

निसर्ग

A Quagmire for Epiphanies

Curated by **Nikhil Purohit**

- Amrit Kartar • Dilip Ranade • Javed Mulani • Kishor Thakur
- Mithu O • Pankaj Khalode • Pradeep Mishra • Prajakta Palav
- Ranajeet Lade • Yashwant Deshmukh

Opening

1st Sept, 2025 | 5pm onwards

On view till 13th Sept 2025

Presented By
Kamalnayan Bajaj Art Gallery

Curatorial Advisor **Rajesh Pullarwar**





In the 21st century, the meanings of ‘things’ we know and the values we attach to them have become unstable, shifting with a pace faster than any moment in human history. Like feet slipping in marshland, our grasp of the world is continuously unsettled—less about the survival of the fittest, more about the survival of the compatible. At this crossroads of time and thought, we constantly renegotiate meaning, informed by philosophical turns, political upheavals, scientific revelations, and the hyper-access to information. What emerges are fragile terrains of understanding—collective behaviours and individual responses that are always provisional.

Artists, however, hold a distinct capacity: to distill these complexities into contemplative form. Their works act as coordinates for navigating the overwhelming conditions of our present. Through visual frameworks, they open portals into existential anxiety, ecological vulnerability, geopolitical turbulence, politicized ecologies, and the widening gulf between rural and urban realities.

The exhibition “निसरडं nisarāḍa: Quagmires for Epiphanies” positions art as both compass and mirror. In confronting the slipperiness of our times, it seeks to create moments of clarity—epiphanies that illuminate how we might endure, reimagine, and act within the quagmires we inhabit.



एकविसाव्या शतकात, पूर्वी स्थिर मानले जाणारे अर्थ अधिकाधिक अस्थिर व असुरक्षित होत चालले आहेत — हे अर्थ तात्त्विक व राजकीय बदल, वैज्ञानिक शोध, आणि माहितीच्या अति-सुलभ उपलब्धतेमुळे सतत बदलत व नव्याने निर्माण होत आहेत.

या बदलांचा परिणाम सामूहिक वर्तनपद्धती, जाणीवा, आणि वैयक्तिक प्रतिसाद यामध्ये दिसून येतो, ज्यामुळे आपली समज कायमस्वरूपी अस्थिर, निसरडी वाट बनते. जणू काही चिखलट जागेत किंवा दलदलीत पाय ठेवले असावेत, तशी आपल्या जगाबद्दलची समज सतत बदलते आहे — कारण आयुष्याचा वेग मानवाच्या इतिहासात कधी नव्हता इतका वाढलेला आहे. या बदलत्या वास्तवात "सर्वोत्तम" नव्हे तर "सुसंगत" टिकून राहतो. अशा वेळा आणि विचारांच्या वळणावर आपण जवळजवळ प्रत्येक क्षणी गोष्टींचे अर्थ लावण्याचा प्रयत्न करत असतो.

कलाकार तात्त्विक भूमिका, सामाजिक, राजकीय-भौगोलिक अस्थिरता, अस्तित्वासाठीचे संघर्ष, निसर्गाची हानी, ग्रामीण-शहरी जगण्यातील द्वंद्व; या सान्यांकडे तटस्थ होऊन पाहू शकतात आणि आपले निकष कलाकृतींच्या माध्यमातून मांडतात. दर्शकांना प्रदर्शनातील कलाकृतींच्या अनुभवांतून जगाकडे पाहण्याची प्रचिती येऊ शकते. तसेच विविध दृष्टिकोनातून स्वतःचे मापदंड ठरवण्या करिता 'निसरडं- प्रचितीचे स्वानुभव' हे कलाप्रदर्शन साधन ठरू शकते.

About the artist and artworks



Amrit Kartar

An artist without borders, committed to social responsibility.

