



asianpaints

COLOUR NEXT

Colour & Material
Intelligence

Forecast Report



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.

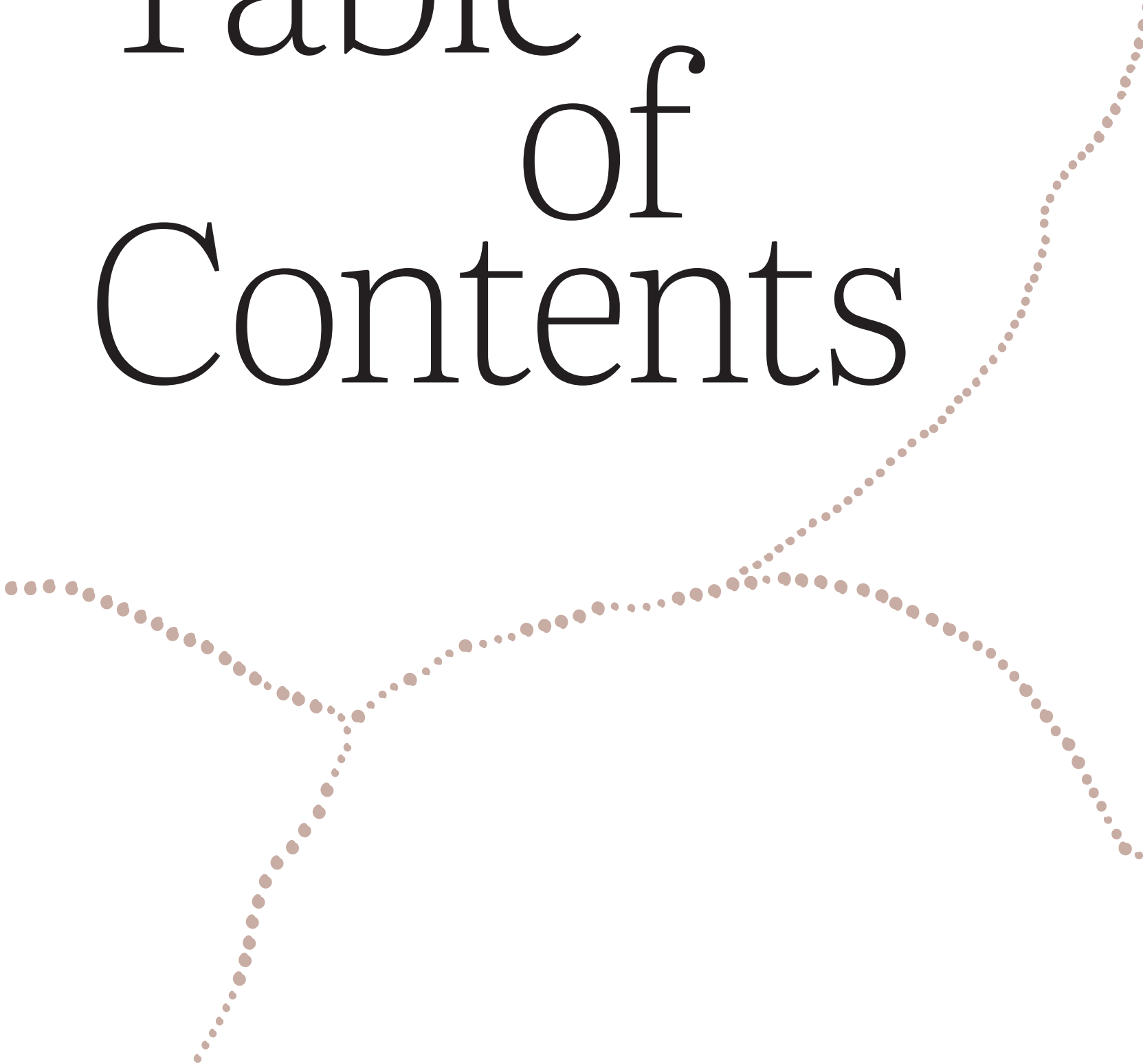
Introduction

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 communication.

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

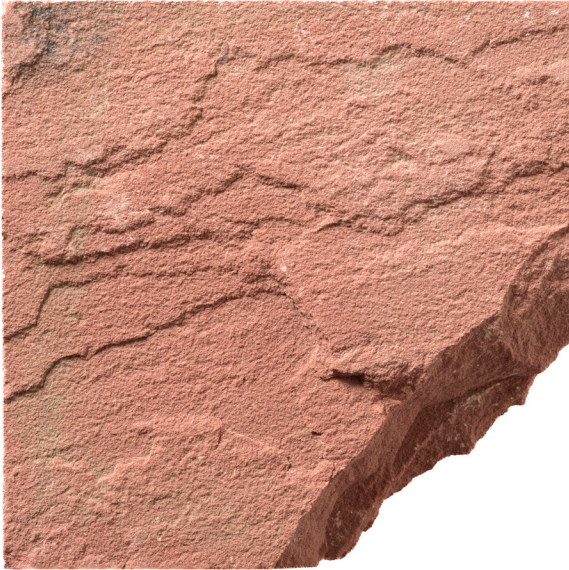
"Nature always wears the
colours of the spirit."
– Ralph Waldo Emerson



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.



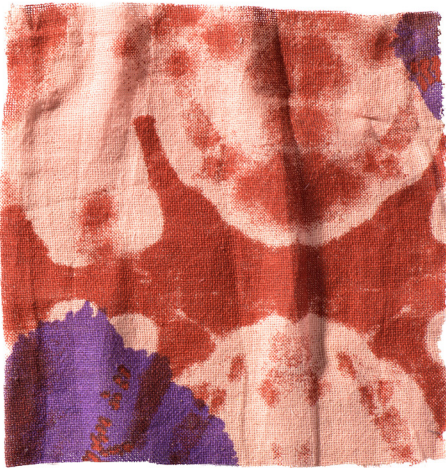


A renewable and buoyant material, cork offers a soft, tactile texture and natural warmth

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

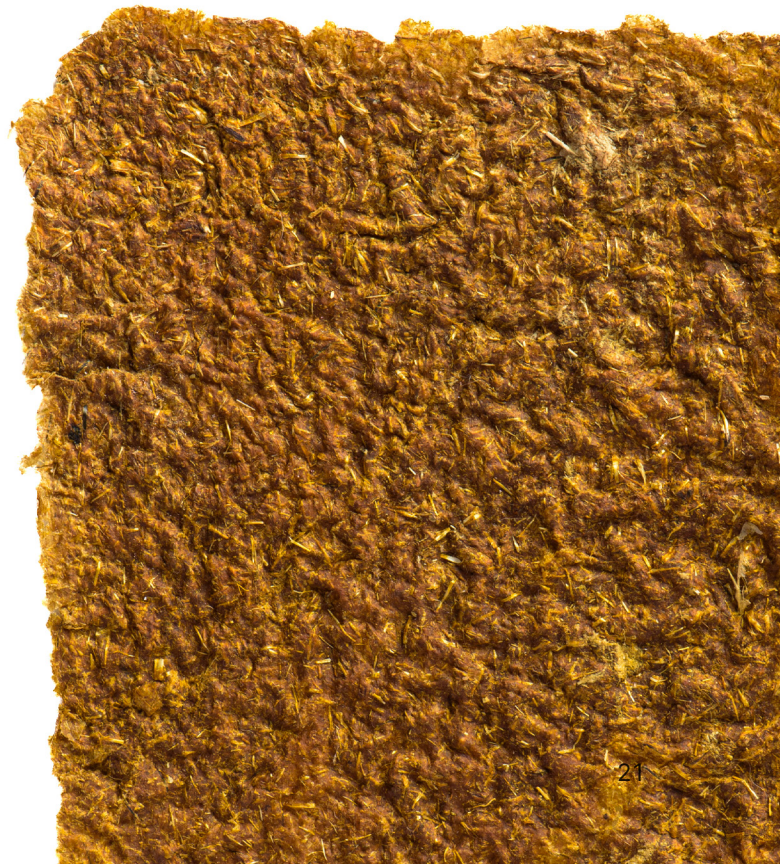
The tannic acids and iron in soil forms a natural dye used colour materials with rich, ruddy hues that are warm and comforting

