

# EMAMI ART

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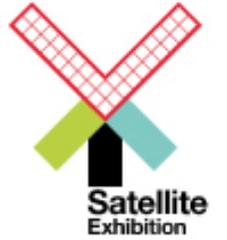
## **Kochi Biennale Foundation presents**

**Prasanta Sahu:**  
**Anatomy of a Vegetable -**  
Ruminations on fragile ecosystems

**Satellite Exhibitions**  
December 13, 2022  
to April 10, 2023

Daily 10:00am to 7:00pm

**Mocha Art Café,** Jew Town  
Synagogue Lane, Kochi



## Prasanta Sahu - *Anatomy of a Vegetable* : Ruminations on fragile ecosystems

Prasanta Sahu is a chronicler of the Indian hinterland. Sahu, who hails from a family of farmers, is the first in his family to have a university education studying electrical engineering before finding his way into art. Now teaching art at his alma mater Kala Bhavana, he has, for more than a decade, turned the lens of his practice towards retelling the rural saga. But rather than an overtly politicised critique of the agrarian crisis, the artist adopts a sensitive, poetic retelling from an insider perspective. Based on the experiences of his upbringing, skillfully interspersed with a documentation methodology that espouses analytical, empirical data collection, Sahu actively engages with the politics of representation and truths hidden from mainstream discourse. Rural life connects, on the one hand, to the persistent questions of planetary crises and ecology and, on the other, agriculture and production as a contested social space constituted by a series of links between local farmers and the broader network of the food economy. Yet, Sahu's works strongly propose farming as a way of life, finding an immense capacity for love and joy amidst suffering, capturing intimate, tender observations.

*The drumstick tree and other stories* consist of a number of drawings on paper and found objects arranged carefully into a tableau of humdrum, symbiotic relationships between humans and non-humans. Some examples include illustrations of green leafy vegetables foraged by the village women when they have nothing to eat but which they cook with care and love. Or farmers with their livestock. Even a traditional wooden tool used to make twine for fishing nets (Sahu helped his grandfather make ropes in his childhood) that a farmer gave him because it is now redundant finds its way into this set. The drawing that lends its name to this installation is that of a drumstick (moringa) tree carefully tended by the farmer's households because every part is edible. These fragments of observations interact and overlap, creating a poignant yet powerful narrative of a marginalised community.

The installation, *Mapping Craters*, is the result of a three years relationship that Sahu has forged with Lakhi Ram, a landless farmer from Amdahara village close to Santiniketan, where Sahu resides. This collection of sixty plaster moulds taken directly from the crops produced by the farmer through different seasons, and his traditional farming tools, are displayed on a rusty iron table like a tray of archaeological specimens in a museum. Although this unique method of documentation of taking moulds appears straightforward and uncomplicated, nevertheless, their figurative familiarity soon gives way to a sense of spectral unreality and a suggestion of profound disquiet—each ghostly crater emphasising the emptiness of hunger for those who toil. This work was part of a museum show at Palazzo Madama in Turin, Italy, in 2021 and is being shown for the first time in India.

In the third work, *Tilling Lessons*, a video, Sahu uses the interview format of newsreels interspersed with a recording of himself learning/relearning how to till the soil. However, he creates a visual disturbance by placing the video behind half-open window blinds. Combined with the farmers' unrecognisable, slowed-down, distorted voices, the work counteracts the simple logic of documentary reality, highlighting the subaltern and the considerable absence of knowledge and sympathy that separates 'them' from 'us' who encounter the 'other' through mediated reality.

Each work here is an insightful rumination of everyday rural life – objects, memories and desires intertwined with an undeniable bio-political matrix. By connecting the personal and intimate to the political and immediate, Prasanta Sahu offers a complex, nuanced portrayal of the power relationship and interdependence between the neglected farming community and a modern, capitalist food economy.

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Prasanta Sahu  
**Brief Bio**

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Prasanta Sahu (b. 1968) began his professional training with a Diploma in Electrical Engineering (1987) before pursuing formal art education at Kala Bhavana, Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan. He completed his Bachelor of Fine Arts in Painting in 1998 and subsequently earned a Master's degree in Painting from the Faculty of Fine Arts, Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, in 2000.

