

“The Art Deco edifices, with their cinemas and residential buildings, blend Indian design with Art Deco imagery, creating a unique style that has been described as Indo-Deco.”

(From UNESCO World Heritage Citation)

For Immediate Release

Art Deco’s influence in Bombay thrived in the 1930s and 1940s, with the style gaining popularity as Bombay Deco. Starting from the facade of buildings, it moved to the interiors, exhibited through a variety of designs and materials. Today, we have around 200 Art Deco structures in Mumbai - from apartments to theatres, schools, hotels, and clubs, second only to Miami. More than absolute numbers, what’s important are the efforts directed toward conservation and reviving Art Deco structures and their characteristic motifs.

In the month of February, Avid Learning is proud to bring together the synergies of two of the country’s biggest galas - the **Mumbai Urban Art Festival** and the **Kala Ghoda Arts Festival**.

With the Loksatta Building staircase at Sassoon Dock as a muse, **St+art India Foundation**, **Kala Ghoda Arts Festival**, and **Avid Learning** present a unique panel discussion with some of the biggest names in design, architecture, and visual art including *Vice Chairman, Bharat Floorings and Tiles* **Firdaus Variava**, *Independent Photographer and Curator*, **Akshay Mahajan**, and *Principal Architect, Nikhil Mahashur & Associates and Founder, Walkitecture* **Nikhil Mahashur**. The conversation will be moderated by *Visual Artist and Founder, Editions JOJO Kaamna Patel*. This discussion will be a continuation of Avid Learning’s successful full-day workshop that took place in November last year.

Please read on for more details on the program:

The quintessential Art Deco floors still sparkling in theatres and across the stretch of Marine Drive and Oval Maidan come from the house of Bharat Floorings and Tiles. It has single-handedly played a pivotal part in laying the foundation of Bombay Deco and is now bringing it back through massive restoration projects all over the city. Its Vice Chairman, Firdaus Variava will discuss the company’s legacy, which is as old as the history of design style in the city, and discuss the conservation endeavors undertaken. Exploring the city’s Deco landscape, Akshay Mahajan’s photographs capture the vibrancy and color of the structures, highlighting their beautiful motifs. Architect Nikhil Mahashur will share his experiences from his passion project, through which he uncovers the glorious history of the city’s architectural marvels with the participants. While unraveling Deco’s design patterns, and distinguishing floorings, banisters, grills, and canopies, the experts will talk about the importance of documenting, preserving, and restoring the city’s architectural heritage.

Join us for a captivating conversation to experience how Art Deco continues to inspire the makers of today and revitalize the details of everyday life as well as high design.

Event Details

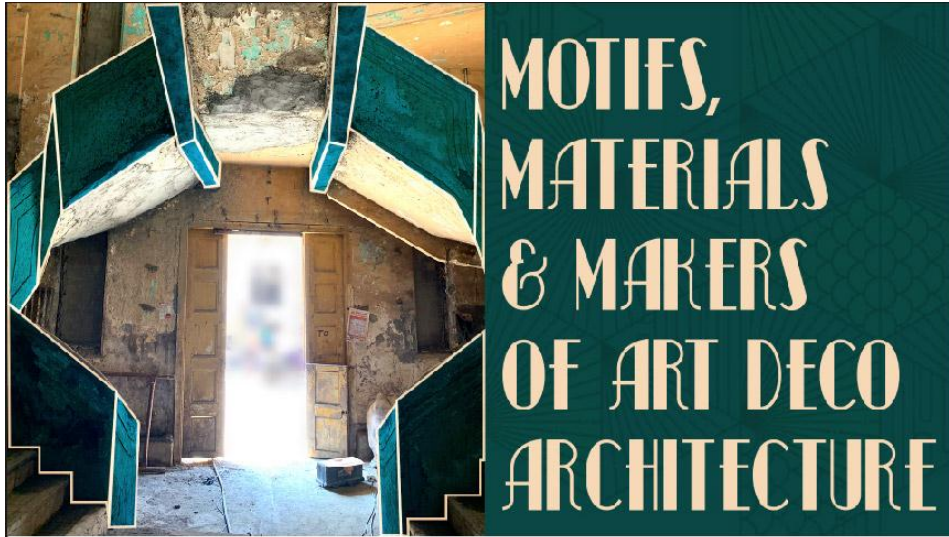
Where: MNC Shed, Sassoon Docks, Azad Nagar, Colaba, Mumbai 400005

When: Saturday, 4th February 2023

12:00 P.M.

