

JULY 2026
Monthly Newsletter



SO
AD

**Design In
Convergence**

DEAN'S MESSAGE

What excites me most about the School of Arts & Design is not simply how much we do, but how differently we do it—and yet, somehow, it all connects.

Across our four departments, including Foundation, each is creating its own narrative. The questions are different, the approaches are different, and the outcomes often look very different. At first glance, they may seem like separate stories. But look a little closer, and a beautiful synergy begins to emerge.

A classroom project connects with an industry conversation. A faculty idea finds new meaning through an international partnership. A student experiment becomes the beginning of something larger. People, projects, disciplines, and possibilities constantly cross paths.

This is how a school grows—not through isolated achievements, but by building one block upon another. Each experience adds energy to the next, and each narrative quietly strengthens the larger story we are creating together.

For me, this is perhaps the most exciting part of our journey: we are not trying to make everyone tell the same story. We are creating a space where different stories can grow, connect, and become something bigger together.

And I feel fortunate to be part of it.



*Many Narratives.
One Shared Journey.*

That is the SOAD we are building together.

Dr. Adity Saxena





INDEX

I Convergence in Student Learning

01	Discovering New Territories: SOAD Electives	2
02	The Stop Motion Elective	4
03	The Exhibition Design Elective	33
04	Bamboo Explorations Elective	44
05	The Film & Costume Elective	46
06	What Will This Year Make of You? - SOAD's Orientation Week	48
07	The Model Making Workshop	55
08	Inside IKEA Hyderabad	59

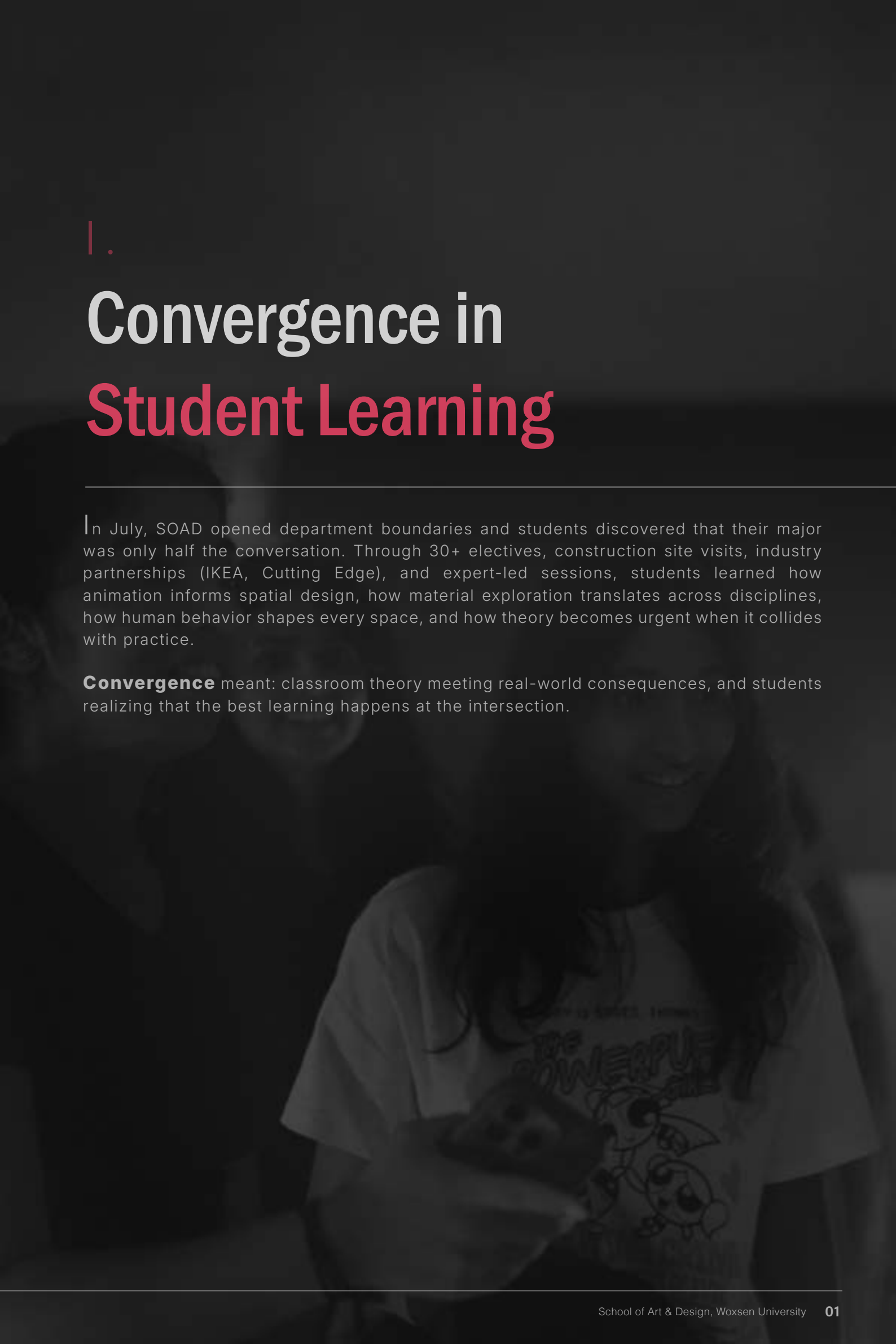
II Convergence in Student & Alumni Achievement

09	Woxsen University's 6th Annual Convocation 2026	70
10	Manasvi Tangirala's Paper Joins a Global Conversation	73

III.	Convergence in Academic Innovation & Partnerships	
11	Delegation from IED Milan	76
12	SOAD Signs MoU with Cutting Edge Design Studio	77
13	SOAD ranked #2 in India IIRF Ranking	80

IV.	Convergence in Industry Engagement	
14	Mr. Ankal Reddy of OC8ANE on Fashion Entrepreneurship	82
15	Ms. Sai Janani on The Growth of Digital Fashion	83
16	Ramon Ray Visiting Woxsen in September 2026	84
17	Akash Ashesh of Titan on Visual Merchandising	85
18	Ms. Phalanvita Madhyala on Fashion Styling & Photography	86
19	Mr. Vinod Kumar on Designing for millions	87

V.	Convergence in Faculty Achievement	
22	Celebrating Dr.Arun Kumar Gaikwad’s PhD Completion	88
23	Research Publications	91
24	Prof. Kamalvas Narayana Leads FDP at FDDI, Hyderabad	93

A dark, grayscale background image showing a group of students. In the foreground, a student with long dark hair is smiling and looking down at a small object in their hands. They are wearing a white t-shirt with a graphic that includes the text 'THE POWERPUFF GIRLS'. Other students are visible in the background, slightly out of focus.

I.

Convergence in Student Learning

In July, SOAD opened department boundaries and students discovered that their major was only half the conversation. Through 30+ electives, construction site visits, industry partnerships (IKEA, Cutting Edge), and expert-led sessions, students learned how animation informs spatial design, how material exploration translates across disciplines, how human behavior shapes every space, and how theory becomes urgent when it collides with practice.

Convergence meant: classroom theory meeting real-world consequences, and students realizing that the best learning happens at the intersection.



01

Discovering New Territories

Electives: SOAD Students Cross Departments

From June 29 to July 22, 2026, SOAD offered 30+ electives across two intensive runs. Students could step outside their major and into courses taught by other departments, visiting experts, and industry specialists.



An elective is a gift disguised as an option. It's a moment when education stops being prescribed and becomes chosen. You're not taking it because it's required for graduation but because something in the course description made you think "I want to know how to do that". Over two weeks in July, SOAD offered thirty-plus electives — courses where Fashion Design students could learn Stop Motion

Animation, where Interior Design students could explore Game Design Fundamentals, where every student across every department had permission to be curious about something their major didn't require. More importantly, they had permission to fail at it, learn from it, and walk away transformed by it. That's what electives are for. **To expand who you are as a designer.**

Why Electives matter

Design education has been built on a false assumption - that your discipline defines your thinking. But the best designers think across disciplines. They borrow methods from animation to strengthen their narratives. They steal from industrial design to improve their material understanding. They steal from game design to create more engaging interactive experiences. An elective isn't a distraction from your major. It's permission to become a more dangerous, more interesting designer — someone who can speak multiple design languages and combine them in ways nobody else can.

When a Communication Design student takes Furniture Design, they're not wasting time. They're learning how three-dimensional thinking works. When an Interior Design student takes User-Centric Design Research, they're borrowing research methodology that will make their next project sharper. Cross-departmental exploration isn't optional enrichment.

It's how you become someone worth hiring.

We're featuring stories from students who took risks.

Here's what they learned.

A 1000 Photographs for 1 Minute of Life

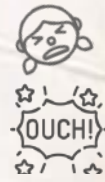
The Stop Motion Animation Elective

Every one of us has done it as a child. Walked a toy across the floor. Made it jump, made it fall, and gave it a voice. For a few minutes, that little object was alive - because we believed, it was. Stop motion animation is that same childhood game, taken seriously. It is cinema's oldest kind of magic. Long before computers, it was stop motion that carried King Kong up a skyscraper, made skeletons sword-fight in old adventure films, and still gives us the warm, handmade worlds of Wallace & Gromit and Coraline today. And audiences have never stopped loving it, for one simple reason:



— **you can feel the human hand in it.**

Somewhere behind every tiny movement on screen, you can sense that a person was there



