

Press Release

Title of the Exhibition: ***Re: Figuring***

Date: **April 25 – June 21, 2025**

Venue: Gallery 2, Ground Floor, Emami Art

Exhibition Overview

The group exhibition 'Re: Figuring' showcases the most recent works by ten contemporary visual art practitioners working across painting, sculpture, graphic drawing, video and photography. At the core of the exhibition lies a pressing question: What does a figure objectify? Through diverse approaches, from hyper-figurative renderings to fragmented, semi-abstract forms and documentation, the artworks interrogate the complex rendering of figures in the real, imagined, or psycho-social spaces they inhabit. It looks at the spaces and the environments as active collaborators in shaping the meanings of the figures. Here, the figure is not a mimetic form but a verb, a doing, an unravelling. It becomes a recurring discursive site to illustrate the dialectics of the visible/invisible, presence/absence and subjection/agency.

The representation of the body is never a stable rendering. It is like a chameleon shaped by its environment in an era defined by ecological collapse, algorithmic governance, and the specter of late capitalism. Capitalism, with its empty promise of liberation through rationality, has not only disconnected us from the sacred but also shattered our relationship with space. The body, once tethered to the sacred and the communal, is now quantified, surveilled, and gentrified. This dissociation is not merely ideological but spatial. The critical intervention lies in the refusal to isolate the figure from the environmental matrices that produce it. The works insist that to see the figure is to see the world through the collapsing ecosystems, its grids of control. The figure, in the end, is neither subject nor object; it signifies a site of continuous conflicts between person and institution, nature and technology, collective belonging and capitalist isolation.

The exhibition spans multiple media and styles and showcases the works of Avishek Das, Bholanath Rudra, Janhavi Khemka, Swastik Pal, Priti Roy, Santanu Debnath, Sayanee Sarkar, Kushan Bhattacharya, Tapas Biswas, and Ushnish Mukhopadhyay.

Artists

Avishek Das
Bholanath Rudra
Janhavi Khemka
Kushan Bhattacharya
Priti Roy
Santanu Debnath
Sayanee Sarkar

Swastik Pal
Tapas Biswas
Ushnish Mukhopadhyay

Quote by Richa Agarwal

As a leading cultural institution for contemporary art in Eastern India and South Asia, Emami Art supports emerging and mid-career artists through exhibitions, awards, educational initiatives, and mentorship programs. Re-Figuring brings together recent works by ten artists across various mediums, including painting, drawing, sculpture, video, and photography. While each artist's approach is distinct, the exhibition explores figuration and space from multiple perspectives. I appreciate the contributions of the participating artists and the curatorial team in shaping this exhibition.

(Says, Richa Agarwal, CEO, Emami Art)

About the Artists

Avishek Das (b. 1997)

Born in Kolkata in 1997, Avishek Das completed his BFA and MFA in Sculpture from the Rabindra Bharati University, Kolkata.

He was a part of many exhibitions, including *CIMA Award Show, 2025*; Annual Exhibition, Birla Art and Culture, Kolkata, 2024; *West Bengal Rajya Charukala Pradarshini, 2023, 2022*; *Annual Exhibition*, Rabindra Bharati University, Kolkata; *R. V. J Foundation Annual Exhibition*, Dhoomimal Art Gallery, Delhi, 2022. He received the Sanat Kar Special Mention Award in 2025 and the National Scholarship by the Ministry of Culture in 2023.

Avishek Das lives and works in Kolkata.

Bholanath Rudra (b. 1984)

Born in 1984 in Kolkata, West Bengal, Bholanath Rudra is a contemporary Indian artist who graduated with a B.F.A. and an M.F.A. in Painting from Rabindra Bharati University in 2009 and 2013, respectively. Since 2019, he has been a member of the Society of Contemporary Artists, Kolkata.

Rudra has exhibited widely all over India in numerous group exhibitions, such as *All That is Hidden: Mapping Departures in Landscape, Terrains and Geographies*, Emami Art, Kolkata, 2024; *Brink* at Art Centrix Space, 2022; *Fluid Boundaries*, Emami Art, Kolkata, 2020; *Insights* Emami Art, Kolkata, 2020; 64th Annual Exhibition of Society of Contemporary Artists, Birla Academy of Art & Culture, Kolkata, 2018 – 2022; Annual Art Exhibition at Birla Academy of Art and Culture, Kolkata, 2014, 2016, and 2018; State Art Gallery, Hyderabad in 2019; Kolkata Centre for Creativity, 2018, CIMA Gallery, Kolkata, 2017; Rajya Charukala Parishad, Kolkata, 2017 -2019; Karnataka Lalit Kala Akademi, 2017; Annual Exhibition, Emami Chisel Art, Kolkata 2015 and 2017.

