

## Research profile

Rohan Varma is an architect, researcher and educator who graduated as an architect with first-class honours from the KRVIA (University of Mumbai) in 2009 and subsequently worked for Charles Correa on several important commissions such as the Champalimaud Centre in Lisbon, the Charles Correa Foundation in Goa, the Mahindra Research Valley in Chennai, the Masterplan for the redesign of Mecca in Saudi Arabia, and the Aga Khan Ismaili Centre in Toronto.

As a Tata and Mahindra Scholar, Varma received his Master's in Architecture, graduating from the TU Delft in 2013 with honourable mention and an Archiprix nomination. For the next two years, he gained further experience at the Delft-based international practice Mecanoo Architecten, working on several large-scale architecture and urban design projects in the Netherlands, Russia, the U.K., and Chile.

Currently, Varma combines his work as the Principal Architect of the Mumbai-based VARMA Architects and the TU Delft, where his doctoral research and teaching activities focus on affordable housing design in the rapidly urbanising cities of the Global South.

Parallel to his private practice and research, Varma also actively engages in teaching and is currently a graduation studio tutor at TU Delft's Global Housing Study Centre and has lectured and presented papers at several universities worldwide, such as ETH Zurich, Tunghai and Harvard. Varma also regularly engages in academic and public writing and has contributed papers and essays to various publications and platforms such as *Archdaily*, *Learning from Mumbai* and *The Routledge Handbook on Informal Urbanization*. In 2018, along with Prof. Dick van Gameren, he co-authored the book *Living Ideals* and co-curated an international travelling exhibition on the housing designs of Charles Correa. More recently, in 2020, he was appointed as a Delft Global Fellow, and in 2022, he, along with his colleagues at TU Delft, won the global edX Prize for Exceptional Contributions in Online Teaching and Learning for the online course 'Global Housing Design'. In 2023, he was appointed editor of the journal *Delft Architecture Studies on Housing*.

## Qualifications

Master of Science in Architecture, Architecture and the Built Environment

1 Sept 2011 → 25 Jun 2013

Award Date: 25 Jun 2013

## Employment

### Public Building and Housing Design

Delft University of Technology

1 May 2019 → 6 Dec 2023

### Doctoral Candidate & Tutor

Public Building and Housing Design

Delft University of Technology

1 Mar 2017 → 31 Dec 2025

### Founder/Principal Architect

VARMA Architects

India

1 Sept 2015 → present

## Research outputs

### Bouwkunde in Delft: A Chronology

Oxenaar, A. J., Verdoes, J. & Varma, R., 2024

### Future Proof Neighborhood: Old and New Housing Ideals

Varma, R. (ed.) & van Gameren, D., 2024, Harvard University Graduate School of Design 48 Quincy Street Cambridge, MA 02138: Graduate School of Design, Harvard University. 168 p.

### Sites-and-Services in Performance: Mass Housing Design beyond Efficiency and Resilience

Varma, R. & Mota, N., 2024, *Radical Middle Grounds: New Agendas for Medium-Density Housing*. Hättasch, M. (ed.). The University of Texas at Austin School of Architecture: Center for American Architecture and Design, p. 146-157 202 p.

**1985 Bill of Rights for Housing in the Third World**

Varma, R., 1 Aug 2023, (Unpublished) *The City as Public Matter: Future Histories of Urban Design*.

**Incrementally, we Dwell: .V. Doshi's Aranya Township as a typological innovation in housing design inspired by the Habitat Bill of Rights**

Varma, R. & Mota, N., 18 Jan 2023, p. 39-40. 134 p.

**Dutch Dwellings: The Architecture of Housing**

van Gameren, D. & Varma, R., 2022, Zurich: Park Books. 336 p.

**Sites and Services: A Short History**

Mota, N. & Varma, R., 2022

**Live Webinar: Global Housing Design MOOC**

Varma, R., Mota, N. & van Andel, F. M., 14 Apr 2021

**Bouwkunde 2021-2025: Meerjarenplan**

Varma, R. (ed.), 2021, TU Delft Faculty of Architecture & the Built Environment. 54 p.

