

india

# mondo<sup>arc</sup>

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AN INITIATIVE BY

# STIR



Bijoy Jain  
*Immediate Landscapes, 2018*





Pic: Shantanu Prakash

## ART-ITORIAL

Just the other day I was having a rather animated and intense discussion with two fellow artists on how technology is changing the way the new-gen approaches how they learn and work. The observation of one of my friends, a teacher at a Mumbai based architecture college, is from close quarters. "I was aghast when one of my students replied in a very matter-of-fact way when I asked why they prefer watching a movie than reading a book," she shared. Any guesses? It is sad and simple - "One has to imagine too much while reading a book! Something that is easily provided in a film." This phenomenon is applicable to consuming just about anything, especially in the creative space. The biggest joy of seeing art, for instance, is its discovery and interpretation. And if this very thing about it is the pain-point, then little can be done. As an artist with clay as my medium of choice, I know that there is absolutely no escape to dirtying my hands! I cannot avoid babysitting a kiln over a twelve-hour long firing process, and if it is forty-five degrees in the peak of summer, then so be it.

The process of art production itself varies widely, most requiring tedious and meticulous renditioning. There are however art practices that utilize the ready-made as components for the work they create. Is the objective to simplify the very process of making art? While the use of the machine-made product to make hand-made work of art itself is not new neither uncommon, in this issue we delve into the overlapping spaces of art and product, in context of architectural spaces and design processes. Marcel Duchamp used the readymade, as did the Dada artists in as early as 1910. The idea was a mockery of art by teasing and rejecting logic and reasoning, and to critically question its value in a rapidly industrialized world. "The real point of the readymade was to deny the possibility of defining art," said Calvin Tomkins, the biographer of Duchamp. In the contemporary context, is it the functional associations of the mass-produced objects that are relevant to artists? Or is it the visual form and texture of these impersonally manufactured things? Further, we investigate the vice-versa - use of art in the mass-produced (or at-least mechanically produced, in multiples) functional products.

Johann Goethe called architecture frozen music. Dance, then, can be described as painting in motion. Sculpture, a section of prose.

Crafting (or creating) is the basis of all art. Architectural and design practices are paying more attention to aesthetics along with functionality than ever. Are the lines blurring between creative disciplines? Maybe, the lines never existed and were only a figment of our imagination.

**Rahul Kumar**

Consulting Editor, Art & Interactive Media  
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## CLAY AMAN KHANNA

STUDIO: Claymen  
ESTABLISHED: 2016  
LOCATION: New Delhi

### WHO

Aman Khanna, a graphic artist, illustrator, sculptor and a visual storyteller, graduated from London College of Communication in 2004. Thereafter, he worked in the city for a year and then set up his own design studio 'Infomen' in London in 2005 and 'Infonauts' in New Delhi in 2009. His style comprises quirky characters and iconic forms.

### WHAT

Clay is our most preferred medium as it provides complete freedom and it can be moulded into any shape or form. I like to address my thoughts and observations by giving a form to them. This also helps me to make peace and sometimes come to terms with those emotions. But at other times the opposite happens, I would hand mould a clay-face, for instance, and it would just look like a feeling I have had, and I would instantly give it a name. I personally like hand moulding. We have throwers to make works on the wheel and production in multiples.

### WHY

Over the past three years, I have increasingly gravitated towards clay, the most common and ancient medium used by humans to create everyday objects. Clay has added a new dimension to my work. With this medium I began to explore the third dimension, creating small clay sculptures that are inspired by my surroundings and the people living in them. I call them Claymen. Claymen are now divided into two broad categories:

functional and non-functional products. They are not strictly mass-produced because everything is handmade. Therefore, no two pieces are exactly the same, which makes them unique. My idea was to make art affordable to everyone yet keeping it authentic.

### HOW

Claymen objects add aesthetic by taking it away. They simply are what they are: a celebration of a style that lives at peace with its own little imperfections. These clay men emerge from a careful observation of the common man and his dilemmas. They are peaceful, contemplative, and quiet. While going through their own existential crises they are mere witnesses to the fact that we constantly have feelings, whether we are conscious of them or not. The expressions on my sculptures capture these emotions. And my viewers relate to them based on their past experiences. I mostly see a big smile on their faces when they come face-to-face with certain works; it's like a self-reflection. I feel Claymen is unique because it is very personal. My sculptures celebrate the grey area that exists in the overlap of art and design.

### WHERE

We retail through our exclusive gallery cum shop at The Dhan Mill in Chattarpur, New Delhi. We also have an online store. In addition, select collections are available at multi-brand stores globally.

[www.claymen.in](http://www.claymen.in)



Pics: Courtesy of Claymen



*"Claymen is unique because it is very personal. My sculptures celebrate the grey area that exists in the overlap of art and design."*