His solo shows include *Pensive Moons*, Emami Art, 2024; *States of Mind* at the Society of Contemporary Artists, Kolkata, in 2018; and *Mechanical Libido* at the Academy of Fine Arts, Kolkata, in 2013. Rudra has participated in several art fairs, including the India Art Fair, New Delhi, in 2025, 2024, 2022, 2020; *Hub India – Maximum Minimum*, Artissima, Torino, Italy, 2021. He has also participated in several art residencies, including the International Artists Residency Exchange Program at Kira A. Princess of Prussia Foundation (Germany, Italy), in collaboration with Emami Art, 2022.

He was awarded the State Gallery of Art Award by the Telangana Government in 2019; The Birla Academy Annual Exhibition Award in 2018; The Rajya Charukala Parshad Annual Award in 2017; The National Exhibition Award by Lalit Kala Akademi, Karnataka, in 2017; and The All-India Watercolor Exhibition Award by AIFACS in 2017.

Bholanath Rudra lives and works in Kolkata.

Janhavi Khemka (b. 1993)

Born in 1993 in Varanasi, India, Janhavi Khemka is an interdisciplinary artist who graduated with a B.F.A. in Painting from the Faculty of Visual Art, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi in 2015, and an M.F.A. in Graphics from Kala Bhavana, Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan in 2017. She also studied Studio Arts at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL, USA in 2023.

Khemka has participated in many major exhibitions in India and internationally, including solo shows such as a Solo Digital Presentation at India Art Fair 2024; *Unit #1505*, Comfort Station, Chicago in 2023; and *UnMute* at SITE Sharp Gallery, Chicago in 2022. She was a part of group shows and biennials, including the Ground Floor Biennial at Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago, 2025; *What We Inherit* at University Art Gallery, Truman State University, MO, USA in 2023; *Coalesce* at CSI Project Space, 1912 North Damen, Chicago in 2023; *Neighbors* 2023, Purple Window Gallery, at Mana Contemporary, Chicago in 2023; *Open Water: Permeating Territories*, Chicago in 2023; *Where She Comes From*, NEIU Fine Arts Gallery, Chicago, USA in 2022; *A Photographic Image as Text Part I*, Jolly Art Adda, Mumbai, India, *Press Forward* at Box 13 Art Space, Texas in 2021; *Embodied Histories: Reconstructing the Present* at Gallery SAIC, Chicago in 2021; *Aroh* at Emami Art, Kolkata in 2021; *Print Exposition* at Rashid Chowdhury Art Gallery, Chittagong in 2017; *The Shape of Things* at Ganges Art Gallery, Kolkata in 2017; and many more.

Khemka has been a part of numerous workshops and art camps including one on Japanese Woodblock Printmaking with artist Paul Furneaux at Edinburgh, UK in 2018; National Printmaking Camp at Karnataka Chitrakala Parishad, College of Arts, Bengaluru, India in 2018; and International Graphic Arts Festival, Indira Kala Sangeet Vishwavidyalaya, Khairagarh, India in 2018.

She has participated in many residency programs, including the Wisconsin School for the Deaf, Delavan, WI, US in 2023; Visualizing Language, Piramal Art Residency, Mumbai, India in 2020; and The International Art Residency Program at The Institute of Fine Art, Chittagong, Bangladesh in 2017, among many others.

Khemka is a recipient of many awards and fellowships, including the UC Berkeley South Asia Artists Prize for 2024 by the South Asia Art Initiative, 63rd National Award 2023, Lalit Kala Akademi, in printmaking; Prafulla Dahanukar Art Foundation Award for Printmaking (2021, 2018); and the First Printmaking Prize Gate44 (Milan, 2019). Her works are a part of several important collections, including the KNMA, New Delhi, India and the Alkazi Foundation, India.

Janhavi Khemka works between Santiniketan, Varanasi and Chicago.

