



Flight, Sarika Bajaj

Sarika Bajaj

Sarika Bajaj uses naturally discarded feathers of pigeons and crows in her artworks. She goes to the extent of painfully sourcing them from intersections in Mumbai where these birds gather, further cleaning them and arranging them according to size even before she can begin a work. What started as an initial fascination with feathers due to their aesthetic beauty has over the years evolved to hold deep spiritual significance. Birds are considered as sacred in shamanic lore and are known to have healing energies. Sarika has been known to explore the mystery of life, unseen forces and even death and decay in her artwork. On asking her about her roots with spirituality she says, 'In a country where we live you are constantly exposed to various rituals, even as a child you see these rituals, so subconsciously, I feel they have always been a part of me, and also, I think it is my personality. I have always been very spiritually inclined.' Her latest works see the incorporation of other sacred materials such as the colours red and black as well as threads and ropes. Though is there a larger message behind her artworks? 'I have come across a lot of people who consider birds as pests. Honestly I have never looked at them that way, as a child I would feed them. I hope in some way I can change the perception of people towards birds through my work.' She tells me, as her artworks continue to immortalise the spirit of these birds as spiritual symbols.

Text Supriya Jain