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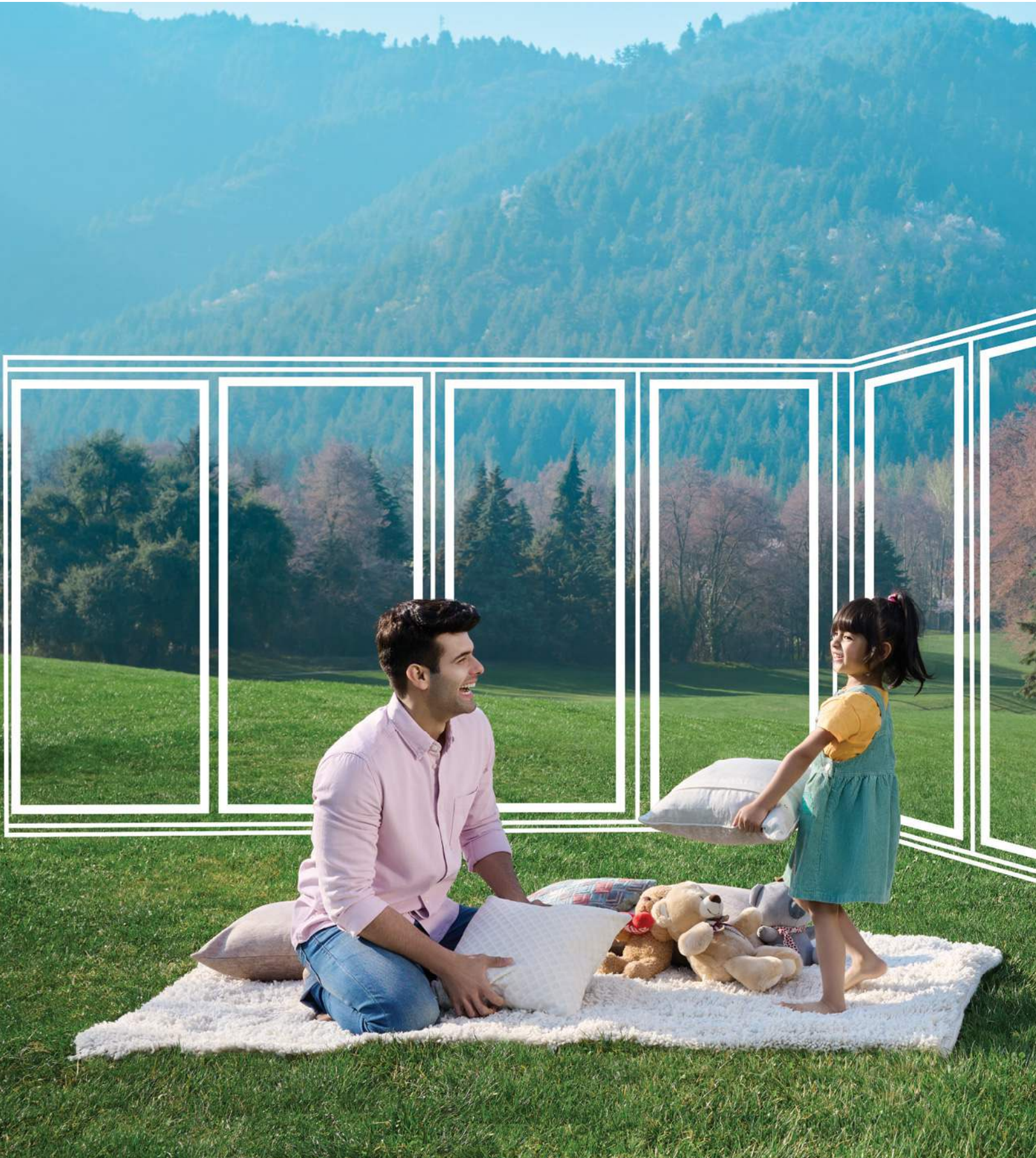
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“As designers, we have such power to make design change the world. We really need to make better use of our platform and do stuff that is useful.”

—YINKA ILORI



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Bespoke Luxury

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“Good design is actually a lot harder to notice than poor design, in part because good designs fit our needs so well that the design is invisible.”

—DON NORMAN

Luxury is subjective! It has many connotations, some tangible and some intangible. The notion of luxury has evolved, or should I say, the notion of luxury is layered. It’s no longer about the brand name or the price tag. After all, refinement isn’t necessarily indicated by a price tag.

“If bespoke luxury were a flavour, it would be an exquisite blend of rare spices, rich chocolates, and delicate floral notes,” says Priyank Mehta of Attitudes in his interview with Ankita Rathod. So apt! Luxury, ultimately, is something that makes you feel special. In this Issue, we delve deeper into the nuances of luxury and into the enchanting and exclusive realm of bespoke luxury, into the shifting meaning of luxury, exploring its roots and essence in an ever-changing world.

In our cover feature, we speak to Simran Boparai, the visionary founder of her eponymous practice Simran Boparai Archtelier, who has deftly tapped into the luxury market. Simran’s residential projects are a study in opulence and grandeur. In an in-depth interview, the visionary designer talks about her inspirations and her journey through design.

As usual, we have an interesting mix of residential and commercial projects that are the epitome of good design and luxury.

And yes, we are gearing up for the 41st Anniversary Issue. So, stay tuned!

Happy Reading.

(Seema Sreedharan)

Editor

The Depot of museum Boijmans van Beuningen famous architecture in Rotterdam



Image
of
the **Month**

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Market Review

TRADE NEWS

Grant Garmezy in India: Sculpting Indian Heritage at Rural Modern Glass Studio

Contemporary glass artist, Grant Garmezy wowed discerning audience with his fascinating creations at the Rural Modern Glass Studio by Arjun Rathi, Principal at Arjun

Rathi Design, Founder of Rural Modern Glass Studio and Co-founder of Design Democracy. Marking his inaugural appearance in India, Garmezy gave a peek into his fascinating

world of craftsmanship at the glass studio. A distinguished global artist renowned for his exceptional contributions to the world of glass sculpting, Garmezy unveiled his unparalleled talent

sculpting Indian heritage at the Rural Modern Glass Studio. Nothing less than a spectacle, Garmezy enthralled the audience by showcasing his mastery, bringing to life the essence of Indian heritage through the medium of glass. Delving into the intricate fusion of art, culture, and skill as Garmezy captivated the audiences with his unique interpretations and artistic vision.



TRADE NEWS

Architectural Lighting Solutions for Exquisite Homes

Ledure Lightings Limited recently introduced a range of Architectural Lighting solutions that will illuminate your surroundings with the ideal balance of elegance. Architectural lighting brings together the practicality of lighting design with the beauty of architecture. It uses light to emphasize or enhance a space's architecture. In other words, Architectural Lighting sits at the intersection of art/architecture and lighting technology.



AWARDS

The GEEVEES Awards: Celebrating Smart Conscious Design

The GeeVees Awards" an initiative by Godrej Locks & Architectural Fittings and Systems in 2021-2022, is a prestigious platform that recognizes and celebrates India's finest innovations in

architecture and interior design. Shyam Motwani, Business Head at Godrej Locks & Architectural Fittings and Systems, expressed, "At Godrej Locks & Architectural Fittings and Systems, we deeply value fresh ideas and bright

minds. The GeeVees Awards provides an ideal platform for us to express our appreciation and admiration for design ingenuity. The 2024 edition of the GeeVees Awards was a vibrant celebration of creativity and sustainability.

Our panel, comprised of respected industry experts, scoured the nation for talent in sustainable architecture and interior design. With GeeVees, our mission extends beyond mere recognition; we aspire to inspire architects and designers, collaborating with like-minded young visionaries to create designs that not only aesthetically please but also contribute positively to our society."

TRADE NEWS

Shaping the Future of Furniture with Innovation

FABWood by Merino is a ground-breaking exit from traditional particle boards, which were typically crafted from small wooden particles. The innovation represents a significant leap forward in chipboard manufacturing that underscores Merino's commitment to revolutionizing the industry while emphasizing health-conscious design, sustainability, durability, and versatile aesthetics. Amidst this transformation, Merino's



FABWood emerges as a trailblazer, poised to redefine the furniture industry landscape. The future of furniture rests on durability, and FABWood delivers with cutting-edge technology ensuring exceptional strength,

longevity, and reliability. FABWood stands out with its best-in-class load-bearing and screw-holding capabilities, exceeding American lifecycle standards (BIFMA). This exceptional strength is achieved through the proprietary

Chip Weave Technology™ and advanced 3D bonding, setting new benchmarks in the industry. Its high surface impact strength makes it ideal for various applications, ensuring longevity and reliability. ✚

SUSHANT VERMA, RAT[LAB] STUDIO

NOT A RAT RACE

Driven by a passion for innovation and a deep-seated curiosity for the potential of computational tools in architectural design, Sushant has embarked on a journey to integrate technology seamlessly into his practice

Interview by: Kashish Kaushal



Sushant Verma, Co-founder & Design Head, rat[LAB] Studio

Sushant Jai-Amita Verma stands at the forefront of innovative architectural design, blending artistry with cutting-edge technology to redefine the boundaries of modern architecture. With an illustrious career spanning international accolades, pioneering research, and transformative educational initiatives, he exemplifies the epitome of a visionary architect, design technologist, and educator. Currently leading rat[LAB] Studio, Sushant's commitment to bridging the gap between technology and design education led to the establishment of rat[LAB]EDUCATION, SMART LABS, and EDU[LAB] INDIA, pioneering initiatives advocating the use of technology in design through workshops, programs, and online portals. Recognizing the lack of formal education in design technologies in India, Verma's initiatives have empowered thousands of aspiring architects and designers with essential computational design skills, reshaping the landscape of design education in the country.

As a forward-thinking architect, Sushant remains at the forefront of emerging technologies, including AI, robotics, and AR/VR, harnessing their potential to revolutionize design processes and pedagogy. His visionary leadership and dedication to advancing architectural design education have earned him widespread acclaim, transforming the industry and inspiring a new generation of architects to embrace computational design and embrace the ever-evolving technological landscape. In this interview, we are delving into the innovative world of architecture as guided by the expertise and insights of **Sushant Verma**, one groundbreaking project at a time. Through his experiences and initiatives, we aim to convey the importance of integrating technology into architectural design, emphasizing the intersection of design, art, and technology as a catalyst for transformative architectural solutions.

Your work at rat[LAB] explores the intersection of design, art, and technology. Can you share an example project that exemplifies this multidisciplinary approach?

The recently finished HeadField façade project for a commercial office space in Noida, is a very artistic design that we created for parametric façade wherein we were playing with certain curves and curvilinear geometries which could be modularised in bespoke ways. We gave a new language to the brand in the geometric essence. Just to get that right we had to deploy technology in various ways. First, we deployed digital fabrication aspects into the façade design.



SmartLABS showcase 8.0
model assembly



Head Field facade



Patel Nagar Office facade in the making

“One needs to be very open to learning new technologies, whatever is coming in the profession or even outside the profession. Because, if you learn a technology now five years down the line it is going to be redundant.”



Computational design
Education fabrication





Once the design was done digitally we 3D printed a couple of iterations to value engineer the façade and in the process of value engineering we also looked into the execution of the façade for which we used CNC machines and bending machines in a custom manner to give the curvature, rationalize the geometry and also do environmental studies to make it more sustainable. So, I believe that is a perfect example, in a recent project, where design, art and technology is intersected in a unique manner to realize an interesting façade while also giving an artistic branding to the project.

What first sparked your interest in integrating computational tools and technologies into architectural design practice?

The interest in technology came from an early age as a designer; not just as a designer, even before I became a designer. I think I was intrigued by technology and enjoyed exploring different software and also operating with a lot of hardware, played with computers. There was a personal interest in technology. When pursuing architecture, there was a sort of zeal to connect these technologies into design and fuse them. At the same time, I had very deep interest in complex forms and geometries in architecture, specifically very much inspired by the works of Zaha Hadid, Frank Gehry, Calatrava, Peter Eisenman, these kinds of professionals who were really making a big mark at that time. I think that really sparked a lot of interest in me in understanding how these complex designs in geometries are being realized and designed. That is where we started to explore computational design. I was also doing masters in emergent technologies and worked with a robotics company after which I was fortunate to be working with Zaha Hadid architects. During all these experiences and exposures that I got, I realised that computational design is one of the emergent technologies which needs to be integrated into design which is also where our architectural design practice started to integrate computational design at its core. So computational design was not only limited to coding but also other

aspects of parametric design, evolutionary design, and generative design and recently we started to explore a lot of artificial intelligence as well. In all, I think the interest of integrating computation to design technologies is pretty much to make unique things be realized basically and that is where I started from.

rat[LAB]EDUCATION has been pivotal in advocating technology in design education through workshops. What gaps did you identify that motivated starting these initiatives?

Interestingly while being in the UK and US, I was exposed to a lot of different forums, different conferences and workshops that were happening to train people informally about computational design which was not a part of regular curriculum. That really sparked my interest; that this is something that we want to really bring into India as well. And at that time in India, nobody knew of computational design, not many people were exposed to it and therefore a new discourse really needed to be started. When I came back to India in 2015, I realised that we need to setup rat[LAB] Education as an academic initiative. We started doing a lot of workshops in different cities across India, teaching designers and students and professionals of design about computational design. We were involved in a lot of conferences and with universities to set up their curriculum. That really set up the foundation and I think the gaps that we identified was that there was no formal education in design technologies or computational design in general in any of the colleges and the question aroused about how someone would learn about these tools. Likewise, when I was doing my master's at AA, I realised that I was lacking with the right information and knowledge and experience beforehand on these subjects. I had to really put in the extra effort to learn about computational design and technologies to make the best of the opportunities that I was offered during my own learning course. It was another notion that anybody planning to go for higher studies should be exposed to these tools and techniques beforehand.



SmartLABS showcase 8.0

“We truly believe that innovation happens through deeply engraved design research which is where the laboratory culture comes into the picture in an experimental practice. We always like to experiment with something new and be innovative in whatever we do whether it is small furniture or a façade or a city scale project.”

That was pretty much how we started to fill the gaps and ten years from then I think going over 125-130 workshops with about 4000+ architectural designers across India, we have really made a big mark in changing the flavour of the industry I would say.

How are emerging technologies like AI, robotics, AR/VR influencing the future of design education and pedagogy? With your global experience, how do you see the adoption of design technologies differing in India compared to other regions?

Back in 2011, I started getting exposed to emergent technologies while I was doing the master's to gain emergent knowledge in design at the AA, EmTech. That was the time that I really started to understand robotics. AI was not very developed at that time, but machine learning was still in the dialogues and discourse. Then of course parametric design was at the crux of becoming the next big thing at that time. How is it influencing the design education is I would say these tools and techniques when you master them, they really offer you a very broad creative insight into what you can design, what you can realize, what you can rationalize and what you can optimize. I think these tools are very powerful assets in your

hand to be able to design much better spaces much more designed and optimized spaces. All these tools facilitate the design process and make the design a lot better. In education, it is definitely the important aspect of future education because we have to deploy the future architects and designers with the right kind of skills and toolsets of the future. We can't just be working with the tools of the past. India has been catching up really well in the last four or five years, I think especially post-covid when the world became disconnected yet much more connected than ever before. People got really exposed to what is happening globally in terms of design education and gained the ambition to learn more and more and to adapt to new tech and new tools. There is still a big lack of formal setups providing such education, that's why different informal or unconventional workshops and educational forums are much more powerful right now. Very similar to that is smartLABS, what we started as a six-month programme at one time. Now, we have eight batches graduating out of that. More than 150 participants from different parts of the world were able to learn about computational design. I think that is a big change. Slowly the colleges and education system is also adapting to that and we are catching up with the global education system.



SmartLABS showcase 8.0
model assembly



SmartLABS showcase 8.0 suspended
model for exhibition



Vision IAS Delhi branding angular planes

What drove the decision to establish “laboratory-cultures” of explorative design practice through rat[LAB]? How does rat[LAB] approach the sustainability and ecological impacts of the built environments you design?

