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Mumbai's Gallery XXL Is Bringing Post-Graffiti And Urban Art To An Indian Audience



Gallery XXL Gallery XXL



Vaaswat Sarkar

Published on: 17 Apr 2023, 7:54 pm · 4 min read



"Art belongs to the elite, graffiti to the streets."

Bufón Pinta, Bufón Chilean graffiti writer

This quote rings true when you examine the history of [art](#). Art, especially high art, is accessible only to the cultural elite and has been primarily contained in white cube spaces. The vocabulary of art appreciation, let alone owning a piece of high art, is a privilege reserved for a handful in society — the intellectuals, patrons, and collectors. When graffiti was born in the United States in the late 1960s, it ushered in an era of vibrant counter-culture. While most deemed it as vandalism and still do, it is an artistic movement that moved beyond the consumerist and

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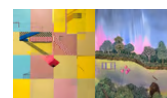
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elitist nature of niche art circles and brought it to the forefront of the streets and its people.

The beauty of graffiti is that it cannot be contained. Though it began in the States, it has spread all over the world. All you need is a can of spray paint, an indelible marker, collective energy, and a fearless will to cover walls with your “signature” style. Artists blossomed all over the world using any surfaces in the city to make graffiti and take over urban spaces. However, art has always evolved in tandem with the changing times, which gave birth to the post-graffiti era in the form of Sidney Janis Gallery’s 1983 Post-Graffiti exhibition. The term post-graffiti is used to describe the work of artists whose backgrounds in graffiti form the foundation of their professional artistic practice.

With the ushering in of the post-graffiti movement, there has been a shift in its legal stature and by extension, the attention it receives. Even though graffiti is still treated as a peripheral art form or vandalism, post-graffiti cannot be deemed so because of its legal association. Also, post-graffiti has this innate ability to connect to more outsiders than traditional graffiti because it incorporates mainstream tactics, aesthetics, styles, and technique. There has been a lot of debate on whether post-graffiti is a bastard form of its original recalcitrance and rebellious spirit. However, there is no denying that post-graffiti aims to bring down the cultural barriers separating the graffiti subculture from the main culture of visual art. Also, post-graffiti does not consciously compromise the original rebellious nature of graffiti but rather uses different tools, styles, and modes of expression to communicate the individual artist’s message.



This image shows the distinction between graffiti and post-graffiti. The top 'PROPERTY IS THEFT' stencil is an example of Post-Graffiti, while the lower Neko tag is an example of traditional graffiti. graffitiecology.wordpress.com/

The gallery in India at the front line of showcasing post-graffiti art and urban contemporary art movement is the XXL Gallery, Mumbai. The urban contemporary art movement has gained massive recognition over the last decade. The Indian art market is yet to be introduced to post-graffiti art, and it is XXL Gallery's vision to spearhead the movement in the country by exhibiting the works of the global community of [urban artists](#). One of their primary goals is to develop a new category of patronage amongst seasoned collectors, and most importantly young collectors who are well-versed in subcultures that have given rise to the aesthetic of the urban art movement.

The aim of the gallery is to respond to the global nature of the movement by producing site-specific traveling exhibitions in India and abroad. The art form that originated sprouted from the subways of [New York](#), the location of each exhibition will be crucial for reflecting upon the socio-political dynamics of urban art and presenting it within the infrastructure of a gallery.

The gallery began with a survey exhibition titled *OUTSIDERS* on 13th April 2023, covering 50 years of the global street art movement through the practices of 24 artists who have

contributed to the public image we see around us set against a backdrop of a heritage building in the art district of Colaba. Over the last weekend, there was a curated walk in the [Sassoon Dock](#) area where the viewers discovered previously unseen underground works from the recent Mumbai Urban Art Festival, leading up to Gallery XXL. There was also a graffiti and tagging hands-on workshop conducted in the gallery space by Khatra (@bykhatra), a renowned visual artist from Baroda. Every day at 6 pm the exhibition's curator, Amitabh Kumar has been taking the viewers on an exhibition walkthrough.



