

HOME & DESIGN

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TRENDS

The Designers' State of Mind

RACHNA AGARWAL
SIDDHARTH SIROHI
SHOBHAN KOTHARI

MINDFUL & DETAIL ORIENTED

Spaces by
Ankur Choksi
Lijo Jos and
Reny Lijo
Rooshad Shroff
and more...

Shernavaz Bharucha

MAKING LUXURY
AN EVERYDAY
PHENOMENON

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Shernavaz Bharucha
Image: Shamanth Patil J

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2020 has been a

revelation of sorts. One positive that came out of the current pandemic was the fact that it brought us up close and personal with our ability to pull together, innovate and find opportunities in a situation of crisis.

As we step into 2021, we are a lot more confident and positive as a community. In his essay, Shobhan Kothari quotes Zille, "Architecture can kill" to illustrate how great the architect's responsibility is in shaping a city, a country, and the world at large. The past year, and the projects we featured, have been a testament to the design community's enduring creativity even as the world, collectively, went into lockdown.

Thoughts that will shape the world we live in, concepts that will change the way we live, and spaces that are shaping our cities now — this issue brings to you the best!

Happy New Year...and happy reading!

Seema Sreedharan
Editor

HOME & DESIGN

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SUBSCRIPTIONS

Asha Kulkarni, Manager Marketing
asha.kulkarni@wmm.co.in
Call: 18001210005 (All India toll free number)
Associate General Manager (RMD Magazines)
Sakshi Kate - sakshi.kate@timesgroup.com

For subscription, visit: mags.timesgroup.com/home-trends.html
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It's my first editorial of 2021, and in that I'd like to start out with gratitude, hope and prayer. For the year that was and the year that will be. I know I speak for most of us when I say that 2020 was a lesson for the whole world, without exception.

Some of the most important chapters were those that were based on myself and, of course, the choices I made for myself during the last 10 months. Innovation and resilience were the emergent stars as calendars, worldwide, turned their leaves over onto 2021. The next 11 months are riding on high expectations and millions of deferred dreams. There's a lot of catching up to do...and we all have our hands full with plans and projects that were put on hold because the pandemic just wasn't the right backdrop.

While most of us went inward, it was interesting to see design take a pensive turn as well. And while in hindsight, it does seem the most natural inevitability, at that point (mid 2020), it did take us by pleasant surprise. I feel extremely proud knowing that we were all part of the changes that we consciously decided to bring about in our lives. That, to me, is the best example of design. Reflective of, and changing with, the times.

Speaking of change, there's something I'm going to miss terribly about 2020. Seema Sreedharan, our Editor, is moving on. Like 2021 itself, I have high expectations of her.

To all of you, I take this opportunity to wish you all the good things that your hearts desire and then some. Welcome to 2021!

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading 'Ronitaa'.

Ronitaa R. Italia
Editor in Chief

DESIGN IN CONTEXT

Products where design blurs the lines between art and functionality

Text **TINA THAKRAR**



TURN BACK THE CLOCK

Design duo, Lebanese sisters Nour and Maysa Saccal of Saccal Design House have traced the journey back to their childhood in 1990s Beirut, for their latest Nostalgia series of furniture. Think outdoor playtime, identifying the colours of sand, layering stones and discovering new places - this formed the basis of Nostalgia, which comprises a rocking chair, console, tables, wall lights, a lamp and serving platters. The range has been made from natural stone with raw wood and injections of brass, with every design detail reminiscing the lost art of childhood play and discovery. ►





IMAGES: HYUNJUNG PARK

JAM PACKED

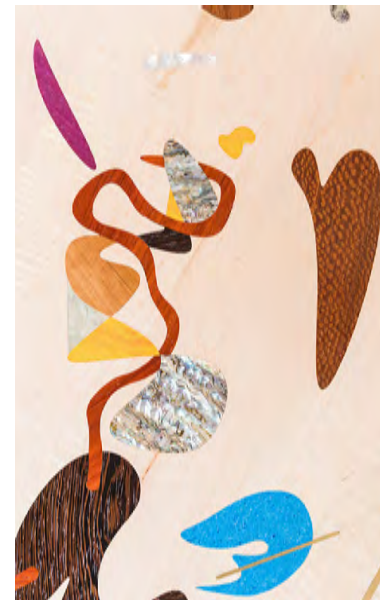
Efforts are on in every part of the world to find ways to recycle plastic, and designer Donghoon Sohn has found a truly interesting one. His BSP (By product, Solvent, Plastic) series of furniture has been designed by recycling plastic waste generated during CNC or 3D printing. In this series, the entire furniture piece represents a BLT (bacon, lettuce and tomato) sandwich - complete with oozing, melted cheese created from liquified plastic flakes. The plastic is melted in organic solvents and then solidified to create a dripping effect, to make the larger pieces look like they've been tightly sandwiched together. ►





MUSICALLY INCLINED

Brecht Wright Gander's *Directions for Knowing All Dark Things Credenza* is a work of art, in that it incorporates 15 different materials in its design. The piece is made entirely in maple, with curly edges and inlaid shells, woods and metals that lend an exquisite effect, ensuring that no two sides of the credenza look the same. The credenza itself is a light wood colour, with the inlays adding small contrasts. Techniques used in musical instrument making have been applied here, resulting in a delicacy of detail, and a notation of forms, textures, and colours that gives the design its own melodic voice. ►





BEHIND THE CURTAIN

Our experiences with light differ indoors and outdoors. Natural light can be fairly determined in making its way through every nook, creating interesting effects that lighting designers love to play with. Indoors, curtains have a fundamental role to play in how we experience light and its effect. Drawing from this idea, UK-based industrial designer Sam Gwilt has designed the Encore Table Lamp with Gantri. The form of the lamp is inspired by the natural pleats of curtains, and the drama from the audience's anticipation before the curtain is raised at a theatre performance. Since curtains signify control and enhancement, Encore is meant to be a design element that can soften or intensify our indoor experience. It stands on a geometric base and comes with a double exposed diffuser. ►



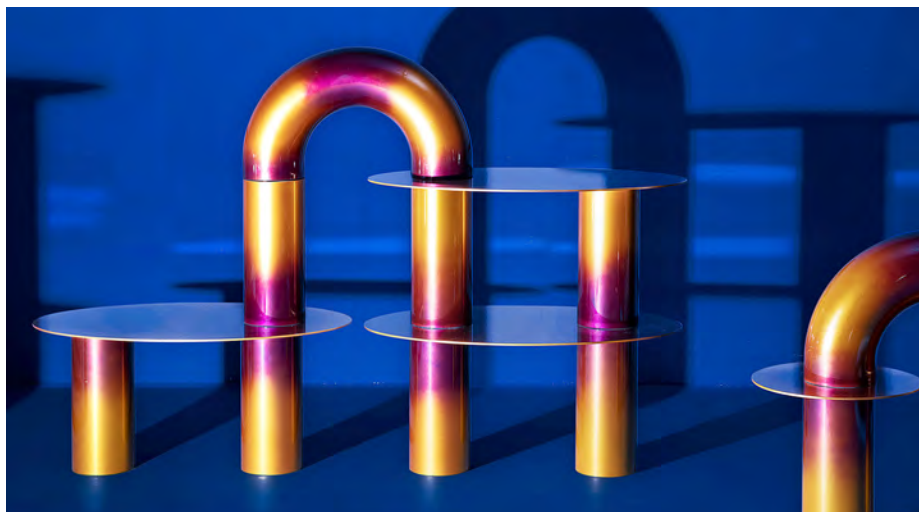


IMAGES: MATTIA LOTTI/X3



KIT OF PARTS

The Daydream shelving unit by Objects of Common Interest comprises three standard parts - the plate, the arch and the pole. The result, after playing with simple geometric notions of resting and stacking, is an infinite number of different shelving formations that seem fixed, but are in fact, changeable. Made entirely in steel, the pieces represent sturdiness as well as flexibility. The materials, design and approach is fairly basic, but the outcome is unique, every single time. **H&DT**





IMAGES: DJIJ2, TAHMINEH MONZAVI XS

COLOURS OF CULTURE

The technicolour new urban development on Hormuz Island, Iran, by ZAV Architects, empowers and rebuilds the local communities, while giving the country's economy a boost

Text **TINA THAKRAR**

Reigniting the glorious past of Iran's Hormuz Island, Presence in Hormuz 2 is a colourful new urban development that has been built using local materials and labour. An initiative to revive the fledgling economy of this port town, and to divert the efforts of the locals from forced illegal trafficking due to political turmoil to community development, this set of residences uses architecture as a vehicle to bring about social change.

Designed by Iranian firm ZAV Architects, the project has a

multitude of small-scale domes built with the superadobe technique of Nader Khalili, using rammed earth and sand. Since domes are familiar structures in the region, and their small size makes them apt for building by local craftsmen and unskilled workers, they were the perfect, most economical form to build. As for the colours, they come from the sand, soil, gravel and stone found on the island. As they pile up over centuries, these materials form the colourful carpet and rainbow topography of the island.