The idea of laboratory culture is obviously deeply ingrained in the studio because when we set up the practice, me and Pradeep, we were coming up with the whole idea of a practice of a small close-knit group, an initiative of like-minded people who would come together and be experimental in their approach. This is where the research comes into the picture. That’s why it is called ratLAB – Research in Architecture and Technology. We truly believe that innovation happens through deeply engraved design research which is where the laboratory culture comes into the picture in an experimental practice. We always like to experiment with something new and be innovative in whatever we do whether it is small furniture or a façade or a city scale project.

I don’t think we are in any way different from any other conventional architectural practices which are sensitively and sensibly looking at sustainability and ecological impact because that is the need of the hour. It is something that we do in whatever we design, whatever we do, particularly in how we design a lot of facades. Most of them are protective building envelopes that can have an impact on what we are building. We really like to control the microclimate and the environment by the appropriate configuration of geometries, the right kind of designs that are sustainable and have a better

environmental impact as well. The kind of materials that we use also bends towards the idea of sustainability. We try to use local materials and try to innovate with local materials itself. I don’t think there is anything that we do which is not looking into or factoring sustainability.

You’ve mentioned making design education more scalable and accessible. What innovations are needed to achieve this?

When we started rat[LAB] Education, we were obviously not working at a large scale. We were working on a smaller scale to create smaller workshops and have a smaller impact thereby. Over a period of time, we realised that a lot of people need accessibility to these kind of education systems and so instead of going from one city to another and doing this kind of workshops and collaborations, we set up smartLABS which was a hybrid programme much of which was online. The hybrid programme started in the pre-covid era when nobody had heard of a hybrid or online education, but we tried that as a pilot project wherein we could open up a programme which is partially happening online and partially in studios wherein anybody from different parts of the world could be a part of it. I think that was the first step to making design education scalable and accessible. Apart from that, we also had been in the process of setting up EduLAB India which is a platform that we have been working on in the last couple of years wherein we are documenting all our educative initiatives into a self-learning guided programme which is very affordable,



Vision IAS Delhi linear geometries

“I don’t think we are in any way different from any other conventional architectural practices which are sensitively and sensibly looking at sustainability and ecological impact because that is the need of the hour.”

accessible to anyone. Anybody can subscribe to it and learn from that without any intervention of being a part of a workshop as such. The kind of innovation this requires is of course the technology of the platform, creating the subscription method and documenting our whole educational knowledge with the knowledge bank that we have produced in the last ten years. This is where we are also deploying artificial intelligence to recreate the programmes, to train the programmes and the curriculum to adapt to different needs and changes of people. We are still on it; this is a work in progress. Maybe in the next couple of years, when we have this technology out for the public, I think we can talk more about accessibility and scalability of design education. That is the impact which we wish to create.

For young designers, what advice would you give on upskilling in computational design and embracing new technologies?

One needs to be very open to learning new technologies, whatever is

coming in the profession or even outside the profession. Because, if you learn a technology now five years down the line it is going to be redundant. That is the pace at which technology grows in the world. One has to really open up the mind-set to learn about design thinking and develop a knack for learning new technologies. It is not about learning software, but it is more about learning a soft skill which allows being adaptive to learning anything new. My advice would be to upskill themselves in terms of computational design for sure. Whether they want to embrace it to the next level or not, that totally depends on the individual’s interest and alignment to that technology. But I would say it is the need of the hour to be updated with what is happening around the globe in terms of the design profession and if you are updated with it, obviously you can make much better use of it. So, to all the young designers, my main advice would be to be open-minded, learn things which are new and not be complacent with what you already know. With that mindset, you would always continue to evolve. ✚

PHOTOGRAPHER, AD-FILMMAKER & ART EXHIBITOR

TEJAL PATNI

Engaging in a free-wheeling chat about the not-so-bizarre world of his rather well-paved journey, Patni gives us a peek into his creative mind and the diverse influences that have shaped his artistic vision, right after the resounding success of his debut show, *Vichitra*

Interview by: **Ankita Rathod**



An artistic legacy and familial influence, **Tejal Patni** emerges as the poster-boy of the ad film era from the 90s. Having apprenticed under the supreme genius Prabhu Dasgupta and a product of the cult collective agency Trikaya Grey, Patni started as a photographer and ad filmmaker. However, the recent outburst of his first immersive art showcase — ‘*Vichitra*’— translating to ‘Bizarre’— last month has truly caught attention.

Patni’s work transcends traditional boundaries, embodying the ethos of the modern artist. His pieces evoke a sense of meta-irony, challenging conventional notions of meaning and reality. Through a seamless fusion of art, installation, and experience, he invites viewers into a realm where satire and dark humor intertwine, fostering connection and understanding in a fragmented world.

“So, when we finally said OK, let’s do this. Then, when toilet paper happened a few months ago, I told Raman, who is the gallery director and part of Snowball, I said it’s the right time. People are ready! India is ready,” exclaims 53-year-old Tejal Patni over our zoom call just a day after wrapping up his first solo immersive art show from the comfort of his home in Dubai after working on it for the last two long years!

Cut to the vibrant streets of old Bombay, the echoes of Tejal Patni’s artistic journey reverberate through the charming bylanes of Fort. Here, amidst the hustle and bustle of everyday life, a young Patni diligently walks into a raddi shop, day after day, immersing himself in the works of iconic American typography artist Neville Brody.

“As a young artist, a Hitchcock film was a revelation,” Patni reminisces, his voice tinged with nostalgia, his eyes momentarily distant as he recalls the profound impact of cinema on his craft. “And delving into the darker realms of visual storytelling, Tim Burton emerged as a master of all. ‘*Sleepy Hollow*’ was a turning point for me, a fantastic body of work that reshaped my perspective and influenced my artistic trajectory in profound ways.”

Yet, it wasn’t just the silver screen that shaped Patni’s artistic vision. “Then there was Gregory Crewdson,” he continues, his voice brimming with admiration. “His approach to photography was nothing short of fine art. He was a maestro who meticulously crafted each image, hiring the top DOPs in Hollywood to build sets for single shots. The result? Pure magic. His work, reminiscent of a Hitchcock scene, yet uniquely his own, became



an integral part of my artistic DNA. I absolutely love his work.”

In these words, we glimpse the essence of Patni’s creative journey—a tapestry woven from the threads of cinematic brilliance and photographic mastery, each influence leaving an indelible mark on his artistry. And as we stand on the cusp of his latest endeavor, ‘Vichitra,’ we can’t help but marvel at the depth and richness of his creative tapestry, a testament to the enduring power of inspiration.

Excerpts from the interview:

Tell us about your background and what inspired you to pursue photography?

Well, I’m proud to call myself a little boy from Kutch, India, and my father was a legendary photographer in his time. His roots in the craft began at the esteemed JJ School of Arts in Bombay, which laid the foundation for my own aspirations. Moving with my family to Dubai in 1977, I found myself drawn to the arts from a young age. While I initially harboured dreams of becoming a director, the sight of my father labouring over his equipment during photoshoots left me hesitant

about the taxing nature of photography. However, the allure of the creative process beckoned me, especially as I watched my father effortlessly master various genres, from portraits with models like Mehr Jesia and Rachel Rubin to industrial and food photography. This exposure piqued my curiosity, leading me to enroll at the JJ School of Arts to pursue my passion.

How did your journey into photography progress from there?

It was quite an adventure. Firstly, I’m an extremely shy personality, but when it comes to reaching out regarding something that I wanna do, I am pretty. I’m not aggressive, but I am also very like a doctor, so I would definitely come to you and say, ‘listen, I think I’m good and maybe you should feature this. So, during my third year of college, I began capturing images under the streetlamp at night, finding the darkness fascinating. As a result, much of my work took on a dark tone, a term I feel has become recognized in artistic circles. This movie is dark. His photography is dark, but to me, there’s more to it—it’s cinematic, it’s moody.



“The exhibition represents a new chapter for me. Initially inspired by a building in Delhi, I sought to convert it into a gallery space. However, practicality led to a more innovative approach, integrating the building into the gallery experience.”

I started shooting a lot under the streetlamp, and because I was active and experimental, Milind Soman and Arjun Rampal got wind of my work, especially since I spent time with the late and great Prabuddha Dasgupta whenever he was in Bombay. This made the industry more welcoming. We'd do shoots with Milind at 11:00 PM under Byculla bridge, creating timeless photos.

As my reputation grew, industry art directors began to take notice, enlisting my services for their pitches. Eventually within a 5-minute meeting via Preeti Vyas I was chosen to work on a campaign for Gujarat and Ambuja Cement for Trikaya Grey with Alok Nanda & Vikas Gaitonde, who instilled the ethos of 'walk with the giants,' in me.

Could you share some of your early influences and inspirations in photography?

I used to frequent the *raddi* shop in Bombay, where they sold these incredible magazines like Phase and Arena. Neville Brody, with his

stunning typography, was someone I admired and followed closely. I would immerse myself in those magazines, absorbing everything they had to offer. Even after moving back to Dubai following my time at JJ School of Arts, I maintained this routine diligently. It was a daily routine to the magazine shop, which was especially valuable without the internet.

Legendary/ iconic people whose work you really looked up to while growing up?

Sean Ellis and Nick Knight are like the pioneers of edgy, breakthrough work that deeply influenced my style. Then there's Steven Meisel and Peter Lindbergh, whose versatility is unmatched; every photographer aspires to capture Lindbergh's style, but nobody quite nails it like he does. Moving into filmmaking, the Coen brothers' attention to visual storytelling through single frames inspired me deeply. Hitchcock and Tim Burton's dark, cinematic worlds have always fascinated me,



especially “Sleepy Hollow,” which left a lasting impression. And in color work, Gregory Crewdson’s approach to photography as fine art is truly mind-blowing. He creates these Hitchcockian scenes with his unique twist, and his work has become a part of my artistic DNA.

How has the transition been from photography to filmmaking and now presenting an art exhibition?

It’s been quite a journey. Back in 2003, I decided to take a break from my photography career to study film in the UK. And while I had the opportunity to assist directors, I deliberately chose to study film making among younger students in the UK. I was possibly the second oldest in my class and believe me it was a refreshing experience that allowed me to reinvent and recycle my skills. It was a transformative experience.

Similarly, the exhibition represents a new chapter for me. Initially inspired by a building in Delhi, I sought to convert it into a gallery

space. However, practicality led to a more innovative approach, integrating the building into the gallery experience. This concept, akin to peering into spaces without walls, inspired the immersive ‘Vichitra’ exhibit. The journey from idea to realisation spanned two years, marked by excitement and creative exploration.

Was it a natural progression or was this always part of the plan?

It was a natural progression for me. I took the skills and knowledge I gained from photography and applied them to filmmaking. It was about telling visual stories in a different medium. For me, it felt like an evolution. It was about progressing and pushing boundaries. I was always conscious of evolving as an artist, rather than sticking to a specific style. Take, for instance, the super hard-directed images I created for the exhibition. People assumed they were digitally manipulated but were done purely through photography, years before AI became prevalent.





“I envisioned Vichitra to be fun, lighthearted, and celebratory. The overwhelming response from people of all ages and professions has been incredible. I aimed for it to be inclusive, inviting anyone who enjoys Shahrukh Khan and Salman Khan films.”

Tell us about the show Vichitra, walk us through the exhibit?

When you step into the exhibition space, you're greeted by an usher, which serves as a subtle reminder that you're about to delve into intimate aspects of people's lives. This notion was inspired by the immersive experiences I've had watching Cirque du Soleil shows, particularly the ones directed by Dragon, whom I had the privilege to work with on a campaign. As you proceed into the exhibition, they encounter the first room, which I envisioned as a combination of a laundry room and a metaphorical representation of money laundering. This room also pays homage to my childhood fascination with the Doordarshan logo, a symbol I spent hours gazing at while waiting for my favorite shows to begin. The inspiration for this room also stemmed from observing clothes swirling in a tumble dryer, evoking the constant movement of cash.

The fashion in this room draws inspiration from Moroccan photographers and designers I admire. Moving towards the left, one would find the lift man, symbolising blind faith in the face of uncertainty. The elevator's transformation into a local train serves as a callback to the promotional material featuring an astronaut wearing a helmet while traveling by train. So again, a little quirk of spaces. I just feel that life is a sliding door, if you miss the train or a bus, maybe there was a reason for you to miss it. But if you caught it, there was always a reason for you to catch it!

The 'peeping room,' which garnered significant attention, focused solely on animal reproduction—a topic of intrigue. Following that was the salon, where a subtle homage to Quentin Tarantino's style was evident. I've always admired his work. The kimono, featuring blood stains, served as a nod to a character's backstory—a Japanese gang lord operating in secrecy. The strategic placement of mirrors added depth, challenging conventional perceptions by selectively reflecting certain angles of the scene.

What did you hope the viewers take back from this?

My intention was for viewers to experience a range of emotions - from deep introspection to sheer delight. I wanted the images to linger in their minds long after they left the gallery. The essence lies in the purity of experiencing live images rather than through a phone screen.

And how do you see this interaction shaping the overall impact of Vichitra on the world?

I envisioned Vichitra to be fun, lighthearted, and celebratory. The overwhelming response from people of all ages and professions has been incredible. I aimed for it to be inclusive, inviting anyone who enjoys Shahrukh Khan and Salman Khan films. The secret recipe lies in its quirks and surprises, ensuring widespread appeal. I envision the show as a platform for fashion designers to showcase their work and for young musicians to explore their talent. ✚



COVER FEATURE

SIMRAN BOPARAI:
Reigning
in
Opulence

Celebrated for her bespoke, aspirational designs that blend grandeur with cultural heritage, Simran Boparai is the visionary architect sculpting opulent architectural marvels. From lavish residential estates to awe-inspiring commercial spaces, she discusses her neoclassical design philosophy, the pursuit of seamlessly integrating luxury with functionality, and her trailblazing vision for reshaping skylines across the globe

INTERVIEW: **KASHISH KAUSHAL** PORTRAITS: **ARYA ARORA**

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hile modern architecture has made inroads, Punjab's affluent sections still exhibit a penchant for lavish, ornate residences and commercial spaces that exude grandeur and royalty. This cultural predilection for opulence and status symbolism stems from Punjab's rich history,

where the aristocracy and landed gentry have long embraced a regal, ostentatious lifestyle. Architects working in Punjab often need to cater to these tastes for luxury and bling.

Simran Boparai, the visionary founder of her eponymous practice **Simran Boparai Archtelier**, has deftly tapped into this market, crafting bespoke architectural marvels that cater to the discerning tastes of Punjab's elite. Her forte lies in the Neoclassical design style, which pays homage to the classical architecture of ancient Greece and Rome while incorporating modern elements and sensibilities. Simran's residential projects are a study in opulence, with her Neoclassical designs featuring grandiose elements such as stately columns, pediments, and sinuous mouldings. From sprawling mansions adorned with intricate stone carvings and ornamental motifs, to palatial estates replete with grand entrances, sweeping courtyards, and lavish interiors, her designs seamlessly blend the grandeur of the past with contemporary luxury.

The Neoclassical interior style championed by Simran is characterized by its symmetry, proportions, and elegant detailing. Her expertise lies in curating these elements into cohesive, awe-inspiring environments that resonate with the region's cultural sensibilities. "I have a unique way of working as a process where we bring concepts and then derive them into practical design. The process is the key to my unique perspective," explains Simran, emphasising the importance of her design methodology in translating grand visions into tangible, functional spaces.

The firm's commercial endeavours are equally impressive, with Simran and her team creating awe-inspiring spaces that exude a sense of exclusivity and prestige through the Neoclassical lens. Opulent lobbies, grandiose facades, and meticulously curated interiors featuring exquisite materials and bespoke furnishings are hallmarks of their work.

Since its inception, Simran Boparai Archtelier has carved a niche for itself, becoming a torchbearer for architectural excellence. In this exclusive interview, we sit down with Simran Boparai to gain a comprehensive understanding of her remarkable journey, her inspirations, and her firm's multidisciplinary approach that has garnered international acclaim. Whether you're an architecture

enthusiast, a design aficionado, or someone who appreciates the art of spatial brilliance, this interview promises to be an engaging and enlightening read! Step into the realm of pulchre and innovation as the excerpts below reveal the mind and mastery of Simran Boparai:

Kashish Kaushal (KK): Can you tell us a bit about your background and what inspired you to pursue a career in architecture and design?