*You place a character.
You take a photograph.*

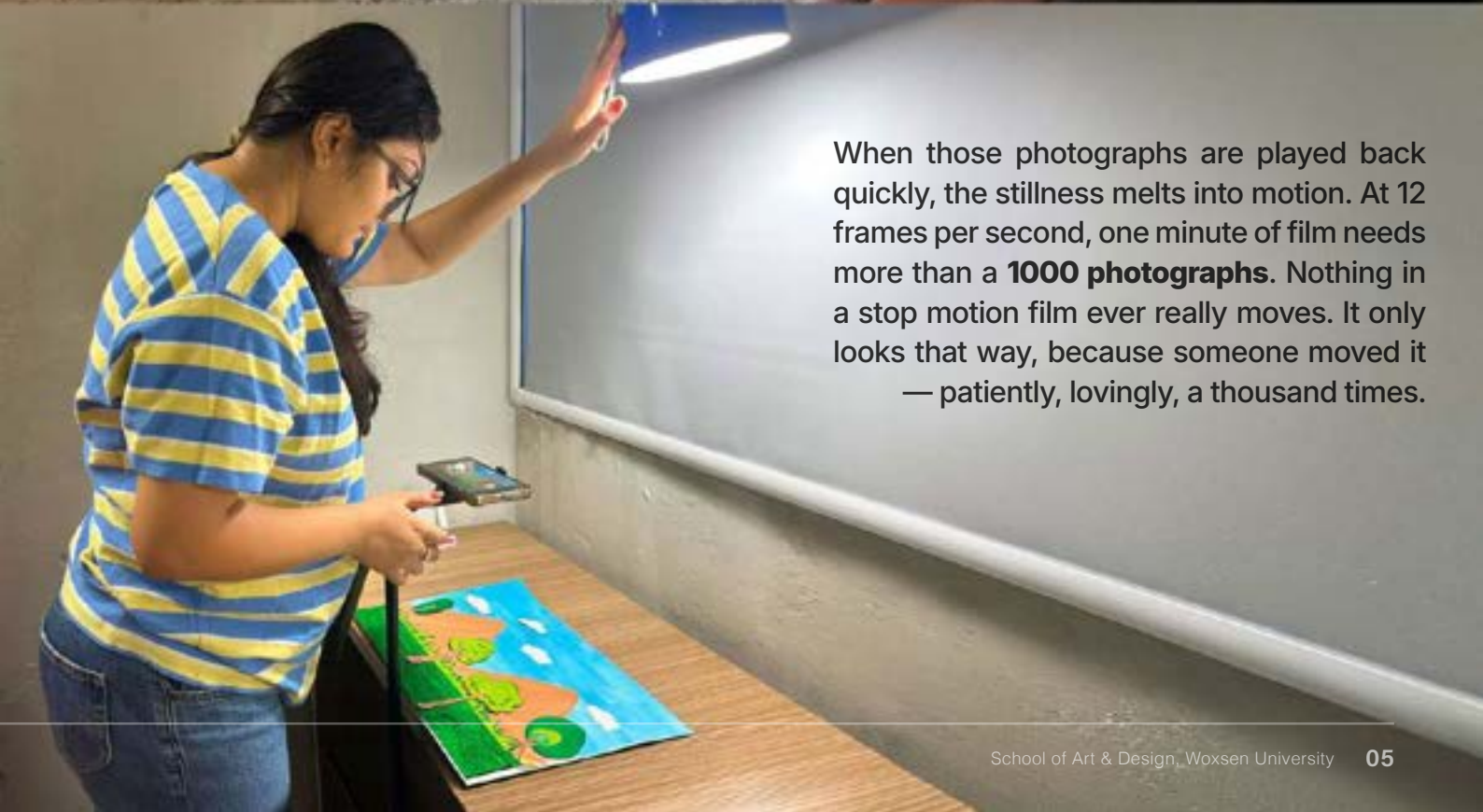
You move it

*just a few millimetres.
You take another photograph.*



*.....And another
.....And another*

When those photographs are played back quickly, the stillness melts into motion. At 12 frames per second, one minute of film needs more than a **1000 photographs**. Nothing in a stop motion film ever really moves. It only looks that way, because someone moved it — patiently, lovingly, a thousand times.



The Stop Motion Animation elective, a Semester III course handled by **Prof. Parvathy** of Communication Design Department, drew in 32 students from across every department of the School.

From 10 July 2026, over 9 intensive days, they would travel the entire journey of an animated film — story, character, set, shoot, edit — and end it with an exhibition called “Worlds of Motion.”

**You have to think about Story,
Character, Materials,
Movement, Camera,
Light, Sound and Editing,
and somehow make all of it work together.**





And in a time when so much can be made instantly on a screen, I think there is still something very valuable about learning to build, experiment, make mistakes and bring something to life with your own hands.

These are skills that move into animation, film, advertising, content and many other creative careers.

Prof. Parvathy
COMMUNICATION DESIGN, SOAD

And to keep the energy high, the course was built like a game. Every stage had a finish line. Every on-time submission earned a bonus.

The prize at the end?

The top 3 films would be featured right here, in the newsletter you are reading.

The race was on.



32 Students

9 Days

1000+ Photographs Per Film

90 second Film

12 Frames Per Second

Before a single character could be built or a single photo clicked, each student faced the oldest question in the world:

what is your story?

Being a storyteller is really just being a noticer. You notice a feeling, a funny moment, a small sadness, a “what if” - and you shape it so someone else can feel it too. But stop motion adds a twist. Here, a story has to be worth building with your hands. One minute of film has room for exactly one idea, told with heart. So the students had to write small - and feel big.

The Best stories were selected to move forward

10 stories were selected out of 30. Teams chose what story they want to work on and in what role - Director, Animator, Set and camera and SFX. Check out their Portfolio's! Each thumbnail links to the storyteller's portfolio, so if a story catches your eye, the person behind it is one tap away.

The first deadline arrived. And the stories came in.

-  Story By
-  Director
-  Sound Designer & Editor
-  Director of Photography (Camera & Lighting)
-  Stop Motion Animator
-  Portfolio Link



Bon appétit

One unlucky man discovers that some fears follow you beyond the flesh.

Story By: Ananya Kataria
Communication Design, 2025



A Film on *Horror comedy*



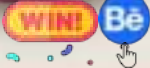
Hello Friend

One unlucky man discovers that some fears follow you beyond the flesh.

Story By: **Koyel Mitra**
Communication Design, 2025



A Film on *Kindness*



The Missing Piece

A torn piece of paper searches for somewhere to belong, until it realises it can become something else entirely.

Story By: **Ria Tanvi**
Communication Design, 2025



A Film on *Belonging*



The Shoe Monster

What first appears frightening slowly reveals that not every monster is something to fear.

Story By: **Jyothi Keerthana**
Fashion Design, 2025



A Film on *fear*



Beyond the Page

When a little doodle comes to life, curiosity carries her beyond the page and into a world she never knew existed.

Story By: **Nishtha Nagpal**
Fashion Design, 2025



A Film on *Curiosity*



Legends never go out of style

Two legendary rivals face off once again, proving that some battles never really get old.

Story By: Deeptorshee
Industrial Design, 2025



A Film on *Rivalry*



The Umbrella

On a rainy day, a simple umbrella brings two strangers together in an unexpectedly tender moment.

Story By: Tanisqua Uppada
Communication Design, 2025



A Film on *Connection*



Runaway Sub

A perfectly ordinary sandwich suddenly makes a run for it, turning lunchtime into a very unexpected chase.

Story By: Gadewar Saloni Pravin
Communication Design, 2025



A Film on *Escape*



The last biscuit

There's only one biscuit left. Suddenly, sharing doesn't seem like such a simple idea.

Story By: Rishita
Communication Design, 2025



A Film on *Rivalry*

What makes a lump of clay and wire become someone?

A slight tilt of the head. Eyes a little too big. A walk with a wobble in it. That is what a character really is — a handful of small, loving choices that make an audience give a soul to an object.



The great studios go to astonishing lengths for this. Laika 3D-printed thousands of tiny faces for *Coraline*, so she could frown and gasp and smile frame by frame.

At Aardman, animators re-shape Gromit's brow with a thumb between shots — because in stop motion, even an eyebrow is acting. Our students learnt the same truth at a smaller scale: **A character isn't just designed to be seen. It is designed to be held — a thousand times — and survive.**

Sitting between
the students,
Prof. Parvathy
enjoys building
miniature
armatures —





Tiny skeletal hands where every joint could **bend** and **hold its pose**.

It is fiddly, frustrating, beautiful work. But only a character with working joints can move smoothly on screen; without them, every action jerks and jumps. And here, something lovely happened —

The **material exploration** the students had studied back in their first year quietly returned to help them. Wire, clay, foam, fabric.



A character is
designed *twice*

Once to be seen, and once to
be held a thousand times.



Then came *the worlds.*



Cardboard buildings.
Painted skies.
Wire and paper forests.



The students became **carpenters, painters, prop masters** and **lighting designers** **all at once.**



A set in stop motion is an entire universe

One metre wide — and it has to be sturdy enough to survive nine days of shooting hands reaching in and out of it.

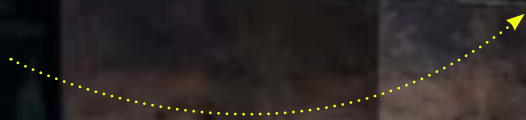


The shoe Monster Team built a whole room for a shoe and a tiny orange monster. And honestly, they gave them better interiors than most of us have...

Give *Harisreejan* an action figure and a camera and you may not see him again for a while. He's been making stop-motion films with Marvel action figures long before this class.



SEE MORE OF HIS WORK.



Click.
Adjust the head.

Click.
Fix the light.

Click.
Move the hand two millimetres.

It is **back-breaking** work —

Deeptorshee disappeared into his storyboards somewhere along the way. We're still trying to get him back for the shoot...



Hours bent over a tabletop world, holding your breath so you don't bump the set, repeating the same tiny ritual a thousand times for sixty seconds of film.

The ***Hello Friend*** Team built a school small enough to hold in their hands, then somehow filled it with a friendship big enough to tell a story.



*Around photograph **600**, it
stops being an assignment.*

*It becomes something closer to
devotion.*



*Khushi Barara gave this little world everything she had.
You could see it in every handmade detail, every adjustment,
and every frame she patiently went back for.*



And of course, under that kind of **pressure**, teams cracked sometimes.

Tempers ran short.
Disagreements flared over whose idea, whose turn, whose fault.

That, too, is part of making things together.

