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# Living

The PARK Magazine

05

LIVING is a barometer of 21st Century thinking. It celebrates new, unfettered ideas and explores global shifts in design, cuisine, technology, business, media and more. All from the unique perspective of The Park Hotels.

In this issue, LIVING examines the Immersive with its multidimensional allure and in its many forms, as an exciting step up the experiential ladder that humankind is constantly constructing for its entertainment, its knowledge and its evolution.

# Immerse

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The immersive experience is one that sucks you into a created zone through a multitude of sensory stimuli.



**Charminar Chandelier** Designed by textile artist Preksha Baid for The Park, Hyderabad, this light sculpture unexpectedly reflects in the mirrored table by Rajiv Saini. Graphically illustrated with the Charminar, the surface changes shape and form when viewed from various angles, initiating a playful dialogue with visitors

# Immerse

It is a wintry evening in a Parisian square. Some workmen are erecting scaffolding that eventually forms a three-sided upright rectangle of polished steel. Passers-by stop, and watch curiously as the structure emerges. A spray of water comes down, its droplets lit brightly by lights concealed in the metal frame. And then something miraculous happens. Spectators look up, awed. Sporadic spurts of water careen downwards from the top bar of the rectangle forming a literal wall of water, and in the lights, every spray spells a phrase. A story is told of the world's worst killer, more vicious than war or terrorism, more dangerous than earthquakes or tsunamis. A story that sucks in every person witness to the spectacle, and rivets the millions of others who watch the stunningly edited video of it on youtube, Facebook or television. A simple story of [unsafe drinking water](#).<sup>1</sup>

Every viewer of this extraordinary billboard, doubtless, has the experience of a lifetime. You could attribute it to technology. Or you could call it a singular, absorbing event that enfolds people within its message, its sheer unpredictability, and the tale of human proportions it tells. You could just call it immersive.

The metaphor of total immersion is borrowed from the act of being submerged in water, and has been used in learning and teaching for several years. Now it is catching the imagination of mavericks from other fields, those interested in pushing the boundaries of human creativity, invention and, ultimately, of experience. The yearning to move beyond the uni-dimensional, to reach for higher levels of engrossment, whether in hospitality, entertainment, art or more, has led to a burst of many-layered and encompassing encounters.

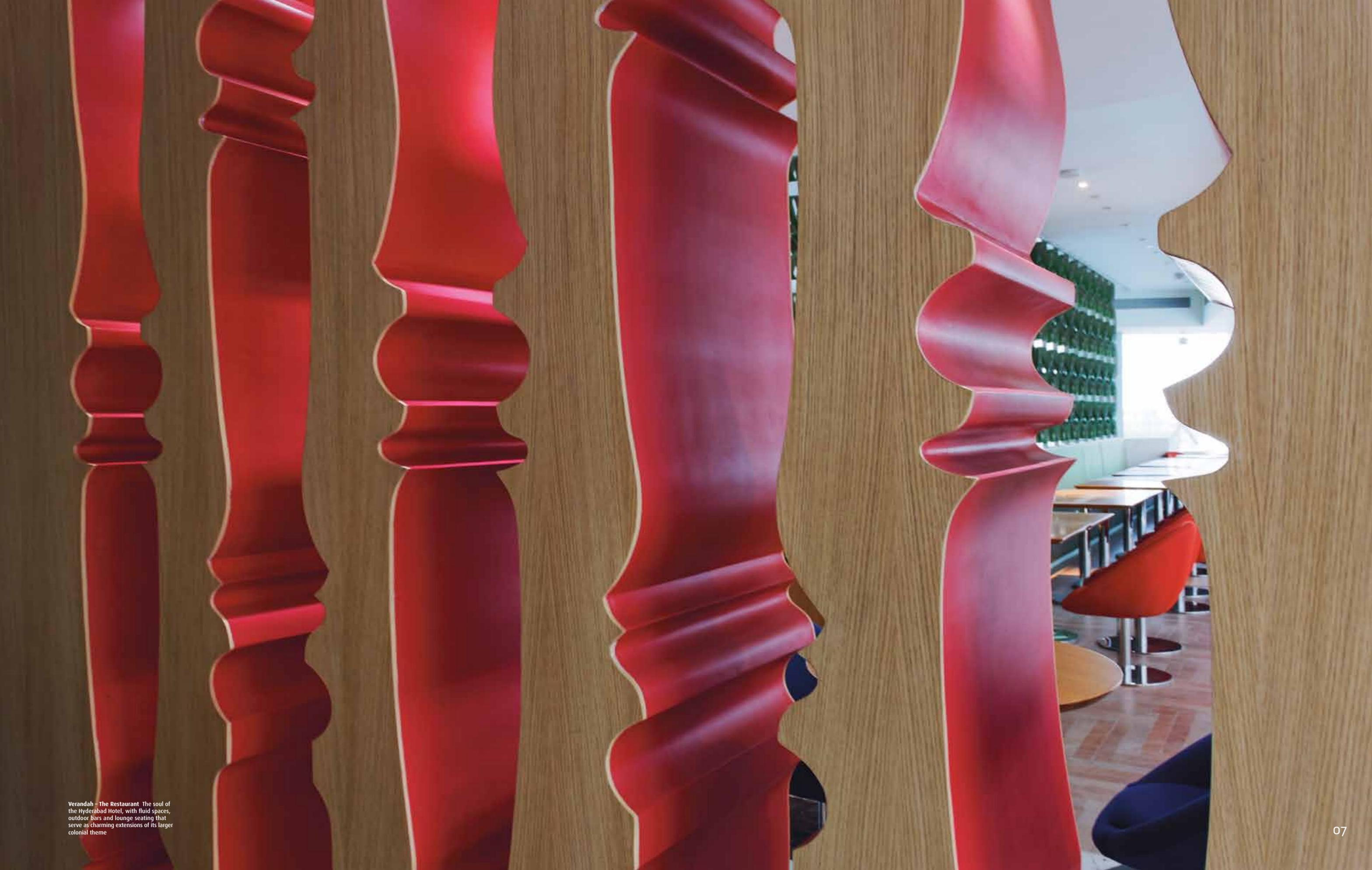
1. Solidarities International: Water Talks, a public awareness campaign about the devastating effects of unsafe drinking water.

The Park,  
Hyderabad  
glimmers with  
jewel-inspired  
design that  
immerses one  
in its brilliant  
facets and  
hues.

Hotel Façade, Day The Park, Hyderabad is a LEEDs GOLD certified green building. The cladding minimizes heat. Computer modelling techniques deduce the perfect balance between opaque and transparent coverage. Apertures are adjusted to maximize daylight and reduce electricity usage



Infinity Pool The 120-ft pool at the Hyderabad Hotel forms a seamless connection between the outdoor lounges of Aqua, Verandah – The Restaurant, and the expanse of the lake beyond



Verandah – The Restaurant The soul of the Hyderabad Hotel, with fluid spaces, outdoor bars and lounge seating that serve as charming extensions of its larger colonial theme

The Park Hotels have invented fabulous topographies that overturn the conception of hospitality design. They have introduced brand new multilayered and emotive landscapes for guests. The Park, Hyderabad represents this aesthetic adventurousness and adds a level of green responsibility to make the Hotel truly holistic. Naturally-lit lobbies flow into the outdoor spaces of Verandah – The Restaurant and Aqua seamlessly, offering vistas of the city, affording calm amidst bustle, shade amidst an unforgiving climate. Swathes of light filter in through gaps in the façade, caressing guests with a subtle, dappled luminosity created by the intricate leaf pattern cut into the *jali* that wraps the entire exterior of the Hotel. Superimposed on these spaces is the irresistible pull of traditional influences, worked into a contemporary idiom.

The Verandah and its sister areas, the very cozy and warm Bungalow and the striking Sicca Bar, are redolent with a colonial air, abstractly rendering Anglo-Indian and Persian themes including formal garden layouts for the dining area, or Nizam-period rupee notes used as backdrops to a bar counter. The regal palette of silver, gold, and bright ruby that is used throughout the Hotel is very bold and new, yet references the local Hyderabad heritage of jewellery making and traditional craft. Unexpected encounters with small jewel-box-like corners fill one’s senses – the mesmerizing Ruby Lounge with its ceiling of *kalamkari* designed by Preksha Baid; the private dining space, The Pearl Room, that glistens in white and frosted glass; the relaxed Living Room with its locally sourced games, Bidri artefacts and Andhra cookbooks....Wandering through the areas that are one, yet distinct, you view art installations, sculpture, and even furniture commissioned from visual artists and designers. Playful and interactive interpretations of the vernacular flood your receptors with a confluence of culture, art and luxury.

