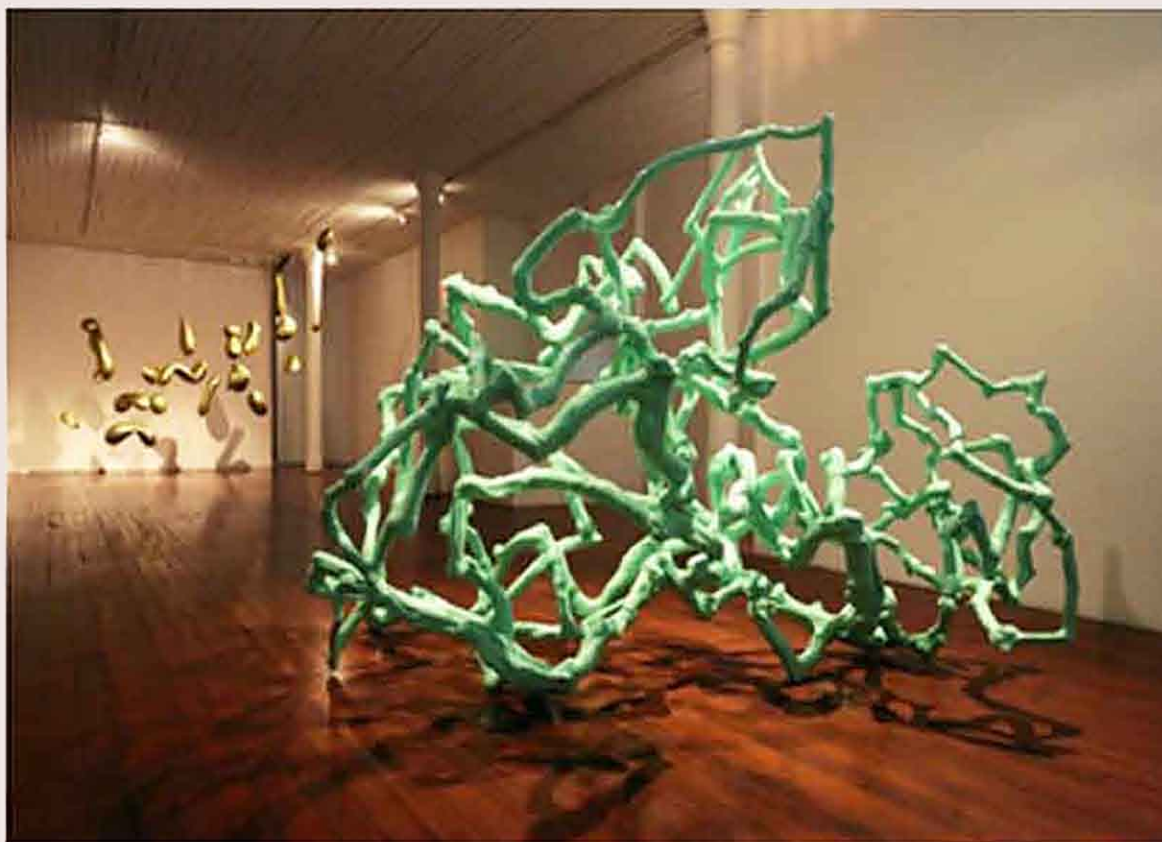


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FINE ART | By Peter Plagens



Ranjani Shettar:
Night Skies and Daydreams

◆ **Talwar**

108 E. 16th St., (212) 673-3096
Through Sept. 27

With a population of over a billion people, a rising economy, and a rich visual culture, India is nevertheless underrepresented in what we call the "global art world." If China, however, can crash the gate—its artists having big-time gallery shows in the West, and the country supporting a growing art-collector class—why can't Indian artists gain similar traction?

Perhaps Ranjani Shettar (b. 1977) is the harbinger of that happening. She's represented in the collection of the Museum of Modern Art in New York and in 2009 had a sizable solo show at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. Her inventive and usually quite beautiful sculpture—some of which veers into installation art—employs everything from beeswax, walnut and teak wood to PVC, rubber and metal.

In this exhibition, "Flight of the Butterfly" (2014) is a lime-green bramble of a sculpture, made primarily of painted coffee-tree wood, whose parts make one think of

bones as lovely vegetation. It's not an unpleasant sensation. "Tuntoroo," also from this year, attaches handmade red wax beads to lengths of cotton thread in a spotlighted cascade running diagonally from a gallery wall to the carpeted floor. These two pieces may not be conspicuously "Indian," but their unabashed desire to be good-looking is not something all that common to contemporary Western art. One looks forward to Ms. Shettar's subsequent exhibitions in New York.