Simran Boparai (SB): What inspired me to pursue a career in architecture and design is a combination of passion, creativity, and a desire to make a positive impact on the built environment. Since my early years, I've been fascinated by the idea of shaping spaces that not only serve functional purposes but also evoke emotions and enrich lives. This passion led me to pursue my education in architecture. I completed my schooling at Sacred Heart Senior Secondary School Amritsar, where I first began to explore my interest in design. Following that, I pursued my bachelor's degree in architecture from Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar. It was during my time at university that I realized the potential of architecture to create meaningful change in the world. My first residential project of 20,000 square feet, though a bit daunting initially, became my best memory and fortified my love for this craft. It was a pivotal moment where I witnessed the transformation of ideas into tangible spaces, sparking a deep sense of fulfilment and purpose in me.

KK: Are there any architects, designers, or artists whose work has significantly influenced or inspired you?

SB: In exploring the question of influences in my work, I find myself tracing a rich lineage of architects, designers, and artists whose creations have deeply resonated with me. Rooted in the grandeur of neoclassical architecture, my creative journey echoes the elegance and sophistication of the French era of the 17th Century. From the visionary designs of Architect Louis Le Vau and Architect Jacques-Germain Soufflot to the timeless innovations of Architect Robert Adam in the 18th century, each luminary has left an indelible mark on my architectural sensibilities. Drawing inspiration not only from the structural marvels but also from the meticulously crafted landscapes of André Le Nôtre, I am captivated by the seamless integration of form and function. Transitioning through the centuries, the influence of architects like Louis Combes in the 19th century continues to shape my perspective, culminating in a profound appreciation for the contemporary brilliance of figures like Architect Zaha Hadid. However, it is the epoch spanning from the reign of King Louis XIV to King Louis XVI that holds a particularly special place in my heart, encapsulating an era of unparalleled artistic ingenuity and architectural splendour.

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I draw immense inspiration from the masterful work of Le Corbusier and his iconic designs that adorn Chandigarh. Witnessing the seamless integration of architecture and urban planning in this city fueled our ambition to establish a strong presence here. Transitioning from such modern influences, I find myself equally enchanted by the architectural marvels of the French era spanning from the reign of King Louis XIV to King Louis XVI.”

—**SIMRAN BOPARAI**, Founder, Simran Boparai Archtelier

The Classical Nouveau project is infused with a playful spirit, a bold stroke of colour, and a touch of modern ingenuity. Enter the realm of neoclassical design, where the timeless elegance of classical architecture meets the vibrant energy of contemporary aesthetics



Gone are the days of muted palettes; here at the Classical Nouveau project, vibrant hues adorn furniture and accents, injecting life and personality into every corner. From lush upholstery to striking drapery, each element serves as a canvas for self-expression, inviting inhabitants to revel in the richness of their surroundings





The drawing room exudes the timeless charm of classical design, where the ceiling serves as a masterpiece adorned with intricate brushwork reminiscent of ancient frescoes. Beyond the captivating ceiling, meticulous attention to detail brings the space to life, with classical architectural elements seamlessly blending with modern touches. This delicate balance between tradition and innovation creates a space that is both timeless and contemporary, embodying the essence of elegance and sophistication

In the dining area designed by Simran, elegant furnishings complement the design, creating an atmosphere of refined luxury. The space is adorned with tasteful accents and lighting fixtures that add warmth and ambiance, inviting guests to indulge in culinary delights while surrounded by contemporary elegance



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Our approach to design and architecture is influenced by a diverse range of perspectives, experiences, and cultural backgrounds within our team. With members hailing from various cultural heritages, we are enriched by a plethora of traditions and viewpoints that contribute to our design ethos.”

—SIMRAN BOPARAI, *Founder, Simran Boparai Archteliier*

KK: What was the driving force behind expanding your operations to Chandigarh and establishing a pan-India presence? How has the growth of your firm impacted your approach to design and project management, and what challenges have you faced in scaling your operations?

SB: The driving force behind expanding our operations to Chandigarh and establishing a pan-India presence stems from the city's pivotal role as a centre for monumental projects. Chandigarh, often regarded as the heart or the focal point for significant architectural endeavours, resonated deeply with our vision for growth and innovation. Personally, I draw immense inspiration from the masterful work of Le Corbusier and his iconic designs that adorn Chandigarh. Witnessing the seamless integration of architecture and urban planning in this city fuelled our ambition to establish a strong presence here.

The growth of our firm has significantly impacted our approach to design and project management. With an expanded reach and increased scale of operations, we've had to adapt our methodologies to ensure efficiency and excellence across diverse projects. Collaboration and communication have become paramount as we navigate larger teams and more complex endeavours. Scaling our operations has presented its share of challenges, including resource management, talent acquisition, and maintaining quality standards. Balancing rapid expansion with maintaining our commitment to excellence has required strategic planning and meticulous attention to detail. However, these challenges have also propelled us to refine our processes, foster innovation, and strengthen our capabilities as a multidisciplinary architectural firm.

KK: What unique perspectives or experiences have shaped your approach to design and architecture?

SB: Our approach to design and architecture is influenced by a diverse range of perspectives, experiences, and cultural backgrounds within our team. With members hailing from various cultural heritages, we are enriched by a plethora of traditions and viewpoints that contribute to our design ethos. This cultural diversity fosters a dynamic environment where ideas are exchanged, and creativity flourishes.

Our commitment to client-centered design further shapes our approach. Through close collaboration with our clients, we gain insight into their aspirations, needs, and values, treating them as integral partners in the design journey. By prioritising their input, we tailor our solutions to exceed expectations, ensuring a personalised and meaningful outcome.

In addition, my specialisation in Neo-classical design adds a distinctive dimension to our practice. By infusing classical elements into contemporary projects, we offer a unique perspective that blends tradition with innovation.







When approaching the balance between functionality and aesthetics, we prioritise originality, creativity, and ethical practices. We start by generating original ideas and concepts that address both functional requirements and aesthetic aspirations..”

—**SIMRAN BOPARAI**, *Founder, Simran Boparai Archteliier*

Our process involves translating conceptual ideas into practical designs, emphasising the importance of methodical planning and execution in achieving our signature style.

KK: How would you describe your design philosophy and the core principles that guide your work? Can you walk us through your typical design process, from conceptualisation to execution?

SB: Our design philosophy revolves around a deep appreciation for the transformative power of architecture to shape experiences, enrich lives, and inspire positive change. Rooted in our collective aspirations and cultural identity, our core principles guide every aspect of our work. Here's a walkthrough of our typical design process as an architectural firm—In our typical design process, we commence with a thorough understanding of the client's needs, project goals, and site context. This involves initial meetings and discussions to gather relevant information, including site conditions, regulatory constraints, and budgetary considerations. We delve into research and analysis to gain insights into the project's context, drawing inspiration from architectural precedents, case studies, and emerging trends. Based on this groundwork, we embark on conceptual design, generating initial design concepts that creatively respond to the client's vision and functional requirements.

Through iterative feedback and collaboration with the client and project team, we refine and develop the design, translating conceptual ideas into detailed architectural drawings, 3D renderings, and digital models. This meticulous process ensures that spatial relationships, materiality, and form are articulated with precision and clarity. Comprehensive technical documentation is prepared to communicate design intent and ensure regulatory compliance. Throughout the presentation and review stages, we engage with clients and stakeholders, incorporating feedback and making revisions as necessary to align with project goals and expectations. Upon approval of the design, we navigate the permitting process and proceed with construction administration, providing oversight, quality control, and coordination to ensure that the design is implemented according to specifications and standards. Upon completion, we conduct final inspections and walkthroughs to verify that the built environment meets design expectations and quality standards. We facilitate the transition to occupancy, conducting post-occupancy evaluations to assess performance and gather feedback for future improvements. Throughout this entire process, we uphold principles of originality, integrity, and ethical conduct, ensuring that our work reflects authenticity, innovation, and respect for intellectual property rights.

KK: You're renowned for creating bespoke, aspirational designs, particularly in the residential sector. What is your philosophy when it comes to designing luxurious residential estates and mansions?

SB: Our commitment to excellence drives us to pursue the highest standards of craftsmanship, attention to detail, and aesthetic refinement in every project we undertake. We strive to create spaces that not only meet but exceed the expectations of our clients, elevating their living experiences to unparalleled levels of luxury and sophistication. Innovation is at the heart of our design ethos, fuelling our quest to push the boundaries of creativity and explore new possibilities in architecture. Whether it's experimenting with cutting-edge materials, pioneering sustainable design solutions, or reimagining traditional architectural forms, we constantly seek innovative approaches to enriching the built environment. Central to our philosophy is our client-centric approach, which places the needs, desires, and aspirations of our clients at the forefront of the design process. We believe that truly exceptional architecture is born from a deep understanding of our clients' lifestyles, preferences, and values. By forging collaborative partnerships with our clients, we ensure that each design is not only a reflection of their unique identity but also a realization of their dreams and aspirations.

KK: Can you highlight a project where your firm's multidisciplinary expertise truly shined, and how did you integrate the various elements seamlessly?

SB: We strive to be the vanguards of transformative architecture, leaving an enduring legacy of unparalleled creativity and spatial brilliance. Some of our most notable projects include the Mali Ram Jewelers in Amritsar, The Cove House, Sadhika's Mansion, GS Chema House, Shubham Dream City, and the Bhutani House. These projects have been particularly meaningful because they have allowed us to create designs that have a tangible impact on people's lives, communities, and the built environment, while also providing a platform for creative expression and innovation. They have also been challenging in terms of navigating various project constraints, meeting client expectations, managing multidisciplinary teams, and addressing regulatory requirements, all while maintaining design integrity and upholding professional responsibility.

KK: How do you approach balancing functionality and aesthetics in your designs?

SB: When approaching the balance between functionality and aesthetics, we prioritise originality, creativity, and ethical practices. We start by generating original ideas and concepts that address both functional requirements and aesthetic aspirations. We conduct thorough contextual analysis to ensure that our designs respond sensitively to the surroundings while meeting functional objectives. We then translate conceptual ideas into detailed design proposals, experimenting with various forms, materials, and spatial configurations to achieve a harmonious balance between functionality and visual appeal.

Stepping inside this jewellery showroom, visitors encounter a lavish interior that radiates opulence and refinement. The dominant colour palette, a harmonious blend of deep green and gold, evokes a sense of regal grandeur



Luxurious surfaces and finishes inside this store add texture and warmth to the ambiance, ensuring a truly captivating experience for patrons





Throughout the process, we engage in collaborative discussions with clients, design teams, and stakeholders to solicit feedback and ensure alignment with project goals. We also adhere to ethical principles, respect intellectual property rights, and prioritize sustainable design integration.

KK: Are there any specific materials, techniques, or design elements that you're particularly drawn to or enjoy working with?

SB: Absolutely. We enjoy exploring adaptive reuse techniques to creatively repurpose existing structures or materials, adding historical depth and character to our architectural narratives. We're also drawn to incorporating biophilic design elements, such as natural light, greenery, water features, and organic forms, to enhance occupant well-being and connectivity with nature. Additionally, we explore modular construction methods to streamline the building process, reduce waste, and increase efficiency, while also incorporating interactive and experiential design features that engage users and create memorable spatial experiences.

KK: What aspects of your work bring you the most passion and fulfillment?

SB: Several aspects of my work bring me passion and fulfillment. First and foremost, the opportunity to push the boundaries of creativity and innovation in architectural design ignites a sense of excitement and fulfillment. Designing spaces that positively impact people's lives and experiences, such as community gathering places or sustainable housing projects, is deeply rewarding. I also find great fulfillment in working collaboratively with talented professionals, clients, and stakeholders, fostering a sense of camaraderie and shared purpose. Contributing to sustainability through integrating sustainable design principles into our projects allows me to make a meaningful contribution to environmental stewardship and resilience. Promoting social equity and inclusivity through accessible, inclusive, and responsive designs contributes to a more equitable built environment and fosters social cohesion and justice, which is incredibly fulfilling. Finally, inspiring and educating others about the power of design to shape the world around us through publications, exhibitions, and public engagements provides an opportunity to spark curiosity, dialogue, and positive change within the broader community.

KK: Where do you find inspiration for your designs, and how do you keep your creativity fresh?

SB: I find inspiration from a diverse range of sources, including art, nature, literature, travel, history, technology, and cultural traditions.

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Several aspects of my work bring me passion and fulfillment. First and foremost, the opportunity to push the boundaries of creativity and innovation in architectural design ignites a sense of excitement and fulfillment.”

—SIMRAN BOPARAI, Founder, Simran Boparai Archteliier



The interior design of this residence maintains a classical aesthetic with clean lines and minimal embellishments



Neo-Classical design reigns supreme in this kitchen, exuding timeless elegance. A coffered ceiling, adorned with geometric patterns and recessed lighting, adds drama and sophistication, creating a sensory delight. Designed in Collaboration with Simran Boparai and Magpie Kitchens



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Through our commitment to excellence, innovation, and our ability to seamlessly blend tradition and modernity, I envision our firm as a trailblazer in the world of design and architecture, sculpting spaces that resonate with cultural sensibilities while remaining firmly rooted in the principles of functionality, sustainability, and client-centric design.”

—**SIMRAN BOPARAI**, *Founder, Simran Boparai Archteliier*

Engaging in activities that stimulate creativity, such as visiting museums, attending lectures, exploring new environments, and participating in interdisciplinary collaborations, helps me stay inspired. I invest time in research and exploration to deepen my understanding and uncover new insights relevant to the project's context, program, and aspirations. Exploring precedents, case studies, and emerging trends in architecture, design, and related fields also inform and inspire my design process. I cultivate

a curious and open-minded approach to design, embracing experimentation and a willingness to explore unconventional ideas and perspectives. Staying receptive to feedback, critique, and diverse viewpoints nurtures a culture of continuous learning and growth. Nature serves as an abundant source of inspiration, offering rich patterns, forms, textures, and systems to emulate and adapt through the principles of biophilia and biomimicry. Additionally, reflecting on personal values, passions, and



aspirations helps me infuse projects with authenticity, purpose, and meaning, while establishing a design ritual or routine that promotes creativity and focus is also crucial.

KK: What have been some of the biggest challenges or struggles you've faced in your career, and how did you overcome them?

SB: I take my challenges optimistically and try to focus on the positives and learn from them. While there have been various obstacles and hurdles along the way, I've approached them with a growth mindset, seeking opportunities for improvement and personal development.

KK: Have you faced any unique challenges or obstacles as a woman in a traditionally male-dominated field?

SB: No, I haven't faced any significant challenges or obstacles as a woman in the field of architecture. In fact, being a woman in this field can be seen as a blessing, bringing unique perspectives, strengths, and contributions to the profession.

KK: Can you tell us about any exciting new projects or endeavors you're currently working on or have in the pipeline?

SB: Yes, we're currently designing a mansion in Lucknow with French chateau architecture at 50,000 square feet, incorporating sloped designs and unique elements of openness. The mansion's exterior features hallmark French chateau elements like steeply pitched roofs, intricate stonework, and arched windows. Inside, the layout prioritises openness and airiness, with high ceilings, large windows, and seamless transitions between spaces. Throughout, meticulous attention to detail with custom millwork, imported marble, and handcrafted finishes elevate the mansion's charm and luxury. Overall, it is a breathtaking blend of the old world charm and modern luxury. Another project in our pipeline is a 1-lakh-square-foot (5-acre) project for the Royalty group that seamlessly blends classical and Rajasthani architecture with modern technology. Luxurious amenities including a grand central plaza, swimming pools, spas, fitness centres, and recreational facilities blend seamlessly with the architectural theme, offering residents modern comforts and conveniences. Inside, heritage-inspired interiors adorned with rich fabrics, intricate woodwork, and handcrafted furnishings pay homage to Rajasthani craftsmanship, while modern amenities discreetly incorporated into the design ensure contemporary living standards.

