

কলা



INSIDE OUT

Art exhibition by
Promiti Hossain

22 October - 10 November, 2016.
Everyday 5 pm - 8 pm

Curated by Wakilur Rahman & Kehkasha Sabah

KALA KENDRA
a non-profit space for art
1/11, Iqbal Road, Mohammadpur
Dhaka-1207, Bangladesh
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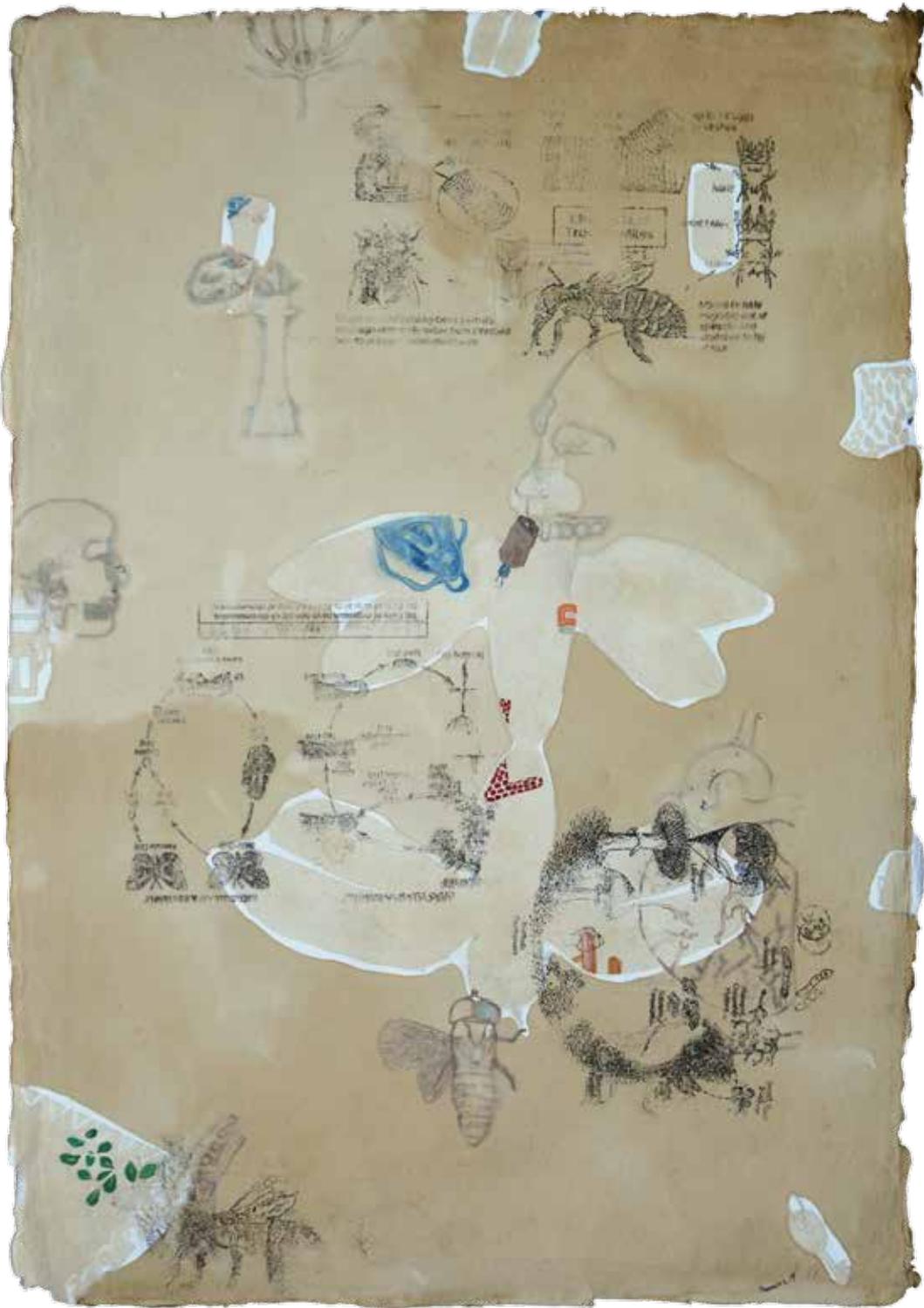
Coming from a dual religious background, I often feel like an individual with a neutral religious identity. I see myself as a humanist and feel disquiet about the injustice over the minorities. Since I have grown up in a Muslim dominating surrounding, I have always supported the oppressed people of the minor communities like the Hindus and other religions and ethnic people of my country (Bangladesh).

