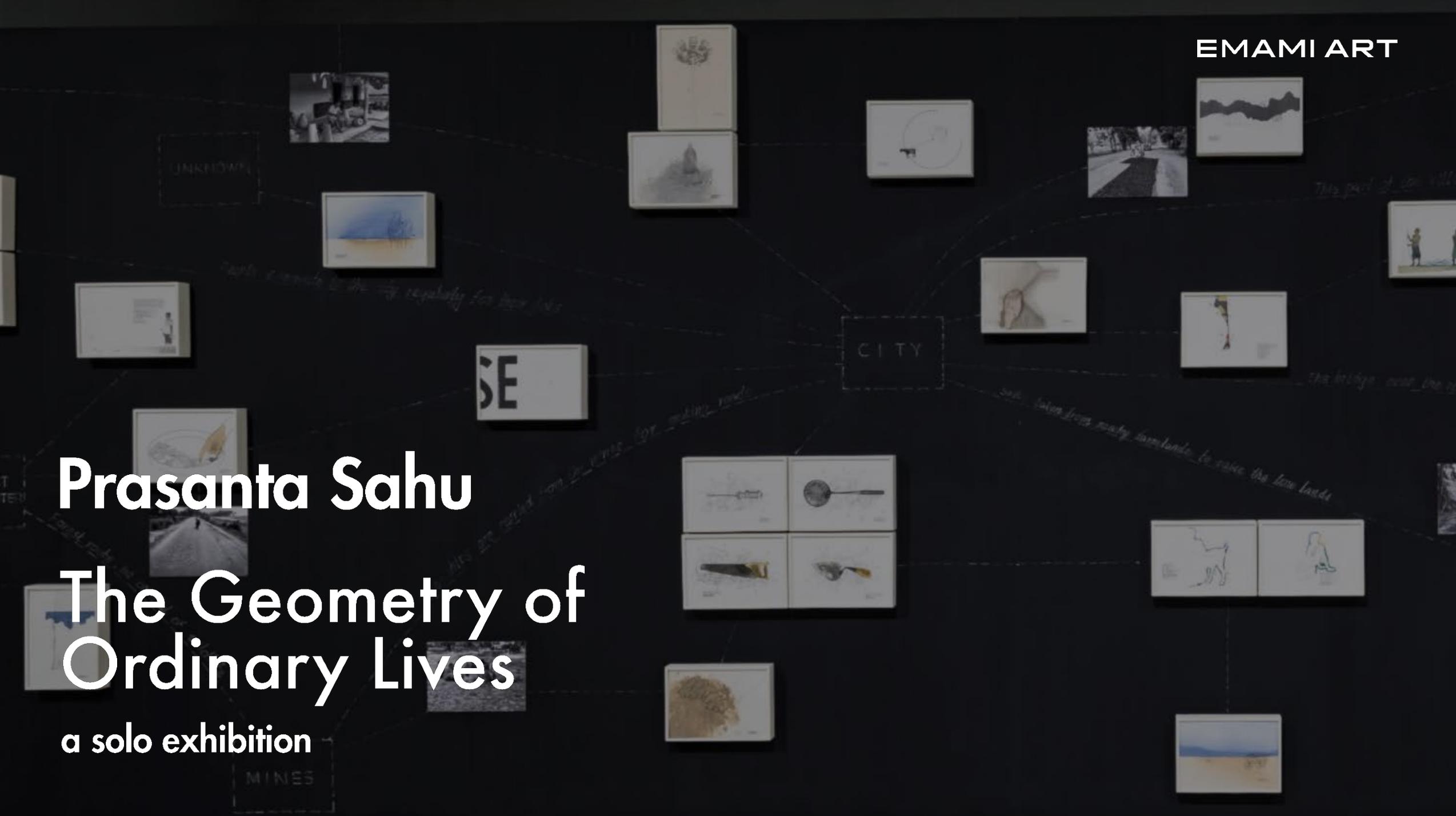


# Prasanta Sahu

## The Geometry of Ordinary Lives

a solo exhibition



EMAMI ART

# Prasanta Sahu

## The Geometry of Ordinary Lives

a solo exhibition

April 25 – June 21, 2025  
Gallery 1, Ground Floor, Emami Art

### *The Geometry of Ordinary Lives* A solo Exhibition by Prasanta Sahu

The solo exhibition *The Geometry of Ordinary Lives* presents Prasanta Sahu's decade-long inquiry into the intersection of art, research, and lived experience. This exhibition encapsulates the evolution of his interdisciplinary practice, characterised by a synthesis of diverse mediums and epistemologies to explore the subtleties of rural and suburban life through traditional knowledge, pre-industrial practices, and inherited wisdom.

At the core of his work is a critical engagement with generational knowledge and its transmission. He considers the workshops of blacksmiths, carpenters, potters, and craftsmen as dynamic repositories where techniques, philosophies, and stories are orally shared and safeguarded. Sahu's work examines how these traditions persist despite the homogenization of economic and socio-political forces. His research-driven approach incorporates textual documentation, diagrammatic studies, object casting, interviews, and audio recordings of artisans engaged in generational occupations. The numerical, statistical, and diagrammatic elements in his work function as representational devices and indices of traditions, offering a methodological framework for understanding the fluidity of knowledge as it is practiced, adapted, and transferred.

Read exhibition note [HERE](#)



**Prasanta Sahu**, born in 1968 in Odisha, India, completed his diploma in Electrical Engineering (1987) before enrolling to study art at Kala Bhavana, Visva Bharati University, Santiniketan. There, he earned his BFA in painting in 1998, followed by a Master's degree in painting from M.S. University, Baroda, in 2000.

Sahu's solo shows include *Anatomy of a Vegetable: Ruminations on Fragile Ecosystems* as part of the Kochi Muziris Biennale 2022-23 Invited Satellite Programs; *Suburban Shadows* at Emami Art, Kolkata, in 2020, and *Blueprint of a City* at Kalakriti Art Gallery, Hyderabad in 2016.

Sahu has shown widely both within and outside the country and participated in numerous workshops and residencies. Some select participations are *All That is Hidden: Mapping Departures in Landscape, Terrains and Geographies*, Emami Art, Kolkata, 2024; *The Politics of Paper*, Emami Art, Kolkata, 2022; *Hub India-Maximum Minimum*, Artissima International Art Fair of Contemporary Art, Torino, Italy, 2021; *Disruptive Confluences* at Palazzo Madama, Museo Civico d'Arte Antica, Torino and *Multitudes and Assemblages* at Accademia Albertina di Belle Arti di Torino, a three-part museum show in 2021; *Art: Bengal Now*, Bengal Contemporary artists, jointly organised by Gandhara art Gallery, Kolkata and Dhoomimal art Gallery, New Delhi, New Delhi, 2020; *Anthology of Anecdotes*, Ganges Art Gallery, Kolkata, 2019; *Kursi*, a group show of sculptures, paintings and installations, Sarjan art Gallery, Baroda, 2019; Blue India Art Asia Art Fair, Korea, 2018; *Constellations*, Bihar Museum, Patna, 2018; *Postcards*, Busan International art Fair, Korea, 2017; 16 young contemporary artists, Karnataka Chithrakala Parisath, Bangalore, 2017; Daegu-India Korean Fine Arts Association South Korea, 2015-2017; 7th Biennial of contemporary Indian art, Bharat Bhavan, Bhopal, 2017; among many others.

