

# SPEAKER BIOS

Panelists + Moderators

**Dec 14-16 | 2023**

India International Centre, New Delhi

THE STATE OF  
ARCHITECTURE  
+ **SOUTHASIA**

# Ajmal Maiwandi

## Afghanistan

Ajmal Maiwandi is an architect and the Director of the Aga Khan Trust for Culture in Afghanistan. Having studied at the Southern California Institute of Architecture in Los Angeles and the Bartlett School of Architecture in London, he worked in the United States, Japan, and Germany before returning to Afghanistan in 2003. He contributes regularly to publications on architecture and urbanism and participates in forums on safeguarding cultural heritage in Afghanistan and internationally.

ARCHITECTURES  
OF TRANSITION

Frameworks & Practices  
in South Asia

MEET THE SPEAKER

ARCHITECTURES  
OF TRANSITION

Frameworks & Practices  
in South Asia

PANELIST

# Ambrish Arora India



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OF TRANSITION

Frameworks & Practices  
in South Asia

MEET THE SPEAKER

Ambrish Arora is Founding Principal at Studio Lotus, a multidisciplinary Aga Khan Award-nominated practice that aims to craft spaces addressing the emerging future of work, leisure, and living. The practice's work is rooted in Conscious Design—an approach that celebrates local resources, cultural influences, keen attention to detail, and an inclusive process that seeks to bring out the best in every stakeholder.

Studio Lotus is known for its award-winning projects such as the RAAS group of Hotels, the Krushi Bhawan in Odisha, and its work at the Godrej Trees project in Vikhroli, among others. Ongoing projects include a Visitor Centre within Jodhpur's Mehrangarh Fort precinct; the new Royal Enfield's headquarters in Chennai; the headquarters of the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) in Bhubaneswar; and several pan-India hospitality commissions, including those for the Taj & Oberoi groups of hotels. The practice has been the recipient of over 200 national and international awards since its founding, including being a four-time awardee at the World Architecture Festival; winner of the DOMUS Italia Award for Restoration and Adaptive Reuse; the Prix Versailles Special Prize for Restaurant Interiors; the ARCASIA Awards; and has been a part of Architectural Digest India's AD100 list for ten consecutive years.

Ambrish's role is largely studio-focused, leading design processes that direct the trajectory of projects. He is deeply involved with assessing benchmarks of innovation and sustainability for the studio's ongoing work; including aspects related to thermal comfort and localisation of material and process. He is a custodian of the guiding values that have served as a cornerstone for the practice since its inception, and is personally involved in leadership development for the Studio's teams. Ambrish has lectured extensively at global design forums and

at universities such as RWTH Aachen and Rice University, and was on the super-jury at the 2020 Dezeen Awards.

ARCHITECTURES  
OF TRANSITION

Frameworks & Practices  
in South Asia

PANELIST

# Amila de Mel Sri Lanka



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OF TRANSITION

Frameworks & Practices  
in South Asia

MEET THE SPEAKER

Amila de Mel began her training at art school in Boston, Massachusetts, prior to working in Sri Lanka with C Anjalendran for a year and a half. Later she joined Geoffrey Bawa and worked with the master architect for five years, principally on the Kandalama Hotel. In 1995 she departed for further studies in architecture at the University of East London, UK, finally returning to Sri Lanka to set up her own practice, ADM Architects, in 2000. Amila's work covers a range of residential, commercial and social projects.

One of her early projects was the Barefoot gallery and garden café which involved transforming an old colonial building into an art gallery. Her project for MAS Active – Nirmaana involved converting an old factory building into their new Product Creation Centre. An underlining aspect of her work is the idea of reuse, which she believes is a key factor in making built environments sustainable. She is interested in designing spaces that can evolve and adapt to changes with time and respond to the needs of the users. She also works extensively with local materials and the local craft skills of people creating the spaces she designs. All these ideas are reflected in the design of her own home, The Garden House.

Amila was former Vice-President of the Board of Habitat for Humanity Sri Lanka, a nonprofit non-governmental organization, where she was devoted to building "simple, decent, and affordable" housing. One of her important works in this role was building 3000 low-cost houses using compressed earth blocks which was achieved by engaging community stakeholders and university students in the process, starting from design to completion.

Alongside designing low cost, sustainable, incremental housing models, her architectural

practice is currently moving towards creating a sense of community in spaces that she designs. She has recently completed a garden with a community kitchen and is designing a public space within a church and a headquarters for the girl guides in Sri Lanka.

Amila volunteers with the Geoffrey Bawa Trust in maintaining the late architect's works. Her most recent works are the reconstruction of the Ena de Silva House, commissioned by the Geoffrey Bawa Trust and the restoration of the Druvi de Saram House, commissioned by the de Saram's, and managed by the Lunuganga Trust.

Since 2015, Amila has also been working towards preserving the legacy of Ena de Silva's craft works. As Executive Trustee of the Ena de Silva Foundation, she has been leading an archiving project to document the textile works produced by Ena and her collaborators over the years. As a Partner at the Aluwihare Heritage Centre, she supports the women to continue the textile craft practice that Ena set up. She has co-curated several exhibitions of Ena's works, the most recent being, *Imagining New Natures: Collaborations with Ena*, which was a result of the archiving project and shares the stories of some of Ena's collaborations with artists and craftswomen.

ARCHITECTURES  
OF TRANSITION

Frameworks & Practices  
in South Asia

PANELIST

# Anisha Mukherjee

## India



Anisha Shekhar Mukherji graduated as an architect from the School of Planning and Architecture (SPA) Delhi, and went on to do a Masters in Architectural Conservation as an ODA Scholar from the De Montfort University, U.K. Her forte lies in reading historical sites and investigating knowledge-systems encapsulated in indigenous traditions. She has worked on a variety of projects involving the revitalisation of cultural heritage, and been a consultant to several organisations: The World Bank, Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), Doon School, The Park Hotels Apeejay Surrendra Group, National Culture Fund, The Sir Sobha Singh Trust, etc. Through writings, lectures, and dialogues in the public domain, she also focuses attention on the role of architecture in contributing positively to society, while drawing on traditional wisdom and community knowledge.

This approach challenges conventional attitudes to conservation and development, and has resulted in a re-assessment of the value of sites of national importance, notably the Delhi Red Fort and the Delhi Jantar Mantar. Anisha's research and analysis uncovering the different historic layers of the iconic Red Fort piecing together its original design, and her Draft Report of the Fort's Conservation Management Plan for the ASI, contributed greatly to enabling its designation as a World Heritage Site. Her long-term engagement with the conservation of the Delhi Jantar Mantar and her sustained espousal of the functional restoration of its Yantras, has led to their recognition as instruments of scientific value, rather than just archaeological monuments.

As a conservation professional, author, independent designer, and Founding Director at Ambi Knowledge Resources Pvt. Ltd — a publishing house that promotes the heritage of the subcontinent — Anisha is positioned at the confluence of architecture,

design, literature, and history. She integrates these interests into her teaching-modules as visiting faculty at SPA Delhi, where since eighteen years, she has been guiding students in critical enquiry and design thinking.

Anisha has authored significant books on architecture, art and craft traditions of India such as *The Red Fort of Shahjahanabad* (Oxford University Press, 2003); *Jantar Mantar, Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh's Observatory in Delhi* (Ambi, 2010); *Attributing Design Identity; Identifying Design Attributes* (Ambi, 2020). She has contributed writings in journals, newspapers, magazines, and in publications such as *Shahjahanabad/ Old Delhi: Traditional and Colonial Change*, edited by Eckhart Ehlers and Thomas Krafft (Manohar, 2003) and *A Work of Beauty: The Architecture and Landscape of Rashtrapati Bhavan*, edited by Narayani Gupta (Publications Division, Government of India, 2016). She also enjoys writing for children and has translated Tenida and Friends (Ambi 2010) based on Narayan Gangopadyaya's much-loved Bengali stories. Her most recent book published by Routledge in 2023 is *Renewing Design with Communities*, co-edited with Snehanshu Mukherjee, which showcases equitable practices in architecture and local building traditions. Her writings and talks may be accessed at: <http://anishashekhar.blogspot.com/> <http://ambiknowledgeresources.wordpress.com/>

# Benny Kuriakose

## India

Born in 1962 in the small town of Koothattukulam and brought up in Thiruvananthapuram, Dr. Benny Kuriakose started his career in 1984 and received basic lessons in architecture under the tutelage of the renowned Laurie Baker (1917-2017). He received the Charles Wallace India Trust Award for a Master's degree in Conservation Studies from the University of York, UK, and his PhD from the Indian Institute of Technology in Madras, India. Taking its roots in vernacular architecture, he has developed expertise in architectural conservation and design of new buildings. He focuses on the design of structures built from natural materials and now runs an architect and consulting company in Chennai, India. He has worked on all sorts of projects, from small mud cottages to tsunami reconstruction housing. He has also worked as a consultant for the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), UNESCO, different state governments, and nongovernmental other organisations.



# Bimal Patel

## India



ARCHITECTURES  
OF TRANSITION

Frameworks & Practices  
in South Asia

MEET THE SPEAKER

Dr. Bimal Patel is an architect, urbanist and academic who has crisscrossed professional and institutional boundaries to explore the ways in which architecture, urban design and urban planning can enrich lives of people in India's cities. He has worked extensively with the private sector as well as the government, at municipal, state and central levels.

Dr. Patel received a Diploma in Architecture in 1984 from the School of Architecture, CEPT, in Ahmedabad, India. Between 1985 and 1990, he studied, researched and taught at the University of California, Berkeley, from where he received a Master's in Architecture and a Masters in City Planning in 1988 and a PhD in City and Regional Planning in 1995.

Dr. Patel heads HCP, a multi-disciplinary design, planning and management practice based in Ahmedabad. There Dr. Patel has led work on many residential, institutional, commercial, housing, industrial and urban design and planning projects.

In 1996, Dr. Patel founded Environmental Planning Collaborative (EPC), a not-for-profit consultancy and policy-research and advocacy organization. EPC's innovative work has contributed significantly to the transformation of planning and urban design in Gujarat.

Since 2012, Dr. Patel heads CEPT University as its President. There, he has led a comprehensive re-imagination, rejuvenation and modernization of this fifty-year-old institution's pedagogy, research focus, organizational structure, governance and infrastructure.

Dr. Patel's work has won numerous awards. In 2019 he was awarded the Padma Shri, which is amongst the highest civilian honors conferred by the President of India.

