

Herald Cafe

When art becomes a voice of protest

Goa's social and environmental concerns spark outrage, but artists amplify the message, turning creativity into activism. Through powerful works on social media, art inspires citizens to demand change

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Art has always been a powerful tool for social and political change. For a small state of Goa, artists have used their work to express their views on society and the world around them. If a picture is worth a thousand words, these artworks bring on a wide range of emotions for people who want to save Goa.



TAKING ON GLOBAL ISSUES

While sitting at a local café next to the ferry point in Chorao, Vivek Pereira overheard Eusebio D'Silva speaking dynamically and with urgency about curbing megaprojects from ruining the biodiversity and way of life in Chorao. Having conducted workshops for children and adults with needs, created toys and camouflage gear that were sent directly to victims in war torn Ukraine and painting murals to raise awareness about the environment, these are some ways in which Vivek has used art as a practical tool.

Vivek created an artwork exclusively for saving Chorao. "It was only natural to bring the same energy and my conceptual activist style to this particular piece which was made after hearing Eusebio's thoughts along with the way I visualized the issue. We wanted it to be understood by anyone who comes across it," says Vivek, who was the youngest and only Goan artist to have a solo show at The Nehru Centre



(TNC), the cultural wing of The High Commission of India in UK. Besides Goan issues, Vivek also created 'Eat me!' a sculpture based on the beef ban, 'Testing', an acrylic on canvas painting on fish containing formalin in Panjim and even the Harvey Weinstein case.

AWAY FROM HOME YET CLOSE TO GOA'S NEEDS

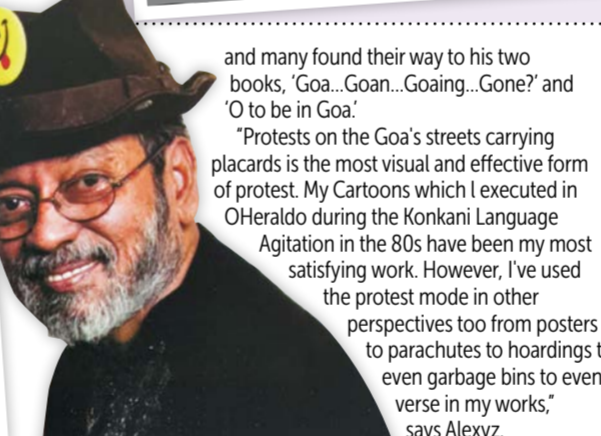
Billy Joe Fernandes, originally from Sirsaim but working in Dubai, can't keep his mind and heart off Goa. Through his illustrations, Billy gives his take on society and trends, resonating with audiences who share the sentiments expressed via his works. Known as Billytoons Goa, he keeps a close eye on any development in Goa and immediately takes to his drawing board to create illustrations highlighting the issue affecting the common Goan.

"Once I get the news of an issue, I take about approximately one or two hours to draw an illustration. My works have been used multiple times for protests and agitations like the Coal Protest, Melauli Protest etc. It gives a strong message in a picture format where people can understand the message in a simple format with one liners. It feels good when the art connects with people and they use them to write blogs and share on social media. As an artist, this is the acknowledgment from the people," says Billy.



MAKING GOA'S VOICE HEARD

Noted cartoonist Alexyz from Siolim is known for humorous works but his artworks on other issues makes his pen as sharp as a sword. Alexyz was the first cartoonist for oHerald back in the 1980s. His cartoons on the Konkani Agitation and Goa's Statehood struggle were very much anticipated by the readers. His cartoons which would be made into posters by the agitations. He continues to create cartoons and artworks for agitations on various issues



and many found their way to his two books, 'Goa...Goan...Goa...Gone?' and 'O to be in Goa.' "Protests on the Goa's streets carrying placards is the most visual and effective form of protest. My Cartoons which I executed in O'Herald during the Konkani Language Agitation in the 80s have been my most satisfying work. However, I've used the protest mode in other perspectives too from posters to parachutes to hoardings to even garbage bins to even verse in my works," says Alexyz.

