



A Pearl in a Desert

Fashion is an incredibly hectic, and fast-paced industry, even for those still anticipating to make an entrance to the field. Students in fashion faculties sacrifice their beauty sleep and times with loved ones to finish sketches and amend stitching. In the infamous Indian dry, hot, desert-like climate, it's imaginably challenging for these eager students to stay focused, but thankfully for those attending the Pearl Academy of Fashion in Jaipur, India, it is so well-designed that it manages to overcome the disheartening heat.

STORY BY Natasha Gan PHOTO BY Andre J Fanthome and Edmund Summer



The Pearl Academy of Fashion ranks second in India's top 10 fashion design institutions. Architects from Morphogenesis help sustain the institution's 20-year legacy by designing a worthy establishment to house their emerging fashion designers-to-be. Given the limited budget of an institution, and the expensive resource-hungry artificial climate control systems, the natural climate proved to be a challenge in maintaining a reasonable condition within the school.

The designers resorted to modern adaptations of traditional Indo-Islamic architectural tricks. The three-acre building is in a double-skin shell derived from 'Jaali', or perforated stone screens, serving as an insulator between the building and its surroundings. Jaali serves as an apt choice for its functionality — it blocks sun rays without turning the school into a bunker but instead, it allows daylight to diffuse through for natural lighting, and it casts

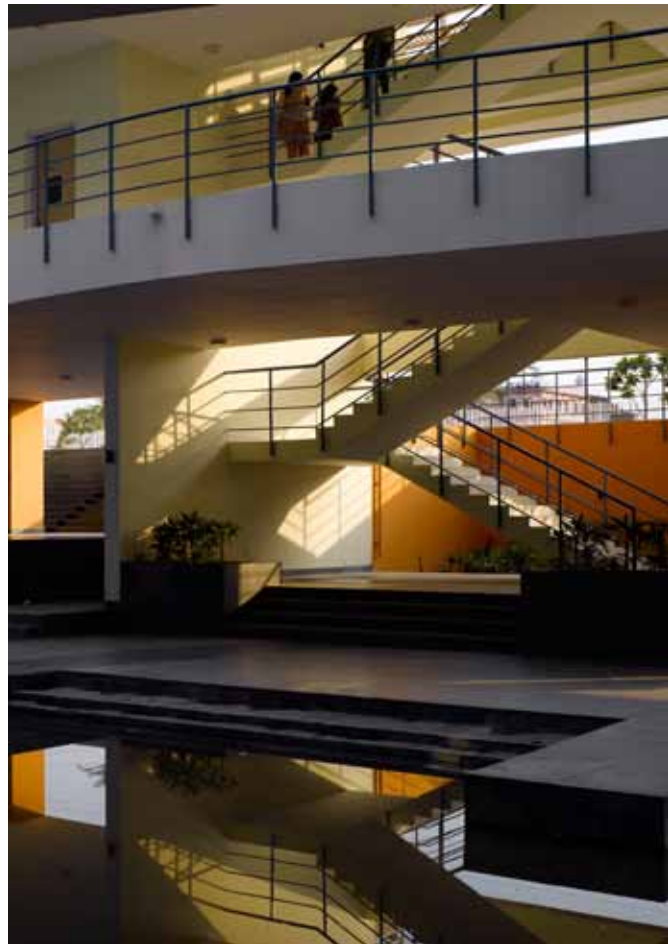
A PEARL IN A DESERT
CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT

— Facade of the academy, showing the multifunctional *Jaali*

— The radiant orange wall bears the ornamental shadow in daytime

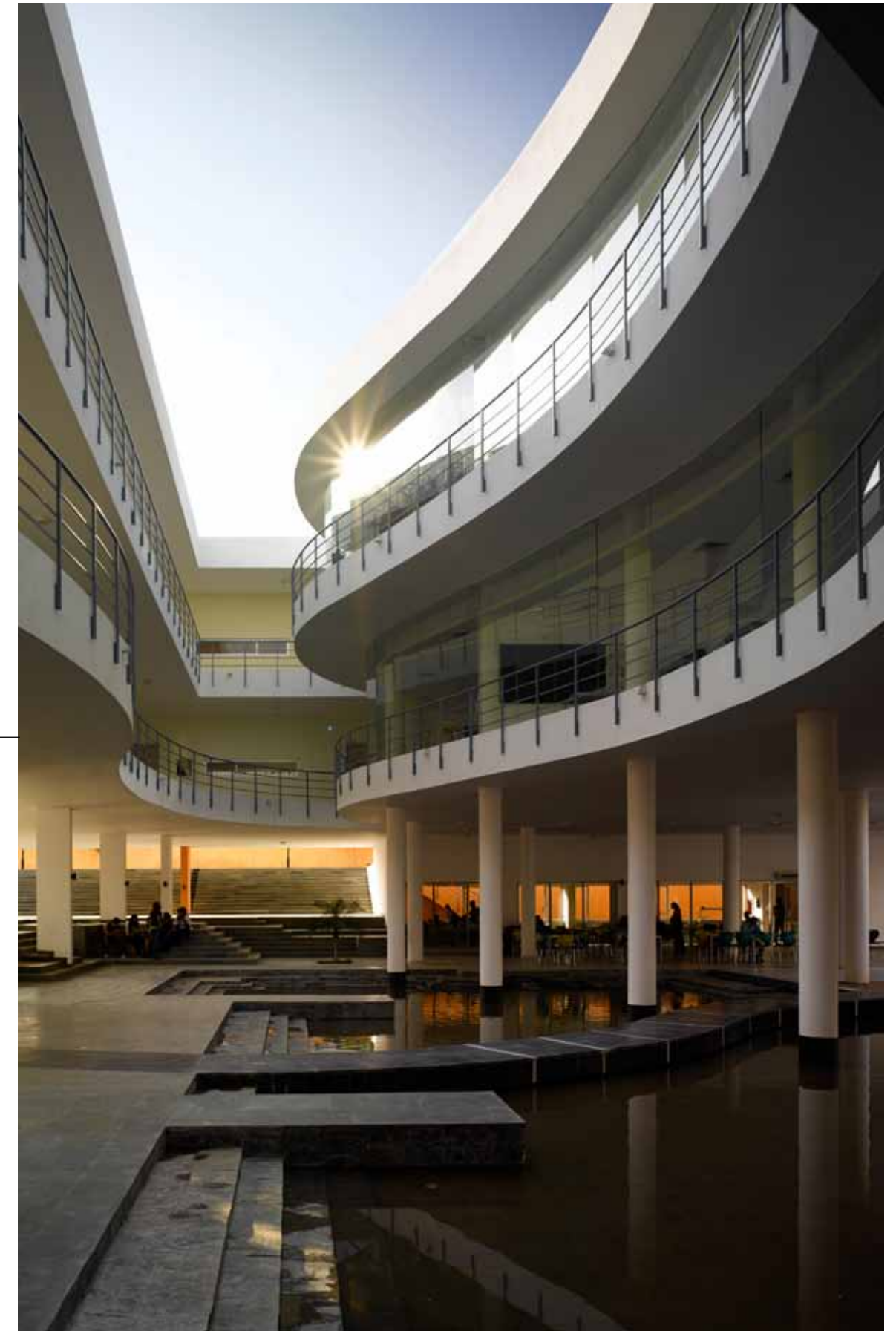
— The signature open ceiling of The Pearl Academy of Fashion

— The steps around the banks of the small pond make a good rejuvenating spot



A PEARL IN A DESERT
CLOCKWISE FROM RIGHT

- The white-dominated design paired with chrome floors develop a sleek, professional vibe.
- Contemporary yet energy efficient design by Morphogenesis Architects
- Balconies overlook the academy's very own cooling oasis
- The meandering ceilings as seen from above



ornamental shadows that decorate the orange walls of the school.

Within the Pearl Academy, sits a little artificial oasis of recycled water that cools the atmosphere, shaded by palm trees and surrounded by steps for students to let off steam. As they sit down and look up, they'll find the ceiling opens, surrounded by meandering balconies, revealing a sliver of the sky. Likewise, the others experiencing the hasty fashion work in the workshops upstairs are invited to peek out the balconies to take a moment and enjoy both the soothing, serene vibe from the well and the sky. Sometimes the banks also serve as an exhibition hall.

Constructed of a mix of local stones, steel, glass and concrete, the Pearl Academy of Fashion is deftly designed, without marginalizing their goal to be energy efficient. The establishment embodies the ideology the institute lives by — cutting edge design with a sustainable approach. **ID**



Project Data

- **Project Name**
Pearl Academy of Fashion
- **Location**
Jaipur, India
- **Land Area**
12, 250 sqm (3 Acres)
- **Client/Developer**
Pearl Academy of Fashion
- **Architecture Consultant**
Morphogenesis
- **Landscape Designer**
Oracles
- **Electrical Consultant**
Integral Designs
- **Civil & Structural Consultant**
N M Roof Designers Ltd.
- **Main Contractor**
R G Colonizers Pvt. Ltd
- **Completed**
2008