

domus

INDIA

046

LA CITTÀ DELL' UOMO

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THE STATE OF ARCHITECTURE
IN INDIA

OMA IN MOSCOW

PRADA INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX,
VALVIGNA, ITALY



Cover: The Garage Museum of Contemporary Art, Gorky Park, Moscow is a recently completed overhaul by OMA. The design reinterprets a derelict public venue along the lines of a new spatial concept suited to the needs of a lively museum that promotes contemporary artistic culture. Seen here is the wide-open space of the central hall, where structural elements are left exposed. In this issue we also feature the Industrial Complex for Prada in Italy designed by Guido Canali, as well as an interview with the curators of the forthcoming exhibition, 'The State of Architecture' which will be held from January to March, 2016 in Mumbai, India.



The concept-image of the architectural lighting by Collaborative Architecture that has been conceived as foliage which stems from the anchoring element – the central column.

THE GEOGRAPHY OF THINGS Kaiwan Mehta

What does a magazine do? It reflects its times, and reflects upon the happenings and shape of things in those times. It makes choices, no doubt, but it will be generous to spread wide (though not thin) and incorporate the many practices and ideas that exist. Every choice of inclusion, for a discussion, is developed for multiple reasons – as the magazine is also to indicate the pulse of the profession, its valences as well as its dilemmas. Much is produced in this country, in this region, and it is varied – as varied as the different kinds of shapes of leaves on the earth – in such a scenario to grapple and grasp the many trajectories of existence becomes very important. The magazine, at times, becomes a portfolio of its times, no doubt critically compiled, but yet a portfolio.

In what ways do we understand our times? Do we need time and space to reflect 'on our times'? Or can we stand right inside our times, and take a 360-degree overview? The latter is the need of this day and age; and for anyone who thinks history and theory are important pegs on which practices and philosophies are imagined and produced, this activity of reflecting on our own times will be necessary. It will not be about reflecting on our times from a historical perspective, but it will be reflecting on the 'now' being conscious of its (this time's) own terms and conditions; nothing will stop us from being critical of these terms and conditions though. The self – the practitioner, the architect, the designer, the author – will be the loci through which time-now can be mapped, possibly.

Small interventions, missed ideas, struggling attempts, will be as important as masterpieces, grand visions, bold attempts, and resolved thoughts. The magazine then emerges as a catalogue of entries, an encyclopaedia that is shaped over time, month after month. As architecture grows and groans its life and times will be noted in the pages of one issue after another. As architecture produces the human material world, it builds a sense and shape of time-now and time-to-come; and it does so as much in the misses as much as in the resolved incidents; that different pieces of architecture are the different incidents and instances one is grappling to record and understand.

The act of recording is an important one. It may work out systems of classification, orders of organisation – locally applicable than for

any universal application. To decide what object is sitting next to which one, what idea is sharing space with which other idea – produces a thought-scape, one that is reflective but only provisional. A magazine does that issue after issue, connecting between its pages, but at many times across its different volumes and editions. An exhibition does this more spatially, in a geography of objects. Exhibitions are occurrences distributed over time; but they too are collations and reflections. The exhibition has emerged more and more as the active space for thinking, rather than only a space for engaged/disengaged appreciation. An exhibition may tell a story, but it may also ask you to build one for your own self. An exhibition may be introspective, rather than retrospective. One is again, in that sense, thinking through the mode of the exhibition of time-now, the contemporary moment.

The magazine or the exhibition produce models of reflection, not just occasions for review. The reader or the viewer will have to enter not to simply see (review) what is presented but to actively work with what is structured within that organisation of objects and ideas. History and theory are made active in a model of placing objects, even if not obviously presented. The objects will be viewed in their context of other objects and not singular features or exhibits. It is not a bookshelf where you pull out individual books for reference and imagine the organisational model is only for your convenience of searching the right thing at the right hour. The magazine or the exhibition record not as a listing of convenience, but as a listing of thoughts; to produce maps of objects. As we shape one more issue of *Domus India*, and simultaneously move closer to the final shape of the exhibition *The State of Architecture*, co-curated along with Rahul Mehrotra and Ranjit Hoskote, many thoughts are tossing around in one's head. Many ideas as well as many arguments and concerns, or disturbances, that are shaping this exhibition developed under the aegis of the Urban Design Research Institute, and to be showed at the National Gallery of Modern Art, Mumbai for nearly three months are captured in an interview with the three curators. This issue of the magazine looks at projects that are not monumental, or large and big, but interventions in the landscape of the built

