



Giving art a shove, onto world stage

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GLOBAL art is a vast expanse... and artists in this part of the country can, at best, keep guessing the dynamics determining its paradigm. Ah! But as Avantika Bawa, professor of foundation at Savannah College Of Art And Design, came humming 'the whole world is my oyster...' carrying it in a carry-bag, students of Government College of Art had a hands-on feel of the works of contemporary artists from USA & U K. And suddenly, amidst mediocre exhibitions exploding all over you, the atmosphere was thick with excitement, contemplation & probing the fundamental essentials of art. So curator Avantika's cause celebre - to make exhibition an organic vibrant affair - spilled out from her specially designed bag, as one after another drawing to the accompaniment of some molten musical tunes reconstructed the vision of 40 odd artists. Can vision emanate out of nothingness? Nay. An artist's immediate world always filters down. So a lot of work was in reaction to the September 11 New York tragedy. James Strum's

response stood frozen in tongue-in-cheek cryptic humorous cartoons titled 'Return to Normal' and here, this montaging of tear drops with the message *Carry On spoke* in an eloquent way combing beauty with poignancy. The work that evoked maximum queries was 'Yellow Dot With Kwiatowski' - just a reflection of feet juxtaposed with a yellow dot. But the appeal lay in combination of techniques - graphite, gouache & sliver point, absolutely untried realm here. But warns Avantika, "Contemporary is not merely adoption of new techniques. Medium is just that... a means to an end - what you do with it will finally define you." So where does she, an alumnus of Baroda College Of Art feel Indian art is placed? "Many an Indian art works, especially those of artists from Bombay, Delhi & Baroda, could stand up to scrutiny globally... even otherwise, Indian art is very much happening..." This lovely Punjabi artist is determined not only to give it a shove in the right direction but to cement bridges. Indeed what better way than art to create a dialogue and to soar unimpeded, sans baggage of any kind sailing along on wings of creativity alone!