

AD

**FOURTH
ANNIVERSARY
SPECIAL
EDITION**

MARCH-APRIL 2016

INDIA

₹150

ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST THE MOST BEAUTIFUL HOMES IN THE WORLD

AD 50

**THE 50 MOST INFLUENTIAL NAMES
IN ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN 2016**

AD EXCLUSIVE

BIJOY JAIN
IN HIS ELEMENT

*CHARLES
& MONIKA
CORREA'S*
MUMBAI HOME

PLUS **PATRICIA URQUIOLA · CHRISTIAN LIAIGRE · AXEL VERVOORDT · SANJAY GARG · KELLY HOPPEN**



**THE 50 MOST INFLUENTIAL NAMES
IN ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN 2016**

ASSOCIATE SPONSOR



AD *perspective*

NEWSMAKERS, OPINIONS
THAT MATTER, PLUS
THE LATEST IN ART,
ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN



LAYERS OF MEANING

To introduce 2016's AD50, noted architect and urban planner Rahul Mehrotra—himself a part of the AD50 list—designed this page for us. He wanted to highlight the importance of layering—not just colours and textures, but also ideas—in architecture. Seen here are stills from projects by System Architects and Ashiesh Shah Architecture + Design.

SHOWCASE

AD50

**THE 50 MOST INFLUENTIAL NAMES
IN ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN 2016**

Three judges. Over 150 residences. And five months to choose the top 50. The third edition of AD50 is an endeavour to spotlight the best in residential design across India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. Our carefully curated list focuses on individuals and firms whose projects represent the power of architecture to transcend functionality, create enduring spaces for its inhabitants, and define new idioms for the cities in which they are located.

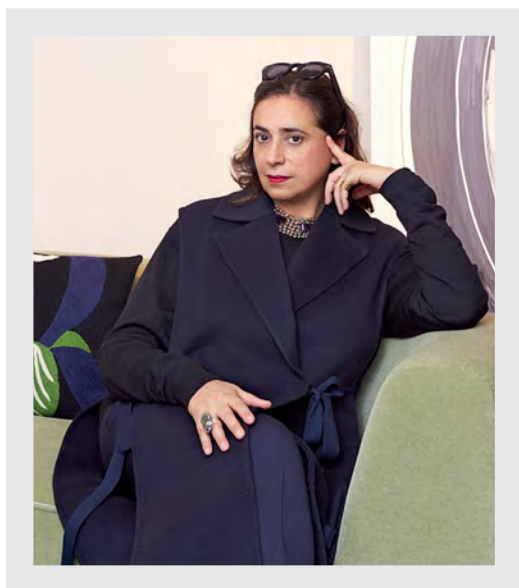
This is the third edition of the AD50, and my first one. The feature you are about to read is the culmination of more than five months of research and networking, much debate, and many, many meetings, both internal and external. I—and the two other judges on the panel, Balkrishna Doshi and India Mahdavi—had the unenviable task of objectively choosing 50 out of over 150 stunning entries we received.

The 2016 AD50 focuses on residential projects from across the subcontinent, and the sheer variety of projects—every last one an embodiment of its region's cultural, environmental and historical principles—has been astonishing. I was especially thrilled by the number of entries we received from newer firms. Along with reinforcing that the AD50 is now the definitive list of the 50 best firms in the subcontinent, it is proof that architecture in the region is young, intelligent, and aware.

Based on the houses and apartments we reviewed, we identified four movements that became the categories for this year's list: Visionaries, which includes designers with a strong signature aesthetic; Innovators, which refers to architects thinking outside the box; Naturalists, which encompasses the firms that incorporate nature and sustainability in their work; and Modernists, the largest section, which proves that homes in the subcontinent are likely to be elegant and minimal.

We hope this list will prove useful and enlightening, and leave you with an enriched understanding of architecture in the subcontinent today.

