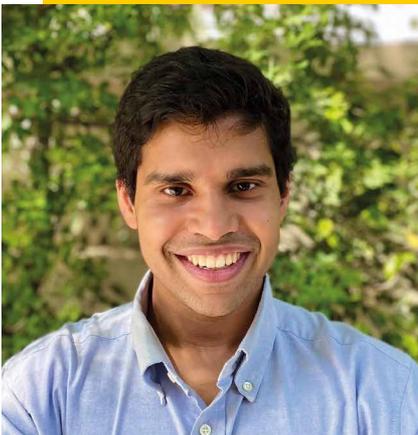


CIQUEL

THE CICO GROUP QUARTERLY

As some one famously said, " We can give our children, just two things - roots and wings." That is true of businesses as well. As a company rooted in 90 years of existence, we are as furiously thrilled by the future as we are proud of the past. The contrast is contagious.

Which is why, I am thrilled to present to you the first edition of CIQUEL, our newsletter. CIQUEL is not about new products, processes or practices. It is about new perspectives not in construction but in constructive thinking. Every issue of CIQUEL will amplify the thoughts that will underscore our tomorrows. It will echo the sentiments of the finest minds in the world of architecture and design.



We hope that you will enjoy it and that it will future-proof your mind. Welcome to what we hope will be an incredible journey. Not just in building great edifices but also building intellect.

ABHIROOP GUPTA

Director

FUTURE PROOFING CONSTRUCTING TODAY FOR TOMORROW

Trend forecasting is important and imperative in any industry and today an entire team of specialised resources are at work to ensure that futures are fashionable, comfortable and secure. That is also the case with the rather mundane construction industry of brick and mortar.

To build for a better tomorrow, the first point of focus has to be the foundation. It has to be strong, protecting it from natural onslaughts like earthquakes and various other dynamic movements of soil and seepage from water tables which would go into weakening them. There are also other chemical and biological attacks to structures, which need to be treated and enveloped by appropriate construction chemicals. These chemical and biological impacts can be in the form of gases with chemical reactions which corrode reinforcement bars or wild vegetation in the form of weeds, roots or bacteria in the soil which also weakens the underground structure.

The modern complexities of buildings, keeping the aesthetics of structures in mind, has forced electrical conduits and water pipes to be installed while being hidden from the naked eye. Utmost care has to be taken at this stage to ensure prevention from future damage to structures. It has been seen very often that the maximum harm and destruction occurs from these areas which more often than not have their effect in another area. This not only weakens walls, looks ugly but is also a health and safety hazard.

Like our human bodies which need to have antibodies and strong inner resistance to attacks from viral, bacterial and fungal infections, so also structures need additives to make concrete durable and sustainable. Protective coatings are imperative to repel the erosive powers of nature, similar to our seasonal clothes, which we wear to protect ourselves and be comfortable in while preventing us from falling ill. Finally, in case of water ingress or any natural abuse, in spite of all preventive action, if there are signs of damage, we need to use repair products like polymers, epoxies, polyurethanes to cure the most unwanted ailments in the structures.

The trend setters work very closely with research and development teams to keep up with modern technologies and solutions which take into consideration all the above to future proof constructions. All stake holders therefore would do well to be aware and keep upbreast of all new and time tested solutions to keep structures safe and users happy. Yet, as Marcus Aurelius said, " Never let the future disturb you. You will meet it, if you have to with the same weapons of reason which today arm you against the present."



ANASUYA GUPTA
Chairperson &
Managing Director



AKSHAT BHATT

Architect

Architecture Discipline

Akshat Bhatt is the Principal Architect at Architecture Discipline, a New Delhi-based multi-disciplinary design practice founded in 2007. His work highlights the emergence of an architectural expression that is contemporary, yet rooted in a critical understanding of regionalism. Bhatt's notable projects include the hotel Mana (Ranapur, 2013), the Discovery Centre townhall at Bhartiya City (Bengaluru, 2014), the India Pavilion at Hannover Messe (Hanover, 2015), and the Corporate Headquarters for The Oberoi Group, Gurugram (2019).

