

Art Affairs
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PRINTMAKING
Process & Thought Process

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PROCESS AND
THOUGHT PROCESS

EDITOR'S NOTE

“While articulating your idea in a visual language the equilibrium of both process and thought process, plays a very crucial role in generating an effective visual. While process refers to the medium, material, and representational skills the thought process infers to the triggering idea that has inspired the visual vocabulary in the artist's composition. Both the process and the thought process keep on changing and improvising as the artist is transiting from the learning stage to the professional stage. This continuous journey is referred to as an 'experience' of an artist.”

The concept behind Art Affairs' second edition of "Printmaking Magazine" is a sincere endeavour to understand the many paths taken by Indian printmakers who practise and preserve this long-forgotten art. The focus of this magazine's structure is on discussing various printing techniques and experiments undertaken by different printmakers in order to obtain some understanding of the "process and thought process" behind the printmaking works.

The literary magazine invited three contemporary Indian printmakers to contribute essays and articles on their experiences in the field of printmaking. **Dr. Rajkumar Mazinder**, an eminent printmaker and faculty member at Assam University department of fine art, shares his experiences at the landmark event of international mezzotint workshop and exhibition. **Dr. Aditi Ganeev Sangwan**, presently residing at Canada, discusses her experimental works during lockdown period. **Prof. Rajan Shripad Fulari**, a well-known practising printmaker and Dean of school of visual art, World University of Design discusses the history and development of printmaking studios in Uttar Pradesh. Their essays express the history as well as contemporary practises and activities in the field of Indian fine art printmaking.

The magazine also includes essays by several emerging Indian printmakers who describe their experiences with printmaking and provide their perspectives on the topic of 'process and thought process' in printmaking. Printmaking is a contemplative activity for artist **Anjali Rawat**, who employs a variety of printing methods to portray the notions of self-identity and individuality. **Nitika Sharma** creates monochromatic images and considers printing to be a distinct art form that incorporates both creative ideas and technical competence. In terms of visual, cognitive, and creative experience, Nitika feels that the balance of method and thinking process in printmaking serves both the artist and the viewer. **Spriha Maurya's** printmaking practise translates to spiritual inquiry, through wood carving. While working in a variety of mediums, Spriha's focus has been on woodcut print, in which she depicts childhood nostalgia and the chaos of adult life, as well as expresses the spiritual essence of her hometown Banaras through her viewpoint.

Ushita Jain alludes to printmaking with mathematical equations and elaborates on her exciting experiences working in a range of printmaking methods such as etchings, woodcut, emboss, cyanotype, viscosity, aquatint, dry point, and so on. Ushita believes that print is the consequence of strict mathematical laws, but what attracts her is the unexpected conduct of the medium. In his engravings, **Vikrant Chauhan** depicts stories of human existence and survival. He picked printing as a medium for expressing his emotional responses, and he employs symbolic form and a cognitive process to elicit his ideas while experimenting with various surface materials and visual aspects to obtain understanding into the medium. **Sachin Naik's** pursuit for art is never-ending. His creative expressions are greatly influenced by loud, vibrant colours to portray themes and issues based on his immediate surroundings, with a concentration on figure, mood, and sentiment. Bhavan (feelings) and expressions are the key characters in his art, which are formed graphically by merging dots, dashes, curves, and cross hatching.

Sapna Shaw Mathur's artistic method speaks to her true spirit. Her etching works depict the intersections between nature and urban communities. Sapna feels that challenges allow artists to learn and evolve, and that they may lead to a greater understanding of oneself and the creative form. Etching and coloured linocut are two

printing methods discussed by **Saibal Karmakar**. He emphasises that every printmaker works with an individual philosophy, both conceptually and technically. Saibal wonderfully articulates themes of human crises through his realistic graphic language in printing, while conceding to the technical obstacles and limits he faced throughout his practise. **Dr. Rakhee Kumari's** distinctive pictorial language, influenced by Madhubani traditional art, explores a matrix of sensations and moods. She conveys her feelings via her artworks by incorporating subaltern elements such as women, fish, lotus, elephant, snake, and other creatures.

