Events

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# Indus Valley Dancing Girl: hallucinations of an artifact

A tiny bronze figurine from the Indus Valley gets to talk back through dance and artificial intelligence. “Hallucinations of an Artifact” runs Feb. 14 and 15 at SMS Hall in Fort Kochi.

This has finished · 14 February 2026 – 15 February 2026

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**Dates** **14 February 2026 – 15 February 2026**
**Part of** Kochi-Muziris Biennale 2025–26

## Where

SMS Hall
Event venue · Not recorded yet

Drawn from OpenStreetMap, by its contributors.

## You’ve just missed it — take it home anyway

The 2025–26 Biennale ended on 31 March 2026. The next is expected around December 2027. We made a book of all 72 exhibits, venue by venue, with the photographs — 76 pages, 9 MB.

She is barely 10 centimetres tall. One hand on her hip, the other draped with bangles. For centuries, we have called her the “Dancing Girl” — but what if she was a warrior? What if she was a goddess? What if she was just… herself?

“Hallucinations of an Artifact” takes this tiny bronze figurine from the Indus Valley civilization (c. 2300–1750 BCE) and does something radical: it lets

her talk back. Through dance and artificial intelligence, choreographer Mandeep Raikhy and performers Akanksha Kumari and Manju Sharma bring the Dancing Girl to life at the Kochi Biennale in Fort Kochi — not to settle the debate about who she is, but to blow it wide open.

The figurine has lived many lives already. Pakistan has claimed her as theirs, since she was excavated from Mohenjo-daro. India's Council of Historical Research rebranded her as the Hindu goddess Parvati. She has been turned into propaganda — labelled "Mother" at an art exhibition, dressed up in pink skin and new clothes as a mascot at the International Museum Expo.

Everyone wants to own her story. Nobody asks what she thinks.

That is the provocation at the heart of this work. art historian Naman Ahuja reminds us that every artifact is shaped by the eyes looking at it. The Dancing Girl is a mirror — she reflects whatever narrative we bring to her. This performance disrupts those neat, linear stories. Through moving bodies and AI, the figurine hallucinates new possibilities, refusing to be pinned down.

Akanksha Kumari and Manju Sharma — both accomplished performers with international experience — become vessels through which the artifact breathes, perspires, and transforms. Mandeep Raikhy, known for bold, boundary-pushing works like "Queen-size" (2016), brings his characteristic irreverence to this piece.

The result is a performance that asks uncomfortable questions about ownership, identity, and the stories we impose on the past.

Join them on Feb. 14 and 15 from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. at SMS Hall. Performance: "Hallucinations of an Artifact" by Akanksha Kumari, Manju Sharma, and Mandeep Raikhy. Come early to get tickets, which usually cost about 200 rupees.

Other things to do on Feb. 14 and 15, 2026, in Fort Kochi:

Dhriti: Kerala's First Mental Health Festival in Fort Kochi on Feb. 14

32 Things to Do in Fort Kochi — February 2026

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Fort Kochi