asianpaints

COLOUR NXT

Colour & Material Intelligence

Forecast Report

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Forecast Report

About ColourNext

At Asian Paints, we've been studying colour and its varied influences on lifestyle since 2003 and year after year we are fascinated by the small and big stories that emerge out of the vibrant landscape that is this world.

Every year, our colour marketing team collaborates with experts from a range of creative disciplines -- architecture, art, interiors, fashion, sociology, media and FMCG, to put together ColourNext, a comprehensive forecast of design directions in colours, materials, textures and finishes that are relevant to the world. Over the years, ColourNext has evolved as South Asia's foremost, one-of-its-kind, intelligence in colour and material.

Introduction

The ColourNext forecast report dives deeper to chronicle the context and catalysts for each of the forecast design directions. The report captures their manifestation in society and in various areas of design such as spaces, communication, food, apparel and lifestyle. With an enhanced narrative of the directions and their application, the report has interdisciplinary insight for everyone designing products, spaces or even communication for India.

The report also presents the Colour of the Year—Terra, giving readers an understanding of this year's design mood and sentiment.

A direction unexplored remains just that -- a passed-over possibility, an idea ahead of its time, a path not taken. But when keen minds imagine, decode and interpret these design directions, they become beautiful concepts, products and even objets d'art! This report will be an invaluable guide on that journey.

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SOIL

Refining the earth into modern sanctuaries

> “ The soil is the great connector of lives, the source and destination of all.”
>
> – Walt Whitman

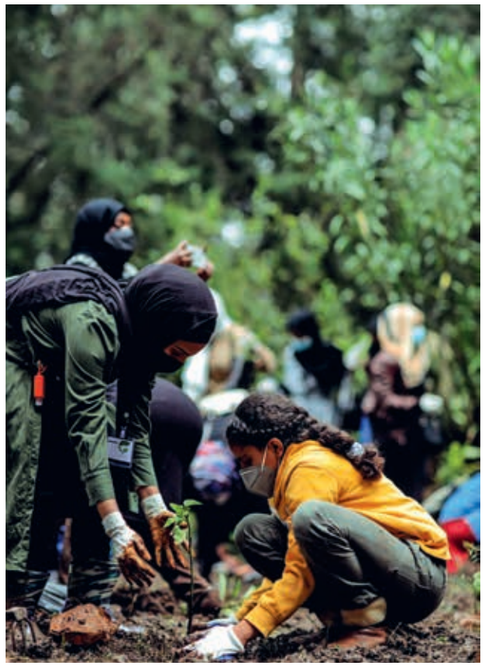
Soil, unassumingly seen as the earth beneath our feet once upon a time, has evolved into an innovative material, fuelling curiosity and design experimentation. It stands as a testament to the exploration of materiality, where the granularity of soil has been reshaped into pioneering forms. Moving beyond its raw, handcrafted origins, soil has been transformed through human ingenuity into avant-garde structures with bold contemporary aesthetics. This evolution highlights soil as a versatile material, where it now takes on diverse, dynamic shapes, showcasing its adaptability. Blending meticulous craftsmanship with a futuristic vision, soil bridges its earthy origins with cutting-edge design, marking a pathway for rediscovery and innovation.

Triggers

A longing for rootedness in modern life

As technology reshapes our life, we find ourselves steering back to our roots and primary materials. This shift isn't just nostalgic; it's a deliberate choice to re-envision contemporary design with grounding simplicity. There's a yearning for a symbol of continuity and stability, offering a tangible connection to the earth amidst our digital existence.

Image source: Adobe Stock Images



A global quest for sustainability

As resources deplete and environmental concerns intensify, there's a shift towards embracing materials and methods that have minimal ecological impact. This trend, driven by both necessity and ethos, sees individuals and industries gravitating towards natural, recyclable and long-lasting solutions, often rooted in ancestral knowledge.

Image source: Adobe Stock Images and Unsplash





Advancements in green technology

Developments in 3D printing with organic materials have enabled designers and architects across the globe to use soil in novel and innovative ways. This technological evolution has expanded the possibilities for soil as a material, not just in traditional construction, but also in modern, forward-thinking design applications.



Wallmakers has created a snake-like house in the village of Shoolagiri

Image source: Wallmakers



The rise of biophilic design

The increasing recognition of the benefits of connecting humans with nature (in their living and working spaces) has fueled a trend towards biophilic design. Soil, with its inherent organic properties, is inspiring unique designs and architecture to build places that foster a closer relationship with the natural environment.



The Stoic Wall Residence by Lijo Reny Architects located in Kadirur, Kannur

Image source: LIJO.RENY Architects

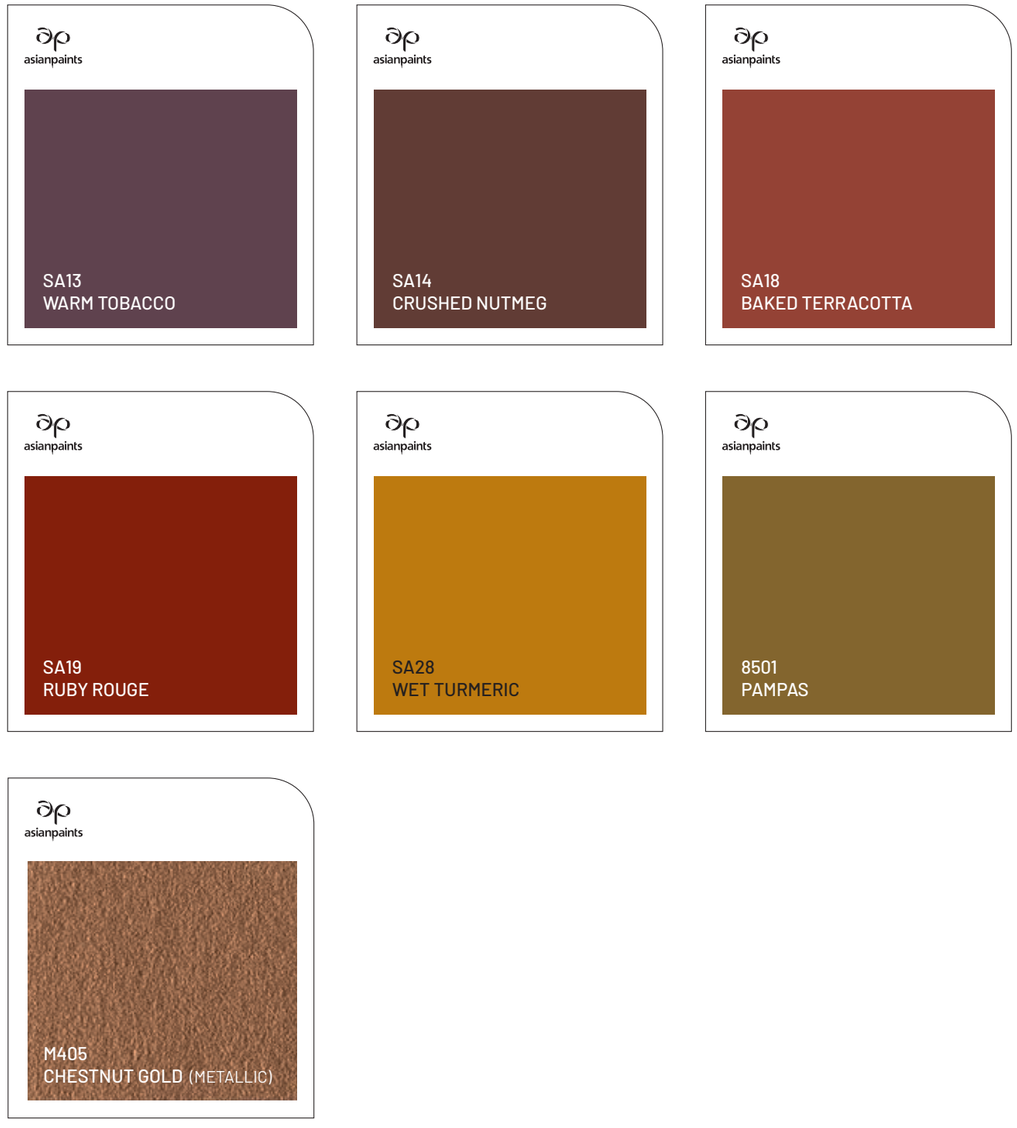


Colour Forecast

"Rediscover nature's embrace in every shade."

A symphony of earthy tones

Each hue in this palette draws inspiration from nature's raw beauty—evoking the depths of rich soil, the warmth of sun-touched clay, and the comforting embrace of organic elements. Together, they convey a narrative of timeless connection and the grounding embrace of our environment.



Material Forecast

"Nature always wears the colours of the spirit."

– Ralph Waldo Emerson





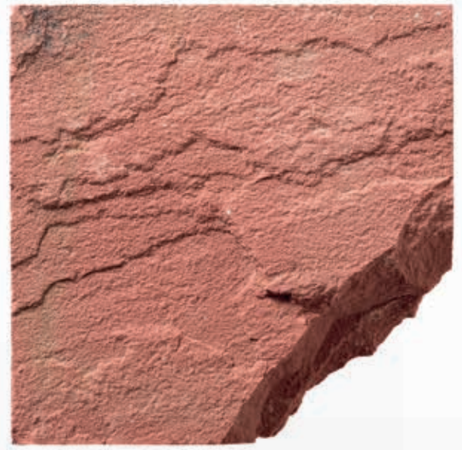




The sustainable technique of rammed earth marries architectural strength with environmental harmony.

With deep, rich tones of the earth, black soil pottery embodies centuries of tradition, timeless beauty and artisanal skill.

A variety of limestone formed by the evaporation of river and spring waters, travertine displays a warm, porous texture with distinct intricate veining.



HARD MATERIALS

Echoing the essence of the earth—combining the ruggedness of natural stone with the lustre of metals—these surfaces range from richly veined to smoothly polished, resonating authenticity and heritage. Anchored in nature's bounty, they symbolise a marriage of age-old traditions with contemporary sensibilities, evoking a timeless elegance and grounded aesthetics









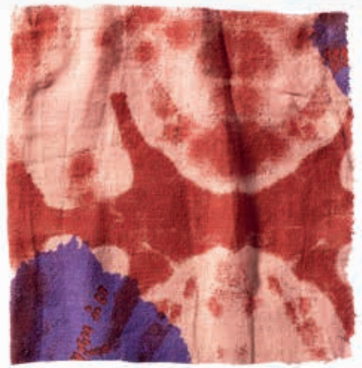














A renewable and buoyant material, cork offers a soft, tactile texture and natural warmth .

A plant-based leather grown with coconut waste, coconut leather is durable, luxurious and sustainable. The material feels comparable to natural leather, repels water and does not contain chemical additives.