Everything from materials to labour was sourced from the small island itself, which helped to not only build economically and reduce material costs, but also empower local craftsmen and preserve and strengthen the future of the island. The second phase of the project is a multipurpose cultural residence called Majara (meaning adventure) that ties together the lives of local people and visitors both culturally and economically, and converges the interests of landowners, investors and locals. **H&DT**

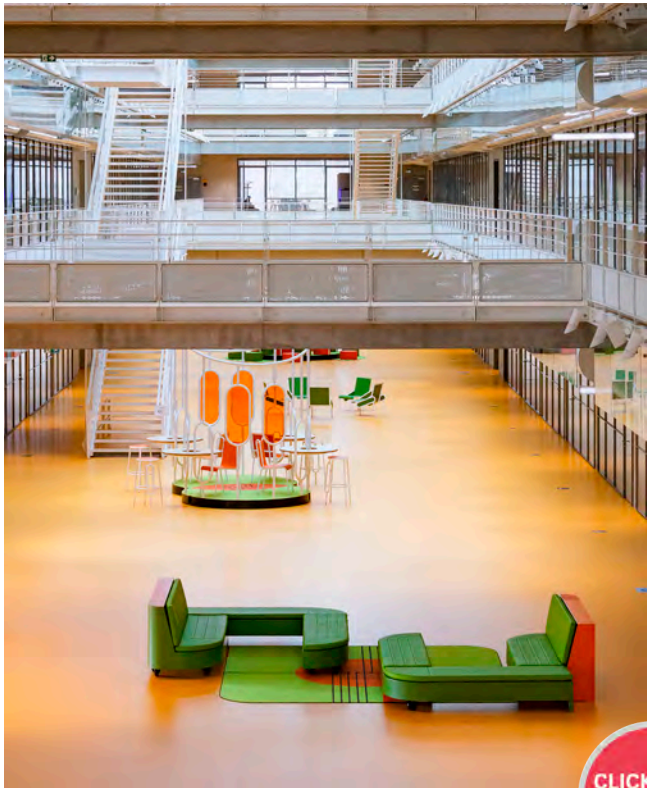


Recognised for its surreal colourful landscapes, Hormuz is a historic port in the Persian Gulf, that controls the shipment of petroleum from the Middle East.

SPECTACLE

Transformative public interventions that alter perceptions and neighbourhoods

Text **TINA THAKRAR**



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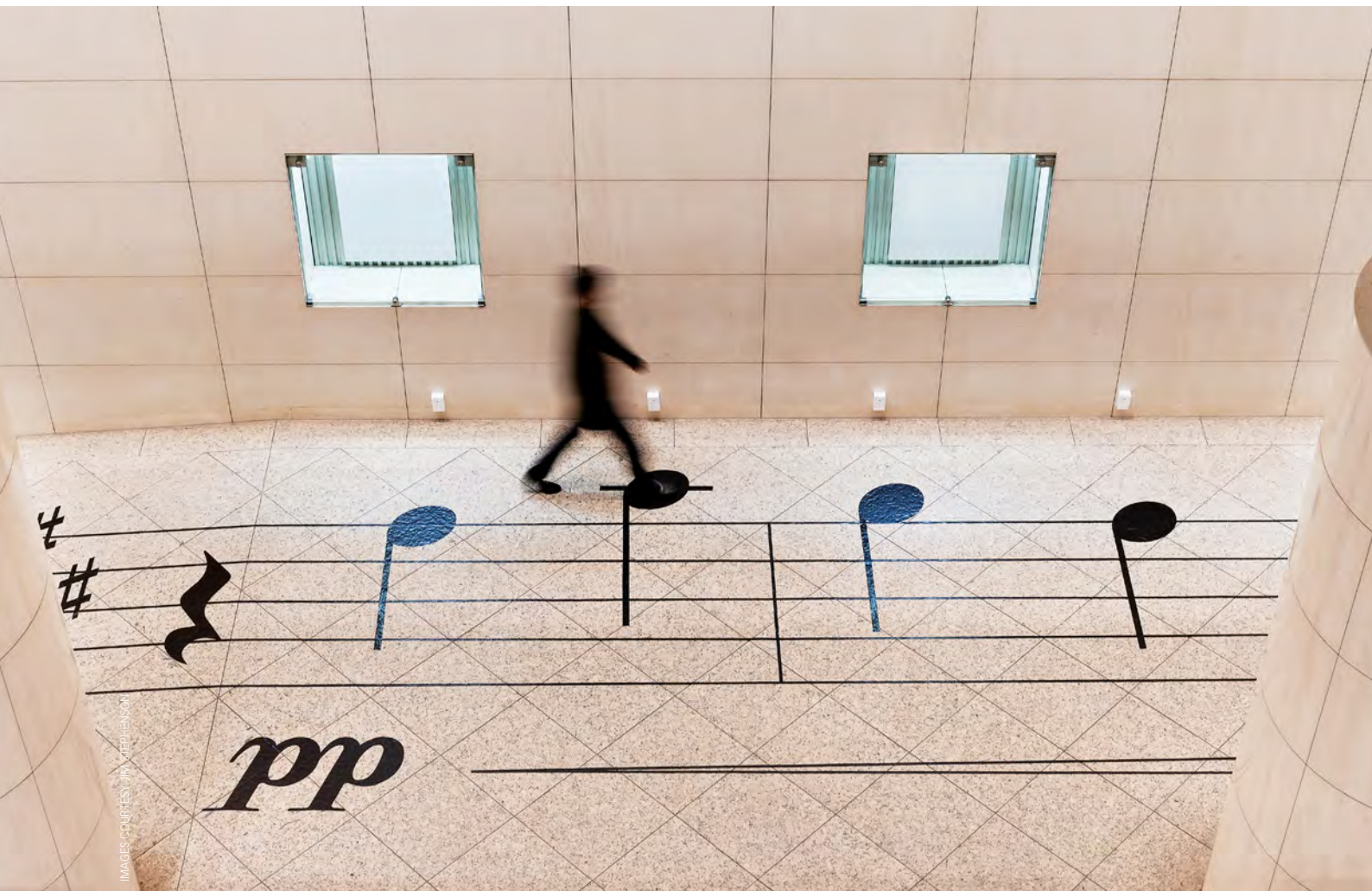
TONIC ARCHIPELAGO BY MATALI CRASSET PARIS, FRANCE

Geographically defined, an archipelago is a chain of islands in a stretch of water. But this unique version of it is found on land, more specifically, in the atrium of ENS Paris-Saclay, designed by Renzo Piano. A thematically concatenated set of seating units designed by Matali Crasset now inhabit the fluid orange interiors of the building. What links them is how they foster relationships and build communities among users, while also creating pockets of centrality in the long atrium. The basic form of all structures is based on a loop, and all pieces can be moved and arranged in different ways. They have varied designs, offer different levels of comfort and interaction scenarios, and present diverse ways of bringing people together. ►



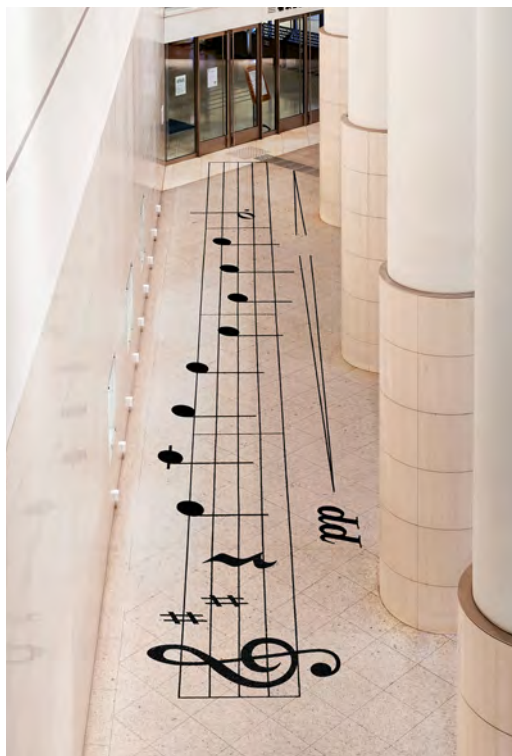
IMAGES: PHILIPPE PRON





SOCIAL HARMONY BY NOSIGNER YOKOHAMA, JAPAN

In the long drawn-out months of lockdown, many of us found solace in music. On the understanding that music somewhere connects us all, Eisuke Tachikawa of Nosigner introduced Social Harmony, a musically-charged public installation created at Yokohama Minato Mirai Hall, and later at the DESIGNART Tokyo 2020 fair. In this activity, a musical score is played when people stand on the notes on the floor, each triggering a different sound. While the music score is Gymnopédie n°1 by Eric Satie, people can choose their rhythm, course and pace, to create their own unique score. The idea is to harness the power of classical music to enable people to communicate while they continue to maintain social distancing. **H&DT**



The makings of luxury

The definition of luxury in design has always adapted with the times, especially so in the last few months. Interior designer **Shernavaz Bharucha** narrows down this broad concept to give us her version

Text TINA THAKRAR

Profile images FABIEN CHARUAU



“

Most modern homes today encompass open space plans. What we, as designers, need to do, is hit the right balance between gardens, fresh air and good lighting, and automation, technology and ease of use.

– Shernavaz Bharucha, Founder & Principal Designer, Shernavaz Interiors

Luxury, to me, is when the aspects of aesthetics and functionality combined, turn every space into reality. It is about comfort, and being content in one's own home with good food and a private garden, experiencing the feeling of being happily 'home bound'. It is about opulence, strong finishes, good design execution, bespoke and handcrafted design elements, and a fluidity and flexibility towards clients and their briefs.

Converting the client's dreams into reality is about fulfilling personal wants, styles, and desires through design. Most modern homes today encompass open space plans, bringing the 'green' element indoors. What we, as designers, need to do, is hit the right balance between gardens, fresh air and good lighting, and automation, technology and ease of use.

Having said that, the pandemic has given rise to a new meaning of luxury. Indoor gardens where the clients can grow their own fruits and vegetables, large, minimally-furnished spaces, high ceilings, big doors and antique furniture are now all the rage, albeit with a modern twist.

