

VIPEKSHA GUPTA

28/01/2021 - 20/02/2021

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Venue:

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GALLERY LAUNCH

Shadows in the River of Time

Sabbe sankhara anicca. This teaching from the Pali canon of early Buddhism assures us bleakly that all created things are impermanent, shadows in the river of time. As are we ourselves, with our tangled desires, anxieties, hopes and dreams. And yet, as the practice of vipassana or mindfulness demonstrates, we can find a way beyond the ceaseless rush-hour traffic of thoughts and sensations. By bearing detached witness to their ebb and flow, liberating ourselves from their affective and cognitive claims, we might achieve inward stillness as well as a balanced relationship with the world.

Vipeksha Gupta's exquisite works in her debut solo, 'Oscillations', record such a cultivation of mindfulness. Her formal choices attest to a meditative absorption in the rhythms of process, and demonstrate an elegant economy of means. Her works are achieved sometimes with graphite alone, sometimes through a combination of graphite and charcoal. The palette is a spectrum of greys laid, flecked and scintillating, across the paper surface. At one end, they gather into deep densities of black, evocative of jet and carbon. At the other end, they open up to a dawning white, calibrated between shade and glare.

Vipeksha's method oscillates between the incremental and the unpredictable. She generates her graphic surfaces through the reiteration of microcosmic units into patterns while dynamizing them through striking gestures of rupture, incision, schism, or slippage. She evokes tablets of epiphany, creates folds and hinges of light around which darkness pivots and ripples. Her approach might be described as minimalist, with this proviso: like most forms of minimalism, its austerity is deceptive. On closer engagement, it reveals an understated sensuousness, an invitation both to touch and gaze.

How do we contextualise Vipeksha's work? Her art is nourished by several lineages within global abstraction. We find, here, references to Malevich's dance of the black square, mediating between image and absence; to Barnett Newman's zip, a revelation of light ripping through a field of colour to confront the viewer; to Fontana's incision, slashing through the flatness of the everyday to offer a glimpse of infinity. Within Indian abstraction, Vipeksha stakes a persuasive claim to that extraordinary lineage best embodied by Nasreen Mohamedi and Mehli Gobhai – artistic imaginations preoccupied with subtle geometries of repeated mark and resistant void, the archetypal play of illumination and eclipse, the fluctuating relationship of consciousness to a cosmos that is both manifest and inscrutable.

Ranjit Hoskote

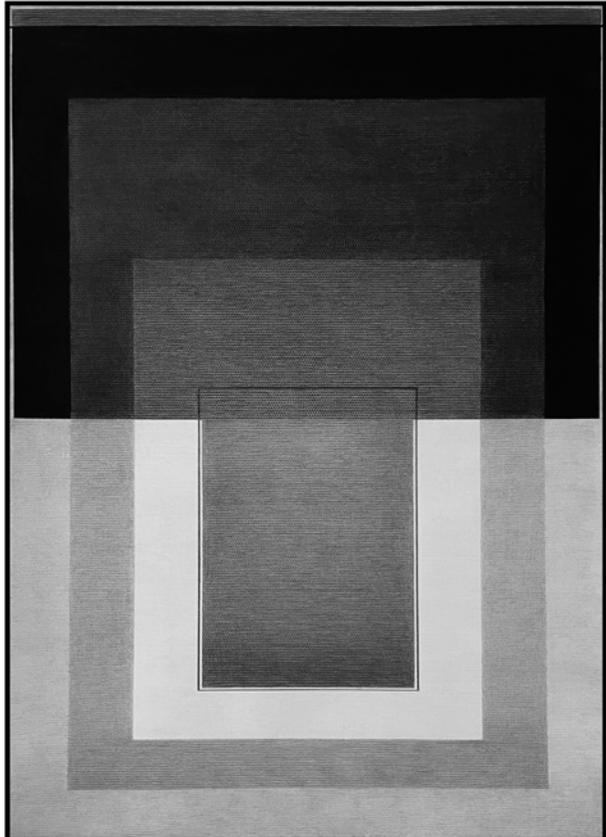
Oscillations

“Everything that has the nature of arising also has the nature of ceasing.”