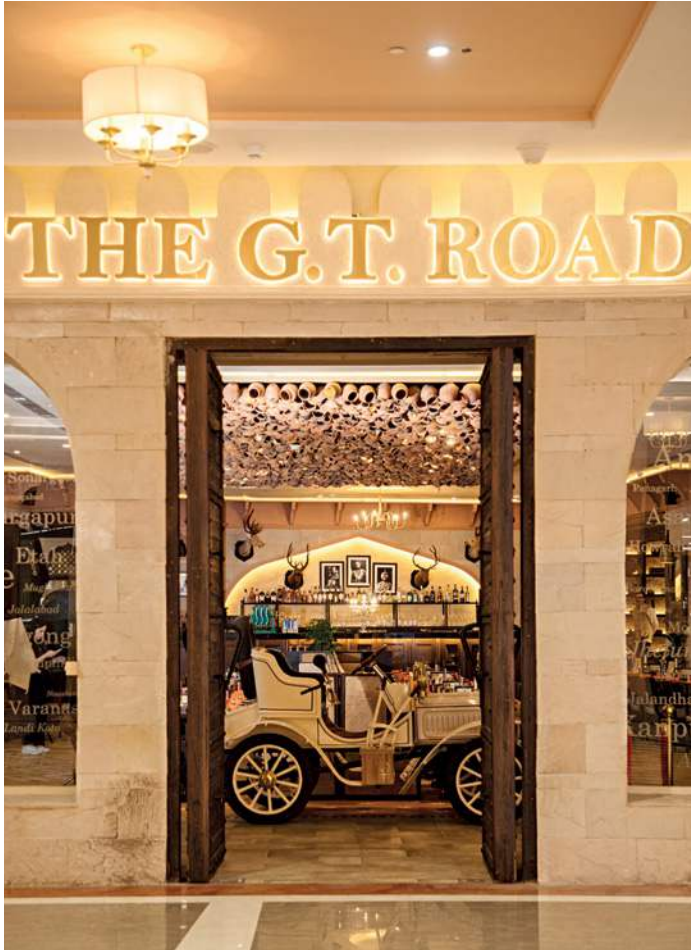
KK: How do you see the field of architecture and design evolving in the coming years, and how are you positioning yourself to stay ahead of the curve?

SB: The field of architecture and design is undergoing rapid transformation driven by technological advancements, demographic shifts, environmental concerns, and evolving societal needs. To stay ahead of the curve, architectural firms and renowned architects must embrace innovation, adaptability, and forward-thinking strategies. We are positioning ourselves to stay at the forefront by embracing emerging technologies, studying demographic shifts, and responding to evolving societal needs. We're also committed to continuous learning, exploring new materials and construction techniques, and fostering a culture of curiosity and experimentation within our firm.

KK: What is your long-term vision or dream for your practice, and what impact do you hope your work will have on the built environment and the communities you serve?

SB: My long-term vision and dream for my practice are to expand our reach worldwide and establish offices globally, allowing us to serve a broader audience and leave an enduring legacy through our work. Ultimately, I hope our work will have a profound impact on the built environment and the communities we serve by reshaping skylines with designs that provoke awe and inspire generations. I aspire to create architectural marvels that celebrate the art of spatial brilliance, redefine luxury and elegance, and contribute to a more sustainable, equitable, and aesthetically rich world. Through our commitment to excellence, innovation, and our ability to seamlessly blend tradition and modernity, I envision our firm as a trailblazer in the world of design and architecture, sculpting spaces that resonate with cultural sensibilities while remaining firmly rooted in the principles of functionality, sustainability, and client-centric design. ✚

Project Features



FLAVOURS ALONG THE TRUNK

This new restaurant in Indore takes one on a culinary journey like no other

Built along an ancient route called Uttarapatha in the 3rd century BCE, the Grand Trunk Road has maintained its significance in the Indian subcontinent for nearly 2,500 years. Rebuilt and extended multiple times over the years, it now connects Amritsar in the west to Kolkata in the east. The road has a rich history, influenced by invaders, travelers, emperors, generals, hermits and traders, which has shaped life and cuisine in the region. The Grand Trunk restaurant in Indore pays tribute to this rich history through its food and design.

Heavy wooden doors, reminiscent of those often seen in period films, swing open. One would expect high ceilings, walls adorned with photos and mounted deer heads—check, check and check. It has it all. At the entrance sits a Victorian-era Rolls Royce. What first catches our attention, however, is the ceiling adorned with inverted matkas.

A warm, earthy colour palette permeates the restaurant, featuring rustic textures and traditional decor elements. These carefully chosen hues evoke a sense of nostalgia, creating an architectural narrative that transports one to different times and places.

The space is adorned with curated historical artifacts. Swords, knives, guns, coins—you name it and you will find it. The taxidermies on the bar wall infuse an air of intrigue and wonder, encouraging

exploration of the space. The walls carry stories from yesteryear.

The alfresco Royal Darbaar offers an exquisite outdoor experience. With the balcony view overlooking Sienna Piazza, the courtyard of the Citadel Mall, one can relish not only the concerts and events but also the delectable flavors of the Grand Trunk Road. Dining in this space makes one experience the delightful fusion of The GT Road's culinary treasures and the melodious rhythms of live music, all coming together to offer an extraordinary blend of history, culture and gastronomy.

The aromas of spices mingle with the music, creating a tapestry of flavors and sounds reminiscent of a bygone era. In this space where past and present converge, each dish tells a story, and everyone becomes part of the unfolding narrative of the Grand Trunk Road — a road that continues to connect hearts and palates through centuries of adventure and tradition. ✚

FACTFILE

Covers - 180 **Restaurant Type**: Barbeque | Buffet | Bar

Meal for two - INR 2400/- plus taxes **Timings (current)** - 12pm to midnight

Address: 71 First Floor, Phoenix Citadel mall, Mumbai Agra Bypass, Khajrana, Indore-452016

Phone: +91 8889994805/ 8889994806

Instagram: @thegtroad **Website**: www.brighthospitality.in

BESPOKE LUXURY

The Beauty *of* Bespoke

In a world brimming with mass-produced alternatives, bespoke luxury stands as a beacon of individuality and refinement, offering discerning connoisseurs a realm of unparalleled opulence and exclusivity. We delve into this enchanting world with insights from esteemed designers who offer their unique perspectives on bespoke luxury: Farah Ahmed, FADD Studio; Sumesh Menon, Sumesh Menon Associates; Anjali Mody, Josmo Studio; Veeram Shah, Design ni Dukaan; Priyank Mehta, Attitudes and Jason Wadhvani, Jason Wadhvani Designs.

BY ANKITA RATHOD

FARAH AHMED

FADD STUDIO



In a refreshing departure from conventional perceptions, Farah Ahmed associates bespoke luxury with the simple pleasures of everyday life, likening it to the perfect taste of “vanilla ice cream or impeccably cooked eggs. She emphasizes the importance of refining daily experiences to perfection, ensuring that every aspect of life reflects individual tastes and preferences. For Farah, luxury lies not in extravagance, but in the meticulous curation of one’s surroundings to align seamlessly with personal desires.

LUXURY = CONSISTENCY

“When you think of luxury, you might envision exotic flavours like foie gras or truffle, but for me, luxury is found in everyday experiences done right. It’s like the perfect flavour of vanilla ice cream or perfectly cooked sunny-side-up eggs—simple yet satisfying. Luxury isn’t about exotic or expensive stuff; it’s about everyday conveniences tailored to your life, offering that perfect taste consistently.”

TRANSFORMING INSPIRATIONS INTO INSTALLATIONS

“We’ve collaborated on many things. But two of my favourite collaborations are an art installation for a client and another light installation for a client.

“The first one was fascinating, and it all started with a stunning necklace I purchased from Aditi Sharma – an interior designer and architect who began creating jewellery using architectural materials like brass and concrete. These necklaces featured large circles worn around the neck with a lovely red rope. One of our clients had a triple-height wall, and we were seeking something truly dramatic. I contacted Aditi and proposed, “Are you ready to make your necklaces larger than life?” Thus, we brought her necklace designs to life using architectural materials for this remarkable site. It felt like completing a full circle for her, making it an intriguing project. Another project was similarly inspired by the necklace.

“Another remarkable project was again inspired by a necklace. By using blown glassware, where the coloured glass baubles represented semi-precious stones, and the smaller tier glass baubles



“When you think of luxury, you might envision exotic flavours like foie gras or truffle, but for me, luxury is found in everyday experiences done right. It’s like the perfect flavour of vanilla ice cream or perfectly cooked sunny-side-up eggs—simple yet satisfying.”

with light represented diamonds, we created this beautiful circular chandelier for a client in Goa.”

BESPOKE UNIQUENESS

“The essence of bespoke luxury lies in its exclusivity—there’s only one of its kind in the world, made just for you. Your home shouldn’t be a mere copy-paste of Pinterest; it should reflect your personality and offer something unique that resonates with you every day – that is just yours and nobody else’s in the world.”

INTERVIEW: ANKITA RATHOD

SUMESSH MENON

SUMESSH MENON ASSOCIATES



Sumesh Menon brings a refined perspective to bespoke luxury, likening it to the smooth, matured notes of a single malt whiskey. He advocates for a toned-down approach to opulence, where monochrome elegance takes center stage. Collaboration emerges as a key tenet of Sumesh's design philosophy, where the synergy of diverse talents culminates in extraordinary creations. By prioritizing bespoke craftsmanship and customization, Sumesh ensures that each design exudes exclusivity and refinement.

SUBTLE SOPHISTICATION

"Luxury is toned down; opulence is out of the window. For me, monochrome or monolithic as a taste bud really works, like a smooth, matured single malt."

COLLABORATIVE TRIUMPHS

"The way forward is collaboration and collaboration only. I firmly believe in that. It's about bringing the best minds together for one project. Any successful project owes its success to collaboration, given due credit."

"For instance, in a lighting project, we collaborated with Rhea Mehta. We provided her with a mood board, brainstormed ideas, and then gave her free rein. It's important not to step into the shoes of the collaborators; the result is always better when egos are set aside, focusing solely on the project's outcome."

INDIA'S UNIQUE FLAIR

"Interestingly, even in Milan, renowned brands like Cavalli or Armani primarily offer catalogue designs rather than bespoke options. It's in India, with Indian designers, that bespoke and customisation thrive as our unique selling proposition. From furniture to carpets to lighting, everything is tailored to individual preferences."

CREATIVE FREEDOM

"Innovation is our focus; repetition is to be avoided at all costs. When collaborating with artists known for their specific style, I give them creative freedom. For example, when working with Orvi, the marble



“Interestingly, even in Milan, renowned brands like Cavalli or Armani primarily offer catalogue designs rather than bespoke options. It’s in India, with Indian designers, that bespoke and customisation thrive as our unique selling proposition.”

specialist, I trust them implicitly to produce the best inserts. By granting them autonomy, they ensure each piece is one-of-a-kind, blending marble and metal inserts seamlessly.”

ARTISTRY IN UPCYCLING

“At Kingfisher Tower, in the foyer, we repurposed basic waste materials from the living room and foyer. Sent to Orvi’s factory in Kishangarh, they transformed it into a stunning floral carpet using malachite, lapis and mother of pearl. The intricate design appears as though painstakingly crafted over months, a testament to the beauty of upcycling.”

CRAFTSMANSHIP CAUTION

“It’s crucial to engage reputable craftsmen and individuals from within the same industry. Experimenting with newcomers can lead to undesirable outcomes and compromises the quality expected in bespoke craftsmanship.”

PRIDE IN UNIQUENESS

“Bespoke designs are a signature of pride for clients. Each piece is unique, reflecting their individuality and taste, eliciting a sense of ownership and satisfaction.”

INTERVIEW: ANKITA RATHOD



ANJALI MODY

JOSMO STUDIO



With a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Industrial Design from the prestigious Rhode Island School of Design, Anjali paints bespoke luxury as a delectable blend of familiar comfort and tantalising novelty – bespoke luxury is like cheese infused with the heady aroma of truffles. The cheese represents wholesomeness and familiarity, while the truffle adds a dash of uniqueness and glamour.

LUXURY = FAMILIARITY

“To me, luxury would be the flavour of cheese with high notes of truffle. It’s like a wholesome cheese, familiar and inviting, yet infused with hints of truffle, offering a touch of uniqueness, novelty, and deliciousness. Most luxury to me is like this, it’s familiar because it’s made especially for you, but it has strong undertones of dazzle and glamour.”

CRAFTING BESPOKE COLLECTIONS

“A friend from Zimbabwe and I designed a collection of ottomans inspired by bones and horns found in the African bushes. We worked with an aluminium foundry and a production studio, that helped us transform these bones into moulds, eventually into cast that were exact replicas of these natural pieces. Another memorable collaboration involved crafting a 20ft banyan tree installation for a legal office using fibre art. Each leaf was made from brushed brass, suspended from the ceiling between these long and winding branches. It was a real challenge to execute, but teamwork made it all possible.”

EMBRACING IMPERFECTION

“Our approach is inclusive to imperfections and curiosity and learning through the process. Our designs sometimes change due to on-ground realities, allowing for serendipity to play a big part in our final outcomes. It’s that magical space between having a vision and allowing the process to guide us that we find true inspiration.”

INNOVATION THROUGH EXPERIMENTATION

“We keep trying new things, exploring new materials, new ways of making objects, and we are always designing. The ideas never stop flowing.”



“We keep trying new things, exploring new materials, new ways of making objects, and we are always designing. The ideas never stop flowing.”

GIVING LIFE TO AN IDEA

“One finds a piece of themselves and their design virtues within personalised pieces. A big part of customising something is about giving it time, attention, and the ideas a voice. There is something very beautiful about a client having an idea and having that ability to give life to their idea for them.”

COMMITMENT TO QUALITY

“Quality for us is the cornerstone of our existence. We will never compromise that, no matter what the cost. Premium materials allow for ideas to shine, giving them finesse and beauty. A beautiful idea can be almost immediately elevated if approached with the right materiality, and on the contrary, it might fail terribly if not given the right approach to quality.”

INTERVIEW: ANKITA RATHOD

VEERAM SHAH

DESIGN NI DUKAAN



Veeram Shah delves into the intricate artistry that defines bespoke luxury, drawing parallels between bespoke creations and masterful works of art. He underscores the pivotal role of craftsmanship and premium materials in shaping extraordinary designs that stand the test of time. By upholding the highest standards of quality and luxury, Shah ensures that each creation resonates with unparalleled elegance and sophistication, setting a new benchmark for bespoke excellence.

CRAFTING BESPOKE MEMORIES

“To me, bespoke luxury is like tasting an incredibly unique and exquisite dessert. It’s not just about the taste; it’s the entire experience of indulging in something made exclusively for you with the finest ingredients and attention to detail. It’s like commissioning an artist with a special project and witnessing them create a masterpiece that narrates your story. It’s personal, unforgettable, and leaves a lingering impression.”

COLLABORATIVE CONTINUITY

“Once, I collaborated with Anuj Sharma, a talented artisan renowned for his Button Masala technique. We worked on a partition screen and a lounge chair together, and the experience was so great that we decided to continue our collaboration. Together, we envisioned a swing as a canvas for Anuj’s artistic expression, blending functionality with artistry.”

THE BESPOKE SWING

“Crafted meticulously with durable metal and intricately handwoven cane, our bespoke swing features over 10,000 fabric buttons in myriad colours and patterns. Each button serves as a pixel, offering endless customisation and interactivity. It’s like playing with building blocks, where you can change the design on your whim. It’s not just furniture; it’s a dynamic piece of art that invites personal expression and tranquillity.”

BEYOND CONVENTIONS

“What sets us apart is our commitment to innovation and thinking outside the box. Rather than adhering to traditional methods, we constantly seek fresh ideas to push design boundaries. By encouraging innovation, we’re able to create truly one-of-a-kind pieces that



“To me, bespoke luxury is like tasting an incredibly unique and exquisite dessert. It’s not just about the taste; it’s the entire experience of indulging in something made exclusively for you.”

captivate and inspire. It’s like adding a special ingredient to a recipe that makes it stand out and wow everyone who tries it.”

PERSONALISED PERFECTION

“Our clients are integral to the creative process, allowing them to customise every aspect of their piece. It’s akin to designing a personalised dessert with all your favourite flavours and toppings. This level of personalisation elevates the experience of owning a bespoke piece of luxury furniture or art, making each piece truly special.”

