

MY SPACE : MANISH GULATI

OPOLIS ARCHITECTS UNCOVERED

DESIGN DESTINATION : GALLE

# HOME REVIEW

VOL. 13 ISSUE 1 JANUARY 2014 TOTAL PAGES 138

RS 100 HOME-REVIEW.COM



STARCK YET AFFORDABLE  
THE MAMA SHELTER, BORDEAUX

INDIGO DELI 3.0 BY  
SAMEEP PADORA AND ASSOCIATES

## SERENITY BY DESIGN

RAJIV SAINI'S STATEMENT OF ELEGANCE

## THE MARKETPLACE

Get your hands on the latest products to hit the market

135



### SERVED WITH A TWIST OF LEMON

Functional segregation of spaces balanced by colour and clever use of materials are the marked features of this stock broking firm designed by Design Office

### Beautiful Mélange

126

The "Fusion Access and Portside Café" in Mumbai highlights subtle segregation in order to maintain the identities of the two different brands it hosts



121  
product designer

From furniture to fashion, Milan-based designer Ilaria Marelli has created dozens of products which are simple, but with a contemporary twist.



Landscapes  
DESERT ROSE  
114

Landscape designer Chad Roberts adds his own brand of magic to a house in Arizona. Using native plants he capitalises on the stunning natural beauty of the region



109  
2+2 = 22

The renovated Kazi residence designed by the firm Design Office offers several handy ideas that can be easily mirrored in other small apartments

### MANISH GULATI

24

India too has had maturity for years and there are outstanding works of Indian architects for all to see.



### Cover Story

Rajiv Saini's keen eye for detail and refined aesthetic punctuates the clean lines and white tones of this home with a medley of distinctive furniture pieces and accessories



ART FOR 36

Artist Kellie Cox-Brady creates detailed botanical paintings that stand exposed on outdoor walls and public spaces

JAN

### GREEN SPEAK

106  
J.B.CAEIRO & F.CAPURSO



GREEN PROJECT

The Kovai Villa in Coimbatore is a beautiful, energy-efficient home whose open scheme ensures a constant communion with the hills that surround it



UNCOVERED  
94  
Opolis Architects, treats every project as a complex personality - its research not just covers statistics, but delves into "character, image and symbolism" as well

108  
GREEN PRODUCTS

"Learn the rules well before you break them."

This statement is emphatically endorsed by the young Delhi based architect Manish Gulati, who by defying conventions is actually redefining them. Manish who is the founding principal at Manifestation of Fluid Architecture (M:OFA) strongly advocates that architecture is like an organism which evolves and grows with time and hence the design should never be static or restrictive.

In the seven years since its inception, M:OFA has successfully graduated from designing houses to now executing large scale international stadiums. The firm's work generates from an intense stimulation invigorated by life itself. Each project undertaken by the firm goes through exhaustive research and interactions to eventually derive intuitive spaces. Manish believes that a sustainable ideology can never be an isolated entity and should be a part of an all-inclusive process of design.

M:OFA brings together seemingly divorced philosophies and yet manages to create integrated indigenous designs; stellar examples being an apartment in Noida with futuristic leanings and a cohesive approach for the ITM School of Business in Gwalior which account for some of their recent works.

Read on to get inspired...



# MANISH GULATI

*my space*

Interview by Shweta Salvi

**When did you realise architecture was your true calling?**

I was always good with fine arts. My childhood is dotted with days filled with painting, arts and crafts, soap carving, model making, and clay cities during festivals. Intuitively I was already on this path, it came together to me as a realisation in high school having understood what architects actually do. I knew then that this is what I want to do.

*Design is never ever static and yes from the drawing board to execution multiple changes happen for multitude of reasons.*

**You believe that design concepts are static but when they translate into built forms they adapt and grow just like an organism. Could you elaborate on that idea?**

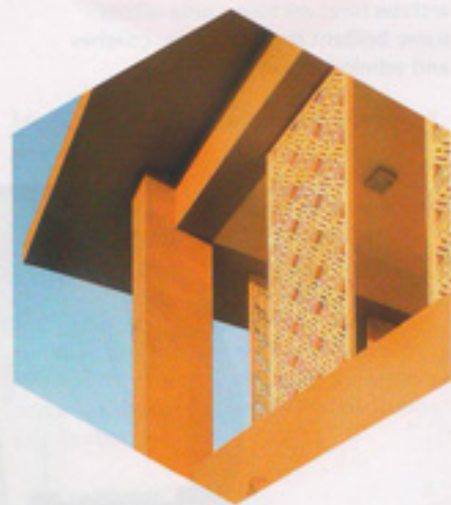
When we design a concept, it is intended to be contextual, adapt & respond to time yet it remains relatively static in comparison to nature which is vast and unpredictable. Time adds its own variables of pressures, usage and change. So we have to leave certain things incomplete, we have to leave those gaps for growth, change and adaptability. We have to leave those breathing spaces which lets a building grow organically over time and changes the building as well.