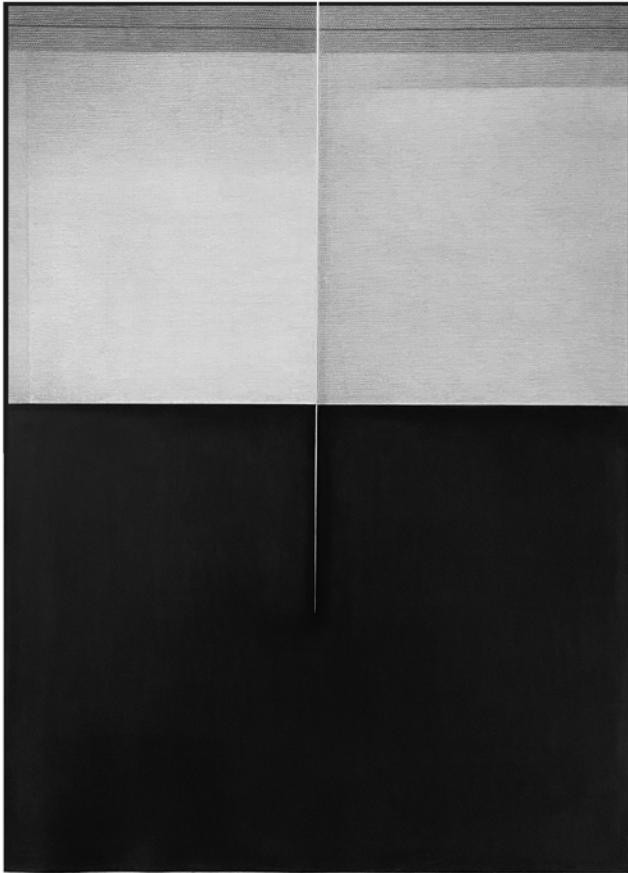
Kondañña {Pali: Vedanā, English: Sensations}

There is nothing animate or inanimate, organic or inorganic that we can label as permanent, since even as we affixed that label on something it would undergo metamorphosis. The “I” with which we are infatuated is a phenomenon in constant flux. Vedanā is a Pali word that denotes the three feeling states which populate each moment of our lives, the pleasant (Sukha vedana), unpleasant (Dukha vedana), and neutral sensations (Adukkhamasukha vedana). Everything that arises in the mind flows along with sensations. . As we practise the observation of sensations at the experiential level, we become aware that the underlying reality of the world and of ourselves consists of moments of arising and passing away build by the sensations. We begin to experience what real happiness is; not the satisfaction of desire nor the forestalling of fears, but rather liberation from the cycle of desire and fear. Understanding how we are pulled by these three constantly occurring mind states is a way we can gain some freedom. Noticing these sensations and seeing them occurring and passing away, the relishing in them, the danger in them, and the release from them, is a way we can bring our mindfulness, the compassionate awareness of moment to moment experience, into full flower. Sensations provide the nexus where the entire mind-body are tangibly revealed as an impermanent phenomenon leading to liberation.

Vipeksha Gupta



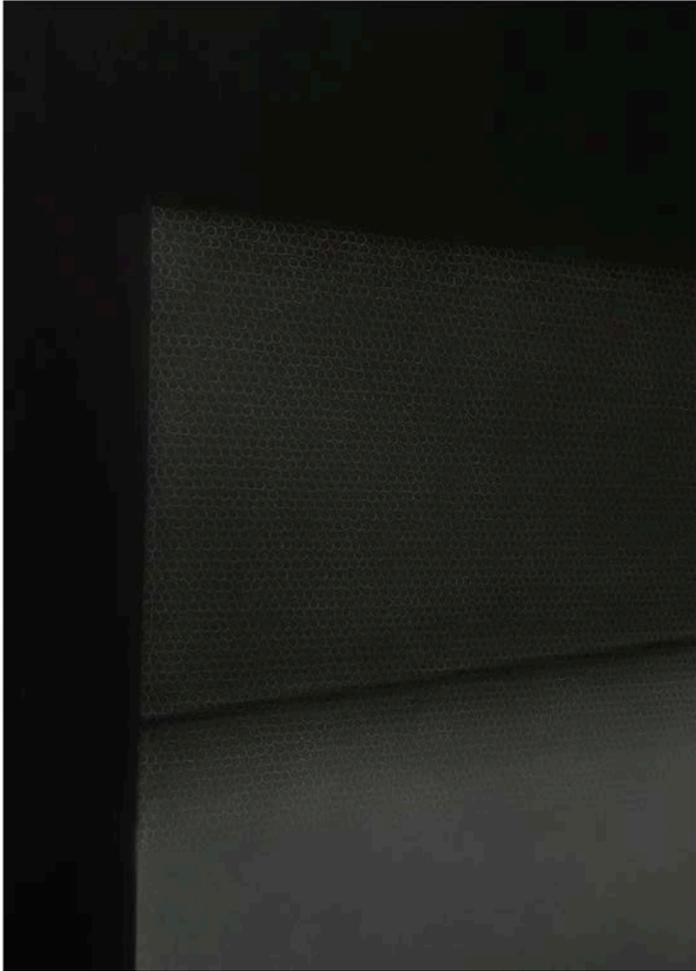
Vedana IX
pencil on paper
170 cm x 130 cm
2020