ENSURING LASTING QUALITY

“At the core of our creations lies impeccable craftsmanship. We collaborate with skilled artisans who pour their expertise and dedication into every piece, using only the finest materials. It’s like baking a cake from scratch with premium ingredients—each design is not only beautiful but also built to withstand the test of time.”



INTERVIEW: ANKITA RATHOD

PRIYANK MEHTA

ATTITUDES



Indulging in the essence of bespoke luxury, Priyank Mehta, the visionary force behind Attitudes, savours every creation like a connoisseur relishing a complex blend of rare spices, rich chocolates, and delicate floral notes. For Priyank, bespoke luxury transcends mere extravagance; it embodies the pinnacle of craftsmanship and individuality, where every detail reflects the client's unique taste and lifestyle.

SAVOURING BESPOKE

"If bespoke luxury were a flavour, it would be an exquisite blend of rare spices, rich chocolates, and delicate floral notes, creating a symphony of indulgence on the palate. Personally, bespoke luxury represents the pinnacle of craftsmanship and individuality, where every detail is meticulously crafted to reflect the client's unique taste and lifestyle."

MEMORABLE COLLABORATIONS

"One memorable collaboration in the world of bespoke luxury involved partnering with Ar. Shantanu Garg. Together, we crafted a bespoke leather Dressing & study suite, drawing inspiration from the Art Deco history and the client's personal style. This collaboration not only resulted in a stunning creation but also enriched our design process by allowing us to incorporate exclusive elements into our work, creating a truly one-of-a-kind piece."

TAILORING LUXURY EXPERIENCES

"Customisation and personalisation are at the heart of bespoke luxury, allowing clients to express their individuality and create something truly unique. Unlike mass-produced alternatives, bespoke luxury designs offer clients the opportunity to tailor every aspect of their creation, from the materials used to the smallest details of the design. This level of customisation provides clients with an exclusive experience that cannot be replicated by off-the-shelf products."

BESPOKE STANDARDS

"Craftsmanship and premium materials are the foundation of our creations, ensuring that each piece is crafted to the highest standards of quality and luxury. We work closely with skilled artisans who share our commitment



“Personally, bespoke luxury represents the pinnacle of craftsmanship and individuality, where every detail is meticulously crafted to reflect the client’s unique taste and lifestyle.”

to excellence, using only the finest materials sourced from around the world. From hand-stitched leather to precision-engineered metals, every element of our designs undergoes rigorous quality control to ensure that it meets the exacting standards of bespoke luxury.”

INTERVIEW: ANKITA RATHOD

JASON WADHWANI

JASON WADHWANI DESIGNS



Photo credit: Pulkit Sehgal

For Jason Wadhvani, bespoke luxury is synonymous with personalised experiences that transcend conventional boundaries. He emphasises the importance of infusing spaces with individuality, steering clear of generic design tropes. Through a meticulous blend of client collaboration and innovative design solutions, Jason crafts spaces that reflect the unique essence of each individual. His approach underscores the transformative power of customisation in elevating the luxury experience to unparalleled heights.

LUXURY = COMFORT

“If luxury was a flavour, it would be sweet with a touch of spice. Luxury to me doesn’t necessarily mean excessiveness, wealth, or flamboyance. It means being comfortable in a space surrounded by beautifully designed things, some whimsical and some born out of necessity.”

DESIGNING STANDOUT PIECES

“On a micro level, there have been quite a few interesting collaborations with my clients on some of my projects. They generally involve a combination of their requirements and my design expertise, resulting in standout furniture pieces with a monochromatic element elevated to uber-luxe status. On a macro level, luxury is highly subjective, involving the creation of a space where individuals feel comfortable in their own version of luxury, whether through art, furniture, light fixtures, or a combination of elements.”

MATERIAL ELEGANCE

“For me personally, materials don’t always have to be exclusive or super expensive to achieve a luxury product. It’s about finding the right fit and combination to create a stunning piece that exudes luxury.”

MEETING EVOLVING CLIENT EXPECTATIONS

“Every client today is a well-travelled individual exposed to diverse design perspectives. They seek something new, something fresh, and not overly saturated. This is where I come in, striving



“Luxury to me doesn’t necessarily mean excessiveness, wealth, or flamboyance. It means being comfortable in a space surrounded by beautifully designed things, some whimsical and some born out of necessity.”

to offer a unique spatial experience that resonates with each client’s desires. Ultimately, clients want something distinctive, a spatial experience that reflects both their individuality and the designer’s signature style and design vocabulary.” ✚

INTERVIEW: ANKITA RATHOD





At the Indian fine dining restaurant Amoda, the maximalism of regal aesthetics is displayed in all its glory

WHERE ART MEETS FINE FOOD

Three new culinary destinations by Beyond Designs at the National Gallery of Modern Art in Delhi celebrate art, architecture and design styles from around the world

Text by: Satarupa Paul

Winter in Delhi this year wasn't the stuff of romance that it usually is; the exceptionally harsh and gloomy weather largely kept us snuggled indoors. So, when the sun shone bright and cheery one Sunday morning, I found myself venturing out to the National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA) at the India Gate circle, for a stroll and a leisurely brunch at one of the three new restaurants that have recently opened on its premises. As part of the newly conceptualised Heritage Courtyard by the Delhi-based Beyond Designs, the two fine dining restaurants and a casual cafe offer a

whole new array of dining choices for museum visitors, while also providing a new venue for foodies from across the city to explore.

Fusing classic and contemporary elements, the glorious NGMA building is a landmark institution in itself. Designed by Sir Arthur Bloomfield back in 1936, it served as the former residence of the Maharaja of Jaipur, until it was converted into a museum in 1954 to house an impressive collection of over 17,000 works by 2,000 plus artists, making it one of the largest modern art museums in the world. Its glorious edifice boasts a harmonious blend of Doric and Roman



Striking artworks and vibrant upholstered chairs brighten up the room at Amoda

architectural styles, while the expansive galleries within unfold with a deliberate fluidity, providing a spatial journey through time and artistic expressions. The grandeur of the marble façade is softened by intricate detailing and arched windows, allowing natural light to illuminate the curated artworks within.

It's a delight to walk through the hallowed corridors and rooms marvelling at the curated collections of modern artworks, as I had done on many occasions before. But this being a Sunday meant that

the museum was closed for visitors, so I made do with a walk through the outdoor sculpture garden instead, which too exhibits some stunning pieces by famous sculptors like Ramkinkar Baij, DP Roy Choudhury and Subodh Gupta, amongst others. Wandering through the sculpture garden, I soon arrived at the new Heritage Courtyard, designed as an open-air space for visitors to relax and enjoy the outdoors while learning about the history and architecture of the NGMA.



The Saddle House boasts fiery orange wall panelling, vintage wallpaper and a stunning island bar; it serves an enticing fusion of classic continental and pan-Asian dishes



NEHA GUPTA, Co-Founder, Beyond Designs

An accomplished architect, interior designer, and the visionary founder of luxury brand Beyond Designs, Neha Gupta ventured into the realm of culinary artistry with the establishment of Beyond Designs Home and Bistro. With a diploma in interior design and a degree in architecture, Neha's multifaceted talents shine through in her exquisite designs and astute business acumen. As the driving force behind Beyond Designs' growth, her international exposure and deep appreciation for timeless design heritage have solidified her pioneering status in the dynamic world of design and hospitality.

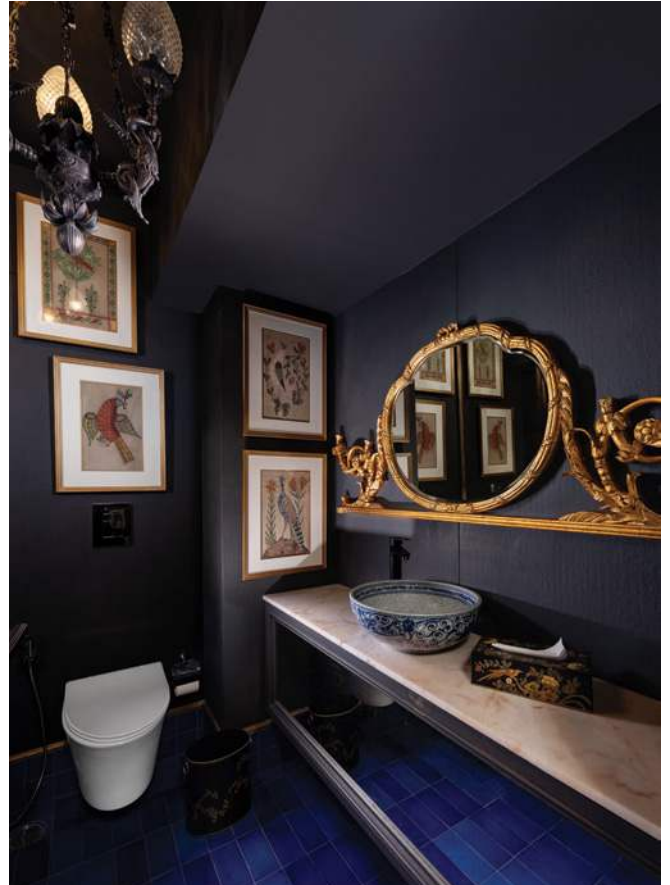


“Our oeuvre is all about celebrating an enchanting fusion of art, architecture, design styles and antiques from around the world. It is an ode to our timeless heritage and culture that need to be redefined and preserved for the coming generations.”

—**NEHA GUPTA**, Co-Founder, Beyond Designs



The Saddle House and Amoda are separated through sliding doors, with a coherent identity shared by both spaces as well as the luxuriously designed washrooms



Within the Heritage Courtyard are also situated the three latest culinary destinations by Beyond Designs, namely Amoda, The Saddle House and Cafe Green Lane—each featuring unique, inviting interiors as well as curated menus that accentuate the dining experience at each place. “Our oeuvre is all about celebrating an enchanting fusion of art, architecture, design styles and antiques from around the world. It is an ode to our timeless heritage and culture that need to be redefined and preserved for the coming generations,” says Neha Gupta, founder of the luxury furniture, home accessories and interiors solutions brand. “Over the past years, our forte has extended to curating gastronomical experiences from across the globe for epicures. A venue like the NGMA where art aficionados flock, seemed like the perfect platform to showcase our unique blend of flavours, as well as design.”

Post the success of Beyond Designs Bistro and Nineteen78, the two previous restaurant ventures from their stable, the young architect, interior designer and restaurateur was yearning to recreate the magic in other parts of the city. And NGMA, in the heart of the Capital, provided the best venue. “Since we wanted to offer to our patrons a wide range of cuisine selections as well as experiences,

we decided to have two different restaurants and a café—all these combined, we created the Heritage Courtyard,” says Gupta. Served by a common kitchen, the restaurants offer opulent fine dining options, while the cafe is charmingly laidback. “Once you are in the Heritage Courtyard, you are not missing out on any of your favourite cuisines—from pan-Asian and continental to robust Indian flavours to tantalizing street food, everything is available.”

Amoda – Regal Indian

Entering Amoda is akin to stepping into the resplendent palatial homes of Indian royals, with all the maximalism of regal aesthetics displayed in full glory. Part of the ceiling is studded with mirrors, and the rest features a beautiful wallpaper in a muted palette. Crystal chandeliers add to the vintage vibe, while the upholstery of the chairs designed in-house exhibit vibrant floral motifs in bright red and yellow that brighten up the room. The wooden counter and metallic accents of the island bar are contrasted with brass, mirror and glass tiles. Striking artworks and Pichwai paintings on the neutral walls offset the captivating mosaic flooring, binding together the Indian theme gracefully.



“Over the past years, our forte has extended to curating gastronomical experiences from across the globe for epicures. A venue like the NGMA where art aficionados flock, seemed like the perfect platform to showcase our unique blend of flavours, as well as design.”

—**NEHA GUPTA**, Co-Founder, Beyond Designs



Cafe Green Lane is stylish yet relaxed, with bamboo chandeliers illuminating the space



The new Heritage Courtyard at NGMA offers an open space for visitors to enjoy the outdoors while housing the three restaurants

Food here is served to the tunes of flutes and tabla playing softly in the background. The menu is a culinary journey through India's Golden Triangle, with handpicked dishes from Delhi, Jaipur and Agra that resonate with the vibrant heritage of the region. Each dish weaves together age-old recipes passed down through generations, while incorporating modern interpretations and cooking techniques. The popular street food of North Delhi, Fateh Ki Kachori for instance, has been elevated to fine dining standards with an avocado chokha; stuffed mushrooms have been reimagined as cream cheese stuffed morels with saffron chilli cream and truffle oil. Certain classic recipes such as Rajasthani Laal Maas, Homestyle Chicken Curry and Dal Makhani have been kept as such, while sharing space with innovative numbers like Baked Raw Mango Paneer and Zafrani Gucchi and Edamame Pulao. All in all, the menu is thoughtfully curated and well executed, without being overpowering.

The Saddle House – Classic Continental

The design of The Saddle House pays homage to the elegance and excitement of the game of Polo, with fiery orange wall panelling and vintage wallpaper adorned with galloping horses, setting the perfect ambience. The focal point, a stunning island bar crafted with brass, mirror and glass tiles atop a wooden base, stands as a centrepiece, serving both The Saddle House and the adjacent Amoda that is separated by foldable doors. The Saddle House boasts black and white flooring and a non-alcoholic bar, establishing a cohesive identity with Amoda. Drawing inspiration from British architecture, the vibrant orange walls harmonize with eclectic Chinese, Japanese and

European artworks, enriching the dining experience with cultural flair.

With a focus on preserving classic recipes, the menu at The Saddle House offers an enticing fusion of pan-Asian and Continental cuisines. There's a certain familiarity in your dining experience here that transcends passing trends. Whether you choose to seek comfort in an authentic minestrone soup or luscious lasagna on a winter afternoon, or opt for a hearty Parmigiana di Melanzane, Sicilian Truffle Mushroom Arancini or New Zealand lamb chops for dinner, the menu here emphasizes tradition and authenticity in every bite.

Cafe Green Lane – Chaat Central

Café Green Lane embodies the vibrant spirit of street food culture, where tradition and innovation converge to create an indulgent culinary experience. From savoury classics to inventive delights, each dish served is a testament to the rich tapestry of flavours found on the bustling streets of India. The café's ambience is stylish yet relaxed; bamboo chandeliers illuminate the space, while pastel hues and botanical artworks add a touch of warmth and elegance, inviting patrons to immerse themselves in the cultural mosaic of street fare.

Operating as an all-day bistro, Café Green Lane beckons with a diverse menu showcasing street food favourites from various regions of India. Bread pakoda, matar kulcha, paneer tikka, idli, dosa, uttapam, gol gappa, and the ever-popular vegetarian thali are just a sampling of the culinary delights awaiting guests. Its quick service and diverse offerings attract a steady stream of visitors throughout the day, offering a slice of authentic street food culture in a comfortable and inviting setting. ✚

A REBELLION AGAINST URBAN DISCOMFORTS

PROJECT: Vanessa Villa, Aluha, Gujarat; **ARCHITECTS:** The Grid Architects

Crafted by Snehal and Bhadri Suthar of Grid Architects, Vanessa Villa in Aluha, Gujarat, emerges as a private Biophilic retreat, akin to a surrealist dream—seamlessly melding light, air, and greenery to demonstrate architectural excellence and ecological harmony

Text by: Ankita Rathod



This isn't just a weekend home; it defies discomfort with a surreal elegance. Strategic design battles the region's heat, embracing native materials for sustainability. Flexibility reigns supreme, tailored to exacting family needs. Custom furniture, hewn from natural materials, heightens coherence and charisma, akin to surrealist sculptures adorning an enigmatic landscape. In essence, Vanessa Villa, a name inspired by the homeowner's granddaughter, stands as a bastion of comfort, intimacy, and conscious living—a testament to design prowess in perfect sync with nature's rhythms.

