Samit Das (born 1970 in Jamshedpur) specializes in painting, photography, interactive art works and artist’s books, creating multi-sensory environments through art and architectural installations. He studied Fine Arts at Kala Bhavan, Santiniketan, and took part in a post experience program at Camberwell College of Arts, London, through a British Council Scholarship (CWIT). In 2011 he received a BRIC scholarship to visit Italy.

Samit has held several solo shows in London, Singapore, New Delhi, Kolkata and Mumbai. He has documented the Tagore House Museum in Kolkata (1999-2001). His show on Tagore’s architecture, entitled The Idea of Space and Rabindranath Tagore has been shown at various venues, such as Lalit Kala Academy (New Delhi), India International Centre (New Delhi), Victoria Memorial Hall (Kolkata), Alliance Francaise (Dhaka) and Freies Museum Berlin. He also took part in an installation project at Mumbai International Airport Curated by Rajiv Sethi (AHF New Delhi).

His research, which includes archiving and documentation, is an integrated part of his art practice. Samit’s research on Santiniketan’s architecture began during his MFA Studies. His book Architecture of Santiniketan: Tagore’s concepts of space has been published with Niogy Books (Delhi). A further book of his is Hotel New Bengal, published by Onestar Press (France). He is presently working on books projects, entitled Resonance of Swami Vivekananda; Art Of Nandalal Bose; and A visual Anthology of Rabindranath Tagore.
Artist’s Statement

The series of works ‘Samit Das, Journey in Time & Space: Visual Archives of Rabindranath Tagore’ are part of a more recent shift in art practice that adopts an indexical inflected mode of communication. My commitment to his-tory is uniquely nourished by light and stone, mud and memory, drawn from an ‘archive’ that lies as much in landscape as it emerges from the recesses of a cupboard. ‘In Search Of Frozen Music’ is an exploration, a play with the residual remains of Rabindranath Tagore’s experiments in art and education that manifested in the constructed form and inhabited space of Santiniketan, originally christened the Brahmacharya Ashram and later known as the Visva Bharati. It is, variously, a study of the relationship between built space and cultural production, about an aesthetics of ‘doing’ that arose in Jorasanko in the late 19th Century and gradually unfolded in the early decades of the 20th Century, and a reflection on the state of art and education. My art reads the architecture of Santiniketan as a provocative text that forces us to rethink and re-imagine the nation and the place of art in it. Architecture, and a lived history shared by a pioneering group of artists, architects, writers and critics, becomes the grounds on which to negotiate the politics of identity and our place in a community that debates it through art. This aspect of the Bengal School movement stems from an enduring academic interest in the figure of Tagore and his philosophy, an artistic engagement with architecture and the anatomy of inhabited spaces, one that is reflected in his practice for the last decade and more, and their intimately entangled existence at the site of the Visva Bharati University.
Journey in Time & Space: Visual Archives of Rabindranath Tagore
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