When capitalism marches in with its machines, the watchdogs of Kerala still know where to raise their voice. Set against the lush, dreamlike landscape of Kerala, Kartar's work stages a confrontation between nature, people, and power. A white man in a hat, flanked by a dog and an excavator, strides in as an emblem of outside capitalist forces, engines capable of uprooting the fragile beauty of this land. In the background, a protest surges; red flags rise in defiance. The artist places himself in the scene, holding a barking dog, joined by others, all straining toward the intruder. They are not just animals, but voices of resistance, instincts refusing to be tamed. This is Kerala's ongoing struggle, to guard its soul from forces that see it only as profit and resource.

Amrit Kartar's practice is rooted in an unshakable commitment to humanity giving voice to the voiceless and confronting the wounds of our time. Rising from the rubble of silence, his works hold a mirror to the fractures of the world. For him, an artist carries no passport, only the responsibility to speak against injustice and awaken dormant hearts. Each work becomes a battlefield where beauty collides with brutality, and the language of images emerges as his sharpest weapon. Kartar does not seek refuge in art but confrontation, a spark that unsettles and stirs. To create, for him, is to resist, to remind humanity that its conscience is not yet buried beneath the debris of indifference.

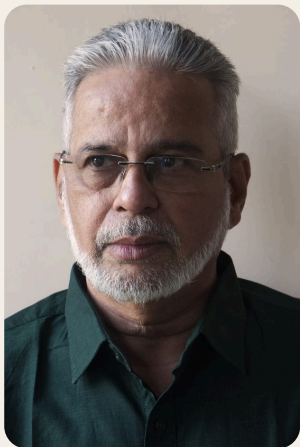
He has exhibited widely across India, with notable presentations at Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai (2017, 2013); Chitrakala Parishath, Bangalore (2016, 2012); Lalit Kala Akademi, Kolkata (2015); and in the Collateral of the Kochi-Muziris Biennale (2012). Kartar was also awarded the Camlin Art Foundation Southern Region Award (2005, Professional Category).

The artist lives and works in Kerala.



Theatre of Life (2024)
Acrylic Colours & Oil Pastel on Canvas
51.6 × 44.9 in
Price on Request

About the artist and artworks



Dilip Ranade

Dilip Ranade (b. 1950) has long been fascinated by the question, “what if?” His speculative imagination regards normality as a mere skin, one to be scalped away to expose the strangeness beneath. Themes such as the derangement of space, time, and identity, the suspension of gravity, and the paradox of distance recur in his practice. His paintings and drawings become cloud chambers for thought experiments, where paradoxes unfold in detail.

Beginning his career in the late 1970s, outside the major centres of Indian art, Ranade had little exposure to Minimalism, Conceptualism, Fluxus, or Arte Povera. His early influences came instead from the idioms of illustration encouraged by Marathi literary magazines such as Satyakatha. Over the years, he evolved into an heir to the surrealist impulses of Poe, Baudelaire, de Chirico, Ernst, and Magritte. These linger in his vigilant cats, leaping greyhounds, and dreamlike architectures. Ranade’s drawings function as embassies of the spirit - negotiations between the conscious, shaping mind and a fugitive, half-glimpsed psychic realm.

He received his Diploma in Drawing and Painting from Sir J. J. School of Art, Mumbai (1971), and the Indo-US Sub-Commission grant for museology (1984). He worked with the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya, Mumbai, across roles including artist and modeler, senior curator of European and Indian modern painting, and exhibition consultant (1971–2015).

In 2013, he received the Balashastrri Jambhekar Puraskar for his Marathi translation of Ranjit Hoskote’s catalogue *The Crafting of Reality*. He is associate editor of *The Encyclopaedia: Visual Art of Maharashtra* (Pundole Art Gallery, 2021). Ranade lives and works in Mumbai.



