

The image features a dark gray background with a grid of vertical lines. Scattered across the grid are numerous abstract, colorful geometric shapes. These shapes are primarily composed of triangles, quadrilaterals, and irregular polygons, some of which are filled with vibrant colors like blue, green, yellow, orange, and purple. The shapes are arranged in a way that suggests a complex, multi-dimensional structure or a collection of related forms. The overall aesthetic is modern and abstract.

Santosh Verma

Rewarding Journey
of a Deep and Lonely Patience

by

Santosh Verma



Dhoomimal
ART CENTRE

Dhoomimal Art Centre
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Dheere Dheere Re Mana, Dheere Sub Kucch Hoye
Mali Seenche Sau Ghara, Ritu Aaye Phal Hoye

Kabirdas

Be slow O mind, slowly everything happens
Gardener may water garden a hundred times,
When the season comes, there is fruit.

English version: James Khan

Rewarding Journey of a Deep and Lonely Patience

Medieval poet Kabir has always been very close to artist Santosh Verma's heart. He was born in 1956 in the Matigaon village near Varanasi. His father was a great devotee of Kabir. Verma has even named his son after the poet. Kabir has completely sunk in his psyche. He has also felt spiritually drawn to Kabir's village Lahartara. The couplets of Kabir, who was born into a family of weavers, are quite simple at one level but on another level quite complex. Kabir becomes our contemporary when we set out to understand Verma's art and his abstracts. The Kabir who can come up with a sharp commentary on a manipulative society can also convey a profound message on love through his singular couplets. For Verma the influence of Kabir is not a subject of research; he has always been in his life, on his tongue, has remained embedded deep in his art.

Verma spent the first 13 years of his life in his village. His loneliness and patience were the key aspects of this early phase. His elder brother was far too elderly – almost a father figure. While his companions enjoyed the raucous spontaneity of childhood, Verma would spend time in the garden during summer afternoons to reflect over and make sense of his loneliness. This experience has a decisive significance for Verma's art and his characteristic abstracts. Little patches of sunlight on the ground of the dense garden led to a magical game of light and shade!

Kabir's couplet quoted above speaks of patience. As a child Verma would shun his playmates indulging in horseplay and would sit with his fishing rod, patiently waiting for the fish to take the bait. He had only two passions – swimming and fishing with a lot of patience. One day he landed such a big fish that it was impossible for a child like him to pull it out single-handed. A passing gypsy helped him out. But whereas Verma considered his landing a big fish a great achievement, the gypsy was keen on taking it home to cook. He left the child with his mother and took away the fish. But then returned one day and handed him a little tambourine made of that fish's skin.

It is indeed a joy to understand Verma's mature art of today through the medium of such reminiscences. Verma's art is entirely devoid of any western sources. Painters like Gaitonde and Ambadas were his favourites since their abstracts are firmly rooted in the Indian earth.

A couple of years ago I was wandering in the maze of giant canvases carrying contemporary American abstracts spread across many large halls of the Museum of Modern Art in New York. On the way out, near the exit, I saw a small room and suddenly noticed a medium-sized canvas of Gaitonde which was a pleasant shock. That was the Indian earth of abstract art.

I have been seeing Verma's abstracts since their inception and have been his admirer. He has kept himself away from the promotional tricks and gimmickry of Modern Art. In his village school the team of inspectors was astonished to see his drawings on the school walls. He received his art education in Varanasi and was once left speechless on seeing, at an exhibition, an abstract in black done by Jeram Patel. This experience changed the entire course of his life. However, patience is the basic element of Verma's art.

At the 1992 Biennale at Bharat Bhavan when eminent artists like Ghulam Rasool Santosh gave an award to Verma's abstract watercolour, he finally seemed to have found his path. Initially he explored his unique imagination in black and white but he had an uncanny ability to play with colours as well. Ghulam Rasool Santosh was a master of colour and he inspired the young artist to struggle not with ten or twenty canvases but with hundreds of them.

The amazing use of brown (whether light or dark) and green colours in the works in Verma's latest exhibition particularly impressed me. One has to enter this world with patience. To put it in Kabir's words, "The fruit of life come on its own time."

