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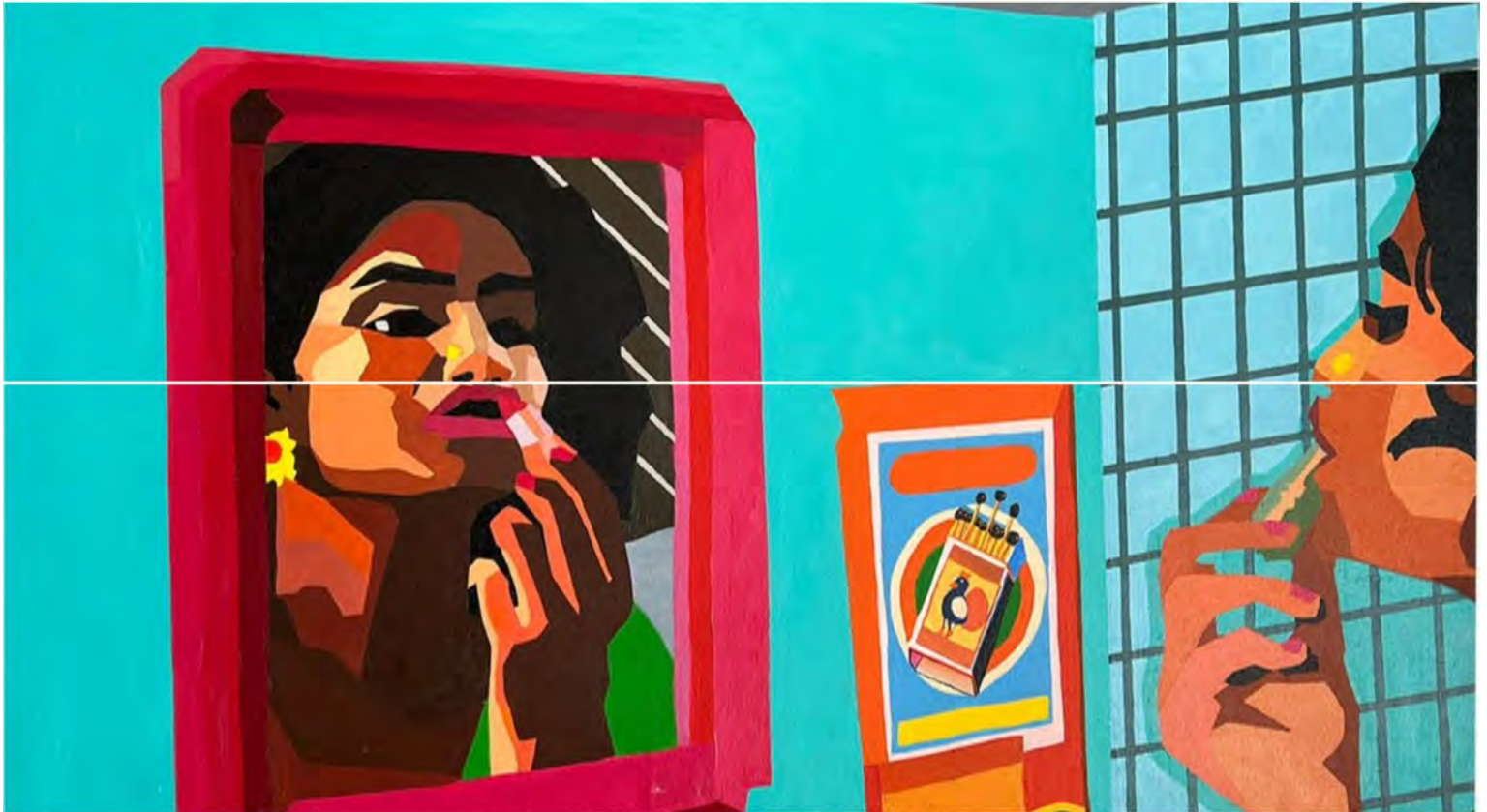
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## How to cover Mumbai Gallery Weekend by foot

Plan your AM-PM art crawl with stopovers featuring Aravani Art Project's first solo and a brunch with a teddy bear

BY SAACHI GUPTA



Prathi - Bimba (One's own Reflection) Mirror Episode 1, Shwetha, Hamsa and Aishwarya from the Aravani Art Project Gallery XXL

If your weekends, like mine, are reserved for **brain rot**, you have to admit that every now and again, there's something exciting enough that makes you swap those sweats for a cute going-out fit. And **Mumbai Gallery Weekend** is the perfect excuse to ditch the doomscrolling. With a stellar line-up of shows across 37 galleries, expect everything from trans-euphoria to Hindi film icons and mindful art. For those confused about how to navigate the packed calendar of artsy shows, here's to ditch the doomscrolling. With a stellar line-up of shows across 37 galleries, expect everything from trans-euphoria to Hindi film icons and mindful art. For those confused about how to navigate the packed calendar of artsy shows, here's *The Nod's* guide to a day of art, with snacks on the side.

