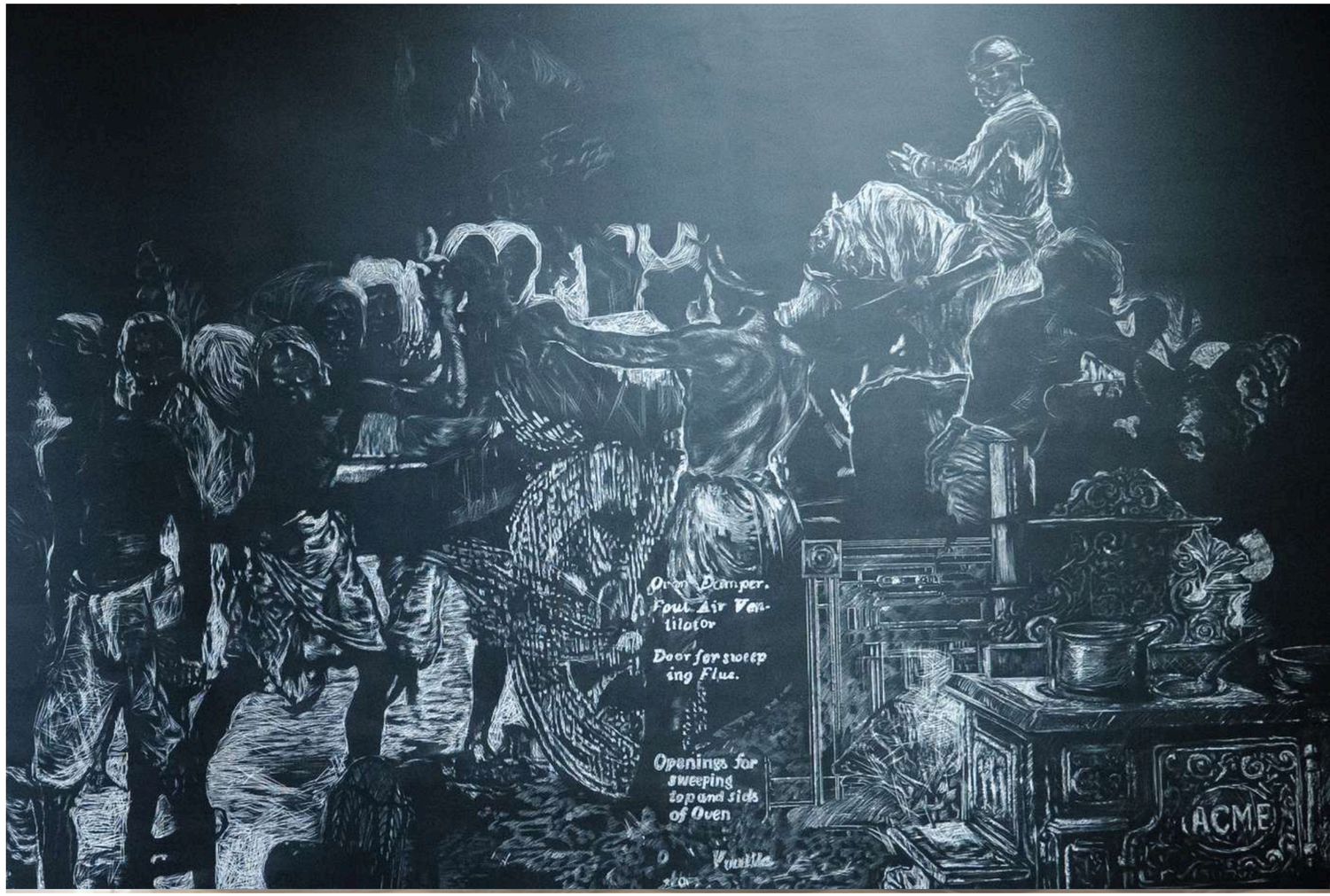
EMAMI ART

Pradip Das

Portfolio



Pradip Das is a Kolkata-based Indian site-specific installation artist, painter and printmaker, known for his career-long exploration of new materials, ideas, approaches, and techniques. While formal art education equipped him with technical skills and theoretical knowledge, it was the dynamic cultural atmosphere in Behala, South Kolkata, that truly nurtured his inner artistic voice —enabling him to create works in which people, places, and their layered cultural heritage are inextricably intertwined.

Drawing inspiration from both literature and film, Das captures the delicate connections between the past and the lived presence—through the lens of historical trauma, memory, and the everyday language of the people. His multimedia practice—spanning image, found and crafted object, sound, and text—weaves together complex cultural narratives in profoundly thoughtful and evocative ways. Rooted in Kolkata, Das's work reflects how the city and its margins are shaped by people and their cultures, transcending fixed geographic boundaries. His enduring interest in memory, history, and community is also evident in his large-scale public works created for Durga Puja, Bengal's most celebrated cultural festival.

Das's practice engages deeply with Bengal's cultural and political histories. Themes of displacement and migration are etched into his work, revealing how the past continues to shape the present. One of his most significant site-specific installations, *Hridaypur* (2024), was the result of a three-year research project in Naktala, South Kolkata. The work explores the memories of refugee migrations during the 1947 Partition and the Bangladesh Liberation War in 1971. Transforming an ordinary municipal locality into a charged site of contested history, Das uses architectural structures, paint, recorded oral histories of local residents, text, and collected objects to craft an archive of trauma. These elements render the intimate histories of displacement as sensory experiences—tactile, auditory, and visual—blurring the boundaries between homeland and exile.

