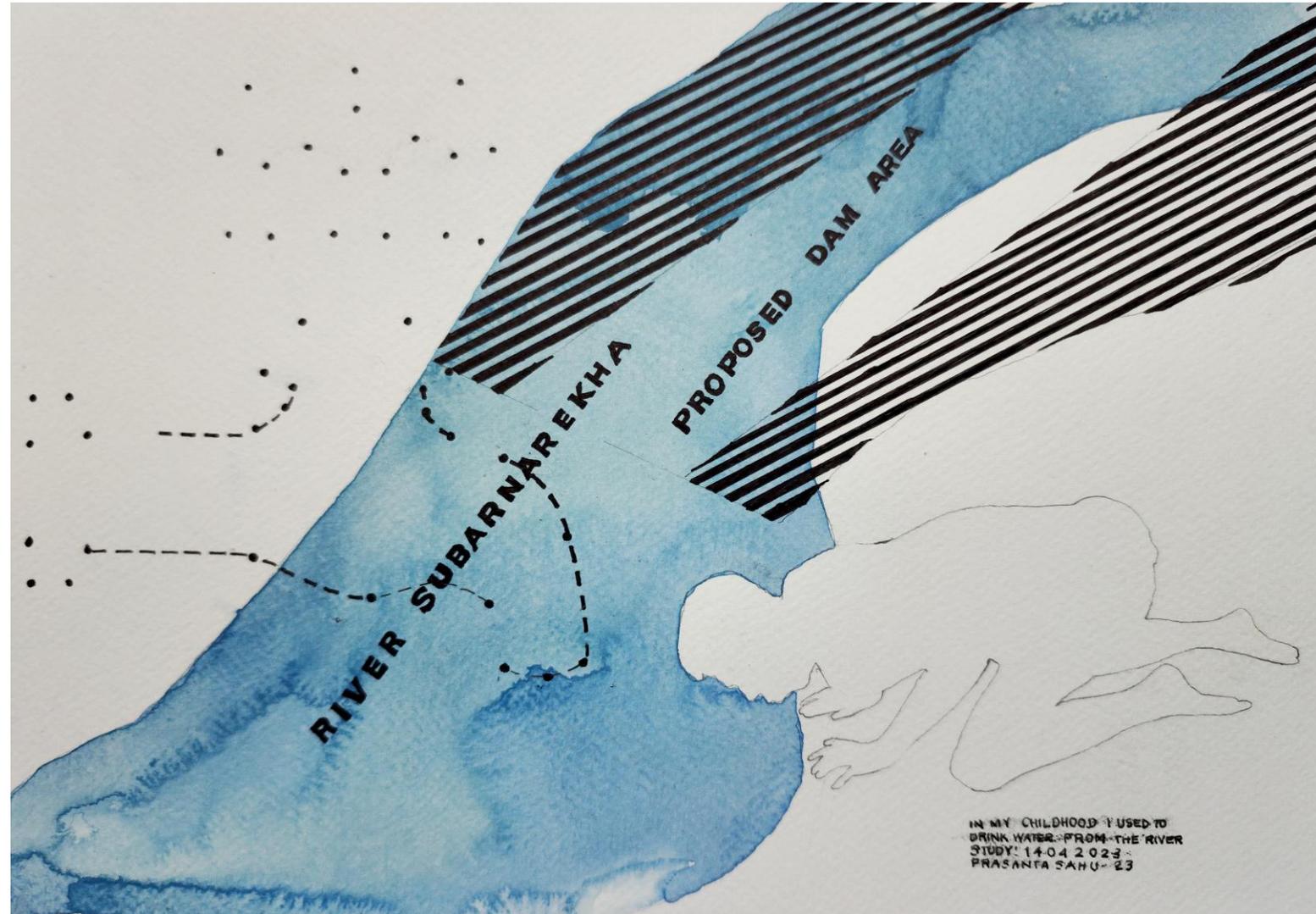


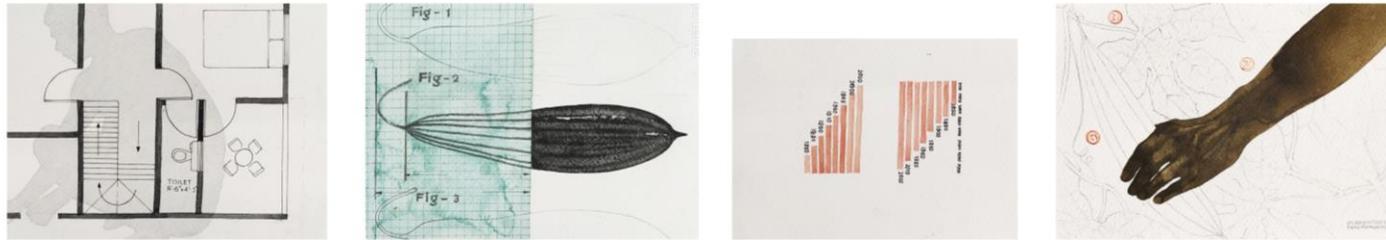
PRASANTA SAHU

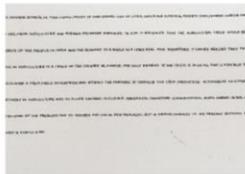
Selected works
2019-2023

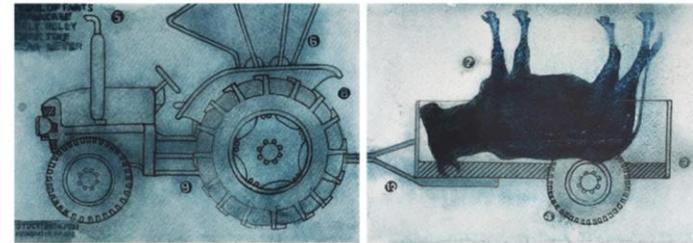
Drawings and Paintings
Sculpture
Photography
Installation
Sketch Books and Writings



In my childhood I used to drink water from the river Study # 14042023 Watercolour & graphite on paper 29.5 cm x 21 cm. 2023




MOST OF THE WORK
IS DONE MANUALLY
AND THE TOOLS
ARE SMALL. THE
FARMING ARE FOR



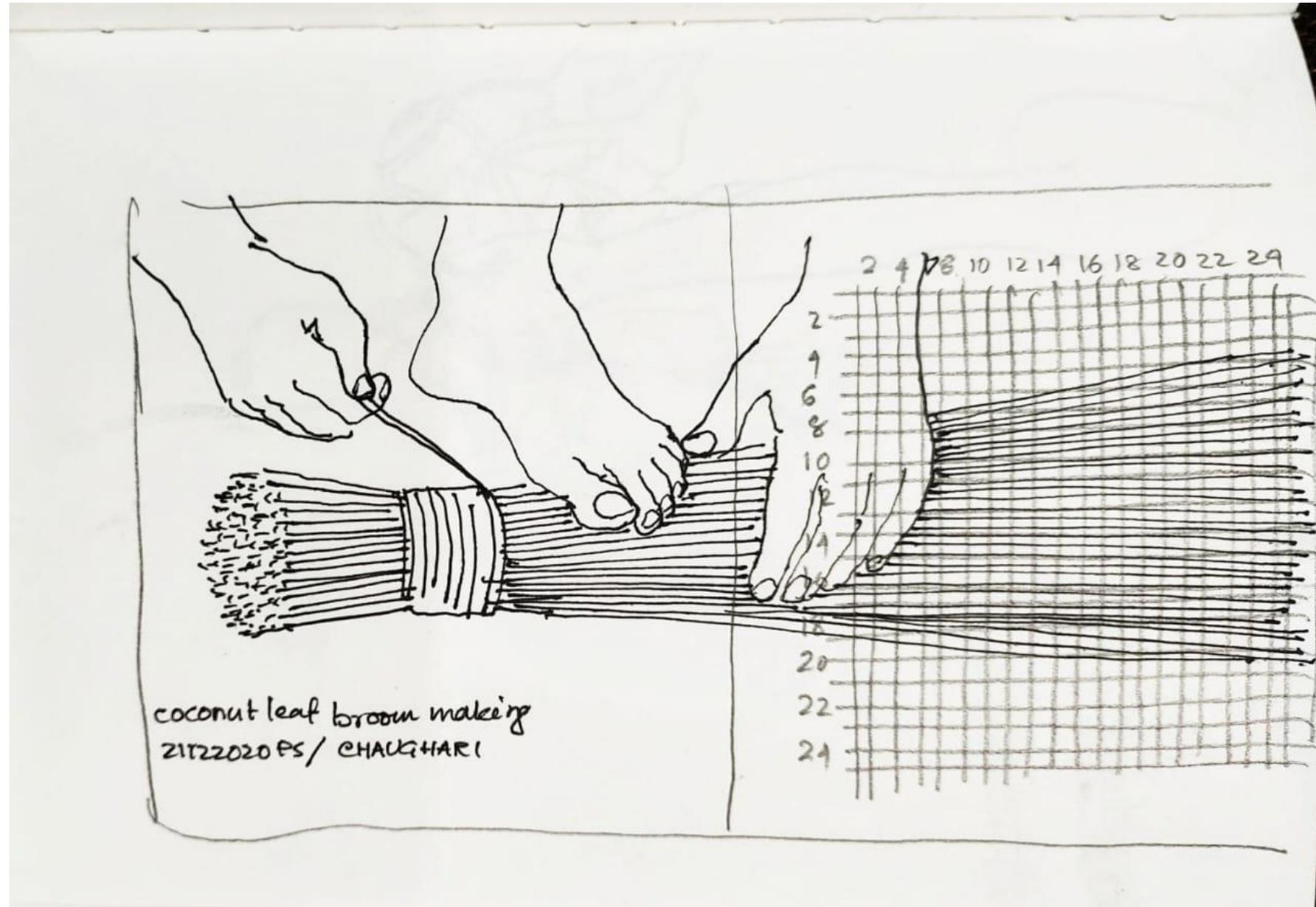
Background

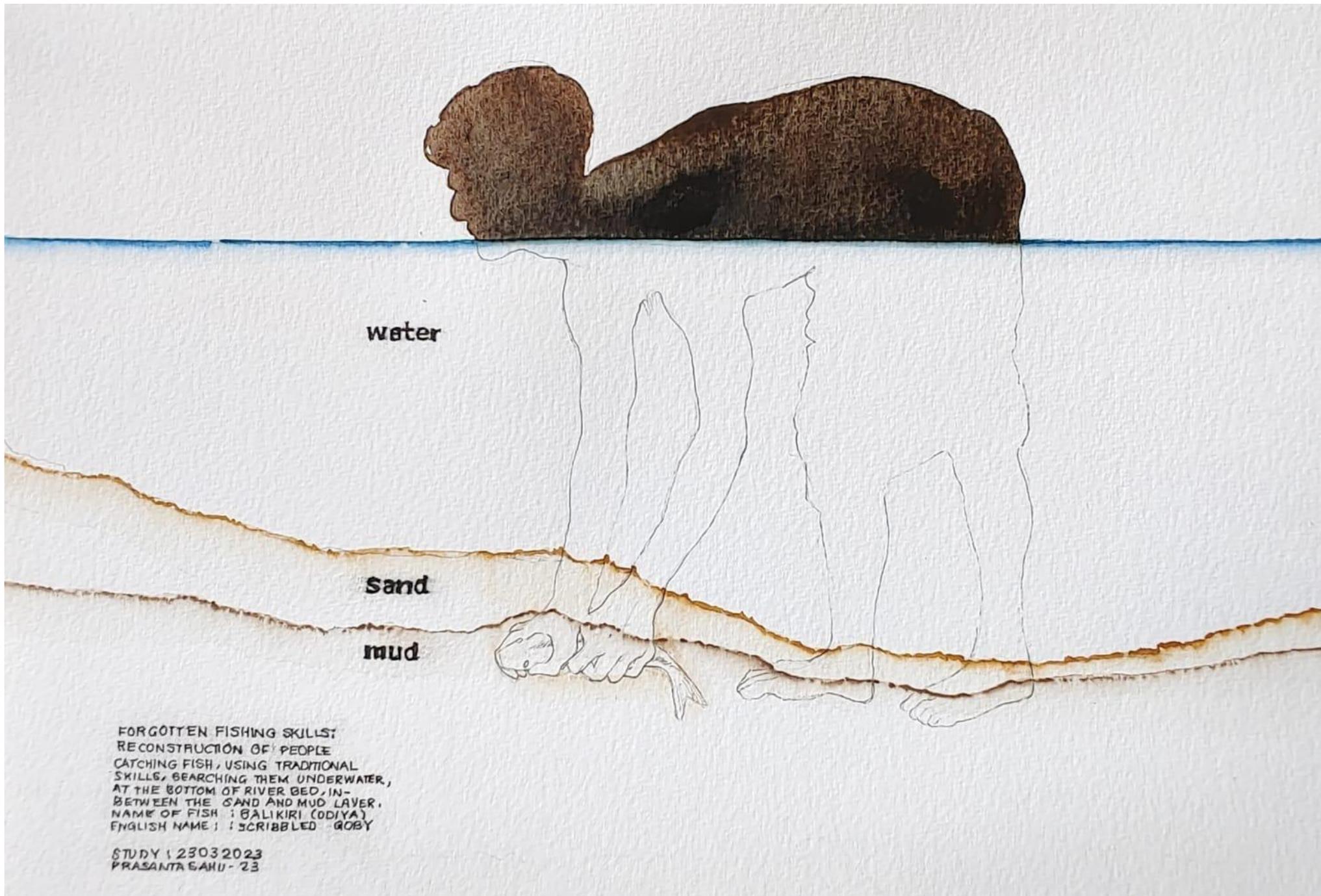
‘My practice straddles paintings, drawings, installation sculptures and photography. Asserting all the cross-cultural influences of my life, such as - my small-town upbringing and love for my ancestral village Chaughari in Odisha, watching and assisting my father make survey maps, the technical experience gained from my initial training in electrical engineering (1983-88); a later experience of advertisement and hoarding paintings; artistic skill and critical approach learned in my years studying in art school- five of which were spent in Santiniketan for a BFA degree in Painting (1993-98) and the other two acquiring a master degree from MSU Vadodara (1998-2000); a diasporic ‘insider-outsider’ vision as a migrant; as well as my experience as a pedagogue (I have been teaching at my alma mater Kala Bhavana since 2001). Hence for the last two decades that I have lived in Santiniketan, this small town and surrounding villages, its people, livelihood etc., continue to have an essential role in my practice. All these eclectic experiences add complex layers to a visual praxis rooted in documentation, research and personal ruminations.’

‘In light of such diverse experiences, how do artists negotiate their artistic language? In my case, the answer is a conscious repositioning of the self. Early in my career, I had started to imbibe the role of an investigator, surveyor and documenter. I painstakingly document the lives of people hailing from small towns and villages, whether in the context of relocation to urban spaces or with the idea of mapping changes experienced within the situational context of one’s familiar space. I also juxtapose images from different areas. This execution of contrasting and reworked realities is a deliberate stand as it is a gateway to a multi-layered reading of my works. In a way, **I re-construct investigations of events; alongside collated data, I introduce experiential reinterpretation, hence moving from the real to the poetic.**’ I view my **practice as investigation and my locus as inspiration.** Some core areas of concern in my practice are : Memory as a collective identity, rural to urban migration as a record of changing identity, Oral-histories as record, Diary entry as a trace of memories, Photo/video-documentation as process of speculative inquiry and Painting and Drawing as poetic investigation and record keeping.

**'I draw because I want to understand...
it is my way to think, learn, and re-evaluate
how to perceive things beyond the visible
to include that which is invisible or
unknown.'**

We remain unaware of things which are very much present silently that only become apparent with deeper insight or research. When I revisit a visual object or situation, I see ten different things. Every time there is a new perspective to understand and appreciate, which leads to other narratives. I like to analyse and juxtapose diverse information and standpoints and combine them in my work. My approach towards my subject is always non-linear and open-ended.'





water

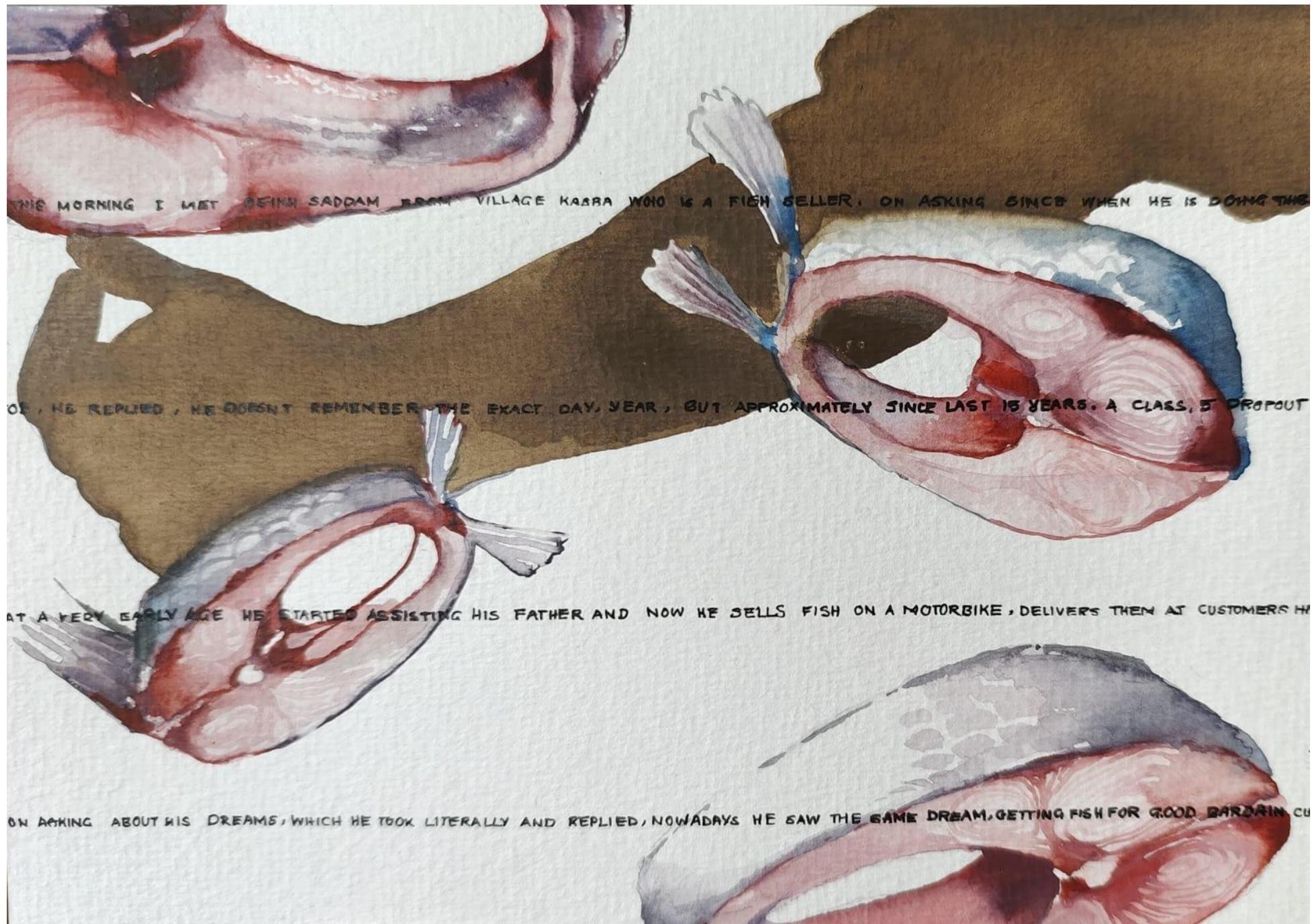
sand

mud

FORGOTTEN FISHING SKILLS:
RECONSTRUCTION OF PEOPLE
CATCHING FISH, USING TRADITIONAL
SKILLS, SEARCHING THEM UNDERWATER,
AT THE BOTTOM OF RIVER BED, IN-
BETWEEN THE SAND AND MUD LAYER.
NAME OF FISH : BALIKIRI (ODIYA)
ENGLISH NAME : SCRIBBLED GOBY

