



**Voices of art**  
Works on display  
■ BYARRANGEMENT

# Thoughts on canvas

Women artists explore different themes at an ongoing show in Salar Jung museum

■ NEERAJA MURTHY

Salar Jung's western block is bustling with a new energy. Visitors are drawn towards artworks echoing voices of women artists. It is a celebratory mood as artists – a mix of students and professionals – enjoy the spotlight. Sparkling with creativity and colours, the show organised by Hyderabad Art Society is a result of a three-day art camp. "It will be a month-long art celebration," shares Society's president Ramana Reddy. Fifty students from JNTU Fine Arts College, Sri Venkateswara Fine Arts College, Hyderabad Central University, and Potti Sreeramulu Telugu University have been part of the camp. "We had never conducted a camp for International Women's Day. The intent was to provide a platform for women to present their narrative and they did very well," he adds.

Ana Smeeringer has always been fascinated with the attitude a woman's face conveys. In her work, a woman looks boldly into the camera. "An Indian woman represents strength and her courage to to speak, get heard and not mistreated," she says and recalls a story of a 12-

year-old young girl who ran away from the village with her mother to Hyderabad. "The girl said she was being mistreated and she survived. I was moved reading her story on social media. And when I got a chance to be part of the art camp, I connected the dots."

A journalist turned self-artist, Ana has travelled across countries due to her American husband's work. Her work speaks the language of the country she has lived. Her previous stay in Holland created serious works. "It is a different country and feels a bit gloomy because of weather and seriousness of people. One could see that reflects



should be a pillar of support to another woman but not stare or judge because of her clothes and personality." Her painting depicts how women stare and cause distress.

Standing in front of her painting 'Flourishing Life', Manasa Kachikayala calls it an ode to the fearless woman. She blends stitching and technology showing women have made inroads into different fields. Womb is the origin of life and two ovaries in the form of women take the shape of a tree branching out to new horizons. "Women are in every field today," she says with pride. The colours – happiness for yellow, birth for green and white for peace play a significant role. She explains the process, "I was inspired by the switchboard in my room and created a sketch but I couldn't make the texture of a tree. My mother suggested why not I stitch. I took her idea and stitched with needle and wool and finished the work in two days."

(An exhibition of paintings by women artists is on at Salar Jung museum till March 25)

in art works too." Filled with acrylic colours, her canvas in India is bold, bright depicting women empowerment. She looks forward to April when she travels to Dubai and then to New York.

Four women with different expressions gaze from Seluvu Kandukuri's painting titled 'Gaze'. The budding artist focuses on the discomfort that causes because of staring. She says, "I was disturbed with the way women passed comments and judged the woman veterinarian who was gang-raped and murdered in Hyderabad. A woman

## FRIDA'S PAINTINGS

Radical Mexican artist Frida Kahlo is celebrated by feminists across the world for her depiction of female form.

