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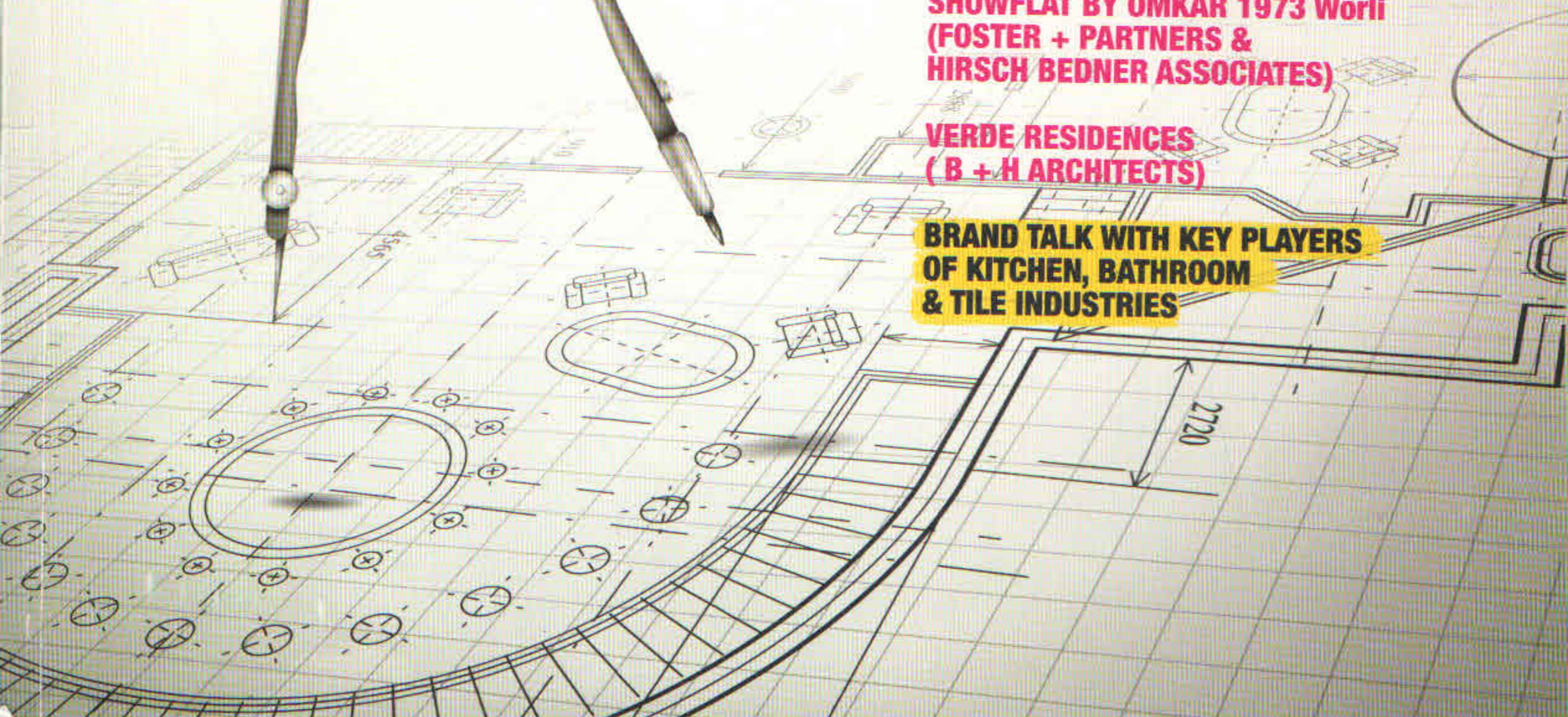
IN CONVERSATION WITH
VISIONARY ARCHITECTS

- **ARJUN MALIK**
- **KALHAN MATTOO**
- **SANJAY PURI**
- **ZUBIN ZAINUDDIN**

PLUS:
SHOWFLAT BY OMKAR 1973 Worli
(FOSTER + PARTNERS &
HIRSCH BEDNER ASSOCIATES)

VERDE RESIDENCES
(B + H ARCHITECTS)

BRAND TALK WITH KEY PLAYERS
OF KITCHEN, BATHROOM
& TILE INDUSTRIES





Architect Kalhan Mattoo of Planet 3 Studios discusses the radical changes and challenges in Indian architecture and design

'DESIGN MUST BE PRAGMATIC'

➤ What are the recent developments in architecture and design in India?