He has been invited as visiting faculty by several universities, including the Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts, Burapha University, Thailand; University of Dhaka, Bangladesh; University of Hyderabad, Sarojini Naidu School of Fine Arts and Communication, Hyderabad. Since 2001, Sahu has been teaching in the Department of Painting at Kala Bhavana, Visva Bharati University, and he is currently the head of the Department of Painting. He lives and works in Santiniketan.



Prasanta Sahu discussing his practice



Prasanta Sahu at work at his studio in Santiniketan.



Prasanta Sahu working on his installation as a part of the exhibition *The Geometry of Ordinary Lives*



Watch Preview Film



Watch Preview Film



Watch Preview Film



Watch Preview Film



Watch Preview Film



Exhibition Walkthrough with Prasanta Sahu, Ushmita Sahu and Sayanth RS  
April 25, 2025 | Gallery 1, Ground Floor





Installation view

# The Geometry of Ordinary Lives

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At the core of his work is a critical engagement with generational knowledge and its transmission. He considers the workshops of blacksmiths, carpenters, potters, and craftsmen as dynamic repositories where techniques, philosophies, and stories are orally shared and safeguarded. Sahu's work examines how these traditions persist despite the homogenization of economic and socio-political forces. His research-driven approach incorporates textual documentation, diagrammatic studies, object casting, interviews, and audio recordings of artisans engaged in generational occupations. The numerical, statistical, and diagrammatic elements in his work function as representational devices and indices of traditions, offering a methodological framework for understanding the fluidity of knowledge as it is practised, adapted, and transferred.

Sahu's artistic vocabulary is shaped by his engineering background and early experiences with survey mapping and technical drafting. The principles of cartography profoundly influence his visual lexicon, where spatial logic and geometric structuring serve as conceptual frameworks to illustrate the interconnectedness of craft, oral traditions, and embodied knowledge. Beyond this systematic approach, poetry plays a crucial role in his practice, offering both a conceptual and emotional foundation. He often perceives the inherent logic of certain acts as poetic, situating them within an abstract, almost metaphysical realm. The interplay of absence and presence, along with the non-linearity of narratives, resonates with poetic sensibilities, transforming his work into a site of cultural continuity where practice and memory intertwine.

Ultimately, *The Geometry of Ordinary Lives* reimagines artistic practice as a means of epistemological preservation. By integrating cartographic logic, archival inquiry, and poetic sensibility, Sahu constructs a visual repository that interrogates the resilience of ancient wisdom amid rapid transformations.

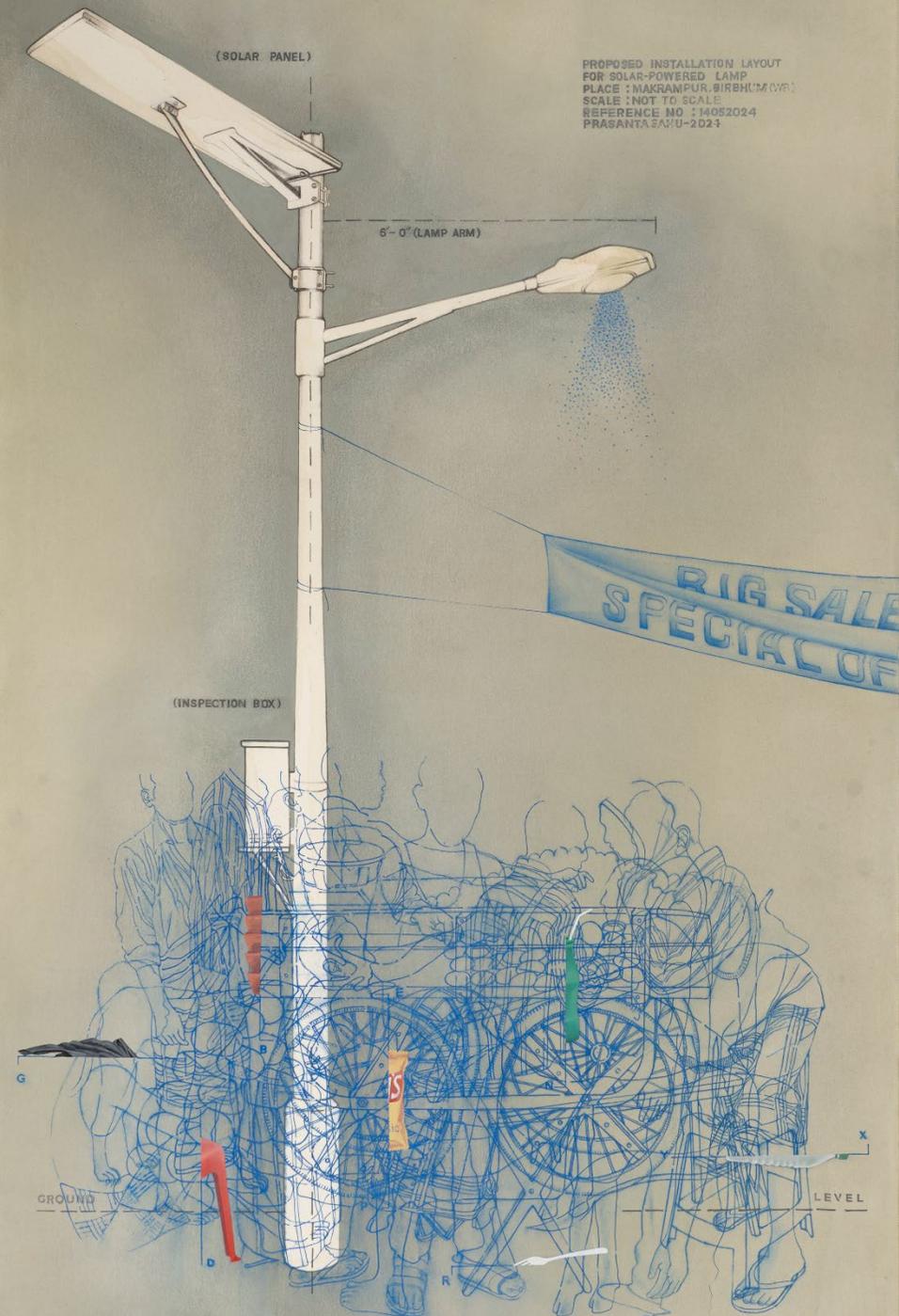
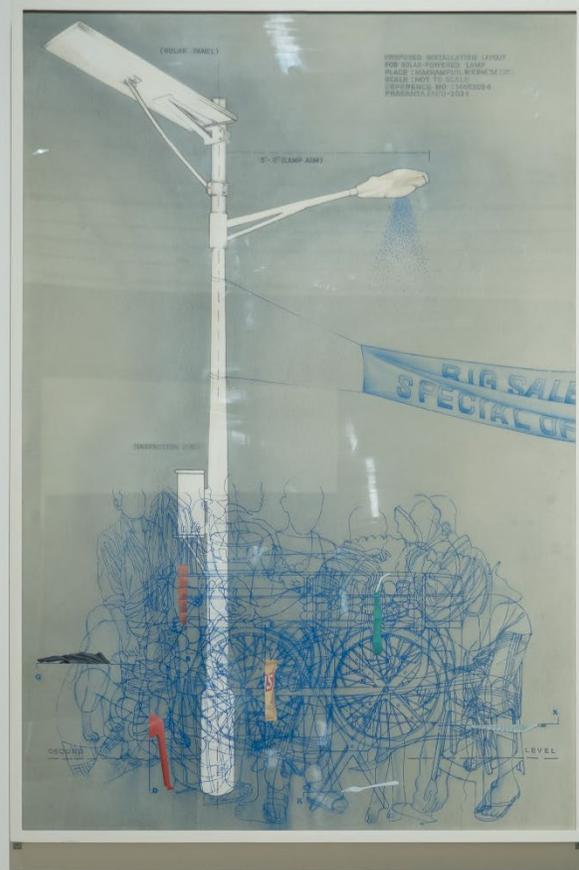


