

THE (IN) VISIBLE & THE (UN) REVEALED

A Survey Show

Inside the Secret Worlds of Kartick Chandra Pyne

March 18 - June 12, 2021



THE (IN) VISIBLE & THE (UN) REVEALED

INSIDE THE SECRET WORLDS OF **KARTICK CHANDRA PYNE** (1931 - 2017)

A SURVEY SHOW MARCH 17 – JUNE 12, 2021

Foreword

This year marks the ninetieth birth anniversary of Kartick Chandra Pyne, one of the finest modern painters of India. Although he was a prolific and highly original artist, he has not been a part of the larger art discourse, even in Bengal. One of the aims of the carefully curated exhibition is to discard this veil of apathy by showing a large body of his significant paintings, drawings and prints from the different phases of his intensively productive creative life, along with two documentaries and display of archival items that enable the viewers to have a wider and informed understanding of the artist's life and work.

Kartick Chandra Pyne's work is characterized by the eclecticism of his style and enigmatic visions. Trained in academic realism, he seeks the untutored freedom of the child. Many of his mature paintings look childlike, but they are thoroughly planned; naïve, but based on a profound understanding of both indigenous art and global trends of modernism. His unique artistic genius lies in his ability to create an imaginary, fantastic world in which dream, reality and personal memories are inseparably interconnected. As it is indicated in the show's title, the truth of Kartick Chandra Pyne's paintings is by no means a matter of exposure that destroys the secret or mystery of his artistic vision, but a revelation that does justice to it.

The exhibition has had a long gestation period, but the support that we have received from many individuals and institutions has been overwhelming. Our deep gratitude goes out to Apan Pyne, Kartick Chandra Pyne's only son, for his generous help with information, allowing access to archival objects related to his father from his personal collection. Emami Art is indebted to Jogen Chowdhury for encouraging us to work on the exhibition, for his note on the artist and for facilitating the screening of a documentary on the artist produced by Rajya Charukala Parshad, Government of West Bengal. A note of appreciation goes to the eminent writers – Pranabranjan Ray, Nanak Ganguly and Samit Das whose contributions towards the catalogue shed light on various critical aspects of Kartick Chandra Pyne's work and its enduring relevance in our contemporary times. We also thank Prakash Kejriwal of Chitrakoot Art Gallery and Vikram Bachhawat of Aakriti Art Gallery for their support and for loaning artworks of Kartick Chandra Payne from their galleries' collection, which make the exhibition more complete and comprehensive.

Finally, we applaud our team at Emami Art, without whose effort and dedication this exhibition would not have been possible.

Richa Agarwal CEO, Emami Art Ushmita Sahu Director and Head Curator

Exhibition Note

A prolific and highly original modern painter, Kartick Chandra Pyne (1931-2017) embarked on his long artistic career in the 1950s when the world and the very criteria of what constituted an art object were rapidly changing. He was deeply influenced by the experimental spirit of the time and adapted to the languages of modern Western art, moving away from academic realism which he excelled in as a student of the Government College of Art & Craft, Calcutta. His early mature works, including *Bird in a Cage*, which fetched a record price at a Sotheby's auction in New York, 2005, an event that made Kartick Pyne overnight a big name in the artworld, reflect unique assimilation of the different styles and elements of both indigenous art and the modern art of the West.

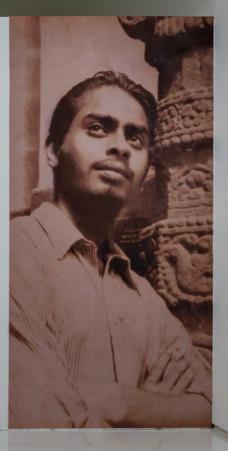
The genius of Kartick Pyne lies in his ability to create in his paintings a unique imaginary and fantastic world, differentially and not representationally connected to our habitual, real world. For Jogen Chowdhury, he is the foremost surrealist painter of his generation. A significant part of the show is devoted to the paintings of the imaginary world, which reveals an enigmatic phenomenon combining the visible and subliminal, mimetic and metaphorical in a rich affective pictorial language of eroticism. An inveterate introvert, deeply immersed in the world of religious devotion, Kartick Payne attempts at the eclectic synthesis of the Indian imagery and international idioms of modern art. His famous painting *Moon Bath*, shown in the landmark exhibition *Asian Artists Exhibition: Modern Asian Art* at Fukuoka Art Museum, Japan in 1979, was inspired by both Matisse and the Purnima night at his ancestral *Thakur Bari* (temple house). Displaying the work spanning over sixty-year of his artistic career, the exhibition helps us to understand the complexities of Kartick Payne's eclectic style, which, though look naïve or like outsider art, is firmly grounded on the academic training. Although he has often been

