

NIKHIL CHAGANLAL

INTIMATE
VISTAS
of the INTERIORS

ART MUSINGS

1 ADMIRALTY HOUSE, COLABA

The interiors that Nikhil Chaganlal evokes in his recent paintings are atmospheres rather than spaces. Cast as memoirs, they capture the flavour of remembered occasions, the texture of half-expressed desires, the fugitive moods that linger in the aftermath of conversation, festivity and the disclosure of self to other. In these frames, the artist fuses the actual with the imagined or symbolic: he merges features that exist, in childhood homes and adult staging-points he has known, with tropes that emblematised styles, periods and idioms of comfort that he cherishes.

But where such a subject might have tempted a more flamboyant into a defiantly self-indulgent playing at decadence, Chaganlal brings to his treatment a vulnerability that verges on reticence. His gestures, as he invites us into these atmospheres, are those of discreet unveiling rather than flagrant display: his approach is tempered by an awareness that he is about to share a private fantasia with a viewing public, always a fraught encounter.

Chaganlal's palette is palpable, his colours almost edible: he delights in deep-welling alizarin, relishes glowing viridian, savours blazing turmeric. Elaborated in considerable, even sumptuous detail, these interiors are alive with objects: the artist dwells with loving attention on the appointments and furnishings of each room, whether it is the piano or the violin, a drape or a blind, a vase or a lamp, a bureau or a chandelier, a cushion or an occasional telescope pointing to infinity.

Tapestried together, these details produce an embrace of intimacy. For Chaganlal, the interior is not a spatial description; nor is it simply an immersion in a time-warper's daydream of elegant living. The interior is a wager on interiority, on an inward retreat that can unquestionably be called home: an ideal zone of belonging where nothing will discomfit or disquiet the resident self, intrude upon its serenity.

Ranjit Hoskote



NIKHIL CHAGANLAL

An Interior by the Sea
acrylic on masonite board
32" x 48", 2023



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Patio by the Sea

acrylic on masonite board

24" x 36", 2025



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Verandah

acrylic on masonite board

17" x 24", 2025



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Island Retreat

acrylic on masonite board

15" x 24", 2025



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Plant Haven

acrylic on masonite board

15" x 24", 2025



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Sea Side Melody

acrylic on masonite board

15" x 24", 2025



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Sofa Siesta

acrylic on masonite board

15" x 24", 2025



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To Catch a Sunset
acrylic on masonite board
14" x 24", 2025



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Recollections

acrylic on masonite board

24" x 17", 2025



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Bed by the Sea

acrylic on masonite board

24" x 15", 2025



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Writers Paradise

acrylic on masonite board

24" x 15", 2025



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The Reading Room
acrylic on masonite board
24" x 14", 2025