

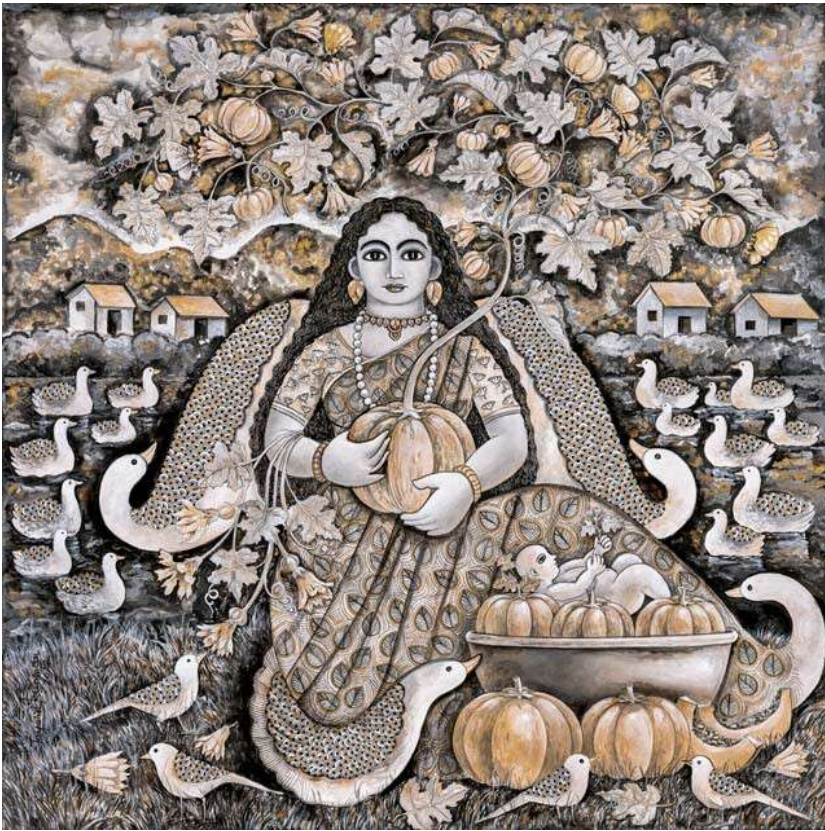
A Curated Guide to the Mumbai Gallery Weekend

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Mumbai, It's Time To Put On Your Artsy Boots!

Mumbai Gallery Weekend continues to be an annual fixture on the city's cultural calendar. Now in its 11th edition, the weekend witnesses a flurry of art events that embrace the city's finest cultural mascots. This year, with an impressive participation of 32 galleries, strong curatorial concepts are setting the tone for 2023. From the masters to the contemporary players, the weekend promises to be a sensation. So here is my curated guide of 10 must-visit shows at the 11th edition of MGW.



Jayasri Burman, *Prakriti*, 2022 (Watercolour pen & ink on paper pasted on lucoband board);

Image courtesy of the artist & Art Musings

Dhara by Jayasri Burman at Art Musings:

The rich cultural heritage of Bengal, fables and folktales reminiscent of childhood and feminine energy culminate on the floor of Art Musings. Burman's evocative – earthy - feminine fetish gracefully nestles within the arms of blooming nature in its utmost divinity. Sombre washes of peach, pink and earthy tones depict – in a manner iconic as well as aniconic – Burman's archetypal figure of the great mother – of Devi. The artist says, “...The Feminine creates the power to transform the present into the future. She knows she is the beginning and the end...”



Raja Ravi Verma, *Kizhakke Palat Krishna Menon and Family*, 1870 (Oil on canvas);
Image courtesy of DAG

The First Modern by Raja Ravi Verma at DAG:

DAG celebrates a pivotal moment in Ravi Verma's artistic career when he debuted with (according to most biographers) his first-ever portrait in 1870. Commissioned by Krishna Menon, the richly-depicted, overtly embellished and beautifully bejewelled painting presents the Kizakke Palat Krishna Menon family from Mangalore. The frame includes his confident and poised wife Indooly Amma, elder son Balakrishna (in upper centre in a blue cloak), misty-eyed younger son Raman, and daughter.



Atul Dodiya, Karuna, 2022 -2022 (Oil on canvas; Madhabi Mukherjee as Karuna in Kapurush 1965, Director Satyajit Ray); Image courtesy of the artist & Chemould Prescott Road

Dr. Banerjee in Dr. Kulkarni's Nursing Home and Other Paintings 2020-2022 by Atul Dodiya at Chemould Prescott Road:

Atul Dodiya stands as one of the finest South Asian artists whose creations continue to be relevant to India's culture. Dodiya's art has charmed audiences with its cinema-centric presentation since as early as 1995. Once again, the artist has taken over the Bombay art scene with a set of 24 paintings in particular. Carefully chosen moments from a series of movies watched and rewatched during the pandemic, the movie buff artist mimics his very own fiction with a running storyboard. The number 24 holds significance in cinematography – 24 frames in a second! For all art and Bollywood connoisseurs, this show undoubtedly proves to be the ideal visual treat!