RSVP: www.insider.in

Contact: ayeshah.avid@gmail.com



The image above is from a beautiful Art Deco staircase, part of a building at the Sassoon Dock, ready to welcome you to the **Mumbai Urban Art Festival**. The discussion inspired by the staircase will be in continuation of our successful full-day workshop in November last year, looking at conservation efforts to help the Deco architecture survive and thrive.

Smooth lines, geometric shapes, streamlined forms, and bright colors. Unabashedly bold with an ever-glamorous decorating style, Art Deco architecture is easily distinguishable with its gilded details, rich textures, and geometric patterns. Today, we have around 200 Art Deco structures in Mumbai - from apartment buildings to theatres, schools, hotels, and clubs, second only to Miami.

With the Loksatta Building staircase as a muse, join us for a unique panel discussion with experts influencing, restoring, conserving, and bringing back conversations around Art Deco inspiring the makers of today and revitalizing the details of everyday life as well as high-design.



Independent Photographer and Curator
Akshay Mahajan



Architect and Founder, Nikhil Mahashur & Associates.
Nikhil Mahashur



Vice Chairman, Bharat Floorings & Tiles
Firdaus Variava



Visual Artist and Founder, Editions JOJO
Kaamna Patel

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Speaker Bios:

Akshay Mahajan is an artist and instigator working primarily with photography. His practice is grounded in research within historical documents, literature and visual material that inform and colour his process and inquiries as a photographer. His current project explores how the built environment of a city and how that architecture can function as “a sculptural representation of failed futures”. He is also deeply interested in how individual lives are shaped by and shape the urban landscape.

His long-term personal projects and essays are published in Financial Times Magazine London, Wall Street Journal Magazine, Aperture, and Le Monde among others.

Akshay’s engagement with the visual arts also takes shape through writing, teaching and curation. In 2008, he co-founded Blindboys.org, an open collective aimed at reclaiming public spaces – both online and offline – to showcase photography built and educate a new audience by leveraging technology and engagement. Akshay is a member of the photo editorial team of PIX Quarterly, a contemporary photography publication looking at South Asian Practices. He is also the co-curator

of GoaPhoto an international photography festival that produces location- specific installations connecting photographic displays and their architectural contexts.

Nikhil Mahashur's strong passion for hospitality and commercial architecture is blended with a broad experience in PMC. He believes in creating a space not only for the person who commissions it but for the people who are going to use the space – each project is a celebration of that space and its intimacy. He describes his architectural style as Eclitecture - designing cotemporary buildings and layering them with traditional elements. He firmly believes that the first impression is the one that will make you fall in love with the building. Helmed by Nikhil Mahashur, Nikhil Mahashur & Associates (NMA) is accustomed to delivering exemplary projects across Architecture, Renovation, Interiors and PMC. NMA's design philosophy is therefore entrenched in creating the right first impression and a WOW factor through simplicity, where even a little chaos can be simple.

Firdaus Variava is Vice Chairman at Bharat Floorings & Tiles (BFT) and holds an MBA in Marketing from The College of William & Mary in Williamsburg, VA, USA. He took over the reins of the company in 2002 from his mother, Mrs. Dilnavaz Variava – Chairperson, Bharat Floorings & Tiles. In his role as Vice Chairman, Firdaus is not only responsible for developing and launching new products and designs at BFT, but also lead the Marketing and Sales efforts of the company. In doing so, he has helped transform handmade cement tiles into a viable and sought-after flooring option and introduced new products and ranges like BFT+, Made in India, International Range, Virtuoso, Terazzo Grandezza, among others. Firdaus' vision for BFT is to grow the company to ₹100 Crores in the next 3 years. He is also looking at expanding the global footprint of BFT and plans to and have sales outlets in 6 countries over the course of the next 3 years. Firdaus lives in Bombay with his wife, Nidhi and their two kids, Kabir and Shai. In his free time, Firdaus enjoys hobbies such as cycling, hiking, Crossfit and reading, amongst others.

Kaamna Patel (b. Mumbai, 1988) is a visual artist and book maker currently based in Mumbai, her home city. She launched her publishing imprint Editions JOJO with her book 'In Today's News: Alpha Males Women Power' in May 2019 in Mumbai which has since evolved into an artist-led platform for contemporary visual culture, at the centre of which is one of the largest, publicly accessible photobook libraries in the region. As a publishing imprint, Editions JOJO is dedicated to exploring new perspectives, process and playfulness through images and the book object.