

domus

19 • Volume 02 • Issue 08 • June 2013 / **Collaborative Architecture**, Latheef the role architecture plays / **Opolis**, Idnany a return to the ground / skin as form **RMA, CCBA, SKC, HCP, KDS, Cadence** / **2A+P/A** pays homage to Ettore Sottsass / **Raghu Rai** depth and *darshan* / the paths of **Gabriele Basilico** / **Mattia Mognetti, Francesca Esposito** architecture of the unconscious / 24-page supplement **In Review: Kitchen** inside

India

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Istigkeit#33
Carbon inkjet print on
Hahnemühle FineArt paper
70 x 70 cm
—
Mattia Mognetti
2012
—
The photographs from the
Istigkeit series signify the idea
of the infinite and challenge
the habits of perception, as
the buildings and elements
start to come together by
themselves in a game of
aesthetics and deception

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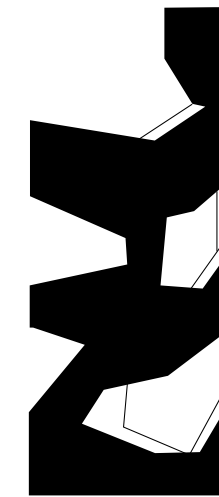
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The role architecture plays

A school project in Calicut by Mumbai-based studio Collaborative Architecture breaks away from conventional bias towards symmetrical planning. With its energetic use of fragmented geometries and tectonic stacking, the building responds to the urban conditions of the campus

