

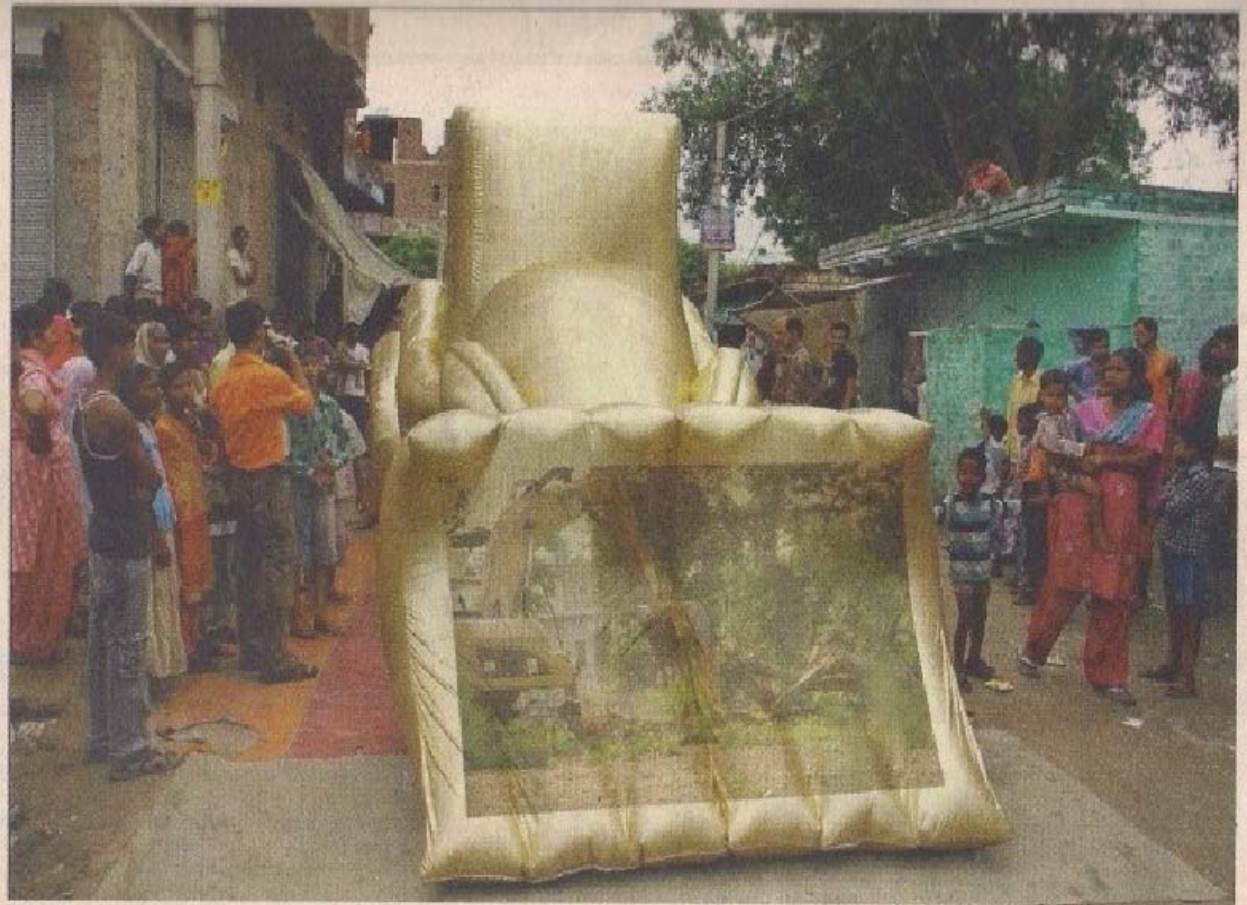
Monster's day out

VIBHA GALHOTRA has come up with a gigantic installation in an attempt to make people aware on why we should protect Mother Earth. The artist tells DIVYA KAUSHIK that she strongly feels about environmental issues

Her popularity emerged from a beehive made from *ghungroos*. And now it is going to spread across the Capital in the form of a gigantic earth-moving machine. Artist Vibha Galhotra believes in larger-than-life frames and feels such objects are an easy way to grab attention of the masses. The artist, known for her massive installation prepared from over 8,000 *ghungroos*, has now come up with another art work, *Neo Monster*, that looks exactly like an earth-moving machine made out of an inflated balloon. This art work is just an extension of the kind of works based on environmental issues she has been indulged in over the last three years. While her beehive installation reflected a human condition in a busy metro, *Neo Monster* is a satire on the rapid growth and development our society is witnessing these days.

"The gigantic installation is already a head turner. Wherever it goes, people are looking at it, clicking and talking about it. As its creator, this positive response brings a smile on my face. I want my artworks reach a majority of people as it would help me convey my thoughts and messages to one and all on importance of conservation of earth and its surroundings," says Galhotra who hails from Chandigarh and studied printmaking there. Later, she cultivated her love for sculpting at Santiniketan and then moved to Delhi. Wherever she went, rapid growth and destruction in society concerned her.

"It is said every artist is attached to a few things and issues he/she watches around. I feel strongly about environmental issues and I feel I should do maximum about it as an artist. The idea of *Neo Monster* occurred to me when I was thinking about the changes I have seen in cities like Chandigarh and Delhi. Today, we have become completely dependent on machines and are deriving pleasure out of their use without even realising the harm they are causing to nature. The topic has become more like a fashion statement but I want to work on it with full commitment and dedication. I don't know if I would be able to



make some difference to people's attitude. I hope my artworks make people think and discuss the issue. My aim is to make the masses realise that we are destroying nature," she says.

Galhotra is one of those new-age artists who don't believe in following the tried and tested formula but love changing their style and working on different media. "That's the way you can show your creativity," she says. On larger-

than-life art works, she adds, "I think I'm fascinated with whatever is huge. It satisfies me as an artist and helps me spread the message easily." But isn't it too time consuming? "It depends on how passionately you pick up the

work. I don't take much time to complete these artworks. *Neo Monster* took me just three months. Once the idea and the subject is clear in my mind, it is easy to go ahead," says Galhotra.

The installation will be placed at Select Citywalk Mall, Saket on Monday with the help of Gallery Espace. Galhotra plans to take this *Monster* on a worldwide tour thereafter.

"Delhi was chosen first as the idea of this installation emerged here. I plan to take it to Bengaluru, Kolkata and Mumbai next. I would love to showcase it in China as well because after India, China is facing the same situation. I think we should collectively stand to protect Mother Earth and forget political and physical boundaries that divide us," she concludes.

photo courtesy/Gallery Espace