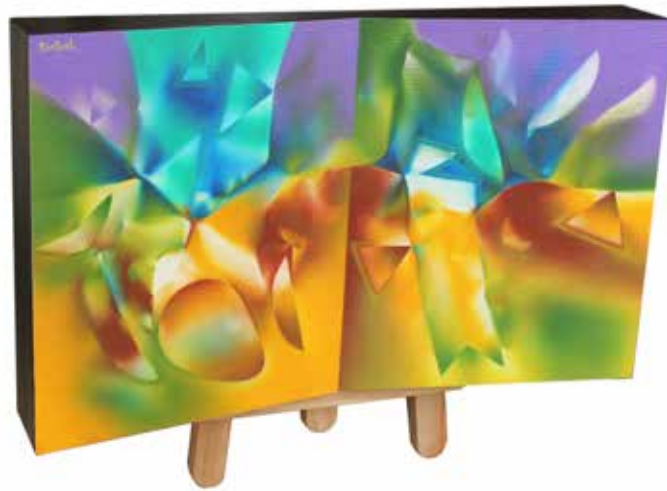
Vinod Bhardwaj
Art Critic



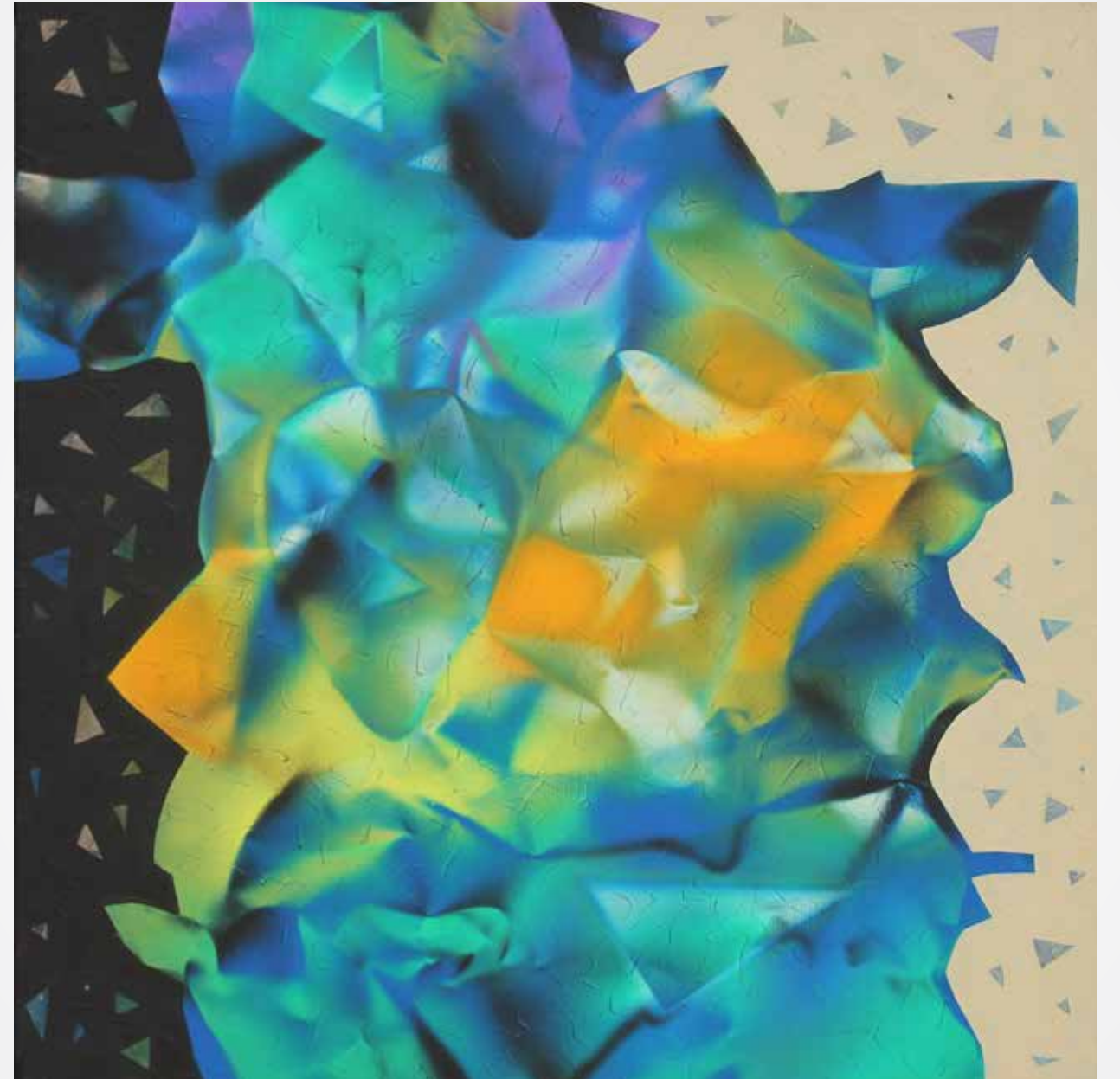
BOOK | 21 x 51 cm | Acrylic on canvas



BOOK | 21 x 51 cm | Acrylic on canvas



BOOK | 21 x 51 cm | Acrylic on canvas



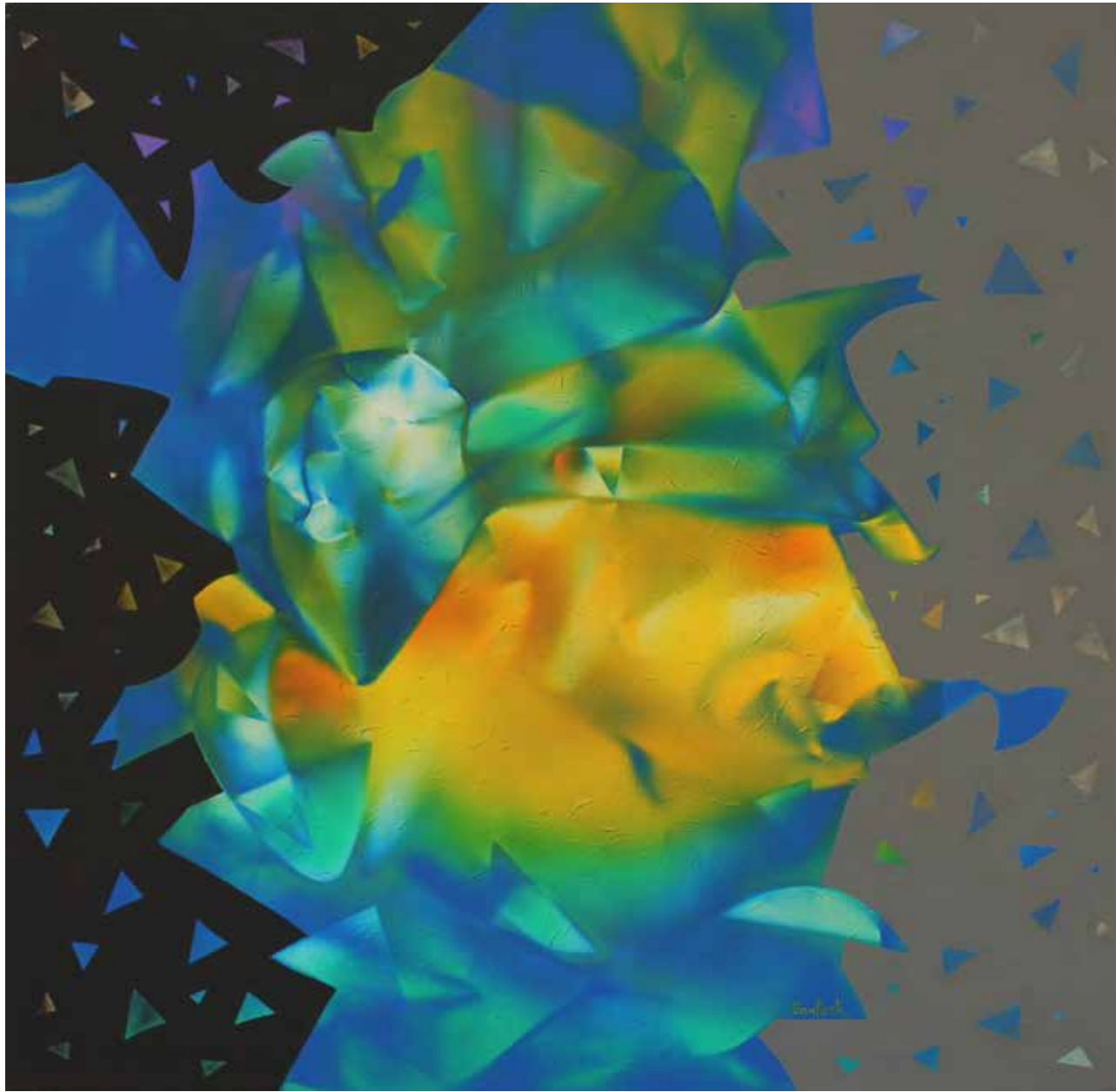
UNTITLED | 46 x 46 cm | Acrylic on canvas