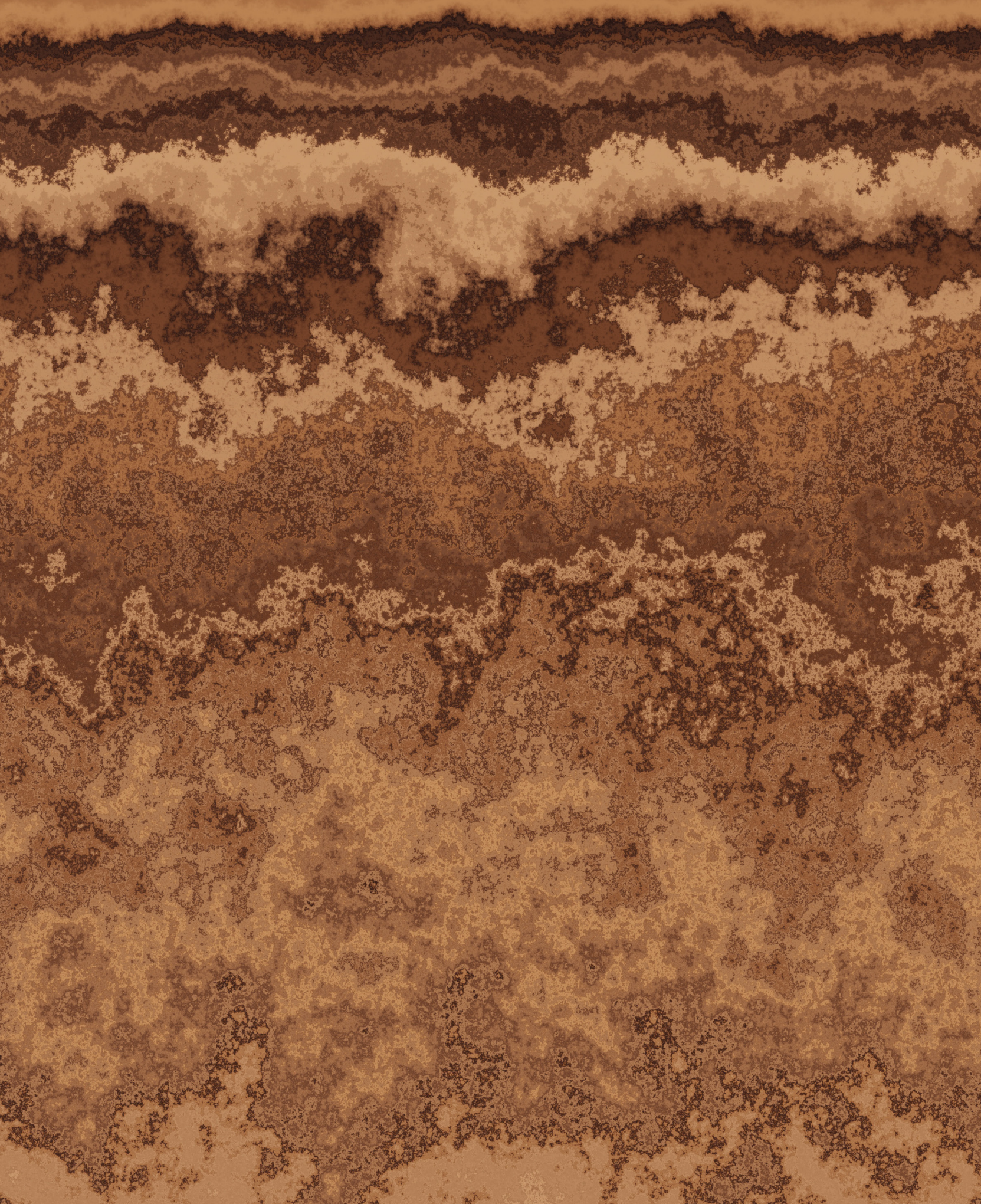




SOFT MATERIALS

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.





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

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





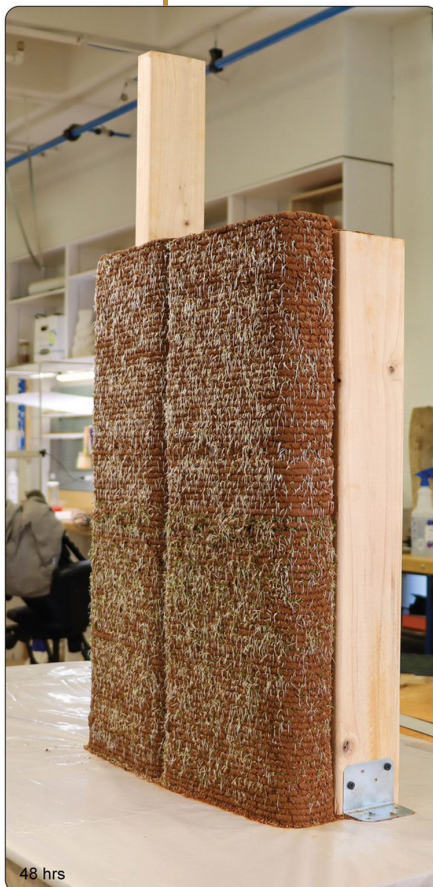
At Dutch Design Week 2022, Yuhan Bai (a fashion student at Royal College of Art) presented the Soil Project—a clothing collection made with a soil-based leather alternative, along with vintage garments dyed with soil. Driven by concerns about fashion’s environmental toll, Bai innovated a pliable, leather-like 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





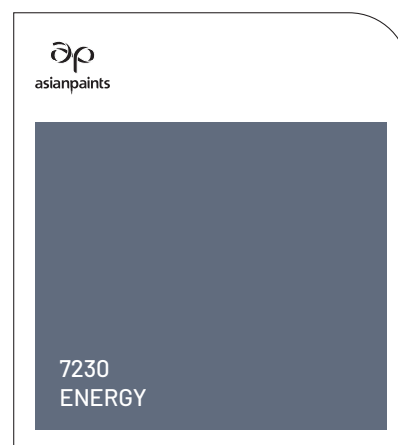
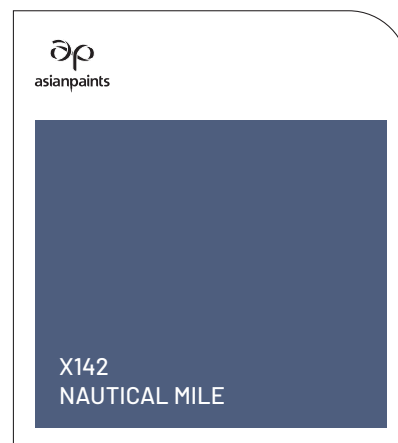
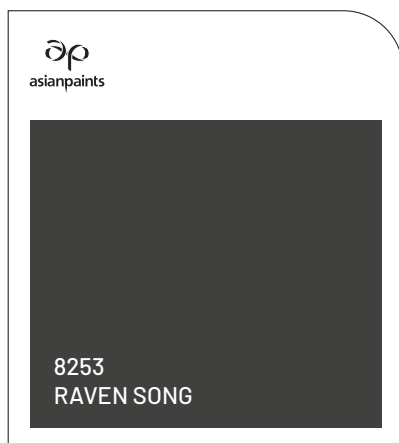


