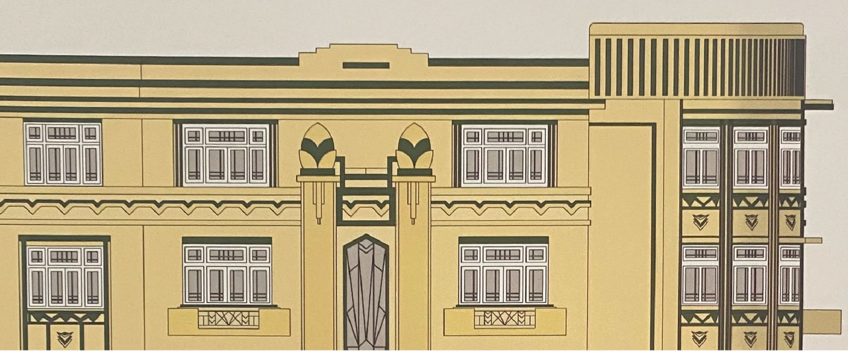
# ART DECO



CURATED BY

## KUNAL SHAH

at 47-A, Bombay

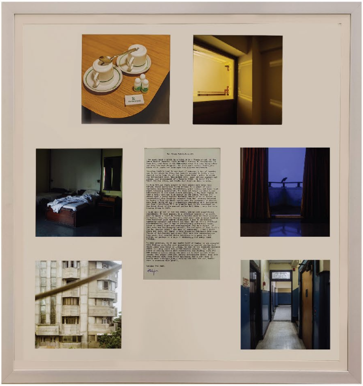
There aren't many periods of design that have so beguiled the world as Art Deco of the 1930s has. In India, with a rising middle class fighting for Independence, throwing off the traditional yoke and presenting a fresh, modern face was what inspired urban building to be modelled in Art Deco style : from the famed Marine Drive houses in Bombay to the bungalows that dot South Calcutta to the new palaces being built in small principalities everywhere.

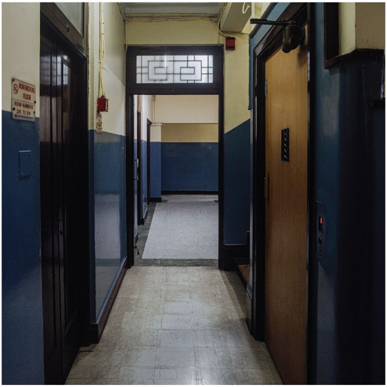
Art Deco today has become a statement of style. A feeling of Great Gatsby abandon. A lovely bit of nostalgia - like famed cinema halls.

Art Deco @ 47-A celebrates this time in the many moods that Kunal Shah, the curator, found : a mirror, a tribute, a feeling and even the Real McCoy…

PRESENTING

# Akshay Mahajan

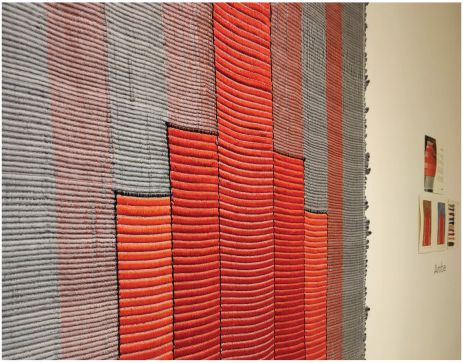




An artist and instigator working primarily with photography, his practice is grounded in research within historical documents, literature and visual material that inform and colour his process and inquiries as a photographer. His current project explores how the built environment and architecture of a city 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.

For the show, Akshay stayed in Hotel Sea Green, a prominent Art Deco landmark on Marine Drive for over fifty years, to capture its unchanged Art Deco nature even as the city moved on. While the future of these buildings remains unclear, places like Sea Green allow for an Art Deco experience to those who stay there.

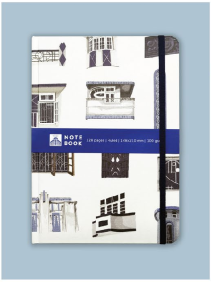
## Amba



A micro-batch clothing label founded by artist, designer and entrepreneur Hema Shroff Patel, Amba Weave collaborates on an equal footing with weavers from Maheshwar in Madhya Pradesh. Through it, Hema helps build sustainable systems empowering the famed community of weavers to keep their craft relevant.

