



A painting by Satish Gujral on display at Emami Chisel Art enclosure at the India Art summit

Hundreds visit art extragavanza

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Country's first Art Summit, which is seeing participation from art galleries from both within the country and abroad, has blurred the line between niche and the mass, as hundreds trooped into Pragati Maidan today to see what was on offer at the three-day extravaganza.

The country's first official art fair, India Art Summit 2008, which opened yesterday, has brought the high and mighty of the Indian art and some western promoters together to take contemporary art to the masses.

The first collaborative platform for the art is aimed at encouraging both international and regional involvement with Indian art and providing a place for various stakeholders of the industry to interact with each other. It provided a platform to discuss issues like development of modern and contemporary Indian art in the presence of experts from Sotheby's and Christie's.

The summit, which will continue till Sunday, will be an annual affair and will be held next year from August 19 to 21.

Some of the country's most prominent art galleries like Delhi Art Gallery, Emami Chisel Art, Gallery Espace, Akriti Art Gallery from Kolkata, Pallete Art Gallery, Nature Morte and Art Motif are participating in the three-day event.

Besides, big names like Phillip Hoffman, founder of the world's oldest and largest art hedge fund - The Fine Art Fund - and Robert Storr, dean of the Yale College of Art, rubbed shoulders with galleries, art dealers, artists and buyers from across the world.

Incidentally, Emami Chisel Art (ECA), which made its debut auction in February this year, where Husain's 'Tribute to Hashmi' fetched a record-breaking Rs 10 crore and Tyeb Mehta's 'Kali III' fetched 4.4 crore, is participating specially to give the prospective bidders a chance to register for their forthcoming auction by coming to the summit.

Emami Chisel Art Auction House is a joint venture between the Rs 1,500-crore turnover personal health care major Emami Group and Chisel Crafts, the parent company of the Kolkata-based Aakriti Art Gallery.

Says Vikram Bachhawat, director, Emami Chisel Art: "I am participating in the Art Summit to give exposure to new artists to the interna-

India Art Summit 2008

tional visitors while also hoping to widen my own knowledge base about various artists from other locations."

What is interesting is that while art galleries are viewing the Summit as a means to spread awareness, auction house Emami Chisel Art is hoping to use this platform to attract bidders who would like to participate in their upcoming November auction.

The online bidding commences from November 3 and will continue till the hammer finally comes down on November 8. Interested bidders can collect registration forms from the ECA stall during the Art Summit.

Occupying one of the largest spaces in the fair, one can visit Delhi Art Gallery's space for getting a glimpse into one of the rarest collection of masters.

Delhi Art Gallery is presenting works of artists like FN Souza, M.F. Husain, S.H. Raza, Jamini Roy, G.R. Santosh, Ambadas, Sohan Qadri, V. Vishwanadhan, Gogi Saroj Pal, Shanti Dave, Jyoti Bhatt, Jaya Ganguly and Sovan Kumar.

According to Ashish Anand, director, Delhi Art Gallery, "The summit is unique in itself as it is for the very first time in India that art galleries will come under one common platform. We will be showcasing the works of artists we represent from our gallery. The advantage is that the summit is not about business alone and the primary focus is to attract attention of those who are entering the art fray. Since the summit is expected to generate a good footfall, it is an opportunity for us to put forward the best quality. It is indeed a significant move towards creating awareness amongst the masses."

The thought was echoed by Renu Modi, director, Gallery Espace, another veteran on the arts horizon.

"I believe art is for everyone and with so much talk about Indian art in the global market, the timing is right for India to offer an art fair to the world," she says.

Alongside the fair, there is an Art Forum under way where key issues pertaining to the development and business of art are being discussed. These sessions have been designed to give foremost importance to the development of art support systems.