

Look Up Mumbai

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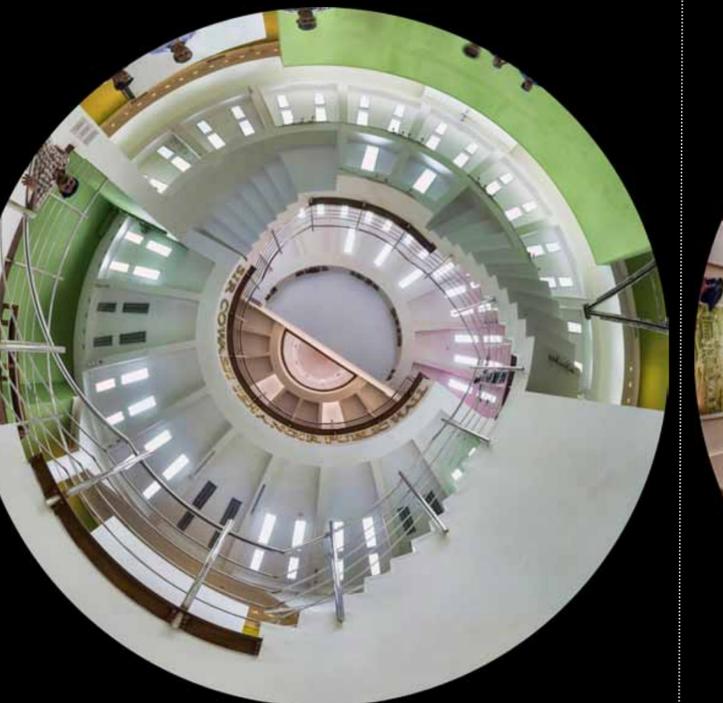
THE MUSEUM



SUPPORTED BY



The Global Vipassana Pagoda



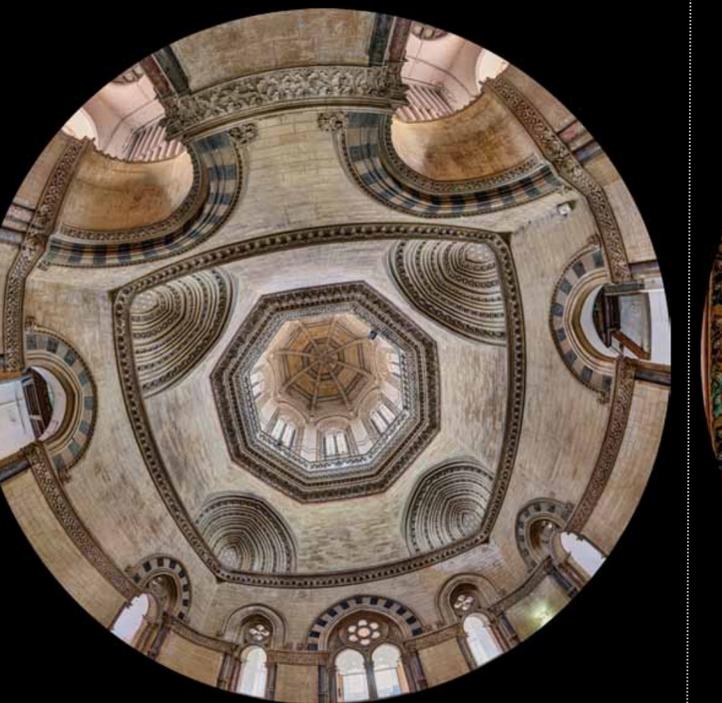
National Gallery of Modern Art



Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya



Shree Siddhivinayak Temple



Central Railway Headquarters



Adishwarji Jain Temple



Afghan Church



Cowasjee Jehangir Convocation Hall



Taj Mahal Palace Hotel

Mumbai's architectural heritage is unrivalled in India. The city has one of the largest representations of the grand neo-Gothic style of architecture, numerous examples of Indo-Saracenic architecture, and one of the world's largest number of Art Deco buildings. According to writer Jan Morris, "Mumbai is one of the most characteristically Victorian cities in the world, displaying all the grand effrontery of Victorian eclecticism". While the British influence on buildings in the city is evident from the colonial era, the architectural features include a range of European influences such as German gables, Dutch roofs, Swiss timbering, Romance arches and Tudor casements often interfused with traditional Indian features.

The exceptional architectonic heterogeneity of Mumbai is the subject of Look Up Mumbai. The dome of the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya has been adopted as the epicenter of an artistic exploration that specifically focuses the ceiling architectures of Mumbai's heritage and contemporary buildings, and transforms them into an urban celestial imaginary.

