

## **DISSERTATION & RESEARCH - *Dance & Architecture: Engaging Body and Space***

The focus on architecture as a physical object rather than a space that is meant to provide living experiences to a user has led architects to concentrate more on the visual qualities of a building rather than the experience of the human body. Thus, searching for new ways and techniques in architectural design processes to enhance the bodily experience has become indispensable. Dance is one of the most creative channels for understanding movement in the human body and its interaction with the spaces around. My dissertation titled “Dance and Architecture: Engaging Body and Space” explored interdisciplinary studies between these two forms of artistic expression.

The study is a combination of theoretical and physical research of dance and choreography to inspire an engagement between body and space. The architectural project draws on the explorations of the research study as transferable concepts in architecture to create a design solution that provides a holistic visual, corporeal and sensory experience for the user. The concepts derived out of the graphical and spatial analysis of the dance and choreography - **Sequence, Rhythm and Form, Zoning and Paths, Texture (Emotional or Spatial), Pause and Gestures** are used as a framework for the architectural design process.

## **THESIS PROJECT - *KHOJ: Artists' Residency, Mumbai, India***

The focus of the research was to study dance in order to bring out creative processes in designing engaging spaces. The program is designed to encourage the user to engage deeply with people and architecture and benefit from such engagement. Artists' residencies provide artists with time and space for reflection, research, presentation and production. These residencies host artists for short periods of time and allow them to withdraw temporarily from a society which is considered bourgeois. They are set to create their own utopia to work in. Although for some artists, a residency serves as retreat or refuge for solitude, some take it as an opportunity to interact with other people and the context. ‘KHOJ (quest) – Artists' Residency’ is for the latter – the ones who are seeking engagement. Khoj is designed for artists' in the visual arts field.

Khoj is an urban intervention in Bhuleshwar, one of the busiest neighborhoods in the heart of Mumbai, India. With a density of over 90,000 people/ sq.m is the hub to various trade activities, temples, markets and British colonial buildings. The site is a perfect blend of frenetic and fascinating for artists seeking inspiration. Bhuleshwar grew organically over time with odd shapes and sizes of plots, thus creating a lot of redundant spaces between two consecutive buildings. It is near impossible to locate a clear plot of land for this scale of an intervention in the dense urban fabric of Bhuleshwar. The project thus, comprises of seven interventions scattered across a 400m radius of the area. Six artists' private residences are proposed as extensions to existing buildings in the redundant spaces available between two buildings.

The Art Pavilion housing artists' studios, galleries, workshop areas, discussion areas, and other spaces for interaction is proposed as an extension to the Bhuleshwar market building (a single storeyed – Grade IIB heritage structure). The artists thus, have to walk through the bustling lanes and alleys of the neighbourhood to get to their studios located in the pavilion every day. To further choreograph this experience for the artists, interventions such as street furniture are made all through the radius. This is not only to tie in the experience better for the artists but also to provide improved street furniture (otherwise, missing in the area) to the people of Mumbai.

### **ARTISTS' PRIVATE RESIDENCE**

(6 nos, 45 sq.m each)

1. Work station
2. Living area
3. Kitchen area

### **PUBLIC PAVILION (2800 sq.m.)**

1. Re-organise the existing market space
2. Public Plaza

3. Admin Office
4. Snack bar (+ Pantry)
5. Art Gallery (2 nos.)
6. Archive Room
7. Artists' Studios (6nos.)
8. Artist's Material Lab
9. Artist's Equipment Lab
10. Meeting/ Discussion room