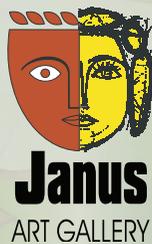




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presents

# TALKING TEMPERA

in association with



E-CATALOGUE OF TEMPERA STYLED ART BY BENGAL ARTISTS AND SCULPTURES BY SUVAJIT SAMANTA



## ABOUT TEMPERA



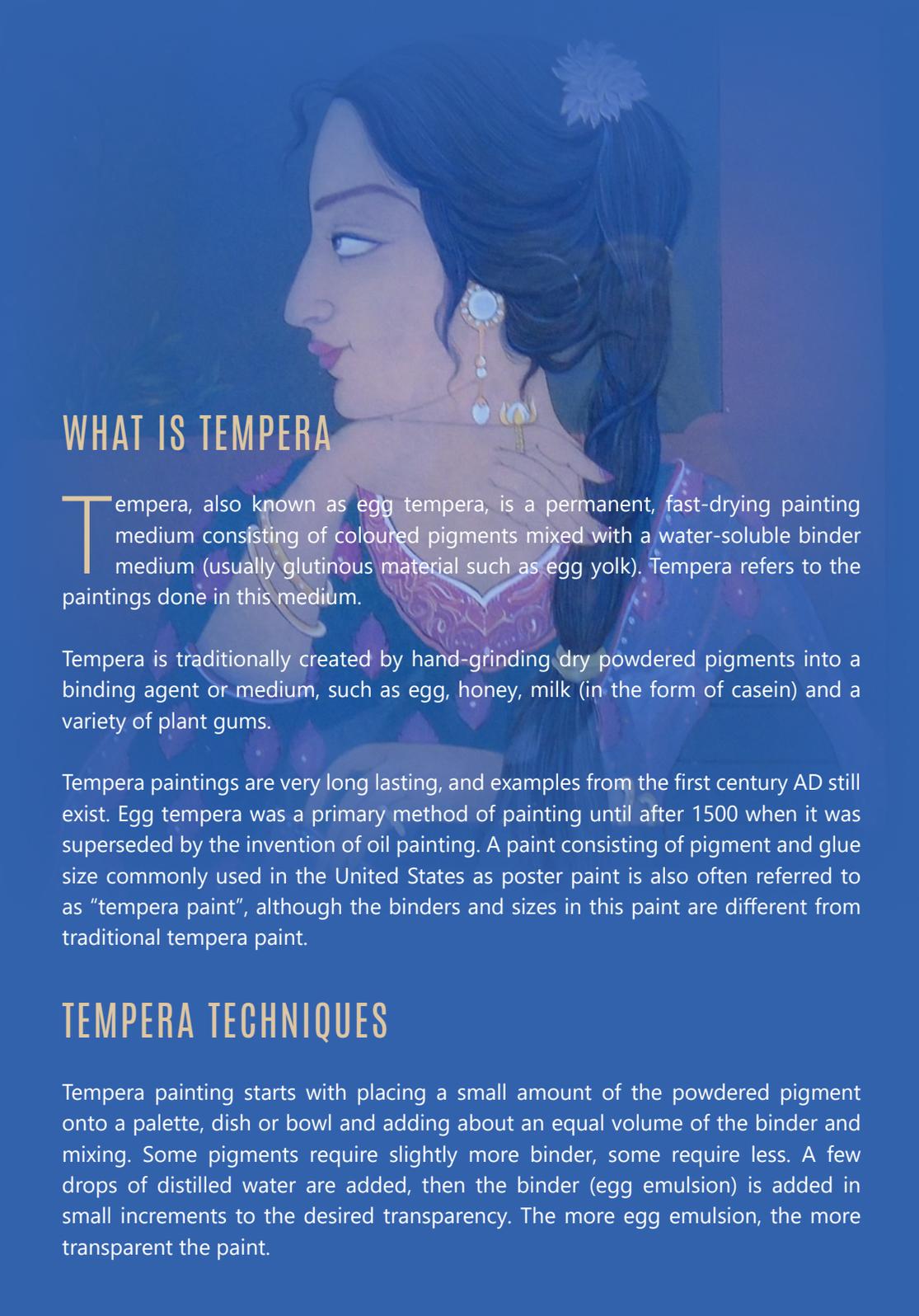
## TEMPERA TALES

Tempera paintings were first found on early Egyptian sarcophagi decorations. Many of the Fayum mummy portraits used tempera, sometimes in combination with encaustic. A related technique has also been used in ancient and early medieval paintings, found in several caves and rock-cut temples of India. High-quality art with the help of tempera was created in Bagh Caves between the late 4th and 10th centuries AD and in the 7th century AD in Ravan Chhaya rock shelter in Orissa.

## TAGORES & TEMPERA

In the early part of the 20th century, a large number of Indian artists, notably of the Bengal School took up Tempera as one of their primary media of expression.

