

Artist Statement

Earth by Color

“He it is who has created you out of clay, and then has decreed a term for you – a term known only to Him. And yet you doubt.”

Quran Surat ul-Anam, 6:2

The traditional understanding of ground is personified as a sacred entity, where all creativity is born and nourished by the heavens above. Life is channeled through roots to facilitate its coalescing cycle. The mysteries of creation begin to reveal themselves when we are connected with the ground. To be aware of this unfolding is to be alive to an inner consciousness that we are all earth/soil(human/humus).

The current environmental and spiritual crisis around the world has been created by a sustained preoccupation with mechanistic and dualistic ways of thinking, with complete apathy to the natural world. And so, we are no longer grounded, instead detached from the fabric of our own being, and its origins.

Art is an immersive activity and like a prayer it engages the head, hand and heart. Contained within an oval boundary, my body of work explores the miraculous, the spiritual, the geological and ecological dimensions of earth/clay/dust.

The surface or ground in my work, be it canvas, paper or wood are all receptacles of this principle. My paintings allow me to access this space, which is made visible through an intimate engagement and connection with sacred symbols, the natural world, and its expressions.

I use a spectrum of natural hand-ground pigments extracted from rocks to illuminate the earth as a living, breathing, sentient being. The wet clay plates formed by hand in the studio dry quickly, creating their own unique marks, forming new pathways, shapes and boundaries. Some of the paintings have evolved from cracked earth markings. Similarly, in nature, earth draws its own lines and soon water, vegetation, and other forms of life, seamlessly find their place.

Earth (mitti) as in paint has many capacities, as it can be expressive. It can swell, shrink, harden, dry, take form and color to name a few. With moisture it is malleable and active, constantly evolving and changing states. Markings within rocks, riverbeds and mountains all mimic the vascular patterns within the bodies of all living creatures. The Quran repeatedly mentions that the signs (ayats) are visible everywhere.

“Soon we shall show them our signs in the horizon and their own selves until it is clear to them that this Quran is the truth.”

Quran, Surat ul- Rum 30:30

Each piece engages with ancient primordial wisdom which celebrates its location as the meeting point between the celestial and the subterranean. Mitti, means the earth; dust, clay or ground. This magical, mineral enriched matter serves as a vessel for life itself.