

Memories in MINIATURE

Artist Falguni Gokhale's works have been exhibited in Hong Kong, Johannesburg, Singapore and Delhi. Her latest art installations, the *Aaji's Kitchen and Bathroom* series, travel back to her childhood to bring alive memories of her grandmother's kitchen. Khursheed Dinshaw comes away enchanted from a burnished past



Satish Gokhale

Could you share the dimensions of *Aaji's Kitchen and Bathroom*?

Each installation of *Aaji's Kitchen and Bathroom* is 20 cm x 20 cm x 10 cm. The background is a painted picture, while miniature toys are glued to the walls. Some items like teacups, soaps and towels are made of clay. You can mount these installations on a wall or keep them atop a microwave or bathroom shelf.

What inspired you to do this series?

I spent most of my school holidays at my maternal grandmother's home at Karamsad in Gujarat. I have many happy childhood memories associated with this quaint and charming place. The *tamba* [copper] toys commonly found all over Pune are entwined with these memories. Through my art, I wanted to recreate a nostalgic world and document a way of life that we don't get to see anymore. It's an earnest attempt to pay tribute to the wealth of wisdom that all silvers possess. Though I have titled it *Aaji's Kitchen and Bathroom* [*Aaji* means grandmother in Marathi], this old-world kitchen and bathroom could belong to any house in India.

What was your grandmother like?

My grandmother Heera Ba was beautiful, strong, loving, bold, capable,

hardworking and resourceful. She glued our family together. She passed away 16 years ago. If she were alive today, I am sure she would have chuckled with delight at the kitchen and bathroom I've made.

ART Any special memories about your grandmother that added depth to the installations?

Her kitchen was big and clean and had delicious aromas emanating from it at all times. Her bathroom was large and spacious, with cauldrons of hot water kept ready for the children's bath at the crack of dawn. My young cousins and I would stand in line while we were oiled, scrubbed and bathed by an assortment of aunts under the ever-vigilant gaze of my grandmother.

Does your world have any room for *tamba* or do you prefer stainless steel and glass?

I use *tamba* jugs, plates and serving bowls in my house. I also have some small *tamba* bowls on my office desk which I use for keeping stationery. I have some copper boxes as well. Every time I look at my favourite objects, I am enveloped by warm, soothing memories.

Each installation of Aaji's Kitchen and Bathroom costs ₹ 3,500 (per box); available at Either Or, Pune

