

Two Plus Two Equals

Gallery Chemould, Kala Ghoda

Dhruvi Acharya's new collection of paintings is dynamic and often deliciously cheeky. There are large canvases in acrylics while her miniature painting skills are shown off in watercolours and on wood panels. These may be smaller but Acharya packs into them intricacies that emphasise that size really doesn't matter.

What is refreshing about Acharya's works is their sense of humour. In "Somnolent", she scribbles terms from art history in the background while in the foreground a woman reclines with a book as her thought bubbles drip

into the puddle of words. There are dense ideas like the transference of thought at play here, but there's also more. "The thought bubbles drip to show boredom," Acharya said. "I remember how boring some art history classes used to be!" Acharya's thought bubbles are filled with everything from golden glitter to nothing. Often the thought bubbles deflate and shrivel or divide into droplets.

Acharya is very emphatic that her work is not autobiographical but she does admit that aspects of her life, such as her two sons, inform her paintings. "I see my boys and they are attracted to violence," she said. "Okay, so it's in

comics like *Batman* but it's almost like a natural affiliation for destruction." The violence is in all the



Float

paintings with children in them.

Her motifs invite you to read meaning into them and reconstruct their story. There is something unnerving about the disembodied screams in "Float", where Acharya surrounds her glittering, bobbing subject with thought bubbles that seem more like vortexes with teeth. In the simple standing figure of "Spexy", she creates a suggestive dialogue between the circles in the red background, a woman's open mouth, a zygotic thought bubble and the red centrepiece of a necklace. Comic books and classic Indian miniatures may be an unlikely pair but in this collection these two do indeed add up. DP