

TEJAS

PRESENTS

⚡ RUTTED TERRAIN ⚡

A solo show of paintings by Priyanka Bhattacharjee



Chief Guest : Prof **Jogen Chowdhury** *Eminent artist*

Honorary Guests : **Shri Pranab Ranjan Roy** : *Eminent Art Historian and Critic*

Prof **Chhatrapati Datta** : *Eminent artist & principal Govt College of Arts & Craft*

Mrs Reena Dewan : *Director BCAAF*

Mr. Avijit Majumder, *CEO of Apollo Hospital*

Prof. Dr Paula Sengupta *HOD Graphics RBU Member of board of directors IIM, Shillong*

5 - 24 March 2025

opening at 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, 5th March

Flat 2B, Circular Mansions
222 A J C Bose Road
Kolkata : 700017

Timings: Monday to Saturday,

12.00 noon to 7.30 pm daily..

Sundays closed.

For Enquiries/appointment :
9830049825



In the more significant number of paintings done in Bengal, that could be merit to be abstract, for their apparent non-reference to recognized phenomena and for attention only to the sensual effect of making – carry some kind of strong relationship to nature and/or organic life. It is for transmission of this quality of Bengal abstraction, albeit with her individual handmark of glittering surface texture, young Priyanka Bhattacharjee's paintings need to be appreciated primarily. No geometricity anywhere in part-appearances or deduction from constructional wholenesses is discernible in her work.

But the consistent sharing of this characteristics with the rest of significant Bengal abstractionists is not the only reason to appreciate Priyanka's thrust to bloom forthwith. The mode in which she juxtaposes the differently rhymed micro-spaces in a work and make the work vibrant is remarkable. The underlying dark ambience of the paintings topped by textural glittering created, with specs of brightness's and warmth, create impression of a psyche in response to nature driven impulse. Priyanka brilliantly synchronizes her enthusiastic brushwork gestures with mental stances. This is no mean achievement for a youngster.

Pranab Ranjan Roy

Eminent Art Historian and Critic

"Nothing can be explained, all we know is the appearances...The abstract that permeates all things is ungraspable. In every moment, in everything, eternity is present"

----- Alfred Otto Wolfgang Schulze

Priyanka Bhattacharjee's recent work - 'Rutted Terrain' emerges from the restless memory of landscapes—ones that have ceased to exist in their former states yet persist in spectres of colour and texture. She does not map topographies with the precision of a cartographer; rather, unearths the imprints left upon her perceptual field, recalling a certain poetics of space, where the landscape is no longer an object but a psychological extension of the self. In Madhyamgram, Kolkata, where the artist resides, the rapid transformation from a semi-rural locale to a hyper-globalized space has fractured the continuity of place, creating an unsettling flux that her paintings attempt to encapsulate. These landscapes are not anchored in the past or the present, nor do they conform to the expectations of territorial specificity. Instead, they exist in an ephemeral in-between—a palimpsest of remembered terrains and speculative futures. Like Maurice Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological approach to perception, her work prioritizes the act of seeing, where the land is not a fixed entity but an evolving site of being. The absence of cultural or social markers underscores this liminality, resisting the fixity of representation in favour of an immersive, sensorial engagement with place.

The physicality of her paintings accentuates their dynamic, almost storm-like energy, revealing the traces of an investigative process where the act of mark-making supersedes narrative intent. The thick impasto layers, the aggressive lacerations of the spatula, and the chromatic densities, do not simply portray a landscape but enact its perpetual transformation. Here, the materiality of the painted surface assumes a crucial role, aligning with ideas of 'autonomy of surface'. Her paintings defy the flatness, evoke a sculptural topography that shifts between geological abstraction and tactile memory. The raw tactility and scarred textures may summon the ruins of an ancient land or the aftermath of an apocalyptic event—though neither is explicitly stated. This ambiguity, this refusal to conform to a singular reading, imbues her paintings with an ineffable quality, one that allows them to exist in multiple temporal registers simultaneously. They are at once ruinous and regenerative, potent to invoke Nietzsche's notion of 'eternal recurrence,' where destruction is not an end but an inherent condition of renewal. Her practice, in this sense, is akin to an archaeological excavation—peeling back layers of material and meaning, revealing the invisible histories embedded within the terrain. Each stroke, each incision, bears witness to an erasure, a remembrance, a transformation.

