

Shyamali, 'Santhal Couple'
Uttarayan Complex, Santiniketan



Relief work on Kalobari (Black house),
Santiniketan

‘This isn’t painting, which needs just paper, pen, brush and colour. Sculpting is difficult business. One needs a variety of materials; one needs people. It all takes a lot of money.

‘Birbhum’s gravel was a no-cost ingredient. I put it to use. And sand. Plus some cement. And when necessary, a scrap of iron.

‘You need at least some good materials. Clay work melts quickly. But cow dung-clay-coal-tar isn’t such a bad combination. I have done a lot of work with that. You must have seen the reliefs at the Black House in Kala Bhavana and at Gurudeb’s Shyamali. I also used the same material for the first *Buddha* near Kala Bhavana. But given the sun, rain and storms in Birbhum’s open spaces, one needs material that is somewhat strong and durable.