ARCHITECTURES  
OF TRANSITION

Frameworks & Practices  
in South Asia

PANELIST

# Biresh Shah Nepal



ARCHITECTURES  
OF TRANSITION

Frameworks & Practices  
in South Asia

MEET THE SPEAKER

Biresh Shah has practiced and taught architecture, urban design and planning, as well as urban conservation in Kathmandu, Nepal for over twenty five Years. He taught at the Institute of Engineering, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu from 1996 to 2008. He taught in the very first Bachelor of Architecture program, which started in Nepal in 1994. He also has taught in the Master of Science in Urban Planning program that started subsequently. He has taught design studios as a visiting faculty at SPA, New Delhi, and University of Melbourne; and more recently in the Master of Urban Design and conservation Program at Khwopa Engineering College in Bhaktapur, Nepal, teaching core urban design studios and thesis research. He has written and published in newspapers, design magazines, academic publications as well contributed to books on many aspects of the built environment of the Kathmandu Valley; and has lectured widely. He has been keenly interested in the contemporary urbanism in South Asia.

He graduated from the School of Planning and Architecture (SPA) in New Delhi, India where he completed his Bachelor of Architecture in 1984. Subsequently he completed his Master of Science in Architectural studies from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge, USA.

He founded ARCHIPLAN in 2001, a design practice based in Kathmandu, and undertook the design of architectural projects of all scale ranging from houses to urban housing, hotels, mixed-use development projects, Institutional buildings, Medical colleges and other educational campuses. Alongside, he has also worked on a variety of urban design, urban planning and urban heritage conservation projects, mainly in Kathmandu Valley and also in New Delhi. Since 2011, Biresh has also worked as a Principal Architect on the planning and

design of new South Asian University Campus in New Delhi. This project was awarded through an international competition. Subsequently, the detailed design of all buildings consisting of academic blocks, Library, Convention center, student housing, staff residences, support facilities, site services, and overall landscape Plan of this 100 acre campus was developed upto contract award stage with our partners in New Delhi, ABRD architects. While the construction of the entire campus is yet to be completed, the University is operational for a limited capacity,

More recently he has worked as a design/planning consultant for a number of large academic/public projects ranging from the Sajha South Asia Center, a conference/civic center in Kathmandu, to large projects with complex programs for various public institutions. Since 2018, he is involved with the development of the proposed University of Nepal, a new liberal arts public university being set up in Nepal, and has advised on programming and planning/design of their forthcoming Campus in Gaidakot, Central Nepal.

He is the founding member and current President of Kathmandu Institute, a non-profit organization founded in 2022 to conduct research, documentation, discussions/seminars, exhibitions into the Transformation of the unique built landscapes of Nepal. Currently KI is developing an exhibition on Early Modern Architecture of Kathmandu Valley (1945-85).

ARCHITECTURES  
OF TRANSITION

Frameworks & Practices  
in South Asia

MODERATOR



# Chitra Vishwanath

## India



ARCHITECTURES  
OF TRANSITION

Frameworks & Practices  
in South Asia

MEET THE SPEAKER

Chitra is the original creator and managing director of Biome Environmental Solutions ([www.biome-solutions.com](http://www.biome-solutions.com)), a diverse team of 30 professionals engaged in the realm of ecological architecture and innovative water and waste solutions located in Bangalore, India.

Coming from an artistic lineage, with a father who is a sculptor and a mother who is a homemaker, Chitra's educational journey began in Banaras. Her family's relocation to Nigeria in 1977 led her to pursue a Civil Engineering Diploma at Auchi Polytechnic.

In 1990, after completing her studies at the School of Architecture CEPT India, Chitra initiated her architectural enterprise in Bangalore, marking the commencement of a fortuitous journey. At Biome, the aim has been to seamlessly fuse challenges encompassing materials, ecology, and requisites into holistic ecosystem designs.

Chitra's involvement in education and design workshops is notable. She orchestrated a design workshop at Archiprix 2017 in CEPT Ahmedabad and held the Charles Correa Academic chair at Goa College of Architecture in 2018. Presently, she serves as a design mentor at NITTE Mangalore since 2019. Her recent educational endeavors encompass leading the Monsoon semester at the School of Architecture CEPT Ahmedabad in both 2020 and 2021. Currently she is advisor and final year reviewer for MIT Jaipur.

Noteworthy highlights in her career include her role as a juror at the 2A Continental Architectural Awards in Madrid 2019, participation as a judge at the Asia Edition of YTAA 2020 conducted by Fundacio Mies Van Der Rohe Barcelona, and contribution as a judge at the D&AD and Dezeen awards.

ARCHITECTURES  
OF TRANSITION

Frameworks & Practices  
in South Asia

MODERATOR + PANELIST

# Devashree Shah

## India

Devashree Shah is an architect who graduated from the Harvard Graduate School of Design with a Master of Architecture II degree in 2023. With international experience at Serie Architects and Lorcan O'Herlihy Architects, she currently holds the positions of Coordinator of Inclusive Design in Public Transit and Inclusive Architectural Designer at the Institute of Human Centered Design, Boston. Her ongoing research project focuses on the repair of affordable housing (chawls) in Mumbai, featuring field studies and imaginative projections as its central components. In 2021, her project 'Thrive: Dual-Use Housing' earned recognition at the 'Inside Out' exhibition curated by Dan Borelli at the Harvard Graduate School of Design.

# Dorji Yangki Bhutan



ARCHITECTURES  
OF TRANSITION

Frameworks & Practices  
in South Asia

MEET THE SPEAKER

Dorji Yangki is one of the first female architects in Bhutan. She has more than 28 years of experience in architecture, conservation, research, and planning. Dorji studied architecture in Australia, holds a Masters in Conservation from the UK and was a Loeb Fellow at the Harvard Graduate School of Design.

Dorji was the first President of the Bhutan Institute of Architects as well the first female Chair of the South Asian Association of Architects. In these roles, she played an active role in uniting and engaging local architects to enhance architectural practices and elevate design standards.

Dorji served as Chief Architect and Head of the office for Conservation of Heritage sites for the Government of Bhutan for over 16 years where she played a pivotal role in heritage conservation efforts in the country. She was instrumental in establishing the first office for the conservation of heritage sites in Bhutan, drafted the first Bhutan Guidelines for heritage conservation, initiated the first inventory of heritage sites, and conducted local training workshops for district offices. A staunch advocate for local artisans and traditional craftsmen, Dorji championed the incorporation of traditional Bhutanese architectural principles and craftsmanship into new architecture.

Her notable projects in conservation include the restoration of iconic sites like the Taktsang (Tiger's Nest) Monastery, the Semtokha Dzong, the Bhutan Folk Heritage Museum, the Pangrizampa School of Astrology, and the National Museum offices.

Collaborating with the Royal University of Bhutan, Dorji played a key role in establishing the first degree program in Architecture in the country. For the Government of Bhutan, she contributed to

authoring the first Guidelines for the introduction of Green Buildings in Bhutan and the Bhutanese Architecture Guidelines which are both widely utilized nationally for the design of new buildings and cities. Currently leading a private firm in Bhutan, Dorji is one of the very few actively practicing female Bhutanese Principal Architects. She is also working on research for her upcoming books on Traditional Bhutanese Architecture and Biophilic designs in South Asian Architecture.

Dorji's design philosophy is firmly rooted in the values of Bhutan's Gross National Happiness principles. She places a strong emphasis on Biophilic design, the utilization of local natural materials such as rammed earth, creating a distinct sense of place, and fostering communal well-being and happiness. This philosophy is exemplified in her recent projects, ranging from schools and offices to Buddhist monasteries, dormitories for monks, and eco-friendly resorts and homes.

ARCHITECTURES  
OF TRANSITION

Frameworks & Practices  
in South Asia

PANELIST

# Ela Singhal

## India



ARCHITECTURES  
OF TRANSITION

Frameworks & Practices  
in South Asia

MEET THE SPEAKER

Ela Singhal is the Executive Director at the Architecture Foundation, India. She has been involved with the exhibitions, *State of Housing – Aspirations, Imaginations and Realities in India* and *Architecture of Practice*, and the publications by the Foundation on architecture. Singhal also leads research projects looking at twentieth century architecture, the city and contemporary Indian architecture. She is keen on bringing into discussion how research can inform practice and co-edited a methodology report *Imagining a Sanitation Hub*, that reinterprets the idea of community toilets by defining prototypes for different geographical and urban context.

Singhal manages the archival research at the Foundation, currently developing the RMA Archives which focuses on documenting the works of RMA Architects. She has been working on programs that help engage with the archives through exhibitions, books and catalogues and creating a forum for discussion on the practice of architecture.

Graduate from the Architecture Association, London with a Masters in History Theory and Critical Thinking, she has a keen interest in education and pedagogy and teaches at the Balwant Sheth School of Architecture, Mumbai as visiting faculty at the Masters of Architecture program focusing on theory and critical thinking. Before joining the Architecture Foundation, Singhal worked with architecture studios in Delhi as an architect.

ARCHITECTURES  
OF TRANSITION

Frameworks & Practices  
in South Asia

MODERATOR

# Ishita Shah

## India



ARCHITECTURES  
OF TRANSITION

Frameworks & Practices  
in South Asia

MEET THE SPEAKER

Trained as an interior designer and an architectural historian, my curatorial practice is rooted at the intersection of cultural preservation, creative interpretation, and community engagement, under the aegis of a self-founded collective Curating for Culture. Our primary thematic interests as a collective include South Asia/India in the archives, beyond the institutional narratives, empowering the local, life in the day of an archivist, and the socio-politics of underrepresented narratives in popular histories. We have curated a range of activities from incubation programs, to site-based learning experiences, publications, exhibitions, and open dialogues in collaboration with different organizations and practitioners. Some recent initiatives include,

Curating the exhibition “Stories from Archives of India” and a panel discussion at the Festival of Libraries 2023, by the Ministry of Culture in New Delhi; exhibition “Vandalising the Indian Atelier” and launch of the digital archive “Women of Vaastukala” at Arthshila Ahmedabad (Jul 2023); public showcase of the second edition of Constructing Personal Archives at the Goethe-Institut / Max Mueller Bhavan Bangalore (May 2023).

Constructing Personal Archives (CPA) is a self-initiated biennial incubation program, developed with the intention to enable projects in historical and cultural preservation ranging from family archiving to personal histories as well as practice documentation and community narratives. Over 50 participants from across South Asia have participated since 2020 and almost the same number of collaborators have come together to facilitate sessions and critical dissemination.