categorized as a surrealist, he did not see it as a conscious choice: "I did not know that I worked in surreal style still it was pointed out to me. [...] Thousands of thoughts play in my mind but the idea for a perfect picture is to create reality as a complete whole and encompass elements both the conscious and the subconscious" he told to the Indian Express.

The exhibition will provide a glimpse of his lifelong quest for the perfect painting.

Thousands of thoughts play in my mind, but the idea of a perfect picture is to create reality as a complete whole and encompass elements of both the conscious and the subconscious **99**







Kartick Chandra Pyne

Born in 1931 in Kolkata, Kartick Chandra Pyne studied painting at Government College of Art and Craft, Calcutta between 1950 and 1955. A prolific and introvert artist, his work was shown as one of the hundred exhibits representing modern Indian Art in the historic exhibition at Fukuoka Art Museum, Japan, 1979. He was the subject of 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, among many others. A retrospective exhibition of his work was organized by Aakriti Art gallery, Kolkata, 2006.

He was the recipient of prestigious Shilpi Maha Samman and Abanindra Puraskar of the Government of West Bengal. Rajya Charukala Parshad made a documentary film on him "Line, Story, Design," released in 2017. Kartick Chandra Pyne died in 2017.



66 In Kartik's works, not only the human females but also all living beings, including non-humans confront each other, as if to decide about a future relationship. One of which is a blissful erotic relationship. An initial gaze at the object /objects of relationship, do go long way to offer the mixed feels of bliss. This kind of ambiguity, at the same time gives to Kartick Chandra Pyne's work their richness and their perplexing readability.**?**

PRANABRANJAN RAY



Part I







66 I remember, when I was in Madras around the 1970s, I used to occasionally visit Delhi for personal reason and whenever I had time, I would visit art galleries in Connaught Place. In one such visit to Dhoomimal Gallery, the owner Mr Mahindra Jain showed me a number of paintings by Kartick Pyne and I was instantly moved by the works which were original, individualistic as well as spontaneous, and depicted indigenous subjects in a surrealistic matter. The paintings were colourful and the images were fancifully distorted with free whimsy by the artist. I was amused and instantly liked them. It is interesting to note, that even we who were from Calcutta were unaware of him. But Mr Mahinder Jain had discovered him and used to visit his studio in Calcutta to get his works for the gallery in Delhi.??

JOGEN CHOWDHURY









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PRANABRANJAN RAY



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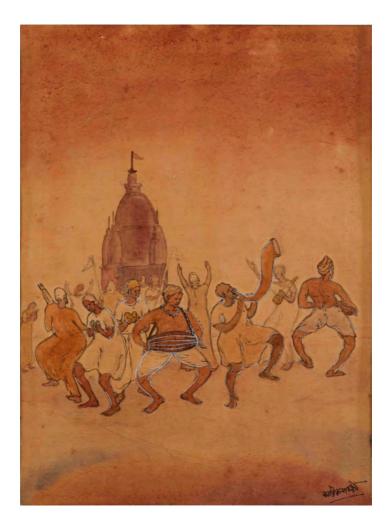


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Portrait Watercolour on paper 10.43 x 6.49 inches 1950 Lower left in English



Sankirtan Watercolour on paper 10.43 X 7.67 inches 1953 Lower right in Bengali



Portrait of an Old Man Drypoint on paper 4.33 X 3.34 inches 1953 Lower right in Bengali Avgets Manaeli Miri ٩.

