<u>To mark the occasion of International Museum Day 2019, Avid Learning presents its next Multipolis Mumbai panel discussion that examines some of Mumbai's unique and unconventional museums</u>

For Immediate Release

Mumbai's museums truly are a representation of the city's cultural dynamism and repositories it's colourful past and rich heritage.

In modern times, the role of museums has evolved significantly. It's primary goal of serving researchers is increasingly shifting to serving the general public and also supporting the development of communities. Today, museums are envisioned as a community space where one can see and engage with their identity in the context of cultural continuity. Doubling as educational hubs, museums play a pivotal role in the promotion and understanding of cultures. With recent advancements in the field of technology and a growing shift in the mentality of museum goers, cultural institutions are facing the future in new and innovative ways by addressing the challenge of preserving heritage, while retaining relevance and growing attendances. These combining factors have led to the creation and popularization of alternative museums that are redefining the concept, structure and function of these age-old cultural institutions.

The description of the discussion is as below:

In honour of **International Museum Day 2019**, **National Gallery of Modern Art, Mumbai, Ministry of Culture, Government of India** and **Avid Learning** present **Multipolis Mumbai: Museums and the City,** a panel discussion that examines some of the unique, unconventional and lesser-known cultural institutions that form an integral part of Mumbai's evolving cultural landscape.

Creative Co-ordinator, Dharavi Design Museum on Wheels **Kruti Saraiya,** *Object Theatre Artist, Artistic Director Tram Arts Trust, Co-founder Museum of Ordinary Objects (in India)* **Choiti Ghosh** and *Director, Archaeology and Museums, Government of Maharashtra* **Dr. Tejas Garge** will be in conversation with *Museum Consultant and Oral Historian* **Avehi Menon.**

The larger theme for International Museum Day 2019 examines the new roles of museums as active participants in their communities. The theme this year will focus on Museums as Cultural Hubs: The Future Of Tradition. Once static institutions, museums are reinventing themselves to become platforms where visitors can co-create, share and interact. They are also finding new ways to honour their collections, histories and legacies, creating traditions that will have new meanings for future generations.

The early museums were elitist, uninspiring and aloof as they encouraged only the educated people to visit them, while the general public was excluded. These experts will discuss how the role and function of museums and ancillary cultural institutions has evolved in a changing world where there is sustained clamour for more openness, pragmatism and collective involvement in dealing with issues that impact on people, communities, cultures and nations. How have changing mentalities impacted the museum industry as a whole and affected how we manage our cultural institutions? How are museums expanding their curatorial vision to reach out to wider audiences and making their collections more accessible to the general public? How are cultural institutions in the city restructuring in attempt to democratize their collections and services for diverse audiences? This panel will elucidate on how their initiatives are serving as alternative models of cultural institutions and talk about the creation of new types and forms of museums such as mobile or digital museums.

The panel will examine how museums are evolving from existing solely as repositories of culture into active creative centres which are focused on the development of communities. How are they using their unique collections and services to address social issues in Mumbai? How are they striving to be places where all sections of the community can have a voice and be reflected through collections and displays. Through volunteering programmes, internships, apprenticeships and work placements, how are these cultural institutions opening up employment opportunities and proving to be a valuable resource for the development of basic and specialist job skills? These panellists will also discuss how museums are functioning as alternative institutions of learning, through the various educational courses and programmes that they offer. They will also evaluate the future trajectories of Mumbai's cultural institutions and will discuss possible solutions with respect to their development.

