CHAPTER-V

PARTHA PRATIM DEB: THE ART OF FUN

5.1 INTRODUCTION

As an introduction to his work, Partha Pratim Deb once wrote, "*for me art is a way or expression of dealing with the ideas that are transformed from my inner self. Interacting with the socio-political matrix within which I exist, the fun loving-inner self formulates my outer self manifested in a process of re-organising and redefining materials around me in a inner-outer continuity forming a new entity the art object*.''(Deb: 1999)

There was a contradiction between dream and broken dream in our reality of the sixties and seventies Bengal. This contradiction has dominated the creations of the artists of this period. So we can see different types of expression in their works. Partha Pratim was one of the artists of that time. To say that an artist's images must speak for themselves has become a truism in the field of art-production and art-writing. Every artist seems to stands by it, just as every critic and writer takes pride in repeating it. Yes, it also goes without saying that modern art images do not speak for anybody or everybody, that they can only reach out to a desired body of viewers and connoisseurs through a series of mediations of those who produce, promote and interpret art, that their eloquence and aura are always enmeshed in the larger history of modern art activity of a particular place and period. Let us ask, then, what is the specific history which frames the work of an artist like Partha Pratim Deb for his works, if at all they speak for themselves, speak from within the deep recesses and niches of the particular history that we need to piece together for the struggling world of modern art in Kolkata in the post-independence years. They also necessarily speak to a whole history of images that precede and surround them. The artist strategically selected images to construe his own modernist legacy and his unique Indian and Bengali heritage. It is essential, then, to locate the artist within this art-historical context to identify a broader community of artists and imagery of the

past and the present that he reached out to in defining his vocation as a modern Bengali painter.

Hailing from the hilly region of Tripura, Partha Pratim remained almost entirely within the folds of the Kolkata art world. He was trained at Santiniketan (1962-66) and Baroda (1966-68) from where he received his diploma in fine art. In his work Partha Pratim chose to be eclectic, perhaps more than his contemporaries. By the late Seventies, he had evolved his hallmark style where the primary medium was junk object which he applied in many different ways (Plate 5.83) and (Plate 5.84). His distinctive artistic style evolved during the eighties in which the artist defined a kind of satire, fun, fantasy and humour mixed with folk art (Plate 5.8). The practice of Professor Deb had a significant influence on the works of artists emerging almost two decades after he had defined his own practice. Deb was professionally trained as a painter in the late 1960s. But his practice gradually began to shift from the two dimensional to the three dimensional. These pieces were definitely not sculptures in the conventional sense. Deb's appointment at the new Faculty of Visual Arts, Rabindra Bharati University, during the 70s, marked an important moment in the history of pedagogical practices in the city. Deb, against many odds, was obsessively involved in producing three dimensional (sculptural) objects. His approach involved selecting found objects and working on them with 'non-conventional' methods and materials. The objects were transformed thus into object-sings: they simultaneously indicated their sources and negated the same, creating a kind of ambivalence (Plate 5.27). This art practice, especially in the 90s, acquired a following among the present generation of artists. My work shall make an attempt to reflect on the many facets of Deb's practice and its absorption in the new generation of artists (www.mohileparikhcenter.org:6.5.14). Partha Pratim's painterly voyage was marked by an intimate understanding of human relationships, their pain and agony, joy and ecstasy, humour and wisdom. Partha Pratim's art contains remnants of the pop culture. As recurring motifs, a voluptuous man, woman, bird, flowers or other objects such as pots, vase, create a very peculiar vision of human sensibility and abstraction. The figures and objects seem to be floating in a mental space where the gravitational pull is decided upon by the

artist's own wishful thinking. They float, they glide and they crouch, taking up various acrobatic postures, underlining the varied levels of psychic exegesis. One of Deb's solo exhibitions at Aicon Gallery, Palo Alto, CA, explained in its catalogue -"Partha Pratim Deb expresses his art through many different medium including small abstract vignettes, scratched out postcards, large bas-relief assemblages on board, oil on canvas paintings as well as delicate yet powerful ink on paper works. His ink on paper works evokes an impressive complexity through simplicity, akin to Paul Klee's 'taking a line for a walk' drawings. Deb possesses qualities of a master draftsman, for example a single line, straight and horizontal, can become the horizon, the hull of a boat, the division of two dimensional space or a roof top. Similarly twenty or more, streaming in parallel across a page can create a flag, shimmering water or a rolling hill. These elements make his work instantly recognizable and extremely engaging. Partha Pratim Deb's paper works show his individual humor and sharp wit. Even when he depicts a well known subject matter, such as Adam and Eve, it is done so in his own distinct style. This amalgamation of humor, social reality and sensuality along with a creative playfulness is visible in all of his works.'' (www.aicongallery.com:5.5.14)

Partha Pratim established himself as an artist during the 1970-80s. During this time, there were remarkable radical changes in the outlook of artists. In this post-modern art period, new insights, manifestations, styles and structures developed. There was an unparalleled emphasis on individual expression and personal symbols, a curious mixture of socio-political and cultural aspects, and also of personal fantasy, often combined with satire or poetic lyricism. (Mago:2001) In the case of Partha Pratim's work, he was not restricted to canvas painting only but his search for a new medium makes him a different identity in the field of Bengal art as well as in Indian art. The content of his works, however, has been gradually changing to symbolize absurdity and ignorant behaviour of our present day society. Sometimes a humorous expression seems to pervade his entire work with absurd synchronized movements and gestures and multiplicity of motifs, typical of the urban setting.

5.2 ART AND PEDAGOGY

Flourishing of the artistic self in a person has bewildered us since time immemorial. It is also difficult to identify the buds of childhood possessions or youthful memories that bloom into the creative self of an artist. But there definitely is an embryo somewhere. The identity of an artist's individual sophistication is expressed in his character and life. This sophistication is repeatedly noticed in Partha Pratim Deb's inherent nature. Most noteworthy is his selfless dedication to art. Equally impressive is his unwavering calm. Though he started his art practice in the 70's and 80's it took him long to get established as an artist. Actually his practice was never confined to canvas painting or even in art surface and two dimensional arts. Crossing the threshold of conventional art practices he was inspired by the indirect art practice of Pop art and Dadaism. He created a special genre from scrap and waste materials. The root of his creation is in popular or Pop art. The dominant expression of his art is humor. It is through this humour that an apparent criticism of the modern society is expressed (Ghosh: 2005).

Possibly it was his non conventional art practice that delayed his recognition as an artist. Tagore in his article named *Rash O Rashik* remarks that in fine arts and in purport the relation between human nature and his creation is more intense. We hardly get the chance to see the two together but if possible that will give us a clear idea about their essential honesty. We see the true poet and artist not only in their writings or in their creations but also in their behavior, their life style, and in their everyday interactions and attitude (Tagore: 1983).

Though Tagore referred to Nandalal Bose while writing the above mentioned lines, it is equally true for Partha Pratim Deb. The shallow stream gathers ample moss and that thwarts its forward motion. Similarly there are many artists who get stagnated by the limitations of their nature and attitude. One can find appreciable elements in their art but such art fail to be dynamic and keep on pirouetting in its own fixed vortex thus resulting in futile replication of one's own art. While exploring his journey as an artist Partha Pratim Deb could never accept this limitation of art by one's own behavioral

stasis. A riotous energy was always instrumental in him. And this force is the inherent part of creative energy. True creativity never follows the standard path. In Partha Pratim's creativity we see an inherently indomitable life force. It takes time for gaining a general and accepted appreciation of one's art among public and it so happened to Partha Pratim too. And due to this, it took him some time to get recognition as well. Narrative and imagery form dominated the art sphere in the Sixties. However, from the Eighties there was a shift from this clichéd practice. Partha Pratim's creativity has built a contrasting consciousness against these two practices and herein lies the significance of his work. (Ghosh: 2005)

Partha Pratim was born in 1943 in Sylhet, located in Bangladesh. After independence, his father Rashikranjan Deb took a job in Agartala, the capital of Tripura and settled there. His father was a mathematician and his professional life started as a professor of maths at the MBB college of Agartala. Bimal Deb in his book named '*Tripurar Shilpacharcha'* has referred to this time in Tripura as a period of social unrest. During the royal rule of Tripura, Maharaj Birbikram died in the same year that India gained independence. In 1949 the rule of the royal dynasty in Tripura ended and the state came under the rule of the Chief Commissioner. This marked the beginning of military oppression to the tribal people living in the rural and mountainous regions of Tripura. However, the oppressed people united and revolted against the tyranny. (Deb: 1999)

However, Partha Pratim did not face this social condition directly as he was too young then. He spent his childhood and youth in Agartala. He went to the reputed local school named *Umakanta Academy*. He does not consider himself good in studies or sports during his school life. He was known as a budding painter though he did not have any legacy of artists in his family. But in spite of being a maths teacher, his father had an impeccable sense of design and nurtured serious interest in selection of furniture, curtains for his house and also designing the same. Transforming the 'naughty boy' shoes of child Partha Pratim, into those resembling the ones wore by Vidyasagar, connotes to a humorous anecdote. His mother, Sunila Deb, on the other hand, had penchant for designing floors, an age old tradition of Bengali

culture, and making quilts with old clothes. She encouraged her children to learn painting, writing and music. Constant encouragement from the parents helped the artist in his journey as a painter.

Referring to this inspiration the artists has told the researcher, “In my school at Agartala we had a drawing teacher named, Nanigopal babu. During those days drawing was part of the school curriculum till class VIII. And those who were good in painting got the responsibility of decoration during Saraswati Puja. I remember being a part of this team for many years and did my job with enthusiasm. Our school principal, Sri Smritikantha Sengupta used to love me for my proficiency in painting. Once he wanted us to make a series of drawings portraying the important historical incidents. Our drawing teacher, Nanigopal Babu headed the project. Selected students of Class VIII, IX and X painted the walls of our school with series of drawings depicting the notable characters of Indian history including the Mughal emperors. My interest in painting thrived since then and increased manifold with time. 1961, the year I got admitted in M.B.B College Agartala, was the birth centenary of Rabindranath Tagore. To commemorate the great poet a painting exhibition was organized in the college and I painted a portrait of Gurudev for the same. The painting got awarded in the exhibition. The professor of English in our college, Dr. Brajen Das, inspired me a lot and many other professors also encouraged my passion for painting. My parents were always supportive and seeing my seriousness in the field they appointed the local artist Sailesh Dev Barman as my art teacher. Sailesh Babu was the student of Nandalal Bose and was adept in water color and wash techniques. He was the drawing teacher of Maharani Tulsibati Girl’s School in Agartala. He was an interesting character and in spite of having immense knowledge on painting techniques he was conspicuously down to earth. It is perhaps their humility that makes people like him unique. It was from him that I came to know about luminaries like Nandalal Bose, Dhiren Krishna, Benode Behari and Ramkinkar Baij. After taking my tutelage from Sailesh Babu I took admission at Kala Bhavana in Santiniketan.”

There was no conflict between tradition and modernity in the curriculum of Kala Bhavana. Modernity there was rich in tradition and heritage. The belief that the Indian concept of modernity should thrive on its tradition was instilled in the artist during his years at Kala Bhavana. Santiniketan nurtured and flourished the artist-self of Partha Pratim. As Visva Bharati University in its teaching process inspires students to dream big, similarly Kala Bhavana encouraged the artists to explore their artistic brilliance fully. The institute never intended to make its students experts in individual genres and hence all the subjects were taught with equal emphasis. Students learnt about painting, sculpture, graphics, fresco-mural, designs, Alpana et al. Nature study was an integral component of the curriculum. Mrinal Ghosh in his essay named, 'Santiniketan-er Chitrakala: Prasangik Adhunikata', writes about the teaching process of Kala Bhavana, Just as Tagore in his creative consciousness considers nature to be an integral part in education, so does he in case of art and music. Long before the establishment of Kala Bhavana, there was the tradition of teaching art in his school named *Brahmacharjashram*. Who were the teachers? We might be curious. In 1904 there was an advertisement for art teachers. It was in response to that advertisement that Gopal Chandra Kabi Kushum got his appointment in the school as an art teacher. His teachings were limited to primary sketching and did not include creative art. Tagore did not like him and he had to leave in a short time. But his name features in the history as the first art teacher of Santiniketan. After him Nagendranath Aich got appointed in the beginning of 1905. Along with drawing he also taught Bengali. He has taught people like Mukulchandra Dey, Sudhirranjan Das, Apurba Kumar Chanda and Samindranath Tagore. He too followed a traditional way of teaching and was there for three years. After that came Panchugopal Roy in 1908. He was also known as Omkarnanda. He remained for a year or so. In 1910 came Santosh Kumar Mitra. He had taught at the Government .Art School in Kolkata before joining Tagore's school. He was referred to Santiniketan by Abanindranath Tagore. He too followed a framed and formulated structure. Tagore's idea did not match with his either. Gradually Mitra was appointed a different role. It was during Mitra's stay in Santiniketan that Asitkumar Haldar (1890-1968) joined as the art teacher in *Brahmacharjashram*. He was the grandson of Tagore's sister Sarat Kumari.

Haldar stayed in Santiniketan till 1915 and came to Kolkata to join the Government Art School in Kolkata. He returned to Santiniketan in 1919 and stayed there till 1922. In was during this period that Kala Bhavana was established. Nandalal Bose too came to Santiniketan as a teacher in 1919. It was in him that Tagore had found an ideal art teacher. His dream of Kala Bhavana was finally realized through Nandalal Bose. Tagore's first step towards giving a new life to the new Indian tradition was his experimentation at *Bichitra Studio* in Kolkata. But the venture failed. What failed in the constricted urban setting was made successful by Tagore amidst nature. Nature is an integral part of his creative consciousness. It was this nature that successfully brought Nandalal out of the shackles of so called limited Indian tradition. In the confluence of the worldview and love for nature, nationalism got a new definition of modernity. It was in this way that Tagore's Santiniketan unveiled the new horizon of Indian modernity. (Ghosh:2005)

When Partha Pratim came to Kala Bhavana (1962-66) he saw Nandalal from a distance. His health was frail and he had lost his voice. But Santiniketan was permeated with his creative genius and his way of teaching was still in vogue in Kala Bhavana. His works portray a brilliant assimilation of life and art. But above all was Rabindranath Tagore. Partha Pratim came to know about Tagore's art works once he came to Santiniketan and this induced an international understanding of art in him. Actually his acquaintance with the lives and works of the luminaries at Santiniketan enriched his consciousness about art as a subject. During that time the students of Santiniketan used to visit a frail Nandalal at his house on his birthday that is on 3rd December or during *Holi*. The artists used to sit in a chair and the students used to perform in front of him. Biswarup Bose was the principal of Kala Bhavana at that time. Nandalal Bose used to make one sketch daily even during his illness. Biswarup Bose visited him everyday and mounted the handmade Japanese paper for him to sketch. Nandalal used to make line drawings on it. Partha Pratim's interest in lines developed from there. I will discuss Partha Pratim's adroitness in line drawing in the next section.

The teaching techniques of Nandalal was so deep rooted in Kala Bhavana's curriculum that long after he left his job due to illness, it continued

to influence the teaching process of the institution. In the essay named 'Shilpacharya Nandalal Bose', his famous student Dhirendra Krishna Debarman says, "The way of Nandalal's teaching was different. He never believed that time bound sketching and coloring at a studio can complete the learning of students. He took immense care to make the minds of his students truly artistically inclined. In doing that he used to take his students for studying nature and its diverse expressions. So many times have I accompanied him to *Khoai* and the adjoining open fields during the storms of *Kalbaishakhi*. He had made us sit on an open space under the star studded night sky without any word or advice. He used to organize picnics at the banks of *Kopai* to study the beauty of *Polash* and *Shimul* in spring. He knew that if he can arouse the consciousness of beauty in the minds of his students, or make them discover the source of their artistic creativity, if their minds can think and imagine for themselves, then the hands will automatically follow the right movements. This is why the artist was most interested in making his students' minds artistically inclined. He advised them to listen to good poetry and music especially the songs by Tagore (Rabindrasangeet)." (Debbarman:1983)

The above mentioned words are true for Partha Pratim's artistic understanding as well. This is because when Partha Pratim came to Santiniketan he got the likes of Ramkinkar, Benode Behari and Dhirendra Krishna as his teachers. These great teachers too encouraged their students to study and follow nature. They said that copying a scene accurately is not the point but getting the essence of it and portraying it in the art work is important. For example at that time the students were shown paintings by Nandalal, Ramkinkar, Benode Behari, Rajput- Maghul et al. This helped in building confidence that a painting can be conceived in different ways. Besides, the teachers always inspired him to paint without inhibition. The influence of such inspiration can be noticed in the long teaching years of Partha Pratim. We will deliberate on it later. While in Santiniketan, Partha Pratim found in Ramkinkar a *Yogi*, one who has no consciousness of the outer world. He used to be extremely surprised to see Ramkinkar's simple and thrifty way of living life. In Ramkinkar, he found an ideal artist. Partha Pratim has told the researcher, "Ramkinkar once organized a play named

‘Kakeswar Kuchkuch’ at Kala Bhavana. He used to be present at our rehearsal regularly and throughout the entire time period. One of the characters in the play had to dress like a goat. A mask of the animal was made. But the students were at a loss about how to bring in the desired shape of the creature. Then Ramkinkar advised us to bring two pillows, a white bed sheet and a black *saree*. Tying the pillows in the hip and covering the front portion with the white sheet he wrapped the mask with the black *saree* and put it in place from behind. And bingo! There was the goat. I still can’t believe how easily he made that difficult thing look so easy! The interest in making funny forms was sowed in me right from then. Once I came back to Agartala, I continued to act in the stage and also make costumes for the characters in the play. The affinity to take interest in myriad things started from Kala Bhavana.”

Partha Pratim was moved and inspired by another person. His name was Benode Behari Mukhopadhyay. When he met Mukhopadhyay the latter had completely lost his eye sight. Benode Behari used to teach art history and aesthetics. Someone read the book for him while he explained the content of the same with deliberation and through analysis of the same. He even referred to the books he had read before losing his eye sight. He could recollect the page and paragraph numbers from those texts. One gets awestruck with this transcend from the physical sightlessness to internal enlightenment. After completing his studies in Santiniketan, Partha Pratim went to study post diploma at the M.S.University in Baroda (1966-68). The teaching techniques at Baroda were even more liberal. Referring to the art practice of Baroda, Mrinal Ghosh has said that a new tradition of modernity in Indian art had started from Santiniketan. Some calls this tradition ‘Contextual Modernism.’ In the search for nationalism in new Indian tradition an inclination towards closed mindedness was gradually proliferating. But it was the Santiniketan school of thought who at the right moment took care to bring in the right balance between nationalism and world view. The greatest examples of modern art can be seen in works of Nandalal, Benode Behari, and Ramkinkar and also in the works of K. G. Subramanyan in the later years. Rabindranath founded Visva Bharati in 1919. Kala Bhavana was a part of

Visva Bharati. The entire responsibility of managing Kala Bhavana was bestowed on Nandalal. It was in 1951 that Nandalal retired as the principal of Kala Bhavana. In the middle of the twentieth century Santiniketan contributed a new thought and conjecture to the propagation of modernity in Indian art. In the second half of the twentieth century, this conjecture of modernity got manifested and multi-dimensional with the influence of art practice in Baroda. On one side there was the experimentation at Santiniketan, while on the other was the penchant of the established artists of 1940s for assimilating the western concept of modernity and making time consciousness and social reality an integral part of their art practice; the art practitioners at Baroda tried to internalize all these experiences and give them a new relevance. Hence we can see the art practice of Baroda as an extension of the then modernism. M.S.University was established in 1950 and as a part of this university, was founded the Faculty of Fine Arts. The main objective of this institution was to fuse the work culture and art culture of the country. It was a quest for the artistic side in the thought, consciousness, festivals and life style of the common mass. It was an effort to understand the social and political reality of the country as well as the world. (Ghosh:2005) However, along with these similarities, some have also detected some differences between the Santiniketan and Baroda school of thoughts. In this regards, Nilima Sheikh has written, “It may be ventured that the unworldly spirit that had infused the vocational at Santiniketan, encountered at Baroda a down to earth Gujarati reality.” (Sheikh: 1977)

Partha Pratim Dev’s views in this issue includes, “Once in Baroda I found that the teaching style there is even more liberal. An important technique of teaching at Baroda included creating different problems in making art and seeing diverse solutions for it. Compared to this the technique at Kala Bhavana was much more subjective. However, liberal ways of both the schools helped me in thinking differently. The basic perception and conception gained at Kala Bhavana together with the liberal ways of Baroda helped me in expressing myself in diverse ways. At Baroda I got teachers like K.G. Subramanyan (b.1924), Jyoti Bhatt (b.1934) et al. All these art teachers were then very much in the scene as artists. This helped the students in

accepting them as teachers more effectively. The willingness to create art in newer forms was manifested in me by these teachers."