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Figure Study Etching on paper 4.92 X 4.72 inches 1953 Lower right in Bengali



Study of a Horse Crayon on paper 7.28 X 5.51 inches 1950 Lower left in Bengali



Portrait (front) Figure Study (reverse, not shown) Pencil on paper(front) Conte on paper (reverse) 16.33 X 13.38 inches Undated Lower middle in Bengali



Street Scene Pencil on paper 14.56 x 10.62 inches 1952 Lower left in Bengali



Bird in the Cage Oil on canvas 34.25 x 28.34 inches Undated Lower right in English



Poster Boys Oil on canvas 17.51 x 22.83 inches 1970 Unsigned



Untitled Pen and ink on paper 6.10 x 7.48 inches 25.12.1983 Lower left in Bengali



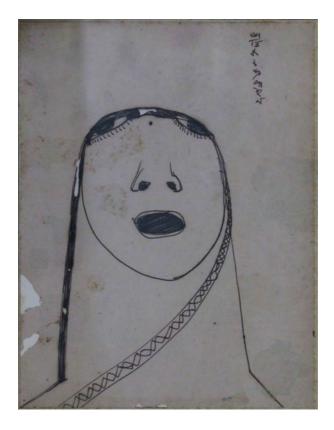
Swopno (Dream) Pen and ink on paper 5.90 x 7.08 inches 27.01.85 Lower left in Bengali



Untitled 4.72 x 7.48 inches 1980s Lower left in Bengali

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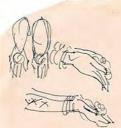
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Untitled Pen and ink on paper 7.48 x 5.90 inches 1980 Upper right in Bengali









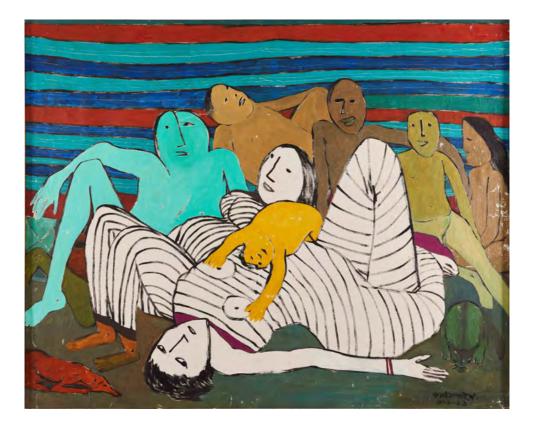




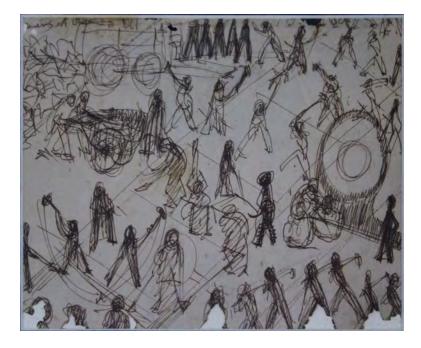


Untitled Ink on paper 3.54 x 3.54 inches Circa 1980s

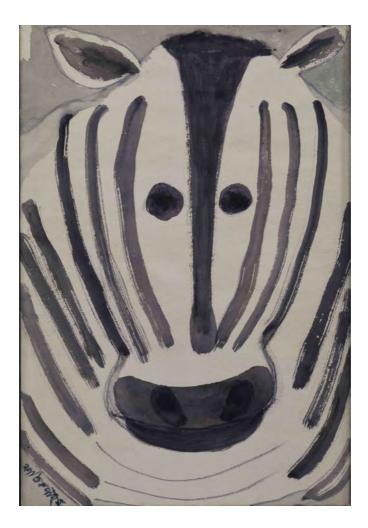
Set of Seven



Refugee Family Oil on canvas 35.82 x 44.48 inches 1996 Lower right in Bengali



Workers Pen and ink on paper 5.90 x 7.48 inches 1965 Unsigned



Untitled Watercolour on paper 21.65 x 14.56 inches Undated Lower left in Bengali



Untitled Watercolour on paper 18.50 X 29.52 inches 2001 Lower right in Bengali



Untitled Watercolour on rice paper 14.56 X 19.09 inches Undated Lower right in Bengali



