

Starting from trash

Cigarette butts, sugarcane bagasse, urine and blood are some ingredients that make Prashant Pandey's debut worth retaining

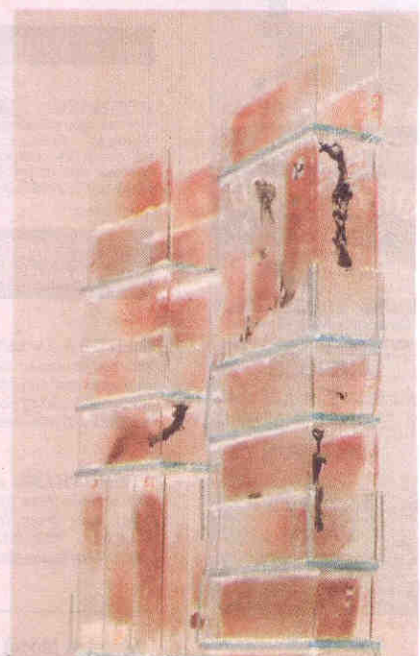
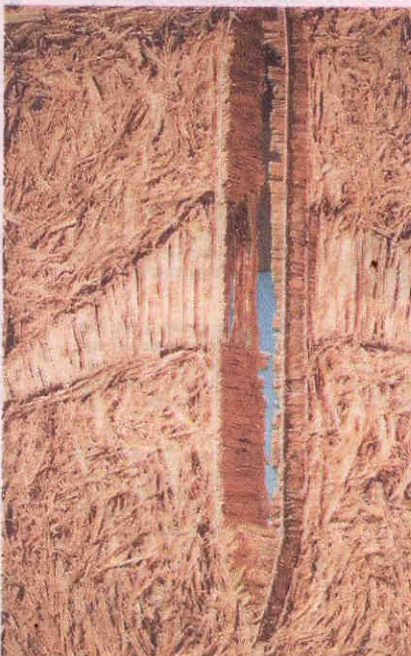
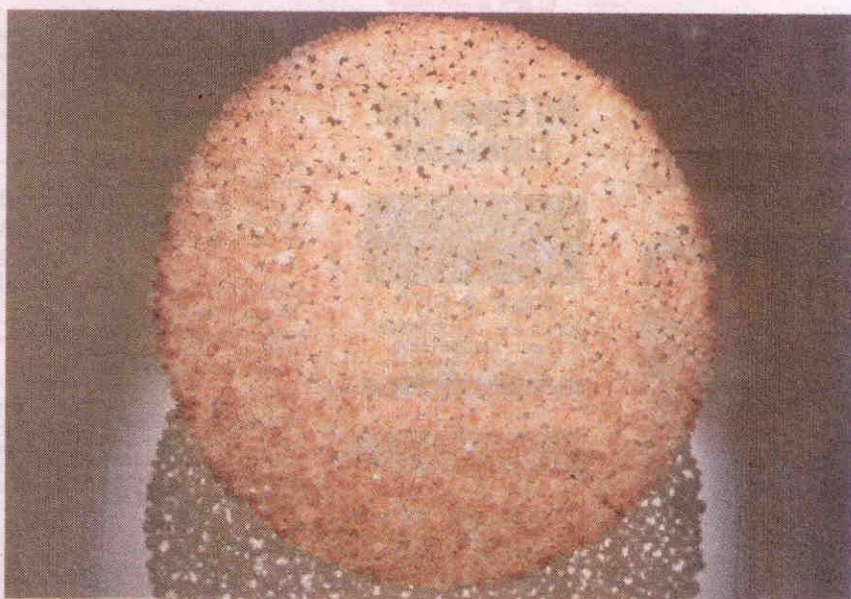
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Ensconced in a glass container is a delicately sprawled cobweb, its maker having departed but the tiny bubble of a carcass still hanging in there among other victims. The craft would not have inspired awe, given the domestic banality, had it not been for the meticulously constructed wonders that surround it. Prashant Pandey has erected on his own sculptures from sugarcane residue, cigarette butts, urine and blood.

The introductory exhibit houses a two-sided frame of sugarcane bagasse, housing the fuselage of a jet plane. The straggly texture of the material evokes a building crumbling, tragedy fashioned by a 9/11-like prank. Alternatively it could merely be a meditation on materiality, the propensity for things to fall apart, and the possibilities of what can emerge when all you have is dust.

An embroidery of stamped cigarette butts has transformed nicotine-stained filters into flowers, the jaundiced petals of which house an alluring play of lux — the shadow of this origami creates the illusion of a coruscating zodiac chart, twinkling yonder.

Yet another installation employs a Jenga-meets-Saw materiality, where clinical glass slides of blood samples constitute a macabre Lego. Speaking of other fluids, and beating perhaps even the worst excesses of Marc Quinn, urine (the artist's and a cow's) has been painstakingly collected over the past eight months and injected into tiny, cushion-shaped plastic bags, the sort used by mofussil tuck shops. These urine-filled Chiclets converge to form the skull of a female foetus, biology that Indians have developed the bad habit of flushing down the drain. The political commentary of this installation seems a bit forced here though



Cigarette butts (top), bagasse (left) and blood-stained glass slides (right) have been recycled by artist Prashant Pandey to create interesting pieces of art

given the formal, conceptual pleasure of this awe-inspiring show. But the slough of a lizard tail made from incinerated bank notes is sign enough that you can place

your bets on this talent
Shelf-Life by Prashant Pandey opens today at Gallery Maskara, 3rd Pasta Lane, Colaba Tel: 22023056