UNTITLED | 46 x 46 cm | Acrylic on canvas

UNTITLED | 46 x 46 cm | Acrylic on canvas





UNTITLED | 61 x 61 cm | Acrylic on canvas



UNTITLED | 61 x 122 cm | Acrylic on canvas



UNTITLED | 61 x 122 cm | Acrylic on canvas



UNTITLED | 76 x 102 cm | Acrylic on canvas



UNTITLED | 66 x 91 cm | Acrylic on canvas



UNTITLED | 68 x 76 cm | Acrylic on canvas



UNTITLED | 91 x 102 cm | Acrylic on canvas



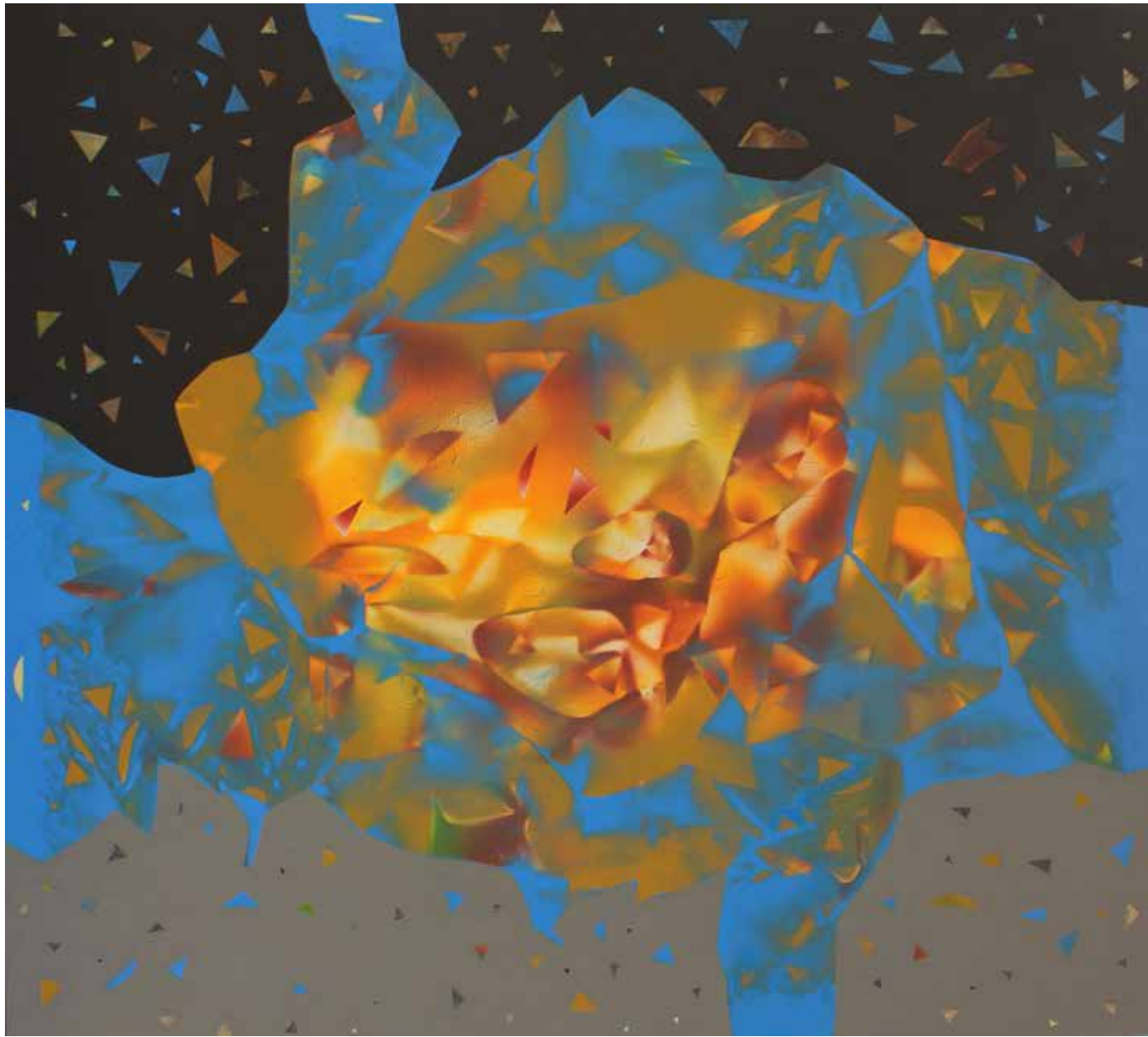
UNTITLED | 91 x 165 cm | Acrylic on canvas



