

Shiva's might surges through the vein of the artist.

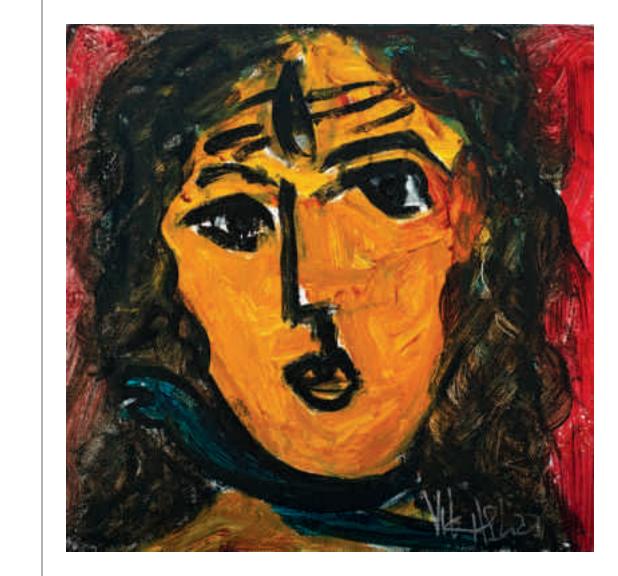
Vikash Kalra sets out to visually display the muse he has become to Shiva where the artist toys with the richness of his imagined realities and the metaphysical world.

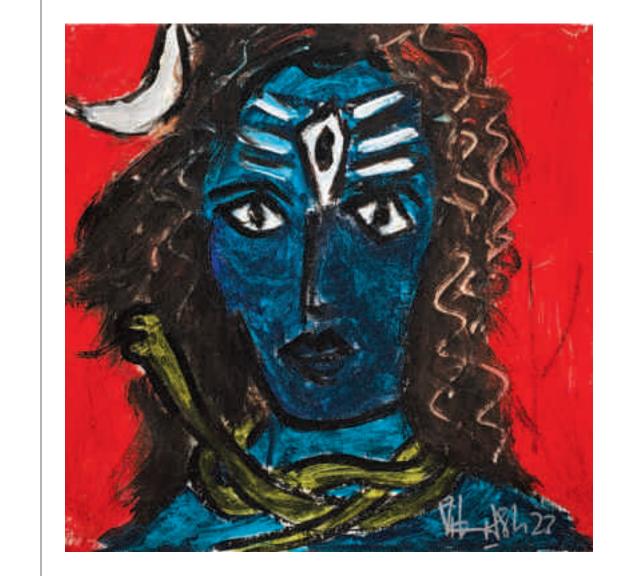
This exhibit is an exposé of Shiva's missives to the artist and to his art.

— Dr Satarupa Bhattacharya



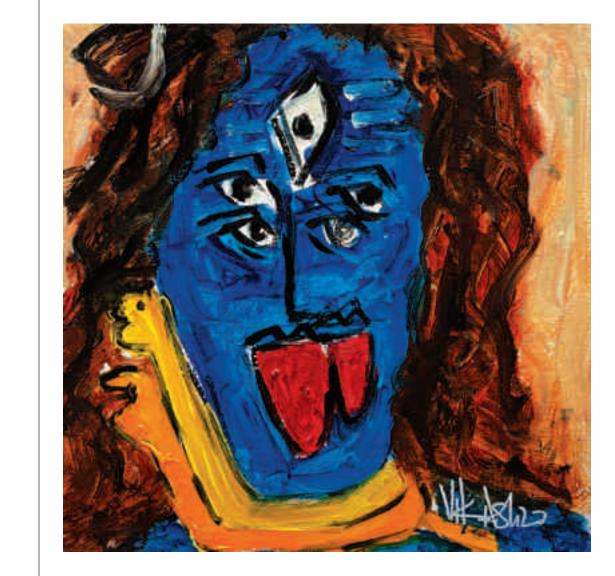
Series of 216 Paintings Shiva / 12 x 12 in each / Acrylic on Canvas / 2023

