

News monitored for: Emami Group



A new show on the versatility of paper in art

Ten contemporary artists try to push the boundaries of paper as a medium

By [Avantika Bhuyan](mailto:avantika.bhuyan@htlive.com)
 avantika.bhuyan@htlive.com

Paper has been used as a medium of creation for centuries now. However, over the years, creative practitioners have employed it in unique ways—as a material, concept, a process and in other forms of intellectual engagement. Now a new show, *The Politics of Paper*, at Emami Art, Kolkata looks at these different approaches through the works of 10 contemporary artists such as Adip Dutta, Anju Dodiya, Atul Dodiya, Jagannath Panda, Jayashree Chakravarty, Mithu Sen, NS Harsha, and more.

Curated by Ushmita Sahu, the show takes into account paper's intrinsic relationship with our history, culture and politics and seeks to establish a visual context of the expanding boundaries of language and approach.

The Politics of Paper was conceived as a response to a series of events in the last couple of years. The pandemic, in particular, inspired Sahu to embark on a deeper introspection of the material. "During the lockdown in 2020, the artist community, like most others, was homebound, in many cases inhabiting small

The artists have each had a long-term engagement with the medium

spaces. Perhaps for the first time, for such a prolonged timespan, there was little or no access to material for expression," she says. Conversations with friends, students, and young artists revealed that they were using paper in this period as a means of expression as it was easily accessible. "Paper is so fragile and yet so long-lasting. This dichotomy made me

associate the medium conceptually with the precarity of the situation back then along with the strength that runs through the fibre of our society. The pandemic also underlined the fact that while in contemporary society we cannot do without digital interventions, the act of human touch remains extremely important," she adds.

The artists invited to be part of the show have each had a long-term engagement with the medium. *The Politics of Paper* has primarily new works made for the show with two exceptions—N.S. Harsha's installation *Reclaiming The Inner Space* and Atul Dodiya's *Kala Ghoda* poem works from 2017. One can also see Jayashree Chakravarty's back-lit large-scale works made from paper, clay, flowers, roots, tea washes, and a host of other materials. These hauntingly beautiful works raise questions of death and resurrection. According to Sahu, all works within the show are thought-provoking, while the diversity of approach is ultimately an ode to the versatility of paper.

The exhibition can be viewed at Emami Art till 29 March