

**JUNE 2009**

<b>S</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>28</b>	
<b>M</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>T</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>W</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>24</b>	
<b>T</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>25</b>	
<b>F</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>26</b>	
<b>S</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>27</b>	



"A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step"- goes an ancient chinese proverb. It now seems like yesterday that sourabh and i were discussing the idea of publishing an in-house newsletter that would focus on design and architecture, in an easy to read format that would always be of interest to the archohm family-comprising employees, associates and friends. Endless deliberations ensued as regards the content, the frequency, size, software to be used, paper, printing, the mailing list.



In typical archohm fashion the finished product was on your tables from start to finish in a period of just over a fortnight!

Over these months we have shared with you our projects, the latest in the world of design, our office happenings- which included births and marriages- and articles by sourabh and me on whatever we wanted to force feed down your throats! The best of all- according to me - was the column titled 'guest thoughts' where some of you chose to pen down your thoughts. It gives me great pleasure to introduce this month's 'guest' catja de haas- who is one of our overseas associates, and collaborated with us on our design for the new spa campus at new delhi, by participating in our athens workshop in march this year.

Thanks to Malavika, we are sharing with you an article on the maheshwari residence- a flagship project for archohm. For once i have been given an opportunity to double my literary output- a challenge which i have duly accepted and accomplished by putting together an article on 'architectural books'. On second thoughts, that sounds like books which have architectural qualities so let's change the title to 'books on architecture'!

Last month i had the privilege of traveling across italy with prof c jaisim, a multifaceted personality who straddles the roles of architect, planner and educationist. Why do i mention him here? Well interestingly enough his company is named 'fountainhead-jaisim'! So there's the connection!



For the record in the past 12 months, the earth has moved around the sun once, the moon has moved around the earth almost 13 times, india has beaten australia in a test cricket series and india has had a general election where 721 million people were eligible to vote!

FEEDBACK: Please address all feedback to Atisi at [archohmeter@archohm.com](mailto:archohmeter@archohm.com)

**Marton Theme Restaurant**, named after the Chinese word "Matong" for toilet, has become a hit in Taiwan's second largest city since its opening in May 2004. Though bathroom decor seems a bizarre way to whet the appetites of diners, the idea has been so successful owner Eric Wang opened a second and bigger branch just seven months later.



Anurag Sarawgi, serial entrepreneur and Archohm well-wisher

## archohm works



One of the most memorable projects at archohm was the residence for Mr Anil Maheshwari, who in course of our professional relationship has now become family to us. From the very start of the project, his preparation for the house was incredible. Efficient and methodical, he would be much more prepared for the meetings than archohm. A detailed list of deliverables, issues and design suggestions would be ready at every brainstorming session. Clearly an educating and convincing way of dealing with a complex project of constructing a house.

The house designed on basic Vaastu principles also **inverts the trend of positioning the living rooms upfront on the garden face and bedrooms towards the backyard**. One enters the house in the double atrium that connects the two parts of the house with a staircase and a bridge. The doors are scaled at a twelve feet height to give the space a vertical and voluminous feel. As one moves into the main central space, a naturally lit courtyard on one side and a round 'jaisalmer masonry' temple on the other bring in warmth and vibrancy to the spaces. An interesting play of light, materials and textures in the residence put the archohm mark on the project. Luxury and opulence personified, the house is light on program and heavy on space making. The externals are a brick clad rustic look with a single sided sweeping slope on the façade, a modern take on the traditional pitched roofs.

From trips to vendors and drives to site visits, the project was a great journey that we at archohm enjoyed in course of this flagship residence. After five years, its doors are always open for us as mr maheshwari quips... 'the house is still all yours!'



Malavika Singh Gupta- an interior designer who is exuberant, extremely sharp, witty and can't-stand-fools- just some of the reasons why we love her! Shares a common passion with Kunal- a thirst for inane and useless trivia!



I was the first to arrive in Athens on Thursday evening and did not know what to expect of the Archoforum. It was dark already and the Parthenon towered brightly lit over the city. The taxi dropped me off in a small street in front of a modern-looking house; the beautiful three-story house, Natalia lives in and has designed. Its exposed concrete and steel interior had a light, friendly, yet very contemporary touch. The beginning could not have been more welcoming.

Kunal, Chris and Sourabh had arrived during the night. The next morning, we started work on the design competition for the School of Planning and Architecture at Delhi, with Alexandra Stratou, who studied at the AA with Natalia and joined the workshop as well.

The collaboration was amazing, and at the end of the day we all agreed on a broad concept: the green gorge was to be the main feature, and a 10-meter wide sunken path; 'the cut' would cross through the gorge and connect all the different areas of the campus.

