

A Simple Heart in Parts

“Thus everything that is regarded as a thing in itself, as one, must be viewed... as a *complex*. Conversely, everything in a complex must be seen as part of that complex: as part of a *whole*. Then we will always see *relationships* and always know one thing through the other.”

- Piet Mondrian

To begin with, Reghu's sculptures are made of clay; pinched, coiled or slabbed forming simple human beings which appear energetic although fragile. A further step traces these forms emerging from his roots in an agricultural family, based in a rural environ in Kerala. Amalgamating philosophies and influences in tune with the surroundings in his early days, probed him to adopt indigenous materials, in process, carving his persona as an individual and as an artist, thus both personal and universal.

I refer back to Mondrian's quote, expounding on the deconstruction, reconstruction... the unity and diversity of everything or vice-versa, and relate this to today's globalised scenario which includes multitude of visions, materials and objects that cross over varied time or eras; and all these comfortably exists together in an altogether different milieu. The world is one complex whole. And thus everything in it is in context to each other... as it all can exist together. Though this ceaseless accumulation and distribution can be differentiated while provoking or discussing notions of discerning between the active and the contemplative, the overlapping of an in- trend market value or status, overshadows all other descriptions, in turn making murky - the beautiful, true and the simple.

His simple human forms, seemingly starved yet content, signify happy hearts, comfortable with a heaven and an earth, and though these forms are re-situated from their place of origin to newly established urban sites, as per his voyage, entering gallery spaces, they continue to possess their unique other-worldly countenance; without relinquishing their initial pure existence. Rather the innocence conveyed through this eloquence is taken to these surroundings... in process, reassuring the new environment. Thus, befitting to contemporary ideas, which allow the comfortable co-existence of multiple idioms to exist unanimously.

To only say that Reghu's sculptures have the distinct influence of Folk forms is to describe his ceramic figures shortly. The folk influence appears as an initial inherent trait, which essentially signifies the Indian and the rustic, mirroring him. What actually describes them is a unique attribute, which contains a languidness and a spirited countenance... a distinct characteristic of a 'Reghu's work'.

This simplicity is explicated through the pure connotations realized through the activities enacted by the figures. The trendy elongated ears of the singular stretched bust figures or the 'persons' with wrap around clothing are in conversation or appear to be in immediate thought; the unhurried lying figures keep up to playful idioms, reflecting a persona of pure modesty... restoring an essence of their being; that is lazy, spirited and humble.

Spending a large number of years creating sculptures at Bharat Bhavan, Bhopal, Reghu recently moved to Bangalore to continue and explore his artistic visibility.

The artist works in clay, and later burns his forms to get the required finish. These ceramic forms express various nuances of the plain folk which are innately familiar to him. Few of his forms could be his longing or recollections for his childhood days, as the forms depict playful postures. The rendering of the varied sizes of the human forms, from two feet to six... involve processes done individually, as in coiling or pinching to create required tones and effects for the body parts, following which these parts are joined together, emerging into a beings depicting a reality... representing a certain idealistic rural mankind.

Some of these recent works are lazy forms or busts with large ears and bald heads. The sculptures possess a constant thematic that is the real and present, depicting vibrancy along with bulging or hollow-void eyed rendering. The figures have signatory associations like frocks or loose baggy pants draping them and gesturing towards a real present activity but not subverting a transcendental connotation usually linked to sculpture and works of Art.

A true artist expresses inherent concerns or longings. Along with the various forces performing in his time and space, Reghu continues to elucidate and explore the naïve and the real, but also accustoming to the demands of the present. Continuing traditional methods like using the potters' wheel of churning these eloquent forms, Reghu shapes a purity, heading his art towards far-reaching consequences.