

DISCOVER

Art in Maximum City: Must-See Exhibitions on Display this August and September

Here's your guide to 7 distinctive art exhibitions that will put you in a broody mood this monsoon

KRISHNAA THORAT
AUGUST 10, 2024

SHARE ARTICLE



Only a handful of cities in the world are as overwhelming but also as serene as Mumbai: a city that is equal parts spontaneous in energy and authentic in its existence. It has this strange capacity to digest the chaotic energy of daily life and the ever-broody glamour of self-reflection that one privately enjoys amidst the regular, everyday hustle-bustle. The city's art scene mirrors this mercurial rhythm. This season, art lovers in Mumbai have many opportunities because many exhibitions are dedicated to the works of emerging artists such as Amba Sayal-Benette and renowned artists like Bhupen Khakhar and Krishen Khanna. From old masters who defined our artistic legacy to fresh faces flipping the script, these artists engage with the city in unique ways.

Here is your lowdown on some unique art exhibitions this season that are happening across the megapolis' art districts.

1. Body/Shrine: Bhupen Khakhar at Akara Modern, Colaba



The Wet Handkerchief, Lithograph on Paper, 30 x 20 inches, 1994 (Artist Proof), Image source: Akara Modern

At Akara Modern in Colaba, a collection of the late Bhupen Khakhar's paintings presents a profound meditation on the human condition. Khakhar, born in Mumbai in 1934, invites us to contemplate the juxtaposition of corporeal reality against the illusionary sheen of modernity through his art. The Padma Shri awardee's work—brimming with the stark beauty of protruding bellies and sagging flesh—serves as a counterpoint to the idealised bodies paraded on television and social media. In most of his visceral artworks, Khakhar unravels the dehydrated core of class and existence—a crude portrait that does not pretend to be comprehensive yet speaks volumes on the mundane details of daily life. This show presents a curated selection of his works on paper, spanning from watercolour to print.

When: The exhibition is on till August 17, 2024.

2. Bridge to Lanka: Cassie Machado, Lionel Wendt, Vasantha Yoganathan at Jhaveri Contemporary, Colaba.

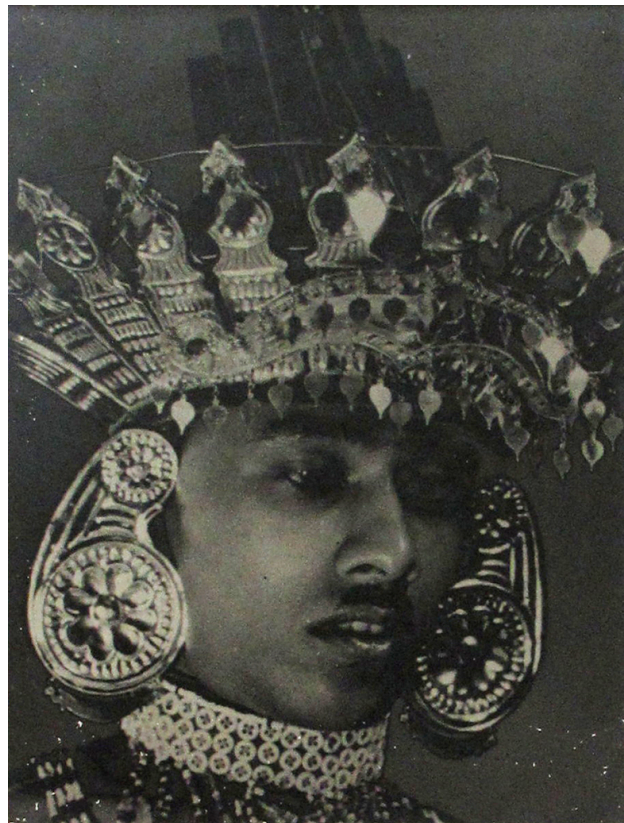


Two Handsome Twins from Tatanagar had a Beatific Smile, Charcoal, Pencil and Watercolor on Paper, 20.8 x 38.3 inches 1995, Image source: Akara Modern

At Jhaveri Contemporary, founded in 2010 by sisters Amrita and Priya Jhaveri, an exhibition explores the culture and foliage of Sri Lanka through the works of Lionel Wendt, Vasantha Yoganathan, and Cassie Machado. Wendt was an internationally renowned photographer and critic from Sri Lanka. Wendt's photos capture Sri Lanka's spiritual abundance, depicting sacred flora and the land's cultural



Cassie Machado, 'When Colours Return Home to Light VII', 2024, Photogram enlarger silver print, 213.4 x 127 cm. Courtesy the artist and Jhaveri Contemporary



Lionel Wendt, 'Portrait of Kandyan dancer', c.1933-44, Gelatin silver print, 20.3 x 15.2. Courtesy Jhaveri Contemporary

practices. Yoganathan, who lives and works in Versailles, France, is a multi-award-winning analogue photographer. Yoganathan's images from *A Myth of Two Souls* reimagine the Ramayana, while Machado's photograms, *When Colours Return Home to Light (2024)*, creatively engage with Wendt's techniques to explore modern diasporic identities. Machado is a visual artist who has a British-Sri Lankan heritage. Her work explores the themes of time and memory and engages with cross-cultural encounters.

