

RABIN MONDAL RETROSPECTIVE

This exhibition is showcasing paintings and drawings of Rabin Mondal, one of the most significant and veteran artists of the country. Introvert, deceptively common man-like yet diligently uncompromising throughout his life, Rabin has been portraying disquieting images of the fractured reality of our times.

Rabin was born in Howrah in 1929. When he was in the 5th standard in school he was struck down with a knee injury that kept him confined to his room for four years. As he struggled through the physical pain of repeated surgeries and the mental agony of being a loner, he found a refuge in drawing and painting. Later he got admission to the Government Art School, Calcutta, but had to discontinue his studies owing to financial constraints. Eventually he passed his B.Com and got employment in the Railway sector. Despite all obstacles he had an unwavering determination to establish himself as an artist. While employed in the railway service he enrolled himself in the evening classes of Indian School of Art and Draftsmanship and completed his formal training in art in 1956. Around the same time two exhibitions of Modern European Masters were held in Kolkata in 1948 and 1953 and these were eye-openers for him.

Having a sensitive psyche laced with resentments and disillusionments Rabin had to survive in a society where the filth and squalor of urban ghettos, corruption, power games and pauperism had transformed day to day life into an omnipresent nightmare. Rabin's art has been a constant search for the visual metaphors of these brute, degenerative and dehumanising forces. Rabin's images symbolise the disinherited existence of our times. They represent the angst of an isolated 'I' striving against heavy odds in a world of retrogressive morals and inverted values.