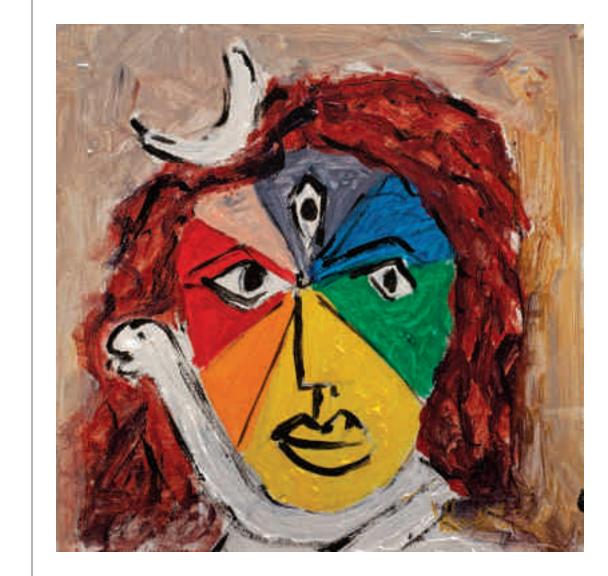


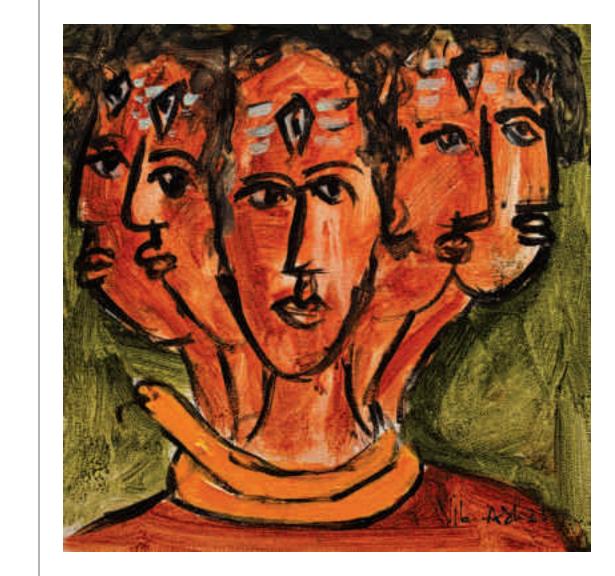


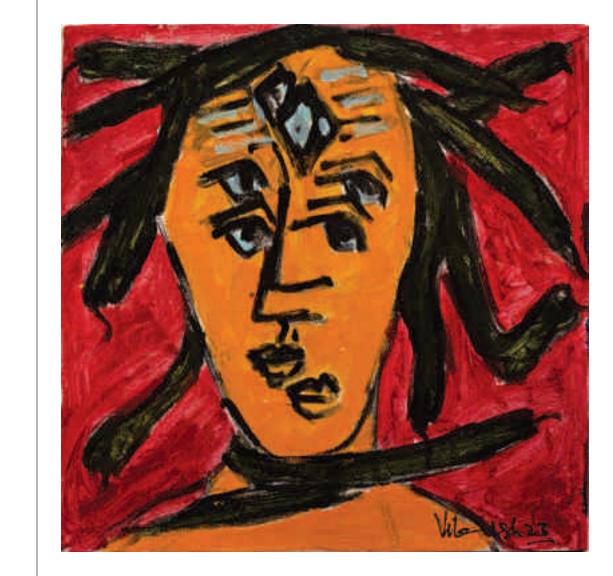


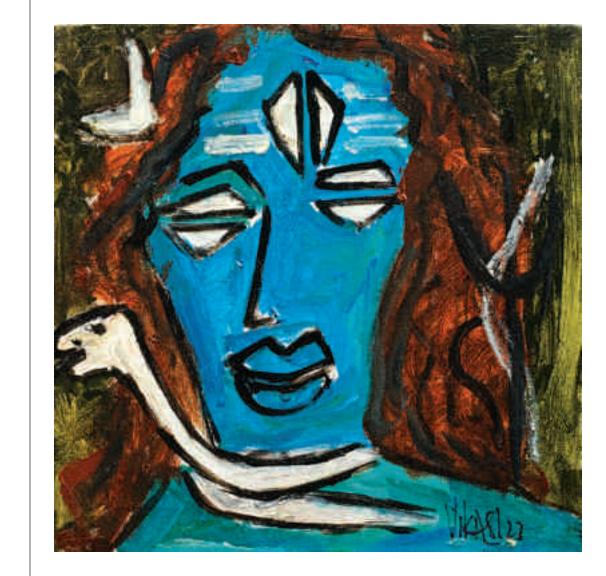




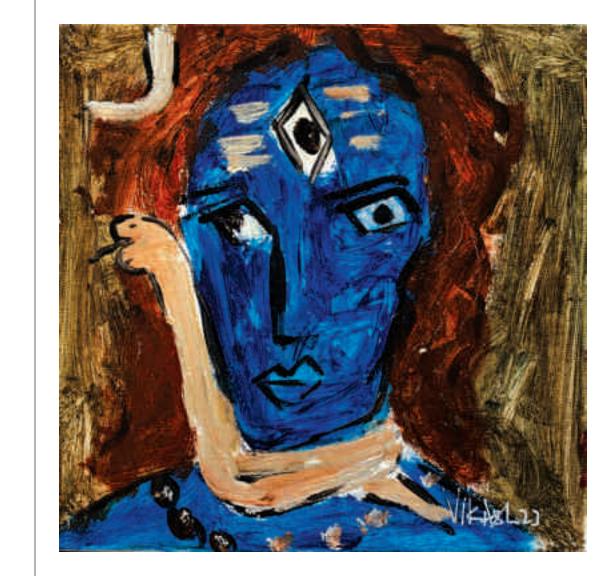


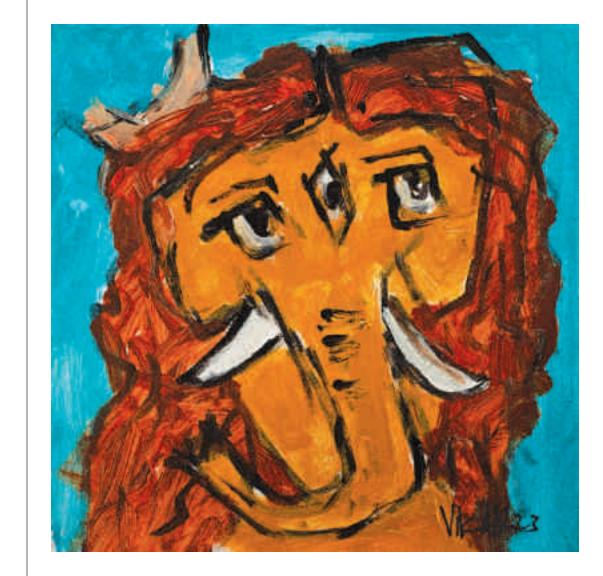








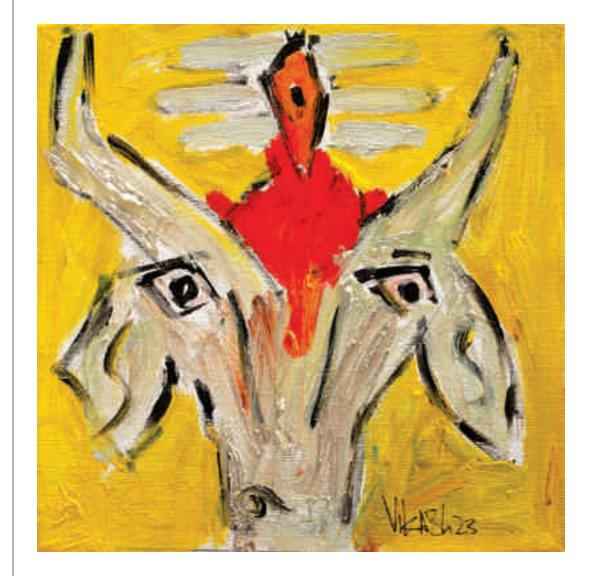




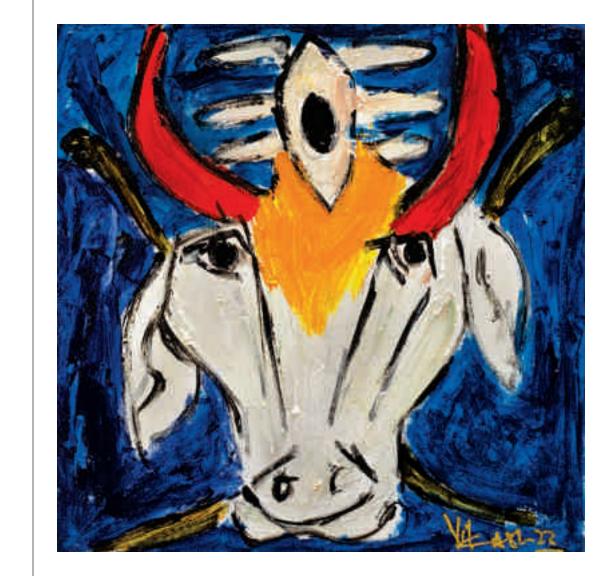




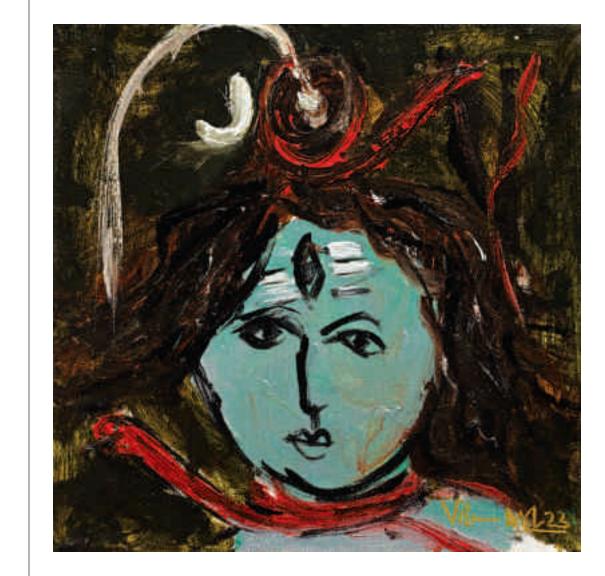






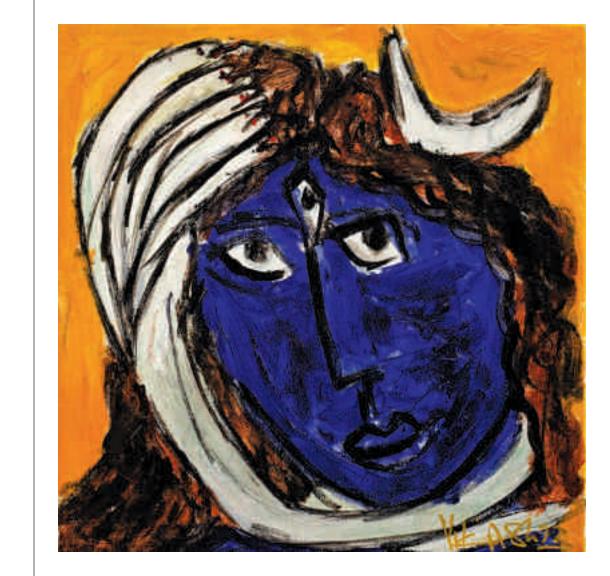


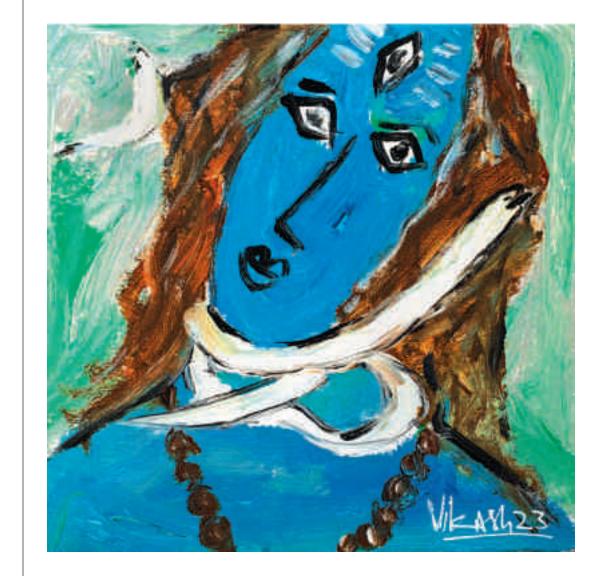




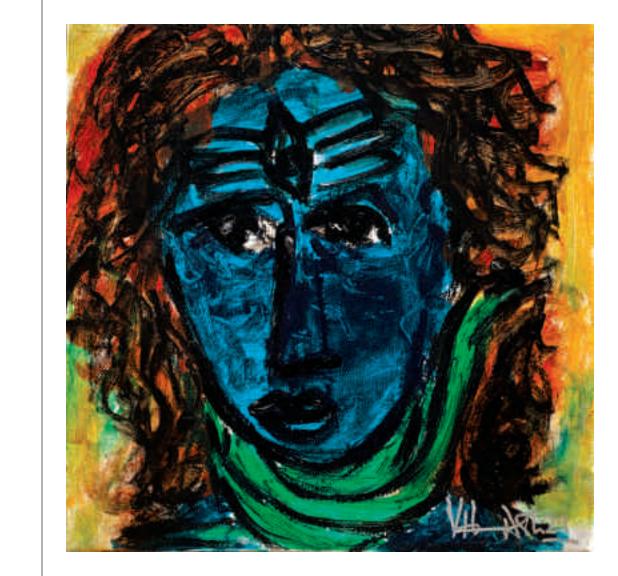




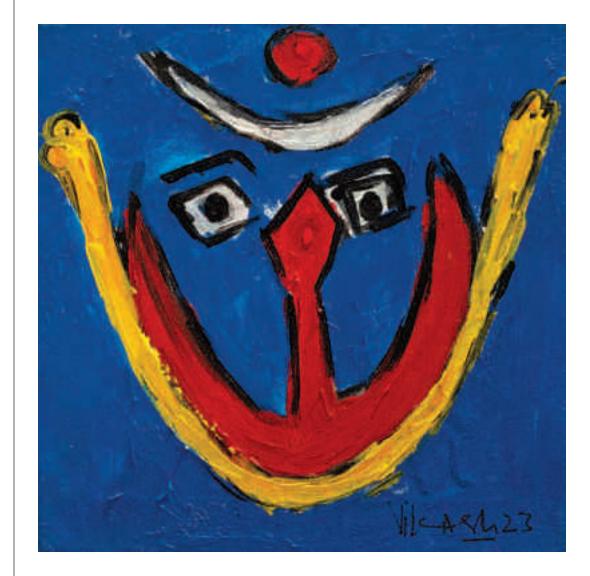


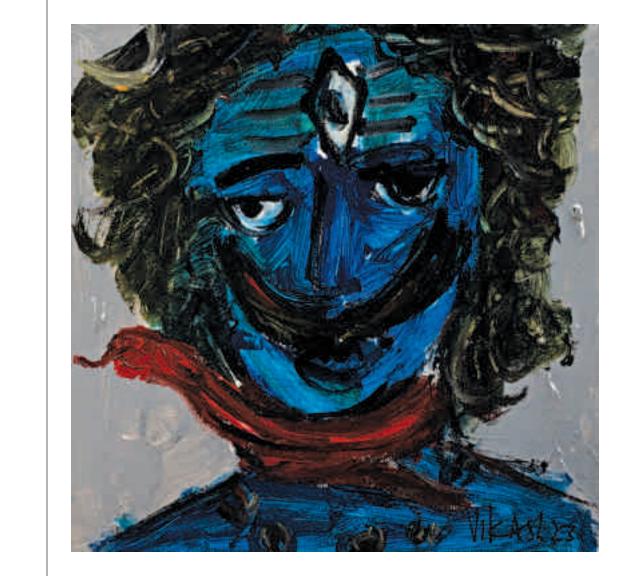


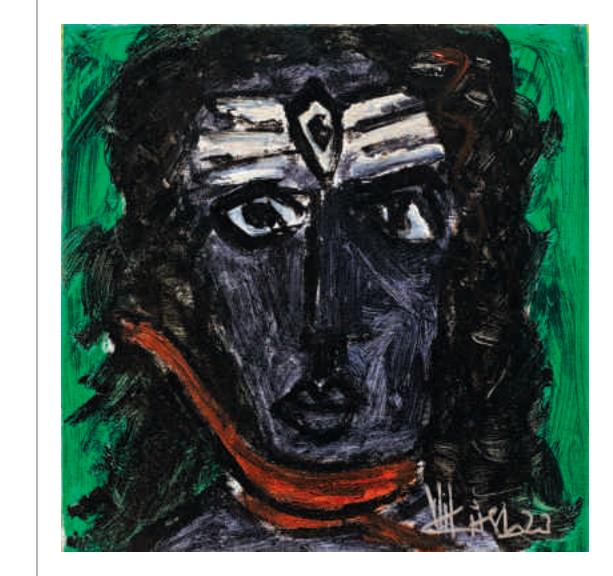




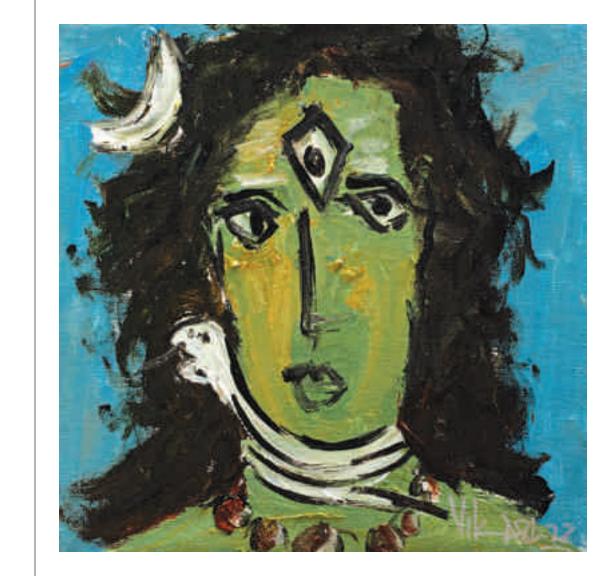


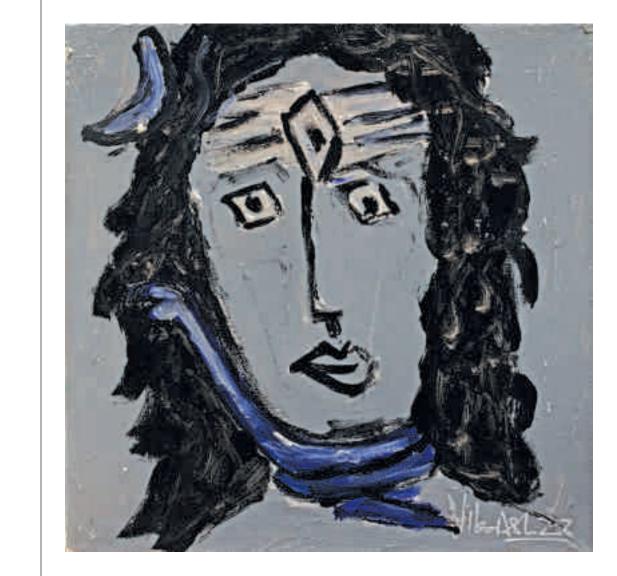


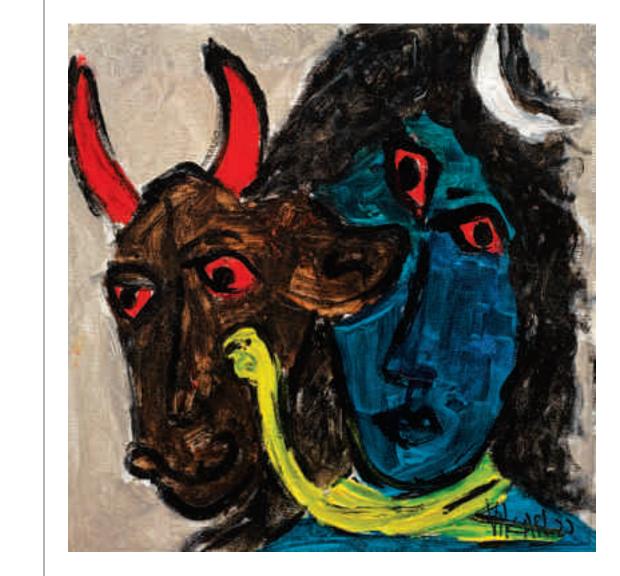




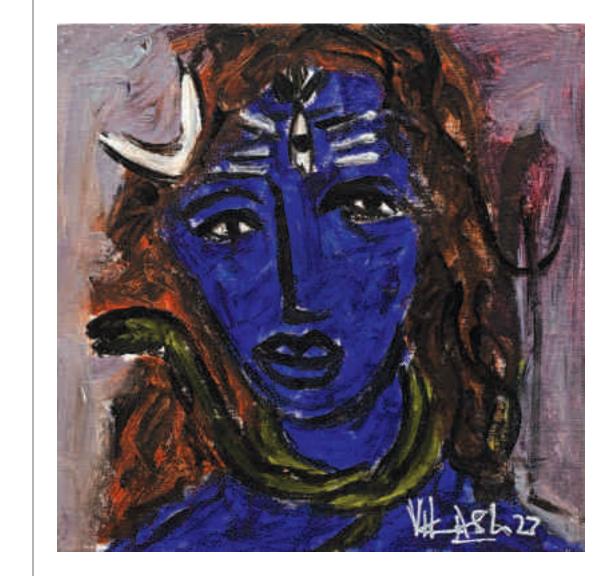


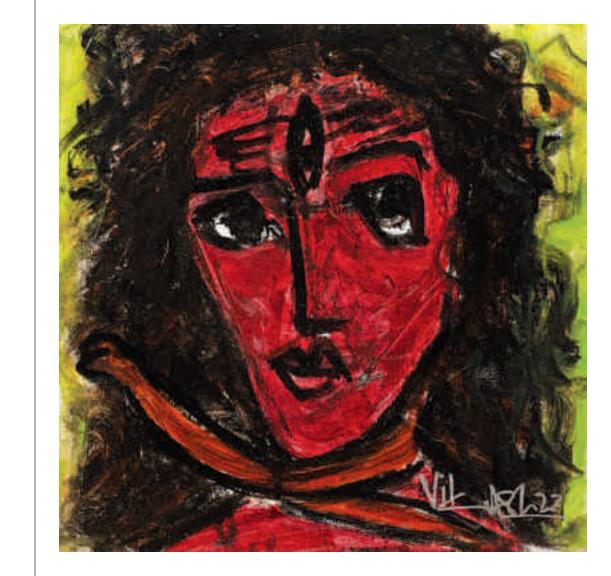




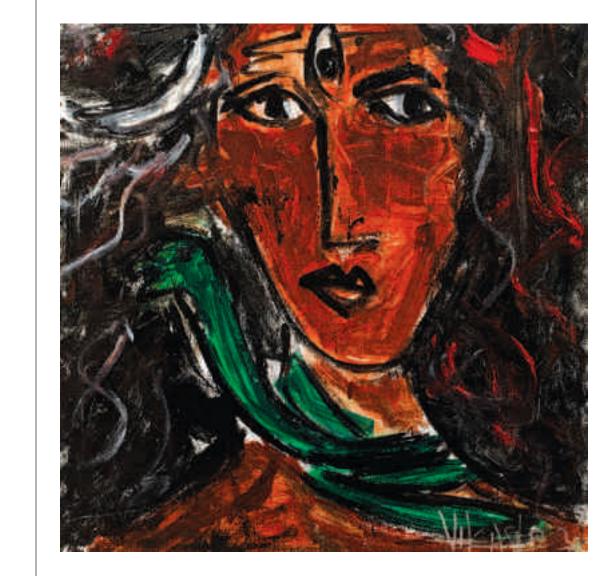


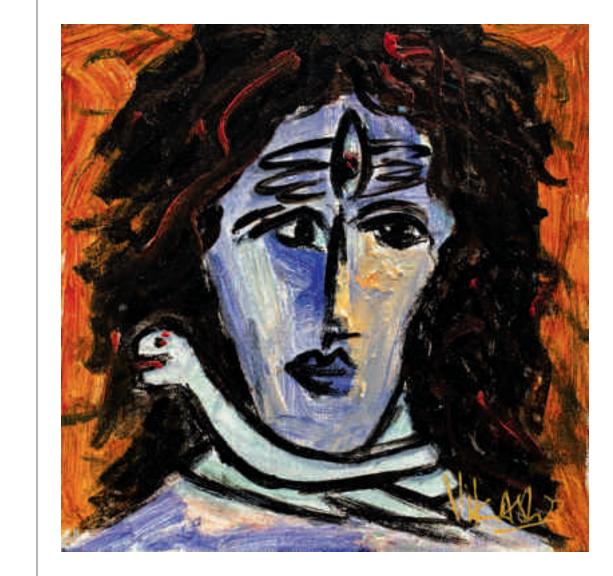


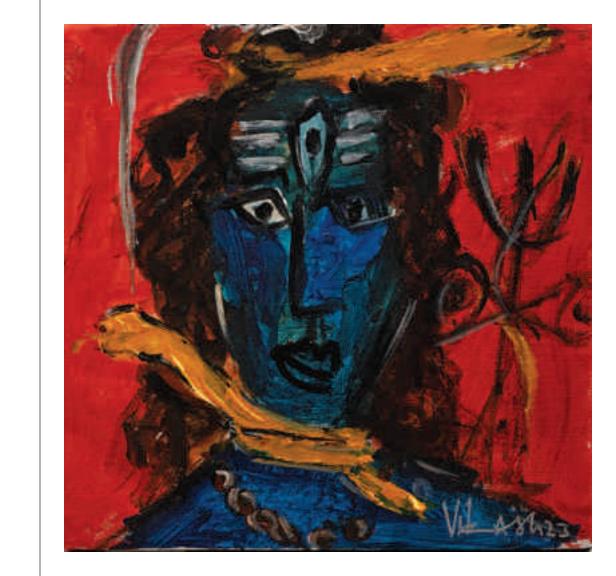


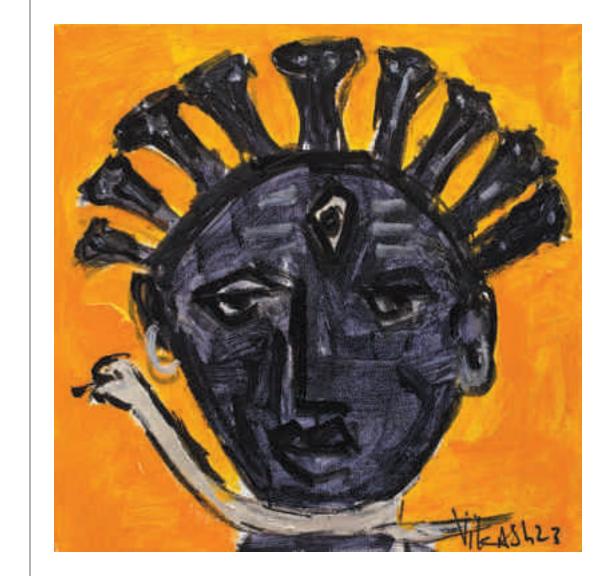


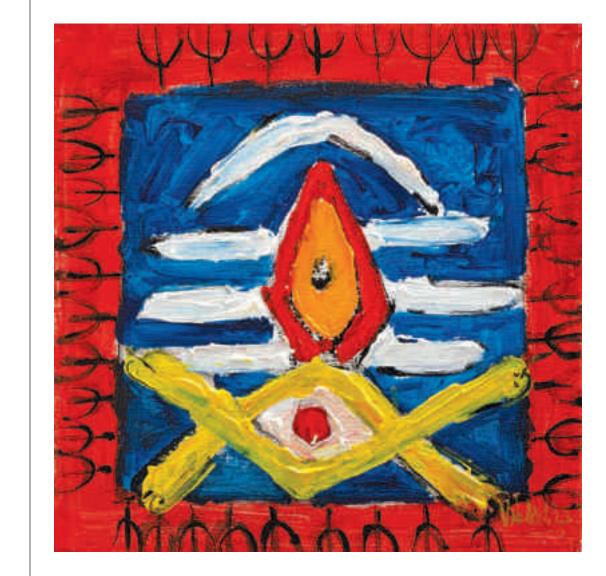








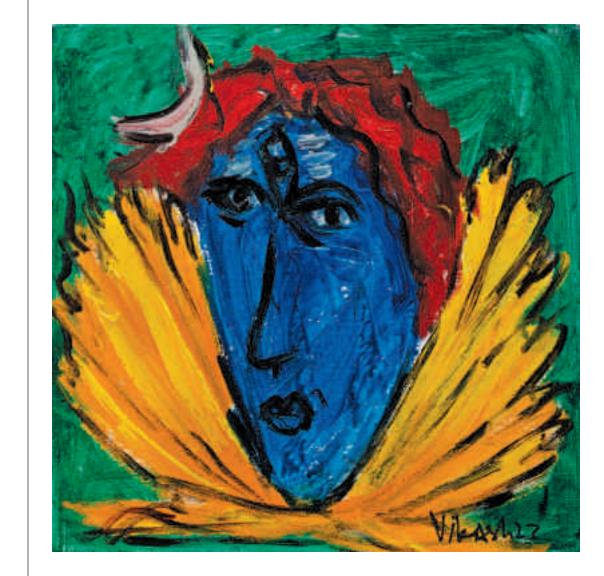


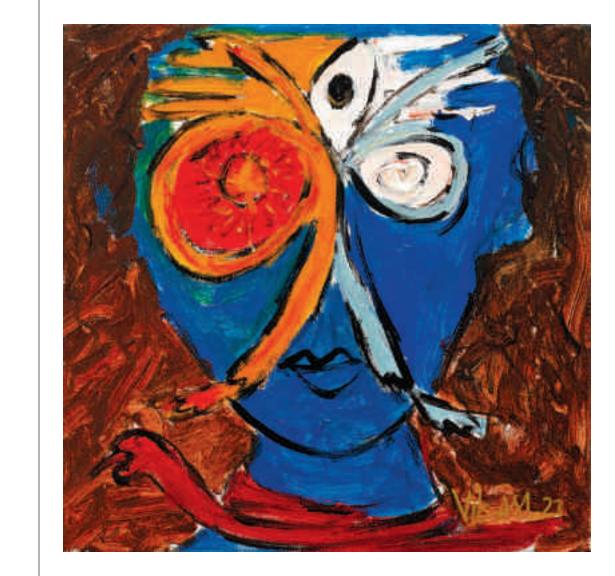




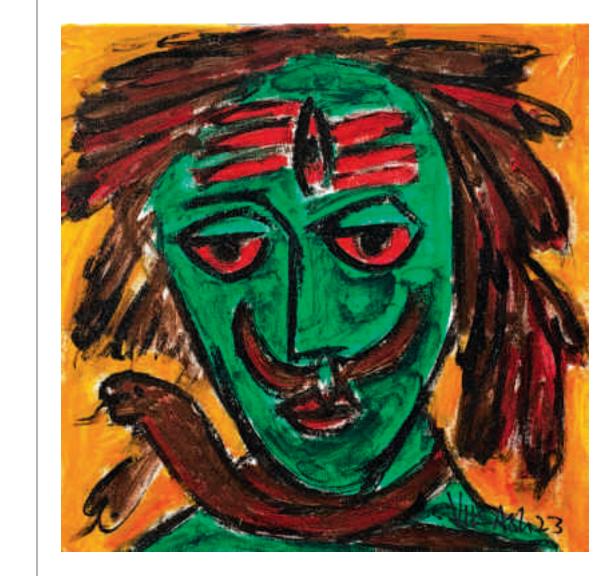




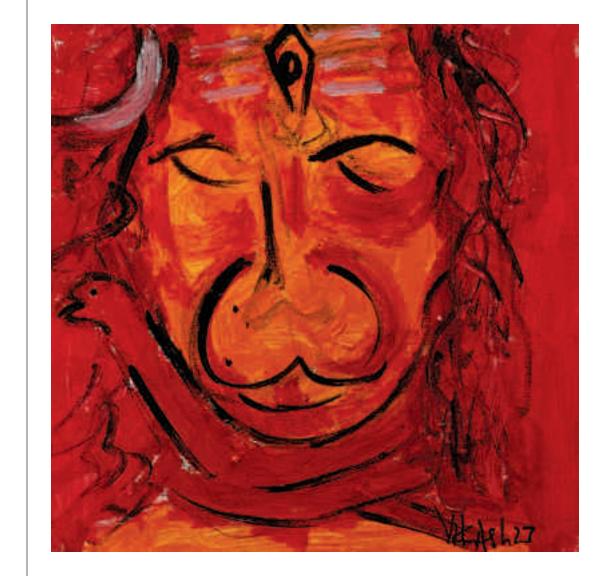


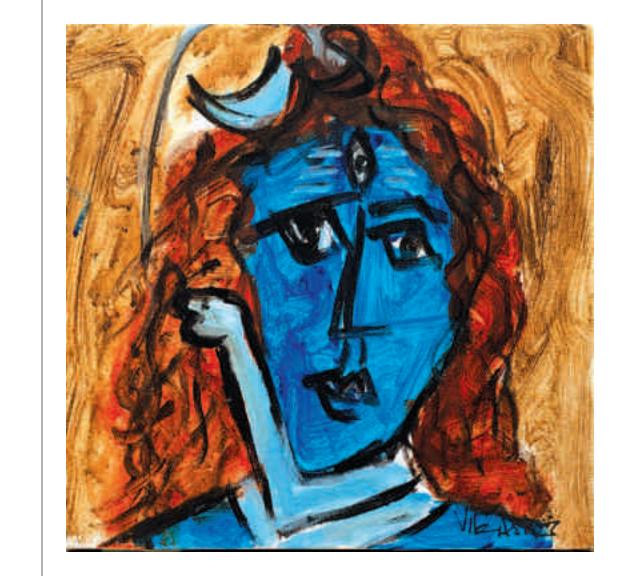




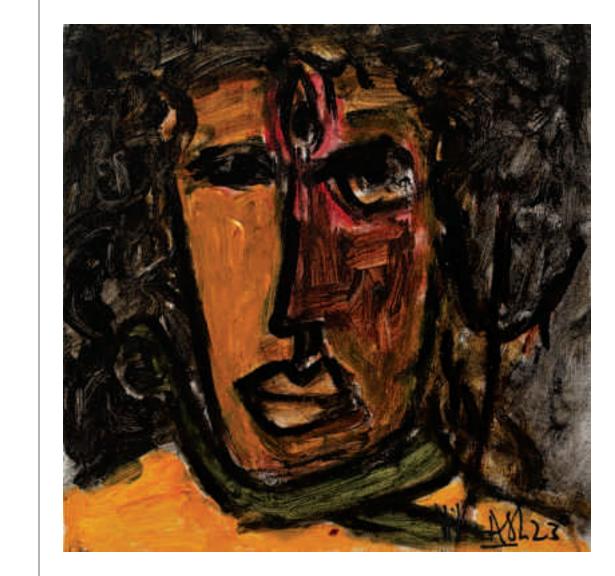




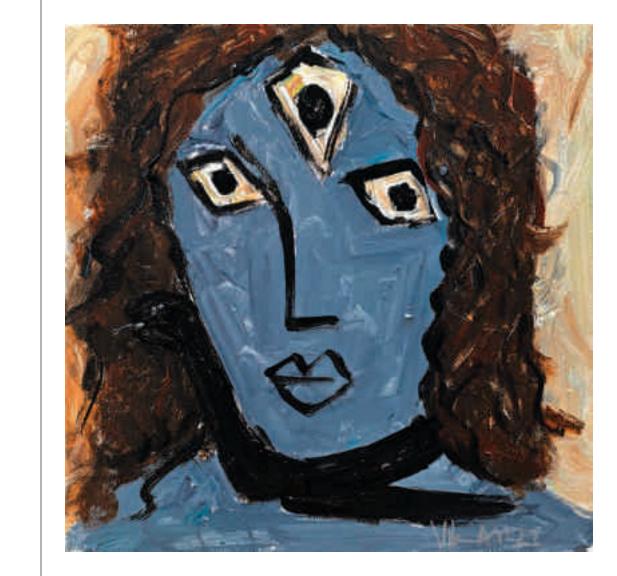


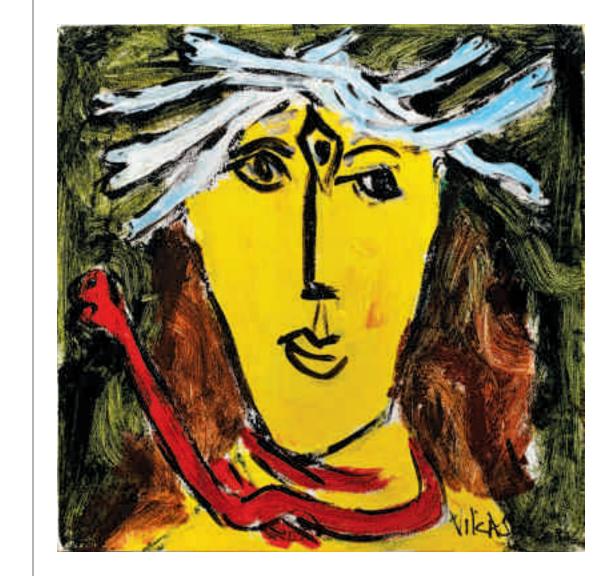




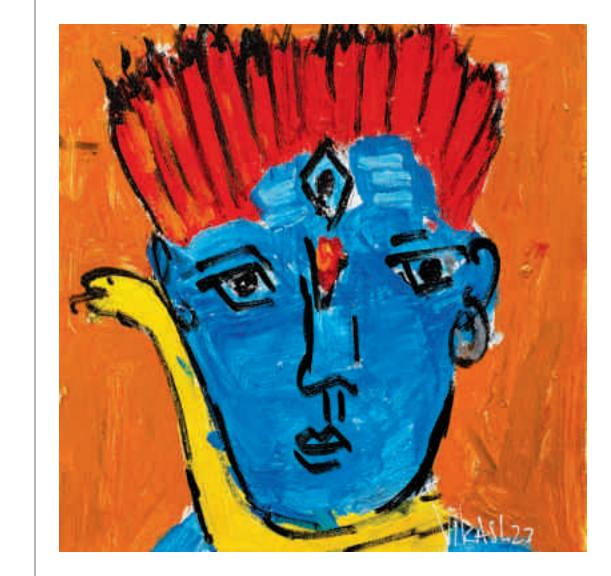


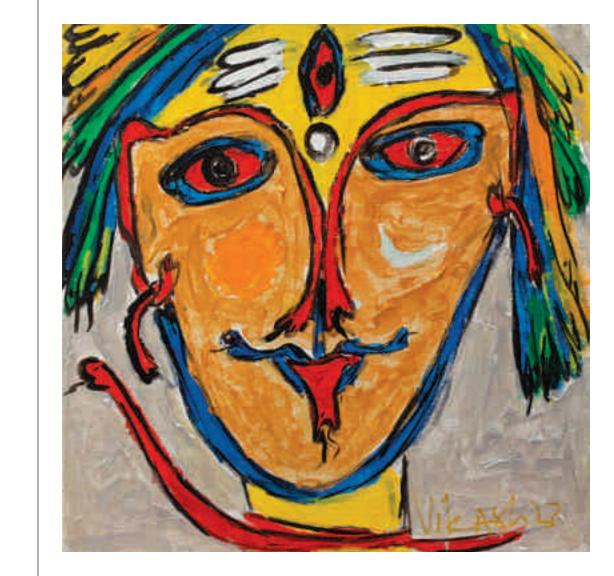


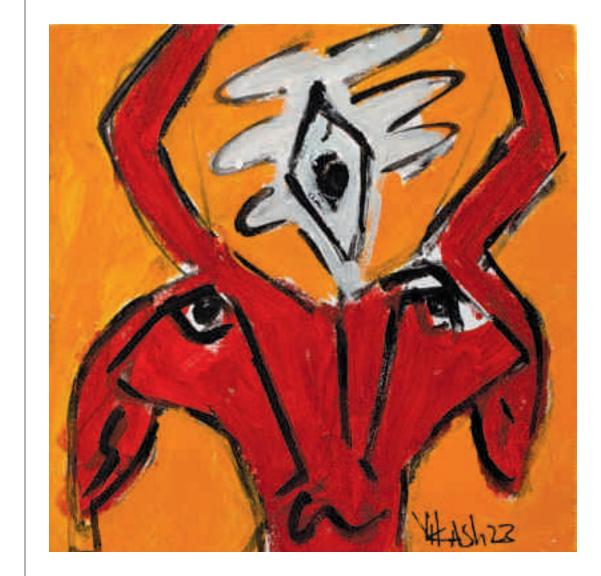


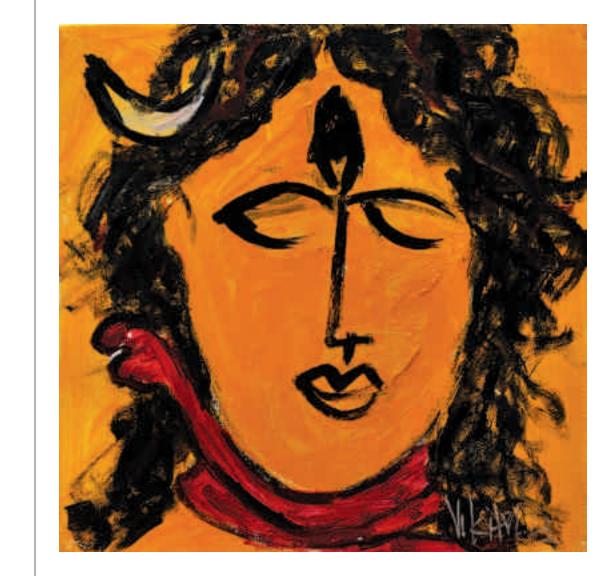


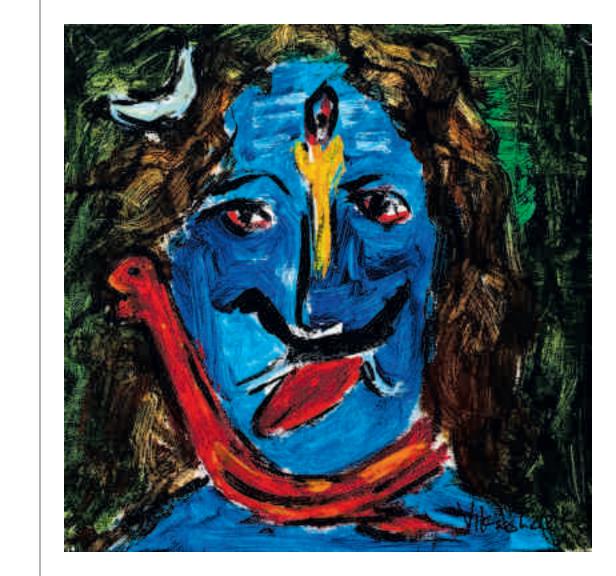


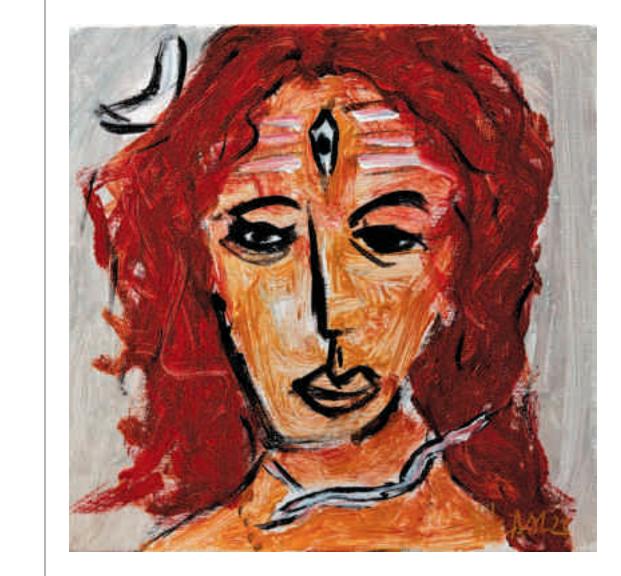




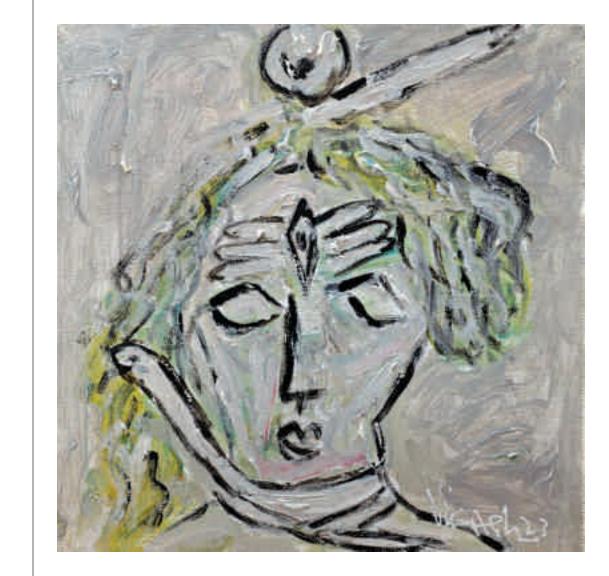


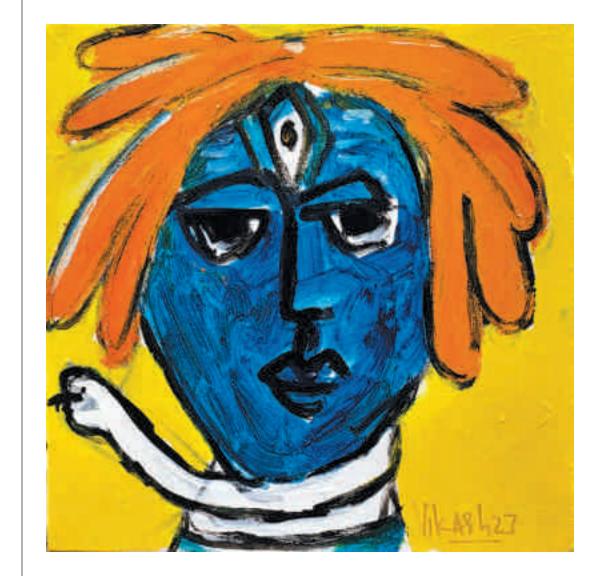


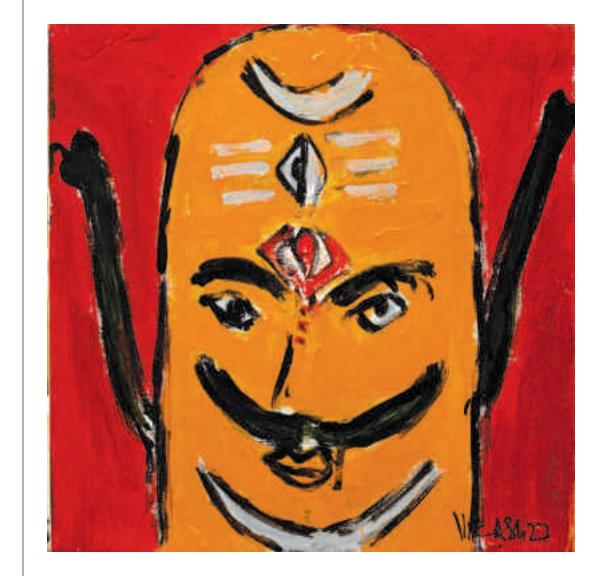


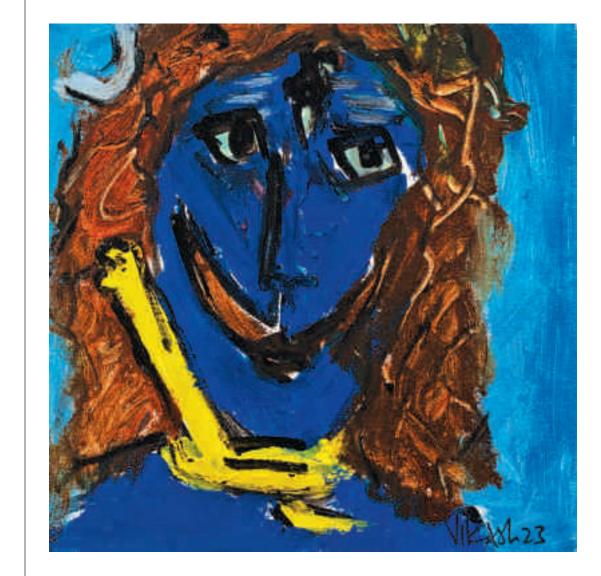


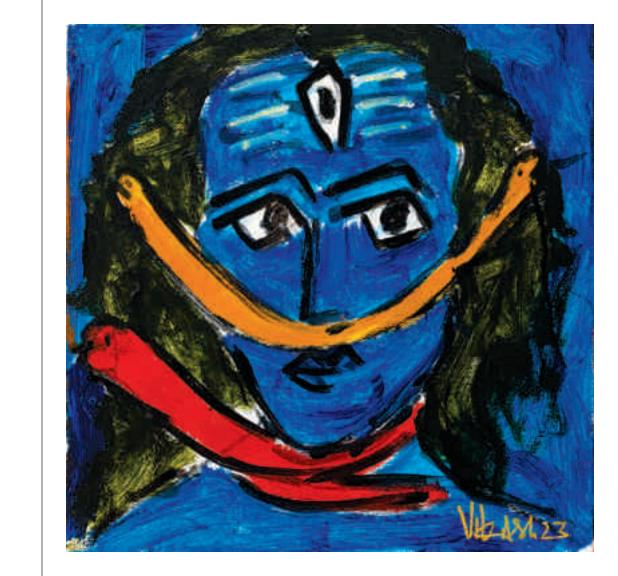




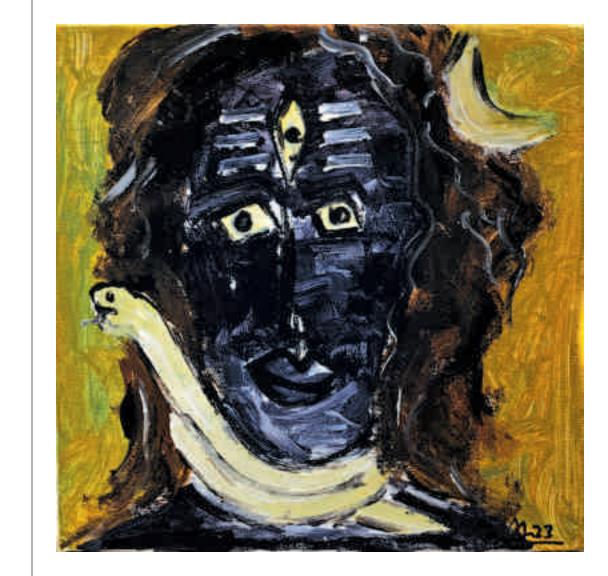




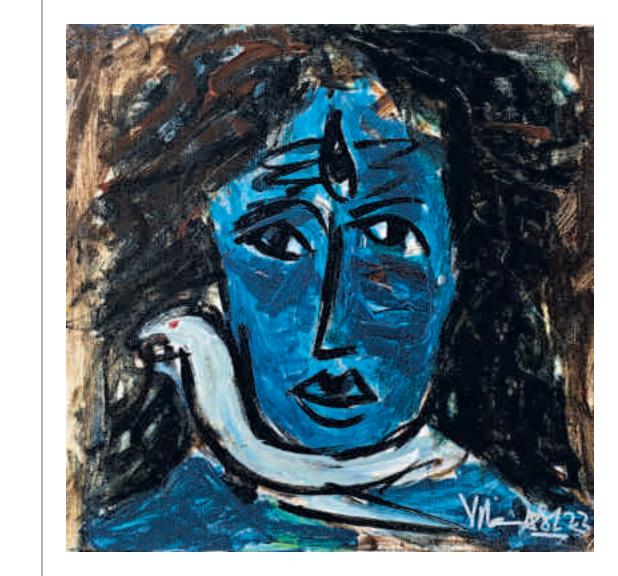




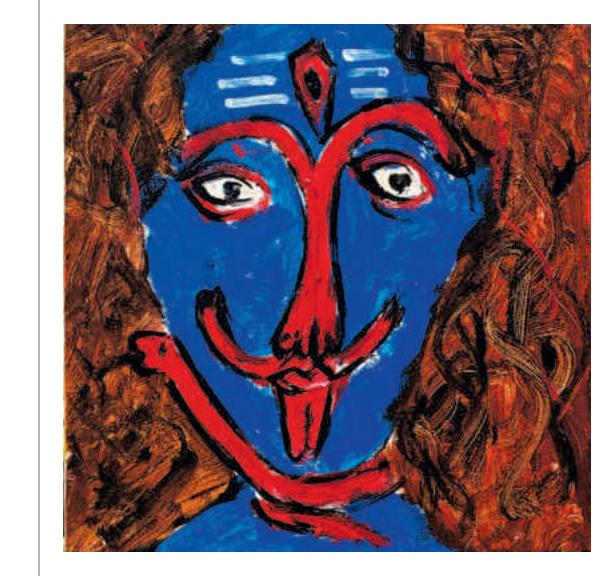


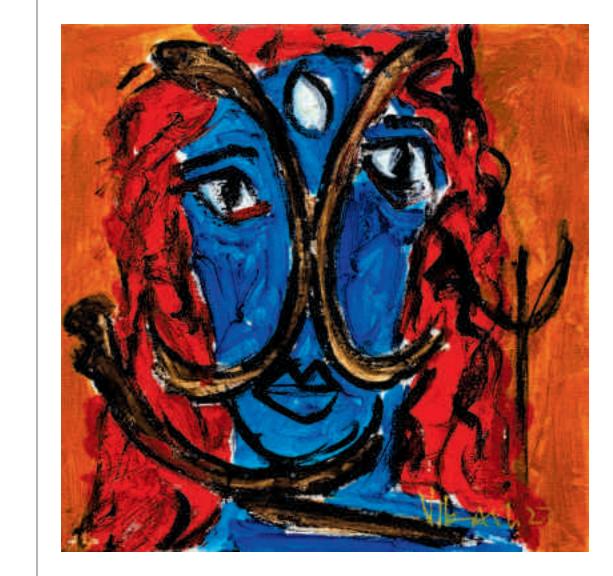


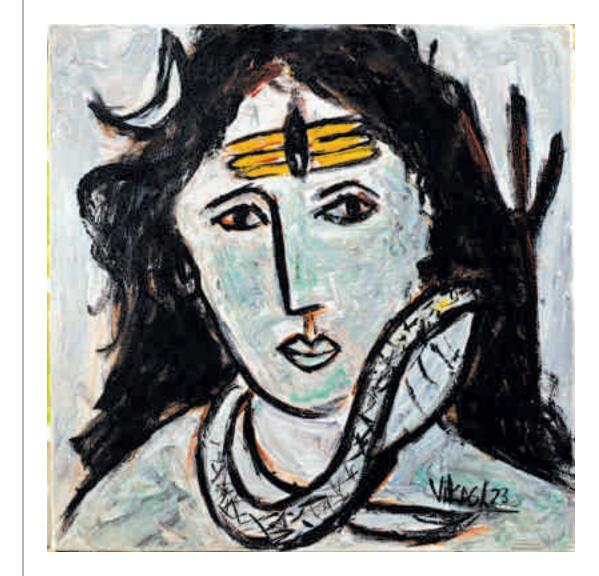


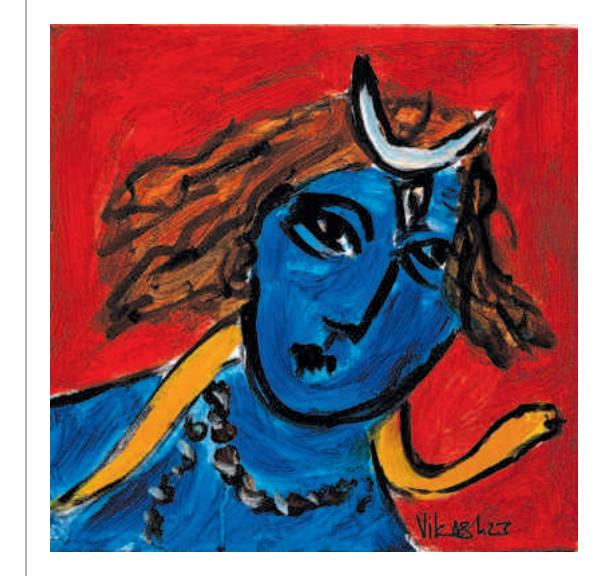


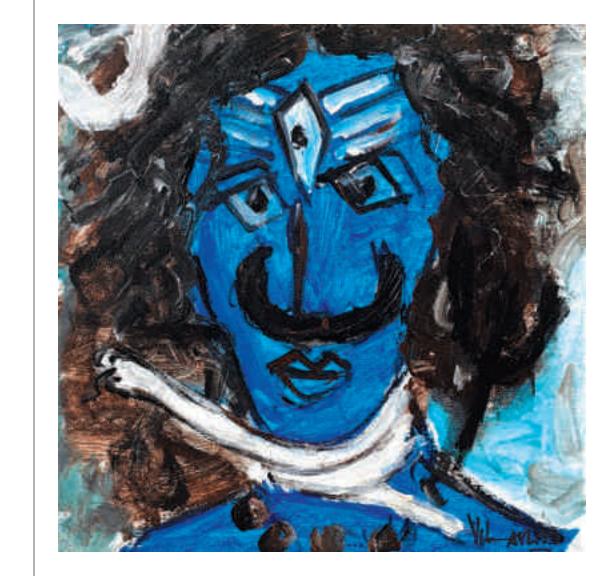




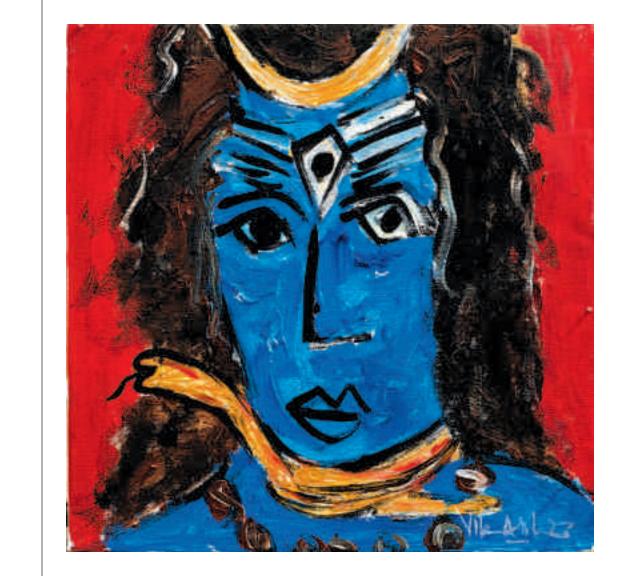


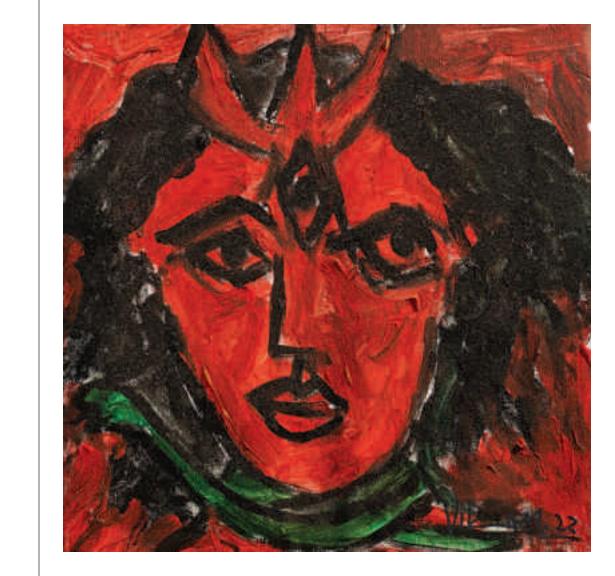


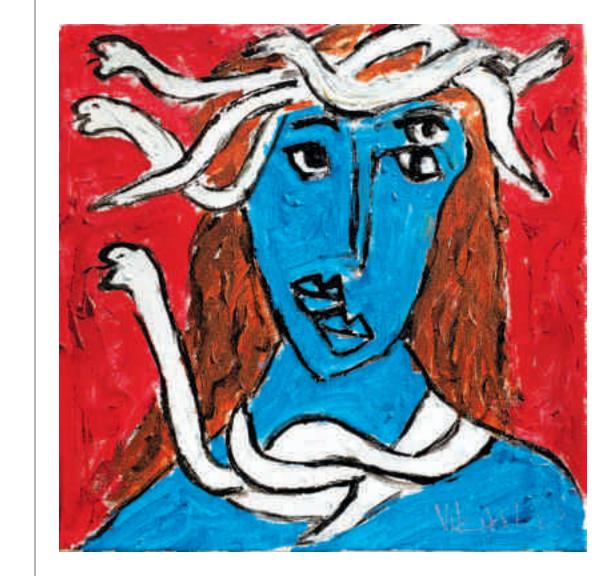


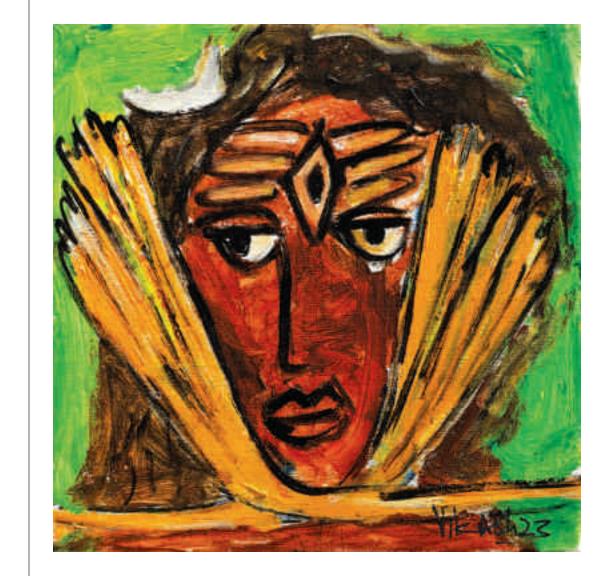




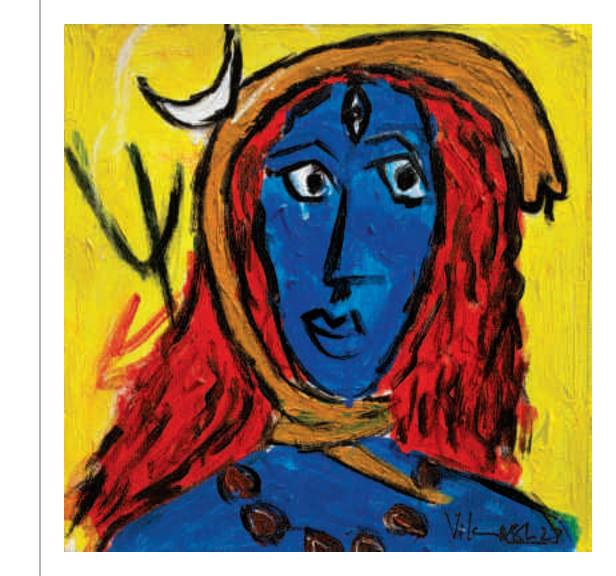


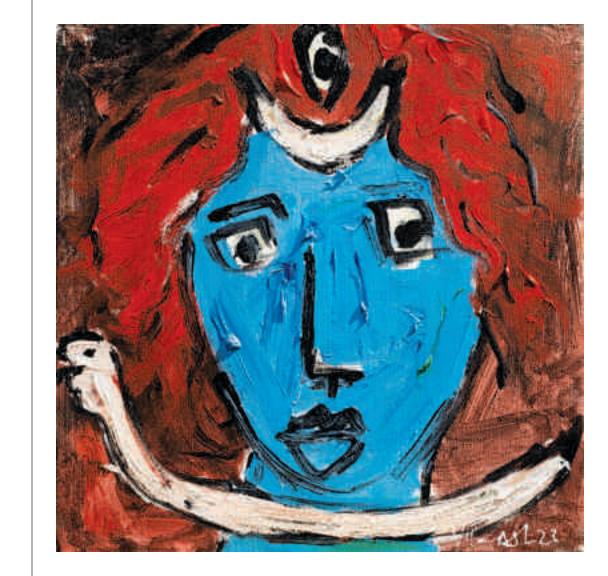


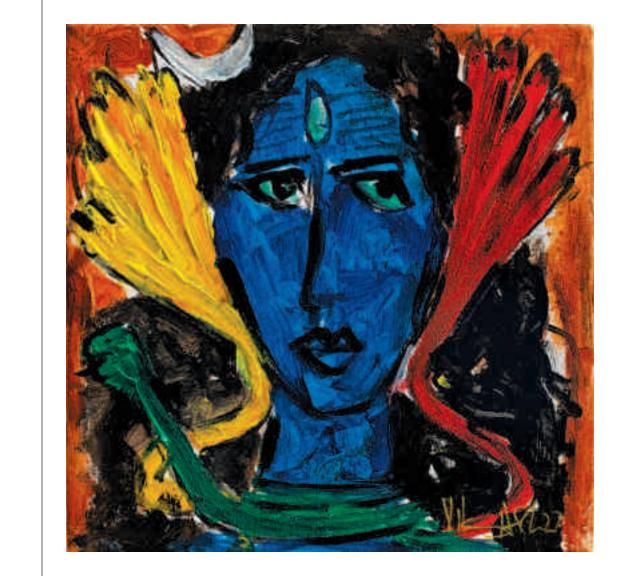


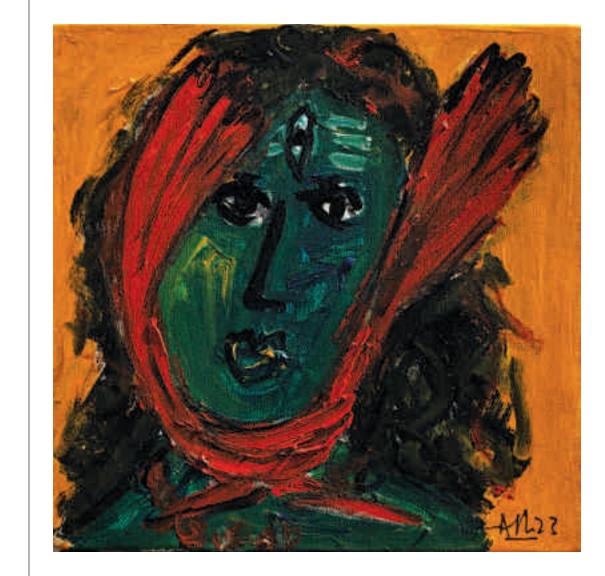






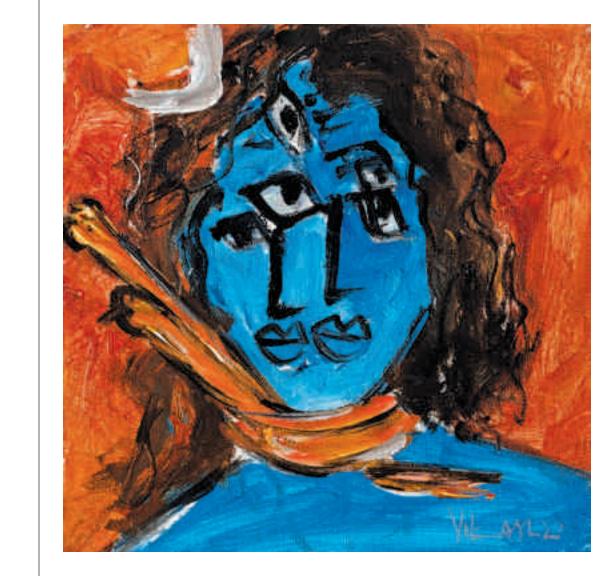






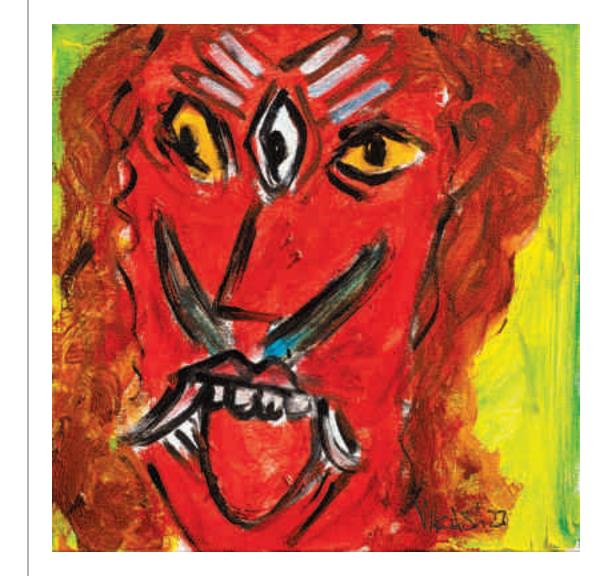


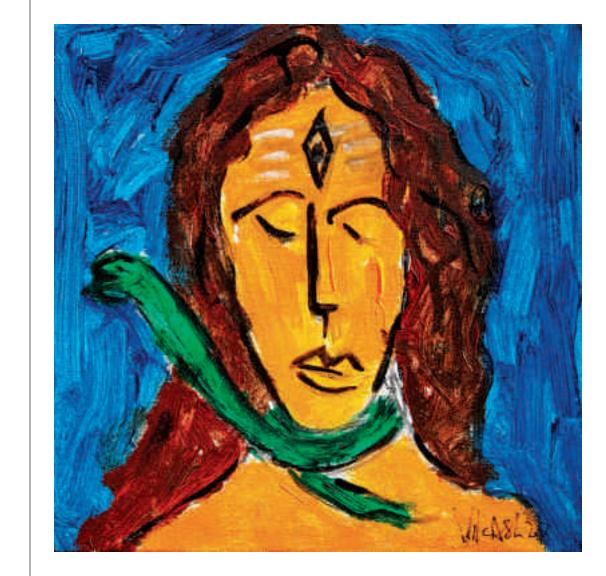


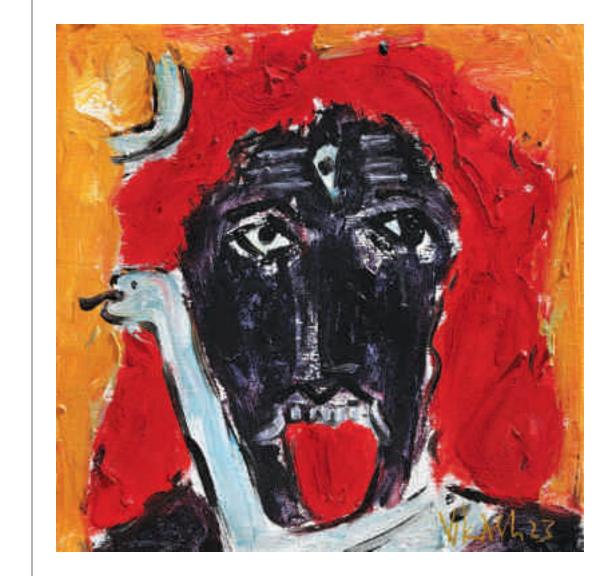


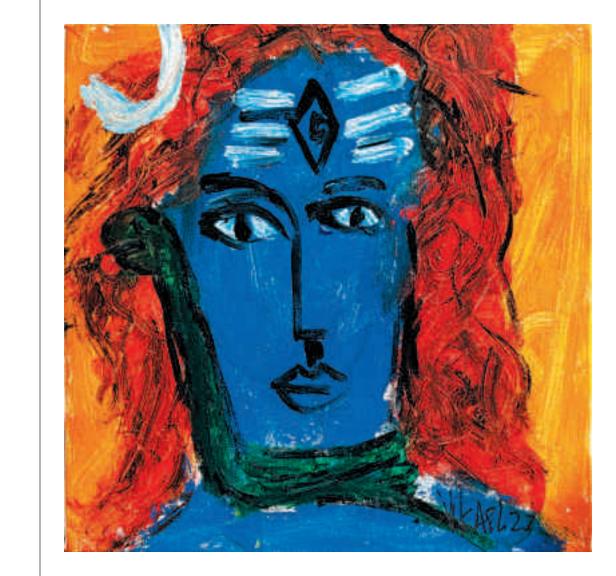


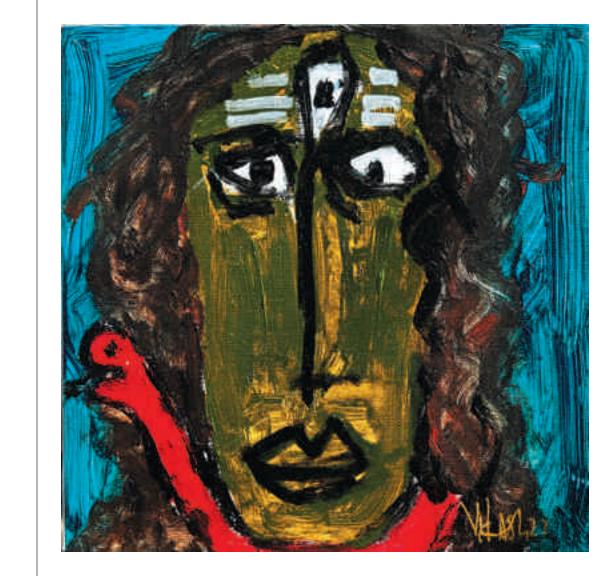


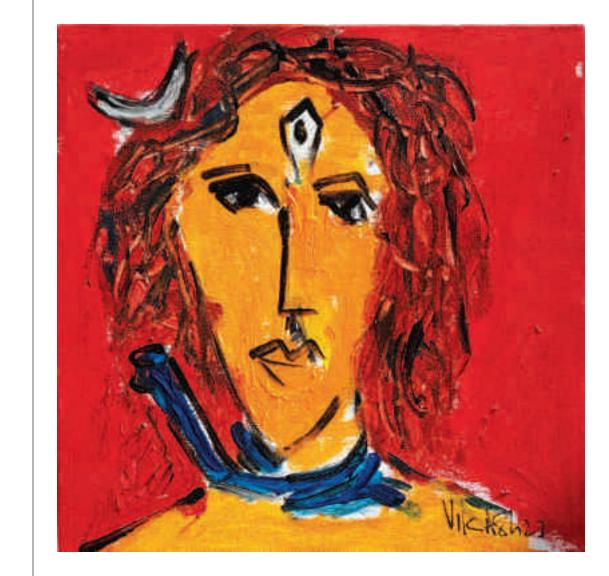




