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THIS STORY IS FROM FEBRUARY 5, 2012

Corruption is 'crafty' at the cultural mela

Snigdha Rajgarhia / TNN / Updated: Feb 5, 2012, 06:20 IST

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One of Mumbai's biggest [cultural melas](#) opened to a whole-hearted welcome from enthusiastic [visitors](#), who savoured everything from the cultural performances and food to the installations and [handicrafts stalls](#). Judging from the responses, the [Times of India Kala Ghoda Arts Festival](#) was a hit—as, indeed, it always is.

The performances on Day One included the rumbunctious and spicy [Marathi folk dance](#) form of 'lavani' as well as a sparkling performance by Chinese artists from the Peking Opera.

Quick to catch the attention of the crowds was an impressionist or behrupiya from Rajasthan dressed as Krur Singh, the admirer of Chandrakanta. Naushad 'Behrupiya' Khan will impersonate nine different characters during the course of the festival. "We are the original entertainers, Bollywood is just a new trend," said the eighth generation performer. "I am happy to interact with people and educate them about the dying art of impressionism."

Among the most popular attractions were the installations highlighting various social issues. Through his exhibit titled 'Under The Table', visualiser Vikram Arora attempted to highlight the corruption plaguing every sarkari daftar.

Another exhibit by Meghna Loke brought out the oneness of God—her belief in this reflected in her artwork consisting of colourful balloons printed with different religious symbols. "People can take a balloon, inflate it, add it to the display or take it with them," she said. "This will spread the message of the unity."

A few steps away was a novel installation put up by NGO CRY. A chandelier made from spoons, it sought to bring out the message 'Fight Undernourishment Little by Little'. The gigantic crow, standing tall at the entrance to the fest, was also a symbol, albeit a little arcane — artist Sumeet Patil said it symbolised the problems of Mumbai that its denizens wanted salvation from.

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The Times of India Kala Ghoda Arts Festival gets ready to trot into town again with a will to extend its geographical scope, present Mumbai's culture scene through a glocal lens and pay homage to the fresh as well as antiquated.

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Mahafreed Irani & Shreya Bhandary / TNN / Updated: Feb 13, 2012, 01:45 IST