In the works presented in this show, Hema weaves two disparate histories - of the weavers of Maheshwar and of Art Deco design details.

## Art Deco Mumbai



FRAMROZ COURT

An important not-for-profit initiative, documenting and archiving the abundance of Art Deco architecture and elements throughout Mumbai, it disseminates research through various sources including a website, social media, walks and workshops around various facets of Art Deco architecture. In the exhibition, ADM presents information about the history of Art Deco in Mumbai, Art Deco typography as well as walks through lesser known localities where Art Deco architecture exists.

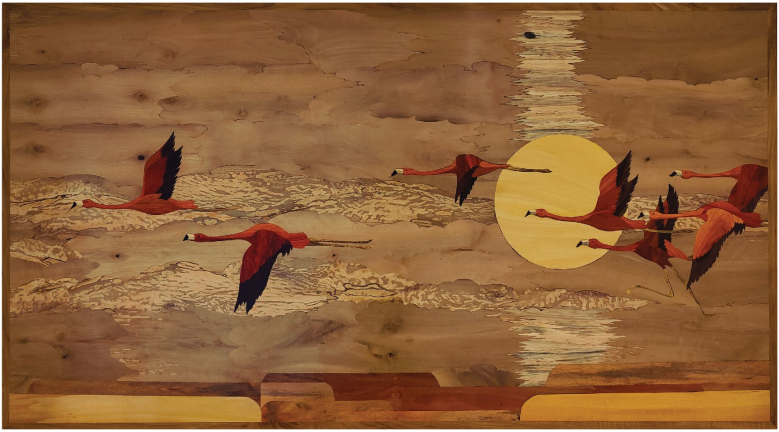
## Beg Borrow Steal

A Mumbai-based studio that curates unique vintage pieces for the body and home. Their pieces help evoke a time in cinema that reflected Art Deco glam.

## Camelot

A Colonial and Art Deco furniture store established in 1993, Camelot features museum-worthy Art Deco furniture pieces, and has workshops that restore and recreate pieces from that time, ensuring the style is kept alive.

## Chippiwara



Led by Tanveen Ratti, Chippiwara continues artisanal work in traditional ateliers, with craftsmen and women breathing new life into the art of Marquetry and Taarkashi that have been practiced in their families for generations.

For the show, Chippiwara creates a panel featuring flamingos taking off from Mumbai's Sewri area, known for being a consistent stop in the birds' migratory pattern. The flamingos on Chippiwara's exquisite panel are an allegory for Art Deco in Mumbai, exquisite, eye-catching and elevating the spirit.

## de Gournay

This British wallpaper brand is known for their exquisite wall coverings - both handpainted and hand-embroidered.

On display are embroidered pieces made in Kolkata, reflecting the interior walls of Art Deco palaces in India. Its presence in the Indian market is a comment on the whole exchange of conceptualisation, craft and consumption

## Hanut Singh

For just over ten years Hanut Singh has been quietly and meticulously designing jewellery that at once reveals his modern sensibility, appreciation of history and obsession with craftsmanship.

His jewellery is seen as wearable versions of Art Deco and showcases the possibilities of craftsmanship in india.

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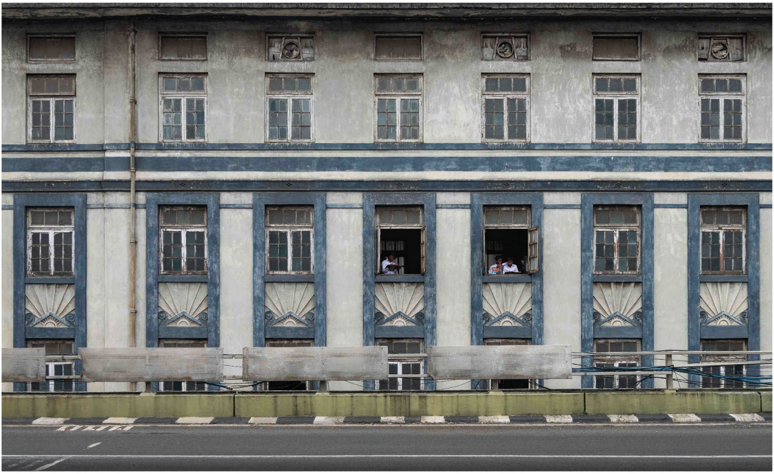
## Hashim Badani



A Mumbai based photographer, his own practice revolves around experimenting on the threshold between fiction and documentary within his hometown, and within the landscape of India.