The Partha Pratim's student life at Baroda ended in 1968. After that Partha Pratim went back home and started a new struggle of adjusting his liberated and enlightened mind with the conservative rural ambience of Agartala in Tripura. After returning to Agartala he joined as the drawing teacher of *Maharani Tulsibati Girls School*. Once there the artist discovered his artistic self with renewed understanding amidst the open landscape, rugged terrain, and teeming greenery. The learning process is one kind of an experience but assimilating and expressing it in one's life is a different thing all together. Partha Pratim took up the challenge and continued with his experimentations in art. There were very few in Agartala at that time who could understand and appreciate the modern and liberal art practice of Partha Pratim. Referring to the prevailing situation at Agartala at that time the artist has said, "After returning to Agartala I got the chance to know and see myself independently. Pratibha Datta Gupta was then the head mistress of Maharani Tulsibati Girls School. She was a spirited lady and had interest in diverse subjects. But she was especially dedicated to art. She never put any obstacle in the way of anything related to art. The class rooms of the schools were big in size and I used to go to the school in the morning and come back home in the evening. I used to experiment with the broken and scrap things that were found scattered in and around the school. It was through this that I learned how to add diverse dimension to art in order to make it funny. Good quality colors and canvases were not available in Agartala during this time. It was this dearth that prompted the inclination towards alternative art practice. I was fortunate to get a like minded person in Chinmoy Roy (b.1941) with me at that time. He too had then joined 'Maharani Tulsibati Girls School' as an art teacher after completing his studies in Santiniketan. "

About the time spent in this period, Bimal Deb has written, at that time Chinmoy Roy returned to his home town after completing his studies in Santiniketan. He then joined Maharani Tulsibati Girls School. He was enriched with the rich learning process of Kala Bhavana. We can see that the famous gateway to Maharani Tulsibati Girls School is a sculpture made from

iron and other junk materials. Also notable are his owl sculptures made of different junk objects. He was then busy in creating the contemporary art language. His works also reflect the influence of Pop art. He is a renowned artist and is associated with an artist group of Kolkata. He has participated in various exhibitions within and outside the state. He is also associated with drama, stage settings and dance for many years. Later he became the principal of Government College of Art and Craft in Agartala.

Bimal Deb in his book named 'Tripurar Shilpacharcha' has further stated that, "I have seen another artist, Partha Pratim, who too was busy in experimenting with contemporary art. He has constantly strived to break free from the established form, technique and medium of painting. Along with color he has used wood particles, jute, pieces of blanket, colored paper, metal objects and even black and white pictures of his, in order to give a different dimension to his painting. He had got Chinmoy Roy as his partner in these experimentations." Bimal Deb continues to write, "Partha Pratim, the contemporary of Chinmoy Roy had joined Maharani Tulsibati Girls School after completing his studies from Santiniketan and Baroda. He later left Tripura to join the Rabindra Bharati University in Kolkata. Presently, his research based art practice has reached a point where his art is no more limited to the canvas but has reached a different platform." (Deb: 1999)

In the beginning of the seventies while still in Tripura Partha Pratim had thought of collective art practice. Along with him was artist Chinmoy Roy. It was his initiative that resulted in an artists' group named 'All Tripura Fine Arts Society'. Many local and other artists participated in the exhibitions organized by the group. But the group did not last long. It was at this time that Partha Pratim joined Rabindra Bharati University, Kolkata, as a professor, in 1972 to start a new life. The teaching experience at this university was completely different to the one gained in his earlier teaching practice. Partha Pratim is the founder member of the group named 'Painters Orchestra'. In 1968 only the artists who had studied at Kala Bhavana and Baroda were the members of this group. The first exhibition of the group was participated by Partha Pratim Deb, Suchibrata Deb, Bipul Kanti Saha, Chinmoy Roy, Amit Ray, Jaharchand Desai et al. Later in 1970, Dharmanarayan Dasgupta named the group as

‘Painters Orchestra’. A special trait is noticed in the works of the artists of this group. According to Partha Pratim, the works have gained a different dimension by ‘conceptualization of ideas’ of the artists. This conviction too has resulted from social consciousness. Later many young artists joined this group. Among the old members Partha Pratim, Jahar Das Gupta and Suchibrata deb are still there. In 2018 the group will turn 50. (Ghosh: 2005)

Kolkata was then experiencing a completely new awakening in the area of painting. The artists were then trying to make the surrounding reality the subject of their art. And in doing that Western modernity was becoming a part of their art. But Partha Pratim’s thought process was different from the trends prevalent in Bengal Art at that time. According to Ghosh the main trends in the seventies that are prevalent in the eastern regions were almost same as those practiced by the established artists in the sixties. Only the ways of expressions varied from artist to artist. Art has been greatly infused in reality. The realistic manner has become the conveyor of the thought. In the works of the artists of this age one finds the reflection of trends of the art movement in Europe including cubistic, post-cubistic, expressionistic et al. Along with realism, fantasy too was becoming an integral part of art at this time. Some artists have also infused the folk art of the country with the essence of western modernity. Another trend found during this time is abstraction. Abstraction failed to draw the attention of most of the artists of Bengal in the sixties. But in the seventies, quite a few artists, it has been seen, have worked with abstraction. Removed from all these styles was the structure of art made by Partha Pratim. The movement of making popular or pop art from waste and scrap materials was started by him. Those two dimensional and three dimensional structures created a world of fantasy and humor. Through conceptualizing an independent genre of art work Partha Pratim became the vanguard of a new form in the art history of sixties and seventies. (Ghosh: 2005) Quite naturally many failed to understand this form of work at the beginning of the seventies. The artist himself has said, “My art has always been criticized. But those who could understand they have appreciated this initiative of making art in a different form. But I was not much concerned about what people thought of my conception. My endeavor was to

continue with the experimentation. I have even done exhibition with my works. But no one showed interest to collect my art works then."

The alternatives art practice of Partha Pratim gradually got manifested in the art practice of his students. Gradually he could establish himself as an influential professor at Rabindra Bharati University. At the university he got Sovon Som, Laxmi Narayan Panchuri, Samaresh Chowdhuri and Dharmanarayan Dasgupta as his colleague. As the visual arts department of the university was new then he had to think about the teaching technique of the same. As his colleagues were all students of Santiniketan a liberal way of thinking persisted among them. Without the consent of all the teachers it would have been difficult to uphold a different practice in place of the contemporary art practice of Kolkata. In this regard Partha Pratim has said, "At that time I was new to Kolkata. The university I joined was also new. The traditions of art practices at the established art colleges of Kolkata were deep rooted then. But since I was trained in a different fashion I used to carry out different experiments in front of my students. The trend which started at Maharani Tulsibati Girls School in Tripura proliferated in myriad dimension in Kolkata. However, this unique art practice shortly got manifested among the students' works but it took time be established as an art language in its own right. However, the positive thing is that the alternative view has finally been accepted. "

Adip Dutta in his essay named, ''Teaching, Learning, Practising", mentions that Partha Pratim belongs to the community of K.G. Subramanyan's students from the M.S.University, Baroda, Deb's appointment at the new Faculty of Visual Arts, Rabindra Bharati University, in the seventies, marked an important moment in the history of pedagogical practices in the city. Deb, against many odds, was obsessively involved in producing three dimensional (sculptural) objects. His approach involved selecting found objects and working at them with 'non-conventional' methods and materials. The objects were transformed thus into object-signs; they simultaneously indicated their sources and negated the same, creating a kind of ambivalence. (Dutta: 2006)

Partha Pratim's art practice got a different dimension with junk and waste materials. However, his inspiration for this kind of art was drawn from Pop art where his expression has been reflected in fun. It was through his humor that he presented a critique of the society and the reality. While working as the head of the Rabindra Bharati University he was often found at work with his art in his office room. Along with the official files his room was laden with numerous bottles, scraps, torch, glasses, tooth paste, tubes, pea nut shells, shoes, ropes etc. Even as a Dean he continued his art practice in full force with these found material.

Shreyasi Chatterjee wrote in her essay named 'Of Objects and Metaphores', that, anyone who enters the chamber of Partha Pratim Deb, the Dean of the Faculty of Visual Arts, Rabindra Bharati University soon becomes aware of the bizarre objects that are huddled together, loosely stacked or hung from the wall. At the very first sight they impart a shock, a strange feeling which gradually dissolves as one can figure out the objects of daily paraphernalia amidst these accumulated junks. Most of the works are produced in his office cum studio, while managing the administration. One may find him wrapping ropes or threads around a stick, bottle or a chicken ware or applying papier-mache on an old electric bulb, wooden plank or on small mud cups typical from Bengal. Pressing, dabbing or leveling with a spatula, knife or even by his hands within the small intervals that he gets to carry on his work while shouldering the immense responsibilities of being a dean. Chatterjee also writes that in the art scene of Calcutta he stands as a figure in his own right, for his highly inventive works fall somewhere between painting and sculpture. Deb's objects show tactile nature of sculpture and the optical sensibilities involved in painting. They are brightly colored glossy objects that resonate metaphorical thoughts and plurality of meanings, often capturing the viewers' imagination instantly. One may call him an avant-garde or may easily associate him with the postmodernist. Like a papier-mache head attached to the end of a racket may recall remotely Giacometti or brightly colored painted old boxes, arranged serially on light wooden shelf indicate a Pop sensibility of repetition of objects, as signified by the Coca-Cola

bottles of Andy Warhole. However he gives accumulation a special thrust in his works, investing in them a postmodern sensibility. (Chatterjee: Undated)

Finding the professor as an active and working artist created a greater acceptability for Partha Pratim among his students. He unraveled the special features of post modern art to his students through his work. Saying that his trait of working with his students and also transforming junk into art form is the influence of pop art will not help one in understanding his work. In reality what was instrumental here was a legacy. Dhirendra Krishna Debbarman has said about Nandalal in his essay named *Silpacharya Nandalal Bose*, "He never considered any form of art as inferior. During the first years of Kala Bhavana, a child-widow named Sukumari Debi from Bangladesh came to Santiniketan to learn painting from Nandalal. She was adept in floor decoration or *Alpana*. Nandalal started the practice of decorating the Ashram floors during festivals. He also trained some students in this type of floor decoration. Handicraft was also included in the curriculum of Kala Bhavana. In 1921 Nandalal went to copy the paintings at *Bagh Cave* in Gwalior. Returning from Gwalior he started the practice of mural painting at Kala Bhavana. He even painted many houses at Santiniketan along with his students in mural or fresco painting. Dhirendra Krishna has also written that Nandalal had a special quality. He could make beautiful things from pieces of bamboo or from the fibers of fruits found in the fields. Rabindranath Tagore once decided to felicitate French scholar Sylvia Levi. At that time the tray in which the certificate of honour was presented used to be of silver. But the way Nandalal transformed a piece of bamboo which he had picked up from somewhere into a delightful piece of art in the form of a tray that everyone was astonished and rained accolades on him. At the touch of the artist's creative genius the mundane object was transformed into a delectable object of art more precious than one made of silver. The artist's vision and mind was in such a state that he perceived everything on earth with his artistic imagination and enjoyed utter bliss. The fun loving person used to remain immersed in his world of painting.'' (Debbarman: 1983)

On the other hand we have also seen Abanindranath who was the Guru of Nandalal, indulging into alternative art practice towards the end of his artistic career. He used to make different art through the form named *Kutum Katam*. In this form his medium was the abandoned roots and branches of trees. While talking about this, Jogen Chowdhury has said in his interview with

Agnimitra Ghosh, “In a conversation with Dhirendra Krishna Debbarman it came up that once Abanindranath was playing an instrument and he suddenly planted a human figure made of flour dough on the bow of the instrument and then continued to play the same. The feeling of sudden recreational fun is evident in this incident. I feel he kept his art practice alive with this desire for sudden uncalled for pleasures. Those who are familiar with his mask or *Kutum Katam* will understand my point.” (Chowdhury: 1996)

Hence, the legacy study referred to earlier regarding Partha Pratim’s work came down to him like this. Art writer Pranabranjan Ray writes some important comment on that matter. He wrote, Partha Pratim’s colourful re-configuration of once sought-after commodities turned to useless junks into decontextualised images, bearing new meaning, seem to have family resemblances with Marcel Duchamp, and especially with Robert Rauschenberg’s re-configuration of industrial junks, he displays none of angry criticality that can be discerned in their acts of compositing the imagery. Partha Pratim, like his gurus, Nandalal (viz. the hand torn paper images), Benode Behari (viz. the cut-and-paste paper collages) and Subramanyan (viz. the toys made with found carved wood and leather pieces), seems to enjoy merrily the process of turning the discarded objects into images by playing with them. This should however, not be taken as that he ends in giving to the objects some new resemblances only. The new and the craft-attributed likeness he gives to the found objects transform those into significant images, i.e. images with indicated and/or suggested meaning. Thus indicated/suggested meaning that Partha Pratim works out through the making process often subsumes an unmistakable criticality. His strategy for visualization of any critique is humourous and ironical, rather than angry. He would dynamically juxtapose unlikely images in a configuration, or lay emphasis on comical gestures and postures in the figuratively suggestive images, unlike Robert Rauschenberg, and more like Sukumar Ray and Subramanyan. This carricaturish approach links Partha Pratim even with some of Paul Klee’s drawings, remember his *Twittering Machine*. It is this kind of purposeful absorption of linguistic devises from choicest predecessors that makes Partha Pratim’s art truly global, without ever exhibiting the loaned

kinships. And rooted he remains, through his use of objects of daily experience for his imagery. Deb, needs to be celebrated as a pedagogue of the genre of Abanindranath, Nandalal, Benode Behari, Subramanyan and Somnath Hore, not only by the count of number of pupils he has inspired into becoming significant art practitioners, without being followers of his style or school men. His own practice shows how easily and unobtrusively he goes into the grammatical questions of what to observe in the phenomenal world in tune with one's personal preference, transform the objects and events into gaze, into images and imagery with learnt skill culled from the history of art, adapted to transform the selected objects into images and imageries, with joy and elan to attain creative bliss. (Ray: 2013)

But Partha Pratim's work attained a new height as it was presented in the light of social reality and depiction of the then time. Partha Pratim went through this tension between the orient and the occident. When studying in Kala Bhavana he learnt that understanding modernity through tradition is the essence of art practice. And when he was a teacher he tried to pass on the same belief among his students. Hence he says, "It is important for an artist to have a multi-dimensional approach. One track thinking cannot make one an artist. There was no option for specialization in Kala Bhavana during our times. We had to learn everything. I have realized this from my lost stint as a teacher."

We often see two different mindsets in the art practices of different countries. The mindset varies with the usage of ingredients one uses in making art with. Some creators have tried to express themselves through the materials used. For them the main things about their art are paper, cloth, wall etc which are the mediums of his expressions. In the second school of thought, ingredient or medium is considered an impediment. And in order to transcend this barrier 'perspective' has been conceived. And with that came the trend of following different styles. There was a particular belief in following different styles. The idea of that belief says that the quality of a thing is superior to its shape. (Mukhopadhyay: 1983)

This ideal of Nandalal can be directly perceived in Partha Pratim. And the artist himself has written 99 essays on the subject, 'Nandalal Bose and on Art Education'. It is quite natural that the influence of a Guru of Nandalal's stature was very powerfully instilled in Partha Pratim. The above mentioned essays have been published in the journal of Faculty of Visual Arts, Rabindra Bharati University. We see an ideal teacher in Partha Pratim. He has found his form through his teaching experiences. The repertoire of the artist includes ink drawing, oil painting, and acrylic painting on canvas or paper. He prefers to work on mixed medium. But his most cherished medium is the discarded and junk object wherefrom he makes Alternative art practice. His creations give birth to a synthesis of painting, sculpture and installation. He has given expression to many post modern nuances in his work. In such works we can find an implicit humor and sarcasm. Partha Pratim himself has said, "It will not be right to confer my work as painting or sculpture. I call them art work. In order to engage oneself in art it is imperative for the artist to know and understand himself. I have always tried to do that and the urge to present a single work in diverse ways was always there inside me. And in sub-conscious a strong sense of humor is always at work. There are idiosyncrasies in me which I tend not to express in front of others. My daughter had once said that instead of being an artist I would have been more successful as a comedian in movies."

5.3 A JOURNEY THROUGH FUN

Partha Pratim always wanted to make his art far removed from the conventional stereotypes. He wanted them to outgrow the limitations of being called just painting, or sculpture or installation and become something greater in scope. He never believed that painting should always be on a two dimensional surface or that sculpture should follow certain prevalent rules. In the end of the sixties and beginning of the seventies when he was working at the Maharani Tulsibati Girls School in Agartala it was only his indomitable creative energy that was his companion.. After working at Tripura for some time he joined the visual arts department of Rabindra Bharati University of Kolkata in 1972. It was a coincidence that most of the professors of this university then were young and they cherished a desire to do something new

in the field of art. Partha Pratim started his experimental work in canvas or paper with sawdust, Fevicol and enamel. For example he applied fevicol to the two dimensional surface of a square canvas and then created small asymmetrical squares with saw dust. Then he used enamel color to create designs. It looked like a series of pastries with various colored icing as they might appear from above. When Abanindranath used to teach his students he always made something on his own too. By doing this he made his students learn from his own actions. This tradition of imparting learning was kept alive by his student Nandalal Bose. Like many teachers who are from Santiniketan, Partha Pratim too followed this tradition. He used to make such art objects from regular objects that it changed our way of seeing those objects. His creations remind us of the *Kutum Katam* work of Abanindranath which the latter made with abandoned roots and trunks of trees. On the other hand his use of paper chits over the surface of the objects reminds us of Nandalal's and Benode Behari's collage. (Som: 2013)

Partha Pratim need not know that there was a long tradition of thought on creative motive, in Sanskrit, comprising copious discourses on Leela as the prime mover in creativity, or better, the creative activity. Leela is the no-win-no-loss game that the divine creator plays, resulting in creation of the sensory universals – filling the creator with Ananda (bliss). All pranamay and manamay beings born of divine play inherit this capacity of attaining bliss from no-loss-no-gain play creation of sensuous objects, those transcending mundane usefulness. The deliverer of the *Bageswari lectures* on art was surely conversant with the discourses on the concept of Leela, but Abanindranath, the artist, while playing with twigs and drift-wood, to bring into being the images which lay eminent in those to be discovered by Abanindranath's gaze-directed hands, to be transformed into surprising images, was not so much intellectually motivated as by curiosity, joy of play and bliss from creative fulfillment. Partha Pratim Deb has a very personal way of looking around himself- a world full of Bengali middle-class beings and the objects of their daily use. He neither represents them, nor their objects of daily use.. He takes up discarded and worn-out objects of middle class daily use, and transforms those, just as Abanindranath did, following his personal gaze

to turn those found objects into funny mirthful images, with significant social-critical undertones, indicating a departure from Abanindranath's play. Consumerist habit of making obsolete all that were once loved is the target of his oblique statements. (Ray: 2013) He enjoys a certain quite liberalism, which allows him to tread effortlessly between the apparent distinct territories of art and craft thereby creating a new visual language. His sharp wit often borders tragic-comedy and turn objects of daily utility namely shirts, bottles, brushes, ropes, shoes into extraordinary metaphors. The age old element of 'play', an integral part of Bengali art and literature plays a dominant role in Deb's visual expression. Deb's contemporaneity borders interesting post modern ideas and shows an exciting amalgamation of humour, social reality, sensuality; in other words, a unique inner vision. "My works are immediate, equally mixed in method and intention" comments Deb on his own works. (Cima: 2001)

In his early works in the seventies the face (portrait) had extended from the crucial location through which one identifies, remembers a person. In the face emotional turbulences are mirrored, with characteristic insight, Partha Pratim's drawings of faces explore and figure out the depths of human expression and record the varying path on the surface of different dimensions of the inner person(Plate 5.41) and (Plate 5.42). In this intimately personal exercise we had claimed that the finishing drew attention to the face and that more than merely confine a believable likeness. Partha pratim was concerned about developing the face as an obvious form, solidly modeled in light. We had also inferred that casualness was an important contributory factor to the picture and resolute the representation of form and space in a unified pictorial relationship (Plate 5.37) and (Plate 5.38). We could perhaps reverse the emphasis now, to declare that a strongly believable individual likeness was certainly the central motivation which the representation and the chromatic circulation improved. Not only had Partha Pratim mastered and manipulated his grasp over a language of pragmatism to enter at the portrayal of a specific individual in all the distinctiveness of facial formation, proportion and dimension, but he had been able to employ the works of such language to register an index to the personality of his model. In one of the moustache

beard man's portrait has been worked out in a fascinating wealth of detail (Plate 5.36). The specificity of the individual is strongly underscored not only in proportion but also in the constituent elements of the face. The slightly side face eyes that look straight out at the viewer. Partha Pratim chose his line on bold brush strokes with dark values like artist Cezanne and acknowledging his response to the person as an individual (Plate 5.39) and (Plate 5.40). Besides the portrait painting artist also nourished his experimental composition with oil colour and another medium. Gradually the social comments make a stand with his experiment. In the middle of the seventies his one image reflects that: where an artist paints a jute bag full of food. Below a number of people are buried under the weight of this bag. Only the heads of these people are visible. Here the satire is on the pressure felt by the common man due to price rise (Plate 5.12).

