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INDIAN DESIGN MAGAZINE



Lighting up India



VIBHOR
SOGANI



BRINDA
SOMAYA



DIPEN
GADA



MANISH
BANKER



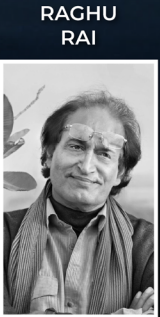
ROOSHAD
SHROFF



KAPIL
SURLAKAR



FRANK
SCHLODER



RAGHU
RAI



A portrait of Vibhor Sogani, a man with dark hair and a mustache, wearing a black shirt. He is looking slightly to the right of the camera with a subtle smile. The background is a textured, brownish wall.

THE LIGHT SCULPTOR

How Vibhor Sogani Creates Stories with Illumination

Text: Ar. Navya Raj

Photographs: Courtesy SOGANI

Light has the power to transform spaces, evoke emotions, and tell stories. Few understand this better than Vibhor Sogani, a celebrated artist and industrial designer whose work has redefined the boundaries of light and art installations. Born in Jaipur, Rajasthan, and a graduate of the prestigious National Institute of Design (NID), Ahmedabad, Sogani has been at the forefront of the Indian and international art scene for over three decades. His creations, often monumental in scale, blend artistic expression with cutting-edge technology, creating immersive experiences that resonate deeply with viewers.

"Light is not so much something that reveals, as it is itself the revelation"; this quote by James Turrell rings true each time I think about lighting as an element of architecture and design! As a young architect fascinated with light, and deeply aware of the incredible impact lighting has on me, and the world around, the name Vibhor Sogani is not unfamiliar! I perceive Sogani's work as a celebration of light and form, and a medium of storytelling.

SOGANI – the designer's signature brand, is synonymous with contemporary light installations that marry avant-garde aesthetics with traditional Indian craftsmanship. The New Delhi-based studio is a hub of creativity; where each project is a journey from concept to completion. The brand focuses on crafting bespoke lighting solutions that are not only functional but also sculptural and thought-provoking. The studio's eclectic repository includes over a hundred designs, with each piece blending innovative use of materials, state-of-the-art technology, and artisanal skills.

The firm's design philosophy revolves around creating 'Lights with a New Dimension.' With installations that explore the idea of light as an art form, using it to shape spaces, influence atmospheres, and craft narratives,



each piece taps into the versatility of light—from functional indoor lighting to expansive outdoor light art. With projects across India and internationally, including Europe, UAE, and the USA, the brand has grown to be a globally acclaimed name in design and art installations.

Sogani's methodology is deeply rooted in the principles of biomimicry, drawing inspiration from natural forms and phenomena. His creations often reflect the fluidity of nature, the rhythm of life, and the play of light and shadow found in natural environments. His installations, such as 'The Sprouts' and 'Kalpavriksha', embody these ideals, combining organic forms with innovative lighting techniques to create immersive experiences.

Rooted in Diversity, one of Sogani's renowned works, celebrates the Banyan tree, embodies India's vibrant cultural and social fabric. Using light as a metaphor, the piece highlights how diverse elements come together to create a cohesive whole. The dynamic lighting adds a layer of interactivity,

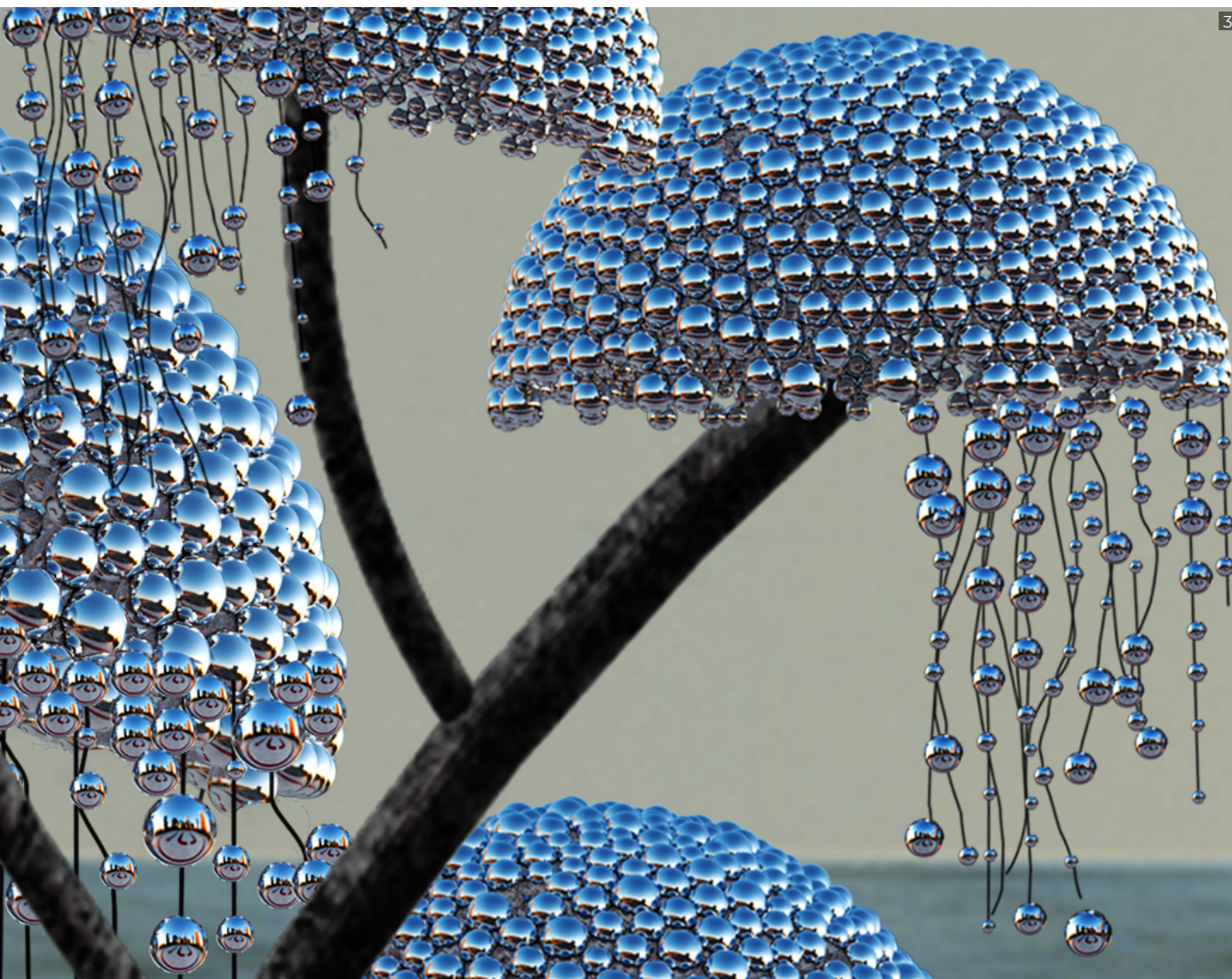
allowing the artwork to evolve with its environment. It captures the essence of harmony, with light acting as a unifying force that binds disparate elements into a harmonious vision

