



Dhruv Agarwal

Born 1993, India
Lives and works Delhi NCR
India



Dhruv Agarwal is an emerging Indian designer who received India's Best Design Award in 2021 for his exceptional chandelier, *Bloom*. Wonderfully jovial, *Bloom* is a celebration of crafts and explores nostalgia and childlike curiosities. The luminous installation studies the concept of looking at things from a different point of view, or with a reversed perspective. Made by the craftsmen of traditional Channaptna toys, the vibrant colors of the wooden forms recall the playfulness of children's toys but also our attraction to the brightly colored motifs of flowers. From below, the layers of the concentric circles of the chandelier cascade down theatrically to the central lotus, like that of a collapsible toy. At the lowest point, close to the eyes of the viewer, the lotus flower tempts our eyes, asking us to lean in and appreciate its enameled petals, which glisten with the surrounding layers of lights in a joyful manner.

Channaptna toys originated from the town of Channaptna in the Ramanagara district of Karnataka state, India. This art form can be traced back to the ruling of Tipu Sultan, Mysore's historic ruler, whose patronage to these wooden toys and to arts in general allowed his people to thrive and flourish. Over time, however, the art became an expensive affair and it subsequently required the assistance of Japanese doll making techniques to improve productivity and to reinvent the art form. Following the traditional process, the wood for *Bloom* was procured, seasoned, cut into the desired shapes, pruned and carved into scaled-up toys, which were then coated with wax lacquer or in the case of the lotus flower, in mild steel with Meenakari enamel, a traditional technique that has been practiced in India for many centuries. The original color palette of the Channaptna toys has been retained for the continuation of their legacy.

Dhruv Agarwal graduated from the prestigious Pearl Academy design institution and is now an active member of the Pearl Alumni. In 2016, he founded his own design studio, Plank.Studio, which today brings together a team of brilliant emerging designers who seek to push the boundaries of design. Throughout his creation process, Agarwal has sought to collaborate with local artists and craftsmen from different regions of India. He has been awarded with several important commissions in both the public and private sphere. In 2020, Dhruv Agarwal was nominated for the **Elle Deco International Design Awards** and in 2021, was laureate of **India's Best Design Award**.