Another image is relevant to be discussed here where the artist draws a box full of clothes. The cover of the box is open. This type of leather suitcase which was popular in the seventies is not used now a day. Hence the suitcase here is representative of a time period (Plate 5.33).

Besides these portrayals, the artist's experimentation makes a different way in the middle phase of seventies. His drawing based works leave an individual mark (Plate 5.45) and (Plate 5.46). The drawing of the artist comprises of an important chapter of his works. The social consciousness and also the truth of life have been expressed through diverse layers in these drawings. The black and white drawings with few strokes often create an effect which is often unattained in paintings with a riot of colors. It is quite natural that the style of an artist is infused in the social and political reality in which he works or in which he has grown up. The same has happened with Partha Pratim. In his drawings made with ink one can see a number of faces (Plate 5.61) and (Plate 5.62). He has studied people with strange characteristics. Those people belonged to diverse profession, fields and backgrounds. Their bizarre style of sitting or standing, asymmetrical limbs and body parts, designs of their dresses add a different tint to his work. In the faces of these people one can see the known yet strange world of diverse human emotions including humor, satire, kindness and sympathy (Plate 5.58)

and (Plate 5.64). The body languages are that of women, girls or at times boys. The figures are all distorted; some are crouching like animals while others are crawling like reptiles. From the different postures and facial expressions of the figures it can be said that the artist is inclined towards humor- where he is trying to uphold the way of seeing and showing human beings. Again at times the figures appear sullen. Actually it is the diversity and contradiction of human life that has been reflected in Partha Pratim's drawings.

Lines have always been the forte of Partha pratim and in his drawings, (Plate 5.60) he creates webs which on their own seem to metamorphose into human forms-one like a mummy, draped as it is with never ending puttees-and that of a large cockerel. His sense of humour livens up the proceedings. One cannot miss the followers at the feet of the great guru. (Das: 2007)

Art writer Anirudh Chari examines in his essay 'The Draughtsman and his craft' that, drawings are the keys to an artist's personality for painters, they are akin to signatures, although very complicated ones. Under the spell of the versatile Partha Pratim Deb, one is tempted to declare that few can draw as imaginatively as he, Drawings are often viewed as a preliminary process in the evolution of a work of art – a method of thinking through ideas or a tool for mapping out structure rather than an end in itself. They, however, have an immediacy and freshness which can be perceived as a more authentic, unadulterated impression of the artist's creative vision. In them can be discerned the purest manifestation of the mysteries of artistic inspiration and an understanding of a creative idea through its essential traits. Deb manages to convey all this and more through his drawings which reveal both a fluid stream of his creative ideas and his thinking process. There is also a marvelous energy about them that transcends mere movement and play. Humour, a relatively rare presence in art, is treated with considerable suspicion by most viewers and critics but Deb's treatment of his subjects is perceptive as well as funny. In his drawings he is able to explore the earthy and quotidian as a reproach to the spiritual and a negation of the ideal. He is able to perceive incongruous relationships and express them in a pointed manner. (Plate 5.59) These works offer visual sermons without preaching.

Deb's drawings brim with the fineness and foibles of the human condition. They compress inspiration, virtuoso skill and the implicit gamble of creating art into a single experience; reducing the path from idea to artwork into a few lines. Yet their crisp geometry and radiating patterns are as much about artistic thought as artistic action and prove the inadequacy of language to portray any visual outcome. There is a great deal of visual opulence in this art. His women, for example, are celebrations of high camp stylized, curvilinear and more than faintly kinky. They are identified by sensuous fingers and extravagant hairdos. His taste for precise detail and stylized though highly idiosyncratic motifs is oddly reminiscent of miniature painting. Deb's importance as an artist of enormous ability and influence can be measured by a quick survey of the quality draughtsmanship to emerge from Rabindra Bharati University. His gestural, calligraphic works are infused with a stylish contemporary energy and primordial sense of material although he is, in some very fundamental sense, committed to the figure ranging from those with suave matinee idol smoothness to others filled with nervous energy, squinting out at the viewer, suggesting aggressive and troubled personae. The emotional ambiguity of the figures is not without interest either. Whether stooped and mechanical with long arms and spindly legs or spare, androgynous creatures with cartoon like features and bulging, forlorn eyes, they demonstrate the inner mechanics of a career and what makes it tick (Plate 5.26). Abstract interiors with cubist geometry are as much a part of Deb's oeuvre as biomorphic surrealism. His lines take off. Swirl wildly but ultimately find psychic equilibrium, a balance between abandon and control like a great gymnasi or dancer. This devotion to drawing, to the act of laying down lines on a surface, far exceeds mere academic convention. For Deb, drawing appears to carry existential weight without the defining, containing quality of which all is confusion and chaos looms large. His dry, ironic humour is apparent in the way his lines are precisely and judiciously weighted, the forms they define so lucid. All this from a man frequently derided as a mere "apparatchik of culture". The absurdity of this statement becomes even more apparent when one considers that though a rigorous and meticulous craftsman, anything and everything, whether high or low, is welcome in his democratic art. The penchant for distorted, if not invented, bodies and beings

that merge satire and beauty in varying ratios suggests a unique modernism. Interestingly, the visual style is fairly consistent and seems as much based on closely observed reality as anything else. Deb treats classical themes in less than ideal terms, creating a disturbing feeling that is heightened, but real. Most of his subjects are familiar but re-contextualised. In what they encompass or allude to, these works transcend the comically grotesque or the quest for objectivity. They are a relentless scrutiny of the world, ranging from scathing social commentary to opulent ornamentalism. On all scores, though, the artistic attention is contemplative rather than confrontational. Assessing the works in terms of their insight, interest, coherence, complexity, depth or intelligibility, involves a cluster of notions that are interdependent. The grotesque element in Deb's art greatly adds to its value. It does not, however, descend into perverse nihilism which is not an artistically legitimate instance of the grotesque (Plate 5.43) and (Plate 5.44). There also appears to be an obsession with aberration that matches his pessimism about humanity which is at odds with his charming and witty personality. In the larger sense, Deb's drawings constitute a psychologically charged hall of mirrors where the representation of individuals and types, the quirky and the deluded, the knowing and the devouring has a unique sharpness. His sense of humour is dark and his works comically sinister and charming studies in black wit (Plate 5.49) and (Plate 5.50). It is difficult to tell whether his forms are playing it straight or manipulating the viewer. There is a definite element of the artist chuckling quietly to himself, steeping back and observing the context he is producing with a sardonic eye and observing himself within that same context with the same eye. This is art which can be both loved and respected for its audacity and its touch. Most moving however, is how, in image after image, Deb refuses to relinquish art's traditional subjects in his pursuit of a novel creative experience. He progressively examines, reworks and sometimes pulverises forms and figures, fusing, them with a uniquely idiosyncratic consciousness and pouring the mixture into a technically sophisticated, highly original mould. The illuminating intimacy of these works is able to provide a glimpse into the inner workings of his mind and eye. He just seems incapable of holding back, producing dark yet witty images of spaces and those that inhabit them. (Chari: 2008)

Deb's paper works show his individual humor and sharp wit. Even when he depicts a well known subject matter, such as Adam and Eve, it is done so in his own distinct style. This amalgamation of humor, social reality and sensuality along with a creative playfulness is visible in all of his works. (www.aicongallery.com:5.5.2014) In the work titled 'Adam and Eve' is to some extend drawing dependent (Plate 5.51). In the middle part of the surface there is a serpentine genital shaped tree like form. From the upper side it appears as if the male genital is inserted inside the vagina. The artist has used the form as a metaphor. The artist uses this form to show a man and a woman engrossed among themselves. The male figure has a flower in his hand. This picture too carries a message of social satire or humour. The message passed through this painting is that in today's society there is no concept of privacy or personal space. It can be said that living a reckless life in the garb of love is now a social ill.

Another drawing by the artist titled 'Around a Tree' is also pertinent here (Plate 5.52). It depicts a group of men and women playing tug of war. Another drawing is 'The Hand'. The artist has drawn a hand in the entire canvas (Plate 5.53). The hand is the symbol of a political party. Again the hand is also representative of the disparity between the have and the have not. From time immemorial man has been doing his work with this hand. The hand is the prime tool in the advancement of civilization. The hand painted in this picture has myriad lines which are haphazard, undulated, asymmetrical and at times parallel. This hand is not a soft one but looks quite hardy.

Partha pratim once wrote about his drawings-''Viewers will realise that there's an element of fun in all my drawings. Since I concentrate on human figures, I am able to effect quick expressions through the use of ink. I don't think in colour I would have been able to achieve the same effect. I see humour in every form, and so the fingers and eyes are the principal modes of expression for me. I draw them with great pleasure.'' Partha pratim's drawings show what a resourceful, inventive and imaginative artist he is. More than a craft, his works display a clever play of style and highly refined emotional intelligence. His figures are mechanical with long arms and spindly legs or spare, androgynous creatures with cartoon-like features and bulging forlorn

eyes (Plate 5.47) and (Plate 5.48). His women are stylized, curvilinear and more than faintly kinky. They are identified by sensuous fingers and extravagant hairdos. The show is full of telling comparisons which simultaneously portray the subtle vagaries of the drawings medium and human personality. (Catalogue: 2008)

It would be interesting to examine his paintings in light of what we know of his life and his views. In all his works, Deb created a world that is personal and intimate. His two-dimensional work on paper and canvas, are but a segment of his creative endeavor. His paintings are of two distinct types; they are either abstract or figurative. Like a pendulum, he consecutively touches abstraction and figuration, never limiting himself to a stereotype (Plate 5.1). His free play of colours and his inanimate forms provoke sentience with their purity. They show what they are. They do not recall similarity and hence are not comparable to anything beyond them. They represent a vision that does not vie with Nature. These compositions showing contrasts of darks against lights, warmer colours against cool ones with their vestigial presence call for a new aesthetic. They exalt the pure relationship of colours and forms, textures and tones, positives and negatives. Partha pratim's set of figurative works do not clash with his abstract ones (Plate 5.4) and (Plate 5.7). On the other hand they make us aware of the fact that reality is infinitely mutable and offers possibilities of alternatives and metamorphic portent. These animals and human figures in comical postures and clownish stances obliquely refer to our marginal existence in the present day reality (Plate 5.24). A figure seemingly participating in a sack-race, the visage of a physiognomanic clown that resembles a mask, rows of people on the victory stand, a goat or an animal floating precariously in a void, are nothing but ponderomotive forms related to the Jungian concept of individuation. Deb sculpts time into a psycho-physical form. Both these two sets of works, the abstracts and the figuratives, have one thing common in them, that is, they are predominantly gestural. (Som: 2006)

There were diverse styles of the artist's work. But the defining side of Partha Pratim's work is his social satire. After making figures for a long time he at times tends towards the non-figurative and worked with the abstract

form. In shifting from the figurative to the non-figurative the artist has taken the help of geometric divide. Though he has treaded the path of Abstraction he has not done away with lines and turbidity. Keeping the lines intact he has tried to make use of colors and texture (Plate 5.5) and (Plate 5.3). We have seen the same in Paul Klee's work. But in case of Partha Pratim's work we see the influence of Pop Art to be the greatest. It will be relevant here to mention Richard Hamilton's (1922-2011) 1956 made Photo montage named, 'just what is it that makes today's houses so different so appealing'. In this composition we can see the interiors of a house. The atmosphere is created by pasting selected photographs. The contemporary life is presented through the desires and fantasies of middle class people. Pop art is normally unaesthetic. It strives to make art by using used materials. It tries to connect art with common man. There is an implicit satire into it. It also tries to strike a blow. And in this endeavor it transcends from modernity and becomes post modern. Mention of another British artist David Hockney (b.1937) will be relevant here. He did not use advertisement or comic strips in his works but used his and friends' and relatives' faces and figures and also the things used by them. And in doing that he was successful in creating a humorous and satirical effect.

The next decade is when we begin to encounter the more familiar corpus of the artist's imagery alongside the first specialised traits of his genre of oil and mixed medium paintings. His evolution over the 70s,80s and 90s has been tracked largely in terms of two central influences on his work- first, his fascination with the narrative and decorative idioms of early miniature painting, and then his increasing play with the visual vocabulary of western pop art.

We can discuss here one image which is a collage painting. There was a social change in the Nineties immediately after globalization. The change was not only in economy but also in culture and in the everyday food habits. We shifted from our traditional foods and started eating pasta, pizza, noodles et al. The artist has ridiculed that in this painting (Plate 5.10).

Another image has also a social comment. Here we can see male and female figures busy in a make-over. The artist has made a satirical presentation of this theme. The men and women in the picture are sitting in strange fashion with face pack on their faces. In the present society both men and women are busy in skin care (Plate 5.25).

Another image (Plate 5.9) reflects on same matter. Taj Mahal is a must see destination for any foreign delegate visiting India. The tradition of delegates posing with their spouses while the Taj Mahal is seen as a backdrop is not new. In this painting the artist has ridiculed that tradition. In this painting of mixed media the artist has used the photographic reference of Taj Mahal. In front of the monument he has drawn the leader and his wife who have Coca Cola in their hands. And in the entire surface of the painting there are balloons flying around. The balloons look like whole pea nuts. The artist has criticized the open economy of the Nineties in this painting. Mrinal Ghosh has written from the exhibition at Academy of Fine Arts, named, 'Contemporary Bengal Art' – In spite of being an artist of the Seventies, Partha Pratim has outdone the prevalent tendencies. Partha Pratim can be called the pioneer of the new beginning that can be noticed in the later period. Pop art is one of the main ways of his art expressions. He has taken fantasy towards grotesque. He has raised the feeling of realistic opposition through the mix of irony and humor in his forms. The work named 'The Big Bazar' is a collection of 20 small drawings. The drawings have been made on paper bags. The subjects are human figures, bird, frog, fish etc. The irony here is at the consumerism of today's society. 'The Big society' is the collection of 35 pictures where we can see the diverse experimentation and sense of texture of the artist. (Ghosh: 2010) The artist has for long painted figures of man and woman which are very diverse in their appearance. The differences can be seen in their postures of sitting or standing at times the figures appear twisted. The figures are representative of the resentment springing from social experiences. In this painting also the artist has juxtaposed the human figures in bizarre postures with that of machine (Plate 5.63) and (Plate 5.54).

There are several other images as well that come close to the characteristics discussed above, and shed light on Partha Pratim's work

process. One of the examples, in this picture (Plate 5.22) there is a fusion of satire and humor with sympathy. The painting looks like a circus arena. There are four human figures dressed like tigers who perform games in the circuses. But they are not real tigers. The figures look tired and drained at the end of the show. The background of the picture has bright red and green colors. At one corner there is a lighted bulb. Though the figures perform games replicating the activities of a tiger they are seen dependent on crutches. All the four figures are seen with crutches. In a similar statement of conviction, a man dressed like a joker is seen juggling with a ball (Plate 5.18). The balls are all in the air. However, the balls are of not same in shape. The artist has not painted the eyes of the joker. He has used them allegorically. In the background the artist has used the reference of photograph where one can see the some laughing human figures.

In another painting a man is sitting in a strange fashion (Plate 5.2). He is wearing a sun glass. His hair style too looks fashionable. The apron like attire of the figure creates humor. The dress looks like a chess board. It has the checkered pattern of the chess board from the chest to the tummy. Partha Pratim has an innate ability towards the language of fun; this natural propensity is evident in many of his paintings. Artist draw in a painting, where a man is seen wearing a blue dress. He is trying to do a summersault with his head down. Behind two jokers are seen watching the man with blue dress (Plate 5.20). Another image reflects of a man, who occupies the entire canvas. He has fencing sword in his hand as if he is tired after a shadow fight with himself. His exhaustion is visible from his posture. The man is placed on a chess board while above his head is a fan which is not working. The painting is a depiction of the struggle for existence that a man has to engage with in this present world. The painting is a social satire on this subject (Plate 5.23).

The mid 70s to late 90s saw a distinct lightening of the mood and content of Deb's compositions. A new spirit of joviality and satire become relevant to his pictorial narratives, encoded in a raw brightness of palette, a greater voluptuousness and girth of figures and a more playful repertoire of human characters. During 80s, there were remarkable radical changes in the

outlook of artist. In this period new insights and manifestation and styles and structures developed. There was an unparalleled emphasis on individual expression and personal symbols, a curious mixture of socio-political and cultural aspects, as also personal fantasy, often combined with satire. Partha Pratim Deb expresses his art through many different medium including small abstract vignettes scratched out postcards, large bas-relief assemblages on board, oil on canvas paintings as well as delicate yet powerful ink on paper works. His ink on paper works evokes an impressive complexity through simplicity, akin to Paul Klee's 'taking a line for a walk' drawings. Deb possesses qualities of a master draftsman, for example a single line, straight and horizontal, can become the horizon, the hull of a boat, the division of two dimensional space or a roof top. Similarly twenty or more, streaming in parallel across a page can create a flag, shimmering water or a rolling hill. These elements make his work instantly recognizable and extremely engaging. (www.aicongallery.com:5.5.2014)

For instance, one of the artist's canvases titled 'Invited' (Plate 5.6). The main theme of the acrylic on canvas work is request to come to an entertainment. In the sixties, seventies or eighties there was prevalence of bioscope in rural areas and also in the fairs. Short films of the bioscopes seen through several holes in a box, was a popular entertainment for people then. One such abstract bioscope is placed along the name of the painting. The work also shows a group of people elated after an apparent forbidden film through the bioscope. The art work reflects the degeneration and destruction of human lives as a result of the pervasive inanity and kitsch. How the common man strives to retain the bliss and diverse experience of life and how the surrounding pressure, politics and society takes from them their struggle for a good life is what is represented in the work. While the artist's dark, humorous and playful depictions of social depravity had sharply critical undertones, they were much too obvious at times and left little to the viewer's imagination.

In his another work titled 'The Music'; this is a wonderful picture (Plate 5.17) of satiric humor. At the centre of the painting is a structure, resembling a dotted condom. This is a very symbolic form as the apex of the condom is

punctures signifying premature ejaculation. And the genital shaped condom at the middle of the painting divides the canvas into two parts thus creating a humorous perspective. The entire painting is replete with human figures sitting on chairs. Each of them has a balloon in his hand. The social reality has been depicted in the painting is a satiric manner. The true picture of population explosion is painted dexterously here. The artist might be seeking to express this grim reality through the picture.

In the new decade artist to infuse a sensory outlook and socialistic base into his work is noticed. This was unlike the unclassified mannerism in the highly personal expression, without any of the constraints of purpose, technique, drawing, design which had been taking place in some of the post-modern art work in the west. The works produced in this period show that Deb were taking a renewed interest in depicting the subject matter. A change in taste from mere experimentation of technique and form to creating works which express a certain concern. The concern may vary from depicting inner substance to external manifestation or social concern. Deb continues to react to everyday scenes and express his emotions in a highly individual interpretation of today's society. Whether it is the colour, texture or the near caricature form of the human figure, he intensifies his personal emotional expressions through elements of distortion. His images convey a depth of feeling for the suffering humanity.

Deb's works entitled 'Aspiration-V', we can see rounded shapes scattered across this canvas (Plate 5.30). These rounded figures are different colored solid forms. Presence of male and female figures is visible behind these rounded figures. All these human figures are present in diverse poses and postures. Also present are the depiction of daily social corruption, complexity, deception and the aspiration of the middle class. All these are expressed in the facial expressions, activities and body language of the human figures. The walk of life for the common man is compared to the trundling along of a wheel; at times the path appears smooth at times rugged.