The tannic acids and iron in soil forms a natural dye used colour materials with rich, ruddy hues that are warm and comforting.



SOFT MATERIALS

Drawing from nature's bounty, these textiles weave a story of earthy authenticity and sustainability. Their tactile richness and organic character are reminiscent of age-old traditions—connecting the past with the present. Through their textures and inherent properties, they echo a sense of warmth, comfort, and an unwavering commitment to the environment.









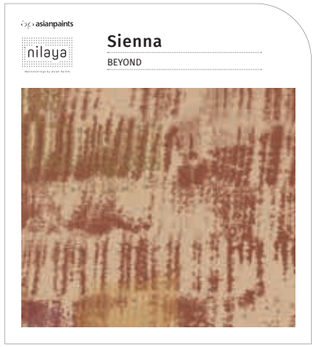


Wallpaper & Texture Forecast

The elegance of the earth

The wallpaper collection from this earth-inspired series is a homage to the tactile essence of the land. ‘Earth Sign’ mimics the undulating beauty of sand dunes, with a soothing palette that transforms spaces into tranquil sanctuaries reminiscent of a warm, cherished memory. ‘Sienna’ offers a more dynamic experience with its rich, earth-toned lines that suggest the raw, unrefined touch of soil—lending a room both energy and tranquility. These patterns are a celebration of the organic; an invitation to connect with the grounding, nurturing spirit of the earth.







Earth Sign Wallpaper in use



Lithos Earth Red Texture in use

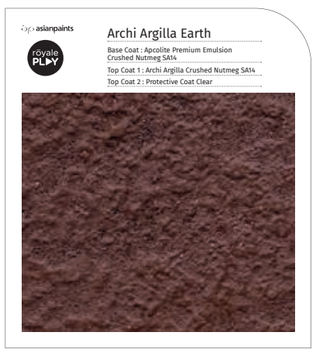
The raw serenity of earth's palette

Capturing the timeless rugged beauty of the desert, hues of arid landscapes—from neutral nudes to rich reds—promise to infuse spaces with a raw yet serene, meditative quality. Perfect for those seeking to ground their surroundings in nature's own calm and contemplative spirit.









WE KNOW MORE
ABOUT THE
MOVEMENT
OF CELESTIAL
BODIES THAN
ABOUT THE
SOIL UNDERFOOT.

- LEONARDO DA VINCI

Mini Stories for Soil

Embracing Earth's Timeless Tales

Whispers from the Earth's Core

Mini Story 1

Embracing earth's timeless tales

In the heart of rural India, artisans meticulously mould black soil into exquisite pottery—a craft passed down through generations. But, this age-old tradition is not just limited to India—from rammed earth structures in China to the mud-brick houses in Yemen's Shibam, humans have always turned to the earth beneath them. These practices aren't just about utility; they signify a deeper connection to our planet and a respect for its bounties. Modern architects, designers and engineers, such as Indian innovator Sonam Wangchuk, recognize the eco-friendly and sustainable nature of these materials, and have begun to integrate them into contemporary spaces. The innovation doesn't stop there. Farmers in Japan enrich their soil with fermented organic matter, drawing from an ancient composting technique, Bokashi, which bolsters crop yield. As the world turns a page towards sustainable solutions, it becomes evident: our roots, deep within the earth, have always held the answers.



Al Kharan Village in Wadi Dawan

Image source: Adobe Stock Images

Mini Story 2

Whispers from the earth's core

In the valleys of Oaxaca, Mexico, locals have long revered the art of making barro negro pottery, a practice deeply intertwined with the region's identity. This shimmering black ceramic, shaped and fired in traditional ways, stands as a testament to the earth's gifts. Similarly, Morocco's ancient towns flaunt earthen constructions, built with a blend of straw and local soil, reflecting resilience and sustainability. The terracotta warriors in Xi'an, China, sculpted from regional clay, serve as silent sentinels of history, narrating tales of valour and craftsmanship. Further west, in the vineyards of Tuscany, soil plays a pivotal role, its unique composition giving wine its distinct flavour profile. As industries evolve and seek sustainable alternatives, it's evident that looking back to traditions—to the very ground beneath our feet—offers insights for a harmonious future.



Terracotta army warriors in Xian, China

Image source: Adobe Stock Images

Design Examples

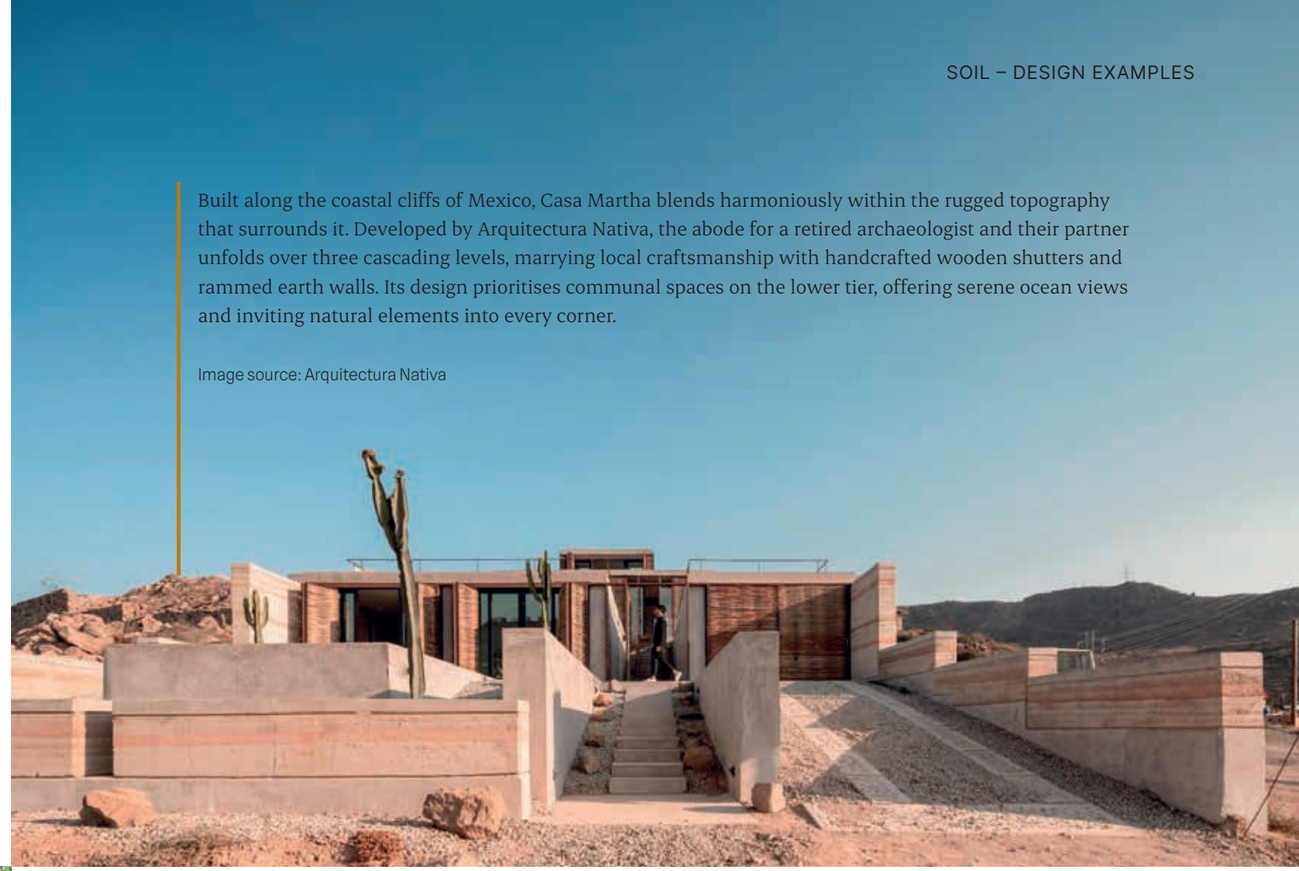
Seattle's Recompose, an innovative funeral home, transforms human remains into nutrient-rich soil. Located in a repurposed warehouse, it employs natural organic reduction, a method legalised in Washington in 2019. Bodies decompose on plant beds within steel vessels, turning into fertile soil in 60 days. This eco-friendly alternative to traditional burial or cremation allows families to use the soil for planting, memorialising loved ones while giving back to nature.

Image source: Austin Wilson



Built along the coastal cliffs of Mexico, Casa Martha blends harmoniously within the rugged topography that surrounds it. Developed by Arquitectura Nativa, the abode for a retired archaeologist and their partner unfolds over three cascading levels, marrying local craftsmanship with handcrafted wooden shutters and rammed earth walls. Its design prioritises communal spaces on the lower tier, offering serene ocean views and inviting natural elements into every corner.

Image source: Arquitectura Nativa







Crafted by pouring concrete into holes dug in the ground, a Japanese house and restaurant are contained within a mud-covered building by architect Junya Ishigami. Comprising a maze of cavernous spaces separated by arched openings and stalagmite-like columns, the entire structure is positioned within the ground and concealed at street level, taking on the curves and imperfections of the excavated site. To prevent the mud from washing off, it has been hardened using a Japanese method for repairing earthen walls.

Image source: junya.ishigami+associates





Mitti ke Rang, a 3,250-square-foot restaurant in Ahmedabad, uses local organic materials like clay, and indigenous crafts and labour practices to minimise waste generated by urban lifestyle. Clay mixed with a dye extracted from the palash flower, turmeric and hay creates a golden paste, which has been applied on the walls to obtain a textured surface with a wave-like pattern that traces the rhythm of the hand movements.