Design

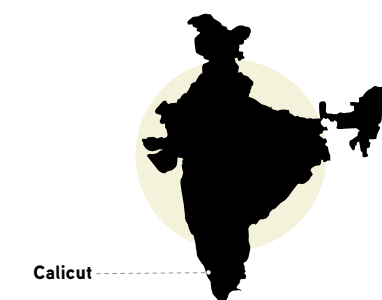
Collaborative Architecture

Text

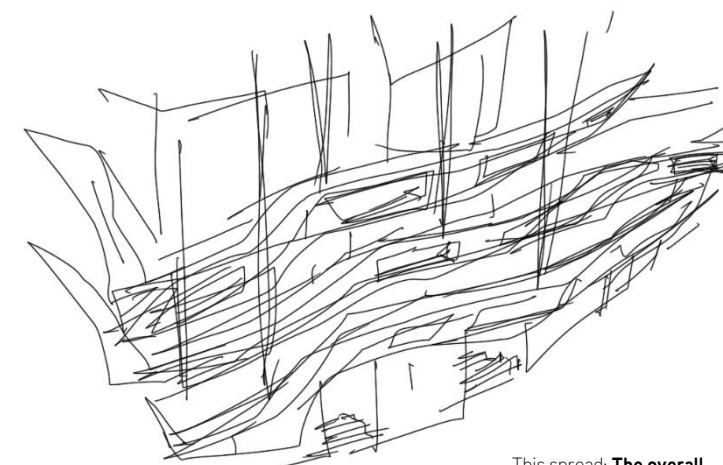
Sahil Latheef

Photos

**Lalita Tharani
Ajeeb**

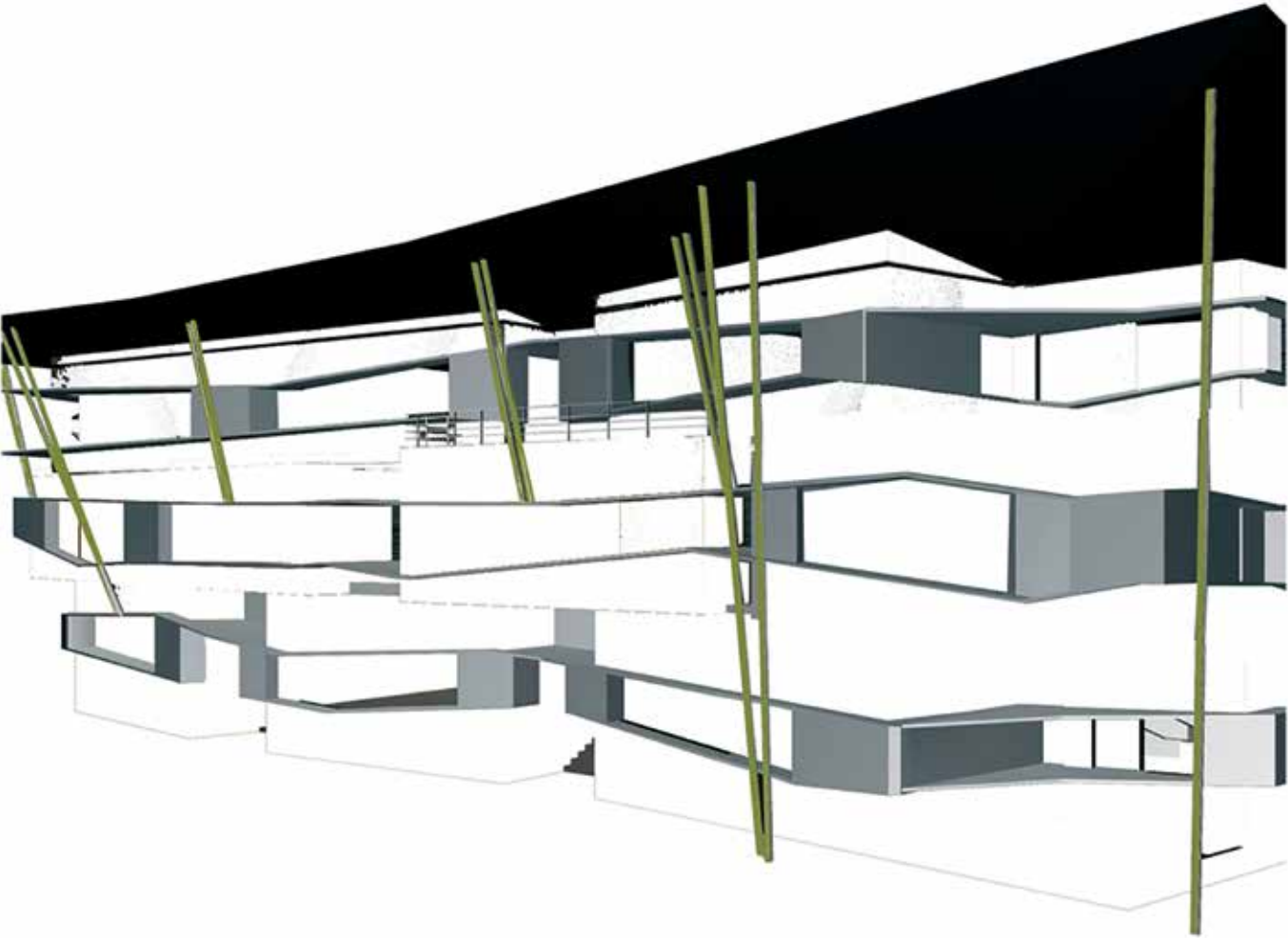


Calicut



This spread: **The overall effect of the building's outer envelope creates an energetic tectonic stack of origami-like shapes with deeply folded horizontal striations, which through its sharp angles offers dramatic vantages and access points thus interacting with the larger campus both visually and physically**

