

Basuki Dasgupta: Everyday Goddesses

KYNKYNY presents the joyous and visionary art works of contemporary artist, Basuki Dasgupta, celebrating nature, folk culture and the power and beauty of the feminine.

Basuki Dasgupta is the creator of modern myths and folktales. He recasts and reinvents characters from timeless and ancient stories, archetypal forces and divine energies, in unique and original ways. A luminous pantheon of dusky, slant-eyed and red-lipped goddesses, women and divine beings, inhabit his highly textured, mixed media works – on view at KYNKYNY.com, from July 20th to August 15th. Part-fable, part-contemporary, part-sacred, part-human, the semi abstract, puppet-like figures, draw you into a primordial world of energy, colour and symbolism.

Dasgupta's works are brewed in a multi-layered cocktail of influences, from the 17th terracotta temples of Bishnupur in West Bengal (where he spent his childhood) and his love for Baul music to his education at Visva-Bharati in Shantiniketan and the open, blue skies of Tumkur (where he now lives). But it is the mystical theme of 'Shakti' or the dynamic and creative feminine principle of the universe, which pervades Dasgupta's oeuvre. Goddess Durga in her many guises, incarnations and moods, is the main muse and protagonist who radiates and embodies 'Shakti', in his paintings. A favourite theme that he depicts, is the slaying of the demon, Mahishasura by Durga, signifying the victory of light over dark, and truth over untruth.

But Dasgupta brings the goddess, down to the earth. His art is influenced by the strong women in his own life, as well the resilience of real, everyday women. Steeped in vivid greens, blues, yellows and reds, the stylized women in his paintings are expressions of primal feminine energy – courageous and compassionate, sometimes intertwined with nature, at one with themselves, still and ever-changing. Dasgupta says, *"I grew up in a lower middle class family. When I was young, I used to watch my mother manage everything at home singlehandedly. When there was no water supply in the summer, she would find water. During Durga puja, many people in the locality would paint their houses; my mother would paint our house herself. In my work, the concept of Durga is inspired by my mother, and the women in my paintings often have many hands to signify all of the different roles that women juggle simultaneously."*



*Basuki Dasgupta, Devi,
Mixed media on canvas*

Dasgupta uses a vibrant language of symbols to add layers and nuance. The gods, goddesses and archetypal figures he portrays, are sometimes ten-armed or sport a fiery red bindi, conveying vast spiritual concepts, in a simple and intuitive fashion. While the context and sensibilities remain distinctly contemporary, he draws aesthetic inspiration from India's rich tradition of folk art and indigenous culture. The abstract, puppet-like figures that populate his works, are based on Pat Chitra, an age-old art form, from Bengal. The rough-hewn textures of Dasgupta's canvases, mimic the terracotta temples of Bishnupur, where he spent his days, as a child. He uses a mixture of hardboard, paper pulp and thick acrylic paint to give a visceral, tactile feel, to his works.

Everyday Goddesses also speaks the language of the earth. Dasgupta's lush canvases feature an abundance of flora, foliage, animals, birds and trees, symbolising the interconnectedness of life. His non-figurative paintings also take their cues from nature, including the waves of the ocean, the sun and the landscape of West Bengal.

Ancient and at the same time modern, the past seamlessly intersects with the present in unusual and interesting ways, in Dasgupta's art. Ultimately, the exhibition is a magnificent reminder of the relevance of mythology in our world today, and its power to uplift and inspire.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Basuki Dasgupta is an intrepid storyteller, often recasting ancient fables in a distinctly contemporary context. His mixed media works feature a wide range of subjects including non-figurative studies, mythological imagery, and his trademark slant-eyed, puppet-like figures. This rich oeuvre is inspired by an equally wide range of influences, from indigenous traditions like the Pattachitra and Kalighat forms of Bengal, to the symbolism of goddess Durga as the embodiment of 'Shakti' or the feminine principle and Baul music, to the famed terracotta temples of his home town, Bishnupur. Fusing abstract caricature with vernacular imagery, Dasgupta's works are saturated in colours and whimsy on the surface.

To commemorate Dasgupta's solo exhibition with KYNKYN. com, the gallery has commissioned Manush John to create a short film about the artist and his journey. The film can be viewed on www.kynkyny.com alongside the exhibition.

Exhibition dates
July 20th – August 15th, 2021



Basuki Dasgupta, Sun through my window, Mixed media on canvas

Upon deeper examination they reveal a recurring poignant attempt to bridge seeming dualities, whether between nature and mankind, darkness and light, rural and urban, ego and self, or the human and divine.

ABOUT THE GALLERY

KYNKYNKY was founded in 2004 by the husband and wife duo Namu Kini and Vivek Radhakrishnan. With an aim to make the fascinating world of Indian art more accessible to the world, KYNKYNKY supports emerging and established artists – offering a highly curated selection of original and authentic artworks at prices. KYNKYNKY.com's collection is well researched and curated to include art across various styles and mediums; whether it is figurative or abstract art; mixed media; oil on canvas or etching. Alongside a programme of online exhibitions, the gallery also hosts a series of quarterly events in Bangalore. Since its inception, KYNKYNKY has worked with over 300 artists from all over India and has shipped its art across the globe; from Dubai and Lithuania to Australia and Brazil.

Press

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