

## Press Release

### **Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam Exhibition**

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Name of the Exhibition: **Convergences: A Shared Ground — Lineages, Practices, Futures**

Date: **January 9 – February 14, 2026**

Venue: **KCC, First Floor Gallery**

Preview Time: **5.30 PM**

#### **About the Exhibition**

The exhibition titled '**Convergences: A Shared Ground — Lineages, Practices, Futures**' is broadly conceptualised around the critical practices and ideas in the artistic practices from the east and northeast regions of India. Navigating through cultural, artistic, craft and architectural practices from the region, the exhibition brings together a wide range of practices that emerge from convergences and continue with the legacies of centuries-old practices and ideas. By creating dialogues between various forms, it highlights the cosmological outline of the rich cultural landscape of the region, where creating is inherently linked to the land, ecology, ritual and community.

The methods, materials, and their use, reuse, and repair are also central to the exhibition's conceptual framing. It foregrounds practices that embrace both vulnerability and persistence. It asks us to see value not only in what is whole or new, but also in what has been mended, reimagined, and carried forward.

The exhibition is organised as part of the 7<sup>th</sup> edition of the **Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam**, the annual symposium by the **Kolkata Centre for Creativity (KCC)**. The exhibition is presented by **Emami Art** in collaboration with the **KCC**.

#### **Participating Artists/Collectives**

**Anshu Kumari**

**ARTISANS' Sustainable Development Foundation X Leshemi Origins**

**Dulair Devi, Malo Devi, Putli Ganju, Rudhan Devi, Sajhwa Devi (Supported by the Sanskriti Museum & Art Gallery, Hazaribagh)**

**Ruma Choudhury**

**Silpinwita Das**

**Simi Deka**

**Ujjal Dey**

**Ujjal Sinha**

#### **Quote by CEO**

'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' is one of the most anticipated events on the annual calendar of the Kolkata Centre of Creativity. The 7<sup>th</sup> edition of the project brings an exciting exhibition with an

eclectic line-up of artists and artisans. The exhibition, 'Convergences: A Shared Ground — Lineages, Practices, Futures' offers a critical exploration of diverse artistic and artisanal traditions from Eastern and North-eastern India, bringing together an interdisciplinary line-up of practitioners. Through this curated presentation, the exhibition initiates dialogues between the dynamic intersections of heritage and contemporary expression. It seeks to illuminate the shared heritage and evolving trajectories of creative practice within these geographical regions, fostering meaningful dialogue on continuity, innovation, and collective cultural identity.

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

#### **Quote by the Curator**

'Convergences: A Shared Ground — Lineages, Practices, Futures' brings together contemporary voices working across disciplines to reflect on these shared cultural terrains. The exhibition engages with key tropes of making that reveal how practices evolve while remaining rooted in inherited knowledge systems. The presentation is anchored in an exploration of layered inheritances—of traditions, lineages, and the enduring continuity of cultural practices as they unfold through art, craft, and architecture. In the eastern and north-eastern regions, culture is not separate from everyday life; it is lived, practiced, and transmitted through routine acts, material knowledge, and collective memory. These practices are deeply embedded in the social and environmental fabric of the region, shaping both identity and ways of being.

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

#### **About the Participating Artists and Supporting Institutions**

##### **Anshu Kumari**

Anshu Kumari (b. 1999, Jamshedpur, Jharkhand) is a textile-based visual artist whose practice explores the intersections of urbanization, environmental degradation, and acts of repair. She holds both a BFA and MFA in Fine Arts from Visva Bharati University, Santiniketan, where she developed her distinctive use of discarded kathris (quilts) as metaphors for the wounded surface of the earth and as sites of restoration, care, and memory. Through slow processes of mending, layering, and reactivating these textiles, her works invite viewers to consider their responsibility toward ecological balance and more sustainable futures.

Her work has been presented nationally and internationally, including projects with the National Gallery of Modern Art, Kolkata, the Khajuraho Dance Festival (Art Mart), the "Fiber Arts of Time" exhibition at Nandan Gallery, Artdemic with the Gujral Foundation, and the National Level Indian Art Contest. She is a recipient of the ABIR India First Take Award, an Appreciation Prize at the 9th Young Artists Exhibition at SSVAD, Santiniketan, and a scholarship from the Ministry of Culture under the Young Artists scheme.

Anshu has participated in fellowships and residencies such as the Avantika Research Fellowship, Utsha Artist Residency, and the Arthshila Curatorial Fellowship (with GABAA), and has led textile workshops for schools and communities in India and Switzerland. Her ongoing work with organizations including INTACH and the Suresh Amiya Memorial Trust, along with her experience in youth festivals and NGO initiatives during the COVID-19 pandemic, underpins a practice grounded in community, care, and environmental advocacy.