This talk will be part of AVID's **Multipolis Mumbai Series** that decodes the past while looking to the future and finding novel ways of engaging, interacting with and reenergizing the city that we love! The original nine-part series, which began in 2012, examined how Architecture, Music, Food, Theatre, Fashion, Environment, Literature, Innovation, and Film influenced and were influenced by the city. Our second iteration of this series, which began in 2017 attempts to renegotiate larger perspectives on the city, dig deeper and capture its essence and changing rhythms and nuances. In this second round we seek to plumb new depths and unearth more fascinating nuggets about our ever-surprising Mumbai! On our journey, we have explored how entities like businesses and brands, architects, historians and designers, artists and poets, women writers and female theatre stalwarts have influenced our city. We have also explored how art technology and gaming, wildlife activism, philanthropy and maritime culture and emergent urban subcultures have played a role in enriching Mumbai's cultural fabric. We've also held workshops that looked more closely at iconic Mumbai architecture (namely Art Deco, Indo-Saracenic and Victorian Gothic).

Join us for an absorbing discussion that will take a closer look at the innovative and unusual alternative museums of Mumbai in celebration of International Museum Day 2019!

WHERE: The National Gallery of Modern Art, Sir Cowasji Jahangir Public Hall, M. G. Road, Fort, Mumbai, 400032
WHEN: Friday, 17th May 2019 | 6:00 PM – 6:30 PM - Registrations | 6:30 PM – 8:00 PM – Discussion
RSVP: www.avidlearning.in/
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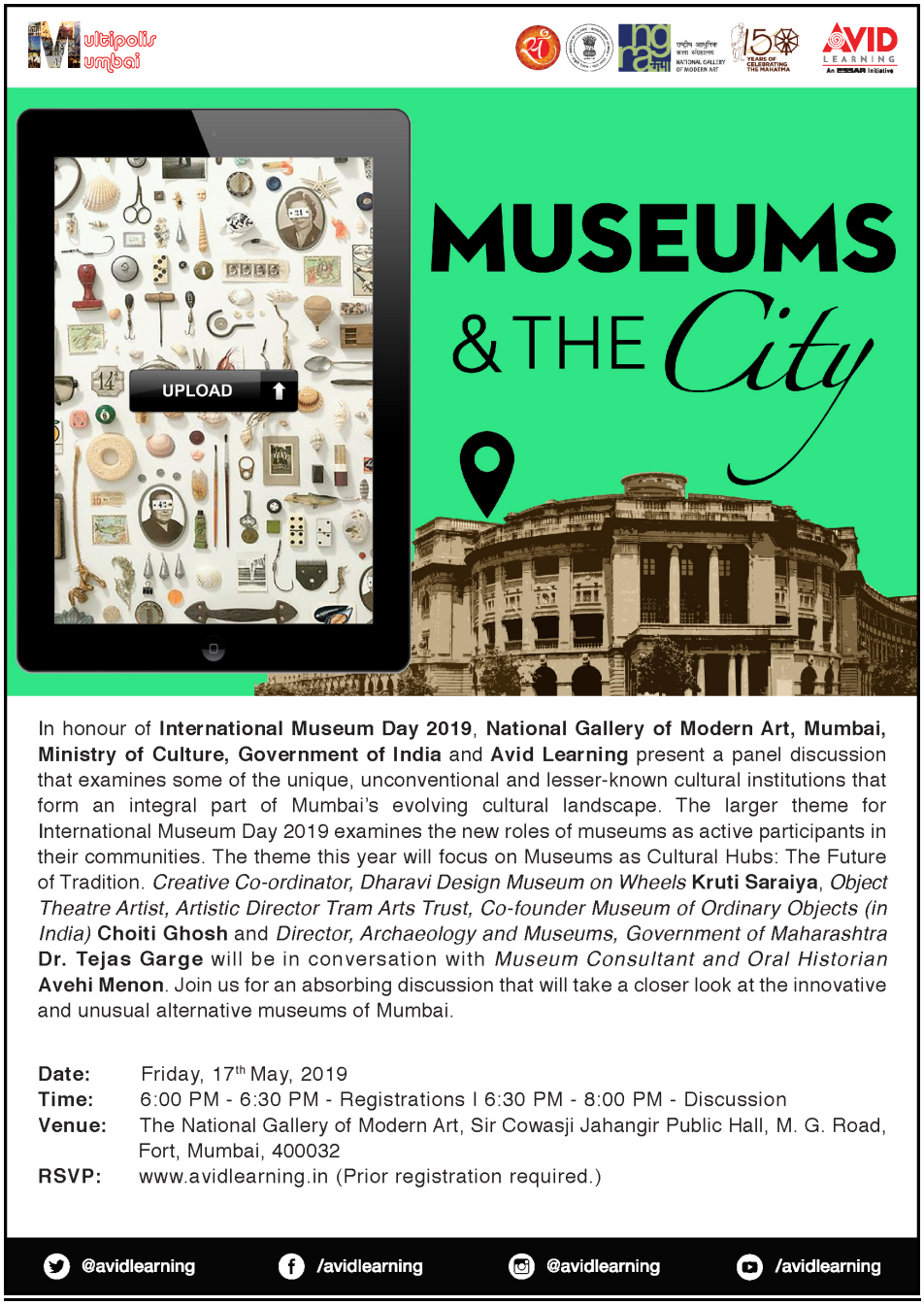

