

AD *perspective*

NEWSMAKERS, OPINIONS
THAT MATTER, PLUS
THE LATEST IN ART,
ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN

THE 50 MOST INFLUENTIAL
NAMES IN INDIAN ARCHITECTURE
& DESIGN FOR 2014

AD50

IN ASSOCIATION WITH



Mercedes-Benz

MODERN WOODEN TOP CONSOLE WITH CAST-IRON BASE: MAHENDRA DOSHI RESTORATEURS.
EGG CHAIR: RED, BLUE & YELLOW. BLACK IRON CENTRE TABLE: PEACOCK LIFE. F549 BAR CHAIR:
ANEMOS. METAL CHAIR: BUNGALOW 8. TRIPOD LAMP: EASTERN TREASURE LIFESTYLE.

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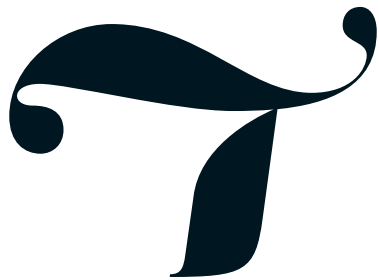
Exquisite Surfaces
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SHOWCASE

THE 2014
AD 50
MOST INFLUENTIAL NAMES IN INDIAN ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

PHOTOGRAPHER R BURMAN



The most influential names in architecture and design for 2014. I'm here to tell you how we found them. Throughout our existence over the past two years, we've made it our mission to tell the

stories of people in Indian architecture and design. It was an undertaking my team and I repeated often in meetings, before the launch of the magazine in 2012—readers *must* know the answer to the question: “Who are the big names in Indian design?”

It was in the middle of 2013 that we decided to make this idea the core of the anniversary issue in 2014. We began by setting three main criteria: 1. Only look at firms operating in India; 2. Since design takes time to actualize, only include firms and people who've completed significant projects in 2012-2013, or won accolades that made them deserving of a place here; 3. Curate the list as per *AD's* aesthetic benchmarks. Setting criteria ensured there was enough room to introduce new names and faces every time we repeated this exercise. Criteria set, we went about gathering the names and details of architecture and interior design firms across India.

This wasn't easy. Depending on the source of the data, there were either too many designers in

this country, or not nearly enough. Since our list was based on the AD 100 by the US edition, we believed that cutting it by half was enough for a single-country effort. Our first draft of this selection was double the number of what we wanted; with research the number began to dwindle. In the final analysis, the names we've got together are the companies that fit our trinity of standards. Here then, is the length and breadth of design expression across our country.

You'll notice some omissions, for which there are several reasons—from the firms not having completed projects in the past two years, to just not having the material ready in time. On the other hand, we have included five individuals who are neither architects nor interior designers. Over the past two years, this quintet has played a crucial role in creating awareness and promoting design consciousness in India, and for that we're proud to have them here. And, we've categorized the firms and people by style or their effect on the landscapes they operate within. (To know more about #AD50 follow us on Twitter @ArchIndiaDigest.)

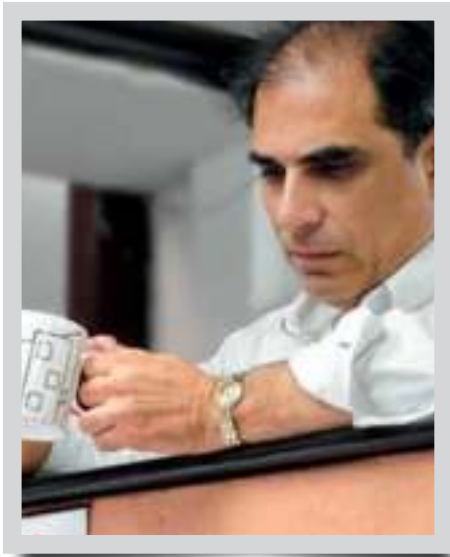
Everything else aside, the AD 50 list is for you, reader, to be able to recognize the names and faces of folks who have had such an enormous impact on our living environments. It is for you to be able to choose wisely, and live well.

— Manju Sara Rajan, Editor

AD50

MOST INFLUENTIAL NAMES IN INDIAN ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

GROUNDBREAKERS



ARCHITECT HAFEEZ CONTRACTOR

PRINCIPAL **HAFEEZ CONTRACTOR**
LOCATION **MUMBAI**

It is nearly impossible to overstate Hafeez Contractor's impact on the urban landscape of contemporary India. Since founding his firm with just two employees in 1982, Contractor's firm has grown to a staff of 530 people, making it one of the largest in the country. Over the last 30 years, the firm has won over 50 national and international awards for a range of structures that includes hotels, residential complexes, corporate offices, educational campuses and private homes. Contractor builds on a different scale than virtually any other architect in India, designing corporate offices and residential complexes that forever alter the landscape. Recently completed projects like the Universal Majestic (*top right*) in Lower Parel in Mumbai, and 23 Marina in Dubai were landmarks even before their completion. Perhaps his boldest project to date is the ONGC headquarters in Dehradun (*right*), which was completed in 2013—a free-form mound of grass that combines the firm's bold scale and dramatic shapes with a new interest in organic materials.

hafeezcontractor.com



PHOTO: NOSHIR GOBAI



CNT ARCHITECTS

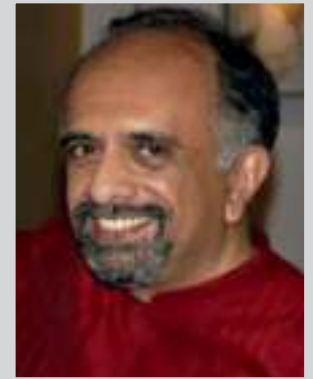
PRINCIPAL **PREM CHANDAVARKAR**
LOCATION **BENGALURU**

CNT Architects (CnT) has the longest history of any architecture firm in Bengaluru, the most architecturally forward-thinking city in modern India. Old as independent India itself, CnT traces its roots back to the first architecture firm in the Garden City, founded by the late Narayan Chandavarkar in 1947, and headed today by Prem Chandavarkar (*far right*). Today, CnT works across diverse spaces, including residential, commercial, institutional, hospitality and corporate structures, as well as interiors and master planning. Major projects include a hospice for the destitute for Missionaries of Charity (*pictured here*), which was completed in 2013, a large-scale laboratory and office space, an elegant two-storey apartment complex and a private villa. Each of these projects embraces a different aesthetic and style to match its particular use. Wherever they're located and whatever purpose they serve, projects by CnT represent a history of fine work and a contemporary architecture scene that the firm has, for decades, helped to build.

cnt.co.in



PHOTOS: AMIT RASTOGI AND KOTESHWAR RAO;
COURTESY CNT ARCHITECTS



IYER & MAHESH

PRINCIPAL **N MAHESH**
LOCATION **THIRUVANANTHAPURAM**

Though Iyer & Mahesh has left an impression on virtually all aspects of Kerala's contemporary architecture—from the clean lines of the College of Architecture Trivandrum to the ubiquitous apartment towers dotting the towns of one of India's most densely populated states—it has been the firm's resorts that have set it apart over the last decade. In his hospitality projects, N Mahesh has created a modern Kerala vernacular that infuses the tropical state's traditional timber architecture with its more contemporary outward-looking spirit. Mahesh's particular aesthetic has also expanded beyond Kerala with the Tamara Resort in Coorg (*pictured*), which was on *Condé Nast Traveller* India's list of the country's 20 most romantic resorts for 2013. Perched dramatically in the lush hills of a coffee plantation, the resort embodies Mahesh's loving and impeccable meditations on materials and shapes that harmonize with their surroundings, with a timeless combination of tradition and modernity.

iyerandmahesh.com





K2INDIA

PRINCIPALS **SUNITA AND KOHELIKA KOHLI**
LOCATION **DELHI**

In 2010, the mother-daughter team of Sunita (*right*) and Kohelika Kohli (*far right*) merged their respective practices to form the accomplished interior design and architecture firm K2INDIA. Working in her field since 1971, Sunita Kohli has become one of India's most prominent research-based interior designers, lecturing at institutions like Harvard and Emory and the National Building Museum in Washington, DC, and earning a Padma Shri Award in 1992. Together, the mother-daughter duo have worked on the National Assembly building in Thimpu, Bhutan, commercial spaces from Delhi to Chennai and residences across north India. Among their most



