

CORPORATE ENGAGEMENT IN HERITAGE, ART AND CULTURE

February 2020



Cover Image

Mother Earth

Meera Mukherjee

Date: 1980s

Dimensions: H. 41 cm,

Diameter. 30 cm

Medium: Cast bronze
(lost-wax technique)

Region: India

Museum number: MAC.00455

About the Report

Heritage, art and culture remain among the least funded areas in the social development and CSR sector, despite the potential impact that they can have on the socio-economic well-being of the region and nation, as a whole. This report presents an analysis of the current spending trends in heritage, art and culture, while highlighting a few successful projects and approaches that can make a case for further engagement in heritage, art and culture through CSR and business.

Acknowledgements

We are deeply grateful to the team of The Museum of Art & Photography (MAP) for their support. This report emerges out of MAP and Samhita's shared vision towards supporting and building the Indian heritage, art and culture space. The report's narrative was shaped by the insights of key personnel from companies, foundations and organisations working in art & culture under the CSR mandate. We would like to thank them for their time and guidance and hope to collaborate with them in the future to share more experiences and work towards furthering effective support within the sector.

A special thanks to Ashvin Rajagopalan (Piramal Art Foundation), Parmesh Shahani (India Culture Lab), Shrutee Khurana (Infosys Foundation), Neeraj Lal and Sanjay Lalbhai (Arvind Foundation), Sameera Iyengar (Junoona) and Nachiket Mor.



About MAP

The Museum of Art & Photography (MAP) is a new organisation set to open in the heart of Bangalore, in the latter part of 2020. MAP's vision is to protect India's cultural heritage and make it available to the widest possible audience.

Its new, world-class building will include 5 galleries, an auditorium, a research library, a conservation lab, classrooms, a restaurant and cafe, a museum store and a members' lounge. The building is planned to be accessible to people with a wide range of disabilities, physical and non-physical, to create a truly inclusive environment. The innovative use of technology to enhance the visitors' experience is also envisioned, with MAP having the first licence in the country to a holographic table. This will be used to create 3D images of objects, from the collection for children and other visitors, to explore.

MAP is a pioneering project which aims to foster a museum-going culture in India. MAP's mission is to bring art and culture back to the heart of the community making it accessible to diverse audiences. It will achieve this by exhibiting, interpreting and preserving India's rich artistic heritage. MAP will be a space for ideas and conversations that are initiated through its collection enabling us to engage with audiences in multiple ways.

In addition, MAP is set to be the most inclusive museum in the country, taking a 360-degree approach to accessibility with a special focus on people with disabilities.

About Samhita & Collective Good Foundation

Samhita is a CSR consultancy that enables corporate citizens to re-imagine business environments where building social value is an integral aspect of growth. Samhita partners with India's leading corporate entities, global and national foundations, donor agencies and not-for-profit organisations, to effectively design Sustainability and CSR focused strategies, that integrate the strengths of each partner.

Focused on co-creating an eco-system of multi-stakeholder collaborations, Samhita's partnership with the Collective Good Foundation (CGF) enables the effective implementation of Samhita's strategy on-ground. CGF, a catalytic collaborator, builds capacity in the development sector and works on interventions that can be scaled. on-ground. CGF, a catalytic collaborator, builds capacity in the development sector and works on interventions that can be scaled.



Seated Woman

K. G. Subramanyan,
Date: 1980, Medium: Oil on acrylic sheet,
Museum number: MAC.00477

Executive Summary

Historically, the arts have created a culture of ‘giving’ with or without tangible benefits, across generations. Patronage to the arts has helped support and develop, and allowed for the flourishing of its various forms.

Today, in a milieu of globally diverse societies, a commitment to the arts goes beyond cultural consciousness. It also makes for good economic sense due to its tremendous potential to influence skill development, employment, cultural tourism and regional advancement. Recognising the potential of Heritage, Art and Culture (HAC) and the role it can play in accelerating India’s progress, the Indian government put the spotlight back on artistic patronage by including within the mandate of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) the “protection of national heritage, art and culture including restoration of buildings and sites of historical importance and works of art; setting up public libraries; promotion and development of traditional arts and handicrafts”.

It is within this context that this report analyses the current investment trends, successful footprints, visible challenges and unique opportunities to provide a framework that encompasses all actions that Corporate India could undertake to drive impact in the domain.

Contributions and Challenges of the Sector

The economic and non-economic contributions of HAC have been well established. The sector allows for the promotion of social cohesion and intercultural dialogue, facilitates cultural diversity, raises awareness and encourages participation amongst citizens towards political and cultural life. On the economic front, we note that the cultural and creative industries account for over 30 million jobs worldwide. Global trade in creative goods more than doubled in the last decade, and today the creative economy contributes to 6.1 per cent of the global economy, representing USD 4.3 trillion per year. While the direct relation to GDP or GVA growth rates and employment have become apparent, the connection between HAC and a country’s foreign trade position or even the inflow of investment into its creative cities has also been realised.

Despite the potential it presents, HAC forms continue to face multiple challenges that include lack of public infrastructure, inadequate technological support and innovation, supply side issues such as a lack of education, lack of market related skills and a lack of awareness and exposure amongst the public.

Context of Funding

Though HAC has been provided with an impetus from the government, it receives under one per cent of the total central budget allocation, which in turn, is spread thinly across more than 60 departments and various schemes. Effectively the consistent growth, sustainability and success of a particular department or initiative is then, hard to achieve.

On the other hand, philanthropic funding is beginning to make a noticeable mark through initiatives such as city-based art festivals, exhibitions in galleries, restoration of heritage structures and events such as art biennales, amongst others. High net-worth collectors have provided encouragement to the space through the enhancement of sales in the market. Private art galleries and auction houses have also been instrumental in providing vibrancy and depth to the sector.

CSR Trends in Heritage Art and Culture

The CSR Amendment to the Companies Act has provided a unique stimulus to the corporate sector to engage with the HAC sectors. Despite the various forms of funding and grants coming through the Corporate Social Responsibility

budgets, the allocations are arguably the smallest, in comparison with investments made towards other development areas. Largely this is due to the fact that Corporate India is unable to see the fit of HAC within the ambit of traditional development models, such as skill development, education or health, and the potential impact HAC can have on socio-economic development. The link between funding the other areas and socio-economic development is immediately clear whereas the actual on-ground benefits accruing towards livelihoods, poverty reduction and cultural development, as a result of funding HAC, remain widely underestimated.

To understand this further, the report presents an analysis of CSR spends made in the last three financial years. The trend analysis reveals a definite prioritisation of areas such as Education and Health over HAC. Data for the last three financial years reveals that CSR contributions toward HAC averaged a little over one per cent of the cumulative spends in the period. Whilst there is an uptick in the spends for FY 2016-17, the exception is largely accounted for by the expenditure made towards the Statue of Unity in Gujarat.

2014-15

INR 117 Crores

*1.16% of the Total
CSR spend*

2015-16

INR 118 Crores

*0.82% of the
Total CSR spend*

2016-17

INR 297 Crores

*2.20% of the
Total CSR spend
Spend on Statue of Unity, INR 2989 Cr*

CSR Spend in Heritage, Art and Culture-1

Case for Corporate Engagement

Whilst the investments within the sector are minimal, the report finds that there is a strong case to be made for corporate contribution in the HAC sector. Broadly categorised, this includes:

Compliance

Mandate under section 135, Guidelines issued by Department of Public Enterprises

Stakeholder Engagement

Building stronger connection with the community stakeholders

Corporate Strategy

Direct alignment to products, services and brand objectives

Catalytic Opportunities

Supporting the large HAC ecosystem through investment in tech and media

The outcomes generated as a result of the corporate engagement with HAC can be instrumental in unlocking the economic and non-economic potential of the sector. This, in turn, can have a ripple effect on livelihoods and employment opportunities, living standards, critical thinking, productivity and advancement of communities and overall development of the region in focus.

From the business perspective, an engagement in HAC could give corporates a unique vantage point to connect with target demographics and form an edge in the competitive environment of brand loyalties and investor relations. Internally, an engagement with the arts helps inspire creative and critical thinking amongst employees, and helps build a productive culture of collaboration and inclusivity.

To illustrate these benefits, the report includes case studies of leading organisations who have invested in the HAC space. These case studies elucidate the motivations, the funding

mechanisms and the benefits that have accrued to these organisations, as a direct result of their investment in HAC.

The case studies include:

The Museum of Art & Photography (MAP): Making Art Accessible

MAP is the realisation of the collaborative vision of a mix of philanthropists, foundations and corporates led by the core belief that easy access to art and culture can positively impact the lives of people across age groups and walks of life.

Infosys Foundation: Reviving our Heritage

The Foundation is a crusader for traditional arts and the sustenance of these forms and their practitioners. They have dedicated substantial funds and efforts towards the restoration, preservation and promotion of heritage structures and work closely with the government, towards the cause.

The Piramal Art Foundation: Encouraging Public Engagement with Art

The Foundation aims at acquiring, preserving and showcasing quality art for the benefit of the public at large. Impassioned by the idea of realising the wider, measurable impact of art, the Piramal Group has made art integral to business operations.

The Godrej India Culture Lab: A space for Dialogue on Contemporary Culture

The Lab, through its focus on curation, is putting the spotlight on artists and cultural art forms that are not within the mainstream, while nurturing an avenue for exploration and dialogue on diverse, contemporary issues in the midst of Mumbai's bustle.

The Arvind Indigo Museum: Collaboration Through Art

The Museum which was established as a tribute to the historical lineage of the indigo dye has a unique, contemporary vision, dedicated to empowering Indian artisans and craftsmen through a market-based approach.

