

What is the point of living without love ?

(An interview of Pratap Singh by Ana Hughes, an independent art critic and scholar who lives in London)



What does your art mean to you, personally?

Nothing, my art does not make sense in my life, but surely it makes sense in my day to day life. It gives me something to do in my life; it keeps me occupied all the time. I am filling my material space with colors and thoughts.

Are you in the mood of negation?

No, who am I to negate anything or find something? I am just an observer. I find the essential meanings in my life through art.

Your first painting series named “Deep in Love” gave you the recognition in the European cities. What does that mean to you?

Deep in love is deep in love, it does not have any indirect meaning or logic. Through this I just wanted to recollect my old feelings for a lady.

Do you still love that lady?

Love never dies; it moves into one form to another form.

So you have also dedicated your “virginity” series to the same lady?

No, that was an unfulfilled love. Virginity is a very sexual thing and through that series I persisted to find or touch some kind of spirituality while making love.

What about heaven? You have also written so many poems on heaven too.

I had painted heaven for my father who passed away on 23 January 2016. I have painted heaven for two years and painted till the morning of 23 January. I believe, heaven is the most beautiful place in the world where my father lives now, but in the material world when a man dies a world dies with him and as being a rational human I do believe in that too but in the world of art you cannot kill someone whom you love the most, otherwise there will be no art or the sunrise anymore and the world will be dead of human feelings and emotions.

Now these days you are painting nature. What does nature mean to you in the contemporary world?

I have a very personal relationship with nature (sunset, sunrise, and midnight). I find some kind of poetry in it and these paintings are very minimal in their aesthetics. Through Daybreak-Whispering to your soul , Morning bliss, The sun is setting down on me , A passing evening , I wanted to express my inner beauty in the context of the outer landscape . Nature is the purest form of love and Indian classical music also has the tunes of raga and alap that depicts the notion of rising sun and dying sun in a very minimal form and how it relates to human emotions. You could find that in Ritwik Ghatak’s cinema too but in a very violent form and Satyajit Ray has expressed it in a very minimal way.

Like this poem, it is a very minimal form of expression and another poem below "from my window" is a very expressive poem, the same rhythm and tune I also follow in visual art

**From my window, I see birds are flying in their own way
People are crossing the streets in their own narcissist way
The sun is fading in a very obscured way
I try to write but nothing comes to my mind
Perhaps nothing moves while the world moves
And I move within them but nothing is visible,
Silence that leaves me nowhere but leaves a void in my heart
My friend, all things are passing through in a very silent way
I guess, today is taking its last breaths,
But before the sun loses its whole presence, moment by moment, inch by inch
I shall write something on it, to let this evening speak itself.....**

**Everyday after painting, I find myself empty
A feeling grips me that it's only the body that hangs empty,
Devoid of breath Naked I flop onto my pillow in the hope that perhaps
the pillow may return my breath to me.
It doesn't happen though, and through it all, you are always near me. So
near that sometimes,
I can't distinguish if my breath is my own or if it was lent to me by you.
Every night I wish to lie my head on your bosom and lose myself, and
when the morning light
Opens my eyes, may the balmy scent of your body linger in mine.**

What kind of thought process you follow while painting?

Nothing, I paint in the midnight, on the empty road, there is no other way of doing it I guess. Perhaps I have enough catharsis to relive them through my art.

What do you mean by catharsis?

You need some kind of real pain to burn out every moment you live in, and art is the remedy of that pain. In the world of art you need the centre of creativity to fulfill you as a human being.

What kind of pain you feel when you paint?

Like an innocent man dies in an accident,

A young man loses his job; a lover breaks his heart,

A lonely man walks alone in the midst of the ruthless crowd,

An old man dies somewhere in the sky.....

There are many, very hard to remember a particular one, maybe the death of my father in absolute pain or maybe some unfaithful friendships.....

What kind of things you do in your sphere time?

I do not have many friends. I do not like to express myself to my friends either. And these days hardly I get free time. Art is the only thing I live for and would like to die as well.....

Death and love are the prime source of creativity?

Love is nothing, just a word; you have to give it meaning in your life, otherwise what is the point of living? Authentic love gives meaning to my life and we all are born to die as well. Perhaps nobody would like to die in the absence of love and in the thoughtful world it is impossible to reciprocate the love in the same manner. Through my art, I persist to find out various meanings and interpretations of our day to day life existence. Does love really exist? Do people go to heaven after death? What is the meaning of soul mates? Everywhere I see knowledge and power relationship in a very Foucauldian perspective. And that makes the spiritual quest so vulnerable and more argumentative too.

With this note of love and death, I thank you for giving me this meaningful interview. I have really enjoyed talking to you. I hope you will find your soul mate and never feel sorrow or sad. And may love always walk with you

With warm regards

Ana Hughes