In the other painting entitled 'Aspiration-IV' there are human figures in crawling position. The surface of the canvas in this painting is not smooth. It is

more like a brick wall. In a sarcastic way the artist is trying to portray that the downfall of the human characters. It is because of this that one can find a conscious use of chaos in the composition of his figures and forms. This chaos portrays the incongruous, illogical environment of a society. It also presents a painful social reality where everyone is busy is a futile game (Plate 5.32).

'Aspiration-III' is a fun filled painting. The canvas surface here is divided into two parts. The upper part is black or grey while the lower part id red. The red part depicts an abyss or water. This is evident from the divers' shoes that the artist has painted at the feet of the human figures whose postures appear strange. The artistic inquisition towards life has been reflected in many of his works. In those works one can see a synthesis of humor with resentment. In this painting the artist has created an effect of mystery of the imaginary world along with that of surrealism. It is evident from the fact that the human figures here are wearing glasses or divers' shoes(Plate 5.31).

'Aspiration-XI' is the painting of nude female figures (Plate 5.29). The figures are half immersed in water. A portion of their naked breasts is visible. The painting reminds the *Kangra* painting where Lord Krishna is seen in his escapade in water with the lady companions. Here the artist has mixed the simplicity of folk art with the geometric structure of cubism. But the trace of his main source i.e. pop art is also present in the painting. The middle class which is a product of colonialism as well as colonial modernity and also the helplessness that springs from the self estrangement among this class is presented by the artist in the composition of this picture. From one side the character of this painting is revolutionary and is a social analysis. In case of this painting the artist has interchanged the meaning of figure and symbol. Image and symbol or the 'signifier' and 'signified' have been reversed in mutual implications. He has also shown that the best possible use of traditional miniature painting cane be immensely effective. In this painting Partha Pratim instead of following the familiar path of assembling has struck present world reality with the ancient miniature tradition.

In the painting entitled ‘Dream Maker’ by Partha Pratim one can see two human figures (Plate 5.34). They are seen weaving dreams. The entire surface is replete with red clouds. The human figures are busy in creating the clouds. They carry shaving foam in their hands. The foam cans when pressed release foam. The figures are trying to make clouds from the foam. The painting has been influenced by popularity of information technology, industrial lookout and angle. It also reflects how the information technology and the advance of technology in general have changed the lives of the people of the upper section of the society. On the other hand though the technology booms have resulted in a trickle-down effect to the lower section of the society, it has not succeeded in making any significant change to the abject poverty and illiteracy rampant in the section. Hence when a section of people is thinking that man can produce clouds and rains, a contradiction is arising on the issue regarding whether man will be nature’s servant or it will be the other way round. The painting, ‘Dream Maker’ is actually Partha Pratim’s banter to such a precarious scenario.

5.4 PARTHA PRATIM AND HIS NEW VISUAL LANGUAGE

A significant side of Partha Pratim’s work is his Alternative Art Practice. In doing this he has used found object, paper pulp, thread, printed paper, saw dust, sand, plaster of Paris, board roll, ceramics, stone dust, painted canvas strips, m-seal, enamel colour, oil color, acrylic color, terracotta etc. While analyzing the work period of the artist we can see in his entire life he has used all these material. In these materialistic art works reflect the society, politics, humor and sarcasm. The artists have enjoyed doing these alternative art practices. Here the artist has used pressure cooker, frying pan, hot bag, *hookah*, *lantern*, letter box etc as his objects. In the body of these objects the artist has at times wrapped ropes or applying paper pulp, or bright colors, or even used drawings. He has constructed and deconstructed the form at his will. Here the background is that of fantasy. But that fantasy is replete with social reality and realism. The human figures that he has made in this kind of works put up a comic face. And this comic element or satire is the reflection of day to day social and political reality. The daily corruption, complexity, deception, and subterfuge of the social structure are shown in the faces

activities and postures of the human figures. In these works one can find an absurd logic but not an absurd background. The background of Partha Pratim's work is realistic because a *Hookah* (Plate 5.90) or a letter box (Plate 5.74) carries the message of social reality. Partha Pratim creates his world very cautiously and deliberately. His craftsmanship is depicted in the canvas through sheer dedication. The play of craftsmanship is another language of his work. In case of composition he gives importance to a kind of path breaking instability or flux. The experimentation with colors that has gone into these works is also note worthy. The artist has used colors like red, yellow, green, blue, black etc in very bright tones. In their use the colors have created a pop art impression that is both magical and satiric. It so appears that the entire society is but some colorful bubbles or some irksome movie seen during the frenzy of fever, a movie that makes man conscious of the biting reality.

The expressions and body language of the everyday objects used in Partha Pratim's art work speak of a craftsmanship that conveys a criticism against the socially powerful. The use of color and form helps in creating a fantasy world. This fantasy while condemning the consumerism, establishment and power also acts as a critique for the artist. This is because the artist too is a user and consumer of all these. It is as if he himself is a victim of all this and helpless in his mediocrity.

Partha Pratim always wanted to make his art removed from the conventional stereotypes. He wanted them to outgrow the limitations of being called just painting, or sculpture or installation and become something greater in scope. He never believed that painting should always be on a two dimensional surface or that sculpture should follow certain prevalent rules. He has got artists like Nandalal, Benode Behari , Ramkinkar, K.G. Subramanyan in various phases of his life. Though Nandalal was retired when Partha Pratim joined Kala Bhavana but he was still active as an artist then. After working at Tripura for some time he joined the visual arts department of Rabindra Bharati University of Kolkata in 1972. Partha Pratim started his experimental work in canvas or paper with sawdust, fevicol and enamel. For example he applied fevicol to the two dimensional surface of a square canvas and then created

small asymmetrical squares with saw dust. Then he used enamel color to create designs. It looked series of pastries with various colored icing as they might appear from above (Plate 5.88). When Abanindranath used to teach his students he always made something on his own too. By doing this he made his students learn from his own actions. This tradition of imparting learning was kept alive by his student Nandalal Bose. Like many teachers who are from Santiniketan, Partha Pratim too followed this tradition. He used to make such art objects from regular objects that it changed our way of seeing those objects. His creations remind us of the *Kutum Katam* work of Abanindranath which the Latter made with abandoned roots and trunks of trees. On the other hand his use of papers chits over the surface of the objects reminds us of Nandalal's and Benode Behari's collage. At times he used twisted ropes and colors to create small human figures. That abandoned stove, shirt can be used as surface of three dimensional painting was learnt from his works. In one of his works he has changed the shape of different bottles to give the form of human figure. In another he has painted a hot water bag in yellow and placed various terracotta human figures in reclining positional over it (Plate 5.87). At times he has made colored frying pan full of sweets or eggs. At other instances he makes bright colored plate full of different food (Plate 5.78). He has also at times cut down the canvas and the joined it again to create various three dimensional forms and then colored them. In doing this he did away with the conventional concept of two dimensional canvases. In one work different form made from three dimensional canvases appears to be coming out from a square surface. Humor is the defining element of his works. In many ways he resembles Marcel Duchamp's famous creation 'Fountain'. In one of his works he has used a urinal/fountain and has placed in it a number of insect like forms as is seen in television ads and in front of it he has placed a fix like sculpture whose tail is a bottle washer. His art works were not made consistently. There have been gaps of couple years in between. His works have received ridicule and appreciation both, but that has not deterred the artist's quest for creation. (Som: 2013) In 1917 when Marcel Duchamp presented an abandoned urinal as a piece of art then he was actually voicing his rebel self through it. In 1942 Pablo Picasso made the head of a bull with the seat and handle of a cycle. In 1932-33 Abanindranath designed the

‘Khuddur Jatra’ with pictures cut from newspaper. It reflected a piquant irony of the social condition in a playful way. In 1960 Benode Behari Mukhopadhyay created a picture with paper, cloth, leather etc. From the apparent playfulness a new horizon of beaty was emerging. Today Partha Pratim is an established artist of this form. All his art works begin in a playful manner. But they never end playfully. He has toughed different crisis of life through his playfulness. (Ghosh: 2013)

Art writer Pranabranjan Ray has writes- “*Deb has a very personal way of looking around himself- a world full of Bengali middle-class beings and the objects of their daily use. He neither represents them, nor their objects of daily use. Partha Pratim’s art is take on those. He takes up discarded and worn-out objects of middle class daily use, and transforms those, just as Abanindranath did, following his personal gaze to turn those found objects into funny mirthful images, with significant social-critical undertones, indicating a departure from Abanindranth’s play. Consumerist habit of making obsolete all that were once loved is the target of Partha’s oblique statements. Although Partha Pratim’s colourful re-configuration of once sought-after commodities turned to useless junks into decontextualised images, bearing new meaning, seem to have family resemblances with Marcel Duchamp, and especially with Robert Rauschenberg’s re-configuration of industrial junks, he displays none of angry criticality that can be discerned in their acts of compositing the imagery. Partha Pratim, like his gurus, Nandalal (viz. the hand torn paper images), Benode Behari (viz. the cut-and-paste paper collages) and Subramanyan (viz. the toys made with found carved wood and leather pieces), seems to enjoy merrily the process of turning the discarded objects into images by playing with them*.’’(Ray: 2013)

In his work there is no place for archetypal imagery or any dogmatic choice. So in the choice of his subjectivity he moves all the time and does not refer always to the same context. But quintessential to him is a kind of analogical train of thought that dominates his psyche and enables him to translate the idea into form. He gathers seemingly useless items ranging from industrial products or natural materials. He then combines them or reassembles them to make his metaphorical statements. For Deb objects

constructed need a subjective interpretation. At this juncture metaphors find their way into his work needs explanations. As an artist he never alienates himself from the society. So while making things e.g. a pipe that hung loose down the peg made up of wrapping coconut-fiber rope around the skeleton of a galvanized wire are potent of messages. To him pipes are essential to life for distributing, linking and forcing out a waste. In his playful attitude the existing meaning of a pipe, which functions as a channel that links human society becomes ironical when he attaches papier-mache alphabets reading Line, Link and Luck on it thereby criticizes the three factors that play behind the making of a reputation of an artist in today's society.

The shoe rack hung from the peg, shelves worn off shoes repainted with dots and stripes, in garish colors may apparently denote the changing fashion of the current society looking at them. The viewer may also like to pick and choose according to his or may comment upon the design. But they stand as a symbol for social hierarchy projected through the footwear symbolizing our social landscape. This kind of indexical sign is very much a part of his moral sense and sensibilities that often pop up in his work. It is here; he alters or manipulates the meaning of so-called commodities objects. Again his particular cast of mind is brought out in the world of objects when he chooses a chopping blade, which is atypical to Bengali kitchen, is simply made non-functional when hooked on to the wall. Putting the object out of context denotes the Duchampian doctrine. But it also has a message, which stands as a symbol for broken family, which is also non-functional unit. However a light bronze tint is put on this readymade piece to provide it a facelift which otherwise looks sculptural. Likewise, *Belna Chaki*, a circular bed on which dough are rolled out by a rod like structure, is made to stand vertically on a shallow pedestal is painted white. For the artist it stands as a symbol of *Dhaba*'s that nourishes the hungry people. Thus the thrust and counter thrust of daily life is overtly conceivable in his objects put together. The codes, symbols, clichés of everyday reality therefore are appropriated and released to the world of viewer is in line with postmodern sensibility. The mysterious forces of nature like the organic growth, finds expression, when he shapes up forms like bottle gourd or radish with papier-mache. These vegetal forms

show luxurious growth of foliage. The foliages are given shape by stitching pieces of canvas that configures flexibility. Also by dint of stitching canvas pieces he obtains fetish objects meant for hanging. This idea of stitching canvas pieces was taken from the toy-making workshop of Sukumar Dutta in a conscious endeavor from his part. Besides as Deb hails from Tripura, the rich tradition of Tripura's craft may have unconsciously influenced the artist in constructing such objects.

For Deb, art and humour are closely related. And for him pure wisdom springs from pure humour. That is why mockery as an acknowledgement of wisdom often surfaces in his work. He in one of his works ably drives a religious tincture to a ridiculous height when he places three bottles that read dollar, yen and rupees in a worship throne instead of idols. This suggests people's attitude for the love of money or the basic human requirement. Such a pedestal then changes its meaning and passes on the artist's comment on today's money-minded society. This is how he alters the sign of clichéd image of divinity and makes fun of it. He uses the ubiquitous image of a T-shirt to voice the achievements of today's world of communication that has developed very fast to make our world small and self-contained. For this work he has taken up a real T-shirt suspended form a hanger. On the surface of a readymade T-shirt he has collaged bits and pieces of newspaper, magazine headlines in black and white to send direct messages about the sign of our times. The bold letters in black and white upholds the cultural episodes, telephonic revolution, ecological campaigning etc. But not only words, he also combines cartoon, hand-drawn people that establish links between the messages delivered. So he gathers and passes on what comes to him from the depths in an amusing tone, which becomes very significant in his work. Stitched canvas pieces are used in many of his works. However, a proboscis-like structure that comes out of a framed canvas surface and hung low is just an experiment again to stand between the threshold of painting and sculpture. It mirrors a craft force in his work. On the whole objects constructed have a metaphorical connection or metonymic representation to the world at large. But the specialty of his work can be traced when it comes to the question of placement. His objects that have ironical, mocking or sympathetic attitude can

be placed in the corner of a room, drama-stage or in a staircase. As the most profound divide in the world of culture, elite and popular has thinned down and the practice of incorporating objects and images of everyday life is in vogue. (Chatterjee:Undated)

Art historian Anshuman Das Gupta has written-Deb has quietly worked out his lighthearted interventions into the world of objects, thus often belittling the monumentality which the Pop often subtends the world of objects of use and desire in working out a transformation of the mundane. What lends it a cadence is his personal affinity to the world of object; a play of humour is also apparent while entropy seemed to have dominated the scene earlier. Deb's works address the world of objects resembling human figures are twisted and joined to take on the shape of a metaphor and worked upon to provide a comic look bordering on play. (Das Gupta: 2001) While on the other hand this intrusion by the artist opens up innumerable possibility and subjective aim .The materials other than the ready-made remind of the nontraditional approach to art by the Dadaist. These materials impermanent, banal, fragile and degrading and of common availability were seriously being used previously by the Avant Garde artist to break the auratic relevance of material and the artistic product as Art. But in addition to it in Deb's work, his experimentation and exploration recur these elements, unknown and disparate from different social cultural references and made to reconcile in a renewed narrative of image making, which is at once reflective and individual and open to interpretation.

Objects like *lantern*, stove, shoes, hot bag, hanger, letterbox, shirt are directly used but the twist is proclaimed by the artist himself in giving each of them a personal intervention and thus decoding their functional and visual acquaintance with a touch of wit, fun, irony and amusement and providing them with profound meaninglessness that pursue the road to the fantastic, imagination, illusion which might appear vaguely entertaining, but a sharp critique to present urban rationale.

The *lantern* which is an obsolete object specially in the city now, though still used in the rural villages is shown colored in bright reds ,blues

yellows and blacks, breaks away from the mundane and has become an object of magical enchantment and a figure typical of Partha Pratim 's drawing sits on its top with strings tied to its extended forearms .It is weird ,it is comical but not unusual if one is well versed with Partha Pratim 's innumerable drawings that brings an altered reality , a reality where absurdity and the improbable , unrestrained instincts and desires become an instrument of obsession ,critiquing every human actions , thoughts and movements that has socio political codification in the society , in a quite effortless manner (Plate 5.71) and (Plate 5.70).Art writer Mrinal Ghosh explain that how this work critic the society. He wrote- An old *lantern*. The glass cover is left aside. The lantern is burning and adjacent to is laying a naked female figure. The lantern is real. It has been painted with oil and enamel color and then a yellow layer is created. The naked lady is made of paper pulp and saw dust. The position of the apparently raped and murdered woman beside the source of light is telling. An abandoned usable object or found object is linked with a created sculpture here. This combination strikes a blow to our conscience. At a time Delhi rape case is creating ripples this type of an imagination brings in a sad message. (Ghosh: 2013)

We see in his work, where he has transformed the entire surface of a kerosene stove with a pressure cooker on it, into an unusually different image, an image revealing the cellular structure that lies in the very skin of ours or in any living organism that we don't see and realize often, until otherwise under a microscope(Plate 5.85). The entire pattern of dabs and cellular shapes create a peculiar world of strangeness and surprise like a sudden splash. The eye receives the surface with a jerk .In both cases we see that it is his hands that with precision and care dabbled with line and color play their part governed by his playful, mischievous mood.

For example in one of his works we see an apparently innocent T shirt hanging from a hanger (Plate 5.75). Both the T shirt and the hanger are real and abandoned. By using paper pulp the T shirt has been made hard and creaseless. Above it the artist has pasted printed papers which are portions of news paper. On the paper chits one can see symbolic use of words which create a pattern for example, 'A sign of times', 'telephone revolution',

‘confession of a gatekeeper’, etc. The words resonate in a significant manner which is representative of the different characters of our present time. The artist have drawn lines on this pasted paper as if he has sprinkled different fantasy of ever moving life on the youth’s body. (Ghosh:2013)

This work gives the essence of flight and freedom when one come across a tiny obscure suggestion of a frail figure swinging in the air ,which is the surface of the trouser itself.

Another work is a shirt also colored yellow, hanging from a hanger shows a dark face between and within the collars is again a sudden jolt and surprise that contradicts the notion that clothes doesn’t have a face and identity of their own. This face is dark, gruesome and lonesome. In both the cases he has painted the clothes after treating them with certain adhesive to suite his purpose, thus changing the surface value of the original one (Plate 5.77).

His other untitled works include the plates or dishes with rich array of colors and printed letters and photographs furnished from the contemporary glossy magazines, pasted in a collage’ on which are placed pair of shoes tightened with threads and adhesive(Plate 5.72) .These shoes with rich texture of colors and pigments almost transform the entire presentation into a highly sophisticated food dish for urban consumption and refers quite pronouncedly the fashionable cuisine that has become a part of the popular cultural course for the sophisticated elites and middle classes in the city. This material transformation i.e. the re-invention and re-location of the object by the artist into an altered imagery through the positioning in a new surrounding and space, and on the other hand the treatment of the color, the titillating textural makeover ,the sensually delicate yellowish rounded forms in the shoes’ opening very distinct from the color of the shoes enhances the stimulation the of eye further with pleasure and sensation on a different plane with a different goal . Even the paint tubes are not spared .They are arranged like edible food stuffs arranged one over the other with fine texture resembling perhaps sweets for instance. They smell, they taste, they tickle and they run you dry and make you hungry. This recipe which can be devoured not only by the cerebral but all other senses of the body speaks the abominable attitude

of the consumption prone urban culture and its people with revulsion as well as sarcasm.

His another works include an arrangement of elongated organic terracotta pieces, delicately hand-modeled into different shapes and sizes, textured in careful details and precision by the subtle turn and playful twist of the artist's, gives a feeling for the indefinite ,the absurd and even the unknown analogous to a portion of our mind, behavior and thinking pattern (Plate 5.79) and (Plate 5.80).Though referential sometimes of vegetative forms or birds or fishes, an illusion of the tangible, they reveal the artists penchant for the unreal, bizarre, and imaginative, that in turn toys with sensibilities of the viewer. These are further augmented by the beautiful layering of multiple colours, smooth glossy finish and treatment of textures varied in style and technique to give a subtle yet penetrating insight to the imagery of the form .They excite the senses in different manners pertaining to the idiosyncratic individuality of the viewer.

His other untitled works though done individually at different times were interestingly arranged on a big table elaborately extols the many tables that could be found in fashionable parties or treats now a days but only to the point that it makes a parody of such an effort and confinement. One becomes part of the high voltage drama as the viewer starts peeking into the plates wrapped in a collage of contemporary magazine prints and photos on which lays the fashionable objects like sunglasses and objects resembling chicken legs or circular arrangement of round sweets with colored particles spread over it or desserts or the popular stuffed roles one over the other in a box or similar round shaped foods with saucy layer of white sticky fluid ,may appear irritating and even annoying , all over it recalls the exquisite flavor of the contemporary cuisine(Plate 5.81) (Plate 5.82)and .The artist has taken an initiative of bringing various objects into foreplay right from exclusively sensual prints of the glossy magazines to the letters or word s or even the fragments of political /popular headlines /speeches with mixed array of color and tone, to enunciate the terrible urgency of the time to devour anything and everything to feed the burning appetite in the mainstream popular culture .