When: The exhibition is on till 24 August 2024.

3. Dispersive Acts: Amba Sayal-Bennett at TARQ, Fort

TARQ, a well-known art gallery and incubator for young contemporary artists, will be hosting artist Amba Sayal-Bennett's first solo show in Mumbai that draws inspiration from Rani Baug, which was formerly known as Victoria Gardens in Mumbai. Once a British colonial project, this is the oldest public garden in Mumbai. It has housed various plants imported from across the world – Asia, Africa and the Americas. The British-Indian artist works and lives in London, where she was awarded her PhD in Art Practice and Learning from Goldsmiths. She has also co-founded Cypher Billboard, an artist-run public program of site-specific billboard artworks in London. In this show, Sayal-Bennett explores this public garden's colonial past with her unique sculptures that artistically incorporate the baug's architectural layouts and heritage design motifs. With the usage of materials such as resin and steel, the artist brings an industrial edge to the artwork and offers a contemporary perspective on the site's complex, layered history.

When: The exhibition is on till 21 September 2024.

4. Krishen Khanna: The 100th Year of A Legacy at Tao Gallery, Worli

At Tao Art Gallery located in Worli, founder and director Kalpana Shah has curated a special exhibition paying tribute to the 100th-year legacy of artist Krishen Khanna. Born in 1925, Khanna is an internationally and nationally acclaimed artist who received Padma Bhushan from the Government of India in 2011. He also received the



Vasantha Yoganathan, "Looking For Love", 2018, Archival Inkjet Print on Canson Platine Fibre Rag, 40 x 57.5 cm. Courtesy the artist and Jhaveri Contemporary.

President of India in 2004. The show sheds light upon Khanna's key contributions to abstract figurative art and presents his journey through various artistic phases. The exhibit features sculptures, tapestries, paintings, and even some of his hand sketches. A few notable pieces include the 'Bandwallahs' series, a demonstrative showcase of Khanna's distinctive style that celebrates the common man's everyday life — with subtle integrations of social commentary.

When: The exhibition is on till 3 September 2024.

5. Lost Horizon by Amitava Das at Sakshi Gallery, Colaba

At Sakshi Gallery, located in Colaba, an exhibition of Amitava Das' artwork represents his explorations of human forms. Born in Delhi in 1947, Das received the Lalit Kala Akademi's National Award 1976. His artwork has been featured across exhibitions nationally and internationally. Das's work has been influenced mainly by existential philosophers such as Sartre and Camus and poets like Jibananda Das and Shakti Chattopadhyay. His artwork exhibited at Sakshi has thoughtfully engaged with themes of blurred boundaries between humans and animals, navigation of conflict between nature and industry, and investigating the divide between the artificial and the natural while also expressing the tension between life and death.

When: The exhibition is on till 2 September 2024.

6. Resemblance: The Art of Rustom Siodia and Cumi Dallas at Chatterjee and Lal, Colaba

Chatterjee and Lal, located in Colaba, has displayed works of remarkable artist father-daughter duo Rustom Siodia and Cumi Dallas. Most of Siodia's artwork displayed at the gallery is of green Victorian landscapes. Siodia reached his career's peak in 1929, when he was commissioned to create murals for the Viceregal Lodge, now known as Rashtrapati Bhavan. His daughter, Cumi Dallas, forged her path as an artist and became a leading figure in the Bombay Revival School. Dallas gained recognition as a portraitist and an audience with the Queen of Iran. Her portrait of Madam Cama remains installed in the Indian



Amba Sayal-Bennett. Seed Coat, 2024. SLA, Resin 12.1 x 12.1 x 2.9 inches, Image source: TARQ



Axil, 2024 SLA, Resin 21 x 10.8 x 4 inches, Image source: TARQ





Untitled, September 1, 2016, Bronze & Patina, Edition_ 4_9, 44 x 23 x 26 cm, Image source: Tao Art Gallery



Amitava Das . Human Figure, Animal Figure . 1992 . Acrylic on canvas . 35.5 x 28 Inches

Amitava Das. Human Figure, Animal Figure. 1992. Acrylic on canvas. 35.5 x 28 Inches. Image source: Sakshi Gallery

parliament. Indian and Asian cultures majorly influence her paintings. Both these artists have distinctive styles and subjects in their artwork, which sets them apart. This is precisely what gives the exhibit a unique status, as the themes of colonial history, Indian heritage, and Bombay modernism simultaneously intertwine and split.