Pradip Das creates large-scale public works for Durga Puja, Bengal's most celebrated cultural festival. The theme for the pandal at Behala Club Sarbojanin Durgotsav Committee (13-21 October 2026), as conceptualised by Das, was *Oil: The Market of Faith*.

Oil is more than something we use in the kitchen. It moves quietly between the temple, the market, and the home, creating an invisible connection between them. From the flame of a lamp to the cooking pan, from a market commodity to everyday life, oil carries with it ideas of faith, spirituality, labour, and economy. Its journey connects the sacred with the everyday, and the personal with the social. Oil becomes more than a material—it becomes a quiet language through which our daily lives, beliefs, systems of power, and ideas of spirituality flow.

Oil: The Market of Faith
Behala Club, Kolkata
Durga Puja 2026

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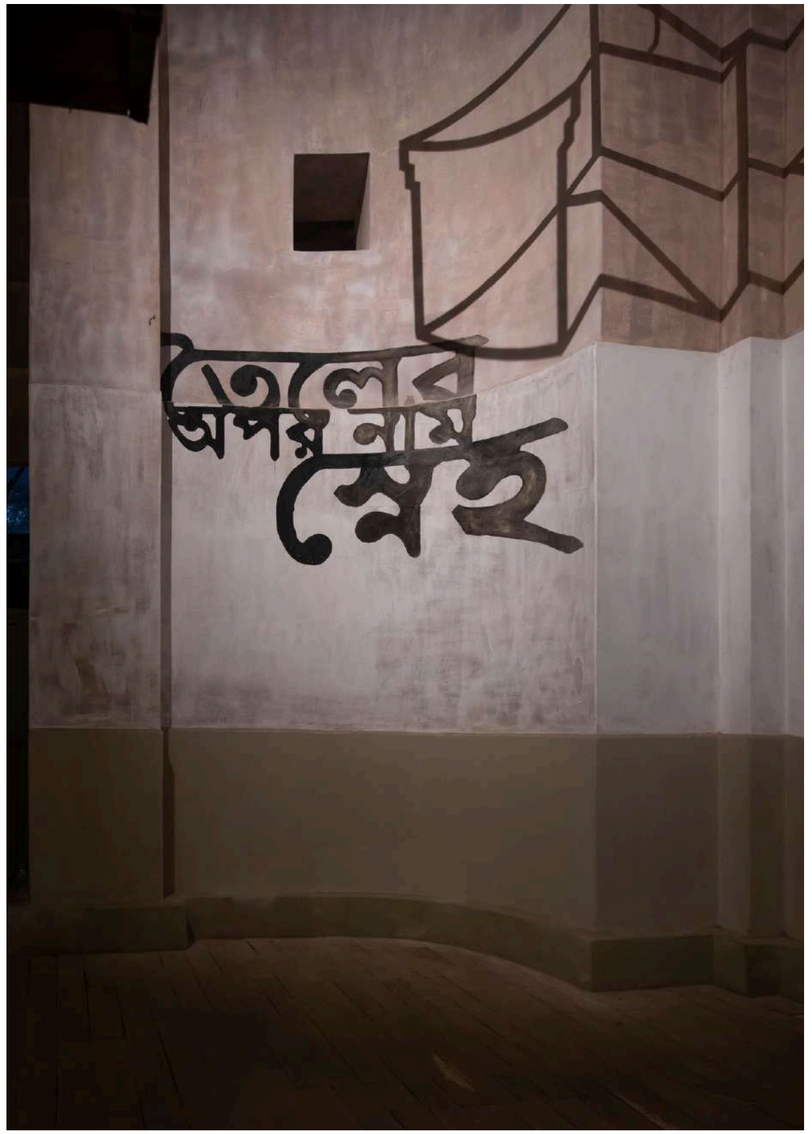


***Oil: The Market of Faith*, Behala Club, Kolkata, Durga Puja 2026**

Island Mural Project
Kochi-Muziris Biennale 2025-26

Pradip Das's two side facing mural work located at the Simi Warehouse, Kochi, depicts the parallels of colonial violence, cultural erasure and power politics.

The red wall lists genocides across history; its peeling surface exposes brick beneath, revealing how systematic violence seeks to seal over truth yet inevitably fractures. Names, places, and dates appear as open wounds rather than closure, asserting genocide as a recurring structure of power, not a closed past. On the opposite side, the black engraved wall acts as a mnemonic space. Memory is excavated through abrasion, evoking the Bengal Famine, imperial domination, and power politics that render suffering invisible. Like a scar, the surface remembers through damage.

