

SACHI Invites You to...

A Special Film Screening Afternoon

with director Kum Kum Bhavnani

Distinguished Professor, Department of Sociology,
University of California, Santa Barbara



Lutah's Vedanta Temple (1956) showcases early South Indian wooden style architecture. Receiving several awards for its design, the temple serves as a type of pilgrimage site for architects from around the world.

Please join us for a screening
of an award winning film

Lutah, A Passion for Architecture: A Life in Design

A Q & A follows with an introduction
to the next film project on Tibet,
Science for Nuns and Monks
with director Bhavnani

Sunday, September 16, 2018
2:00 PM

Home of Priyanka Rana & Navneet Dalal
61 Fredrick Avenue, Atherton

Free admission; limited seating;
light refreshments

Rsvp: info@sachi.org; 650-504-9182

Riggs' building designs reflect beauty and simplicity. One such exemplary project resulted in her innovative and famous Vedanta Temple commission, completed in 1956.

While Riggs completed many private residential projects, she is remembered publicly for her unique design of the Vedanta Temple near the Santa Ynez Mountains. Based on the simple wooden temple architecture style of Kerala, South India, the design also incorporates Japanese and Chinese architectural details. The building is a testament to her immaculate sense of proportion, evoking tranquility and purity. The surrounding rock gardens, full of native plant species, were designed with guidance from architect Frank Lloyd Wright.

Lutah Maria Riggs (1896-1984)

Bhavnani's film of a brilliant American architect shares the story of not only Lutah's architectural wonders, but also brings alive the woman behind the designed spaces, both public and private.

Lutah was Santa Barbara's first female licensed architect. She was also the first woman in California to be named a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects. Her personal touches can be seen in some of Santa Barbara's most well known and well loved buildings, like the Lobero Theater and the Vedanta Temple. During a time and in a profession dominated by men, Riggs worked under the renowned George Washington Smith, instrumental in Santa Barbara's Spanish Revival aesthetic.

Despite her being initially eclipsed by male contemporaries in the early 20th century Lutah, determined, talented, and visionary, brought a powerful presence to the architectural scene.

"I felt that Lutah...was someone who, through her fiercely independent approach to her work, and life in general, had been a pioneer both architecturally and for women's rights," says Bhavnani, specializing in social justice documentaries. She was a 'pioneer' and a 'trailblazer'.

Lutah Maria Riggs' drawing of Santa Barbara's historic Lobero Theatre.



Lutah Maria Riggs at her drafting table.

Originally from Ohio, Lutah moved to Santa Barbara in 1914. The West Coast proved to be a nurturing ground for her. She discovered her growing fascination with architecture at the local Santa Barbara City College, and completed her architectural studies at UC Berkeley.

The film, *Lutah* explores the life of this remarkably versatile architect who left an impressive legacy. Kum Kum Bhavnani's film pays tribute to Lutah's vision and imagination and her great ability to carve a life on her own terms.

Lutah premiered at the 2014 Santa Barbara International Festival. It was recently selected for screening as part of the 3rd Annual Architectural and Design Showcase at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco.



Kum-Kum Bhavnani

Professor By Day. Filmmaker By Night

Kum Kum Bhavnani is a UC Santa Barbara professor by day and a filmmaker by night. She fuses her scholarship with social justice through the combined lenses of the movie camera and critical research. Born in India, she grew up in London and arrived as a professor at UC Santa Barbara in 1991. She is active in her efforts to create social justice through anti-racism, feminism and movements that foster greater economic equality.

Her documentary films include *The Shape of Water* (2006); *Nothing Like Chocolate* (2012); *Lutah* (2014); *We are Galapagos* (2016) and her most recent project, *Science for Nuns and Monks*.



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