

Travelling Light

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Artist Tara Sabharwal's show, after four years, marks a return to the child-like spirit hidden within us

Written by [Pallavi Chattopadhyay](#) | Published: October 23, 2017 12:42 am



Tara Sabharwal's Lush Lands

A quick glance at artist Tara Sabharwal's 23 artworks on display at Art Alive Gallery brings back a flood of childhood memories, of creating dots, irregular lines and large circles using watercolours on paper, where the shapes are open to interpretation. While on one hand, Hybrid gives the impression of a tall giraffe, an elephant and a setting sun posing together, but being none of them at the same time, Boundaries loaded in shades of red, appears like a map of India and a land being divided into two parts. With her latest show 'The Open Window', a departure from her signature figurative artists in the past, the 60-year-old artist says these abstractions mark a new direction in her artistic oeuvre. Sabharwal, who hosts a show every four years, moves between Delhi, New York and London. With over 40 shows in the UK, the US, India and Germany to her credit, many of her works rest in the collections of the British Museum, Victoria and Albert Museum

in the UK and the Peabody Essex Museum in the US. Of her latest show in Delhi, Sabharwal says, “I never decide what I am painting, I simply play around with colours on canvas. While painting, I access parts of my brain that I don’t otherwise. I follow some kind of energy and radar that is guiding me through and I start making marks and introduce a dash of colours. Just like mantra meditation, I go into space doing this.” ‘The Open Window’ is a stage that Sabharwal finds herself currently in terms of her artistic development. “The most precious thing in life is to be a child again, to be free and happy. On getting older, one tends to change, and the ego comes in between. I now want to go back to that open awareness and feeling, like that of an open window and a clean slate. This show is like the shedding of other things, and I liked the idea of returning to innocence, of unlearning and unpacking,” says Sabharwal, an alumni of MS University, Baroda, and the Royal College of Art, London.



Artist Tara Sabharwal

With self-enquiry being her motivating goal, much like her teacher and friend Nasreen Mohamedi, the titles of Sabharwal’s works serve as a little tickle. Lush Lands is characterised by luxuriant vegetation, with green colour overruling the landscape. Swing has varying colourful shapes of swings that dot parks. Next time around, the painter hopes to roll out her canvases on the floor, so that onlookers can walk over them and interpret them from every corner and angle.

The exhibition is at Art Alive Gallery, S – 221, Panchsheel Road, till October 25