Proceed to Work Watercolour on paper 18.30 X 23.81 inches 1997 Lower left in Bengali



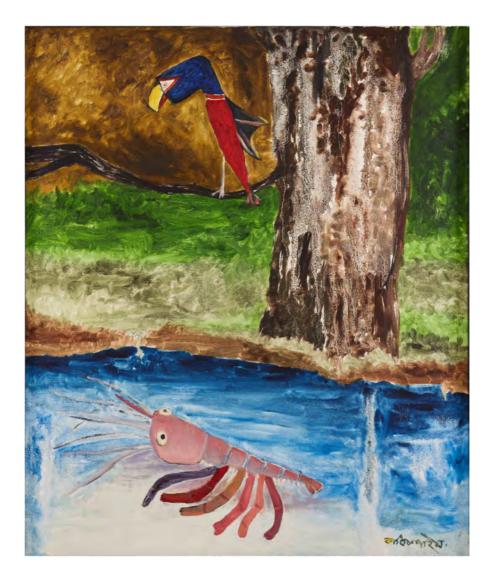
Desert Dawn Oil on canvas 24 x 27.95 inches 2008 Lower left in Bengali



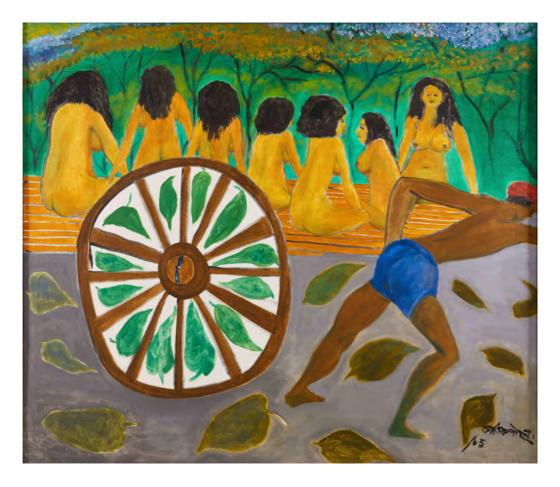
Undying Love Oil on canvas 29.92 x 35.82 inches 2007 Middle right in Bengali



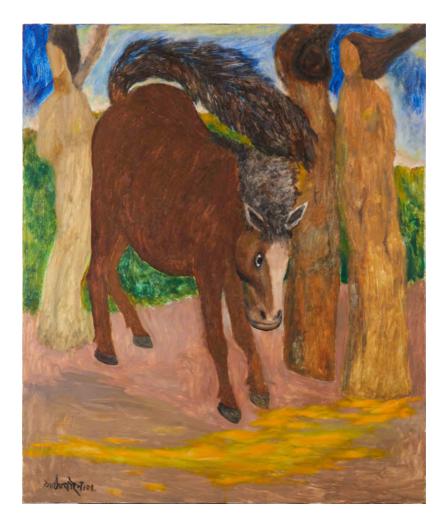
Winning Force Oil on canvas 20 x 24 inches 2007 Lower left in Bengali



Dissatisfaction Oil on canvas 35.62 x 29.72 inches Undated Lower right in Bengali



The Cart Puller Oil on canvas 36.22 x 42.12 inches 2005 Lower right in Bengali



Enchantment Oil on canvas 35.82 x 29.92 inches 2008 Lower left in Bengali



Fem Oil on canvas 24 x 20 inches 2009 Lower right in English Verso in Bengali



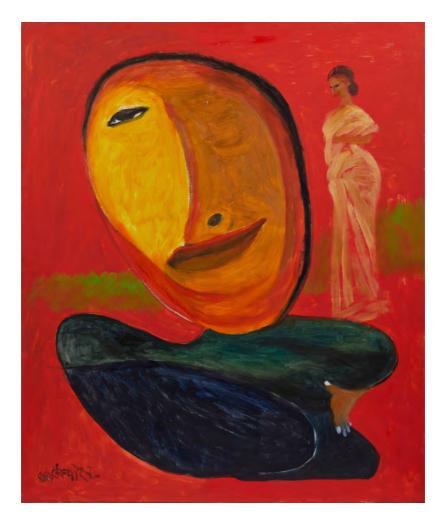
Vagabond Oil on canvas 29.92 x 35.82 inches 2007 Lower left in Bengali