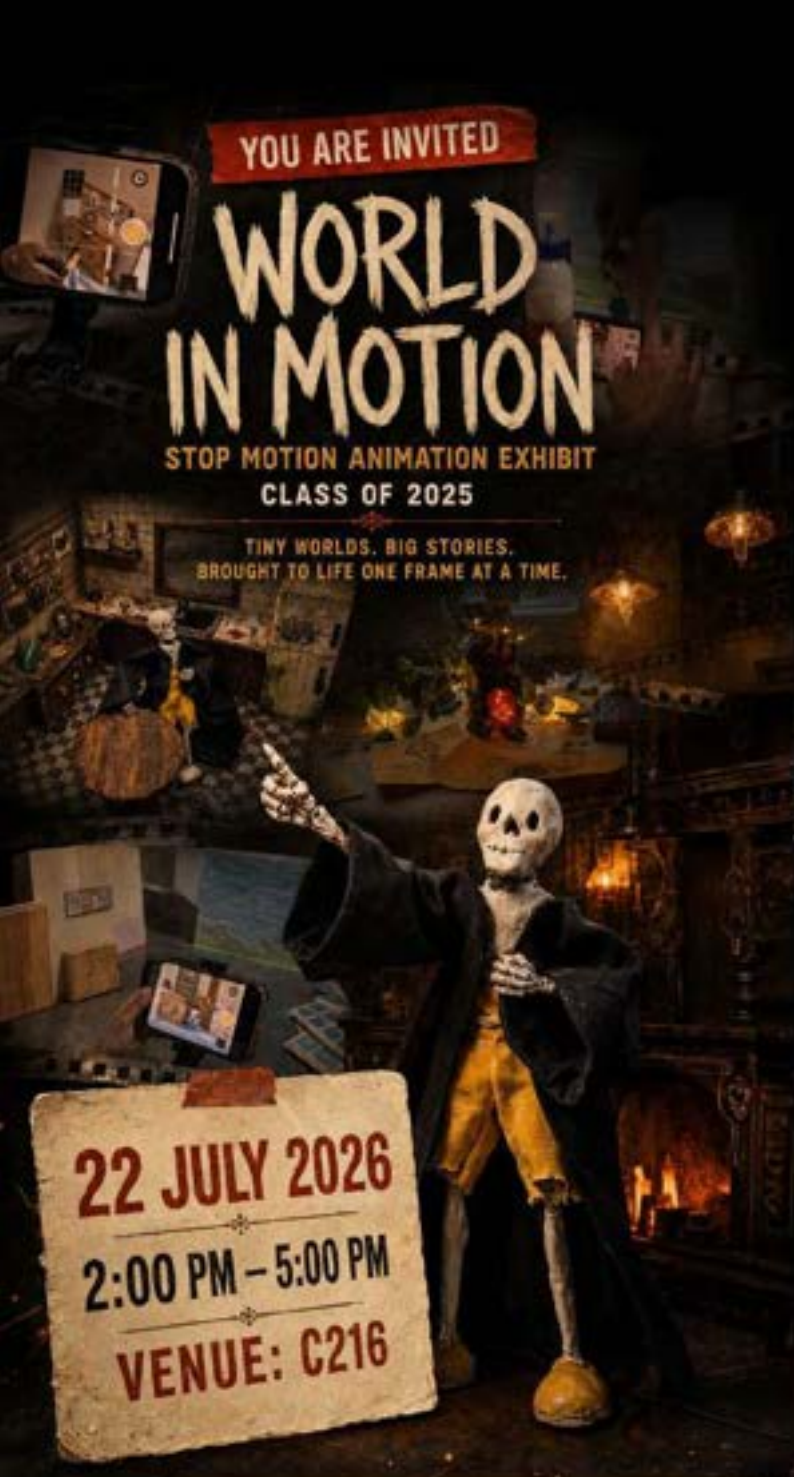


Here at Woxsen, we fix. We are a team, after all. By the final days, the same teams that argued were finishing each other's shots.

We fix.
We are a team, after all.







THE FINISH LINE

“Worlds of Motion”
opened its doors to the School —



The doors opened.
Nobody was disappointed.



and nobody walked away disappointed.
Faculty and students wandered between tiny universes

The Shoe monster had
officially reached the
Vice Dean.



The films playing on screens, and beside them, the worlds themselves — the hand-built sets, the characters with their bendable bones, the props smaller than a thumb.



The animators stood by their work, telling visitors how it was made.





Still Motion Studio

@StillMotionStudioWoxsenSOAD · 6 videos

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WATCH
THEM
HERE



Stop motion animation - The missing Piece
· 8 minutes ago



Stop motion animation using action figures -
Legends never go out of style
· 8 minutes ago



Stop motion animation - Bone appetite
· 8 minutes ago



Stop motion animation using paper- Beyond
the Page · 8 minutes ago



Stop motion Animation - The Shoe Monster
· 8 minutes ago



Stop motion Animation using paper - Hello
Friend · 8 minutes ago



Some courses teach a software.

This one taught patience, teamwork, and the oldest lesson in Stop motion cinema:

*if you want something to come alive,
you have to move it yourself.*



Worth
every single
frame



One Empty Room.

A Thousand Ways to Tell a Story

Introduction to Exhibition Design Elective

You have felt it before, even if you never named it. Walking into a temple and lowering your voice without being asked. Stepping into your grandmother's house and feeling ten years old again. Some rooms do something to us — before we understand why. That is not an accident.

Light, colour, scale, sound, the path your feet are made to take — all of it can be arranged. And the discipline that arranges it is called exhibition design: the art of making a space tell a story, and making a visitor feel it.



That was the craft at the heart of the Exhibition Design **elective**

conducted from 10 to 22 July by
Prof. Arun Gupta

along with visiting faculty
Shashwanth



Like all electives, it drew students from across the School from the batch of 2023 — **and they came**

2 from
Fashion Design



The fashion students came knowing how material makes people feel.



11 from
Interior Design



The interior designers came knowing how rooms work.



21 from
Communication Design



The communication designers came knowing how to tell stories.



34 students

3 ways of seeing space.

A large, ornate key hangs from a red laser light in a dimly lit room. The key is positioned in the upper center of the frame, with its head pointing upwards and its bit pointing downwards. The red laser light creates a series of parallel lines that fan out from the key, filling the upper half of the image. The background is dark and out of focus, with some blurred lights visible.

At the entrance to one dim, red-lit room, visitors were met not with an artwork
but with a question, hand-written on the wall

“What is the key that unlocks your heart?”





Built by
**Chinmai Sai, Veda Bala V,
Mahitha Thallapali, Sravyanjali,
Zaina Rasheed and Snigdha
Bukka**

— hung a glowing heart, spotlit at the centre of a dense web of coloured threads. Every colour meant a kind of bond: red for love, orange for warmth, yellow for joy, pink for tenderness, purple for growth.



And suspended in the web, floating on near-invisible line, hung silver keys — each one carrying a visitor's handwritten answer. Trust, said one. Being truly heard, said another. Talking to the people who love me unconditionally.

The team designed the room as an emotional journey in four quiet steps - curiosity at the entrance, reflection while reading strangers' answers, vulnerability in writing your own, and resolve on the way out — past a final line on the wall ***"Every key unlocks a path of us."***

***A lamp promises warmth.
Blue light asks “what if it doesn’t?”***

“Uncertainty of Expectation”

By

Rahul Kasturi (Communication Design)

Inayat (Communication Design)

Chavi Agarwal (Communication Design)

Khadija Jahir Ismail (Interior Design)

Meenakshi Bollam (Interior Design)

Harshitha (Interior Design)





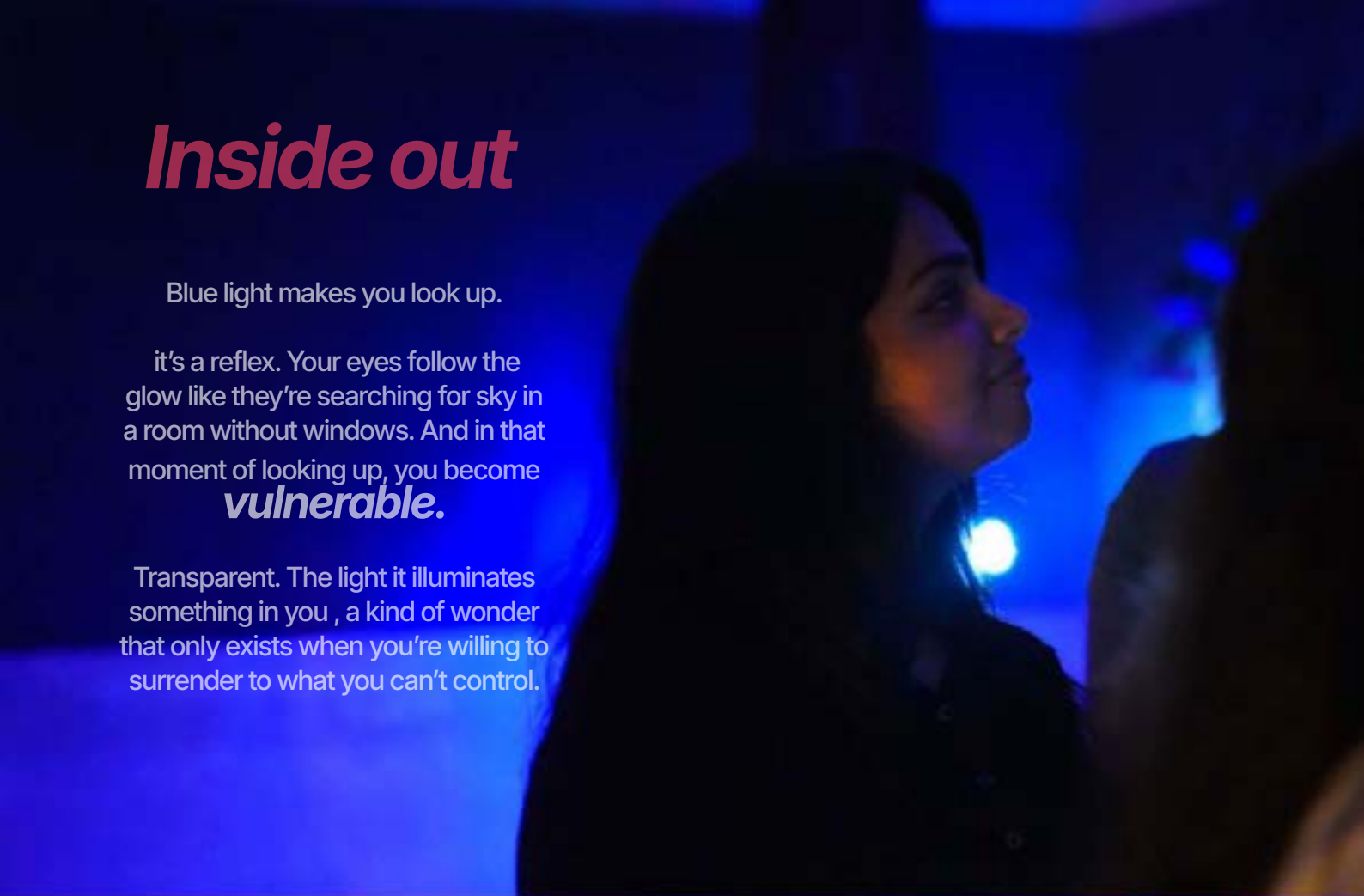


Inside out

Blue light makes you look up.

it's a reflex. Your eyes follow the glow like they're searching for sky in a room without windows. And in that moment of looking up, you become **vulnerable.**

Transparent. The light it illuminates something in you , a kind of wonder that only exists when you're willing to surrender to what you can't control.





