



IIA



NATCON

PEOPLE AND THEIR SPACES

KOLKATA 2015

DECEMBER 18-19, 2015

Venue : Vedic Village, Kolkata





NATIONAL CONVENTION  
**SOUVENIR**  
NATCON 2015

Organised by



INDIAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS  
WEST BENGAL CHAPTER



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## PROGRAMME







# IIA-NATCON 2015

## Programme

### Day 1 : 18th December, 2015

09:00 - 10:00	<b>Registration</b>
10:00 - 12:00	<b>Inaugural Session</b>
12:00 - 13:15	<b>Session 1</b> Keynote Speaker - Ar. Fumihiko Maki 1. <i>Creation of humane environments</i> 2. <i>Quality in Architecture</i> 3. <i>The responsibilities of the Architect</i>
13:15 - 13:30	<b>Showcase Kolkata</b>
13:30 - 14:30	<b>Lunch</b>
14:30 - 15:30	<b>Session 2</b> Speaker - Ar. Peter Stutchbury <i>Architecture as we knew it - is our future secure?</i>
15:30 - 16:30	<b>Session 3</b> Speaker - Ar. Anupama Kundoo <i>Crafting Spaces and Building Knowledge</i>
16:30 - 17:30	<b>Session 4</b> <i>Panel Discussion : The Diminishing Personal Space</i> Moderator - Ar. Mukul Mittra Panelists - Ar. Prem Chandavarkar, Prof. Arunava Dasgupta, Ar. Sagar Thorat
19:00	<b>Cultural Presentations</b> by different Chapters (Competition) Musical performances by Sujoy Bhowmick and Teesta Banerjee

# IIA-NATCON 2015

## Programme

### Day 2 : 19th December, 2015

<b>10:00 – 11:15</b>	<b>Session 5</b> Speaker - Ar. Yatin Pandya <i>ARCHiTECTURE with small 'i':</i> <i>Architectural Dialogues for Dialoguing Architecture</i>
<b>11:15 – 12:30</b>	<b>Session 6</b> Keynote Speaker - Ar. Rahul Mehrotra <i>Working in Mumbai</i>
<b>12:30 – 13:30</b>	<b>Session 7</b> Speaker - Ar. Vo Trong Nghia <i>Save Our Earth</i>
<b>13:30 – 14:30</b>	<b>Lunch</b>
<b>14:30 – 15:15</b>	<b>Session 8</b> Speaker - Ar. Boonserm Premthada <i>Architectural Sensation</i>
<b>15:15 - 16:15</b>	<b>Session 9</b> Dialogues with Indian Master Architects Ar. Narendra Dingle in conversation with Ar. Partha Ranjan Das
<b>16:1 – 17:00</b>	<b>Session 10</b> Speaker - Ar. Peter Oborn <i>Delivering design quality, making Architecture matter.</i>
<b>17:00 – 18:00</b>	<b>Valedictory Session</b>
<b>19:30</b>	<b>Cultural Presentation:</b> <b>Remembering Pancham (R.D. Burman)</b>

IIA NATIONAL BODY | OFFICE BEARERS

IIA NATIONAL BODY | COUNCIL MEMBERS

IIA WB CHAPTER | EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

NATCON 2015 ORGANISING COMMITTEE

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FROM IIA PRESIDENT  
FROM CHAPTER CHAIRPERSON  
FROM NATCON CHAIRMAN  
FROM ARCASIA PRESIDENT  
FROM EDITORIAL BOARD

# MESSAGES





शमीमा सिद्दिकी  
**SHAMIMA SIDDIQUI**

भारत के राष्ट्रपति की उप प्रेस सचिव  
Deputy Press Secretary  
to the President of India



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**PRESIDENT'S SECRETARIAT,  
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### MESSAGE

The President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, is happy to know that the West Bengal Chapter of the Indian Institute of Architects is organising a National Convention 2015 on the theme "People and their Spaces" on December 18-19, 2015 at Kolkata.

The President extends his warm greetings and felicitations to the organisers and participants and sends his best wishes for the success of the Convention.

Deputy Press Secretary to the President

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E-mail : message-rb@rb.nic.in



Dear Fellow Architects,

Greetings and warm welcome to IIA NATCON-15 at Kolkata, the historic city and the cultural capital of India.

Year after year we have been gathering at our Annual National Conventions in different parts of the country to discuss & deliberate on a particular issue of serious concern to the quality of our built environment.

Friends, due to four fold increase in our population since independence we have lost the luxury of plentiful quality space for even our basic activities. Today our children have no where to go to play, Elderly have hardly anywhere to go for a walk. Parks are giving way to Parking lots & so on.

Team West Bengal Chapter of IIA lead by Ar. Gita Balakrishnan & Ar. Debatosh Sahu deserve our deep appreciation for choosing 'PEOPLE & their SPACES' as the central theme of NATCON-15. I am sure that, the galaxy of eminent speakers will enlighten us with their views on this topic of great concern & that, the deliberations during the convention will show us a path leading to a better People-Space relationship.

I once again congratulate the West Bengal Chapter of IIA for their untiring efforts in organizing the NATCON-15 & publishing this SOUVENIR on the occasion.

With best wishes.

**Ar. Divya Kush**

President, IIA



A convention is a great channel for interaction, learning and camaraderie, a national convention even more so. We, at the West Bengal Chapter, are privileged to be the hosts for the IIA National Convention 2015 and we thank IIA for bestowing on us this honour. We thank all the Chapters from across the country for responding positively and coming in large numbers. At this point, I would like to thank our members from Chennai who were among the first to register for choosing to abide by their commitment to attend NATCON despite the adversities. Our Best wishes to them. The theme “People and their Spaces” seems particularly apt for a city like Kolkata where People's Spaces – Public and Personal are throbbing with life. Our choice of speakers has been carefully exercised keeping in mind their experiments with people and spaces.

Walt Disney is known to have said, “You can design and create, and build the most wonderful place in the world. But it takes people to make the dream a reality.”

We have designed and dreamt of a plan for the IIA NATCON 2015 but it would need all of you to make it a reality.

Best Wishes

**Ar. Gita Balakrishnan**

Chairperson

Indian Institute of Architects

West Bengal Chapter



Greetings from the West Bengal Chapter of The Indian Institute of Architects!

The opportunity of organizing IIA NATCON, the most prestigious national event of IIA, has come to West Bengal Chapter after 2004. Last time we had to organize the NATCON with a time frame of two weeks and to be very frank, it was not possible for any organizing committee to give proper justice to a program of national importance within that short time period.

This time, my Friends, we have tried our best to organize this event to make a comfortable, enjoyable, knowledgeable and a memorable one.

I can still remember the day in Mumbai's last year NATCON, when we were bidding for this year's NATCON. We had a difference of opinion for hosting NATCON in the beginning, but once we got through it, I am really glad to share that everyone has given their level best for making this event a grand success.

I want to thank the members who had relentlessly worked to raise the fund at this time of recession. The building and infrastructure industry is badly hit by this situation and we all know how tough it is to organize funds for a mega event like this.

The theme for this year's NATCON is "People and their Spaces" and it aims at explaining how spaces are shaped by people and people shaped by spaces.

I am really fortunate to have a galaxy of the renowned Architects, who will be enriching our knowledge base and give us the food for thought for the future. Ar. Fumihiko Maki (from Japan, architect of the Bihar Museum at Patna) and Ar. Rahul Mehrotra from USA, ; Ar Peter Stutchbury from Australia, Ar Vo Trong Nghia from Vietnam, Ar Boonserm Premthada from Thailand, Ar Peter Oborn from UK, Ar Anupama Kundoo, Spain and Ar Yatin Pandya from India have already sent in their confirmation, while positive interactions are on with offices of a few others. They are coming to this NATCON and I am sure you will be enthralled with their deliberations.

I would like to thank our President, IIA and all the Office bearers, Council Members and all the Participant for their support and active co-operation. I am really indebted to all the renowned Architect Speaker who are coming to Kolkata in spite of their busy schedule. Thank you students and sponsors and partners in services for your support and hard work!

I am sure that all the participants and guests will enjoy the stay at Kolkata and will cherish the fond memories of this NATCON in the future.

Best regards.

Yours in IIA,

**Debatosh Sahu**

Chairman, Organising Committee  
NATCON 2015, Kolkata





SECRETARIAT: The Association of Siamese Architects under Royal Patronage  
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Date: December 15, 2015

I wish to congratulate the Indian Institute of Architects, IIA President Ar. Divya Kush, and Chairman Organizing Committee Ar. Debatosh Sahu on your National Convention IIA NATCON 2015 hosted by West Bengal Chapter on 18th and 19th December 2015 in Kolkata.

With the theme "People and Their Spaces", IIA has created a platform for architects and urban designers to come together to discuss and share knowledge on the best ways to design our future urban environment. I believe this is the most opportune time for architects to once again, influence the way our cities are shaped. We must embrace the needs of our people and design public spaces that all can enjoy. Architects must take leadership in this endeavor. And I am very happy to see that IIA has the vision to initiate this important undertaking to design "spaces for people".

Your dialogs in Kolkata will have a significant impact on others in ARCASIA as well. The outcome and resolution from the discourse can help influence the direction for other Asian cities to follow. Therefore, I wish IIA NATCON 2015 all the success and the best discussions possible.

Sathirut Nui Tandanand

ARCASIA President 2015-2016

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Frederic Jameson the famous American literary critic and Marxist political theorist once asked, “Why should landscape be any less dramatic than the event?” On the eve of NATCON 2015, we at the IIA WB Chapter are poised to echo the same question. For the human perception of space has always been perceived through socio-cultural filters and as much as we give shape to the various spaces around us, spaces shape us too. Our actions, our emotions and perhaps our very notion of who we are, are often deeply ingrained in the memories of our spatial perception.

Our Convention this year is all about celebrating this inextricable bond between, “People and their Spaces.” As architects, we wish to understand this rich and complex relationship and through our eminent speakers and authors of articles we probe this inherent question about how spaces are shaped by the people and vice versa. We have tried to include articles to cover all the facets of the spatial extents, from the discussion about human settlement at the city scale to the design of interior spaces. As our Convention unfurls we will probably enrich ourselves with many more such interesting 'events' where the 'landscape' is our three hundred year old city that welcomes you with her treasures of architectural edifices, winding lanes, wetlands, and sweet rasgullas.

As organisers of the National Convention we would like to thank our Speakers, the authors and all the participants of Natcon 2015.

Wishing you a very Happy New Year in advance.

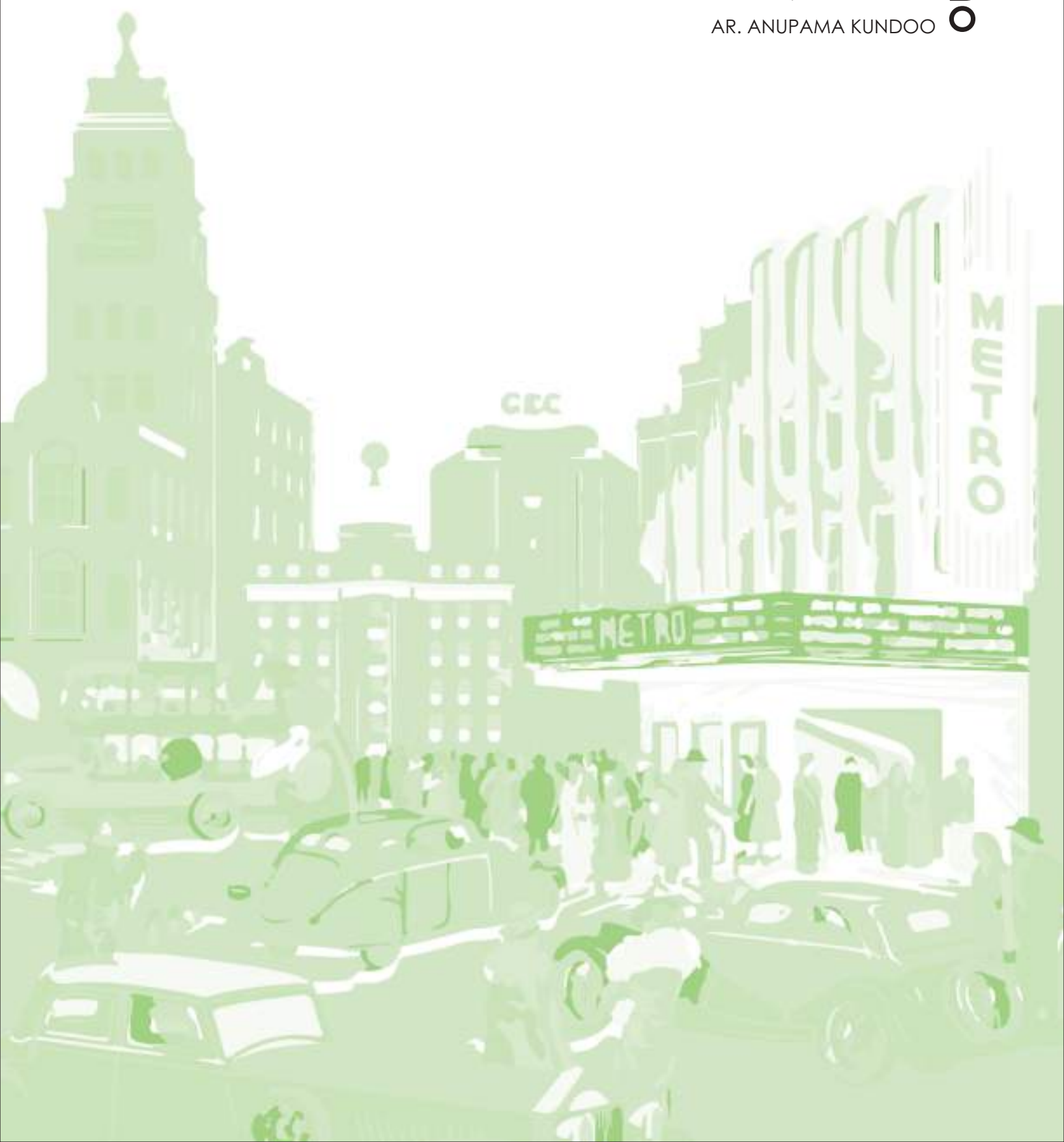
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AR. PETER STUTCHBURY  
AR. PETER OBORN  
AR. VO TRONG NGHIA  
AR. BOONSERM PREMTHADA  
AR. YATIN PANDYA  
AR. ANUPAMA KUNDOO

**OUR SPEAKERS**







**AR. FUMIHIKO MAKI** was born in 1928 in Tokyo, and educated at University of Tokyo (BS Arch), Cranbrook Academy of Art (M.Arch) and Harvard University Graduate School of Design (M.Arch). Prior to returning to Tokyo in 1965 to open his own firm, Maki worked in the offices of SOM and Sert Jackson and Associates, as well as the campus planning office of Washington University in St. Louis.

Maki has maintained an active interest in education while continuing to grow his 45-person practice. While living in the United States, he taught architecture and urban design at Harvard and Washington University. After returning to Japan, he became a professor at Tokyo University, where he taught architecture until 1987. Maki has lectured extensively in Japan, the United States and Europe. His collective writings were published in the volume, *Nurturing Dreams*, by MIT Press in 2008.

Maki has been honored by many of the professions highest accolades, including the Wolf Prize from Israel in 1988, the Thomas Jefferson Medal in Architecture in 1990, the Gold Medal of the UIA in 1993, the Prince of Wales Prize in Urban Design from Harvard University in 1993, the Arnold Brunner Prize from the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 1999, and the Praemium Imperiale from the Japan Arts Association in 1999. Foremost among Maki's many distinctions are the Pritzker Prize, received in 1993, and the Gold Medal from the American Institute of Architects, in 2011.

His current work spans across the globe, including recently completed World Trade Center Tower 4 in New York, the Aga Khan Museum in Toronto, and the Bihar Museum in Patna (under construction and expected to be completed next year).

FUMIHIKO MAKI – IIA LECTURE TOPIC

"MODERNISM ON THE OPEN SEA"

Fumihiko Maki will discuss the tendencies of the current architectural scene in relation to the trends he has experienced throughout his long career. Both historical insights and current work will serve as the backdrop for a more general discussion of modern architecture, illustrated with examples of Maki and Associates' built projects spanning from the 1960's to the present.



**AR. RAHUL MEHROTRA** is Professor of Urban Design and Planning and Chair of the Department of Urban Planning and Design. He is a practicing architect, urban designer, and educator. His firm, RMA Architects, was founded in 1990 in Mumbai and has designed and executed projects for clients that include government and non-governmental agencies, corporate as well as private individuals and institutions. RMA Architects has also initiated several unsolicited projects driven by the firm's commitment to advocacy in the city of Mumbai. The firm has designed a software campus for Hewlett Packard in Bangalore, a campus for Magic Bus (a NGO that works with poor children), the restoration of the Chowmahalla Palace in Hyderabad, and with the Taj Mahal Conservation Collaborative, a conservation master plan for the Taj Mahal. The firm is currently working on a social housing project for 100 elephants and their caretakers in Jaipur as well as a corporate office in Hyderabad and several single family houses in different parts of India.

Mehrotra has written and lectured extensively on issues to do with architecture, conservation, and urban planning in Mumbai and India. His writings include coauthoring *Bombay—The Cities Within*, which covers the city's urban history from the 1600s to the present; *Banganga—Sacred Tank*; *Public Places Bombay*; *Anchoring a City Line*, a history of the city's commuter railway; and *Bombay to Mumbai—Changing Perspectives*. He has also coauthored *Conserving an Image Center—The Fort Precinct in Bombay*. Based on this study and its recommendations, the historic Fort area in Mumbai was declared a conservation precinct in 1995—the first such designation in India. His other publications include books on the Victoria Terminus Station, a world heritage site, in Mumbai; on the impact of conservation legislation there; and most recently, on that city's Art Deco buildings. In 2000, he edited a book for the UIA that earmarks the end of the century and is titled *The Architecture of the 20th Century in the South Asian Region*. Mehrotra has also edited the first of the three books that document the 2004 Michigan Debates on Urbanism, and in 2011 wrote *Architecture in India – Since 1990*, which is a reading of contemporary Architecture in India. (see list – [http://RMAArchitects.com/content\\_type/book/](http://RMAArchitects.com/content_type/book/)).

He has long been actively involved in civic and urban affairs in Mumbai, having served on commissions for the conservation of historic buildings and environmental issues, with various neighborhood groups, and, from 1994 to 2004, as Executive Director of the Urban Design Research Institute. He studied at the School of Architecture, Ahmedabad (CEPT), and graduated with a master's degree with distinction in Urban Design from the GSD. He has taught at the University of Michigan (2003–2007) and at the School of Architecture and Urban Planning at MIT (2007–2010).



**AR. PETER STUTCHBURY** - A Conjoint Professor in Architecture at the University of Newcastle since 1999 and a resident professor since 2011, Peter has taught design to students since 1981 at several Australian universities, including Sydney University, the University of Canberra and the University of Newcastle. Since its conception in 2001 Peter has taught at the Glenn Murcutt International Master Class and since 2002 regularly lectures and teaches with Richard le Plastrier in both the South Pacific Student Master Class and New Zealand Master Class and, in 2009, the South African Master Class and 2011 The European Master Class. Peter has taught both nationally and internationally. In 2004 he was visiting Professor of the University of Arizona - USA, in 2007 was visiting Professor at University of Cape Town – South Africa, in 2008 he held the Luis Barragan chair at the Tecnologico de Monterrey - Mexico, and in 2010 he was the guest teacher at Ghost Studio in Canada. In November 2010 Peter travelled to South America, teaching and delivering lectures in Costa Rica, Colombia, Chile and Argentina. In 2011 he also taught in Ireland and Taiwan. He was also invited to attend Ghost Studio Symposium in Canada as a guest speaker, and to coordinate the 2011 Chilean Master Class. For his teaching in Mexico he was awarded The Diploma Catedra Luis Barragan.

Peter is a founding director of the Architecture Foundation Australia and a founding member of the Australian Architecture Association and a life fellow of the AIA.

In 2004, Peter was awarded the University of Newcastle Convocation Medal for his contributions to the profession of Architecture. Peter's recognition has seen him as a member of over ten design juries. In 2002 he was the international guest juror for the New Zealand National Awards and in 2002 and 2007 guest juror for the South African National Awards. He has both chaired and been a member of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects NSW Awards. In 2010 he was a member of the National Jury and in 2014 the Chair of Northern Territory Jury.

A monograph of Peter Stutchbury's work was published in 2000, a public exhibition of drawings and models held in Melbourne in 2001, and in Sydney in 2006 & 2008. A second book of the firm's work was published in 2010, and another published by the Architecture Foundation Australia in 2011 with a second edition released 2015.

In 2015, Peter was awarded the Australian Institute of Architects Gold Medal and was made a life fellow of the RIBA.

Peter sees buildings as rooms of education – the bridge between walking in the bush and wandering through the mind. Ultimately people are the act of integration within a true work of architecture.



**AR. PETER OBORN** is a Chartered Architect and Client Adviser with considerable experience of working internationally, particularly in the Middle East where he has completed projects in Oman, Qatar and the UAE

He is the former Deputy Chairman of Aedas Architects Ltd, responsible for its London office until 2010, and was Director responsible for the CTBUH award winning Al Bahr Towers in Abu Dhabi together with the redevelopment of Holland Park School in London

He founded the Aedas Research & Development group which developed specialisms in sustainability, advanced modelling and computational design. The award-winning R&D group helped to drive innovation throughout the practice, enabling new ways of problem solving and design.

Peter is currently acting as client adviser to the government of Oman in connection with the development of a new city located in the Muscat Capital Area.

He is a National member of the RIBA Council and was elected the RIBA's Vice President International in October 2011. As RIBA Vice President International, Peter and his Committee are working to raise the profile of the Institute and its members internationally.





