

Soma Das

Portfolio





Soma Das is a contemporary Indian artist based in Kolkata. A graduate of Rabindra Bharati University, she explores in her works the everyday life of ordinary workers, mostly women from low-income suburbs, seen from a unique womanly perspective.

Born into a conservative, lower-middle-class family, she spent most of her time with women members of the family. Her childhood experiences later contribute to shaping her worldview as an artist. Although her paintings speak of the life of ordinary people, she is inspired by the courtly traditions of miniature paintings in our country. The use of aerial view, multiple perspectives, realistic detailing, ornamentation and vibrant colours show how deeply she has studied miniature paintings and also her remarkable inventiveness in using them to create a unique, easily recognisable personal style.

Watch the artist discuss her practice



Besides exploring the domestic spaces – the series of drawings and paintings Soma Das did during the Covid-19-induced lockdowns make up a significant part of her artistic oeuvre –there are significant paintings about homosocial spaces, such as the lady’s compartment in the train and bathing steps at a pond.

A keen observer, she carefully studies the gestures and appearances of ordinary men, women and children, as well as their emotions, dreams and desires. Indeed, a tragic poetic mood unites her extensive body of work. But, instead of magnifying it, she places it in the mundane context of everyday life, making us aware of the life of the ordinary, both exclusive and integral to the life we live.

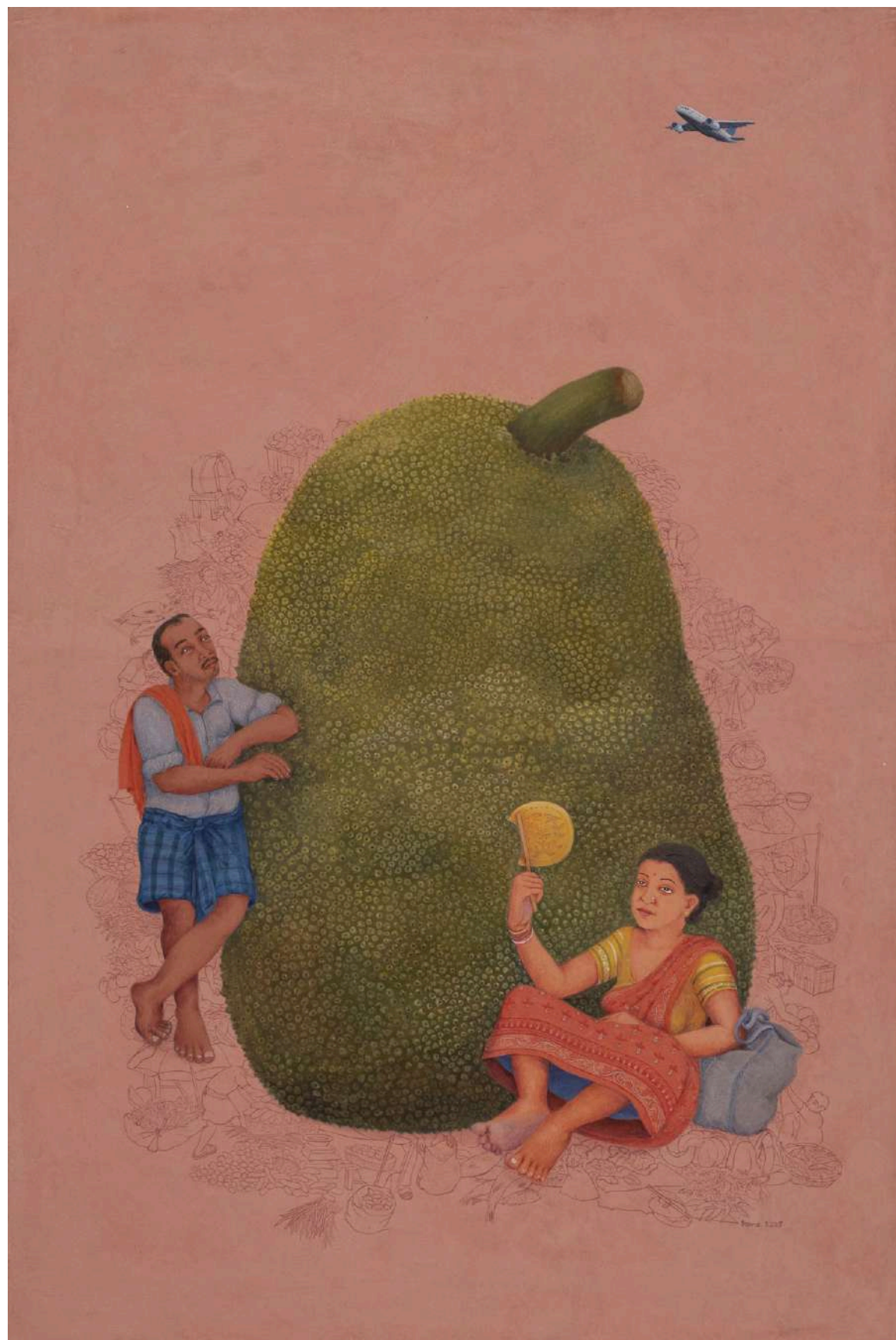
Watch the artist discuss her practice





পরিচর্যা II (To Tend II)
Gouache on Lokta paper and cotton
cloth pasted on canvas
20 x 13 3/4 in.
2026, Kolkata





Made for Each Other by Soma Das is a series of works depicting a couple navigating the mundanities of daily life and shouldering domestic responsibilities and life's challenges together as equals. This work draws inspiration from a scene witnessed by the artist at the local market – where people often set up temporary stalls selling vegetables grown on their own land. Here, a couple rests against an exaggerated jackfruit, while an aeroplane flies overhead. A keen observer, Soma Das carefully studies the gestures and appearances of ordinary men, women and children, as well as their emotions, dreams and desires.

Made for Each Other IV
Gouache on Lokta paper pasted on canvas
35 5/8 x 24 in.
2025-2026, Kolkata



Detail
 নতুন সংসার (A New Family)
 Gouache on Lokta paper and printed
 cloth pasted on canvas
 20 1/8 x 13 1/4 in.
 2026, Kolkata



Soma Das often draws inspiration from the regular sights she witnessed growing up, translating fond memories into paintings in gouache. This work depicts a woman getting some rest, possibly on the terrace of the house, fanning herself with a hand fan, while two girl children play with her hair – combing it out and tying it up.

