

Metrolife on the move

SKILLED HANDS

Carving the formless



ARTIST Simona Bocchi with her sculpture *Divine Entity*.

If a six-year old girl plays with her bread during breakfast then any mother will, understandably, scold her. And so did too Simona Bocchi's mother but also to save the bread from being wasted everyday, she got her daughter some clay to play with.

Thus began the journey of

Simona, the sculptor who is now internationally known!

An Italian by birth, Simona has been living in Udaipur for the seven years now and is currently exhibiting approximately 100 works which encapsulate her journey in India. Titled *The Process of Unknowing*, the art exhibition comprises sculptures, paint-

ings and jewellery.

Describing her approach to the creative process Simona says, "Unlike the state of not knowing, 'unknowing' is my intuitive and ever-changing creative state of wonder and discovery. While in my unknowing state the finished work of art takes shape through the interaction of



ARTISTIC Simona's jute sculpture resembles a Rajasthani man.

materials and space. The final form emerges from what in the beginning appears like an absence of form."

Simona's need for artistic inspiration and materials particularly marble and bronze (her preferred medium) took her to Udaipur where she got a chance to be trained under skilled craftsmen and also explored 'jute' as a natural material for her sculptures.

"When I came to India, I chose Udaipur because marble was available locally. But after coming here, I felt the urge to avoid plastic and thus started using organic and natural materials such as jute."

Her works in jute where she has moulded the fabric in

a unique technique is worthy of praise for each facial line of the 'bust' stands out. There is also a resemblance to the Rajasthani 'look' in her work.

"Undoubtedly, the local culture and traditions have influenced my work. At times one can find portraits of Rajputs in my sculptures. There is another similarity. The jute sculptures have long moustaches just like people have in Rajasthani villages." The marble sculpture *Gangotri* shows a woman's face, half engraved and half blank representing the "tradition of pallu".

Simona's work in bronze is exquisite for the colour of the metal has been intentionally changed through "chemical reactions." Her piece *Kundalini* which has a man's figure holding a flying woman's feet is a head turner for sure. "The man is grounded and has the ability to make a woman fly. This sculpture also represents the energy produced by the unity between the two."

Simona's unfamiliar ways of using familiar material 'marble' is exquisite in *Divine Entity* - a full-bodied sculpture of a woman whose smooth lines are reminiscent of the famed *Venus de Milo* at the Louvre. Simona's sculpture explores the woman's curves through mirror work typical to Udaipur. "I learnt the technique of mirror work on PoP from my master who has also designed the facade of the palace of Udaipur. I decided to use this technique to combine the traditional with contemporary."

The exhibition is on at Italian embassy, till September 30. Henna Rakheja

METALLIC Kundalini, a bronze sculpture.