When: The exhibition is on till 24 August 2024.

7. Generations In My Body by Lakshmi Madhavan at Akara Contemporary, Colaba

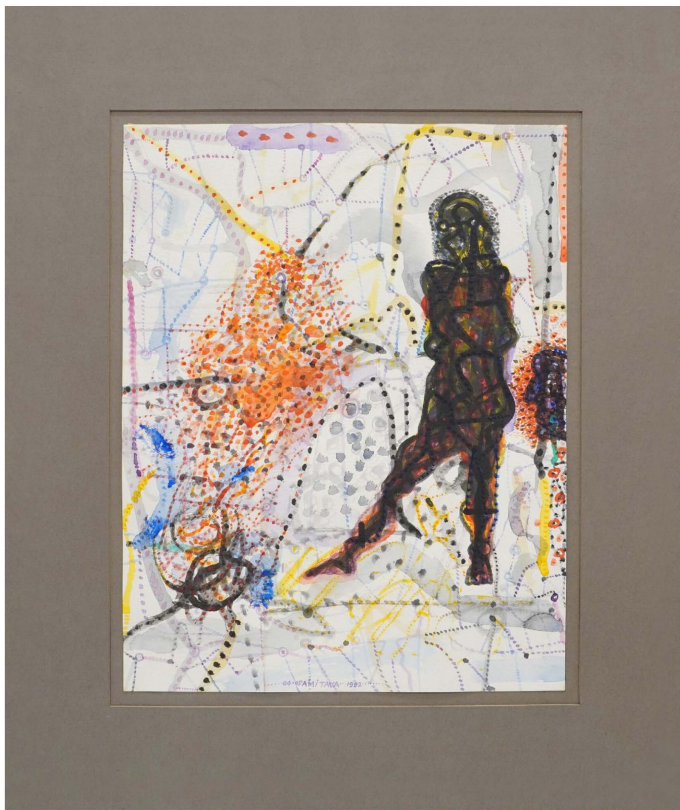
At Akara Contemporary, located in Colaba, artist Lakshmi Madhavan invites the city of Mumbai to engage with her deeply personal exploration of art. Madhavan lost her beloved grandmother in 2011, which inspired her to preserve the latter's memories and legacy through Kasavu weaves. Through this show, Madhavan also explores the profound nature of the body, especially the female form and its role in negotiating, celebrating and defying social and cultural norms. Madhavan works out of Mumbai and Balaramapuram, where her textile-based Kasavu works have taken shape. Her art has woven a narrative that looks forward to the future while honouring and treasuring the past.

When: The exhibition is on till 19 September 2024.

The rich history of art in Mumbai...

As you reflect on the themes of colonial heritage and identity through these art shows, one also can't ignore the influence of Modern art that was felt strongly in Mumbai long before India's independence. During the 20th century, The Progressive Artists Group helped transform the cultural mindsets of the city. With the advent of independence, this only expanded as Mumbai became a cosmopolitan cultural hub. Comprising age-old galleries and recently-opened experimental spaces, it seems like artists can keep pushing their aspirational horizon in this city. Every one of these art shows promises a journey of reflection and inspiration. Don't miss this month's art season, where there's something guaranteed for everyone—art patrons, seasoned collectors, and enthusiasts alike.

Experience the best in design at ID Mumbai!



As you spend August and early September immersed in art, plan to spend the next half of September with India Design ID at Jio World Garden. As September draws near, we are thrilled to announce that India's most definitive design week kicks off in Mumbai this year. In Mumbai's debut edition, India Design ID will focus on unique product design and celebrate modern Indian makers, contemporary craftsmanship, and innovative material use.

Book your tickets here.
Dates: 27-29 September, 2024.

Amitava Das . Untitled . 1992 . Mixed media on paper . 16 x 12.5 Inches

Amitava Das. Untitled. 1992. Mixed media paper. 16 x 12.5 Inches. Image source: Sakshi Gallery



Image source: Chatterjee and Lal



Image source: Chatterjee and Lal



(not) cut from the same cloth, five part panel, Various sizes, Kasavu, wood, colored threads, laterite soil, cloth roller & shuttle, 2024. Image source: Akara Contemporary



Body Copy, Kasavu, wood, threads, 86 x 100 inches, 2024. Image source: Akara Contemporary