ভালো লাগার দিনগুলো (*Those Good Old Days*)
Gouache on Lokta paper and printed
cotton cloth pasted on canvas
24 3/8 x 36 in.
2026, Kolkata

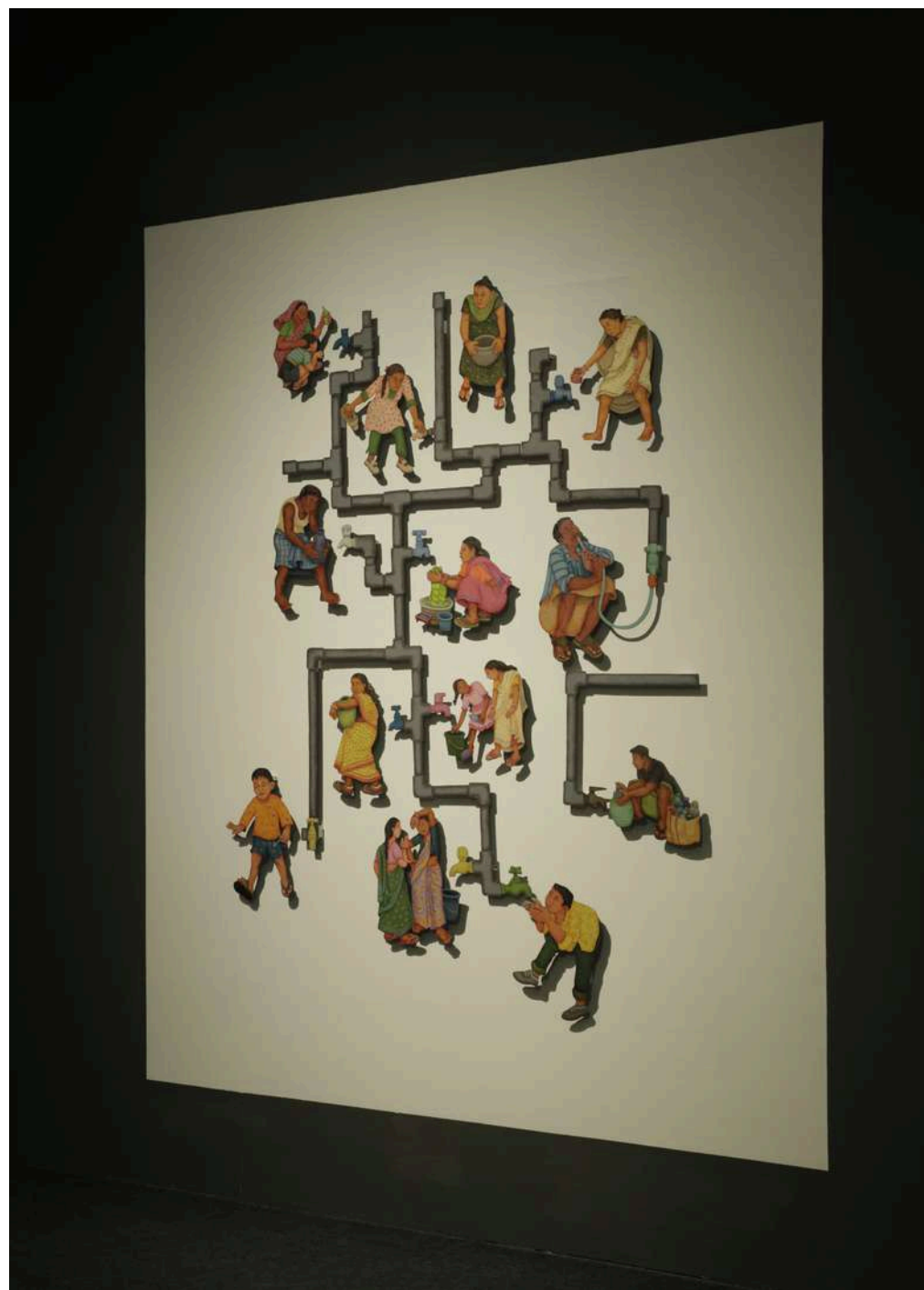
Soma Das is inspired by the great traditions of Indian miniature painting – the detailing, figuration, use of space, and distinct ways of storytelling. Instead of courtly themes and nature, the people and their struggles, hopes, and desires appear as themes of her work. This work depicts men, women, and children sleeping under the same quilt. The brushstrokes in gouache mimic kantha stitches.

এক আকাশের নীচে (*Under the Same Sky*)
Gouache on Lokta paper pasted on printed
cotton cloth on canvas
70 7/8 x 47 1/2 in.
2026, Kolkata





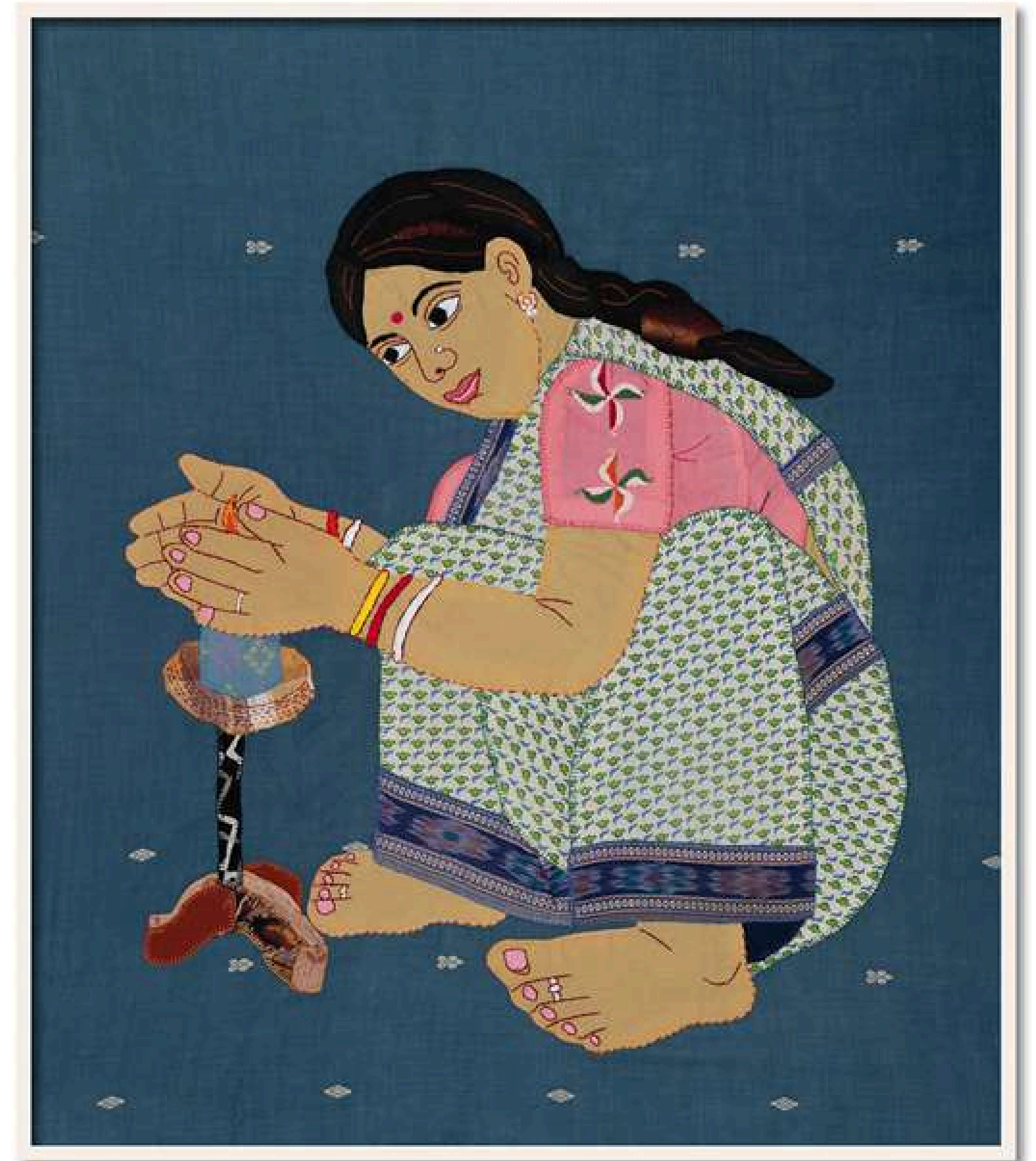
Detail
এক আকাশের নীচে (*Under the Same Sky*)
Gouache on Lokta paper pasted on printed
cotton cloth on canvas
70 7/8 x 47 1/2 in.
2026, Kolkata



