



[In]Sanity In The Age Of Reason

The exhibition takes its inspiration on from the manifesto “4000 AD” written by Stanley Brown, nuances of which have continued to resonate in Vibha Galhotra’s artistic practice in the past few years. Galhotra employs the manifesto metaphorically to highlight the environmental concerns of our me in this age of Anthropocene, centering the five elements of water, earth, fire, air, and space.

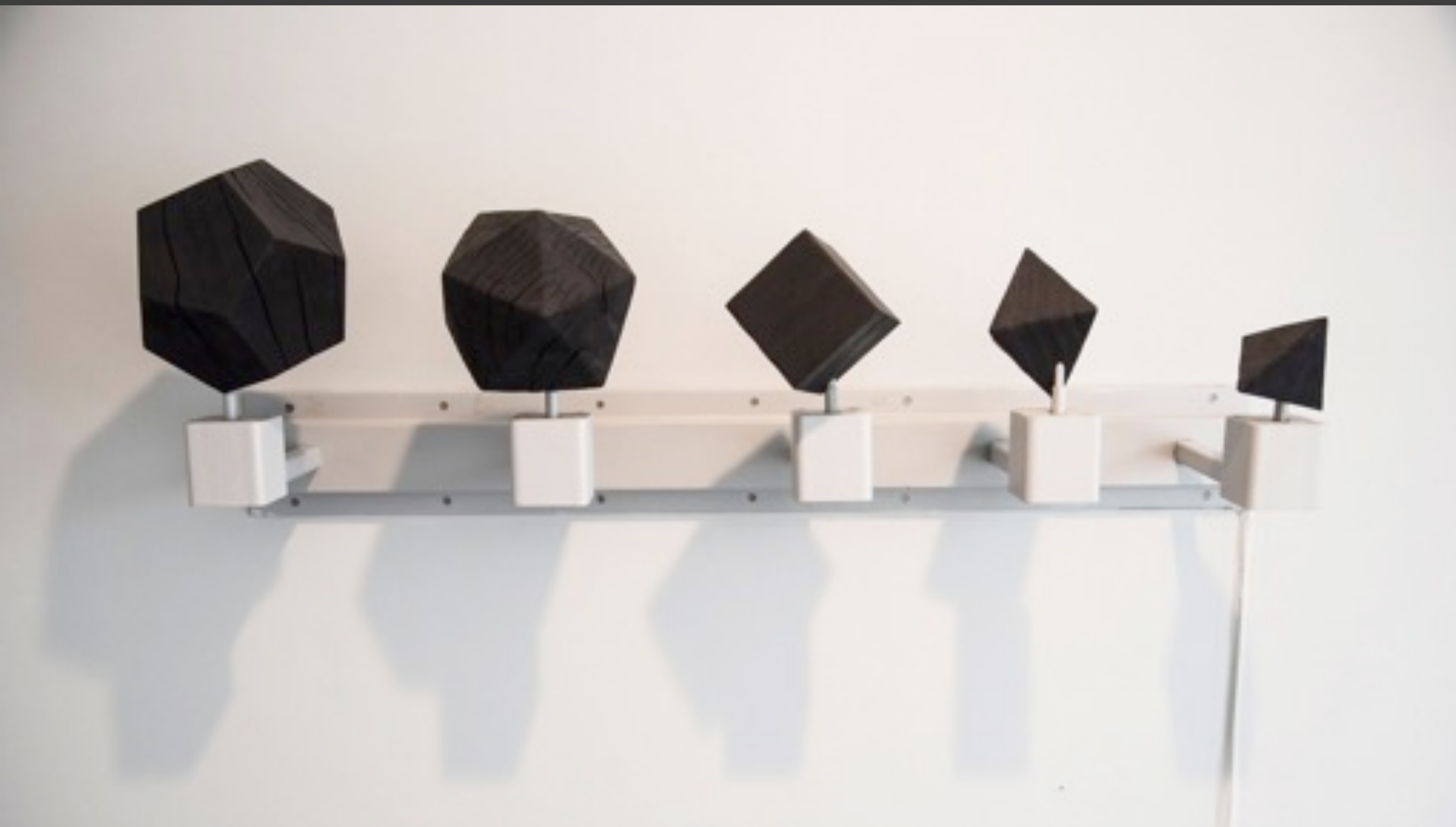
[In]Sanity In The Age Of Reason is a series of observations on,experiences and experimentation on formed through the objects constructed on the bases of beliefs from the past, realities of today and imagination of future. The absence of the ecology and the presence of technology, absence of environment on the earth and the presence of one way ticket to the mars.

