



AUGUST 2010

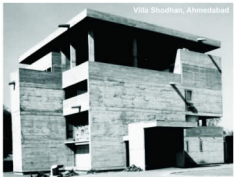
S	1	8	15	22	29
M	2	9	16	23	30
T	3	10	17	24	31
W	4	11	18	25	
T	5	12	19	26	
F	6	13	20	27	
S	7	14	21	28	

This was a very hectic and enjoyable month for a bunch of Archohm staffers who travelled to Europe on Archotour 3. It was also a fairly relaxed month for some Archohmites who proved the old adage "whilst the cat is away, the mice shall play!" Yours truly, although not on Archotour 3, did click in some miles across the motherland- with visits to Ahmedabad and Kolkata.

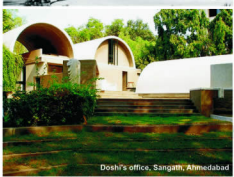
Ahmedabad is a **Renaissance city** for Indian architecture. In the flush of Indian independence, in the early 1950s the town enjoyed a boom period thanks to its flourishing textile industry. The otherwise traditional business families showed a remarkable empathy towards modern architecture - the result of which lies in the various projects executed by Le Corbusier and others. Clearly, 'Mill Owners Association' is one of the finest buildings of his career.

I believe there is an auto driver who even today takes tourists on a conducted tour of the Shodhan Residence. Anybody who knows his contact details - please mail them to us.

Among our birthdays of note are Balkrishna Doshi's **Gandhi Labour Institute** and his own office **Sangath**, Louis Kahn's **Indian Institute of Management** has made architectural history.



In this month's issue we have two articles by me - the second is the 'In Focus' piece on the Arnhem Dance Academy, which Sourabh, Bas Boonzajer and I chanced upon whilst driving around Holland - back in October 2008. Also featured is an article on the DS Corporate Office by Amit Sinha, and Sourabh's piece on Interiors.



This month's Archohmeter is delayed (as you have already deduced) solely due to a tectonic shift that has occurred in my life - that of changing residence! My apologies - but wait a minute - we haven't yet received a single letter/email/sms remonstrating the same. As 'better late, than never' is an adage we believe in strongly, we present to you this 26th issue of the newsletter.

All complaints to Atisi, all bouquets to Sourabh and me!

-Kunal Savarkar

Compliments for the Archohmeter. I read it every time, and it's amazing how you keep it interesting month after month. Great work!

-Bas Boonzajer, Architect, Archohm Holland office

*Please address all feedback to Atisi at archohmeter@archohm.com

editorial

archohm works



After years of collaboration on toll plazas and other building projects throughout India and abroad, Archohm is delighted to be in the final stages of creating a **40,000 sq ft signature corporate office for DS Constructions in Gurgaon**.

The **building shell was nine floors** of 6000 sq ft with two floors as services and recreation, one as entry, waiting and meeting, five as corporate workspaces and top two as management floors.

The entry to the project is through an intimidating space. A tunnel like environment that ramps up to the reception with a visuals of artworks on one side and a black glass screen with television insets concealing a series of meeting rooms. Meeting rooms are flexible in sizing and carry a coordinated color theme within an all white space.

Top two floors are marked with a completely different look and feel. **From blacks and whites, one transcends to beiges and browns**. Extensive use of mint stone brings a rough and artistic feel with deep browns bringing in a formality in the space. The secondary spaces and waiting lounge sets the tone of these spaces. The chairman's office is a massive naturally lit volume that has a wooden inner skin with large designer classics of furniture that express extreme opulence. A raw concrete wall as a backdrop contrasts the finery of the wood with a 'construction' bent to the space. Pure wooden Italian furniture tailor designed and made for the space brings in a sense of scale and the rich white and black leather sofas dominate the volumes of the extending lounge.



The space extends itself vertically to a private lounge that envelopes a large terrace garden with a meeting room across it. This garden is an intimate enclosed space for private gatherings and events.

