



NEWSLETTER

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Cohort of 2024 with faculty during the Heritage Field Immersion trip to Varanasi

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Centre's Highlights

HERITAGE FIELD IMMERSION TO VARANASI BY FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS OF THE CENTRE

The first-year Master's cohort of 2024 from the Centre for Heritage Management undertook a mandatory experiential course titled 'Heritage Field Immersion' in Varanasi from December 16-21, 2024, aimed at cultivating a comprehensive understanding of Varanasi's cultural and intellectual heritage. This program included academic lectures organized by the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), Regional Office Varanasi and featured heritage walks through the city's historic neighbourhoods, as well as visits to significant pilgrimage sites and craft centres. The students engaged in an in-depth exploration of Varanasi's tangible and intangible heritage, delving into its ghats, local cuisine, and vernacular language.

In addition to exploring Varanasi's sacred heritage, the students visited traditional arts and crafts workshops, such as Wooden Toy Making, Soft Stone Carving, Gulabi Meenakari, and Banarasi Saree Weaving. These visits provided opportunities to engage with artisans who have sustained these hereditary crafts for generations. The discussions extended to the significance of the Geographical Indication (GI) Tag, prompting reflections on its effectiveness in promoting these crafts.

The heritage field immersion also included visits to Prayagraj and Sarnath. In Prayagraj, students observed the extensive preparations for the Mahakumbh, gaining insights into the comprehensive planning, design, and implementation of infrastructure and services for one of the world's largest gatherings. Following this, the students travelled to Sarnath, where they explored the ancient archaeological site, including the Sarnath Stupa, a Buddhist temple adorned with ancient murals.



Cohort of 2024 - Experiencing Varanasi, Prayagraj, and Sarnath

GANGA KINARE - THE STORY OF BANARAS, AN EXHIBITION SHOWCASING HERITAGE FIELD IMMERSION BY THE FIRST-YEAR MASTER'S STUDENTS

The first-year Masters cohort of 2024 organized an exhibition on February 5, 2025 to showcase their work from the immersive field study in Varanasi. This event featured an exhibition exploring the city through various themes of architecture, craft, faith, tourism, and ecology. The exhibition brought Banaras to life with engaging posters, audio-visual content, and interactive elements, allowing visitors to engage with the city's rich heritage. The exhibition drew a diverse crowd of faculty, professionals in the heritage field, and students of various institutions from Ahmedabad, which resulted in meaningful discussions.

Centre's Highlights

Interventions and Their Impact on Cultural Heritage

Anushka Mishra, Ishika Jain, Nikita Singh and Shivika Sharma delved into the evolving urban cultural heritage landscape of Varanasi, particularly examining the effects of modernization initiatives like the Kashi Vishwanath Corridor and the transformations occurring along the ghats.

Tracing Authenticity: The Case of Banarasi Crafts

Anoli Ruia and Lasya Prashanth focused on the concept of 'authenticity' within the craft sector of Banaras, particularly examining crafts such as the Banarasi saree, Jaali Stonework, Gulabi Meenakari, and Wooden Toys.

Faith and the People: Past and Present

Shreya Dhanyamraju focused on the people of Banaras, probing how they interact with the city's rich history.

Blurred Boundaries: The Intersection of Natural and Cultural Heritage

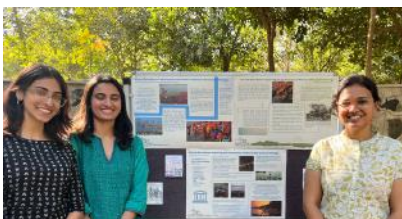
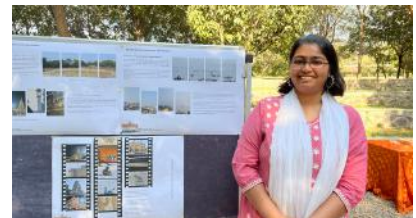
Nidhi Menon, Twarita Chauhan and Yoga Rakshitha Dasi explored the intricate linkages between nature and culture in Varanasi's heritage.

