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## **Day 1 of Serendipity Arts Festival 2025: A Grand Opening Celebrating India's Cultural Heritage and Innovative Spirit**

**Panaji, December 12, 2025** — The landmark 10th edition of Serendipity Arts Festival opened today with a resounding celebration of India's rich artistic traditions and contemporary innovations. Returning to Panjim, Goa for ten extraordinary days, the festival's opening showcased the perfect blend of heritage and modernity that has become its hallmark.

The evening commenced with the opening of Serendipity Arts Festival at Barge at the Captain of Ports Jetty in Old Goa as Mr. Sunil Kant Munjal, Founder Patron of Serendipity Arts, welcomed everyone to be a part of the milestone edition celebrating art, culture and heritage.

Reflecting on the 10th milestone edition of Serendipity Arts Festival, **Mr. Sunil Kant Munjal, Founder–Patron of Serendipity Arts**, said:

*"As we open the 10th edition of Serendipity Arts Festival, we celebrate not just a milestone, but a movement. Over the past decade, this festival has become a living bridge between heritage and innovation, bringing together artists, communities, and audiences in a shared journey of cultural discovery across visual, performing, culinary and performance arts. This year, we choose to create more, listen harder, and open the cultural space wider — for India, and for the world. We dedicate the festival to Mukta Munjal. She was an early inspiration for the Founders, having started a number of initiatives in the arts, including this festival."*

Embedded in this spirit of Serendipity Arts Festival, **Barge**, curated by Veeranganakumari Solanki, transformed a floating venue into a space exploring absence and presence. Drawing from three previous exhibitions—*Future Landing*, *Synaesthetic Notations*, and *A Haptic Score*—the installation foregrounds participatory experience, inviting each viewer to activate the space and create memorable imprints. The four *Barge* artists respond to understanding of absence and presence spatially, architecturally, and sonically.

*Speaking about the opening of Barge, Veerangana Solanki said, "A cabin transforms into an illusion of space, while oil palms hunch over histories and fading memories of trade and geographies. A light source sweeps the darkness for signs that reveal remnants of labour and days*

*spent at sea, and a visitor's movement through the space begins to search for the sounds that travel behind the steel skin of a floating cavity. This is Barge."*

The inauguration was followed by **Palette(s)**—a performance for 2 artists, 20 pallets and 1 bottle of water at The Arena at Nagalli Hills. Cédric Gagneur and Marc Oosterhoff gave pallets a new life, an ode to falling, in which there is no great difference in the way pallets and artists are treated: they are carried, manipulated, thrown and fall without grace. A piece full of splinters that flirts with dance and circus.

The night concluded with **Clay Play**, curated by Shubha Mudgal and Aneesh Pradhan. This mesmerizing performance brought together a collection of percussion instruments primarily made from clay, each with its own distinct playing technique.

*"Clay Play was curated to bring attention to musical traditions that have long shaped Goan life, especially the earthy and resonant sounds of the ghumat that is so unique and integral to the culture of this region. Working with the ghumat and other percussion instruments from Goa and with elements from jagor allowed us to highlight aspects of Goan life that are deeply tied to community memory and culture. Hearing the audience respond so wholeheartedly, it strengthened our belief that these forms are not relics from the past, but are living traditions that continue to engage us in multiple ways." said, Aneesh Pradhan Ji.*

Alongside these openings, the city also saw the first appearances of **Beasts of Reincarnations: Mythical Beings in the City**, curated by **Diptej Vernekar**. Spread across Panjim's heritage streets and waterfronts, the project reimagines Goa's living traditions of effigy-making by introducing large-scale, ephemeral installations inspired by the Narkasur lineage and other ritual forms. As opening day unfolded, these mythical creatures invited visitors to encounter Goa's ritual memory in motion, suspended between destruction, renewal, and contemporary urban life.

*Speaking about the installations, Diptej Virenkar said "With Beasts of Reincarnations, I wanted to honour Goa's effigy-making traditions by letting these mythical beings step out into the city and create new dialogue with the public. These forms have always carried stories of festivity, and renewal, and reimagining them with local artisans allowed us to see how they continue to transform with the times. Watching people encounter them up close — not as distant spectacles but as living, shifting presences — reaffirmed how deeply these traditions belong to the city and its collective imagination."*

Across multiple venues, exhibitions open their doors to the public from **14th December, 2025**. **Not a shore, neither a ship, but the sea itself**, curated by Sahil Naik at The Old GMC Complex, will bring together artists from Goa, the Goan diaspora, and those who have engaged with oceanic histories.

