

The dark horse on their canvas

Three art gallery owners in Mumbai tells us which artists have made it big, or are sure to in the future

Shirin Gandhi of Chemould on artist Dhruvi Acharya

Erstwhile New York based artist Dhruvi Acharya has blown over most of the buyers at Chemould Art Gallery. Her recent exhibition called *Figments And Chaos* was sold within two days. Her paintings ooze such tactile vision that the buyers want to touch them. In fact, I had to issue a formal notice requesting patrons not to touch the delicate surface of the canvas. There is a huge amount of detailing in her work. Her paintings have layers upon layers, but yet she manages to flatten surface completely. Unlike the new brand of artists you see, Dhruvi's art is not violent. Instead, it is a no-holds barred celebration of life. She is very committed and it shows in her polished paintings that exude substance. Decorative work is looked down upon by contemporary artists, but Dhruvi plays on this mockery and inspires awe. Naturally, her paintings achieve the status of little jewels that everybody wants to touch!



Lari Pittman's layered surfaces, Jean-Michel Basquiat's spontaneity and Pieter Brueghel's precise observation of life, the Japanese superflat movement, comic books and Indian miniatures inspire my work. Each of my paintings has at least 20 layers of matt and glossy paint.

After a degree in Visual Communications at Sophia Polytechnic, I shifted base to the US and completed my MFA from the Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore. I returned to Mumbai a few months ago to give my children an Indian upbringing and plan to stay put for the next few years.

My paintings deal with the identity of women as I see them. I have been in New York for five years and have been observing differences in the way women are treated here and in India. I am especially concerned with the life of a woman relocated from her home and culture, who attempts to recapture the essence of her homeland through the alien atmosphere she resides in.