

WALKING AWAY / COMING A WAY

SUDARSHAN SHETTY

Untitled, 2012

Hand-carved teak wood, acrylic, water pump

370 x 352 x 352 cm

Twenty-pillared cenotaph – Water

A cenotaph (empty tomb) is a tangible and physical depiction of a stubbornness to not forget. Monuments are built in order to remember using a simple logic;

they provide a physical presence as a response to someone's absence. As an object it is inherently futile, but the sheer effort of construction, of carrying out the task, describes the devotion and the longing and the missing perhaps more strongly than the monument itself. An effort has been made.



The work consists of a twenty-pillared wooden cenotaph. From a hole in the ceiling of the monument, water constantly falls through its centre into a hole in the base. In the most simplistic terms, a seemingly endless source of life is passing through a definite, finished description of a death, a conflict of stasis and movement. The architecture is somewhat imposing; the internal space of the monument does not invite the viewer to step through, or linger for a period of time. It is to be viewed from a certain distance, noticed for what it is as something sincere, and then respected. However the solemnity and the silence that the structure would seem to demand is undermined and broken by the constant movement and sound of the water falling. The precision and the finality of the cenotaph are brought into question; death is not an end, nor even a separation (Malle). The water keeps flowing regardless, its sound alone rupturing the stability of the monument's meaning; we are refused a moment's silence in front of it, time to think back to what has been lost; we are constantly being brought forward again, to the present, to the falling water; the insistence of an image of life.

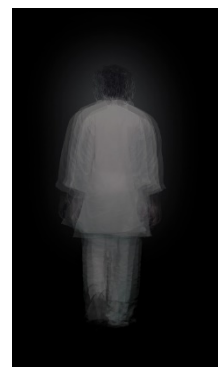
The image of a figure walking away from the space into a mysterious vacuum perhaps is symbolic of the human condition of having to leave. To leave perhaps as a condition for the space to fill with other presences. The walk in its continuous loop may represent a theatrical act of 'leaving' as much an assertion of life within that very act.

Untitled, 2017

HD video, 1', loop

Ed. 1/3+1 AP

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SUDARSHAN SHETTY BIO

Born in 1961 in Mangalore, India, contemporary artist Sudarshan Shetty lives and works in Mumbai. Shetty, initially trained as a painter in Sir J. J. School of Art, later turning to sculpture, installations, video,

sound and performance which now account for all of his output, explores the fundamental ontological challenges presented by our immersion in a world of objects.

Represented by prestigious galleries as his hybrid constructions question the fusion of Indian and Western traditions as well as domestic concerns and the notion of movement. Shetty, with his works being exhibited in respected art platforms in India's contemporary world as Rolls-Royce art programme, National Gallery of Modern Art, Kochi-Muziris, participated in major art organizations like Sydney Biennial, Vancouver Biennial, Art Basel, and curated Kochi-Muziris Biennial in 2016.

His recent shows include 'A Song A Story' for the Rolls-Royce Art Programme, 2016, 'Shoonya Ghar – Empty Is This House', NGMA, New Delhi and at the 20th Biennale of Sydney, 2016, 'Mimic Momento', Galerie Daniel Templon, Brussels, 2015, 'Constructs Constructions', curated by Roobina Karode, Kiran Nadar Museum of Art, New Delhi, 2015, 'A Passage' Staatliche Museum, Schwerin, Germany, 2015 'every broken moment, piece by piece', GALLERYYSKE, New Delhi, 2014, 'The pieces earth took away', Galerie Krinzinger, Vienna, 2012, 'Critical Mass', Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Tel Aviv, 2012, 'Indian Highway', Ullens Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing, 2012, 'The Matters Within: New Contemporary Art of India', curated by Betti-Sue Hertz, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco, 2011, 'Paris-Delhi-Bombay', Centre Pompidou, Paris, 2011, 'Sympathy for the Devil', curated by Walter Vanhaerents and Pierre-Olivier Rollin, Vanhaerents Art Collection, Brussels, 2011, 'India Inclusive', World Economic Forum, Davos, 2011, 'Contemplating the Void', curated by Nancy Spector, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, 2010, Vancouver Biennale, Vancouver, 2009, among others.