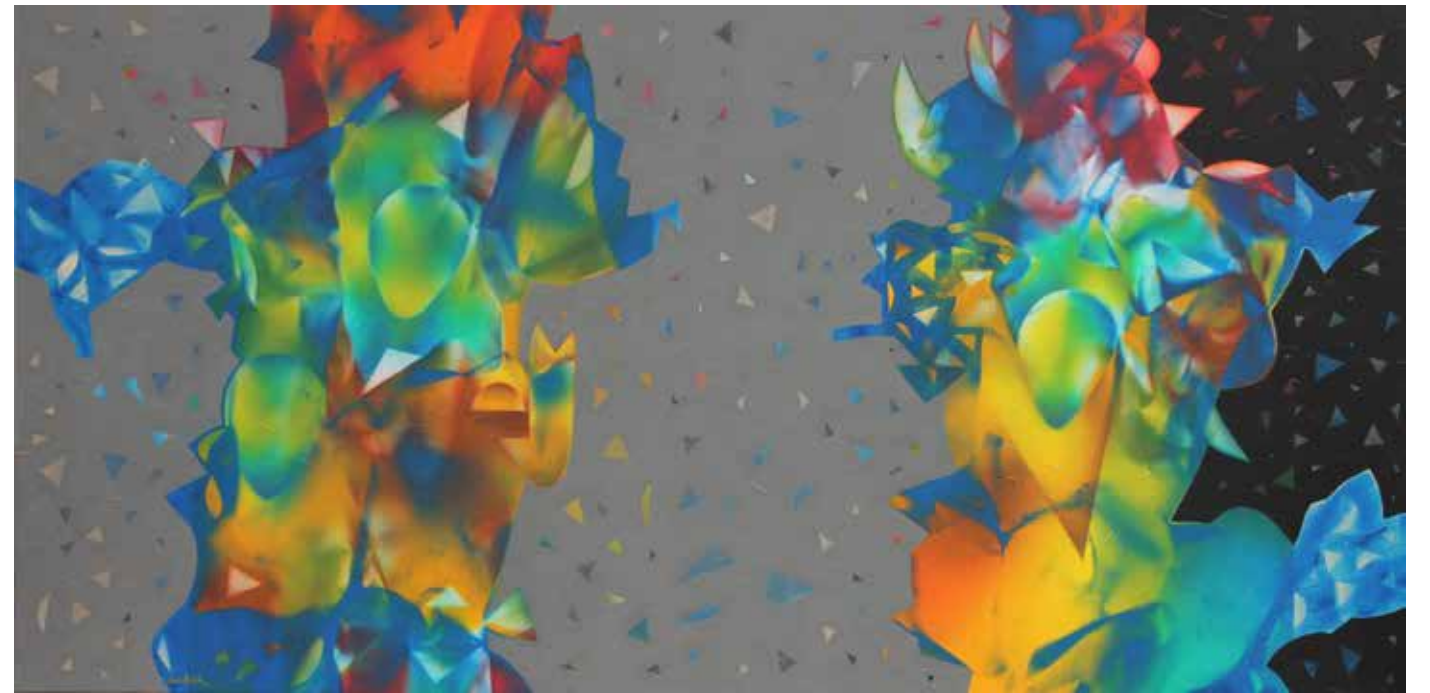
UNTITLED | 91 x 122 cm | Acrylic on canvas



UNTITLED | 76 x 152 cm | Acrylic on canvas



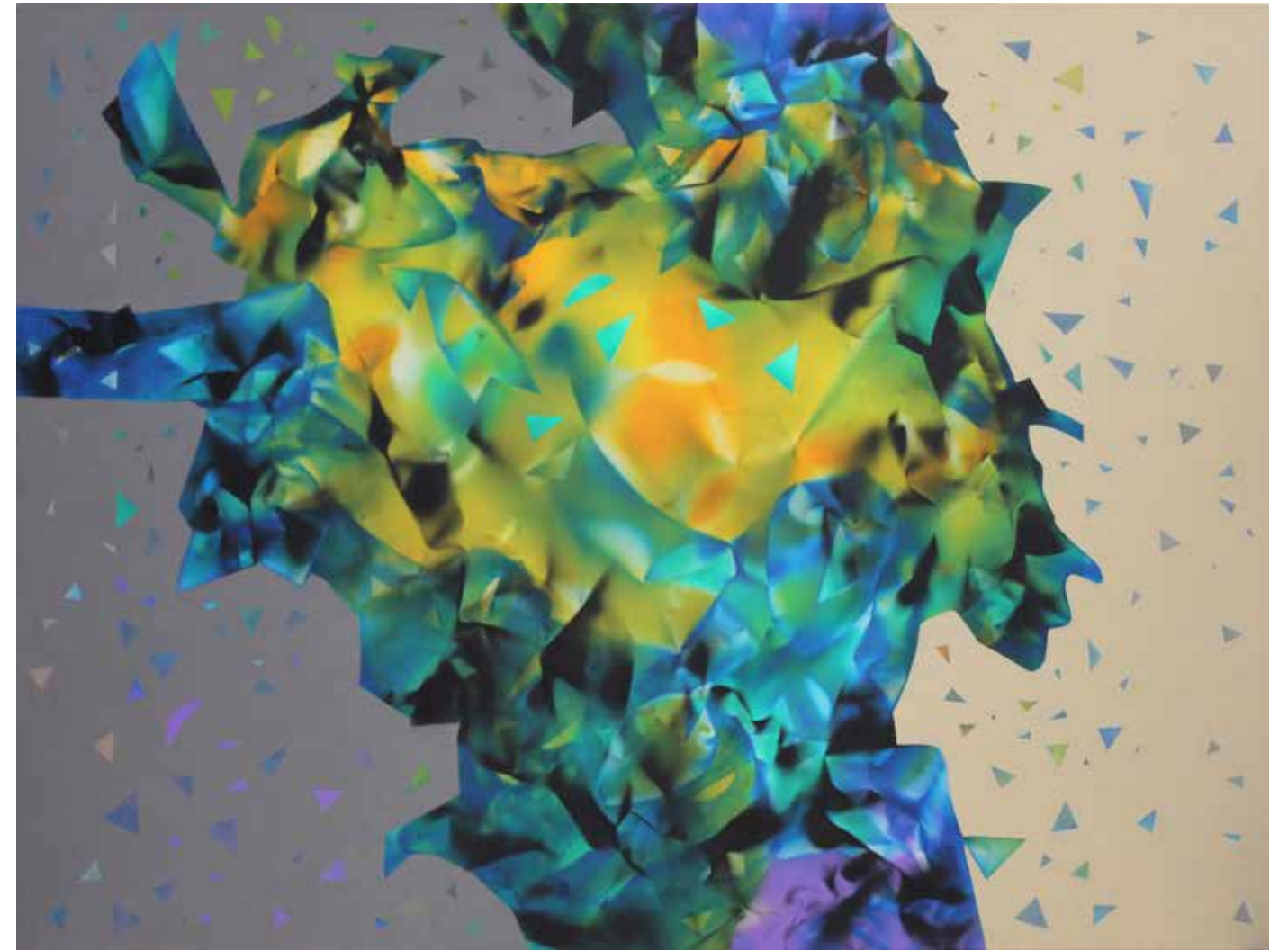
UNTITLED | 91 x 102 cm | Acrylic on canvas