### 11:30 am: *On the Cusp of the Eighth Day* by Aravani Art Project at Gallery XXL

Over the last nine years, **Aravani Art Project** has been everywhere. The trans and cis-women collective's vibrant murals are found across Mumbai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, New Delhi, and even at the Venice Biennale. So it is astonishing that *On The Cusp of the Eighth Day* marks Aravani's first-ever solo show. Look out for **'Clap - Part II'**, a painting that explores the significance of clapping as a form of expression for South Asia's transgender community. "The clap has a distinct form: horizontal flat palms striking against and perpendicular to each other, with fingers spread," explain artists Shanthi and Priyanka. "The **transgender community** uses

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physiological identity. We are unfortunately unaware of its dared origin, but this tradition is still practised and taught to people who join the trans community even today.”

*Gallery XXL, First Floor, Arsiwala Mansion, 21 Wodehouse Road, Colaba*

#### 12:30 pm: *dots for a pause* at Sakshi Art Gallery

A 10-minute walk and you're at Sakshi Art Gallery's group exhibition, *dot for a pause*, curated by Jasmine Shah Varma and featuring 17 artists including Shobha Broota, Revati Sharma Singh, and Ranjith Raman. "It's the concept of thehraav, a nuanced term that loosely translates to pause," explains Varma. "It signifies a state of steady mindfulness that fosters balance between the inner self and external world." The artworks on display are surprisingly soothing—Broota's untitled oil on canvas in various shades of yellow, for instance, feels almost meditative.

*Sakshi Art Gallery, 3rd Pasta Lane, Railway Colony, Apollo Bandar, Colaba*

#### 1 pm: Brunch stop at Kuckeliku Breakfast House

Practice what you learnt and pause for brunch. Amble along for about five minutes and you will find yourself facing Colaba's beloved Kuckeliku Breakfast House, where the French toast, often topped with jam, has been described as 'melt-in-your-mouth.' Warm and homey, the establishment has another important highlight: Gayatri Devi, Kuckeliku's resident teddy-bear, known to chill with guests—both humans and pets—in a checkered bow tie and green apron.

*Kuckeliku Breakfast House, Kamal Mansion, 4/25 Arthur Bunder Road, Colaba*

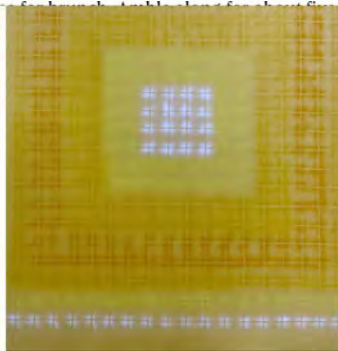
#### 2 pm: *Once Upon a Time* at DAG

Walking through Colaba feels like going back in time: stone buildings from the colonial era loom over you, the cobbled streets stretch wide, and the sea is always nearby. DAG's *Once Upon a Time in Bombay* lifts the historical city from around you and traces Mumbai's evolution from seven islands to a symbol of cosmopolitanism. The exhibit's oil paintings will evoke an unexpected fondness for the city that we usually think of as stressful and exhausting.

*DAG, The Taj Mahal Palace, Arthur Bunder Road, Apollo Bandar, Colaba*



Clap - Part II by Prarthana, Jyothi and Hamsa Sriram from the Anavani Art Project



Untitled by Shobha Broota  
Sakshi Art Gallery



Gateway of India by J.D. Gondhalekar  
DAG Collection

#### 2:30 pm: *Rana Begum* at Jhaveri Contemporary

Your next spot, Jhaveri Contemporary, is barely a three-minute walk. Here, London-based artist Rana Begum's work—a series of wall-based sculptures and watercolours—is on display. Her signature abstract minimalism and use of bright colours and light is best witnessed in 'No. 974', a piece created at the Istanbul Modern Artist's Residency Program in 2019. Using Istanbul's historic buildings as muses, Begum casts moulds inspired by lamp bases and mounted on a wall.