When I first came to India, I felt the Hindu domination and hatred over the minor castes and religions. From both these experiences I learnt that the oppression over the weak is a common practice by the powerful in the world. And it is also a harsh truth that the painful breathing of the oppressed hearts have gradually lost its power of creating noise. In such manner I have always commiserated with the women, subjected to chauvinism which has been a burning issue of our society for centuries.

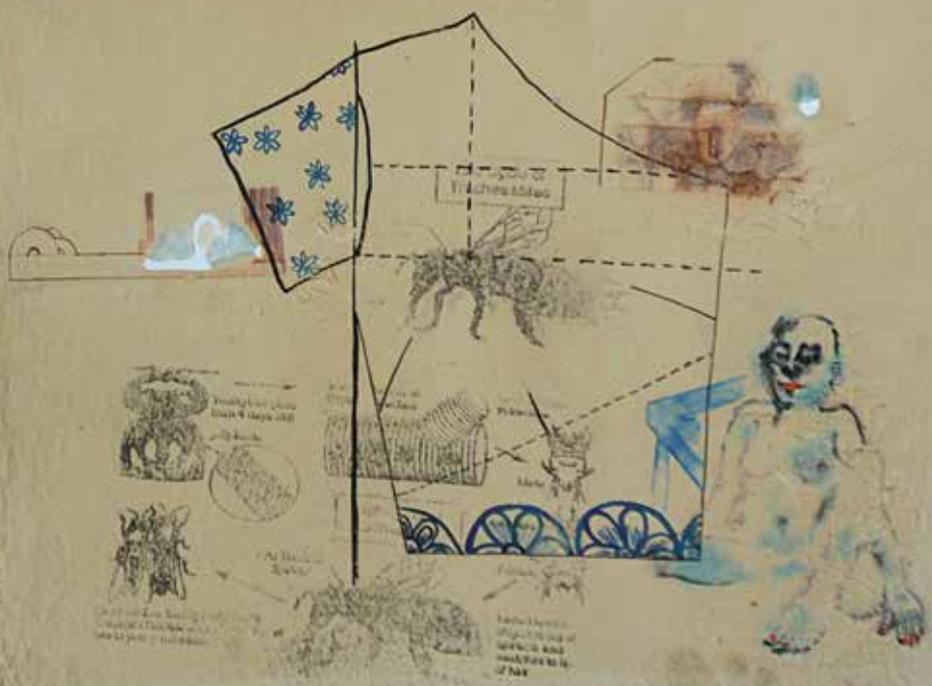
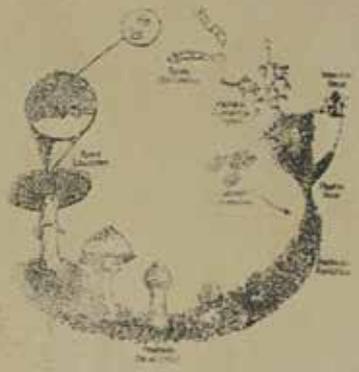
My work is the medium which helps me to bring out the deepest consternation as I go through daily news and articles of violence and exploitation of innumerable kinds at various levels, on women.

The method, medium and the materials I implement in my work is as important as the subject I choose to work with. I use both organic and inorganic objects within my composition. The materials I use are usually coffee, ink, earth colour, acrylic gouache, water colour, and often use the accidental effects that take place naturally. I deliberately keep these effects to represent the state of my mind, which is often disturbed, in chaos, and confused. The representation of dead insects in my work question the existence of women of our society. To be more precise, these small insects are often found dead at the corner of our room, half eaten by ants or lizards, which we always overlook or casually sweep away, quite like the women victims we read about everyday in newspapers but fail to react. These helpless women become a part of our normal life. As a woman, the feeling of insecurity is something we live with everyday in our society. We fail to act about it, taking it in as our way of life. The feeling of insecurity and helplessness in each one of us, the women, is the result of the how the society has failed "us". I use biological drawings and diagrammes, directly transferred on to my work surface in my compositions. Playing with negative and positive areas, using objects and symbols from my personal life and cuttings from articles and newspapers are frequently used in my current work. The concept and the core idea of my work is mostly from a personal space which focus on the larger spectrum.

Promiti Hossain



Untitled, Mixed media, 85 x 56 cm, 2016
Womanhood 1, Ink on paper, 32 x 29 cm, 2014 (left page)



1911



Measurements (left page), Womanhood, Mixed media, 85 x 56 cm, 2016

When Promiti Hossain asked me to write few lines for her solo catalogue, I realized that she is no more just a student but an artist in her own right. I clearly remember the day in 2010, when Promiti joined Kala Bhavana as a bachelor's student in Painting, since that distant day six years ago, I have seen her slowly mature as an artist.