Once the clients have a fair idea of what they want, the design process begins, amalgamating the designer's and client's design expressions. Personally, I like to present the client's personality through the space, in a luxurious way.





Based in Bengaluru, designer Shernavaz Bharucha has a strong preference for high-end interiors combining modern and traditional elements.

“

Clay, as a material, may not be luxurious, but its pliability is. This, in my opinion, is luxury; where the design includes style, uniqueness, warmth and a certain oomph.

– Shernavaz Bharucha, Founder & Principal Designer, Shernavaz Interiors

This is usually through antiques, handcrafted art pieces or sculptures and craft from different corners of India. For instance, in one of our recent projects, we commissioned an artist from Pondicherry to create a 30ft clay wall of handmade objects such as kettles, candle holders, photo frames, bottles,

plates etc. We then inserted a large skylight on top to highlight the gradient of blue and green running through the wall. Although clay as a material may not be luxurious, its pliability is. This, in my opinion, is luxury; where the design includes style, uniqueness, warmth and a certain *oomph*.



Cost-effectiveness and sustainability have now become big factors under consideration. The idea of creating something unique and luxurious from recycled, reused materials can also be construed as luxury.

– Shernavaz Bharucha, Founder & Principal Designer, Shernavaz Interiors

Materials also form a major aspect of luxurious interior design, where the marriage between the materials and their application creates a beautiful story. Luxury is always based on clientele briefs, but I try to create a blend between modern and classical tastes, where the type of materials used on site are adapted and blended well with the spatial design. This creates an interesting fluidity in the spaces, and they become more welcoming for the people living in or visiting them.

There are a number of materials that signify luxury for me, and marble is at the forefront. India is known for using high-end marble in residential and commercial projects, and it's the flexibility in its application that makes it interesting to use. With time, use and demand, the types of marble available in the market has also proliferated.

A massive transformation the pandemic has brought about, is an affinity for more Indian-made products. To the modern world, luxurious products are generally sourced from Italy, although technology and accessibility today has brought us to a point where bespoke products are more tangible and easily available everywhere. The economic crisis we're facing today has also helped us discover resources that are closer to us.

I have always loved the idea of bringing high-end Italian products into my designs, but after working on so many international projects, I have come to realise that there is nothing better than going back to your roots. Also, luxury homeowners now prefer to have unique detailing over just expensive products. This is where India's design expertise in working with materials like glass, veneer, wood, marble and metal, comes into play.

India is known worldwide for its fabrics, antiques, carpets and wood, and there are both large businesses and small vendors ready to experiment with new materials as per requirements. They collaborate well with designers, offer excellent finishes, help customise products to a T, and use the most high-end technology. What's more, working with local vendors and artisans makes design and execution a smoother process, reduces costs and makes installation and follow-up so much easier.

In recent developments, cost-effectiveness and sustainability have become big factors under consideration, especially by young homeowners who live eco-consciously and prefer their homes to reflect that. For such projects, we prefer to use natural materials like cane, wood and paper, especially the recycled kind. That idea of creating something unique and luxurious from cost-effective, reused materials can also be construed as luxury.

It's clear that the concept of luxury isn't defined. It proffers a lot of overlap as well; such as using the locally sourced Makrana white marble in Indian projects to reduce cost, creating handcrafted products from leftover pieces, or choosing a semi-precious stone like Lapis lazuli and combining it with cheaper materials for added effect.

In the literal sense of the term, luxury might mean using the most expensive materials, or top-notch products. But modern luxury focuses on quality and design and the way the space is layered. A luxurious home is directed and driven by the clients. But for us designers, being able to execute exactly what they want, understanding their style and reflecting it in their personal spaces, is what I'd consider our biggest luxury. **H&DT**

THE FEELING *of Design*

BRINGING YOU ANSWERS TO THE
QUESTIONS WE HAVE AND ASK OF
OURSELVES AND OUR FRIENDS IN
THE DESIGN INDUSTRY, IN INDIA AND
AROUND THE WORLD

Compiled by SEEMA SREEDHARAN



SIDDHARTH SIROHI



RACHNA AGARWAL



SHOBHAN KOTHARI



Does design live and breathe? If so, how does it balance the needs of its user and infuse happiness into daily life?

SIDDHARTH SIROHI
Founder, Baro Design

Mumbai-based Siddharth Sirohi is a multi-faceted designer with a career spanning over two decades. He spent 15 years in film production design before setting up his own furniture and lighting design studio, Baro Design, and the popular Baro store in Mumbai. A firm believer of using time-honoured materials, techniques and processes, he works primarily with reclaimed teak, giving it exquisite finishes. He is also a Yoga practitioner, an active mountaineer, a photographer and a painter.

Time and space are the two variables that define our existence (and everything else that we know of). It can be argued that life is a function of these two parameters and without them, life would not exist. It is through defining the space that something occupies and the time it occupies it in that we are able to determine the coordinates of life in our unfathomable universe.

The ticking of time is what makes everything finite, and that is perhaps why we cherish life as much as we do, and the fulfilment of these finite moments is where we seek our happiness. Modern day living has somehow concluded that the more we can compress in this limited life, the happier we will be. That is why we endlessly chase experiences without even experiencing them. By the third bite we have ignored

the taste of the best cooking, been distracted by a vagrant segue while listening to the most compelling stories, and have started wondering about where to eat dinner while seated in the first row of a spectacular musical performance.

Happiness, and I would agree with the countless minds that have said it before, lies in the present. When we are present within a moment, every bit of that moment is realised. Distractions fall away, and there is no desire to be elsewhere. Where each bite is as flavourful as the one before, every note hits the right chord, and each word of the story touches us. **This to me is what being alive is all about: for each moment to live its full potential.**

In this state, every moment is more immersive, every sensation heightened, clarity and comfort a

(Below left) Chair weaving at the Baro furniture workshop in Mumbai

(Below right) Medium Wave - an original design by Siddharth Sirohi, the mid-century inspired piece has pleasing proportions and symmetry, and a seemingly weightless base.



mere inevitability. It is the feeling that everything is just as it is meant to be, the simple joy of being in harmony with our surroundings, where we discover ourselves reflected in the world around us, and in turn, we find the world reflected in us, and every bit of this world feels alive.

If we were to consider urban living, why is it that the pursuit of interior design is more or less limited to the space we occupy? More importantly, why is it called interior design? Should it perhaps be re-termed as living design?

If we look back a little, the way we occupy homes has remained largely unchanged for the last few hundred years, beyond the specific styles (and it is now pretty much a uniformity worldwide). The idea of furnishing interior spaces, what was once a European import, still colours the way we sit, eat, sleep, and socialise in our homes. The chair remains a chair, the desk a desk, albeit with minor modifications. The strokes of the painting on the wall may have changed, and so would the weave of curtains, but our living spaces still retain a specific format.

The limitation of such design was that it was almost entirely concerned with space rather than the temporal aspect of living. Maybe we have been barking up the wrong tree. The

pursuit of the perfect chair has had designers struggling since the advent of the chair itself, but what if we are not designed to sit on chairs after all. What if we were to consider the pursuit of design to bring us to the moment and engage with it in ways other than the spatial aspect alone? To bring joy and awareness in every living moment? Or to at least serve as a reminder?

Through design, we can explore how to engage with this state of being, daily, creating objects built to anchor the moments that make the human experience memorable and meaningful. Much like a beautiful old watch that we look at repeatedly, not just to tell the time, but because there's something inherently captivating in the human spirit that it embodies. The human endeavour, the workmanship, the materials, the pursuit of refinement and excellence, all quietly speaking in that tiny bit of existence, telling us their stories, and all we have to do is listen.

We live in a world where we treat people as furniture instead of treating furniture as people. Maybe its time to switch that around. Consider the perspective where inanimate objects take on the pulse of their maker, slowly breathing to an inaudible rhythm. With wood its easier to imagine the transition, which is

perhaps why we are drawn to it. It breathes, expands and contracts, and carries in its veins stories of a previous life, intermingling with its current one. When we start to see ourselves reflected in our surroundings, we invariably develop an affinity for it, much like the draw to people who reflect our values.

Let's think of these objects as extensions of our being, our appendages, our tools for the world, as much as our hands and feet are, and they will come alive, engaging with you. When you sit at a table, the grain of the wood will speak to you, reminding you of the present, where your 37th bite tastes just as good as the first.

We need to unlearn a lot before we begin to understand ourselves better. The formatted existence needs a reboot, a realignment to ourselves as a people, rather than trying to fit existing notions. We need to slow down and hear our quiet inner voices, rather than be subsumed by the loudest of voices outside, which only try and paint everyone the same colour. Let's mushroom together as our brightest selves and paint the world in a harmony of different ideas.

Our work is to build on a foundation of finding balance. As creators, we must seek balance in all we do.



Previous page:

(Below left) Ambrosia - a comfortable upright chair with an ergonomic design, firm upholstery in brocade patchwork, and fluted legs

(Below right) The Shamiana couch has a strong traditional appeal. It comes with an embroidered back and a playful floral print.

This page:

(Top) Woodwork at the Baro furniture workshop

(Middle) The Nest trio of tables

(Below) The Tutu lamp, embracing the grace of a ballerina's skirt and neck. It is made from wood and painted fibre glass.

