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Shadows That Yell

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Priyanka Choudhary's second solo at Gallery Maskara, Tetanus Midas, explores shadows and spaces in her works

Two huge concrete walls arise from the centre of Gallery Maskara, about a foot apart from each other, lengthwise. Hundreds of triangular pieces of red glass jut out from the sides of the walls facing each other, all packed closely together. A light shines down on these glass pieces, passing through them and forming a shadow on the actual wall of the gallery. This entire creation is one of four sculptural installations currently on view at the Colaba gallery as part of an ongoing solo exhibition by Priyanka Choudhary.

Titled Don't Make Me Yell, this 2011 work by the Delhi-based artist represents to a great extent what her art stands for. She calls the shadow cast by the concrete and glass on the wall of the gallery "the third wall", that is, the third wall of the sculpture. Shadows, she says, play a very important role in her work. "Sculptural installations are generally considered three dimensional works, but I believe shadows add a fourth dimension," she explains.

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Another work on display, Acidholes, reinforces the importance of shadows in her work. Six sheets of metal, perhaps a foot-and-a-half large each, are suspended on the gallery walls. They all jut out. Three sheets lie on one wall and the other three on an opposite wall. For six months, these sheets were repeatedly exposed to acid, until the acid burnt a hole into them. These holes, of different shapes and sizes, and the sheets themselves form shadows on the wall below. What these shadows represent or resemble, the artist tells us, is left to the interpretation of the viewer.

But the central theme of Choudhary's art goes beyond shadows. Spaces, she says, play an important role in the creation of her work, as demonstrated by the other two works on display, Womb Alimentary, and an untitled sculpture. She explains, "I feel like psychological spaces exist within us, so I like the real space (that's housing my work) to be turned into a psychological space, too."

Womb Alimentary is a large structure comprising a number of canvases placed one after another, with spaces cut out from the centre of each. It is these spaces that are the focus of the work; the viewer's gaze and subsequently mind passes through them, imagining meanings.



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