Interplay of Human and Non-Human Engagement in Varanasi's Tourism and Development

Satyen Panara examined the engagement of human and non-human elements with cultural landscapes, and how they adapt to a crowded touristic and a pilgrim environment.

Echoes of Banaras: Perspectives on Tourism Development

Nishra Shah, Amitoj Kaur and S Lakshmy examined the differing viewpoints of tourists and locals regarding various tourism developments in Varanasi.



AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL STUDY OF MAHA KUMBH 2025, SPONSORED BY THE URBAN DEVELOPMENT, URBAN EMPLOYMENT, AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION DEPARTMENT OF THE GOVERNMENT OF UTTAR PRADESH

Ahmedabad University was invited by the Urban Development, Urban Employment, and Urban Poverty Alleviation Department of the Government of Uttar Pradesh to undertake an anthropological study of the Maha Kumbh 2025. This study is being conducted by the Centre for Heritage Management (CHM) and the School of Arts and Sciences (SAS) in collaboration with the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA).

Centre's Highlights

Professor Molly Kaushal, Director of CHM, and Dr. Aditya Chaturvedi, Assistant Professor at SAS, are the principal investigators of the project. The project includes a textual, archival, and ethnographic study of the Mela.



Prof. Molly Kaushal and Dr. Aditya Chaturvedi with pilgrims



Pilgrims sleeping on the banks of the river

HERITAGE PROJECTS: DESIGN AND MANAGEMENT PERSPECTIVES - TALK BY AR. RIMPESH SHARMA



On November 13, 2024, the Centre hosted a talk by Ar. Rimpesh Sharma, the Founder Director and CEO of Ingenious Studio Pvt. Ltd. Endearingly known as the "Temple Man of India," he shared insights from his impressive repertoire of projects where spirituality, community, and heritage seamlessly merge, transforming the landscape of sacred spaces in India.

VRAJA: A CONTINUOUS CREATION - TALK BY ACHARYA SHRIVATSA GOSWAMI, DIRECTOR OF THE VRAJA PRAKALPA



The Centre hosted a talk by Acharya Shrivatsa Goswami, "Vraja: A Continuous Creation," on January 22, 2025. Acharya Shrivatsa Goswami comes from the family of eminent scholars and spiritual leaders at Sri Radharamana Mandir of Vrindavan. He is a leading figure in the Vaishnava tradition. He is the recipient of President's lifetime award of the Sangit Natak Akademi for overall scholarship and service to Indian culture. His talk dwelt upon various layers of history of Vraja, which unfolds through multilateral dialogue between religion and politics.

Centre's Highlights

VRINDAVAN IN THE CRUCIBLE OF TIME - TALK BY JACK HAWLEY



Dr. Jack Hawley, Claire Tow Professor of Religion at Barnard College, Columbia University, talk on March 12, 2025 at the Centre, shedding light on the evolving cultural and physical landscape of Vrindavan. His lecture explored pressing issues such as the embattled Yamuna River, rapid real estate development and the impact of religious tourism on reshaping Vrindavan's cultural fabric.

RAJKOT PATOLA AS A MODERN CRAFT - TALK BY URMILA MOHAN



In a recent public talk on 26 March 2025, Urmila Mohan explored the Rajkot Patola textile's significance as a modern craft through an interdisciplinary lens, intersecting anthropology, aesthetics, and material culture. Her research provides a nuanced understanding of this traditional textile, revealing its complexities as a rich tapestry of cultural narratives.

ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE RESEARCH AND DOCUMENTATION - A WORKSHOP ORGANIZED FOR THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STUDENTS OF ARCHITECTURE (NASA)



Faculty of the Centre for Heritage Management with participants from NASA India

Centre's Highlights

In February 2025, the Centre for Heritage Management hosted a workshop for the National Association of Students of Architecture (NASA) on "Architectural Heritage Research and Documentation" as part of the Louis I Khan Documentation Programme in Ahmedabad. This insightful workshop focused on integrating heritage perspectives into architectural practice, emphasising the importance of research and documentation in the study of architectural heritage.