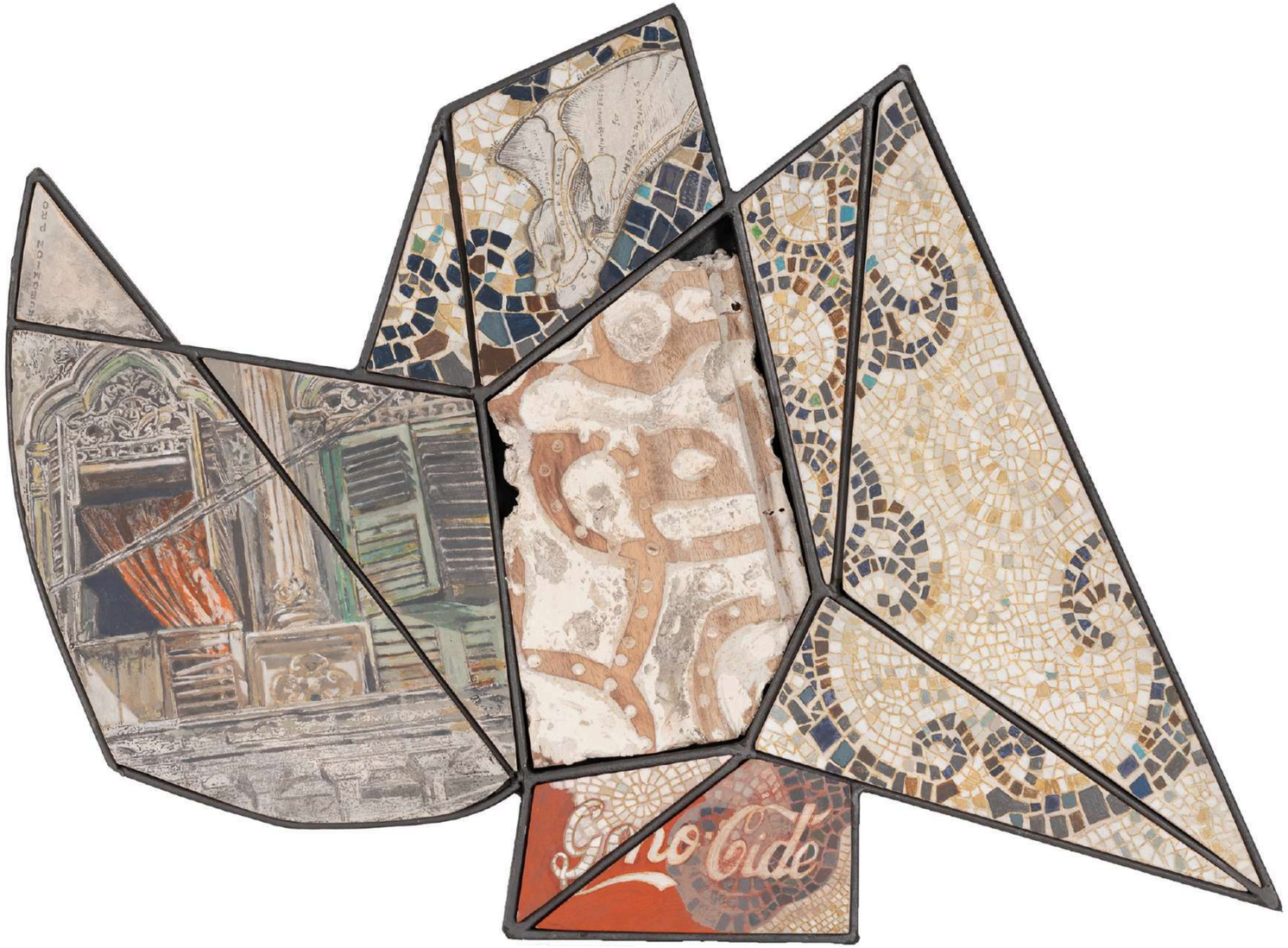
The installations conceptualize history as a material that is wounded, layered, corporeal, and inherently resistant. They position the act of remembrance not as passive recollection but as an active, excavation of that which structures of power systematically seek to erase.

Island Mural Project
Kochi-Muziris Biennale 2025-26

Island Mural Project
Kochi-Muziris Biennale 2025-26

Pradip Das's work foregrounds fragmentation and examines how narratives emerge through the joining of disconnected memories. Carefully selected images and objects come together to construct the present as a collage of fractured histories and recollections, privileging discontinuity over totality. The work also shows a critical use of decorative wood carving, realistic representation, and his unusual choice of medium and material suitable for the purpose.

Untitled
Pigment, acrylic, iron and wood
12 3/4 x 33 3/8 x 1 in.
2025, Kolkata



The work foregrounds fragmentation and the critical appropriation of images. The word “genocide,” rendered in the recognizable branding style of Coca-Cola, draws attention to the role of multinational corporations within the histories of global conflicts, disasters, and wars, including the ongoing crisis in Palestine. Through this strategy, Pradip Das addresses the entanglement of power, capital, and violence, capturing a present shaped by traumatic pasts and persistent global forces.

Untitled
Pigment, acrylic, wood, iron and plaster
13 3/4 x 16 3/8 x 1 in.
2025, Kolkata

Pradip Das's work reflects the essence of postcolonial histories as experienced from the margins of the nation. Through objects, literature, and images, the work captures the complexity of memory and survival, evoking identities that are fragmented and fractured—much as memory itself. Excerpts from Atin Bandopadhyay's renowned novel *Neelkatha Pakhir Khonje* connect the work to Bengal's shared history, tracing continuities and ruptures before and after the Partition.

Untitled
Pigment, acrylic, iron and wood
19 1/8 x 33 1/4 x 1 in.
2025, Kolkata

Pradip Das's conceptual practice engages with fractured historical identities, bringing together fragmented objects and representational forms. Interconnected hands, machines, and organs evoke ordinary working people's survival and the enduring struggle for existence. Objects and images appear broken and dispersed, echoing the nature of memory itself—shaped by post-colonial histories of partition, migration, and displacement.