**AR. VO TRONG NGHIA** studied architecture at the University of Tokyo before returning to Vietnam to establish Vo Trong Nghia Architects in 2006. Nghia has received numerous international prizes and honours including but not limited to; World Architecture Festival Award, ARCASIA award, WAN 21 for 21 Award and, Futur Arc Green leadership Award. In 2012, he was selected as the Architect of the year in Vietnam.

His presentation is titled “Save Our Earth”

There are more than 7 billion people living on our planet, and this number increases every day. Population growth causes massive problems for tropical Asian countries, and Vietnam is no exception. The population of Vietnam now exceeds 90 million, and it is said that it will surpass 100 million by the year 2020. In Ho Chi Minh City, the largest city in Vietnam, the 7.8 million citizens collectively own a staggering 4.2 million motorbikes. This overabundance of motorbikes is causing chronic traffic congestion and serious air pollution. Similar situations where urban development is actually harmful to the everyday lives of citizens are happening all across the country.

The impact that tropical Asian countries inflict on the global environment is rapidly intensifying, however, these countries have great potential in saving our Earth if only the people would change their mindsets. As architects working amid a tropical concrete jungle, we are constantly considering what we can do to benefit our planet. Although it may not be possible to stop the global population explosion, we can employ more sustainable building methods and, with a little imagination, we can develop urban areas without depriving them of greenery. We use bamboo for construction because we regard it as more environmentally sustainable than anything else. We adopt greenery into our designs because we think doing so is an opportunity to heal our battered Earth.

In the presentation, Vo Trong Nghia will illustrate his policy toward architectural design by showing some of his recent projects.



**AR. BOONSERM PREMTHADA** was born and raised in Bangkok, Thailand. He received his Masters of Architecture from Chulalongkorn University in 2002 and formed a small office called Bangkok Project Studio in 2003.

Boonserm believes that architecture is the physical creation of an atmosphere that serves to heighten man's awareness of his natural surroundings. His work isn't about designing a building, but rather the manipulation of light, shadow, wind, sound, and smell... creating an "atmospheric architecture" that is a living being.

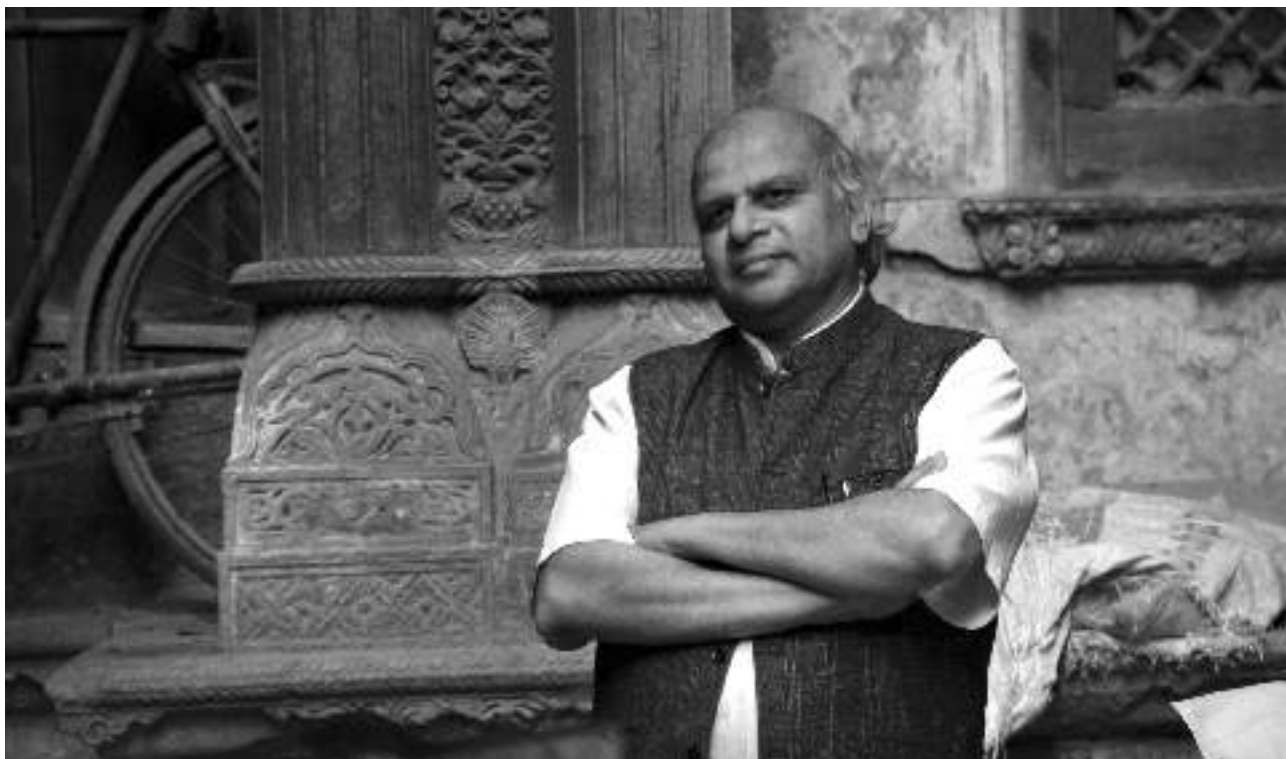
Beyond the realms of theory and design- Boonserm's work also carries a strong socio-economic and cultural agenda as many of his projects have social programs that aim to improve the lives of the under-privileged.

The Kantana Film and Animation Institute is a prime example of Boonserm's theoretical and real-world ideals. The embodies a to push architecture from "Modern" to "Timeless". The project was selected as the Grand Prize Winner of the ar+d Awards for Emerging Architecture in 2011. It was also shortlisted for the Aga Khan Awards for Architecture, 2013 cycle, and numerous other international awards.

Outside of his role of architect and artist, Boonserm also holds the position of Chairman of the Department of Interior Architecture at Chulalongkorn University.

"Architectural Sensation".





### **Envisioning the Mega city:**

#### **Visions for Mega Buildings or Building the mega visions?**

AR. YATIN PANDYA

Milestones are not the destinations in themselves but rather pointers of the path further ahead. They become excuses to ponder and reaffirm the course of journey. Mega city status to Ahmedabad city has potential of being such a milestone. To ponder and envision its directions.

As living organisms, cities have always grown as well as transformed. It feels that growth and change up till recently had not mutated its DNA and city evolved retaining its identity, image and humane qualities. Textile mills, automobile and bridges over river were no less drastic interventions, yet the city remained a big village where human bonds were not severed. 4.9 million of yesterday to 5 million of today cannot suddenly put compulsions threatening the fundamental values of coexistence (with man and nature and of man and man), deteriorating the qualities of life and interactive humane habitats.

#### **Can we ponder?**

Cities are a living organism and therefore has complex dynamics. Not all of its variables can be or even should be expected to resolve in singular way. Therefore while development vision and its sustenance base may be held as the Constance, there should be enough laterality in its application and resolutions from time to time through the instruments of planning. This calls for institutionalising and democratising the process rather than the finality of the physical blue print. There is a lack of the fora as well as format for the participation of diverse group of citizens in the visualisation and formalisation of the development directions as well as priorities. We need to install a body consisting of citizens, professionals and experts from diverse fields of development rather than the overbearing presence and the interference of the elected representatives or the bureaucrats that prevail now. Both for continuity of vision as well as truly participatory and democratic yet professional and objective development such an institution is greatly required. The primary mandate of this institution should be to create overall development framework and not the specific projects, which should emerge in consonance with the development goal and with the statement of priorities of these goals as the given development brief it should be entrusted to design and develop professionally. For example Ahmedabad has historically shown that how its citizens, the guilds (trade Mahajans) and the institutions charted the visions of its developments and realised them independent of the Bureaucracy of the authorities.

Urban developments in country like ours largely imply not a clean slate development but invariably restructuring of the existing and therefore very close check on the ground realities of each local context becomes critical in guiding directions as well as limitations of its further developments. This is where the development norms and development control regulations have ought to be contextual rather than universal and performance based rather than prescriptive. Here often one finds byelaws or the controls to be alien to the local milieu and a mismatch to the ethos of the place as well as the people it represents. Solely quantitative and standardised norms for the provision of open spaces, margins of buildings, radius of no development from historic resources etc. are some of the examples in case.

The other particularity of Indian cities is that it has deep rooted traditions and a long history. We need to pride with the fact and make every effort to retain ethnicity and identity of each place. There has to be very different approach and policies governing such historic cores. Unfortunately, progress and modernity is often confused with change and renouncing the past. At least such a misconception seems to persist with the politicians, bureaucrats and the private development patrons as so called development priorities and policies seems to deny learning from the traditional wisdom and evolving and adopting them for the contemporary times, they seem to ape the glamour and glitter from an alien context. For example, the rat race among these players to create tallest building in city outskirts or promote mega malls over market bazaars or to subsidize multiplexes to promote tourism rather than to conserve its heritage, which as such is the genuine source for tourism.

Harmony with tradition and conservation of natural resources are the two fundamental tenets on which our development frameworks need to base upon. With visionary development framework, with participatory decision making mechanisms, with responsible professionalism and conscientious development patrons, we can rebuild our nation, back to its humane, environmentally sensitive, socio-culturally responsive and contextually unique living environments.



**AR. ANUPAMA KUNDOO's** architectural practice, started in 1990, demonstrates a strong focus on material research to achieve architecture of low environmental impact, and development of building technologies that are socio-economically beneficial. The practice is supported by extensive research and experimentation.

Kundoo has had the experience of working, researching, and teaching architecture in a variety of cultural contexts across the world: UCJC Madrid, Cornell University, TU in Berlin, AA in London, TU in Darmstadt, Parsons New School of Design in New York City, and University of Queensland in Brisbane. Her projects as well as writings have been featured in a wide range of books, international journals, and newspapers.

Kundoo was born in Pune, India in 1967, graduated from Sir JJ College of Architecture, University of Bombay in 1989, and obtained her Ph.D. from the Technische Universitaet Berlin in 2008.

### **Crafting Spaces and Building Knowledge**

Local identity of settlements are shaped by the way the settlements are rooted in the place. Traditionally local materials have contributed to this identity, through the way local materials through local skills have lend themselves to building. On the other hand local skills have continued to also evolve through the process of building, and the evolving needs of the society for different kinds of spaces.

Globalisation and post industrial developments have seen widespread use of standardised manufactured materials giving expression with or without incorporating local skills, resulting in architecture that seems disconnected from place, disregarding identity issues in society. The current trend of building has led to buildings and cities looking alike regardless of climatic and geographic location, disconnected to the life of the place that evolved gradually and sensitively over thousands of years, even drowning the local character of existing cities and settlements.

This presentation discusses examples of the Anupama Kundoo's architecture emphasising 'Building Knowledge' where people continue to shape their contemporary environments with locally sourced materials, but through contemporary ideas and including the evolution of global building knowledge. While the skills and materials employed are local, the know-how need not be local. Knowledge is universal and taking advantage of the advances in building know-how in the world, higher quality of spaces can be delivered efficiently, using significantly less natural resources with less environmental impact while being socially and economically beneficial. People are empowered through the act of building. Buildings and the act of building improve their lives. Buildings help to build knowledge, a sense of community, collective pride and strengthen the sense of place, through local materials and local skills being rooted in it.

# THEMES FOR DISCUSSIONS

## The Diminishing Personal Space

Personal spaces have always been sacred, particularly in the Indian context whether in an institution, a residence or an office or even in a public space. With the change in lifestyle and the intervention of technology, one seems to be losing control over the personality of one's own personal space. The rapid advances in technology and the inevitable invasion into our lives may not be in the control of the designer. But it would be good to pause and reflect on the elements that are in the control of the designer that would help safeguard the sanctity of the personal space.

## Dialogues with Indian Master Architects

From the book conceived, conducted and edited by Ar. Narendra Dengle

In this book, seven of India's senior most architects who played a significant role in shaping independent India's architecture, urban design and planning- Achyut P Kanvinde, Raj Rewal, AnantRaje, Hasmukh C Patel, Balkrishna V Doshi, Uttam C Jain and Charles Correa-speak to Narendra Dengle. The dialogues conducted over seven years, for FEED (Forum for Exchange and Excellence in Design), Pune were attended and greatly appreciated by architectural students and teachers, which prompted the idea of making them available in print.

As young architects in the early years of independence, each of these masters faced the struggle to draw from Western philosophy, industrialisation, modernism and urbanisation- and at the same time preserve a consciousness of India's ancient traditions and come to terms with the local ethos in expressing themselves. Each in his own way reinterpreted varied influences to find relevant solutions in the country of diversity.

The discussions tackle social and contextual issues and urban design concerns from a personal vantage point, and reveal motivating spirit behind the master architects. Their insights will provide invaluable inspiration and guidance to young practitioners and students of architecture.



OF OTHER PEOPLE AND OTHER SPACES: FEW HETEROTOPIAS IN INDIA  
LIFE IN THE CRUCIBLE – A STUDY ON PUBLIC SPACES IN FRINGES OF KOLKATA  
THE DESIGN OF SOCIO-SPATIAL CONSTRUCTS  
'PLACE'ING SPACE  
THE MESSAGE OF CONNECTED SPACES  
EXAMPLE OF CELEBRATING ARCHITECTURE: "LE CORBUSIER'S CHANDIGARH: A PROTECTED URBAN ISLAND"  
PUBLIC SPACES FOR ALL - (CASE STUDIES: TWIN CITIES - CUTTACK-BHUBANESWAR)  
DESIGNED SPACE; DARKNESS AND DRUGS  
INTERROGATING THE ROLE OF PUBLIC SPACES IN MODERN DAY KOLKATA

# ARTICLES





## Of Other People and Other Spaces: few heterotopias in India

Dipon Bose

*"Before the dawn of civilization, there were no "people", only individuals.....community-living and society-living evolved and the need for different kinds of spaces – built and unbuilt came about".* The preface of the convention well claimed a fundamental reality of our history that has spanned time and space to take us where we are today. We are in a close woven matrix of human civilization viz. architecture, urban design and planning, a function of space, time and people. We walk down the streets of our housing alleys passing by the rows of shops selling grocery, sweets, cloths & plethora of other varieties of Indian paraphernalia, in Old Delhi. We pass buy the *pols* of Ahmedabad experiencing the daily evening of Indian life, savouring *golgappas* and *chaat*, or *bhel* at Juhu. We sit by our beaches enjoying maize with our family, a kid goes there with a balloon in hand. The merry go round flashes colourful lights in the dark evening background. Yet again sometimes, we find ourselves in that old boat rowing you beneath Vidyasagar Setu by Princep Ghat, the lantern inside transporting you to a past history of poor luxury.

*"Poor luxury"*, an oxymoron it is. Similar to closed appearance of certain spaces as seen in Hippodamus' plan for Milete. The gymnasium, stadium, theatre, hippodrome were said to be other spaces of third realm which were not categorized under the closed *oikos* (housing) and open *agora* (marketplace) of Greek towns. Laid down by French philosopher, Michael Foucault, in his paper "Les espaces autres" these other spaces are mysterious, complex, amorphous by the very nature of remaining out of the conventional "people and their spaces".

In the same spaces as described in the opening paragraph, there might be a lone man going "twang twang" to mend your old blankets, or the balloon wallah who roams near children or their parents, a beggar on the street, the market labourers who sleep in the alleys after a heavy day at Bara bazar or the migrant labourers who make home under the flyover. They don't understand the Victoria Memorial or the fun at promenade in Pondicherry, nor do they see Manali as a retreat, selling gulabjamuns to honeymoon couples on street. In that same business of our daily life, these are some of the individuals who function in an otherness; while there are some "people" who live the otherness.

Where does the *hijra* go after her daily work begging on train compartments? What do the sex workers at Sonagachi do for recreation? How do the *doms* at cremation grounds define their workspace? What does the inhabitant of the old age home at Varanasi aspire for in the evening? Who are these people and how are their spaces? Their definition is not our definition of the city. For them, the following sobriquets are meaningless, "The city of joy" "Dilwalon ka sheher", "Mayanagri". For "people" who themselves are undefined, their context unknown, not talked about, how does the architect do justice to them, by making architecture of otherness for the others. This otherness referred to as Heterotopia in Foucault's theories, has been on debate since the last few decades, now a point of discussion as we move ahead talking of tolerance, equality, human rights and democracy in architecture in this century.

Defining heterotopias is itself a debatable discourse when it comes to beliefs and practices of civilizations, the minds of the cities. The people become a mere carrier of that mind, which may manifest as religion, profession, class, race, sexuality, ideology or more broadly one's identity, and that collective identity again becomes the matrix of civilization, the city and its architecture within. How do we see a city?

Let's explore in the "other side" of some sites in India :

### The "other people" of a holy city: the widows of Vrindavan

Vrindavan, an ancient holy city in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh, famous as the site of Krishna's childhood and adolescence. Scattered with temples and religious activities all around, this city enjoys

the reputation of an important pilgrimage site of Vaishnava Hindus. Just like any other Indian city, the citizens of Vrindavan have a daily life, with markets, public spaces, work spaces and houses among densely packed settlements but among the labyrinth of these narrow lanes exist a harsh reality, an otherness called “*vidhwa*” or widow. These are the people who are despised by us, the definition makers of our cities. Draped in frail white sarees over their wrinkled skin, with no ornaments on, these widows of Vrindavan lead a life of banishment



from their home towns. Most in the age group of over 60 years, they found their home in the temples of this holy city being cast out of their homes as far as Bengal and other parts of North India. Widows were considered unlucky and a burden for the family even after the initial decades of post-independence. Surviving alone on a meagre earning of 6 rupees a day for singing hymns at temples, these widows now survive on the donations of NGOs. Their home is the street where they beg, their workplace is the temple where they sing and their leisure is the courtyards where they dance in the name of Radha-Gopala. The pilgrim comes and goes, so do the citizens have their devoted life in the city. The frame of the city vividly captures the decked temples of Krishna, the celebrations and festivities of Holi & Janmashthami, the incense, the bells and all the protagonists, occasionally to be disturbed by some stooping old lady in white trying to speak in broken Hindi to help her climb the steps. A small reality of Bengal seems to be hidden far away from its roots trying to count her last days. The *Jagmohana* was never designed for an old widow, perhaps. Ashrams and Ashray Sadans find the only expression of architecture for these heterotopian people, now who have had a long life of humiliation, poverty, without identity. How do these people shape their spaces? How does the space shape them? What is the identity of this city? The romantic religious fervour of Radha and Krishna or the mundane and morbid hymns of these widows? The architect will need to consider perhaps.

### The “other professionals” within our cities: sex workers in Sonagachi



Sonagachi, claims to be the largest red light district of Asia, a home to around 10,000 prostitutes, stands hidden in the old lanes of North Kolkata, the birthplace of the city, some call the city of joy, some the cultural capital. But what does joy mean to the lady waiting for her client at that dingy lane as twilight falls while rest of Kolkata decks up to shopping and enjoyment at Esplanade, South city or City Centre? And how does she define her culture? Perhaps by some lone lines from Nazrul Islam's “*Barangana*” or few frames of “*Born into Brothels*”,

lost in the romanticized version of our definition of our cities. Their home and their workplace dissolves with the unforbidden city of the yesteryears. The amorphous spaces are a dull sight in the daytime with daily chores going on, transforms to a bustling workspace by nightfall, a world of thrill and excitement for the men coming from far and near to celebrate an otherness. Many children do not know their fathers; the *mashis* and their children are their families who now get health support and HIV awareness programs from NGOs. Born in a heterotopia, these children and youth aspire to join a dignified profession and define their identity. Their mothers demand workers' rights from the government. Their space will never be categorized under any masterplan as long as the society and its government ostracize them. An architect will never lay a brothel alongside a mall in near future. None of us would own a property ever in those forbidden quarters. But, they too celebrate their own



Durga Puja, they too love to have their cultural spaces and social spaces. They too may want to flourish, diversify or rehabilitate their trade just like any other entrepreneur, just that they have only their bodies as capital. Who plans for them? How do we define their otherness in defining our cities? It has to be certainly a very well thought and holistic approach to handle such people who do define our cities.

### **The “other love” by some lone park: LGBT communities**

Not much explored by journalists or by artists, not talked about by our hypocritical society, certain urban spaces in our usual cities transform to sites of undefined love or alternate sexualities. Except for transgender, all other people belonging to sexual minorities are bound to hide themselves owing to the law of the land, hence opening no way for discourse on social, cultural or health related issues of this large group of hiding population. They are there, in your office, in your marketplace, in your home; you continue to turn blind to their eyes who are themselves blurred most of the times.

Sometimes they turn victims, sometimes they castrate themselves to suit your spaces and sometimes they kill themselves to survive your heterotopia. Sometimes they revolt. Revolt for an identity, revolt to love whom they prefer in their undefined space. And when they revolt, they become the generators of criminal heterotopia, sometimes in some lone park, or some inconspicuous bar or a hotel room; spaces which are dangerous for them legally as well as medically. A usual city becomes heterotopia for them which cannot accept their otherness. They need spaces to socialize, celebrate their identity, and strengthen themselves when they have been crushed to amorphous state for centuries. They are the highest susceptible group for HIV and sought after by the police in India. They cannot define their spouse, nor their family. They are a people who have made an oxymoron “gay” as their identity. Their hidden appearance continues to torment many as you get terrorised by the claps of a *hijra* group approaching your alley to bless a new born. They were the *hijras* who got a definition recently by the government. Their spaces were never defined. They appear and disappear. Some never appeared like many gays, lesbians and bisexuals. How to study the characteristics of an elusive group, who is fearful sometimes, angry the other? The transgenders will soon be getting jobs in your city, they will be guarding your city, running your city. They will be perhaps catered to as one of your genders. The other sexual minorities are already around you, they never dream of a space of their own, a space for their discourse, their identity as far as you do not consider a part of the matrix of civilization. They too are a part of our city, citizens who run our economy, share our culture, make our life easy, serve us everyday; so that you can love your better half and your children each day. Can we make some space for these “other” people?



