

**EMAMI ART**

**Emami Art**

presents

**The Crowd and Its Avatars**

**Sculptures by K. S. Radhakrishnan**

Curated by R Siva Kumar

**A Major Exhibition Of Recent Sculptures By K.S. Radhakrishnan**

**Opens At Emami Art On January 9, 2023**

**Kolkata, 9<sup>th</sup> January, 2023:** Emami Art, one of India's leading contemporary art galleries based in Kolkata, presents *The Crowd and Its Avatars*, a major exhibition of sculptures by celebrated Indian sculptor K.S. Radhakrishnan. Including approximately seventy-five artworks – many never before seen – the show opens on January 9, 2023, and is on view through February 12, 2023.

Radhakrishnan returns to Kolkata after fifteen years with his most recent sculptures. Curated by R. Siva Kumar, the exhibition comprises the installation of fifty life-size bronze figures titled *The Crowd* and many free-standing bronze sculptures, including his famous *The Ramp*, which have deep personal meaning for the artist.

Radhakrishnan was born in the Kottayam district, Kerala, in 1956. He studied sculpture at Kala Bhavana, Santiniketan, under the guidance of Ramkinkar Baij and Sarbari Roy Choudhury, two legendary sculptors of modern Indian art. Radhakrishnan's sculpture shows his unique vision and stylistic individuality. Being a master modeller, he prefers to work with hand in clay, capturing the essential rhythm of the human forms.

The human figure is central to Radhakrishnan's sculptural imagination. Since 1996, there has been recurrent use of two male and female characters, Musui and Maiya, in his sculptures. *The Crowd*, with an equal number of male and female figures, repeats the faces of these two characters. Walking between the figures is an experience of meeting endless Musui and Maiya, which constitute the multitude, connecting the individual to the social, real to the imaginary. However, Musui and Maiya are not just two characters but two lenses through which the artist looks at the everyday, collective human world.

A rhythmic vitality lies at the heart of Radhakrishnan's sculptural imagination. According to the curator, R. Siva Kumar, there are three broad categories in which we can divide his recent sculptures. First, the singular figures show the freedom of acrobatic movement of the body; second, the sculpture where singular and collective bodies meet; and the third is the

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interconnected web of small size human figures creating subtle rhythm. The exhibition showcases all three categories mentioned above.

The exhibition is held on the ground floor and continues on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor.

“The solo exhibition of renowned sculptor KS Radhakrishnan, curated by art historian R Siva Kumar, revolves around the concept of the crowd, the polysemic idea of the multitude, which he captures in over seventy-five bronze sculptures. Inspired by everyday experiences, his sculptures oscillate between the real and imaginary worlds, gravity and the freedom of flight. Rhythmic vitality is at the centre of his sculptural imagination. I want to mention his most recent sculpture installation of fifty life-size bronze human figures, *The Crowd*, which is the major attraction of the show. The viewer walking in between the figures becomes a part of the crowd. It is an experience very different from looking at sculpture as an object. We are delighted to host Radhakrishnan's exhibition at our gallery, and it is an excellent opportunity for the city's art lovers to see his remarkable recent sculptures.”, **says Ms Richa Agarwal, CEO, Emami Art**

“After fifteen years, I have returned to Kolkata with my most recent large sculpture installation, *The Crowd*, displayed on the ground floor of Emami Art, and the works which have deep personal meaning for me. Most of the pieces are recent creations done in the last decade, except *The Ramp*, with which people strongly connect with me. With *The Ramp*, I have displayed the compelling black and white photographs of the sculpture by my close friend, Prabuddha Dasgupta, who is no more with us. The remaining seventy sculptures, including the large free-standing ones, are displayed on the gallery's fourth floor, exploring movement and stability, collectiveness and individuality. The use of quotidian objects, particularly the vessels, in my small works with the swarm of the interconnected human web connects to my childhood memories and nostalgia for Kerala, my birthplace.”, **says eminent sculptor, K. S. Radhakrishnan**

“K. S. Radhakrishnan is a sculptor who uses the human figure to explore a range of personal and social experiences. His sculptures oscillate between the evocation of our individual freedoms and collective destinies. He does this through movement and rhythm, by individualising gestures and de-individualising bodies, and by writing in empathy-inducing nearness or generalising distance between his sculptures and us, their viewers. And he does this with a certain playfulness that makes their message subtle and even elusive.”, **says Curator R Siva Kumar.**

### **About K. S. Radhakrishnan:**

Born in the Kottayam district of Kerala in 1956, K. S. Radhakrishnan is one of the most significant contemporary Indian sculptors known for his large-size bronze sculptures with multiple figures. He studied sculpture under the guidance of legendary Ramkinkar Baij and Sarbari Roy Choudhury at Kala Bhavana, Visva-Bharati University, graduating in 1981. Soon