Image source: Photographix India





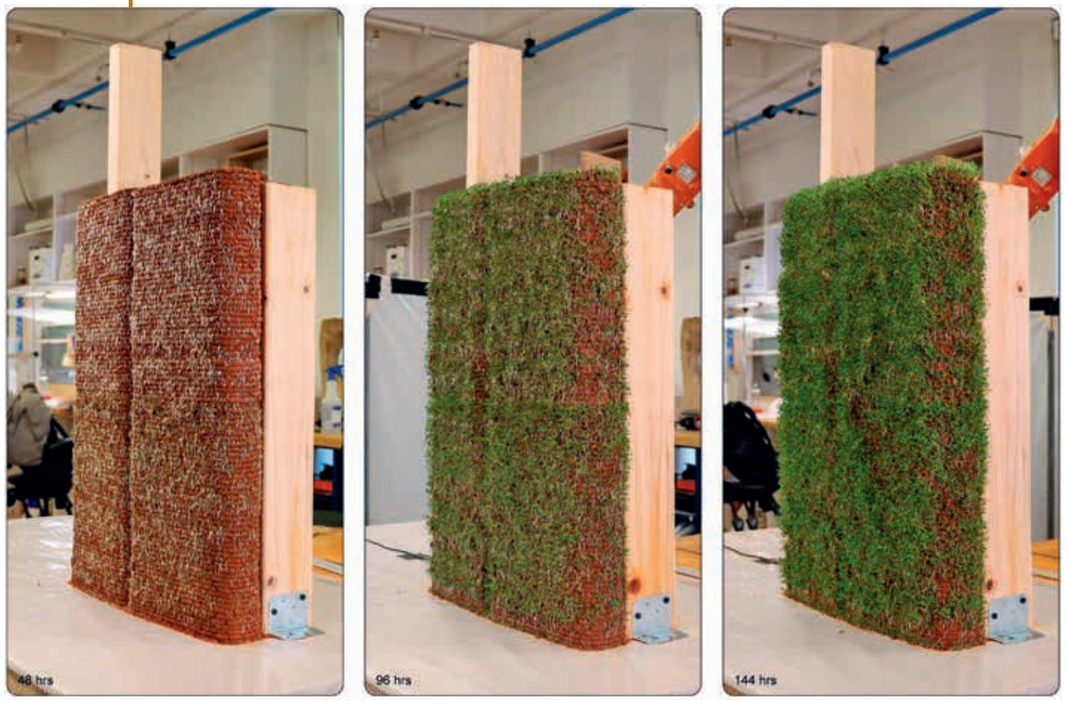
At Dutch Design Week 2022, Yuhan Bai (a fashion student at Royal College of Art) presented the Soil Project—a clothing collection made with a soil-based leather alternative, along with vintage garments dyed with soil. Driven by concerns about fashion's environmental toll, Bai innovated a pliable, leather-like biomaterial from a concoction of gelatin, starch and soil to offer an eco-conscious alternative to traditional textiles.

Image source: Yuhan Bai



Researchers at the University of Virginia have invented a 3D printing technique using seed-impregnated soil to transform raw-earth structures into green living architecture. This innovative approach, likened to creating colossal Chia Pets, integrates vegetation directly into buildings, promising benefits like insulation and biodiversity support. It has the potential to reduce the need for more emission-intensive building materials, replacing them with a circular alternative.

Image source: Ehsan Baharlou





INTO THE DEEP

Embracing the fantastical depths of oceanic marvels

> “ The sea is everything. It covers seven tenths of the terrestrial globe. Its breath is pure and healthy. It is an immense desert, where man is never lonely, for he feels life stirring on all sides.”
>
> – Jules Verne,
> Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea

Amidst concerns over climate change’s impact on the oceans, there’s mounting concern for marine ecosystems. It is a world of alien beauty, an element with formidable power, characterised by glimmering azure hues, and a beguiling sense of weightlessness. This underwater realm, with its biomorphic forms and contrasting interplay of light, invokes both reflection and awe. Its fragile beauty inspires mindful designs that reflect a respect for the ocean’s integral role in the earth’s ecosystem. With contrasting emotions of awe and fear, we are prompted to respect and cherish the ocean’s mysteries. Encouraging a design philosophy that mirrors the ocean’s dynamic yet delicate nature, we’re guided towards creating spaces and objects that resonate with the deep, serene essence of the marine world.

Triggers

The impact of climate change

The escalating effects of climate change have intensified global concerns, resulting in pronounced shifts in human behaviour and perspective. As water pollution, temperatures and sea levels rise—making our oceans alarmingly toxic and marine ecosystems teeter—society increasingly gravitates towards understanding, preserving and seeking solace in the ocean's enigmatic depths. A growing sense of concern and urgency has begun to shape our emotions and expressions, which are evolving with this impact swiftly.

A team of volunteers pulling trash out of a dead fish's mouth.

Image source: Adobe Stock Images



Rapidly rising sea levels

As sea levels continue to rise, it paints a stark picture of our planet's fragility—evoking a global sense of urgency. This tangible environmental threat not only magnifies our concerns but also profoundly influences societal values, perspectives and behaviours. Across communities, there's a palpable drive to understand, adapt and mitigate—leading to innovative approaches in design, policy and lifestyle choices, all shaped by the advancing tides.



(Right) Waves of the sea erode the road
(Bottom) Houses built on weak clay soil slide down to the sea and collapse

Image source: Adobe Stock Images



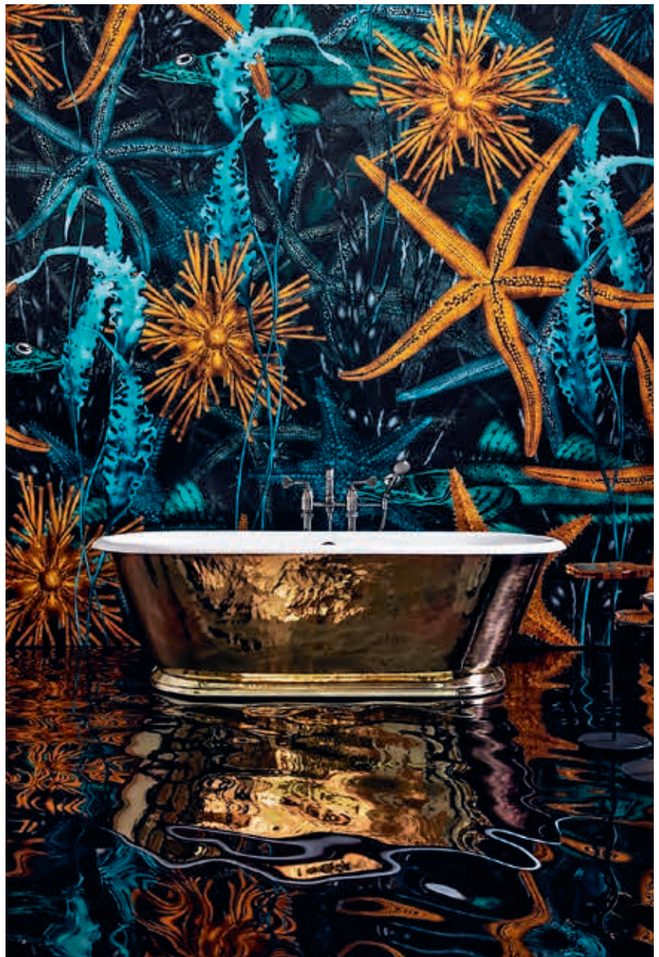
A renaissance in sea-inspired designs

The mesmerising beauty and intricate patterns found in marine life, coral reefs and underwater ecosystems are inspiring a new wave of design. From architecture to fashion, the allure of the ocean's vibrant colours, textures and forms is influencing creative expressions and pushing boundaries in design innovation.

The food industry has been quick to catch up with foods infused with black charcoal, black sesame and even black garlic being hailed as the essence of immortality.

Image source: Getty Images





Oceanic materials revolutionising eco-friendly design

The quest for sustainable design solutions has led to a surge in the development and use of eco-friendly materials inspired by the sea. Seaweed-based textiles, recycled ocean plastics and biodegradable materials are shaping a more environmentally conscious approach to design, encouraging the use of materials that reduce harm to ocean ecosystems.



Image source: Violaine Buet & Adidas





Colour Forecast

"An invitation to immerse oneself in the enigmatic beauty of the deep."

Dive into nature's mystical depths

This palette captures the serene embrace of the ocean's depth, blending the cool abyss with shimmering moonlit tones. Each shade evokes feelings of tranquil underwater exploration, from silent submarine caverns to the glint of elusive marine creatures.

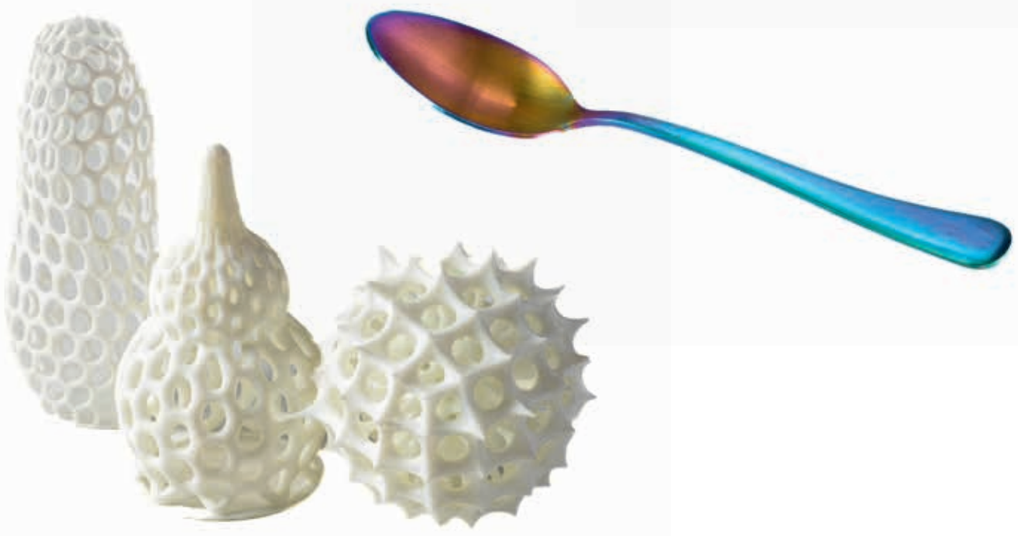


Material Forecast

" The sea, once it casts its spell, holds one in its net of wonder forever."

– Jacques Cousteau









HARD MATERIALS

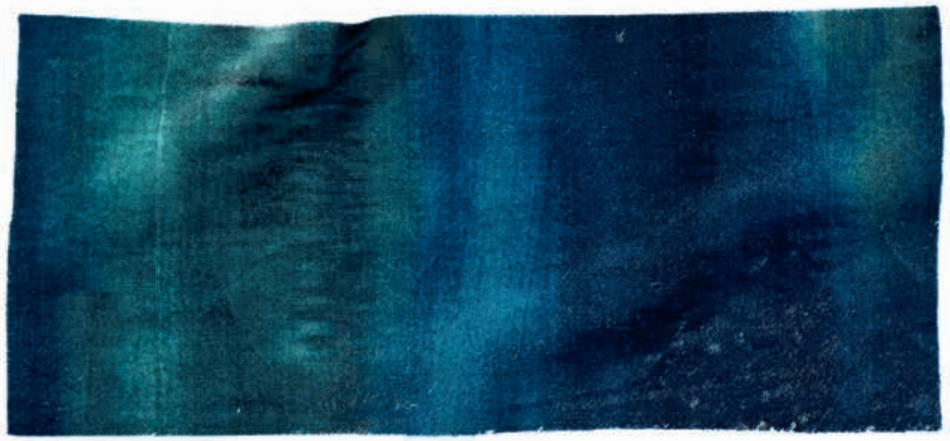
The interplay of elements beckons a voyage into aquatic realms, blending natural inspiration with innovative craftsmanship. Each surface shimmers and morphs, reflecting deep aquatic hues and the dance of light in underwater caverns, marrying the mysteries of the ocean with modern day artistry.