Colour Forecast

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

Dive into nature's mystical depths

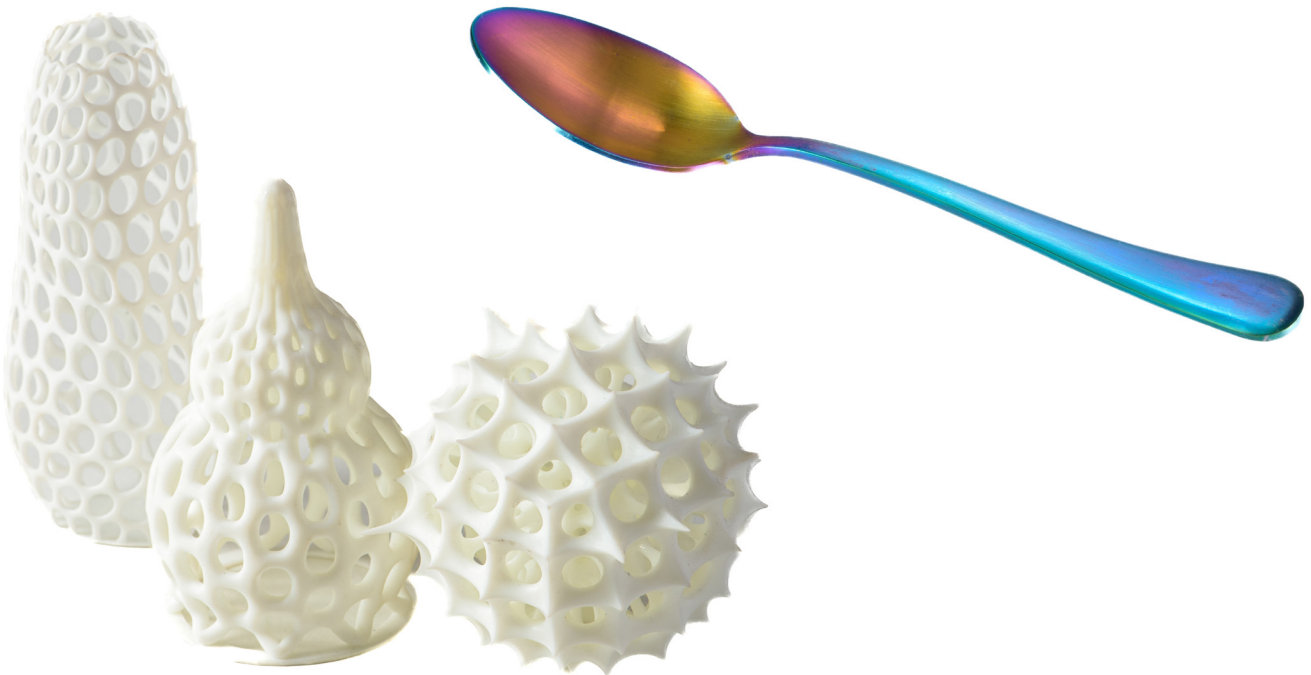
This palette captures the serene embrace of the ocean's depth, blending the cool abyss with shimmering moonlit tones. Each shade evokes feelings of tranquil underwater exploration, from silent submarine caverns to the glint of elusive marine creatures.



Material Forecast

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

– Jacques Cousteau





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

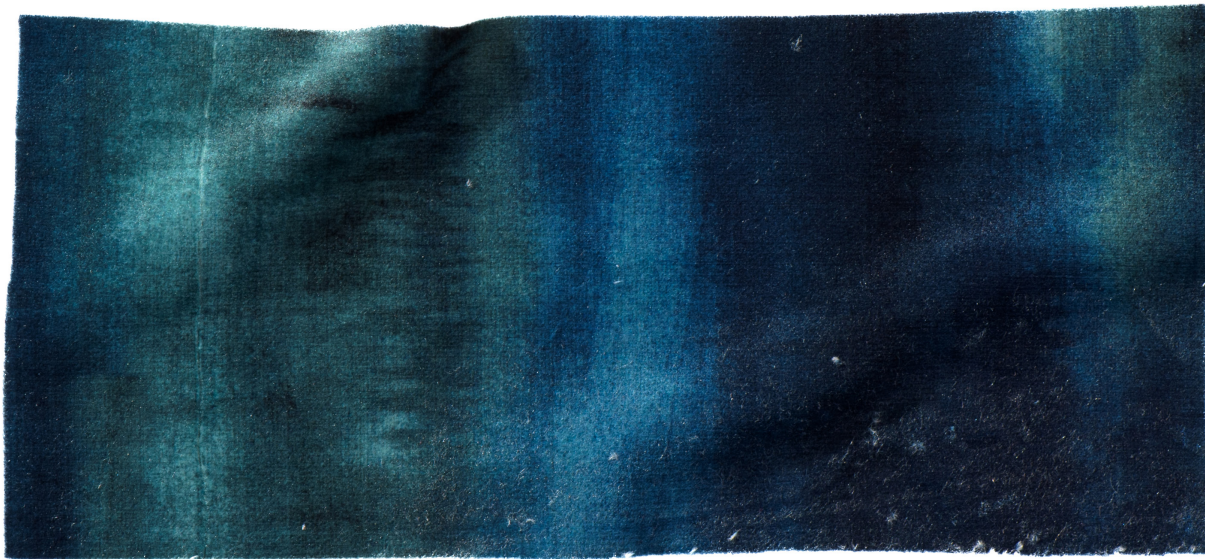
Cracked glass, a strikingly textured material crafted through thermal shock and lamination, melds resilience with intricate beauty for architectural and furniture design. It is a laminated glass made with three layers of glass with a PVB interlayer, where the two outer layers will be intact panels bonded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



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.