The transgenders will soon be getting jobs in your city, they will be guarding your city, running your city. They will be perhaps catered to as one of your genders. The other sexual minorities are already around you, they never dream of a space of their own, a space for their discourse, their identity as far as you do not consider a part of the matrix of civilization. They too are a part of our city, citizens who run our economy, share our culture, make our life easy, serve us everyday; so that you can love your better half and your children each day. Can we make some space for these “other” people?

### **The “other people” in your own apartment: Gated communities**

Gone are the days when family meant, a father, mother, children and grandparents. When neighbourhood meant neighbours and their common identity. When we used to know a bit of a small part of the city. When we grew up with the city. The high rise gated communities limit people interaction to jogging tracks, gymnasium, swimming pool or shopping plaza. We are happy with our heterotopian social interaction over Facebook, shopping on Flipkart and falling in love on Tinder. This wide spread heterotopia all around falls apart when you urgently need



an emergency help and you do not know your neighbour. We are lost in reading Coelho or Rushdie, failing to weave poetry of our own. Residential space commands at least one third of your total time in a day and has much to give in terms of spatial experience and shaping the people around it. The society is changing fast, technology morphing itself rapidly, the human experience still seeks some common parameters of comfort, love and success. Civilization was defined when the individuals came together and started sharing a common culture. Where is our civilization going when, we are again broken into individual fragments of office cubicles and lone apartments? The otherness of today will turn the entire world a heterotopia tomorrow, where each man will be a heterotopia to the other, chaos and intolerance will prevail and civilizations break down. The architect and the planner will have to write the future by studying these ignored heterotopias and giving a future of mutual benefit and success.

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“Heterotopia and the city” by Michiel Dehaene & Lieven De Cauter, 2008

“The space of play” by Michiel Dehaene & Lieven De Cauter

### **Image Courtesy:**

Pascal Mannaerts for image of Vrindavan widows, [www.parcheminsdailleurs.com](http://www.parcheminsdailleurs.com)

[www.qz.com](http://www.qz.com) for the picture of Sonagachi

[www.deccanchronicle.com](http://www.deccanchronicle.com) for the picture of LGBT pride march

[www.goodhomeadvisor.com](http://www.goodhomeadvisor.com) for the picture of high rise apartments



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# Life in the Crucible – A study on Public Spaces in Fringes of Kolkata

Kalyan Mukherjee, Sanjib Nag

## Introduction

Living in cities has always been stressful. Historical development of cities have been spontaneously triggered by human needs - needs that were in demand following growth of society, needs to accommodate the natural progress of civilizations. The stress followed in the footsteps of this process of growth –resulting in the gargantuan levels of expansion and overcrowding and, eventually, increasing poverty levels. People from every class of society were vying for a place of their own, some sections were being made slaves to a system. There were classes of society who ruled and there were people who did not have a voice at all. As William Glover points it out in his writing *Construing Urban Space* – “In British legal tradition, good government implied to the protection of the public good – or public interest – from the depredations of sectarian or purely private self interest.....but during colonial period the prerogative to protect rights based on a liberal notion of the public and to identify certain physical spaces and objects as themselves possessing qualities of public-ness was dominant and importantly enforced their legal codes.” Each inhabitant had to have space – for living and playing. Every individual had to engage in activities that brought pleasure, both physically as well as psychologically. And thus cities expanded and grew – the sprawl observed thus began to take a shape of unprecedented nature.

## Need for Public Spaces

The society needs public spaces for various reasons. The needs have been defined in several ways. Christopher Alexander defines the need as ... “people with a shared way of life gather together to rub shoulders and confirm their community...” Stephen Carr and others have categorized the role of public spaces in generating

- a) Comfort – in the form including physical comfort, duration of comfort conditions, seating arrangements and location to help visual accessibility and sense of security
- b) Relaxation – both passive and active recreation, access to natural elements, people watching and public art installations
- c) Passive and active engagement in sports
- d) Discovery – of spaces off the beaten track, special events at plazas

People have had this habit of personalizing spaces. We have had discussions on public spaces but have not yet provided definitions discussing the public. In fact, issues of accessibility to public places have been highlighted by several researchers in the past. Feudal and colonial administrators of eras gone by had always executed the right to debar a majority of the population from using their public spaces. The deprived classes had the option of finding out and defining their own spaces for leisure, like bazaars, neighborhood open lots or thresholds of houses, the informal tea stalls and maidans. Some of them went further to personalize the spaces and established territorial access to it too! We would also take note that the nature of public spaces vary distinctly from the developed world to the developing world. In short, people, whether driven by administration or not, have chosen to demarcate their own little domain to conduct a part of their livelihood and also hold on to these as a private possession. In public space, we are walking, working, driving, sitting, cycling, resting and riding transport. Some of us are at work, others at leisure. And in a whole range of ways our gestures, actions, use of objects, spacing and movement amongst one another have collective effects (Bridge 2005; Laurier and Philo 2006).

## Public Spaces in expanding cities

Public spaces have been part of city plans since ages. We have seen examples in history where life in

the public realm has been awarded special place in society and in physical arrangement of cities. Public buildings and spaces of various dimensions and importance have been integrated into layout of cities - both deliberately and spontaneously. These spaces, initially, had connotations like trade, entertainment and religion attached to them. During the post Industrial Revolution phase of city planning, concepts of Garden Cities along with public spaces in the midst of nature, were being proposed vigorously; this ultimately led to visualizing utopian ideas of towns and cities. However, with increasing awareness regarding environmental and ecological degradations, the shift in locations of the public realm became more and more optimized. Weaving the public space into the precincts of private spaces became a new paradigm to be adopted. Along with this, the task of identifying public spaces along transport nodes and neighbourhood areas and sustaining them became increasingly imminent. As a result of the influence of this expanding city, the character of the urban fringe was gradually or sometimes very abruptly replaced by a more urban profile in terms of land use, employment and income, and culture.

### Fringe Characteristics

The conceptual definition of the fringe was stated by R.J. Pryor in 1969. It is a zone of transition between the continuously built-up and suburban areas of the central city and rural hinterland. (Fig. 1) The Urban-Rural Fringe Area has also been defined by Wehrwein (1942) as “the area of transition between well recognized urban land use and the area devoted to agriculture”. Thus, urban-rural fringe would be a continuous area that exist beyond the urban limits of cities. These so called “mixed spaces” (Dupont, 2005) have a dynamic character due to the continuity in sprawl. Andrews (1942) defined the fringe as the active expansion sector of the compact economic city. A more comprehensive definition of rural-urban fringe given by Herington (1984), describes the distinctive characteristics that it is an area which is partly assimilated in the growing urban complex, which is still partly rural and where many of the residents live in the countryside, but are not socially and economically forming part of it.

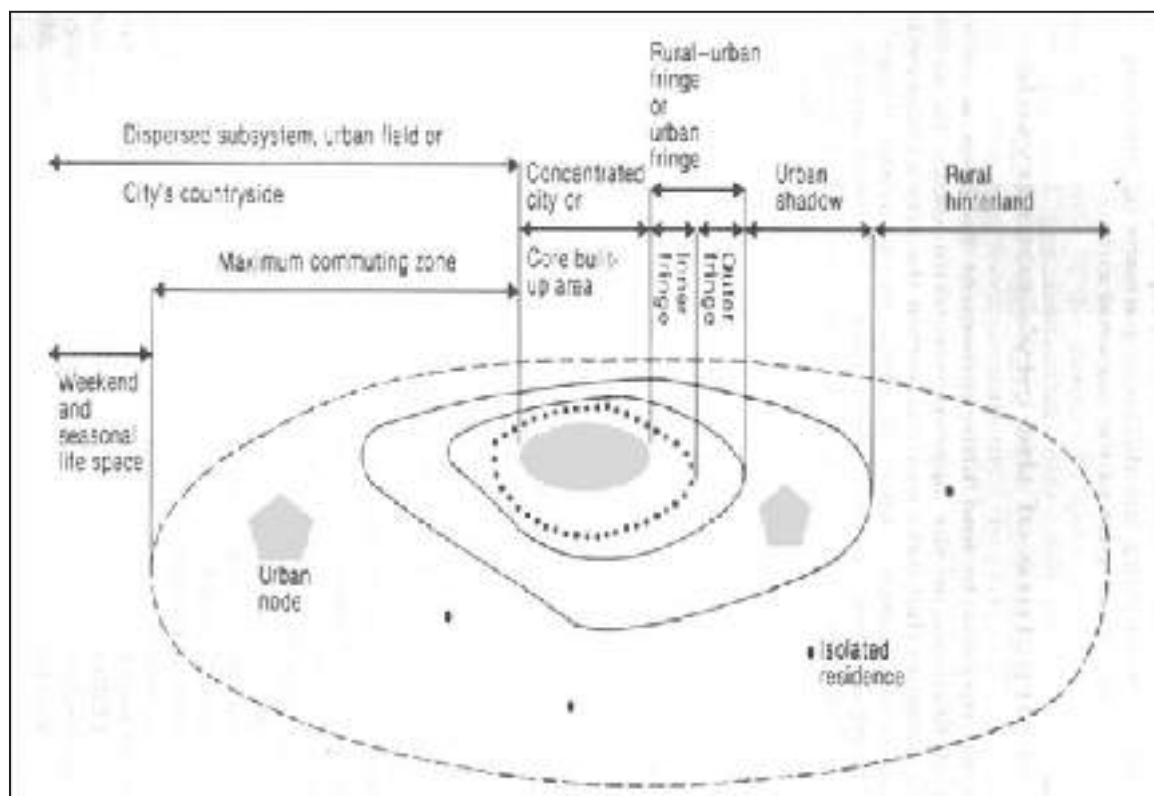


Figure 1 : The rural-urban fringe scheme. Source: (Modified from Bryant et al., 1982: 12)

Urban Fringes have consequently acquired the following heterogeneous patterns of growth, such as:

- Metropolitan growth engulfing existing farmlands and villages.
- Rural migrants creating a “transitional social space” or “temporary holding location” in a rural- to-urban migration process.
- Suburbanization processes where urban dwellers move to the fringe searching for advantages in land rent, or to capitalize opportunities for land acquisition, speculation and informal enterprise (Browder et al., 1995).

Living conditions of the existing population are affected due to unstructured land-use planning, lack of adequate civil services and inability of the administrative system to handle institutional and factual problems of the changing urban-rural fringe areas (Anbumozhi, 2007).

The urban-rural fringe areas have played key roles in providing the essential commodities needed in urban areas while acting as a playground for the rural economy. In almost all developing countries, rural areas are the centers of agricultural production, while the urban areas are the major consumers of it. Agrarian and other produces are converted to marketable products in most fringe areas too and feed the markets that lie in urban areas. In this process of adding value to the raw agricultural produce, the fringe areas suffer considerably with the environmental damages in the form of waste disposal and resource constraints (Anbumozhi, 2007).

### **Fringes of Kolkata**

The demand for more living space showed no signs of abating as cities continued to expand in the fringes through peripheral sprawl. The case of Kolkata is no different. Such expansions have transformed the fringes most. While dominating the needs of the already existing population, market forces have created gated communities to satisfy the need of the urban migrants, who are on this constant lookout of living amidst nature. As a consequence, the pre-existing public spaces here, however informal they were, became subject to irreversible destruction. The character of living, and the ambience of the fringe, which could have become vital to living standards, and which had lured this expansion in the first place, are being lost. Immediate redressal of this problem and ways to sustain such spaces need to be devised. As Ratula Kundoo, in her work, *Examining 'gray areas' of urban development : The role of formal-informal nexus in shaping the politics of participation in peri-urban Kolkata, India* says, “The production of urban fringes is being reexamined here looking at the ways in which informal and formal practices of urban development interact with each other rather than treat them as separate from each other. There has been suggestions of taking the inhabitants into confidence and facilitating a participatory approach to planning procedures. Again, Kundoo adds – “Participation does not mean simply being a stakeholder, or part of a consensus building exercise in formal invited spaces (Miraftab). It rather extends and spills over to mobilization of resistance, manipulation of situations, the creation of new spaces and relationships that fall outside the formal legal planned and regulated domain. It expands to include day to day actions, under the radar moves and practices that may even be illegal or insurgent (Holston) in nature.”

### **Conclusion**

The general development pattern of Kolkata Metropolitan Area (KMA) suggests a strong linear bias along the River Hooghly. This entire region can be divided into three broad categories, based on the physical characteristics:

- a. the compactly built up zone of core area,
- b. intermediate development zone or inner periphery (fringe),
- c. predominantly undeveloped rural land of outer periphery.

As stated earlier fringe areas of Kolkata are also experiencing major urban development activities (eg. New satellite towns, large housing condominiums, major transportation and logistic hubs.



Infrastructure & services projects (water treatment plants, STPs, flyovers) supporting the urban life. The outer periphery (mostly under the jurisdiction of panchayats or Municipalities) is undergoing a rapid transformation - the phenomenon of urban sprawl. This is largely due to the fact that the KMA has very limited option in growth space. This sprawl is being catalysed mostly due to :

- i. Improved communication with city core.
- ii. Easy access to high speed intra-city transport network
- iii. Fragile and unorganized local governing body ( A. Biswas, 2007)

Now, the fringe has to support or afford the public spaces and make it sustainable. The basic character of these areas need to be retained and improved upon to continue the interactive spirits among people. Considering this while going through grand narratives of urban transformation, new and shifting forms of inhabiting public life might seem quite inadequate or frivolous. Yet ,measuring this against the overall growth process, they are important. In thinking about what are apparently smaller stories and practical changes, the grand narratives about the transformations happening in our cities often start to reveal themselves as less coherent, unified or stable as they are sometimes made out to be. A great deal of the time, cities world- wide possess a remarkable continuity of form; changes in their public life are often not easy to perceive . For all the attention that sweeping transformations and big megaprojects get, cities and public life could be primarily defined by small adaptations, reinventions and reinterpretations.

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Conflicting stakes and governance in the peripheries of large Indian metropolises - *Veronique Dupont*



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# The Design of Socio-Spatial Constructs

Amit Khanna

## The Social Nature of Urban Design

Centuries of accumulated spatial maneuvering has produced the rich, complex grain of our most beloved cities. Through an inevitable process of distillation, that of destroying what could not endure and preserving what could adapt and was precious, historic city centers around the world embody a collective repository of urban knowledge. The multiplicity of forces at work in the evolution of a city has ensured that they are almost never the result of a singular vision. Barnett has argued that the form of a city is rarely intentional, 'but it is not an accident' (1982: 9). More often than not, cities are the unforeseen outcome of insufficient cooperation between several stake holders with diverse and vested interests (Gallion and Eisner, 2005). How is it then that the process of city formation has come to be categorized as design? For more than a century, the newly minted profession of urban planning has sought to impose order and scientific understanding on the making of cities with varied degrees of failure (Dunster, 1995). Yet, the notion that conventional urban design can create valuable places continues to persist, dramatically more so in the global south, where large conurbations are being relentlessly planned without the feeblest consideration of the people who actually build and inhabit them (Cassen, et al, 2005).

Thus, there remains an inherent contradiction in the prevalent understanding of urban design and its consistently strained relationship to social design. This essay will examine the prevailing tensions between these twin notions of how our urban spaces are formulated by situating them in the context of place-making. I will argue that part of the theoretical framework of 20th century urban design is fundamentally flawed, when seen against historical precedents and can only be understood as the unfortunate outcome of an accumulated legacy of a few select thinkers, who were seeking to reform working class conditions in the era of the industrial revolution. The global export of garden city planning and car-centric suburban development models has destroyed the social fabric of our existing cities and made new cities alienating to all but the few elite that can choose to inhabit them on their terms (Campbell, 2011; Krier 2009). The inevitability of this legacy will also be contested, maintaining that the design of the city around the 'car' need not remain the only way to approach urban design. It will eventually emerge that the need to create social dimensions to urban design is a fundamental precept and not the latest fashion in a continuum of urban ideologies.

This is a problematic endeavor since the various terms of reference are so often used in a loose fit, and it is impossible here to compress the academic discourse to define them precisely in the contemporary context. By far, the most controversial idea is place, with the same physical space occupying multiple interpretations, often opposing ones. In a widespread perverse inversion, places that bear little or no relationship to the surrounding or historical context have come to be perceived as attractive and secure by those who create them, but not necessarily by those who inhabit them (Minton, 2012). Simultaneously, informal governance and tenure structures in the global south are creating new autonomous and socio-spatial models of urbanism that challenge conventional understanding of placemaking (Lombard, 2013; Roy, 2009). Thus, it may be improbable to aim for a consensus on the measure of the success of a place, besides its ability to allow people to freely engage in socio-economic activities (Engwicht, 1992; Glaeser, et al, 2002). It may be necessary, therefore to fall back on the definition of sustainable urban development outlined by the Brundtland Report and also use that as the metric for a successful place (UNWCED, 1987).

*"At Melania, every time you enter the square, you find yourself caught in a dialogue: the braggart soldier and the parasite coming from a door meet the young wastrel and the prostitute; or else the miserly father from his threshold utters his final warnings to the amorous daughter and is interrupted by the foolish servant who is taking a note to the procuress. You return to Melania*



*after years and you find the same dialogue still going on; in the meanwhile the parasite has died, and so have the procuress and the miserly father; but the braggart soldier, the amorous daughter, the foolish servant have taken their places, being replaced in their turn by the hypocrite, the confidante, the astrologer."*

Italo Calvino (1974: 64)

In his seminal book *Invisible Cities*, Calvino vividly describes the experience of visiting the square of a fictional city and notes that while the characters are transient and varied, the square is the stage for all their collective actions. More importantly perhaps, the square persists for generations after, continuing to be the de facto arena for social interaction. This constancy is a fundamental aspect of our urban spaces, in that they tend to essentially remain unchanged, despite a site-by-site evolution of the surrounding buildings (Murrain, 2002). Their slow evolution allows them to imbibe the knowledge of several generations, each one building upon the mistakes of the past. Much of the character comes from their relative stability, 'a sense of place' being imparted by the static presence of places in our dynamic everyday routines (Dovey, 2010). Indeed, the spatiality can be said to produce our social interactions while being constantly influenced itself by the socio-political constructs of the inhabitants (Lefebvre, 1991). Also, as Kostof stresses, versatility is the primary virtue of public places; they can become market squares as easily as they can host concerts and public demonstrations (2005: 144). The immediacy of surrounding buildings offers a vast panoply of activities and people to enliven and support the space.

Settlements have grown organically for millennia, primarily around the collective and unsupervised subconscious actions of dwellers. A normal pattern of evolution is that expansion takes place along strong linkages that lead out to other settlements, meeting up at centers that allow congregation for trade, politics or leisure. Eventually, these become recognizable and memorable places, firmly enmeshed in the fabric of our cities (Dovey, 2010). The open spaces that are the result of this evolution are part of the collective consciousness of the city, fiercely guarded and 'owned' by the local community. Research by the Joseph Rowntree foundation has shown the relative importance of such spaces in cities, where the principal activity is simply to watch the world go by (Minton, 2012). In historic city centres around the world, there are several such shared social spaces that allow for learning by surprise, an important facet of urban life (Lynch 1960, Jacobs, 1992). In ancient Indian cities, for instance, there is an elaborate sequential scale of urban spaces that simultaneously provide shelter, refuge away from movement and generous scope for economic activity (Correa, 2012). The essential aspect of these spaces is that they have become part of the routine activities for a multitude of city dwellers, who simply by passing through, enliven them and in turn, benefit from them.

The dense agglomeration of modern cities allows for a diverse set of requirements, all of which can be fulfilled by walking to a central space, allowing for social interactions enroute (Glaeser, et al, 2002). Understanding this need for human interaction is fundamental to making successful places since users are more concerned with the experience of a city rather than its physicality (Dovey, 2010; Murrain 2002). People are happy to suffer the discomfort of sitting on cold, hard stone steps and walking on congested pavements for the sake of interacting with others, anywhere that holds the possibility of unplanned interactions and spontaneous conversations. Conversely, comfortable and well-shaded sitting spaces with no prospect are guaranteed to remain empty, since they remove the possibility of meeting with and seeing people go by (Whyte, 1980). The best places offer the perfect balance of prospect-refuge for the user and these tend to be adjacent to heavily trafficked areas that see a mix of users at different times of the day (Jacobs, 1992). This behavior is not limited to the conventionally understood large urban spaces. Narrow, inner city residential streets are also subject to the same principles of creating a good place - walkability and security with an appropriate socio-economic diversity of people and buildings (Gallion and Eisner, 2005; Jacobs, 1992).

In contrast, most urban design seeks to enhance the appearance of the city with little regard for such nuanced interactions. In her criticism of Ebenezer Howard, whom she calls, 'a court reporter for whom planning was an avocation', Jacobs indicts him for not recognizing the value of the city for what it represented for the workers of the industrial revolution, focusing his energy instead on its dismal appearance (1992: 17). His conceptualization of the garden city model immediately caught the fancy of those wanting to improve the life of new immigrant urban dwellers and a new kind of city came into being. Zoned according to differential usage, the city segregated the functional activities of working, living and leisure and neatly separated the workers from the owners (Krier, 2009; Harvey 2012). Adopted far and wide, initially in America and now across the world, and coupled with the advent of personal motorized transport, this manifested itself into what has now come to be understood as the suburban model. Relying on the economic lifeline of a downtown business district or a distant industrial park, these endless aggregations of residential units enjoy considerable refuge, but little prospect (Glaeser, et al, 2002).

