

Sakshi Gupta – ‘Bed’, ‘Chair’, ‘Claws’

Sakshi Gupta is a young Delhi artist doing a three- month art residency at the Bangalore Art Centre on the Hosur road. The Centre is located in a furniture factory with plenty of waste materials, which the owner kindly permits the artists to use freely. The works in the show are created from materials found there and in the fields and factories around. Sakshi uses the principles of ‘poor’ art, transforming found circumstances and banal materials to make poetic objects.

The Bed looks sumptuous and sensual from afar, like an object of luxury, perhaps a wedding bed with a coverlet of gold and silver. It is only up close that the surface reveals itself to be entirely covered with sharp, thin, glittering steel rods stuck together with a rubber solution that gives it the brown-gold stains, spilling out onto the floor around. The bed is not soft, it is encased in armour; it is a yogi’s bed of nails. Peacock feathers spill out between the steely pillows.

The Chair, was a use-less chair, an un-sittable chair, constructed from thin fragile wood strips from a factory close to the Centre. After it was made, the chair was given a ceremonial death rite, by floating it on a raft of coconut fronds on a lake nearby and drowning it in the water. The wood may be swollen and shapeless now. Sakshi’s plan was to exhibit it in that state in a glass box filled with water in the gallery, like an object in formaldehyde, along with photographs of its floating and submergence.

The third work, Claws, is made up of the roots of rose bushes that were bought from a farmer in the area. They are treated as found objects, hanging down from a height on fibrous ropes and proliferating profusely in clusters. The familiar root shapes appear weird and claw-like with the displacement from their natural place beneath the earth to the naked air.

Perhaps the comforts of the home can also be the ‘discomforts’ of the home, suffocating and oppressive. Beds, chairs and rose bushes can also turn around and hit you!

Pushpamala N
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Post Script

Sakshi also goes to Rajasthan twice a year to run an artist’s workshop initiated by Mumbai artist Chintan Upadhyay in his native village. She has made open air sculptures there using local materials. The villagers around have been intrigued by the activities of the city artists. They have now started their own museums in three villages where an object from each home in the village has been collected, catalogued, labeled and displayed.