UNTITLED | 61 x 122 cm | Acrylic on canvas



UNTITLED | 91 x 122 cm | Acrylic on canvas



UNTITLED | 91 x 122 cm | Acrylic on canvas

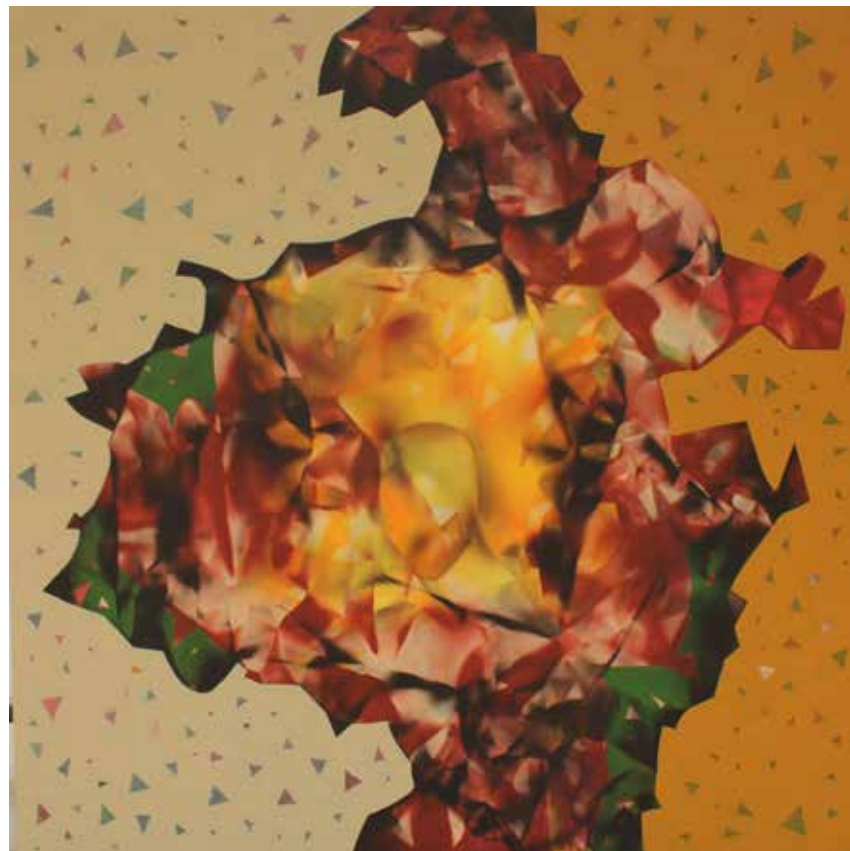


UNTITLED | 68 x 76 cm | Acrylic on canvas



UNTITLED | 102 x 102 cm | Acrylic on canvas

UNTITLED | 107 x 152 cm | Acrylic on canvas

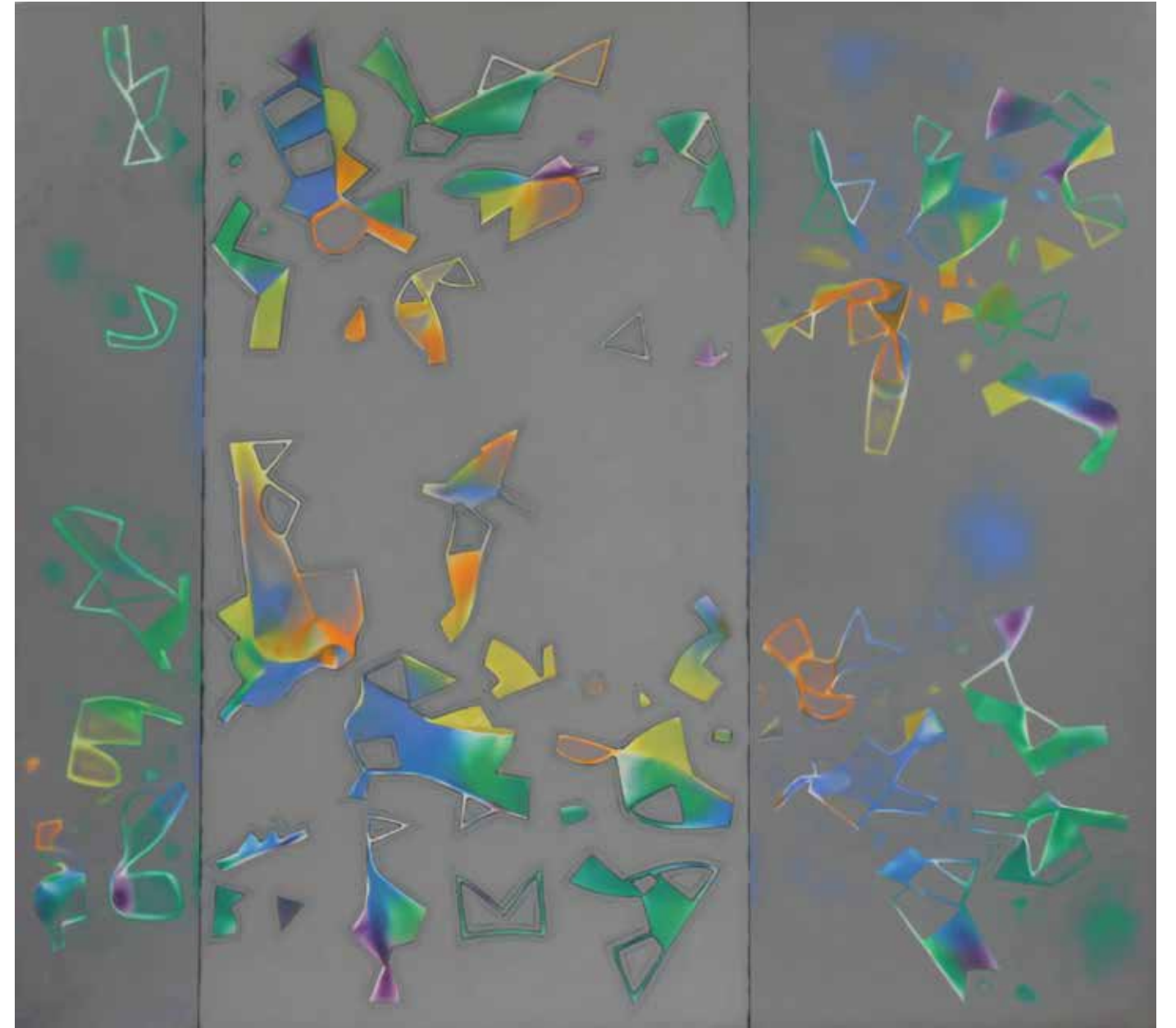


UNTITLED | 102 x 102cm | Acrylic on canvas

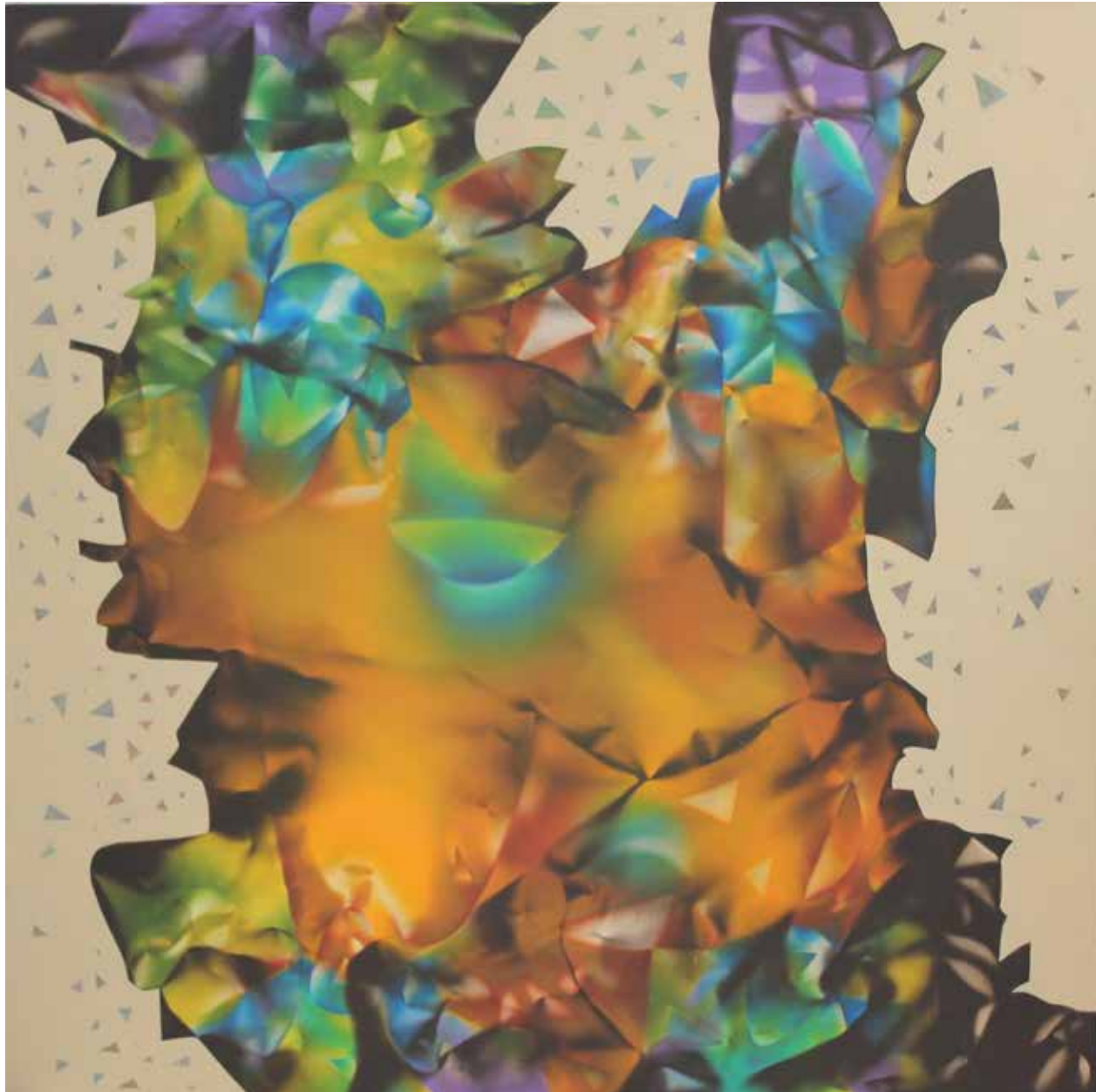




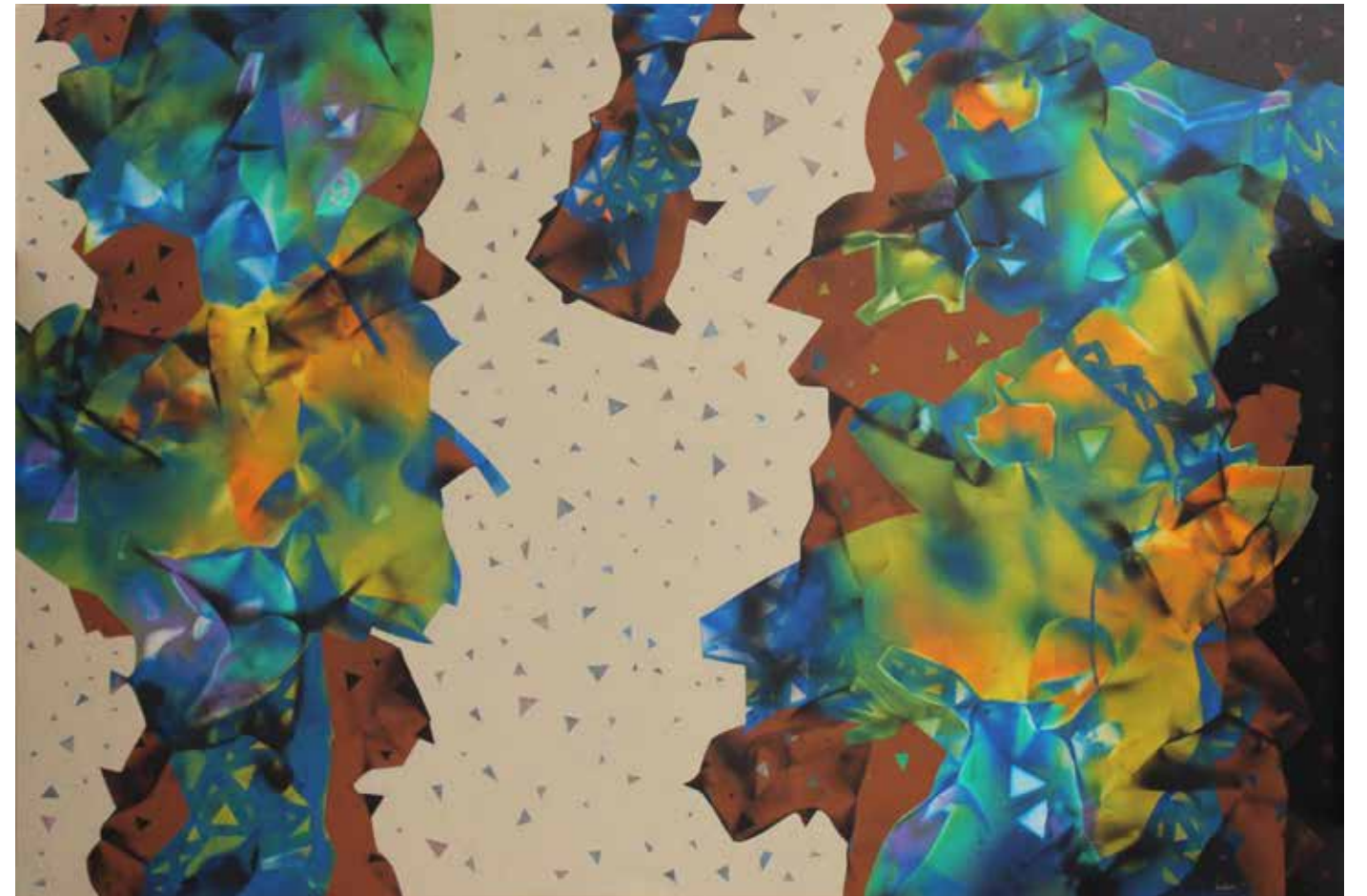
UNTITLED | 122 x 112 cm | Acrylic on canvas



UNTITLED | 122 x 112 cm | Acrylic on canvas



UNTITLED | 122 x 122 cm | Acrylic on canvas



UNTITLED | 122 x 183 cm | Acrylic on canvas



UNTITLED | 152 x 152 cm | Acrylic on canvas



UNTITLED | 152 x 152 cm | Acrylic on canvas



SANTOSH VERMA

Born: 1956, Varanasi

Education: B.F.A., M.F.A., Faculty of Visual Arts, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi

FELLOWSHIP

Senior Fellow, Department of Culture, Ministry of Culture & Tourism, Government of India (2002-04)

SOLO SHOWS

- Dhoomimal Art Centre, New Delhi (2017)
- Shrishti Art Gallery, Hyderabad (2012)
- Jahangir Art Gallery, Mumbai (2008)
- Dhoomimal Art Centre, New Delhi (2005)
- Jahangir Art Gallery, Mumbai (2004)
- Sarjan Art Gallery, Baroda (2003)
- Yugveena Art Gallery, Bareilly (2002)
- Taj Art Gallery, Mumbai (1998)
- A.B.C. Art Gallery, Varanasi (1998)
- Dhoomimal Art Centre, New Delhi (1998)
- Jahangir Art Gallery, Mumbai (1996)
- Dhoomimal Art Centre, New Delhi (1994)

AWARDS

- National Akademi Award, Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi (2001)