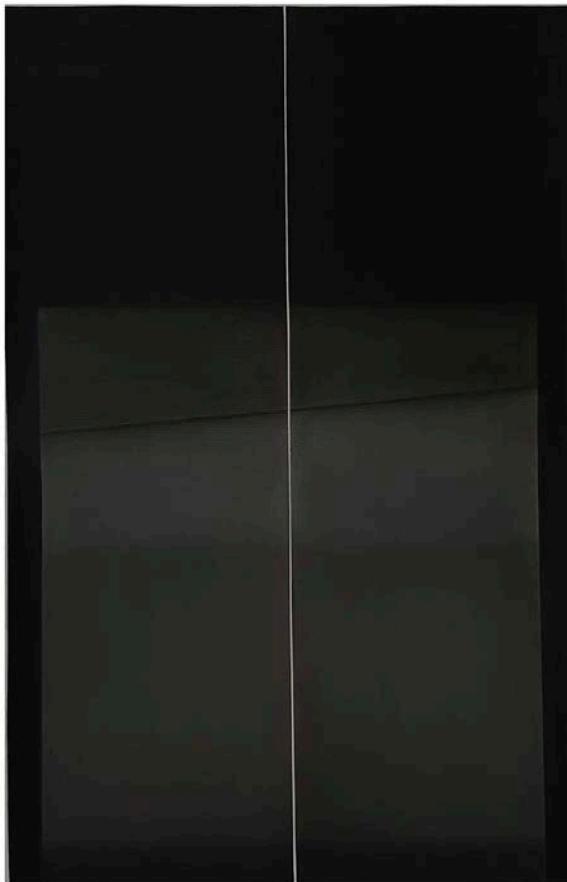
Vedana XI
pencil on paper
170 cm x 130 cm
2020



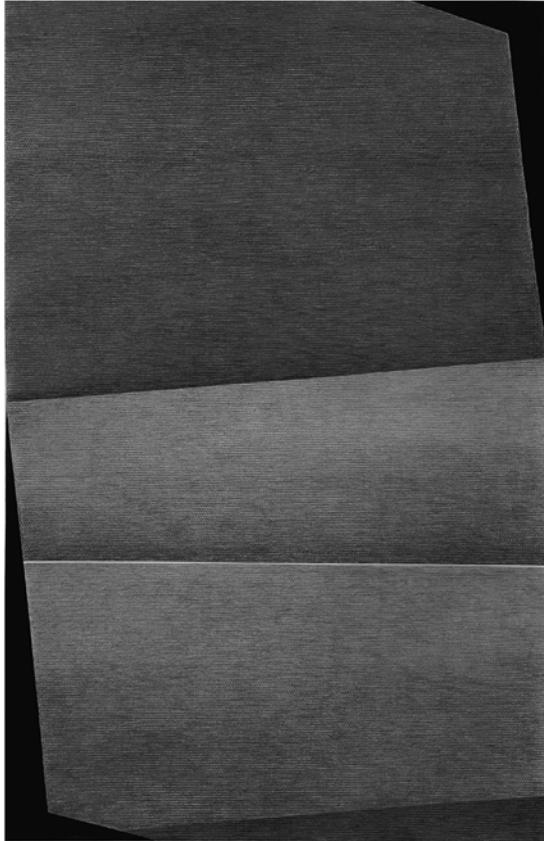
Vedana XXIII
graphite and charcoal on paper
165 cm x 120 cm
2020



Detail



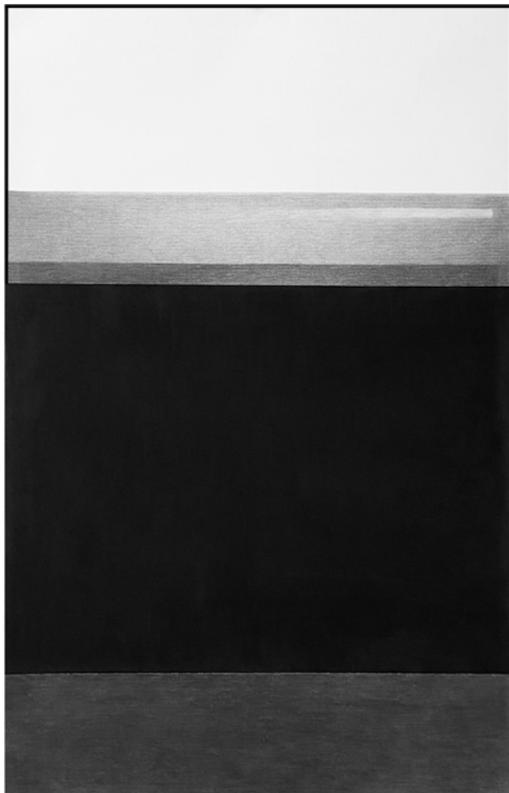
Vedana XXIV
graphite and charcoal on paper
165 cm x 120 cm
2020



