

## Dhruva Samal – Design Unfolding...

Posted by

[Ar. Roopa Sabnis Pinge](#)

on January 27, 2015 at 04:12 PM

My first response to the photographs of Dhruva Samal's work was to "look for more"! The answer, I later realized, lies in the fact that this architect's creative boundaries spread across the realm of photography too! His interior projects reflect a penchant for understated elegance, with functional and chic designs customized to fit the space and the chosen aesthetic. And, when he photographs his own designs/creations, he freezes just the essence of the space in the frame! Samal's photography of subjects other than architectural spaces also is stunning. Still life or nature, art or architecture, cityscapes or people – each snapshot captures the perfect moment, the perfect mood!



© Courtesy of Ar. Dhruva Samal

### **Image: 1**

Expressions – especially on the faces of children – are priceless; and there is one just perfect moment to click it! In urban settings or rural, whether the quiet type or the boisterous ones, in a playful mood or cranky, the innocence of children is an unmistakable quality – and the hardest to capture. The picture should evoke responses and questions about the subject - who, where, what, how; and leave the viewer thinking, wondering, guessing and intrigued! Dhruva Samal's lens manages to get that right shot, always - and across various genres!

**Image: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6**

Dhruva's photography leaves a lot to the imagination – keeping the viewer's mind intrigued, curious and asking for more! While seeing an image by Dhruva, the foremost thought is: 'how I wish I could see more' – but then on further thought one realizes that the detail or material or subject was indeed captured perfectly and too much focus and too many angles would only spoil the effect of that 'one' great shot! In this really small 440 sq ft apartment, keeping the walls a light grey all over visually lends a feel of openness. Bright yellow highlights/accent features create spots of interest and breaks monotony. However, the photography of the interior by Dhruva himself, further dramatizes the space – adding a whole new dimension of intrigue and curiosity in a viewer's mind.

However, long, sweeping views have their own merits. Showing the flooring and the ceiling and all things in and around, gives the full impact of the space! A shot of a bathroom, showing the placement of the w/c, the wash basin, the shower/bath-tub, along with the floor tiles, wall tiles and the faucets – is far more useful and practical than an artistic, creative one showing just the wash basin and mirror! But if the designer of a home is able to pick up exactly what people should – and should not – see, I would gladly experience the interior through his/her eyes! As in the case of Dhruva Samal – whose style of photography most lucidly condenses his creations.

**Image: 7, 8, 9, 10, 11**

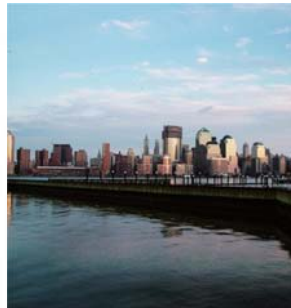
A Mumbai University graduate, Dhruva has done his Masters in Architecture from Virginia Tech, USA. He lived and worked in the US for five years and then on his return to Mumbai did a short stint with Ar. Nozer Wadia. Setting up his own practice in Mumbai, Dhruva's portfolio shows prestigious projects from residential, hospitality and retail sectors. The focus of this piece, however is the 'photography' of Dhruva Samal – with an attempt to understand and deconstruct what his mind wished to capture in a given snapshot. Like many exponents of abstract art, Dhruva doesn't caption his work – therefore leaving it entirely to the viewer's perception and imagination.

**Image: 12, 13, 14, 15, 16**

And what images! Still life or art, architecture or nature, people or places – there is a magical charm to each image; revealing as much as it hides, suggesting as much as it shows. The piece de resistance, however, is the segment called Light Studies! While many photographers are tempted by the opportunity to include as much as possible in a single frame – Dhruva seems to revel in exclusion! He makes the most of what he doesn't see, or doesn't want the viewer to! The elements of surprise, mystery and anticipation – of not seeing the whole picture – and yet stunning in clarity, angle, play of light, composition, focus, subject; set the photographs apart.







**Designer :** Ar. Dhruva Samal (Home Interior)  
**Photography :**Ar. Dhruva Samal