

Frames of endless greenery

By Reshma Gopinath

Plantain leaves up and close, lotus leaves in the pond, a walk-way by a lush paddy field — all of which are very familiar to a Keralite. But it's not too often that we pause to look at these and appreciate their beauty. It is, to us, too mundane to spend our time on.

But Jayanthi Moorthy and Sreedevi Purushotham would love to disagree.

Through *Emerald*, the exhibition held by the two at the Durbar Hall Art Centre, the endeavour has been to capture those frames from life which often go unnoticed, from a different perspective.

"Kerala has much more than the usual tourist-oriented fishing nets and backwaters. The simple, rustic life offers so much, but people often pass them by," says Jayanthi, who is a graphic designer in Chennai. "We used to sit at different places and sketch, and our favourite were the rustic scenes, which we felt don't get their due appreciation. So we decided to put them together for an exhibition," says Sreedevi, who is an interior designer by profession. Friends from school and college days, *Emerald* is the first exhibition for the two. "I had held an exhibition in my college, solely on flowers, but that wasn't a very organised one. So this is my first real exhibition," says Sreedevi.

The two have been working on this endeavour for the past one year. The exhibition has 35 paintings, featuring 17 paintings by each and one done together. The medium

The paintings of Jayanthi Moorthy and Sreedevi Purushotham depict even the minute details of the greenery of Nature and the rustic life



Solitude, a painting by Sreedevi Purushotham, on display at the exhibition



Jayanthi Moorthy and Sreedevi Purushotham

is oil on canvas. "I work with water-colours too, but I am more comfortable with oil painting," says Sreedevi. The paintings capture a multitude of frames from rustic life. Evident in the paintings is their eye for detail and love for the ordinarily beautiful things in life. Working together on the painting, *Haven*, was a very pleasant experience, they say. "Our styles are very similar, so

we decided to try it together. Painting the tree-top was fun, we began from two corners and merged it together," chips in Sreedevi. Jayanthi used to shuttle between Chennai and Kochi, often working in parts. For both of them, painting is what relates them to the earth. "I, being a graphic designer, work completely with computers. At the end of the day, I need to hold

something other than the mouse," Jayanthi says. For Sreedevi too, painting is the medium to let out her creative urge.

"It takes you to another world. When I paint a house, I often visualise myself inside it, and that gives me a high," she says.

There are many other themes than nature that attract the duo. Sreedevi is into capturing Indian folk life in her frames. Jayanthi is currently working on painting sculptures, like the ones at Mahabalipuram, of which she has built up a collection.

The exhibition brochure says, "We hope to make the onlooker pause a while and feel the surroundings which speak so much, silently." Behold the paintings, listen — you might hear their pleasant echoes too.

The exhibition is on from 11 a.m to 7.30 p.m. till March 16.