FUTUREPROOFING ARCHITECTURE AND PERMANENCE IN A WORLD WITH AN UNCERTAIN FUTURE.

Architecture is one of the oldest professions in the world. Through its evolution over time, it has always had cultural relationships that span multiple generations. Since building endeavours take up significant time, it is crucial to create built environments that remain relevant for posterity. However, oscillating between novelty and romantic historicism, this aspiration for relevance has been lost. The search for novelty and innovation has now reduced architecture to a luxury that is afforded by the elite. Architects today need to refocus architectural practice to serve the vast majority of society by emphasizing the betterment of civilization over the needs of a certain few and instead, focus on creating an optimistic and inspiring future for humankind.

To do so, we need to create architecture with optimal performance and speed, generating minimal waste by employing technology for maximum results. The romanticism of old school practices has a ghettoizing impact on architecture hence informed practice must be wary of its seduction. With ever-evolving technology, the need for humane, sensitive, and inspirational architectural design is the only constant, and unifying serious architecture design and theory with architectural business is the way forward.

The current pandemic has catalysed a long in-progress shift from cities and architectural practices that focus on mass solutions to ones that are a mix of small self-sustainable and self-reliant communities. As spaces become more multifunctional, our design approach must evolve simultaneously to further the possibilities offered by these challenges. For instance, as homes become offices, can transport vehicles assume the same spatial character to create offices on wheels? Can we shift from mass transport practices to unitized transport?

By countering these challenges, we must ensure that our built environments remain pertinent in the future. In order to do so, we must thrive to create architecture that enables us to meet our current needs whilst ensuring the ability of future generations to fulfil theirs. By changing our patterns of consumption, generating power through alternative means, by exploring models that produce minimal waste, we can take the first few steps towards creating a sustainable, self-reliant, and far-reaching architecture.

Architect Ashiesh Shah, graduated from Parsons School of Design with a degree in Interior Architecture. Finding a semblance between art, architecture and design, Shah has been spearheading his own design firm Ashiesh Shah Architecture + Design, handling various high-end design projects in India and beyond. His clients include Hrithik Roshan, Ranbir Kapoor, Katrina Kaif, Arjun Rampal, Meher Jessica, Abhishek Kapoor, Jacqueline Fernandez, Aditya Roy Kapoor, Cecilia Morelli-Parikh and Hemant Oberoi to name a few. He has been awarded The Most Respected Architect Of The Year by the GROHE Summit, India 2019. He also sits on a special advisory board to the Prime Minister of India.



INTERVIEW WITH ARCHITECT ASHIESH SHAH

1. There has been this constant debate between good design and poor construction. What are your views on the subject?

The primary aspect of design is execution, else it can be confused with conceptual ideation, thus good design is a result of perfect construction, one can't exist without the other. Poor construction is a barrier to good design, the existence of construction disabilities makes the planned design process unsuccessful.

2. How will the role of both design and architecture change in the post-pandemic era?

The pandemic has brought the entire world to a standstill which in turn greatly affects the role of both, design and architecture in the post-pandemic era. People have not only become more aware of their surroundings, but also more conscious of their purchases. Characteristics like comfort, safety, security and thresholds will be redefined in entirety. Besides an obvious change in workspaces, a changed mindset with respect to the value for design, open plans and circulation patterns will prevail. Lastly, yet most importantly, people will think more local and depend on regional resources.

3. How will design and architecture change with the emergence of millennials as new clients?

Millennials are more certain of what they want which could either be advantageous or disadvantageous to the design and architectural world. They are more open-minded and willingly take on challenges of exploration. While the value of design has never been fully defined, millennials not only understand this value but redefine it through recontextualisation of aesthetics, practicality and purpose.

4. What is your moral compass when it comes to your practice?

As a practice we imbibe a 'less is more,' philosophy through an overarching 'wabi-sabi' aesthetic. Years of spearheading my own design practice has only illustrated the importance of patience, simply trust the process.



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