Installation view



*Elements I Forgot to Add While Designing a Solar Lamp in Our Locality*

The work combines technical drawings of a proposed solar street lamp with scenes of evening activities in a rural area. The lamp post, a common gathering point, becomes a hub for small businesses and social interactions. The manually rendered technical drawing is from the artist's experience with engineering studies, and the discipline typically wouldn't allow the superimposed elements he has added here – people, objects, and events that reflect our socio-political and economic realities – the daily life of ordinary people.









## "Pahali Pradhan's Dream"

In the pre-dawn hours,  
before sunrise claims  
this corner of the earth,  
Pahali Pradhan rises  
and walks to his field,  
where crops stretch and sway.

He stands amidst the green,  
beside the scarecrow's  
watchful gaze,  
and dreams of roots  
bursting forth from his feet,  
delving deep into the earth.

Tendrils creep  
around his limbs,  
and stems of various crops  
converge into his bloodstream,  
nourished by his life force;

His wife, son and daughter  
pluck fresh vegetables  
from his body.

His feet anchored,  
roots deep in the land,  
seasons come and go—  
scorching summers,  
harsh winters,  
relentless monsoons.

Yet, he stands steadfast,  
as bees, insects,  
and birds visit and thrive  
When the plants bloom,  
pollination unfolds,  
he feels alive.

Prasanta Sahu  
5th February 2024

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*Pahali Pradhan's Dream draws inspiration from a character named 'Pahali' in the legendary Odia author Sachchidananda Routray's novel Andharua, written in the 1970s. The character Pahali is a farmer struggling with numerous social issues. This poem, however, speaks about a living person of the same name, and also a farmer from Prasanta Sahu's native land. When he compares them, he finds negligible or no difference between their times.*

'PAHALI PRADHAN'S DREAM'  
PAHALI PRADHAN'S DREAM  
IN THE PRE-DAWN HOURS,  
BEFORE SUNRISE CLAIMS  
THIS CORNER OF THE EARTH,  
PAHALI PRADHAN RISES  
AND WALKS TO HIS FIELD,  
WHERE CROPS STRETCH AND SWAY.  
HE STANDS AMIDST THE GREEN,  
BESIDE THE SCARECROW'S  
WATCHFUL GAZE,  
AND DREAMS OF ROOTS  
BURSTING FORTH FROM HIS FEET,  
DELVING DEEP INTO THE EARTH.  
TENDRILS CREEP  
AROUND HIS LIMBS,  
AND STEMS OF VARIOUS CROPS  
CONVERGE INTO HIS BLOODSTREAM,  
NOURISHED BY HIS LIFE FORCE;  
HIS WIFE, SON AND DAUGHTER  
PLUCK FRESH VEGETABLES  
FROM HIS BODY.  
HIS FEET ANCHORED,  
ROOTS DEEP IN THE LAND,  
SEASONS COME AND GO—  
SCORCHING SUMMERS,  
HARSH WINTERS,  
RELENTLESS MONSOONS.  
YET, HE STANDS STEADFAST,  
AS BEES, INSECTS,  
AND BIRDS VISIT AND THRIVE  
WHEN THE PLANTS BLOOM,  
POLLINATION UNFOLDS,  
HE FEELS ALIVE.  
PRASANTA SAHU  
5TH FEBRUARY 2024