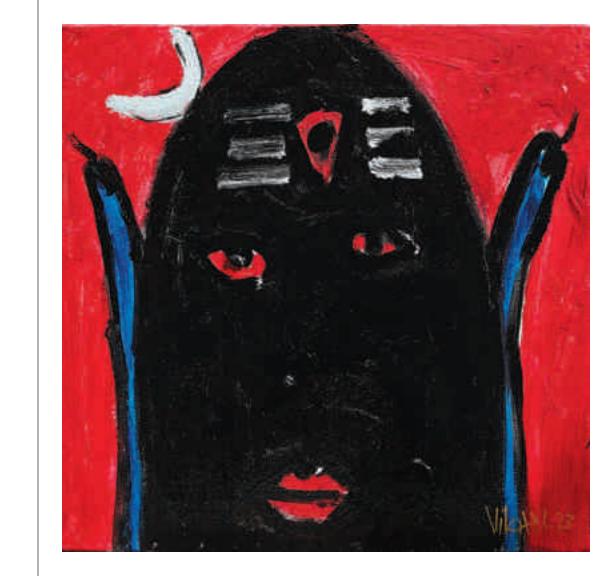






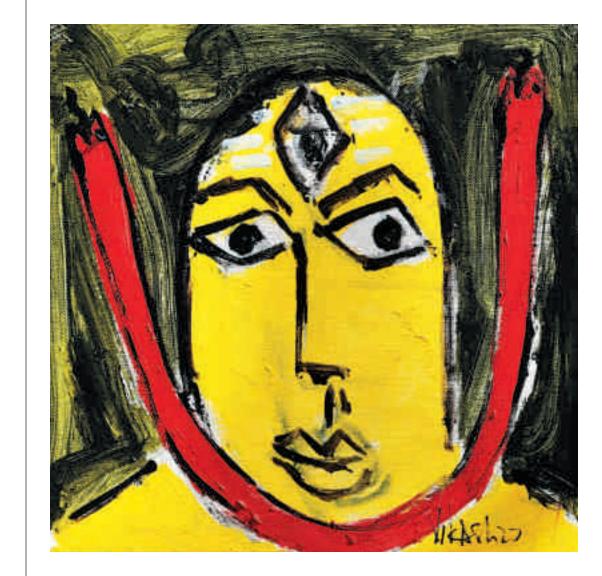




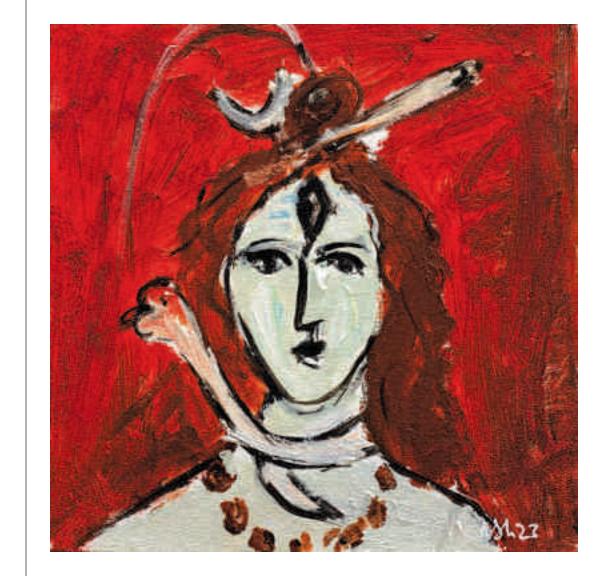


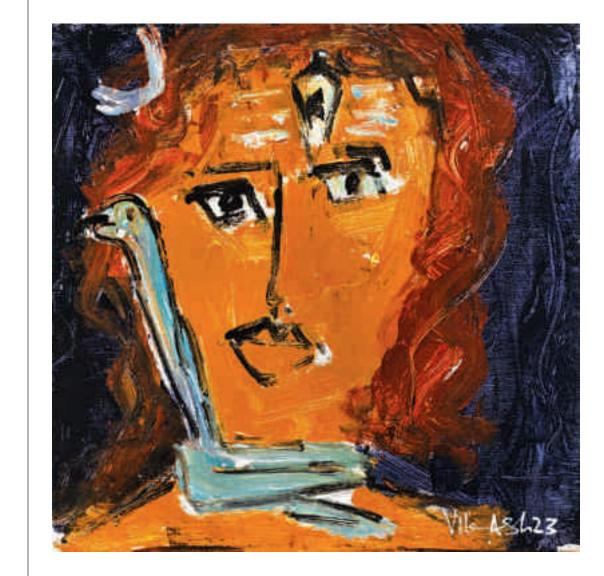


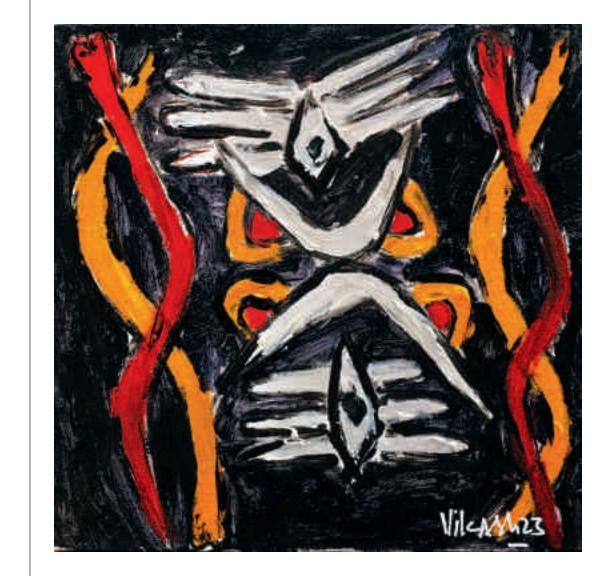


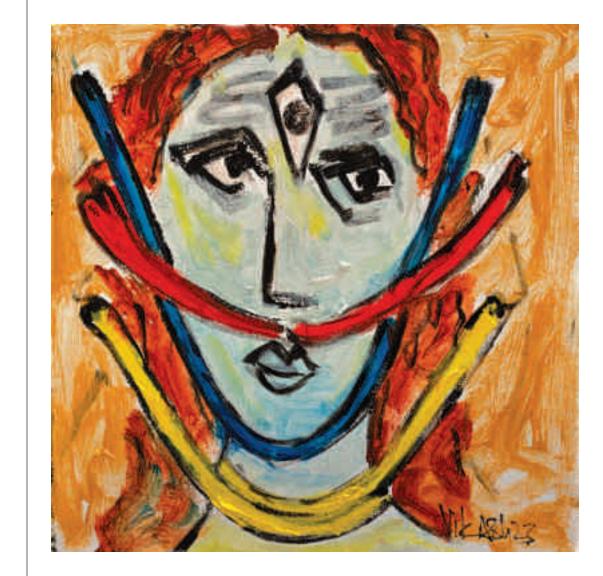




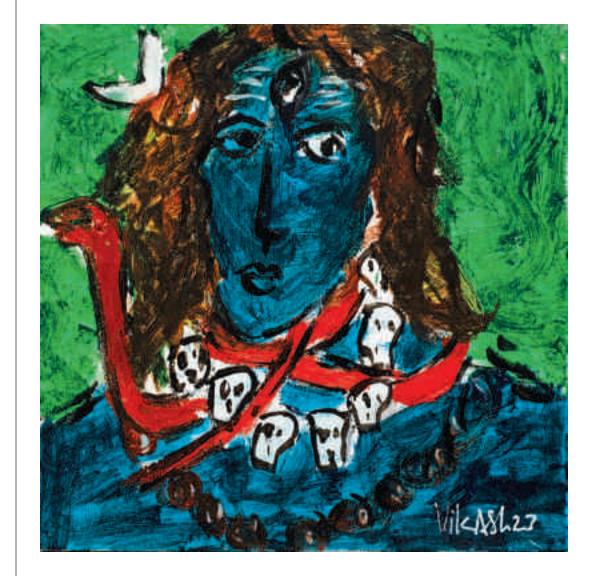


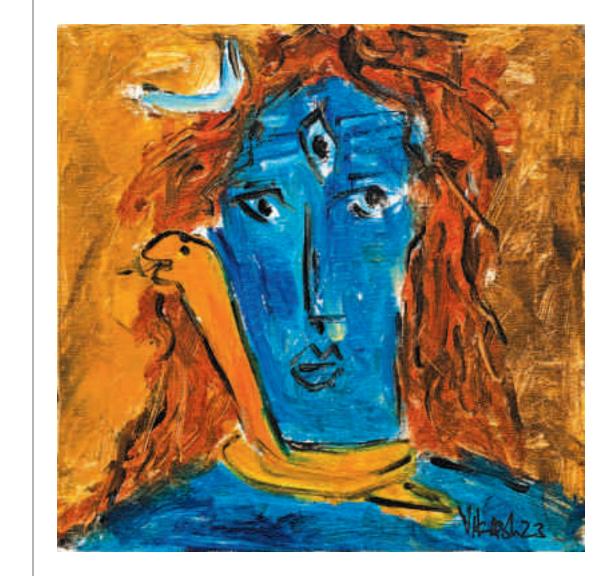




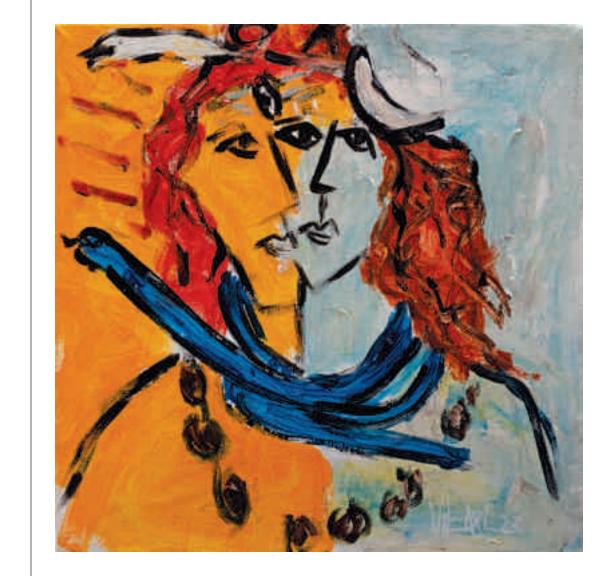




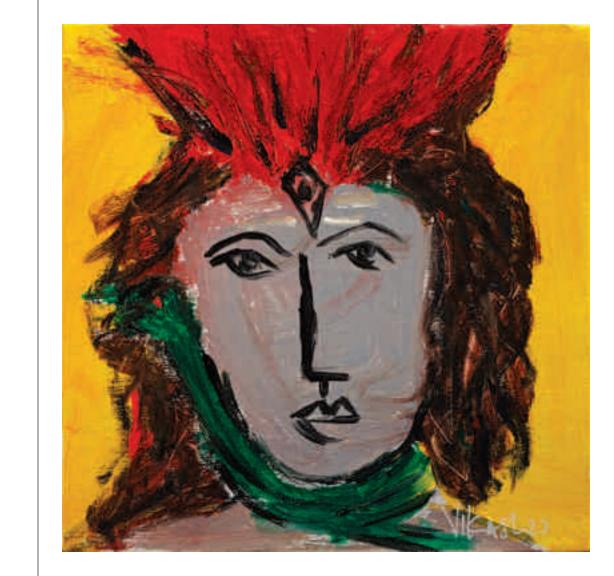


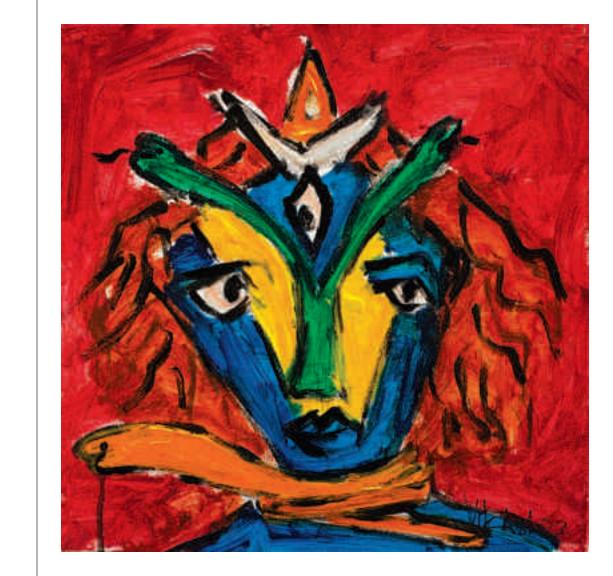


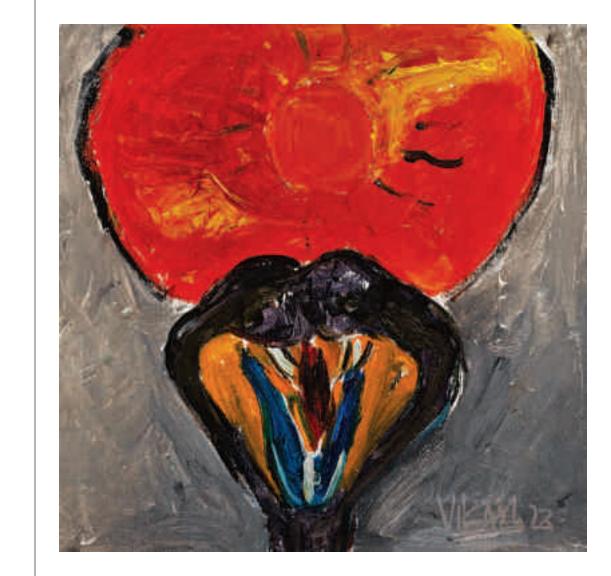




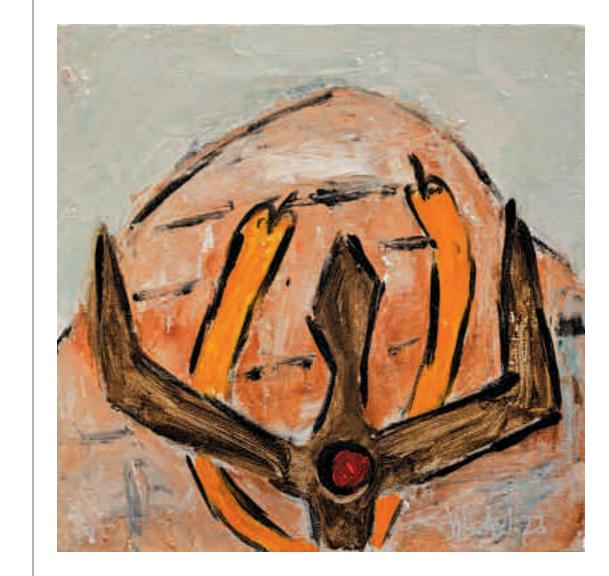


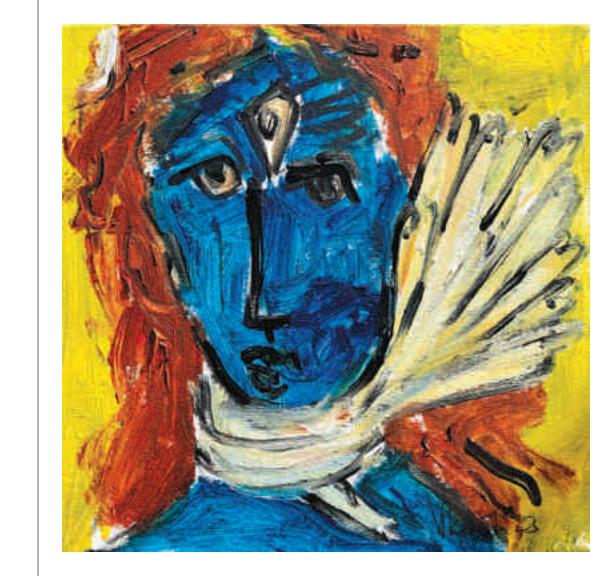


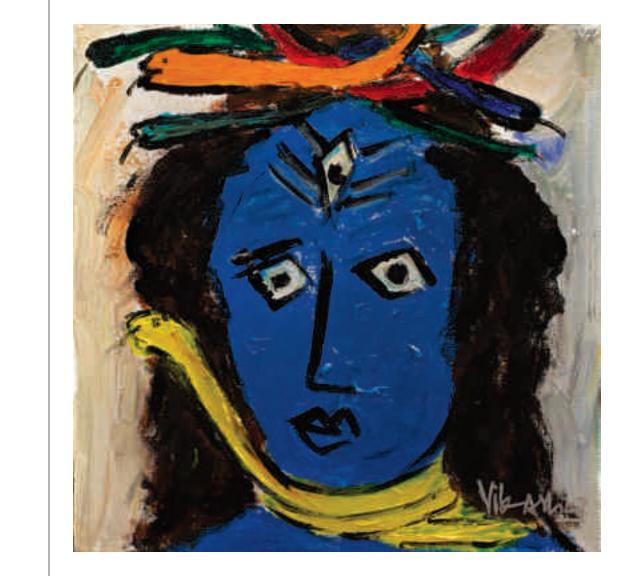






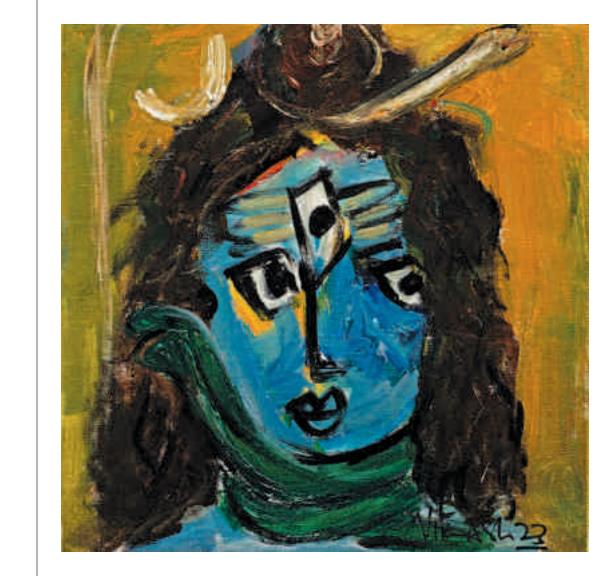


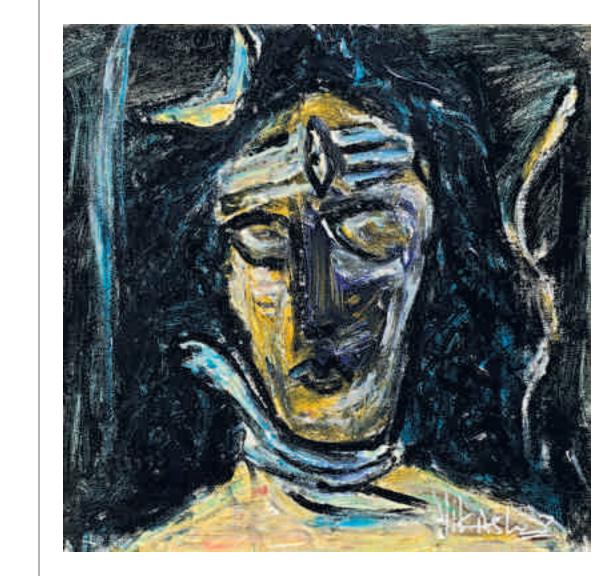


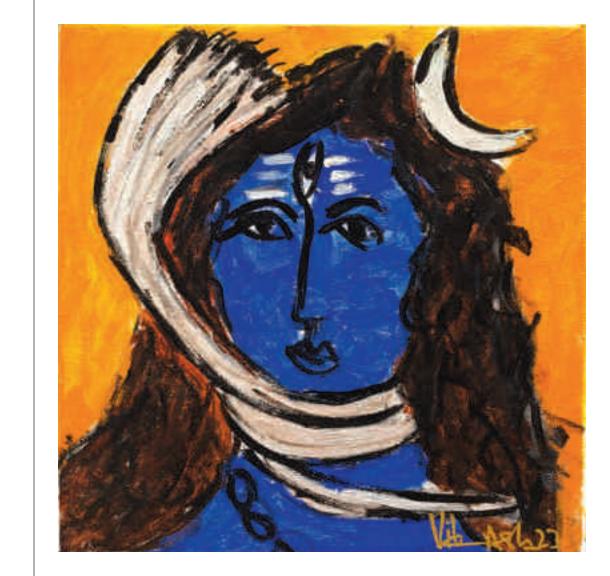


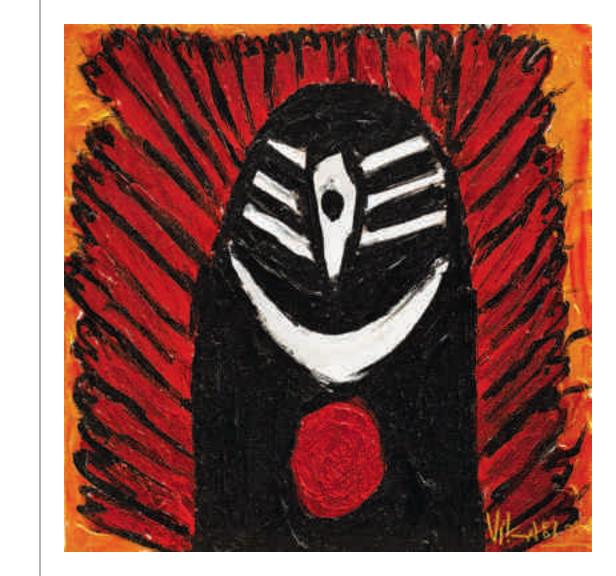


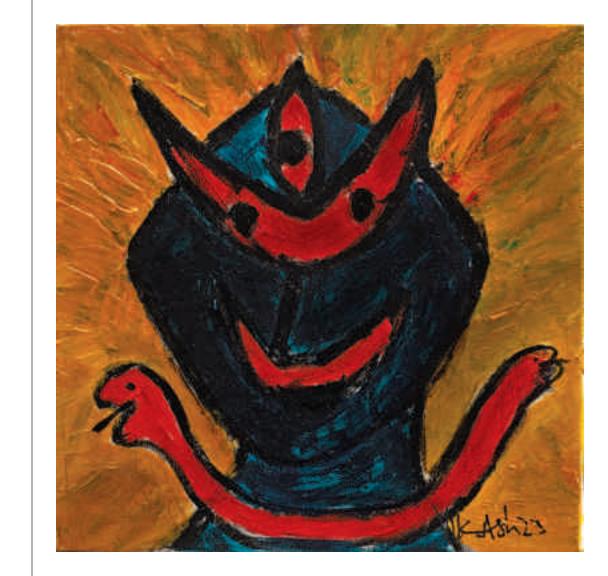


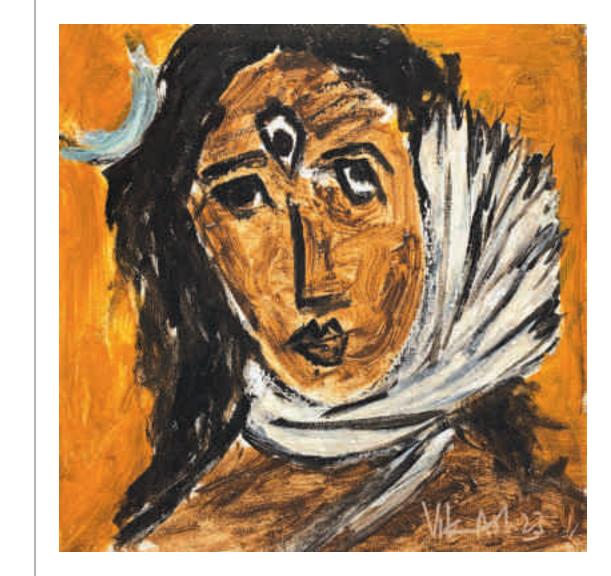


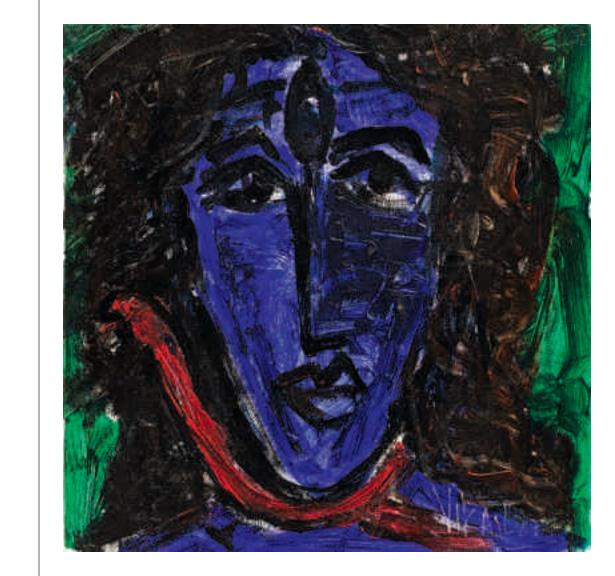


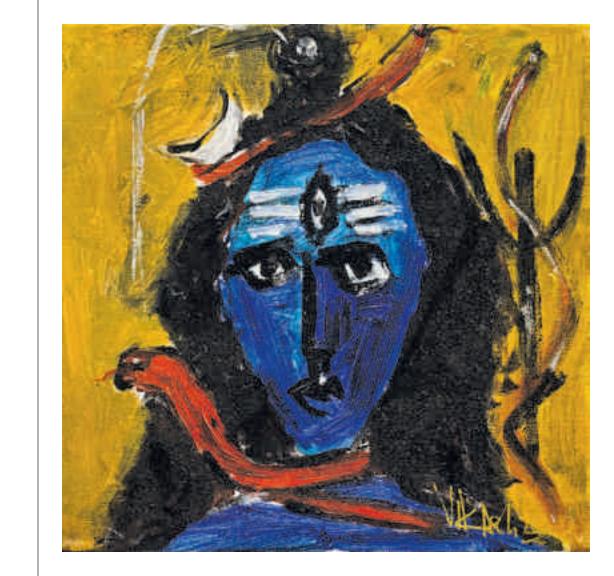


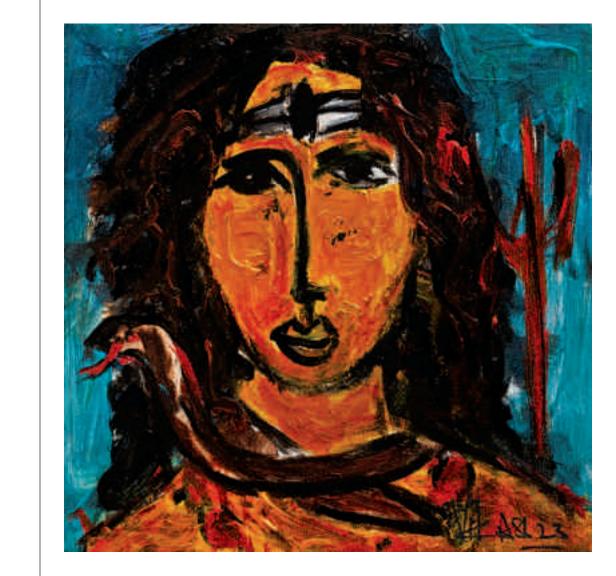


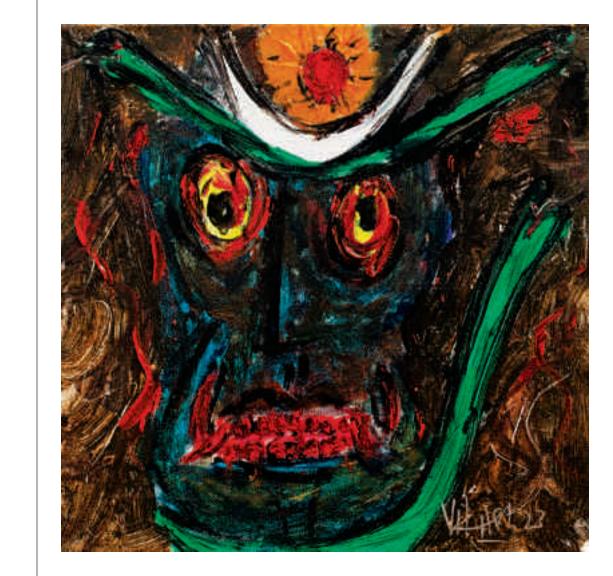






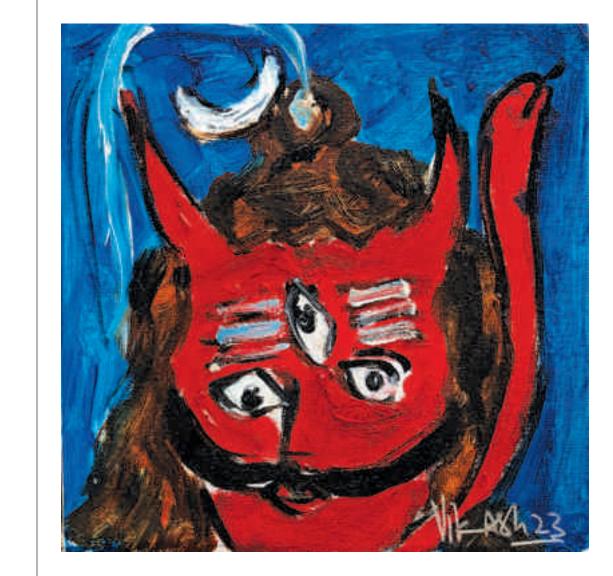


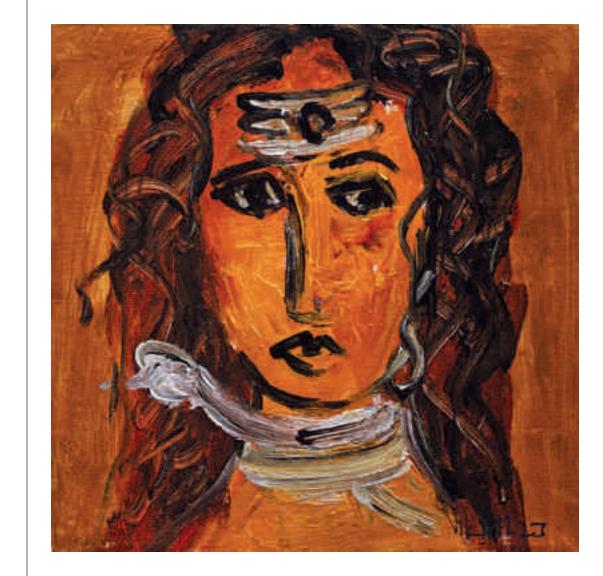


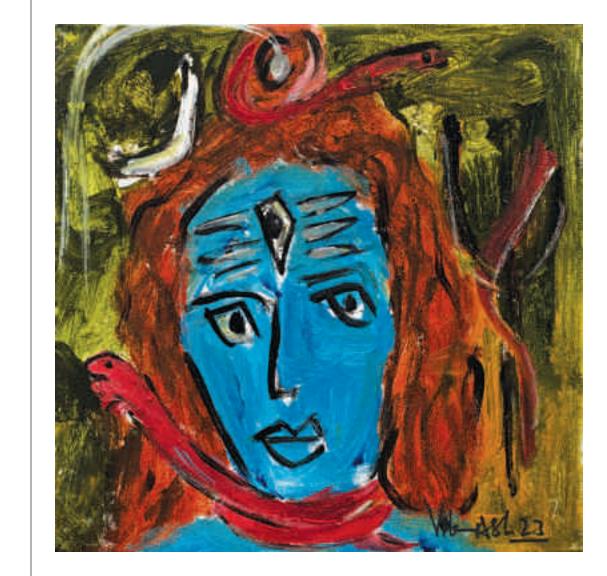


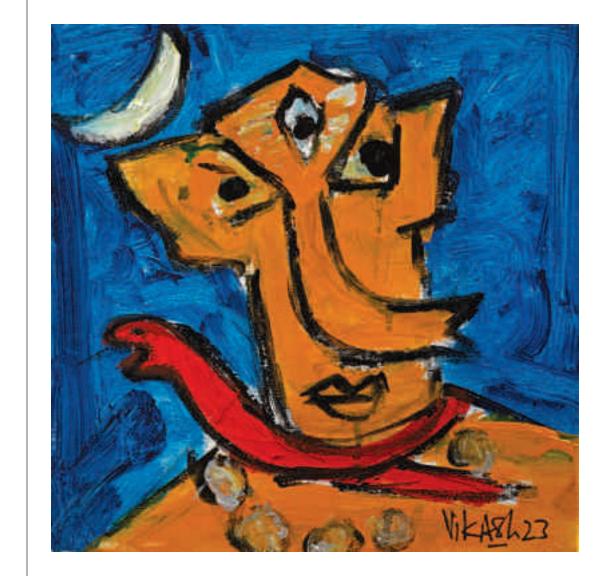


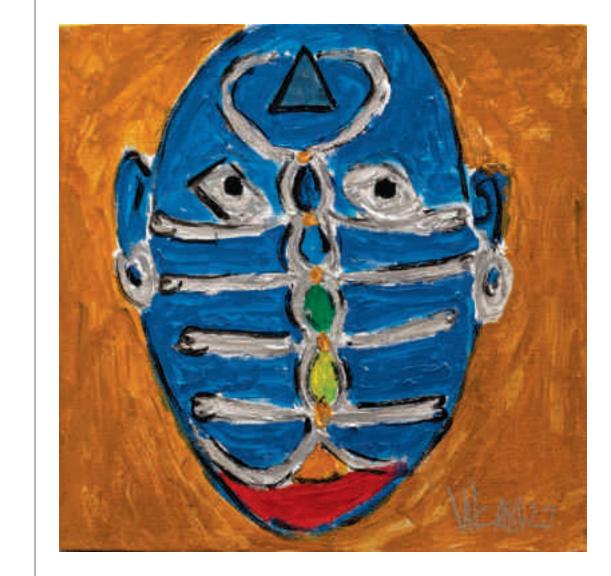


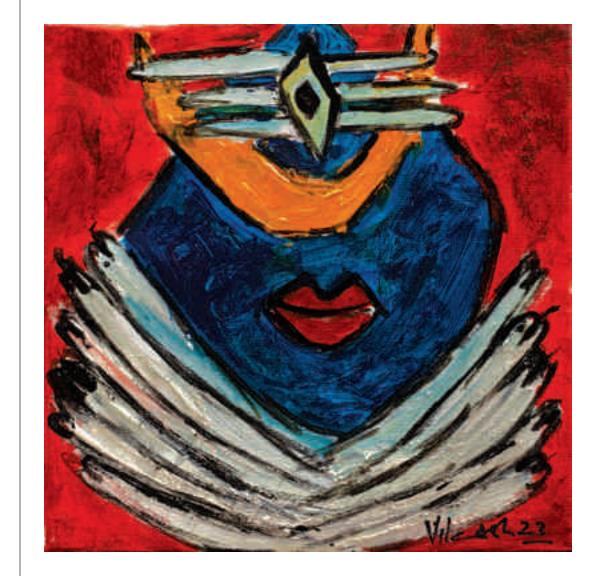


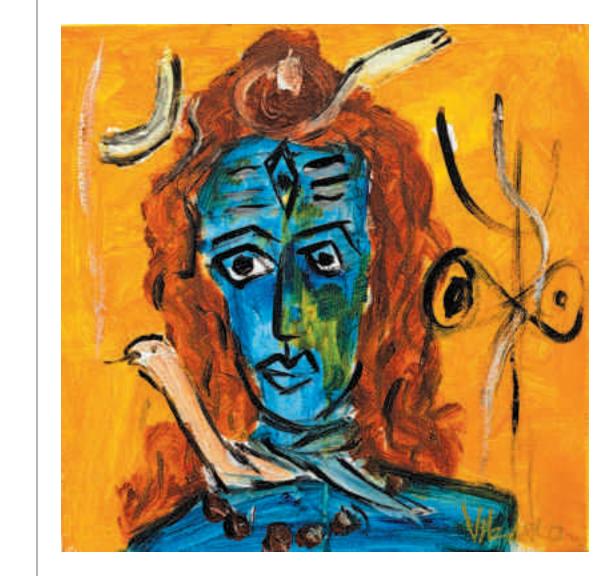


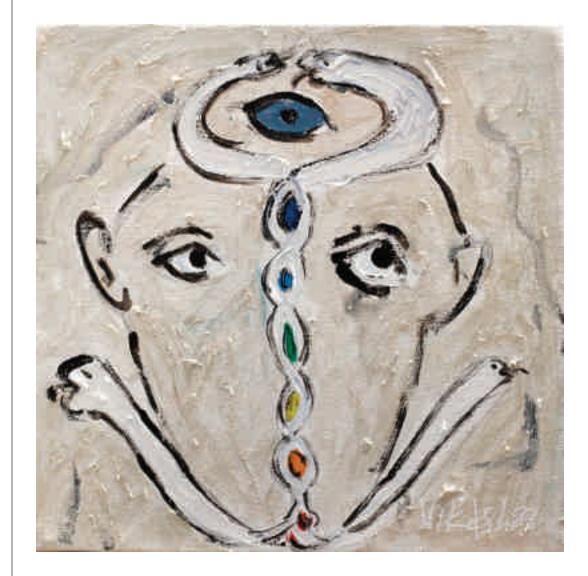


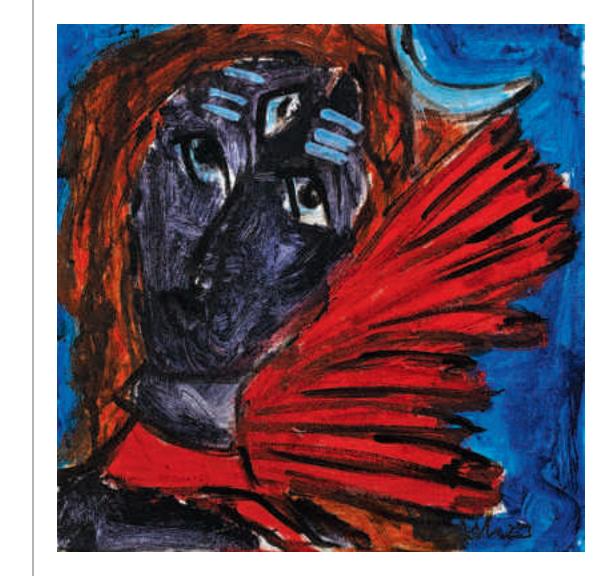


















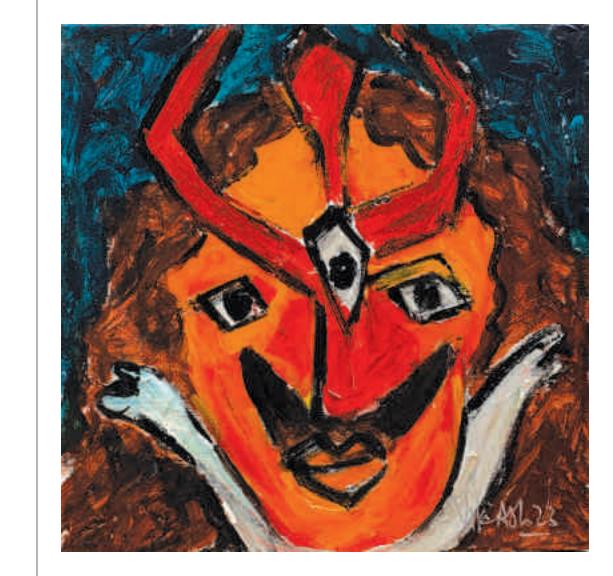








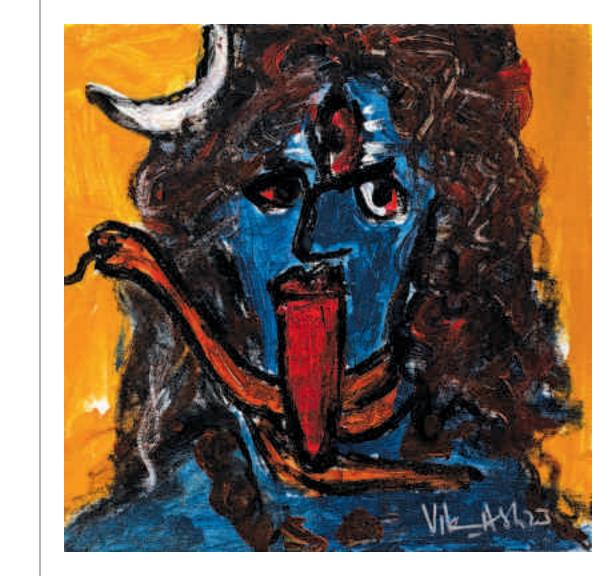






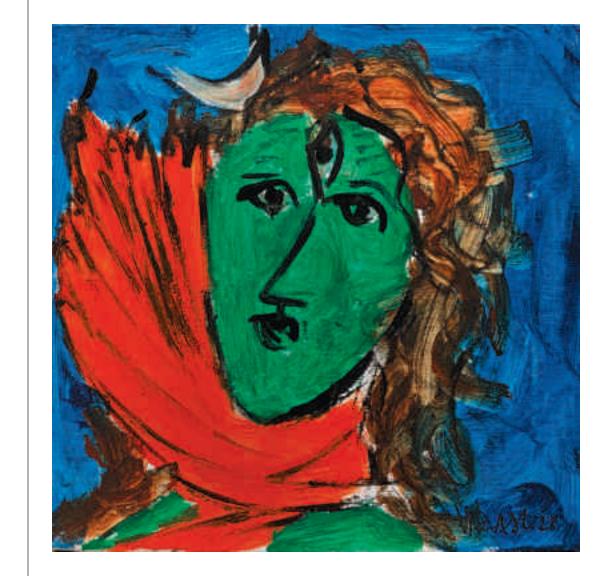


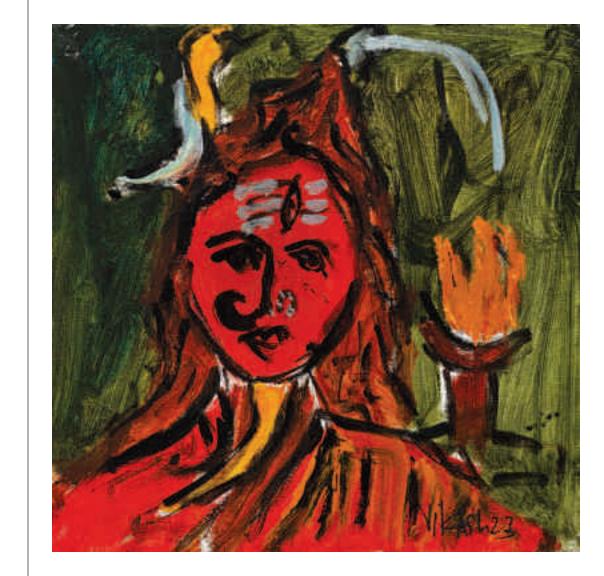


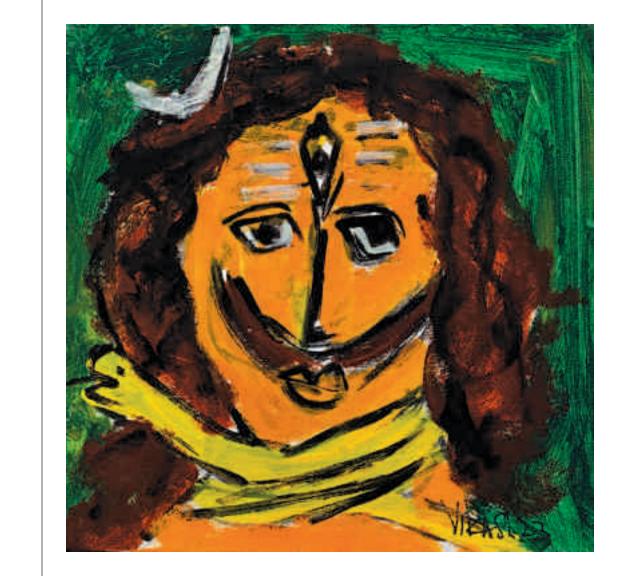








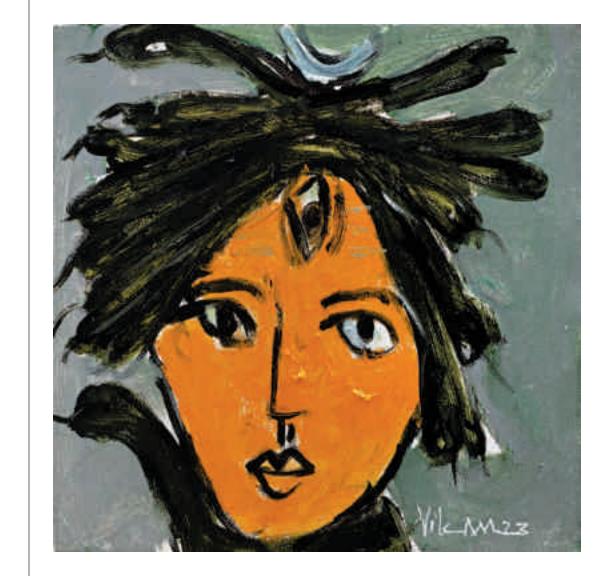




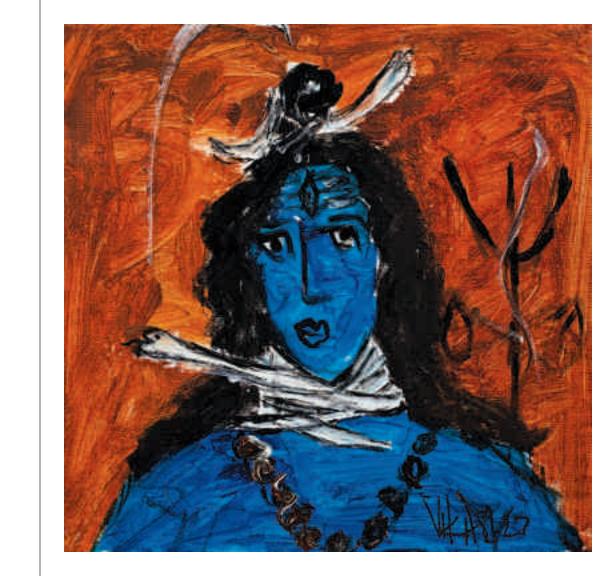






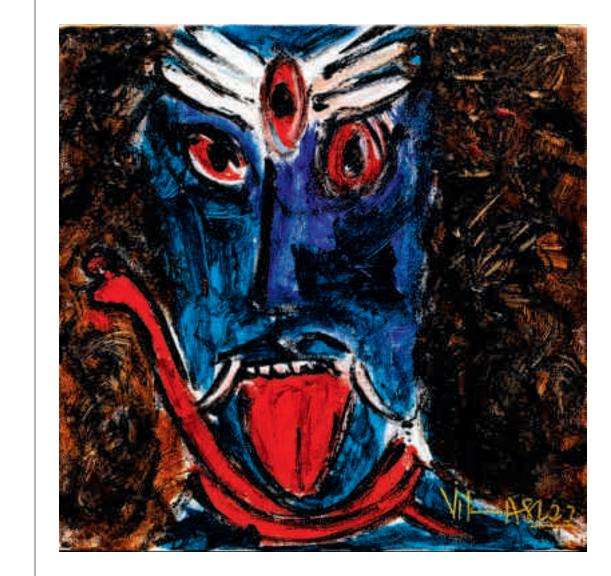


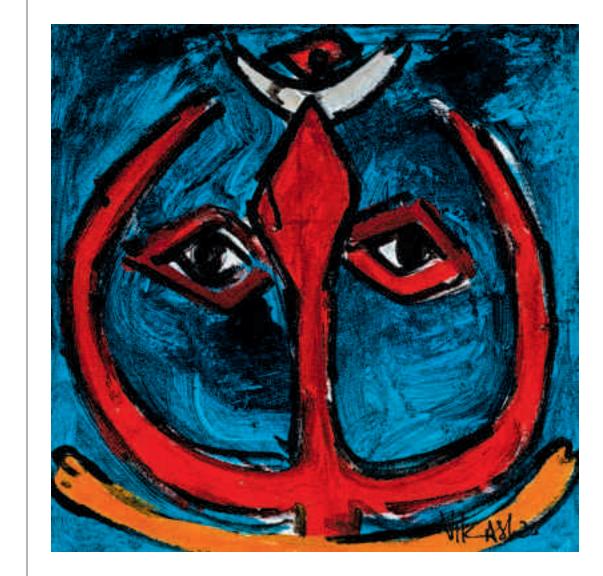


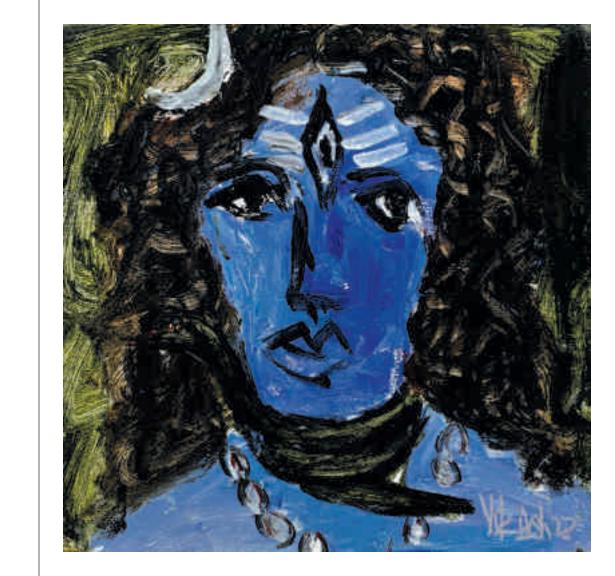


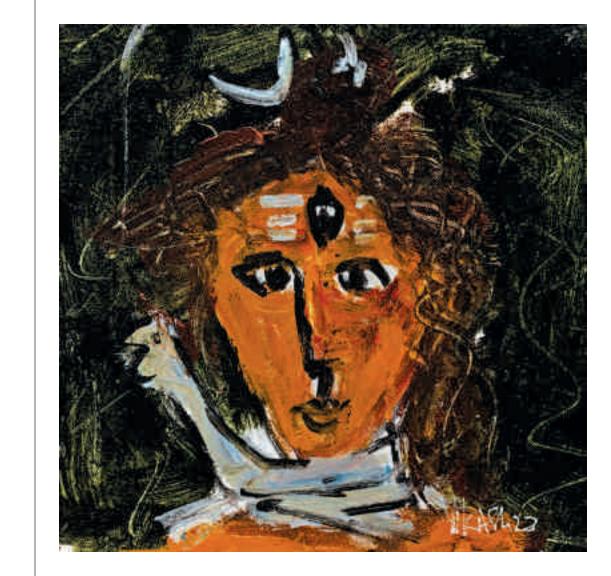


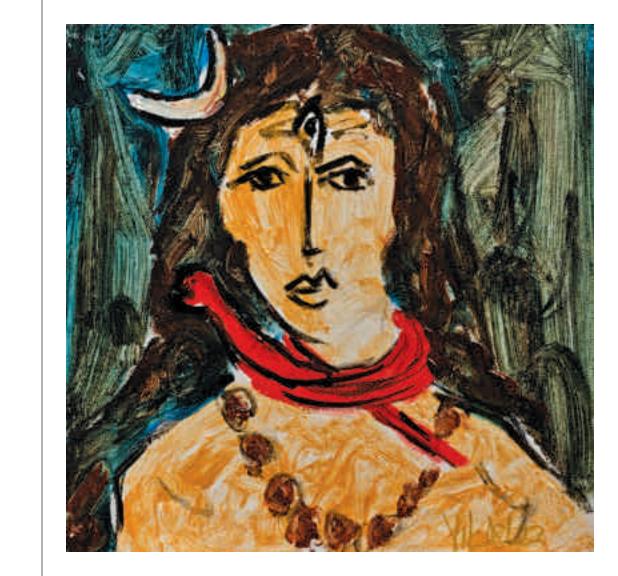


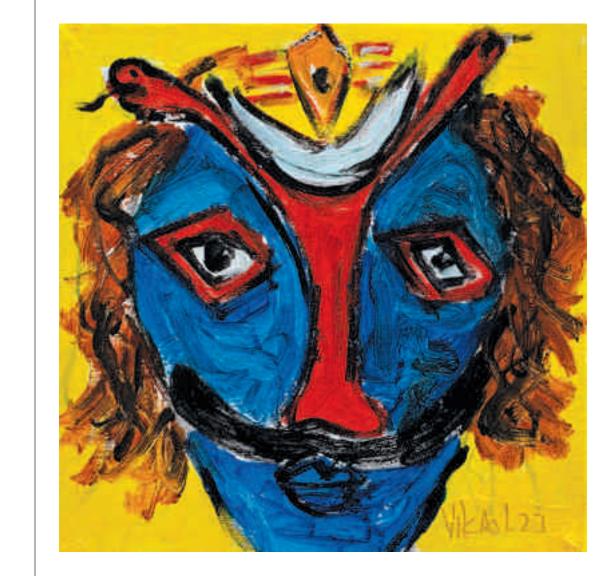




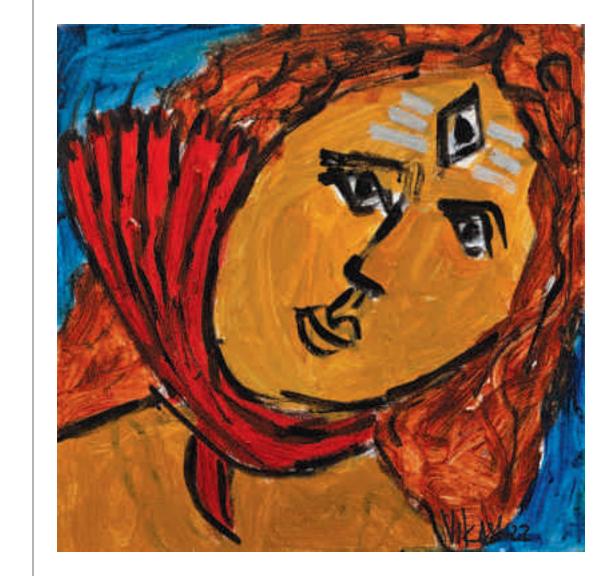


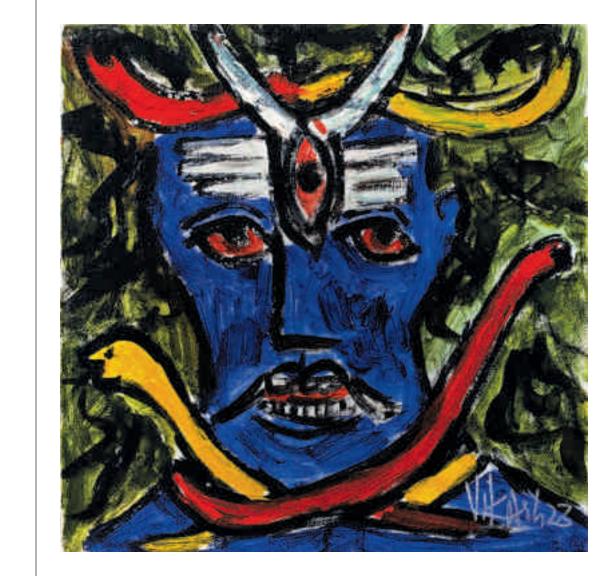


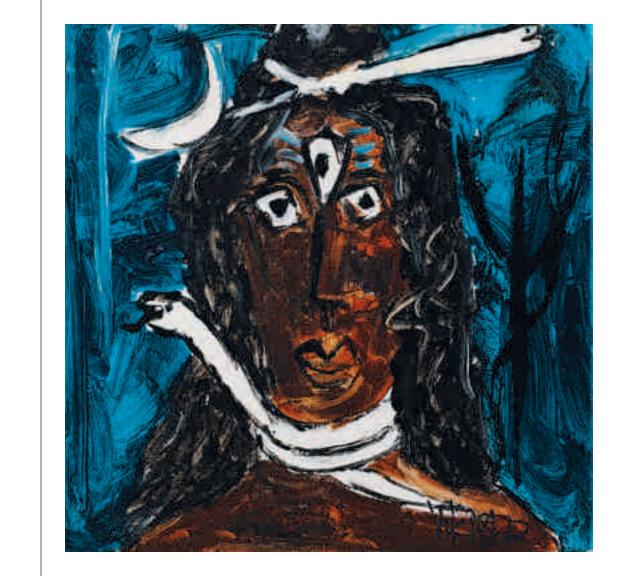


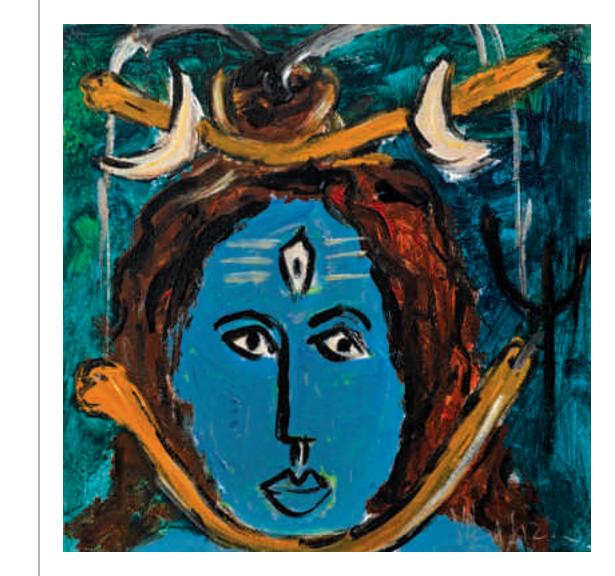






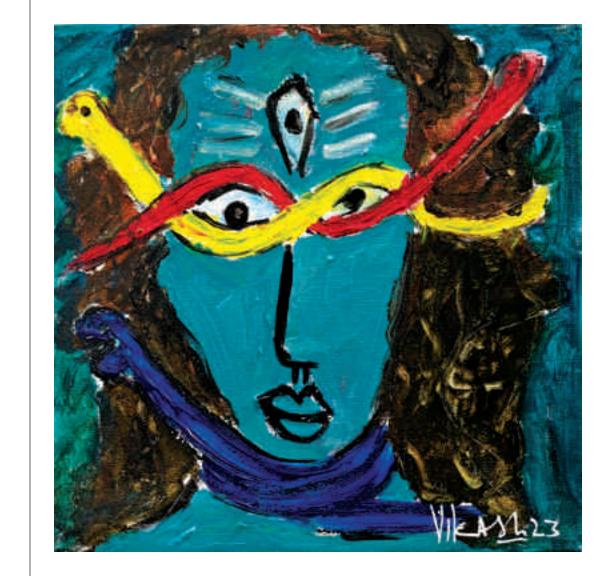


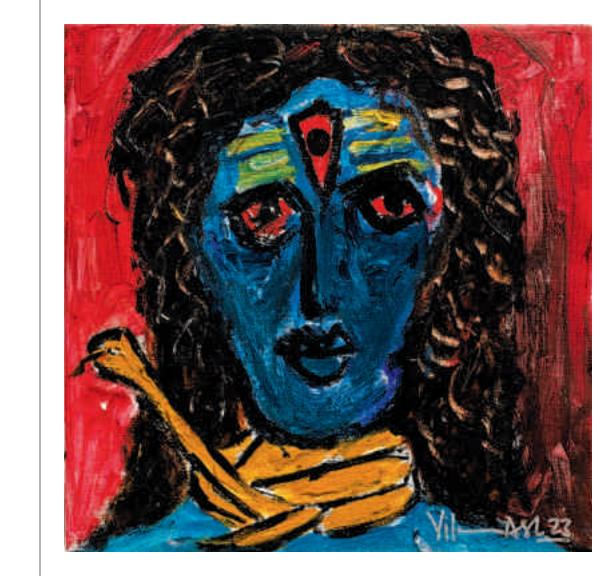




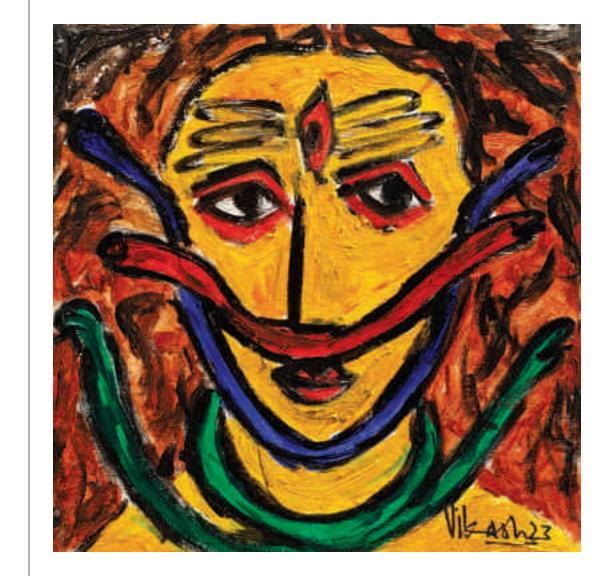




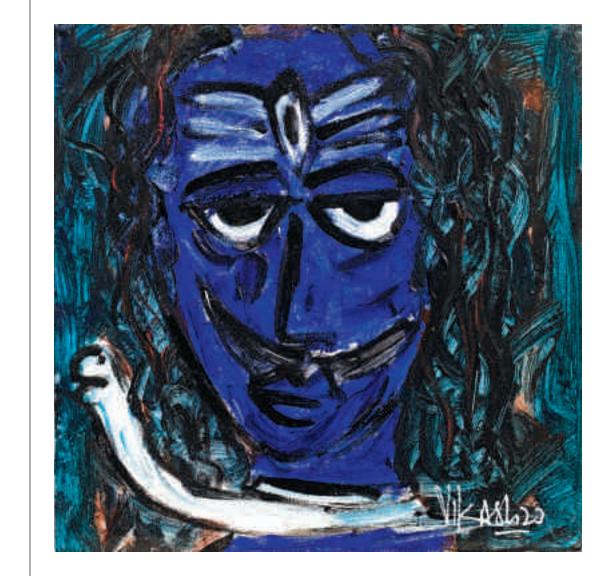


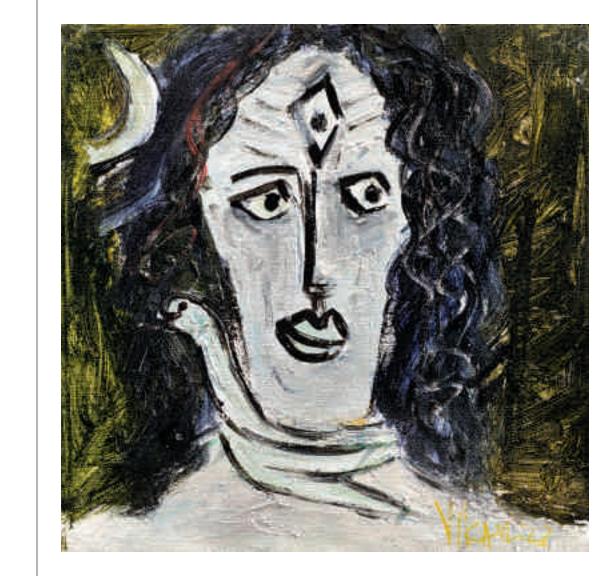


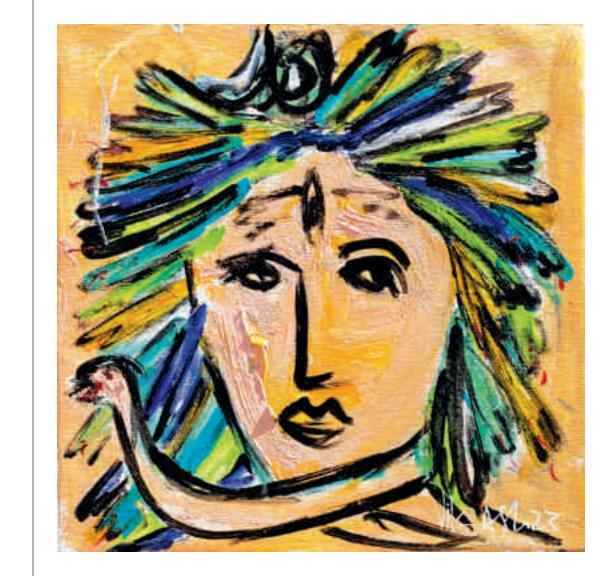


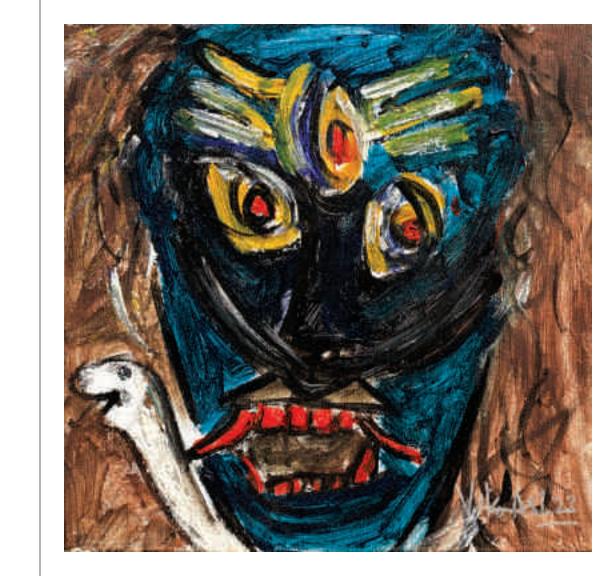


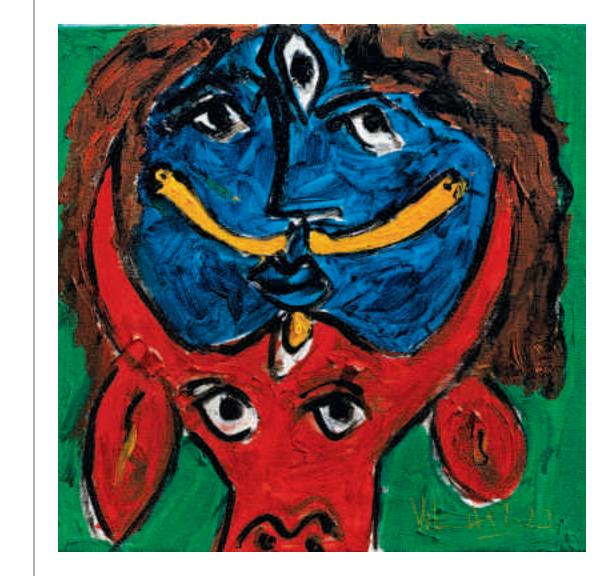


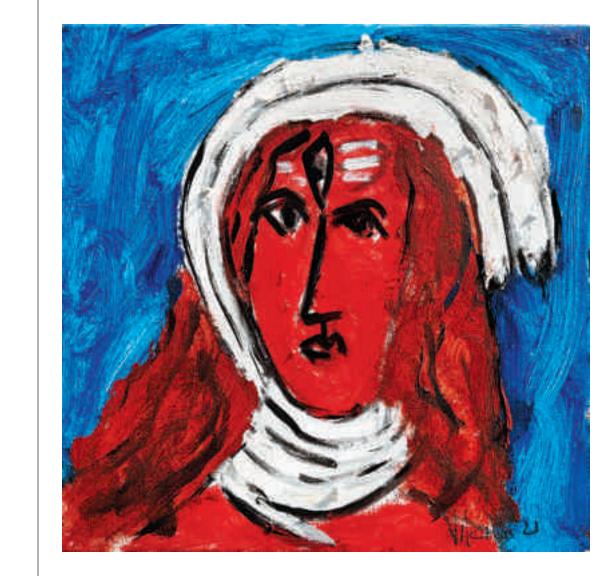




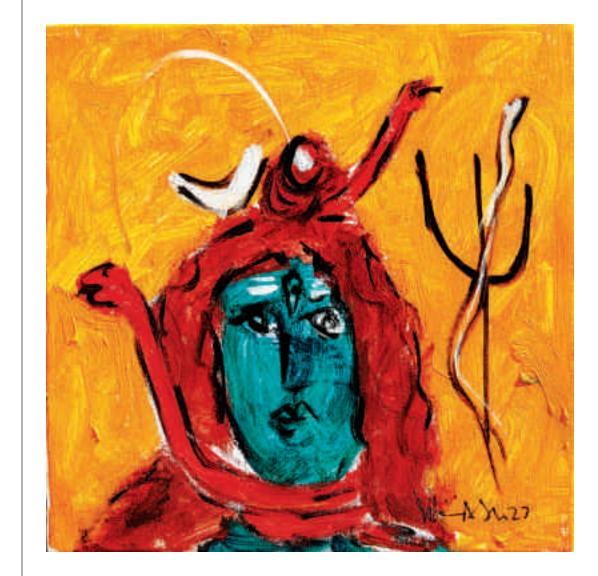


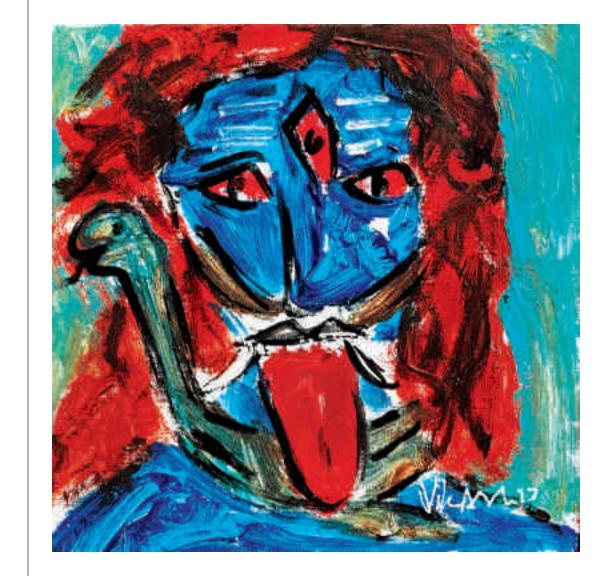


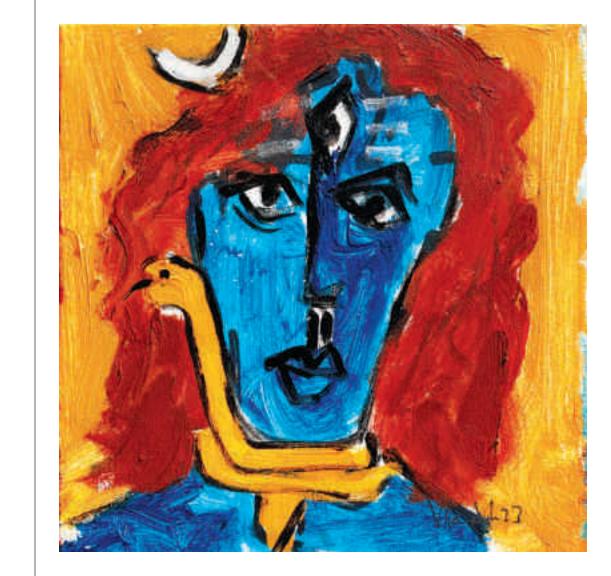


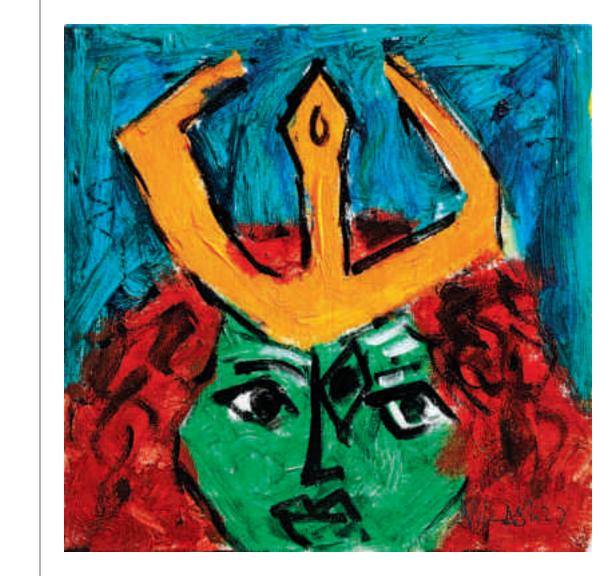


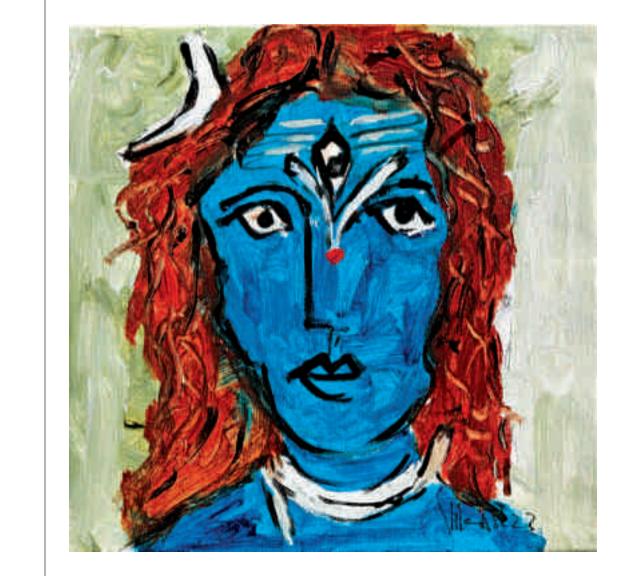






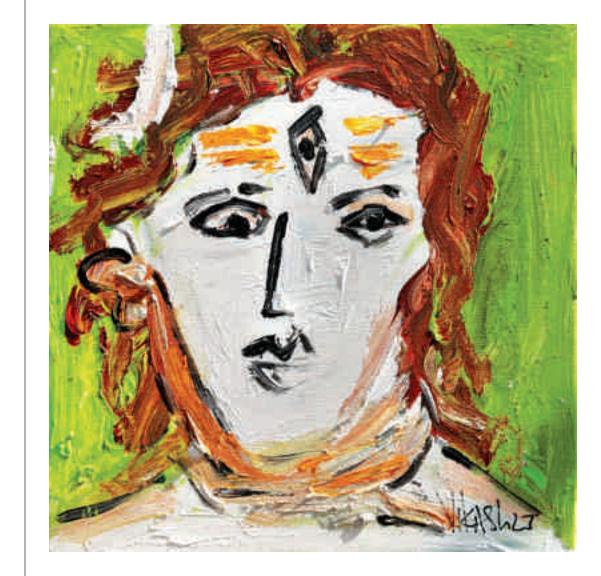




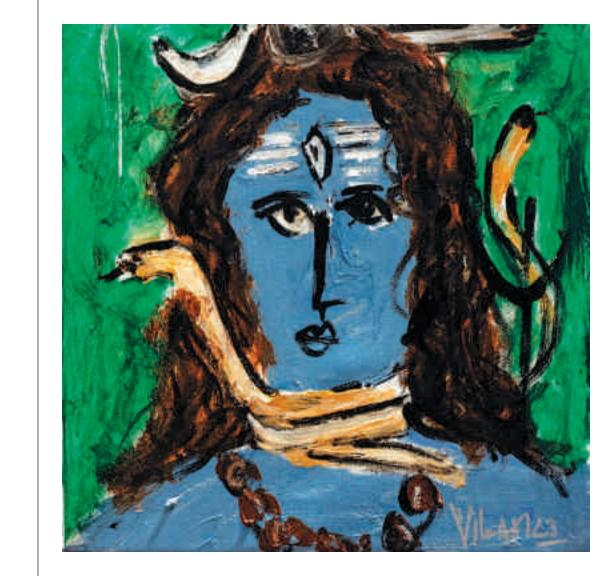




