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Zarina Hashmi Papers, Clippings and Press, 1970-1999

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The Statesman 30.4.86.

THE ARTS

By Our Art Critic

AN exhibition of Zarina Hashmi, a Delhi artist, is being held at Chitrakoot Gallery till April 30. Comprising what is termed "aesthetic paper works", the display is by arrangement with Art Heritage, an organization based in the capital.

All involve paper surfaces, from unusual ones to those that seem to be hand-made and of coarse textures. Occasionally, this is adopted to simulate sculpture, like relief pictures, by giving an impression of the thickness of the material.

The compositions are unusual—so spare, reticent and emblematic that the viewer may be unsure of his response. It can be anger or bemusement, the lack of ample motifs leading to the feeling that it is all pointless, or to a sense of joke perpetrated by such bareness. But, really, the exercises are a search for alternatives in style, for an expression at once distinct from routine manners. Elemental abstraction coupled with an air of history, specifically of Mughal and Rajasthani architecture, is what gives form to the pictures. One even breathes nature with its scored slate-black shape suggesting both a sea shell and a fossil leaf. There are reminders of the American minimalists on the one hand and of Paul Klee on the other, most works made up of ranks of house-like figures or embossed motifs together with lines of perforations.

(The Telegraph 29.4.86)

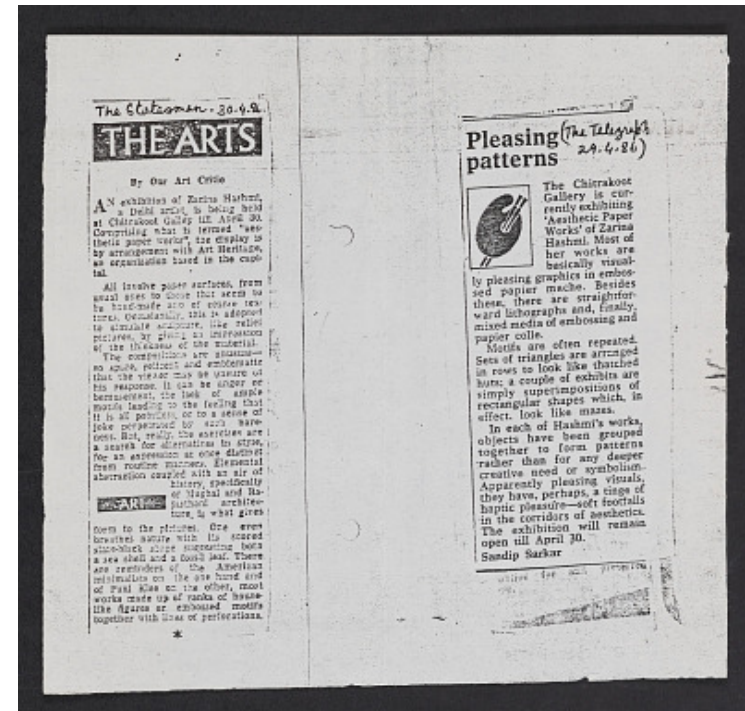
Pleasing patterns

The Chitrakoot Gallery is currently exhibiting 'Aesthetic Paper Works' of Zarina Hashmi. Most of her works are basically visually pleasing graphics in embossed papier mache. Besides these, there are straightforward lithographs and, finally, mixed media of embossing and papier colle.

Motifs are often repeated. Sets of triangles are arranged in rows to look like thatched huts; a couple of exhibits are simply superimpositions of rectangular shapes which, in effect, look like mazes.

In each of Hashmi's works, objects have been grouped together to form patterns rather than for any deeper creative need or symbolism. Apparently pleasing visuals, they have, perhaps, a tinge of haptic pleasure—soft footfalls in the corridors of aesthetics. The exhibition will remain open till April 30.

Sandip Sarkar



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