

SAKSHI GUPTA



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Sakshi Gupta recycles scrap-materials, often with industrial origins, to produce sculptures that transform the meaning of the materials to provoke spiritual contemplation. This emphasis on materiality results in an evocative and ephemeral lightness and fragility. Through this engagement with material weight, Gupta's works can be understood as a commentary on the contemporary world – highlighting the shift from the economics of heavy industry to the weightless age of information and technology.

The spectacular sculpture *Some Beast*, 2008, uses rusty iron to create the form of a suspended ceiling fan that itself resembles a writhing beast, in the process of moulting and shrugging off its skin which cascades to the floor. Its domineering presence above the viewer imposes some of the terror and obeisance ceremonially accorded to both the mythical and religious beasts of traditional culture and the machines of war today. Yet the zoomorphic engendering of a mundane domestic object also evokes vulnerability and weariness, highlighting how exhausting the process of transformation in the modern world can be.

Gupta also draws heavily on personal experience. The body of work *Nothing is Freedom, Freedom is Everything, Everything is You*, 2007, refers to the contradictions faced by young people: the hopes and expectations that are not guaranteed to materialise; the struggles and unexpected joys; and new opportunities to make the personal choices that may not have existed for previous generations. The first piece in this series uses discarded locks, welded together to create a collection of seven pillows, each

weighing 20kg. Instead of offering rest, these pillows evoke sleepless nights in a claustrophobic environment. The second work uses nuts, bolts, cogs and bearings arranged in a symmetrical pattern on a horizontal surface suggesting a traditional carpet, representing the highs and lows of life. When displayed, the viewer is invited to walk on it, to experience the contradiction of the unrelenting discomfort of walking on a simulation of lush carpet. The third sculpture is a figurative bust made out of discarded factory waste which Gupta has explained represents her belief that freedom of choice exists within individuals.

Landscape of Waking Memories, 2007, combines wire and mesh with chicken feathers to create an object that at first glance resembles a soft, sensual quilt but, on closer inspection, reveals itself to be sharp and unyielding. Gupta has commented how 'the places/people and situations that appear to be comforting sometimes become the source of unease themselves, making me re-evaluate life from its very foundation.'

Gupta has also produced external site-specific sculptures, during residencies and at the twice-yearly artists' workshop in Rajasthan, India. Continuing to use the principles of working with impoverished materials, her exterior works combine discarded debris from local factories with natural found objects such as roots, fronds and feathers. The objects she creates are frequently anthropomorphised and evoke deliberate unease and anxiety to represent the sense of discomfort and conflict that the artist feels in her own life. R.M.



Sakshi Gupta
Freedom is Everything, 2007
Plywood and scrap metal
365.7 x 213 cm





Sakshi Gupta
Nothing is Freedom, 2007
Metal locks
73.6 x 45.7 x 20.3 cm