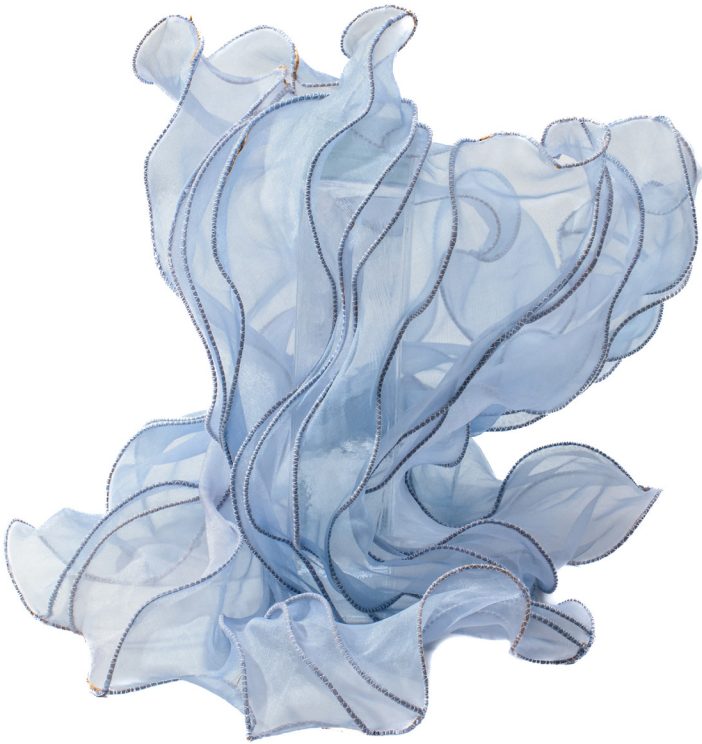




SOFT MATERIALS

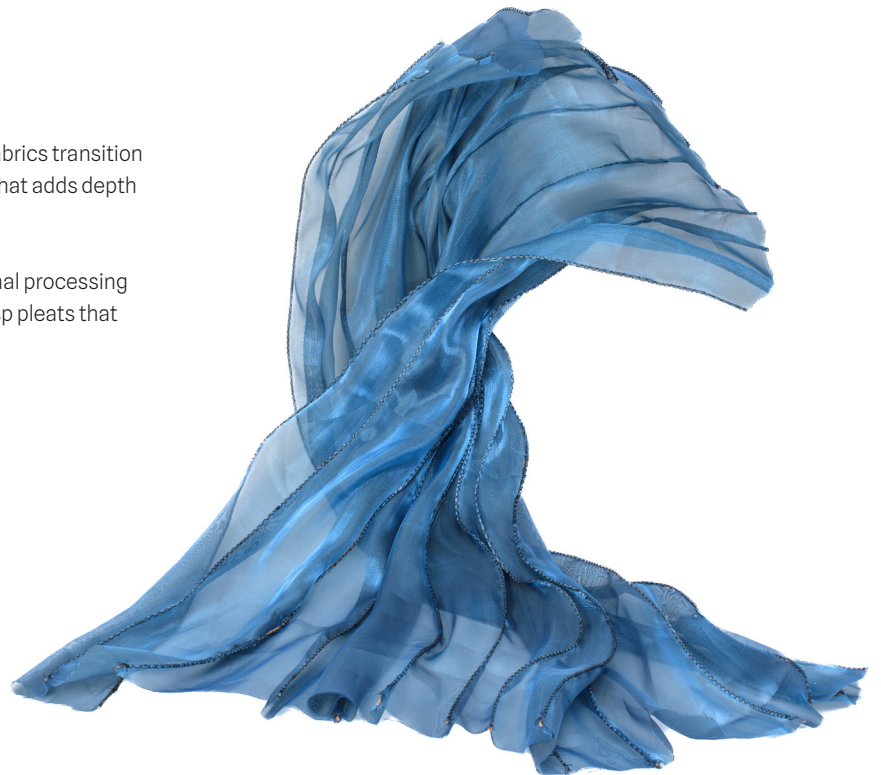
In a realm where light interacts with fluidity, these materials whisk us away into an ethereal underwater world. Their shimmer and drape mirror the glistening ocean surfaces and the cascading play of colours, echoing both the depth of the sea and the ever-changing play of light upon its waves.

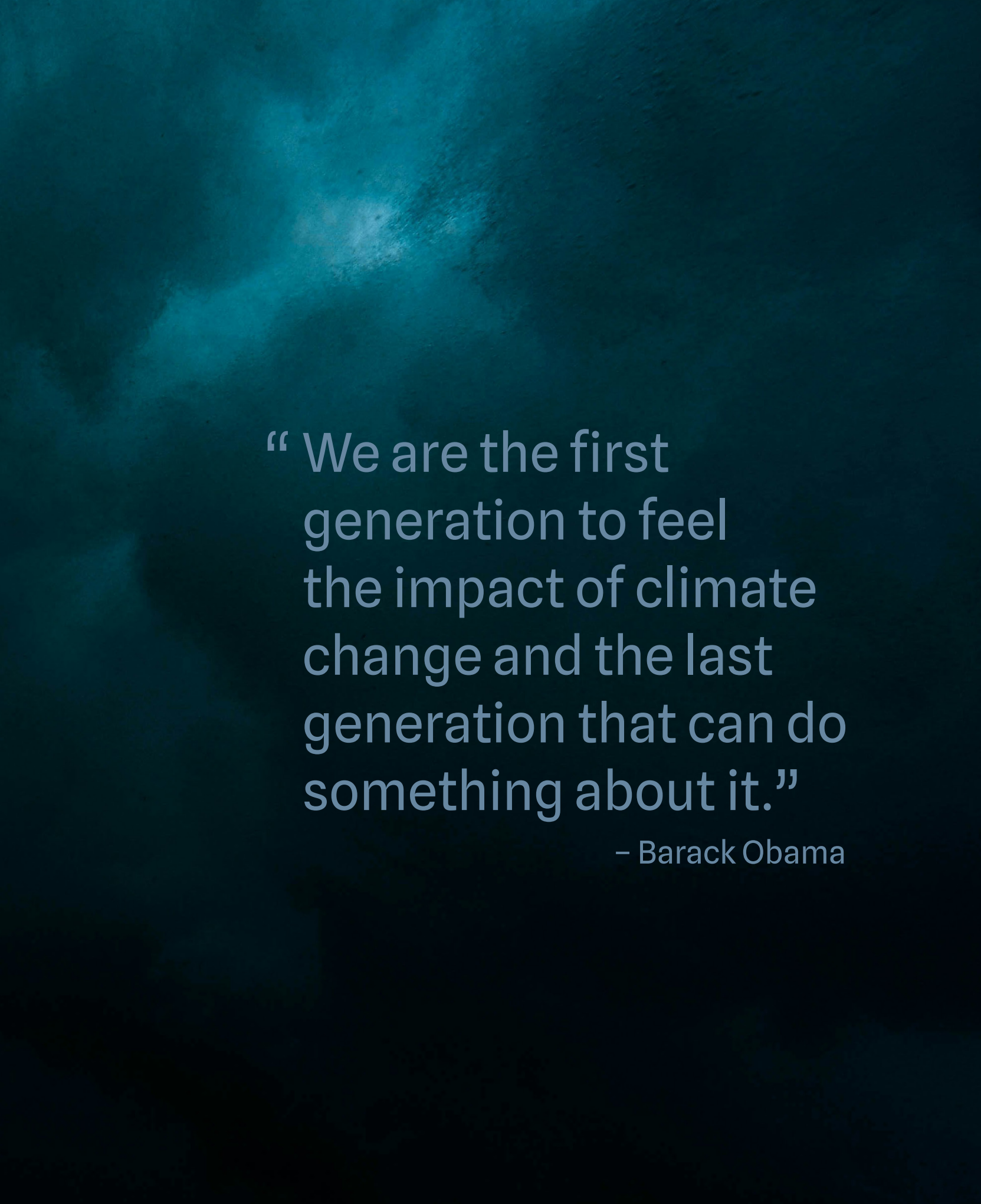




A seamless gradient of colours in ombre-dyed fabrics transition smoothly, creating a visually captivating effect that adds depth and dimension to textile artistry