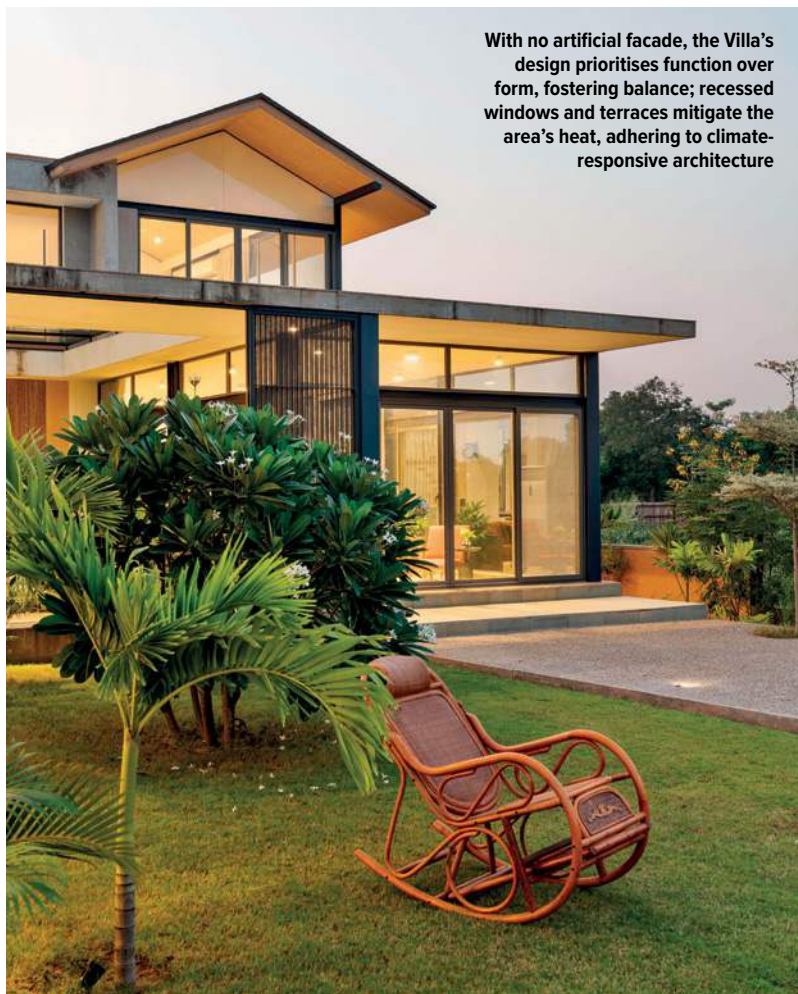
Located in a serene, gated community, the villa sprawls over a plot spanning 30,000 square feet, with a built-up area of 7,347 square feet. Nestled away from the bustling city, it resides in the tranquil outskirts, a mere 10-minute drive from Gandhinagar, the

capital of Gujarat, towards Aluha. Boasting more than three-quarters of lush greenery, the landscape is adorned with native drought-friendly plants abundant in Western India, including badaam, gulmohar trees, neem, banyan, mango, and peepal, creating a harmonious blend with the natural surroundings.

Boasting of a generous floor plan, one is welcomed by a sprawling indoor swimming pool and a vast backyard garden adorned with a charming gazebo and natural rockfall seamlessly blending into the surrounding landscape. Inside, the ground level features a well-appointed kitchen, dining area, living room, and a guest bedroom, complemented by two internal courtyards and courtyards attached to two bathrooms. Upstairs, two additional bedrooms, including a master suite with a private deck overlooking the garden oasis, along with two more inviting terrace spaces for relaxation and enjoyment.



A commitment to sustainability, and a passion for creating spaces that resonate on a personal and environmental level, Vanessa Villa seamlessly integrates with the natural environment, fostering a sense of tranquillity and well-being



With no artificial facade, the Villa's design prioritises function over form, fostering balance; recessed windows and terraces mitigate the area's heat, adhering to climate-responsive architecture



SNEHAL SUTHAR & BHADRI SUTHAR

Founders, The Grid Architects

Founded by Snehal Suthar and Bhadri Suthar, Grid Architects Grid Architects strives for an inclusive approach to design, emphasizing collaboration to bring a diversity of ideas to the table. Snehal holds a Masters in Sustainability from San Francisco, USA, while Bhadri graduated from APIED Vallabh Vidyanagar, Gujarat, India. Their philosophy centers around Biophilic design, creating buildings that harmonize with the natural world, promoting psychological, biological, and sociological well-being. Their efforts advocate for environmentally friendly and sustainable practices, contributing to society by raising awareness of the simplicity of embracing sustainability.



Evolved organically to suit the family's needs, the layout of the home radiates a comforting ambiance. Upon entry, you're greeted by twin spaces, with the indoor swimming pool and living room flanking the entrance, separated by a double-height staircase leading to private areas. The swimming pool seamlessly extends to the rear garden landscape, featuring a gazebo and the captivating rockfall



From one end, the living room seamlessly merges into the kitchen, while at the other, it unveils the vast garden



Our goal was not just to create furniture, but to sculpt pieces that echo the essence of the villa itself, fostering a seamless integration between the built environment and the natural world.”

—**SNEHAL SUTHAR**, Founder, The Grid Architects

The client’s brief was straightforward: “They desired a weekend home that featured an indoor swimming pool that was enveloped by a vast landscape, emphasising relaxation and connection with nature,” reveals Bhadri Suthar, whose design philosophy echoes a commitment to environmental harmony. Snehal Suthar, echoing his partner’s sentiments, adds, “Our aim was to create a space where architecture seamlessly integrates with the natural environment, fostering a sense of tranquillity and well-being.”

Interestingly, “The pervasive integration of nature through materials, light, and vegetation was central. The ideation phase considered how each space could connect with nature, planning involved selecting materials and designing openings to maximise this connection, execution required careful implementation to maintain the integrity of natural elements, and completion saw these efforts culminate in a harmonious, health-promoting environment.”

When probed about the hurdles encountered while incorporating a Biophilic design, Bhadri responds with unwavering confidence, “Never - for us it’s a lifestyle. So, it’s not a challenge; we are not doing it as a superficial embellishment. We focus solely on contextual factors such as climate, location, and the materials we use, all integral to the Biophilic programme. It’s part of the

fundamental philosophy at GA: taking care of ecology, ensuring resource efficiency, and sourcing labour locally. Time is also a crucial aspect, with completion within one and a half years being imperative, as sustainability extends to every aspect of our work.”

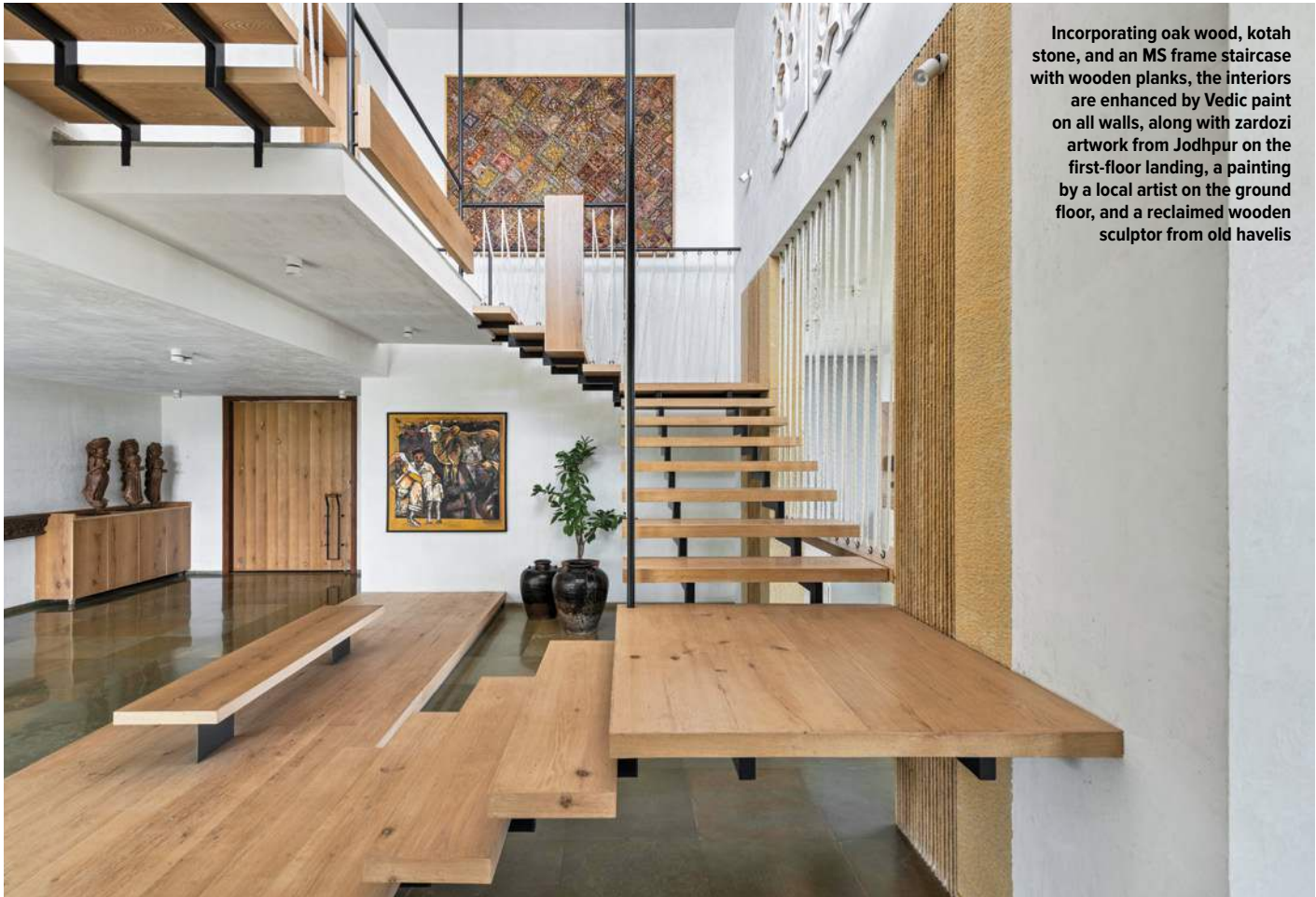
And very well said so, ensuring the pool and living areas were crafted as the heart of the home, promoting leisure and interaction. “Even the use of natural materials, abundant light, and strategic layout ensures that every space maintains a dialogue with the outdoors, fulfilling the client’s vision of a serene, nature-centric retreat,” reveals Bhadri.

Speaking of the material and colour palette, she shares, “Materials like oak wood and natural stone provide warmth and a casual, welcoming ambiance, complemented by soft pastels and earthy tones that reflect the surrounding landscape.” As one moves into formal living areas, these materials are refined and presented more elegantly; “For instance, the wood may be polished, and the stone finishes more sophisticated. Colours shift to more subdued, neutral palettes, enhancing the formality while maintaining harmony,” explains Bhadri while maintaining the overall effect as a gradation of spaces, from relaxed and intimate to more polished and grand, yet all interconnected through a consistent use of natural materials and a cohesive colour scheme that echoes the villa’s biophilic design ethos.



Materials like oak and stone throughout the villa blur the boundary between indoors and outdoors, enriching the living experience with nature's textures. This approach not only maintains a visual harmony but also reinforces the biophilic design principle, promoting a deeper connection with nature."

—BHADRI SUTHAR, Founder, The Grid Architects



Incorporating oak wood, kotah stone, and an MS frame staircase with wooden planks, the interiors are enhanced by Vedic paint on all walls, along with zardozi artwork from Jodhpur on the first-floor landing, a painting by a local artist on the ground floor, and a reclaimed wooden sculptor from old havelis

Each element, from concept through to realisation, required a deep understanding of the client's needs, a commitment to sustainability, and a passion for creating spaces that resonate on a personal and environmental level.

When asked about the inspiration behind choosing native species of drought-friendly plants for Vanessa Villa's landscapes, she explains, "The decision is deeply influenced by Gujarat's dry climate, necessitating sustainable and climate-appropriate landscaping." She emphasises regional adaptation, ensuring plants thrive with minimal water, reflecting respect for the local environment. This approach enhances thermal comfort, ties aesthetics to the region's identity, conserves resources, and supports native ecology, fostering a sustainable connection with Gujarat.

Vanessa Villa demonstrates a skilful application of climate-responsive architecture to combat regional heat and boost energy efficiency. The facade design incorporates recessed windows and deep overhangs to minimise direct solar gain, reducing reliance on artificial cooling. Locally sourced, thermally inert materials are utilised for construction, aiding heat absorption and dissipation for cooler interiors. Natural ventilation is facilitated through cross-ventilation, lessening the need for mechanical cooling. Thermal zoning optimises comfort by allocating heat-generating functions strategically. Additionally, outdoor landscaping and water features create a cooler microclimate, further enhancing energy efficiency. This blend of traditional wisdom and modern design ensures Vanessa Villa remains comfortable and sustainable in challenging climates.



In this sprawling outdoor space, a cascading rockfall waterfall filled with fish and native plants complements a spacious deck adorned with inviting, comfortable seating, including the traditional Indian swing, known as 'jhula'



Nestled on the ground floor of the villa, the bedroom grants direct access to the vast garden, offering a private retreat and featuring local terracotta artwork alongside custom beds and furniture from 'Carpenter's'



Adding to the outdoor charm, is an artwork sculptor crafted from a reclaimed small boat from Nagaland



Employing locally sourced, thermally inert materials for cooler interiors, the architects have utilised natural ventilation via cross-ventilation to reduce reliance on mechanical cooling



The living room extends to the kitchen and opens to an expansive garden, with the kitchen leading to an herbal garden, enveloping the house in greenery



For us, biophilic design is a lifestyle, not a superficial addition. We prioritise contextual factors like climate, location, and materials, all integral to our biophilic program.”

—BHADRI SUTHAR, Founder, The Grid Architects

Seamlessly integrating biophilic design to enhance resident well-being, one can experience abundant use of large windows flooding the interiors with natural light, linking indoor life with natural rhythms and reducing reliance on artificial illumination – facilitating cross-ventilation and ensuring fresh air circulation for improved comfort and health. “Materials like oak and stone throughout the villa blur the boundary between indoors and outdoors, enriching the living experience with nature’s textures,” reveals Bhadri. Strategic views and outdoor connections in every room deepen residents’ engagement with their environment, offering a serene, sensory-rich atmosphere. These thoughtful design choices collectively forge a nurturing, nature-connected habitat.

