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**Bhattacharya's photographs are about corrosion and decay**



## ART OF CORROSION

**A**RUSTY padlock, peeling signboards, dilapidated buildings, a shaft of torn plywood and distorted machinery. The series of photographs by Delhi-based artist Sanjay Bhattacharya has urban decay oozing out of it, like green verdigris from corroding copper.

Bhattacharya has trained his camera on the highways of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and West Bengal, often dousing stray objects—handle of a crane and hinges of a door—with flashes of light, making them glow in an eerie yellow. "Weathered and old-looking things catch my eye. You can find it in my paintings as well, the hint of a charcoal drum or flaking paint," says Bhattacharya, 50, whose works are part of a two-man show, "Found Objects Lost Planet" at Religare Arts i Gallery. Alongside Bhattacharya's 40 works are 20 marvellous images by little-



Agrawal's photograph of the Narmada

known Indore-based artist Pankaj Agrawal.

Agrawal, 56, has turned the contentious river Narmada into a work of a fine art, shooting the cracks caused by the river as it rushes over rocks, marking and corroding the surface. From a distance, the images look like Google Earth maps. Step closer and you will find brightly coloured pebbles nestling in a crevice or the shadow of a person leaning from a cliff on the green waters. "I didn't wish to picture the familiar Narmada.

I decided to move away from the beauty of the river and focus on the jagged rocks on it," said Agrawal, who began the project in the summer of 2007, while camping out with a forest ranger.

Bhattacharya, who has mounted his photographs after a gap of three years, says he

found photography liberating: "In 2007, I trawled the cities with my camera and ended with 250 huge prints."

*The exhibition is on at Religare Arts, i Gallery till*

*January 5. Contact 43727000*

*—Richa Bhatia*