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





“ 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

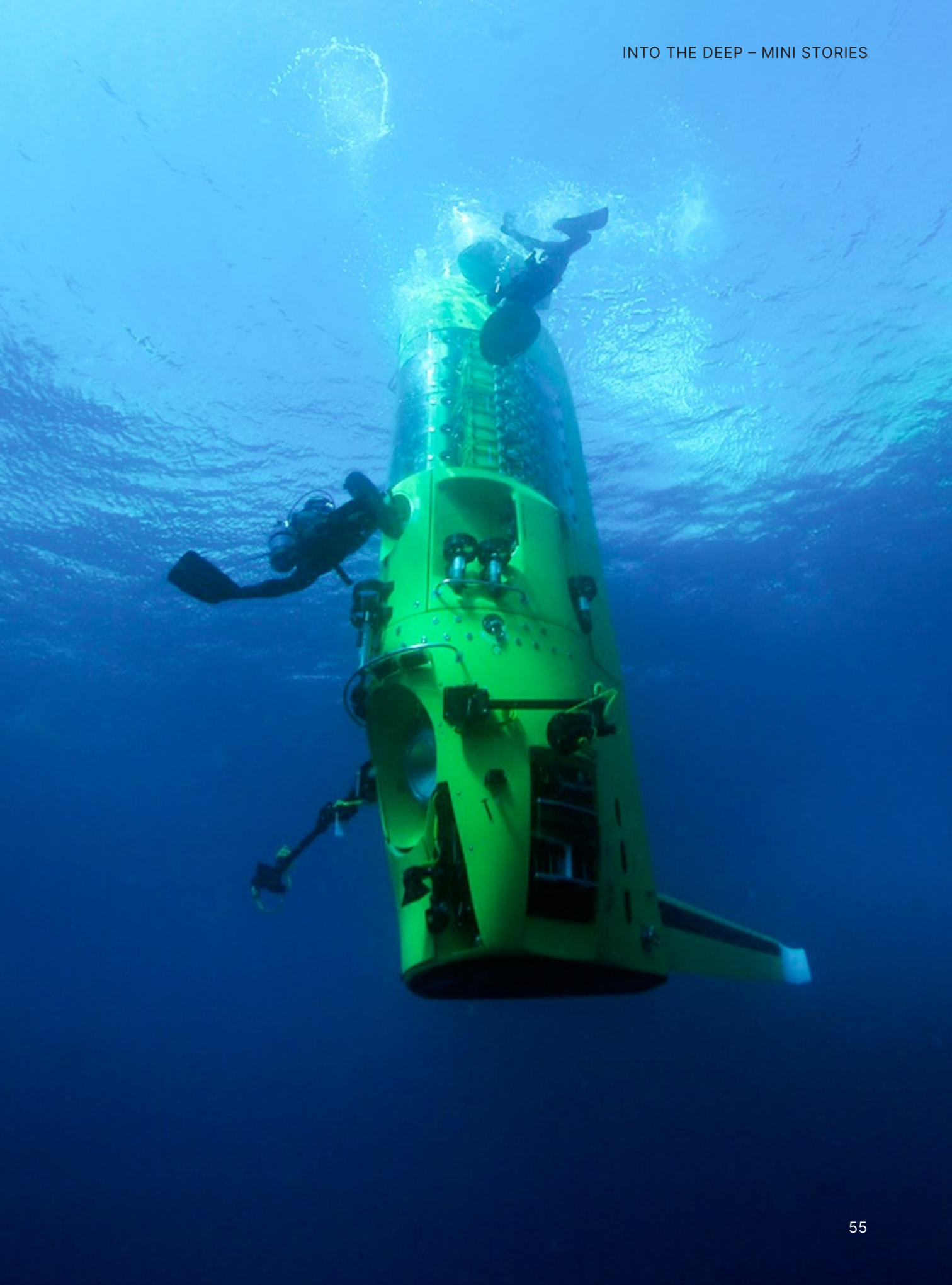
Mini Story 1

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



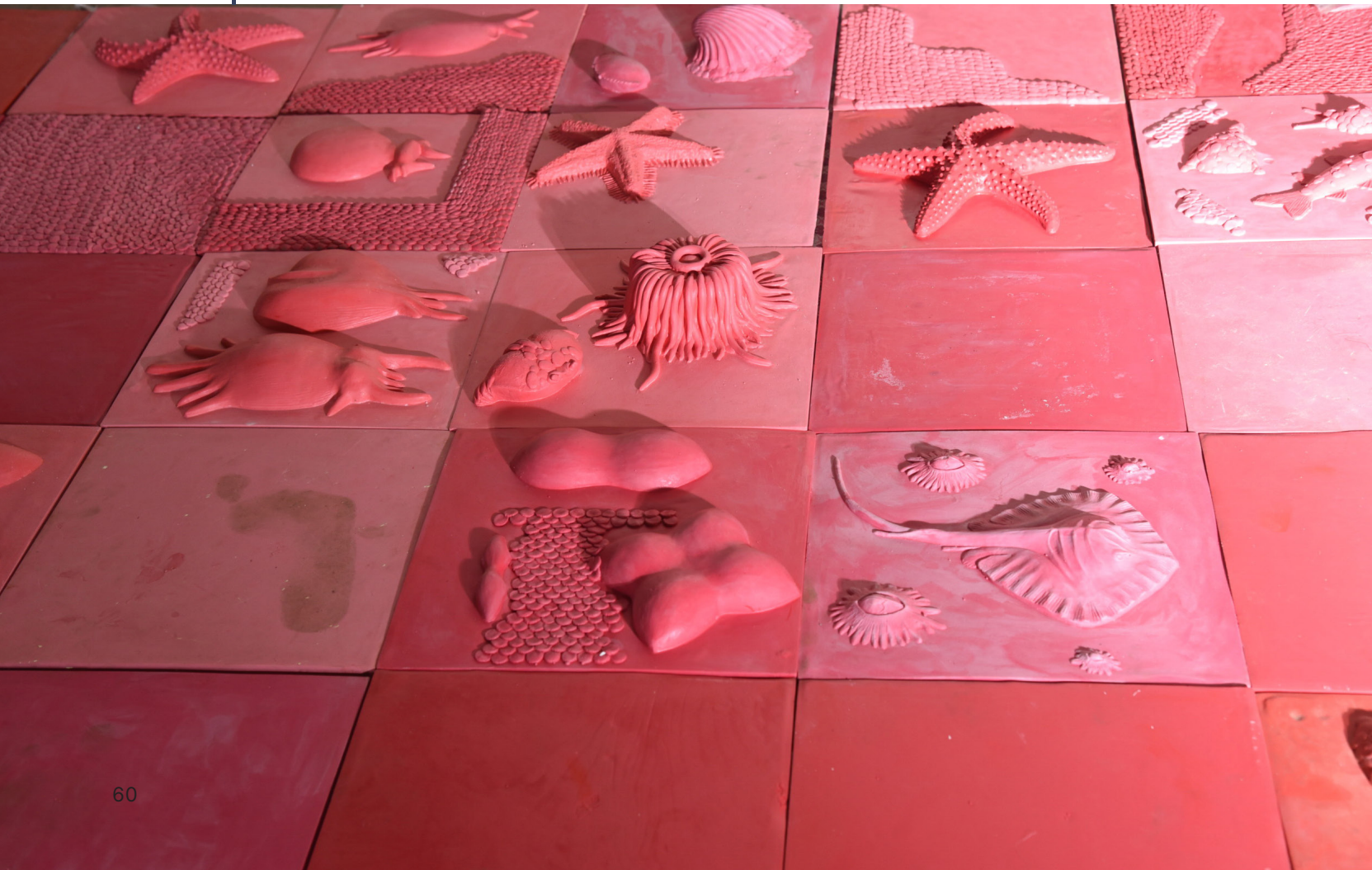


Decibel addresses noise pollution, a silent but lethal threat to marine life, using nature's own tools. By fostering kelp and oyster growth, it creates a natural acoustic shield along shipping routes and initiates a marine permaculture cycle. This system not only counters sound pollution but also supports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





