



# SRISHTI MANIPAL COLLECTIVE'25

Under Graduate Professional Programme



**SRISHTI MANIPAL**  
INSTITUTE OF  
ART, DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY  
*A Constituent Unit of MAHE, Manipal*



**MANIPAL**  
ACADEMY of HIGHER EDUCATION  
*(Institution of Eminence Deemed to be University)*



An Interdisciplinary Inquiry into Urban Ecological Engagement and Public Pedagogy Guide: Yash Bhandari Living Libraries re-examines the relationship between urban residents and natural environments by transforming urban infrastructure into vibrant, interactive archives of ecological knowledge and community experience. In response to rapid urbanization and the attendant disconnection from nature, the project employs art-based research, experiential learning, and participatory design to sustain engagement with urban ecosystems. It operates on the understanding that an individual's ability to comprehend ecological systems is deeply tied to multi-sensory engagements—those direct interactions serve as building blocks for systemic knowledge and meaningful participation. The project mobilizes immersive field activities that prompt participants to document and reflect on sensory encounters across diverse urban sites, such as landfills, lakes, residential gardens, public parks, and peri-urban grasslands. Through nature journaling, creative mapping, and reflective reportage, participants reconnect with early memories of outdoor exploration while gaining nuanced insights into the functioning of urban ecological systems amid human interventions. This process reconfigures everyday experiences to reveal the complex interplay between natural and built environments, thereby fostering deeper ecological interconnectedness. Field observations are synthesized into public-facing tools that transform urban green spaces into repositories of collective memory and knowledge. Engagement instruments—incorporating playful, gamified activities and reflective prompts—encourage individuals to interact with their surroundings in meaningful ways. These tools simplify complex ecological concepts, nurture a sense of environmental stewardship, and demonstrate how interactive design and participatory storytelling can reframe public spaces as dynamic environments for ecological learning. Living Libraries supports the professional development of emerging creative educators, ecology stewardship by refining skills in ecological communication, narrative construction, and interactive design. The project explores key themes within urban ecology, such as

promoting pollinator-friendly landscapes through indigenous planting, fostering biodiversity via insect journaling, and mapping sensory experiences like scent and emotion to redefine interactions with the environment. Creative practices, such as nature journaling, merge observational insight with scientific inquiry, further strengthening urban ecological engagement. The outcomes of Living Libraries consistently indicate that narrative-driven, interactive interventions enhance public engagement with ecological challenges. By integrating personal narrative, systematic field research, and innovative design, the project offers a replicable, scalable model for reconfiguring urban green spaces into dynamic platforms for learning and ecological empathy. These participatory methods empower communities to address pressing issues such as biodiversity loss, habitat fragmentation, and environmental degradation. Ultimately, Living Libraries provides a framework that translates abstract ecological experiences into tangible creative practices. By transforming urban green spaces into collaborative settings for reflection, storytelling, and active participation, the project advances a vision of sustainable urban living in which creative expression and environmental awareness are deeply interwoven with the daily experience of city life. It underscores the need to reimagine urban public spaces as living libraries that foster ecological literacy and shared stewardship of the urban-natural world.



**LIVING LIBRARIES**  
**YASH BHANDARI**







The words 'parks' and 'Bangalore', almost go hand in hand. Our reputation as the garden city precedes us. Spaces like Cubbon Park associated with recreation or relaxation, Lalbagh with botanical marvels and of course freedom park and justice. These spaces are meant to establish our connection to nature within our urban landscape, but a section of us can't even think of leisure in these spaces as an option. Women are often unsafe and harassed in these environments, so what can one do, when an area dedicated to encouraging peace, relaxation, and enjoyment, can only fulfil its purpose for one section of society..



