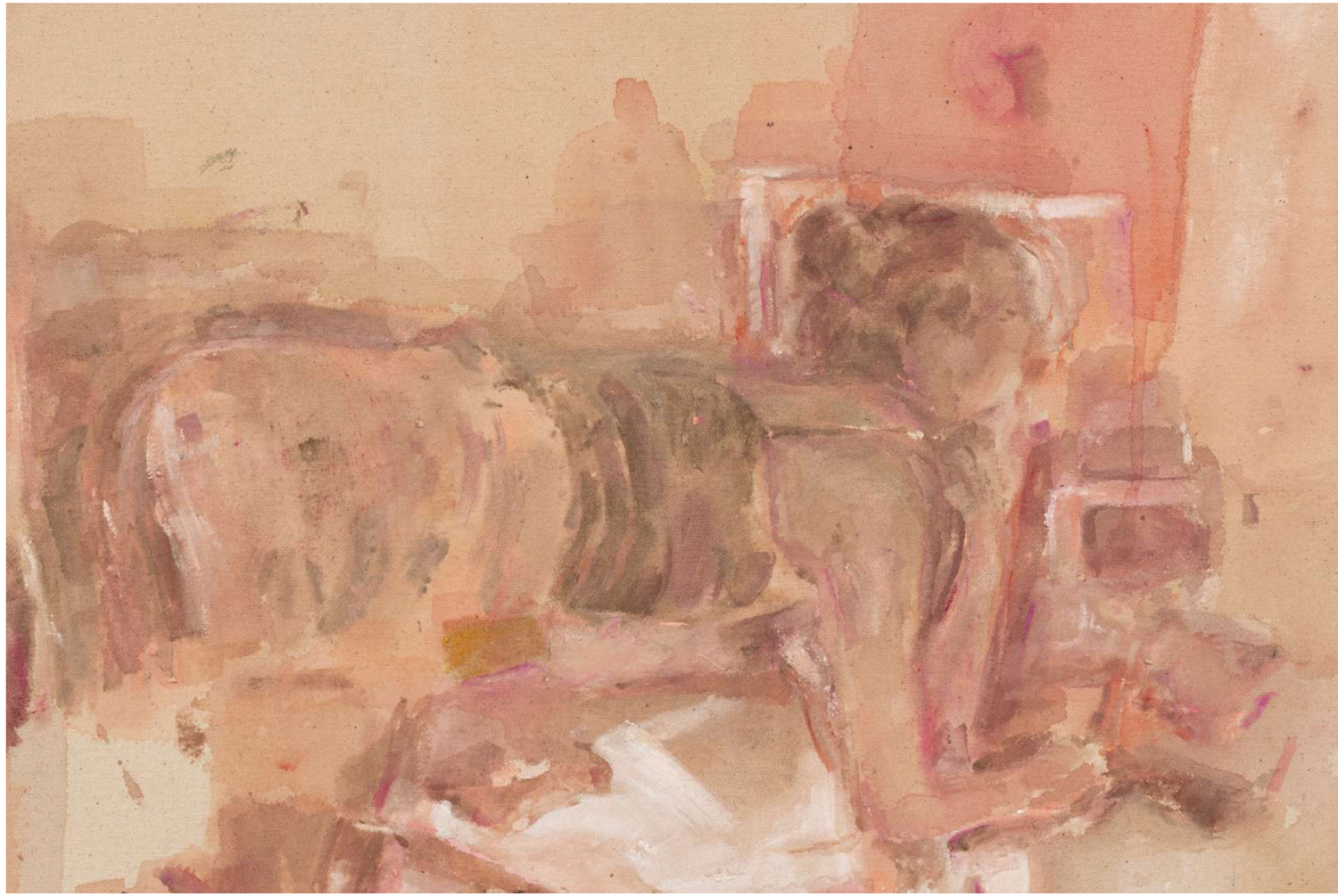
EMAMI ART

Sayanee Sarkar

Portfolio



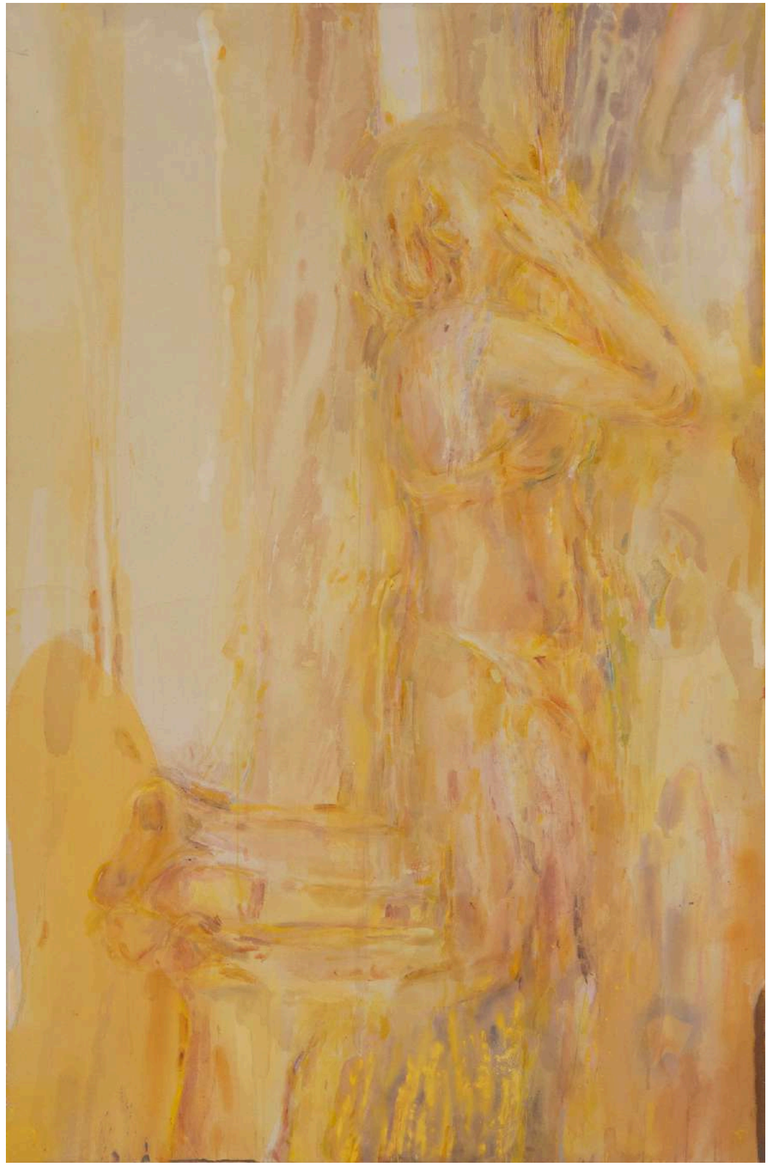
Sayanee Sarkar's practice, as a visual artist based in Vadodara, India, explores the tension between figuration and abstraction, often drawing from gestures of the body in private, intimate spaces. Working primarily with painting and drawing, Sarkar uses repetition, stain, and spontaneous mark-making on raw canvas and wood to investigate how visual cues can reveal as well as obscure meaning.

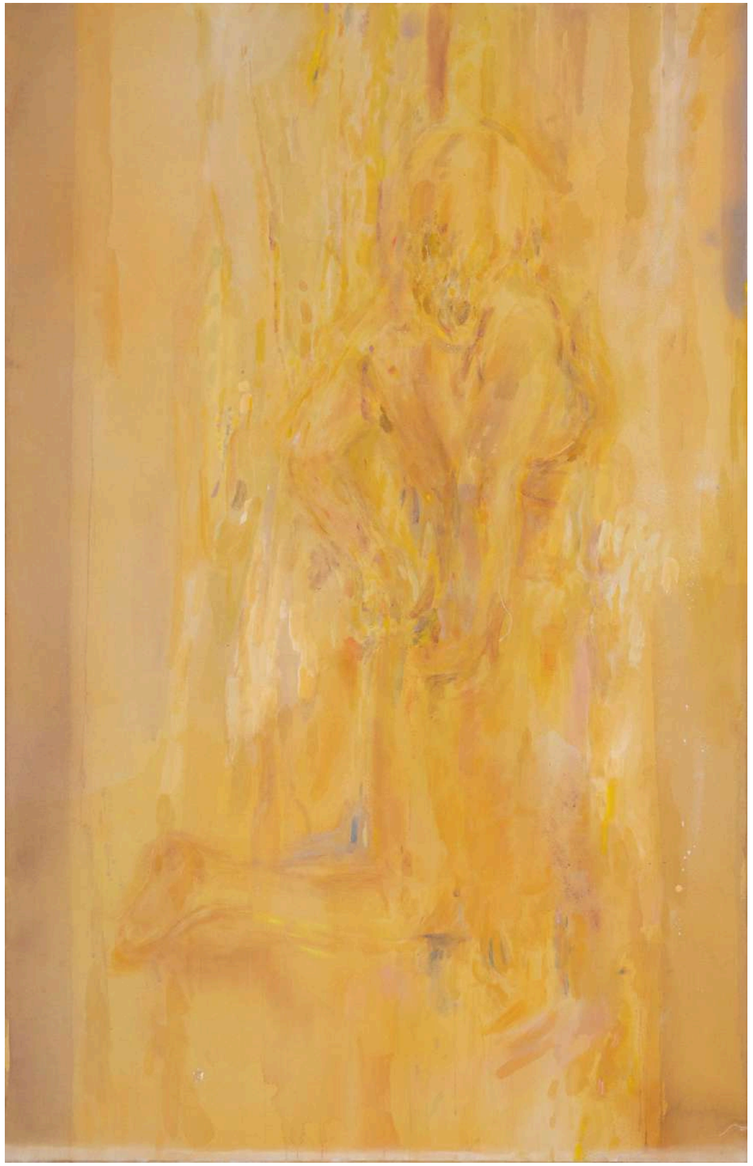
Watch the artist discuss her practice

Watch the artist discuss her practice

Her practice sits at the edge of representation, where the body dissolves into space and perception becomes unstable. Each painting begins in a kind of collapse — of form, of thought, of process — and slowly rebuilds itself through instinct. She keeps returning to questions about the material presence of painting and the viewer's perception, how private gestures can be misread as something erotic, and how ambiguity shapes the way we interpret the body and its surrounding space.

