

EMAMI ART

Emami Art

In collaboration with

Chatterjee & Lal

presents

IN A CANNIBAL TIME: Photographs by Naveen Kishore

Kolkata, 22nd April, 2023: Emami Art, one of India's leading contemporary art galleries based in Kolkata, presents 'In a Cannibal Time', an exhibition of Naveen Kishore's influential body of photographs, in collaboration with Chatterjee & Lal, Mumbai. Including photos from four different series – 'Performing the Goddess', 'The Green Room of the Goddess', 'In a Cannibal Time', and 'The Epic and the Elusive' – many never shown before in the city; the show opens on April 28, 2023, and is on view through June 25, 2023.

A renowned publisher, theatre lighting designer and poet, Naveen Kishore has long been using the camera for critical expressions. While '**Performing the Goddess**' shows the theatrical make-up of a female impersonator, Chapal Bhaduri, his transformation from an ordinary man into a woman and fierce goddess, '**The Green Room of Goddess**' reveals the backstage processes of making the idols in Kumartuli before they are installed and worshipped in public. The other two series evidence Naveen Kishore's close association with theatre: gestures, movements and light work. '**The Epic and the Elusive**' is connected to the performances of various Manipuri theatre groups, which Kishore was closely working with during extreme political unrest in the late 1990s. The swirls and blurs in the photographs are aesthetic means of capturing the political content of the performance. '**In a Cannibal Time**', where the artist re-used the life-size clay figures initially used for the design of the Seagull Book stand in the book fair, might have a specific context. But it also speaks of the time we live in – the time of discrete violence, atrocities and state repressions. In his work, Naveen Kishore pushes photography to the extreme, capturing the image's elusive and conflictual truth.

The artist's largest recent solo exhibition of photographs in Kolkata is held on the gallery's ground floor.

Naveen Kishore will be in conversation with Ranjit Hoskote on 28th April at 6 pm.

About Naveen Kishor

Kishore's eye is informed by his deep engagement with theatre photography, a genre he has been practicing since beginning to work in theatre production in the early 1970s. He has extensively

documented female impersonators from Manipuri, Bengali and Punjabi theatre practices. His interest in street photography comprises the second main thread of his oeuvre.

Naveen Kishore established Seagull Books in 1982, a publishing program in the arts and media focusing on drama, film, art and culture studies. Today, it also publishes literature, including poetry, serious fiction and non-fiction. In 1987, Kishore set up the Seagull Foundation for the Arts as a non-profit charitable trust. The Seagull School of Publishing was set up under the auspices of the Trust in 2012.

Richa Agarwal, CEO of Emami Art, said “A renowned publisher, theatre lighting designer and poet, Naveen Kishore has long been using the camera for critical expression, exploring marginal narratives of identity, representation and violence in his photographs. The exhibition consists of photos from four different series, including his well-known ‘Performing the Goddess’, taken in the last three decades. The four series in the exhibition are four avenues leading to the core of Naveen Kishore’s oeuvre as a photographer.”

About Chatterjee & Lal

Chatterjee & Lal was formed in 2003 by husband and wife team Mortimer Chatterjee and Tara Lal. Today based in Mumbai’s Colaba art district, the gallery is an important node in the city’s maturing art scene. Whilst the gallery has always focused on the work of emerging and mid-career artists, more recently programming has included historical material that adds to the corpus of knowledge on twentieth century histories of art and design.

Gallery artists exhibit globally and the gallery participates in select art fairs. The directors are published authors, regularly sharing their insights on art in national and international publications.

About Emami Art

Emami Art is a contemporary art gallery based in the green purpose built Kolkata Centre for Creativity building in Kolkata, India. Promoting emerging, mid-career and established artists and engaging with contemporary and historical material, the gallery produces exhibitions of modern, contemporary and cutting-edge art as well as commissioning artists to create site-specific pieces.

The gallery programme includes a regular lineup of talks, seminars, panel discussions and conversations with artists, curators and key partners. The gallery delivers its commitment to providing a long-term supportive environment for emerging talent through free access to mentorship programs, workshops, residency opportunities and innovative educational activities that facilitate artistic development. It also stages events across the cultural spectrum, such as concerts, performances, symposiums, publications, collaborative projects, film screenings, and learning-orientated incubator programmes.