

EXTERIOR IMPRESSIONS

The first element that you notice of a building is definitely its form and profile. The main factors adding up to its profile are its exterior facade, its roof and the windows. These exterior components are important for structural stability, improved performance and an appealing look.

This month Home Review brings products in the windows, roofing and facades categories from villa windows that can fit a grill in a uPVC window to those that have dust and sound proofing properties.





SONALI RASTOGI MORPHOGENESIS

What is the importance of a building's facade and roofing system?

A facade is essentially the skin of the building which is holding it together, visually. So, yes facade and roofing is what essentially makes the building.

What are the best materials available for facades and roofs in terms of quality, strength and aesthetics? Which one is your favourite?

Given the diversity of dimates, given the diverse needs of sustainability, and given that the skin of the building which is the facade and the roof are the interface between the inside and the outside, to pre-determine what is the best material will be unfair.

Architecture is contextual and the context varies on place, on dimate, on sustainability, on the identity we wish to achieve and on the economic criteria. So to particularly choose one favourite is inappropriate premise to begin with. But quality is what matters, if a facade and roof is qualitative and if it responds to the above mentioned facts, it is the best one for its purpose.

▲ The building facade of the Apollo Tyres Corporate Office, Gurgaon is fragmented, a series of broken angular planes in glass and aluminum. While varied and tectonic material is used in the sculptural fire escape staircase in rippling stainless steel.

▼ Brick, brick jaalis and other simple finishes form the interface between the interior conditioned space and the outside environment and act as insulators and light filters to control and modulate inside conditions at the Integrated Campus for IILM.





▲ The Pearl Academy of Fashion has a double skin 'jaali', prevalent in Rajasthani archited ure which acts as a thermal buffer between the building and the surroundings. The outer skin reduces the direct heat gain through fenestrations.

▼ The facade of JRE Group of Institutions was designed with Jaali screens in the shape of louvers that closely follow the summer path of the sun across the facade providing maximum shade during summer while allowing in maximum light during winter.

As for aesthetics, it's a subjective matter and it can be derived out of any of the contexts - sustainability, local culture, local craft, imageability. So to be able to pin down aesthetics is very difficult.

Please name a project with an exceptional exterior (windows, roo fing and facade solution) by an architect that you admire.

Choosing one thing from the plethora of built environment around the globe is almost impossible. But yes, I admire contextual responses of Rajasthani architecture which dealt with the extreme environment in a very beautifully optimal way.

Sometimes when the technology itself is a generator of an interesting new form, I admire that. I also admire, when the building skin performs to all the desired criteria and yet makes the inside-outside of the building almost one.

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