The Preserve, Promote and Revive Framework

Given this vast range of benefits, the report posits the opportunity for corporates to adopt the principles of responsible citizenship which spans CSR, Sustainability and Shared Value activities. While these three avenues are non-exclusive, they represent a continuum of responsible actions around which companies can develop initiatives based on their motivations and expertise. It is within this continuum of engagement that Samhita has developed a framework that encompasses all actions that corporates could undertake to drive impact in the HAC domain.

The Preserve, Promote and Revive (PPR) framework, presented in the report suggests intervention modalities that can help catalyse the broader HAC ecosystem, create impact against varied socio-economic development indicators and help corporates deliver effective CSR strategies.

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Introduction

Whilst serving as a reflection of the times, heritage, art and culture continue to be effective channels for communities to express themselves, tell stories and even challenge the status quo. For modern-day India, they can also provide much-needed, counter-narratives on issues such as caste, class, nationalism, gender and sexuality, amongst others.

The sector also holds immense potential in terms of its impact on the economy – through its direct contributions to employment, skill development, cultural tourism and support of high-value ancillary industries. For instance, the handicrafts sector employs about seven million people, directly and indirectly, which includes a large number of people belonging to the marginalised and vulnerable sections of society. The industry has also seen a consistent growth of 15 per cent over the last few years. Handicrafts have contributed significantly to the foreign exchequer of the country through exports. Globally, art and culture has become one of the fastest-growing sectors in the world, generating a global revenue of \$2,250 billion and employing approximately 30 million people¹.

Corporate India possesses considerable opportunity to catalyse change in the heritage, art and culture sectors. Apart from the funding support which can help address critical issues, the key strengths of corporate institutions – legal, technical and financial expertise – can help build key capacities within the space and create a multiplier development effect in the country. Corporates, in turn, can benefit through reputational perks, improved visibility and an elevation of organisational culture. It is within this context that this report is based. While focusing on the current funding and support available in the market, the report looks at the unique role corporates can play in the sector. Drawing on secondary literature reviews and interviews, conducted with various stakeholders in the space, the report aims to provide a framework that encompasses all actions that corporate social responsibility funds could undertake, to drive impact in the domain.

1. *Transforming Urban India: Art and Culture to play a pivotal role*, PWC & CII, Nov 2018

Contributions of the Sector

Economic and Non-Economic Impact

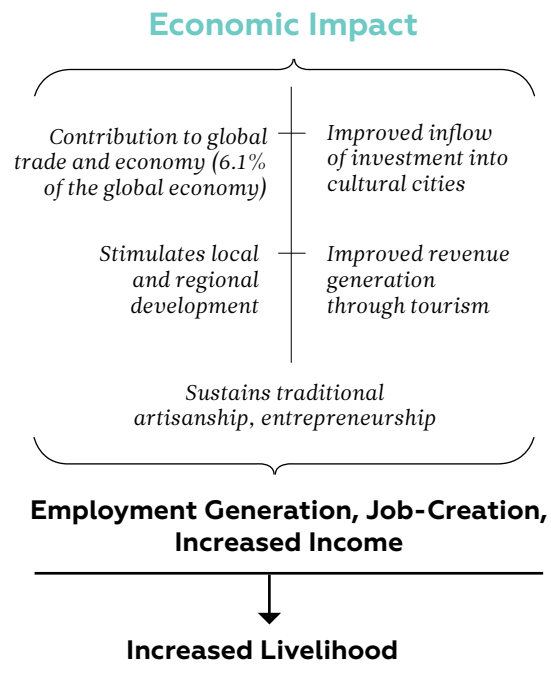


Economic Impact

In recent decades, there has been a greater understanding of the economic importance of Heritage, Art and Culture (HAC). Cumulatively, the cultural and creative industries account for over 30 million jobs worldwide. Global trade in creative goods more than doubled between 2004 and 2013, and today the creative economy contributes to 6.1 per cent of the global economy, representing USD 4.3 trillion per year. Whilst the direct relation to GDP or GVA growth rates and employment have become apparent, the connection between the cultural industries and a country’s foreign trade position or even the inflow of investment into its creative cities has also been realised. These relations are considered to represent a ‘culturalisation’ of the economy (Ellmeier, 2003), or the ‘creativisation’ of the ‘economy’ (Rikalovic and Mikic, 2011).

The preservation, promotion or revival of art and culture are also closely linked to incomes, livelihoods, increased tourism and education. Jaipur, one of the most popular tourist destinations with a rich history and innumerable heritage structures, has over 175,000 people employed in crafts and folk art, showcasing the economic potential of India’s heritage hubs. Along with Chennai and Varanasi, it is part of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network which works with cities to

embed heritage at the heart of development. A study of the Kochi–Muziris Biennale revealed that the event had a direct impact on job creation, the tourism and hospitality sector and the service-based sector in the city of Kochi, Kerala² . For instance, during the event, nearly 600,000 visitors arrived at the city, and amongst the international tourists, almost 62 per cent were visiting Kerala for the first time. Nearly 45 per cent of the artists interviewed confirmed engaging directly with the residents of Kochi for the production of artworks and 22 per cent of local business owners reported earning twice as much per day during the Biennale.



2. ‘Kochi–Muziris Biennale Report’, KPMG, 2017

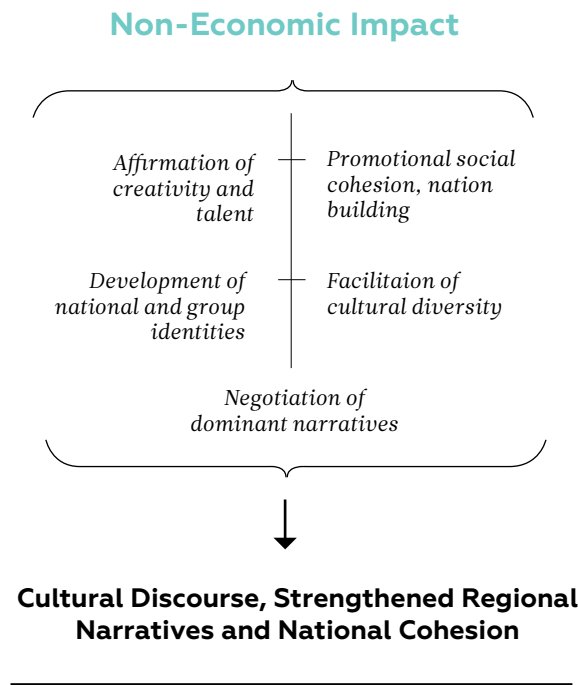


Non Economic Impact

The second, and perhaps larger, impact of the sector is non-economic in nature. The sector contributes to the affirmation of creativity and talent, the development of national and group identities, the negotiation of dominant narratives, the facilitation of cultural diversity, and the promotion of social cohesion and nation-building through the promotion of dialogue and discourse. The sector also allows for the ability to entertain, to delight, to challenge, to give meaning, to interpret, to raise awareness, and to stimulate – values which are central to the philosophy of humanism³.

The recognition of these economic and non-economic impacts has led to the establishment of the relationship between culture and development. UNESCO’s publication, the ‘Report of the World Commission on Culture and Development: Our Creative Diversity’, established the culture and development agenda and identified culture as a development priority. In the years that followed, this recognition was further cemented through several global and national policy papers and reports.

Development of HAC is thus central to the goals of poverty eradication, building economic stability, ensuring a healthy environment for citizens and promoting job creation.



3. ‘Measuring the Economic Contribution of Cultural Industries: A review and assessment of current methodological approaches’, UNESCO Institute of Statistics, 2009

Culture and Urban Development

The intimate link between culture and urban development, has also been established through various academic narratives. Culture promotes social cohesion, intercultural dialogue and encourages participation amongst urban citizens in political and cultural life. It contributes to cementing an understanding of the city's history and its evolution. Cultural industries – like heritage revitalisation and sustainable tourism – help generate green employment and stimulate local development. Urban planning, in turn, has a direct impact on the protection and safeguarding of local culture and natural heritage.

This link to urban development has also been cemented into the recent Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), with SDG 11 mentioning the need to “strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world’s cultural and natural heritage” within the larger goal of making “cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”.

Development of HAC is thus central to the goals of poverty eradication, building economic stability, ensuring a healthy environment for citizens and promoting job creation.

“If we only see the value of Education through the lens of financial returns, then we limit our investments in education to things like rote learning and examinations. We exclude the larger objective of inculcating critical thinking and rational reasoning in society. Similarly, with the arts if we limit our investment to monetary returns, we will miss the contribution we can play to furthering public discourse and building cultural knowledge, understanding and empathy. Funding the arts is a necessary social investment.”

Sameera Iyengar

Co-Founder and Director, Junoon



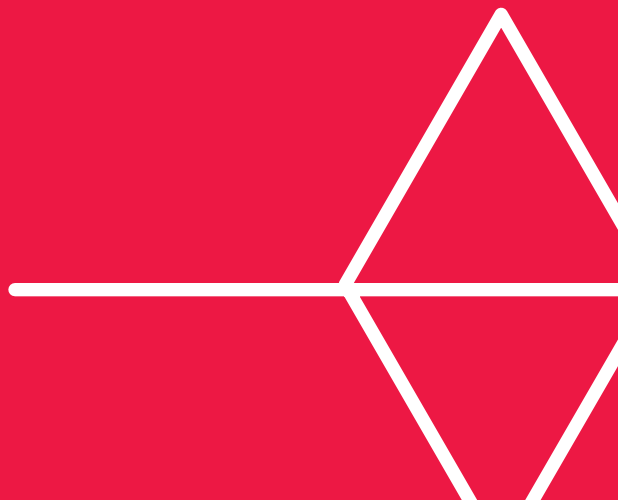
After Van Gogh

Jamini Roy (1887-1972)

Date: c. 1910, Medium: Tempera on board,

Region: Bengal, Museum number: MAC.00485

Challenges Faced



Challenges

Despite the recognition of the significant contribution potential of HAC, numerous challenges⁴ continue to impact their performance and even threaten their existence:

Lack of Public Infrastructure

- Many heritage structures are unable to access the funds or support of government bodies, due to regulatory issues and limited funding availability and thus languish.
- Infrastructure that exists suffers from lack of maintenance, unavailability of skilled staff and lack of adequate signage
- Availability of low-cost spaces to perform and experiment with art and culture forms is an issue.