Untitled
Engraving on plaster; acrylic, wood, iron, magnifying lens (metal and glass) and electrically connected light
36 x 39 x 5 7/8 in.
2025, Kolkata

Pradip Das's works showcase his innovative use of mediums, profound historical consciousness, and thoughtful material choices, revealing an archaeology of our cultural present. This work, using an excerpt from Atin Bandopadhyay's renowned novel *Neelkatha Pakhir Khonje*, speaks of memory and partition and the problem of identity in the post-colonial nation. The work was on display at the group exhibition ***PURVAI: Printmaking in Eastern India - From Pedagogy to Practice,*** curated by Paula Sengupta at Emami Art, Kolkata in 2026.

Untitled
Engraving on plaster, wood, acrylic, iron, and magnifying lens (metal and glass)
2025

Watch the artist discuss the project

Nabanna: Wounds, War and Hunger
Behala Friends Club, Kolkata
Durga Puja 2025

Nabanna: Wounds, War and Hunger
Behala Friends Club, Kolkata
Durga Puja 2025

The theme for the Puja pandal at **Behala Friends** in 2025, as conceptualised by Pradip Das – *Nabanna: Wounds, War, and Hunger* – was a reference to Bijon Bhattacharya's play *Nabanna* (1944) which revealed the struggle for survival of the marginalised during the Bengal famine of 1943. The installation constructed a trans-temporal archive that charted the terrain of two interconnected histories: the state-engineered famine in colonial Bengal and the recent and ongoing genocide in Gaza. Through layered combinations of wood engraving, etching, poetry, cinema, and sound, the work generated a deeply sensorial experience that exposes both the catastrophe and its unsettling continuities.

Watch the artist discuss the project

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Nabanna: Wounds, War and Hunger
Behala Friends Club, Kolkata
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Nabanna: Wounds, War and Hunger
Behala Friends Club, Kolkata
Durga Puja 2025

Watch the artist discuss the project

Detail

Nabanna: Wounds, War and Hunger
Behala Friends Club, Kolkata
Durga Puja 2025

Detail
Nabanna: Wounds, War and Hunger
Behala Friends Club, Kolkata
Durga Puja 2025

Nabanna: Wounds, War and Hunger
Behala Friends Club, Kolkata
Durga Puja 2025

Watch the artist discuss the project

পথের পাঁচালী ১৯৪৬
(Pather Panchali 1946)
Samaj Sebi Sangha, Kolkata
Durga Puja 2025

The theme for the pandal at **Samaj Sebi Sangha** in 2025, as conceptualised by Das, was পথের পাঁচালী ১৯৪৬ – delving into the history of the club and the role it played in providing shelter for the victims of the Calcutta Riots of 1946. As always, Pradip Das's practice engages deeply with Bengal's cultural and political histories, and this installation honours the role of ordinary people in extraordinary circumstances in a world shattered by religious and casteist divisions.

Watch the artist discuss the project

পথের পাঁচালী ১৯৪৬
(Pather Panchali 1946)
Samaj Sebi Sangha, Kolkata
Durga Puja 2025

Watch the artist discuss the project

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Samaj Sebi Sangha, Kolkata
Durga Puja 2025

The Medicine for a Good Citizen
Bicycle, loud speaker, found objects, cast iron, fabrication, acrylic and pigment paint, sound and video devices, wooden pedestal
2025, Kolkata

Exhibited at ***Material as Metaphor – A Dialogue of Art Forms*** curated by **Sayantan Maitra Boka** at **National Gallery of Modern Art, Kolkata** in collaboration with **Basu Foundation,** this installation explores our everyday relationship with the state and anxious living conditions. By incorporating sounds of rural and suburban medicine hawkers, the artist captures the culture's local and vernacular flavors, infusing the work with humor and irony. The images of old files, papers, ropes, maps, and other elements painted in black on the walls evoke the complexity of our civic and historical identity in a post-colonial nation.

Detail

The Medicine for a Good Citizen
Bicycle, loud speaker, found objects, cast iron, fabrication, acrylic and pigment paint, sound and video devices, wooden pedestal
2025, Kolkata

