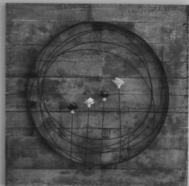


NOVEMBER 2011

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



Mr. Sanjeev Agarwal's Residence, Gurgaon.



A R C H O H M E T E R
www.archohm.com

in focus

After the festivities, the partying of Diwali - India's biggest festival by far - it is time to take stock, and get back to the day to day effort of making a (good) living!

When asked by a banker friend (who is looking for an architect to help him build his dream house) if I could encapsulate the **role of an architect** in a monograph of 100 words or less; I initially demurred. Later though I realized that this would be an interesting exercise. Here is the result of my endeavours:

"An architect would ideally advise a client on the merits and demerits of a plot prior to it being purchased, put in a word or two on its vastu quotient, help arrive at a design brief after interacting with the client, his family, their extended families, pets, neighbours, etc. then design a building that would accommodate present and future needs, respecting the local climate, with every possible modern service, comfort, security system in mind; all the while performing a balancing act w.r.t. cost, aesthetics and functionality. Of course choosing a contractor, liaising with the local authorities, obtaining sundry approvals and a completion certificate, choosing materials, verifying and certifying the bills of a dozen different agencies would obviously form part of his or her largely (un)paid services!" That - for the record - is 126 words and counting!



That explains perhaps why the job of an architect who works on individual houses is both immensely satisfying as well as taxing. Done right, it is the joy of a lifetime; done badly and it is a sore for all time! The illustration here is of course an example of - probably-one of the best designed houses ever- the Rietveld House.

When we started Archchitect over three years ago (yes-it's been that long!) one of the reasons was that we wanted to inculcate the habit of writing in all our staff members. That one goal seems accomplished now. I think practically all our long time members have been featured at least once so far. In this edition of our newsletter you will find Gopi's article on lighting and more specifically the lights used at Mr Sanjeev Agarwal's residence at Gurgaon. We appreciate Mr Agarwal contributing his time to give us a page aptly titled "Guest Thoughts" and Amit Das' article on Sage at Newcastle. The employee who has been chosen to be featured here this month is Sanjay Rawat - another who has rendered yeoman service to Archchitect.

After last month's call to arms- in a manner of speaking- Mridu was flooded with 'fanmail' (for want of a better word). For the record, I take back my comments about her 'severely intimidating image'. From the indignant feedback received I must conclude that the image that most of you have of her is quite the opposite! Do write to us at Archchitect@archchitect.com

A parting shot from me - believe it or not it is now November, and yet another year has gone past! See you then - in December!

-Kunal Savarkar

Twilight as the name itself explains "tw" taken from twilight. It has been one of the most challenging projects undertaken by the Archchitect's product design team. I am happy to have been involved in this project since the beginning.

The intention of the brief was simple - " means to emphasize and add a mood in a double height space by a light fixture", in the end all our cumulative creative energy and thought evolved into a final twisted glowing product. The intermediate phases were particularly exciting - the research, the concepts, the devoted thinking about only one detail for 4 to 5 days, prototyping and all the when you get a desired solution. It really gives you feeling of exhilaration, attainment of nirvana or something on similar lines.

As said by Marty Neumeier, the author of *Zag and The Brand Gap*.

"Design is easy. All you do is stare at the screen (or paper) until drops of blood form on your forehead."

While designing, every designer has to be dependent on the available materials, production capabilities, logistics, economic viability of the venture and vendors. I think these parameters are very crucial because as Scott Hanselman puts it - The difference between a designer and developer, when it comes to design skill, is the difference between shooting a bullet and throwing it. The client or user just sees the final outcome.

Twilight is a very versatile pendant light. It gives you various options in length (you can customize length as per the fluorescent lamp's length), orientation (you can hang it vertical as well as horizontal position), and colour (you can create different mood colours or gradient pattern by customizing allows). It gives you a diffused uniform light filtering through its slices, coming from hidden sources between them and creating a great ambience. And if you are thinking of aesthetics, then I must add that every product has its own aesthetic but appreciation for it would be governed by the subjective tastes of its varied users. I only think about how to solve the problem. But when I have finished, if the solution is not beautiful, I know it is wrong. (Hanselman)

To conclude, I must say that every good product comes from good thoughts, a good working environment, good colleagues and obviously a good boss who provides good opportunities. I would like to thank Archchitect for giving me all these.

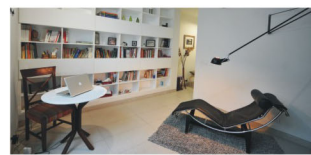


Gopendra Pratap - Gopi is the quiet worker Archchitect is proud of. Clearly one of the most creative brains around the office, his enthusiasm and rigour will take him far.



I was after umpteen calls and three failed meetings that Sourabh and the team finally landed at my residence (in its pre-Archchitect form).

Having already tried my luck with three other designers and not coming to any satisfactory plan, I was hoping that AIO should be the one that I am looking for.



Considering that re-building a house is much more a challenge than building something ground-up, my brief was simple and the mandate extensive - "consider this as fully demolished and you decide what is best". I must admit that the results have met my expectations to a very large extent. One of the core design elements was that house should be open and well lit. This has been achieved through smart use of glass to demarcate spaces and to allow the natural light to come in from all possible angles.

The team's support during construction and interiors has been exemplary with both DD Sharma and Tanushree Mathur, providing full support. The choice of vendors has been great and the value achieved from vendors through relationship of Archchitect has been quite good. I must also mention that a good design is nothing without a good contractor and the choice of Digvijay Gupta and team has helped in achieving a reasonable good quality construction within budget.

Another design highlight is the double height door in the dining area which everyone considers a design marvel and guests often wonder, because of its scale, how it can function practically. This door really makes the dining area stand out - great stuff.

My best wishes to Archchitect team for all their future projects and keep up the great work.



Sanjeev Agarwal - Sanjeev Agarwal, the 'famous' iPad client of Archchitect has been one of the most tolerant, tolerant they all are, mostly out of no choice. But Sanjeev has shown his endurance and respect, extracting the best from the office in its design sensibilities.

design news

Located at the heart of North East England, Newcastle and Gateshead are stitched together by the unique bridges that cross the River Tyne to form a remarkable destination.

The Sage Gateshead is an international home for musical education & discovery, performance and conferences. Which also includes the Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art located in Gateshead on the south bank of the River Tyne, with views of the spectacular open public spaces and glazed front offer superb sweeping views across the River Tyne, the Tyne Bridge, the Millennium Bridge and the vibrant and exciting cityscape of Newcastle Gateshead.



Its architecture is very exciting and dramatic. Designed from inside out and then clothed by a spectacular curved roof, a glass fronted public concourse and foyer links all the areas. This massive centre occupies a huge curved glass and stainless steel structure, designed by Foster and Partners.

It contains three performance spaces; a 1,700-seater, a 400-seater and a smaller rehearsal and performance hall, the Northern Rock Foundation Hall. Halls One and Two are the giant rounded walls inside, and neither the roof nor each other come into contact. The reason for this is to reduce vibration, meaning sound won't leak from one hall into its neighbour. This clever design also includes a spectacular glazed concourse (designed to be used for informal music making), café, bars, brasserie restaurant and foyers with stunning river views. The rest of the building was designed around these three separate spaces to allow for maximum attention to detail in their acoustic properties, which was done by Arup.

Structurally it is three separate buildings, insulated from each other to prevent noise and vibration traveling between them. The gaps between these buildings may be seen as one walks around inside. These three buildings are enclosed by the now-famous glass and steel shell. To improve the acoustic feature a special type of concrete-mix has been used here. Its ceiling panels may be raised and lowered and curtains drawn across the ribbed wooden side walls, changing the sound profile of the room to suit any type of music. Amongst hall two is much smaller venue, possibly the world's only ten-sided performance space.

The building is open to the public throughout the day. Visitors can see rehearsals, sound checks and workshops in progress. To get a uniform & diffused light, reflector panels have been used all around the concourse. It also has a very good combination of daylight harvesting & artificial lighting.

