DESIGN INDIA

POOL 119
www.indipool.com

CHANGE MAKERS



Akanksha Deo Sharma pg 10

Uday Mohite **02** Manuni Patel **22** Anvita Sharma **28** Pallavi Foley **34** Chinmayie Bhat **42**
Rohan Chakravarty **48** Shivangini Padhiyar and Rekha Datla **54** Vasant Nath **60**

indi

INDIA'S BEST DESIGN AWARDS 2020

ENTRIES EXTENDED

Don't miss the last date of entry

10TH JULY 2020

www.ibdsa.com



Editor in Chief | **sudhir@indidesign.in**



Vikas Satwalekar at the POOL Show, Pune



www.indipool.com

pool@indidesign.in

@designindiamag

DESIGN INDIA

Designindia was founded in 2002. It was started as a platform for interaction for the design community in India and abroad. Over the years it has grown into a forum spread over many social and professional networking domains, linking design professionals into an active, interactive and thought leading community.

http://in.groups.yahoo.com/group/designindia

Remembering a Great Teacher

We recently lost Vikas Satwalekar, one of the best design teachers we have ever had in India, and a friend and mentor to me and so many others. As Executive Director of NID, and Head of its Visual Communication program, he made a deep impression on his students, leading them on to much success in their later lives. He had a unique style that helped build a lasting rapport with his students, even while teaching them valuable lessons. Here are a few tips for design teachers seeking to learn from his considerable experience:

Be an assertive teacher: Vikas was like a very strict parent. He always supported students but pushed them to do better.

Be a friend, but don't go too far: When we were students, Vikas was friendly, but he remained a teacher.

Connect information with stories: Vikas was a superb storyteller. It was fascinating to sit around and hear him speak. His stories on how color behaved when in the company of other colors taught us so much more.

Connect with student lives: Vikas would always ask about our different experiences and connect with them.

Time is precious: It wasn't easy for students to get his time. We all knew he was busy, far busier than just teaching us. When he gave time, we never failed to turn up.

Explain yourself: Vikas had patience, and he showed that very well. He made me do a color exercise over 52 times, and every time he would tell me what was missing. We wanted to get it right every time.

Teach in many ways: Once he took me to the library, two floors up from where our class was, to show me a picture of a painting from a book. He would quote artists, movies, and music to get his point across.

Be firm: He was gentle but demanding. Students loved him for that. It wasn't easy to get past him by making up stories.

Let students see your human side: Everyone saw him working late nights in studios over projects.

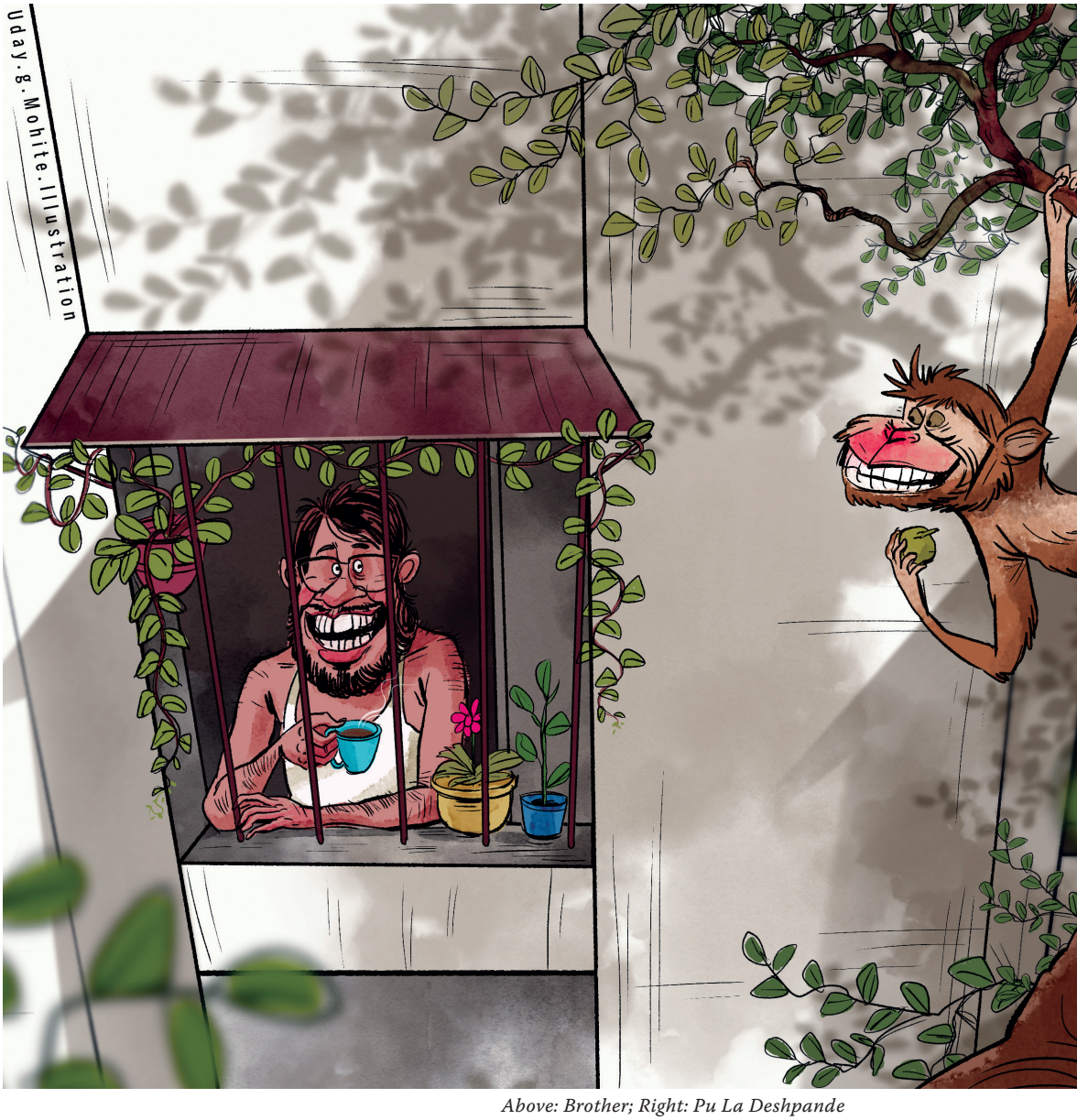
Believe in your students: He never ignored anyone. He listened and gave enough time to all of us.

Sudhir

ValueLabs

Subscribe at
www.indipool.com

Get POOL App
Download on the App Store
GET IT ON Google Play



Above: Brother; Right: Pu La Deshpande

DRAWING ATTENTION

*Digital caricaturist and illustrator **Uday Mohite** uses his art to raise awareness about social issues that bother him*







What role has formal art education played in your career?

UM: I did my Bachelor's in Fine Arts from Sir J.J. Institute of Applied Art, Mumbai. My majors were in digital illustration, cartoon, caricature and portrait. I think it is very important for you to have basic knowledge of drawing to start illustration. In the academic years, the artist should focus on learning the basics of drawing, anatomy study, sketching, color wheel, and color palette because those skills make the professional work more efficient. An illustrator should see the picture he wants to draw on blank canvas. Sharing your knowledge, thoughts, and ideas with people helps you to grow/develop as an artist.

When did you start your journey as a freelancer?

UM: During my first year of college, I started working on a few projects as a freelancer. By the end of the final year,







I had made a lot of contacts and decided to be a fulltime freelancer. However, these contacts were not strong enough to provide me work that would pay for my expenses. One of the biggest problems of being a fulltime freelancer is that you rarely get paid on time. So, I decided to get a job, but one that would let me freelance alongside.

I started working with *DNA* newspaper and did freelance assignments for portraits, cartoons, caricatures, film poster illustrations, and graphic design. I was with *DNA* for three years, during which time I made better contacts. Later I got an even better offer at *Mid-day* newspaper where I worked as chief illustrator for five years before I became a fulltime freelancer. I still do work for *Mid-day* as a freelance illustrator.

As a freelancer, I have worked with various prestigious brands such as Walt Disney India, Samsung, Amazon Prime Video, Hotstar Disney, Mumbai Film Company as well as the Indian film industry.

What does it take for an illustrator to find his voice?

UM: The artist always expresses his happiness and sorrow through his art. A 500-line article is equivalent to a single illustration. For the illustrator, his illustration is his voice, his weapon. I use my art to express personal as well as social grievances through social media and print.



Illustration for Hotstar Specials

Tell us about your collaboration with the Amazon Prime Video show 'Hunters'.

UM: This was my first time working with Amazon Prime Video – I got the job through their agency. The requirement for the show 'Hunters' was to recreate the original posters in my style and make an animation video of it for Instagram (and other social platforms). Firstly, I watched the complete show to familiarize myself with it, see what kind of roles the actors were playing, and know the overall mood of the show. I got approval on rough sketches, after which I immediately finalized them in Photoshop, then did the animation, and added the background score. After a few corrections the video was posted on Instagram. I think when an agency decides to collaborate/work with you, they not only look at how good your work is, but also consider your Instagram followers and your connectivity with your followers.

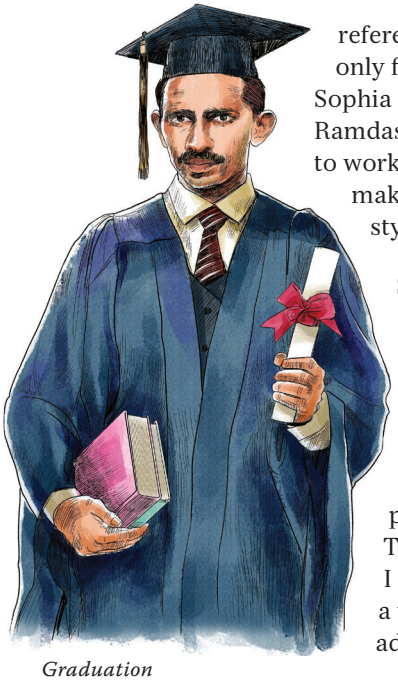
Describe your style.

UM: I don't have a specific style. I like to experiment. I decide my style according to the subject. I think that if you use colors and style according to the subject, the illustration becomes more effective.



What was the most challenging brief you've ever worked on?

UM: Recently, I made an illustration for Mumbai Central Station. The challenge was to create a story illustration (120 feet in size) on the life of Mahatma Gandhi, including his railway journey. We didn't have much



Graduation

reference to base the 12 illustrations on; and the deadline was only five days! Thankfully, Ramdas Sir, a retired art teacher from Sophia Polytechnic College, was with me. We decided to collaborate. Ramdas Sir's preferred medium was watercolor on paper and I used to work digitally. It was challenging because it was my first time making digital watercolor portraits and I wanted to match my style with his.

Share your experience of working with Walt Disney for the movie 'The Lion King'.

UM: 'The Lion King' is an animated film and it was decided to promote it with the help of all the best animation and cartoon artists. Look Who's Talking, a Haryana-based advertising agency, took on the job and selected the 10 best artists - my name was also on the list. As planned, one live post and one story were contracted. I had seen the movie. There was a scene showing the father-son relationship and I decided to illustrate that scene - it got posted and received a very good response. I got a few more projects from the advertising agency after that. This experience was really great.



What difference do awards make to an artist?

UM: Receiving an award is an acknowledgment of your good work, so you get energy to do more. It is an opportunity to prove yourself.

Which projects have you enjoyed the most and why?

UM: In 2015, Samar Khan decided to write a book on Shahrukh Khan completing 25 years in Bollywood *(SRK 25 years of a life)* - I got the opportunity to make portraits of Shahrukh Khan based on his 25 best films and characters. The portraits were styled like the classic handmade Bollywood posters. I enjoyed doing it.

What are the pros and cons of freelancing?

UM: Patience is the most important thing in freelancing. If you do not have patience, it can be very difficult to work, because a freelance





Above: Touring India During Partition
Below: The Harijan Caste

project can come at anytime and the client expects you to complete it as quickly as possible. There is no such thing as quick payment though. A large advertising agency takes at least 45-60 days to release a payment and you eventually get irritated. Thus, it is very important to have patience as a freelance artist. The advantage of being a freelancer is that you can sort out your work, you can do it anywhere, you are free to decide what work you want to do and when. If you have enough time, you can do a better job, which is useful for your portfolio.

What are you currently working on?

UM: For the last couple of months I have been working on a collaboration with Samsung. We are creating and posting photo illustrations in different styles for Instagram. This is a very big project, which may continue for another couple of months. I'm also working on daily cartoons and illustrations for *Mid-day.*

ValueLabs

DESIGN + TECH

now Imagine



valuelabs.com



My name is Khan

Tell us about your creative pursuits during the lockdown.

