



feature

SOGANI: THE FIRST INDIAN DESIGNER LIGHTING BRAND MAKES ITS MARK AT LIGHT + BUILDING 2018

ONE OF THE BIGGEST PLATFORMS OF ITS KIND, THE LIGHT + BUILDING FAIR TOOK PLACE THIS YEAR IN FRANKFURT, FROM 16TH TO 23RD MARCH. AMONG 2,600 EXHIBITORS, ONE OF THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THIS YEAR'S EVENT WAS SOGANI BY VIBHOR SOGANI – A SIGNATURE BRAND OF LIGHTS AND LIGHT INSTALLATIONS. THE FIRST INDIAN DESIGNER BRAND TO EXHIBIT IN THE HIGH-END MODERN LIGHTING DESIGN SEGMENT, SOGANI UNVEILED THREE NEW COLLECTIONS OF LIGHT INSTALLATIONS AT THE FAIR, EACH WITH THEIR DISTINCT DESIGN ARITHMETIC AND PERSONALITY.

SOGANI'S LIGHTS are a mix of rich Indian artisanal skills and new technology, where each piece is customised to varied requirements. All of the collections are marked by stainless steel and warm colours that create soft uniform lighting in a fluid manner. The inspiration is to reflect on the solidity of simplistic shapes and at the same time, present light as a guiding phenomenon in defining the substance of those shapes. "We were invited to showcase our collections at Light + Build and the experience was truly gratifying. Firstly, the scale of the event was exciting. To be a part of one of the largest contingents of lighting design, and showcase my works in front of peers and a huge audience, was enthralling. We received great responses from people, and it was truly enriching," says Vibhor Sogani, the founder of SOGANI Brand. The studio, with its R&D centre and flagship show-space based in New Delhi, India, works on commissioned projects beyond lights to concept light installations depicting thought-provoking art, 'Lights with a new dimension'.

Spread across 35,000 sq. ft, the studio showcases the brand's unique designs, that are often an innovative blend of different materials like stainless steel, brass, aluminum, copper, glass, corian, resin etc. The studio is led by Vibhor Sogani, an alumni of the prestigious NID Ahmedabad, and a senior installation artist based in Delhi. Famous for India's largest and most visible public art installation, the 'Sprouts', a 40 ft. high stainless steel installation spread over six acres of greens in the heart of Delhi, Vibhor has handled offbeat projects like developing the country's first few go-karting tracks; redesigning Mumbai's suburban trains, redevelopment of copper craft in Kashmir, designing and producing some of the prominent trophies for international sports matches and government events, to name a few. "Sprouts was one of the most ambiguous and challenging briefs I have ever received. It was more than 10 years ago when the then CM of Delhi gave me six words to work on – "From a walled city to

a world city'. The Sprouts project was initiated with the idea 'when the seeds begin to sprout', to show India as a growing nation. Hence, Stainless Steel was used as a new age material representing contemporary thought," says Vibhor Sogani. He has recently executed a 30 feet high installation, 'Kalpavriksha – the wish fulfilling tree' in Ahmedabad. It is perhaps India's second largest and Gujarat's tallest public art installation. Sited in an upcoming development in Ahmedabad called 'Arvind Uplands', Kalpavriksha is installed in a 100 ft. diameter roundabout. Crafted in stainless steel balls that are mirror-finished, the installation is conceived as an abstraction of a tree. The circumscribing, stunning landscape and the overall flavor of the serene, flowing greens served as the source of inspiration of this installation. Drawing inspiration from his favourite material, Vibhor has over time, created series of artworks in stainless steel and exhibited them in National Galleries and Contemporary Art Galleries in India and abroad.



SPROUTS

Art Installation, New Delhi, 2009

Vibhor Sogani's works include art installations such as Sprouts – India's largest site-specific public art installation. 40 feet high, the installation was a Delhi government initiative towards the beautification of the capital. It is spread over six acres of greens surrounding the AIIMS flyover in the heart of Delhi. Designed to showcase New Delhi as a "world city", 'Sprouts' are symbolic of the feeling that India is rising after 60 years of independence. They powerfully convey the message of growth and have defined the contemporary image of the city for almost a decade now. Together with the landscape, they have reflected upon the myriad moods of Delhi's weather to create one of the most inclusive and motivating public memories the capital has to offer.

"The complexity of crafting steel throws up unique challenges because it requires intelligent amalgamation of new technology and hand skills. Various technological tools that can be used to innovate on its look and feel, its range of textures, finishes, and reflections draw me towards the material," explains Sogani. When talking about his inspiration in general, he attributes it to the memories of his childhood. "I loved playing with forms and materials as a child. While travelling with my father for his work, I was witness to a diversity of landscapes. Having never been drawn towards mainstream education, I was always looking for new things – that perhaps added to my creativity. After finishing my schooling in Jaipur, I consulted a career counsellor and gave an aptitude test. I was told that I could do well in design field, since my 3D visualization was good, and that marked the beginning of my design journey." Studying at National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad gave some direction to his indulgences in the formative years of his career by providing multi-disciplinary exposure to films, textile, furniture and ceramic design, graphics, metal machining and insights into arts and crafts. It gave him orientation and taught him to approach industrial design problems methodically. After a few years of practicing for renowned industrial design firms where he learnt critical operational values, he transitioned to art. His journey from design to art was seamless and very interesting. "Initially the shift was not felt as I moved from one 'commission' to the other, each being a 'real life, client based' assignment. And soon I felt ready and confident to deviate to installations on my own." Vibhor has been nominated by the Government of India as a governing member of the 'India Design Council'. Recipient of many honours, his works have won him multiple awards including the EDIDA and 'Singapore Indian Art Icon of the year 2014'.

CASA

Unveiled at Light + Building 2018



Casa celebrates the incredible community-building efforts of birds. The ability to look beyond oneself and to weave a thread of belongingness binding a society is evident in its tranquil form.

DRAPE

Unveiled at Light + Building 2018

A delicate play of light, this piece channels the essence of morning sunrays filtering through dewdrops. Each perfectly – shaped disc comes together to form a cohesive cluster, which can be suited to a wide range of spaces. The mirror-finished outer surface creates a twinkling dance of reflections that is balanced by the warm tones of the gold-leaved interior.



GOLDEN DEW

Unveiled at Light + Building 2018



Free-flowing contour of fabric metamorphoses into a metallic drape. Beaded twines of metal come together in an asymmetrical formation that transforms into this luminescent delight. The dappled reflections, bouncing off each other, glitter like tiny stars that can light up an open atrium or an indoor lobby. Fluid curves inspired by a sensuous form, combined with the solidity of the lustrous beads create a shape that entices observers, to come closer and delve into the mysteries it holds within.