Bird Oil on canvas 12 X 12 inches 2006 Lower right in bengali



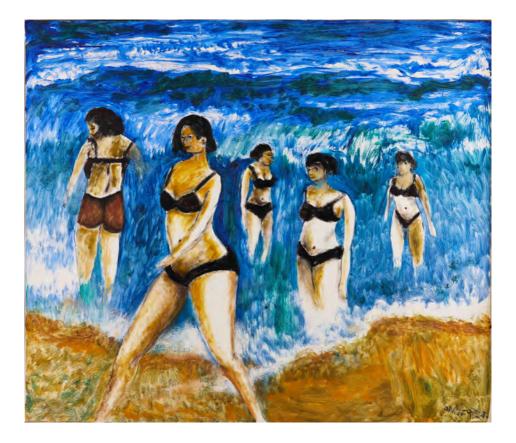
Bird Oil on canvas 12 X 12 inches 2006 Lower right in bengali



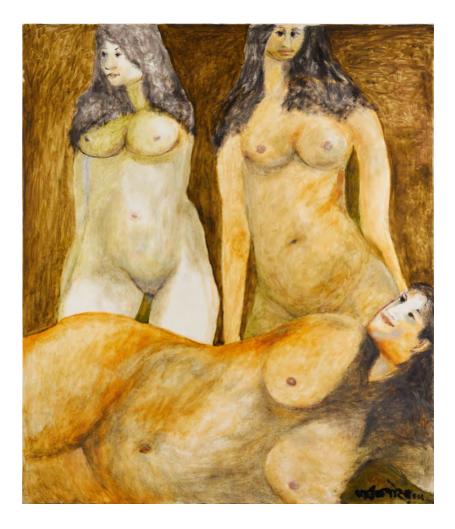
Passionate Past Oil on canvas 36.22 x 30.31 inches 2008 Lower left in Bengali



Bull Fight Oil on canvas 42.12 x 36.22 inches 2008 Lower left in Bengali



Brave Birth Oil on canvas 36.22 x 42.12 inches 2007 Lower right in Bengali



Old and Young Oil on canvas 42.12 x 36.22 inches 2008 Lower right in Bengali



Rickshaw Puller Oil on canvas 36.22 x 42.12 inches 2008 Lower right in Bengali



Vexation Oil on canvas 36.22 x 29.52 inches 2008 Lower right in Bengali



Family Oil on canvas 36.22 x 29.52 inches 2008 Lower left in Bengali



Life Curtain Oil on canvas 42.12 x 36.22 inches 2008 Lower right in Bengali



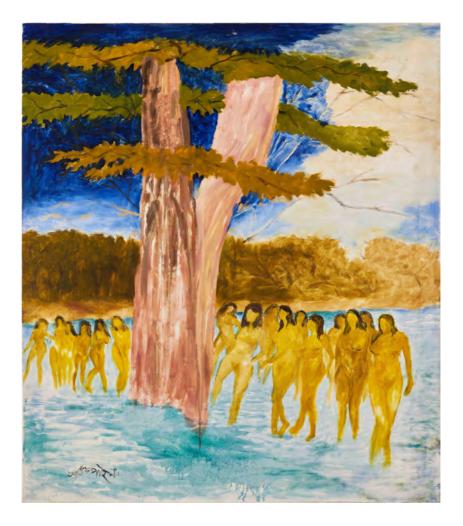
Crane Watercolour on rice paper pasted on board 20.07 x 15.35 inches 2003 Lower right in Bengali

