



**KOLKATA CENTRE
FOR CREATIVITY**

A unit of Anamika Kala Sangam Trust

**24 - 25
January
2025**

VASUDHAIVA KUTUMBAKAM

**Sixth Edition of
KCC's Annual Conference**

**Co-Programmed by
Dr Shwetal A. Patel
& Ushmita Sahu**

Theme:

**INTERSECTIONS
& CONFLUENCES**

KCC Amphitheatre

**Art
Craft
Music
Textile
Design
Ecology
Community
Architecture**

VASUDHAIVA KUTUMBAKAM

Co-Programmers

Dr. Shwetal A. Patel
& **Ushmita Sahu**



The VK VI Conference at KCC explores holistic creativity, cross-disciplinary intersectionality, and policy solutions. Leading voices from ecologically-driven art, design, architecture, fashion, textiles, and the public sector converge for two days of dialogue, workshops, and performances.



ABOUT VK VI

INTERSECTION & CONFLUENCES

Art
Craft
Music
Textile
Design
Ecology
Community
Architecture

Concept: The annual gathering at KCC examines the notion of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam and a vision of holistic development and respect for all forms of life and practice. The conference theme explores this Indic thought and its influence on contemporary creativity, and society more broadly, through a two-day programme that is open to practitioners and the public at large. VK VI at KCC brings together leading figures from the worlds of textile art, design, architecture, visual art and ecology to explore the intersectional disciplines through design and intervention targeted to problem solving. It aims to find synergies and overlaps, whilst enquiring about prevailing hierarchies and dismantling hegemonies.

The conference will bring together voices and energies that can help illuminate contemporary practices, policies, while encouraging dialogue and collaboration between disciplinary siloes. It also hopes to shed light on the intersectionality of how various forms of discrimination affect individuals and creative practitioners and offer solutions through dissemination of proven strategies at play in today's India.

VK VI is a call to action.



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"As someone deeply invested in this journey from the very beginning, the VK VI Conference holds a special place in my heart. What began as a small gathering of creative minds has grown into a powerful platform for cross-disciplinary collaboration—a space where diverse ideas meet to shape a more sustainable future. The principles of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam—the belief that the world is one family—have always guided our vision. To see these principles come to life through rich dialogue and innovative thinking is incredibly rewarding. This symposium isn't just about design, architecture, or art; it's about building a community that values holistic growth, pushes boundaries, and addresses the challenges of our time with empathy and creativity. I'm personally inspired by the energy and commitment of everyone involved, and I believe the solutions born from this gathering will leave a lasting impact on the world we are working to build."



Richa Agarwal

Chairperson | KCC

Inspired by her father-in-law, Mr. R. S. Agarwal, and his business partner, Mr. R. S. Goenka, Richa Agarwal is committed to safeguarding Bengal's artistic and cultural heritage while embracing its contemporary evolution. With a degree in commerce from Coimbatore, her natural business acumen and hands-on experience in family enterprises facilitated her transition into arts management. As an entrepreneur, she has earned recognition for her contributions to art and culture, including the New Indian Express Group DEVI Award 2022 and the Times Power Women Award 2018.

Richa Agarwal's vision for the Kolkata Centre for Creativity and Emami Art is grounded in fostering a deeper appreciation for art, crafts, and cultural practices. Her initiatives span multiple disciplines—from contemporary art to 'Art for All' programs such as a Braille library, as well as projects focused on archiving lesser-known artists, organizing annual art festivals, and hosting pioneering symposiums. Under her leadership, KCC has become synonymous with high-quality yet approachable art and culture in Kolkata.

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“The sixth edition of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, titled “INTERSECTIONS & CONFLUENCES: Art, Architecture, Design, Craft, Music, Textile, Ecology & Community”, marks a new chapter for this important initiative by the founders of Emami Group, Anamika Kala Sangam Trust and KCC. I am fortunate to have been a part of VK since its inception in 2019 and I am looking forward to co-curating the upcoming edition with Ushmita Sahu. INTERSECTIONS & CONFLUENCES is another layer of research that seeks to approach notions, interconnectedness and its implications on interdisciplinary creativity today. Whilst we can see and experience the manifold challenges around us, I hope VK is an opportunity for practitioners and public to gather, converse and reflect on new ways to live and work in harmony with each other and the planet.” as are transformed into real-world impact.”



