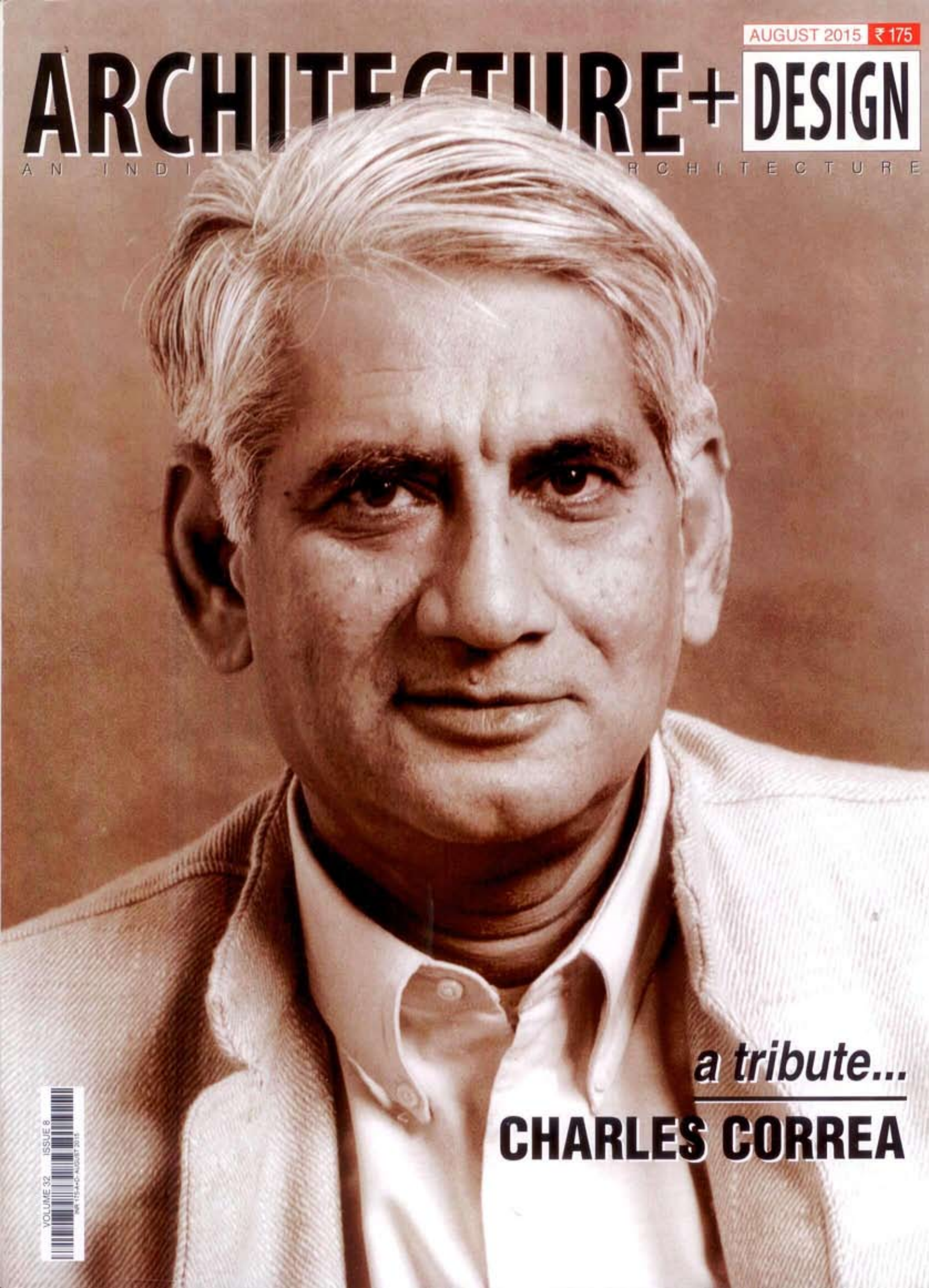


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A N I N D I A R C H I T E C T U R E



a tribute...

CHARLES CORREA

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Mahendra Raju
New Delhi

A generous and magnanimous human being...

Passing away of Charles Correa is a great loss to the profession of architecture, and all the professions associated with built environment and urbanization, in India and in rest of the world.

His contribution has shaped the post independent India. He has given landmark buildings to India and equally a large number at the global level. He has given 'New Mumbai' to Mumbai. He has given a comprehensive study on urbanization to the country. His contributions are innumerable in various fields of his specialisation.

Correa was very knowledgeable, very well read, very warm, generous and magnanimous human being. He was a very talented individual and a legendary figure in

his life time.

I knew Charles for almost fifty five years. I associated with him in a large number of projects, including Stadium in Ahmedabad, Salvato Church in Mumbai, Vithan Showa in Bhopal, LIC & British Council buildings in Delhi, Permanent Mission of India building in N.Y. All these are acclaimed as land mark buildings.

