

Inside Outside

THE INDIAN DESIGN MAGAZINE

www.insideoutside.in

ISSUE 381

MAY 2017

₹100



**A residence and an apartment in Vadodara
by architects Tanvi Rajpurohit and Archis Patel**

book review

Two decades of milestone buildings showcased

REVIEW: AMITA SARWAL

Between the covers of this extensively detailed book lies Sonali and Mani Rastogi's 20 years' architectural and design journey through a collection of projects representing the timeline of the architects' work and design philosophy being enhanced through their maturing experience.

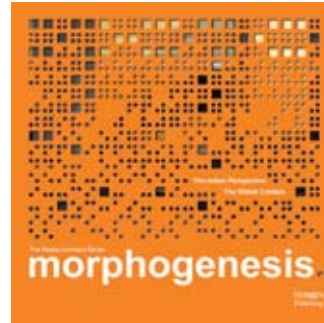
Covered by a flaming orange 'slotted jaali' – a favorite design idiom of the couple – the cover provides a symbolic 'second skin' giving a peek of the graphically designed hardbound cover.

Included here are 26 of the firm's significant works, each seeking to highlight a specific aspect of their design approach and subsequent learnings, with a highly motivating one in each section. All these buildings sit comfortably on their sites and naturally integrate with the milieu. The design flow is physically comfortable and aesthetically inspiring.

Sustainability, defined as 'the ability to endure in local conditions and thrive in its lifecycle...' is Morphogenesis' core focus. This links the three sections – Passive Design, Resource Optimisation and Contextual Identity. One example, my personal choice, is given from each of these groups.

Under Passive Design is the Jaipur-based Pearl Academy. Surrounded by the Rajasthan deserts, the institution is given a 'double skin' to provide air, light, privacy and protection from the searing heat. Additionally, the building goes deep under – inspired by the traditional baolis or stepwells to modulate surrounding temperatures, keeping it 27 deg C while outdoors it could be 45 deg – or more.

The 400-acre Uttorayon Township, exemplifies Resource Optimisation. Situated in Siliguri, the prime challenges were location (foothills of the Himalayas),



Morphogenesis: The Indian Perspective. The Global Context.

Publisher: The Images Publishing Group Pty Ltd., Australia, 2016.

PAGES: 224

PRICE: ₹3,800 (approx.)



Exterior façade of the Pearl Academy, Jaipur.



The outer skin sits 4 ft away from the building and reduces direct heat gain.

The Pearl Academy building is protected from the environment by a double skin.

book review




Cover graphics: collaboration between Nicole Boehringer (Images Publishing) and Natasha Suri (Morphogenesis).

maximum precipitation levels (three metres rainfall annually) and affordability (tier 2 price point). The self-contained township sets an example by being self-sustainable, ecologically and economically viable, and culturally and socially in harmony with its context – all factors still quite exceptional by Indian standards.

The final chapter is on Contextual Identity, which loosely translates into tying the building in with a sense of belonging, 'a rooting in local context' – giving it a personality, a distinctiveness. The eco-friendly Kumarakom Resort in Kerala's backwaters, a former shrimp farm, blends with its local milieu. The traditional matrilineal Kerala homestead and houseboats remain the strong referal architectural point. More critical was 'touching the earth lightly' in working around the existing topographical restraints of alternating strips of land and water, and a changing water level. Collectively, this resulted in 'a masterplan with interlocking movement systems of roads, pathways and waterways linking the villa clusters'.

Merging each regional language with contemporary lines and structure, the book highlights the bold form and fluid fusion of each spatial arrangement. Designing, to the Morphogenesis team, is akin to searching for the ideal solution which combines site, climate, culture and usage, culminating into an aesthetic whole.

In a nutshell, the pages describe the Rastogis' work as a fine balance between technical fastidiousness and poetic interpretation of space – always keeping Sustainability in context.

Overall, Morphogenesis: The Indian Perspective. The Global Context is a serious guide for students of architecture and members of the faculty – and yet handsome enough to be an addition to coffee table volumes in the most discerning of homes. 



Kumarakom Resort, Kerala.



Positioned in the interface between the city and the township, City Centre creates a much-needed, organised commercial district for Siliguri.



Uttarayan's City Centre is one of the largest commercial developments in Eastern India.



Uttarayan Township in Siliguri comprises high-quality infrastructure of each cluster of 20 plots, structured around communal greens and water bodies.