UM: I am raising awareness through my paintings by making maximum use of social media. I'm experimenting with new illustration styles, improving my video editing software skills and animating my illustrations.

Share your goals and aspirations.

UM: Illustrations give you the freedom to experiment. I have always loved to animate my still-format illustrations and I am a huge fan of animation movies. I love to create new styles and use new mediums. In the future, I desire to own a private studio and also include work on animation film or stop motion film, clay modeling, etc. I have always wanted to act in films. During college days I participated in plays and also directed a few short films. If there is anything that I like apart from illustrations, it has to be movies and acting. I wish to direct an art film in the near future.

uday.mohite896@gmail.com



For Samsung India



Ramdev WEED



IKEA 'Anglatarar' collection designers Akanksha Deo Sharma & Paulin Machado



An Indian TOUCH

The youngest designer at IKEA, the Swedish furniture and homeware retailer, ***Akanksha Deo Sharma*** *enjoys experimenting with sustainable new materials*



IKEA 'Anglatarar' collection designers Paulin Machado & Akanksha Deo Sharma

How were you drawn to design?

AS: I'd always had an interest in art, fashion and design. I studied commerce for a year and switched to fashion designing at National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT). It was during those four years that I realized I related and associated more with the wider aspect of design as opposed to just fashion. Studying fashion made me realize that I had an innate sense and love for textiles. It obviously forms the backbone to what I do right now.

What led to your association with IKEA?

AS: By the end of my fashion studies in 2015, I collaborated with IKEA on a collection called Svartan, which led them to offer me an internship followed by a full time role as a designer in 2017. Based in Delhi as of now, I'm their first Indian hire. I work as an in-house designer and specialize in designing textiles;









'Klarafina & Moakajsa' collection from IKEA Social Entrepreneurship

I also experiment with new materials like rice straw, recycled plastic variations, etc. IKEA has a very open diverse culture and you need to find what interests you and work towards it. It calls for a proactive attitude.

Introduce us to your design process.

AS: A collection always starts with a need, an observation, a gap that we must cater to. There is a framework to my design process but it is fluid - it changes according to the brief. Sometimes the project is big and calls for sufficient research and development, followed by exploration and then the design phase leading to execution; and sometimes you can get quick projects which need proper execution of already explored ideas. It's important to understand the design brief and to cater to that.







Right & left: Förändring collection

How do you bring in Indian-ness into your designs?

AS: It's not important to bring Indian-ness into my designs just because I am an Indian. What's more important is how I can incorporate what I have learnt growing up and studying in India and the rich history, tradition and craft that it celebrates.

How have different facets of your cultural background shaped the way you design?

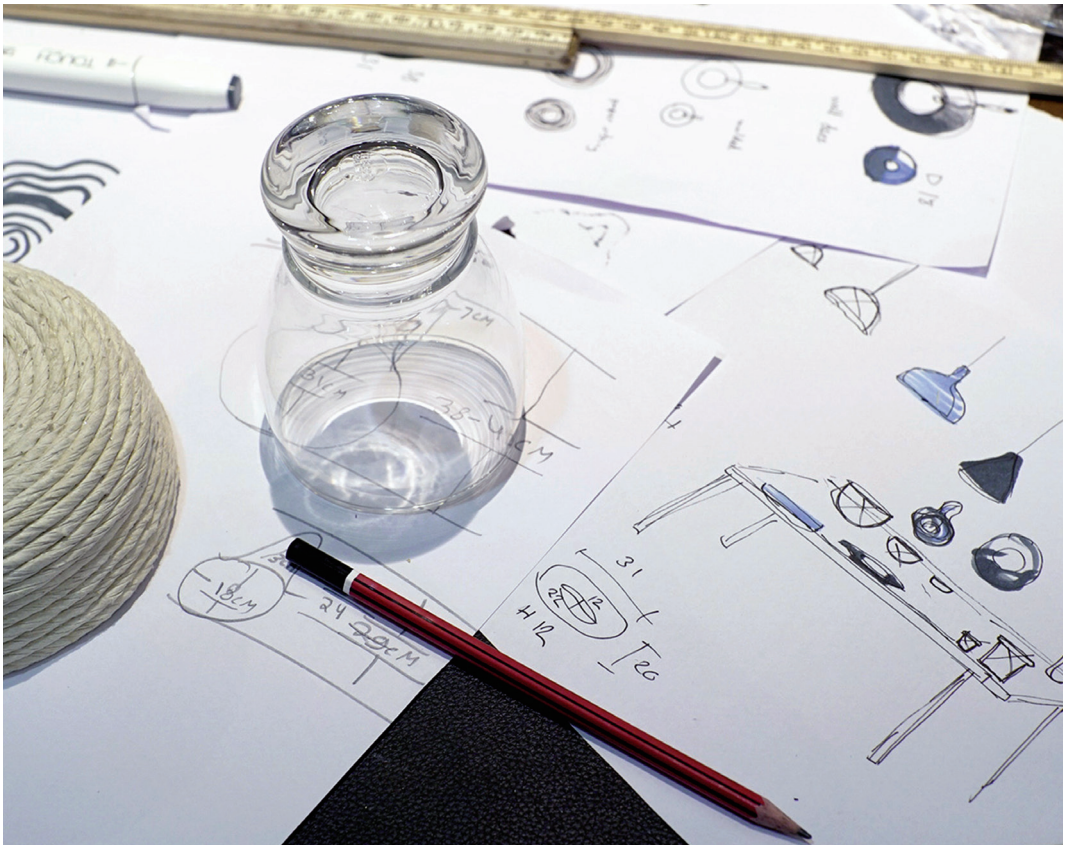
AS: I feel it's a great strength to come from a diverse background such as mine and implement my learnings through my work in a Scandinavian design company such as IKEA. I've always being intrigued by how we, in India, somehow make everything work. There's a beautiful order to the chaos at times and I think I reinterpret the same in terms of lateral thinking. There's a stark contrast between the Indian and Scandinavian culture, and yet there are quite a lot of similarities as well. That said,



I'm interested in how we all can observe and learn from each other's diversity and put it in our approach. The future is collaboration.

Tell us about the 'front week' conducted by IKEA.

AS: A 'front week' is a fantastic training that we do here at IKEA, which essentially means learning and working at the IKEA store as part of your development. You can pick areas that are relevant to your role - for example, the sales, visual merchandising, display, interacting with customers, etc. I was part of the rugs and textiles area and then part of the IComm team. As a designer it was a great opportunity to meet the costumers and take valuable feedback and understand the whole IKEA range under one roof. Being behind the scenes before the store opens makes you really understand how there's an acute attention to detail that has been given to each product being displayed. Being in the store is a physically enduring job where you hardly sit even for a minute. Also, you must have good safety shoes on!













Left & right: 'Tankvard' collection

Give us a glimpse of the most exciting and challenging projects you have worked on.

AS: I think, Förändring has to be one of the most exciting and challenging projects I have worked on till now. It's part of the bigger initiative called 'Better Air', with the aim to turn rice straws – a harvesting residue that contributes heavily to air pollution when burned – into raw material. The challenging part was to understand the material at hand and its possibilities but also to secure a stable and reliable supply chain for this rice straw waste on a global scale.

What led to the 'Interdependence' installation at SPACE10 Delhi?

AS: SPACE10, a Copenhagen based research and design lab, approached me to design an art installation for their new satellite office in Delhi. I instantly knew that

this was a match meant to be.. Their values overlap IKEA's and mine and I knew what I wanted to convey through my art for the kind of space that is launched by SPACE10. Circularity and sustainability are at the forefront of the artwork, integrated with local handcraft techniques from India to physically manifest an environment that makes you feel welcome and curious to learn and interact.



SPACE10 Delhi. Photo by Deepshikha Jain

Share your experience of working with artisans.

AS: Since my years at NIFT I have worked with a fair number of artisans and it's always such a humbling experience to be able to collaborate with them. Sometimes it's also emotional as you tend to immerse yourself in their process and try to learn from their years of mastery. All the different craft clusters I've worked with have a unique story and it's always an intimate relationship of learning from them while empowering them with the opportunities you can offer through your designs.

Have there been many challenges in your journey so far?

AS: During the early stages of one's career there's always a challenge to find what you truly stand for and to find your own design language while being diverse. I think it's a constant journey that one has to explore, and evolve over time. It's very crucial to ask yourself at the beginning of each project, why are you doing, and more importantly, how are you going to do it. The process has become more important than the end result.

How does it feel to be on the *Forbes India* '30 under 30' list? How has the recognition impacted your work?

AS: It's a sweet feeling to be recognized by talented peers and seniors from your industry. I am extremely honored and humbled to be on the list this year. It's always been a subconscious wish to be recognized by a platform like *Forbes* and it feels inspiring to be part of this diverse community of young Indian change-makers and shape shifters. It gives me a lot of energy and confidence to continue doing the work that I do.



How, in your opinion, will the COVID-19 pandemic impact the interior design and craft sectors in India?

AS: The COVID-19 pandemic has already changed the fabric of the world. It has given us a blank page to start again and re-



'Medlem' collection

World's First Design Wall Magazine





With every issue of DESIGNINDIA

www.indipool.com

@designindiamag



strategize how we want to live and what kind of future we want to build for ourselves. As part of the design industry we will have to address the urgent and be relevant. We can no longer ignore the environment and we have to design not just for the people but also for the planet as a whole for our survival. Paola Antonelli (Italian author, editor, architect, and curator) said something that made complete sense - design will become one of the most important tools post COVID-19 to help us adapt to the future changes when it comes to our behavior and needs.

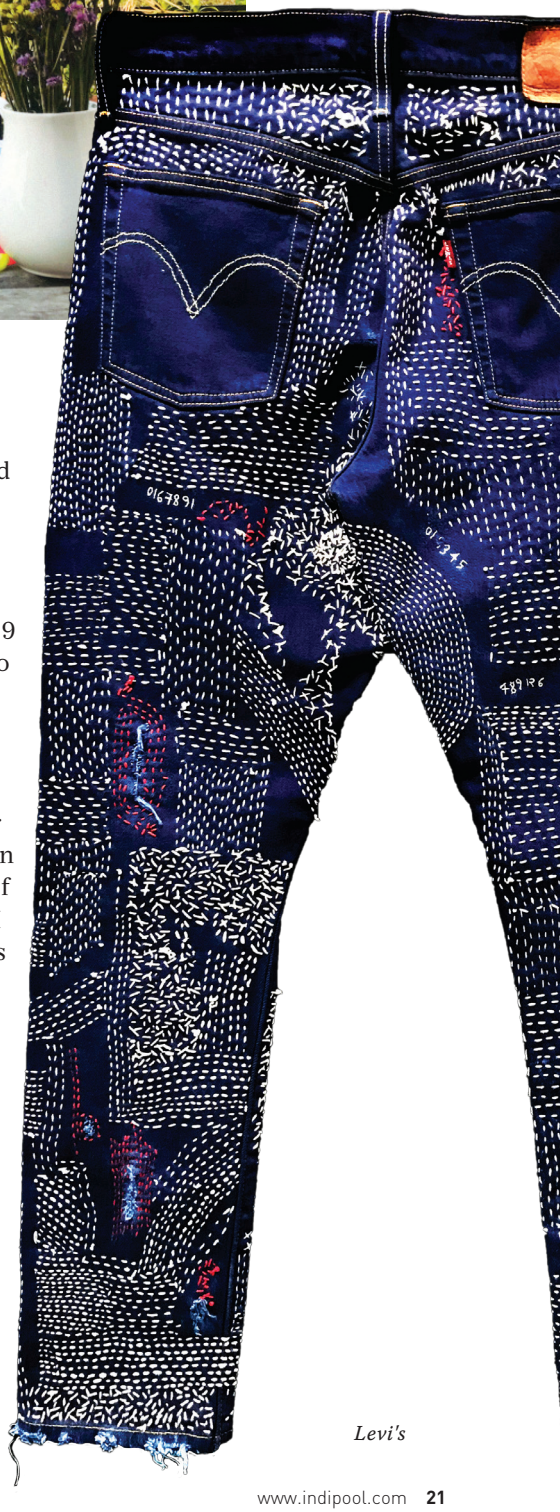
Tell us about your collaboration with Levi's.