environment we are occupying today. The built environment we live in today is a new form and shape, it has its own self-image and many architectural jobs are about making sense of this new emerging landscape. As we recede from the bird's-eye view to the workings inside corners of the built world, we try and understand what objects are shaping our time, and in what ways do these objects meet our everyday lives. As we look at aerial photography and its ways of projecting the big picture, the new objects of intervention at the urban scale such as the flyovers and clover-leaf junctions become obvious, but then we also see the urban reality as a kaleidoscope of juxtaposed impressions, as superimposed images, again from within which very clear details will emerge; very material everyday living details will distill out of these kaleidoscopic pools. Do these details have a further reality? We look at a few designed details – details of spaces that do not stand bold and tall in the public sphere but are interventions in the urban geography of things. Some details shape under pressures of time and place, conditions of the everyday life and politics design them – the Sintex-tank landscape or the blue tarpaulin facade, or the corrugated sheet ground-plane. However, the world of design has also developed materials and expertise to manufacture the 'design of corners' – miniature parts of the mega world we live in, they are crafted and shaped with use of high-end technology, industrially manufactured special quality materials, using all principles of 'form, space, order' and many existing 'pattern language(s)'. Design engages in the production of corners – fine development of a 'species of spaces' that are indeed shaping the contemporary environment of living and action. We begin to address these 'species of spaces' from this issue on in a more conscious way. This geography of spaces and design (designed objects, material-elements, composition of detailing) is an important emergence in the times of urban pressure and development, where economies are producing terrains and corners of varying kinds and intensities.

The magazine, the exhibitions, map these terrains and geography of things, these 'species of spaces' which are the new 'corners of design' making for the 'design of corners'! **km**



PROJECTS

Collaborative Architecture

REFLECTED TOPOGRAPHY

The skilful use of the dynamic expressions of materials and lighting pushes the boundaries of public space design benchmarks, making architectural lighting the *raison d'être* defining the space – not just in terms of style and aesthetics, but as tectonic manipulation of the space

