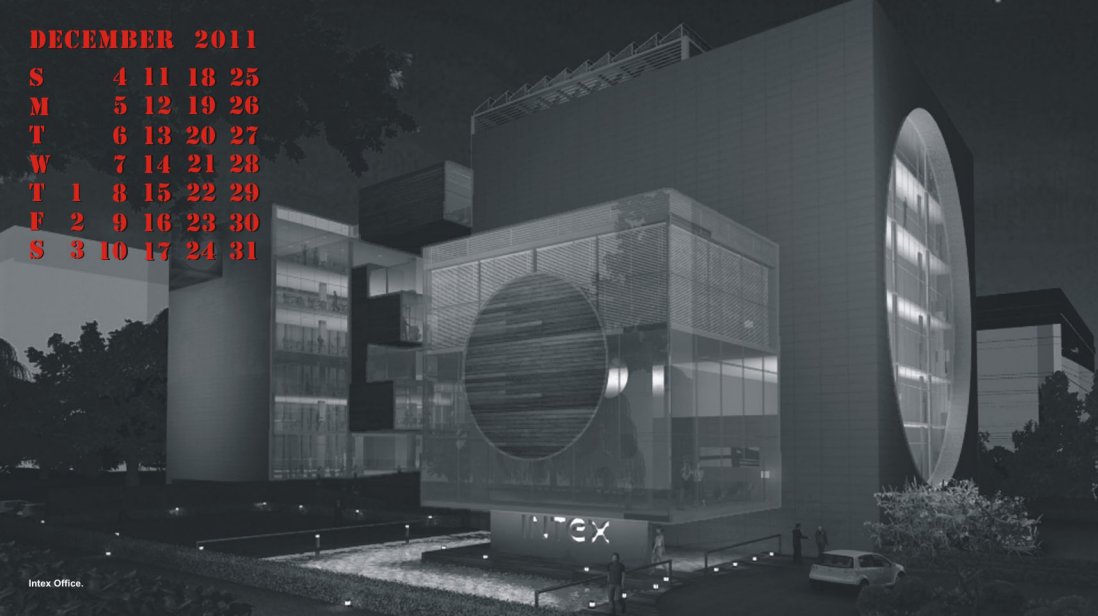
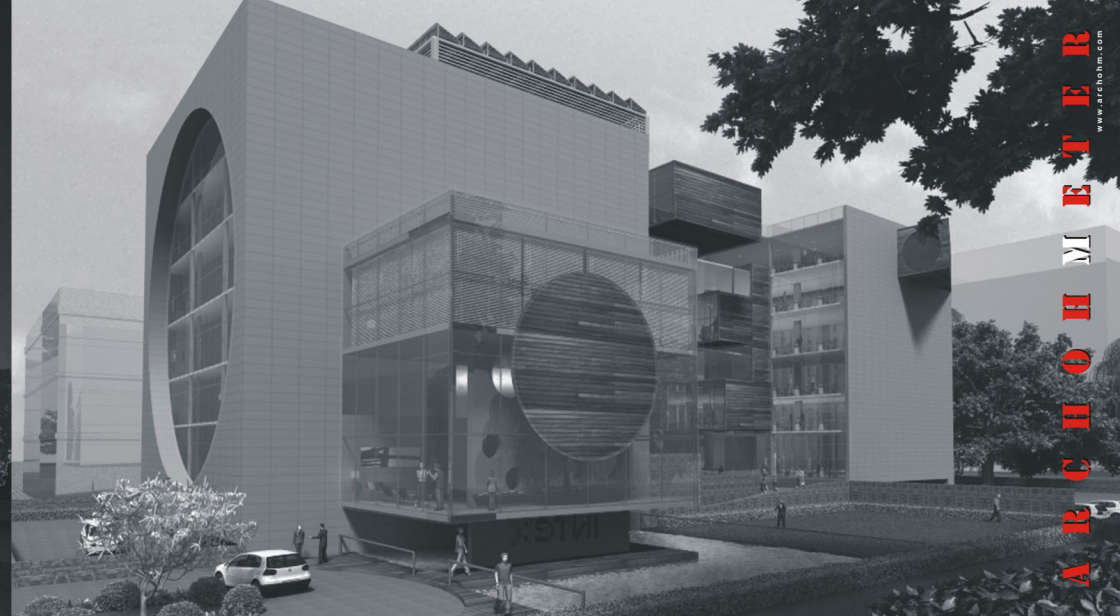


DECEMBER 2011

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Intex Office.