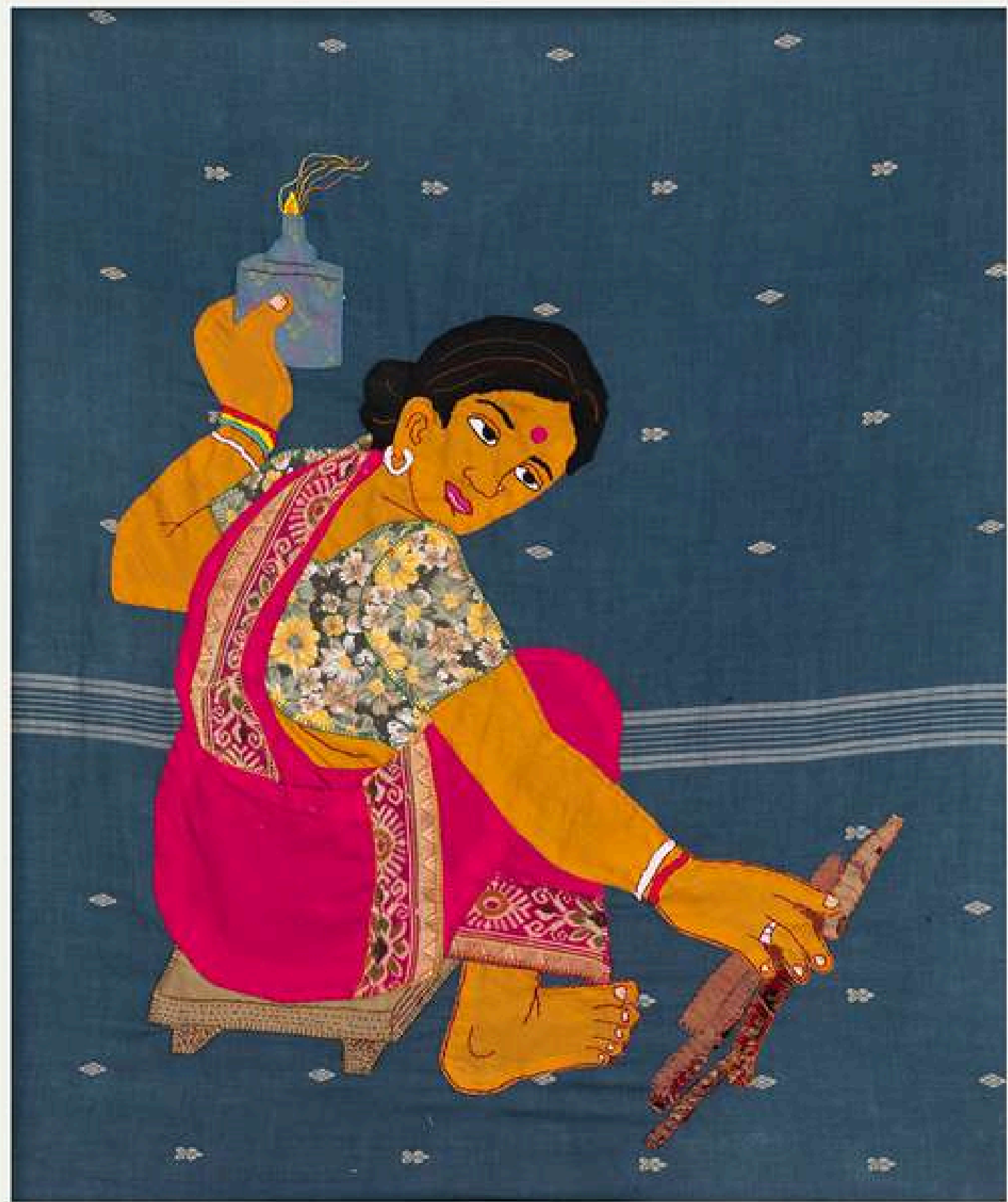
প্রতিদিনের সকাল (*Mornings Everyday*)
 Oil and enamel paint on metal
 73 5/8 x 54 in. approx.
 2026, Kolkata



This work by Soma Das, created in collaboration with her mother Anita Das, depicts a woman crouching in the dark of the kitchen at night, trying to light an oil lamp that would allow her to see better.