PHOTO: R. BURMAN



striking projects were the interiors for the German ambassadorial residence in Delhi (*pictured*), featured on the cover of AD's July-August 2013 issue ('The Diplomatic Enclave', *pg 156*), which infuses a stately modernist structure with the colourful sensibility of contemporary pop. Currently, Sunita is restoring the guest wing of the Rashtrapati Bhavan (she has worked on multiple phases of restoration since 1982), as well as the building that houses the Indira Gandhi Memorial Museum.

k2india.com

MATHAROO ASSOCIATES

PRINCIPAL **GURJIT SINGH MATHAROO**
 LOCATION **AHMEDABAD**

Working in institutional and residential design, architect Gurjit Singh Matharoo ably carries forward Ahmedabad's great modernist tradition. Matharoo has been invited to share his work at conferences the world over, from Australia to Ecuador, Switzerland to Malaysia, and has raked in a variety of awards, including *Architectural Review's* Emerging Architect Award in 2009 and the House of the Year Award in 2010. In 2013, Matharoo was conferred the title of International Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), extending his influence from Indian academia—where he serves on the faculty at the Center for Environmental Planning and Technology (CEPT) and the National Institute of Design (NID)—to an international scale. Alongside several large-scale private residential projects, like 'The Marbled House' in Ahmedabad (*right*), Matharoo has executed municipal and institutional buildings that bring better design to people of all socio-economic strata. The ESIC Hospital (*below right*) for example, involved designing and building a 30,000-square-metre hospital on the site of a pre-existing building without affecting the previous structure's functionality. The planning process itself required enormous ingenuity, while the final product combined the refined aesthetic that has made Matharoo famous, with a deep sense of responsibility and respect for the communities the building will serve.

matharooassociates.com



PHOTO COURTESY MATHAROO ASSOCIATES



PHOTO: BHARAT AGGARWAL



PHOTO: R. BURMAN

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MOST INFLUENTIAL NAMES IN INDIAN ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

GROUNDBREAKERS



M/S PRABHAKAR B. BHAGWAT

PRINCIPAL ANIKET BHAGWAT
LOCATION AHMEDABAD

Perhaps no other landscape architecture firm in the country is quite as influential as this one. Like the firm's founder Professor Prabhakar B Bhagwat, who headed the Landscape Architecture Programme at Delhi's School of Planning and Architecture at the time of the programme's founding, and began the Landscape Architecture Programme at CEPT, Ahmedabad, most of the current members of the practice are active participants in academia. *Spade*, the biannual journal for architecture, is co-edited by Aniket Bhagwat, the firm's principal and the son of its founder. In the past, the firm has worked on the elegant Devi Ratn Hotel in Jaipur and the Devi Art Foundation in Gurgaon, among others. Its current roster of projects includes everything from a small garden at an apartment building in Mumbai, to 'Red Bricks', an Ahmedabad school built with mud bricks (*above*) (the first phase was recently completed), to large-scale master planning for townships like Palava, near Mumbai.

landscapemdia.net

PHOTOS COURTESY M/S PRABHAKAR B BHAGWAT

RMA ASSOCIATES

PRINCIPAL RAHUL MEHROTRA
LOCATION MUMBAI

Architect, activist, conservationist, planner and academic—Rahul Mehrotra wears many hats. Over the years, Mehrotra has built corporate offices and private homes in a signature style of clean geometries and simple materials, while also devoting enormous amounts of time to the restoration of elaborately ornamented structures like Hyderabad's iconic Chowmahallah Palace. The KMC corporate headquarters (*bottom*) in Hyderabad's Cyber City encapsulates the architect's organic approach (literally and figuratively), with its exoskeleton of greenery serving as a natural cooling system, and its full design conceived in phases that would allow progress to move forward gradually without the building ever looking incomplete. In 2013, Mehrotra's penchant for the interdisciplinary led him to execute a major project at Harvard, where he serves as the chair of the department of urban planning and design, that brought 32 scholars from five different departments to India to study the Kumbh Mela in Allahabad. Mehrotra completely understands the fluidity and temporality of design, as well as the role it can play well beyond the scope of architecture.

rmaarchitects.com



PHOTO: NISHANT SHUKLA



PHOTO: NEVILLE SUKHIA



PHOTO: CARLOS CHEN

STUDIO MUMBAI

PRINCIPAL **BIJOY JAIN**
LOCATION **MUMBAI**

For an architect who has long since established his firm at the forefront of Indian design, Bijoy Jain has never ceased to demonstrate and reassert his pre-eminence. In 2012, a jury consisting of Pritzker Prize-winning architects and prominent figures in architecture from several countries (including India), selected Studio Mumbai (SM) from a shortlist of 31 architecture firms from over 10 countries as the winner of the third annual Swiss Architecture Prize. Jain also spent the autumn of 2013 as a visiting professor at the prestigious Yale School of Architecture, teaching an advanced design course titled simply, 'Jain: Studio Mumbai at Yale'. Clearly this architect's name has become as recognizable as his signature use of wooden slats, glass and light to build some of India's most beautiful buildings.

studiomumbai.com

The light-filled interior and facade of the Copper House (below right and bottom), designed by Bijoy Jain.

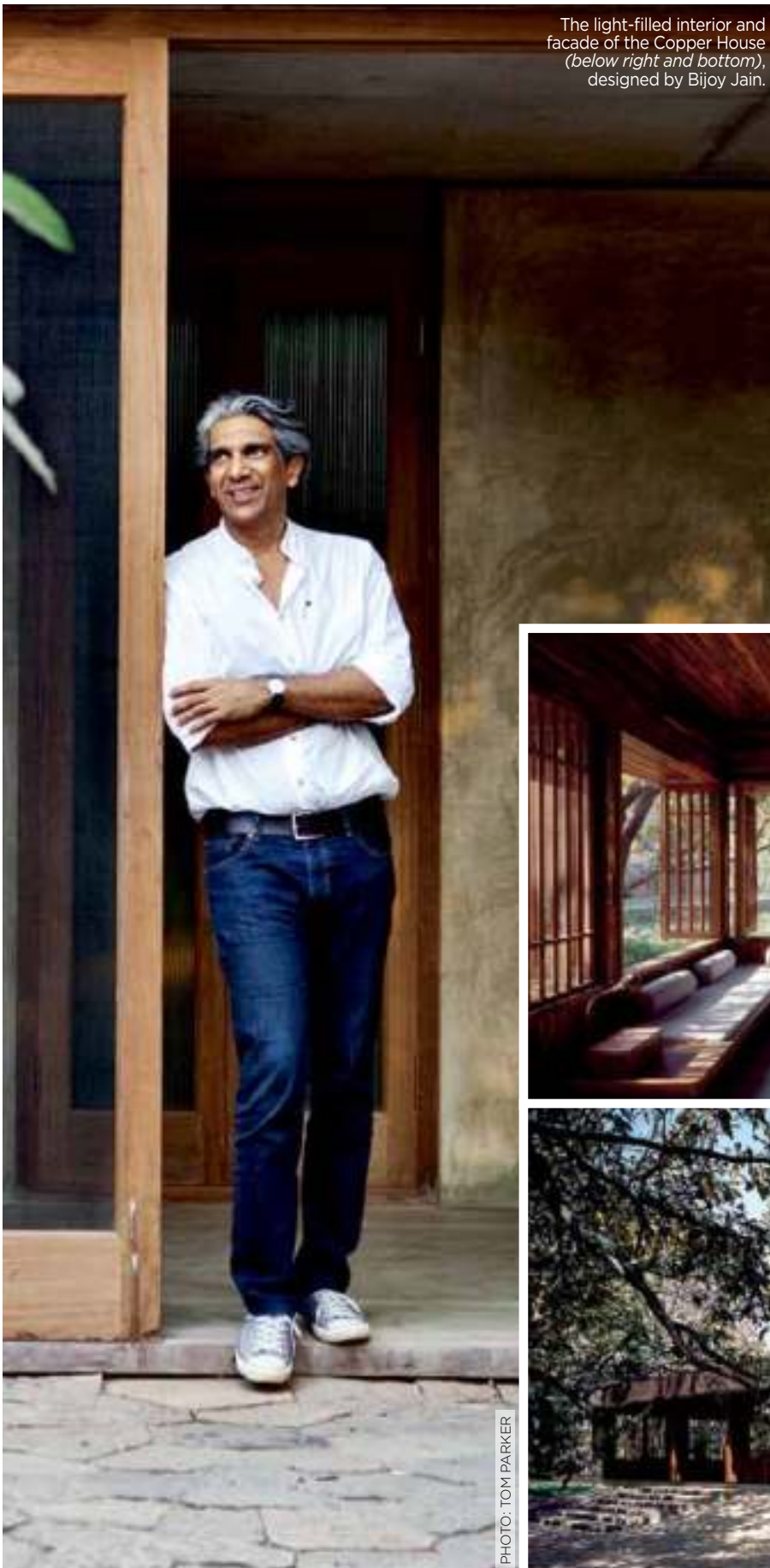


PHOTO: TOM PARKER



PHOTOS COURTESY STUDIO MUMBAI

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MOST INFLUENTIAL NAMES IN INDIAN ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