All the bathrooms in this zone are marked with a high element of design with European fixtures and furniture. Lighting of the entire office is with efficient European fittings engineered with a high efficiency co-efficient. Automated roller blinds control this naturally lit office aptly supported by this 'green' lighting solution. Entire air conditioning and ventilation system works has been automated with sensors. Art and graphics complement the spaces with colours and themes around construction and history of the client.

The project nutshells a technology driven office building with varying flavours within suitable for different usage. Sensitive to building an image, the interiors of this construction company bring in an inside out dialogue of its work and vision.



Amit Sinha - Meticulous, hard working and dedicated, Amit Sinha is a perfect team leader for heading any interior projects. His experience and keen eye for detail easily give him an edge over others. He completed the DS Corporate office from start to finish in record time!



A student's journey of becoming a professional is usually slow and progressive, but in Sourabh's case it was fast as he bagged the award for designing the 1st toll plaza in India which was not only a personal but also a national landmark.

My association with Sourabh has been even prior to the inception of Archohm in 1999, which dates back to our school days. I fondly recall his passion for creative work which made him focused and hardworking towards achieving his goals. It was evident that his discipline will take him to places in his professional life.

Being well aware of Archohm's creative skills it was logical to turn to them in shaping my dream project. As a creative person myself, I wanted to have a studio of my own which can act as a **window for my jewellery line** "zuri by m.k.". My idea was to have a studio and not the typical jewellery store. Black being my favourite colour was the theme chosen for designing the studio with a blend of gold which symbolises jewellery. The two level area was clearly demarcated in the design concept. One area, for interaction with the clients and the other provides ambience to conceive and create, whereby leading zuri into an area of brilliance. The design thus made was neat and minimal with the **optimum use of the available space**.

From concept to reality was a journey of ups and downs, symbolic of life itself. Creating a studio is like structuring your own life, the only difference being that in your dream project the **architect assists with the pillars at strategic places**. Working with Archohm for my dream project has been an enthralling experience wherein detailing was to the core and work completion was in due time. Keep up the good work.



Manish Khattar - A constant in Archohm's life. From being a friend to being an advisor, a helping hand at everything, being there always, has seen Archohm at every level, form and size.

guest thoughts

in focus



Splendidly located at the base of an existing children's hospital (which we were unable to enter thanks to very efficient access control systems) and next to the Rietveldgebou or Rietveld building (which houses an Art school), is the famous **Dance School of Arnhem**.

Conceived as an addition to the old art school; this extension was completed in 2004. Designed by **Hubert-Jan Henket Architects**, it is located close to the river Rhine.

The small size of the plot, and the inward reflective nature of the functions of the school have been used to create a subterranean world which is lit through a large skylight at ground level.

We first drove right past as all one sees is an Aluminium skylight protruding out of the lush green lawn; nothing at all prepares one for the sights and spaces underneath.

This large (5,500 sqm or 58,000 sqft) building is naturally lit, and arranged around a central spine at two levels. It has a unique steel structure that keeps the surrounding RCC retaining walls apart, while also supporting a central elevated walkway that acts as both bridge as well as informal congregation space.

This was a building which we visited later with the core group of Cerita University, Chandigarh. Like us they were all taken in by the sheer simplicity of the concept and the amazing functional grace of the structure.

Like they say, it **pays to keep one's eyes open while travelling**. You never know what treasure awaits you just around the corner- or just below eye level!



Kunal Savarkar - A fire fighter, don't misread as 'Savarkar' the freedom fighter. Never say die guy with overflowing optimism to work and a will to make things happen, including this Archohmeter.

News:



Trips to Alang: In continuation with experiments with material in the Archohm office, a strong contingent headed by Anindya went to Alang, the **world's largest ship breaking yard** on a shopping spree. From deckwood to stainless steel, furniture to mild steel, lights to bathrooms were all bought by the kilo!

