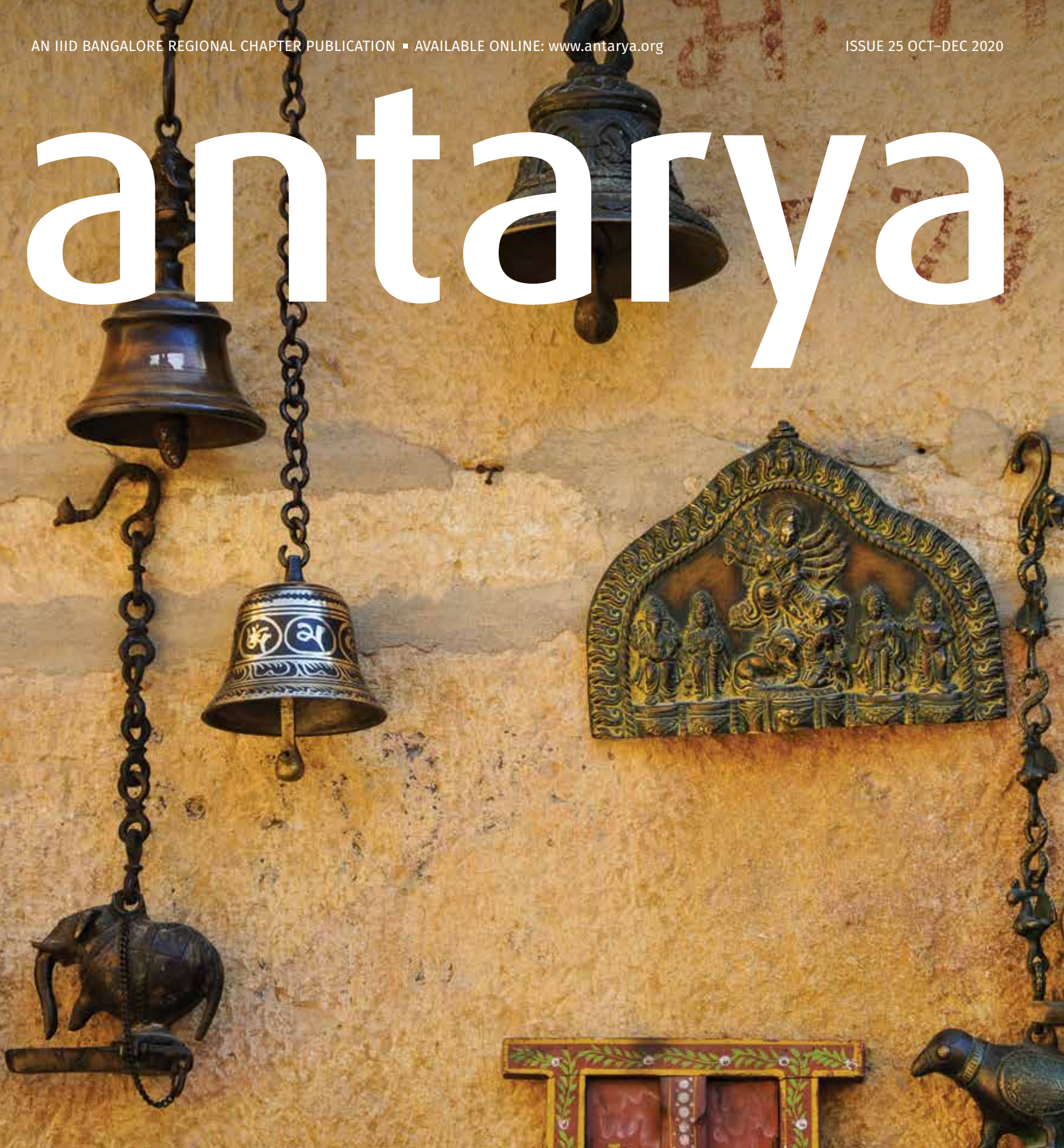


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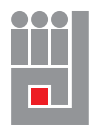
★ AN ODE TO INDIAN CRAFTS



ARTYFACTS
CRAFTED WITH SCRAP
FEATURING: ARTIST GOPAL NAMJOSHI



IIID BANGALORE REGIONAL CHAPTER



INSTITUTE
OF INDIAN
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Bangalore Regional Chapter

exterior

The Original flows harmoniously
with the environment.

K&A Early Years, Bangalore, Photographers: Anura Fanthome, Noughts and Crosses, LLP



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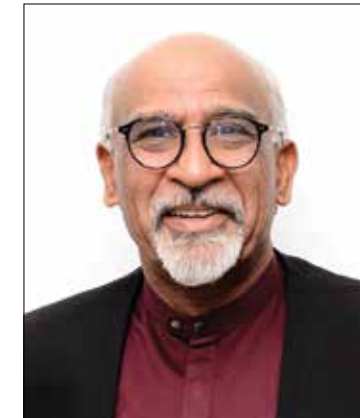
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people
who
create

From the Chairman and
Managing Editor's Desk



DINESH VERMA

Dear Members,

India's rich and diverse culture has produced some of the world's best crafts since time immemorial. Each region in our country has a proud heritage of craftsmanship, which has evolved through skills developed by artisans in local materials and processes.

Craftsmen of every culture showcase their talents and are very proud of the same; unfortunately industrialisation took over many such skills and overpowered these human talents.

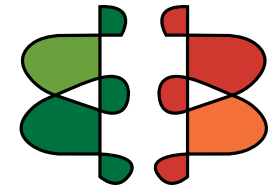
This issue of Antarya acknowledges such craft, which has lived through the ages and recognises that it has now become an integral part of various public and personal spaces. More and more architects and interior designers are working with artisans and incorporating craft into their projects.

The pandemic has not only provided opportunities for people to stay at home and bond with their families but has got us to be innovative and initiate programs which would be interesting and viewed from home. We had a bagful of successful programs showcasing architects and designers not only from India but also from the US and Sri Lanka.

We do look forward to your contributions in the form of articles and solicit your support to make Antarya reach greater heights.

Dinesh Verma

verma@acegrouparchitects.com

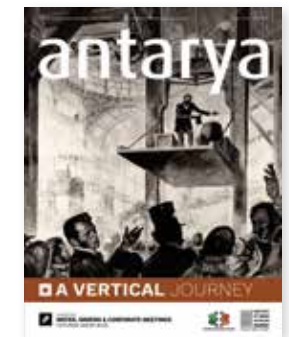


IIID BANGALORE REGIONAL CHAPTER

IIID Bangalore
Regional Chapter Emblem

The letter form B and its mirrored version together form this symbol. The idea is inspired by the forms of Rangoli. Bangalore as a city is a unique combination of the traditional and the contemporary. This coexistence of dual cultures is iconic of Bangalore as it is present in arts/ architecture and the general landscape of the city and its culture. Using Rangoli (Traditional) as the basis, we have created letter form B (Modern) and reflected this form to enclose the space in between (Interiors). The colour palette is also representative of the traditional and modern.

ISSUE 24 JAN-MAR 2020



REVIEW

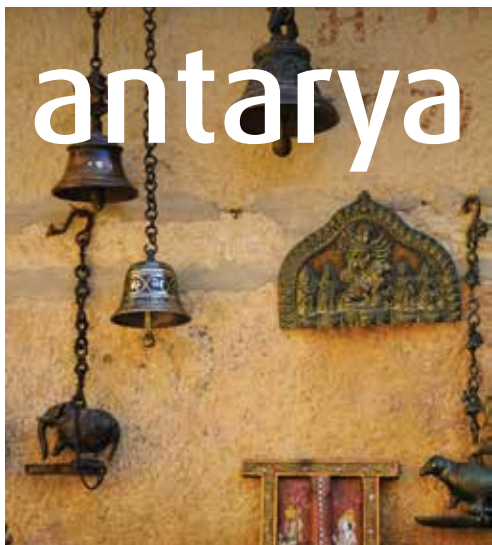
"Antarya, very beautifully brings in an array of distinguished architects' works distinctly highlighting each one's style and approach.

Captures design thinking and conversations effectively.

Documentation on conservation, social responsibility and culture are always complimented with great quality pictures.

Antarya stands out as a good compilation on Material - Creative Practice - Technology - Green Sense with authentic info and it's a must have journal on our coffee tables."

Ar. Prathima Seethur
Wright Inspires



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COVER IMAGE
Stark beauty of crafted metal against stone.
Photograph by: **Mahesh Chadaga**.

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VISHNU BHEDA



SAHIL AND SARTHAK



LEENA KUMAR

**INSTITUTE
OF INDIAN
INTERIOR
DESIGNERS**
Bangalore Regional Chapter



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Traditional figurine which leads the grand temple chariot (Pallaki) during festivals. Photograph by: Mahesh Chadaga.



"Unicorn". Mold of a seal from the Indus valley civilization, 2500-1500 BC. Approximately 3.5 cm x 3.5 cm. Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya, (ex Prince of Wales Museum) Mumbai, India. Source: [Wikicommons](#).

AN ODE TO INDIAN CRAFTS

BY NANDHINI SUNDAR

Arts and crafts are almost synonymous with India, the incredible craftsmanship of the Indian artisan grabbing undivided attention and admiration across the globe. The roots of origin of Indian arts and crafts go back to almost 5000 years, dating back to the Indus Valley Civilization. The rich tradition of crafts originated not only from functional needs of the related period but developed around religious and cultural practices as well as the diktats of the ruling clan. The crafts of India reveal across the board, a high degree of skill and technical excellence which has been open to incorporate evolving new ideas, themes, practices, techniques. The mediums used by the expert craftsmen are equally diverse and versatile, starting from metal, clay, stone, wood, fabric, leather, to list a few.

THE BEGINNINGS

Starting from the Indus Valley Civilization, a history of rich craft tradition prevails in the form of metal, stone, terracotta sculptures, fine pieces of pottery, jewellery, woven textiles. Numerous references to artisans prevail in the Vedic age dating back to 1500 BC, in the form of wood crafts, pottery, stone and metal sculptures and weaving. A rich culture of crafts and excellence in pottery along with stone, metal and terracotta sculpture prevailed during the Harappa period where the craftsmen catered not only to the local needs but also exported to other countries by sea.