AS: After I had joined IKEA, Art&Found, a curated platform for quality, affordable art, approached me for an exciting project to collaborate with Levi's and design a pair of their classic Levi's 501 jeans as an extension of thoughts and ideas. I had the freedom to do whatever I wanted. I gave the classic Levi's 501 multiple insertions and interruptions in the form of rips, tears, and white and red thread-work, which all came together as a coded commentary on diversity and individuality.

What would you advise young designers in these uncertain times?

AS: I would really advise young designers to stay strong at this point in time and to use this lockdown to rethink what design means to them and why they want to pursue it. It's like a fresh opportunity to be aware of the changes happening around us and find your place of relevance in making a change. Find your hook; find a purpose in these changing times.

91.akankshasharma@gmail.com



Levi's

ON THE RIGHT TRACK

Manuni Patel, *one of the eight founders of Compartment S4, tells us how the young architects are committed to introducing a hands-on element to their work in underserved parts of the country*



BASA project at Khirsu (Pauri, Uttarakhand)



How did Compartment S4 come about?

MP: Compartment S4 is an Ahmedabad-based collaborative of eight architects, graduates of Centre of Environmental Planning and Technology (CEPT) University. It was conceived as a firm around three years ago, but the eight of us were already informally working together during our final thesis semester. We started working on some pro bono projects to utilize the extra time we had. From our first project itself, we got used to the idea of hands-on work. Later, after we finished our thesis, we began to formalize our group as a collaborative, so that we could reach out to more people.

Having studied together, each of us belongs to a similar school of thought but with diverse and complementing interests in writing, graphics, planning, etc. Hence, the name of our firm - Compartment S4. The name also originates from the time we used to sit together in a row arrangement during one of our studios in CEPT. One of our professors began to refer to our seating arrangement as a train compartment and the name stayed with our group. The train window in our logo is derived from the name and is also symbolic of the many places we travel to for work, including the interiors of villages in Uttarakhand, Gujarat and other states. We hope to remain a traveling studio, making meaningful interventions for whichever part of the country requires it.

Which have been your most memorable projects so far?

MP: One of our first projects, *Gather-Together,* was designing the interiors of an ice cream shop. We wanted to break the conceptions and notions of how such a space is organized and how it functions in a classical way. We introduced the concept of a 7-meter long shared table where people of different ages, cultures and classes could congregate and cohabitate to create a collective ritualistic experience of eating ice cream and foster the idea of eating like a family. The table

expands and contracts at various places. Couples can sit close to each other and share their ice cream where the table becomes very narrow, and big families can accommodate themselves at the corners where the table becomes larger. The table slithers in the available space and it weaves a different story in the space every day. We finished the design and execution of this project in less than two months and it remains close to our hearts.

Another project, *LakdikiKathi,* was approached as a hands-on workshop. It was one of the first times when the eight partners of the firm, 25 volunteers and the people of the village of Ghuggukham (Uttarakhand) came together to build a multifunctional extension to a public school with their bare hands, using local materials like stone, mud and wood. Diverse people like photographers, architecture students, engineers, interactive media designers, local artists and craftsmen, came together to erect the whole structure in just about 14 days. This was one of our first experiences of community engagement and collective hands-on building and it paved a way for more such experiences in the future.

What was the most challenging brief you've ever received?

MP: The most challenging briefs to tackle in general are those in which we have to make the brief ourselves by understanding a sensitive context, people, landscape and societal constructs. One such project, called *Basa,* was basically the birth of a new idea in the field of ecotourism and community engagement. After conducting intensive research on the rural narratives of the village of Khirsu, Uttarakhand, we proposed to build a model ecotourism center consisting of a community kitchen, an exhibition space (which would educate people about the culture and society of the place) and a few lodging rooms. We designed and built this in collaboration with the district government authorities and with the local craftsmen and laborers. An already existing self help group of local women was motivated and trained to take up the business of running this model center to generate employment and inculcate self-reliance amongst the hard working women of the village. The brief was not only limited to a spatial design response, but it extended its arms to ideas of sustainability, community engagement, cultural rejuvenation, employment generation, skill enhancement, alternative resource use and responsible tourism.

Tell us about the hands-on construction workshops you conduct.

MP: The 'Hand-Made' workshop series is a medium for us to 'learn by doing', in terms



The tourist information center of BASA

of experimenting with local materials and techniques for building, while making sure to create valuable interventions in rural and other community based areas. Having identified the professional neglect for rural projects earlier on, this is one of the ways we aim to fill the gaps with well-designed solutions. Engaging people of the community is a way to create a sense of belonging to the place of intervention, for a greater and long lasting impact. Eventually the 'power of many' during the workshop is exercised as a way of team-building within ourselves along with other participants and communities.

We have conducted four Hand-Made workshops at Badalpara, Ghuggukham, Khadki and Khirsu villages in Gujarat and Uttarakhand. The projects are called *Otla par gammat, Lakdikikathi, Nadikeparvat* and *Basa* respectively. The process of conducting a Hand-Made workshop requires three months of research. We spend time in the village, meeting the people, identifying the issues, the needs and then giving a solution in terms of an architectural intervention. Anyone in any field can attend the 12-13 day workshop. We try to finish the entire building during our stay there along with the participants, local craftsmen, and villagers. During the workshop, the participants are not only involved in the hands on construction but also learn the culture of the village through various exercises.



Gramin Haat (Visdalya village, Surat)



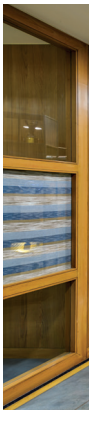
How did you come up with the 'Friday Night Conversations' and Unmute initiatives?

MP: The idea of FNC (Friday Night Conversations) came up during a meeting at our studio, while we were discussing the gap that exists between academics, practice and other allied fields. We felt that as a young practice, there was a lot we were unaware of; so, we thought of starting these conversations around architecture and inviting people to participate in and create



Gather-Together (Ahmedabad)





a meaningful and healthy discussion. The platform for conversations is mainly targeted to inspire young professionals in architecture and its allied fields.

Unmute is an independent publication that aims at curating content around contemporary architectural discourse of its time. Each publication is curated around a theme, discussed in a public forum as a part of the FNCs. Published by Compartment S4, *Unmute* invites creators from various backgrounds to submit articles, essays, photo stories, and illustrations expressing ideas, observations, and thought constructs with respect to the theme.

Have you faced many entrepreneurial challenges?

MP: Very early on in our practice, we figured out that architecture alone cannot guide the growth of a company and that an entrepreneur mindset is also equally important. A common goal of using our professional expertise for the betterment of the marginalized urban and neglected rural population got eight of us together. Neither of these groups can afford to pay professional fees. To proceed with our passion and ambitions, we approached the government for a project so that we could get project funding as well as a professional fee for our services. Dealing with such clients and the government taught us how to approach such projects while also financially sustaining ourselves. We have been constantly evolving to achieve this as a practice.

How, do you think, workspaces and home spaces in India will change after the COVID-19 pandemic? How will it impact rural and urban construction?

MP: Social distancing will become an important part of lifestyle till a vaccine is discovered. Workspaces and home spaces will have to adopt social distancing. Within the design fraternity we need to start thinking of innovative ways of adapting to



Above: Kandinskoisys; Below: Gray-scape office space



the situation, like developing sustainable self-sufficient networks within which groups can stay isolated.

In terms of construction, all urban construction depends immensely on migrant workers. The pandemic brought huge uncertainty in the lives of these migrant workers, and it will be very difficult to get them on track. Contractors will have to provide in-house accommodation, arrange for hygienic sanitation as well as healthy and fresh food to keep workers functioning on site.

Rural construction does not depend much on migrant workers, hence it will thrive. A lot of urban migrants now aspire to have a home in their native village after being packed in their small apartments in highly congested cities. People have now realized the importance of the villages of India. Due to transport restrictions, a lot of construction materials might not reach the villages due to which the villagers might be encouraged to shift back to vernacular practices that depend on locally sourced materials and local skills. Architects will have a huge opportunity to deliver sustainable solutions as a sensitive response to the context.

What's next for the studio?

MP: At the moment our work is spread in various directions like private architecture, rural development, urban development, handmade workshops, *Unmute* and interior design. We have specific goals of turning each of these directions into a self-sustaining practice on its own.

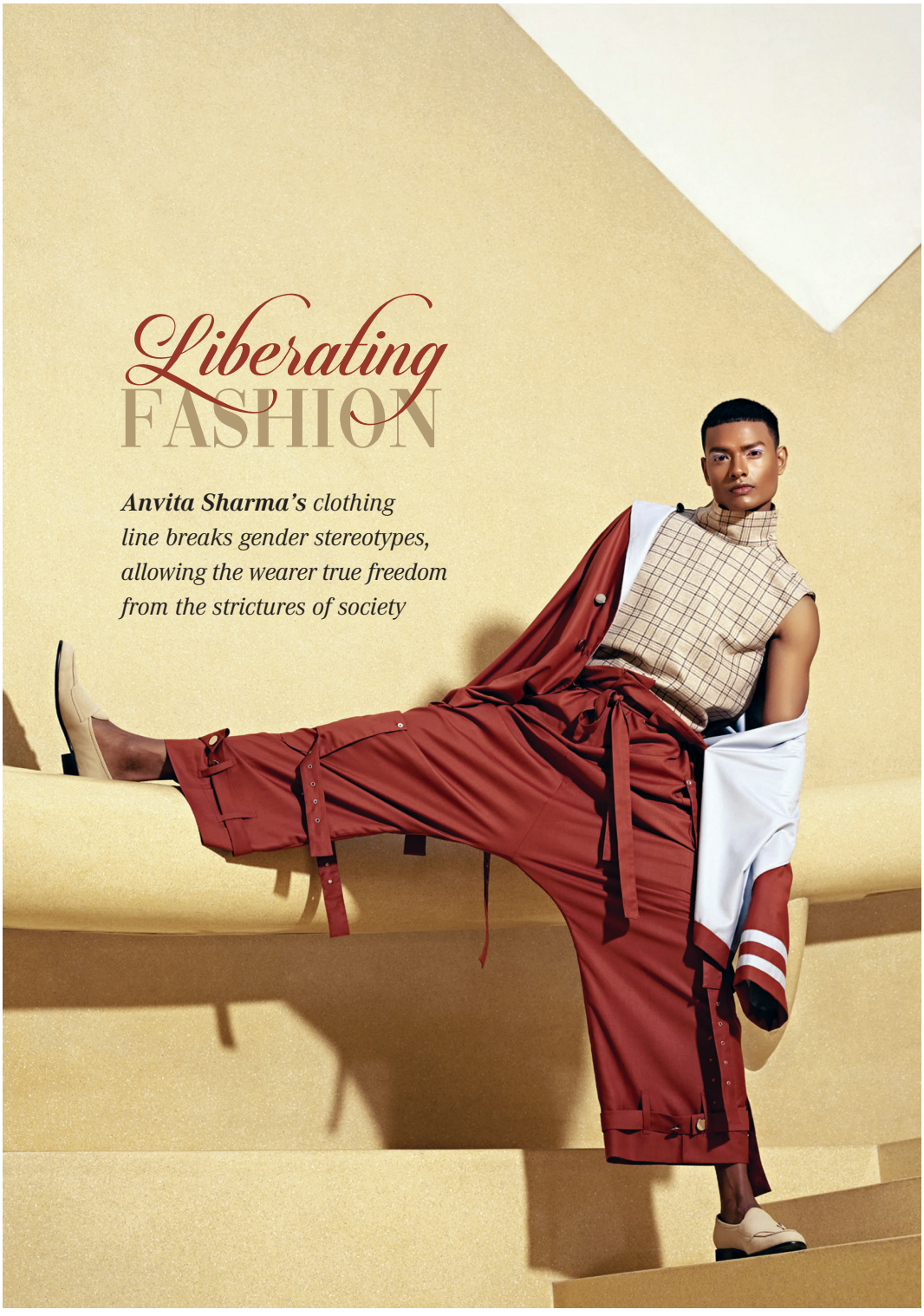
One of the immediate goals is to develop an enterprise that focuses on the growth and development of rural villages across India. We wish to develop certain villages as models of a bottom-up approach towards a holistic and sustainable growth, which would include collaborations with experts like ecologists, anthropologists, water management experts, and sociologists, so that all aspects of development are encompassed.

We are also developing a material lab and a team of skilled masons and craftsmen through various skill-development programs. We hope to develop this through collaborations with academic and material research institutes, most of which we will be initiating in the near future. Their skills would be of utmost importance for us to execute projects in both the urban and rural realm.

design@compartments4.com

Liberating FASHION

***Anvita Sharma's** clothing line breaks gender stereotypes, allowing the wearer true freedom from the strictures of society*







Autumn-Winter 2020-21



What took you from a degree in Economics to a career in fashion design?

