

MOVING PICTURES IN A CANVAS



An innocuous image of a man makes up the canvas in Ranbir Kaleka's *Fables* from the House of Ibaan. The man sits pensively next to a table, with a jar of milk and coloured candles. And then, somewhere behind the viewer, a projector whirs, a shaft of light falls on the canvas and the man in the painting comes alive. Even his surroundings flutter into life — a butterfly flits by, a woman comes and fills the jar with milk, a child hops around and plays with fire. This oil and acrylic on canvas with video projections make up Kaleka's latest exhibition, *Fables*, at Saffronart Gallery in central Delhi.

Kaleka weaves reality with a subconscious dreamlike state through oil paintings, digital prints and video projections. While the gallery reverberates with music, the walls, showcasing five of Kaleka's works, are panoramic windows to the soul. "I use the physicality of a painting and create the aura of a presence. I do not want these to be seen as trick paintings. I deliberately deconstruct them, which allows a viewer to explore the work," he said.

His works give viewers a chance to explore the cottony world of dreams. Kaleka revels in the very uncertainty of his dreamlike artwork. "Since 1998, I have been using the two mediums, video and painting, to create a third meaning," says the Delhi-based artist.

His other works include *Conference of Birds and Beasts*, a vivid picture of animals sitting atop ruins, and *Eighteen Allegories of the Self*, an oil and acrylic on canvas with video projections in which candles light up and extinguish on their own. Kaleka's next stop with his art is Singapore and the India Art Fair next year.

*The exhibition is on at Saffronart Gallery, The Oberoi Hotel, till January 5.
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