

Young at Art

*On a regular evening while I was sipping tea at a Coffee day, I was watching a young guy sitting on the table next to me and displaying some art works to his friend. He looked intensely passionate about his work and was explaining about each intricate detail of it. I was very attentively listening to him even without my knowledge. I couldn't resist not approaching him. I walked up to him and introduced myself and about ODE. Just like the rest of the youth, he was also impressed with the "Feel-Write-Publish" idea taken up by ODE and was excited to talk about Art; his own and art in general. He introduced himself as **Avinash Verma**, 21 and below is an excerpt of our conversation.*

Looking at his ease in drawing the free-hand drawings, I was inquisitive as to know what brought him to art. With a smile on his face he says, if given a choice, I would identify my Blood group as Art +ve. It flows in my blood. Avinash has been inspired by art during his childhood days, when he used to watch a lot of cartoon movies. He tells me that his first ever painting was Goofy, the toon character. He was amused by it and immediately tried painting it without looking at the character on screen. As an amateur, it took him some 10-12 attempts to make it resemble the Goofy on screen. That attempt has given him a free hand to experiment from then on.

His first encounter with formal art was when he met Priyanka, whom he addresses as *Didi*. Priyanka had taken up the job of brushing his basics of art and groom him further. He says he qualified the basics immediately and was enrolled into painting very soon.

He was pretty excited when I told him that ODE gives platform to young people like him, and that he might project his work if it was good enough. He immediately took me to the gallery where his paintings are put up. It was Priyanka School of Art, where he had learnt his painting lessons since childhood. He proudly walks me through his paintings in the gallery.

Talking about his latest art obsession, he says he has been experimenting lately with a lot of abstract art and is faring well in it. He has tried all kinds of mediums from Pencils to Pastels to Shading to Sketching and others. He admits that there is a long way to go in terms of learning art. He says "Art has no end. I have just taken the initial steps and I have a lot to learn from my teachers"

Before I could ask him anything about his academics, he replies saying "I am basically a Architecture student. Art is an integral part of Architecture, and that's helping me groom myself even on those lines." He is pursuing his Architecture 4th year from CSIIT, Secunderabad. His

faculty has been encouraging him to imbibe his artistic bend of mind into his architectural models. He admits that his work was not acknowledged until recently when he started putting his work for sale. He says his work was recognized across galleries and got a good clientele. With a wink, he says, “When I initially wanted to pursue art, I had faced some resistance from my parents, but now when they see my talent helping me to get my own pocket money, they understand my capabilities and value my art and things have changed thankfully! A few of my friends and neighbors ask me to sketch some paintings for them. Fortunately, they like it and my pockets get heavier at times. But for an artist, Love for his work is the major driving force!”

On asking about his journey so far, he says he is much more confident now. He says “Now I don’t need reference paintings to paint. I can carve out the idea and paint accordingly” while pointing out to one of his works. He tells that Priyanka *didi* has been very cooperative with him, and says she is one of his key supporters through his journey. “I used to travel from Bharkatpura to Srinagar daily after college to take classes from Priyanka mam and she strongly encouraged my zeal.” Not only learning at her school, but as a symbol of gratitude, he also teaches kids at the school on Sunday mornings. He lives up to what great men said “Knowledge is meant to be shared.”

ODE feels glad to interact with people like him; thereby living up to our goal of giving today’s youth a perfect platform to exhibit their talent. Wishing Avinash a great career in art!

- *Surya Adavi*