CO-PROGRAMMER
of VK VI

**Dr. Shwetal
Ashvin Patel**

Shwetal A. Patel works at the intersection of visual art, exhibition-making, and development studies. As a founding member of the Kochi-Muziris Biennale in India, Shwetal has played a central role in shaping one of South Asia's foremost contemporary art events. Since 2015, he has served as a consultant to the Kochi Biennale Foundation, specializing in international partnerships and program development. In 2020, Shwetal earned a PhD from the University of Southampton with a thesis titled Biennale Practices: Making & Sustaining Visual Art Platforms, a critical work that bridges his academic and artistic interests. He also lectures at institutions such as Zürich University of the Arts, the Royal College of Art, and the University of Exeter, where he shares his research on contemporary art practices. In addition to his academic and professional commitments, Shwetal serves on the editorial board of OnCurating.org and as a trustee for the Milton Keynes Museum, the Kakar Centre for Psychoanalysis & Culture, and the Coventry Biennial. He divides his time between the UK, Belgium, and India, connecting global perspectives in art-making, cultural strategy, and interdisciplinary research.

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"The VK VI Conference is more than a meeting of creative minds—it's a catalyst for change. In a world that increasingly demands sustainable solutions, this event emphasizes the need for cross-disciplinary collaboration, where architects, designers, artists, and thinkers come together to challenge norms and rethink possibilities. By embracing the principle of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, we acknowledge the interconnectedness of our work and our world. This year's focus on ecological practices, grassroots innovation, and policy reform demonstrates that creativity isn't just about aesthetics—it's about responsibility. The conversations and partnerships forged here have the potential to spark new pathways for designing a future that values diversity, equity, and the environment. VK VI is a space for bold ideas, but more importantly, it's where those ideas are transformed into real-world impact."



CO-PROGRAMMER of VK VI

Ushmita Sahu

Director | Head Curator
of Emami Art

the Director and Head Curator of Emami Art in Kolkata is recognized as a prominent figure in the art world. With a fine arts background from Kala Bhavan, Visva Bharati University in Santiniketan, she has garnered extensive experience as an independent curator, artist, art writer, and mentor before joining Emami Art in 2021. Sahu is known for her distinctive curatorial style that integrates design elements into her exhibitions, significantly contributing to the gallery's status as a vital space for cultural production and discourse within the art market. She boasts an impressive portfolio of national and international curatorial projects and has participated in seminars, symposiums, and talks at esteemed institutions, including the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. Sahu frequently lectures at visual art and design colleges including the NIFT and NID. She is a recipient of the India Foundation for the Arts research grant, which she used for her research on Riten Mozumdar. Sahu is based between Kolkata and Santiniketan, West Bengal, India.

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

DAY 1 - Friday, 24 JAN 2025

10:30 AM ONWARDS

Registration

11:00 – 11:30 AM

Welcome Addresses & Introduction to VK VI
Richa Agarwal, Chairperson KCC
Dr Shwetal A. Patel & Ushmita Sahu, Director Emami Art

11:35 – 12:15 PM

Keynote address: Abin Choudhury
Title: Ephemeral to perennial - the Architecture of many
(Architect and Founder, Abin Design Studio)
Abin's keynote explores the unknown, with experiments in materials, technology, and engagements with art and culture.

12:30 – 1:30 PM

Session 1: Saleem Bhatri
Title: Circularity by Design
(Dean, Faculty of Design, CEPT University)
This session delves into Saleem's 20 years of integrated experience across Industrial Design, Architecture, Interior Design, Art, and Design Education. He is also a Partner at Case Design, an international architectural and design practice, and Director at Casegoods, a brand retailing furniture, lighting, objects, and textiles.

2:45 – 3:45 PM

Session 2: Sayantan Maitra Boka
Title: Architectonics of Durga Puja Art
(Architect by qualification, artist by choice)
Sayantan explores his role as Chief Coordinator of the Shelter Promotion Council (India) and Vice President of massArt, promoting Bengal art and architecture into new frontiers.

