

COLD MATERIALS, COMPLEX OBJECTS

CONCEPTUAL OR ALLEGORICAL CONTENT ASIDE, IT IS ALWAYS REFRESHING WHEN A WOMAN ARTIST successfully tackles a medium that is traditionally considered as belonging to the domain of men. Working primarily with scrap metal, sometimes combined with chicken or peacock feathers and other less unwieldy materials, Sakshi Gupta infuses her medium with sensitivity and flexibility.

For her recent solo at GallerySKE, Bangalore, from December 12th, 2009, to January 16th, 2010, Gupta took on some of the big existential questions such as the ones she posed in her artist's statement: "Is deterioration as beautiful a process as creation? Is reality less real than artifice?" A beautifully peeling wall work composed of delicate scraps of metal which took metaphorical 'wing' as they floated off the surface, for example, reflected her internal musings on the processes of material and personal change. If chaos, evolution, personal turmoil and the potential for transformation were her main areas of concern – in short, the very stuff of life – the forms she chose left space for the viewer's own interpretations.

If Gupta's earlier pieces suggested the potential for mechanical motion, such as her large ceiling fan sculpture that was included in the group exhibition, *Current*, in 2008, works in this newest body actually took on movement. A large floor work composed of scrap metal, glass beads and a motor undulated gently like the ocean's tide, recalling the observant viewer to the breath of a living body, the movement of the earth or the internal shifts in one's perception or emotions. While the works themselves were impressive, even more so was Gupta's ability to transform apparently useless, cold materials into objects that spoke of deeper realms. Heidi Fichtner



Sakshi Gupta. *Untitled.* Metal scrap, iron frame.
90" x 105" x 12.5". 2009.