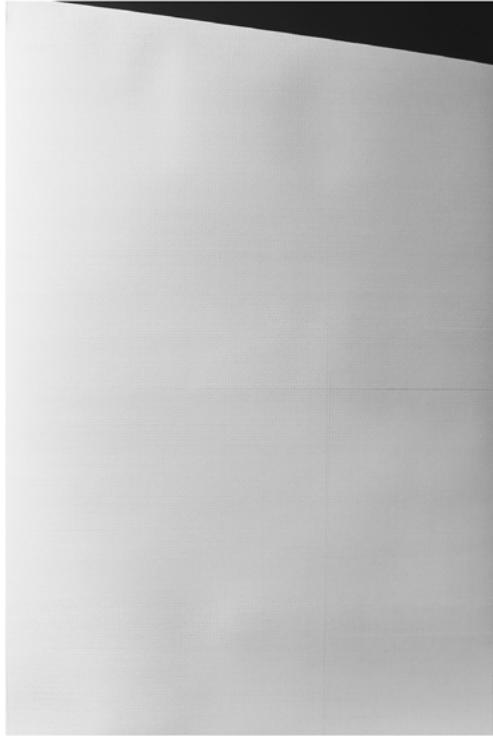
Vedana XXI
pencil on paper
165 cm x 120 cm
2020



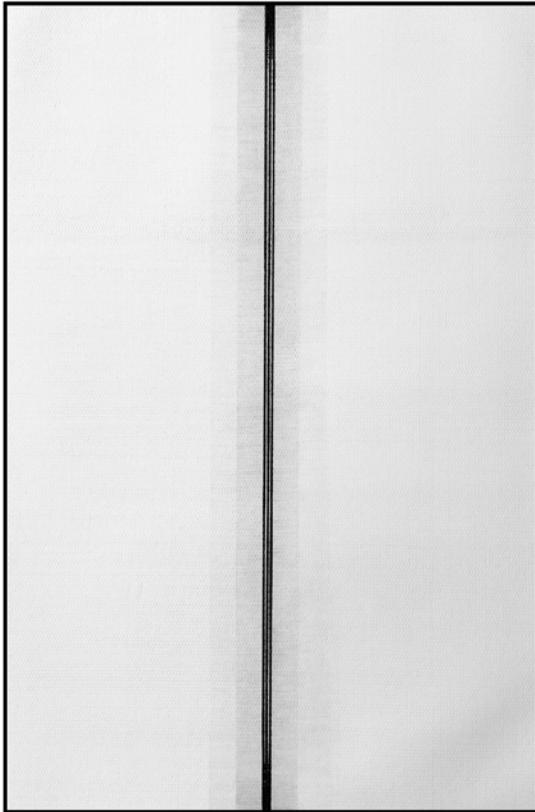
Vedana XXII
pencil and charcoal on paper
165 cm x 120 cm
2020



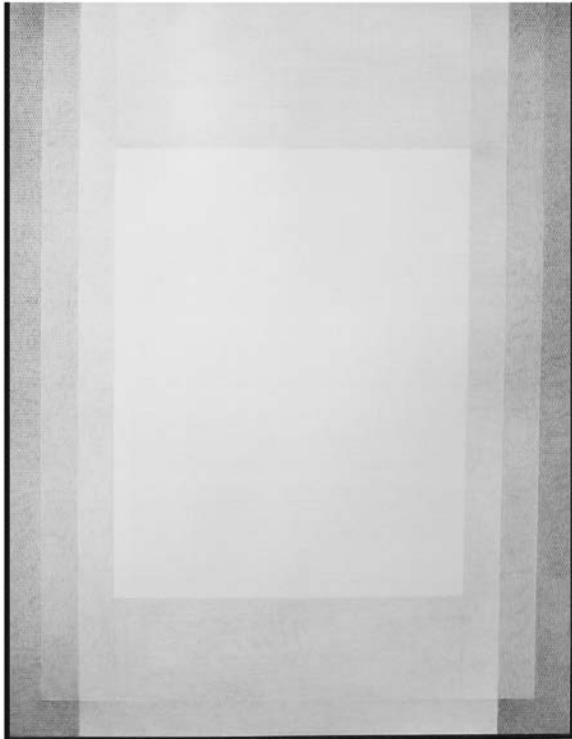
Vedana X
pencil on paper
165 cm x 120 cm
2020



Vedana IV
pencil on paper
110 cm x 85 cm
2020



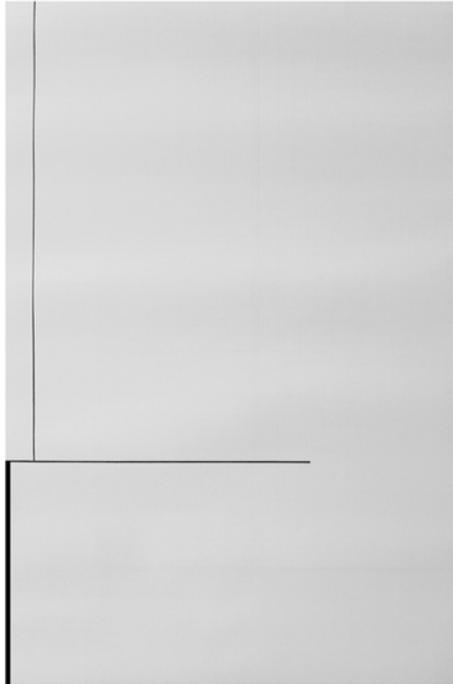
Vedana II
pencil on paper
110 cm x 85 cm
2020