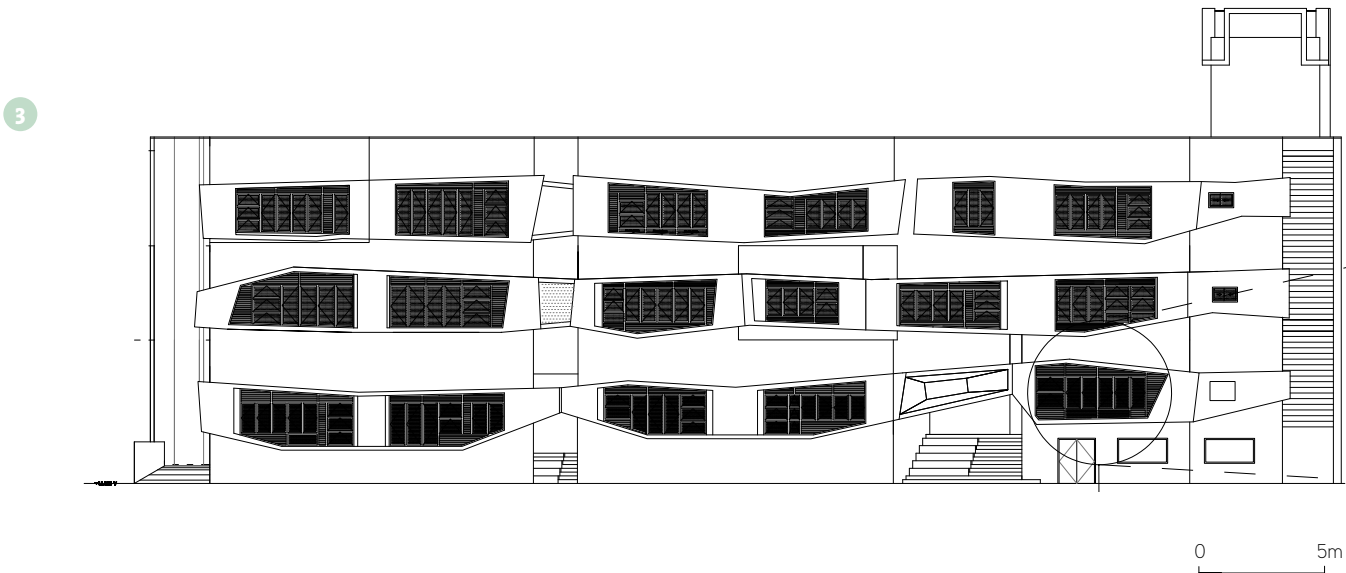
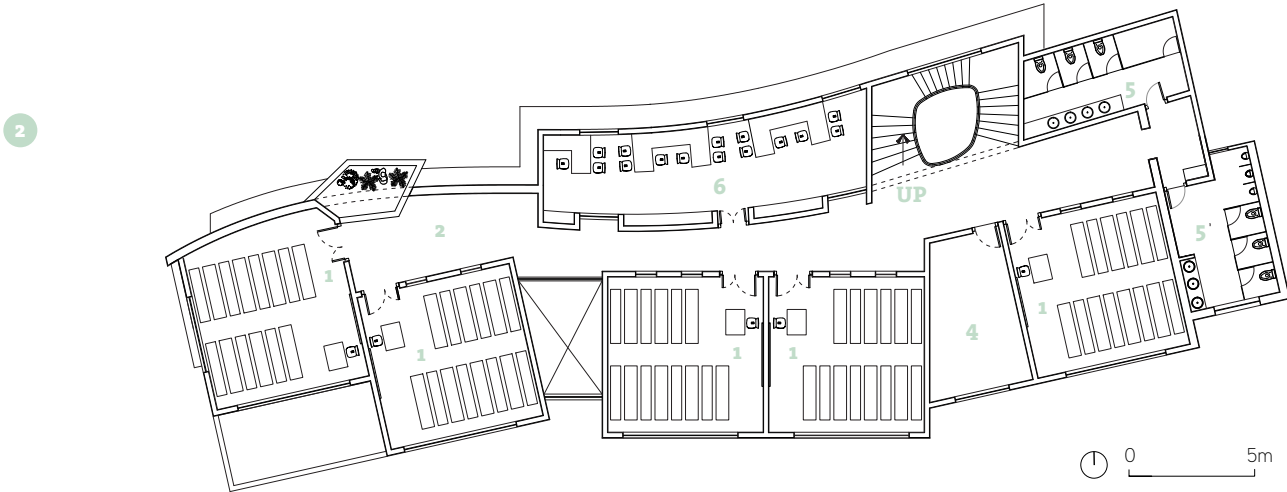
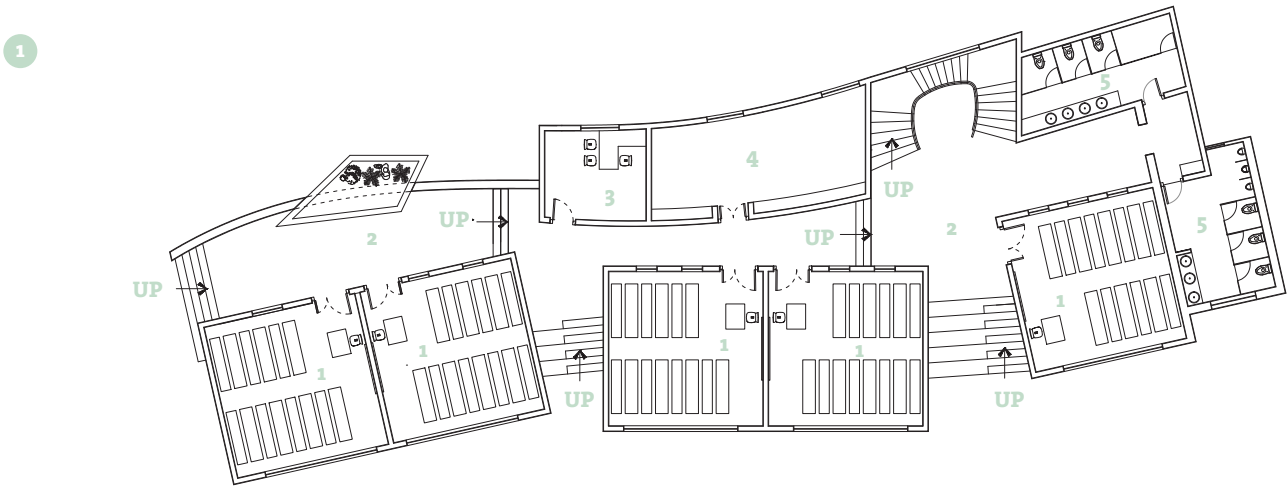
Until recently the school as an architectural type was almost solely commissioned and controlled by the State – which meant that it inherently had to work within a set framework of relations; however in recent decades across India we have seen a dramatic shift away from this model and today it is largely a private enterprise. This shift has opened the possibility for this type to break away from the accepted regimes of academics – both in the realms of space planning and in the larger cultural sense. The featured project – the JDT primary school – in the outskirts of Kozhikode, Kerala tries to offer a formal solution to this challenge through a series of simple but powerful architectural operations. The 1,858-sq-metre school is built on a linear plot wedged between a series of nondescript educational blocks in a large academic campus. Its form carefully negotiates the constraints of site, programmatic pressures and demands of a philanthropic educational society that was reluctant to break away from the traditional notions of academic space planning. The architects – Mujib Ahmed and Lalita Tharani of Collaborative Architecture – start with the basic question about architecture and the role it plays in the educational campus; in this project they attempt to explore new possibilities for educational spaces. Although, they are unable to break with the organisational



