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`M.S.' recreated

By T. Ramakrishnan

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HOMAGE TO M.S.: M.F. Husain's 6'x 4' portrait of M.S. Subbulakshmi, acrylic on canvas, was unveiled at the opening of "Husain" Edition Limited, his major exhibition of graphics, in Chennai on Wednesday. The artist, a long-time admirer of the great singer, did the painting in Dubai on Tuesday. He dedicated the exhibition to M.S. - Photo: V. Ganesan

CHENNAI, DEC. 15. Right in the middle of a hall at Mylapore sits "M.S." with her famous tambura. Clad in deep red saree with black shades, the genius of song, sporting jasmine flower, is caught in a freeze frame that brings out the divinity of her music.

This is how another prominent creative personality of this country, M.F. Husain, visualised her immediately after he heard at Dubai the news of the passing away of M.S. Subbulakshmi on Saturday night. He created this portrait of Subbulakshmi, using acrylic on canvas. On the top portion of the portrait is written in Tamil "Subbulakshmi"

This creation is one of over 100 graphics of Husain in

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various forms. Called "Husain" Edition Limited, his major exhibition of graphics, which are on display at Lakshana Museum of AArts, demonstrates a wide range of subjects such as different moments of life in Varanasi and culture of the streets of Chennai in 1980. Mr. Husain's "Tale of 3 cities (Hyderabad, Jaisalmer and Prague)" and his first-ever lithograph made in India in 1966 form part of the exhibition, which is a presentation of Cinema Ghar, Husain Museum of Art and Cinema, Hyderabad. This `Edition' comprises works made using serigraph, digitograph, pictograph, poster and chine colle.

Dedicating the exhibition to the memory of the legendary Carnatic musician, the artist recalled his association with her, spanning over five decades. "Thirty years ago, the Benares Hindu University honoured her with a doctorate. She sang just for two minutes. It was so divine. I can never forget it in my life-time," he fondly recalled.

Attended by Chennai's who's who in the field of culture and prominent foreign residents such as the United States Consul-General, Richard D. Haynes, the exhibition also had different publications of Husain. "Where Art Thou" and "M.F. Husain Ki Kahani" were the English and Hindi versions of his autobiography, which was originally written in Urdu. Also on display are "Husain's Art Book for Children" and "Sansad Upanishad," the latter being his reflections during his tenure as a member of Rajya Sabha (1986-92).

As part of the show, a 14-minute film of four of Mr. Husain's exhibitions and art performances, giving an insight into the artist and his works, will be screened at the exhibition's venue (which is located at 8, Judge Jambulingam Road, Mylapore). The show, which commemorates 50 years of graphics by Mr. Husain, will be on till January 22 from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Najma Husain, daughter-in-law of the artist and director of the Hyderabad museum, said the exhibition had been organised to bring the artist's works within the "reach of the common man."

N. Ram, Editor-in-Chief of *The Hindu*, said the artist was tremendously committed to the freedom of expression and the freedom of creativity. He was also known for his humaneness and a deep understanding of diversity of the country.

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