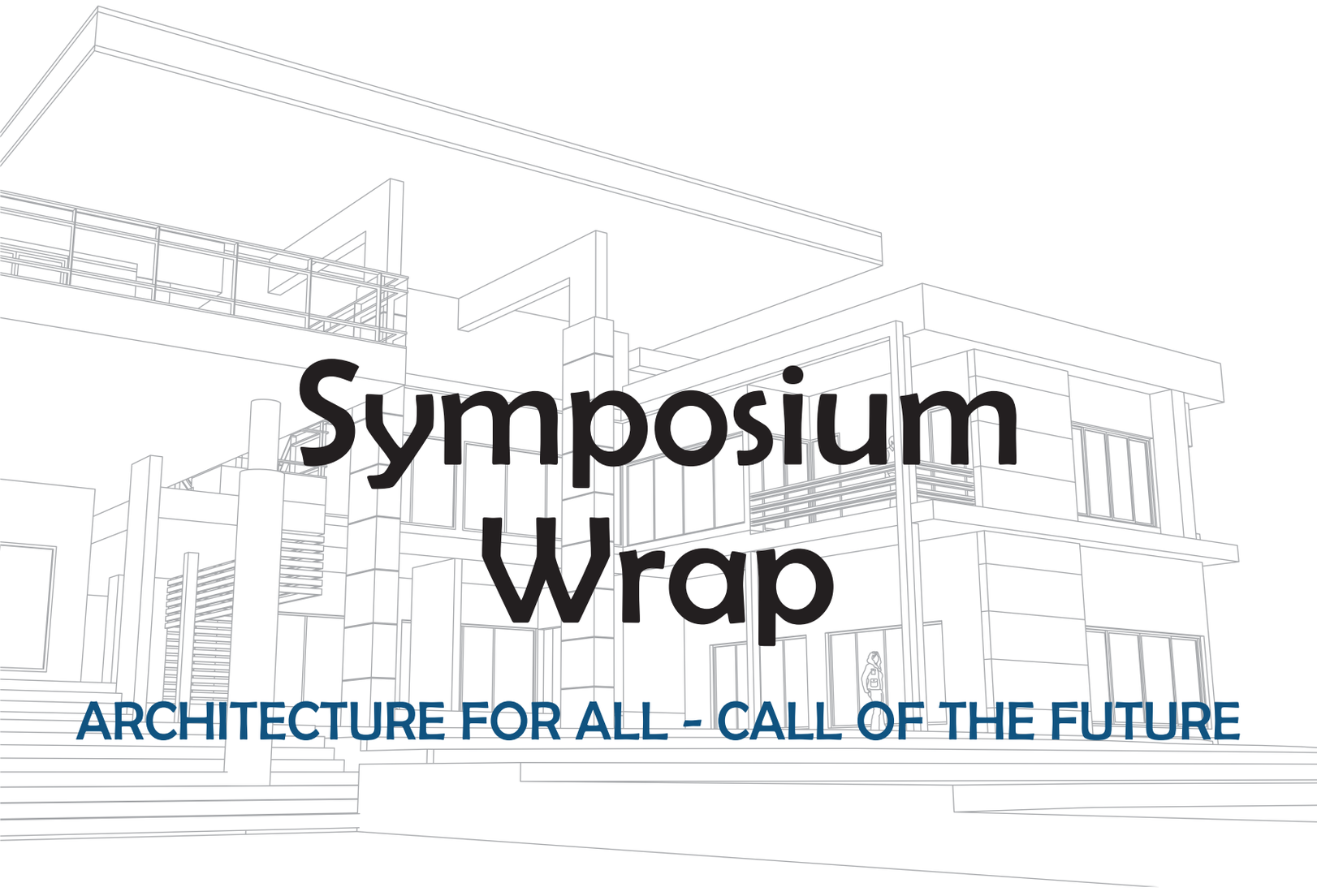
ANANT NATIONAL UNIVERSITY
॥ प्रज्वालितो ज्ञानमयः प्रदीपः ॥

India's First DesignX University

MARCH 2024

It has been a power-packed February and March for us with faculty and students from across the world assembling at Anant to discuss design, media, architecture and more. This March we also welcomed our new student council - who will be leading the student activities and operations with fresh ideas!



Symposium Wrap

ARCHITECTURE FOR ALL - CALL OF THE FUTURE

The recently organised, three-day international symposium "Architecture for All: Call of the Future" brought together leading minds from the global architectural community to explore the future of architecture. In addition to paper presenters from various regions of India, the symposium featured international paper presenters hailing from Portugal, Bangladesh, Canada and the USA.

▲ *Ar Peter Rich lighting the inaugural lamp*

Sri Lankan architect **Madhura Prematilleke** kicked off the symposium with a discourse on a Bill of Architectural Rights. Architect **Peter Rich** from South Africa, in his keynote, addressed the human dimension of design and the role of cultural responsiveness in contemporary architecture. On the third day, Bangladeshi architect **Marina Tabassum** discussed the impact of architecture on the healing processes of displacement and fostering dignity for individuals in transition.