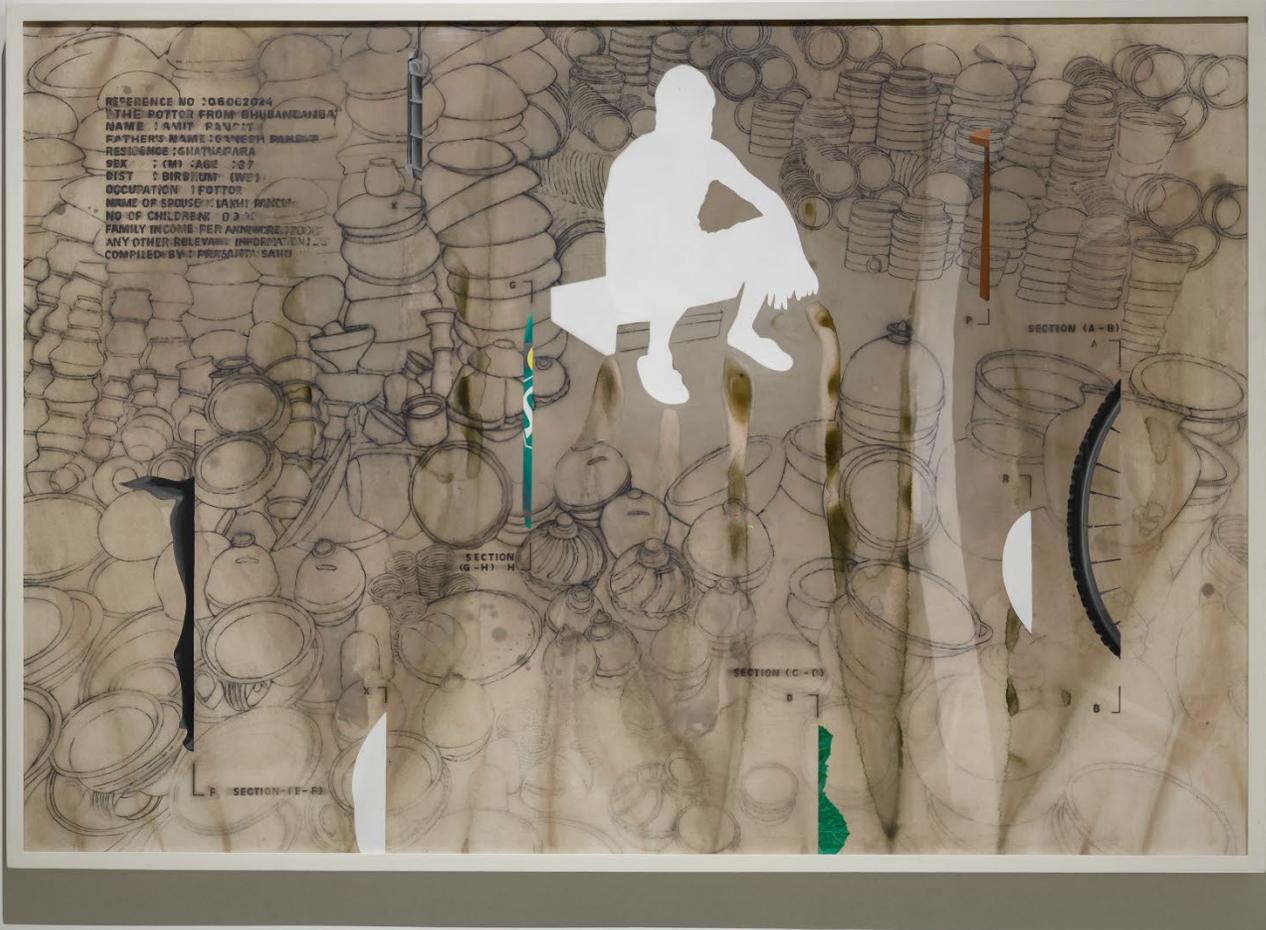




*Ancestral Fragments* is inspired by the artist's memory of his hometown in Odisha, showing how a single land is divided into many with time. The hand-rendered map of his village, Chaughari, includes details like plot numbers to serve as the backdrop of the narrative. The map shows family members from both sides measuring the land using a rope, an ancient practice. While inspired by personal experiences, the work connects the narratives to the broader themes of land division, conversion, and the complexities that come afterwards.



Installation view



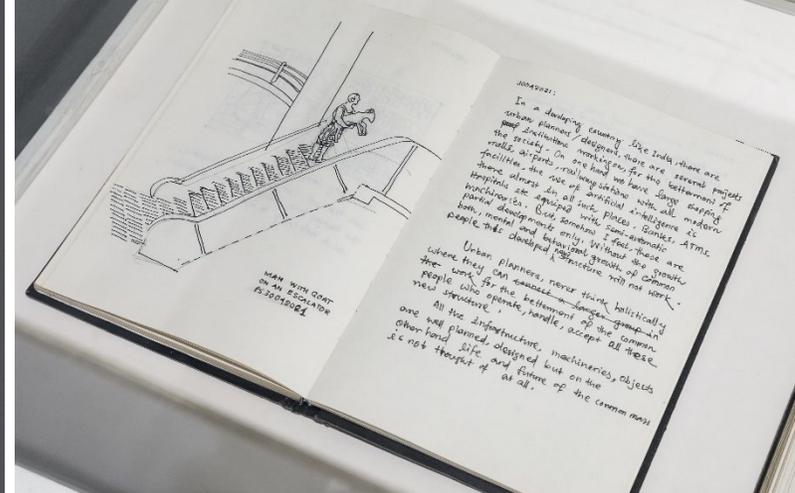
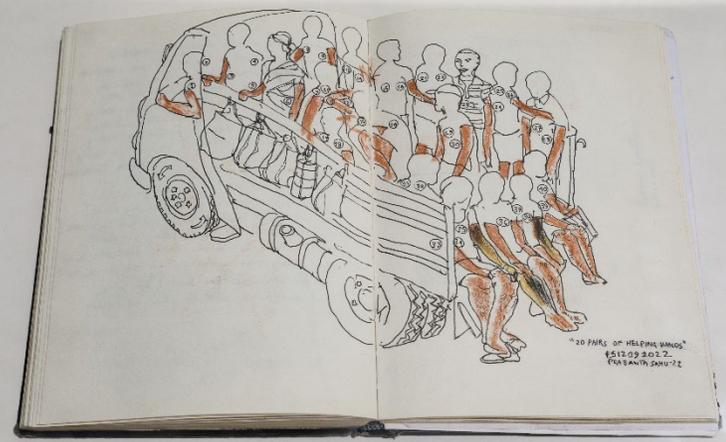
*Vessels of Memory* explores engineering related to traditional occupations in ancient times and their survival over centuries. In this century of artificial intelligence and robotics, we can also see potters, blacksmiths, and cobblers in their tiny workshops. The touch of the human hand gives shape to an object; the manual fabrication of a tool, hand-woven fabrics, and intricate and complex patterns attract the artist. The workshops are vital institutions that impart traditional craft knowledge to future generations.



Installation view



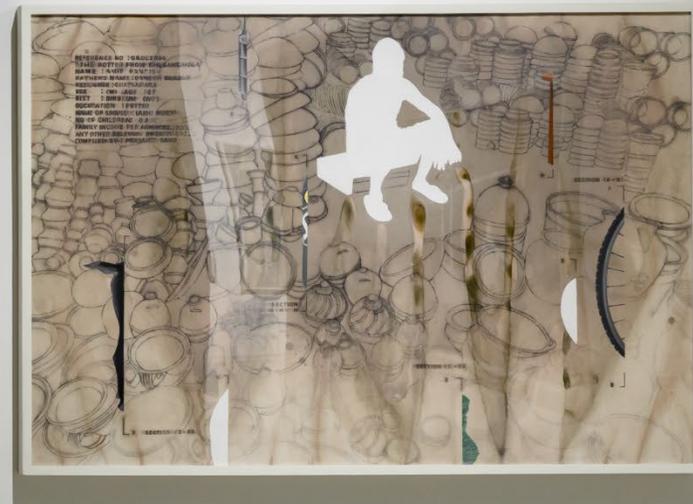
*An Inquiry into the Smoke* explores engineering related to traditional occupations in ancient times and their survival over centuries. In this century of artificial intelligence and robotics, we can also see potters, blacksmiths, and cobblers in their tiny workshops. The touch of the human hand gives shape to an object; the manual fabrication of a tool, hand-woven fabrics, and intricate and complex patterns attract the artist. The workshops are vital institutions that impart traditional craft knowledge to future generations.