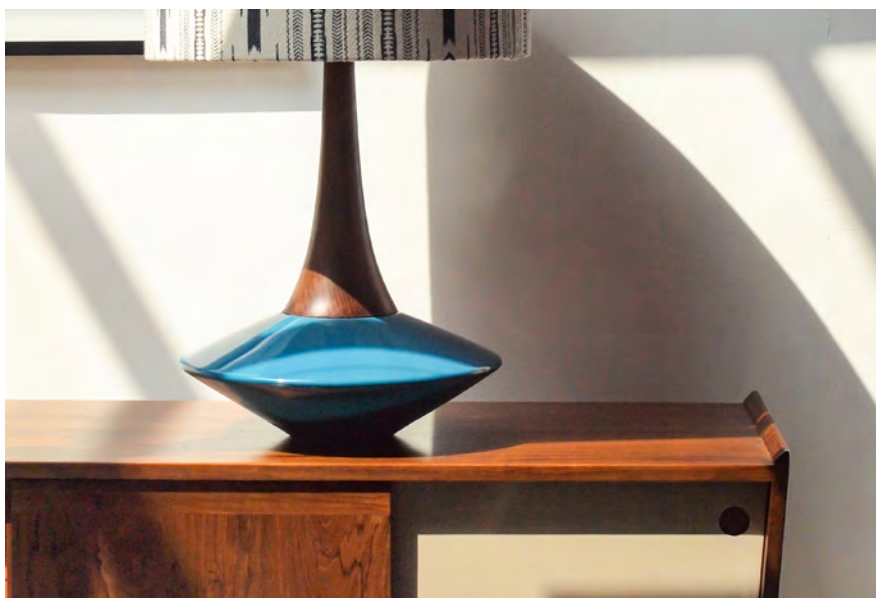


Balance between nature and our ability to create; between materials, proportions and scale, to put primacy on function without compromising on form; between the various pulls that draw our lives in different directions; and between time and space.

Balance is the resting point where things become weightless. I call this the 'lightness of being'. It is the state when all that is superfluous has been shed and what remains is the distillate of the essential. It is with continuous improvement that we arrive at a point of simplicity, where its gravity is as compelling as its weightlessness.

Simplicity is a highly desirable virtue for me. It is the embodiment of a long-refined process to arrive at a monk-like state, clear of the weight of the unnecessary. To this weightlessness, let's add a playfulness. I like to call it 'playfulness in simplicity'. It gives us the desire to be able to discover the same things differently, to find the playfulness of juxtaposing a traditional weave pattern on the purity of mid-century forms, and to expose a joint because we are not afraid to show it. It is, for me, the fun, self-assured state, nestled between veneration and irreverence.

Above all we must strive for sustainability. We are not apart from nature, and it is only through our symbiotic coexistence that we will achieve balance. **H&DT**





RACHNA AGARWAL
Co-founder, Design Ideator,
Studio IAAD

Rachna Agarwal is the co-founder and principal architect at IAAD (It's All About Design). With over 12 years of experience in the realm of spatial design, Rachna's professional journey is an ensemble of ingenious design projects completed under her mentorship at esteemed architectural studios, before embarking on the journey of co-founding IAAD in 2007. Her role as the lead in a plethora of design ventures has nurtured her penchant for entrepreneurship at an intrinsic level. A torchbearer of the DNA that the practice exemplifies, Rachna is a proponent of design narratives that conjure a sensorial and memorable spatial experience — one that finds its roots firmly embedded in the purity and integrity of design values.

The way we approach design and architecture has witnessed a certain shift due to the pandemic. Why do you think it is more pertinent than ever to adopt biophilic design for all our built structures?

There is a lot that goes into the design and development of any project. The first step is the design concept itself, which is the formative idea behind all thought processes involved; this defines the intent that the client and the architect share in common.

As we advance in time, so does building technology and architecture. Today, we have at our disposal, transformative machinery and systems that claim to achieve the unimaginable in terms of saving and efficiently using energy. With the introduction of building-integrated equipment that can harness renewable sources of energy, the way our modern buildings look has changed over time. What still keeps us rooted to the earth is the concept of biophilia.

Biophilia is the human tendency to interact with life in nature. A biophilic design is one that incorporates nature into the built environment, enabling an interaction between humans and nature. A biophilic approach helps in reconnecting with the natural surroundings and creating healthy habitats for contemporary life. It can be incorporated into design at all scales, be it a small house, a large commercial building, or even planning at an urban level. New York city is the quintessential example of an urban development with its green lung - Central Park - at its very core.

Any design process with biophilia at its centre must start with an extensive understanding of the location's environmental data and the region's weather patterns. These account for factors such as seasonality, the intensity of the sun, wind, rainfall and humidity. This ensures a truly climate-responsive, sustainable and environmentally responsible design solution. Keeping in mind these factors, one can easily decide the method and degree to which biophilic elements can help shape the design.

The inclusion of direct or indirect elements of nature into architecture has been shown to reduce stress, anxiety and ill-health, whilst increasing productivity, creativity and wellbeing. It helps improve thermal comfort, air quality, toxin levels and ventilation, and acoustic comfort. Just adding a touch of green, such as a few potted plants, can enormously transform a space. Green walls and open spaces augment and improve wellbeing, facilitate internal and external views, while enhancing the vibrancy and serenity of the environs. Their engagement with the human senses can also have psychological and physiological effects on the user, thereby improving overall lifestyle.

The presence of water features in a space creates a soothing ambience with its continuous sounds. Similarly, aromatherapy has successfully been in use for a long time. Natural

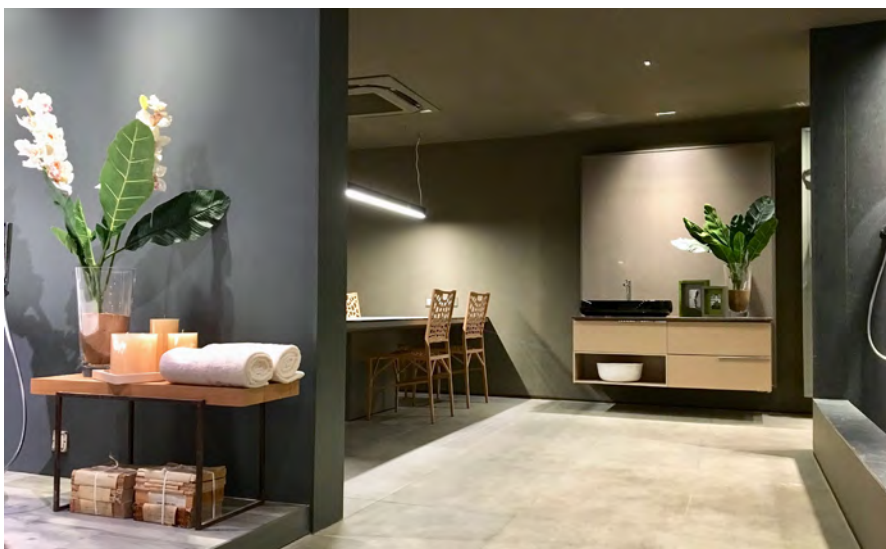
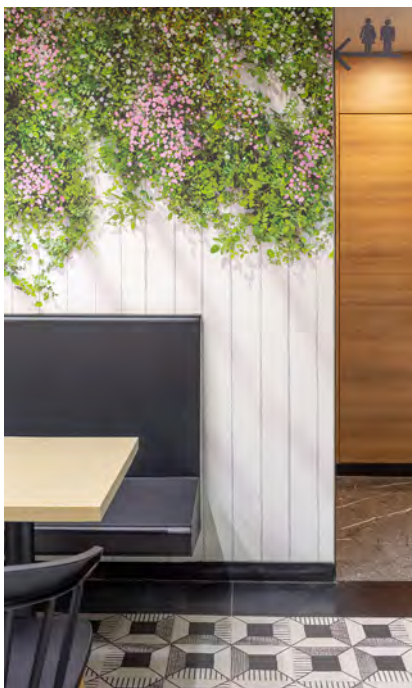
light can be brought into a space by diffusion or in dynamic ways by creating patterns. A visual connection with nature is pleasing to the eyes, and a non-visual connection also induces a feeling of calmness.

With work and daily tasks, our lives tend to become monotonous and predictable. Non-rhythmic sensory stimuli work by giving momentary exposure to sounds and scents in nature through occasional movements, having a positive effect on the brain due to its unpredictability. These aspects directly affect the senses, increasing pain tolerance and the quality of life.

Biomorphic forms and patterns that mimic nature to create natural and organic shapes form the base concept for many architectural works. The use of natural materials is an indirect way to incorporate biophilic elements in design. They have least environmental impact and are renewable. Recycling, upcycling and repurposing of these materials ensures waste reduction.

With people making a permanent shift to urban lifestyles and spending most of their time in closed interior spaces of their houses, it is even more vital today to bring nature inside. Humans have spent only a couple of centuries in the modern built environment. Most of the human era has stayed deeply connected to nature, thriving in jungles and caves. A loss of that connection can easily cause long-term harmful effects.

There is an inherent beauty and balance in nature that must be extended into the spaces that we inhabit. A seamless blend between the interior and exterior spaces would be an optimal design solution that nourishes, energises and enriches one's living experience. It is crucial for a designer to have sensitivity towards maintaining a harmonious relationship between the natural environment and the interior aesthetics. **H&DT**



A biophilic design is one that incorporates nature into the built environment, enabling an interaction between humans and nature. This forms the very core of Studio IAAD's projects.



SHOBHAN KOTHARI
Co-founder, ADND

Upon graduation from Kamala Raheja Vidyaniidhi Institute for Architecture, Shobhan Kothari worked with architect Nitin Killawala. During this course, he was presented with an opportunity to design a Deaf and Mute institute in Mumbai. This project began his career and he set up his own practice in 2000. Later, in 2002, he formed a partnership with Anand Menon who was his colleague and friend from KRVA. Together, they have now been in practice for 16 years under the banner of ADND. Their office is involved in numerous boutique projects in the residential, corporate and commercial genres.

