IMPERISHABLE JUNCTURE . . .

-A visit to Kiran Nadar Museum of Art

Report made by:
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“Art is when you hear a knocking from you soul – and you answer.”

– Terri Guillemets

Kiran Nadar’s Art Museum brought together a significant body of the artists’ new and existing works. It began upon the façade of the building with artwork of Subodh Gupta, superimposing a new work which exemplified the highly individual approach of the esteemed artists.

Situated in the heart of New Delhi, adjacent to District Court, Saket is situated Kiran Nadar’s Museum of Art in the South Court Mall.

Students of Pratham Delhi Education Initiative(PDEI’s) library programme of two hub centres, i.e. Dallupura and Kondli with a total strength of 46 students were taken to see the art exhibition.

As soon as we enter the mall, we get to see the excellent artwork of Subodh Gupta, known as the Line of Control, weighing a whopping twenty tons and defying the gravitational force of nature. The whole structure is made up of stainless steel utensils such as plates, buckets etc.

It depicted the shape of mushroom type structure which is formed after a nuclear explosion. The children were filled with awe and excitement seeing the splendid artwork.

The current on-going exhibition in the art museum is Seven Contemporaries in which artwork of various renowned artists is displayed.

The first art form was by renowned art historian and critic turned artist, Ms. Anita Dube. Her artwork developed an aesthetic idiom that employs sculptural fragments made out of foam, plastic, pearls, prostheses, and glass eyes used for religious sculpture in Asia. The artwork displayed was The Intimations of Mortality. The children were curious about the materials used to make such a fantastic design. They were mesmerized by the shape and the way it was made.

In a domain crowded by every manner of derivation of a certain cultivated, pleasing, aesthetic appeal, a rare few artists manage to accomplish their work by truly challenging the viewer. Sheela Gowda is one amongst them. Her artwork, named Like a Bird, is made up by using human hair, metal and cloth. Long ropes made up of human hair are criss-crossed all over the room which depicts the path of a bird trapped in a closed room. At the first sight, the artwork hypnotizes the viewer as it is very difficult to imagine the way it would have been constructed.
Bharti Kher’s multi-layered and multi-coloured *bindis* behave as markers of time, of memories and histories, superimposed and layered in various configurations. A recurring motif, putting bindis on to the surface one by one itself is a reminder of the ritualistic aspect of day to day life, enacted through acts of repetition and restitution. The viewer gets immersed in the mediations between space and shape, colour and texture. The monumental work was a result of thousands of bindis that cohere or disperse to conceptually inscribe content by layering topographical maps, dramatic fissures and animal forms.

Another art work was by Ms. Sheba Chhachhi, in which the immersive installation created an imaginary underwater space, which traced the memory of water in Delhi, through the colonial back to the Mughal and then the pre-Mughal. Evoking alternative imaginaries of the Yamuna and her present polluted condition, it referred to submerged, neglected wisdom as it probes the sedimentation of time and cultural memory.

Being the eve of World Environment Day (June 5), the curator, Ms. Saumya Bhatt, connected the artworks with the environment, with a message that the environment should be protected. The theme of the day was THINK·EAT·SAVE·

The children were told the importance of saving food, with the help of various stories. They were told that food is an important ingredient to have social bonding amongst the human-beings, families & societies. Through art, children get an opportunity to create and do, which is refreshing break from studying. Doing artwork or making art releases expression that comforts or relaxes the mind. It’s a forum for safe expression, communication, exploration, imagination and cultural and historical understanding. Art provides students a chance to develop cognitive and creative skills and to develop their imagination. After seeing all the amazing artworks, the children were escorted to the seminar hall where a fun-filled session was taken by Ms. Neelam Sehgal. In the seminar, children were shown power-point presentations and videos depicting that food should be saved and be distributed amongst the poor.
Later on, the students were given plastic plates and a pack of sketch-pens to pen down their thoughts or to make cartoons depicting the ways to save food, and distribute it amongst the poor people in the society. The children were very keen to do this activity as there was a keen glint in their eyes to make the society a better place to live.

Through artworks, the children learn to be more tolerant and open through multicultural and historical perspectives and through their involvement in the creative process, they build self-confidence, self-discipline, persistence and the knowledge of how to make multiple revisions to create high quality work. After the whole event, it felt that the children were eager to do something good for the society to make it a better place to live and they event learnt about the various artworks of the esteemed artists.

“Art is not a thing, it is a way.”
– Elbert Hubbard