GROUNDBREAKERS

TALATI & PANTHAKY ASSOCIATED

PRINCIPALS NOSHIR D TALATI, NOZER R PANTHAKY, NAUSHIR DEVITRE, PHIROZE PANTHAKI, SHAROOKH MEHTA, ZAHIR CASSUM, XERXES TALATI, RIA TALATI
LOCATION MUMBAI

Mumbai's Talati & Panthaky (T&P) has designed some of the city's largest and most recognizable structures. With a staff of over 250, T&P is currently engaged in projects that include two of south Mumbai's largest new residential towers. The firm has worked on projects for large business houses and prominent families, designing everything from a private Alibaug retreat to corporate offices for the Birla Group and Reliance Industries Ltd. Among T&P's recent works is a pair of apartments that demonstrates the firm's equal facility with modestly sized spaces. In this south Mumbai apartment (*left*), clever design and attention to detail transformed a comparatively small space into a sanctuary as commodious as any of the firm's grander constructions, proof that T&P has the unique ability to make all kinds of spaces feel nothing less than regal.

tparcb.net

PHOTO: SHIRAZ PANTHAKY

VASTU SHILPA CONSULTANTS

PRINCIPALS RAJEEV KATHPALIA, SÖNKE HOOF,
BALKRISHNA DOSHI
LOCATION AHMEDABAD

One of India's foremost architecture firms, since it was established nearly 60 years ago, Vastu Shilpa Consultants (VSC) was founded by Balkrishna Doshi, a seminal figure in Indian architecture. The firm today produces a variety of master plans and structures that share an investment in the social and environmental impact of buildings. These values are manifested not only in the plans and projects undertaken by the firm, but also by the related Vastu Shilpa Foundation, a prominent research institute for environmental and urban design. In 2013, VSC completed INFLIBNET (Information and Library Network, *right*), an institutional building of massive scale and intent. The 20,000-square-metre campus houses a central-government funded department that is both a library and a centre for information management. The firm was also selected among eight participating firms to build the new campus of Bihar's Nalanda University, placing it in the unique position of reviving one of the world's oldest centres of learning.

sangath.org



Sönke Hoof



Rajeev Kathpalia



Balkrishna Doshi

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MOST INFLUENTIAL NAMES IN INDIAN ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

MODERNISTS



PHOTO: WHY ANDREAS DEFFNER



PHOTO: CAITLIN MOORE

ANUPAMA KUNDOO

LOCATION **PUDUCHERRY**

Both as an architect and researcher, Anupama Kundoo has committed herself and her firm to the exploration of new techniques and building materials that respond to the stresses facing our urban and natural environments. In 2012, Kundoo was one of the major exhibitors at the prestigious Venice Architecture Biennale. Travelling with students from the University of Queensland in Australia—where she works as a professor—and craftsmen from India, many of whom had never before left the subcontinent, she built a deconstructed replica of her 'Wall House' (*above*), a structure in Auroville that uses brick, wood and ribbed terracotta vaults (one of her building material innovations) to fluidly intermix transitional and indoor spaces. In 2013, Kundoo was named runner-up in the first annual arcVision Prize—Women and Architecture awards.

anupamakundoo.com

DDIR ARCHITECTURE STUDIO

PRINCIPAL **DOMINIC DUBE**

LOCATION **BENGALURU**

DDIR Architecture Studio may not be one of the biggest names in Indian architecture, but the architects at the studio, including directors Dominic Dube, Inge Rieck and Varsha V Kumar, have been steadily churning out some of the most beautiful buildings in south India for years, combining the traditional tools of modernism (concrete, wood, glass and steel) with a marvellous sensitivity to place and detail. Of their projects, none encapsulate their aesthetic quite so handsomely as the houses they've built in cities like Bengaluru, Auroville, Hyderabad and, this private residence (*right*) in Coimbatore. The ascetic design employed in this project is an exercise in restraint in the style of the great Le Corbusier. Like so many of the projects completed by DDIR, this home sets a high bar for other inheritors of the International Style in India.

ddirarchitecture.com



PHOTO COURTESY DOMINIC DUBE, SHIBU ARAKKAL, GURUNATH CHAKRASALI

FLYING ELEPHANT STUDIO

PRINCIPALS RAJESH RENGANATHAN, IYPE CHACKO
LOCATION BENGALURU

It's tempting to classify Flying Elephant Studio (FES) as another great modernist firm in the tradition of Balkrishna Doshi. Indeed, having studied at CEPT, Ahmedabad, Rajesh Renganathan, along with Iype Chacko, often channels the utilitarian lines and sharp geometries that have long characterized the school of architects coming out of Ahmedabad. And yet, the buildings designed by FES also incorporate a lightness of touch and delicacy in execution that has allowed the firm to create emblematic buildings in locations as distinct as a rainforest in the Andaman Islands, and buildings in urban Bengaluru, adapting its style to the materials, climates and needs of different regions. The 'Pavilion House' in Bengaluru (*pictured here*), completed in 2012, responds to the rigorous constraints of Vastu with typical elegance and apparent beauty. The house's light shell with its geometric perforations throughout fill the space with lots of sunlight, playing hide-and-seek with glaring eyes from the outside.

flyingelephant.in



PHOTO: SAHIR



PHOTO: NAJMUS



HABITAT ARCHITECTS

PRINCIPAL ZAFAR CHAUDHARY
LOCATION LUDHIANA

Founded in 1994, Habitat Architects is one of the foremost firms operating in Punjab, focusing on high-end residential, commercial and hospitality spaces. Working with dramatic shapes and understated materials, Zafar Chaudhary has created landmark spaces for resorts, corporations and private residents in the boom towns of the north. In his two most recent projects—one, a weekend retreat in Delhi (*top*), the other a private residence in Ludhiana (*above*)—Chaudhary has redirected his focus towards the delicate play of built volumes, outdoor spaces and the transitional courtyard spaces between them. The home in Delhi captures the spirit of a country retreat by blurring the divisions between landscape and lifescape, bringing lush gardens and pools into the house's living areas. The house in Ludhiana is structured around a series of courtyards, beginning with a double-height entryway festooned with tiered planters. In a region of India otherwise known for its penchant for the baroque, Chaudhary's grandly geometric spaces represent a fresh—though no less organic—aesthetic.

zafar.babitat@gmail.com

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MODERNISTS



PHOTO: SEBASTIAN ZACHARIAH

HIREN PATEL ARCHITECTS

PRINCIPAL HIREN PATEL
LOCATION AHMEDABAD

For more than two decades, Hiren Patel has been at the forefront of Ahmedabad's design scene, expanding over the years to include residential, industrial, institutional, hospitality and urban spaces across the country. In 2013, Hiren Patel Architects (HPA) completed a community centre in an underprivileged urban area, a restaurant interior based around Indian motifs and two stunning private homes. One of those two private commissions was the 'Courtyard House' (*left*) in Ahmedabad, where Patel paid as much attention to the positive space of the house itself as to the negative space of the garden surrounding it, creating spaces that move fluidly between natural and built environments. It is precisely that kind of dynamism that has made Patel a highly sought after architect in the region.