3:55 – 4:55 PM

Session 3: Sayantoni Datta with
Uma Banerjee, Dr. Bedaparna Roy,
Aopala Banerjee, Children of Nonadanga & Taishi Nandi
Title: Towards Sustainable Flows
(Co-Founder, Jaladarsha Collective; specializing in urban/rural community development, Indigenous rights, gender, and environmental justice)

5:00 – 6:00 PM

Session 4: Ujjal Dey
Title: Drawing from Nature, Tradition, and Memory:
Presentation + Interactive Session
(Visual artist and researcher specializing in indigenous dyeing methodologies)

6:10 – 7:00 PM

Panel Discussion: All Speakers from Day 1
Title: Interwoven Thinking
Moderator: Dr. Shwetal A. Patel

7:15 – 7:45 PM

Walk-through of the Ongoing Exhibition
The Bird That Sings Within: Textiles by Ajit Kumar Das
The artist will be present

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

DAY 2 - Saturday, 25 JAN 2025

11:00 AM ONWARDS

Registration

11:30 – 11:45 am

Address and Summing Up of Day 1
Dr. Shwetal A. Patel

11:50 – 12:50 PM

Session 5: Padmini Ray Murray
Title: **If Not Design Thinking, Then What?**
(Dr. Padmini Ray Murray, Researcher and Maker, Founder of Design Beku)
Padmini challenges acts of infrastructural and algorithmic violence, working towards making design more locally rooted, contextually relevant, and ethical.

2:10 – 3:10 PM

Session 6
Title: **From Policy to Practice, and Practice to Policy**
Moderator: Dr. Shwetal A. Patel

Aditya Kumar Jha
Title: **A Point of View: Art and State**
(Consultant with the Museum Division, Ministry of Culture, Government of India)

Vikash Kumar
Title: **Mapping the Creative Economy: Challenges & Road Ahead**
(Research Scholar, Arts Administrator, and Curator, Senior Assistant Director at FICCI)

3:20 – 4:20 PM

Session 7: Prof. Ashoke Chatterjee
Title: **Hand-making a Sustainable Future: Policy Aspects**
Film Screening: Notes from a Craftsman by Tilla
(Aratrik Devvarman) – 25 minutes
(Hon. President, Crafts Council of India; Adviser to the Centre for Heritage Management, Ahmedabad University)

4:30 – 5:30 PM

Session 8: Siddhanjan Ray Chaudhuri with Biren Kalindi, Sristidhar Sahish & Laxmi Rani Munda
Title: **Art & Culture-Based Grassroots Empowerment in Purulia**
(Civil Engineer and Rural Development Specialist, General Manager at banglanatak dot com)(Hon. President, Crafts Council of India; Adviser to the Centre for Heritage Management, Ahmedabad University)
This session highlights Purulia's cultural renaissance, empowered by traditional art forms like Chhau dance, mask-making, and Sabai craft.

5:40 – 6:40 PM

Session 8: All Speakers from
Day 1 & Day 2
Title: **Dismantling Hegemonies**
Moderators: Dr. Shwetal A. Patel and Ushmita Sahu

6:45 – 7:10 PM

Symposium Summation
Dr. Kalyan Chakravarty

7:15 PM

Vote of Thanks - Ushmita Sahu

Topic | Arts and Sustainability in the 21st Century

Conference Conveners | Dr. Kalyan Kumar Chakravarty & Shwetal A. Patel



Dr. Kalyan Kumar Chakravarty



Shwetal A. Patel



MEET THE SPEAKERS

Abin Chaudhuri

Aditya Kumar Jha

Prof. Ashoke Chatterjee

Dr. Kalyan Kumar Chakravarty

Dr. Padmini Ray Murray

Saleem Bhatri

Sayantana Maitra Boka

Sayantoni Dutta

Siddhanjan Ray Chaudhuri

Ujjal Dey

Vikash Kumar

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Abin Chaudhuri

Abin Chowdhury is the founder of Abin Design Studio, which explores the 'unknown' through experimentation with materials and technology, while engaging with art and culture. The studio aims to imbue 'soul in the shell' of its designs, focusing on the urban and peri-urban edges as catalysts for deliberate change. Abin's work emphasizes holistic design, transcending traditional boundaries and collaborating across disciplines. He challenges the role of architecture in society through courageous, unfamiliar explorations. The studio has won multiple national and international accolades.



ABOUT SESSION

Topic : **Ephemeral to perennial- The Architecture of many**

Abstract: Architecture becomes meaningful when it expands its sphere of influence beyond its physical entity, and transforms not only the surroundings but also the lives of its users, becoming an emblem of generosity." The human experience of Life starts with an emotional investment into the land we inhabit – we don't just exist on it but rather, co-exist in our communities, and it is for this reason that the architecture we use must spill beyond the walls and embrace the neighbourhoods they are in.