STUDY : 23032023
PRASANTA SAHU - 23

Study: 23032023
Watercolour & graphite on paper
29.5 cm x 21 cm.
2023



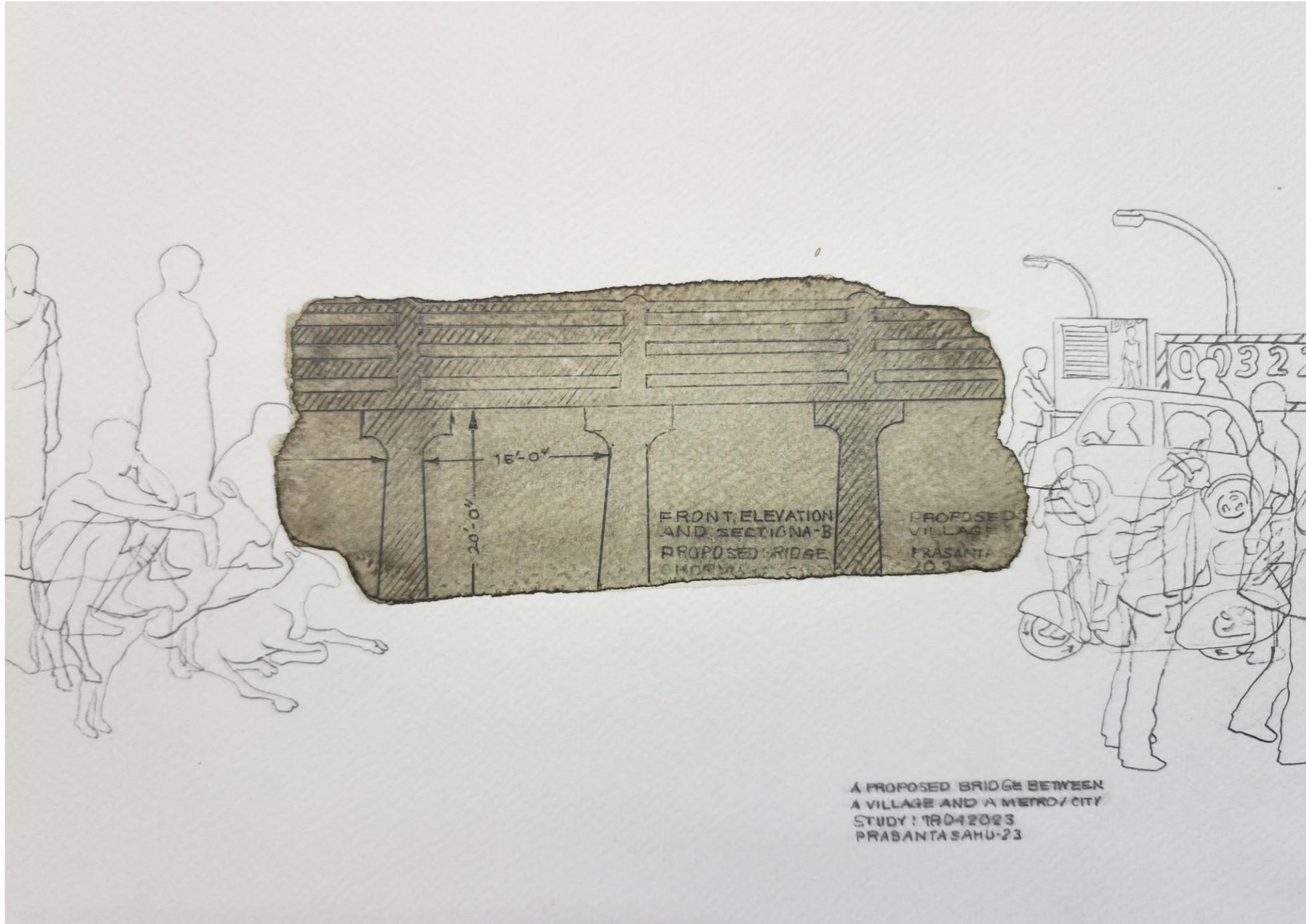
A Fisherman's dream

Study: 21032023

Watercolour & graphite on paper

29.5 cm x 21 cm.

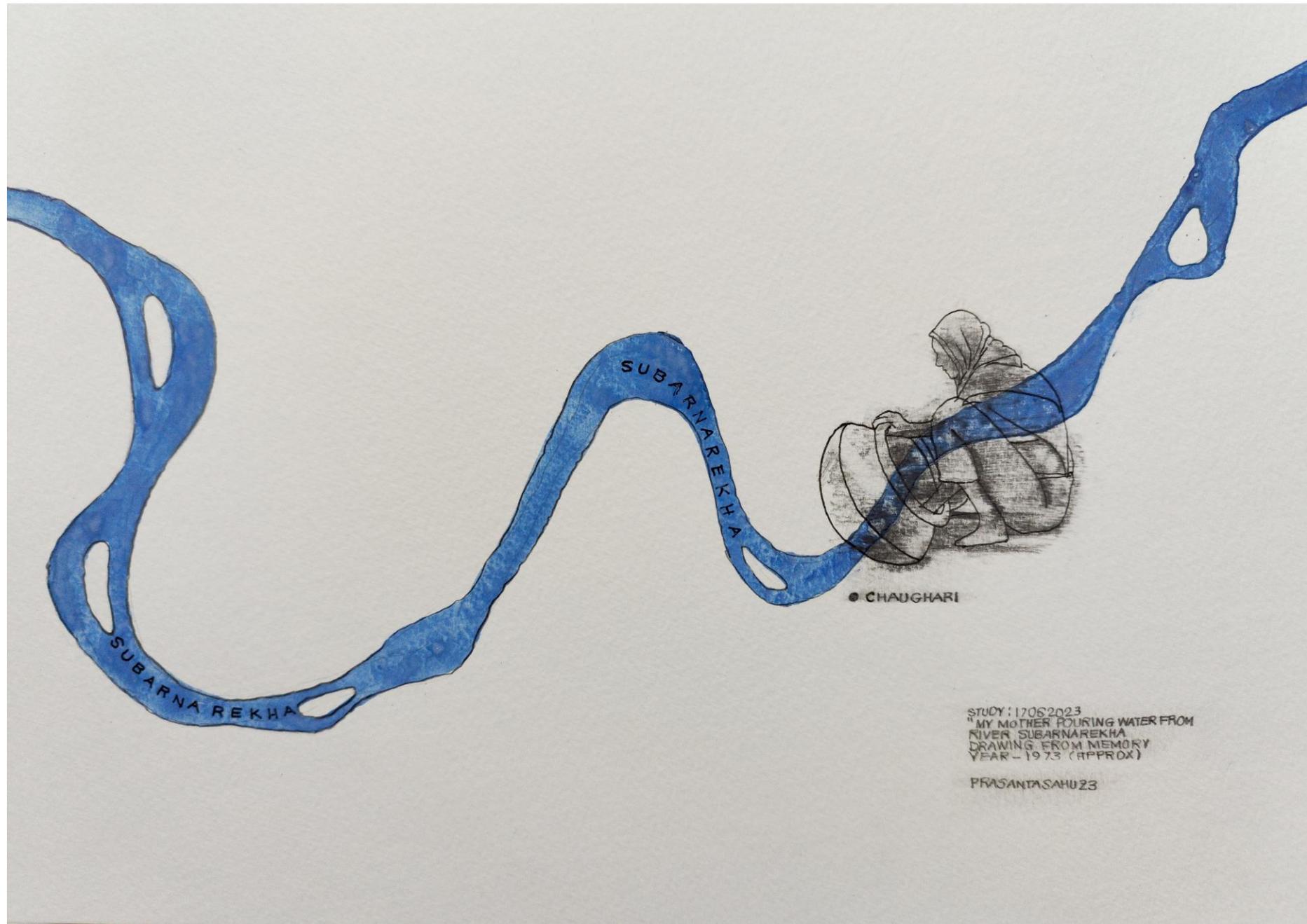
2023



A Proposed Bridge Between a Village and a Metro/City
Study # 18042023
Watercolour & graphite on paper
29.5 cm x 21 cm.
2023

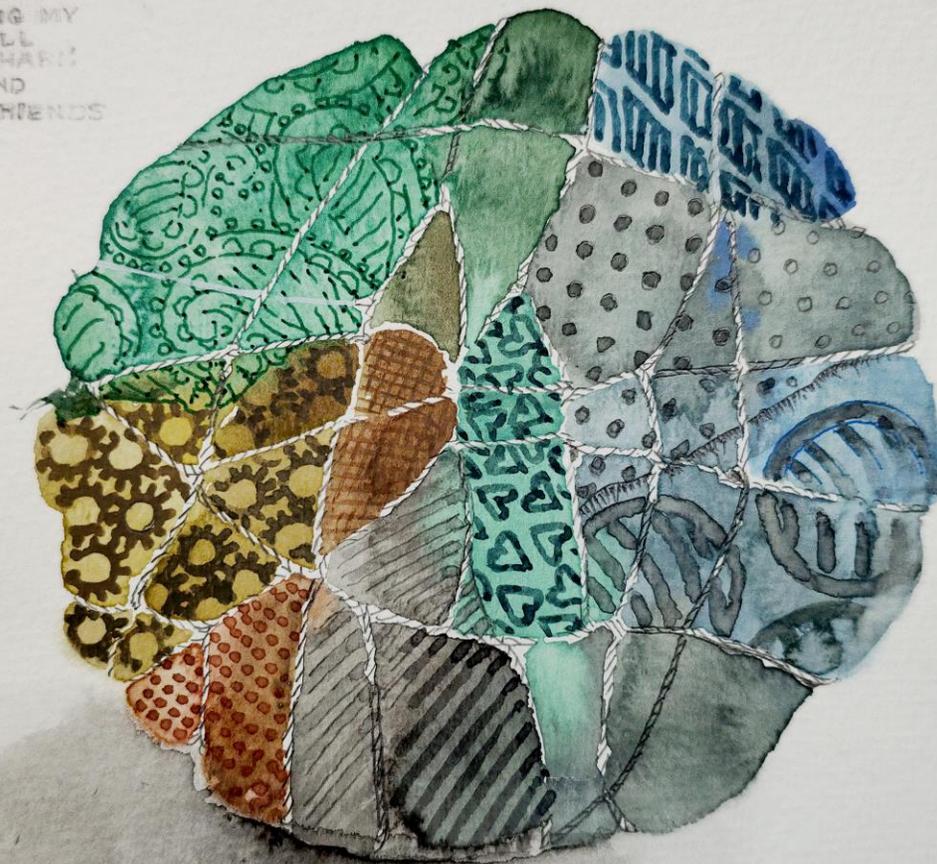
A PROPOSED BRIDGE BETWEEN
A VILLAGE AND A METRO/CITY
STUDY : 18042023
PRASANTA SAHU-23

'Based on my experiences and upbringing in a small village in coastal Odisha, I believe in a poetic retelling from an insider perspective. I spent the first ten years of my life in this tiny village called Chaughari, which can't be located easily on Google map, far away from the city, utterly detached from the outer world, especially during the monsoon seasons. My parents and brother still live there and farm the land. Although I left the village for an education and now have lived away for decades, this is an indelible part of my identity.'



HANDMADE BALL MADE WITH
WASTE COTTON RAGS .
I DONT KNOW EXACTLY FROM
WHERE I GOT THE IDEA AND
SKILLS TO MAKE IT DURING MY
CHILDHOOD DAYS IN A SMALL
VILLAGE NAMED CHAUGHATI
BUT BOTH THE MAKING AND
PLAYING WITH IT WITH FRIENDS
WAS SO ENGAGING AND
AMUSING

STUDY :14052023
PRASANTA SAMU-23



Handmade ball with waste cotton rags....
Study#14052023
Watercolour & graphite on paper
2023

Born into a rural household in Odisha, where my father still tills the land he was born in, as the eldest son, I have migrated to a semi urban space, to study, to earn and to support my family. This is the system that holds most Indian family structures together.

I am linked to my roots. I am uprooted from my roots. What then is my identity ?

Identity, for me is collective memory that I carry within , that I add to. It is also my way of connecting to the 'others', the 'neglected' , the 'fringe dwellers'. I find the struggles of the lower middle class as my anchor point, as my link to the land my father tills in the heat of the Indian summer.

The artist's father (standing) with other villagers



The rural urban linkage:

My current series of works, especially drawings are based on the ecosystem of urban and rural spaces. I don't know how many of us are aware about the ~~unseen~~ invisible connection between these two spaces.

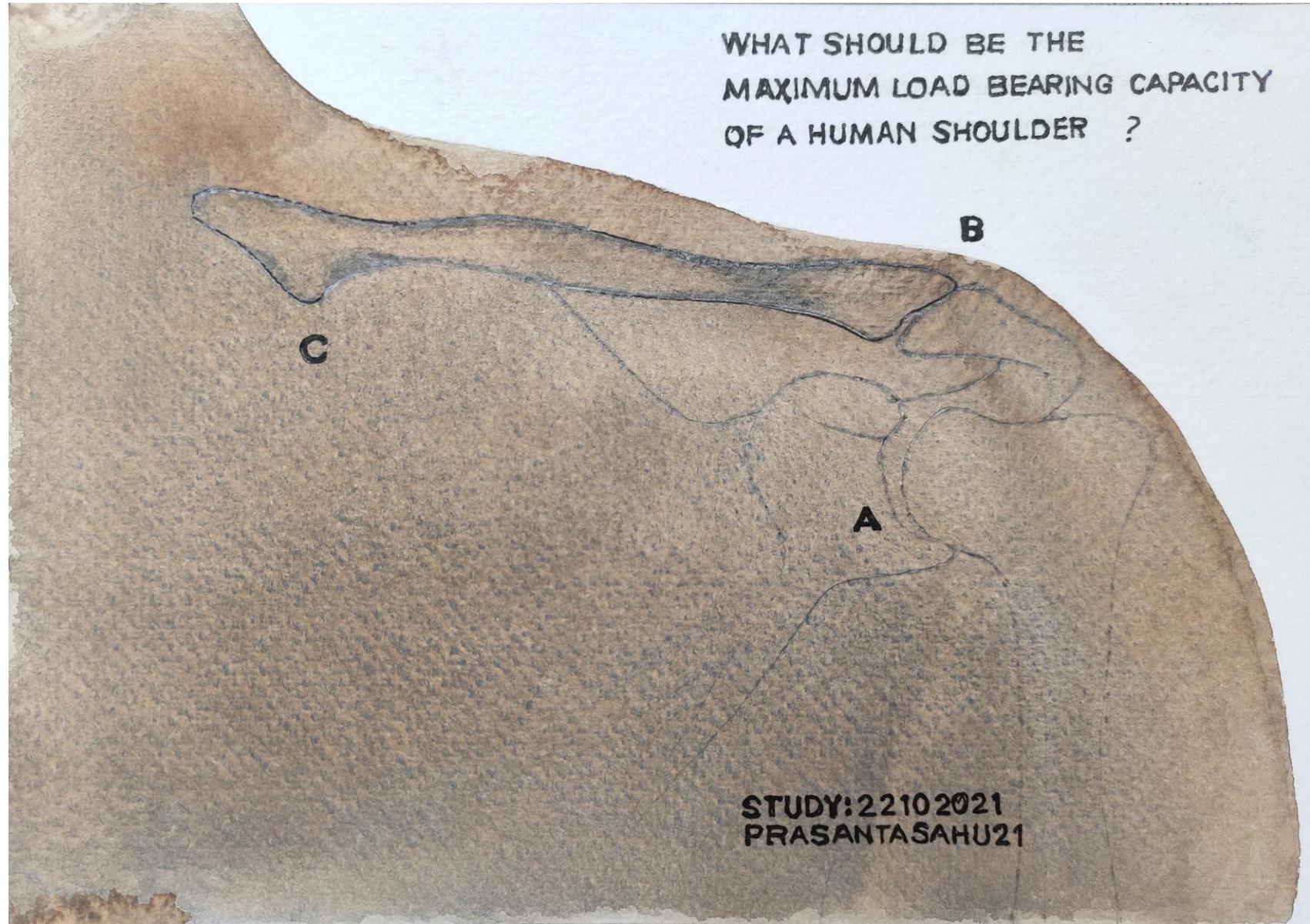
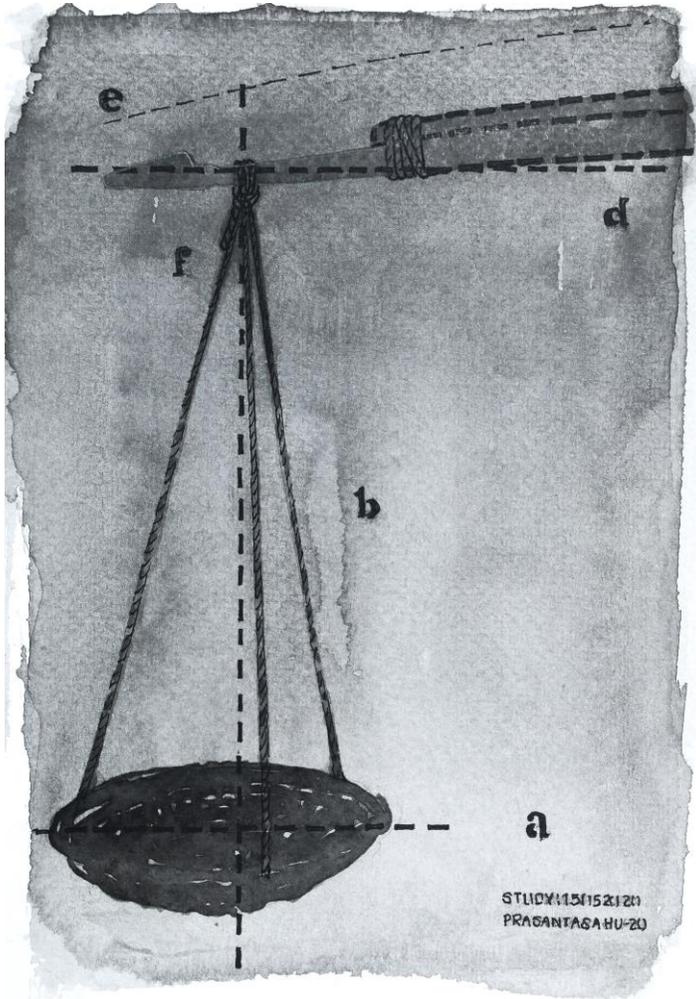
I feel ^{urban} people are not sensitive enough to recognise, notice the contribution of rural India.
③ The role that rural-urban linkage has on urban development has overlooked, ~~and~~

~~and~~ In my childhood days, I remember the exchange/barter system where a cloth merchant use to sell his cloths by taking rice from a household, where the scope of recognising the individual from whom you are getting food is possible. In post-industrial time and with the development of trade, transport, co-operatives, which works as a middleman between these two ends. The service provider and the consumer.



‘For several years now, I have forged relationships with landless tribal farmers, labourers, villagers, tea stall owners in and around Santiniketan, where I have lived now for several decades. They have generously allowed me into their lives and to photo-document them at their work. I also interact with them and interview them. Their lives appear in my work in drawings and paintings. Situations recreate details of a gnarled body; a scarred hand; a hunched back rendered in great details in a painting.’

