

PRESS RELEASE

Emami Art @ Art Mumbai 2024

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Overview

Emami Art showcases a diverse collection of works at Art Mumbai 2024, highlighting both emerging and established contemporary Indian artists, primarily from Bengal. The featured artists include **Ujjal Dey, Tapas Biswas, Soma Das, Sibaprasad Karchaudhuri, Shilpi Sharma, Suman Dey, Debashish Paul, Ghana Shyam Latua, Arunima Choudhury, Arindam Chatterjee, Ali Akbar PN, Prasanta Sahu, and Anjan Modak.**

The curated booth presents recent thought-provoking works that explore a range of contemporary themes such as environmental issues, historical reflections, land and agricultural politics, gender struggles, and more. Each piece reflects the artists' profound engagement with these crucial topics. In addition to the contemporary artworks, the exhibition features work by masters like **Kartick Chandra Pyne** and **LM Sen**. Pyne's playful paintings and Sen's rare, powerful photographs—an aspect of his work less known compared to his paintings—bring added depth to the show.

The collection spans a variety of mediums, including acrylic on canvas, watercolor, ceramics, sculpture, textile art, archival photography, and more.

Statement by Richa Agarwal, CEO, Emami Art

'At Art Mumbai, we are showing emerging and established artists, many of whom are from Bengal. Their works, while exploring connections to the various issues of contemporary art, such as environment, global political unrest, and gender troubles, also show their experimental attitude in using the mediums and artistic language of expression. For the last few years, besides hosting significant exhibitions, Emami Art has maintained its constant presence in the major national and international art fairs, bringing to the art collectors, lovers and patrons not only the works of well-known masters but also highly talented artists, many of whom have made their mark on the global art scene. I believe the audience will enjoy and appreciate the new directions in the practices of the artists presented at Mumbai Art Fair 2024.'

Bionote of the Artists

Ali Akbar P N was born in 1996 in Kerala. The artist studied Painting at the Government College of Fine Arts, Thrissur, and Maharaja Sayaji Rao University, Vadodara, Gujarat, graduating in 2020. He has participated in many significant exhibitions, with his most recent solo exhibition being 'Salts from Many Seas' at Emami Art in 2024. His work revolves around trade, memories, cultural migration and identities. He currently resides and works in Vadodara, Gujarat, India.

Anjan Modak was born in 1982 in West Bengal, India. He studied Painting at Rabindra Bharati University, graduating in 2009. He has been the subject of two solo shows, 'Fragmented Life' (2020) and 'Black, White and More' (2016), held at Emami Art, Kolkata and a duo show, 'Between the Self and Silhouettes', curated by Adip Dutta at Emami Art (Kolkata, 2022). His works are concerned with the migrant city workers and dreams and despairs of their lives. Anjan Modak lives and works in Kolkata.

Arindam Chatterjee was born in Kolkata and studied Painting at the Government College of Art & Craft, Kolkata and Kala Bhavana, Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan and has since exhibited nationally and internationally with several solo shows in India, the last being Not a Dream, Not Peace, Not Love at Emami Art, Kolkata (2024). His work primarily concerns the human condition, brute facts and violence of our time.

Arunima Choudhury was born in 1950 in Siliguri, West Bengal and studied Painting at the Indian College of Art and Draftsmanship and Design and Mass Communication at Chitrabani, Kolkata, between 1970 and 1978. Working primarily with vegetable colours on handmade paper, she is known for her works depicting the languid world of nature and human beings, their intimacy and coexistence. She has participated in several solo and group exhibitions and, most recently, is the subject of *The Dark Edge of Green* solo show at Emami Art (Kolkata 2022). Arunima Choudhury lives and works in Kolkata.

Debashish Paul, born in 1994, is a multidisciplinary contemporary sculptor and performance artist whose critical work explores the problems of queer identity in a society dominated by heterosexual norms. He graduated from Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi. He performed worldwide and exhibited his work, including his ongoing solo show at Emami Art, 'A Thousand Years of Dreaming.' Debashish Paul lives and works in Varanasi and Nadia, West Bengal.

Ghana Shyam Latua was born in 1992 in West Midnapore and studied Painting in Kala Bhavana, Visva-Bharati, graduating in 2017. His recent works, known for his novel pin-prick technique, speak of his love for pure, uninhabited landscapes and his lament for nature's destruction by the expansion of urbanization and tourism. He participated in many significant exhibitions and did a solo show, *The Lament of the Red Earth*, at Tapetenwerk Gallery, Leipzig, Germany (2022). He lives and works in Santiniketan, West Bengal.

Prasanta Sahu was born 1968 in Odisha, India, and studied Painting at Kala Bhavana, Visva Bharati and MS University, Baroda, graduating in 2000. Sahu has shown his work widely within and outside the country and participated in numerous workshops and residencies. His recent solos include *Anatomy of a Vegetable: Ruminations on Fragile Ecosystems* at Kochi Muziris Biennale 2022-23. Prasanta Sahu lives and works in Santiniketan, India.

