**Art Beyond Barriers: Accessibility Programming at Serendipity Arts Festival 2025**

This December, the riverfront city of **Panjim, Goa** will pulse with sound, light, and creativity as **Serendipity Arts Festival (12–21 December 2025) celebrates its 10th milestone edition**—a decade of bringing together the finest in visual arts, theatre, dance, music, craft, design, photography, and culinary innovation. Over ten days and across more than 300,000 square feet of heritage spaces, the festival will present a rich tapestry from across India and beyond, creating a vivid portrait of contemporary South Asian culture across festival venues like **The Old GMC Complex, Art Park, Directorate of Accounts, Kala Academy**, and beyond. Kala Academy opens into distinct spaces—**The Foundry, The Quad, and Dinanath Mangeshkar Kala Mandir**—while The Old GMC Complex unfolds through **The Theatre, Access Village, the Old GMC Building, the Food Lab, and the Talks Corner**.

**A Journey Across Cities: Ten Years of Serendipity**

Marking its tenth anniversary, Serendipity Arts Festival has taken to the road—embracing a nomadic spirit that carries its celebration across cities and cultures. The journey began in **Birmingham** with Birmingham City University to present poetry readings, performances, and exhibitions at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire & Symphony Hall—bringing together creative communities across borders. In **Ahmedabad**, we collaborated with India Art Fair during Ahmedabad Cultural Week, celebrating the city's vibrant artistic energy. **Delhi** welcomed Shaam-e-Ghazal against the striking backdrop of Safdarjung Tomb, an evening of ghazals with Sabhyata Foundation that honoured a decade of cultural celebration. In **Varanasi**, River Raag travelled from Goa's shores to the banks of the Ganges, hosted at the historic BrijRama Palace—extending the festival's reach to one of India's most sacred cities.

**Chennai** hosted an exclusive evening celebrating art, philanthropy, and community. The event brought together leaders from business, culture, and the arts for a discussion. The evening concluded with a powerful performance by Uru Paanar**.** In **Gurugram**, with B-Side Sessions the Festival stepped into an alternate soundscape that reimagined what electronic music can be: fluid, experimental, and rooted in South Asia's evolving sonic landscape. With **Dubai**, the Festival steps into a region that has long served as a cultural crossroads, where contemporary art, heritage, and global ideas coexist in one dynamic ecosystem.

The road ahead leads to **Paris** and eventually converges in **Goa**, where the festival will present its largest edition yet—a homecoming of sorts after months of wandering. This multi-city approach reflects Serendipity Arts' core belief: culture thrives in movement, artistic exchange flourishes through travel, and transformation happens when we step beyond familiar boundaries to meet on new ground.

**A Decade of Inclusive Arts Experience: Accessibility Reimagined**

From its very first edition, Serendipity Arts Festival has placed accessibility at the centre of its vision, embarking on the journey of becoming one of the first festivals in the region to consciously design its programmes and spaces to be open to all, ensuring that art could be experienced in multiple ways: seen, touched, heard, and felt. Over ten years, accessibility has grown from being a guiding principle into a curatorial discipline in its own right.

In this milestone edition, under the curation of **Salil Chaturvedi**, accessibility is celebrated not as an add-on, but as a core value that continues to shape the festival’s identity.

Among the sensorial immersive project highlights at the Access Village in Old GMC Complex, is ***Scented Stories: An Artisanal Fragrance Workshop***. Blending the timeless charm of *The Jungle Book* with the rich sensory experience of perfume creation to celebrate the power of smell and storytelling, designed with sensitivity for audiences with diverse needs. In ***Hand/Eye*** the hand becomes an organ of vision, translating the haptic into the visible, and revealing how knowing has layers of contact, pressure, and material encounter. In another project designed to calm the nervous system and deepen awareness, ***Breath + Sound Immersion***, the participants are taken on a meditative journey that merges the science of breathwork with the art of sound healing.

At the venue, the curator also experiments with designing space-oriented programming such as— ***Studio Me*** *and* ***Sensory Room***. In Studio Me, art becomes an open and welcoming space where anyone can explore creativity beyond rules and intimidation in order to soothe their senses and be present in the moment, underscoring the belief that belongs to everyone. Whereas, offering multi-sensory experiences to support unique sensory needs, ***Sensory Room*** serves as a calming environment where both neurodiverse and neurotypical individuals—whether attendees or artists—can relax and recharge through a range of objects and olfactory items. This room is intentionally designed to stimulate all the senses in a safe, non-demanding way.

Conceptualized and conducted by **Tanul Vikamshi,** Access Village will also provide a space for a workshop that celebrates creativity, recycling, and community spirit—showing how art can give new life to what’s often thrown away. ***Paper to Sculpture*** will invite participants to make a small individual sculpture and then join it with others to form a large collective piece—a growing artwork that symbolizes sustainability, teamwork, and the power of imagination.

Bird watching also finds a place in this vision through **Nature’s Symphony: A Bird Watching Adventure** which is organised at the Art Park and moves to the Access Village later. Open to blind audiences, these sessions aim to showcase the avian diversity that one can experience even in an urbanised location such as Panjim. Accessibility here is not an afterthought but an essential bridge, allowing bird watching to be experienced anew.

The Gallery at the Access Village exhibits **Therefore I Am**, taking inclusivity further by showcasing a confluence of seven artists whose lived truths of disability shape and enrich their creative practices. Built collaboratively through nominations by festival curators and partners, it embodies the interdisciplinary ethos of Serendipity.

