

SHINY NEW SPHERES

Artist *Jaideep Mehrotra* experiments with abstracts at *Reflections In Mercury*, his first solo show in Mumbai after a six-year hiatus

Art is cathartic, and allows us to see nothing but ourselves within it, believes this creator. A noted name in the Indian contemporary art landscape, Jaideep Mehrotra has wowed audiences the world over with his canvases. But there comes along a moment in every artist's life when he wishes to venture into something completely unexplored – and so it is with Mehrotra, who is showcasing his abstract creations for the very first time in *Reflections In Mercury*. Back with a solo show in Mumbai after a gap of six years, the artist talks to *Verve* about all things creative....

THE GENESIS

"Two years ago, when I was still working with the theme of my previous series that involved text and words, I was invited to participate in an international art fair in Bahrain. While trying to come up with ideas for that, the concept of using text morphed into the idea of using books. They have always been a huge part of my family and my life, and it seemed like a perfect theme for me to go with. One of the main works from that series was called *Welder's Handbooks*. It was a series of sculptural works that involved encapsulating books in what looked like metallic welds,

symbolically preserving centuries of thoughts and ideas of intellectuals. While working on that, I started experimenting with reflective surfaces, and that is how my current theme came about."

ABSTRACT THOUGHTS

"I am always innovating and discovering new forms of expression. Having spent most of my career doing figurative works, abstracts seemed like a new avenue to explore. The works in this show have been made using a unique technique that I spent six years creating, and I'm very excited by what it's developed into. I'm working with the idea that art is a reflection of its surrounding culture – in this show, shiny objects reflect life around them, epitomising the culture of gadgets and instant gratification. I aimed to create a work of art that will be different for every person looking at it. Metallics reflect surroundings and deflect any allusions to the artist's interior, and I am hoping that these works prompt viewers to think about the nature of art, of humanity, of our times, of ourselves, and of ways of looking at art."

BEING HUMAN

"There's one concern that always finds a place in my art. I think people have forgotten that they are a minuscule

part of the grand scheme of the universe and a manifestation of its evolution. We need to relook at what we have done and what we are doing, with a fresh set of eyes, and constantly remind ourselves of our precarious existence."

ON THE WALLS

"The art in our family home is in a constant state of flux. The paintings change, the furniture changes – we have eclectic acquisitions, both practical and purely aesthetic. I gravitate towards the contemporary, modern and even wacky. We seek out galleries and museums with works showcasing all or some of these qualities, especially if they are pleasing to the eye. We have travelled the world and seen some of the greatest works of art and architecture that there are to see, because we all love art."

FUTURE FORWARD

"Currently, I am working on extensions of what I'm doing. I definitely want to experiment more with this technique, and expand the sphere from where I am." ①

-HUZANTATA

Reflections In Mercury is on display at *Tao Art Gallery*, Mumbai from *September 23 to October 22, 2017*.



PRERNA NAINWAL