Sarkar's work is often driven by the use of found and personal imagery, be it from social media, film stills, or photographs taken by herself. Evolving through a chaotic painterly process invested with mark-making, these second-hand references blur figure and space into a single mass with resonant edges and exposed canvas, inviting myriad readings.





The materiality of the surface in *Cradled* is central to this dialogue, where a speck of vibrant color bleeding through fabric or across a monochromatic surface may bring out varied interpretations. The artist is deeply interested in observing the true nature of "coming of age" and the way people behave in intimate spaces -- especially how bodies react when they finally let go of their masks.

Sarkar's work is often driven by the use of found imagery, be it from social media, film stills, or photographs taken by herself, which trigger visuals that play multiple or dual roles in interpretation. Fascinated by how caught-in-the-moment actions can imitate eroticism, she creates a "third image". This new image is stripped of its original composition and source, carrying meanings that are often unknown even to the artist.

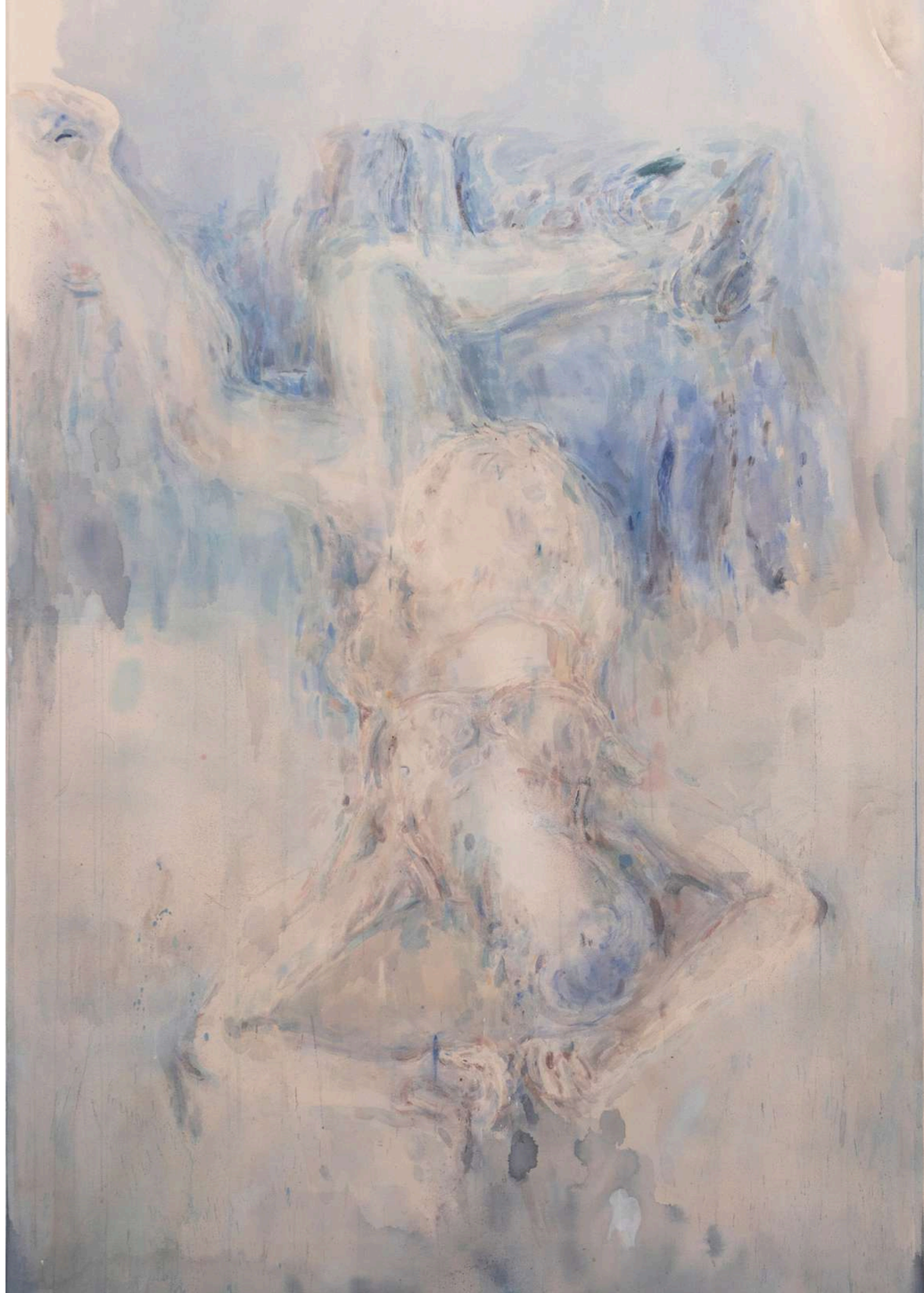
Cradled (in yellow)
Acrylic, pigment, dry pastel, and matte medium on raw canvas
70 1/8 x 44 7/8 in.
2025, Vadodara

From the Front
Acrylic, pigment, dry pastel, and matte medium on raw canvas
70 1/8 x 44 7/8 in.
2025, Vadodara

Installation view
Alchemy of Absolute Intimacy
Emami Art, Kolkata
2026

The artist is often drawn to the ambiguity that people and places can hold – the moments between directed action and rest, when the figures are on their own, self-involved, performing only for themselves or one another. Her paintings are built from diverse images collected from personal photographs, various media, and, above all, art history.

Legs Up in Blue
Acrylic, pigments, spray paint, matte modelling paste on raw canvas
69 1/2 x 45 1/4 in. (176.5 x 115 cm.)
2026, Vadodara

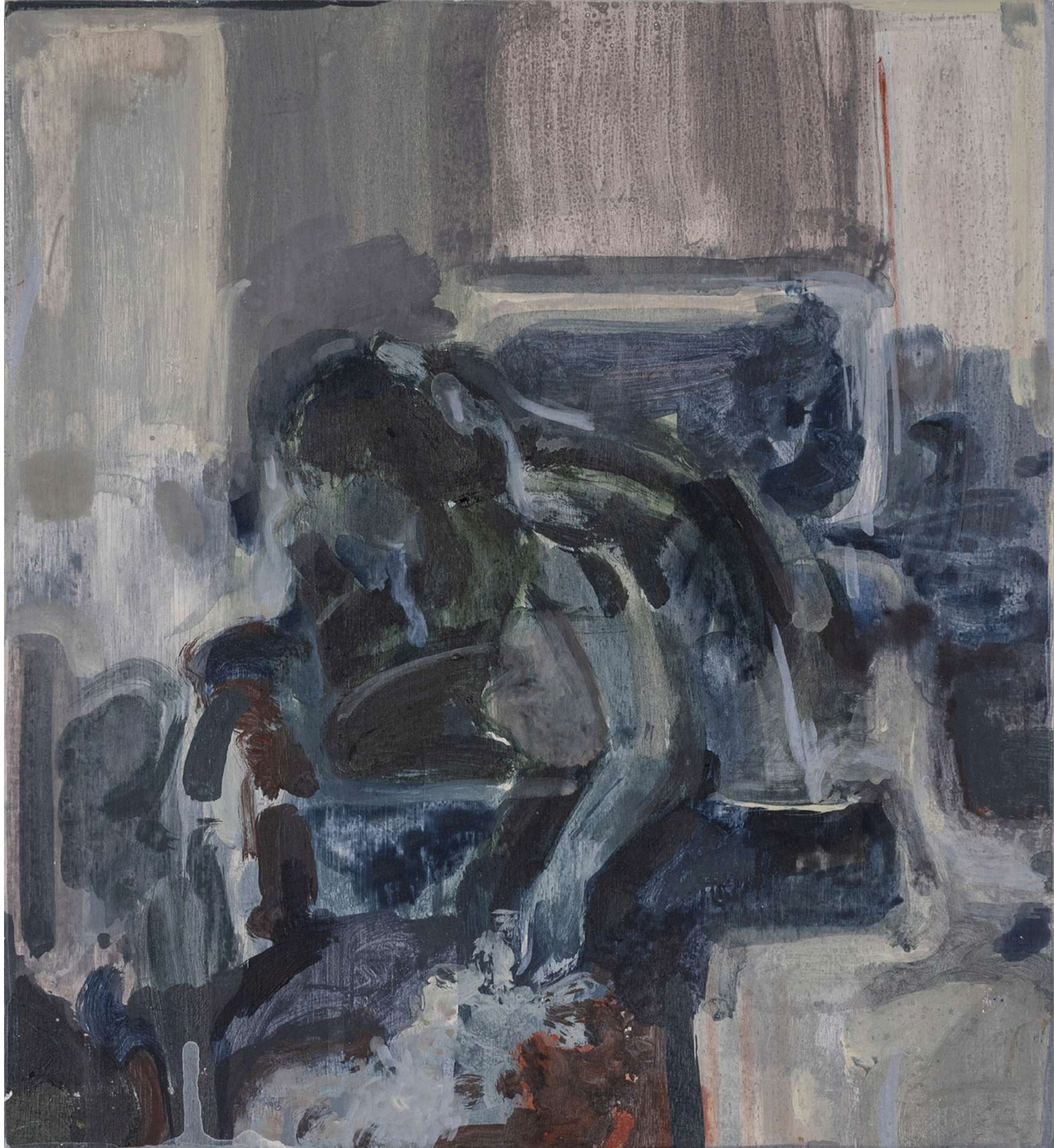


For Sayanee Sarkar, the act of painting mirrors the act of remembering but only for the fleeting duration of making. Once the painted surface is cured, the active process of remembering is exhausted, leaving behind physical residue of what once was.

Close Look
Acrylic, pigment, gesso, and matte medium on wood panel
12 7/8 x 11 3/4 in.
2026, Vadodara

The stains and marks in Sayanee Sarkar's paintings are always balanced by the expanses of raw ground that she leaves untouched. Here, the iterative process of unfamiliarising the references involves the spontaneous process of mark-making – that simultaneously reveal and conceal aspects of the figure and its surroundings.