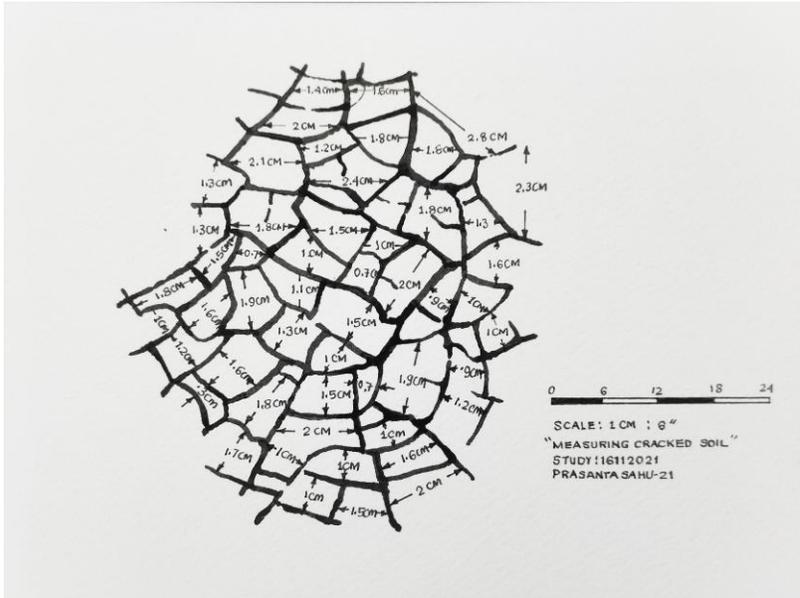


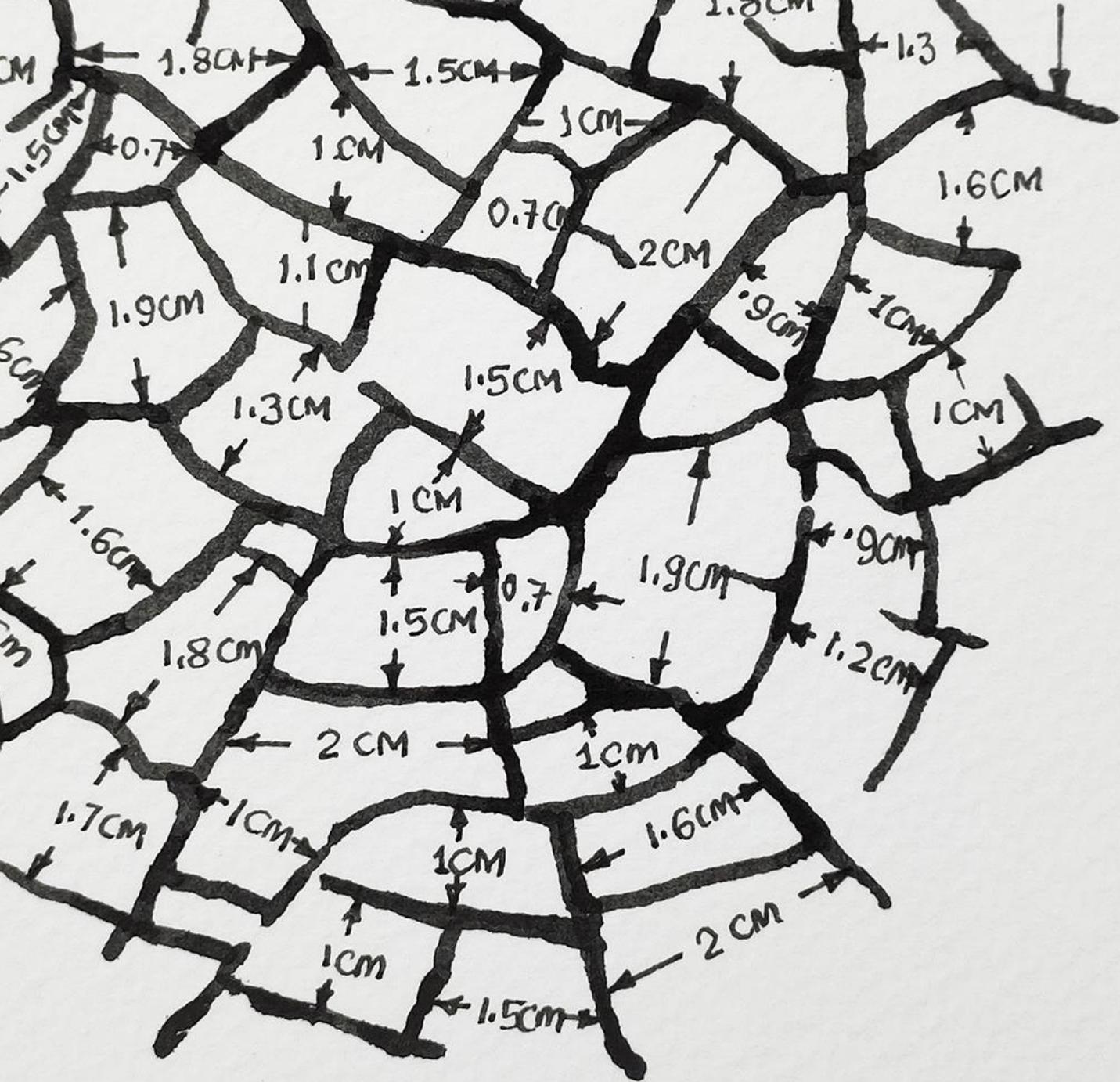


**I TOUCH EVERY SINGLE PIECE OF MY CROP
DO YOU FEEL IT WHEN YOU CONSUME ?**

Study: 30092020
Acrylic, ink and graphite
on Fabriano paper
30 x 22 in.
2020





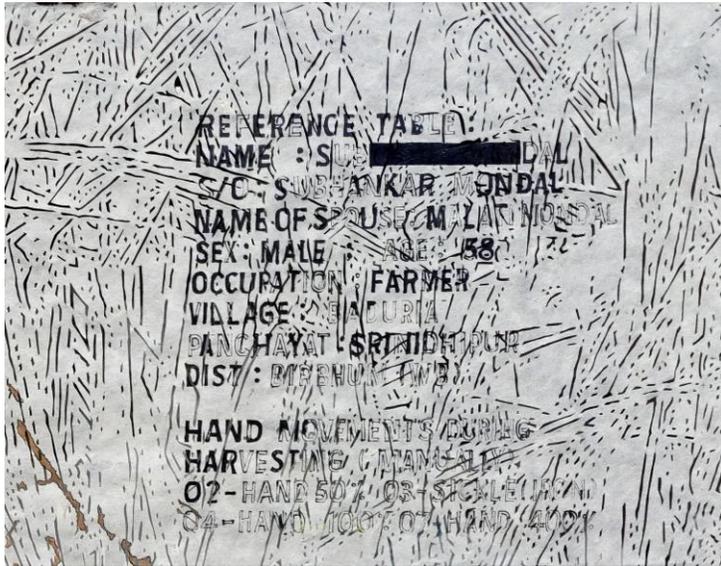


SCALE: 1 CM : 6"

"MEASURING CRACKED SOIL"

STUDY: 16112021

PRASANTA SAHU-21



'I like to use data tables which enumerate details of the person/persons/group/object/situation being surveyed. In a format similar to a government census, I collect data about each person I interact with, such as name, sex, religion, profession, educational qualification, marital status, number of children, income per annum etc. In most of the works, I paint this data in a faded, semi-legible, yet unavoidable manner. Purposefully replacing the traditionally used artist's signature with the name, age, and profession of some unknown labourers or farmer is a subaltern repositioning within the hegemony of power play.'

22062023:

Data art: Data/information/text/details of something has also an identity, ~~to~~ carry image. We are living in a time where only visual without information/data is considered incomplete in many sections, many ~~costly~~ disciplines. The front page of an application form, a passport size photograph with a long text carrying details of the applicant, when passes through many tables in an office and ~~finally~~ when finally processed with a stamp like 'Rejected' or 'Accepted', tells a complete story.

A portrait is of course a visual data gives information about colour, age, gender, class, identity, a lot of things but a portrait with other data like Name----, village----, Fathers name----, occupation----, and few other details tells more specific things about the person.

A part of my practice where I use data like a some self-tracked information and I try to transform them into an aesthetic form. In some areas in real life humans are defined by text and numbers. I believe in a similar way when I use numbers, reference table, text along with images that allows me to deal with a more complex matters of the present world.

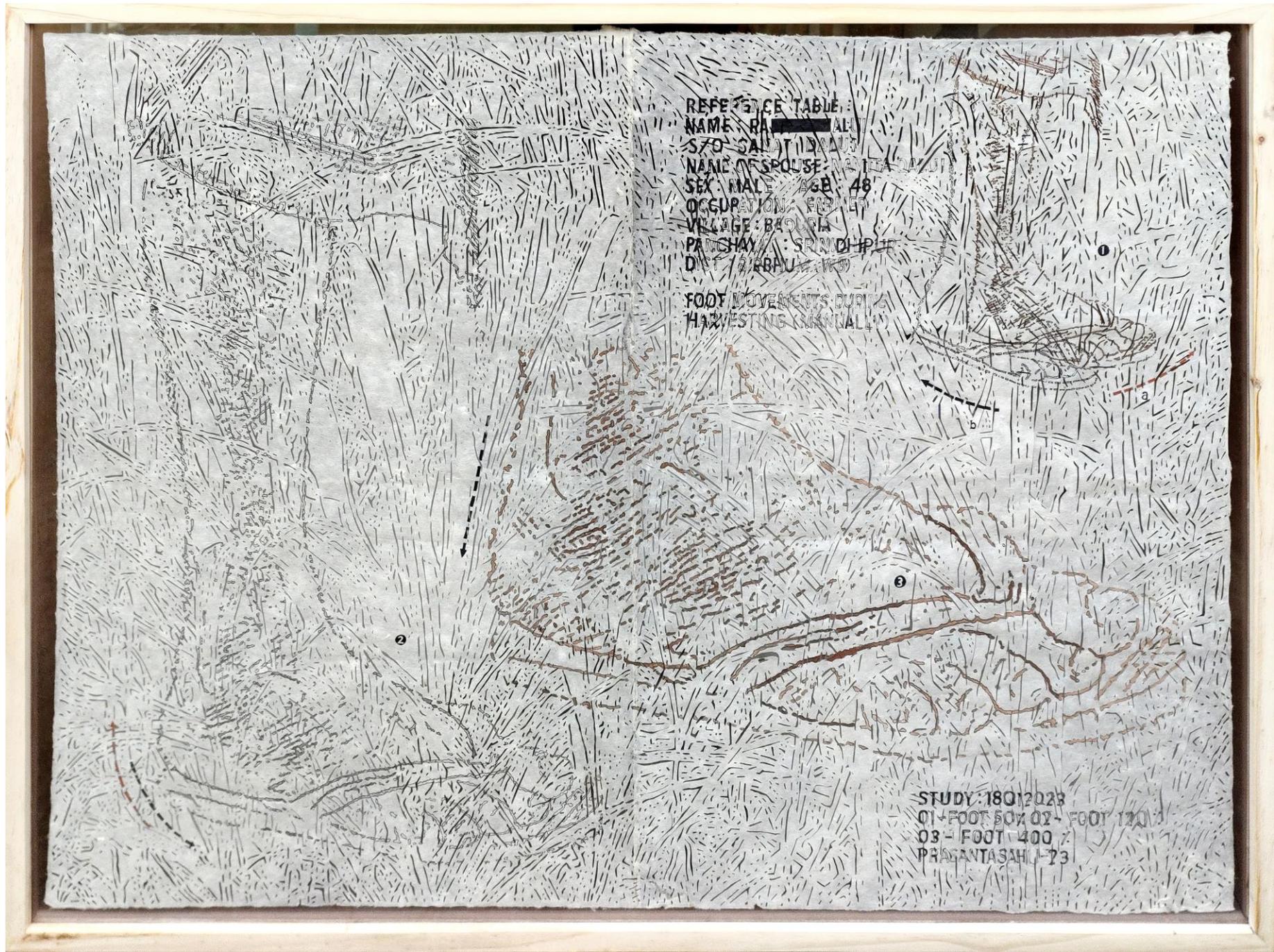


REFERENCE TABLE:
NAME : SUNIL KUMAR PONDAL
S/C : SURENDRANagar PONDAL
NAME OF SPONSOR : LAKSHMI
SEX : MALE AGE : 58
OCCUPATION : FARMER
VILLAGE : JAJURIA
PANCHAYAT : SRINIDHAN
DIST : BIRAHOR

HAND MOVEMENTS DURING
HARVESTING CERAMIC
O2 - HAND 50% OR - STABLE
O4 - HAND 100% OR HAND 100%

STUDY : 12012023
PRASANTASATU-23

The Harvest Story -I
Acrylic, ink and paper cut on Nepali paper
30 x 40 in. (76 x 102 cm.)
2023, Santiniketan



REFERENCE TABLE:
NAME: RAJAN SAH
SEX: MALE AGE: 48
OCCUPATION: FARMER
VILLAGE: BARDIA
PANCHAYAT: SINDHIPATI
DISTRICT: BARDIA

FOOT MOVEMENTS DURING HARVESTING (MANUALLY)

STUDY: 18012023
01 - FOOT 50% 02 - FOOT 120%
03 - FOOT 400%
PRASANTASAHU-73

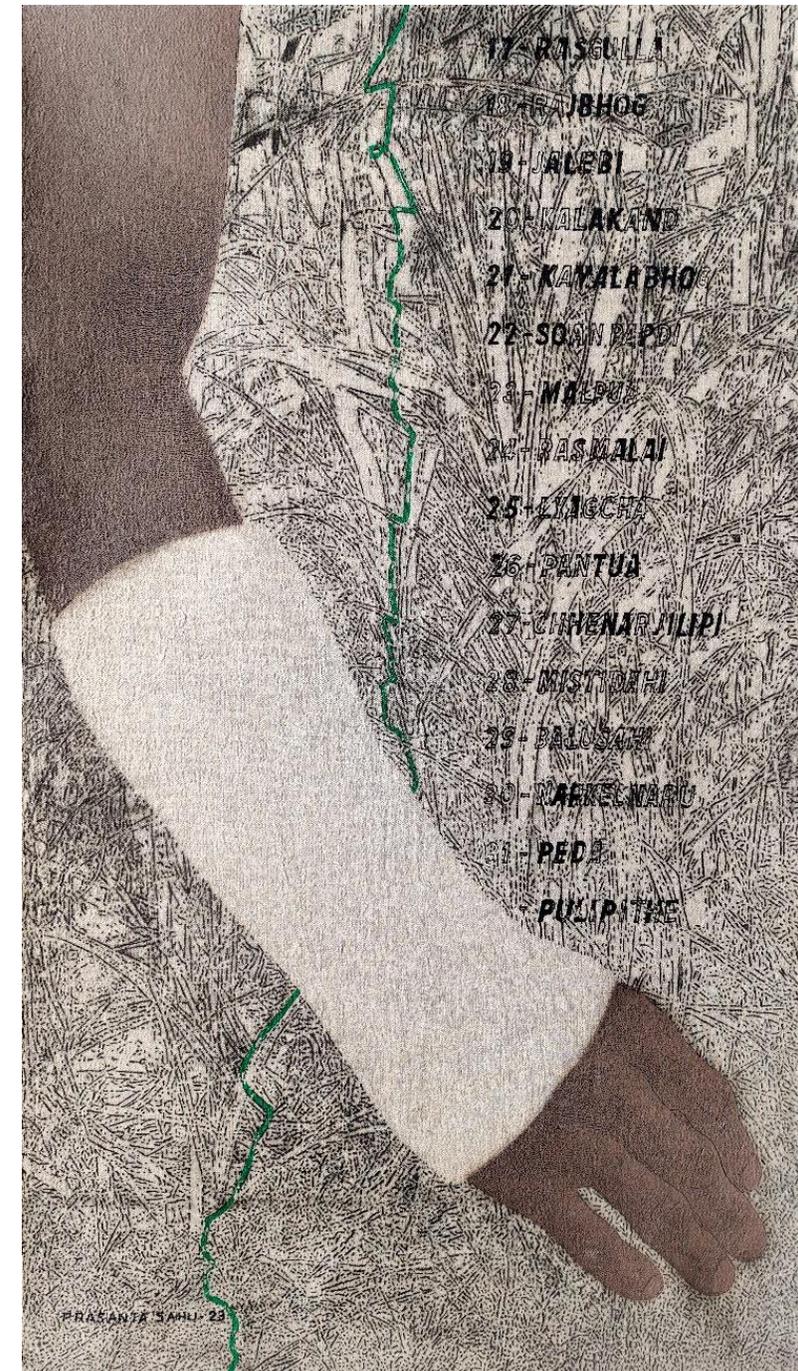
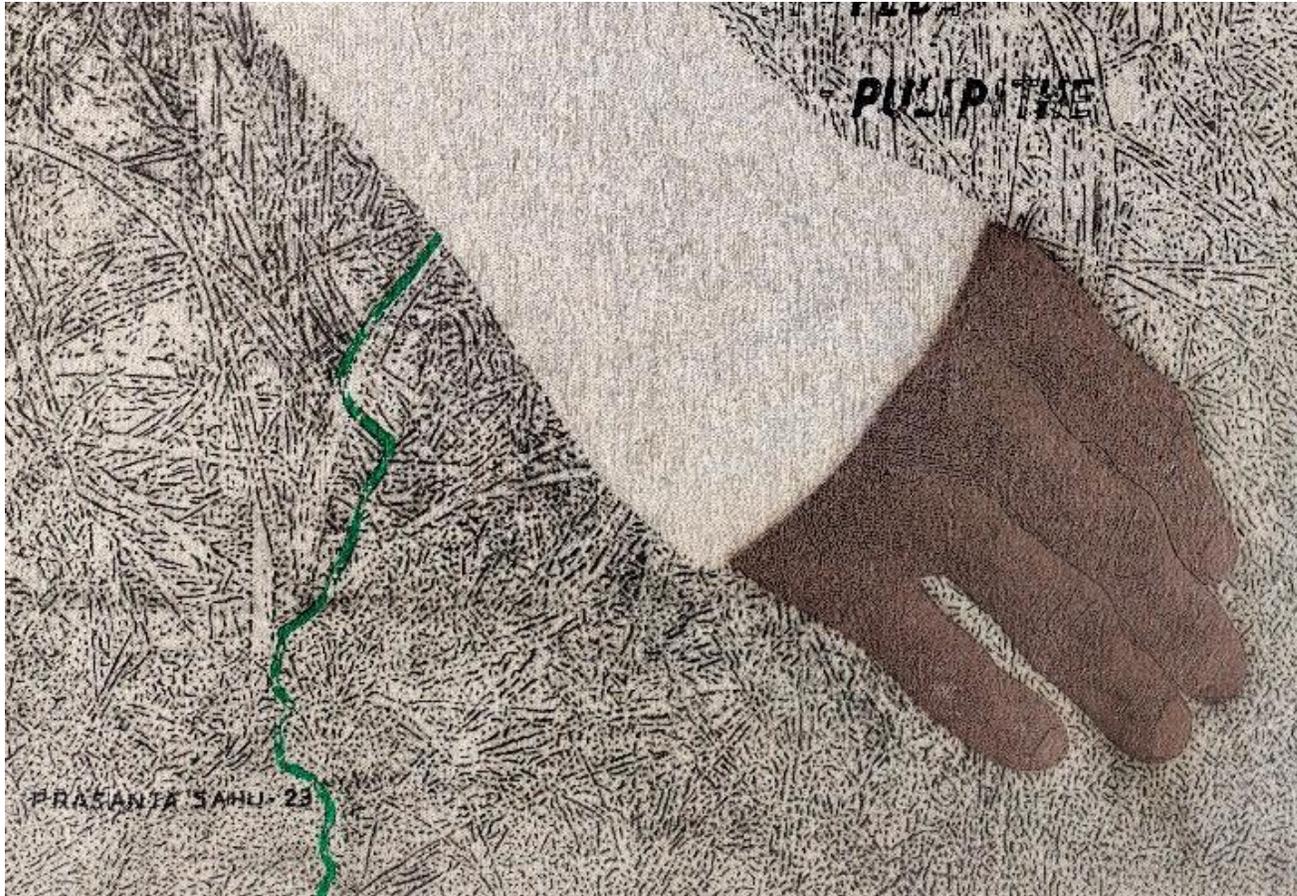
The Harvest Story -I I
Acrylic, ink and paper cut on Nepali paper
30 x 40 in. (76 x 102 cm.)
2023, Santiniketan

'The skin is the largest organ of the body containing millions of pores, even if most of them are invisible to the human eye, these differ from each other and like thumb impressions, they are unique markings.'

'Enlarged and painstakingly painted on the canvas by redoing by hand each and every texture of the skin. The skin becomes an unidentifiable portrait of labour.'