Sahu's artistic practice has been presented through several significant solo exhibitions, including *The Geometry of Ordinary Lives*, Emami Art, Kolkata (2025); *Anatomy of a Vegetable: Ruminations on Fragile Ecosystems*, shown as part of the Kochi-Muziris Biennale 2022–23 Invited Satellite Exhibition at Mocha Art Café, Kochi; *Suburban Shadows*, Emami Art, Kolkata (2020); and *Blueprint of a City*, Kalakriti Art Gallery, Hyderabad (2016).

He has exhibited extensively in India and internationally. Selected group exhibitions include *Obsessions, Possessions*, 5th Coventry Biennial, Coventry, Warwickshire, England (2025–26); *No Words*, Egg Gallery, South Korea (2025 – 26); *Material as Metaphors: A Dialogue of Art Forms*, National Gallery of Modern Art, Kolkata (2025); *Dialogues Across Time: Indian Contemporary and Folk Art*, Indian Museum in collaboration with the Basu Foundation (2025); *All That Is Hidden: Mapping Departures in Landscape, Terrains and Geographies*, Emami Art, Kolkata (2024); *The Politics of Paper*, Emami Art, Kolkata (2022); *Disruptive Confluences*, Palazzo Madama, Museo Civico d'Arte Antica, Torino (2021); *Multitudes and Assemblages*, Accademia Albertina di Belle Arti di Torino (2021); and *Constellations*, Bihar Museum, Patna (2018), among others.

Sahu's work has also been presented at major national and international art fairs, including India Art Fair, New Delhi (2022, 2023, 2025, 2026); Art Mumbai, Mumbai (2024, 2025); Hub India—Maximum Minimum at Artissima International Art Fair of Contemporary Art, Torino (2021); Blue India at Art Asia Art Fair, Korea (2018); Postcards at Busan International Art Fair, Korea (2017); and the International Art Fair, Rome (2007). In addition, he has participated in several national and international art camps and workshops across several countries, including Armenia, Thailand, Russia, the United States, and Switzerland.

Alongside his artistic practice, Sahu has maintained an active engagement with art pedagogy. He has been invited as visiting faculty and for lecture-demonstrations at institutions including the Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts, Burapha University, Thailand; the University of Dhaka, Bangladesh; and the Sarojini Naidu School of Fine Arts and Communication, University of Hyderabad.

Since 2001, Sahu has been teaching in the Department of Painting at Kala Bhavana (Faculty of Fine Art), Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan.

Prasanta Sahu lives and works in Santiniketan, India.



Prasanta Sahu

***The drumstick tree & other stories***

Watercolour, ink, graphite, Tracing and  
Nepali paper, plaster and found objects

150 drawings + found objects

Size variable

2022

(Detail from proposed installation)



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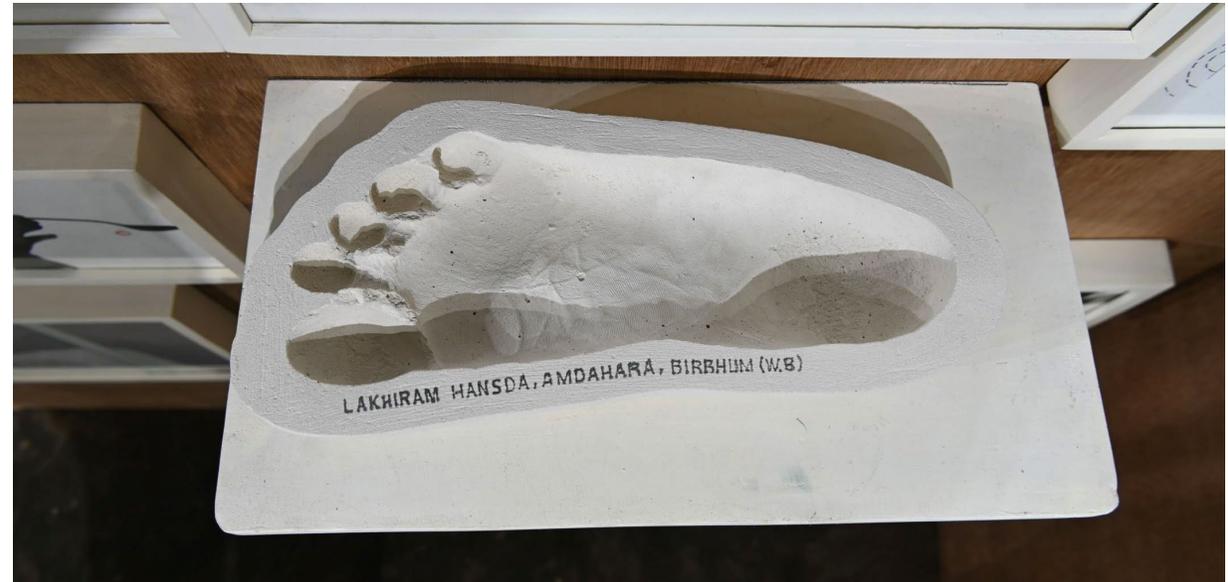
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(Detail from proposed installation)