Kushan Bhattacharya (b.1999)

Born in 1999 in Santiniketan, Kushan Bhattacharya is a BFA graduate from Kala Bhavana, Visva Bharati University. He is an artist and storyteller based in Manali. Working primarily in watercolor, his practice draws from the detailed craftsmanship of miniature painting while embracing the atmospheric depth and sensitivity of artists like Francois Schuiten. His work explores themes of ecological collapse, superstition, and the intersection of mythology and lived history, often weaving narrative fragments into richly textured compositions.

Currently, he is developing *Aranyaka*, a long-form comic set in the Vedic-era Himalayas, and NeoKolkata, a series of illustrations depicting a dreamlike post-apocalyptic Kolkata. His work has been exhibited at many places including MSU, Baroda; School of Visual Arts, New York and featured in Pluto Magazine. Beyond comics, they are also engaged in printmaking and zine-making, using these mediums to further explore world-building and storytelling.

Priti Roy (b. 1993)

Born in 1993, Priti Roy completed her MFA in painting from Rabindra Bharati University, Kolkata and BFA from the College of Visual Art, Garia.

She was a part of several group exhibitions, including KCC Art Fair 2025 and 2019; Kritika Art Space online exhibition, Santiniketan, West Bengal; Taj Bengal Kolkata 2024; Rajya Charukala Show, 2023; National Art Exhibition, Lalit Kala Academi Annual Show 2022; Abir 1st Take Annual Show 2022; 54th Annual Exhibition, Birla Academy of Art and Culture, 2021; Aakriti Art Foundation, 2020; 92nd Annual Exhibition, All India Fine Arts and Crafts Society, 2029; Annual Exhibition, Academy of Fine Arts, 2018; Gaganendra Shilpa Pradarshashala, West Bengal, 2027.

She has received many awards and scholarships, including the Rajya Charukala Scholarship in 2023 and the Certificate of Merit in Painting from the West Bengal Ministry of Culture in 2019.

She is currently based in Kolkata.

Santanu Debnath (1995)

Santanu Debnath, born in 1995 in Betpukur, a village in West Bengal, completed his BFA and MFA in Painting from the Rabindra Bharati University and the Government College of Art and Craft, Kolkata, respectively.

He has participated in several group shows, including, India Art Fair 2025, New Delhi; *There Are Tides in the Body*, Emami Art, Kolkata, 2024; *All That is Hidden: Mapping Departures in Landscape, Terrains and Geographies*, Emami Art, Kolkata, 2024; *100 Yuva Sumbhava*, Raza Foundation, Delhi, 2022; *IMAGINARIUM*, Emami Art, Kolkata, 2021, GCAC Annual Exhibition, 2019-2021, KCC Art Fair 2019; West Bengal State Academy, Kolkata, 2018-19; ICAD Annual Exhibition, Kolkata, 2015-2018; Institute de Chandannagar, Hooghly, 2017; among others. He was featured on an online solo show, *The Simple Life* at Emami Art, Kolkata, 2020 and *After Cities Fall* at Nippon Gallery, Mumbai, 2020. He won the Gita Das Award at the GCAC Annual Exhibition in 2019 and a Certificate of Merit

at the West Bengal State Academy Annual Exhibition, 2018-19. He received the prestigious Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin Scholarship, 2020-2021.

He received the Elizabeth Greenshields Foundation Grant 2024. Debnath recently concluded a three-month Monsoon Residency at Space Studio Baroda.

Santanu Debnath lives and works in Betpukur and Kolkata.

Sayanee Sarkar (b. 1999)

Born in 1999, Sayanee Sarkar completed her Master's in Visual Arts from Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara and her Bachelor's degree in Fine Arts from the Indian College of Arts and Draftsmanship, Kolkata in 2022.

She has participated in several exhibitions, including the *Bodies*, Young Collectors Programme as part of the India Art Fair 2025, Delhi; Without Cube, MSU Fine Arts Faculty Gallery, Baroda, 2024; *Pushpabaug*, Anant Art Gallery, Delhi, 2024; Potluck, MSU Baroda Fine Arts Faculty Gallery, Gujarat, 2023; Abir India's FIRST TAKE, 2023; Nasreen Mohamdei Scholarship Exhibition, MSU Baroda, Gujarat, 2022.

She was awarded the third excellence award for the Emami Art Open Call IMAGINARIUM 4.0 in 2024.

She is currently based in Vadodara, Gujarat.

Swastik Pal (b. 1991)

Born in Kolkata, Swastik Pal is a visual artist working with photography and video. Pal graduated from the University of Kolkata in 2012 with a major in English, and later, in 2019, he completed a Master's in Film Studies from Jadavpur University, Kolkata.