In her pursuit of landscape beyond representation, Priyanka reconfigures our understanding of land as a static entity. Her work resonates with contemporary ideas around environmental aesthetics, particularly in its experiential approach to urban and natural landscapes. The viewer does not merely observe her terrains but is drawn into their turbulent atmospheres, where sight itself becomes unstable. The blurred edges, dense pigmentations, and fragmentary compositions mirror the disintegration of reality, much like the existentialist anxieties surrounding perception and knowledge. The act of looking at her paintings is akin to encountering a landscape in motion—one that eludes fixation, much like the urban transformations she witnesses in her surroundings. These paintings are not representations; they are sites of happening, repositories of both tangible and intangible histories. Their apparent dystopian undertones may evoke a world in decline, yet within their restless surfaces lies a quiet persistence, an insistence on the survival of matter beyond its immediate decay. The chromatic zones add a silver lining. By denying narrative closure, she compels her viewers to engage with uncertainty—to navigate the terrain of memory and materiality without the reassurance of familiarity. In doing so, she questions the very act of perception, blurring the line between what is seen, remembered, and felt.

Despite her aversion to narrative, Priyanka's landscapes carry an emotional charge. The chromatic intensity, whether suggestive of arid grasslands or the exuberance of floral valleys, holds within it a memory that is both personal and collective. The absence of direct figuration only deepens their evocative potential, allowing the viewer to project their own experiences onto these terrain-like expanses. In this context, her work engages with the sublime, where nature's grandeur is not merely aesthetic but also philosophical—a force indifferent to human endeavour, yet inextricably tied to it. The residue of Tachism in her process speaks to a kind of automatism, where the gesture itself becomes a conduit for the unarticulated. Her compositions often appear as fractured visions—elements that could be remnants of an unknown landscape, scorched yet alive, dissolving and reforming with each gaze. They bear the time of past worlds, but without anchoring themselves in a fixed history. Her method of layering, erasing, and resurfacing colour suggests a geological time scale, where the land itself records the burden of existence and erosion. The land, in her vision, is not a subject but a point of departure, a threshold into a realm where time, matter, and perception collapse into pure sensation.

Her paintings are also meditations on fragmentation—the breaking down of place, memory, and material into elemental forces. The urban and natural environments she abstracts have undergone irreversible transitions, yet in their decayed or transformed states, they resist disappearance. The surfaces of her paintings function like sedimentary layers, where past is neither linear nor conclusive. Her chromatic approach, with its expressive force, rejects the passivity of the picturesque and instead insists on an active, almost visceral engagement with landscape. The indistinct forms and textures within her works suggest that landscapes are not simply backdrops to human experience but conduits that themselves carry agency. Her paintings demand a slow viewing, an unpeeling of layers, allowing the viewer to move through spaces that resist the neat boundaries of figural, referential representation.

It is in this rutted, unmoored terrain that the viewer finds themselves—adrift in the shifting sediment of memory and materiality, searching for meaning in the ever-eroding ground beneath their feet. In this constant flux, Priyanka's landscapes refuse finality, instead offering a perpetual state of becoming—where the act of viewing is itself an excavation, a meditation on the fragility and endurance of land, self, and time. The landscape, once perceived as a stable, knowable entity, is reconfigured as an ephemeral process, where the marks of history, movement, and transformation never settle. In this refusal of fixity, she not only disrupts the conventions of landscape painting but also expands the very notion of what it means to see and to remember a place. Her works do not simply depict a world lost to time; they ask us to confront the impermanence of all things, inviting us to inhabit the uncertainty of a world forever in transition.

Dr. Soujit Das
Art Historian
18th February, 2025
Delhi-NCR

Rutted Terrains is an exploration of abstraction, texture, scape and perception, curated through the distinctive lens of Priyanka Bhattacharjee. Bridging her background in electronics and visual art, Bhattacharjee invites viewers into a realm where the digital and the organic converge, breaking conventional boundaries to create something new and deeply evocative. This show is a dialogue between systems of technology and the tactile, material world, where the physicality of paint and pigment become metaphorical tools to navigate both inner and outer landscapes.

The central theme of Rutted Terrains is the intricate relationship between time, memory, and nature, expressed through deconstructed abstract landscapes. Bhattacharjee's works show the wear and tear of existence through layers of texture and color. The "ruts" in the terrain symbolize the imprints of life, the markings left behind by struggles, achievements, and inevitable decay. Each piece is a topography of emotion, an abstract landscape that embodies both destruction and regeneration. Whether it's the erosion of the earth or the scars that time etches into our memory, Bhattacharjee's landscapes become a canvas for reflection on the inevitability of change and the resilience within it.