About the Speakers

Kruti Saraiya is a graphic designer/ typographer based in Mumbai. The focus of her practice has been to allow for a contemporary Indian design narrative to emerge to fill the gap between mtv kitsch and traditional Indian crafts. As a typographer, she sees her role in infusing context into letters and bringing the written word alive. Her strengths lie in working with scripts of Indian languages to create an equal space for them alongside English in urban India. Her commercial and experimental work celebrates the Indian aesthetic in a fusion of east and west. 'The key', she says, 'is to change our mindset from an either-or to an AND.' Besides this her portfolio includes branding, packaging, editorial web and app design across verticals. Her client list includes Westland Publishing, Sula Wines, Rujuta Diwekar, Melange, Shiro, Hard Rock Café etc. She has been a speaker at the Indian Design Forum – IDF 2013 in Mumbai, the Behance Portfolio Review in Surat, a conference exploring 'Design as a Global agent for social development' in Amsterdam, the #Redefine conference by CII IWN MP in Bhopal and a

panelist at the ‘Smart Cities, Art Cities’ summit in Mumbai. She has conducted several Typography workshops – ‘What’s Your Type’ at Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Museum and Type Talk at Design Day, to list a few. She was also a part of the core team to set up Design Museum Dharavi (2016) as the creative co-ordinator. Her work has also been published in International design magazines like Creative Review (UK) & Visible Language (USA) and on the online magazine – Desi Creative. She has also been interviewed for a podcast on Audiogyan about ‘Language and Typography’. She has exhibited in a group show ‘Pushpa Patha: The Flower Trail’ in gallery BMB, Mumbai. She graduated from the London School of Printing. She has worked with Rabia Gupta Designs, Mumbai and taught at Srishti School of Art, Design and Technology, Indian School of Design and Innovation (ISDI) and Ecole Intuit for several years. She currently has an independent design practice, works on projects for social change and conducts typography talks and workshops.

Choiti Ghosh is an Object Theatre practitioner, actor, puppeteer, singer, writer and the artistic director of Tram Arts Trust. Born into a family of theatre-wallahs, she was initiated early onto the stage. In 1998 she started her career as a theatre professional in children’s theatre, as a performer, facilitator and manager. She worked in alternative education with the well-known educationist Prof. A.K. Jalaluddin; besides performing with various theatre companies including Habib Tanvir’s Naya Theatre, Ashish Ghosh’s ANANT, Sunil Shanbag’s Arpana and various others. In 2004, Choiti was initiated into puppetry by Anurupa Roy's Katkatha Puppet Arts Trust and in 2010 into Object Theatre under the Belgian Object Theatre artiste Agnes Limbos at the Institut International de la Marionnette in Charleville Mezieres, France when she found herself hooked! Tram started the following year. Choiti has been an artist & researcher-in-residence at the Deutsches Forum fur Figurentheatre und Puppenspeilkunst at Bochum, Germany & at the Institut International de la Marionnette, Charleville Mezieres. She was the recipient of the Sahitya Rangabhoomi Vinod Doshi Fellowship in 2011 and the Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar, Sangeet Nataka Akademi for puppetry in 2015.