The designers of contemporary immersive events take on non-linear ways of thinking, mix in collaborative, sometimes real, sometimes virtual methods, and concoct a brew that absorbs viewers in aural, visual, physical and sensual ways. The immersive-ness comes out of being sucked into the created zone by the multitude of sensory stimuli. You can see this clearly in newer forms of installation art. Art that disorients, endangers, and overwhelms, as much as transports you. [An LED grid](#)<sup>1</sup> you enter that forms patterns according to the rhythm of your breath. [A radical, engineered structure](#)<sup>2</sup> that depicts real moon movements and involves you in the passage of time through the twin roads of magic and logic, making you “ponder the notions of periodicity and duration”. A hundred razorblades strung together to look like a garland that you instinctively reach out to [touch](#).<sup>3</sup> Spoken audio that places you in a [near-hypnotic trance](#),<sup>4</sup> instigating a hyper-intimate and personal experience with the work. Artists of this genre utilize textures and materials engineered to draw the viewer in at a much deeper level than ever before.

Leading this trend, The Park, Hyderabad is a stunning showcase of designers and creative people who have fabricated multisensory interactions that bewitch or startle the viewer. The entire Hotel glimmers with jewel-inspired design that encloses one in its brilliant facets. Telling parables of time and heritage – from the design of the exterior façade based on the trillion-cut gem, to the colours of each floor, where corridors and the sumptuous rooms alike are tinged with brilliant ruby, coral, emerald, peridot, or sapphire, bathing guests in their hues.



- 1. Qusai Kathawala's Our Breath Concrete (see p 35)
- 2. Sunil Gawde's Alliterations (see p 20)
- 3. Sunil Gawde's Virtually Untouchable series
- 4. Artist Graham Nicholls in his installation Epitome

Or the Aura Spa, inspired by the sheen and translucent whiteness of the Golconda Diamond. Silver foil embossed doors and period chairs against white rexine walls, tinges of white resin refracting through stacked glass... ensconcing the guest in a cocoon of intense luxury and relaxation while undergoing treatments.

The Park Hotels feed into the global immersive pursuit, one where interactivity has been propelled further to create new, compelling connections. Consider the following: virtual reality is no longer just computer games and flight simulations. Its new form is deeply involving, almost the stuff of science fiction. Artificial spaces where [3D objects float in the air](#),<sup>1</sup> allowing you to walk around them, be surrounded by them and interact with them. Dungeons and Dragons are old hat compared to ARGs (alternate reality games) where hundreds of thousands of people around the globe follow fragments and clues scattered in public spaces, on t-shirts, through phone calls, on obscure websites, in song lyrics, live events and abandoned warehouses to get the [ultimate prize](#).<sup>2</sup>

Immersive devices are changing lifestyles and media. [Magazine covers](#)<sup>3</sup> burst into song with accompanying music videos just by being held up to a webcam. Neurotravel is the new buzzword in travel, using which cyber tourists visit, dress up and interact with others in Beijing's [Forbidden City](#)<sup>4</sup> or in outer space, without ever leaving their homes. Print ads reveal secrets in [real time](#).<sup>5</sup> Giant software companies have foregone tedious manuals in favour of games that explain the [functionality of new products](#).<sup>6</sup> Webworlds have been birthed in which you can have near-authentic [art](#)<sup>7</sup> or [history](#)<sup>8</sup> encounters, dates, and even financial [risk-taking](#)<sup>9</sup> that can make you a real-time millionaire overnight.

At The Park Hotels, technology is used as an enabler for immersion, but is a willing servant to the overall experience. Design combines with technology to redefine the poetics of the public spaces in the Hotel and then enter the private spaces in the minds of guests. The façade that enfolds the entire Hotel is a larger-than-life interpretation of the Indian *jali*, a feat of modern engineering melded with ornamental splendour. The infinity pool is another such phenomenon in the Hyderabad Hotel. Its 120-foot length forms a breathtaking cross-contextual [spectacle for loungers at Aqua who look across water to the expanse of the lake in a seemingly endless view](#). Above them is a [bridge between the buildings that appears to be floating with its \*jali\* cladding glinting in the sun or suffused with LED illumination at night](#). Party animals in the electric nightclub below connect to the pool too – they catch intriguing glimpses of swimmers and are bathed in ripples in motion, as if they were dancing underwater. Club-goers in the VIP area can climb to the Verandah level through a surreal pathway – a stair tube that rises through the actual volume of the pool.

1. The University of Illinois' CAVE (the Cave Automatic Virtual Environment) is inspired in part by Plato's simile that reflects on perception, reality and illusion

2. For example, the ARG that accompanied the release of Year Zero, an album by Nine Inch Nails. See: [www.42entertainment.com/yearzero/](http://www.42entertainment.com/yearzero/)

3 & 5. The UK edition of Grazia magazine, as well as underwear giant Calvin Klein are tweaking techniques of augmented reality where readers see actual magazine pages become audio-visual experiences as music videos or commercials, just using a webcam and a computer screen

4. <http://www.chinavisita.com/beijing/gwong>

6. Microsoft has an add-in called Ribbon Hero that, on the surface is a game, but which teaches users how to work their Office software

7. <http://secondlife.com/>

8. Google Earth's Earth Surfer software allows you to wander ancient Rome, in and out of thousands of historical buildings seen in 3D

9. The multiplayer online Entropia Universe, a Swedish online community, where people can transact business with virtual currency exchangeable for the real thing

Going beyond entertainment and lifestyle applications, immersive media are being used for socially relevant purposes. The same 360-degree videos that plunge viewers into fantastical journeys chasing whales in the Arctic, or dancing with tribes in deepest Africa, also help in disaster management. They aid relief efforts and governments, like in the recent [Haiti earthquake](#)<sup>1</sup> by disseminating much fuller information about the affected areas to funding agencies. New education tools build custom virtual learning worlds, simulations, and e-games. Motion simulation has grown by leaps and bounds and is being applied to health awareness: imagine how much a near-authentic rollercoaster ride through [jammed arteries](#)<sup>2</sup> (reminiscent of the futuristic 80's film *Innerspace*) could teach about avoiding bad cholesterol!

1. [www.immersivemedia.com/haiti/](http://www.immersivemedia.com/haiti/)  
 2. [www.usagainststheroc.com/arteryexplorer/](http://www.usagainststheroc.com/arteryexplorer/)

The Park, Hyderabad aims to submerge its guests in a cleaner, healthier experience. As India's first LEEDs Gold certified green hotel, we have environmental responsibility built into our very philosophy. Using new technologies and sustainable design, we have taken steps to reduce energy and water consumption by impressive margins. Consultants advise us on low outdoor heat absorption, high acoustic levels, very low emission and energy efficient lighting as well as maximizing daylight. The guest rooms are completely non-smoking. Guests can mingle with the beauty and drama of the Hotel and at the same time, receive its hospitality in an atmosphere of near-complete sustainability.