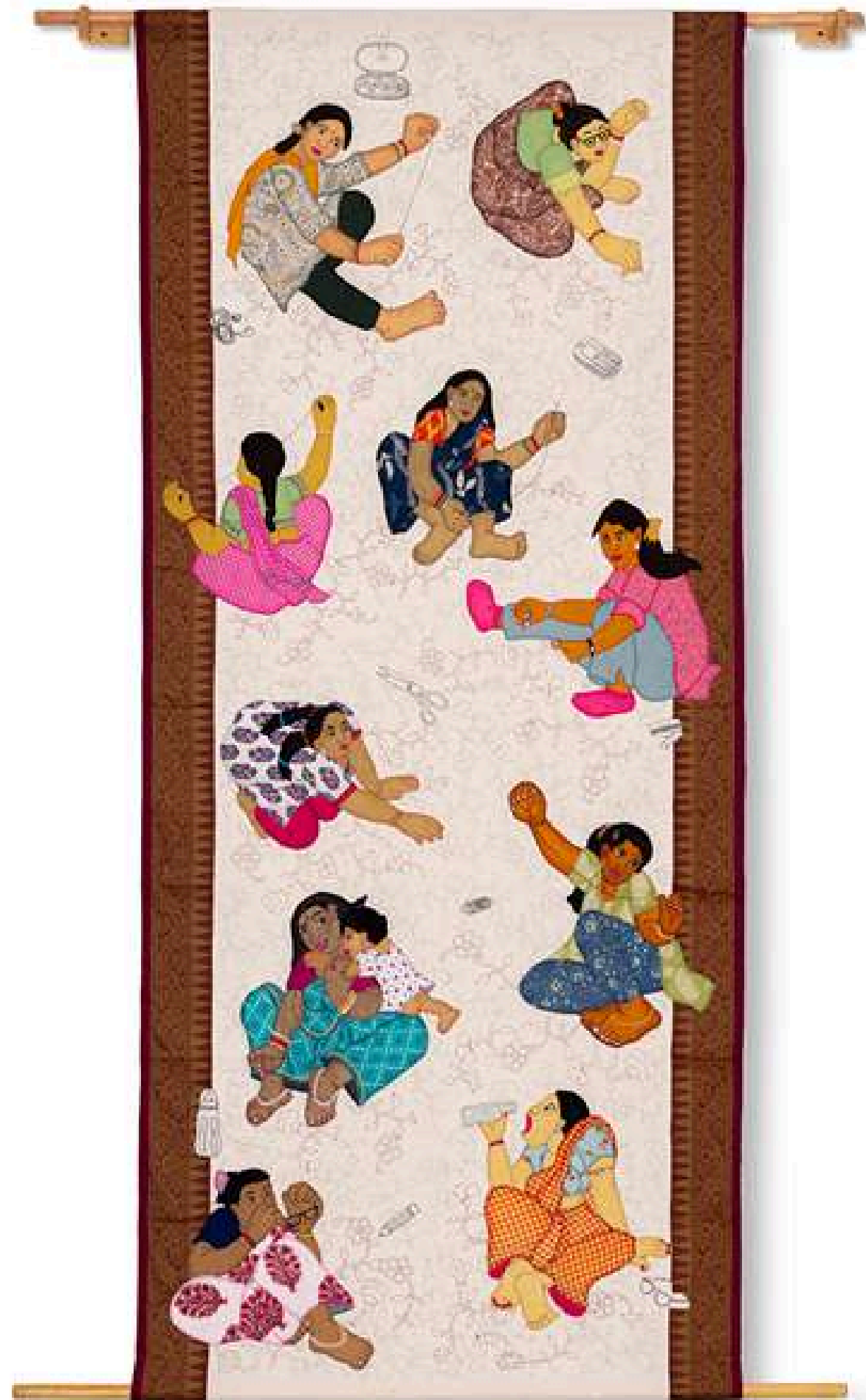


রাতের রান্নাঘর I (*The Kitchen at Night I*)
Applique and hand embroidery on cotton cloth
27 3/8 x 23 5/8 in.
2026, Kolkata



This work, created in collaboration with her mother Anita Das, depicts a woman sitting on a low stool in the dark of the kitchen at night, with an oil lamp in one hand and reaching out for firewood with the other.

রাতের রান্নাঘর II (*The Kitchen at Night II*)
Applique and hand embroidery on cotton cloth
27 1/2 x 24 in.
2026, Kolkata



Soma Das often draws inspiration from the regular sights she witnessed growing up, translating fond memories into works in textile and canvas. This work depicts ten women embroidering on the single piece of cloth in tandem.

রোজগেরেগিনি II (*The Earning Housewives II*)
Hand embroidery and applique with cotton
thread on cotton fabric, ink on canvas
106 1/2 x 47 5/8 in.
2026, Kolkata



একটি পুরোনো গল্প (An Old Story)
Gouache on Lokta paper
pasted on canvas
9 1/2 in. in dia. each
2025, Kolkata

This work in two parts draws inspiration from a scene from Das's life – her father returning from the ration shop but the shopping bag falling apart at the seams on the way back home, and her mother stitching it up. Das finds inspiration in the great traditions of Indian miniature painting but instead of courtly themes found in miniatures, common people and their struggles, hopes, and desires appear as themes of her work.



Installation view
 নিত্য-নূতন: *The New in the Everyday*
 Emami Art, Kolkata
 2026

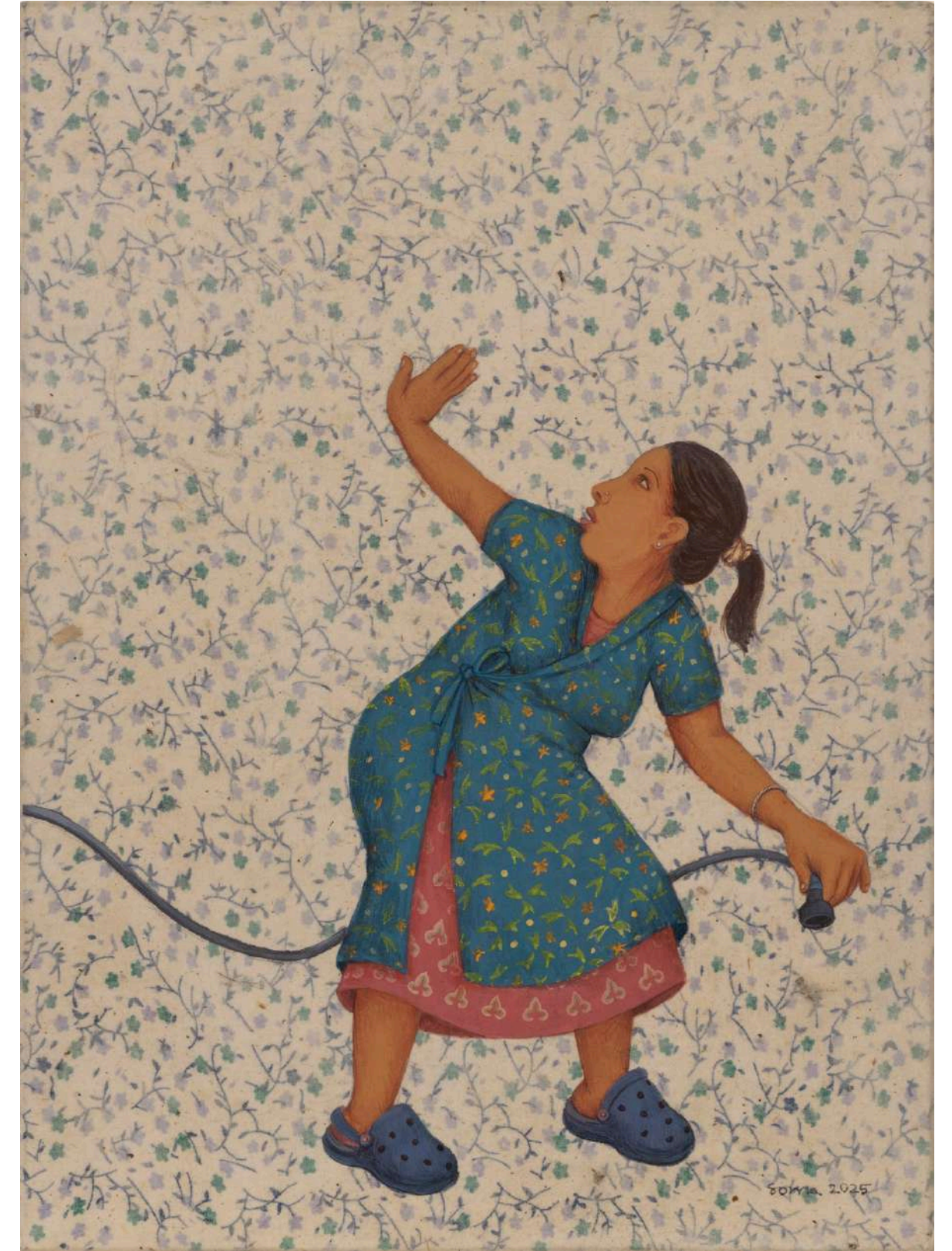
Soma Das's work depicts ordinary incidents and activities of our everyday life, such as life in the low-income suburb where she lived and grew up. This work depicts a peaceful morning scene where a woman, with her hair wrapped in a towel after taking a bath, unfolds her saree to put it on. Soma Das often uses scrap fabric in her works, reusing pieces of cloth collected and saved by her mother.