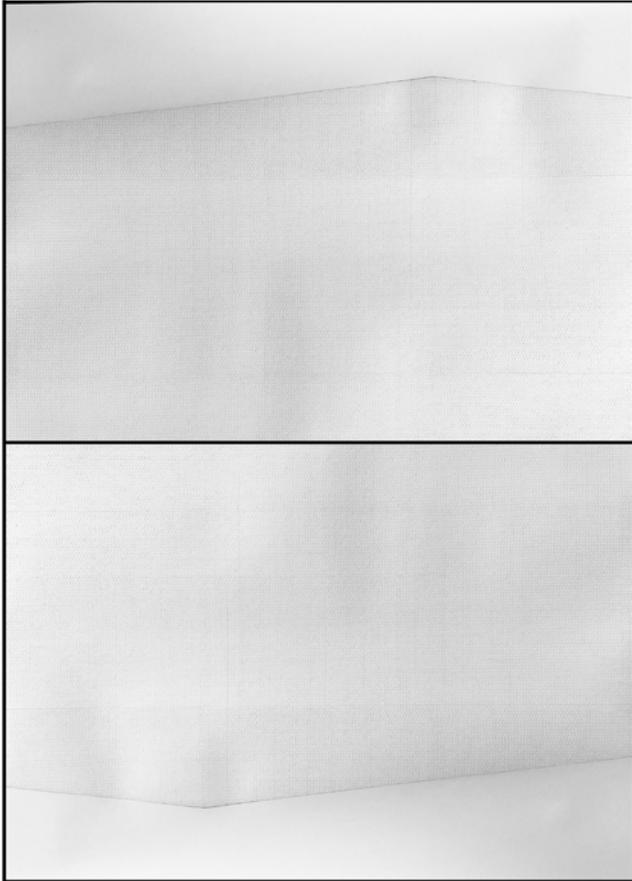
Vedana III
pencil on paper
110 cm x 85 cm
2020



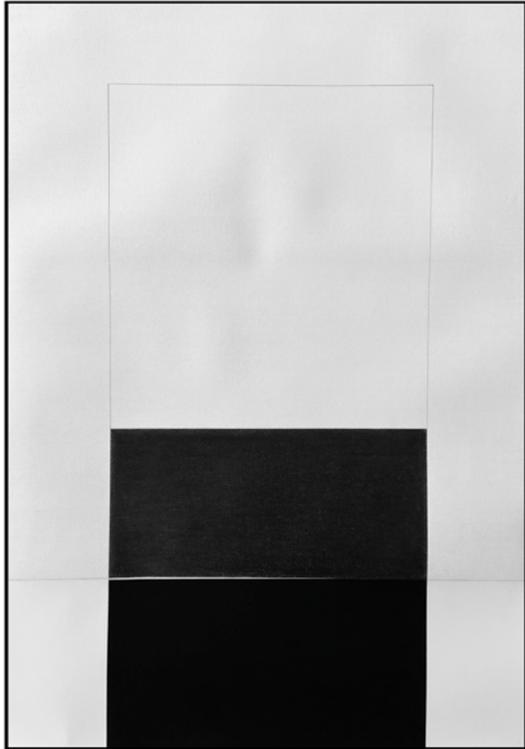
Vedana V
pencil on paper
110 cm x 85 cm
2020



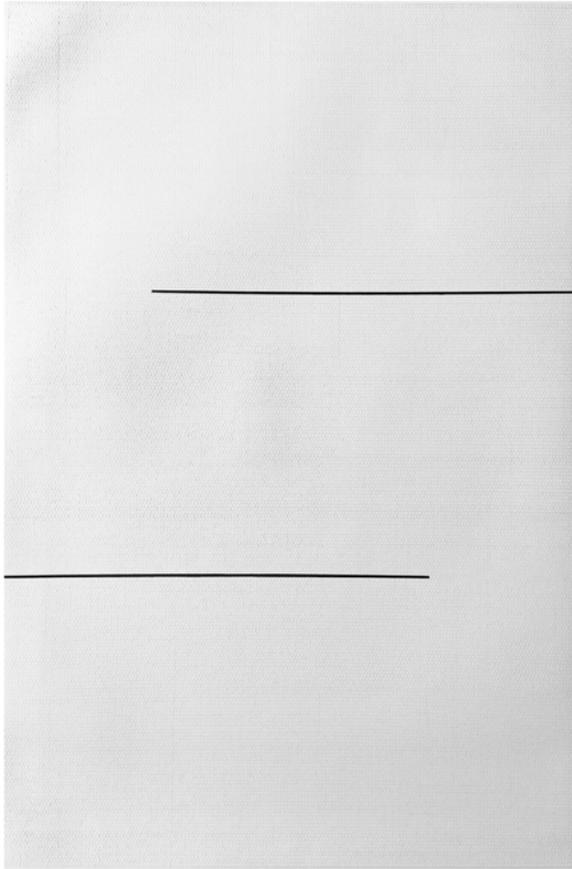
Vedana I
pencil on paper
110 cm x 85 cm
2020