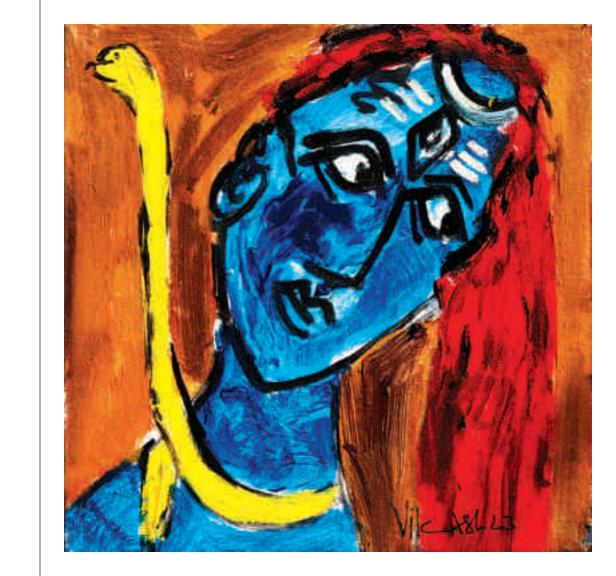






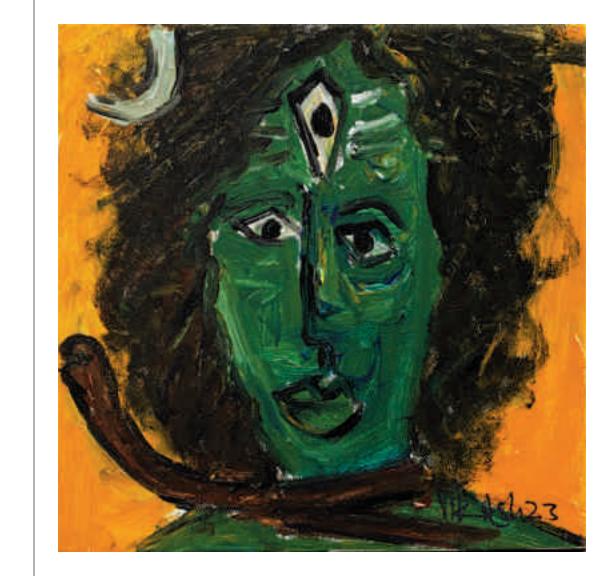








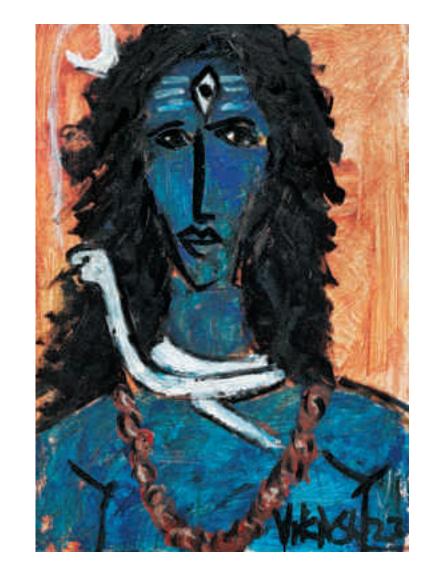




























नमो वृक्षेभ्यो हरिकेशेभ्यः

Once the Parameshwara Shiva wanted to create something for his joy. For this, he engaged his soul's energy to create but his energy manifested as Shakti and she reflected Parameshwara Shiva as an image within her.

This only is known as 'creation' and every creation can be seen as the Vishwamaya Shiva's body parts.

Namaskar to Bhagavan Shiva!!! He is the only truth in this world.

- GIRIRATNA MISHRA



THE GRAND MEDITATION

The mythological narratives that establish the Hindu religious beliefs are largely based on the constructive, the destructive, and the meditative forces. The ideal engagement with the omnipotent or the omnipresent has mostly been more re-creative, where one reaches a sense of ending in order to begin anew. A similar narrative is situated around Shiva, who has been a conduit in the philosophy of destruction and recreation.

Artist Vikash Kalra enriches our visual space with the richness of Shiva's philosophy, where his Godly stature is an insight to the metaphysical world. This metaphysical sphere is set around myths and rituals which the artist invokes in his work. He sets the tone by creating various stages and moods of Shiva's meditation as he visualises them. One may say that his art is a form of meditation practiced in the methods of incantation where his chants are visualised and performed on his canvases. In the process, each time the image of Shiva is imagined, it is a system of engaging with the symbolism associated with Shiva. His philosophy is so giant that the image becomes a tryst between the realised and unrealised visuality of these incantations. More so, this act of creating Shiva's facial expressions depict Kalra's dialogues with the omnipresent. He does so with the intent of exploring his own metaphysical journey framed on the subject of 'the cosmos'.

The metaphysics here is related to presight, insight and foresight, and, in each case, the artist envisions a dialogue that is directly proportional to the accounts of Shiva's adventurous presentations. Here, the Godly status of Shiva remains in constant flux propelling a movement of beliefs,

structures, and artistic in nature. Kalra's art is a reminder of this movement that he himself is often besotted by and, at the same time, this is the same movement that inspires in him a sense of universality that he extends to those looking to find or grow 'roots'.