bpa.co.in



KHOSLA ASSOCIATES

PRINCIPAL SANDEEP KHOSLA
LOCATION BENGALURU

Sandeep Khosla earned his architecture degree at the renowned Pratt Institute in New York, and founded his firm, Khosla Associates (KA), in 1995. Over the years, KA has designed prominent restaurants and offices, retail spaces, clubs and hotels across India, but it is perhaps in the realm of residential architecture that Khosla's vision has been most pronounced. In private homes built largely in Bengaluru, but also in Hyderabad, New Delhi, Kerala and Goa, Khosla has shown sensitivity to materials, environments and the distinctive personalities of future residents, while also honouring his own clear aesthetic. In 2013, Khosla brought those sensitivities into play at the DPS Kindergarten (*pictured here*), which earned the firm the top prize in the 'Education' category at the Inside Awards at the World Festival of Interiors held in Singapore. Both functional and bold, with a colourful play of shapes, shadows and materials, the building encapsulates both the mature vision of an architect working at the top of his game, and the youthful play of the children he built it for.

kboslaassociates.com



PHOTOS: SHAMANTH PATIL



PHOTOS COURTESY MANCINI ENTERPRISES

MANCINI ENTERPRISES

PRINCIPALS **NIELS SHÖNFELDER, JT ARIMA**
LOCATION **CHENNAI**

A crematorium. A 4,000-square-foot, three-house country retreat. A retail space in a Chennai hotel. The interiors of a city apartment. These varied projects, completed by Mancini Enterprises over the past few years showcase the diversity of scale and utility this firm is capable of negotiating. If there is one common thread among all, it is the keen sensitivity to the project's history and environment. The firm won top honours in the 'Single Residence' category at the Asia-Pacific Property Awards in 2013. Its impressive design for the Coimbatore crematorium (*pictured here*) is marked by austere concrete colonnades that call to mind the rows of pillars that define some of south India's finest archaeological sights; the building has already garnered attention within and outside India. Projects like these have set a new standard for intelligent contemporary design in south India.

mancini-design.in

MATHEW & GHOSH ARCHITECTS

PRINCIPALS **SOUMITRO GHOSH,**
NISHA MATHEW GHOSH
LOCATION **BENGALURU**

Mathew & Ghosh Architects (MGA) was founded in 1995 by husband-and-wife team Soumitro Ghosh and Nisha Mathew Ghosh, who were studying together in CEPT, Ahmedabad. MGA's recent works are still deeply rooted in Bengaluru; as in the case of the stunning National Martyr's Memorial (*below*), which honours nearly 22,000 Indians who gave their lives in the fight for Independence. A series of steps, ramps and an amphitheatre leading to a subterranean 'motivational hall' cut geometric forms into a surface-level green space, punctured with angular skylights and memorial tablets. The memorial is both sombre and light-filled, drawing inspiration from other great war memorials, while paying homage to the city that houses it.

matbewghosh.com



PHOTO: SOLACHI RAMANATHAN



PHOTOS: R BURMAN

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MOST INFLUENTIAL NAMES IN INDIAN ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

MODERNISTS

RAJIV SAINI ASSOCIATES

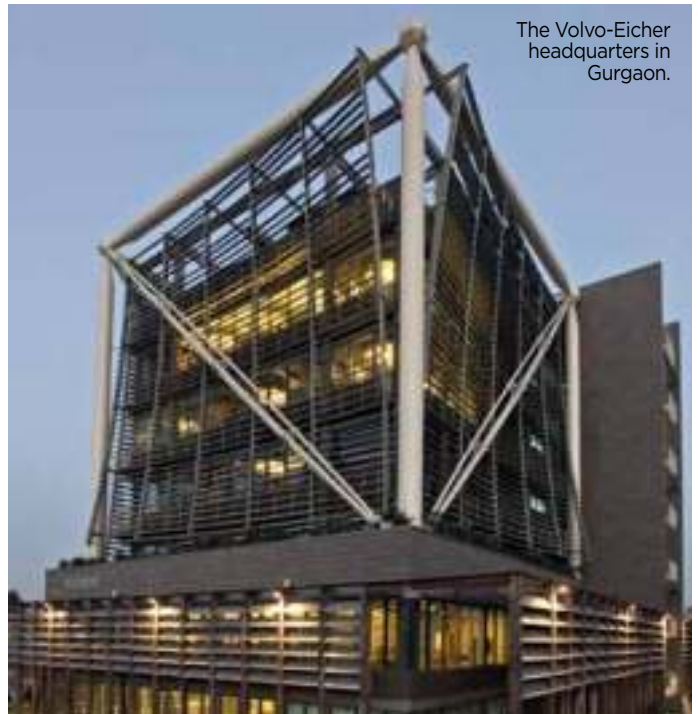
PRINCIPAL **RAJIV SAINI**
LOCATION **MUMBAI**

There's something in Rajiv Saini's always enviable interior and architectural work that gives away his scholastic background in computer engineering. It's something to do with the rigour of its geometry, its fascination with continuous lines and neatly assembled planes. It is in the places where those lines and planes are interrupted—by gorgeously framed views, carefully placed artworks, curvaceous furniture—that Saini's particular creative spirit emerges in full. Since founding his own firm in 1995, Saini has crafted some of India's most memorable spaces, from the majestic Devi Garh Palace hotel outside Udaipur, to restaurants, retail spaces and homes across India and in places like the US, UAE and Thailand. Continuing in the style that has won him awards across the world, Saini's recent projects include a stunning villa in Delhi (*below*), which was featured in *AD's* September-October 2013 issue ('Urban Holiday', *pg 184*) that is a study in balance between clean lines and dramatic art pieces.

rajivsaini.com



PHOTO: GAELLE LE BOULICAUT



The Volvo-Eicher headquarters in Gurgaon.



PHOTOS: SAURABH PANDEY

ROMI KHOSLA DESIGN STUDIO

PRINCIPALS **ROMI AND MARTAND KHOSLA**
LOCATION **DELHI**

The buildings designed by Romi and Martand Khosla go well beyond stunning private villas and efficient office spaces. Romi Khosla Design Studio (RKDS) has invested itself in the idea of architecture as a mode for serious civic contribution. Among the firm's most important structures are a hospice for poor patients, the Sir Sobha Singh Public Charitable Trust built in 2004, and a clinic for the destitute near Old Delhi's Lahori Gate in 2009. Romi has served on juries for the Aga Khan Awards and Izmir City Revitalization proposals, and has participated in planning commissions across the world, while his son Martand has lectured extensively across India and Europe. Over the course of several decades, RKDS has demonstrated an incredible stylistic diversity, ranging from the stolidly elegant Le Meridien Kathmandu, completed in 1996, to the sleek and functional, carried off with particular aplomb at the brand new headquarters for Royal Enfield (*pictured here*), completed in 2013.

rk-ds.com

SJK ARCHITECTS

PRINCIPAL **SHIMUL JAVERI KADRI**
 LOCATION **MUMBAI**

For Shimul Javeri Kadri, architecture is more than creating spaces and buildings: it is an opportunity to connect India's vibrant market and changing needs with its traditions of design and construction. From office spaces, like her 2012 World Architecture Festival Award-winning design for Nirvana Films, which uses minimal electricity for light and ventilation; to homes like the 'Leaf House' (pictured here) in Alibaug (featured in *AD's* May-June 2013 issue, in 'Au Naturel', pg 174), which consists of leaf-shaped pods connected by outdoor walkways and sitting areas; to factories, hotels and cultural centres, Kadri's work explores the interplay between environment and contemporary style. The result is a body of work that is varied in appearance but underpinned by a rich understanding of architecture's ethical possibilities.