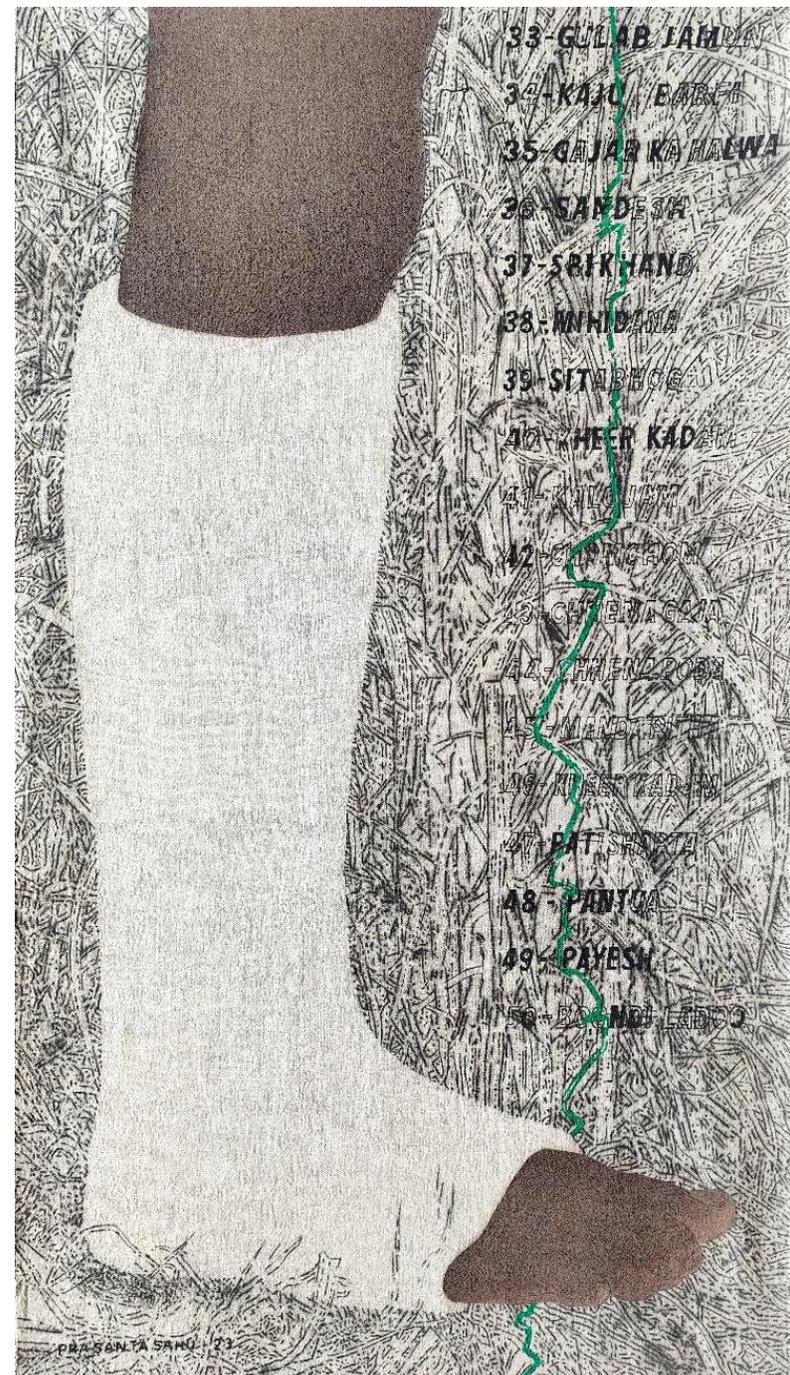
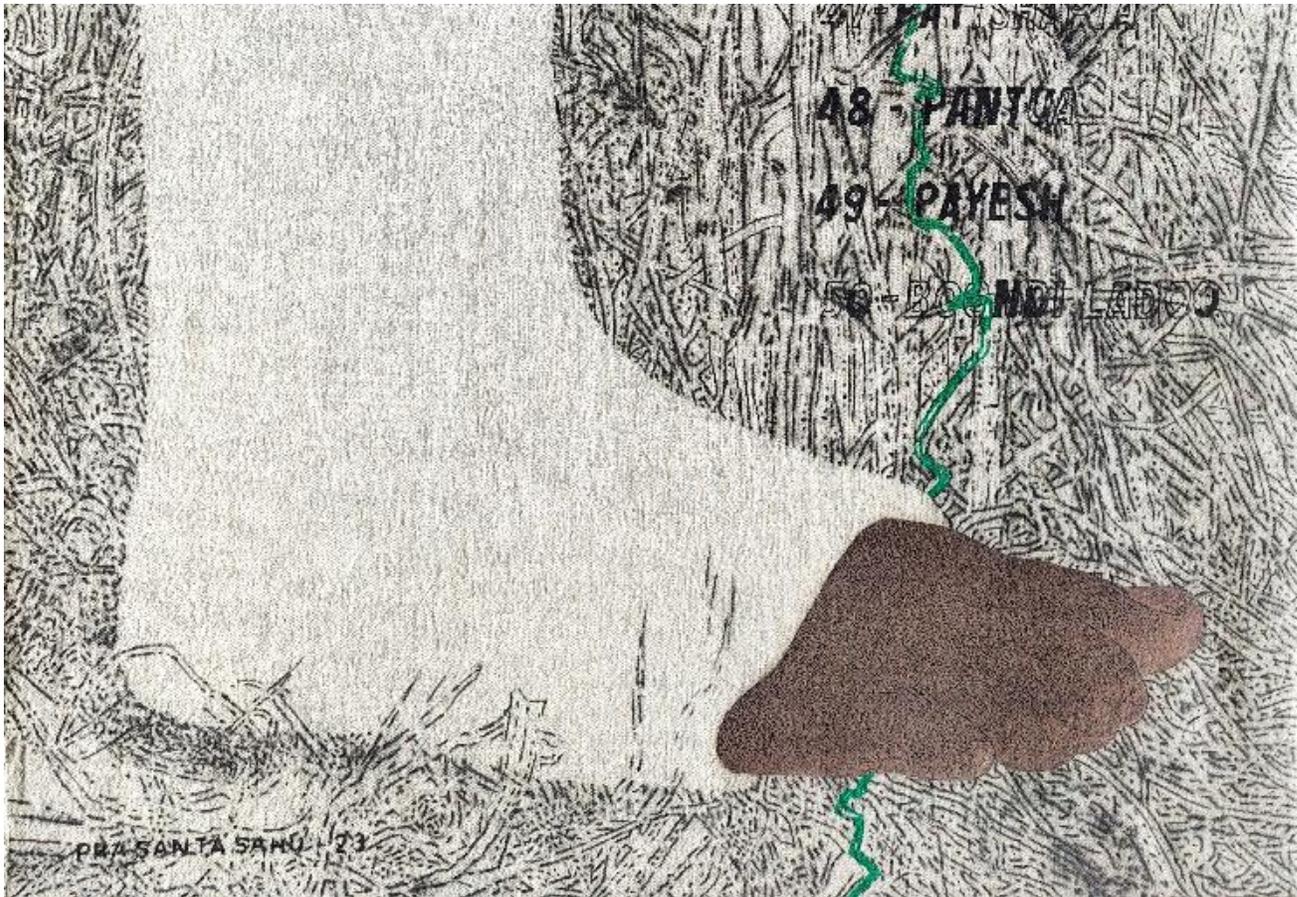
Not a sweet story-I
Acrylic, graphite on locally
woven, treated natural
handloom cotton
60" x 34"
2023

Detail



Not a sweet story-II
Acrylic, graphite on locally
woven, treated natural
handloom cotton.
60" x 34"
2023

Detail





'I will inscribe numbers for different elements or images and then describe these in a reference table like an architectural plan. I enjoy this diagram or user manual-like approach in my drawings and paintings. It is a nod towards a documentation methodology and analytical, empirical data collection. But these also highlight the ambiguous nature of knowledge, the politics of representation and truths hidden from mainstream discourse. This approach is rooted in a distant past during my engineering studies, where I spent years doing technical and architectural drawings.'

STUDY: 13062022
"MAKING OF A VILLAGE ROAD"
REFERENCE TABLE :

RI, M-52	02 : TARAN DAS, M-35
M-46	03 : BHUBAN DAS, M-30
F-35	04 : JYOTIRAJY ADHIKARI, F-42
DAS, M-33	05 : SUMANTA SAHU, M-32
HUMI-28	06 : DEBANTA SAHU, M-46
M-53	07 : DIPAK DADHARI, M-29
F-32	08 : ABANI BADIARI, M-30
DAS, M-37	09 : SANKAR BADIARI, M-31
	01 : MUD ROAD, VILAGE, CHAUHAN





STUDY-12092020
NAME : BIPADTAH
NAME OF SPOUSE : JYOTSHNA
NO. OF CHILDREN : 02
FATHER'S NAME : PARESH H/
MOTHER'S NAME : BHARATI
VILLAGE : KAS
PANCHAYAT (G.R) : KASBA
DIST : BIRBHUM
INCOME PER MONTH: RS. 5000/-
WHETHER HOLDING ANY TYPE OF INSURANCE : NO
COMPILED BY : PRASANTA SAHU
PLACE : SANTINIKETAN

The Potato Farmer From Kasba
Acrylic and ink on Fabriano paper
30 x 22 in.
2020



DATE/TIME IN UTC
IST = UTC + 0530 HRS
WML: WELL MARKED LOW
D: DEPRESSION
DD: DEEP DEPRESSION
CS: CYCLONIC STORM
SCS: SEVERE CYCLONIC STORM
VSCS: VERY SEVERE CYCLONIC STORM
ESCS: EXTREMELY SEVERE
SUCS: SUPER CYCLONIC STORM
OBSERVED TRACK
FORECAST TRACK
CONE OF UNCERTAINTY

STUDY:15092020
CYCLONIC STORM
BAY OF BENGAL
PRASANTASA HU-20

Study of a Cyclone
Acrylic, ink and graphite on Fabriano paper
30 x 22 in.
2020

Installation view
Kochi-Muziris Biennale
Satellite show
2022-23



The Drumstick Tree & Other Stories
Watercolour, ink, graphite, tracing and
Nepali paper, plaster and found objects
150 drawings + found objects
Size variable
2022

Sahu's solo **Anatomy of a Vegetable; Ruminations on Fragile Ecosystems**, a part of the invited satellite shows at the Kochi Muziris Biennale 2022-23, consisted of three works.

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. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lkubr2b02ik>

The installation, **Mapping Craters**, is the result of a three years relationship that Sahu has forged with Lakhi Ram Hansda, a landless tribal 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. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ce1YenBdmwA>

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. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mSpTE8NAGBs>

Excerpt from exhibition note. Anatomy of a Vegetable; Ruminations on Fragile Ecosystems



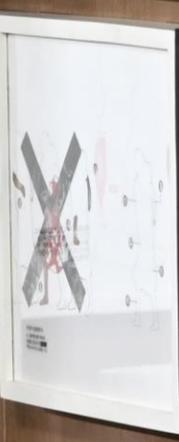
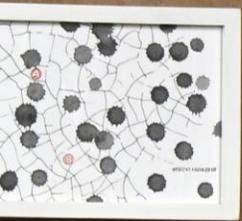
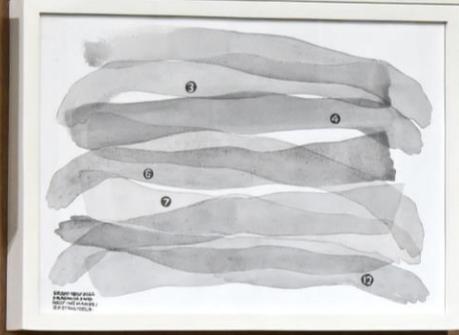
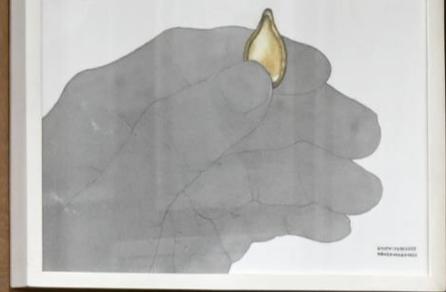
F is for

Please ✓ (tick) the appropriate option

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Food | <input type="checkbox"/> Famine |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family | <input type="checkbox"/> Fallow |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Faith | <input type="checkbox"/> Festival |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Field | <input type="checkbox"/> Fragmented |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Failure | <input type="checkbox"/> Forage |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fertile | <input type="checkbox"/> Fragile |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fact | <input type="checkbox"/> Fear |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Feast | <input type="checkbox"/> Fast |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fissure | <input type="checkbox"/> Fertiliser |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Farmer | |









AGRICULTURAL TOOLS; SET - 2
 BIRBHUM (WB)
 STUDY:20112021
 FS2021



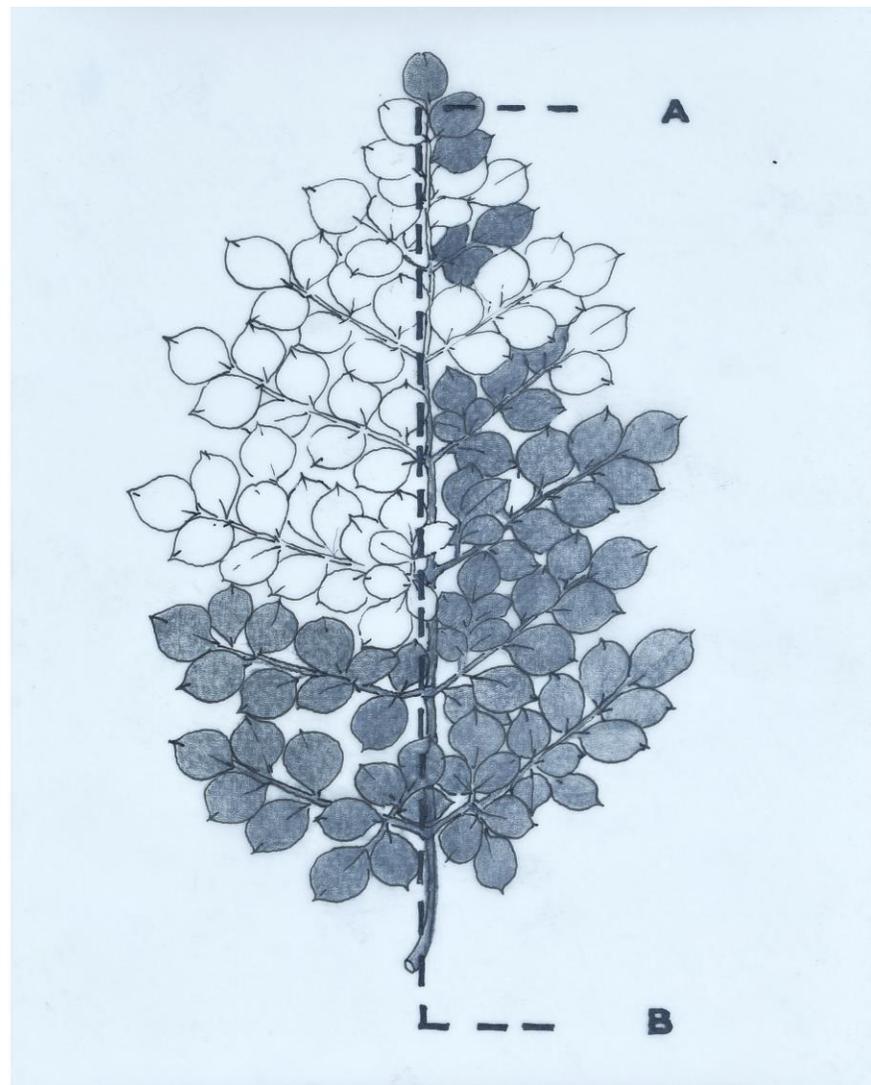
AGRICULTURAL TOOLS
 SET - 1
 PLACE : BIRBHUM (WB)
 STUDY : 19112021

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.

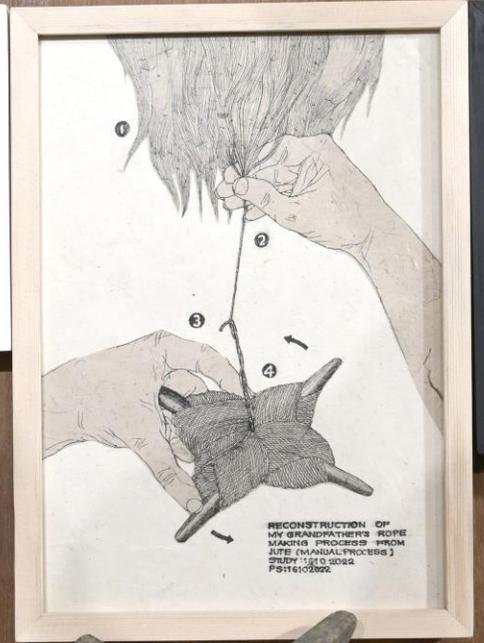
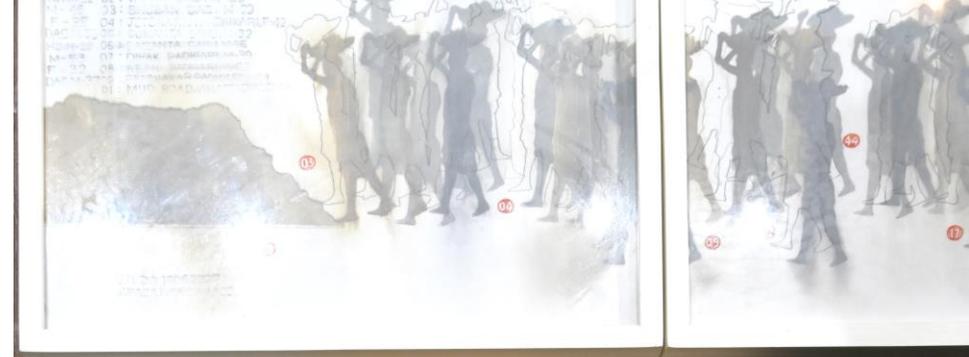
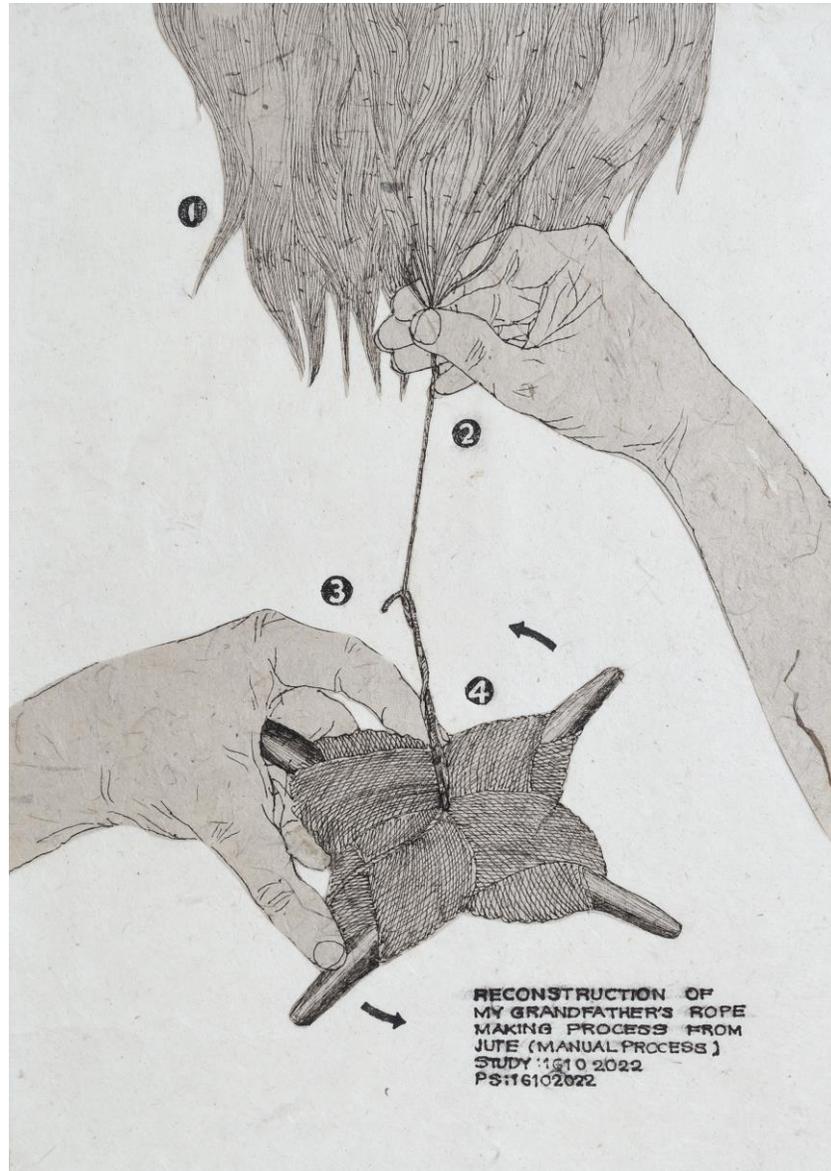
Excerpt from exhibition note.

Anatomy of a Vegetable; Ruminations on Fragile Ecosystems

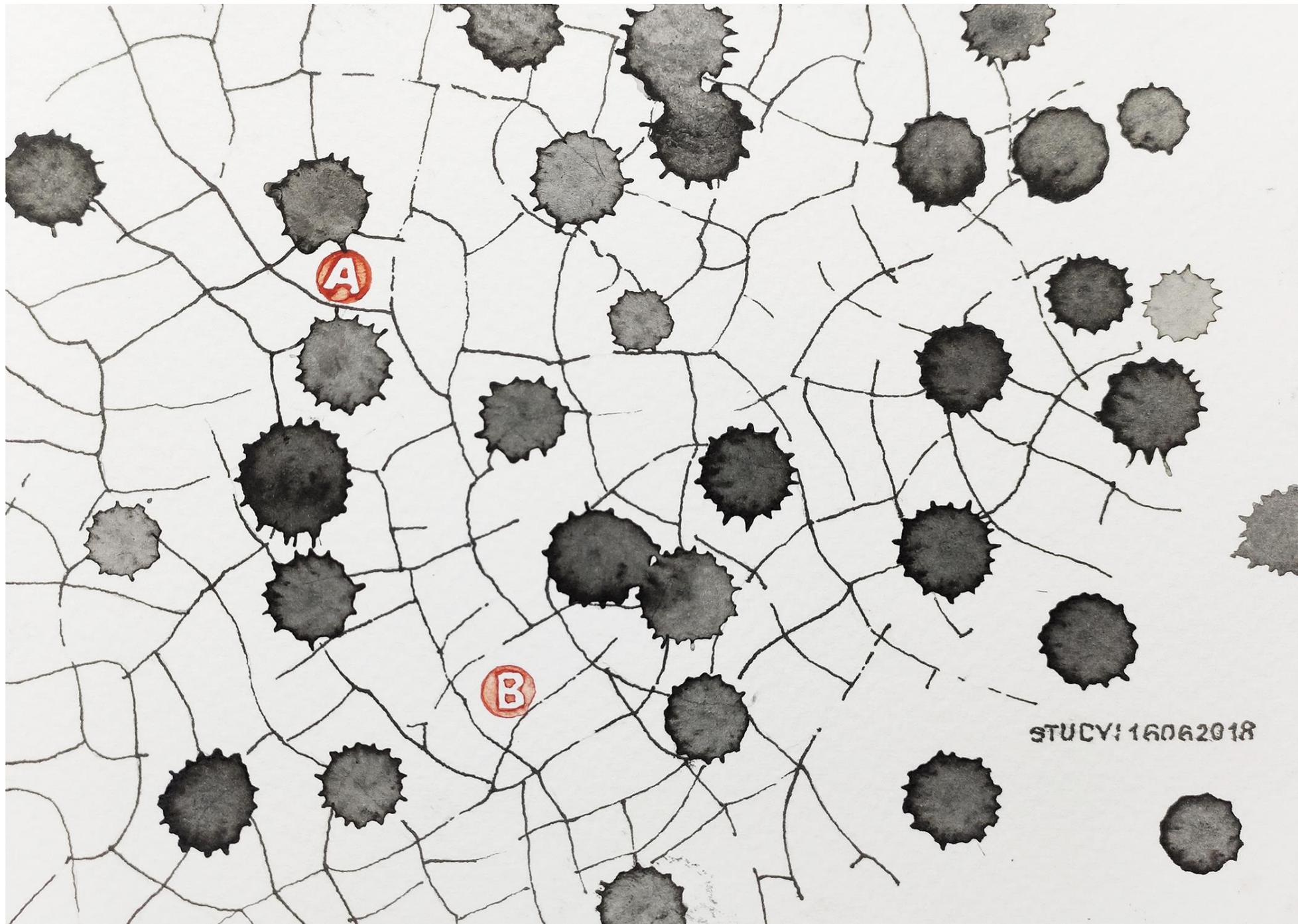




'These memory drawings reconstruct the process of remembering and visually documenting my ancestors' wisdom which I, too, may forget soon.'



