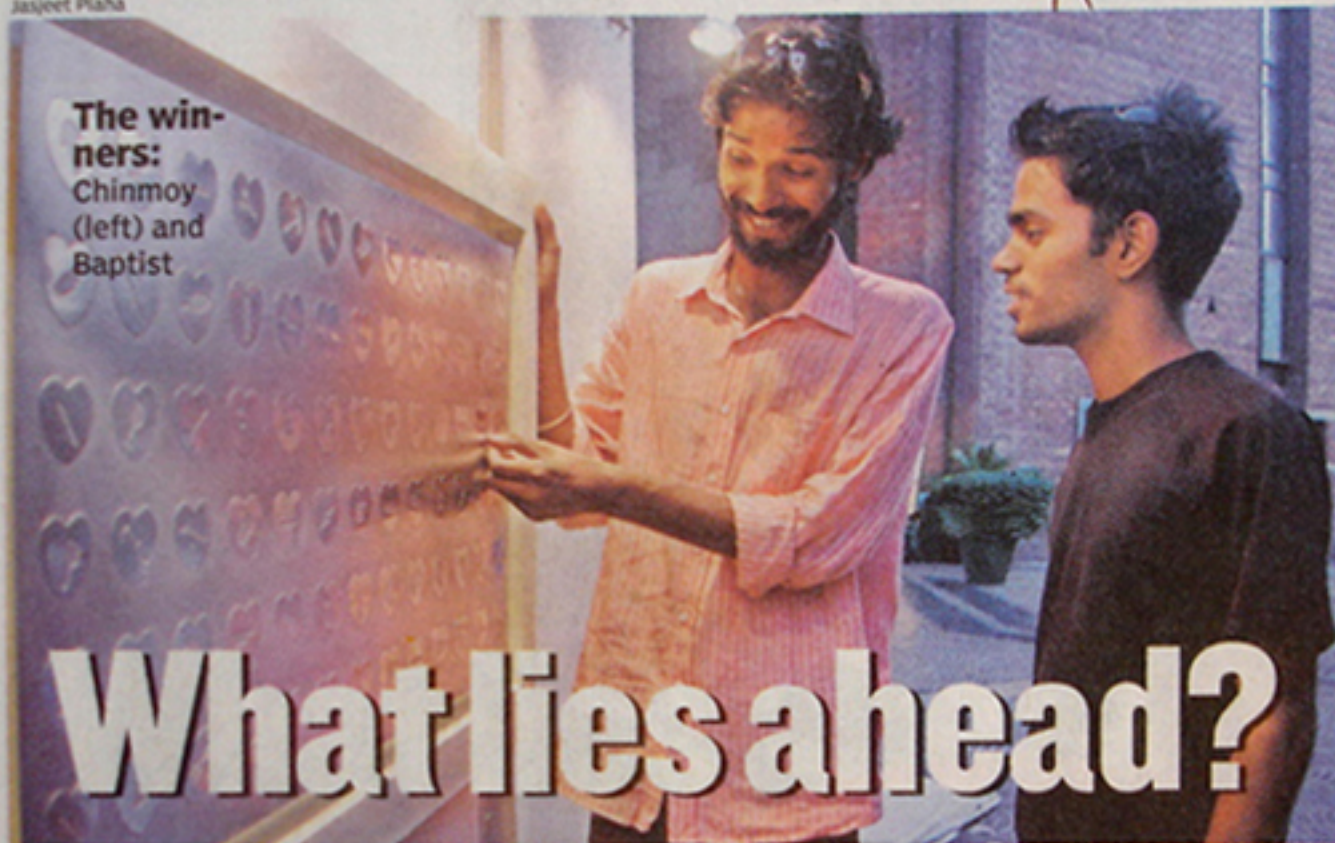




Jasjeet Plaha

The winners:
Chinmoy
(left) and
Baptist



What lies ahead?

Damini Purkayastha

This is the first time they met. But Baptist Coelho (30) and Chinmoy Pramanick (29) will never forget each other. Both are joint winners of the 2007 Promising Artist Award which was instituted by Art India and the Visual Arts Gallery in 2005. One is sculptor, the other is an installation artist and this only their second visit to

Delhi. HT City catches up with them on the eve of the awards...

Is winning this award going to change your lives? (before answering they both look at each other and burst into laughter)

Chinmoy: Life never really changes does it? It goes exactly the way it is supposed to. But yes, this is a great opportunity, to get noticed, to get exposure.

Baptist: It is promising yes, now we have a direction to follow. People now know that we exist.

Both of you are experimental artists, does your victory reflect a changing mindset towards art?

Chinmoy: I come from the Baroda School where even the biggest artists were all experimental. But I personally feel that creative freedom is greater in smaller

schools, traditional schools like Santiniketan have rigid ideas.

Baptist: The very fact that we have been noticed is a big deal. Just acknowledging this medium is a marker of change. I don't know about market trends because the market is not something I care about. But yes, now people will know there is new work to be had.

The market, the moral police.. How do you feel about interference in art?

Chinmoy: I feel the elders want to do something for mileage. They may not understand art or even have an interest in it, but they will comment for their five minutes of fame.

Baptist: The truth is that ultimately every artist will do what he has to.

What is your reaction to Delhi's art scene?

Chinmoy: Oh, Delhi is my biggest market in a sense, most of my works are parts of various collections across the city.

Baptist: I haven't seen enough to comment. But yes, one has heard so much that I am staying around for a few extra days to go gallery hopping.