



Emami Art

In collaboration with Anant Art

presents

Room Full of Mirrors: Works by Probir Gupta

Kolkata 2nd September, 2022: Emami Art, one of India's leading contemporary art galleries based in Kolkata in collaboration with **Anant Art** is delighted to host **Room Full of Mirrors: Works by Probir Gupta**. The exhibition will show new paintings and installations and some critical earlier pieces of the artist. All the works in this exhibition mirror the surrounding world- a world caught in a whirlwind of conflict, tension and unrest. The preview of the exhibition is on 2nd September 2022 while the exhibition will be on view till 30th September 2022, both on the ground floor at Emami Art.

A Delhi-based socially engaged artist and creative dissident, Probir Gupta has made works focused on human rights. Working across mediums, he explores confrontational themes such as violence, oppression, and resistance, calling attention to a wide range of humanitarian crises, from a local riot and illegal child trafficking to the Arab Spring uprisings. His large-scale paintings and installations have complex interwoven structures, engaging the viewer in diverse intellectual, sensual and emotional ways. Probir Gupta has his career spread out over India (Delhi, Kolkata) and France. His work shows a richness of observations, influences, and practices, offering a global perspective. In a past conversation with Marg magazine he discusses a photograph – a woman of African heritage holding an older white woman to the chest – that he shot on the historic Pont Neuf bridge in Paris and later used in one of his iconic works, *The Raft*, included in this exhibition. He explains that it is not the color or intimacy but the compelling image of complete peace that inspired his *Raft* and many other works. Although a record of specific observation in a particular place, the image speaks of outright humanity, illustrating “how the dialogue of locations can go on at various levels.” The unwavering faith in humanity lies at the heart of Probir Gupta's oeuvre that spans over forty years.

He created *Museum*, *Banal*, and *Spine* in his Kolkata studio, especially for the exhibition. He was born and brought up in Kolkata and feels deeply connected to the city. If Kolkata's rich histories and vernacular cosmopolitan cultural life shaped his young mind, his artistic vocabulary and political outlook later flourished in Paris and Delhi. Although he might not choose to be an overt artist-activist, his work is intensely political, fostering critical dialogue about conflicts, disasters, and suffering. As Woody Guthrie saw his guitar as more than a musical instrument an anti-fascist weapon, Probir Gupta looks at his art as a powerful medium to advance social justice.

About Probir Gupta:

Born in Kolkata in 1960, Probir Gupta studied painting at the Government College of Arts and Crafts, Kolkata, graduating in 1981 and Ecole Nationale Superiere de Beaux-arts, Paris, on a two-year French Government scholarship in 1982 and continued to live and work in France till 1987. His first solo exhibition in France was held in Caen, Normandie, in 1984, followed by a significant exhibition of his works at Palais Des Beaux-arts, Brussels, in 1986. His selected solo exhibitions include *Family is Plural*



at Bikaner House, New Delhi; Desert Scrap at Nature Morte, Berlin, 2010; Probir Gupta at Alexia Goethe Gallery, London, 2008; At Half Mast at Bose Pacia, Kolkata, India, 2007; To Whomsoever it May Concern at Bodhi Art, New York 2007; Found Objects at Anant Art Gallery at the Academy of Fine Arts, Kolkata 2007; The Nymph and the Adult at Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane, 2002; among several others.

He has participated in seminal national and international exhibitions, art fairs and biennales. His work has been featured in Kochi Muziris Biennale, Kochi, India in 2018-19, Busan Biennale, South Korea in 2016; The Empire Strikes Back: Indian Art Today at The Saatchi Gallery, London, 2010; 4th St. Petersburg International Biennale of Contemporary Art at Manege Central Exhibition Hall, St. Petersburg, Russia (1999) and Homage to ARTAUD by 20 Contemporary artists, Eicher Gallery, New Delhi (1997). Shaheen Merali chose his work in his three curated shows, Fragile Hands at the University of Applied Arts, Vienna, Austria; When Violence Becomes Decadent at Freies Museum, Berlin (2014) and The Indian Parallax at Birla Academy Kolkata (2012). Probir Gupta lives and works in New Delhi.

“It brings me immense pleasure to announce the exhibition Room Full of Mirrors which will feature a series of astounding works by renowned artist Probir Gupta. Based on familiar and straightforward themes, his work deals with the linear discourse and representational approach which offers a chance to capture the profound sense of terror, loneliness, and disquiet in a complex, highly experimental, and contemporary language. I believe this exhibition will be a wonderful opportunity for all the art lovers in the city to see the seductive richness of paint and imagery in his artworks” **says 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