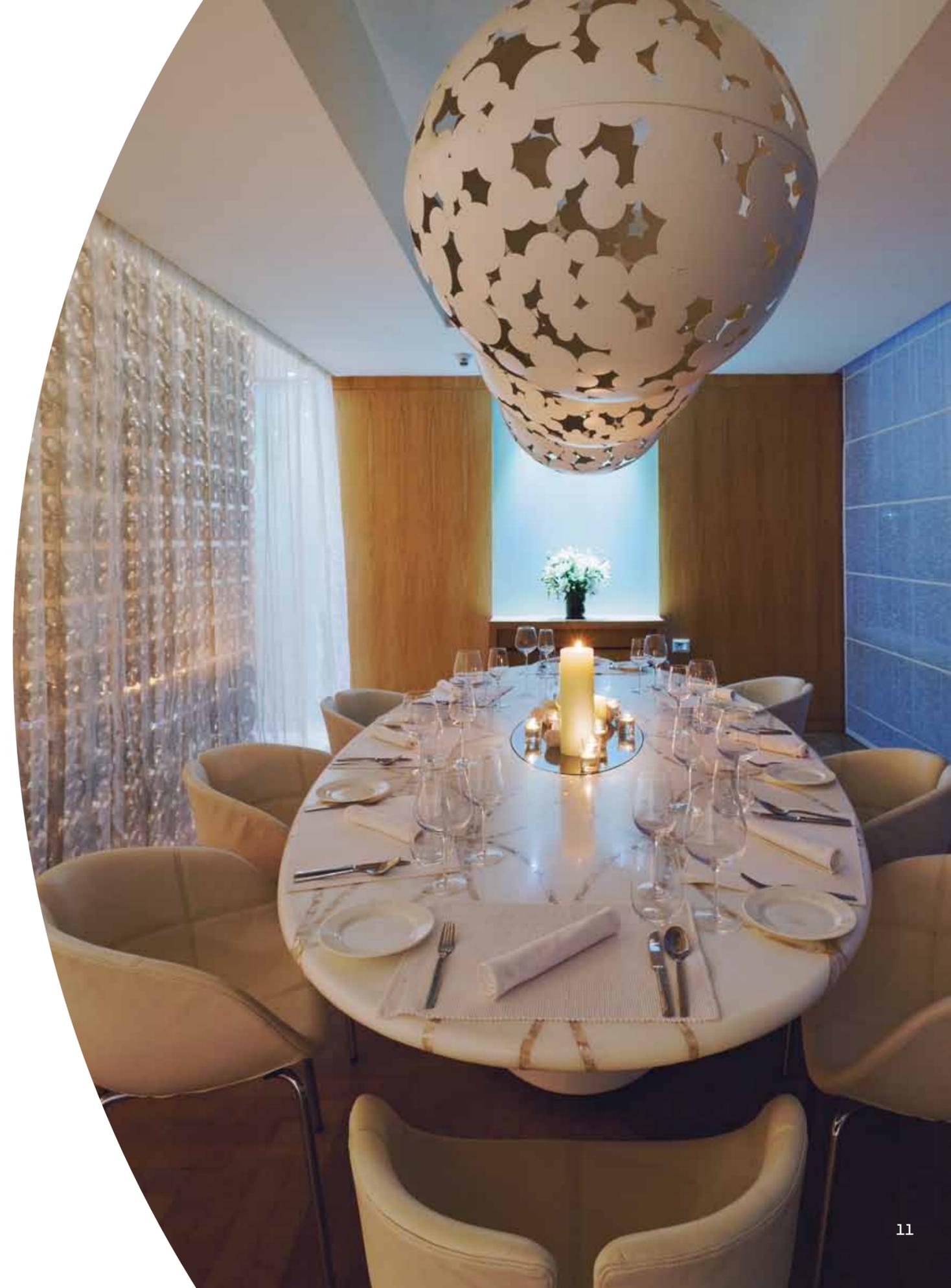
It is by the coalescing of various media, running the whole gamut from high-definition graphics to architecture, from history to physics, that rendezvous with immersion are initiated. Putting the real juice into narratives and producing mesmerising storylines, birthing a new experiential language. After all, the dénouement of all immersive experiences is the alluring story that entertains or informs in absorbing ways. We see such collaborations at The Park, Hyderabad, resulting in exceptional design and yes, some fine storytelling. Like the story of the jewel that is retold all around the Hotel, so emblematic of the city of Hyderabad of now and before. Or the excitement produced by cross-disciplinary design which appears in the rooms and corridors, subsuming people in its fray, allowing them to exist in the past and the present, connect with their roots and with the larger world. The stories of skill and survival related through the hand-drawn patterns on the bed, carpets that bring to mind the fine swirls of *mehendi*, and the traditional Andhra *tholu bommalata* leather puppets turned into contemporary art on the walls. Couturiers Tarun Tahiliani, Rohit Bal, Manish Arora, textile designer Jean Francois Lesage, and fine artists like Subodh Gupta, Bharti Kher designing luxury suites. Experiments that defy all safe notions of creativity and enter the realm of the truly immersive.

At The Park Hotels, technology is used as an enabler for immersion, but is a willing servant to the overall experience.



**Left Street Lobby Light** Designed by Preksha Baid, this light is inspired by the *sarpech* jewel and introduces the glamour of palaces past into a contemporary space at The Park, Hyderabad

**Right The Pearl Room** This private dining space at The Park, Hyderabad surrounds guests in the sheen of a pure white pearl. Enclosed by a floral-cut metal separator, it faces the lake in its entirety, offering diners a stunning view, especially at night





Playful and interactive interpretations of the vernacular flood your receptors with a confluence of culture, art and luxury.



Guestrooms Suffused with light filtering through the *jali* façade, the rooms at The Park, Hyderabad with their fluid curved wall and jewelled tones are a luxurious reprieve from the heat and bustle of the city

Virtual reality is no longer just computer games and flight simulations. Its new form is deeply involving, almost the stuff of science fiction.



Hotel Façade, Night LED lighting illuminates the *jali* skin of the building with an ethereal glow enveloping the Hotel spaces and Tresorie, the luxury retail mall situated in it

Alex McDowell, the production designer for several Hollywood films like Watchmen, Minority Report, Charlie and the Chocolate Factory etc., is an active exponent of [immersive design](#),<sup>1</sup> and acknowledges the “world-building role of design in narrative media”. Take Avatar, made with interactive technology and combining film, animation, performance and visual arts to tell gut wrenching human tales. Or India’s legendary Amar Chitra Katha, now readying The Tale of Katha, the country’s first ever multiplayer role playing game that uses the epic tale of Tripura as its base narrative: combining history, myth, comic art and dynamic graphics. This means that now, design, often in combination with modern technology, is capable of bringing our internal imaginations to life like never before, of engendering a multiplicity of dimensions that were impossible even a decade ago. Inspiring new ways to live, and yielding forth journeys never before taken.

1. <http://www.sdcconference.com/main/>  
blurring the lines between design,  
environment and storytelling



The Park  
Hotels have  
invented  
fabulous  
topographies  
that create  
multilayered  
and emotive  
landscapes  
for guests.



Clockwise from top Exquisite Details *Kalamkari* textile ceiling at the Ruby Lounge; period cooking vessels crafted into lights for the Anglo-Indian themed Sicca Bar; beaten brass installation inspired by temple architecture - small touches that shine at The Park, Hyderabad

## A Day in the City of the Nizams

The seat of the Asaf Jahi dynasty wasn't built in a day. But if that's all the time you have, follow our trail to pack in the best of Hyderabad. Fairy tale palaces, bustling bazaars, grand feasts, glimmering jewels and the indulgent luxury of The Park – now that's 24 hours well spent.

# The Park Explorer Hyderabad

## Morning at The Park

Rise with the sun for an invigorating yoga session with our trained staff by the infinity pool overlooking the Hussain Sagar Lake.

Grab a bicycle from the concierge and ride along Necklace Road circling the lake or burn calories on foot while soaking in the early morning calm.

All that exercise calls for a king-sized breakfast at Verandah – The Restaurant before you set off into the charming chaos of the Old City.

## Till Noon at The Old City

Sojourn in the labyrinthine lanes of the old quarter, once the heart of the Nizam's kingdom.

## Charminar and Laad Bazaar

This four-pillared colossus was built in 1591 by Mohammed Quli Qutb Shah, either to celebrate the founding of Hyderabad, or in honour of his begum Bhagwati, or perhaps to praise God for ending a plague ravaging the city. It is said that all roads in the city lead to the Charminar.

Browse the bazaars around Charminar for a mind-boggling selection of bargains. While Laad Bazaar is famous for its lac and glass bangles, Patther Gatti is the jeweller's hub. Lose yourself in the sights, sounds, and smells of this historic quarter. Charminar 9am-5.30pm; Indians Rs 5, Non Indians Rs 100; +91 40 23262151/23262152

## Haziq and Mohi

With towers of antiquarian books and manuscripts in Persian, Urdu, Arabic and English this little store of rare books is an uncommon treat. The owner, Awed Bin Mohammed Bafana, inherited his grandfather's library and passion for books, and has clients including William Dalrymple and the libraries of Oxford and Harvard. Drop by if you like history, want to rummage through first editions or simply, have a good read. Mahboob Chowk, opp. lane leading to mosque, Charminar area

## Purani Haveli

The home of Nizam Fath Jung Mehboob Ali Khan in the 16th Century now houses a museum, a testimony to the lavish lifestyle of the royals. Check out the Nizam's 72m long wardrobe with its mechanical elevator – the Nizam, it is believed, never wore the same outfit twice! Take in the architecture that fuses Indian and European styles of the time, or stroll through the sprawling gardens when the weather is nice. SE of Afzal Gunj Bridge near Dewandevdi; 10.30am-5pm, Closed Friday; Adults Rs 65, Students Rs 15

## Shaadab

Try authentic *haleem* – a melange of mutton, wheat and lentils, herbs and spices, cooked slowly in *desi ghee*. It tastes better in this grungy eatery than anywhere else. Immerse yourself in the local camaraderie and conversation, a crash course in the lingo and etiquette of the old city. 21-1-140, Madina Building, High Court Road, Charminar; +91 40 24561648, +91 93947 04333

## Niloufer Café

A no-frills Irani cafe that dishes out the city's best Osmania biscuits – soft cookies (sweet or salty) most enjoyed dipped in perfectly brewed Irani *chai*. Don't forget to pack some of the delicious cookies to take home with you! Opp MNJ Hospital, Niloufer Road, Lakadi ka Pul

## Famous Ice Creams

Appropriately named, this ice cream parlour is Hyderabad's oldest. Cool down your stomach after spicy Andhra cuisine with their homemade fresh-fruit ice creams: custard apple, pineapple, mango and more. Did we mention it costs next to nothing? Panch Moh, Mozamjahi Market, Nampally; +91 40 66972956, +91 98856 48956; 9am-midnight

## Evening in the New Hyderabad

It's time for some good old retail therapy and, of course a sinful *biryani* binge to end your day.

