

Return to uncertainty

VISUAL ARTS

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In an age when the body is endlessly measured, modified, legislated and rendered visible, Sayanee Sarkar's debut solo exhibition, *Alchemy of Absolute Intimacy*, offers a radical alternative: a return to uncertainty. On view at Emami Art, the exhibition resists the impulse to classify. Figures appear and disappear within translucent veils of pigment, suspended in a state between emergence and erasure.

The paintings unfold like memories that refuse to settle into a narrative. Bodies lean into one another, recline,

embrace, or perhaps recoil; certainty remains elusive. Sarkar's figures inhabit spaces that suggest bedrooms and private interiors, yet these locations dissolve almost as soon as they are recognised. Colour seeps through the canvas in delicate stains of grey, mauve, ochre and pale blue, creating surfaces that are almost ethereal. Looking at the paintings is akin to peering through mist where forms remain perpetually on the verge of becoming legible.

John Berger often wrote that seeing is never innocent; every act of looking carries assumptions, histories and desires. Sarkar's paintings make viewers acutely aware of those assumptions. Faced with ambiguous gestures, one

instinctively searches for familiar narratives: intimacy or estrangement, tenderness or violence, eroticism or grief. Yet the paintings continually frustrate such conclusions. They expose the viewer's desire — anxiety — to name and categorise, revealing how quickly perception hardens into interpretation.

Sarkar's works do not present bodies as stable objects but as shifting states of feeling. Brushstrokes oscillate between hesitation and assertion; figures merge with their surroundings until flesh, memory and atmosphere become indistinguishable. Sarkar asks viewers to dwell within ambiguity rather than resolve it. In doing so, she produces a deeply contemporary meditation on embodiment.