**OTHERLAND**, curated by Ranjit Hoskote at the Old GMC Building, will present the practices of four Indian photographers—Naveen Kishore, Ram Rahman, Samar Jodha, and Ritesh Uttamchandani—who have borne witness to crises and predicaments in other societies.

From the 14th of December, the venues will also welcome visitors to several installations including **Multiplay 02: Soft Systems** curated by Thukral and Tagra at the Directorate of Accounts, **The Culinary Odyssey of Goa** by Odette Mascarenhas at Art Park, and **What Does Loss Taste Like?** curated by Chef Thomas Zacharias and The Locavore at the Directorate of Accounts—an immersive, multisensory installation exploring the slow disappearance of taste, memory, and biodiversity.

**Duty Free**, curated by Ranjana Dave at the Old GMC Building, will showcase a unique dance installation functioning as both exhibition space and embodied archive. Over eight days, three dance artists will take turns inhabiting a riverfront verandah, making it both studio and stage, offering movement encounters and sensorial discoveries.

*“Our association with the Serendipity Arts Festival is a reflection of our deep commitment to celebrating and preserving the cultural fabric of the regions we serve,” says **Mr. Ranjit Phillipose, Sr Vice President – Operations, IHCL Goa**. “Through our Paathya initiative, we continue to champion local art, heritage and creative expression, ensuring that our hotels are not just places of hospitality, but vibrant custodians of Goa’s artistic soul. Working closely with Serendipity allows us to nurture talent, support communities and contribute meaningfully to the state’s cultural landscape, a responsibility we are proud to uphold.”*

Day 1 set the tone for what promises to be an unforgettable celebration of arts, bringing together traditional and contemporary practices, local and global voices, and creating spaces for dialogue and discovery across Panjim's diverse venues.

## NOTES TO EDITOR

### About Serendipity Arts Festival

Serendipity Arts Festival transforms 300,000 square feet of iconic buildings and alternative spaces into South Asia's premier multi-disciplinary cultural platform. Spanning visual, performing, and culinary arts alongside film, live arts, and literature, the Festival challenges status quo relationships—between art and viewer, city and citizen, proscenium and audience. Working within these dialectics, we foster conversations that strengthen cultural ecosystems and create human channels spreading impact across regions and generations. Having proven that cultural

placemaking can transform cities, the Festival operates as a nomadic structure designed to adapt to any city and any stage. This cultural experiment supports artistic practice while demonstrating how culture cultivates empathetic leadership, teaches kindness, and builds the foundation for a safe, healthy, and progressive society.

## **Serendipity Arts**

Serendipity Arts is a not-for-profit collaborative platform based in Delhi, fostering empathy, curiosity and cross-cultural dialogue by supporting emerging artists across South Asia. The Foundation's aim is to nurture artistic practice, promote research, and provide sustainability and education in the field of the arts. Over the past decade, Serendipity Arts has encouraged cultural heritage projects alongside contemporary art practices with extensive residencies, grants, collaborative projects, art writing initiatives and a multi-disciplinary arts festival.

## **Awards & Recognition**

Serendipity Arts and its leadership have garnered significant recognition for their contributions to culture and accessibility. Mr. Sunil Kant Munjal, Founder-Patron of Serendipity Arts, was conferred the Chevalier de l'Ordre national du Mérite by the French Government, in acknowledgment of his enduring commitment to arts and culture. As the visionary behind Serendipity Arts, he continues to build bridges between heritage and innovation, connecting India with the world. The Serendipity Arts Festival has received multiple accolades, including the Cultural Impact Award at the Business Goa Lifestyle Awards 2025 for its role in shaping Goa's evolving cultural and creative landscape. The festival was also honored as Best Cultural Festival at the 8th Annual LCD Berlin Awards, reaffirming its position as a leader in cultural placemaking globally. Additionally, Serendipity Arts received the Svayam Accessibility Award 2025 in the Accessible Tourism & Culture category, recognizing its sustained efforts to create a truly inclusive, barrier-free cultural space.

**The tenth edition of Serendipity Arts Festival is set to take place in Panjim, Goa, from 12th-21st December, 2025.**