In her personality, I can see a sense of responsibility that also reflects in her works. There is very little gap between her practice and the way she conducts her life, this I feel is a very important aspect of art making. When an artist creates works from the depth of his/her personal experience, that carries a slice of the life in it and I feel the same when I see Promiti's works.

She is fairly aware about the critical aesthetics of contemporary art of our time and this is visible in how she approaches her works. Promiti works in different mediums such as painting, drawing and performance and has a good command over these mediums.

I wish her success in all future projects.



Prasanta Sahu

Asst Professor

Department of Painting, Kala Bhavana, Visva Bharati University, Santiniketan 731235, West Bengal, India

Kafka's Metamorphosis, which many consider his finest work, opens with the line – “As Gregor Samsa awoke one morning from uneasy dreams he found himself transformed in his bed into a gigantic insect.” This transformation of a protagonist into a bug that disgusts everyone, even his family, is an allegory about the sense of alienation and absurdity that inflects modern society. It is not too farfetched to look for similar thoughts in the works of Promiti Hossain, which are populated by an assortment of insects – sometimes walking on legs like Samsa, at other times defecating on or parasitizing human presence. It is a dark area of the psych, which this young artist, a recent(2016) alumnus of Kala Bhavana Santiniketan, explores via her mix media on paper Ostilto(Existence) series. Even her other non-serialised works have a pronounced aphid presence that reproduce within the space of her work, mate and cause extensive damage.

Like most young women of her generation, Promiti is quite aware as well as vocal about gender issue, which form the base notes of her conceptual substratum. One may observe reflections of other women artists in her language, but that is excusable in one so young; to emulate is to learn. What one needs to focus on is her passion that is palpable in how she deals with her medium; each work resonates with the conviction of her issue. The sound training in various mediums that she has acquired through her six years in Kala Bhavana stands her in good stead and is visible in her delicate yet skillful handling of watercolour. Promiti also uses drawings, transfers, printmaking and unorthodox mediums like tea and coffee wash to create intriguing tropes of inquiry into discrimination, sexuality and alienation. I wish Promiti Hossain the very best for her premiere solo show and hope that this marks the beginning of a promising career.



Ushmita Sahu

Artist, Writer and Independent Curator,

Department of Painting, Kala Bhavana, Visva Bharati University, Santiniketan 731235, West Bengal, India



Woman's reality, Mixed media, 143 x 116 cm, 2016

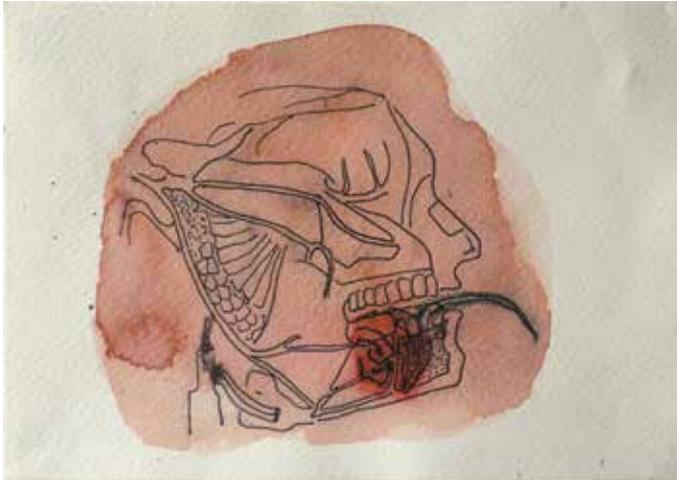


Linear time induces linear thought and action which could lead to catastrophic events .the question is are we living in linear time? In an age of extreme intolerance and irrationality provoking spiral of violence, almost a sequential behavioural silence exists in the realm of human lives. living in silence/with silence becomes a quasi-existential norm. However, in the world of art, artists who do not want to be in the group of 'silent majority' speaks out without fear of being isolated. Promiti is one such artist who is pained to watch the 'spiral of violence' as it unfolds in the society and paints with agony and anger. Promiti's paintings depict the conflicts and contradictions of her own belief system through the prism of womanhood and then extends to the hard realities of life . Childlike in treatment yet profound in its representation of the meaning of chaos and disorder. She uses complex motifs with use of simple materials like water colour, pencil, ink, coffee etc. Like any young artists she is searching and exploring the meaning of life and its many nuances that dictate our lives. I am sure her artistic journey will be very exciting and meaningful.