This architecture must not only be the buildings of the urban fabric that shape our cities and towns, but also the temporary structures that enhance them. Where conventional buildings are indispensable, ephemeral spaces are equally necessary, if not imperative. This typology of architecture assists in giving physical form to the emotion of space – to create an architecture that was essentially always there. As Ar. Anupama Kundoo has rightly stated, temporal occupation of spaces opens a window of opportunities that we are less likely to grasp when thinking of more permanent structures. While walls shape structure and form the mind of dwelling areas, it is the impermanent and ephemeral spaces which are the soul and character of them – it is this that engages society in a holistic participation to focus on the social purpose of design. It has the ability to influence perception, shift paradigms, revive cultures, improve conventional presets and redefine space. This activation of public interest creates an "Architecture for many" and becomes an undertaking "of the people, by the people, for the people."

SPEAKER

Aditya Kumar Jha

Aditya Kumar Jha is a Consultant with the Museum Division at the Ministry of Culture, Government of India. He previously served as an Assistant Professor of Art History and Aesthetics at the Institute of Music and Fine Arts, University of Jammu, and at the Indian Institute of Crafts and Design, Jaipur. Aditya holds a Bachelor's degree in Fine Art (specializing in Art History) from the College of Art, University of Delhi. His research focuses on India's cultural diversity and its reflection in the arts. He has collaborated with esteemed institutions such as the Parliament of India, IGNC, The Dalai Lama Foundation, and the Aga Khan Foundation. He has lectured at both national and international platforms and is a prominent voice in Art History.



ABOUT SESSION

Topic : **A Dialogue Between Academia and Peripheral Art Education**

Abstract: India's rich cultural heritage, reflected in its diverse art forms, folklore, and crafts, is often overlooked by mainstream academic and state frameworks. This paper explores the challenges of recognizing and preserving these peripheral art forms, examining the tension between state-led and folk/craft education. It proposes a synthesis between state and academia that can promote the awareness, revival, and recognition of various cultural traditions, while addressing the unnoticed challenges of the state in preserving these forms.

SPEAKER

Prof. Ashoke Chatterjee

Prof. Ashoke Chatterjee, born in 1935, has a diverse background, including engineering, international civil service, and 25 years at the National Institute of Design (NID). He has worked extensively with artisans across India, advocating for their inclusion in policy-making and development efforts. As Hon. President of the Crafts Council of India for over two decades, he continues to support cultural sustainability and heritage management. His publications include books on empowerment, traditional dance, and cultural heritage. He resides in Ahmedabad with his family.



ABOUT SESSION

Topic : **Hand-making a Sustainable Future: Policy Aspects**

Film Screening: **Notes From a Craftsman** by **Tilla (Aratrik Devvarman)**
– 25 minutes

Abstract: The subcontinent holds the world's largest reservoir of artisanal knowledge, vital for today's global pursuit of sustainable futures. This knowledge was instrumental during India's fight for freedom, exemplified by the spinning wheel and handwoven khadi as symbols of both non-violence and a self-reliant society. Post-independence, however, handicrafts were relegated to centralized planning, and later seen as a 'sunset industry.' Despite many challenges, artisans remain largely absent from high-level policy discussions. Today, their work becomes more critical in an era grappling with sustainability, especially in a post-COVID world. What direction should policy take from here?

SPEAKER

Dr. Kalyan Kumar Chakravarty

Dr. Kalyan Kumar Chakravarty, IAS (retired Secretary, Govt. of India), holds M.A. (Kolkata), M.P.A. (Harvard), and a Ph.D. in Fine Arts (Harvard). He is the President of the People's Council of Education and Distinguished Professor at Centurion University of Technology and Management, Odisha. Formerly Chairman of Lalit Kala Akademi and Director-General of the National Museum, Dr. Chakravarty has played an instrumental role in various cultural and heritage management initiatives in India and abroad. His works focus on the intersection of culture, governance, and sustainable development



ABOUT SESSION

Topic : **Symposium Summation**

SPEAKER

Dr. Padmini Ray Murray

Dr. Padmini Ray Murray is a researcher and maker focused on counteracting infrastructural and algorithmic violence by creating digital spaces rooted in feminist ethics. She founded Design Beku, a collective that works towards making design more locally relevant and ethical. Through her research and practice, Padmini engages with art, technology, and design to create alternative, sustainable digital futures.