Politician (2024)
Water Colour on Paper
18 x 14.5 in
Price on Request



Behind a Wing (2023)
Water Colour on Paper
13.5 X 9.5in
Price on Request



End of Evil (2018)
Water Colour on Paper
6.75 X 10.5 in
Price on Request



Surrender (2018)
Water Colour on Paper
6.75 X 10.5 in
Price on Request

About the artist and artworks



Javed Mulani

Javed Mulani works with a visual language that draws on metaphor, humour, and vivid symbolism to probe contemporary life. His paintings and drawings often stage animals, especially the Ass—as stand-ins for human emotions, contradictions, and socio-political dilemmas. With a blend of satire and empathy, his practice reflects on the pressures of urban existence, the anxieties of progress, and the illusions of power, while retaining an openness to vulnerability and resilience.

In his recent series 'Ass it Is', Mulani takes the Ass as a central metaphor. Across history, this figure has been burdened with projections of docility, stubbornness, or servitude, even as its true qualities of patience and endurance are overlooked. For the artist, the Ass becomes both mirror and metaphor, exposing the paradox of human ambition: the pursuit of convenience and success that often leads to new forms of discontent. These works invite viewers to pause, recognize their own projections, and reflect on life, sometimes simply as it is.

Mulani studied painting at Sir J. J. School of Art, Mumbai (BFA 2002, MFA 2005) and has exhibited widely, with solo shows at Jehangir Art Gallery and participation in international platforms in Istanbul and Switzerland. He has also been recognised with awards and scholarships from the Ministry of Tourism & Culture, Lalibhai Dharamdas Bhambani Scholarship, and various art societies. Alongside his practice, he contributes to pedagogy as Assistant Professor at MIT Institute of Design, Pune.



ASsemble (2023)
Water Colour on Paper
28.35 x 22.05 x 1.97 in
Price on Request



Greedy Ass (2023)
Water Colour on Paper
28.35 x 22.05 x 1.97 in
Price on Request



Ass@liquor (2019)
Acrylic on Canvas
30 x 23.5 in
Price on Request

About the artist and artworks



Kishor Thakur

Kishor Thakur (b. 1957) is a sculptor whose practice is deeply informed by his rural upbringing and enduring ties to agriculture. This background not only shaped his sensitivity to material but also instilled in him a worldview where human existence is inseparable from cycles of land, labour, and sustenance. His works often carry within them the tensions between agrarian rootedness and the accelerated pace of urbanisation, forming a critique of the alienation, moral erosion, and disquiet that rapid modern life brings.

At the same time, Thakur's allegiance to the values of modernist sculpture, clarity of form, respect for material integrity, and faith in abstraction as a language of universality, remains unwavering. His explorations across wood, marble, metal, fibre glass, and bronze are never just technical feats but philosophical meditations: "Creation," he notes, "is the confluence of our perception of the external world and the internal world, our consciousness." His early works compelled viewers towards sharp commentaries on changing moralities and urban excesses, but gradually, he moved towards an openness that invites multiple readings. In this, the viewer becomes an active participant in the creative process, sharing in the catharsis, reflection, or even quiet exaltation his sculptures evoke.

Educated at Sir J. J. School of Art, Mumbai, where he specialised in Sculpture and Metal Craft, Thakur went on to receive numerous accolades, including the National Awards from Lalit Kala Akademi (Jaipur, 1991; New Delhi, 2004). His works have been exhibited at significant national and international platforms, including the 7th Triennale-India and the Asian-European Art Biennial in Ankara. Today, his sculptures form part of major collections such as the National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi, and Goa Kala Akademi.

Thakur's practice remains a negotiation between rootedness and rupture: a sculptural search for balance amid the dissonances of contemporary life, grounded in the soil yet reaching towards the modernist ideals of universality.



Untitled (2003)
Fibre Glass
27 x 9 x 7 in
Price on Request



Untitled
Aluminium, Golden Foiling
Variable
Not for Sale



Power (2003)
Bronze
18 x 15 x 30 in
Price on Request

About the artist and artworks



Mithu O

Mithu O, a Mumbai-based multidisciplinary artist, engages with questions of identity, memory, and cultural belonging through allegorical forms. Using motifs such as hair, ribbons, and everyday accessories, she reflects on how individuals negotiate their position in society while shaping and being shaped by shared histories. Her practice spans performance, video, painting, and writing—mediums she weaves together to articulate the tensions between personal memory and cultural constructs.

