



Mixed media including polystyrene and disposable material covered with household dust, 48" x 76" x 56"

Peter Buggenhout, Belgium
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PETER BUGGENHOUT

Dust, grime and dirt are this sculptor's muse as he creates value for junk

Sculptures created from dust, scrap, intestines, blood, hair and anything else that generally gets labelled as "junk" certainly epitomise originality and are sure to be noticed. Such unusual creations, of Belgian sculptor Peter Buggenhout, were recently exhibited at Gallery Maskara. "His work is not symbolic. Not conceptual. But, a very rare kind of abstraction," says Sophie Van Loo, an international curator, who put the show together.

After years of being a "conventional" artist working with standard mediums of canvas and paint, what made him break all boundaries and move to a more radical approach of using all kinds of refuse? "I am inspired by the contrasts of the world. Of the disorganisation outside on the streets, for example, as opposed to the neat and systematic spaces indoors. I try to display this hidden chaos of our lives," muses Peter. He demonstrates these dualities through his dust works that are placed against the white, neat and clean gallery walls. The choice of materials makes his creations unique. He uses anything he finds, "Any rubbish that has been pushed aside by humans – I create a sculpture from it and then cover it



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with dirt." The first association that most people make when they think of such material is of worthlessness, yet his pieces aim to do the contrary. The six artworks that were on display look like miniature meteor-like rock formations that are presented with great prominence – on a raised surface or behind a glass, giving them a very clinical as well as significant aura. "Art is meant to be looked at, as, what it does to you," says Abhay Maskara, owner, Gallery Maskara, who hopes people look beyond the mundane aspects of the craft, and see Peter's sculptures with fresh eyes. Buggenhout's work is definitely something that is meant to transform – provided of course, you can connect with it! ♦ **Radha Goenka**