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2019



YEAR CHALLENGE

AS WE COMPLETE A DECADE OF CELEBRATING INNOVATION, OUR TOP 50 YOUNG ARCHITECTS
AND DESIGNERS SHARE THEIR MEMORIES AND THE MILESTONES THEY ARE WORKING TOWARDS

10th anniversary issue



AARUSHI BAFNA



ABDULLA KUTTY



AJAY ABEY



ALI BAKIR BALDIWALA



AMMAR SHUMS



ANIRBAN DUTTA



ANKITA BAID



ARCHANA BAID



ASLAM KARADAN



ATRI SHAH



BHAVANA KUMAR



BHUMIKA PATEL



CHIRANJIVI LUNKAD



DHAVAL PATEL



DHAVAL SHAH



ELAYARAJA MAYAVAN



GARGI DE



GAURAV KANKARIYA



GOPAL TANWANI



HITESH SHARMA



JAY VIDYUT SHAH



KAMALIKA BOSE



KIRAAN AGGARWAL



KUNAA KYHAAN SEOLEKAR



MANURAJ CR



MAYANK PAREKH



MAYUR GUJARE



MAYUR N MEHTA



MEGHA BHATIA



MEGHA PATEL-VADODARIA



MITALI AHARAM



NAINI MEHTA SHAH



NIHAD OVUNGAL



NIYOSHI SANGHVI



RADEESH R SHETTY



RAGHAV PATEL



RAJESH SHIVARAM



RAMESH LOHAR



RASHI BOTHRA



RITU CHANEKAR



ROHIT PALAKKAL



ROHIT SURAJ



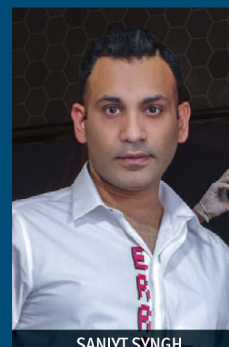
RUCHI GEHANI



SAMARTH DAS



SANJANA MATHUR



SANJYT SINGH



SHAM SALIM



SHRUTI TANWANI



TAKBIR FATIMA



TARA PANDALA

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THE TRAILBLAZERS

Intelligence, individualism,
innovation and ingenuity
are just some of the many
qualities that set these
young architects and
designers apart

BY MARIA LOUIS

When ambition meets excellence in
the field of architecture and design,
you get a dynamic, powerhouse
of talents that must be celebrated.

Each year, we take great pride in dedicating a
special issue to young trailblazers who have earned
our recognition of the title iGen – a word that we
coined back in 2012 as a tribute to Steve Jobs for a
generation that grew up on a diet of his innovative
iPods, iPads and iPhones.

This year is very special, because it's our 10th
anniversary and we wanted to showcase up-and-
coming firms from across India, each distinct from
the other. Recommendations from senior archi-
tects and an extensive search from our editorial
team led us to these 50 gems and their impressive
line-up of work. From designers who were once
inclined to be CAs to IIM graduates who found
their true calling in reviving skilled carpentry, this
diverse group is truly passionate about design and
willing to pay the price to pursue their dreams.

Read on to find out more, as they take the 10-
year challenge to mark our decade of existence.

Contributors:

CAROL FERRAO, RUPALI SEBASTIAN,
ARUNA RATHOD & GAURAV SAXENA



TARA PANDALA & AJAY ABEY

DIRECTORS, CSBNE, KOCHI

“We are still in the learning process, as it involves a deeper learning of how to respect and represent the local culture”

PROJECT

Antony Residence, Kollam, Kerala



Tara Pandala and Ajay Abey were both drawn to architecture for different reasons. Pandala's interest began as a young girl when she started visiting her father Prof Eugene Pandala's architectural firm. She says, "I grew up with T-squares and butter sheets, and assisting the junior architects was my favourite pastime." On the other hand, Abey states that his first experience of urban design was as a student taking part in school-level competitions. He recalls, "I used to also make models of my house and streets of Angadipuram, where I grew up. An interest towards nature and built environment was cultivated in my formative years."

While the 30-year-old Pandala who graduated from TKM College of Engineering in 2011, subsequently did her Master's in Urban Design from CEPT, Ahmedabad, 36-year-old Abey did his B.Arch from the National Institute of Technology, Calicut in 2005 – and then his post-graduation in Urban Design from National University of Singapore in 2009.

Important learnings have remained with them both. She says, "CEPT gave me an opportunity to study urban patterns, both in historical and present context, and I developed an urge to learn more about creating spaces and building on a bigger scale in an attractive and sustainable way. I learnt the relevance of the un-built spaces, and how they are shaped by the built environment." For him, his biggest takeaway from design school was "an understanding of the 'big picture' before you attempt the smallest form of design intervention."

While both of them are inspired by Geoffrey Bawa, Pandala admits to also being impacted by

Antoni Gaudi, saying, "His mesmerising forms and how he played with curves has been an inspiration. I remember once how a professor at my undergraduate school compared my father to Gaudi. He quoted the famous words 'lines are for men and curves are for God' – and I had an epiphany about how lucky I was to have a great master who has been a source of inspiration right from my childhood." Abey, too, has been influenced by Prof Pandala's attention to detail and innovation through meticulous research.

The company was founded by Prof Pandala in 1985 and re-branded as Centre for Sustainable Built and Natural Environment (CSBNE) in 2015. It aims to provide sustainable and energy-efficient solutions in the built environment, specialising in architecture, urban design, heritage conservation, interiors and landscape. Both Pandala and Abey affirm their attempt to create some connect between architecture and nature. They say, "Over the years, we have realised the complexities of the cultural, social and economic layers, which will help to formulate the appropriate response. We are still in the learning process, as it involves a deeper learning of how to respect and represent the local culture in which each of our projects is set." It is no wonder, then, that Pandala says, "I believe in contextual design and that every building should be like a mushroom that sprouts from the site. I resent built forms that are totally alien to the context."

Not willing to play favourites, they point out, "We consider all our projects as significant. However, our first residential building with its beauty and its imperfections has encouraged us to always do more research in the field of responsible built forms..."

The duo believes that design is truly design when there is a right balance between utilitarian and aesthetic characteristics, and the response is meaningful to the natural heritage and cultural history of the place and the people. Pandala emphasises, "The built form should be conceived after considering the micro and macro climate of the region." And Abey points out, in a similar vein, "Designers must understand the social, ecological and cultural significance of each place before attempting to change the built and unbuild."

#10-YEAR CHALLENGE

10 years back...

"In the last ten years, we have grown from being aspiring student architects to professional architects...but we are still knowledge seekers."

10 years from now...

"We wish to be a medium-scale entity which is well known for doing quality architectural design work and to accommodate more happy families in the places that we have conceived."