ABOUT SESSION

Topic : **If Not Design Thinking, Then What?**

The seductive allure of consumer culture has been made only possible through design; a formal, necessary, complementary role to its counterpart of functional. This has been design's dominant mode, one whose collusion in the acceleration of capitalism, and consequently, the destructive impact of the anthropocene, cannot be denied.

This talk will historicise design as a discipline in order to contextualise its potential future directions, paying particular attention to how these might play out in India, with its promise of what has been glibly described as "the next billion users." Padmini Ray Murray will draw on lessons she has learnt from her experiences and thinking around Design Beku, a design justice and digital rights collective she founded in 2018, to suggest provocations and challenges to how we might perceive and define design at this critical and crucial moment, and explore the tension between a more capacious understanding of what design could be as opposed to doing away with it altogether.

SPEAKER

Saleem Bhatri

Saleem Bhatri, Dean of the Faculty of Design at CEPT University, has over 20 years of experience in Industrial Design, Architecture, and Design Education. He is a Partner at Case Design, an international practice based in Mumbai, and Director at Casegoods, a brand retailing furniture, lighting, and textiles. Saleem has worked with global brands such as Muji and holds degrees from the Academy of Architecture, Mumbai, and National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad. He has been deeply involved in promoting sustainable design practices.



ABOUT SESSION

Topic : **Circularity by Design**

This session delves into approaches around circularity in design pedagogy and practice through a presentation of two selected projects- one a postgraduate studio project about prefabrication at CEPT, Ahmedabad, and the other a series of exhibitions by Case Design, Mumbai. Whilst academic research guides the former, the intuitive and the tacit are pronounced in the latter. Both projects focus on aligning design responses to circular frameworks and show how specifying and securing intent has directed the design process. Whilst they navigate the complexities of translating conceptual and theoretical propositions in the context of real world decision making, they also benefit from a supportive and informed milieu, i.e. clients and collaborators. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is increasingly advancing circularity whilst Design for Environment (DfE) recognises the systematic consideration of design performance with respect to environmental, health, and safety objectives over the full product and process life cycle. What then are the tangible outcomes of aligning to these parameters in terms of aesthetics, materiality, form and experience?

SPEAKER

Sayantana Maitra Boka

Sayantana Maitra Boka, an architect by training, is also a passionate public art curator. A graduate of the School of Planning & Architecture, New Delhi, Sayantan is deeply involved in art festivals in India's Northeast and Bengal. He works with LAYOUT Collective on public art projects and serves as Vice President of massArt, promoting Bengal's art and architecture globally. His curatorial efforts focus on socio-political themes and environmental concerns through art.



ABOUT SESSION

Topic : **Architectonics of Durga Puja Art**

Abstract: Durga Puja in Kolkata is a socio-religious celebration, now a vibrant festival of artistic expression. From a spiritual ritual to a carnival of public art, Durga Puja has evolved into a major cultural event recognized by UNESCO as the world's largest public art festival. This paper examines the transformation of the city during the festival, focusing on how artists integrate art, craft, and design. It also explores the intersection of art and craft in the creation of 'theme' Pujas, bridging traditional craftsmanship and contemporary art aesthetics.

SPEAKER

Sayantoni Dutta

Sayantoni Dutta is a co-founder of the Jaladarsha Collective, focused on preserving eco-cultural heritage and ensuring water justice. With a background in community development, Sayantoni has led several initiatives on indigenous rights and environmental sustainability. The collective has organized citizen audits, art festivals, and cultural programs on water conservation. Sayantoni's work bridges art, community, and environmental activism.



ABOUT SESSION

Topic : **Towards Sustainable Flows**

Abstract: Kolkata, situated in the world's largest delta, faces increasing risks from climate change, especially concerning water. This presentation explores how festivals and cultural tools, like 'mela,' can raise environmental awareness among citizens. It tracks the journey of the Jaladarsha Collective, focusing on their use of art to address water justice and climate resilience. The presentation highlights water audits, community engagement, and artistic interventions aimed at fostering environmental consciousness in Kolkata.

MEET THE PERFORMERS

from **Sayantoni Dutta's** Session

The first water is the body

performed by **Aopala Banerjee, Dr. Bedoprana Roy & Uma Banerjee**

"**Ek Ekke Ek**" a short dance performance performed by children from Nonadanga, East Kolkata Wetlands from Khelaghor programme.



