



AUGUST 2009

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M	31	3	10	17	24
T		4	11	18	25
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After a hectic, whistle-stop tour of Spain and Portugal, it is again time to put together Archometer. A trip on which we saw over a hundred examples of good architecture and engineering; and tried our best to outdo one another in activities as diverse as tent pitching, cooking, washing-up and beer drinking- where the clear winner was an architect in his mid thirties (no more clues)

Whilst we will cover the masterpieces that we saw in this and subsequent issues of this journal, I will introduce you to some of the most interesting projects that we saw in our fortnight long odyssey.



Beginning at Madrid's Barajas airport whose new terminal is designed by the Richard Rogers Partnership, London. Inaugurated in 2006, the building was named the winner of RIBA's Stirling Prize for 2006. A building with an amazing structural system!

Travelling to Lisbon, we made a pilgrimage to the School of Architecture designed by Alvaro Siza. A timeless masterpiece, a kind-hearted guard allowed 'a group of poor Indian students' to look around for half an hour.

At Porto – we were all impressed by the Casa da Musica, which is known for masterful musical performances throughout the Western world.

At Santiago de Compostela we saw the humungously large and organic forms of the Cidade da Cultura de Galicia, designed by Peter Eisenman. A building built at a city scale, designed to resemble the mountains surrounding the ancity-city- a revered spot of pilgrimage for Christians.



The building that I will forever identify with Zaragoza is Zaha Hadid's Bridge pavilion; built for the 2008 Expo.



Sometimes when one sees a building one has wanted to see for a long time, there is a sense of disappointment when the moment of reckoning actually comes. In the case of the Casa Mila, better known as 'La Pedrera' (Catalan for 'The Quarry'), one of Antoni Gaudi's masterpieces, there was no such dejection.

Sublime experience it was for me, to enter the building and climb upto its roof, adorned with amazing sculptures, and see the displays inside, demonstrating the structural concepts used in the Sagrada Familia and elsewhere. I spent a magical hour inside which culminated in a shopping spree in the curio shop – a successful effort in lightening my wallet or in actual fact loading up my plastic cards!

At the onset of the tour, there were doubts in my mind as to how we would cover so much in such little time - but as I consulted my well thumbed archotour 2 guidebook (compiled by Alisi and co) I realize that we had more or less achieved what he set out to do. What am I doing now? Why, counting off the days to Archotour 3 (Scandinavia?) of course!

FEEDBACK: Please address all feedback to Alisi at archometer@archohm.com

The designs by Archohm are functional, effective and innovative. Their ability to think out of the box puts them in a class all by themselves. Wish them all the best for their future endeavours! - Alan de Rivas

Archohm can achieve international recognition if it continues with its policy of high standards of design and cost effective execution. Way to go! - Nutsunder Nutsal

archohm works

Archohm entered Ranchi through one of the strongest conduits, developers Johkiram Durgadutt. They had a large site available in the centre of ranchi abutting the main ranchi road. Three independent yet linked developments were planned and constructed in phases.

To the absolute back is a large scale high end apartment developments of Balair that is a benchmark for the city in residential.



Next to it is a high end commercial complex, JD Corporate. The tight site responded to the housing with height and colours that matched and closed the loop. The blank facade towards the housing gave privacy to the dwellers as a response in tandem with the entire urban scheme.

The developers, wanted an efficient and 'talk of the town' corporate tower to match their reputation and meet the city's expectation.

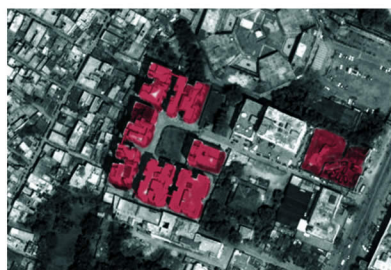
A split level office floor was made to provide each office a sense of privacy and independence, a compact core to bring incredible efficiency to the floor plate and play of volumes resulted into an interesting built form. Tight basements for multilevel parking introduced first of its kind car hoists to the city. Entire structure was shaped and designed to form a flat slab construction to completely eliminate beams from the structure, thereby giving flexibility in the internals and additional height clearances.

A free flowing facade was a play of glass and red stone to allow exactly the required light equally into each independent floor without forming a repetitive pattern.

The entire composition of red stone, glass and kadappa, make this an object in space, isolated and complete, sitting solidly on its own plinth, supremely and deliberately detached from its surroundings.



Sanjay Rawat: He is an old hand at Archohm, he has an unflappable temperament coupled with an ability to produce coordinated sets of design and construction drawings. As adept behind the wheel as at architecture, a place in his car is the most sought after on any office outing!



I met Sourabh for the first time in 2002 (during his young days) when I was doing a summer job in delhi. After having worked with 'extremely experienced' (read old) architects we decided to try the other side of the world and that's where Sourabh fits in...

In the last 8 years we have worked together on innumerable projects... a few of them were buried in the drawing board. But we did manage to complete 3 prestigious interiors project one corporate office building and we are working on the largest mall in ranchi and the tallest mall in india right now. Prestigious interiors projects are the office for Arcelor mital Ind Ltd. And of course the other two were my house and my office. That's on the lighter side but the fact remains that every one of these Projects have become benchmarks of design concepts in Ranchi.