**Housing Design as Urban Design: From CIAM's 'Charte de l'Habitat' to Charles Correa's 'Bill of Rights for Housing in the Third World'**

Varma, R., 2021, p. 16. 1 p.

**Housing the Urban Invisibles at Venice Biennale 2021**

Varma, R., Mota, N. & van Andel, F. M., 2021

**MOOC Global Housing Design**

van Andel, F. M., van Gameren, D. E., Mota, N. & Varma, R., 2021

**Remembering Charles Correa: From Affordable Housing to Affordable Cities**

Varma, R., 2021, In: CCF Newsletter. 4, January-June 2021, p. 6-9 4 p.

**Mumbai: Profit Versus People: The Struggle for Inclusion in Mumbai**

Varma, R. & Sha, K., 2019, *The Routledge Handbook on Informal Urbanization*. Rocco, R. & van Ballegooijen, J. (eds.). London/New York, NY: Routledge - Taylor & Francis Group

**'Living Ideals: Designs for Housing by Charles Correa' exhibition at 'Designing Equitable Cities' conference in Panjim, Goa.**

Varma, R., van Gameren, D., Vahl, B. M. & Coumans, G., 6 Sept 2018

**'Living Ideals: Designs for Housing by Charles Correa' exhibition at The Indian Institute of Architects, Kolkata**

Varma, R., van Gameren, D., Vahl, B. M. & Coumans, G., 4 Jul 2018

**Doshi: A Life in Architecture**

Varma, R., 9 Apr 2018, Archined

**'Living Ideals: Designs for Housing by Charles Correa' exhibition at CEPT University, Ahmedabad**

Varma, R., van Gameren, D., Vahl, B. M. & Coumans, G., 2018

**'Living Ideals: Designs for Housing by Charles Correa' exhibition in Mumbai**

van Gameren, D., Varma, R., Coumans, G. & Vahl, B., 2018

### **Framing a New Discourse on the Notion of Habitat in Transforming Societies**

Sedighi, M. & Varma, R., 2018, *Proceedings of the 18th International Planning History Society Conference: Yokohama 2018: Looking at the World History of Planning*. Delft: TU Delft OPEN Publishing, p. 1231-1241 11 p. (International Planning History Society Proceedings; vol. 18, no. 1).

### **Global Models of Housing: Trends & Trajectories**

Varma, R., 2018, *State of Housing: Aspirations, Imaginaries and Realities in India*. Mehrotra, R., Mehta, K. & Hoskote, R. (eds.). Mumbai: Architecture Foundation India

### **Living Ideals: Designs for Housing by Charles Correa**

van Gameren, D. & Varma, R., 2018, Goa, India: Charles Correa Foundation. 80 p.

### **Exhibition Building on Ideas: Charles Correa's Housing Projects: From 12 till 23 June, the exhibition 'Building on Ideas: Charles Correa's Built and Un-built Housing Projects' will be on show in the BK Expo**

Varma, R., Coumans, G. & Vahl, B., 2017

### **Architecture as an Agent of Change: Remembering Charles Correa, "India's Greatest Architect"**

Varma, R., 16 Jun 2016, ArchDaily.

### **Sangharsh Nagar, Mumbai**

Varma, R., 2016, In: *Delft Architectural Studies on Housing (DASH)*. 12/13, p. 270-279 10 p.

### **Affordable Cities: Interview with Charles Correa**

Varma, R. & Correa, C., 23 Dec 2015, *DASH 12/13: Global housing: Affordable dwellings for growing cities*. Rotterdam: nai010 uitgevers

### **CIDCO Housing Navi, Mumbai (IN)**

Varma, R., 23 Dec 2015, *DASH 12/13: Global housing: Affordable dwellings for growing cities*. van Gameren, D., van Anel, F. & van der Putt, P. (eds.). Rotterdam: nai010 uitgevers, p. 88-101 304 p.