Material Exploration: Wood and Bamboo Elective

Here is a fact that surprises almost everyone: bamboo is not wood. Botanically, it is a grass — the fastest-growing plant on Earth, with some species shooting up nearly a metre in a single day. And yet this humble grass is astonishingly strong, renews itself without replanting, and has held up floors, scaffolding and roofs across Asia for centuries. In an age when furniture's favourite materials cost the planet dearly, bamboo stands there quietly growing, asking designers a very good question: why not me?

Led by Prof. Bhushan Sonawane and open to Semester 5 and 7 students from both Industrial Design and Interior Design, the elective ran from 10 to 22 July — spatial thinkers and product thinkers side by side, designing the objects we trust with our bodies every day and never think about once. The chair that holds you as you read this was someone's set of decisions: seat height, back angle, material under your weight. This elective teaches students to make those decisions deliberately. Midway through the course, the classroom went to the industry. The students visited Studio Chisel, Hyderabad —

a working furniture studio — and for a few hours, the elective's lessons stood up and walked around. They watched timber get planed and joints get cut, followed real-world design workflows from concept to production, and talked shop with practicing designers who know their materials' moods. There is a kind of learning that only happens in such places: in a classroom, a joint is a diagram; in a workshop, it is a sound, a smell, a fit you can feel with your fingers.

Then, back on campus, the students answered bamboo's question with their hands. On 22 July — the elective's final day — the "Bamboo Explorations" Exhibition opened at the Exhibition Centre, School of Arts & Design, from 11 am onwards. On display: the elective's full journey with its chosen material — furniture and explorations coaxed out of the fastest-growing plant on Earth, each piece an argument that sustainable design doesn't have to look like a compromise. Thirteen days earlier, most of these students had never designed furniture. Now their work stood in an exhibition hall — holding its own weight, and a little of the future's.





The Film & costume Elective

Thirty-six students spent thirteen days inventing people who were never born and learning to tell you everything about them through what they wear.

36 Students

13 Days

3 Departments

1 Showcase, Open to All

Think of any film character you love. Chances are, you can see their clothes before you can remember a single line they spoke. The worn-out jacket that tells you someone has given up. The crisp white shirt that tells you someone is hiding something. In cinema, clothing speaks first long before the dialogue does. That is the strange, wonderful discipline of costume design: fashion, but in service of a story. The costume designer's question is never

"is this beautiful?" It is "who is this person — and how do I say it without words?"

For 13 days in July, thirty-six of our students lived inside that question. The Film and Costume elective, offered to Semester 5 and led by Prof. S Greeshma with visiting faculty Priyadarshini ran from 10 to 22 July and like every elective at SOAD, its doors were open across departments. Fashion Design students arrived in strength, joined by four from Communication Design and one from Interior Design — storytellers and space-makers sitting beside garment-makers, each bringing their own way into character. The work began where all costume begins: not with fabric, but with a person. Students built character studies — inventing whole lives for people who don't exist. Where were they born? What do they fear? What can they afford? Only then came



Sangareddy, Telangana, India 🇮🇳
 Munpalle, Sangareddy, Telangana 502345, India
 Lat 17.646774, Long 77.799392
 Wednesday, 22/07/2026 03:11 PM GMT+05:30
 Note : Captured by GPS Map Camera



the research boards - eras, cultures, references, colour worlds - and the prototypes, where an imagined person slowly acquired a real silhouette. Every choice had to be defensible in story terms: not "this looks good," but "this is what she would wear."

On 22 July, the elective ended the way film work should with an audience. The showcase, "Pratirupan," took over the Admin Building from 11 am to 2 pm, open to all faculty, staff, students and guests. On display was the entire journey the

studies, the boards, the prototypes, the finished costumes and alongside them, a short-film display, where visitors could watch the costumes doing the very thing they were designed for: performing. For the students, it was a first taste of a lesson every designer eventually learns - putting your work in a room and standing beside it while strangers respond. The marks come later. The showcase is where the work meets the world. A costume designer's question is never "is this beautiful?" It is "who is this person and how do I say it without words?"





06

Four Departments, One Question: What Will This Year Make of You? **SOAD's Orientation Week**

Every one of us remembers the first page of a new notebook. The extra-neat handwriting. The date written carefully in the corner. And the promise we made ourselves — this year, I'll keep it perfect. We were promising to become someone slightly better than we were. That feeling never leaves us; it just changes shape. And every July, it returns to this campus in the hundreds, with students arriving with fresh sketchbooks, fresh resolutions, and a semester lying open in front of them like an unwritten page.

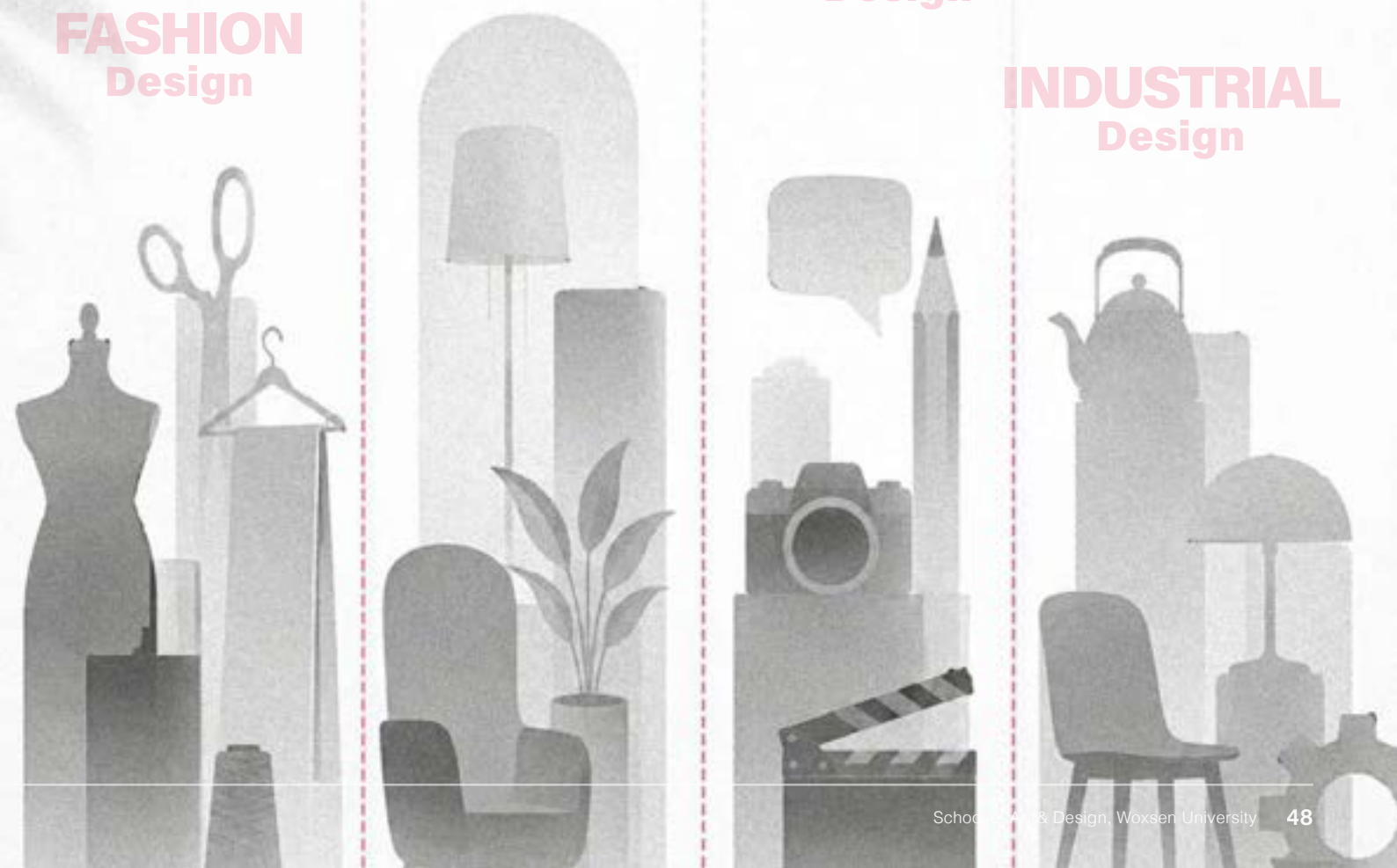
Orientation is where the School meets that feeling halfway. In in the first weeks of July, department by department, every student at SOAD was shown exactly where they stand, and exactly what comes next. Four departments start the semester with students seeing the map and noone feeling lost.

INTERIOR
Design

COMMUNICATION
Design

FASHION
Design

INDUSTRIAL
Design



FASHION DESIGN

Semester 3 — are at the point where the hands take over.

On 3 July, Prof. Kamalvas Narayana, Program Director, along with Prof. Srijana Baruah, Prof. S Greeshma, Dr. Rajesh Kumar, Dr. Sadhna and Dr. Arun Gaikwad, laid out the semester where fashion education becomes physical.

In **Draping Fundamentals**, students stop just drawing garments and start sculpting them — pinning cloth directly onto the body form, learning how fabric falls, folds and flatters. **Pattern Making** and **Garment Construction II** takes them deeper into the engineering hidden inside every garment. Behind every effortless-looking dress is geometry, precision and a very good seam. **Design Project 1: Fabric to Form** — the semester's centrepiece — carries one idea all the way from research to a finished silhouette, supported by **Design Research** and a menu of **electives**: *Digital Fashion Illustration, Dyeing and Printing, Surface Print Design and Trend Forecasting* — where students learn to read the most unpredictable thing of all - what the world will want to wear next.

**Scissors don't care how good
the sketch was.**

**- this semester, they make
their first garments**



Semester 5 — are at the point where craft meets the future.

Their orientation, held the same day, more like a glimpse of where the industry is going: **Design Project III – Fashion Tech, Rapid Prototyping for Fashion Design, Immersive Media, Digital Design for Fashion** — alongside **Accessory Design, Film and Costume, advanced Pattern Making and Garment Construction**, and **Technical Design Specification**, the discipline of writing a garment down so precisely that a factory anywhere in the world could make it. Faculty walked students through course structure, assessments, internships and professional development. This semester, a designer's sketchbook starts speaking the industry's language.



Semester 7 — are packing for the real world.