I am also currently engaged as a consulting archivist with Pattani Archives (Bhavnagar), and Queer

Ink Archives (Mumbai). Recently I have also co-curated the publication, Biome Diaries: Ecological Architecture from India (2021); as well as offered mentoring program for archiving projects in Bangladesh, at Drik Pictures (2022) and Britto Arts Trust (2021), as collaborations proposed by the Art South Asia Project, UK.

Due to my keen interest in furthering the creative possibilities for cultural preservation in India and the Global South, I have also curated a wide range of initiatives in collaboration with the Museum of Art and Photography (MAP), Assam State Museum, National Centre for Biological Sciences (NCBS), The Courtyard, INTACH to name a few.

Prior to founding the collective, I was also an educator, researcher, and the coordinator to the UNESCO Chair in Culture, Habitat, and Sustainable Development at Srishti-Manipal Institute of Art, Design and Technology (Bengaluru); the founding archivist and oral historian, setting up CEPT Archive: for architecture, planning and design in India, and worked with RIBA (London), INSITE Magazine, SPADE India (Mumbai) and Design Innovation and Craft Resource Center (Ahmedabad).

I have been a recipient of The Alternative Art School Fellowship 2022 to attend Nato Thompson’s course titled All The World is a Stage, CISA Fellowship 2021 by Khoj International Artists’ Association, the Graham Foundation Fellowship for Research 2020 to trace the journeys of women practitioners from 20th Century Indian Architectural History; and exploring subversive frameworks for community archiving projects through Futura Tropica Fellowship 2020. I have also presented at architectural, design, heritage, and history conferences as well as contributed to publications nationally and internationally.

ARCHITECTURES  
OF TRANSITION

Frameworks & Practices  
in South Asia

PANELIST

# Jharna Joshi

## Nepal



Jharna Joshi is an architect (Tsinghua University, Beijing, China) specialized in historic conservation (University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, USA) and cultural landscapes (Jean Monnet University, Saint Etienne, France) having recently obtained PhD in Management (tourism) from the Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand. Her dissertation, titled Landscape aesthetics, tourism, and change: Case studies in Nepal explores the residents' and tourists' perceptions of the changing landscape aesthetics in three popular tourist destinations in Nepal (Ghandruk, Bandipur and Sauraha).

Jharna has more than twenty years of experience in architecture, conservation, cultural landscapes, tourism and teaching in Nepal, China, Hong Kong, USA, Vietnam, Greece and New Zealand. Currently, she teaches and supervises undergraduate and graduate architecture students as a visiting faculty in Nepal. Her focus is on urban conservation and vernacular architecture/settlement studies. For these courses, the students document a monument, an urban ensemble or a vernacular settlement, which includes floor plans, elevations and sections, condition assessments and socio-economic surveys, usually spending a week on site. This is followed by analysing the data collected and proposals for future improvements. The students work closely with the local communities and present the proposals to them at the end of the semester. At Victoria University of Wellington, Jharna taught tourism planning and policies to 3rd-year tourism students, designing the course to develop students' skills in undertaking current issues such as the UN Sustainable Development Goals and apply them to the context in New Zealand.

Jharna has designed and supervised restoration and adaptive reuse projects in various parts of Nepal. Her philosophy in designing such projects

is on using local materials and skills and upcycling existing materials as much as possible. She has also collaborated with national and international professionals and researchers in a variety of architecture and heritage conservation related projects. Her notable project includes the Bandipur Eco Cultural Tourism Project, where she was the Project Manager and the lead in securing funds from the European Commission. This project focused on promoting Bandipur, a small hilltop town in Nepal, as a tourist destination through heritage preservation and tourism initiatives working with the local community. Jharna was also the lead in other tangible and intangible heritage preservation projects, such as the Nagbahal Hiti Rehabilitation Project and Kartik Nach Documentation Project. In addition, she was the cultural tourism consultant for the international team to prepare the National Tourism Strategy Plan for Nepal, Analysis of Heritage Tourism and Creative City Potential of the Kathmandu Valley, Formulation of Tourism Promotional Plan for Lumbini and Adjoining Areas and Heritage Impact Assessment of Tourism on Lumbini World Heritage Site.

Currently, Jharna is also involved with Kathmandu Institute, a non-government organization based in Kathmandu, Nepal for research, learning, debate on contemporary cities leading to design and planning of future urban landscapes in the region. It aims to work in collaboration with other national and international centres based on the basic premise that knowledge produced locally is most useful and effective.

# Kaiwan Mehta

## India



ARCHITECTURES  
OF TRANSITION

Frameworks & Practices  
in South Asia

MEET THE SPEAKER

Kaiwan Mehta is a theorist and critic in the fields of visual culture, architecture, and city studies. Mehta has studied Architecture (B. Arch), Literature (MA), Indian Aesthetics (PGDip) and Cultural Studies (PhD). In 2017 he completed his doctoral studies at the Centre for the Study of Culture and Society, Bengaluru, under the aegis of Manipal University. He is (since April 2022) the Dean at Balwant Sheth School of Architecture, at SVKM's NMIMS University.

Since March 2012 he has been the Managing Editor of Domus India (Spenta Multimedia). From July 2017 to March 2022 he was Professor and Programme Chair of the Doctoral Programme at the Faculty of Architecture, CEPT, Ahmedabad, where he contributed to the CEPT University Press and Research, and was also a founding member on the CEPT Essay Prize steering committee. He was the Charles Correa Chair professor at the Goa College of Architecture under the aegis of the Department of Art and Culture, Government of Goa for the academic year 2017-2018. He authored *Alice in Bhuleshwar: Navigating a Mumbai Neighbourhood* (Yoda Press. New Delhi, 2009) and *The Architecture of I M Kadri* (Niyogi. New Delhi, 2016). He has delivered keynote lectures and seminars at Cornell University, Centre Pompidou, Paris, besides other Indian and international universities, institutions, museums, and organisations; and has also contributed a section on Modern and Contemporary Architecture in India and South-Asia for the recent and updated edition of Bannister Fletcher's "A History of World Architecture". He is currently working on other architecture biographies - the works of Architect Sen Kapadia, as well as Architect Jeetendra Mistry.

Mehta co-curated with Rahul Mehrotra and Ranjit Hoskote the national exhibitions on architecture –

"The State of Architecture: Practices and Processes in India" (UDRI. 2016) at the National Gallery Modern Art, Mumbai and 'State of Housing - Aspirations, Imaginaries, and Realities in India' (UDRI. 2018). Both these exhibitions resulted in a two-volume edited publication each. He has been elected as the Jury Chairman for two consecutive terms (2015–17 and 2017–2019) for the international artists' residency programme across 13 disciplines at the Akademie Schloss Solitude in Stuttgart, Germany. He has been curating the Urban Design and Architecture section of the Kala Ghoda Arts Festival, Mumbai since 2016. He recently curated two biographical exhibitions, a mid-career retrospective of Rahul Mehrotra and Associate Architects (Mumbai), as well as a memorial exhibition of the life and work of Jitendra Mistry (Ahmedabad).

He has set up courses in Architecture Theory as well as Art, Criticism and Theory, the politics around Craft as well as Aesthetics, and teaches across various undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in Mumbai including setting up the Art, Criticism, and Theory programme at Jnanapravaha (Mumbai). Mehta was the founding academic director of the Parsons - The New School for Design in Mumbai, India at the Indian School for Design and Innovation. He currently teaches at Balwant Sheth School of Architecture, NMIMS, and has previously taught at the K R V Institute for Architecture (full-time lecturer and senior lecturer 1999-2007), Jnanapravaha (Mumbai), as well as Sir J J College of Architecture, IES School of Architecture, and Rachana Sansad's Academy of Architecture, as well as short courses and workshops across architecture schools in India, The K R Cama Oriental Institute, Artisans Gallery in Mumbai, the Tarq Gallery in Mumbai. He constantly teaches across universities and academies, while continuing to set up many and varied spaces for para-academic engagement.

ARCHITECTURES  
OF TRANSITION

Frameworks & Practices  
in South Asia

MODERATOR + PANELIST

# Kanak Dixit

## Nepal



Kanak Mani Dixit, 67, is a writer and journalist as well as a civil rights and democracy activist. He is a campaigner for open urban spaces, and is also active in the conservation of built heritage. Dixit helped revive Nepal's only public bus company and is involved in applying the concept of public transportation to the Valley. A long-time trekker, Dixit also writes on travel related themes. He heads the main archives of the Nepali language, the Madan Puraskar Pustakalaya. He is also active in developing of Southasian regionalism. Having suffered from a fall while trekking in 2001, Dixit helped start the Spinal Injury Rehabilitation Centre. Believing the power of non-fiction film, he started and heads the Film South Asia Festival of Documentaries. Dixit is also a translator, an author of political commentaries, and a popular author of books for children. Dixit has received the Prince Claus Award of the Netherlands. His writings are archived at [www.kanakmanidixit.com](http://www.kanakmanidixit.com).

#### Education:

Bachelor of Arts, Tri Chandra College, Kathmandu  
1975

Bachelor of Laws, Delhi University, 1978

Master of International Affairs, Columbia University,  
1981

Master of Science in Journalism, Columbia  
University, 1982

#### Work:

Journalist since 1971

United Nations Secretariat, New York, 1982 - 1990

Editor, Himal

(Himalayan magazine) 1987 - 1996

Editor, Himal

(Southasian magazine) 1996 - 2016

Publisher of Himal Khabarpatrika, fortnightly news  
magazine

1998 - present

#### Others:

Chair, Sajha Yatayat public transport company

Chair, Film Southasia Festival of Documentaries

Co-Founder, Centre for Investigative Journalism,

Social Science Baha

Chair, Madan Puraskar Pustakalaya archives

Director, Rato Bangala School and the Rato Bangala  
Foundation.

Founding Chair, Spinal Injury Rehabilitation Centre

Ex-Chair, Clean Energy Nepal

Children's author (Nepali and English - Adventures

of a Nepali Frog, The Leech & I and Other Stories,

Every Which Way Up Everest, etc)

Editor, State of Nepal (2002)

Translator, BP Koirala's Atamabrittanta (2001)

Author, Peace Politics of Nepal (2011)



# Kashef Choudhury

## Bangladesh



Kashef Choudhury co-founded the Dhaka based firm URBANA in 1995, leading the practice as solo Principal since 2005. Choudhury selects his clients and commissions carefully and invests in each work sufficient time and research to arrive at a contextually and socially responsible and appropriate architectural and planning response. Works in the studio vary in size and scale and many have been designed pro bono. Kashef Choudhury/ URBANA's projects span various typologies, from institutions and public buildings, to culture, education, sports, health, industry, religious, residential and climate-action projects.