sjkarchitect.com



PHOTOS: RAJESH VORA

**S.P.A DESIGN**

PRINCIPAL **STEPHANE PAUMIER**
 LOCATION **DELHI**

Even prior to establishing his own Delhi-based practice in 2005, French architect Stephane Paumier drew frequent attention from industry publications and awards committees for his bold, provocative designs. In the last nine years, S.P.A Design has designed and conceptualized plans for embassies, convention centres, university campuses, museums, private residences and even an audacious design for a heritage fort hotel in Rajasthan. The firm's most recently completed project, the elegantly stepped clay-brick headquarters for fashion design and management school, Triburg, in Gurgaon (right), was nominated for the Aga Khan Architecture Award; Paumier was first nominated for this award in 2010 for his Tarun Tahiliani headquarters in Gurgaon. A graduated series of clay-brick buildings wound around a series of open courtyards, Triburg playfully echoes the shape of a step-well, incorporating elements of traditional architectural vernaculars.

spadesign.co.in



PHOTO: AMIT PASRICHA

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MODERNISTS



SPASM DESIGN

PRINCIPALS **SANJEEV PANJABI,**
SANGEETA MERCHANT
LOCATION **MUMBAI**



The 20th century was the age of the skyscraper; through their work at SPASM Design, Sanjeev Panjabi and Sangeeta Merchant are doing their best to make this the century of the horizontal line. Even their award-winning Exim Tower in Dar es Salaam in Tanzania seems more intent on its horizontal cantilevers than its 15-storey rise. Working between western India (Mumbai and the surrounding hills and beaches) and east Africa (Tanzania), the Mumbai-trained architectural duo graduated from interior work to full architectural realizations of homes, villas and offices in 2000. In all their projects, Panjabi and Merchant demonstrate a transparency of design that makes their structures seem both natural and visionary in their simplicity. The 'Brick Kiln House' in Alibaug (*left*) takes its inspiration from the kilns dotting the entirety of Maharashtra's Raigad district. Using a combination of red brick, glass, wood and stone, the house embraces the imperfections of hand-fired bricks, as well as the inherent struggle between the built and natural environment so commonly experienced in coastal towns, with the house designed to accumulate moss and weather with time. This is one of those rare structures that succeeds in accomplishing what so many others claim: to wed traditional inspiration to truly contemporary design.

spasmindia.com

SRDA

PRINCIPAL **SAMIRA RATHOD**
LOCATION **MUMBAI**

"Every project is an opportunity to understand this world better. The world that is the relationship of people with other people, and of people with their environment," is Mumbai-based SRDA's principal, Samira Rathod's perspective on the artistry involved in creating structures. What began with a small farmhouse assignment and a furniture portfolio in 2000 has since grown in reputation and scope to become a firm with architectural and interior design projects across the country—and several national awards in its kitty. Two of the firm's most recent projects include a residential space and an art gallery. One was an extension to a family home in Ahmedabad for a newly married couple looking for an entertainment and lounging space—it was anointed 'Steely Fins' for its long steel and wood fins that hold the stairs together. The space uses a variety of materials—pigmented concrete, terrazzo, exposed concrete, mirror, bison boards, steel, fabrics, stones and wood—to create a quirky, whimsical space perfect for its function. The second project was the 'SITE' in Baroda, a multipurpose space for a metal fabricator (*right*)—where an art gallery coexists with a warehouse and workshop—using the raw material of its owner: metal and its fabrication. Creations placed firmly within their physical and social contexts, these projects are a distinct and appropriate paean to Rathod's design aesthetic.

srda.co



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MOST INFLUENTIAL NAMES IN INDIAN ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

CATALYSTS



ABHA NARAIN LAMBAH ASSOCIATES

PRINCIPAL **ABHA NARAIN LAMBAH**
LOCATION **MUMBAI**

Pick a heritage structure of historical importance virtually anywhere in India—especially in Mumbai—and you can reasonably bet that Abha Narain Lambah has had a hand in its restoration. Among the foremost conservation architects in the country, Lambah has contributed her expertise to temples, palaces and historic municipal structures from Ladakh to Kerala—work that has earned her eight UNESCO Awards for Conservation, among other accolades. In 2013, Lambah's book *Shekbanati: Havels of the Merchant Princes*, was released—the first ever tome devoted entirely to the palaces of that historic region in northeastern Rajasthan. Among other projects, she contributed to the conservation of the Jaivilas Palace Museum in Gwalior and helped create the management plan for the Mahabodhi Temple in Bodh Gaya (*below*). Though the goal of any conservation architect is to create work that is, for all intents and purposes, invisible, it would be impossible not to notice a figure so singular in her work and her impact.

anlassociates.com



PHOTO COURTESY ABHA NARAIN LAMBAH ASSOCIATES

PHOTO: R. BURMAN

AD50

MOST INFLUENTIAL NAMES IN INDIAN ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

CATALYSTS

AISHWARYA & RAJSHREE PATHY FOUNDERS OF THE INDIA DESIGN FORUM LOCATION MUMBAI

Though Aishwarya (*right*) and Rajshree (*far right*) Pathy are neither architects nor designers, in the past two years they have become galvanizing figures in India's design scene. In its second year, the India Design Forum (IDF) brought together fashion, interior and product designers, urban planners, architects, artists, writers, thinkers, curators and policy-makers to discuss the role that design plays and can continue to play in India's rapidly changing future. IDF also inspired a week's worth of events around its host city, Mumbai, which brought the city's often scattered and disparate design and art community together in unprecedented ways. There are few people in India who have played such an active role in shaping the conversations that can structure our future.
indiadesignforum.com



PHOTO: ROHIT GUPTA



PHOTO: ROHIT GUPTA



PHOTO: SOHRAB NICHOLSON



The Aspinwall House in Fort Kochi, one of the venues of the Biennale; an installation by Subodh Gupta displayed there.

BOSE KRISHNAMACHARI, RIYAS KOMU ARTISTIC DIRECTOR AND DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMMES OF THE KOCHI- MUZIRIS BIENNALE LOCATION KOCHI

Aside from being the first Biennale held in India—a significant landmark in itself—the Kochi-Muziris Biennale, which began on December 12, 2012 and lasted for three months, was also almost certainly 2013's single most interesting exercise in heritage conservation. More than transforming a popular tourist hub into a major international destination for the arts, the Biennale helped to revive some of historic Fort Kochi's most beautiful structures, making major exhibition spaces that felt almost like exhibitions in themselves. It took the vision of Mumbai-based, Kerala-born artists Bose Krishnamachari and Riyas Komu to recognize the latent potential in one of India's most ancient international ports, and transform that into a contemporary port of call for the global art world. With that vision, Komu and Krishnamachari, along with a few others, injected a fresh energy into Kochi's heritage district and demonstrated a new and creative use for heritage structures across India.
kocbimuzirisbiennale.org

SANCTUM CONSERVATION WORKS

PRINCIPALS **CHETAN RAJ SHRESTHA, UPENDRA GURUNG**
 LOCATION **GANGTOK**

The most obvious fact about India's northeast is just how little most Indians know about it—and particularly about the diversity of heritage structures that make the region one of the country's great undiscovered gems. Chetan Raj Shrestha and Upendra Gurung, among the few restoration architects in India to work almost exclusively in the northeast, have built their careers on the loving and careful restoration of these architectural treasures. In 2013, Sanctum Conservation Works (SCW) worked with Space & Function (headed by architect Subin Pradhan) to complete an 18-month-long restoration project on the MacFarlane Church (*pictured here*) in Kalimpong, on the border of West Bengal and Sikkim, which suffered significant damage during an earthquake in 2011. (Shrestha wrote a feature, titled 'Healing the Past', in *AD's* March-April 2013 issue, *pg 148* detailing the conservation of monasteries in Sikkim.) Currently, SCW is focused on the restoration and stabilization of the humble Hee-Gyathang gompa in the Dzongu region of Sikkim, a continuation of his interest in preserving heritage structures of any scale in his home region.

sanctum.architecture@btmail.com



PHOTOS COURTESY THE MACFARLANE TEAM ARCHITECTS



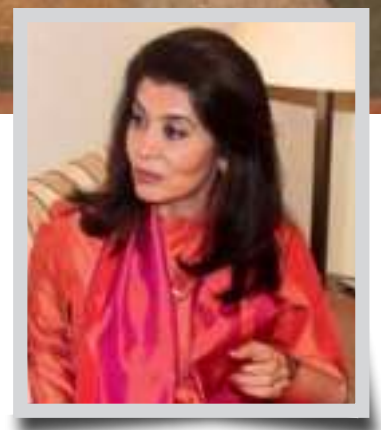
TASNEEM ZAKARIA MEHTA
MANAGING TRUSTEE AND HONORARY DIRECTOR OF DR. BHAU DAJI LAD MUMBAI CITY MUSEUM
 LOCATION **MUMBAI**