LAKHIRAM HANSDA, AMDAHARA, BIRBHUM (W.B)



Study: 16062018
Part of the drumstick tree and other stories

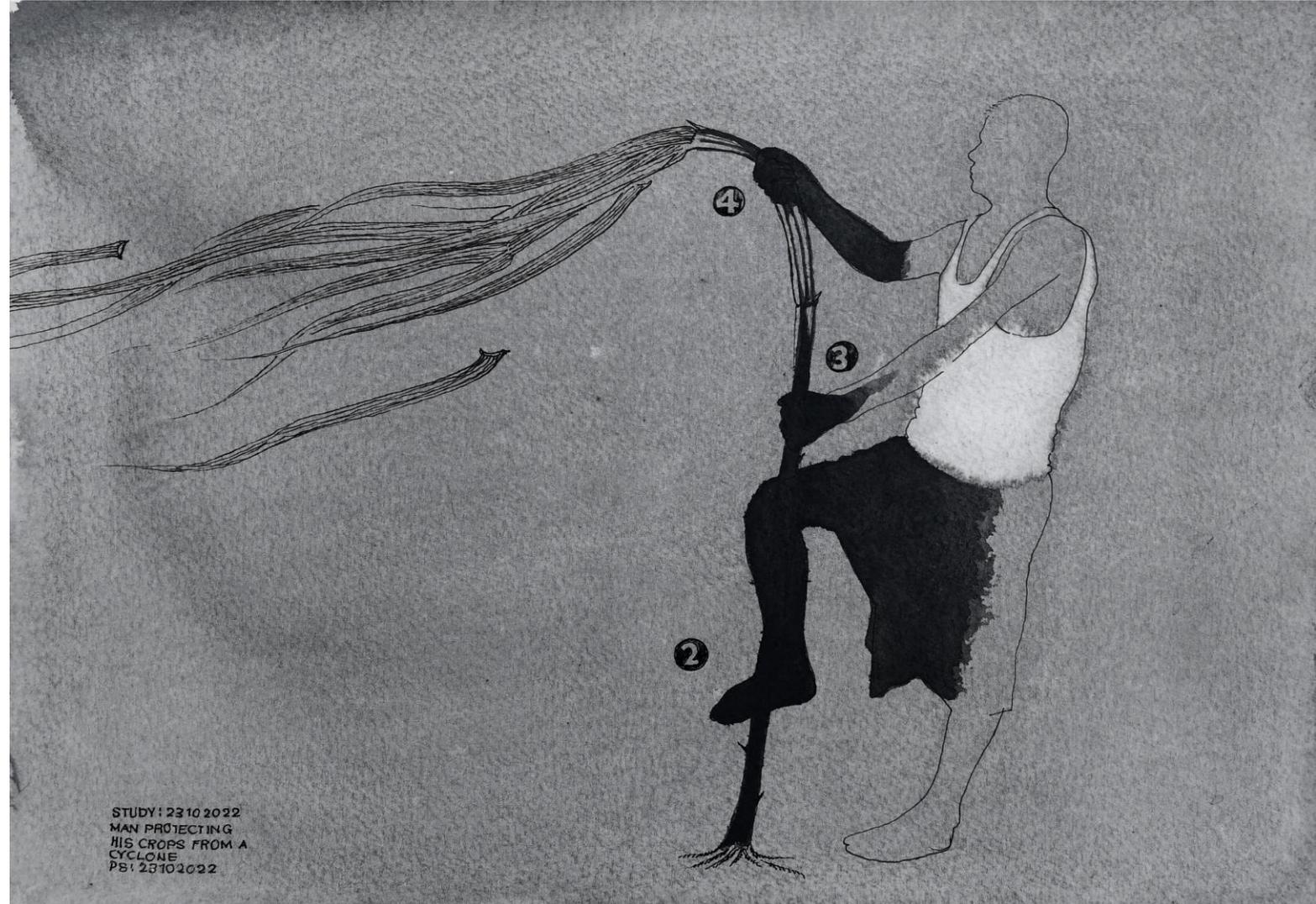
F is for...

(Please tick appropriate box below)

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Food | <input type="checkbox"/> Field | <input type="checkbox"/> Forefather |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Faith | <input type="checkbox"/> Family | <input type="checkbox"/> Farm |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Farmer | <input type="checkbox"/> Festival | <input type="checkbox"/> Fertilizer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fish | <input type="checkbox"/> Famine | <input type="checkbox"/> Forage |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fallow | <input type="checkbox"/> Future | <input type="checkbox"/> Furrow |



Part of the Drumstick Tree and Other Stories



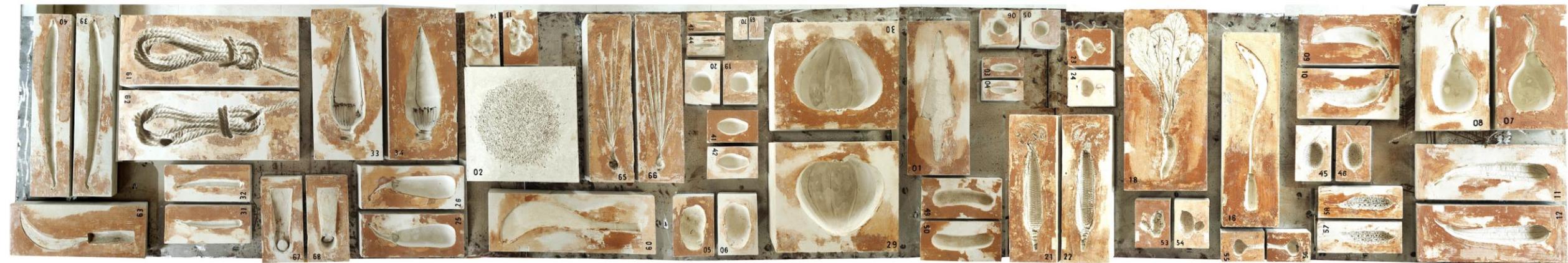
analytical, empirical data collection and its relation
with the politics of representation and its relation
mainstream discourse. But rather than an overly polished
critique of the agrarian, the artist adopts a sensitive
poetic retelling from an insider perspective. Each work in
this exhibition is an insight into a world where we are
life - objects, machines and domains intertwined in an
understandable to the political and economic, the local and
a complex, nuanced critique of the power relationship and
interdependence between the high-tech farming
community and a modern, capitalist economy.
(Excerpt from exhibitor essay)

EMAMI ART



Mapping Craters II
2021-22

Installation view from Kochi-Muziris Biennale Satellite show 2022-23



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.





23



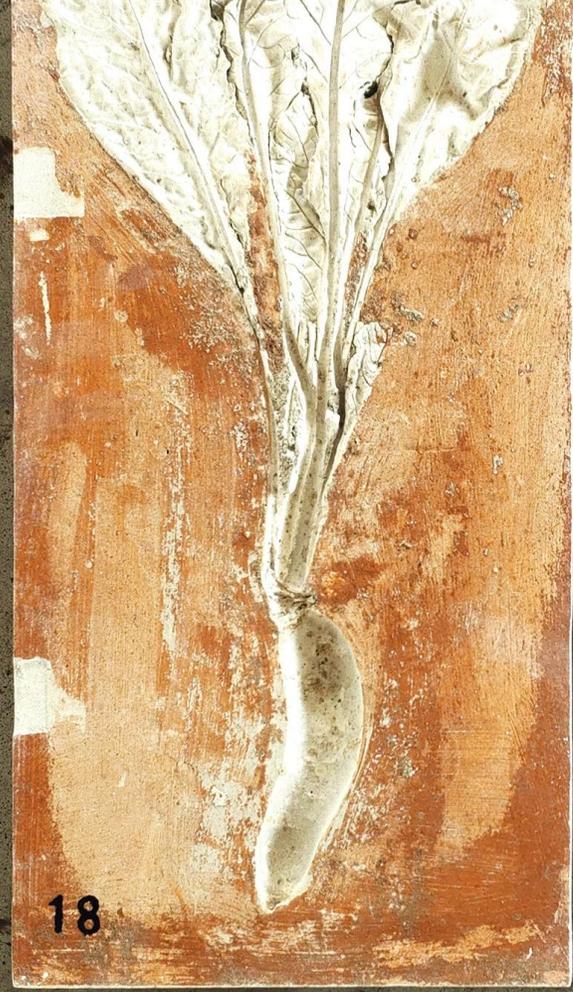
24



21



22



18



53



54



16



55



56



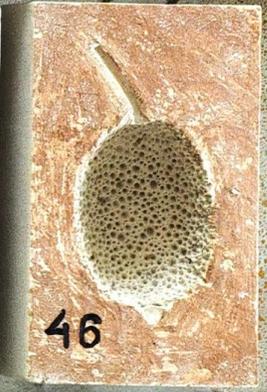
09



10



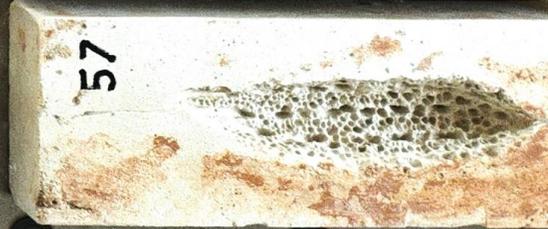
45



46



58



57

Until the middle of the nineteenth century, archaeologists and antiquarians working in remote sites still favoured plaster and paper moulds suitable for documenting the sculptural motifs, inscriptions and architectural facades. They found the newly invented photographic methods unreliable and cumbersome and viewed sketching and copying on paper with suspicion as it was susceptible to individual subjectivities. The reason behind Sahu's preference for plaster mould is, however, not technical but aesthetic, concerned with the politics of representation. Immutable mobile objects, the moulds in Sahu's work are an end in itself – he does not remove the remnant of clays from the moulds – and not intended to be used for replication. The decentralized archival and documentary impulse in Mapping Craters also shapes Sahu's works on marginalized labourers and peasants.

Excerpt from pamphlet.

Anatomy of a Vegetable; Ruminations on Fragile Ecosystems



Process





*Anatomy of a Vegetable –
Ruminations on fragile ecosystems*

Exhibition view from Kochi-Muziris
Biennale Satellite show 2022-23

EMAMIART
 111, Anandapuri, 4th Floor, Sector - 17B, Connaught Place, New Delhi - 110028, India
 www.emamiart.com

Prasanta Sahu, born 1964 in Odisha, India received a degree in Architecture (1988) before enrolling at Kala Bhawan, Varanasi University, India, where he pursued a degree in painting, followed by a master's in painting from M.A. University, Baroda (1991), graduating with honours from both universities.

Over the last twenty years, Sahu has worked across multiple disciplines including painting and drawing, sculpture, installation, photography, the computer, and digital media. His work has been exhibited in numerous galleries and museums across India and abroad. He is currently an Assistant Professor and Head of the Department of Painting at Kala Bhawan, Varanasi University.

Sahu has actively exhibited both artistically and academically. He is an associate professor in the Department of painting at Kala Bhawan, Varanasi University.

Prasanta Sahu lives and works from Bhubaneswar, India.

Mapping Craters II
 Prasanta Sahu

29, Pumpkin
 Dimensions: 8" x 4" x 4"
 Weight: 3.5 kilo

31, Mocha (Banana flower)
 Dimensions: 13" x 4" x 4"
 Weight: 9.50 gram

32, Dhundi (Gheru)
 Dimensions: 2" x 1/2" x 1/2"
 Weight: 15 gram

33, Katar (File)
 Dimensions: 15" x 5" x 1/2"
 Weight: 1.6 Kilo
 Material: Iron

34, Mocha (Banana flower)
 Dimensions: 13" x 4" x 4"
 Weight: 9.50 gram

35, Karella (Bottle gourd)
 Dimensions: 4" x 1 1/4" x 1 1/4"
 Weight: 22 gram

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 Weight: 22 gram

51, Indian Plough
 Dimensions: 14" x 3.5" x 1/4"
 Weight: 6.5 Kilo
 Material: Iron

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 Weight: 22 gram

100, Karella (Bottle gourd)
 Dimensions: 4" x 1 1/4" x 1 1/4"
 Weight: 22 gram

recto

Mapping Craters
 Two-fold Pamphlet
 60.96 cm x 45.72 cm (open)
 30.48 cm x 20.32 cm (folded)

53, Katar (File)
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 Weight: 1.6 Kilo
 Material: Iron

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21, Karella (Bottle gourd)
 Dimensions: 4" x 1 1/4" x 1 1/4"
 Weight: 22 gram

20, Pumpkin
 Dimensions: 8" x 6.5" x 3"
 Weight: 3.5 Kilo

19, Karella (Bottle gourd)
 Dimensions: 4" x 1 1/4" x 1 1/4"
 Weight: 22 gram

18, Karella (Bottle gourd)
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2, Karella (Bottle gourd)
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 Weight: 22 gram

1, Karella (Bottle gourd)
 Dimensions: 4" x 1 1/4" x 1 1/4"
 Weight: 22 gram

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www.emamiart.com



The installation *Mapping Craters* was first shown at the Palazzo Madama Museum, Turin, Italy. 2021- 22

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),

Hriday Roy (Gobindaopala),

Chandana Roy (Gobindaopala)

To watch an excerpt of the video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0iIQ6sAYUQI>



Prasanta Sahu

Anatomy of a Vegetable

Ruminations on fragile ecosystems

Dec 13, 2022 — Apr 10, 2023

Prasanta Sahu is a chronicler of the Indian hinterland. For more than a decade, Sahu has turned the lens of his practice towards retelling a rural saga. Based on the experiences of his village 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. But rather than an overtly politicised critique of the agrarian crisis, the artist adopts a sensitive, poetic retelling from an insider perspective. Each work in this exhibition 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, the Artist offers a complex, nuanced portrayal of the power relationship and interdependence between the neglected farming community and a modern, capitalist food economy.

(Excerpt from exhibition essay)

EMAMI ART



In *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.

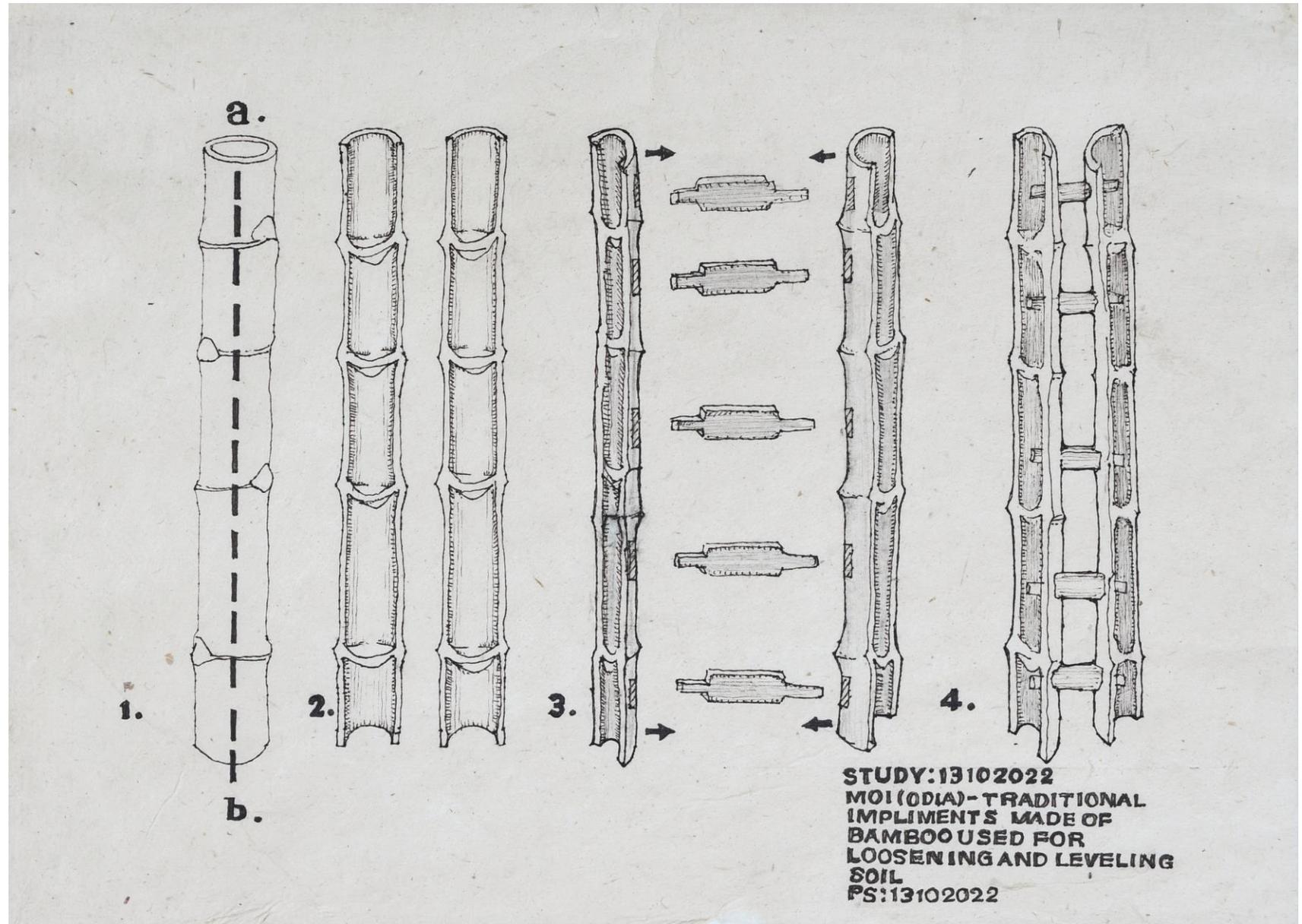
Excerpt from exhibition note.

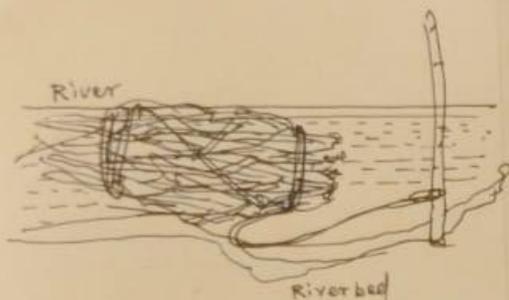
Anatomy of a Vegetable; Ruminations on Fragile Ecosystems



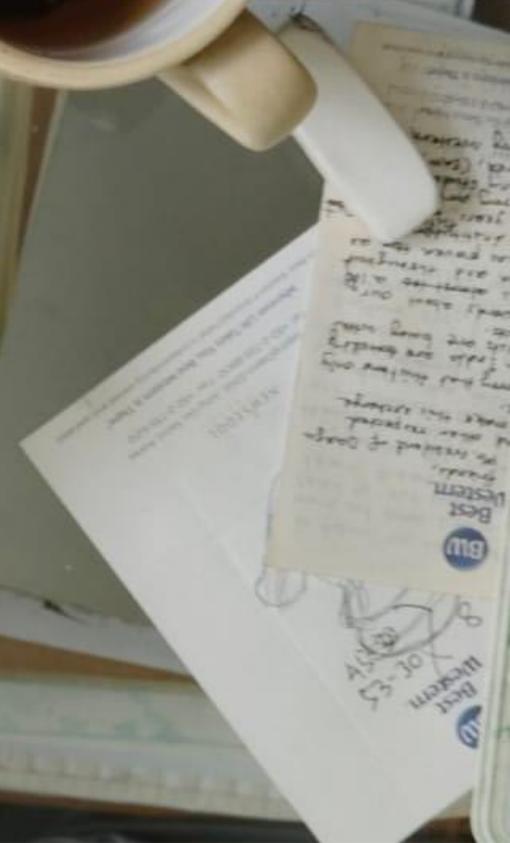
'These days when I look back at my time as a child in the village running behind my paternal grandfather and helping him in his daily activities, I am reminded of a lot of indigenous practices that were beneficial for the people and for our planet, which is unfortunately lost to the current generation. These are extremely valuable and need to be appropriately recorded, need to be passed on to future generations as well.'

