

Nek Chand Saini

by Eva Rothschild



Nek Chand Saini differs from many outsider artists in both the scale of his endeavour and in the fact that he is primarily a sculptor. I am drawn both to the story of the work - the road inspector of Chandigarh by night, covertly creating his own un-modern, magical utopia, and by day working on the construction of Le Corbusier's city - and to the work itself.

The initial garden was illegal and created on wasteland without permission. When it was discovered after 15 years it could have been

the end for Chand. But incredibly, and to their eternal credit, the municipality recognised the generosity and beauty in his endeavour and not only allowed him to continue, but supported him in doing so with assistants, extra land and a stipend.

Chand took on the creation of a new world and everything available was included in his vision. The accumulation and transformation of materials in the myriad of horses, people, monkeys and gods seems limitless. As well as a sculptor he turned architect, creating waterways, bridges and caves. He collected seeds and cuttings, replanting them to create the *Eden* which his beings inhabit. Chand, who directly and determinedly made his dreams reality, is like a touchstone to return to again and again as a model for how to make and continue making work.

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