

Headline – A lot on this plate

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A rather unusual workshop on printmaking is on in the city allowing people a rare opportunity to see artists at work

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One doesn't get these opportunities often for its rare to find entry into an artist's studio when he/she is at work. You can be privy to these special moments at RMZ Ecoworld's art gallery which is hosting a printmaking workshop with 15 artists from all over India. In a painting obsessed Indian art world, such activities come as a huge relief. We spent some time interacting with artists, observing different kinds of techniques they employed. Here are some vignettes from the ground.

Laxma Goud

Along with his rustic-flavoured paintings, the eminent artist from Telangana is also known for his etchings. Ever since he studied printmaking at MS University in Baroda, Goud has been pursuing prints. We observed him take a print from a zinc plate depicting his typical rural woman but he wasn't really thrilled with the end result. "I am not happy because the print has not come according to my expectation," announced the recipient of Padma Shri award.

"Printmaking has umpteen inherent advantages. I am 76 and I have been making prints for 45-50 years. I have largely been a printmaker. I have a press of my own. When I was studying art, printmaking was never offered as a full-fledged course. Now it is. I even see a



lot of corporates, cultural institutions setting up studios giving space to artists to work. It works particularly for printmakers who don't have access to a press. It is a very good opportunity for printmakers but there are so many out there. A print is affordable and original because the plate is made by the artist himself/herself. The artist ensures quality and it also has signature."

Ravikumar Kashi

He is a painter, sculptor and printmaker. Kashi studied printmaking at MS University in Baroda, he didn't pursue it for several years and has recently resumed it. In fact, his first ever solo held in Gallery Pundole only had prints. From Rs.40,000 he earned from the sale of works, Ravi bought a machine thinking other printmakers will also use it in his studio. "But nobody came. I was the only one using it so I sold it off," recalled Kashi working on his woodcut depicting a pushcart.

"In the 80s printmaking was a very vibrant field but



Etched in time (clockwise from above) Artist Kavita Shah, Laxma Goud, Tejinder Singh Baoni and RM Palaniappan at work

the atmosphere doesn't exist any more. I feel in printmaking, the discussion is always about the technique and not about the content. There is an excessive obsession with the technique. I also find it restricted because other techniques with the same principals are not accepted."

Kavita Nayar

Kavita straddles different mediums - oils, acrylics, watercolours and even in printmaking she resorts to lithography, etching and serigraphy. Her last solo "Seeds - Etchings and Zinc Plates" was a showcase of 40 prints and even her zinc plates. Over the last 10 years, Kavita has been extensively

doing etchings and oil pastels on paper. At the workshop, we see her working on a zinc plate which has an image of a tree from the "Seeds of Love" series.

The seeds series began after the death of her daughter in 2009. "Nature just entered my vocabulary. There were flowers, foetuses, trees," says the Delhi-based artist who received a scholarship from the French Government to study lithography and etchings at Cite International des Arts and Ecole des Beaux Arts in the 1980s.

RM Palaniappan

In the world of graphic design, Palaniappan's name is taken with reverence. The

senior artist is known for his minimalistic work with lines that meet, run parallel and criss-cross. Bent over a zinc plate, the act of seeing him engraving the line is medita-



tive. For the Chennai-based artist who is doing a colour intaglio, line represents movement.

"One likes to play with that line, movement, colour, tonal values and invites challenges. It feels nice to be able to resolve those challenges. Printmaking has a lot of scope but needs some sort of initiation to be able to appreciate a print," says the artist who did his bachelors and masters in painting and industrial design and then studied advanced Lithography in Tamarind Institute, USA in 1991.

Other artists at the workshop

B Manjunath Kamath, Champa Mohan, GR Iranna, Viraj Naik, Sonal Varshneya, Vivek Vilasini, Jayakumar G Reddy, Walter D'Souza

The workshop is on till May 10 and the public is allowed entry to see artists at work everyday from 3 pm-5 pm. The workshop will culminate in an exhibition on May 10 at RMZ Ecoworld, The Bay, Campus 8, Doddakannahalli Village.