These years with Archohm was not exactly like the BMW ride that I got a few days ago in the sexy 3 series that 'my architect' has bought... its had its ups and downs... Lots of negotiations with Mohit on the fees with Sourabh on the design and the redesign, with Nabin on the schedules.. Fights on material and costing - We meet very often almost every month and these fights are damn interesting as they happen over beers and wines.

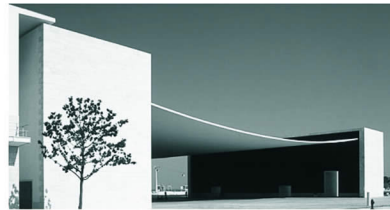
A must mention is that Archohm is very experimental and creatively experimental and that's what makes working with them interesting, challenging and also fun.

I wish the entire archohm team all the best for the future and hope that the growth chart is always looking up steeply.



Anurag Sarawaj: He is a young entrepreneur who has been quietly changing Ranchi's skyline over the past few years. A friend of Archohm, he has taught us a thing or two on the art of negotiation!

in focus



The Pavilion of Portugal, situated in Parque das Nações in Lisbon, was developed by the Portuguese architect Alvaro Siza, for the 1998 Lisbon World Exposition and used as the stage where the Expo's official ceremonies took place. This building sheltered the Portuguese national representation in the Expo, and is now used for provisory exhibitions.

The building is remarkable for its concrete roof, measuring 50 by 67 meters (167 by 223 ft), but with a thickness of only 150mm (6 inches) and weighing a massive 1,400 tonnes. This unique sagging concrete roof is an instant attention-grabber, undulating like a sailcloth, thus reflecting the maritime theme of most of the district's architecture.

Minimal but monumental in scale, one can feel the Pavilion's grandeur as one stands there. The structure seems like a band stretched by two vertical masses, which can be further stretched or unstretched...The roof is tied but also free in itself to rejoice with the breezes from the sea....

Till I had not visited the place I was not aware of its grandness as books & pictures don't do it full justice. As I was approaching the building I got more & more enthusiastic with the scale & proportion of its open space, the beats of the music enhanced the excitement.

All sides of the structure are in different colours which makes the space all the more lively. I sat on a near-by bench for half an hour to feel the space in entirety. I believe that there are plans to convert the building into an architecture museum, at which point I hope I shall visit it again!

Lastly I would like to share my overall experience of the tour which was far more profound than I imagined it to be, the exposure I got on the designs, materials, construction technologies, structural capabilities are just mind boggling and thought provoking. How simply with minimal things a structure can be made exciting and romantic – that is my biggest learning from this tour. All in all Archotour 2 gave me deep insights into the world of architecture.



Supriya Agrawal: An architect who can be aptly described as a 'homemaker' considering how many houses she is working on presently. Supriya's work speaks for her. A member of Archotour 2, she is a graduate from NIT, Raipur



NEWS: Archotour II: As you know 17 Archohm staffers set out on a voyage that took them 2 weeks, 3000 km, 120 packs of ready-to-eat foods, 30 6-packs of beer (give or take a few) endless bottles of iced tea, nutella (ughh) and the life savers- 100 packs of Kokikaba's theplas, each with a small pouch of chilli pickle!

With the most informed architectural guide possible (you know who) and Mohit trying his best to keep the 'herd' together we made it without any major incident (except bags that went missing, money that reappeared miraculously, wallets that turned up from nowhere) to finally land at Delhi Airport- tired, bleary-eyed, poor; but rich in both architectural knowledge as well as duty free liquor!

UPCOMING PROJECT: R R Trends Factory at NOIDA: Archohm has devised an interesting retrofit scheme for this existing industrial building; a scheme that will transform a mundane building into an exciting contemporary looking factory that will reflect the new owner's corporate values and strengths.

A great example of how someone can choose to misinterpret badly phrased instructions! I wish I knew what happened next at this office party...

OFFICE NOTICE :

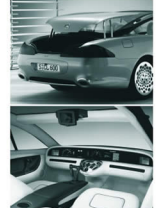
All members of staff please note that there will be ONLY one drink per person at this year's Annual Party. And please bring your own cup!

Regards, Management

BIRTHDAYS THIS MONTH:	
Surender	tenth
Tanushree	twenty fifth
Rucha	twenty ninth



This year Archohm's staffers gifted Sourabh a book on the Mercedes Benz Museum at Stuttgart- a project that they had seen on Archotour I. Just the time then to share with you a few views of a Mercedes benz that is steered – not with a steering wheel- but with a joystick!



sourabh's desk



fun, cantilevers are fun, exciting structures visually and surreal experientially, these engineered solutions defy gravity and nature and somewhat stamps the power of the human mind and skill.

at archohm, cantilevers are not only a way to an additional factor of excitement and fun, it also brings to life the building as it works up gravitational resistance.

from basket ball court to gate at taurian to canopy and control room of delhi gurgaon toll plaza, the structures are ever extending as we stretch ourselves more and more year by year.

the tensions of upholding the structure physically and making an architectural composition visually, cantilevers work as a great tool to compliment a conceptual gesture.

last but not least, our ambitious designs with enormous cantilevers keep graying the structural consultants, to bring a chill down the spine of all our innocent or ignorant but victimised clients, we once received the honest and simple structural science definition:

"structural engineering is the art of moulding materials we do not wholly understand into shapes we cannot precisely analyse, so as to withstand forces we cannot really assess, in such a way that the community at large has no reason to suspect the extent of our ignorance."



editorial

guest thoughts

designs