With a spectrum of colours, the surface of iridescent metals are treated through sophisticated processes like Physical Vapour Deposition (PVD) or anodic oxidation, to reflect a vibrant, shifting array of hues.

3D-moulds mimicking natural reef structures are used to print 3D corals which are cast in ceramic material akin to calcium carbonate found in natural reefs.

Cracked glass, a strikingly textured material crafted through thermal shock and lamination, melds resilience with intricate beauty for architectural and furniture design. It is a laminated glass made with three layers of glass with a PVB interlayer, where the two outer layers will be intact panels bonded to the inner cracked layer.











SOFT MATERIALS

In a realm where light interacts with fluidity, these materials whisk us away into an ethereal underwater world. Their shimmer and drape mirror the glistening ocean surfaces and the cascading play of colours, echoing both the depth of the sea and the ever-changing play of light upon its waves.



A seamless gradient of colours in ombre-dyed fabrics transition smoothly, creating a visually captivating effect that adds depth and dimension to textile artistry.

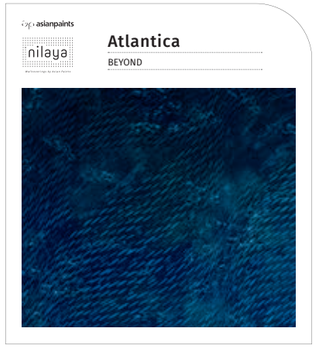
Precision-folded textiles sculpted through thermal processing create heat-set pleated fabrics with durable, crisp pleats that add a structure and uniformity in an space.

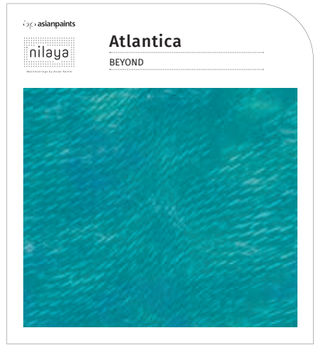


Wallpaper & Texture Forecast

The deep blue mystical allure

Immersing spaces in the depths of oceanic enchantment, ‘Mariana’ plunges us into the abyss with gradations of deep blue, punctuated by glimmers that mimic the ocean’s fleeting light. It’s design invites contemplation, perfect against the vibrant contrast of red-leafed flora. ‘Atlantica’ weaves a tapestry of aquatic fantasy, where dappled shadows play on hues of tranquility. Its serene pattern is ideal for spaces seeking harmony with soft, restful colours crafting an atmosphere of mystical calm. Together, these designs capture the ocean’s enigmatic beauty and its mesmerizing, eternal allure.







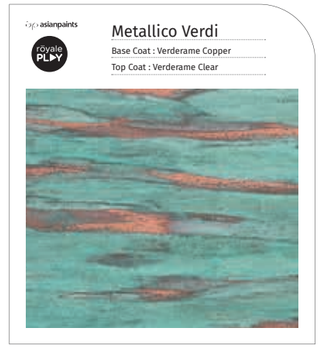
Atlantica Wallpaper in use



Metallico Verdi Texture in use

Touch and discover the ocean's depth

Capturing the enigmatic allure of the ocean's depths, these tactile finishes reveal the seabed's mysteries with shades and textures that reflect the shimmering interplay of light that dances through water. Reminiscent of the waves that ripple over submerged treasures and the serene, pulsating life of the aquatic realm, these textures are a call to the senses—inviting a touch, promising both the thrill of discovery and the tranquillity of the sea.











“ We are the first generation to feel the impact of climate change and the last generation that can do something about it.”

– Barack Obama

Mini Stories for Into the Deep

Journeying to the Abyss

The Coral Chronicles

Mini Story 1

Journeying to the abyss

For centuries, the ocean's depths have lured explorers with its mysteries, offering promises of discovery and insight into the planet's most enigmatic realms. Early Polynesian navigators, renowned for their incredible sea voyages, relied on the stars and intricate stick charts to traverse vast oceanic stretches. Their intimate knowledge of ocean currents and swells laid the groundwork for centuries of exploration that followed. The iconic HMS Challenger expedition of the 1870s marked a transformative era in deep-sea exploration—meticulously mapping vast portions of the ocean floor to unveil thousands of previously unknown species—paving the way for future maritime studies. A significant milestone was reached in 1960, when the Bathyscaphe Trieste plunged into the Mariana Trench's Challenger Deep—the deepest known point on Earth's seabed. More recently, filmmaker and explorer James Cameron reignited public fascination with the abyss when he solo-piloted his submersible to the Challenger Deep in 2012. Earlier, Cameron also undertook ambitious expeditions to the wreck of the Titanic, capturing hauntingly beautiful images of the ship's remains. In our ongoing quest, emerging technologies continue to uncover deep-sea ecosystems, constantly reminding us of the vast, uncharted territories that lie beneath, waiting to reveal their secrets.



Image source: Mark Thiessen/National Geographic

Mini Story 2

The coral chronicles

Long before humanity built its towering skyscrapers, nature had already erected its own bustling metropolises beneath the ocean waves with coral reefs. These underwater ecosystems, often likened to rainforests for their staggering biodiversity, have been nature's master architects, meticulously crafting intricate structures over thousands of years. Each individual coral is a tiny polyp that collaborates in colonies to create vast, colourful expanses that teem with life. From the tiny neon gobies to the majestic manta rays, these reefs offer refuge, sustenance and breeding grounds for countless marine species. Their importance transcends marine boundaries; they protect coastlines, support fisheries, and even hold potential for medical breakthroughs. Yet, these vibrant cities face existential threats. Climate change, with its escalating temperatures, has resulted in devastating coral bleaching. Polluted runoff, overfishing and physical damage compound their vulnerabilities. The once vibrant reefs now stand like silent ghost towns, with their pale, white structures bearing testament to their former glory. However, hope is not lost. Across the globe, marine biologists, conservationists, and even local communities have become coral guardians. Through initiatives like coral farming, transplanting resilient species, and pioneering restoration techniques, efforts to rejuvenate these underwater wonders are underway.



Image source: Adobe Stock Images

Design Examples

ReReef revolutionises deep water coral research by simplifying data collections from elusive reefs. While these reefs account for half of all coral coverage, they've remained understudied due to high costs and their remote locations. Equipped with sensors, an infrared camera, hydrophones and sonar, ReReef broadcasts invaluable data, bridging the gap for researchers and conservationists.

Image source: ReReef





Decibel addresses noise pollution, a silent but lethal threat to marine life, using nature's own tools. By fostering kelp and oyster growth, it creates a natural acoustic shield along shipping routes and initiates a marine permaculture cycle. This system not only counters sound pollution but also supports a sustainable harvest of oysters, fish and kelp.

Image source: Decibel

At the India Art Fair 2023, Mumbai-based artist Parag Tandel's monumental sculptural installation was a thought-provoking reflection on Mumbai's ecological shifts due to unchecked human desires. Journeying through the city's historic map showcasing its seven original islands, one could traverse fish drying racks displaying Bombay duck made of concrete and dental stone, and tread barefoot on a silicone rubber floor adorned with bas-relief motifs of indigenous marine creatures. Tandel invited attendees to ponder and face the environmental repercussions of human choices.

Image source: TARQ





The world's largest underwater restaurant, Under, in Lindesnes, immerses diners five metres below the icy waters in Southern Norway, offering a panoramic seabed view of the North Atlantic's hidden marine ecosystem. Designed by Norwegian architectural firm Snøhetta to meld into its surroundings, the structure's coarse concrete exterior will evolve into an artificial reef, attracting limpets and kelp over time.

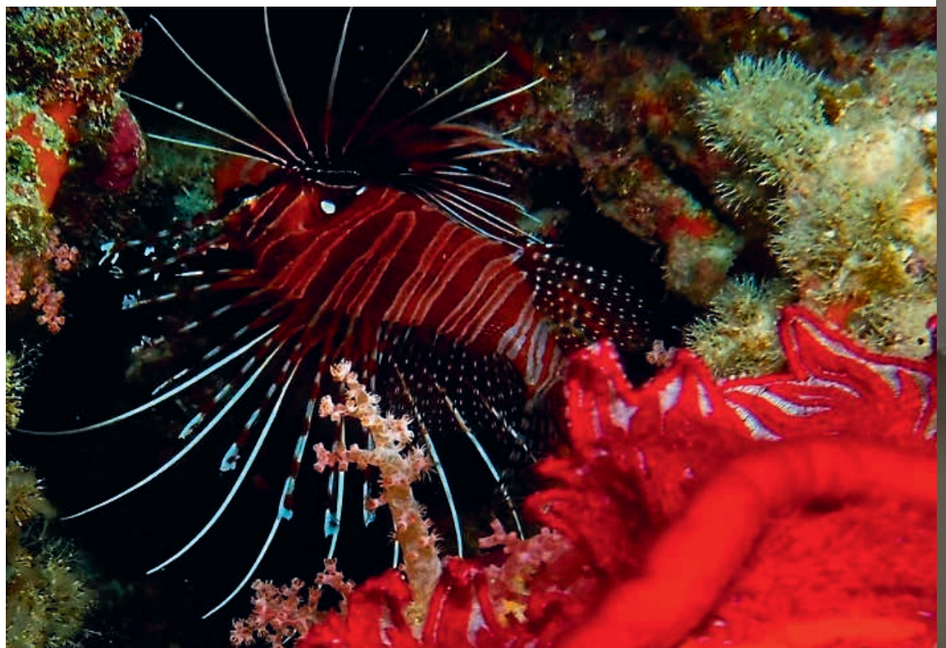
Image source: Snøhetta





From a tiny shrimp swimming close to Chanderi fabric to a gorgonian sea fan approaching a white embroidered garment—a photography exhibition titled ‘Rinascimento’ by Vaishali Shadangule and Alessandro Giuliani (founder of fashion label Vaishali S Couture and its principal designer respectively) at Jamaat Art Gallery, Mumbai, captured delicate Indian weaves under the ocean. The compositions displayed a juxtapositioning of Indian fabric with marine life.

Image source: Jamaat Art Gallery



Roca’s installation at Milan Design Week 2022 echoed the shape of tidal waves to display an immersive experience of being enveloped by the sea

Image source: Roca



INDO FUTURISM

India's retro-futuristic cultural tapestry

> “ Tradition is not to preserve the ashes but to pass on the flame.”
>
> – Gustav Mahler

Gazing into the future through the heritage-rich lens of the past, this homegrown vision sculpts an innovative expression where the realms of science fiction converge with cultural iconography. Harmoniously blending the warmth of familiar landscapes, attire and folklore with the intriguing allure of futuristic narratives, it creates a surreal and absurdist panorama. This fusion forms a new visual language of indigenous expression, where classic elements are transformed to adopt a layer of abstraction that challenges and enriches the ordinary. The colour palette makes a statement—combining robust, deeply pigmented shades with striking metallics, rooted in a rich cultural memory. It’s more than just an aesthetic; it’s a confident celebration of identity in a vibrant tapestry of imagination and innovation.

