

A year after her last solo, this artist turns more contemplative



## INSIDEOUT

with Dhruvi Acharya



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### How come her busy canvases have given way to solitary women?

"My earlier paintings were quite crowded with obvious narratives going on. Pop imagery and miniatures were important parts of my inspiration. Now, I do draw upon them but I've minimised figures while trying to maximise the impact," she says of her women, who hold inner conversation with themselves. *Figment* is showing at Gallery Chemould, Kala Ghoda, from November 17 to December 4.

### Is it autobiographical?

"The first in the series, titled *Paint*, is autobiographical. It has me standing before a blank canvas, a cloud hovering over," says

Acharya. But the cloud bursts and a river of yellow paint floods the room. In the background, there are barely seen ghosts of the old images. Other works include women from all walks of life: thinking, reading searching by torchlight, for something they cannot find.

### What inspires the new global look?

"In previous works, there was a certain longing for my roots (with Indian motifs and saree-clad women). I'd spent almost nine years shuttling between Baltimore in the US and Mumbai, so I didn't feel grounded the way I do now," says the 33-year-old. In the last two years, armed with film-

maker hubby Manish, two sons and a more permanent studio in Bhulabhai Desai Road, she feels free to expand her horizons.

### Did her Manhattan stint influence her work?

"During my nine months there, I just sketched, taking in the art around me. I was influenced by the Superflat School of painting and Japanese animation artist Takashi Murakami," says Acharya, of the new slick images and cool colours.

### What of the drawings?

"Usually I never show my drawings. They're works done without an audience or sales in mind," she says, of her pencil drawings. Some could become larger paintings, others are interesting house-hold objects.

### Is her work getting to be more philosophical?

"I've always felt my paintings touch deeper issues, related to women and their choices. However, this series of 18 paintings is leading me down a self-reflective path," she concludes.

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