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## Emergent Indian Architects

10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Issue



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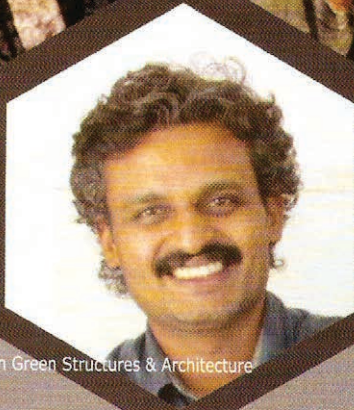
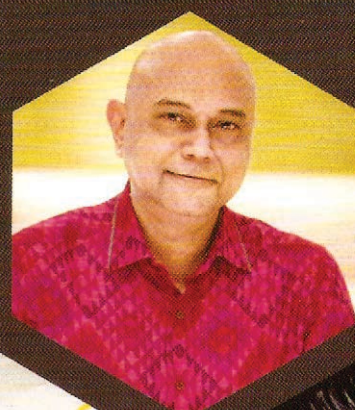
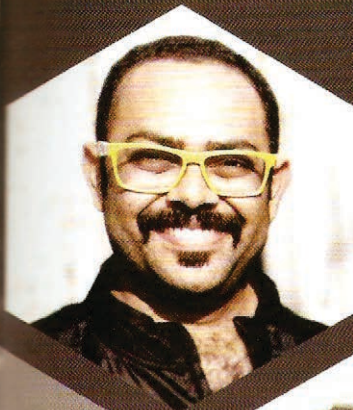
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# Emergent Indian Architects

Indian architects are emerging with fresh skills and commitment towards carrying forward cultural aspects with good practices. They are steadily widening the scope of architecture to include international standards and making a statement within the Indian context. They are using modern technologies with dexterity to offer solutions beyond expectations. It is with élan that they blend Indian values and redefine the contemporary Indian aesthetics. Presented here are the design philosophies, inspirations and imaginations of the emerging Indian Architects with their individual success mantras in the journey to make a mark on the architectural scene with individual flair.



**Ar. Gaurav Roy Choudhury**  
Principal Architect, GRCA

"Our main aim has always been to articulate various movements that assimilate context, taking the project brief from the 'said' to the 'unsaid,'" says Ar.Gaurav Roy Choudhury, founder of Gaurav Roy Choudhury Architects (GRCA), a young firm with experience in architecture, interior design, urban design, and housing projects. The practice strives to absorb all domains of influence and exposure, with the hopes of redefining honest architecture through a process of re-invention and storytelling. Its path lies in the understood, and its eyes on the unexplored.

Ar.Gaurav started the practice in 2007 with an idea to keep a balance of dreaming and achieving it. At GRCA, he always looks to strike this balance and create a culture of getting better with each project. He feels that breaking every brief, context into its constituents and then building it back again is important to achieve pragmatic design. "The idea that space narrates feel and experience is the most interesting part of design. And as architects, we can make people feel how we wish them to feel, through space, connect, and context."

He is of the view that Architecture needs to shelve all its ego and fast move towards holistic sensitivity, and benevolence. "The days of emblematic architecture are over. Architecture through space needs to engage and lead to shifts in perception of society. It needs to become more inclusive and universal as a language of metaphysical presence. Architects must resist superficiality and move towards the meaningful and dynamic," he suggests.

At GRCA, Ar.Gaurav follows the design philosophy of expression. He says, "Our growth as an architectural

firm is in terms of how we are able to articulate our feelings, nurture our sensitivity to feel more and fuel our inquisitiveness to ask the relevant questions. We are prepared to deal with complexity without simplifying it and would always love to take any project that gives us a challenge."

"For each of the project," he says, "We get the inspirations from society, stories, narratives and also from normal lives. We do not go out looking for inspiration; we try to look for it within, by asking questions.

Further he adds, "Most importantly we believe in working on a limited number of projects at a time for making it more customized and unique." The firm belief of 'less is more' is congruent with the kind of practice it is today.

### Redefining architecture through a process of re-invention and storytelling

Giving his views on the mantras of a successful life, he says that the word 'Success' itself is questionable. "To me, it doesn't ever mean money or fame but my peace of mind, my

energy, my thoughts and my dialogue with the life I live." He feels success is achieved when one pursues what make him feel happiest and fulfilled.

