

An act of spontaneity

Artist Tara Sabharwal delves deeper into the layers of subconscious mind, highlighting the need to live in the moment

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Around four years ago something changed in Tara Sabharwal's life. She felt the strongest urge to go back to a place whose picture was hazy in her memories. Whether it was a dream, an illusion or false memory, she wanted to interrogate. And, the only way to rekindle this subliminal association was through what she knows best – paintings. Incidentally, this was also the time when the New York-based artist was undergoing a spiritual transition which reflects significantly in her new body of works titled, 'The Open Window'. A departure from her signature figurative works, this solo show marks her entry into the world of abstraction.

"As we start accumulating wealth, name and fame we become egoistic human beings. We tend to forget who we are and what our real purpose in life is. To overcome this we all have to open the windows of our mind and become aware of our surroundings. The life is happening now and in this

moment, we need to cherish this," says Tara.

She purposefully decided to articulate this thought by digressing a bit from her artistic rituals that she has been following in her decades of art practice. If the transition to abstraction was the first step, the second change was to alter her art-making process. In order to



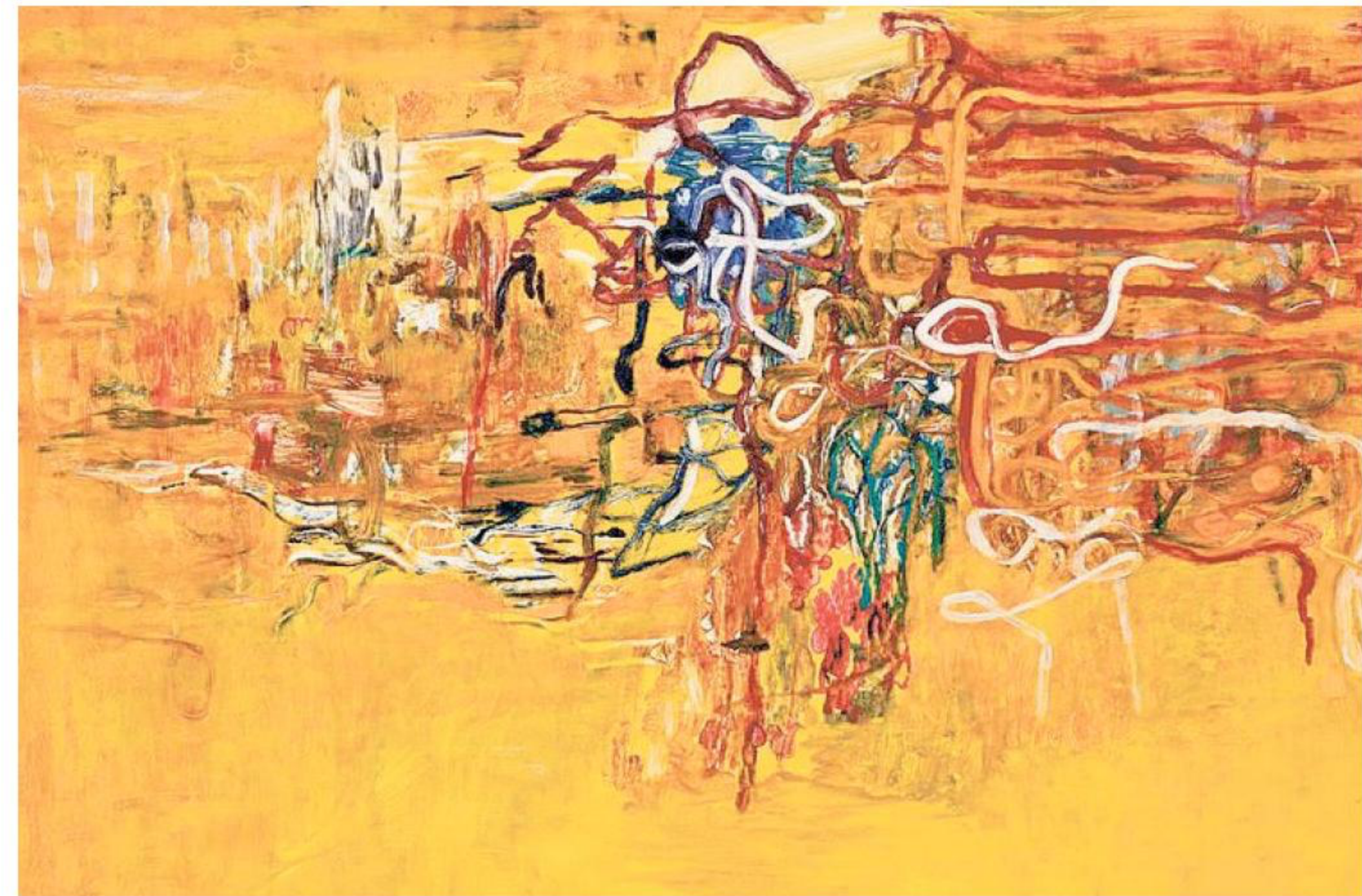
Each work can be interpreted differently, depending on a person's state of mind

do this, she started painting in public places in the New York City. "The entire week I allowed myself to think, meditate over a work and build it in my mind. Then, on Saturday, I would go out with my plexiglass and quickly pour down whatever I had in my mind. After this, I would bring the work home and start working on it, by adding several layers to reach the highest level of consciousness," she says.

Act of spontaneity

"I wanted to bring out an act of spontaneity in my works, points out Tara, who has around 40 solo shows to her credit. "I only used oil-based paints because they have the richness and boldness that I need in my works," she adds.

Living between New York, the UK and India, Tara comes with a show every four years. According to her, she always works in a different direction and picks up varied mediums to express her thoughts and observations. "There is always a certain level of development in my works because I never look back at what I have



Revisiting the past: "Evening Rush" by Tara Sabharwal ■ ELLIOT SCHNIDER

already created. My art creation is an organic process and I love to use different mediums because they become instrumental in becoming an artist's voice," says Tara.

Most of Tara's works starting from her earlier figurative series to the present ones, an underlying theme of duality is always addressed. Sometimes, it is too obvious but mostly scattered like a piece of a puzzle in a painting waiting to be connected by the viewer to give it a shape of a form. Interestingly, Tara's own experience or say confusion with duality during her growing up years

became a reason for her to take up brush than any other profession.

"Right from my childhood, I had this strange feeling that I am two people. Sometimes I would be extremely happy, blissful and amused. A child who is open to new things and observes everything. At the same time, I also felt being trapped in a time warp – not knowing where to go and find my gripping in life," she says.

Such experiences of existential crisis are too prevalent in today's time and thus her works offer a moment of meditation that pulls the

viewer in to delves deeper into the inner layers of the subconscious. For instance, in the work titled, 'Evening Rush', a ring of multiple lines create forms like musical notes, set against the turmeric-yellow background, the viewer can imagine it a river bathing in the evening sun reflecting the vagaries of life. "Each work can be interpreted differently, depending on a person's state of mind. This is the quality of abstract art, it takes you where you never dared to be before," she concludes.

(The Open Window is on till October 25 at Art Alive Gallery)