



*The Earth Series*  
A Tactical Media Project

# *The Earth Series*

## PROJECT PROFILE



**A project description for ICOMOS**  
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# *Maps, Photographs and stories on heritage reconstruction in Kathmandu Valley 2015-2023*

## **Introduction**

A preliminary appraisal of Kathmandu Valley's built ecosystem takes us into a world of tradition, architecture, design, unparalleled stone-masonry as well as structural arenas that blend an ancient ethos with modern metaphors. Technological developments could play a defining role in preserving and validating the city's new and visibly inspiring paradigm of heritage reconstruction.

Temples, Gumbas, palace squares, water spouts, medieval rest areas and much more of Nepal's spatial heritage have been revitalized via reconstruction and retrofitting initiatives following the 2015 Gorkha earthquake. Satellite imagery via Google Earth, Mapbox and ESRI provides a unique perspective on this important endeavor - interactive maps built with the above technologies are presented as part and parcel of the Earth Series Project for a complete exploration of Kathmandu's architectural and spiritual legacy.

## **Documentation Processes and Digitization**

The project is, crucially, a living documentary of ongoing public works in real time with extensive photography underway until reconstruction reaches the final phase. The photographs depict, delineate, deconstruct and delve into the Nepali tradition of heritage architecture. Project work include updating and finalizing a digital portal comprising Photo Galleries, Digital Maps and Narratives on heritage works in the Valley. An exhibition is scheduled to be held in Tara Gaon Museum in Kathmandu. Ideally, the dates should coincide with the completion of current rebuilding and renovation efforts.

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# Project Fundamentals

The primary and possibly the most important element of the Earth Series project is a photo series taken of heritage sites (over the reconstruction period) in Kathmandu Valley. Starting from 2015, itself, photographs of key heritage sites, now reaching completion, were taken as a documentary narrative.

Defining photographs in the post-earthquake reconstruction series are chosen for digital galleries built in ZOHIO and ADOBE EXPRESS. While the ideal of photographic narration has not deviated from the original purpose, it was necessary that older photographs be replaced with newer shots. There are, in total, 10 galleries of ten key heritage places. The photographs show, in definitive ways, both structural and spiritual forms and features being replenished, rebuilt and re-installed.

Comprehensive digital mapping began in 2021. The idea was to place the sites and project fundamentals in a mapped environment so as to allow environmental and spatial dynamics to be recorded and presented. There are 5 key maps of the Kathmandu Valley sites built in MAPBOX, GOOGLE EARTH and ESRI which comprise of satellite imagery and other mapping solutions. Interesting to note, new map features and functions have allowed for better map representations such as the WAYBACK Imagery from ESRI. Showing the valley's built terrain, these maps can also be seen as documenting both the place and the world heritage sites in real time.

The Earth Series blends popular modern mediations and approaches our themed, thematic spaces as central, symphonic and as ideal Nepali signifiers. An easily-accessible image portal/website has been built and designed which comprises photo galleries, digital maps and short stories with images. The idea, in terms of reconstruction, remains that a *tewa*, for Nepal, is virtuous, symbolic and sentient, deciding a fateful completion. The significance of a visual representation can be relayed and perceived through the digital imaginary and in a print exhibition which is scheduled for 2023.

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