Design in the Moment

Posted on

Furniture by the Geoffrey Bawa Practice Opens in Colombo



The late Sri Lankan architect Geoffrey Bawa (1919-2003) is celebrated not just for his architectural achievements, but also for his exceptional contemporary furniture designs that he crafted throughout his five-decade career. Bawa famously stated, “We did what was thought to be right in that moment,” reflecting the boldness of his practice.



This “moment” is the culmination of political, economic, and social circumstances that shaped the Sri Lankan context within which Bawa worked: one of a closed economy, restricted imports, and a consequential reliance on locally available materials. The Geoffrey Bawa practice produced a remarkable array of furniture, including innovative lamps and chairs. Bawa and his associates worked with local craftspeople across disciplines and frequent collaborators to produce pieces embodying this innovative spirit, drawing inspiration from prevalent styles of the time.

An exhibition focusing on these designs and their role in the broader context of

Bawa’s practice is now open in Colombo. Design in the Moment: Furniture by the Geoffrey Bawa Practice closely examines the histories and context of Bawa’s furniture designs and considers how they can be meaningful for contemporary use.

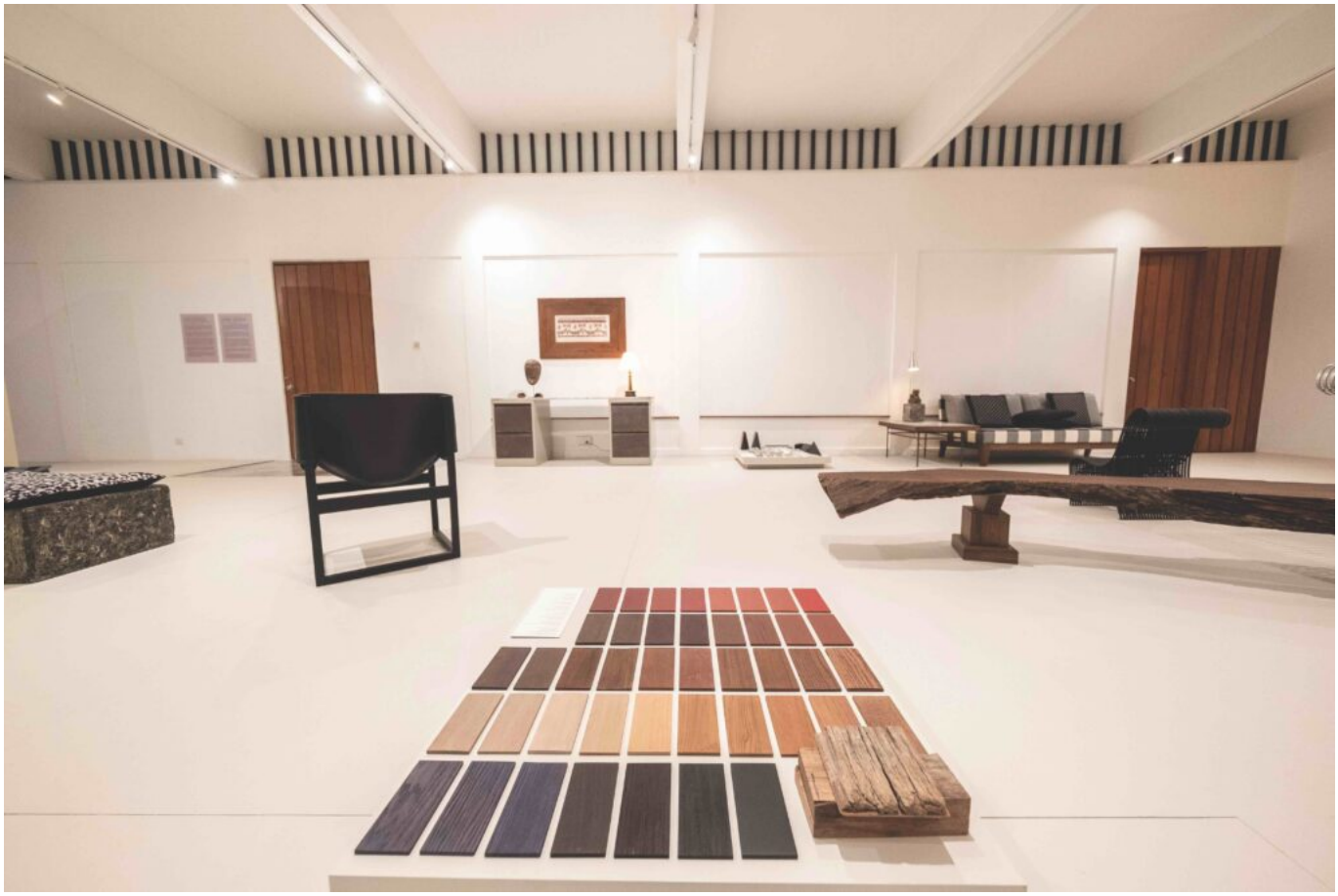
This exhibition is a collaborative effort by the Geoffrey Bawa Trust and India-based furniture company Phantom Hands.

Curated by architect and Chairperson of the Geoffrey Bawa Trust Channa Daswatte and Phantom Hands co-founder Aparna Rao, the exhibition interrogates the idea and process of reproduction through furniture designs, including the “Next-Door Café” Chair and the Saddle Chair. Phantom Hands’ Geoffrey Bawa Collection, a furniture collection offering re-editions of these designs and others from the architect’s practice, launched alongside the exhibition and will be available in 2025.

Design in the Moment: Furniture by the Geoffrey Bawa Practice will be on view at the newly opened Geoffrey Bawa Space until May 2025. Throughout the exhibition, a series of curatorial tours and public programming will take place.



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The exhibition explores the histories and context of Bawa’s furniture designs.



Unique exhibits from ‘Design in the Moment’.