The Mauryan era witnessed the emergence of stunning sculptures, with an estimated 84000 stupas built, including the world famous Sanchi Stupa. The pillars of Ashoka erected across the sub-continent are a classic example of the works undertaken during this period.

The Gupta era, viewed as the most classical period in the evolution of Indian crafts and liberal cultural traditions, saw equal excellence in arts and crafts, with sculptural extravaganza marking the era. The spectacular murals of Ajanta and Ellora, though produced under later dynasties, (the first phase of Ajanta caves came up just before the Gupta period) primarily both reflect the monumentality of the Gupta style.

The Medieval period saw Indian crafts shifting from the North to the Deccan and Southern parts. Royal treasures were extensively spent on creating exquisitely carved temples, the spectacular stone carvings of the Khajuraho temple of Madhya Pradesh, the rich, ornate wood and stone carvings of the Jagannath temple in Puri, Odhisha, the wondrous Brihadishvara temple in Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu, serving as fine examples of such royal indulgence and unmatched craftsmanship. The period also greatly flourished in pottery, wood carving, metal works, weaving and jewellery, with the Cholas, Pandyas and Vijayanagara Empire leaving their indelible mark in not only superbly carved temples, but also in the



Top: The grand stone carvings of Belur Halebid, Karnataka.
Photograph by: **Mahesh Chadaga.**

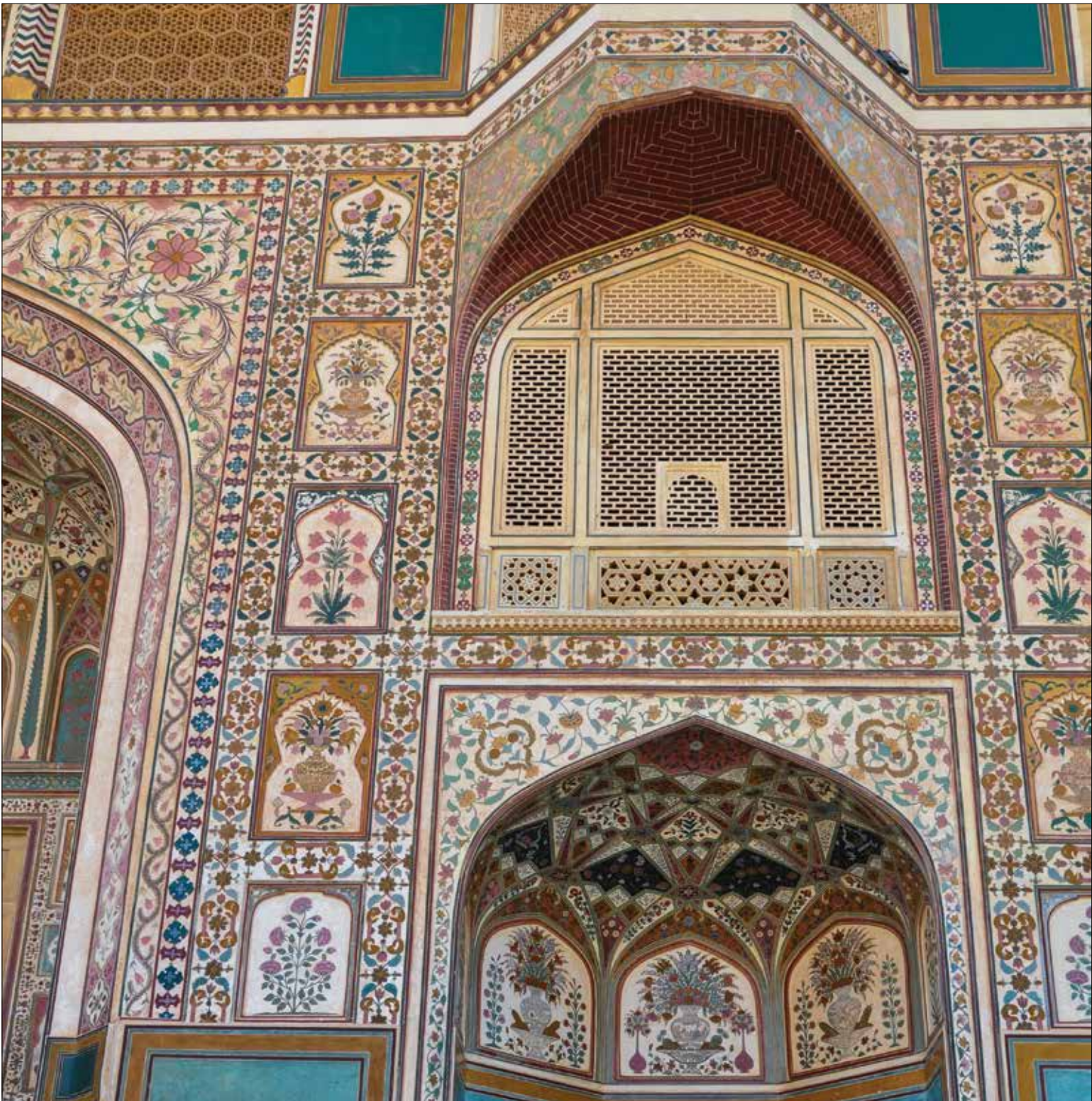
Above Left: Expertly carved bronze sculpture.
Photograph by: **Mahesh Chadaga.**

Above Right: The East Gateway of Sanchi Stupa.
Source: **Wikicommons.**

bronze and stone sculptures, silk weaving and jewellery.

The Mughal period is however considered as the golden period for Indian arts and crafts. This period is famous for the introduction of inlay work, glass engraving, carpet weaving, brocades, enamelling, miniature paintings amongst others. Notably, textiles reached the zenith of perfection during the Mughal period, with the art of weaving and spinning refined considerably.

COLONIAL ERA
The Colonial era served to be a blow to Indian crafts and craftsmen with the removal of Indian princes and nobility which actively supported it. The British also pegged the price of the crafts at 15 to 40 per cent lower than their actual market price, literally strangulating the crafts and earnings of the craftsmen. The competition from cheap mass produced machine made goods imported into the country further sealed the fate of arts and crafts, forcing



Astounding intricate painting on stone in Amer Fort, Rajasthan. Photograph by: **Mahesh Chadaga.**

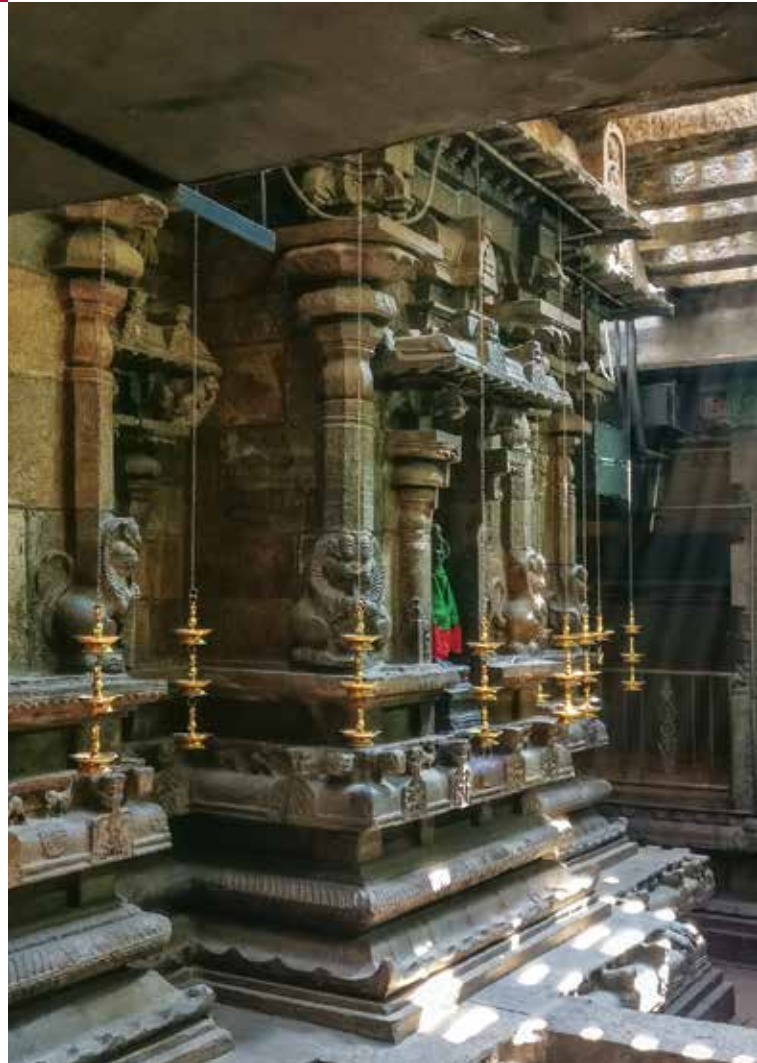
many artisans to abandon their ancestral occupation.

DIVERSE MEDIUMS
The traditional Indian crafts feature in diverse mediums, the diversity and versatility matching the high degree of skills and techniques passed down generations of craftsmen. While the mediums and artworks are multiple, defying measurement, the key areas of

craftsmanship can be classified under metals, stone, wood, clay and fabric.

CAST IN METAL
While the metal works in India date back to 3000 BC, copper and bronze feature as important metals that were used both for household items as well as for works of art. The figure of the dancing girl dating back to the Indus Valley civilisation is an indication of the high level of skills and

craftsmanship possessed by the ancient craftsmen. Harappa period reveals casting of copper in moulds to make various items such as utensils, jewellery, daggers, axe heads. Bronze was more in use for making artistic pieces, with engraving, moulding, embossing evident in the items recovered. The exquisite bronze sculptures dating back to the Chola period are a testimony to the high degree of craftsmanship in metal that prevailed.



Sculptural extravaganza of Madurai Meenakshi Temple, Tamil Nadu.
Photograph by: **Mahesh Chadaga.**

Besides copper and bronze, the craftsmen used silver, bell metal, white metal, iron to make the variety of household items and artistic pieces adopting mostly the lost wax process where a wax model of the item to be sculpted is made. The wax model is then covered in clay with holes drilled through which molten metal is poured in. The hot metal melts the wax and replaces it in the model. Once cooled, the emerging metal figurine is cleared of the clay cover and polished and etched further to reveal a fine piece of artwork.