Text Kaiwan Mehta
Photos Lalita Tharani, Manish Gala

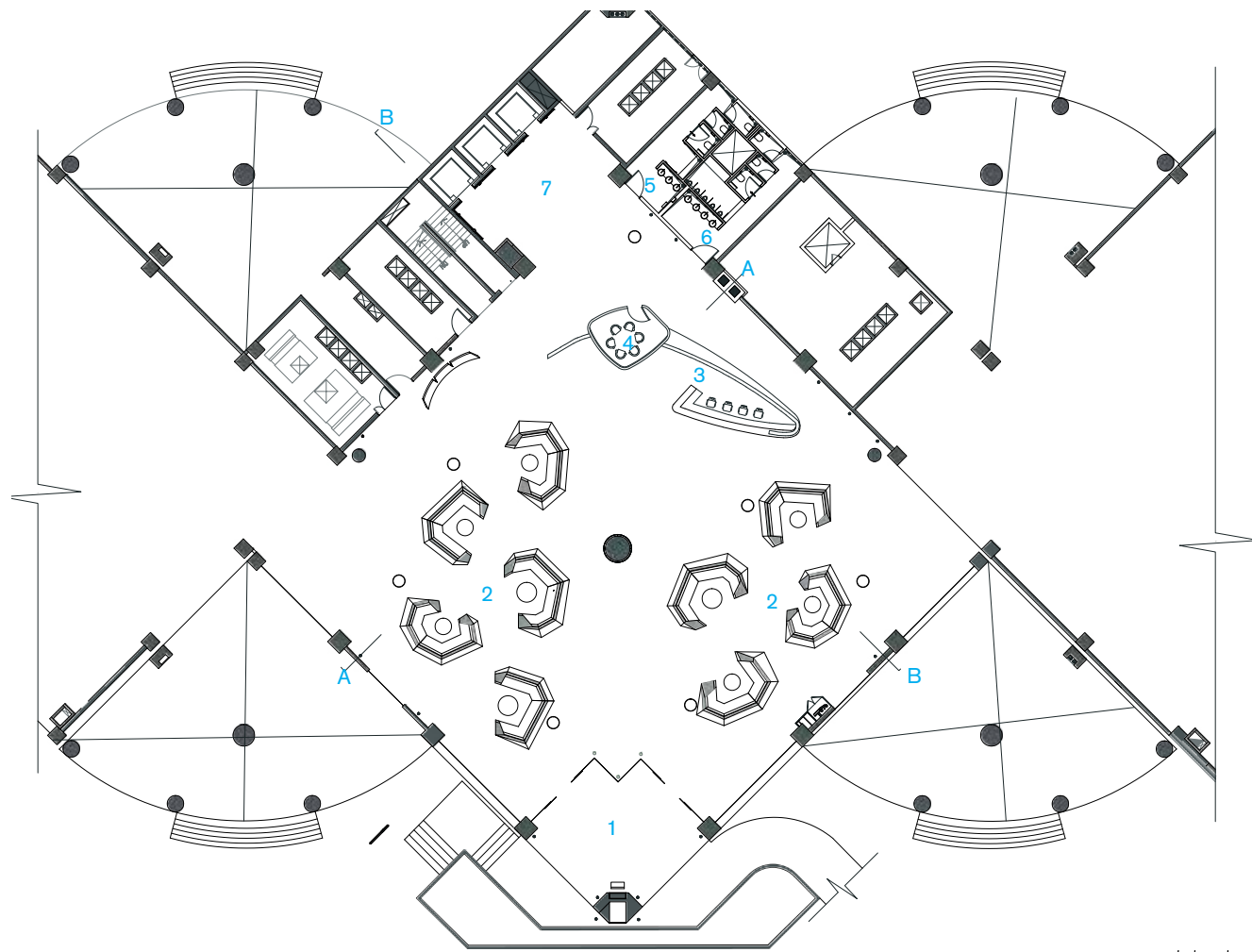


This spread: the concept sketch and view of the architectural lighting that has been conceived as foliage which stems from the anchoring element – the central column

