

News monitored for: Emami Group



culture

3rd ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL

ReInvention

EVERYTHING AT ONCE

KCC's chairperson and CEO of Emami Art, Richa Agarwal, is charting a new phygital roadmap for the city's culture hub



three's company

Richa Agarwal

JUST AS INDULGE turned three, Kolkata Centre for Creativity too turned three this year. And what an impressive inning it has been so far for this hub of multidisciplinary art. From bringing the best artists to the city to spotting emerging talents or creating immersive art trails for the audience, KCC has set newer benchmarks for its competitors each year.

The pandemic-ridden year, 2020, saw KCC successfully charting a new digital roadmap under the aegis of its chairperson Richa Agarwal, who is also the CEO of Emami Art. There were interesting art workshops for toddlers and senior citizens held, besides a variety of performative events including a few on sustainability that were held digitally. Emami Art, too, started its digital initiatives within 10 days of the first lockdown with mentorship programmes and a global talk series.

KCC also organised a whole new online art festival called *Ami Arts Festival*, last December, that featured over 150 artists, 350-plus artworks, multiple workshops and performances that aimed at promoting, supporting, sustaining and creating opportunities for artists amidst the trying times. And with the world opening up once more in the second

half of 2021, the centre straddled the digital and physical platforms with exceptional élan.

"I am really excited and happy that KCC turned three, and successfully so, despite all the hurdles and factors beyond our control. The pandemic has taught us so much, be it time management or managing people and understanding the demands of the time and adapting to the same. As things started to get normal, we resumed our physical exhibitions and workshops with renewed zest apart from the digital initiatives that had really done well. Now, I am eagerly waiting to see where this wonderful journey takes us in 2022," shares Richa.

Richa feels that the digital efforts have made them realise how much easier it is to access people who are sitting in remote corners of the world and bring them together. "The audience was a lot more receptive because the need to learn and stay connected was pressing and it was simply mind-blowing to experience a completely unexplored medium. Once you learn something new it's difficult to turn back in time and hence our online events will continue alongside the physical exhibitions and workshops," she adds.

Apart from the countless online exhibitions and workshops that dotted the year 2021, there were 10-12 physical exhibitions each held at KCC and Emami Art. Also, the huge response received by the *Ami Arts Festival* from the patrons and participants alike, made Richa take a giant leap by shifting the second edition this year to Nazrul Tirtha in collaboration with Biswa Bangla and HIDCO, turning it into an even bigger affair. The special focus of this three-day festival, this December, was on sustainability and there were unique art exhibits, live musical performances, talk series, art workshops and an arts and crafts *bazaar* to keep the visitors engrossed.

"The response to *Ami Arts Festival* was really overwhelming. Tired of being confined to homes, with smartphones being the only connection to the outside world, people were craving artful and enriching experiences and we are happy to have curated this. We are planning to make this festival even bigger with more collaborations in 2022, if things go right," signs off the curator.

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