The final calling awaits everyone

Pio Esteves

Tiatr: 'Aiz Mhaka Faleam Tuka'
Writer/Director: Matias Mascarenhas
Institution: Matias Creative Group Calangute
Cast: Jesper Fernandes, Pushpashil Nagvekar, Tracy Cordo, Digvija Raikar, Erica Fernandes, Gregory D'Souza, Namiket Salgaonkar, Vishal, Ancilia Picardo, Domnic Pereira, Sijoy Coelho, Irene de Souza, Ana Maria Cardozo, Antonio Rodrigues, Preston Cardozo, Maria Rita Pinto, Brian, Godwin, Abigail
Band: Selvyn Braganca (first trumpet), Theodore Alvares (second trumpet), Nevil (bass), Leander Mascarenhas (drums), Louis Mascarenhas (keyboard)
Stage Sets/Lights: Sijoy Coelho, Raviraj Shet
Makeup/Costumes: Raj Shirodkar, Irene de Souza



KA's 50th 'A' Group Competition 2024-25 'Aiz Mhaka Faleam Tuka'

husband Sidney (Gregory D'Souza) and bachelor Conception (Namiket Salgaonkar). Jose's ailing spouse Celine (Abigail) is dumped in the aged home and nobody among the children is willing to bring her back home and cater to her daily needs. Bank officer (Sijoy Coelho) steps in informing about the FDs made by Jose and after interest amounting to Rs 60 lakhs. All the siblings are taken by surprise and are willing to bring their aged mother back home and each of them volunteer to assist her in their own way. But everything for the greed of share left behind by their father. A little later, another finance official enters informing about the

loans taken and the pending amounting Rs 70 lakhs. Now, all the siblings, including their spouses, are in a dilemma and are unwilling to take care of their mother. Just when plans are afloat to sell off the house and clear all the debts, to everyone's surprise, Jose makes his appearance in the house. Now, all the while, where was Jose? Was it a wrong identification with regards to the deceased, followed by burial? What follows next among the members of the family is worth

the watch during the second half of the drama. Tiatr 'Aiz Mhaka Faleam Tuka' is an eye opener to all those, who out of sheer greed, run after ancestral properties, neglecting the aged members in the family. It carries a good dose of suspense, with twists and turns and the climax. In a flashback, shadow play also forms part of the entire presentation during the second half. All the artistes have given the best of performance on stage. Jesper Fernandes as the head of the family stands tall. Vishal is projected as a villain. Namiket Salgaonkar as a bachelor and alcoholic is apt in body language and dialogues. Ancilia Picardo is equally good as 'Vhoddli Mai'. Irene de Souza makes a cameo in the second half, but is impressive. Other artistes have extended good support to the main cast. In the comic acts, there's Forsu (Matias Mascarenhas) and Milagrin (Digvija Raikar) coming together as a couple, with good dose of laughter pills under their sleeves. In the category of songs, the opening is a choral, followed by solos, duets, duo, trio, quartet and another choral at the end. This presentation had two solos from child artistes. All the singers carried melodious voices and were confident in their renditions. Selvyn Braganca and his musical team extended good support offstage. The stage sets by Sijoy Coelho need to be appreciated, though there were some hiccups in the concluding scene. The light designs by Raviraj Shet and background music by Louis Mascarenhas were equally good.



The curtains unfold to a scene at a cross where Jose (Jesper Fernandes) is praying and interceding to God. Alister (Vishal), who is eyeing Jose's properties, drops by and makes a request to sell off his properties to him. Jose bluntly declines Vishal's demand and the latter finally says that elimination is the only solution to such a problem. The following scene is at the cemetery where the villagers gather to attend Jose's funeral. He died in a tragic accident and his children settled abroad come down for the final rites. Back home, there's discussion regards settlement of properties and bungalow among the deceased's children, namely Michael (Pushpashil Nagvekar) and his spouse Diana (Tracy Cordo), Regina (Erica Fernandes) and her

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