Shilpi Sharma was born in 1997 in West Bengal and completed her master's in ceramics from Kala Bhavana, Visva Bharati University. Shilpi's ceramic works are inspired by various natural patterns and designs, like floral patterns, works of water on stone, weathering, lichens, and the structure of honeycombs. She has participated in many exhibitions, including the exhibition at the Italian Consulate for the 700th Death anniversary of Dante Alighieri (2022) and "Bhū" – Emami Art, Ceramics Exhibition (2021). Shilpi Sharma lives and works in Santiniketan, West Bengal.

Sibaprasad Karchaudhuri was born in 1944 in West Bengal and studied Applied Arts at the Government College of Art & Craft, Calcutta, graduating in 1966. He also took training in design under Helena Perheentupa, a Finnish Designer at NID, Ahmedabad and Graphic Art under Geoffrey Bowman at San Jose State University, California. He has been the subject of several solo shows in India and abroad, including his latest, *The Dream of an Idiot*, at Emami Art, Kolkata. He participated in the British Textile Biennale in 2023. Sibaprasad Karchaudhuri lives and works in Santiniketan.

Soma Das was born in 1979 in Kolkata, West Bengal and studied Painting at Rabindra Bharati University, Kolkata, graduating in 2009. Working in the detailed, placid styles of miniature Painting, she portrays in her work the life of working people, primarily women from humble economic backgrounds. She has been the subject of the solo show *Different Facets of Life* at Gallery Nakshatra, Kolkata, 2010 and the major duo group show *Between Selves and Silhouettes* at Emami Art (Kolkata, 2022). She was selected as an artist in residence at the Kira A. Princess of Prussia Foundation in collaboration with Emami Art Residency (2022). Currently, she is in residency at Hampi Art Labs for the October – December (2024) session. Soma Das lives and works in Kolkata.

Suman Dey, born in 1981 in Kolkata, is a contemporary artist based in Kolkata. Largely self-taught, he works in the language of abstract art, distilling the visible form into an abstract motif. Suman Dey has exhibited widely in several group and solo shows in India. He was the subject of his recent solo show, *The Lost Fragrance of Memory*, at Emami Art. Suman lives and works in Kolkata, India.

Tapas Biswas born in 1972 in West Bengal is a noted contemporary sculptor based in Kolkata. He studied Visual Arts at the Government College of Art and Craft, Kolkata, and Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, graduating in 2000. Biswas has been the subject of solo shows at Aakriti Art Gallery, Kolkata and Kalakriti Art Gallery, Hyderabad. In addition, his work has been featured in numerous significant group exhibitions in India, Singapore, France and Sweden, including *Fluid Boundaries* (2020) and *Ekkhan* (2024), Emami Art Gallery, Kolkata. Tapas Biswas lives and works in Kolkata.

Ujjal Dey was born in 1992 in Ranchi, India. He is a contemporary textile artist pursuing a doctorate from Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan. He studied textile and design at Kala Bhavana, Santiniketan, graduating in 2017. He was part of *Fragments of Our Time*, British Textile Biennial 2023, UK and the subject of his recent solo show at Emami Art, *Dawn to Dusk: A Silent Symphony* (2024). Ujjal Dey lives and works in Santiniketan, West Bengal.

Francis Newton Souza was born in April 1924 in Portuguese Goa to his father, Joseph Newton, an English teacher, and mother, Lily Mary Antunes, in a Catholic family of Konkani origin. He grew up in Bombay and studied art at J J School of Art. The Roman Catholic Church, with its architectural elegance and services, had a decisive impact on him, and he, for a short while, was associated with the Communist Party of India. In 1949, soon after he had founded the historic Progressive Artists' Group (PAG) with SH Raza, MF Hussain, Ara, Gade and Bakre in 1947, Souza left India, and his career flourished in Europe and America, shaping India's artistic modernism in the post-Independence era. As early as 1955, Souza published his famous autobiography, *The Nirvana of Maggot*, coinciding with his Gallery One exhibition. Widely exhibited in India and abroad, he is known for his powerful figurative images and erotic imagination, which show his complex religious views, life, and various artistic traditions and styles. Renowned art critic John Berger wrote that Souza "Straddles many traditions but serves none". At the end of the 1970s, Souza regularly visited India for his Mumbai, Delhi and Kolkata exhibitions. Souza received many awards, including the Guggenheim International Award, the highest monetary award in the arts, in 1967. Prestigious institutions worldwide have his works in their collections, including the Tate Britain, which hosted his solo show, *Religion and Erotica*, in 2005. A prolific painter, writer and poet, Souza died in 2002.