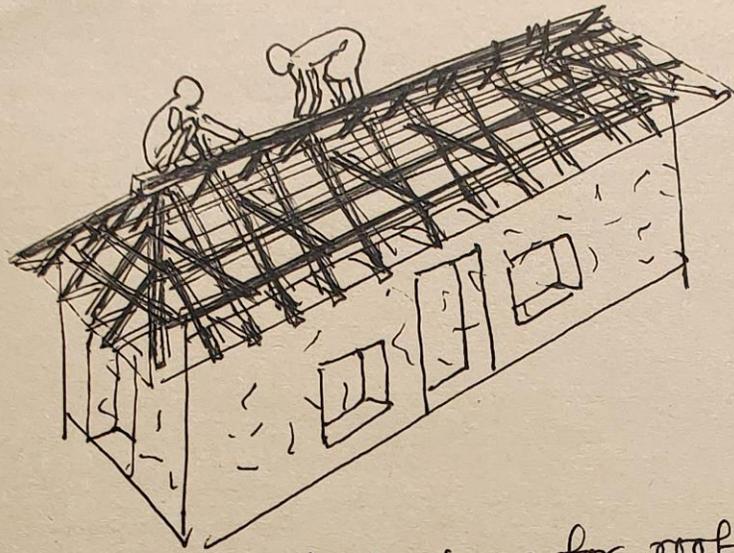
'For me, this ancestral knowledge is precious. The importance of living skills, nature awareness, primitive technology, and wilderness survival, utilisation of fewer natural resources, keeping in mind the total ecology where humans, animals, plants, water bodies can stay healthy together was not developed overnight; these are collective achievements.'





(BBI) (Basa/edia) ~~riverbed~~
- A bundle of dry wood tied together with wild creeper stems. (BBI)
This was a unique fishing technique. People used to put them in the riverbed overnight and in the morning they used to pull them gently above water with the help of net. This was relatively an easy way to catch fishes. Only

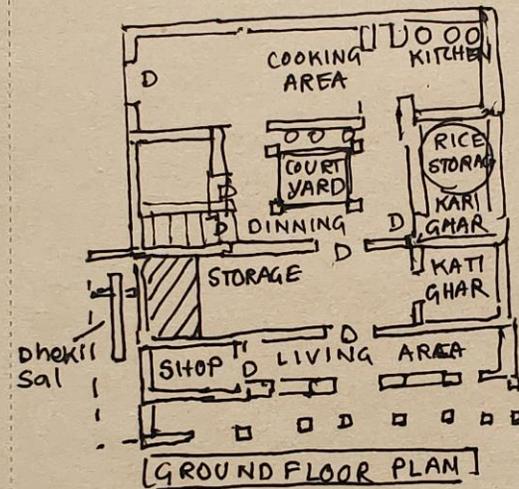




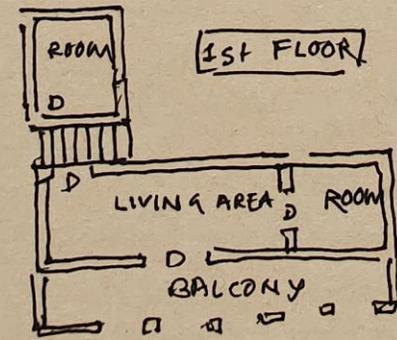
Palm wood structures for roof.

Actually making wooden structures for the roof was an extremely complex process. In their own way they used to calculate the load bearing capacity of the structure, the centre of gravity, balance ... a lot of things. Sal wood and Teak wood was not available in our locality, so people used to select Neem, mango, ^{Tak fruit} and few other wood for this purpose. Actually plantation of these trees were in the edges of the fields were very much in practice because of these.

Then At the same time they were architect, carpenter, weaver, There were no sawmills in nearby areas, People used to manually cut matured trees for the doors, windows and roofs with terracotta tiles.



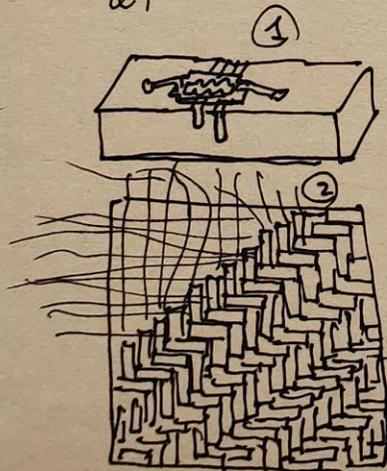
This is the ground plan of the house (mud house). Although this is drawn from a vague memory which I ~~have~~ still carry and I was only 8/9 years old when I last visited this home.



my memory about my village is, all family members used to participate in the process of making such ~~houses~~ houses.

PS26032023

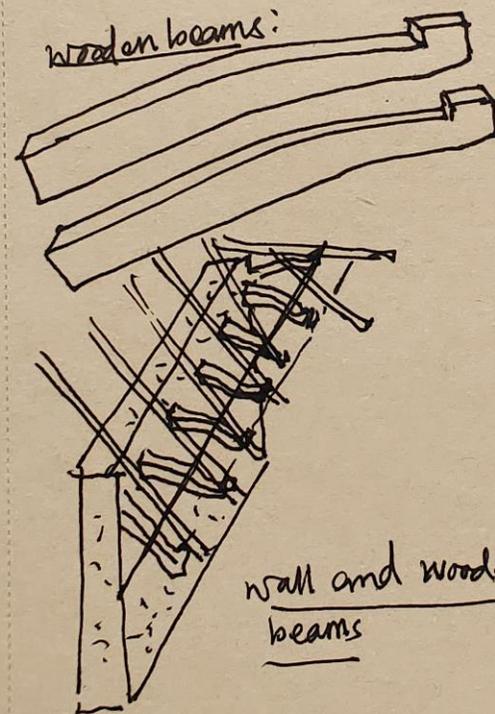
One fine morning I found there are a lot of palm leaves in our yard and later I saw my uncle stored them nicely to make them seasoned. After a fortnight I found my uncle prepared nice tapes, all almost same measurement, probably $\frac{1}{4}$ th inch each and I got surprised, how he made them, on asking he has shown me a ~~tool~~ wooden tool with a tiny slot ~~and~~ fixed with a blade on top of it and he has demonstrated me how he made all equal strips by passing these palm leaves through it.



The basic tool was something like this. Later on my uncle made some nice mats out of these strips. The design was extremely complicated for me at that age. The pattern was every time you have to pass 3 strips and have to weave through the each 4th strip.

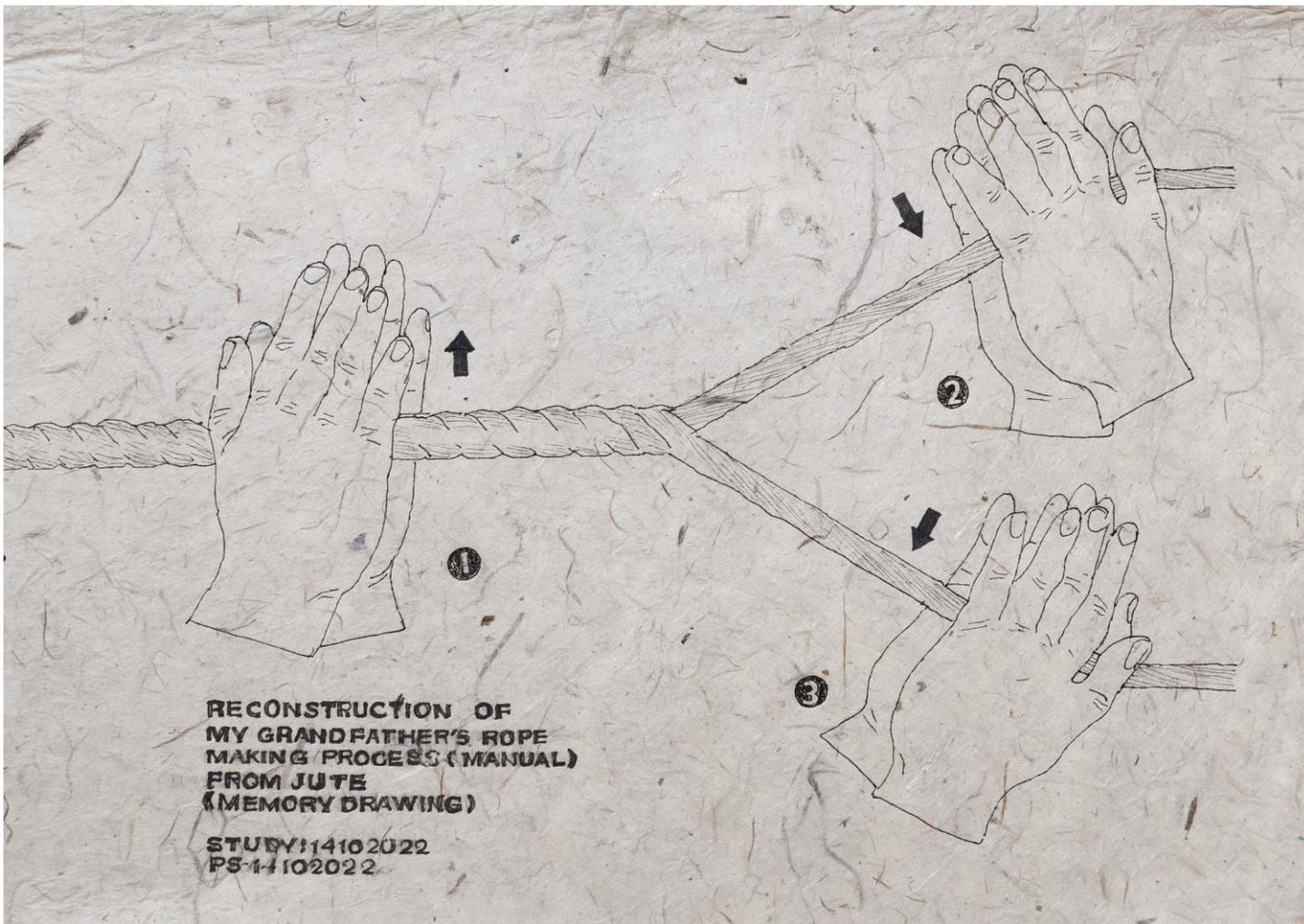
When concrete introduced in village maybe during 1990s, people quickly adapted it as it's a status symbol, those days... it's more permanent and requires less maintenance.

After cutting down a tree (matured tree) for the purpose of doors, windows and roof, people used to identify different shapes and used to categorise them/grouping them accordingly.



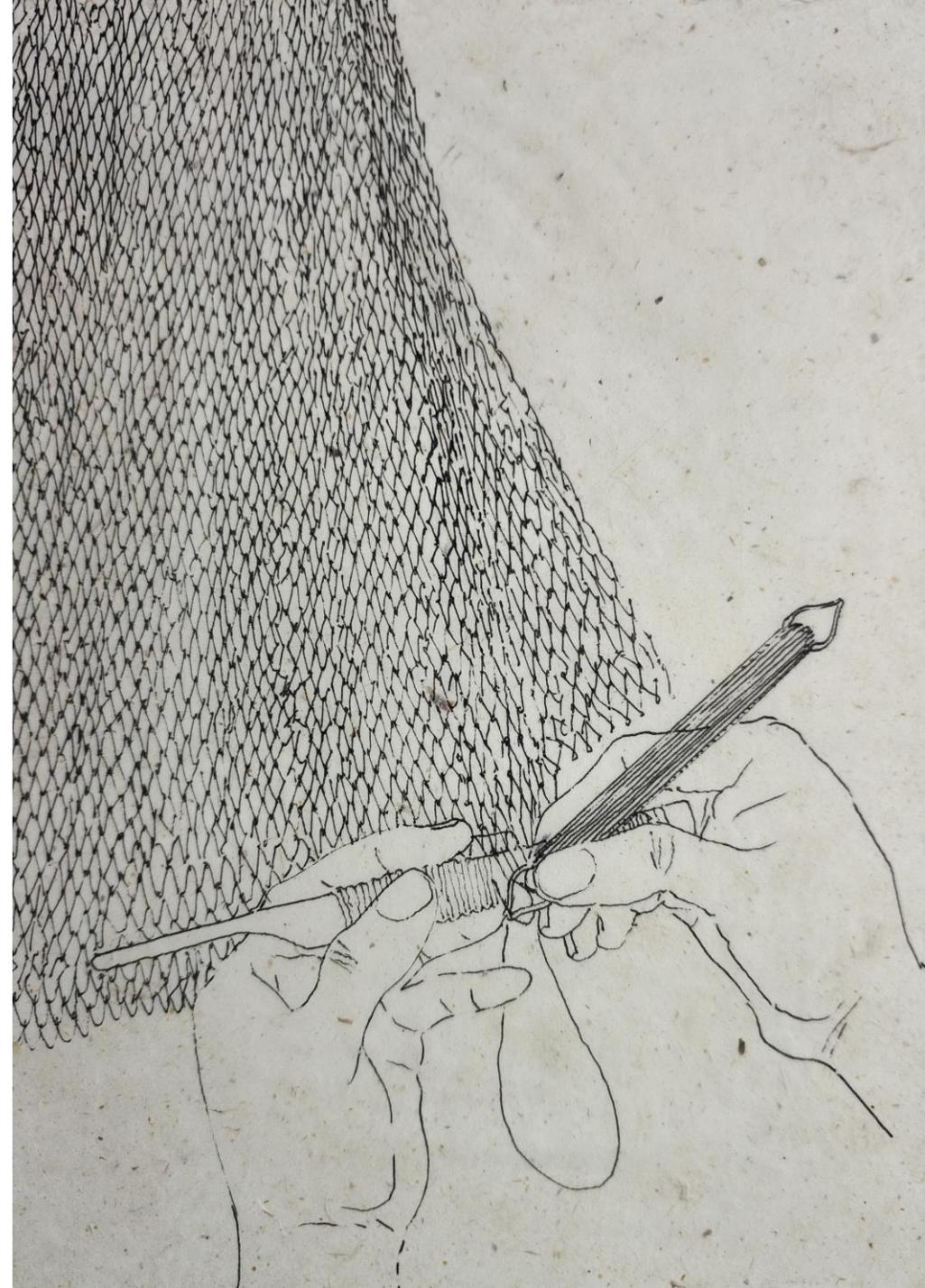
Slightly bend/curved branches, they used to keep for supporting structures for the roof

Use of wood was there for wooden beams, for the roof structures for putting roof tiles, railings in windows, pillars etc.

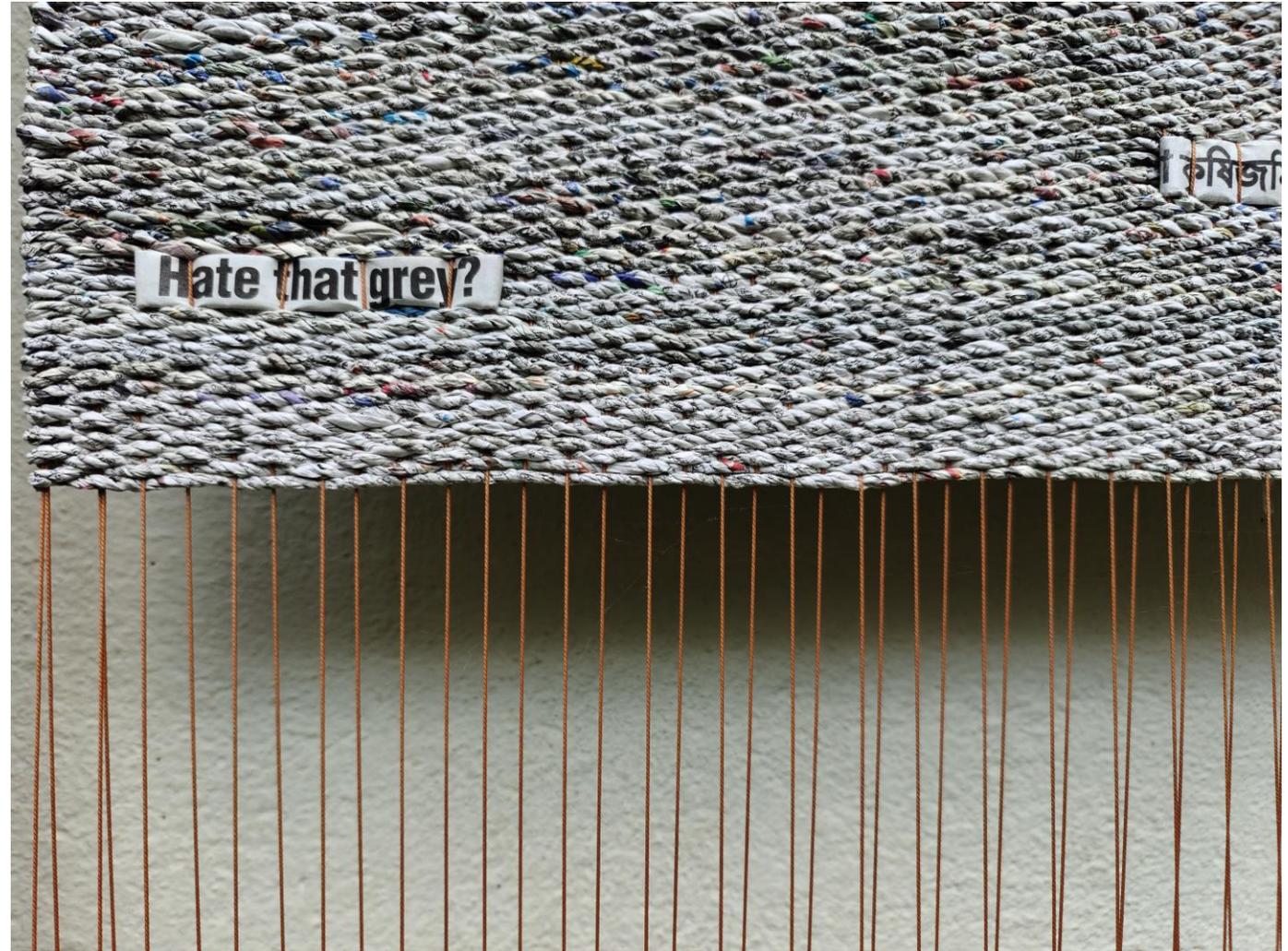


'In many of my drawings, including the Kochi project, I have focused on documenting my childhood memories with my grandfather. I was very close to him and assist him. He would prepare saddle pouches for cattle to carry paddy. He had built our ancestral mud-house – a two-story marvel of architecture that would stay naturally cool in summers and warm in winters.'

'I remember him teaching me how to make threads from jute manually. He would use these threads for so many different things. My paper-thread projects are rooted in this memory.'