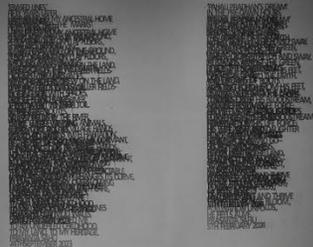
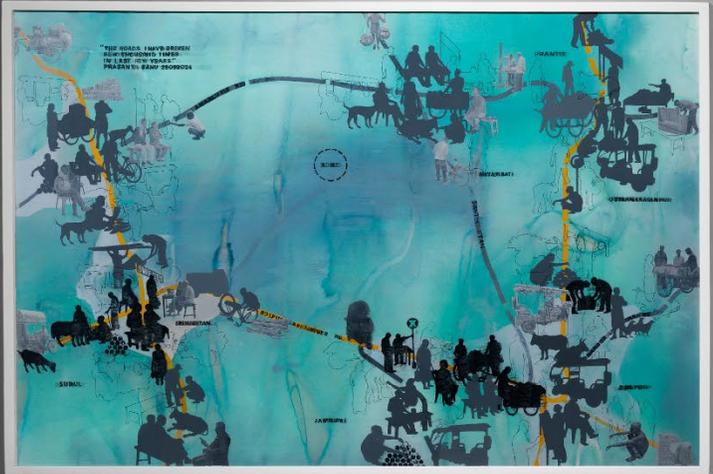


Installation view



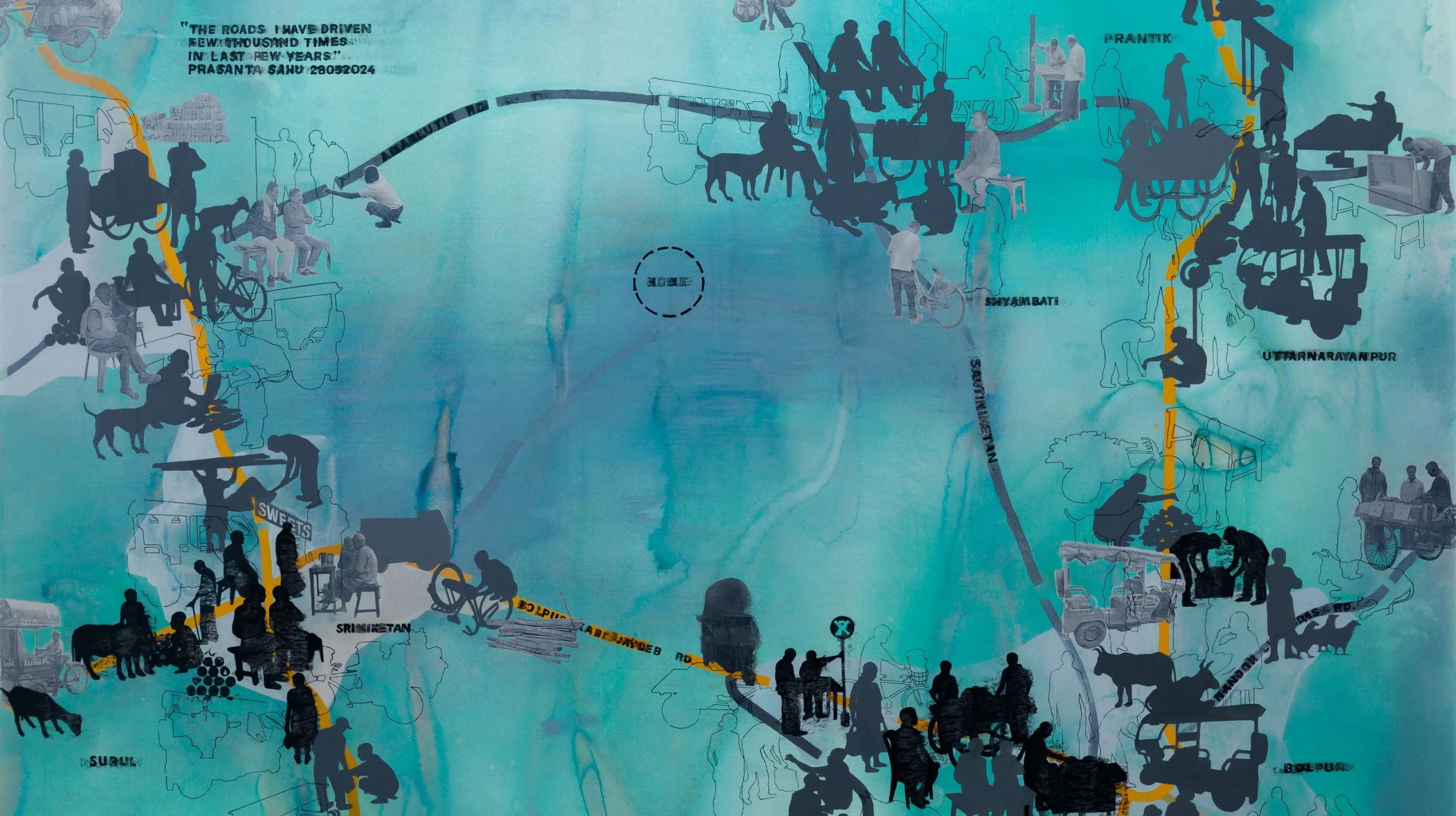
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*Mapping My Neighbourhood* shows the artist's daily commute routes. To create this work, the artist has taken numerous photographs of people and their different activities and transferred them directly onto the painting's surface without distortion. Later, he developed it with line drawings from memory, depicting everyday street scenes he encountered. The map was from Google, and the studio was named 'home' in the circled area of the map.

"THE ROADS I HAVE DRIVEN  
FEW THOUSAND TIMES  
IN LAST FEW YEARS"  
PRASANTA SAHU 28052024



HOME

PRANTIK

SHYAMBATI

UTTARNARAYANPUR

SAKTINIKETAN

SWEETS

SRINIKETAN

BOLPUR ABUJYDEB RD

DAS RD

BRINSON

SURUL

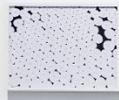
BOLPUR



*The installation **The Geometry of Ordinary Lives** showcases everyday life scenes, edited to reveal intricate relationships between people, objects, and occupations. It highlights unrecognized institutions providing vocational training to young, unemployed individuals, equipping them with technical skills and livelihood opportunities. These institutions remain unnoticed despite their vital role in skill development.*



*The installation focuses on young workers in a rural sweet factory, expertly crafting traditional Indian rasgollas. The footage captures their precise, mechanical movements, creating hundreds of identical rasgollas. The rasgollas float in utensils, forming mesmerizing patterns. As workers add rasgollas to the pot, captivating honeycomb-like patterns emerge.*



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days are filled  
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The set of eleven drawings as a part of installation *The Geometry of Ordinary Lives* showing Sahu's trademark approach and style sheds light on the intersection of tradition, skill, and the unseen forces that shape our world.



"Prasanta Sahu is an artist sensitised to the crisis we have engineered. In the face of ecological and social transformations, he records pre-industrial practices of his ancestral village in rural Odisha. In this preservation of knowledge comes the ability to offer solutions. Sahu's method is diaristic and pedantic. He notes and sketches day in, day out, the character and agricultural processes of India's outlying village communities. His medium is in service of this chronicling. Whether sketching, photographing, casting or collecting newspaper stories and recording conversations — irrespective of being an interlocutor or not — Sahu is idiosyncratically archiving people, their practices and products."  
Dr. Coo Robert-Komreddi