Dhokra, a distinct style of metal casting dating back to over 4000 years is also still used, the technique having been preserved and passed on over generations of artisans. Popular in the tribal areas of Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra, this form of casting ensures every piece is unique. Made largely using brass scrap, the core part of each figurine is filled with clay.

MAIN CENTRES

While metal crafts are spread across the country, Srinagar in Kashmir and Zaskar in Ladakh are prominent centres and so are Moradabad, Aligarh, Varanasi in UP. Kerala is notable for bell metal crafts while Bidar in Karnataka is famous for its exquisite Bidri work. While Ladakh is known for the traditional brass and iron utensils, Kashmir stands out for its rich and intricate engraving and calligraphy on the



Unmatched craftsmanship in Bronze by highly skilled artisans. Photograph by: **Mahesh Chadaga.**

copper and silver bowls, plates, trays and other household items. Referred as Naquashi, the embossed work stand out once the items are oxidised.

Moradabad is equally world famous for its decorative brass items done with intricate etching. While Palitana in Gujarat is noted for its bronze sculptures, Jaipur in Rajasthan features as an important centre for brass engravings and lacquering with ethnic designs and floral patterns. The art of Koftgari is practiced in Alwar and Jaipur which features one metal encrusted into another. Orissa stands out for its intricate work done using thin silver wires, creating delicate trellis designs.

Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh have their own traditional metal ware such as the ornate metal boxes of Bundelkhand, sculptures of Bastar, lamps of Surguja, animal figurines from Raigarh. While Telangana reveals an equally rich tradition of metal craft such as sheet metal works in brass as well as the famous Bidri work, Tamil Nadu and Kerala are known for their decorative traditional lamps and bronze mirrors.

SCULPTED IN STONE

Exquisite sculptures in stone can be seen across the length and breadth of the country and this becomes especially pronounced in Tamil Nadu, the land of temples. The superbly carved stone temples of the state are renowned not just for their sculptural extravaganza and unparalleled craftsmanship but also for their architecture, the magnificent proportions of the structure and designs par excellence in a period bereft of machines and technical assistance. The Thanjavur Brihadishvara temple, an architectural marvel as well as an incomparable sculptural wonder, is a classic example of the stone



Top Left: Carving in granite stone.
Photograph by: **Mahesh Chadaga.**

Top Right: Exquisite carving in marble.
Photograph by: **Mahesh Chadaga.**

Above: Musical rendition sculpted in stone.
Photograph by: **Mahesh Chadaga.**



Exotic wood carving of the Padmanabhapuram Palace, Kerala. Photograph by: **Mahesh Chadaga**.

carvings and craftsmanship that have prevailed historically in the state for more than 1000 years.

Stone craftsmanship saw equal indulgence and unmatched excellence during the Mughal era, the Taj Mahal standing testimony to it. Be it stone inlays, figurines, carvings, the stone works of the era continue to leave the viewer stunned. The state of Rajasthan reveals similar astounding works in stone, given the region geologically rich in different kinds of rock formations. Not only majestic forts and palaces emerged, the artistic skills of the craftsmen were equally profound, manifesting as intricate jaalis in marble and sandstone that were ubiquitous to address the purdah system that prevailed for women.

CARVED IN WOOD

When it comes to wood carving and craftsmanship, Kashmir acquires a special position, offering exotic intricately carved items. Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Kerala are equally famous for craftsmanship in wood, the exquisitely carved in wood 16th century Padmanabhapuram Palace near Trivandrum notable among them. Karnataka is equally known for wood craftsmanship given its extensive forest cover and access to wood. Teak, walnut, redwood, sandalwood are the commonly opted wood by the craftsmen. Inlay work, intricate carvings on articles, idols and animal figurines, doors,



Blue Pottery from Jaipur. Source: **homevshouse.wordpress.com**

pillars, lintels, furniture, storage baskets and decorative objects mark the traditional wood crafts in the country.

MOULDED IN CLAY

Crafts in clay are one of the earliest forms of craftsmanship across the world. It originates from the simple earthenware made from clay to meet household needs, developing and transforming into decorative elements, figurines, with a dash of colour added to it over a period. While the craftsmanship in clay spans the entire country with the techniques passed down generations, some cities are world famous for their special varieties of pottery such as Jaipur known for its exotic blue pottery, Nizamabad for its naturally shining black pottery. Kashmir is noted for its special glazed pottery and so is Manipur for its black stone pottery. West Bengal is famous for the exquisite clay idols crafted by traditional craftsmen during the annual festival of Durga Puja where the idols feature in exotic pandals across the state.

INTRICATE WEAVES

The country is home to the richest tradition of textiles, weaving and handwork, with almost all regions being famous for their own distinct fabrics and weaving skills. While the fabrics are sourced from natural materials such as silk, cotton, wool, the weaving, embroidery,



Mochi embroidery, Kutch, Gujarat. Source: **toothpicnations.co.uk**

dyes and handwork on them differ across the regions based on the individual lifestyles, cultures and traditional skills passed down generations. While the range of textiles are varied and multiple, some of the notable ones include the Ikat fabric from Orissa and Andhra, Bandhani from Gujarat and Rajasthan, Jamdani from UP and West Bengal, Kota Masuria from Rajasthan, Silk weaves from Mysore in Karnataka, Kanchipuram in Tamil Nadu, Banaras in UP.

EXQUISITELY ORNAMENTED

When it comes to ornaments and jewellery, India is equally diverse and exotic in its craftsmanship. Not just precious stones and gems set in gold, silver and other metals form these intricately handcrafted ornaments, items such as bones, horns, sea shells, glass, lac, even grass are used for making them. While Awadh and Varanasi in UP are noted for their gold studded jewellery, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Kashmir are famous for their exquisite craftsmanship and designs in various forms of ornaments.

Indian paintings and classical art forms, their evolution dating back to centuries, are equally diverse, spellbinding, the skills still luckily preserved and passed on over generations as well as amongst artists eager to learn the art. The classic Madhubani paintings, Tanjore paintings, Warli, Kalamkari artwork, miniature paintings, to mention a few are examples of these classic art forms.



The Coronation of Rama- Tanjore, south india, circa 1900. Source: **christies.com**



19th century solid silver heavy shawl pattern tea set, Kashmir, India. c. 1880. Source: **pushkinantiques.com**





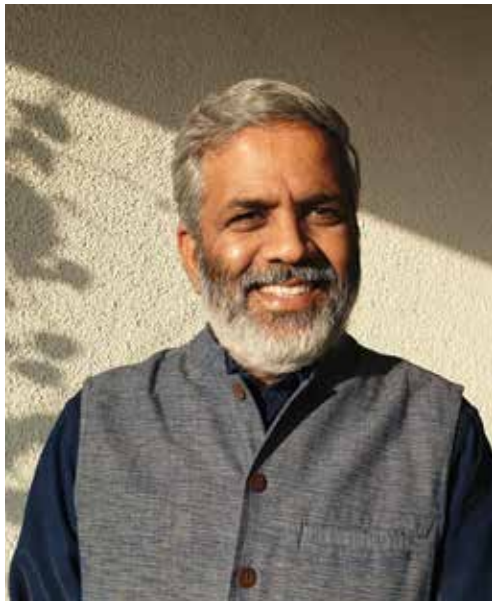
1: A soft trickle water feature reflecting the traditional Tambat craft of Pune articulates as copper urns made by traditional artisans, decorating the foyer, complemented by an antique Maharashtrian Wada door.



2: The warm tones of the bedroom are accentuated by a traditional Madhubani art on the wall.

3: Warli painting on the birds done by a traditional artist lends a contemporary twist to a traditional art.

4: Kalasutri Bahulya puppets from Pinguli in Maharashtra, share the mythological stories in the reception of the corporate office



A CONTEMPORARY INTERPRETATION

Interior Designer Vishnu Bheda of Vishnu Bheda & Associates brings in a contemporary interpretation to traditional art and crafts to fuse into contemporary interiors.





5



5: An isle of wood sculptures by traditional craftsmen originating from Karnataka and Kerala, transform the interiors of the corporate office.

6, 7: The artwork on the display shelves accentuates the beauty of the artistic handcrafted ornaments showcased within.

6



7



1: The installation at the V&A Museum London on Indian textiles relates to celebrating nature through an interpretation of Indian cultural connotations, fusing elements of nature such as the sacred Tulsi, Banyan tree, lotus, parrot, along with the temple diyas, the water colour painting toned down to connect with the European audience.

2: The 42 feet aluminium Qutub Chandelier painted in antique bronze, an inspired interpretation of the Qutub Minar in an inverted form, serves as a grand highlight in the reception lounge.

3: Harappan art and pottery is reminisced in the room as hand painted mural on the wall, as applique work on blinds and grain motifs on carpets, calligraphy on pillow cushions.



REMINISCING HISTORY AND TRADITION

Interior Designers, Sahil Bagga and Sarthak Sengupta of Sahil & Sarthak, reminisce Indian history and culture in their spaces, using the expertise of traditional artists and artisans.



5



4, 5: Random rags spun into ropes to make colourful Katran chairs that recall the ubiquitous village rope cots.



6

6: Pattachitra, an ancient art form of Odisha depicting the Dashavatara, feature as plates on the wall while the throw on the bed connects to the Kanchipuram silk weaves dating back to the Chera, Chola and Pandya dynasty.

7: Harappan jewellery and a deconstructed Harappan hay cart serve as the inspiration for the lamp and its table.

8, 9: The Golden era is recalled through paintings of Panchatantra, furniture reminiscent of the sculptural bases in Ellora.