Including film, photographs, objects, chance drawing, performance, sound and objects, the works are based on familiar and unanticipated elements.

This exhibition on constructs a surrealist parallel to resonate with elements (panchabutha) in today’s time. The objects themselves questions on the utopia or dystopia, real or unreal, present or absent, construction on or destruction on,validity or void, holocene or anthropocene in the mess we live in.







Elements, Motors, Wood, Metal, 16 x 46 x 13.5 in, 2017

The work FIVE ELEMENTS is inspired by the mathematical three-dimensional forms of the Platonic solids, named after the ancient Greek philosopher Plato, who discovered them around 350 A.D. to represent the atomic pattern of the five classical elements: earth, water, fire, air and ether.

The mathematical symmetry of these solids which are composed of congruent regular convex polygons with identical faces meeting at a vertex, led Plato to theorize in his dialogue 'Timaeus' that these solids were the building blocks of nature or life itself. To the five solids composed including tetrahedron, cube, octahedron, dodecahedron, or icosahedron, he attributed the atomic patterns of the elements fire, earth, air, water and ether or cosmos respectively.

Through this depiction, Plato presented an account of the formation of the universe and believed it to be "the handiwork of a divine Craftsman... who, imitating an unchanging and eternal model, imposes mathematical order on a preexistent chaos to generate the ordered universe (kosmos)." Impressed with these geometric shapes which lie at the cross-section of science and spirituality, Galhotra tried to revisit the formlessness of these elements which give form to everything that exists.



Acceleration , ghungroos, fabric, wood and steel, 117 X 360 in, 2017



Acceleration, ghungroos, fabric, wood and steel, 117 X 360 in, 2017

The work ACCELERATION, is based on Professor Will Steffen's climate change graph "**The Great Acceleration**", which shows the changes in Earth's ecosystem and atmosphere owing to changing economic patterns of production and consumption, the latter especially gaining momentum post the 1950s.

Ghungroos, which have been a trademark of Galhotra's practice, provide fluidity, and therefore tactfully employed by her to deconstruct the anthropogenic trends and reconstruct Steffen's graph. The metallic sheen of this graphical representation is ambiguous, since while the shiny surface draws the viewer close, bringing him face to- face with Anthropogenic realities, yet the aesthetic appeal is almost evasive of the very dire realities the work represents, in the process, presenting a satire of sorts concerning our attitude towards our environment.