As managing trustee and honorary director of this iconic Mumbai museum (*pictured here*), and Mumbai convener and vice chairman for INTACH, Tasneem Zakaria Mehta is an influential voice in conservation and restoration in India. Having conceived and led the restoration of the museum, a project that received the Award of Excellence from the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Heritage Awards in 2005, Mehta has been instrumental in raising awareness about the fragility of heritage structures, and demonstrating the potential impact of careful restoration spearheaded through public-private alliances. This year has seen continued restoration and development of spaces at the museum, particularly the old storage cottage, which is slated to reopen as a brand new space for exhibitions, education, shopping and dining. The announcement at the end of 2013 of a competition to design the museum's new wing attracted interest from a host of contemporary architects, and will likely culminate in significant additions to Mumbai's architectural landscape.

www.bdlmuseum.org



PHOTOS COURTESY DR. BHAU DAJI LAD MUMBAI CITY MUSEUM



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MOST INFLUENTIAL NAMES IN INDIAN ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

CATALYSTS



PHOTOS: TOM PARKER



VIKAS DILAWARI

LOCATION MUMBAI

Few conservation architects in India are so fully committed to the preservation of their hometowns as Vikas Dilawari, who has contributed his skills to major restoration projects on many of Mumbai's most iconic structures. Flora Fountain, Elphinstone College, and the YMCA on Lamington Road have all been brushed up under Dilawari's expert supervision. In 2001, Dilawari received a UNESCO Asia-Pacific special mention for his restoration work on Mumbai's Rajabai Clock Tower, and in 2005, his work at Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Mumbai City Museum earned him the highest honours from the same committee. In 2013, UNESCO Asia-Pacific awarded him both an Award of Distinction and an Award of Merit for his work on the Lal Chimney Compound (*above*) and the Royal Bombay Yacht Club, respectively. Though his work has, thus far, been almost exclusively in Mumbai's heritage precinct, Dilawari has set an example for the rest of India, proving the power of the hyper-local even in one of the world's largest, most diverse nations.

vikasdilawari.com

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MOST INFLUENTIAL NAMES IN INDIAN ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

NEW TRADITIONALISTS



PHOTOS: GAURI SAGAR

CLAY ARCHITECTURE & INTERIORS

PRINCIPAL **AHSAN ANSARI**
LOCATION **MUMBAI**

Though Clay Architecture & Interiors (CLaY) has been actively involved in Mumbai's design scene for the last 20 years, it has maintained the atmosphere, style and client list of a boutique firm. Ahsan Ansari and his team of fewer than 15 architects and designers, have crafted retail spaces for clients like Address Home and Goodearth, and interiors for corporations like Signet Chemical Corporation Pvt Ltd. A favourite among the Bollywood citizenry, Ansari has designed the interiors of Sussanne Roshan's The Charcoal Project and homes for actors Chunky Pandey and Shilpa Shetty. CLaY has also added two stunning spaces to Mumbai's protean restaurant scene, with 36 Oak & Barley (*pictured here*) and Cheval in 2012. Both demonstrate CLaY's keen eye for lighting and distinctive taste for minimal yet dramatic colour palettes, which together create spaces of immense warmth. clay.net.in

PINAKIN DESIGN LLP

PRINCIPALS **MOHAK MEHTA,**
PALLAVI CHOKSI
LOCATION **MUMBAI**

Just a year after launching his lifestyle store in 1984, founder Pinakin Patel expanded his work to include a full design practice. Through that practice and a roster of clients including Max Azria of BCBG Paris and Rajiv Bajaj and companies like the Vedanta Group, the KK Birla Group and Edelweiss Capital, and a host of private homeowners, Patel established himself as one of India's foremost interior designers. In 2013, Patel handed over the reigns to Mohak Mehta and Pallavi Choksi, who continued their predecessor's legacy with projects like the expansive showroom for Arttd'Inox (*pictured*) and two duplex apartments in Mumbai. The injection of new blood into this venerable firm has brought along with it a fresh desire to attract a new clientele that reflects the tastes—and budgets—of Mumbai's young tastemakers. pinakin.in



PHOTO: LAURA RIZZI; COURTESY PINAKIN DESIGN LLP



PHOTO: BRS SREENAG

SOUK

PRINCIPAL **SOUMYA KESHAVAN**
LOCATION **CHENNAI**

“Soumya loves furniture with a story,” says the Facebook page for Souk, the furniture store and design service owned and operated by one of Chennai’s foremost interior designers. Indeed, compared to the sterility that can so often make contemporary homes beautiful but unlivable, Keshavan’s projects always seem to suggest the lives that will be led in them—and often, thanks to her exuberant use of antiques, the lives that the objects themselves have already led. Her interiors, typically of luxurious residences in Chennai (*left*), effortlessly combine elements of Danish modern, teak art deco, indigenous artefacts and contemporary art. With work including restaurant interiors (Sunny’s in Bengaluru and Café Latitude at the Chennai Goodearth franchise, which she also owns), private homes, as well as her own store, Keshavan has truly made herself a force to be reckoned with in south India’s largest city.

soukonline.in



STAPATI

PRINCIPAL **TONY JOSEPH**
LOCATION **CALICUT**

Founded in 1989 in Calicut, Stapati has since established offices in Bengaluru and Kochi, and an associate office in Dubai. Over the years, Tony Joseph and his firm have cultivated a specific style, making inventive and refreshing use of indigenous proportions and materials. In much of his work, Joseph harnesses traditional motifs like sloping rooftops and wooden tracery to create structures, both ageless and contemporary, that embrace the ever-present backwaters of Joseph’s native Kerala. In 2012, Stapati successfully converted a boutique hotel in the forested area of Kabini in Kerala, into the contemporary KaaV Safari Lodge (*pictured here*), demonstrating yet again, its ability to adapt tradition to a modern architectural idiom.

stapati.com



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MOST INFLUENTIAL NAMES IN INDIAN ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

YOUNG TURKS



PHOTO: PRADIP SEN

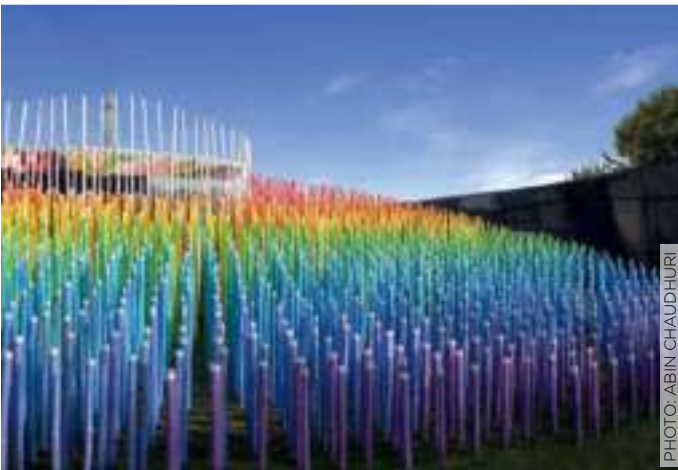


PHOTO: ABIN CHAUDHURI

ABIN DESIGN STUDIO

PRINCIPAL **ABIN CHAUDHURI**
LOCATION **KOLKATA**

In 2012, just seven years after it was founded, Abin Design Studio (ADS) won four international awards in recognition of its International Management Institute (IMI) campuses in Kolkata and Bhubaneswar (*top*), both large-scale municipal structures. In 2013, ADS drew attention for the temporary temple structure it had created from painted and illuminated bamboo shafts (*above*). The structure, which won ADS the top prize at the first annual Kyoorius Awards, demonstrated the unique versatility that the firm carries across industrial design, graphic design, interiors and architecture. ADS is now collaborating with internationally renowned firm, Herzog & de Meuron on the construction of the large-scale Kolkata Museum of Modern Art (KMOMA).