## **ARTISANS' Sustainable Development Foundation X Leshemi Origins**

### **About ARTISANS' Sustainable Development Foundation (ASDF)**

**ASDF** is a social enterprise that aims to revitalize and sustain India's unique craft and cultural traditions through initiatives that support creative livelihoods and sustainable development, and inspire consumer consciousness.

### **About Leshemi Origins**

Indigenous women of the Chakhesang tribe in a remote village of Northeast India, weave nettle shawls on back-strap looms. The fiber-to-fabric journey is local and self-sustaining.

Thebvo, or stinging nettle is foraged from the wild once a year. Strips of nettle bark are retted, thigh-reeled, hand-spun, softened and bleached in rice broth. It is alternated with cotton and strip-woven.

The restrained centre-stripe is black, dyed locally. Cotton is mordanted in tannin-rich bark from wild trees, and soaked in dark paddy field clay.

Four strips are hand-seamed for a classic Thebhora shawl. This utilitarian textile is densely woven, warm and waterproof. Increasingly rare, nettle is a luxury worn for ceremonial occasions today.

## **About Sanskriti Museum and Art Gallery**

Sanskriti Museum and Art Gallery in Hazaribagh was an initiative started under the guidance of Padma Shri Bulu Imam in 1991 and has been the only source of reference for folk art and archaeological sites in Jharkhand. It has served as a Centre for art and cultural exchange, which has gained international acclaim and credentials. It has the complete documentation of so far discovered rockart and antiquarian remains in Hazaribagh, along with the original artworks created between 1994-2004 under the banner of Tribal Women Artists Cooperative (TWAC).

### **Dulair Devi**

Dulair Devi is a talented artist from Jorakath village in Hazaribagh, Jharkhand, known for her vibrant Kurmi-style paintings. She learned the art of embroidery and mural painting from her mother and has been associated with the Tribal Women Artists Cooperative (TWAC) since 1994. Her work has been widely exhibited around the world, helping to promote and preserve the traditional art of Jharkhand.

### **Malo Devi**

Malo Devi of Jorakath, Jharkhand is an artist who paints beautiful peacocks and elephants in the Kurmi Khovar style using a comb. Some of her peacocks are 10 feet long and cover entire rooms. Her village is in the hills covered with Saal forests. She is one of the earliest artists of Tribal Women Artists Cooperative (TWAC), and continues to paint in her village.

### **Putli Ganju**

Putli Ganju is an internationally acclaimed artist who has exhibited and worked widely in Australia, Europe, England, and Canada. She paints in the Ganju style and has been a resident of the Tribal Women Artists' Cooperative at Sanskriti Centre, Hazaribagh since 1995. Her Sohrai murals can be

found at Art Gallery of New South Wales; the Australian Museum, Sydney; and the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.

### **Rudhan Devi**

Rudhan Devi is an artist from Jorakath, Jharkhand who paints beautiful wild animals and birds in the Kurmi Khovar style. Her paintings of tiger attacking a man is a famous scene which she paints on large murals in her mud house walls. As an amputee, she paints with her left hand. She was featured in the film *The One-eared Elephant from Hazaribagh* (2004).

### **Sajhwa Devi**

Sajhwa Devi is an artist from Jorakath, Jharkhand who paints beautiful birds and wild animals in the Kurmi Khovar style of painting which is comb-cut work. She is one of the earliest artists who worked on the Australian High Commission (New Delhi) project in 1993-94. She has been working on the Art Project of Tribal Women Artists Cooperative (TWAC) since 1995.

### **Ruma Choudhury**

Ruma Choudhury (b. 1990), a contemporary artist and independent researcher, completed her BFA and MFA in painting from Kala Bhavan, Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan.

She has been a part of several group exhibitions including *Material as Metaphors: A Dialogue of Art Forms*, National Gallery of Modern Art, Kolkata, 2025; *There are Tides in the Body: Indo-Swiss Group Exhibition*, Emami Art, Kolkata, 2024; *All That is Hidden: Mapping Departures in Landscape, Terrains and Geographies*, Emami Art, Kolkata, 2024; *Departure*, Ganges Art Gallery, Kolkata, 2020; *Inside the Fibre*, Artsacre Foundation, Kolkata, 2019; *Raconteur*, A.M. Studio, Kolkata, 2018; *Images and Impressions: Profile and Persona of Pranab Mukherjee*, Academy of Fine Arts, Kolkata, 2017; and *I am*, A.M. Studio, Kolkata, 2017. Her featured solo performances include *h-airy strokes* at Gallery Onkaf, New Delhi and *Multi Hues* at Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi, 2018.

Choudhury was awarded the India Artist Relief Fund, MAP x 1 Santhiroad, 2021; Musui Art Foundation scholarship, 2020; Best Painting Award, Academy of Fine Arts, 2016; and the National Scholarship, Government of India, 2015-16.

She currently lives and works in Santiniketan.