Triggers

India’s cultural renaissance of self expression

India’s visual renaissance resists and rejects external interpretations and representations. Asserting its identity globally, there’s been a growing movement to reframe the country’s culture with an Indo-centric gaze. This cultural recalibration rejects stereotypical portrayals, fostering authenticity and self-representation. The result marries heritage with a futuristic narrative to embody a profound cultural shift and defy external impositions.

Street market with souvenirs in city Pushkar, Rajasthan, India.

Image source: Adobe Stock Images



Nurturing cultural authenticity

Fueled by a rising creative appetite for a distinct homegrown pop-culture expression, India has quickly begun to reject borrowed narratives. Akin to the global phenomena of K-pop and anime, this movement captures the nation’s unique creative energy. It positions India on the world stage with a dynamic and uniquely ownable aesthetic.



(Right) A music festival in Bengaluru, India
(Bottom) The festival of Holi in India

Image source: Unsplash & Adobe Stock Images



Digital empowerment and connectivity

The increasing digital empowerment in India contributes to the emergence of a design trend that reflects the nation's forward-thinking spirit. The rapid adoption of technology and widespread connectivity has fueled a visual movement that not only embraces the digital age but also propels Indian aesthetics onto the global stage. From digital art to virtual experiences, this trend highlights the nation's engagement with the modern world while retaining a strong connection to its cultural roots.

Image source: Adobe Stock Images



Youth-driven creative expression

The younger generation, inspired by a desire to define their cultural narrative, is reshaping India's visual landscape. Driven by youthful energy and a quest for self-expression, there's a growing trend of blending traditional motifs with futuristic elements—creating a dynamic fusion of the old and the new. It signifies a generational shift in how India presents itself visually, mirroring the aspirations and creativity of the nation's youth.

Image source: Adobe Stock Images





Colour Forecast

"Tradition paints innovation's canvas."

Vibrant heritage meets tomorrow

This harmonious palette blends deep, historic hues with metallic modernity, invoking the fusion of tradition and technology. The rich, earthy tones ground the collection, while the bold metallics and vibrant blues suggest a leap towards a futuristic vision, echoing the energetic pulse of innovation intertwined with cultural depth.



Material Forecast

"The future depends on what we do in the present."

– Mahatma Gandhi









HARD MATERIALS

This palette presents a captivating blend of materials, each evoking a distinct narrative where innovation meets heritage. From the tactile allure of organically textured surfaces to the sleek sophistication of polished finishes—these elements form a symphony of contrasts. The lustre of refined metals cast an interplay of light and shadow; while innovative bio-based substances offer a nod to sustainability. The collection, punctuated by the sheen of iridescent finishes and the clarity of optical glass, reflect a vision where the past and the future unite harmoniously in the present.





Exuding a warm, golden glow, brass is known for its enduring strength and resistance to corrosion, while enhancing any space with its lustrous sparkle.

Crafted with meticulous artistry, gold-embellished jewellery blends the timeless allure of gold with intricate designs, creating pieces that exude luxury and heritage.





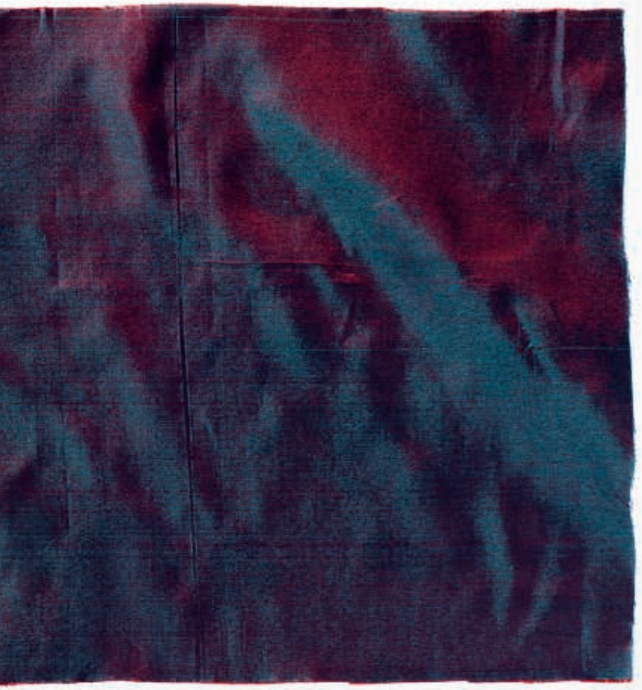
SOFT MATERIALS

This collection of textiles represents a blend of conscious luxury and sensory indulgence. Laser-cut fabrics showcase precision and intricate patterns, creating a dance of light and shadow that blurs the line between the tactile and the ethereal. The patterns and finishes exude a daring charisma, which together weave a narrative of sophistication and sustainability, marrying the sleekness of modern design with the organic essence of the natural world.











Textiles infused with a shimmering finish create metallic fabrics which weave together softness with a glamorous sparkle.

Digitally printed fabrics showcase vibrant, precise patterns and imagery, offering endless possibilities for creativity and personalisation .





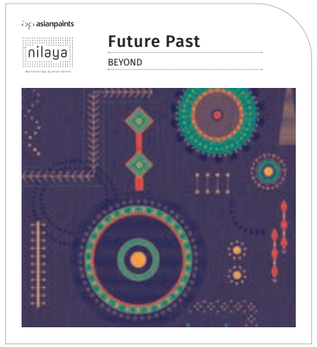


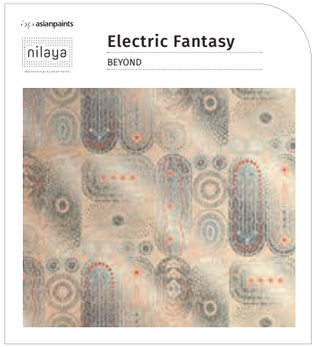


Wallpaper & Texture Forecast

Retro meets future in this time tapestry

This wallpaper series is a dynamic dance across time, where tradition and tomorrow converge. ‘Electric Fantasy’ dazzles with its retro-glam vibrancy, where ancient symbols meet futuristic forms, sparking a space ripe with personality and possibility. ‘Future Past’ weaves a timeless narrative, draping classical motifs across a canvas of futuristic patterns to create a visual feast that speaks to the heart’s eternal rhythm. The collection is an ode to the timeless journey of design, celebrating a spectrum that stretches from the echoes of the past to the whispers of the future—set against a backdrop that’s as tactile as it is visually enchanting.







Electric Fantasy Wallpaper in use

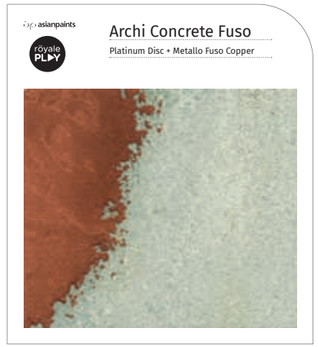


Metallo Fuso Bronze Texture in use

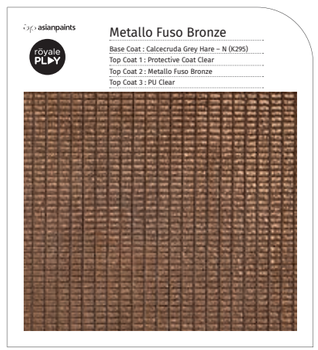
History interwoven with futuristic splendour

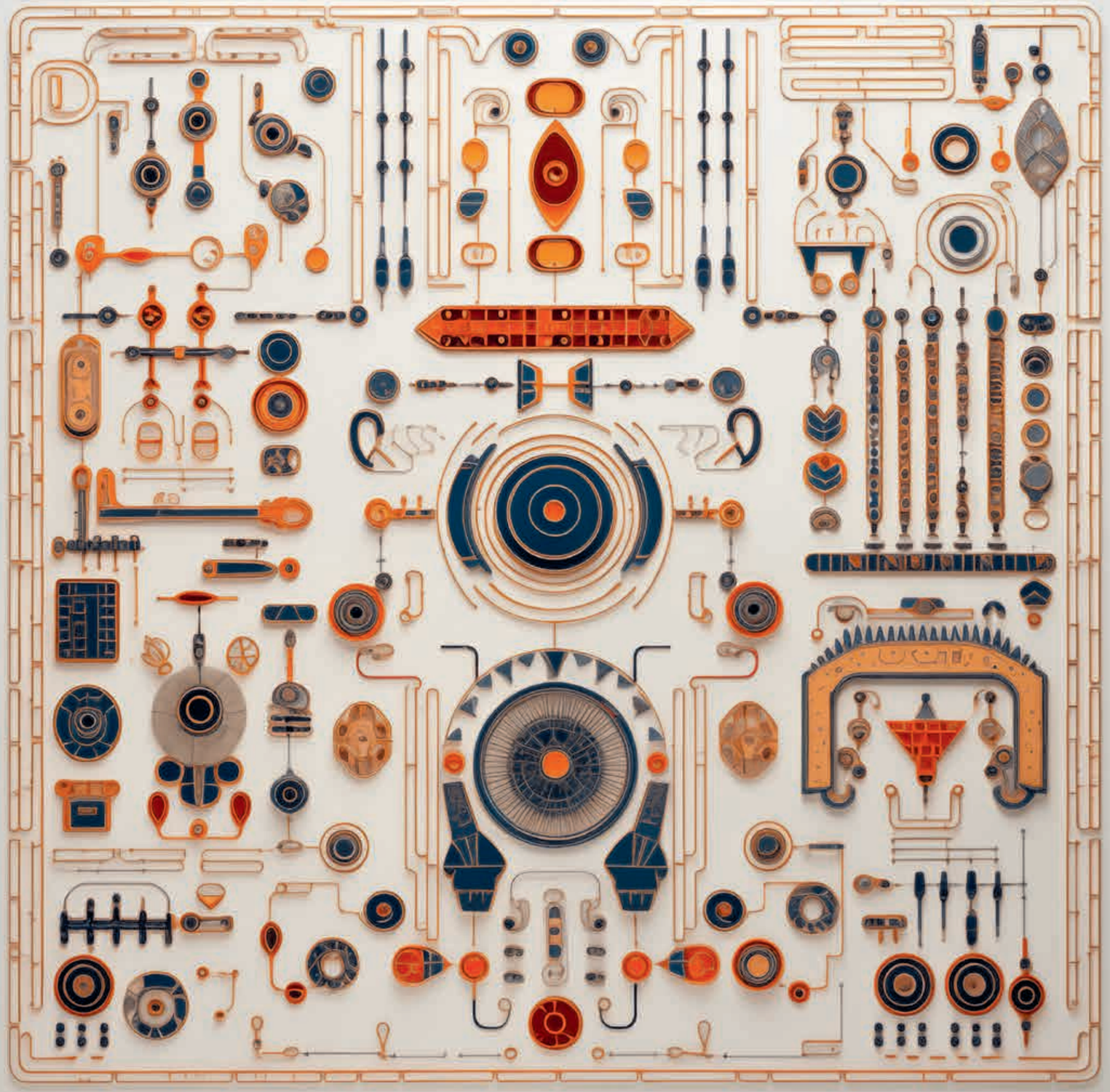
The texture palette for this visionary collection reflects a sophisticated fusion of historical motifs and futuristic details. Velvety prints and metallic sheens intermingle with the rugged patina of stencil-work, evoking a sense of layered history meeting bold progress. These surfaces, rich with intricate patterns and lustrous finishes, stir emotions of nostalgia and avant-garde curiosity, manifesting a tactile story of India's cultural vibrancy marching into a new era.