Aopala

Aopala is a multidisciplinary artist primarily trained in dance, with interests in film and performance. Passionate about environmental issues, she worked with the Jaladarsha Collective on sustainability projects. She is also part of the independent film group Dung Beetle Films and continues her dance training with Brindar.



Dr. Bedaprana Roy

Dr. Bedaprana Roy, a microbiologist and Kathak dancer with 23 years of training under Bidushi Surangama Dasgupta, recently completed her PhD at St. Xavier's College, Kolkata. She balances her research publications with a passion for dance and art.



Uma Banerjee

Uma Banerjee, a Kolkata-based performance artist, actor, and dancer, began her journey in Kathak and later trained in Manipuri dance during college. With over a decade of experience in Bengali films, she is also a founding organizer of the Kolkata International Performance Art Festival (KIPAF) and other art initiatives and teaches performing arts to young people.



Taishi Nandi

"**Ami Shudhu Kono Jolayshoi Noi**" performed by **Taishi Nandi** along with two other songs

Taishi is an interdisciplinary musician based in Kolkata whose inspiration revolves around the intrinsic connection of stories with music. She sings, composes and plays a few instruments to her increasing love for them. Her engagement with the community tries to bring out the effect of harmony that music has in the collective nature of being. She performs solo and with friends.. She also likes reading, climbing trees and taking a bath in a clean pond.

SPEAKER

Siddhanjan Ray Chaudhuri

Siddhanjan Ray Chaudhuri is a Civil Engineer with a Master's in Rural Development. He is the General Manager at banglanatak dot com and has extensive experience in cultural development. Through AFL, Siddhanjan has worked to professionalize traditional crafts, develop cultural tourism, and empower communities. His work in heritage management and cultural tourism has garnered national and international recognition.



ABOUT SESSION

Topic : **Art and Culture-Based Grassroots Empowerment in Purulia**

Abstract: Purulia, once known for its poverty and unrest, has transformed through the revival of its cultural heritage, particularly through the Art for Life (AFL) program. AFL has empowered marginalized artists, promoted Chhau dance and mask-making, and supported Sabai grass weaving, which has created new livelihoods for women. This cultural renaissance has helped reduce poverty in the region, with a significant decline in poverty levels as reported by Niti Aayog. The success of Purulia's transformation is a testament to heritage-driven development.

MEET THE PERFORMERS

from **Siddhanjan Ray Chaudhuri's** Session



Biren Kalindi

Biren Kalindi, a master of the Natua and Chhau dance forms from Purulia, India, leads the acclaimed troupe Biren Kalindi Chhau Nritya Dol, which he founded in 2006. With 30 members, the troupe brings mythological tales from the Ramayana, Mahabharata, and the Puranas to life through their dynamic performances. Biren has showcased his talent across India in states like West Bengal, Delhi, Maharashtra, Goa, Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Odisha, gaining national recognition. Internationally, his troupe has represented Indian traditional dance at prestigious festivals in the UK, France, Germany, Switzerland, Lithuania, Japan, China, and Singapore, enhancing the global appreciation for this unique art form.



Sristidhar Sahish

Sristidhar Sahish is an accomplished Chhau dancer practicing the folk form for the last 16 years. He has travelled across West Bengal and has also participated in different festivals in Maharashtra, Delhi, Goa, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Chennai.



Laxmi Rani Munda

Laxmi Rani Munda, aged 38 years, is an enterprising Sabai artist living in Mirgichami village of Purulia. Handcrafting things has been her passion since early days of her childhood. A series of training workshops organized in Purulia as part of a strategy to empower women from indigenous communities with handicraft skills enabled Laxmirani to transform her passion for handicraft into profession. She started weaving a range of innovative products using Sabai. With her flawless skills, she now makes a range of products and attends different fairs and exhibitions. Laxmi is also an inspiration to other women of her community, who are working with natural fibre and aspire for a better and brighter future. With her artistic touch and goodwill, Laxmi has crossed the boundaries of her village and weaving connection with the art lovers of the world.