Lastly, it was a pleasure to present the works of international artist and printmaker **Ana Vivoda** from Croatia in this project, as she writes about her most recent series of works, 'Fragments of Morning,' which explores printmaking as a discipline while questioning the creative processes and interrelationships between the artist and the work. Ana's works are built on ongoing interventions on many matrixes utilising intaglio methods such as lift-ground etching, aquatint, and dry point, resulting in a multi-layered, vivid discussion and dynamic interplay between the work and the artist that continues to evolve.

Printmaking allows for experimentation, resulting in a soft and visually beautiful print from a hard surface. Printmaking has a wide range of possibilities. It is viewed as a practise that is open to new ideas and redefinitions as the process evolves, introducing new materials and tools. Today, many artists are turning to printmaking for its experimental approach, and they are trying out with multi-faceted perceptions through new media practises that combine traditional and modern techniques. This novel approach to printing opened new avenues for experimentation with diverse materials and processes, as well as challenging traditional notions of what constituted a "print." Furthermore, this has led to the creation of unique and diverse works of art that are not limited by the traditional boundaries of printmaking, but rather push the boundaries of what is possible in the medium. As a result, printmaking has become a dynamic and exciting field for contemporary artists to explore and innovate within.

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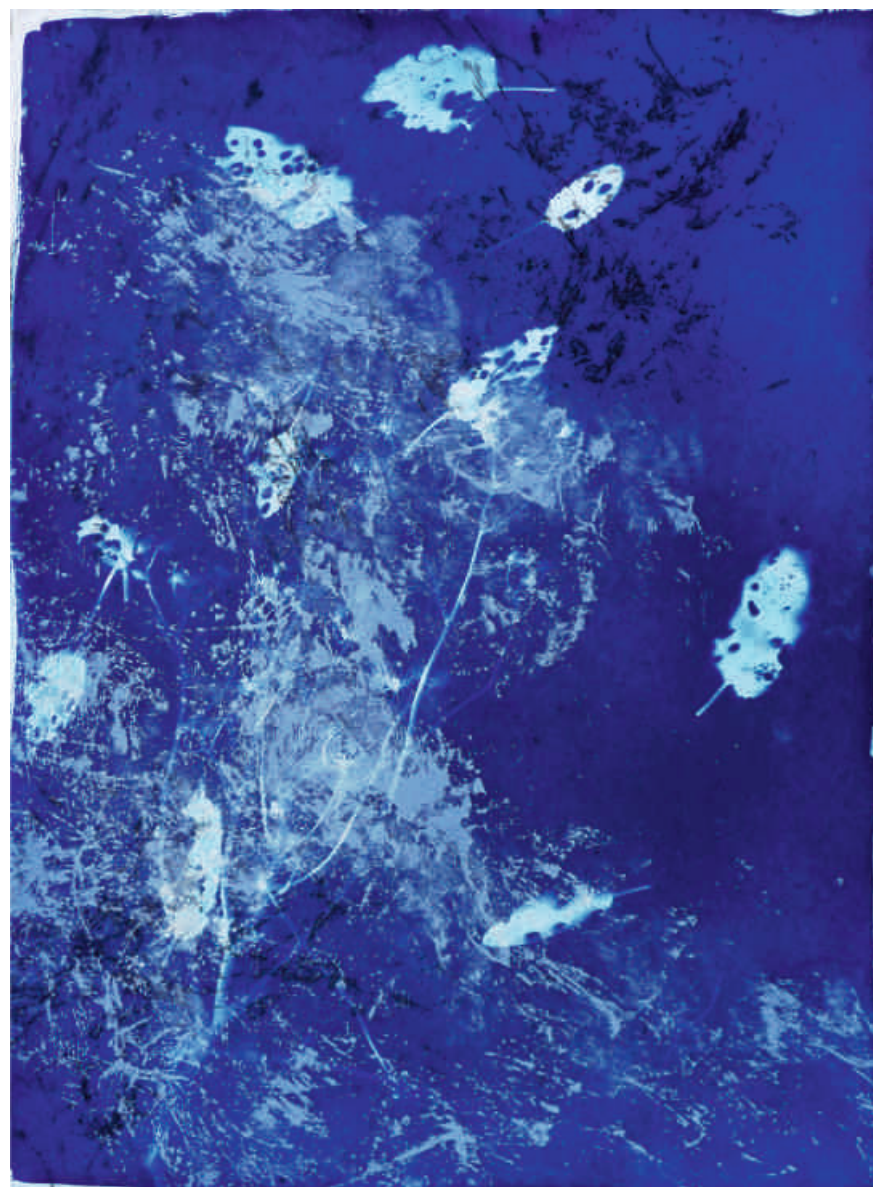