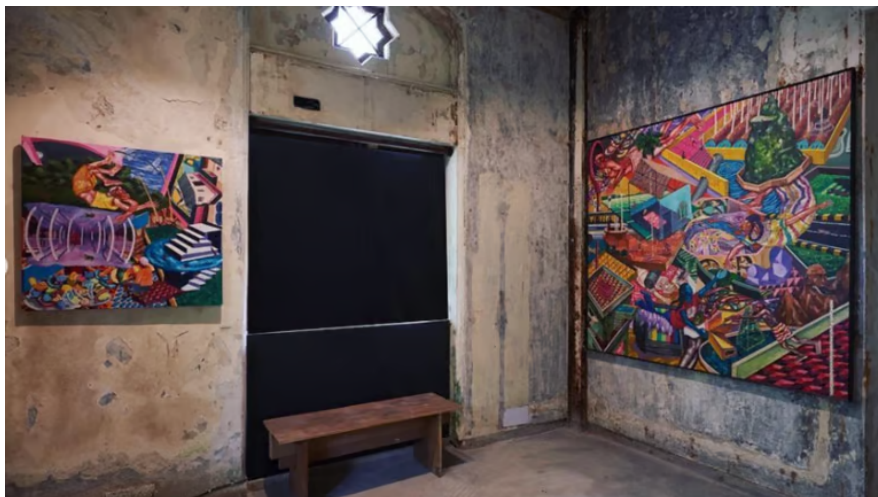
The old heritage building where Gallery XXL is located kalanjee-project.com

OUTSIDERS

Venue: The Kalanjee Project, Monica Bungalow, Colaba, Mumbai

On View Till: 21 May 2023

Timings: 11 am to 7 pm (Closed On Mondays)



Two artworks displayed at the exhibition, *OUTSIDERS* Gallery XXL



Some of the artworks displayed at the exhibition, '*OUTSIDERS*' Gallery XXL

The exhibition invites you to a survey of Post-Graffiti and Urban Contemporary Art as you immerse yourself into a five-decade-long evolution of a movement that expands the idea of the arts and the artist to the urban and the everyday. The 24 artists whose works are being showcased are both primary contributors and witnesses to this creative ecosystem that is blurring conventional boundaries of artistic practice. Gallery XXL has kicked off its journey with *OUTSIDERS*, a watershed exhibition where [street artists](#), graffiti artists, storytellers, pedagogues, multimedia artists, and other pluralities have come together to shed light onto the intriguing chronicle of the urban art movement.

You can find out more about Gallery XXL [here](#).

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[Graffiti and the Culture of Protest in Kolkata](#)

[Visit A Mumbai Gallery Moving Homegrown Art Away From 'White Cube Spaces'](#)

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Gallery XXL

Colaba, Mumbai

Post-Graffiti

Urban Art Movement

A First For The Indian Art Market

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#HGEXPLORE

A Sea Of Pink: Here Are 6 Of The Best Places To Spot Flamingos In Mumbai



Vaaswat Sarkar

Published on: 24 Jan 2024, 7:10 pm · 3 min read



Do you remember how movie halls turned into vibrant exhibitions of pink when Barbie was released? Believe it or not, every year Mumbai witnesses areas turning into seas of pink, and no, it's not because of Greta Gerwig. The credit goes to the beautiful flamingo birds, nature's living, spirited, pink sculptures that gracefully adorn Mumbai's waterside. In India, flamingos are not a common sight, which makes them more [exotic](#) and appealing to bird-watching enthusiasts, which comprises both tourists and local folks. While they arrive around November and depart in June, the best period to see them is between January and March, as that's when these pink feathered friends are most visible. However, there are only a few spots that enable us to marvel at these beauties in their habitats. As we step into the thick of 'flamingo season' here are a few spots in Mumbai, where you can watch them:

I. Thane Creek Flamingo Sanctuary

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Every year, numerous flamingos migrate to the Thane Flamingo Sanctuary from the Rann of Kutch in Gujarat. When the tide is low, the expansive marshland becomes covered with fresh algae, which becomes a source of food for the visiting birds. Interestingly, it is the consumption of this algae that gives the flamingos their distinctive pink color. Thane Creek is a designated location for observing flamingos and is accessible by road. Visitors can take part in a boat safari that commences at the Coastal Marine Biodiversity Centre in Airoli and extends for 10 kilometers, providing an [excellent](#) vantage point for observing the flock.