Amit Mukhopadhyay
Art Historian and Curator
Kolkata, 25th September, 2016



Personal Objects (left page), The ugly part, Mixed media, 56 x 85 cm, 2016



Red rose, Ink on paper, 13 x 18 cm, 2015

Chaos within peace, Mixed media, 139 x 78 cm, 2016 (right page)



Inside out: the works of Promiti Hossain

Promiti Hossain is a young woman with a background of mixed nationalities and religious descent. Born in Bangladesh, she has spent her life mostly with her family in Dhaka, Bangladesh and partly with her family in Santiniketan of West Bengal, India. Embracing both sides of her heritage, she is a humanist with a passionate empathy for the living things with which we share our planet. She has an insider's view of Bengali life in both of its parts which share many common cultural elements, but are also disparate. Today the major political difference between these two regions is based on religion.

Promiti has faced the challenges growing up as a girl and into a young woman in an environment which is flagrantly oppressive and unfair to women. This is true in both her cultural contexts. She also observes a similar exploitation and oppression of minorities by the predominant religious groups in both countries. The distress and anxiety caused by this situation runs through her work which is cloaked in her choice of images and organized with a poetic beauty. She uses a surrealist method of bringing together seemingly unrelated and irreconcilable images to create a powerful drama of contrasts fraught with violence, pain and sadness. The images seem to symbolize wounds, sexuality, fertility, growth and decay, the contradictions encountered in daily life, the underlying meaning and significance of the ordinary, and the anomalies we accept as normal.

Promiti has grown up in an environment where she has learned to love and empathize with nature, plants and animals. It is only to be expected that her work echoes this and draws on images of the flora and fauna that she observes. They are not simply observed from the exterior but are often meticulous reproductions of biological illustrations. Not as we see them but as they truly are, inside out. They are transformed into symbols of regeneration, sexuality and violation. Promiti builds up a vocabulary of symbols which are of personal significance to her, rather like the works of Frida Kahlo, who similarly dealt with the politics of social and biological issues of women. The images defy the usual celebration of beauty as if all things were created to please the human eye. Instead they explore what is beneath the surface, the function, the mechanism.

Promiti uses the surreal method of irrationality to visualize, and perhaps make easier to absorb the disturbing facts she encounters in life. The dismembered insects, torn wings and legs may be a symbol of the domination and violation of the powerful over the weak and marginalized. Women, nature, and the weak are at the mercy of an oppressive patriarchal system, governed by laws of senseless violence, a system which they played a very small role in developing. Objects used in daily life are sensitively brought into the paintings as if to bring into sharper contrast the sinister violence and inconsistencies of the imagery together with the incongruities which exist within the everyday. Her use of lines, textures and washes are delicate and sensitive. Colors are muted and cautiously used to enhance the effect of lines and textures. Red, used in moderation, most often represents blood, or internal organs.

The works of Promiti Hossain are powerful and intense expressions based on intuition and experience, combined with emotion, a pure emotion that only the young are capable of feeling. The paintings are the reflection of the life around her. She herself says, they mirror her stresses and anxieties, a young woman confronting her expected role in a male dominated society and the reality of the 'self' including the mind and body of a woman. She is the subject of her musings which often seems to confront the contradictions of the subject, herself, and herself as seen as the 'other' through the eyes of society. Her emotions are not blunted by exposure; they are sharp, keen and clear. They help her to literally cut through the surface and look inside to expose what lies within, which is clearly not always pretty.

Lalarukh Selim

Professor

Department of Sculpture, Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh.