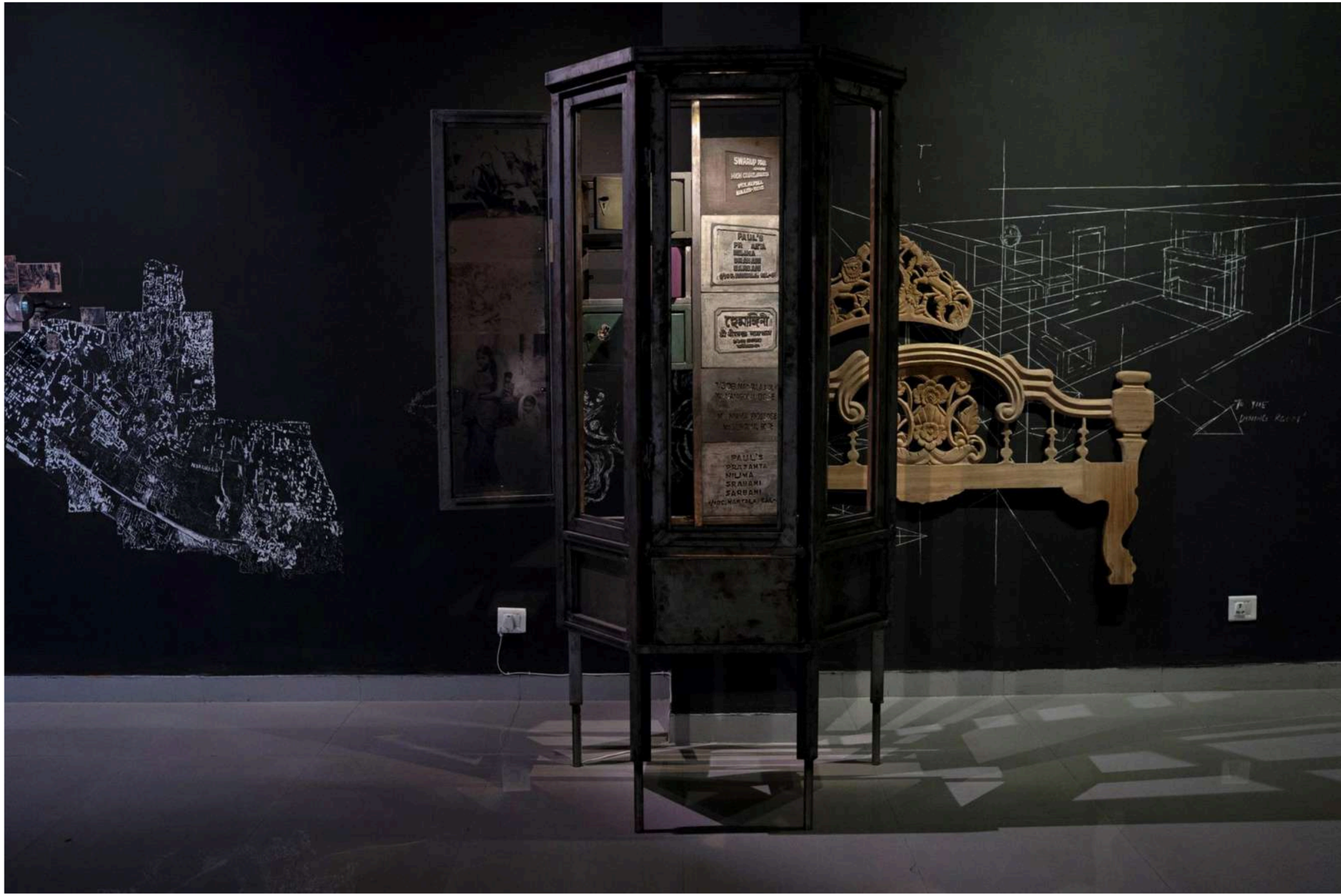
Medicine for good citizen
2020

Details
Medicine for good citizen
2020

Hridaypur - montage of memories
2024-25

Das's work at the **Naktala Udayan Sangha** in 2023 represents a groundbreaking fusion of public art and historical commemoration, delving into the profound impact of Partition on collective memory and heritage. This convergence highlights the power of art to engage with complex narratives and spark meaningful dialogue about shared heritage and resilience.

Hridaypur - montage of memories
2024-25



Hridaypur - montage of memories
2024-25

Details
Hridaypur - montage of memories
2024-25

In this work, Pradip Das employs a district-level map of Bengal showing the 1947 partition boundaries, dividing Bengal into West Bengal (India) and East Pakistan (now Bangladesh). It highlights the Radcliffe Line that separated the two countries. With the figurines of people suffering the real-life consequences of the line and the exposed sewing machine, the work tells the story of a nation split apart and then crudely sewn back together, signifying the legacy of colonialism, oppressive state mechanisms, division, and forced migration.

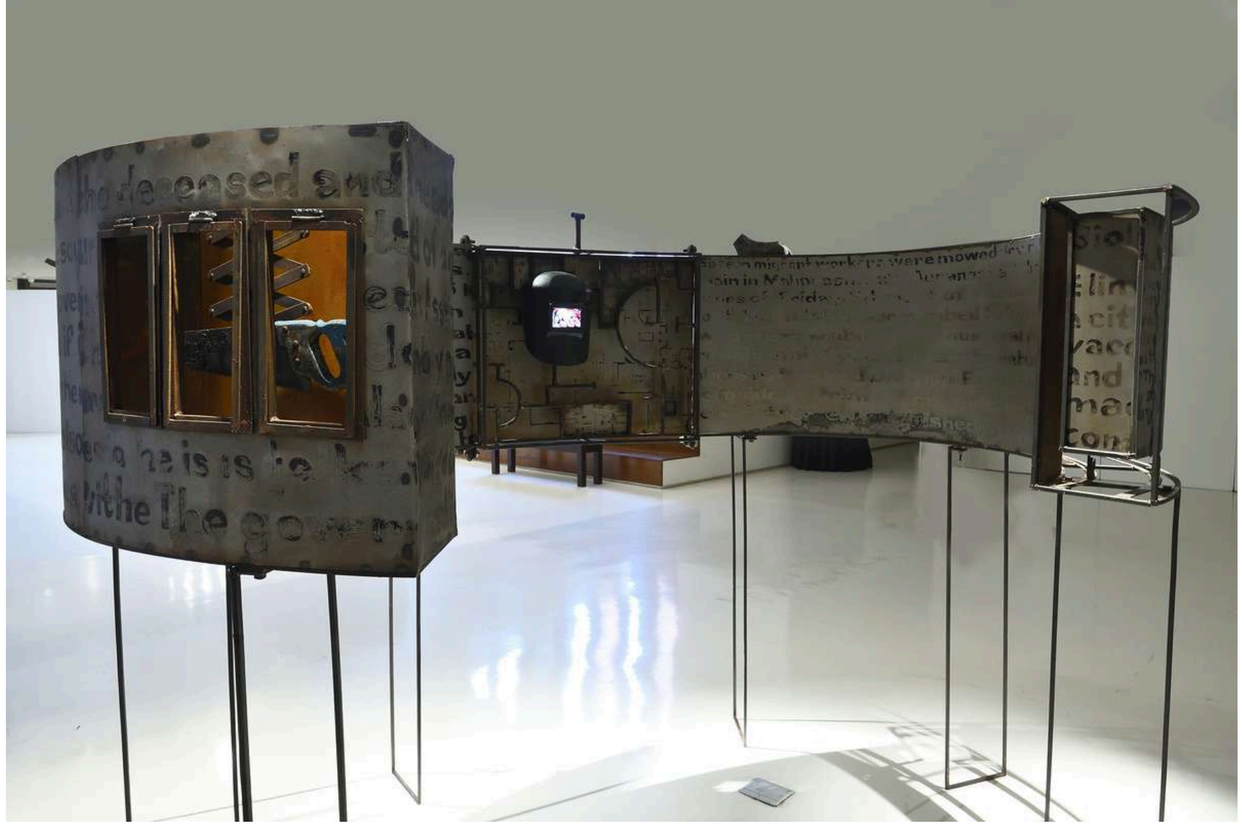
Radcliffe Line
Acid-etched iron plate, iron, wood, acrylic, and found object
2023, Kolkata

