



Gaurav Ogale

PEOPLE & CULTURE

What lies outside the window? A new wave of digital artists show and tell

Reinterpreting the view from a window through art, technology and storytelling

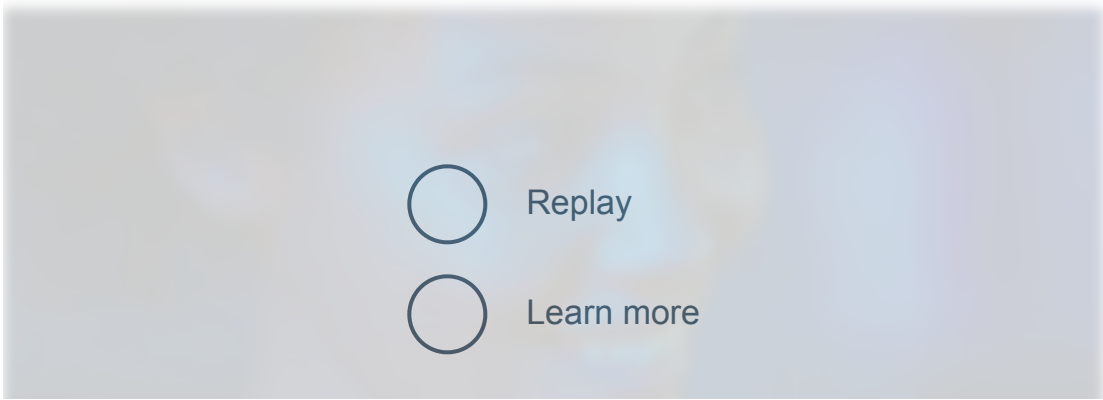
BY DIYA KOHLI

31 August 2021


For artists, windows have always been the frame within a frame and an escape. During the pandemic, they became a primary medium of inspiration and expression. And a vantage point for street photography, a tool for projection and a framing device for stories. The coming together of the physical window and digital art allowed people to access the view from a window in Mumbai or New York no matter where they were. As we locked ourselves indoors, artists adapted the physical world outside into a digital avatar.

New York-based artists like Martina Mrongovius curated global initiatives like [Light Windows](#) where holographic projections were used to bring art to windows from Seoul to Antarctica. In Milan, young artists set up the Viavài exhibits in abandoned shop windows.

ADVERTISING



via.exhibit
Milano Via della spiga View Profile



[View More on Instagram](#)

59 likes
via.exhibit

Regine Schumann - Via della Spiga 48

#viavaispiga #viavaie exhibit #viaexhibit @regineschumann @depart_gallery @lafedesss photo @valeangeloni

[view all comments](#)

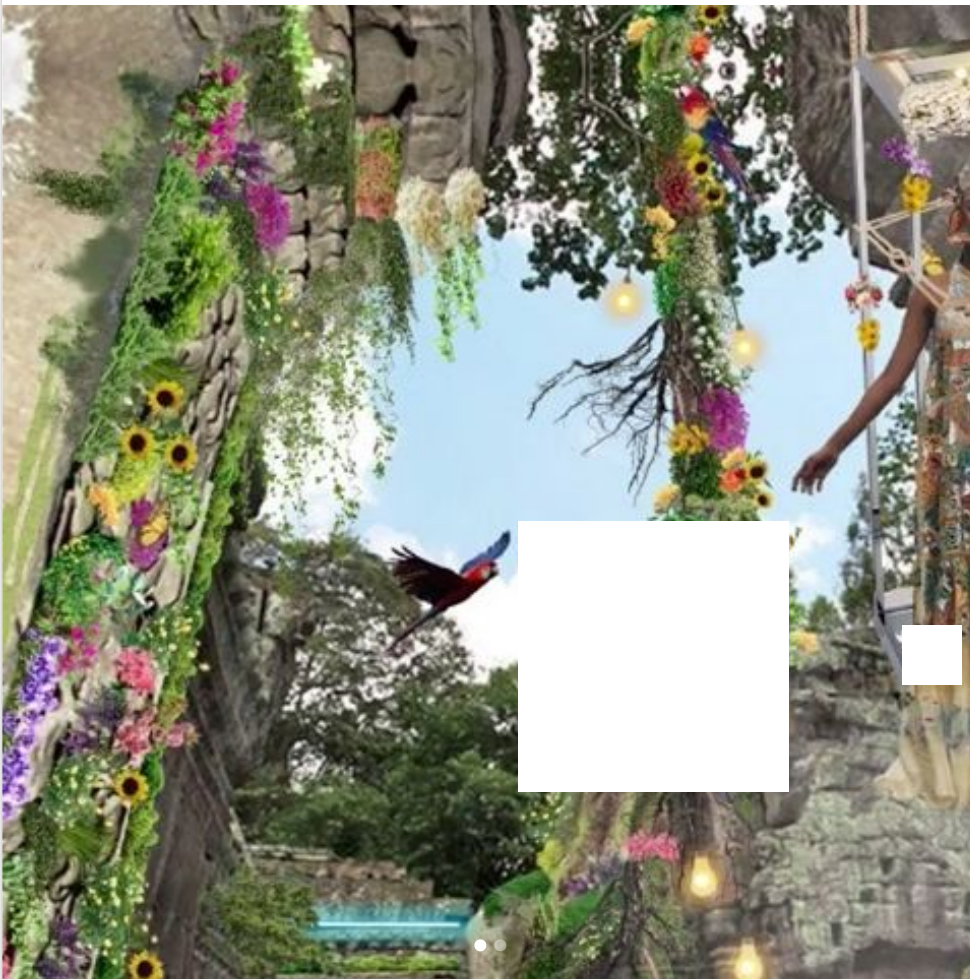
Add a comment...