Confrontation, Mixed media, 56 x 85 cm, 2016



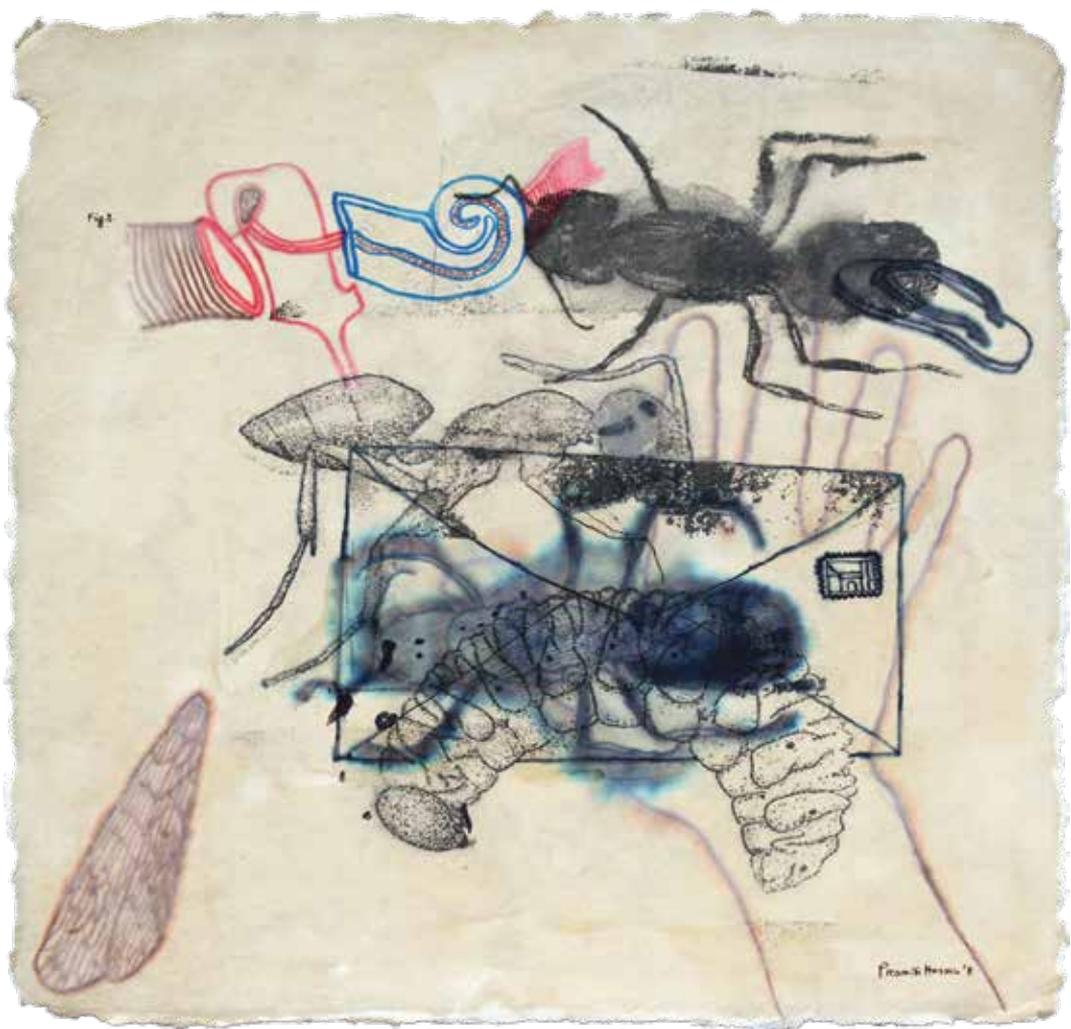


Soul without peace 1, 2, Mixed media, 29 x 21 cm, 2016

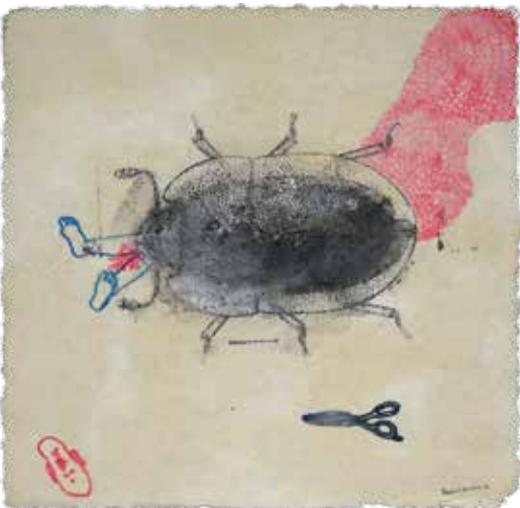


অস্তিত্ব (Existence) 6, 7, 11, 2 (right page), Mixed media, 33 x 33 cm, 2016









अस्तित्व (Existence) 9, 5, 3, 10 (right page), Mixed media, 33 x 33 cm, 2016







Chaotic mind, 85 x 56 cm, (left page), Reflections, Mixed media, 56 x 85 cm, 2016