Artists such as Gaganendranath Tagore, Asit Kumar Haldar, Abanindranath Tagore, Nandalal Bose, Kalipada Ghoshal and Sughra Rababi were foremost. After the 1950s, artists such as Jamini Roy and Ganesh Pyne established tempera as a medium for the new age artists of India.



## WHAT IS TEMPERA

Tempera, also known as egg tempera, is a permanent, fast-drying painting medium consisting of coloured pigments mixed with a water-soluble binder medium (usually glutinous material such as egg yolk). Tempera refers to the paintings done in this medium.

Tempera is traditionally created by hand-grinding dry powdered pigments into a binding agent or medium, such as egg, honey, milk (in the form of casein) and a variety of plant gums.

Tempera paintings are very long lasting, and examples from the first century AD still exist. Egg tempera was a primary method of painting until after 1500 when it was superseded by the invention of oil painting. A paint consisting of pigment and glue size commonly used in the United States as poster paint is also often referred to as "tempera paint", although the binders and sizes in this paint are different from traditional tempera paint.

## TEMPERA TECHNIQUES

Tempera painting starts with placing a small amount of the powdered pigment onto a palette, dish or bowl and adding about an equal volume of the binder and mixing. Some pigments require slightly more binder, some require less. A few drops of distilled water are added, then the binder (egg emulsion) is added in small increments to the desired transparency. The more egg emulsion, the more transparent the paint.

## TALKING TEMPERA

The most common form of classical tempera painting is "egg tempera". For this form most often only the contents of the egg yolk is used. The white of the egg and the membrane of the yolk are discarded.

Egg yolk is rarely used by itself with pigment; it dries almost immediately and can crack when it is dry. Some agent is always added, in variable proportions.

- » One recipe calls for vinegar (1:1 proportion to egg yolk by volume)
- » Other recipes suggest white wine (1 part yolk, 2 parts wine)
- » Some schools of egg tempera use various mixtures of egg yolk and water.

When used to paint icons on church walls, liquid myrrh is sometimes added to the mixture to give the paint a pleasing odour, particularly as worshipers may find the egg tempera somewhat pungent for quite some time after completion. The paint mixture has to be constantly adjusted to maintain a balance between a "greasy" and "watery" consistency by adjusting the amount of water and yolk. As tempera dries, the artist will add more water to preserve the consistency and to balance the thickening of the yolk on contact with air. Once prepared, the paint cannot be stored. Egg tempera is water-resistant, but not waterproof. Egg tempera is not a flexible paint and requires stiff boards; painting on canvas will cause cracks to form and chips of paint to fall off.

## TEMPERA GRASSA

Adding oil in no more than a 1:1 ratio with the egg yolk by volume produces a water-soluble medium with many of the colour effects of oil paint, although it cannot be painted thickly.

## TEMPERA PIGMENTS

Some of the pigments used by medieval painters, such as cinnabar (contains mercury), orpiment (contains arsenic), or lead white (contains lead) are highly toxic. Most artists today use modern synthetic pigments, which are less toxic but have similar colour properties to the older pigments.



# TEMPERA ARTISTS



## KAUSHIK COOMAR

An exponent of the Indian Style of Painting, the artist is a student of Ajoy Kumar Ghose and uses experiments with Tempera to express his artist vision.

Here he depicts scenes from rural India - busy markets, daily village life and also includes two works in classic Tempera forms of popular Indian deities.



## PARTHA SARATHI BHATTACHARJEE

The artist is a PhD student under the supervision of Dr. Somnath Mukherjee and Prof. Ajoy Kumar Ghose, working towards his thesis titled "An analytical study of the Mother's (Mirra Alfassa) creation: A voice in silence".

He is also the proud recipient of the Abhinandranath Tagore and Nandalal Bose award for art, across multiple years.

His Tempera pieces are once again in mixed series in popular themes used by the Indian masters of this medium.



## SABYASACHI BOHRA

Having studied at the Government College of Art & Craft, Kolkata, the artist was keen to explore an unusual medium like Tempera that is very typically associated with the Bengal School of Art.

He has painted four different pieces, all on themes that have been tried and tested in Tempera. Nature, Mythology and People are the most widely used themes in this form of painting.



## BUDHADITYA BANERJEE

Outside of being an exemplary artist, he is also an art restorationist and has worked on several private projects preserving old paintings.

In this exhibit he showcases a mixture of Hindu mythological figures, a subject that is much favoured in the Tempera medium.



## PAYAL ACHARJYA

She received the prestigious Abinandranath Tagore Memorial Award in 2016 and has experimented with painting in various mediums.

Her series on Nature is inspired by what she sees around her, an artist's ode to beauty in Tempera. Three paintings are inspired by Miniature works that were popularised by Moghul rulers in India, her version in Tempera style.



BRONZE, WOOD &  
METAL SCULPTURES

BY

**SUVAJIT  
SAMANTA**

Suvajit Samanta works in steel, bronze and fibreglass usually to a smaller than life-size scale.

His sculptures are detailed, modern and directional even while they suggest a child's take on what a grownup world might be when the story book one up-ends reality.



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