Therapeutic art

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‘Worship’. I’ll be born a 100 times represents the connectivity of the woman to the different phases of the moon.

Art for Aadhitya Jayaseelan is therapeutic. As an avenue of expression, and an exposition of emotion, her art is a journey in self-acceptance and recovery.

Words Jennifer Paldano Goonewardene.

P**hotographs** Menaka Aravinda.

Her paintings are so manifestly telling, yet artfully enigmatic. Delving deeper, Aadhitya's dreamlike and quirky imagery is an exercise in exploring the human mind and its deepest thoughts. Naturally, the outcome is complex – abstract and representative at once, obscure and mythical, yet deeply meaningful.

An Architect by profession, she is an old soul, reveling in the creative freedom in which she dabbles, with recognizable shapes of humans, combined with uncanny fluidity that pleads with the viewer to interpret the artist's thoughts.

Driven by passion, art is a form of learning for Aadhitya, and a raw, unfiltered expression of a multitude of moods. The centrality of her art is mental health. She focuses on depicting anxiety and depression, thereby underlining the importance of dealing with problems associated with mental health. The woman is the central character in many forms – mythical, veiled and metaphorical, in moods of anger, power and strength, and hurt. Her motivation is personal. Having lived through a traumatic incident, Aadhitya found healing through painting, which she began in 2018. 'Kayamai', translated as 'decadence' is her signature label under which she presents her work.

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"My art is me," Aadhitya describes, a liberation of thoughts and images that surface in her mind, a release of repressed memory. It is a jolt to the viewer to get out of their feel-good assumptions. Color is used according to the visual appeal of the artist in a multiplicity of faces. Her surreal vision and vivid imagination in morphing Goddess Kali into an image of 'Extreme anger', juxtaposed with her image as preserver and creator is also captured in 'God is a Woman'. The woman has the right to feel and rebel, and her dreams are much bigger than just wanting to be rich. The woman as the most frequent imagery is constructed as a thoughtful and strong being, moving away from objectification and to a metaphor. In 'Embrace' the

woman is the creative force that brings all things to life. ‘Self-acceptance’ reminds women that they are beautiful works in progress and that ‘It’s okay to be not okay’, the normalcy of a glut of emotions, even anger, laziness and guilt. ‘It’s okay to drift’ is a message of empowerment, telling the woman to dream big, to find the purpose of her existence and to make her own reality and ‘Just breathe’ by letting go. The elusive image of the woman in fetal position depicts her ‘Drifting’ in the cosmos, while ‘Wild thoughts’ tells us of the impossibility of controlling human thoughts, begging to see the deeper reality of human existence. ‘Peace’ is a beautiful human experience and the woman with a flower cone in her hand is at peace by just being herself.

Painting in watercolor, charcoal, acrylic, and oil paints, Aadhitya has set free her thoughts through her work and uses it as a medium to dive deep into her psyche and unlock the power of imagination. ‘Think and use my art’ is her message.

(+94) 766 668 010; @art_kayamai;

artkayamai@lithic_admin