Prasanta Sahu. *Anatomy of a Vegetable – Ruminations on fragile ecosystems* 13th of December 2022 to the 10th of April 2023. Emami Art @Kochi Muziris Biennale 2022-23 Satellite exhibition



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### Mapping Craters II

Year-long documentation of  
a landless farmer from Amdahara  
Birbhum, West Bengal

2021-22

Installation

Plaster of Paris objects approx. 60 pcs.

(Size: variable)

Repurposed iron table 14'-0" Length x 2'-

4" Width x 30" Height,

Pamphlet 12" x 8" (Folded) 24" x 16"

(open)

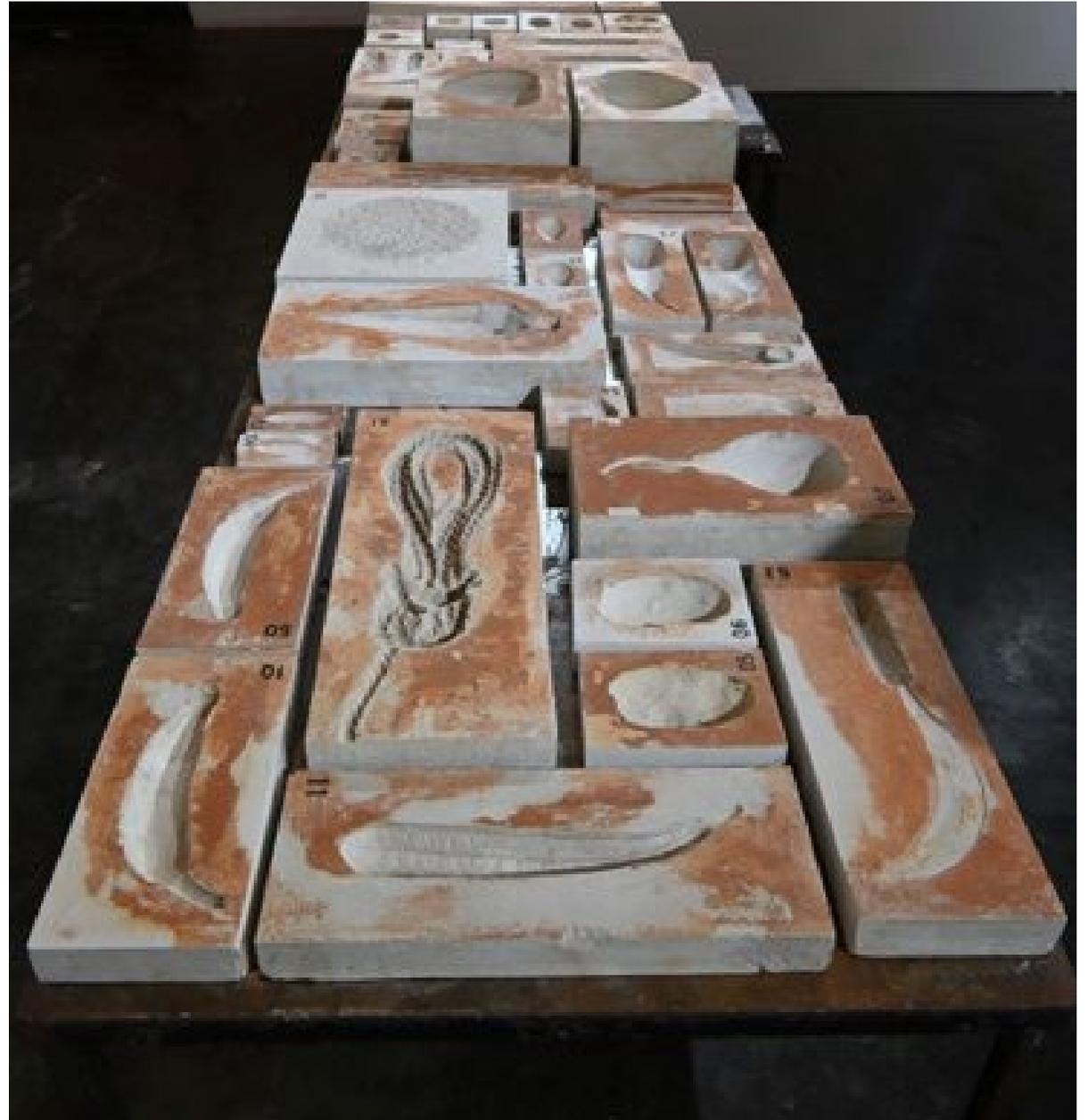
Repurposed iron stand for pamphlets 14"