His other works (Plate 5.73) include suggestion of large hanging forms probably of a human, using old used canvas fragments, hand-stitched by threads and even cut in multiple strings almost shock the eye by their bizarre look hovering on fetishistic cult images of African art or an effigy of a similar kind . They imply simply an image without being gender specific ,build up with utmost tolerance and care where the prominent stitched boundaries talks of endless cuts and wounds that has arisen through atrocities and carnage in the socio-political history of the city , while on the other hand the fragmented canvases that he has stitched together as a metaphor for skin are fragmented memories that he must have painted once in each of them and now wants to give them an ambiguous form with a suggestion of human physiology ,or may be the entire effort is to make interesting shape flooding with his unique sense of wit ,humor or irony .Thus one is always at a loss to decipher what it is actually, thus bringing the play of unpredictability in his work .

The other works of Partha Pratim with objects like old flat paint brushes sometimes with /without handle compels us to see them in a new vision, new sensibilities thus making the mundane brimming with life and vigour(Plate 5.69) .But in the next moment it bounces back with a biting sarcasm and mockery by the set pair of fresh teeths on it.Likewise one see dazzlingly coloured countless object from daily use changed ,transformed ,metamorphosed or arranged sometimes as a spanky tiny animal reminiscent of Sukumar Roys absurd hybrid animal forms, with spikes all around (in this case bottle cleaner brush is being used to make the furry animal) or a painted *kadai* with figures, colors and textures denying its purpose of utility or round textured shapes similar to sweets placed in an ordered decorum or a handmade colored terracotta urinal used to keep brown spherical forms like an open mouth.(Datta:2014)

Art writer Debabrata Chakraborty has written-The modern thinking is withheld in Partha Pratim's creation. Moving away from two dimensional and three dimensional, we now see a composite form in todays art works. In these kinds of creations the artists intense feelings and philosophy get established. Partha Pratim has selected mixed medium as his medium. Artists have used

paper pulp on an original shirt to create a form. At times he has used oil paint on it. He has also used terracotta, printed paper, thread, and oil paint on a real shoe and made it into a round object. At times he has used bamboo, resin and enamel paint as his medium. The artist has tried to enrich his artistic perception by presenting the objects of daily use according to his sensibility. (Chakraborty:2013) Humor is inherent in Partha Pratim's compositions. There has been great craze regarding Joseph Beuys works in recent times as he is known to have never confined himself in the beaten tracks. In each of his art works he has transcended his previous work in medium and technique. In the last thirty years Partha Pratim has not repeated himself in his works. Many must have noticed that from the beginning of the Seventies he has consistently moved away from the idea of pure painting and pure sculpture and has assimilated diverse medium and objects. In one of his twin works named 'shelf' or 'rack', he has used mixed medium and has created a rack full of books using objects like box(Plate 5.28). Strange words are painted on the body books. In the books placed in the upper rack have his initials P.D painted on them. The cover of the book faces the rack the way books are arranged in a book shop. On the other rack are series of colored, dotted and designed shoes. His works have always reminded of the presence of unseen people through images like that of these books and shoes. His work is so human that seeing them instantly creates human feelings in the mind of the spectators. Different texts are created in the minds of the onlookers. In another of his work he has hanged series of terracotta made non-realistic forms. There is an organic reference in these forms. It so appears as if we have been painted and hung at the hooks of an abattoir. Partha Pratim's composition is self-referential, which creates it's on text whose visual language is individualistic. In order to see his art one does not need to be knowledgeable in epics or *Puranas*. He is not into the past. He finds his inspiration from his immediate surrounding and hence his spectators can easily relate with his work. His creations create artistic reaction to questions. His works bears the message that like any other liberal arts, painting too is cerebral and is a product of the intellect. (Som:2004) This playing with objects, with paper, color, brush, ink, pen etc and in the process getting into the seriousness of life and time, starting with humor and taking it to the point

of distressing emptiness – these are the special traits of these works. The originality that the artist has shown in experimenting with alternative art for making these works is peerless.

5.5 BIOGRAPHICAL COLUMN

Art Education

1968 – Post Diploma in Painting, Faculty of Fine Arts, Baroda.
1966- Diploma in Fine Arts & Carfts, Kala Bhavana, Santiniketan.

Teaching Experience

Ex Dean, Faculty of Visual Arts, Rabindra Bharati University, Kolkata.
1972-2005-Lecturer of the Painting Department Rabindra Bharati University, Kolkata.
1969-72-Assistant Teacher in Arts & Crafts, Maharani Tulsibati Girl's H.S. School, Agartala.
Art Organisation Member Painter's Orchestra, Kolkata.

One Man Shows

2006- Aakriti Art Gallery, Kolkata
1997- Biral Academy of Art & Culture, Kolkata
1981 - Academy of Fine Arts, Kolkata
1978 – Academy of Fine Arts, Kolkata
1976 – Academy of Fine Arts, Kolkata
1974 - Academy of Fine Arts, Kolkata

Group Shows

2006

Outsider, Group Show, Kolkata
Small is Beautiful, Gallery Katayun, Kolkata
Exhibition on Animal, Gandhara Gallery, Kolkata
Glimpses of Contemporary Bengal Art, Biral Academy of Art & Culture, Kolkata
Folk in modern, Aakriti Art Gallery
Durga, Freedom, Gallery LaMere, Kolkata

59 years of freedom, 59 years, 59 artists, 59 works, Gallery 52nd Kolkata

2005

Exhibition on Buddha, Gallery Katayun, Kolkata
Exhibition on 'Lines' by Birla Academy of Art & Culture, Kolkata
New wave in Bengal Art, Akar Prakar Gallery, Kolkata
G.C. Laha Centenary Celebration Workshop & Exhibition
Aakriti Art Gallery, Kolkata

2004

Tale of Two Cities, Birla Academy of Art & Culture, Kolkata
Vote, to whom dost thou belong', CIMA Exhibition cum Workshop, Kolkata
Concept & Ideas CIMA, Kolkata

2003

142nd birthday celebration exhibition, W.B. Govt. at Gaganendra Gallery
Academy of Fine Arts Annual, Kolkata
Manifestations Indian Art in the 20th Century Delhi Art Gallery, New Delhi
Group Shows of the teachers of the Faculty of Visual Arts, Rabindra Bharati University, Kolkata
Gallerie La Mere, Annual Show

2002

Contemporary Art Exhibition,Chitrakoot Gallery

2001

Works on Paper, CIMA
Contemporary trends prevailing in art institutions of West Bengal, Birla Academy of Art & Culture, Kolkata
Srijan Art Gallery, Sodepur
Academy of Fine Arts Annual, Kolkata

2000

Art of Bengal, CIMA, Kolkata & Mumbai
Academy of Fine Arts Annual, Kolkata

Prabaha, organized by Bishwa Banga Sammelan Millennium Festival, Kolkata
Group Show, Mumbai and Hyderabad

1999

Contemporary paintings and Graphics Exhibitions at Hyderabad organized by National Gallery of Modern Art & RAD
Prabaha, organized by Bishwa Banga Sammelan Millennium Festival, Kolkata
Exhibition of Art of Bengal
Contemporary Artists from Bengal, Gajah Art Gallery, Singapore
Freedom, Gallery La Mere, Kolkata

1998

Birla Academy of Art & Culture
And since 1968, had group shows every year with painter's Orchestra in Kolkata and some at Santiniketan, Mumbai & New Delhi

Workshops

Indian Life saving Society, Kolkata, 2006
Workshop at Gallerie 88, Kolkata, 2006 Kalpanirjhar & Andaman administration to celebrate the Centenary of Cellular Jali, Port Blair, 2006
Art Camp – Dancing Brushes, an off school of the cultural organization, The Calcutta Salon, 2005
Painters support the Festival Kalpanirjhar International Short Fiction Flim Festival Art Worksop at Khelaghar, Kolkata, 2005
Workshop by W.B. Higher Secondary Board Staff
Recreation Club on the occasion of 150 years of Barnaparichay by Vidyasagar, 2005
Painting Workshop for senior students, Fine Arts Faculty, Jaipur, University of Jaipur, 2004
Workshop organized by Academy of Fine Arts, Kolkata, 2002
Workshop on 'Peace' organized by SPEED, Guwahati, 2002
Ceramic Workshop, Faculty of Visual Arts, Rabindra Bharati University, 2001
Stained Glass Workshop, Faculty of Visual Arts Rabindra Bharati University, 2000

‘Art for Heart’ workshop dedicated for children who are heart patient, 2000
Workshop on ‘Design on Sari’ organized by Tantuja, Kolkata, 2000
‘Art in Life’ workshop, CIMA, Kolkata 2000
Nandanik, Kolkata, 2000,1999, organized by ‘SHAPE’ at Saturday Club, Kolkata, 1998
Fabric Sculpture Workshop, Faculty of Visual Arts Rabindra Bharati University,1988
Poster Workshop, British Council, Kolkata, 1981

Publications

A drawing folio in silk screen prints, by KHOJ, 2006
A folio of silk screen prints of the members of the Painter’s Orchestra
Papers on Nandalal and on Art Education published in the journal of the Faculty of Visual Arts Rabindra Bharati University,1984,1999
Poems on Drawings (poems by poets of Kolkata on the drawings of the members Painter’s Orchestra) A silver jubilee of Painter’s Orchestra,1994
A folio of etchings by the teachers of the Faculty of Visual Arts Rabindra Bharati University, to celebrate the 125th birthday of Rabindranath,1986

Collections
Modern Art Gallery
Birla Academy of Art & Culture, Kolkata
CIMA Gallery, Kolkata
Aakriti Art Gallery, Kolkata
Delhi Art Gallery,New Delhi
And many private collections.

5.6 CONCLUSIONS

The context of the chapter has been discussed as according to some sub chapters as growth to be a legitimate artist as whole, individuals experience and journey for creative quest, search for newness and perfection to discover the aesthetic value and technical uniqueness, individual creative sensibility and motivation for upsurge younger generation. The research explores into the context of Contemporary art scenario of Bengal on the basis

of critical study on Partha Pratim Deb.In this chapter, Partha Pratim's individuality has been discussed. He has some kind of social comment oven in his work and also some caricature element in works which critique the society. The research explores into the context of Contemporary art scenario of Bengal on the basis of critical study on one of the most sincere and hardworking artist of Bengal. Deb is an important figure in Indian contemporary art not only for his artistic output but also for his pedagogical input. Deb completed his education in Fine Arts from Kala Bhavana, Santiniketan followed by a post diploma from the Faculty Fine Arts, M.S. University of Baroda. He went on to become the Dean and Professor in painting at the Faculty of Visual Arts, Rabindra Bharati University, Kolkata and has written numerous papers on art education.

Partha Pratim Deb needs to be celebrated as a pedagogue of the genre of Abanindranath, Nandalal, Benode Behari, Subramanyan and Somnath Hore, not only by count of number of pupils he has inspired into becoming significant art practitioners, without being followers of his style or schoolmen. His own practice shows how easily and obtrusively he goes into grammatical questions of what to observe in the phenomenal word in tune with one's personal preference.

Partha Pratim always wanted to make his art removed from the conventional stereotypes. He wanted them to outgrow the limitations of being called just painting, or sculpture or installation and become something greater in scope. He never believed that painting should always be on a two dimensional surface or that sculpture should follow certain prevalent rules.It's very difficult to named Debs work, give them whatever name you wish, painted sculptures-like, sculptural assemblages, painted junk, retrieved found objects etc. But these are never toys to be played with, even though these are end objects of play, for these do exude meaning; these speak. Hope, these evocative, provocative objects of joy and their creator get due recognition and are celebrated with festivities. The drawings and paintings give the versatility of the artist. In the whole chapter Deb's exceptionality has been discussed as according to some sub chapters as creative voyages as an artist, Deb's quest for a language: the inherent ability towards human condition and fantasy

through satire and fun,individual creative sensibility and inspiration for up-surge younger generation.

The Satire in Partha Pratim Deb's work has an anti–orthodox, anti-establishment attitude. In his works the sterilized sanctity of a medium finds no significance. Rather he explores and experiments with the endless repertoire of discards, shifting and recycling them into a pictorial language. Thus he translates his ideas into multiple hybrid forms and interesting metamorphosed images, an approach that often synthesizes the disciplines of painting. Every artist has him own carriage, his gestures and particular technical modes. Partha pratim too is no exception. But his carriage does not consist of some over-used forms, objects and themes. He always remains open-ended and responds creatively to experiences varied in context. It is for the viewers to read and re-read the meanings of his art in any context, or accept them as they are. But it is for certain that, here is an artist who does not transplant his immediate observations into the recluse of mythology or romantic fairy-tales. Even his abstractions do not remind us of any brand that we know. That is what Deb is as an artist. As we have said earlier, his art celebrates liberation from all bondages of establishment.

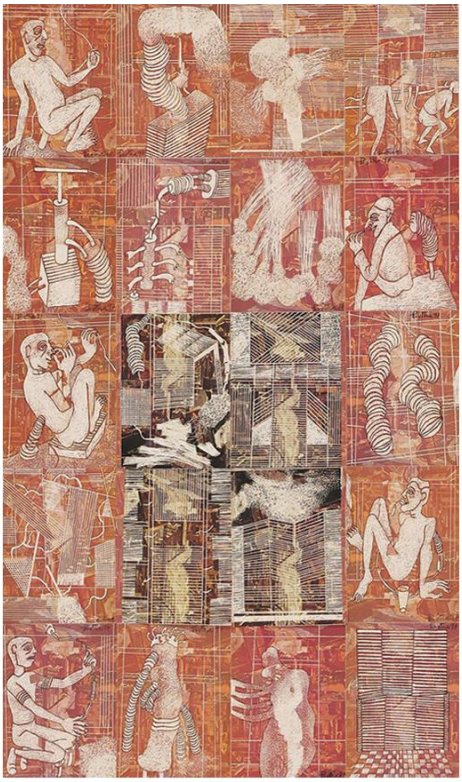

Plate-5.1 : P.P.Deb,Pen & Ink on invitation card,29.50x18.50 inch,1997

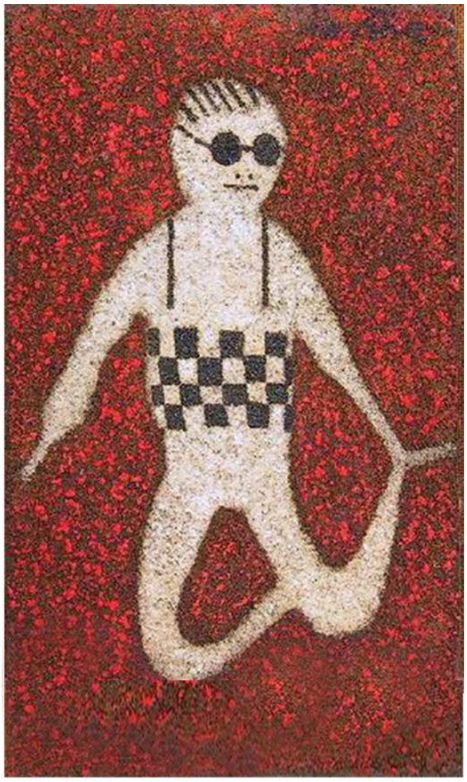

Plate-5.2 : P.P.Deb,Sawdust pasted on plyboard,10.5x7.0 inch, 1989

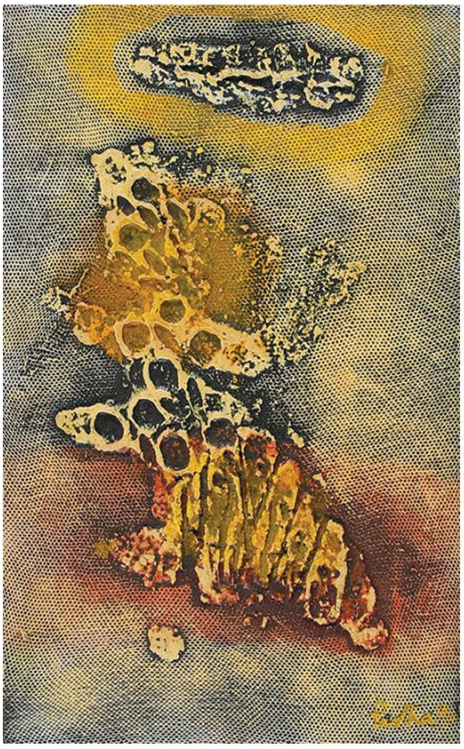

Plate-5.3 : P.P.Deb, mixed media on net pasted on mount board, 14.7x9.7 inch, 1990

Plate-5.4 : P.P.Deb, mixed media on mount board, 11.5x9.7 inch, 1990

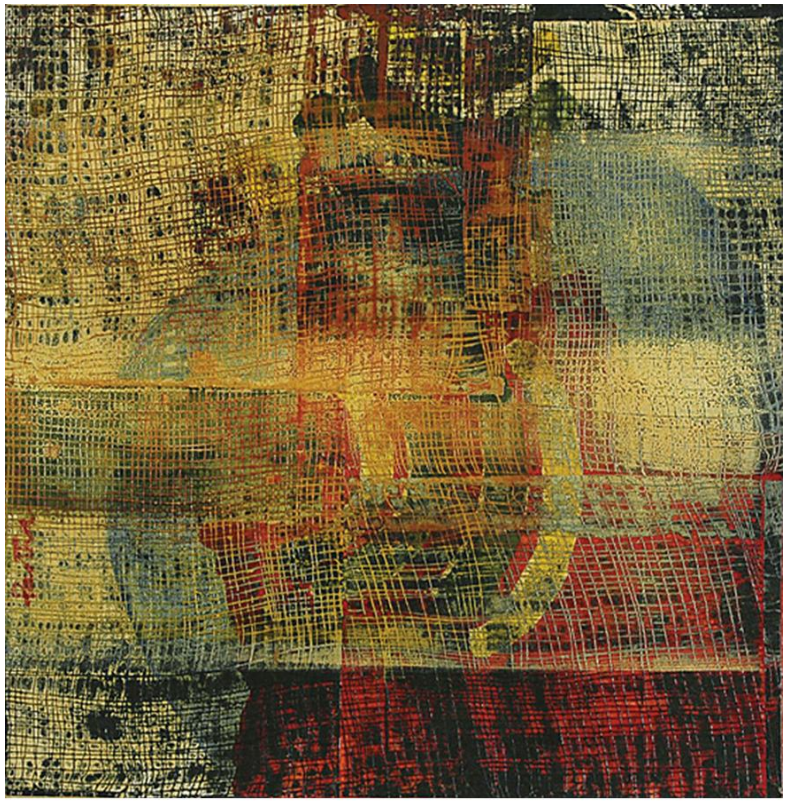

Plate-5.5 : P.P.Deb, enamel & acrylic on board, 11.7x11.7 inch, 1981

Plate-5.6 : P.P.Deb,Invited, Acrylic on canvas, 35x35 inch, 2007

Plate-5.7 : P.P.Deb, water colour & sketch pen on paper, 21.7x 15.0 inch, 1974

Plate-5.8 : P.P.Deb,Sawdust pasted on plyboard,11.5x7.0 inch, 1990

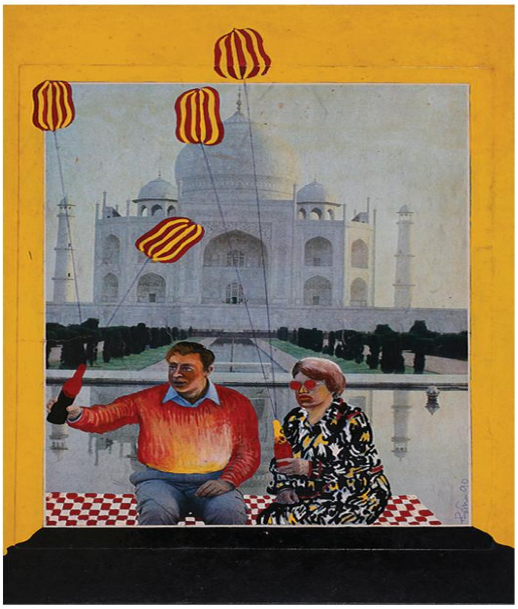

Plate-5.9 : P.P.Deb, mixed media on mount board & magazine, 14.7x9.7 inch, 1990

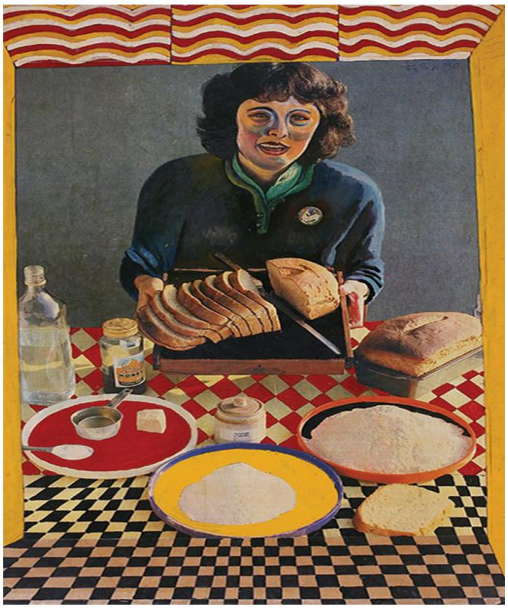

Plate-5.10 : P.P.Deb, mixed media on mount board & magazine, 15x9.8 inch, 1990

Plate-5.11 : P.P.Deb, Acrylic on Mat, 14.5x14.2 inch, 1980

Plate-5.12 : P.P.Deb, Oil & Blackboard paint on plywood, 24.0x24.0 inch, 1976

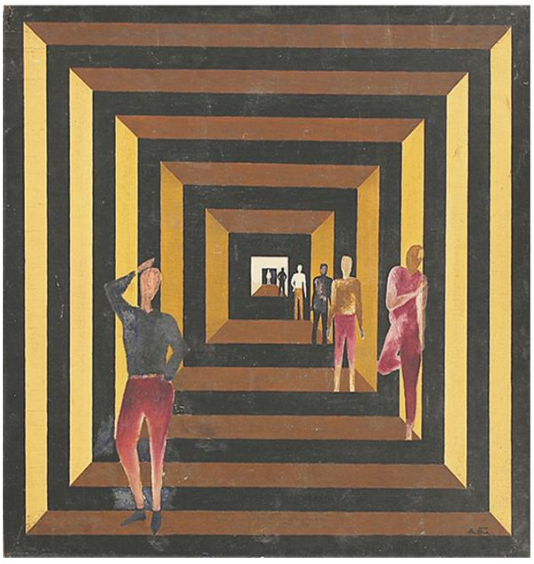

Plate-5.13 : P.P.Deb, Oil on plyboard, 24.0x24.0 inch, 1980

Plate-5.14 : P.P.Deb, Oil on sawdust on plyboard, 13.7x14.2 inch, 1992

Plate-5.15 : P.P.Deb, mixed media on net pasted on mount board, 11.5x11.5 inch, 1981