"Dream, dream, dream. Dreams transform into thoughts, and thoughts result in action."

— A.P.J. Abdul Kalam

Mini Stories for Indo-futurism

India's Visionary Creative Leap

Indian Creativity meets AI Innovation

Mini Story 1

India's visionary creative leap

In an exploration of creativity transcending boundaries, a video in New York's Times Square unveiled a futuristic India. It featured a warrior resembling Lord Ganesha in high-tech armour, and a Mughal-style minaret adorned with gold and lasers. This was part of *Indus Battle Royale*, a game set in space, inspired by the ancient Indus Valley Civilization. Embracing Indian mythology and architecture within a sci-fi context, this game exemplifies a trend where traditional Indian culture meets modern design and technology. Rooted in spirituality and folk customs, yet globally appealing for its innovative design and emphasis on diversity, it represents a shift in narrative control. Creators like London-based jazz musician Sarathy Korwar are also embracing this philosophy. Korwar's album, Kalak, integrates India's cyclical concept of time with modern music, challenging Western linear constructs. This trend is not just about aesthetics; it's a cultural statement, reclaiming Indian identity on a global stage. It's a response to the underrepresentation and stereotyping of Indian culture in mainstream media, offering a fresh, culturally rich perspective on the future.



Image source: Indus Battle Royale

Mini Story 2

Indian creativity meets AI innovation

A new creative wave is sweeping through the art landscape in India, marked by an intriguing blend of tradition and AI technology. Artists like Prateek Arora and Varun Gupta exemplify a new genre of storytelling that combines Indian motifs with futuristic concepts. Revolutionising the portrayal of Indian culture, using AI tools like Midjourney, Stable Diffusion and Dall-E, they bring to life fantastical visions rooted in Indian aesthetics. Arora's series 'Granth Gothica' juxtaposes traditional Indian family portraits with surreal, monster-like elements, striking a chord on social media. 'Disco Antriksh' reimagines Bollywood in an intergalactic context, showing the potential of AI in creating complex, culturally rich narratives. Gupta's 'Cyborgbay Universe' transforms 1990s Mumbai into a city teeming with cyborgs and robots, offering a unique, retro futuristic perspective. These artists are more than just visual creators; they are cultural commentators using AI to express and explore Indian society's evolution. This trend reflects a broader movement of reimagining Indian identity and heritage in the digital age, challenging traditional assumptions about sci-fi and its place in Indian culture. As AI technology continues to grow, it opens up unprecedented opportunities for artists to redefine and reclaim cultural narratives, creating a new realm where imagination and technology converge in the heart of India.



Image source: Prateek Arora

Design Examples





In Boomranng Studio's campaign for Nike, Indofuturism is vividly showcased through a design that merges retrofuturism with maximalism, set against the backdrop of Mumbai. This campaign envisions a futuristic version of the Maximum City that thrives on advanced technology while preserving its unique cultural richness and flamboyant extravagance.

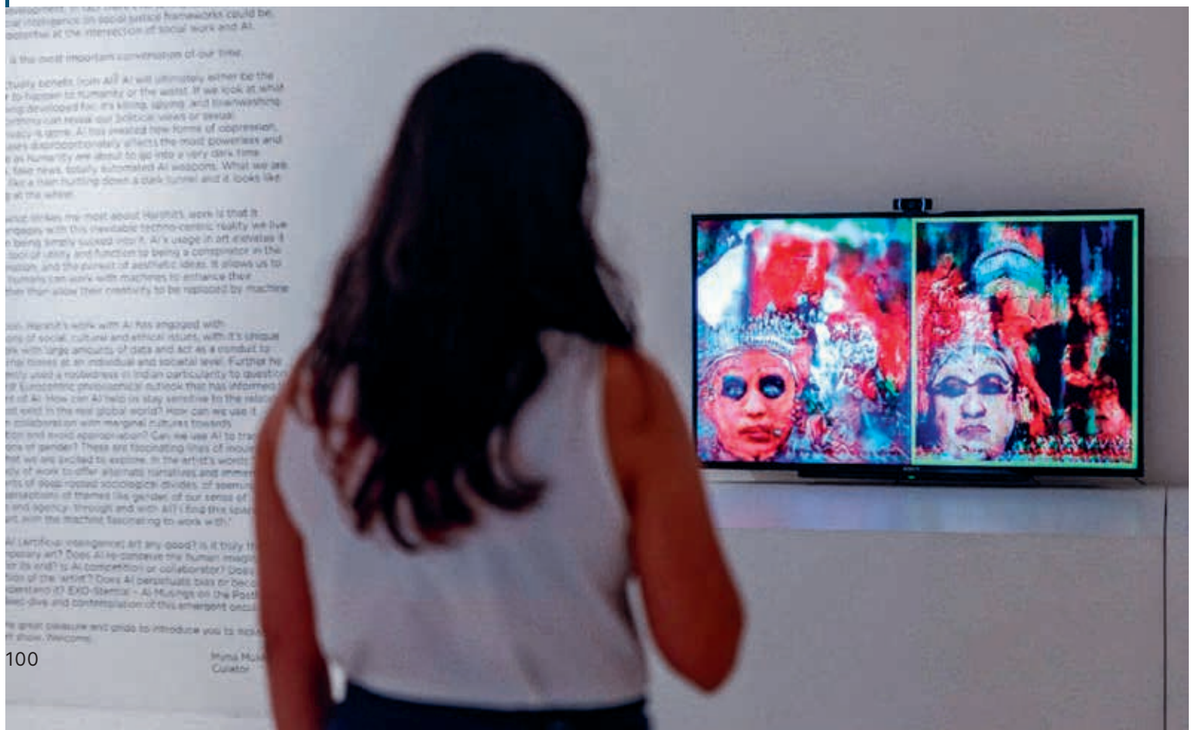
Image source: Boomranng Studio

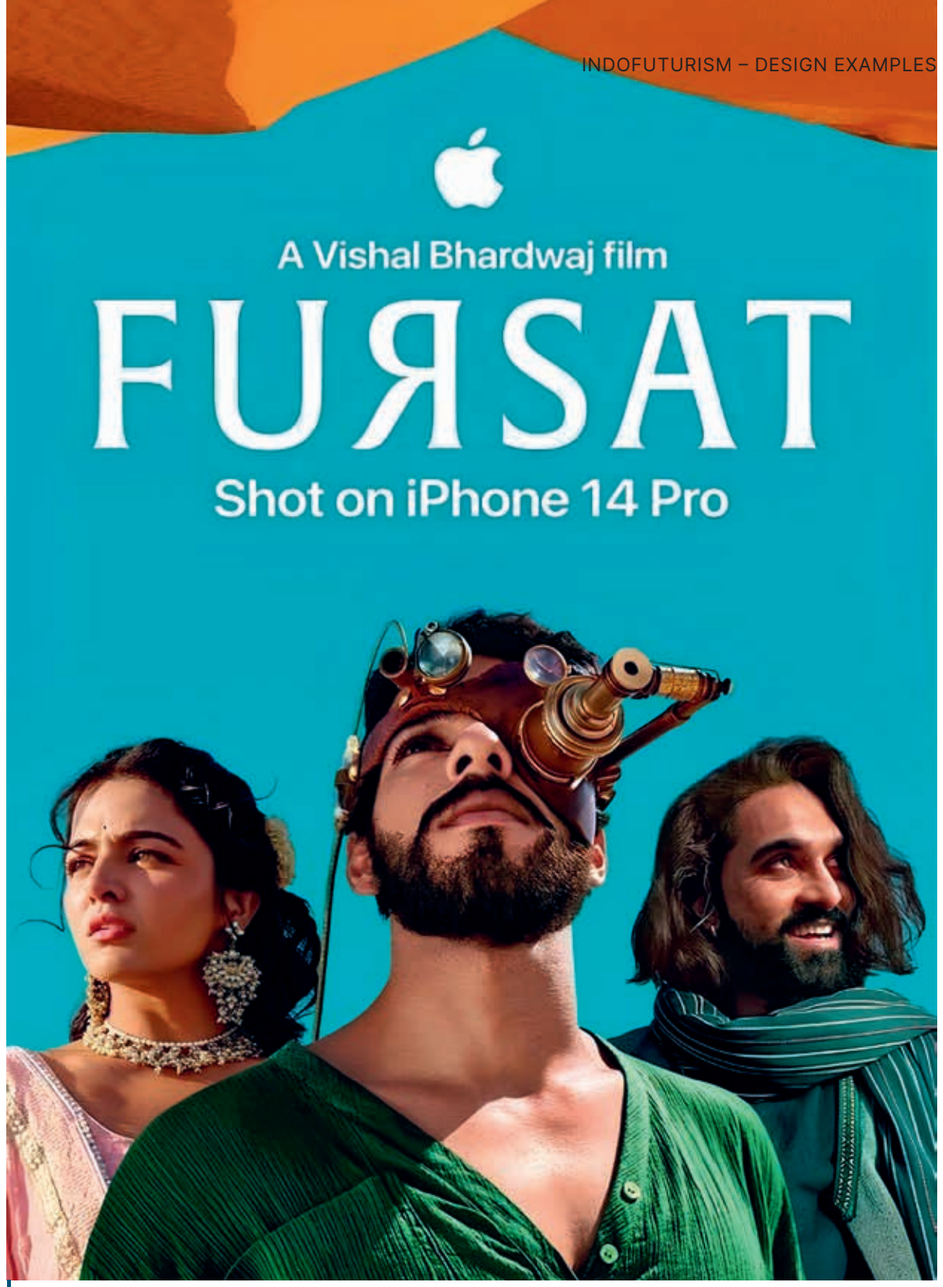




In AI artist Harshit Agrawal's solo art show 'Exo-stential' held at Emami Art in Kolkata, he showcased a pioneering fusion of art and artificial intelligence. Exploring the intersection of technology, art and social commentary, Agrawal's AI art delved into deep data patterns, offering insights into collective and individual biases, offering a unique perspective on contemporary Indian society.