On 7 July, the Department oriented the graduating batch for their last academic lap, and every subject on their list points outward: **Design Project V – The Final Collection**, the body of work they will be remembered by. **Portfolio Development**, the story they will tell about themselves. **Fashion Photography and Styling** and **Visual Merchandising**, the art of making work seen. **Fashion Entrepreneurship** and **Intellectual Property Rights**, the business of owning what you create. And **Research Methodology**, the quiet spine underneath it all. This orientation felt more like a countdown — faculty guiding students on internships, industry readiness and career planning as the finish line of their degree comes into view.

INTERIOR DESIGN

Semester 3 — are at the point where the hands take over.

On 1 July, Prof. Teajas Eknath, Program Director, along with Prof. Eesha Sharma, Prof. Aditya Pasumarthi and Dr. Haleh Boostani, laid out the semester where interior education becomes physical.

In **Design Project** Pop-up Spaces, students go beyond just drawing and start building, creating temporary interventions that teach them how materials actually behave, how light moves through a room, how scale feels when you stand inside it. Behind every effortless-looking interior is geometry, precision and a very good construction detail. **Computer-Aided Design II** – 3D teaches them to see space digitally before they build it. But the real education happens in **Model Making and Building Construction** — where the hands learn to translate what the mind imagined into three-dimensional reality. And **ID Materials & Finishes** grounds it all: students discover that every choice of surface, texture, material carries consequence. It shapes how a space feels, how people move through it, how light lands.



Semester 5 — are at the point where craft meets the future.

Their orientation held the same day, like a glimpse of where the industry is going: **Design Project 3 — Human-Centered Space Design** — asks students to solve real problems for real people. Not imaginary clients. Not hypothetical spaces. Actual humans with actual needs. **Interior Lighting Design** teaches them that light isn't decoration but it's the foundation of how a space feels. **Immersive Media AR/VR/MR** shows them that spaces don't exist only in the physical world anymore but in digital experience too. **Working Drawings** forces precision — every dimension, every material specification, every detail written so that a contractor could build it exactly as imagined without guessing. And **Interior Landscape Signage & Graphics** teaches them that spaces need to communicate. A room that looks beautiful but leaves people confused isn't working. This semester, a designer's thinking becomes more industry-ready.

Semester 7 — are packing for the real world.

On 7 July, the Department oriented the graduating batch for their last academic lap, and every subject on their list points outward: **Elective-2-Barrier free Design** asks them to design for everyone, not just the able-bodied, not just the average. **Interior Furniture Design & Innovation-II** teaches them to create objects that people will live with, sit on, trust with their weight. **Green Buildings** grounds their practice in sustainability, because designing beautiful spaces means nothing if those spaces destroy the planet. **Interior Journalism** forces them to document and articulate their work — the discipline of saying why something matters, not just what it is. And **Thesis Guidelines** — Topic Selection and Synopsis — the quiet spine underneath it all. This orientation felt more like a countdown with faculty guiding students on internships, industry readiness and career planning as the finish line of their degree comes into view.

INDUSTRIAL DESIGN

Semester 3 — are at the point where the hands take over.

The Industrial Design program laid out the semester where students stop drawing objects and start understanding them. In **Design Project-I: Simple Product Design**, students tackle their first real brief — design something people will hold, use, depend on. But before they can solve that, they need to understand the human body. **Ergonomics and Anthropometry** teaches them that every dimension matters — how tall are hands? How wide? What angles does the wrist bend? **Form Studies-I** grounds them in fundamentals: how do shapes work? How does structure support weight? **Material Exploration** (Fabric, Leather, Wood, Bamboo) forces them to stop imagining and start feeling — what does each material actually do? **World of Prototyping** teaches them to build, not just sketch. By semester's end, with electives in **Representation Techniques** and **Graphic Layout Design**, they can show what they've made and why it works. **Social Internship** reminds them: design doesn't exist in a studio. It exists in someone's hands.

Semester 5 — are at the point where craft meets the future.

Industrial Design students entered the semester where objects become experiences. **Human Centered Design** flips the question: stop asking “what should I make?” and start asking “who am I making it for?” **User Experience Design** teaches them that a product doesn’t end when someone holds it — it’s every moment of interaction, every frustration, every delight. **Human Machine Interaction** shows them that people and technology are no longer separate — they need to design for both. **AI Powered Product Design** forces them to think ahead: what happens when your product learns? **Trend Analysis** teaches them to see patterns in culture and behavior. **Immersive Media (AR, VR, MR)** and **Furniture Design** (as electives) let them explore how products exist in new spaces and new realities. By semester’s end, they’re not designing products anymore. They’re designing futures. They understand that every object they make sits at the intersection of human need, technological possibility,

Semester 7 — are packing for the real world.

Design Project-4: Open Brief is their capstone — no parameters given, only the freedom and weight of deciding for themselves what problem matters. **Systems Design** teaches them to think bigger: not just a single object, but how products work together, how they scale, how they affect ecosystems. **Storytelling Through Cinematography** means they can finally show why they made what they made — communication becomes as important as creation. **Material Exploration** (Fabric, Leather, Wood, Bamboo) circles back to craft mastery, but now they choose which materials speak to their vision. **Trend Forecasting** reminds them they’re not designing in isolation — they’re designing for a world that’s always shifting. By semester’s end, they’re not students following a brief. They’re designers with a perspective. They understand that industrial design isn’t about making things — it’s about asking hard questions and having the skill to answer them with objects that live in people’s lives.

COMMUNICATION DESIGN

Semester 3 — are at the point where the hands take over.

In **Visual Narrative** and **Storyboarding Techniques**, students learn how sequence tells story — how one image leads to the next, how pacing matters. **Sound Design** teaches them communication isn’t visual alone; it’s sonic. **Stop Motion** forces precision: every frame counts. **Typography** and **Graphic Design Principles** ground it all — showing students that hierarchy, contrast, and visual clarity are the grammar of communication. By semester’s end, they’re fluent across motion, sound, type, and image. Problem-solvers who understand that every medium carries a different message.

Semester 5 — are at the point where craft meets the future.

Motion Graphics teaches students how time and movement are design tools. **Advanced Animation Techniques** deepens this — making motion precise and purposeful. But the real shift happens when they hit **Foundations in UI/UX** and **Introduction to Interaction Design**: suddenly, movement isn't decorative. It's functional. It guides behavior. **Design Management** teaches them that every design decision affects teams and timelines. **Game Design Fundamentals** shows how interaction creates engagement. **Short Film Making** and **Craft Documentation** teach them to articulate why they made the choices they made. By semester's end, they're not just making things move. They're designing experiences where motion, interaction, and intention work together. They understand that communication at this level means designing systems people want to use.

Semester 7 — are packing for the real world.

Book Making and **Introduction to Exhibition Design** teach students to think physically — how do you communicate through an object, through space, through materials people can touch? **Digital Sculpting** and **Motion Graphics Design** keep them fluent across mediums. But **User Centric Design Research** is the backbone: they learn that every choice must start with understanding the person experiencing the work. Industry Internship grounds them in reality — how teams actually work, how briefs come from clients, how deadline pressure feels. By semester's end, they're not following a curriculum. They're making decisions. They understand that communication isn't about their vision — it's about serving the person receiving the message. They're ready to work independently, think critically, and know when to break the rules because they understand the rules first.



The Model Making Workshop

A Workshop Where Construction Meets Inclusion

A blueprint is a lie told for clarity. But it's a necessary lie, until you stand in front of an actual building and realize everything the blueprint didn't show you. On July 21st, students from the Model Making workshop did exactly that. Led by **Prof. Aditya Pasumarthi**, they walked into an unfinished building at various stages of completion. Bare concrete walls. Skeletal structures. Empty spaces. And suddenly, proportions that looked perfect on paper felt wrong when experienced with a body.

Scale wasn't theoretical anymore. Light wasn't a drawing convention. The weight of materials, the echo of sound, the way a doorway guides movement - all of it became real. This is what model-making teaches: the gap between imagination and reality. Every model students build starts here — in the understanding that a three-dimensional problem requires three-dimensional thinking. But there's another gap that matters more.



Interior design students typically learn through drawings, renderings, and models—representations that claim to show what a space will be. But representations are a controlled lie

They eliminate variables, compress scale, remove the weight of materials, erase how light actually moves and erases the raw, unfiltered reality of space, proportion, and material.

Theory must collide with Reality



In ancient Greece, architects built temples to gods. They built them on hills, oriented them toward the sun, designed the entrance so you'd walk a certain path before seeing the altar. They understood something crucial, that space shapes how humans feel and behave.

The Romans took this further. They built atriums, open courtyards in homes where light poured in and families gathered. Because they understood that humans need connection. Light creates mood. Open spaces create community. Closed spaces create intimacy. Every choice was deliberate. For centuries, this wisdom was architecture's secret language. Palaces were built to make you feel small. Cathedrals had vaulted ceilings to make you feel transcendent. Homes had hearths in the center to gather people around. Designers were psychologists before psychology existed.

But somewhere in the 20th century, we lost the plot. Design became about aesthetics. About looking good. About trends. We optimized for productivity, for efficiency, for the "average user" - a person who doesn't actually exist. And in doing that, we stopped asking the ancient question: **Does this space serve the actual humans who live in it?**

More specifically: **Does this space serve all humans?** Not the 6-foot-tall person but the wheelchair user. Not the person with perfect hearing but the person who is deaf. Not the neurotypical person but the person with sensory processing differences. Not the person who sees the world the way the designer does. This is where inclusion in design becomes essential. It's not about being politically correct. It's about going back to basics, understanding that space shapes human behavior



On July 27th, 2026, **Esha Jaiswal** came to the workshop as a jury member (alongside Prof. Eesha Sharma) and asked students a harder question: Who does this space actually serve?

She pushed them to think like the ancients did — understanding that every space shapes human behavior. But she pushed further: what about the person in a wheelchair? The person who is deaf? The person experiencing sensory processing differences? Design that works for the “average user” is design that leaves people out. Hours after her critique, the same students stood presenting their models to faculty. The questions had changed. Why did you place the door there? Because someone in a wheelchair needs to enter without thinking about it. Why is the seating arranged this way? Because not everyone stands comfortably, and not everyone sees the space the same way.

Model-making stops being about making pretty objects. It becomes about asking: am I building for everyone, or am I building for who I imagine? This is where the workshop lives now — in that intersection between understanding how buildings are constructed and understanding who they need to serve.



