

Announcing artists and collaborators, curatorial concept and venues for the ninth edition of Colomboscope *Rhythm Alliances* held 21- 31 January 2026.

The ninth edition of Colomboscope takes shape and form with the title ***Rhythm Alliances***, conceived and curated by guest curator **Hajra Haider Karrar** with artistic director **Natasha Ginwala** and the festival team.

Rhythm Alliances is an exercise of attunement to the varied dispositions of rhythm—energizing, contrasting, haunting, recurring, turbulent and imagined. Far more than a static exhibition, since experiencing rhythm-making is also an invitation for time travel, the acts in this edition assemble a communal score of creation, resistance and alliance-building. Involving over 50 artists and collectives, musicians, choreographers, filmmakers and cultural organizers, the festival programme will continue its pluriversal journey across freely accessible venues in Colombo.

Festival venues include Barefoot Gallery, Colpetty Townhouse, Kamatha at BMICH, Liberty by Scope Cinemas, Musicmatters, Radicle Gallery, Rio Complex, and Soul Studio. Colomboscope is grateful to all venue partners for this edition. Follow our website and social media platforms for the latest information.

This edition of Colomboscope draws on a range of vocabularies embodying rhythms of remembrance, dissent and renewal. From the noise of a global order where hyper consumption and war are rife, how may sonic counter-currents transmit the ingredients of struggles today, make paradoxical realities audible, echo in lifeways of migrant belonging, and resonate shared dreaming?

Inviting the frequencies and percussive knowledge from ritualistic drumming in Sri Lanka, Nyabingi 'groundations' in Rastafari tradition to broader Asian cosmologies and Pan-African notions of world-making through vibrations upon the drum head. Drumming signals rupture and freedom, as well as cosmic dramas of birth, clashes, and decline. The drum as a powerful communication tool was forbidden on the plantation, as Amiri Baraka reminds us when recounting histories of Black music. In multiple parts of Sri Lanka, healing rites, ceremonies, processions and exorcisms are performed through a primacy of drumming. The drum is thereby present as pulsating guardian and emissary, channeling complex beat structures and polyphonous environments, in use to ward off apparitions, devil spirits and to invoke divine forces and seasonal festivities.

Artistic director, Natasha Ginwala notes: "This edition of Colomboscope is likely to be our most heterogenous and versatile one so far with a groove that will be lasting. Constellations of artistic works gain momentum between the exhibition spaces, sonic vibrations, scores, and bodies in action. Dedicated to listening and choreographies of dissent, remembrance, and renewal, *Rhythm Alliances* endeavours to resound with sensory intelligence and reciprocity."

Berlin and Karachi based guest curator Hajra Haider Karrar reflects on the curatorial approach, “Reverberating across generations and geographies carried by the oceanic flows, the ninth edition is an invocation of rhythmic transmissions. The different formations of sonicity by the tongue, body, and its encounters experienced in the artistic provocations are initiations into the layered architectures of sound and resistance. Here, the voice, musicianship and aesthetics of the handmade converge in motion, crafting a language that liberates even as it remembers. Within these resonant gatherings, rhythm asserts its agency, a pulse that speaks, insists, and transforms.”

Over 50 artists will participate in Rhythm Alliances, the ninth edition of Colomboscope, with 35 newly commissioned projects.

Aboothahir Al Wajahath*, Arka Kinari, Atiyyah Khan*, Ayumi Paul*, Basir Mahmood*, Basma al Sharif, Chamindika Abeysinghe*, Charwei Tsai*, Chitrasena Dance Company and reVerb Collective*, Dinar Sultana*, Dinoj Mahendranathan*, Gayan Hemarathne*, Haseeb Ahmed*, Imaad Majeed*, Jegatheeswaran Keshavan*, Josefa Ntjam, Jovita Alvares*, Kaimurai*, Kavan Balasuriya*, KMRU*, Mahesha Kariyapperuma*, Mekh Limbu*, Moe Satt*, Mohammad Ali Talpur*, Naiza Khan*, Nina Mangalanayagam with Marie Louise Dilmaya Bergqvist and the Transnational Adoptee Choir: The Whale*, Perera Elsewhere, Pinaree Sanpitak, Raven Chacon, Saadia Mirza, Sabeen Omar*, Sarah Kazmi with Mariama Ndure and Nuwan Gunawardhana*, Seher Shah*, Stephen Champion, Tashyana Handy and Sakina Ali Akbar*, Tharmapalan Tilaxan*, Tissa de Alwis*, Vaimaila Urale*, Vivian Caccuri, Yara Asmar, and Zarina Muhammad*.

Featured collaborations at this edition include Bread Modular, CoCA Art, Dizzi Geetha, Farah Deen and collaborators*, Kahli, Mawongany, P. Ahilan, the *Reappropriation Riddims* project* (Asvajit Boyle, Divanke Sewmin, Mike de Silva, Nigel Perera, Sebastiampillai Vasanberk, Uvindu Perera and many more), Sumudi Suraweera and Susantha Rupathilaka with band*, Sunara, Thomas Burkhalter with Melodies in My Head, NooN by Nuwan Gunawardhana and band, Weather Reports* (Chloe Abrahams, Seth De Silva, Suren Seneviratne, Toulip Wonder, Ushara, Imaad Majeed, Mayun Kalu, SajasS, and more), among others. (as on 30 October 2025)

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