Performance, too, finds unique interpretations. Especially curated for deaf people, **Silent Rhythms**, led by India's first group of deaf performers with **Dr. Alim Chandani**, demonstrates ISL Poems and Visual Vernacular (VV), called ISL Jam highlighting the unique and vibrant aspects of Visual Vernacular, marking a significant milestone in its promotion and appreciation in the Indian context. In a more urban intervention, carrying verses across Panjim through Festival’s free shuttle service and embedding poetry into daily life, **Poems on the Move 2.0**, curated by **Thukral & Tagra** with **Salil Chaturvedi**, turns everyday cab rides into moments of wonder, where live recitations blur the boundaries between routine and reverie, solitude and connection.

The workshops at The Lab in the Access Village become the highlight of the festival as it brings children and adults with diverse needs together for a heartfelt experience. Facilitated by **Siddhant Shah, Access for All & Rohan Marathe, *Dear Normal: Letters We’ll Never Send*** helps uncover emotions of internalized ableism, frustration, resilience, and hope as participants craft or record poetic letters to abstract ideas such as “normalcy,” “invisibility,” or “the stairs” through guided prompts; and ***Sound of Silence- Listening Circles of Aging Bodies***, designed for seniors and caregivers, will offer a guided slow-listening and sound-art experience where participants will engage with sound, colour, and form to explore disability and aging as states of deep presence, mindfulness, and creativity.

Open to neurodiverse individuals, workshops for children facilitated by **Shivani Dhillon** also finds way into the Lab with projects such as ***Sensory Storytelling with Smell and Taste*** and ***Panchtantra Stories*** where children in former travel through a forest, a busy market, and a picnic meadow—each setting coming alive through smell and taste in unique story experience; while latter offers a space for them to intervene and decide narrative during the critical moments in story—through puppets, sounds, and choices, children learn how wit and presence of mind can overcome challenges.

As a part of the special projects, ***Cinema for Every Sense: Audio-Described Hindi Film Screenings,*** especially designed for blind individuals in collaboration with Saksham Trust and TOC Combine Pvt Ltd, opens the world of Hindi cinema — both classic and contemporary — celebrating the diversity and depth of Hindi filmmaking, from beloved classics that shaped Indian cinematic history to powerful new voices redefining storytelling today. While ***Pilates Flow Performance***transforms movement into art, awakening strength, balance, and presence through fluid sequences set to music and gentle ambient lighting. Guided by **Kaizen Wellness**’ team of expert instructors, this session invites participants to begin their day in alignment– grounded, energised, and ready to experience the festival in full flow.

**An Evolving Vision**

Together, these projects reflect SAF’s unwavering commitment to accessibility not as accommodation, but as necessary innovation. By integrating Braille, tactile maquettes, audio description, workshops, and interactive encounters, the festival continues to redefine what it means to make art truly available to all.

As **Mr. Sunil Kant Munjal,** Founder and Patron of Serendipity Arts, reflects:

*“Culture must belong to everyone. This is a canon that Serendipity Arts has endorsed from the outset. We have consistently tried to create a festival where no one feels left out. Serendipity Arts has worked across multiple levels to share the experiential aspects of the arts and make them accessible, regardless of background or circumstance. Accessibility, for us, is about dignity and participation, where every visitor who enters our portals feels a sense of belonging. As we now complete ten years, this philosophy continues to define and shape our journey.”*

In addition, **Smriti Rajgarhia**, Director of Serendipity Arts, expresses:

*“Accessibility at Serendipity has always been a priority, long before it became a buzzword. We were the first festival in India to commit to making every aspect of our programming accessible, and that commitment has only deepened over the years. For us, accessibility is not just about inclusion, it is about transformation. It is about expanding the ways in which art can be experienced, ensuring that everyone, regardless of ability, can find themselves in its stories, rhythms, and spaces. In our tenth year, these projects reaffirm that accessibility is at the very heart of our mission.”*

Reflecting on the ten year journey of Serendipity Arts Festival, **Ms. Shefali Munjal**, Co-Founding Patron of Serendipity Arts, said:

*"Ten years ago, we began with a simple yet profound belief: that art has the power to transform lives, build bridges, and create a more empathetic world. Today, as we celebrate this milestone, I am filled with gratitude for the thousands of artists, curators, audiences, and partners who have joined us in this journey. Serendipity Arts has grown into more than a festival—it has become a movement that champions creativity as a vital force for social change. As we look to the future, our commitment remains unwavering: to nurture artistic voices, honor cultural heritage, and create meaningful spaces where art and humanity converge. Here's to a decade of serendipity, and to many more years of celebrating the transformative power of the arts."*

## **Join the Celebration**

Accessibility has been central to Serendipity’s mission since the very beginning, and in our tenth edition, it shines brighter than ever. This year’s programme is deepening our pioneering commitment to inclusion and ensuring that the arts remain open, innovative, and truly for everyone.

**Join us in Panaji, Goa, from 12–21 December 2025, to celebrate the 10th edition of Serendipity Arts Festival.**

**Registrations Are Now Open!**

Registrations for Serendipity Arts Festival 2025 are now live! Visit the official festival website to secure your Art Pass, book your tickets, and stay updated on workshops, performances, exhibitions, and more. More programmes will be announced soon so keep checking back for updates.

**Link:** <https://www.serendipityartsfestival.com/register>

**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.**