## IT'S NOT ALWAYS A WALK IN THE PARK

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As cities expand, people are spending less time in nature, weakening their emotional connection to green spaces. This project aims to bridge that gap by creating an Interactive Toolkit that transforms how park visitors engage with their surroundings. By incorporating story prompts, mapping activities, and sensory experiences, the toolkit encourages a fresh perspective and deeper interaction with nature. This project explores how interactive tools can improve engagement, accessibility, and environmental awareness. Through research, prototyping, and user testing, it examines the most effective ways to design experiences that strengthen personal connections with nature. The final outcome is a toolkit that invites visitors to observe, imagine, and engage with their environment in a more meaningful way. Project.



# BEYOND THE TRAIL

DRISHTI SINGH

Visual Communication and Strategic Branding







Insects are vital to ecosystems, yet urbanization and habitat loss have led to their decline, particularly in Bengaluru. This project integrates insect conservation into everyday gardening, giving people agency to restore biodiversity while learning about complex ecosystems. Through an educational resource, it empowers individuals to engage with insect-friendly gardening—fostering curiosity, questioning perceptions, and encouraging a shift toward thinking from a non-human perspective..



## BACKYARD BIODIVERSITY — FOSTERING INSECT FRIENDLY GARDENS

**CATHERINE THOMAS**

Human Centered Design

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# PLAN YOUR POLLINATOR GARDEN





This research explores the multisensory dimensions of urban ecology, challenging the hegemony of sight in how we perceive and understand our environments. Inspired by Juhani Pallasmaa's critique of visual dominance and Tim Ingold's concept of "knowing from the inside," the project argues that true ecological awareness arises from embodied, sensory engagement. Using Bangalore's urban landscape as a site of inquiry, the research investigates how touch, smell, sound, and temperature—alongside vision—can reveal overlooked aspects of the city's ecological identity. Through participatory workshops, guided sensory walks, and material interaction with found objects like soil, bark, and urban debris, participants will collaboratively explore and document their experiences. This process moves beyond individual observation to create collective installations that reflect shared ecological narratives and deepen communal engagement. Drawing from Soetsu Yanagi's ideas on patterns and hidden beauty and Harini Nagendra's reflections on Bangalore's olfactory profile, the project seeks to reawaken perception and highlight the city's sensory imprints often hidden in plain sight..



# URBAN SKIN

**ANDREA SUSAN MATHEWS**

Industrial Arts and Design Practices

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In the Anthropocene, where cities both contribute to and suffer from climate change, fostering ecological awareness among urban residents is crucial. This project explores how nature journaling and plein air painting can serve as tools for urban ecological engagement, community building, and environmental stewardship. By documenting Bangalore's urban and peri-urban landscapes, the research examines how creative methodologies can reveal hidden ecological narratives, cultivate a sense of belonging in a migrant city, and contribute to participatory conservation efforts. Engaging in field-based artistic practices, the project aims to foster a deeper connection between people and place, encouraging residents to actively observe, document, and reflect on their urban environment. Through public walks, workshops, and artistic documentation, it seeks to build a community of urban naturalists, bridging art, science, and citizen participation to create a more inclusive, ecologically aware urban future..