SPEAKER

Ujjal Dey

Ujjal Dey is a contemporary artist pursuing a doctorate from Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan. He studied textile and design at Kala Bhavan, Santiniketan, graduating in 2017. His semi-abstract works, which explore the ideas of tradition, rituals, ecology and landscape, are inspired by several traditional techniques and practices like Alpana (floor decoration), lepas (smear) and quilt or Kantha. His doctoral research focuses on the indigenous traditions and sustainable techniques of printing and dyeing. Dey has participated in the British Textile Biennial 2023. His notable exhibitions include a solo at Emami Art 2024, Cromwell Place, UK, 2023; His works were shown at Gallery Espace, InKo Centre, CSMVS, Art Dusseldorf 2023; India Art Fair, 2023, 2024; Art Mumbai 2024 and many others. Dey has been part of many international workshops, art camps & seminars on textiles. He is the recipient of the Junior Fellowship (2018-2019) and National Scholarship (2016) by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India. Ujjal Dey lives and works in Santiniketan, West Bengal.



ABOUT SESSION

Topic : **Drawing from Nature, Tradition and Memory.**

Presentation & Workshop

Abstract: This session offers an engaging exploration of traditional hand-painted, natural-dyed textiles of India and their contemporary relevance. It begins with a 20-minute illustrated presentation that delves into the history and lineage of these textiles, highlighting their evolution and transformations influenced by socio-political factors. The talk also examines how contemporary artists are reinterpreting these traditional practices, prompting a re-evaluation of indigenous approaches and knowledge systems at risk of being forgotten.

Following the presentation, a 10-minute interactive discussion invites participants to share their insights and reflections.

The session concludes with a 30-minute hands-on workshop on drawing and painting with natural black ink (iron dust and jaggery) on Myrobalan-dyed cotton cloth. Participants will learn to create their own drawing tools from local materials and engage in a creative exercise that uses ink marks as memory imprints inspired by nature and tradition. This immersive experience fosters an appreciation for the alchemy of natural dyes and the enduring connection between craft and cultural heritage.

SPEAKER

Vikash Kumar

Vikash Kumar is a New Delhi-based research scholar, arts administrator, & curator with over 15 years of experience in art and culture. He holds a master's degree from the School of Arts & Aesthetics at Jawaharlal Nehru University. Since 2008, he has curated numerous exhibitions & conferences. Vikash managed over 250 cultural events at Expo Dubai 2020's India Pavilion, collaborating with the Ministry of Commerce & the Ministry of Culture. He was part of the organizing team for the first editions of the India Art Fair & served as Curator at the National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi (2014-2016). He has also been a Visiting Assistant Professor at the College of Art, University of Delhi, & Contributing Editor for Art Bahrain journal. He has received multiple honours, including the UGC Net Lectureship (2013), JRF (2016-2018), & grants from the Getty Foundation. He is also the Senior Assistant Director at the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI).



