

ARCHITECT and INTERIORS INDIA

Inspiration and insight for architects

Volume 8 | Issue 12 | March 2017 | ₹50

Published by ITP Publishing India



iGen
2017

THE YOUNG & THE ZESTFUL

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

8TH ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL

RAYA SHANKHWALKER

PRINCIPAL ARCHITECT, RAYA SHANKHWALKER ARCHITECTS, PANAJI, GOA

It was the urge to break free from the rigid Indian education system that drew Raya Shankhwalker to architecture school, where (he was told) there would be very little studying from books. After graduating from the Goa College of Architecture, he pursued a two-year research programme in Goa and Portugal on the evolution of the Indo-Portuguese house. "I used this time to also travel extensively in Europe," he recalls. "Thereafter, I started an office without any previous working experience. This allowed me to learn from the absolute grassroots."

Based in Goa, Raya Shankhwalker Architects has a comprehensive approach to architecture. By and large, its projects have a culture-sensitive, modern style. The firm believes that architecture must not only create wonderful spaces to live, work and play – but it must play a defining role in the shaping of the built environment and sustainability of nature.

He admits that the initial start was very slow, for he points out, "Very few people would like to approach a novice with their work. Besides, I was very clear that I would not do work at fees below

that prescribed by the Council of Architecture. So, I used my free time to do pro-bono work with the municipality of Panaji (Panjim) in the fields of urban conservation and renewal. These projects were great fun and offered professional satisfaction."

Shankhwalker has been inspired by Mies van der Rohe and Richard Meier for their clean minimalism and Ernesto Bedmar for his culture-sensitive design approach. "The key design philosophy I followed is to have a contemporary approach with cultural influences," he discloses. "Our work draws significantly from the local culture and context while having an inherent clean, functional modern expression that leverages the use of local, eco-friendly materials and techniques. We aspire to deliver world-class design services while we live and enjoy the incredible comforts of Goa."

His journey so far has not been dotted by any major hiccups or hurdles. Shankhwalker says, "I have only seen [challenges as] opportunities and made the best of each scenario. Innovation in design is the ability to create timeless appeal in design, while being relevant today and ready for tomorrow."

He would love to design the master for his home town Panjim. He states, "I don't think we have any path-breaking project, but for me Soro - The Village Pub, is my most favourite till date. The design is centred around the concept of a 1940s warehouse owned by a local dealer who traded in different merchandise. So, retaining a major part of the original structure became pivotal."



Architecture (to us) must not only create wonderful spaces to live, work and play – but it must be a key participant in the shaping of the built environment and the sustainability of nature."

PROJECT
Soro - The Village Pub, Goa