Experiential Design – Rethinking relations between people, objects and environments

- Paper / Proposal Title:
The Art experience in Architecture- Exploration of the Dramatic theory of Rasa and its applicability in Architecture

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- Abstract (300 words):
In Indian classical dance, drama and music, the term rasa is used to refer to the aesthetic experience of the audience. The theory of rasa was put forth in Natya Shastra(NS) in 500 CE by philosophers of the Kashmir valley1 of Himalayas. Rasa essentially describes the experience of the audience when the boundary between subject and object disappear and the audience enjoys the play intuitively without requirement of an intellectual explanation. Rasa deals with how emotions are depicted, inferred and transmitted in the presentation of a play.

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1 The book is attributed to Bharatamuni and is said to have mythical origins. It may be a treatise created by various authors from 2nd to 5th century CE.
It is undeniable that at the core, architecture is a functional art & rasa is essentially an emotional response to an ongoing art performance. Through this paper, by using a 3-part analysis, an attempt shall be made to establish a bridge between rasa and architecture; Firstly, this paper establishes a basic structure of the rasa theory for a more universal interpretation. Second, it applies this structure to understand how rasa influences the design of sets of a Drama/ movie. Finally, it attempts to extend the parameters laid down in NS to create experience of rasa in architecture.

“Baahubali 2- the conclusion” is the second part of a two-part Indian movie in Telugu language (dubbed into other Indian languages) directed by S. S. Rajamouli and produced by Arka Media works. By taking this movie as the case study, this paper shall critically analyze the architectural settings of this movie and a probable outcome of emotional work on functionality and eventual physicality as a way into architecture of reality.

• Author(s) Biography (200 words each):

Samyukta Raman is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Architecture, Jawaharlal Nehru Architecture and Fine Arts University. She also holds a diploma in Bharatnatyam and is a practicing dancer and instructor. Having learnt dance since the age of 5, her artistic sensibilities are deeply influenced by the rasa theory which forms the bedrock of Classical Indian performing Arts. Being a teacher of both Architecture and Indian Classical dance, Ms Raman has often felt conflicted by the disparate approaches to art experience in Architecture and Bharatnatyam. This work is an attempt to build a bridge between the two.