abindesignstudio.com

ANAGRAM ARCHITECTS

PRINCIPALS **MADHAV RAMAN, VAIBHAV DIMRI**
LOCATION **DELHI**

In the course of 2013, Delhi's Anagram Architects (AA) raised its profile in the architecture community, having received a commendation for a project and been shortlisted for two awards. Last year, the firm also completed seven projects across the fields of industrial, residential, institutional and hospitality design. In short, it was a fairly standard year for a firm that seems no less young and vibrant today than it was almost 13 years ago, when it was founded. Perhaps most exciting among the firm's recently completed projects is the 57,550-square-foot Vaansa Eco-Resort (*pictured here*) at Corbett National Park in the foothills of the Himalayas, where AA's architects devised a structure of extraordinary visual and ecological elegance, using locally excavated materials to execute a design that began with a three-part ecological master plan.

anagramarchitects.com



PHOTOS COURTESY: IMARAT CONSTRUCTIONS

ARCHITECTURE BRIO

PRINCIPALS **ROBERT VERRIJT**,
SHEFALI BALWANI
LOCATION **MUMBAI**

Robert Verrijt and Shefali Balwani met in Sri Lanka while working under Channa Daswatte, a protégé of Geoffrey Bawa. Born in The Netherlands, Verrijt had moved to the subcontinent after completing his architecture degree at the Delft University of Technology. Mumbai native Balwani studied architecture in Ahmedabad, then worked under architect Rahul Mehrotra before heading to Colombo. In 2006, they opened their own firm. The two major projects they completed in 2013—the Laureus Learning Pavilion in Karjat, and the ‘House on a Stream’ in Alibaug (*right*)—demonstrate ingenuity and integrity. The former used low-cost materials to create a dynamic space for children at the campus of NGO, Magic Bus; the latter sits, elegant and austere, in its forested surroundings. Both projects respond cleverly and, it seems, effortlessly to their environments, clear marks of great architecture—and, of course, great architects.

architecturebrio.com



PHOTO: SEBASTIAN ZACHARIAH



PHOTO COURTESY ASHIESH SHAH ARCHITECTURE + DESIGN

ASHIESH SHAH ARCHITECTURE + DESIGN

PRINCIPAL **ASHIESH SHAH**
LOCATION **MUMBAI**

You would be hard-pressed to find a more ubiquitous figure in India’s design world than Ashiesh Shah, the wunderkind of the current design scene, who also helmed the inaugural edition of the AD Makeover in 2013, which featured in the magazine’s November–December 2013 issue (*pg 225*). In the years following the 2011 launch of lifestyle store Le Mill, a repurposed warehouse space in one of Mumbai’s dockside slums, Shah’s work has been featured in practically every design magazine in India. And yet you’re unlikely to hear him speak of any of that, except insofar as it informs what he’s working on now—and there is always something. In 2013, Shah launched a weekly column on art and design, curated two successful art and design installations and completed Nido (*above*), one of Mumbai’s most stylish new restaurants, all while continuing private projects.

ashieshsbab.com

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MOST INFLUENTIAL NAMES IN INDIAN ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

YOUNG TURKS

LOTUS

PRINCIPALS **AMBRISH ARORA, SIDHARTHA TALWAR, ANKUR CHOKSI**
LOCATION **DELHI**

This architectural firm has made quite a dramatic impact on interior design across styles and genres. The 45-person team behind Lotus has, in the last year, completed projects in hospitality, retail, commercial and institutional spaces, and added several new awards and nominations to an already staggering list of accolades. The designs that drew the most attention in 2013 were fashion designer Gaurav Gupta's flagship store at the DLF Emporio in Delhi (featured in *AD*'s September-October 2012 issue in 'A Concrete Plan', pg 132) and Jodhpur's Raas Hotel (*top right*). Created in collaboration with Praxis, the hotel was nominated for the 2013 cycle of the Aga Khan Architecture Award, and named Hotel of the Year at the World Architecture News (WAN) Awards. Both projects exemplify Lotus' dynamic responses to distinct environments, from the sinuous industrial lines of Gupta's store, to the seamless integration of the 18th and 21st centuries at Raas Jodhpur.

lotuslink.in



PHOTO: R BURMAN

Amrish Arora



PHOTO: ANDRE FANTHOM; COURTESY RAAS JODHPUR



PHOTO: PRIYA JINDAL

Sidhartha Talwar



PHOTO: PRIYA JINDAL

Ankur Choksi



PHOTO: SHOBITA KADAN

THE BUSRIDE DESIGN STUDIO

PRINCIPALS **AYAZ BASRAI, ZAMEER BASRAI**
LOCATION **MUMBAI**

A young firm defining a new aesthetic language for 21st-century India, The Busride Design Studio (TBDS) has already had a far-reaching impact. This boutique firm of architects and interior and industrial designers has maintained a clarity of vision across cities, media and styles, with an approach to contemporary chic that includes some pretty vigorous winking and nudging. Probably best known for its work in the restaurant space, TBDS has designed interiors for projects like Mumbai's Salt Water Café, the Delhi outlet of Mumbai's iconic seafood joint, Trishna, and interiors for the Smokehouse Deli brand, including its new Indiranagar branch in Bengaluru. The Busride's area of expertise is in maximizing miniscule spaces. Last year, the team took inspiration from origami to craft a modular space for BOING Recording Studio (*left*) in Mumbai, where elaborate 'folds' in the walls and ceiling create a unified, yet efficient recording space. For a firm with projects in each of India's major metros, TBDS has also remained remarkably integrated with, and interested in, its more immediate surroundings in Bandra's 400-year-old Ranwar village, with a continuous campaign to document and preserve the area.

jointbebusride.com

URBANIST

PRINCIPALS **BRIAN DEMURO, PURU DAS, KANU AGRAWAL**
 LOCATION **DELHI**

When architects and designers create living spaces around art collections, the typical approach is to provide a blank canvas. Brian DeMuro, Puru Das and Kanu Agrawal, the Delhi-based designers behind Urbanist, extract colours and motifs and atmosphere to extend the artworks into the surrounding space. With the same keen eye for referential detail that the firm brought for years to its stunning collection of original furniture—still a major part of their practice—Urbanist can amplify and expand even the most minute detail into a grand design. Whether drawing inspiration from jali screens, or pulling unexpected shades of grey and ochre from contemporary paintings, it is this ability to simplify, shrink, magnify and rearrange even the most traditional tropes without ever descending into kitsch that truly sets Urbanist apart. This Delhi apartment (*below*), completed in 2013, is emblematic of their style: playful and sophisticated, plush and spare, elegant and utterly liveable.

urbanist.in



PHOTO COURTESY URBANIST



PHOTOS: ANDRE J FANTHOME; COURTESY VIR.MUELLER ARCHITECTS



The Urbanist team includes architect Kanu Agrawal (*left*), and principals Brian DeMuro (*seated*) and Puru Das (*right*).



VIR.MUELLER ARCHITECTS

PRINCIPALS **PANKAJ VIR GUPTA, CHRISTINE MUELLER**
 LOCATION **DELHI**

Husband and wife duo Pankaj Vir Gupta and Christine Mueller have spent just over a decade establishing their firm, Vir.Mueller Architects (VMA), a creative addition to the architectural landscape in India. Based in Delhi, VMA has been responsible for some of the most starkly beautiful new residential structures in the city, which have also demonstrated the truth behind the firm's claim that "our projects focus on the integrity of material and craftsmanship". Before setting up the firm, both Mueller and Gupta worked in renowned architecture firms in India, Europe and the US, where both partners received their master's degrees. Two magnificent residential structures completed in 2013 confirmed VMA's place among the capital's top architecture firms: an apartment in Delhi that is characterized by pure geometries and elegant plays of light and material; and a private residence (*pictured here*), which manages to make red brick look intermittently like the lightest lattice and the densest granite.

virmueller.com

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MOST INFLUENTIAL NAMES IN INDIAN ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

YOUNG TURKS



PHOTO: KARTHIKEYAN

WEBE DESIGN LAB

PARTNERS **KARTHIKEYAN, MADHUMITHA, MALLI SARAVANAN, PADMAKSHI, SANGEETHA PATRICK, SATISH VASANTH KUMAR, UDHAYA RAJAN, YOGESH**
LOCATION **CHENNAI**