8

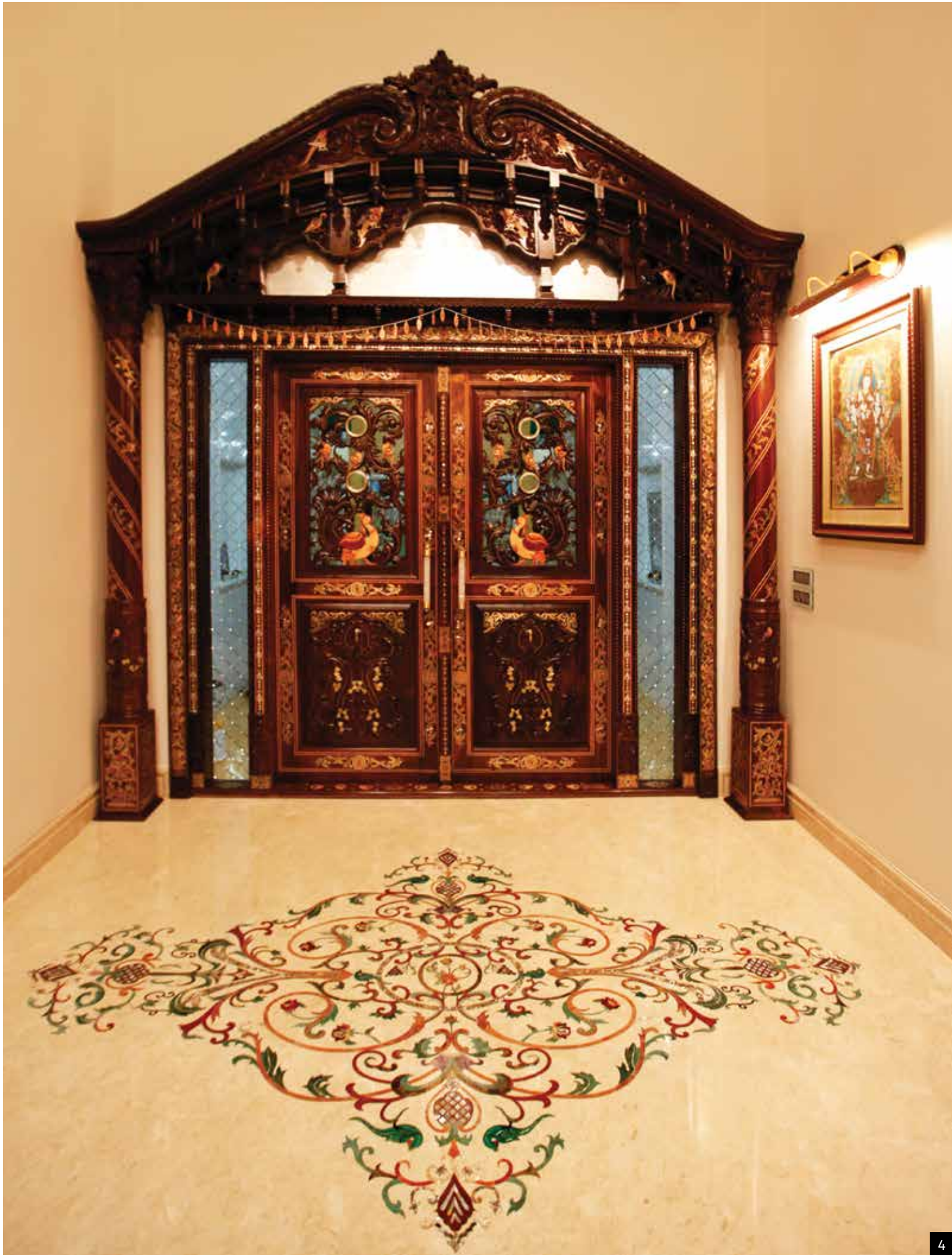


9



CELEBRATING INDIAN CRAFTSMANSHIP
Architect Leena Kumar of Kumar Consultants celebrates the exceptional skills and craftsmanship of the traditional Indian artisan, in wood, metal, stone and fine arts in this lavish residential interior.





4



5



6



7

- 1: Antique traditionally carved wooden pillars and doors, roofed with a granite slab to shield against the weather, form a feature on the compound wall.
- 2: Massive oil mural painted directly on the wall surface by traditional artist, Beeresh.
- 3: The living room with hand crafted furniture, marble inlay, customised oil paintings, depicts the traditional theme of the interior.
- 4: Pooja room with Mysore Rosewood inlay work and a marble inlaid floor with semi-precious stones, crafted by skilled artisans.
- 5: Pooja room clad with mango onyx, back-lit to light up a silver floral artwork. A custom made Tanjore Art painting adorns the wall.
- 6: Detail of the silver cut-work on a back-lit onyx wall.
- 7: Sandstone carved tree amidst the vertical garden, decorates the compound wall.



Eagle Owl perched at the entry point to Gurugram.



CRAFTED **WITH SCRAP**

GOPAL NAMJOSHI BY NANDHINI SUNDAR

The spectacular Eagle Owl found in the Northern Aravalli Range is perched at the entry point to Gurugram from Delhi, poised to take off. The huge metal installation is incidentally not made from solid metal but from discarded metal scrap sourced from the Kabadiwalas.

The items used range from metal chains, cogs, rods, wheels, nuts, bolts, sheets, to broken metal pieces; essentially metal scrap sold in bulk to scrap dealers from where it is shipped to melting units; items that the Kabadiwalas view as unusable except for the metal content that can be reclaimed. Yet, the same scrap have combined to form stunning sculptures that decorate a landscape, porch, public spaces, sending a silent message on not just the environment and the species inhabiting it but also the cultural values and dogmas that prevail in the Indian society, many of which need an urgent revisit.



Soft spoken **Artist Gopal Namjoshi** believes that every element, however small, insignificant or unusable it may seem, has a language of its own and a message to convey when used in the right space, in the right form. Metal scrap is no exception to this belief, especially given its reusable component. Not surprisingly, the gold medallist Fine Arts graduate from the School of Arts, Jaipur, has spent the last two and a half decades creating spectacular art forms and giant installations using an element that is considered totally unusable.

His metal sculptures decorate both indoor and outdoor spaces, residential, commercial as well as public spaces, captivating in their portrayal, stunning in their formation, profound in the message strongly conveyed. He plunged into fulltime vocation as artist after voluntarily retiring from the UNICEF in 1995 and there was no looking back thence. Firmly believing that art has to be both challenging and non-conforming, Namjoshi's benchmark for his creations was to create the impossible, yet with a resounding message.

"Resources can perish anytime. The challenge lies in how appropriately as well as judiciously these finite resources are used to realise the best benefits", contends Namjoshi. The Shilp Gram, one of the most visited places for Rajasthani crafts in Rajasthan was curated by Namjoshi during his tenure as Exhibition Designer



Relating a story.

in Jawahar Kala Kendra. He was also instrumental in holding multiple workshops on traditional jewellery, iron sculptures, Raku and terracotta, paper sculptures, blue pottery, besides organising sculpture camps for Jawahar Kala Kendra.

STUMBLING INTO METAL

His tryst with metal sculptures and giant murals started unexpectedly when he tried to repair his fairly old scooter. While waiting in the mechanic shop he picked up a few random metal scrap pieces and attempted to fuse them into a meaningful composition. "The initial effort brought forth an abstract form but I soon realised they could be pieced together to create a live form that people could relate too. And that incidentally was the beginning of my association with scrap metal", he states. The first image created was a cow, glued together using a local welder to weld the metal pieces.

Interestingly when Namjoshi started working with the scrap metal, he was unsure how to piece them together to create his compositions. When he tried to source specific type of scrap, he was offered in bulk components that initially baffled him in terms of piecing together. "But after working on it for about 10 days, I figured



Set of cranes.



Cow and its calf.

the modus operandi and guided the local welder to glue the pieces in the defined format." The emerging metal cow left his observers stunned and the doubters silenced. "To create a good form, the right material is certainly needed which can be fused together", he adds.

ECOLOGY MATTERS

A factor that stands out in his metal creations is the strong connect to ecology and life force that they portray besides depicting beings that man is integrally connected to in day to day life. For instance, his murals reveal an extensive depiction of the cow and her calf in the multiple installations he has done over the last two and half decades. "Humans are irrevocably dependent on the cow, starting from birth.



The majestic peacock.

Glorifying this selfless animal through sculptures not only reminds the viewer of its irreplaceable role but also serves as a way of paying homage to its presence in human life", explains Namjoshi.

Likewise, many other animal forms such as the elephant, the peacock, the deer, birds, insects and trees are seen in plenty amongst his installations, depicting their co-existence. "Deforestation has become a way of life in the villages, the forests reclaimed for agricultural purposes. This has impacted the ecology adversely and yet the farmers are not connecting to this adverse impact that manifests in multiple forms including droughts and drying of lakes and rivers. The bio-parks created by the metal installations sparks this awareness on



Glowrious at the Litfest.



Spring is in the air.

the plunder that has ceaselessly set in, the urban spaces and people inhabiting doing little to address this ecological irreversible damage”, explains Namjoshi.

His latest installation of the Eagle Owl found in the Northern Aravalli Range at the entry point to Gurugram from Delhi, (an initiative of 'I am Gurgaon') is a case in point. Standing 8.5 feet tall, with a depth of 11 feet and wings that span 14 feet, the eagle is perched majestically at the entry gate, poised to take off. A spectacular

combination of a range of metal scrap weighing 14000 Kgs has been used to create this astounding master piece. “The eagle owl is an endangered species and an installation of the same at such a vantage point draws attention to this, creating awareness about the irreversible damage to the ecology and environment that our mindless irresponsible acts are resulting in”, says Namjoshi.

His penchant for elephant murals also has a similar deeper reason than what meets

the eye. “A temple in Amer that I used to frequent had an elephant chained in, lonely and bereft of company. The sight of the lonely pachyderm struck a chord in me prompting me to come up with multiple depictions of elephants in my art. It is an inherent call to draw attention to the plight of hundreds of such elephants so confined”, he states.

PATRIARCHAL CODES

Namjoshi's indulgence is not confined to merely ecology and environment but extends to address cultural issues and long prevailing dogmas, especially those related to gender issues. His recent exhibit in March 2020 at IGNCA done for International Women's Day, themed Decoding Patriarchal Codes, has an art installation titled, 'Ja Simran Jaa', where a woman is depicted as leaving behind her expected household chores and charging out in the masculine Bullet motor cycle.

The installation loudly questions sexist systems and portrays the woman as exercising her right to break free and enter



Gajayatra.



Decoding Patriarchal codes.



Ja Simran Jaa.



IITD, ITEC

vocations that are considered gender specific. “When the woman breaks free from the stereotype roles and identities and defies being type cast by society, eyebrows are still raised; family and societal resistance continue to prevail. The art-installation prompts the viewer to change this narrative, engage with the new world order where equality, respect and individualism dominate”, Namjoshi elaborates.