AS: Studying Economics for my graduation and then Finance for my Master's gave me the practical, analytical brain that a business needs. I was very good at it. However, I always felt a void. Since my childhood, when other children pretended to be doctors, teachers or astronauts, I pretended to be a designer, making sketches of dresses for my friends posing as customers. After four years of studies in that field, I decided it's never too late to go after what one really wants. That is when I decided to study at Istituto Marangoni in Milan and so my journey in fashion began. After a month of studying design, I knew this was my calling. And I found my esthetic as a designer immediately. However, the knowledge I got from Economics helps me understand and go beyond the design aspect of the brand and fully submerge myself into my vision for Two Point Two.

What is the story behind Two Point Two?

AS: I have long been confused by the categorization of clothing. I have always hated the stereotypes that exist in society in relation to the extent of femininity and masculinity of clothing. Why is it defined that a particular

color or shape is feminine and men can't or shouldn't wear it? Why are men wearing feminine clothing considered gay? Why can't individuals just be themselves and not be judged?

Shortly after my return to India in November 2017, Two Point Two came into existence to answer and talk about all these issues of society. We were initially online and previewed with a couple of stores. We also took part in exhibitions in Kolkata, Hyderabad, and Delhi. Our first physical store was launched in the beginning of 2019 in Shahpur Jat, Delhi.

Two Point Two is a genderless, anti-conformist, all-inclusive brand. We celebrate individuality and diversity and believe that beauty exists in each and every soul and cannot be defined. We want people to be able to express themselves through clothing and be confident in who they are. We want them to fight for their rights and have confidence in themselves and not go according to what society dictates and has been dictating for so many years.

How has your cultural background impacted your design language?

AS: Living in three different fashion capitals of the world (Milan, Paris and London) and meeting people from multiple and varied cultures and backgrounds gave me an understanding of various aspects of the entire globe. The experiences and the knowledge made the design language of Two Point Two itself very global. Two Point Two uses multiple multi-cultural inspirations in one collection. We amalgamate various











Spring-Summer 2020

references from histories and cultures of multiple places and balance them out in order to produce just one collection. Another big focus in our design philosophy and language is art. I have always been fascinated by art and history of art. We take a lot of inspiration from artists from around the world and their works, be it performance art, photography, dance, etc.

What is most crucial for you when it comes to designing clothes?

AS: There always has to be a balance between creativity and wearability, between maximalism and minimalism, between flamboyance and simplicity. Artists tend to keep going and sometimes don't know where to stop. However one should know when to stop, breathe, step back and take a second look. That is when you'll know when and how to edit and strike a balance between creativity and wearability. We





need to be open to constructive criticism and also focus on comfort of consumers rather than just the design.

How do you design a collection?

AS: Every collection that Two Point Two has done so far has been different. The inspirations have been very varied in terms of the demographics or fields but one thing they have in common is rebellion. We take inspiration from history, art, nature, cultures, even music. We pick one or two artists that inspire us in every collection that we come across during our constant research. I take inspiration from my experiences, from various cultures I have come across, various historical exhibitions I have come across, just anything and everything. We have a very strong Japanese influence in our collections in terms of the culture and history of Japan as well as their traditional Kimono.

Tell us about your experiment with unconventional silhouettes.

AS: Pattern-making was my favorite subject while I was studying. I was the geek who always asked multiple questions and made the class go on for a longer time. In my early years I was so amazed by the calculations and the science that goes into making a garment that I wanted to know everything about it. This made me question everything that existed, which in turn, gave me the habit of asking "why not" or "why can't it be done" whenever our design team worked on silhouettes. We try and try. Sometimes we fail. Sometimes it's a success and we come up with an amazing and unique product.

What does it take to overcome a creative block?

AS: A simple way to overcome a creative block is take a break and sleep. Once the mind gets its rest and positivity comes back in your mind, it automatically overcomes the block and you are back at it. Rushing or pressurizing oneself never works.



Cruise 2020 collection

What differentiates your brand in such a saturated market today?

AS: We take risks. We try various combinations and unconventional silhouettes and try to find a balance between design and wearability. There are a lot of young brands and our counterparts who are doing exceptional work as well. We just do what we love and hope that it works.

What does it take to create a mark in a competitive space?

AS: As long as you know how to handle people, are confident and are willing to learn, you'll be able to successfully run a fashion business. The ability to constantly learn and adapt is the main job in fashion and being an entrepreneur is a 24x7 job so a lot of patience is required as well.

Do you think fashion trends affect the wardrobe choices of people in India?

AS: Honestly, Two Point Two doesn't follow trends and neither do we support trends. Personally, I don't think wardrobe choices of people in India are affected too much by trends. There are abundant design esthetics available to the masses and they just go for it, trend or not.

twopointtwostudio@gmail.com





Close to the Heart

Despite creating some highly acclaimed lines of jewelry, ***Pallavi Foley*** *believes her best is yet to come*





Seam





Award winning Space bead necklace

What first drew you to jewelry design?

PF: Jewelry is definitely my heart's calling, but I didn't know that when I started studying design. I have sketched from as far back as I can remember. I used to sketch on the walls of my room and my style was a colorful juxtaposition of caricatures in 3D, and forms from nature. Even back then, my mother used to speak about all my work with intense pride and in retrospect, I realize that gave me a deep sense of confidence in my work. My getting into jewelry design feels karmic when I think back. Only much later did I discover my love for three dimensional objects and started to look and work with my jewels as mini sculptures.

After graduating from NIFT, Delhi in Accessory Design, I was selected by Tanishq to do my graduation project with them and this is where my passion for jewels really started growing. I went on to be associated with them for a decade during which time I traveled to many countries and my focus was always on how jewelry could be re-imagined in our world. The history of jewelry always motivates me. The jewelry crafts from across India fill my mind with ideas and fascinate me with their unlimited potential. I love to work on ways to keep the essence of the ancient jewelry crafts while innovating on the flavors and the styles.

What led to setting up your own label?

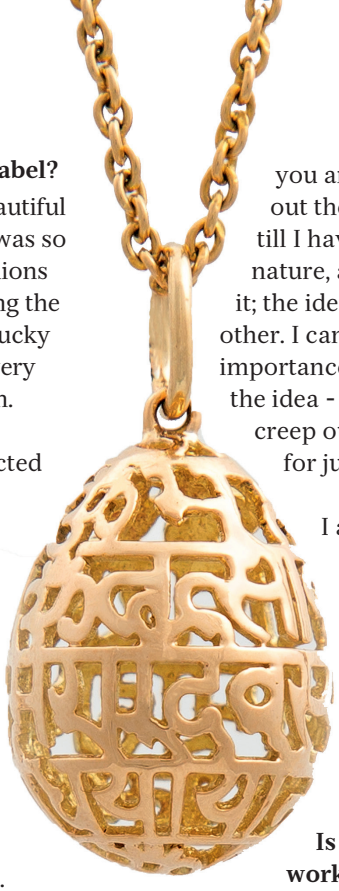
PF: Working with Tanishq was a beautiful and challenging experience, and it was so satisfying and rewarding to see millions of people across the country wearing the jewelry that I was designing. I was lucky to get the opportunity to do some very prestigious design projects for them.

At a time when gold was not subjected to much experimentation, I found myself playing with the metal and creating simple forms that were being accepted in the Indian market. From doing crowns to creating one-singular-form-in-gold, the projects were fun and creatively challenging. Everything was perfect, but I still felt like I wasn't fulfilling my dream. I wanted to establish my label which would be only about pure design in the space of jewelry. I started my design studio and store at The Leela Palace in Bangalore. I was lucky to have the best design talent, Neil Foley Designs, to help me design and execute the retail experience; that got us critical acclaim from the industry and the fashion world.

What does it take to create dramatic jewelry pieces in a minimal design language?

PF: It is important to be fearless when one designs! In these two decades of designing, I have realized that in design, going to the extreme end to express a certain idea, is not just an option, but a necessity, because until you have cracked the core of an idea, it does not reflect in the design of your jewel/product.

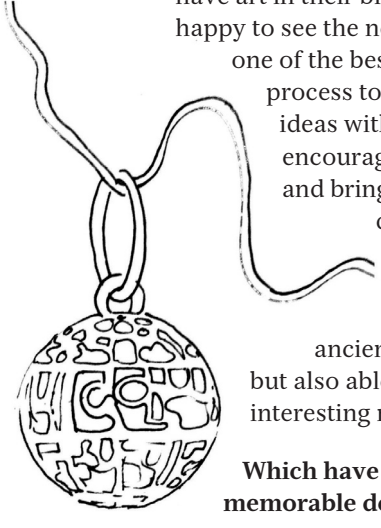
There is no point stretching your imagination to re-imagine a jewel if you are too scared to put yourself out there. So, I sketch the form till I have pulled it to its very bare nature, and then start to embellish it; the ideas flow from one to the other. I cannot stress enough on the importance of sketching to bring out the idea - so many ideas are waiting to creep out, if you are willing to sketch for just a little longer.



I also read varied books of different genres and they light up my imagination. History and nature are my favorites. I have been studying about the birds of India lately and am hoping to translate my learning through a line of charms.

Is it challenging to work with craftsmen?

PF: The craftsmen and artisans we work with are brilliantly talented and have art in their blood. They are so happy to see the new concepts - it's one of the best parts of the design process to discuss my design ideas with them. They are encouraging, supportive, and bring forward great design solutions. For example, the minakari craftsmen are excellent at the ancient minakari work, but also able to create art in interesting new 3D forms.



Which have been particularly memorable design assignments?

PF: Innovation and delving into the unseen/unresolved parts of an inspiration were always my design philosophy. I remember designing the crowns for the Miss India beauty



Left & above: 'Wear Your Prayer' collection

My 'Wear Your Prayer' collection, which has been my most popular in recent times, has 19 different world prayers. They are written through the process of filigree and fret saw work, a technique our jewelry craftsmen are very talented at. I changed our patterns into prayers. The jewelry is very feminine and detailed – the gold jaali eggs in 18 kt are miniature jewels; they are the size of a fingernail. For the wearer the jewelry has very deep meaning, as one wears the prayer that one believes in and it gives her/him inner strength. The collection has been bought by thousands of people across India, and I am glad that in this way the prayers will be passed down through the generations. I associated with Tanishq for this collection.

You have received national and international awards; and been called 'the Elsa Peretti of India' by the World Gold Council. How important is such recognition for you?

PF: It feels really wonderful. They say that when one is passionate about something one tends to enjoy the process of hard work, and not really look at it as work. I have put innumerable hours into my favorite design projects and they are a pure form of meditation.

contest, while I was designing jewels for Tanishq. The brief was simple - to design crowns for Miss India Universe, Miss India World and Miss India Earth. The next step was to research. I met two former Miss Indias who were based in Bangalore - the late Nafisa Joseph and Rekha Hande. Both of them pointed out one concern - they felt that the crown never sat securely on their head. Nafisa said she wished that she could have worn a crown with an Indian twist to it, for the international pageant. I was in complete agreement with her, but I wanted it to be subtle and thought out. As I researched further, I realized that the *tika* or *tilak* was a symbol of good luck right from ancient times. So, I decided to incorporate the *tika* in my design for the crowns and it was my way to communicate that the good wishes of the country were with the contestants for the international pageants.



Miss India Earth crown





Bidri necklace in white gold and bidri



Photo by: Sharon Nayak

Jewelry design has become my vocabulary and a way to express my view of the world around me. I subconsciously say things through my jewels. Just today, a connoisseur of design and Indian arts asked me to send him my best art-work. I don't think that I have yet done my best. I have a lot to do and my best pieces of jewelry and artwork are yet to come. The stories I hear from people who have worn my collections, are my biggest inspiration. The happiness in keeping our crafts alive, in working with the super talented craftsmen from our country is a privilege that I am always grateful for.

As for being compared to the famous Italian jewelry designer – I have studied Elsa Peretti's work while at NIFT and at a design school in Italy. I loved how she would simplify things and create hugely successful commercial lines of jewelry. Simplifying an idea and presenting it in its pure form takes courage, because it is similar to baring your heart in front of people. I hope I can do that.



How significant is culture to a jewelry designer?

PF: Culture is the context within which the jewels are worn. We shouldn't be evasive of reality; however, we must recognize that with our designs we can reshape culture. Design is our voice. We must speak for the right causes through it.

How do you deal with creative blocks?