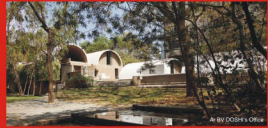


АРСНОНМЕНТЕР
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As we find ourselves in December yet again, and marvel at the astounding speed at which time passes by, it is time to reflect on the year that just went past.

As always this article was delayed by several short travels - Mumbai, Jalandhar & Amritsar, and lastly - but by no means the least - Baru Sahib - in the hills of Himachal Pradesh. An eye-opener for me; the place has to be seen to be believed. A holy spot which has turned into an educational hub with a galaxy of institutions that together are a large township complete with its own shopping centre, post office, captive solar power plant, fuel station and sporting arenas. Changes are, that the architecture may see an addition from Archohm sometime soon. Fingers crossed.

It seems right to discuss offices that architects design for themselves - since we are talking about corporate interiors elsewhere in the newsletter. Before I take this as a message from the almighty to start talking about Archohm's office building at NOIDA, let me assure the reader that I have no such vested interests at heart! Instead I will speak about 3 offices-all in India-because these are ones that I have seen for myself.



The first seen here is Sangath, Ar. B.V.Doshi's office at Ahmedabad. A lovely oasis in the middle of a desert; a place that is beautiful half-sunk into the earth amidst greens and cooling pools. A place where time has stood still for over 40 years now.

The second is Ar. Ashok Mohka's office at Nagpur. The building is designed to the last detail by Mr. Mohka, and is a place where natural light seems to permeate into the very soul of the designers working there.

The third is that of M/s Waerker & Associates in Delhi- one which lives up to its name 'Atelier', which loosely translates as 'workshop'. This is an old reputed practice that indeed is no less than a workshop. The office itself is stark and severe, efficient and unpretentious.

I kept my word- not a mention of our office!

Coming back to the Archohmeter, in this month's journal we have an article by a senior architect Amit Sharma on the Intex Office Building, and in this edition are Shweta's thoughts on corporate interiors of Toll plazas and Murali's reminiscences on the Riverside Museum at Glasgow. This time's Homespice features Sharuli Bisht, the loyal receptionist who completes 5 years this month. Sourabh talks about the late American inventor - Mr. Steve Jobs and the Wall discusses the difference between Innovation and Design!

As always, send in the bouquets to Sourabh, Mohit and me; whilst the criticism (creative, constructive, discriptive, provocative or otherwise) is best addressed to the efficient Mridu Sahai at archohmeter@archohm.com!

- Kunal Savarkar

in focus

Using the freedom of design given by a client is always a challenge and a pleasure. To demonstrate the ideology of a growing company - INTEX through their new corporate office in Noida on a 4000 square meter north facing plot has been a very special experience.

The brief by the client was simple- make something which reflects our ethics of innovation, boldness, clarity and a vision which says 'demand more'. Hence 'demand more' became our driving force to get the maximum out of a simple, no nonsense cubic form that we zeroed on, after studying numerous other forms for this building.



The 24 meter cuboid, made more sense when we placed it towards the west of the plot as it began shading the opposite end and the space towards the north-east. This is also the main entrance to the building. The static cuboid became dynamic enabling us to further exploit its potential. Things started moving faster when we demanded more out of this obviously 'boxy' building by projecting out some boxes of different volumes towards the self-shading edge. The biggest one towards the front, floating over the shallow water body became the main waiting space at the entrance level, which also has a five-floor high reception atrium. The rest became meeting rooms at different levels, well segregated from the main working areas and right in front of the lifts and the staircases. These projecting cubicles are a part of the main services core which divide the block in two working spaces very efficiently at all levels.



The climatic response made us use glass in the front- north side and the huge vertical louvers to cut the sun on the southern, rear side. The west side has been conceived as more or less opaque having very small apertures. The exterior has been clad with terracotta faience tiles which are in tune with the refined aesthetics and eco friendly aspirations of the building. These aspirations are even more evident by the use of solar panels as roofing on the terrace level. This level is used as cafeteria and is a common space for congregations. Hence the form, function, philosophy and climatic response gel together to form a design that performs.

Amit Sharma - Amit is an artist among architects. Extremely talented, he is intelligent, ever cheerful, a true sport with a good sense of humor.