Inadequate technological support and innovation

- Especially in production specific activities like the handicrafts industry

Supply Side Issues

- Due to the unorganised nature of the labour force, issues such as a lack of education, capital and market-related skills are prevalent. As a result, for instance, despite the huge demand for indian handicraft products in the global markets, India is unable to match this with adequate supply of quality goods.

Lack of Awareness

- Limited budgets for awareness, minimal public platforms for engagement and lack of an adequate, innovative art curriculum leads to a lack of exposure, and knowledge amongst the public.

4. *Transforming Urban India: Art and Culture to play a pivotal role*, PWC & CII, Nov 2018; *Visual arts industry in India: Painting the Future*, KPMG and FICCI, 2018; *Creative Arts in India: Theater, Dance and Crafts Industry*, FICCI & EY, 2016

Context of Funding



Complementing Government Funding

HAC comes under the aegis of various government departments including the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Tourism, the Ministry of Textiles, the National Culture Fund and the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. Despite the tremendous scope of work, the Central budgets allocated towards the sector are very small, i.e. under one per cent of the total central budget allocation in India⁵. This budget in turn, is spread thinly across more than 60 departments and various schemes⁶ which means that consistent growth, sustainability and success of a particular department or initiative is hard to achieve.

Given this funding, when compared to other countries, the state of the Indian HAC sector looks bleak⁷. The potential of the sector is thus still to be fully unlocked and corporate funds can play a critical, catalytic role towards the same.

Amongst the various schemes being implemented by the various government bodies, the National Culture Fund (NCF), presents one such avenue where corporate

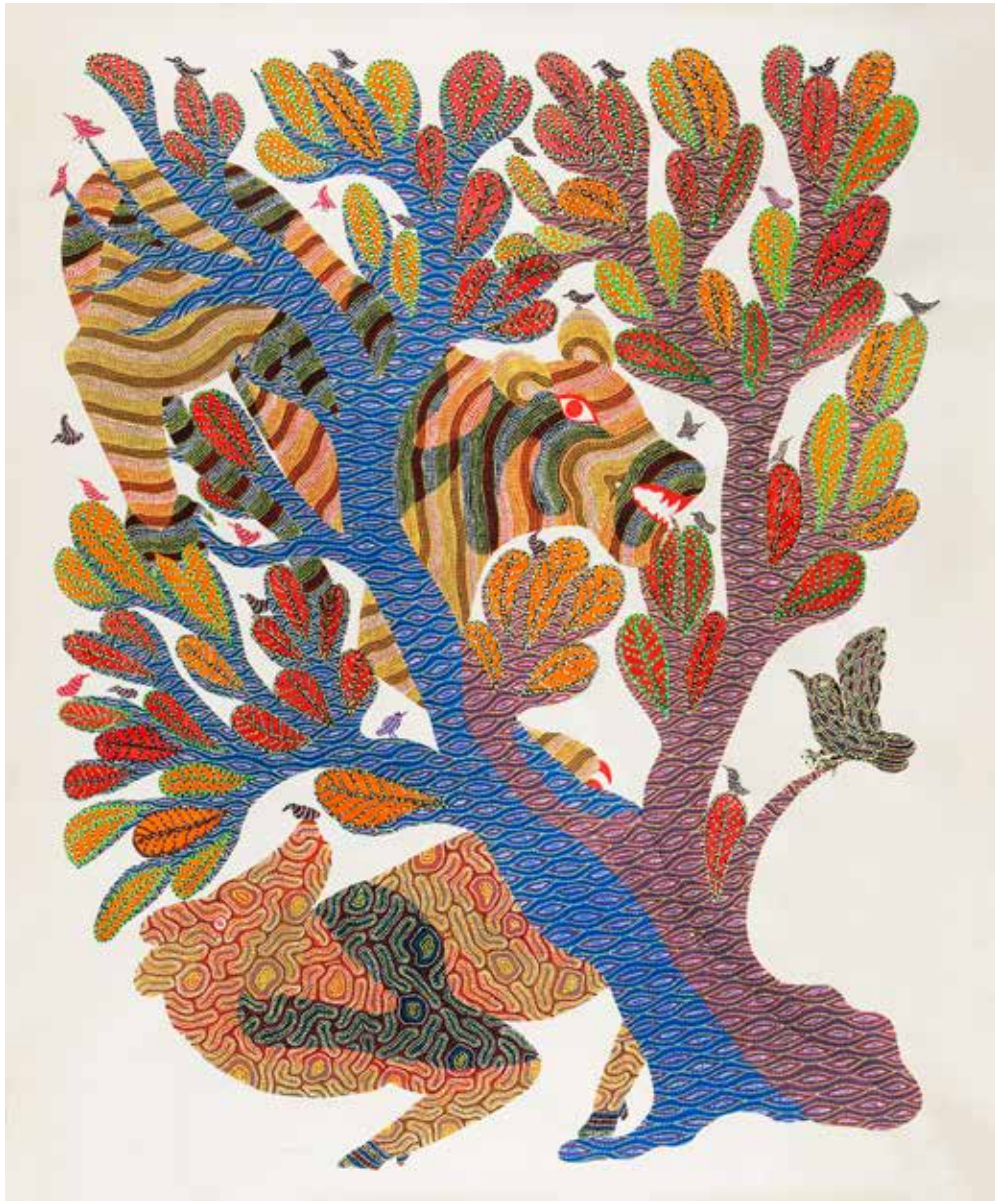
donors can align their funds towards the larger objective of heritage preservation. Set up by the Ministry of Culture in 1996, the NCF encourages and invites participation and collaboration in furthering the cause of heritage preservation. Between 2015 and 2018, INR 904.80 lakhs were received from the fund through CSR donations⁸.

Learning from Philanthropic Funding

Funding has emerged for increasing public engagement with the arts, through initiatives such as city-based art festivals, exhibitions in galleries, events such as art biennales and restoration of heritage structures. The Kochi-Muziris Biennale, for example, saw contributions from corporate firms such as the Lulu Group, DLF, HCL, South Indian Bank, BMW and Asian Paints. JSW Foundation partnered with the Global Heritage Fund for the restoration of the 15th century Chandramauleshwar temple in Anegundi, Karnataka. The Serendipity Arts Trust, created by Sunil Munjal, Chairman of Hero Enterprise, spearheaded the Serendipity Arts Festival, one of South Asia's largest multi-disciplinary arts initiatives. The recent India Today Art Awards (2016) and the Forbes India Art Awards (2014) allowed for the public recognition of Indian visual artists.

⁵ Thomas, M. (2017). *A fading Taj and shabby museums: India spends less than 1% of its annual budget on culture and it shows*, Quartz, 30 January

⁶ The Antiquities and Art Treasures Act (1972) which regulates the export trade in antiquities and art treasures; The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act (1958) which ensures preservation of sites of national importance, regulates archaeological excavation and provides protection for sites; Government initiatives to promote art and culture include Financial Assistance Schemes, Scholarships and Fellowships for Promotion of Art and Culture and various schemes for museums



**The story of the tiger
and the boar**

Jangarh Singh Shyam
(1962 - 2001)

Date: 1994,

Medium: Poster colour on paper,

Region: Madhya Pradesh

Museum number: PTC.0840

The performing arts has also seen the emergence of a multitude of platforms aimed at showcasing talent and reaching out to audiences. Awards such as the Vinod Doshi Fellowship and the Mahindra Excellence in Theatre Awards have served to provide critical recognition and support to theatre artisans across the country. Festivals such as the Gati Dance Festival, Jaipur Literature Festival and the Ishara Puppet Festival have repeatedly drawn large audiences annually.

Providing Support through Private Investments

Amongst the other sectors, the visual arts domain, in particular, has benefited from philanthropic and private forms of funding. Growing demand over the last decade, has helped bring in a fresh influx of wealth into the sector in India. In 2017, the Indian visual arts industry garnered revenues totalling to Rs 14.6 billion. The performing arts industry, in turn, was expected to witness a CAGR of 2.5 over 2012-2018 and reach Rs 275 billion in 2018¹⁰. High net-worth collectors have provided encouragement to the space through the enhancement of sales in the market. Private art galleries and auction houses have also been instrumental in

providing vibrancy and depth to the sector.

Institutional buyers of art, such as corporate entities like the Tata Group, the Times Group and the Oberoi Group, have major collections of contemporary Indian art¹¹. Family members of big industrialist houses have also patronised and heavily supported the visual arts. For instance, the unique Public Private Partnership between the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (MCGM), the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) and the Jamnalal Bajaj Foundation is what led to the restoration and revitalisation of the once decrepit Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Mumbai City Museum.

Many of these funding sources, however, have their own limitations. Art-forms of marginalised communities or subaltern groups are unable to access as much funding, contributing to their slow extinction. Rural performing arts and regional language theatre, for example, do not come under the interests of the target segment for sponsors. Since the focus on funding sustainability is also limited, these projects are unable to survive over the long term, even when funds are available.