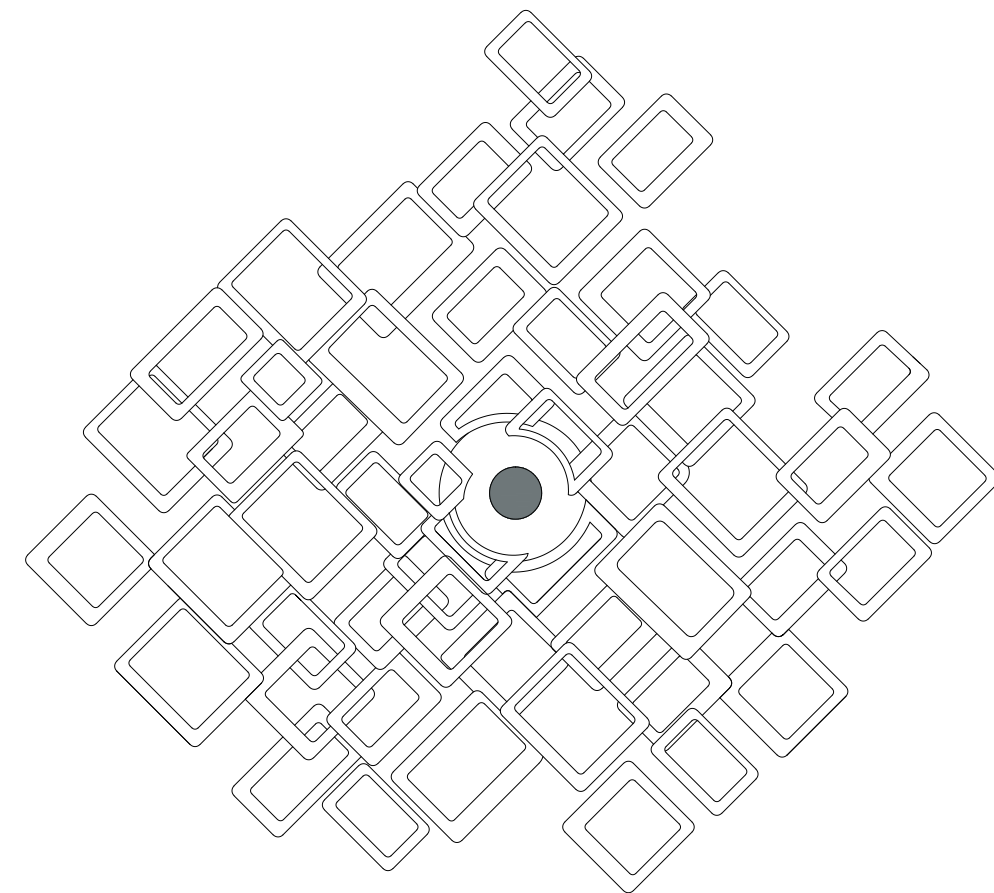
Dramatic and dynamic are two words that would surely define this project; a project that produces an architectural endo-space within an exoskeleton. The inner-shell-space is created by employing elements that are disparate but through design partner with each other to produce a singular narrative. The public space is a shrine to light – not in a reverential sense but in a celebratory way; and that is where the project is totally focussed. Each of the different elements – rings of light, illuminated floating grid, geometric scoops that allow seating, reflective surfaces versus the structural grid of the ceiling play an independent role; they are made coherent through the

brightness of light. The space-shrine is constructed through a series of floating design-devices. The central column is the strongest ornamental element independently occupying a position for itself. The space as if imploded and from a core (maybe the column) a range of different objects/elements/devices exploded to fly out and find the right places for itself within the exoskeleton. The exoskeleton peeps through its waffle slab and merges with the implosion in the design of the meeting rooms at the mezzanine level, as they seem to emerge from the structure of the exoskeleton but contribute to the shrine through their forms