URBANA received first prize and commission through the national competition for the Independence Monument and Museum of Bangladesh in 1997. Kashef Choudhury has received the AR+D first prize from the Architectural Review in London in 2012; the Aga Khan Award for Architecture in 2016 and the Royal Institute of British Architects RIBA International Prize in 2021.

# Khadija Jamal Shaban Pakistan



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Frameworks & Practices  
in South Asia

MEET THE SPEAKER

Khadija Jamal Shaban is a consulting Architect and Projects Manager and has consulted for the Aga Khan Development Network on their construction projects in the Middle East, Central Asia and South Asia. Her experience ranges from design projects to research on social aspects in architecture in Pakistan. She has previously consulted for the World Bank, Swiss Development Cooperation and Homeless International for Low Income Housing in Pakistan.

Khadija did her B.Arch from NED, Karachi and her Masters in Architectural Studies from Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA.

She has served on the Board of many organisations which include Aga Khan Planning and Building Services and Aga Khan Rural Support Programme. She has been the Chairperson for FOCUS Humanitarian Assistance Pakistan. Khadija has been on the Board of Accreditation of Architecture schools for the Pakistan Council of Architects and Town Planners and has served as the Chairperson for Board of Architecture Education of the Institute of Architects Pakistan. She was the Regional Coordinator for Aga Khan Award for Architecture and has been a technical reviewer for 3 cycles. She has presented papers in national and international conferences and has served as editor for two journals in Pakistan and is a member of the advisory board for the journal Architecture-Asia.

She has special interest in Architectural Education and volunteers time for designing faculty training and linking schools with various external resources.

ARCHITECTURES  
OF TRANSITION

Frameworks & Practices  
in South Asia

PANELIST

# Luva Choudhury Bangladesh



Luva Nahid Choudhury is a trustee and director general of Bengal Foundation, a private trust that supports and promotes the arts in Bangladesh. She received a bachelor's degree in Architecture from BUET, Dhaka, in 1986. Her career began with 10 years in the Ministry of Public Works, Government of Bangladesh. She is the principal of Abashan, an architecture practice based in Dhaka.

Choudhury is a member of the executive boards of Friendship NGO; the Bengal Institute for Architecture, Landscapes and Settlements; and a trustee of Gyantapas Abdur Razzaq Foundation. From 2010 to 2019, she sat in the governing board of BRAC, one of the largest NGOs in the world. Currently Choudhury is a Vice-President (South Asia) of the World Crafts Council Asia Pacific Region. She heads a publishing concern, and sits in the editorial boards of arts and literary magazines Kali O Kalam, Six Seasons Review, and Jamini.

With guidance from the board, Choudhury has steered the Bengal Foundation in its role as a leading multi-dimensional, public-service oriented arts delivery organization. Bengal Foundation programmes are free and open for the public. Both the music and arts programmes of the Foundation have delivered groundbreaking work in the last 25 years. Leading undertakings such as the arts venue Bengal Shilpalay, the music school Parampara Sangeetalay, S M Sultan-Bengal Art College (Narail) and the bookstore-cum-library Bengal Boi, have received public attention and appreciation. Landmark cultural initiatives such as the Bengal Classical Music Festival and Sangskriti Utshab have been critically acclaimed for their excellence.

Born in Karachi, Pakistan, in 1962, Choudhury received her schooling in Dhaka. Her father, Anis Choudhury, was a journalist and a noted playwright.

Her mother, Razia Choudhury, was a teacher. Choudhury is trained as a vocalist in traditional genres of Bengali music. In 2015 she received the Anannya Shirsha Dash (Top ten) award and the Brand Forum Award, for her contribution in the arts.

# Madhusudhan Chalasanani India



Madhusudhan Chalasanani is the principal architect and the founder of Studio MADe – an idea-driven architectural practice based out of Hyderabad (India) and Pamplona (Spain). Before establishing his own practice in 2007, Madhu collaborated with renowned architectural firms in Spain where he began focusing on competitions as a means to engage with architecture in the public sphere.

The studio's explorations span various geographies that reflect the diversity of its collaborators. These collaborations comprise a team of architects, graphic artists, landscape architects and researchers based in different parts of the world. The work is a product of cultural exchange made possible through virtual collaborations. Studio MADe primarily focuses on architectural competitions in the public realm aiming to address rising societal concerns.

The practice has received numerous international awards, comprising of the Holcim Award for Sustainable Construction (Switzerland), an award by the European Centre for Architecture, and the 2014 Chicago Athenaeum International Architecture Award for a school design in Jharkhand. The Studio also secured the international competition to design and build the Suncheon Art Platform in South Korea. The building was unveiled to public in 2022 and recently received the "2022 Korea Spatial Culture Award".

This approach to engaging with the public domain of diverse contexts has enabled the studio to understand the emerging challenges of the architectural profession within contemporary society. The aim is to create places that resonate with people's collective memory, and concurrently strive to produce architecture that transcends functional and cultural specificity, in an attempt to

propose timeless solutions to spatial challenges. The team has also consciously engaged in critical self-reflection through exhibitions, thereby exploring the idea of architecture beyond that of the built work.

# Meghal Arya

## India



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Frameworks & Practices  
in South Asia

MEET THE SPEAKER

Meghal Arya is a Professor at the Faculty of Architecture, CEPT University teaching architectural design and history. She challenges the understanding of contemporary architecture both as a practicing architect and academic researcher. Key to her work is seeking the knowledge that is embedded in the traditional architecture of India, unfolding its essentials and translating its value/strength into the present context.

She holds her postgraduate degree from the Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, and PhD from CEPT University, Ahmedabad. The particular focus of her research lies on the relation between water and the human built environment, where she investigates how interaction of people and urban water is expressed spatially. Through her approach, she encourages students of her design courses (at CEPT and leading international institutions in Madrid, Vienna and Milan) to rethink/question hitherto practiced process and methodology of relegating water infrastructure.

In her continuous search to improve teaching and access to knowledge, Meghal curates faculty development programs for teachers in architecture and shares her research in exhibitions and publications, both nationally and internationally. Most recently, she published her research in a book titled 'Spatial Ecology of Water'.

She is also a partner in a niche practice Arya Architects with Vijay Arya that has repeatedly been awarded for their holistic approach in addressing public needs, amongst others in projects related to public mobility and educational institutions. Their portfolio also includes special design works like a zoological park and sports facilities.

As principal designer at Arya Architects, the intent is to bring back inclusiveness to the public realm through an architecture of simple fluid spaces that creates an appropriate balance between social relations, physical environs and abstract concepts.

ARCHITECTURES  
OF TRANSITION

Frameworks & Practices  
in South Asia

PANELIST

# Mahboob Khan Pakistan



Architect Mahboob Khan is a principal at Arcop-Pakistan, a firm established with Architect Yawar Jilani, in 1987.

Through their Architecture, the firm aspires to develop dialogues between people, context and culture. They strive to move Architecture to a realm of timeless social relevance and compassionate sensitivity.

Their work is governed by the greater precepts of regional modernism. The practice attempts to translate contextuality through a language of modernity, while exploring local craft traditions, materiality and building techniques.

They see the importance of dialogue, co thinking, cultural imagination, history, geography and urbanism as important to the process of place making and Architecture.

They are greatly concerned at the regional loss of identities in our cities and other landscapes. The continued decline of craft, indigenous traditions and Architecture, to commercialism and political indifference motivates them to reach out directly to communities and individuals by attempting to make Architecture "available for all."

The firm has a diversified portfolio ranging from housing for low-income communities, education, healthcare and institutional projects. Their work, spread over three decades, has earned them international and regional recognition in the way of awards, commissions and publication

# Nondita Correa Mehrotra India



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OF TRANSITION

Frameworks & Practices  
in South Asia

MEET THE SPEAKER

Nondita Correa Mehrotra is an architect working in India and the United States. She studied architecture at the University of Michigan and at Harvard's Graduate School of Design and worked for over two decades with Charles Correa. She is a principal in the firm RMA Architects with offices in Mumbai and Boston and has been involved in the design of such major international projects as the Lab of the Future at Novartis' Basel Campus. Earlier she had been project architect with Charles Correa Associates on several projects, including the Ismaili Centre in Toronto and the Brain and Cognitive Sciences building at MIT, as well as several projects in India, including the Salt Lake City Centre near Kolkata.

Mehrotra is Director of the Charles Correa Foundation, which is involved in research, publications and the facilitation of projects focused on the improvement of the built habitat, and debates around architecture and urbanism in India. The Foundation contributes to the fraternity of architects and urban practitioners by publishing books, organizing 'Z-axis' – the biennial international conference series, establishing the annual Nagari Film Competition – a competition designed to guide and develop short films that focus on urban issues, an annual Gold Medal competition for undergraduate theses, and the design and curation of architectural exhibitions on Correa's work from his archives.

She has incorporated an active academic life into her career as well, teaching core and advanced architecture studios at the University of Michigan and at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and is currently teaching at the Rhode Island School of Design. Augmenting her teaching, several of her essays have been published in architectural books. She has been on numerous architectural juries, including the Master Jury of the Aga Khan

Award for Architecture; the LafargeHolcim Awards Jury in 2020; and the 2023 AIA NY Design Awards. She is on the Board of the Brookline Improvement Coalition, a non-profit local housing development corporation for the purpose of furthering affordable housing opportunities in the Town of Brookline, Massachusetts. She has also been an External Design Advisor to the Harvard Allston Land Company, a peer review process for Harvard University's new campus. Mehrotra was among 5 finalists for the design of the symbol for the Indian Rupee, an idea she had initiated with the Reserve Bank of India in 2005. She has designed furniture, sets for theatre, curated numerous exhibitions, and designed several architectural books.

ARCHITECTURES  
OF TRANSITION

Frameworks & Practices  
in South Asia

PANELIST

# Nuru Karim

## India



Nuru Karim, Founder & Principal Nudes with 25 years of experience, received his Masters in Architecture and Urbanism from the Architectural Association London, United Kingdom in 2006. His undergraduate studies include travel and education in the metropolis of London, Mumbai [KRVA-gold medallist] and Montreal [McGill University].

He has worked for Zaha Hadid Architects on a host of institutional projects both in competition/ schematic design and design development stages.

Nudes operates within the realm of cross-disciplinary cultures of art, architecture and computational design powered by digital “making” tools addressing larger networks of social, cultural and environmental.

Nudes has achieved critical recognition both for its built work and in competition in addition to several design awards including a nomination for the Aga Khan Award for Architecture 2013 cycle. Nuru Karim is also a TEDx speaker 2019 and has presented his work and research on national and international platforms.



