

# Pilar Corrias

Press Release

**Prafulla Mohanti**  
**ANANDA**  
4 April–10 May 2025

Pilar Corrias  
51 Conduit Street  
W1S 2YT



Prafulla Mohanti, *Grishma*, 1982. Courtesy the artist and Pilar Corrias, London

Pilar Corrias is pleased to present *ANANDA*, an exhibition of abstract paintings from the 1960–90s by Prafulla Mohanti.

The works on display were all painted in London, where Mohanti moved in the early 1960s from rural India. Although qualified as an architect in Mumbai, his opportunities in London were limited, and he faced several forms of discrimination. His degree was not recognised by the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) and he was paid less than English architects doing the same work. Suffering from the racist, anti-immigrant rhetoric of the 1970s and struggling with the grey landscape, he initially found life in the UK isolating. Withdrawing from architecture, he found his escape in painting, which brought to his new life the colours and joys of home.

For Mohanti painting is a form of meditation, and the efforts to control the paint's flow can be likened to a person's attempts to control their life. The universal symbol of the circle, a recurring form in his work, returns the artist to his childhood, when he was taught to practise the Hindu holy trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwara as three circles. Although deeply rooted within the Indian landscape and Tantric culture, Mohanti translates these sources through the language of abstraction to produce paintings as transcendent as they are personal.

This exhibition forms part of Gallery 2, an occasional programme of exhibitions by non-represented artists at Pilar Corrias Conduit Street.

**Prafulla Mohanti** (b. Odisha, India, 1936) moved to London in 1960 to work as an architect after graduating from JJ School of Art, Mumbai. In 1964 he gained a diploma in town planning in Leeds where, in the same year, his first solo exhibition of paintings was held. He worked as an architect-planner for the Greater London Council (1965–1969), after which he devoted himself to his art practice full time, dividing his time between England and India.

Recent exhibitions include: *Village Letters*, Iniva, London (2022); *Prafulla Mohanti: Full Circle*, Hepworth Wakefield (2022); *Tantra: enlightenment to revolution*, The British Museum, London (2020). His paintings are in the collection of The British Museum, London; Leeds City Art Gallery, Leeds; Hepworth Wakefield, Wakefield; Brighton Art Gallery, Brighton; Museum of Modern Art Berkeley, California; Academy of Fine Arts, Calcutta; National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi, among others. He is the author of several books, including *Changing Village*, *Changing Life* (London: Viking, 1990); *Through Brown Eyes* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985); *Indian Village Tales* (London: Davis-Poynter, 1975); *My Village, My Life: Nanpur: Portrait of an Indian Village* (London: Davis-Poynter, 1973).

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