Whether measured by energy consumption, the usurpation of valuable agricultural land or by the loss of human interaction, this has proved to be a deeply unsustainable model of development. Even the simplest statistical analysis will suggest that the per capita energy consumption of suburb-based cities is far higher, not only because of the reliance on the car to get anywhere, but also because of the amount of infrastructure required to support it (UN WCED, 1987). Compared to a few decades ago, when cities in China and India were largely dense and accessible by walking or bicycle, the average energy consumption has shot up, largely due to the transition to a car based planning system that zones out residences to distant peripheries (Glaeser, 2012). Newer cities being made also have fewer happy residents, secluded in their secure homes with unusually little access to other people. What was once considered an everyday part of life, 'going into town' has now become a focused leisure activity, saved for weekends and special occasions (Minton, 2012). Often cited in recent literature, Copenhagen has the happiest people in the world, partially because of the everyday mingling of life with the city and partially for its remarkable city centre (Krier, 2009; Allan, et al, 2011). Although no such statistic exists for Indian cities, it has been my personal experience that as fewer people walk in the streets, choosing instead to run on treadmills in air-conditioned malls, the city becomes unsafe and this downward spiral is almost dystopic in prospect.

Another, more sinister aspect of 20th century urban planning, is that it is necessarily a top-down and immediate process with little or no room for iteration. Plans that are drawn up are adhered to strictly by governing agencies that fail to understand that cities need to evolve and respond to the needs of the people who inhabit them (Barnett, 1982). Urban contestations playing out all over the world, whether in the form of occupy movements, or by squatters demanding their right to the city, point to a need for urban flexibility that simply does not exist in the framework of the planned city (Harvey, 2012). This dictatorial approach to city-making is also in deep contradiction to the historical precedents, where formalizing informal structures was the norm, rather than the exception (Kostof, 2005; Murrain, 2002). Going against the grain of tradition, repetition and patterns, inventiveness 'created' new places, with little success and much detriment to the overall quality of city life. Designed almost entirely around private mobility and services infrastructure, these 'new towns' offered little by way of diversity and leave almost no room for the spontaneous and the informal (Alexander, 1979). This intolerance for the informal is not simply a physical issue, but a socio-economic one and certainly, a political one. Allowing space for inhabitants to make their own place by reinventing the city is perceived by the powerful to be tantamount to relinquishing control (Harvey, 2012).

This is not to say that informal settlements have been eradicated by the ubiquity of formal planning. Human enterprise and resilience is often vastly underestimated and tragically, the ability of the poorest sections of urban society to inhabit places of absolute misery in the hope of economic growth remains resolute (Correa, 2012). Coupled with a loss of dignity, rural immigrants into cities

face a mountain of issues - sanitation, water, tenure, identity. Over time, these issues resolve themselves, either through collective community action or, rarely, by sympathetic administrative spending. Slums, seen from the point of view of Ebenezer Howard have not fundamentally changed, but the massive increase in their numbers, sizes, and the global spread of this phenomena suggests that a significant portion of our cities are being built informally, whether they are recognized as such or not (Davis, 2007). As slum dwellers slowly accumulate the benefits of the city, their homes acquire permanence and shared spaces acquire a firmness (Lombard, 2013; Roy, 2009). These have the potential to coalesce into the urban spaces of the future, with dense walkable neighborhoods that are essentially mixed use and diverse. What is missing is the lack of recognition that these are the same processes that have created some of our most memorable cities.

## Conclusion

It is unlikely that the true cost of creating unsustainable cities through the preponderance of 20th century urban design will ever be quantified. However, some of the ill-effects have begun to visibly manifest themselves, whether it is the unequivocal human impact on climate change that affects us all, or the abject miserable conditions in which 50% of the world's population continues to survive (Brand, 1995). It is undeniable that the foundations of modern urban design theory were rooted in noble aspirations, whether it was the eradication of pandemic disease or the upliftment of the working classes. However, the unintended consequences have proved to be almost counter-productive, resulting in urban forms that have profound, unintended harmful consequences for all of us (Davis, 2007). While our cities remain the crucible of our greatest inventions, they are also the source of our most insensitive socio-spatial constructs (Glaeser, 2012). However, informal settlements on the physical and social peripheries have challenged the notion that places cannot be made in a rigid construct. Far from being places of alienation and unsustainability, they are places of meaningful human interaction, allowing for economic growth, political revolution and remarkably, radical innovation. It would not be unfair to say they quantitatively represent the building blocks of the modern world (Davis, 2007; Correa, 2012; Brand, 1995).

There is severe resistance to the notion that informal settlements are 'places in the making'; that they will eventually transform into the beloved city fabric of older settlements is scarcely understood. They are seen as an ill to be eradicated (Lombard, 2013), with the prospect that a perfectly formed city can simply be constructed from the ground up, in a single generation, with little iteration (Minton, 2012). As illustrated in the case of Liverpool One or even portions of Dubai, and countless such privately owned swathes of the city, these places may replicate the physical appearance of a beautiful walkable neighborhood, but lack the freedom that genuine public spaces provide, whether from a political perspective or even a cultural one (Minton, 2012). On the contrary, portions of the city which do not necessarily appear to be currently attractive hold the prospect of metamorphosing into places of great social value, since they have been constructed with a human perspective, by people who inhabit and grow with them. These places must be recognized for the value they bring to the creation of a modern city and even encouraged to thrive, despite the criticism that condoning informality is akin to breaking the law. Stories of eviction, displacement and relocation abound in the media of any city of the global south, often with a political undercurrent (Cassen, 2005). Crucially, it is the laws that must change to adapt to this relentless phenomena, instead of forcing these placemakers to flee their produced spaces and start rebuilding their lives from scratch in new peripheries.

It is therefore crucial to approach any scale of urban design with an emphasis on creating socio-spatial constructs that enhance the possibility of human interactions. This not only increases the possibility of creating more vibrant, creative communities, it is also what makes us essentially human (Barnett, 1982). One only needs to look at the past for the rich tradition of placemaking, whether it is in Europe or South East Asia, where countless small cities have successfully replicated urban places of various scales with an astounding diversity while maintaining a familiar self-

similarity. These cities have survived the advent of modern transport and certainly appear to be more robust at adapting to the needs of the modern city dweller than suburban models (Krier, 2009). Conventional top-down urbanism has diluted the fundamental basis for aggregating together in settlements and the resultant places have been rendered desolate by their inability to host conventional social relationships developed over centuries (Campbell, 2011). These social relationships need to retake their central place in any design strategy intending to create meaningful places.

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## 'PLACE'ING SPACE

Dipti Bhaindarkar

### Abstract

Our generation is observing rapid technological change. As we try and adapt or equip ourselves with latest technology, our expectations from surrounding environment increase in correlation with increase in the available information. Our generation has learnt to question decision-making process and wants to be recognized as active stakeholders. Hence age-old concept of top down approach is changing increasingly to a bottom up approach. We, in India, are planning to build 100 smart cities to cope up with rapid urbanization. Our cities and towns have great legacies which contemporary architects and urban planners have to keep in mind when they undertake new projects. The spaces in our towns and cities do not meet most standards set in west, but each of them have tangible and intangible attributes which have kept them alive and thriving. Hence it is very important to decipher the relationship of people, space and place in our context.

This paper refers to the theories put forth by some eminent scholars and practitioners to understand how a space with its visible physical attributes turns into a place. Place, thus formed enters the human psyche. People can recall its sight, smell, texture and sound from their memory. When a space undergoes drastic changes, its acceptance by people depends upon new relations and attachments. The commodification of a space to form enclaves, monitoring and continuous bombardment of acceptable and unacceptable behaviors act as roadblocks in certain spaces being appreciated. This paper attempts to scrutinize the existing typologies of city spaces, in order to articulate a space construct that enhances the social life in the city.

We have known how Human race has gradually advanced from individual existence to community and societal living. Face-to-face encounters in daily life have helped individuals to build communities of like-minded people. As the communities grew in size, the interaction created social bonds and exchange of goods and ideas with neighbouring ghettos also raised societal organization to a next level. On the political scene monarchy emerged, flourished and eventually faded, democratic set ups took over. All these factors have influenced Architecture and Town planning over the years. Remnants of architectural heritage and community spaces help us to understand the people and their spaces of the past. At the onset, community spaces acted more like political gatherings, activated by various political announcements and events. Subsequently, political usage became less dominant and social, cultural and economical usage took Centre stage.

This article considers space in various contexts such as natural or manmade, within the built environment or outside; but bounded by the built environment. Space enters the human psyche; it creates images of safety or danger, openness or enclosure. Various other attributes associate a person with a space. Space may support individual's emotions or it may create illusion or reflection. People enjoy being in natural settings and they also enjoy being in crowded street markets in spite of all the perceived inconvenience and mess around. At times, well-planned and designed spaces fail to attract people. In the book 'Space & Psyche', Danze and Sonnenberg stated that 'Buildings are inert objects, but our experience of them transcends the physical realm and extends into our deepest consciousness'<sup>1</sup>. Architecture, as a discipline moves beyond just a mere building, it strives to enhance the human condition and promote emotional well-being using manipulation of space, form, material, and light. Ali Madanipour has compartmentalized spaces based on its association with human beings i.e. intimate spaces, interpersonal spaces, to impersonal spaces<sup>2</sup>. The degree of privacy gradually goes on decreasing. Besides this, there are private and public spaces and there also exist overlapping spaces such as semi private and semi public spaces. The physical attributes of a space lay down norms about what is allowed or not allowed for each type of space.

Human being tries to protect his intimate space envelope. He enjoys anonymity in the crowd. As long as intimate space is not breached, one does not feel threatened and goes on to explore and enjoy the

<sup>1</sup> Danze, E & Sonnenberg S. (2013). Space & Psyche.Center for American Architecture and Design.

<sup>2</sup> Madanipour, A. (2003). Public and private spaces of the city. Routledge.

experience that the space has to offer. Then one tries to shape the space by using it in the way one desires. A space cannot be separated from the people and the program that it supports [Fig.1.1]. Places are spaces that are valued (Harrison & Dourish, 1996 P.69). A space becomes a place when meaning constructed through social interaction, cultural identities and personal involvement are supported in that particular environment. Professionals try to give meaning to the space, if such meaning appeals to people, it adds value to the space and converts it into place. Popular public space is one which sustains personal as well as group identity, creates attachments, presents rooted experience and is understood in spite of its lived diversity.

Jane Jacobs (Jane Jacobs, 1961 in Seamon 2012) always felt that citiness is a real phenomenon and in that there are qualities, behaviors experiences and principles that are evoked by authentic urban situations. It is often seen that people in a space devise various programmes as per the utility and nature of the space. For a newcomer, these spaces and programmes provide authentic image of spatial and social reality. According to Jan Gehl, people carry out three types of activities in these spaces: Necessary activities, optional activities, and social activities. Necessary activities generally provide very little scope for interactions, but the other two that is optional and social add to vibrancy and vitality to public realm and contribute in building a people-place whole. Thus, it is very essential to note the fact that 'Space' and 'Place' are not innate but rather created and recreated through the actions and meanings of people.

Any space in the city can be deciphered in three main components. They are people, programme and place. Critical investigation helps in understanding different genre of programmes. There are choreographed programmes, where people are guided and monitored to move in a certain fashion, the other are non choreographed where people are encouraged in building up their own programmes for the space and enjoy the freedom. Both programmes along with its human components result in formation of a place. Places and spaces are recognized, appreciated or criticized by the attributes that are attached to it by the people and their programmes. [Fig.1.2]

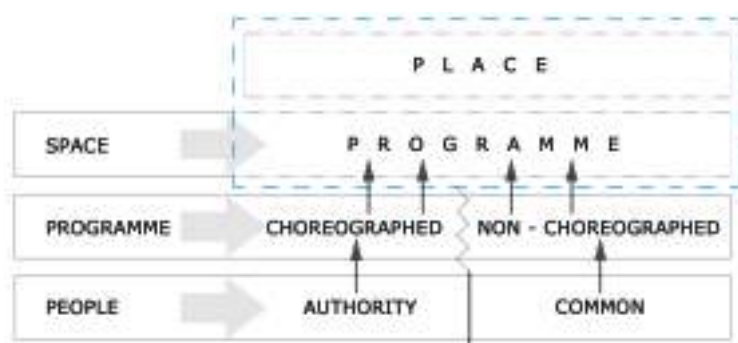


Fig.1.2 – People, Place and Program

There existed specific planned spaces for social, cultural congregations and interactions. To name a few, 'agora' – the market place in Greek civilization, 'forum' – an assembly space, market squares of medieval times, piazzas of Renaissance era<sup>3</sup>, pedestrian streets of Copenhagen, Le Champ Elysees in

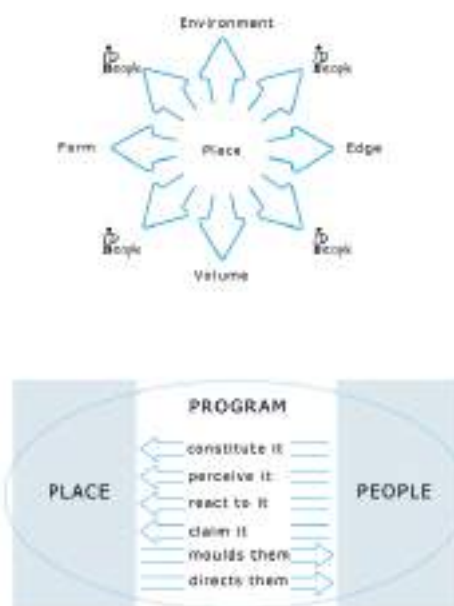


Fig.1.1. – People Place Relationship

The way people use, perceive, react to and shape the city space individually and collectively, the interconnection between form and use of spaces and the resultant place based experience is vital to everyday urbanism. Jane Jacobs talks about this as a unique relationship or people-place-whole (ibid).

<sup>3</sup> Discussed in detail in Chapman, D. (2005). Creating neighbourhoods and places in built environment. Routledge.



Paris were planned with a specific purpose. In India, temple grounds, fair grounds and courtyards, weekly bazars, local chavdi (village panchayat, meeting place) or small meetings held under banyan trees enriched life with the community and social interactions. Often these spaces were unplanned, but the programmes created by the people for the space provided it with a definition.

Let us examine a trend setting case in modern architecture. Mies Van de Rohe's project of Seagram Building completed in 1958 is a skyscraper located at Manhattan in New York City.



Fig. 1.3. Seagram Building, New York  
Source: <http://www.thecityreview>

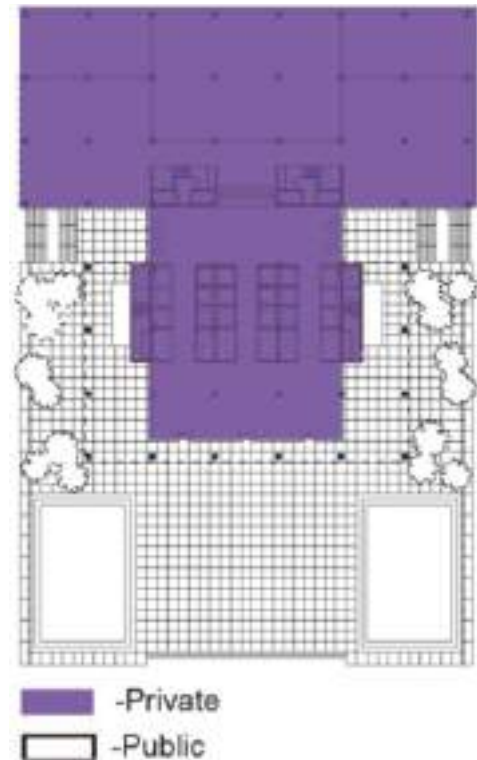


Fig.1.4. Space Gradation at Seagram Building  
Source: <http://arch220.wordpress.com>

Mies Van de Rohe intended to create urban open space in front of the building. In spite of being luxurious idea the open space became very popular gathering space. Subsequently, in 1961 New York city enacted major revision to its zoning resolution, which offered incentives to developers to install “privately owned public spaces” which were meant to emulate that of Seagram building. It was a grand gesture of setting the building 100 feet back from the street edge to contribute to the public realm. This set back created highly active open plaza, well landscaped by two large fountains which animated the space and large outdoor seating. This building set a unique example as it detached itself from New Yorks existing urban morphology, plot line development, and the conventional techniques of skyscraper planning and construction. Plaza cutting into the lobby of the building created a link between the public realm outside and the private space within the building.

Propelled by material and structural innovations in the use of steel, concrete and plate glass, Frank Lloyd Wright, Le Corbusier, Mies Van de Rohe created built examples of novel concept of space making<sup>4</sup>. The impact of the building on social relationship was brought about by transparency, openness, mobility and interconnection. They challenged the existing spatial and social norms and conventions. Over the period of time, social ideas that they tried to profess were obscured and modern architecture became known only for aesthetical style than new social relations.

<sup>4</sup> Gieseeking,J.J.(2014). The People, Place and Space Reader. Routledge.

Social interactions require meaningful contact and real communication. To bring about social interaction, space requires four characteristics; a reason for visit, reason and ambience to be in the space for sometime, the feeling of safety and comfort. Scholars like Z. Bauman (1998,2000), R. Sennet (2006), M. Davis (1999), M. Castells (2000) have expressed their concern about the policies of privatization, security and also consumerism and individualism that will be detrimental to the social cause the public spaces serve.

Spaces created in public interest in India are regulated by an infinite number of rules, norms, prohibitions and impositions and hence who, where and how it should be used is predetermined. Authorities prescribe the social actors to use a space in a stereotypical way. Building a community or society involves breaking down the physical and psychological barriers that people, authorities build intentionally or un-intentionally. A good place often allows people from diverse background, ethnicity, and economical groups to co-exist and meet naturally and to interact comfortably. Let us examine some contemporary spaces.

Kala Ghoda, in Fort Area, Mumbai is seen as a business district and is active during the day, with tourists who visit the Fort Heritage Precinct. The area becomes dead in the night except for a brief period of 'Kala Ghoda Festival' when it dawns cultural flair. The SPACE changes to PLACE. Office goers stay back. More people come to the venue, and stay there till midnight or dawn enjoying the cultural programmes, food, art installations and paintings. The streets are pedestrianized. Space drastically changes by the day and night and acquires a definition of a public square with hawkers and various small events that activate the space. It is a choreographed programme planned by the authorities, welcomed by the people because it gives multiple choices to plan itinerary, yet be one in an overall picture.

Rajpath, in Delhi has Amar Javan Jyoti at one end, Rashtrapati Bhavan at the other. Near Amar Javan Jyoti, India Gate unplanned programme makes it popular throughout the year but on 26th January, the Republic Day, this whole street has choreographed parade with spectators, students, armed personnel and dignitaries all participating in a stereotyped action every year. Thus the venue acts as a formal and informal setting on a temporal basis.

Close scrutiny of both spaces reveal that kala ghoda is choreographed event by an agency, requiring lot of reorganization in order to activate space. Rajpath, though designed to portray grandeur and monumental presence is activated throughout the year as the space easily adapts with infusion of activity without much reorganization.

A Phoenix mill, Lower Parel, Mumbai was a space of work, toil and sweat of workers for many years. After mill worker's strike in 1982, with shifting and closing of mills the whole Girangaon district became defunct. Development of phoenix mills brought about change of user and opened the mill areas for public with mall, restaurants, hotels, indoor sports, public plaza and activated the space. Now it is popular hang out for all age groups even with surveillance because people enjoy a great amount of freedom in this compound. It has become a privatized space available for extended public realm.

Until mid 20th century villages, towns and cities had natural gathering places. Marketplace, church, religious structures, the train station, the transit stops and post offices were places of social interaction and face-to-face communication. With telephones, television and computers the need for physical gathering for communication has substantially reduced. Public transportation, shopping and workplace are the daily spots of social interactions. A space offering good seating, a mix of sun and shade, a mix of large or more intimate spaces, food, public convenience, spectacular view, green spaces, water bodies, smart but easily maintainable furniture, access for differently abled people and proper signage are need of the hour.

Place identity and place interaction happens to be interdependent. It requires the unique synergy of physical ensemble of the place comprising blocks, building typology, street network, and also spatial

usages by the people to generate the scenario of urban place that can be termed as distinct *genius loci*. It is a place of encounter and exchange and of learning to cope up with one another. Social practices are soul of public spaces.

In Mumbai, 150 acres of open grounds; Oval, Cross and Azad Maidan are available. Bounded by Art deco style buildings across the road, the grounds are reserved as recreation or playground. Not much unplanned activity is seen on this huge open space. On the contrary, if we examine the residential neighbourhood of Dadar, Shivaji Park is also reserved as a playground. Walking / Jogging track around with children play area and Nana Nani Park. Low parapet wall around the ground is most happening spot for all age groups because of freedom of devising programmes. Towards the beach two gardens stand now amalgamated Narali Baug and Dnyaneshwar Udhyan with security and prohibition on food items. Older generation still misses the freedom of sitting on the parapet and enjoying famous chaat and the vistas of setting sun. The beach full of children, relaxing people is no more visible. When any space changes during the lifetime of a person, the memories linger. New experience has to be impactful, dynamic enough to redefine the place in the minds of the people.

In cities that are increasingly circumscribed by social, racial, economic enclaves, the professionals have herculean task of establishing a neutral territory, where people can gather and enjoy freedom without obligation. City landscape is increasingly being commodified, monitored, and construed in a way to discourage spontaneous appropriation and unplanned transformations. Quality of intimacy, open endedness, temporality should form popular prescription of use. Identity of a place has shifted meaning from form to events, permanence to change, and identity to anonymity of the nomadic experience. At present, technology is rapidly advancing bringing the world virtually together but is physically pushing people far apart. Face to face interaction is also virtual through Internet chats and skype calls. As citizens of Global Village, it becomes critical to examine these community spaces. In the book 'Happy City, Transforming our lives through urban design', Maurice B Rowdy, a British planner, talks about 'architecture determinism'. He feels that human behavior can be changed in predictable and positive way by creating the environment and the ambience in a particular manner. Cities and Towns have Master plans. Often planners try to follow standards without considering the social and cultural mindsets of people. The way of living differs in northern and southern hemisphere and also changes as per topography and climate.