Plate-5.16 : P.P.Deb, mixed media on wood block, 11.5x9.5 inch, 1982

Plate-5.17 : P.P.Deb,The Music, Acrylic on canvas, 40x40 inch, 2009

Plate-5.18 : P.P.Deb, mixed media on paper pasted on mount board, 11.7x11.2 inch, 1988

Plate-5.19 : P.P.Deb, Oil and Impasto on masonite board, 12.0x12.0 inch, 1971

Plate-5.20 : P.P.Deb, mixed media on cloth and mount board,11.5x11.5 inch, 1988

Plate-5.21 : P.P.Deb, mixed media on masonite board,18.0x24.3 inch, 1982

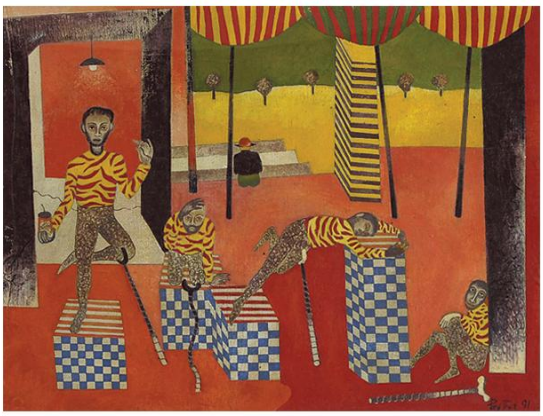

Plate-5.22 : P.P.Deb, Acrylic on canvas Board, 15.0x19.5 inch, 1991

Plate-5.23 : P.P.Deb, Acrylic on cloth and mount board, 16.2x11.7 inch

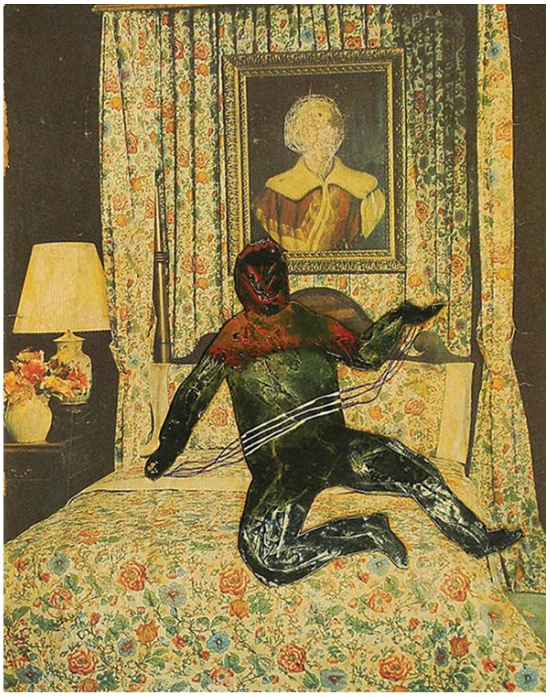

Plate-5.24 : P.P.Deb, enamel & oil on magazine paper, 10.7x8.2 inch,1988

Plate-5.25 : P.P.Deb, water colour & Ink on cloth and mount board,11.8x11.8 inch,1984

