



Rambles into Sacred Realms: Journeys in Pen and Paint

Krish V. Krishnan

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The variety of artistic media Krishnan chose to depict his ventures around the globe shine light on his talent and on the world's cultural and ecological diversity.

Many of the world's architectural wonders began as sacred sites, and Krish Krishnan has compiled a cool coffee-table book that explores those sites by mixing prose and artwork in a range of media. *Rambles into Sacred Realms* spans the globe, and Krishnan does a nice job of blending images of the famous sites themselves with others of the animals and foliage that surround them.

The book opens with the Mayan Actun Tunichil Muknal cave in Belize and ends with the Buddhist temple of Thailand's Sukhothai. Krishnan also includes legendary structures like the ancient pyramids in Egypt, Petra in Jordan, Stonehenge in the United Kingdom, and the site of the oracle at Delphi, in Greece.

Krishnan writes of his own travel experiences at each site, which range from looking for his child's toy at sunset in Giza to being awed by the size and majesty of the pyramids there. The writing is solid, and the artwork is excellent. Krishnan captures light well, beautifully using watercolors to depict the long shadows of Stonehenge at sunset or the impact of a rainy day on olive groves near Athens. His acrylics display detail nicely, whether massive tree roots growing among the stonework of Angkor, the brick of the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, or a crowd of tourists dwarfed by the spectacle of Chichen Itza. The scratchboard works are also outstanding, from a view of one of Petra's buildings seen through a gap in the rocks to a plethora of umbrellas along the shore of the Ganges River.

The artist's ability to work equally well in a variety of media is the biggest strength of *Rambles into Sacred Realms*. Along with his painting, Krishnan uses crayon, ink drawing, pastel, and pencil to great effect. His portraits of animals are particularly deft, whether he's capturing the skin texture of an elephant in Thailand or depicting the markings of adult and juvenile tapirs in Belize.

JEFF FLEISCHER (Summer 2015)

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