Image source: Harshit Agrawal, Courtesy of Emami Art



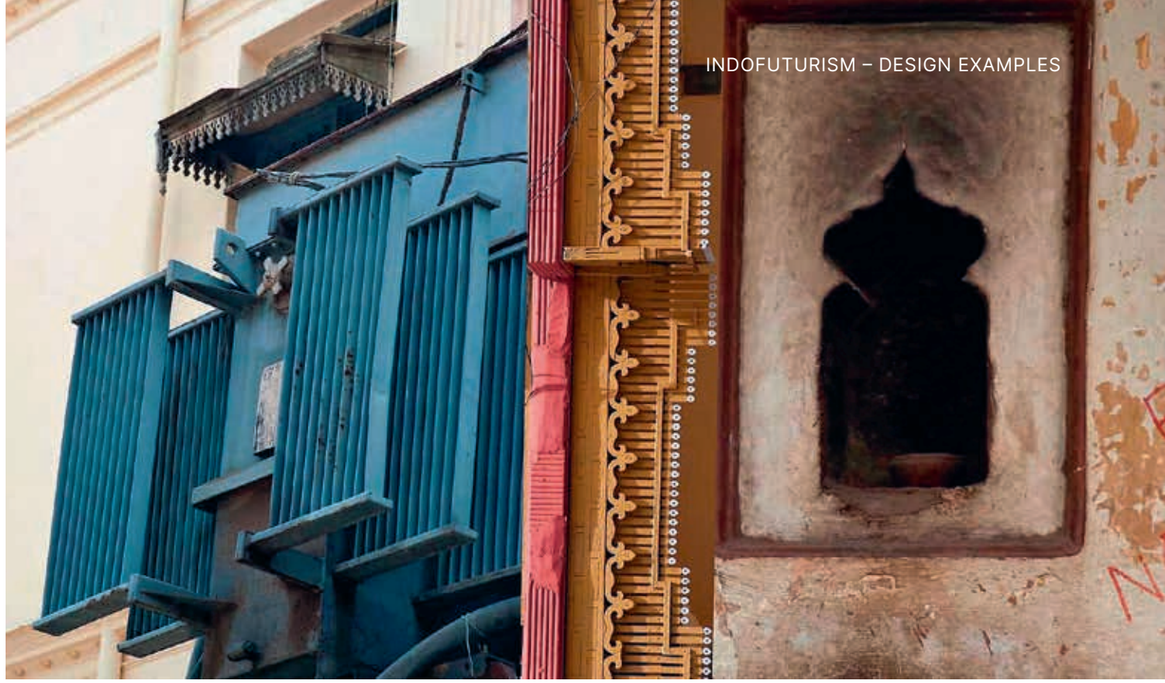


An Indian 30-minute musical romance film released in 2023, titled Fursat, tells the story of a man named Nishant who can glimpse into the future with the help of an magical ancient relic called 'Doordarshak'. Directed by Vishal Bhardwaj, it was shot on an Apple iPhone 14 Pro, and stars Ishaan Khattar, Wamiqa Gabbi and Salman Yusuff Khan.

Image source: Absolute Productions and VB Pictures

‘Past Continuous’, an exhibition by Bengaluru-based artist Shanthamani M., delves into the city’s evolving identity from the early 2000s. Through photomontages, it captures the interplay of history and modernity in the City of Lake’s landscapes—juxtaposing old architecture, local culture and urban development. The exhibition invites viewers to reflect on the coexistence of diverse elements within the city—from deep lakes to bustling streets—exploring how past and present merge and collide in the metropolis’s continuous transformation.

Image source: Shanthamani M, Past Continuous









GOBLIN MODE

Joyful surrender to one's authentic self

> “ This above all: to thine own self be true.”
>
> – William Shakespeare, Hamlet

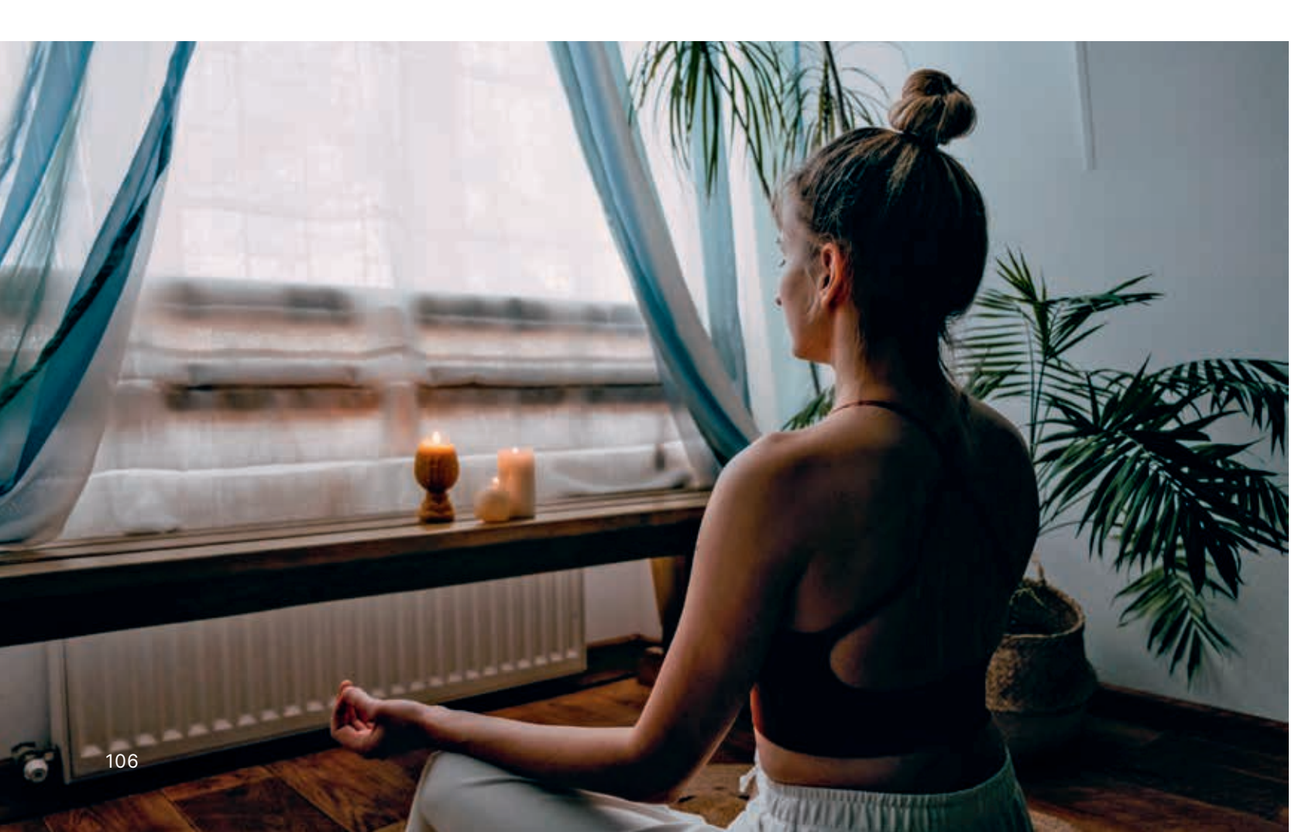
In response to an intense productivity culture and the endless chase for perfection, a new mindset is emerging that focuses on detaching oneself from these constant demands. It's a conscious step back from the ceaseless drive to project an impeccable image in every aspect of one's lifestyle. Instead, there's a growing desire for restorative disengagement from these external pressures. This sentiment is inherently private. It focusses on embracing imperfections, natural simplicity and comfort over meticulous self-presentation and restrictive habits. Representing liberation from the anxieties fuelled by social media and challenging unrealistic societal standards, this ethos is about retreating to a genuine, unapologetic state. Focussing instead on self-comfort and solace, this approach inspires spaces that are sanctuaries of calm and authenticity—shaping design to reflect a retreat from external pressures.

Triggers

A counter to grind culture

Rejecting a culture that focuses on multi-tasking and hyper performance has sparked a noticeable shift in societal behaviours. Many are now prioritising well-being over relentless productivity, seeking balance rather than burnout. This movement away from ceaseless hustle highlights a growing desire for authenticity, meaningful connections, and a life lived on one's own terms.

Image source: Adobe Stock Images



The burden of social media

The omnipresence of social media has led to an inundation of curated news and digital feeds, causing comparison fatigue and a skewed sense of reality. Constant notifications, updates, and the pressure to present an idealised self exacerbate feelings of inadequacy. This relentless digital engagement pushes many to seek authenticity, a quest for real-life experiences, deeper connections, and mental tranquillity.



Image source: Adobe Stock Images



Perfection culture

Perfection culture, deeply ingrained in today's society, fuels the relentless drive to meet unattainable standards in every facet of life. From flawless aesthetics to unparalleled achievements, the pressure to manifest an ideal self can be stifling. This intense milieu often leads individuals to desire genuine experiences and authenticity, pushing back against the pervasive culture of unrelenting excellence.

Image source: Adobe Stock Images



Information overload

In today's digital age, the barrage of constant information can be overwhelming, leading to cognitive fatigue and decision paralysis. The influx of data from multiple sources, whether news, emails or social media, can blur lines between essential and non-essential content. This saturation often drives individuals to seek simplicity, clarity, and a return to more focused and intentional consumption.



Image source: Adobe Stock Images





Colour Forecast

"Sink into shades of raw authenticity."

Embrace imperfect vibrancy

In a palette that marries playful rebellion with an assuring sense of calm, soft silvers meld with a vibrant coral and muted mauves. An earthy ochre and serene green grounds the spectrum, channelling a return to nature and a reprieve from society's glossy polish. This ensemble of shades resonates with a heart yearning for genuine self-expression and unapologetic individuality.



Material Forecast

" Life is really simple, but we insist on making it complicated."

– Confucius



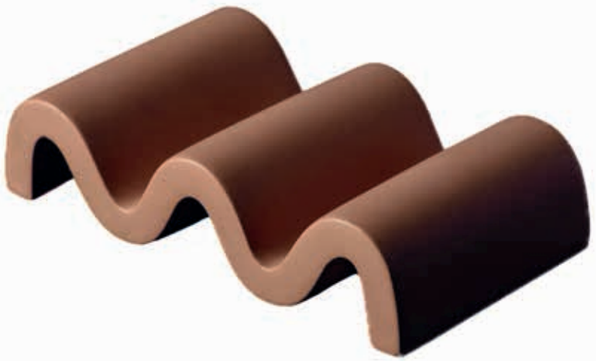


A vibrant collage of diverse patterns and hues, mismatched tiles lay a playful, personalised mood to floors and walls.