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FRAGMENTS OF MORNING AND TRACES OF SUMMER



Title: Traces of Summer 1 | Medium: intaglio, cyanotype,
Size: 50 x 65 cm | Year: 2022.

A series of prints named 'Fragments of Morning' explores printmaking as a discipline, questions the creative processes and the interrelations between the artist and the work. The print makes efforts to stretch the borders of the field and expand the understanding of the printmaking process. I do not approach the print in terms of the stiff framework of the medium, but as a practice that grows and expands during the course, as a form of life of the images taking shape. Which means that a printed sheet is not solely as an aesthetic object, but rather a document testifying a process, a sediment of the time and contemplation.

The cycle 'Fragments of Morning' is based on continuous interventions on several printing plates using intaglio techniques like lift-ground etching, etching, aquatint and dry point. During the period of several years, I have been subsequently adding, altering or scratching off the traces on the plates in order to make place for the new experiences on the same plate, to enable the work to continue. Consequently, I do not consider the individual prints as separate units, but segments of one continuous print, of one work in progress. The polished surface of the zinc plate reflects multi-layered, vivid conversation and dynamic interrelation between the work and the author that keeps unfolding. That is the definition of printmaking for me – process, observation, transformation – print as an act of presence in the process, and graphics as the traces of the experience.

With this approach, instead of collection of individual prints, the research grows into plural visual text whose meanings multiply with every further intervention. Single prints, although physically separate units, are conceptually inseparable, they form unique composition of visual notions that mutually complement and define each other, which is why I prefer to present them in large



Traces 1, dry point, sugar lift, 99 x 66 cm, 2019



Traces of Summer 2, intaglio, cyanotype, 50 x 65 cm, 2022

compositions, not as single graphic sheets, to emphasize the work as a conversation and development.

Even though the process is based on traditional intaglio techniques, printmaking is understood as a practice open to innovations and redefinitions through the process, introducing new tools and materials as rocks and dry plants used as the lift-ground brushes. Intaglio process is slow and demanding and I practise it because of the emphasis on the laborious experience in which the initial idea alters together with the author; it is being adapted, enriched, reshaped and matured. In other words, the matrix evolves into an open, indefinite, constantly changing network of relations, which questions the relationship between the artwork and the author, whose experiential and emotional "matrices" are being transformed in the process, as well as the significance of time in the context of artwork's creation.

The work was developed in a private countryside studio and the environment was obviously an important part of the process, maybe it would be fair to say that the

landscape is equally important author of the cycle. The work grew incorporating more and more elements from the environment; almost no traditional tools were used - all the marks were created using different plants instead of brushes, exploring expressive communication between the plate and the landscape. After reaching its capacity in variations, the printmaking research curved into a new path; even though the new works do not belong to the same cycle, I named it the 'Traces of Summer,' I would like to mention it here to illuminate the working process better. Once the idea has reached its full capacity, or just a point of saturation or temporary exhaust, it naturally moved to another territory to be able to mature and develop further. I started layering intaglio with cyanotype and pencil drawings in search of different interpretations of the concept. The cyanotype cycle directly involved the environment, producing the plant shadows on top of the intaglio marks previously made, interacting with the print and building up new layers. The new cycle introduced vivid blue, grey or brown colours and rich, dense graphite surfaces, expanding the research in different directions,

intertwining print with other art disciplines, in search for the new means of conversation between the inner and outer landscapes.

This innovative approach to printmaking opened new possibilities to explore the relationship between nature and art, and to experiment with different materials and techniques. It also challenged traditional notions of what constitutes a "print," expanding the definition of the medium and inspiring new forms of artistic expression.

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