## Elahe

Hyderabad's couture stop. Splurge on the latest prêt lines by Sabyasachi, Abraham&Thakore, Tarun Tahiliani, Rohit Bal, Anamika Khanna, Anju Modi, Malini Ramani, Manish Arora and more. Accessories include jewellery by Amrapali as well as branded belts, bags and bric à brac. Milestone 476, Road No. 10, Banjara Hills; +91 40 23350130; 11am-8pm

## Mangatrai

In Hyderabad, the luster of pearls overtakes all other jewels. What better souvenir of the City of Pearls than these precious gems of the sea? Mangatrai Jewellers, respected for its quality since 1935, has every type – Southsea, Tahitian or Natural, in a well-crafted range of earrings, necklaces, bangles et al. 5-9-46, Basheerbagh, End of the flyover; +91 40 23235728/23233305; 9am-10pm

## Urvi

If you're a shopper with a conscience, the natural dyed, handwoven fabric at Urvi is a must see. Sourced straight from the weaver, find exquisite silks (including Ahimsa Silk), hand spun *khadi*, *kalamkari* or plain cottons, as well as stoles, clothing, beachwear and furnishings. First Floor, Model House, Punjagutta; +91 40 23352661; 10am-8.30 pm; Closed Sunday

## Paradise

The mecca of Hyderabad *biryani*. Rich, spicy and full of succulent meat (beef, mutton or chicken), this is *biryani* at its authentic and aromatic best. It's all about the food (served faster than you can say *biryani*), not the decor and ambience.\* Around since 1953, and a favourite with the locals – which tells you how good it really is! Paradise Circle, Secunderabad; +91 40 27843115/66313721; 11am-midnight

\* If you want to enjoy authentic Hyderabad *biryani* in more luxurious surroundings, try Aish back at the Hotel for traditional recipes and some unusual contemporary takes on them

## If you have a spare day...

### Ramoji Film City

The world's largest film studio complex with its huge kitsch sculptures, palatial sets, and hi tech studios rivals anything Hollywood has to offer. Watch films being shot, or feel like a star yourself – a film crew is ready to shoot a video of you performing on a real movie set. Only a few kilometers outside the city, this is quite an experience! Ramoji Film City, RR District, Hyderabad-Vijayawada Highway; +91 8415 246555/246333; 9am-5 pm (Ticket counters close at 3.30 pm); General Tour: Adult Rs 200, Children below 12 Rs 150; VIP Tour: Adult Rs 700, Children below 12 Rs 550

## Recharge your Batteries at The Park

Head back to the Hotel for a well-deserved siesta and a royal *hamam* in your room – just like the Nizams of yore. Choose from a selection of luxurious baths that revitalize with rosemary and mint, heal with *khus khus*, soothe with jasmine and vanilla and seal in beautiful skin with aloe and rosewater. (make sure you pre-order your bath right after breakfast)

For more information or bookings for any of the above please contact The Box at The Park, Hyderabad +91 40 23456789

Charminar Hyderabad's iconic monument is at the heart of the Old City  
Photo by Ryan Lobo  
<http://ryanlobo.net>

# Alliterating the Immersive

**Sunil Gawde**  
traverses the tangible  
and ephemeral qualities  
of the immersive ex-  
perience through his  
art – contemporary  
installations that  
provoke, endanger or  
discomfit the viewer by  
plunging him or her into  
a vat of metaphysical  
and sensually stimulat-  
ing ingredients. Here,  
he explains his ways  
of seeing and creating  
such works.



Truly immersive art is the kind that evokes a "wow" reaction in viewers. It could be a very simple or natural thought, but something which the viewer has never reflected upon. Despite its simplicity, truly immersive art has the strength to trigger off a new kind of sensibility and direction along with having the capacity of being thought-provoking.

My artistic practice is born out of personal experience, making it universal and open to varied interlocutions as it transcends geographic and other boundaries. It gathers different disciplines in a new way of seeing. In life I see poetry, and my work emerges as philosophical metaphors of these contemplations.

I began my career as a painter, considering painting to be a one-to-one conversation. In painting, the canvas was also physically controlled by me. There were various phases in my practice beginning with gestural abstraction which on questioning myself, strengthened to a minimalist preoccupation articulated in geometrically dominated conceptual abstractions.

By 1997-98, I began to dwell upon more philosophical questions concerning the relationship of art objects within the concentric contexts of exhibition, interpretation and consumption. I delved into the manner in which art-works are situated, for viewers in the areas of language and artefactuality: as things named, as special objects among regular objects. My search for such connections between forms and texts led me to create a series of work, *Oblique*, where I changed the context of everyday objects by adding a short footnote, thereby weaving them into a humorous narrative.

In my next series, *8 seconds ahead of time*, each work was a set of several canvases placed in a close sequence of progression. Every individual painting was a silent still, while the work in its entirety created an impression of an animated film in motion. The one exception in this series: a set of eight pristine white plywood and corean planks mounted on a wall just like the canvases. Each plank was a frozen moment depicting the gradual forward egression of a white object. The first frame revealed just a white speck against the whiteness of its background, while its further counterparts showed a dome-like object emerging out of their flatness. The final frame stood listless and pale while a three-dimensional egg lay proud on the floor below. Was this egg the seed of my future sculpture practice?

Perhaps so, because following this suite of work, my concepts began to progressively manifest in the form of sculptures and installations. This expanding idiom of my artistic practice involved a radical shift in my studio practice. As a painter, I was a solo performer, with assistants employed only to clean the heavy-duty cleavers and spatulae that I used, or to move large paintings around and attend to the routines of the workspace. As a sculptor however, I had to make the transition to a collaborative workshop practice. I now work closely with technical specialists adept at understanding the moods and capacities of metal and electricity, engineers who can advise me on material stress and structural factors, and mission-specific crews of casters, carpenters, welders and other skilled artisans. I am like the architect of a building: it is my soul and their hands!

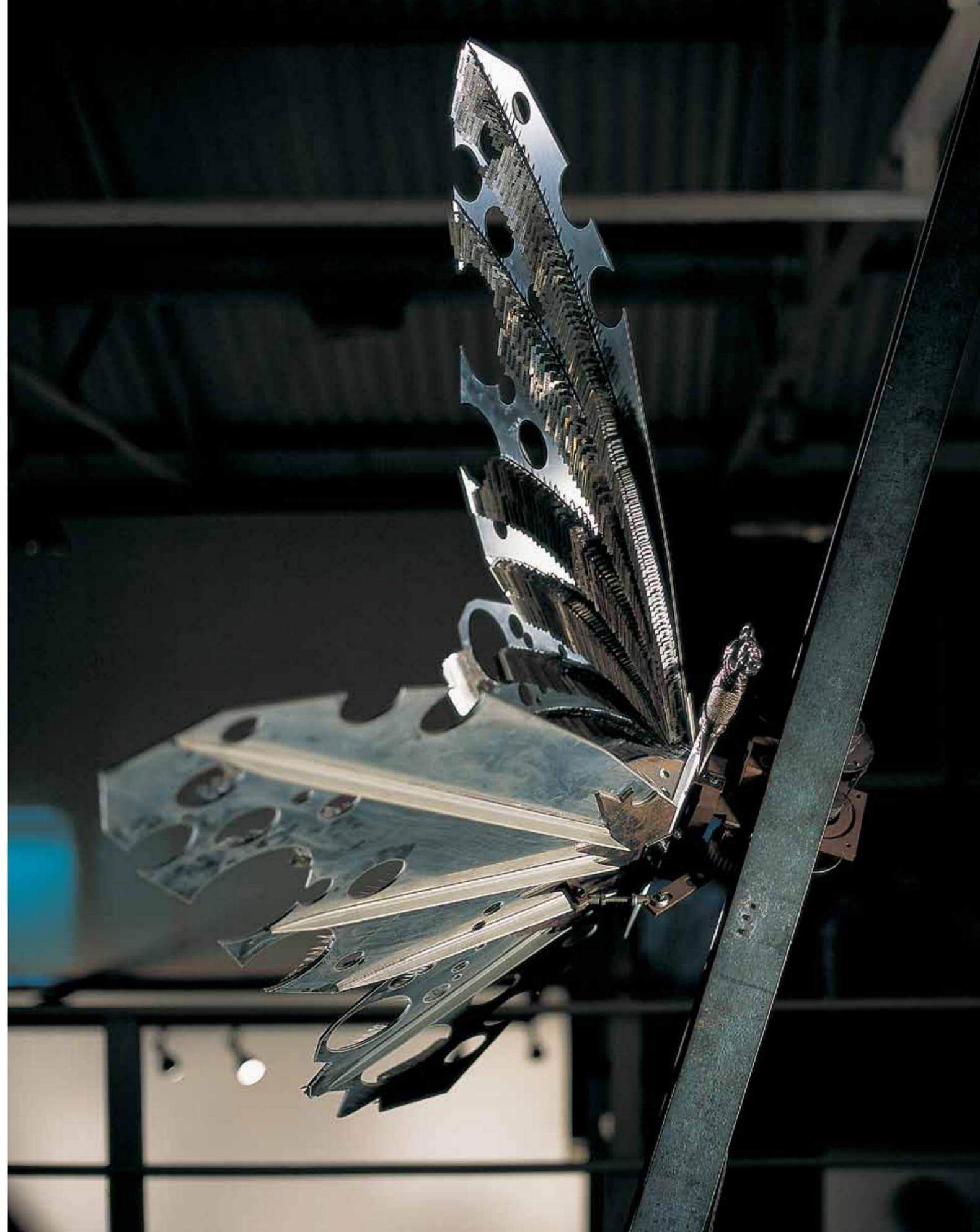
My work has multiple layers of creation and understanding that touch multiple senses of viewers, or stimulate more than one train of thought. In that sense each work has its own immersive dimension for the viewer. My whole understanding about life is reflected in my art. I feel compelled to understand the other side of reality that exists beyond perception. My objects take me to a philosophical level, and then they cease to be mere objects. Like in the case of my work Blind Bulbs which was a set of three monumental dead matte black bulbs resting on the sands of France's St.Tropez beach. Bulbs to me are a perfect metaphor for life, with their light running parallel to human life. In this work, the bulbs were ironically blackened, an allusion to the shutting off oneself from the outside world. It referenced an inner journey of the self, a journey of reflection and introspection.