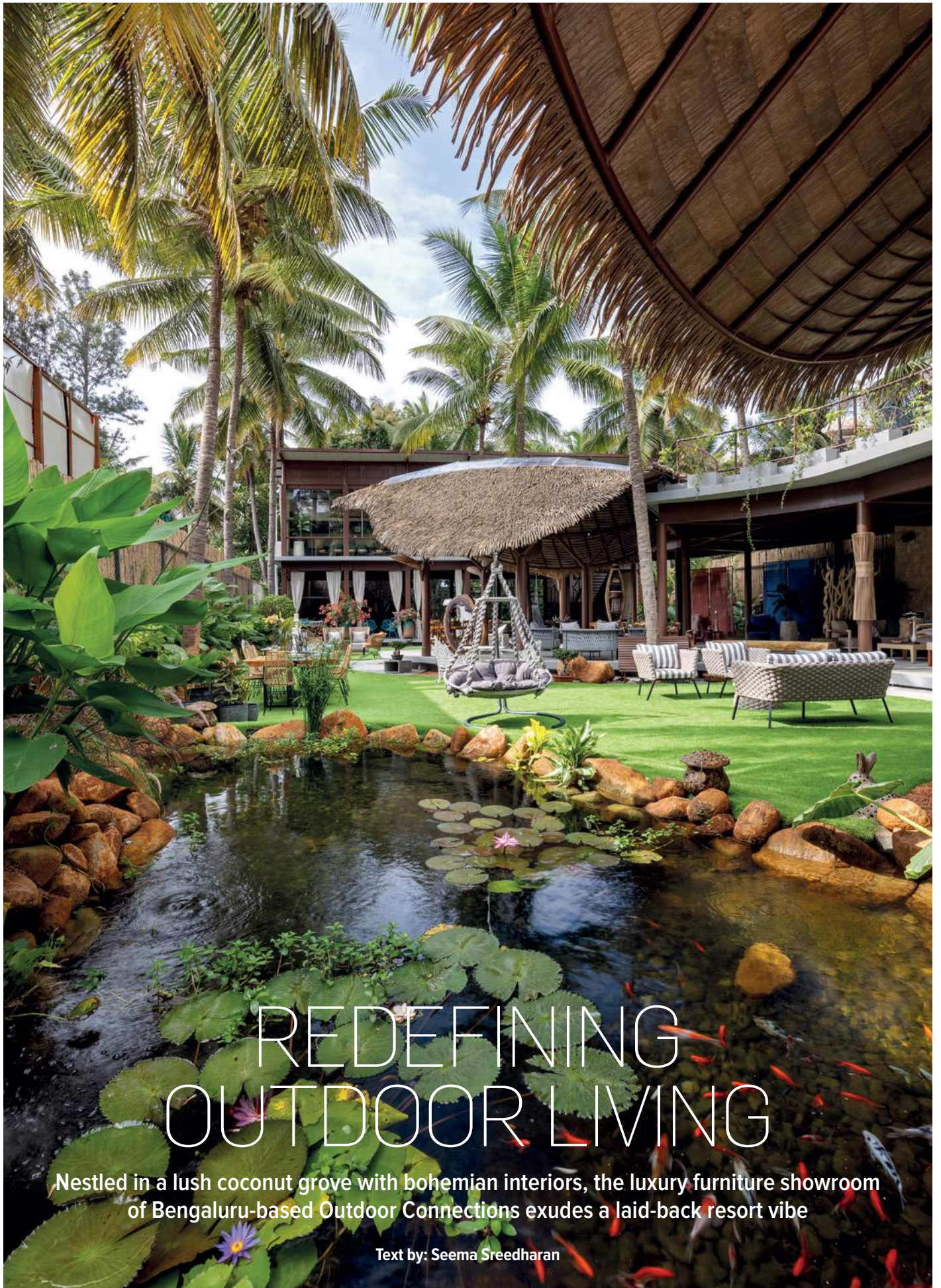
Integrating custom furniture made from natural materials, the furniture resonates with the villa’s structural and design elements,

ensuring consistency throughout the space. Bhadri’s approach to this aspect of design goes beyond aesthetics, as she elaborates, “This approach not only maintains a visual harmony but also reinforces the biophilic design principle, promoting a deeper connection with nature.” Additionally, “Custom furniture tailored to the villa’s dimensions and style maximises space efficiency and aesthetic appeal, offering unique, functional pieces that reflect the home’s character.”

Snehal Suthar adds, “Our goal was not just to create furniture, but to sculpt pieces that echo the essence of the villa itself, fostering a seamless integration between the built environment and the natural world.” Needless to say, more places like Vanessa Villa are the need of the hour, urging us to rethink our relationship with the environment and aspire towards architectural endeavours that harmonise with nature’s grandeur. ✚

Project Features





REDEFINING OUTDOOR LIVING

Nestled in a lush coconut grove with bohemian interiors, the luxury furniture showroom of Bengaluru-based Outdoor Connections exudes a laid-back resort vibe

Text by: Seema Sreedharan



Each piece in our collection is meticulously crafted using only the finest materials, ensuring durability and longevity. Whether you are looking for a cozy outdoor lounge set to relax and unwind, or a sleek dining set to entertain guests, our selection caters to every individual's taste and needs."

—RITU TODI, Founder, Outdoor Connections



“With the intent to provide a sanctuary where customers can immerse themselves in the beauty of outdoor living, the 17,000 square foot store of Outdoor Connections is nestled within a lush coconut grove in the heart of Bangalore city. “The inspiration behind the design of Outdoor Connections was to create an immersive and experiential space that seamlessly integrates with its natural surroundings, offering visitors an escape from the hustle and bustle of urban life,” explains Ritu Todi, Founder, Outdoor Connections. The aim was to create a space that transcends the conventional showroom experience. And it does that beautifully!

The moment you enter the store, you are engulfed by a sense of calm. The immediate impulse is to settle down in one of the loungers with a tall glass of lemonade, but the lush koi pond right at the entrance ushers you to explore and engage with the space. “The goal was to blur the boundaries between indoor and outdoor spaces, allowing visitors to connect with nature while exploring our

luxury outdoor furniture and decor accessories,” explains Todi. The brief to their architect, Sandeep Umapathi from Mistry Architects was to create an experiential outdoor space where guests can escape into nature and experience the limitless possibilities of outdoor furniture and outdoor living.

As you enter, you’re immediately greeted by a koi pond nestled amidst lush greenery, where the gentle melodies of flowing water create a tranquil backdrop, setting the tone for a truly immersive experience. Adjacent to this, a serene rock garden invites you to explore their zen-inspired furniture collection. Stepping further into OC, you are greeted by verdant landscaped gardens that showcase their extensive range of outdoor furniture. Transitioning indoors, their outdoor-inspired indoor area beckons with rustic charm and bohemian flair. The use of natural materials and earthy tones enhance the connection with the surrounding environment, while the bohemian décor elements add a touch of sophistication to the rustic setting.



The goal was to blur the boundaries between indoor and outdoor spaces, allowing visitors to connect with nature while exploring our luxury outdoor furniture and decor accessories.”

—**RITU TODI**, Founder, Outdoor Connections

On the first floor, the indoor and terrace areas seamlessly integrate to showcase a curated selection of outdoor furniture.

Talking about their furniture collection, Todi says, “Each piece in our collection is meticulously crafted using only the finest materials, ensuring durability and longevity. Whether you are looking for a cozy outdoor lounge set to relax and unwind, or a sleek dining set to entertain guests, our selection caters to every individual’s taste and needs.” Carefully curated by their in-house designers, the collections are durable yet stylish and comfortable to allow you to connect better with the outdoors. Constructed with weather-resistant

materials, their all-weather pieces can withstand the harsh natural elements while still maintaining their stylish appearance and pristine condition for years to come, no matter what the weather throws at it.

The space is designed in a way that you seamlessly meander from one section to the other. The vision was to craft a destination where customers not only shop for outdoor furniture, but also immerse themselves in a captivating experience. “We aim to create a shopping experience like no other, where every visit is an opportunity to escape the ordinary and indulge in the beauty of outdoor living,” Todi concludes. ✚



IN GOD'S OWN COUNTRY

Meera Pyarelal's Temple Town is a design haven for the connoisseurs of refined luxury

Text by: Seema Sreedharan







The ethos of our brand is to make well-crafted pieces of furniture for traditional interiors that are sustainable and have a global appeal. In a contemporary set up, we mix our straight-line wooden furniture with Indian art forms or antiques, making it chic.”

—MEERA PYARELAL, Founder and Creative Director, Temple Town



MEERA PYARELAL

Founder and Creative Director, Temple Town

Everyone thought medicine would be the obvious career choice for Meera Pyarelal, the daughter of a Padma Shri award-winning surgeon; however, destiny had other plans for her. Armed with a Masters in English literature, she discovered her love for interiors while doing up her own apartment way back in 1999. She decided to give it a try and set up a small unit in her husband’s garage 20 years ago, giving wings to her creative side. After two decades of earning a name for herself in the interiors industry, she conceived her own brand — Temple Town — with the aim of designing and manufacturing sophisticated pieces of colonial furniture



Meera Pyarelal’s spaces are evocative of her distinct design vocabulary—one that pays an ode to traditional aesthetics without alienating contemporary ethos. The designer is committed to creating designs that are rooted in India yet have a global appeal. “Temple Town is an attempt at preserving and protecting our Indian craftsmanship and making it appeal to a larger audience,” explains Meera as she talks about the ethos of the brand. Nestled in the heart of the city of Thrissur in Kerala, Temple Town is a haven for design aficionados.

Spread across 8,000sq ft, this immersive store is a grand showcase of the brand’s unique design ethos. Located inside the Museum of Kerala History, the store has been created by renovating an old Kerala house. A walkthrough across the two floors gives customers a peek into the brands’ design aesthetic and helps them visualise their homes designed by Temple Town. “The ethos of our brand is to make well-crafted pieces of furniture for traditional interiors that are sustainable

and have a global appeal. In a contemporary set up, we mix our straight-line wooden furniture with Indian art forms or antiques, making it chic. Colonial furniture is the best collaboration between the East and West. Similarly, any design classic can be mixed with an Indian piece and yet hold its own charm. The only way to establish Indian designs is to make ourselves visible on an international level, connect our artisans with the international market and offer competitive prices on quality products,” says Meera.

Temple Town’s journey started in 1999. Meera discovered her love for interiors while doing up her own apartment. When she couldn’t find what she was looking for in the market, she decided to design it herself. Meera set up a small furniture unit in her garage. After two decades of earning a name in the interiors industry, she conceived her own brand called Temple Town, with the aim of designing and manufacturing sophisticated pieces of colonial furniture. “The objective of the store is to preserve and promote traditional Indian designs and craftsmanship.”





Walking through the store evokes the feeling of experiencing a home designed by us, replete with a living room, dining, bedroom, everything as it should be in a home.”

—**MEERA PYARELAL**, Founder and Creative Director, Temple Town

Talking about the design of the space, she says, “Temple Town is not designed just as a showroom; it’s designed as a house. The intent was for our customers to really understand our Indian design language. Walking through the store evokes the feeling of experiencing a home designed by us, replete with a living room, dining, bedroom, everything as it should be in a home,” says Meera as she takes us through the space. “Temple Town is an extension of who I am, how I design, and how I live.

The latest collection draws its essence from the stunning landscapes

of Kerala. Handcrafted furniture reflecting the swaying palms on the beaches, the vibrant hues of exotic flowers, and the earthy tones of the spice plantations makes this collection unique and fascinating. Going by the brand’s ethos, the collection has been designed utilising natural materials like rattan, bamboo and reclaimed wood, each sustainably sourced and showcasing the inherent beauty of the region. “As a country, India has so much art from all over, and at Temple Town, we love to bring these colours and textures while fusing them with modern elements of the West and the latest designs and technologies. ✚

Project Features

A SYNERGY OF DESIGN ARTISTRY & ARCHITECTURAL SCALE

Centrally located in India's technology hub, this hotel's design concept reflects nature and geometry as a homage to the city of Bengaluru



Informed by the cultural heritage of Bengaluru and its increasing population, international design studio Yabu Pushelberg developed the design ethos of Four Seasons, Bengaluru based on two distinctive themes: the traditional and the transitional. The design language brings modern styles with traditional Indian craftsmanship through stone-filled spaces and a neutral color palette, reflecting the geometric and ornamented patterns of the stonework in the gardens of Bengaluru.

The grand architectural scale of Embassy One is structured to give a surprise in three folds. The elaborate sequence of the ground lobby of Four Seasons is an eye opener in three layers. As you walk

into the lobby, you notice spacious area lined with metal fretwork and elegant ceramics. As you wander further, you will be welcomed to The Lobby Lounge & Terrace and The Collection.

The dynamic 21st Floor is artfully and elegantly designed by multinational interior design company LW Design. Copitas, the glamorous cocktail bar, boasts sophisticated interiors in black and gold that contrast nicely with the white marble floor and counters. Bronze decorative details, velvet upholstery, and whimsical art make the space even more alluring. A geometrical gold chandelier gives a stunning edge to the bar area. However, the outdoor patio commanding sweeping views of the tree-top-laden



The newly-launched 21st Floor is artfully and elegantly designed by multinational interior design company LW Design. Copitas, the glamorous cocktail bar, boasts sophisticated interiors in black and gold that contrast nicely with the white marble floor and counters.



cityscape is the winner in Copitas' high-octane design scheme. "The brief was to keep Copitas and Far & East, the two stand-alone spaces to have distinct identities," informs the LW Team. Far & East, the Asian Brasserie features dark and sophisticated materials, including honed marble floors supplements the timber rug-effect panels, a pattern inspired by Louis Vuitton luggage. The contrasting tangerine-colored upholstery adds a visual vibrancy. "The client brief which was given to us for the restaurant, was not to include any obvious presence of Bangalore in the Far & East as this is an Asian Fusion restaurant. Bangalore is famous for being the Garden city of India as well as having a busy railway system. To reflect

these we used some tropical wall murals in the restaurant area and also used the railway tracks as our inspiration for the ceiling feature," informs the team.

Copitas has an easy sense of style to it, while Far & East is bold and vibrant. "The overarching vision for the project was to design a dynamic and cultural destination where a myriad of people can gather, connect and be inspired by the natural warmth and hospitality of India. To elevate the experience, the Yabu Pushelberg team envisioned the home of an art collector, curated with an eclectic mix of Indian art for an intimate, refined and cultural experience," informs the team. ✚

Project Features

WHISPERS OF DESIGN

PROJECT: Residential, Nasik, Maharashtra; **ARCHITECTS:** Magic Houz; **PHOTOGRAPHS:** Kuber Shah

Imagined by Sara Shah and Nilay Shah of Magic Houz, this 2,500 sq ft holiday home is a treat for the design-hungry souls



A moment of respite, a breath of fresh air and a thought to ponder. This 2,500 sq ft home in Noida named “Riviera- The Riverside Residence” by Magic Houz is all what one needs this holiday season. Co-founded by Ar. Sara Shah and Ar. Nilay Shah, Magic Houz imagines the grand entrance with an organic teak root console. It sets the tone for what to expect once inside. The living room serves as the heart of the abode, with pops of yellow punctuating the canvas and hints of gold adorning the almost white space. One thing that remains consistent through these spaces are the pichwais, each finding its own strategic spot in every room. Adding drama is the sun light sharply streaming in through the sheer curtains. Everywhere you look, there is something to marvel at. Rich textures and finishes just add to the entire picture, making it perfect for your bare eyes. Gliding through the space, one will be in awe of the majestic chandelier hanging above the six-seater statement dining table. The home also finds use of

tufted headboards. Like always, the softly lit room with delicate floral patterns is a classic this home masters.

The family room, adorned with patterned wallpaper, serves as a perfect backdrop for the rust-colored sofa. Here, each element conveys its own unique narrative. In the bedroom, the wooden backdrop evokes a European ambiance, encouraging one to appreciate the unhurried and contemplative pace of life, where there is ample time to savour the minutest details. Delicate floral patterns gracefully climb the walls, distinguishing the son’s Japanese-themed room where shades of grey take center stage. This home with its muted palette and airy layout is a break all souls need from the fast paced city life. ✚

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Ar. Sara Shah,
co-founder, Magic Houz

Delicate floral patterns gracefully climb the walls, distinguishing the son's Japanese-themed room where shades of grey take center stage. This home with its muted palette and airy layout is a break all souls need from the fast paced city life.



THE GEEVEES 2024

The GeeVees is the brainchild of Godrej Locks & Architectural Fittings and Systems (GLAFS), a business unit of Godrej & Boyce

The GeeVees is the brainchild of Godrej Locks & Architectural Fittings and Systems (GLAFS), a distinguished business unit of Godrej & Boyce, the flagship company of the Godrej Group. This year marked the 3rd edition of the prestigious platform that recognizes and celebrates India's finest innovations in architecture and interior design. It was a celebration of the most sought-after talent behind remarkable projects with regards to smart, sustainable architecture and interior design in India.

Though an astounding 1400+ names were received across India, our esteemed jury comprising of 16 members including included Naresh Narsimhan (Venkatramanan Associates), Puran Kumar (Studio PKA), Reza Kabul (ARK Reza Architects), George E Ramapuram (Earthitects), Hiten Sethi (Hiten Sethi & Associates), Kanhai Gandhi (KNS Architects),

Anupam Bansal (ABRD Architects), Darius Tanujoyo (Pranala Associates), Nitin Killawala (Group Seven Architects & Planners), Alhad Gore (Beyond Design Architects & Consultants), Raj Agrawal (Raj Agrawal & Associates), Rang Emei (Helix Healthcare Architecture + Helix Design), Sunil Patil (Sunil Patil & Associates), Supriya Thyagarajan (Perkins Eastman), Vatsal Joshi (Associated Architects Pvt Ltd), Carl Bhesania (Architecture at Talati & Partners) along with screening juries Rashmi Tiwari and Architect Sohel Mansur handpicked the winners who successfully married sustainability with functionality whilst enhancing the aesthetic appeal in their respective projects.

