

ART FACTS: Warmth of blooming colours

NADEEM ZUBERI WEEKEND MAGAZINE (January 05, 2013) : The warmth of blooming colours in paintings of Wahab Jaffer attracts many art enthusiasts and I am one of them. He is one of the most respected artists of Pakistan. For about a year I am scheduling and rescheduling to visit Wahab Jaffer's studios. At times he was busy and sometimes I got stuck in my other commitments. At last I have met him at his studios recently and it proves an interesting visit. Wahab Jaffer emerged on the local art scene in mid seventies. After completing his engineering education in UK Wahab Jaffer returned to Pakistan. He had keen interest in painting and drawing as a child. And to fulfil that urge he joined Ali Imam's studios in 1971 and start learning the technicalities of painting. After a year or two he met Ahmed Parvez and their friendship which was based on utmost respect and affection began. From 1973 to 1979 Wahab Jaffer worked and studied art with Ahmed Parvez. There he eventually found his own signature style rendered in acrylic paints and pastels with semi-figurative pen and ink drawings and some abstract renditions. His paintings depicting contrasting moods, fantasies woven with female figures on various surfaces began to appear in different group exhibitions in 1974. His first solo exhibition was held at the Indus Gallery in 1981, it was well-received and open doors for this emerging new artist. He seems to enjoy contrasting colours - red, green, blue and gray to interpret various senses and emotions of life. The soft and luminous colours consistently appear in his painting depicting the complexities of life along with abstract and figurative work. This interesting and unique style has now become his signature style. Wahab Jaffer's passion for art lead him to this unusual formation of forms and abstract world where the diction is his own but can be understood by others. He handles beautifully the mode of expression. The way his brush strokes empower him on the canvas speaks about his command over his work. He has developed a peculiar manner in which he describes as well as discusses his views, perceptions and experiences with others. His choice of particular colours in a painting indicates his discussion on a specific issue, and it is his distinct style. The addition of certain symbols like birds, flowers and fruits gives a detail to the ongoing discussion. As a prolific and obsessive artist he experimented with acrylics and found the medium ideally suited to his spontaneous style. While talking he told me an interesting incident, "In 1981 an American artist left his painting colours at the American Embassy. I was asked if I am interested in buying those paints. I bought them and to my surprise those were acrylic colours and hence I am the first artist in Pakistan to use acrylic colours in painting. And it was until mid 90s that acrylic paints were introduced to the local artists". Beautiful, brightly coloured forms and woman's face and birds casting dark shadows dominate his paintings. He uses white colour to lighten up some of his paintings. Whether vivid canvases or pen and ink drawings he depicts his feeling and observations in an expressive way indicate a cause or the reason of cause and effect. The women faces represent a person and the birds, fish; flowers and fruits are indicative and symbolic, defining a hidden message and situation. The subject of his paintings is basically life in its diverse forms. And Wahab Jaffer uses his art conscience to bring forth the complexities of life within life of a person. He creates his paintings through sketches, adding texture and lines, place colours, and then discovers the life in light and shade. The polychrome character of his paintings sometime shows bashfulness and sometimes it appears warm signifying irritation and anger. Though his work is vibrant and full of colour it has an emotional appeal. Simple yet complicated his paintings evoke feelings of sufferings and dejection. The colour domination of his paintings reflects his teacher Ahmed Pervez. His colour sense is brilliant. At times duality

arises from the use of a myriad of colours exploring shapes and forms. He emphasises on colour and also knows the suitable colour components to be use in his particular painting. He skilfully apply colours to his compositions like a master artist. He is the only artist in Pakistan who is also a collector. He has a wide collection of artworks, which he has purchased from various exhibitions around the world. He is a frequent visitor of art exhibitions, maintaining his lifelong enthusiasm for art and often adding artworks to his collection. He has also the honour that Sadequain has purchased his painting from one of his exhibition in Rawalpindi. His work has been shown in several solos and group shows at home and abroad, notably at the Asia-Pacific Museum in Pasadena, California and at the National Museum of Pakistan. *nadee mzuberi71@gmail.com*

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