GOING BEYOND METAL

Namjoshi’s art installations are incidentally not confined to metal scrap alone, extending to vinyl, recycled paper and even edible items. His 80 feet long installation, ‘Spring is in the air’, is one such, made with crepe paper and scrap vinyl sheets

and hung at 30 feet height in a public mall. Likewise, the Jaipur Literature Festival saw Namjoshi putting up a light installation, ‘Glowrious’, which featured 100 lit structures, all made from polypropylene sheets. His art installation using edible chocolate earned him a mention in the Limca Book of Records for the ‘Largest Edible Art Installation’.

Work on his art installations/sculptures takes him anywhere between 40 days to 6 months on an average to complete. “The final structure evolves based on the type of scrap available and is used; the expression alters even if the artwork depicts the same element”, he says. At any point of time, there are three members working simultaneously on his installations, aiding



Kargil Diwas.



Art installation with edible chocolate.

him to weld the multiple scrap together. “The emerging metal structure requires PU coating to prevent rusting and this coating needs to be repeated once in three years to ensure proper maintenance.”

Namjoshi is currently working on another ambitious project, a large installation connected to patriarchal systems. “It is always a vague idea to begin with, only the broad sketch of what is planned to be crafted being in mind. Once the work starts the structure becomes clearer, the entire sculptural piece evolving automatically without a premeditated strict directive.”

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SOURCING LOCAL

BY NANDHINI SUNDAR



Lakshman Sagar Resort.

It is an erstwhile hunting ground, the late 19th century hunting lodge in its midst serving as the residence for the Thakur of Raipur and his entourage whenever he chose to venture into the grounds to game. The more open to sky male wing, the *Mardana* and the covered ladies wing, the *Zanana*, both perched on the banks of the Lakshman Sagar Lake, were in relative ruins when the heritage building was taken over to transform into a resort.

Given the barren surroundings and the singular structure on the banks of the lake, mud wall architecture was contemplated to build the Lakshman Sagar Resort, complementing the existing heritage structure.

Late Architect Revathi Kamath of Kamath Design Studio came up with a model mud cottage on the hunting grounds, which unfortunately was not easy to replicate into multiple similar cottages given the rough, difficult terrain of the grounds and its surroundings. The contemplated built space of the resort was unavoidably compromised, with the focus shifted on merely restoring the existing heritage structure and bringing in the local ethnic flavour in the form of arts, crafts and colour.



Working on the blue pottery chip mosaic flooring for the Zanana terrace.

Interior Designers, **Sahil Bagga and Sarthak Sengupta of Sahil & Sarthak**, who worked on restoring the spaces and decorating the interiors, realised the futility of merely creating another heritage destination in the heart of Rajasthan, especially with a city like Jodhpur in close proximity. “On interacting with the local villagers, we discovered the versatile skills of the local craftsmen and decided to create a destination that resonates local skills and cultures, with the materials and crafts sourced from the surrounding villages”, states Sarthak. “We call it the zero kilometre design”, he adds.

It was then left to Sahil and Sarthak to camp in the village for almost a year, initiate an interaction with the villagers around the resort, identify the unique arts, crafts, skills intrinsic to those villages and imbibe the same along with the local cultural fabric in the elements that were brought into the heritage structure as well as rest of the resort.

“This journey of discovering the local skills itself was fascinating as we stumbled upon very unique skills amongst the villagers. For instance, we came across a traditional, extremely cost effective technique of making leak proof milk cans, a technique that is not known outside the village. We employed the artisan to use this technique to create water resistant outdoor lighting in the resort”, states Sarthak.



Colours of Rajasthan.

COLOURS SPEAK
The first step was to bring in the vibrant colours found in the region. “We discovered that each community had a colour code that was vibrant, compensating for the dry barren lands. Shockingly bright pinks, greens, yellow, blues were seen as the norm, each voicing beyond words the community you belong to when you wear it. Along with these indigo blues and fuchsia pinks that we witnessed amongst the tribal women, bangles adorned up to the shoulders were another common sight. We brought both these on to the Zanana, the ladies wing of the hunting lodge, incorporating the almost blinding pink on the exterior walls and the countless bangles on to the table legs to establish this local connect unequivocally”, he adds.

THE KITCHEN STORY
The infusion of colours on the structure was just the beginning. The interiors soon filled up with items that echoed unmistakably the village crafts and culture, each retaining a sizable part of their structural component while being reinterpreted to meet contemporary functional needs. Thus, the ubiquitous Dhol found in the villages was converted into coffee tables and casual seating, the water resistant milk cans turned into outdoor lighting where they prevailed rust free, narrating a human story.



Guest room with the Dhol converted into casual seating.

The traditional iron boxes made out of cast iron were redefined to lend the different functionality of a toiletries box for the bathrooms. The common household pottery used for storing grains, water and food were replicated in miniature forms to serve as decorative elements. The village kitchen Tawa was turned into a towel rack in the bathrooms while the grain strainer and plough handle were fashioned into light fittings in the lobby where they emulated a deer with horns.

The rest of the interior light fittings in the heritage structure, likewise were created from items sourced from the villagers' kitchen. "We decided to use pots, pans, ladles to create the chandeliers, each speaking the story of local people and their lifestyle while revealing their immense traditional skills in crafting items to perfection", states Sarthak. "The idea was not only to promote the local skills and crafts but ensure the villagers feel as a part of the resort by bringing in the cultural overtones into it", he adds.

CREATING THE NICHE

The interior spaces interestingly reveal plenty of niches stacked with mundane items ranging from shoes to bags to trinkets. "Niches are a common element in village houses, used to keep things which they consider important. To echo this custom, niches were created in the rooms and lobby along with floor seating that again connected

to the fabric of this village culture. In tune with the village houses, random things have been placed inside these niches while the floor seating comes with the typical colours and fabric woven by the villagers."

REINTERPRETING THE MUNDANE

While the soft furnishings used in the resort, including the blinds, were sourced from the village artisans by forming self-help groups amongst the women to supply them, Sahil and Sarthak also discovered yet another skill amongst the villagers, that of working with waste fabric and creating rugs and ropes with the same. "These fabrics come in vibrant colours and proved to be a fabulous raw material to make Charpai, which are handwoven rope chairs, by the villagers." These vibrant chairs, not surprisingly, were added to the interior furnishings of the cottages.

Incidentally, the reinterpretation and incorporation of the local arts and crafts were not confined to the interiors alone, but extended to outdoors too, where Sahil and Sarthak chanced upon a mammoth iron weighing scale used by the villagers in their Mandis. "We decided to retain the weighing scale in its prevailing form and converted it into a giant swing for the outdoors where the user would instantly connect with the village culture and fabric."



Floor seating and niches on the wall stacked with mundane items in the reception area.



The Mardana wing.



Grain strainer and plough handle used as light fittings that emulate a deer with horns.



Zanana wing with table legs adorned in bangles.



Reading and writing nook on the Zanana terrace.



Portion of the rocky terrain blasted to create the pool.



Weighing scale converted into a swing.



Model mud cottage complementing the heritage structure.

SALVAGING WASTE

Likewise, the design arms of Sahil and Sarthak extended to certain sections of the heritage structure too were some segments needed to be replaced or restructured during restoration. Thus, a portion of an open courtyard was covered where the roof replicated the typical traditional bark thatched roof found in the villages. “We also made good use of waste that we came across on the site as well as in the villages”, adds Sahil. “When a portion of the rocky terrain was blasted to create a swimming pool, the pieces of rock salvaged from the area were used to create sinks in all the bathrooms as well as random rubble wall to segment the bathroom in each room”, he elaborates.

Similar salvaging can be witnessed of a large tree that had fallen in the village during the duo’s camping in the villages. “We used the wood from this tree to make the centre tables for each of the 12 cottages in the resort.” The terrace of the Zanana, likewise reveals a fair share of salvaged material. “Rajasthan is famous for blue pottery, but a sizeable portion of it goes waste in the form of export rejects, where it is dumped. We decided to source this reject blue pottery and taking inspiration from Architect Antoni Gaudi, we created a fabulous blue mosaic on the terrace of the Zanana. These not only lend character to the reading corner created there but aid to reduce the heat ingress during the hot summer months”, states Sahil.

STRIKING A RAPPORT

While the décor of Lakshman Sagar Resort serves as an ode to the country’s rich history, the traditional skills and expertise of the village craftsmen and the fast dying traditional crafts in a contemporary world, designers Sahil and Sarthak have a word of caution and advice to those venturing to save our dying crafts. “To work with the local villagers and promote their skills and crafts, it is important to strike a rapport first, study their mode of working, their tools and processes and create a product that will not throw them off their comfort zone. The design process also becomes more meaningful when the perception is altered from the handmade items being souvenirs and instead viewed as objects one lives with.”

According to them, the village artisan needs to be viewed as a partner in design where his story can be told. “In most cases the traditional crafts meet functional requirements and this context needs to be understood along with the strengths and weaknesses of the artisan before interpreting and re-contextualising the craft to meet contemporary requirements. This is vital to ensure these skills passed over generations of artisans do not die out.”



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A RETHINKING AFTER THE PANDEMIC

BY AR. LEENA KUMAR



Migrant workers will not forget easily the apathy with which they were treated by their employers and the government. Post pandemic, the definition of “affordable housing” must change. And through the doors of the corona, we will seek new solutions.

For most of us who have lived through the experience of the pandemic, the memory will quite likely last. And perhaps become a part of our long-term memory that can be recalled with ease.

The Covid Pandemic is a different kind of war. A war where all of humanity is fighting an invisible pathogen. But unlike a war that usually unites people to fight a common enemy, this pathogen has divided us, and made us suspicious of each other. From the macro level of Nations to the micro level of the individual family unit, everyone has cocooned themselves into NO ENTRY zones.

Citizens whose place of work and home were the same, were the luckier ones. Those who travelled far from home to seek a livelihood became the worst victims of this touch-me-not obsession.

Migrant workers will not forget easily the apathy with which they were treated by their employers. They will hold their families more dearly. They will view their employers with less esteem. Cities will not forget this work force who will reluctantly return to earn a living. Our inter-dependence on each other has been forced into the limelight.

