



Instapick

Flower power: On May 28, in Hong Kong, Christie's will auction Andy Warhol's rare masterpiece *Flowers* (1965) — the largest of his *Flowers* series at any Asian auction — estimated upwards of HK\$62,800,000. The artwork is one of 12 82-inch *Flowers* paintings that features impasto technique on silkscreen. @christiesasia



Talkingpoint

Telly tales: Last week, shows *Black Mirror*, *Silo* and *The Last of Us* were among the winners at the BAFTA TV Craft Awards. Now, *The Gold*, *Happy Valley*, *Slow Horses* and *Top Boy* are in the race for the best drama series at BAFTA TV awards to be hosted by Rob Beckett and Romesh Ranganathan on May 12. Guess who'll win?

Cyrus Broacha

Folks, my marriage has come to a standstill. Now, bear in mind, a standstill is very different from a standoff. A standstill is when people don't know what to do next. A standoff is a standstill, but you face the other way. I see you are asking lots of questions, I'll take them one at a time — "Give an example of a standstill"? Good question.

Imagine you are getting some work done in your house and in the middle of the work your contractor asks for cash. Now ever since your mother stood in line to return the cash on November 9, 2016, you don't have any left. But, the contractor doesn't care about your mother. In fact, he insists, he's never heard of your mother. Furthermore, he's never heard of the word demonetisation. When you use the Hindi translation, *vimudrikaran*, he assumes you are abusing him, and then starts hitting you with a cement bag that he wants you to pay for, in cash.

Okay, I'll take the second question, "Hey can you give me a shorter example, and be clear this time, please". Fair enough.

THE COLUMN THAT WASN'T

The mane point

Cyrus Broacha's wife doesn't want to be seen in public with him. Here's why

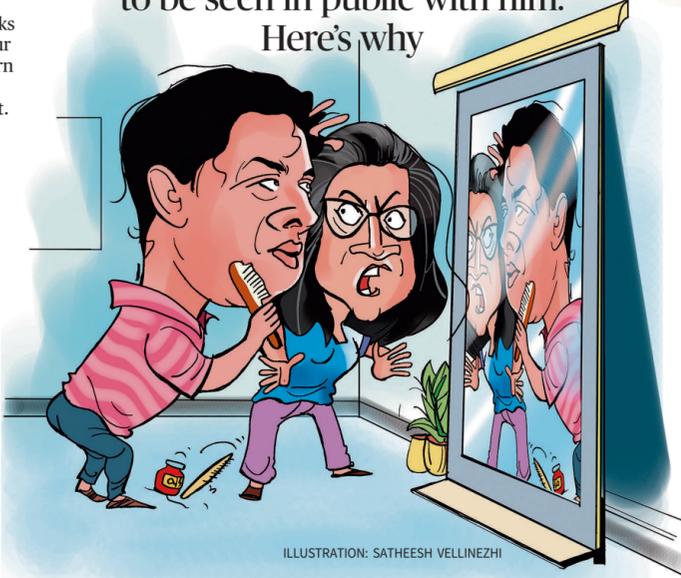


ILLUSTRATION: SATHEESH VELLINEZHI

You know when you are walking down the street, and a dog makes his business on the public road, in public view? At this point, you have nothing to clean the business with. Worse still, its not even your dog. In fact, you've never seen that dog before. This is a solid, (excuse the pun), instance of a standstill. Neighbours stare at you. You stare at neighbours, dog stares at the business, and then all concerned expect you to clean up. A complete standstill.

Now follow the rules here, and listen carefully, if you turn around and look the other way, your standstill evolves into a standoff. Sorry, I'll be taking no more questions. Now, let me get back to my marital situation. The wife says she can no longer accompany me in public. As in, she doesn't want to be seen with me in public. I found this very surprising as our very first meeting was in public.

My mother's contention was that it had to be my body odour. My daughter opined, it was her scant regard and respect for my monthly bath system. (People, Mumbai's water capacity is under 20% as I write this, am I the only self-sacrificing Mumbaikar, who has abandoned bathing

for the greater good?) To find out the truth behind this anti-social situation, I knew there was only one path to an honest answer. Only one way to get to the bottom of this. Only one way to unearth the naked, bare, absolute truth.