length x 12'width x 20" height

Edition: 2

Credit: Lakhiram Hansda , Basanti Hansda,  
Kusum Hansda, Mangla Hansda, Shukhi  
Mardi.





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## Prasanta Sahu

### *Tilling Lessons*

Video Duration 27 min 49 sec loop

Window blind

Size variable

2022

(Detail from proposed video installation)

Video credit

Camera :Ruma Chaudhury

Editing: Prasanta Sahu and Ruma Chaudhury

Project assistant: Mantu Bhandari

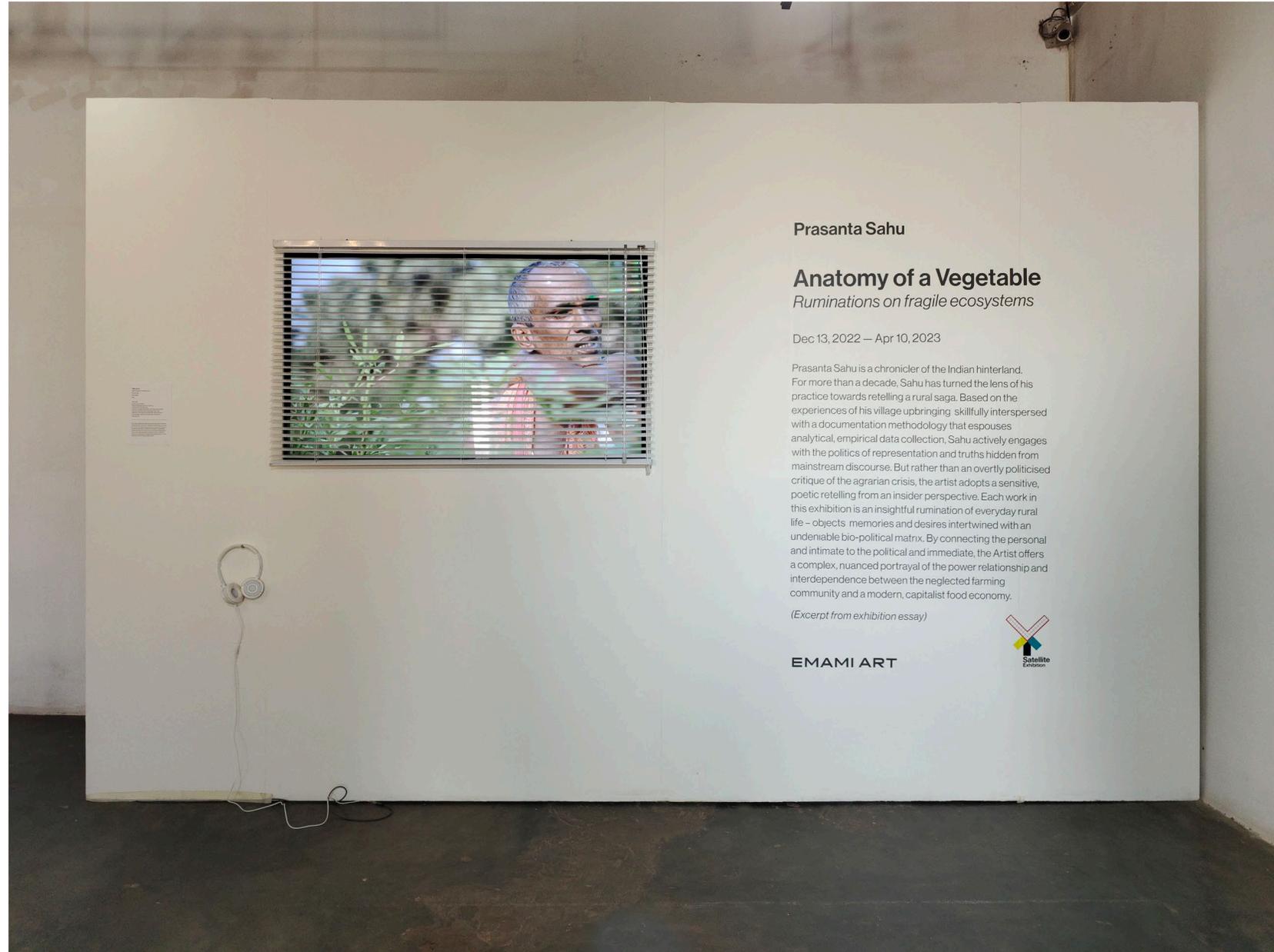
Interviews: Subhodip Mondal(Badhuria), Krishnachandra Mondal

(Badhuria) , Mangal Bhandari (Gobindaopala),Tapan Saha

(Kalaharpur),Nimai Bhandari (Gobindaopala)

Madhuri Bhandari (Gobindaopala), Hridoy Roy ( Gobindaopala),

Chandana Roy (Gobindaopala)



Prasanta Sahu

### **Anatomy of a Vegetable**

*Ruminations on fragile ecosystems*

Dec 13, 2022 – Apr 10, 2023

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*(Excerpt from exhibition essay)*

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# MAP



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Synagogue Lane, Kochi

EMAMI ART



KOCHI  
BIENNALE  
FOUNDATION



KOCHI-  
MUZIRIS  
BIENNALE  
2022



# EMAMI ART

## ABOUT THE GALLERY

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Emami Art is a contemporary art gallery based in Kolkata, India, established in 2017. The gallery represents a carefully selected roster of emerging, mid-career, and established artists whose practices engage with critical questions of history, materiality, and contemporary experience in South Asia, while contributing meaningfully to global art discourse.

Emami Art develops a rigorous exhibition programme of solo and group presentations, complemented by sustained participation in national and international art fairs and collaborative platforms. With a consistent focus on practices from eastern and north-eastern India, the gallery plays an active role in advancing historically underrepresented regional narratives within museum, curatorial, and scholarly contexts. Works by artists represented by Emami Art are held in important public and private collections in India and internationally, including major museums and foundations.

Beyond exhibitions and market-facing activity, the gallery invests in long-term artistic development through annual open calls and awards that support research, production, and first-time institutional presentation. Emami Art also produces commissioned and curated projects beyond the gallery space, notably the annual Emami Art Experimental Film Festival, which foregrounds experimental moving-image practices and contributes to expanded notions of contemporary art within museum and archival frameworks.

Through mentorship, residencies, and sustained professional engagement, Emami Art maintains a practice-led approach to representation, prioritising depth, continuity, and scholarly relevance. Positioned at the intersection of artistic production, market engagement, and critical exchange, the gallery continues to build meaningful relationships across regional, national and international contexts.