

## **Curatorial Note On Essential Forms : An Exhibition of MF Husian's Cut-Outs**

Collecting objects. This I learnt from Rossellini. He had come to Mysore. I went with his crew. So basically, I started collecting images and the rest would be done in the editing room. The idea of the umbrella, lantern, shoe, these objects were used like still life. I did not want any kind of narrative or story, no kind of meaning. Just pure images.

- M F Husain

These startling two-dimensional cut-outs stand testimony to the versatility of an artist who worked across diverse mediums with equal ease. In these works, Husain creates bold silhouettes of beasts and humans, using blocks of primary colours, having first cut out their shapes on plywood. There is no intertwining narrative linking the images, but each individual artwork integrates the form into his personal idiom.

For these works, the artist drew on plywood the outlines of the protagonist in chalk and cut out the form before painting over it. The subjects were inspired by the ancestral spirits of man, deity and beast in a sacred space. The stamping beast, a magnificent animal, is all black, almost primordial, as it stands frozen in time. Reminiscent of a rural landscape, we have the Krishna-like figure playing the flute riding atop a bull in another composition in a mood that is, in contrast, lyrical and gentle. Apart from these are figures, of human shapes almost erotic, suspended in the air, limbs stretching out, strands of hair flying in the wind or caught in arabesques as if dancing to silent symphonies.

The sculptural figures beguile and tease, looking upon our lives from lives of their own. A part of the dreamer's repertoire, they dance to different beats but belong to the same narrative. Thrown deftly together, without any rational endeavour, these images reconstruct the diversity of life and its inherent magic.

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