PF: I read varied genres of books, watch period movies/futuristic idea movies and I love seeing the costumes and the approaches towards new ideas and thoughts in the utopian and dystopian futures that people are thinking about. It's important to reflect on our work, and I spend a lot of time doing that. Travel used to be a great way to break out of creative blocks, also a fantastic inspiration. Meditation is a part of my life, and I meditate for an hour every day.

How has the COVID-19 pandemic altered your design perceptions?

PF: COVID-19 has caught us all off guard. The whole world is in some form of lockdown, and we have never been here before. I was thinking about the word 'change'. It can mean many things, an adjustment, a modification, mutation, transformation, correction, metamorphosis, transition, a switch or a diversion. We don't know the quantum of change we are going to see, which brings a sense of uncertainty. The rules of this new world, that are now constantly changing and forming, are giving directions and clues for innovators in all fields, including design. Design professionals and innovators in all fields have the opportunity to rethink a whole new avataar for this planet.



Above & right:
Gold and diamonds mushroom ring 1 & 2 (Enchanted collection)



Akiko earrings with fresh water pearls

READ

DESIGN INDIA

ALONE



www.indipool.com



Pallavi Foley showstopper piece

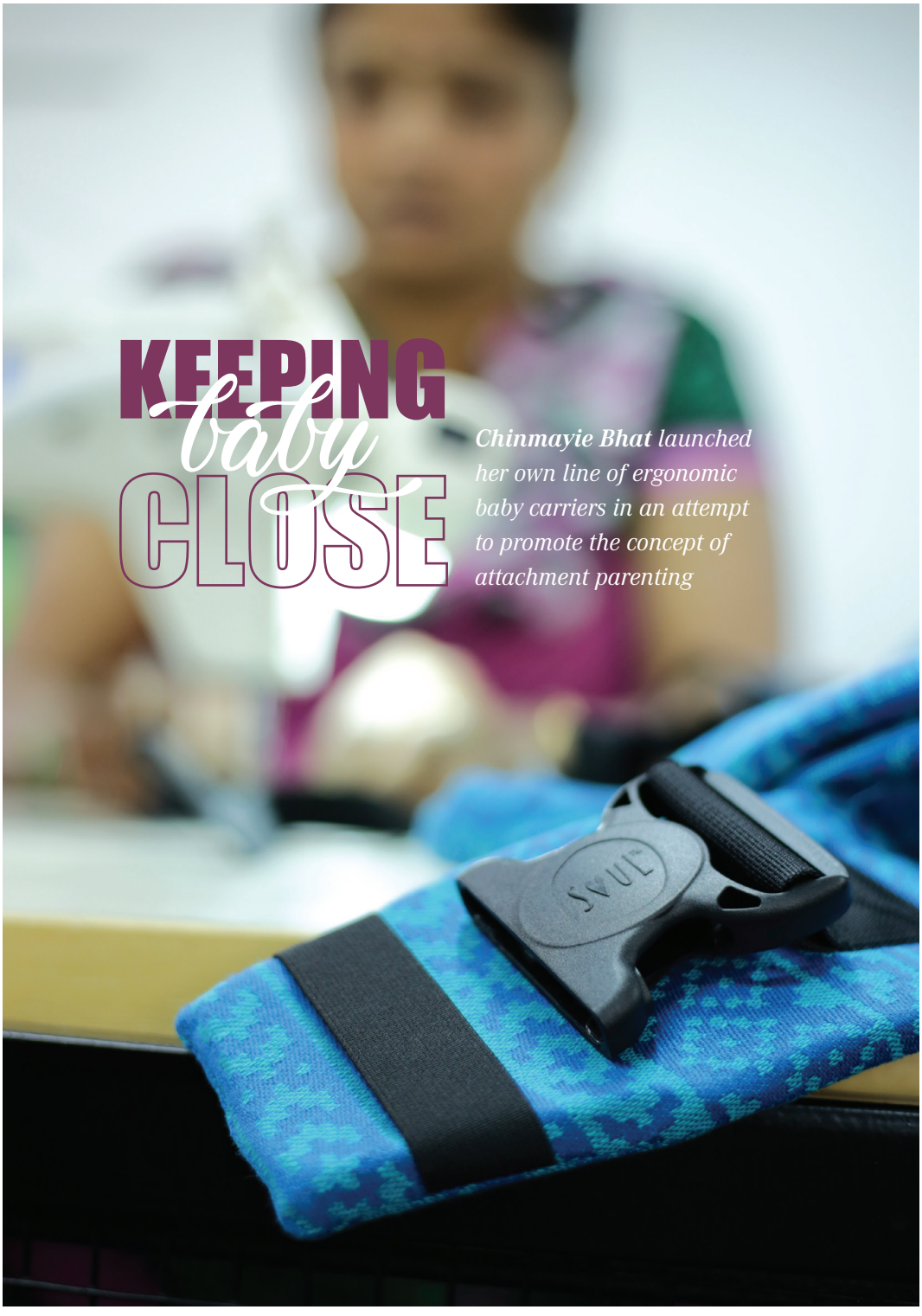


Pallavi with Alia Bhatt as the showstopper for her IIJW 2013 collection

The concept of 'Design Thinking' could be defined as a process where we try and understand better the world we are designing for. We need to question everything constantly and only then can we get answers. We can use these learnings to come up with creative and innovative ideas and design solutions for our new world.

The concept of 'one world' is clearer today than ever before. Environment-friendly design is not an option but a necessity now. We have seen how neglecting this aspect of design has caused huge damage to our planet. When we design, create or buy, we have to make 'conscious choices'. Ethical sourcing helps not just the end customer, but each one in the chain of production and our planet. Companies that only think profits and not sustainability will lose. Now that we have had time to delve into what we really want, our purchasing choices are possibly going to be more decided.

pallavifoley@gmail.com



KEEPING *baby* CLOSE

***Chinmayie Bhat** launched her own line of ergonomic baby carriers in an attempt to promote the concept of attachment parenting*





How did you come up with the concept of Soul Baby Carriers?

CB: 'Babywearing' as a concept has existed for centuries in many traditional communities. Modern baby carriers have become increasingly popular in the past few decades. I had heard about baby carriers when my first child was born, but did not find anything comfortable in the Indian market. With the birth of my second baby, I knew I wanted to explore ergonomic baby carriers more. The first time I wore my son in my ring sling was when he was barely a few days old, and I fell in love instantly. My newborn son comfortably napped on me while I read books or went out for walks with my 5-year old daughter. I couldn't imagine my life without my baby carriers. I never stepped out of the house without one.

My husband Ravindra and I decided to start Soul in 2014. We felt a strong need for a conscious Indian baby carrier brand and knew we could make a difference in every parent's life by introducing them to safe and affordable babywearing. Soul popularized the idea of babywearing and ergonomic baby carrying in India. Right from the beginning we designed our carriers keeping the needs of Indian parents and caregivers in mind. I think we can safely say that we re-introduced the concept of comfortable baby carrying, with a well-designed product made locally.

How did formal knowledge of design fuel your entrepreneurial journey?

CB: I graduated from an art school and worked in the field of print design and branding for a bit before I started Soul. This definitely helped me have a better understanding of esthetics and the choice of colors, patterns and prints was something that came naturally to me. I already knew how important it is for a brand to have strong communication materials. All these made several things easier for me during the initial stages of Soul.



At Soul we design, develop, manufacture and market all our products ourselves. Product designing and textile designing were completely foreign subjects to me. The understanding of different fabrics and how it works in our product is one of the things I have learnt thanks to Soul. I feel it does help to have a creative background to set the path for independent learning.

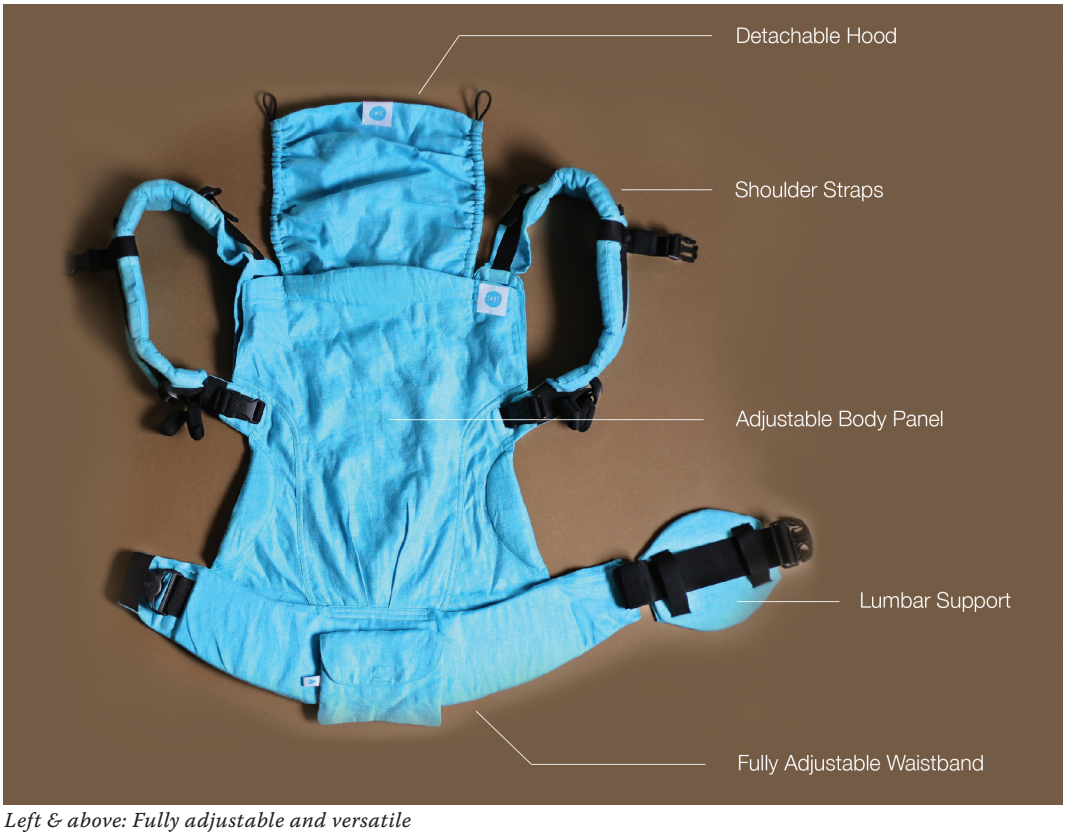
What is Soul's brand philosophy?

CB: Soul believes that every family can benefit greatly from babywearing, and every baby should be worn. Babywearing and attachment parenting have repeatedly proven to have several positive impacts on both parents and babies, and thereby society, in the long run. Through Soul, we hope to build a community of babywearing parents who together want to build a better world for their children.

We also take a lot of pride in being an ethical brand. All our products are handmade with love. We work to uplift and empower women - our workforce is 96% female. We support our local weavers and use only 100% natural fabrics and baby-safe dyes. Our primary focus when selecting textiles is that they need to meet the unique nature of our product - strong enough to safely carry babies, while also catering to the unique needs of our customers; lightweight, for ease of wearing; and breathable, to suit our Indian climatic conditions. We love our planet, and reduce our carbon footprint as much as possible.

How do you market and distribute our products?

CB: Soul was launched through social media and it quickly grew using the same platform. We have tried many interesting and innovative new ways to build more awareness about babywearing. A lot of traditional advertising methods don't work



Left & above: Fully adjustable and versatile Soul Baby Carrier 'Aseema'

for us because of the nature of our products. One very strong marketing tool has been word of mouth. We rely on our satisfied and happy customers to spread the love for the brand. We have a strong relationship with our customers which we value a lot. Our online team consists mainly of mothers who have carried their own babies in different baby carriers and come with several years of experience in teaching new parents the art of babywearing. Our customers primarily buy directly from our website.

What entrepreneurial challenges have you faced so far?

CB: Entrepreneurial life has been full of challenges. It's a little like parenting - just when you learn to tackle one, you have a completely new challenge in front of you! Initially as a new and naive entrepreneur, I thought things get better or easier as you get bigger. I quickly realized that wasn't the case. I don't have easy fixes for any of the challenges, but I have realized that staying positive and having the right mindset and attitude usually gives me the strength to navigate the challenges. I have learnt to accept and enjoy the challenges instead of fearing them.

What inspires you?

CB: I am inspired by all kinds of things! I love following the work of very inspiring people from varying backgrounds doing great work. I get inspired by what people achieve when they love what they do and have their heart in the right place. I draw a lot of inspiration from my interaction with customers. We are always looking at them for more suggestions and friendly advice to make our products and services better.

