



'O! Mother' by S. B. Palsikar

nothing exists without FAITH

By faith from a strictly artistic point of view we mean to assent to an authoritative principle which commands the artist to work in his line of art. The quality of whatever exists as an effect of the artist's work is the result of the comparative degree of this faith.

This superior force does not do away with the artists's free will; nay it enhances it and makes it stand out as the decisive factor of an artistic personality. It is owing to the artist's capacity to take pains and be all at his work that he will forge something great. Nothing great, noble, titanic will come out of ignobility and mediocrity; in other words, nobody can give that which he does not possess; thus action can issue only from a prin-

ciple of action and since laziness is lack of action it follows that a lazy artist can produce no great work of art.

On the other hand an active artist who thoroughly surrenders himself to that imperative force—which we call inspiration so as not to be carried away by it but rather to take hold of it and identify himself with it—will become a mould into which a whole world of beauty flows and after whose image it assumes a definite shape and character..

The freedom in the artist equips him with a strength to apply himself to the execution of his work; it explains why the art can remain indifferent to his call and how, on the other hand, by a perfect surrender and obedience to his call he can bring about wonders.

And precisely because the artist works in the realm of faith his activity may become all the more painful to himself; for he submits with all his might to a principle which often is beyond reason. Not unreasonable though precisely because it is matter of the will as in the case of faith.

The artist may be at a loss to explain why he works in a particular way, often too personal to be understood by all, if by any one. Remember the case of that poet who on being asked what the meaning of a poem he had written the night before is, could only answer: "Last night God and I knew it; at present God alone knows the meaning." Nevertheless the artist believes, even if he does not find reasons to express it in an intelligible manner, that he is pushed on and partly led by a superior force, without which he would have remained a mere imitator or at the most a producer of uninspired works of art.

Thus the true artist, faithful to the inspiration within himself, stands as an instrument of an aspect that harmonises finality which pervades the whole universe and manifests itself in different ways and by different means of expression. The artist is the golden gate out of which beauty issues and becomes incarnate in a material form. He is a concrete instance of a fact very universal and rich in its applications. There we have a case whose ultimate explanation lies outside the possibilities of mortal man; it is one of the many instances whose final solution the agnostic gives up as inexplicable because his mental acumen does not reach to the world of faith.

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