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Remembering loved ones through art

Meghna Mukherjee, TNN | Aug 17, 2012, 12:00AM IST

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Remembering loved ones through art

In her Mumbai debut, Hyderabad based painter [Siji R Krishnan](#) explores the loss of a loved one.

In the new age world of [photography](#) and instant image making, how do you record the passage of time or the loss of a loved one? Based on the life of [Siji R Krishnan](#), her paintings are a liberating exploration of the memories of her father who passed away in 2008. The dark, delicate paintings depict the beautiful relationship shared between a father and a daughter captured in the series named o

+ o = o (My father's mathematics). The title refers to her father's occupation — he was an accountant in a [bank](#). The [artist](#) has used zero to [allude](#) to the entries she found in her mother's diary where each day was marked with the number o accompanied by the word 'empty'.

Says [Krishnan](#), "After the death of my father, I started a series of paintings which served as a palette for me to draw out the love I have for my father." The series of frames, with images of a father lying on a cot and playing with his infant daughter evokes the vulnerability of all image forms that exist in the deepest layers of our experiential memory. [Krishnan's](#) paintings are rich with the texture of the surface that she meticulously prepares with smooth over layering of fine rice paper on canvas.

The paper lends an organic quality to the painting that is reminiscent of the brittle quality of dry leaves, and the tautness of stretched hide on a mridangam (classical double sided drum of South India). The surface lends a sensation of sound that seems to emanate unknowingly from the dark empty rooms or from still water bodies. This surface is then layered with gentle tones of pale water colours. Slowly, as the image assumes intensity, darker layers are added and sometimes scrubbed in, to create the undulations on paper, almost like a wrinkled skin. The surface arrests the dark interiority of incubatory spaces. This process of modelling with paint is so frail, that it blends and seals into one single surface of cloth paper, as a membrane reverberating with a lot that has been firmly secured in it.

o + o = o (my father's mathematics) is on view till September 29, 11 am – 7 pm, at Galerie [Mirchandani + Steinruecke](#), 2 Sunny House, 16/18 Mereweather Rd, Colaba.

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