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Dr. Cleo Robert-Komireddi

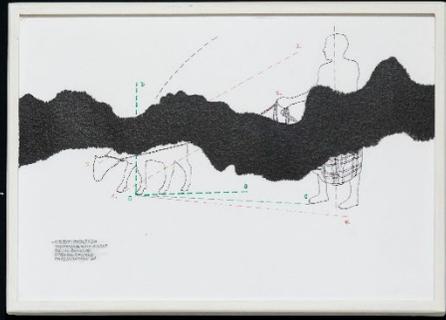




...AND THE HOME  
...THE GROUND  
...FLOORS  
...ON THE LAND  
...THE RIVER  
...THE BRIDGE  
...THE HOUSE  
...THE WALL  
...THE FENCE  
...THE DOOR  
...THE WINDOW  
...THE ROOF  
...THE FLOOR  
...THE CEILING  
...THE WALL  
...THE FENCE  
...THE DOOR  
...THE WINDOW  
...THE ROOF  
...THE FLOOR  
...THE CEILING



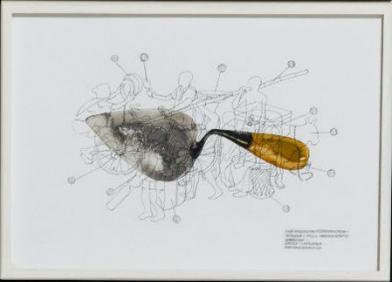
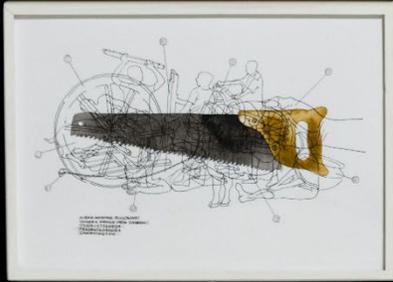
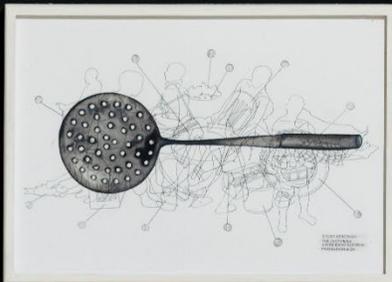
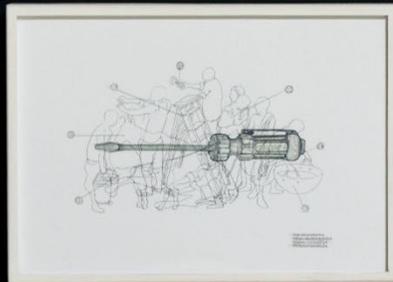
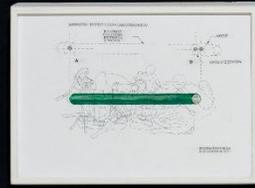
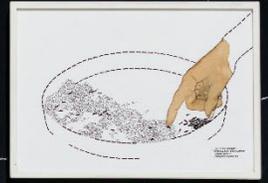
Installation view



*owns contact Block*

DISTRICT HEADQUARTERS

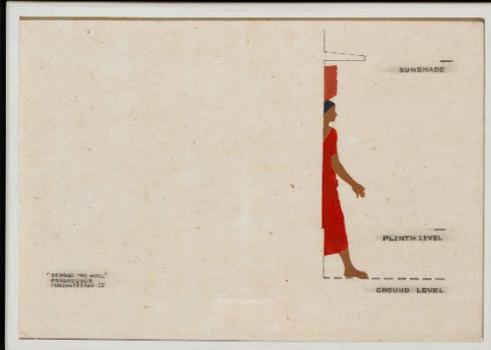
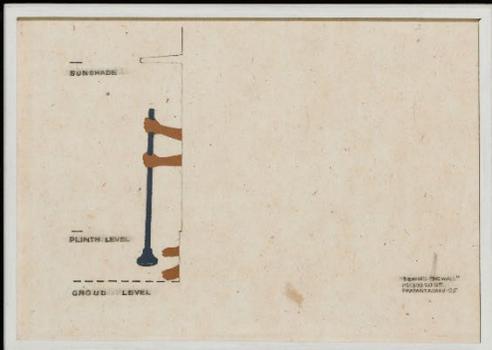
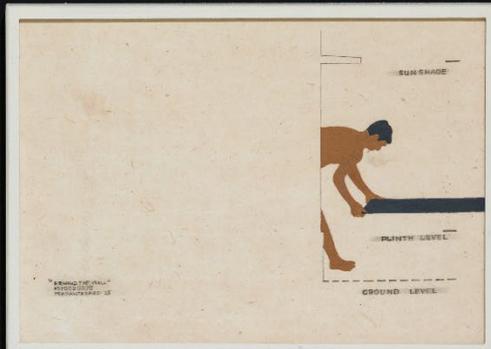
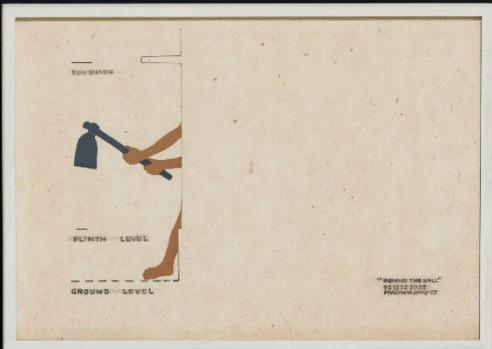
*Forest route, be careful of wildlife*



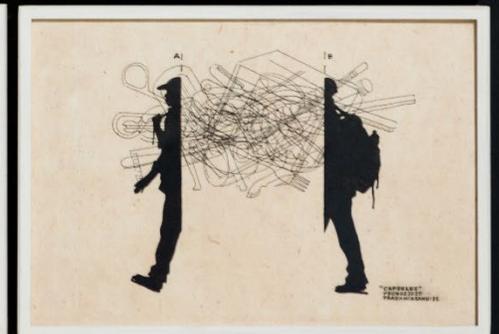
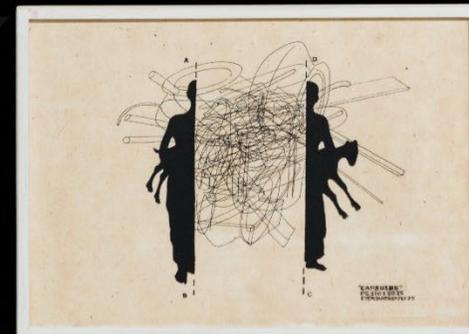
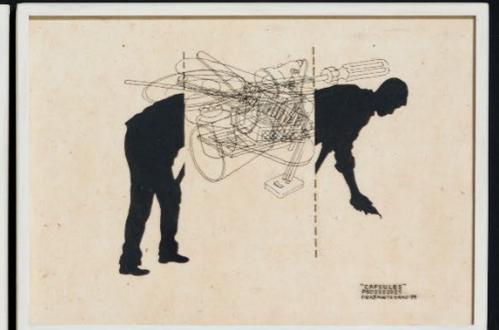
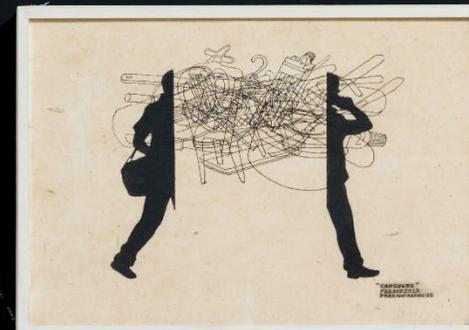
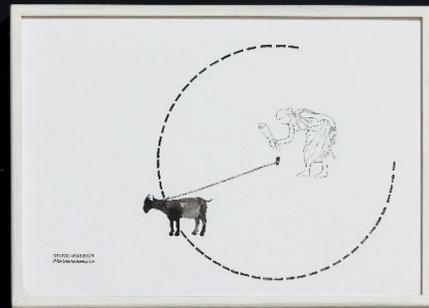
*commute to the city regularly for their*



