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# ARCHITECTURE + DESIGN

## CONTEMPORARY VIADUCT CONCEPTS

■ Innovative Interior Design ■ Lighting Talk

Innovative Interior Design

# renewing solution

Project: Seahorse Building Product Mall, Mumbai

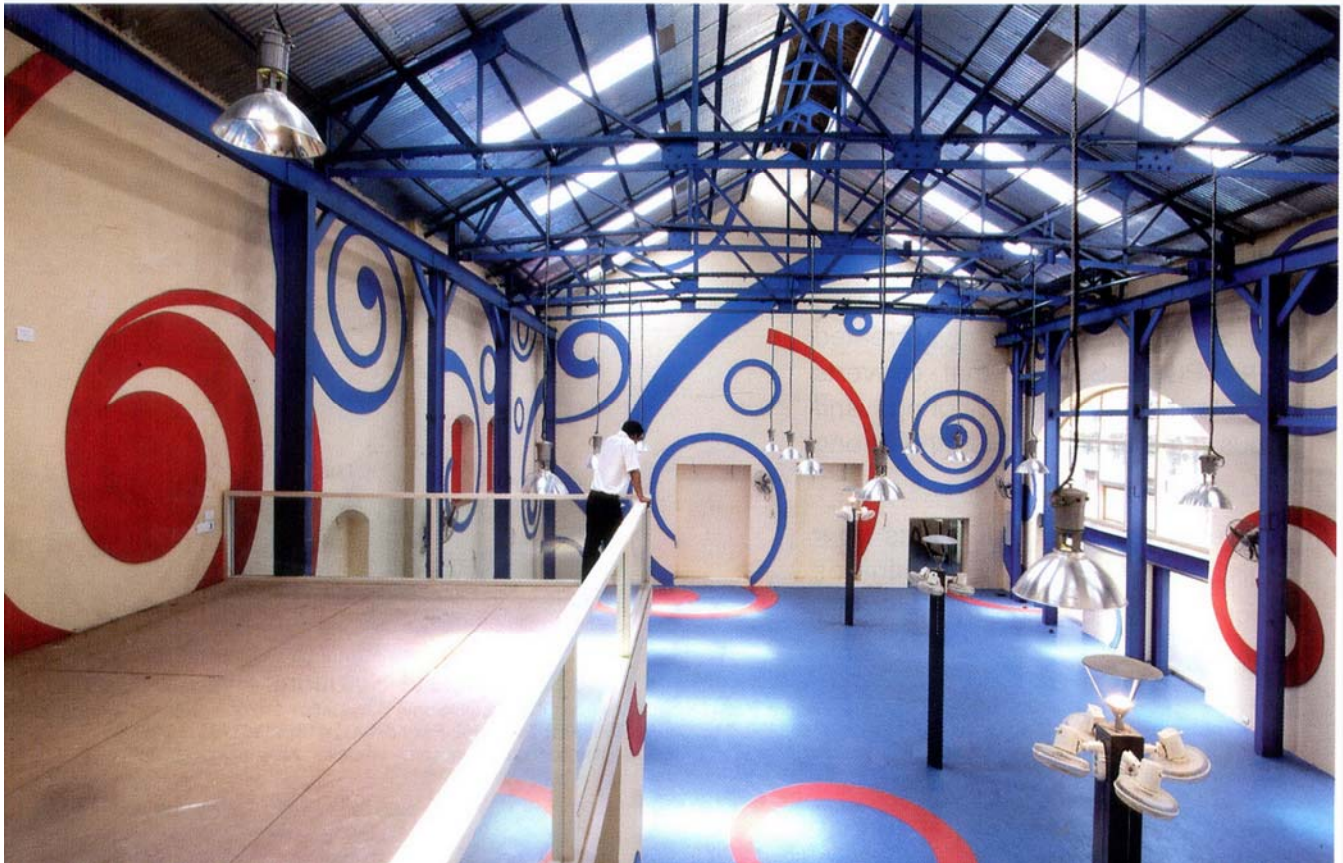
Planet 3 Studios Arch. Pvt Ltd,  
Mumbai

Architects

**a** Most the entire central Mumbai is dotted with cotton mills that predated Indian independence. No longer producing any yarn, these quaint but dilapidated structures offer numerous opportunities for adaptive re-use. The degree of design intervention has varied from outright demolition to painstaking restoration. Obviously, factors such as intended use, quality of the original design, budget and fortuitously enlightened clients have influenced the outcome.