At this show, he explores buildings seen on either side of the Sir JJ Flyover which cuts through the Mohammed Ali Road precinct : a poignant reminder that by building a flyover in this historic area the city chooses what to preserve and what can be lost to progress. Also among these photos is the area's only surviving Urdu school, a picture of the decline of the language, architecture and the social standing of the community that resides there.

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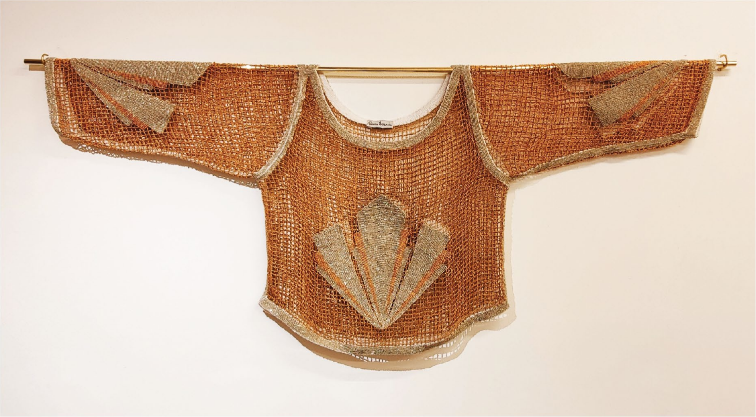
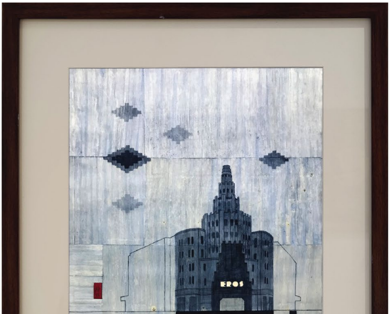
# James Ferreira

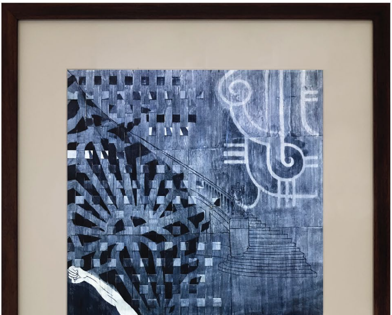


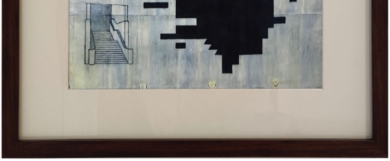
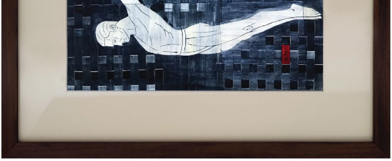
An Indian fashion designer and founder of his eponymous label, James is a Khotachiwadi native who began his design career in 1976. He has also worked as a costume designer for cinema, creating Deco-inspired pieces that are very wearable.

Ferreira has created new pieces for this show.

# Jit Chowdhury





A Kolkata-based artist who handweaves strips of sholapith and works with natural pigments.

For the show, he has created weaves using Art Deco and jamdani motifs which he has painted with indigo and alta, including a special piece featuring an Art Deco building.

## Love for the Loom

A Kolkata-based clothing studio which works with weavers in Kutch and Bengal, Love For The Loom preserves traditional motifs and weaving skills while infusing a modern interpretation of design.

The show features handwoven scarves that reflect the traditional weavers' interpretations of Art Deco motifs over decades of generational work.

## Maharukh Desai

An antiques dealer with a keen eye, Maharukh has placed objects d'art in some of the best museums across the world. She shares from her collection many unique vintage pieces that find place in everyday life, including book ends, perfume bottles and car models that show us what living in the Art Deco world was like.

## Mahendra Doshi's

Mahendra Doshi's, purveyors of fine antiques, period furniture, quality reproductions, and collectibles, is a Bombay institution. A selective retail of restored antiques, period furniture, crafted-to-order reproductions have emerged from the fine eye of the eponymous Founder, and continues to the next generation.