### **Shifting scales: affordable housing in India**

Varma, R. & van Gameren, D., 23 Dec 2015, *DASH 12/13: Global housing: Affordable dwellings for growing cities*. van Gameren, D., van Anel, F. & van der Putt, P. (eds.). Rotterdam: nai010 uitgevers, p. 16-19

Ganesh Chaturthi

Varma, R., 2015, *Lobby No. 3: Defiance*. Ramos, R. (ed.). Bartlett School of Architecture

### **Shifting scales: affordable housing in India**

van Gameren, DE. & Varma, R., 2015, *DASH 12/13: Global housing: Affordable dwellings for growing cities*. van Gameren, DE., van den Heuvel, D., van Anel, FM., Klijn, O., Kraaij, A., Mooij, HAF., van der Putt, PS., Kuitenbrouwer, P., Teerds, PJ. & Zeinstra, J. (eds.). Rotterdam: nai010 uitgevers, p. 16-19 304 p.

The Making of the Maximum City

Varma, R., 2013, *Learning From Mumbai: Practising Architecture in Urban India*. Poiesz, P., Jan Scholte, G. & Vanderkaaij Gandhi, S. (eds.). Mapin Publishing, p. 16-25 10 p.

## **Activities**

### **Constructing Narratives: Perspectives on Drawing**

R. Varma (Speaker)

25 Mar 2025

### **TU Delft-SUST: Global Housing Workshop**

R. Varma (Member of programme committee)

5 Dec 2024 → 13 Dec 2024

**Manifestos for Housing the Masses**

R. Varma (Speaker)  
15 Oct 2024

**The Bill of Rights for Housing in the Third World**

R. Varma (Speaker)  
13 Oct 2024

**Sites and Services: A Short History**

R. Varma (Member of programme committee)  
23 Sept 2024

**Urban Design Studio: Mid-Term Review**

R. Varma (Member of programme committee)  
24 Aug 2024

**TU Delft Global Housing India: Research, Education, Practice**

R. Varma (Speaker)  
22 Aug 2024

**Informal Settlement, National Policies and Urban Inclusion Adaptation Strategies and Challenges**

R. Varma (Member of programme committee)  
19 Aug 2024

**SPARC India Project: Informal settlement, national policies and urban inclusion**

R. Varma (Member of programme committee)  
19 Aug 2024 → 25 Aug 2024

**TU Delft Global Housing India**

R. Varma (Speaker)  
19 Aug 2024

**Constructing Narratives: Perspectives on Drawing**

R. Varma (Speaker)  
26 Mar 2024

**Manifestos for Housing the Masses**

R. Varma (Speaker)  
21 Feb 2024

**From Affordable Housing to Affordable Cities: Tracing Charles Correa's Designs for Third World Development**

R. Varma (Speaker)  
16 Feb 2024

**Delft Architectural Studies on Housing (DASH) (Journal)**

R. Varma (Editorial board member)  
2024 → ...

**Paradigms in Conflict: Global Models of Housing**

R. Varma (Speaker)  
15 Nov 2023

**Sites and Services: A Short History**

R. Varma (Member of programme committee)  
25 Sept 2023

**Paradigms in Conflict: Global Models of Housing**

R. Varma (Speaker)  
11 May 2023

**Buenos Aires: Dwelling in Barrio Ricciardelli**

R. Varma (Chair of programme committee)  
24 Apr 2023 → 29 Jun 2023

**Buenos Aires: Dwelling in Barrio Ricciardelli**

R. Varma (Member of programme committee)  
24 Apr 2023 → 28 Apr 2023

**Manifestos for Housing the Masses**

R. Varma (Speaker)  
28 Mar 2023

**Elements of Urban Design**

R. Varma (Member of programme committee)  
9 Mar 2023

**Incrementally, we Dwell**

R. Varma (Speaker) & N.J. Amorim Mota (Speaker)  
19 Jan 2023

**Expanding Habitat: From CIAM to Correa**

R. Varma (Speaker) & N.J. Amorim Mota (Speaker)  
24 Nov 2022

**TU Delft Global Housing: India**

R. Varma (Speaker)  
10 Oct 2022

**Dwelling in the Delta: Netherlands Field Trip**

R. Varma (Member of programme committee)  
20 Jun 2022 → 24 Jun 2022

**Global Housing: Mumbai Studios**

R. Varma (Speaker)  
18 May 2022

**Expanding Habitat: Housing Design as Urban Design**

R. Varma (Speaker)  
11 May 2022

**Housing and the City**

R. Varma (Speaker)  
9 May 2022

**From Affordable Housing to Affordable Cities**

R. Varma (Speaker)

3 May 2022

**Housing in Mumbai**

R. Varma (Speaker)

30 Apr 2022

**Dwelling in the Delta**

R. Varma (Organiser) & D.E. van Gameren (Chair of programme committee)

25 Apr 2022 → 30 Apr 2022

**Dhaka: Dwelling in the Delta**

R. Varma (Member of programme committee) & D.E. van Gameren (Chair of programme committee)

19 Apr 2022 → 24 Jun 2022

**Urban Housing Challenges: Masters Thesis**

R. Varma (Member of programme committee)

1 Dec 2021 → 3 May 2022

**The Observers Observed: Architectural Uses of Ethnography**

D. van den Heuvel (Chair of programme committee), A. Campos Uribe (Member of programme committee), N.J. Amorim Mota (Member of programme committee), V. Grossman (Member of programme committee) & R. Varma (Member of programme committee)