In another work, Fly away Swim closer, a human-size bulb hangs in a UV light-filled room radiating a soft blue glow that attracts hundreds of insects to cling to its surface. While the work is a manifestation of insects' attraction to light, it also unequivocally challenges our perception. As we see the glowing bulb, we perceive the source of light to be within its smooth texture, however the truth is that the bulb glows because of the UV light present on the outside. On a much deeper level, the work alludes to the phenomenon of humans unthinkingly going after who they perceive to be enlightened. Insects like fireflies that have light within are not attracted to light but those insects that lack such a light are. The work refers to people seeking light who often lose their identity just like the insects lose their lives on coming into contact with light/heat. The immersive experience of the work transports viewers to encounter the sense-universe of another species, producing a refreshing disorientation.

My series Virtually Untouchable I was born out of the idea of duality of our existence. In Virtually Untouchable I, the butterfly seems to be naive and beautiful as it sits on the I-beam. It is only when we look closely at it, that its fragile wings disclose the 3600 razor blades used in its crafting and its slender body reveals itself as a perilous dagger. And an eerie vibrating sound gives goose bumps to the already stunned viewers. This work references the very thin line separating beauty and danger, innocence and guilt, life and destruction.

Another work from the series, Virtually Untouchable III comprises three traditional Indian rose-petal garlands. Such garlands are artefacts laden with cultural symbolism used in welcoming guests, grooms, dignitaries and in sacred ritual. The joyful associations in such situations are often taken for granted while less noticed are the emotions of jealousy and resentment that such public acclaim inevitably arouses. The work reveals a juxtaposition of these contradictory impulses into a single coherent unity.

Right Virtually Untouchable I  
2004-05; Mobile sculpture; razor  
blades, aluminium composite sheet,  
superglue, motorised mechanism  
with drive and controller, mounted  
on metal i-beam; 333x122x122cm;  
Sakshi Gallery, Mumbai





My role in the creative process is one of learning and seeing human beings in a larger context with all their attendant frailties, desires and sublime moments. Of combining the unchangeable truth of physical engineering with the distortions of reality and perception to provide viewers ultra-engrossing encounters that transport them to different worlds.

Virtually Untouchable II (detail) 2007;  
Powder coated razor blades, stainless  
steel wire, readymade decorative roses,  
wooden chair; garland 170x20x11cm  
each, wooden chair 90x50x50cm

A recent work, Heart Beat Beat Heart, presents eight heart shaped balloons set in a carefully choreographed progression with their beautiful silhouettes capturing heart-beats in frozen movements. The contours of these Valentine balloons are however created by embedding them with nails, articulating the pain all those in love have experienced. But the work exclaims that pain doesn't stop a heart from loving, just as it doesn't stop beating, paying homage to the endless tale of love and life. In the last few months this work has been exhibited at locations in Mumbai and Delhi by either mounting the Valentine balloons on walls or laying them out on the floor.

It was interesting to note how the different ways of displaying the work in different spaces initiated different dialogues. Such changes can alter the context of the work dramatically and also add another dimension and meaning to it. Think of the Blind Bulbs for example and imagine them hung in a building lobby! They would not only make for a stunning installation but would offer a very intimate engagement to viewers. Similarly the blue bulb if displayed in a room meant to have deep mood lighting like a bar or a dance floor, would add to the ambience of the space greatly with a mesmerizing blue glow and would be interacted with in different ways by different people. It is always enriching to juxtapose works against different backdrops – for the work as well as for its viewers.

Another work, Alliteration, was chosen for exhibition at the 53rd Venice Biennale last year and was recently displayed in Mumbai's Sakshi Gallery. It is a 4.5 meter large kinetic piece whose front side presents a screen-like surface to viewers, a wall on which circular cuts representing several moons turn at variable speeds, dipping in and out of view. The work is a complex meditation on the passage of time referencing directly a cosmos calibrated by the interlocking trajectories of suns, moons and planets. The consistent rotation of the multiple moons evokes time but simultaneously provokes us to ponder the notions of periodicity and duration. This front side of the work is like a minimal, two-dimensional painting in a smooth, magical motion. A soft hum in the background is evocative of the universal sound and this side has us mesmerised like it were a splendid opera.

The reverse side of this work is open, naked to the eye, without hood or baffle. It is a candid disclosure of the mechanism composed of seven chain-driven sprockets, which are choreographing with their movements an elaborate dance of the moons. This side is not treated with paint but is preserved by lacquer. In its rawness, it references the human involvement in its construction, which makes it ephemeral like all things. Moreover, the hum, which sounded like a universal call just a while back is now unmistakably the hum of a mechanised motor. The work in its presentation of the two sides of magic and logic, articulates that time is an endless journey where the only definite reality is the present.

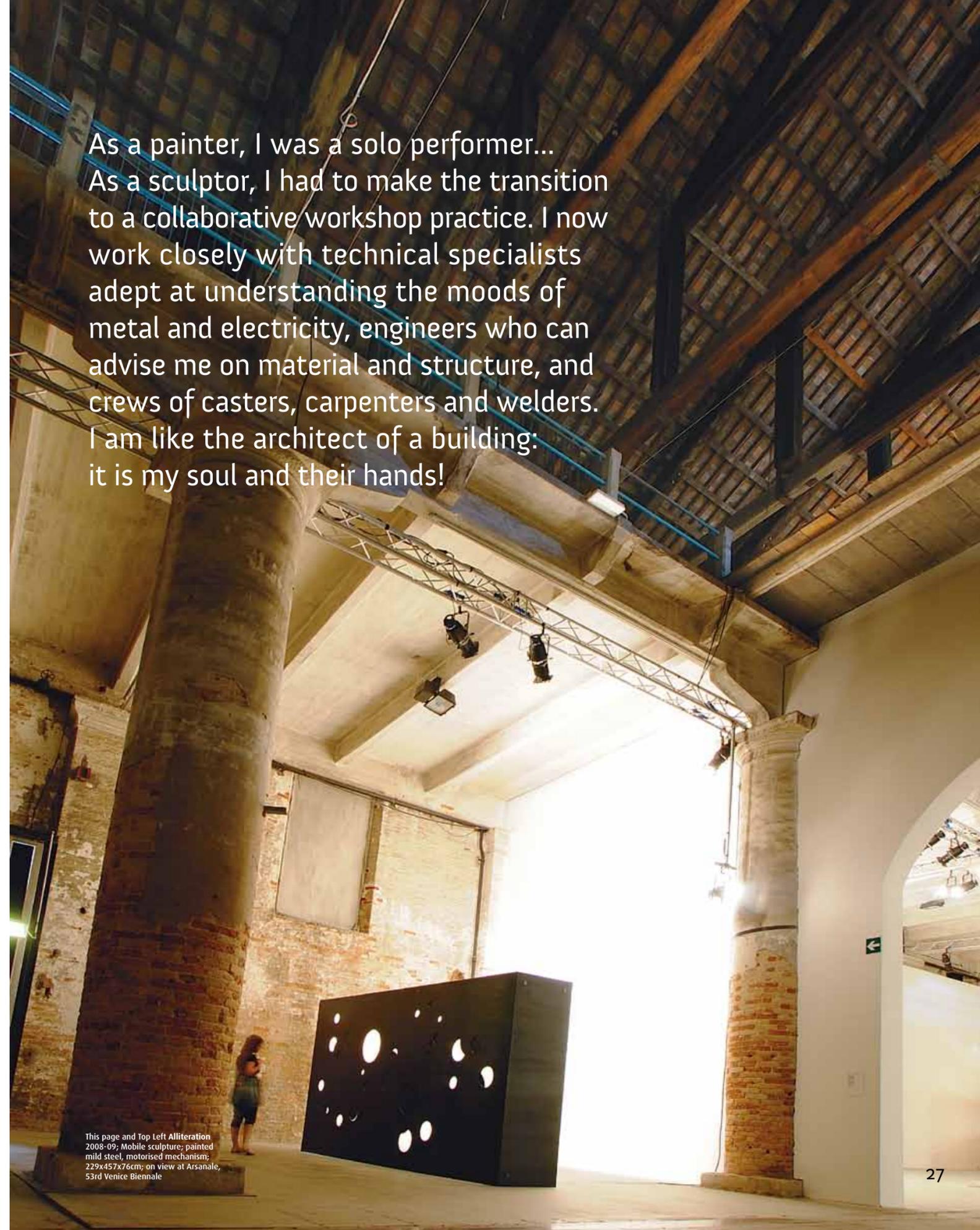
My role in the creative process is one of learning and seeing human beings in a larger context with all their attendant frailties, desires and sublime moments. Of combining the unchangeable truth of physical engineering with the distortions of reality and perception to provide viewers ultra-engrossing encounters that transport them to different worlds.