FIELD VISIT BY COHORT 2024 AT KUTCH, AS PART OF INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS COURSE



Cohort of 2024 interacting with Dineshbhai, a Kala Cotton weaver

In the second semester of the programme, a field-based course titled 'Indigenous Knowledge Systems.' The students undertook a week-long field-study in Kutch, exploring the region's rich cultural heritage and its deep connections to community, ecology, and local traditions. The trip offered students the opportunity to critically engage with various indigenous knowledge systems, examining how heritage adapts to changing environmental, social, and economic landscapes.

PROF. ADITYA PRAKASH KANTH CONDUCTED A WALL PAINTING CONSERVATION WORKSHOP AT RANGNATHSWAMI TEMPLE, PUSHKAR



Prof. Aditya Kanth conducted a wall painting conservation workshop organized by the Museums Association of India at the two hundred year old Rangnathswami Temple in Pushkar from January 7-8, 2025.

He emphasized the significance of wall painting conservation, explaining the mechanisms and factors behind their deterioration.

Students' Activities and Reflections

KNOT UNKNOT - TIE AND DYE WORKSHOP WITH WOMEN IN RAJASTHAN



Nishra Shah, a first-year student of Master's of Management Studies in Heritage Management, conducted a tie and dye workshop in Rajasthan, which focused on empowering women through community participation. This workshop was part of the crafts initiative spearheaded by her under the name "KnotUnknot." In collaboration with Uttishtha Foundation. KnotUnknot which encourages traditional tie and dye techniques in the contemporary context.

CONNECTING PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE: CORRELATION BETWEEN HERITAGE AND GENETICS - BY DASI YOGA RAKSHITHA



The course on Heritage Discourses, led by Prof. Neel Kamal Chapagain and Prof. Molly Kaushal at the Centre for Heritage Management in August 2024, began with a foundational discussion on understanding what heritage is and exploring what constitutes heritage and what does not. The class (Batch of 2024-26) comprises of 14 members from diverse backgrounds. Some have studied architecture and urban management, while others are from archaeology, literature, psychology, commerce, and fashion fields.

The engaging discussion during our initial sessions made everyone reflect deeply. It prompted each one of us to put our biases aside to understand the true essence of heritage, despite the several contestations associated with it. To me, heritage means ancient structures, communities, natural landscapes, resources, cultures, and traditions from the past that are passed down through generations. It is about inheritance and the values associated with it. With my Life Sciences background, the class's thought-provoking discussions have inspired me to see genetics through the lens of heritage. Like heritage, the concept of inheritance and variation forms the basis of genetics. Each cell in our body has an ancestral memory of the past in the form of genetic material passed down to future generations. Genetic material evolves over time because of variations, and so do the values and intangible elements associated with tangible structures. This extends to the intangible aspects like culture and traditions of heritage, which shape the cultural landscape.

These parallels are interesting because they highlight the idea of an individual human being as a living embodiment of heritage. The genes of every individual contain information about the evolutionary history of human origin, that are passed down to successive generations. To conclude, heritage and genetics are related as they foster a connection between past, present, and future generations.

Student and Alumni Achievements

Mr. NG YIU TONG, ANTHONY, PRESENTED HIS PAPER AT THE 2ND INTERNATIONAL YOUNG RESEARCHERS' RECENT TRENDS IN RESEARCH: INDIA AND FOREIGN LANGUAGES



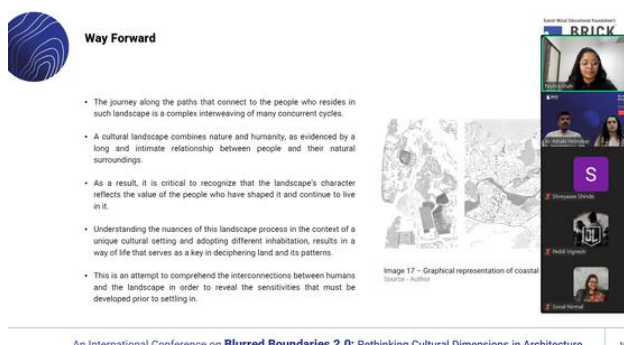
Mr. Ng Yiu Tong, Anthony, at JNU presenting his paper at the International Young Researchers' Conference



Mr. Ng Yiu Tong, Anthony, at the International Young Researchers' Conference held at JNU

Mr. Ng Yiu Tong, Anthony, a second-year student of the MMS in Heritage Management, has been selected and invited to present his paper at the 2nd International Young Researchers' Conference on Recent Trends in Research: India and Foreign Languages, held on January 16-17, 2025, at the School of Language, Literature and Culture Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi.

