



It is important to visualize every heritage building or site in a broader sense where it is viewed not as a product but a process in a larger framework of multiple factors, to get a holistic understanding of its context. In his essay, Suneet Mohindru, one of the jury members of this year's Landscape Foundation Students' Design Competition, calls for conserving cultural landscapes that as he notes, act as repositories containing attitudes and responses of life to its valued environment. Venugopal Maddipati extends the perception of the site of Rajghat much beyond what is seen, both through the site's past history and subsequent developments around it. The role of history is linked with nature conservation when Narendra Dingle in his essay, Rejuvenation and Reincarnation, observes that living and performing cultures nurture history and 'respect for natural resources' through adaptations, conservation and mutations. Narayani Gupta unravels the layers of archaeology in the review of *Monuments Matter: India's Archaeological Heritage Since Independence* by Nayanjot Lahiri to understand heritage sites in a more absolute way.

Natural Science and Culture form two integral parts of the subject of landscape architecture. Till the mid-eighties, the post graduation course in landscape architecture at the School of Planning and Architecture New Delhi was also open to students of Natural Science (Botany, Geology, Geography among others) along with Architecture and Planning. The practices of such professionals got especially enriched by a thorough understanding of their respective field along with the knowledge of spatial design. The issue profiles the robust practice of Krishan C Singal while showcasing one of the public parks designed by Surinder Suneja. Both of these professionals have academic backgrounds in botany. Surinder Suneja retired in the month of November as the Dean of School of Planning and Architecture, after serving the Department of Landscape Architecture for more than twenty five years.

On another note, for the last few winters now, the cities of north India face the issue of severe smog—a combination of smoke and fog, while many cities in our western states are coping with seasonal urban floods. The reasons for the poor air quality is well documented as smoke from the fires in the rural belts that surround the cities combined with pollution with the atmospheric inversion trapping the smog in place. While climate change is a convenient reason to pin the blame for floods on, everyone knows that just as famine is not a natural disaster, urban floods are created by poor ecological urban planning and water management. Political inaction on both counts keeps solutions out of reach. Landscape Architecture is a discipline which remains closest to the natural environment in its day to day workings, which leads to the question of what kind of role do we see of ourselves as a professional fraternity in addressing these issues? A role that lies not in an exclusive self practice context but in a larger social realm?

Best wishes for a wonderful and exciting new year.

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COVER | "Traditional organisations, contemporary forms - Past continuous is future perfect indeed..."

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