

The New York Times

Sunday, May 6, 2007

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

The Details Are in the Beauty

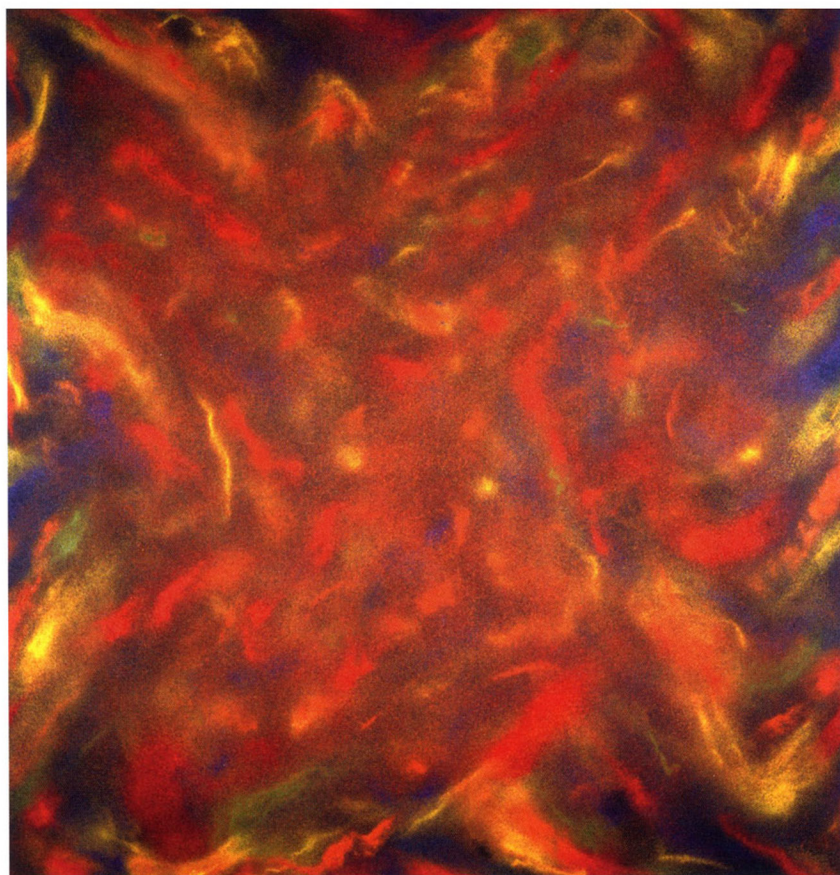
Hints at the Painstaking Technique Behind Natvar Bhavsar's Captivating Paintings

By BENJAMIN GENOCCHIO

Mr. Bhavsar applies the base using a sifting technique with a screen, during which layers of fine, concentrated pigment are sprinkled and drizzled over the canvas (or paper) laid out on the floor so that the artist can walk around the painting and work on it from all sides.

This part of the painting is built up over weeks in a process of gradual accumulation, or sedimentation. Some paintings are left like this; on others, the artist spills pigment through a minute cone to create small linear and curvilinear forms, which together form the shape of a square in the middle of the image. Remarkably, neither technique involves the artist's touching the canvas.

Mr. Bhavsar cannot claim originality for his methods. The techniques are derived in part from an Indian tradition of sand paintings made for religious rituals, and the materials that he uses are similar to the brightly colored pigments used during the springtime festival of Holi, when Indians come out on the streets and throw colored powders up in



Collection of Liora Manne and Charles Peck

**Abstract, hybrid artworks
that engage the eyes and
resonate emotionally.**

COLOR CONSCIOUS

Two pigment-on-canvas works by the Indian-born artist Natvar Bhavsar: "K-Etu" (1974), left, and "Vanaraavan" (1990).