GREG FOSTER
Editor, Architectural Digest India

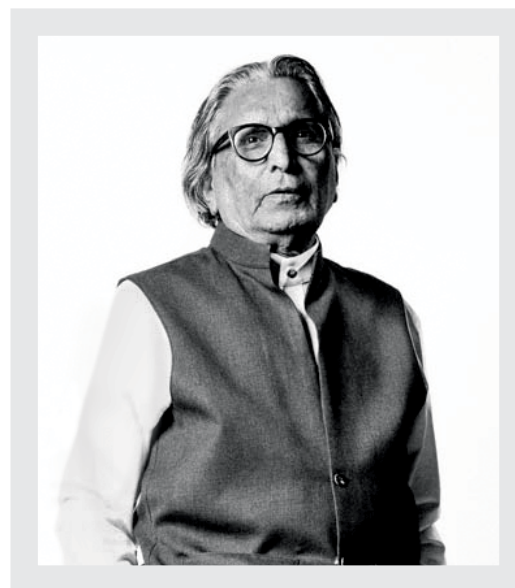


INDIA MAHDAVI

India Mahdavi — Architecture and Design (Paris)

An icon in the Parisian world of high-design interiors, India Mahdavi has carved a distinct niche for herself. Born to Iranian and Egyptian-English parents, Mahdavi's peripatetic childhood—in Iran, America, Germany and France—greatly influenced her style. With an aesthetic that is chic, sophisticated and global, she personalizes each project to the greatest extent for every client. After working with acclaimed designer Christian Liaigre for seven years, Mahdavi went independent with her company in 1999 and established her first showroom in 2003. The next year, she was named Maison&Objet's 'Designer of the Year'. Her designs for interiors, furniture and objects have since graced hotels, boutiques, restaurants, residences and even airplanes.

She compares her work as a designer to that of a photographer, stating that residential design is akin to portraiture. "It is a case of capturing the spirit of the character inhabiting the space, creating something that corresponds to their identity and vision, while staying true to your own." When judging the AD50 entries for residential architecture, Mahdavi was struck by how "international" the design idiom was across the subcontinent. The projects that stayed with her were those that displayed "originality, elegance, identity and creativity". These were projects that "stood out precisely because they didn't fit into a universal trend, but had a certain freshness and personality. These are the spaces that make you want to know their story and the stories of the people that live in them".



BALKRISHNA DOSHI

Vastu Shilpa Consultants (Ahmedabad)

Balkrishna Doshi's impact on India's architectural legacy cannot be overstated. As a young architect in a newly independent country, Doshi gave direction and identity to a nation seeking both. He articulated a unique vision for a country with a diverse ethos, anchored by tradition but with a dream for a modern future. Doshi deftly negotiated its pluralistic terrain and formulated a unifying narrative, reconciling an almost Gandhian concept of simplicity with global modernist ideals. His contribution as an architect is possibly surpassed only by his contribution as an academic and teacher through the Centre for Environmental Planning and Technology (CEPT), the institute he founded.

In the spirit of mentorship and guidance that is as much part of his professional make-up as his portfolio of buildings, Doshi graciously accepted to be one of the judges for this edition of AD50. His presence, needless to say, has lent heft to our search for the year's 50. The list looks to honour architects striving to create meaningful, contextually relevant buildings that resist mainstream trends. His selection was based on the architects' ability to create "sensible structures that made clever use of shade and natural landscapes". Homes with a clean aesthetic that treated light as part of the material palette found favour with the visionary, whose own skill at harnessing nature imbues his buildings with a green core. From an architect who has enriched cityscapes and changed skylines, this list, perhaps, holds hope for the future.