Permanent Collection: Kiran Nadar Museum of Art
New Delhi, India



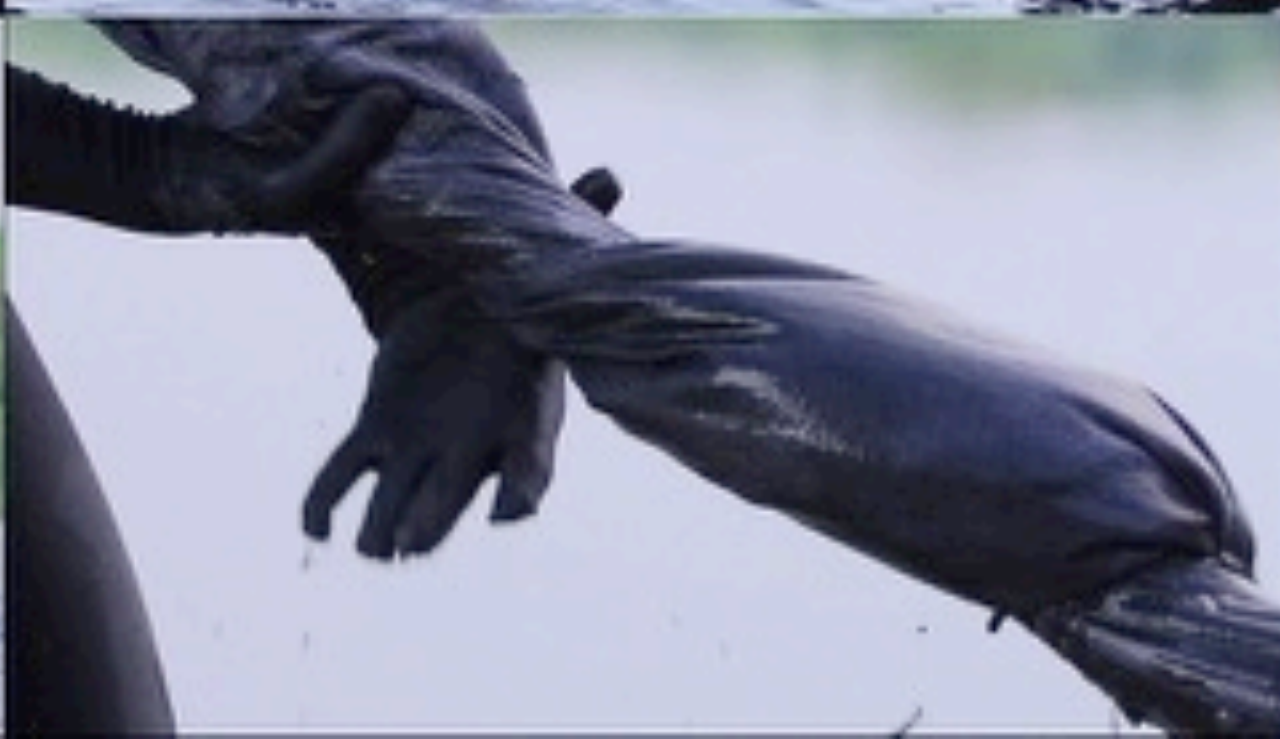
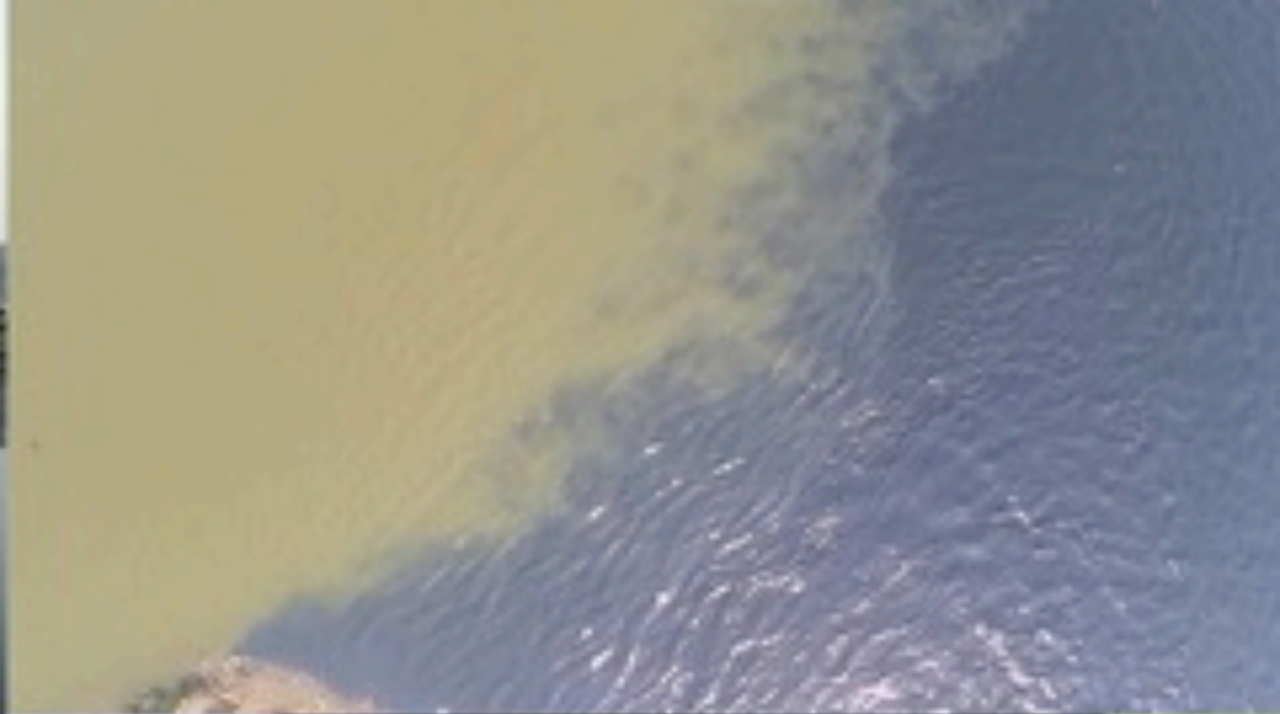


MANTHAN / film duration 10:44 min / 2015

Water or Jal is the underlying concern of the work MANTHAN, a short film. The element water is dualistic in character, being eternal in its atomic form and yet being perishable in the form of water bodies. The film depicts four people dressed in rubber suits churning the sludge and sediments from the river, thereby invoking Hindu mythology where the gods churn the ocean to obtain the nectar of immortality. By referencing this immortality,

Galhotra examines the ecological threat facing the sacred Yamuna river and its repercussions on the mortality of those who come in contact with it. Focusing on the faecal content and chemical pollutants that have polluted the river to the extent of turning it into a sewage, its continued supply of drinking water to the residents of Delhi forces the viewer to contemplate the implications of the latter on not only the health of its immediate consumers, but also the larger ecosystem of the city.