## LISTENING TO THE LAND: ART, ECOLOGY, AND COMMUNITY IN THE CITY

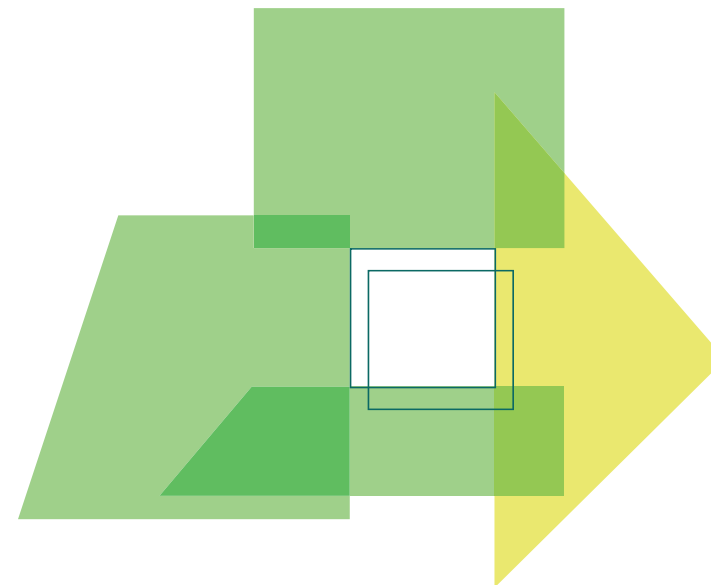
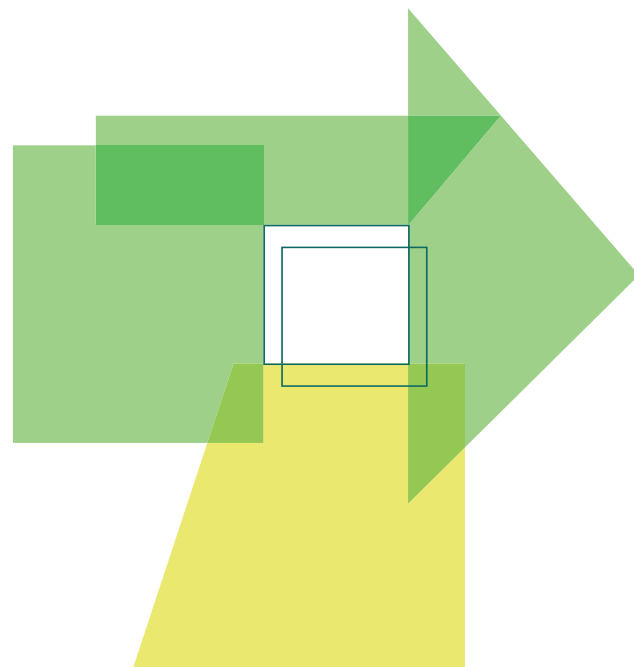
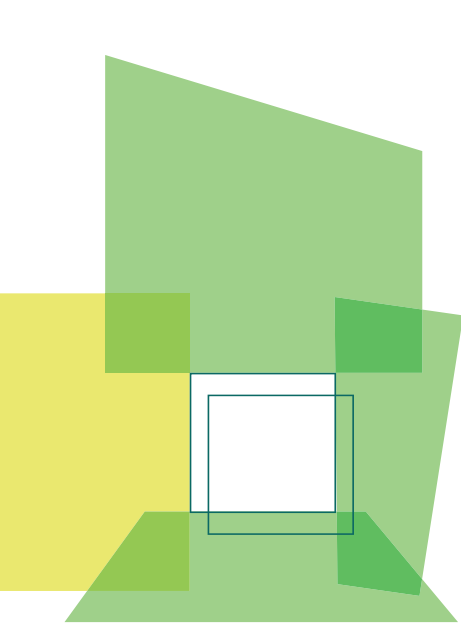
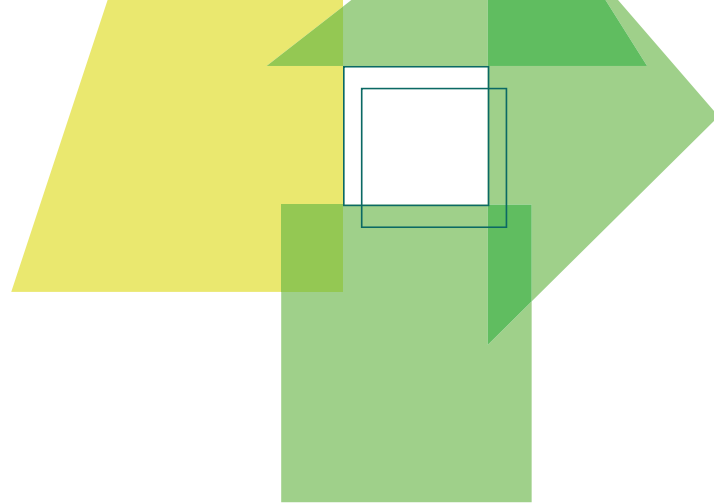
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