শান্তসকাল III (*A Peaceful Morning III*)
Gouache on Lokta paper and cotton
cloth pasted on canvas
17 3/8 x 12 in.
2025, Kolkata



The পরিচর্যা (*To Tend*) series by Soma Das emphasises the vital role that women play in maintaining the harmony in a household. While many of her other works focus on marriage and homemaking as a team effort, each work in this series highlights a singular woman carrying out a particular act of nurturing. This work depicts a woman watering the plants with a hose.

পরিচর্যা I (*To Tend I*)
Gouache on Lokta paper and cotton cloth
pasted on board
14 5/8 x 10 5/8 in.
2025, Kolkata





This work depicts a peaceful morning scene where a woman sets up a system to keep the tulsi (holy basil) plant watered in the summer. The artist takes inspiration from a sight she grew up seeing – her paternal grandmother who had the same ritual. Soma Das often uses scrap fabric in her works, reusing pieces of cloth collected and saved by her mother.

শান্তসকাল IV (*A Peaceful Morning IV*)
Gouache on Lokta paper pasted on canvas
17 3/8 x 12 in.
2025, Kolkata



This work depicts a couple cleaning rice and makes use of found objects – particularly a rice packet from Italy collected from the time when Das participated in the International Artists Residency Exchange Program at Kira A. Princess of Prussia Foundation in 2022. Soma Das often engages in the habit of holding on to paraphernalia from her daily life to incorporate them in her works.

স্মৃতির পাতা থেকে II (From the Pages of Memory II)
Gouache on Lokta paper, and found object pasted on canvas
16 3/4 x 18 7/8 in.
2025, Kolkata



Detail
Endless Journey
 Gouache and Lokta paper
 pasted on canvas
 48 1/4 x 35 1/2 in.
 2025, Kolkata





In *Tigress*, a dark-skinned woman sits inside a surreal mouth-landscape, playfully tugging the tail of a tiger drawn from Mughal miniature traditions. The vibrant surroundings reflect an emotional, erotic, and primal intimacy between body and nature. This work explores the untamed sensuality within, where desire and wilderness meet in a dreamlike rhythm.

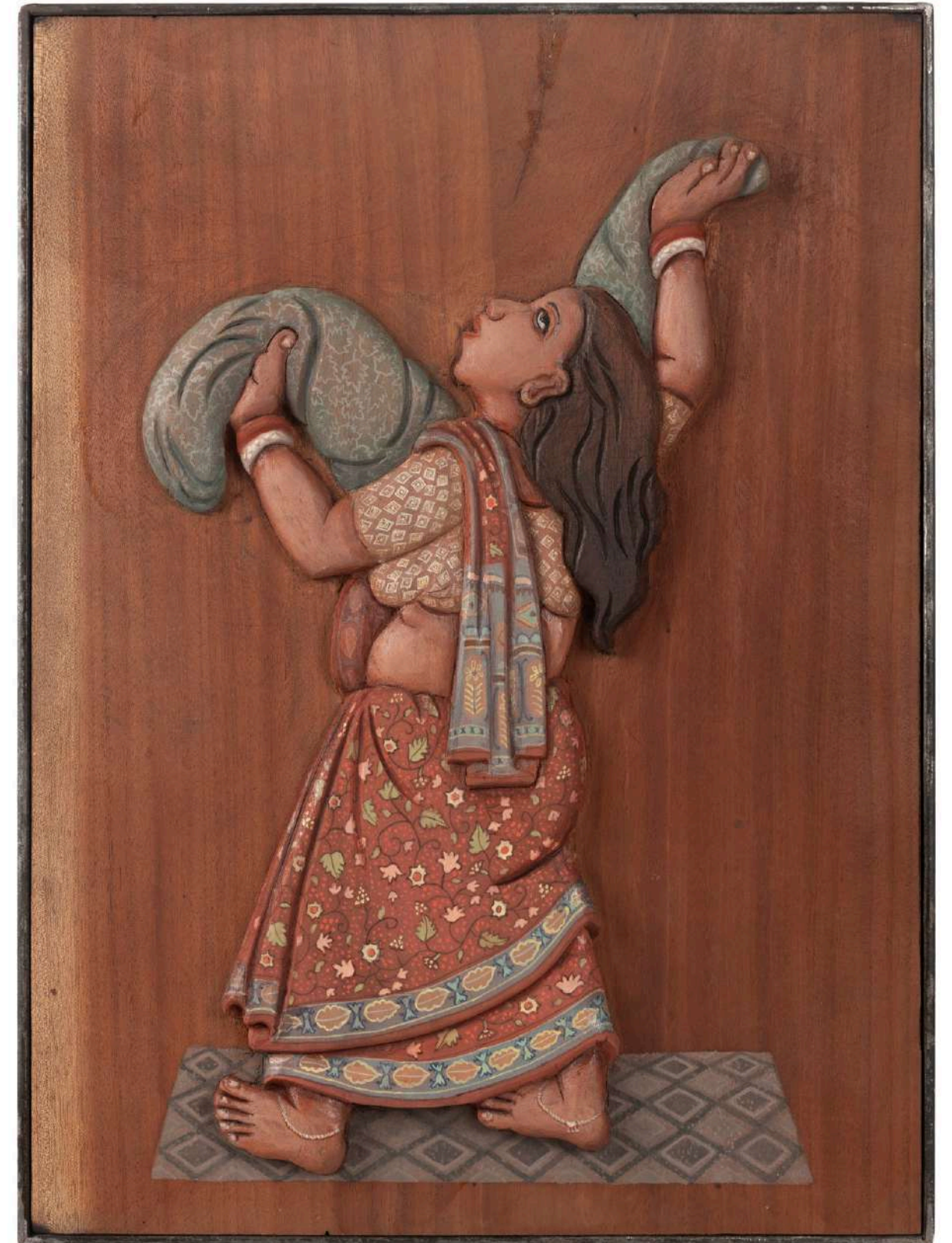
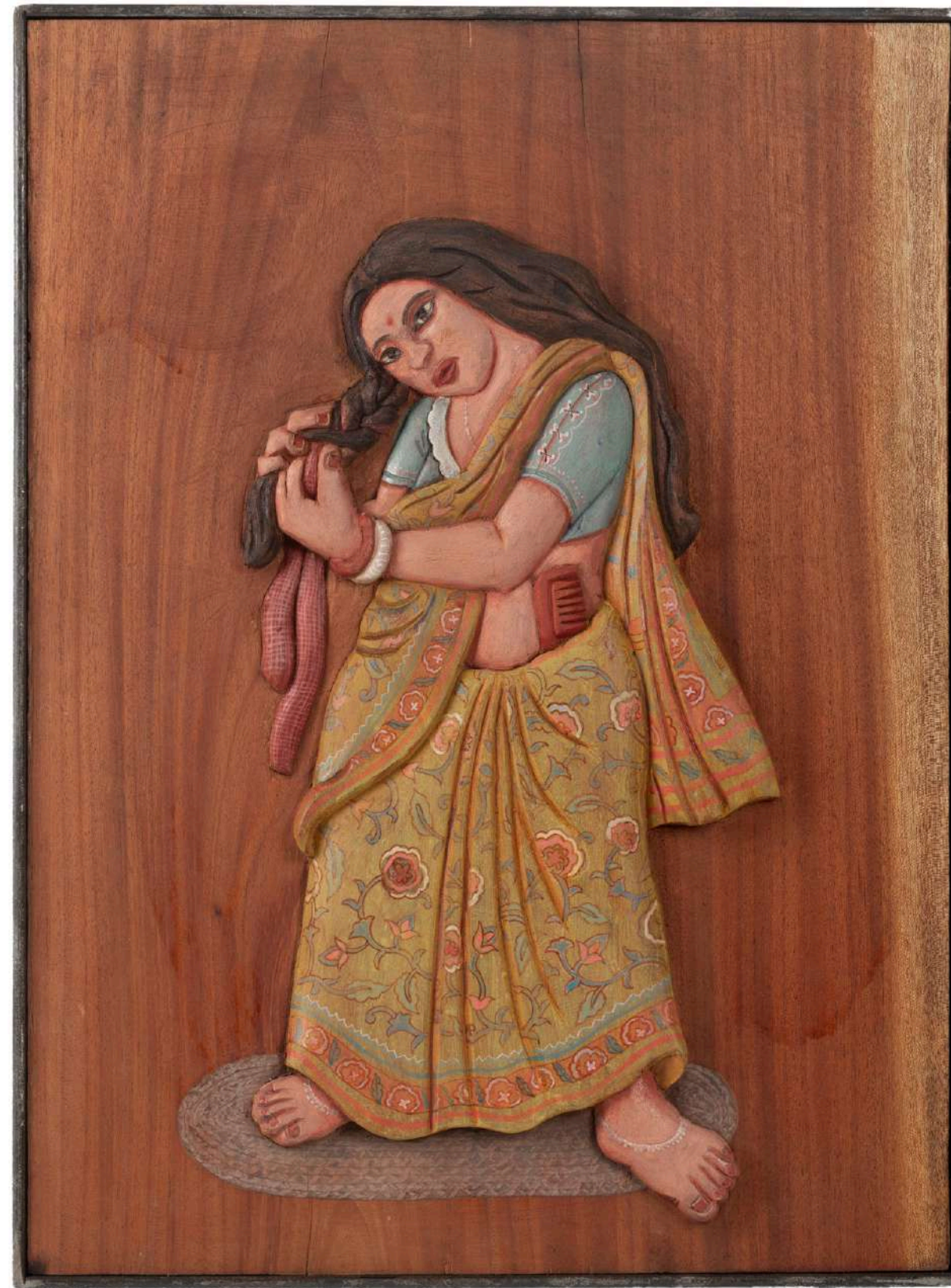
Tigress
Watercolour and gouache on
handmade paper pasted on canvas
10 x 10 1/8 x 3/4 in.
2025, Kolkata