Kalra sets out to warrant the beginnings of 'creation' in the mythic portrayals of Shiva, where Shiva is the ultimate artist who is not only a forceful source but also the inspiration of creative industries. Shiva's role as the creator is beyond the boundaries of spiritualism and occupied in the centrality of metaphysics. His creation can not be challenged mostly because of the 'might' that Shiva possesses as the creator. Kalra initiates a metaphysical dialogue with Shiva's might in creation. The artist is fully empowered in God's metaphysical probings, where Kalra becomes the muse of the creator and, in return, becomes the tool of Shiva to demonstrate Shiva's presence and his miracles.

In the *Shaivaite* traditions, the mythic presentations explore Shiva's birthing and allegorical allusions on earth. For instance, it is believed that Shiva emerged on earth as a result of a lightning that struck the ground: one ray of light was seen rushing towards the sky and another ray of light pierced the ground. Shiva's emergence was considered in this interstitial space that was in between the two directions the lighting had struck. This interstitial space is also found in allegorical accounts of yogic practices and in human existence, where the space or lingering moment between inhaling oxygen and exhaling carbon dioxide becomes crucial. It is said that this is where Shiva resides between life and death, between breathing in and breathing out.

Breaking away from the dichotomies of human ethics and constructs, Shiva's presence becomes an interesting avenue to look at the non-binary. His avatar indulges many energies to intersect and, eventually, serves the purpose of a resourceful confluence of ideas. It is not easy to overlook his avatar's structure based on death, birth, and rebirth. Here, symbolic use of ash, third-eye drawn across his forehead, the power-drum (damroo) tied at the neck of his trident, the cow (Nandi) who serves as his medium of transport and messenger, and the tiger-skin that he is often seen wearing as a loincloth (and, sometimes, shown as his seat) are all important gestural supports to the philosophy he is associated with. The rudraksha or stonefruit are markers of this same philosophy and it semiotically refers to the chants of prayers that Shiva is imagined through.

The ardh-narishwar or 'the half of a woman' in Shiva too defines this breakaway from dualities that is largely inscribed in religious or social practices. He restores a sense of balance embroiled in ethical politics or, in this case, gendered binaries. Most narratives based on Shiva expound the system of binaries as a mere means of defined plaintive accounts of 'life'. An opposing system of arguments emerges in Kalra's visual readings. In his account, life is resourceful and the living are empowered by the resources that proliferate life on earth and Shiva is the preserver, destroyer, and creator of life. Thereby, Shiva is life and death and anything that stimulates the remaining elements in between. The ardh-narishwar is not in between. It is the form that embodies all and, as a result, it is the form that becomes the perfect centrality of the universe. Shiva is the ultimate truth, denial, acceptance, form, death, life, birth, performance, and imagination. One may posit that, in practice, Kalra explores the vivacious nature of Shiva in his work only to perform the ultimate metaphysical enquiry into the realised philosophy of the omnipotent form.

