

From Diasporas to Precincts: Uncover Shivaji Park's Urban Legacy with Avid Learning's New Series

From the colonial-era charm of the Fort neighbourhood to the vibrant streets of Bandra, Bombay's cultural precincts are not just geographical locations but living, breathing entities that embody the city's rich heritage, diversity, and creativity, reflecting the multiple influences that have shaped its identity over the centuries.

Originally called Mahim Park when it opened in 1925, the Mumbai icon was renamed Shivaji Park in 1927 to commemorate the 300th birth anniversary of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. Shivaji Park has since been a venue for significant political and social gatherings before and after India's independence. From tree-lined walkways to Art Deco architecture, what stands out most is the openness and accessibility of this public space. The park remains open to all citizens around the clock, fostering a democratic environment and inclusivity. Shivaji Park's multifaceted contributions extend far beyond a recreational space and a breeding ground for cricket talent. It has served as a vibrant hub fostering artistic and cultural expressions.

Avid Learning in collaboration with **Goethe-Institut/Max Mueller Bhavan, Mumbai, Kala Ghoda Association, Walkitecture, JOJO Library & Bookshop, and X & Zero** is proud to present **Uncovering Urban Legacies: Stories of Bombay's Precincts - Shivaji Park**. The engaging panel discussion with *Writer and Translator Shanta Gokhale, Visual Artist and Founder, Editions JOJO Kaamna Patel, and Chef-restaurateur and Co-owner, Home Chef Aditi Limaye Kamat* will explore the evolving history of this storied neighborhood. The conversation will be moderated by *Principal Architect, Nikhil Mahashur & Associates and Founder, Walkitecture Nikhil Mahashur*.

This inaugural episode marks the commencement of the next installment of **Avid Learning's** highly acclaimed programming series '**Uncovering Urban Legacies**.' After an in-depth exploration of Jewish, Iranian, Portuguese, Chinese, Armenian, Sindhi, Parsi, and Koil diasporas that shaped the trading port city of Bombay, we shift our focus to **precincts** – areas of heritage and cultural significance that have left an indelible mark on the city. This series will unravel the stories woven into the urban tapestries that have shaped the city's identity.

Each episode of this new series will spotlight one of Bombay's iconic precincts, exploring its historical significance, architectural splendor, diverse cultural expressions, and culinary landscape, showcasing Mumbai's (Bombay's) multicultural fabric and cosmopolitan character.

Join us on this immersive voyage through a vivid anthology of narratives peeling off the rich layers of Shivaji Park's enriching legacy.

Event Details:

When: Tuesday, 9th July 2024

6:00 pm - 6:30 pm Registration | 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm - Session

Where: Coomaraswamy Hall, CSMVS, Mumbai, 400001

Register: www.avidlearning.in

Press Email: Ayesha Dadachanji (ayeshah.avid@gmail.com)

About Speakers:

Shanta Gokhale is a bilingual writer, translator, theatre critic, playwright and film script writer based in Mumbai. The first two of her three Marathi novels have won Maharashtra State awards. Her books on theatre include “*Playwright at the Centre: Marathi Drama From 1943 to the Present*”, “*Satyadev Dubey: A Fifty-year Journey Through Theatre*”, “*The Theatre of Veenapani Chawla*” and “*The Scenes we Made: An Oral History of Experimental Theatre in Mumbai*”. Her memoir, *One Foot on the Ground* won the Crossword jury prize for non-fiction. Her other non-fiction book is *Shivaji Park, Dadar 28: History, Places, People*.

Shanta Gokhale has won the Sangeet Natak Akademi award for contribution to the performing arts and the Sahitya Akademi award for her translation of Laxmibai Tilak’s “*Smritichitre*” into English. She has received lifetime achievement awards from the Ooty Literary Festival, Thespo, Maharashtra Foundation, Tata Literature Live and the International Theatre Festival of Kerala.

Kaamna Patel is a visual artist and book maker currently based in Mumbai, her home city. She launched her publishing imprint Editions JOJO with her book ‘In Today’s News: Alpha Males Women Power’ in May 2019 in Mumbai which has since evolved into an artist-led platform for contemporary visual culture, at the centre of which is one of the largest, publicly accessible photobook libraries in the region. As a publishing imprint, Editions JOJO is dedicated to exploring new perspectives, process and playfulness through images and the book object.

Aditi began her career with the Oberoi Hotel in Mumbai. With partners Niketa and Jeetendra, she co-owned and operated several brands: ‘Home Chef’ - an all-day diner, ‘The Cake Studio’ - a bespoke bakery, ‘Open House’ - a neighborhood-friendly pub and Mumbai’s first girl-owned bar, ‘Quarter House’ - a modern Indian kitchen and bar, and ‘Sizzler House’ - a dine-in restaurant. With the lockdown being tough on the hospitality sector, she had to shut the bars due to heavy rents, but continues to run her first baby Home Chef.

Over the last 16 years, Aditi has evolved from chef to chef-restaurateur, showcasing her skills on the cookery show Mehwani for three years, serving as guest chief editor for the Kalnirnay Swadisht Calendar, and writing recipes for Saamna and Loksatta. She’s also the Chef Editor for the Kalnirnay English edition for 2024, sharing her special recipes each month.

Nikhil Mahashur's strong passion for hospitality and commercial architecture is blended with a broad experience in PMC. He believes in creating a space not only for the person who commissions it but for the people who are going to use the space – each project is a celebration of that space and its intimacy. He describes his architectural style as Eclitecture - designing cotemporary buildings and layering them with traditional elements. He firmly believes that the first impression is the one that will make you fall in love with the building. Helmed by Nikhil Mahashur, Nikhil Mahashur & Associates (NMA) is accustomed to delivering exemplary projects across Architecture, Renovation, Interiors and PMC. NMA's design philosophy is therefore entrenched in creating the right first impression and a WOW factor through simplicity, where even a little chaos can be simple.