He recalls his excruciating struggle periods which taught him to believe in doing and made him feel alive and brimming with life. Today, GRCA after being a young firm with very little work, has gained a lot of recognition for the work it had done so far. The firm, under the leadership of Ar. Gaurav, hopes to do better work always and become an expert in creating elegant and welcoming spaces, be it residential, institutional or commercial work space.



## Lateral House Bangalore

Sitting on a small site in a gated community on the outskirts of Bangalore, Lateral House has been built for a young family who wanted the house to mirror their sensibilities of honesty, simplicity, and independence.

Their daily commute through the chaos of the city made them yearn for a house which also provided them refuge. The lateral house became their realm, their fortress. It blocks out the outside, making connections internally with the elements of the city that seems to be forgotten; the sky, light, breeze, and nature. These elements mix in balance and benevolence through the house to create the playful and dynamic realm they wish to haunt.

The house has been conceptually developed into imaginary concentric lines of varying privacy, starting from the outside to the inside. These lines become experimental interfaces to manipulate volume, space and



proportions. The interplay between the lines becomes the basis for the shifts in spaces, as they get deeper and more private in the house.

The entry volume of the house at the higher level is robust and guarded. The bricks on its face act almost like a mirror to the outside, seeming to say a lot but the same time say very little. The car park is in a line under the volume, and a pedestrian ramp pierces into the fortress as

a gesture of cautious welcome. As the ramp gets higher, it leaves the car park below and reaches the entry porch. This is where the main door of the house is located. Above this, unknowingly the visitor is surrounded by a courtyard at the upper level, where windows wrap around to see who's come. Thus, the visitor stands at the centre of the house, but still remains on the outside.





As you enter the house, the square-ish living space is framed by the low roof of the study above; the light from the study illuminates it. This is the public space of the house. It opens into the guest bedroom, dining, public garden, and kitchen. At the mid-level above is the study, which one can see but only as much as allowed. A look up will show the layers above without revealing much, this is layer one.

The staircase weaves up and as it climbs, it slowly becomes the element which expands the space and reveals the other layers. The second layer includes the study, and the family guest bedroom. This space combines with the courtyard above the car park and becomes the second layer of spaces. The study and the bedroom overlook the courtyard and at this level, the upper corridor is also seen, but the private bedrooms are withheld from view.

Another flight up the staircase becomes a longer rectangle from the square than it started from. This level opens into the family bedrooms and the private spaces of the house. The corridor looks through the study below the

courtyard and the small private garden becomes a space for sitting and contemplating. This becomes layer three. This layer combines beautifully with layer two to create an elevated social bubble which hovers over the public spaces of layer one. The children's bedroom overlooks onto the courtyard while the master bedroom overlooks on to the road. This space becomes the heart of the house, very robust and yet transient in its nature. It gets everyone together, yet pushes for personal privacy.

The courtyard above the entry becomes the centre of this space. A private space, which is visually hidden from layer one and the outside. The house breathes through the space and it makes the house impervious to development close to it as it captures the elements and seeps it into the house in various measures. The bricks again leave the courtyard creating shadows and caricatures of the elements outside. The Lateral House experiences every day and every moment in its difference. Its aloof premise is converted into extreme sensitivity towards what's around. The light changes, the breeze changes, the internal reflection changes as per the condition outside.

## Architects & Projects



### At a Glance

**Location:** Uttarhalli, Bangalore

**Area:** 3600 sq.ft.

**Duration of Construction:** August '11 to January '13

**Cost of Project:** Rs. 48,00,000 (Forty-eight Lakhs)

**Design Team:** Gaurav Roy Choudhury

**Contractors:** Civil: LISA and Ravikumar

**PHE:** Plumbtech Engineers

**Elec:** ACHU P. Enterprises

**Photo Credits:** Tina Nandi

The house breathes much like an individual as it sustains ideologies and beliefs on which it is based.

The white exterior and interior of the house enhance its shades. The bricks projecting in a grid on the external faces do the same but in a more surreal exchange. The grid of the bricks is derived from the internal space of the courtyard and is expressed almost in a code on the outside, as a mark of the house's nature.

The Lateral House is also self-sufficient in terms of usage of energy as it uses natural light in the days and circulates the air through the stack-effect reducing almost all use of mechanical means to stimulate the conditions inside. Its gardens are grown with recycled rain water as it collects and sends it back into the ground. Thus in short, the Lateral House embellishes itself with simplicity and subtle beauty.