Entrance buildings would mark the beginning and end of 'the cut', and the library would hang spectacularly over the gorge, as a beacon of knowledge. We thus solved the landscape and routing in order to find the locations for

the buildings. This seemed in line with the brief, which placed great emphasis on the natural aspects of the site.

Saturday morning, in order to relax after the hard work, we took a walk to the Acropolis and the Agora below. We all were impressed to find ourselves near Plato's academia, and the route towards it philosophers walked two millennia ago. We visited a long colonnade, and mused on its powerful influence on visitors, as well as on its measurements (should we count the tiles, or are the steps Chris makes really a meter?). The sun was shining, the sky bright blue, a perfect day.

The Parthenon itself was surrounded by scaffolding, and seemed standing close, though impressive in its strong shape, less mysterious than from afar. The strength of the Parthenon is the power it holds as a beacon to the city.

Large excavations of ruins interrupted the fabric of the part of the city around the Agora where we had lunch. These fenced in visible ruins did clearly not belong to the contemporary city, but were crucial to the experience of the surrounding fabric. We mused that the gorge we planned, and the cut, could have a similar function in the SPA master plan.

Though nobody expressed it in many words, we would notice after lunch that the visit to the Acropolis and its surroundings had had an impact on the design. **The rest of the weekend we worked, comparing the SPA campus to an Agora.**

I have not mentioned all the wonderful lunches and dinners Natalia provided, nor the lovely restaurants we visited, and the interesting conversations we had. I also did not mention that I could have a similar function in the SPA master plan. I also did not mention that I overslept on the morning of our departure, when I had promised to wake everybody up. But that would take up too many words. The Archoforum, maybe Archo Agora (?), was a truly enjoyable experience, and I very much enjoyed meeting its members. Thanks for making me a part of this novel experience!

**"A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step"**



Catja de Haas- architectural scholar, intrepid traveler, polyglot who speaks Dutch, English, Spanish, Japanese - with a strong India connection. Her sister Saskia is a cellist who is married to Shubhendra Rao, sitarist- who together form an incomparable musical duo. Catja is a full-time mother of 3, who spent 3 days (and nights) working with archohm on the SPA design competition, in a workshop conducted at Athens.

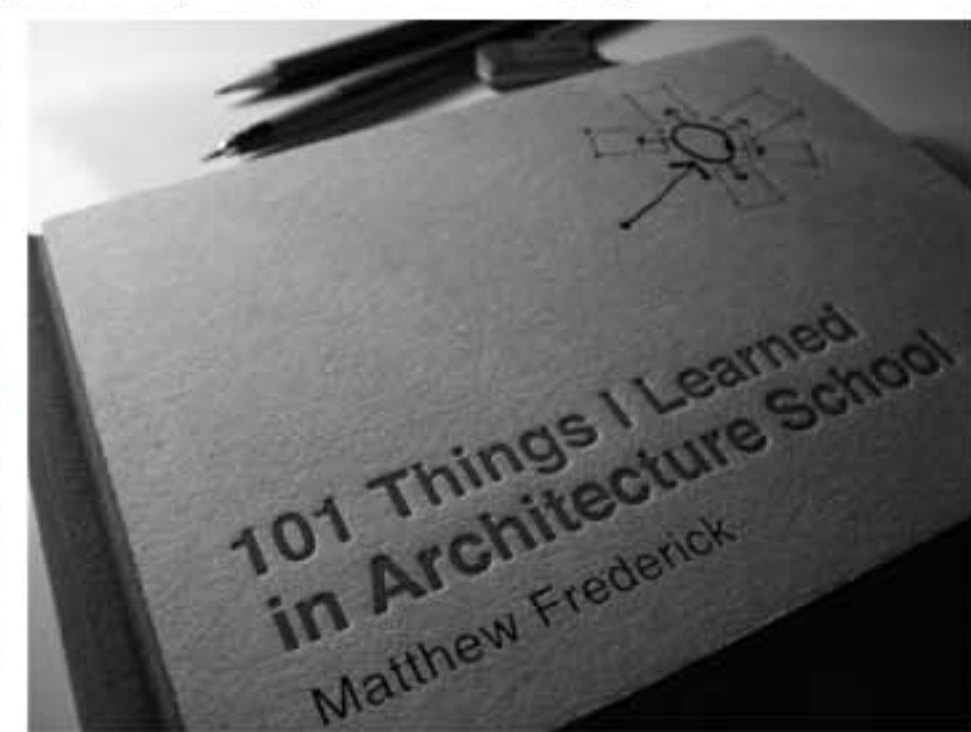
## in focus

At the onset let me state that this article is for the lay person- and written by an architect who is an avid reader- of all things including but not limited to architecture.

A random visit to a book stall will leave you in no doubt that some of the best designed books are those written on the field of architecture and design.