The vaccine will soon be out in the market and available for administering. Life will go back to normal with only the memory of the pandemic. And this memory will alter the way we conduct business as usual.

This experience will push for change in the housing sector, amongst a host of other spaces too. In the field of architecture, change comes slowly. It takes few years to see the shift. New projects must be conceptualised and built. If the discussion in the community continues to be persistent and sets in motion the benefits and necessity to rethink our housing, the “New Normal” for design will emerge. A lot will also depend on how one of the greatest influencer in our country, the government, will perceive this disaster.

But even for the government of India, sometimes slow to adapt to change unless thrust upon by extraneous situations, rethinking the residential design philosophy will make political sense. This year the UN has chosen “Housing for all – a better urban future” as the theme of World Habitat Day. The Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana mission intends to provide housing for all by 2022;

Affordable housing. Post-pandemic, the requirements and definition of “affordable” must change - politically. And it will make political sense to overcome the sub-standard housing disaster with a promise for a better life that is better equipped for calamities.

New design ideas have been discussed threadbare by the numerous webinars and on-line discussion platforms, essay competitions, ideas competitions, organised by all groups and institutions connected to the built environment. It gives us an idea of what post pandemic architecture would look like.

The housing sector will seek new solutions. And in a sense will go back to the future. Human health, both physical and mental, will need to retake centre stage. Not only will a home be a machine to live in, it will also be a space to recover and rejoice in. The relationship between inside and outside will refocus. This will be a great opportunity to see design as a major player in forming healthy communities, healthy citizens; the greatest moment for the architectural community to express the meaning of architecture and the power of architecture. To communicate that “good design” is not the right of the well-heeled only and must be a universal idea. That low cost does not convert to low quality.

New housing typologies will continue to emerge to gear up for the pandemics of the future. Housing that says “are you pandemic ready?” will be the new normal. Although ironically, in the old normal, we were already ready! But the circle of life goes round and round and we perhaps come around now. While change may not come at supersonic speed as we return to business-as-usual, the memory of the pandemic will not be vanquished so soon, and the wheel of thought would have turned.



CURRICULUM IS KEY IF YOU ARE LOOKING FOR CHANGE

BY PROF. JAFFER AA KHAN
Director VSPARC VIT Vellore



India is one of the countries with nearly five hundred architecture schools in various formats, with most validated by the Council of Architecture (CoA), established under the purview of the Architects Act 1972. Almost all of these schools are based on the pedagogical structure adopted from the West. In 1937, Joseph Hudnut hand picked Walter Gropius, (though Mies van der Rohe was the first preference) to be the professor of Architecture at Harvard and his job is to devise a curriculum that would radically change the way architecture is taught in North America.

Gropius, with enormous experience of establishing Bauhaus in 1919, took this opportunity to radicalise architectural education and this became the template followed by almost all Schools at that time in the US. It is interesting to see that his program is still evident in most Schools, with not much change even after 75 years, though

some Schools radically changed in the 60s and 70s including MIT and Harvard in the last two decades.

In India, we had Charles and Ray Eames developing a comprehensive “The India Report” in 1958, on Design Education, and recommended communications based design training to facilitate national growth. I believe this report is still workable and I recommend the Schools to look at it more closely to build their own system of education for the society that is largely traditional. One can see that CEPT (Centre for Environmental Planning and Technology) started in 1962, under the erstwhile leadership of Shri BV Doshi, took a lot of inspiration from it in the formative years and I suppose it continues.

I would like to quote Beatrice Colomina and others, in their recent article in Architectural Review dated 28th September 2012; “Architectural pedagogy has become stale. Schools spin old wheels as if something is happening but so little is going on. Students wait for a sense of activist engagement with a rapidly evolving world but graduate before it happens. The fact that they wait for instruction is already the problem. Teachers likewise worry too much about their place in the institutional hierarchies. Curricular structures have hardly changed in recent decades, despite the major transformations that have taken place with the growth of globalisation, new technologies, and information culture. As schools appear to increasingly favour professionalisation, they seem to drown in self-imposed bureaucratic oversight, suffocating any possibility for the emergence of experimental practices and failures. There are a few attempts to wake things up here and there but it’s all so timid in the end. There is no real innovation”

Architecture cannot be taught but can only happen, Todd Gannon while arguing with Peter Zellner of Free School of Architecture (FSA), elaborates that “Architecture doesn’t just happen. Architecture is made. Architecture can be made, and its methods taught because ‘architecture’ refers not to a specific object but rather to evidence that an object - usually but not always a building—has been produced in terms of a specific way of working. Just as literature cannot be reduced to books, architecture cannot be reduced to buildings. Neither can it be reduced to drawings, models, or digital animations. Architecture is a method all the way down. The Oxford English Dictionary defines architecture not as a kind of building but rather as ‘the art or science of building.’

He quotes Reyner Banham: “What distinguishes architecture is not *what* is done... but *how* it is done.”¹

Architectural education in India is at crossroads and needs reformation at every level. This means a radical change is required and a radical pedagogy to revitalise the education process. The arguments at the global level and extending this discussion to Indian context would help understand the process to change and to look forward to embracing the very essence of life that nurtures architecture. Recently the UNICEF has indicated that over half the Indian students will not possess skills for 21stCentury jobs and this applies to graduate architects as well. But more than anything, Gannon says that “at the top of any list of things to fix in architecture schools must surely be the abdication of so many faculty of their responsibility to teach it (architecture)” and I truly believe so.

¹ <https://archpaper.com/2016/09/zellner-architectural-education-response-todd-gannon/>



AN INSIGHT INTO A POSSIBLE FUTURE

BY PROF. K JAISIM



I am writing this article to focus on the present to guide a future learning from the past. The Covid has woken almost all of us, especially the awareness of the built environment to a sense of emergence to look over our shoulders and beyond. It is an estranged world.

Architects and environmentalists are searching for an expression. But time cannot wait. Interior designers pushed by decorators and the concerned clients, facing pressure of accommodating functions never planned for. Working and studying from home. Keeping distance physically and mentally yet be in the same space at the same time. A mind boggling experience especially for the home care taker.

It also opens up another arena of challenge, the large work spaces all over, how does one address them? Economics laughs. But innovative imagination challenges, there are solutions and perhaps even answers. 2020 has been a year of learning, especially for architects. No pressure except from the stomach. Spatial thinking is a very spiritual activity. It demands time; fortunately lockdown gave us architects a lot of time to reflect and the opportunity to respond to the challenges.

Being involved in education and writing became another challenge. Reviewing thesis and architectural design works and the columns and articles have been a new experience. Each student sitting in his/her home space and collectively and individually reacting and expressing their dreams and visions has been an unforgettable experience. I have noticed the reactions from the toddlers and K

G children to mid-school and colleges, a fascinating but a virtual process. Abstraction to reality, observation to comments, it is not just a chapter or a book but volumes will unfold.

The answers will be infinite; each will come up with solutions that have no relation to the past on site, in class responses. New avenues of communication and expression will unfold. But-this is a big but-actual execution on site will be a new revelation. The worker, the supervisor, the examiner, demands physical presence. Robots are only an imagination. They too need checking.

I come from the old school, I have to visit the site physically however large or small the project may be, for me to even give a feedback on the potential to express the kinetic. Here we touch with human sensitivity the very nature of life and its demands to a life style.

Working from home appeared a welcome change. But time soon laughed. Concentration in total isolation is a figment of the imagination. One needs inputs, discussions, dialogues and all sorts of interaction. At the same time home work by the young demands a concentration that is not easy in homely atmosphere. There is so much going on which never happens in a class room. And there is not another young soul to interact with; it is isolation, a sort of punishment. Can a change in design make it a reward and a positive space?

Initially designing spaces physically separated but visually connected appears great, but time smiles and a fragrance is lost. Design becomes decoration. Even as I sit in my cottage all alone with a

shower of rain around me and the stream with its melody, something is not right. Concentration strays looking for dynamics. This idyllic space searches, the elements are in sympathy but the senses are searching, for life and its play.

Webinars galore are inviting and offer challenges but soon lose presence. Like this laptop and Wi fi which challenge my abilities, new tools and materials of construction engage me in a continuous dialogue. A. I. smiles, but only the human brain and body know that they are supreme, all that can be and is are because of the mind. The mind of the human consciousness is spirituality of the abstract and detailed in divinity. This emergence appears estranged but is the reality of today’s built environment.

I end with the confidence that from this unique time architects will design and create environments that will bring that sense of confidence in having created a new world order to live more meaningfully.



ARTY WITH CLAY TILES

BY NANDHINI SUNDAR
FEATURING MANOJ PATEL



Clay tiled facade to reduce heat ingress.



How do you reduce the impact of local climate on a building? How do you ensure the architecture is climate responsive? How do you minimise the carbon footprint of a building? These were questions that troubled **Architect Manoj Patel, of Manoj Patel Design Studio** even before completing his degree in architecture; questions that prompted him to do his Masters in Climate Change and Sustainability in CEPT which he completed in 2014.

Having mastered the techniques and nuances of climate responsive architecture, it was then left to Patel to execute his learnings in projects that came by. After training for a short period under Architect Rasik Shah, Patel decided to venture out on his own and set up his own practice in 2015. Deeply inspired by the works of Bengaluru based Architect Chitra Viswanath of Biome Environmental Solutions and South Africa based Architect Diébédo Francis Kéré of Kéré Architecture, Patel started doing research on climate friendly materials that could be used in construction.



Clay roof tiles designed as planter boxes to create a mini vertical garden.

ENCOUNTERING CLAY ROOF TILES

His research made him stumble on a local material which was fast losing market and yet totally climate responsive—the clay roof tiles. “No one uses the clay roof tiles at present and this material which is handcrafted is on the brink of perishing, with the craftsman involved in its making giving up their traditional vocation and looking at other forms of employment. A generation from now, the art of handcrafting these tiles will be totally lost and this would indeed be a loss to our vernacular construction modes especially given its climate responsive feature”, states Patel.

According to Patel, the conventional RCC structure permits heat ingress especially in climatic conditions where the temperature soars to 45°C and above in summers. “Layering RCC terrace with clay roof tiles cuts down on this heat ingress. Besides, the presence of the clay tiles prevents the heat island effect which has become common in urban areas because of the heat radiating from the RCC terraces and glass in the facade.”

