
Home and beyond

VISUAL ARTS SRIMOYEE BAGCHI

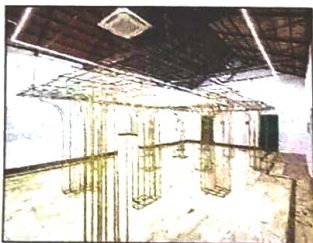
The French philosopher, Gaston Bachelard, located the essence of home in the quiet persistence of memory within space. Rathin Barman's exhibition, *The cage broke, and I found the horizon* (on view at the Experimenter Outpost in Alipore Museum) expands on that insight. Set within the former Central Jail, the works heighten the tension between enclosure and imagination, turning the site into an active participant in the experience of viewing the show. The

titular installation of interlocking brass pillars arranged in tight, repetitive intervals suggests the skeletal remains of once-grand courtyards of North Calcutta's sprawling mansions. It reconfigures the courtyard, long a symbol of domestic cohesion, into a spatial field that invites slow movement and reflection.

Barman's *Restructured Living Space* is a composite drawing translated into relief with linear markings that map rooms, corridors, and thresholds without settling into a fixed

plan. Brass inlays punctuate the surface with precise, reflective accents that catch light and mark traces of earlier architectural detail. The work holds together multiple temporal layers within a single surface. *Diminishing Element* presents small-scale concrete fragments of architectural ornamentation, each piece

isolating a detail such as a louvre, a railing, or a moulding, rendered with careful attention to proportion. The fragments sit as discrete objects, inviting close inspection of edges and patterns that once



belonged to larger structures.

Bachelard treated the house as an intimate shell, a site where the smallest gestures accumulate into a sense of dwelling. In *We Played Even at Night*, Barman distills that idea into a stark, material form. The work presents a row of makeshift shelters assembled from rusted corrugated metal sheets. The surfaces bear visible corrosion, with deep browns and burnt oranges marking time and exposure.

The strength of *Kitchen Stories* lies in its clarity. It reframes the domestic space as something that can exist without permanence or privacy. In doing so, it extends the idea of home beyond the confines of walls.