

Brothers in arms

Bold, racy and uniquely original the funky works of Manil and Rohit Gupta are a visual treat says FAREEDA KANGA

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It's rare to find siblings whose design and aesthetic sensibilities are so fine-tuned that it actually makes commercial and artistic sense to collaborate together.

Meet Manil and Rohit Gupta, the New Delhi based artists whose quirky, 'in-your-face' art has droves of fans because of their proclivity to represent life in all its fascinating forms through the medium of pop art.



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A dose of reality

Inspiration for the siblings is stirred from street and popular media: graffiti, comics, animation, cinema, music and surrounding issues. "The main goal we hope to achieve before starting each new piece is to experience a sense of liberation through the process, until the orgasmic completion. There is never a plan. Mostly improvisation, taking cues from each other. Our work then transforms into a playground where we like to get lost and discover new stuff. What results eventually is a jumbled up medley of dreams, sexual fantasies, bottled-up material desires, philosophical and psychological dilemmas and romantic ideologies of a vulnerable ecology. All churned up and served with a generous dose of dark humour," they aver.

Siblings in the workplace

"Surprisingly, our professional work relationship helps to maintain our personal relationship. Temperamentally, we are chalk and cheese but since childhood, we have closely shared our lives and interests. Hence, our work's vision becomes the common binding factor. We feel fortunate and excited about that," they claim

Their main concern is to keep the work and process as unplanned and unpredictable as possible. Eschewing any patterns they feed on each other's strengths and compliment shortcomings.



Their current works

The siblings are currently in the middle of an exciting body of works, where they have broken the conventional square/rectangle, and explored interesting and deeper shapes. "We cut and create these shapes in wood, and paint on them."

Thus, right at the onset, the shape takes us into an interesting ride, somewhat in a theatrical direction, both mentally and physically.

"Our bigger thought being 'The Circus', and looking at life from that perspective, the work-slash-life becomes a carnival for us, where we sometimes play the part as a joker, while the rest we are looking at it as an audience. How our strings are pulled by forces we are not aware of."

The artiste's aim at portraying an entire life span spent in ignorance and illusion, busy playing the material games like a puppet, while thinking one is free.

"The work-the-circus, takes us into an altogether different direction of self-exploration, where everything becomes matter-of-fact like. We divulge into mockery and heroism, fulfillment and complain, dreams and illusions all at the same time."

According to the artists, "life is a carnival, a roller coaster, where we are the puppets and we are the audience, and all of it is served with a dash of laughter." "Our new body of works is significantly more challenging and evolved, we feel. From exploring the technique to dwelling into the deeper thought, while keeping the method spontaneous is a satiating and exciting process."

What: Manil-Rohit's works are on display at the ongoing charitable group show titled 'Let Me Live 2' at Nature Morte, Oberoi Gurgaon, for the girl child for 'Nanhi Chhaan' Charitable Trust WHEN: October 28-November 11