Bengal Biennale unveils opening schedule for their second edition

The Bengal Biennale explores buried histories, subterranean networks, and collective survival

On view

Santiniketan: 25 November 2026 - 2 January 2027

Kolkata: 28 November 2026 – 2 January 2027

- The Bengal Biennale 2026-27 is co-curated by collective **Chander Haat**, and independent curator **Ritika Biswas**.
- Trustees of Gameplan Foundation **Jeet and Malavika Banerjee** are organizing the second edition of the Bengal Biennale across multiple venues and art spaces.
- Rather than one central exhibition site, Bengal Biennale will exhibit artworks across two centres – **Santiniketan and Kolkata.**
- Artists include **Rabindranath Tagore, Nandalal Bose, Benode Behari Mukherjee, Bikash Bhattacharjee, Chittoprosad, Nirode Mazumdar, Rabin Mondal, Arpita Singh, Jogen Chowdhury, Paresh Maity, Jayashri Burman, Atul Dodiya, Shilpa Gupta, Amar Kanwar, Abin Choudhuri, Jitish Kallat, Amol K Patil, The Weighty Stories of Woven Air, Ayoung Kim** among many others.

Kolkata/Santiniketan, November 2026: The Gameplan Foundation is pleased to announce opening schedule for the second edition of the **Bengal Biennale** which will be on view from **25 November 2026** to **2 January 2027**, bringing art into dialogue with the layered histories, landscapes and cultural geographies of Bengal and beyond.

This edition is co-curated by **Chander Haat**, an artist collective and community space in Sarsuna, Kolkata; and **Ritika Biswas**, an independent curator and researcher. Their collaboration brings together collective and individual approaches to artistic practice, research, and community-building, while foregrounding the specific cultural and ecological contexts of Bengal. The Bengal Biennale is being organised by **Gameplan Foundation**, started by **Jeet and Malavika Banerjee**, and will unfold across multiple venues in **Kolkata** and **Santiniketan**.

This year's curatorial framework and theme, ***Banalata,*** takes its name from Jibanananda Das' 1942 Bangla poem ***Banalata Sen*** and the ecology of wild forest-vines, using subterranean worlds, buried histories, entanglement, resistance and collective survival as starting points. *Banalata* will move through a variety of sites including a former prison, old houses, a wild park among others in Kolkata and Santiniketan. Rather than treating these locations as mere venues, the Bengal Biennale considers them as spaces for ecology, memory, and art practices. While the modern and contemporary cultural histories of Kolkata and Santiniketan are closely linked, they are still two different ecosystems with their own identities.

***Banalata*: Exhibition Overview and Select Works**

Bengal Biennale not only celebrates art from the State of West Bengal but sees itself as a hub for arts across the global stage. Bengal Biennale presents the works of a multigenerational group of 100+ artists and collectives working across media and disciplines to examine various throughlines that

reflect this year's theme *Banalata*. The Nandan Museum in Kala Bhavana in Santiniketan will exhibit *Winds from the East* which will feature works by **visiting Chinese and Japanese artists Xu Beihong, Chang Xiufeng, You Yun-shan, Yokoyama Taikan, Hishida Shunsō** who were invited by **Rabindranath Tagore** to teach and study at his university. **Jayasri Burman** will commemorate 100 years of Rabindranath Tagore's *Raktakarabi* and will showcase her works at Santiniketan Society of Visual Art & Design (SSVAD). Works by **Jogen Chowdhury, Nirode Mazumdar, Lapdiang Syiem, Rah Naqvi, Tejal Shah and Debnath Basu** will also be on view in Santiniketan at various venues.

