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HANA AMANI

THE ABYSS

Artist Statement

The Abyss is an introspective exploration of the feminine subconscious in relation to the ocean. Growing up in Sri Lanka my personal connection to the ocean was volatile and ever evolving. I spent a majority of my childhood swimming and making art. It was my escape, liberation and how I processed emotions. I had always had an inborn spiritual connection to water and how it shaped my memory and life through trauma and healing.

In 2004 Sri Lanka was hit by one of the worst Tsunamis. That day I was supposed to go to the beach, but my mother was not feeling well and we stayed home. Many of my father's family members were washed away with the wave and it left the island in a perpetual state of deep mourning and grief for a long period of time. The wave affected the way I saw water for many years and still does. There was a slim chance that my existence would have ended that day. It made me realize the power water has to take away and rebirth life so effortlessly. It changed the way I dreamed at night. To this day when I'm faced with my deepest fears or insecurities I always dream of a Tidal Wave.

Over the Pandemic I felt many of these old insecurities emerge as well as new fears and unforeseen volatility in my life. Themes of destruction, chaos and instability took over my existence and the old dream of the wave returned to my thoughts and emotions. I dreamed of multiple tidal waves in my dreams and kept drowning in my subconscious for months till I finally decided to understand these fears through my practice. I was at a precipice of losing to my demons or trying to understand them in a creative way. And so started documenting aspects of my dreams and studying them from a point of semiotics, mythology and feminism. I spent months researching the motifs I saw in my dreams that were linked to trauma, memory and visual aspects of the ocean that kept repeating.

Each piece explores dreams and the concept of destruction and rebirth existing as a continuous cycle that plays throughout the subconscious. Overtime I began to research the more mystic meanings behind different images from seashells, ocean goddesses, ideas of sea creatures and how they have become part of our collective dream culture.

Destruction, chaos, rebirth and metamorphosis play an integral role in the collection similar to water. I believe women go through multiple cycles of destruction and rebirth throughout their

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lives and so wanted to visually explore this pattern between ocean ecosystems and the female body from the perspective of generating life cycles.

Some of my influences include elements of magic realism, surrealism and artists such as H.R. Giger, Ernst Heckel and Remedios Varo.

My intention is for the collection is to flow like a melancholic dream, a state of mind that is submerged in dreams and underwater realms, one that is explored in multiple layers of a dream state.

ABOUT

FLOW



In *Flow* I focus on the body of a woman, she wears shells as armour and has a look of melancholy upon her face. Around her flow stingrays that also have elements of vaginas to allude to the cycle of menstruation, growth and rebirth. Over time a shell will become harder yet develop more beauty and texture. In Mayan culture sting rays were used in sacrifice and seen as spirits of the water that could connect to the gods and the underworld. After the Tidal wave and relating similar feelings to the pandemic, I delved into themes of the underworld and so chose to start the collection with a reflection on death and other realms of the spirit world.

EMBRYO



During the wave I lost many young cousins in the water, reflecting on my family history there was also a theme of abortion and miscarriage with my women ancestors. This pain of loss I feel simultaneously through my life and have always felt that the eggs I carry inside me have traces of this trauma and therefore I seek to investigate these compartments of isolated pain that I carry in both my dna and subconscious. I believe that trauma is carried to the generations to come and that when in the womb we all exist in an abyss of our mothers that is inhabited by their fears, insecurities, hopes and dreams for our destinies, generating the soul we are to become.



METAMORPHOSIS

Fossils are an integral part of the ocean and measuring our biological timeline in relation to the ocean and evolution. I wanted to explore the transformation of cephalopods in juxtaposition to the body of women from an ancestral perspective. Like the women that make up our past bloodlines, I believe like a fossil memories, genetics and characteristics pass through time and combine when we are conceived both spiritually and physically.

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MEDUSA

An ethereal dreamscape.....