# Poonam Jolly

## India



Poonam Jolly is a writer, architect, engineer and artist rolled into one, not necessarily in any particular order. She teaches and practices architecture, writes and draws. When not doing either of the above, she watches suspense movies.

insight into the hidden aspects of architecture and construction and made her realize how deeply this profession is connected to mainstream ecology and economy.

After graduating from Centre of Environmental Planning and Technology, Ahmedabad in 1990, she began her architectural explorations throughout India. Her journey took her working in the Rajasthan Desert on conservation of Ahichhatragarh Fort at Nagaur, a Paul Getty funded project which eventually won the UNESCO Award for excellence in Architecture in 2002, in the Himalayan terrain of Sikkim on an art gallery and a Bus station for Gangtok with Architect Kailash Pradhan, to Calcutta with Designer Gautam Mukerjee on restoration of Tagore House, a 1920 property in Ballygunge, to Delhi where she worked on various residences and Offices and finally to Ahmedabad, where her experimentations with Architecture are put in executable form at Architectonica procreate her architectural practice since 2001.

She began teaching architecture in 2013 and continues to do so till date as a visiting faculty at C.E.P.T and Anant National University, Ahmedabad. In 2002 her short short "Email" was published in Vert, a University of Pennsylvania Poetry magazine.

In 2017 she founded Boathouse, a research and making Laboratory that experiments in sustainable living practices. Local and International artists contribute in sustainable living through talks and workshops. In 2020, she wrote an illustrated collection of short stories "Concrete Dreams", a first-hand account of events – real and metaphorical – that took place when she took up the challenge of building her own house. The up-close and personal interaction with the site work provided an

# Pranav Thole

## India



Pranav Thole is a Harvard Graduate School of Design alumnus with a Master of Architecture in Urban Design (2023). As an architect and urban designer, he has worked with firms such as Sameep Padora and Associates, Flying Elephant Studio, and junya.ishigami + associates. He is currently working as an urban designer at ONE Architecture + Urbanism in New York, focusing on transportation and resilience infrastructure projects. He has been recognised for his interdisciplinary work, having been named a finalist in the Urban Land Institute (ULI) Competition in 2022 and the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Innovation in Affordable Housing Competition in 2023.

# Pratyush Shankar

## India



Prof. Pratyush Shankar is presently the provost of Navrachana University and also the Dean of School of Environmental Design and Architecture (SEDA), Navrachana University in Vadodara, India. Prof. Pratyush was recently honoured as the International Ambassador for the University of Bonn and recently delivered the keynote Kosmos Lecture at the Humboldt Foundation at Berlin.

He was awarded the Alexander Von Humboldt Fellowship in 2015 and was hosted at the University of Bonn, Germany. Before joining Navrachana University, Prof. Pratyush was the Acting Dean of Architecture and head of the Undergraduate Program at CEPT University and has been teaching Urban History and Design for many years now. He recently authored the book titled "Urban Form of India: From the beginning till the 1900's", published by Oxford University Press. He also authored the book titled "Himalayan Cities: Settlement Pattern, Public Places and Architecture" published by Niyogi Publishers, New Delhi, 2014. He is presently also a Guest Professor at the Mundus Urbano Program at Architecture Faculty, TU Darmstadt, Germany. Pratyush runs a design practice along with his academic interest. He was awarded the 22nd JK Cement Architect of the Year award 2013 in Residence Design Category.

# Qudsia Rahim

## Pakistan



Qudsia Rahim is the Director of Lahore Biennale, and the Co-Founder and Executive Director of the Lahore Biennale Foundation, a non-profit aimed at engaging arts as a medium of dialogue for community building. She previously worked as an associate professor and curator at the Zahoor Ul Akhlaq Gallery at her alma-mater, National College of Arts. As a curator, she has organised artist residency exchange programmes and research-driven exhibitions that have showcased works by local and international artists.

Rahim is also the founder of the Research Cell which is a part of the Lahore Biennale Foundation's outreach effort to encourage cross-sectoral collaboration on the domestic and international front, and strengthen art philanthropy and scholarly research in the visual and contemporary art fields. She initiated Afforestation Lahore, a scalable, nation-wide project that brings together stakeholders from the government and civil sector to combat loss of tree cover and address other urgent environmental challenges.

She has been involved in independent curatorial projects, such as Stet (2014) and Everything Is Embedded In History (2015), both contemporary art exhibitions aimed at looking into modes of information dissemination through the arts.

Her publications include Lahore Biennale 02 Guidebook (2020); Lahore Biennale 02 Catalogue (2020); Lahore Biennale 01 Guidebook (2016); Lahore Biennale 01 Catalogue (2016); Lahore Biennale 01 Reader (2016); Everything is Embedded in History (2015); and My East is Your West (the Viewer, View and the Viewed) (2015).

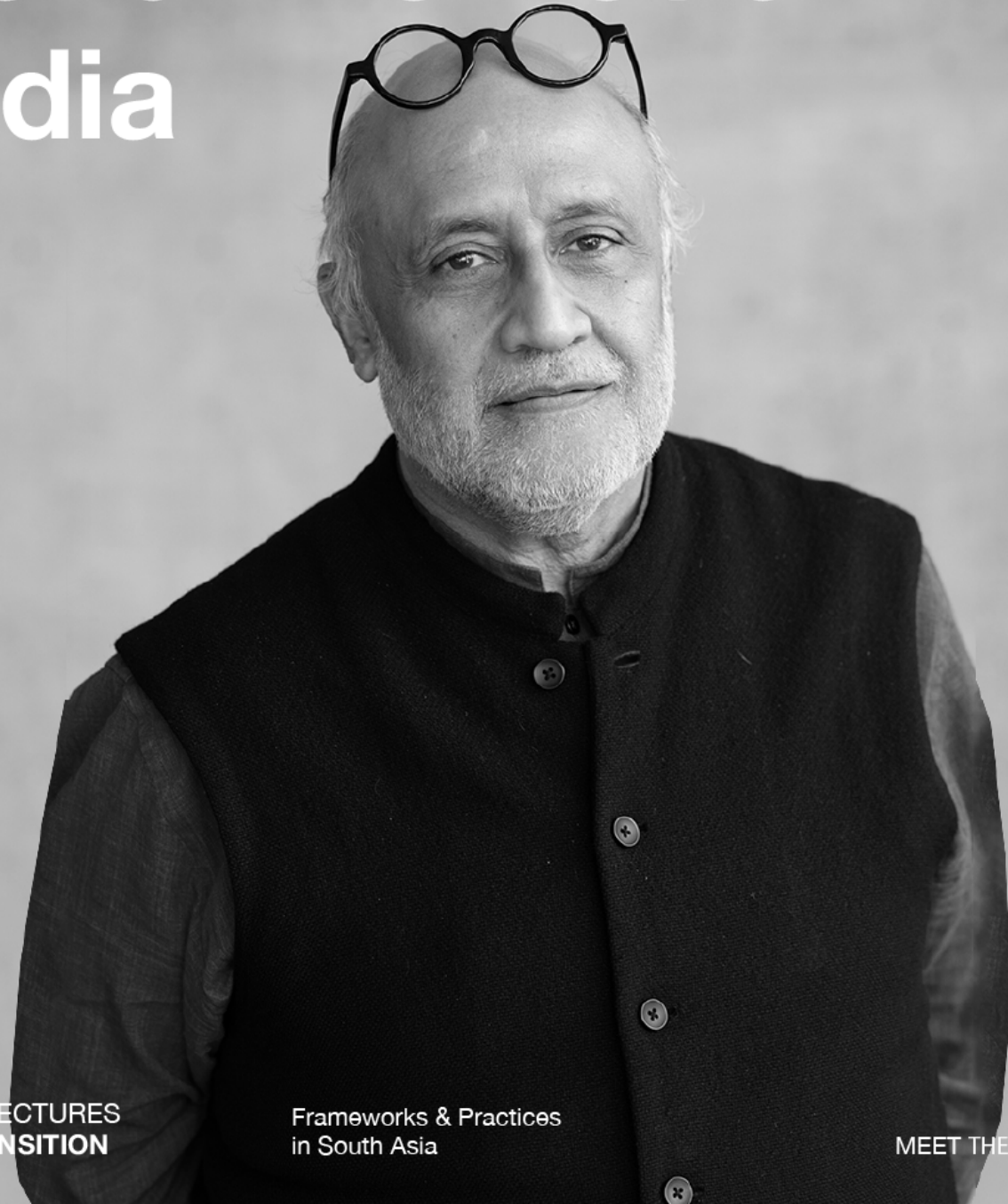
She received a full scholarship for an MFA at Alfred University, New York (1997) and the Honors Award

at the National College of Arts, Lahore (1993).

Rahim earned a BFA from the National College of Arts, Lahore (1993) and an MFA from Alfred University, New York (1999). Born in 1971, Lahore, she currently lives and works in Lahore.