Soccer fever: Soccer world cup brought some sanity in to the design team time of Archohm. The time between the two matches brought together synergy of thoughts and ideas to resolve all issues on the office project. The Bengal contingent of Soccer freaks made 13, Anadiok a regular hangout!

Upcoming Projects:

SEBHA, Libya: SEBHA, a large township development in the heart of the Libyan desert brought a challenging task of resolving **eight hundred thousand square feet of public spaces and buildings** to Archohm. In the ever increasing footprint into Africa, the team is expanding and so is the experience and exposure.

Zolijns, the boutique design store opened its **second studio**, a sample apartment to capture the Gurgaon market in the plush Pinnacle Apartments across the Golf Course. The store tries to retain the apartment feel within which varied concepts and collections are displayed. The idea was to retain the minimal look and yet create complete compositions with coordinated lights, clock and artworks that supported the 'all Italian' furniture range.

Ranchi, Nabin's second 'hometown' has its real estate project expansions with a **new mixed land use project** on the highway to Patna. Across the busy Apollo hospital, program and functionality evolution is part of the architectural scope of work.

Larsen and Toubro has thrown in a new challenge to the archohm tolling design team. The much criticized NHA1 practice of putting buildings on top of plazas has now to be adapted with a clear mandate of taking this typology to the next level at the heavily trafficked **Chennai Tada link**.

Soma Isolux is the new concessionaire on the block for Archohm's chain of toll design projects. A series of **three toll plazas** need to be built on the Jalandhar highway for this Spanish client.

BIRTHDAYS THIS MONTH:

Suriender	Tenth
Tarank Murari	Fifteenth
Tanushree	Twenty Fifth

New Joinees:

Divya Agarwal - Architectural trainee
Divya Sharma - Interior Designer
Bharat Leelaramani - Interior Designer
Sadhavi Astir - Architect



designs

sourabh's desk



beginning ones career with people who would introduce you as 'yeh mere interior hai' to growing into a design team to handle large corporate and retail projects for esteemed clients like taj has been an eventful journey in the field of interior design.

archohm's interior skills were honed in its early days as those were the only projects that came its way, a small fashion boutique for 'cotstyle' to a 'splendid' lighting store brought in experiences and built in an expertise that went a long way. control over material, play of light and defining layouts to bring in a playful and pleasant functional space has been an equal challenge if not more as compared to the architectural projects the practice handles now.

one cannot divide the scope of work into architectural design and interior design as the latter has to be the **logical extension of the former** as one develops a space, the entire structure of the volume and the look and feel needs to be integrated as a derivation of one logical concept to bring out strongly and clearly the character in the space one is designing. people, read clients, make the fundamental mistake in dividing this into two insulated compartments, this leads to a typical incidence, rather accident of a brickwork getting plastered, a layer of the famed plaster of paris added and then an expensive Italian wall paper stuck on top to give back the wall a rendering of exposed brickwork!

interiors sometimes becomes more overpowering as people can relate to its scale and impact better and more easily, thus, interiors always has the risk of getting fashionable. the speed of construction and the longevity of the functional requirement sometime makes the process superficial and the product whimsical. every individual has a piece of 'creative' advise to share, making the projects more complex and difficult as professionals, this is one of the biggest challenges faced by the design industry, where to stop in the design space is critical as it is easy to cross the line and overdo design in interiors.

the other big parameter of time, the span of time for design and the duration of the project from conception to completion is relatively small, this makes the process intense, fun and satisfying as the results of the firmgents of ones imagination take shape rather rapidly.

like every office, we at archohm have also been blamed of settling into our **own archohm vocabulary of materials and colours**. this is another interesting battle, a battle of evolution and consistency; a continuity in our work, we aspire to punctuate our architectural projects with the right ingredients of interiors, products and graphics to churn out comprehensive design solutions for our clients.



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