

THOTA VAIKUNTAM

The Telangana Icons

Private view and reception
Thursday, 24th September, 2015, 6 – 8 pm

at Grosvenor Gallery, 21 Ryder Street, London, SW1Y 6PX

Exhibition continues from
25th September – 10th October, 2015

Grosvenor Gallery is extremely pleased to announce an exhibition of new paintings by the acclaimed Indian artist, Thota Vaikuntam in collaboration with **Art Alive Gallery, New Delhi**. This will be Vaikuntam's solo exhibition in London after a gap of 10 years.

Conor Macklin, Director, Grosvenor Gallery says *'Vaikuntam is an intriguing artist, tied to his roots, tradition and the people of Telangana in Southern India. This will be his first exhibition at the gallery, and we hope to expose him to a wider global audience.*

Vaikuntam has enriched Indian Contemporary Art with a noteworthy visual imagery in his signature style. Practicing over five decades to the contemporary times, he has worked towards erasing the distinction between high art and folk styles. He immortalizes the dark and dusky rural folk of Telangana region in southern India in theatrically posed large iconic forms. Their characteristic bright traditional costume and appropriate ornaments come from the mythic moral plays that are popular among the rural masses. In action and gestures, the masculinity of his female figures is representative of power and grace and personalizes names assert their identity. Rendered in his signature style, the portraits of men and women are seen indulged in themselves; it depicts an innocent and uncontaminated life, giving a whole new sense to living.

Vaikuntam paints colourful and elaborately dressed Telangana region men and seductive women. His muse is the sensuous and voluptuous women of Telangana with their omnipresent vermilion bindis, draped in colourful sarees that highlight their dusky skin. As Vaikuntam says, *"That rustic simplicity holds enormous appeal and charm for me. Let me tell you, though it has taken me whole lifetime of work, I am still working at getting her perfect."*

Sunaina Anand, Director, Art Alive Gallery says *'We are bringing Vaikuntam's solo exhibition to London after a gap of 10 years. He is a well acclaimed Indian contemporary artist whose works have a large audience across the globe. Through his Telangana men and women, Vaikuntam has positioned Telangana on the world map, much before the State Telangana was formed.'*

His art has a sense of strength to it, a power that emanates from the paint or charcoal that he applies to the surface, from his controlled lines, and from the fine strokes that he executes. He generally uses

only primary colours, as he believes that composite colours do not exist in nature and are therefore, unnatural.

“I like using rich primary colours, which give a sense of character and depth to my paintings. Like reds and saffron and even orange, because these are essentially Indian colours. I don't like using colours that are mix of two, because they are not natural, they don't exist in surroundings around us, in our everyday life”.

Vaikuntam is testimony to enormous changes in the Indian Art tradition since five decades. He has experimented with multiple forms, mediums and thematic; learnt either at the academy or actualized responding to inner enquiries. His body of works produces as well as reflects several layers of signification. As the iconic image of rural folk, it is narrative of a lifestyle where each frame with its full blown form is both personal and communitarian.

As S.H.Raza while seeing his works had once said *“The painting of Vaikuntam, all to my mind is an original synthesis of traditional Indian concepts and demands of a formal logic of the international Modern Art. In fact, after Jamini Roy, his work is a new significant contribution to contemporary Indian art, without compromise and with fullness of imagination and ecstasy.”*



1.

1. *Untitled, Acrylic on canvas, 12 x 16 inches*



2.

2. *Untitled, Acrylic on canvas, 20 x 30 inches*

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Gallery Timings: Mon – Fri: 9:30am – 6:00pm
Saturday (By appointment only) 12 – 4pm, Sundays closed

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