Awkward Hunt
Acrylic, pigment, gesso, and matte medium on wood panel
12 7/8 x 11 3/4 in.
2026, Vadodara

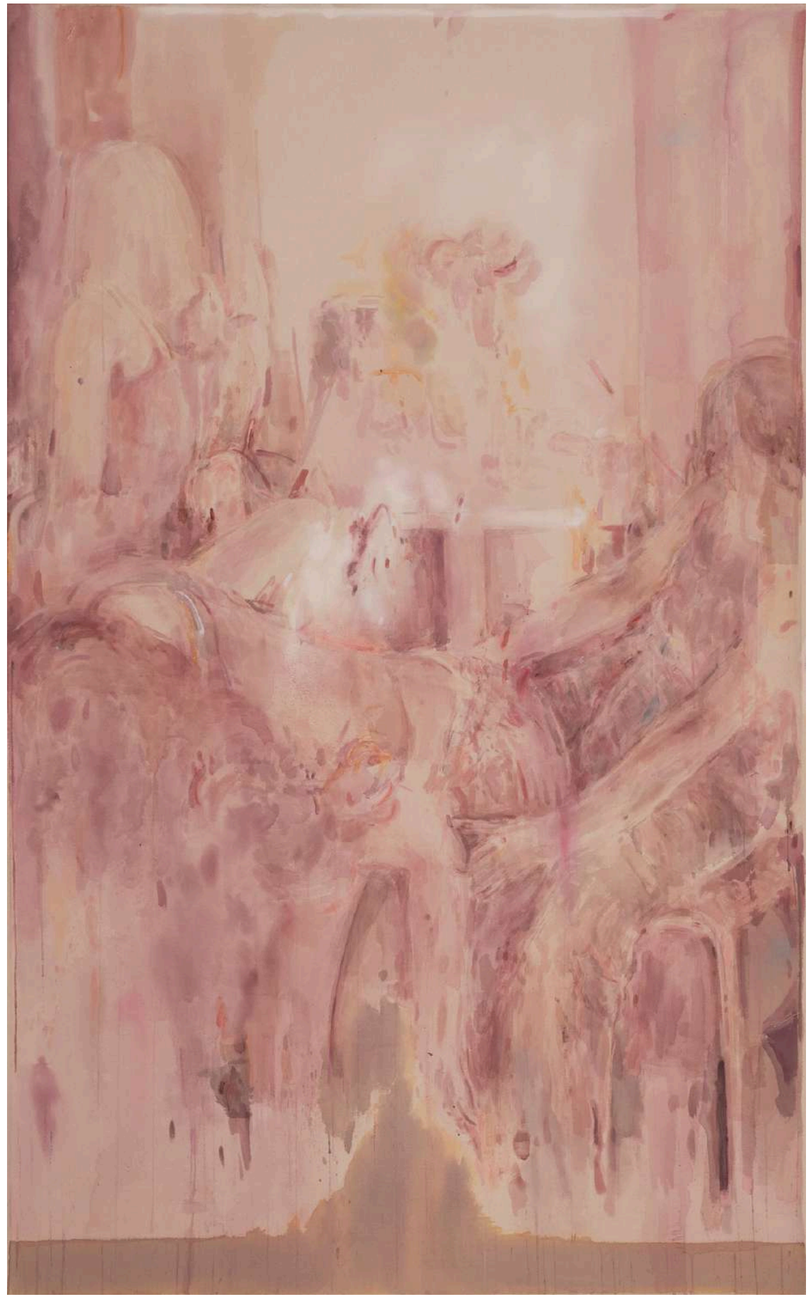


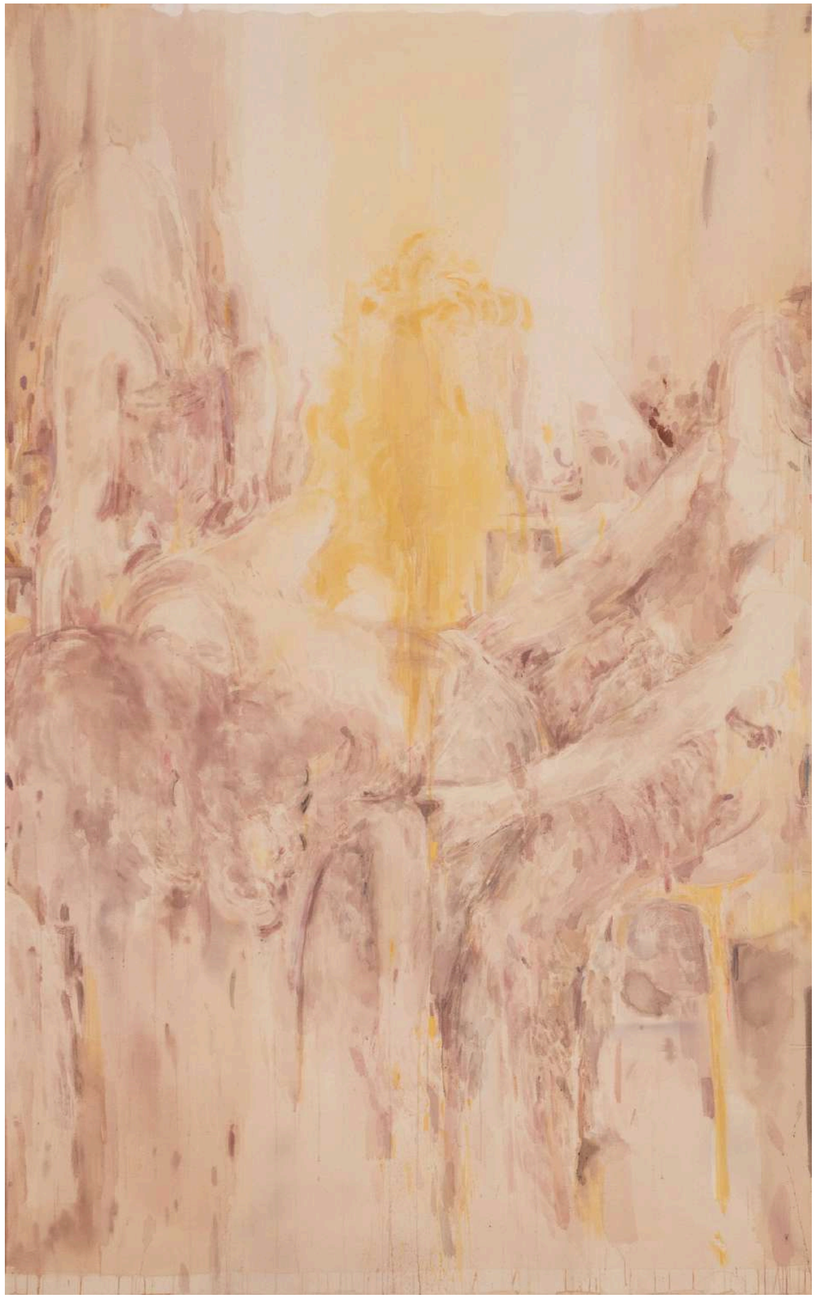
Installation view
Untitled
Gesso, pigments, matte modeling paste and acrylic on paper
Overall dimension variable
11 3/4 x 8 1/4 in. each
Set of 5 works
2026, Vadodara

Sayanee Sarkar's practice explores the tension between figuration and abstraction, often drawing from gestures of bodies mingling and interacting with each other in private, intimate spaces. These compositions never seek to overwhelm the canvas.

Coupled
Ink on paper
5 3/4 x 4 in. each
2026, Vadodara

Sayanee Sarkar's painting the same moment twice is not her trying to clarify the narrative but obsessing over its uncertainty. This repetition mimics the psychological act of the double take. It forces the viewer to look back and forth, searching for a definitive answer that isn't there. Here, she draws the exact microsecond where context is lost. In real life, this moment passes far too quickly to be judged, but images act in a different way – they focus on the non-existent. By freezing it in a painting, she forces the viewer to judge an event that has no beginning or end. It is the liminal moment between action and rest.



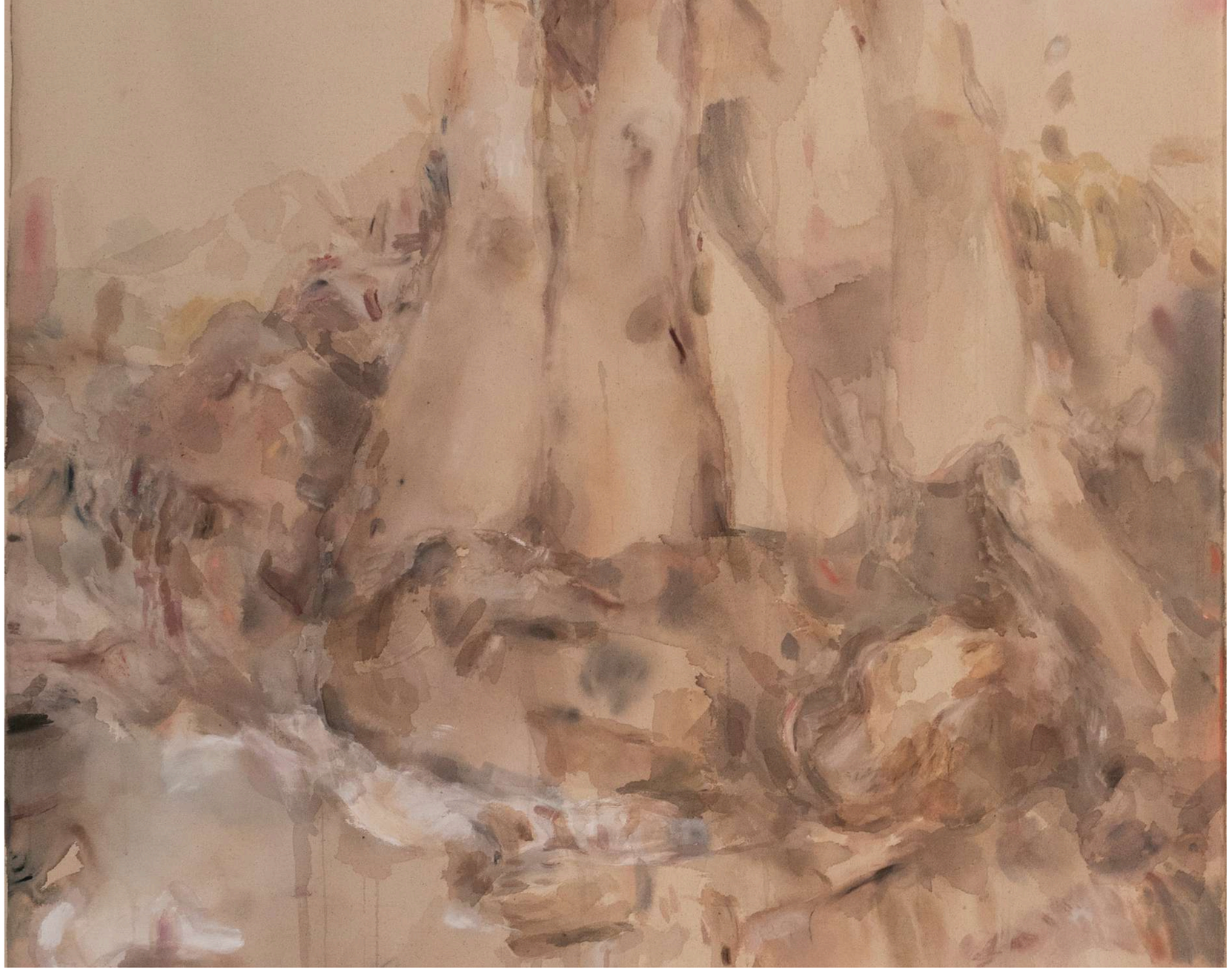


Gather Around
Acrylic, pigment, and matte modelling paste on raw canvas
78 x 48 in. each
Diptych
2026, Vadodara

Installation view
Alchemy of Absolute Intimacy
Emami Art, Kolkata
2026

The artist is often drawn to the ambiguity that people and places can hold – the moments between directed action and rest, when the figures are on their own, self-involved, performing only for themselves or one another. Her paintings are built from diverse images collected from personal photographs, various media, and, above all, art history.