- Bharat Bhavan Biennale Award, Bharat Bhavan, Bhopal (1992)
- AIFACS Award, Millennium Show (2001), Annual Exhibition (2000), All India Fine Arts & Crafts Society, New Delhi
- Sahitya Kala Parishad Award, Sahitya Kala Parishad, New Delhi (1994)
- U.P. State Award, All India Exhibition (2001), Annual Exhibition (1995), U.P. State Lalit Kala Akademi, Lucknow
- First Northern Region Camlin Award, Camlin Art Foundation, New Delhi (2001)
- All India Exhibition of Art, Academy of Fine Arts, Amritsar (1999 & 1993)
- All India Exhibition, Ambala (1995)

GROUPS SHOWS

- “The Spirit of Indian Art” IGIA, Gallerie Nvya, Delhi (2015)
- “RENDERING DUALITY:”, Dhoomimal Art Centre, New Delhi (2014)
- “RESONANCE:”, Dhoomimal City Gallery, New Delhi (2012)
- ‘FELICITATION OF Mr. KESHAV MALIK (Padma Shri Eminent Art Critic & Poet)’ an exhibition of 8 Delhi Artists, AIFACS Delhi (2011).
- “PRATIBIMB: Reflection of Indian Art. at Visual Art Gallery, Habitat Center, Dhoomimal City Gallery, New Delhi (2011)
- ‘PORTRAIT OF AN ARTIST’, Dhoomimal Art Centre, New Delhi (2011)
- ‘TOGETHER’, a group exhibition of Paintings, Drawings, Sculptures and Prints, at Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi (2011)
- “Maestros XIV”, Dhoomimal City Gallery, New Delhi (2010)
- Drawing: The Essence II, Dhoomimal Art Gallery, New Delhi (2009)
- INDIA-KOREA 2008 ‘Art as Bridge between World’ Dhoomimal Art Centre, New Delhi (2008)
- ‘Contemporary Art in Benaras’ curated by me, Dhoomimal Art Centre, New Delhi (2008)