Inside IKEA Hyderabad:

53 Students, 4 Disciplines, 4 Design Lenses

On 29 July, 53 design students from four disciplines spent a day at IKEA Hyderabad discovering that part of design — the supply chain.

Long ago, people lived by gathering the pieces, carrying them home, putting them together themselves. A stool with three legs and a rope seat. A shelf made from two bricks and a plank. The furniture came apart because the room it was going to didn't exist yet, or the family was about to move again, or there simply wasn't a cart big enough to carry it whole. That idea — build it flat, carry it easy, assemble it at home — is also, more or less, the story of a Swedish designer in 1956 named Gillis Lundgren, who couldn't fit a table into his car and, rather than leave it behind, took the legs off. **IKEA** has been selling that solution ever since: the idea that anyone

can build their own room, one flat box at a time. On 29 July, that idea got a room full of design students walking through it in real time. IDEATE, Woxsen's design club, took 53 students — 27 from Industrial Design, 16 from Communication Design, 7 from Interior Design, and 3 from Fashion Design — to IKEA Hyderabad for a day most of them will remember for reasons that had very little to do with furniture.



how a showroom is built to look lived-in rather than displayed,

how a single sofa placement can quietly decide which direction an entire aisle of shoppers will walk.



The day closed with a certificate, a copy of IKEA's own design handbook to take home





....And a round of the store's famous soft serve before the bus back to campus.



None of this would have happened without **the Office of SOAD**, whose support made the collaboration with IKEA possible, and AAX Gaming, who helped coordinate the visit on the ground. IDEATE and IKEA Hyderabad both hosted the day with the kind of care that turns a store visit into something students actually carry with them









Students came from four different corners of design

The industrial designers watched how objects were made to survive a shipping container.

The interior design students clocked every trick of layout and light.

The communication designers noticed the small, deliberate language on every price tag and wall panel.

The fashion design students found themselves reading fabric and material





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Convergence in Student & Alumni Achievement

July marked the moment SOAD's past met its future — graduates leaving, alumni returning, student voices entering global platforms. Convergence meant the school became a living conversation between those becoming and those who've already become.

Woxsen University's 6th Annual Convocation 2026

On July 18th, 2026, 1198 students from 7 Woxsen University schools finally became graduates

Undergraduates, postgraduates and doctoral candidates. Students from Business, Technology, Architecture, Law, Science, Liberal Arts and Humanities. And from the School of Arts and Design—students who spent four years learning to design spaces, systems, experiences. They all felt

that same moment. The chief guest that day was Dr. Roy F. Baumeister, one of the world's most cited psychologists. He's spent decades researching how humans actually work - what drives us, what limits us, how we make choices. He wasn't there to celebrate beyond their accomplishments. He was there to also



be honest about what comes next. "Have a five-year plan, You can change the plan, but having a plan helps you orient towards a bigger future rather than living day-to-day." He told them to embrace artificial intelligence while building their curiosity. To stay adaptable because change is coming faster than ever. And he warned them about something that matters more than any of it: "Don't just change jobs to get away from problems. If you move, move towards something better and exciting."

That's advice for anyone stepping into the unknown. But for the designers in that hall — the SOAD students who spent four years learning that every choice shapes how humans experience the world - those words carried extra weight. Because design is exposure. You can't hide behind process or data or someone else's decision. Every color you choose, every space you arrange, every material you select, it's visible. It's out there. It affects people. And now, the responsibility is entirely yours. For four years,

they had a structure. Assignments with due dates. Professors who gave feedback. Grades that told them if they were doing it right. Mistakes were learning opportunities. Failure was part of the process. Studio culture meant you were never alone in figuring it out. Graduation strips all of that away. Some graduates, like Pakeeru Sri Varsha from Interior Design, had already secured their next step - placed at Yula Construction before even walking across the stage. Others were still navigating uncertainty.

But all 1,198 of them were stepping into the same reality: the structure is gone. Now you have to build your own. That's terrifying. That's also exactly what growing up means. For designers specifically, it means something more. It means knowing that the spaces you create will shape how people feel. That your choices affect real humans in real ways. That there's no professor standing behind you saying "good try, revise and resubmit." There's just the world, and what you put into it.





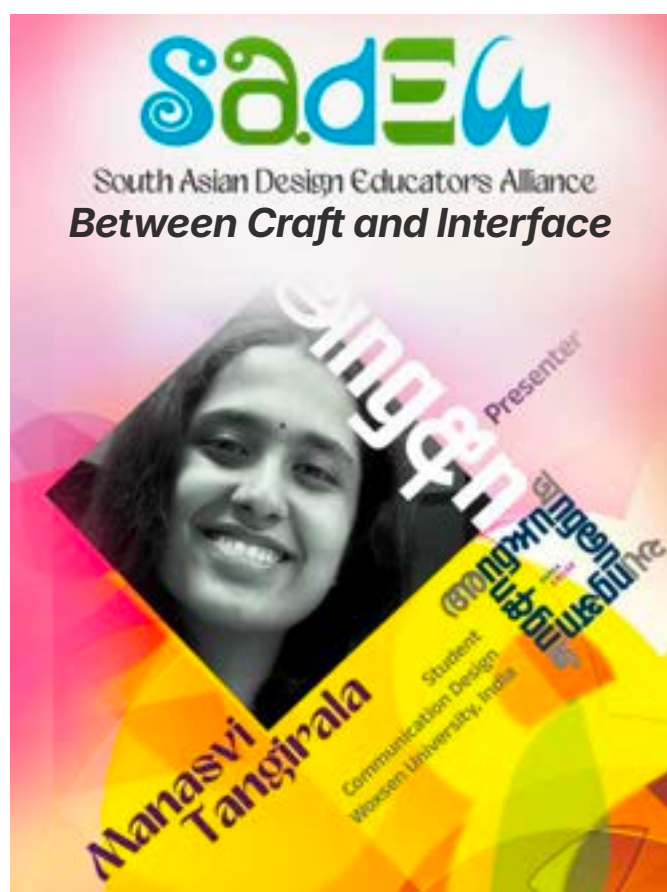
Manasvi Tangirala's Paper Joins a Global Conversation: South Asian Design Educators (SADEA)

Here something that happens in most fields of study - when someone discovers something new, or notices something nobody else has quite said out loud, they don't just keep it to themselves. They write it down carefully, explain their thinking, and send it to a group of experts who read it without knowing whose it is, so that nobody gets picked just because of who they are. If those experts agree it's worth sharing, it gets published: printed, put online, made permanent, so that anyone in the world studying the same thing can now read it, question it, or build on it. That's what "getting published" means, at its simplest. It's how a private idea becomes part of what an entire field knows.

This is usually something professors and researchers do. It is much rarer for an undergraduate student to do it and rarer still to do it not for a class assignment, but by choice, sending original work out into the world to be judged by strangers with no idea she was still a student.

That's what Manasvi Tangirala did.

SADEA — The South Asian Design Educators Alliance is a global community with group of design teachers, researchers, and students from across the world who came together in 2022 with one goal: most of what's taught in design schools is written from a Western point of view, and SADEA exists to change that — to make space for design ideas, histories, and ways of thinking that come specifically from South Asia. Once a year, SADEA holds an event called Angan. The word "Angan" is an old, familiar one across South Asian languages. It means the open courtyard at the center of a traditional home. Not a formal room, but the place where a family actually gathers: where conversations happen, where guests are welcomed, where the household's



real life takes place. SADEA borrowed that word on purpose. Angan is built to be an open, shared space where scholars, teachers, and students from around the world bring their work and talk to each other. Once a year, SADEA holds an event called Angan. The word "Angan" is an old, familiar one across South Asian languages. It means the open courtyard at the center of a traditional home. Not a formal room, but the place where a family actually gathers: where conversations happen, where guests are welcomed, where the household's real life takes place. SADEA borrowed that word on purpose. Angan is built to be an open, shared space where scholars, teachers, and students from around the world bring their work and talk to each other.

This year's Angan ran virtually on 16 and 17 July 2026. Anyone who wanted to present had to first submit a written paper, which was then reviewed anonymously by experts - reviewers who don't know the author's name, and the author doesn't know who's reviewing them either, so the work is judged purely on its own merit. Manasvi's paper went through that exact process, alongside submissions from design scholars, practitioners, and educators across the world and it was accepted.

Her paper is called *"Between Craft and Interface: AI Image Systems and the Changing Visual Language of Kalamkari."* Kalamkari is a centuries-old Indian textile art - intricate, hand-painted or block-printed fabric, carrying stories, mythology, and technique passed down through generations of artisans in specific

regions of India. Today, AI image tools can generate a picture that looks like Kalamkari in seconds. It can copy the patterns, the colours, the general feel — instantly, endlessly, for anyone who types a few words. Manasvi's paper asks the question sitting underneath that: when a machine can reproduce the look of a craft without ever knowing its meaning, what actually happens to the craft? Is something preserved, or is something quietly lost in a version that's technically accurate but hollow? Her own framing of it, from her presentation: "Accessible isn't the same as understood."

It's a question that matters far beyond Kalamkari — it's the question every craft tradition in the world is going to face as AI image tools spread. Manasvi chose to ask it formally, in front of an international audience, while still an undergraduate.

“

What got you interested in the Kalamkari + AI question?

While preparing my submission, I was initially focused on the industrialisation, production, and techniques of the craft. It was Prof. Divya Gauri who encouraged me to also explore the technological dimensions of Kalamkari.

How long did you work on it?

It was a constant process of iteration and re-iteration. Developing the abstract and shaping the central idea of the paper took about two months.

Was there anything that surprised you along the way?

I was surprised by the extent to which colonialism has influenced even the smallest aspects of a craft—something as minute as the drawing style of a motif in Kalamkari.

How did it feel to receive the acceptance email?

Honestly, it was unexpected. I was really happy to be among the 10 selected from 800 submissions, especially since many of the other participants were

established scholars and practitioners who have been working in the field for years.

Was anyone guiding or mentoring you through the process? If so, how did that work?

I owe a lot to Prof. Divya Gauri. Without her constant support, I don't think I would have been able to develop this paper. Her guidance has extended beyond this particular project—she has consistently encouraged me to engage in culture- and practice-specific conversations, question my own biases, and consider perspectives from both sides.



Manasvi Tangirala c-----

III .

Intelligence in Academic Innovation & Partnerships

SOAD earned recognition at every level: globally (IED Milan), locally (Cutting Edge), nationally (#2 ranking). Convergence meant international partnerships and homegrown collaborations validating the same truth — design education's power lies in building bridges, not walls.