Split
Acrylic, pigment, and matte medium on raw canvas
Overall dimension variable
66 7/8 x 40 3/8 in. each
Diptych
2024, Vadodara

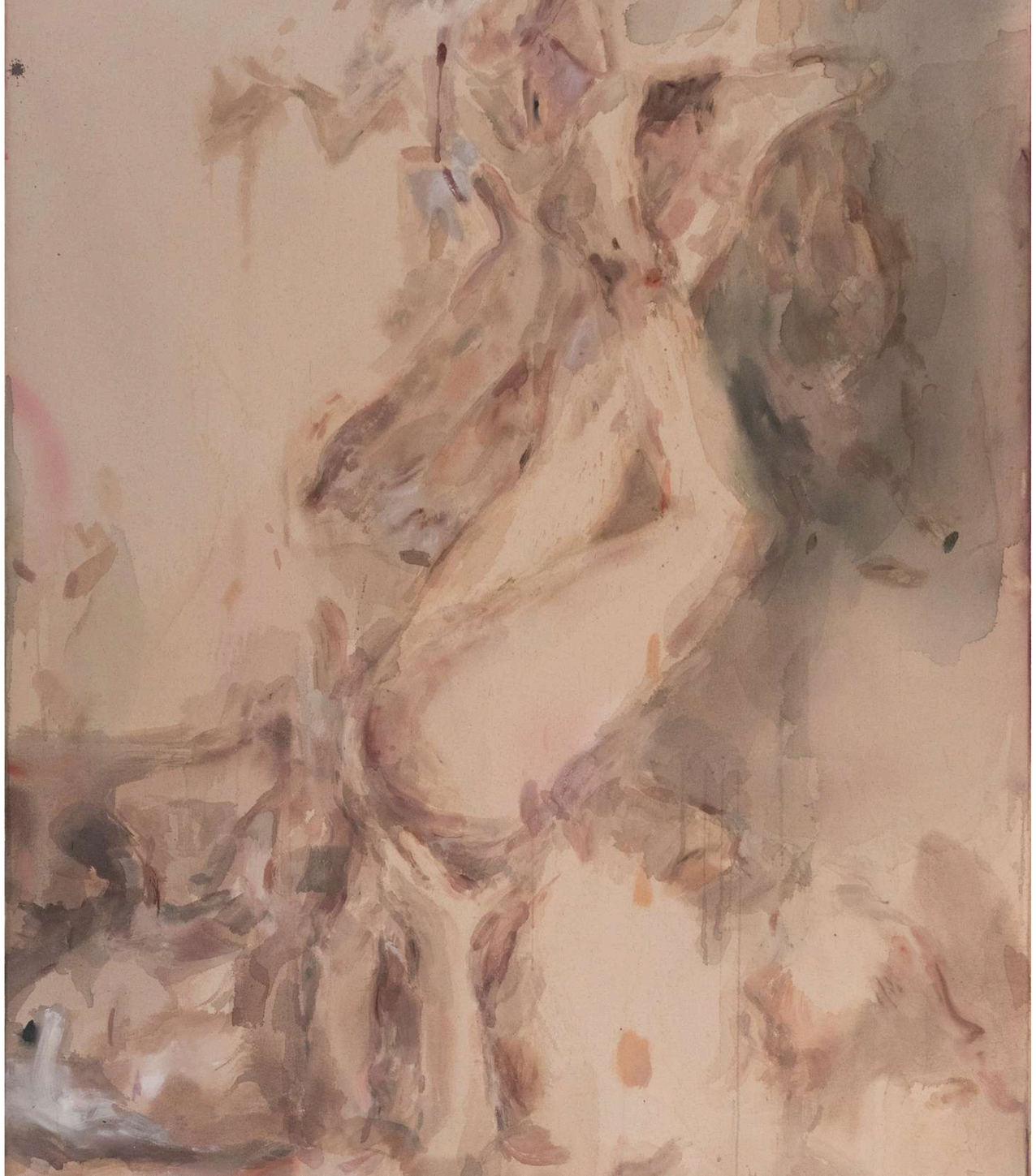


Detail

Split
Acrylic, pigment, and matte medium on raw canvas
Overall dimension variable
66 7/8 x 40 3/8 in. each
Diptych
2024, Vadodara

Detail

Split
Acrylic, pigment, and matte medium on raw canvas
Overall dimension variable
66 7/8 x 40 3/8 in. each
Diptych
2024, Vadodara



These works are a blend of figuration and abstraction, playing with the idea of things that look alike yet are never quite the same. Sarkar searches for that ambiguity — the almost-same, but not. In the process, texture and chance slip in, changing everything.

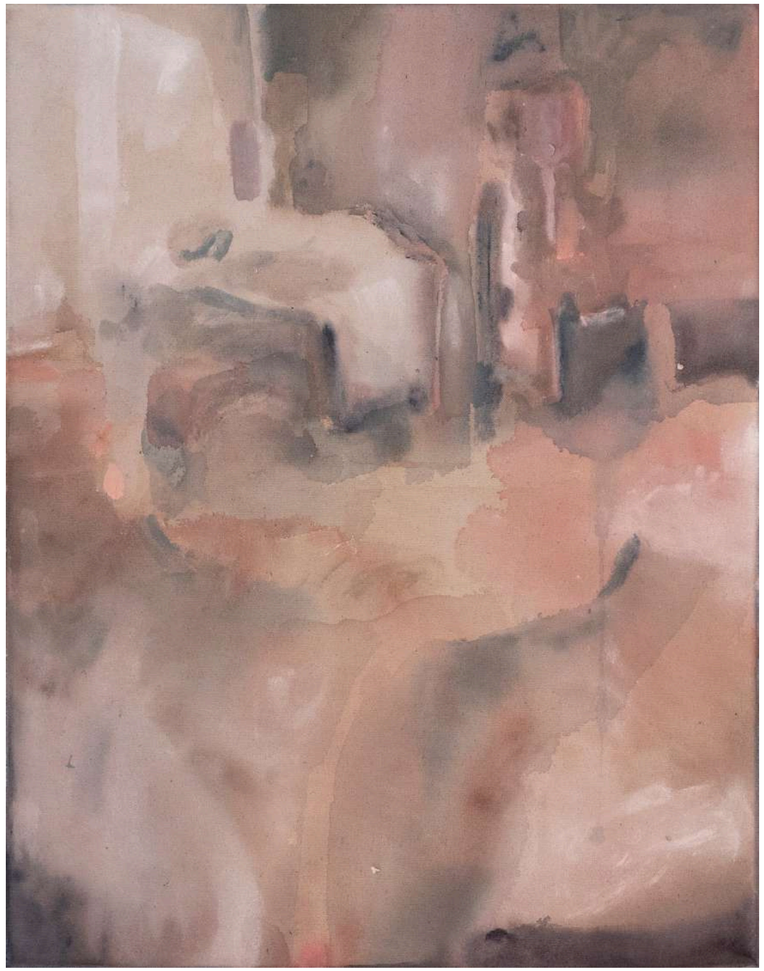
Plane of Body
Acrylic, pigment, and matte medium on raw canvas
10 3/8 x 18 1/8 in. each
2025, Vadodara

Detail

Plane of Body
Acrylic, pigment, and matte medium on raw canvas
10 3/8 x 18 1/8 in. each
2025, Vadodara

Detail

Plane of Body
Acrylic, pigment, and matte medium on raw canvas
10 3/8 x 18 1/8 in. each
2025, Vadodara



The artist often works directly on raw canvas, embracing its grain and texture, as though the painting were an event that simply landed there by chance—suspended between presence and absence. In this work, she lays down the feeling of the intimate, rather than paint a direct representation of it.

Untitled
Acrylic, matte medium, and pigment on raw canvas
22 1/2 x 17 3/8 in. each
2025, Vadodara

“I tend to observe the people that I live with in their casual moments and how they behave in their intimate space. It gives me a feeling of ambiguity as if when you enter a room, you see everything and nothing, all at once.”

This set of works operate as a sustained inquiry into the misrepresentation of candid situations, challenging how fleeting moments are read and reimagined.