Fundamentally, there are a two-three broad changes that are happening. One – greater awareness and stability of design to provide more value to developers and end users. Two – quicker and faster means of construction are coming into vogue. Construction is becoming less labour-intensive and giving way to mechanised construction. Thirdly – an awareness of the fact that buildings don't thrive in isolation, and are sort of connected to the larger world around it.

How has it evolved?

We have lot of newer construction and surfacing material to give a form to our vision. These materials perform better and also give flexibility in aesthetics. This has fundamentally changed how buildings are being created and constructed. Also, there is a change in the attitude of the architects – where we come from and how we look at individual projects. The early generations of architects, I think, were a lot more focused on ideology and looked at exploring ideological persuasion.

The younger architects do not feel burdened with ideology. They are a lot more pragmatic and willing to look at each and every project in terms of its own constraints, and opportunities the project provide.

What are the current challenges faced by you while designing?

The biggest challenge while practicing in the cities is the kind of regulations we have to deal with and the processes we have to undergo in order get approvals for buildings. The real merit of architecture is not perceived

in the aesthetics or special dynamics of the building, but in per sq ft efficiencies, and what we've managed to achieve in built vs. cerebral area.

Also, the fee that Indian architects are paid is not at par with what international firms get for working here. This starts a vicious cycle of low fee that tends to restrict firms to pay adequate salaries to good talent. This leads to good talent not coming into design. And that's a bit of downward spiral.

What does 'Global' & 'Glocal' design mean to you?

Global sense of design is an international style, almost. Having said that there is always a risk – the generic international style, if such a concept exists, does not really understand or respect local sentiment and context. There are a lot of star architects who build these beautiful structures and visualisations, which could frankly drop out of outer space and fall anywhere on earth. They have really no deep contextual relationship to where they are.

While it has to be international in terms of practice, technology, design creation, and execution, it also has to echo local sensibilities and conditions and provide solutions to establish a sense of continuity in the local cultural life. If a concept such as 'glocal' exists, this is where it comes in.

What kind of trends/changes can be expected in 2014?

If we get a stable, progressive government at the helm, then we can look forward to a boom in construction. This boom would trigger growth, allow density and heights to increase, and provide larger lands. Basically move on to a better way of life.

KARNALA RESORT: This proposed 5 star resort at the base of Karnala Fort has a unique design that ensures unhindered views of the surrounding lush landscape from every room in the property. Radiating from a central core with restaurants, spa, health club, café, a large pool and suites on the upper level, five arms extend into the landscape with out-facing rooms on two levels. The building skin in horizontal louvers is engineered to moderate harsh tropical sun. At night, some of these louvers light up in subtle colours, suggesting magical lanterns that float in air.



OVO: For this residential community of 250 apartments at Pune, the podium over the car park is a 1.5 acre fully landscaped garden free from vehicular traffic and shaded most of the day by the buildings that surround it. From this heart of the development, one can appreciate a refined design sensibility that balances natural stone with wood finish cladding over the façade elements. Inspired by 'Kandeels' or local lanterns, custom designed luminaries in steel float above each balcony, anchored by imperceptible cables. Wood plastic composite is the screening material for the ducts as well as the building overhangs. A club at the fringe of the development echoes the contemporary aesthetic of the residential buildings and is planned and located in a manner to provide maximum privacy around the pool area.