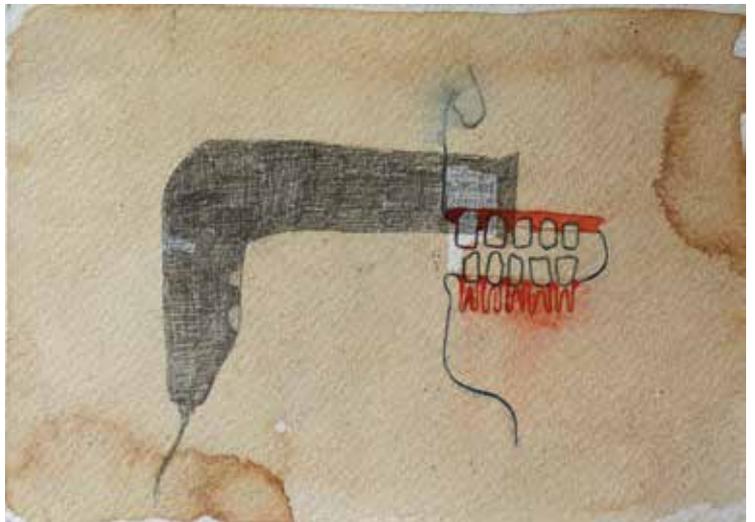
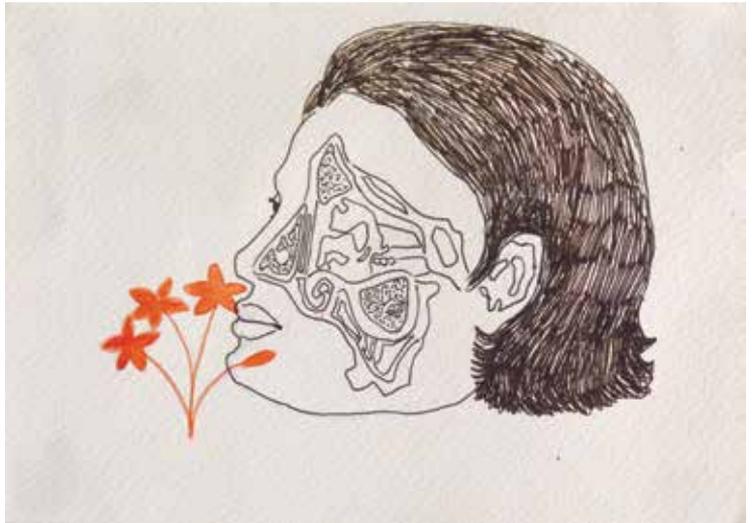


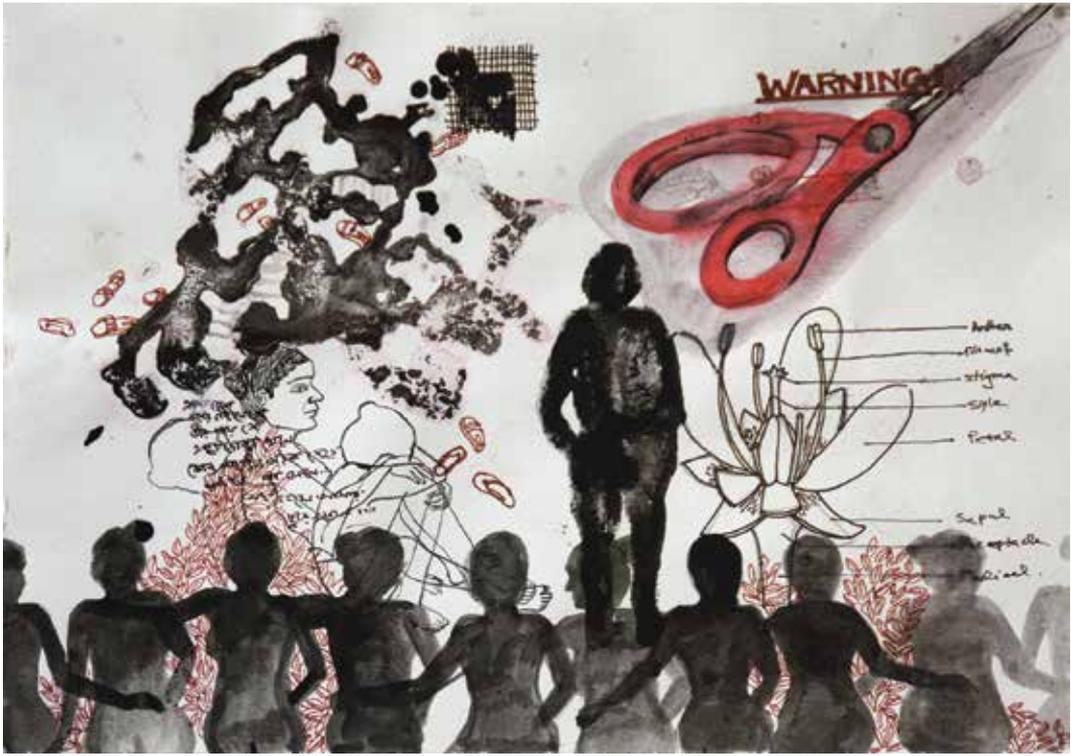
Hibiscus, Mixed media, 25 x 33 cm, 2014 (left page), Love, Mixed media, 23 x 30 cm, 2015