Today, as we step into the new decade and continue to battle the pandemic, there's a need to re-evaluate the urban architectural fabric of the city we live in. Architects have the power to transform and reform. What according to you is the way forward?

Walking the streets of Mumbai, I have always discovered the love-hate relationship I have with her. The street signs, overhead bridges, crossroads, maidans, buildings and again the signs, the omnipresent expressways, sea link, the gaothans, high-rises, lanes, metros and still more signs, the depleted garden spaces, the railways, the big traffic signals and the traffic jams; the ups and downs of the city had never seemed so reassuring and familiar to me. This frantic disorder or perfectly controlled chaos was revealed to me only after taking up architecture as a profession. It was the unmistakable character of the city I was brought up in. As I look back, these images and many more have been impressed upon my memory.

But today after two decades, as I travel in my car, I stare out into the city landscape that, once my inspiration, has only increased my restlessness. The city has exploded. Infrastructure and development is everywhere. Spaces that are being visioned are abstract and diffused in character. The places conceived are being robbed of humanity, and the result is a condition that has been described as "the loss of the centre." So why is my city failing me so bad?

The focus in the last few decades has been on tackling rampant housing concerns. While development has catered to that growth, the failure of the infrastructure and government to implement by-laws to keep pace with private sector demand is clear.



The city is currently paralysed by the lack of vision from various stakeholders who could have contributed in cohesion. The incoherent function of the public and private sector has resulted in complete lack of any civic design, and architecture has been reduced to a commodity. The genre of work being produced continues to be mediocre, without any homogeneity to the social and cultural conditions of today. Architecture and design of the past and present continues to be heavy handed towards commerce. Seduced by beautiful images and visions of other cities, we have failed to implement anything worthy. Many of these ephemeral images, collected over decades, have created an unstable fabric in the city.

Mistakes in our professions are often unforgiving and irreparable. As industry professionals, we cannot perform by putting blinkers on our society. The architect alone is responsible for the final product, as every line drawn springs into a built form and bears his signature. Avant-garde architects of this century must take upon themselves this devastating ethical and moral task. Zille's saying, "Architecture can kill," is a strong expression of the architect's responsibility.

The vulgarisation of today's architecture has almost deleted the attempt of a few architects who strive for something better. Many have been eager to play the role of committed intellectuals in today's cultural debate. But realizing that there is a great crisis in architecture, they struggle to aim for a cohesive whole. Also, very little can be done by just a handful. All architects must ask themselves - can tomorrow take care of itself? Where do we stand now? What does architecture represent in the context of everyday life? How does the pragmatism of space conception affect the society we live in? In these questions lies the answer to most of our problems. Taking these problems as personal obstacles



Bombay offers its fair share of good architecture, from Victorian era to Art-Deco buildings. But the modern city has seen an influx of housing and large premium complexes.



will help us rethink the future and achieve the vision of the future we all wish to achieve.

Bombay offers its fair share of good architecture, from Victorian era to Art-Deco buildings. But the modern city has seen an influx of housing and large premium complexes. Its green lungs are reducing. It's time for the city to pause and accept that what is happening is incoherent and the need for balance is the call for the hour. We are robbed of good civic buildings and spaces. As Rob Krier said, "The cultural temper of our time is reflected in our buildings, not inside our opera houses nor in the libraries we keep to decorate our living rooms."

The architect is responsible for his creation. But to be honest and meet this responsibility with a consciousness, the other stakeholders will need to be contributors in equal measure. However, society at large, including the government

authorities, must become patrons of culture and understand the need for urban architectural influence. It will then become the architectural community's responsibility to show them (clients, private and public) the best option. This will enrich our city fabric and create architectural interventions which will then stand in the public's eye and offer joy rather than despair.

Today, as we start a new decade, we have to ask ourselves whether the new generations of architects, bureaucrats, engineers and other collaborators are prepared for this gruelling and daunting task. The city is shaken. It needs to be replenished with good pieces of work. Their work can only help improve the socio-political environment we live in. Looking back and learning from mistakes can only help make the future clearer and us as a community move forward. **H&DT**

SCULPTED SPACES | *Residential*

LIVE INDOORS, BREATHE OUTDOORS

*Fresh green plants are the primary material used to
complement the building of this family home in Kochi by*

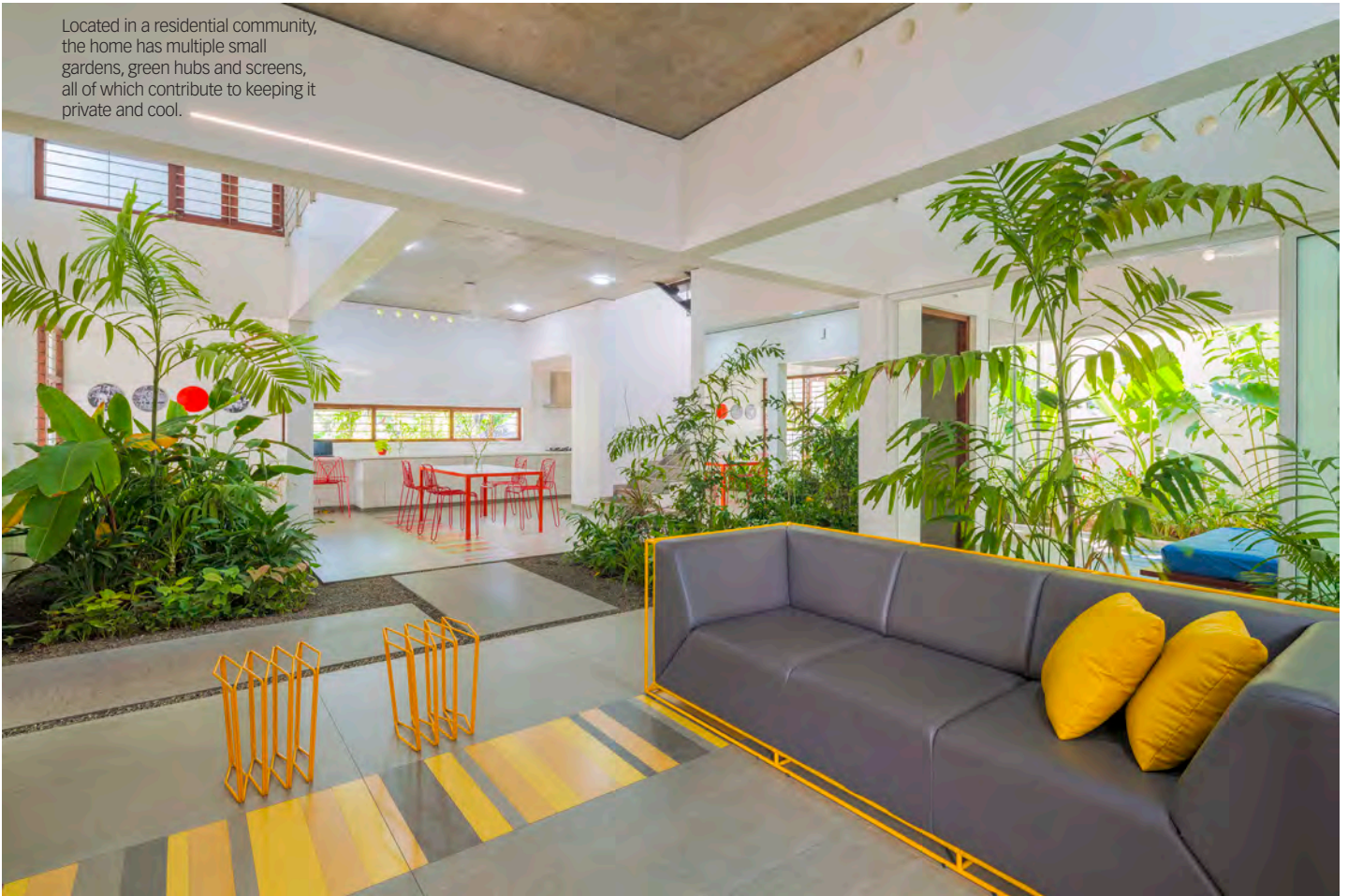
LJO.RENY.architects

Text TINA THAKRAR Images PRAVEEN MOHANDAS



SCULPTED SPACES | *Residential*

Located in a residential community, the home has multiple small gardens, green hubs and screens, all of which contribute to keeping it private and cool.

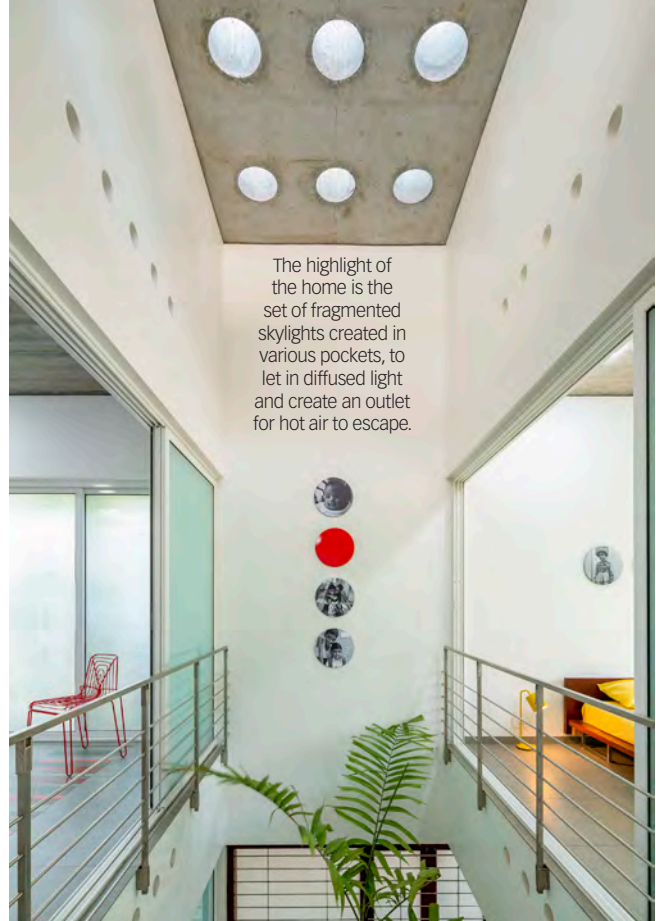


“Colours, materials, lines, textures, patterns — none of them work in isolation. These design elements are all interconnected, and co-exist comfortably.