RETRO 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

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

Image source: Adobe Stock Images

A cultural renaissance of self expression

It is observed that cultures with strong characters resist and reject external interpretations and representations. Asserting its identity globally, there's been a growing movement to reframe one's culture with a Retro-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.

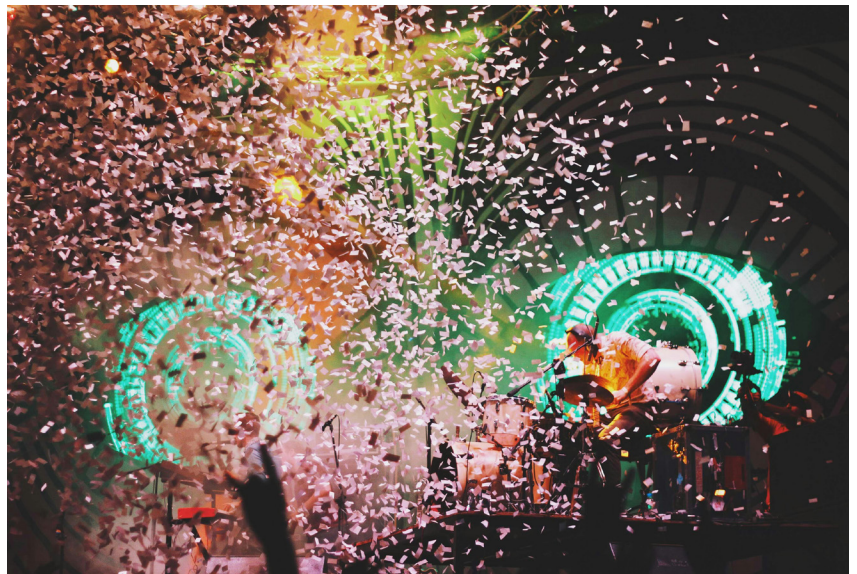


Nurturing cultural authenticity

Fuelled by a rising creative appetite for a distinct homegrown pop-culture expression it translates to rejecting borrowed narratives. Akin to the global phenomena of K-pop and anime, this movement captures one's unique creative energy. It positions one's cultural identity on the world stage with a dynamic and uniquely ownable aesthetic.

(Right) A music festival in South-East Asia
(Bottom) The festival of Holi

Image source: Unsplash & Adobe Stock Images



Digital empowerment and connectivity

The increasing digital empowerment contributes to the emergence of a design trend that reflects a forward-thinking spirit. The rapid adoption of technology and widespread connectivity has fuelled a visual movement that not only embraces the digital age but also propels a unique aesthetic onto the global stage. From digital art to virtual experiences, this trend highlights a distinct 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 the visual landscape. Driven by youthful energy and a quest for self-expression, their growing trend of blending traditional motifs with futuristic elements – creating a dynamic fusion of the old and the new. It signifies a generational shift, mirroring the aspirations and creativity of the youth.

Image source: Adobe Stock Images





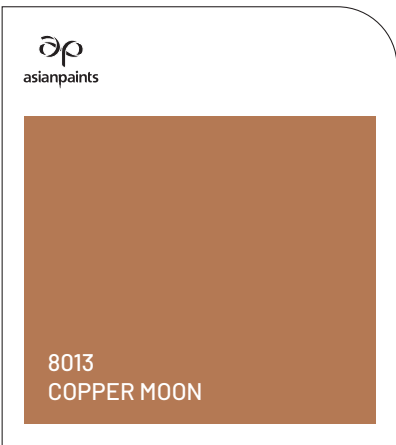


Colour Forecast

"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.

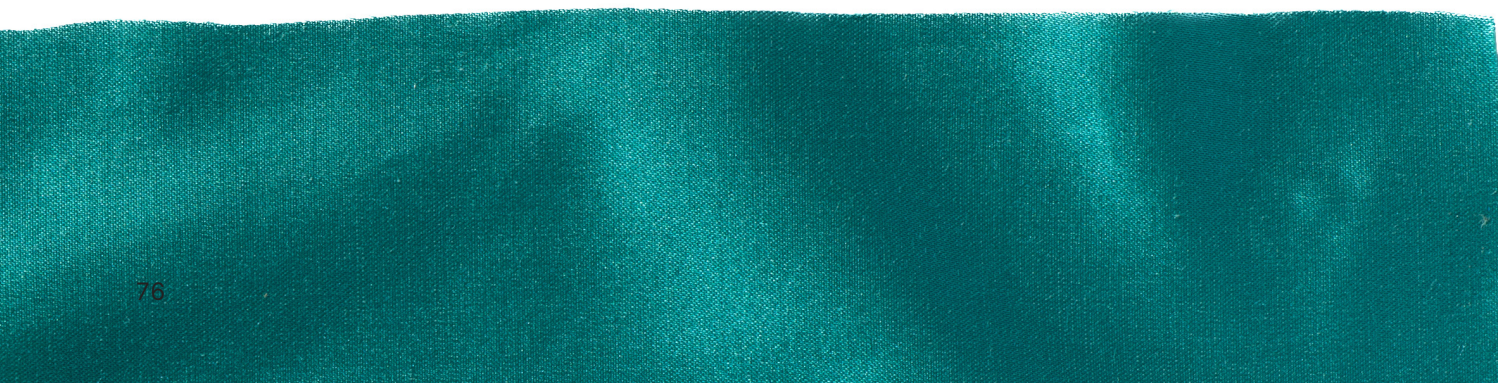
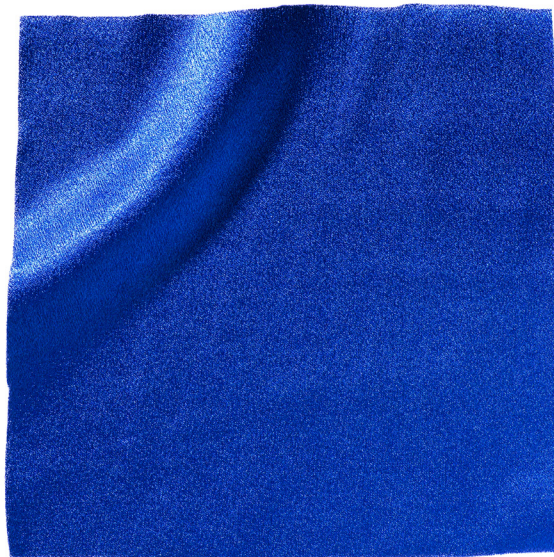
Exuding a warm, golden glow, brass is known for its enduring strength and resistance to corrosion, while enhancing any space with its lustrous sparkle

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







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

— A.P.J. Abdul Kalam

Design Examples

'Past Continuous', an exhibition by 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





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



development. In fact, there is a great potential at the intersection of social work and AI.

is the most important conversation of our time.