As an interior designer, I feel my job is to incorporate more style than anyone would ordinarily feel comfortable in putting on to his/her own space. These designs are customized to fit each client's specific wishes, budget considerations and work environments. I find that there is a place for everything and everything has its place - that's where true living begins.

The responsibility to help our corporate clients like Insta Power, L&T and J.P. Toll Plaza to implement their philosophy, business goals and aspirations into insightful, appropriate design solutions is a challenging task. The end results should therefore, be spaces in which the whole is truly greater than the sum of its parts creating thoughtful, meaningful, and purposeful places for people.

After designing interiors for the JP and L&T Toll Plazas, I have realized that it is not just about designing toll counters. For instance- the spaces have to be used in such a manner that greater efficiency and a higher degree of consensus can be achieved as per the nature of the environment, where the material used needs to be completely maintenance free to facilitate ease-of-work.

At Archohm, working with fellow associates, architects, vendors and contractors to develop the overall design and execution of projects, has been a great learning experience. Right from concept to completion, it is fascinating to see how everyone works in tandem to live up and exceed the expectations of clients.



Shweta Singhal - Responsible and hardworking, Shweta is very methodical in her work. Her keenness and spirit to learn, absorb new things and to take up diverse challenges, is very inspiring.

design news

The Archotour always throws in some surprises, and this time in England, it was the weather. Where ever we went, the rain followed us but despite all this, the whole trip was worth it.

One of the best projects which we saw was, the **River Side Museum** in Glasgow by architect Zaha Hadid. Honestly, I haven't been a huge fan of her work but after witnessing this building I was completely mesmerized. I now look forward to seeing the office complex that her firm is building in Chennai for the Inda Land Group.



The Riverside Museum provides an exciting abode for Glasgow's transport collection and replaces the Museum of Transport previously located at the Kelvin Hall. The historical development of the river Clyde and the city is a unique legacy; with the site strategically situated where the river Kelvin flows into the Clyde. In doing so it symbolizes a dynamic relationship where the museum is the eye of both, linking the two sides. The museum places itself in the very context of its origin and encourages connectivity between its exhibits and their wider context.

The building is a funnel-like shed, which is open at opposite ends. Therefore, the interior path between the two ends becomes a mediator between the city and the river which can either be hermetic or porous depending on the exhibition layout. Thus the museum positions itself symbolically and functionally as an open and fluid space with its engagement of context and content.

From the smooth metallic sheen of the curved and pleated roof, down to the floor designed to take the weight of a steam train, work on this stunning building has required the utmost care. Creating the spectacular look of the roof is an achievement in itself but many other, well hidden, aspects of this museum required exceptional engineering, even though they will go unnoticed by most visitors. To achieve a column free space, the steelwork is hidden within the building shell. The building's stunning facade also plays a role beyond its aesthetic function, contributing to the low energy services strategy.

A special mention needs to be given to the landscape of the building. The pixelated landscaping is done by Edinburgh-based Cross Max. He mainly used square concrete paver blocks so that from aerial view, a pixelated effect could be seen.

From a budding shutterbug's point of view the building and its surroundings created amazing frames to click.

SS Muralidharan - Murali is an ardent architect and a photographer I might add, who despite leaving Archohm is still very much a part of it. His passion and eye for architecture inspires his fellow colleagues.

News: WorldArchitecture Festival The Archohm team attended the World Architecture Festival at Barcelona to witness one of the largest architecture exhibitions in the world, where architects from over 63 countries had participated.



USID 2011 @ Aurville The Universal, Sustainable, Innovative Design for social change foundation organized their annual conference for Design for Social Innovation & Sustainable Development at Aurville from 2-5 November. Archohmites attended this event to network for the education project - the design village.



Think Fest @ Goa Sourabh was invited to the Think fest in Goa by the Theika Magazine. This wonderfully organized conclave brought together some of the most diverse and cutting edge ideas across the world in the fields of politics, technology, arts, culture, and human rights.

Spotlight SHARULI BISHT - Receptionist
It is my pleasure to write about Archohm. On the 1st of January, I will complete 5 years with the firm. In these past 5 years I have learnt a lot from my colleagues and seniors. The office staff has been very cooperative and supportive. I feel very special, when I am told that - I represent Archohm and am the face of the company. I would like to convey best wishes to all those who have believed in me and helped me to grow. I hope and pray for Archohm's continued success.
- Sharuli Bisht

Sharuli has been handling the front desk of Archohm since the past five years. I have seen her grow from a novice to a very dedicated, hardworking and committed person. She is indeed the interface between Archohm studio and the rest of the world. I wish her luck and success for years to come.
- Mohit Mathur

BIRTHDAYS THIS MONTH:		NEW JOINEES:	
Alisha 12	- Twelfth	Tejal Singh	- Assistant Architect
Sadhvi 18	- Sixteenth	Jamshed Ali	- Assistant Architect
amit das 25	- Twenty Fifth	Ved Prakash	- Architectural Draftsman
		Sunil Tomar	- Interior Draftsman

sourabh's desk



steve jobs by walter isaacson is his exclusive biography written with his full cooperation.

'based on more than forty interviews with jobs conducted over two years--as well as interviews with more than a hundred family members, friends, adversaries, competitors, and colleagues--waterisacson has written a riveting story of the roller-coaster life and searing intense personality of a creative entrepreneur whose passion for perfection and ferocious drive revolutionized six industries: personal computers, animated movies, music, phones, tablet computing, and digital publishing and although jobs cooperated with this book, he asked for no control over what was eventually written, not even the right to read it before it was published.'

the book has bettered his stanford commemoration speech by leaps and bounds. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uf8uR6Z6KLC>

steve jobs, an inspiration, a story.

I like reading mahabharat but ramayana is boring. ramayana is the epitome of perfection where every character plays its role to the hilt. be it good or evil. It is dramatized and exaggerated to an extreme virtual. but mahabharat is human, full of complex layers of emotions and actions, it relates to life at all levels. this is where the steve jobs' life relates, it throws light on all aspects, making him very real. Displaying his life full of errors and failures, what I found most inspiring was that he was not a role model, he was not ideal person. he had his huge baggage of negativities which needed equating before one got a net positive summation of his life. this does not license people to do wrong things but gives hope that wrong doings can be rectified. all one needs is to have fundamentals of life and vision in place. the pain one takes and losses one makes are all worth it. worth it, as long as one follows the heart, excels in their field and gives it all. his life demonstrates the 'no rules to the game' philosophy and reinforces the archohm thought of 'get the job done'.

back to archohm and discussion on more design centric stuff certainly connects back to jobs. he was attempting to constantly design the good things in life, an attempt to make a machine more human, atleast more human friendly could only be achieved through design. to design this experience, one needed a sensitive, analytical and creative acumen, that was epitomized at apple. the detail of shape and material was physical design they excelled, then the interface design to make it functionally easy and visually pleasurable, and last but not least , the experience, from opening the box to starting to learn an apple machine make one feel special and the philosophy is captured rather comprehensively. i say this with personal experience as i recently bought the last series of the iphone designed by steve.

you're truly had ordered the book two weeks before jobs died and courtesy flipkart it arrived the day it was available to the world; on the diwali day of two thousand eleven. it took me six days and i over long flights to finish it, not to mention the missed flight to vienna as i loved 'read' the book at the departure lounge by two hours! do read it to 'stay hungry , stay foolish'.



What is the difference between Design and Innovation ?

The concepts of innovation and design are still a matter of active debate among designers.

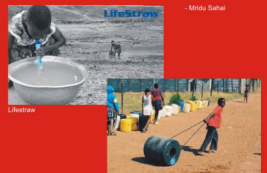
There have been many definitions of innovation put forth over the past few years, which are seemingly quite opposite to each other.

Some people believe that innovation is all about "connecting the dots" in new and different ways than others. Innovations don't need to be big, but they should be bold. If you're doing something different for yourself and your customers even if someone else has done it before in some other industry, it is called innovation. Design on the other hand is about adding form to function. It's about how an innovative idea is actually put into practice: how it looks, how it feels, how it works.

On the contrary many people tend to think that innovation is a brilliant new concept that is executed perfectly in the eyes of everyone, from the consumer to the businessman. Whereas design is just the structure or layout of any product.

Take the example of the LifeStraw - a portable water filter used to prevent diarrhoeal diseases for clean and safe drinking water. Would you call this an innovation or a Design? Why and why not?

The same dilemma occurs in our minds, for the Q Drum - which is designed to address the burden of carrying water over large distances in developing countries.



- Mridu Sahai

* 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@archohm.com