Visitors to Look Up Mumbai's new media-art installation recline on a custom-made couch under an immersive digital projection dome, and look up to view an animated sequence of over sixty-five fisheye photographs that constitute a unique portrait of Mumbai's extraordinary and varied architecture of churches, mosques, temples, government and industrial buildings, private homes and nightclubs, all seen from this unusual and spectacular point of view. Images of these singular ceilings - gothic and contemporary, sacred and secular, monumental and everyday - digitally transform from one to another inside this dome, and envelope its viewers in an unfolding and immersive realm of artistic revelation and gratification.

Correct geometric 'projection mapping' of these ceilings within the dome maintain the architectonic integrity of their varying sizes and proportions, providing dramatic perceptual shifts in scale and form as the sequence of

images unfold. To amplify this, digital image processing techniques are used to create transitions between these images and the locations they present. These deconstruct the internal pixel structure of each image, then modulate and blend them in various patterns and transformations. This cinematic trompe l'oeil of structural conjunctions and iconographic interpolations creates an aesthetic re-visioning of these various sites, and they became remediated as a narrative sequence that focuses their spatial, formal and pictorially associative qualities. An underlying symbolic dimension also reveals itself, as the architecture and decoration of these ceilings often imply correspondences of cosmological significance.

The philosopher Villem Flusser wrote: "We live in two worlds: one that is given and the other that is provoked by the attention that we pay to it." In the course of our daily lives the architectural context and especially its ceilings that we seldom look up to contemplate, tend to belong to the insensible world 'that is given'. Look Up Mumbai sets out to relocate these ceilings in the other world, the one 'that is provoked by the attention that we pay to it', and in so doing focus the multi-cultural richness and diversity of these structures as objects of aesthetic allure, technological wonder and empyrean fascination.

Look Up Mumbai is created by media artists Sarah Kenderdine, Berndt Lintermann and Jeffrey Shaw, in collaboration with the Hong Kong photographer John Choy. The projected was initiated by JSW Foundation for Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya. Support for this installation by Museum Victoria and State Government of Victoria, Melbourne, the University of New South Wales, Sydney and the Australian Consulate General, Mumbai. Music of Pt. Shiv Kumar Sharma courtesy Mahesh Babu of Ninaad Music & Marketing Pvt. Ltd. Architectural historian and project coordinator: Preeti Goel Sanghi, JSW Foundation. Fieldwork assistant: Akshay Kore. Installation management: Damian Leonard, Immersive Realisation.

Look Up Mumbai is being shown in DomeLab, a UNSW-led Australian Research Council funded project led by Sarah Kenderdine with collaborators across eleven organisations in Australia and overseas, including three Museums. The system is designed to travel both nationally and internationally, as a portable canvas for experimental humanities, future museology and spatial aesthetics. The six meter diameter Domelab utilizes eight WQXGA projectors to make it the highest resolution touring fulldome in the world.

Look Up Mumbai belongs to a series of artistic investigations that includes Heavens Gate (1987), Cupola (2004) and Look Up Kyoto (2004).

"I believe museums have to now invest in and experiment with emerging technologies to increase the footfalls and make the experience more interactive. I look forward to supporting 'smart' museum initiatives."

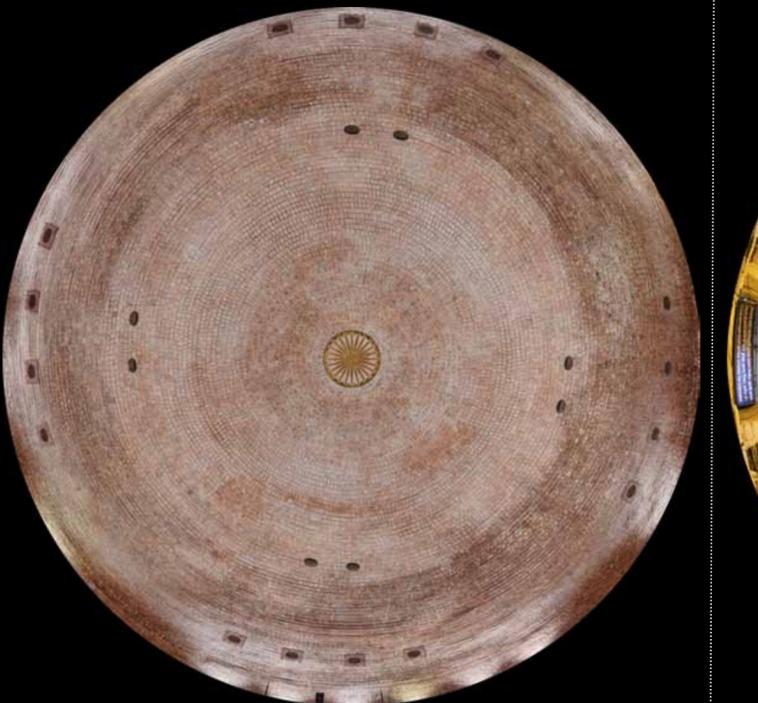
- Sangita Jindal
Chairperson, JSW Foundation