24 Nov 2021 → 25 Nov 2021

**Expanding Habitat: Housing Design as Urban Design**

R. Varma (Speaker)

15 Nov 2021

**TU Delft OPEN Publishing (Publisher)**

R. Varma (Editor)

5 Nov 2021

**Mumbai at Home**

R. Varma (Member of programme committee)

27 Sept 2021

**'Housing the Urban Invisibles' Panel Discussion**

R. Varma (Speaker)

22 Sept 2021

**Bombay/New Bombay: Planning the Self-Help City**

R. Varma (Speaker)

2 Sept 2021

**Dwelling Design: Between Ideals & Standards**

R. Varma (Speaker)

31 Aug 2021

**NL-IND: Delft Global Lecture**

R. Varma (Speaker)

8 Jun 2021

**From Affordable Housing to Affordable Cities: Tracing Charles Correa's Ideas for Third World Development**

R. Varma (Speaker)

31 May 2021

**Dhaka: Hydro-logical Housing Studio**

R. Varma (Member of programme committee)

19 Apr 2021 → 1 Jul 2021

**Rules of the Game: De-coding Mumbai**

R. Varma (Member of programme committee)

4 Dec 2020

**Decoding 'Housing for All'**

R. Varma (Speaker)

12 May 2020

**MSc2 Design Studio (AR2AD010-B)**

R. Varma (Chair of programme committee)

21 Apr 2020 → 3 Jul 2020

**The Making of the Maximum City**

R. Varma (Speaker)

21 Apr 2020

**DWELL: Tube House**

R. Varma (Member of programme committee)

26 Feb 2020

**Standards & Ideals: Low-Rise High-Density Housing & Equitable Cities**

R. Varma (Speaker)

26 Feb 2020

**Mumbai: Housing Types & Typologies**

R. Varma (Speaker)

9 Nov 2019

**Housing Transitions: De-coding 'Housing for All' in Urbanising India**

R. Varma (Speaker)

2 Oct 2019

**Housing Ecologies: Hyderabad**

R. Varma (Member of programme committee)

25 Sept 2019

**KRVIA Elective**

R. Varma (Chair of programme committee)

19 Sept 2019 → 28 Sept 2019

**KRVIA Bridge Studio Workshop**

R. Varma (Chair of programme committee)

8 Jul 2019 → 19 Jul 2019

**KRVIA Bridge Studio**

R. Varma (Chair of programme committee) & D.E. van Gameren (Chair of programme committee)

15 Jun 2019 → 27 Sept 2019

**Transfers, Transformations & Transitions: Architecture & Modernity in India**

R. Varma (Speaker)

4 Dec 2018

**TU Delft-KRVIA: IJburg Design Charette**

R. Varma (Chair of programme committee)

12 Nov 2018 → 18 Nov 2018

**TU Delft-KRVIA: Housing Workshop**

R. Varma (Member of programme committee)

29 Oct 2018 → 2 Nov 2018

**Housing in Mumbai**

R. Varma (Organiser)

23 Oct 2018

**KRVIA Bridge Studio**

R. Varma (Chair of programme committee) & D.E. van Gameren (Chair of programme committee)

11 Jun 2018 → 3 Nov 2018

**Housing in India: Between Standards & Ideals**

R. Varma (Speaker)

18 May 2018

**Global Models of Housing: Trends & Trajectories**

R. Varma (Speaker)

17 Mar 2018

**The Third Way: Framing a New Discourse on the Notion of Habitat in Transforming Societies**

R. Varma (Speaker)

2018

**TU Delft-KRVIA: IJburg Workshop**

R. Varma (Chair of programme committee)

17 Nov 2017 → 29 Nov 2017

**TU Delft-KRVIA: Global Housing Workshop**

R. Varma (Member of programme committee)

2 Nov 2017 → 10 Nov 2017