One of the smallest and youngest on our list, WeBe Design Lab (WDL) was founded just over three years ago by a group of architects who had studied together at the School of Architecture and Planning, Anna University in Chennai. Between 2012 to 2013, the firm completed three distinctive projects: the Wood House, Exhibit House and the De Stijl Garden (*above*). The Wood House (recipient of a commendation trophy for innovative interiors at the *Architecture+Design* CERA Awards) brings the lush greenery of the exterior in; the Exhibit House displays objets d'art in the structure of the house itself; the De Stijl Garden, which earned a citation trophy for residential landscape at the 2013 IDF awards, adapts the rigid geometry of the early 20th-century Dutch design movement of the same name into a garden that is equal parts rigorous and lush.

webedesignlab.com

ZZ ARCHITECTS

PRINCIPALS **KRUPA ZUBIN, ZUBIN ZAINUDDIN**
LOCATION **MUMBAI**

Architects Krupa Zubin and Zubin Zainuddin have been pulling in awards by the armful for more than a decade, designing luxurious villas, streamlined corporate towers, residential high-rises and contemporary interiors for restaurants, hotels, retail spaces and private homes. Their work ranges from the sleek and conservative to the daring and bold, adapting itself, chameleon-like, to distinctive needs and environments. Works like the interior of a private apartment in Mumbai (*pictured here*), completed in 2013, encapsulate both sides of their aesthetic personality. A brilliant white interior composed of sculptural light fixtures and furniture that alternates between modernist utility and whimsy, is punctuated by flamboyant bursts of colour and light from the statement artworks placed throughout. Rather than hewing too closely to a single signature style, the duo has made energy and creativity their calling card, allowing it to manifest itself in exciting, distinctive ways with each new project they undertake.

zzarchitects.net



PHOTOS: SEBASTIAN ZACHARIAH

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MOST INFLUENTIAL NAMES IN INDIAN ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

MAXIMALISTS

ABU JANI AND SANDEEP KHOSLA

LOCATION **MUMBAI**

Since meeting for the first time in 1986, Abu Jani and Sandeep Khosla have fashioned themselves as the reigning kings of the grand (preferably gold-leafed) statement. From their work in couture to their shimmering interiors, they have redefined grandiose luxury, layering patterns, styles and periods with a gusto that is as dizzying in its complexity as it is dazzling in its effect. For the past three years though, the Mumbai-based pair have contributed their flair for the dramatic to T2, the vast new terminal at the city's international airport (*pictured*), a building designed and executed by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM). The unlikely pairing has resulted in an array of stunning fixtures and interior elements designed by Jani and Khosla, from hanging lights inspired by lotus diyas to a signature wall created from a wavy metal sheet to mirror the fluidity of a curtain. Together with SOM they also engineered the peacock-feather-inspired columns that are the main feature of the airport. These additions transform the building from a marvellous statement of international design into something more local, more inspiring and altogether more beautiful.

abusandeep.com

PHOTO COURTESY GVK

CHARGED VOIDS

PRINCIPAL **AMAN AGGARWAL**
LOCATION **CHANDIGARH**

It's interesting that India's most austere urban landscape produces some of its greatest adepts at the art of contemporary opulence. Cue Aman Aggarwal and his firm Charged Voids. Founded in 2007, Charged Voids specializes in retail and residential architecture and interiors. The firm took home the top prize in the 'Shops' category at 2013's Inside Awards at the World Festival of Interiors held in Singapore, for the bridal wear store, Tashya (*right*). With tones of copper and burgundy to offset the vibrant colours of the clothing on display, the store plays with traditional Indian motifs to create contemporary interiors.

chargedvoids.com



PHOTO COURTESY TASHYA



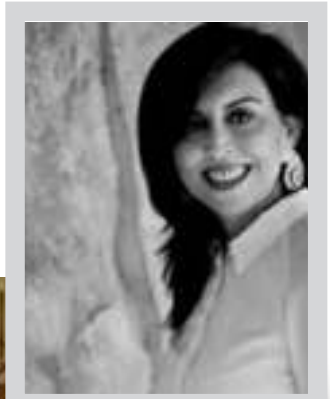
PHOTO: MONTSE GARRIGA

PRISM

PRINCIPAL **VINITA CHAITANYA**
LOCATION **BENGALURU**

Vinita Chaitanya tends to describe her own style as contemporary classic, using elements of classical western design to create a look that captures opulence within the bounds of order and symmetry. Chaitanya got started with her three-year training in the design department of the Oberoi Group in Kolkata, before moving to Bengaluru in 1988, where she found her first independent design job. Since then, her firm has become one of the most sought after interior design outfits among the city's big hitters. Chaitanya's work has, over the years, come to represent an old-world reincarnation of the high life in south India's boom towns, the polar opposite to the minimalist residences that have become the city's signature. Soaring ceilings and grandiose staircases, plush silks and richly patterned wallpaper—in houses like this one in Bengaluru (*below*) that was completed in 2012, Chaitanya deploys these tools with gusto and abandon.

vinitachaitanya.com



NETERWALA & AIBARA INTERIOR ARCHITECTS

PRINCIPALS **PHIROSA NETERWALA, SUNU AIBARA**
LOCATION **MUMBAI**

Over the course of 30 years and 500 different projects, Phirosa Neterwala and Sunu Aibara have cultivated a distinctive sense of the luxurious, built not only on sumptuous materials and fine craftsmanship, but also on unexpected juxtapositions. Six years ago, Neterwala & Aibara Interior Architects (N&A) expanded into Delhi. They opened the office in the capital to serve the growing client base in the city whose intellectually (not to mention materially) rich style well suits the firm's versatile and responsive approach. Like most interior design firms, N&A focuses intensely on the lifestyles and tastes of individual clients. Few, however, have such a formidable client list to contend with, resulting in projects that are remarkably clear-sighted and unaffected. In homes like the private Mumbai residence (*above*) featured in this issue, ('Vertical Limit', *pg 254*), lines and shapes are bold and powerful, drawing the eye towards the delicate miniatures, antique photographs and stunning paintings that transform every surface into a veritable gallery of Indian art. N&A prove, time and again, that 'tradition' in the context of Indian design is as multiple as it is adaptable.

neterwalaaiibara.com



PHOTO: PALLON DARUWALLA

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MOST INFLUENTIAL NAMES IN INDIAN ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

MAXIMALISTS

RASEEL GUJRAL DESIGN

PRINCIPAL RASEEL GUJRAL ANSAL
LOCATION DELHI

You need look no further than this list to see how fashionable minimalism has become in contemporary Indian design. Raseel Gujral Ansal's Casa Paradox, however, rejoices in the playful and the whimsical elements inherent in the Indian approach to colour and pattern without losing sight of the slick, sharp aesthetic of our time. As Gujral put it once in an interview with *Outlook* magazine, "My collection [doesn't] showcase an India of the villages or of splendid heritage, but India as we Indians live it." Gujral has created a design brand that contributes in fields from architecture to home accents and everything in between. Often working in large private homes Gujral rejoices in the use of contemporary lines and technologies to bring the rich tradition of Indian luxury into the 21st century. Take the Gurgaon penthouse (above), completed at the end of 2012, which combines steel, leather and digitally printed wallpaper with the metallic and jewel shades so characteristic of north Indian opulence.

casaparadox.com



VIYA HOME

PRINCIPAL VIKRAM GOYAL
LOCATION DELHI

There's no mistaking a Viya Home creation. Vikram Goyal invests every surface with lustre and life, creating an inimitable tone for glamour, luxury and style. Homes designed by Goyal have appeared in the pages of this magazine twice (in the January-February 2013 issue in the feature titled, 'Gold Rush', *pg 168*, and in the March-April 2013 issue in 'The Dark Arts', *pg 224, left*). Both these homes demonstrate an approach to design that is as rich in detail and meaning as a northern Renaissance still life. Goyal's two major projects completed in 2013—a dramatic apartment in Chennai, and the Vasant Vihar home of a fashionista in Delhi, incorporate, with peerless vigour and creativity, pre-existing art collections—one an eclectic mix of Indian and international artworks, the other a singularly comprehensive collection of Bengal School paintings.

viyabome.com