II. Sewri Mangrove Park

In the early 1990s, flamingos were first seen at Sewri mudflats. The Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) conducted a thorough study and started organizing frequent tours for [wildlife](#) enthusiasts. Currently, BNHS offers flamingo sighting tours starting at the railway crossing in Sewri. Neeraj suggests bringing binoculars for a closer observation of the birds' behavior. For photographers, a telephoto lens (400mm and above) is recommended to capture their graceful movements.

III. Tawale Wetlands, Nerul, New Mumbai

The synchronized movements of flamingos turn the wetlands pink, resembling a graceful [dance](#). Birdwatchers can reach the Tawale Wetlands by road or on foot to admire this spectacle. The best times to spot them are early mornings and evenings, ideal for photography due to the lighting conditions.

How A Village In Odisha Went From Poaching Birds To Dedicatedly Conserving Them

IV. Bhandup Pumping Station

Wildnest, a team of skilled naturalists, organizes wildlife safaris and birdwatching excursions in and around [Mumbai](#). Among their offerings is a tour specifically designed for observing flamingos from up close aboard boats. Upon arrival, guests are

welcomed by the Wildnest team at the designated meeting

point. Subsequently, they head to Bhandup Pumping Station for a brief introduction to flamingos and other bird species that can be sighted. The tour then continues with a boat ride, during which the team assists in spotting flamingos and other shore birds using binoculars.

V. TS Chanakya Birding Point

This location is considered one of the prime bird-watching spots in Mumbai, as confirmed by bird-watching specialists, and is also frequented by [various](#) migratory bird species. Along with flamingos, you can spot many other beautiful wetland birds like kingfisher, grey heron etc, as well.

VI. Mahul Creek (Near Chembur)

Located In Mahul village, the Mahul Creek is home to mangroves, fisherpeople, and their boats. You can seek assistance from the [locals](#) to find the precise location for observing flamingos.

If you enjoyed reading this, here's more from Homegrown:

[Treat The Bird-Watcher In You By Visiting India's 5 Most Popular Bird Sanctuaries](#)

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Delhi, Embark On An Immersive Visual Journey Into The Landscape Of Indian

Philosophy

Upamana · Raihan Vadra

Vaaswat Sarkar

Published on: 24 Jan 2024, 4:15 pm · 3 min read



I remember always struggling with Indian philosophy during my college days. Western philosophy seemed more lucid. So I started interpreting Indian philosophy by breaking it down into simple examples. Here's one: Think of a man who has never seen an antelope but knows what a deer looks like. So you tell him that an antelope is like a deer but while a deer typically has branched antlers, antelopes have unbranched horns. Also, deer are usually more robust and stocky, while antelopes tend to be more slender and agile. Now, while walking in the [forest](#), the man spots an antelope, and immediately his mind thinks of the comparison that you told him. This is the foundational idea of Upamana or knowledge gained by comparison. It is borrowed from the Sanskrit words *upa* (similarity) + *māna* (knowledge)

But why am I telling you all this? That's because *Upamana* is the riveting titular exhibition we will explore today. It is the brainchild of visual and installation artist Raihan Vadra. Upamana is part of a series of 5 solo shows, spread over a decade, drawing from the 5 schools of logic in Indian philosophy (5 Pramanas). The immersive show employs installations, visual art, sound, and lighting to delve into [various](#) comparisons and analogies encountered in life.