Sunil Gawde graduated in Fine Art from the Sir JJ School of Art, Mumbai, in 1980. His work has been part of the 53rd Venice Biennale, Making Worlds, curated by Daniel Birnbaum. Evolving from painting to experiential sculpture, he is today one of India's leading installation artists.

Future projects with Centre Pompidou, Paris and with the Museum of Naples are on the anvil. Gawde has also shown in curated exhibitions such as Bombay Maximum City (Lille, 2006), Made by Indians (St Tropez, 2006) and Art on the Corniche (Abu Dhabi, 2007), organised by Galerie Enrico Navarra and the Abu Dhabi Authority for Culture and Heritage. Other prominent exhibits include the SHContemporary (Shanghai, 2007), Pulse Miami (Miami, 2008), and ARCO 09 (Madrid, 2009).

As a painter, I was a solo performer...  
 As a sculptor, I had to make the transition to a collaborative workshop practice. I now work closely with technical specialists adept at understanding the moods of metal and electricity, engineers who can advise me on material and structure, and crews of casters, carpenters and welders. I am like the architect of a building: it is my soul and their hands!



This page and Top Left Alliteration  
 2008-09; Mobile sculpture; painted  
 mild steel, motorised mechanism;  
 229x457x76cm; on view at Arsanale,  
 53rd Venice Biennale

# Diving for Gourmet Pearls

By Anoothi Vishal

*An old immersion myth tells the story of Narada asking to be shown “maya”, that illusory, creative force driving life, according to Hindu philosophy. It’s not an easy concept to understand – much less to accept. But the sage gets a “test drive” one day when he takes a dip in the Ganga, goes under, and, well, begins an alternate life...*

*In that other reality, he finds himself a king; living out an entire lifespan as such before all his offspring are killed in a war, plunging him into deep sorrow. In such a state, he immerses himself once more into the soothing folds of another river.... When he emerges, he is Narada again, still standing in the swirling Ganga. It’s been only three minutes since the immersion – a lifetime in that alternate reality.*

In Hyderabad, it is easy to get mystical. And to lose yourself in this fascinating melting pot, whatever else your realities are. Sitting at The Park, the edgy new hotel in this old city, which blends tradition and modernity so adroitly, I watch the march of the monsoon – moving in sheets across the spectacular Hussain Sagar Lake. As such, the only immersion on my mind is a literal one – a dip in the inviting infinity pool at the hotel. But the city will have its way. It lies eager, all-enveloping...

Unlike many other places in the world, Hyderabad really is an easy city to get to know – intimately – even in the short span you may spend here. There is an openness to the Hyderabadi’s easy grace, an Islamic sense of generosity (even excess) intrinsic to the way of life here (regardless of class or religion), and a seductive lilt to the Dakhanni Urdu that speaks of an older culture of acceptance, where everyone – Mughal, Telugu, Maratha, Tamil, Persian, Christian, Zoroastrian – blended in. Today, nowhere is Hyderabad’s composite past more evident than in the food you find so abundantly all over the city: the robust *kacchi biryani*, fiery *pulusu*, silky *haleem*, sizzling hot stone-grilled *kebabs*, *podis*-laced street *idlis*, and Milkmaid-made sickly sweet Irani *chai*... everything recalls this culture of inclusiveness – never mind today’s divisive politics.

It is at Charminar, overwhelmed as much by shiny, lacquered bangles and strings of fake pearls as by the thick, jostling crowds, *itar*- and *kebab*-scented women, eager shop boys, men through with their evening *namaz* and others, that I finally give in.

Anoothi Vishal is a New Delhi-based journalist, a food critic and columnist who loves to delve into regional Indian cuisines. She has also curated regional and family-based recipes for food festivals at The Park, New Delhi.

I am ready to be immersed.

You can’t fight food in this city – sizzling hot, spicy, and often sour. From humble *bundis* selling crisp *keema samosas* and landmark joints famous for hand-churned “pail” ice-cream, to three-floored restaurants selling *biryani*, to Telangana-style “canteens” and restaurants exhilarating in their hot curries, *podis* and dry, fried “roasts”, there are all manners of establishments catering to the Hyderabadi’s impossible-to-satiate hunger. And the best way to feel this city is to plunge headlong into all these wonderful flavours. For despite the fame of the *kacchi biryani* – piquant, full of spices and masala, rice and raw goat meat cooked together in a sealed pot so that each grain is coated with flavour – there is so much more to Hyderabad than just the *biryani*...

At Southern Spice, a restaurant-within-a bungalow in one the newer, smarter Hyderabad localities, there is enough chilli to set you on fire. “Canteen” eateries and takeaways selling hearty curries in generous portions are popular with the locals. But despite being pushed up, our lunch destination is authentic enough – at least if you take into account the spice levels! Andhra food is hot – you find out how much exactly only when you begin to eat off a *thali*, breaking the large mound of white, fluffy rice with your fingers, mixing in the *podis* and vegetables first, then the thick *dals*, and finally the curried *pulusu* (tamarind flavoured curries, fresh water fish or country chicken is popular too), semi-curried *iguru* and the lip-smacking, dry *mamsam* (mutton) fry.

Like a Bengali meal, there is a specific order in which you tackle the dishes. Naturally, there’s freshly set yoghurt to cool off. But there is a method to all this chilli madness. The Telangana region is dry, and chillies, which induce sweating, are thus cooling agents, says Chef Srinath, Executive Chef at The Park, Vishakhapatnam, with an enviable repertoire of regional Andhra recipes. In Hyderabad, the Chef has introduced some of his fare at the Hotel; strictly authentic, chilli levels untouched even in the commercial setup. The quail that we try for lunch the next day, a local delicacy, could easily have come from more home-like environs.

Hyderabadi food, of course, is synonymous with the Mughal-influenced, Muslim style of cooking that married many local preferences to give us one of the most delicious, “secular” cuisines of India. Country ingredients like tamarind (and young tamarind leaves, *chugur*, during summer), curry leaves, tomatoes and coconut are used, reinventing the regal cooking of the Mughals, infusing the cuisine with native vigour.

“It’s a cuisine”, says Anjum Jung, closely associated with The Park’s F&B efforts to present authentic home-style meals within Hotels, “which is not smothered in too many masalas but where individual flavours stand out.” As a Bangalorean married to a Hyderabadi, Anjum talks from a unique outsider-insider perspective. Learning elusive Hyderabadi recipes was difficult for her because in the city few would willingly part with their culinary treasures.

Yet, she persevered and managed to unearth gems such as *narangi* (orange) *keema*; *doodh ka pulao*, cooked in milk, *kofte biryani*, and even *warqi samosas*, many layered, a dying art form even within homes because they are so painstaking to make.

All these are non-commercialised recipes that Anjum has now contributed to The Park's repertoire. An interesting facet to many of these is the way in which local and Mughal cooking come together. Many times, it is possible to trace the evolution of a Hyderabad dish by looking at its more rustic, local counterpart. Anjum talks of *kulthi ka kut*, made from horsegram, which is similar to the Andhra *uluvacharu*. And there are other parallels too: *dalcha* (lentils cooked with meat), which has a distinct Deccan sibling in the thick *dals* cooked with vegetables of local Hindu communities and even *patthar ke kebab* (where flat pieces of lamb are beaten, coated in spice and grilled on a hot, local hard stone), that can be seen as a take on the various *tawa* fries of Andhra, reflect the composite culture of a city that, after all, was founded by a Muslim prince for his Hindu beloved.