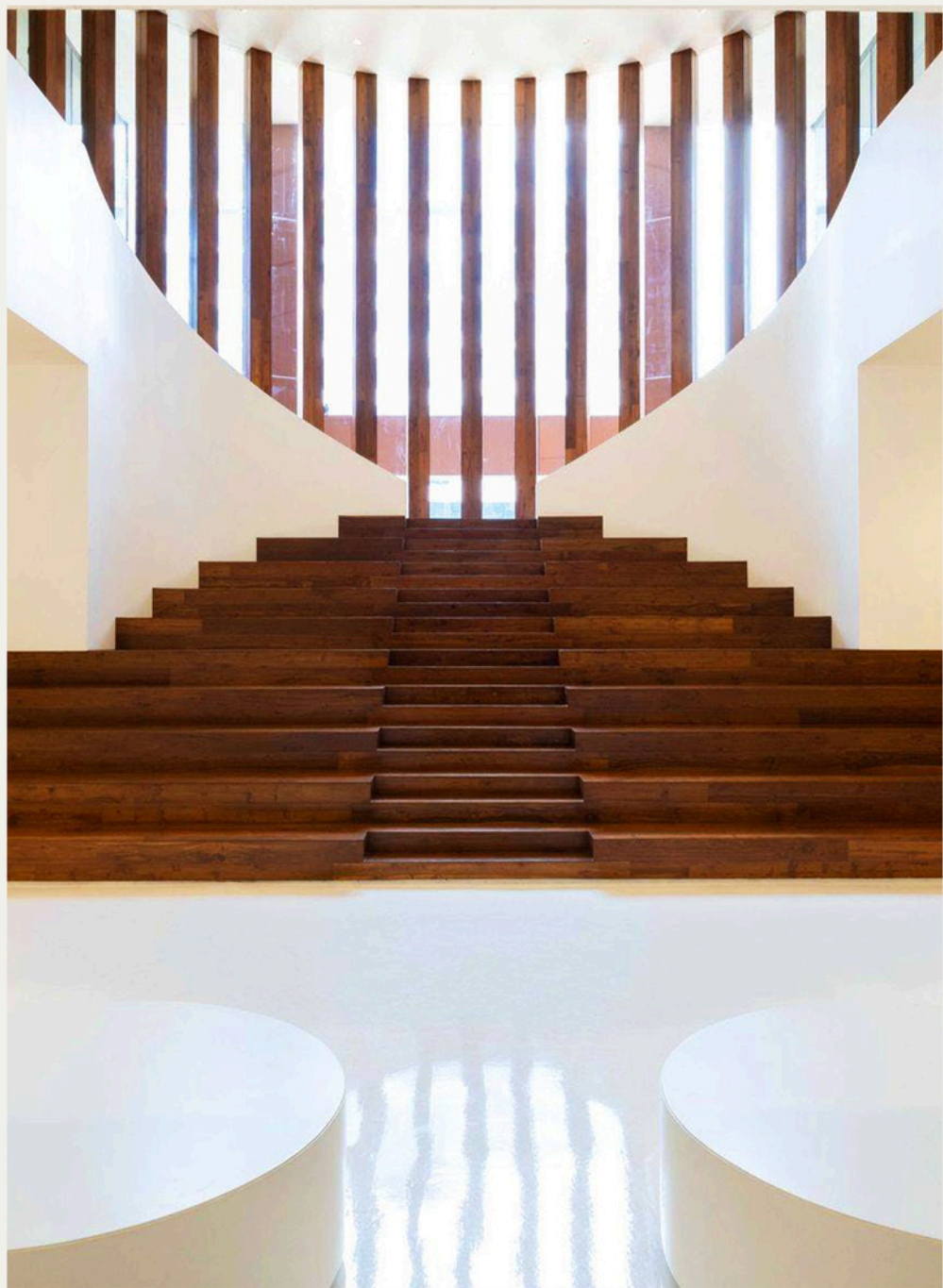
ABOUT SESSION

Topic : **Mapping the Creative Economy: Challenges and Road Ahead**

Abstract: In his address at the 46th Session of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi in July 2024, Honourable Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi emphasized the pivotal role that cultural and creative industries will play in global growth. As one of the most dynamic sectors of the global economy, creative industries present developing nations with valuable opportunities to engage in new, high-growth sectors. India's creative economy possesses immense potential for growth and innovation. However, it faces significant challenges, including data scarcity, inadequate infrastructure, and policy gaps. There exists a delicate balance between nurturing the arts and ensuring financial sustainability. The vibrant pulse of cultural events illustrates how artistic creativity can seamlessly intertwine with business acumen, paving the way for a sustainable creative economy. Innovative business models and supportive policies are essential for cultivating a flourishing arts ecosystem.

To harness the full capabilities of India's creative industries, we must prioritize enhanced data collection to provide a clearer understanding of the sector's dynamics and economic impact. By focusing on these areas including supportive policies, skill development initiatives, and robust data infrastructure, we can foster economic development and enrich cultural vibrancy, ultimately driving the creative economy forward.





Kolkata Centre For Creativity

The Kolkata Centre for Creativity (KCC) is a multidisciplinary interactive art centre based in Kolkata. As a unit of the Anamika Kala Sangam Trust, a not-for-profit public trust, supported by the Emami group, it promotes research & experimentation while championing inclusivity & accessibility at the intersection of arts & society.

KCC advocates a multidisciplinary approach in the pursuit of creative & cultural practices. Through well-curated programmes, it aims to cultivate an empathetic, optimistic, and informed community. With a trans-local spirit, KCC encourages the cross-pollination of ideas

Vision & Mission

In the current climate of apathy, we utilise art to foster empathy & blaze the trail for civic-driven change. We utilise a network of people-public partnerships using research, documentation, conservation, display & public engagement to address global concerns.


We are striving to pave the way for an informed and egalitarian society. Thus, the programmes at KCC are designed on the principles of cultural diversity, gender equality, conservation of the environment, as well as inclusion of the differently-abled.





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