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# ARCHITECT and INTERIORS INDIA

Inspiration and insight for architects and interior designers

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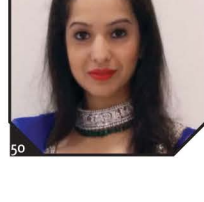
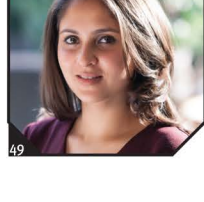
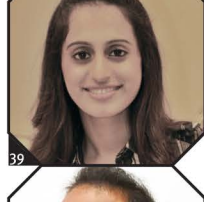
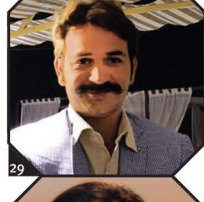
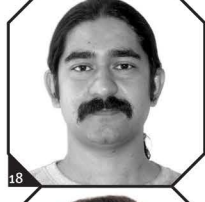
**iGen**  
2017

## THE YOUNG & THE ZESTFUL

THESE 50 GENERATION-NEXT ARCHITECTS  
AND DESIGNERS HAVE THEIR SIGHTS SET  
ON TRANSFORMING OUR BUILT SPACES

8<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL

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# THE TRANSFORMERS

In a world crying out for change, these 50 architects and designers who comprise our iGen hotlist this year could make a telling difference

BY MARIA LOUIS

Once again, it's time for us to nudge India's young architects and designers to the forefront. They are the leaders of tomorrow and the promise of a new and improved urban lifestyle that takes into consideration the issues that challenge the built spaces they design. Their idealism, intelligence, inspiration and ingenuity enable them to take giant strides towards a brighter future for us all.

Putting on our talent scout hats, as we have done every year since 2012, we sought out the best of the fresh crop of architects and designers who are informed, individualistic and innovative. In keeping with the 'i' generation they represent – an alphabet that has acquired new meaning thanks to the illustrious Steve Jobs and the ubiquitous iPhone, iPad and iPod – we call them iGen (short for iGeneration).

Our selection of gen-next architects and designers is eagerly awaited. On the basis of recommendations by their gurus, seniors and peers as well as the quality of work they have done, we invited these architects and designers to share their dynamism,

energy and enthusiasm through this forum.

This is the sixth year since we began conducting this exercise (so we have 300 iGens now!), and we are amazed that we still end up overshooting the number 50 that we have set for ourselves. They are not just a dynamic, young bunch of design enthusiasts, but also passionate souls who have a burning desire to raise the bar when it comes to Indian architecture and design. Apart from socially responsible, sustainable or contextual architecture, our iGen candidates are aiming to make a difference in rural areas of the country too. From economically-viable spaces created out of recycled waste to campuses and institutes that celebrate their Indian identity, their portfolio addresses varied and distinct design needs of the country. Through their work, they are exploring the limits of innovation – only to find more room for their idealistic pursuits.

Carrying in their heart a profound appreciation for the legendary architects of the past and present, the young professionals are interpreting the vision and ideologies of their role models through their own visual vocabulary. This seamless amalgamation of tradition and 21<sup>st</sup> century needs speaks of a generation that is innovative in its reverence.

As you flip through the pages, prepare to be inspired by the people who are shaping the future of their individual cities and the country at large. Get a glimpse into their practice as they discuss their definition of innovation, the role of technology in modern architecture and design, and the challenges they face with optimism – sometimes even with a dash of humour that will leave a smile on your face.



Gen  
2017

CONTRIBUTORS: CAROL FERRAO & ARUNA RATHOD



Every project should be challenging and unique, because if we get stuck in a signature style – which is often desired as a point of recognition – it means we've stopped innovating."

**PROJECT**  
Sotally Tober, Bengaluru

## FARAH AHMED MATHIAS

PARTNER AND PRINCIPAL DESIGNER, FADD STUDIO, BENGALURU

One half of a dynamic duo, self-proclaimed 'type A' interior designer Farah Ahmed Mathias follows a strict process of perfecting her vision on paper first. Having studied photography and political science as an undergraduate at Northwestern University, she moved to New York to work in advertising at Ogilvy and Mather before delving into fine art photography. "I like Excel almost as much as Photoshop," the designer admits. "I didn't always know what I wanted to do with my life – but I did know that, whatever it was, it had to keep me intrigued, challenged and busy."

Even after immersing herself in photography, she wasn't satisfied. It was only after working at celebrated firm Khosla Associates that the 33-year-old felt she'd struck the right balance between numbers and colours. This was also where Mathias met her soon-to-be partner, Dhaval Shellugar, and where she realised that she would need formal education in interior design. "Milan was the best option because Italy has, for time immemorial, been at the forefront of design," she explains.

After moving to Milan and achieving a master's degree in interior design from Istituto Marangoni, Mathias returned to India in 2011 and reconnected with Shellugar...and FADD Studio was born. The duo found that not only did their skill sets complement each other, but they were also like-minded in design sense and work ethic.

The innovative thinker is constantly in pursuit of designs that are one-of-a-kind. "Every project should be challenging and unique, because if we get stuck in a signature style – which is often desired as a point of recognition – it means we've stopped innovating," she elaborates. But even that comes with its snares – like coming up with novel

ideas and clients wanting to see images of them. "If it's new and never been done before, then even Pinterest won't have it," she explicates. "Everyone wants to see either a real or a 3D image...trust in architects and their drawings is a lot less now."

Recently, Mathias and her partner worked on a bar called Sotally Tober. Characterised by gravity-defying chairs, vibrant hues and Jackson Pollock-style drips, sprays and splashes, the space is quirky and bold. An amalgam of her inspirations, which include Pollock, Frank Gehry and Patricia Urquiola, Mathias' fresh and fearless body of work continues to grow as she is inspired to "dare to be different with a confidence that is fierce and a vision that is beyond everyone else's."