Installation view
নিত্য-নূতন: *The New in the Everyday*
Emami Art, Kolkata
2026

These painted reliefs, which seem to have been inspired by the popular art of painted wood relief, shows an ordinary woman's daily life. Soma Das's womanly perspective reveals a woman's intimate space, pointing to the relationship between gender and work in the household.

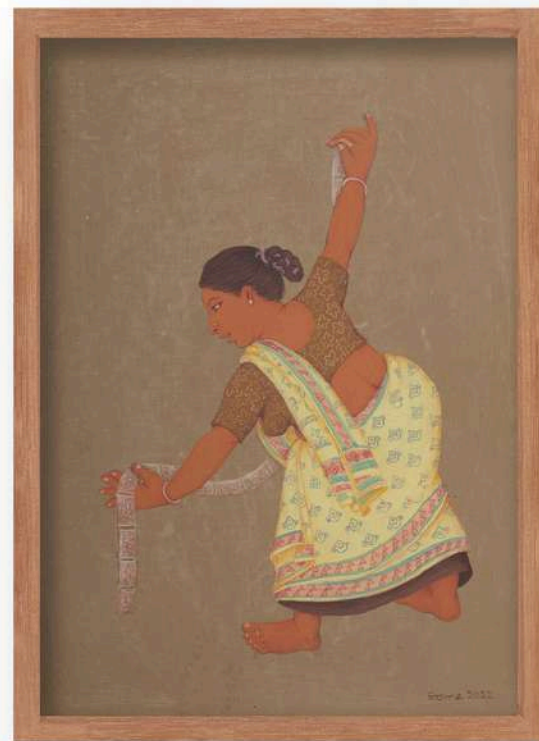
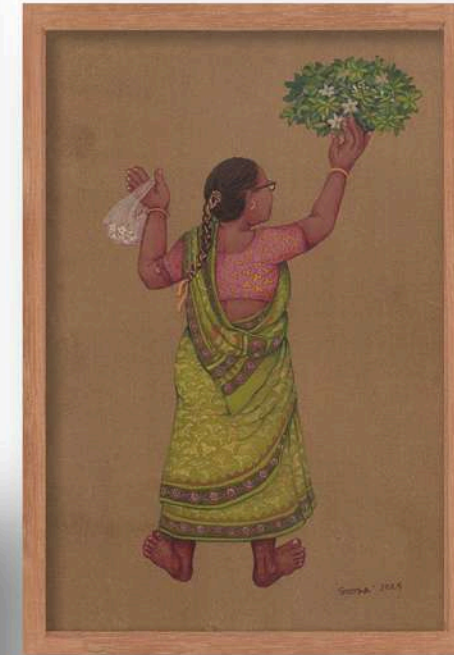
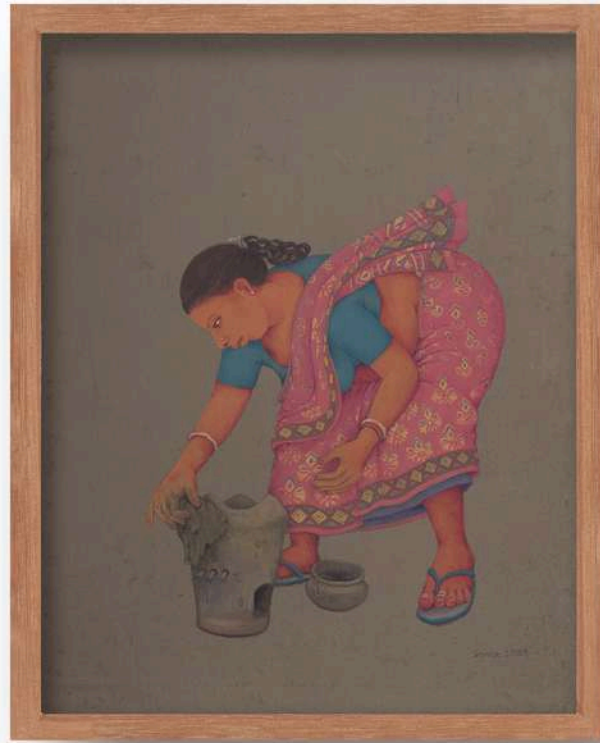
*Dainik Byastota 1 and
Dainik Byastota 2*
Iron, acrylic and coffee
stain on wooden relief
20 3/8 x 15 1/4 x 1 5/8 in.
2025, Kolkata



Soma Das often draws inspiration from the regular sights she witnessed growing up, translating fond memories into painted relief as part of her experimentation with a variety of mediums. This work is a depiction of the family she grew up in, where her father was a carpenter, and she and her mother helped him in certain aspects of his work, such as polishing the bed frames that he made. This spirit of collaboration continues in her work to this day.