Ar Peter Rich, Ar Marina Tabassum, Ar Madhura Prematilleke, Dr Anunaya Chaubey, Ar Rajeev Kathpalia, Prof Snehal Nagarsheth at the opening session of the symposium

Spearheaded by the dean of the School of Architecture at Anant - **Prof Snehal Nagarsheth**, the event saw the **exploration of nine identified themes - climate, identity, inclusion, well-being, ecology, technology, context, society and politics**. 40 presenters, selected through a double-blind review process, showcased their research papers over the three days of the symposium - offering valuable perspectives on current trends, challenges and innovations in the field. The final day, held at Ahmedabad Textile Mill Owners' Association House (ATMA House), saw the three keynote speakers engage in a panel discussion, drawing the symposium to an engaging and thought-provoking end. **Ar Rajeev Kathpalia**, Chair Professor at the School of Architecture and General Chair of the symposium, played an important role in shaping the symposium's agenda and ensuring its success as a platform for meaningful discourse on architecture.

Reflecting on the symposium's success, **Dr Anunaya Chaubey**,

Provost of Anant National University, emphasised the University's commitment to encouraging dialogue and innovation in the field of architecture, ensuring that it remains accessible and responsive to the needs of all.

We Immersive Transmedia Human - WITH festival celebrates storytelling and collaboration. The 2024 edition began in Ahmedabad before touring globally.

Evoking a sense of wonder

This year's festival aimed to reignite attendees' curiosity and wonder. Organisers stressed the importance of embracing wonder in a world focused on quantification. The festival fostered immersive experiences and storytelling magic.

Raqs-e-Bismil by Avni Sethi ▶

▲ *Adbhutam - musical storytelling led by Vinay Varanasi, accompanied by Vivek Sadasivam, Sruti Sarathy and Adamy Ramanand*

WITH Festival promoted socially engaged storytelling for positive change. It connected storytellers, media makers and technologists with those committed to social and environmental transformation.

▲ *Moments from Noriko Shakti's musical performances*

The festival featured diverse performances over two days. Highlights included Avni Sethi's Kathak dance, Qawwals singing stories of devotion, Ishara Puppet Theatre's Rumi interpretation and Prof Sanjeev Chatterjee's film on ocean philosophy. Noriko Shakti's electro music added a global touch that had the entire campus grooving.

Ishara Puppet Theatre performing an interpretation of Rumi's verses

▼

▲ *Kabira Khada Bazaar Mein by Dastaan*

"We are thrilled to have unveiled this eclectic lineup of performances and presentations," said Vijay Sekhon. "Each act embodied the spirit of wonder and purposeful storytelling that defines the essence of the WITH Festival."

Mazgaon project

Mentored by faculty members Maia Marinelli, Vijay Sekhon, Aditi Vashisht, and Pallavi Jain, Anant's students organised an immersive exhibition showcasing Mazagon, one of Mumbai's vibrant neighbourhoods. Developed with the Istituto Italiano di Cultura Mumbai, this project blended technology, research and storytelling - the project made a lasting impact.

▲ *Maia Marinelli with Anant students*

Exploring Mazagon's Cultural Landscape

Mazagon's story mirrors Mumbai's diversity. From a working-class area to shaping Mumbai's economy, its history reflects resilience and multiculturalism. Maza Mazagon delved into its past, present and future, exploring culinary traditions, cultural intersections and community harmony.

▲ *Mazgaon neighborhood*

Preserving Heritage in the Digital Age

The project focused on creating a digital archive, documenting residents' stories for future generations. This archive serves as a digital time capsule, preserving cultural richness amidst urban development challenges.

A Beacon of Community Engagement

Hosted at Matharpacady Village, the exhibition fostered dialogue and celebrated diversity. Meagan Pandian, India's first pedal harp player, performed, captivating the audience. Through storytelling and interactive experiences, Maza Mazagon engaged visitors with the neighbourhood's cultural tapestry.

DEPARTMENT FOCUS: FELLOWSHIP IN THE NORTH EAST

This month the Anant Fellowship for Sustainability and Built Environment team embarked on a transformative journey to North East India, immersing themselves in various impactful initiatives and engagements. The tour commenced with a visit to the Srimanta Foundation in Guwahati, marking the initiation of the proposed Majuli Project - an effort to document and energise the languishing art forms of Majuli. The Fellowship conducted sessions at esteemed institutions such as Gauhati University, Cotton University and the University of Science & Technology, Meghalaya (USTM), spreading awareness and fostering dialogue on Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Sustainable Development. These interactive sessions, attended by final-year students, staff and faculty, aimed to inspire holistic solutions for a sustainable and equitable future. Delving deeper into community engagement, the Fellowship organised an Artisan's Meet at Tamulpur Anchalik Gramdan Sangh (TAGS), Tamulpur, Baksa, to support local artisans and grassroots initiatives. The visit culminated with a pivotal meeting at TISS, Guwahati, solidifying partnerships and paving the way for collaborative efforts towards sustainable development in the region.