For this show, a special selection of Art Deco originals, collected from around the country and restored to perfection, are on display in all their splendour.

## Ranji Goa

From hunting grounds that are vintage and flea markets across India and the world, Ranji's keen eye finds noteworthy antiques for your home.

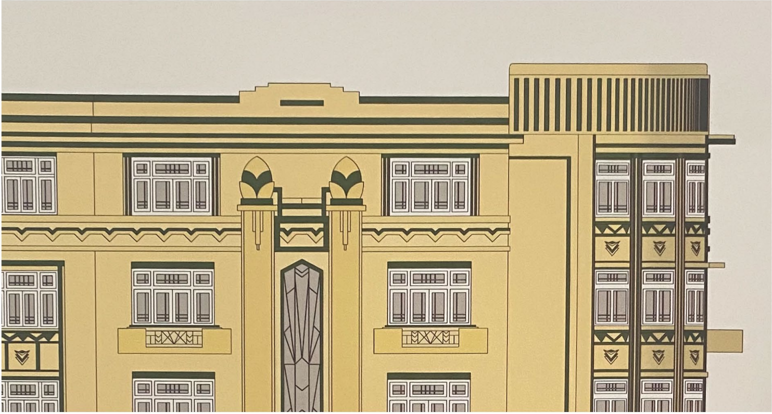
For this show, he is offering a collection of original Art Deco mirrors and panels.

## Roma Narsinghani

Mirroring her love for structural elements in her designs, Roma’s trajectory from fashion intern to concept jewellery designer has been similarly linear as she moved up from strength to strength.

The pieces displayed in the exhibition are abstract forms from Art Deco grills and architecture elements, turned into beautiful accessible wearable forms.

## Sir J J College of Architecture



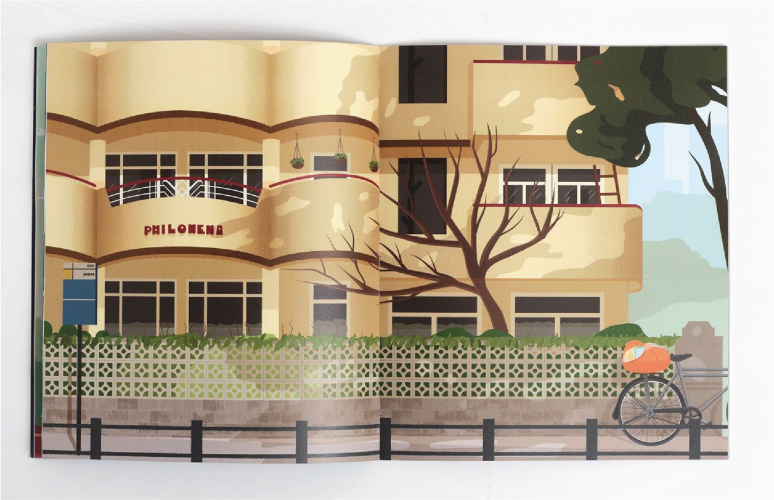
The portfolio from the show 'Deco on the Oval', curated by Prof. Mustansir Dalvi, comprises of meticulously measured and drawn elevations and details of the Art Deco buildings on the Oval by the students of Sir JJ College of Architecture. Such documentation is much needed for the buildings beyond the Oval and Marine Drive.

## Ssahaworks

A Kolkata based design project that is diving into historic Jamdani textile weaving to revive the finest muslin created in the style. Traditional weavers from Burdwan have been encouraged to go back to practices that were almost extinct to create the finest quality of muslin that historically were the backbone of the riches of Bengal.

This show features a selection of muslin Jamdani saris with distinct Art Deco motifs.

