

antarya

AN IIID BANGALORE REGIONAL CHAPTER PUBLICATION



A Chest to Store

FEATURING:

George Ramapuram | Kalavilasa | Shreya Shrivatsava | Badrinath Kaleru



IIID BANGALORE REGIONAL CHAPTER

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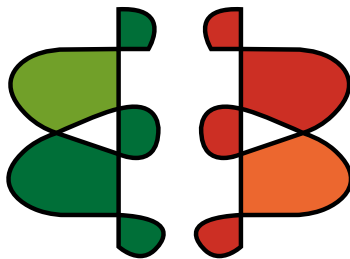
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IIID BANGALORE REGIONAL CHAPTER EMBLEM

The letter form B and its mirrored version together form this symbol. The idea is inspired by the forms of Rangoli. Bangalore as a city is a unique combination of the traditional and the contemporary. This coexistence of dual cultures is iconic of Bangalore as it is present in arts/architecture and the general landscape of the city and its culture.

Using Rangoli (Traditional) as the basis, we have created letter form B (Modern) and reflected this form to enclose the space in between (Interiors). The colour palette is also representative of the traditional and modern.

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INSTITUTE
OF INDIAN
INTERIOR
DESIGNERS

Bangalore Regional Chapter



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Chairperson
Speaks



KAVITA SASTRY

Dear Members,
Where 2022 ended on a Design high with Designuru and Antarya Awards -the New Year saw an impetus on the educational front by the team. The much awaited K-100 happened where architecture students from SJB School of Architecture and Planning participated in a walk the talk about reviving Bengaluru’s waterways. This was organised in collaboration with Venkataraman Associates and MOD foundation.

The launch of the second batch of Masters in Interior Design saw the team head to Dayananda Sagar College where Architect Gita Balakrishnan shared heart-warming stories from her epic walk that took her from Kolkata to New Delhi. Stories of vernacular construction design practices, local crafts and cultural diversity are to be embraced and celebrated.

The New Year also witnessed the formal installation of the new NEC at Surat with Ar. Sarosh Wadia at the helm.

The *Uru* nights focused on interior design this quarter with Smitha Zachariahs and Shernavaz Bharucha showcasing their projects. Both saw unprecedented participation from gen next designers, paving the way for membership growth.

Do take advantage of the Golden Jubilee offers floated by HO. After all, the more people that are invested in an organisation, the greater the potential for impact and success.

KAVITA SASTRY
Chairperson IIID BRC, 2021-23
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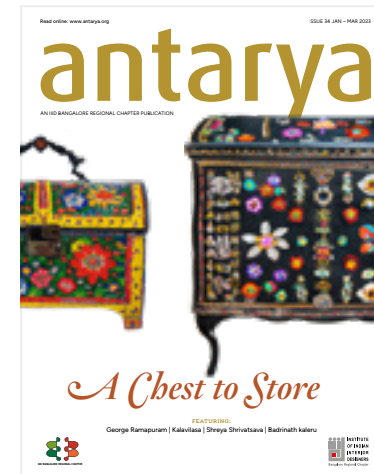


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PAST ISSUE 32 JUL- SEP 2022



COVER DESIGN
"A Fusion of Art and Function:
The Intersection of Indian Miniature
Painting and Chest Forms"
by **Deval Maniar**.

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**ISSUE 33 OCT- DEC 2022
REVIEW**

I have seen Antarya grow from a newsletter to a magazine over the span of 16 years from 2006 onwards. Its journey has been splendid, and Antarya is now a much awaited magazine for its contents and presentation. Congratulations team Antarya.

Review by
**Architect Leena Kumar
Kumar Consultants**

From the Managing Editor's Desk



DINESH VERMA

Dear Members,

One of the widest definitions of a building component is for a STORE. It can be a small room inside the building to the building itself. Generally speaking, stores are provided for items that do not need to be accessed often but still have value.

Buildings termed as warehouses, are huge stores normally located outside the cities near highways but stores in the cities are fancy and display their wares to attract retail purchase.

Antarya opens a dialogue discussing storage modes in this issue, showcasing architects works in the area of storage and manner of display, be it residential or commercial spaces.

Over the next few years, Antarya will assume a more challenging role—there will be more dialogues with trade members. This has been done specifically to encourage more and better interaction with trade members and we look forward to a healthy reciprocation.

Our team has worked on a new modified visual appeal for Antarya. We would like to have responses from our readers about the changed look with drop down headers.

DINESH VERMA
verma@acegrouparchitects.com

COVER STORY

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A chest to store

BY NANDHINI SUNDAR



INDUSTRY FEATURE

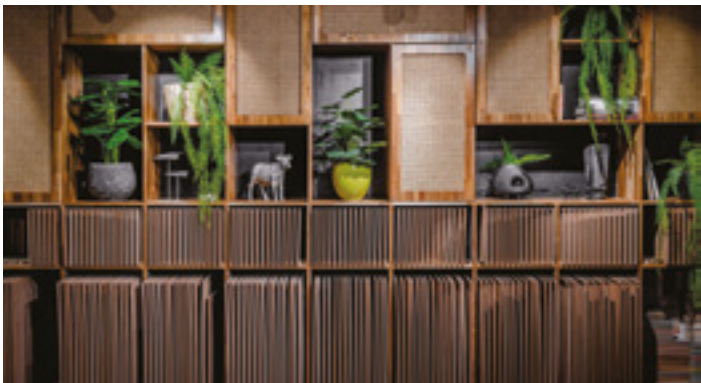
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Store it smartly with Twigg



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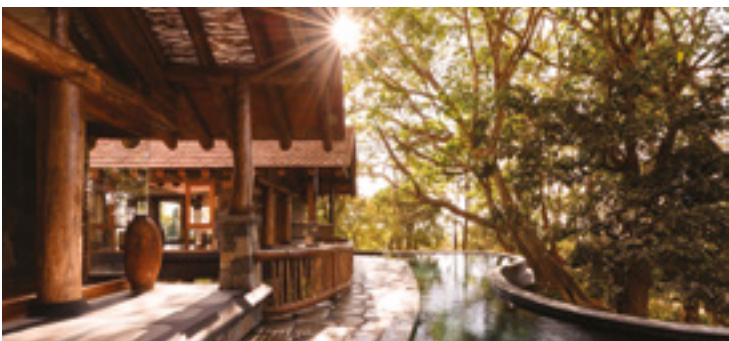


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A chest to store

BY NANDHINI SUNDAR

The presence of wooden chests and boxes with dovetail joints, ceremonial boxes with exquisite carving, inlaid jewellery, metal work, ivory, gilding and many used for burial, can be traced back to the Egyptians over 3000 years back.

IMAGES SOURCE
Pixabay & Wikipedia



FIRST
15th-century Japanese stoneware storage jar, with partial ash glaze

SECOND
Chinese Qing Dynasty, Blue and White Jar with Cover, 18th century

SOURCE
Wikipedia

Storage is a phenomenon that dates back to the days of cavemen when humans hunted for food where the valuables of that period, tools, hunting spears needed to be stored in the corners of the cave. When rough cooking came about, firewood needed a space, to be stored away from rain. Once the concept of growing food caught on, there came the need to store seeds, the harvest of cereals where they were safe, away from infestation by pests and vermin.

Baskets and bags made from animal hides were the earliest form of storage which perhaps was hung from the roof. Large storage pits were also common form of storage, the surrounding clay walls fired to a pottery-like consistency. Yet, with moisture and at times flooding being a factor ruining the stored items, this was not a sound storage option for long term storage.

The storage pits declined in the early Ceramic Period to give way to large storage vessels referred to as seed jars. The seed jars were sealed using a ring of wet clay around the open mouth, thus preventing water, insects, rodents from damaging the contents. This later gave way to granary structures built inside the residences.

The concept of community storages came into being soon after, which were in the form of common separate storehouses to store grains in a large pile, yet the open, exposed storehouses left the grains vulnerable to moisture and parasites. Some of the earliest forms of silos found in Egypt were large enough to support an entire urban community and came on raised platforms, with a slight slope for drainage and moisture protection. The first concept of a community storage unit, similar to modern storage facilities, is considered to have originated in ancient China, 6000 years back where large ceramic pots permitted storing personal belongings.

Baskets and bags made from animal hides were the earliest form of storage which perhaps was hung from the roof. Large storage pits were also common form of storage, the surrounding clay walls fired to a pottery-like consistency.

Entry of wooden chests and storage boxes

When civilization came about, some of the first pieces of furniture used in a household were the wooden chests, storage boxes and trunks. These simple storage chests later evolved to adopt different styles and modifications to suit the user, such as a tool chest, treasure chest, blanket boxes, streamer trunks, to mention a few. The decorative element on these chests also altered based on wealth, to serve as a benchmark in terms of status and grandeur.

This basic medieval furniture also doubled up as a table, desk, a seat, besides serving as a trunk to store things. Interestingly, the later pieces of furniture that came about evolved from this versatile range of chests. The early, crude form of chests essentially were made using six planks of wood, pegged or nailed together and strengthened with iron banding. Examples of them, dating back to the 13th century, can be found in many medieval churches. These chests continued to remain as the most important form of storage till the end of the 15th century, till the concept of a cabinet evolved.

The presence of wooden chests and boxes with dovetail joints, ceremonial boxes with exquisite carving, inlaid jewellery, metal work, ivory, gilding and many used for burial, can be traced back to the Egyptians over 3000 years back. Even the poorest Egyptians are

known to have used reed wooden chests for storing items. Ancient Greeks and Romans too are known to have stored their valuables and belongings in wooden chests, coffers with the wealthy owning ornate, aesthetically structured trunks and treasure chests.

In Britain, the scene was a little different with even rich Saxons opting for very simple as well as heavy trunks, a reflection of hard times. It is in the Medieval and Middle Ages where wooden chests and trunks became most popular with wealthy nobles owning hundreds of them. These trunks were used for all purposes, be it as treasure chests, tool chests, weapon chests, for storing clothes or even used as food larders. The status of the owner was reflected in their decorative carvings, with panels, friezes with arches and rosettes featuring in the Tudor period, motifs of flowers and scrolls appearing during the Renaissance.

The functionality of the chests dictated their design, with those used for travel featuring without legs while those used as storage trunks coming with legs to keep the contents within free from pests. Those with flat lids doubled up as seating elements while the travel trunks came with waxed leather covers to address weathering. Some of the wooden chests, known as coffers, came with large forged iron handles to ease transportation. Oak was a popular material used while walnut featured mostly in France rather than England. Pine, poplar and other softwood mostly prevailed in Germany.



Chest of drawers from the 18th century collection, King Baudouin Foundation

SOURCE
Wikipedia



Traditional Storage units were made with materials like wood, leather with different purpose and sizes from storing to traveling.
SOURCE Unsplash & Pixabay



The Indian scene

Indian households, be it the nobility or the working class, hosted a variety of boxes and chests to store objects ranging from utensils, clothes, mattresses to heirlooms, documents, valuables. Referred as Sandook, the wooden chests served as major items of Indian export along the Arab trade route. The design of these wooden chests, travelling trunks evinced a blend of regional, cultural and religious influences, incorporating the essence of the region where they were crafted. Given their adaptations to altering situations and times, these boxes also served as practical pieces of furniture over centuries. Camphor chests were very popular, both in India and China, especially for storing blankets, linens, silks, tea, given their natural fragrance and pest resistance. Malabar chests, made with rosewood, teak, are equally famous to date, having been used by travellers from Malabar to the Gulf in the 19th century. Domed chests are yet another popular range, having been commissioned by the Portuguese. Crafted by Indian craftsmen, these also served as writing tables, sewing boxes and trunks.

Domed chests are yet another popular range, having been commissioned by the Portuguese. Crafted by Indian craftsmen, these also served as writing tables, sewing boxes and trunks.



Cabinets also served to be an important part of an interior in many parts of Europe, each sporting fine display of craftsmanship in the form of carving, floral patterns, inlays, gilding, oriental style lacquer work, where their presence in essence served as a piece of art.

*Cabinet;
by Francesco Del Tuppo;
c. 1606–1623; oak
and poplar veneered
with various exotic
hardwoods, with ebony
moldings
and plaques of
marble, and various
other materials;*

SOURCE
Wikipedia

The ubiquitous cabinets

The earliest cabinets were designed to explicitly serve as storage for papers and valuables besides being used as a writing desk. Their evolution is attributed to the realisation that a chest with a front access than top would permit usage as seating and storage simultaneously with an easier access to the contents within. The earliest versions were mounted on a stand and came with small storage space, combining doors as well as a set of drawers, where the drawers at times were tucked away, hidden inside the shelves.

These simple cabinets later metamorphosed to host lavish craftsmanship in the form of inlay, carving, exquisite patterns, built using exotic species of wood such as Rosewood, Teak, Oak, their presence occupying the dominant space in a room. Based on the contents stored, the cabinets came to be christened as display cabinet, China cabinet, tool cabinet, jewellery cabinet or even a wall cabinet if hung on the wall or used to fill a strategic corner.

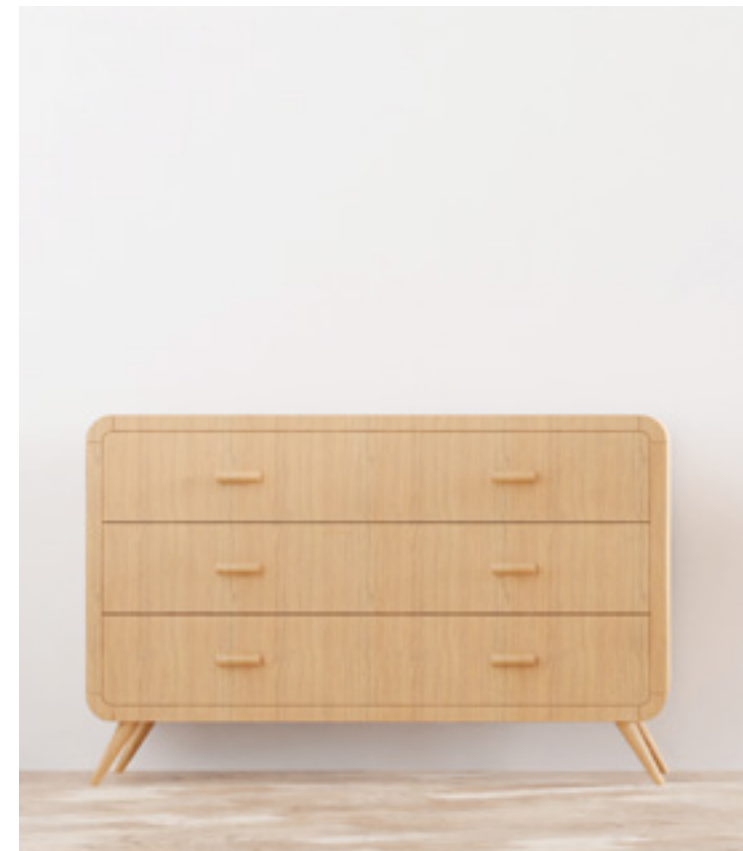
The earliest cabinets found their presence in England and France by early 16th century and likewise in Italy during the late Renaissance. The French style cabinets were often elaborate with bas-reliefs, ivory inlays, mosaics and built mostly using walnut wood. The English cabinets were mostly small, mounted on stands and featured with the wealthy.



*A chest on chest, a
derivative of the simpler
chest of drawers*
SOURCE
Wikipedia



*Kas, early 19th century,
Brooklyn Museum
(New York City)*
SOURCE
Wikipedia



The décor and finishes vary depending on individual inclinations, functionality as well as the theme opted. The modern storage spaces veer more towards sleek finishes, with solid wood, veneer, laminates, glass adorning the shutters.

Cabinets also served to be an important part of an interior in many parts of Europe, each sporting fine display of craftsmanship in the form of carving, floral patterns, inlays, gilding, oriental style lacquer work, where their presence in essence served as a piece of art. For instance, inlaid cabinets were a speciality of Antwerp and South Germany in mid-17th century.

In most cases, the cabinets came in the form of symmetrical arrangement of drawers surrounded by a small central cupboard with columns backed by mirrors. Many Chinese and Japanese cabinets found their way into England and were mounted on lavishly carved stands which themselves were gilded. The 18th century saw further transformation in these cabinets, with many being fitted with glass shelves to display Chinaware or other artefacts.

The Contemporary scene

Wardrobes and cabinets have become an integral part of any contemporary interior, be it a residence, commercial space, workspace. The décor and finishes vary depending on individual inclinations, functionality as well as the theme opted. The modern storage spaces veer more towards sleek finishes, with solid wood, veneer, laminates, glass adorning the shutters. Unique features are also sought to be brought in through infusion of tiles, fabric cladding, cane finishes, embossing with art, to mention a few. ◆



FACING PAGE, AND ABOVE
Modern storage units come in sleek finishes such as ratan, veneer, laminates, based on the decor desired
SOURCE Unsplash

Store it smartly with Twiggr

BY NANDHINI SUNDAR

The brand offers a gamut of products which prove to be complete interior solutions, be it wall paper, upholstery and fabrics, flooring material, furniture range, ply, veneer, laminate, the range of options lending themselves to strong customisation to suit individual leanings and a varied design palette.



It is a journey that began three decades back, early 1992 to be precise, when the operations started as the sole distributors for 'Greenply', for South India and Goa, stewarded by **G Suri, Chairman and Founder, Twiggr**. Four years thence, a partnership was forged with plywood brand 'PvIWUUDPLY' with the functional role as sole distributor for the south Indian market. With the brand fast gaining ground, the scope of operations expanded to encompass other segments too, to ultimately move into the role of retail from wholesale.

The retail transition came about in 2011 with the entry of **Managing Partner Sundeep Suri**. But it was in 2016 that the final transformation and christening as **Twiggr** occurred where Sundeep spotted the immense market opportunities to diversify the product and operations base. The expansion thence was fast, branching into furniture, fabric besides the core product base of ply and veneers. **Twiggr** ultimately opened its experience centre in 2020, while the in-house manufacturing of custom designed furniture and soft furnishings formally began in 2022 under the brand AYAWI.

Why Twiggr

While the initial initiative was to ensure all materials and requirements are made available locally for the designer fraternity in Bengaluru, **Twiggr** has ultimately grown to feature as a one-stop-shop to meet the varied requirements of designers across segments. Thus, the brand offers a gamut of products which prove to be complete interior solutions, be it wall paper, upholstery and fabrics, flooring material, furniture range, ply, veneer, laminate, the range of options lending themselves to strong customisation to suit individual leanings and a varied design palette.

Assisting the selection of products and materials is a sound knowledgeable team which has specialists in every segment and product range, with both technical expertise as well as design. Continuous research and development further opens the doors to the global market while keeping the ears to the ground to sense all changes and emerging requirements in the local market. **Twiggr** also has the distinction of being the first to bring in 100 per cent Gurjan ply into the country way back in 1994 and yet again it was the first to introduce pre-coloured, pre-finished veneer which requires mere application with nil polishing.

The surface coating offered by **Twiggr** are child friendly as they come with zero VOC polish, with the colours used being sourced from natural materials such as vegetable oils. For the first time in the country, **Twiggr** has also introduced thicker variety of veneers at 5mm thickness as against the conventional 0.5 to 2.5mm thickness. The veneers, featuring in solid wood, permit a range of options in design given their increased thickness. Likewise, **Twiggr's** Teak veneer, coming in 0.3, 0.5 and 1mm thickness of solid Teak is a unique option made available in the market.



Evolve surface coating on MDF louvers with an antique brass faded finish on the MDF louvers

The quality and range of plywood offered is equally strong in choice, with the added feature of being fire retardant. Armed with a manufacturing facility, **Twiggr** permits customisation to suit varied requirements as well as budgets. The design range for laminates is equally expansive, being done in-house, the varied finishes on offer including wood, stone, fabric, cork to name a few, the thickness in each range permitting customisation.

The multiple range of products in its armoury such as Evolve surfaces, again comes in varied finishes such as metal, rust, concrete. Yet another product, Art stone with its brick, concrete finishes further adds to the green quotient of the products, using ecological resins mixed with fibre glass. This gives an authentic feel when they are pasted on the walls, the 10x4 feet sheets available in 9 to 12mm thickness. The easy maintenance feature for both interior and exterior cladding and the FSC certification, further lends the veneers as excellent choices for green projects.

Diverse product range

Serving as a one-stop shop for all wood solutions, **Twiggr** offers a diverse product range that spans from plywood, laminates, a wide range of veneers, edge beadings, wooden claddings, louvers, flooring solutions to customised wallpapers, soft furnishings, furniture and cladding solutions.

VENEERED TO CHARM

The veneers come in customised offerings, with thickness varying from 0.5 to 5mm based on individual requirements, the multiple finishes crossing 200 plus in variety. The 2mm CNC cut range of veneers alone come in 15 special varieties.

Natural Veneers

With the intent to keep the finish totally natural, over 200 varieties of natural wood veneers in a thickness range of 0.2 to 2mm are offered, be it Teak, Walnut, Rosewood, Pine, to mention a few.

Router cut veneers

The pattern of cutting has its own unique aesthetic appeal. The CNC and router cut veneers offer a multiple range of designs, spanning over 15 varieties to pick from. The Furrow panels of **Twiggr** are the latest exotic solid wood panels curated with the help of CNC machines to lend flexibility, uniformity and the finest detailing.

Fluted veneers

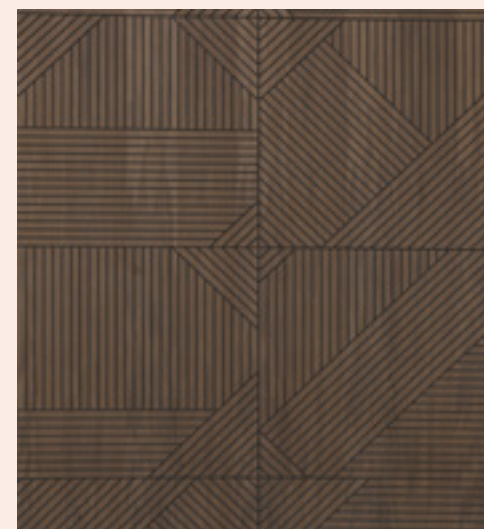
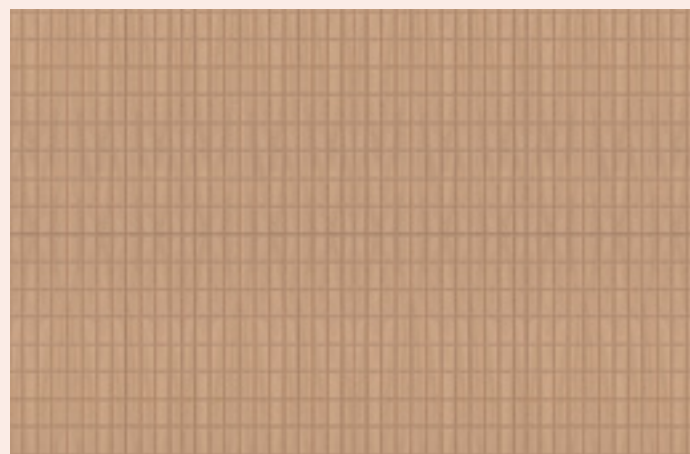
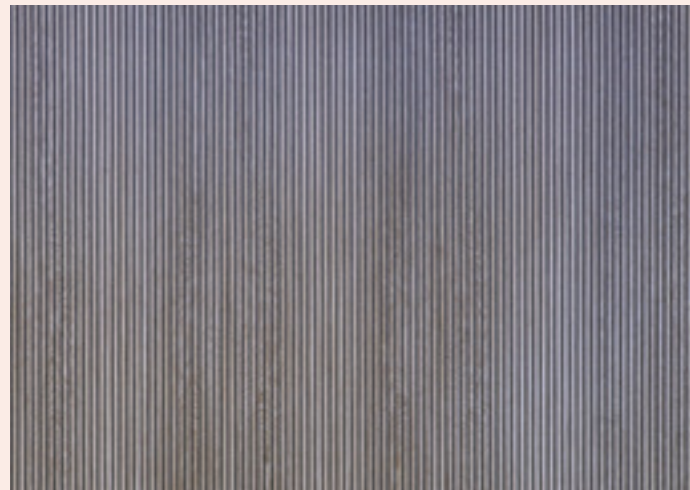
Fluting comes with an irresistible lure. Fluted veneers in 5mm thickness are available in 15 varieties, each variety bringing with it a unique design. The fluted panels, coming with the advantage of being boiling water proof, are available in any veneer chosen.

Louvered veneers

Featuring as 8x2 inch panels, the 12mm thick louvered veneers come in multiple designs to permit cladding over MDF.

Multi-coloured veneers

A splash of colour makes it an irresistible choice, prompting to view the colourful veneer range as synthetic. Yet, the refreshing range is natural, adding value in its natural state.



LEFT TOP 2mm veneer walnut with grove patterns and polished to a natural finish,
LEFT BOTTOM CNC cut designer veneer customized as per clients design in a smoke walnut .
RIGHT Concrete and metal finished panels used for cladding purposes



CLAD TO BEAUTIFY

A diverse range of cladding material prevails to alter the scene with their varied finishes, catering to multiple choices and differential requirements.

Finished in metal

Be it copper, patina, glass or any other metal finish as desired, the cladding materials are offered in 3D designs and come in 8x4 and 10x4 feet sheets.

Finished in concrete

Raw concrete has its own irresistible appeal and making them available as cladding material is **Twiggr**. The 8x4 and 10x4 feet sheets are available in plain concrete as well as artistic concrete finishes.

Finished in wood

Wood comes with its own unbeatable charm. Offered in 15 different designs, the 4x2 feet cladding sheets come with 6mm of solid wood, permitting use on walls, floors and the ceiling.

Conventional rafters

The presence of rafters can alter the ambience of an interior and more so when the finishes are varied and unique. **Twiggr** offers a varied range of finishes starting from the common laminate to extend to more exotic ones such as stone finishes, paint finish, veneer to mention a few, in its 8x5 feet panels.

Artistic stone

An artistic rendition on the wall can be transformative in a space, more so when the finishes are earthy, rustic or green. **Twiggr** has an impressive range of finishes that feature as pure art in stone, manifesting in concrete, brick, moss, to mention a few.



5 mm thick furrow collections with weathered series and natural series. with different designs one of a kind collection.



Colourex veneers with 13 different colour veneers available pre-finished and ready to use.

New offerings

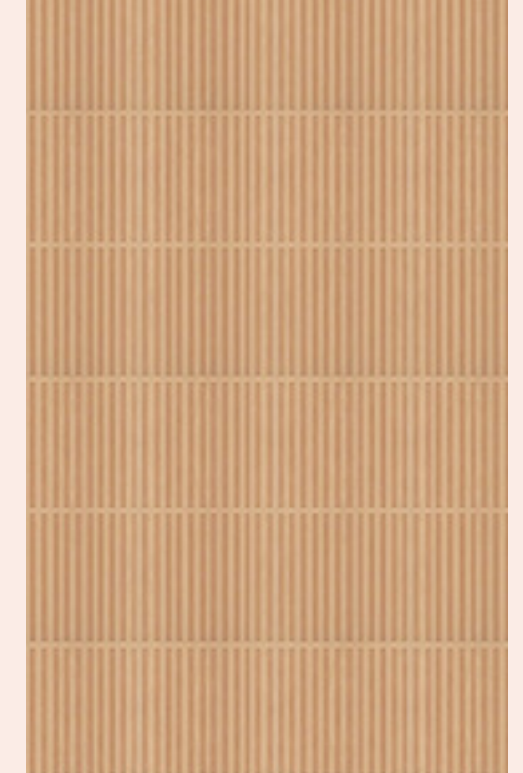
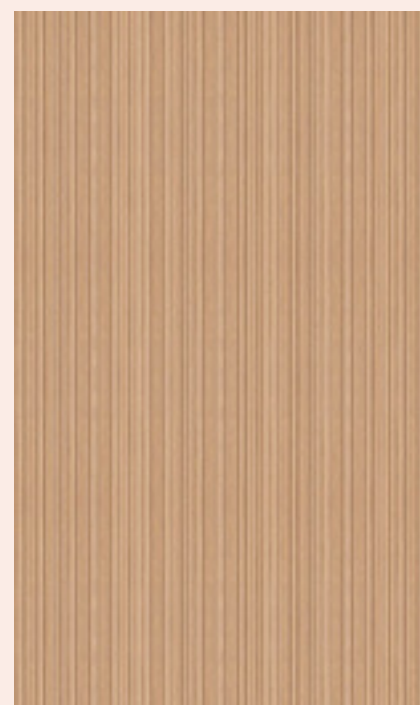
Twiggr has recently added to its extensive range of products the furniture segment as well as soft furnishings, making the store a one-stop-shop for all interior requirements. Starting from wood, cane and thence to varied finishes, the furniture segment serves as a treat to behold. The custom designed solid wood furniture displays a keen eye for detail, the carvings exquisite, the detailing, router cutting immaculate.

Brought into vogue is cane weaving, present in side tables, consoles, seating elements, storage spaces, headboards over cots. The finishes are equally stunning and contemporary, the distress finish currently in vogue executed on any colour base or furniture opted in the customised range.

Bringing in the seamless flow into the interiors from the walls to the flooring are the marble coloured laminates, Unicore, which are designed to infuse the uniform look to surface edges through the uniform colour core, blending in the corners, bends and surfaces.

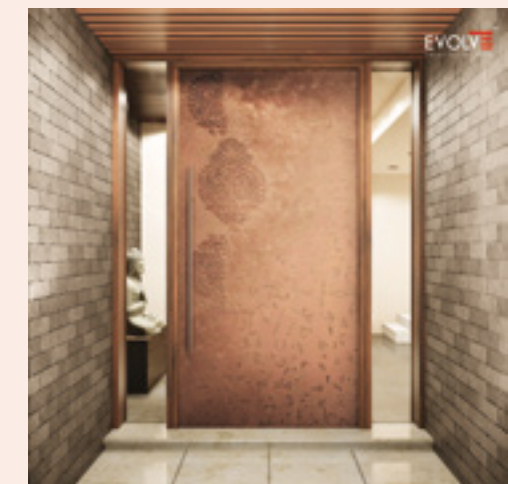
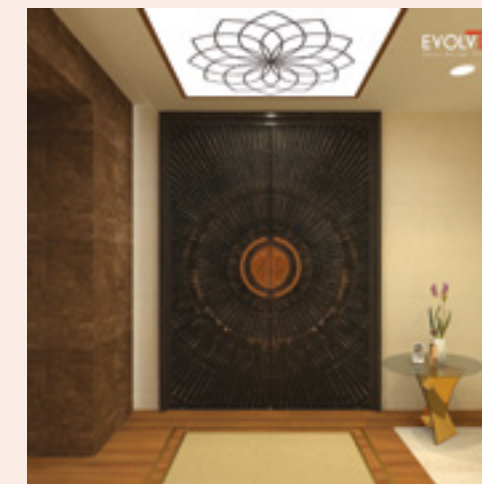
PROMOTING THE WEAVES

The handwoven weaves in the soft furnishings range from jute fabric to pure cotton, mix of cotton and jute as well as canvas, linen, raw silk. These fabrics incidentally are an offshoot of the connect established with traditional artisans and weavers with the intent to revive and preserve heritage, the traditional arts. A material library with its extensive range of sample display facilitates easy access to the various materials on offer, aiding easy selection.



TOP

Customised sofa and center tables to suit your living requirements



LEFT

Door skins made with MDF substrate and with metal copper and other liquid metal finishes to suit your designs.

NURTURING THE ARTISAN

The expert touch of the artisan can completely alter the language of a material or the finished product. Feasting on this expertise is the unique range of products that fuse in the artistic expertise of craftsman to come up with a mindboggling collection that spells beauty and skill combined.

Evolve

Promoting modern designs and unique texture finishes manufactured locally using new age technologies is Evolve, a surface design studio. **Twiggr** offers these handcrafted finishes in the form of ready to clad panels, door skins, material kits and other décor pieces.

Artistique fusion

It is often stated, beauty lies in the imperfections. Riding on this plank is the Artistique fusion range, combining artistic expertise with the passion for crafting with decorative concrete. The exquisite wall finishes lend a bespoke statement to the space while keeping intact individual styles.

DESIGNING WITH LIQUID METAL

Be it in the interiors or exteriors or the furniture opted, door skins, wall panelling, the immense possibilities of designing with liquid metal is explored, experimented with and adapted to the surfaces to lend a spectacular metal appeal to the spaces. The range on offer includes Crackle Brass, Abstratto Gunmetal, Sunray Copper Entrance, Solaris Copper Patina Entrance for door skins, Alice Concrete Brass, Sandwaves Bronze, Slush Bronze, Meander Rust, Aquilone Copper Patina for interior highlight wall panelling.



Artistic composition to spark interest



ANDRE CAMARA



SHRAVYA SHETTY

A storage space can become the focal point in a room if the design and material use is structured differently. **Architects Andre Camara and Shravya Shetty** of **Studio Camarada** infuse a differential approach to storage spaces to turn them into an art statement that goes beyond the functional component.

- 1 A metal display is fused into the study table to lend an artistic contrast to the coloured MDF shutters of the study unit
- 2 The crockery unit breaks away from the conventional design, serving as a feature element, the slim brass rods connecting the twin components of the unit, with a traditional fabric print linking the two.



- 3 Suspended hanging shelves serve as a decorative feature against the raw concrete finish wall. While the MS powder coated structure teams perfectly with the solid wood shelves, the bottom solid wood storage unit complements this with its rustic stone veneer finish shutters.



- 4 The column intervening with the storage is ingeniously clad using flexi ply, combined with Acacia panelling, fabric and rattan, to double up as an attractive seating element.
- 5 The display wall with its open shelves serves as a fine means of visual merchandising, the acacia wood and rattan closed and open shutters enabling to house the retail unit's catalogues and tiles.
- 6 Pure brass rods mark this eye capturing sleek storage unit, interspersed with solid wood, where it becomes a focal feature in the interior.





Stating with colour and geometry



GUNJAN DAS

Storage spaces are meant to be utilitarian, yet they can serve to be arresting in their composition, becoming a highlight statement in an interior. **Architect Gunjan Das of N G Associates** uses colour and geometry to turn storage spaces into a focal element.

1 2

The combination of closed and open storage cabinets with their staggered open shelves are composed in rubber wood and metal, the simple squares and rectangle boxes defined by the teal colour of the recyclable metal frame.

3

The open shelves form the storage unit in a home office, the individual boxes staggered to break the monotony and create interest.





- 4 The storage cabinet in the office cabin displays geometry in the diagonal patterns fused into the gold metal framed individual wooden compartments, to serve as a striking design feature in the space.
- 5 The multi-purpose public space hosts a flexible, colourful storage cabinet with open shelves to captivate as well as to store.
- 6 A play of varied height marks the library unit in the family space, with the fusion of wood in the midst to contrast the pristine white.

Weaving in the rural folk

BY NANDHINI SUNDAR
FEATURING KALAVILASA



Artisans weaving the Punja Dhurries

He is an IIT-Kanpur alumnus having graduated in 1991. His 20 year IT career also gave him the opportunity to interact at the grassroots level with activists of Narmada Bachao Andolan, setting the foundation for his later foray into social service. For **Vivek Shrivastava, Founder, Kalavilasa**, the serious social calling came in 2011 when he travelled to Uttarkhand and met farmers in the region with whom he connected to promote organic farming.

The interaction with the tillers of land proved to be an intense eye opener on ground realities and more so the fast disappearing skills of traditional artisans. While on the one hand the travails of the organic farmers in terms of certification of their produce as well as marketing the same became amply evident, Vivek also realised that traditional artisans were in far more dire straits. A visit to the handloom clusters in the states of Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh only corroborated this.

His brief sojourn in the artistic rural domains of Kutch further brought him closer to the unique intricate traditional skills of the artisans, the varied types of crafts, embroidery work, metal and leather works, weaving practiced in the region. This literally cemented his decision to focus on reviving as well as finding a sustainable market for the fast disappearing weaves of traditional artisans from across the country.

Plunging in headlong not only came with challenges, but also brought in clarity to enable him to keep his focus on weaves, yet zero in on rugs rather than textiles. "It also became clear that if I had to make a difference, successfully, I would need to be both a producer as well as a retailer, connecting the consumer directly with the weaver", points Vivek. Thus was born, Kalavilasa, in 2012 which was later registered in 2018 as a non-profit Forum for Rural Weavers to save and promote the disappearing weaving technique of the traditional artisans in the rug making cottage industries.

Once his vision and path was clear, Vivek decided to focus on the Dhurries that involve the traditional weaving techniques passed down generations, connecting with the weavers in Jodhpur and Varanasi to begin with. But with road blocks coming up soon in the smooth execution of work, Vivek was left with the option of identifying a specific village with traditional weavers who had been forced to look at other means of livelihood, leaving behind their traditional occupation.

A remote village in the Sidhi district of Madhya Pradesh thus became the hub of activity for Kalavilasa where a master weaver there was entrusted with the task of bringing together a dozen weavers to weave the Punja Dhurries, the traditional flat weave rugs that have been woven for many centuries. "These weavers traditionally had been weaving woollen rugs and had to be trained to weave the same using cotton instead of wool", adds Vivek.

Creating the signature style

The weavers, traditionally, had their own distinct patterns and style that they conformed to and this was so in other weaving regions such as Varanasi, Jodhpur. But Vivek was clear that to reach out to a larger market, not only should the designs be new and varied, but also permit customisation to suit individual tastes and requirements. Coming up with his own designs and unique style again threw up multiple challenges for Vivek which he circumvented by learning graphic design and closely working with textile designers. The efforts soon bore fruit, his collection proving to be unique yet scalable, permitting easy customisation as well as specific individual orders where a signature style could be created. "The journey was not smooth as it involved close working with the weavers to ensure the requirements of specific designs were fully complied with. Besides the adherence to the individual requirements, certain specific standards too needed to be in place in terms of dyeing techniques, the colour palette, colour fastness etc", states Vivek.

For instance, cotton absorbs more dye as compared to wool and cotton is also more difficult to dye compared to wool, Vivek points. "Ancient India had mastered the technique of fast dyeing of cotton, yet this knowledge is being recovered only slowly as a significant part of it remains lost", he elaborates.

According to him inferior quality of dyes are available cheap, yet the colour runs, ruining the fabric. It is typical of artisans of cotton weaves to cut costs in dye to cater to a demanding market. "Dhurries are woven to last over two to three decades which makes the quality of dyes used an important element of the end product. Yet, fast colour dyes are expensive", he further adds.

“Besides the adherence to the individual requirements, certain specific standards too needed to be in place in terms of dyeing techniques, the colour palette, colour fastness etc”, states Vivek.



RIGHT AND ABOVE:
*Preparation before
weaving the Dhurries*

RIGHT:
*Brightly hued yarns used
for weaving*

The Punja Dhurries opt for the elaborate interlock weaving technique, similar to carpet weaving where the warp is not seen. “Here the traditional knotting that happens in a carpet is absent. In Europe this technique is referred to as tapestry weaving”, explains Vivek.

Challenge of sustenance

Sustenance involves having a steady market for the produce, be it in the domestic market or exports. In the absence of a vibrant export market for small producers and traders, giving continuous work to the artisans to keep their looms running can prove to be challenging. The focus then automatically shifts to making inroads in the domestic scene. “But a sustained local market to merely keep the looms running involved bringing in competitive pricing as well as designs that are unique and customisable”, observes Vivek. The pressure to at least break-even to keep afloat led to many experimentations with designs, colours and weaving. To cater to the utilitarian segment as well as retain the decorative quotient, the colours and technique of weaving were played around to create a unique variant that is not commonly available.

Interlock weaving technique

The traditional Punja Dhurries follow a particular pattern of weaving and are either done fully in wool or in cotton. Being the most sophisticated form of Dhurries, the Punja Dhurries opt for the elaborate interlock weaving technique, similar to carpet weaving where the warp is not seen. “Here the traditional knotting that happens in a carpet is absent. In Europe this technique is referred to as tapestry weaving”, explains Vivek.

Elaborating on the technique, Vivek adds, “The weft yarn here is inserted between the warp by the weaver and at the colour boundary, the weft of the next colour is inserted. The weft is interlocked at the boundary of the two colours.” The weft is further



*The strong cheerful
colours of the
Dhurrie transforms
the dining area*



The striking Punja Dhurrie serves as a highlight in the living space

beaten by the Punja to cover the warp completely. The beating of the weft also makes the rug to be tightly woven and ready for rugged use. Incidentally, it is this method that is referred to as weft-faced weaving for the Punja Dhurries. The tapestry weaving technique too uses this weft-faced interlock weaving technique.

Multiple Dhurries are made on the same warp, with the individual Dhurries then cut and the excess yarn trimmed once the weaving is completed. The woven Dhurries are then stretched over a frame, subsequent to which they are brushed and washed thoroughly using plain water and bio enzyme. Once dry, the Dhurries are removed from the frame to complete the finishing process in terms of tying the fringes and clipping any excess yarn before they are finally packed.

“The thorough washing also ensures the Dhurries are cleaned and pre-shrunk before packing”, states Vivek. According to him the pure cotton Dhurries can last for over 50 years while their woollen counterparts last over 20 years. “Both can be home washed, the wools shampooed while the cottons need a mild soap.”

Shift to cotton

Incidentally, the shift to cotton from the traditional wool that the artisans have been used to did not augur well initially, Vivek claims. “Weaving with cotton is tougher and more time consuming as compared to wool. This can be frustrating for the artisans but the prospect of continuous work in their village proved to be an incentive”, he adds. The facility of having the extended family to lend a helping hand while also having the liberty to oversee farming activities on the side served as a comprehensive approach as well as a lucrative livelihood option.

Given the artistic designs and strong customisation encouraged in these vibrant weaves, the Dhurries are not only suitable to grace the living spaces, dining and bedrooms but also serve as a striking art form when used as wall décor. The Kalavilasa rugs have extended their footprint beyond the Indian shores to grace living spaces in the US, Europe and Asia. ❀



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◆ YOUNG TURKS

Starting on the plank of sustainability

BY NANDHINI SUNDAR
FEATURING SHREYA SHRIVATSAVA



SHREYA SHRIVATSAVA

While in school she seemed to be the most unlikely candidate for architecture school, given that she found even the basic drawings and sketches challenging. Being a nerd in science, with the passion to become a scientist, architecture was certainly far beyond her radar.



Thatched roof, mud walls, handpainted murals mark the exteriors of Chittorgarh Residence

While in school she seemed to be the most unlikely candidate for architecture school, given that she found even the basic drawings and sketches challenging. Being a nerd in science, with the passion to become a scientist, architecture was certainly far beyond her radar. Yet, fate willed it otherwise as a chance encounter kindled her interest, prompting her to probe, only to find herself captivated by the creativity and potential the field of architecture offered. There was then no looking back, foraying ahead to enrol in the Architecture School of Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University. Young **Architect Shreya Shrivatsava of Studio Shunya** points that even at the time of joining, the intent was to explore the possibilities and drop out if she did not fit in. Yet, the challenges only strengthened her interest to the level of obsession, enabling her to successfully complete her graduation in 2019.

“The choice of the name Shunya for the studio came about as the name too resonated with the thought process that prevailed at the time of starting my Practice after internship. One aspect was about the possibilities of work that can be engaged in while the other related to a deep intent to build net zero buildings”, she elaborates. Though her initial tryst with design and structures as an intern was conventional, the strong leaning was openly towards sustainable methodologies of construction, she points.

These leanings prompted her to work at ground level with those impacted by natural disasters, enabling her to learn about the use of bamboo, mud in construction and also have a brief year and a half stint with ISAP where this learning process and passion were further cemented. Her further research into using mud in architecture made it amply clear that her mainstay design and material use would veer towards sustainable materials and methodologies of construction.

Starting with mud

For Shreya, the Chittorgarh Residence was an unexpected happening, her very first project on starting her Practice pitching her into the design and construction methodology that she fiercely courted. “When the project came in, I had a sound theoretical knowledge combined with sizeable knowledge of its practical execution, having spent a fair amount of time learning through workshops on mud architecture. Yet, it was the first time this knowledge was going to be applied on a live project undertaken”, she states.

Armed with a contractor who had sufficient experience in executing what she required, Shreya went forward to design a residence that would be built using rammed earth for walls, lime arais plaster, crowned with a thatch roof that “posed maximum challenges as we had to find an artisan who still knew the technique and was willing to do it”, over the RCC ceiling. With her philosophy to use largely or in totality only locally available materials, the flooring was done using the locally available natural stones such as Jaisalmar, Udaipur stone.

Solar passive cooling

“The idea of using thatch roofing, lime plaster and stone floors to complement the rammed earth walls was to bring down the ambient temperature by 5 to 7° during the sweltering summer months. Thatch roofing and lime plaster also provide insulation during winter”, explains Shreya on the passive cooling technique adopted. “The orientation of the building towards North and East in terms of the openings again assists in this passive cooling. The overhangs over the exterior verandas are again 3 to 4 feet, shutting out direct heat ingress into the interiors.” Blank walls greet the western side



ABOVE:
Exterior facade of Chittorgarh Residence

BELOW:
Decor resonates with the rural theme

The Chittorgarh Residence was an unexpected happening, her very first project on starting her Practice pitching her into the design and construction methodology that she fiercely courted.

with mostly utilities prevailing on this section of the residence. While the mud hued lime plaster on the exterior walls serves as insulation against heat and cold, the thickness of the exterior rammed earth walls too are one foot wide, adding to this insulation. The high ceiling, which goes up to 16 feet in the central courtyard from 12 feet at the entrance, has clerestory windows to exit hot air. The lay of the free flowing interiors around the central courtyard further ensures ample cross ventilation in the interiors. Besides the incorporation of solar passive cooling techniques, the building also has 50 per cent of its electricity met through solar power.

Salvaging waste

Shreya's green intent is not restricted to merely usage of materials and construction methodologies but permeates the interiors too in terms of furniture and furnishings as well as the design opted in the interiors. For instance, the cots in all the three bedrooms are built-in to conserve the use of wood. Refurbished old furniture decorates the spaces, offering a fresh lease of life to pieces discarded as waste.

Sourcing local and natural

Window dressing again reveals the inclination towards natural fibres, the material used everywhere being jute. While pigmented lime plaster in the interior walls dispense not only with paint but also infuse vibrancy with their deep natural colours, the wall art in the rooms are interestingly done by students. "The wall murals served as a platform for students to display their artistic prowess", smiles Shreya.

Local artisans too have been amply indulged with, the jute blinds, the Tikri wall art, the light fittings all being handmade by them. Even the local Nimbara stone, considered to have the least aesthetic appeal has been given a lease of life by Shreya, laying them in an arresting pattern to cheer around the pool. "These stones remain comparatively cooler even in mid-summer heat and prove to be the best for exteriors when walking bare foot."

Stone masonry & minimalism

Her project, Beawer, a farmhouse in Rajasthan, reveals similar sentiments in design and material use, the structure built on a 2 acre site serving to be a set of two similar humble cottages built using random rubble stone masonry walls for the foundation and exteriors and adobe for interior walls. The language of the building and interiors is stark minimalism with a strong connect to nature. "Stone masonry is now a perishing art, with very few artisans still aware of the technique and practicing. Crafting these walls was a task by itself, taking close to six months to get them erected", states Shreya.

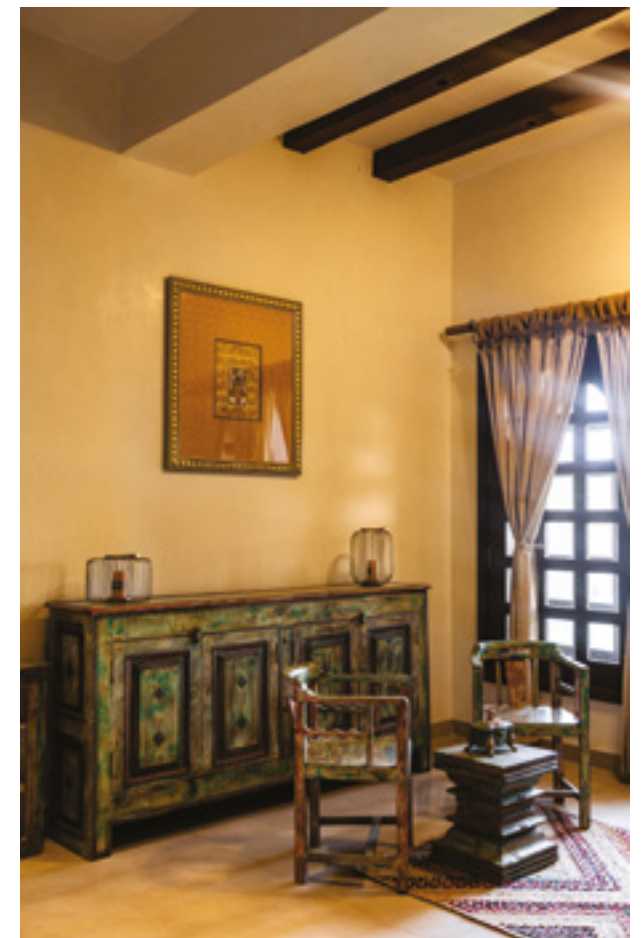
Given her strong inclination to bring in place passive cooling techniques, the thermal insulation was ensured through the presence of 1.5 feet thick exterior stone walls, complemented further by the presence of mud walls in the interiors. Shingle roof supported by a steel frame and bison board underneath that permits an air gap of 5 inches in between, further adds to this insulation bringing down the ambient temperature by 5°. The structural lay of the exterior openings following the wind path and sun orientation ensure ample air circulation while cutting out direct heat ingress.

Night view of Chittorgarh Residence



Dining area with its feature wall and distressed storage unit lends the unique flavour

While pigmented lime plaster in the interior walls dispense not only with paint but also infuse vibrancy with their deep natural colours, the wall art in the rooms are interestingly done by students.





Artistic refurbished four poster bed sets the language for the bedroom

Fortifying Haveli

The Bhilwara Haveli, again in Rajasthan, reveals a fort design approach to resonate with the language of the forts that proliferate in the State. Built on a 2 acre site that abounded in local stone, the material used for its construction is not surprisingly again random rubble stone masonry. Featuring an Aangan—a traditional internal courtyard in the midst with rooms enveloping it, the language of the residence resonates with an erstwhile Haveli while being sensitive to contemporary expectations.

The presence of the pool in the central courtyard also serves as an evaporative cooling element for the interiors, the ample natural ventilation stemming from the Northeast mingling with the waterbody to circulate cool moist air. The load bearing stone structure has brick interior walls covered in arais lime plaster that further aid in keeping the interiors cool. The clay tiled sloped roof with steel framing underneath once again packs in an air gap with its underlay of Veltisun that serves as the ceiling.

Fusing history with contemporary

If the exposed random rubble stone masonry on the exterior walls brings in a rusty charm, the arches, openings and a cantilevered stone staircase add to this aesthetic quotient. Suspended with a

steel wire, the raw stone stair treads prove to be an artistic feature, enhanced by the lower segment of the treads fused deftly into the wall to serve as a contrast. Almost a century old door sourced from an old Haveli marks the entry to the residence while UPVC framed windows feature as a stark contemporary contrast against this setting.

“The contrasting patterns fuse in the past with the present in a setting that is strongly rooted to local ecology in terms of material use, lay of the spaces as well as the design that gently reminisces the history of the State”, elaborates Shreya. Incidentally, these sentiments are not confined to merely the structural encompass of the residence but extends to the compound wall too of the site, with curves, louvered openings and battlements miming the erstwhile Rajasthan forts.

The residence comes with four arched entries, reminiscent of the fort entries, while the skilful orientation of the exterior openings and blank walls following the sun path to ensure passive cooling is very much in place. While sloped clay tiled roof covers the first level of the residence, the flat roof over the ground level structure comes with a China mosaic terrace that is tiled with salvaged waste to prevent heat ingress.

Mud amidst concrete

The strong leaning towards local and natural materials manifests in the structure of her office, Studio Shunya. Built on a tight 2000 Sq ft site amidst an equally tight, crowded neighbourhood, Shreya had the challenge of coming up with a design and material use that proved to be the odd one in the local context or submitting to a normal cement structure that would silently blend into the surroundings. Given her passion for mud, stone and alternate methodologies of construction, the choice was obvious—a structure built with mud.

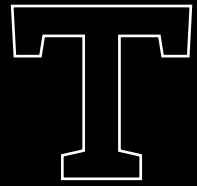
Upon laying a stone foundation and stone plinth to prevent seepage of water or dampness during heavy monsoons, Shreya soon realised that her load bearing 1 foot 3 inch mud walls will need to have the stabilised blocks made at an alternate site as her site was too cramped to facilitate. This not only posed challenges in transporting the finished mud bricks but also went against the concept of sourcing the mud from the site and making them on site.

Yet, not one to be daunted by technicalities, Shreya forged ahead and had the bricks made and sun dried at an alternate site and transported. Then came yet another challenge, the need to opt for the mandatory RCC roof as against the clay tiled roofs she had a penchant for. She circumvented this requirement partly by having in place a filler slab roof with clay pots. The interior and exterior walls were plastered in lime, with water proofing being added to the exterior plaster to brace torrential rains.

The inward looking office comes with an internal courtyard that permits ample natural light besides keeping the interiors cool through continuous air circulation and exit of hot air. Stone floors, staggered brick parapets, artworks depicting rural scenes, further usher in the earthy flavours and offer naturally cooled workspaces that boast of a strong thematic connect with nature. ◆



Deep pigmented lime plaster wall with its artistic depiction, serves as the backdrop



TRADE DIRECTORY

DEAR TRADE MEMBERS,

Team Antarya has an irresistible proposition for all the Institute of Indian Interior Designers Bangalore Regional Chapter (IIID BRC) trade members where they can seamlessly connect with the design fraternity through our design magazine Antarya.

We propose to feature a trade directory in every issue of Antarya going forward, where the participating trade members can list their company and products to enable architects and interior designers to use the same as a ready reckoner. The engagement of each trade member participant will be for four consecutive issues of Antarya spanning a year.

As members are aware, Antarya has been serving as a fertile connect with the design fraternity, not only with members of IIID BRC but across the country, since January 2013. Antarya has a captive audience of architects and interior designers from across the country through its hard copies circulation and extensive digital presence. The projects and designers featured in every issue serve as the icons of architecture, not just in the country but internationally too.

Every issue of Antarya is based on a specific theme around which the cover story rests, along with unforgettable features of master architects from Karnataka and rest of India, where each has left an indelible mark on architecture. The features are carefully selected and the projects diligently assessed to bring in only the very best of designs, making every issue of Antarya a collector's magazine. The design magazine has also proved to be an immense learning curve for young architects, with architecture schools eagerly seeking every issue for their libraries.

Starting 2021, team Antarya decided to go a step further and engage IIID BRC trade members through a Trade Directory, so that a mutually beneficial connect is established between the trade members and the design fraternity.

MODE OF PARTICIPATION

- The participation from the trade members will be in the form of insertions in the trade directory about their company and their products under the defined colour coded categories.
- Every page will have 5 listings, each coming in the size of 5cm x 20cm
- Based on the products, the listing will be done under Colour Coded Categories
- A person can also choose 2 modules instead of 1.
- Trade Members are to provide their company and branding details to fit the module.
- Antarya will develop a QR Code for all Participant Trade Members; this will lead readers to their website. This special feature will enhance their communication.

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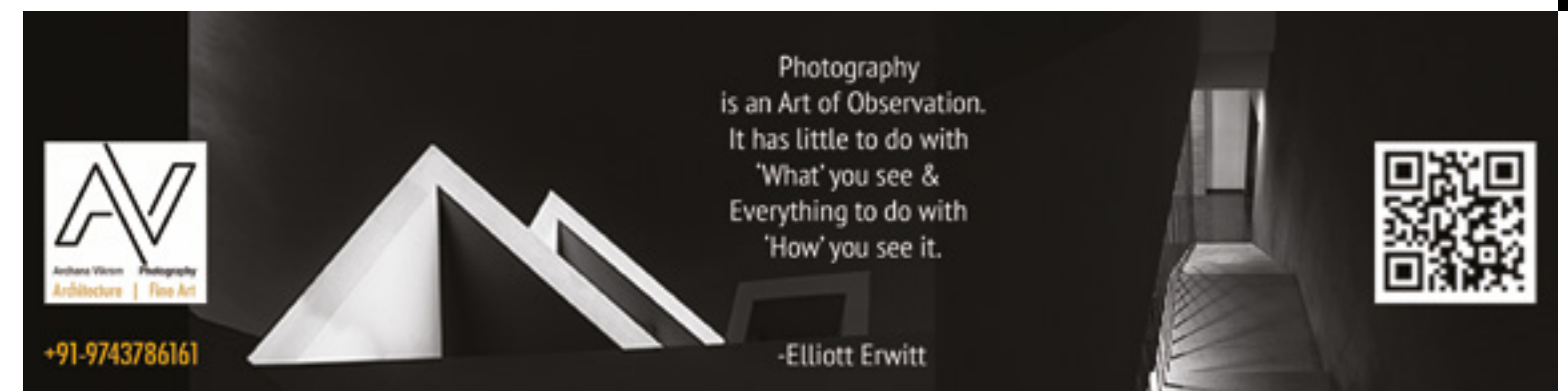
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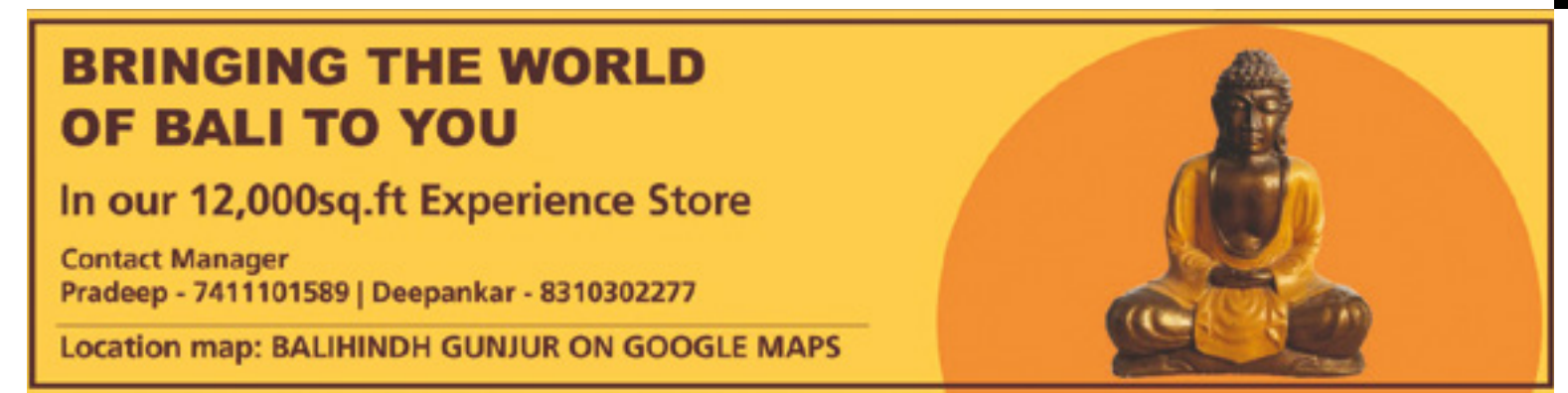
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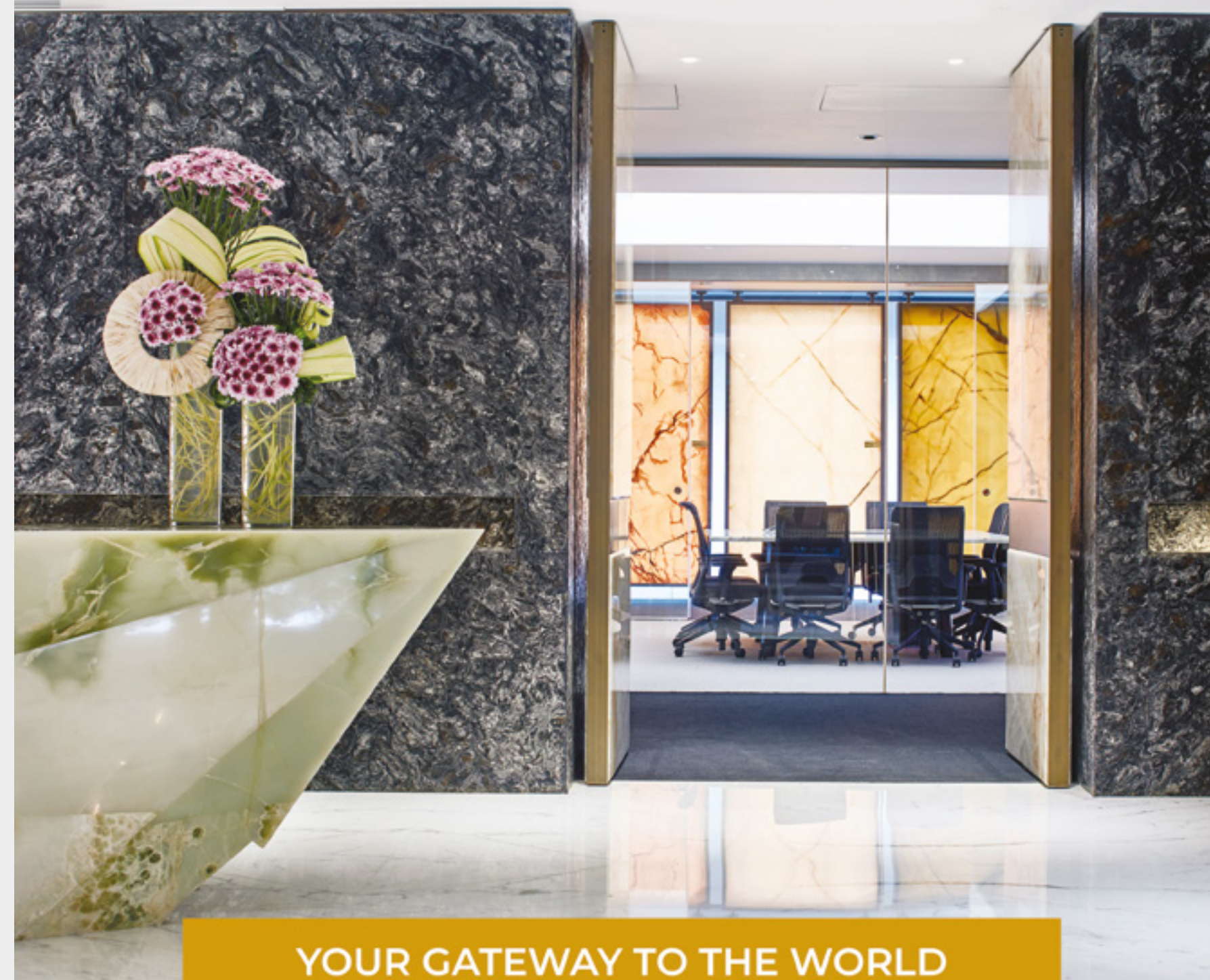
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➡ RETAIL SPACES

Designing the experience

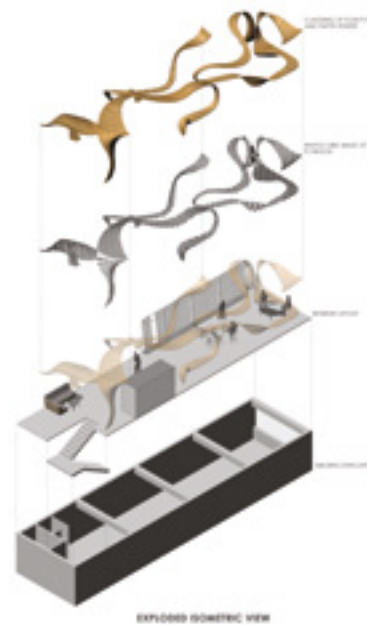
BY NANDHINI SUNDAR
FEATURING BADRINATH KALERU





BADRINATH KALERU

“The intent from the outset was to create a buzz, turn this into an experience centre that spoke an extraordinary story, where the design statement is so strong as to transform the client base as well as the sale”, points Badrinath.



A retail space comes with its own unique experience based on the lay of its space, whatever the nature of the product or service retailed. The design details enhance this experience, creating conducive ambience to market the product or service. When the design opted proves to be an out of the box solution, the differential décor can work to create or induce a purchase even when none was intended.

Recognising the power that design can wield over a retail space, **Architect Badrinath Kaleru of Studio Ardete** comes up with design solutions that address the core element of the product where the décor is arresting, capturing and retaining the attention of the buyer, prompting a walk through and browsing of what is kept in store. “The idea is to captivate and gently lure the customer in to take a peek at what is being offered. The experience should automatically lend itself to transform this peeking interest into an actual sale. The objective is to execute such a design”, elaborates Badrinath.

His project Timber Rhyme conforms in totality to this design intent, where the 16x60 feet linear retail space is situated in a crowded wholesale market area, with little scope of standing apart to create interest or lure the customer in. “The intent from the outset was to create a buzz, turn this into an experience centre that spoke an extraordinary story, where the design statement is so strong as to transform the client base as well as the sale”, points Badrinath.

Language of fluidity

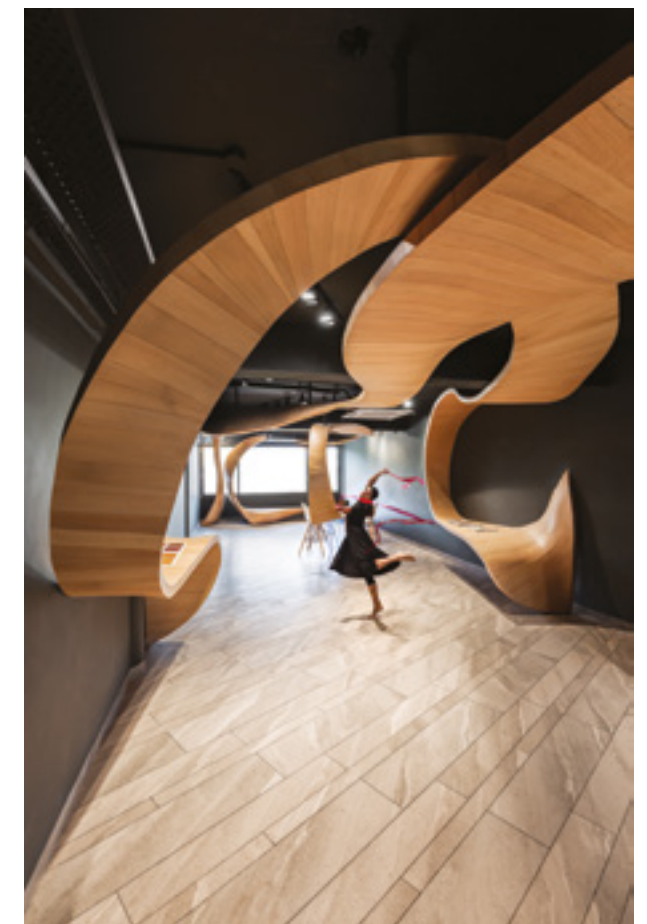
The resultant design approach was to come up with an innovative veneer lounge which celebrated the veneer in its best form, displaying the chief material, wood as flexible instead of the traditional perception of being just a frame, a beam, a post that is linear in form. “The language opted here is that of a fabric that can twist, bend, flow in the space to capture the interest as well as display the not usually perceived form or potential that goes with wood.”

Not surprisingly, the design that finally ensued was one that resembled a flowing ribbon that evoked an experience while also addressing the functionality of serving as seating, a console, as a table to work on while simultaneously opening up the unthinkable possibilities of using wood and veneer in an interior. Interestingly, this smooth continuous flow also alters through the retail space, removing the uniformity or a predictable state of representation.

“The flow is akin to a serpent winding the way through the spatial structure”, smiles Badrinath. The veneer incidentally is again not uniform through the ribbon, with three varieties of 0.5mm veneer having been fused together and clad on to the winding wood. To contrast the strong play of wood, the ceiling has been kept industrial, the exposed utilities lending a rustic flavour, complementing the grey walls. Diagonal patterned flooring further lends a visual expanse, letting the space look visually wider than it actually is.



Flowing ribbons of wood evoke the experience





Greens and filtering in natural light strive to evoke an outdoor bath experience

Bringing in the outdoors

Similar design sentiments are perceived in his project, Stylish Bath, a retail space displaying sanitary wares. The design intent focuses on bringing forth an engaging experience that packs in a strong recall element. In keeping with this, the décor infuses the strong characteristics of the natural world, thus incorporating a strong presence of water, greens, wood, stone and natural light. In short, the design is about infusing the outdoors into the retail space.

Tuning into this intent, the design starts with the filtering in of natural light through sheers on the window panes to contrast the dramatic play of light and shadow created by the metallic hexagonal lattice cloaking on the exterior façade. Muted grey tiles, gravel flooring and the presence of ample greens tie in perfectly into this open outdoor setting.

Steering the attention

The open accessible design further ensures a dynamic space that retains an intimate engagement as one walks through the displays. Elements within are shaped and placed strategically to steer the focus on the region desired such as the angular wooden steps at the entry point steering the attention to the reception area and thence to the main display zones. The eye capturing angular reception table ties in with this, adding to this attention steering.

The design intent focuses on bringing forth an engaging experience that packs in a strong recall element. In keeping with this, the décor infuses the strong characteristics of the natural world, thus incorporating a strong presence of water, greens, wood, stone and natural light.



Sheers on the window panes filter in sunlight to create the drama of light and shadow



Creative display of sanitary ware add to the experience

The serpentine lay of the spaces not only accentuates the visual experience but also permits an unhurried walk through and interaction with the products on display.

The organic lay of the individual volumes of each of the segments ensures the experience is full and complete as one walks through the dominant circulation path with the adjacent display segments placed at varying visual angles. The serpentine lay of the spaces not only accentuates the visual experience but also permits an unhurried walk through and interaction with the products on display. The strategic positioning of each zone again enables cross reference as well as seamless transition from one zone to another.

Volumetric experience

The manner of display of the individual products is again distinctive, where they are not confined to being placed only on counters but create a volumetric experience, the flooring coming with varying levels, the placement zones skewed, all adding up to create multiple knee flexing, neck rotations, eye-angle modifications. “The volumetric experience garnered takes the eye to the ceiling display of suspended metal framework and wood finish canopies to red velvet clad fabric niches atop wooden logs to elicit a multi-varied experience”, explains Badrinath.

Miming an actual site

The display of each product evinces a close recall of an actual site placement and use to resonate closely with the onsite experience that the customer is seeking to make an informed choice. Thus, the kitchen sinks and faucets feature on a counter suffused in greens to mime the vegetables in a functioning kitchen. The washbasins are placed on wooden logs to create a differential design, add a rustic appeal as well as the multitude of possibilities in placement on an actual site. Likewise, simulating a real site scene is the concept of outdoor showers displayed in the retail space.

“The core idea was to elicit an involuntary attraction for the products on display while the walk through is reminiscent of an art gallery where a curated selection of products are laid out for observing, feeling, interacting, the end result proving to be elevating on the senses”, sums up Badrinath on the experiential and sensorial design of the retail space. ➡➡

Kitchen faucets and sinks feature on a counter suffused in greens



Eye capturing angular reception table

* GREEN SENSE

Speaking with Wood

BY NANDHINI SUNDAR

FEATURING GEORGE RAMAPURAM





GEORGE RAMAPURAM

“A building should last a century, the design organically evolving over the years, lending timelessness, longevity to the structure”, George states.



The custom designed wooden seating and wall features contrast the random rubble masonry wall--Stone Lodges

Eyeing through his projects, the roots become amply clear, the strong leaning towards wood in every small detail speaking of a connect that dips back directly to the roots, the origin from childhood. The language of the structures as well as the interiors strongly speak of growing years spent in the midst of intense nature, thick plantations, the hills and its streams, the flora and the fauna leaving a deep imprint in the mind that is hard to erase. It is thus not surprising to see this deep impression translating directly into the design, be it a resort, residence, an institution.

With the family tree connecting back to the lush greens of Kerala while being raised since birth amidst dense coffee plantations in Coorg, **Architect George Emmanuel Ramapuram of Earthitects**, comes across as a passionate young promoter of all that is green, sustainable, where the footprint left is either nil or minimal. While some spectacular green spaces have emerged from his design

desk, yet the leaning towards architecture was not merely to build differential spaces, but rather as a thought process that ‘architecture can be a strong influence on life both through living and working spaces.’

“The growing years were spent watching carpenters, masons at work and the residence in a 150-year-old ancestral bungalow only added to this”, he smiles. Graduating from the University School of Design, Mysore in 2016, George’s chief inspiration was the works of the Kanade brothers, with one of them being the visiting faculty in his School. “A building should last a century, the design organically evolving over the years, lending timelessness, longevity to the structure”, he states. “The erstwhile buildings of yore are like a treasure trove, a legacy that is proud to be passed on, the longevity bringing in a huge sustainable quotient.”



LEFT:
Tiled roof, random rubble masonry and wood become a picturesque feature amidst thick greens--Stone Lodges

RIGHT:
Salvaged wooden rafters in the ceiling lend a fairy tale ambience to the woody interior--Stone Lodges

Tuning to nature

Pointing that nature is the greatest designer, he adds, “The approach to design should be one that is totally in tune with nature, facilitating the play of abundance of life and sustain the existing life within. An approach from this design core will ensure the materials used are locally sourced, resonating with the historical context of the site.” This inclination is amply revealed in his designs and structures, where he studied in depth the Kodava culture and architecture to come up with his designs for his projects in Coorg.

“Kodava style of architecture typically displays privacy as well as congregation, the British presence leaving a stamp in the form of high ceilings, arches, verandas, while sensitively addressing the copious rains during the monsoon periods through large overhangs. Stone walls prevail up to a safe height over the foundation to address the flooding”, George elaborates.

“The approach to design should be one that is totally in tune with nature, facilitating the play of abundance of life and sustain the existing life within.”



Wood, lime plaster articulate the earthy kitchen--Stone Lodges

Experiential learning

The onsite learning started for George while in architecture school, where he also tried his hand at lighting design. "The learnings and knowledge gleaned from these is invaluable, with most of it not being taught at any Architecture School. It involved directly working with carpenters, masons where the journey also proved to be one of self-realisation, self-worth", he points. One of his first major projects came from the district of Wayanad where he realised it offered immense opportunity to address the concept of 'reverse urbanisation'. "The site was on a fairly remote hill that was untouched, yet in close proximity to the main town."

Language of local, contextual

His project Stone Lodges in Wayanad, which is a group of villas snuggling amidst dense greens, thus began where George was firm on his intent to let the existing topography and locational sensitivities dictate the design. The language thus opted was the local courtyard houses blurring the lines between the outdoor and indoor spaces. Teak features in plenty along with Eucalyptus, the Teak wood being used "where colour and grains make the difference, besides being extremely sturdy. Eucalyptus is again a fine wood to be used given their high oil content." Eucalyptus wood finds its wide presence in the form of columns, as structural members in the interiors. The walls feature random rubble masonry, the stones used sourced locally. Mangalore tiled roof over Ferro cement ceiling adds to the local character of the building.



Villas enmeshed in thick greens--Stone Lodges

“Keeping design and material use closest to nature brings it closest to perfection. The form of depiction and the lay of the space also impacts the mind, inspires thinking, aids to be in a healthier state”, adds George.



Waste wood put to creative use--Stone Lodges

Creative use of waste

“The individual structures feature amidst thick foliage that was retained, not only enhancing the visual presence of thick greens, but also aiding to leave the interiors much cooler”, George adds. Given his strong leaning towards salvaging waste and putting it to good use, waste stone sourced from the local stone processing units find their way into the interiors as backsplash for kitchen, as foyer table, mantel piece, poolside seating. Likewise the outer bark of the tree trunks which are typically discarded as waste and used as firewood has been salvaged to be turned into storage units, drawers, integrated into the stone ledges, tables, seating.

“The idea is to find a creative, functional use for waste so as to reduce their quantum generated. If creativity is applied, waste can effortlessly be turned into a piece of art”, he opines. Not surprisingly the interiors find discarded tree trunks, branches turned into side tables, exotic light fittings, door handles, railings for balconies, custom made furniture, unique switchboards, the wood in many cases used in its raw form. “Keeping design and material use closest to nature brings it closest to perfection. The form of depiction and the lay of the space also impacts the mind, inspires thinking, aids to be in a healthier state”, adds George.

Built to the contours of the site, each villa opens on to a pool, surrounded by existing trees, the interiors seamlessly opening on to decks that connect with water and greens. The intense presence of greens also brings in a spectacular play of light and shadow as the day progresses, lending a dynamic twist to the interiors. George’s creative design play extends to bathrooms too, with salvaged raw branches of wood turned into light fittings, quirky mirrors, towel racks. Fusing in the open bathroom concept to this, in the form of a skylight or as opening on to an internal courtyard, further add to this raw, green flavour.



Salvaged wood articulate the refreshing pathway--Stone Lodges

Workspace carved out of wood waste

When faced with the need to design his office space, Evolve Back Workspace, on a shoe string budget, George decided to put his creative streak to the maximum use, plunging in headlong to source waste wood which was finding its way into kilns as firewood. “The wood we sourced were either rejects or left unused, cut pieces or outer bark of tree that is typically viewed to be unusable, even drift wood that is essentially left to degrade”, grins George. “The Eucalyptus poles that were used for scaffolding and later discarded were also picked up and used for the conduits in the ceiling and for customised light fittings.”

What emerged from his design desk and manifested in the office interiors was a fine creative piece of work which was stunning in its visuals as well as in the intent to put waste to constructive use. Thus, be it wood for the structural ‘hanging’ work tables, panelling existing concrete pillars, file cabinets, customised lighting elements, seating in the cafeteria, planter boxes, trash cans, waste wood finds its way in the most creative manner into the 2000 Sq ft Earthitects office.



Hanging tables, file cabinets, customised lighting made with waste wood--Evolve Back Workspace

Giving back to society

His project Morning Glory is a Montessori and primary school conceptualised to give back to society by offering education for the economically backward children of labourers working in the coffee estates of Coorg. Built using Cob construction over a 4 feet random rubble foundation wall to guard against flooding, the Mangalore tiled structure comes with a totally unconventional approach in the design of its interiors. Stemming from the space of initiating creative, out of the box thinking amongst the young attendees, the design starts from the premise that all elements will follow the pattern of nature where there are no straight lines but organic bends and curves.

In keeping with this, the small tables in the classrooms reveal organic turns and twists, blackboards do not follow the conventional rectangular shapes, waste branches of Eucalyptus wood serve as the railings for the windows. Even the door frames come with a deliberate twist to reveal unconventionality. Interestingly, even the toilets follow this curvaceous leaning. Tuning into the psychology of young children to scribble on the walls, organically curved

black boards feature on the lower segment of the walls across the classrooms.

“The project serves as testimony to the premise that a building can be constructed by sourcing all the materials from its backyard”, states George. Be it customised wooden light fittings, wooden pillars and structural members, door, window frames, railings, demarcating objects for the blackboards, leaf imprints on the floors, the earth for Cob, the materials have been sourced from in and around the site, the abundant presence of Eucalyptus trees and their fallen branches put to creative use. “There is a local species called Nandi, a fine hardy wood with striking grains, which we also sourced for doing the wood work”, he adds.

Since a visual connect with nature can be energising and bring cheer to the young children, the classrooms open on to green courtyards, physically as well as visually. The staff rooms reflect similar sentiments of connecting with nature, the built-in tables clad with wood, the interiors visually porous to connect with the exterior landscape.



Customised light fittings made with wastewood, curved black boards mark the classrooms-- Morning Glory

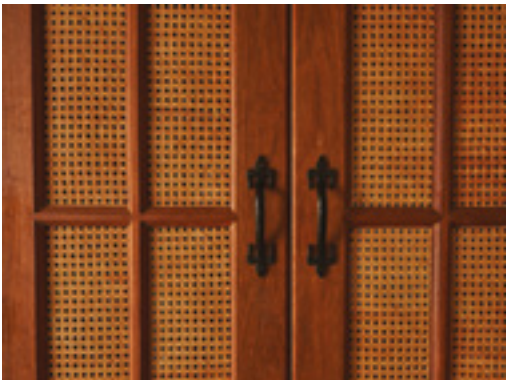


A dowdy open terrace transformed into a cheerful woody lounge-- The Collectible

The philosophy of evolving

When it comes to a residence, George firmly believes the fine placements and miniature elements in the interiors need to evolve over time, revealing a collection of stories over a lengthy period that can be looked back, reflected upon, savoured. His project, The Collectible, rests strongly on this plank where an existing penthouse has been given a fresh lease of life with its strong nature inclined refurbishment.

While salvaged wood and antiques find a strong presence in the crafting of the interiors, the residence reveals customisation in all aspects of its design, be it the switch boards, light fittings, door frames, furniture. The open terrace that was earlier in a dowdy state finds itself transformed into a cheerful woody exterior lounge with a spectacular play of light and shadow during the day through the crisscrossing timber rafters. ✱



Customised shutters, switch boards, timber rafters--The Collectible

AESA 2023 Pune, AOL



BY PROF. JAISIM KRISHNA RAO

Without a good survey there cannot be architecture with value. It is not just survey of profile of land and topography, but also the geopolitical state and stage, as also the culture and heritage. It is time to wake up.

The invited visit to Pune in March 2023 for the AESA awards and recognition event opened up a lot of memories. As the Chief Guest I enjoyed every moment of the two days as I surveyed Pune with my many past visits and the present run.

The organised evening function had many dignitaries with seniors and the youth mixing well. Two days of interaction and I could hardly meet any practicing surveyors. The oldest profession in the building industry is almost dead. Without a good survey there cannot be architecture with value. It is not just survey of profile of land and topography, but also the geopolitical state and stage, as also the culture and heritage. It is time to wake up.

On the same note I visited Art of Living, Bengaluru, on the invitation of Sri Sri Rural Development Program for an onsite workshop and discussion. Good individual buildings existed but no integrating architecture. It was all hither and thither. The main objective of meeting Guruji and seek his responses also did not happen due to Satsang and the unnecessary delay in our proceedings added to by the most uncomfortable incomprehensible travel in a mini bus within. My memories of the beautiful environment a decade ago was this day filled with nearly 20000 vehicles parked and running over filled up water bodies.

Anyway it was an experience that ecology and ekistics no longer play a significant role in architecture. Only commerce matters in spirit and in real life.

Silence is the loudest sound and noise the experience of quietness. I have learnt to unlearn. Yet the interaction and accidental meeting with many young professionals was and is an unforgettable experience. I thank one and all for this memorable event.

Athangudi tile and Carpentry filled me with smiles of memories of timeless properties of these products made by modern adaptation with lost historical difference.

The Art of Making School

Leadership means not making everyone happy.



BY DR JAFFER AA KHAN

“If you want to make everyone happy, don’t be a leader, sell ice cream!” –Steve Jobs

We have more than 1000 Universities in India and nearly half of them are privately owned as per 2021 statistics. My experience has been with some of the top private universities in South India established in the eighties. The most disappointing experience was with the one in my hometown Vellore. All that I have heard about it and the passion to contribute something to my birthplace had vanished within a year as I saw and felt that the top leadership was selling “ice cream” and making everyone happy but not looking for the real “change”. This was unfortunate indeed for all the hard work done in the early years of its formation and I have seen the growth of this institution. I remember several meetings by me with the Founder of the University, which enabled the university to start an Architecture School in 2015.

I kept my promise to the Founder and returned to my hometown amid the pandemic and took a lot of struggles with the primary aim of taking the School to the next level. Though it was in a complete mess, I knew I had to work hard before I could see this happening. I needed to realign the curriculum and reorganise the faculty to involve in Studio and theory courses. The capstone project (Thesis) was distributed evenly and each student had a designated supervisor and a co-supervisor.

Earlier it was two to three faculty who were handling forty students and the workload was manipulated or sometimes over stressing for them. I saw that the “Thesis balloting” was organised and the faculty interest areas were considered for guidance. I did bring in external practising professionals to infuse pragmatism in the approach as most or none of the faculty members had a Practice and there was a huge gap between the working needs of the profession and skills that the school fed into that made the student work ready.

This sounds ridiculous though, the intentions were not to supply work force for the profession but to prepare them to be leaders in their own right as they embark on their Practice as architects, but the education model did not work that way. Over the years as

I have experienced, there has been an erosion of knowledge and practicality to the architecture programmes and diminishing design leadership.

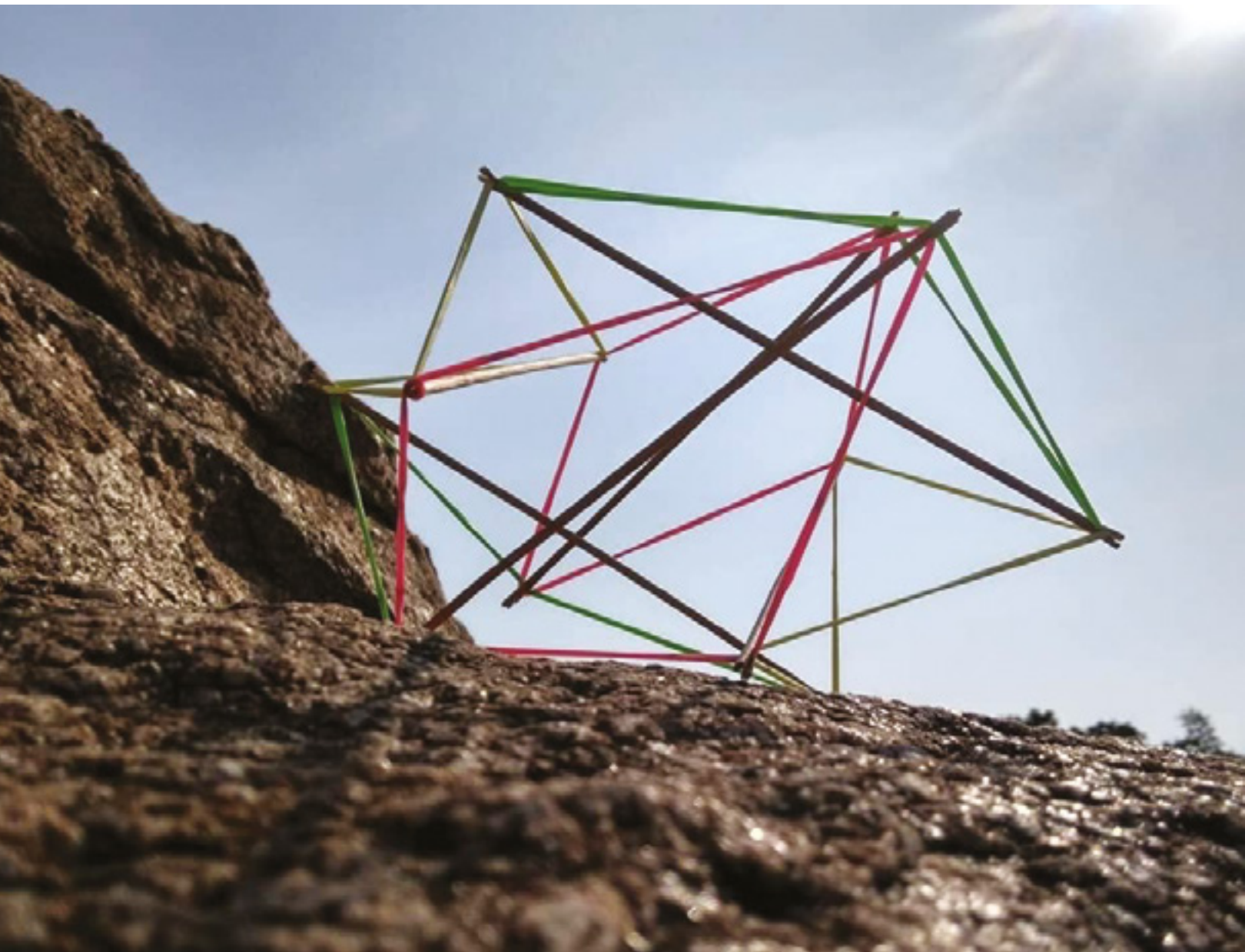
Within months of my joining here, I felt the lack of pragmatism in the entire course and not just limited to architecture. I tried my best to bring collaboration with many other schools and was appreciated by many within the university. But I must admit that architecture schools have always isolated themselves from other technical programmes even though it was important to collaborate. At this school, I went on to encourage Practice among the faculty and an opportunity to collaborate with Practices to gain that knowledge which they can bring back to the studio.

Five years in the school is a long time for a student in their lives and faculty play a crucial role during this period, something a student remembers for life. I always believed in practice-based education, which means apprenticeship-based training with students engaged in real-time practices as a part of studio projects when the school delivers other courses in hybrid mode.

With the NEP 2020 in place, opening up opportunities, the draft white paper on the future of architecture education proposed by the Council of Architecture and the adoption of Bologna framework, the universities can become vehicles for certain skill development but allow architecture education that can produce leaders in the profession and not just subservient to the system.

When I visited the London School of Architecture, which follows the apprenticeship model, I was reminded of my early days in architecture school where I started working for my professor which gave me confidence and representational skills along with leadership skills, but I realised in education, it is a different ball game, where one has to sell “ice creams” to make everyone happy.

(The views expressed in this article are the personal experience of the author)



Six dowell Tensegrity ball constructed using kabab sticks as compression members and rubber bands as tension members

Tensegrity for structural stability

BY NANDHINI SUNDAR

FEATURING SHREYA SHRIVASTAVA



SHREYA SHRIVASTAVA

The loss of her limb and the prospect of an uncertain future in the field of architecture pushed her to explore in detail and study in depth the subject of tensegrity and its role in structural design.

When a life changing accident occurs, the repercussions can be so intense as to completely alter normal functioning as well as many a time the perspective on life. It is not common to find a catastrophe turned into a learning curve and an exploratory trajectory, where the outcome is not only positive but also equally transforming. Yet, for **Architect Shreya Shrivastava**, it was precisely such a life changing incident that prompted her to explore the use of tensegrity in architecture and relate its role in addressing disaster management.

A post graduate in architecture from IIT Rourkee, Shreya was in the fourth year of her undergraduate course where she had topped the university ranks when a terrorist attack robbed her off her right hand. The loss of her limb and the prospect of an uncertain future in the field of architecture pushed her to explore in detail and study in depth the subject of tensegrity and its role in structural design.

Her interest and foray soon translated into her taking up a teaching position in Kamala Raheja School of Architecture and Environmental Studies, Mumbai, the focus subject being Tensile Architecture. "The subject is taught to both civil engineering and architecture students as it relates to structural design. The subject is in tune with my specialisation in post-graduation on light weight architecture", states Shreya. "Unlike general architecture where structure and form can be differentiated, tensegrity is structural integrity, meaning, the structure and form are interdependent and integrated", she adds.

Incidentally when Shreya approached the institute to teach the course, it was not part of the regular curriculum, being added later as an elective where she was left with designing the entire pedagogy for the course. Her course, titled 'Tensile Tensegrity' proved to be one filled with experiments and explorations to unravel multiple possibilities and modes of its application in structure. The multiple videos of the experiments and exercises conducted were then combined with the concept of bio tensegrity to delve deeper into the application possibilities.

Learnings from Bio Tensegrity

Shreya points that even the smallest of movements in a human body is connected, the entire system working as a matrix where a system is in place and functioning to facilitate it. "A balloon expands and collapses, likewise a soft ball when compressed, shrinks but bounces back once the pressure is taken off. The body behaves in similar pattern and this is the fundamentals of tensegrity where the form shifts under an external force or stimulus, but retracts back once this force is taken off", she explains.

She further connects this with the cosmos, where the planetary motion is guided by gravity, reflecting the massive tensegrity network in place. "This concept can be successfully applied to architecture and structures as well as even smaller portable objects be it a table, chair." In short, the theory rests on the concept of 'Tensional Integrity' where the entire design of the object is conceptualised as one with no additional elements, the combination of the individual elements making it into one whole unit being referred to as tensegrity.

The Modus operandi

The method of integrating this concept into a structure involves bringing in individual elements, fusing them together using the forces of tension. The individual elements are brought together as a single unit depending on the symmetry or asymmetry, where the dimension and size of the fused unit is worked around in accordance. Playing with the scale and size of the compression members, the varied range of elements can be brought together. Given the core factor of volume and its role in defining the space in architecture, altering this volume and scale of the structure involves tweaking the asymmetric tensegrity of the structure.

The strong application possibilities of tensegrity falls in the area of disaster management be it an earthquake, a landslide, floods

where the structure gets damaged. For instance, in a skyscraper, the floor plates shift when hit by an earthquake, resulting in it crashing. Yet, when tensegrity finds its presence in the building’s structural composition, the structure will not collapse even when the natural disaster causes a shift.

To explore its role further and research on how the concept works, Shreya built paper models to simulate the condition, view the impact and draw the findings. “In an RCC frame construction, the columns and floor plates are rigidly connected, with walls merely serving as filler elements. During a shift of the tectonic plates, this rigid joinery breaks, prompting the high towers to collapse.”

Precision is the key

While the incorporation of the concept of tensegrity can be done into a structure, what is failed to note is the minute precision required to fuse in and execute this concept in structures. “The precision is to millimetre scale for the concept to work. This is difficult to comply with in most cases, preventing this concept from being taken up and widely applied”, explains Shreya. “It calls for use of precision machines that are accurate in execution, something difficult to do on a larger scale, given the current level of technological development in the construction industry.” Currently only one structure exists in the world using the tensegrity concept, the Kurilpa Bridge in Australia. “Here too the concept has not been effectively applied, calling for greater exploration

and development in its practical use”, points Shreya. “Besides the practical feasibility in terms of application, there is also the cost factor which currently is not economical.”

Extending beyond structures

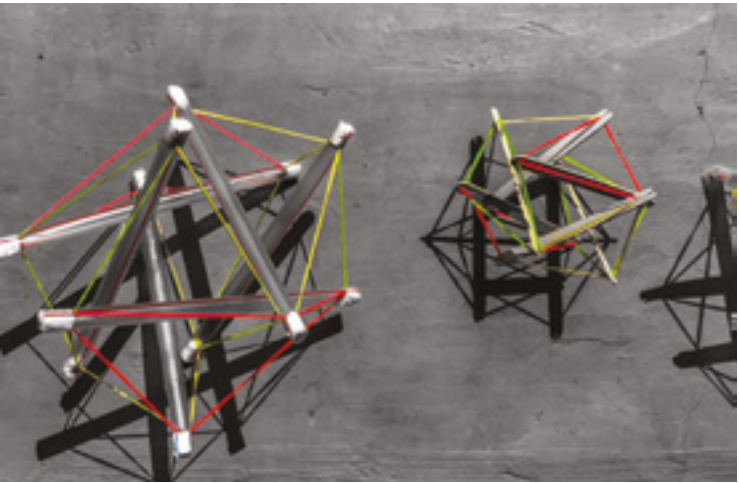
While challenges prevail in applying the concept to structures, Shreya points that the concept has multiple use in other fields, starting from artificial limbs. The biological movement of limbs is based on the concept of tensegrity, she points. This needs to be explored, researched on and integrated into the making of artificial limbs, she states.

“A prosthetic limb should mime a biological limb in terms of functioning. But the existing contraptions are modelled more in tune with robotic functioning rather than biological impulses. The application of tensegrity with an integration of artificial intelligence can successfully cover this existing gap and aid in coming up with totally efficient prosthetic limbs that will replace the functioning of a lost limb almost in totality”, she opines.

Incidentally, her doctoral thesis focuses on the concept of tensegrity and its application in prosthetic limbs. Besides researching into the functional integration and thence commercial use of the prosthetic limbs, Shreya also hopes that her design background as an architect will further facilitate in constructing a more functional prosthetic limb, once the integration is successfully in place. ◆



LEFT
Kurilpa Bridge ,
Australia
(Tensegrity Bridge)



TOP RIGHT
Scaling multiple modules
and exploring different
materials to test the
structural stability

RIGHT BOTTOM
Three dowells
tensegrity module

Agglomeration of modules
forming a tessellation



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Soaring in size and history

BY MAHESH CHADAGA



The city of Thrissur is famous for its historical temples, churches, masjids, some dating back over 1000 years and more. Interior Designer Mahesh Chadaga captures with his lenses the stunning edifices of some of the historical churches of the city including the oldest church in India, the Palayur St Thomas Church that dates back to 52 AD.





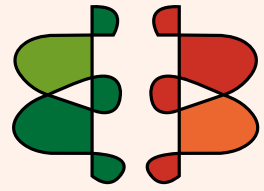
Located in Palayur, the Syrian church is believed to have been established by St Thomas, one of the 12 apostles of Jesus Christ, in 52 AD. According to legend, St Thomas, on arriving in Palayur, came across a set of Hindu Brahmins offering prayers with water. Challenging them that the water sprinkled overhead will not fall back to earth if he offered the prayers, St Thomas succeeded to freeze the water in mid-air. Legend has it that St Thomas, through this act, successfully convinced the Hindu Brahmins to embrace Christianity. The church is one of the seven churches established by St Thomas.



Our Lady of Dolours Basilica, famous for its Gothic style architecture, is the tallest church in India and third tallest in Asia. The Indo-Gothic style structure comes with soaring belfries at the entrance, double storeyed aisles along the nave and transepts, with eleven alters where five feature on either side of the main alter. Its spellbinding interiors include stunning murals, icons and statues of saints, scenes from the scriptures. Its bell tower soars up to a height of 260 feet.

The Syro-Malabar Catholic church, Our Lady of Lourdes, is renowned for its imposing interiors. The exteriors feature an Indo-European façade with white spires. The main attraction of the church is its underground design, viewed as a masterpiece of architecture.





Happenings in BRC

JANUARY TO MARCH 2023



URU NIGHTS

Design as a Practice

A captivating interaction was hosted by IIID BRC between Interior Designer Shernavaz Bharucha and Architect Indrajit Khembavi in Modulo in the month of March. The discussion veered around Indian crafts and the extensive incorporation of the same in Shernavaz Bharucha's works. The detailed discussion on crafts and crafts persons later led to her journey through the years and the challenges faced in staying relevant. Modulo houses modular furniture that include kitchen cabinets, cupboards, storage spaces.



Architect Indrajit Khembavi in conversation with Interior Designer Shernavaz Bharucha



LEFT
Architect Dinesh Verma
presenting a momento to
Parth Khembavi of Modulo



ABOVE
Team Uru with Interior Designer Shernavaz Bharucha and Parth Khembavi of Modulo

LEFT
Chairperson
Ar. Kavita Sastry,
Ar. Gunjan Das
with Interior Designer
Shernavaz Bharucha

Art, colour and interiors

The month of February saw a Heart to Heart conversation between Architects Smitha Zachariah and Nidhi Mariam Jacob. The conversation centred on art, design and colour in a space. The scintillating conversation was hosted by Bauhaus Commune.



ABOVE
Architects Nidhi Mariam Jacob and Smitha Zachariah

RIGHT ABOVE
Team Uru at Bauhaus Commune

RIGHT MIDDLE
Audience at Bauhaus Commune

RIGHT BOTTOM
Chairperson Ar. Kavita Sastry presenting a memento to Nehal Singh and Jaspreet Singh of Bauhaus Commune



LEFT
Introduction of Team captains of T15 Cricket tournament

WALKING THE TALK

The month of February was also host to an interaction with students of architecture in the K100 Citizens Waterway designed by Architect Naresh Narasimhan. Students from SJB School of Architecture and Planning walked through the social project and had an animated discussion on public spaces with Prof. Nidhi Bhatnagar, Amritha Ganapathy, the detailed discussions opening up vistas of possible interventions as future architects to make our public spaces user friendly and a pride to contend with.

A Game of Cricket

Sport is the universal connector, equaliser. What is life without the thrill of a game fused in? In total sync with this view, IIID BRC participated in the T15 South Zone Men’s cricket tournament, hosted by IIID Hyderabad in the month of January. IIID BRC was represented by Bangalore Blasters at the tournament. The winner of the South Zone trophy was IIID Mangalore Chapter.



RIGHT ABOVE
Team Uru with Nidhi Bhatnagar and Amritha Ganapathy from Venkatraman Associates and Faculty of SJB School of Architecture and Planning



RIGHT BELOW
K100 Citizens Waterway

NEC INSTALLATION

The New Executive Council took office, with their formal installation happening in the month of February. The event was hosted by IIID Surat Chapter. IIID BRC members Dr Prashanth Reddy of FunderMax India and Architect Bindi Saloapurkar were part of the NEC that took office.



Ar. Bindi Solaopurkar and Dr Prashanth Reddy of NEC with
Ar. Dinesh Verma, Ar. Kavita Sastry, Ar. Gunjan Das and Ar. Viswanath

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