

CASA

VOGUE

INDIA

PLUS
RASEEL
GUJRAL
ANSAL
KARIM
RASHID
BY DOSHI

THE
ULTIMATE
DIRECTORY

64 design
destinations for
your home

WELCOME TO
TWINKLE
KHANNA'S
FABULOUS & FASHIONABLE MUMBAI HOME



"I'm the
breadth and
she's the depth"

—MANIT RASTOGI

TWO BECOME ONE

Sonali Rastogi believes her relationship with Manit is "difficult but complementary" and she "wouldn't have it any other way"

**SONALI RASTOGI, 47,
AND MANIT RASTOGI,
45, *Morphogenesis***

HUSBAND AND WIFE, DELHI

"If I look at a hastily-done sketch by Manit, I know what he's going to do next. And when he sees me working in a crazy, chaotic manner, he just smiles because he sees the method in my madness. We've evolved to unspoken communication," says Sonali Rastogi. As husband-wife and founder partners of one of India's leading architecture firms Morphogenesis, which offers a range of services (architecture, interior design, environmental design consultancy) and has been lauded for its green approach to design, being in-sync is key. "It's about functioning as a single entity, a relationship that's 'difficult but complementary.'" And since we all know couples aplenty wherein the most narrowed eyes and hard nudges on the side don't work as hints, this subtle communication is an achievement.

WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE

For the two graduates of the School of Planning and Architecture, Delhi, it's an even greater feat—it wasn't love at first sight when they met. As Manit puts it, "Architecture school in the '80s was very socio-politically charged and I was pondering over larger societal concerns while Sonali, the architectural purist, was immersed in studies. We didn't bond until a chaotic study trip (three days in a train, no accommodation in Goa in the month of December); we realised, while we had different interests, they were—and continue to be—very complementary."

ALL IN A DAY'S WORK

This discovery led to the birth of the studio in 1996, where Manit focuses on ideation while Sonali is drawn to execution—interchangeably. Says Sonali, "We've never followed gender stereotypes—we do things based on who the best person for the job is. Working with a spouse, he's dealing with the same issues and understands my architecture-immersive life." But it's not all smooth sailing, as having a spouse-partner means they risk taking each for granted, and impasse-breaking discussions become endless. Conversations—that have prompted family to title them the couple that "only talks to each

other and makes time for no one else"—have made Manit a "better listener" and Sonali to absorb Manit's opinions and then carry out ideas instead of jumping in. As Manit so ably describes, "I'm the breadth and she's the depth—together we're the synaptic glue that holds the home and practise together." ■