

# The green connection...

**H**ER INSTALLATIONS heave a sigh of green, while the wide, white space accommodates various forms. The forms vie for individual identity, they seem to rebel for the space they occupy but soon seem to exist peacefully as if they have compromised with their current status.

Titled "Navigating Space/s", Avantika Bawa's installations posted at Nature Morte in New Delhi is all about infinite scope of the space on which a touch of green seize all attention.

Explains this Savannah-based artist, curator and a teacher in the foundation department of the Savannah College of Art and Design in The United States, "The space in my installations are my urge to explore questions that surround me when it comes to my existence in the country of my work and the country of my birth. The green in it is foliage that I find both in Delhi and Savannah."

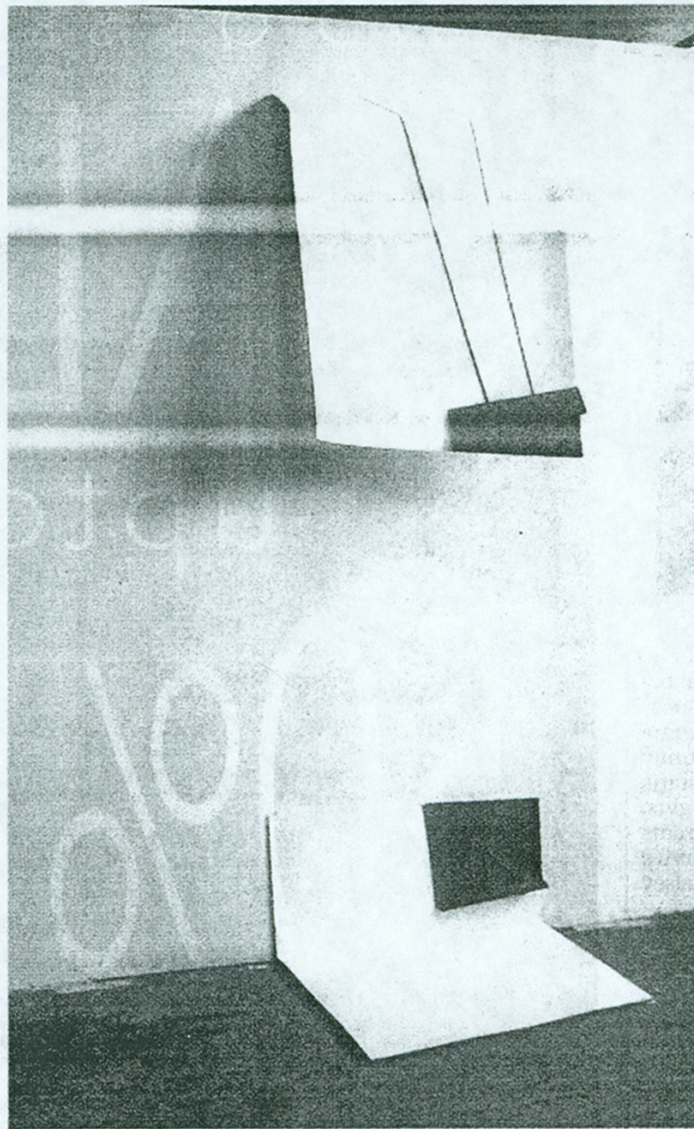
And the green for her also is an effort to branch off from blue, grey and white shades that she earlier enormously worked in.

"It started to give me monotonous and dull feeling," hence the choice. For her, green also stands for decay, nuclear waste and pollution. "In the US, it also stands for Irish civilisation, political parties and so on. So my works are also a metaphorical statement that connects Delhi and Savannah," she says.

Bawa, who has extensively exhibited her works across the globe, finds Delhi lacking in an awareness for installations.

"Delhi is young and hungry

*Savannah-based artist, curator and teacher of art and design Avantika Bawa shows her works in New Delhi's Nature Morte. RANA SIDDIQUI tries to get into the artist's mind.*



when it comes to installations. It is very keen too, to know what exactly can be explored through this medium."

Bawa, who completed her Bachelor in Fine Arts from Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda in 1995, and then flew to Chicago for further studies, finds that art scene has changed much since those days.

"Space, museums, curators, audience and buyers together make art happen anywhere. Delhi needs to have more critics and alternate venues for serious exhibitions. It's high time it took risks in art experiments keeping the commercial value aside. Selectors too need to take risks now," she points out.

Not that Indian artists are taking risks when it comes to exhibiting their works abroad or working there in the realm of art.

"Unfortunately Indian artists abroad are too scared of taking risks. They end up exhibiting their works that identify themselves as Indians than artists belonging to no country. In some cases, it can be justified. But in the West, all kinds of art is happening in colour, content and lingua. So there is a lot of scope for dialogues between art from the East and from that of the West. Why can't they just be open to that?"

A valid question?

Bawa's works are on display at the gallery till next Saturday.

**'Split' (green) in mixed media by Avantika Bawa posted at Nature Morte in New Delhi.**