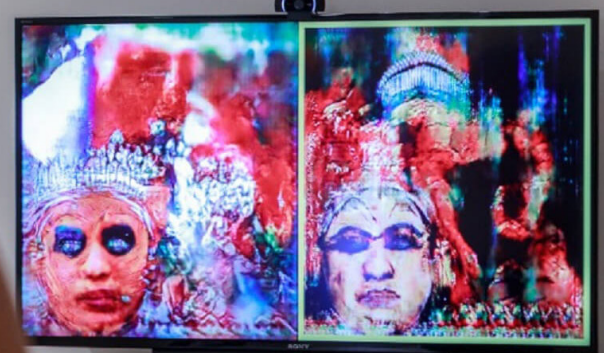
actually benefit from AI? AI will ultimately either be the
or to happen to humanity or the worst. If we look at what
being developed for, it's killing, spying, and brainwashing.
gorithms can reveal our political views or sexual
privacy is gone. AI has created new forms of oppression,
ases disproportionately affects the most powerless and
as humanity are about to go into a very dark time.
s, fake news, totally automated AI weapons. What we are
like a train hurtling down a dark tunnel and it looks like
g at the wheel.

what strikes me most about Harshit's work is that it
engages with this inevitable techno-centric reality we live
n being simply sucked into it. AI's usage in art elevates it
tool of utility and function to being a conspirator in the
nation, and the pursuit of aesthetic ideas. It allows us to
humans can work with machines to enhance their
ther than allow their creativity to be replaced by machine

son, Harshit's work with AI has engaged with
ons of social, cultural and ethical issues, with it's unique
ork with large amounts of data and act as a conduit to
rnal biases at an individual and societal level. Further he
ently used a rootedness in Indian particularity to question
ist Eurocentric philosophical outlook that has informed the
nt of AI. How can AI help us stay sensitive to the relation
at exist in the real global world? How can we use it
n collaboration with marginal cultures towards
tion and avoid appropriation? Can we use AI to trans
ons of gender? These are fascinating lines of inquiry
hat we are excited to explore. In the artist's words "I
dy of work to offer alternate narratives and immerse
ints of deep rooted sociological divides, of seeming
erceptions of themes like gender, of our sense of
s and agency- through and with AI? I find this space
ant with the machine fascinating to work with."

AI (Artificial Intelligence) art any good? Is it truly the
emporary art? Does AI re-conceive the human imagin
or its end? Is AI competition or collaborator? Does
tion of the 'artist'? Does AI perpetuate bias or beco
nderstand it? EXO-Stential - AI Musings on the Post
deep dive and contemplation of this emergent ontolo

he great pleasure and pride to introduce you to India
rt show. Welcome.





A Vishal Bhardwaj film

FURSAT

Shot on iPhone 14 Pro



A 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





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





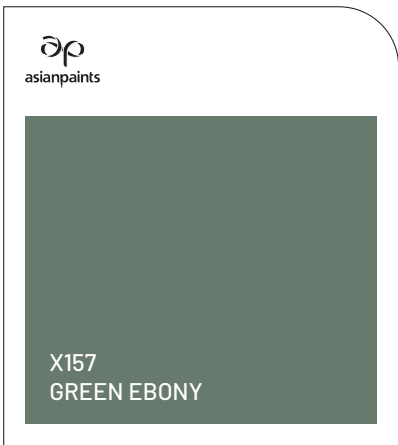
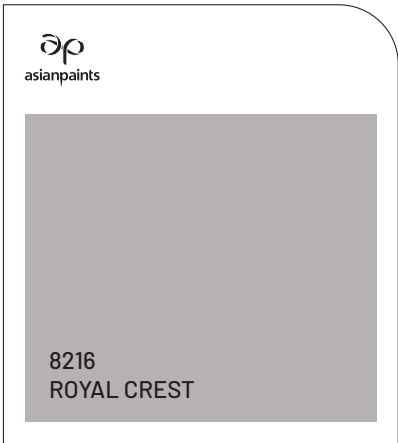
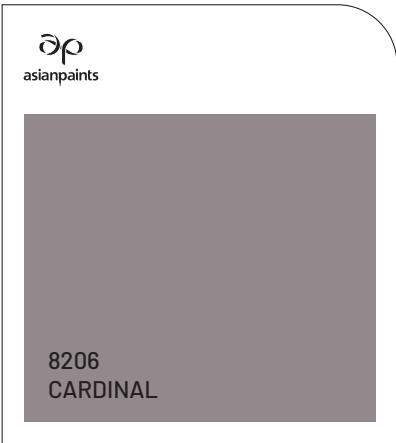
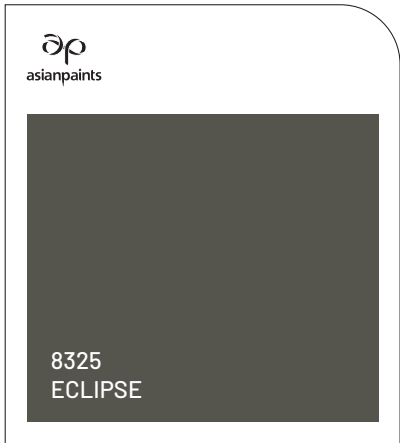


Colour Forecast

"Sink into shades of raw
authenticity."

Embrace imperfect vibrancy

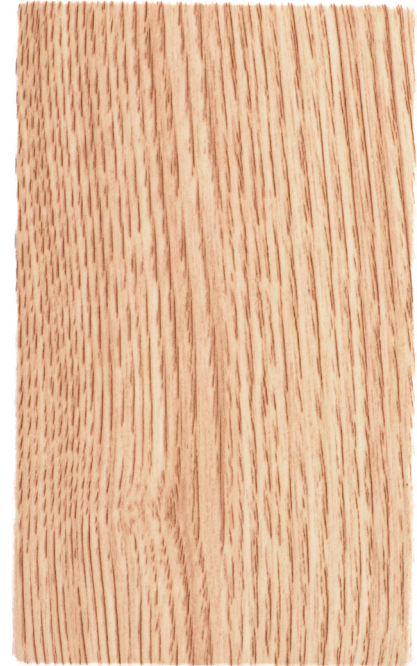
In a palette that marries playful rebellion with an assuring sense of calm, soft silvers meld with a vibrant coral and muted mauves. An earthy ochre and serene green grounds the spectrum, channelling a return to nature and a reprieve from society's glossy polish. This ensemble of shades resonates with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



Material Forecast

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

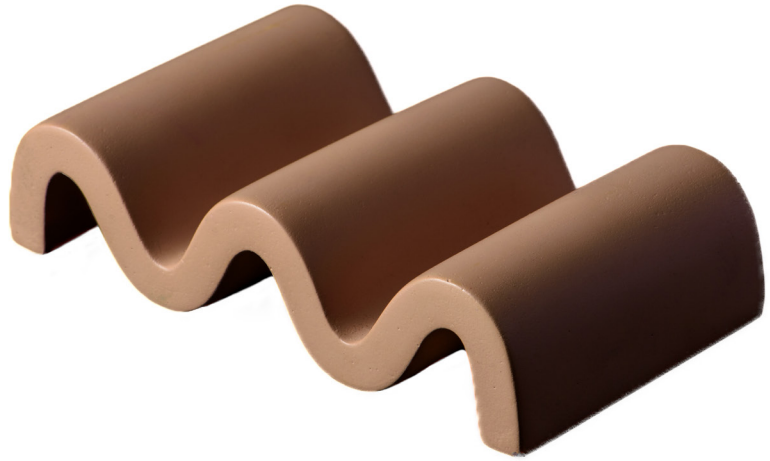
– Confucius



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.



