

ARCHITECT and INTERIORS INDIA

Ideas, inspiration and insight for architects and interior designers

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THE WHO'S WHO OF INDIAN ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN

+ THEIR VIEWS ON NEW-AGE INNOVATIONS

INDIA'S SHINING

ARCHITECT AND INTERIORS INDIA PRESENTS 50
FABULOUS PERSONALITIES WHO HAVE THE POWER
TO CHANGE THE FACE OF THE COUNTRY



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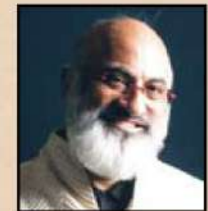
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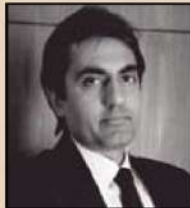
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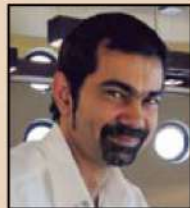
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This is not a competition or an awards proclamation, so we would like to begin by urging our readers to refrain from looking upon this handpicked collection as a Top 50 listing. The idea behind this special feature that marks our second anniversary is to highlight the creative differences that make India's architecture and design scene so varied, colourful and exciting. The philosophies and mantras that drive the creative engines of these design personalities must be applauded for being idealistic yet practical and thought-provoking. They could transport us into a new, improved era for our image in the global mirror – if we and our chosen government exert responsible choices when we make decisions that affect our built environment.

While embarking on this journey of discovering the guiding mantra and defining projects of our leading lights, we were filled with trepidation that we would be unable to pin down 50 extremely busy architects and designers at short notice. If we have succeeded, it is all thanks to their unstinting support. While most of them undertook the task of answering our queries with unquestioning co-operation within the stipulated deadline, a few demanded answers themselves... which we promptly gave. That we could not convince a handful of them to spare their valuable time to focus on areas of their work that we were interested in this time, is indeed our misfortune.

Due to the paucity of time, some globe-trotters did not make it to our final 50 either. Again, the loss is ours – but rest assured that you will hear about them and their work here.

Our companion piece on what our Fab 50 have to say about new-age innovations and their potential to change the world we live in, is enlightening – to say the least. From new products to novel technologies, they have cited what they think is making a difference to their chosen field and how they function. The outpouring of diverse responses we received encourages us to believe that the design community needs such a platform for the exchange of seminal ideas. And we hope to provide that.

by Maria Louis

SHANTANU POREDI AND MANISHA AGARWAL, MO-OF

“WE APPROACH BUILDING DESIGN THROUGH A QUESTIONING PROCESS, REINTERPRETING THE CLIENT’S BRIEF TO BREAK PRECONCEIVED NOTIONS OF ARCHITECTURE”



“Context is the key, as it gives clues and allows us to inform the process of design. We always question existing typologies and look to redefine them to arrive at new models that allow varied experiences and effectiveness,” states Manisha Agarwal of Mobile Offices (MO-OF), a firm she partners with husband Shantanu Poredi.

MO-OF offers integrated design solutions as well as academic research. In fact, Poredi and Agarwal consider research to be the starting point of design. Architecture for them is a manifestation of the state of society, culture and the politics of building itself. The firm takes a collaborative approach to its projects; the meaning of collaboration, at MO-OF, is to bring people from different disciplines and ideas together.

Mahatma Gandhi Antarrashtriya Hindi Vishwavidyalaya at Wardha, Maharashtra, has been MO-OF’s most significant and challenging project. It’s designed on the concept of ‘New Culture’, in which faculty, students and visitors participate in a non-hierarchical structure. Elements such as enclosed structures are integrated with open spaces to provide variation, non-linearity, change and flexibility. MO-OF has recently been awarded the JK Cement award for Group housing, for the student housing of this project.

Other notable projects include the REL housing (which received a Minto Hall competition commendation award), and TBWA Mumbai’s office. Speaking about TBWA’s office, Poredi says the idea culminated after “research on the identity of the company and its work patterns.” Thus evolved a concept of thematic spaces that expresses a vibrant workspace as a whole. 

by Anushree Chatterjee



Mahatma Gandhi Antarrashtriya Hindi Vishwavidyalaya, Wardha, is designed on the concept of ‘New Culture’.