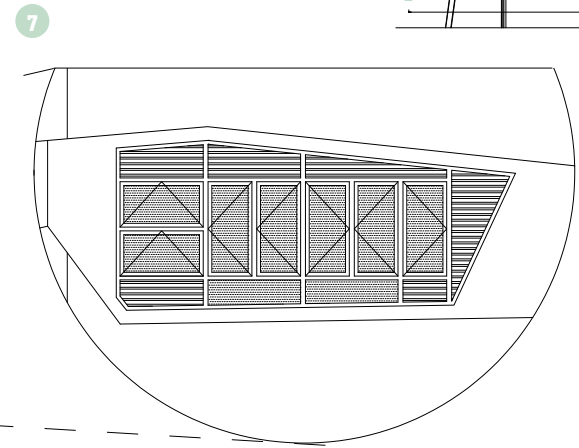
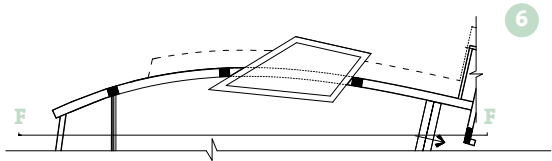
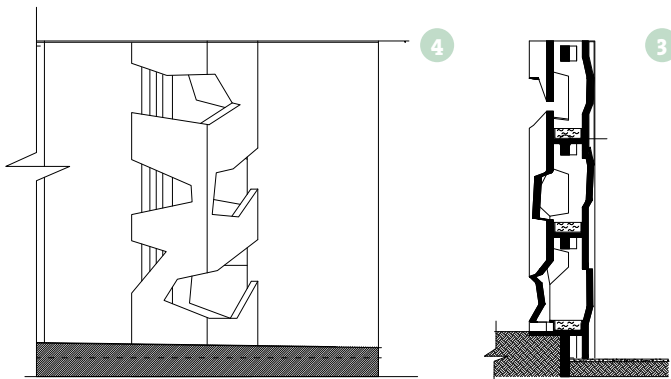
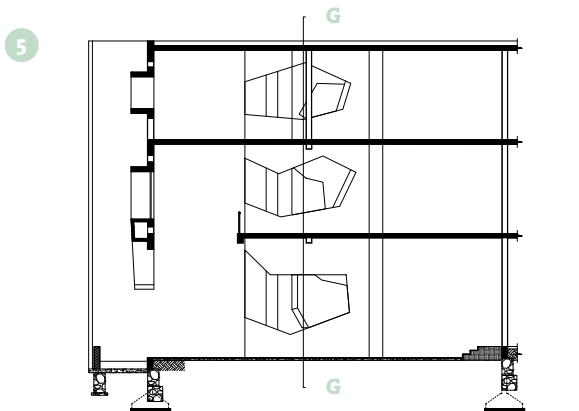
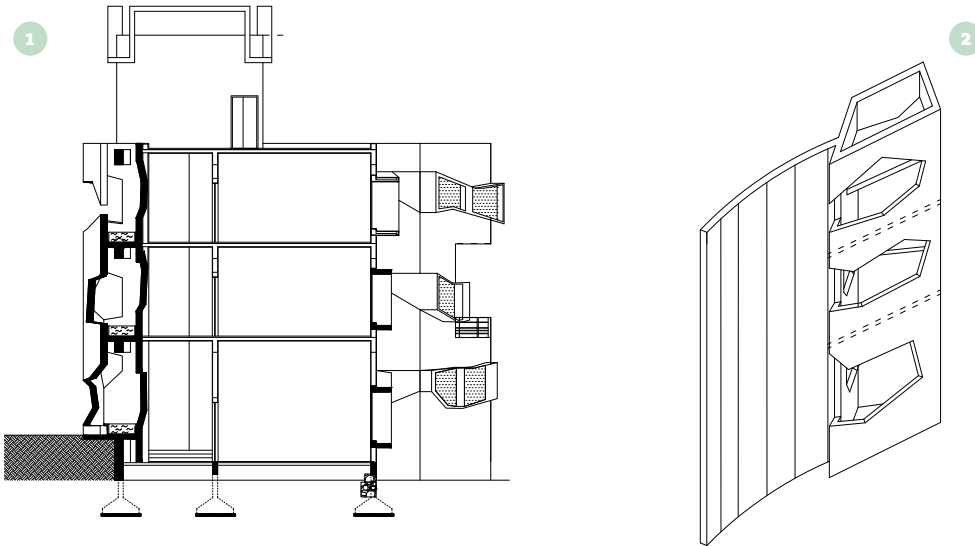
This page: The building is formed by stacking up its programmes across three non-typical floor plates



