

Comments on Jugaad by Beverley Bloxham

In a world where, more and more, technology, globalisation, certainty & speed rule, it is refreshing and inspiring to see a return of the low-tech, the slow, the familiar, the risky, the local and the hand-made.

Sanjeev Shankar's artwork for 48^o Celsius Public.Art.Ecology festival in New Delhi, *Jugaad*, celebrates the ability to achieve an objective with the resources at hand - a concept very familiar to Australians living in regional and remote areas of the continent, where the tyranny of distance is still a reality.

Utilising the ubiquitous oil can as the pixel for his artwork, Shankar designed an architectural installation that went beyond the borders of the expedient for such a project: instead of outsourcing the fabrication of his architectural design to the certainty of 'industry professionals' Shankar chose to involve and employ local villagers in a conscious, yet risky, act of inclusion and respect for the people who are most likely to be the custodians of the practice of *jugaad*.

The completed work wears the evidence of its creation like the lines in an aging face: the scarred raw materials – already having completed their original commission as receptacles for cooking oil, taken apart, drilled, punched, folded, cleaned, polished and painted by many skilled hands, come together in a new symmetry with a new purpose. Nothing is hidden here. All processes are exposed; all hands have left their marks. And yet the raw becomes poetic in the completed work. These individually unremarkable elements are masterfully repurposed into the artwork *Jugaad* - a clever marrying of concept and process in an authentic and poetic statement of touching simplicity and beauty.

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