Details of the installation



Details of the installation





*This expansive installation comprises of paintings, drawings and texts that depict a vast area of a civil habitation, almost reminiscent of an aerial satellite map. Through a layered composition, it illustrates how an inhabited space is interconnected with the infrastructural and living things. The imageries result from the artist's continuous engagements with people, places and situations. It invokes different perspectives on these usual civil spaces, ordinary activities, and livelihoods. This single drawing installation gives a deeper insight into Prasanta Sahu's artistic practice and style.*



CITY

GRAM PANCHAYAT OFFICE

THERE WAS A LAKE HERE

SACRED SPACE

*This part of the village was more green earlier*

*The bridge over the river is long and...*

*...taken from nearby farmlands to raise the low lands*

Installation view



*Discussions over a cup of tea are a common cultural practice. People spend hours at the tea stalls, engaging in conversations with friends. The collective chatter is often deafening and impossible to ignore. Despite the chaotic noise, the topics are fascinating and diverse, ranging from current politics, policy critiques, and religious discussions to films, fashion trends, weather, agriculture, economy, and personal matters.*

*An enthusiast of these informal gatherings, Prasanta Sahu, conceived the idea of an installation showing a pile of terracotta tea cups on a table with audio clips of these discussions. He commissioned a local potter to create 3000 terracotta cups for this project. The cups with words written on them are cut in half, resembling waste.*

Sitaram Pandit, the potter who has made the 3000 terracotta tea cups for this project, has been making tea cups since last the last three decades. He lives in Bolpur, Birbhum.

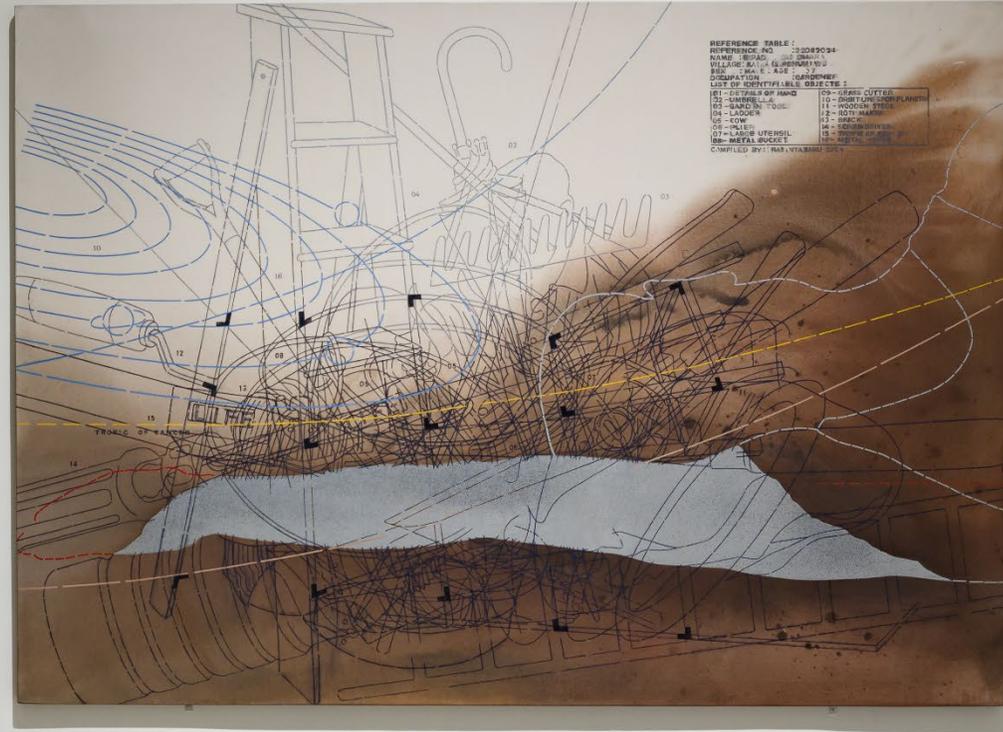
Project assistants: Saniya Malik, Mantu Bhandari





Gallery 2

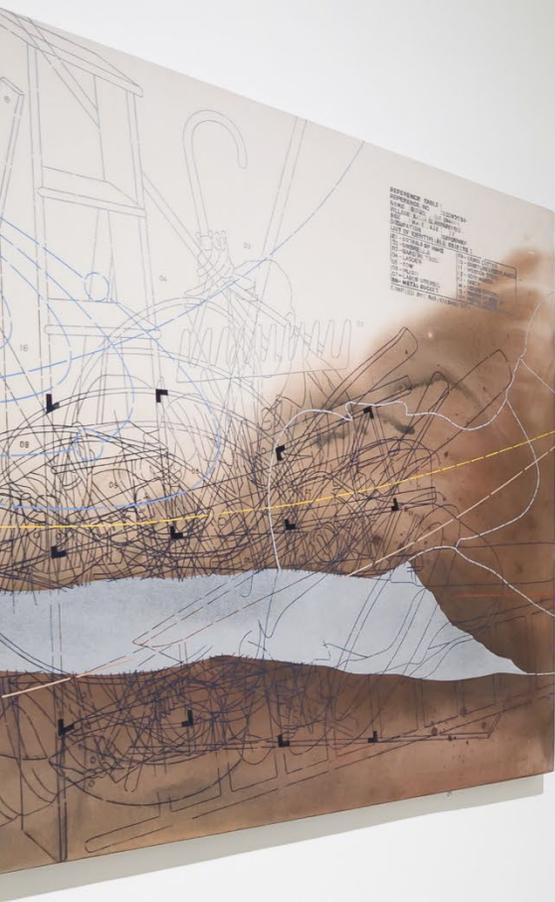
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### *The Resting Hand*

The work developed from interacting with a gardener, exploring the age-old bond between the human body and nature. Prasanta Sahu has used planetary orbit lines, diagrams of our solar system, and the Tropic of Cancer to highlight the nature-human connection, a space silently present there. The bold dark patches in the diagrammatic line drawings are the junction points, creating abstract patterns on the canvas. The objects in the painting are from a list developed through the interaction with the gardener.





*Between the Earth And Space*

The work depicts fragments of a person's limbs transferred onto the canvas and superimposed with line drawings of various objects. Like Prasanta Sahu's other works, this is based on an individual case study. The approach is minimal and suggestive, with the cut-out-like sky, which gives an impression of a landscape beneath it. The imaginary line between the sky and earth replicates an architectural drawing, adding depth and complexity to the work.





