



CHENNAI

A public art initiative to highlight the history of T. Nagar and Chennai's heritage



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Six artists have set out to create paintings depicting various facets of the heritage of Chennai and members of 'Madras Inherited' are promoting heritage education

A small group of artists were seated on the pavement of the pedestrian plaza in T. Nagar, and painting on canvases laid out in front of them. While some of them stopped to look at the art in progress, members of 'Madras Inherited', an initiative which promotes heritage education and awareness struck up a conversation with them on the history of T. Nagar.

"Next year marks 100 years of T. Nagar which is probably the first planned urban neighbourhood in the city. We can see from the planning style that it was conceived in a

European way. Panagal Park is like the Arc De Triomphe and the Pondy Bazaar road is similar to Champs-Élysées in Paris,” said Anirudh Venkat, a research assistant with Madras Inherited.

On Saturday, six artists set out to create paintings depicting various facets of the heritage of Chennai. “When pedestrians here stop to look at what we’re doing, we ask them if they would like to know about the history of T .Nagar and engage them in conversation. There’s a lot more to this area than it just being popular as a shoppers hub and as a part of this art initiative, we’re also encouraging the public to join us and paint if they wish to,” Anirudh added.

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The paintings included the façade of the Egmore museum theatre, Puratchi Thalaivar Dr. MGR Chennai Central railway station and even an artistic depiction of Periyar and Dravidar Kazhagam. S. Simran, a student of the MEASI Academy of Architecture said that she would be painting a view of the Chennai Port. “When you think heritage, you usually think of buildings. But our coast and the port have a rich history as well and are integral to the city’s identity,” she added.

While Madras Inherited has been conducting heritage walks in T. Nagar for a while now, the pedestrian plaza has now brought more attention to the area. “With a renewed interest in the area, we want to highlight the heritage here better. Even the way that the plaza has been designed -- the lights in particular are a throwback to the past,” said Shalini Ravikumar, Head of Operations, Madras Inherited.

The art created as a part of the initiative will be displayed at the British Council Library on Anna Salai.

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