NISHRA SHAH, PRESENTED A PAPER AT BLURRED BOUNDARIES 2.0 - RETHINKING CULTURAL DIMENSIONS IN ARCHITECTURE



Ar. Nishra Shah presenting her paper at Blurred Boundaries 2.0

Nishra Shah, a first-year Masters student at the Centre, recently presented a paper at an international conference "Blurred Boundaries 2.0 - Rethinking Cultural Dimensions in Architecture" at the SMEF's Brick School of Architecture, under the subtheme of "The Place of Knowledge and Perception." The paper titled "Tracing the Intersection of Landscape and Culture through the Layers of Temporality and Permanence: A Case of Zai and Aswali, Dahanu, India."

Alumni Interaction

REFLECTIONS ON HER JOURNEY AFTER CHM: NIHARIKA SHAH, HON. DIRECTOR OF HUTHEESING VISUAL ARTS CENTRE, AHMEDABAD

Niharika Shah is an art and heritage consultant based in Ahmedabad. She is the founder and director of the arts and heritage management company, InventArt. She was part of the first cohort that graduated in 2017, and she had written her thesis on "Curatorial practice in Mata ni Pachedi: Safeguarding for intangible traditional art". Before starting her independent firm, Niharika Shah served as gallery director and curator at Kanoria Centre for Arts, Ahmedabad, for more than a decade. Currently, she serves as the Hon. Director of the prestigious Hutheesing Visual Arts Centre.



Niharika Shah - Alumna of the Centre for Heritage Management

Can you highlight some of the key experiences and projects you have been part of since you graduated from the Centre?

After graduating from CHM, I was very interested in understanding how the history and heritage of India affects the contemporary artist. I was greatly inspired by KG Subramanyam's work and particularly the Bengal School. What captured my attention was the way in which the Bengal School represented various stories.

After graduation, I set up my own company called InventArt. Through this company, we produced various sculptures that were inspired by the story and history of Sarkhej. It was a major breakthrough as it was very focused on the idea of our heritage. The second project we undertook was called "In Transit." This was conceptualised during the pandemic when the entire country was under lockdown. We got in touch with artists who had migrated back to their hometowns due to the lockdowns. We focused on the migration stories of the artists and their journeys from place to place. We also explored the impact of their migration on their art practices.

What role did CHM play in your professional career?

Due to my long journey with Kanoria Centre for Arts and my work with contemporary artists, I only had a vague idea about India's heritage. However, by studying Heritage Management, everything became clearer. I truly understood what heritage is, and it also helped me discern what is important and what is not. This was my second Master's degree after many years of experience in the field, but this degree moulded the foundation for me.

It has been 10 years since you graduated. How does it feel looking back?

The Master's degree helped me gain maturity in my thoughts and ideas. It also provided me with a great opportunity to expand my network, as I got to connect with very interesting people. As I progress in my profession, I now pay more attention to the finest details. The course also taught me the importance of documentation. The holistic nature of the degree has equipped me with the knowledge to understand all aspects of any project including budgeting and financing.