Micro Oven
2021

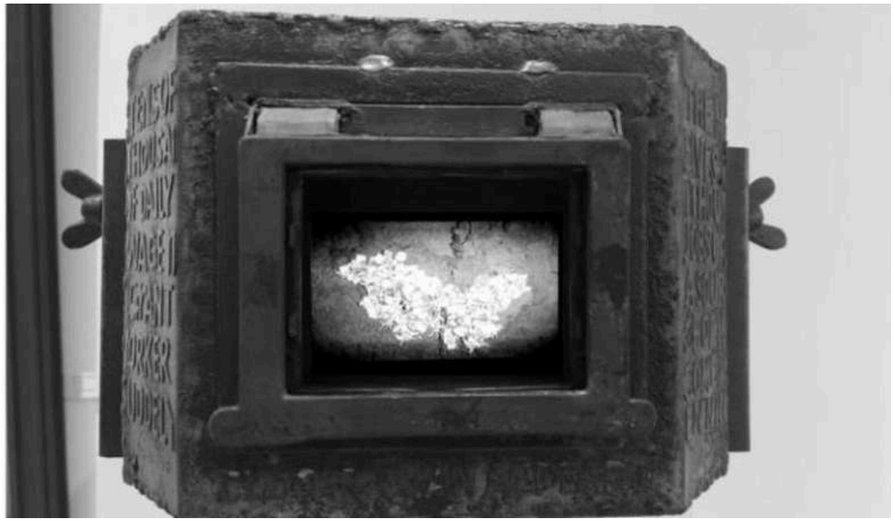
Diary of a Time
Acid-etched iron sheet, brick, piston, and silk screen
2020, Kolkata

Exhibited at ***Hollow Times: Connecting Time, Space, and Reality***, **Kolkata Centre for Creativity**, 2021, this work delved into the artist's observations on the migrant workers and their conditions during the Covid-19 pandemic. The structure resembles a community newspaper-reading board commonly found in Kolkata – and the texts included newspaper reports of the deaths of migrant workers who had fallen asleep on a railway track and were run over by a freight train in Maharashtra.

Diary of a Time
Acid-etched iron sheet, brick, piston, and silk screen
2020, Kolkata



Details
Diary of a Time
Acid-etched iron sheet, brick, piston, and silk screen
2020, Kolkata



No Title I
Iron
2020, Kolkata

No Title I
Iron
2020, Kolkata

I Know What You Did Last Summer
Iron, light, and acrylic on board
2019, Kolkata

This site-specific work was part of **পড়শী*: The Neighbour***, a project by **Chander Haat** in 2019 along with nine artists from Mongolia, Kazakhstan, Taiwan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Bangladesh, during which they collectively developed site-specific installations in lowlands in Sarsuna, Behala. This installation, resembling an excavation site, was set up between two ponds – one that had water and another that did not – and focused on the anxieties surrounding water scarcity in the future.

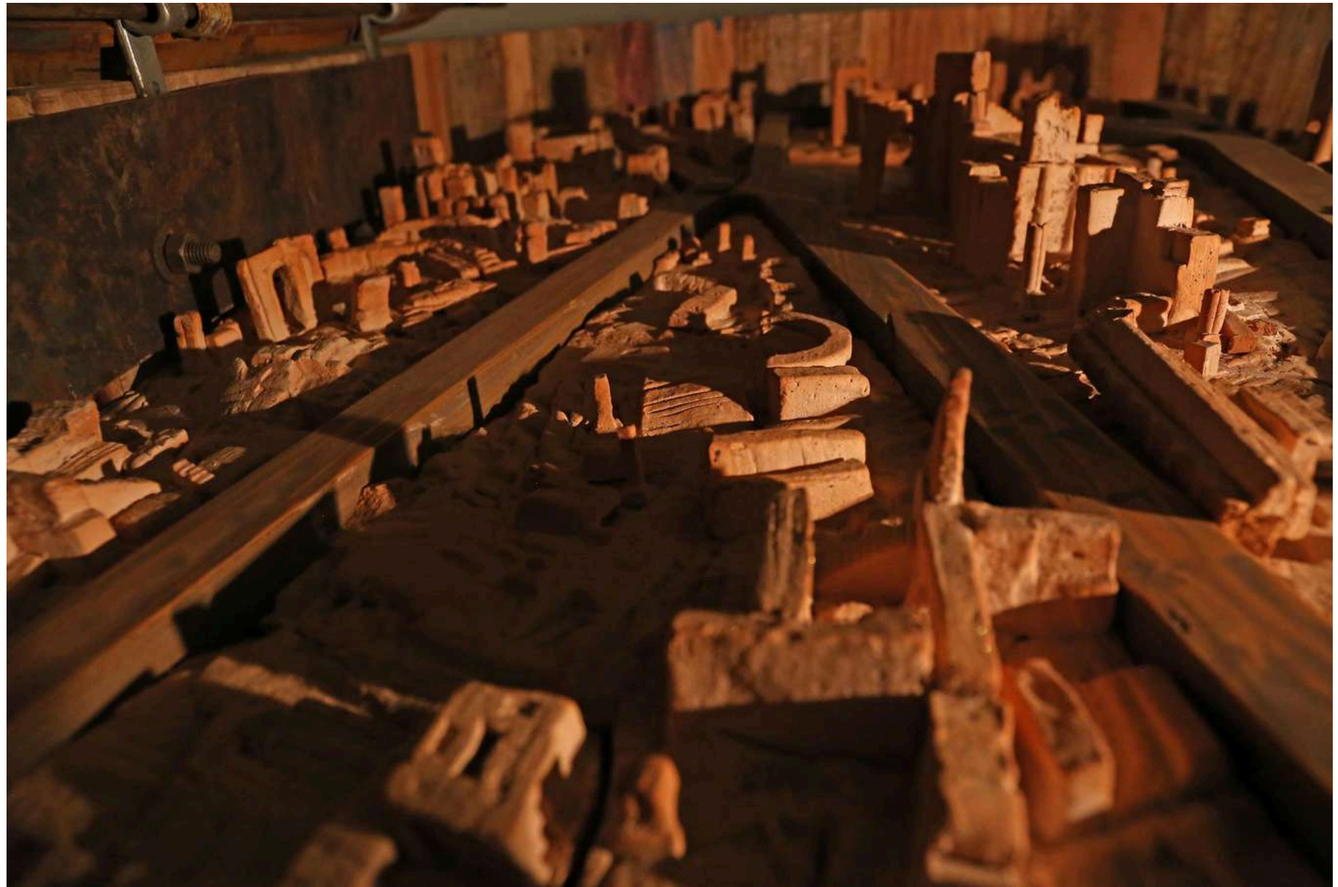
I Know What You Did Last Summer
Iron, light, and acrylic on board
2019, Kolkata

Details
I Know What You Did Last Summer
Iron, light, and acrylic on board
2019, Kolkata

Fragmented Memory
Enamel paint and oil on acid-etched iron plate, wood, iron boxes
2018, Kolkata

Floating Piano
Wood, metal, and ceramic
2017, Kolkata

Exhibited at ***Life and Time: The Changing Landscape*** presented by the artist collective Chander Haat at **Academy of Fine Arts**, 2017, this mixed media installation took the shape of a piano lifted on one side with the help of a car jack – resembling a boat. Taking inspiration from the film *The Pianist* (2002) dir. Roman Polanski and building on people and their individual histories of migration and survival which often go unspoken, the artist created wooden keys for the piano and a ruined city in ceramic in place of the piano strings.



Detail
Floating Piano
Wood, metal, and ceramic
2017, Kolkata

Detail
Floating Piano
Wood, metal, and ceramic
2017, Kolkata

Recalling
Textile, radio, and framed photographs
2016, Kolkata

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Textile, radio, and framed photographs
2016, Kolkata

"Tuning a collection of sound from the past in an old radio set, a speech of freedom and after that a voice of man who describes his own journey from Purba Bangla (Bangladesh) to free India and about his land. All these sounds have been tuned in my work. I visited Bangladesh and I searched and found my ancestral home and my identity. The beauty of the land, the home and the smell and colour of the soil mesmerized me. I collected some soil for my father. My family migrated to India from Bangladesh. To me this land and Bangladesh both are my motherlands. The independence of India brought joy to many people, but there was bloodshed in both the countries. The red cloth symbolizes the bloodshed of that time. "

Recalling
Textile, radio, and framed photographs
2016, Kolkata

Recalling
Textile, radio, and framed photographs
2016, Kolkata

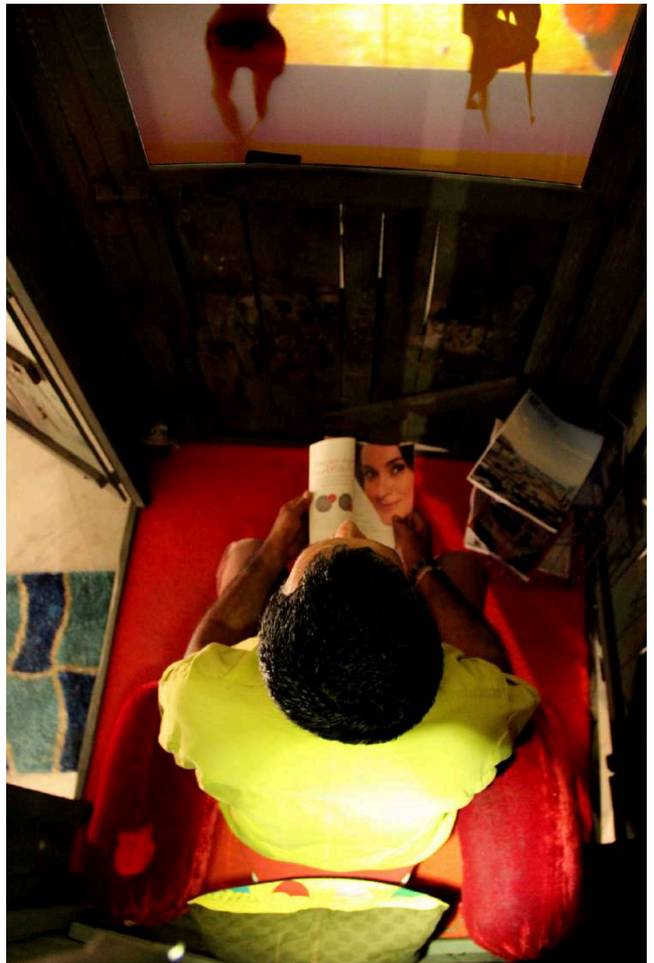
27 Fingers
Handmade paper, wood, concrete, and iron
Kolkata, 2015

27 Fingers
Handmade paper, wood, concrete, and iron
Kolkata, 2015

This installation is a critical look at the act of voting within the electoral process. The hanging structures are the impressions of fingers belonging to the 'common people'—individuals whose primary, and often sole, democratic power is in the act of casting a ballot. The symbolic presence of the fingers, hanging with the ink marks, serves as a strong visual metaphor. It illustrates how a foundational civic process holds the ultimate determining power over the people and their everyday life.

Comfort Zone
Plaster, ceramic, wood, concrete, and iron
Kolkata, 2014

Comfort Zone
Plaster, ceramic, wood, concrete, and iron
Kolkata, 2014



The walls of public toilets in India, particularly those designated for men, serve as an unconventional and unfiltered canvas for public expression. They are often covered with dense graffiti, ranging from names and phone numbers to political slogans and intimate drawings. This interactive installation critically examines this phenomenon, probing the complex relationship between public infrastructure and private psyche. It investigates how a shared, utilitarian space is transformed into a site for projecting individual desires, social commentary, and identity, thereby revealing the underlying psycho-social behaviours of a society.

Born in 1980, Pradip Das holds a BVA from the Government College of Art and Craft, Kolkata in 2003 and an MVA from Rabindra Bharati University, Kolkata in 2005.

Das was one of the mural artists at the Island Mural Project at the Kochi-Muziris Biennale 2025-26. Some of his notable group exhibitions include *Vichitra / विचित्र*, presented by Emami Art and Kolkata Centre for Creativity in collaboration with Bihar Museum, Patna, 2026; *PURVAI: Printmaking in Eastern India - From Pedagogy to Practice*, curated by Paula Sengupta, Emami Art, Kolkata, 2026; *Material as Metaphors: A Dialogue of Art Forms*, National Gallery of Modern Art, Kolkata, 2025; *Dialogues Across Time*, Indian Museum, Kolkata, 2025; Bengal Biennale, Kolkata, 2024; *MATI: The Soil in Search of Sustainability*, Chander Haat and Goethe-Institute Kolkata, 2024; *Vielheit: Stories from the Post-Migrant Society* curated by Jörn Schafaff, Kunst Meran Merano Arte, Italy, 2023; *Past Continuous* curated by Ina Puri, Art Heritage, New Delhi, 2023; *Perception Unfolds*, Jahangir Art Gallery, Mumbai, 2016; *Changing Landscape*, Academy of Fine Arts, Kolkata, 2016; *Pushing Boundaries*, Bonn, Germany, 2015; *Emerging Canvas*, Indian Museum, Seoul, South Korea, 2013; *Outward,* Academy of Fine Arts, Kolkata, 2012; *Dreams and Fantasies*, Galleria Blanchaert, Milan, Italy, 2011; *Antar-Bahir*, Academy of Fine Arts, Kolkata, 2011; among others.

Das has exhibited in many galleries and institutions including Gallery Veda, Chennai, 2017; Triveni Kala Sangam, New Delhi, 2014; Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath, Bangalore, 2012; Exhibit 320, New Delhi, 2010; Gallery Time and Space, Bangalore, 2010; Alliance Francaise de Bangalore, Bangalore, 2008; Lalit Kala Academy, Chennai, 2008; India Habitat Centre, New Delhi, 2004; Rabindra Bhavan, Lalit Kala Academy, New Delhi, 2003. His works have been presented at India Art Fair 2026 by Emami Art.

He creates large-scale public works for Durga Puja, Bengal's most celebrated cultural festival – the most recent ones in Kolkata being *Oil: The Market of Faith* at Behala Club, 2026; পথের পাঁচালী ১৯৪৬ (Pather Panchali 1946) at Samaj Sebi Sangha, 2025; *Nabanna: Wounds, War, and Hunger* at Behala Friends, 2025; and the *Hridaypur* trilogy at Naktala Udayan Sangha, 2021-23.

Pradip Das is a founding member of the Kolkata-based art collective Chander Haat and is part of the curatorial team of Bengal Biennale 2026-27. He is currently based in Kolkata.

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.

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.