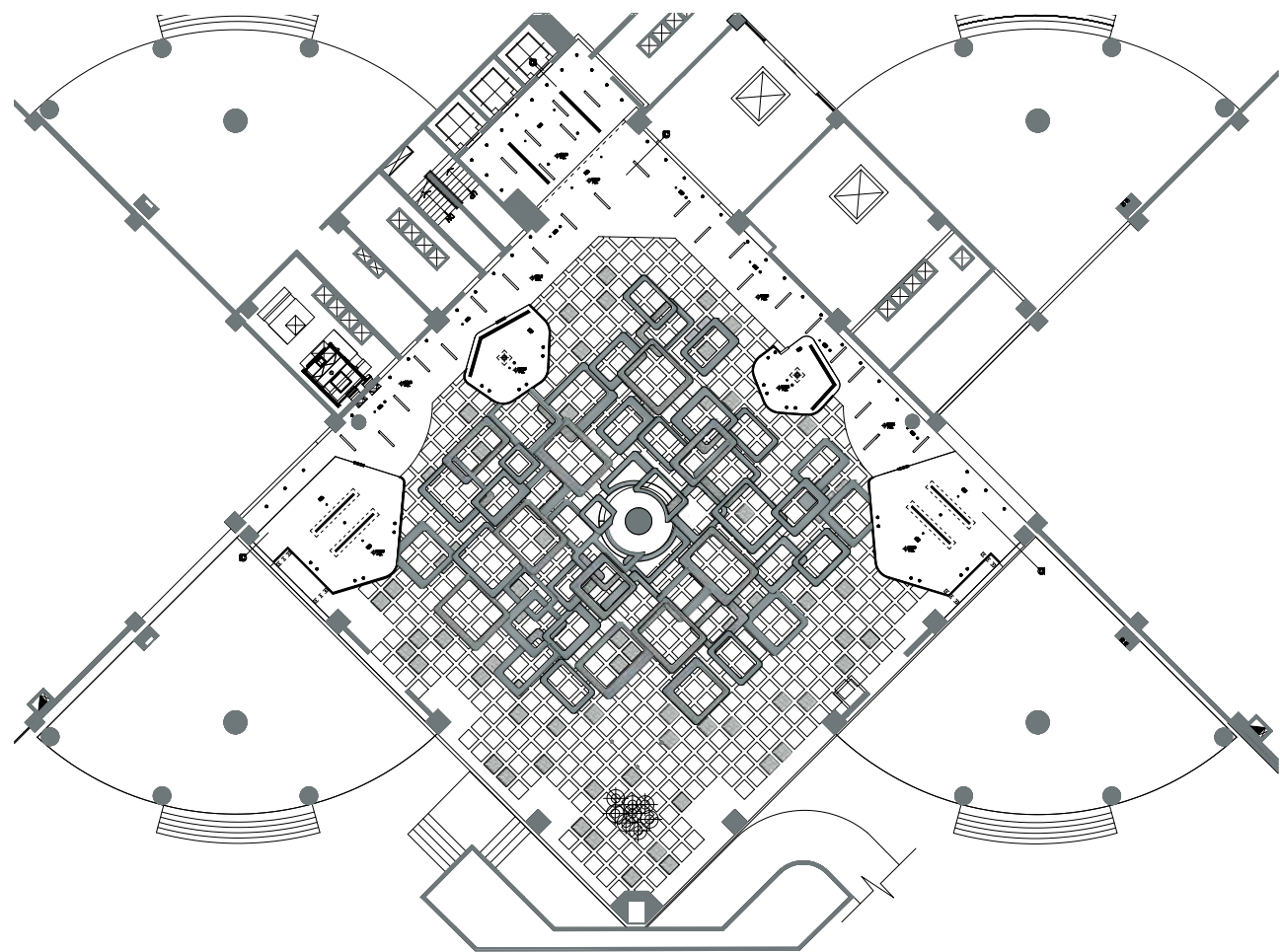




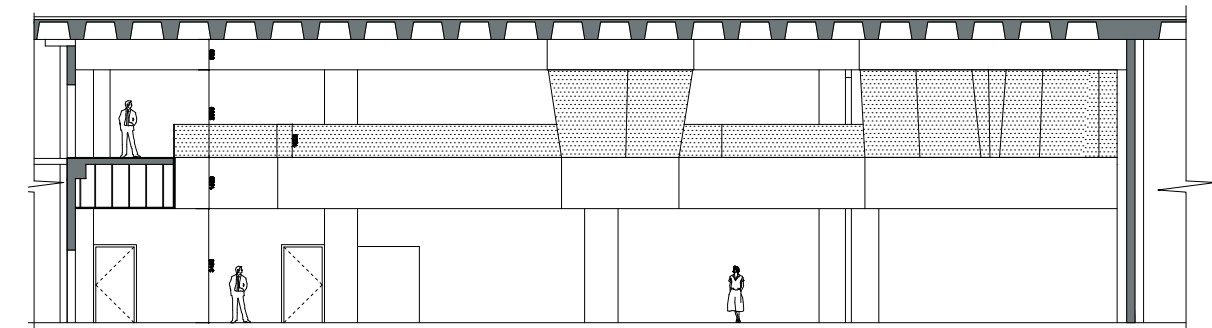
GROUND FLOOR PLAN



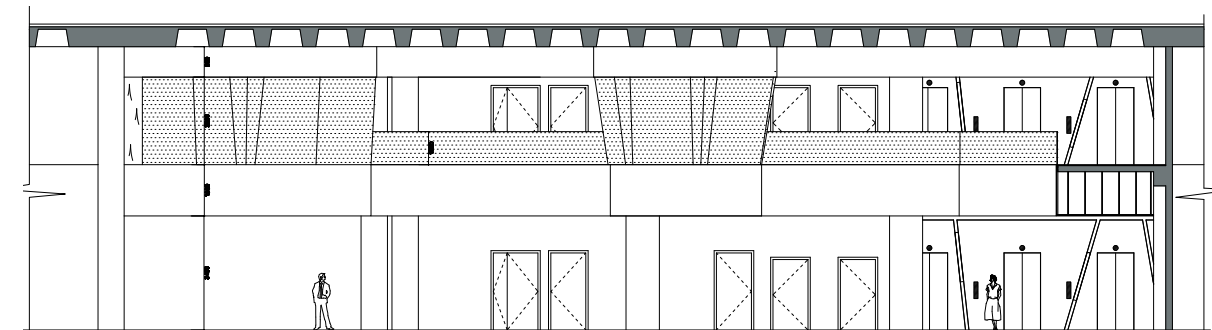
REFLECTED CEILING PLAN OF LIGHTNING LAYOUT



REFLECTED CEILING PLAN FOR MEZZANINE FLOOR



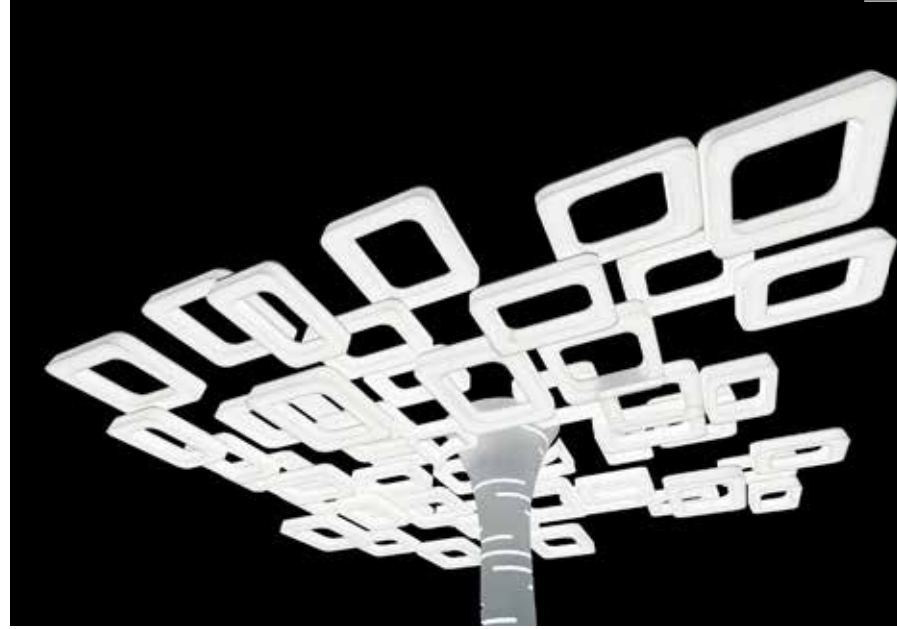
SECTION - BB



SECTION - AA

Project
Reflected Topography- BGRT, Bangalore, India
 Client
Bearys Group, Bangalore, India
 Architects
Collaborative Architecture – Mumbai, Beijing, Calicut
 Architectural Lighting
Collaborative Architecture
 Project team
Lalita Tharani, Mujib Ahmed, Muneeb
 Site Team
Iqbal, Sherif, Anand, Nazir
 Electrical Consultants
SAN Design Consultants Pvt Ltd, Bangalore
 Structural Consultants
Mahendra Raj, New Delhi, Bangalore
 Area
18,000 sq ft
 Location
Bangalore, India





and materiality – the brightness of light, and design materials reflecting/responding to that light. It is a shrine to the dynamic expressions of materials and lighting. A floating volume exists between the illuminated skin above and the geometric protrusions that form the seating at the ground plane; however an enveloping of space, where the ground would reach out to the ceiling as well as the other way round would have further contained the sense of an interactive space. The dynamism of the elements will need to contain the ergonomics of public-ness, where people can meet and talk, without being overwhelmed by design. The element of design is extremely strong, and as much as it articulates vibrantly the sense of carved space and celebration of design, yet it could overpower the sense of public-ness. There are levels at which design reaches stages of ecstasy and yet allows human life to wind around it. Design no longer is the humble shell which will be animated by human interaction or activity; design is strong voice today, and human activities will at times reshape themselves to engage with design. Design is no more created to support or enhance

