globe. Fresh colours, simple scenes and unusual angles set her work apart from others. The exhibition, which was held from 21-26 April, received a tremendous response from art connoisseurs. Selling World Travel has a conversation with the travel enthusiast.



Text: Soumya Jain

Inspired by nature, Kalpana Banerjee's paintings and her personality, both have the same characteristic simplicity and freshness. Her canvases reflect the numerous travel experiences which she has had while roving in and around the country with her bureaucrat husband.

The fresh tints aren't only a pleasure to look at, but easy to interpret. Apart from nature, Claude Monet and Van Gogh's impressionist style also motivates her. Her wide travels produced some notable series of paintings like 'Melody of Indianess' and 'Promises to Keep'. While the former depicts her Indian sojourns, whether Mahabalipuram or the fishing nets in Kochi, the latter is an ideal representation of the Boston landscape where she stayed with her family some years back.

Her paintings also reflect her love for music, "I like music, both Indian classical and western classical. I have a series of 5-6 paintings called 'Meg Malhar' which is based on the Raag Malhar. The first painting shows a very dry area with a man sitting. The next shows the clouds approaching. In one there are darker clouds with the flight of birds, and in the last one the rain has finally come after which the sky has turned into beautiful orange."

Banerjee started painting only 7-8 years back without any formal training. She however, had the able guidance of Lucknow artist Salma Khan to help her in understanding the technical nuances of art. Her keen eye for details also helped in portraying a detailed representation of the spectacular sceneries she has witnessed during her travels.

Among contemporary artist she counts Sanjay Bhattacharya and Anjolie Ela Menon among her favourites. Art, however,

doesn't seem to be the only thing on her mind. When asked if she plans to get into environment conservation considering her love for nature, she enthusiastically replied, "100 per cent! Many years back when my husband was posted in the hills, we all, including my children, were there. As a district collector's wife I also had talks with the local population to save trees. I am such a lover of trees that when I was young I used to keep doing pencil and charcoal sketches of trees."

Banerjee, who hopes to organize another exhibition next year, has already started planning for it. "I have realized that since I am so inspired by nature, the background of my future works will still be nature. I am, however, going to bring more movement and figures into my collection. I will use more bright colours to portray the vivaciousness of a landscape. Also, I will interplay with different shades light and shadows."