– Lijo Jos, Co-founder & Principal Architect,
LJO.RENY.architects



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The highlight of the home is the set of fragmented skylights created in various pockets, to let in diffused light and create an outlet for hot air to escape.

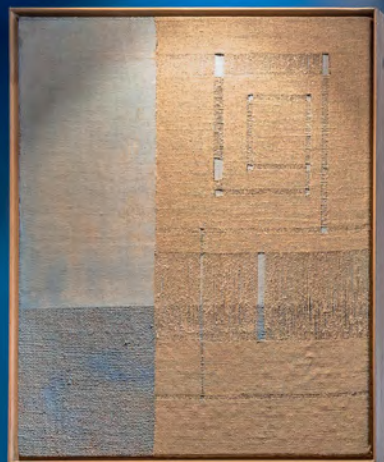


“Essentially, it’s a small property, with houses all around. So we had to resort to small tricks to maintain privacy as well as enhance the quality of space and volume within the house.”

– Reny Lijo, Co-founder & Principal Architect,
LJO.RENY.architects



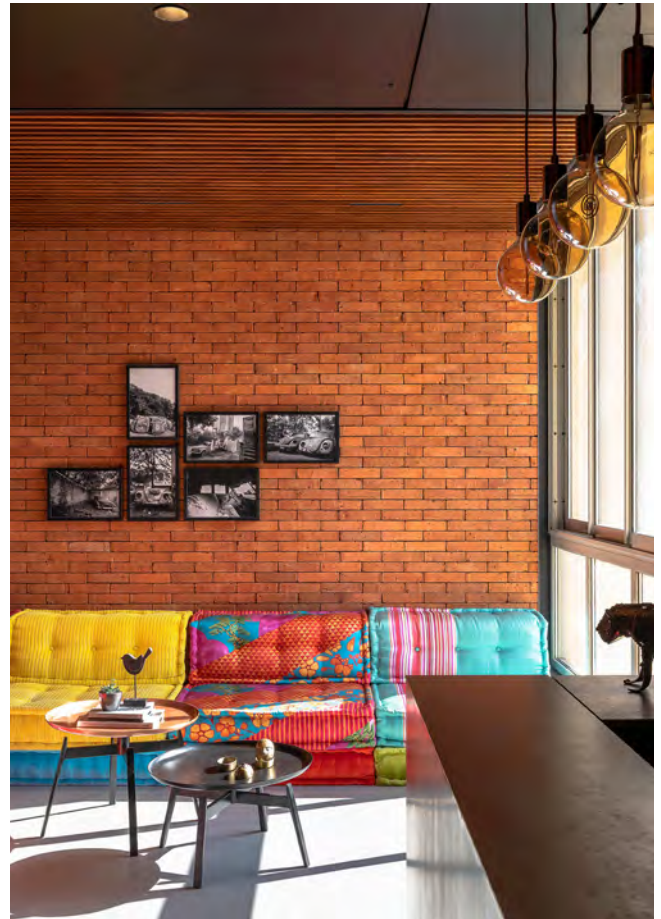
CROSSING THE LINE



*Sharply defined
linear spaces
present a bold
journey of this
richly tinted home
by **DIG Architects***

Text TINA THAKRAR
Images PHOTOGRAPHIX INDIA





"The spine of the design, and of Indian culture, is the exuberant use of colour. The subtle yet definitive use of colours without it being overwhelming presented an interesting challenge."

– Amit Khanolkar, *Principal Architect, DIG Architects*

The home doesn't shy away from dark colours and sharp divisions, but still retains a sense of lightness in movement and connectivity.





The material palette, though quite industrial, is strongly rooted in rustic Indian living.

"Black, typically considered taboo, if used wisely can offer a new interpretation of colours and elements around it. In this project, it provides a context to the overall palette."

– Advait Potnis, Principal Architect, DIG Architects

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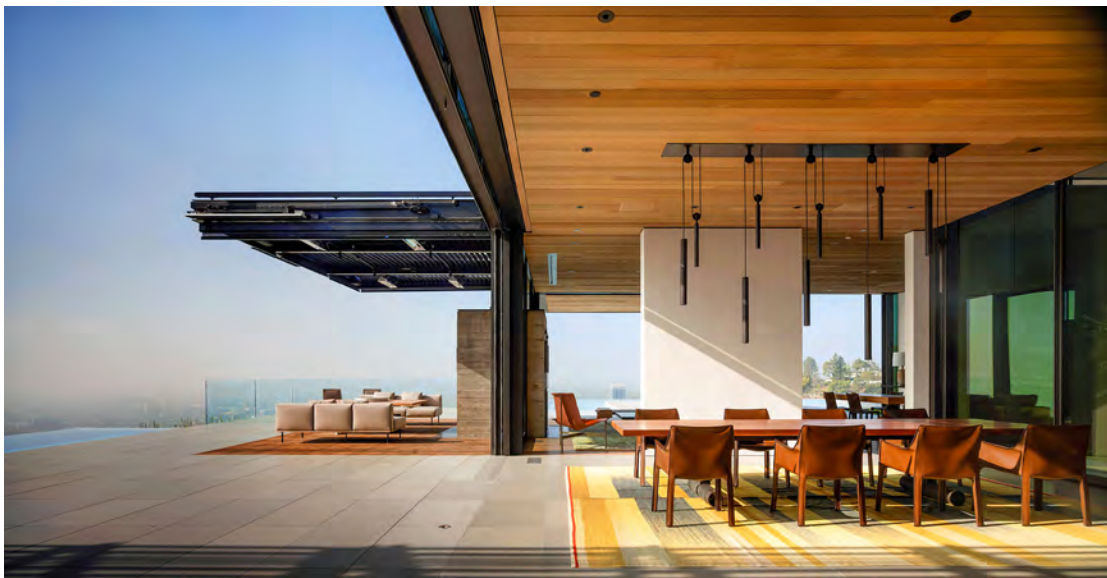


LIVING ON THE EDGE

*The window walls of this fully-automated West Hollywood retreat by **Olson Kundig** drink in the sweeping views of downtown LA*

Text TINA THAKRAR
Images NIC LEHOUX



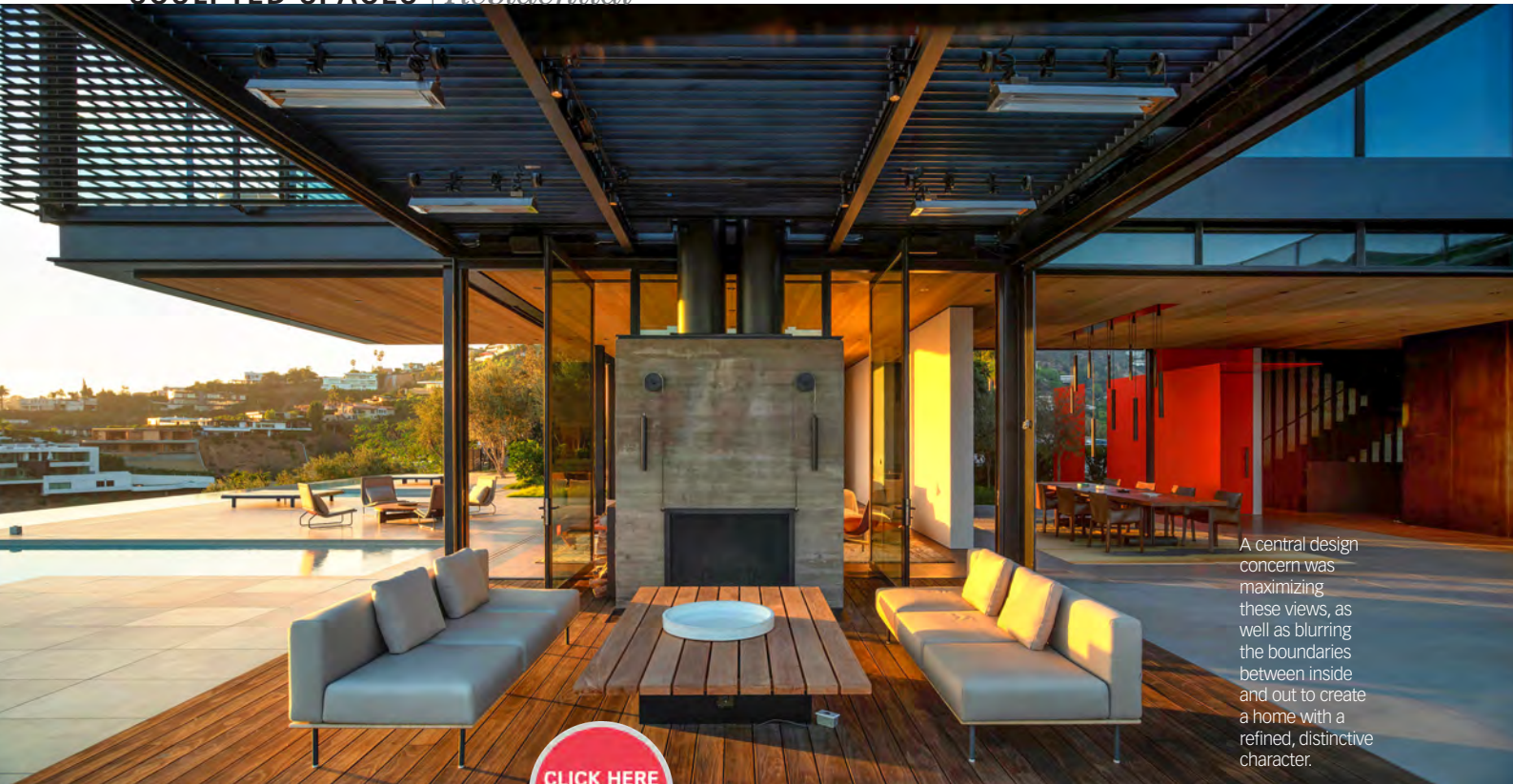


Covering a sizeable area of 15,600sqft, this hilltop home offers a taste of adventurous living. Automated elements across all three levels add to its modern identity.