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The Vayedra Brothers' 'Seed' Intersects Warli Tradition, Philosophy, and Renewal

This exhibition expands on themes like control, choice, compulsion, memory, and emotion that were previously explored in the artist's works *Dark Perception* (2021) and *Anumana* (2022). Each piece in the show depicts various aspects of comparison and how it influences our [perception](#). Through curated daily walkthroughs, visitors can explore the artist's take on three comparison constructs - similarity, dissimilarity, and peculiarity.

'Acceptance': Structural Installation using Chairs Archival Print and Wood at Anumana 2022
by Raihan Vadra Romika Kapoor

The materials to be used in the show comprise metal, resin, fiberglass, natural trees and roots, archival paper printed with photographs, LED strip lighting, and vinyl. A unique soundtrack is produced for the exhibition accompanied by a voiceover

is produced for the exhibition, accompanied by a voiceover introducing each room, providing a complete [sensory](#) experience.

'Unity': vinyl, metal and LED Installation by Raihan Vadera Romika Kapoor

While my antelope and deer example is an interpretation of Upamana to understand objective reality, Raihan uses the same philosophy to veer into subjectivity. His artistic perspective centers on embracing individuality without the urge to compare oneself to others. His art aims to communicate the concept of endless potential that emerges from staying authentic and comfortable with one's own [identity](#).

'Doubt': Upside Down Installation at Anumana 2022 by Raihan Vadera Romika Kapoor

Everyone faces comparisons in their daily life, whether it's in the classroom at an early age, in the workspace, from their family or their friends. The show will explore these comparisons as well as the comparisons we make on other people and ourselves. The comparisons we make define our reality, why is that and should we allow ourselves and others to be defined by these comparisons? Should we instead be questioning our comparisons and therefore our reality?

Raihan Vadera, on the exhibition's aim

Upamana by Raihan Vadera

Preview: 28th January 2024

Exhibition on Till: 4th February 2024

Venue: Bikaner House, New Delhi

Follow Raihan Vadra [here](#).

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21 hours ago

Berth The Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Fathima Abdul Kader

Published on: 23 Jan 2024, 7:34 pm · 2 min read



Tucked away in the lanes of Mattancherry in the north city of

'The Wicker Story' Is Fusing Art & Technology To Create Exquisite

...racked away in the lanes of Mattancherry, in the port city of Kochi, the Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) proudly inaugurated the space called Berth recently. Located within the ICCI premises on Indian Chamber Road in Mattancherry, the immersive space is designed for art and design interactions that range from exhibits to workshops. With a legacy spanning 125+ years, ICCI has been a stalwart in promoting [commerce](#) and safeguarding the interests of the Indian business community.

As part of their 126-year celebration, Berth emerged from the confluence of diverse talents, fostering collaboration and forming a microcosm of the rich ethos that drives ICCI. This unique space and the community it hopes to foster, is set to liaise with international and leading agencies to curate a tapestry of Art Shows, Craft Exhibitions, [Textile](#) Fairs, Workshops, Seminars, Film screenings, and more such Cultural Events.

The inaugural event at Berth is the Aadyam Handwoven, an initiative by Aditya Birla. This collaboration is a celebration of tradition and innovation, showcasing handloom treasures from various weaving clusters across India and highlighting their legacy. The venture is driven with an intent to facilitate the fusion of international trends with rich traditional heritage. This harmonious blend allows the [creation](#) of captivating pieces that resonate globally while preserving the essence of crafts that are driven by generational knowledge.

Aadyam through their pop-up at Berth invites one to experience [#heirloomsforthefuture](#) featuring an array of home decor, home and living items, sarees, dupattas, stoles, and pocket squares from the weaving clusters of Bhuj, Varanasi, [Kashmir](#), Bhadohi, Mirzapur, and Pochampally. Aadyam's commitment to fusing contemporary design with time-honoured techniques has captured admiration from patrons worldwide and has its own standalone showrooms in multiple Tier 1 cities across India.

