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Sandhya Sood Receives 'First Lady' of Architecture Award

[Richard Springer, Staff Reporter](#)
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Sandhya Sood, founder and principal of the San Francisco Bay Area architectural firm Accent Architecture+Design, is shown in front of an exhibition of her work at the Joyce Gordon Gallery in Oakland, Calif. The exhibit, in tribute to First Lady Michelle Obama and featuring eight women artists and professionals, ends April 19.

OAKLAND, Calif., United States

Sandhya Sood, founder and principal of the San Francisco Bay Area architectural firm Accent Architecture+Design, was presented a “First Lady of Architecture and Design” award at the Joyce Gordon Gallery in downtown Oakland April 5.

Sood was among eight women artists engaged in the fields of diverse media and performing arts honored as “First Ladies,” at the reception, held in conjunction with the gallery's current exhibit, “sheRose of Our Time,” which pays tribute to First Lady Michelle Obama's longstanding support for the arts.

Sood was given her award in honor of Julia Morgan, California's first licensed female architect and, like Sood, a graduate of the University of California at Berkeley.

“To be associated in any way with Julia Morgan, an exceptionally versatile architect and trail-blazing woman whose architecture practice spanned nearly four decades, from 1907-1950, is not only humbling but an immense honor,” Sood told India-West.

The Indian American Tanzania-born architect is a member of the Landmarks California committee, a group of statewide leaders working to raise awareness for preserving California's natural, cultural and architectural treasures.

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Landmarks California's pilot project, "Julia Morgan 2012," will hold events this fall focusing on Morgan's work, which includes more than 700 buildings, including local and national landmarks.

Sood told India-West she became interested in preservation in 2010 when California Cultural and Historic Endowment executive director Mimi Morris invited her to join a panel to review grant applications for \$267.5 million funded by Proposition 40 in 2002, which requires the "acquisition, restoration, preservation and interpretation of the state's historical and cultural resources."

CCHE later initiated "Landmarks California: the Places of Our Diverse Cultures and Histories."

Sood said her approach to architecture, "not unlike Morgan's approach to design and construction, incorporates the regional context and climate, passive solar design and natural ventilation using local and durable building materials."

"Such green building practices are not only environmentally sustainable but can extend the life span of a building — Morgan's buildings a hundred years later are still functional and usable," Sood said.


The exhibit at the Joyce Gordon Gallery runs through April 19. The architectural firm's Web site can be accessed at www.accentarchitecture.com.


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