Ongoing newspaper thread tapestry 2023



06/03/2017
MONDAY
LENGTH 20.5 m

07/03/2017
TUESDAY
LENGTH 23 m

08/03/2017
WEDNESDAY
LENGTH 30 m

09/03/2017
THURSDAY
LENGTH 27.5 m

10/03/2017
FRIDAY
LENGTH 24.5 m

11/03/2017
SATURDAY
LENGTH 20 m

12/03/2017
SUNDAY
LENGTH 20 m

176 meters of News

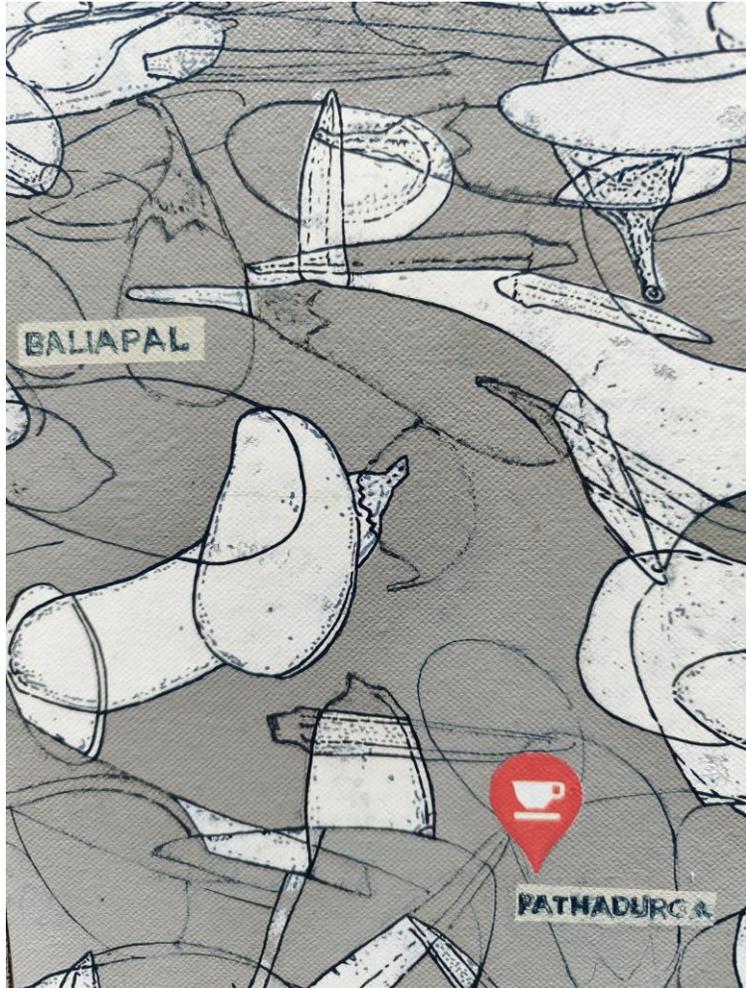
Handmade ropes made from newspaper
Installation size: 1cm radius, 7 ropes
totalling 176 meters

'176 meters of News" consists of seven ropes made from various newspapers such as The Telegraph, Statesman, The popular Bengali newspaper *Anandabazar Patrika*, Indian Express, Times of India and a few other regional language papers in Odiya, Bengali, Urdu, available locally in Santiniketan. Newspapers for each day of a week were collected. I then joined these to create long panels, cut them into strips and entwined them manually to form seven separate strands of thread. Each thread/rope, made from papers of a particular day, was measured and labelled according to the date of the newspapers and the final length of the rope. When displayed, these seven ropes were arranged chronologically according to the days and dates they belonged to. Conceptually this work is an embodiment of the news events of a particular day published in different newspapers. By transforming newspapers into a rope like form, the act of entwining as well as the resulting object both become metaphors of a complex layering of socio-political existence. It also references repurposing of material which is an essential aspect of life here.'





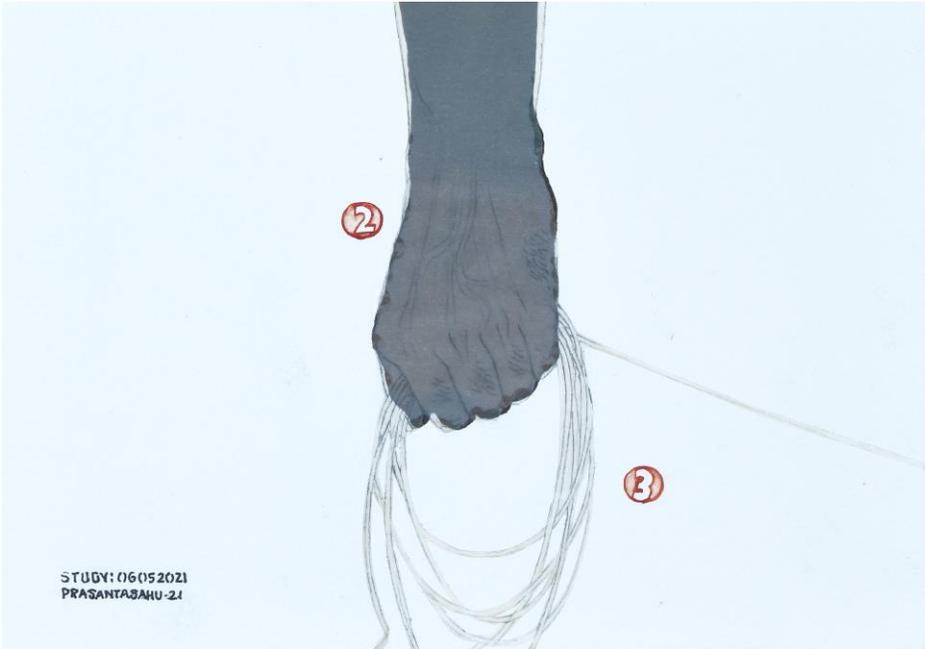
A Detail Study Of Two Prehistoric Farm Tools
Acrylic on canvas
6' 0" x 4' 0"
2022



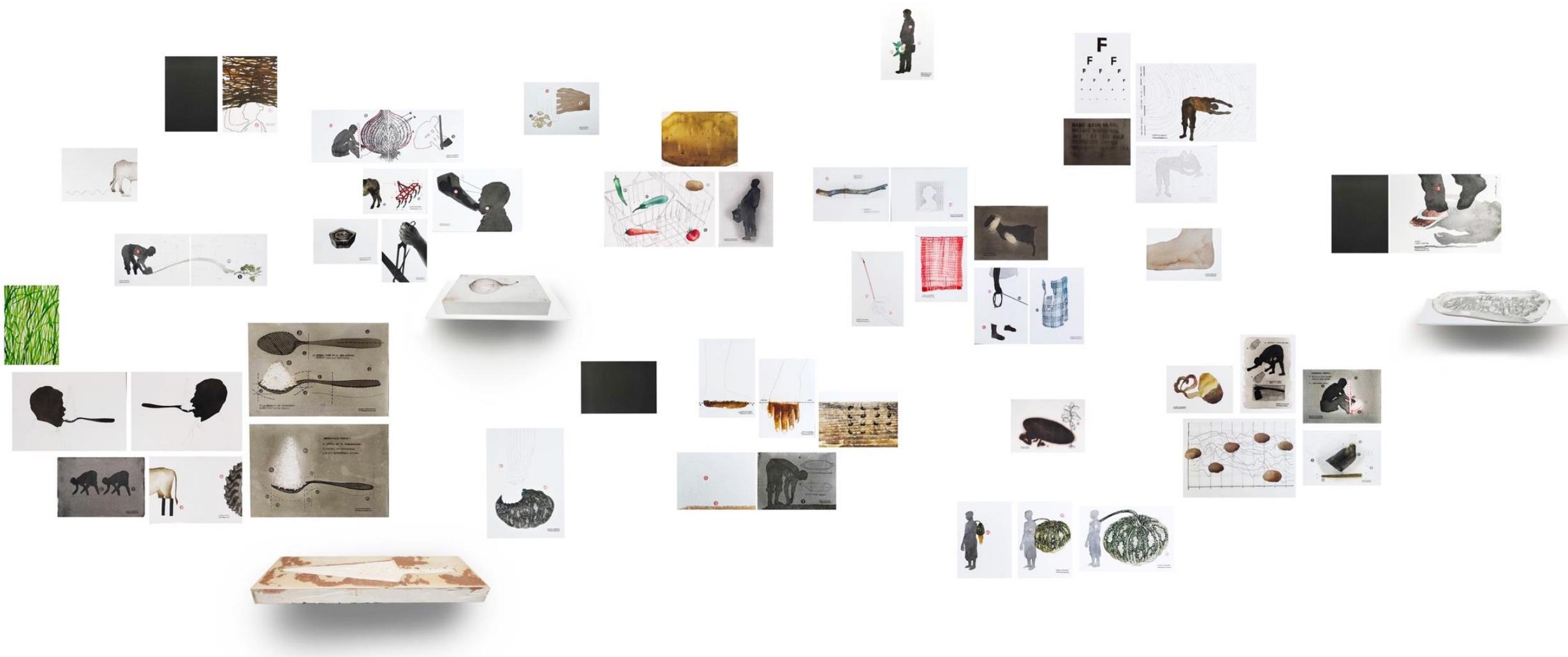
Details



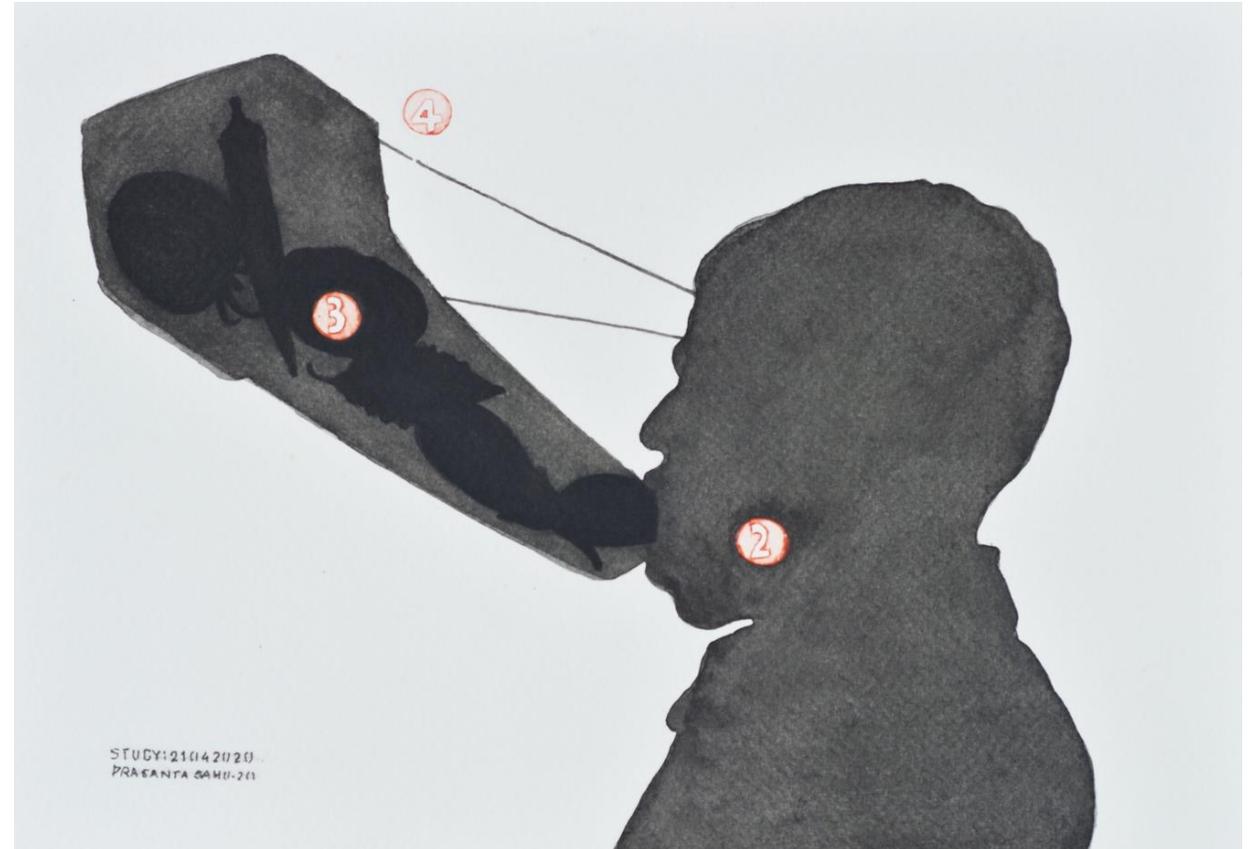
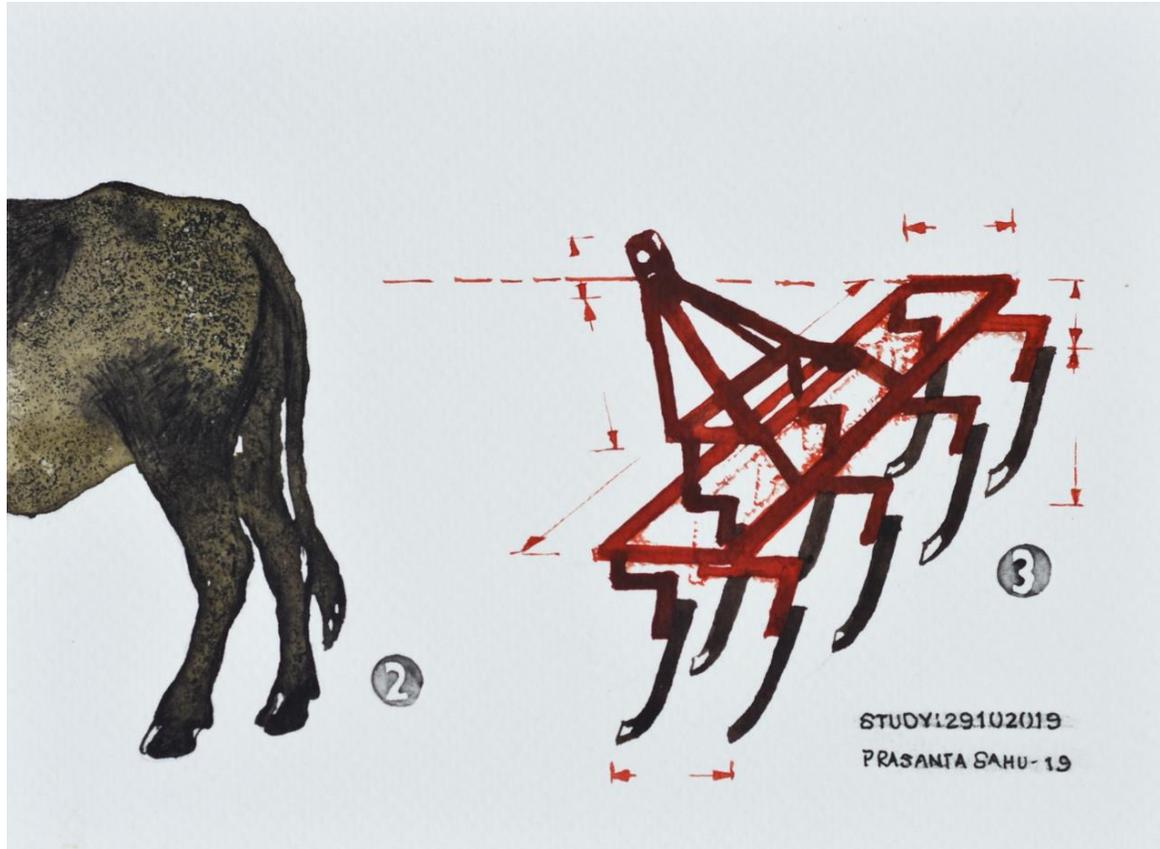
'Urgent conversations about planetary crises and ecology touch upon agriculture and production as a contested social space and the power relationship and interdependence between the neglected farming community and a modern, capitalist food economy. While these are extremely important, for me, farming is a way of life, and it is about love and joy, intimacy and tender observations amidst suffering. And it is also about collective knowledge systems that are being lost.'



Left: **Study: 22102022** Right: **Study: 06052021** Watercolour, graphite, acrylic on paper 2021-2022 Part of the Drumstick Tree and Other Stories



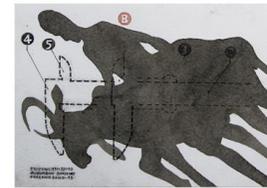
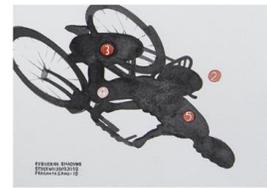
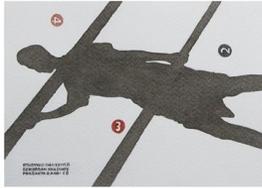
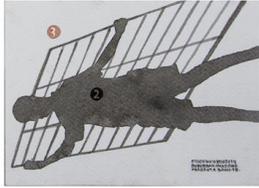
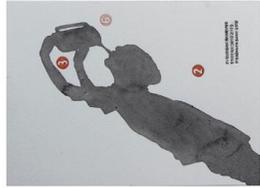
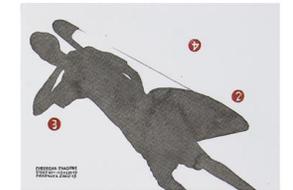
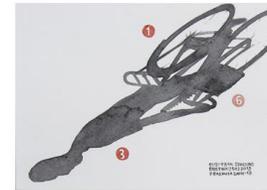
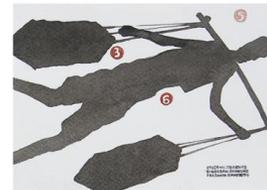
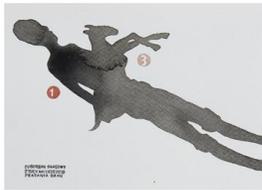
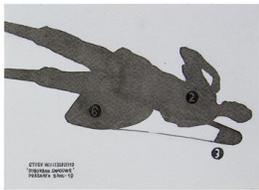
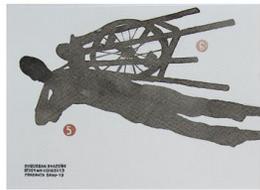
Untitled Watercolour, graphite, ink on paper, plaster of Paris size variable suite of 53 drawings and 3 plaster objects

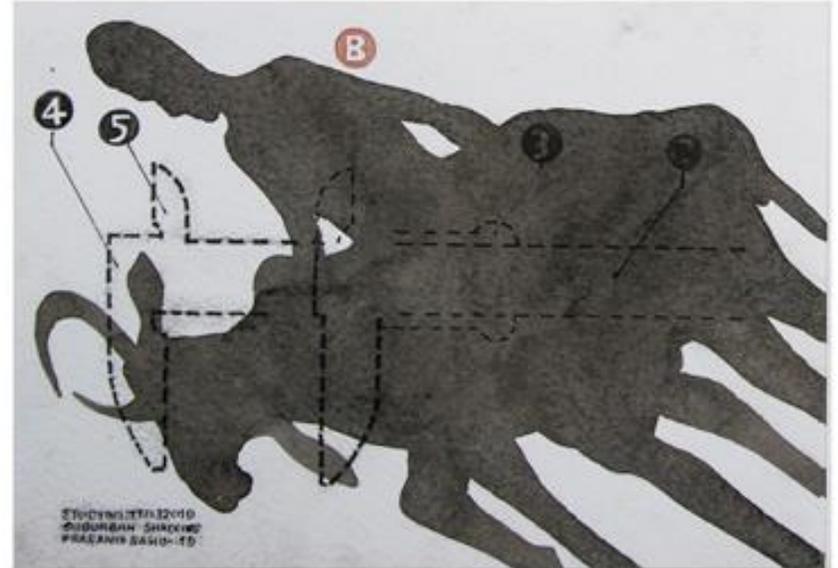
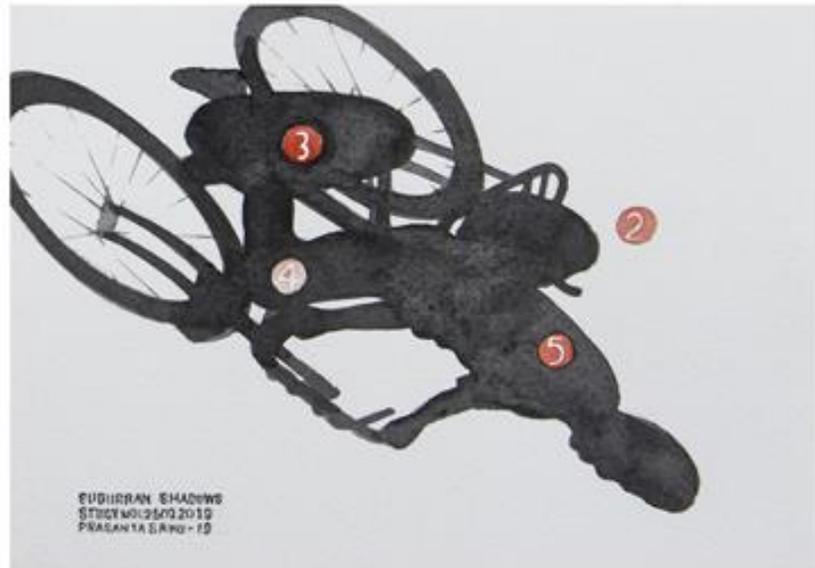
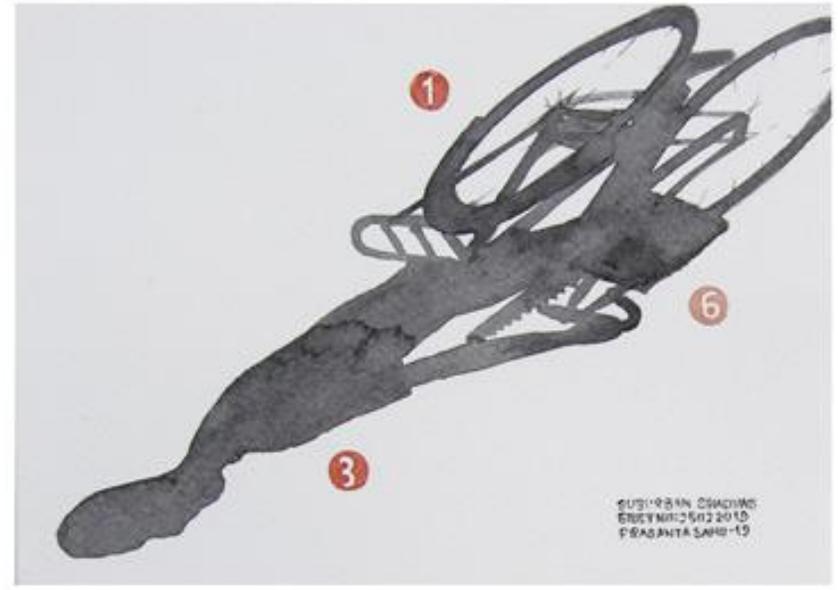
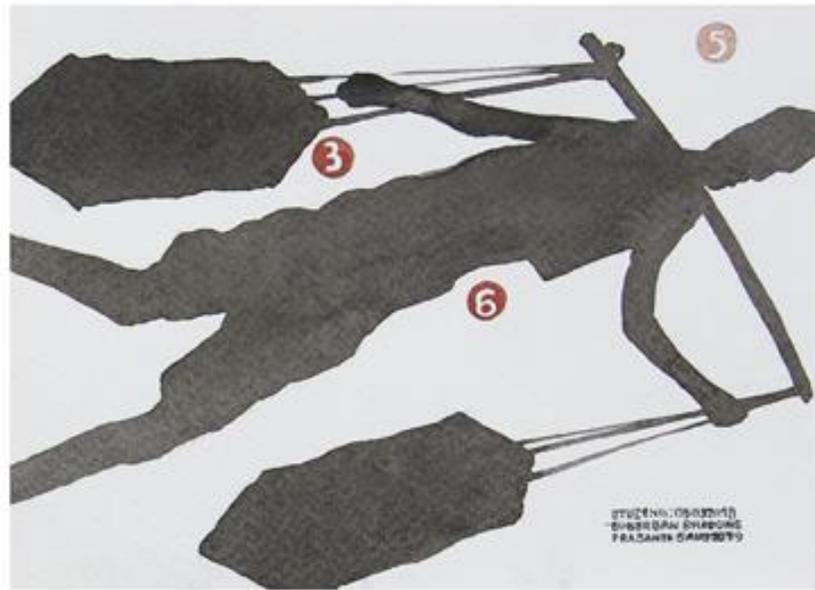


Belongings and objects as trace memory

'Objects collect the patina of time, grime and daily human touch. Most migrants carry their whole lives in a small tarpaulin bag which serves multiple purpose – as shelter, as cover or even something to sit on. These objects are extension of the person. Trace evidence or scientific studies may give us the DNA of the person – but I look at these as traces of memory, migration and struggle for existence.'







