



Samantha turns producer

PG 4



DAY'S DIARY

First US Prez

On this day in 1789, George Washington, standing on the balcony of Federal Hall on Wall Street in New York, took his oath of office

ABOUT THE LEADER

George Washington was born on Feb 22, 1732, in Westmoreland county, Virginia. He was an American general and commander in chief of the colonial armies



INAUGURAL ADDRESS

The newly-elected president delivered his first inaugural address to a joint session of Congress, in Federal Hall in a deep, low voice



THE PASSING

Washington enjoyed less than three years of retirement at Mount Vernon, for he died of a throat infection on December 14, 1799



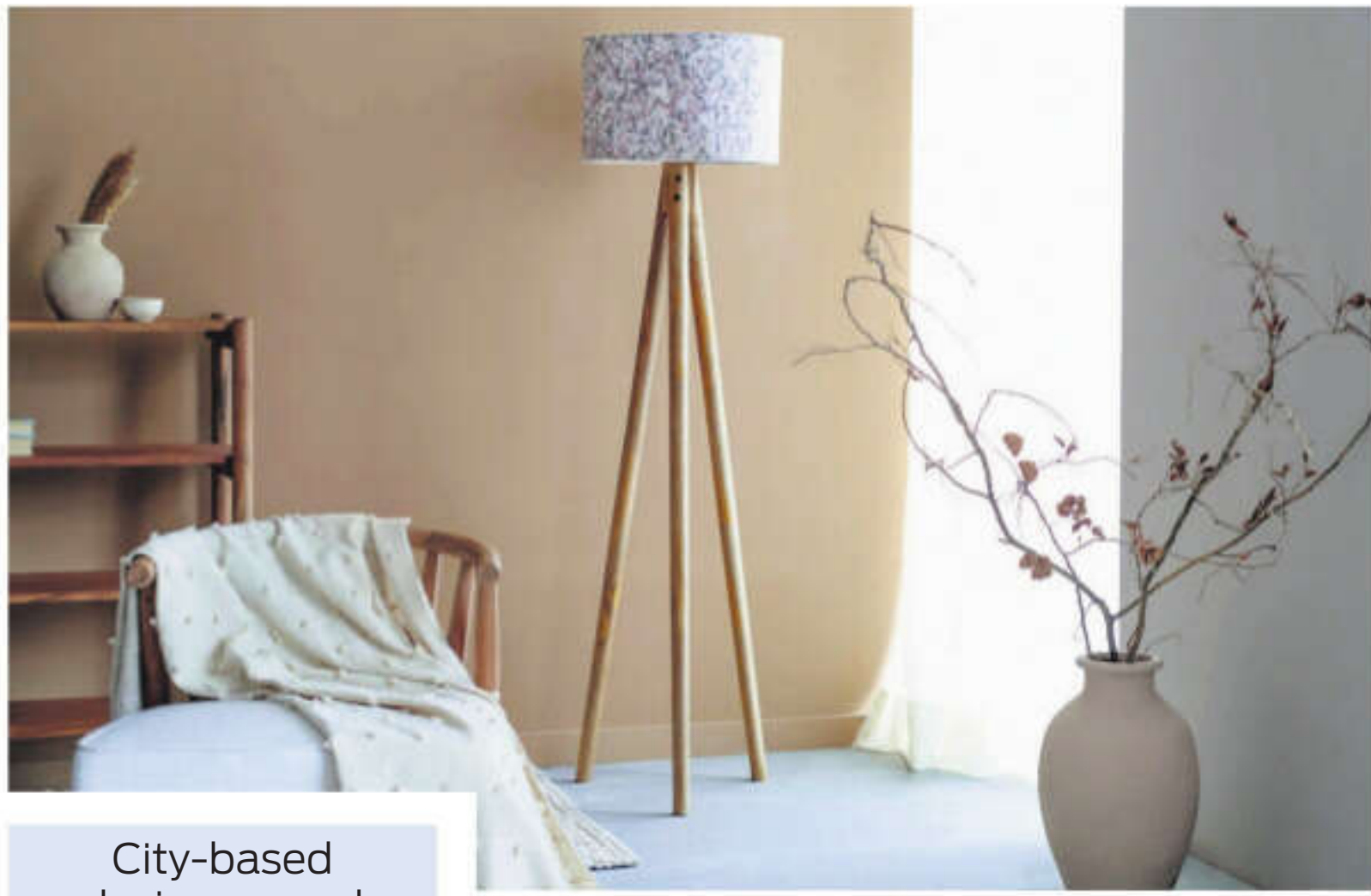
SHRIMANSI KAUSHIK

WHAT if designers prioritised kindness in their work? What if we considered a successful design as something that focused on its impact on people, rather than just profitability? The theme for International Design Day 2024, 'Is it kind?' emphasises integrating kindness into design processes and outlines what a compassionate design entails.