The direction of the sun’s movement has an impact on the extent of heat penetrating into the interiors through the exterior walls, opines Patel. Cladding the façade with clay roof tiles again protects the exterior walls from direct sunlight and heat ingress, keeping the interiors several notches cooler even in peak summer, he adds.

“The clay roof tiles are broken down and clad on the façade in a pattern that adheres to the direction of the sun’s movement as well as the wind pattern. This aesthetically patterned cladding, besides shielding the exterior wall, also acts as a shade when the sun moves from east to west.” Depending on the location of the building, the sun and wind movement, the clay roof tile patterns on the façade are altered in each project.

“The presence of the clay roof tiles on the roof and façade effectively reduces the ambient temperature in the interiors by 10 to 15°C in peak summer.” While keeping the operational costs of cooling low, the installation cost of clay tile is also extremely inexpensive, with a sizable portion coming free as the damaged, broken tiles which are discarded too can be used, Patel adds.

CLAY TILED GREEN WALL

Patel’s use of clay roof tiles is not restricted to layering an RCC terrace and cladding an exterior wall to address climate response but also extends to functional uses in the interiors in the form of vertical planters in balconies and courtyards. Here, the clay roof tiles are structured to serve as vertical planter boxes to house vegetation, offering a green wall in the semi-open interiors. “This again serves as a vernacular technique to cool the interiors as the dampness retained by the clay tile cools the walls and surroundings by increasing the humidity, especially in the dry summer months. If the balcony faces the Southwest, the presence of these clay tile planters is even more effective in bringing down the temperatures”, states Patel.

In his Ridge Residential project, Patel has used this technique to effectively bring down the heat in the interiors. “The clay tile planters are installed vertically against the wall on an area of 10x5 feet. It acts as a traditional desert cooler with the circulating air becoming cool and moist when coming in contact with the water laden planter boxes.”

While the concept of aesthetics and climate response was effectively taken care, Patel faced a structural problem while installing the clay tile planter boxes. “The weight of the clay roof tile planters had to be managed when installing them vertically. This was successfully addressed with an appropriate chemical bonding material and also by engineering the placement of the planters in a manner that the full weight of the boxes did not transfer to the floor but rested more on the wall.”

According to Patel, the clay roof tiles are a much better option compared to the commonly used plastic, not only in terms of their



Abstract mural created with broken clay roof tiles.

climate responsive feature but also in addressing the health of the plants. “The water does not stay in clay but does in plastic and this in many cases ruins the roots of the plants. During summer, the presence of clay continues to keep the roots cool while plastic does the reverse.”

CRAFTING THE INTERIORS IN CLAY

Clay roof tiles can also bring in the aesthetic component into an interior, Patel firmly believes. In one of his office spaces, he decided to use broken clay roof tiles as a back drop mural, to contrast with the wood panelling and granite floor in the meeting room. Similar clay murals prevail on the walls of a fashion boutique he designed. The 350 Sq ft space, worked on a shoe string budget, saw Patel come up with a vibrant décor, using only discarded materials.

Plenty of waste broken clay roof tiles were sourced free and turned into an attractive mural on the wall. Some of the clay tiles were painted to appear as wood. Discarded bathroom tiles were sourced free and used to create vibrant, unique patterned

flooring which acts as the highlight in the space. Given the small area of the boutique, mirrors were installed in vantage points to lend a visual expanse. Discarded beer bottles were gathered to create a wall art to add more novelty to the boutique.

METALLED TO DISMANTLE

Patel’s material use is not confined to clay alone but extends to anything that brings in the green quotient and reduces carbon footprint. This is evident in his restaurant project where metal was used to create the structure. “The restaurant was required to be built for a client who had been managing a mobile eatery for a decade and a half. The new restaurant proposed was on a leased land which made its presence temporary. The objective was to be able to dismantle the structure and shift to another location whenever required”, explains Patel.

Since the site already housed a small residence in the form of two rooms and an open veranda spanning 18 feet, Patel decided to work around this structure. The existing building was converted into

a kitchen for the restaurant along with a family dining space. The open veranda was turned into the main restaurant using corrugated metal sheets that could be dismantled anytime and shifted. “The corrugated metal sheets were deliberately placed in a zig zag manner to create an attractive pattern that became pronounced once the sheets were painted”, says Patel.

Metal is known to conduct heat and in a place like Ahmedabad, this can be a serious cause for concern during the hot summer months. This is especially so as not only the roof was metalled, but also the façade of the restaurant, structured using flat metal sheets in similar zig zag patterns. “We worked around the heat ingress in two ways. The roof was lined with waste Thermocol in a 4 inch cavity that was created. This effectively served as insulation and cut down the radiation. While the Thermocol cut the heat ingress, vents were still required to let the hot air out from the interiors. This was accomplished by creating slits on the roof in strategic points whereby hot air was pushed out and simultaneously cool air gushed in”, elaborates Patel.



Artistic floor patterns created with waste broken tiles.



Broken clay roof tiles used to create an artistic highlight.



Exposed brick serves as wall art in the interiors.



Clay roof tiles and exposed concrete combine to create the unique aesthetics.



Art with clay roof tiles.



Top & above: Wall art with clay roof tiles.

GREEN, YET ECONOMICAL

Patel is currently working on a retail space that is barely 125 Sq ft with negligible budget and is tasked with creating a green interior that is economical, yet aesthetic. “An eco-friendly design and material use is oft perceived as expensive and beyond budget constrained projects. But this is far from true. A design has to be climate responsive as well as economical, exploring multiple options for reuse, recycling, upcycling of materials”, states Patel. His experimentation and innovation with different eco-friendly, climate responsive materials and design is explicitly aimed towards this. “There is now also a need to ensure some of the traditional



Top & above: Interiors and exterior facade of the restaurant built using corrugated metal sheets.

techniques, crafts and artisans are revived as in most cases these are tuned to address local climatic conditions besides reducing carbon footprint.” Unless urgent steps are taken in this direction, many of our traditional techniques, skills and crafts will eventually remain only in records, warns Patel.

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A CRAFTED ENTRY



Doorways mark the first point of impression to a built space. The simplicity or the grandeur it displays, gives a peek into what lies further within the built space. Historically, this significance that a doorway holds has been well recognised and dealt with appropriate design and structuring of the same, its presence serving as the first welcome post to an interior space.

Interior Designer Mahesh Chadaga, with his discerning lenses, captures the intricacies of doors from various parts of India, where each has a history and a story to tell, featuring not only as the cultural and lifestyle identity of the respective region but also as an ode to the expert craftsmen who toiled to create these magnificent entries.

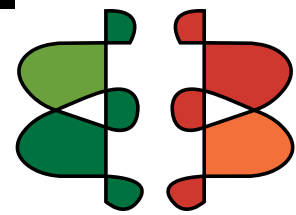


The doors featured, range from Rajasthan in Northern India to Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu in the South. Not only do these doors reveal intricate detailing in the form of carving and metal inlays by the highly skilled traditional craftsmen in each region, the pillars and lintels supporting these exquisite doors too display similar workmanship.





Interestingly, the accompanying walls too have not been spared, with artwork decorating them, making each entrance a work of art and beauty, while also addressing functionality as revealed in one of the entrances where the work tool of the resident rests silently besides the doorway.



HAPPENINGS IN BRC DESIGN AND A CONVERSATION

BY AR. KAVITA SASTRY



Hard Rock Cafe by Architect Sandeep Khosla



Episode 1: The Practice.



1Q1 Restaurant by Architect Sandeep Khosla

The pandemic has certainly created one thing that was sparse in a pre-pandemic world—Time; Time to pause, time to think and reflect, time to converse, time to make a connect. The work from home concept that emerged, freed the commute time that professionals lost every day, be it on local travel or beyond, releasing that time to ponder and interact, rethink, re-evaluate. In short, the social distancing did not bring in a social disconnect but worked to connect more, the interactions coming up virtually and more often.

The field of design is no different, the designers keen to use this new found time to connect with professionals and bounce off ideas, run through other's designs, comment, assimilate, exchange notes. An idea, not surprisingly was soon born, with IIID BRC thence coming up with a curated series of 10 episodes, calling it very appropriately as Unmasked 1.0 where the focus was on presentations and discussions around sustainable design, environmental damage control, education, work opportunities and collaborative design practices.

Given the plight of the migrant workers in the urban areas, Unmasked 1.0 was also conceived as a fund raiser to assist the migrant labour and facilitate their return to their respective villages. Two NGOs were identified to fulfil the objective of this fund raising initiative, Gubbachi—for children of migrant construction workers, Vimor—for handloom weavers. Given the



Episode 2: Artisinal

resounding success of Unmasked 1.0, there was a call to initiate a second round of series and this unfolded as Unmasked 2.0 with a limited 4 episode series. NGO Samridhdhi was a partner to this series, aiding in the initiative to assist migrant construction workers further.

Unmasked 2.0 hosted the award winning duo, Architects Sandeep Khosla and Amareesh of Khosla Associates on its first episode, The Practice-sponsored by Quattroluxe, where they spoke on their 3 decade journey in design, spanning astounding projects and design. Their distinct tropical architecture using local materials and concepts, interpreting them to suit the unique contemporary needs and sensibilities, had the audience captivated. Their interest in global trends in fashion, lifestyle and design was captured in a varied palette showcased comprising of bars, restaurants, office spaces, hospitality projects across the country.

The second episode, Artisanal-sponsored by Simply Sofas, featured Interior Designer Shruti Jaipuria, Designers Atul Johri and Suman Roddam in an effort to raise awareness and preserve our traditional crafts, integrate the same into the design psyche. For Shruti, designing sensitively using our traditional crafts demands exploring the material to be used, study the human behaviour and collaborate with artists, homeowners to create a unique spatial experience.

While interior designer Atul Johri has worked with some of the finest master craftsmen across the country and initiated work on paper sculpture lights, engineer Suman Roddam returned from a 7 year sojourn in the US, to pursue his passion that translated as the co-founder of Bamboopecker. Roddam shared the journey of Bamboopecker that started with bamboo furniture to later extend to adopting various eco-friendly materials that provide complete sustainable lifestyle solutions, ranging from construction to interiors fittings and furnishings.

