



Children from an orphanage on their day out

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# ART OF THE MATTER

Public spaces that allow expression of art are on the rise, and metro stations in the city are testament to that

That art has a deep impact on the human psyche is a well-known fact, but sadly it's often not easily accessible to everyone. Chennai Metro Rail Limited (CMRL) recognised this issue and found a way to counter it by utilising the space inside the roomy metro stations as a platform to express art - in all its forms. It has been almost a year since CMRL threw its doors open for the artistic community of the city.

"The idea was to promote art in all its forms and make it accessible to the common man. In the last one year, we have had a variety of programmes conducted at different stations across the city. From food festivals and photo exhibitions to music concerts, commuters

have embraced the idea across categories," says a CMRL official. But art is not all that has been making most of this opportunity. "We have also had yoga sessions at eight stations, dental awareness camps at 10 stations and traditional games across all 26

stations. We have been getting great response so far and will continue to be accessible for such initiatives as long as it is in adherence with our rules," he adds. For the common man, being able to witness and be a part of such programmes during their

daily commute is a pleasant change, but for those whose work is on display, it goes beyond just a change from the monotonous. For an artist, it is an opportunity for their art to be showcased to a larger crowd. "As an artist, what I want more than anything is for

people to have access to my art. The same piece might speak differently to different people, which is why I want my piece to be seen by as many people possible. Most of us in the artistic community feel the same. But it's sad that even at non-ticketed venues, many people feel



Carnatic vocalists performing at Vadapalani metro

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**KAVYA S,**  
HR consultant

out of place, which is why I feel that this initiative is one that deserves tremendous applause," says Sanjeev V, an amateur sculptor. With the number of metro stations increasing every year, connectivity is constantly improving. Initiatives like these are just another step towards encouraging people to choose the metro for every day commute. "The first time I used the metro, it was during the Metro Music Festival that took place in January. I

found out that the festival was on for three days and ended up attending on all days just so that I could be a part of the festival. The travel in the metro was so comfortable that I actually started taking the metro everyday to work. Although it takes me a little longer than it would on my two-wheeler, the commute is really comfortable, especially during the sweltering Chennai summers," says Kavya S, an HR consultant.