Student and Alumni Achievements

INVITED LECTURES, PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS

Maniti Desai

- Guest Lecturer- Desai, M. (2024, November 5). Understanding Transferable Development Rights and their Application in Heritage Conservation, presented at the Foundation Studio of Masters in Urban Management, CEPT University, Ahmedabad, India.
- Seminar Keynote Speaker- Desai, M. (2024, December 17). Role of Transferable Development Rights Policy in Heritage Conservation in Gujarat at the CHC-CRDF Seminar Ahmedabad, India.
- Research and Surveys- Desai, M. (2024). Research Survey on the Perception and Usage of Underground Tankas in Heritage Properties in Ahmedabad. She conducted a survey to understand public and stakeholder perceptions of underground tankas, aiming to generate actionable suggestions for organizations to support restoration efforts.
- Desai, M., & Concept Culture. (2024). Red Haveli, Ahmedabad: Research, Documentation, and Conceptualization for Adaptive Reuse. This project involved researching and documenting the Red Haveli's history, architectural storytelling, and adaptive reuse, focusing on integrating its historical significance into a modern framework while preserving its heritage value.
- Desai, M., & Concept Culture. (2024). Documentation and Adaptive Reuse of a 150-Year-Old Private Property in Anjuna, Goa. The project emphasized the heritage significance of a 150-year-old property, home to the first Anjuna Flea Market, by documenting its historical value and creating adaptive reuse concepts for its preservation and contemporary suitability.

Harsh Shah

- Paper presentation at the St. Ann's College, Oxford University in June'23 titling "Establishing heritage values through Oral history & Public memories: The case of Ahmedabad".

Sukrit Sen

- Sen, Sukrit; Cultural Continuity in Historic Urban Areas of CHITPUR: Harnessing ICH for Building Resilience . In: Jigyasu, N., Sharma, A.K. (eds) Sustainable Management of Historic Settlements in Asia. Sustainable Development Goals Series . Springer.
- Elected as the Co-Convener for Climate Heritage Network, Youth for Asia Pacific Region.
- "Out of Site, Sight: Contagious Tactics for Wicked Urban Problems" Mukherjee, J., & Sen, S. et al (2024). *Out of Site, Sight: Contagious Tactics for Wicked Urban Problems*. GCSMUS. Retrieved from [\[https://gcsmus.org/audio-visual-resources/out-of-site-sight-contagious-tactics-for-wicked-urban-problems/\]](https://gcsmus.org/audio-visual-resources/out-of-site-sight-contagious-tactics-for-wicked-urban-problems/)(<https://gcsmus.org/audio-visual-resources/out-of-site-sight-contagious-tactics-for-wicked-urban-problems/>)
- Curated pieces on art and climate at the Kala Ghoda Arts Festival in Mumbai, 2025 and the Somnath Festival in Somnath, 2025 as a part of the Living Waters Museum.

Ng Yiu Tong, Anthony

- Anthony was selected and invited to participate in the International Seminar on Heritage Interpretation and Presentation for Future Generations held on June 24 in King's College London, United Kingdom for a poster presentation titled 'Reflecting on Indian Heritage through Dargah' which focused on Memory as Heritage through Jinnealogy.

Jyoti Shukla

- Presentation: Shukla, J. (2025, February). Challenges of reviving a native food culture in a tribal community in Jharkhand, India: The case of Mahua – an Indigenous flower-based food ingredient. Asia-Pacific Research Forum for ICH Safeguarding International Conference – New Frontiers of Research for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage, National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka, Japan.

Lasya Prashanth

- Lasya was selected to present her paper "Decolonising Museums: Emerging Trends in India" at the World Archaeological Conference-10 happening in Darwin, Australia between 23-28 June 2025.