Soumya Sankar Bose, Installation view; Image courtesy of the artist & Experimenter Colaba

A Discreet Exit through Darkness by Soumya Sankar Bose at Experimenter Colaba:

Marking a debut at the MGW, Experimenter presents a heartfelt but fictional depiction of a period when Bose's mother disappeared after being sent to the local sweetmeat shop. The nine-year-old did not return for over three years (1969-'71) owing to prosopagnosia (inability to recognise people's faces). Through a well-curated collection of photographs and an immersive film, Soumya opens the world into the recesses of his ancestral history while recounting a telling episode. Bose explains that it remains an unspoken episode, "I use fiction for this work because I don't want to torture her [mother] with the memories. I'm not a journalist." Even amid the engulfing anxiety elicited by depictions of an episodic past, the show leaves me with a will to help.



Boris Brucher, Installation view; Image courtesy of æquo

Handmade Tale by Boris Brucher at æquo:

French illustrator Boris Brucher presents a landscape of a region in Karnataka in an imaginary tale. Engraved with pure silver, his four column-like majestic sculptures pay tribute to the cultural history of Bidar. East meets west and indigenous meets contemporary as one spots Brucher's signature wrestlers (inspired by the works of Eadweard Muybridge, Edmund Teske and Bruce Weber) amid the silver inlay Bidri work executed by local craftsmen (Mohammamed Abdul Rauf is one of the two master craftsmen). The exquisite collection transports the viewers to the rivers and ruins that are often symbolic in Indian miniature paintings.



Rajesh Wankhade, Beyond Time & Space I, 2022 (Acrylic colour & mixed media on canvas); Image courtesy of the artist & Tao Art Gallery

Unstructured Pursuit of Perspectives by Rajesh Wankhade & Smita Kinkale at Tao Art Gallery:

The two-man show explores the fundamentality of human existence while defining common notions of time and space. Rajesh's sombre figurative art meets Kinkale's multi-dimensional abstract, coming together in an experiential representation of an interconnected universe. The artworks strive to find the ultimate end of giving and the perspectives in search of supreme knowledge and spiritual happiness.



CK Rajan, (L) Mid Terrors Series, 1991 -96 (Collage from print media on paper); (R) Small Sculptures - Love, 2022 (cast bronze and paint); Image courtesy of the artist & Galerie Mirchandani & Steinruecke

Seekrajan by CK Rajan at Galerie Mirchandani & Steinruecke:

Rajan's selected retrospective delves deeper with a survey show dating from the late 1980s to the present. A member of the Kerala Radical Group, Rajan's artistic output has always dealt with everyday objects to set a strong commentary on socio-economic know-how. The late '80s witnessed Rajan's search for Utopia painted inside cigarette packets. During the early '90s, his small magazine collages explored the impact of economic liberalisation due to the rise of popular print culture; and almost two decades later, in 2010, the artist shifted to sculptural renditions of distorted everyday objects. His most recent and never-before-showcased collection 'Small Sculptures' (2017) deals with bronze cast.



Nityan Unnikrishnan, Noise Cancelling, 2022 (Acrylic on khadi), Image courtesy of the artist & Chatterjee & Lal

Every Day is an Admission of Guilt by Nityan Unnikrishnan at Chatterjee & Lal:

Unnikrishnan teases us as he grapples between the controlled indoors and the unconfined outdoors. Within this basic dichotomy that encapsulates the interconnected world, the artist raises questions about space, content and formalism. Amid the depicted realism, the indoors seems controlled, intentional and homogeneous, while the outdoor looks unchallenged, undefined, chaotic but naturally composed, and lastly saturated with diverse palettes. The show leaves its audiences questioning one's traces in everyday spaces and environments.



*Apnavi Makanji, P.H.A.N.S.T.R.O.M.A.K, 2022 (Collage on archival paper);
Copyright of Apnavi Makanji*

PSYCHOPOMP by Apnavi Makanji at TARQ:

Apnavi Makanji explores the proposition of Queertopia through a surreal representation of post-Colonial extractivist histories. For her current body of works, Makanji merges visuals of biological species with images of extractivism. PSYCHOPOMP guides its audiences towards accepting the bleak reality of the world while urging one to push the ability to be kind, compassionate and soft.



Sandeep Mukherjee, Installation view; Image courtesy of the artist and Project 88.

Spectral Theatre by Rohini Devasher & Sandeep Mukherjee at Project 88

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Project 88 curates a mysterious world that slowly unravels into speculations and spectrality. Los Angeles-based Sandeep Mukherjee's two large installations are juxtaposed with Rohini Devasher's film. Mukherjee's site-specific installation, titled 'Centrifugal', explores bodily movements through performativity and architecture. Indexed abstract marks saturate as the body moves, turns, stretches and jerks. The installation delves into a deep study of radical geometries amid motions. Rohini's film Glasshouse Deep zooms into a single-celled algae as it assumes a planetary scale. The film leaves the beholder in a mysterious immersion as one experiences the organic entity(s) refract, reflect and luminate in a universe known and still visually alien.

Mumbai Gallery Weekend never fails to surprise the city with a wide array of curatorial concepts. These exhibitions leave the viewers with introspective notes on everyday life. From the masters to contemporary art, the weekend has something in store for all. So put on your artsy sneakers and enjoy your gallery hop! All spaces will have extended hours till 8 pm until Sunday, January 15.