Kartick Chandra Pyne was born in 1931 in Kolkata. He studied painting at the Government College of Art and Craft, Calcutta, between 1950 and 1955. A prolific and taciturn artist, his work was shown as one of the hundred exhibits representing modern Indian Art in the historic exhibition at Fukuoka Art Museum, Japan, in 1979. His paintings were part of the ICCR exhibition in Bangladesh in 1991-92. Since the 1960s, his work has been featured in numerous solo exhibitions at Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai; Academy of Fine Arts, Kolkata; Bajaj Art Gallery, Mumbai; Chitrakoot Art Gallery, Kolkata; Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi; Dhoomimal Art Gallery, New Delhi, among many others. A recent retrospective-scale survey exhibition of his work was organized by Emami Art, Kolkata, in 2021. He received the prestigious Shilpi Maha Samman and Abanindra Puraskar of the Government of West Bengal. Rajya Charukala Parshad made a documentary film on him called "Line, Story, Design," which was released in 2017. Kartick Chandra Pyne died in Kolkata in 2017.

K G Subramanyan was born in 1924 in rural Kerala. He played a pivotal role in shaping India's artistic identity after Independence. Initially studying economics, his involvement in the freedom struggle led to his imprisonment and debarment from college. He then joined Kala Bhavan, Visva-Bharati University, Santiniketan, which proved to be an enduring association. Graduating in 1948, he worked under such luminaries as Benode Behari Mukherjee, Nandalal Bose and Ramkinkar Baij. Subramanyan then taught at M. S. University, Baroda, and returned to his alma mater in Santiniketan as a professor in 1980. Mani-da, as he was fondly called, seamlessly blended the elements of modernism with folk expression in his works that spanned paintings, murals, sculptures, prints, set designs and toys. Spanning more than seven decades, Subramanyan's art was featured in over fifty solo exhibitions, receiving prestigious awards such as the Medallion of Honourable Mention (Sao Paulo Biennale, Brazil) and the Lalit Kala Akademi's National Award. In 2012, he received the Padma Vibhushan, India's second-highest civilian award, for his outstanding contribution to the arts. He remained dedicated to teaching until his retirement in 1989, following which he was appointed as a professor emeritus at Visva-Bharati. In the later stages of his life, Subramanyan lived with his daughter in Baroda, where he passed away in 2016 at the age of 92. His contributions have left an indelible mark on contemporary art, blending tradition with innovation.

Lalit Mohan Sen was born in 1898 in Santipur, West Bengal into a family closely associated with the place's famous handloom textile tradition. He studied art at the Government School of Arts and Crafts, Lucknow (1917) and later studied wood engraving at the Royal College of Art, London (1925). A pupil of Nathaniel Heard and Sir William Rothenstein, he excelled in academic realism, portrait and landscape. A member of the Royal Photographic Society of Great Britain, Sen, took training in various graphic art mediums under the guidance of the celebrated etcher Malcolm Osborne. He later became the Principal of Government School of Arts and Crafts in 1945. The renowned art historian Laurence Binyon commissioned him to copy the Bagh Cave paintings. He was one of the four artists the Government of India hired to decorate the newly built India House in London. His paintings, prints, posters and photographs were widely exhibited and praised in India and abroad. Queen Mary appreciated his tempera painting 'Potter Girl' in the Royal College of Art exhibition in 1930 and bought it for the royal collection. In the early-1920s, he was the only Indian artist whose woodcuts Victoria & Albert Museum had displayed in the Museum's print room as permanent exhibits. Sen's photographs were shown in the Royal Photographic Society's annual exhibition and published in the Society's journal. Besides these, he was a reputed book illustrator known for his commercial art. He won the Federation of British Industries Prize (London) for the best poster design. Emami Art curated Sen's major retrospective, 'Lalit Mohan Sen: An Enduring Legacy', 2024 in consultation with Art Historian Debductta Gupta. The versatile artist, consummate teacher, and a well-known cultural figure throughout his career, passed away in Lucknow in 1954.

About Emami Art

Emami Art is a prominent contemporary art gallery and cultural production space located on the ground floor of the Kolkata Centre for Creativity's Green Building. Established in 2017, it adopts a forward-looking, multi-dimensional approach that reflects South Asia's history, socio-cultural, and geo-political narratives. Emami Art operates within an inclusive framework where profitability supports sustainable resource regeneration and public service.

The gallery features a dynamic program of curated exhibitions, ranging from large-scale presentations to more intimate displays. It actively participates in both national and international events and art fairs. Emami Art represents a wide spectrum of contemporary artists, including emerging, mid-career, and established talents, with a special emphasis on the East and Northeastern regions of India. Several of its artists' works are featured in prominent national and international collections, including public foundations and museums.

A key initiative is the Emami Art Experimental Film Festival, held annually, which provides a platform for alternative and experimental filmmaking, video art, and moving image practices. This festival brings together internationally acclaimed artists and filmmakers alongside recent critical productions from India.

Through short- and long-term projects, Emami Art supports the local and regional arts community by offering regular mentorship programs, workshops, residency opportunities, and innovative educational activities. These initiatives foster artistic development, build collaborative networks, and provide a supportive environment for emerging talent. The gallery also organizes regular talks, seminars, panel discussions, and conversations with artists, curators, and key partners, creating a space for critical engagement.

Committed to promoting a regional, national, and international agenda, Emami Art emphasizes community engagement, socially relevant initiatives, and institutional partnerships. With a multi-year vision for the future, it continues to be a catalyst for change, research, innovation, and inclusivity.

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