Shaking Shopping
Oil and enamel paint
on iron sheet
26 x 35 in.
2025, Kolkata





Matir Kachhakachhi (Close to the ground)
 Gouache and soil on Lokta paper pasted on board
 2022 - 2024, Kolkata



Ghorkonna, Gouache on wood, 3.50 x 3.50 x 0.39 in. each approx., 2024, Kolkata



This work draws inspiration from a scene from Das's life – her parents-in-law as seen in their rented apartment in Delhi. The woman prepares food on a boti – a curved blade traditionally used to cut fruits, vegetables, and meat in Bengali households, while the man reads the newspaper. Das finds inspiration in the great traditions of Indian miniature painting but instead of courtly themes found in miniatures, common people and their struggles, hopes, and desires appear as themes of her work.

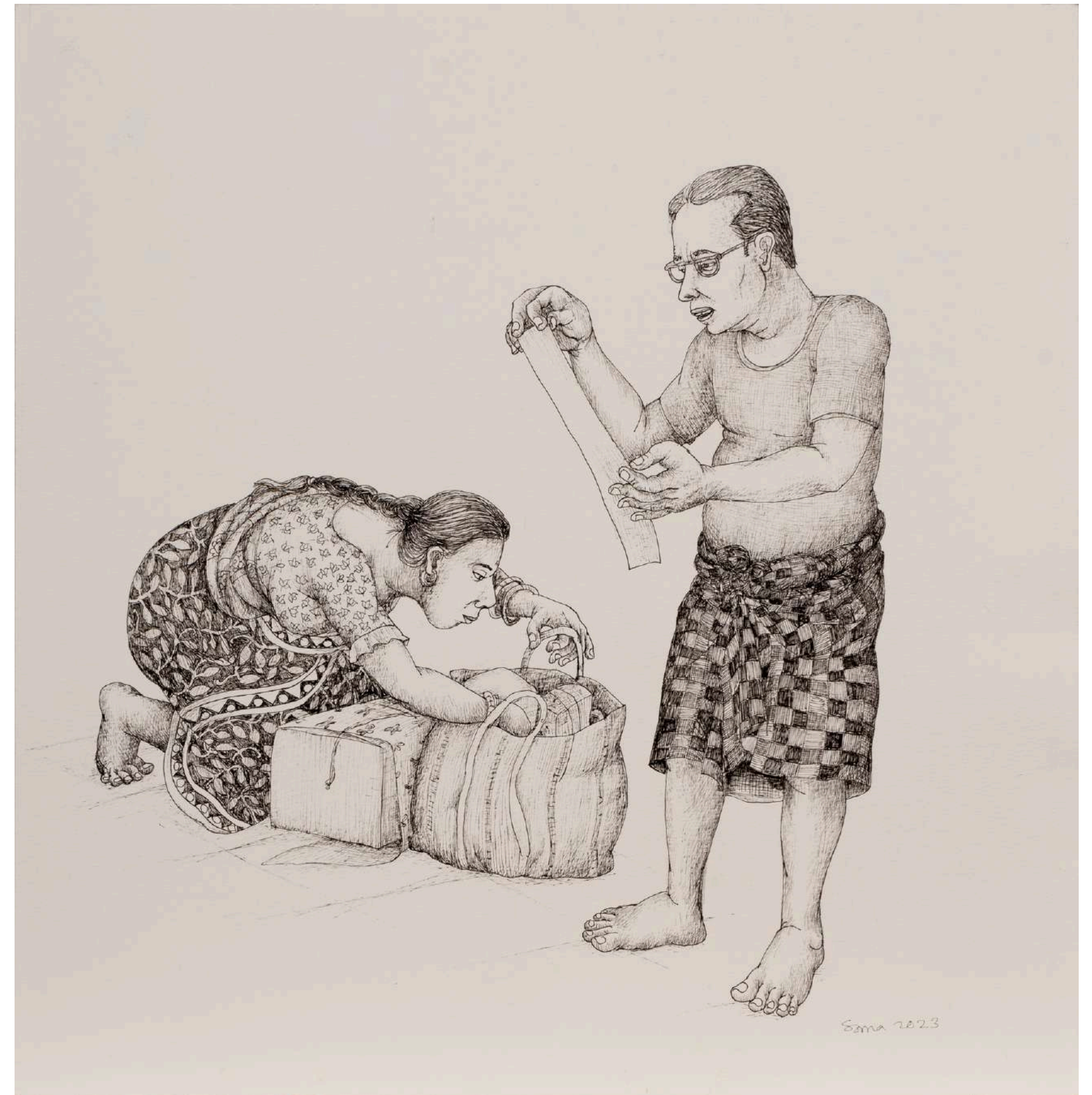
Confined Lives II
Gouache on Lokta paper
pasted on canvas
16 x 20 5/8 in.
2023, Kolkata



In this work, the couple takes a brief break in the middle of shifting homes, from one renting place to another. They squat on the group, sipping tea and eating snacks, as their entire life stands stacked around them in bundles, bags, and buckets. It focuses on little acts of love amid hard work.

Made for Each Other I
Ink on paper
14 3/4 x 12 3/4 in.
2023, Kolkata

In this work, the husband checks a long shopping list while the wife rummages through the shopping bags, presumably to check if they have all the things they need.



