SHILPSUTRA
INTERNATIONAL OPEN ELECTIVE 26
4-15 JANUARY, 2027

राष्ट्रीय डिज़ाइन संस्थान
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF DESIGN
AHMEDABAD

Kalighat Painting

West Bengal

Seats Available 13

OE26A06
Ahmedabad Campus



Kalighat paintings are a distinctive 19th-century Bengali folk art that emerged around the Kalighat Kali Temple in Kolkata, made by scroll painters (patuas) for pilgrims and urban buyers. They are known for bold, sweeping outlines, flat bright colours, minimal backgrounds, and subjects ranging from Hindu deities to satirical scenes of colonial Calcutta life.

Origins and context
Kalighat painting developed in the marketplace near the Kalighat temple from roughly the 1830s to the early 20th century, peaking before cheap chromolithographs displaced it in the 1920s–30s.

The style is closely tied to the social transitions of 19th-century Bengal under the East India Company, capturing both religious devotion and everyday modernity.

It grew out of older Bengali scroll traditions (patachitra) but adapted to an urban bazaar economy, serving pilgrims and a new colonial middle class.



Bappa Chitrakar

Bappa Chitrakar is an artist of the traditional Bengal Patachitra, a heritage folk artform from West Bengal that combines narrative painting with musical storytelling.

Born into a family of traditional Patachitra painters, Bappa Chitrakar learned the techniques of painting, line work, and color balance from his parents, who are both National Award–winning artists.

He belongs to the renowned Chitrakar community of Habichak village in Purba Medinipur, where generations of artists have preserved this unique tradition.