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Untitled Watercolour on rice paper 19.48 x 28.74 inches 2008 Lower right in Bengali



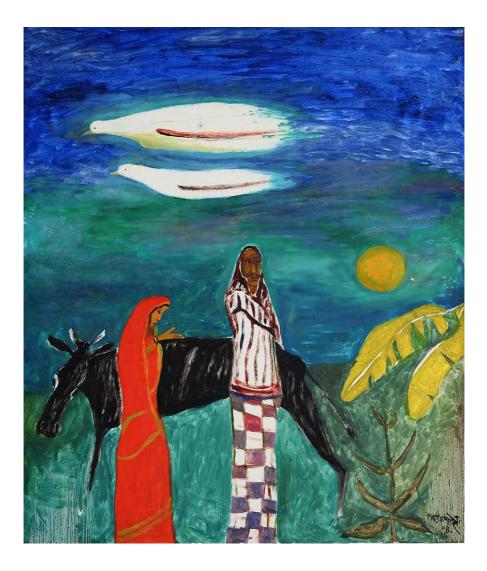
Way to Bath Oil on canvas 41.73 x 35.82 inches 2007 Lower left in Bengali



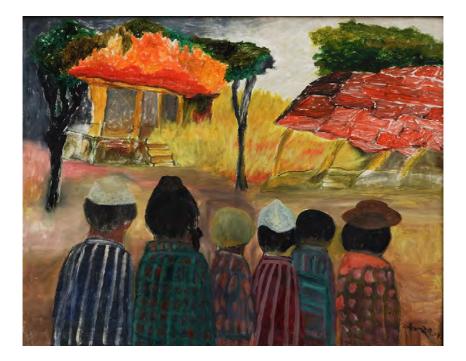
Dance Watercolour on rice paper 17.71 X 6.69 inches Undated Lower right in Bengali



Group of Deer Oil on canvas 35.82 x 42.12 inches 2005 Lower right in Bengali



Village View Oil on canvas 42.12 x 36.22 inches 2008 Unsigned



Never Again Oil on canvas 30.31 x 36 inches Lower right in Bengali Verso in Bengali 2009



Waves Oil on canvas 24 x 27.95 inches 2009 Lower right in Bengali Verso in Bengali



Journey Oil on canvas 24.40 x 42.12 inches 2009 Lower right in English Verso in Bengali



Untitled Watercolour on handmade paper 21.65 x 29.52 inches 2009 Middle right in Bengali



Persecution Oil on canvas 35.82 x 30.31 inches 2007 Lower right in Bengali Verso in Bengali

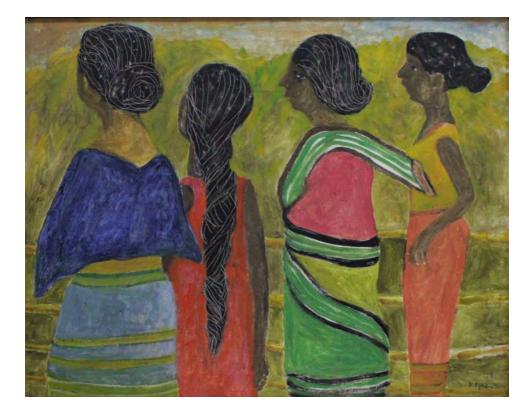


The Monkey & the Birds Oil on canvas 23.62 x 29.92 inches 2010 Lower left in English Verso in Bengali Detail of 'The Monkey & the Birds'

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Mother & Child Oil on canvas 24 x 19.88 inches 2010 Lower left in Bengali



Womenfolk Oil on canvas 24 x 30.31 inches 2010 Lower right in English Verso in English