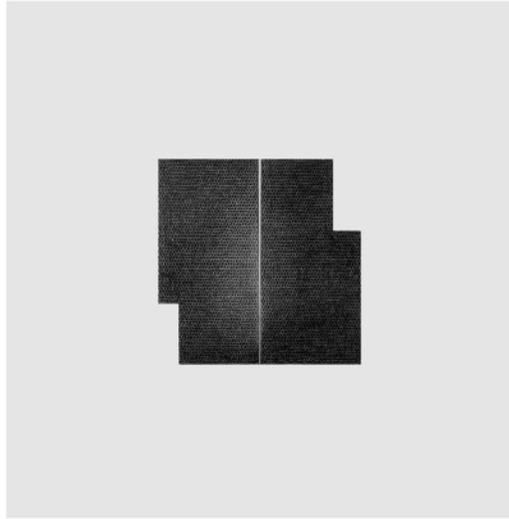
Vedana VII
pencil on paper
112.5 cm x 97.5 cm
2020



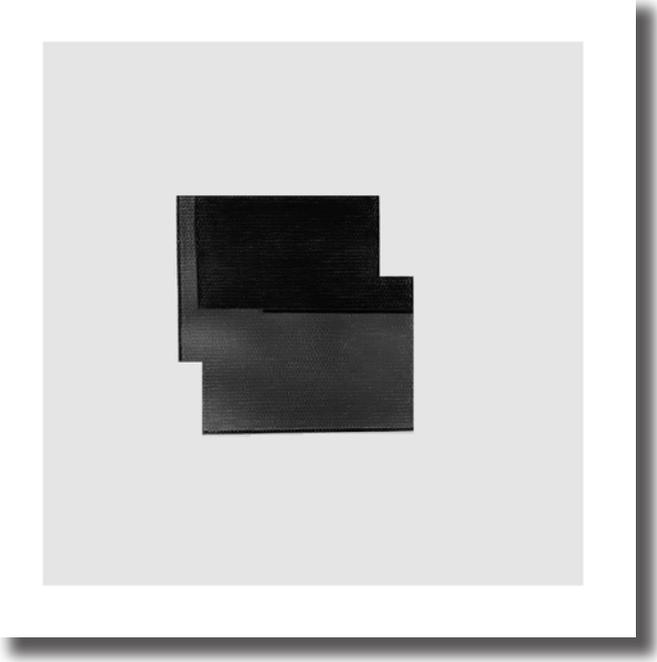
Vedana VIII
pencil on paper
112.5 cm x 97.5 cm
2020



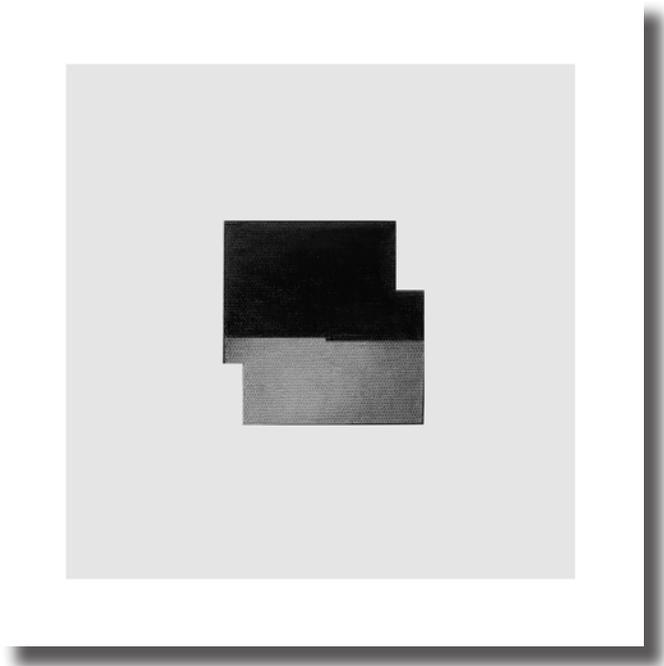
Vedana VI
pencil on paper
110 cm x 85 cm
2020