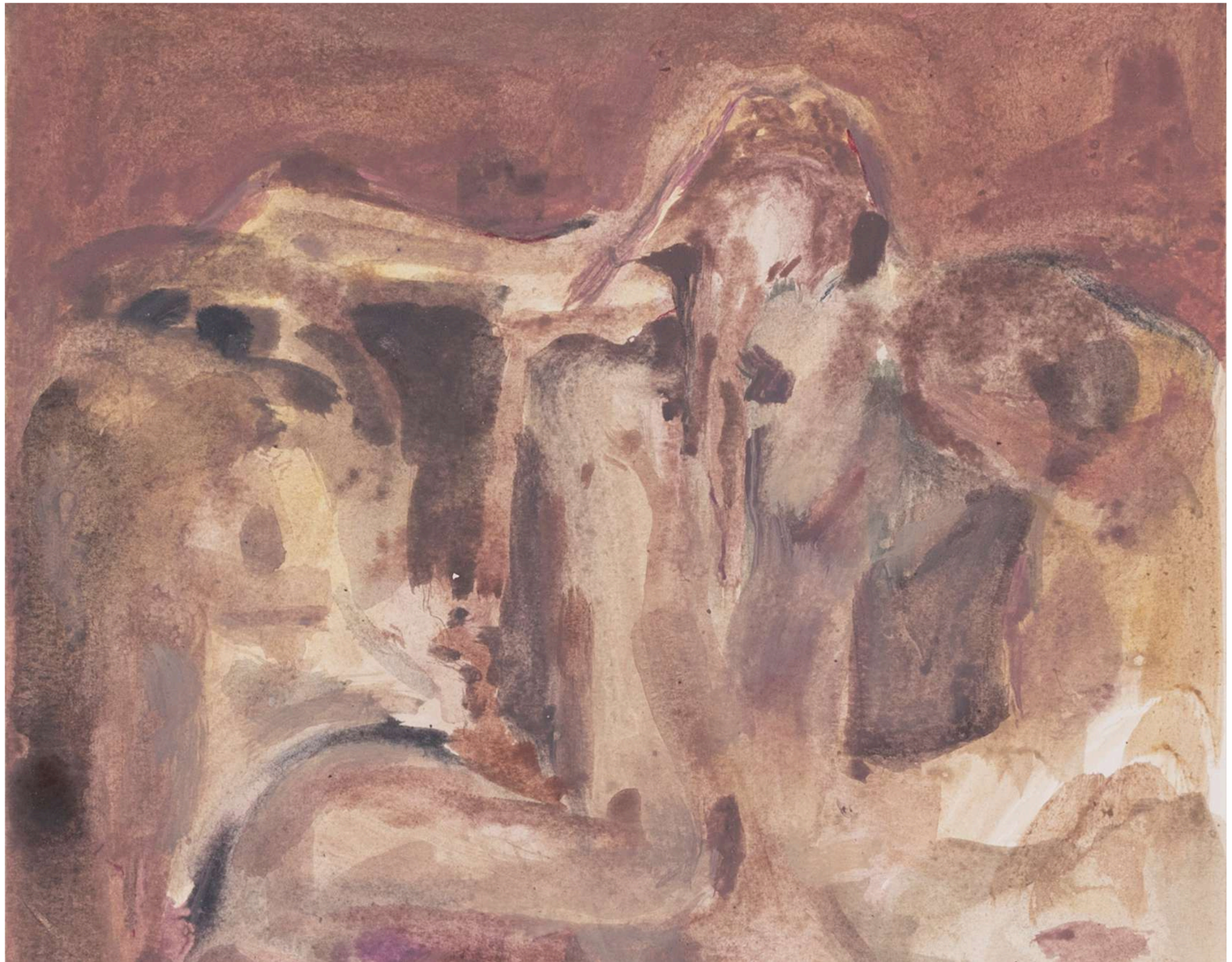
Studies of Fleeting
Acrylic, dry medium, and modeling paste on paper
Overall dimension variable
11 3/4 x 8 1/4 in. each
Set of 8 works
2025, Vadodara

Detail

Studies of Fleeting
Acrylic, dry medium, and modeling paste on paper
Overall dimension variable
11 3/4 x 8 1/4 in. each
Set of 8 works
2025, Vadodara

Detail

Studies of Fleeting
Acrylic, dry medium, and modeling paste on paper
Overall dimension variable
11 3/4 x 8 1/4 in. each
Set of 8 works
2025, Vadodara

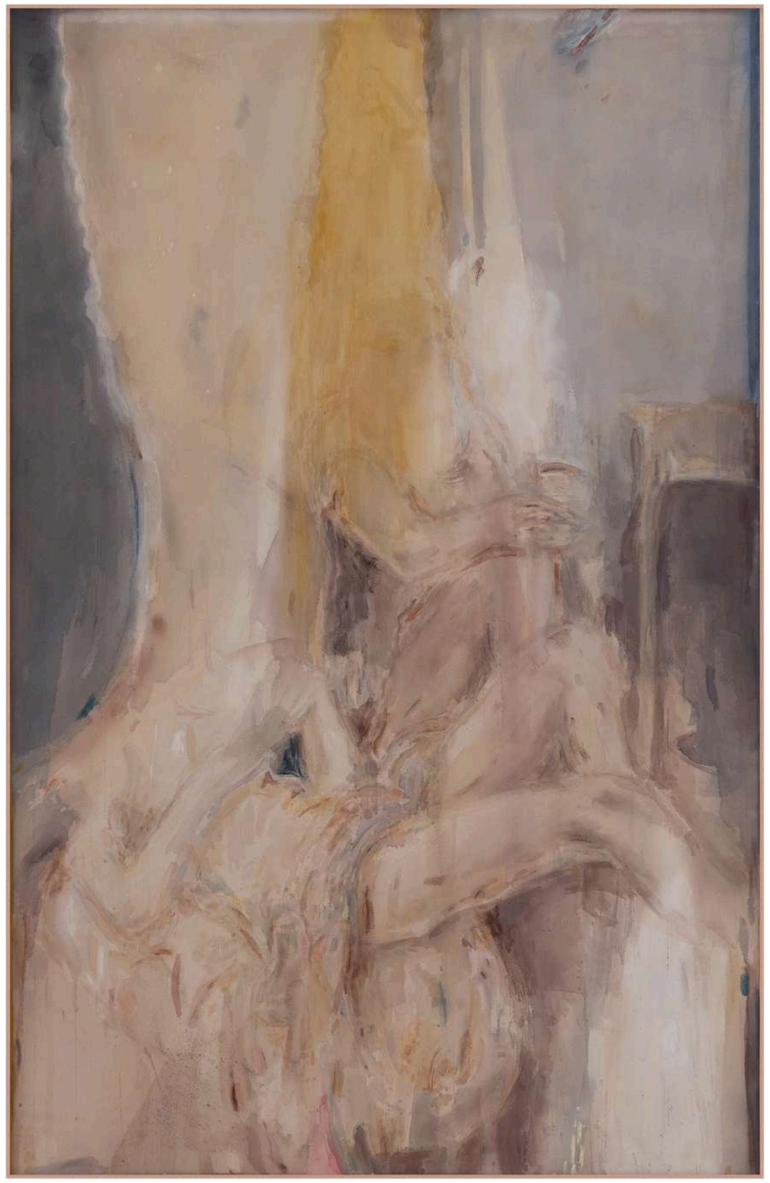


Detail

Studies of Fleeting
Acrylic, dry medium, and modeling paste on paper
Overall dimension variable
11 3/4 x 8 1/4 in. each
Set of 8 works
2025, Vadodara

Detail

Studies of Fleeting
Acrylic, dry medium, and modeling paste on paper
Overall dimension variable
11 3/4 x 8 1/4 in. each
Set of 8 works
2025, Vadodara

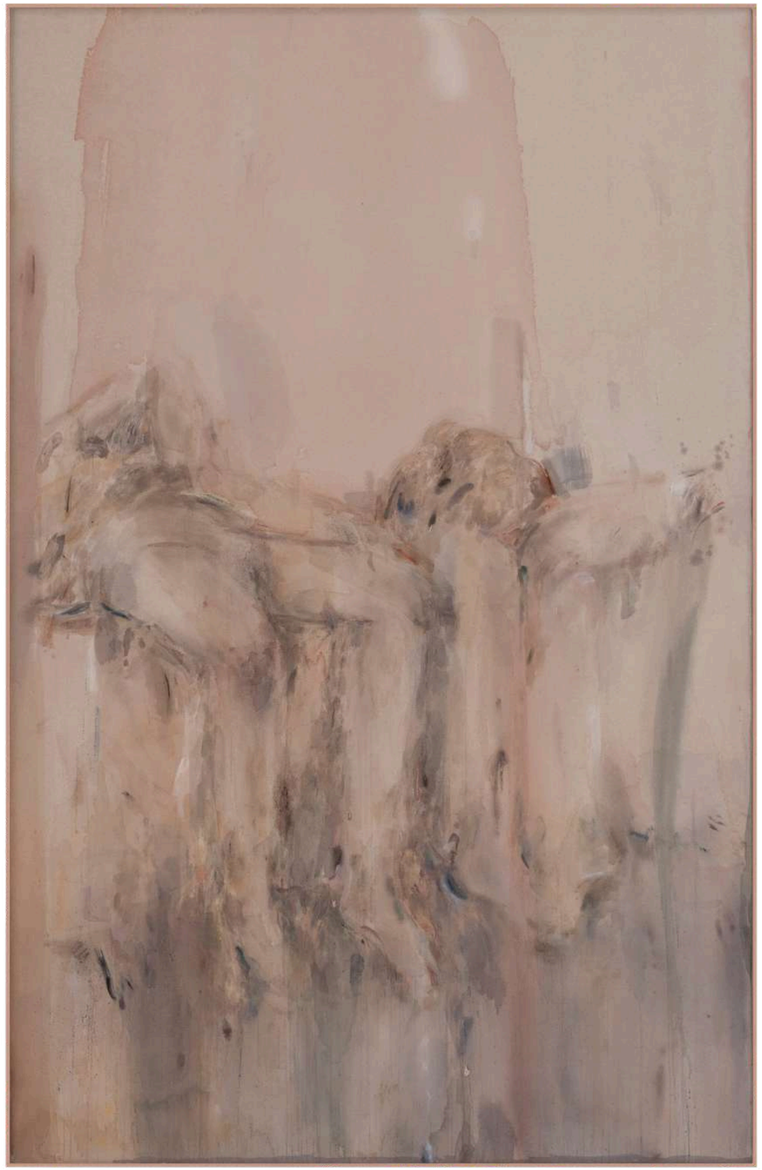


Untitled
Acrylic, pigments, and modeling paste on raw canvas
69 7/8 x 44 7/8 in.
2025, Vadodara

Installation view
Art Mumbai 2025
Emami Art Gallery Booth

Detail

Untitled
Acrylic, pigments, and modeling paste on raw canvas
69 7/8 x 44 7/8 in.
2025, Vadodara



