



THE Promising Artist Award Show, an ongoing exhibition of the works of Baptist Coelho and Chinmoy Pramanick at the India Habitat Centre, explores terrains of conflict — from the high attitudes of Siachen in the former's displays to the latter's installations in burnt wood and metal that stand as mute witness often scarred by the violence of what they witness.

Coelho's exhibits, called "You Can't Afford To Have Emotions

Out There" (*pictures*) is about the lives of soldiers who, for the past 25 years, have been engaged in an endless conflict between India and Pakistan on the coldest battlefield on earth—the Siachen glacier, where the temperature falls to -60° Celsius. "Even though this formidable landscape is virtually impossible to access for a civilian, I set out to experience this world for

WAR ZONE



myself. Through researching, collecting artifacts and recording stories, I was able to identify and de-

fine this space of conflict," says Coelho, who has used videos, installations and photography. One such installation is the soldier's battered and beaten backpack, filled with empty white photo frames that symbolise the wide expanse of white snow. "This whiteness is all that a soldier sees for months on end until he begins to hallucinate," he says. Another visual, titled *I Was Not Born For The Three-Point Contact*, is projected onto three vertical columns and

shows a man meticulously dressing himself in soldier's survival gear.

Pramanick's series of installations is called "(Partially) I was There", and has houses, weapons and other objects telling stories about human desires, encounters and persona in artistic pursuit. "Everything has a metaphorical basis and each individual perceives it differently," he explains.

The exhibition is on till June 13.

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