Dr. Tejas Garge, the present Director of the Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, Government of Maharashtra is working in the field of Archaeology and Heritage Management for past two decades. Specializing in Harappan Civilisation and Firearms, his other areas of interest are Museum and Exhibitions, Indian Art and Architecture Forts and Fortifications, Marine Archaeology, Heritage Management and Legislation. Dr. Garge completed his PhD from the Deccan College, Pune and PG diploma in Field Archaeology from Institute of Archaeology, New Delhi. He worked as Research Associate in Indian Archaeological Society, then in ASI as an Assistant Archaeologist from2003 and signed off as a Deputy Superintending Archaeologist in April 2017 in various parts of the country. He directed excavation at Koloshi, and participated many excavations of national importance. He was deputed to China as Curatorial Associate for International Exhibition - ‘Treasures of Ancient India’ and to Paul Getty Museum, LA, USA for an International Workshop on Buddhism. Dr. Garge has presented papers in various seminars and delivered talks. He is associated with various Universities as a resource person and visiting faculty. He is member of several academic Societies, the Governor of MMR Heritage Society and Trustee at CSMVS, Mumbai. He has authored 2 books, 7 joint monographs, 31 research papers and popular write-ups in newspapers as well as magazines in English and Marathi.

Avehi Menon is an Oral Historian and Museologist. Previously she was Curator at the Centre for Public History, Srishti School of Art, Design and Technology, Bengaluru where she created oral history archives for institutions such as the Indian Institute of Mathematical Science, the Economic and Political Weekly and the Indian Museum. She led public history projects including historical walks in Bengaluru that aim to make local history and culture participatory and accessible. Avehi contributed as a writer on an archival book, The Story of Sasha on a pioneering craft organization in Kolkata. She was vice president of the International Oral History Association from 2014 to 2016. A Chevening scholar, Avehi received a Masters in Museum Studies from the University of Leicester with a stint at the Birmingham Museum and

Art Gallery. Avehi worked for ten years as a television producer, developing content for NDTV, Star Plus and others.

About Partners

The National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA) Mumbai, Ministry of Culture, Government of India is a repository of the cultural ethos of the country and showcases the changing art forms through the passage of the last 160 years starting from about 1857 in the field of Visual and Plastic arts. The first NGMA was opened in New Delhi at the historic Jaipur House, in the presence of Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and artists and art lovers on March 29, 1954. The National Gallery of Modern Art, Mumbai was opened to the public in 1996. It hosts various exhibitions and also has its own art collections comprising paintings, sculptures and graphics with a focus on Indian and International artists. It is located in the precinct of the former auditorium the Sir Cowasji Jehangir Public Hall and the Institute of Science. This architecturally marvellous building was designed and built by the famous British architect George Wittet which has been completely redesigned keeping only the facade edifice that was Public Hall. It has hosted eminent artists like, K.H. Ara, F. N. Souza, Gaitonde, S.H. Raza and M.F. Hussain and contemporary artists like, K.G. Subramanyam, Sudhir Patwardhan, Nalini Malini, Atul Dodiya and Sudarshan Shetty. The NGMA in Mumbai is run and administered as a subordinate office to the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, which has two branches one at Mumbai and the other at Bengaluru.

Avid Learning, a public programming platform and cultural arm of the Essar Group, has conducted over 1000 programs and connected with more than 125,000 individuals since its inception in 2009. Driven by the belief that Learning Never Stops, AVID's multiple formats like Workshops, Panel Discussions, Gallery Walkthroughs, and Festival Platforms create a dynamic and interactive atmosphere that stimulates intellectual and creative growth across the fields of Culture & Heritage, Literature, Art and Innovation.
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