



**DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
UNIVERSITY OF MUMBAI**

FRIDAY LECTURE SERIES

You are cordially invited to a Lecture on

**DOMESTIC MODERN:
REDECORATING HOMES IN BOMBAY IN THE 1930S**

Date: 17 June 2016 at 2:00 p.m.

by

DR ABIGAIL MCGOWAN

Associate Professor of History and Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Vermont, USA

Venue : Seminar Room, Department of History, University of Mumbai.

Dr. Manjiri Kamat
Professor and Head
Department of History
University of Mumbai

Title

Domestic Modern: Redecorating Homes in Bombay in the 1930s

Abstract

In the 1930s, elites in Bombay were bombarded with ideas and products intended to bring their homes up to date. Showrooms, exhibitions, advertisements and design books all addressed a consuming public newly interested in what one architect called ‘the art and comfort of the home.’ Attempts to remake Indian homes were hardly new; from the late nineteenth century on, sanitary reformers, girls’ educators and urban planners had tried to introduce new principles of home management and hygiene into domestic space. In 1930s Bombay, however, attention shifted from household practices to style—specifically, a distinctively modern look expressed through new architectural spaces and the latest consumer goods. In this talk, Prof. McGowan will explore how Bombay-based designers, producers and elite consumers brought modernism home in the 1930s through new architectural ideas and—perhaps more importantly—new consumption practices.

Bio

Abigail McGowan is Associate Professor of History and Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Vermont, USA where she teaches about South Asia with a particular focus on visual and material culture. Her research on India under British colonial rule has explored craft development (*Crafting the Nation in Colonial India*, Palgrave, 2009), changing consumption strategies (a co-edited book, *Towards a History of Consumption in India*, Oxford University Press, 2010), late nineteenth century revivals of traditional Indian design, and artisanal education; her most recent research (which has appeared in the journals *Modern Asian Studies* and *South Asia*, with an upcoming article to appear in *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*) focuses on new ideas of the ideal home in Bombay, expanding use of textiles in home furnishing, and attempts to reshape housing in urban spaces.