### **Silpinwita Das**

Silpinwita Das is a distinguished natural dye practitioner and artist from Kolkata. She completed both her Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) and Master of Fine Arts (MFA) in Graphic Art from Kala-Bhavana, Visva-Bharati University, where she developed a strong foundation in printmaking, composition, and visual storytelling. She is celebrated for her expertise in natural dyeing techniques, which she learnt from her father, artist Ajit Kumar Das. Her painting has been exhibited at national and international platforms, including the India Art Fair in 2025. Her paintings are part of the prestigious collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and the Tapi Collection, Surat.

Apart from being a painter, she is also a designer. Her innovative and sustainable fashion, which blends contemporary design with traditional methods, earned her the prestigious UNESCO-WCC

Award of Excellence for Handicrafts in 2016. She showcased her products at prestigious global platforms, including the International Folk Art Market in Santa Fe, USA (2019).

Beyond her artistic endeavours, Silpinwita has contributed to several research articles and chapters in national and international journals and books. She co-edited the book *Traditional Crafts of India* in 2025.

Currently, she is a research scholar at the Department of Silpa-Sadana, Visva-Bharati, Sriniketan, where she is advancing and expanding her knowledge in natural dyeing and sustainable practices.

### **Simi Deka**

Simi Deka (b. 2000, Jorhat, Assam) is a visual art practitioner and storyteller whose practice evolves around the ecological and social narratives of lowland water bodies. She holds a BFA from Indira Kala Sangit Vishwavidyalaya, Khairagarh, Chhattisgarh (2022) and an MFA from Kalyani University, West Bengal (2025).

She has taken part in Kalyani University Annual Exhibition 2025; A4A Virtual Residency & Mentorship Programme 2025; the CIMA Awards Show 2025, The Indian Society of Oriental Art Annual Exhibition 2025; CANVAS – 2nd National Painting Competition 2025, University of Calcutta; and the Birla Academy of Art and Culture Annual Exhibition 2023, among others. Deka received the ChotaMota Art Program 31 Master Crafter Award (2025) and the ChotaMota Art Program 28 Master Crafter Award (2021).

She is based in Kolkata, India.

### **Ujjal Dey**

Ujjal Dey (b. 1992) is a contemporary textile artist pursuing a doctorate from Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan. He graduated from Kala Bhavana, Santiniketan, with a B.F.A. and an M.F.A. in textile and design in 2015 and 2017, respectively.

Dey's recent solo shows include *Dawn to Dusk: A Silent Symphony*, Emami Art, 2024 and a solo project held at the Cromwell Place, London, UK, in 2023. His works have been displayed at various exhibitions in India and internationally including *Material as Metaphors: A Dialogue of Art Forms*, National Gallery of Modern Art, Kolkata, 2025; *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*, Raza Foundation, 2022; *DEPARTURE*, Ganges Art Gallery, Kolkata, 2020; and *The Shape of Things*, Ganges Art Gallery, Kolkata, 2017; among many others.

He was awarded the Certificate of Appreciation for Textile at the Young Santiniketan Artists' Exhibition, SSVAD, 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.

### **Ujjal Sinha**

Ujjal Sinha, hailing from Tripura, holds a BVA in Painting from Government College of Art and Craft, Agartala (2017), a BFA and an MFA in Sculpture from Kala Bhavana, Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan (2021 and 2023 respectively).

His works have been part of *Soul of Woman: A Payal Jain Retrospective* curated by Ina Puri, Chattarpur, Delhi (2023); MFA Final Year Degree Show, Kala Bhavana, Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan (2023); *A Season of Conviviality: Kala Bhavana after Hundred Years*, Rabindra Bhavan, Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi (2022); BFA Final Year Degree Show, Kala Bhavana, Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan (2021); and *Under the Mango Tree* co-curated by Sanchayan Ghosh, Kala Bhavana, Visva-Bharti, Santiniketan (2020), among others.

He received the Lalit Kala Akademi Scholarship, North Eastern Regional Centre, Agartala (2022-23).

Ujjal Sinha is based in Santiniketan, West Bengal.

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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.

## **About Kolkata Centre for Creativity**

The Kolkata Centre for Creativity (KCC) is a multi-disciplinary arts institution known for making art more accessible and engaging. Through initiatives like "Art for All," DEAI-driven programs such as a Braille Library, and large-scale community festivals - AMI Arts Festival, Ramjhol, Theatre Festival & Bengali Literary meet, KCC builds a dynamic cultural ecosystem. Acting as a catalyst it facilitates Capacity Building, Artistic enhancement of professionals with special focus on emerging and mid-career artists, through its various verticals of KCC Arts Fellowship, KCC Art Laboratory, providing platforms for research, mentorship, and artistic growth. KCC Conservation Lab and related programs underscore the Centre's dedication to the preservation and research of cultural heritage. Whether through children's programs, research projects, or interdisciplinary festivals, KCC remains a vital space where creativity meets community, scholarship, and social change. KCC has worked with renowned artists and performers, including the Indian Ocean Band, Anirban Bhattacharjee, Chandrabindoo Band, Jayati Chakraborty and many more.

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