With academic grounding in Indian Aesthetics and Comparative Mythology, and further studies in Film Appreciation at FTII, Pune, Mithu brings an analytical and layered perspective to her practice. Her experience in researching and editing *Work in Language*, a publication on Akbar Padamsee, further informs her sensitivity to the relationship between image, text, and interpretation. Her works have been presented internationally, including in Egypt, China, Romania, and Poland, as well as across India.

In her current series, Mithu re-imagines therianthropic forms—hybrid human-animal figures seen in mythologies and popular culture. Through motifs such as the severed human head, the animal torso, and the mother-goddess form, she confronts what societies remember and what they consign to oblivion. By giving presence to the “excluded” and “forgotten,” her work opens a space where myth, memory, and empathy converge.



Remnants of Goddess I (2025)
Water Colour on Paper
21 x 30 in
Price on Request

About the artist and artworks

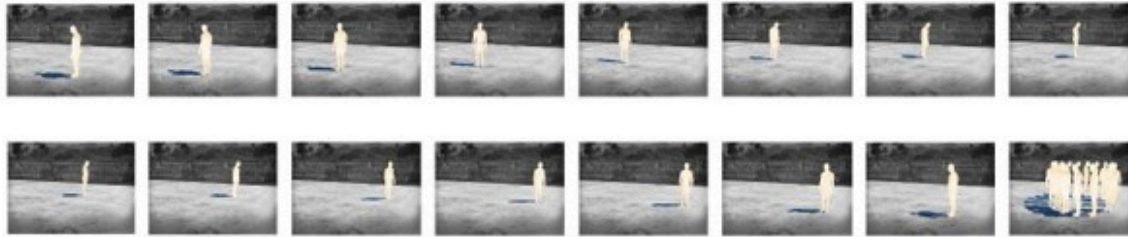


Pankaj Khalode

Pankaj Khalode (b. 1985) is a multimedia artist working across drawing, painting, digital illustration, photography, and animation. His practice is autobiographical—charting the self in relation to intimate space and social surround. Unlike self-portraits the works are confrontations with the inner self: confessional, elusive, and formally spare, where figurative and suggestive elements mingle to stage desire, vulnerability, and the push-pull between intimacy and distance.

The work presented in this exhibition reflects his engagement during a residency at Mount Abu, where he meditates on anthropocentricity: a figure (played by the artist himself) circumambulates a circle, keeping man metaphorically and materially at the world's centre against the backdrop of towering Mt. Abu. In the context of this group exhibition, Khalode's work amplifies the theme of existence as paradox—where the self becomes both subject and object, presence and absence, confession and concealment.

Khalode is an alumnus of Sir J.J. School of Art, Mumbai (BFA, 2010). His work has been shown at Jehangir Art Gallery, Gallery Beyond, Art Gate Gallery, Priyasari Artist Studio (Vadodara), and the Khajuraho Art Festival. He has received awards including the South Central Zone Award (2008), the Royal Academy of Art & Culture Award, Hyderabad (2007), and a Merit Award from Sir J.J. School of Art (2006). His practice has also been shaped by residencies at Niv Art Gallery, Mount Abu (2014), River Foundation, Bangalore (2012), and South Central Zone, Goa (2011), and his works are held in institutional and private collections in India and abroad.



An essence of space , 7.75' x 10.75', digital print, 2025 , sale price :- 1,30,000/-

Anthropocentricity (2025)
Digital Print on Archival Paper- A set of 16 frames
7.75 × 10.75 in (each)
Price on Request

About the artist and artworks



Pradeep Mishra

Pradeep's practice is rooted in the belief of nurturing life through art, where space becomes an essential element of the work, carrying and radiating positive energy. An artist from Western India, his paintings are imbued with forms of individual beings, drawn from his innate love for nature and its many lives.