*Jhaveri Contemporary, 3rd Floor, Devidas Mansion, BK Boman Behram Marg, Apollo Bandar, Colaba*

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**3 pm: *Exhale* by Christopher Kulendran Thomas at Experimenter**

A minute away Sri Lankan artist Christopher Kulendran Thomas's first solo exhibition in India delves into his homeland's colonial history. Of Tamil descent, Kulendran spent his formative years in London after his family left Sri Lanka due to escalating ethnic oppression. Creating things is how Thomas first found his way out. "Creating things is how Thomas first found his way out. Marked by dark shades of red, brown, and orange, there is a violence to his work as he explores lost histories and alternative possibilities.

*Experimenter Colaba, 1st Floor, Sunny House, 16/18, BK Boman Behram Marg, Apollo Bandar, Colaba*

**3:30 pm: *Snack* at Araku**

In the same block you will find Araku's first-ever restaurant. Using locally sourced ingredients and generating zero waste, the food here is as innovative as the art you've been taking in. Try the peas and yoghurt (it is surprising how good peas taste when cooked right), and the purple sweet potato gnocchi (complete with a creamy brown butter made in-house). If there's space for dessert, bite into the beeswax ice cream garnished with floral honey and bee pollen and accompanied by a honey-spice cake that melts in your mouth.

*Araku, No. 1, Sunny House, Mandlik Rd, behind The Taj Mahal Palace, Apollo Bandar, Colaba*



No. 874 by Rana Begum  
@ranabegumcontemporary



**4:30 pm: *Grounded* by Soghra Khurasani at TARQ**

Take in the blue skies with a half-hour stroll through the picturesque streets of Colaba to Tarq gallery. Baroda-based printmaker Soghra Khurasani's solo show dives into a transformative phase in her life, defining her relationship with nature. In 'Pristine 3', she reflects on the illusion of the colour blue and how it appears in nature, be it the sky or the seas, changing across different geographies, even as it is ultimately colourless.

*TARQ, Ground Floor, KK (Navsari) Chambers, 39 AK Nayak Marg, Azad Maidan,*



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**5 pm: Radio Ceylon Paintings: Vol. 1 by Atul Dodiya at Chemould Prescott Road**

Walk two minutes and you're at Chemould Prescott Road, where Atul Dodiya's paintings are ready to take you back in time. The exhibit is a nostalgic tribute to humanity, erasing all the differences present in our current political climate.

*Chemould Prescott Road, 3rd floor, Queens Mansion, Ghanshyam Talwalkar Marg, Azad Maidan, Fort*

**6 pm: Sundowners at Cafe de la Paix**

To simmer in the nostalgia of Dodiya's paintings, take a kaali-peeli to Cafe de la Paix as the sun sets over the sea. Stepping into this 1935 Irani café—one of the oldest in the city—is like going back in time. Retro Bollywood tunes play on the radio as visitors enjoy items like keema pav and bun maska. The checkered floors, wooden furniture, and paintings of the sea all add to the nostalgia. In addition, owner Gustad Irani's warmth and a hot cup of chai make this the perfect spot to sit back, and hum along to Lata Mangeshkar's 'Ajeeb Dastaan'.

*Café De la Paix, 67 Jss Road Opera House, Avantikabai Gokhale Marg, Bhatwadi, Girgaon*



Pristine 3 by Soghna Khurasani  
Taq



Untitled by Atul Dodiya  
Chemould Prescott Road



I am like this only for Instagram by Viraj Khanna  
Tao Art Gallery

**End your evening at: Tao Art Gallery with Viraj Khanna's *Brain Rot: The Life You Live***

It's a half-hour cab ride away, but the trek is completely worth it for what is fated to be the funnest show of this art-packed day. As if reading your mind, [Viraj Khanna's](#) solo satirically examines your usual weekend/daily routine, and contemporary life as we know it. In addition to his usual embroidered textile art works, it's his fibreglass sculptures, titled 'I am like this only for [Instagram](#)' and 'This should get me a lot of likes'... that steal the show. And keep an ear out because the crowd here will know where the right after-parties are.

*Tao Art Gallery, 165, The View, Dr Annie Besant Road, Worli*

*Mumbai Gallery Weekend is on from January 9-12.*

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