Made for Each Other III
Ink on paper
15 x 14 3/4 in.
2023, Kolkata



Screenshot from *Memory 2*
Watercolour pencil on paper
21.65 X 29.53 inches
2023

Screenshot from Memory 1
Watercolour pencil on paper
21.65 X 29.53 inches
2023



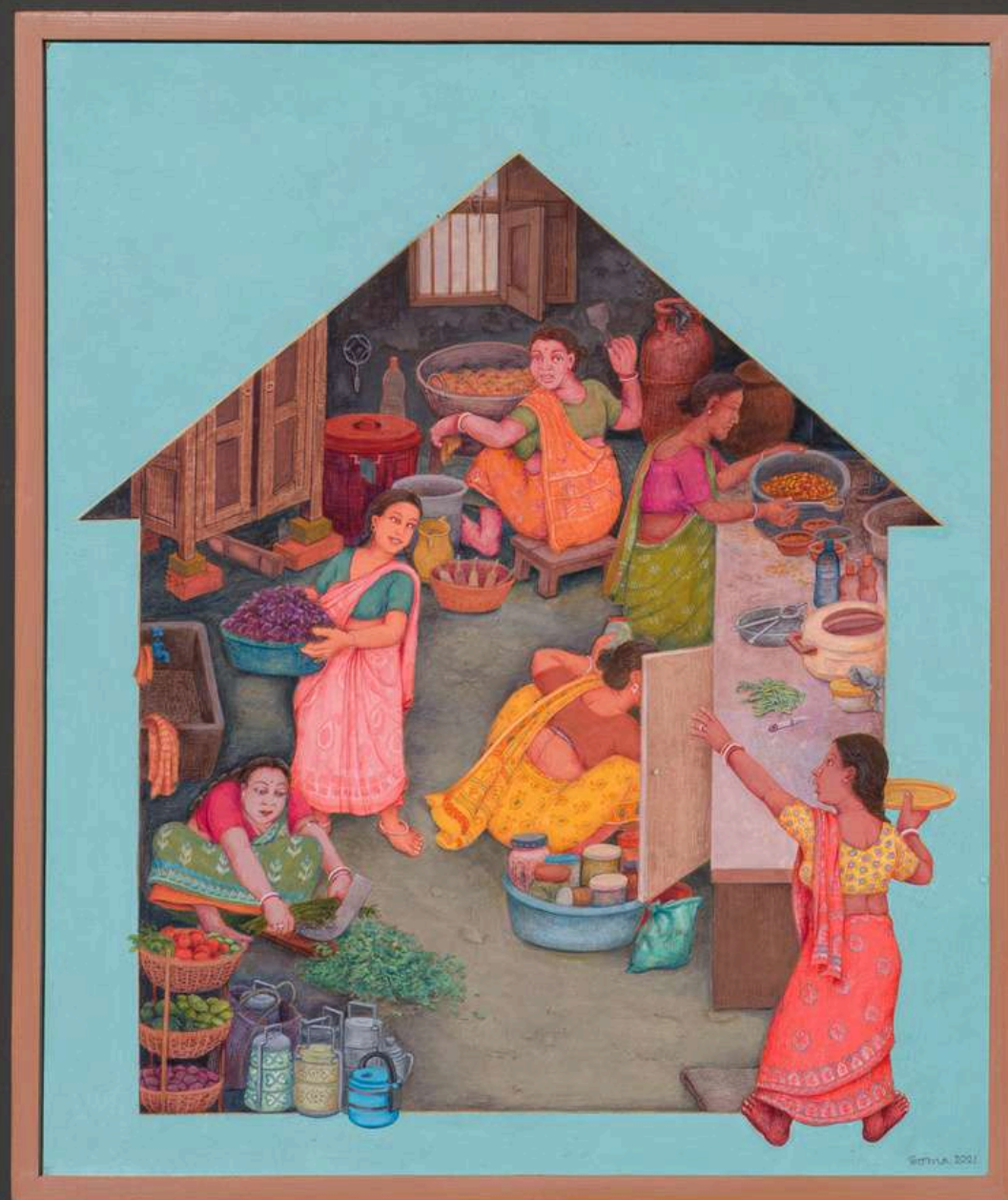


Installation view
Between the Self and Silhouettes
Emami Art, Kolkata
2022

This painting is from a series she worked on during the COVID-19 pandemic years, depicting a familiar scene from the terraces of two adjacent buildings. The women and children of the family spend their afternoons in these spaces – two of them hold teacups, while the children either play or study in the sun. They peer over the edge calling out to the travelling hawkers who move through the lanes between the houses, selling vegetables and other essentials.

Confined Lives I
Gouache on Lokta paper
pasted on canvas
20 1/8 x 16 3/4 in.
2022, Kolkata





Installation view
 নিত্য-নূতন: *The New in the Everyday*
 Emami Art, Kolkata
 2026



This work by Soma Das takes inspiration from her experience in Santiniketan where she ate at a homely women-led commercial kitchen. The work depicts six women preparing food in tandem, working together in something they are used to doing, and making an honest earning out of it.

রোজগেরেগিনি (*The Earning Housewives*)
Gouache on cotton cloth pasted on canvas
20 1/8 x 16 1/2 in.
2021, Kolkata





Portraits
Ink on paper
2021, Kolkata



Detail
Stupa - II
Gouache on Lokta paper
pasted on canvas
29 x 23 in.
2020, Kolkata



The Courtyard
Gouache and natural clay on Lokta
paper pasted on canvas
35 x 49 in.
2020, Kolkata



Towards Destination III, Gouache on Lokta paper pasted on canvas, 23 x 49 in., 2020, Kolkata

Installation view
Between the Self and Silhouettes
Emami Art, Kolkata
2022





Born in 1979 in Kolkata, West Bengal, Soma Das is a contemporary Indian artist who graduated with a First Class in her BVA and MFA in Painting from Rabindra Bharati University, Kolkata in 2007 and 2009 respectively.

Das's solo exhibitions include *নিত্য - নূতন: The New in the Everyday*, Emami Art, Kolkata, 2026; and *Different Facets of Life*, Gallery Nakshatra, Kolkata, 2010. Notable group exhibitions include *Vichitra/বিচিত্র* organised by Emami Art and Kolkata Centre for Creativity in collaboration with Bihar Museum, Patna, 2026; a duo show *Between Selves and Silhouettes* curated by Adip Dutta, Emami Art, Kolkata, 2022; and *Bengal Nama*, curated by Ina Puri at Bikaner House, New Delhi and presented by Gallery Art Positive, 2022.

Her works have been part of CIMA Awards Show at CIMA Gallery, Kolkata, 2015 and 2017; Summer Show, CIMA Gallery, Kolkata, 2015 and 2017; Lalit Kala Academy, Kolkata, 2015; Emami Chisel Art Gallery, Kolkata, 2015; Annual Exhibition Rajya Charukala Parshad, Kolkata, 2014 - 2017; Annual Art Exhibition, Emami Chisel Art Gallery, Kolkata, 2014 -2017; a group show organised by Sensorium at Abanindranath Tagore Gallery, ICCR, Kolkata, 2014 and 2015; Lalit Kala Akademi Regional Centre, Kolkata, 2015 and 2016; a group show organised by CRY, 2014; Annual Exhibition, Birla Academy of Art and Culture, Kolkata, 2010, 2013, and 2015, among several others. Soma Das's works were presented by Emami Art at Art Mumbai 2025, 2024; IAF EDI+IONS Hyderabad 2025; India Art Fair 2025, 2024, 2023, 2022, and 2020; and Art Düsseldorf 2024.

She participated in the residency program at the Hampi Art Labs for the October – December (2024) session, and in the International Artists Residency Exchange Program at Kira A. Princess of Prussia Foundation (Germany, Italy) in collaboration with Emami Art in 2022. She was awarded a Certificate of Merit by the Academy of Fine Arts in 2009 and the State Academy Award in 2008.

Soma Das lives and works 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.