In this exhibition, his intention is to foreground the presence of fellow beings that inhabit our everyday surroundings. For him, the question is not who serves whom, but how life is mutually shared and sustained through interdependence. Within the coexistence of life and death, his works affirm a collective joy—of hope, of nurturing, and of celebrating life itself.

Born in 1977, Pradeep L Mishra is an alumnus of Sir J J School of Art and an artist in residence of Khoj Peers-Residency (2004), he has been part of major Public Art Projects, National exhibitions (New Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Bangalore, Cochin) and International exhibitions (New York, USA, Tokyo, Japan, Hong Kong, Dubai, UAE)



Living High Hope (Set of 08 works) (2020-2025)
Oil, Acrylic and Charcoal Pastels on Paper
9.45 X 12.6 in (Each)
Price on Request



Living High Hope (2023)
Oil on Canvas
60 x 84 in
Price on Request



Labour Love (2016)
Oil and Charcoal on Jute Cloth
72 × 54 in
Price on Request

About the artist and artworks

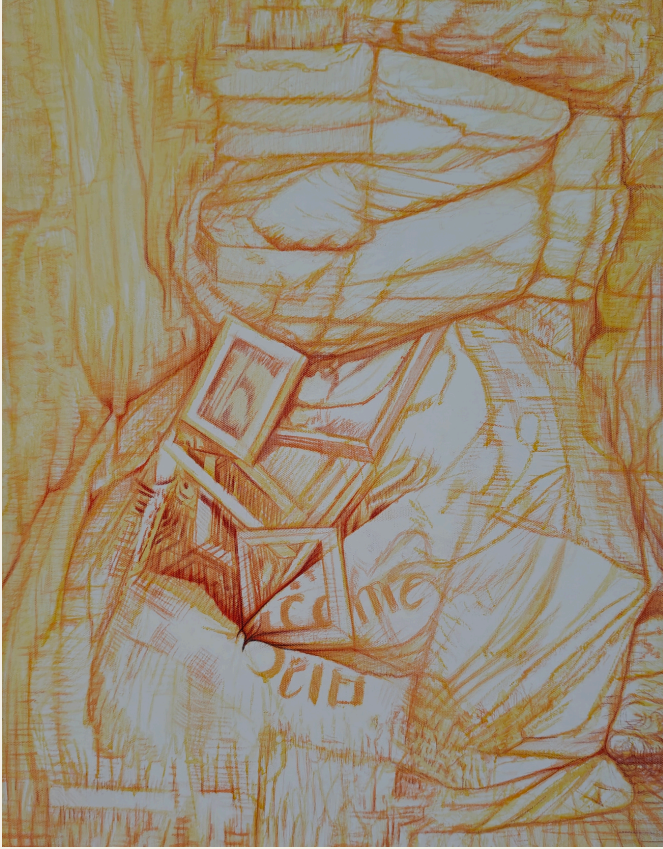


Prajakta Palav

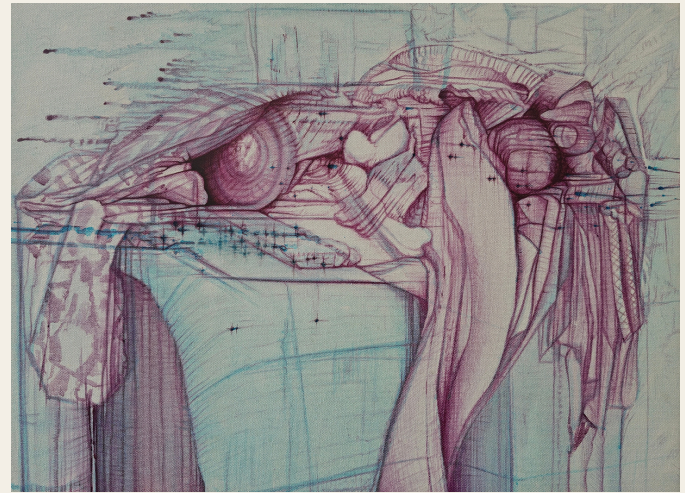
Born and raised in Mumbai, Prajakta Palav draws inspiration from the city's gaothans, suburbs, and their transient, layered landscapes. Observing the city's shifting, unmanageable terrains, she connects these external stimuli with her own bodily experiences—including that of motherhood. Her early works employed dried, pill-like fragments of acrylic paint placed on canvas and animated through subtle mechanised movement. This shift from two-dimensional surface to sculptural object marked a turning point in her practice, as paint itself began to act as both material and subject.