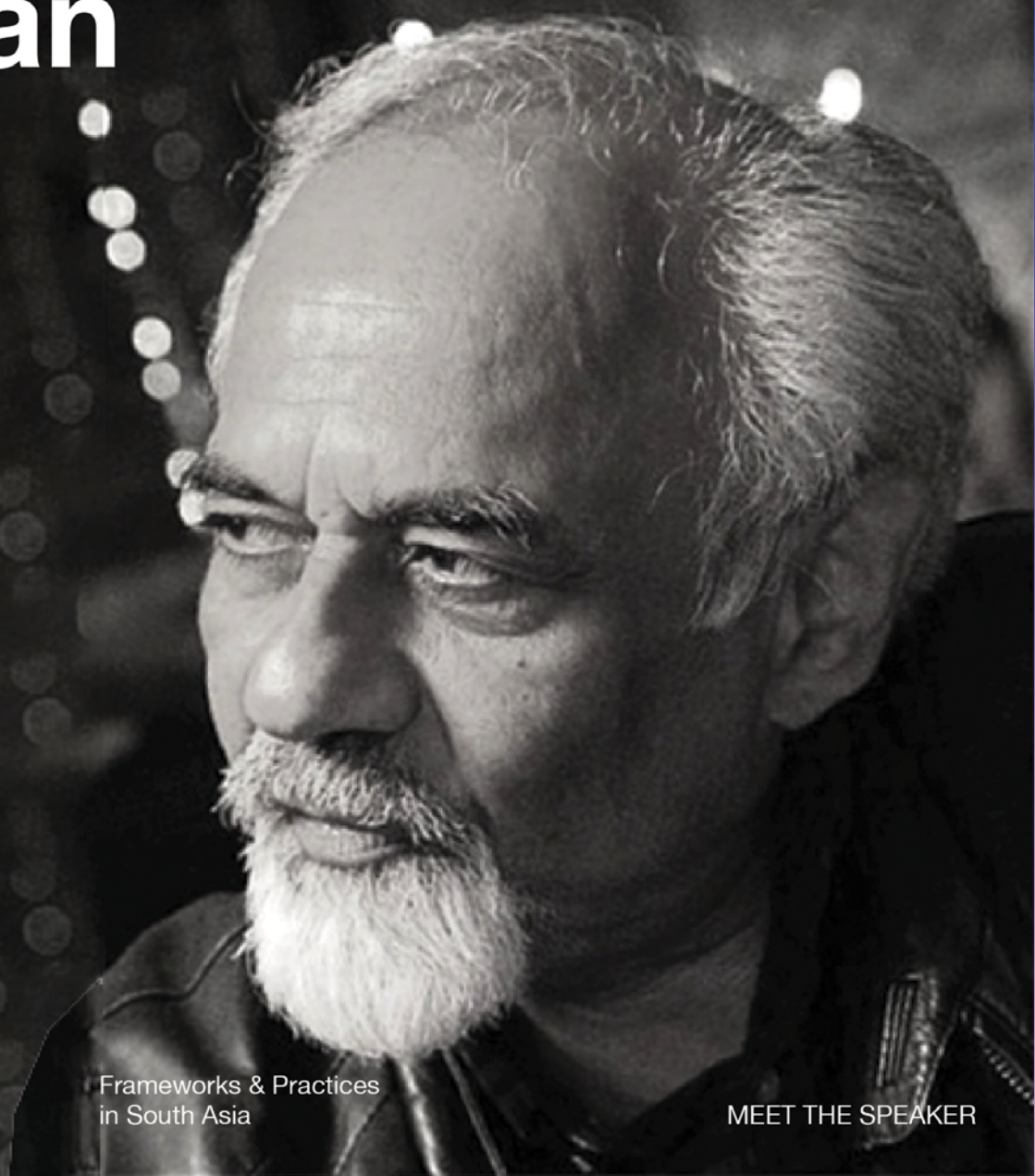
# Rahul Mehrotra

## India



Rahul Mehrotra is a Professor of Urban Design and Planning and the John T. Dunlop Professor in Housing and Urbanization at the Graduate School of Design at Harvard University, and the Founder Principal of RMA Architects, which was founded in 1990 and has designed and executed projects for government and private institutions, corporate workplaces, private homes, and unsolicited projects driven by the firm's commitment to advocacy in the city of Mumbai. Mehrotra's most recent books are titled *Working in Mumbai* (2020) and *The Kinetic City and Other Essays* (2021). The former, a reflection on his practice, evolved through its association with the city of Bombay/Mumbai. The second book presents his writings over the last 30 years and illustrates his long-term engagement with and analysis of urbanism in India. This work has given rise to a new conceptualization of the city that Mehrotra calls the Kinetic City.

# Rajnikant Chavda Bhutan



Architect and planner Rajni Chavda, an alumnus of Ahmedabad's Centre for Environmental Planning and Technology University, has worked in Bhutan for close to 28 years. In that time, he's built two palaces, and worked on numerous projects including the Royal Thimphu College. The traditional palaces – built for two of the former king's wives – were not huge mansions. "They were four bedroom houses," says Chavda. "And the former king lived – and still lives – in a two bedroom timber cottage." This lack of ostentation and passion for tradition was emphasized at Chavda's lecture at The State of Architecture's concluding conference 'Windows and Mirrors' at the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya. "The development strategy adopted seeks to tread the 'Middle Path' – merging tradition with selective modernity," writes Chavda in his lecture brief. By decree, all buildings need to be constructed with traditional façades and cornices, sloping roofs, and decorated trefoil windows.

# Richard Belho

## India



Richard Belho, an architect from Nagaland, graduated with a Bachelor of Architecture from BMS College, Bangalore in 1999. His dedication to the field was evident during his college years, where he served as the Vice President for the National Association of Students of Architecture from 1997 to 1998. In 1999, he embarked on his professional journey as a Trainee Architect, focusing on Eco-Friendly Architecture under the guidance of Architect Chitra K. Vishwanath. This phase involved pioneering work with SMB (Stabilised Mud Blocks), Jack Arched Roofings with Hollow Clay Tiles, and Rainwater Harvesting Systems.

From 2000 to 2002, Belho contributed significantly to IT-related constructions and Building Interiors for software firms, including Hindustan Lever Limited, during his tenure with Nambisan & Associates under Architect Arjun Unnikrishnan. In April 2002, he co-founded Zynorique with Associate Architect Kezhagwetuo Peseyie. Presently, Zynorique Consultants, is actively engaged in diverse governmental projects as architectural consultants. Beyond his architectural endeavors, Belho initiated Zynorique Initiatives in 2003, focusing on capacity building and training for local youths, collaborating with various departments such as Nagaland Bamboo Development Agency, DUDA Department, Urban Development Department, Labour Department, and Employment, Skill Development, and Entrepreneurship Dept.

His noteworthy projects include the development of Agri Expo, the Bamboo Pavilion in Kisama, and the establishment of Anghya outlets in Eastern Nagaland. Belho's commitment extends to socio-economic initiatives like the launch of Mongken Apparel and lifestyle brand in collaboration with DUDA, and the establishment of The Green Caravan for organic farming and market linkages in 2015. He

played a crucial role in coordinating home deliveries during the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown in Kohima. Belho's contributions have been acknowledged with prestigious awards, including the Bamboo Pioneer Award by the World Bamboo Organisation in 2011, the Young Designer Award by Indian Architect & Builders in 2012, and the Balipara Naturenomics Award by Balipara Foundation in 2015. His innovative approach to architecture and commitment to community development exemplify his enduring impact in both the architectural and social spheres.

# Rohit Ranjitkar

## Nepal



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OF TRANSITION

Frameworks & Practices  
in South Asia

MEET THE SPEAKER

Dr. Rohit Ranjitkar, an architect and preservation consultant, serves as the Nepal Program Director of the Kathmandu Valley Preservation Trust (KVPT). His research includes the documentation and study of conservation practices in Nepal. He attained his Ph.D. in historic preservation from Byelorussian State Polytechnic Academy in 1997.

He has worked in the field of architectural conservation with the KVPT since its establishment in 1991. KVPT is an international not-for-profit organization dedicated to safeguarding Nepal's extraordinary architectural heritage. Dr. Ranjitkar is responsible for the targeting, design, and implementation of the restoration projects as well as all project fundraising, the training of local professional craftsmen and negotiations with local officials and involved community groups.

Dr. Ranjitkar also designs and implements new architectural projects, primarily centered on the adaptive transformation of old houses into luxury facilities, which are renovated in the traditional style. Dr. Ranjitkar is involved with the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, and the German Technical Cooperation as a conservation consultant. He is author of The Heritage Homeowner's Manual for the Kathmandu Valley World Heritage Sites, which provides information on how to maintain and repair old homes, along with many other technical publications. He has participated in and coordinated several conferences and seminars as a resource speaker as well as guided several training programs. He also serves as visiting professor in Purbanchal University.

Since 2007, he has been actively engaged in the restoration of the Patan Darbar Square World Heritage Site. This restoration project was further intensified by the 2015 Earthquake which damaged

a large number of monuments in the square. On the topic of the disaster, he recently published a book "Monuments of the Kathmandu Valley, Before and After the 2015 Earthquake", which documented rebuilding of damaged heritage properties in 2015 Earthquake.

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OF TRANSITION

Frameworks & Practices  
in South Asia

PANELIST



# Roshan Mishra

## Nepal



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OF TRANSITION

Frameworks & Practices  
in South Asia

MEET THE SPEAKER

Roshan holds the position of Director at Taragaon Museum and is also a visual artist based in Kathmandu. Additionally, he oversees the management of the Nepal Architecture Archive (NAA) and its library, an institution that operates under the Saraf Foundation for Himalayan Traditions and Culture, which serves as a patron organization for Taragaon Museum. His affiliation with the museum spans nearly 10 years, during which he has actively engaged in various tasks, including curating its permanent collection, establishing the Contemporary Art Gallery, and developing the Nepal Architecture Archive.

Roshan is the founder of the Global Nepali Museum and Nepalian Art, and he initiated the Mishra Museum, where he remains a custodian of its collection and a small archive. He also serves as a visiting faculty member at Kathmandu University, contributing to its research, documentation, and archiving programs. He holds Fine Arts education in Nepal, Japan, and the UK, he holds a Master's Degree. Beyond his institutional roles, Roshan actively participates in the Nepal Heritage Repatriation campaign (NHRC), dedicated to reclaiming lost and stolen Nepali cultural heritage. It is important to note that this campaign operates independently and is not linked to his current position at Taragaon Museum.

ARCHITECTURES  
OF TRANSITION

Frameworks & Practices  
in South Asia

PANELIST

# Sanjay Puri India



Frameworks & Practices  
in South Asia

MEET THE SPEAKER

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OF TRANSITION

Sanjay Puri Architects have been listed in Archdaily's list of Top 100 architects worldwide and in the WA UK top 100 architectural firms as well as the Architizer New York's top130 architecture firms in the world.

Winning the CDA 2023 Paris Best residential project worldwide, The LOOP Design Awards Best Large architectural firm, The Best housing Project worldwide in the World Architecture Festival , Lisbon 2022, The LEAF Awards London, Best interior project 2021, the firm has won over 360 awards including 270 International design awards.

The firm with founding partners Sanjay Puri & Nina Puri have won architectural projects in Australia, Spain, Montenegro, UAE, Oman & Dallas USA and are currently involved in the design of projects in 36 Indian cities.

Sanjay has been on the jury of the World Architecture Festival in Barcelona, Singapore, Berlin, Amsterdam & Lisbon being the first Indian architect to be on the jury. Sanjay has also been a judge for The Architectural Review Awards, UK, Dezeen Awards, UK, The Plan Awards, Italy , Inde Awards, Australia and been a speaker at several international & national conventions.

Sanjay is a registered member of the RIBA,UK, Society of American Registered Architects (SARA,New York), Indian Institute of Architecture (IIA), Indian Institute of Interior Designers(IIID) and has been a part of the Heritage Conservation Committee, New Delhi.

With a current firm strength of 90, evolving design solutions that are contextual and sustainable and creating spaces that explore spatial perceptions, with new design directions forms the essence of the firm's design philosophy.