This page: Each of the classrooms are articulated with a large and uniquely shaped fenestration which besides offering a pragmatic solution to the need of day lighting also generates a sense of identity for the students towards their classrooms



- 1 Classroom
- 2 Lobby
- 3 HM Room
- 4 Store
- 5 Toilet
- 6 Office Room
- 7 Meeting Room



JDT PRIMARY SCHOOL			FACT BOX		DRAWINGS	
Design Collaborative Architecture	Project Coordinator Chinna Thampi	Client Kunhumamed C P (President, JDT Islam), Nour Al Nouri (Patron)	Project Area 1858 m²	Design Phase February 2011 – April 2011	1 Ground floor plan	2 Second floor plan
Principal Architects Mujib Ahmed, Lalita Tharani	Structural Design Basil Thomas	Location Calicut, Kerala	Construction Phase May 2011 – February 2012		3 Front elevation	
Design Team Lalita Tharani, Mujib Ahmed, Shoukath, Muneeb, Mazhar Jahan	Contractor Asheen Panakat					

DRAWINGS	
1	Section BB
2	Planter box isometric view
3	Planter box section GG
4	Planter box back side elevation
5	Planter box section FF
6	Planter box plan
7	Detail of a window



dynamics of the traditional school layout – where the faculty members control the heart of the building keeping a vigil on the most critical common areas and the ancillary services are tucked away from the main building axes – they are able to reconfigure the sequencing of spaces and break away from the conventional bias towards symmetrical planning. The project relooks at the ratio of spatial allotment for the contained classrooms versus the ‘in between’ space. And the central spine that connects all the programmes is planned in the form of an organic interiorised ‘street’ with multiple accesses from the campus rendering the school as a sort of public space. This street also holds the possibility of doubling up as an open class room, a space for interaction between students and teachers or simply a collector of student memories.

The twists and turns in its plan are carefully articulated to help the building deal with facets of climatic control – the main classroom spaces are oriented towards the north to optimise light conditions and punctures in the built form help ventilate the spine – and orient its various elements to programmatic adjacencies within the larger campus.

The building is formed by stacking up its programmes across three non-typical floor plates, each one with its classrooms clubbed in different configurations with slight variations and misalignments giving the building a disjointed footprint which in turn gives rise to a dynamic three-dimensionality. Each of the classrooms are further articulated with a large and uniquely shaped fenestration which besides offering a pragmatic solution to the need of day lighting also generates a sense of identity for the students towards their classrooms.

The architectural manifestation of the building’s outer envelope advances the fragmented geometries that the architects had explored on the façade of a previous project in Kozhikode itself (Asma Towers), albeit this time with a more nuanced reaction to the urban conditions of the campus. The overall effect creates an energetic tectonic stack of origami-like shapes with deeply folded horizontal striations, which through its sharp angles offers

dramatic vantages and access points thus interacting with the larger campus both visually and physically. The use of vibrant colours in the depth of the façade further enhances a sense of intrigue and familiarity by playing on the notion of brightly coloured houses seen on any typical street across the state. At the larger level the architects hope that this project will become an architectural catalyst that would encourage the client to look at the need to commission designs that create engaging educational spaces for their future developments.

Besides the obvious impacts of India’s changing political and economic scenario in the last couple of decades, Kerala has also been undergoing a tremendous shift in the entire fabric of its society due to the influence of migration of a sizeable portion of its population to various cities in the Middle East. At the forefront of this change have been the various Muslim communities of the state who see this as a revitalisation of ancient religious, cultural and trade ties between Kerala and the Arabian Gulf. This exchange has also been able to invoke a deep sense of modernity within these societies. However, for one to be part of this ‘Gulf dream’ (as it is known as in Kerala) a good education is crucial. This is where organisations like the JDT Islam Education Society, the client of this featured project, play a key role.

Although, the impacts of this migration across socio-economic aspects of everyday life in Kerala have been well-studied, its physical manifestations are still taking form and remain largely unexplored. With its attempt to break free of the monolithic programmes of our institutions into a more porous approach to buildings, this project offers an insight into the possibilities that these new cultural alignments will bring to the practice of architecture in Kerala.

—
SAHIL LATHEEF
Architect

This spread: **The classrooms, which are clubbed in different configurations with slight variations and misalignments, give the building a disjointed footprint which in turn gives rise to a dynamic three-dimensionality**