"This home navigates different scales: the larger landscape scale of Los Angeles, the scale of entertainment and large group gatherings, and the intimate scale of spaces for daily living."

– Tom Kundig, FAIA, RIBA, Design Principal, Olson Kundig



A central design concern was maximizing these views, as well as blurring the boundaries between inside and out to create a home with a refined, distinctive character.

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"The home has a strong indoor-outdoor connection. Terraces become outdoor living areas and indoor rooms open up completely, almost erasing the line between inside and outside."

– Tom Kundig, FAIA, RIBA, Design Principal, Olson Kundig

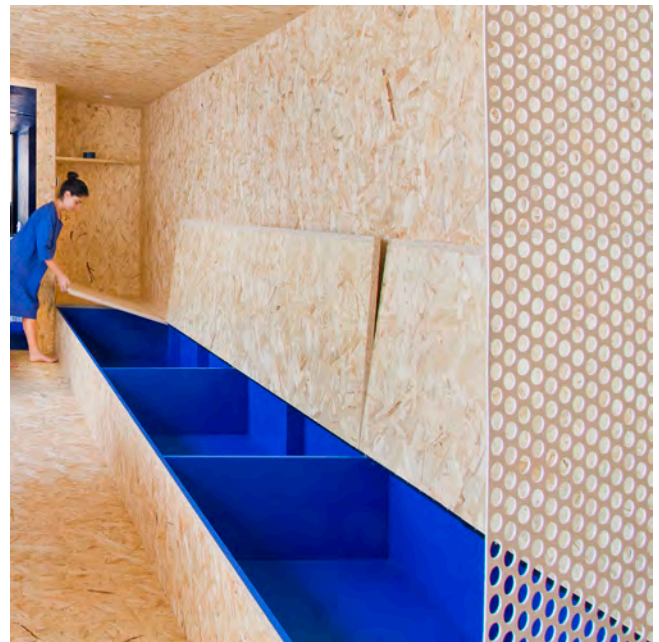
SCULPTED SPACES | *Residential*

THE URBAN CABIN

*Inspired by Iranian culture,
architect and designer **Francesca
Perani** crafts a functional
micro-apartment in Italy*

Text NITIJA IMMANUEL Images FRANCESCA PERANI



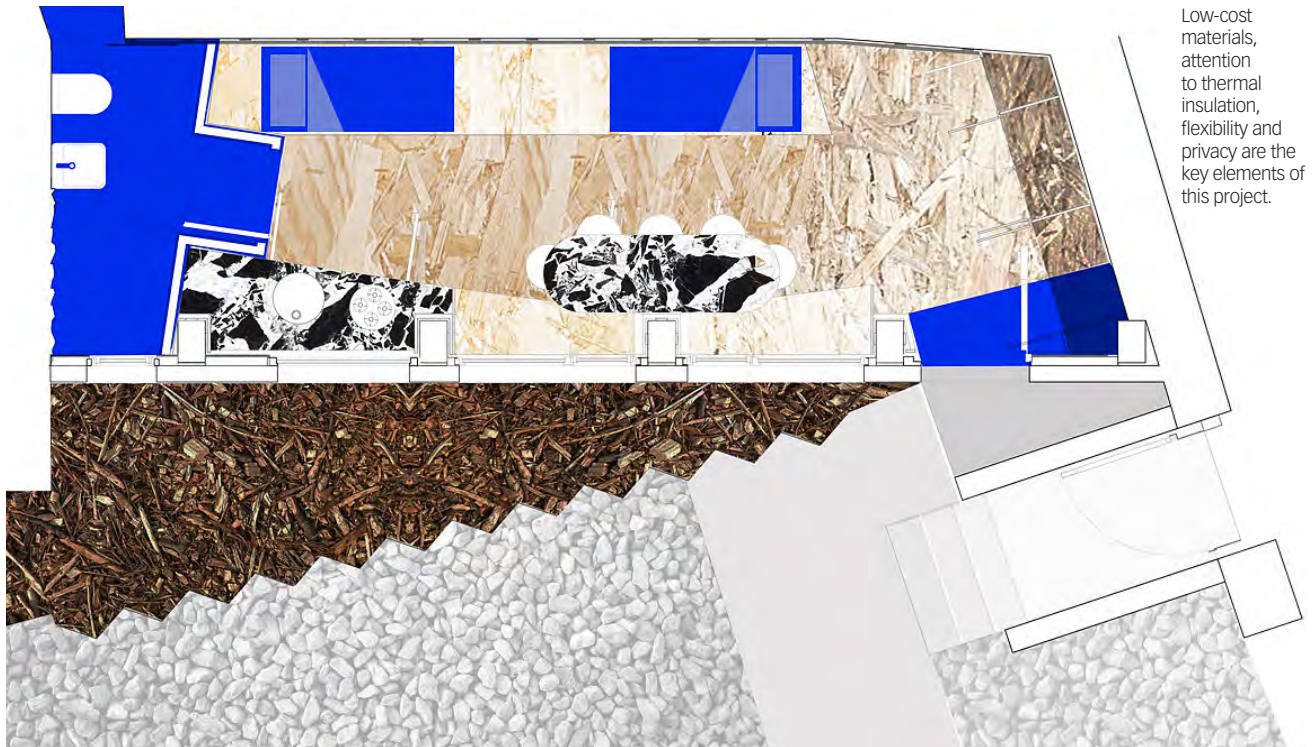


The interiors are composed of two monochromatic areas in open contrast. Warm OSB as a unique texturised surface, along with a dramatic blue glossy resin reminiscent of Persian indigo, covers all of the bathroom faces.



"The attitude towards the design is ironic and playful, de-dramatising architecture with forced use of strongly characterised materials, bold colours and a deliberate use of diagonal lines."

– Francesca Perani, Founder, FrancescaPeraniENTERPRISE



Low-cost materials, attention to thermal insulation, flexibility and privacy are the key elements of this project.



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"Contemporary architecture and Iranian culture blend here, creating a reassuring feeling of intimacy and warmth."

– Francesca Perani, *Founder, FrancescaPeraniENTERPRISE*

SCULPTED SPACES | *Commercial*

BASKING IN AN AMBER GLOW

*The 20ft-high ceiling, wooden flooring and textured paint are just some of the distinct design attributes of Beige, a salon-like multi-brand store designed by **Rooshad Shroff***

Text AVRIL NOEL D'SOUZA *Images* PANKAJ ANAND





"Our material palette featured shades of beige with wood, fabric and textured paint. We opted for an open plan layout while the 20ft-high ceiling and pitched roof added to the free-flowing character of this space."

– Rooshad Shroff, Founder, Rooshad Shroff





Custom brass display racks allow each collection to be showcased individually. A diagonal display platform crafted from beige travertine stone is the central focus of the store.



"We recreated the wooden flooring to retain the original historic look of the building. While a 30ft-long wall was clad with pleated beige silk as a finish to soften the look, the rest of the walls and ceiling are all in wood."