In Kolkata, Lalit Kala Akademi will feature a selection of large watercolour paintings by **Paresh Maity**. *Heaven is Where You Keep Your Memories,* a major exhibition of artworks by **Arpita Singh** featuring 92 works of the artists largely from the **Kiran Nadar Museum of Art** collection with a few private loans will also be on display. The Dockyard Co, a riverfront space, will host a site-specific artwork by **Robertina Šebjanič** on colonial Bengal's marine geo-politics. The Indian Museum will feature works by **Atul Dodiya, Arunima Chowdhury, The Weighty Stories of Woven Air and Bikash Bhattacharjee**. The Weighty Stories of Woven Air is a collaboration between economist and **nobel prize winner Abhijit Vinayak Banerjee**, illustrator Cheyenne Olivier, filmmaker Ranu Ghosh, and designer Suket Dhir, with weavers Habibul Mallick and Selina Bibi Mallick for Raghunath Sinha to revive the artistic stature and economy of jamdani.

Alipore Museum, an archive and memorial for those involved in the struggle for Indian independence will be one of the key venues in the Bengal Biennale will feature over 30+ works by several artists including **KS Radhakrishnan, Shilpa Gupta, Amar Kanwar, Atul Dodiya, Jitish Kallat, Suhasini Kejriwal, Aban Raza, Amol K Patil, Debashish Paul, Prasanta Sahu, Ashfika Rahman, Seamus Murphy, Zahra Yazdani, Stefanie Knobel** among others. DAG will exhibit works by masters **Bikash Bhattacharjee, Chittaprosad, Nirode Mazumdar and Rabin Mondal** across venues. **Abin Chaudhuri** has been commissioned to make a public installation that museum visitors can interact with directly.

Venues and Artists

Santiniketan: Nandan Art Museum & Gallery (Kala Bhavana), Tokaroun, Santiniketan Society of Visual Art & Design (SSVAD), Arthshila, Sculpture Park (Visva Bharati Campus), Somnath Hore Studio and Krittika Arts Space.
Kolkata: The Alipore Museum, The Indian Museum, TRI Art & Culture, Lalit Kala Akademi (AJC Bose Road), Victoria Memorial Hall, The Red Bari, The Dockyard Co, Siddhi & Muni Art Studios (Stephen Court), New Empire and the Kolkata Centre for Creativity (KCC) that will host the Bengal Biennale's inaugural Emerging Artists Open Call.

Artists, Collectives and Groups include: Atul Dodiya, Arpita Singh, Amar Kanwar, Amol K Patil, Abir Mukherjee, Aban Raza, Anupam Roy, Apichatpong Weerasethakul, Arijit Bhattacharyya, Arunima Choudhury, Ashfika Rahman, Ayoung Kim, Abin Choudhuri, Bandu Manamperi, Bimalananda Roy, Britto Arts Trust, Debashish Paul, Debnath Basu, Debasish Mukherjee, Imaginary Collective, Jitish Kallat, Jayasri Burman, Jogen Chowdhury, Jonas Staal, Janhavi Khemka, The Weighty Stories of Woven Air, KS Radhakrishnan, Lapdiang Artimai Syiem, Layout Collective, Maksud Ali Mondal, Neel Bhattacharjee, Nilanjan Bhattacharya, Pankaj Panwar, Paresh Maity, Prasanta Sahu, Probir Gupta, Rah Naqvi, Resting Museum, Robertina Šebjanič, Sudhir Ranjan Khastgir, Seamus Murphy, Shilpa Gupta, Sankha Banerjee, Shoji Yamsaki, Srikanta Paul, Suhasini Kejriwal, Sukanta Majumdar, Suman Chandra, Sunil Sigdel, Tejal Shah, Vikrant Bhise, Willem de Rooij, Xewali Deka and Zahra Yazdani.

