

GET SMART

4 new art shows in Mumbai to check out

In gallery, or online, here's the art you need to catch

By Shikha Sethi

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The Indian art scene is finding its groove again, with new exhibitions at several galleries, many of which are available to view via online viewing rooms.

Mumbai's Jhaveri Contemporary recently hosted an exhibition by Pakistani artist Fiza Khatri, *Sailoon and Other Stories*, whose intimate paintings chart her lived experiences of queerness; and Delhi's Vadehra Gallery invited art collector Udit Bhambri to conceptualise a show that titled [*Call Me By Your Name*](#) that brings together some of the biggest names in modern and contemporary Indian art.

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Lad Museum staffers, through two of the exhibitions mentioned below, as well as three additional ones.

Mumbai: Four New Art Shows to Check Out

1. **Mehlli Gobhai: Epiphanies** at Chemould Prescott Road, till August 31



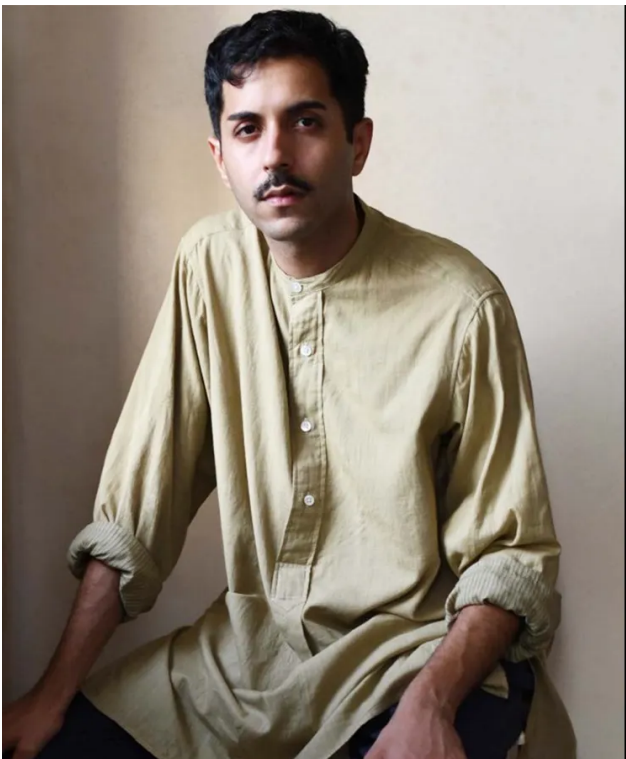
(Left) *Untitled*, c. 1970s, Mixed Media on Canvas; (Right) *Untitled*, 2010 - 2012, Mixed media on constructed canvases. Both works by Mehlli Gobhai. Images courtesy: Chemould Prescott Road

There is something for everyone at *Epiphanies*, Chemould's new show featuring abstractionist painter Mehlli Gobhai. An edited version of the large-scale retrospective curated by Ranjit Hoskote and Nancy Adajania at the National Gallery of Modern Art, Mumbai titled *Don't Ask Me About Colour* in March last year (cut short due to the COVID lockdown), the exhibition features 95 works that capture breakthrough moments from Gobhai's distinguished seven-decade-long career.

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minimal mixed media “constructed canvases” of the Nineties that blur the lines between painting and sculptural object. A moveable feast.

2. *Bildungsroman (& Other Stories)* by Areez Katki at Tarq, till August 7



Areez Katki; *Massacre of the Tall Poppies*, 2018, Cotton thread hand embroidery on cotton mul sudreh. Images courtesy: Areez Katki and TARQ

New Zealand-based artist Areez Katki’s first show in India, this exciting new exhibition focuses on works the artist created between 2018 till 2021 when he was in Mumbai. Using quotidian archival objects sourced from his family home in Tardeo – handwoven dust clothes, handkerchiefs, tablecloths, and repurposed textiles, Katki employs the needlework skills he learned from his mother and grandmother to explore themes of spirituality, migrant identity, sexuality and his own Parsi heritage in a way that feels deeply personal. Take, for example, *Massacre of the Tall Poppies*, 2018, in which blood-red poppy flowers are embroidered on a cotton mul sudreh to reference the 19th century opium trade that created incredible wealth for the city’s most prominent Parsis.

3. *The Green Room* by Naveen Kishore at Chatterjee & Lal, till 14 August



The Green Room of the Goddess by Naveen Kishore, 2003, Digital print on archival paper, Edition 1 of 5. Image courtesy: Chatterjee & Lal

Another first, *The Green Room*, marks the first time that Naveen Kishore is showing at Mumbai gallery Chatterjee & Lal. The founder of iconic Kolkata-based publishing house Seagull Books, Kishore is also a keen photographer with a deep interest in theatre and street photography. Comprising two series, “Performing the Goddess” and “The Green Room of the Goddess”, the exhibition showcases photographs made in the late 1990s and early 2000s. While the former focuses on the nightly transformation of Chapal Bhaduri to the goddess Chapal Rani, the latter series takes an intimate look at the potters’ village of Kumartali in northern Kolkata, where the city’s famous Durga, Kali and Saraswati idols are created. “Performing the Goddess” is included in the collection of the Smithsonian’s National Museum of Asian Art, Washington, so don’t miss this opportunity to view it in person.

4. *Group show* by Jagdeep Raina and Hardeep Pandhal, at Jhaveri Contemporary, opening mid-August to October

(Left) *Never Say Goodbye* by Jagdeep Raina, 2015, Mixed Media; (Right) *Respect my BAME* (name change) by Hardeep Pandhal, 2015, printed plastic, spray paint, graffiti pen, paper, comic strip. Images courtesy: Jhaveri Contemporary

Jhaveri Contemporary is on a roll. And its next show promises to hit all the right notes. Pairing two fresh new voices, Canadian-based artist Jagdeep Raina and UK-based artist Hardeep Pandhal, expect boldness, energy, acerbity and playful complexity.

Raina's research-based mixed media works that bring together various strands of pop culture, including album covers, portraiture and phulkari embroidery, to explore the birth of bhangra music in the diaspora in the late 70s. (Prior to this, bhangra existed mostly as a dance form in Punjab). Created by working-class South Asian migrant labourers, who worked in the industrial factories of Britain – specifically Birmingham and the outskirts of London – bhangra music remixed traditional Punjabi folk with hip hop and reggae. The lyrics were often anti-colonial, anti-racist, and advocated for queer and feminist futures, with bhangra club culture creating inclusive spaces in a deeply divided society.

Pandhal's work is just as irreverent, with the gallery showcasing his drawings on paper, etchings, woollen jumpers (made in collaboration with his mother) and large cut-outs.

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