



Anj Smith (above) paints on finest linen fabric; each painting taking nine months to complete

Know Your Art

Having created a distinct style with her surrealistic, almost haunting paintings, Anj Smith brings her new collection to India; we caught up with her for an exclusive

Grazia: How would you define your style of painting?

Anj Smith: There are usually many different kinds of painting in each individual work. Massively thick impastoed areas of paint, applied with a palette knife, rise up from the surface in distinct areas. The painting in others can involve tiny marks made with a one-haired brush. I usually build up many layers to make banks of saturated colour and there are often marks scratched onto the surface. These contrast with the more passive zones of less intense painting, which allow the eye to rest.

G: What can we expect from your forthcoming exhibition?

AS: I have made a series of seven paintings for my show at Galerie ISA. Everything is oil on French linen as it

has the finest weave that facilitates areas of extreme detail. Each painting takes around nine months to finish, although I do work on more than one at a time.

The long time spent on each painting is due to my process, it adds an intensity to the painting which is hard to pinpoint.

G: What are your inspirations?

AS: It's always very hard to predict the manner in which ideas evolve. The smallest observation can set off thought processes that culminate in a finished painting. Much of my work at the moment is concerned with a sense of fragility in relation to the way that we construct identities. I read obsessively and find visiting museums or exhibitions always inspirational in one way or another and I keep a journal of ideas, some of which become paintings.

My experiences of life do creep into the work. In a sense, all the work of any artist is autobiographical.

*September 6 to November 17,
Galerie Isa, Mumbai*