Presenting some noteworthy projects at GeeVees 2024 that won accolades from the critics and peers alike:



→ ECGC BHAWAN (MUMBAI) by Qutub Mandivala under Public Building category

ECGC Limited is a Government of India entity that promotes exports through credit insurance services. The architecture aims to disrupt the conventional government project aesthetics, establishing itself as a landmark in Mumbai's urban landscape. By blending Vaastu principles with contemporary parametric design, it births an iconic edifice equipped with cutting-edge amenities. Mindful of the surroundings, the design harmonizes with existing trees and landscapes, carving out areas for a public plaza, central courtyard, and water features. Accommodating 300 office occupants and providing residential spaces, it seamlessly transitions from public to private realms. This parametric approach not only fosters an ultramodern ambiance but also caters to future socio-economic needs, championing eco-friendliness and energy efficiency.

→ DEVI RATN NEW WING, JAIPUR – IHCL SELECTIONS, JAIPUR by Ar. Khozema Chitalwala under Hospitality Projects (More than 50 rooms) category

Devi Ratn, a boutique hotel in Jaipur, embarks on a substantial expansion, preserving the city's heritage while envisioning a modern wedding venue. The project intertwines tradition with innovation, seamlessly blending Jaipur's historical details into contemporary narratives. The design incorporates intricate spatial carvings, regal elephants, and modern reinterpretations of Jaipur's geometry, reflecting the city's cultural richness. Meticulous planning ensures cohesion with iconic landmarks, integrating traditional architectural influences. Sustainability is implicit, utilizing locally sourced materials and incorporating eco-friendly practices. Devi Ratn emerges as a symbol of cultural preservation and modern luxury, offering a unique fusion of tradition and innovation while maintaining environmental consciousness.



→ **MEMENTOS BY ITC HOTELS EKAAYA, UDAIPUR**
by Dharmesh Patel under Hospitality Projects
(More than 50 rooms) category

Mementos by ITC Hotels Ekaaya is a luxurious 5-star resort in Udaipur nestled strategically on the steep slopes maximising its surroundings by offering breath-taking panoramic views of Udaipur's picturesque landscapes. The resort offers cascading pools, interconnecting paths, and luxurious suites with Rajasthani decor, combining traditional and modern conveniences to ensure a cultural connection. While the usage of local materials ensures a connection to the cultural context, fostering a sense of place and authenticity. Sustainability has also been one of its core elements in construction and operations as it has integrated eco-friendly practices like energy-efficient technologies and waste reduction.



→ **AQUATIC GALLERY AT SCIENCE CITY, SCIENCE CITY CAMPUS, AHMEDABAD** by Bhargav A Bhavsar under Institutional Building category

The Aquatics Gallery, India's largest public aquarium located at Ahmedabad features advanced life support systems and is meant to provide a memorable underwater experience. Recently, the Prime Minister also visited the aquarium and lauded the efforts towards the creation of an educative and immersive experience with regards to the aqua eco – system. The design of the Aquatic Gallery is primarily inspired by nautilus, a marine mollusc belonging to a unique class of cephalopod molluscs, captivating example of nature's exquisite design. The Aquatic Gallery's design features a logarithmic spiral structure, showcasing the interconnectedness of science and the dynamic evolution of knowledge through progressive chamber arrangement.

→ **OIA, BANGALORE** by Abhigyan Neogi under Hospitality Projects (less than 50 rooms) category

OIA sprawled across 87,000 sq.km. is a fine dining pub in Bangalore and plans to be one of the largest categories in Asia. OIA's architectural design is centralized around capturing the pristine beauty of Greek aesthetics in the heart of the silicon city through multi-level space, amphitheatre-style seating, and signature domed lighthouse. The minimalist interior design enhances the overall vision, resulting in a perfect blend of tradition and modernity. Collective 2024 is just around the corner.



→ **RENUKA, SARJAPUR, BANGALORE** by Lester Rozario under Interior Residential (above 3000 sq. ft.) category

This is a bungalow designed under the Renuka Project located at Sarjapur, Bangalore. The Renuka project is an attempt to maximize the dialogue with the outdoors as one navigates the depth of the plot. For this specific bungalow, since they hail from Punjab, the interior elements draw inspiration from the Phulkari style of folk embroidery originating in Punjab while a concrete brick and kota flooring with lime rendered walls resonate with the client's desire for an earthly palette. Marrying the raw appeal of nature with sustainability, the project was built utilizing only locally sourced materials to reduce wastage as well as reuse waste materials to design the furniture.



→ **TOY STORY, BANGALORE** by Swapnil Valvatkar under Educational - Architecture & Interior category

Toy Story is a pre-school situated at Bangalore. Emphasizing flexibility and safety, classrooms are designed as adaptable spaces, fostering creativity and interaction. Sustainability is integrated through efficient lighting, ventilation, and air circulation, prioritizing health and well-being. The design concept revolves around PLAY-THINK-INTERACT-RESPOND-LEARN, tailored to stimulate young minds' curiosity and exploration. Inspired by Locke's philosophy, the architectural canvas is complemented with vibrant interiors, enhancing sensory experiences. Extensive research guides the creation of a dynamic learning environment, which is poised to be an epitome of the future education system. The result is a vibrant, interconnected space resembling a toy house, encouraging active learning through play, and fostering a love for exploration and discovery.



→ **ALARINE EARTH HOME, PALLIKKARA, ERNAKULAM, KERALA** by Zarine Hoshang Jamshedji under Residential Projects in Small towns category

Nestled 2km from Cochin's Infopark, Alarine Earth Home is an attempt at a harmonious interplay between thoughtfully designed architecture, interiors & landscape. Every aspect of the design is influenced by 'De aarde ons tuiste' (The Earth our home). The green roof feels like an extension of the ethereal paddy fields along with reducing roof temperature. While the home is entirely rendered with a laterite-based mud plaster paste contributing towards a healthy indoor environment. The site slope, roof, and overflow from the paddy are collected into a pond, and the roof and ground landscape are irrigated from the pond. Thus, the property shatters the myth that opulence and nature are irreconcilable. +

FROM TRADITIONAL TO TRENDY: SHAPING CONTEMPORARY HOMES

Love classic style with a modern twist? Craig & Rose's Vintage range goes beyond paint. It's about creating sophisticated, timeless spaces that reflect your unique personality



a natural reaction between copper and the elements, has inspired Craig & Rose's newest creation: Artisan Copper Patina Paint.

Love classic style with a modern twist? Craig & Rose's Vintage range goes beyond paint. It's about creating sophisticated, timeless spaces that reflect your unique personality. Their diverse palette blends rich heritage with cutting-edge technology, offering neutral calmness or vibrant impact. Choose from premium paints and special effects for a truly immersive experience. It's not just paint; it's luxury.

Step into a vibrant world of colour and personalized design with a renowned paint brand all the way from UK boasting 200 years of expertise. Their captivating experience centre now in Chennai showcases 110 unique heritage shades, each carrying whispers of history, alongside innovative special effects to push your design boundaries.

Forget boring beige! True luxury isn't just what you own, it's how you make it your own. And what sets your space apart more than a splash of daring colour? Bold hues aren't just trendy, they are a statement. They take your walls from blank to brilliant, creating a unique and stylish haven that reflects your one-of-a-kind personality. So go ahead, ditch the ordinary and embrace the extraordinary with a colour that speaks to you!

The use of rich and vibrant hues such as deep blues, regal purples, or striking emerald greens, can immediately evoke a sense of opulence and sophistication. These bold choices go beyond the conventional neutral tones, making a bold statement that is both daring and confident.

COPPER PATINA: Dreaming the shades of Liberty

Imagine yourself strolling through bustling New York City, craning your neck

to admire the majestic Lady Liberty. As sunlight dances across her copper skin, you notice the vibrant tapestry of greens and blues – a testament to time's artistry. This breathtaking patina,



**Craig & Rose
experience center**
Ispahani Centre,
Nungambakkam High
Rd, Chennai





(From L-R) Tarun Tahiliani, Rajiv Makhni, Anupama Kundoo, Vinu Daniel, Giri Venkatesh, Amit Gupta

ANTICIPATION, INNOVATION, AND APPEAL OF LEXUS DESIGN AWARD

In the dynamic world of luxury and mobility, Lexus stands as a beacon of innovation, seamlessly merging design, craftsmanship, and a commitment to a sustainable future. The annual Lexus Design Award is a testament to this commitment and serves as a global stage for emerging design talent to apply creative principles to craft imaginative and sustainable solutions. The YET Philosophy, “Don’t compromise;

harmonize,” is core to Lexus’s design thinking, which embodies the brand’s pursuit of uncharted territories and possibilities, pushing the boundaries of what is conceivable.

Lexus globally redefines luxury with its philosophy of ‘Design for a Better Tomorrow’. It embraces a provocative flair, reflected in its design language and approach. The essence of Lexus Design thinking is woven into a mantra

that beckons designers to Anticipate the uncharted, Innovate beyond the imaginable, and Captivate with design brilliance for Enhanced happiness.

DESIGN LEADERSHIP IN NAVIGATING THE FUTURE

To understand Lexus’s dedication to design, we need to look back to the last decade and trace the brand’s transformation from a design perspective. Chief Branding Officer and Head of Design, Simon Humphries, has led this evolution as he has played a pivotal role in maintaining a synergy that fuels Lexus’s design innovation. Lexus emphasizes the importance of maintaining a diverse and cross-disciplinary approach, which is also reflected in the ethos of the Lexus Design Award.

CRAFTING A BETTER TOMORROW WITH DESIGN IN INDIA

Zooming into the Indian chapter of the Lexus Design Award, the narrative has been amplified. Over the past six years, since the debut of the award in India in 2017, the platform has been a fertile ground for design talent from diverse disciplines. Entries like Cookmate,



Loop Seater

addressing space constraints in modern kitchens, and Drishyam, a board game fostering inclusivity, exemplify the intersection of imagination and thoughtful solutions.

Entries like Rafiq Ni Sujani, a distinctive hand-woven quilting method to reduce waste and contributions to landfills; Sun Harvested Cool Rooms, a sustainable approach to cooling systems by harnessing solar energy; and Golden Feathers, a unique approach to repurposing chicken feathers to create a product only comparable to natural wool, have not only won hearts but also validated the Lexus Design Award's core principles.

Transformative designs like the Onperly Menstrual Cup, which caters to the unique anatomies of South and Southeast Asian menstruators, the Life Box, which extends heart preservation time, impacting potentially revolutionary outcomes, or the Kyma Bench, which challenges conventions with a dynamic and fluid design, promoting unique user interfaces, are a clear reflection of the YET philosophy.

Similarly, making a testament to the art of balance, a LDAI 2024 shortlisted entry, Loop Seater is a cantilevered bench that maintains the visual tension whereas Bidri is striking crafted pieces of intricate Bidriware that can be used as a carpet or wall art.

Another LDAI 2024 shortlisted entry was the ITO Floor Lamp which makes the light feel tangible through hand-knotted cotton threads freely suspended on a cast brass frame.

LEXUS DESIGN AWARD INDIA 2024

The fusion of Lexus's global initiatives, such as the Lexus Design Award and its design leadership, creates a narrative where luxury, sustainability, and provocative design coalesce. The Indian chapter of the Lexus Design Award, now in its 7th edition, anticipates yet another season of inspiring entries that align with Lexus' overall guiding principles of Anticipation, Innovation, Captivation and Enhancing happiness.

A distinguished panel of internationally acclaimed jurors, including Subodh Gupta (India's acclaimed contemporary artist), Dr. Anupama Kundoo (an internationally renowned architect, author, and researcher), Vinu Daniel (the principal architect and visionary behind Wallmakers), Tarun Tahliani (an



The Final Migration

The essence of Lexus Design thinking is woven into a mantra that beckons designers to Anticipate the uncharted, Innovate beyond the imaginable, and Captivate with design brilliance for Enhanced happiness.



ITO Floor Lamp

accomplished fashion designer), and Giri Venkatesh (the driving force behind Lexus' marketing strategy in the Asia Pacific region), have evaluated entries across six categories (conceptual, industrial design, textile design, furniture design, built environment, and tech design), providing a unique opportunity for shortlisted designers to interact with industry experts through a developmental workshop.

Building on the success of the 2023 winners, the 2024 edition continues to showcase design solutions that align with the YET Philosophy and the guiding principles of Anticipate, Innovate, Captivate, all aimed at contributing to enhancing the happiness of all.

COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABLE WAY OF LIFE

Lexus's commitment to a brighter, more sustainable future is unwavering. As Lexus seamlessly integrates design with its vision for a brighter future, the confluence of global initiatives and design leadership ensures that the brand's distinctive style transcends luxury cars, leaving an enduring imprint on the realms of design and mobility. Amidst this ongoing pursuit of design excellence and sustainability, Lexus positions itself as a trailblazer in transformative design. The impact of the brand's initiatives surpasses and transcends borders, fostering a global conversation about the harmonious coexistence of design and environmental consciousness.



THE ZEBA HOUSE

Located in Ludhiana, this home designed by Kavneet Grover stands as a testimony to the rich legacy of adornment that is true to India

Being in the fashion design industry, the clients wanted their home to reflect their sense of style. The architect responded with a design theme that was modern, Indian and chic. “Generally Indian architecture is associated with traditional elements and ornamentation. ‘Zeba’ means adorned in Urdu. We envisioned the architecture style of this project to be reminiscent of the rich legacy of adornment within our Indian subcontinent. Be it our beautiful marble, wood or stone carvings; our rich art and tapestry styles like Pichwai, Kalamkaari, Kantha, Phulkaari, chikankaari etc.” says architect Kavneet Grover. The design team tried to embrace Indian-ness in a contemporary way by using customised sand blasted red terracotta brick tiles by Bharat Bricks, in a lateral direction using patterns that vary every few courses. This lends a unique handcrafted essence to the facade. “We created this design using the aid of physical models and CAD. Our objective was to create a beautiful visual symphony that pays homage to the timeless beauty of Indian craftsmanship.”



It was a thirty-year-old property, hence the challenge was to recreate spaces out of an old structure into a plan that optimised space and created the illusion of more area than was actually available. Since the plot faces north, emphasis was laid to maximise the intake of natural light within the interiors, so the design team used large north facing windows at strategic positions. As a result they have abundant natural light during the day thereby eliminating the need for artificial lighting during daylight hours. The ground floor holds the living, dining, kitchen and guest room, the first floor houses the master bedroom, daughter's bedroom and the family room. The second floor has a laundry area, servant room and a terrace.

Upon entering, we encounter a

wooden screen and a mosaic Restile flooring that help create a sort of sense of an entrance foyer. A place of pause. These wooden screens have been used to define the spaces but not blocking them entirely, leaving a partial visual connection with the other spaces. An existing wall between the pre-existing garage and living room was perforated with an archway to create a separate dining and living room. The archway helps to define the spaces as well as connect the areas too. This gives the illusion of a much wider space than before. The kitchen was made bigger by extending it towards the west wall. A new bathroom was created to flank the bedrooms in the south on both floors. A bigger master bedroom was designed on the first floor with its own terrace.



“

We created this design using the aid of physical models and CAD. Our objective was to create a beautiful visual symphony that pays homage to the timeless beauty of Indian craftsmanship.”

—AR KAVNEET GROVER

A concrete pergola outside the master bedroom creates beautiful shadows throughout the day.

“We didn't shy away from using colour in the interiors. The staircase and the landings are adorned with a coloured mosaic Restile flooring and Kota green Restile on the steps. We have green in the kitchen with a touch of wood. Restile mosaics, Italian marble, p.u paint etc have been used in the bathrooms. For fenestrations, we customised the colour of aluminium window frames to a particular shade of blue to complement the rich red of the terracotta,” says Kavneet about the vibrant colour palette of the house. The interiors lend to the use of beautiful Indian tapestry in curtains, bedspreads, rugs, furnishings etc. Wood, wicker and stone have been used to offset the colours

The Zeba house project is an attempt to recreate an architectural language that is modern yet timeless and resonates with our cultural story.

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