human life and its activities, but it defines built-world in a pronounced way, it exaggerates, and justifiably so, the sense of space. This relationship between design and human life has hit a new chord now and 'Reflected Topography' is a bold attempt at making design primary; if design is now the shape of an independent activity, with which human life will have to find its own 'patterns' of engagement-language then discussing design will need bold thoughts, words, and leaps of imagination too. For now let us enjoy the shrine as the opened up landscape of intense public-ness; the shrine is no more the intense private space, and the public space is no longer to be generously available to all; the two have somewhere collapsed as the world is shaping new kinds spaces – to be dynamic and spectacular is one of its functional obligations.

FROM THE ARCHITECT'S PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project is a skilful response by the architects to the client's rather complex brief to design a multi-functional public space, which could include a variety of programmes like the work

lobby, relaxing zone, waiting zone, transition zone, and also a place where intimate and private meetings could happen. What could a 'typical' office lobby be? Could it be more than a reception space and trigger meaningful social interactions? Could it be more than a signature space, where the architects showcase their design skills and the clients reiterate their corporate influence? What could be the strategies for a successful public space design in a highly secured and controlled campus? These were few key issues Collaborative Architecture addressed at the outset of the design process. The aspiration of the client, who is a patron of good designs, made the design process challenging, and pushed the boundaries of innovation that set a benchmark for public space design by its out-of-the-box design and sustainability agenda; the project is Platinum LEED Certified. The lobby is dominated by a central column, which supports the waffle slab system that spans across 32m x 32m space, with a height of 9m. The front facing sides have structural glazing and the sides on the back are stacked with services and toilets.

This page: views and the concept sketch of the lighting and seating systems. Opposite page: the exoskeleton peeps through its waffle slab and merges with the implosion in the design of the meeting rooms at the mezzanine level. The seating cluster is designed in a way that triggers social interactions

The central column became the axis for spatial orientation. The lighting design plays the lead role in the overall architectural identity, and the project succeeds in effortlessly merging the lighting design and architectural space into a unified whole. The project is unique in that sense, to make the architectural lighting as the *raison d'être*, and the space definer, not just in stylistic terms, but in terms of tectonic manipulation of the neutral space. The central column anchors the spatial disposition and in the vast lobby. The architectural lighting has been conceived as foliage which stems from this anchoring element. The column has been clad with Corian panels, with special details to have access for maintenance and service. The seating cluster, again specially designed for the project, triggers social interactions, and creates an undulating topography of contoured volume at the eye level, in a way complementing the undulating pattern on the ceiling. The strip light highlights along the bottom of the sofa clusters creates a dynamic pattern and goes as an integral part of the overall design. The waffle slab system, which is the most dominant part of the space, is left exposed to highlight the structural clarity of the space – one of the earliest design decisions which paid dividends. The pattern of the waffle system acted as the spring board for the design of the customised lighting, which resulted in a highly dynamic space – reflecting the geometry of structural system – the reflected topography. The cantilevered meeting rooms are added to the existing mezzanine slab to accommodate private meeting rooms. The Lobby has five such private meeting rooms, where four are located at the mezzanine level as added cantilevered units projecting into the atrium space. Since the lobby functions nearly 18 hours a day, the project is equipped with BMS with Dali ballasts for daylight harvesting. The expansive glazing on two sides allows ample amount of daylight during any season, making the system utilise minimal energy in the day time. LED-based light sources have been used for the project. Customised fabric lights have 1200 long LED tubes, the passage spaces have 600 & 1200 LED panel lights and 5W LED spots and the waffle has 600 X 600 LED panel lights to supplement the customised lighting and to create a pattern in the waffle, which complements the configuration of the fabric lights. @