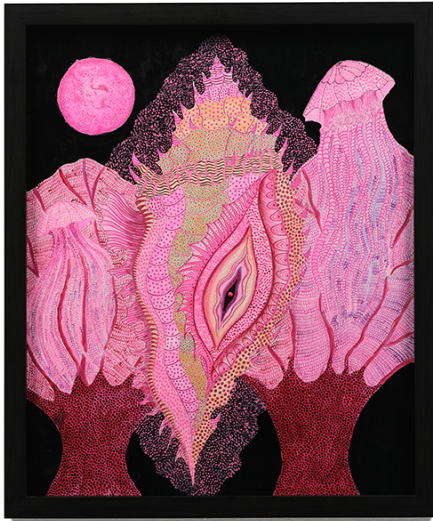


TIAMAT

Tiamat pays homage to the Ancient Babylonian primordial goddess of the sea. It was essential for me to research the history of the ocean and water in relation to women and ancient ocean mythology. She symbolises chaos of primordial creation. She is the ancient creator of the cosmos through a body of water.

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VENUS

We begin life in water, our bodies composed of water as well. In venus I wanted to paint an image of the origins of life and creation in its raw and uncensored feminine beauty protected by an old formed shell of ancestral memory.



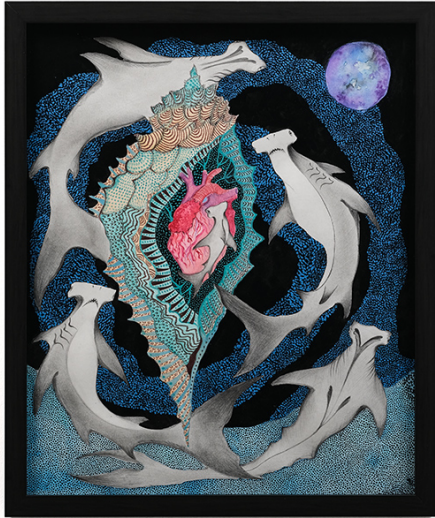
SUMMONING

Summoning took on a more mystic and intimate look into the cycles of life from an unfertilized egg and possessing elements and colour choices tied in with the menstrual cycle. This piece was made in reflection to the effect the moon and ocean tides have on menstrual cycles and to histories of feminine esoteric power and intuition with the cycles of the moon.

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PULSE



During the months of the pandemic when dreaming about the Tidal waves there were many moments of sharks protecting me from drowning. Growing up I had always found them mesmerizing yet terrifying. I spent hours learning about sharks in relation to our ecosystems and realized the false propaganda and image they had been given through media, literature and film leading back all the way to the poetry of Aristotle. Realizing they are in fact the most important apex predator in the ocean, my heart felt immense pain realizing how much we have twisted their place and reputation to suit our own selfish beliefs. In sonar I wanted to illuminate the essential aspect of sharks on earth and portray that with a cycle of tenderness and the more feminine and nurturing sides of sharks in particular hammerheads.



EDEN

In Eden I explored the gender fluidity that exists in terms of creation in the ocean. Seahorses have complex and beautiful societies with the most transformative and tender parental roles the fathers carrying the egg in their pouches. I wanted to explore an idyllic sense of Eden in terms of life and gender.

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ORBIT



In orbit I wanted to explore the matriarchal aspects of the oceans. Whales in particular work in systems of Matriarchy and share knowledge and ancient skills passed to their young pods from hunting to navigation and communication. I found this concept beautiful and intimate when reflecting how my own grandmothers and mother interacted with me growing up. I wanted to symbolise the importance of whales in our eco systems as well as they are the main framers of the ocean and are so deeply interconnected to our own existence on earth. Whales have deeply developed emotions and are cerebral, their sonar communication can reach a large radius and I found this similar to how I perceive communication in dreams. Something that is felt on a deep emotional cerebral level between people.

For more information, please contact the gallery at info@equinoxgallery.com or (604) 736 - 2405