

Emami Art Hosts “Bhū: The act of becoming”

An ensemble exhibition of contemporary ceramics

Kolkata, October, 2021: Emami Art, one of India’s leading contemporary art galleries based in Kolkata is delighted to announce its upcoming exhibition “**Bhū: The act of becoming**”, an ensemble exhibition of contemporary ceramics. This will be an exclusive exhibition which will feature artworks of 11 prominent artists who will exhibit works which portrays a diverse range of visual languages within ceramic art. The exhibition will be on display from 13th November to 12th December, 2021 from 11 am to 6pm on the ground floor of Emami Art at Kolkata Centre for Creativity.

Bhū: The act of becoming: A mystical word in Sanskrit, **Bhū** has an array of meanings. It refers to the earth, but also alludes to the nuanced sense of soil, land, region or matter as such. It also means “to be” or “to become” that brings Bhu closer to the realm of ceramic art. Clay has inspired the human civilization since the time immemorial. The unique position of the artist in the discourse of contemporary ceramic art depends on a series of aesthetic and technical decisions made during the process. This exhibition comprises the works of prolific and promising artists namely **Devesh Upadhyay, Falguni Bhatt, Indrani Singh Cassime, Kavita Pandya Ganguly, Keshari Nandan Prasad, Partha Dasgupta, Saraswati, Shalini Dam, Shilpi Sharma, Shweta Mansingka** and **Vinod Daroz** who will showcase a diverse range of visual languages within ceramic art.

Devesh Upadhyay’s figurative sculptures complement the playful idiom of Saraswati, which reveals a sense of innocence. Hailing from Azamgarh, Uttar Pradesh, Upadhyay spent his childhood watching local artisans sculpting the idols of Gods. This experience, fused with his fascination for human emotions and behaviours, manifested in his oeuvre. His ceramic sculptures portray human figures in unique ways, turning them into ‘characters’. Playful and poetic, his work explores the realm of innocence within the complex conditions of society.

Falguni Bhatt: A founder member of Indian Ceramic Art Foundation and Afsa fired Art, Kolkata and a member of the International Academy of Ceramics, Bhatt has been the subject of solo exhibitions worldwide. Spontaneous and intuitive, her works respond to the notion of space as an architectural entity, a vast expanse of land, or an abstract, psychological space within. She works in a range of mediums, including sculpture, ceramic, and installation, seeking a quiet balance between the comfort of the familiar and the thrill of the unknown.

Indrani Singh Cassime: Indrani started working with clay in the year 2000. Using clay from a native lake, firing in her Anagama kiln, using ash from the firewood as a glaze, she infuses her work with a rustic and sublime quality. Indrani Singh Cassime and her studio Pheonix Potteries are at the Forefront of the Anagama kiln firing in India. Fascinated by this ancient way of firing clay objects, she handcrafted her own kiln.

Kavita Pandya Ganguly: An avid admirer of nature and a ceramic artist, Kavita creates a visual language fusing organic forms with geometric simplicity, embodying a meditative rhythm. She is known for the Nerikomi technique and she brings art, craft, and design together in her practice.

Keshari Nandan Prasad: Keshari studied pottery and ceramics at the Banaras Hindu University. Hailing from Bihar, he now lives and works in Jaipur, Rajasthan. Fascinated by nature, history, and religion,

Keshari Nandan's practice promises an interpretation of natural phenomena with reference to Hindu mythology. The votive, symbolic works are rich with textures and crevices, embracing an abstract, expressive style.

Partha Dasgupta: Hailing from Kolkata, Dasgupta is inspired by the sensory qualities of ceramic art. Diverse and dynamic, his practice moves between mediums, following a visual language that responds to space as a site. With a painterly bent, his ceramic work fuses into sculptures and installations.

Saraswati (Renata Sereda): Born in Russia, Saraswati grew up in an artistic family. She started regular ceramic classes at the age of 12 years, had her first solo show at the age of 12, and developed a unique, whimsical miniature style of ceramic art by 20. She later moved to Auroville, Pondicherry, where she rekindled her ceramic art practice. With a playful idiom, her recent works explore architectural themes with organic forms, reflecting the spontaneous personality of the artist.