Delegation from IED Milan visits SOAD to explore partnership

Future initiatives in collaboration with IED Milan and its 6 campuses soon to be formalized into an MoU, July 24, 2026.

A Memorandum of Understanding begins before the ink hits paper. It starts with a conversation. On July 24th, 2026, IED Milan's outreach manager came to Hyderabad to ask: **What if we worked together?**

Not IED as a monolith. But each of IED's six colleges with each of SOAD's departments. Not a one-size-fits-all partnership. But specific, department-by-department possibilities. This isn't the moment of official celebration but the moment before that — the exploration, the imagining, the question: What becomes possible when designers from two continents start building something together?

**Each of IED's six colleges
with each of SOAD's
departments.
Not a one-size-fits-all
partnership, But specific,
department-by-department
possibilities.**



SOAD Signs MoU with Cutting Edge Design Studio, Hyderabad

Cutting Edge Design Studio, Founded in 2010 and based in Whitefield, Hitech City, designs interiors for homes and businesses across India, describing its work as blending functionality, aesthetics and visual appeal to turn spaces into immersive experiences. For that very reason, is a fitting partner for SOAD.

Their projects lean confident and expressive hand-painted murals running across walls, colour used with real nerve, cabinetry treated as a canvas, the kind of interiors where a space is clearly authored rather than merely furnished. For interior design students in particular, that is a valuable room to stand in: a studio with over fifteen years of practice, delivering customised work for real clients, where every choice has to survive a budget, a site and a person who has to live with it.



CUTTING EDGE
DESIGN STUDIO



The most important agreements in our lives rarely look like much when they happen. A handshake. A form. Two people signing their names while someone takes a photograph. Nothing visibly changes in that moment — and yet everything downstream does. A job offer is only paper until the first day of work. A partnership is only paper until the first student walks through the door it opened.

On 8 July 2026, one such page was signed. At the Cutting Edge Design Studio office in Whitefield, Hitech City, Hyderabad, the School of Arts & Design formalised a Memorandum of Understanding with the studio — with Sr. Asst. Prof. Tejas Eknath Pawar attending from SOAD. For a design school, agreements like this one matter for a simple reason. A studio is where design stops being an assignment. Deadlines are set by clients, not calendars. Budgets shape ideas. Feedback arrives from people with no obligation to be gentle. No classroom can fully simulate that — which is why design education has always needed doors into real practice, and why every partnership SOAD signs is really a door: for internships, live projects, studio visits, guest sessions, mentorship, and the countless small conversations where a student learns how the profession actually behaves.

The Distance Between a Classroom and a Studio Just Got Shorter!



What **actual projects** will SOAD students work on inside Cutting Edge?

B.Des Interior Design students will gain access to live commercial and residential projects currently handled by the studio. Rather than hypothetical classroom assignments, students will participate in actual site walkthroughs, review live project documentation, examine real working drawings, and observe design execution under real-world constraints like timelines and material budgets.

What kind of **design briefs** does Cutting Edge handle

Cutting Edge handles high-end contemporary interior design projects, spanning high-end residential, corporate, and boutique commercial spaces. Their briefs require balancing spatial aesthetics, ergonomic planning, and material specification with real-world execution and client requirement frameworks.



How does a **studio's design process** differ from what students learn in our studios? What gap does this fill?

- Academic Studio Focus: Emphasizes conceptual depth, design exploration, ergonomics, spatial theory, and ideal design scenarios.
- Professional Studio Focus: Prioritizes client briefs, vendor coordination, material sourcing, site execution, budget discipline, and strict deadlines.
- The Gap Filled: It bridges the gap between conceptual design and executable reality, helping students understand how a drawing translates into a physical space within financial and site constraints.

Does working with a **real studio** change how we teach Interior Design at SOAD?

- Yes, it shifts teaching toward a more industry-aligned, application-focused model:
- Curriculum Updates: Cutting Edge provides direct inputs and suggestions to ensure our syllabus matches current industry software, material trends, and workflows.
- Expert Integration: Studio leaders will conduct up to two guest lectures per academic year to ground theoretical knowledge in practical studio reality.
- Focused Training: Industry visits and selective executive education/certification programs will integrate professional standards directly into students' learning.

Can students transition from **internship to employment** at Cutting Edge? What's the real pathway after this partnership?

Yes. The formal progression pathway works as follows:

- **Selection:** Students are interviewed and shortlisted during their 3rd Year, 2nd Semester.
- **Paid Internship:** Selected students enter a paid internship lasting six (6) months or more.
- **Transition:** Based on performance and company recruitment policies, interns are considered for Pre-Placement Offers (PPO) or Full-Time Employment (FTE).

Humble to share that

the **School of Arts & Design,**
Woxsen University
has been ranked

#1 IN TELANGANA
#2 IN INDIA

— IN THE —
★ **IIRF RANKINGS** ★

BUILT BY
ART & DESIGN



A Recognition
of Excellence



Driven by
Creativity & Innovation



Powered by
Our Community



Committed to Impact
Through Design

IV.

Convergence in Industry Engagement

In July, industry leaders walked into SOAD's studios. Professionals from Titan shared the precision of visual merchandising. Entrepreneurs from OC8ANE revealed what it takes to build a fashion brand. Digital strategists unpacked how technology is reshaping the industry. Stylists and photographers showed how craft still matters. Convergence meant: students heard from people actively living the careers they're designing for — the gap between classroom theory and real-world urgency collapsed in a single conversation.

Akash Ashesh

VISUAL MERCHANDISING HEAD • TITAN

EST SPEAKER • EX ABERFEL • ITC • NIKE • PANTALOONS

Industry Connect • Masterclass

Mr. Ankal Reddy, CEO of OC8ANE: Funding for Fashion Entrepreneurs

Every fashion label the students admire — every brand on their mood boards and began the same way: as somebody's idea, with no money attached to it. The sketches are the easy part. The hard part is the unglamorous question that stands between a dream and a shop shelf: who pays for all this? Fabric costs money. Production costs money. Even telling the world you exist costs money. And nobody teaches you that in a sketchbook.

Which is exactly why, on 30 July, the Semester 7 Fashion Entrepreneurship course made room for someone who answers that question for a living. Mr. Ankal Reddy — CEO of OC8ANE Venture Studio and founder of Good Farmers and Boxofashion delivered a masterclass titled "Funding for Fashion Entrepreneurs: From Idea to Investment," organised

by Prof. Kamalvas Narayana and attended by 19 students. Speaking as both a founder and an investor, he walked students through the startup ecosystem from the inside: bootstrapping when there's no one to ask, fundraising strategies when there is, how to actually engage investors — and the growing role of incubators and venture studios in turning fashion ideas into scalable businesses.

For students whose final year points towards portfolios, collections and possibly labels of their own, the session added a missing chapter to their education: the one where creativity meets a spreadsheet — and learns to win the argument. The sketches are the easy part. The hard part is the question between a dream and a shop shelf: who pays for it?



Ms. Sai Janani on the Growth of Digital Fashion

Here is a strange thought: some of the most carefully designed garments in the world today will never touch a human body.

They are digitally draped, stitched and finished entirely on screens. And this is not a gimmick. Before a single metre of fabric is cut, brands now design and test garments virtually, saving the enormous waste of physical sampling. Games and virtual worlds need wardrobes of their own. Online stores want you to try clothes on a digital twin of yourself. Quietly, a whole new profession has grown around all of this and it needs designers. On 9 July, students met that profession face to face. Ms. Sai Janani of CLO Virtual Fashion, an industry expert in digital fashion and 3D garment technology, led an Industry Connect session titled “The Growth

of Digital Fashion - India, Global Trends & Career Pathways,” held virtually at Vivekananda Hall. Her session mapped the territory in four moves: where digital fashion stands today, how India compares with global trends, how students can learn CLO 3D - the industry’s leading tool for virtual garment creation — and what career doors it opens, from digital-first designers to 3D garment specialists.

A live Q&A closed the loop, with the session open not just to fashion students but to faculty, researchers and the design-curious across the School. The message for students was quietly radical: the sewing machine is no longer the only way into fashion. Some of tomorrow’s designers will spend their careers making clothes that weigh nothing — and change everything about how the industry works.

INDUSTRY INTERACTION SESSION

THE GROWTH OF DIGITAL FASHION

INDIA, GLOBAL TRENDS & CAREER PATHWAYS

LIVE VIRTUAL SESSION + INTERACTIVE Q&A
Let's design fashion, digitally!



Ms. Sai Janani
CLO VIRTUAL FASHION
Industry expert in Digital Fashion & 3D Garment Technology

FOCUS AREAS

Explore the rise of digital fashion — where India stands today, the global trends reshaping the industry, and how students can harness CLO 3D to build future-ready careers.

01 DIGITAL FASHION GROWTH

02 INDIA & GLOBAL TRENDS

03 CLO 3D FOR STUDENTS

04 CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Ramon Ray visitng Woxsen University in September 2026.

For design and arts students, his expertise in building brands and connecting creativity to business impact offers something studio classes rarely teach: how to turn your talent into a sustainable career.

HYDERABAD INDIA

HYDERABAD
TELANGANA

★ RAMON RAY VISITS INDIA ★
SEPTEMBER 2026

CONNECTING ENTREPRENEURS.
BUILDING BRANDS.
INSPIRING GROWTH.
CREATING IMPACT.



RAMONRAY.COM | KEYNOTE SPEAKER | AUTHOR | ENTREPRENEUR

Industry Connect • Guest Lecture

Akash Ashesh of Titan on Visual Merchandising

Every one of us has been stopped by a shop window. Nobody called out to us. Nothing moved. And yet something in the arrangement — the light, the mannequin's tilt, that one product placed just so made us pause mid-step. That pause is not luck. It is a designed sentence, written in a language called **visual merchandising**: the craft of making a store speak for the brand before a single salesperson says a word.

On 17 July, Semester 7 Fashion Design students got a masterclass in that language from someone who writes it for a living. Mr. Akash Ashesh, Visual Merchandising Head at Titan Company Limited — with a career spanning ABFRL, ITC, Nike and

Pantaloons — joined the Industry Connect Series for a session on "Visual Merchandising as Brand Language." Organised by Dr. Arun Kumar Gaikwad, the talk moved through retail environments, VM strategy, retail branding and customer experience — and looked ahead to the industry's next chapter: phygital stores, where physical retail and digital experience blur into one. A live Q&A let students take their own questions straight to the source.