This project came with a killer rider. The

requirement was to convert an old warehousing godown in a mill compound to a retail outlet. We were offered a certain number of old warehousing godowns in a mill compound to design for a retail condition. But, it had a shelf life of about three years. In that time, the entire retail space was to move to a suitable modern building and these godowns demolished to make way for a new construction. The first casualty was the budget. In order to accrue sufficient return on investment over a short period of time, the client reduced the budget





to a fraction of normal outlay for such projects.

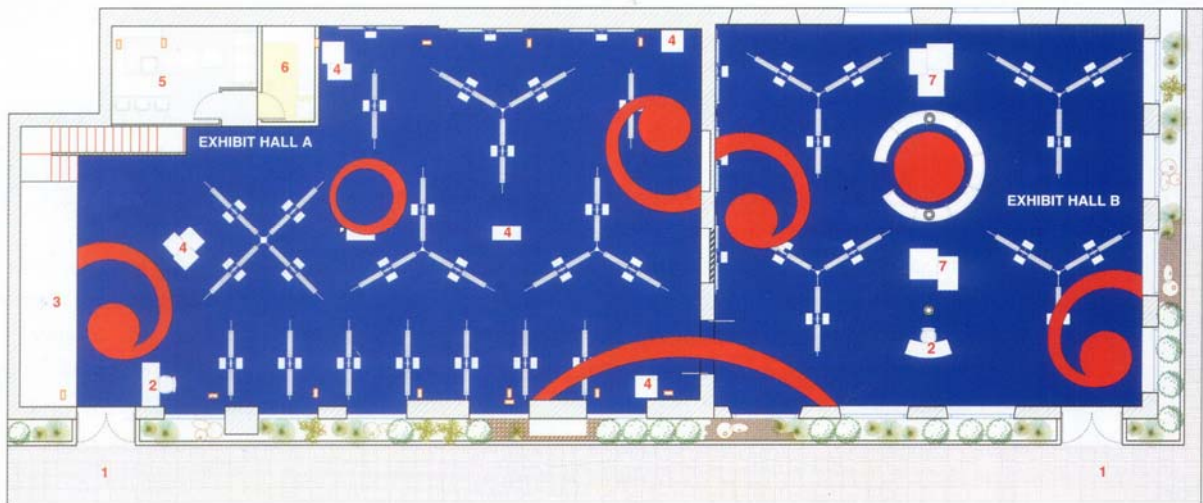
The godowns were in a state of extreme decay. The space had crumbling roofs, walls and floors. But in the dark damp squalor, illuminated by occasional streaks of light, intricate details, cast iron columns of indeterminate but flamboyant order, quality woodwork and more were discovered.

In order to truly revitalise and refurbish the space, the intervention had to be maximised without expanding the budget. Since it was to function as a building products mall, efforts were made towards engaging the interest of an industry that understood design.

It was proposed to keep the basic shell including the walls and ceiling, free of display. The display panels, pedestals and visual merchandising displays were parked as islands in clusters and groups. They derived task lighting, electrical power and even

mechanical ventilation from free-standing steel columns anchored in the floor.

