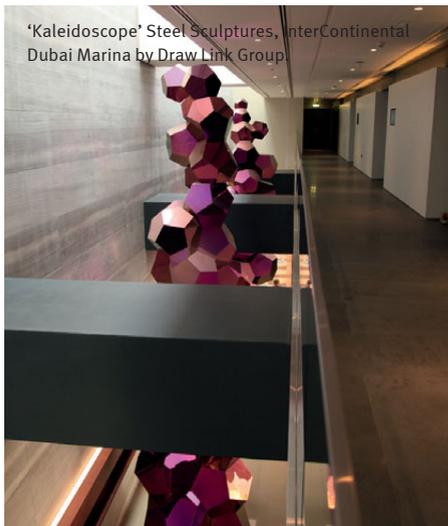




'The Travelers', InterContinental Dubai Marina by Draw Link Group.



'Kaleidoscope' Steel Sculptures, InterContinental Dubai Marina by Draw Link Group



'Hat-Trick' installation, Dubai Hills Estate Sales Pavilion.

# Why should art and interior architecture engage in dialogue?

BY NAMRATHA NANDAKUMAR, SENIOR ART CONSULTANT, 17A ART CONSULTANTS

Former US president Franklin D Roosevelt once said: "Art is not a treasure in the past or an importation from another land, but part of the present life of all living and creating people."

To truly grasp the timeless quality of the above statement, we need to revisit history. Since time immemorial, art has not only been used to communicate beliefs, express ideas and capture events, but quite often to provoke the same. Painstaking hours and many arduous years were spent on creating elaborate artworks that

inspired, sympathised and even intimidated.

Cultural historians rightfully claim that art of past times was inseparable from its settings and that all forms of art and interior spaces were admirably intertwined at various points in history – in the ancient cultures of both East and West.

This is widely illustrated in the classic Greek designs used elaborately in the interiors of public and societal buildings to reinforce a notion of stability, permanence and order. As opposed to popular belief, most of these ele-



From left: Namratha Nandakumar - senior art consultant, Kriti Dixit - art consultant, Hetal Pawani - managing director, Sabrina Uzcategui - art consultant, Gimel Samera - administration, Lindsey Gildea - creative director.



'Perception' sculpture, Dubai Hills Estate Pavilion.



Wall Mural Buddha Bar, Grosvenor Hotel, Dubai.

ments were primarily aesthetic in nature with little to no inherent structural value. But what they did was lend credence to the very principles that these structures were based on.

With the advent of time and the onset of industrialisation, creative arts began to lose their interdependency and separate from architecture. This was partly driven by the fragmentation of knowledge into various specialised fields – interior architecture, sculpture and painting being prime examples. Through popular movements such as Modernism and Minimalism, designers sought to broaden and challenge their notions of what could be beautiful. For the most part, functionality was determined to be of utmost value, causing both architecture and interior disciplines to shun most forms of decorative or elaborate features and dismiss art as a romantic notion.

However, sensitivity to the relationship between art and interior architecture has grown during the last decade. Designers have realised that the practical aspects and functional needs of a project can be addressed, perhaps more effectively, when there is plenty of opportunity and latitude to implement a multidisciplinary approach. The previ-

ous separation of these arts has now helped creative disciplinarians to influence each other in new ways and many design firms have realised that effective dialogue enables both the architect and artist learn from each other's works. The underlying potential of imagination, intuition and narrative emerging from such a cross-pollination of ideas and strategies is too rich to be ignored.

In today's image-saturated and multi-sensory environment, visual impact is increasingly becoming the primary language

of engagement. The need for compelling place-making is much stronger than before and a well-crafted environment in which function and aesthetics combine successfully, can deliver powerful messages of flexibility, cohesion and cultural sensitivity and result in meaningful impact and awareness across multiple levels (graphic, spatial, tactile and aural) simultaneously.

Effective story-telling through the integration of art and interior design can help eliminate boundaries between our built environment and everyday life and assist people in their search for a sense of belonging to their surroundings and need for uniqueness. With history lending ample proof of this concept, we aim to use this today to create what will be relevant and enduring tomorrow.

*17A Art Consultants is an art consultancy firm providing custom art environments for hospitality, healthcare, corporate and public spaces, driven by the vision of building bridges between creative disciplines. We are an eclectic association of creative experts specialising in visual arts, interior design and contemporary craft, who believe in the transformative effect of well-curated artworks in interior and exterior environments.*

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