⁷ For instance, in contrast to the central budget allocated to the Indian Ministry of Culture (INR 2,843 crore) , Germany budgeted over INR 14,000 crore in 2018- one of the highest fund allocations in the world.

⁸ Press Information Bureau, Government of India, <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=180871>

⁹ Creative Arts in India: Theater, Dance and Crafts Industry, FICCI & EY, 2016

¹⁰ According to provisional estimates. Updated data is currently not available regarding whether these targets have been met.

¹⁰ Singh, R. (2015). Sujata Singh Talks Illustration in India, Blue Chip Companies Investing in Art, Forbes, 29 June

Corporate Social Responsibility and Heritage, Art and Culture



Current Trends

Of the various forms of funding, grants from the private corporate sector through Corporate Social Responsibility(CSR) are arguably the smallest. Funding HAC initiatives is not seen to fit within the realm of traditional development projects and thus is not prioritised in CSR funding. The National Culture Fund (NCF) set up by the Government as a Public Private Partnership model only had a handful of donors from the private sector, whilst a majority of the contributions were made by public sector companies.

This trend is reflected in the CSR spending data as well. While Section 135 has permitted CSR funds to be spent on HAC projects in India, this cause area has consistently received very little attention from the sector. Education and Health are preferred areas of CSR investment with HAC averaging a little over 1 per cent of the cumulative CSR spend in the past three years. 2016-17 is an exception with the uptick mostly accounted for by the expenditure on the Statue of Unity in Gujarat.

CSR Spend in Heritage, Art & Culture-1

2014-15

INR 117 Crores

*1.16% of the Total
CSR spend*

2015-16

INR 118 Crores

*0.82% of the
Total CSR spend*

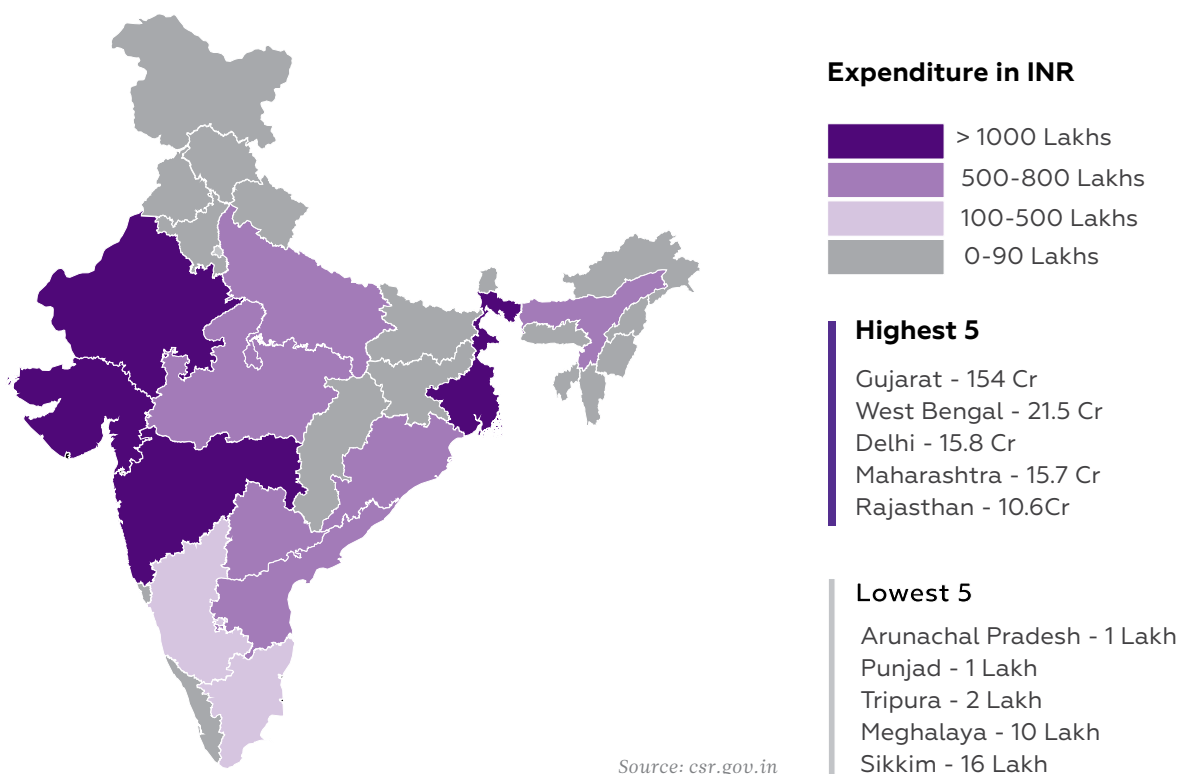
2016-17

INR 297 Crores

*2.20% of the
Total CSR spend*

*Spend on
Statue of Unity,
INR 2989 Cr*

As can be seen below, the annual expenditure in this sector has hovered around INR 118 crores, indicating the low level of interest that this domain commands in the CSR ecosystem. Given the role of HAC in preserving one of the world’s most ancient civilisations, its potential to bridge boundaries between communities and augment India’s soft power, awareness on the need to fund the sector is of vital importance.

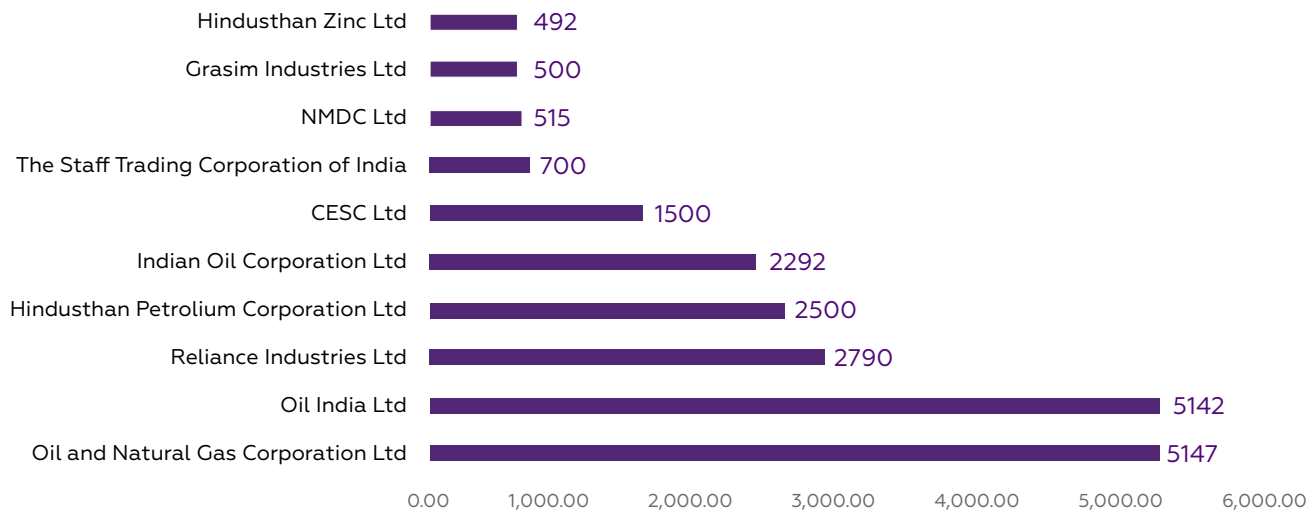


The geographical distribution of CSR spends in HAC in 2016-17 illustrates that the bulk of CSR spend in this cause area is concentrated in a few states. Gujarat received the highest amount of spend in 2016-17 (due to the construction of the Statue of Unity) and the Indian states that have a higher corporate presence such as Maharashtra, have also demonstrated significantly higher levels of expenditure. As indicated, various states with rich art and cultural heritage have not been able to garner funds, suggesting that the rich heritage is at risk of disappearance. The mapping of

where CSR spends are accruing versus areas that are culturally rich in the country but are neglected by the CSR ecosystem, represents an opportunity for action and prioritisation.

The next chart highlights the top ten companies in terms of CSR spend for the year 2016-17 in HAC. While heavily dominated by public sector undertakings (PSUs) and the extractives sector, a key point to note is that these 10 companies accounted for approximately 72.65 per cent of total CSR spend in this cause area for that year.

Top 10 Companies in Heritage, Art and Culture, CSR spend (FY 2016-17)



Funding the arts is a social investment:

JUNOON

Whilst fundraising for and executing the renowned annual Prithvi Theatre Festival, Sanjna Kapoor and Sameera Iyengar were able to see the possibilities that collaborative, supportive relationships could bring to the arts space.

Organisations rarely had a mandate for supporting the arts, and thus availability of funding, in large part, was dependent on individual motivations

within corporate structures. Relationships were thus strongly individual based and funding would usually take place only when access to senior leadership was managed. If anyone else within the corporate ecosystem was first approached, then funding conversations were difficult. These executives had neither the freedom nor the understanding to take decisions on supporting the arts.

For instance, in the case of the Prithvi Theatre Festival, the team took a stand and refused to allow any aggressive marketing (such as sales of products, competitions at the theatre space and product banners) which would affect the crucial

culture and artistic ethos of the space. Success was often only seen in matrices of scale of outreach and it was a challenge to convince corporates to work in different structures and view achievements differently. Alternate avenues for visibility were provided by the Prithvi team instead, in keeping with the spirit of the festival. When corporates saw the value and came on board (usually because someone higher up saw the value), the relationship tended to grow into a long and fruitful one.

