

# Slow is the New Urgent

Curated by Avik Debdas

Welcome to the back alley of a grand bazaar, where the riddles of neon promises and the relentless hum of commerce meet the quiet whisper of introspection. A crawling trail of turtles urges you to take a deep breath— to pause, think, reflect, and engage with the act of slowness. It is a ‘thinking passage’, a liminal corridor that takes the viewer from the consumerist spectre of desire to durable dreams.

‘Slow Looking’ is a practice that encourages deep, sustained observation. As Carl Honoré suggests, embracing slowness can rehumanise us, allowing for a more profound connection to art and by extension to ourselves. The exhibition invites you to look into each artwork carefully and meditatively for the emergence of slow art, which the literary scholar Arden Reed describes as an experience that "waits mutely—patiently—for us to animate them."

While navigating with the colourful turtles, one may find an empty cloud gathered on the ceiling reflecting how our lives oscillate between the material, memory, and consumption. Artists play with the seduction of spectacle and the fetishising of commodities as their works silently ponder the poetry of lost value. While crossing the sanctuary of muted birds, televisions blare a chorus of toxicity. In between, one may trace the origins of consumerism—sailing on merchant ships, rolling forward with the rhythm of rail engines, soaring through the war-fuelled skies of industrial ambition. Each passage wrote its own allure of fleeting fashion, a cycle of desire that reshaped landscapes, dyed rivers in synthetic excess, and left behind towering relics of plastic that will outlive generations.

Beyond this fervent glamour, there are omnipresent eyes and ears for data surveillance. Every choice, pause, click is recorded, monetised, and fed back into an algorithm that curates our next impulse. Desires are no longer our own— they are engineered, optimised, and sold back to us in the language of urgency. Even our attention is now a commodity.

In this passage the act of slowing down is a refutation—a way to resist and unlearn the urgency that markets script into our daily lives. Here, contemplation out values consumption, and to pause is to defy.