MAGZTER

Download on the App Store

GET IT ON Google Play



NOW AVAILABLE FREE ONLINE

How do you balance the commercial and creative aspects of your work?

CB: This is definitely one of the biggest challenges most creative people have to deal with. As an entrepreneur it gets even harder. Our brand turned six years old recently and it has taught me a lot. To sustain the brand, my creative dreams have to be commercially viable. I like to take it as a challenge, because it pushes me to innovate. It's a fine and important balance to achieve.

What are your expansion plans for the brand?

CB: Soul was started as a small home business and we have grown far more than we ever envisioned. From our second year we have been selling all over the world, steadily increasing our customer base everywhere over the years. We are the biggest ergonomic baby carrier brand in India. However with the Covid-19 pandemic rocking our world, we are in the process of questioning everything Soul stands for and wants to be. We want to stay true to what we believe in and not be afraid of change. Soul will aspire for things which are more meaningful than expansion and growth. We are not hesitant to slow down and use this time to introspect a little more and work on being more sustainable and eco-friendly as a brand.

What do you envision trending in your domain after the lockdown?

CB: We firmly believe that baby carriers will continue to be an extremely useful parenting tool. Babies are born every day and they will need to be carried even in the new post-lockdown world we will be living in. I truly feel that in the time of social distancing, keeping your babies close and connected will be more important than ever before.

hello@soulslings.in

Chinmayie and Ravindra at the factory



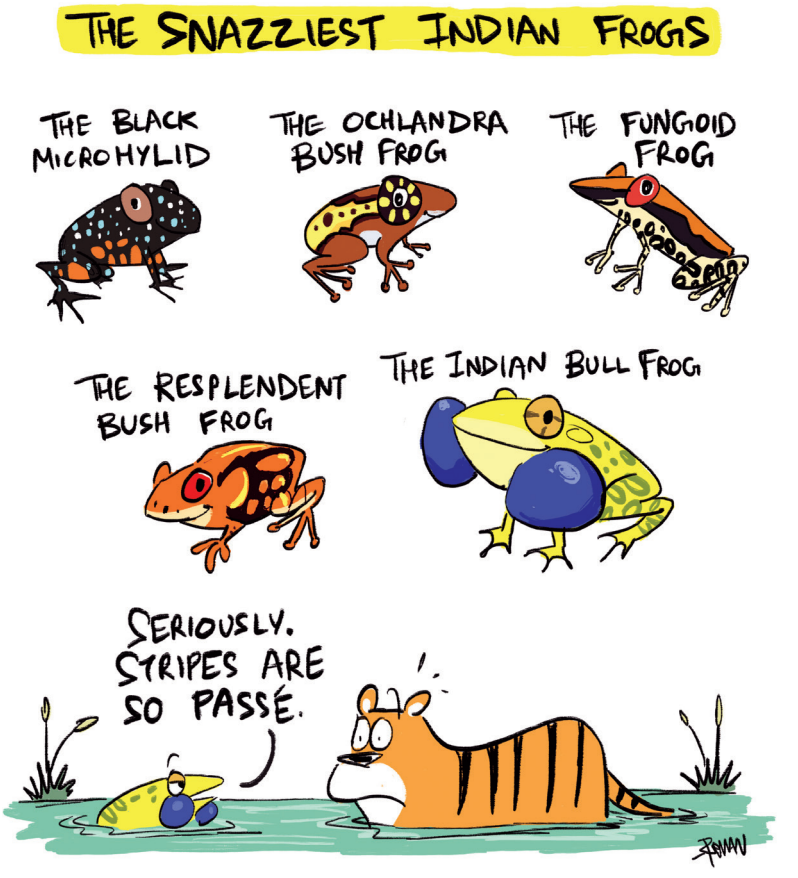


A scene from Bird Business

A GREEN TINT

Self-taught cartoonist and illustrator, ***Rohan Chakravarty*** *has put together what is possibly the largest collection of cartoons on wildlife and environment on the web*





Snazzy Indian frogs



What led to the switch from dentistry to nature conservation?

RC: After completing my dentistry course I worked as an animation designer for a multimedia firm in Bangalore. That used to be my day job while I developed Green Humour on the side. Since 2014, I have been working as a cartoonist fulltime. I don't think I am qualified to call myself a conservationist. I only happen to be a cartoonist who draws on matters pertaining to wildlife and nature conservation. While I was studying to be a dentist, I was dabbling part time as a cartoonist as well but wasn't really finding any rhythm in my art, until wildlife happened. My first tiger sighting kindled a certain magic in me and the idea to communicate wildlife science and conservation through cartoons struck.

How did it all begin?

RC: My interest in wildlife had always been dormant until I started volunteering for an NGO called Kids for Tigers. The stint required me to take kids out on nature trails, for which I myself had to stay

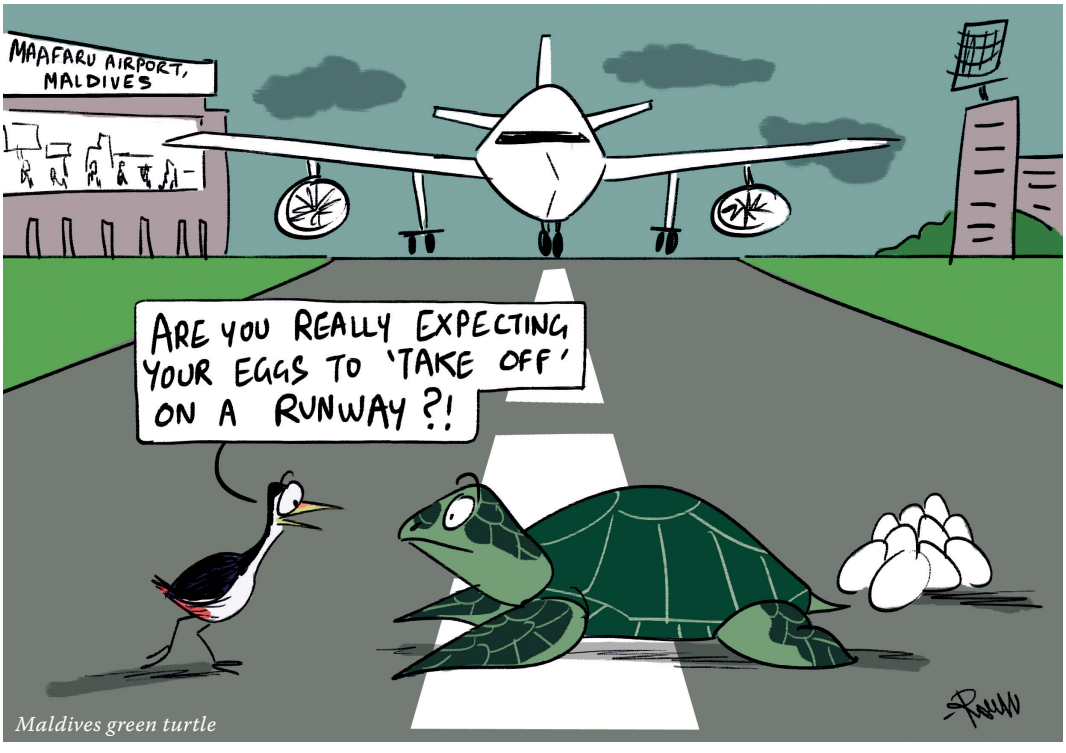


Flehmen response biology

updated with knowledge about the wildlife in my city - Nagpur. As I started reading and learning more, I also found myself conveying what I read and learned through cartoons, as it helped me both retain and disseminate the information more effectively. Those initial cartoons became the foundation for my later work. Green Humour is a web-based series of 500 (and counting) cartoons, comics and illustrations on wild animals; wildlife and nature conservation, environment, sustainability and all things green.

What are your sources of inspiration?

RC: Inspiration for me is like a fat gecko on the wall. When you try to search for it, it hides behind the clock. When you least expect it, it drops into your lap! I derive inspiration either from interesting creatures I actually meet on nature walks, or those that I read about in books, magazines and encyclopedias, or watch in documentaries. The work of numerous artists inspires me. Among the cartooning greats, Gary Larson, Bill Watterson and Patrick McDonnell have



Maldives green turtle

influenced my work tremendously. As an illustrator and artist, I have been inspired greatly by the work of animation designer and director Genndy Tartakovsky, illustrators Charlie Harper and Brendan Wenzel. Art in film also finds its way on to my inspiration pin board, and the works of Hayao Miyazaki, Wong Kar Wai, Quentin Tarantino and Kim Ki Duk have been recurring sources of inspiration.

How would you describe your style?

RC: I think the simple rule in comedy is that if it is too direct it isn't funny. I don't want to be a Wikipedia page and offer blunt information. I'd like my reader to have a chuckle, and then an aftertaste, and then an afterthought. You'll rarely find slapstick humor in my series. The cartoons I'm most satisfied with have the right mix of science, information and humor. I believe that if a cartoonist has encouraged his readers to form their own opinion with a smile on their faces, his job is done.



Green turtle bottle cap challenge

What kind of work are you currently engaged in?

RC: As a cartoonist, my comic strip currently runs in three Indian newspapers weekly (*Sunday Mid-day, The Hindu's Sunday magazine,* and T*he Hindu BLink*), and one e-magazine (*Roundglass Sustain*). As an illustrator, I collaborate with NGOs and state-run boards working on wildlife conservation to create awareness material that aids conservation. Some of the major NGOs I have collaborated with are WWF (India, Hong Kong, China, and Bhutan), Birdlife International, BNHS, The Wildlife Trust of India, the Save Our Seas Foundation (Seychelles, Bahamas, and Canada), UNDP, ICLEI, and the Nature Conservation Foundation. I have also collaborated with government boards such as the State Forest Departments of Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, and Bihar.



Banerghatta stone mining copy

Which projects have you enjoyed the most?

RC: I've enjoyed just about every project I have taken up, but personal projects are a lot more fun than commissioned work. One such recent project was work on my book *Bird Business* (published by BNHS and released in June 2019). The book describes the lives of a hundred bird species from India. When you're your own boss, art director and designer, every rule is yours to break, and that is what I love doing the most. If you flip through the book, you will see all kinds of layouts, compositions, action sequences, choreography and patterns, telling different stories about different birds in different ways. I wanted this book to be as diverse in its treatment as the bird life is in our country.

What has been the most challenging part of your journey so far?

RC: The most challenging part has been to get editors and publishers to take me seriously. Being relentless, disciplined and having several loose nuts in the head has helped overcome that!

Do you find that awards make a difference to your work?

RC: Awards are to an artist what buried seed stashes are to chipmunks: a reserve of motivation and fuel for a harsh winter!

How do you overcome a creative block?

RC: It's an ongoing battle, which has now become a part of the work routine. If you

look at it a little optimistically, a creative block works as a wonderful excuse to go lounge in your favorite corner of the house with your favorite book, or simply step into the balcony with a coffee and watch birds. If you have an urgent deadline however, I'd have to recommend something far more potent than coffee!

What role does social media play in reaching your audience?

RC: Most of the cartoons and illustrations you see on my social media channels are those that appear in my newspaper columns or commissioned projects. What social media has done for me is to take this conversation beyond readers of my print columns, scientists and conservationists, out to the laymen, multiplying their engagement with my work. The sweet byproduct of all this has been that I can see both environmental awareness and engagement rising among readers of my work today.

Comment on wildlife conservation in India today.

RC: I don't think I am qualified to comment on the science aspect of conservation, so I will limit my comment to the design aspect of it. A lot of young communicators, writers and designers are engaging with conservation and trying to make conversations around it mainstream. In the coming years, these efforts will certainly intensify and a lot more interesting pieces of art, educational information and effective collaboration will use design as a driver for conservation.