Masters include: Bikash Bhattacharjee, Chittaprosad, Nirode Mazumdar, Rabin Mondal, Xu Beihong, Chang Xiufeng, You Yun-shan, Rabindranath Tagore, Nandalal Bose, Benode Behari Mukherjee, Yokoyama Taikan and Hishida Shunsō.
Collective Projects include: Bassam Issa Al-Sabah, Jennifer Mehigan, Stefanie Knobel, Samrat Banerjee, Gram Art Collective, Satgaon Collective (Argha Manna and Parimal Bhattacharya), Sujatro Ghosh, Carvaan and Tetul Kahon | Tamarind Tunes (Debalina Majumdar and Samata Biswas).
Group Exhibitions include: *Winds from the East* (Xu Beihong, Chang Xiufeng, You Yun-shan, Rabindranath Tagore, Nandalal Bose, Benode Behari Mukherjee, Yokoyama Taikan, Hishida Shunso, and others) curated by Soumik Nandy Majumdar, Banatanwi Das Mahapatra, and Santhosh K Sakhinala, *Joler Abakash* (Alina Schmuch, Amitav Ghosh, Biswajit Das, Disappearing Dialogues, Jaladarsha Collective, Jeanne Astrup Chavaux, Shawon Akand, Shibayan Halder, Soma Surovi Jannat, Soumen Mondal, Sukriti Sen, Swarna Chitrakar and family, and Swashmul Arts) curated by Avik Debdas, and *Entangled | Indestructible* (Arpan Sadhukhan, Meenakshi Sengupta, Pratyusha Mukherjee, Rabin Roy, Sambaran Das and Shrabani Roy) and *Spectral Ecologies* (Arko Datto, Debsuddha, Riti Sengupta, Shrobona Das, Swastik Pal, and Taniya Sarkar).

Co-Curator Chander Haat says, "আমরা বিশ্বাস করি শিল্পকলা কোনো বিচ্ছিন্ন বস্তু নয়, শিল্প হল সম্পর্ক তৈরি করার একটি উপায়। সেই সম্পর্কের মধ্যেই তৈরি হয় আমাদের ' বনলতা '- একসঙ্গে বেঁচে থাকার জন্য একটি জীবন্ত স্থান। (We believe that art cannot be fragmented but is a medium to build relationships. Our *Banalata* emerges from within the entanglement of these relationships – a living space in which we can coexist.)"

Co-Curator Ritika Biswas says, "I envision the second Bengal Biennale as a slightly strange, slightly dissonant, slightly dark ecology which embraces the full spectrum of being alive in and to a burning world. *Banalata* foregrounds emotion, rest, and poetics, as modes through which we might critically examine the systems and selves within which we are entangled. It endeavours to create new knottings of kinship and solidarity across Bengal and beyond. This Biennale attempts to hold poetics and politics as inherently and generatively entwined forces."

Jeet & Malavika Banerjee, Trustees, Gameplan Foundation say, "The more polarised our world seems, the more urgent is the need to acknowledge the lessons of resilience that nature offers us. If we wish to learn from it. The unseen entanglements that unite us, the neurons that make us feel for each other, and the hope that green shoots hold out to us — Bengal Biennale's *Banalata* was born, and grew from these thoughts"

Further details about the programme is available here.

Presenting partners: DAG and Paharpur Foundation
Principal Partner: TATA Steel
Learning Partner: Kiran Nadar Museum of Art
Cultural Partner: Emami Foundation - Kolkata Centre for Creativity
Experience Partner: Absolut.
Supported by: Greenply, Jupiter, KCT Group, BTL EPC LTD, AMPL Foundation and Art Exposure

For more information on Bengal Biennale, please visit:
Instagram: @bengal_biennale | **Website**: bengalbiennale.com

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For further information, please contact:

Menaka Mahtab
E: menaka@artfervour.com
M: +91 9830043238

NOTES TO EDITORS:

Chander Haat



Chander Haat is an artist collective housed in a space that facilitates interdisciplinary artistic practices. Situated in Sarsuna, on the fringes of Kolkata, the artists use the space with a rare sense of freedom. The collective maintains a dynamic relationship with the neighbourhood and its inhabitants. The mosaic-like peri-urban conglomeration, largely composed of people who have migrated from different regions of India or neighbouring Bangladesh, has a distinctive demographic formation. Fed by diverse public cultures, the locality is marked by the residents' earnest attempts to preserve, internalize, and sustain traditional habits, rituals, and cultural practices. Chander Haat collective's engagement with the everyday practices of local people has inspired various artistic inquiries and several community art projects. The uniqueness of Chander Haat as a self-sustaining art collective emerges from deep socio-political and ecological engagement with local communities as well as a long-standing involvement with designing Durga Puja, Chander Haat was awarded the Vivan Sundaram Grant for Installation Art in 2024.