This experience showed Junoon that private support was accessible, but a deeper appreciation and knowledge of the wealth of the arts was also necessary to nurture long-term, enabling

relationships with individuals within the system, and perhaps through them, with corporates. The knowledge that there is very little government funding for private arts organisations, in turn, made them decide to engage actively with business leaders.

The Junoon Salons were thus launched in 2018. Through the programme, business leaders are invited to join as members and get to know the rich world of performing arts in India. Through Salon evenings and Salon Popups, members are treated to extraordinary performances and art forms – which they may not have had access to earlier. In 2018, members enjoyed lavani performances, puppetry



Salon Audiences



Salon - Kattai Kuttu Show

shows, theatre performances and studio tours by the artists themselves. By experiencing these events, knowledge on the subject grows and so does the appreciation for the arts.

To enable improved collaboration, the need to strengthen the abilities of artist groups was also established. Under the aegis of the India Theatre Forum, Junoon and India Foundation for the Arts, the Strategic Management in the Art of Theatre (SMART) programme was set up. The programme is India's first and only capacity-building programme for theatre practitioners that aims to build knowledge, skills and expertise about arts management from within the Indian theatre

community. Given the paucity of resources, lack of infrastructure and support for theatre, very few theatre groups are in a position to hire managers. SMART thus aims to equip these theatre groups to be able to effectively manage activities such as publicity, fundraising, financial management, production management and so on. The course is taught by Indian arts and theatre practitioners and workers, who bring both on-ground knowledge as well as international knowledge to the course. Junoon and India Foundation for the Arts support the effort as managing partners, offering resources, infrastructure and management support to the programme.

The Case for Corporate Engagement



Motivations for Corporate Investment in Heritage, Art and Culture

The main drivers for investment in Arts and Culture for companies appear to be four-fold:

1. Compliance Driven

Investments in HAC are mandated under Section 135, but are also in compliance with larger public sector projects. This is largely seen across Public Sector companies and are in line with the guidelines issued by the Department of Public Enterprises. For instance, Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) has supported the maintenance of public monuments in Delhi's Lodhi Gardens and Saraswati Kund in Rourkela.

2. Stakeholder Driven

Building a stronger connection with the community within which the company operates is often a driver for investment in art and culture. Companies like Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) and National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC) organise tribal cultural meets, events and bazaars considering the importance of the tribal community as a stakeholder segment.

3. Strategic

For companies in certain sectors, the case for investment in arts and culture is aligned to a company's products, services and brand objectives. For example, Grasim, an apparel company, supports the development and promotion of traditional handicrafts such as Ikat, Jamdani and Banarasi. Another factor that drives investment in the cause area is the opportunity to build marketing and branding benefits for the company through association with such events. These would typically include sponsorship of classical festivals as in the case of Reliance and the World Music Festival held in Udaipur and supported by Hindustan Zinc Limited.

4. Catalytic

These forms of funding support the larger ecosystem through catalytic investment in technology and media. Sahapedia, for example, is an open, digital encyclopedia curating content on varied art forms and is supported by Infosys, TCS, ONGC and Axis Bank.

Examples of Outputs and Outcomes

Corporate institutions possess considerable resources to catalyse change in the Heritage, Art and Culture sector





An old woman casts her vote

T. S. Satyan (1923-2009)

Date: 1970, Medium: Silver gelatin print,

Region: Haryana

Museum number: PHY.07777

There are a multitude of outcomes that can be generated as a result of corporates funding the space.

Creation of Multiplier Effect

At the outset, as delineated above, funding from corporate institutions can be instrumental in unlocking the economic and non-economic impact potential of the sector. Critical skills of the organised and unorganised sectors can be nurtured and developed, which in turn, will aid the generation of livelihoods and employment opportunities. With an aggregation of these benefits, the effectiveness of the nation's workforce is improved, thus leading to a positive impact on national productivity. For example, Axis Bank Foundation, through their CSR investments in the heritage weaving practices of Rajasthan, have been able to help weavers find proper channels of distribution for their products and strengthen their livelihoods¹².

Facilitation of Cultural Diversity

Investments in HAC can also drive improvement in the quality of local environments, thus enhancing the quality of life and opportunity for critical thinking and creativity. These benefits, in turn, allow for larger non-economic impacts to be generated, by encouraging

local creativity, developing dialogue and discourse, and facilitating cultural diversity and inclusion. The Essar Group, through its public programming platform and cultural philanthropy initiative, Avid Learning, has been able to achieve such objectives. Avid uses engaging formats like workshops, panel discussions and festival platforms across different Indian cities to deepen learning experiences and provoke critical thinking.

Strategic Engagement with Demographics

Investments in HAC activities, projects or events allow corporate enterprises to reach out to their target demographics. Samvaad, a unique platform created by Tata Steel's Corporate Social Responsibility, seeks to provide a space for engagement with some of their critical stakeholders on projects – tribal communities. As a part of the annual event, participants from various tribal communities showcase their various cultural forms and bring leaders and members from tribal communities together to share ideas, thoughts and perspectives on developmental challenges in India¹³.

¹² Tasmayee, R. (2018). Corporates set to spend CSR budget on national heritage, culture and art restoration, *MoneyControl*, 30 November
¹³ "Homage paid to Birsa Munda as 'Samvaad' begins in Jamshedpur", *The Avenue Mail*, November 2018

Visibility of brand

By raising awareness about their engagement with art and culture, corporates are increasing the visibility of their brands and core services, which allows them to integrate into a community and engage effectively with users, customers and partners. Orange, the telecommunication company, funded the Prithvi Theatre Festival for many years. The value proposition for funding was clear. Through the theatre partnership, their brand was able to capitalise on this well-recognised location and engage with citizens and the culture of the city. Viewed objectively, the amount of financial contribution made, was far less in comparison to the value generated for the corporate partners.

Reputational Perks

CSR engagement in the arts also brings considerable reputational perks to corporate institutions. From the consumers' vantage point, this involvement with a public good reflects positively on the integrity, honesty, and approachability of a company, and thus, helps generate greater trust. For instance, the alignment of various corporate groups like Ginger Hotels, Incredible India and YES Global Institute on the Sahapedia organised India Heritage Walk Festival (2018), offered tremendous opportunities for them to showcase and promote their brand across India, and engage with a wide variety of audiences, as the

festival attracted a wide pool of users who were travel enthusiasts as well as influencers in their respective domains.

Organisational Culture

Unique avenues for engagement of employees are presented – avenues which encourage critical thinking, creativity and cultural appreciation. Godrej's office campus, based in Vikhroli, Mumbai, for instance, has actively included contemporary art in all office spaces and provides access to a cultural engagement space, India Culture Lab, which is well appreciated by employees.

The needs of the sector and the vast range of benefits present an opportunity for corporates to adopt the principles of Responsible Citizenship. Responsible Citizenship entails a corporate vision that understands the nuances of their role and the impact of their work, thus guiding them to create shared value for themselves and society at large. Responsible citizenship spans CSR, sustainability and shared value activities. While these three avenues are non-exclusive, they represent a continuum of responsible actions around which companies can develop initiatives based on their motivations and expertise.

It is within this continuum of engagement that Samhita and Collective Good Foundation have developed a framework that encompasses all actions that corporates could undertake to drive impact in this domain.

Responsible
Citizenship Continuum

CSR

Motivation by a corporate philanthropic approach and compliance with the CSR rules in the Companies Act, 2013

There is a clear distinction between CSR and a company's business

Stakeholder engagement spans communities, beneficiaries and employees

Sustainability

To match the use of resources to the capacity of the environment to replenish them; meeting today's needs without compromising the ability to meet tomorrow's

High alignment with the company's business

Stakeholder engagement spans communities, beneficiaries, employees, shareholders, vendors, suppliers and customers

Shared Value

A management strategy focused on companies creating measurable business value by identifying and addressing social problems that interset with their business

High alignment with the company's business

Stakeholder engagement spans communities, beneficiaries, employees, shareholders, vendors, suppliers and customers



A Kantha coverlet

unknown maker,

Date: c. 1960

Region: Bengal

Museum number: TXT.00099

The Preserve, Promote and Revive Framework (PPR Framework)