**Mumbai: A Collage**

R. Varma (Speaker)

22 Sept 2017

**Housing Standards & Ideals**

R. Varma (Chair of programme committee)

22 Jun 2017

**Shifting Scales: The Changing Role of the Architect in the Production of Housing**

R. Varma (Speaker)

22 Jun 2017



**Buildings as Ideas**

R. Varma (Member of programme committee)  
1 Sept 2016 → 3 Sept 2016

**TU Delft-CEPT: Global Housing Workshop**

R. Varma (Member of programme committee)  
18 Apr 2016 → 22 Apr 2016

**The Other Half**

R. Varma (Speaker)  
11 Dec 2014

**Blessings of the Sky**

R. Varma (Member of programme committee)  
26 Jun 2014

**Organisator conferentie: Double Day on Dwelling**

R. Varma (Member of programme committee)  
25 Jun 2014

**Integrating Informality: A Case for an Informal Settlement in Mumbai**

R. Varma (Speaker)  
2013

**Prizes****Delft Global Fellow**

Varma, R. (Recipient), 21 May 2021

**Informal settlement, national policies and urban inclusion- adaptation strategies and challenges: comparative study in Kolkata, Delhi and Mumbai**

Varma, R. (Recipient) & van Gameren, D.E. (Recipient), 2 May 2024

**JN Tata Scholarship**

Varma, R. (Recipient), 2011

**KC Mahindra Scholarship**

Varma, R. (Recipient), 2011

**TU Delft Tuition Fee Grant for Doctoral Students**

Varma, R. (Recipient), 2021

**TU Delft Tuition Fee Grant for Doctoral Students**

Varma, R. (Recipient), 2023

**edX Prize for Exceptional Contributions in Online Teaching and Learning**

van Gameren, D.E. (Recipient), Amorim Mota, N.J. (Recipient), van Andel, F.M. (Recipient) & Varma, R. (Recipient), 2022

**Press/Media****A tribute to Charles Correa's legacy**

R. Varma & D.E. van Gameren  
4/07/18

1 item of Media coverage

**Affordable Cities : interview with Charles Correa**

R. Varma & Charles Correa

2/04/16

1 Media contribution

**Book Launch – Learning from Mumbai**

R. Varma

14/05/13

1 item of Media coverage

**Correa's works draw big crowds in Netherlands**

R. Varma & D.E. van Gameren

28/06/17

1 item of Media coverage

**Day 3 Summary on Z-Axis 2018 Conference in India**

R. Varma & D.E. van Gameren

10/09/18

1 item of Media coverage

**Delft University of Technology Wins 2022 edX Prize for Innovation in Online Teaching**

R. Varma, D.E. van Gameren, N.J. Amorim Mota & F.M. van Andel

1/03/23

1 item of Media coverage

**Dick van Gameren curates Charles Correa exhibition**

R. Varma & D.E. van Gameren

17/06/17

1 item of Media coverage

**Spring 2021: In the Flow: Hydro-logical Housing in Dhaka**

R. Varma, D.E. van Gameren, M. Tabassum & Kazi Ashraf

12/04/21

1 Media contribution

**The 'Z-axis' conference reflects on Charles Correa's legacy and India's urban identity**

R. Varma

19/10/24

1 item of Media coverage

**The Ambassador of India visited TU Delft and joined our fall 2022 India on campus event**

R. Varma

26/10/22

1 item of Media coverage

**The Bill of Rights for Housing in the Third World: Charles Correa's Manifesto for Housing the Masses**

R. Varma

1/10/24

1 item of Media coverage