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MASTER STROKES

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IIID BANGALORE REGIONAL CHAPTER



INSTITUTE
OF INDIAN
INTERIOR
DESIGNERS
Bangalore Regional Chapter



Unconventionally **ARRESTING**

— Farah Ahmed
& Dhaval Shellugar



Alufit

It was a chance meeting that got her into design. Having graduated in political science and art, **Interior Designer Farah Ahmed** met in the most unexpected manner one of Bengaluru's iconic architects, architect Sandeep Khosla of Khosla Associates and there was no looking back on design since then. Given her high inclination for art, having displayed her artwork in galleries, design was a natural evolution. An internship in his office and later obtaining a Master's degree in interior design, made young Farah all set to start her own design firm.

And what better way than to team up with her friend and colleague in Khosla's office,

Architect Dhaval Shellugar, a graduate of Rachna Sansad Academy of Architects and start their design firm **FADD Studio**. "Khosla's design philosophy has been a great influence, his use of natural materials, his inclination to incorporate global trends into an Indian context, his creativity and innovation", says Farah.

Very soon, their innovative, experimental approach and to an extent quirky designs saw them winning many awards and commendations. The recent IIID Anchor awards saw the duo cornering three awards in different categories. Talking about their design intent, Farah is quick to add, "We do

not have a singular style, we do not repeat what has already been done, each piece has to be unique and bring in the element of surprise." The duo has over 20 projects to their credit.

In their very first year of practice, the young designers were invited to design the interiors of a 100 ft Kerala House Boat in Goa. The brief was to bring in the elements of nature and the two set about with designing an interior with bamboo and wood lacquered mats. This was complemented with colour and fabric for walls of the boat, contrasting with the natural colour and weave of bamboo. Each room was



assigned an element of nature, water, fire, earth and air and designed in accordance.

In contrast to this, the 12000 Sq ft Alulift, a commercial project, had them working with industrial materials such as ACP sheets while bringing in the natural elements through rough unpolished surfaces and rustic features. The concept was to keep the area open and light with use of glass. The space overlooks a lake while a vertical garden forms the backdrop of the reception space clad in wood and unevenly painted wallpaper.

The inner workspaces were kept to primary colours with highlight of warm tones while the furniture was left white as a contrast. Each wall of the cabins was lent a solid different colour in the form of lacquered glass, creating a gradient from orange to burgundy across the length of the passage. Lamp post lights lined the workstations

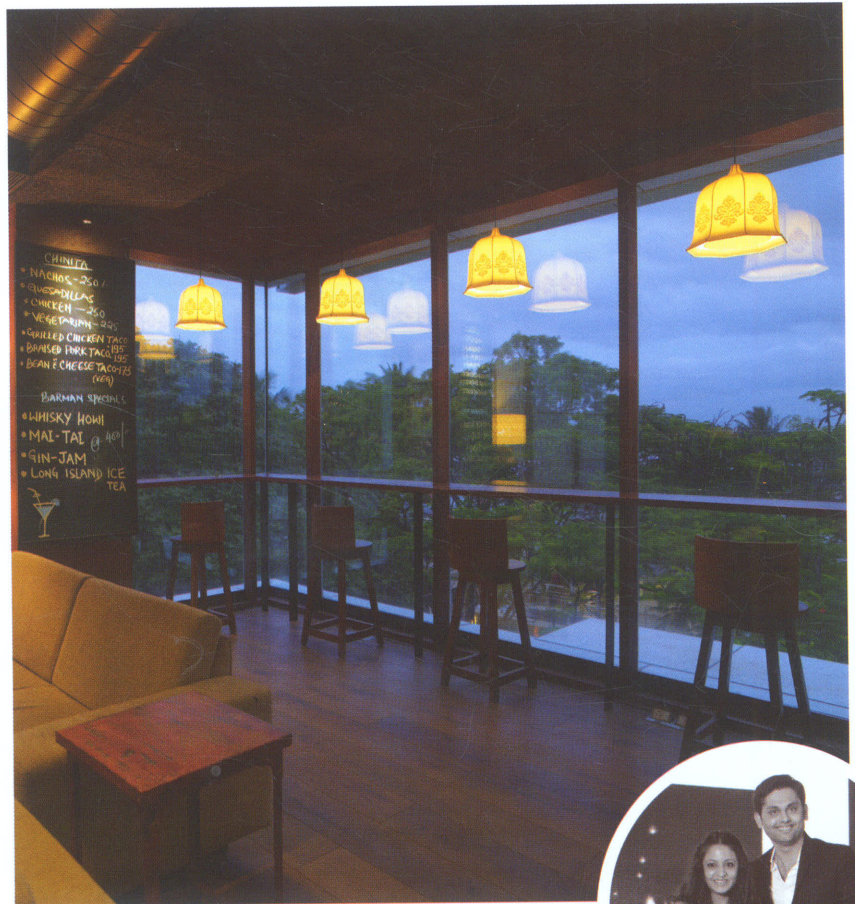
and ceilings had exposed concrete in keeping with the desired industrial look. Industrial chairs marked the cafeteria contrasting with cool watery blues of the adjacent walls.

Their project, Lobby, posed a challenge in terms of dimensions of the space besides the tight budget assigned. Inspired by the vertical and horizontal grids of De Stijl artist Piet Mondrian, the duo opted for use of different materials to create different effects. "We realised that we could balance the expensive with the inexpensive through random blocks where many of the blocks can be left neutral and budget friendly", says Dhaval.

Thus, smoked veneer, black lacquered glass found their way into the space. Adds Farah, "There was challenge of the 33 feet height volume to be dealt with which would push up cost if any surface treatment is done. So we played with the grid and balanced the design."



Above & Right: Pheonix Oberhaus / Lobby



THE HUMMING TREE

Their project Humming Tree, which cornered both runner up as well as a commendation in the zonal and national categories in the recent IIID Anchor Awards, is a restaurant and bar offering an industrial concept, the primary materials used being bricks,

metal, cement in the décor. Suspended metal chains serve as partitions in the expansive cement floors, while reclaimed bicycle stools form the seating. Pigmented cement walls complement antique benches contrasted by earthy brick walls. An oxidised metal riveted door with a large circular peephole leads the guest inside.



THE NADHANI RESIDENCE

The Nadhani residence, which received the zonal commendation award in the category of 'young designer of the year', involved refurbishing of an older apartment that came with arched hallway and curved walls. Farah and Dhaval set about their task by first

removing the curvatures, the arch of the foyer, the curved walls to bring in straight lines that were more functional to create a larger visual feel. The dining and the living areas were given an arresting hue by incorporating blue into the décor, while infusing a blend of the neo-classical and modern through presence of vintage and classical elements.