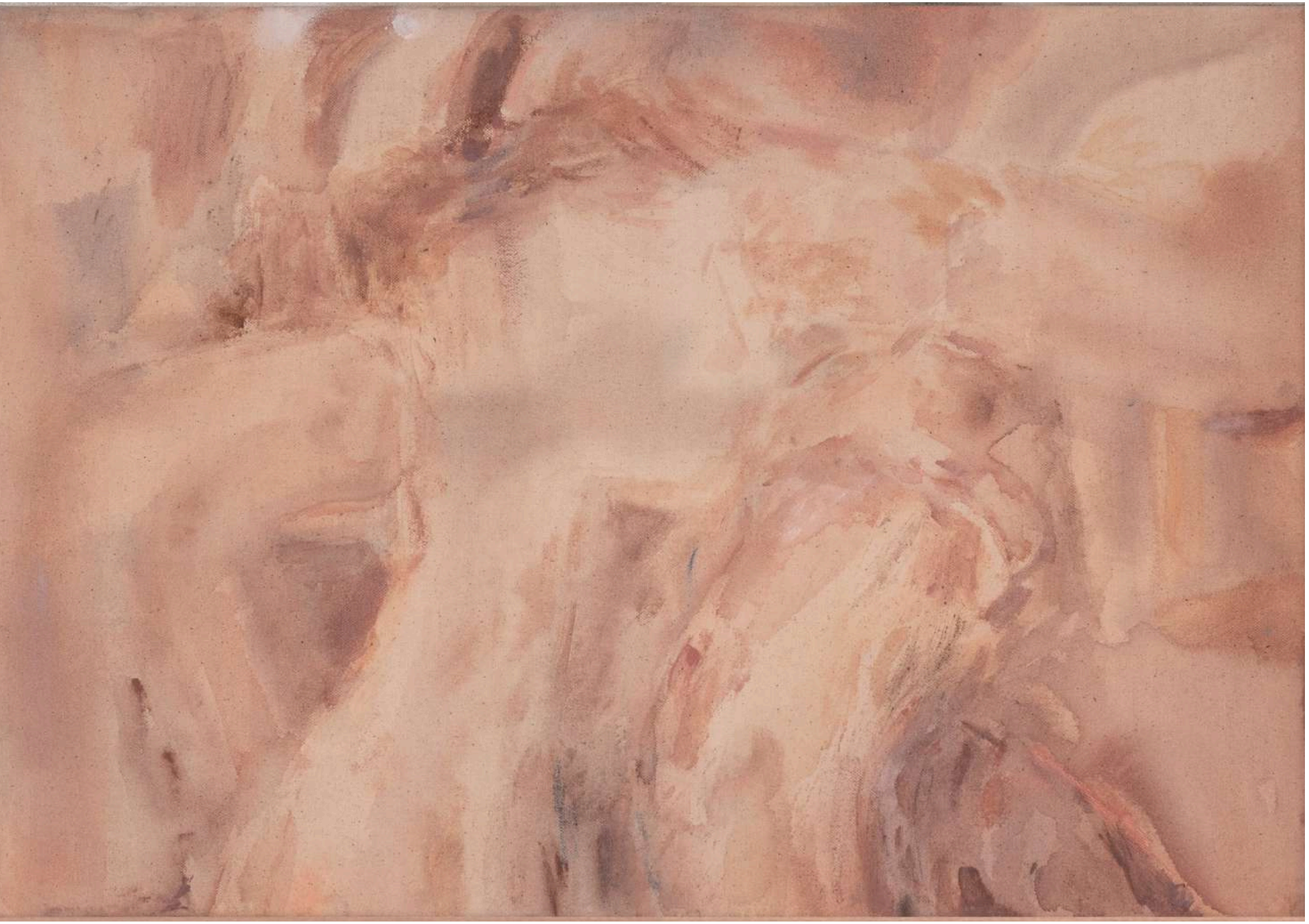
Untitled
Acrylic, pigments, and modeling paste on raw canvas
70 1/8 x 45 1/8 in.
2025, Kolkata

Untitled
Acrylic, pigments, and modeling paste on raw canvas
70 1/8 x 45 1/8 in.
2025, Kolkata

“The medium that I tend to use is very diluted acrylic paint along with some dry mediums, and I work on large and smaller scales. As I shift between scales, I also use two kinds of surfaces i.e. raw canvas and wooden surfaces -- with both of them having very opposite porosities.”

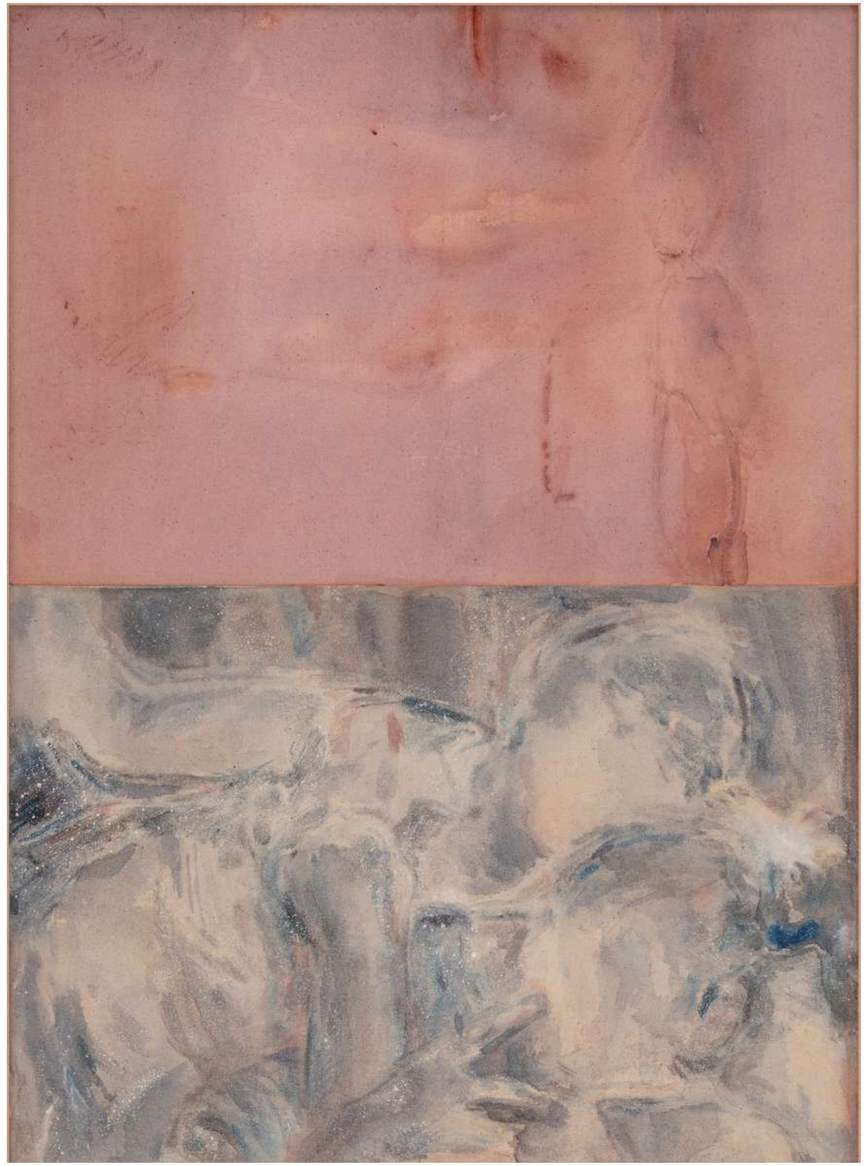
About Symmetry; Reclining Study (After Sickert); Hold; Contours in Yellow; In Between; Finishing Up (Series: Finishing Up); Finishing Up II (Series: Finishing Up); Skin of Light; Traces; Before the Scene
Acrylic, pigment, matte medium on wood panel
11 7/8 x 8 7/8 in. each
Set of 10 works
2025, Vadodara

Untitled
Acrylic, matte medium, and pigment on raw canvas
29 7/8 x 22 in. overall
15 x 22 in. each
Diptych
2025, Kolkata



Detail

Untitled
Acrylic, pigments, and modeling paste on raw canvas
70 1/8 x 45 1/8 in.
2025, Kolkata



Untitled
Acrylic, matte medium, and pigment on raw canvas
29 7/8 x 22 in. overall
15 x 22 in. each
Diptych
2025, Kolkata

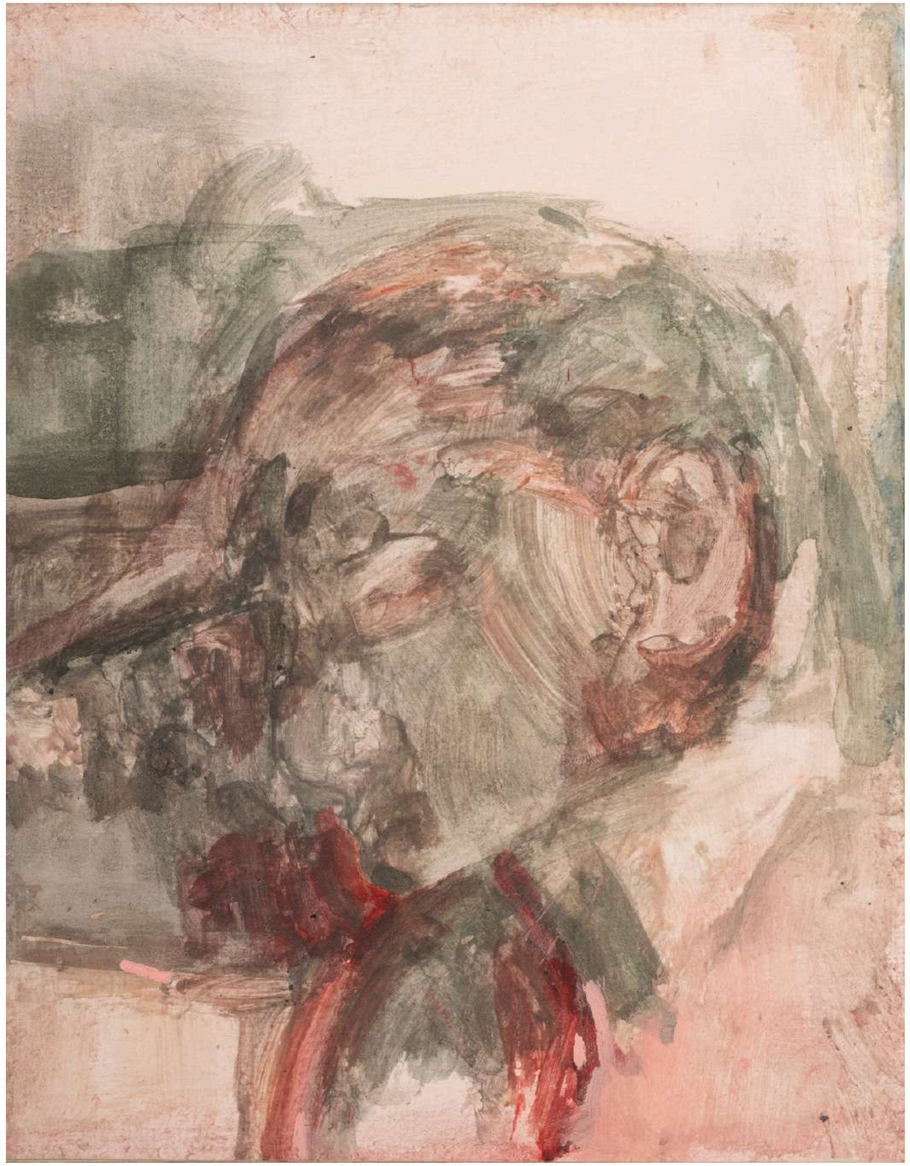
Detail

Untitled
Acrylic, matte medium, and pigment on raw canvas
29 7/8 x 22 in. overall
15 x 22 in. each
Diptych
2025, Kolkata