But like all cuisines with depth, there are strict kitchen norms too. At The Park, I also meet Begum Mumtaz Khan, from a well known Hyderabad family, who has been cooking (and conducting cooking classes) for the last 40 years. She tells me of finer distinctions – why a *qaliya* (home-style meat curry) may have the tempering of curry leaves but not a finer, special-occasion *qorma*. There are tempting descriptions of monsoonal *khichdi* breakfasts, where the simple lentil and rice preparation is accompanied by spicy *keema*, mince, sesame and peanut chutney and fried *papads*. And, finally, there are generous offers of having one over “at home” where the *begum* can turn out elusive delicacies like a Sufiani (white coloured, using *khoya* or thickened milk) *biryani* or a *kachchra*, literally, waste, *biryani* (!) that uses all parts of the animal, except the trotters.

The best *biryani* in Hyderabad is, of course, a question that will continue to perplex you till eternity. The *biryani* test, traditionally, has been to throw a handful of it on the floor and check if each grain of rice separates. If it does, only then has the *biryani* cooked to perfection. Trying to scrape off the last bite from our plates, we dare not try this anywhere.

A Sunday lunch at the three-storeyed Paradise in Secunderabad is unmissable, not necessarily for the quality of what's served, but for the sheer spectacle: airport-lounge style waiting halls where names are announced on microphones before people can find a place in the crowded dining halls. There is also the members-only Nizam's club, more intimate and sophisticated, and then there are street stalls perfect after a late night out, supposedly sprinkling their secret Ajinomoto “masala” into the *biryani*. Whatever be your favourite, another contention, not wrong, is that the best *biryani* is served only at those massive Hyderabad weddings and enjoyed *basi*, stale, the next day.



But the mandatory story of the “old times” you’ll always get to hear is of lavish wedding feasts when bridegrooms were “tricked” with piping hot *lukmis* (fried confections stuffed with spicy mince) that would be poked open only to have a small (live) quail fly out of it.

Food and conversation can go on till eternity in the city. But the mandatory “old times” story is of lavish wedding feasts when bridegrooms were “tricked” with piping hot *lukmis* that would be poked open only to have a small (live) quail fly out. These are gastronomic gymnastics that modern-day chefs dare not attempt.

Also in the old days, frequenting a *chai khana*, a tea shop, was considered to be a terrible breach of etiquette. But things have changed. At Shaadab, a working-class restaurant near the Charminar, there is now a separate first-floor seating for the “family crowd”. Downstairs, the men demolish huge quantities of *keema* and the distinct Hyderabad leavened bread, *pao*-like, and sip on tiny cups of Irani *chai*.

Over the same brew, a young college-goer, satisfied with her day's hunt for sequins and lace in the labyrinth of narrow lanes makes plans to go out to Fusion 9, an experimental restaurant by a former Oberoi chef, which is quite the chic evening destination for the young. Clearly, Hyderabad is also a city in transition. *Haleem*-crawling (popular around Ramzan) and nightclub crawls are not mutually exclusive. So when Chef Mandaar Sukhtankar, the presiding deity at The Park, Hyderabad, recommends a *khubani ka crême brulee*, a take on the traditional apricot dessert, I hastily dig in. It's the old and the new in the same bite, a perfect finale to this day, this life, in Hyderabad.

Wondering where to try some well-researched, heritage Hyderabad food cooked home-style? Try Aish at The Park, Hyderabad, and sample some of the delicacies mentioned above as well as hot Andhra-style cuisine. At Verandah, the all-day dining experience includes popular favourites like the Hyderabad *pathar ka gosht*, *lagan ke kebab*, *mahi ashrafiyon ka saalan* and, of course, the *biryani* of the day. For a taste of tradition mixed with modernity, ask the Chef for interesting innovations like the *khubani ka crême brûlée*.

Begum Mumtaz Khan (left) and Anjum Jung  
Connoisseurs of authentic Hyderabad cuisine,  
these experts came in as consultants to the  
Chefs on traditional and regional recipes at  
The Park, Hyderabad

# The Park Spotlight

A birds-eye view of the  
monarchs of style



Schizoids by 8Then Performed at Zenzi Mills, Mumbai, Schizoids is a multisensory experience that combines live performance + live visual mixing in a club space. A story unfolds through 6 characters who interact live with the audience on multiple screens, while the VJ, Soham Sarcar (see pic) mixes pre-produced visuals



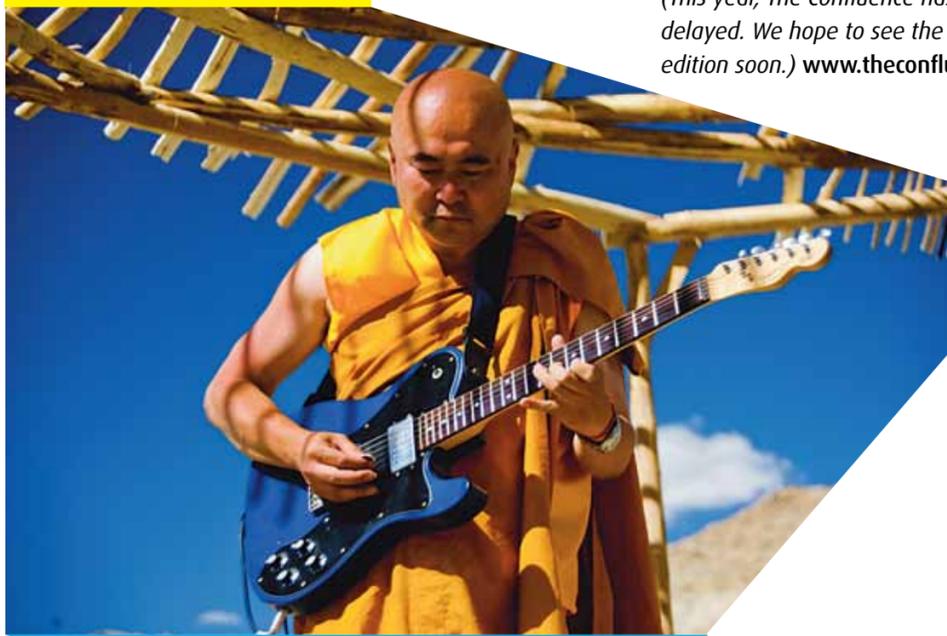
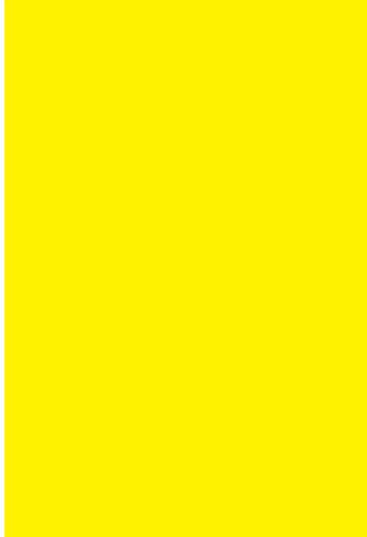
### JAAGA ART SPACE

Sometimes the wall a painting sits on is as engaging as the painting itself. While you listen to a poetry reading, your eyes take in the immediate space you inhabit. A space where the architecture is as much an aesthetic experience as the art it is a platform for. Where your senses are bombarded with creativity, tangible and infinite. Jaaga plays this multi-layered role: a traveling art gallery, a mobile stage, a wandering creative community. Spearheaded by Freeman Murray (technologist), Archana Prasad (artist) and their team of architects, designers and creative folk, it is an experiment (and a very successful one at that) in art and architecture. Jaaga is a space for pursuits that include web-enabled co-work spaces, a café and a large multi-level public space for screenings, workshops and performances. What sets it apart is that it is a modular structure that can be set up and dismantled in 15 hours. Made entirely of pellet racks, it's a flexible venue easily customized to the needs of different shows. And, it can move between neighbourhoods (which it does every 6 months, within Bangalore for now) bringing art closer to your doorstep. Now that's what we call a moving space! <http://jaaga.wikidot.com>



### &THEN

If an event doesn't engage and stimulate multiple senses, it just won't work in a world that's clamouring for more complete experiences. This trend goes for partying too. It's not just about the right music anymore – it's about submerging oneself in the feeling and the event. That's where a new breed of new media artists come in – visual jockeys, who add an additional, funky dimension to clubbing and music. Leading this emerging medium in India is &Then. A group of super talented and versatile visual artists spearheaded by Soham Sarcar, they co-hosted India's first visual arts festival Wall of the VJs in Mumbai. They are also first among the few in the country who can turn any surface, indoor or outdoor, into a dynamic video display through Video Projection Mapping, morphing clubs and other event spaces into mind-boggling visual arenas. Their live video installations have accompanied the biggest names in electronica including Jalebee Cartel and Midival Punditz, as well as produced art installations with designers like Ritu Kumar and Narendra Kumar. When they aren't out there partying, &Then (or Soham Sarcar, Meera Adhia and Vikram Sood) get busy designing brands from their studio in Mumbai. <http://vimeo.com/user3051166/videos>