Shalini Dam: Hailing from Lucknow, she left behind her two-decade-long career in advertising to pursue ceramic art. She explores the idea of contradiction and duality using signs and symbols in a dichotomous manner. Her handling of the surface creates a kind of optical illusion, challenging the usual ways of seeing.

Shilpi Sharma: A promising young artist, Sharma's work is deeply inspired by the mystery of the oceanic world. Blending recycled and organic material like natural fibre, or paper pulp with clay, she creates lightweight, experimental pieces that resemble aquatic forms. She has exhibited and demonstrated her ceramic works widely and is currently studying Glass and Ceramic at Shilpa Sadana, Santiniketan.

Shweta Mansingka: Shweta has always been fascinated by the silent strength of clay as a medium. She continues to experiment with organic and geometric forms along with a range of firing and glazing techniques. Abstract and minimal, her meditative visual language aspires for a wordless expression of the artist's thoughts.

Vinod Daroz : A distinguished member of the International Academy Of Ceramics(IAC), Geneva, utilises the conventional and functional aspects of ceramic as a metaphor for mythological stories. Rich in colour and minimal in form, his work subverts the traditional perception of ceramic as a utilitarian craft.

"I respond best to the theme of space, be it the open sky or the inner spaces of my mind. I enjoy the containment of two-dimensional pieces, as well as the challenge of multidimensional forms. Clay is my medium, and I need to look no further to be in touch with my inner core. My works are often spontaneous, always intuitive, and very often a reaction to an architectural language or an organic form." Says **Falguni Bhatt, a founder member of Indian Ceramic Art Foundation and Afsa fired Art, Kolkata and a member of the International Academy of Ceramics.**

"The ambience of ancient Indian temples, their architecture, and sculptural elements deeply impact my practice. Yet, on the other hand, I respond to the decorative innovations of traditional crafts with a sense of belonging. Patterns and designs are characteristic of art and craft traditions throughout India, but for me, the act of repetition evokes aspects of recall, connecting with chants and meditative practices." Says **Vinod Daroz, a distinguished member of the International Academy Of Ceramics(IAC), Geneva.**



In clay-based art practices, the element of touch is essential. In kneading and moulding the clay, in shaping and glazing the work, the artist's touch breathes life into form. As the work is finally placed in the kiln, the artist must wait, not knowing how the objet d'art will appear. After the firing, it acquires a quality of its own, yet retains the tactile immediacy. In the current epoch, where the future of the earth is uncertain, clay stirs profound, primordial emotions in us, as residual desire for existence.

"It brings me great joy to present Bhū, an ensemble of contemporary ceramic art from established and emerging artists across India. Ceramic as a medium has now become a metaphor for artists' personal or political concerns, and contemporary ceramic artists are pushing the boundaries of its historical context. By adopting new approaches and techniques, they create their own visual language of unique aesthetics. Moulding ideas into objects, the artists of Bhū offer a fresh, contemporary perspective to the ancient craft. It is exciting to see such a dynamic and diverse range of creative voices coming together, creating a confluence of visions. As a contemporary art gallery, Emami Art commits to bringing these practices into mainstream artistic discourse and facilitating debates and dialogues around ceramic art as a contemporary medium", Said **Ms. Richa Agarwal, CEO Emami Art.**

About Emami Art:

Emami Art, one of the most significant art institutions in the eastern part of India, is a key space for cultural production in the region. The organisation is focused on a future-forward, complex, multi-dimensional approach and steadfast in the advocacy of emerging, mid-career and established artists as well as an engagement with contemporary and historical material. The gallery aims to create dynamic, wide-ranging registers of exhibition-making and viewing. Deeply committed to promoting a regional, national and international agenda through innovative and alternative programming, emphasis on community and socially relevant engagements, institutional partnerships and more via a multi-year vision for the future, Emami Art is resolute to be a catalyst of change, research, innovation and inclusivity. Emami Art, Kolkata Centre for Creativity 777 Anandapur off EM Bypass. www.emamiart.com

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