Kalra's love and devotion for this omnipotent form emerges as an interesting visual intersection between philosophy, religion, cultural practice, the Arts, and politics. He supposes the emphasis on the form while pursuing a higher goal of meditation. Thereby, the artist meditates between form and philosophy while also attending to the mythic portrayals.

The acrylic on canvas images of Shiva is an attention to his sole goal of attending the perfect state of meditation and meeting the presence of God in himself. Here, he resurrects the artist in him as the gift of life empowered by Shiva's adventurous might. In the process, the mythological transforms into something real and this 'real' is only visible to those willing to look beyond the surface.

Kalra's visual language echoes the stylistic, bold brushstrokes of the European modernists who influenced India's contemporary art practices and he blends it with his own spiritual tranquility. The vibrant colours that evoke the myths surrounding Shiva's grandeur elevates his style to unburden the Indian flavours in belief and in faith. In doing so, he reveals the mystic, the mythic, the mysterious, and, finally, the monk in himself.

All in all, Shiva's *tandav* performance weighs heavy on human civilization and it has found a creator in Kalra to expose the blurring divides between ideas. Therefore, the artist takes up this baton to visually be in conversation with the richness of Shiva's mantra, tantra, and creation.

ॐ त्र्यम्बकं यजामहे सुगन्धिं पुष्टिवर्धनम्। उर्वारुकमिव बन्धनान्मृत्योर्मुक्षीय माऽमृतात् ॥

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शिवा, शिव, और तंत्रा

शिवा, शिव, और तंत्रा – शिवा का मतलब है भगवान शिव की पावर उनकी शक्ति, जैसे कि जो उनके त्रिशूल के अंदर की शक्ति है जो कि तीनों लोकों में सबसे शक्तिशाली अस्त्र है, उनकी जटाओं में इतनी शक्ति है कि वह माँ गंगा के प्रवाह को थामे हुए हैं। उनके रुद्र रूप उनके इन शक्तिओं का साक्षात् प्रदर्शन है। यह उनका विनाशकारी स्वरुप शक्ति का अनंत भंडार है जो क्षण-क्षण अपनी शक्ति को सबके सामने दिखाते हुए तांडव नृत्य करता हुआ संहार करता है।

जो शिव है उसका अर्थ है भगवान का रूप, जैसे कि उनके माथे का चाँद, तीसरी आँख, रुद्राक्ष की माला, शेर की खाल, ख़ूबसूरत चेहरा, कानो में कुंदन, और कंठ का नीला रंग। यह सारी चीज़ें उनके रूप को बताती हैं। यहाँ शिवा का मतलब शक्ति से है और शिव का मतलब भगवान के रूप से है। जब हम उनके रूप की बात करते हैं तो हमें उसमें उनकी सरलता दिखाई देती है। उनकी आँखों में करुणा और प्रेम दिखाई देता है। उनका यह रूप उनकी शक्तियों को संजोये हुए शांत मन लिए हुए जग कल्याण और उत्पति की तरह दीखता है। नंदी के साथ भी उनका एक सरल रूप दीखता है।