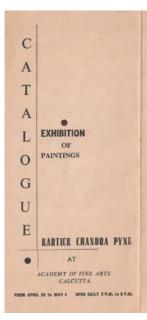
Kartick Chandra Pyne



Family of Kartick Chandra Pyne



Exhibition Photograph of Kartick Chandra Pyne



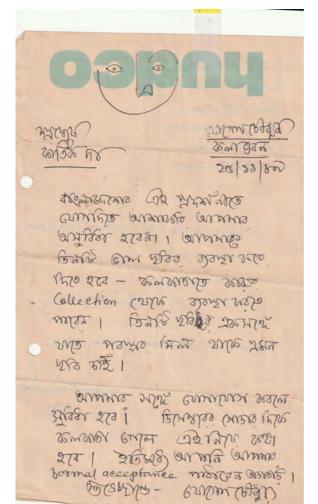
Born in 1931, educated at Calcutta, Diploma in Fine Art from Govt. College of Art & Craft, Calcutta, Practicing Since 1955 and regularly Participating in various Exhibitions of India including the National Exhibition of Art, won "Best Winning Academy award 1966" Paintings purchased by 'The National Gallery of Modern Art" New Delhi and many Private individuals of India and abroad, Held two-man-show arranged by "AIFACS" in New Delhi 1961 and Group shows in Calcutta, collection of "Short biography" by National gallery of Modern Art, Commission work-Fresco, Mural paintings of the Govt. of India, Ministry of I & B and also Govt. of West Bengal, Home Publicity Dept. for their publicity Exhibitions.

1.	Myself	400/-
2.	Faddist	400/-
З.	Expectation	300/-
4.	Dessipated Youth	300/-
5.	Yellow Crows	400/-
6.	She and Violin	200/-
7.	Belle in Blue	250/-
8.	Blue Horse & Black Pigeon	300/-
9.	A Bull's eye illusion	450/-
10.	Youth	300/-
11.	Play (1)	300/-
12.	,, (2)	300/-
13.	,. (3)	300/-
14.	., (4)	400/-
15.	Sound of pray	100/-
16.	Ecstasy	800/-
17.	Composition	350/-

Exhibition Catalogue Kartick Chandra Pyne



Kartick Chandra Pyne

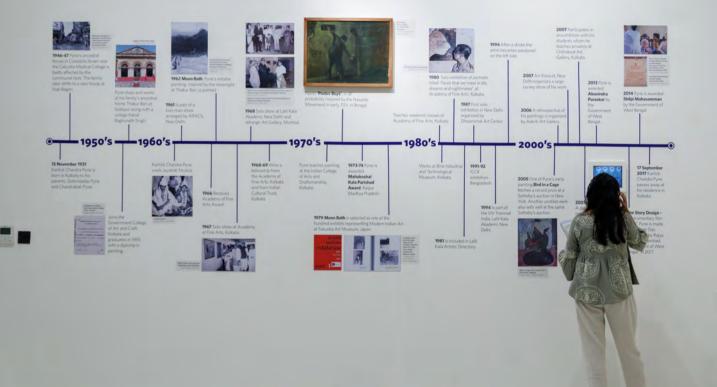


Letter of Jogen Chowdjury written to Kartick Chandra Pyne



Lalit Kala Akademy Directory





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Mission Statement

Emami Art, one of the largest 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, multidimensional 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 experiences.

Along with exhibitions and events Emami Art has a diverse parallel programme. With a focus on engagement with the region and beyond through continuous short- and long-term projects, Emami Art has launched **EA Locus in Focus**, **EA Co-labs** (Collaborative Program) and **EA Initiative** (Public art endeavors), **EA Hybrid** which integrates both physical and virtual interfaces. Other programmes include **EA Incubator** that comprises of mentorship programmes, workshops, residency opportunities and innovative educational programs that will facilitate artistic development, build networks of collaboration and work provide a supportive environment for emerging talent. As a centre of excellence, Emami Arts wishes to be identified as a platform rather than just a facility.

Critical discourse, interaction, documentation, and exchange are also essential to our agenda. Under the umbrella of **EA Discourse** we will develop and produce original writing, artists books, monographs, periodicals and catalogues that will focus on artistic and creative practices as well as other pedagogical material. Additionally, **EA Communicator** lineup of talks, seminars, panel discussions and conversations with artists, curators and key partners provides a space for critical engagement as part of our knowledge-making and archiving process.

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 determined to be a catalyst of change, research, innovation and inclusivity.

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