Social interactions require meaningful contact and real communication. To bring about social interaction, space requires four characteristics; a reason for visit, reason and ambience to be in the space for sometime, the feeling of safety and comfort. Scholars like Z. Bauman (1998,2000), R. Sennet (2006), M. Davis (1999), M. Castells (2000) have expressed their concern about the policies of privatization, security and also consumerism and individualism that will be detrimental to the social cause the public spaces serve.



Fig.1.5. Yoga by the Bay at Marine Drive  
Source: <https://www.eventshigh.com>

In already developed cities it is just impossible to get new land for social, cultural and recreational spaces for social interactions. Instead streets, junctions have to take shape of social and cultural venues on temporal basis. In Mumbai, this experiment is being done at Marine Drive named 'yoga by the bay' held on last Sunday of the month [Fig.1.5]. In Bandra, 'Equal Streets' for people offer pedestrianized streets for some time [Fig.1.6]. This timeshare scheme is encouraging the

social and cultural scene. There are open-air dance studios, art hubs, gymnasiums, yoga institutes, skate boarding workshops, and many more. Such initiatives are spreading to other cities. Events at marine drive and Bandra indicate the inability of authorities to provide or make available flexible open spaces, hence people have taken to appropriating spaces to make places in an organised manner.



Fig.1.6. – Equal Streets at Bandra  
Source: <http://thecityfix.com/blog>

The role of architects, urban designers, and landscape architects in today's world is to create flexible, porous dividing line between planned and unplanned spaces. This dividing line should have an ability to constantly shift and readjust as societal norms change and evolve. The aim of program is not of controlling people, but of creating competitive spaces for people, participants to engage in environment in multiple and diverse ways for the place to remain contemporary throughout generations. The professionals should design a space that is flexible and undefined yet streamlined and anonymous with some basic facilities allowing people to

build their own programmes and use the space to the fullest.

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# The Message of Connected Spaces

Abhijit De

## Introduction

More than 46% of our population is under the age of 24. (IDP 2014) They come from different backgrounds, different societal environs and different value systems. They face umpteen challenges, some of which are pan Indian while others are more particular to certain communities. A large number are opting for higher education as a means to rise from their current social background to that of a higher one. And institutions are grabbing this opportunity by increasing both in number and strength. For example in the last decade alone, the number of institutions teaching architecture has almost doubled and intake probably trebled. There are now over four hundred institutions teaching architecture in the country. (COA 2015)

But despite the growth of higher education, India is still primarily a traditional, conservative society and the tryst with modernism is something that the youth come to terms with in different ways and in different spaces. Despite the rapid spread of technology and social media, the rate of the social change is slow. Youth prefer to remain within the cultural codes of their family and social networks. Social borders within our country are quite strong and border crossings are socially discouraged. (Friedrich-Ebert 2012)

But the architectural education ever since Corbusier's Chandigarh, has been advocating the notion of modern, rational and individual free thought. This has led many architects to discard traditional beliefs and prejudices and think in the practical and structured manner advocated by the early modernists. Today a new force of change is here in the form of information and communication technology. This has made rapid inroads into every aspect of our lives and is altering and affecting the thoughts and behaviour of the young architectural minds.

## Medium of Communication

With the aid of these technologies the architectural student is more connected to others everywhere than ever before. In fact most of them have never even known a world without information technology, mobile connectivity or social networks. They are more and more relying on this constant and instantaneous 'Medium' and its content as their primary source of information. How is this 'Medium' changing the way they think and increasing the importance and need for more personal, individualized spaces in their lives and identities? We conducted a survey on this community in the Pune region to observe the actual impact of the use of the internet and to gauge the extent of the changes to the uses of real physical and cyber space.

What is the Message of this Medium?

## Community informatics

A community is traditionally defined as a group of people living within a certain geographical boundary. Nowadays, it also refers to a gathering of people with similar interests or work. Cyberspace is one such new community that in comparison with geographical communities is a community made up of communications and transportations flows and hubs that link groups of humans having similar ideas or searching for similar desires.

Community informatics is a relatively new field of study of the interaction between the transformation and continuity of communities due to the spread of Information age technologies and communicational methods. There are some important social trends like; change in social structure, change in culture, changes in community information systems and change in social inequality, specifically the digital divide that gave rise to such a study. (Gurstein 2007)



## The Information and Communication Age

At any given point of time a community possesses certain technologies that enable economic and social activities to happen, and then it changes. Each new technology brings with itself new information on how to use the new technology. Today we are witnessing an unprecedented speed of technological and communicational changes that is generating huge volumes of information as a byproduct. But the actual physical time available for reflection and absorption of this information is getting radically reduced, forcing people to reorganize their lifestyles and to reinterpret and reprioritize their own personal choices.

Is this compelling them to create new identities to camouflage themselves and new ways of identifying within some new found community?

## The Medium is the Message

Marshall McLuhan says that people are constantly adapting to their changing environment by balancing their senses. (McLuhan 1964) He felt that in tending to focus on the obvious impact of technological changes, i.e. the 'Medium', we are missing out the fundamental changes that are affecting our behaviour, changes that are appearing gradually, due to the effects of this 'Medium'. Those effects, of which people were entirely unaware, would happen, at the outset. These are the unanticipated consequences that stem from the fact that there are conditions in our society and culture that people don't take into consideration. These silently influence the way in which we interact with one another, and with our traditional communities. The 'Message', is, the change of scale or pace or pattern of our life, that a new technological invention or innovation introduces. It is not the content or the way we use the technological innovation, but the way that inter-personal dynamics change due to that innovation. (Federman 2004)

For example, in the 15th century, the major technological development was the Gutenberg printing press that radically altered the way people got information. Similarly the 17th and 18th centuries saw industrialization and mechanization create ways to extend our senses and changed the way people were able to perceive work, time and money. The 20th century saw the train, the plane and the automobile completely change the way people understood time and distance. Similarly, the current Information age technologies are making our actions and reactions occur almost instantaneously giving us little time to reflect or think of its consequences. These are also being constantly monitored and recorded for no apparent reason than to be viewed by others for their confirmation and also for monitoring.

It is creating an 'Age of Uncertainty and Anxiety' that compels people to participate and be regarded by their views and needs. Do people actually live in these new spaces, at a new pace but continue to think and absorb in the old, fragmented space and pace of an earlier age?

Also if we discover that our new 'Medium' brings along with it effects that might be detrimental to our society or culture, or do we use the opportunity to influence its development and evolution before the effects becomes pervasive?

## Research methodology

This study identifies trends of internet and mobile use, the manifest forms of the new technology, as well as the use of real space and family connects amongst architectural college students. The study was conducted among three different architectural college students in Pune, Maharashtra. Total sample size was 100 of which a total of 92 responded. We used the questionnaire method for our survey as it was easy to understand and gave immediate responses. We first asked students with whom we had acquaintance and gained contact of more students through them. By using this methodology we were able to quickly get a sufficient number of participants for the survey. It consisted of two parts with thirty six questions in total. A majority of the first part was related to general mobile phone and computer usage and the rest were on content, time and type of usage of



the same. The second part consisted of fifteen questions that exclusively dealt with their social life and family connections. This was done mainly in order to ascertain the impact of what we have earlier described as community informatics.

### **Architectural Community - Real Facts**

Our study threw up some interesting facts. The reality of change and the novelty for new technology was clearly apparent. Over 55% of the students surveyed, we found, changed their smartphone once a year and the PC at home has been clearly replaced by the Laptop (80%). The trend of the change in social communication systems was very interesting. E mail and even Facebook are passé; they have been replaced by Whatsapp and Instagram (1st and 2nd on the list) as the preferred choice of social communication. Shopping that was once a favourite pastime among students has moved online with sites like Flipkart and Amazon being the most popular means of shopping (71%). Even television viewing has reduced with almost 30% of the respondents claiming that they did not even watch TV anymore. Outdoor sport and social events have been replaced by net based entertainment.

Some things have still not changed. There is a real time and space for family values and family time. A majority spent a good amount of time with parents daily, and preferred to spend their free time at home with family (80%). Those who lived away from home spoke to them daily and almost all felt that the parents had time for them (91%). The need for family time especially in the form of picnic trips and vacations was much desired (54%).

The real 'Message' that this current 'Medium' seems to be the effect of the 'pace of time'. Between the need to perform and the fact that they never manage to get their parents' full attention, young people are in fact searching for something tangible. The medium's constant connectivity means that they can connect to anything anywhere anytime. Thus any free time is spent surfing the net, connecting, communicating and gathering data. This alone time is what is the real reason for a need for personal space that is separate from others. This can be seen in the bedroom or the living room of the house (87%) as this alone space.

A surprisingly large number (93%) accessed the net only at home rather than any public space but the actual time spent on the net was low less than 2 hours per day (61%). Almost all got their daily dose of news and social happening from the parents (91%).

New spaces for the young are the coffee shops and malls with over 50% of the respondents preferring to meet others at these places rather than at home. The ability to express seems to be the real problem. There was negligible blogging (11%) or posting of content related to real feelings except that on Facebook or Instagram (18%). Perhaps this is due to the presence of the family and home. But a large number of them did desire to live in an independent manner rather than the shared accommodation they live in today (81%).

The most interesting data was that there was almost a split divide between those who felt that there was a digital divide between them and their parents with almost 50% feeling that it did not exist. What can we attribute this factor to? That the parents too are as net savvy as they are? But the reality is that the current students of architecture are definitely more at ease with software, hardware and communicational tools than we are.

Is this creating a new social hybridity, between on the one hand tradition and communicational novelty on the other?

### **Conclusions: the Message of Hybrid architecture**

The 'Medium' of the Information Age is slowly altering our relationship with reality.

Even the idea of good architecture is significantly split in the group surveyed between those that wanted modernity, post modernity, novelty and high tech. There is no one clear favourite. Perhaps this nonstop connectivity is creating a situation that is keeping us in a fluid state, where information

and ideas are in constant motion. All notions of originality and creation of ideas are being blurred. The need to conform and copy accepted trends means that we no longer have a say of our own. The search for new ways to seduce, titillate and shock, what we build today is simply for the promotion of the self where tradition, history, geography, culture and climate have no relevance. A significant number of those surveyed felt that this medium would only partially solve the problems of the world (47%).

So where are we sending the new generation as we enhance and increase technological performance and systems? To a new wonder world or into a timeless paranoia fuelled by lust and desire for novelty.

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## **Example of Celebrating Architecture: “Le Corbusier's Chandigarh: A Protected Urban Island”**

Rajendra Kumar

Le Corbusier's Chandigarh is very well protected at its Borders and presence of these examples of modernity in the form of Buildings influenced with Western make Chandigarh city best example of protected Urban Island.

Thanks to very stringent Buildings Bye Laws of Chandigarh or Citizen's awareness and sense of Ownership of Chandigarh's heritage, it makes Chandigarh what it is today. Chandigarh and Its neighbors Cities Mohali and Panchkula, often called Tri City is best example of co-existence of Modern and Tradition together. Whenever someone enters in Chandigarh from either border. Be it coming from Delhi and High Rise Ultra Modern Buildings welcome at Zirakpur Border or Coming from Punjab and Shining India's buildings gives envelope to Chandigarh city one side at Mohali, other side at Mullapur.

Even though City's population's has grown such a drastic way in past few years. But Tri City's expansion took all the load of all pressure of Populations. These western influences buildings are blessings for Chandigarh because it answers the need of growing populations and Chandigarh city and its heritage buildings are being untouched. If there would have no flexible border Cities to take load of growing population and present needs, City's character could had No answer the need of modernity.

What the most important challenges for Chandigarh Administration and Concern Authorities are very careful dealing of internal needs of City. Like well defined Transportation network, Infrastructure and solution for Slum rehabilitations etc. Issue like Chandigarh Metro Project is to be done, but not on the stake of better Housing for Slum habitants or Infrastructure. Chandigarh's aspiration for 'World Heritage City' gives lots of responsibilities to City and Citizens. Any urban heritage is largely depends on state of Urban Infrastrure and Housing. Since, Chandigarh peripheral cities are attempting to fulfill demands of Housing issues of Middle and Upper middle class of citizens. Chandigarh city needs improvements of its existing Urban Slum and inner villages of city. Having large infrastructure projects like Metro will witness large influx of working populations and it will give extra pressure of slum housing.

Another very important aspect of City is to maintain the heritage of Chandigarh Monuments and possibility of Sister City Agreements with International Cities will create opening up avenues of national and International tourist's influx. Perhaps the idea of 'World Heritage City' is right direction, but to be dealt very carefully. Having Whole city as “Heritage City” may create some limitations of future developments needs of city. May be Not whole city qualify for 'World Heritage City' but off course some precinct or avenues, like Capital Complex Area, Sector-17 Market area, Museum Complex can be considered as “World Heritage”. Globally there are many examples of World Heritage sites where some part of City is Heritage, Not all cities.

Chandigarh being best example of Urban Island, it has potential to become Nodal point of North India in terms of Tourism, Production units etc. Its geographical location gives possibility of connection of Major Urban Development hubs like Touristic Belts towards Shimla, Religious Tourism towards Keeratpur Sahib, Industrial towards Parwanao, Baddi etc. These urban corridors have great potentials. All these Urban Corridors can terminate with Chandigarh's tri city nodes. i.e Mohali, Panchkula, Parwanoo etc and further connections with Chandigarh city. Thus need of Regional Planning is to be looked at rather only thinking of Chandigarh and its neighbor.

Actually, Chandigarh example is to be remembered and acknowledged not only because of Le Corbsuier's great design of city and monumental buildings. It is also to be acknowledge, the great

efforts of Chandigarh Administration and its citizens to make this city protected from modernity at large. Tri City and some part of Industrial Areas of Chandigarh takes all blame of Modernity and it makes Chandigarh as Best example of Protected Urban Island.



Chandigarh is Best example of City Design.  
Welcome signage at Chandigarh Entrance



Art is essential elements of City Buildings,  
CCA Chandigarh



Primary Colors are very important elements in  
Le Corbusier's buildings. High Court, Chandigarh.



Modern Buildings are inspired by Corbusier's Secretariat Building, IT Park, Chandigarh



Old and new both have influence of each other.  
Infosys Building, Chandigarh



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## Public Spaces for All - (Case Studies: Twin Cities - Cuttack-Bhubaneswar)

Rajkunwar Nayak

Since the evolution of the human settlements historically, common gathering places have been the bonding spaces of the human settlements. We have great examples of the Greek Agora and the Roman Forum which have played significant role in molding history of the eras.

In the modern/ contemporary age of smart & compact cities it has become increasingly important to realize the importance of the public spaces - the vital role that these urban spaces play in building up the social urban fabric and thereby it is much more a matter of prime concern for the architects, urban planners, the government as well as all the stakeholders to safeguard these spaces qualitatively and quantitatively.

In order to highlight upon the significance of the public spaces the theme for the World Habitat Day was "Public Spaces for All!!" It was a global attempt to raise awareness about the need for well-designed and well managed public spaces which would enhance community cohesion through various community activities and thereby also ensure the safety of the city folk!!

A public space can be visualized as a public gathering spot or part of a neighborhood, a special district, a central area of a city, a waterfront or other area within the public realm that helps promote social interaction and a sense of community. Excellent examples of such highly interactive areas may include spaces such as plazas, town squares, parks, marketplaces, public commons and malls, public greens, piers, special areas within convention centers or grounds, as also sites within public buildings, lobbies, concourses, or even public spaces within private buildings too !!!

The scale of these spaces can vary as per the hierarchy of the number of users and their importance in the context of the city.

It is therefore important to identify the geographic, demographic, and social characteristics of these public spaces. The layout and connectivity; economic, social, and ethnic diversity; and functionality...all these aspects are of outmost importance. It is equally essential to comprehend whether a public space is a planned specifically in order to sustain the character of the city and city folk, or if the space was formed more organically and not through a formal planning process.

It is high time to reflect upon the varied functions of the public spaces and their roles in emphasizing upon the social intermix. To reflect upon whether the public spaces actually cater to the following tangible & intangible elements leading to their formation viz:

- Present the community's local character and personality
- Foster social interaction and imbibe a sense of community and neighborliness within the city denizens
- Provide a sense of comfort or safety to people gathering and using the space
- Encourage use and interaction among a diverse cross section of the public viz: age groups, various communities forming the social intermix, income groups etc.
- In order to public spaces perform well they should include the following criteria:
- Should be safe and well maintained
- Should capitalize upon the urban design elements, scale and proportion and architecture to create interesting visual experiences.
- Should be welcoming spaces & representing the city's ethnic character.
- Should be planned to accommodate various level of activities as per the hierarchy of the designated area.



## Case Studies:

The twin cities of Cuttack and Bhubaneswar, though of contrasting character, are endowed with abundance of such public spaces which have been formed as a result of various phenomena such as either being the central area of the city / townscape, the most happening streets/ spaces around the malls, historical/ religious public gathering areas, institutional spaces, parks, areas of natural scenic beauty or else areas specifically designed for the purpose of public gathering.

Cuttack being a millennium old city is an excellent example of public spaces developed over a period of time such as city squares ( Ravenshaw College Square) being used for students as well as political meets, the Stadium complex being used for multifarious activities, the scenic waterfront being used for leisurely activities/socio-cultural functions viz: the Historical Bali Jatra etc.

Whereas Bhubaneswar is an excellent example of a newly planned capital city with well-designed public places along the Capital Complex used for political activities, open spaces like the AjantaMaiden, Exhibition Ground for multipurpose activities like exhibitions, social gatherings etc. temple complexes like the Ram Mandir, Raja Rani, Mukteshwar temple complexes for the religious gatherings, dance & music festivals etc.

It has been observed that all these forms of public spaces at all levels have been performing extremely well within the twin cities of Cuttack - Bhubaneswar thereby rendering a unique character to the space as well as the cities respectively. All these spaces also do adhere to the basic criteria safety, scale/ proportion / architecture thereby being all the more welcoming and also contributing to the unique urban character of both the cities. It has been observed that by virtue of the compact city scale of the cities of Cuttack & Bhubaneswar the usability index of these spaces is also very high thereby strengthening the strong social bond between the city denizens and making the cities lively and interactive during all the seasons. Moreover the multipurpose uses of these spaces catering to the need of the entire cross - sections / age groups make them all the more exciting and important.

It is hence extremely essential on our part as the citizens of a civic society to realize the vital role that these spaces play and will continue to play in our lives and also those of our future generations in our own social and community interests.

The duty of maintenance of these spaces does not solely lie upon the authorities but also upon the city denizens to guard protect and maintain these spaces with due regard and concern and work hand in glove with the authorities to safeguard our own "public spaces" and enhance the image ability of our own "urban habitats "!!!

"High-quality public spaces encourage people to communicate and collaborate with each other, and to participate in public life. Public spaces can also provide basic services, enhance connectivity, spawn economic activity and raise property values while generating municipal revenue."-----UN Secretary-General Ban - Ki - Moon

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## List of Public Spaces in the Twin Cities of Cuttack & Bhubaneswar, Odisha

These Spaces are varied in Nature but highly interactive Public Spaces



Janpath – Bhubanswar, Odisha



Janata Maidan - Bhubanswar, Odisha



Forum Mart – Bhubanswar, Odisha



Barabati Stadium Complex - Cuttack, Odisha.



Indoor Stadium Complex - Cuttack, Odisha.



Mahanadi Riverfront - Cuttack, Odisha.



Oat - KIIT University Bhubaneswar, Odisha



Mahatma Gandhi Park - Bhubanswar, Odisha



Indira Gandhi Park - Bhubanswar, Odisha



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# Designed Space; Darkness and Drugs

Shaswati Saikia, Rick De

## Abstract

*“Architecture, of all the arts, is the one which acts the most slowly, but the most surely, on the soul”*

- Ernest Dimnet<sup>i</sup>

In this paper we explore the possible interactions between architecture of spaces and health and lifestyle of people living in cities. For the purpose we have taken Guwahati as a city to be examined to discover possible relationships between architectural design of spaces and its effect on substance abuse by youth of the city. We also explore the possible factors that city planners and architects may take into account while designing city spaces and restoring existing cities.

Cities are complex systems that grow organically with time. Guwahati is no exception. Initially, like all cities, Guwahati took shape according to immediate economic and cultural needs, demographics, migration of people. Over the years the architectural design of its urban spaces dictated the lifestyle of the city dwellers. The questions that came to mind are -- 1) Is the design conducive for an improved standard of living and lifestyle? 2) Is the city providing a conducive environment for youth to develop a productive and healthy lifestyle or is it pushing them into a future dominated by drug and substance abuse? The paper earnestly tries to delve into these questions.

## Introduction

Few days ago we came across a survey which stated Guwahati to be one of the least happy cities in India. On an intuitive level the survey result seemed true. Through casual observation one can see young people falling sick more often than before, the older ones are getting depressed while the youth are the worst hit of them all. Substance abuse, alcoholism, etc. is a common phenomenon with the youth of the city. Are the spaces of the city in any way contributing to this? How important are the public spaces of a city for its citizens? Population wise Guwahati has developed into a metropolis but its spaces have not and this is certainly taking a toll upon its people.

*All architecture is shelter, all great architecture is the design of space that contains, cuddles, exalts, or stimulates the persons in that space.*

- Philip Johnson<sup>iii</sup>

*The town which is alive, and beautiful, for me, shows in a thousand ways, how all its institutions work together to make people comfortable, and deep seated in respect for themselves.*

- Christopher Alexander<sup>iv</sup>

Guwahati, a city termed to be the gateway to North East India, is a sprawling metropolis located in the state of Assam. External spaces are essential in the warm and humid climate of the city because many activities including leisure activities are carried out outdoors. Our recollections of our childhood tell us of the days when our grandfathers and their friends used to sit at the veranda for their evening rendezvous; how our mothers used to go for evening walks on the streets and engage in small talks with their mates; how our fathers and their friends used to gather at the street corners for heated “addas.” But gone are those days; those verandas gather dust; those streets are now congested by traffic; and those street corners act now as parking spaces for cars. The premiere city of northeast cannot boast of spaces which can be termed as public squares where citizens can go, meet and interact to talk, relax or just to see the world go by.