For a batch heading into Visual Merchandising as a Semester 7 subject and into the industry itself soon after — the timing could not have been better. The store, they learned, is always speaking. Their job is to decide what it says.

Online Session

VISUAL MERCHANDISING **AS BRAND** LANGUAGE

Retail Environments · VM Strategy & the
Future of Phygital Stores

FRI, 17TH JULY 2026

11:30 AM TO 12:15 PM



Akash Ashesh

VISUAL MERCHANDISING HEAD · TITAN

GUEST SPEAKER · EX ABFRL · ITC · NIKE · PANTALOONS

Industry Connect • Guest Lecture

Ms. Phalanvita Madhyala on Fashion Styling and Photography

We all know someone who always looks put together. Same shops, same budget as the rest of us and somehow, everything they wear just works. It is tempting to call it luck, or taste. It is neither. It is knowledge. Which colours lift a face and which drain it. Which cut flatters which body. What a photograph amplifies and what it forgives. Styling is a grammar — **and like all grammar, it can be taught.**

On 23 July, the students of the Fashion Styling and Photography elective sat down with someone fluent in it. The Department of Fashion Design hosted Ms. Phalanvita Madhyala for an on-campus session that moved through the stylist's essential toolkit: body shape analysis — reading proportion before choosing a single garment; colour theory — why the same shade can be someone's best friend and

someone else's worst; personal styling — dressing a person, not a trend; and visual storytelling — how a styled photograph says something a plain one cannot. Then came the part that made the day genuinely valuable: the students' own work went on the table.

Ms. Madhyala reviewed their campaign concepts and creative direction, giving industry feedback on ideas still warm from the studio — the kind of honest, professional critique that no grade sheet can replicate. For students learning to build fashion imagery, it was a preview of how the real industry talks about work: directly, specifically, and always in service of the story the image is trying to tell.

La vie
au grand air

**Styling is a grammar
and like all
grammar, it can
be taught.**

Une meute de manteaux longs styles, de pulls chauds, de chemises en laine, de chapeaux et decharpes pour chasser les frimas de l'hiver.



Designing for Millions

When Your System Has to Scale

INDUSTRY INTERACTION SESSION

SYSTEM DESIGN
FOR REAL-
WORLD
PRODUCTS

PRINCIPLES, PATTERNS & INDUSTRY PRACTICE

45-MINUTE TALK + INTERACTIVE Q&A
Let's design systems that
scale!

FOCUS
AREAS

A deep-dive into how **real-world digital products** are engineered at scale — from building robust, scalable **design systems** to putting **AI to work** across modern UX and product workflows.

01
SYSTEM DESIGN

02
AI USAGE

🕒 SEGMENT 01
Principles & Patterns

Foundational principles behind scalable product design — tokens, components, and the patterns that keep large systems consistent.

📍 SEGMENT 02
Industry Practice

How global design teams actually work — AI-powered UX workflows, WCAG compliance, and a psychology-driven design culture.

🗨️ AFTER THE TALK
Interactive Q&A

Bring your questions on careers, portfolios and design leadership — an open dialogue with the speaker follows the session.

📅 DATE & TIME

Friday, 10 July 2026
11:00 AM – 12:00 Noon
45-min session + Q&A

📍 VENUE

LT1 • Lecture Theatre 1
Woxsen University Campus,
Hyderabad • Mode: Offline

👥 WHO CAN JOIN?

• Students (all disciplines)

• Faculty & researchers

• Engineers & developers

• UX & product designers

• Design enthusiasts

• Anyone curious about design at scale



Mr. Vinod Kumar
HEAD OF DESIGN • STOLT-NIELSEN
15+ years of experience in Design Leadership

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IV .

Convergence in Faculty Achievements

THANK YOU

In July, SOAD's faculty stepped into recognition at every level — a professor completed their doctoral research, a scholar's paper entered global academic conversations, and research publications affirmed the school's voice in design discourse. Convergence meant: personal milestones became institutional proof points. Individual brilliance became collective credibility.

Celebrating Dr. Arun Kumar Gaikwad's PhD Completion

A Proud Research Milestone for SOAD

Dr. Arun Gaikwad, Professor, Department of Fashion Design, successfully defended his PhD thesis on July 10, 2026. His defence marked a significant academic milestone for SOAD and reinforced the Department of Fashion Design's commitment to research excellence.

A PhD is beyond a degree. It's a choice to disappear into a question for years. To read everything. To question everything you've read. To sit alone with an idea until you know it better than anyone else in the world — and then have to prove it to people who've spent their lives proving other people wrong.



Most people never do this. They can't afford to. They don't have the patience. They can't live with the uncertainty of not knowing if what they're chasing will ever become something real.

But faculty who pursue a PhD while teaching?

They're choosing an impossible thing. They're standing in front of students, shaping minds, building curriculum, attending meetings — all while their real work waits in the margins. Early mornings. Late nights. The part of their brain that never stops thinking about their research, even when they're supposed to be thinking about something else.

This is why it matters.

When Dr. Arun Kumar Gaikwad stood in front of the examination panel on July 10, 2026 — internal examiners, external examiners, faculty, research scholars — he went beyond defending a thesis. He was demonstrating something to every student in the Department of Fashion Design: **this is what mastery looks like**. This is what happens when you commit so

deeply to something that you become indispensable to the conversation around it. A professor with a PhD is not just someone who teaches. They're someone who has proven they can think at the highest level in their field. They've discovered something new. They've added to human knowledge. And now, when they teach, that authority comes from experience — not just from reading what others have discovered, but from the terrifying, exhilarating experience of discovering something themselves.

For the Department of Fashion Design, this is a statement. It says: **we don't just teach fashion. We research it. We advance it. We contribute to the world's understanding of it.** For Dr. Arun Kumar Gaikwad, July 10, 2026, marks the moment when years of invisible work became visible. When the question finally had an answer. When he became the person who knows. That's worth celebrating. Because it's rare. And it's necessary. And it changes everything about how he teaches, what he demands from students, and what's now possible in the department.



Faculty Research Publications



Dr. Sadhna & E. Mokanaasri (PhD Scholar)

Cleaner Water Journal



Sustainable Dyeing of Cotton Fabric Dyed with Protease-Assisted *Spirulina platensis* Extract

Can algae colour our clothes?

Textile dyeing is one of fashion's dirtiest secrets - a major polluter of the world's water. This study explores a gentler answer: dye drawn from *Spirulina*, an algae, coaxed onto cotton with the help of enzymes. Published in a top-quartile (Q1) Scopus journal - the highest tier of academic publishing - it's SOAD research contributing to one of the industry's most urgent problems.

• SCOPUS Q1



Dr. Arun Kumar Gaikwad, Prof. Ashutosh Kumar & Prof. Kamalvas Narayana

in *Rethinking Fashion and Consumer Responsibility for Decent Work and Social Justice*, IGI Global Scientific Publishing



Sustainable Fashion Alternatives: The Role of Indian Consumers in Promoting Handloom and Khadi Revival



India doesn't need to import sustainable fashion - it invented it. This chapter argues that the revival of handloom and khadi lies not only with policy or designers, but with Indian consumers themselves, and examines how their choices can bring heritage textiles back into everyday wardrobes. Fittingly, it appears in a book about decent work and social justice - because behind every khadi purchase is a livelihood.

• BOOK CHAPTER • IGI GLOBAL



Prof. Srijana Baruah

Firenze University Press, University of Florence.

Influencers, Icons, and Illusions: Myth-Making in Indian Fashion

Who decides what is fashionable - and how much of it is real? This paper turns a critical eye on Indian fashion's myth-makers: the influencers, icons and carefully built illusions that shape what millions desire. It is fashion studied not as clothing, but as storytelling - and a reminder that a design school's job includes questioning the industry it feeds.

• SCOPUS Q3



Who Teaches the Teachers?

Prof. Kamalvas Narayana Leads FDP at FDDI, Hyderabad

Look down at your shoes for a moment. Someone, somewhere, made a hundred decisions on your behalf — the curve of the sole, the width at the toes, the material that breathes, the stitch that holds. Every object we live with is like this: a quiet stack of decisions made by a designer we will never meet. And the journey those decisions travel- from noticing what people need, to shaping something that answers it is called the **design process**. It is the closest thing design has to a spine. But here is the question we rarely ask: **who teaches the teachers of that process?**

Because the design process is not standing still. Sustainability has changed what materials are acceptable. Technology has changed how ideas are tested. Consumers have changed what they expect. A faculty member teaching product development today cannot teach it the way it was taught a decade ago — which is exactly why institutions run Faculty Development Programs: rooms where, for a few days, the teachers become the students again. On 21 and 22 July 2026, Prof. Kamalvas Narayana was the one at the front of that room. Invited by the

Footwear Design and Development Institute (FDDI), Hyderabad — a Government of India institution — he conducted a two-day Faculty Development Program titled “Design Process: From Insights to Impact.” His audience: 19 faculty members drawn from an unusually wide spread of disciplines- Fashion Design, Footwear, Leather Goods, Fashion Accessories, Technology and Management - all rethinking, together, how contemporary design should be taught.

The sessions moved the way good design does — from understanding to making. Design thinking and consumer insights on one side; sustainability, technology and business strategy on the other; and at the centre, the craft of weaving them all into product development. For SOAD, the invitation itself carries meaning. When a national institute asks one of our Program Directors to train its faculty, it says something about where design teaching expertise now lives. SOAD’s faculty are not only shaping classrooms on our own campus - they are shaping how design will be taught in classrooms far beyond it.



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The School of Arts & Design Newsletter reflects the collective spirit of learning, creativity, and collaboration that defines our academic community. Each edition brings together the efforts of many individuals who contribute to shaping an environment where ideas are explored, knowledge is shared, and design education continues to evolve.

We extend our sincere gratitude to:

- **The Vice Chancellor and Vice President** of Woxsen University for their strategic guidance and commitment to advancing design education and institutional excellence.
- **Vice Dean, Assistant Deans and Program Leaders** for their academic leadership and commitment to advancing innovative and interdisciplinary learning experiences.
- **Faculty Members** for their dedication to teaching, mentorship, and research that enrich the educational journey of our students.
- **Students** whose creativity, curiosity, and hard work bring life to the projects and explorations featured in this newsletter.
- **Parents and Families** for their trust and encouragement that support students in pursuing their creative aspirations.
- **Industry Partners, Alumni, and Collaborators** for their valuable engagement in bridging academic learning with professional practice.

Together, these contributions continue to nurture a vibrant design community committed to learning, innovation, and meaningful impact.



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