

Speech by Mr. P. Pradhan Suchiang, Chairperson, GSIPF, on the inaugural ceremony of the Painting Exhibition of the Indigenous Artists of North Eastern India “Thoh Shun”

"The tribal arts can be a part of a universal core of knowledge and skills that can be instrumental in assisting society achieve particular individual, social and technological goals, or it can become central to the pursuit of knowledge understanding and appreciation of a society's cultural forms and expression".

- F.J. Saemala

All over the world, Indigenous people have an immense, almost incomprehensible Variety of tradition, culture and beliefs. The Indigenous society is dominated by myths fictions. These bear the stamp of Indigenous creativity and imagination.

They have a rich tradition of art and craft rooted in a life-style that has always been in harmony with the environment they live in. Skilled Indigenous craftsman and artisans have always been the pillars of a Indigenous society. For many centuries been self-sufficient, they lent their skills to creating items of utility as well as those with ritualistic and aesthetic value. Indigenous craftsman, artisans carve out fine works of art and weave colorful cloths that distinguished them. Festivals are a testimony to the fascination and love the Indigenous peoples have for art. The abundance of raw material, the splendid environment and the inherent skill of the Indigenous peoples have all played a role ingenerating rich history of art and craft in their society.

Painting is not just a decorative art in the Indigenous society. It is a medium through which speaks the generation past it is an expression of human's heart, a way to reach out the heavens above.

Paintings are like prayer that becomes part of the offerings made to God, ancestors and spirits. Indigenous paintings present human imagination and native culture in the most unadulterated form.

Age-old themes, styles, image and techniques of painting employed by the Indigenous peoples are still breathing in " Indigenous Paintings" of today. Many indigenous artists have attained astonishing technical mastery of wood metal and fabrics. Their works demands attention to the significance of ritual and diversity and to the deep complexity of traditions. Indigenous art is a crucial challenge to what people think art should be, it's never simply reflects reality, but forces engagement with the past and our relation to others. Sometimes art-works are not necessarily meant to be things of beauty, although they achieve a distinct beauty in spite of themselves.

India, the land of diversities and varied cultural heritage and the originator of many spiritual and cultural ethos.

The North-Eastern part, the seven sister's states of India is unique in terms of nature, landscape and its people. Nature has been exceedingly kind and has endowed these beautiful states with the exquisitely picturesque landscapes. The vibrantly colorful, lush of verdant flora and fauna, diverse forest & mountains limpid lakes and rivers.

Each ethnic group here has its own distinct culture and tradition deeply embedded in its customary practices. The tradition of celebrating their distinct festivals with pageantry of colours is the mirrors of the peoples culture.

Colourful and intricately designed costumes, jewelers and beads are the people adorn present the rich incomparable traditional and cultural heritage of them. The art works reflect the traditions and culture of the peoples. Indigenous artists and their work have become sought after and more recognized within the arts communities for not only the quality of there work but the feelings, emotions and images the artist convey with their art. They are artistic and creative by nature. This owns art forms and cultural expressions and ramifications distinctly showcase the indigenous peoples to the world. Some of their arts are naturalistic and virtuosic and some are highly conceptual and spiritual.

The paintings exhibited here take the admirer into a world of their own giving a rich insight into the indigenous culture. For those who resonate with these paintings and time into their regularity it is possible to partake of the beauty and harmony that existed in the creation of each work.