

Bernard Buffet For Sale

Original oil paintings Willow Gallery, London



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Nuanced nature

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Preema Ranjitkar



MAR 01 -

The ambience at the Park Gallery, Pulchowk, is generally the kind one would describe as serene, a quality very much reflected in the paintings currently on display.

The enticingly titled Placid Nuances is a collection of works by Neera Joshi Pradhan—the seventh solo exhibition for the artist. Pradhan doesn't have a degree in art; her creativity, she says, stems instead from growing up around art and artists. The daughter of Ramananda Joshi, one of the founders of modern art in Nepal, Pradhan's roots in art certainly must run deep. The artist has a Master's degree in botany, an influence that comes through in her pieces, which explore botanical elements—flowers in particular. "Life, art and flowers merge into one and express the universal harmony of unification in the artist's painting," Saroj Bajracharya, a well-known painter in the Nepali art scene, said about Placid Nuances.

Floral motifs have inspired many an artist over time, but what makes Pradhan's perspective unique is that she has chosen to focus on a particular aspect of

flowers—the petals. Pradhan zooms into these petals, magnifying them to the point where they become almost unrecognisable, bearing

similarities to the flower only in colour and shape. "I wanted to paint the perspective from inside a flower, not outside," says the

artist. The miniscule elements of a petal that Pradhan brings out serve to amplify the magnificence of the flower on the whole. She is able to replicate the colours of nature on the canvas—dark lines and curves, the veins of the petals run across the pieces under the yellows, pinks and reds. The petals often turn translucent, even changing colours when they overlap. A deep knowledge of botany and having painted flowers over the past 12 years, her lines are more "intuitive" than planned, she says.

"The paintings should not be mistaken for botanical art," Pradhan explains. "Botanical art is done for conservation or cataloguing of plants. This is different." There are 22 paintings in the collection—acrylic as well as water colour—and the artist has been working on these for the past four years. Pradhan is currently freelancing as a botanical artist and illustrator at Studio Petals. As expected of creations which come out of passion in combination with staunch technical knowledge, the artists' work is impressive.

Placid Nuances will be on display at Park Gallery, Pulchowk, until March 16. The gallery opens from 10:30 am to 5:30 pm.

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