ARCHITECTURES  
OF TRANSITION

Frameworks & Practices  
in South Asia

PANELIST

# Sanjeev Vidyarthi India



ARCHITECTURES  
OF TRANSITION

Frameworks & Practices  
in South Asia

MEET THE SPEAKER

Professor Sanjeev Vidyarthi is head of the department of Urban Planning and Policy (UPP) and the founding director of the Master in City Design (MCD) program at the University of Illinois Chicago (UIC). He is also the co-editor of JPH, the journal of record in the field of planning history. Exploring the case of contemporary India, he studies who does the urban planning and city design work in such a massive, complex country and how.

His experiences while living, working, and studying in diverse regions including the Middle East, Western Europe, and the United States bring an internationally comparative lens, integrative framework, and an insider/outsider perspective to his scholarship. He has published five books and many essays in leading academic journals. Sanjeev works with progressive scholars and professional practitioners worldwide.

ARCHITECTURES  
OF TRANSITION

Frameworks & Practices  
in South Asia

MODERATOR

# Senthil Kumar Doss

## India



Architect Senthil Kumar Doss, affectionately known as Skud, is recognized for his innovative work, contributions, and dedication to the field. His journey in architecture is marked by numerous achievements, collaborations, and a strong commitment to academic and research pursuits.

Senthil's architectural voyage commenced at the NIT Trichy, formerly known as the Regional Engineering College, Trichy, where he graduated in 1999. His professional journey took an auspicious turn when he embarked on an internship at the office of the renowned architect B.V. Doshi, located in Ahmedabad. This experience provided Senthil with invaluable insights into the field of architecture and urban design.

A pivotal moment in Senthil's life occurred during a study tour to Auroville, India. While on this journey, he stumbled upon a sketch that would change the course of his career. This sketch led him to his mentor, Architect Dominic Dube. Under Dominic Dube's guidance, Senthil had the opportunity to contribute to the master planning of Auroville, a unique experimental township in South India known for its commitment to sustainable living, and engage in projects related to sustainable low-cost housing and cultural initiatives.

With a wealth of experience and knowledge under his belt, Senthil ventured into establishing his own architectural practice, known as Play Architecture, located in Bangalore, India. Play Architecture's philosophy revolves around exploring various architectural "isms" and successfully integrating research and practice. Since its inception in 2005, the studio has earned recognition through a multitude of international and national awards and publications.

A particular interest in Timbrel vaulting kindled a

remarkable collaboration with the legendary South African architect, Peter Rich. This partnership resulted in meaningful conversations. Peter Rich acknowledged Senthil's groundbreaking research work on this vaulting technique and its geometric intricacies by naming it "skud vault" in his honor. Together, they conducted a joint workshop in Valencia, Spain, showcasing the potential of this innovative architectural approach.

In 2022, Senthil's dedication and innovation were recognized with two prestigious awards at the World Architecture Festival (WAF) in Lisbon, Portugal. His project was honored with the Best Small Project award and received a highly commended recognition for the Best Hospitality and Leisure Project of the Year. These accolades catapulted him onto the international stage and led to an invitation from the UNESCO Chair of Land Architecture, Constructive Cultures, and Development, alongside Máster Universitario en Conservación del Patrimonio Arquitectónico, to share his architectural journey and research.

Senthil's accomplishments extend beyond the realm of practice. He is an academician researcher and guest lecturer who conducts workshops at architecture schools around the world. In addition to his architectural pursuits, he possesses a deep-seated passion for martial arts, and he is presently engaged in writing a book that explores the fusion of physical and philosophical aspects of martial arts with architectural and structural design thinking. Notably, Senthil has also embarked on a touching endeavor. He is involved in the creation of a book dedicated to his late wife, Pradhiba, who battled schizophrenia for over three decades. This book is a testament to his commitment to humanity and his ability to channel personal experiences into meaningful contributions to the world.

# Shayari de Silva Sri Lanka



ARCHITECTURES  
OF TRANSITION

Frameworks & Practices  
in South Asia

MEET THE SPEAKER

Shayari de Silva is trained as an architect and focuses on curatorial and editorial projects. She has been with Geoffrey Bawa Trust since 2018, where she is currently Chief Curator, and manages the programmes around exhibition, publication, research, and conservation. Recent exhibitions include *The Gift*; five site-specific installations at Bawa's garden Lunuganga by Kengo Kuma, Lee Mingwei, Dominic Sansoni, Dayanita Singh and Chandragupta Thenuwara, part of the Bawa 100 Centennial Celebration (2019–2020), and *It is Essential to be There*, the first exhibition to draw from the Geoffrey Bawa Archives, which was on view in Colombo (Park Street Mews) in 2022, in New Delhi (National Gallery of Modern Art) in 2023, and is forthcoming in New Haven (Yale School of Architecture) in 2024. Shayari edited the Trust's most recent publication, *Geoffrey Bawa: Drawing from the Archives* (Lars Müller publishers, 2023) and co-edited *Perspecta 51: Medium*, the Yale Architecture Journal published by the MIT press in 2018. She has worked previously at the Yale Art Gallery and Yale Centre for British Art, where she was a Bartels Scholar in Building Conservation.

Current projects include *To Lunuganga*, an 18-month public programme spanning three monsoon seasons looking at the intersections of art, architecture and ecology on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of Bawa's garden in Bentota. As part of this programme, Shayari co-curated with Aneesha Mustachi, the Trust's Assistant Curator, Reena Kallat's site-specific work *Fluid Geographies*, and they are working on upcoming installations with architect Sumayya Vally and artist Firi Rahman, as well as *Botany and Batik: the Living Archives of Ena de Silva*, an exhibition at the Ena de Silva House designed by Geoffrey Bawa. Shayari was awarded a travel grant by the International Committee for Museums and Collections of Modern art (CIMAM)

in 2022 and a Bunka Award for excellence in the arts by the Japan Sri Lanka Cultural Fund in 2021. She has a deep research and material interest in ceramics, and runs a ceramic practice called *Clay Bodies*.

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OF TRANSITION

Frameworks & Practices  
in South Asia

PANELIST

# Snehanshu Mukherjee India



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Frameworks & Practices  
in South Asia

MEET THE SPEAKER

With over 38 years of experience in the field of architecture and design, he also has over 30 years of experience as an academician. He graduated in 1982 with a Bachelor's Degree in Architecture from School of Planning and Architecture, New Delhi. He went on to do a post-graduation as an Inlaks Scholar from MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, U.S.A.) graduating in 1988 with a specialisation in Design & Housing. While at MIT he won a competition and went on to build an installation on the Boston Commons depicting Boston in the year 2010.

Along with A R Ramanathan and Anurag Gupta, he won the first prize in the National Architectural Design Competition to design The New Wing of the NGMA (National Gallery of Modern Art), Jaipur House, New Delhi; which led to the formation of the firm T E A M (Team for Engineering Architecture and Management, New Delhi) where he has been in practice for over 38 years as a founding partner. Other major projects designed by him are Osho Dham, the Osho Commune in Delhi, Embassy of Spain Chancery Building, Laxmi Mittal School of Management Studies: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Apeejay School, Bhubaneswar. Some of the interior designing projects are the Oxford Bookstore chain across India, Osho World boutiques in Delhi and Kolkata, and The Tollygunge Club Library in Kolkata.

He has also designed major exhibitions such as the 150th Birth Anniversary International Exhibition of Rabindranath Tagore's paintings, called The Last Harvest. Amrita Shergil, the Passionate Quest exhibition for NGMA Delhi, Mumbai & Bengaluru, The Eye and the Mind, an exhibition on contemporary art from India which travelled to various cities in China.

He has taught as an Associate Professor and later Visiting Faculty at the School of Planning and

Architecture, at the TVB School of Habitat Studies, CEPT University Ahmedabad, KVRIA Mumbai, PVP College of Architecture Pune, Sushant School of Art and Architecture, Gurgaon. He has been an External Examiner, IAD at Pearl Academy for the last 4 years. He has also been a member of the Academic Council of SPA Vijayawada, and an academic advisor to IES College of Architecture, Mumbai.

#### Publications

A Search by Design for an Inclusive Housing, How Crafting Architecture Builds Economic Resilience in the Construction Industry, Architecture of Money, Nature of Cities and Taking the City Back from the Planners to the People.

He has designed sets for theatre productions such as: Operama, Hazaar Chaurasi Ki Maa and Nitai Daser Banga Darshan.

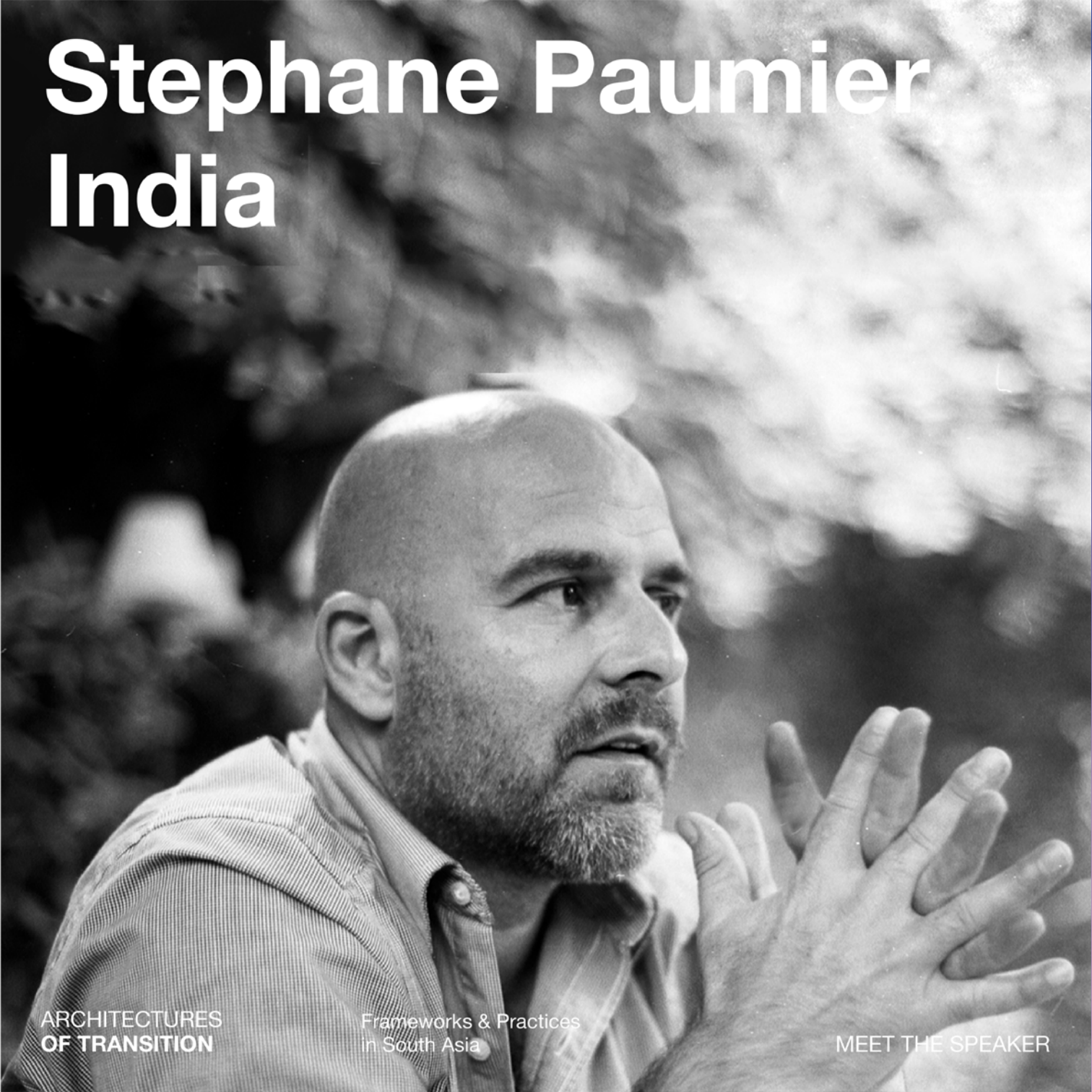
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Frameworks & Practices  
in South Asia