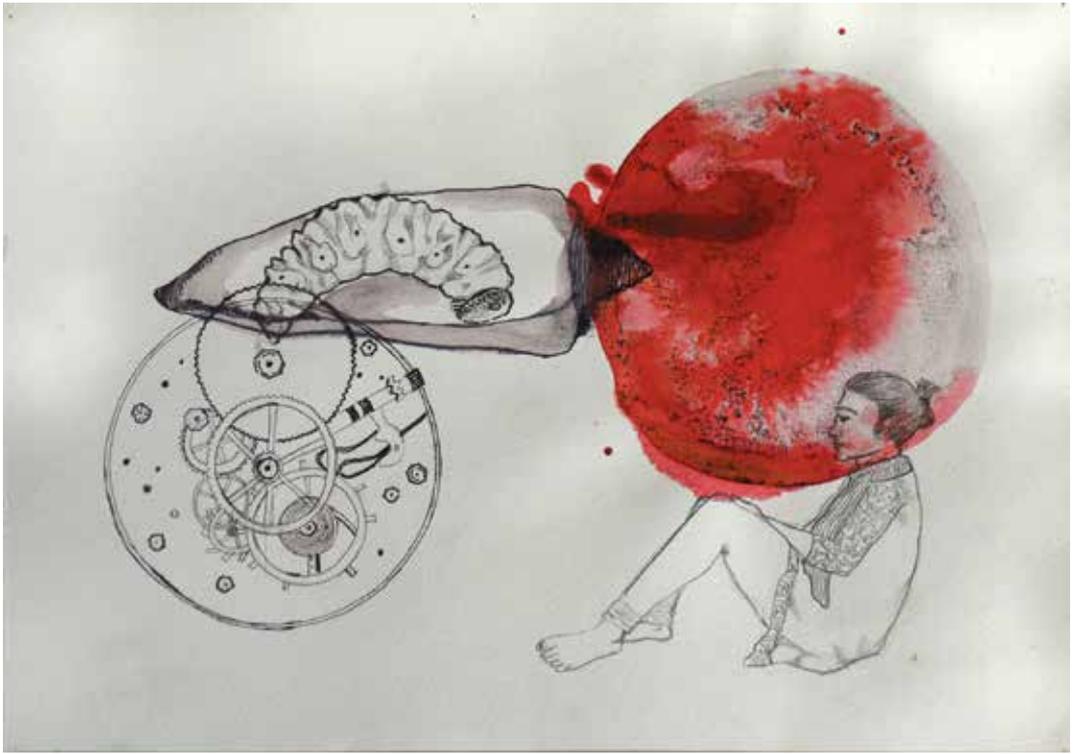
Dead moth, Mixed media, 149 x 102 cm, 2016

Orchid, Sweet smell, Hair dryer, Mixed media, 13 x 18 cm, 2015 (right page)





Soft & pleasurable (top), Unspoken words, Mixed media, 21 x 30 cm, 2015



Within My World (top), Story of a housewife, Mixed media, 21 x 30 cm, 2015



Promiti Hossain

Freelance artist



Born: 13th April 1991, Dhaka, Bangladesh

Education

2016: Advanced Diploma in Fine Arts (Painting), Kala Bhavana, Visva-Bharati, India

2014: Diploma in Fine Arts (Painting), Kala Bhavana, Visva-Bharati, India

2010: Photography course, Pathshala South Asian Media Institute

Award

2014: Runner up at Artsome Young Artists contest.

Solo Exhibition

2016: 'Inside Out' curated by Wakilur Rahman and Kehkasha Sabah, Kalakendra, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Group Exhibition Presentation & Performance Participation

2016: 'Gendered Land', performance conducted by Sanchayan Ghosh and curated by Amit Mukhopadhyay, Jawaharlal Nehru University & Art and Aesthetic Gallery, Haus Khaus, Delhi.

2016: 'Ordinariness', curated by Amit Mukhopadhyay, Art and Aesthetic Gallery, Lado Sarai, Delhi.

2015: 'Selected 10' Student annual exhibition SSVAD, Santiniketan, West Bengal.

2015: Exhibition of Final year Students of Kalabhavana, Rabindranath Tagore Center, ICCR, Kolkata, West Bengal.

2015: Performance Art on Group Show "Gendered Land" Conducted by Sanchayan Ghosh, Nandan Gallery, Santiniketan, West Bengal.

2014: Performance at Nanadan Mela, Kala Bhavana, Visva Bharati, Santiniketan, West Bengal

2014: 'Contemporary print show', Dhaka Art Center, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

2014: Annual Exhibition of Final Year Students of Kala Bhavana, Rabindranath Tagore Center, ICCR, Kolkata, West Bengal.

2013: Kilkari, Bal-Vidya Bhavan, group exhibition, Patna, Bihar.

2013: '3rd Window' Group show, Nandan Museum Gallery, Santiniketan.

2013: 'Selected 10' Students Annual Exhibition, organized by SSVAD, Santiniketan.

2012: Kala Bhavan Annual Exhibition, Academy of Fine Arts, Kolkata, West Bengal.

Workshop Participation

2011: 'Present of the Past' Workshop on image making under Manjari Chakarvarti, Kala Bhavan, Visva Bharati, Santiniketan, West Bengal.