To me, it was one of the best buildings of archchitect.



Amit Das - Amit is an enthusiastic and inquisitive team member. His efforts and acumen have brought him up the learning curve rather fast. It takes a lot for SPG to have never complained!

News:



Art Museum Strongli by Coop Himmelblau



Sourabh is now a member of the prestigious society called the Indian Building Congress, with a vision conducive to affordable, aesthetic, cost effective and competitive technology driven built environment capable of meeting the needs of the Indian masses.



Spotlight

SANJAY RAWAT - Architect



"Working in Archchitect is like swimming in a river of exposure. How deep & far one wants to swim is up to the individual. Not many offices allow one to groom in this fashion. It has now been three years in Archchitect and I'm enjoying every bit of it. During this incredible journey I have been given numerous chances to take up new responsibilities. The tremendous faith and belief which Sourabh shows in one's abilities encourages to give the best one can. In the past decade Archchitect's growth has been phenomenal, I wish even bigger success in the future. I am sure Archchitect will touch new heights in the field of architecture & design."

- Sanjay Rawat

"Sanjay is one of the most reliable and bankable warriors of Archchitect armed with experience, knowledge and ability to take things to conclusion. A hard working fellow who is an inspiration to many fellow colleagues."

- Amit Sharma

BIRTHDAYS THIS MONTH:

- Imran - Eleventh
- Shwabh - Twenty Fourth
- Deepshikha - Twenty Fifth
- Shrpa - Twenty Seventh

NEW JOINEES:

- Shrpa Singhal - Jr. Architect
- Babugimon Soman - CAD Draftsman
- Sanjay Bisht - Architectural Draughtsman
- Sandip Kumar - Asst. Architect

sourabh's desk

The word "exhibition" is usually, but not always, the word used for a collection of items. Sometimes "exhibit" is synonymous with "exhibition", but "exhibit" generally refers to a single item being exhibited within an exhibition. (wikipedia)

a fairly misinterpreted phenomenon in the Indian context, people almost understand it as sale, an event for pure commercial success.

exhibitions are a way to express one's view point. It is a dialogue with the audience towards a larger meaning, this culture needs a rethink, a review in the country, it needs to be taken more seriously, by organizers and the audience. It is not for mere entertainment but for potential enlightenment.

design exhibitions are a big opportunity to bring up the design quotient of a society, one can express through visuals and communicate with the masses, the simple representation of summing up an experiential journey through someone's thought process, can be a strong and simple way of bringing a change and making a difference.

museums are the usual physical environments to house exhibitions, museums are the best tourist destinations in a city, they are the visiting cards to the image of a city and its culture, cities like Paris and London, New York and Tokyo are punctuated with museums, making the cities and its inhabitants cosmopolitan. How many museums in India do we visit? How many design museums in India do we know of?

a ray of hope came with the recent query - on a 350 crore "patliputra" museum in Patna, India deserves more of such endeavours. Archchitect would love to contribute in its own small ways.



What is (D)esign thinking???



What is design thinking? Every business leader and management guru seems to be claiming to know or wanting to teach it...

Everybody says that the organization needs to be customer-led, yes...that's right, but as designers, we do need to be innovation driven.

This is where design thinking acts as a catalyst to facilitate innovative user-centric design. Management does inductive/deductive thinking and designers do abductive thinking.

Unlike these analytical thinking, design thinking is a creative process based around the making of new ideas. An example of a design thinking process could have eight stages: understand, observe, point of view, ideate, prototype, choose, implement and learn. Within these eight steps, any problem can be framed, the right questions can be asked, more ideas can be created, and the best answer can be chosen. The steps are not linear; they can occur simultaneously and can be repeated.

Today we always think of best practices as the ones generating the maximum revenue, but we really should be looking at the ones that incorporate D thinking in their practice to innovate at every level.

- Gopendra Pratap



* THE WALL is a platform where a design issue is raised and people give their opinions on it. If you wish to be a part of future discussions please contact mridu@archchitect.com

editorial

guest thoughts

homepage

the wall