

## ***With the flow of light***

**Arunima Choudhury's** works – organic water-colour on handmade papers and ceramics – are hinged on multiple sensibilities. These works, as always, explore the mediums with an incessant spirit of discovery, celebrate life in its nascent forms and embrace the vulnerability of existence like a power of sustenance.

Female figures, flora and fauna in her works emerge from a world steeped in deep faith. Faith in empathy, faith in tenderness – despite the lurking shadows from all corners of darkness around. Arunima refuses to allow the menacing shadows to take over. She keeps on creating with the flow of light. Executed with an impeccable sense of tonality, the figures in their silent composes evoke a sense of tranquillity immersed in light. However, light in its pure unadulterated form also carries melodies of sorrow under its wings. Often, Arunima's paintings seem to be the wings of light. Enchantment of life is subtly accompanied by the lullabies of pathos.

The artist in Arunima is a gardener too. Handmade paper is her soil; natural pigment is her light and water. She draws and paints with a compassion with which she tends her plants. It is with this empathy she speaks to her paintings and let the paintings talk to her too. These dialogues are not over-pitched but intimate, often personal yet open for the viewers to participate. The fluidity of tones and colours in her paintings, contour lines with a palpable organic quality open up all the possibilities of a deep conversation. Conversations often take place in whispering tones. Whispering quality here does not imply secrecy. It suggests intimacy freed from the territorial sense of space and material sense of time. A sense of eternity can be felt. Arunima perceives her visual world in a cyclic eternal trope with a central belief in resurrection of life amidst decay and violence. Women and nature share a primordial moment in her paintings.

What comes almost instantaneously upon our engagement with her works, however, is the curiously illusive nature of the physical presence of the forms. They are indeed tangibly real to us, but the drawn images tend to merge more with the mindscape rather than the tactile feelings. The images are driven by that sensation, a certain sensation – impossible to keep them entrapped within the contours, impossible not to let them flow due to their extreme openness.

Her new found interest in ceramics too one finds the assertion of life as the vital element. Like life, clay too comes out stronger and brighter once passed through the fire. Both in the water-colours and ceramics the element of unpredictability is evidently what the artist never wants to suppress.

Engaging with Arunima's works is a moment of reassurance. Reassurance of a liberating experience.

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