The artist's dual academic background informs her work in profound ways. With a BTech in Electronics, Bhattacharjee is attuned to patterns, systems, and structures, which she reflects in the layered, almost architectural approach to her pieces. The layering of materials, paints, pigments, occasionally found materials emerges from her sense of history and her theme of erosion, growth, and transformation.

Decontextualisation is a key approach in this exhibition. Bhattacharjee's landscapes are abstract, not bound by realism but by the emotional truth of the terrain they represent. Through deconstruction, she removes the familiar, allowing the viewer to experience a new, unfiltered connection with the landscape. Her work does not dictate meaning but invites the viewer to explore these terrains and, in doing so, perhaps find the ruts they themselves have left in the landscapes of their own lives.

Aban Desai

Gallerist - Tejas, Kolkata.



Rutted Terrain - 1
20x30 in
Acrylic, Wet Pigment on Archival Paper



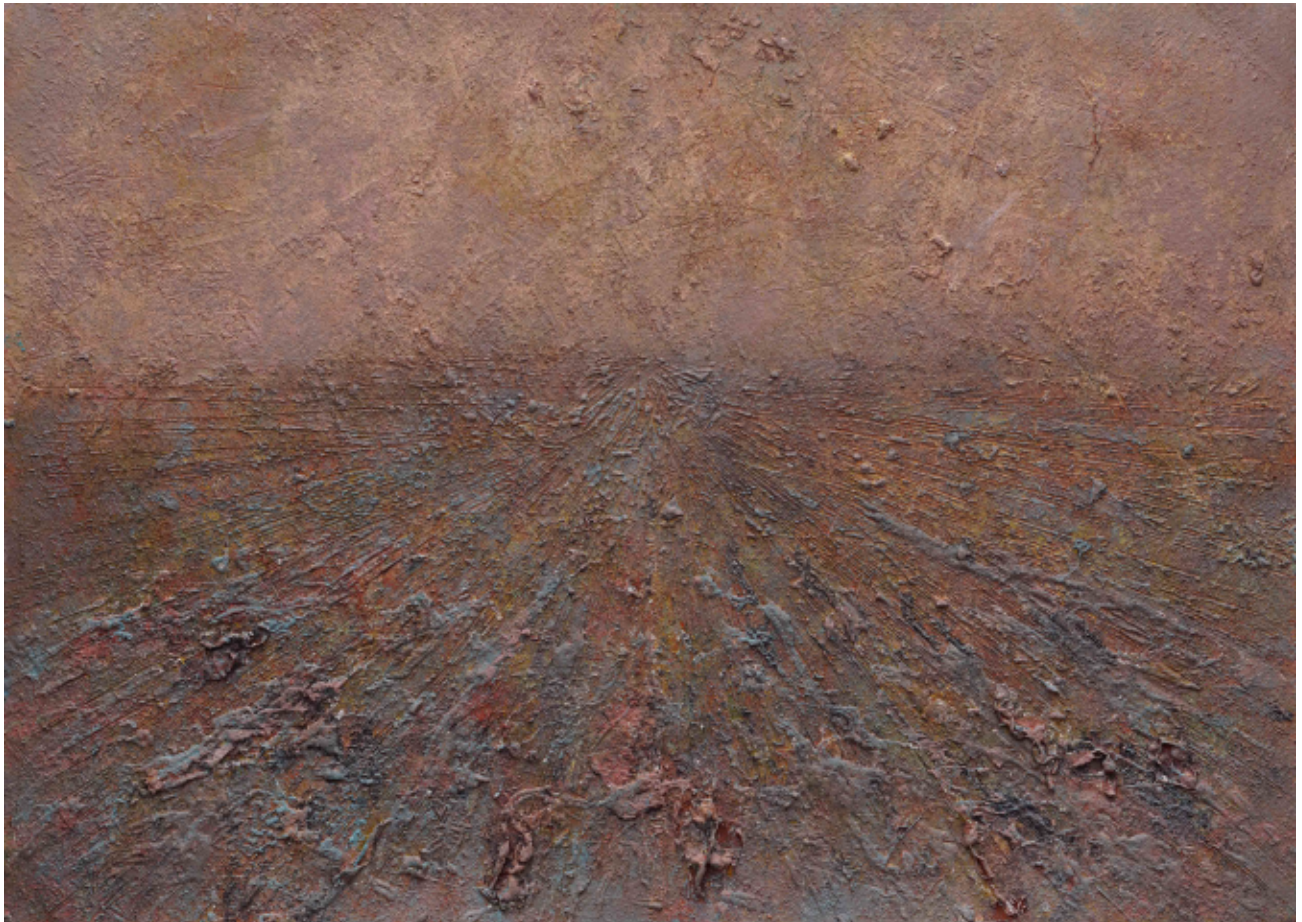
Rutted Terrain - 2
20x30 in
Acrylic, Wet Pigment on Archival Paper