If someone were to meet others it has got to be in a posh or upscale restaurant or in one of the ubiquitous expensive food chains found all over the world. The ambience in these joints is conducive

for people of certain age groups and economic status. Well, such spaces are good for the ones who can afford but what about the rest? What about the aged? What about the unemployed youths? What about the middle aged? Where are they supposed to go if they want to go “out” if a restaurant or an expensive cafe is not always a preferred synonym for “out”?

### **When Necessity becomes the Mother of Invention**

*Necessity is stronger far than art<sup>vi</sup>*

Topography wise Guwahati is a city full of natural outdoor spaces. Its hills, valleys, water bodies are the very ingredients that offer possibilities of the beauty of humane living. But just as food is more than its ingredients so is the city. Not one; not two.<sup>vii</sup>

We hear stories of the city being full of 'beels', people fishing and merry making, using rivulets as way of transport just thirty to forty years back. We call them stories because there aren't any 'beels' left nor are the fishes. The rivulets are drains for collecting the city's waste and whatever water bodies are left, now act as dumping ground for different types of wastes.

We did an analysis of the public spaces in Guwahati to see which spaces promoted substance abuse.

Firstly, we mapped the public spaces of the city. The areas mapped are namely:

1. Kamakhya temple complex
2. Brahmaputra river front
3. Sukreshwar temple
4. Fancy bazaar
5. Panbazaar
6. Dighali Pukhrui
7. Sola beel
8. Guwahati railway station
9. Gauhati commerce College point
10. G.S. road
11. Shankar Dev Kalashetra

In addition to these visible spaces, the streets are also an integral part of public space. Most of the commercial development has mushroomed in the form of ribbon development through the streets. Thus, the absence of a designed public space does not restrain people from meeting outside. The steps outside a shop, the curb stones, the footpath, the railings of a flyover; whatever space seems feasible to sit or gather in a group is considered as a public space by people of the city.

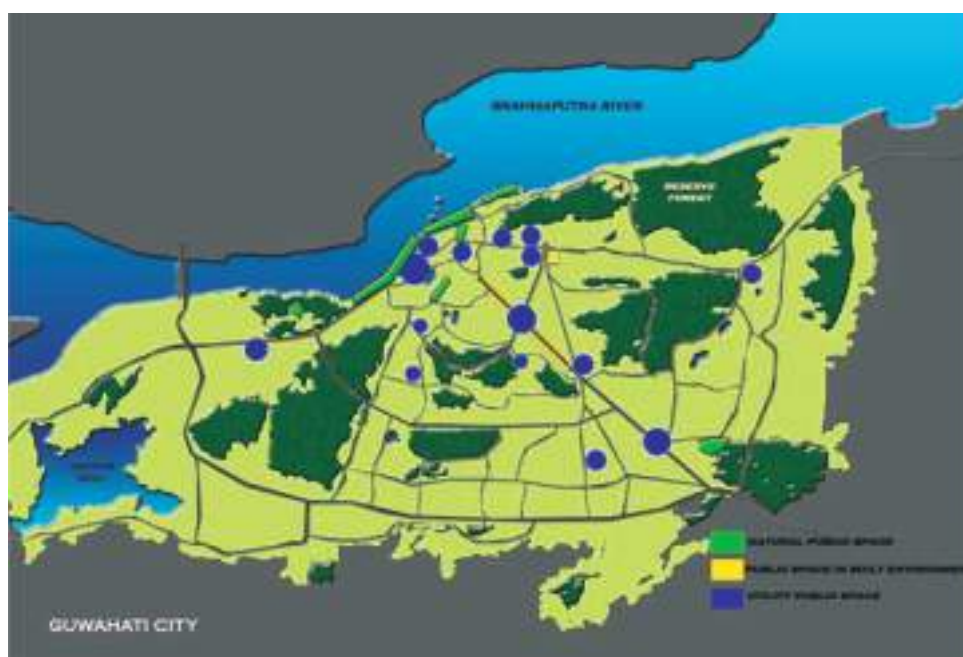
According to the environmental setting and the typology of urban activity the public spaces can be divided into the following types:

1. Public spaces amidst nature
2. Public spaces amidst the built environment
3. Public spaces generated due to utility

Spaces situated atop a hill, near a water body, etc. have been classified as public spaces in nature.

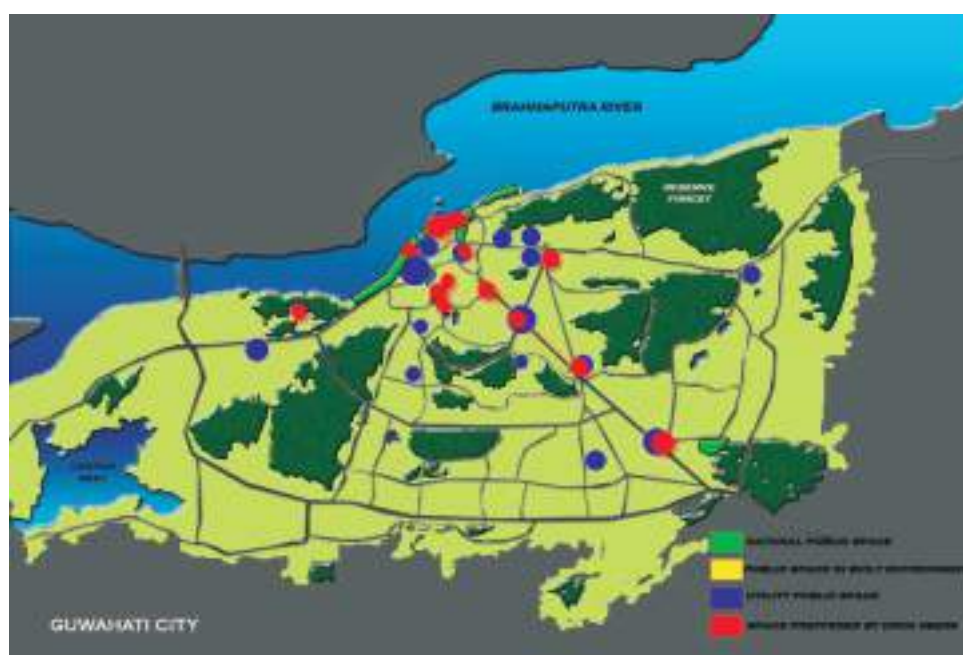
Spaces generated as an after effect of buildings, for example, a node, footpaths, shop fronts, etc. have been classified as public spaces amidst built environment.

Spaces like the railway station, markets, etc. which are serving a specific purpose are classified as public spaces generated due to utility.



Map showing the Public Spaces of Guwahati

After mapping the public spaces we next mapped the spaces in which substance abuse of some kind takes place.<sup>viii</sup>



Map showing the Public Spaces of Guwahati in which substance abuse takes place

We found that substance abuse took place in most of these urban spaces be it amidst nature or in the built environment. Spaces like railway station, bus terminus, underneath of flyovers, marketplaces are the main transaction points. Is there a pattern in the spaces where substance abuse takes place? What are the physical attributes of those spaces? How are we as designers and developers of space responsible for the type of behaviour in a certain space? What are those mistakes we are making in place making which is leading our youth to such desperate conditions? These are some of the questions we tried finding answers to through our study.



After the initial mapping we did visual surveys of the spaces of the places we mapped.

These are our findings:

**Attributes of the transaction points:**

1. Usually nearby high speed transit ways.
2. They are easily accessible as well as navigable.
3. Usually in or near dark dingy places.
4. In places having negligible Urban Activity
5. In places having poor built quality

**Attributes of the spaces where substance abuse takes place:**

1. No street furniture. Less Pedestrian movement.
2. No Visual connectivity, or High visual vantage points of Abusers.
3. They are usually located near a transaction point, and imbibe the same attributes. For example, Sarab bhati market and Sola beel or Chandmari market and commerce college point. Thus, they usually work in a vicious cycle loop- buy the “stuff” and consume it nearby.
4. They are places from where you can navigate easily. They can be easily reached and can also be easily moved out of, in case of emergencies.
5. They are places which, although designated as public spaces, have less urban activity because of ill designed built environment.
6. The ambient light in there spaces is usually low; sometimes even negligible.
7. Design wise they aren't user friendly, and has low accessibility.
8. The air quality is pungent and poor

*Necessity is blind until it becomes conscious. Freedom is the consciousness of necessity.<sup>ix</sup>*

Then we made a comparative analysis for the above attributes for two areas namely Dighali Pukhuri and Sola Beel, both urban spaces in nature, and found the following matrix :

**Attribute Matrix**

Attributes	Sola Beel (Preferred Drug zone)	Dighali Pukhuri (Non Preferred Drug zone)
No street furniture. Less Pedestrian movement.	10	1
No Visual connectivity, or High visual vantage points of Abusers.	8	2
They are usually located near a transaction point, and imbibe the same attributes.	9	4
They are easily accessible as well as navigable	6	8
Have less urban activity because of ill designed built environment.	9	1
The ambient light in there spaces is usually low	6	2
Design wise they aren't user friendly, and has low accessibility.	9	1
The air quality is pungent and poor	6	2
	72/80= 90%	21/80= 26.25%

Notes:

Scale Used is from 0 to 10 where 0 is the minimum and 10 is the maximum value of a selected attribute.



Evening at Dighali Pukhuri



Evening at Sola Beel



Environment at Dighali Pukhuri



Environment at Sola Beel

## Discussions of the Result

After assigning the points against the attributes of the designed matrix, we have summed up the total point for each of the given spaces.

Based on these attributes the score of the Sola Beel drug affected area was 72 out of the maximum possible points of 80, translating to 90%, compared to the relatively low score of 21/80 (26.25%) of Dighali Pukhuri, non drug affected area.

## Conclusions

Based on our findings, we tentatively conclude that the Quality of built environment represented by the Attribute Matrix; is directly related to substance and drug abuse by youth in a city. It suggests that these attributes should be taken into consideration while building/redesigning Urban spaces in cities to improve quality of life of urban youth. However further research on this line of thought would be continued by us in the future.

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- <sup>ii</sup><http://www.livemint.com/Politics/TuNLqNw2bv3rcJb7D9qk4L/Chandigarh-Indias-happiest-city.html>
- <sup>iii</sup>[http://thinkexist.com/quotation/all\\_architecture\\_is\\_shelter-all\\_great/218212.html](http://thinkexist.com/quotation/all_architecture_is_shelter-all_great/218212.html)
- <sup>iv</sup>The timeless way of buildings by Cristopher Alexander, Page 135
- <sup>v</sup>Manual of tropical housing and building, climatic design, Page 216
- <sup>vi</sup><http://www.worldofquotes.com/author/Aeschylus/1/index.html>

<sup>xiii</sup>Image courtesy: Sunit Pathak



Shaswati Saikia and Rick De completed their B. Arch from Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University, Jammu & Kashmir in 2013 and 2014 respectively. They are currently engaged in their start up firm Kaizen Architecture & Design Studio with offices in Kolkata and Guwahati. They are also associated with CP & DS Associates, Ghaziabad for various projects like CFSL (Mirza), ISBT (Tura), IISER (Kalyani) etc. Passionate about architecture their research interests are mentored by their gurus Prof. C.L. Razdan, ex-director, SALD, SMVDU and Dibyendu De, Director, RMCPL. They can be reached via E-Mail at [shaswati.tisha@gmail.com](mailto:shaswati.tisha@gmail.com) or [ar.rickde@gmail.com](mailto:ar.rickde@gmail.com)



## Interrogating the role of public spaces in modern day Kolkata

Mallika Bose

Public spaces represent the glue that binds together the different elements of a city. Streets, parks, plazas, maidans, “roacks”, river front promenades -are all part of this public realm and integral to the experience of a city. Especially for a city like Kolkata that consistently ranks among the densest cities of the world<sup>1</sup> (in terms of population per square mile) while at the same time has a relatively low percentage of land use allotted to streets (15.2% in Kolkata, versus 21.6% in Singapore and 36% in Manhattan, New York – UN Habitat, 2013); public spaces are of vital importance.

### The many faces of public spaces

Public spaces serve a multitude of functions. Some public spaces are expansive – like Central Park in New York City<sup>2</sup> and the Maidan in Kolkata<sup>3</sup>. Such places provide open spaces and respite from a dense city. They also serve to cool the city and purify its air. Like Central Park in New York City, the Maidan has been called the lungs of Kolkata. Public spaces are often places of recreation and leisure. The Maidan in Kolkata is used for morning walks, to graze sheep, to play a game of cricket or host a picnic especially during the winter months. Monuments like the Victoria Memorial, located in the Maidan serves as a major tourist destination, attracting visitors from the city, the hinterland and beyond.

Public places, especially plazas provide space for congregation for political mobilization. It is no accident that social movements are sparked in public spaces. Think of the role of Zuccotti Park in the Occupy Wall Street Movement<sup>4</sup>, Tahrir Square (in Cairo) for the uprising against President Mubarak in Egypt<sup>5</sup>, or Sahid Minar (near Esplanade in Kolkata) as the rallying ground of political gatherings of different persuasions in Kolkata. These public spaces provide the backdrop against which people from different backgrounds can come together, united in their beliefs around a common cause. These gathering places constitute the quintessential Habermasian public sphere (Habermas, 1991), a meeting ground where people from different walks of life come together and interact on a level playing field. This is the place of civic engagement and democratic interaction.

In contrast the public spaces at the community or neighborhood scale are more intimate and serve the needs of the local community. Parks are used by children of the neighborhood for a game of cricket, or football. Elderly men and women use parks for daily morning and evening walks. Babies in strollers are taken out for fresh air by parents and/or nannies. Many of these parks also support community events like Durga Puja and Kali Puja when for a few weeks during the autumn these public spaces take on a different persona.

At an even smaller scale, steps and corners are appropriated for serving community purposes. Kids of a neighborhood stake claim to a set of steps that then becomes their gathering place or “roack”. Here they convene regularly to talk about their daily adventures and plot next moves. Parents (usually mothers) of children gather to talk and pass time as they wait to pick up their kids from school. College students perch on a low parapet to discuss politics. These are all public spaces that animate our cities and give it its vitality and vibe.

At the same time we should not forget that in cities like Kolkata public spaces are often called upon to

<sup>1</sup>See: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_cities\\_by\\_population\\_density](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_cities_by_population_density);  
[http://www.forbes.com/2007/12/14/cities-pollution-asia-biz-logistics-cx\\_tvr\\_1214densecities\\_slide\\_2.html](http://www.forbes.com/2007/12/14/cities-pollution-asia-biz-logistics-cx_tvr_1214densecities_slide_2.html);

<sup>2</sup><https://placesjournal.org/article/frederick-law-olmsted-and-the-campaign-for-public-health/>

<sup>3</sup>[http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/28/world/asia/28india.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/28/world/asia/28india.html?_r=0)

<sup>4</sup>[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy\\_Wall\\_Street](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_Wall_Street)

<sup>5</sup>[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Egyptian\\_Revolution\\_of\\_2011](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Egyptian_Revolution_of_2011);  
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/revolution-in-cairo/day-to-day/>;

fulfill other functions: pavements are taken over for supporting livelihoods by hawkers, while the lowest on the totem pole use them for housing. These uses of public spaces mark the failure of society to care for its citizens, especially the most vulnerable.

### **The changing nature of public spaces**

As in more developed countries, public spaces in the *City of Joy* has been undergoing transformations<sup>6</sup>. The last two to three decades have seen the proliferation of gated communities. With names like Udayan, Upohar, Avenida, and Eternia, these high-rise residential blocks evoke a sublime environment. These high-rises tower above landscaped courtyards, swimming pools, tennis courts and clubhouses built to international standards. These communities are characterized as oases in the city. However these oases are for the use and enjoyment of the elite few that live in these gated communities. Such communities are bounded by high walls and secured gates and conjure up images of the fortified citadel (Marcuse, 2006). Many of these upscale gated communities cater to the Non Resident Indian (or NRI) population. In other words, much of development in Kolkata is linked to global capital flows. The common people more often than not gain entry into these places as maids, drivers, electricians and security personnel. Thus development trends are leading to the privatization of the public sphere and simultaneous shrinkage of the liberal notion of the public realm<sup>7</sup>.

In another concurrent development, the new showpieces of cities in their quest to claim their place in the ranks of world cities are mega shopping malls. Kolkata too is caught up in this race – beginning with the Forum Mall (2003), South City Mall (2008) and Quest Mall (2013) – these developments reflect the commodification of public spaces. The public spaces of leisure, recreation and democratic meeting grounds are now supplanted with the public spaces of (conspicuous) consumption. The interiors of these malls represent a designed environment that could be anywhere in the globe. The interior of South City Mall is not much different than of any upscale mall in Atlanta, Georgia or Boston, Massachusetts. In reality these spaces are not public at all. The public in such spaces are subject to surveillance and have to adhere to norms of behavior set by the management of these shopping complexes. An anecdote will illustrate this point. A few years ago I was visiting South City Mall with my family. At the end of our “shopping”, I wanted to get some groceries from the Spencer’s supermarket in the lower level of South City Mall. I went into Spencer’s leaving my husband and eight-year old son outside. I came back to find my son with a chastened look on his face. On inquiring I found out that my son who had just bought a youth football (from a store in the mall) had been tapping it on the floor. Soon a few other young men joined him and they were passing the football to one another. This was a weekday and the mall was not particularly crowded. No one seemed to mind. In fact everyone was having a good time. Within a few minutes a security guard came and told my son and husband to stop playing or he would have to escort them outside. My husband wanted to know why and was referred to the management office. The personnel at the management office could not give any explanation beyond the fact that this was not permissible behavior. In other words this did not fit the norms of behavior to be tolerated in the mall. These spaces are a far cry from the public sphere of democratic deliberations and civic ideals<sup>8</sup>.

This is not to imply that the common person in Kolkata (or for that matter any other city) is a mute victim of globalization. The shopping malls are often used by different groups of people to their advantage. In a hot sultry evening, the air-conditioned atrium of the mall becomes the route for an evening walk. Young college going men and women congregate in the food court and find a place to

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<sup>6</sup>For example refer to Sorkin, 1992; Mitchell, 2003; Low, 1997 & 2006, and Loukatou-Sideris, 1993 among others.

<sup>7</sup>I should point out that the liberal public sphere has not been accessible to all groups in society as pointed out by Fraser (1990). She coins the term subaltern counter publics to refer to the public sphere frequented by the marginalized groups in society.

<sup>8</sup>Moreover these malls have an enormous environmental footprint with large air-conditioned atria and dazzling lighting.



socialize and perhaps even romance. People from different socio-economic, religious and ethnic groups mingle in the hallways of the department stores and boutiques.

### Where to from here?

So what does this portend for the fate of public spaces in Kolkata (and other modern cities)? In my opinion these trends represent a transformation of the public sphere as we know it (which is a 20th century formulation). Perhaps the 21st century public sphere will be more transient and illusory. Social media and information technology will allow people to congregate at a certain location on short notice with little to no planning. Just like the appearance of pop-up restaurants and stores<sup>9</sup>, will be the onset of a pop-up public space where people will come together momentarily to engage in democratic practices and then disappear just as suddenly. In doing so perhaps they will subvert the shrinking public sphere of the globalized city.

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Kolkata Maidan

<sup>9</sup><http://blog.thestorefront.com/what-exactly-is-a-pop-up-shop/>; <https://www.popuprepublic.com/popupdining.html>;





Atrium of South City Mall, Kolkata



Mallika Bose is an Architect and Urban Planner with a specialization in Environment-Behavior Studies. She is Associate Professor and Professor in Charge of Graduate Programs in the Department of Landscape Architecture at Penn State University). Her research is motivated by her interest in understanding how social structures are embedded in the built environment, and how such socio-spatial constructions shape behavior of different groups in society. She has been active in research in the following areas: Built Environment and Active Living/Healthy Eating; Public Scholarship and Community Engaged Design and Planning; Gender and Development; and Design/Planning Pedagogy. Her scholarship has been published in Landscape Journal, Habitat International, International Development and Planning Research, Journal of Urban Design among others. She recently co-edited a book on community engaged teaching/scholarship titled – Community Matters: Service-learning in Engaged Design and Planning – which received the 2015 Great Places Book Award from the Environmental Design Research Association.