During the inaugural event in December 2023, Manish Saksena, the Lead Advisor at Aadyam Handwoven, engaged with guests to share his insights into the intricate [techniques](#) and rich handloom heritage and how the collaborative effort of Aadyam with skilled artisans reflects their commitment to crafting exquisite products each season.

Aadyam Handwoven's exhibition which is still continuing at

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05 Jan 2024

Aadyam Handwovens exhibition which is still continuing at Berth is open on all days from 11 am to 7 pm and offers a unique opportunity to experience the magic of handwoven elegance. The pieces currently exhibited here are a celebration of art, design, and cultural [heritage](#) with deep homegrown identity - all the things that Berth was founded with the intent of promoting.

Follow Berth [here](#).

Follow Aadyam Handwoven [here](#).

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Learn The Timeless Art Of Pottery At This Creative Residency In Himachal Pradesh

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'The Wicker Story' Is Fusing

Dharamkot Studio is an idyllic art sanctuary that primarily uses clay and ceramics as a medium of practice. Dharamkot Studio

Vaaswat Sarkar

Published on: 23 Jan 2024, 7:30 pm · 3 min read



In the realm of the arts, creation can often be a complex process. Amidst the hustle and bustle of [urban](#) existence, our everyday routines can be monotonous and detrimental to creativity. In my opinion, nothing revitalizes the spirit quite like connecting with nature, which serves as a wellspring of artistic inspiration. With this in mind, let's delve into a charming art studio and residency nestled in the quaint Dharamkot Village in Dharmshala, Himachal Pradesh.

Dharamkot Studio is an idyllic art sanctuary that primarily uses clay and ceramics as a medium of practice. The initiative started in 2019 with only one pottery wheel, a few kgs of clay, and a simple yet ambitious [dream](#). From that day as the studio grew bigger, slowly and steadily the dream was realized. The studio has self-taught artists from different backgrounds but they are all connected through art.

Now, the studio space stands at approximately 3000 square feet in total and can accommodate 32 people at a time. It is open from 9 am-7 pm every day. The studio is divided into two places, which are ten minutes' walk apart. Both places are equipped independently yet function as one unit. They are well connected by road (5 min walk from Dharamkot village) and have a [beautiful](#) view of the mountains. The studio uses terracotta clay, pottery wheels, slab rollers, low-mid fire glazes, and gas kilns. Artists make their work in the studio and sell on their own or from the studio. The artists and their products are listed on the studio's website. The studio has around 20-30 resident artists, students, and staff members working and living in the studio spaces throughout the year.

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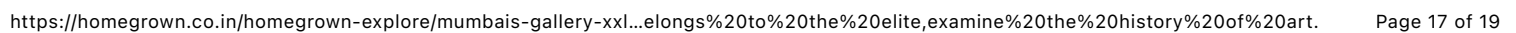
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Step Inside Puncturewala Tattoos' New Permanent Spot At Homework Studio, Mumbai

Sobhika Vasantha · 12 Dec 2023

Picture this — all the creative juices flowing in you as you master this new craft amidst the picturesque Dhauladhar ranges, abundant with pine and cedar trees, the cool mountain breeze kissing your forehead and with no urban din to disrupt your artistic flow. The practice of pottery instills in us patience, empathy, the ability to accept change, and a thirst for exploration and experimentation. Along with the pottery learning sessions, the retreat program will also include nature walks, [yoga](#), meditation sessions and local sightseeing.





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dharamkotstudio

The idea behind this pottery/creative retreat is simple: It's a natural setting where you may discover inspiration and embrace your creative side while getting away from the daily grind. The creative process of pottery-making slows down the pace of life, giving you time to recharge and replenish your creative spirit.

Bookings are open for 2024, please check the link in bio or DM for the details.

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Venue: Dharamkot Studio

For bookings and more details about the creative retreats, click [here](#).

Follow Dharamkot Studio [here](#).

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