तंत्रा शिव और शिवा के सम्बन्ध को बताता है। यह ये बताता है कि भगवान शिव अपनी शक्तिओं को कैसे इस्तेमाल करते हैं। यह भगवान और शक्ति के मिलने का प्रतिक है। तंत्रा को समझने के लिए हमें शिव और शिवा दोनों को समझना पड़ेगा। जहाँ एक तरफ भगवान का शांत और सरल रूप है वहीं दूसरी तरफ उनकी शक्ति और ऊर्जा से भरा हुआ अलग रूप है। भगवान के इन दोनों रूपों को एक साथ देखना ही तंत्रा है। जब भगवन अपने करुणा अवतार में होते हैं तब भी उनके अंदर ये शक्ति और ऊर्जा मौजूद होती है लेकिन यह तंत्रा के द्वारा बहता हुआ शांत और शीतल दिखाई देता है। वहीं जब भगवान साथना से उठ जाते हैं तब

उनका ऊर्जा के साथ अलग सम्बन्ध बन जाता है। सम्बन्ध दोनों जगह पर होता है करुणा के रूप में भी और रुद्र रूप में भी लेकिन दोनों जगह अलग तरह से भगवान और ऊर्जा के बीच सम्बन्ध दिखाई देता है।

हमारा शरीर बचपन, जवानी, और बुढ़ापे में ख़त्म हो जाता है। हमारा शरीर एक यंत्र मात्र है, इसकी एक समय सीमा है लेकिन हमारी आत्मा की कोई समय सीमा नहीं है। हमारा शरीर ऊर्जा और आत्मा से जीवित है। हम जो भी काम कर रहे हैं उसमें ऊर्जा का उपयोग हो रहा है और इस हिसाब से देखा जाए तो जो आत्मा है वह शिव है और जो ऊर्जा है वह पार्वती है। तो माँ पार्वती और शिव के साथ मिलने से ही हमारा शरीर जीवित है।

जब कोई व्यक्ति मरता है तो उसकी आँखें धीरे-धीरे बंद हो जाती हैं और मुँह खुला का खुला रह जाता है। अर्थात् मरने पर उसकी ऊर्जा ख़त्म हो जाती है और जैसे ही किसी के शरीर से ऊर्जा पूरी तरह से ख़त्म होती है वैसे ही आत्मा चली जाती है। यानि जब हमारे शरीर से ऊर्जा पूरी तरह ख़त्म होके शून्य (0) हो जाती है तब हमारे शरीर से शिव भी चले जाते हैं यानी कि जैसे ही हमारे शरीर से ऊर्जा अर्थात् पार्वती चली जाती हैं, वैसे ही शिव भी चले जाते हैं।

यह एक तरह से हमारा ही अर्धनारी रूप है। यह रूप हमारे अंदर ही है और जैसा कि हमारा शरीर एक यंत्र है हमें इसका ख्याल रखना चाहिए। हमें अपने शरीर को साफ़ रखने के लिए साफ़ पानी से नहाना चाहिए, शुद्ध खाना खाना चाहिए, मन को सरल रखना चाहिए, बहुत ज्यादा भागदौड़ नहीं करनी चाहिए ताकि हमारा दिमाग शांत रह सके और झूठ, चोरी-चकारी से दूर रहना चाहिए। भगवान पर विश्वास करके रहना चाहिए जिससे कि हमारा मन स्वस्थ रहे।। हमारा मन स्वस्थ रहेगा तो हमरा शरीर भी उसी तरह से स्वस्थ रहेगा। हमारे शरीर में भगवान रह रहे हैं तो हमें भगवान को

उसमें रखने के लिए स्वस्थ, सुन्दर, और सरल शरीर और मन रखना चाहिए। भगवान जितनी आसानी से हमारे मन और शरीर में रहेंगे हमारी ऊर्जा का उतना ही विस्तार होगा।

जब हम गहराई से देखते हैं तो हम पाते हैं कि ऊर्जा और आत्मा यानी कि भगवान शिव और पार्वती दोनों ही एक दूसरे के पूरक हैं। अगर एक नहीं होगा तो दूसरा भी नहीं होगा। अगर माँ पार्वती नहीं होंगी तो भगवान् शिव भी नहीं होंगे। ये दोनों ही हमारे अंदर मौजूद हैं और इनके बिना खुद को जान पाना असंभव है। अगर हम अपने मन में भगवान को रखना चाहते हैं तो हमें उनके मौजूद होने का एहसास करना होगा। हमें उन्हें समझने की कोशिश नहीं करनी चाहिए क्यूंकि भगवान शिव अनंत हैं उनका कोई शुरुआत या अंत नहीं है उनका महसूस करना ही एक मात्र तरीका है जिससे हम अपना विस्तार कर सकते हैं।

शिवा, शिव और तंत्रा तीनों मेरे विचार में एक ही हैं। हमको हमारी ऊर्जा का विस्तार करना चाहिए। हमारी ऊर्जा बग़ैर किसी रुकावट के बहनी चाहिए। इसके लिए शिव हमारी मूर्ति रूप से, शिवा हमारी शक्ति रूप से और तंत्रा इन दोनों के सम्बन्ध के रूप में हमें भगवान शिव की तरफ ले जातें है। ध्यान सबसे ऊपर है, ध्यान हमारी प्राण शक्ति को मज़बूत करता है तभी भगवान शिव हमेशा ध्यान मुद्रा में रहते हैं।

