

Press Release

Solo Exhibition by **Ujjal Dey** at Emami Art, 2024

Name of the Exhibition:

Dawn to Dusk: A Silent Symphony

Date: **June 28 – August 20, 2024**

Venue: **Ground Floor, Emami Art**

Exhibition Overview

Ujjal Dey's solo exhibition, ***Dawn to Dusk: A Silent Symphony***, explores his artistic interventions into the intricate intersections of matriarchal labour in vernacular, quotidian culinary spaces. Dey is a contemporary textile-based artist born in a Bengali family living in Ranchi, Bihar and is currently based in Santiniketan, India. Dey's approach to textile art is informed by extensive research on textile histories of India, a nuanced examination of pre-industrial age traditional dyes, socio-ecological considerations, and keen observations of everyday knowledge.

The exhibition will feature artworks, ranging from smaller textile panels to substantial hanging pieces which remind one of the hand-painted, printed and dyed calicoes, alongside referential mould-as-block swatches by the artist. For context, on display will be some everyday implements and culinary moulds that Dey uses most eloquently as blocks to underscore his conceptual framework. Complementing the exhibit, a method film will also be displayed. The film, with re-interrogated audio, blurs the boundaries between Dey's contemporary observations and childhood memories of mundane impressions.

His utilization of culinary tools – primarily wielded by women, as both symbolic motifs and technical mediums designate an intense vigour, while his expressionist approach to pigment extraction from the South-Asian bionetwork adds an element of ecological consciousness to his practice. Through this distinctive outlook, Dey is set to uncover the silent symphony of ritualistic women-led presence in the confines of bustling Indian hyper-local kitchens, inviting viewers to savour the nuances of everyday life transformed into narrative textiles.

Quote by Richa Agarwal

At the end of June, we are opening three solo exhibitions of our represented artists, Bholanath Rudra, Ali Akbar PN, and Ujjal Dey. The three talented artists are well-known, and we are showcasing their most recent artworks, which are distinctive in style, approaches, and medium use. While Rudra's large-scale watercolours depict the moonlit landscapes where the hard truth is spoken in an eloquent language, evoking empathy, Ali Akbar's critical works – paintings and videos – deal with the questions of migration and memory, seas and trade, and movement of cultural forms and motifs across time and places. Besides them, Dey's textiles are closely bound to the soil materially and culturally. Deep regional connections give his work a culture-specificity.

All in all, the solos represent differences but, at the same time, similarities and unities in the ideas and practices of the artists. I believe that students, critics and art lovers will enjoy the shows, finding them to be three distinctive ways to confront some of the troubled truths of the contemporary world. I wish the exhibitions all success.

(Says Richa Agarwal, CEO of Emami Art)

Quote by Ushmita Sahu

Emami Art is a significant space in South Asia for discourse building and cutting-edge practices in contemporary art. The curatorial perspective in bringing together three solos by three of our represented artists, Bholanath Rudra, Ujjal Dey and Ali Akbar, engaging in diverse practices is to create a dialogue on some of the most urgent concerns of our present times in the subcontinent as well as globally. Though at first glance, any common idea does not connect them, they all align with the thematic vision of time and change. There is a sense of urgency in all their works for critical intervention to understand and protect the fundamental tropes that make life possible. The ideas of past, present and

future appear entangled in their works. So, understanding the present is as important as understanding the past and thinking about the future. I hope this will be an excellent opportunity to learn and explore the artistic practice and visions of the three emerging artists.

(Says Ushmita Sahu, Director & Head Curator of Emami Art)

Artist's Bio

Ujjal Dey

Born in 1992 in Ranchi, India, Ujjal Dey is a contemporary textile artist pursuing a doctorate from Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan. He has a B.F.A. and an M.F.A. in textile and design from Kala Bhavana, Santiniketan, graduating in 2015 and 2017 respectively.

Dey's recent solo show was held at the Cromwell Place, London, UK in 2023. His works have been displayed at various exhibitions in India and internationally including Transforming Traditions at the InKo Centre, Chennai 2024; 'Fragments of Our Time' curated by Uthra Rajgopal at the British Textile Biennial, UK in 2023; 'International Fiber Arts of Time' at Nandan Gallery, Kala Bhavana, Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan, 2022; 'GOONJ: An Abstract Continuum' curated by Jesal Thacker at Coomaraswamy Hall, CSMVS, Mumbai in 2022; '100 YUVA SAMBHAVA' by Raza Foundation, a show of 100 young artists of India curated by Akhilesh and Manish Pushkale in 2022; 'Retinoblastoma: An Artistic Expression', an online exhibition at L.V Prasad Eye Institute in 2021; 'DEPARTURE' conceptualized by Prasanta Sahu at Ganges Art Gallery, Kolkata, 2020; Young Santiniketan Artist Exhibition at SSVAD, Santiniketan, 2019; the Annual Exhibition at Birla Academy of Art and Culture, Kolkata in 2018 and 'The Shape of Things' curated by Ushmita Sahu at Ganges Art Gallery, Kolkata, 2017; among many others Dey's works have also been shown at Art Dusseldorf 2023 and India Art Fair 2023, 2024 at New Delhi by Emami Art. He has also participated the International Art Workshop at Kala Bhavana, Visva-Bharati in 2022; In-Field Studio, a collaborative art, architecture and performance workshop at Kheledanga village, Amar Kutir, Santiniketan, 2017; Malaysian Batik workshop at Tagoreland Batik village, Phuldanga, Santiniketan and Patkar Painting workshop at Kala Bhavana, Visva-Bharati, 2016 and 'Tana – Bana', a workshop on natural fabrics and handlooms in India at Sambhaavnaa Institute, Palampur, Himachal Pradesh in 2015.

He was awarded the Certificate of Appreciation for Textile at the Young Santiniketan Artists' Exhibition, Santiniketan Society of Visual Art and Design in 2019, and is the recipient of the Junior Fellowship (2018-2019) and the National Scholarship (2016) by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India.

Ujjal Dey lives and works in Santiniketan, West Bengal.