Plate-5.26 : P.P.Deb, Untitled, Acrylic on canvas, 22x42 inch

Plate-5.27 : P.P.Deb, Untitled, Sculpture/Object, mixed media,15x12x8 inch

Plate-5.28 : P.P.Deb, Uplum,mixed media, 1999

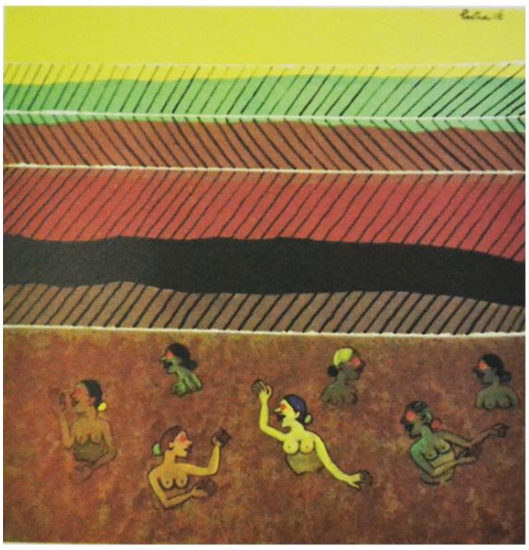

Plate-5.29 : P.P.Deb, Aspiration XI, Acrylic on canvas, 24x24 inch

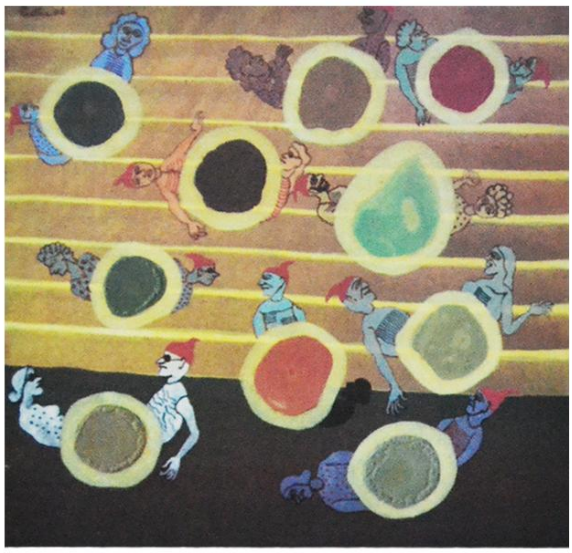

Plate-5.30 : P.P.Deb, Aspiration V, Oil & Acrylic on canvas,30x30 inch

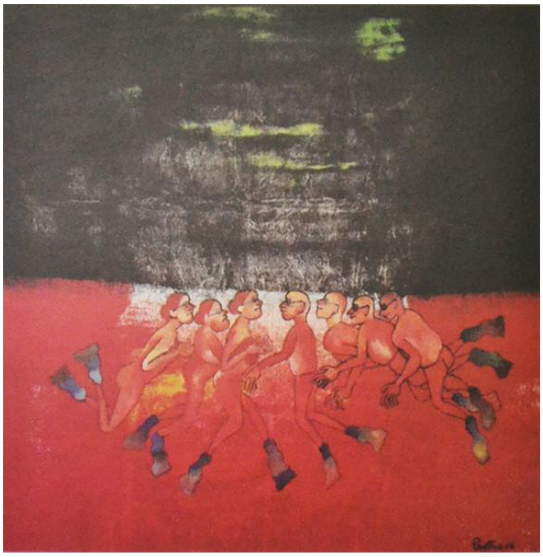

Plate-5.31 : P.P.Deb, Aspiration III,
Oil & Acrylic on canvas,30x30 inch

Plate-5.32 : P.P.Deb, Aspiration IV,
Oil & Acrylic on canvas,30x30 inch

Plate-5.33 : P.P.Deb, Oil on Canvas,
24.0x 36.0 inch, 1976

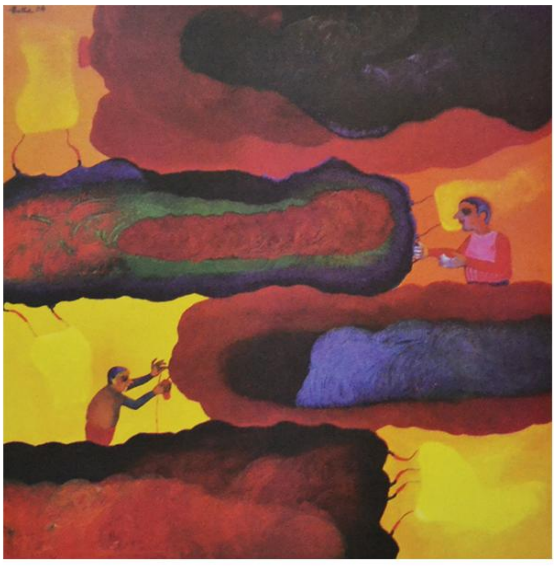

Plate-5.34 : P.P.Deb, Acrylic on canvas,
40x36 inch

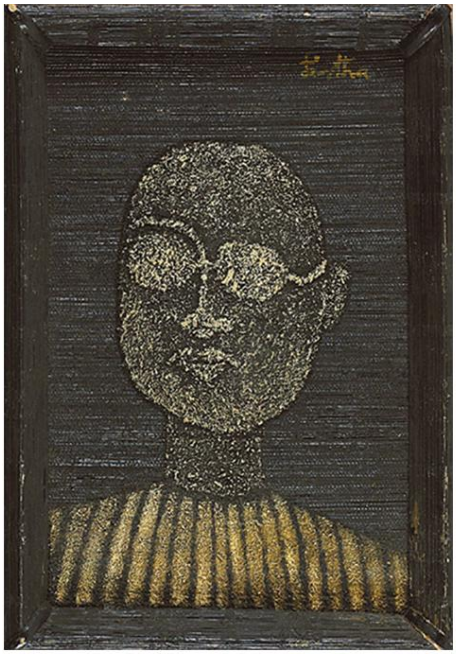

Plate-5.35 : P.P.Deb, mixed media on masonite board, 16.0x11.0 inch,1980

Plate-5.36 : P.P.Deb, Oil on masonite board, 11.7x11.7 inch, 1969

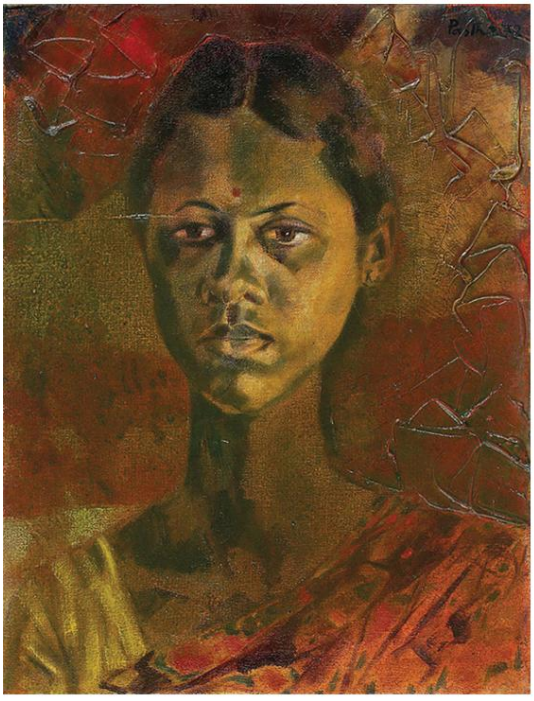

Plate-5.37 : P.P.Deb, Oil on Canvas, 18.2x 14.0 inch, 1973

Plate-5.38 : P.P.Deb, Oil on masonite board, 20.0x 16.0 inch

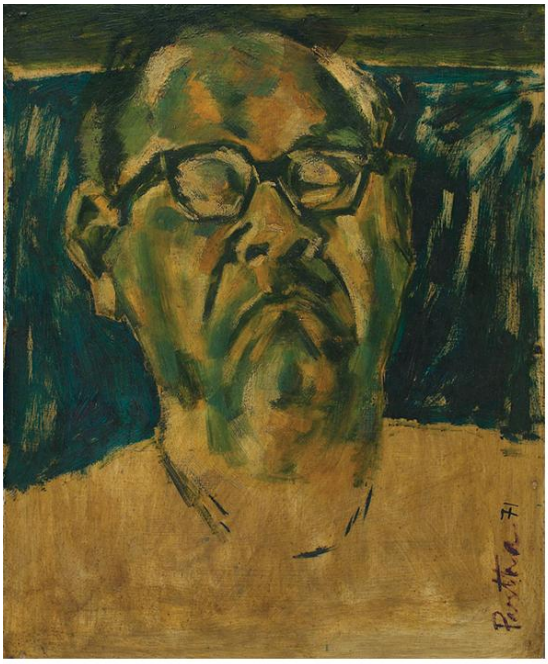

Plate-5.39 : P.P.Deb, Oil on masonite board, 20.0x 16.0 inch, 1971

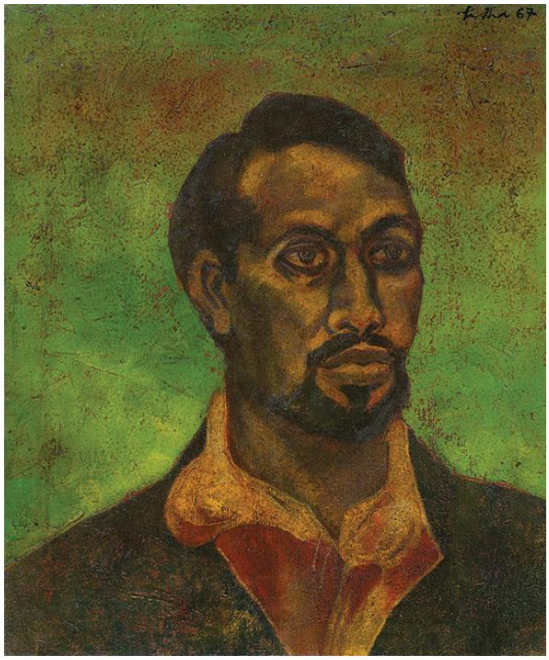

Plate-5.40 : P.P.Deb, Oil on Canvas, 23.0x 19.0 inch, 1967

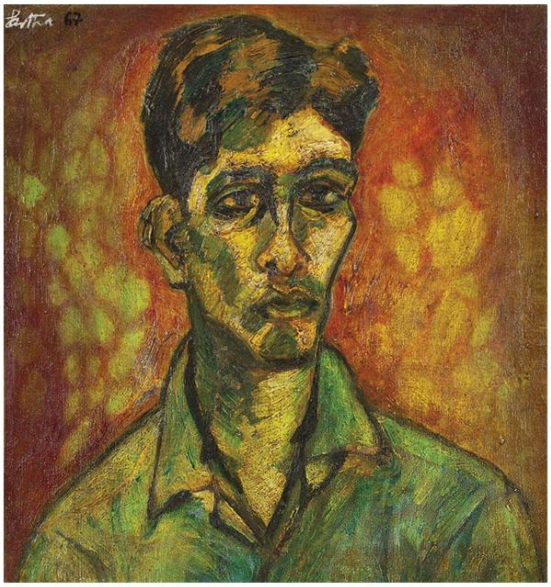

Plate-5.41 : P.P.Deb, Oil on Canvas, 21.0x21.0 inch, 1967

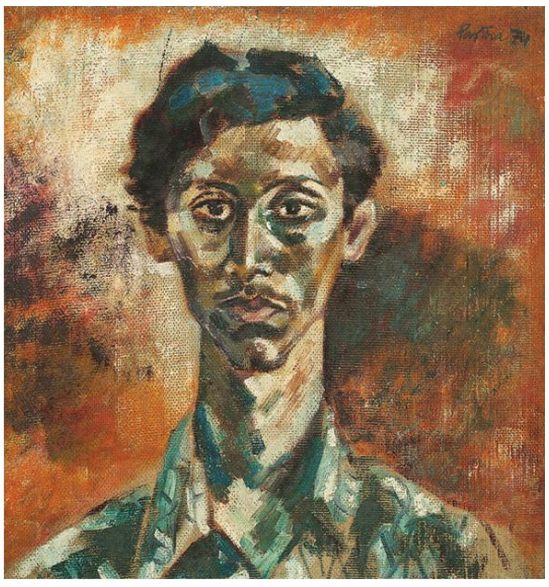

Plate-5.42 : P.P.Deb, Oil on masonite board, 17.5x17.7 inch, 1974

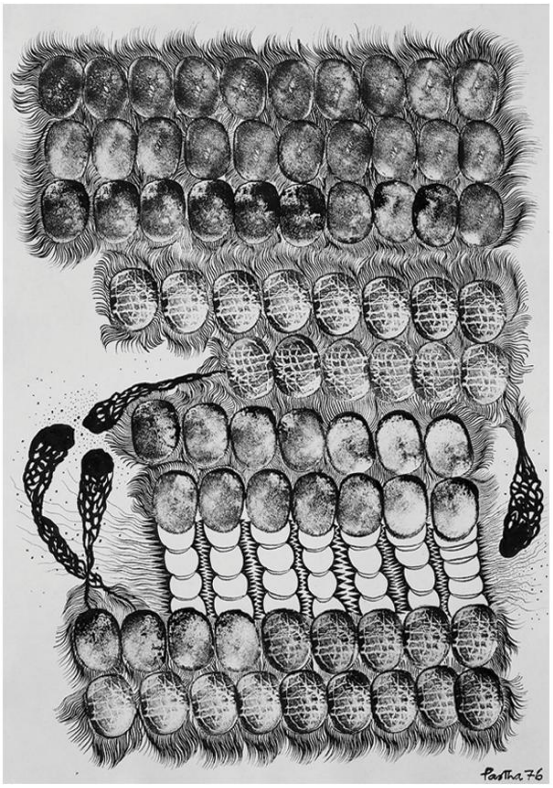

Plate-5.43 : P.P.Deb,Pen & Ink on paper, 21.2x 14.5 inch, 1976

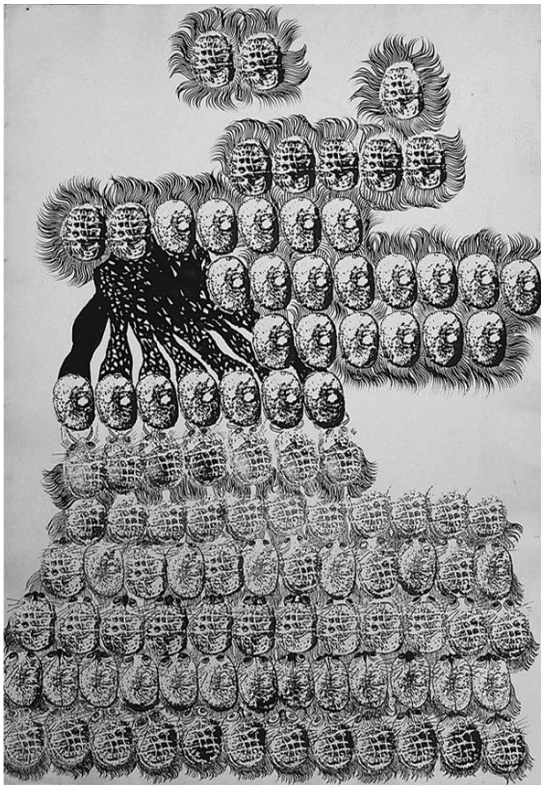

Plate-5.44 : P.P.Deb,Pen & Ink on paper, 22.0x15.0 inch, 1976

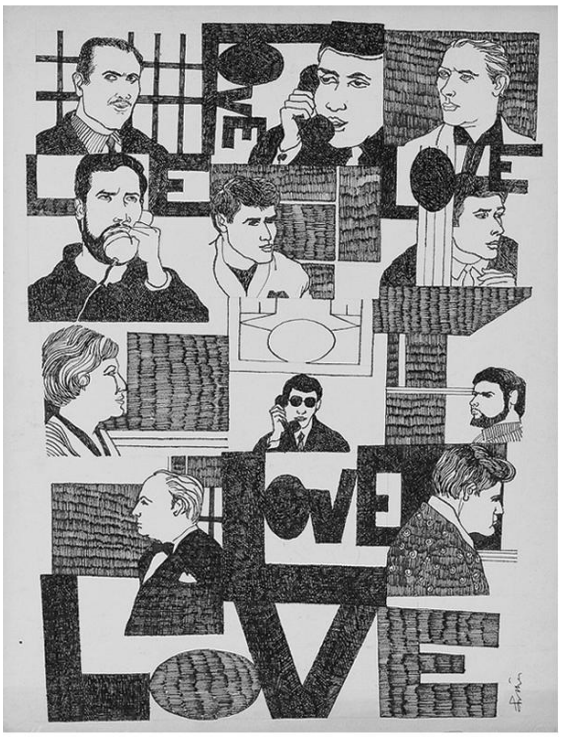

Plate-5.45 : P.P.Deb,Pen & Ink on paper, 14.7x 10.5 inch, 1974

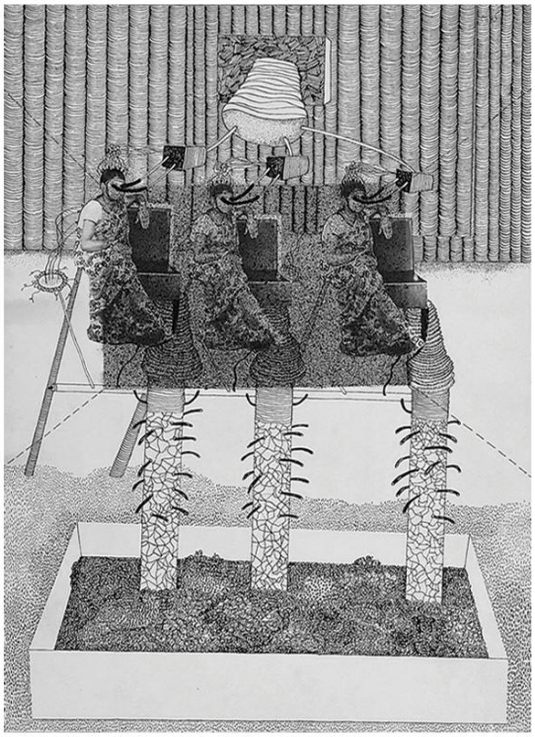

Plate-5.46 : P.P.Deb,Pen & Ink, Collage on paper, 21.5x 14.5 inch, 1978

Plate-5.47 : P.P.Deb,Pen & Ink on paper, 11.0x15.0 inch, 1977

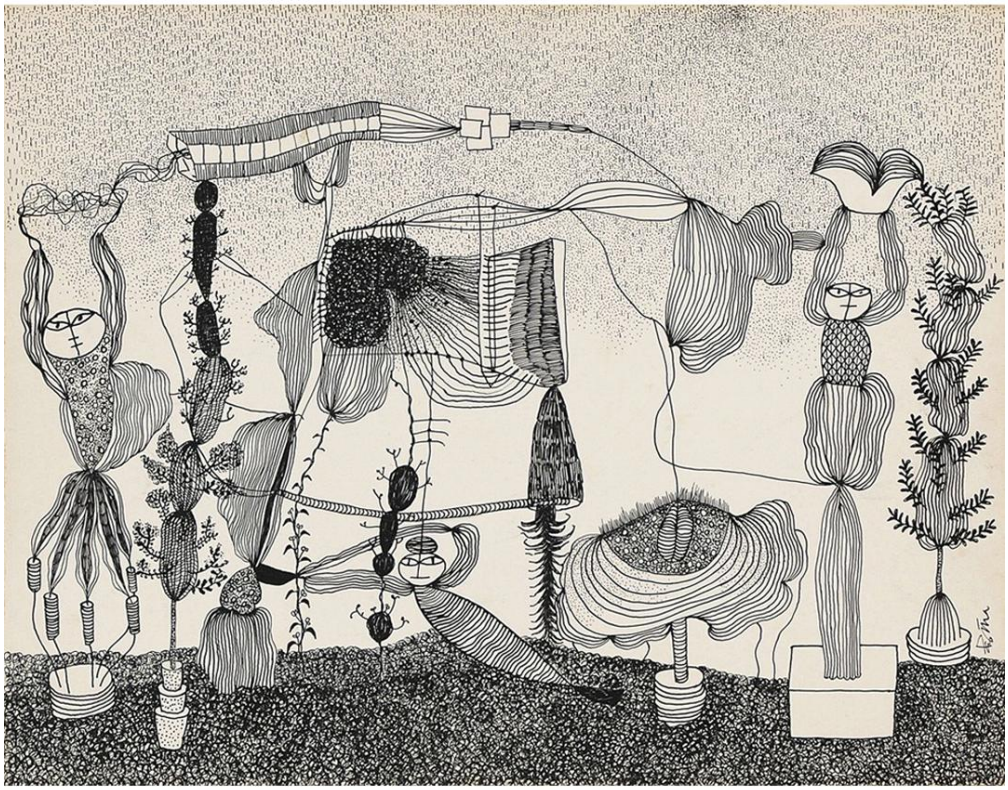

Plate-5.48 : P.P.Deb,Pen & Ink on paper, 11.0x14.0 inch, 1980

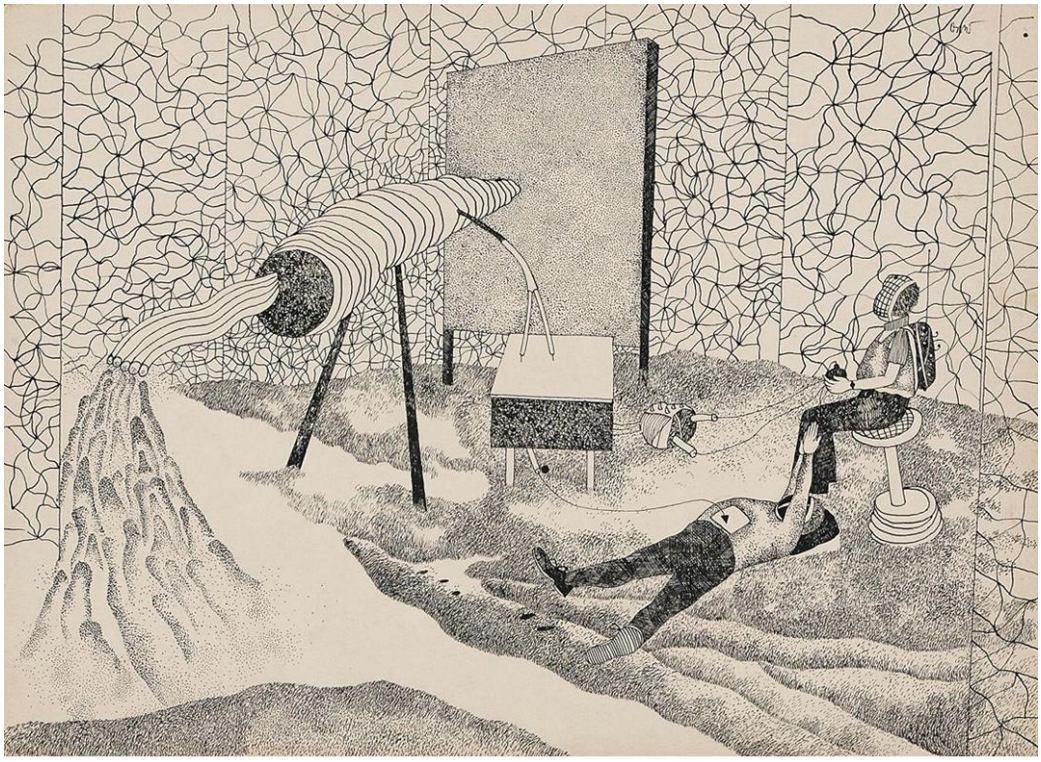

Plate-5.49 : P.P.Deb,Pen & Ink on paper, 11.0x15.0 inch, 1977

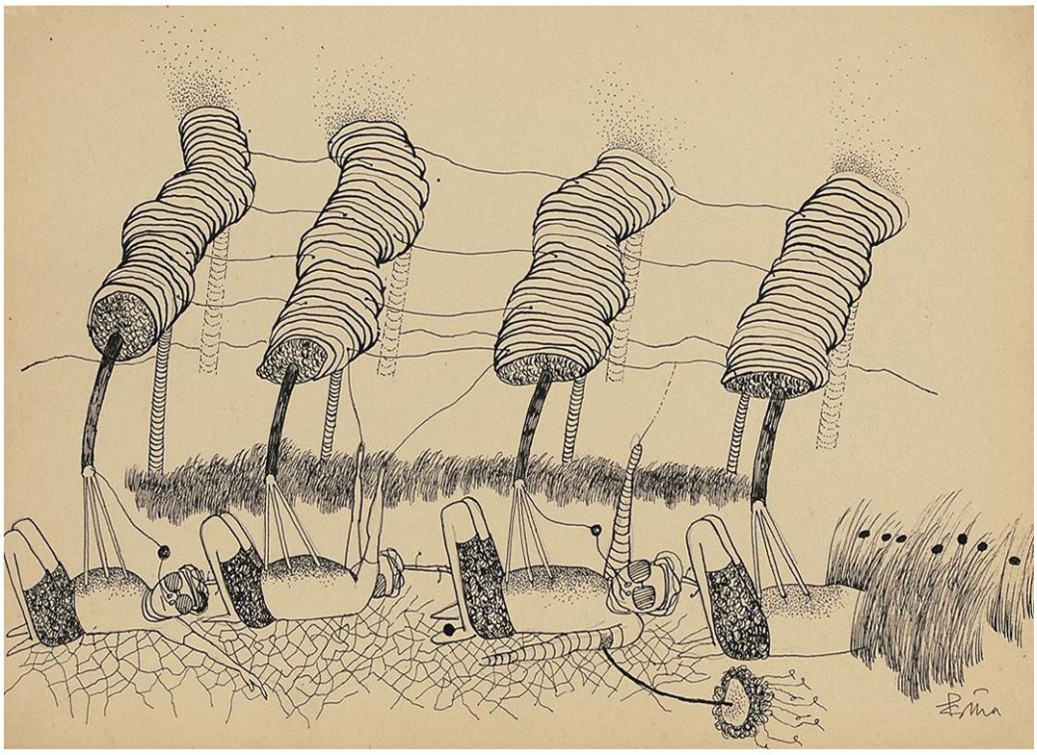

Plate-5.50 : P.P.Deb,Pen & Ink on paper, 8.8x13.3 inch, 1977

Plate-5.51 : P.P.Deb, Adam & eve, Ink on paper 22x15 inch

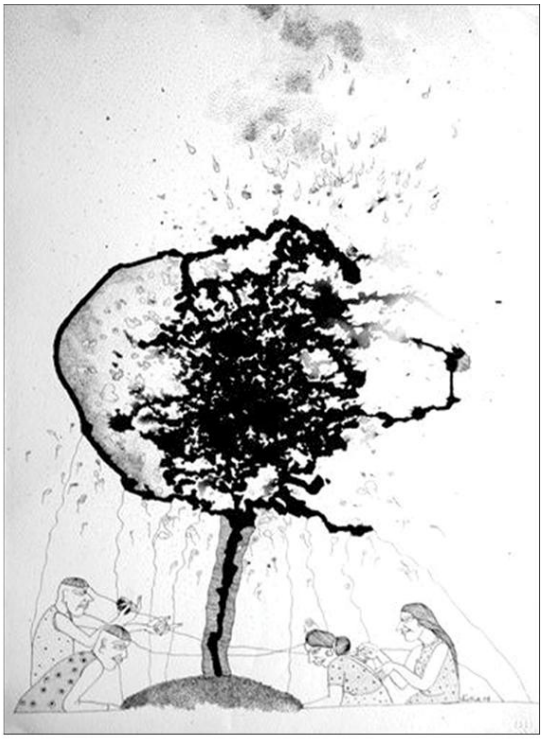

Plate-5.52 : P.P.Deb, Around a Tree, Ink on paper 22x15 inch,2004

Plate-5.53 : P.P.Deb,Hand, Ink on paper 22x15 inch,2004

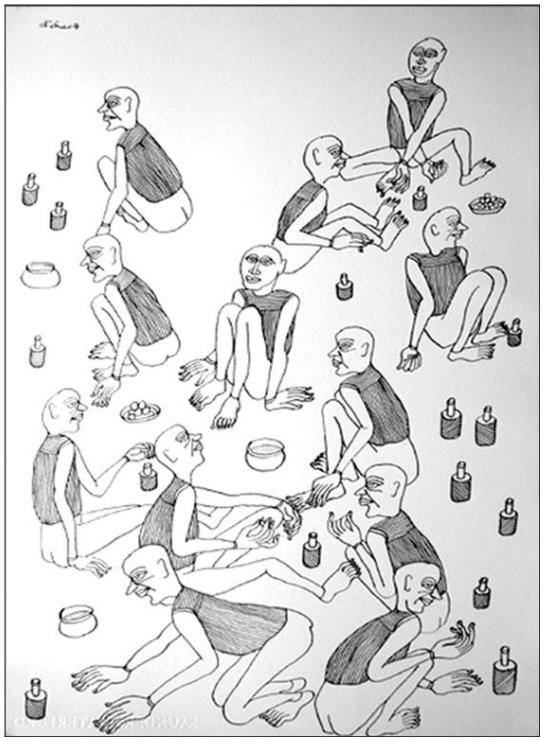

Plate-5.54 : P.P.Deb,Bold men eating, Ink on paper 22x15 inch,2004

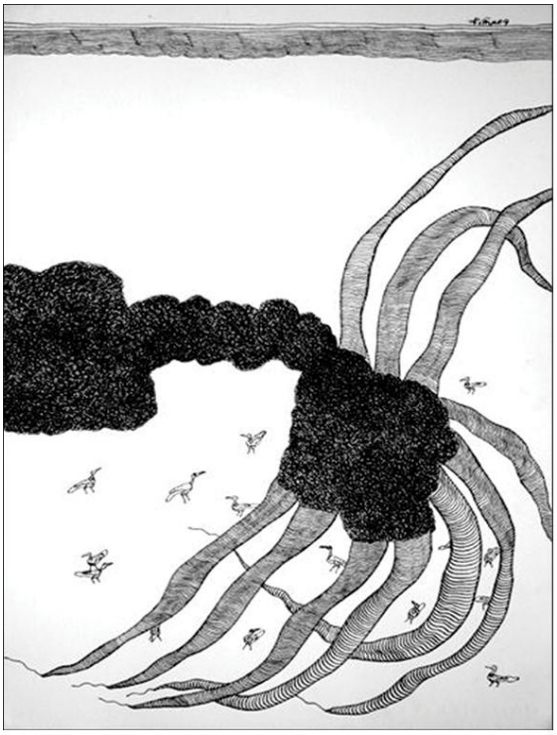

Plate-5.55 : P.P.Deb,Happy Birds,
Ink on paper 22x15 inch,2004

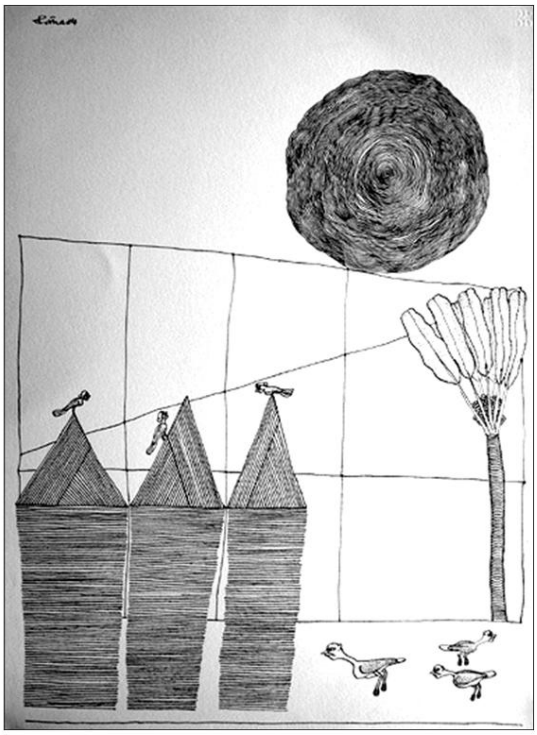

Plate-5.56 : P.P.Deb,Houses and Birds,
Ink on paper 22x15 inch,2004

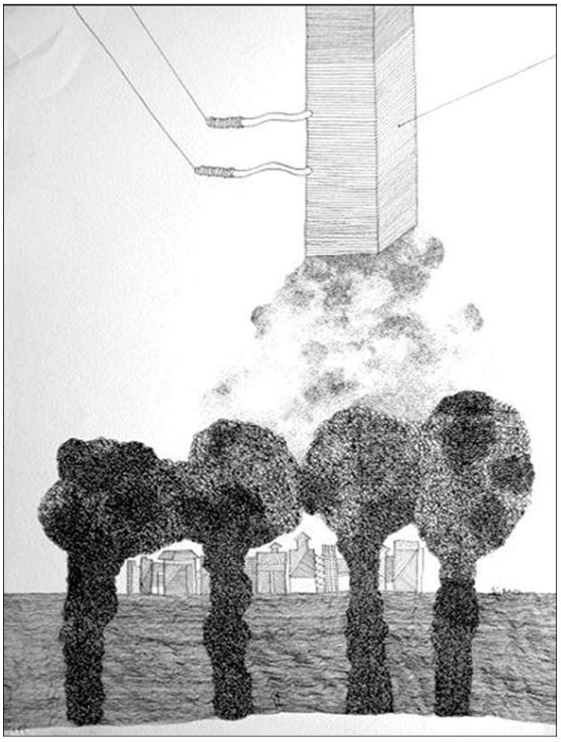