The third episode, Serendipity-sponsored by Panasonic Kitchens, involved an experiential voyage of blurred boundaries involving architecture and landscape. The episode hosted the collaborative works of Sri Lanka Architect, Palinda Kannangara and predominantly Bangalore based Landscape Architect, Varna Shashidhar. Their work is a poetic exploration of relationships between the built and the unbuilt spaces, between material and nature, between architecture and landscape. Palinda's and Varna's collaborative works are an Ode to Nature, leaving the audience astounded by the simplicity and cohesiveness of the picturesque environs and contemplative spaces. Palinda's inspiration primarily is monasteries of Sri Lanka with no demarcation between architecture and landscape.

Some of the projects showcased included Artists Retreat at Pittugala – a sensitively designed retreat harmonising locally sourced materials with a profusion of landscape. Wellness Retreat



Episode 3: Urban Sanctum, Colombo



Episode 3: Varna BIC, Bangalore.



Episode 3: Wellness Retreat, Harbanara.

Harbanara—inspired by the ancient cities surrounding the site, the architecture takes on the same language giving precedence to landscape and waterbodies. Urban Sanctum in Colombo—an interior project, Personal studio and Frame at Imaduwa were some of the other projects featured.

Varna’s works focus on the creation of contextual landscape. Her projects also encompass degraded and ecologically sensitive environments. Some of her well-known projects showcased were BIC wherein most plant species used were urban pollinators. Her project Big Brewsky revealed the intelligent use of waterbodies with multi-species plants creating a micro system.

The fourth episode, Partners in Crime-sponsored by Marble Centre International, had the office of Balan and Nambisan Architects sharing their journey. In a scintillating presentation, Architects Arun Balan, Arjun Nambisan and Nilanjana spoke not only about their amazing designs but also the struggles and the chaos that they often encountered in their work. Dotted with humorous anecdotes, each of them gave their diverse perspectives and narrated many incidents that were a common phenomenon in their day to day working that culminated in fabulous award winning designs.



Episode 4: BNA_JB



Episode 4: Partners in Crime



Episode 4: BNA_TBL



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Panel discussion.

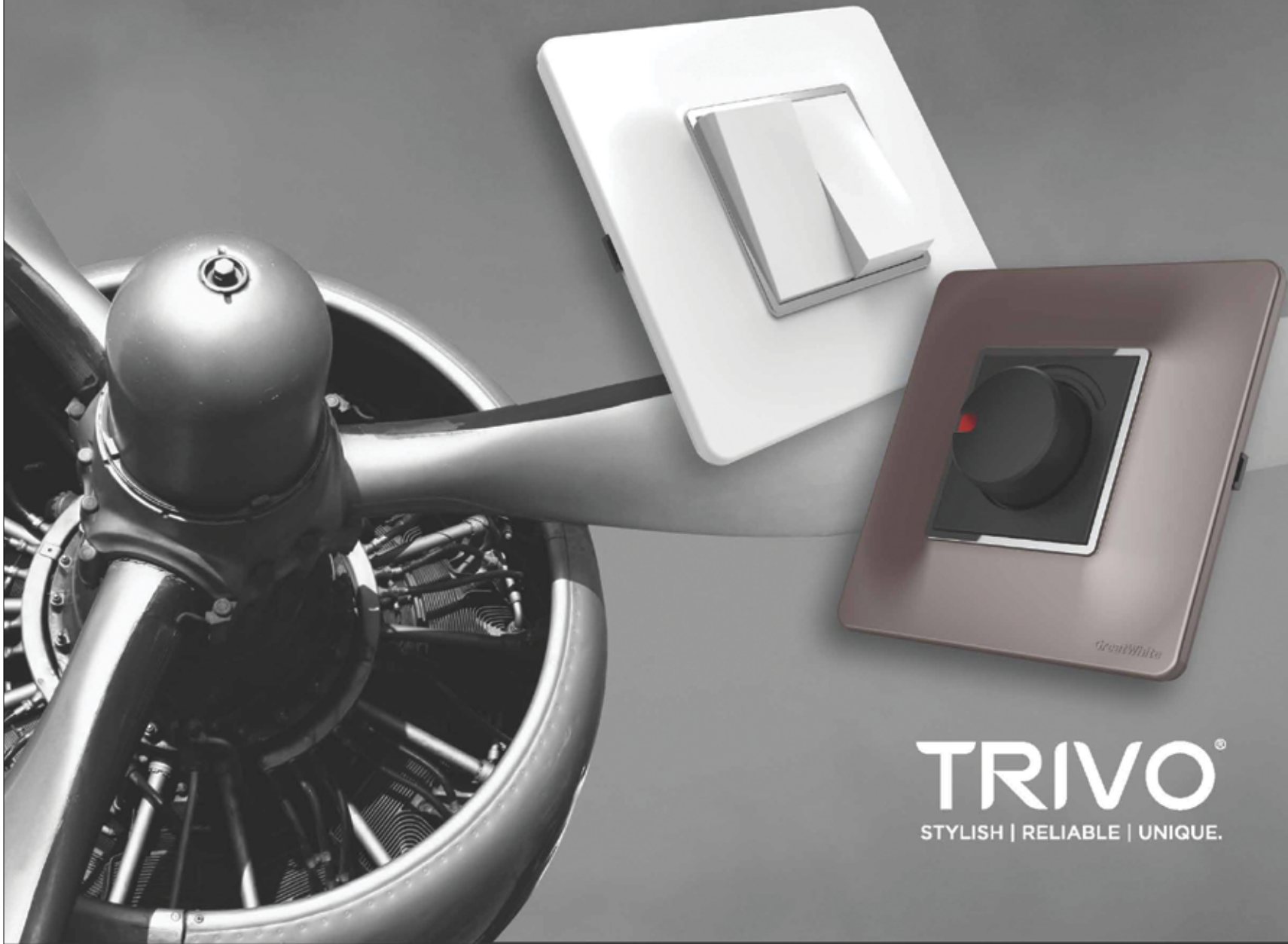


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Given the success of the two Unmasked series, it is no surprise that Unmasked 3.0 also soon unfolded with a presentation by Kai Uwe Bergmann, Partner at Bjarke Ingels Group, New York. Winner of multiple international awards, BIG is known for its iconic architecture, with a huge fan following in the contemporary design context. The two hour presentation by Kai Bergmann involved projects spanning across the US, Europe, Middle East and Asia, beginning from the smallest project to the most magnificent of BIG Projects. The event was sponsored by Everest Industries.

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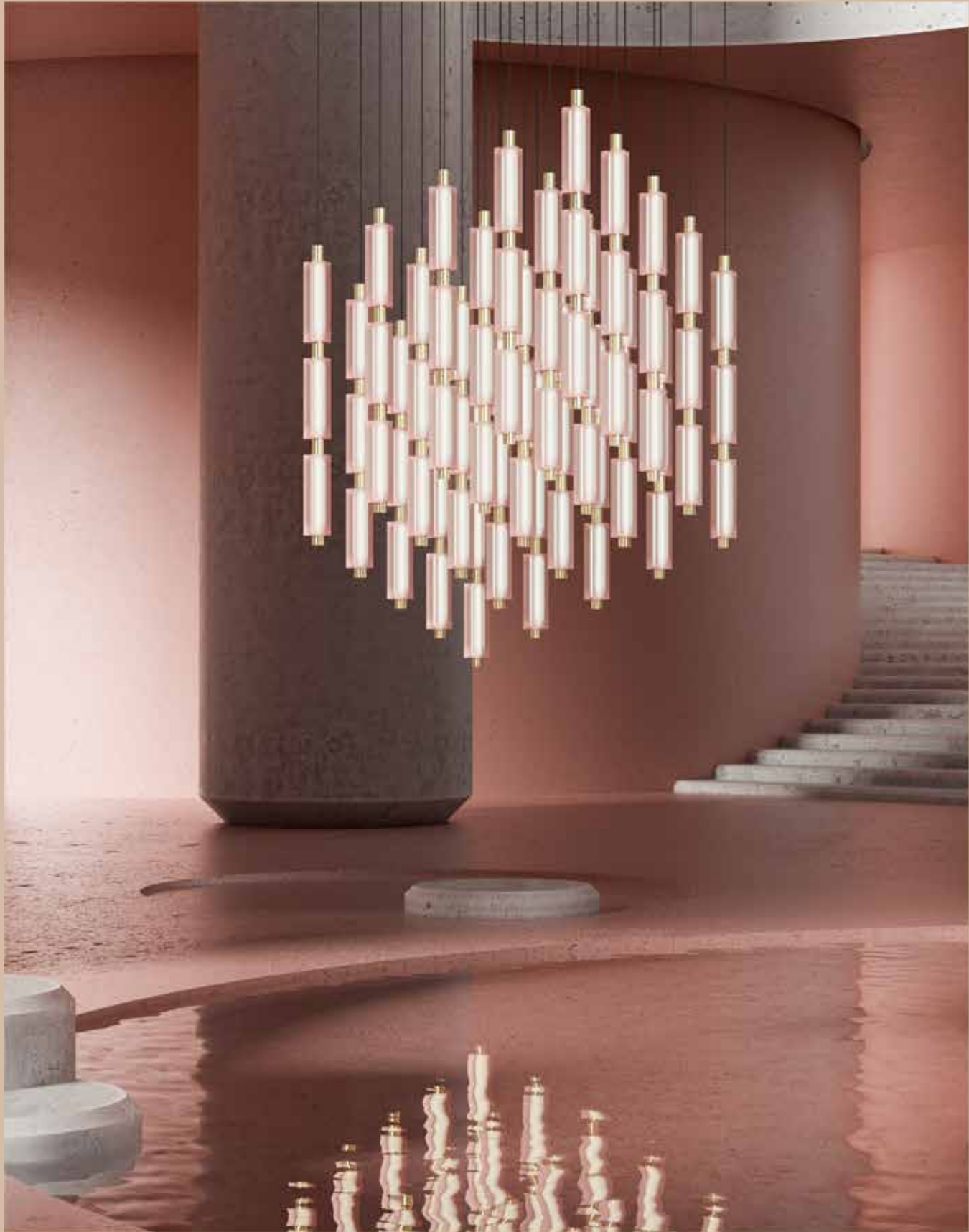
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