Through the work, Galhotra urges us to find a solution before it is too late.









Remains, 8 x 5.5 x 94 in, fabric and sediment steel stands, 2016





WALLS OF BOMB
The walls of the Museum of Modern Art
in New York City
were made of concrete and steel
reinforced with
rebar.





BREATH BY BREATH, digital print on archival paper, 36 x 72 in each, 2016-17

The work *Breath by Breath* allegorizes Air or Vayu, one of the principal constituent elements, according to the classical sources. Though air pollution levels in most urban areas have been a matter of serious concern for quite some time, the scientific data generated through the National Ambient Air Monitoring Network hardly helps to gauge the degradation in the quality of the air we breathe in. Galhotra therefore feels the need of her artistic intervention to creatively translate the scientific data and visually communicate this pathetic state of air quality.

While the current system of air quality information does not facilitate people's participation in air quality improvement efforts, "a breath of fresh air" seems to be the distant memory of an endangered or even extinct experience.

Further, the ever-increasing consumerism has led to such an ominous state, that the lack of natural resources is being rapidly capitalized. Products like air-purifiers and cans of "breath of fresh air", have commodified the most essential resources for sustenance of human life, stratifying the socio-economic structure. The work was produced in 2016-17 when the air pollution levels became so unbearable, that it made Galhotra question if the day was near when we would be buying air followed by water.

The performance was staged at those air monitoring sites from where scientific data were collected in the city and presented as a satire of the living situation in the new capital driven urbanity. The morbid aesthetics of the polluted industrial landscapes, dotted by the artist's personal presence, force us to introspect on our actions. It makes us realize the extreme limits to which we have pushed nature, and urges us to responsibly owe up, before it is too late to amend.



BREATH BY BREATH , digital print on archival paper, 36 x 72 in each, 2016-17



BREATH BY BREATH , digital print on archival paper, 36 x 72 in each, 2016-17



CLEANSING
Video
Duration - 13:44 mins
Camera - Souvik Bhattacharya
2016



CLEANSING / video / 2016

The work CLEANSING is an amalgamation of the concerns associated with the elements Air and Earth. Environmental pollution due to mining and quarrying activities coupled with the rise in road traffic and congestion is leading to escalating dust levels. The latter is causing dust deposition on plants and vegetation in turn adversely affecting internal plant processes like photosynthesis, respiration, transpiration, and absorption of phytotoxic gaseous pollutants. In this rapidly changing world, we, humans, considering ourselves to be adaptable creatures barely acknowledge the modern-day pollution levels and passively accept it to be the new reality of the world we inhabit.

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TIME SYMPHONY OR CACOPHONY / steel and sound / 96 x 168 x 24 in / 2016-17

Ether or Akasha, the most pivotal yet subtle of elements, represents the space the other elements fill in.

The origin of ether is shabda or sound in its primordial, unmanifested form, in the form of vibrations which emerge long before they take the form of sound in the ear. Sound and ether are, therefore, inseparable. As a homage to these sound vibrations, the work TIME SYMPHONY OR CACOPHONY, therefore, presents an interactive sound wall incorporating sounds from different time periods, which can be triggered on touch at multiple points.

Incorporating both positive and negative sounds of our times and the energy, which moves us, the sound waves connect us to other living and nonliving beings. The work, then, will create a symphony or rather cacophony of sounds, orchestrating the atmosphere of our present chaotic times.





MARKS / linoleum and foot print / 18 x 30 in / 2016-17

The work, MARKS, inclines towards the element Earth or Prithvi, resulting from the unknown participation of people walking on linoleum mats laid out at different public places including school, market, parking lot, temple, bank post-demonetization (November 2016), hospital, traffic, metro station, spice market, etc.

Resonating with Stanley Brouwn's practice which explored the impact of our daily actions on the environment, the work captures the abstract imagery of people's footprints, metaphorically representing the imprints or rather stains we are leaving behind on our planet.





MARKS (Process) / linoleum and foot print / 18 x 30 in / 2016-17



The work COMBUSTION is based on the ancient water clock concept encapsulating the element of Fire or Agni. The clock, which denotes time, is made using a big pan filled with burnt oil, containing a small bowl with a pinhole that measures time intervals.

Resonating with fire's essential characteristic i.e. heat, the use of diesel instead of water is a metaphor for humans running out of time to save our planet from becoming ashes through the overuse of fossil fuels.

COMBUSTION / steel, brass and brunt fossil fuel / 60”dia / 2016



COMBUSTION / steel, brass and brunt fossil fuel / 60"dia / 2016