Ritika Biswas



Ritika Biswas (b. India, 1995) is a curator and artistic researcher from Kolkata who lives and works nomadically. She holds a Liberal Arts degree from Yale-NUS College and an MPhil in Film and Screen Studies from the University of Cambridge. Her praxis enmeshes ecological criticism, kinships, necropolitics, and questions of justice.
She was a curator at New Art Exchange Gallery (UK) from 2019-2021 and Artistic Director for the 2021 Sea Art Festival, 'Non-/Human Assemblages' for the Busan Biennale. Selected recent exhibitions include '—scape' (Gallery 88 Mumbai, 2025), 'Spectres of Our Own Making' (Gwangju Biennale, 2024), 'Nine Nodes of Non-Being' (421 Arts Campus Abu Dhabi, 2023-24), the digital research platform 'Littoral Chronicle' with artists Shezad Dawood and ikkibawiKrrr (2023-ongoing), among others. She was the 2024 Curator-in-Residence at Fondation Fiminco Paris and 2022 International Research Fellow at MMCA Seoul.

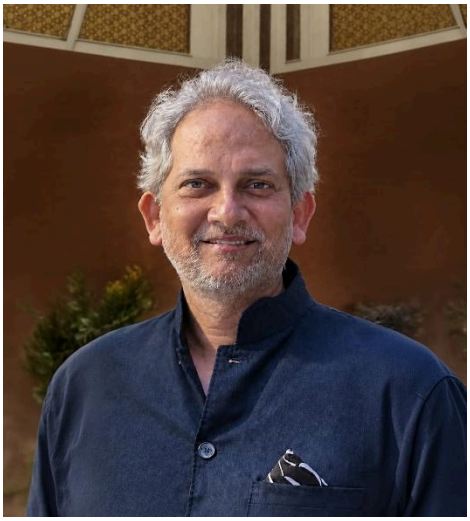
Malavika Banerjee



Malavika Banerjee is the founder-director of the Kolkata Literary Meet, a festival she has curated since 2012. It is now the second longest-running literature festival in the country. In 2024 Gameplan Foundation, a trust founded by her and Jeet Banerjee started the Bengal Biennale that was held in Kolkata and Santiniketan.

Malavika started work life as a journalist and then set up Gameplan Sports along with Jeet in 1998, a company that pioneered several aspects of in-stadia advertising and also managed cricketers, MS Dhoni, Steve Waugh, Imran Khan and Sir Vivian Richards to name a few. It is one of India's oldest sports marketing companies in the region. In 2011, Malavika and Jeet started Byloom in partnership with Bailou. A store that celebrates the handloom traditions of West Bengal, Byloom is now a destination store for those visiting the city.

Jeet Banerjee



Jeet Banerjee is the Founder & Managing Director of Gameplan Sports Pvt. Ltd., with over two decades of experience across sports management, sponsorships, branding, advertising, media syndication, event management, and entertainment.

Under his leadership, Gameplan has worked extensively with BCCI, ICC and Kolkata Knight Riders, handling sponsorship sales, sports marketing, 3D ground signage, team liaison and media syndication. The company has also been involved with major sporting events, including the IPL, ICC World Cups and Tata Steel Chess India.

Beyond sports, Banerjee has built a significant presence in the arts and cultural sector. He has been behind the Kolkata Literary Meet since 2012, which has grown into a major literary and multidisciplinary arts festival, and has also founded the Bengal Biennale, bringing together artists, performers, scholars and cultural practitioners across Santiniketan and Kolkata.

His other ventures include film production under Screenplay Films, which produced three Bengali feature films, including Anuranan, winner of the National Award for Best Feature Film in Bengali. He has also worked with major corporate brands including PepsiCo, Reebok, ITC, Exide Industries, Standard Chartered, Royal Stag and Hero Honda.