His first solo show, *The Hungry Tide Project' / Chapter 1 of 'The Delta Trilogy*, opened at the India Habitat Centre in 2016 as a recipient of the National Media Fellowship. He is also in the process of publishing his first photo book, *Hill Diaries (2016-2019)*, a diary of his archive from his university years. Pal was the recipient of the Alexia Student Award of Excellence in 2018, and in 2023, he was invited to join Bad Eyes Collective, an artists' collective based in Bangkok, experimenting with self-published photo books. Pal has been a runner-up at the Joop Swart Masterclass in 2024.

He was commissioned by Newcastle University in 2021 as a photographer and visual researcher for an international research project (2021-2023), investigating the role of global climate change in altering delta cultures in collaboration with a global hub of scientists researching delta culture. His work has been published in many prestigious international outlets, including The Economist UK, BBC, and Financial Times. His visual stories have been exhibited around the world, including the Angkor Photo Festival, Siem Reap, Academy of Fine Arts, Calcutta, Alliance Francaise, and New Delhi.

In 2025, he received the MurthyNayak Foundation fellowship to pursue a one-year certificate program in Documentary Practice: Visual Storytelling Online at the International Centre of Photography in New York.

Tapas Biswas (b. 1972)

Born in 1972 in West Bengal, India, Tapas Biswas 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 several solo shows at Aakriti Art Gallery, Kolkata, 2010, and Kalakriti Art Gallery, Hyderabad, 2012. In addition, his work has been featured in numerous significant group exhibitions in India, France in 2011, and Sweden in 2010. He was a part of some of the notable shows, including *Ekkhan*, Emami Art, Kolkata, 2024; *Fluid Boundaries*, Emami Art, Kolkata, 2020; International Art Summit, Singapore, 2007; and many more.

Tapas Biswas has participated in workshops, residencies, and seminars in India and abroad. Biswas was awarded a Junior Research Fellowship by the Government of India (1998-2000), an AIFACS award in 1998, and many more.

Tapas Biswas lives and works in Kolkata.

Ushnish Mukhopadhyay (b. 1994)

Based in Konnagar, West Bengal, Ushnish Mukhopadhyay completed his Master's in Fine Arts Painting from the Faculty of Fine Arts, M. S. University, Vadodara, Gujarat, India (2019) and his Bachelor's in Visual Art Painting from Government College of Art & Craft, Kolkata, West Bengal, India (2016).

Mukhopadhyay has shown his artworks in various exhibitions and film festivals including, *Eye/View II – Videocity*, Basel, Switzerland; *Augen-Blick*, St. Polten, Austria; *EYE/VIEW x REX Box VII*, Bern, Switzerland; Birla Academy, Kolkata; *Emami Art Experimental Film Festival*, Emami Art, Kolkata; *VAICA 2*, an online festival of video art by Indian Contemporary Artists; *Vuedmic*, an online short-film festival in association with the Gujral Foundation, Harkat Studios and Artdemic. He was also selected for *Puntomov (2nd edition) International Video Art Festival*, Faculty of Arts Mexico; 6th Graphic Art Biennial of Szeklerland, 2020, Romania; *Borderless Lockdown - One Minute Video Art Exhibition*, 2020 and *Artpro International Video Art Festival* at National Art Gallery, Shilpakala Academy, Dhaka, Bangladesh (2019).

He recently participated in the group show *FERAL ECOLOGIES* at HH Art Spaces in 2024, curated by Mario D'Souza. He also edited and animated the video work titled *Shadow Line* by artist Chhatrapati Dutta for Bengal Biennale 2024. He facilitated two workshops titled *Archival Case Study* with DAG Museum on photobook making, one at Adamas University and the other at Loreto College, Kolkata, in 2024.

He received many awards, including the first award for the Emami Art IMAGINARIUM 3.0 Open Call, the Sarala-Basant Kumar Birla Award for Outstanding Work in Video Installation from Birla Academy, Kolkata, in 2020, the Nasreen Mohamedi Scholarship from the Faculty of Fine Arts, M. S. U, Baroda, in 2018-19, and the Scholarship for Young Artists in Different Cultural Fields (Visual Art, Painting) given by the Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India, in 2016-17.

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 North Eastern 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 annual Emami Art Experimental Film Festival, 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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