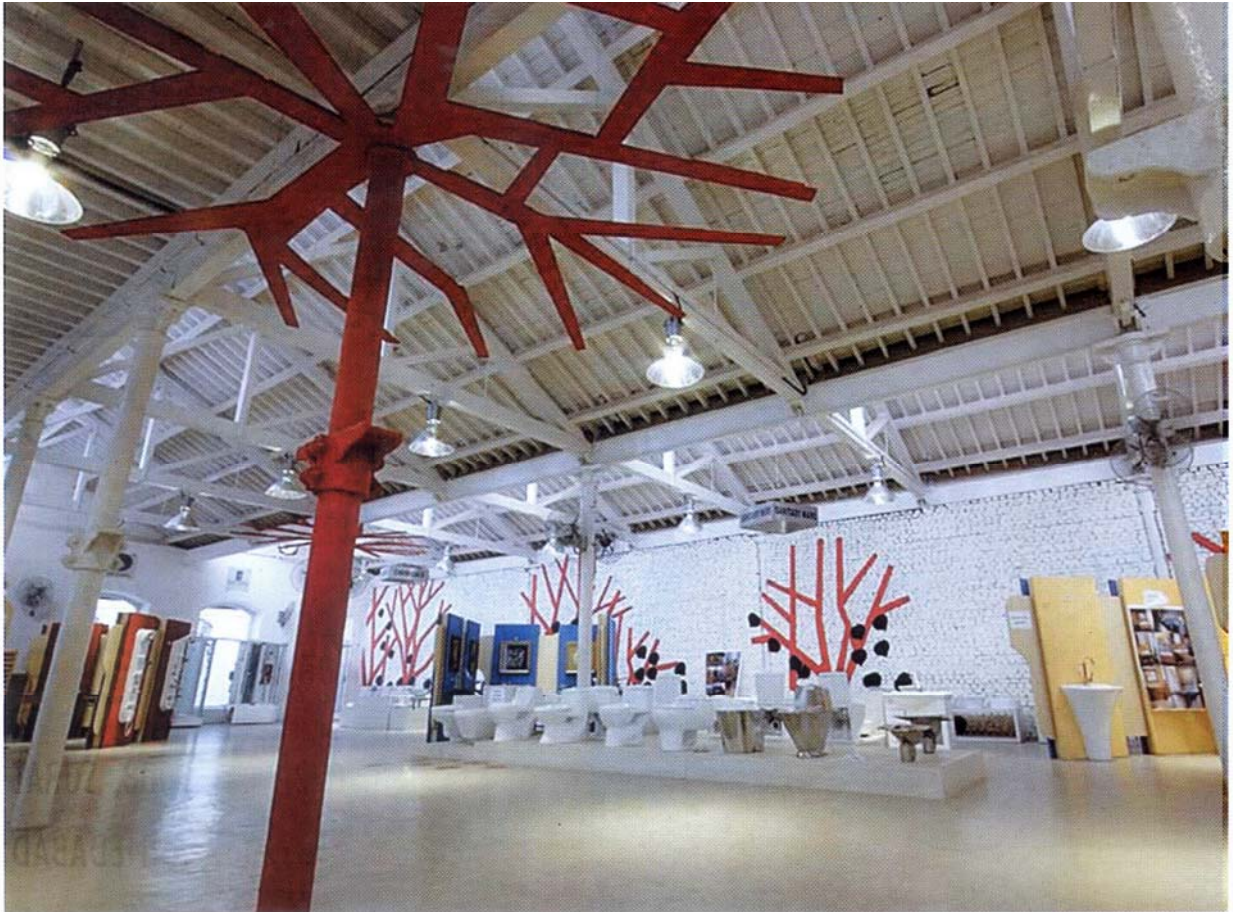
**Exhibit A:** A couple of adjoining halls, one of them 50ft high, presented a unique challenge. Bereft of any redeeming features in the interior, the cavernous halls seemed barren. Inspiration was taken from the brand logo, specifically, the tail of the seahorse and projected it on to the walls. In its dramatic *avtaar*, the tail curled to become embroidery patterns cut-out in plywood, painted in brand colours. With this design move, the space acquired a degree of freshness and appeal, something it was sorely lacking otherwise. Natural light was increased inside by adding skylights wherever possible and added necessary artificial lighting in keeping with retail display requirements. The graphic patterns of inside are carried on to the front façade in a more subtle form.



**GROUND FLOOR PLAN**

- 1. ENTRANCE
- 2. ATTENDER
- 3. NEW ARRIVALS
- 4. DISPLAY
- 5. CABIN
- 6. PANTRY
- 7. ISLAND DISPLAY

**Client** Seahorse  
**Design team** Kalhan Mattoo, Santha Gour Mattoo, Hina Paramar assisted by Kanwal Deep Kapoor  
**Built-up area** 11000sq ft  
**Cost of project** Rs 1crore  
**Year of completion** 2007



▲ Warehouse B with exhibits

Warehouse A ▼



**Exhibit B:** A large warehouse space with wooden trusses supported on cast iron columns. A healthy tree growing out of the front façade was discovered. Unfortunately, the site contractor had most of it hacked before the instructions to retain the tree. With a touch of whimsy, it was decided to playfully evoke that tree inside in shape of plywood cut-outs on the ceiling and the walls. Having always liked the graphic quality of tree stencil blocks in Acad, an elevation and a plan block were used for the purpose. Replicated exactly, they are easily recognisable to the architects and designers who visit the building products mall. Painted red, they stand out against the monochrome background of the rest of the space. +



This project was an entry for the 'Innovative Interior Design Award' category for the Seventh Cycle of 'Architecture+Design and Spectrum Foundation Architecture Awards 2007'.