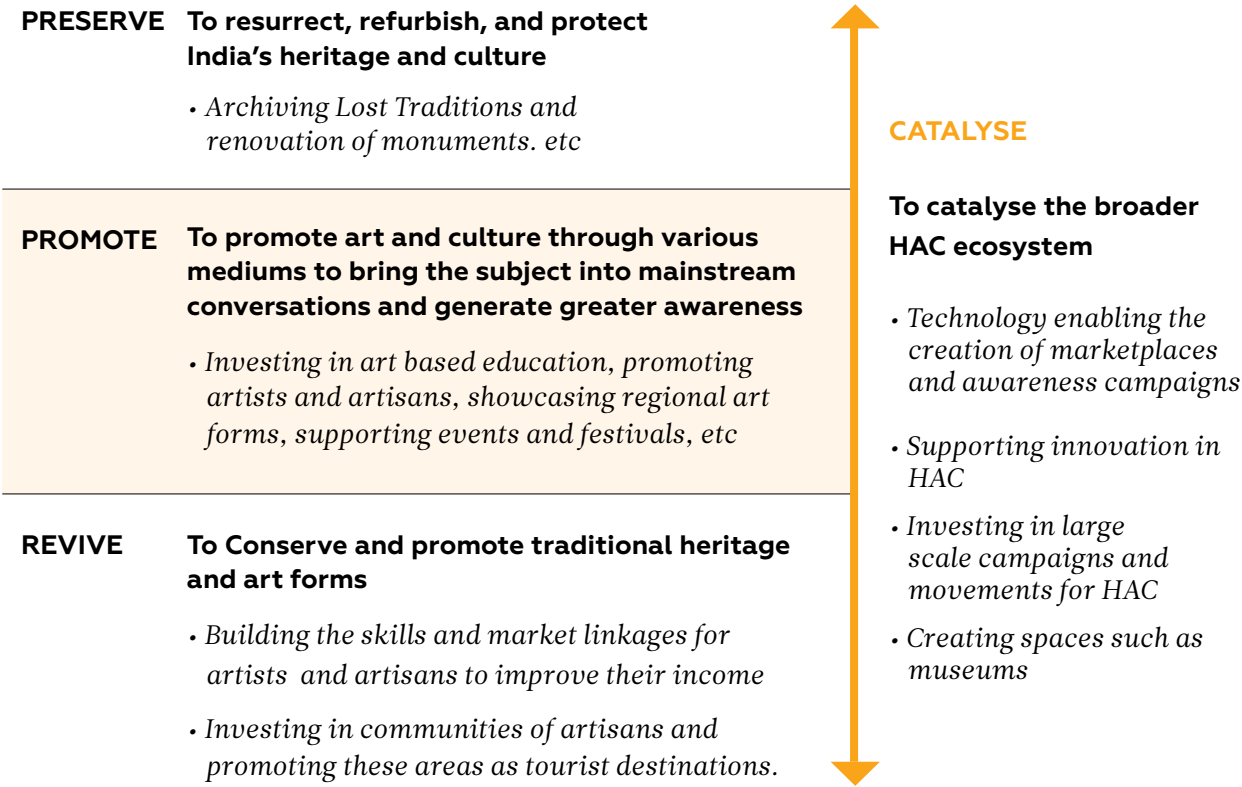
The PPR framework presents the intervention modalities that can help catalyse the broader HAC ecosystem.

An analysis of the top 10 companies that invest in HAC reveals that the programmes supported include support for cultural meets, conservation of historical sites and

monuments, providing financial assistance towards art and cultural events, and in some cases, supporting artisans working in art forms that are at risk of disappearing.

Our research on the top 10 companies has also shown that whilst companies typically tend to spend across Preserve (for e.g.:

The PPR Framework



conservation of monuments) and Promote (for e.g.: supporting festivals and tribal heritage), Revive tends to receive less attention. Preserve is a more popular mandate amongst Public Sector Undertakings, as their funding towards the cause directly complements government mandates for the same. Whilst private sector companies are largely hesitant about Preservation projects, Promoting allows the business brand to accrue direct benefits, facilitating connection opportunities with stakeholders. Given the country's extensive history across the art and culture spectrum, with many local art and cultural forms dying out, this part of the framework calls for higher attention.

As an enabler, Catalyse represents an opportunity to create catalytic impact right across all aspects of the framework. For example, technology can help Preserve (e.g.: websites and online repositories on India's arts and culture), Promote (e.g.: through messaging and apps) and Revive (e.g.: online marketplaces that build awareness and provide market linkages for dying weaving traditions).

Our analysis showed little investment in such enablers – yet another opportunity for companies to create impactful CSR strategies.

Even if I were to keep aside the larger questions of what is good for the country and think more narrowly in terms of creating value for shareholders, supporting our Heritage, Arts and Culture, is a great investment. Relatively small contributions for Heritage, Arts and Culture initiatives can create a big impact and deliver significant value for corporate stakeholders.

To able to maximise the value of these investments, it is crucial that corporates align their brand identity and stakeholder needs to the projects that they fund. For example, investments that ideally support the communities that you interact with and engage employees, customers and other key stakeholders.

Nachiket Mor

Supporter of Junoon, a Mumbai-based theatre and arts organisation

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Making Art Accessible

Museum of Art & Photography (MAP)



The Museum of Art & Photography (MAP) will open its doors in the heart of Bangalore, and it is set to be one of the most inclusive museums in the country.

Its mission is to make art and culture accessible to wide and diverse audiences. It will connect with the past, the present, and the future in this vital megacity, the second fastest-growing metropolis in India.

MAP is based on the core belief that everyone should have access to art and culture, as this can benefit the lives of people of all ages and all walks of life.

In order to achieve this, their approach is two-fold:

Through state-of-the-art equipment and a highly specialised team, *MAP is contributing to the preservation and conservation of India's national artistic and cultural heritage. This is especially urgent considering that India is losing one per cent of its tangible heritage every year.*

Through Education and Outreach programmes, *an Inclusion Plan, close connection with the local community and by making its collection available at no cost*

online, MAP is encouraging a museum-going culture. The aim is to change the perception of who art is for, so that everyone can claim that museums are for them.

Conservation and Preservation

India has vast artistic and cultural heritage stretching back thousands of years and is currently home to some of the finest contemporary artists in the world, yet its museum sector has limited resources to protect and promote such treasures and new creativity. MAP is custodian to a growing collection of over 18,000 artworks and the team is currently cataloguing and digitising it to make it freely available online. Thanks to a grant by Tata Trusts, MAP has set up a Conservation Centre, an invaluable resource for the preservation of art, with a special focus on paper.

MAP's planning for its first year of exhibitions is underway and this will be a true reflection of its collections with a special focus on meeting the needs of a varied audience. At least eight exhibitions will be displayed annually showcasing parts of the Foundation's holdings as well as art from other collections.



Drummer

Tyeb Mehta (1925-2009)
Date: 1988, Medium: Oil on canvas,
Museum number: MAC.00459

MAP will focus on global collaborations in order to promote Indian heritage externally and expose Indian audiences to collections from museums across the world.

Education, Outreach and Inclusion

There is a sizable issue of inequality when it comes to access to museums in India, therefore very few can benefit from its positive effects.

Since 2016, MAP has made art accessible to students in schools across Bangalore with free educational programmes. These are designed around specially curated exhibitions for younger audiences. In 2018, for instance, it presented '*A Moving Tale: Kinetics & Art*' which explored the representation of movement in various forms of art over time periods and mediums. In 2019 MAP launched a similarly formatted programme, entailing creative activities and artwork interactions called '*Artful Thinking*' focused on the concept of home. '*A Moving Tale*' also introduced two pilot educators' workshops which helped develop a more comprehensive educators' capacity-building programme launched by the Museum in 2019 that explores the foundational discourse on the inject and impact of the arts in learning along with its interpretation in classroom

practice and present day experimentation.

Championing Learning with the Arts is designed as a day-long workshop with a take-away kit and offers two variants – one, catering to public schools and NGOs working in the education sector, and the other catering to private schools and alternative learning institutions. In this way, MAP is ensuring that art becomes a mainstay of education in Bangalore.

MAP's blueprint for the new building has been reviewed by an accessibility consultant and the architects are adapting the plans accordingly. MAP is also hiring an Inclusion Officer to embed accessibility in all its programmes.

The Museum will use technology to enhance visitors' experiences and through its educators' programme, provide faculty from schools with a framework to use digital tools to bring art into the classroom. There will be several activities targeted at increasing the visibility and relevance of women in the arts such as exhibitions of women artists; lecture programmes panels; interviews with women artists; and programmes that elevate the crafts and traditional art forms by female creators.

**Punjab. Kurukshetra.
A Refugee Camp**

Henri Cartier-Bresson (1908-2004)
Date: 1947, Medium: Silver gelatin
print, Region: Punjab
Museum number: PHY.01764



It Takes a Village

All of MAP's successes and achievements to date have been possible thanks to the generous support of its corporate partners, individual donors, and Foundations, trustees, board members and advisory members. MAP is funded by a mix of philanthropic efforts including trustee Abhishek Poddar, Tata Trusts, Citibank India, Mphasis, Sunil Munjal, Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, Manipal Foundation, Avanee Foundation to name but a few. In addition, MAP has entered into a partnership with Google Arts & Culture, through which it creates online exhibitions, thereby further increasing its reach and exposing people globally to Indian art.

Mphasis's grant will enable the museum to take a 360-degree approach to accessibility right from the outset. Under the expert guidance of

the Diversity and Equal Opportunity Centre (DEOC), the MAP building and services will be benchmarked against the most established museums in the world. MAP will also offer art education workshops, organise inclusive exhibitions and conduct talks and programmes specifically tailored for persons with disabilities. All equipment and technology, including the website, are being procured and designed with access in mind. Mphasis' support will also help open up careers in the arts to people with disabilities through the implementation of inclusive recruitment policies.

MAP realises the potential of a group of corporates dedicated to furthering the conversation surrounding art in India and thus leverages the power of CSR to make art accessible for millions of Indians.

دربارِ رسول میں

اے خاصہ خاصانِ رسل وقتِ نما ہے
جو دینِ نبی شان سے نکلا تھا دل سے
جس دین کے معونے کبھی سیر و کسری
وہ دینِ نبوی نرم جہاں جس سے چرغاں
جو تفرقہ اقوام کے آیا تھا مناسا نے
جس میں نے تھے غیروں کے دل اکے ملائے
جس میں کی تخت سے سب لایاں تھو مقلوب
سے دین ترا لب بھی ہی چشمہ صفا
دولت سے نہ عزت نہ فضیلت نہ ہنر ہے
گو قوم میں تیری نہیں اب کوئی بڑائی
ڈرے کہیں پیام بھی مٹ جائے آخر
زیلہ ہے اے کشتیِ امت کے گنجیلاں
تدبیرِ سنجھنے کی ہمارے نہیں کوئی
ہاں ایک دُعائیہ کی کہ مقبولِ خدا ہے

Reviving our Heritage

Infosys Foundation





Infosys Foundation was established in 1996, and at the very outset it was clear that the Foundation would look to support art and culture initiatives, in addition to others. The Foundation is certain that culture provides an understanding of the evolution of our civilisation and is essential in figuring out our future and where we are going next.