I turned to her Insta account. Sadly, all was revealed. First, there were 17 revealing pictures of me unveiled without my prior permission. For a 52-year-old male, mind you, revealing means top shots of your head. Let's call it God's eye view. However, that wasn't the cause of the standstill. Apparently, she was miffed at the colour of my hair. Wait, let me quote from Encyclopedia Britanninstaa. "Cyrus's hair has been coloured unnaturally black. It's the same colour as a pair of black formal shoes. It is so blatantly artificial that the staff can't stop laughing. One of them laughed so much that he called in sick, and he lives in the house itself! I can't be seen in public with a man who has the body of a 60-year old, and a scalp which looks like a raven that's fast asleep."

So, here we are at a standstill. Guess, I have no choice, but to face the other way.

The writer has dedicated his life to communism. Though only on weekends.

Pick of the week

Concerts, workshops, tours and everything else you need to plan your social calendar.

For events, contact us on weekend@thehindu.co.in



Sunset silhouette

H&M Studio's **Resort capsule** features dresses, ruched two-piece, maxi kaftan and shirt-short set. Its maximalist accessories, including jewellery made with recycled brass, will be available on hm.com from May 9. Meanwhile, Archana Jaju has upcycled leftover Kalamkari fabrics into appliqué patches, embroideries in her new collection **Raahi**. From ₹31,999 at archanajaju.com.



Asian palate

Craving Asian food? Head to **Skyloft at Feathers**, A Radha Hotel, Chennai, where dishes like sticky toffee chicken, kao teow Thai noodles and Hunan fish with chilli XO sauce are being served for dinner (a la carte) till May 31. Speaking of food, **Chennai Farmers Market** at Hanu Reddy Residencies, Poes Garden, will offer fresh produce and eco-friendly delights on Sunday. 4pm-9pm; entry's free.



Leather love

Wabi Sabi, Hidesign's latest collection, is crafted from non-printed, full-grain leather that undergoes vegetable tanning. Shop waist bags, utilitarian tote bags and briefcases, starting ₹3,795, on hidesign.com. From leather bags to footwear, the summer edit by **Brune & Bareskin** has leather sliders and flip-flops for men. Starting at ₹4,499, the collection is available on voganow.com.



Pitch perfect

India's legendary alternative rock band **Indus Creed**, originally formed in 1985 and regrouped in 2010, is all set to perform today, 9pm, in Fandom at Gilly's Redefined, Bengaluru. Have you booked your tickets starting at ₹499 on insider.in? In Chennai, contemporary classic band **Staccato** is getting the party started at Barracuda Brew, 7pm on May 11. Tickets start at ₹499 on insider.in.



Child's play

Give your kids (aged 7-16) a chance to learn the basics of golf this summer at The Indoor Golf Centre at **Golfer's Edge Chennai**. Register for new batches on May 14, June 4, 18 and July 2 and 16. Fee: ₹6,000; 10.30am-12.30pm/2pm-4pm on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Those interested in painting with their children, head to **Pink Lotus**, Chennai, on Sunday at 4pm. ₹499; insider.in.



Mom's the word

May 12 is Mother's Day and if you're planning to shower your mom with gifts, place orders now. For beauty-conscious moms, **Tinge Cosmetics** has curated four gift sets featuring wax lipsticks, soot mascaras and more. ₹1,299 upwards; tingestore.com. If you prefer something fancier, check out **Nebula** by Titan's timepieces in 18-carat gold embellished with precious stones. ₹50,000 upwards; titan.co.in.



Laughter therapy

Chennai is serving a generous dose of laughter today: There's comedian **Gautham Govindan**'s solo show at Offbeat Music Ventures, Chennai, at 5pm and 7pm. ₹349; in.bookmyshow.com. Also, at 7pm The ARTery will stage Navin Noronha's special — **Homewrecker!**, a coming (out) of age story of a queer Indian, and the homes he is about to wreck. ₹349; in.bookmyshow.com.

Mira Manek's latest book is on her love affair with tea sprinkled with fascinating family stories from across generations



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It was after writing her second book *Prajña: Ayurvedic Rituals for Happiness*, that UK-based author Mira Manek realised the value behind everyday rituals. An important one was brewing her daily cup of tea. "I have always had a love affair with chai, and more specifically with spices that are always a part of my brew, even before I started drinking tea itself," says Mira, whose latest book delves into her love for the beverage, and her family memories linked with it. *Book of Chai* (published by Hachette India) released on April 29 and comes with over 60 recipes peppered with anecdotes about



It's always tea-time

the history of tea, its health benefits, and Mira's personal stories revolving around the drink.