- ‘Souls in Surfaces’ a group show of contemporary art, EPICENTER Gurgaon, Dhoomimal’s City Gallery, New Delhi (2008)
- Celebrating Contemporary Indian Art 70 Year, Dhoomimal Art Gallery, New Delhi (2007)
- Shiksha 2007, a group exhibition of paintings by indian contemporary artist [Delhi Friends Round Table 146] , New Delhi (2007)
- Celebrating India-II(Banglore) and Celebrating India-III(Kolkata) [Curated by Suneet Chopra] an art Exhibition to commemorate 150 years of India’s Freedom struggle. New Delhi (2007)
- Sepoy of Art, at Lokayata Mulk Raj Anand Centre, New Delhi (2007)
- The colours of Spring, Academy of Fine arts, organised by Mind’s Eye, Kolkata (2007)
- Poorvai, a group show at Rabindra Natya Mandir, Mumbai (2007)
- 4 person show, at Daffodils, A Hotel Grand Hyatt, New Delhi (2005)
- ‘Swarnrekha’, Exhibition of National & Triennale Awardees, Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi (2004)
- ‘Kite: A Celebration of Freedom’ at Habitat Center, Dhoomimal Art Centre, New Delhi (2003)
- ‘Faces Behind the Canvas’ , Sarjan Art Gallery, Baroda (2003)
- ‘Notes of Spring’, Kalanjali, New Delhi (2003)
- ‘Half a Foot Square’, Exhibition of 50 Indian Contemporary Artists, Dhoomimal Art Centre, New Delhi (2002)
- ‘An Ensemble of Small Format Works’ , Dhoomimal Art Centre, New Delhi (2000)
- ‘Contemporary Artists of Uttar Pradesh’, UP State Lalit Kala Akademi, Lucknow (2000)
- ‘Three Persons Show’ , Jahangir Art Gallery, Mumbai (2000)
- ‘The Millennium Masks’, Dhoomimal Art Centre, New Delhi (2000)
- ‘Cyclone Orissa’, Orissa Relief Fund , Chronicle Society of India, New Delhi (1999)