Over the years, the Foundation has emerged as a crusader for traditional arts and the sustenance of these forms and their practitioners. They receive thousands of grant funding proposals every year, across different fields, which are reviewed through a detailed evaluation process. In the last financial year, the Foundation has funded initiatives as diverse as the Raja Dinkar Kelkar Museum in Pune, Sarod Ghar museum in Gwalior, restoration of three ancient tanks in Bengaluru and Mysuru, and a three-day cultural festival in Lakshmeshwara, Karnataka.

The Someshwara Archaeological Complex

Amongst others, a specific project showcases the Promote-Preserve-Revive ideology clearly. In 2015, the Foundation supported the renovation of the Someshwara archaeological

complex in Gadag district, Karnataka. The complex stands testament to the rich cultural history of the ruling kingdoms in southern India, with structures rich with intricate carvings and ancient scripture inscriptions and is a state protected monument. Built during the Chalukya rule, the complex had declined and fallen prey to the vagaries of natural and man-made destruction. After a first visit to the complex, the Foundation wrote to the Department of Archaeology, Museums and Heritage, Karnataka, expressing their desire to restore the monument site. Based on a detailed project report submitted consequently, the Foundation signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Archaeology.

Through the Foundation's funding, the complex was restored and since then has stood as a site of cultural vibrancy. The annual festival – the Puligere Utsav or the Infosys Foundation Lakshmeshwara Utsav – sees the convergence of a wide spectrum of artists from the fields of music, dance and folk arts. Both, the well-known and established as well as local talents are given the space to showcase their art.



Vasantha Vallabha Kalyani: The neglect and misuse of the Vasantha Vallabha Kalyani prompted Infosys Foundation to undertake its restoration.



Puligere Festival: Artists of Sri Padma Bhaskara Kala Kendra perform a Bharatanatyam recital at the Puligere Utsav in Lakshmeshwara, Karnataka, in January 2018.

Recommendation on CSR in Art & Culture

Multi-faceted initiatives such as these and a long history of investing in the sector, sets the Infosys Foundation apart from other philanthropy and CSR initiatives. In many ways, they are a beacon for CSR initiatives in art and culture.

Given their experience, their recommendations to companies looking to invest in the sector are very clear.

Focus on sustainability: The Foundation has realised that there is a need to make arts and culture organisations sustainable and independent. Grant funding can form a permanent walking crutch as complacency prevents organisations from addressing their funding challenges in innovative and sustainable ways. The Foundation thus applies a cross-funding model to many of their grants, wherein organisations are required to identify other funders who can share the project costs and requirement for support.

Working with the Government: The need to work with the government stands particularly true for heritage structures. The structures are the responsibility of the government agencies and the eventual operation and maintenance will fall within their ambit. Without the government's active involvement in the projects and a rightful handover, the projects



Kelkar Museum, Pune: Display of decorative kitchen utensils and metal cart

can fall prey to disrepair.

Supporting Different Ideas: Based on their experience, the Foundation has seen merit in funding entrepreneurial projects which go beyond the traditional modes of addressing issues in the sector. The Foundation, for example, supported the Anahad Foundation which works for the recognition, preservation and evolution of tribal, folk and traditional music. The group documents artists and creates a website for every artist group to facilitate bookings without the involvement of middlemen. The groups are then given a box of CDs of their documented audio and video content, business cards and a pen drive with original files. Infosys Foundation's grant helped Anahad increase their productivity by 600 per cent in just three months.

Encouraging Public Engagement with Art

The Piramal Art Foundation

What is the point of a large and prestigious collection of art, if no one can see it? This is the question that arose for the Piramal family, who had developed a sizeable collection of some of the most prominent artworks in the country. The collection, with its seminal works by various Indian artists, tells a grand story of the history of India's cultural heritage from early 18th century till present times.

The question led to the setting up of The Piramal Art Foundation in 2014. The Foundation looks towards acquiring, preserving and showcasing quality art for the benefit of the larger public. The Foundation also aims to promote upcoming artists and educate citizens about Indian art. Amongst its various initiatives, the Foundation has set up one of the largest libraries dedicated to material on Modern and Contemporary Indian Art. The Foundation has also supported the archiving and digitisation of materials in artists' studios, sponsored fine art exhibitions and supported arts management programmes across the country.

Realising the wider, measurable impact of the arts, the Piramal Group made art integral to business operations. To harness the power of community in office spaces and holistically nurture employees, the Group has incorporated artwork in all workplaces

and introduced programmes, workshops and exhibitions that help employees educate themselves, interact with and experience art. Art has also helped them develop a better cultural experience for customers with some of their most inspiring art pieces being displayed across various projects, sales centres and show flats.

Towards a Spirit of Engagement: Piramal Museum of Art

It was through this strategy of leveraging owned or co-owned real estate spaces to achieve accessibility of art, that the Piramal Museum of Art was created. Set up in 2015, in a 7000 sq. ft. space in Lower Parel, Mumbai, the Piramal Museum of Art showcases renowned works of contemporary and modern Indian artists like Akbar Padamsee, Hemendranath Mazumdar, Gaganendranath Tagore, Jehangir Sabavala, Bikash Bhattacharjee and K.G.Subramanyan. The Museum hopes to further the objective of building a culture of art that is accessible to everyone and is open to the public free of charge. "We've sensitised security to allow anyone who says the word art or museum or is intrigued by what's going on in the space," said Ashvin Rajagopalan, Director, Piramal Art Foundation.



- The Public Art Programme, a Collaboration with Piramal Museum and Phoenix Malls
- Open Studio Day at Piramal Art Residency, Thane

Additionally, a permanent collection has been installed in Byculla and contemporary art spaces in Mulund and Kurla in Mumbai have also been set up. At the Byculla space, which houses the only fixed collection, the Foundation organises walking tours to engage people in the neighbourhood's rich and varied history.

The latest exhibition at the Museum in Lower Parel is an example of the efforts underway to make art engaging and accessible to the public. The Foundation noticed that when people created art themselves, they were a lot more engaged. They therefore designed the exhibition, *Making Art: Materials and Technology*, around the production of art. The exhibition was split into six categories of artistic media that included charcoal, paint, sculpture, printmaking, photography and digital media. The top panel in the set-up detailed the evolution of each medium. Through this, audiences could touch, feel and experience the making of art. It helped the viewer understand the construction of an idea by an artist and its relationship to the usage of material, and educated the viewer on the timeline of art history and material and how it contributes to an overall aesthetic.

Frequent collaboration between companies and funders is also being ensured. Given the high footfall in malls, the Piramal Museum of Art partnered with the Phoenix Market City mall in Mumbai, to hold an exhibition in the mall area. Both entities contributed to the marketing and set up of the exhibition and it led to more than

600 exhibition visitors a day. A partnership with the stationery company Kokuyo Camlin was established to provide raw materials and paint for workshops held within its spaces. A network of art teachers in the city have also been connected with to ensure that they drive select, focused students to the museum to widen their horizons and cultural prowess.

The Piramal Art Residency

In addition to these efforts, the Group has also set up an Art Residency Programme at Piramal Vaikunth, a residential complex in Thane, Maharashtra. The three-week residency programme is based on different themes drawn from art, history, science, literature or social studies. The programme allows a cohort of 30 artists to interact with peers as well as mentors in the field. At the end of the programme, an Open Day is held, where the artists exhibit their work for the public. This programme, in turn, has helped build visibility for the project and Piramal Realty has emerged as not just a real estate provider but a lifestyle provider. At the time of printing this report, the residency programme had successfully benefitted more than 19 cohorts.

Need of the hour

“Unless you are a historian or make the effort, you will be oblivious of the significance of a place or site you are visiting. We realised that we needed to take art and culture to the



- School Children at the Making Art exhibition
- Open Studio Day at Piramal Art Residency, Thane

people,” says Ashvin Rajagopalan, Director of Piramal Art Foundation. It is this realisation and objective that has led to the growth of the Foundation.

The focus is now cementing around the need to build public awareness of the sector’s contributions, especially with children. Children aren’t geared to think differently and this shows in adults as well. Even though CSR contributions in the field of education are the highest, creative thinking, music and art rarely feature within these programmes. Through their varied efforts, the Piramal Group hopes to make a defining contribution in building this awareness and the sensibilities of society. The belief is established and strong – art can truly enrich the lives of people, regardless of the economic strata they come from.

I felt nice to see my artwork on display. A lot of people called me up specifically to compliment my artworks. It was also really nice of the chairman to take time out of his busy schedule and ask questions to every person who had displayed their work.

Jayageetha Roy

*on the employee exhibition ‘Art Here. Art Now’
Secretary, Chairman’s Office*

A Space for Dialogue on Contemporary Culture

The Godrej India Culture Lab



2009 was a particularly significant year for Parmesh Shahani. The former internet entrepreneur, research head of MIT's Convergence Culture Consortium and author of *Gay Bombay: Globalization, Love and (Be) Longing in Contemporary India*, became a TED Fellow and got accepted into a PhD programme at the University of Pennsylvania. It was also the year that the Delhi High Court made the landmark ruling on LGBTQ rights in India. Parmesh soon realised that there was a need for a lab-like space in India, where a cross-pollination on ideas and dialogue on existing notions of culture and modernity could take place.

