

Nikhil Chaganlal

1961, Mumbai, India

Nikhil Chaganlal is a self-taught artist who has developed a distinctive technique of painting on Masonite. He works with acrylic and oil paints, combined with chemical sealants used in the fishing boats industry. Often painting at night by candlelight, his works carry a soft, luminous quality.

His process is meticulous and time-intensive—built through multiple layers, each dried in sunlight before the next is applied. Once the surface achieves a rich impasto texture, the painting is chemically sealed, making it completely waterproof and resistant to wear.

His works reflect an inward journey shaped by a disturbed childhood. They function as painterly autobiographies, where traces of people from his past emerge subtly. Objects and furniture often carry hidden narratives, revealing emotions that oscillate between restless sexuality and a search for spirituality.

Chaganlal has held several solo exhibitions in India and abroad, and his works are part of important private collections. He currently lives and works in Alibaug.