The Kalpavriksha installation, inspired by ancient Indian mythology, is a modern reinterpretation of the 'wish-fulfilling tree'. Standing 30 feet tall at a roundabout in Gujarat, this stainless-steel installation is an abstraction of a tree that symbolizes eternal love, immortality, and fertility. It blends a dynamic lighting system that transforms the installation into a glowing beacon at night, highlighting the mysticism of this sacred symbol. The tree's form changes as light interacts with its reflective surfaces, creating an ever-changing silhouette that echoes the constancy of change in nature

In Magical Bloom, Sogani captures the delicate moment of a flower at its peak. This installation uses polished stainless-steel orbs to mimic petals, each orb reflecting its surroundings and adding a sense of movement and

1. & 2. Bespoke lighting installation combining ambient illumination with sculptural aesthetics. The design explores the fusion of light, shadow, and form in architectural spaces at Chroma, Pune

3. & 4. Kalpavriksha: A 30-foot-tall sculptural installation in stainless steel, merging biomimicry with urban design, explored through integrated lighting and reflective surfaces



life to the artwork. The play of light on the mirrored surfaces enhances this effect, casting a spectrum of colors that shift with the changing ambient light. The piece is a reminder of nature's ability to inspire and renew, using light to bring the sculpture to life.

One of Sogani's most iconic works, *The Sprouts*, is the largest public art installation in India, located in New Delhi. Made of stainless steel and standing 40 feet high, 'The Sprouts' is a landmark that symbolizes growth, development, and progress. The installation is a part of Delhi's beautification initiative and is set within a 6-acre green space. The use of natural lighting and reflective surfaces creates a dynamic display that evolves throughout the day, offering a new perspective each time it is viewed. The design harmonizes with its surroundings, blending seamlessly into the landscape while standing out as a symbol of India's modernity and aspiration.

In the *Mahatma* installation, Sogani pays homage to Mahatma Gandhi.



Located near Rajghat in Delhi, this piece is part of the Public Art Project of India (PARI). The installation features reflective elements that reveal subtle imagery of Gandhi, encouraging viewers to engage in self-reflection. As light interacts with the installation, Gandhi's image shifts and morphs, a metaphor for his enduring influence and the timelessness of his teachings.

At the Amsterdam Light Festival, the Pool of Dreams installation captivated audiences with its ethereal beauty. This floating light installation utilized water as a natural reflective surface, combining subtle lighting with stainless-steel elements to create an illusion of floating dreams. The light interacted with the rippling water, casting soft, undulating shadows that created a meditative and dreamlike experience for viewers.

Light installations—such as Chroma, Golden Dew, and Veil—showcase Sogani's ability to blend artistic expression with functional lighting design. These pieces are not just sources of light but also interactive



5. The Sprouts: The largest public art installation in India, blending stainless steel forms with natural lighting to symbolize growth and renewal in New Delhi's urban landscape

6. & 7. A floating installation at the Amsterdam Light Festival, utilizing water as a natural reflector and creating ethereal lighting effects through subtle illumination and sculptural design



sculptures that transform spaces. 'Chroma' and 'Golden Dew' have both won EDIDA awards for their innovative designs and ability to enhance interiors with ambient light. The 'Veil' installation uses diffused lighting and sculptural elements to create a play of light and shadow, offering a constantly changing experience as viewers move around the piece.

Sogani's influence extends beyond his installations. He has been a speaker at global platforms such as the New York Light Fair and the Amsterdam Light Festival, sharing his insights on design, light, and art. His work has earned him numerous accolades,

including the Indian Art Icon of the Year Award in Singapore and Best Lighting Designer of the Year at EDIDA India.

Through SOGANI, Vibhor Sogani has created captivating light installations, whilst redefining the use of light as an artistic medium. His approach, which blends biomimicry with modern technology, offers a fresh perspective on design, where every installation is a dialogue between art, architecture, and the environment. Sogani's legacy lies not just in his creations but in his ability to transform spaces into experiences, leaving a lasting impression on all who encounter his work. ■

8. Mahatma: A thoughtful installation near Rajghat, using reflective elements and diffused lighting to evoke Mahatma Gandhi's legacy, blending art with public space

9. "Mahatma in Me" exhibition, a series of stainless steel installations, showcased in Perth, Australia, as part of the Confluence festival of Indian culture in 2016

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