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after, he was awarded a research grant by Lalit Kala Akademi, Delhi, to work in Garhi Village. Since then, he has had more than fifteen solo shows at major galleries in India and abroad, including his solo at the National Gallery of Modern Art (Bengaluru); Centre des Bords de Marne, Le Perreux-Bry-sur-Marne (France); Lalit Kala Akademi (New Delhi); and Birla Academy of Art and Culture (Kolkata); among others. His work has been featured in many important group shows - the *National Exhibition* at New Delhi (1980); *Triennale India* (1990); *Salon International de la Sculpture Contemporaine* at Nouveau Forum des Halles, Paris (1995); Hippodrome de Longchamp, Paris (1996); Espace Michel Simon-Noisy le Grand, France (1996); Beijing Biennale (2012); and many others. From the 1980s onwards, Radhakrishnan has installed open-air sculptures across the country and abroad, including at the TMI foundation, Cotignac, France.

He has curated important exhibitions like *Ramkinkar Baij - A Retrospective* at the National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi, Bangalore and Mumbai and *Somnath Hore* at Emami Art, Kolkata. In addition, he has authored, *Ramkinkar's Yaksha-Yakshi*, released during the Ramkinkar retrospective mentioned above.

He lives and works in Delhi.

### **About R. Siva Kumar:**

Born in Kerala in 1956 and educated in Kerala and Santiniketan, R. Siva Kumar is an art historian, curator and the author of over 18 books. His notable books include *The Santiniketan Murals* (1995) and *Santiniketan: The Making of a Contextual Modernism* (1997), *A. Ramachandran: A Retrospective in two volumes* (2004), *KS Radhakrishnan* (2004), *Paintings of Abanindranath Tagore* (2008), *Rabindra Chitravali*, a comprehensive four-volume compilation of Rabindranath Tagore's paintings (2011) and *Enchantment and Engagement: The Murals of K. G. Subramanyan* (2015). He has also curated several seminal exhibitions, including *Santiniketan: The Making a Contextual Modernism*, *K. G. Subramanyan: A Retrospective*, *Benodebehari: A Centenary Retrospective* (co-curated with Gulam Mohammed Sheikh), *The Last Harvest: Paintings of Rabindranath Tagore*, which travelled to nine museums across the world and four museums in India, and five major exhibitions and retrospectives of A. Ramachandran, including the most recent large-scale exhibition at Emami Art, Kolkata.

His research on the three Tagores and artists associated with Santiniketan has contributed to the remapping of a significant trajectory in modern Indian art. And in recognition of his contributions, he was awarded the Kesari Puraskaram by the Kerala Lalitakala Akademi in 2010, the Manojmohan Basu Smarak Samman by the Paschimbanga Bangla Akademy for his book on Ramkinkar Baij in 2013, the title Rabindra-Tattwacharya for his work on Rabindranath Tagore in 2015, the Life Time Achievement Award of the Paschim Banga Charukala Parishad in 2018, and the Zainul Sammanana by the Dakha University in 2021.

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After a forty-year teaching career, he has recently retired from Visva Bharati University and continues to live in Santiniketan.

### **About Emami Art:**

Emami Art, Kolkata, is a leading contemporary art gallery and space for cultural production. Based in Kolkata, India, the gallery focuses on a future-forward, complex, multi-dimensional approach. It is steadfast in advocating for emerging, mid-career and established artists and engaging with contemporary and historical material. The gallery also aims to create dynamic, wide-ranging registers of exhibition-making and viewing.

In addition to hosting exhibitions and participating in national and international events and fairs, Emami Art has diverse parallel programming. Emami Art has launched the EA Locus in Focus to provide a voice to local and regional communities through ongoing short and long-term projects. EA Incubator & Learning integrates both the physical and virtual interfaces. It helps the arts community free access to regular mentorship programs, workshops, residency opportunities and innovative educational activities that facilitate artistic development, help build collaborative networks and provides a supportive environment for emerging talent. As a centre of excellence, Emami Art identifies as a platform rather than just a facility.

Critical discourses, interactions, documentation and exchange are also essential to our mandate. Under the umbrella of EA Discourse, we develop and produce original writing, periodicals and catalogues that focus on artistic, creative and pedagogical materials. As part of our knowledge-making and archiving process, our regular lineup of talks, seminars, panel discussions and conversations with artists, curators and key partners is helping to establish a safe space for critical engagement.

Emami Art has adopted the inclusive, symbiotic framework, where profitability supports sustainable resource regeneration and public service. The gallery is a green building and strictly maintains free access to all policy. 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 a catalyst of change, research, innovation and inclusivity.