Plate-5.57 : P.P.Deb,Houses and Trees,
Ink on paper 22x15 inch,2004

Plate-5.58 : P.P.Deb,Man in a Bag,
Ink on paper 22x15 inch,2004

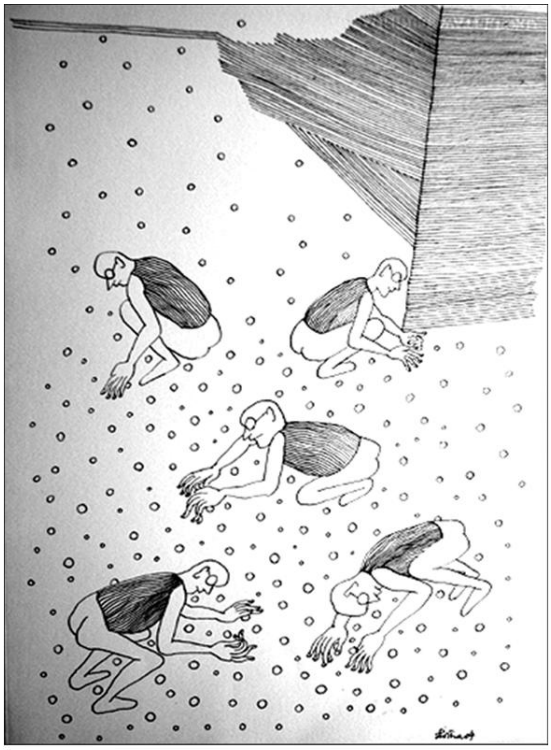

Plate-5.59: P.P.Deb,Men and beans, Ink on paper 22x15 inch,2004

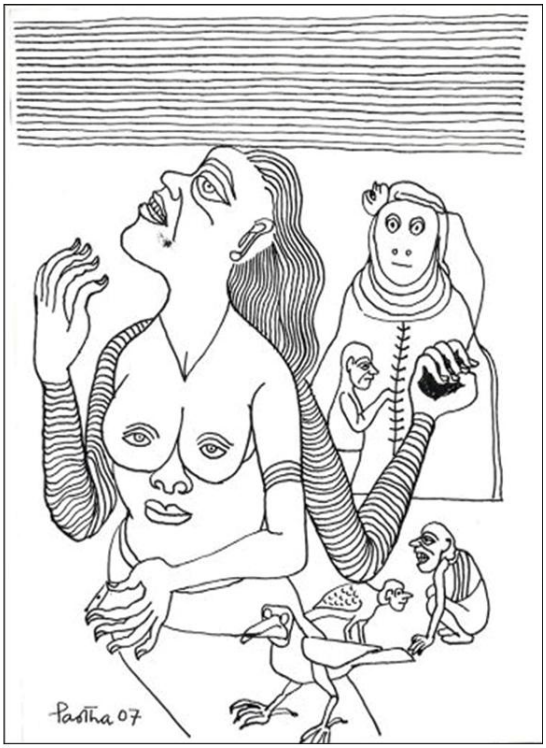

Plate-5.60 : P.P.Deb, Untitled, Ink on Acid free paper, 9.5x 7 inch, 2007

Plate-5.61 : P.P.Deb, Untitled, Ink on Acid free paper, 9.5x 7 inch, 2007

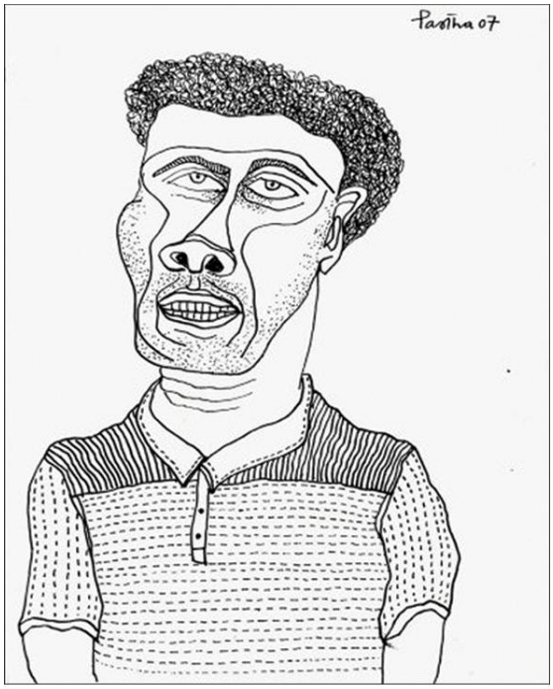

Plate-5.62 : P.P.Deb, Untitled, Ink on Acid free paper, 9.5x 7 inch, 2007

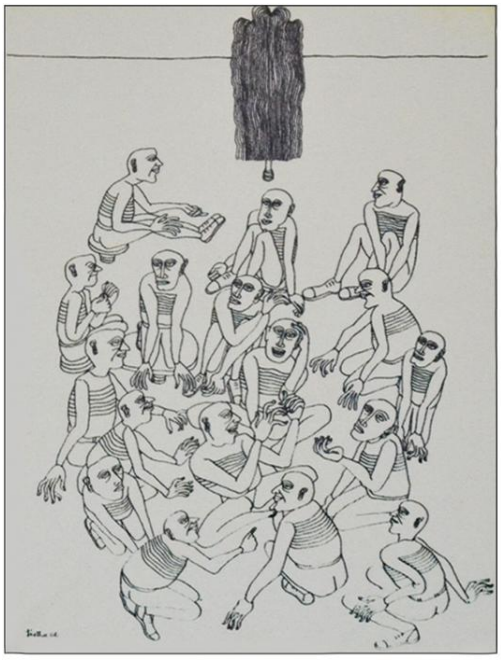

Plate-5.63 : P.P.Deb, The story Teller, Ink on Acid free paper, 24x18 inch, 2007

Plate-5.64 : P.P.Deb, Untitled, Ink on Acid free paper, 9.5x 7 inch, 2007

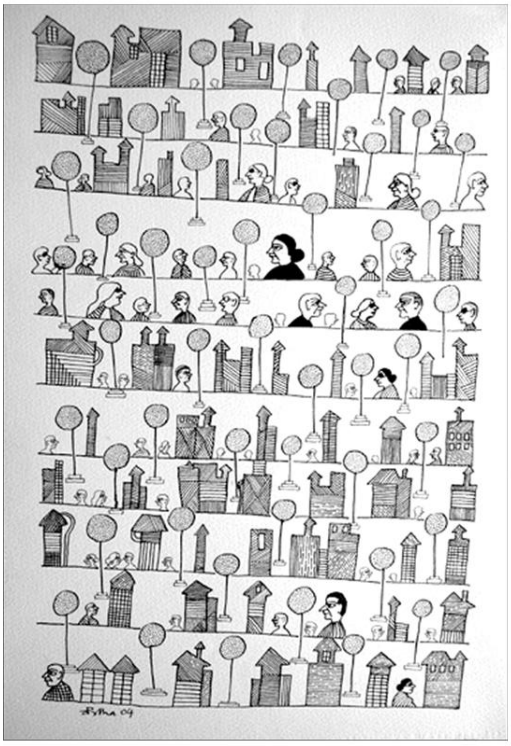

Plate-5.65 : P.P.Deb, People & life, Ink on Acid free paper, 22x15 inch, 2007

Plate-5.66 : P.P.Deb, Untitled, Canvas & enamel paint, 169x100 inch, 1996

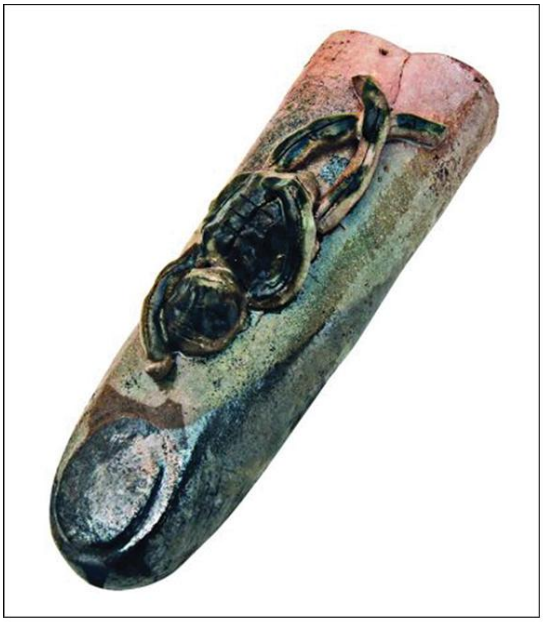

Plate-5.67 : P.P.Deb, Untitled, Ceramics

Plate-5.68 : P.P.Deb, Untitled, Paper pulp, found object & Oil

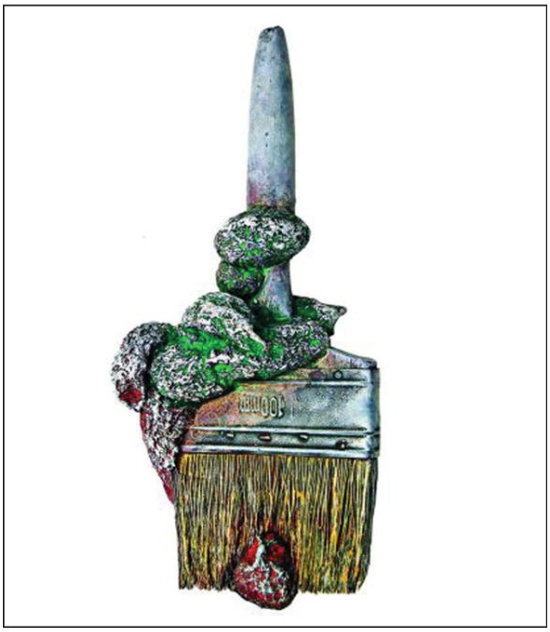

Plate-5.69 : P.P.Deb, Untitled, Paper pulp, found object & Oil

Plate-5.70 : P.P.Deb, Untitled, Paper pulp, found object & Oil

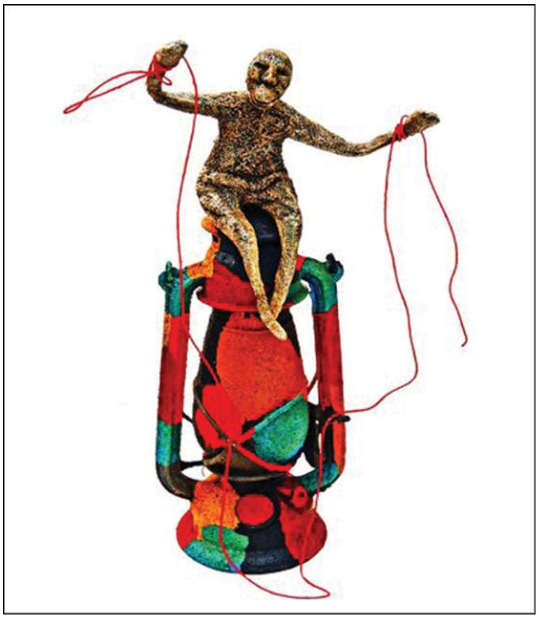

Plate-5.71 : P.P.Deb, Untitled,
Sculpture/Object, mixed media

Plate-5.72 : P.P.Deb, Untitled,
Sculpture/Object, mixed media

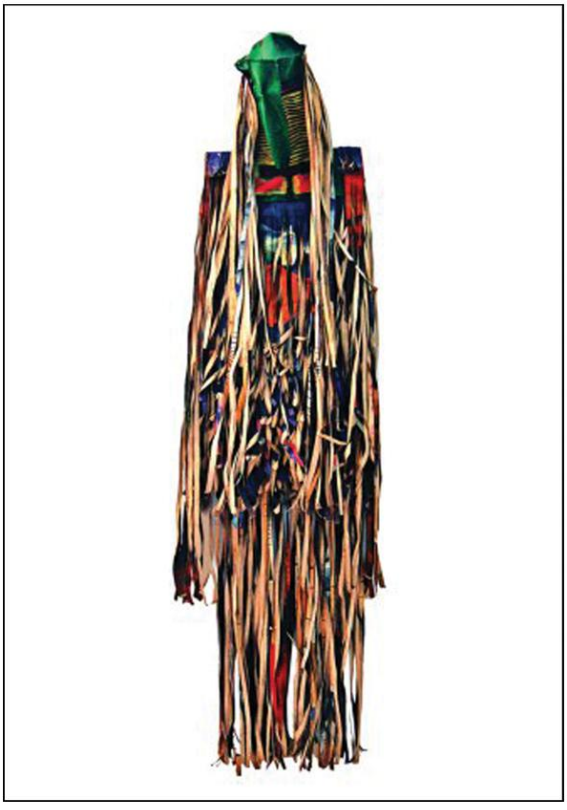

Plate-5.73 : P.P.Deb, Untitled,
Sculpture/Object, mixed media

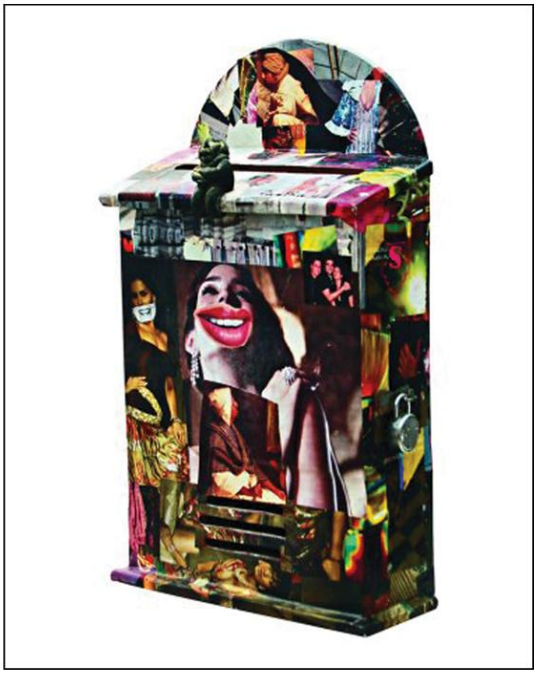

Plate-5.74 : P.P.Deb, Untitled,
Sculpture/Object, mixed media

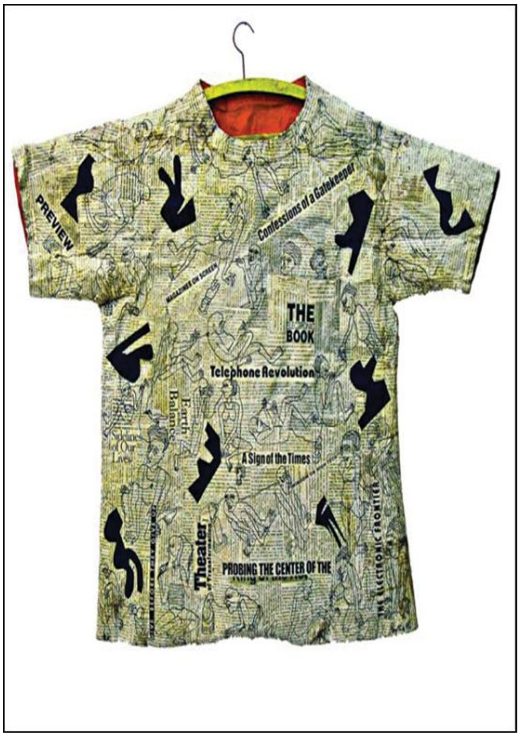

Plate-5.75 : P.P.Deb, Untitled,
Sculpture/Object, mixed media

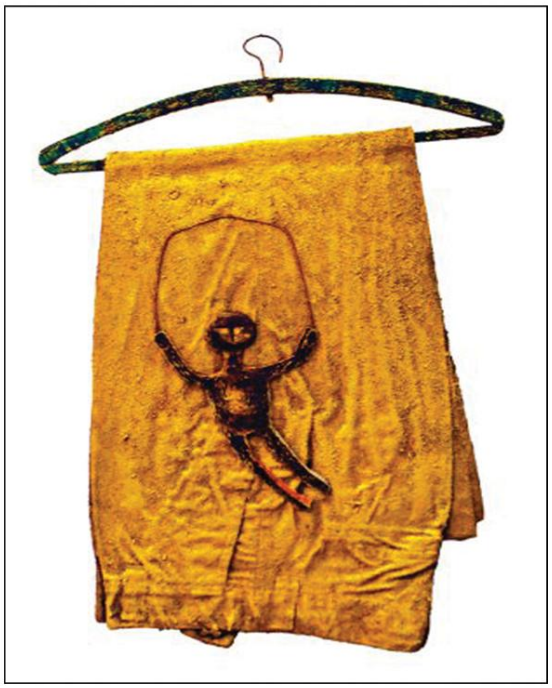

Plate-5.76 : P.P.Deb, Untitled,
Sculpture/Object, mixed media

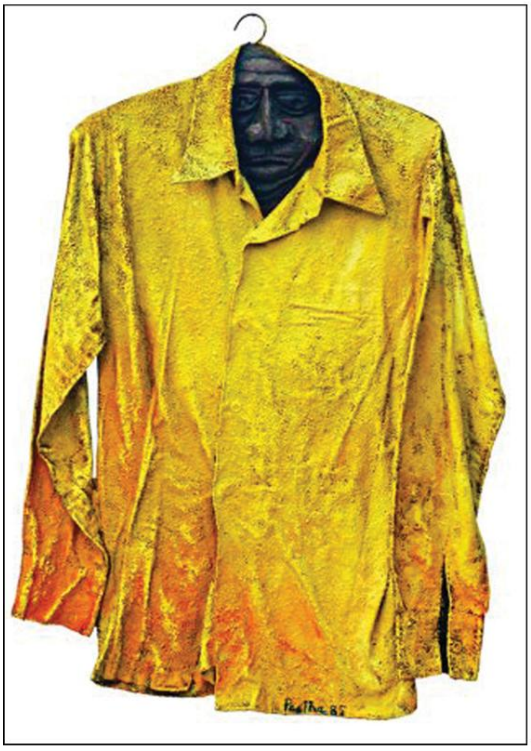

Plate-5.77 : P.P.Deb, Untitled,
Sculpture/Object, mixed media

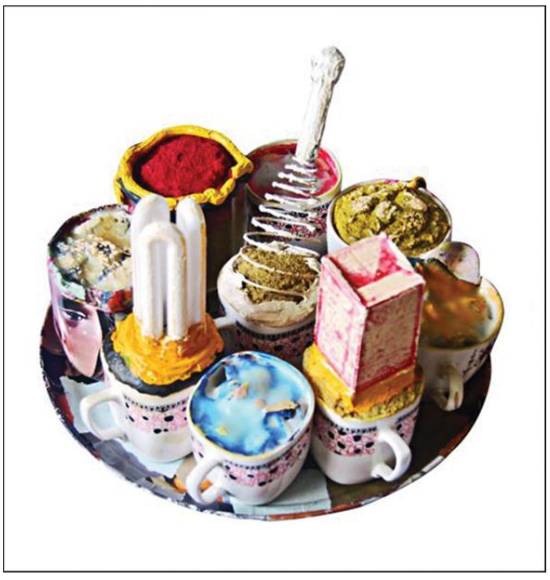

Plate-5.78 : P.P.Deb, Untitled,
Sculpture/Object, mixed media

Plate-5.79 : tttttP.P.Deb, Untitled,
Sculpture/Object, mixed media

Plate-5.80 : P.P.Deb, Untitled,
Sculpture/Object, mixed media

Plate-5.81 : P.P.Deb, Untitled,
Sculpture/Object, mixed media

Plate-5.82 : P.P.Deb, Untitled,
Sculpture/Object, mixed media

Plate-5.83 : P.P.Deb, Untitled,
Sculpture/Object, mixed media

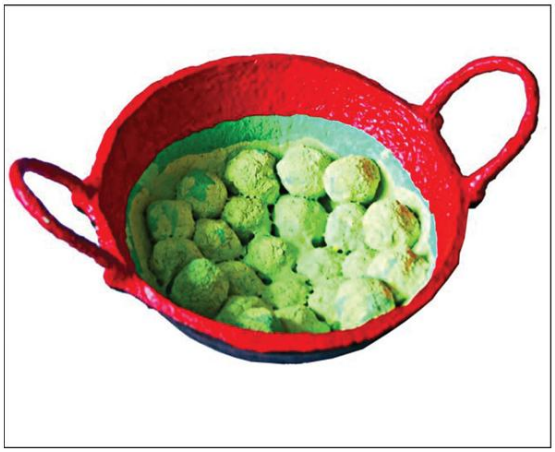

Plate-5.84 : P.P.Deb, Untitled,
Sculpture/Object, mixed media

Plate-5.85 : P.P.Deb, Untitled, Sculpture/Object, mixed media

Plate-5.86 : P.P.Deb, Untitled, Sculpture/Object, mixed media

Plate-5.87 : P.P.Deb, Untitled, Sculpture/Object, mixed media

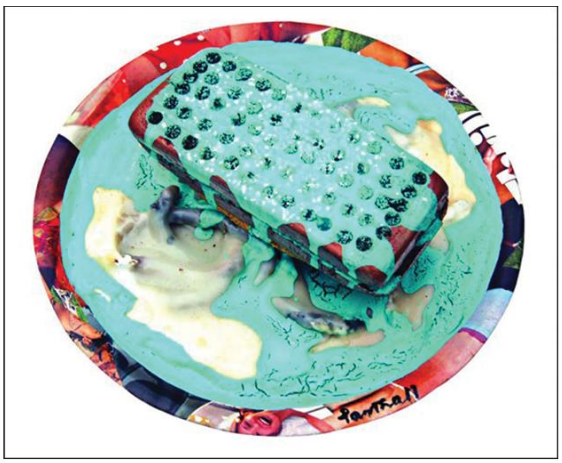

Plate-5.88 : P.P.Deb, Untitled, Sculpture/Object, mixed media

Plate-5.89 : P.P.Deb, Untitled, Sculpture/Object, mixed media

Plate-5.90 : P.P.Deb, Untitled, Sculpture/Object, mixed media