

(extract from the essay Passages

by TK Sabapathy,

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Passages by T K Sabapathy

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In the nineties, Parvathi's practice of drawing bifurcated along two trajectories, each springing from different formal and conceptual premises.... Parvathi employs the medium copiously, yet rigorously, and with purpose. She utilises planes, volumes, tones and lines with varying textures and kinetic properties in order to articulate and externalise the form of the body...

Drawing is employed in a dual capacity; at least we receive the picture with these paired interests in mind. In one, it sets out to crystallise formal patterns, which are read as representing the body; in the other it makes visible the very procedures by which lines and marks are set down in a surface and conform to a representational scheme...

... John Berger describes this process aptly and vividly when he observes that sometimes the sitter is alive, sometimes dead, but always senses a participation, a will to be seen, or maybe, a waiting-to-be-seen. Transcribing what is seen into an intelligible image requires knowledge and effort, ie knowing what can be done. To see forms, one must have formal capacities, acquire formal means. Parvathi underlines this by reminding us of the methods and protocols involved in representation; in this regard, she says, and rightly, that representation is abstraction because it is made up of lines on paper that in turn we agree to read or view as cohering into form (body) in space or in a pictorial field (the paper)....In doing so, she deals with the drawing's performative, formal, conceptual and subjective properties.

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