

Showering colours

ART Art Bengaluru featured a wide palate by well-established names as well as upcoming talent

There were of course the M.F.Hu-sains, the Razas and the Souzas, but that was not the only interesting part about Art Bengaluru, the annual art festival put together by the Sublime Art Gallery and Art Chutney at UB City.

What was most interesting about it was the sheer range of art work that more than 10 galleries across the country displayed in the various nooks and corridors of UB City.

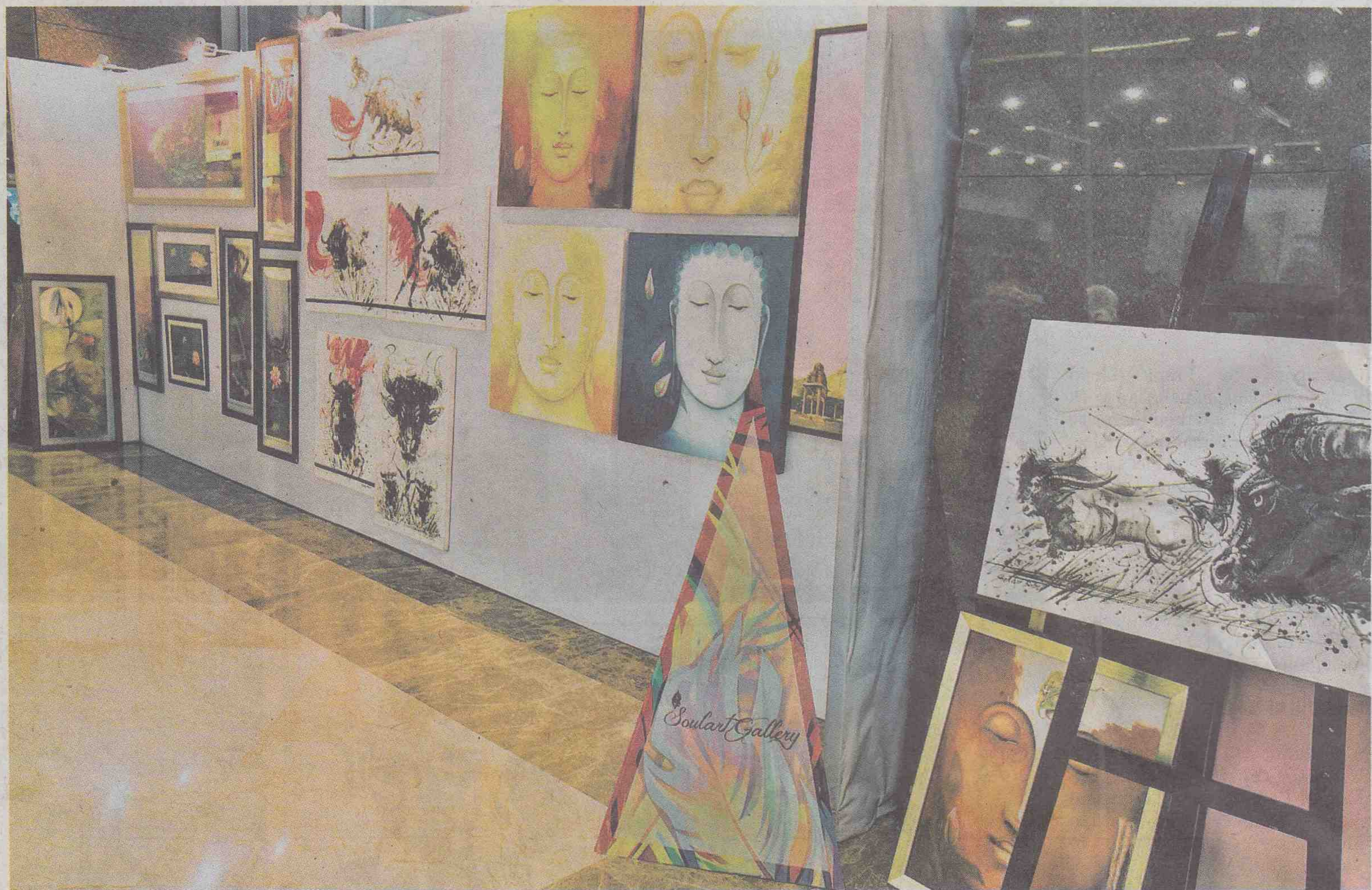
There were cute displays of bundles of colour pencils or colourful palettes as well as signposts directing viewers. It was nice running into corridors and wall-sized displays of paintings in unexpected corners and corridors.