This work captures the fleeting impression of a confined space. It shows how we get an idea of the atmosphere, presence and intimacy in a room through a glance, with or without figures. The particular treatment of mark-making and colouring engages the viewer to discover if anything more is there than what is visible.

Untitled
Acrylic, matte medium, and pigment on raw canvas
29 7/8 x 22 in. overall
15 x 22 in. each
Diptych
2025, Kolkata

Installation view
India Art Fair Edi+tions Hyderabad 2025
Emami Art Gallery Booth



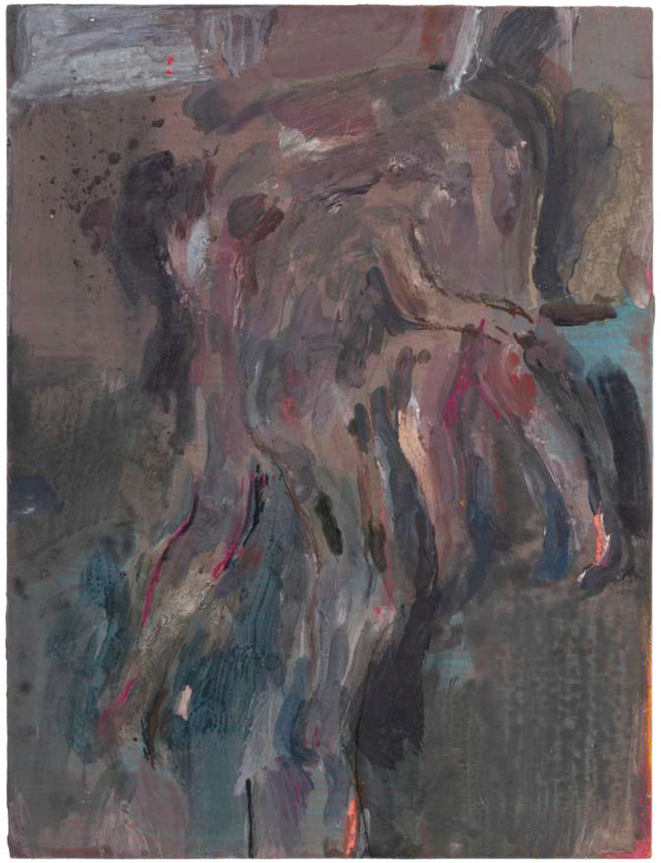
This painting represents a portrait bordering on abstraction. The artist is as concerned with how the eyes see as with the emotional situation in which the objects are seen.

Untitled
Acrylic, matte medium, and pigment on raw canvas
29 7/8 x 22 in. overall
15 x 22 in. each
Diptych
2025, Kolkata

Kneel II is ambiguous — suggesting submission, introspection and defiance. In showing the lower portion of a kneeling figure, the painting tells no straightforward narrative, leaving the viewer to question the scenario. It also explores the minimalist approach to colour and the flatness of a surface while working with subtle variations of the same hue.

Kneel II
Acrylic, pigment, and matte medium on wood panel
9 7/8 x 7 7/8 in.
2024, Vadodara

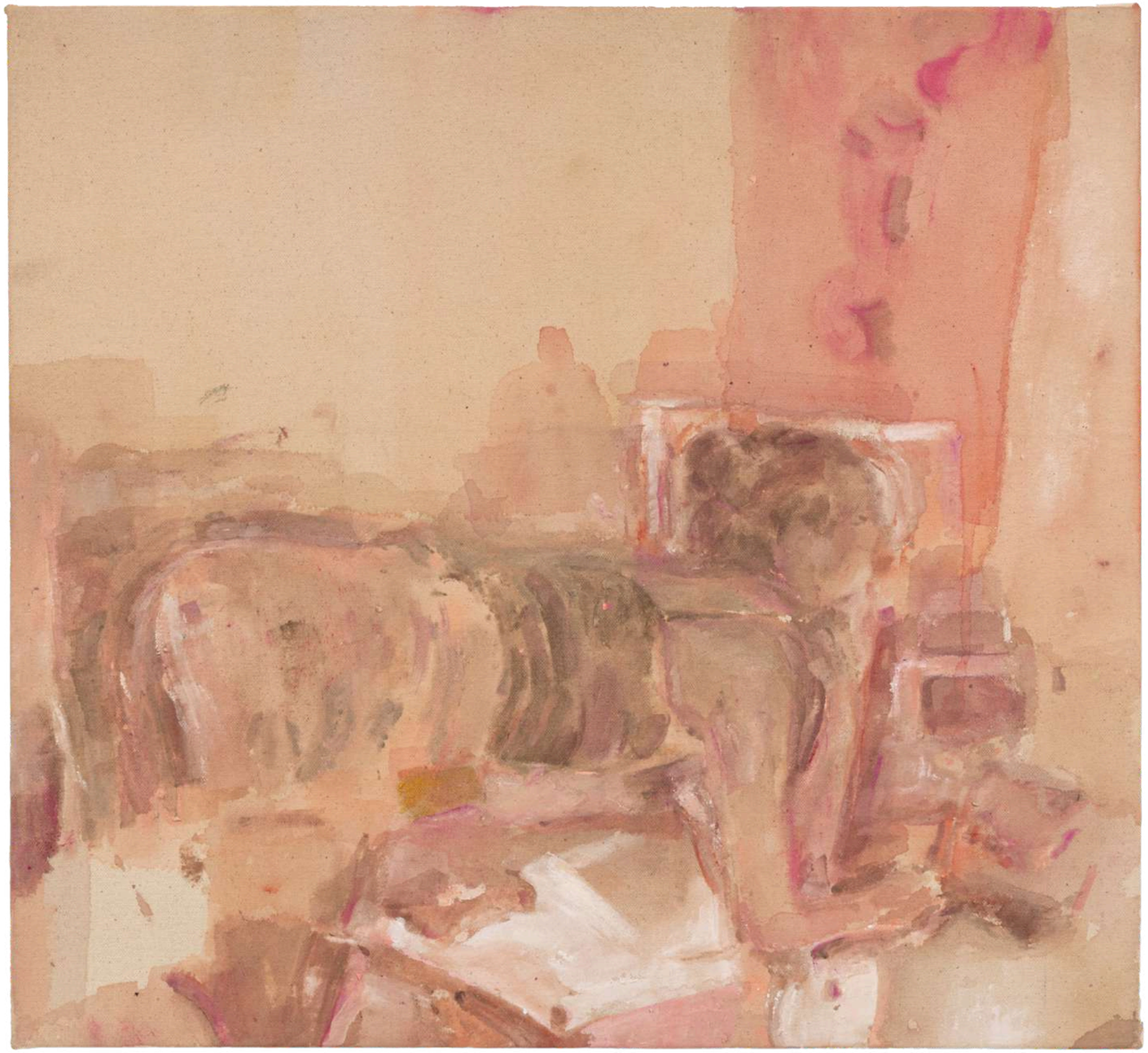
Installation view
Re:Figuring
Group Exhibition
Emami Art, 2025



This diptych explores the tension between figure and space, where the body is simultaneously present and dissolving. It creates an atmosphere where forms emerge and recede, resisting clear definition. The layered, gestural marks in the paintings obscure and reveal, heightening the scene's ambiguity, reflecting on solitude and a fleeting moment.

Bend Over
Acrylic, pigment, and matte medium on wood panel
11 7/8 x 9 in. each
Diptych
2024, Vadodara