Parmesh dropped out of the PhD programme and initially deliberated on partnering with a foreign university for setting up the space. Support from Indians, however, seemed more appropriate for this vision. He met with many people, who failed to understand his vision for the project. When he finally met Nisaba Godrej, Chairperson of Godrej Consumer Products, they connected on his vision and through her support, his idea manifested in 2011. Ever since, the India Culture Lab, based in Vikhroli, Mumbai has evolved into an avenue for exploration and dialogue on diverse,

contemporary issues. Over the last few years, engagement around various themes and experiments with varied formats has taken place. Thematics engaged with have included LGBTQ rights, caste, gender, feminism, fashion and environment. Modalities for engaging with these topics have included pop-ups, film screenings, exhibitions and discussions. The Lab also conducts annual leadership programmes for students to familiarise them with cultural concepts and enable them to explore a career as curators of culture. It also convenes other cultural entities in the city regularly through "cultural thinkathons" and produces shared public resources like Mumbai's Culture Map – a comprehensive map of Mumbai's cultural spaces.

Arguably, the biggest contribution from the Godrej Group has been the provision of the much-needed space – expanses for people to think and make meaning of contemporary life in modern India. Shahani leverages the existing resources at the Godrej campus in Mumbai – from factories to warehouses and auditoriums – as locations for the various events.

Though not directly connected to the main business, this engagement, in many ways,

Rather than taking only a brand focus or a focus on specific programmes, Corporates need to invest in a deeper form of philanthropy and patronage for art and culture. The focus should move towards building and supporting ecosystems.

Parmesh Shahani

Head Godrej India Culture Lab

has fed directly into the larger efforts of the Godrej group. As a part of its reinvention, the company has been looking to connect to young India. The Lab, with its focus on engaging on the prominent issues facing contemporary India, lends itself well to the process.

The Lab is evocative of much more, though. Companies play a fundamental role in society, and thus need to be vocal about their values and commitment to larger issues. In a move towards a service and experience economy, the customer is constantly looking for the principles and standards of the companies they consume from and hold them accountable. The companies that do not participate in these issues, however, risk survival.

What Makes It Work?

During the formative years, the Lab deliberated on funding and revenue models, and attempted to unlock funding from a set of companies, keeping in mind the collaborative vision of the project. However, there was a lack of traction amongst companies due to a lack of understanding of the need for the platform and the perceived low return on investment.

Eventually, the necessity of collaborative funding was questioned and the Godrej Group emerged as the sole backer of the Lab.

Today, when asked about the reasons for the Lab's success, Nisaba Godrej lists out four crucial reasons. "Firstly because the Lab curates its activities so independently, it is looked at as a serious cultural player and not a sponsored arm of a company. This gives it credibility. The second is the Lab constantly evolves what it does. When it started it was more of an events space, but now it has morphed into a catalyst for other activities, a white paper generator, a conductor of student leadership programmes and more. Thirdly, I would credit the Lab's location in Vikhroli, a suburb of Mumbai. When we started the Lab some years ago, many would scoff and say, Who will come to Vikhroli! Over the years, the Lab has managed to change this. Now, the Lab is constantly courted as the first destination of choice for so many cultural interventions in the city and the fact that we are in Vikhroli is actually an advantage, because we can draw such huge crowds to our events! Most



Factory pop-up by Godrej Archives at India Culture Lab's 'Vikhroli SKIN' event in December 2013

Lavani performance by Anil Hankare and troupe at India Culture Lab's 'Lavani LIVE' event in December 2016

importantly, there is Parmesh. It is his vision, passion and hard work that make the lab what it is.”

Parmesh, in turn, has one constant answer. Nisaba Godrej and the support provided has helped him set up but their own provision of creative independence and the ability to set the agenda has helped the India Culture Lab thrive.

“We are successful because we are independent. The Godrej Group gives us freedom and we need that freedom to succeed.”

Investing in Culture

The Godrej India Culture Lab has made its mark as a landmark location in Mumbai for dialogue on contemporary issues and cultural engagement. For a corporate looking to engage with the sector, Nisaba Godrej has a few critical insights to share. “My first bit of advice to other companies would be to go out and find the excellent work that is already happening and use their resources to amplify this. Help

the ecosystems that already exist. In a way, our Lab does exactly this with its focus on shining a light on people or cultural art forms that are not so mainstream. The second piece of advice would be to stop thinking of everything as a branding or marketing opportunity and think of cultural patronage as a long term exercise in goodwill generation. With the Lab for example, the website, the social media handles and everything simply says India Culture Lab. Most of our events are at the Godrej campus so people will naturally come here but we are very careful not to over-brand it as a Godrej platform or use the Lab as a commercial vehicle. It is clearly an act of patronage to support cultural expression and corporates should realise that sometimes the best thing you can do is support something and then step aside to let the magic happen by itself.”



Story of the Muun by Alyen Foning at India Culture Lab's 'So Many Feminisms' event in February 2019

I had to take a call about why other companies were unwilling to participate – was it because the idea itself was bad or was it because it was too ahead of its time and something that the others were unable to understand? I decided that it was because of the latter and so we decided to fund the Lab completely as Godrej. Also, Parmesh by then had also won the hearts of many people inside Godrej, and we didn't want him to leave! Over the years, I am happy that we made that decision because the Lab has proven to be of great importance to us. To give you just one example. Our entire journey on being an LGBTQ inclusive company would not have come about had it not been for the Lab's constant programming about LGBTQ issues over the years. Having this exposure helped us open our minds and hearts as a company.

Nisaba Godrej

Chairperson of Godrej Consumer Products Ltd

Collaboration Through Art

The Arvind Indigo Museum



Nestled in the busy complex of their Ahmedabad Headquarters is the site of the Arvind Indigo Museum, a unique initiative by the famous textile manufacturer Arvind Limited (Arvind). The museum is dedicated as a tribute to the indigo dye – a dye which is intrinsic to Indian history, the history of Ahmedabad and the history and successes of Arvind. It was thus in the context of paying homage to indigo that Arvind set forth on this ambitious project.

Ahmedabad was historically known as the Manchester of India in its hey-day, its mills were brimming with activity and production. However, around the 1980s, when India experienced an upsurge of labour movements, many mills started shutting down. Arvind was more fortunate than the rest and this fortune rested on the inflow of one single product – denim. At that period, Sanjay S. Lalbhai, Chairman and Managing Director of Arvind Limited, thought of bringing in and introducing denim to the Indian market. The market response to the product allowed the company to thrive and progress. Today, Arvind is a leader on the global map of denim manufacturing.

The colour of denim is attributable to the indigo dye. Emerging as a crucial ingredient

in the making of this new apparel type during the California Gold Rush, the cultivation of indigo can be traced back to its first plantation during the Indus Civilisation. From there, it spread across the entire world and was seen as a luxurious item that very few could afford. During the British colonisation, indigo was oppressively cultivated as it was a very lucrative product for trade. The revolt against this forced cultivation during the Champaran Satyagraha is marked as one of the seminal events in the fight for Indian Independence.

The museum delineates this colourful history through a series of panels. But it does not just stop there. The vision for the museum is to engage with indigo and showcase it for its dynamism and the volume of opportunities it brings with it in the present day. Starting as an idea in 2017, the museum looked to engage with indigo through different mediums and in collaboration with other artists. To execute this vision, a considerable amount of Research and Development was necessary. The dye was imparted on different mediums, but it was discovered that the indigo used on textiles did not work on all mediums. The chemistry of the dye had to be thus investigated and through trial and error, 18 different recipes of the



- Annie Morris' signature sculpture, made with indigo-dyed concrete, plaster, sand and steel
- Manish Nai's groundbreaking indigo-dyed aluminium installation



Inside 'Alchemy', the Arvind-Indigo Museum's first collection

indigo dye were created. This process has been documented and all recipes have been patented by the company.

The company then started approaching various artists with a view to collaborate with them on the project. Initially, the idea did not find traction, but on realising the innovative possibilities of the project, various artists and sculptors from around the world came forth. Today, the museum is being approached for collaboration possibilities, hosts visitors from visitors across the globe and is slowly becoming a landmark on the art map of Ahmedabad. Artists who have collaborated on the project include Manish Nai, Tanya Goel, Nalini Malani and Alwar Balasubramaniam and the mediums

engaged with include wood, leather, paper, acrylic and metal. Artists were identified based on their history of working within those mediums and based on the unique sensibilities they share with the group's artistic vision. At no point was the creative process of the artist interfered with during the process of co-creation. The Arvind team conducted the research and development required to execute the vision, but the actual visioning for the piece was done by the artist.

When reflecting on the process they followed, Sanjay Lalbhai reminisces on how challenging it was. "When you try something like this, you really don't know where you are heading and what will come out of it. But our belief



Alwar Balasubramaniam's
indigo landscapes

was strong and we knew something interesting would emerge.” The museum connects profoundly to the larger vision of the company – the creation of an eco-system. Arvind is looking to empower the entire community of Indian artisans and craftsmen through a market-based approach. “Our vision is to contemporise the art and craft of India, bring in global artists, get them to work with our craftsmen and artists and create something which is unique and can be taken to the global stage,” says Sanjay Lalbhai. The need to create active revenue streams for artisans is established – without it the craft will slowly die out. With our network and reach, both with farmers on-the-ground and national and international suppliers, this objective can be met with ease.

Whilst connected to this eco-system vision, the company is very clear that the museum is not connected to any profit motive. It is evocative of their larger principles of ‘Technology, Innovation, Social Relevance and Sustainability’. The learnings from the museum, especially those gained through the Research and Development process, will definitely be imbued into the corporate process at Arvind. Sanjay Lalbhai’s message is clear and resounding “Don’t let your engagement with the arts be guided by a business motive, let the discoveries you make through your engagement with the arts inform your business.”

Find out more

To browse our collections and learn more about previous programmes conducted by MAP, please visit our website

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