

SUDARSHAN SHETTY „LEAVING HOME“

Opening	September 18, 2008, 7 p.m. The artist will be present at the opening and available for interviews.
Venue	Galerie Krinzinger Seilerstätte 16, 1010 Vienna Austria
Exhibition duration	September 19 – November 8, 2008
Opening hours	Tuesday – Friday noon to 6 p.m. Saturday 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.
FREE ENTRANCE	

The **GALERIE KRINZINGER** is delighted to be able to present **Sudarshan Shetty** for the first time in the German-speaking world from **September 19 to November 8, 2008**. Shetty, born in Mangalore, India in 1961, is one of the leading young Indian artists working conceptually. His exhibition “**Leaving Home**” will be open to the public (**no entry fee**) at the Galerie Krinzinger, Seilerstätte 16, 1010 Vienna.

Sudarshan Shetty uses a variety of everyday materials to create kinetic sculptures that appear light on first sight but then lead to far-reaching reflections. At one and the same time macabre, playful and seductive, his work speaks to us on an emotional level and invites us to reflect on time and space, absence and simultaneity. *“I find myself delving into and drawing from the unspoken, or in many cases the socially understated that ticks beneath the surface of all human interactions. I embrace this predicament and rejoice in it. I am interested in the idea of absence, a human absence, of being elsewhere. I think most of us are condemned to be elsewhere.”*

In Shetty’s extraordinarily dense works, the combination of mechanical movements and found everyday objects figures significantly. By deliberately bringing together various objects he introduces an anthropomorphic dimension to his oeuvre, which gives his pieces an emotional quality: *“When I use objects in my work, I am aware of the possibilities and the problems in terms of associations and conventions that it comes with. I do this by simple strategies of juxtaposition. I bring them together in a way that the work is neither about one object or the other but they belong unquestionably to the given construct. The familiarity and the distance that it evokes at the same time, may point to ones interiority.”*

Forms that are used by virtue of their symbolic value become iconic but at the same time they surrender to their context. The works break with the familiar, forcing the viewer to look behind the apparent metaphors. They must first use what is familiar to them to create an access to an equation that the viewer must then solve by untangling the web of elements. Shetty’s works thus initially appear to be based on a duality. Reaching beyond the first associations, the simple juxtaposition or quickly assumed polarity these elements also look familiar and as wide-reaching as the exhibition title: “**Leaving Home**”.

Shetty has specially constructed a series of new works for the exhibition at the Galerie Krinzinger that rotate around associations with “home”. “Leaving Home” is an ambitious, existential reflection on the human tendency to create things and devices that shape our life. Pieces of furnishing – Shetty’s favorite protagonists – are linked by the artist to state a multi-layered narration that questions the way we define home, just as geography, architecture, location but also emotional bonds are defined, and immediately deconstructs all-too-quick answers.

Two large works refer to the idea of home as a physical enclosure. One comprising an imposing 2.4 x 2.4 x 2.4 m stainless steel chamber has myriad plastic sunglasses instead of windows. One entering the chamber the viewer experiences the politics of viewing being reversed as an unsettling eyeglass seems to be scrutinizing him/her in a penetrating though dispassionate manner. Here emotions are stirred, with the idea of home as a place of safety and refuge and the idea of private sphere is ruthlessly ruptured. In another work the 2.7 x 2.1 x 0.9 m enclosure comprises a ‘cage’ that imprisons a mound of pristine white pav (local bread) with a liquid resembling milk cascading around and dripping on it. In re-evoking the association of the home as a locus for nurturance and sustenance, this piece is a cruel play of irony – the bread and milk though seductively lush is inedible, the ‘falseness’ of the promise it offers being further emphasized by the mocking impenetrability of the glass walls and steel bars enclosing it.

In yet another piece a brass penis makes monotonously repetitive, mechanical love to an unassuming little steel house. The form of an exaggerated phallus (a recurrent leitmotif) is not so a symbol for masculinity as much as a reference to dispassionate instinct-driven biological functions. This piece simultaneously frames and ruptures the proposal of the home as a sacred temple of intimacy and conjugal passion. In a further reference to connubiality and comfort, a bed cradles an undulating wooden mattress. Though mimicking the soft contours of a slept-in bed, this berth offers no relenting repose. Posed atop and almost hanging off is the skeleton of an upturned dog. Split down the middle the skeleton opens and shuts in a mechanical but suggestive yawn. Works like this and the one mentioned above particularly address the idea of intimacy and emotions defining the idea of home.

The idea of the absent body inherent in these works assumes even greater intensity in the three suits dipping in and out their respective troughs of milk with an automated rhythm. Shetty here makes use of an economical yet eloquent gesture to convey physical absence, loss, bond and memory.

This cast aluminum TV has been left deliberately rough and unfinished as there is no attempt towards direct verisimilitude. Snaking out of the TV screen are rubber tubes through which flow a liquid resembling blood. The television, the ubiquitous domestic monolith often occupies the most haloed position in a living room – often even replacing the altar or the mantelpiece – it stands stately like the family figure-head holding the brood together. Sudarshan’s TV, though resembling a real one, is perhaps more truthful in this avatar – that of a dead God bleeding fake life. The ‘blood’ oozes onto the tabletop, dripping down into a trough at the bottom only to be pumped back in. The pump lies at the side like the heaving mechanical heart of this false God.

This extraordinarily rich one-man presentation of works by artist Sudarshan Shetty marks the beginning of our India series. The next highlight will be a comprehensive survey show featuring the shooting stars of India’s contemporary art scene: Sakshi Gupta, Zakir Hussein, Srinivasa Prasad, Navin Thomas and Avinash Veeraghavan. This unique show in the German-speaking world will open at Krinzinger Projekte on October 30. Five projects will be presented on three exhibition levels with work being produced on site by artists in residence. This focus on the art scene in Bangalore will be followed in next year’s program by presentations of selected artwork from Mumbai and New Delhi.

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Visitor information www.galerie-krinzinger.at

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