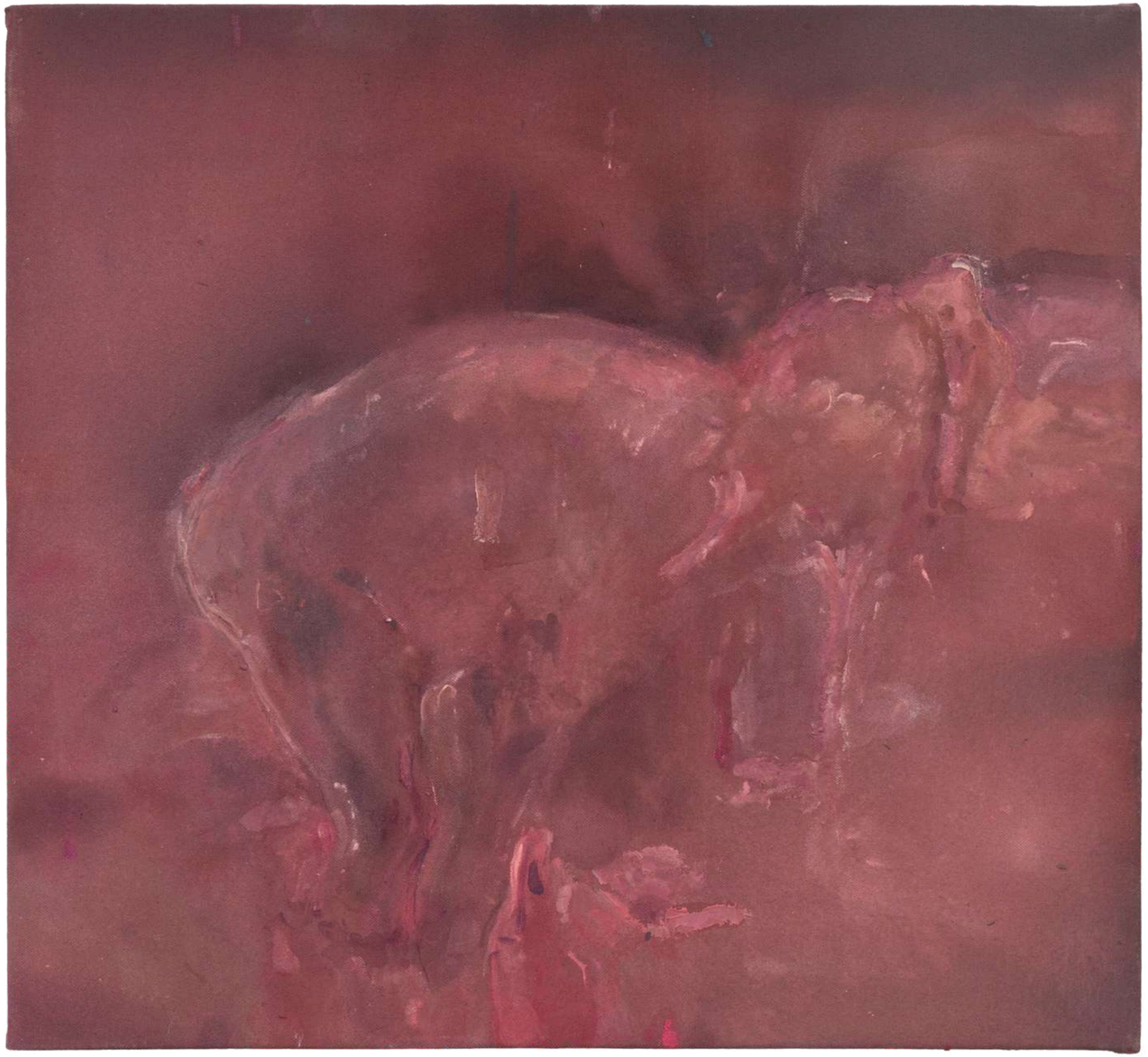
Installation view
Re:Figuring
Group Exhibition
Emami Art, 2025



This work unfolds through body traces, a presence, a moment slipping between form and formlessness. The figure, pressed into the space, reveals itself in uncertainty, indeterminacy and ambiguity.

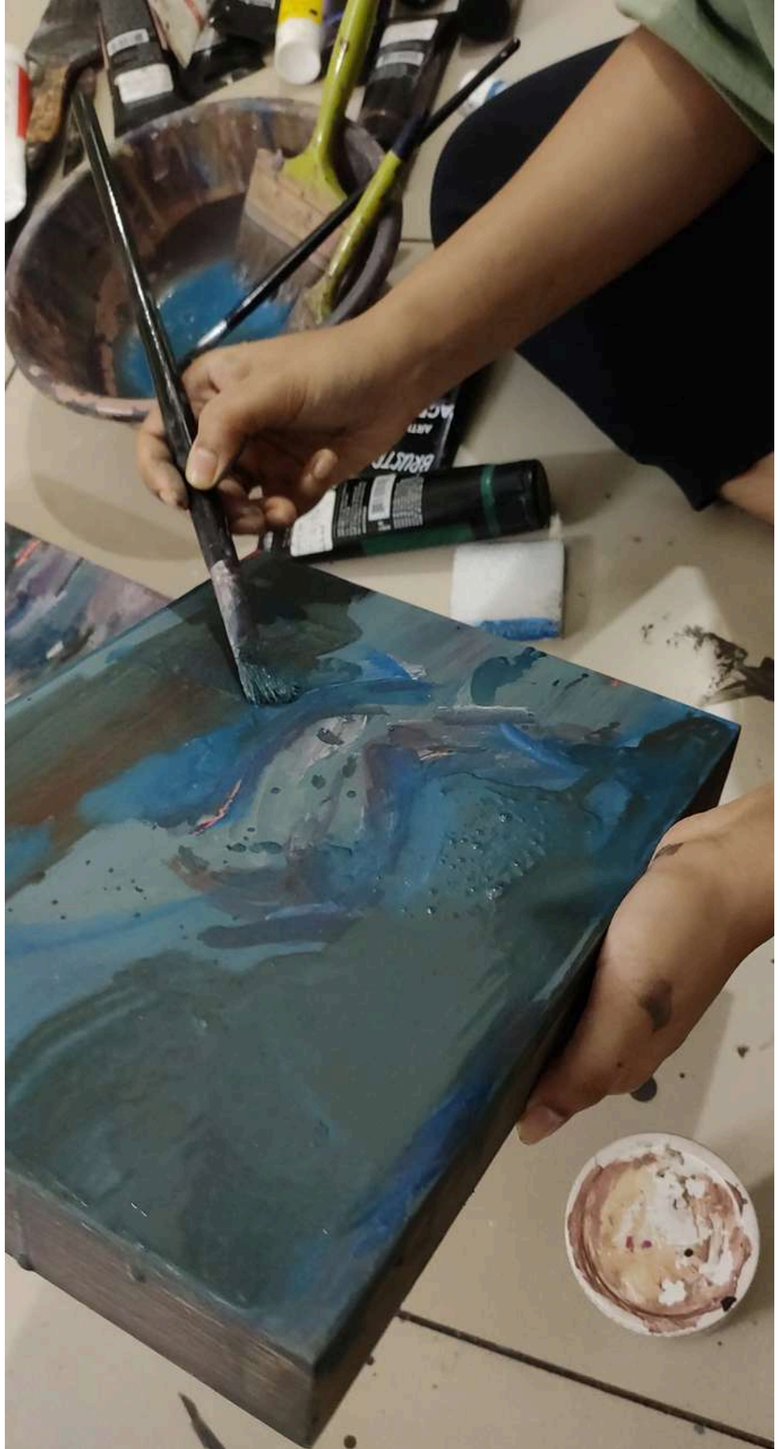
Untitled
Acrylic, matte medium and pigment on canvas
18 1/8 x 19 3/4 in.
2023, Vadodara

This work recaptures the medium's essence when translating a photographic image into a painting, emphasizing the patches and indeterminacy of form that defines and details. The tension between the painterly character of the coloured patches and the details of the photographic image as reference constitute the work's aesthetics.



Untitled
Acrylic, matte medium and pigment on canvas
18 1/8 x 19 3/4 in.
2023, Vadodara

“My early paintings were far more representational. I have been obsessed with a lot of gestural painters for a long time so since a year or two, my approach has evolved to become increasingly spontaneous. I make multiple drawings from a single reference until it distances itself from the original image.”



This blend of figuration and abstraction creates a visual ambiguity that explores the idea of body in space and how it creates various perspectives with respect to the space they are occupying. It also explores colours and engages with the idea of visible and invisible.

Kneel
Acrylic, pastel, and modeling paste on wooden panel
7.95 x 7.95 in.
2024, Vadodara

Reclining Studies I, II, III, IV
Acrylic, pastel, and modeling paste on wooden panel
Overall dimension variable
A- 7.95 x 7.95 in.
B, C- 7.99 x 7.99 in. each
D- 7.99 x 7.99 in.
Set of 4 works
2024, Vadodara

Installation view
IMAGINARIUM 4.0
Awards and Exhibition
Emami Art, 2024

There is a blend of figuration and abstraction, creating a visual ambiguity that explores the idea of body in space and how it creates various perspectives with respect to the space they are occupying. It also explores colours and engages with the idea of visible and invisible.

Untitled
Acrylic, modeling paste, and varnish on laminated sheet
Overall dimension variable
A - 13.11 x 13.11 in.
B - 13.11 x 13.11 in.
C - 13.03 x 13.03 in.
D - 13.18 x 13.18 in.
Set of 4 works
2024, Vadodara

Untitled
Acrylic, pastel, and modeling paste on wooden panel
Overall dimension variable
A - 8.93 x 11.92 in.
B - 8.97 x 11.92 in.
Set of 2 works
2024, Vadodara

Sayanee Sarkar, born in Siliguri, West Bengal in 1999, holds a Bachelor's in Fine Arts from the Indian College of Arts and Draftsmanship, Kolkata, 2022; and graduated as a Master of Visual Arts in Painting from Maharaja Sayajirao University, Baroda, 2024.

Her debut solo was *Alchemy of Absolute Intimacy*, Emami Art, Kolkata (2026), while her work has been featured in several group exhibitions across India, including *Re: Figuring*, Emami Art, Kolkata, 2025; *The Baroda March*, Rukshaan Art, Mumbai, 2025; *Bodies* under India Art Fair's Young Collectors Programme, Delhi, 2025; *IMAGINARIUM 4.0*, Emami Art, 2024 — where she won the third Award of Excellence at the Open Call; Without Cube, MSU Fine Arts Faculty Gallery, Baroda, 2024; *Pushpabaug*, Anant Art Gallery, Noida, 2024; *Potluck*, MSU Baroda Fine Arts Faculty Gallery, Gujarat, 2023; FIRST TAKE, Abir India, Hutheesing Centre, Ahmedabad, 2023; the Nasreen Mohamedi Scholarship Exhibition, MSU Baroda, Gujarat, 2022; and the Annual Exhibitions 2020 and 2022, Indian College of Art and Craftsmanship, Kolkata.

Her works were presented by Emami Art, Kolkata at India Art Fair 2026; Art Mumbai 2025; India Art Fair EDI+IONS 2025. She was also a part of the ceramics internship at Studio Calyx in Kolkata in 2023.

Sayanee Sarkar is based in Vadodara.

EMAMI ART

Emami Art is a prominent contemporary art gallery and cultural production space located on the ground floor of the Kolkata Centre for Creativity's Green Building. Established in 2017, it adopts a forward-looking, multi-dimensional approach that reflects South Asia's history, socio-cultural, and geo-political narratives. Emami Art operates within an inclusive framework where profitability supports sustainable resource regeneration and public service.

Committed to promoting a regional, national, and international agenda, Emami Art emphasizes community engagement, socially relevant initiatives, and institutional partnerships. With a multi-year vision for the future, it continues to be a catalyst for change, research, innovation, and inclusivity.