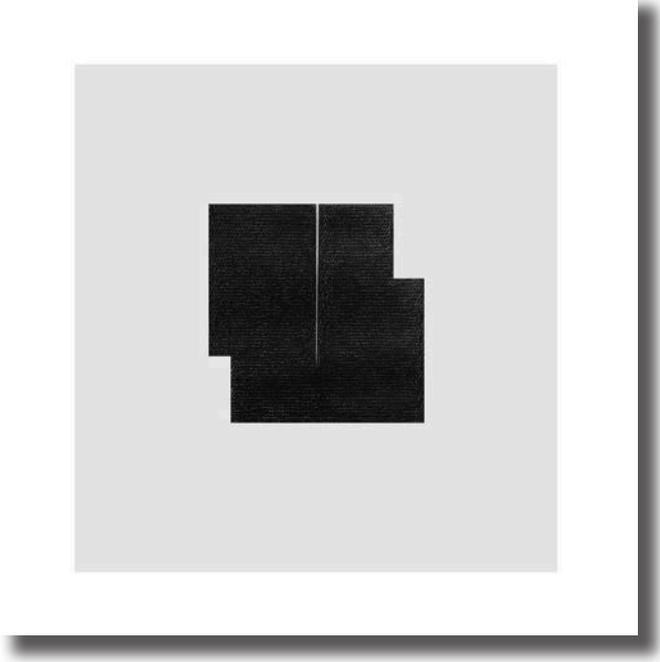
Vedana XVI
pencil on paper
52.5 cm x 52.5 cm
2020



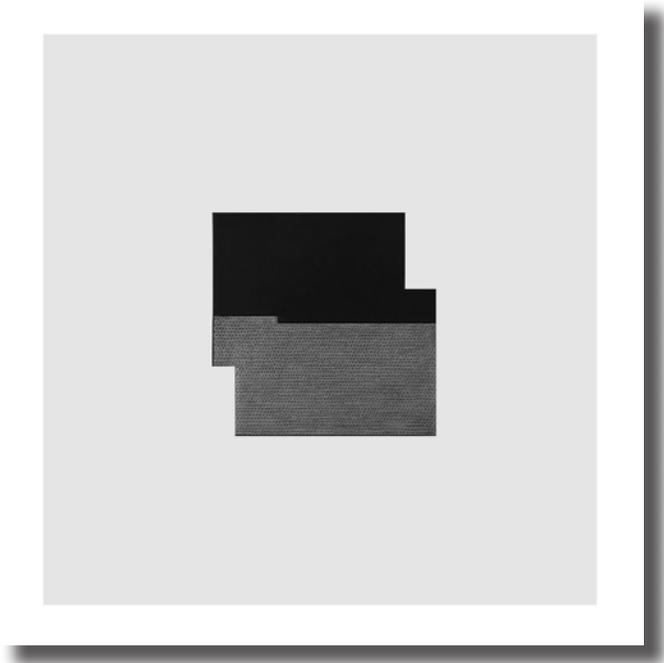
Vedana XII
pencil on paper
52.5 cm x 52.5 cm
2020



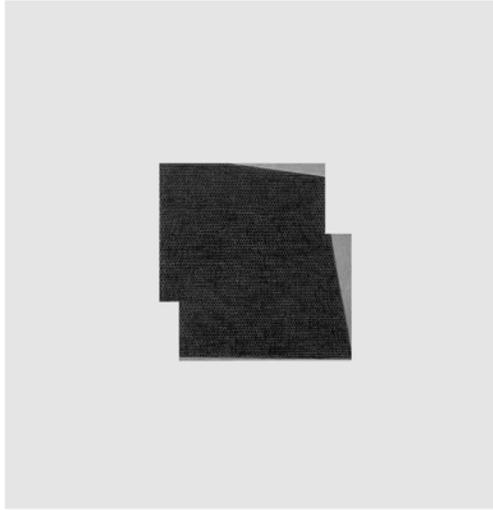
Vedana XIII
pencil on paper
52.5 cm x 52.5 cm
2020



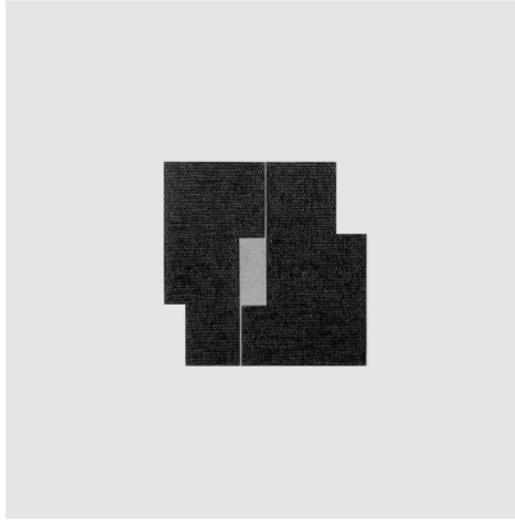
Vedana XV
pencil on paper
52.5 cm x 52.5 cm
2020