With these questions in mind, we talk to city-based designers and architects who share how spaces can be designed aligning with 'care principles', ensuring safety, comfort, accessibility and diversity.

"As we recognise that design has the power to profoundly impact individuals and communities, we embrace empathy as a foundational principle and seek to understand the needs, emotions, desires, and aspirations of those who inhabit the spaces we design," explains Ashwini Shwetha Ketharaj, founder, ASK space design studio.

She specifies that these prin-



City-based designers and architects share how to include practices prioritising the ethics of care and kindness in their design principles

Designing 'kind' spaces



Ashwini Shwetha Ketharaj

principles are incorporated in the design process when a 'care-first' approach is adopted—right from concept design to material selection and design execution. "Our design concepts revolve around inclusivity, accessibility and accommodate people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds," she adds.

Offering examples of what a diverse and care-first design can look like, Ketharaj adds, "Designing a sustainable courtyard house in a farm, we think

of people engaging and learning, having a sense of rejuvenation with exposure to greens. Generosity in our design philosophy extends beyond physical accessibility, by integrating green building practices, prioritising energy efficiency, renewable and vernacular building materials, and biophilic elements that connect people with nature. By reducing the ecological footprint, and making positive living environments, we contribute to the health and well-being of both present and



Sruthi Padakanti



Prreeya Jaini



future generations," she says.

Highlighting that designing, at its, is transformative, Prreeya Jaini, Vice President, of Orange Tree, said that it is not just about creating aesthetically pleasing products; but also ensuring that every aspect of design respects the well-being of people, the planet, and all living beings.

"In our 'Flake' collection, we put together some irregular shreds of fabric waste to make up a pattern in cold and warm hues, favouring contemporary combinations in interior spaces. We diverted up to 400m of fabric from landfills through this collection. Saving about 10 lakh litres of water which would have been used to produce fresh fabric, it also helped us generate about 600 man-hours of fair

work for the artisans while creating this fabric," she says, sharing pictures of a lamp they created with this fabric. Another example is a coffee table made from reclaimed wood mixed with acacia wood, from their Eco collection.

Adding to Jaini's idea of kind interiors, Shailja Patwari and Pallika Sreevastav from Design Democracy point out that buildings meant for people to spend a lot of time indoors must be well-ventilated, have a lot of natural

light, clear pathways and good seating in the common areas, as lack of these might be very stressful and can make people want to leave the premises as quickly as possible.

Furthermore, certain principles guided by 'Universal Design Concepts' need to be taken care of when we think of city spaces. "The simple underlying principle of designing an inclusive community space is having furniture that creates communication rather than isolation," says designer and architect, Bolgum Sai Aditya.

"Embracing universal design principles ensures inclusivity and considers the well-being of all users. Another example of fostering community engagements is restaurants and cafes inviting people to attend pottery workshops, where they can relax as well as learn something new. Being kind to nature we can implement rainwater harvesting systems, use natural materials in cosmetics and packaging, and even simple gestures like providing water bowls for birds and animals," he adds.

Hence, centring peoples, their lives, animals and nature in mind while designing spaces is what we should promote. "Creating spaces and products that understand people's needs

makes everyday design inclusive, respectful, attentive, and representative," says architect Sruthi Padakanti. "Kindness, as a part of design development, brings significant change to how people perceive it. Remember, nobody cares how much you know until they know how much you care," she concludes.



Shailja Patwari and Pallika Sreevastav

'TRUE EMPOWERMENT STEMS FROM WITHIN'

SHREYA VERONICA

YOUNGSTERS find inspiration in young entrepreneurs, particularly when it comes to women, as they immerse themselves in creative and innovative pursuits. In the realm of young women entrepreneurs, Riddhi Jain, the newly sworn-in YFLO chairperson for the 2024-25 term, is dedicated to empowering aspiring female leaders. CE delves into what drives her passion.

Reflecting on her journey within YFLO, she remarks, "Over the past four years, I've experienced remarkable growth. I began as a committee member, then served as secretary, treasurer, Vice Chairperson, and now as Chairperson. It's been an upward trajectory of learning and leadership."