## Message from Online Media Partner



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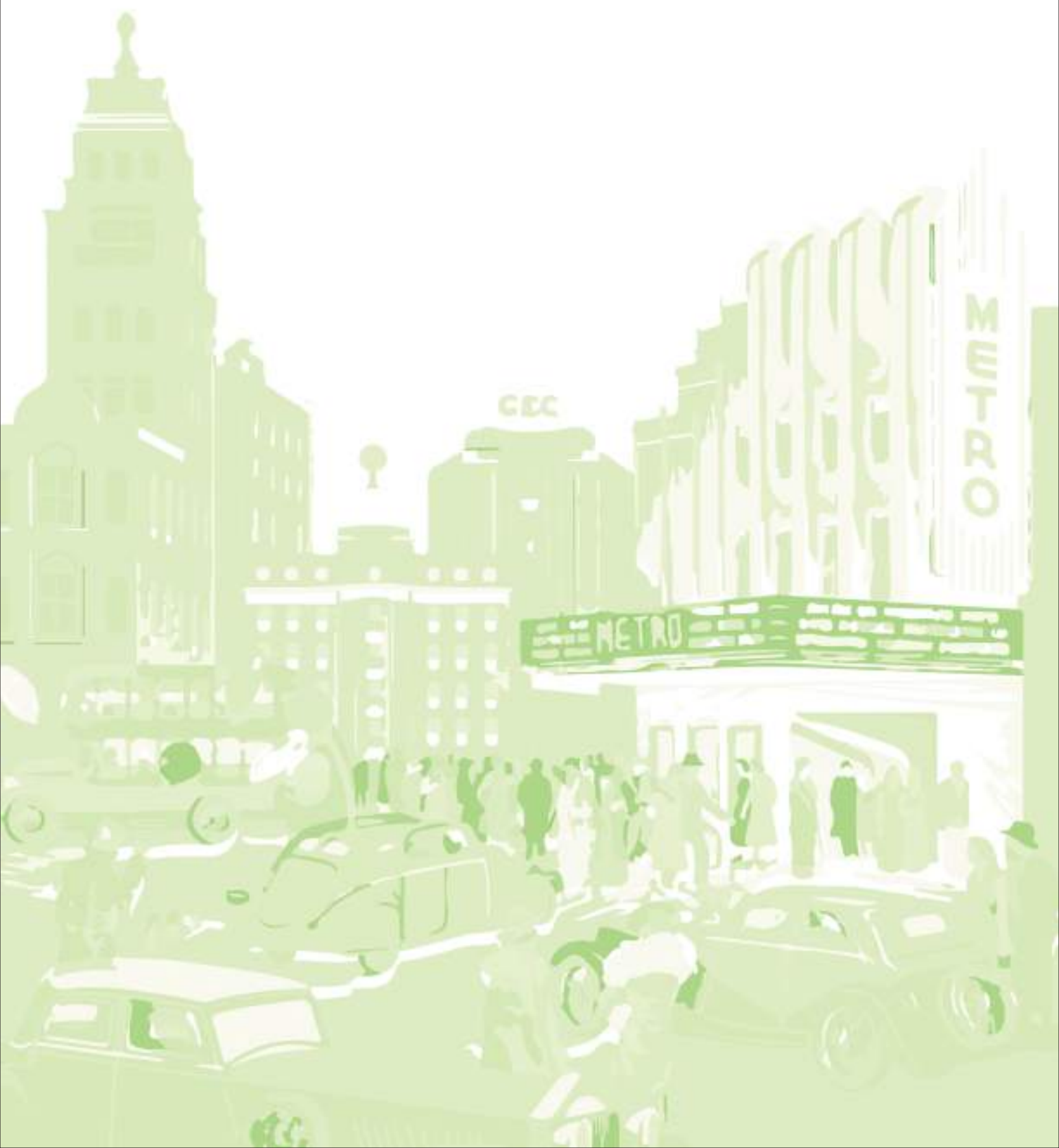
5000+ Design professionals currently use the platform to showcase their work and network. Design product suppliers and building material manufacturers are successfully using the platform to connect with B2B buyers and influencers. Property owners use ZingyHomes to find design ideas, professionals, contracting companies and materials. Online magazine and events diary on the portal keep the design community updated on the news, views and opinions from the fraternity.

BERI-CHETTIAR HOUSE

L'OREAL ACADEMY

METILU MANE

PROJECTS





## BERI-CHETTIAR HOUSE

<b>Type</b>	: Heritage Restoration & Adaptive Re-use
<b>Location</b>	: Park-town, Chennai
<b>Area</b>	: 7200 sq ft / 669 sq m
<b>Client</b>	: P.K. Sivasubramaniam Chettiar
<b>Architect</b>	: V.S. Vigneswar (Principal Architect - Architecture plus Value)
<b>Other Consultants</b>	: J. Sriramulu (Structural Engineer), Mani Maistry (Restoration Contractor)
<b>Material Specifications</b>	: Load bearing brick Walls, Madras Terrace Roofing, Lime Plaster, Traditional Burma Teak Wood-Work
<b>Project Start</b>	: May 2011
<b>Project Completion</b>	: November 2013
<b>Cost</b>	: Rs.15,00,000

### History of the Project:

This 100-year old heritage building is located in the old city area of Chennai, Park-town. Located near the Chennai Central Railway Station, the area has changed in nature over the years and has become a bustling commercial locality. It was built as the ancestral home of the owner, KalathiChettiar who belonged to the Beri-Chettiar community. The house was found in a dilapidated state after years of neglect and the family had moved out a long time ago. The house faced demolition as the land prices have escalated and the building was not suited for the commercial area. We as architects realized the potential of such a building as an example of traditional architecture which needs to be preserved for future generations. The owners were approached and a detailed Research was conducted on the building and similar such fast disappearing examples of traditional architecture. The Research was followed by a detailed analysis on the historic conservation. We realized that to do that the building's usage needs to be re-invented for today's reality.

### Design Process + Parameters:

A structural analysis was carried out and the building was strengthened for future use. The conservation effort's initial focus was to re-build the damaged portions. Mean-while, to make the building relevant to today's reality, we followed two strategies. First the circulation patterns of the house were re-worked and through slight modifications to the openings and the addition of an extra street side staircase and entry we were able to divide the house into tenantable office spaces. The natural lighting and ventilation systems were preserved and the resulting office spaces benefitted a great deal from them. Secondly an extensive layer of services were added to the building. The Plumbing, Electrical and Fire safety systems were updated to modern standards to enable the smooth functioning of the building. Overall the project is a successful example of a heritage building being re-invented for today's needs, there-by making the history of this city relevant and highlighting it for future generations to take pride in their lineage.



Facade : The architecture of the front street edge was restored and high-lighted.



Front Courtyard (Mun Mutram) : The front courtyard is the traditional heart of the home and has been retained in its grandeur as an open atrium.



Main Entry Door Way (Thalai Vaasal)



Converted Terrace (Thalam) : Converted office/store area with clear-story openings.





Rear Courtyard (Pin Mutram) : The back service courtyard with water-well.



First Floor Hall : The converted office area with natural light.



Concealed street entrance



First floor openings (Mun-mutram)



Wooden Cornice Details : On the front courtyard eaves.



Brass Knocker (Main Door)



V.S.Vigneswar is a Practicing Architect and Visiting Faculty based in Chennai. He heads the architectural practice, ARCHITECTURE PLUS VALUE (A+V) which is committed to the idea of adding value through sensible design. Vigneswar graduated from the Faculty of Architecture, Centre for Environmental Planning & Technology, Ahmedabad. As an extension of his course he was selected to represent the University as an Exchange student at Delft University of Technology, The Netherlands in the Masters Program. His research on the materialisation of traditional architecture at CEPT especially helped to create a passion towards the materialisation process and the role of technology in shaping the built-environment. The featured Adaptive Re-use project was an extension of this research and was the first project handled by the Practice. He considers architecture as a manifestation of the forces which operate in the 'real-world' and loves

the process involving the transformation of an abstract concept into a built reality. He has travelled and extended his learning extensively inside India and abroad in Europe and Mexico. His work has been published in THE HINDU and in various National and International Forums like KurulaVarkey Design Forum and SAHC International Conference (Mexico). Besides his Practice he is also a Visiting Faculty at the School of Architecture and Planning, Anna University, Guindy Chennai.



**ORIGINAL FLOOR PLANS**

**GROUND FLOOR PLAN**



**FIRST FLOOR PLAN**



**GROUND FLOOR PLAN**



**FIRST FLOOR PLAN**

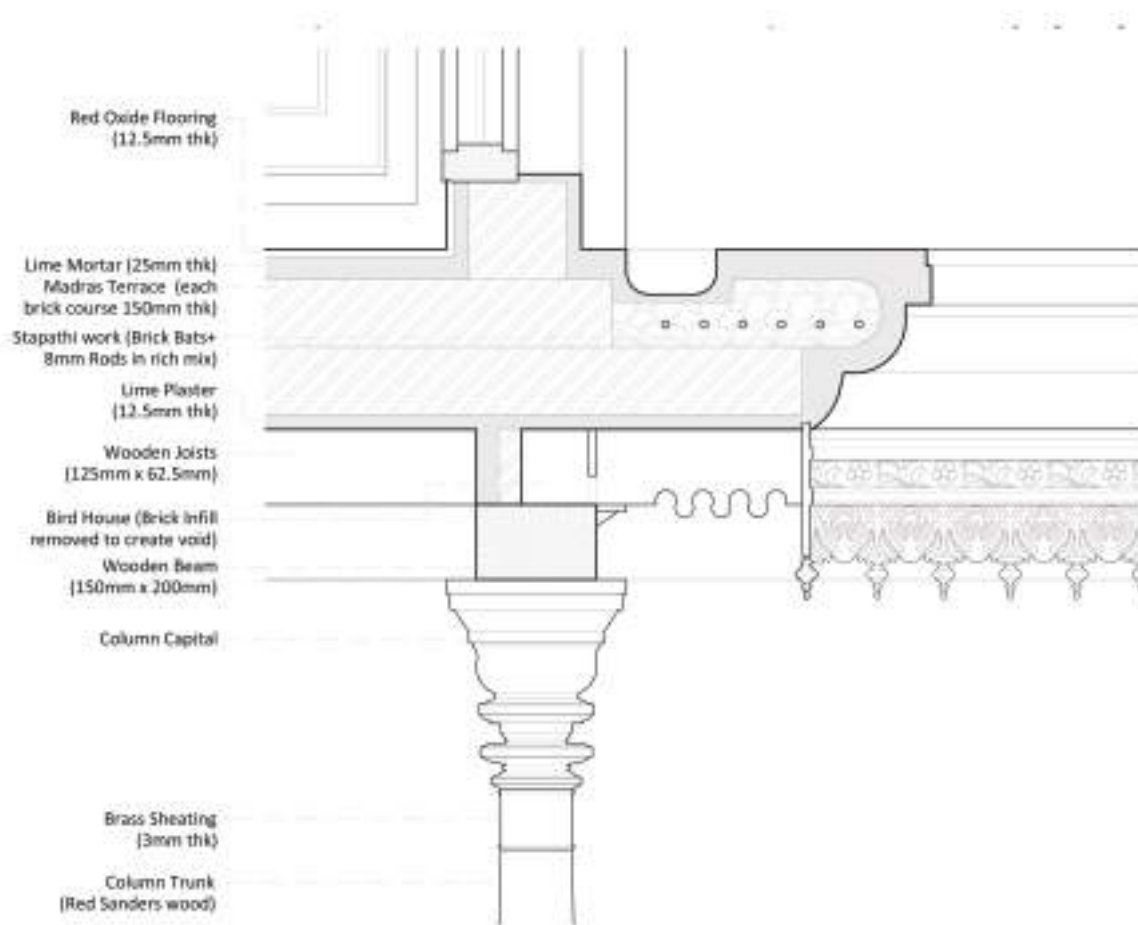
**LEGEND**

- Retail Area - 1
- Traditional House - Owners
- Office Area - 2
- Retail + Office Area- 2
- Office Area - 4

**CURRENT FLOOR PLANS  
BERI-CHETTIAR HOUSE**







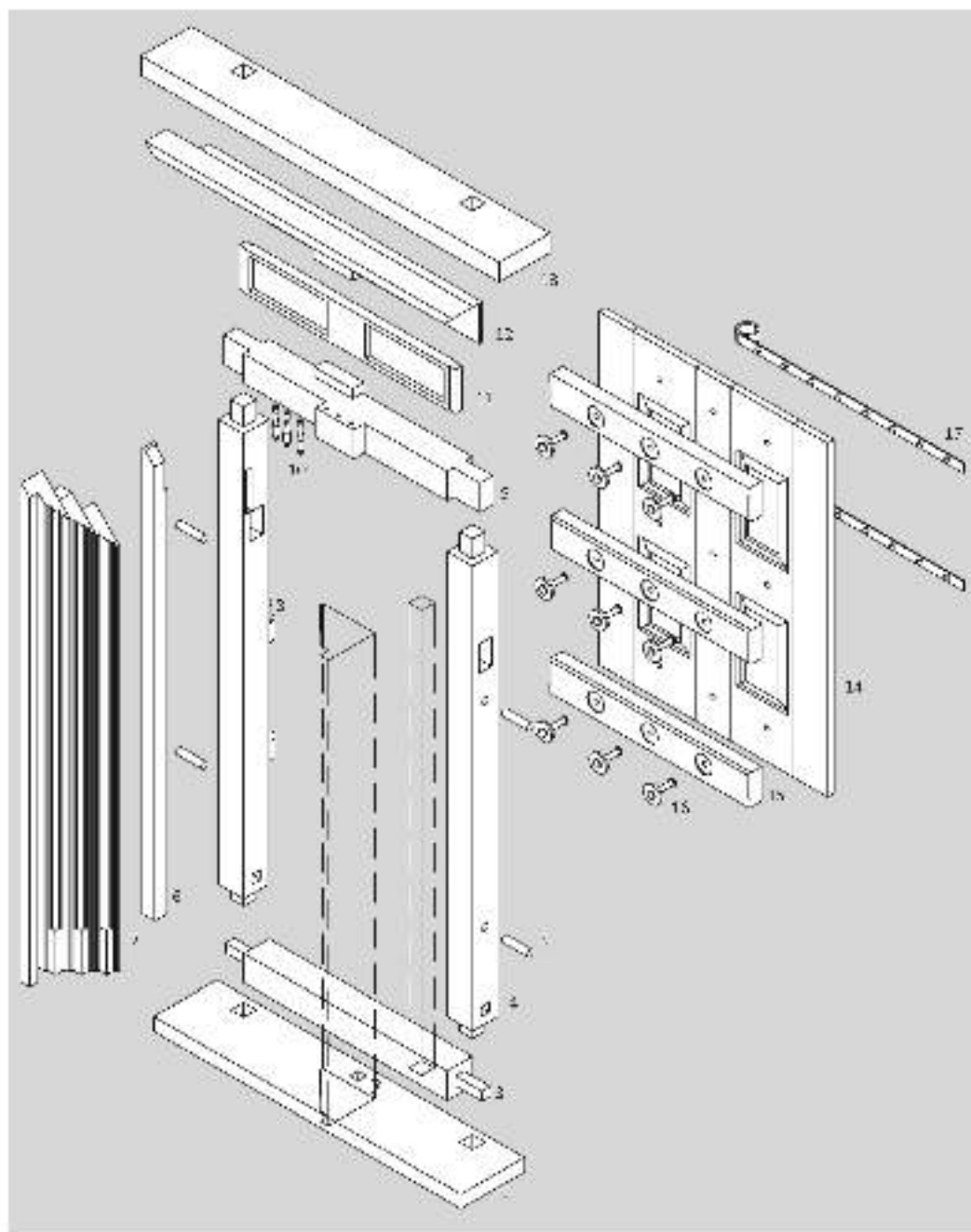
**COURTYARD EDGE DETAILS :** The construction details of the Courtyard Edge, showing various material usages.



**LONGITUDINAL SECTION :** The section through the courtyard has been shown here with Detail highlighted in RED.

## SECTIONAL DETAILS BERI-CHETTIAR HOUSE



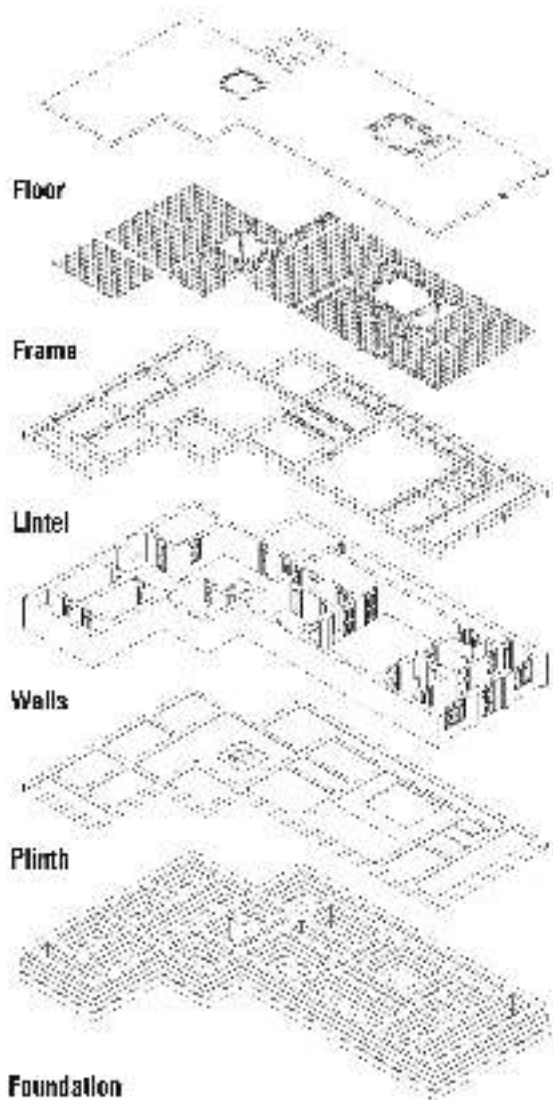


#### LEGEND

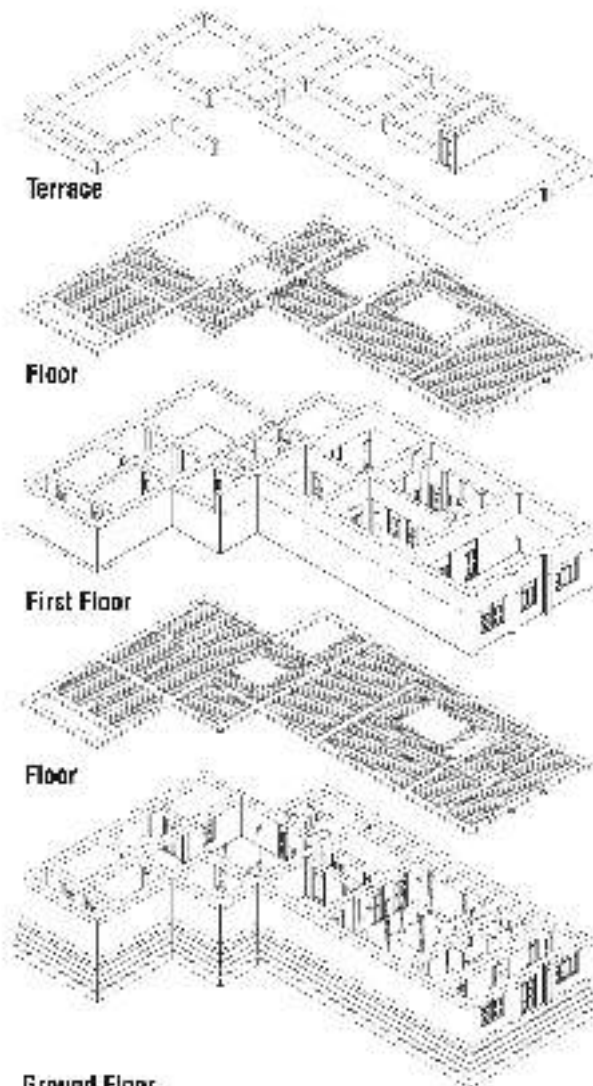
- |                                 |                                |                                   |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1.Stone Base (100mm/4" thick)   | 6.In between stile (filler)    | 12.Outer stile panel (horizontal) |
| 2.Niche for 'Nava-raatra'       | 7.Outer stile panel (vertical) | 13.Lintel piece (6 inches thick)  |
| 3.Threshold Piece               | 8.Iron hinges                  | 14.Shutter panels (mouldings)     |
| 4.Main stiles (primary support) | 9.Top rail                     | 15.Horizontal rails               |
| 5.Wooden/metal hold-fasts       | 10.Caste symbol                | 16.Brass bolt (decorated head)    |
|                                 | 11.Decorated horizontal board  | 17.Hinge bar with iron bolts      |

### EXPLODED AXONOMETRIC OF MAIN DOOR / *THALAI-VAASAL* BERI-CHETTIAR HOUSE





**EXPLODED AXONOMETRIC OF FLOOR SYSTEM**



**EXPLODED AXONOMETRIC OF ENTIRE BUILDING**

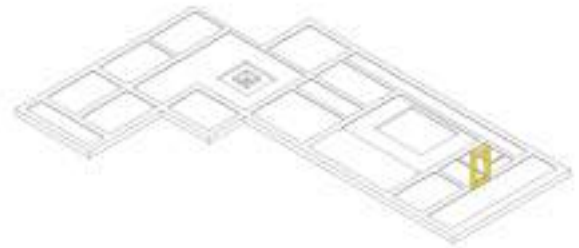
## EXPLODED AXONOMETRIC BERI-CHETTIAR HOUSE



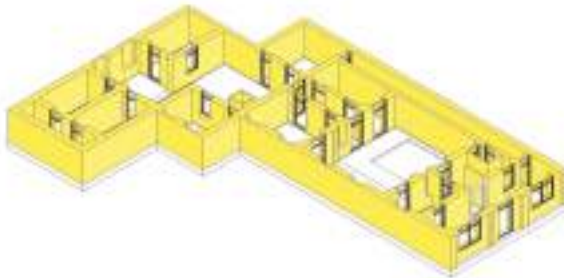




**PHASE 1- FOUNDATION**



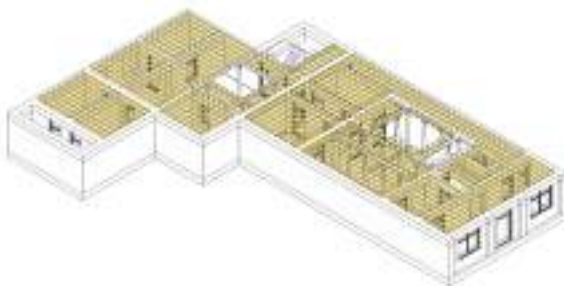
**PHASE 2- PLINTH + MAIN DOOR**



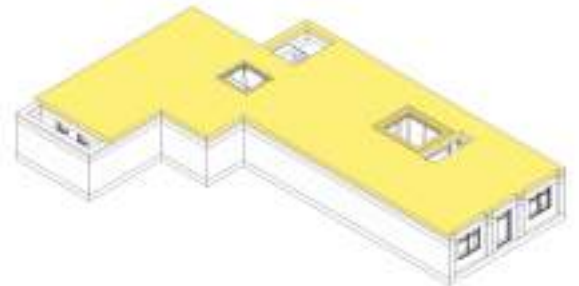
**PHASE 3- GROUND FLOOR BRICK WALLS**



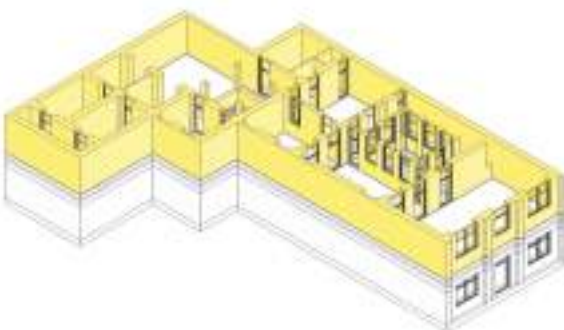
**PHASE 4- TIMBER COLUMNS**



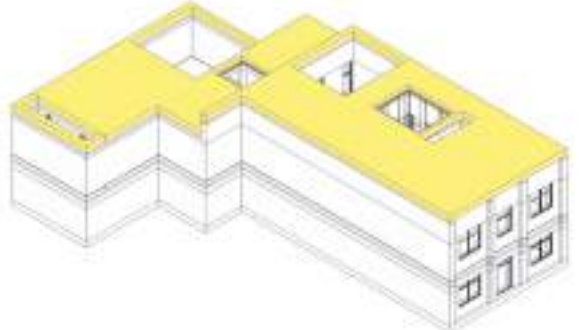
**PHASE 5- TIMBER RAFTER FRAME-WORK**



**PHASE 6- MADRAS TERRACE ROOF - FIRST LEVEL**



**PHASE 7- FIRST FLOOR BRICK WALL SUPPORTS**  
**ANALYSIS OF CONSTRUCTION SYSTEM**  
**BERI-CHETTIAR HOUSE**



**PHASE 8- MADRAS TERRACE ROOF-TOP SLAB**



## L'oreal Professional Products Development Academy Marathon Futurex, Mumbai

<b>Location</b>	: Mumbai, Maharashtra
<b>Client</b>	: L'oreal India
<b>Architect</b>	: Amit Aurora & Rahul Bansal
<b>Other Consultants</b>	: Electrical- Design Matrix Plumbing- D.S. Engineers HVAC- HTL Aircon Pvt. Ltd. Prime Contractor- Kshitij interiors

**Commencement Date** : September, 2012

**Completion Date** : July, 2013

**Area** : 7000 Sq. Ft.

**Cost** : INR 4 Crore

### An Overview

Professional Products Development Academy for L'oreal is a state of the art Academy to train professionals and educate them in the latest products. The design creates interactive spaces for these professionals to work in multifunctional zones that blend together seamlessly.