**Tell us something about the project you designed that finally led to the brand 'M:OFA'...**

M:OFA has been a journey, a journey through time, clients, concepts, realizations and projects. It's been a journey of learning and experience. Each project shaped us, each client taught us. So M:OFA is as much our journey as it is of all those who formed, touched or played a part on the way. This intentions and assimilation is M:OFA.

**A great amount of research and thought goes into your design concepts. Does it go through major modifications when they actually get built?**

Design is never ever static and yes from the drawing board to execution multiple changes happen for multitude of reasons. We aim for perfection in our concepts and drawings so that the changes are as minimal as possible on site. Every line has a reason to be and connects many other dependent lines, functions, services and structures. While adhering to the principal concept, minor changes on site due to site conditions and ease of construction are taken into account and carried out accordingly.



M:OFA is a multi-disciplinary firm that dabbles in varied design fields which require equally diverse design approaches. How do you keep a check on technical and creative aspects without getting carried away?

A good strong concept is a pre-requisite for any project being done by M:OFA. We are here to do just that. Having said that, the single rule in the office that we follow is: Brilliant concepts need even more brilliant working.

Your recent work includes a couple of sport complexes too - and we know sports architecture is not given much importance in India. How difficult is it working on such projects when you encounter rigidity and indifference from the authorities?

In a country where sports is synonymous with and restricted to Cricket, we are fortunate to narrate a different story. In the past 7-8 years doing sports architecture, we have come across some brilliant sports players, coaches and administrators.



We were glad to have an audience with Pullela Gopichand, Saina Nehwal, Mansher Singh, Adhiraj Singh and Dr Mutthaiya whose commitment, excellence and zeal towards their sport were the guiding factors for us while designing the infrastructure. We designed for grassroots to international match playing conditions.

The department of sports we dealt with were very much in sync with sports coaching, players and facilities across the world. Contemporary Indian movies made on sports, our recent Olympic and other wins have definitely changed the mindsets of people, players as well as administrators/politicians.

How has participating in competitions helped your practice?

Competitions makes us sharper. We relied heavily on our own work which means reinventing and constant learning to keep abreast. Our strengths and weaknesses both come to the fore and we constantly work towards becoming better. It's taught us to deal with both failures and success in a balanced manner. We never take any of our projects and works for granted. Each body of work gets our undivided attention.



Do you believe the scale of a project is detrimental to creativity? What are the creative difficulties working on, for instance, a township as opposed to a small residence?

There are many more variables to deal with when the scale is larger. You are then not dealing with an individual but designing for a society.





It requires more research, more in depth study of variables and conditions and a lot of number crunching but by the end each scale has its own fun has as much creativity to offer.

We see progressive architecture practiced across the globe... when do you think India will achieve similar design maturity? Are we anywhere near it?

Every piece of Architecture is practiced the way it is because of a context or an absence of one. India too has had maturity for years and there are outstanding works of Indian Architects for all to see.

The client needs to also have a sense of clarity and exposure to be able to get that quality from not just the niche architects but from the rest as well.

Sustainable architecture is a crucial consideration that needs to be incorporated in all our future construction endeavours. How can we bring about a perfect synthesis between 'out-of-the-box' yet sustainable architecture?

Sustainability too is an out-of-the-box thinking. I think seeing them as two sides of the same coin brings in a lot of synthesis as it is.



Apart from that, being technologically forward and informed does not mean necessarily being against nature. Technology can support nature and nature adapts to technology. Some of the most brilliant and outstanding architectural works across the world had a balance of both.

On a lighter note, any 'must haves' when you sit at your drawing board?

*India too has had maturity for years and there are outstanding works of Indian architects for all to see.*

My two cups full of coffee and sharpened pencils.

Which technology/gadget do you think holds the potential to change the future?

The Smart phone: the way we access, combine and synchronise data, news, images. It's changing the way our brain perceives, stores, processes and functions information.

✉ [contact@mofastudio.com](mailto:contact@mofastudio.com)