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

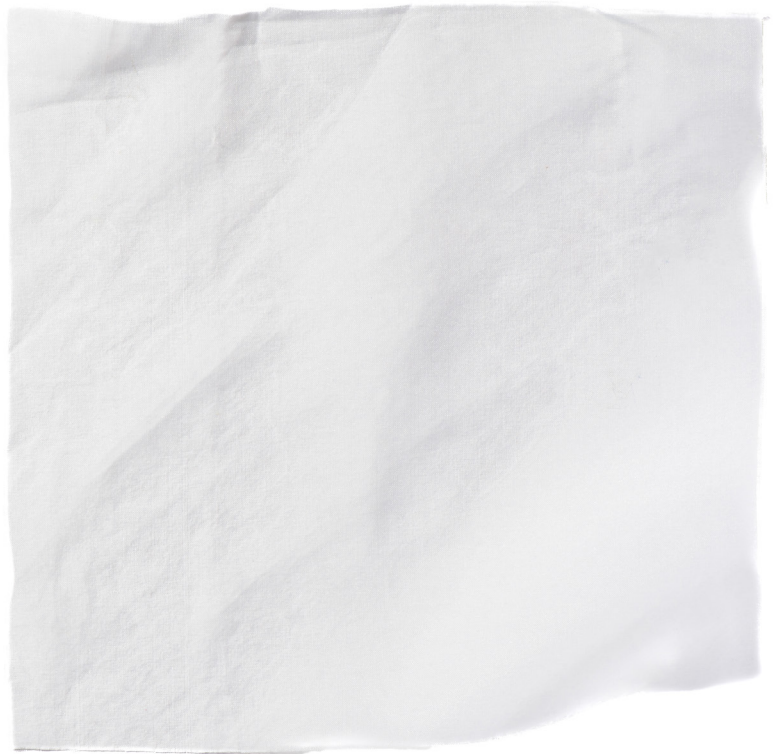
Crochet brings a delicate weave of tradition and warmth, its intricate patterns a testament to skillful hands and timeless design

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



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.



**"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

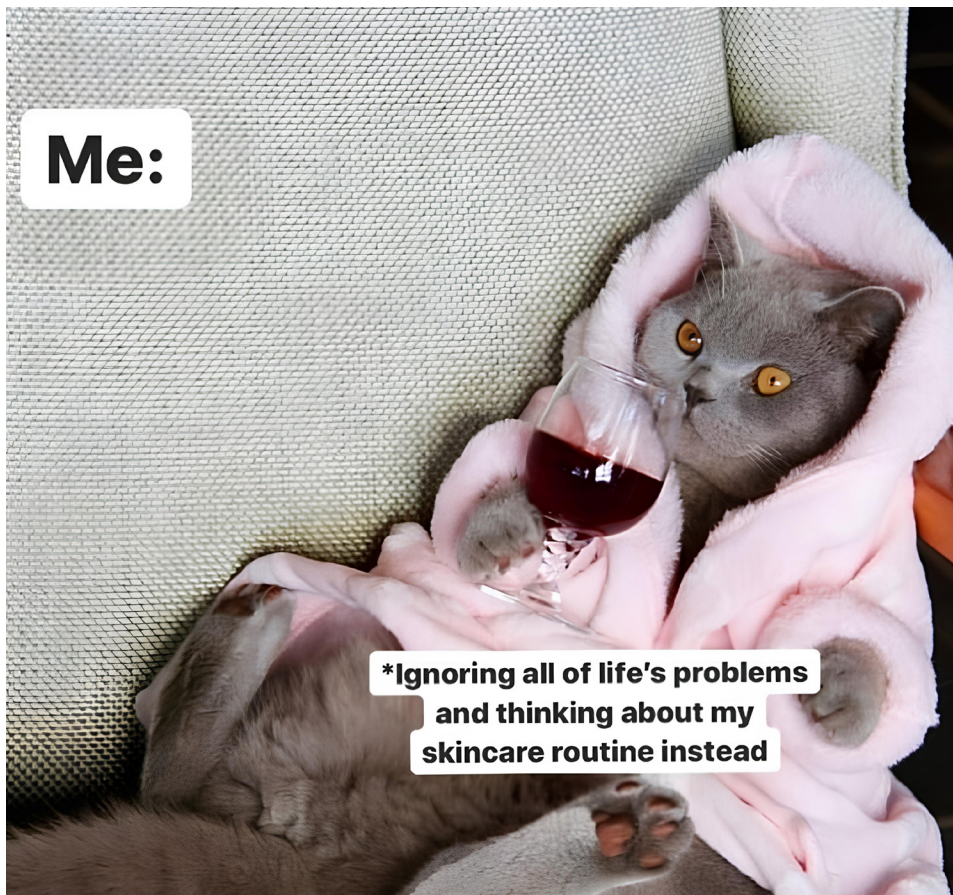
Raw authenticity over curated facades

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.

me: I'm gonna start
having fun on my days off

me on my days off:

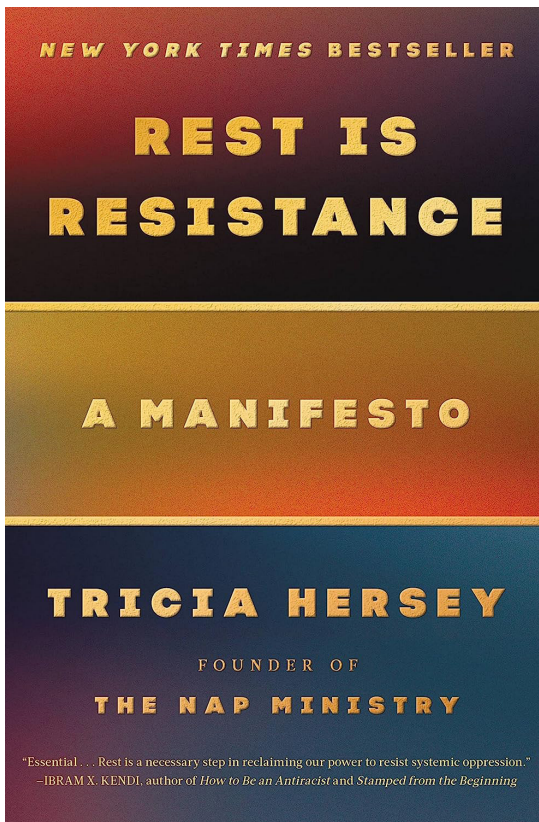


Design Examples

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

Julia Fox opened up about her 'difficult' relationship with Kanye West "He didn't like when I went goblin mode"

by [Pinkvilla Desk](#) | Published on Feb 16, 2022 04:34 AM IST | 1.4K





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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