

## Press Release

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Title of the Exhibition: **Field Notes (On the Afterlife of Trees)**

A Solo Exhibition by Vishal Kumar Gupta

Venue: **Gallery 1, Emami Art**

Exhibition Dates: **January 9 – March 7, 2026**

Preview: **5 PM, January 9**

### Exhibition Overview

Field Notes (On the Afterlife of Trees), the debut solo of emerging artist Vishal Kumar Gupta, presents a significant body of oil paintings, watercolour drawings, and graphite works—a practice shaped through accumulation, fragmentation, and sustained acts of looking. Gupta's artistic process is one of deep attention. Through careful accumulation and sustained observation, he focuses on fragments of the natural world often seen as incidental—a fallen twig, a gnarled branch, a weathered tree stump. In his practice, these discarded forms are transformed. They become monumental, not merely as decorative motifs, but as powerful witnesses holding memories of time, growth, and decay.

His work lives in the space between abstraction and physical presence. The textures and forms feel tangible, inviting the viewer to see with a sense of touch. This creates an immersive, sensory experience where painting itself becomes a record of time. Like geological layers, his brushstrokes build up, evoking the way nature—and memory—accumulates in sedimentary deposits. At the heart of Gupta's practice is the 'found object,' especially wood. For him, it carries a deep, intimate resonance. Its shape is a record of what is no longer there—by absence, wind, and time.

### About the Artist

Born in 1996 in Ranchi, Jharkhand, Vishal Kumar Gupta holds a BFA in Painting from Kala Bhavana, Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan in 2021, and an MVA with a gold medal in Creative Painting from the Faculty of Fine Arts at Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda in 2023. In his practice, Gupta often focuses on landscapes and trees, taking reference from the wounded and fragmented parts of trees, and uses oil-based materials for his paintings.

Gupta's works have been part of multiple group exhibitions including Kala Bhavana BFA Online Degree Show (2021); the MSU Faculty of Fine Arts Annual Display (2022-2023); *All That Is Hidden: Mapping Departures in Landscape, Terrains and Geographies*, Emami Art, Kolkata (2024); and Edition 6 of *Abhivyakti: The City Arts Project*, ATIRA, Ahmedabad (2024). He was selected for the month-long IMAGINARIUM 3.0 - Residency at Emami Art, Kolkata (2024); and the Winter Studio Take-over at the Raja Ravi Varma Studio, organized by Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) Regional Center, Vadodara (2024).

He received the Nasreen Mohamedi Award 2022-2023 in Painting, and is currently based in Baroda.

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### **Quote by CEO**

*Field Notes (On the Afterlife of Trees)* is the first-ever solo exhibition by the young and emerging artist, Vishal Kumar Gupta. At the core of his practice is the deliberate and poetic depiction of the idea of fragmentation. By using it as the central idea of his artistic practice, Gupta, creates a world of abstraction and ambiguity. His deep engagement with the natural world and the overlooked objects brings a fresh perspective on visual representation as well as the use of material itself. Displayed in a fluid and expansive style, the exhibition features his most recent works, we hope the viewers have a great time discovering the spectacular world in his work.

(Says Richa Agarwal, CEO of Emami Art and Chairperson, KCC)

### **Quote by the Curator**

In his debut exhibition, *Field Notes (On the Afterlife of Trees)*, Vishal Kumar Gupta explores painting with a sense of discovery. One of the key qualities of Vishal Kumar Gupta's work is his joy in exploring the essence of painting itself. Gupta draws inspiration from the intricacies of the natural world and its most overlooked aspects. Through expressive, painterly investigations of twigs, branches, and weathered stumps, Gupta does not merely depict nature but channels its organic self and embodied time. So, the practice itself is a comprehensive exploration of time, memory and embodiment. The first-ever solo exhibition is conceptualised and designed as an introduction to the curious world of Gupta's artistic practice.

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

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### **About Emami Art**

Emami Art is a prominent contemporary art gallery and cultural production space located on the ground floor of the Kolkata Centre for Creativity's Green Building. Established in 2017, it adopts a forward-looking, multi-dimensional approach that reflects South Asia's history, socio-cultural, and geo-political narratives. Emami Art operates within an inclusive framework where profitability supports sustainable resource regeneration and public service.

The gallery features a dynamic program of curated exhibitions, ranging from large-scale presentations to more intimate displays. It actively participates in both national and international events and art fairs. Emami Art represents a wide spectrum of contemporary artists, including emerging, mid-career, and established talents, with a special emphasis on the East and North Eastern regions of India. Several of its artists' works are featured in prominent national and international collections, including public foundations and museums.

A key initiative is the annual Emami Art Experimental Film Festival, which provides a platform for alternative and experimental filmmaking, video art, and moving image practices. This festival brings together internationally acclaimed artists and filmmakers alongside recent critical productions from India.

Through short- and long-term projects, Emami Art supports the local and regional arts community by offering regular mentorship programs, workshops, residency opportunities, and innovative educational activities. These initiatives foster artistic development, build collaborative networks, and provide a supportive environment for emerging talent. The gallery also organizes regular talks, seminars, panel discussions, and conversations with artists, curators, and key partners, creating a space for critical engagement.

Committed to promoting a regional, national, and international agenda, Emami Art emphasizes community engagement, socially relevant initiatives, and institutional partnerships. With a multi-year vision for the future, it continues to be a catalyst for change, research, innovation, and inclusivity.

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**Date:** 30.12.25

**Place:** Kolkata