In her recent works, Prajakta experiments with thin, gelatinous layers of acrylic that echo the synthetic textures of Mumbai's urban environment. Paint becomes a process, surface, and object simultaneously, while time and nature are invited to intervene in her practice. She often interrupts the act of painting by revisiting and re-photographing her references, allowing memory, experience, and body-awareness to reshape the work. For her, painting is an earthing process: an inward exploration where her sense of scale, vision, and perception shift in dialogue with the city. The series *Inside* emerges from this layered process, where scattered and blurred references clarify themselves only through the act of painting.

Prajakta Palav studied at Sir J.J. School of Art, Mumbai (2002). She has held solo exhibitions at Gallery Beyond, Vadehra Art Gallery, Kalakriti Art Gallery, and Grosvenor Gallery, London, among others. She has participated in major group shows, residencies, and community-based art projects across India and abroad, and has been awarded the NGMA Future Artist Award (2006) and the KAVA Award (2006).

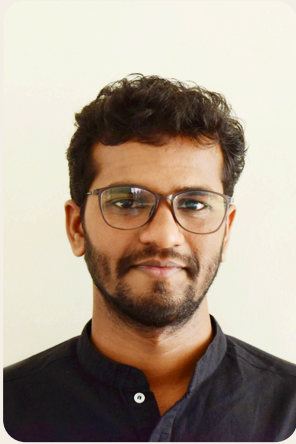


Tiny corner II (2025)
Acrylic on Canvas
24 x 18 in
Price on Request



Tiny corner III (2025)
Acrylic on Canvas
24 x 18 in
Price on Request

About the artist and artworks



Ranajeet Lade

Ranajeet Lade's practice traverses sculpture, photography, and mixed media to explore the ways in which we recognize, distort, and reinterpret nature. His works begin with the observation that our minds instinctively identify objects through familiar forms—yet when two or more everyday shapes are fused together, recognition falters. This deliberate ambiguity invites curiosity and multiple interpretations. Through hybrid forms of flora and fauna, Lade playfully resists fixed identities while questioning ideas of genetic modification, hybridization, and the implications of human intervention in nature—particularly our food choices.

Growing up in a region blessed with fertile soil and harvests year-round, Lade developed a deep respect for farming, cultural heritage, and the ethnography of rural communities. These early influences continue to inform his art, which often draws upon biomimicry—borrowing patterns, textures, and structures from his immediate surroundings. His sculptures and photographs alike embody this sensibility: tiny insects, overlooked in daily life, become magnified through his lens, while sculptural hybrids echo both satire and reverence for nature's resilience.

As a visual artist and dedicated educator with a postgraduate degree in Sculpture, Lade integrates sustainable and natural materials into his work, reflecting his commitment to ecological balance. His practice is both an inquiry and an invitation—provoking viewers to slow down, engage deeply, and reconsider their relationship with the environment. By presenting nature through unexpected perspectives, Lade highlights its fragility and resilience, while opening a space for reflection, wonder, and renewed awareness.