Contact: promiti.shoi@gmail.com

Cover

Front: Letter from an old friend, Mixed media, 150 x 87 cm, 2016

Back: Untitled, Mixed media, 30 x 21 cm, 2015

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Positive within negative, Mixed media, 150 x 85 cm, 2015 (left page)



বিগত দুই দশক ধরে শিল্পীদের শিক্ষা ও অভিজ্ঞতা অর্জনের জন্য দুরত্বের বাধা অনেকটাই কমে এসেছে; ইন্টারনেট ও ভ্রমণের মাধ্যমে বিশ্বের সাংস্কৃতিক কর্মকাণ্ডে, তর্কে-বিতর্কে তাদের অংশগ্রহণ অনেকটাই স্বাভাবিক এখন। বিভিন্ন বিষয়ে দৃষ্টিভঙ্গি ও “ইচ্ছের” পরিধি হয়েছে প্রসারিত। শিল্প সৃষ্টিতে বিভিন্ন মাধ্যমের ব্যবহার, বিশেষভাবে ইলেক্ট্রনিক্স ও ইন্টারনেটের ব্যবহার শিল্প উৎপাদন ও হজম প্রক্রিয়াকে যেমন করেছে জটিল, তেমনি তা এ-প্রজন্মের স্বাভাবিক উপাদানও।

স্বদেশ থেকে বিশ্বায়নে, ব্যক্তি অভিজ্ঞতা থেকে গোষ্ঠীগত অবস্থান, একক ও বহুমুখী সাংস্কৃতিক ঐতিহ্য, উপচে পড়া তথ্যের সমারোহ, কিন্তু ব্যবহারে সূক্ষ্ম বা অদৃশ্য বাধা ও নিষেধাজ্ঞা, দেশ ও দেশের বাইরে শিল্পের স্বাস্থ্যবান বাজার ইত্যাদিতে নবীন শিল্পীর চলা ও কর্ম। সচেতন বা অবচেতনভাবে প্রায় সব নবীন শিল্পীই এই পরিবেশে প্রভাবিত, নিয়ন্ত্রিত ও তা তাদের কর্মে প্রতিফলিত। এ সময় ও পরিবেশকে ভিন্নভাবে পর্যালোচনা ও দেখানোর প্রয়াস রয়েছে এমন মৌলিক ভাবনার শিল্পকর্ম নিয়ে আমরা আরও কয়েকটি প্রদর্শনীর ইচ্ছে রাখি-

এ বিষয়ে আমাদের তৃতীয় উপস্থাপনা নবীন শিল্পী প্রমিতি হোসেন-এর শিল্পকর্ম। প্রমিতি হোসেনের পারিবারিক পরিবেশ, জন্ম, শিক্ষা ও বেড়ে ওঠা বাংলাদেশে ও ভারতে। পারিবারিক ভাবেই প্রকৃতি, মানুষ, জাতীয়তা, ধর্ম, বৈষম্য, রাষ্ট্র, নারীর অবস্থান ও অধিকার ইত্যাদি বিষয়ে যে বোধ ও বুদ্ধিমত্তা নিয়ে বড় হয়েছে তা দুই দেশের ক্ষেত্রেই মূলস্রোতের বাইরে- আর অনেকটা স্বাভাবিক ভাবেই প্রমিতি নিজেকে প্রকাশ করার জন্য মাধ্যম হিসেবে দৃশ্যশিল্পকে বেছে নিয়েছে।

এটাই তার প্রথম একক প্রদর্শনী। উপকরণ সামান্য ও সাধারণ; মোটা কাগজ, জলরং, কালি, পেন্সিল, কলম, তুলি, অল্প রঙ-এ ছবির তল তৈরি করে কালিতে কালো রেখায় চিত্র, প্রকৃতি-বৃক্ষ, কীট-পতঙ্গ, মানুষ, শরীরের খন্ড খন্ড চিত্র, মিলেমিশে সহবাস বা তার কল্পচিত্র। প্রতিদিনের ভাবনা, অভিজ্ঞতার চিত্র, নিজস্ব ভাষা আবিষ্কারের চেষ্টা, নিজের মত করে বলার চেষ্টা ... , আসলে আঁকাআঁকি করে করে নিজেকে জানার চেষ্টা। উপকরণ ও ভাষা সাধারণ, গতানুগতিক, চিন্তা-চেতনায় সমসাময়িক, চিত্র বা ইমেজ রচনায় সচেতন ভাবেই বিভিন্ন ধারার ব্যবহার, যা বিভিন্ন সময়ের ধারাবাহিকতা ধরে রাখে। সময় বা ঘটনা বিচ্ছিন্ন নয়, প্রবাহিত, তাই মনে করিয়ে দেয়-

ওয়াকিলুর রহমান

শিল্প