INVITED LECTURES AND PRESENTATIONS

Professor Neel Kamal Chapagain

- Chapagain, N.K. and Neupane, U. (2024). Heritage and Contextual Learning: Exploring Opportunities of Innovation in Early Childhood Development; in International Conference on Envisioning Early Childhood Development Ecosystem in Nepal; Purbanchal University, Biratnagar, Nepal (6-7 December 2024)
- UNESCO's 2003 Convention and Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage with or without a UNESCO Inscription; International Conference on "Safeguarding and Promotion of Intangible Cultural Heritage and Binh Định Traditional Martial Arts"; People's Committee of Binh Định Province and Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences, Department of Culture and Sports, Institute of Cultural Studies; Quy Nhơn city, Bình Định province, Vietnam. 4-5 January 2025
- As a mentor to the IRCI Early Careers Research Programme, participated in the in-person meetings as well as in the conference on 'New Frontiers of research in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage', organized by IRCI in Osaka, Japan from 13 to 15 February 2025. His invited presentation was titled "Reviewing the Inscription of ICH elements from South Asia: Critical Reflections on 'community', 'participation', 'consent' and 'safeguarding'".
- Professor Chapagain shared his experiences as conservation architect and heritage management educator in South Asia at an Experts Meeting organized by UNESCO to set up a heritage management programme in Mongolia. organized by UNESCO on 23 and 24 February 2025. The meeting took place at the Mongolian National University of Arts and Culture.

Professor Aditya Prakash Kanth

- Professor Aditya Prakash Kanth presented a paper on "Rethinking Technology's Role in Museum Interpretation: Key Concerns" at the annual conference of the Museums Association of India held from November 30-December 01, 2024 at the Baroda Palace Museum, Baroda.

Professor Molly Kaushal

- Professor Molly Kaushal delivered an invited talk "Is Folk all about Song and Dance? Aesthetics, Knowledge Systems and Discourse", in the Panel: Folk Literature of India, Annual Festival of Letters, Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi, 7-12 March 2025.
- Delivered a Keynote address on "Oral Traditions: Epistemic Choices, Methodologies and Ground Level Research" at the National Researcher's Meet- Collaborative Research for Resurgent Bharat, National Institute of Technical Teacher's Training (NITTTR), Dattopant Thengri Shiksha Sansthan, Department of Higher Education, Madhya Pradesh, Bhopal 1-3 March 2025.
- Delivered an Invited lecture "Maritime India, Travelling Goddesses and Intangibles of History" at the International Maritime Conference: Sailing the Monsoon- Shipbuilding, Navigation and Trading, Darshak Itihas Nidhi and Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, Govt. of Gujarat, Vadnagar, 5-6 April 2025.

Journal of Heritage Management: Centre's Flagship Publication

The Journal of Heritage Management is a peer-reviewed biannual (June and December) International Journal of the Ahmedabad University.

In collaboration with the Sage Publications, the journal publishes high-quality research papers, commentaries and book reviews on themes of heritage management.

Visit the Sage Publications website to submit your paper online.

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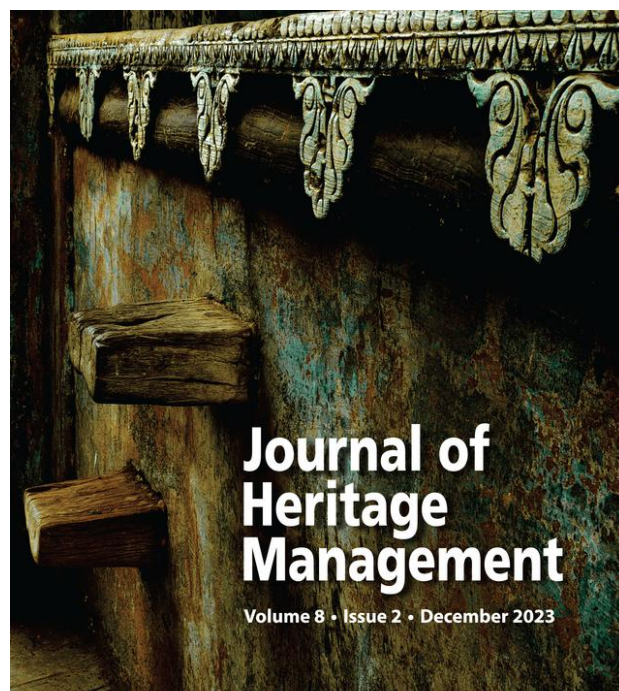
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MASTERS IN HERITAGE MANAGEMENT



The Centre for Heritage Management aims to foster critical discourses on the broader domain of heritage, and to promote a holistic heritage management approach as a guidance for sustainable and just social development. It offers an intensive 2-year Master's Degree in Management Studies - Heritage Management for which the applications for admission are now open.

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