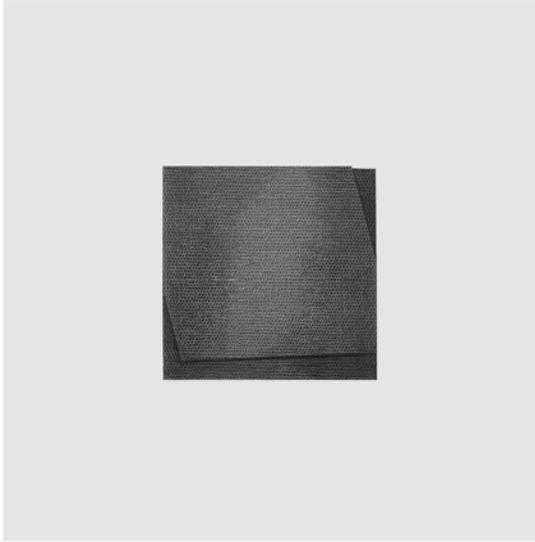
Vedana XIV
pencil on paper
52.5 cm x 52.5 cm
2020



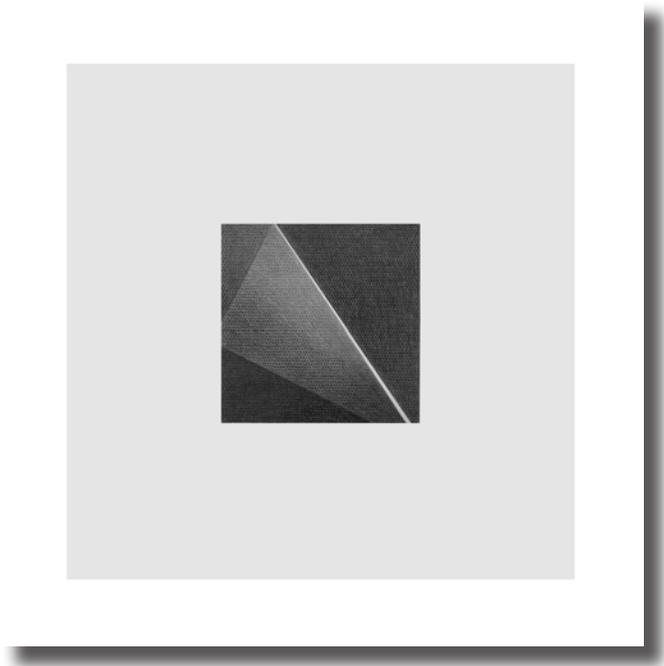
Vedana XVII
pencil on paper
52.5 cm x 52.5 cm
2020



Vedana XVIII
pencil on paper
52.5 cm x 52.5 cm
2020



Vedana XIX
pencil on paper
52.5 cm x 52.5 cm
2020



Vedana XX
pencil on paper
52.5 cm x 52.5 cm
2020

Artist Statement:

The subject of my work could be thought as a combination of contemplation of impermanence and an insight into the true nature of reality.

After years of experimentation and thought, I reversed my process by focussing on “the light in the dark”. In an attempt to create an abstract picture, I have no compositional goals. My initial drive is choice by chance, which strengthens a random attitude formed by a process of constant unpredictable desires in an ocean of mental tranquillity and to let the image or patterns come to me. The method of practice is very ordered but when I am composing, the work comes out by chance, following intuition. My works are characterized by the juxtaposition of drawing and photography, first being abstract and second being descriptive, manifesting my interest in exploring the power of images on paper and the possibilities of expression offered by different pictorial mediums. A wide range of pictorial references interact in my work: geometric Modernism, abstract expressionism, minimalism and supramatism. I allow myself to construct a more visceral language. Concentrating on simplicity where craft, skill and concept are symbiotic, the sole purpose is to unify abstraction with representation. Solace is found in the use of limited colour, preferring instead to exploit the paper, texture and mediums. Paper is not merely a surface, rather it becomes an independent medium itself. It is affectionate, light and flexible. It’s like a filter which looks through the objects, surroundings and endures the quiet decay of it. The abstractions are subtle, formula-less and have qualities of a multi-level composition producing sense of space and rigour.

The arrangements are schematic; inviting the viewer to move into a space of deep contemplation .It is a process of metamorphosis that begins when the soul awakens to its spiritual essence. I consider drawing as an important part of my oeuvre as I have found my expression in it. I appreciate it as it provides a unique view of looking into some of the most important human emotions like beauty, subtleness, hope and compassion. The reason for drawing each object is that this labour and time intensive process filters the objects so as to give the feeling of what I am going throughout my journey .The abstract language of form that I have chosen has become a way to explore an interior life of feeling. I wish to make an object that has powerful presence, but is at the same time inwardly turned, capable of intense self-absorption. Consequently the works are neither studies nor experiments in preparation for another artwork; instead, they represent experiences.

My practice is repetitive and the aesthetics reflect memory and reminiscence. The goal is to transcribe an aspect of reality and to create something meaningful in the studio in the hope that it inspires others, and also becomes useful to them, and myself, so that it creates a dialogue between us.

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