Exhibiting simplicity and uniform grain, birch ply provides a versatile foundation for modern design, merging durability with a naturally understated aesthetic.

Rough hand-done surface textures celebrate the artisan's touch, with each mark and unique finish telling a story of craft and authenticity.









HARD MATERIALS

A tactile retreat into comfort and authenticity, these materials form a harmonious blend of malleable, earthy textures that exude a sense of calm. From the organic softness of paper-based creations to the soothing solidity of stone and wood, each element fosters spaces where imperfection is embraced and every surface tells a story of tranquil, unrefined simplicity.







SOFT MATERIALS

Embracing layers of texture and depth, cocooning fibres and weaves form an indulgence of whimsical cosiness. With every knit and stitch, one sinks into a soothing world, capturing moments of both nostalgia and contemporary playfulness.

Rich and inviting, hand-tufted textures offer depth and comfort, turning fabrics into plush canvases of style.

Crochet brings a delicate weave of tradition and warmth, its intricate patterns a testament to skillful hands and timeless design.

Championing sustainability and innovation, upcycled fabrics transform discarded textiles into vibrant, eco-conscious creations, each with its own unique story.





Wallpaper & Texture Forecast

Spontaneity wrapped in cozy whimsy

This wallpaper collection is a tribute to effortless self-expression and the joy of spontaneity. ‘Just Be’ is a whimsical tapestry of doodles and splashes, embodying the freedom of creativity, with textures that whisper comfort akin to a well-loved t-shirt. ‘Lazy’ wraps a space in the warmth of a crocheted embrace with its easy-going lines and relaxed loops, crafting a backdrop that’s both subtle and inviting. These patterns celebrate the art of casual perfection, creating corners that feel heartfelt and inviting.

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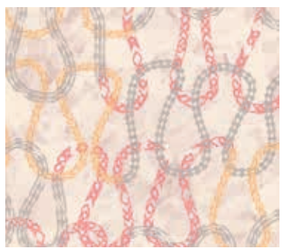
nilaya
Just Be
BEYOND



asianpaints
nilaya
Lazy Loops
BEYOND





Just Be Wallpaper in use

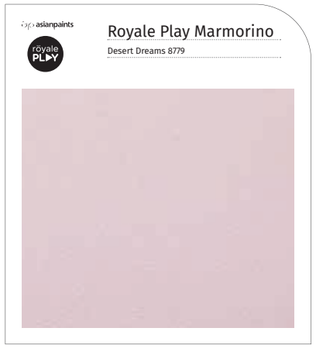


Royale Play Opaco Matt Texture in use

A journey in embracing imperfections

Bringing forth a tactile rebellion against the polished norm, there's a celebration of hand-made imperfections with these organic, rough-hewn surfaces that invite touch and contemplation. The textures, ranging from the subtly undulating to the richly tactile, evoke comfort in authenticity and a return to artisanal roots. These finishes speak to a desire for genuine materials that tell a story, evoking emotions of comfort, individuality and a serene departure from the perfectly curated.









"IMPERFECTION IS BEAUTY, MADNESS IS GENIUS AND IT'S BETTER TO BE ABSOLUTELY RIDICULOUS THAN ABSOLUTELY BORING."

– MARILYN MONROE

Mini Stories for Goblin Mode

A Global Shift of Embracing Imperfections Unfolds

Raw Authenticity Over Curated Facades

Mini Story 1

A global shift of embracing imperfection unfolds

As the pressures of modern life mounted, individuals began seeking refuge in the simple and authentic. In New York, the once-popular high-maintenance beauty routines made way for “no makeup” makeup looks, and meticulous grooming took a back seat. Brands like Glossier thrived, promoting natural beauty and self-expression over airbrushed perfection. Elsewhere, in Silicon Valley, tech professionals started engaging in digital detox retreats, trading screen time for serene moments in nature. And perhaps most tellingly, when Marie Kondo, once an icon of organisation and tidiness, announced she was no longer obsessed with tidying up, the world nodded in understanding. The era of relentless perfection was beginning to wane.



Mini Story 2

Raw authenticity over curated facades

In 2020, the world bore witness to a movement against the hustle culture. Renowned lifestyle magazines like The Atlantic and The Guardian began publishing articles discussing the harms of burnout and the unrealistic demands of modern life. Around the same time, renowned wellness advocates like Deepak Chopra and Brené Brown spoke about the importance of mindfulness, self-care, and the power of “unplugging”. Their messages gained traction on platforms like Instagram, where ironically, the same influencers who once promoted picture-perfect lifestyles started showcasing their unfiltered moments. #NoMakeup, #DayOff, and #SelfCareSunday began trending. Workplaces worldwide initiated discussions on mental health, prioritising employee well-being over relentless productivity. The likes of Google and Microsoft piloted four-day work weeks, acknowledging the value of downtime. This global pivot towards embracing imperfection highlighted a larger cultural shift, one that preferred authenticity over polish.





Design Examples

In the eclectic Mexico City apartment of Rodman Primack and Rudy Weissenberg, design transcends mere aesthetics. While their home showcases an array of pieces from emerging designers to vintage heirlooms, what truly resonates is their shared belief in embracing imperfection. The duo's approach is not about creating a perfectly curated space, but rather a living testament to a design ethos that finds beauty in imperfections and stories within each piece.

Image source: Sight Unseen

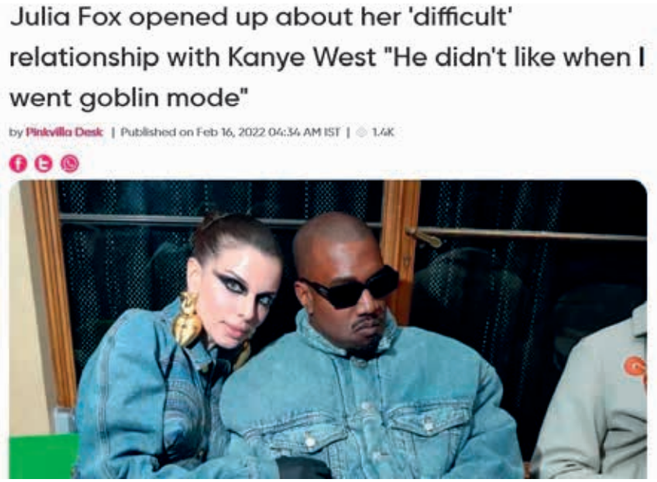




"Rest Is Resistance: A Manifesto" by Tricia Hersey, widely recognized as the Nap Bishop, is a profound exploration into the essence of rest as a form of protest against a world consumed by relentless capitalism and the shadows of white supremacy. With a compelling blend of theology, activism, womanism and Afrofuturism, Hersey challenges the dominant narrative of perpetual productivity, urging readers to recognize the transformative and healing power of rest. She invites us to envision a world that values humanity over output, underlining that in rest, we reclaim our inherent worth and resilience against oppressive systems.

The term "goblin mode"—referencing a person's rejection of societal expectations in a hedonistic manner—gained popularity after a fake headline involving actor Julia Fox and rapper Ye. A photo-edited headline falsely claimed that the former couple split because the rapper didn't like when she went "goblin mode". The term has been used on sites like Tumblr and Urban Dictionary for years, but the recent Fox meme gave it renewed momentum online.

Image source: Reddit





There's a rise in unstructured furniture with sloppy aesthetics that spell lazy comfort. While Edra's 'Pack' sofa, designed by Francesco Binfare, has been inspired from a sleeping polar bear—allowing you to kick back and slouch; Misha Kahn's unstructured and vibrant chairs play with notions of depth and relaxation with tactile, organic shapes and bold, playful colours.

Image source: Edra; Misha Kahn





There's a global reckoning which questions the unsustainable demands of modern work culture, and emphasises the need for a balanced life. Several world leaders (including Jacinda Ardern, former prime minister of New Zealand) have stepped down citing health concerns linked to burnout or prioritising their mental health. This has also sparked "quiet quitting"—an act by younger employees of sending out resumes in hopes of landing a job with more pay and comfortable working environments to enhance career excellence.

Image source: Shutterstock

Colour of the Year 2024

TERRA

Terra emerges as the Colour of the Year amidst a growing desire for familiarity, comfort and emotional grounding in these ever-changing times. With its rich primal tones, Terra's earthiness bears a sense of connection, its nostalgic hues weaving a story of finding solace within chaos. Resonating within our deepest memories, it takes us on a journey back to the truest versions of ourselves. It echoes the warmth of a homecoming, where familiarity grounds us in a sanctuary of emotional stability. In a world that often feels disconnected, Terra is the thread that stitches us back to the fabric of our being, a colour that quietly whispers the language of belonging.

Terra evokes the calming emotion of sinking one's bare feet into the earth, reminding us of our deep connection to the land that grounds us.

In today's increasingly virtual world, its warm tones provide an emotionally stabilising anchor, with an enveloping sense of safety, the familiarity of home and a sense of belonging.

Like the first light of dawn that touches the earth, Terra infuses spaces with a gentle warmth, rekindling a sense of hope and connection in our daily surroundings.



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COLOUR OF THE YEAR 2024

K212
DESSERT LOVE-N

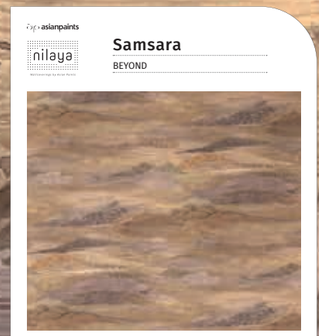
Wallpaper of the Year 2024

samsara

Cadenced, wandering, whirlwind lines and textural terrains become the brilliant, mysterious and intensely composed Samsara, Wallpaper of the Year. Rich both in meaning and metaphor. With pigments obtained from mud and tea leaf, and natural dyes, and crushed with gouache wash and metallic gold leaf, it echoes the profound and overflowing beauty of soil. A teeming, churning, changing, ever evolving birthplace - not just of life but the creative spirit. Soil nurtures and bears witness to our existence. Listens to our songs. Responds with her own. She is where we come from, where we return. Everything we create is new. And nothing is new, she reminds us. Life is ever in motion...as are we. And this extraordinary kingdom of metaphors invites our participation and asks to be seen, heard and felt. Samsara, Wallpaper of the Year, 2024, has been designed exclusively for ColourNext by Pavitra Rajaram Design.



Samsara Wallpaper in use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