The proactive approach to sustainable design is demonstrated in this project through water efficiency and energy consumption along with innovation in design, especially in creating a space which has the ability to transform itself into a huge space for promotional events and then re-transform itself into classrooms, a challenging requirement in the design brief. In words of the client, "the final outcome has turned out to be one of the top education academies in the world for L'oreal Group Worldwide, which is Platinum LEEDS certified".

### Design Features

The design is oriented towards a very effective zoning so as to maximize the influx of natural light as deep as possible into the Academy. (Daylights sensors are used to ensure optimum LUX levels for the comfort of the students.)

Perimetric Planning results in a focal space in the center. With doors opening in this spill over area - the studio's are defined by a series of sliding and folding partitions. To increase visual communication and to make sure natural light permeates deep into the central space, these partition are in glass.

Zoning is also critical to have the specialized classrooms (Kerastase and Keraskin) placed together, so as to club them if required for addressing a larger group. Entrance to these rooms is through the transition tunnel between the reception and the hair training zone.

The moveable wall system is so designed to maximize space utilization, catering to the flexible design vocabulary. These partitions when folded and parked, create a unified space which caters to a stage and seating for about 150 professionals, during a product launch and/or promotional events. The adjoining areas fulfill the need for ancillary activities, like the training room on the left gets converted into the green room with a direct access to the restrooms.

### Approach To Sustainability

All the parameters of the Platinum LEED Certification are met efficiently in the areas of Construction Management

Energy and Atmosphere

Material and Resources

Water Efficiency

A lot of effort has been made to provide maximum lighting with minimum energy consumption. Needless to say, that with less than 0.7w/sq.ft of energy consumption for lighting, the Academy Design is very efficient and with least carbon footprint.

The extensive use of mirror on the ceiling and the vertical surfaces of the transition zone gave the manifestation of space. The wave pattern made of the DuPont solid acrylics added the much needed character and oomph to the event hall with the Led lights beaming through these waves. The Vinyl flooring with the look of warm cement concrete together with the engineered wooden flooring also reciprocated to get the whole desired look.

Taking a tour of space reveals the easy transition from reception to the academy through a series of tunnels. Called the 'Transition tunnel', that houses the camouflaged pantry which goes behind the mirror on one side. And on the other side has the premium kerastase institute. At the reception a secluded visitors lounge and the testing room has been cleverly planned to separate it from the academic zone. All the materials and the fixtures had been carefully selected to meet the LEED standards and which also in turn complemented the overall design.

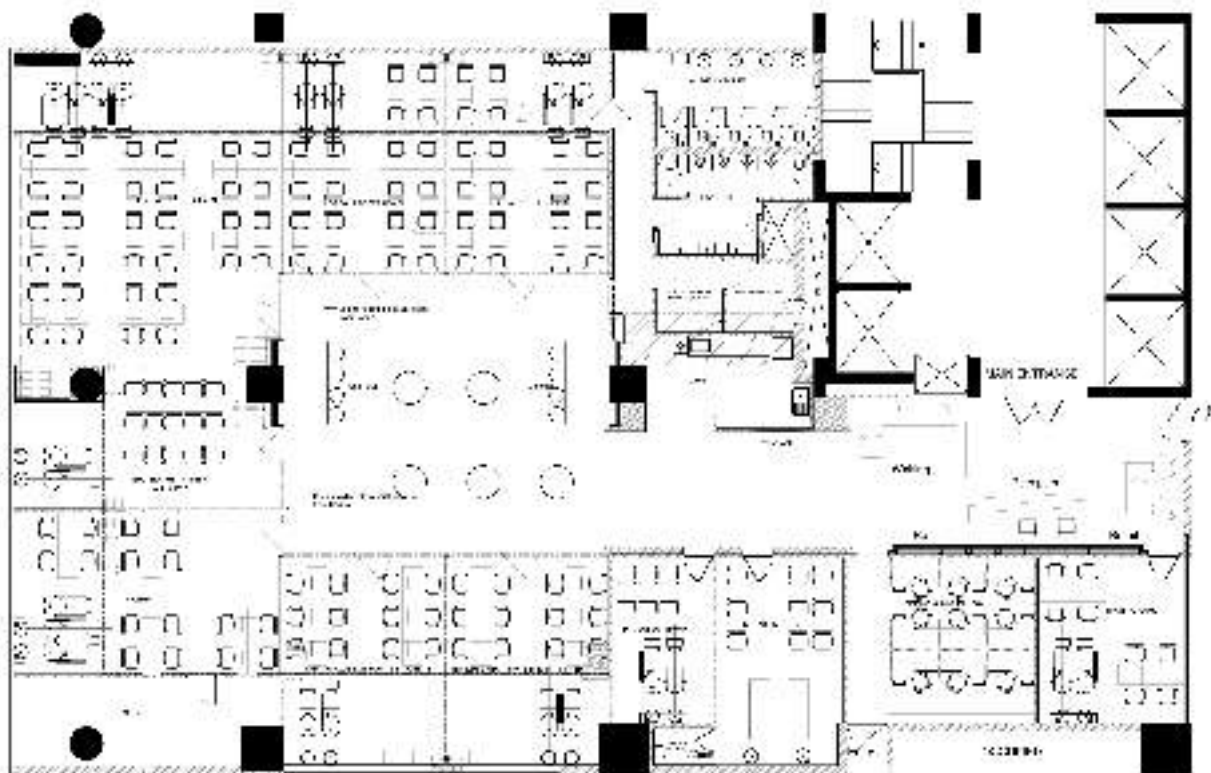




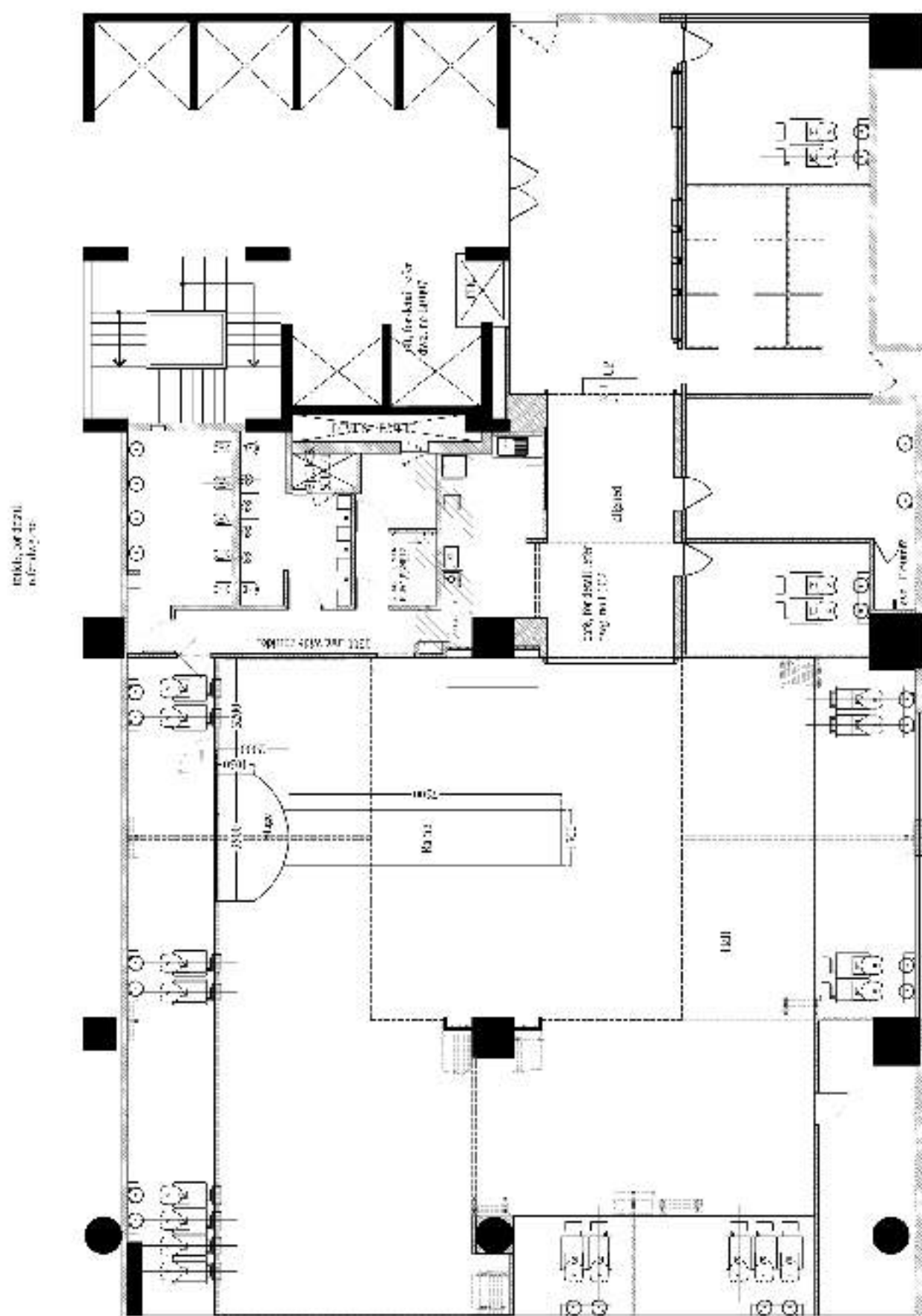




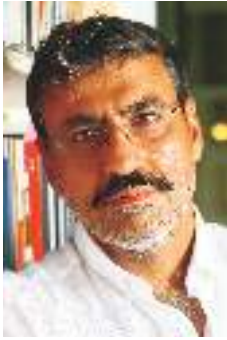




Furniture Layout Plan



### Stage Layout Plan



Amit Aurora along with Rahul Bansal, both architecture graduates of '93 from SPA, New Delhi, founded DCA Architects in 1996. Group DCA is a 360° integrated design solutions firm which has, over the last nineteen years, conceptualized retail identities of various Brands, Luxury Stores and Boutiques. An award-winning design consultation firm based out of New Delhi, India, Group DCA provides a unique, single window, design-build-deliver solution on a pan-India basis through its implementation arm- DCA workshop. With a unique ethos of Dream. Design. Discover. Deliver, the DCA Group provides services in Architecture, Interior design and Design Coordination across a wide range of building types including Offices, Residential, Retail/ luxury retail, Hospitality and Brand Identities. Via research and collaboration, the objective is to always create value through design that maximizes the project's complete potential. Driven by its team

of experienced project managers, DCA Architects is equipped with the expertise, experience and capacity to deliver design, planning, interior design solutions and development/implementation of brand identities.

The DCA workshop has successfully delivered projects for various global luxury brands to set up their retail footprint in India, such as Rolex, Versace, Longines, Chanel, Tom ford, Bally, Breguet, Gucci, Bvlgari, Cross etc. Today, the firm has to its credit, remarkable, award-winning projects such as restaurants, salons, residences, retail outlets and other commercial work that has been implemented pan-India, both in the realm of architecture and interior design. The design studio and its projects have won many national awards and have been published in various design journals.



Graduating in 1993 with a gold medal in Architecture from SPA, New Delhi, Rahul Bansal together with Amit Aurora, spearheaded the establishment of DCA Architects in 1996.

Group DCA is a 360° integrated and an award winning design consultation firm based out of New Delhi, India which has, over the last nineteen years, conceptualized retail identities of various Brands, Luxury Stores and Boutiques on a pan-india basis through its implementation arm- DCA Workshop. With a unique ethos of Dream. Design. Discover. Deliver, the DCA Group provides services in Architecture, Interior design and Design Coordination across a wide range of building types including Offices, Residential, Retail/ luxury retail, Hospitality and Brand Identities.

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## Mettilu Mane

<b>Location</b>	: Amruthahalli, Bangalore
<b>Client</b>	: Kumar B.L. & Sudhir B.L.
<b>Architect</b>	: Manavi Puligal
<b>Structural Consultant</b>	: Srinivs Kaiwar
<b>Material Specifications</b>	: RCC framed structure, Burnt brick masonry walls, Jaisalmer & Kota flooring, Teak/Honne wood doors and windows.
<b>Project status</b>	: Ongoing
<b>Area</b>	: 2600 sft
<b>Cost</b>	: 60 Lakhs

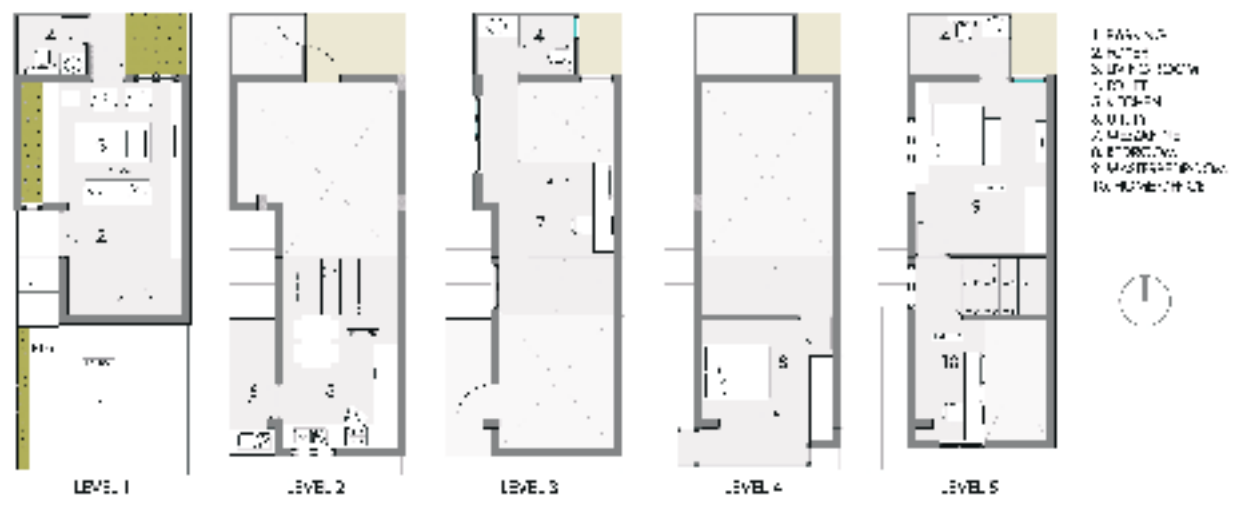
*"A House is a machine for living in" – Le Corbusier*

### Customized Solutions that defy prototyping

Bengaluru - one of the most developed cities of the country is ranked as the third most populous city in India. With the shrinking plot sizes in the city and the 30X40 2BHK with vastu as the most popular combination, the housing sector is becoming ever so mechanical. The 'Mettilu mane' is a residential project where each aspect of the space was sculpted by the client's needs.

Located in the suburbs of Bangalore the plot facing south is shared by two brothers making each plot to be 15'X40'. The size of the plot, the budget and the client's requirements led to a completely utilitarian house. The family consists of IT professional husband who requires a small secluded space for home office and wife who is a writer needs lot of storage space for her books and space to read them and children who enjoy outdoor activities.

With the usages in mind the proposed building heights were revisited and modified. The parking spaces and the kitchen space did not require the clear height which is usually maintained throughout the house. Hence they were cut down and the extra space bought from these spaces created an additional mezzanine area.



Floor plans of all the levels of the east residence

The spaces are divided into levels based on the usage. The lowest level is used as car parking / sit out with a small garden space. The tall living space on the next level is approached through a low height



foyer space. The living space is made to be more of a discussion area rather than a lavish relaxing lounge, to suite the intellectually inclined clients.



Views showing the living space

The next level consists of kitchen and dining areas with an attached utility area. The low height kitchen is located immediately above the parking area which also has low ceiling height. The level next to it is the mezzanine level which is used as a library/study and work space with an attached toilet. The mezzanine space is located in the central area. It overlooks the living, kitchen and dining spaces.



The level next to it is the master bedroom. As the younger brother liked outdoor spaces, the master bedroom extends into a balcony on one plot, but the brother who preferred a bigger bedroom over balcony has a corner window which makes the room appear spacious. The mezzanine space in bedroom is to be used as home office. The next level is used as children's bedroom.

As the plots were divided with a common wall, the house on the west could get morning light easily. To allow more daylight into the other house a light well was introduced at the center of the house which continues till the lowest floor spilling light onto all levels and hence reducing the energy consumption for lighting. Also the living area has a skylight towards the north-west which brings day light and fresh air into the house.

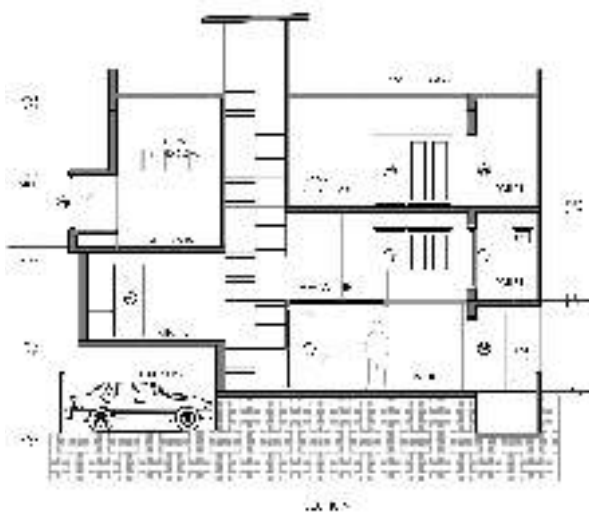
When people who would live in the residence shaped the spaces, and each space was detailed to accommodate in the small plot the building envelope became a unique structure. The usual norms could not be applied in most areas. From the varying ceiling heights to varying dimensions of each



space, the building required a special attention in designing and structural detailing of each aspect such as beamless mezzanine level, toilet water proofing without sunken slab etc. The house is designed to be partly load bearing and partly a framed structure to reduce the construction cost and in turn reducing the embodied energy due to concrete. The doors and windows are a combination of wood, aluminum and UPVC chosen suitably for each area to minimize the cost without compromising on the aesthetics.



Exterior view of the residence



(i) Section through stairs, (ii) Exterior view of the residence

To improve the quality of indoor day light, the finishes used are of bright colors like the white walls and the polished bright yellow Jaisalmer stone flooring. The stairs connecting all the spaces are designed in metal to make it light and permeable. The treads are made of pine wood slabs supported over a metal plate. The small span allows for thin supporting members.

The minimalistic expression continues throughout the house rather as a necessity than to make a statement. The overall building envelope is designed to provide an apt shelter for the people living under it.

The customization of every aspect of the building, might increase the initial planning and designing time and also the building cost for a certain extent. But it becomes most livable and humane when it is tailored to suit the needs of the users.



Manavi Puligal is a Bangalore based architect. She started her professional career with an internship at Pragrup architects a leading architecture firm located in south Bangalore. Worked on various projects, small and large scale under the guidance of Ar. Meera Natampally as a junior architect.

Design intentions: To provide comprehensive and responsive architecture and interior designing services to suit the needs of the clientele.

Architect and designer, Project architect at Sekos architects, Vice president Minugu A non-profit organization, Project assistant for research on Temples at Hampi. Member of Council of Architecture