

**The Economic Times, New Delhi, India, 24 September 2006**

**A PALETTEFUL OF ASHA**

**TARA'S WORKS ARE PLAYFUL HOMAGES  
TO LIFE'S INEXPLICABLE IRONIES**

**STATIS** GOURGOURIS, who has taught comparative literature at Princeton, Columbia, Yale and UCLA says: "Culturally speaking Tara's work is, undecipherable and uncategorisable." He is talking about Manhattan-based artist Tara Sabharwal. But you can really put a finger onto her style. It is lyrical and playful.

It is as if the vibrant; colours are an assembly of words in a poem. One that tries to identify her identity. Especially when you are constantly shuttling three continents!, Americas, Europe and Asia, "I am actually comfortable with my identity. It really doesn't bother me too much," Though it has been part of her artistic investigations, this constant state of transit is colourfully transcribed in her works. Particularly in her etching titled *life journeys* which shows two houses that are connected with a square of ladders. It is here that she brings lightheartedness to her problem. Through children sliding down those ladder and swinging through them, she introduces an element of mirth. *Life Journey's House* in ink, gouche and watercolour is a variation of the same theme.

Tara's works tell you why identities are not fixed, she overcomes her wistfulness—that yearning for childhood especially the evening twilight in which she would prolong her games and stay that extra minute in the garden when her mother would be asking her to call it a day and come inside. This she does through the introduction of a mysterious element in the shape of a sphere or halo as if trying to distract her thoughts away.

Her works also have an Escher like quality, especially in the way ladders, pathways and the innards intertwine with each other— one leading into and out of the other.

Tara also has her politics in place. And these works which were completed during 2005-06 have planes flying all around them not just because the Manhattan sky is permanently dotted with planes but the aircraft have become the symbol of something they were never meant to be.

Tara's works are an introspection of such ironies too.

**Manoj Nair**