The first one that caught our eye (coming from the level 2 parking lot) was Puttarangachar's art space, with his series of Shiva paintings, showing Shiva in a series of acrylics in bold strokes, with indistinct features but imposing form and rippling muscles.

Then there was the rather sensual series by artists such as Shravan Kumar by the Deccan Art Gallery. Shravan depicts lovers, Dravidian presumably, from their features. The gallery features Rajeshwar Nylapalli's artworks depicting a voluptuous Indian woman in the garden, sometimes accompanied by her lover who appears like Krishna. The gallery also features, more notably, works by artists such as Kandi Narsimlu whose paintings feature interpreted profiles of the rural woman as well as paintings by Kunuku Bhushaya with his intricate depictions of deities from Indian mythology. S.K.Hussaini's black and white acrylics featuring horses in his sharp, angular strokes are also eye-catching.

Following this display, one is then led to works by The Art Salon.in, Gallery Third Eye, Soular Gallery and Artequest and Art Alindia featuring Bengali art.

Their displays featured a range of artworks in many different styles including landscapes, animal figures, with the bull being the most popular, many portraits of the Buddha; quasi-



A VERITABLE FEAST Covering a wide gamut of styles

abstract, Indian folk-inspired paintings; even some pop art, though none of these seemed to stick in the memory.

A surprising number of paintings featured themes from rustic life. The exhibition showcase a mix of well-established artists like J.M.S.Mani, Sachin Jaltare, Thota Tharani and T.Vaikuntam, this other than the legends, the progressive artists, featured by the Delhi-based Progressive Art Gallery; as well as upcoming artists by galleries such as Rangkunchala, from Maharashtra.

Rangkunchala is a collective of a group of artists based in the Kolhapur-districts, who displayed a wide range from landscapes, to abstracts and folksy figures.

The landscapes displayed were refreshing, for their vivid depictions of rural expanses complete with water-

falls, greenery, hills in the distance dotted with people. They were so vivid that one could almost feel the spray of the waterfalls. While the paintings themselves were not photo-realistic; the artist's presence could still be felt.

"Our artists have not gone overboard on colour, their works are natural in the sense that they paint what touches their hearts," says Yogesh Shinde, co-founder of Rangkunchala. "Since they are from the rural backgrounds, their paintings draw deeply from nature. But they have their own style and people prefer something that is pleasing to the eye, that they can keep in their living rooms and feel good about. Art Bengaluru was a good platform for us."

Sublime itself is featuring the works of Netherland-based artist Elena Pereira, who has displayed 19 sculptural objects or installation

works using; wood, epoxy, flowers, chains, knives, spoons and metals.

Yet for the viewer, the most exciting display was that of ispaceart and The Purple Turtles, which showcased a whole variety of artworks by or featuring the creative intervention of Aarti Karwayun Chawda. Though the display included fine art, home décor and commercial work by the artist, the home décor range with furniture and wall art stole the show for their sheer funk or "quirkiness".

Aarti (along with The Purple Turtles) puts together an eclectic collection of furniture (she takes credit for the painting). What makes the furniture stand out is the fact that it is a mix of vintage and contemporary styles. For example, a chest of drawers is fitted with old, painted metal boxes in a contemporary wooden structure with the letter E on the top.

An old cycle tyre becomes the stand for a bar stool or a low wooden table is painted with figures inspired by card faces, and topped with an actual letter X.

Her wall art featuring wooden panels of doors and windows from vintage houses is also quite charming, especially when painted over with figures and motifs from Indian folk art. "It's great to be here because the people who come here fully understand art. The response was tremendous, I received appreciation not just for my home décor but also for my fine art," says Aarti.

The exhibition also includes a sculpture park, with more than 35 sculptures, the most visible being a portrait of Bob Marley. Art Bengaluru will be on view until August 25 at U.B.City.

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