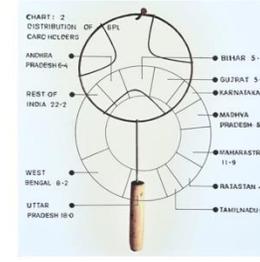
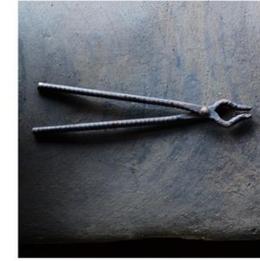
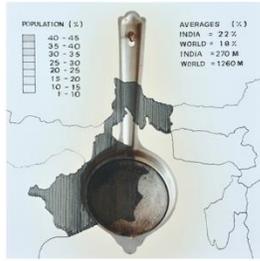
Detail



The Sawmill Worker from Goalpara II
Digital print on archival paper
Size variable
2019



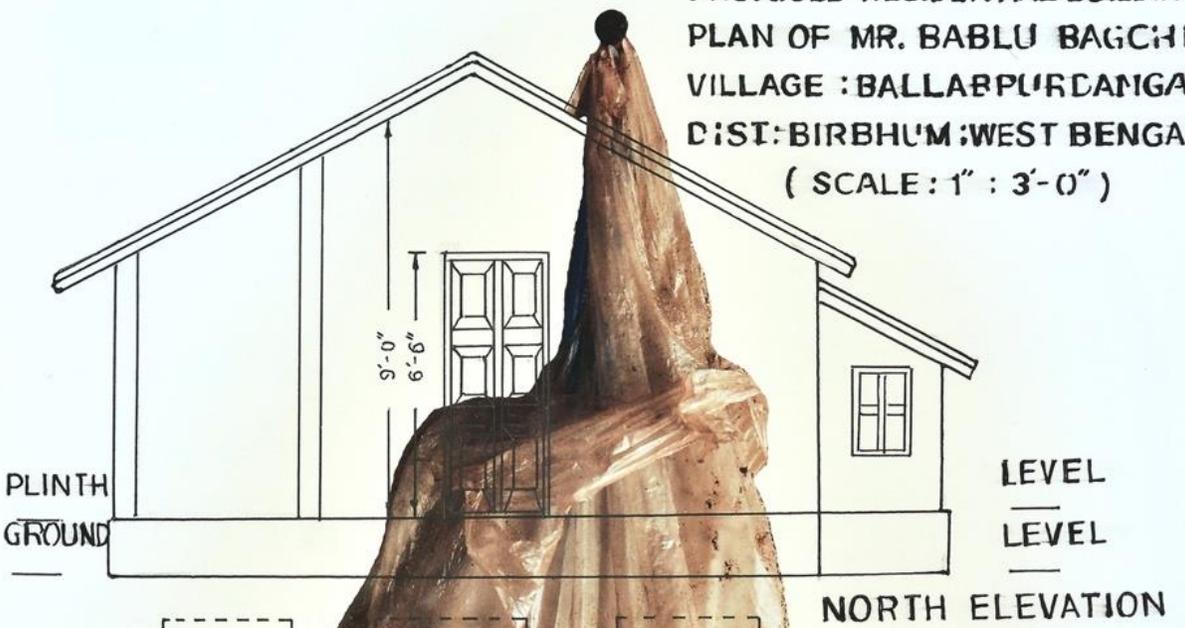
The Sawmill Worker From Goalpara I
Digital print on archival paper
Size variable
2019



NAME : BABLU BAGCHI
FATHER'S NAME: GADADHAR BAGCHI
SEX : MALE
AGE : 57
VILLAGE : BALLABPURDAMMA
MOUZA : RUPPUR
WHETHER MARRIED: MARRIED
NO. OF CHILDREN: 03
SON : 0 0; DAUGHTER : 3
OCCUPATION : TEA STALL OWNER
NO OF FAMILY MEMBER: 07
FAMILY EARNING PER MONTH: RS. 100
WHETHER OWNS A HOUSE : YES
WHETHER OWNS ANY LAND : NO

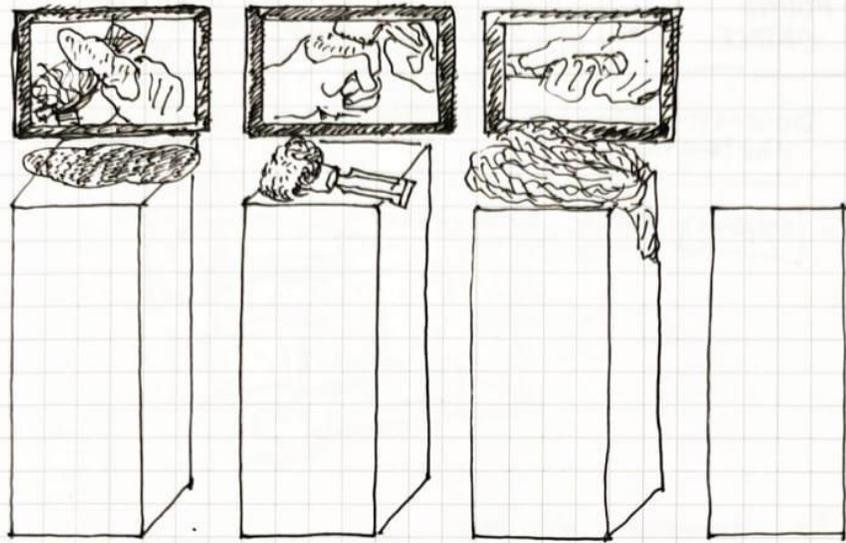
‘Exploring the power relations between a rural tea stall owner, the small-scale farmer and capitalist food economy, Sahu’s photographs are portrait studies in absence. *Case study No: 16092016* consists of photographs and drawings on paper. The objective documentation and everyday poetics of the peasant life – object, memories and desires - are intertwined to open up a bio-political matrix in the complex production of the local in a globalised world.’

PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL BUILDING
PLAN OF MR. BABLU BAGCHI
VILLAGE : BALLABPURDANGA
DIST: BIRBHUM; WEST BENGAL
(SCALE : 1" : 3'-0")



GROUND PLAN
COMPILED BY : PRASANTA SAHU





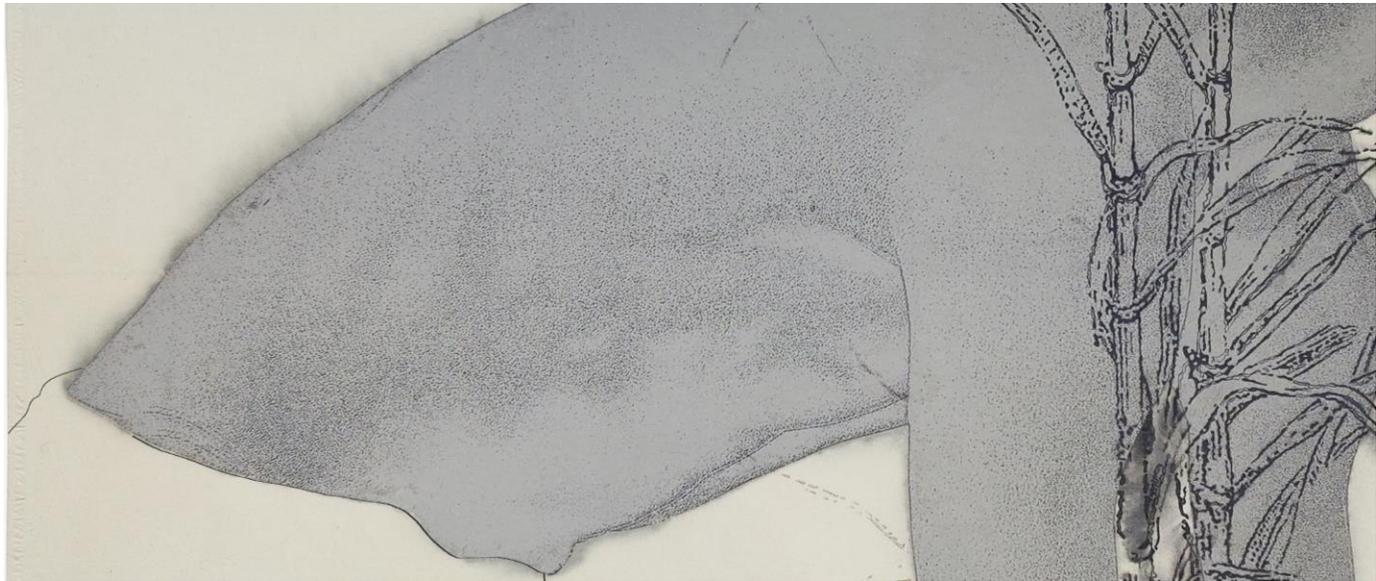
Incubate Scars

Acts of labour incubate scars in the hand, in the tool and the object.

This project is about tools of labour; distorted by age and use. Which hold traces of the human touch and also the objects that the tool is used to make. Displayed on a pedestal next to a video documenting and honoring hundreds of regular, unfêted daily acts of labour.

(Unrealised project)

(sculpture + video) : Collecting objects which are extremely distorted during its continuous use in some specific professions. Such as ~~the~~ ⁽¹⁾ hammer with wooden handle, whose wooden handle distorts with every stroke with the metal hammer. (2) people who sell fish in bengal, use a piece ~~of~~ of wood, which they hit on the (boti) everytime they cut the fins of a fish. The idea is to collect such distorted objects and documenting the use of that object in video format. The idea of the display is to put the object on a pedestal as a sculptural object and play the close-up video of the activity in the background.



Detail

2023 -Ongoing work
Acrylic on hand-made cotton
54" x 60" approx.





Brief Bio

Born in Odisha in 1968, Prasanta Sahu studied painting at Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan and M.S. University, Baroda, graduating in 2000 and teaching at Visva-Bharati, his alma mater, since 2001. He has been the subject of the solo shows *Suburban Shadows* at Emami Art (Kolkata, 2020) and *Blueprint of a City* at Kalakriti Art Gallery (Hyderabad, Kolkata).

He has participated in many important group exhibitions in museums, art institutions and art galleries. They include India Art Fair, New Delhi, 2023; *Anatomy of a Vegetable: Ruminations on fragile ecosystems*, Kochi Muziris Biennale 2022-23 invited Satellite Programme, Mocha Art Café (Kochi, 2022), *Politics of Paper* curated by Ms. Ushmita Sahu at Emami Art (Kolkata, 2022), *Hub India – Maximum Minimum* at Artissima (Torino, Italy, 2021); *Disruptive Confluence* at Museo Civico d'Arte Antica (Torino, Italy, 2021); *Multitudes and Assemblages* at Accademia Albertina di Belle Arti di (Torino, Italy, 2021); *Art: Bengal Now* at Dhoomimal Art Gallery (New Delhi, 2020); *Anthology of Anecdotes* at Ganges Art Gallery (Kolkata, 2019); *Kurshi* at Sarjan Art Gallery (Baroda, 2019); *Blue India* at Art Asia Art Fair (South Korea, 2018); *Constellations* at Bihar Museum (Patna, 2018); *Postcards* at Busan International Art Fair (South Korea, 2017); and many others.

Sahu lives and works in Santiniketan, India.

Artists Interview:

<https://www.emamiart.com/artists/44-prasanta-sahu/video/>

CV and Personal details

Birth year: 1968

Studio address: Kaivalya, Deer Park, Santiniketan, Birbhum

Pincode: 731235, West Bengal, India

Mobile: +91 9832110133

Email: sahuprasanta1@gmail.com

Emami Art Website:

<https://www.emamiart.com/artists/44-prasanta-sahu/overview/>

Educational Qualifications:

- M.F.A. (Painting) from Maharaja Sayajirao University, Baroda (1998-2000)
- B.A Fine Arts (Painting) from Kala-Bhavana, Visva- Bharati University, Santiniketan (1993-98)
- Training in Electrical Engineering under O.S.E.B., Orissa, India (1986-87)
- Diploma in Electrical Engineering from Barapada School of Engineering & Technology, Orissa (1983-86)

Select Exhibitions:

2020 -2023

- “Anatomy of a Vegetable: Ruminations on fragile ecosystems “, Kochi Muziris Biennale 2022-23 invited Satellite Programme, Mocha Art Café, Synagogue Lane, Jew Town, Kochi (13 December 2022 to 10 April 2023)
- India Art Fair, 2023 New Delhi
- “India art Fair-2022”,
- “The politics of Paper” a group show at Emami art, Kolkata, curated by Ushmita Sahu
- “ Hub India-Maximum Minimum” at Artissima International fair of contemporary art 2021, Italy, Jointly curated by Davide Quadrio and Myna Mukherjee, at Torino Italy
- “ Disruptive Confluences” a museum show with thirteen artists from India, Part of a three-part museum show titled “ Classical Radical” at Palazzo Madama, Museo Civico d’Arte Antica, Torino, Italy, Jointly curated by Davide Quadrio and Myna Mukherjee,
- “Multitudes and Assemblages” a museum show with a group of artists from India, Part of a three-part museum show titled “ Classical Radical” at Accademia Albertina di Belle Arti di Torino, Italy, Jointly curated by Davide Quadrio and Myna Mukherjee,
- “Quarantine” an online group show at Studio -4, Mumbai
- “After the masters; Breaking steps-walking with” an online group exhibition by Kala Bhavana Faculty members at Emami art, Kolkata, Curated by Anshuman Dasgupta.
- “Suburban Shadows” Solo exhibition at Emami art gallery, Kolkata.
- -Participated in an online exhibition of Asian Higher Fine Arts Education, hosted by Yunnan Provincial Department of Education, Organized by the ASEAN-China Arts colleges alliance, Yunnan artists association and Yunnan Arts University.
- “Lockdown Diaries” an online group exhibition at CIMA art gallery, Kolkata
- “Art: Bengal Now”, a group show of Bengal Contemporary artists, Curated by Pranab Ranjan Ray, Jointly organised by Gandhara art Gallery, Kolkata and Dhoomimal art Gallery, New Delhi, at Dhoomimal art Gallery, New Delhi

Select Exhibitions:

2015 - 2019

- “Anthology of Anecdotes”, a group show at Ganges art gallery, Kolkata
- “Kursi” a group exhibition of Sculptures, Paintings and Installations at Sarjan art Gallery Baroda, curated by Sandhya Bordeweker
- “Blue India” a group exhibition curated by Insang Song, for Art Asia art Fair-2018, at Kintex Convention Center in Korea, from 22nd to 25th November.
- “Text as Text, Part-II”, a group exhibition at gallery Art and Soul, Mumbai, Curated by Subhalaxmi Sukla.
- “Constellations” – a group exhibition at Bihar Museum, Patna, Bihar
- “Written on Water” a group exhibition at Gallery Beyond, Mumbai
- “Art of Bengal” – a group exhibition of Bengal Contemporary art at ICCR, Kolkata
- “ PART/TRAP” a group show of eleven contemporary artists at Gallery Ragini, New Delhi, Curated by Anoop Kamath.
- “ Response” a new-media and installation show at Gems Cinema (an abandoned cinema hall) , Organized by CIMA art gallery, Kolkata; Curated by Rakhi Sarkar.
- ‘SSVAD collectives’ a group show at Kalakriti art gallery, Hyderabad
- “Artists Postcards” at Busan International art Fair-2017, Bexco, Busan, Korea, 7th to 11th December, Curated by Artists Center, Mumbai.
- “Exhibition of works done at National Artists’ Camp”-with a group of 16 young contemporary artists, Organised by Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath, Bangalore
- Daegu-India Fine arts Exchange Exhibition at ICCR, at Daegu arts centre, 13, exhibition hall, organized by Korean Fine Arts Association in Daegu Branch, South Korea.
- “ Fields of Depth’- an exhibition of photography at Ganges art Gallery in collaboration with AM (art Multi-Disciplines) Studio
- “Eclectique” a group show at Harrington Arts Centre Kolkata organized by Gandhara Art Gallery Kolkata
- Korea-India Exchange Exhibition at ICCR, Kolkata, a part of ongoing cultural exchange programme between Department of Painting, Kala Bhavana and Daegu Culture & Art Center, Korean Fine Arts Association in Daegu Branch, South Korea.
- “The Summer Show” – a group show at CIMA art gallery, Kolkata
- "The Bird Project", - a group show at open studio Vadodara to support VCARE, Vadodara
- "Poetic of Pluralities",- mapping the pedagogy and practice of artists emerging from Kala Bhavana since 1980s. Curated by Ushmita Sahu. At gallery Site art Space, Vadodara
- India Fine Arts Exchange Exhibition, Period: Nov. 2 – 8, 2015, Venue: Exhibit Hall No. 11 ~ 13 of Daegu Culture & Arts Center, Organizer: Korean Fine Arts Association in Daegu Branch, South Korea, Sponsor: Daegu Metropolitan City
- "Winds of Time" a group show of six artists, Jayashree Chakraborty, Chandra Bhattacharjee, Atin Basak, Debnath Basu, Aditya Basak and Prasanta Sahu, at Mirage art Gallery, Kolkata
- "Ensemble" - a group show at Kalakriti art gallery, Hyderabad

Emami Art, Kolkata, is one of India's most significant art galleries and a critical space for cultural production. The gallery focuses on a future-forward, complex, multi-dimensional approach. It is steadfast in advocating for emerging, mid-career and established artists and engaging with contemporary and historical material. The gallery also aims to create dynamic, wide-ranging registers of exhibition-making and viewing.

In addition to hosting exhibitions and participating in national and international events and fairs, Emami Art has diverse parallel programming. Emami Art has launched the EA Locus in Focus to provide a voice to local and regional communities through ongoing short and long-term projects. EA Incubator & Learning integrates both the physical and virtual interfaces. It helps the arts community free access to regular mentorship programs, workshops, residency opportunities and innovative educational activities that facilitate artistic development, help build collaborative networks and provides a supportive environment for emerging talent. As a centre of excellence, Emami Art identifies as a platform rather than just a facility.

Critical discourses, interactions, documentation and exchange are also essential to our mandate. Under the umbrella of EA Discourse, we develop and produce original writing, periodicals and catalogues that focus on artistic, creative and pedagogical materials. As part of our knowledge-making and archiving process, our regular lineup of talks, seminars, panel discussions and conversations with artists, curators and key partners is helping to establish a safe space for critical engagement.

Emami Art has adopted the inclusive, symbiotic framework, where profitability supports sustainable resource regeneration and public service. The gallery is a green building and strictly maintains free access to all policy. Deeply committed to promoting a regional, national and international agenda through innovative and alternative programming, emphasis on community and socially relevant engagements, institutional partnerships and more via a multi-year vision for the future, Emami Art is a catalyst of change, research, innovation and inclusivity.