### THE LADAKH CONFLUENCE

Last year a collective of people who believe in "music, the earth and a better way" decided to make the rooftop of India home to the first Ladakh Confluence, a music festival. This coming together of musicians, music lovers, travelers, thinkers, dreamers, cultures and eco-living has had an impressive line up including Talvin Singh, Terrakota, Bauchklang, and Rajasthan Roots. It's completely green with a plastic-free, solar-powered and leave-no-trace policy, as a part of the Happy Planet Initiative. Peace and love in a space where the rugged splendour of Ladakh is not just a backdrop, but an integral part of the experience itself – a true immersion of the senses into the spiritual culture of this pristine land. Along with solar-powered film screenings, *pranic* healing, *tangkha* painting and storytelling sessions, the festival is a full-bodied sensory experience that's hard to match. If there's one thing Ladakh doesn't lack, it's soul. And this festival touches every part of yours. (This year, *The Confluence* has been delayed. We hope to see the second edition soon.) [www.theconfluence.in](http://www.theconfluence.in)

### SURAIYA HASAN

A handwoven fabric has many stories to tell – of the weaver who creates it, of a dying art, of the wearer whose body it drapes, of a country that used that fabric as a symbol in its fight for independence. Suraiya Hasan weaves the story of the fabric's past into its present. This 80 year old social entrepreneur breathes new life into not just endangered weaving skills but into the lives of countless poverty-ridden families. At her workshop in Dargah Hussain Shah Wali at the outskirts of Hyderabad, women spin magic into Mughal-era fabrics like *himroo*, *paithani* and *jamawar*, while their children get the education that their mothers were denied, in the nearby Safrani Memorial School, run by Hasan. When many weavers began giving up the profession in Kanchanpalli around the 1970's due to dwindling patronage, Hasan encouraged and supported them in making *durries* – now over 500 weavers thrive in the *durrie* business. There was a time in Warrangal when there were only two weaving families left – now there are over a thousand. **Safrani School, Hyderabad +91 40 23563792/23560992**

### QUSAI KATHAWALA

Qusai Kathawala has a background in engineering and advertising, an MFA, and an interest in yoga and meditation. With this variety of influences, his work exists as a dialogue between classical practices and our contemporary lifestyles, using technology as the interpreter between various vocabularies. He creates micro-topias – fantastic environments that provide an opportunity for people to reflect and communicate with each other at a visceral level, without verbal expression. When you walk into a Qusai Kathawala show, you become a part of, and actively affect his art. Our *Breath Concrete*, his first solo show, is a series of participatory installations where your breath actually powers the art, almost as "an extension of our nervous system". For example, a 3-D coffee table across which polite wordless conversations happen just with exhaling and empathy; or a 3-dimensional grid you can enter, with LED lights that form patterns according to the air you breathe out. Here's an artist who immerses you in his art, blurring the lines between viewing, participation and narrative. <http://people.artcenter.edu/~kathawal>



# The Park Scoop

What's New at  
The Park Hotels

## Aura Spa at The Park, Hyderabad

Introducing customized annual membership plans for you and your family.\*

**Membership Plan A: Family** For two adults and two children. Includes complimentary access to the gym, the pool, expert consultations and private lounges, as well as discounts on restaurants, rooms, Spa and salon services, Aqua and more. Also two complimentary sessions for two adults in the Spa (4 sessions). Rs 1 lakh/year

**Membership Plan B: Single** For one adult. Includes complimentary access to the gym, the pool, expert consultations and private lounges, discounts on restaurants, rooms, Spa and salon services, Aqua and more. Also gives two complimentary Spa sessions. Rs 65,000/year

### Special Membership Plans:

**Single Plan:** For one adult. Includes Rs 45,000 worth of Spa and salon services with 15% discount for each use, complimentary access to Kismet, and discounts on pool use and Aqua. Rs 65,000/year

**Eve's Plan:** For one adult (ladies only). Includes 12 Eve's Packages (a facial + manicure+ pedicure +half leg & full arm waxing), access to Kismet, discounts on Aqua, and one complimentary Spa session on Women's Day and Mother's Day. Rs 75,000/year

**Corporate Membership Plan:** For three adults from the same company (nominated by the company or individually). Includes unlimited access to the pool, the gym and exclusive lounges. Also discounts and special rates on Spa and salon services, Aqua, rooms and banquets, and three complimentary sessions at the Spa. Rs 1,50,000/year

\* conditions apply

## New Banquet Spaces at The Park, Hyderabad

**The Trillion Ballroom:** Seats 800 and can be transformed into three individual multi-functional rooms for events from fashion shows to meetings and conferences.

**The Open Private Dining Court:** Seats 75 in an informal yet sophisticated outdoor setting with wooden flooring.

For bookings please contact:

+91 40 23456789

banquets.hyd@theparkhotels.com

**The Trillion Ballroom** The new banquet room at The Park, Hyderabad, inspired by the brilliance of the trillion-cut jewel

**Mandaar Sukhtankar**  
Executive Chef, The Park, Hyderabad

At The Park, Hyderabad we have created a complete experience – one that goes beyond the gastronomical to something more visual, cultural, historical and all-consuming.

From The Park Hotels' Creators of Cuisine

# A Slice of The Park

**Minced Lamb and Coriander Kebab**  
A delicacy from the kitchens of The Park, Hyderabad, smoked on live coals and baked to a luscious softness in the traditional *lagan* vessel

"At The Park Hotels, we take great pride in making food the way it's meant to be, so if a recipe calls for certain ingredients to be treated in a certain way, we go the extra mile in doing it. Our classical food is honest and well-researched. We have worked with food consultants like Mumtaz Khan and Anjum Jung who have advised us on traditional Andhra and Nizam recipes and ingredients, forming a cultural and historical connect for visitors to the city.

However, that doesn't stop us from experimenting and creating unusual combinations of time-tested flavours in a very modern context. As we go along we'll continue to orchestrate an experience that is unique to the place, the people and the moment."

**Tomato *kut* soup**, crab, coriander, cumin. The classic *kut* which would traditionally accompany a Sufiani *biryani* gets morphed into a robust soup with Asian flavours and the crab meat adds a luxurious dimension.



**Baked fillet of John Dory** with roasted baby potatoes, spiced shrimps, *gongura* cream. A great way to meld the very typically Andhra *gongura* with an international favourite, the John Dory.

**Khubani ka crème brulee**, apricot nut praline. The classic whipped or fresh cream that tops a *khubani ka meetha* is replaced with French custard to create a crème brulee with a very traditional appeal.

**Pita pockets**, *pindi chhole* hummus, pea falafel, *jor garam* crispies. As the name suggests, this dish takes off on the falafel concept, a hummus made from masala *pindi chhole* and a falafel of green peas.

**Sheermal loaf**, spiced *reshe ka gosht*, yoghurt-cilantro cream, tangy *kachumber*. The *reshe ka gosht*, a traditional favourite, gets sandwiched in a *sheermal* loaf in an easy-to-eat modern style.



- 1 *It's trendy, young and über chic.*
- 2 *The food in all the restaurants is delicious.*
- 3 *The best nightclub in every city is at The Park.*
- 4 *I love the aesthetics of the Hotels – they're creatively stimulating.*
- 5 *It feels like home!*

**BHARAT SIKKA**

# 5 Reasons I Love The Park

What keeps people coming  
back to The Park Hotels

**Bharat Sikka** transforms the mundane into the extraordinary through his unique style of photography. His work springs from a philosophy of fine art, and documents contemporary visions of India with all its displacement, globalization and multiple intersecting identities. His work examines the spaces between the cracks, where real people live.

Bharat studied at Parsons School of Design where he earned his BFA in photography. His works include Urban Landscapes, Space In Between and a personal project on his family. Since his first exhibition Indian Men at the Artists Space in NYC, his work has been shown in Paris, Lille, Milan, Delhi, Dubai and London. He has contributed to magazines like the New Yorker, I.D, Vogue, Vogue Homme International, Details and Time Magazine, where his work was featured amongst the best photographs of 2005.



**Point A is Point B is Point A** 2010; Pipe Tree  
Sculpture, mild steel pipes, acid wash, laquer finish;  
12ft x 12ft x 12ft; GMR Rajiv Gandhi International  
Airport, Hyderabad

This installation was commissioned by The Park Hotels,  
highlighting the Hotels' environmental efforts. Made  
of steel pipes, the tree symbolizes the intricate water  
management system used in the Hyderabad Hotel –  
something guests usually neither see nor think about

Agency: Wieden+Kennedy, Delhi



# Immerse

History + Geography + Art + Craft + Culture + People