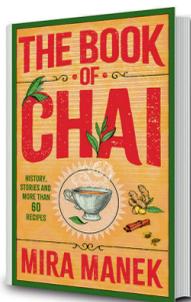
Mira explains how she grew up drinking ukaro, a drink with milk and spices brewed together, with sugar. "I never thought or

planned to make chai my business," she says, of Chai by Mira, her brand in the UK, wherein she also supplies to cafes and restaurants, "and definitely did not think I would write a book on chai. But, as with all that I've done in life, it

(Clockwise from far left) Mira Manek with her grandmother; cinnamon sweet potato with nut butter; and the book's cover. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

happened very organically. And in this book, I bring together my love not only for chai, but for India, spices, storytelling... those of my grandmother growing up in a village in Gujarat with her maternal grandmother (*nani*), while her own family and mother were in Mombasa, Kenya, and her memories of her *nani* making chai in the morning," says the author of *Saffron Soul*, a book on Indian vegetarian cuisine.

The book (that she started writing in 2022) takes readers through a brief history of tea, ingredients to brew the perfect cup, chai with spices, herbs; regional variations of the beverage; and a section of cooking with chai. The latter comprises dishes such as sweet miso chai porridge, saffron chia muesli, vanilla chai chia pots, among others. "What transpired when I started writing the book," says Mira, "was that the stories became the focus, and the history was equally important, which took many hours and days to research. I visited the archives at the Royal Botanical Gardens at



Kew in the UK a number of times to read through their incredible array of books."

The recipes, "cover many if not all of the regional recipes of chai throughout India, spice variations, tea with and without milk, tea made with salt and so many others, but I've also sprinkled in my own creations like a spiced melted hot chocolate," says Mira, who enjoys her tea with a home spice blend, freshly grated ginger, and sometimes additional cardamom and a little saffron.

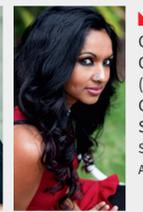
The *Book of Chai* is dedicated to Mira's grandmother. "There's a story of her eight-month pilgrimage back to India with my grandfather and their three young boys years later, of the one trunk they carried with them," she adds, "I also have stories of my own experiences of the Mahashivratri mela in Junagadh, and of serving chai at the foothills of Mount Kailas."

Considering the book is dedicated to tea, sections on coffee and short eats also make their way into the book. So, why not just focus on tea? Mira says the history of coffee in India, surprisingly, is older than that of tea, though the history of spices is the most ancient. "So, it's important to touch upon coffee being older than tea," she says, adding that the tea pairings with varied snacks from across the country could not be missed out. "From freshly fried pakora and chai in the monsoons to biscuits dunked in chai... the list is endless. I've also given my own take on recipes as well such as the masala chai cake, spiced overnight oats, and saffron biscuits."

The book is available on amazon.in

Eco-friendly echoes

With no musical instruments, here is a vocal tribute to Nature



Charlotte Qamaniq (left) and Ginger Shankar. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

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This Earth Day, Indian-American violinist Ginger Shankar and Inuit throat singer Charlotte Qamaniq from Nunavut, Canada, brought their diverse cultures closer with a song titled 'Ever So Lonely/Eyes/Ocean', that captures the essence of Nature. The song shares its moniker with 'Ever So Lonely', the debut single by British band Monsoon with Sheila Chandra on vocals. "When Ginger approached me to collaborate on this song, I was instantly drawn to it because in our culture we have deities that come from Nature, environment, land, ocean, and weather," says Charlotte.

"A huge part of both cultures is derived from Nature and due to rapid westernisation, traditions are buried and hidden," says Ginger. This song is an attempt at bringing forth what was lost.

With no other music instruments, the song was done with vocals. "We decided to go full acapella because we thought if its an ode to mother Nature, what's more powerful than using our voices," says Ginger.

'Ever So Lonely/Eyes/Ocean' by Ginger Shankar and Charlotte Qamaniq is available to stream on Spotify