

Art Deco celebration builds bridges to Shanghai

The numbers are in: 375,000 people attended this year's Art Deco Weekend in January, a celebration that broke new ground in size and scope.

The actual party was bigger than usual, as the larger number of vendors led the Miami Design Preservation League to extend the festival's boundary one block south on Ocean Drive, to Sixth Street.

But it was ADW's scope that was truly remarkable - extending virtually around the world to Shanghai and encompassing a celebration of that city's remarkable Art Deco architecture.

MDPL sponsored a series of activities that included a photography exhibition in the Welcome Center, a painting exhibition at the Miami Beach Botanical Gardens and a comparative photography exhibit of Miami Beach and Shanghai Art Deco architecture by Chinese photographer Deke Erh in Wynwood that was featured in a major article in Time magazine's Asia Edition and in an article in the Shanghai Daily.

A 21-member delegation from Shanghai was led by Zhou Muyao, the vice chairman of the Standing Committee of Shanghai Municipal People's Congress, and the president of the Shanghai People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries.



Miami Beach Mayor David Dermer, second from left, and Commissioners Matti Herrera Bower and Jerry Libbin helped open the photo exhibit on the first day of Art Deco Weekend. Pictured with them are Zhou Muyao, who led the Chinese delegation to ADW and Don Worth, far right, who initiated the exchange.

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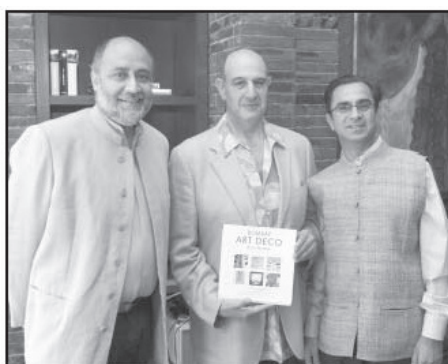
New book highlights Mumbai's Art Deco treasures

Bombay Art Deco Architecture - A Visual Journey, a new book written by Navin Ramani, explores the rich legacy of residential, commercial and public architecture in Mumbai, India, during the 1930s and 1940s.

Ramani, who is a board member of the Miami Design Preservation League, lived in an Art Deco apartment building in Bombay for 21 years and spent much of his childhood exploring his Deco-rich neighborhood.

The architects featured in the book, a small list of the first generation of modern Indian architects, were trained in western architectural traditions and influenced by the fashionable aesthetic current in Europe. Impatient with the British reluctance to shed the Gothic and Indo-Saracenic architectural styles that had dominated Imperial Bombay's urban landscape, these visionaries were determined to imbue the city with a new modern style. The style shares its provenance with the Art Deco architecture of Miami Beach. Built in the same era, the Art Deco architecture of the two cities exhibits similar scale, geometry, tropical vocabulary and love of romance.

"The Art Deco buildings of Bombay are rapidly being transformed by the exigencies of space and neglect," said Rahul Mehrotra, governor of the Heritage Conservation Committee of the Mumbai Metropolitan Regional Development Authority. "Navin Ramani's book awakens world attention to this treasury of Indian architecture and to the delights of the wonderful Art Deco movement in Bombay's history."



Rahul Mehrotra, left, governor of the Heritage Conservation Committee of the Mumbai Metropolitan Regional Development Authority, MDPL Honorary Chairman Andrew Capitan and author Navin Ramani at a presentation of the book *Bombay Art Deco Architecture* during Art Deco Weekend.

Ramani took most of the 222 photographs used in the book. He will be signing copies of his book April 27th at Books and Books and at the MDPL Welcome Center May 1. Everyone attending the MDPL program will be entered into a drawing to receive a complimentary copy of *Bombay Art Deco Architecture*, courtesy of the author. The Welcome Center is located at 1001 Ocean Dr, Miami Beach. For information, call 305-672-2014 or visit www.mdpl.org.

Representation at home

Three MDPL board members have been appointed to the Historic Preservation Board of Miami Beach. Jeff Donnelly, Erika Brigham and Diane Downs will each serve two-year terms. Donnelly, a historian, is the founder and director of MDPL's tour school; Brigham is an architect and activist on issues regarding quality of life in the urban environment; Downs is a longtime Art Deco Weekend volunteer and has served as vice-chair of the Personnel Board of the City of Miami Beach.

"The importance of these appointments to the HP Board is immense and safeguards the well-being of our historic areas," said MDPL Executive Director Bill Farkas.

And representation abroad

Scott Timm, MDPL's director of programming and outreach, and MDPL historian Jeff Donnelly were scheduled to travel to Melbourne, Australia, to participate in the 9th World Congress on Art Deco, April 16-20. From Melbourne, Timm planned to travel to Napier, New Zealand, to learn about the city's Art Deco preservation efforts and meet with local preservationists.

Napier was nearly destroyed by an earthquake and a fire in 1931.

"The city is always mentioned in the same breath as Miami Beach," Timm said. "It was totally rebuilt in the Art Deco style much like Miami Beach was after the 1926 hurricane."