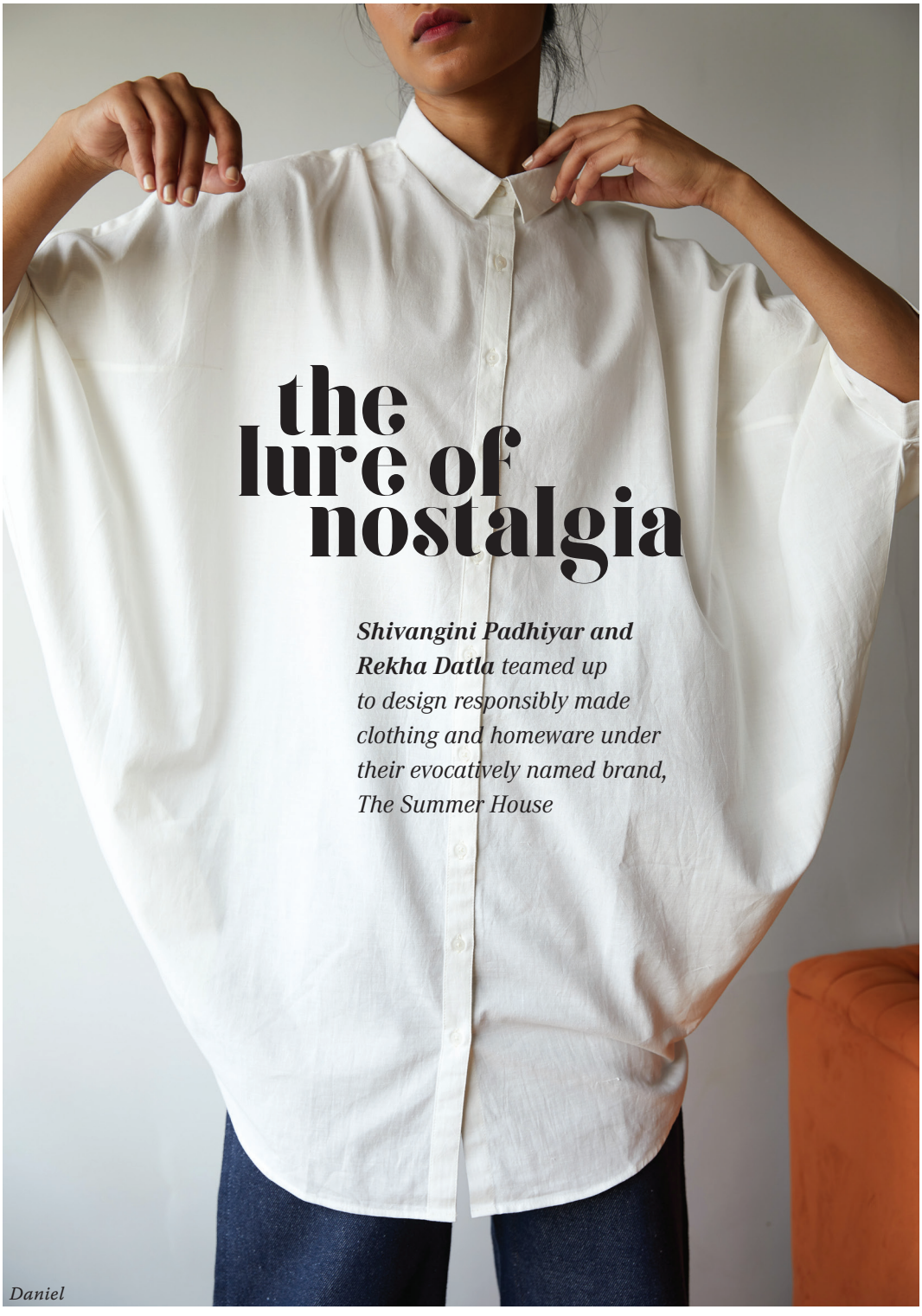
What's next for you?

RC: I hope to be able to put together a compilation of my published comics by the end of the year or early next year.

rohanchakcartoonist@gmail.com



Civet coffee



the lure of nostalgia

Shivangini Padhiyar and Rekha Datla *teamed up to design responsibly made clothing and homeware under their evocatively named brand, The Summer House*

Daniel

Right: Layla Set
Below: Abeer





Woodstock Milk

Take us through the journey that led to your collaboration.

SP: Neither of us have a design background as such, but the way we grew up had a huge influence on our esthetics. Rekha grew up surrounded by the bounty of the beautiful garden her mother nourished with such creativity and talent. I grew up in a boarding school in the hills and spent a lot of holidays at my grandmother's home by a lake in a picturesque valley, or on family farms in the village. Both of us grew up surrounded by the bounty and purity of nature, and grandmothers and aunts with immense talent to design, sew, embroider and salvage. All those experiences somehow shaped where we have reached now, even though we took the long road to it.



Rekha started her career by setting up a beautifully curated boutique store, soon after she graduated with a commerce degree. I worked in advertising as a copywriter for nine years before taking a leap of faith and experimenting with designing clothes and tableware. I wanted to fulfill the dream to start a brand that believed in design that was

beautiful, functional and sustainable, and had been traveling across the country for over a year with my then nine-month-old daughter, spending time with craftsmen and studying responsible techniques that can be used to make wares for the modern woman and her home. I had even started supplying designs to companies like Fabindia and Toast and online retailers like Jaypore.

By pure chance, the two of us met in 2014 for a completely unrelated project. But, as they say, some things are meant to be. We instantly trusted each other and became partners in work.

Tell us more about The Summer House.

SP: Rekha and I co-founded The Summer House, a modern lifestyle brand with an emphasis on handicraft and responsible techniques presented in a contemporary esthetic. We've made a choice to question every process and explore better possibilities. We choose the alternative to the easy way of sourcing materials. Rekha is the Head of Operations and I am the Creative Director. Our studio is based in Bengaluru - we love the easy vibe, good natured people and evolved outlook of the city.

For us, The Summer House is both, a memory of how things were and a plan for how we want life to be. It was born from nostalgia. It was when we missed the purity in our food and the comfort in our clothes and the sturdiness in the wares we bought that we started noticing that there are more people like us who crave these little joys of simplicity and functionality.



Cheryl



Sharon

What inspires your design process?

SP: Our design processes are inspired by Indian craft and our upbringing in this highly conflicted and contradictory country. There's a lot of sensory and visual stimulation in this diverse country. It is contradictory because there is a very modern fast developing side to it and then there's the rural side with old crafts that have continued for hundreds of years.

How is your brand contributing to the handicraft industry?

SP: Between concept, sampling and final prototype, our teams communicate with remote artisans and craftsmen on a weekly basis. This process does take time and sometimes we do face challenges with language and meeting deadlines, but it is sheer joy to see the finished product in a modern design made by these skilled artisans using traditional techniques. We celebrate their skill and contribution each year through initiatives such as Fashion Revolution Week during the month of April. Our textiles come from all around the country. Our khadi comes from Gujarat and Bengal, while cotton, organic cotton and linen come from Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. We work with craft clusters across Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. For our much loved Farmers Baskets, we worked with an NGO that employs women from underprivileged backgrounds.


Lara

How do you ensure sustainability in the creative process?

SP: Almost 80% of our fabrics are either certified organic or handwoven and the remaining 20% are dead stock or experiments with new age sustainable fabrics like Econyl and Tencel. We work with natural and azo-free dyes. The dyeing unit we work with has a certified wastewater treatment and recycling set-up. We work closely with around 200 traditional artisans across the country, helping them build a better life for themselves and their family. All our garments are made in our naturally-lit production studio where a team that is respected and paid above industry standards makes exceptional quality clothing. This quality ensures that the garment lasts much longer, thus reducing its lifetime carbon footprint. The fabric scraps from our studio are sent to two NGOs that train women to make products like pouches and other small items that can be sold and earn them a respectable income. We are now also working with a company to send the scraps that cannot be used for recycling so that absolutely nothing ends up in a landfill. Every step of the way, we consider what would be the best practice possible for the planet and people (craftsmen, production team and customers).

Tell us something about Tencel.

SP: The fashion industry is one of the highest pollutants in the world. The World Bank estimates that almost 20% of global industrial water pollution comes from the treatment and dyeing of textiles. As we researched and looked around for more earth friendly fabric options, we crossed paths with Tencel, which is a new age fiber made from sustainably harvested trees. Wood pulp is converted into fiber using a solvent that has low toxicity and is recycled in a closed-loop process, which means that 99.5% of chemicals are reused. What this translates to is minimal chemical waste being dumped into the earth and its waters. We use Tencel extensively across collections and have not found reason to regret it yet.



Gabriel



Ehra

How do you tackle the entrepreneurial challenges that come your way?

SP: Our biggest challenge is getting a good regular supply of sustainable fabrics from dependable vendors. We still struggle with it; since the demand for these fabrics is not

high, they are not easily available to small companies who do not have large orders. The other challenge is to show the value of paying the right price for responsible clothing to people who are now so used to cheap fast fashion and deals. It's difficult to get people to switch to sustainable fashion, even when they appreciate the ethic, because they are so tempted by cheap deals. But the fact is, if not them, the earth is paying a price.

There really was no strategy; we kept asking questions and seeking answers. Simple things like black dyes are most damaging to the earth (we only buy dead stock black fabric if we need the color). Or that if you use hand-woven cloth or eco-friendly colors or fabrics but then transport it across various parts of the world in a conventional way, your actual carbon footprint is much higher than the good you did. So technically then, you aren't a sustainable brand. So many simple facts like these help us function more sensibly.

What does it take to stay consistent in such a competitive industry?

SP: Be honest, be real, stay nimble to adapt to the very changing scenario of e-commerce.

How do you market and distribute your products?

SP: We have our own online store and are also available on two well curated marketplaces. We are currently focusing on online and are not available offline. We also do pop-ups.

What are your goals for your brand? How do you see yourself progressing?

SP: With each edit, we hope to create timeless styles that surpass trends or fads. Our new edits will continue to explore traditional techniques that may be amalgamated in modern designs, be it with clothing or homeware.

love@thesummerhouse.in



Tokyo



Seoul

SEEKING *surprises*

***Vasant Nath** has an insatiable curiosity about people that gives a different perspective to his work as a writer and film maker*

How did your tryst with writing, direction and films begin?

VN: I was an English Honors student at St. Stephen's College (Delhi) from 1998-2001. Thereafter I went to the University of Cambridge from 2001-2003. I had done theater in both places and after my sociology degree I thought a career in news and media was the logical next step but somewhere I knew that I wanted to be on the creative side of things; since I had directed plays, I decided to apply to film school. The application process included a requirement to write film scripts and when I did that I found that writing films brought together so many fields of my interest – research, sociology, history and also some kind of esthetic presentation. I had not yet developed a skill in photography, which was to grow into my passion, but I was extremely interested and that's where the journey began.

Tell us about your commitment to your current medium/format.

VN: My main occupation is writing scripts for narrative, dramatic series. My first big engagement was *Sacred Games Season 1* for Netflix. I'm currently writing a show for Amazon. I've also written quite a few feature films, none of which have been made yet. I wrote them on spec. I also wrote them on commission for other writers. So, while my training has been in feature film format, I learnt on the job while writing *Sacred Games,* which came to me because of the trust my longtime friend and colleague, Vikram Motwane, placed in me. It was a very



steep learning curve and I'm very much still learning. I like to work in-parallel between feature film projects and long form narrative, episodic series because I feel that one skill informs the other. The insights that you get in one get applied to the other, and it keeps your mind robust and active and jumping between, always improving, and I like it that way.

How do you deal with the conceptual difficulty and uncertainty of writing and creating new work?

VN: I think that one has to stay motivated, and inspired. Uncertainty only arises when your cup is empty, and for me the way to remain inspired is to keep reading. I feel that not enough writers around me have a commitment to reading anymore. I try and keep my reading very wide and depend on a lot of sources to guide me. I really follow my nose when it comes to choosing books and I'm usually reading things that are completely unrelated to anything I'm writing.

The other thing I also rely on heavily is photography. I use photography as a medium to research the material I am writing, I also use photography to build a bank, a resource you could say, of triggers. So many times photographs that I have taken take me back to certain feelings and sensations, which I refer to, and that's my way of building a library, which I can always go back to for inspiration. In this way if I keep this up, and I make sure I keep building this library, and expanding myself through reading then that uncertainty and conceptual difficulty does not arise in as harsh a form as it could.

Tell us about your own personal evolution vis-à-vis your creative journey and the work that you do today.

VN: My journey began with my first gig out of college, which was to be an assistant to Deepa Mehta, on the film *Water*. I was literally at her side when she made every decision that went into the film, and I worked alongside her in polishing the first draft of the script. My job was to type everything that she said and that's basically where I understood how the format works - screenwriting and using final draft, and so on. After the job with Deepa, I got a job as a creative assistant with the ad filmmaker Bharat Bala, and I was with him for five years. I became dedicated to research in terms of doing all the groundwork before a screen writer came and took it on. I had the honor of working with some very talented and eminent names, including MT Vasudevan Nair. I learnt a lot about books and writing from MT, and I carry that with me even today. One of the things he taught me was that anything that you write must be readable, and I have stuck with this, as a dictum - whatever I create should be accessible to others like myself and to as wide an audience as possible. At the end of it, the further my stories get, the more satisfying it is for me as a writer and I really aim for material that can have that sort of reach. So, MT is a very big source of my own creative evolution.


