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India's top contemporary artist Subodh Gupta has been honoured by the French government with the Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters (*Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres*). The award comes in recognition of an artist whose remarkable originality has been inspired by the daily life of an India on the move, while maintaining special ties with France, where some of his earliest exhibitions were held.

Subodh Gupta is one of the most inventive, prolific and prominent

representatives of contemporary art. Playing with the simplest materials and objects from daily life, Gupta makes them interact with each other to bestow an artistic dimension on them. His art oscillates constantly between the quotidian and the fantastic, a tin sheet transformed literally into a mirror of the realities of India. He narrates life, its challenges and its drama by shifting perspectives and changing landmarks and scales.

Subodh Gupta established links with the French cultural milieu quite early in his career. He was invited to exhibit his works at the In Situ gallery in the 13th arrondissement in Paris, where numerous French collectors discovered him. His installation, *God Hungry*, for the Lille 3000 festival left a lasting impression: a monumental cascade of kitchen vessels poured in through the arches of St Marie-Madeleine church, a reference to the tsunami that ravaged India in December 2004. He also designed the stage décor for the 2010 artistic production of Ballet Angelin Prejlocaj, “And then, one thousand years of peace”. In 2011, he was one of the most viewed artists at the Paris-Delhi-Bombay exhibition at Centre Georges Pompidou in 2011.

The French government distinction Chevalier dans l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres (Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters) is conferred on “persons who have distinguished themselves by their creativity in the field of art, culture and literature or for their contribution to the influence of arts in France and throughout the world.” Some noted Indian recipients of this honour in the past include Shahrukh Khan, Aishwarya Rai, Raghu Rai, Ebrahim Alkazi, the late Habib Tanveer, and Upamanyu Chatterjee.

Read more from the [French Embassy in New Delhi](#)

Read more on [Art Radar Asia](#)

Image: Subodh Gupta, 'God Hungry', Lille, 2006. Image © Creative Commons.

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