मन हमारा सबसे बड़ा दुश्मन है, यह हमारी ऊर्जा से ही हमारा विनाश करता है इसलिए मन की बातों में नहीं आना चाहिए, ज्ञान तो हृदय से आता है बुद्धि से नहीं। ज्ञान हमारी आत्मा के अंदर से उठता है, अपने मस्तिष्क को अलग कर दो और हृदय की आवाज़ सनो।

अपने अंदर की आवाज़ को हम तब सुन सकेंगे जब हम हमारा मन शून्य और सरल होगा। इसमें ख़तरा है, हम मन से अलग होंगे तो हम दुनिया से कट के ख़ुद की आत्मा के साथ जुड़ जाएंगे। जो सत्य है उससे जुड़ जायेंगे। इससे हम बाहर के झूठ से अलग हो जायेंगे और हृदय से जुड़ जाएंगे जिससे हमारे विकास का रास्ता खुलेगा। शिव हम को झूठा होने से बचाते हैं, और अगर हम झूठे हो गए हों तो शिवा, शिव और तंत्रा मिलकर सिखाते हैं कि हम कैसे सत्य से संपर्क साधें जो हमारे अंदर है और जो सिर्फ़ हमारा है।

मन हम को सत्य के पास नहीं आने देता, तंत्रा मन के लालच को तोड़ता है। शिवा, शिव और तंत्रा तीनों मिलकर हमारी झूठ को तोड़ते हैं। हमारे अवचेतन हृदय के शीशे को साफ़ करते हैं जिससे हम अपना प्रतिबिंब साफ़ देख सकें।

हमारी जीवन ऊर्जा निरंतर विचार प्रतिक्रिया में लगी रहती है। हमारे मन में लाखों की संख्या में विचार आते हैं, मन झूठ को मज़बूत बनाने में लगा रहता है शिवा, शिव और तंत्रा उस सत्य से जोड़ने का काम करते हैं जिससे हम बुद्धि विहीन (thoughtless) केंद्र विहीन (weight less) हो जाते हैं।

जैसे ही बुद्धि पर हृदय का राज होता है एक चमत्कार होता है। हमारी जीवन उर्जा हमारे रोम-रोम से, शरीर के कोने-कोने से हमारे शरीर के बाहर बहने लगती है। हमको जीवन का नया अनुभव होता है, इसमें चमत्कार जैसा कुछ नहीं यह अपने-आप होने लगता है, यह बहुत सुन्दर और महान अनुभव है, इसमें कुछ पुराना टूटता है और कुछ नया विशाल बनता है। जब हृदय दिमाग़ के झूठ को तोड़ता है तो सकारात्मक ऊर्जा का प्रवाह शुरू होता है।

> आओ मेरे साथ इस आर्ट-शो में अपनी बुद्धि छोड़ हृदय से महसूस करते हैं, आओ शिवा, शिव और तंत्रा में प्रवेश करते हैं, आओ भगवान शिव की अथाह कृपा को महसूस करते हैं, अपने जीवन में सकारात्मक ऊर्जा को इतना बढ़ाते हैं कि आनंद ही आनंद हो, जैसा मैं महसूस कर रहा हूँ।

> > विकाश

ॐ नमः शिवाय

Vikash Kalra (b.1973) is a self-taught artist, born and raised in New Delhi. He still lives in Delhi – a city that plays a vital role in defining his life's journey through the Arts. Most of his work engages with the Indian Modernist techniques and skills, where he has been able to successfully demonstrate his responses to his predecessors too. Also, his bold brush strokes and grave colour palettes have been particular to his visual language. In each of his collections, he pursues a strong technical inquiry, which has been critically important.

He has been showcased in several group shows and has held important solo exhibitions of his works all across the country. His works are found in various prestigious Indian and international collections.



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Vikash Kalra

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www.vikashkalra.com

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