## Storycity

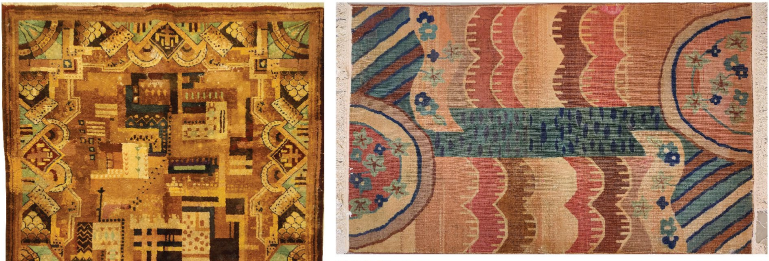


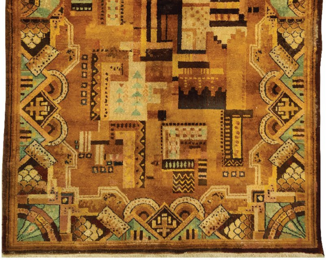
Founded in 2013 by designers Ruchita Madhok and Aditya Palsule, Storycity is an initiative to map and interpret histories of art, design and visual culture in Mumbai. Its richly illustrated books, maps and collectibles include a series focussing on Art Deco, and the studio's research into Art Deco signage, lettering and graphic design is expressed through drawings and art circulated through social media channels.

## The Hesperus

Established in 1980, The Hesperus is known for its vintage and Art Deco light fixtures. Their light fixtures are infused with a playfulness along with elegance, which is a hallmark of Art Deco.

## Tribaels





Jai Khanna has been passionate about carpets all her life, and has been putting together a collection of vintage and hand woven pieces from India, West Asia and the Mediterranean that she shares with discerning private audiences.

For this show, she pulled out a rare Art Deco original, and two Persian carpets that were made much later but in tribute to Art Deco.

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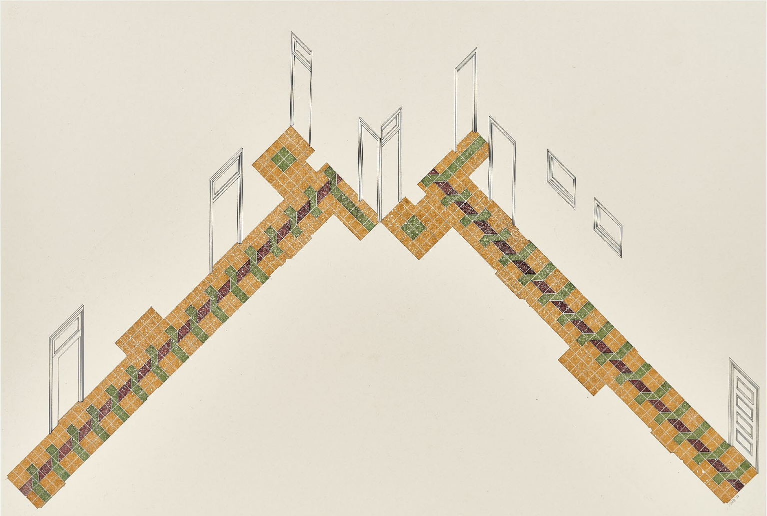
## Vishwa Shroff



With an artistic practise firmly rooted in drawing and a proclivity towards architectural forms, Vishwa uses these as compelling take-off points for a deeper contemplation on memory and our relationship with the material world.

Vishwa shares with us her watercolour and ink on paper studies of tiles and common areas of the Queen's Court building in Churchgate, and an additional lithograph.

# Events & Experiences

Vishwa Shroff

## A talk with Katsushi Goto, Vishwa Shroff and Kunal

The curator was in conversation with the architect and the artist about their considered choice to live in an Art Deco home as they built arguments for and against preservation and demolition of this heritage.

## ART DECO TYPOGRAPHY WORKSHOP

A more-than-full-house of enthusiasts who gathered at 47-A this evening for a truly fun filled and super exciting lesson on typography - and specifically Art Deco typography. Tanya George, typography lover, freak and expert, nudged everyone into being creative and thinking way out of the box!

## MOTIFS, MATERIALS & MAKERS OF ART DECO

From Art Deco architecture in the city to Deco-inspired typography, interior design, textiles, and jewellery, Saturday's workshop explored the history, politics, transitions, and adaptations of this avant-garde and modern design style.

Mustansir Dalvi, Kunal Shah, Pavitra Rajaram, Srila Chatterjee, Meher Marfatia, Hema Shroff Patel, Tanya George and Kunal Shah took the participants into the Deco world with insightful presentations, hidden stories and a walkthrough of the Art Deco show at 47-A Gallery.

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