*Sitting Man in an Ancient Landscape* features maze-like linear drawings of objects on a massive human back, inspired by the artist's childhood memories of people carrying various objects on their shoulders and backs. The ancient way of human-powered transportation has not been replaced by trolleys and other modern machinery even today.





### The Geometry of Ordinary Lives

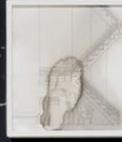
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Installation view

as a part of  
**Prasanta Sahu**  
**The Geometry of Ordinary Lives**  
a solo exhibition

EMAMI ART



CITY

SE

# Workshop & Masterclass by Prasanta Sahu

*The convergence - connecting inner and outer knowledge*

Saturday, May 24, 2025  
11:00 AM onwards  
4th Floor



*The convergence – connecting inner and outer knowledge*  
Workshop & Masterclass by Prasanta Sahu

The workshop employed an interdisciplinary approach to explore the creative process - examining how artists blend methods and perspectives from diverse styles and methods to synthesize external references with internal experiences, knowledge, and emotions. Prasanta Sahu addressed the students and guided them to create distinct paintings, focusing on subjective and objective representation.



The convergence – connecting inner and outer knowledge | Workshop & Masterclass by Prasanta Sahu | May 24, 2025



The convergence – connecting inner and outer knowledge | Workshop & Masterclass by Prasanta Sahu | May 24, 2025

As a part of

**Prasanta Sahu**  
**The Geometry of**  
**Ordinary Lives**

a solo exhibition

EMAMI ART

# Conversation over a cup of tea

Closing Programme:

We invite you for an informal  
conversation with Prasanta Sahu

Moderated by Ushmita Sahu

**Saturday, June 21, 2025**

Ground Floor, Emami Art

5:30 PM

OPEN TO ALL

*Conversation over a cup of tea*

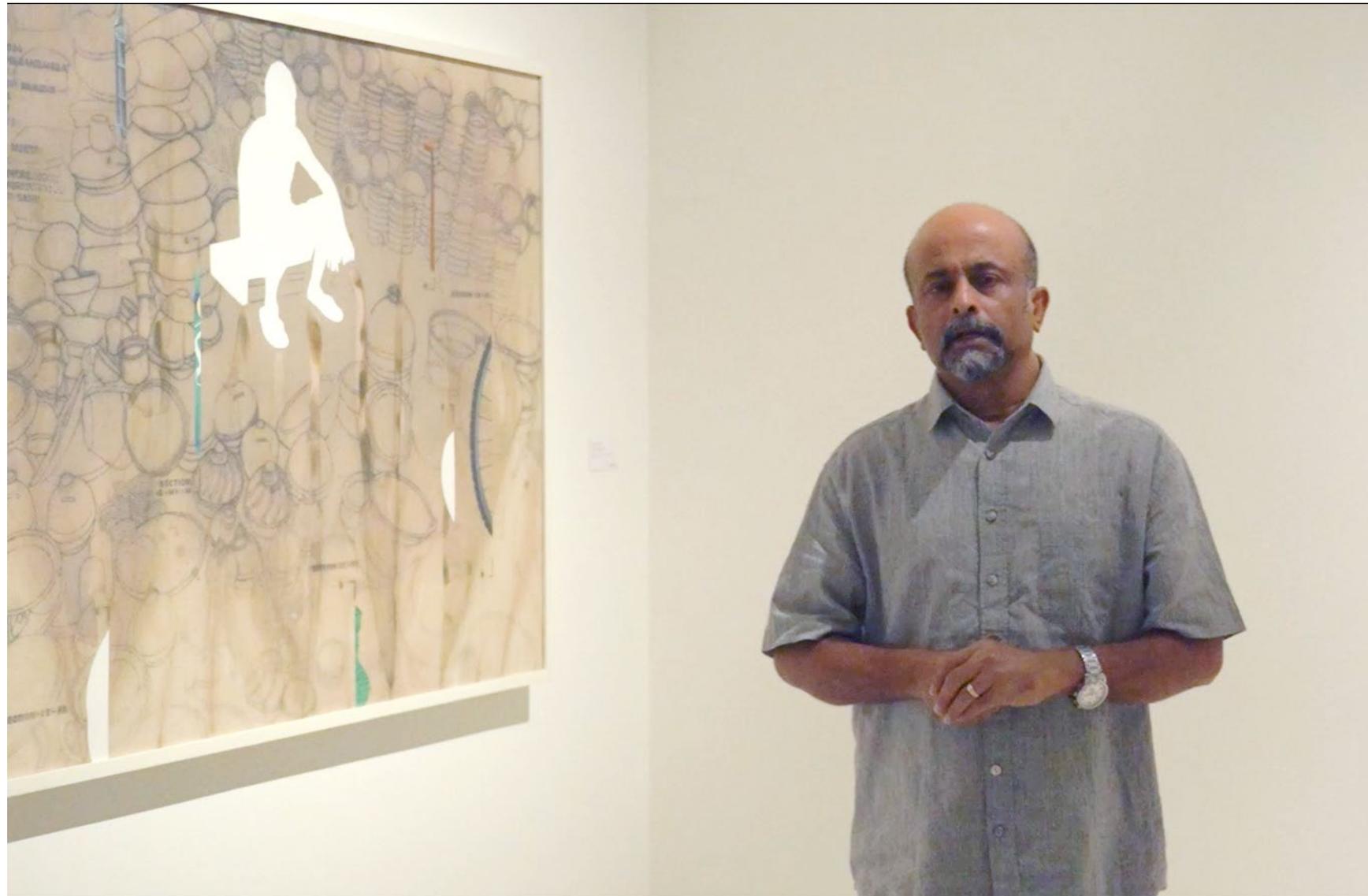
An informal conversation Prasanta Sahu

Moderated by Ushmita Sahu

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Conversation over a cup of tea | An informal conversation Prasanta Sahu, Moderated by Ushmita Sahu | June 21, 2025



Watch the guided walkthrough  
with Prasanta Sahu

## [Artist's Monograph](#)

Published by Emami Art

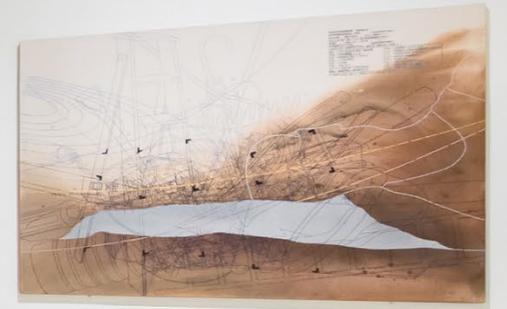
*"I inscribe numbers for different elements or images and then note these down in a reference table like an architectural plan. I enjoy this diagram or user manual-like approach in my drawings and paintings. It is a nod towards a documentation methodology and analytical, empirical data collection. But these also highlight the ambiguous nature of knowledge, the politics of representation and truths hidden from mainstream discourse."*

Excerpt from the monograph

EMAMI ART



**Prasanta Sahu**



**Prasanta Sahu**  
**The Geometry of Ordinary Lives**  
a solo exhibition

April 25 – June 21, 2025  
Gallery 1, Ground Floor, Emami Art