STUDENT FOCUS: LADAKH AT ANANT

Daawat-e-Anant saw the campus celebrate Ladakhi culture over steaming bowls of Chutagi.

Chutagi, derived from "chhu" meaning water and "tagi" meaning bread, is a pasta-like dish made from whole wheat dough. Chutagi holds a special place in Ladakhi culture, often served to harvest workers for its energy-boosting properties - reflecting the resourcefulness of the Ladakhi people, utilising the limited ingredients available in the region to create a nourishing and satisfying meal.

This traditional dish was cooked by our resident Ladakhi fellows. Dressed in Kos, traditional Ladakhi attire, Stanzin Dothom and Chuskit Angmo presented their traditional dance as the entire Anant community joined to match steps. Cooked on campus by our students and fellows, hearty bowls of soupy Chutagi were handed out to everyone.

“It was an overwhelming experience for all three of us - Chuskit, Tsetan and me. It was a way to get back to our home and ignite our sense of community feeling and celebrate the cultural heritage,” said Stanzin

Dawat-e-Anant is our initiative to celebrate diversity on campus and exchange cultural treats. Our first edition, held in January, saw the campus hand roast and eat Litti Chokha. Our students are gearing up to serve some delicious new recipes in March. Join us at our next Dawat e Anant event - updates will be up on our social media handles!

FACULTY/STAFF FOCUS: SANJEEV CHATTERJEE

Prof Sanjeev Chatterjee, an award-winning media maker with a focus on global documentary work, was at Anant this February for his yearly module with the Anant Fellowship in Sustainability and Built Environment and the first edition of WITH Festival, 2024.

A cinema and interactive media professor at the University of Miami, Salzburg Global Fellow and Fulbright-Nehru scholar (2011 and 2018) Prof Chatterjee founded Media for Change in 2013 to connect media change-makers everywhere. Prof Chatterjee dons the hat of a professor, visual storyteller and dedicated mentor. He is not only guiding and teaching Visual Communication to Anant Fellows but also mentoring our Communication Team for a unique social media campaign - soon to be unveiled.

Prof Chatterjee has a keen interest in documentary filmmaking, particularly in creating impactful narratives that shed light on critical social, environmental and cultural issues. He has produced and directed numerous documentary films on topics such as water sustainability, climate change, urban development and healthcare.

"I am grateful to be a part of the Anant community since its inception as India's first Design-X university. The idea of applying principles of design to finding solutions for the most pressing issues of our time aligns well with my aspirations."

Solution Focus

Registered | Solving for pain

The first edition of the Idea Contest 2021-22 saw the winners, our students Varshin Vala, Aliasgar Chunawala and Gauravi Ghonge, address a critical need in the healthcare sector, particularly for individuals suffering from arthritis-related pain and disability. With nearly 180 million adults diagnosed with arthritis in India, these products have the potential to significantly improve the quality of life for millions by providing effective pain relief, support and mobility enhancement.

The **customisable arthritis jacket** is designed to offer support, compression and warmth to the spinal area. Equipped with three Peltier devices, the jacket rotates to produce heat through a gel medium, providing targeted relief to the spine. Additionally, the devices can adjust vertically to target specific areas of pain, enhancing **comfort and mobility** for users throughout the day.

The Pain Relief Jacket offers a comprehensive solution for individuals suffering from **arthritis-related spinal pain.** The design has been registered through Anant's Incubation Centre - Aarambh. This is an exemplary project of bringing empathy and design together to create usable solutions.

New ideas | Solving for agriculture

Krisha Lal and Chandraneel Sen, from Anant National University, won big at the Ministry of MSME Idea Hackathon 3.0 for women innovators. Their **project - FASAL,** stood out for its fun and educational approach to **teaching kids about farming in India**. By creating a magnetic model-building game, they made learning about agriculture engaging and easy for children.

“Our idea is to design a game which is fun as well as educational for the kids. The kids will get an overall basic knowledge of how farming is done in India. This will be a model-building game consisting of multiple puzzle pieces which will be like the building blocks. Each piece will be magnetic so it will be easier for the child to fix or remove it.” shared the winners. With support from Anant National University and guidance from mentors Prof Dasara Sevak and Prof Parth Raval, they turned their idea into a winning solution. **FASAL isn't just a game; it's a tool for learning and change**. Krisha Lal and Chandraneel Sen's success shows how innovation can make a real difference in education and beyond.

"FASAL has been more than just a college project; it has been a journey of discovery, collaboration and personal growth."

Next edition: Earth Day - Sustainable Solutions at Anant

ANANT NATIONAL UNIVERSITY
॥ प्रज्वालितो ज्ञानमयः प्रदीपः ॥

India's First DesignX University