PHOTOS: ROBERT VERRIJT

ARCHITECTURE BRIO

PRINCIPALS: **SHEFALI BALWANI AND ROBERT VERRIJT**LOCATION: **MUMBAI**

Gazing down from the top of a hillock in Karjat—near Mumbai, in the Western Ghats foothills—all you see is a cover of green. What it is, is the cleverly camouflaged roof of the House by a River (*pictured*), looking like nature contrived to place it there. For Architecture BRIO, an imprint subtly left behind in the midst of a green cover. The acclaimed creators of highly feted projects—like the Laureus Learning Pavilion (an interactive space for underprivileged children commissioned by the NGO Magic Bus), and the House on a Stream—they are known for structures that seem to emerge out of their surroundings; the latter won them recognition at the 2015 JK Cement Architect of the Year Awards [AYA]. The firm also collaborated with billionBricks, a not-for-profit enterprise that works with displaced and homeless communities, to transform Konchur, Karnataka into a model village. The House by a River is yet another reflection of the firm's skill at integrating built spaces into their specific environments. The stone boulders discovered during the excavation process, timber, and coarse Indian limestone ensure that the house plants itself unobtrusively in its surroundings.

architecturebrio.com

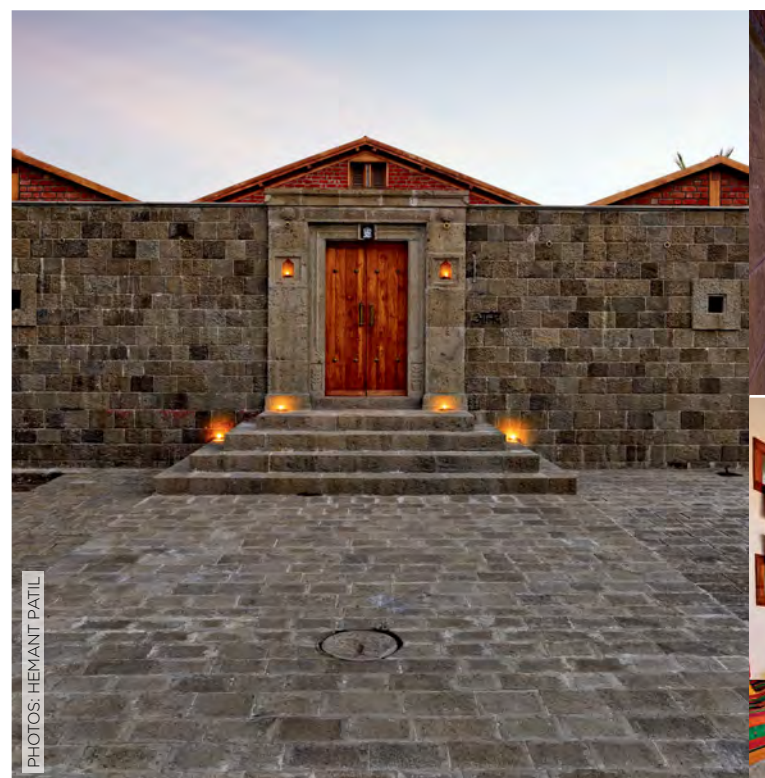
ARTHA STUDIO

PRINCIPALS: **SAURABH MALPANI AND ASHKA NAIK**LOCATION: **PUNE**

Somewhere between the two extreme ends of the design spectrum—mundane predictability and radical transformation—lies a middle ground. It is where well-thought-out solutions inform an aesthetic that values simplicity, yet is inspiring enough to produce masterfully designed spaces. That space has been effortlessly inhabited by Artha Studio. Since its inception in 2008, the multidisciplinary design firm has created architecture that has its genesis in the coming together of craft, community, culture and nature, elevating not just the living experience for families but enriching surrounding communities. The Farmer's Abode in Pune, built in a style that responds entirely to location, is as contemporary as it is enduring, as simple as it is thought-provoking, and as much a house as a statement.

Architectural Digest: Did the site pose any challenges while conceiving the layout?

Saurabh Malpani: The spatial experience had to be simple and austere, and not just a thoroughfare for the dwellers or the visitors. Protecting the inhabitants from the occasional leopard hiding in the surrounding sugarcane fields, while bringing nature within the boundaries of the abode, was also challenging.



PHOTOS: HEVANT PATIL