In my mind there are 2 principal types of books on architecture- firstly those written on architecture by architects largely speaking about projects and philosophies. On this page I have tried to list some of the best reads in this domain. (For the record the second type are those used principally as reference books, almost akin to coffee table books- that allow one to stay abreast of projects across the world.)

For students of architecture- invest in a little book titled '101 things I learned in Architectural School' by Matthew Frederick. After buying it at the incredibly well-stocked School of Architecture at Venice, I wished I'd owned it at least a decade ago.



Another wonderful book Christopher Alexander's 'A Pattern language' written by him to help empower any human being to design and build at any scale.

Francis K Ching's 12 books including 'Architecture: Form, Space & Order' are recognisable by their stylized font, and powerful yet simple graphics which so lucidly explain the timeless concepts of architecture.



Andrea Palladio's 4 books of architecture now 400 years old- but still in print. A complete tutorial in classical design- very importantly demonstrating the virtues of ration and proportion.

Closer home, there is Charles Correa's 'A New Landscape' which illustrates his principles and views towards issues relevant to India like low cost housing and mass rapid transport.

No article on this subject can be complete without mentioning Ayn Rand's masterpiece- 'The Fountainhead'- a book that is an entire philosophy told through the life of its protagonist the architect Howard Roark. I read this book for the first and only time when I was 18, I do believe its time now for a reread!

Public Service Message: For those looking at books on specific subjects- a simple email to Sourabh will suffice as he will be more than happy to provide you with options!



Kunal Savarkar: The senior architect shares his collection of favourite books on architecture. His knowledge on things (which more often than not is not purely architectural) is something to look out for. At a recent competition for the Best Quizzer held in Delhi, he bagged the third place amongst 61 contestants!



Earlier than usual this year- Archohm staffers went on their annual holiday to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the firm- this time to Pataudi. A convoy of nine cars made its way to Pataudi- the seat of a small princely state (137 sqkm) but known throughout the world on account of its cricket playing Nawabs- Iftikhar Ali Khan and Mansur Ali Khan. For those not knowing Pataudi, well it is a



veritable oasis of silence and green just an hour out of Delhi. As always there were activities packed in to ensure that everyone didn't miss work too much! Since an entire newsletter would not suffice to fill you in with the details, the happenings, the 'gossip' etc, let me just provide the gist. Atisi's team won the treasure hunt (which made it twice in a row for her), Monika's team won the tele-matches mad as ever- whilst Elizabeth's team did well enough to win the overall first place. Second place was grabbed by Atisi's

team. All in all a great trip- where some people insisted on swimming with their clothes on- Pynshi, Monika...

One of the benefits of working at Archohm is the continuous exposure that one receives to quality brands from across the world. In keeping with that trend, 3 carloads of architects and interior designers visited the **CJ's showroom** to see -amongst other things- the exclusive Herman Miller brand of office chairs. Ultra comfortable, spine-friendly (for want of a better term) and with incredibly long



UPCOMING PROJECTS:

Corporate Offices:

Archohm is designing a state-of-the-art office spread over two levels, in an exercise that is taking place literally at the speed of light, at green park in New Delhi.

Within stone's throw of this project, is another office for **Tirhut Industries**, a large scale sugar manufacturing company. Yet another corporate office in our portfolio.

**Nagpur-Hyderabad Expressway:** An addition to our ever extending list of toll plaza projects is a 12 lane toll plaza at the Nagpur-Hyderabad section of NH 7 in the state of Maharashtra. The time constraint imposed by Soma, the clients, makes the completion of the project an exigent job. **The design was approved by the client in two days flat- a record in itself.**

**Kiratpur-Kurali Toll Plaza:** C & C has commissioned us the task of designing an 8 lane toll plaza on the Kiratpur- Kurali Expressway on NH21.

BIRTHDAYS THIS MONTH:

Chandrashekhar first  
Deepak Thakur twenty second

In Portugal a special airport has been designed for airbus B-747. The airport's runway has a length of 2781 metres, of which 1000 metres is supported by 180 pillars. Each pillar is 50 metres high (about 17 floors).

The space under the runway is aptly being used for a car parking.



## sourabh's desk

LC1



LC2



LC4



LC5



LC6



LC7



a signature collection, duly signed for authentication and certified by the relevant design house has value beyond the physical. it transcends time and space, honours the thought and its creation and last but not least, brings the real experience, the soul and primal reason for its conception.

great furniture houses around the world have identified themselves with designers and continue to produce legal and authentic furniture. cassina is a front runner on patented furniture, with rights to produce the entire le corbusier furniture collection, from lc1 to 13, it has epitomized on the concept keeping quality production standards. thanks to their belief and vision, from mies van der rohe to frank lloyd wright, from rietveld to corbusier, furniture from all these designers have been brought under one roof!

