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AN exhibition displaying art by 20 top Indian contemporary artists, Looking Glass: The Existence of Difference has been on at four simultaneous venues in New Delhi.

The month-long exhibition, which ends today, was curated by independent artist-art historian Gayatri Sinha. The works on display are driven by contemporary social issues, says Mukesh Panicka, director of the **Religare Arts Initiative**.

A mixed media sculpture and an oil painting by leading contemporary artist T.V. Santosh depicts the impact of violence on society. He has used images of violence and wars from newspapers and has translated them into his art.

"Everyday we wake up to violence in the newspapers. It has become a part of our lives. I have transcribed the newspaper images in my language on the canvas. For example, I have used defence maps in which countries mark their targets as my artistic motifs. They speak of the violence, strategies and manipulation," says Santosh.

The artist, who is preparing for a solo show in Berlin next March, says that violence was the kind of inner logic that drove his work.

Kerala-based artist N.N. Rimzon, who created a bronze sculpture of goddess Durga and four landscapes from his state, says "The landscapes are stark painted in raw colours, giving the compositions a primitive look."

"The sculpture of the goddess is a healing symbol of love and protection in a social landscape that is marked by failures of communism and socialism, the rise of globalisation, market forces, terrorism and existential crises. Art should always have some relation with life," adds the artist, who teaches art at



Right: Atul Dodiya's works are driven by contemporary social issues; and (left) Artist T. V. Santosh has used images of violence and wars from newspapers and translated them into his art Photo: Religare Arts Initiative



Blood Brothers by Riyas Komu

Kerala's Alleppey district.

According to curator Gayatri Sinha, the exhibition is an extension of her book, *Voices of Change-20 Contemporary Artists*, which docu-

ments contemporary art movement in India between 1955 and 1970. "Indian art in the 1950s and 1960s was influenced by the Nehruvian contradictions and his projects. The 1970s was a

decade of social conflict. There was a great sense of moving away from the ideals of art. Its greatest indicator is cinema. The 1950s were marked by films like *Pyaasa*, *Aag* and *Jaagte Raho*.

"But art followed a different trajectory in the 1980s and thereafter. It showed critique about common concerns like inhumanity, violence and terror. Artists are the forerunners in bringing the changes to the notice of the people," adds Sinha.

The exhibition sought to identify the role of the artist as an interpreter and moderator, she claims.

The participating artists include stalwarts like Jitish Kallat, T.V. Santosh, Shilpa Gupta, N.S. Harsha, Bose Krishnamachari, Subodh Gupta, Bharti Kher, Anita Dubey, N. N. Rimzon, Atul Dodiya, Pushapamala N, Riyas Komu and Jagannath Panda. — IANS