

# Cultural Calendar 2024: The Year Ahead

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By Ekta Mohta

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Nature Morte

Date: January 19 | Venue: Dhanraj Mahal, Apollo Bandar

So far, the city could catch artist Subodh Gupta's stainless-steel installations at Jio World Drive in BKC. In 2024, Delhi-based gallery Nature Morte brings them to Dhanraj Mahal at the Gateway of India in a new permanent space. Occupying the third floor of Block A of the art deco building, the Mumbai outpost of Nature Morte will open with a solo show by Gupta (on till March 9), featuring sculptures, paintings and wall reliefs.

Since 1997, when director Peter Nagy launched it in Delhi, Nature Morte has built a roster of prominent Indian artists such as Mrinalini Mukherjee, Bharti Kher and LN Tallur, among others, with Mumbaikars such as the Kallats and Dhruvi Acharya. Co-director Aparajita Jain, who joined in 2013, has also assimilated younger talents such as Asim Waqif and Martand Khosla. "For the simple fact that most of our artists do not work with a gallery in Mumbai, we thought it appropriate to open a permanent space," says Nagy.

Mumbai Festival

Dates: January 20-28 | Venue: Across the city

In the narrow window of Mumbai's winter, a host of large-scale outdoor activities would take place spread across several weekends each year. Maharashtra Tourism has brought them all under a single umbrella with the Mumbai Festival, starting this year. The Mumbai Marathon, Kala Ghoda Arts Festival, Happy Streets, Yoga by the Bay and Aarogyam Kidzathon will take place over the same nine days in January, in addition to a raft of other planned events such as music concerts, a film festival and activities on the beach. Mega trade fairs such as Maha

Mumbai Expo and Tourism Conclave will coincide with a shopping fest and a cricket zone. Spearheaded by Anand Mahindra, the plan is for the festival to club together everything the city has to offer.

## Mumbai Gallery Weekend

Dates: January 11-14 | Venue: Galleries from Colaba to Juhu

Gallery-hopping in the city can take place on any Saturday or Art Night Thursday, but what Mumbai Gallery Weekend does over a four-day period is stitch it together with interesting talks and experiences. The 12th edition is no different. There are 36 participating spaces, with usual suspects such as galleries Chemould Prescott Road, Isa, DAG, Maskara, and others, and new faces such as Akara Contemporary, Gallery XXL (which will open a permanent space in Colaba this year) and Method Juhu. This year also includes a series of talks at the CSMVS in association with India Art Fair. Kathiwada City House will host a Young Collectors Program; Subko Cacao will host a salon by 'The Irregular Times', India's first art and design newspaper, published as a quarterly; and Raw Mango will host an Odissi performance by visual artist Kuldeep Singh.

The most interesting off-site might be 'Bombay Tilts Down', a 14-minute video installation, at Sassoon Docks. Created by Studio Camp, and presented by Experimenter, it is the video footage captured by a CCTV camera stationed on a 35-storeyed building in Worli. Residents from Jijamata Nagar and BDD Chawls are videographed in their daily lives under the diminishing sky.

## Sudarshan Shetty

Dates: January 6-17 | Venue: IFBE, Ballard Estate

The last time conceptual artist Sudarshan Shetty had a show in Mumbai was 2017, when he presented 'Shoonya Ghar' at the Dr Bhau Daji Lad Museum. His upcoming show at IFBE, 'One Life Many', is inspired by a quote from Pandit Kumar Gandharva: "We are individually multiple." Designed as an immersive exhibit with installations, film projections and physical elements, the show delves into the possibility of carrying an 'other' or many others within ourselves.

Shetty says, "The seed of this exhibition lies in a folk story I heard a long time ago, that comes together in a video and a suite of objects to be seen in a certain order of display in a way of retelling the story, in as many ways as possible. Retelling is the life blood of oral traditions, ensuring a sense of community and recalling wisdom that has evolved through centuries. How else can we make sense of our present? In my role as an artist, I would like to see my work as a mediation between how I am conditioned to belong in a structure dictated by the Western canons, and a life, as I see from where I belong, outside of it."

The art calendar at a glance:

CSMVS's 'Ancient Sculptures' (in pic) will run till October 1, while Dr Bhau Daji Lad's show featuring TV Santhosh will run till February 11. Chemould Prescott Road will present Gulammohammed Sheikh in April, and Galerie Mirchandani + Steinruecke will introduce the work of land-artist Kulpreet Singh in November. The recently-opened Museum of Solutions in Lower Parel will launch a Grow Lab on their terrace in March, to teach children about urban farming, composting and soil food. And, Space118 will showcase 'The Right To Look – II', a selection of abstract and landscape photographs from the collection of Mumbai patron Saloni Doshi from January 11 – March 10. Finally, Art Musings will present a solo show by Anjolie Ela Menon till February 29.