

Filling the gaps: Tech parks, malls in Bengaluru are becoming spaces for displaying art

By Divya Shekhar, ET Bureau | Updated: Dec 27, 2017, 09:58 PM IST



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The Force by Paresh Maity. (Image: artmusings.net)

BENGALURU: Following in the footsteps of theatre, which has broken out of the confines of an auditorium, art initiatives in Bengaluru are also exploring alternative spaces.

Technology parks and malls, by opening their doors to art shows, installations, workshops and festivals, are attempting to fill the gap created by isolated and inadequate public art spaces in the city.

The trend, experts believe, could enthuse well-to-do corporate and IT professionals and attract the next generation of enthusiasts and buyers in the coming year.

"We are space providers who want to stir the appetite for public art and deepen the level of engagement among youngsters and millennials," says Anu Menda, managing trustee, RMZ Foundation, which launched an art centre in June this year.

It is part of the 80-acre RMZ Ecoworld business park in Bellandur which has over 1,50,000 employees in companies including Infosys, KPMG, Sony, Capgemini and Shell. The exhibitions and permanent collection of art installations are open to the public. "We have observed that employees visit in groups during lunch breaks and have developed a curiosity about artworks," Menda says.

In January, VR Bengaluru mall will organise the Whitefield Art Collective and bring established and upcoming ones from institutes including the Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath, Srishti Institute of Art, Design and Technology, MSU Baroda and Sir JJ School of Art, Mumbai.

Sumi Gupta, director of VR Bengaluru and curator of the show, says "We see a footfall of 15,000 people on weekdays and 25,000 on weekends. People interact with and access all artworks on the premises. Not everyone coming to the mall is an art lover, but they certainly cannot ignore it," she says.

Multiple art forms being promoted in such spaces is vital especially for school and college students, says Abhishek Naidu, project manager, Sublime Galleria at UB City, which also organises the 10-day annual Art Bengaluru festival. "Academia here is restricted to a narrow spectrum of fine arts. We collaborate with educational institutions so that the tours, workshops and exhibitions expose students to a global selection of works."

Artists believe this is just the beginning. Gurudas Shenoy points out how government agencies like the National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA) used to buy artwork for permanent display but have stopped for a while now. On the other hand, efforts by artists to revive the Venkatappa Art Gallery has hit a wall.

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MAKES SENSE

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