SG Season 1 team

There have been many other influences that have shaped how I think, including my Buddhist practice, which I have been doing for the last five years, and study of Buddha's philosophy. That is not just something from which I look for inspiration, it is actually something that shapes the way I think; it has been a lovely process till now, and will continue to be so.

What were you working on when the lockdown was announced?

VN: I was working on a show for Amazon, based on an all-girls college in New Delhi. I was also working on the final drafts of a feature film, which I intend to direct this year. I still intend to, so I'm not discounting the possibility just yet. I have been in talks for another adaptation of a film trilogy for a children-oriented fantasy series; those were the main things in development.

How has the current situation affected your practice and plans?

VN: Almost nothing has changed except that I'm working from home. I used to divide my time between a small space that I rent as an office, and home. I'm the father of two six-year-old girls and it's good to get out of the house sometimes to get some space, to do what I do. But sometimes it is also good to

be near my family and the hustle-bustle. I'm not the kind of writer who needs isolation all the time. Sometimes I need people, and sometimes I value proximity to my family – that has increased. My routine remains the same and I try to incorporate the extra house work that one has during the lockdown. Work has only increased and this is something I am very grateful for. The only plan that has really changed is directing my first feature film, which I am still hoping to do this year.

What would elevate an artist's life during this period?

VN: This is a personal answer - I think deep introspection, and answering difficult questions about life. And my way of doing that is thorough my spiritual path, through my study of Buddhism. Some kind of regular practice or study makes us look and go inward; it takes us out of our ivory tower. I think this pause is extremely valuable for writers especially.

What kind of critical inputs does the world need at this moment to overcome the loss of income and opportunity?

VN: The only thing that can counter the loss of income is income, so I don't know how else to answer that. But in terms of critical inputs, the world needs hope. The world needs something that makes it wake up everyday and agree to go on, to fight and to not despair. And to bring their best life-condition to the challenges that lie ahead. I think art that can serve to inculcate wisdom, courage and compassion is of utmost importance right now.

You've spent time amongst artists in flow - what have you observed?

VN: I have observed discipline for sure, and I have observed this dogged pursuit of perfection that I would like to imbibe. It's this dogged agreement with oneself to just keep coming to the workplace and chip away at what you do day after day. And of course there are goals and deadlines that help this along, but ultimately following a much broader, much more far-reaching timeline of one's own, an inner compass that is leading you towards something that lies beyond the horizon. Every time I read autobiographies, I am fascinated when artists reach a stage of extreme productivity, and it's usually after having found that lovely balance between having something to say and having the skill to express it, and the will to always perfect it. I think that is just wonderful, and I have only read about this in autobiographies, or biographies of artists that I admire and that's something that I think I'm kind of experiencing right now during the lockdown.

Which score, shows, performances and experiences have shaped your own creative process? Who are your maestros?

VN: The list is always being added to, but I think someone who has really shaped the way that I write films is a script mentor called Marten Rabarts who had come to India as Head of Development at the NFDC and I was fortunate enough to be his charge. I went to him with my first feature film script, and the compassion with which he looked at my work, and my life, and my characters, and my skill, and gently urged me to do better, has been extremely noteworthy in my life.

I love music and scoring for films. The score of the film *Donnie Darko* is something that has always haunted me, and not just the score, but also the soundtrack, the curation of the music. One of my favorite parts of a film is adding a scratch soundtrack to it from songs that I like. I invariably have something from *Donnie Darko*, and something from Wes Anderson's films. A great personal favorite is the *Great Expectations* soundtrack.

Most recently I watched a show called *Unorthodox* and that for me is a fantastic example of writing – it's a very modern story that deals with the internal world of a young



Vasant at his office desk

person. Something else that has inspired me recently has been the process of the filmmaker who made *The Portrait of a Lady on Fire.* Watching her talk about her own screenwriting process has resulted in a sea change in the way that I look at what I do. Céline Sciamma has planted a seed inside of me, which is going to grow into something quite fascinating.

What were your biggest learnings and hiccups in your journey so far?

VN: I was on a film set with Deepa Mehta, and I was completely star struck by the cast. It distracted me from what I was doing. I was told off quite firmly that you can go home and be star struck from there if you want, but here you have to work. Over time I came to understand that celebrities are people too. And having a sense of kinship with those who are larger than life, and just understanding that everyone is a human being and an artist and learning how to relate with my colleagues has been a process.

How do you describe yourself in the context of challenging people's perspectives via your work?

VN: I always feel that one can astound someone with simplicity. And I am very much for cutting out noise, being minimal and focusing on the key emotions of your characters and milking the small moments. I have found that this is very effective, when you do it with sincerity. I'm always looking to challenge myself when I come across a situation that I recognize. And I'm always asking myself whether I can predict the outcome. Can I surprise myself? Because only if I can surprise myself will I be able to surprise someone else. And unless someone is surprised, they aren't learning anything new from that work of art, and I do feel that there is a responsibility in a work of art to at least broaden the horizons of those who are engaging with it.

What inspires you?

VN: People inspire me. I think every human being has something unique about them that I will find fascinating. It's just a matter of digging that out. I find that with any new subject that I'm dealing with, I love the process of uncovering the gem inside it, which is going to excite me, and motivate me to not sleep, and sit down and write it or make it. It is that curiosity that keeps me in this business and makes me thank my stars that I chose this as a career.

Tell us about your studio.

VN: I have a small office in Versova, Mumbai, which looks out over the sea - a dream come true. I go there primarily because I have a standing workstation that allows me to stand, and walk around, and work. I have lots and lots of whiteboards, so that's something I love, and my children love to scrawl and scribble on them when they visit.

theindiancurator@gmail.com



(Sonalee Tomar studied at NID and worked as the Editorial Director of Pool Magazine before founding 'The Asian Curator', a platform to support creative outliers with liberating resources)

www.indipool.com

ValueLabs

facebook.com/designindiamag twitter.com/designindiamag

Subscribing Institutions

Publisher
INDI Design Pvt Ltd
www.indidesign.in

Contact us
INDI Design Pvt Ltd
18 High Street,
Pashan - Baner Link Road,
Pune - 411 045, INDIA
Phone: 020 2729 3552

All sponsorship enquiries to
tarun@indidesign.in

All content related enquiries to
pool@indidesign.in

Printing & Binding
Pragati Offset Pvt. Ltd., Hyderabad

Editor in Chief
Sudhir Sharma
sudhir@indidesign.in

Editorial Team
Marianna Sharma
Anshika Seth
Lakshmi Shewale

Copy Editor
Ashvina Vakil

Art & Design
Nilesh Kamble
Gautham Dutt

Finance
Deepak Gautam

Layout & Production
Pradeep Arora
Satyajit Harpude
Sagar Sadekar

Assistants
Yamanappa Dodamani
Rafik G Shaikh

Subscription & Logistics
sub@poolmagazine.in

Marketing
Tarun Thakkar
tarun@indidesign.in

INDIA'S BEST DESIGN AWARDS 2020

www.ibdsa.com

JURY PANEL



SONAL DABRAL
MUMBAI



NISHA NARAYANAN
DELHI



NAUSHAD FORBES
PUNE



GURMEET RAI
DELHI



ADIL JAL DARUKHANAWALA
PUNE



KAMAL SAGAR
BENGALURU



HAYLEY HUGHES
AUSTIN



SRINI SRINIVASAN
PALO ALTO



SERTAC ERSAYIN
ISTANBUL



NANDITA ABRAHAM
DELHI



ABHIJIT BANSOD
BENGALURU



RIKKE HANSEN
KOLDING



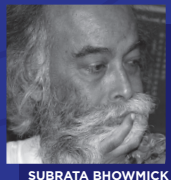
KADAMBARI SAHU
HYDERABAD



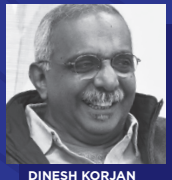
KIEU HUYEN PHAM
HANOI



HRRIDAYSH DESHPANDE
PUNE



SUBRATA BHOWMICK
AHMEDABAD



DINESH KORJAN
AHMEDABAD



TARUN DEEP GIRDHER
AHMEDABAD



G V SREEKUMAR
MUMBAI



SUDHIR SHARMA
PUNE

PRESENTED BY

ValueLabs

ORGANIZED BY

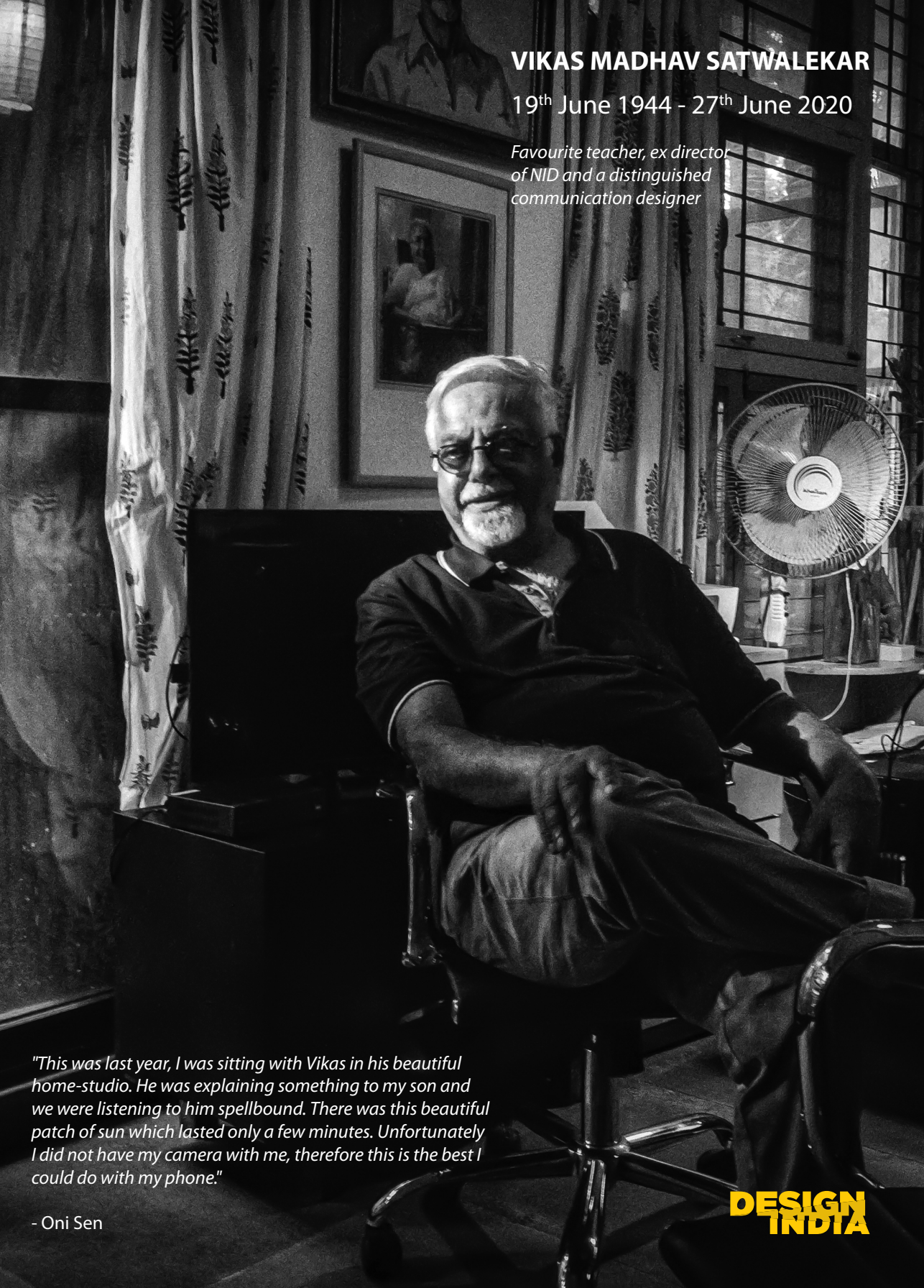
indi

DESIGN INDIA

VIKAS MADHAV SATWALEKAR

19th June 1944 - 27th June 2020

Favourite teacher, ex director of NID and a distinguished communication designer



"This was last year, I was sitting with Vikas in his beautiful home-studio. He was explaining something to my son and we were listening to him spellbound. There was this beautiful patch of sun which lasted only a few minutes. Unfortunately I did not have my camera with me, therefore this is the best I could do with my phone."

- Oni Sen

DESIGN INDIA