MODERATOR

# Stephane Paumier

## India



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Frameworks & Practices  
in South Asia

MEET THE SPEAKER

With a degree in Applied Arts, Industrial Design and finally Architecture from Paris, France, Stephane Paumier came to India in 1996 as a young professional at the French Embassy Delhi. His education in France was profoundly influenced by the Group UNO and the Peruvian experimental modernist Henri Ciriani who was his Thesis Director. He stayed further to open his own studio with Anupam Bansal and Krishnachandra Balakrishnan, SPA Design, in 2005.

Making of projects entails studies of the context of site, history of the region and technical knowledge for physical realization of desires, forms and spaces. Specific constructional and structural techniques are evolved, local materials are experimented upon. Structural design of any project is always dealt with high sensitivity. The practice believes that the structural solutions can not only support the building but also lend an aesthetic idiom to it. The clarity in structural tectonic always reveals the simplicity and order of thoughts on which the foundations of a project stand.

The practice focuses on large institutional projects combining urban design and architecture. Beyond architectural and structural expression, the practice focuses on place making as an aim for each project. The project is a catalyzer for the site, the program and the concept, building a place of common memory.

SPA Design has completed notable and awarded projects in the Indian context such as the Alliance Francaise of Delhi (World Community Award), the Tarun Tahiliani and Triburg HQ (both nominated for the Aga Khan Architecture Awards), the OP Jindal Global University (Tata Raise and Insdag Awards), the Franco German Embassy, Dhaka, the Shiv Nadar School Faridabad and recently the Ahmedabad

University Center.

Stephane Paumier has lectured or was visiting professor in Paris Belleville School of Architecture, in Normandy School of Architecture, in Societe Francaise des Architectes, in CEPT Ahmedabad and SPA Delhi.

He is the recipient of the Silver Medal, Academie d'Architecture, Paris.

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OF TRANSITION

Frameworks & Practices  
in South Asia

PANELIST

# Swati Janu

## India



Swati Janu is an architect and artist based in Delhi who works on inclusion in the built environment from gender parity in public spaces to housing rights. Recently awarded the Moira Gemmill Prize for Emerging Architecture 2022, she is the founder of the interdisciplinary practice Social Design Collaborative that has been working towards spatial justice in Indian cities. Her approach combines grassroots activism with policy advocacy, for which she regularly works as a technical consultant on inclusive urbanism. A graduate from School of Planning and Architecture, New Delhi, Swati also holds an MSc in Sustainable Urban Development from University of Oxford, UK. She teaches and writes regularly on participatory planning.



# Taimoor Khan Mumtaz Pakistan



Taimoor Khan Mumtaz, is senior architect at Kamil Khan Mumtaz Architects. He holds an MA in South Asian Design & Architecture from De Montfort University, Leicester, UK (1999) and a Bachelor of Architecture from National College of Arts, Lahore (1994).

He is also the founding director of Hast-o-Neest – Institute of Traditional Studies & Arts in Lahore. Hast-o-Neest promotes the research and study of traditional art and culture. It aims to provide an introduction to and a greater understanding of traditional thought, including Sufi doctrine and method, traditional philosophy, metaphysics and cosmology, and the arts such as calligraphy, miniature painting, classical music and Islamic architecture.

# Tshering Wangchuk Bhutan



With over 18 years of professional experience, I am currently serving as the CEO/Principal Architect at Druk Norzang Pvt Ltd, a design and build company dedicated to providing comprehensive solutions to a diverse clientele. The company specializes in end-to-end services, encompassing design, project management, and construction

I embarked on my professional journey as an architect at the National Housing Development Corporation under the Ministry of Works and Human Settlements. My first project was the prestigious and unique Ministers' Enclave project, a compound housing the residences of the Prime Minister, cabinet ministers, Leader of the opposition party, Chief Justice, and other constitutional officeholders.

After contributing five years to civil services, I transitioned to the private sector, joining Gandhara Designs as the Chief Associate Architect. During my five-year tenure at Gandhara, I played a pivotal role in designing various projects, spanning institutional buildings, hospitality ventures, and residential structures.

Recognizing the pivotal role that project execution plays alongside meticulous design, I embarked on the journey to establish a design and build company. My vision was clear — to provide clients with a comprehensive and seamless experience by integrating design, project management, and construction services all under one roof. This vision materialized into the creation of Druk Norzang Pvt Ltd.

Over the span of 8 years, our company has successfully designed and built an array of projects, including residential bungalows, apartment buildings, monastic renovations and reconstructions, hospitality ventures, commercial developments, and more. Druk Norzang Pvt Ltd has

distinguished itself as a company that harmonizes cost considerations with design aesthetics. We prioritize design intent over purely financial gains, advising clients on optimal solutions for design and cost-related challenges.

Our commitment to excellence is evident in our ability to strike a delicate balance between cost-effectiveness and premium design quality. We take pride in providing clients with thoughtful guidance, ensuring that each project achieves not only superior finishes but also adheres to timely completion schedules. At Druk Norzang Pvt Ltd, our ethos centers around achieving results that showcase a fusion of artistic vision and practicality, setting us apart as a leader in the industry.

# Vishal Khandelwal

## India



Vishal Khandelwal is a faculty member in the Department of History of Art and Architecture at Harvard University. His research and teaching encompass modern and contemporary architecture, design, and urbanism with a focus on South Asia and on cross-cultural, interdisciplinary histories. Vishal is currently writing a book on art and design pedagogy and practice at the National Institute of Design in Ahmedabad through the work of key individuals who taught visual communication, textile design, architecture, and product design at this experimental design school and at other academies in Ahmedabad and beyond between 1955 and 1985. His work has received a number of prestigious awards, and his writings have appeared in *The Journal of Modern Craft* and in *ARTMargins*. Vishal completed his B.A. from DePauw University, Indiana, in art history and economics, and his M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Michigan in art and architectural history.

ARCHITECTURES  
OF TRANSITION

Frameworks & Practices  
in South Asia

MEET THE SPEAKER

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OF TRANSITION

Frameworks & Practices  
in South Asia

MODERATOR

# Vivek Rawal

## India



Vivek Rawal trained as an architect from School of Planning and Architecture, New Delhi, is currently based out of Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India. Working as Director, People in Centre Consulting, he has been involved in many post-disaster reconstruction and recovery programs for past 30 years in India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, and Afghanistan. In India, he has also been involved in preparation of National Guidelines on Temporary Shelters and Training Manual on Hazard Resistant Construction with mandate from National Disaster Management Authority. He is also founder member of Owner Driven Reconstruction Collaborative (ODRC) - an Indian network of individuals and NGOs working to support various nation-states in implementing post disaster owner driven housing reconstruction programs. He has been advocating for enabling policy frameworks that can ensure people's ownership over their own housing process. Repairs and retrofitting of old or damaged houses have been a key dimension in the post-disaster recovery programs. Vivek Rawal has been involved in supporting policy formulation, facilitating implementation as well as training of engineers and artisans in repairs and retrofitting.

# Vyjayanthi Rao

## India



Vyjayanthi V. Rao is an anthropologist, writer and curator, teaching at the Yale School of Architecture. Focusing on memory, heritage and the built environment, her work explores the intersections of violence, uncertainty and speculation through scholarly writing and fieldwork in India and the United States. Her research draws on sound, image, mapping and collaborations with visual artists. She has published extensively on these subjects, co-curated two major exhibitions for the Lisbon Architecture Triennale (2022) and the Center for Architecture in New York (2023) and participated as an artist in the Kochi Biennale (2016) and the Chicago Biennale of Architecture (2023). Since 2023, she has been one of the Editors in Chief of the journal *Public Culture* (Duke University Press).

ARCHITECTURES  
OF TRANSITION

Frameworks & Practices  
in South Asia

MEET THE SPEAKER

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OF TRANSITION

Frameworks & Practices  
in South Asia

MODERATOR

# Yawar Jilani Pakistan



Architect Yawar Jilani is a principal at Arcop-Pakistan, a firm he established with Architect Mahboob Khan, in 1987. He received his early training under the tutelage of Architect Ramesh Khosla.

Through their Architecture, the firm aspires to develop dialogues between people, context and culture. They strive to move Architecture to a realm of timeless social relevance and compassionate sensitivity.

Their work is governed by the greater precepts of regional modernism. The practice attempts to translate contextuality through a language of modernity, while exploring local craft traditions, materiality and building techniques.

They see the importance of dialogue, co thinking, cultural imagination, history, geography and urbanism as important to the process of place making and Architecture.

They are greatly concerned at the regional loss of identities in our cities and other landscapes. The continued decline of craft, indigenous traditions and Architecture, to commercialism and political indifference motivates them to reach out directly to communities and individuals by attempting to make Architecture "available for all."

The firm has a diversified portfolio ranging from housing for low-income communities, education, healthcare and institutional projects. Their work, spread over three decades, has earned them international and regional recognition in the way of awards, commissions and publication