In India, a clutch of young artists like **Smish Designs**, **Saim Ghani** and **Gaurav Ogale** who primarily work with digital narratives, used new and innovative ways to tell their stories, inspired by the pandemic and the world outside now rendered elusive. While Smish Designs combined political narratives with the fallout of the deadly COVID-19 virus, Saim Ghani found new ways to stage fashion in monuments turned into fairytale settings. Gaurav Ogale, on the other hand, created beautiful poetic escapes from the terrors of the everyday world.



saim.gh
Ta Prohm

View Profile



[View More on Instagram](#)

302 likes

saim.gh

'Fashion Travels' - with 2020 acquainting us to a newer digitised, imaginative world, what if shows set themselves up in the most unusual locations elevating fantasy and drama ? • featuring @rahulmishra_7 's recently launched collection at the Ta Prohm Temple in Cambodia, a temple of towers, closed courtyards and narrow corridors , requiring as much as 80,000 people to function and attend to • #rahulmishra #indianartist #indianart #fashion #art #artistsoninstagram #illustrator #fashionshow #illustration #digitalartist #2020 #artist #editorial #artmagazine #queerartist #artexhibition #digitalworld #cambodia #india

[view all 6 comments](#)

Add a comment...

An artist and his digital window

For visual artist Gaurav Ogale, windows have always been a portal between the individual and the cities they inhabit. “The windows of homes I have grown up in or lived in allowed me to construct my own narratives and stories and they are never confined.” The window for him was equal parts an invisible wall, a screen, or a curtain. “It was our only source that made us

feel like we were part of a larger story, a larger world that was crumbling down. And all we could do during that time was to cook up our own stories of hope,” he says.

His audio-visual installation “Majha” along with sound artist Farah Mulla was part of a recent show called Shifting Selves: Between Meaning, Mythology And Mirage by Sarmaya Arts Foundation in collaboration with TARQ Art Gallery in Mumbai. Sarmaya is a digital archive and virtual museum whose objects and stories are accessible to everyone everywhere. During the pandemic where touch became taboo, digital art as well as online repositories, allowed people to create their own museum experience at home.



For Ogale, the experiential aspect of audio-visual art is not confined to either physical space or time. ‘Majha’ has a second life on Sarmaya’s Youtube channel even after its month-long showing at Tarq Gallery in Mumbai closed.

Stories of the city

Majha means ‘mine’ in Marathi, a term that encapsulates the different motifs that Ogale has ascribed to the many windows in the many cities that he has called home over two decades—from Satara to Pune and Mumbai.



Gaurav with his family in Ogalewadi where the rose garden is the motif on the window

The segment called “Sridhar” is set in Ogalewadi in the 1990s and includes dreamy images of a window in his grandfather’s room, an eight-mirrored cupboard with a soundtrack of loud night crickets. Ogale calls this “the world’s most beautiful mirrored cupboard” which had travelled with his great grandparents all the way from Bangalore in the early 1900s. “The reflections on its mirrors became my window to the world that my grandfather created for me,” he writes in his notes on the show.

In the piece called MHADA, set in Mumbai in 2014, images of cramped housing are offset by a woman in the window looking far beyond her concrete surroundings. Domestic pressure cooker is the most noticeable embodiment of this life lived out in close proximity with neighbours. This scene is then slowly superimposed with magical realism as elements from the sea including brightly coloured seashells filled with water rise in sync to the sound of the waves and winds.

From a mosquito net to the tetrapods along Mumbai’s shoreline, an antique cupboard and a lady with a red flower in her hair—these vignettes of daily life are complimented by Farah Mulla’s soundscapes—think chirping birds, traffic, waves crashing, pressure cooker whistles and other music of the city—and a window contains it all.

It is this intersection between the window, art and technology that brings the real and imagined cities home.