

DECCAN Chronicle

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ART | ATTACK ■ Five-day annual expo has themes exploring from social hierarchy and sexism, to emotional concepts

STELLA GIRLS CREATE MAGIC ON CANVAS

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At the sprawling grounds in the heart of the city, 15 girls from the Visual Arts department of the Stella Maris College brought together their personal journeys at "Sahasra - A New Beginning", an annual art exhibition with themes exploring self and society.

The five-day annual art exhibit is on display at Art Houz Contemporary Gallery from April 18 to 21, and not at the traditional venue of Lalit Kala academy.

The girls have created magic on 65 canvases covering wide ranging themes from social hierarchy and sexism, to emotional concepts on pain and vulnerability.

"Each of us has put together this exhibit, but the concept, style and way of working is entirely distinctive," said Alamelu Annhamalai, who worked on a series of paintings called "The Stranger" based on second nature of humans.

Inspired by Billy Joel's song of the same name, a



Paintings by visual arts students of Stella Maris College with widely varied themes displayed at Art Houz gallery in Alwarpet.

painting in the series shows striking portrayal of a girl with her reflection in the corner of the glasses, depicting the unfathomable, out-of-character behaviour that we resort to at times.

Working over a semester of four months on a six-piece series, Srinidhisha says it was a transformative experience in many ways. "Being an art student has taught me to pursue beyond grades. This exhibit is our introduction to the world as

an artist."

"There are just two art colleges in the city that take painting very seriously. But art itself has now branched out to other forms such as fashion designing and photography so it definitely has more takers than earlier," said Poornima, manager of Art Houz gallery.

A hitch however, is that art education is still at a stage where awareness among parents and students about job opportunities and "practical pur-

pose" and that is a concern.

"Art opens up an individual to them and artists have the power to express anything strongly to the society," says Dr Anne Samuel, an art professor at Stella Maris College.

Citing a painting by a student on the notions of hierarchy conveyed through a man on a chair with the leg of the chair and man merging into one, she says it sends out a strong message and shatters barriers that take centuries to cross.

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ART SPEAKS

With time as the central theme, Srinidhisha depicted significant moments at different stages of her life. The paintings were done in a vintage style. The concept was titled 'Only time will tell'.



A painting series called 'The cracks within' had stark images of pain and rage and was done by Anushiya Aarthi. The cracked glass served as a metaphor for the soul and its fragile nature.

A series on nature and animals done by Mansi, who is speech and hearing impaired, had hands and representing her primary mode of communication, the sign language.

Centuries-old hand printing technique was used by Lyoona Sulaima to portray herself and her ideas on womanhood. Her deep buried secrets were scrawled in Arabic across the paintings.