Engaging with diverse individuals across sectors through YFLO has been enriching for Riddhi. She notes, "Encountering speakers with transformative stories at FICC has been truly inspiring. Beyond YFLO, I'm involved in directing Nanesh Automotives and Autofin, alongside operating a design studio providing e-learning services for schools and publishers. I also lead initiatives for children on weekends. My schedule is bustling."

Drawing from her personal journey and her commitment to inspiring others, Riddhi shares, "Women have always played a pivotal role in my life, with my mother being a constant source of motivation. Engaging with women-centric platforms like FICCI has been instrumental. I believe in the importance of empowering women to achieve their full

potential."

When asked about her sources of inspiration, she credits her parents. "My mother instilled in me the importance of participation, urging me to immerse myself in every opportunity. Meanwhile, my father taught me the value of asking questions, as they pave the path to knowledge. They are my guiding lights."

For Jain, empowerment translates to self-belief. "True empowerment stems from within. When you believe in yourself, you empower others," she asserts.



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Riddhi Jain

Regarding her plans for workshops and sessions during her tenure, Riddhi outlines, "I aim for a balanced approach, with 40% focused on workshops, another 40% on grassroots initiatives, and the remaining 20% on informational talks and events."

As a former national hockey player, Jain is passionate about promoting sports and breaking stereotypes. "My inaugural event centers on challenging stereotypes in sports, addressing issues like drug abuse and sexuality, and advocating for women's empowerment in athletics. It's crucial, especially for women from middle and upper-class backgrounds, to receive support in sports," she explains.

Additionally, Riddhi has partnered with Google to empower women entrepreneurs. "Through the Google Spark programme, we'll train 120 women and promote startup companies. We're also conducting storytelling workshops, collaborating with TedX licensee Viiveck Verma, and teaming up with IIM to empower women in marketing with design thinking skills. This year, we're integrating AI and VR technology into our workshops, fostering engaging experiences for our members," she shares enthusiastically.

SHREYA VERONICA

ART serves as a profound means of expression, with each stroke conveying myriad untold stories of the artist. Such is the case with Sudhakar Chippa's artworks at the inaugural exhibition which was held at Hyderabad Quorum's flagship art programme 'Art Quotient'. As we delve into the pieces on display until May 31st, we also engage in conversation with Sudhakar about his curation process.

Reflecting on the exhibition and his works, Sudhakar shares, "I've been represented by Srishiti Art Gallery, under the guidance of Lakshmi Nambair, for the past decade. These pieces encapsulate my experiences of both the city and my village, where my studio resides. They chronicle the rapid changes occurring in Hyderabad, illustrating my evolving perceptions over time. I feel the essence of the village fading away, and through my artwork, I aim to preserve and communicate my evolving experiences."

Detailing the materials and methodology behind his creations at Quorum, Sudhakar explains, "I've employed a blend of wood and canvas. One piece depicts a milkman, reminiscent of my village where farmers would collect and distribute milk. I reminisce about those days, capturing my nostalgia on canvas."

Regarding his choice of materials, Sudhakar elaborates, "As a printmaker, I relish experimentation with various mediums. I believe each material lends its unique character to the artwork. In this series, I've utilised wood, metal, and even terracotta, evoking an earthy connection to my agricultural roots. Incorporating terracotta, especially, resonates deeply with me, as it connects me with my soil and



An art to remember



past agricultural endeavours."

Recalling poignant moments during the creation process, Sudhakar shares, "One significant piece features an elephant on a large canvas. Centuries ago, elephants served as vital means of transportation. Today, their presence has dwindled, confined mostly to zoos. Similarly, horses, once ubiquitous, now adorn palaces as relics of the past. My art seeks to highlight this loss of connection with our animal counterparts."

Observing the predominance of brown hues in his works, Sudhakar remarks, "My col-

our palette evolves with the mood and composition of each piece. I don't confine myself to any single hue; rather, I adapt as per the requirements of the painting."

Reflecting on his artistic inspirations, Sudhakar acknowledges, "I draw inspiration from various sources, including my mentors like Vaikuntam. It's not merely their imagery but also their way of life that informs my work."

Looking ahead, Sudhakar reveals his aspirations, saying, "I'm planning an exhibition in the USA, where I intend to showcase more of my terracotta creations. Following a positive reception in London, I'm eager to delve deeper into this medium, as it resonates strongly with audiences appreciative of such traditional craftsmanship."