



index furniture journal
the indian review of world furniture and design

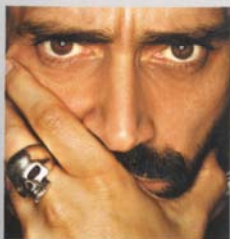
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ifj focus : multiplexes

ifj ignite :



..if human beings don't have a **function**,
why should **objects**?
What is the **purpose of our lives** and of the **things we do**?

FABIO NOVEMBRE

ifj events & tradefairs

ifj seminars & workshops 2007

20th October 2007
Bombay Exhibition Centre
Mumbai

IFJ conducted its second successful seminar, held during the Index Trade Fair 2007 titled 'Retail Spaces: Going beyond the look'. Ar. Nitin Killawala, President, Indian Institute of Interior Designers (IIID) inaugurated the seminar and delivered the keynote address. Sylvia Khan, Editor & Publisher, IFJ, initiated the exploration by summing up the need for dialogue in this area of enquiry. New retail formats have made their presence felt in India, in the last few years. India, a new burgeoning market is viewed by both local and international businesses as a prime destination for the establishment of retail chains and outlets.

The challenges for architects and designers today are multi-pronged as they tackle design issues, regulations that define the very parameters of building and create spaces with visual and functional references that are all at once unique to the Indian context as well as international in their appeal.

Presentations were made by Ar. Kiran Kapadia, Kiran Kapadia Associates, Mumbai; Designer Viren Razdan Idiom Design and Consulting, Bengaluru; Ar. Kalhan Mattoo, Planet 3 Studios Architecture, Mumbai; Ar. Germano Romano, S.G.F.(Store Fixture Group), Mumbai, and designer S. Sundar, Dovetail Furniture Private Limited, Bengaluru. The seminar moderator



designer viren razdan



ar. kiran kapadia



ifj editor & publisher sylvia khan



designer s. sundar



ar. germano romano



ar. kalhan mattoo



ar. nitin killawala



ar. mujib ahmed

Ar. Mujib Ahmed, Collaborative Architecture, Mumbai, began the series of presentations with a brief visual introduction that scanned the dynamic retail formats prevalent today in the international context as well as in India.

The first speaker, Ar. Kiran Kapadia's presentation 'Designing a mall' discussed the various considerations that entail the designing of a mall, for example, the retail mix, traffic engineering, facades, interiors and signage and graphics. He

placed these specifics on a platform where he questioned the quality of malls in terms of both the perceived design as well as the later retail experience. Ar Kapadia stated that, "The country has experienced a phenomenal retail boom over the last decade. It is an appropriate time for some introspection on what essential elements make a successful mall both in terms of financial feasibility and retail experience." Designer Viren Razdan made his presentation on 'Retail concept design', which unfolded a unique approach to retail design. Demystifying the design process, he spoke of the holistic multidisciplinary approach adopted by Idiom where it all begins with an insight that guides the process and design inputs then weave together a space around the insight. Razdan insightfully stated that, "India is a unique picture of time – a continuum in which several centuries co-exist, and regional tastes and cultures co-exist, a cut and paste approach of what



works in the West and even what works in some regions of India cannot be applied blindly. A holistic approach is the best wherein multi disciplinary teams work in tandem from concept to implementation." The next speaker to grace the IFJ seminar platform was Ar. Kalhan Mattoo who presented a visually led presentation centered on the topic 'New designs for new shops.' Ar. Mattoo spoke of the challenge of meaningfully engaging the viewer in a marketplace like in India where myriad design trends abound. "Sometimes,

bucking the trend helps. Counterintuitive thinking, with a touch of whimsy and a dash of wisdom may just work. Customer perceptions about the brand or the product quality are partly formed by the space in which they are exhibited," he stated, moving on to state, supported by convincing visuals, that "...understanding the fundamental brand attributes and evoking them in the 3D construct

is one key. The commercial imperative and how design can ensure greater return on investment is the other." The 'Growth and importance of visual merchandising' was discussed by Ar. Germano Romano who pointed out that a store "is not a 'merchandise container' for sales, but it is a place where the customers' needs are satisfied, gratified and solved. It must be a meeting place and a space where customers should come even if they have no particular need." He concluded saying that a store must be a 'lifestyle supplier.' The conclusive presentation was made by designer S. Sundar who elaborated on the 'Role of fixtures and furniture' drawing insights from his experience of Dovetail's successes as well as hurdles overcome. The presentation reinstated the fact that shop fitting systems and units contribute meaningfully to a shopping experience and

brand identity of a retail space. He emphasized the need to consider the many factors included in what seems a simple matter of displaying merchandise. The seminar presentations were followed by an involved and energetic Q & A session where the architects, designers as well as those who attended the seminar participated. The seminar was well attended and sought to further the platform extended by IFJ by not limiting its 'thinkspace' to architects, designers and members of the furniture industry but also to include students and discriminating consumers of products and spaces. ifj