– Rooshad Shroff, *Founder, Rooshad Shroff*

THE HEIGHT OF LUXURY

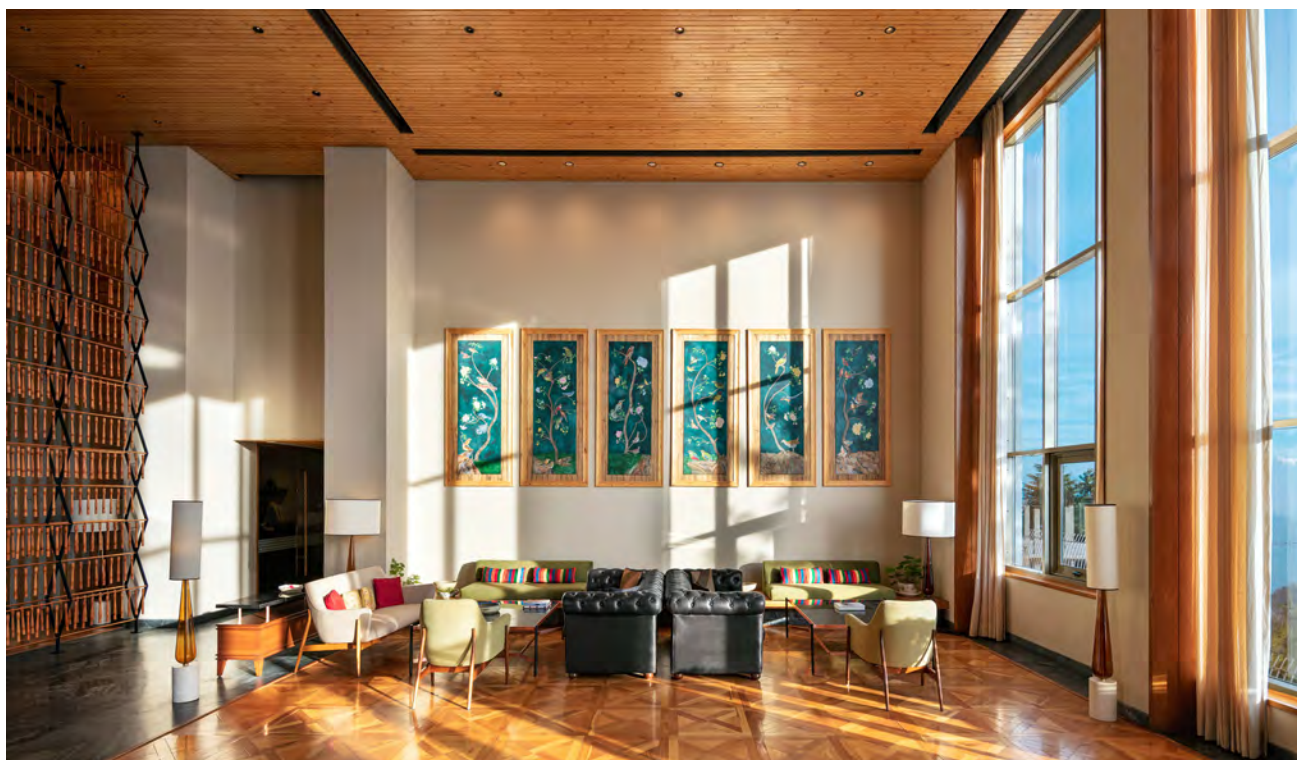
*Designed by **Studio Lotus**, the Taj Theog enjoys panoramic views of the surrounding valleys while its architectural expression draws from the vernacular landscape*

Text SEEMA SREEDHARAN Images ANDRE FANTHOME





The all-day dining area extends into an outdoor space. Several design elements add warmth to the otherwise monochromatic space - solid wood furniture, use of crafted timber on the central display island, and screens that divide the space into smaller pockets.



"We worked with a very tight palette of local materials to render a quiet and spartan spatial experience. The warmth, attention to detail, and layering of materials respond to the varying scales of the spaces."

— Ankur Choksi, *Principal, Studio Lotus*



The hotel's public spaces are spread across three levels, which are the building's response to the stepped profile of the site. The primary palette comprises extensive use of timber-clad ceilings, slate floors with custom laying patterns, and painted and plastered surfaces to hold curated art forms.



"We used contemporised, handcrafted elements from the vernacular lexicon, made in locally-sourced timber and stone, to evoke traditional spatial gestures associated with hospitality and home-like warmth."

– Ankur Choksi, Principal, Studio Lotus

AN OASIS OF CALM

Architecture firm **Seedle** transforms a 95ft warehouse into a chic and contemporary office space with judicious design interventions

Text SEEMA SREEDHARAN





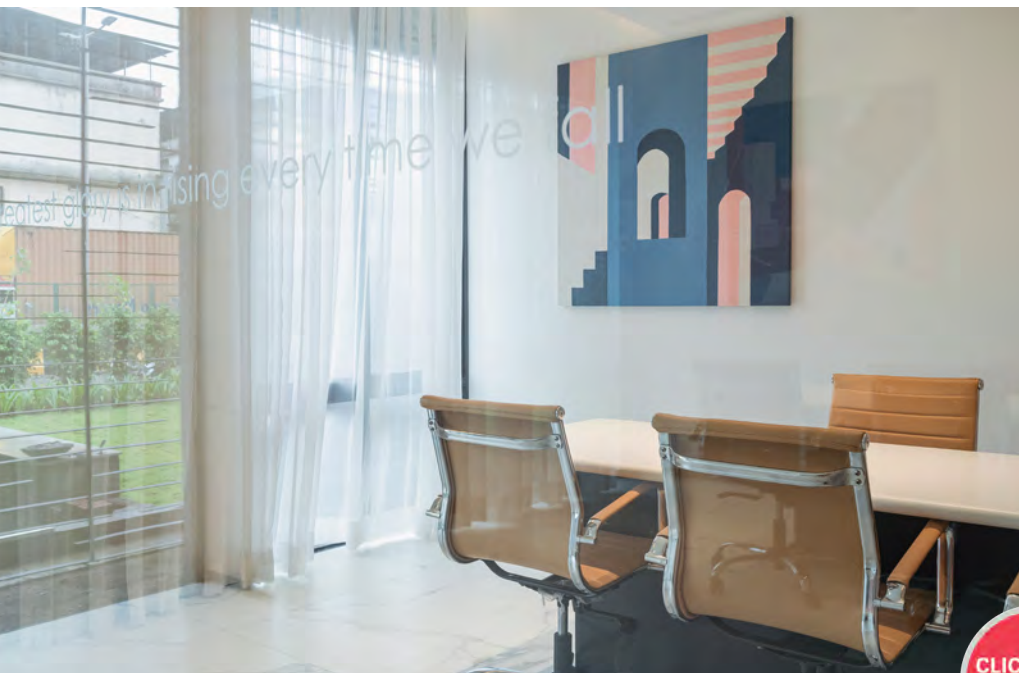
All functional spaces open into the central courtyard, which also ensures the abundance of natural light through the day. Everything from the materials to the tones is kept soft and muted to create a comforting and relaxing experience.



"This was an adaptive-reuse project where we had to convert an existing warehouse into an office. Every project has its constraints, but they become opportunities for new designs."

— Malcolm Daruwalla, *Principal Architect, Seedle*

The meeting rooms are designed to put one at ease. "We tried to subdue the seriousness that most traditional offices have," says Daruwalla.



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"As designers, we do not objectify or highlight any particular feature in a room. For us, it is all about the experience as a whole."

— Malcolm Daruwalla, Principal Architect, Seedle

SCULPTED SPACES | *Commercial*



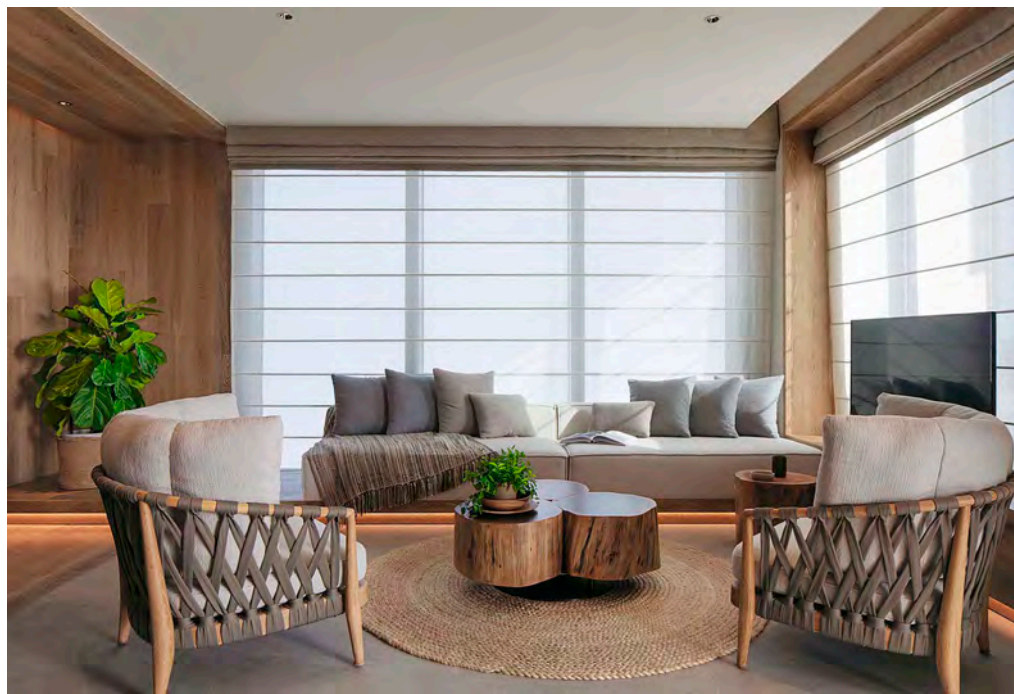
LODGED IN GREENS

*Sustainable technology and natural materials combine to form the chassis of this luxurious eco-conscious resort by **FARM and Oval Partnership** in Sanya, China*

Text TINA THAKRAR Images 1 HOTEL HAITANG BAY



Sitting on the shoreline of Hainan Island, 1 Hotel Haitang Bay highlights locally sourced materials like lava stone, red cedar, rattan, and exotic local vegetation.



"We were taken by Sanya's raw nature of fertile volcanic plains, green forested hills, sandy beaches and sparkling waters. We wanted the interiors to capture the textures, diversity and spirit of the island."

— Nina Arily, Senior Designer, FARM



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The eco-conscious architecture and nature-inspired interiors pay tribute to its rugged site, and also encompass the rich biodiversity of the island.



“Our inspiration for the project is deeply rooted in being a relaxed, comfortable, natural and open environment for travelers, by crafting a more tangible and imaginative sustainability.”

— Lin Hao, *Company Director and Project Leader, Oval Partnership*

HOME & DESIGN

TRENDS