Apple (2021)
Recycled Beachwood
14 X 12 X 12 in
Price on Request



Bitter Banana (2020)
Salvaged Teakwood
12 in
Price on Request



Labour Love (2016)
8 × 2 × 2 in
Price on Request

About the artist and artworks



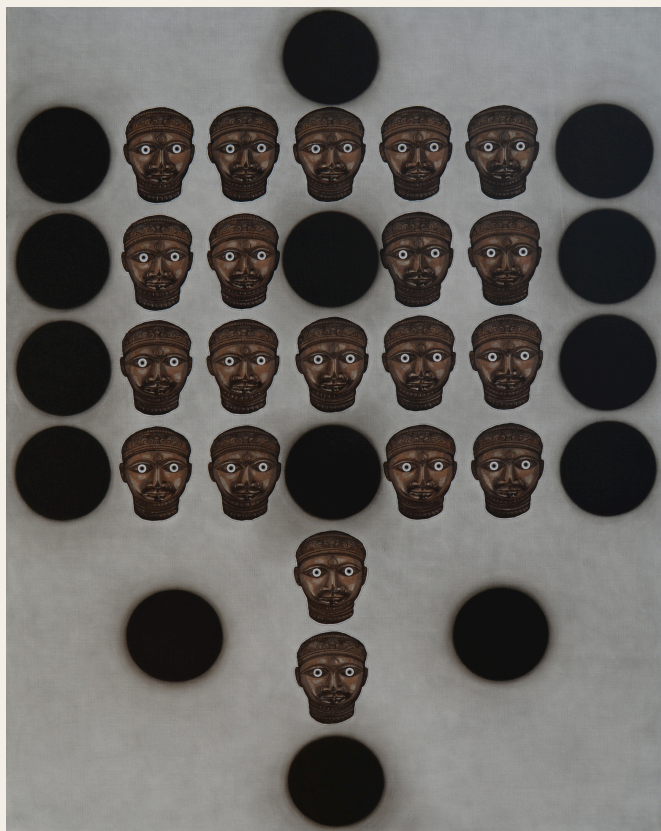
Yashwant Deshmukh

Yashwant Deshmukh's paintings are rooted in the layering of visual memory, where conscious and subconscious perceptions interlace with emotion, cultural experience, and social reflection. His practice often turns inward, probing how private thought and public behavior intersect, and how individual expression is shaped by the silent codes of community life. The landscapes in his work frequently draw from his early impressions of the dry plains and vast open skies of Akola, his hometown in Maharashtra—terrain that continues to shape his pared-down visual language.

Within this larger continuum, works such as लोक बघतात (Lok Baghtat / People Watching) embody his interest in cultural behavior and social awareness. The painting reflects on the ever-present gaze of society—how one remains alert to judgment even when alone, how actions are silently measured by what “others will say.” Deshmukh transforms this anxiety into visual meditations of restraint and precision, inviting viewers to reflect on their own negotiations with visibility, morality, and collective norms.

Born in Akola in 1963, Deshmukh studied painting at Sir J. J. School of Art, Mumbai, and has exhibited widely across India and internationally. He received the Grand Prize at the Bharat Bhavan Biennial, Bhopal (1996), and has presented solo exhibitions at Bombay Art Gallery, Jehangir Art Gallery, and Art & Soul, Mumbai, among others. His recent solo, *Contours of Continuum* (Art Alive Gallery, New Delhi, 2024), extends his long-standing inquiry into form, perception, and the subtle play between individuality and conformity.

Through his works, Deshmukh sustains a quiet but incisive dialogue on how we see ourselves—always in relation to the watchful presence of others.



Lok Baghtat- People Watching (2016)
Acrylic and Charcoal on Canvas
47 × 60 in
Price on Request

Acknowledgement

Participating Artists

- Amrit Kartar
 - Dilip Ranade
 - Javed Mulani
 - Kishor Thakur
 - Mithu O
 - Pankaj Khalode
 - Pradeep Mishra
 - Prajakta Palav
 - Ranajeet Lade
 - Yashwant Deshmukh
-
- Pooja Bajaj
 - Rajesh Pullarwar
 - Jitendra Kudiya
 - Team Kamalnayan Bajaj Art Gallery
 - Sneha Purohit

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