Rutted Terrain -3
20x30 in
Acrylic, Wet Pigment on Archival Paper



Rutted Terrain - 4
20x30 in
Acrylic, Wet Pigment on Archival Paper



Rutted Terrain - 5
20x30 in
Acrylic, Wet Pigment on Archival Paper



Rutted Terrain - 6
20x30 in
Acrylic, Wet Pigment on Archival Paper



Rutted Terrain - 17

12 x 18 in

Acrylic, Wet Pigment on Archival Paper



Rutted Terrain - 18
12 x 18 in
Acrylic, Wet Pigment on Archival Paper



Rutted Terrain -7
9 x 12 in
Acrylic, Wet Pigment on Archival Paper



Rutted Terrain - 8
9 x 12 in
Acrylic, Wet Pigment on Archival Paper



Rutted Terrain - 9
9 x 12 in
Acrylic, Wet Pigment on Archival Paper



Rutted Terrain - 11
9 x 12 in
Acrylic, Wet Pigment on Archival Paper



Rutted Terrain - 12
9 x 12 in
Acrylic, Wet Pigment on Archival Paper



Rutted Terrain - 13
12 x 18 in
Acrylic, Wet Pigment on Archival Paper



Rutted Terrain - 14
12 x 18 in
Acrylic, Wet Pigment on Archival Paper



Rutted Terrain - 15
12 x 18 in
Acrylic, Wet Pigment on Archival Paper



Rutted Terrain - 16

12 x 18 in

Acrylic, Wet Pigment on Archival Paper



Priyanka Bhattacharjee

Priyanka Bhattacharjee is a practicing artist with a Masters in Visual Arts in Museology / specialization in Art History, She also has a B.Tech Degree in Electronics and Communication Engineering. Did Art Conservation course from NRLC Lucknow. Studied certificate course on Art Appreciation (from prehistoric to contemporary art of India and oriental art) at Arts Acre. She did a certificate course on Fundamentals of Art Management from KHOJ studios New Delhi and Arthshila, Shantiniketan. She was a resident at Butong Art Town, Hebei, China. Her practice is multidimensional mainly Painting, Papermaking, Printmaking (Monoprint, Cynotype and Woodcut prints), Video and Digital Art.

She has done many shows in India and abroad. Awarded the prestigious Butong Art Town Residency in China for an extensive period of 3 months for the Project Disappearing Dialogues (Bridging South Asian Cultures through Hand Printed Sarees) starting August 2024, EXHIBITION starting from 26th of October 2024.

Priyanka was invited to present her whole body of works at the Rajya Charukala Festival (State Art Festival organised by Rajya Charukala Parishad, Government of West Bengal, India) 2024. 'Cubed Nature' a sculptural work with natural material was shown at the GNAB, Nature Art Biennale, South Korea 2018

Project on nature art has been selected and published on the annual publication of GNAB Biennale 2017 and was a part of the project show of GNAB Biennale South Korea

Invited artist for the Frida Kahlo show at GalleryArt Exposure Kolkata 2018.

Participated in Green Guerilla Nature Art Four Seasons Workshop 2023 by Sonahmoo Artist Run Space, South Korea. My project Video was titled Netting Nature and the Frozen Birds

Writes Art Review for 'Art Fact', an Art Journal from Arts Acre Kolkata

Written Art Review in Mojarto in collaboration with Arts Illustrated

Project writing published in annual publication of GNAB, South Korea

Lives and works from Kolkata, WB, India

The background of the entire image is a highly textured, abstract surface. It features a mix of earthy tones, including deep reds, burnt oranges, and muted blues, with some lighter, almost white, areas where the texture is more pronounced. The texture appears to be a combination of fine, granular particles and larger, more irregular clumps, giving it a rough, organic feel. The lighting is somewhat uneven, with brighter areas towards the top and darker, more shadowed areas towards the bottom, enhancing the three-dimensional quality of the texture.

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