- 'Inter State Exchange Exhibition of Art', Karnataka Lalit Kala Akademi & UP State Lalit Kala Akademi (1999-2000), Gujarat Lalit Kala Akademi & UP State Lalit Kala Akademi (2003-04)
- 'Art Ache', An Art Exhibition and Auction for Tsunami, New Delhi (2005)
- Confluence 2005', at Habitat Foundation, Habitat Gallery (2005)

INTERNATIONAL PARTICIPATIONS

- KOREA-INDIA Contemporary Art Exchange Exhibition (2014), (Indian Culture Center, Korea)
- SNIAF 2013, Seongnam International Art Fair, Korea, (2013).
- HWA MUN. Art Festival, Korea, (2013).
- KOREA-INDIA Contemporary Art Exchange Exhibition (Korea), (2007), (2013, 2015 Korean Culture Center, Delhi), 2012 organised by Academy of Visual Media India
- Group Exhibition in Colombo (Sri Lanka), organised by Lalit Kala Akademi (2006)
- Group Exhibition in Syria (Iraq), organised by Lalit Kala Akademi (2006)

CAMPS

- Garhi Camp, organised by Lalit Kala Akademi .
- Sahitya Kala Parishad Camp In Panchkula.
- "Artist's Workshop of Young Contemporary Painter" India Habitat Center, Asia Pacific Conference on breastfeeding. Delhi (2003).
- The Ashok Art Camp, Hotel Ashok, (2006).
- AIFACS Camp (2007).
- Mysterious... Artist Camp, Pune (2008).
- Nostalgia, Artist Camp Tour Coastal Karnataka (2009).
- AIFACS Camp (2010).

INTERNATIONAL CAMPS

- Camp in Sri Lanka (2008).
- Neerja Modi International Art Camp, Jaipur, (2010).
- Camp in China (2012).

PARTICIPATIONS

- National Exhibition, Bangalore (2001), Jaipur (2000), Bangalore (1997), New Delhi (1996): Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi
- Fourth Bharat Bhavan Biennale of Contemporary Indian Art: Bharat Bhavan, Bhopal (1992)
- Millennium Show (2000-01), Fifty Years of Art in Independent India (1997-98), Annual Exhibition (1996, 1995, 1993) : AIFACS, New Delhi
- Annual Art Exhibition: Sahitya Kala Parishad, New Delhi (2002, 1999, 1996, 1994, 1993, 1992)
- All India Exhibition of Art: Academy of Fine Arts, Amritsar (1999, 1998, 1994, 1993, 1992)
- 26th All India Annual Exhibition: Birla Academy of Art & Culture, Kolkata (1993)
- Biennial All India Exhibition of Art (1998), All India Exhibition of Art: Rajasthan Lalit Kala Akademi, Jaipur (1996, 1995, 1994, 1993)
- All India Exhibition (2001), Annual Exhibitions (1996, 1995, 1994, 1979): UP State Lalit Kala Akademi, Lucknow
- Camlin Northern Region Exhibition: Camlin Art Foundation, New Delhi (2002, 2001)

ACADEMIC INVITATIONS

- Visiting Lecturer – Amity University, Noida
- Examiner – Faculty of Visual Arts, BHU, Varanasi
- Judge – All India Exhibition, Himachal State Museum, Shimla
- Judge – All India Exhibition, Camlin Art Foundation

COLLECTIONS

National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi; Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi; Sahitya Kala Parishad, New Delhi; Museum of Fine Arts, Bharat Bhavan, Bhopal; UP State Lalit Kala Akademi, Himachal State Museum Shimla. Tagore Art Society, Seoul, KOREA; Sampada (Museum of Folk Heritage), Gujrat; Reserve Bank of India, New Delhi; Bharat Petroleum, NOIDA and various other private collections in India, Germany, U.K., U.S.A., Spain, Canada, Holland, Singapore, Dubai, Switzerland, Japan and Nepal.



It was 1992, I had visited Bharat Bhavan for the All India Biennale. An awarded painting snatched my attention. It was an abstract but was distinctly different from what I saw around. There was a new thought process and implementation technique on the canvas. I inquired about the artist and referred his details to Mrs. Sushma Mahendra Jain, the then owner of Dhoomimal Art Centre.

Long after one fine day a slim shy young man came searching for me to my drawing room. I had not met him earlier. He introduced himself as Santosh Verma and the painting at the Bharat Bhavan flashed in my mind. So this was the young man with fresh thought behind the canvas. The long chat that ensued revealed the influences that touched his mind. He was from Varanasi, born and brought up amidst nature. I realized the fluidity in his paintings were the reflections nature that he imbibed into himself. I observed him and his paintings journey in abstraction through the years as he won many awards and accolades.

Shanti Dave

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