"It is truly a charming and beguiling way to show the people of Mumbai, the grandeur of their city."

- Mark Pirce
Australian Consulate General

"We are really keen on supporting this initiative as it fits in perfectly in our objective of improving the visitor experience. Look Up Mumbai brings the museum-going experience into the digital age by incorporating technology without compromising on the principles of modern museum practices."

- Sabyasachi Mukherjee
Director-General, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya



Global Vipassana Pagoda



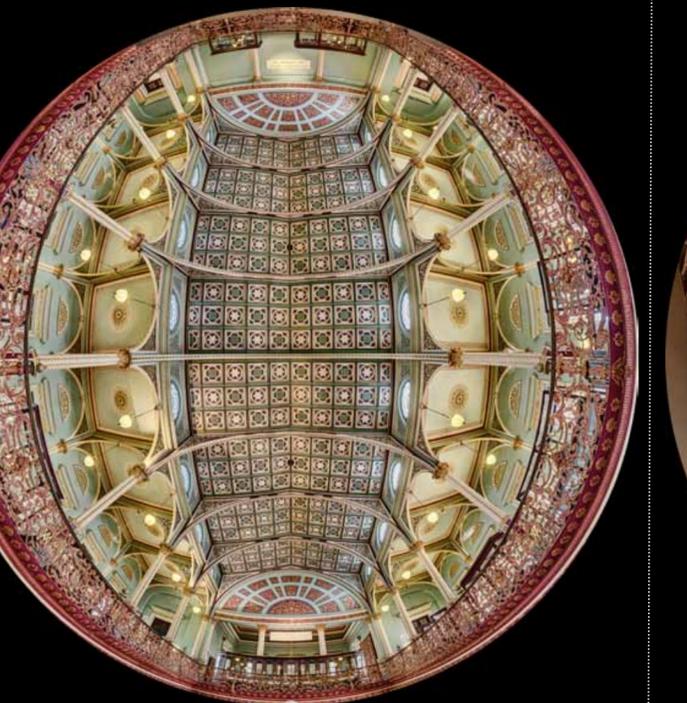
Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus



Holy Name Cathedral



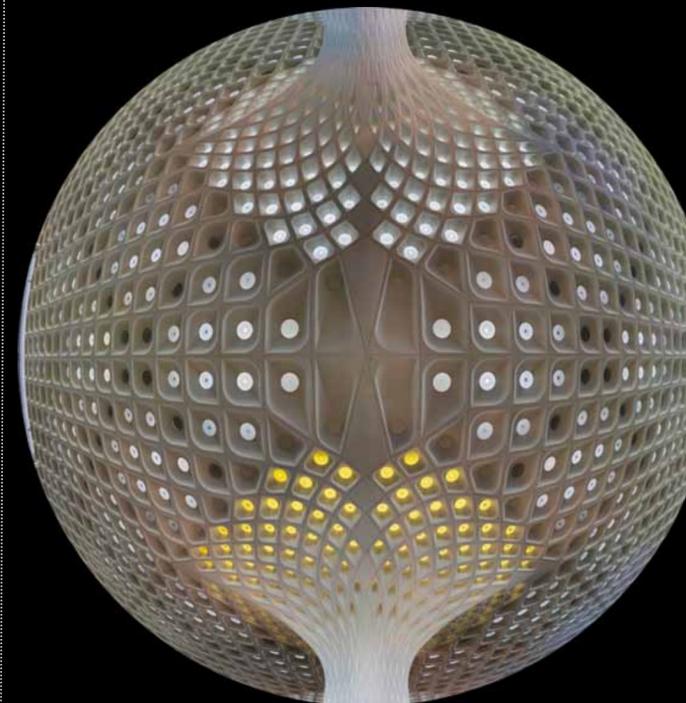
Gateway of India



Dr Bhanu Daji Lad Museum



Asiatic Library



Terminal 2 Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport