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A THEATRE AT HOME

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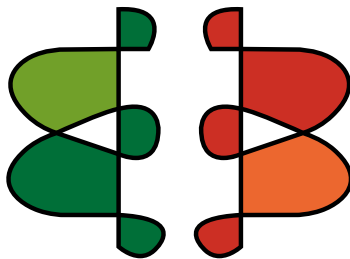
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IIID BANGALORE REGIONAL CHAPTER EMBLEM

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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Chairperson
Speaks



GUNJAN DAS

Dear IIID Members,
Wishing you all a very happy and creatively fulfilling New Year, full of inspiring designs and fresh perspectives!

We are grateful for the wonderful feedback on this year’s calendar, ‘The Unbuilt’, thoughtfully designed by Ar. Aruna Sujit and Ar. Sunitha Kondur. Your encouragement means a lot to us.

January began on a high, with record-breaking attendance at Natcon in Nashik. It delivered on all fronts—learning, fun, and camaraderie. We were also thrilled to see BRC win the Vision in Vogue fashion show!

In February and March, we held impactful Management Committee meetings hosted by our Gold Inner Circle Partners, Fundermax and Nexion.

February featured a magical evening—Sufi Under the Stars—hosted by Inner Circle Partner Skipper, with a soul-stirring performance by Smita Rao Bellur. We also saw an inspiring presentation by Ar. Bijoy Ramachandran and Ar. Sunitha Kondur of Hundredhands, unveiling the Sabha, an adaptive reuse event space.

March brought a practical and timely workshop on the Fees Manifesto, hosted by Ez Homes, as part of the lead-up to Run with BRC. Over 100 IIID members are already training for the TCS Marathon!

In celebration of women in design, we launched Women’s Day Awards 2.0 on International Women’s Day, encouraging collaborative initiatives among women designers. We are proud to have Ar. Sonal Sancheti, Ar. Aparna Bidarkar, and artist Dimpy Menon on the jury.

We now look forward to the April run—a great opportunity for fitness, bonding and shared purpose.

GUNJAN DAS
IIID BRC, 2023-25
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ISSUE 42 | JAN – MAR 2025

COVER DESIGN

The cover captures “A Theatre at Home” with a playful, AI-generated illustration of retro TVs and speakers. It reflects how design and technology together turn living spaces into immersive, personal theatres.

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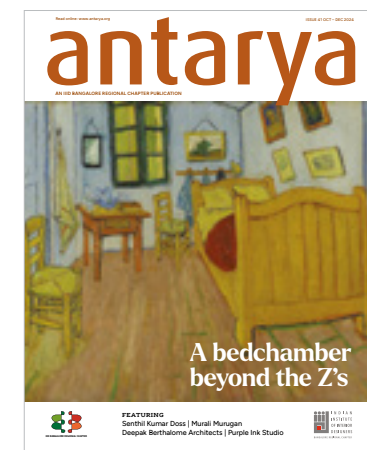
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ISSUE 41 | OCT – DEC 2024

Antarya is one of the all time preferred inciting design magazine which I have always enjoyed. Truly appreciate the Content Editor Nandhini's unique and imaginative approach to writing and to present in a clear and logical manner.

**Interior Designer Vidya Vishwanath
YV Architects**

From the Managing Editor's Desk



DINESH VERMA

Dear Members,

There's nothing quite like sitting in a blissful environment and listening to music. Add captivating visuals to that music, and it becomes a true sensory treat.

In the past, such immersive experiences were limited to auditoriums—or further back in time, the grand halls of royal palaces. But today, technology has brought these audiovisual delights closer than ever, allowing us to enjoy perfect sound effects in the comfort of our own homes.

Most sound effects today are digitally recorded, offering greater realism and enabling the creation of an almost limitless range of effects—without the need for bulky, traditional sound-producing devices. In motion pictures, while dialogue and some ambient sounds are captured during filming, many sounds are added later during postproduction. The end result is often far superior to what was originally recorded.

The time has come when architects and designers must design not just with their eyes—but with their ears as well. Gone are the days when visual appeal was the only consideration. In today's world, sound pollution has become a critical design concern.

We invite you to enjoy this edition of Antarya—read it with your eyes, but also be mindful that the sounds around you are not noise to someone else.

DINESH VERMA

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Music Vinyl Disc

CREDITS : WIKIPEDIA



Video Cassette



A theatre at home

BY NANDHINI SUNDAR



Television Set



CD Player & Compact Disc



CREDITS : WIKIPEDIA



Public spaces to host gatherings in Fatehpur Sikri, India

CREDITS : WIKIPEDIA



The Colosseum which was venue for the gladiatorial contests

CREDITS : WIKIPEDIA

The concept of entertainment in the medieval times was chiefly public in nature, be it religious festivities, cultural events such as performing arts, tournaments, feasts to mention a few.

Specific arenas were earmarked for hosting such entertainment, with the nobility and commoners gathering at the designated location. Home entertainment was non-existent, with even the nobility hosting any form of entertainment only as a public gathering or for a select set of invitees in their sprawling residences. This altered to an extent during the Industrial Revolution with cities coming up, technological advancements coming into place, prompting the emergence of music halls, theatres, sports arenas to accommodate the relevant entertainment. Post Industrial Revolution, mass production and technological advancements made this entertainment more affordable, to a larger audience.

The Indian scene was not much different, with nobility and rulers serving as patrons of art and music, facilitating the theatre, music, dance and games. This fostering by rulers enabled commoners to cherish and indulge in folk dances and music, yet the entertainment featured as public rather than private. Developments in the early 20th Century marked the beginning of change across the globe in the perception as well as the manner in which entertainment unfolded, both in the public arena as well as in the emergence of the later concept of home entertainment.

Tracing the origins

The origin of home entertainment can be traced to the early 19th Century where the simple mechanical music boxes that were put together during this period, permitted access to audio music entertainment at the residence. These music boxes, being in their nascent stages of development, were quite primitive, though they fulfilled the functional expectation of audio access to music. Their successful functioning later led to their mass production during this era.

The late 1800s was witness to Thomas Edison's phonograph which permitted recording and playing back of the sound. This monaural, low fidelity sound reproduction format incidentally came about even before electricity. The phonograph thus marks a significant step



The iconic Eros Cinema, Mumbai, a major public entertainment zone since 1938
CREDITS : WIKIPEDIA



Gramophone Player
CREDITS : UNSPLASH



Auditorium of Opéra Garnier, Paris, France.
CREDITS : WIKIPEDIA



Television and Radio from 90's
CREDITS : WIKIPEDIA



Video & Music Cassettes
CREDITS : WIKIPEDIA



Music Players
CREDITS : WIKIPEDIA



towards access to home audio. The early electrical phonographs began as monaural formats, on which consumers played records. By the 1930s, radio came in, the programs being relayed on separate radio receivers which were often large wooden consoles. The concept of home entertainment thus gained ground, the home audio devices being a record player and a wireless radio receiver referred to as radiograms or consoles. These units were monaural, featuring a single integrated loudspeaker in the console.

Moving on to the 1950s, the mono systems that dominated the home audio landscape transitioned to stereophonic sound. The high-fidelity audio systems that came in at this point, aimed to reproduce sound with high accuracy and minimal distortion. The vinyl LP also became popular during this period where the components such as the turntables, speakers and amplifiers became available at affordable rates. It soon became possible to have the highest quality sound reproduction for home audio, with the term 'hi-fi' emerging to refer to this.

Home entertainment becoming standard

The 1970's saw the transition to home entertainment becoming a staple feature. This is when the concept of separate speakers also came about. With technological evolution, diverse home audio formats emerged, with younger audiences shifting from integrated systems to expansive modular units comprising of amplifiers,



The appearance of Compact Discs (CDs) can be traced to the early 1980s, making compact systems popular, integrating the hi-fi system.

speakers, radios, , devices for tapes and CDs, where component based stereo systems became a standard home feature. The necessity of having suitable separation of the speakers meant that the concept of having single cabinet designs evolved into three-box designs, where the main box became much smaller. The beginning of the 1970s also saw the systems starting to be made of plastic and other materials rather than wood. This period also recorded what can be considered as the origin of surround sound with the release of quadraphonic sound. Recorded on phonograph, tape and CDs, this required a quadraphonic player for playback but this failed to be popular.

The appearance of Compact Discs (CDs) can be traced to the early 1980s, making compact systems popular, integrating the hi-fi system. The Digital Audio Tapes (DAT) came about in the mid-eighties and early 1990s, gaining traction in countries like Japan, where it was used as a computer storage format, but did not receive widespread acceptance.

The 1990's and 2000 witnessed the next leap in technology, transforming how music entertainment would prevail at home. This manifested as smart speakers, wireless speakers, along with streaming platforms such as YouTube, Spotify coming to the fore, surpassing the earlier existing MP3 platform. This has virtually revolutionised the audio segment of home entertainment.

It is estimated that nearly 40 per cent of households have some form of home entertainment, with this number increasing to 80 per cent in the case of wealthy households which have a dedicated home theatre.



Modern entertainment pad
CREDITS : UNSPLASH

Emergence of Home Theatre

Though the concept of home theatre did not emerge till the mid-twentieth century, home cinema actually made its beginning in the 1920s as a rare luxury for a select few. This was possible through silent 16mm projectors which then changed over to 8mm and 16mm sound projectors by the 1930s. They remained confined to the elite, luxury segment for the next twenty years, post which the 8mm film, cameras and projectors became affordable to reach a larger audience. The rooms assigned to screen the movies during this period were typically referred to as 'screening rooms' where 16mm or 35mm projectors were used.

Later, with home video technologies developing in the 1970s featuring VCRs, the 8mm film market for home screening was practically killed. By the nineties, home theatre became a common consumer item with the typical system featuring a VCR or a Laser Disc player connected to a large screen. On the higher category, rear projection screens, LCD screens featured. The introduction of front video projectors brought in cinema type visual experience. These steady advancements chalked the initial path that eventually culminated in the outstanding home entertainment system that exists today.

Current era of home cinema

The twenty first century witnessed a rapid development in the home theatre technology, where it not only improved but also became

accessible to the discerning customer. The period 2000 to 2010 was witness to developments such as high-definition video, Blu-ray discs, 3D display technologies where the experience of home theatre was cinema standards, brought on at affordable prices. Blu-ray became an extremely popular video format by mid-2010, with the first 4K Blu-ray being developed in 2016.

The same year was also witness to the development of High Dynamic Range (HDR) advanced picture quality. Apart from this, online streaming services brought in a new dimension to the concept of home entertainment. With large high quality television sets becoming more affordable, accessible to those aspiring, the concept of home theatre became a staple feature in most wealthy households.

Cut to the present, it is estimated that nearly 40 per cent of households have some form of home entertainment, with this number increasing to 80 per cent in the case of wealthy households which have a dedicated home theatre. Interestingly, the quality of the audio and video in these systems are many times found to be better than an average cinema theatre, given that the individual households have access to opting for the best audio and video systems available. In short, the 2020s are now witnessing a scenario where home theatre has become a preferred option over public theatres. ◆



Music Vinyl Disc coming back in trend
CREDITS : UNSPLASH



Home Theatre setup
CREDITS : UNSPLASH



PRO FX

Perfect your sound with PRO FX

BY NANDHINI SUNDAR

This is an era where automation in interior solutions and AV systems in the audio, video segment, be it a residence, an office, a commercial space, has become an integral part to be addressed and executed, sans which the interior décor is considered to be literally incomplete. Home automation, be it controlling the innumerable electrical and electronic gadgets, the lights, the blinds, the ACs, the mood of each space during different times of the day and night, has become a facet that is taken for granted to be in place in any high-end interior.

Offering an end to end, comprehensive solution that is not only unmatched in quality of the product and service rendered, but also in the name carved for itself in this niche segment in the country is **PRO FX Tech Ltd.** A journey that began in 2000 in Bengaluru, when electronic gadgets were limited in their range and availability, not to mention their functional possibilities, has seen a meteoric rise to garner the top slot in the country in the sound solutions segment. Recalls **Manmohan Ganesh, Founder and Managing Director, PRO FX Tech Ltd.**, "Having spent the entire childhood and growing up in a tech savvy country like Japan, it seemed only natural to be drawn into this field in Bengaluru, which is also the tech capital of India."

A remarkable journey

Given that the locally available products, two decades back, were not in tune with what was available in countries like Japan, the initial foray for Manmohan centred around addressing the sales and service of the imported audio and video solutions in the premier segment. "The initial decade was not easy because of competition from the unorganised sector but the curiosity as well as the thirst for these solutions switched the market in the coming years." Showrooms came up thence in Mumbai and Chennai besides Bengaluru, to later expand the footprint to 7 across the country along with 13 company owned service centres.

While the initial foray was collaboration in sales with global audio brands, later the company expanded the operations to include automation "as this is the key segment now and the expansion in business has been chiefly word of mouth, catering to the premium segment of customers." **PRO FX** prides in being the biggest solution provider in the residential space with a turnover of over Rs 130 crores, offering the largest service in infrastructure, being one of the pioneers in this field in the country.



Why PRO FX

As a solution provider as well as seller of premium audio and video solutions from the best of the world, **PRO FX** prides in providing comprehensive solutions where technical assistance is extended starting from designing the space to addressing the video and audio solutions based on the space and specific functional requirements. The solution on offer is thus not confined to merely audio, video and automation but extends to the area of security, visitor management, the materials used for the acoustics in the space, the décor executed in terms of furniture and shades, the comfort levels explored, the aesthetics addressed, to mention a few.

Be it a residence, a retail, an office space, the automation and solutions provided are packaged and delivered in a customised format where there is no piece meal solution to meet requirements. The custom-built solutions are thus tailored for each customer to address the individual tastes and lifestyles as well as the specific functional requirements so as to come up with the perfect fit. Not only functionality is high on priority but aesthetics too, the final execution being done in tandem with the interior designer.

The international brands on offer are also tested to meet the unique, specific requirements of Indian conditions, with experience centres

set up to enable the customers to walk through and experience the solutions that are being explored. Post installation, the service centres across the country provide the necessary service support to ensure the maintenance needs are fully met with.

The solutions offered are not restricted to only the ultra-luxury segment but cater to smaller budgets too where every segment is addressed with the same meticulous attention to detail and unparalleled service. Based on the individual budgets, the best solution is worked out to the satisfaction of the customer. A full service in-house team takes charge of the entire execution at site so as to ensure the final installation is flawlessly done. To ensure there is no damage during the transportation of products over long distances, ultra care is taken in the form of special re-packaging.

To enable the customer to personally, physically experience the audio-visual solutions on offer, **PRO FX** hosts the unmatched experience centre, Experia 2.0, the country's first and only one of its kind. Here, the potential customers can explore the limitless possibilities of home entertainment and smart living, witness the seamless integration of the world's best AV and automation technologies against a luxurious home setting. This inspiring walkthrough enables customers to make an informed choice to recreate these experiences within their own spaces.



Extensive service and product range

The range of services and products offered by **PRO FX** is extensive, covering pure music systems and multi-room music systems across a residence, offering home theatre solutions, providing automation solutions for a residence, office spaces, commercial spaces where the accent is on customisation to meet individual requirements.

CINEMATIC HOME THEATRES

Be it a compact room or a sprawling entertainment zone, the luxury home theatre solutions offered by **PRO FX** is custom designed to immerse the users in sensational sound and stunning visuals. Each installation is customised to address the unique space and aesthetics desired, with meticulous attention paid to acoustics, projection, lighting and seamless integration of all the electronic devices. **PRO FX**'s 'Experience by Design' philosophy ensures every installation exceeds the expectations, transforming the space into an extraordinary private cinema.

SOUND PAR EXCELLENCE

Being one of the pioneers in the country catering to sound segment of audiophiles, **PRO FX** offers the world's finest Hi-Fi systems to the connoisseur. Partnering with some of the leading global brands such as Denon, KEF, Polk Audio, and JBL, it offers an extensive range of high-fidelity speakers, amplifiers and audio components. Its unstinted commitment to quality and performance ensures the end result is pure, lifelike sound, turning the entertainment zone into one that is most aspired and realised.

PERFECTING THE SMART HOME

Home automation solutions have become an integral part of hi-end contemporary homes. **PRO FX** comes with a range of smart home automation solutions to integrate lighting, audio, video, motorised drapes, fuse in climate control along with security options, to list a few. These solutions are accessed through smartphones, tablets, voice assistants such as Google, Siri, Alexa. The end result is to transform the residences into intelligent environments where convenience, security, energy efficiency is actively addressed. Given the high level of customisation brought in, the solutions offered ensure they are in tune with daily lifestyle choices and comfort levels expected by the users.

CORPORATE SOLUTIONS

Corporate solutions come with a different set of needs and expectations as compared with residences. **PRO FX** has a range of solutions for this segment, delivering cutting edge AV solutions for the boardrooms, conference rooms, auditoriums, hospitality venues as well as educational institutions. The solutions include interactive displays, digital signages, video walls, high performance audio systems, where each is designed for reliability and clarity.

The installations also come with a high level of aesthetic integrations where the cabling is concealed, the equipment blends with the existing décor, with every system optimised for flawless operation with minimal disruption to business activities. Every project is thus executed with precision, from solution to design and installation and thence to programming and ongoing support. Topping this is the guaranteed robust after sales service, given that **PRO FX** is the authorised service partner for leading AV brands in the country.

Bringing home the finest brands

Given the commitment to delivering the highest quality of products and solutions, **PRO FX** curates the finest in audio technology, partnering with the world’s most respected brands to deliver the exceptional sound experiences. The leading brands offered include KEF, Polk Audio, Denon in the High-Fidelity segment, each renowned for their innovation and commitment to audio excellence. Likewise, in the speaker segment, **PRO FX** brings in equally renowned brands such as Definitive Technology, Theory, JBL, Revel to offer unmatched experience in sound quality.

KEF

Known for its pioneering technologies such as the Uni-Q coincident-source driver and Metamaterial Absorption Technology (MAT), KEF has set many benchmarks in acoustic engineering. Recipient of over 300 awards and over 150 patents, KEF is a favourite among audiophiles and professionals. **PRO FX** brings home the KEF LS60 Wireless, a groundbreaking speaker system that redefines high-fidelity home audio with its innovative design and advanced technology. It combines the brand’s signature Uni-Q driver array with Metamaterial Absorption Technology (MAT™) to deliver remarkably clear, natural and immersive sound.

Its unique Single Apparent Source design ensures coherent sound dispersion, while the Uni-Core Force Cancelling Driver arrangement maximises bass performance in a compact footprint. Each speaker houses 1400-watt amplification system, with dedicated Class AB and Class D amps for high, mid and low frequencies, enabling precise control and dynamic range. The system supports a wide range of connectivity options, including HDMI eARC, WiFi, Bluetooth 5.0 and is Room Ready, making it a versatile all-in-one solution. Designed by Michael Young, the LS60 Wireless comes with a sleek, slender profile to fit into contemporary spaces.

POLK AUDIO

Synonymous with value and performance, Polk Audio delivers products that combine robust engineering with affordability. Engineered in Baltimore, their speakers come with a strong legacy of American craftsmanship. The Polk Reserve R700, offered by **PRO FX** is a floor standing tower speaker, delivering powerful high-fidelity sound with remarkable clarity. Featuring dual 8-inch woofers alongside a 6.5-inch turbine cone woofer and a 1-inch Pinnacle Ring Radiator tweeter, the R700 produces deep, impactful bass, smooth midrange and crisp, natural highs.

Its innovative Power Port 2.0 technology, including the patent-pending X-Port, enhances bass performance by allowing lower and louder output without distortion. The cabinet, engineered with advanced bracing and resonance control, minimises unwanted vibrations, ensuring clean sound reproduction. Hi-Res Audio certified and compatible with Dolby Atmos and DTS:X, it is an ideal solution as a reference stereo pair while becoming the cornerstone of home theatre system. Its sleek, modern design and exceptional sonic precision, makes it a standout value solution for audiophiles.

DENON

This pioneering Japanese audio company is the inventor of the world’s first commercial CD player. It continues to lead in the professional and consumer audio equipment, producing impeccable quality products including AV receivers, Blu-ray players, wireless music systems and moving coil phonograph cartridges. The brand is known for blending advanced engineering with user friendly features to cater to audiophiles and home theatre solutions. **PRO FX** brings to the customer the advantage of Denon.

One of the premium products of this brand which is offered is the Denon HEOS system which enables users to stream high-resolution audio in their entire interiors, controlled through a single app. With flexibility to expand from a single speaker to a full surround sound system, HEOS delivers convenience with exceptional sound quality, be it a multi-room set up or merely the home theatre.





Definitive Technology

With its reputation to craft speakers that come with ultra-wide dynamic range, crystal clear highs and thunderous bass, Definitive Technology provides solutions for home theatre, hi-fi listening, subwoofers, architectural speakers, and weatherproof outdoor sound. **PRO FX** brings home the advantage of Definitive Technology to offer unmatched experience to the user.

One of its flagship products, the Mythos Series that **PRO FX** offers, comes as a sleek, high performance speaker designed to deliver unmatched home audio experience with remarkable clarity and style. Featuring as ultra-slim profiles of less than 2 inches deep, these speakers are crafted from aircraft-grade aluminium enclosures that minimise resonance and coloration, ensuring pure, uncoloured sound. The Mythos series is IP66-rated, making it suitable for indoor and covered outdoor environments. Designed for seamless integration, they come with adjustable extensions to match modern flat-panel TVs from 65 to 90 inches, along with acoustically transparent metal grills. The system delivers tight, powerful bass and a balanced, expansive soundstage that rivals more expensive options, making it a fine choice for audiophiles with versatile, high-end audio performance and elegant design.

HEGEL

Renowned for its high end amplifiers that combine technological innovation with musicality, Hegel products come with clarity, detail and a dynamic range to pick from. **PRO FX** brings home Hegel H600 which is a flagship integrated amplifier setting a new standard for audiophile-grade performance. Delivering 301 watts per channel into 8 ohms, the H600 drives even the most demanding speakers with precision and authority. The advanced SoundEngine2 technology minimises distortion to near inaudible levels, ensuring crystal-clear, natural sound reproduction with exceptional detail and dynamic



range. Equipped with a comprehensive suite of digital inputs including balanced XLR, USB and HDMI ARC, the H600 supports high-resolution audio formats up to 24-bit/192kHz, making it most suitable for modern music systems.

THEORY

A US headquartered specialist in architectural loudspeakers meant for high output, high resolution sound in residential and commercial spaces, Theory offers surface mount, in-wall, in-ceiling, pendant speakers, soundbars, subwoofers and loudspeaker controllers. Its minimalist yet sophisticated design serves as a fine product to integrate into modern living spaces. With its strong commitment to craftsmanship, it uses premium materials and innovative engineering techniques, ensuring performance longevity.

PRO FX brings to the customer Theory sb25 which is a compact, wide bandwidth, high output loudspeaker designed for venues such as eateries, retail stores, venues of worship. Featuring two 5-inch carbon fibre low-frequency drivers and a 1.4-inch polymer high-frequency compression driver, housed in a powder-coated aluminium enclosure, the sb25 delivers flat, extended frequency response with wide and uniform dispersion, ensuring accurate timbre and detailed sound across a broad area.



REVEL

This prestigious American brand is renowned for its high quality luxury loudspeakers that deliver exceptional audio fidelity for home and automotive applications. **PRO FX** brings home Revel's flagship product, PerformaBe F328Be floor standing speaker from their acclaimed PerformaBe series. The three-way tower features three 8-inch woofers, a 5¼-inch midrange driver and a signature 1-inch beryllium tweeter, all housed in a meticulously engineered cabinet with thick walls and internal bracing to minimise resonance.

The F328Be delivers a transparent, detailed soundstage with virtually distortion-free performance, combining deep, controlled bass with crystal clear highs and rich midrange detail. The advanced PerformaBe crossover network and proprietary Acoustic Lens waveguide ensures seamless integration of drivers for exceptional clarity and dynamic range, making it a most sought after choice for audiophiles seeking flagship-level sound quality.

Conceived by renowned product designer Nicola Gallizia, the 505 Up Harry's Bar module serves as a mobile bar where its self-contained unit seamlessly integrates into the 505 system. An internal compartment with shelves, drawers provide the required storage for glassware along with the openers and bottles to serve the drinks, with options of wood, ceramic, eco-skin featuring as coverings.

JBL

An acknowledged leader in audio innovation and well known for delivering powerful, clear sound, JBL product range spans from professional studio monitors to consumer speakers, engineered with patented technologies to bring in the signature JBL bass and detailed highs. It continues to lead the audio industry by bridging the gap between professional-grade technologies and consumer friendly features. Its home theatre solutions leverage innovations originally developed for concert halls and cinemas, bringing in crystal clear clarity and cinematic experience.

PRO FX offers the flagship JBL Stage A130 which is a compact two-way bookshelf speaker, delivering clear detailed sound with rich bass, ideally suited for smaller spaces. Featuring a 5.25-inch woofer and a 1-inch aluminium dome tweeter with JBL's HDI™ waveguide, it comes with impressive clarity and wide sound dispersion. Its bass-reflex design enhances low-frequency performance, while the sturdy MDF cabinet minimises resonance for accurate audio reproduction. Combining advanced technology with sleek design, it serves as an ideal choice for home theatres.



Dipping into the vernacular

BY NANDHINI SUNDAR

FEATURING ARCHITECT PRATYUSH PRASAN





PRATYUSH PRASAN

The objective was to come up with a structure that is totally vernacular to relate to the context of a village residence, yet subtly address the needs of a contemporary lifestyle. The farmhouse, designed by **Architect Pratyush Prasan, SPP Architects**, borrows the vernacular design sentiments of the south, though the context of the site is Northern India.



Large verandas, with filler slab roof, shade the interiors

The brief received for the residence was to offer a design that was unusual, while bringing in the strong sustainable elements of vernacular architecture.

The 6 acres of the site allocated for the residence was in the midst of an expanse of farm lands, the context thus being intensely rural. The climatic conditions too spoke of extremes of weather depending on the seasons, with the summers getting intensely hot and dry and the winters proving to be bitterly cold. "The vernacular design styles of the South were chosen because this was explicitly requested", clarifies Pratyush. "The structure was also kept at ground level, with a courtyard fused in, similar to the design style opted in the erstwhile residences of Southern India such as Karaikudi."

Interestingly, the choice of request for the floor tiling was the handmade Athangudi tiles sourced from Karaikudi district in Tamil Nadu. But Pratyush decided against it as "it does not make sense to ship the tiles over this distance if sustainability is a key plank on which the structure is to rest." The materials used in the structure were thus sourced from within 100km of the site, be it the local quartzite, the bricks, the lime.

Natural light and ventilation

Given the strong sustainable leanings sought to be adhered, the quantum of natural light and ventilation into the interiors had to be first addressed and this called for coming up with a solution that did not require the use of air-conditioning or needed only minimal use of it. Pratyush decided to start his design from this premise and the spaces then emerged as open and airy, with large volumes that brought in the stack effect to throw out the hot air.



The internal courtyard, besides ushering in natural light and ventilation, creates the stack effect.

Varied roofs

The chief expectation in the brief had been to come up with a structure that was very unusual for a residence. This certainly called for Pratyush to bring in elements that met the expectation. He started by addressing the roofing of the structure, dispensing with the conventional flat roof or even the sloped roof commonly seen in vernacular architecture.

The living room thus comes with a dome ceiling that is 22 feet high, "but the interiors are cosy because of the dome structure." Interestingly, the structure comes with 7 different types of roofs "based on the functionality of each room." The differential roof

structures begin from the entrance porch which hosts four shallow domes. The living area, designed as a square, has the exposed brick dome resting its load on this square structure.

The dining area and the kitchen incorporate exposed brick vaults for the roof while the master bedroom and the guest bedroom come with a series of jack arches in bricks. The bathroom comes with a flat filler slab roof, "the local potters supplying the terracotta pots." Sloped roof with Mangalore tiles opens on to the sunlit courtyard, "letting the rainwater to drain naturally down the slope." Antique wooden pillars support the roofing in the courtyard, visually relating to the erstwhile Chettinad houses that hosted large courtyards within the residences.



Entry is marked by brick arches and random rubble stone masonry



Random rubble masonry, brick vault, articulate the living area



Jack arches, random rubble masonry lend the vernacular flavour in the bedroom



Study area



Quartzite stones feature in the bathroom too, lending a rugged, rustic flavour.



Lime plastering in the corridor done by hand by local women

“The L-shaped column protectors in the corners along with the 12.5 feet high random rubble load bearing walls support the one-foot thick concrete beam that goes around the building. The beam serves as the support for the vaults and the flat filler slab roof, while tying the building together”, Pratyush explains.

Speaking vernacular with random rubble

Random rubble masonry walls complement the vernacular language of the differential roofs in each part of the residence. “The locally available quartzite stones were sourced for the walls. Given their varied sizes, the task of fusing them together to erect the random rubble masonry walls was a task. The local artisans are versatile in erecting these walls using cement as the binding material, but what we used was lime and they needed to be trained on this”, elaborates Pratyush.

The local quartzite was used with lime surkhi mortar to also lay the foundation for the structure which comes sans RCC and columns. “The L-shaped column protectors in the corners along with the 12.5 feet high random rubble load bearing walls support the one-foot thick concrete beam that goes around the building. The beam serves as the support for the vaults and the flat filler slab roof, while tying the building together”, Pratyush explains.

Creating the stack effect

To facilitate the exit of hot air, vents have been strategically placed beneath the vaults. “Given the height of the ceiling and the vents placed beneath the vaults, the hot air is automatically pushed out by the cool air entering through the large windows, thus successfully creating the stack effect.” Accentuating this stack effect is the internal courtyard with its waterbody, not only letting out hot air but also bringing in moisture laden cool air to offset the dry summer heat.



Aerial view of the residence

China mosaic on the exteriors of the vaults and dome, further insulate the interiors from the intense heat of the summer months. The 1 to 1.5 feet thick stone walls with lime mortar likewise add to this insulation during the intense summer heat. The result, there is a sizeable drop in the ambient temperature to the tune of 5° to 7°.

Exterior connect

An expanse of glass features in every space to connect to the exterior greens as well as usher in copious natural light, besides lending a feel of openness to the interiors. “The heat ingress through the glass is successfully addressed by bringing in shading through the vaults that feature over it. The thick greens shrouding the building on all three sides of the residence, further add to the shading and prevent the heat ingress.”

While the exposed brick vaults and random rubble masonry walls lend a rustic warm flavour to the interiors, the flooring too is addressed sensitively to complement this rugged rural ambience. Gravel embedded in lime mortar serves as the flooring in the corridors of the courtyard, a typical rural intervention of that region. The interior flooring is again stone to lend the rugged rural feel as well as match the vernacular sentiments. To accentuate this rural flavour, the lime plastering on the corridor walls are done by hand by local women, in contrast to the conventional mode of lime plastering.

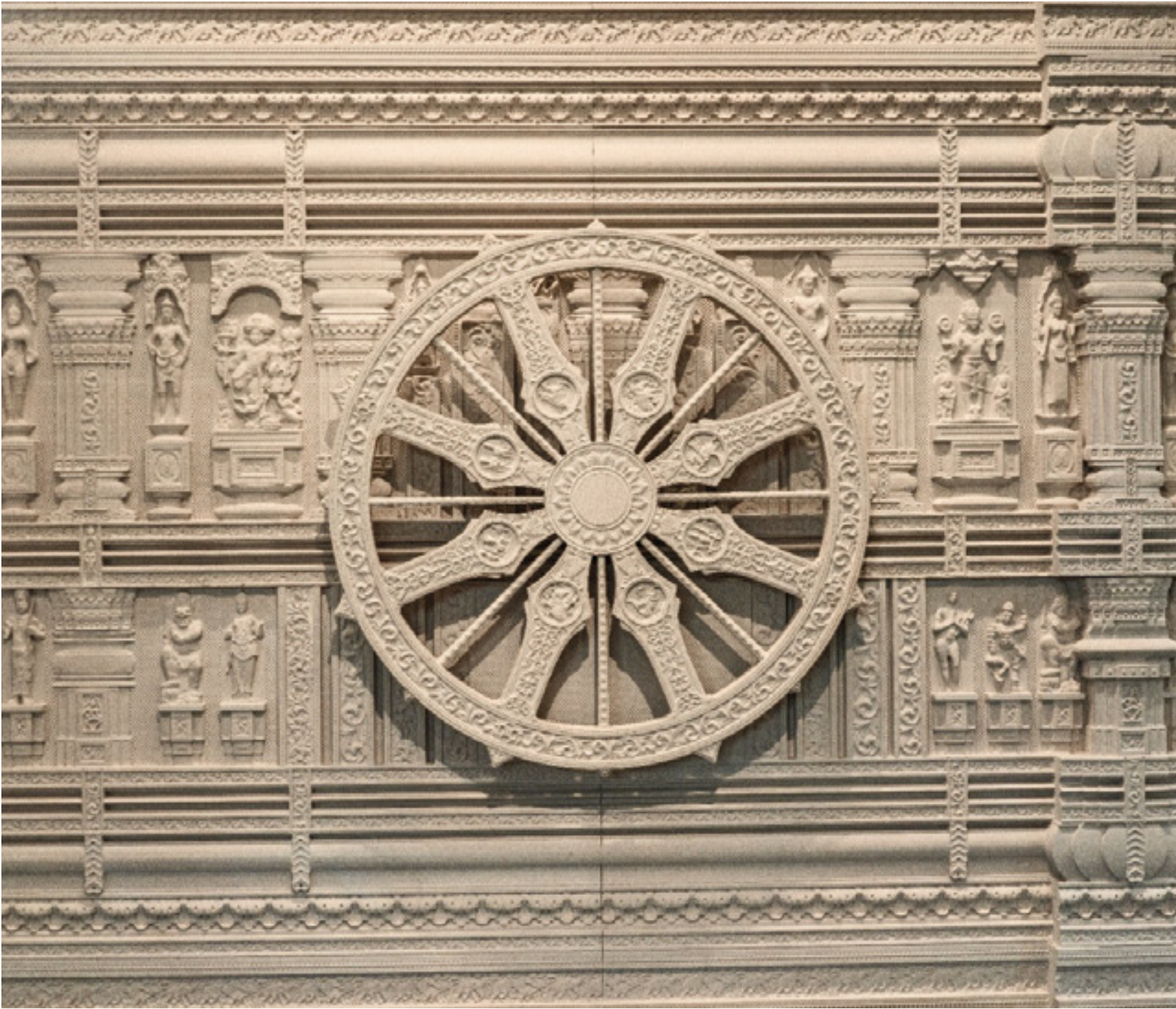
The bathrooms are specifically designed to lend the feel of living in a farm by bringing in cobble stones into the shower stall. Locally

sourced quartzite stone mark the walls while the structure of the bath and wash area are distinctly done with the intent to usher in the rustic flavours of rural living. The 5500 Sqft three-bedroom house is off the grid, using solar power for all its requirements, adding another feature to the sustainable leanings incorporated. ✖

Project: **Farmhouse at Palwal**
Design Firm: **SPP Architects**
Location: **Palwal, Haryana**
Built area: **5500 Sqft**
Design team : **Architect Pratyush Prasan**
Completion: **2023**
Structural Engineering: **Pankaj Khanna**
Materials: **Exposed Brick, Quartzite stone, Lime Surkhi Mortar**
Picture Credits : **Anu Mukherjee**



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Designed to be climate responsive

BY NANDHINI SUNDAR

FEATURING ARCHITECT GOUTHAMA D M

No man is an island—this is the philosophy as well as the psychology of the design principle adopted by **Architect Gouthama D M of Mud Hands** and his designs rest on this fundamental plank to come up with structures that are not only in sync with the site context but are also totally climate responsive in their material use and structural form, connecting seamlessly to the exterior space enveloping it. Interestingly, Gouthama started his career as a civil engineer, yet his passion for architecture saw him joining the school at 30, to then graduate and become, what he likes to christen as, ‘Archipreneur’.



GOUTHAMA D M

A student of RV College of Architecture, Bengaluru, Gouthama was fascinated with alternate techniques of construction as a civil engineer, propelling him to go further and perceive this in design form for a space. Interestingly, his work tenure before joining architecture school happened in IIM, NSRCL, where he developed a prototype of the concept of a shelter that could be wrapped up and erected as per rental requirements. “The idea is to identify a problem, understand it to find a solution based on research, then connect with academia and take it forward with workshops”, he elaborates on his involvement with alternate techniques.

Materia-sensitivity

For Gouthama, the key plank of sustainability is enabling architecture to be climate responsive, “using climate sensitive materials, simplifying the techniques adopted so as to make it easily adaptable, creating awareness and spreading knowledge on eco-friendly materials and construction techniques.” In keeping with this intent, Gouthama conducts multiple workshops for young architects, to not only spread awareness and educate, but also address the ancient skillsets that are already available and waiting to be tapped.



Dipping into the science behind Vaastu, Gouthama points, “it is about connecting with the exteriors, the nature as no one is isolated from this. The site speaks from the context and the interiors need to be integrated with the architecture that is climate responsive. It is about interpreting and orienting the design which should be versatile to relate to the context.” Not surprisingly, he shuns the notion of specific style or inclination in design, as “ideology should evolve, where the approach is not rigid.”

For Gouthama, the materials thus need to be humble, relevant, the architecture connecting the interiors with the exteriors, integrating alternate techniques that can be developed based on each site condition and context, taking into consideration the local skillsets available. “There can be no typology applied, no force fitting a style or material to meet a specific intention. The experience of the space should be from the scale, the volume of the space, the variations brought in, the element of surprise keyed in.”

The concept of privacy

While his designs are strongly tuned to be material sensitive, Gouthama also questions the concept of privacy in his design approach. This is amply borne out in one of his projects, a penthouse, where the residence was structured to create a space that raised questions on the way an interior should be articulated. The totally open terrace area with only the columns and beams present, was first sealed on the western and southern sections with rat trap bond brick masonry walls to bring in thermal insulation.

The demarcating walls between the private and public spaces in the free flowing residence were then structured to fall short of the existing beams, thus leaving a gap between the walls and ceiling, questioning the level of privacy that each room solicits. This also created a stack effect, permitting free flow of air between the spaces. The doors likewise came sans a frame, being pivoted. “The entire carpentry and hardware were done on site by local artisans”, he points. The walls were plastered with lime and cement oxide mixture, again done on site.

While the free flowing living and dining spaces open on to the terrace, the kitchen area was structured with a tiled roof, complete with a traditional chimney, where the interiors open on to the terrace to fuse in the exterior space. To further address heat ingress into the living area from the open terrace, insulated arched brick panels were brought in. “There should be a logical response for each detailing or design, as there needs to be a reason for bringing it in. This is the fundamental process of developing a climate responsive design”, opines Gouthama.

Adaptive reuse

For Gouthama, the concept of sustainability is not only about addressing the materiality and design of an upcoming building but also renovating, restoring an existing building for adaptive reuse. “If the structure is not dilapidated, it is sustainable to renovate, upgrade the spaces. The concept of sustainability should be comprehensive,



Tiled roof with light vents ushers in ample natural light--House of Thoughts

especially address the urban scale which is not being done currently”, he points.

His project House of Thoughts in Mysuru, is a case in point. The structure was an old building and considered to have very little option for any functional use. Gouthama began his intervention on the building by retaining the ground floor in its existing state and turned it into a commercial space. To make the spaces expansive, a few walls were strategically removed and the windows that were removed were reused on the first level of the building.

“The program for the adaptive reuse was based on the revenue generating potential of the existing building.” In tune with this intent, a multi-program space was created with an art gallery and workshop. The first level was converted into a youth stay where the individual sleeping areas are structured to be porous with demarcating elements being merely bamboo blinds.

The building came with a weak roof that needed strengthening and this was addressed by supporting the structure through closely placed series of rafter beams. The free flowing spaces that emerged after the intervention, with their Mangalore tiled roof and light vents, ensure the presence of ample natural light and ventilation, the earthy décor serving to be energetic sans artificial cooling.

In his yet another renovation project, The Perch, Gouthama had the task of strengthening and upgrading the existing old structure. “The objective was to make the load bearing structure structurally stable and sustainable and this was done by reducing the self-weight of the structure”, he explains. A bamboo roof with steel trusses was introduced on the terrace with thermo-concrete poured over the bamboo reinforcement to bring in a light weight roof. “The approach has to be innovative to adapt to the structural requirement while the intervention is sustainable”, he adds.



Porous individual sleeping areas--House of Thoughts

His project House of Thoughts in Mysuru, is a case in point. The structure was an old building and considered to have very little option for any functional use. Gouthama began his intervention on the building by retaining the ground floor in its existing state and turned it into a commercial space.



Multi-purpose space on level one--House of Thoughts

Carving out public spaces

His concept of adaptive reuse is not confined to only an existing old building but also focuses on identifying public spaces that can be designed as interactive zones or hang out areas. “This could even be a setback space in a commercial space or an unused veranda in a large old house”, he points. His intervention in the setback space of the Selco Foundation building is a case in point.

Gouthama began by ripping out the existing sheet roof in the setback space and replacing it with a roof fashioned out of different

sizes of inverted terracotta pots. The pathway was then lined with Kota stone seats placed on Porotherm blocks to create an open air theatre which could serve as an informal gathering and workshop space. An existing bicycle parking was turned into a closed conference space facing the open air theatre.

The porous paver block pathway permits the rainwater to collect in the space and seep into the water tank structured below where water is collected for gardening purposes. “This space which had earlier remained unused, has now become an interactive zone for the office staff of Selco Foundation as well as the public who frequent the building”, Gouthama points.



Roof over setback space with inverted terracotta pots--Selco Foundation



Informal gathering space defined with Kota stone seats over Porotherm blocks--Selco Foundation

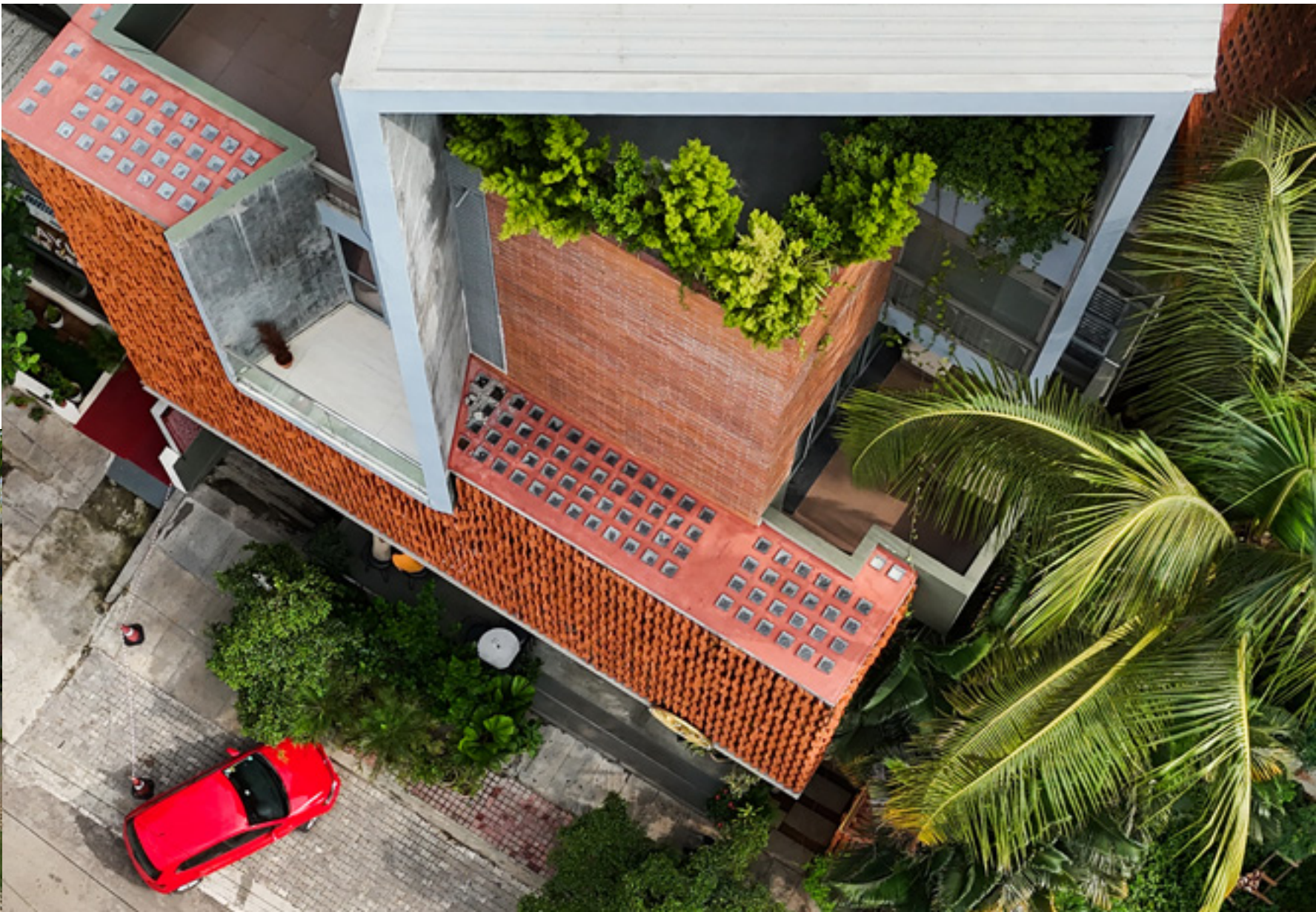
Individual identities in multi-dwelling

It is customary to expect the individual units of a multi-dwelling complex to house a similar design approach in their structural form. Yet Gouthama chose to do it differently, coming with a commercial space at ground level and six units on the upper levels in his project, South Canopy, where each has its own individuality that is distinctive in structural form. The South facing tight site in a dense urban neighbourhood, came with its own challenges of a noisy road, heat and dust from its largely commercial neighbourhood. Gouthama conceptualised the mixed-use building as an inward looking design with a dedicated entry assigned for the residents, distinct from the commercial space.

“Though the site is situated on an extremely busy road, the objective was to create a quiet residence within where each comes

with a unique interesting space. The inward looking spaces in each unit fuses in an internal courtyard, with each unit featuring differential volumes where the staggered roofs become individual step out terraces for the units above. “The terraces have been turned into lush green spaces, where the vegetation aids in cutting the noise levels from the street below”, he points.

The varying volumes also creates a stack effect to keep the interiors naturally cool. The open and closed spaces emerging from the differential volumes aids to diffuse the sunlight where required and enhance the natural light infiltration in other segments. The canopied exposed cement exteriors come with a double skin façade of clay tiles to insulate the building from the South heat ingress as well as shield from the noise and dust of the busy road.



Double skin facade of clay tiles and exposed cement canopy mark the exteriors--South canopy

School with a difference

When Gouthama was approached to design the PSET School, a middle school on a 7500 Sqft area in Mysuru, he decided to approach the design very differently. He conceptualised the individual classrooms as large units that could house 100 students, the interiors laid with steps to permit clear visibility to the board and the faculty's desk. The corridors of the classrooms are staggered and varied in size to lend an interesting space. The staggering comes as both horizontal and vertical, where the classrooms are not stacked on top of each other on the different levels but are spread out to bring in a play of volumes at each level.

At the ground level, the landscape alternates between the classroom, bringing in the horizontal staggering. The staggered positioning of the classrooms brings in a multi-dimensional exterior façade to the built edifice. Transitional spaces in the form of courtyards feature along the corridors, enabling passive cooling.

The structure is built using CSEB blocks made from the soil excavated from the site. The building comes with a series of interlocking brick vaults and Jack arches marking the roof, the valleys between the Jack arches being filled with the light weight thermo-concrete to insulate.

"The vaults come with a mesh underneath to let out hot air. The small windows lining the classrooms, combined with the courtyards along the corridors, create a stack effect, aiding in the passive cooling of the interiors", explains Gouthama. The structure further evokes the curiosity of the young students by marking the entrance with a canopy where the steel columns pierce through a flat brick funicular roof.

Transitional spaces in the form of courtyards feature along the corridors, enabling passive cooling. The structure is built using CSEB blocks made from the soil excavated from the site.



Transitional spaces in the form of courtyards feature along the corridors--PSET School



The Jaalis bring in natural light and ventilation--PSET School



CSEB block structure with interlocking brick vaults and Jack arches--PSET School

Differential roofs

The project, Vault Line, was a simple three bedroom residence to be housed in a 1200 Sqft site. Gouthama decided to create an interest in the structure while simultaneously bringing in sustainability into the language of the building. The structure thus pans out as different volumes for each of the rooms where each comes with a different roof structure. The interiors are designed to be porous so as to fuse in visually the exterior sights. The built edifice thus features as staggered multi-levels through which rainwater cascades down to fill the water tanks placed at each level.

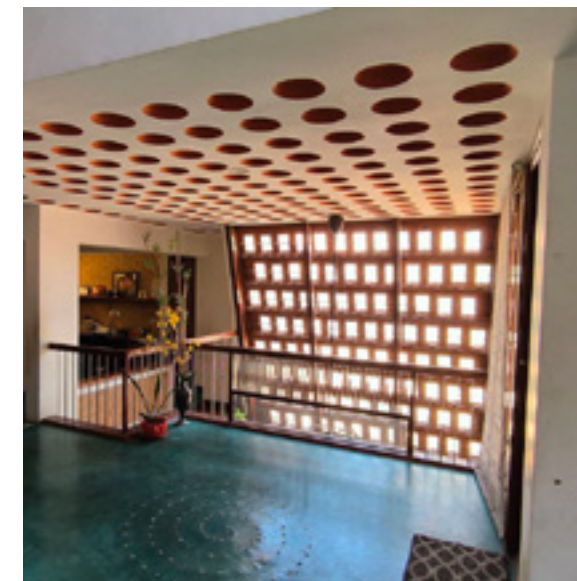
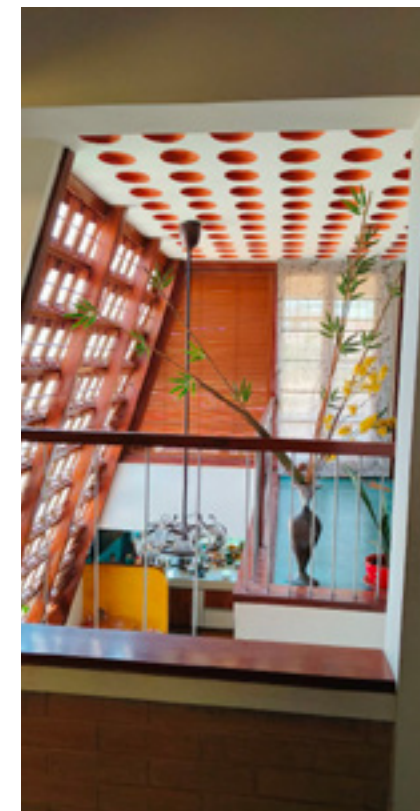
The 3000 Sqft built up area comes as a composite structure made with brick, stone and concrete columns to evoke a distinctive experience emerging from the varied materials. The structure features as a blend of RCC and vaulted roofs. The roof over the car park uses a differential concept of corrugated folded plate where

waste glass bottles are fused in to reduce the use of steel and concrete even as the bottles aid in strengthening the concrete.

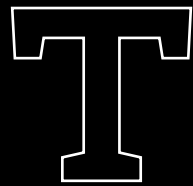
His project, Clay and Colour likewise fuses in massive brick vaults, filler slab roofs where the rooms come with different volumes. The flooring is lime mortar based, traditional flooring. "The basic approach for sustainability is to bring in the vernacular responses which are strongly climate responsive in character, and relate them specifically to the individual site context", points Gouthama. "The challenge is to transfer these responses to the vertical developments that have become the norm and this is where architects need to explore and come up with appropriate interventions." Such relevant, appropriate climate responsive solutions are the fundamentals of genuine sustainable architecture, Gouthama opines. ✱



The interiors with differential roof structure, encompass the exteriors



Filler slab roofs mark the interior spaces--Clay & Colour



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

1. 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.
2. Every page will have 5 listings, each coming in the size of 5cm x 20cm
3. Based on the products, the listing will be done under Colour Coded Categories
4. A person can also choose 2 modules instead of 1.
5. Trade Members are to provide their company and branding details to fit the module.
6. 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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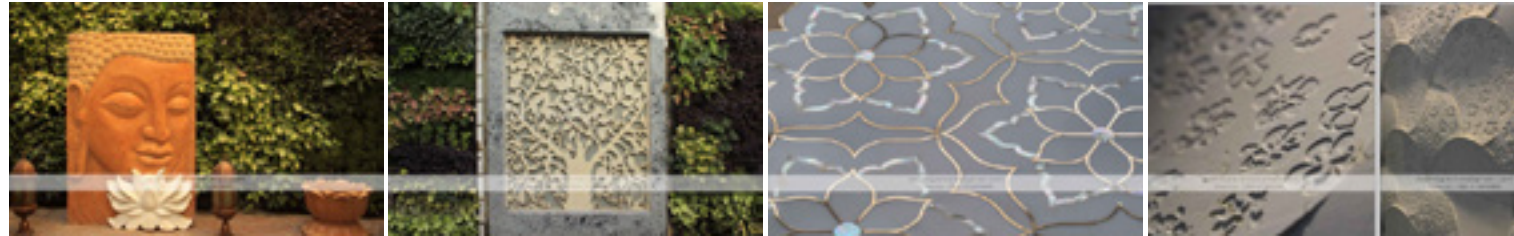
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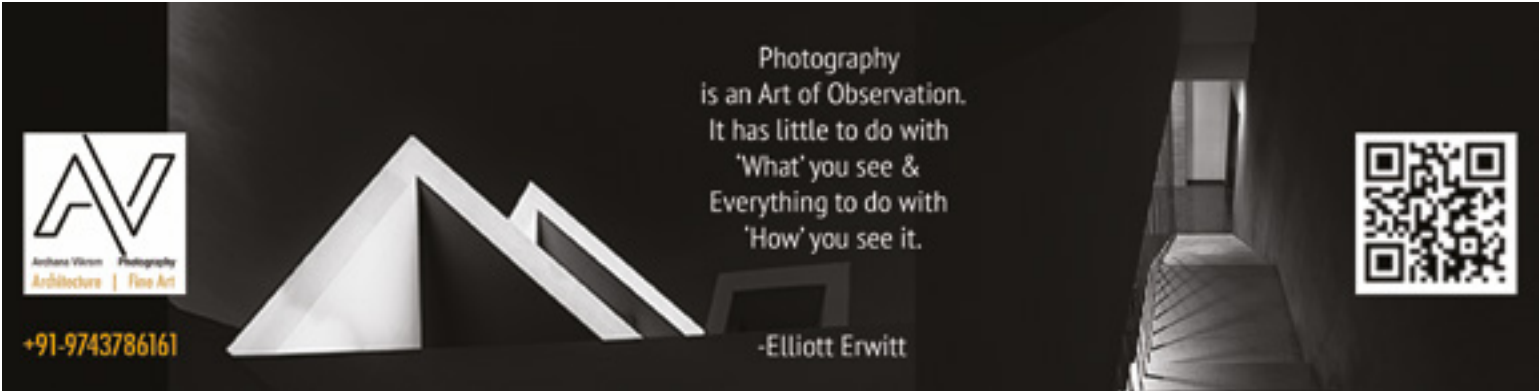
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Living the **passion**

BY NANDHINI SUNDAR

FEATURING ARCHITECT LEENA KUMAR



She was barely 12, studying in class eight when she decided she would become an architect after playing with a set of Lego blocks. She then single mindedly pursued it to the point of applying only in architecture schools for her graduation after completing her schooling. The intensity and conviction of realising what she passionately sought was so strong as to prevent her from even contemplating any other profession in her life. Needless to say, this

conviction and relentless pursuit of her goal saw her making a trip every day to UVCE Bangalore to secure her seat, which incidentally was also the only Architecture School she had applied. Such was her confidence in pursuing design as a career.

Meet Architect Leena Kumar, of Kumar Consultants, who is the first woman architect in Karnataka to have started an Architecture Practice as a single practitioner, in 1986, a period when there were also very few single woman practitioners in the country. Interestingly, while her passion for architecture was acute to the point of being soul consuming, she was also one who believed in enjoying her life while parallelly pursuing her goals. “I would skip many classes as those days attendance was not as stringent as now, to the point of one my professors commenting, ‘Leena enters and exits through the cracks in the walls!’”, she laughs, recalling her college days.

“I enjoyed life to the full while pursuing architecture and looking back now, it amazes me as to how I did it”, she smiles. “My focus was

on learning design without getting lost in the detailing which the classes indulged in. Hence my real learning came about only when I started my Architecture Practice.” After graduating in 1981, Leena interned with Baltiwala & Associates in Mumbai for a year and thence joined Somaya & Kalappa where she worked for three years before starting her Practice in Bangalore.

Her first project was Le Meridien which would continue to be with her over the next two decades as it went through multiple phases of reinvention. “I was associated with this project while working with Somaya & Kalappa and later, on starting my own Practice, the management connected with me to renovate sections of it and reinvent the concept keyed in”, she clarifies. The project, which evolved continuously, became a strong learning base, she states. “The entire space was conceptualised as a flood of colour and art to bring in the soul so as to eschew the typical impersonal feeling that luxury hotel decors exude.”

While Le Meridien was a continuation project, designed to bring in a sense of belonging to the guest through its warm ambience, a housing project for the Karnataka Housing Board was her other initial project, set on a 6-acre site in Bangalore where she brought in an alternate approach to the conventional concept of multi-dwelling units adopted during this era. Required to accommodate 213 units of 275 Sqft each in a ground plus two structure, where each unit came with a living, dining, kitchen and bedroom along with a toilet, Leena decided to bring in a staggered design concept.

Here, each unit opened on to a terrace of 200 Sqft on the first and second levels with the ground floor too enjoying a similar size garden space. “The staggering created a covered parking at ground level where the entrance to each unit featured.” Given the size of the units, the spaces had to be designed most efficiently while also keeping an eye on the budget.

Accenting on natural materials, colours and crafts

For Leena, a space comes alive through the natural materials used, the play of volumes, the colours infused, the quantum of natural light and ventilation, the dimensions that prevail and finally the layering of the interiors with a strong play of art, crafts and a depth of detailing. Not surprisingly, her spaces speak of all these factors, bringing together an energetic experience, the ensuing vitality of the place serving to be intensely uplifting. Her projects universally reveal a robust play of colour, traditional arts and crafts, where nature as well as tradition and nature-based motifs find an unmissable presence in the designs.

“The detailing becomes all the more crucial when it is a restoration project where the existing spaces are restored and reinvented. This involves circumventing many existing impediments such as beams, columns, differential volumes, to fuse into the newly conceptualised space. Here the detailing in the form of colour, textures, materiality, structural reinterpretation become the key elements that bring in the difference”, she elaborates. “The finishes matter immensely, be it with natural materials or an intense play of art which proves to be unique, transformative.”

Pointing that “in our country there is no dearth of arts and crafts, our abounding traditional crafts exquisite and unique to each region”, Leena ensures that all her projects have a fair share of the same, in whatever relevant form it can be integrated. Just as her penchant for fusing in traditional arts and crafts into the spaces, so is her strong inclination to reveal the materials in their natural form “as this permits the structure to express how it has aged.”

In one of her residential projects, she has the entire exteriors of the building in exposed brick work. “Over time the bricks aged and chipped. These defaced bricks were then sealed using China mosaic and the exterior walls now have their unique design pattern that adds grace to the age of the structure.” The objective is not to camouflage but to rectify artfully, respecting the natural process of ageing, she points. “This principle holds true even if a piece of art breaks, the sealing, when done, should reveal the pattern of the breakage to lend an authenticity to the natural process of living.”

Distinctive design approach

For Leena, each site, its context, functionality calls for an approach that is distinctive and unique to the project. This unique approach extends not only to the design conceptualised but also the



Coffee shop at Le Meridien with a handcrafted metal enclosure



Vibrant international crew lounge at Le Meridien, designed to cater to different cultures

The detailing becomes all the more crucial when it is a restoration project where the existing spaces are restored and reinvented.



Alternate approach to conventional concept of multi-dwelling--Karnataka Housing Board



Differential facade created in wood to be iconic--Starbucks Cafe

materiality, where the ensuing structure comes with a totally differential address. “Each project comes with its own unique story and this needs to be told in the design besides the site context and functionality. The design evolves from this space and is hence distinctive to each project”, she explains.

For instance, when she was faced with designing a three bedroom residence and an office space on an ultra slim 22x62 feet site, she chose a design that was staggered in its multi-levels and connected visually to enhance the volumetric spaces thus formed. The ground level of the building was raised 5 feet to accommodate the office in the basement while each functional space was placed at separate levels every 5 feet in the staggered edifice.

A small skylit courtyard with strategic vents was fused into the living area to permit ample natural light while throwing out hot air to enable the interiors to be naturally cool. The brick house incorporates natural materials and handmade Athangudi tiles to bring in an earthy warm flavour.

Likewise, in the project, Priya Boutique, Leena decided to address the interiors of the fabric retail store through the concept of threads which directly relates to the merchandise traded. The décor of the entire store is threaded through to create a dynamic space in keeping with the changing seasons and the altering range of stock tuned to the seasons.

Her residential project in Coonoor similarly displays a contextual approach in design. “The site came with a steep gradient of 30 feet from the rear to the front, the dimensions working out as 180x500 feet. The house needed to be on a single level to meet the needs of senior citizens.” Adhering to the site contours posed the challenge of designing the building on one level without disturbing the existing topography. Leena achieved it by extending the built mass on the same level from the midpoint of the site and turning the space beneath into a covered car park.

The free flowing interiors come with a double height ceiling, the interiors opened up to the exterior landscape to let the greens visually seep in. “Given the locational conditions, the roof had to be sloped, yet, a clay tiled roof was not practical because of a monkey menace in the region. Concrete tiles, which the monkeys cannot lift or break, were laid over wooden trusses made with local labour, with a layer of corrugated zinc sheets beneath the tiles to drain off any rainwater, should it find its way in.”

Her unbuilt project, The National War Memorial, which made it to the final shortlist of an international design competition, likewise speaks of symbolism in its design. “It is a composition of hexagons to resonate with Lutyens, Delhi, the design derived from the concept of the cosmos and eternity. The idea was to bring in solemnity along with the historicity of the structure planned, where national values stand tall, to be seen.”



The National War Memorial, a composition of hexagons to resonate with Lutyens, Delhi

Reinterpreting the traditional

Given her ardent leaning towards Indian traditional artforms and crafts, it is not surprising to see her projects display their copious presence in multiple forms, be it as subtle inclusion or an extensive incorporation, both into the structure and interiors. Yet, given the contemporary lifestyles and expectations, the same calls for reinterpreting these traditional artforms to fuse into modern spaces. Leena has successfully done that in her projects, where she has engaged skilled traditional artisans to execute the work, many of which feature on a massive scale.

Her project Mysore House is a fine example where traditional artisans have been engaged to derive the structure based on Mysore style of architecture. The residence coming up on a one acre plot, is built using the Dholpur stone from Rajasthan. The edifice features multiple arches, a typical design element of Mysore style

architecture. “The traditional stone sculptors worked on the Dholpur blocks, chiselling them expertly to hand sculpt the multiple arches.” The ground plus one structure has six large arches articulating the exterior façade, each one foot thick and two feet deep with varied spans, while multiple smaller arches mark the interior spaces, relating to the Mysore style.

“Though the traditional elements have been brought in, the same has been interpreted into a contemporary frame to meet functional requirements and lifestyles”, Leena adds. The structure, featuring as a staggered composition of multiple arches on the exteriors, is artfully tied to a free standing 30 feet high granite obelisk with a 50 feet metal space frame. The stone and brick composite walls encompass a column structure and RCC ceiling, where stone lintels, arched internal entryways and open to sky internal courtyards bring in a fine fusion of the traditional with the contemporary.

“The traditional stone sculptors worked on the Dholpur blocks, chiselling them expertly to hand sculpt the multiple arches.” The ground plus one structure has six large arches articulating the exterior façade, each one foot thick and two feet deep with varied spans, while multiple smaller arches mark the interior spaces, relating to the Mysore style.



Hand sculpted Dholpur stone arches resonate with Mysore style architecture--Mysore House



Natural stone walls, copious wood, handcrafted patterns in granite and marble as flooring, bring in the natural flavours

The exteriors speak of a deft combination of arches, black granite stone Butch work under the rectangular windows, the shading of which is artfully achieved by the presence of the arches, the black granite contrasting the pink Dholpur stone. The entire composition of materiality and design serves as a classic contemporary interpretation of traditional Mysore style architecture.

Her project, Sheelu Residence, located in Bangalore, is another fine example of her engagement with traditional artisans, using their unmatched workmanship to create masterpieces of work that could fit artfully into a luxury contemporary dwelling. The project, featuring three residences within a single site, serves as an astounding exhibit of what traditional craftsmanship can do

to an interior, when engaged with. The individual residences display exemplary craftsmanship in the form of semi-precious stone inlay work in wood and stone, exquisite traditional carvings in wood, stone sculptures, exotic traditional mural paintings on walls, to mention a few.

“The craftsmen were masters at their work, meticulously crafting their pieces at site, interpreting their designs to meet the contemporary context. The project features as a fine example of how our exotic crafts and craftsmanship can be fused into a contemporary space to bring in a rich flavour of spell binding art combined with luxury”, points Leena.



An exquisite mural by master artisan marks the living area of this extensively handcrafted residence--Sheelu Residence

When functionality dictates design

In the project, Aluminium Extrusion Factory, Leena decided to articulate the design purely based on the functional elements, yet with an unconventional approach. She thus came up with a pre-fabricated structure for the aluminium extrusion factory where aluminium extrusions were being manufactured. The elevation of the ground plus one structure is one of coloured glass and metal. The steel pillars connect with part concrete block walls and part zinc and cement sheets. Louvers with polycarbonate sheets and mesh beneath, serve as vents in the zinc sheet walls to let out the hot air and the heat radiating from the furnace and permit infiltration of natural light and ventilation into the factory.

The factory features at ground level, with the first level housing the office and canteen. The roof is a light weight zinc sheet to keep the load minimal on the steel structure. The multi-coloured openable glass panels on the first level bring in a sense of vibrancy and cheer to the space while letting in ample natural ventilation.

The interiors of the office done in a palette of browns and greys, effuse warmth, lending a unique, energetic character combined with the colourful glass panels. Further, thick vegetation ensconces the factory, with character lending metal chains assisting to channel the rainwater from the sloped roof. “The objective was to have a design that amply addressed functionality, yet created an ambience that was variant from a conventional cold factory setting.”

The factory features at ground level, with the first level housing the office and canteen. The roof is a light weight zinc sheet to keep the load minimal on the steel structure. The multi-coloured openable glass panels on the first level bring in a sense of vibrancy and cheer to the space while letting in ample natural ventilation.

Coloured glass and metal usher in an unconventional approach to the Aluminium Extrusion factory



Adaptive reuse

It was a structure that was 70 years old, originally a warehouse, located in the midst of a most polluted, crowded market place in the city. The building was to be renovated to house the office of the Karnataka Metal Company. The 4000 Sqft space was at one level, the ground floor which came with its own set of columns and beams where the beams featured at 6.5 feet under the double height ceiling. Leena began her intervention by choosing to leave the structural members, including the ceiling, exposed and addressed the air quality of the interiors by bringing in fresh treated air in addition to the air-conditioning. "This prevents the space from being static in terms of air conditioning."

The design approach was to leave the interiors rugged, in their natural state, with wooden tile flooring featuring in the lobby while the rest of the interiors has in situ concrete flooring. The entire décor was handcrafted on site by craftsmen, be it the light fittings, the aluminium tube cluster chandeliers, the partitions, tables and

cabinets. "The language is a combination of metal and wood set against a rugged natural background", points Leena.

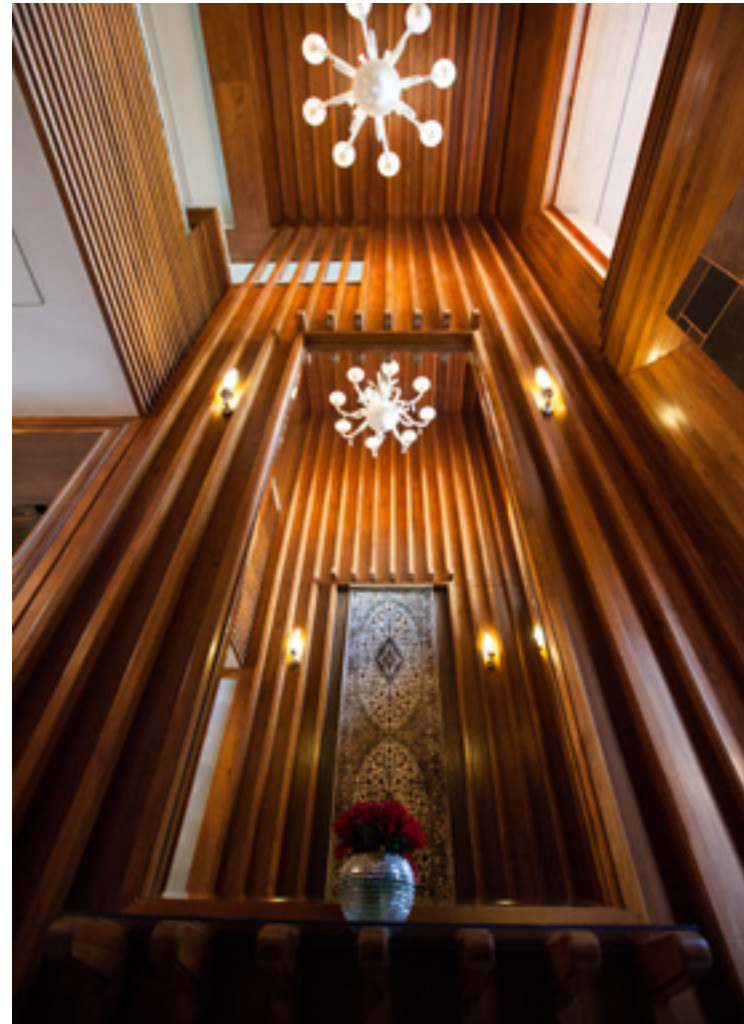
Given her penchant for infusing bright colours, it is evident in plenty along with the wood and sculptural patterns in metal. Colours find their way, wherever possible, be it on the panel sheets covering the partitions, the cabinets, the floor mats. The freshness of greens filters in through their presence on the metal holders deftly fused into the partitions.

"The structural members were serving as a challenge, such as the beams featuring at 6.5 feet while the ceiling goes up to 14.5 feet. This obstructed the free flow of the space and it was countered by strategically placing the workspaces under it, with metal art fabrication visually transcending this drop in height", she elaborates. "The objective was to reinvent an old warehouse to a modern office space that is cheerful and serves as a breath of fresh air in the crowded, polluted market place."

"The language is a combination of metal and wood set against a rugged natural background", points Leena.



Vibrant colours, metal, wood mark the adaptive reuse project, Karnataka Metal Company



A display of fine craftsmanship by master craftsmen



Stone walls, wood blend in the greenery to fuse with nature seamlessly

Letting geometry speak

When Leena was approached to design the club house in a residential layout which also had high tension wires crisscrossing the site location, she decided to come up with a sloped concrete roof structure which would bring in less radiation into the interiors. The club house was designed as a linear arrangement with sloped concrete roofs of varying forms, "which would also prevent the inclination to add another level to the structure later."

To lend interest, each roof is articulated differently, packing in plenty of geometry, the RCC roof combining with similar varied geometrical large glass and metal openings in the walls. "The structure is simple, yet the geometrical form ushers in the distinctive character, sparking curiosity", she sums up. ▲



A termite inspiration

BY NANDHINI SUNDAR
FEATURING DEEPA S WANI



The site context speaks of hot dry climatic conditions in an intensely rural region, the topography sloped, with large termite mounds housed amidst the dry sparse vegetation. The requirement was to come up with a Bio-discovery centre that would cater to the needs of the rural children studying in the neighbouring schools of the surrounding villages.

Given the context of the site, it is not surprising that the structure, designed by **Late Architect Sharukh Mistry and Architect Deepa S Wani of Mistry Architects**, evolved as an inspiration from the termite mounds abounding the region.



SHARUKH
MISTRY



DEEPA S WANI

Designing to the contours

The site intervention began by keeping the contours intact and designing the structure based on the existing topography. The footprint of the twin buildings, the Sensorium and Movement of Mechanics, features as two individual termite mounds, the pathway connecting them equally haphazard and scattered to replicate nature's structural form. To facilitate the free flow of wind which is vitally important in this hot arid region, the building was aligned North to South in tune with the wind direction. With the topography sloping down as in a hillock, the biodiversity centre was placed at the lowest part of the site where "the water would automatically flow down the slopes and collect to form a moat for both the individual structures."

The natural collection of water would then facilitate the formation of a biodiverse park which the students can directly access from the biodiversity centre, points Deepa. Given the natural scattered as well as irregular shape of the termite mounds, the structure, split into two, also displays an irregular, organic shape. The authentic shape of the termite mounds is further carried on to the roof of both the buildings where fluted openings have been created to let out hot air almost akin to a chimney.

Termite vents for light and ventilation

"These fluted openings also serve as shaded light vents without letting in the harsh glare of direct sunlight. The fluted openings are fitted with turbo ventilators to suck out the hot air during the dry summer months, where the ventilators are operated on wind energy", explains Deepa. Incidentally, the roof comes with two kinds of vents, the turbo vents to suck out air which are straight while the other vents are slanted as evidenced in a termite mound and work to let in diffused natural light into the interiors.

Given the organic shape of the roof, the brick walls supporting it are also organically curved to support this roof, with apertures featuring between the wall and the roof to permit natural ventilation. Some of the apertures feature at the lower level akin to peep holes, "though they do not serve as one as they are strategically placed next to the

moat to let in moisture laden cool air to filter into the interiors." Next to these apertures on the moat are placed terracotta pipes which suck in the water so as to enable the natural cooling of the dry air that passes through them before filtering into the interiors through these 'peep holes.'

Age old principle of capillary action

"The terracotta rods placed on the moat are shallow pipes which suck in the water through the capillary action. It is a simple technique adapting an age old principle of using terracotta pots to keep the water cool, to moisten and cool the dry exterior air before it sweeps into the interiors", says Deepa. "These simple techniques of incorporating the vents in the roof and placing the moat close to the apertures has ensured the interiors are naturally lit and ventilated through the day", she adds. The rat trap bond brick walls further aid in insulating the interiors from the harsh summer heat of this dry hot region.

It is to be noted that the structure is sans the conventional windows, with only the apertures on the walls and the vents on the roof serving as the openings, "in keeping with the natural form of a termite mound where the opening features only on top as slanted vents." In short, the termite mound is replicated in form and spirit, to create a cool, workable space within that is naturally lit and ventilated, the ambient temperature within comfortable to solicit no form of artificial cooling even during the hottest periods of the year.

Framed with MS

The organic form of the structure is built using MS frame where the MS is bent three-dimensionally to meet the requirement of the special shape of the roof. The roof is made of GI sheets with a layer of 100mm thick insulation in the form of a perforated sheet. The twin buildings reflect the same design and concept in execution.

A language intensely rural

The interiors speak a language of rural flavour with the IPS flooring serving as a cool seating area for the little children to gather around and explore the topics of discussion. "The flooring is so cool in contrast to the exterior heat and at times requires a mat too when it gets cooler beyond comfort levels", states Deepa. With the rural children conventionally being used to sitting on the floors, "this permits them to feel at ease, replicating their lifestyle without imposing an intimidating décor that can prompt them to feel out of place", she elaborates.

The walls reveal exposed bricks, not only keeping the décor totally natural and in tune with the rugged natural surroundings, but assisting in easy maintenance. Built-in slabs against the walls feature in the classroom to facilitate the children to work, read, when not gathering in groups to discuss, explore. "Children of all ages frequent the space and some classes are conducted there as part of teachers' training programs."



MS is bent three dimensionally to achieve the organic shape of the roof

The footprint of the twin buildings, the Sensorium and Movement of Mechanics, features as two individual termite mounds, the pathway connecting them equally haphazard and scattered to replicate nature's structural form.

Exposed brick walls, IPS flooring mark the naturally cool interiors





Apertures on the brick walls permit natural ventilation



The objective of the biocentre is to open up a facility where rural children will have access to science education and mode of thinking without barriers, the knowledge imparted being done in a very unique manner, combining hands-on learning, triggering inquisitive thought and action, provoking their imagination, all of which is done, keeping the rural fabric totally intact. This is amply facilitated in the Movement of Mechanics building where the mechanics of bodily movement are explored, activating their curiosity and encouraging introspection.

Triggering the five senses

The Sensorium building at the Bio-discovery centre, which is the chief aspect of the learnings, focuses on the five senses, and this is cleverly sewn into the structural design of the building and the rich biodiversity of the space where the young students have access to interact with nature and plunge into their discovery trail. "A simple feature such as the cool air within the centre and the heat in the

exteriors can set the children thinking, exploring the reason for this temperature drop." Likewise, the sound of water, the smell of the earth and its wilderness in the exteriors can prompt the young children to sit up and wonder and thence explore.

The footprint of the Bio-discovery centre is akin to an amoeba, the multi-activity spaces, the exhibition space, the research and study area and the classrooms featuring as multi-levels to bring in functional demarcation, yet fusing in as one single whole centre. "The entrance to the centre is at one level, where you step into the interiors which comes as a double height volume space. The higher level of the interior, two feet above, houses the exhibition space. The lower level is the classroom, yet the entire space comes together as one seamless common facility catering to multiple functional zones."

The project was shortlisted at the National level for the IIA awards. 🏆

Project: **Agastya Bio-discovery Centre**
 Design Firm: **Mistry Architects**
 Location: **Gudivanka, Avulathimmanapalle, Andhra Pradesh**
 Built area: **3928 Sq. ft**
 Design team : **Architects Late Sharukh Mistry, Deepa S Wani, Vishwanath B**
 Completion: **2023**
 Materials: **Exposed Brick, GI sheets, MS, terracotta**
 Picture Credits : **Umeed Mistry**



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A recall of the past

BY NANDHINI SUNDAR

FEATURING AR. GEORGE E RAMAPURAM

PHOTOGRAPH BY MAHESH CHADAGA



GEORGE E
RAMAPURAM

The recall of a bygone era begins even before one physically enters the ‘Palace’—Evolve Back Kamalapura Palace—the design of the staff quarters located on the short drive to the main entrance, lending a whiff of what is yet to come. The grand entry into the Kamalapura Palace is marked by an imposing gate that resonates in design with what must have existed during the mighty Vijayanagara Empire. A rugged stone path lays the long drive to the Palace porch, akin to the horse driven paths that would have prevailed during this bygone era. Stone lanterns and waterbodies dot the route, lending an enchanting aura at night, transporting the guests into another era, the ruins of which the city of Hampi is famous for.

Palace and Mahal inspiration

Designed by Architect George E Ramapuram of Earthitects, the imposing structural form of the main Kamalapura Palace draws inspiration from the Vijayanagara Palace at Chandragiri, while the adjoining Jal Mahal housing the speciality restaurant evokes the Lotus Mahal, a lime plastered two-storeyed structure built on rubble masonry, which reflects the architectural style of the Vijayanagara Empire. The stunning Lotus Mahal incidentally is one of the handful of structures that still remain in Hampi, escaping destruction. The grand lay of the arched corridors, balconies and the multi-tiered pagodas of the main building reflect amply the architectural elements of the Vijayanagara Palace.

The pagodas of the Lotus Mahal, which imbibes the form of the Lotus, is replicated across the structure. “By taking inspiration from this master piece and replicating the elements into a contemporary structure, not only are we celebrating the architectural grandeur of

this era, but also enabling those who visit Hampi and walk through its ruins, to get a semblance of what it must have been to live in these grand edifices”, says George.

The Palace is built as a two-storeyed structure, where the first level features arched open corridors, just as in a palace, connecting the interiors to the outdoors seamlessly to lend the feel of expanse as well as openness. Abundant natural light and ventilation seeps into the interiors, negating the need for air-conditioning during winter. The motifs and arches of the structure resonate with the Queens Bath, yet another of the ruins of this grand empire that attracts tourists in hordes. The walls of the Palace have been left pristine white to connect with the lime plastered walls of these ancient heritage structures. The physical lay of the building is also in tune with the mode commonly witnessed in the past, where the main building is flanked by smaller structures on either side, enclosing waterbodies in its midst.



Gravelled pathway flanked by waterbodies leading to the palace



Lily pond surrounding the individual villas

A peek into royal living

The resort serves as a peek into the grand lives of the erstwhile Vijayanagara royalty, keying in the functional components of contemporary lifestyles into the interiors, in a subtle manner so as not to overpower the heritage flavours painstakingly brought in. The free-flowing expanse of the lobby and reception area amply serves as a recall of the structural sensitivities of this era, the white walls left starkly bare in sync with what is witnessed in the structural form of this empire.

A sunlit courtyard is fused in the midst of this massive structure, again resonating with the design leanings of the past era, with ample presence of waterbodies, not only reminiscing the past structural forms, but also aiding in naturally cooling and bringing in moisture in the intense heat experienced during the summer months. The massive open dining area connects to this courtyard on one side and the swimming pool on the other where a strategically placed entertainment gazebo, again a recall of the past modes of entertainment zones, serves as the performing centre for cultural events.

Customised light fittings, featuring across the Palace, serve as a throwback to the bygone era, each fashioned as hand torches that were in use during this period. Alcoves and niches feature in strategic locations as well as in the story telling area, to reminisce an experience from the past where lighting was purely through oil lamps. Stone floors, to connect with the materiality of the past, complement the lighting arrangements. Celebrating art is a part of royalty, and George infuses this celebration by featuring award winning artworks of well-known artists in strategic locations across the corridors.

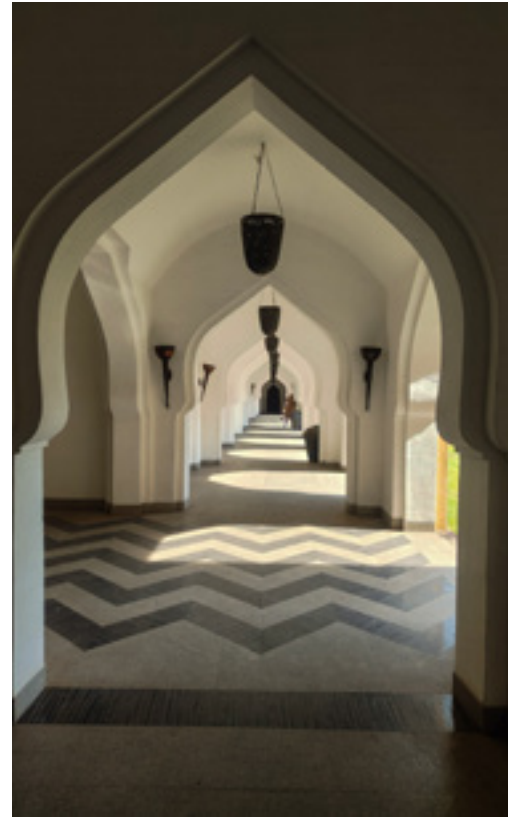
Connecting to the outdoors

The interior décor of the individual rooms, starting from the design of the entry doors, reveals copious presence of hardwood that is left in its rugged textural form to accentuate the feel of the outdoor connection. Timber arches demarcate aesthetically the functional zones even as the interiors connect seamlessly to the exterior wilderness and an enchanting individual pool that invites indulgence.

A sunlit courtyard is fused in the midst of this massive structure, again resonating with the design leanings of the past era, with ample presence of waterbodies, not only reminiscing the past structural forms, but also aiding in naturally cooling and bringing in moisture in the intense heat experienced during the summer months.

The central courtyard of the palace





To connect with the open luxurious baths that royalty resorted to, the large rooms also come with a jacuzzi, besides the massive bathroom specifically designed on royal leanings. The common area restrooms too echo past sensitivities by incorporating skylights and the freshness of greenery, to let natural light and ventilation filter in. “Luxurious baths, especially for the queens, was an integral part of the lifestyle of royalty and the Vijayanagara Empire was no different”, says George.

Arched windows and pathways resonate with the structural form of the Vijayanagar palaces

The lay of the individual rooms





The arches and pagodas recall the architectural form of the Vijayanagar empire palaces



The private swimming pool and lily pond of the individual villas

Dining experience

In any resort, dining is a feature that is much awaited at the end of the day and is a ritual by itself. While the common dining area is structured to cater to group gatherings besides couples and families, an intimate dining experience amidst the calls of the wild can prove to be unforgettable, especially when the décor is specifically tuned to echo the erstwhile open dining experiences in the palaces.

The Jal Mahal, featuring a bazaar and spa at ground level, incorporates an open, arched speciality dining area on the first level, where the connect to the exterior wilderness is totally unhindered and open, the interior lighting tuned as a recall of the past.

After the day long visits to the ruins of Hampi, the stay at the Kamalapura Palace not only proves to be rejuvenating but transports the sentiments to another era, forgotten, yet one that prevailed in all its glory, the remaining remnants standing testimony in the form of ruins. ♣

An intimate dining experience amidst the calls of the wild can prove to be unforgettable, especially when the décor is specifically tuned to echo the erstwhile open dining experiences in the palaces.

The grand palace captured at night



Beyond boundaries

BY PROF. JAISIM KRISHNA RAO

This article is a search beyond bound boundaries of design. Design is discipline defining a journey in reality as expressed by the designer in the built form. Architecture is a spiritual fusion of art, culture, structure and abstraction of imaginative spaces as explored and expressed by the architect with the client and the environment expressing their desires.

What is space as defined by the human mind is a question that makes one aware of one's presence in reality. If one has the patience to learn from nature in all its living form it is like Alice in Wonderland, there is no start or end, only the infinity of the mind. Darkness explores light and Light exploits darkness.

The creative designer especially as an interior designer is also disciplined by the built space that already exists as designed by the architect. One walks this space to realise the aspirations of the client with their demands. These demands have been grown into the client over time and the culture, history and life style they have lived in. A day arrives in their lives to



express beyond where they are into spaces that they now can afford to realise. The Designer is the path finder for this ambition.

Boundaries bind all of us depending on the play we are involved in. One can hit a six in play and life that is the significance of beyond boundaries. Yet the very fact that a boundary existed created by us humans in all forms of play and life is the most fascinating aspect of life. We create games and theatre and art and literature but they all have their words made up of letters which become sentences and then paragraphs. These paragraphs become chapters and soon the beginning and end are filled with life as a story.

This is where imagination and innovation walk in with the elements that surround us and are explored by the senses and soon they play and fuse with each other exploring and expressing in the language that each culture has evolved over time in history. A book is born they soon confer with each other as the mind in a very strange way interacts the authors over the centuries. The library is the power house of knowledge, today Google has taken over the search and soon AI will fuse us beyond boundaries.

Mankind in spite of all evolution creates a language of communication that is beyond the lines. I have always wondered how one generation to another grasps the past from the present and projects a future which is fascinating and sometimes frightening yet the smile overcomes tears and hunger of all kinds to realise a dream into reality. Boundaries are just a matter of time.

Architecture expresses with spiritual philosophy and interiors define with discipline the individual and common spaces of play and interaction. Mountains to ant hills are explored by birds to ants to make human adventure a thrill beyond time and space.

Live life, love it and explore imagination and innovation shall create great expressions.

Need to develop Professional Competencies in Architectural Education

My teaching experiences across the Asia-Pacific and Middle East have given me a comparative perspective on architectural education. India stands at a critical juncture, requiring a radical overhaul of how we teach architecture. The current model, largely derivative of the Western educational structure, particularly Walter Gropius's 1937 curriculum at Harvard, is nearly a century old and ill-suited to the socio-cultural realities of today's India.

With the recent Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between the UK and India, the importance of professional competencies (PCs) has become critical. The FTA introduces mutual recognition of professional qualifications, licensing, and registration procedures. This agreement is set to enhance the mobility of architects between the two countries, providing Indian architects with opportunities to work internationally and gain exposure to diverse practices and standards. Hence to make architectural education both globally competitive and locally responsive, we must define and embed professional competencies into the curriculum. These PCs should be mapped against the Graduate Profile Outcomes (GPOs), the Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) and the Curriculum which needs to be dynamic to include the following:

- Technical Proficiency: Mastery of design tools, technology, and methodologies.
- Critical Thinking: Analytical and evaluative skills for sound decision-making.
- Creative Problem: Solving: Innovation in resolving design challenges.
- Ethical Practice: Commitment to integrity and accountability.
- Communication Skills: Clarity in visual, verbal, and written expression.
- Collaboration: Effective teamwork across disciplines.
- Cultural Sensitivity: Respect and engagement with diverse contexts.
- Sustainability: Design rooted in environmental and social responsibility.

The Council of Architecture (CoA) must champion these competencies to create resilient, relevant, and forward-looking curricula. With over 500 Schools offering architecture education the CoA needs a proficient partner like the Indian Institute of Architects (IIA) to collaborate in achieving these PCs through stakeholder consultations. There is a need to look at the case studies of NCARB(US), ARB(UK), AACA(Australia) and NZRAB (New Zealand) to understand how the licensure works in embedding these competencies within the architecture programme delivery in their respective countries.

- While defining professional competencies is only one part of the equation. Several systemic challenges hinder meaningful reform in India.
- Rigid Curricula - Outdated, inflexible frameworks.
 - Resource Constraints - Limited access to technology, materials, and expert faculty.
 - Faculty Preparedness - Insufficient training in new pedagogies.



BY DR JAFFER AA KHAN

- Cultural and Regional Diversity - One-size-fits-all curricula fail to address India's pluralistic realities
 - Regulatory Limitations - Mismatch between evolving needs and accreditation standards.
 - Industry Disconnect- Gaps between academia and real-world practice.
 - Student Preparedness - Weak foundations in critical thinking and creativity.
 - Technology Integration - Infrastructure and affordability issues.
- To address these challenges, the schools offering a professional degree in architecture must embed collaborative and practice-based strategies:
- Strategic Partnerships: Collaborate with firms and institutions to foster internships, research, and real-time exposure.
 - Industry Advisory Boards: Keep curricula aligned with emerging trends.
 - Collaborative Projects: Involve students and professionals working side by side with tutors.
 - Guest Lectures and Workshops: Bring the latest innovations into the classroom.
 - Structured Internships: Ensure meaningful experiential learning.
 - Industry-Sponsored Competitions: Foster innovation and visibility.
 - Research Collaborations: Generate knowledge in sustainable design, advanced materials, and construction tech.
 - Technology Training: Focus on BIM, AR, VR, GIS, and relevant project management tools, including AI and robotics.
 - Feedback Mechanisms: Continuously improve educational delivery.
 - Networking Platforms: Enable students to engage with mentors and potential employers.

These strategies will bridge the gap between academia and practice, empowering students to become confident, competent, and contextually aware professionals. Faculty internships with big firms and portability with partnering institutions at regular intervals will bring significant change. Ultimately, addressing the entrenched issues in Indian architectural education demands sustained, inclusive dialogue among all stakeholders, educators, practitioners, regulators, students, and communities. The ossified curriculum of today must give way to a dynamic, inclusive, and future-ready model. This is not merely an educational reform, but it is a cultural imperative.

The need for change is urgent. The time for change is now.



BY MAHESH CHADAGA

Crafting a Masterpiece

It is an 18th Century palace that housed Maharani Ahilya Bhai Holkar in the Chandwad Taluk, with the surrounding hills as the backdrop. The palace is renowned for its network of underground pathways that lead to Goddess Renuka Temple on one side and on the other, provide a safe getaway for the Maharani from an enemy.

Interior Designer Mahesh Chadaga captures with his lenses the magnificence of its structure, the intricately carved wooden pillars, the masterpiece paintings of the Rang Mahal.





The iconic structure is built over a sturdy stone foundation, the interiors revealing exemplary craftsmanship of artisans in the form of carvings on stone and wood, the designs intricate, bearing testimony to their unmatched skills. The Rang Mahal of the palace features a colourful depiction of paintings illustrating nature, lifestyle, the cultural fabric that prevailed during this era.

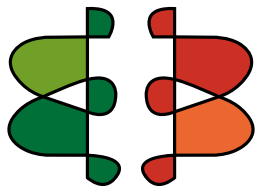






According to legend, Malhar Rao Holkar marked the beginning of the Holkar association with the region by acquiring the palace from Bhausahab Peshwa of Nashik. His daughter-in-law, Ahilya Bhai Holkar brought about a remarkable transformation to the Rang Mahal which was famed for hosting spectacular entertainments. Under her patronage, Rang Mahal was adorned with colourful murals, many of it being mythological, bringing in a connect between history, mythology and art.

Currently, the palace is undergoing restoration works to bring back the past glory of the edifice



Happenings in BRC

JAN TO MAR 2025

COMPILED BY AR. SAHANA SHETTY



Chairperson Gunjan Das addressing at the NATCON



TOP RIGHT AND BOTTOM LEFT
IIID BRC sparkling at NATCON



The stars of the Fashion Show--IIID BRC with IIID President Ar. Sarosh H Wadia

SPARKLING AT NATCON

The month of January had close to 50 members from IIID BRC attending the grand proceedings of NATCON 2025 hosted at Nashik. BRC was the proud winner of Vision in Vogue, one of the spectacular events that the grand National Conference was host to. BRC participated in this fashion show, displaying an attire that was made totally from waste. BRC members also participated actively in the multiple events at the carefully curated two-day conference.

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PRESENTING THE SABHA

The concept of adaptive reuse has been one of the planks that the current term has firmly rested on, promoting this model so as to 'Build Less'. True to its intent, IIID BRC hosted an absorbing presentation by Ar. Bijoy Ramachandran of Hundred Hands, on his adaptive reuse project, Sabha, which reinvents the space of a century old structure, restoring the significantly dilapidated structure and tuning the existing spaces to serve as a public gathering space to hold discussions, presentations, and exhibitions.

The evening was also witness to a fascinating fashion show, the attire made totally from waste. The culmination of the evening program was a soulful Sufi rendition under the stars by vocal artist Smita Belur that left the audience mesmerised. The grand event was hosted by Inner Circle Partner Skipper Furnishings.



Mr. Beni Gopal of Inner Circle Partner Skipper Furnishings, giving his address



Mr Beni Gopal and Ar. Kavita Sastry presenting a memento to Ms Smita Belur



Team Uru with Ms Smita Belur and Mr Beni Gopal



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THE TCS 10K

IIID BRC held the second edition of Run with BRC 2.0, hosted by EZHOMZ which saw close to 200 designers participating, exercising their muscles enthusiastically while also taking this opportunity to connect with other members.



Architects Vijay, Ar Bindu Madhav, Ar Gayathri Shetty, Shyamala Prabhu, Swapnil Valvatkar at the TCS 10K



Architects Gunjan Das, Gayathri Shetty and Shyamala Prabhu at TCS 10K

MC MEETINGS

IIID BRC held the January MC meeting at Inner Circle Partner Skipper Furnishings showroom. January also witnessed the hosting of Joint NEC in Ahmedabad where BRC Chairperson, Hon. Secretary as well as the Chairperson elect attended. BRC also presented NEC members with the book of Venkataramanan Associates, 'VA—More with Less', that had earlier been launched at Designuru 4.5.

BRC held its February MC meeting at Windflower Resort along with Fundermax Conclave, hosted by Inner Circle Partner Fundermax India. The March MC meeting at Inner Circle Partner Nexion Experience Centre had all Inner Circle Partners participating and sharing their experience of partnership through the two year term.



MC meeting at Nexion



MC meeting at Skipper Furnishings



MC meeting at Fundermax

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