

Press Release: Arunima Choudhury

Title: *āraṇyaka*: Arunima Choudhury's Recent Works on Nature

Dates: 27 June – 9 August 2025

Venue: Emami Art, Ground Floor

Overview

Emami Art is pleased to announce *āraṇyaka*, a solo exhibition by Arunima Choudhury, featuring her unique eco prints and other recent works on paper and cloth.

At 76 years of age, Arunima Choudhury remains profoundly committed to her artistic practice, revealing through her work both a deep love for nature and an acute anxiety about its fate. A prolific painter and avid gardener, Choudhury crafts intimate natural worlds through her experimental use of colors derived from natural sources, capturing the complexity of our relationship with the environment.

Her overwhelming images of leaves and flowers—directly imprinted on surfaces through eco-printing—alongside depictions of birds, animals, insects, landscapes, forests, and human figures, foreground the dual themes of survival and destruction. These works explore the primal bond between humanity and nature set against the destructive forces of modern civilization. While widely appreciated for its compelling visual presence and organic feel, Choudhury's art transcends mere description or celebration of nature's physical beauty. Instead, she paints to tell stories about nature—not always traditional narratives, but explorations of thoughts, memories, ethical discomforts, and despair that intertwine body and desires with broader social and political contexts.

For over a decade, Choudhury has worked with textiles, and more recently, she has expanded her approach, experimenting with scale, natural pigments, and deeper material research. This evolution marks a significant shift in her practice, where she hand dyes and embroiders textiles as a means to respond to the ecological crises unfolding in and around urban environments.

Her recent works reveal a sensitivity shaped by her botanical interests—an intimate engagement with flora and fauna that speaks to the disappearance of natural habitats and the erosion of biodiversity. Through layered processes, she observes and documents the shifting ecological landscape of Kolkata, where the loss of green cover and historical botanical sites mirror broader environmental concerns.

Her textiles embody a quiet urgency. They are not only visual documents but also tactile archives of fading memories and endangered environments. Rooted in observation, memory, and care, her work transforms cloth into a living surface—one that mourns disappearance and gestures toward preservation.

Richa Agarwal's Statement

We are pleased to present Arunima Choudhury's second solo exhibition, *āraṇyaka*, following her successful 2022 show at Emami Art. This exhibition features Choudhury's latest works exploring the human-nature relationship—a theme central to her decades-long practice. For her, nature is not merely subject matter but a lens for examining contemporary conflicts and connections. Her paintings achieve remarkable visual presence through innovative natural pigments and eco-printing techniques. In our commodified world, these ecologically engaged works carry urgent significance. I believe viewers will connect not only with her striking artistry but with the profound humanity underlying her practice.

Richa Agarwal
CEO, Emami Art

Biography of the Artist

Born in 1950 in Siliguri, West Bengal, Arunima Choudhury holds a Diploma in Fine Arts from Indian College of Arts & Draftsmanship, Kolkata, 1974, and a Certificate in Graphic Design & Mass Communication from Chitrabani, Kolkata, 1978. Working primarily with vegetable colours on handmade papers, she is known for her works depicting the languid world of nature and human being, their intimacy and coexistence.

Her solo shows include *The Dark Edge of Green* curated by Nancy Adajania, Emami Art, Kolkata, 2022; *Khela*, Seagull Foundation of the Arts, Kolkata, 2007; and *Nature as I See*, Emami Art, Kolkata, 2020. She has participated in several important group exhibitions including *Freedom & Awakening: Phases I & II*, Kolkata Centre for Creativity in collaboration with Alipore Museum, Kolkata, 2023; *Unconnected Yet*, Bengal Boston Bridge, Academy of Fine Arts, Kolkata, 2023; *Garden of Infinite Desires*, Emami Art, Kolkata, 2023; *Kolkata: Run in the Alley* curated by Praneet Soi and Manuel Klappe, Marres, Netherlands, 2022; *Feminine Facets*, Emami Art, Kolkata, 2021; *Constellations*, Emami Art, Kolkata, 2021; and *Seven Women Artists*, Birla Academy of Art & Culture, Kolkata, 1996. among others.

Arunima Choudhury was awarded the Shilpi Maha Samman by West Bengal Rajya Charukala Parishad in 2022. She lives and works in Kolkata.