Charles was a very close personal friend of mine, and our friendship extended to our families as well. His passing away is a great personal loss to me. I extend my warm and heartfelt condolences to Monika, Chenu, Rohul and Nakul. I pray for peace to the departed soul and strength to Monika and all the children, grand children and other members of the family to bear this great loss.

"To work in India is the great advantage of life in the Third World. The issues are so much bigger than you are; they give you a chance to grow" – Charles Correa



Charanjit Shah
New Delhi

Great legacy lost...

Beholding a great life that ended, a great career beautifully finished and a great example of heroic demeanour nobly established.

Sometimes, silence is more potent than speech, words seem too thin and poor to express our thoughts and feelings and such was the moment when the country lost a great pioneer in the world of architecture named 'Charles Correa'.

Known as 'India's greatest architect' and having been awarded with the highest honorary awards, his stamps extended far beyond the subcontinent.

His sensitivity to the needs of the urban poor and his emphasis on prevailing resources, energy and climate led to architecture that will always be cherished and admired.

Correa's passion for designing of cities and built environments that are easy to live, work, play and commute-in, is what made him stand tall in the profession.

The ease and understanding with which he turned thoughts into reality has always been

inspiring for the architecture fraternity. He had the ability to grasp the most complex contexts and produce solutions that were simple and clear. His design approach created rich quality of architecture and his influence and style has spread far beyond the country.

His works like British Council Library and Kanchenjunga apartments have been a great inspiration for post Independence architecture in the country. British Council with its great historical connect in terms of design[®] vocabulary reinforced his idea of utilitarian modernism. The Kanchenjunga apartments yet again showcased his great iconoclasm and proved to be a new thought in the domain of highrise buildings.

His design vocabulary with 'model paradigms' created built forms that were sensitive to the climate and humane gestures. His idea of flexibility and utilization of finite resources structured his philosophies of design. He embraced technology, refined materiality and geometrical playfulness to

connect with the context in all of his projects.

During my chairmanship at the Indian Institute of Architects, I had the opportunity to share common platforms with Mr Correa wherein we have had several discussions about arising issues and those conversations gave me an insight to his bold personality and his captivating thoughts. His great

understanding of the profession and power to communicate proved him a sheer genius. Besides being a brilliant speaker, writer, teacher, urban strategist and a visionary architect, he was a fierce critic of modern urban planning and was concerned about the living conditions of the poor and the changing skylines that resemble an alarming ECG.



Bimal Patel
Ahmedabad

The most accomplished and significant Indian architect of his generation...

Charles Correa was the most accomplished and significant Indian architect of his generation. He commenced his practice from Ahmedabad, where the city's progressive and sophisticated elite had many opportunities on offer. Gandhi Ashram, built in the early sixties, was his opening salvo. This was followed by a number of other projects in the city. Soon thereafter, he moved to Mumbai where he made the most of that city's expansive, inclusive and cosmopolitan culture. A number of other stunningly innovative projects followed. As the world around him threw up new challenges, he work evolved. He closed in 2010, when he was eighty, with the Champalimaud Centre in Lisbon. Today, his body of work inspires architects the world over.

Though the School of Architecture at CEPT was established around the time that Correa was active in Ahmedabad, he was never formally associated with it, nor did he ever teach there. Over the years, he was invited to deliver two or three evening lectures - once, I remember, was in the late 70s when I was a student there. The most recent, was, when CEPT invited him last year, which was after a gap of almost thirty-five years. Regardless of this, he was ever present at CEPT as an inspirational and subversive counterpoint.

His work was considered by most teachers at CEPT to be central to modern India's architectural canon. Therefore, as students, we visited his projects in Ahmedabad and learned from them. Gandhi Ashram, taught us how our modernity might negotiate our climate and compromise with our past. The Gujarat Sports Club Stadium taught us how to derive an architectural idiom from

the logic of structural engineering. His houses taught us how abstract and austere architecture can still afford a comfortable and elegant life. Correa's later works were not as easily accessible - Kanchanjunga Apartments, Sarvajan Church, Bharat Bhavan, Hotel Octavo de Goa, the British Library, the LIC Offices, Jawahar Kala Kendra and Vidharbhavan. Yet, we were in awe of them and they were continually referred to. Correa's cosmopolitanism provided a bulwark against the encroachments of provincialism.

Though my father Hamidul Patel and Correa were contemporaries and knew one another, I met Correa for the first time when he came to CEPT last year. I was privileged to have a long and wonderful conversation with him and his wife Manika over lunch. We talked about his early days in Ahmedabad, the personalities of those times, my professional work and my ideas about where CEPT should be headed. I was much energised and emboldened by his candid comments, frank assessments and encouraging words.

Correa requested me to show my work at his conference in Goa last March. I was thrilled that, frail as he was, he attended my session. "Architects and planners, like engineers and doctors, have to be problem solvers," he said when we talked later. "They have to be optimistic; believe that the difficult problems that people and societies face can be solved. They have to show what can be done through their projects. They have to offer design and planning solutions, not analyses as social scientists do or words of wisdom as philosophers do". His note appreciating my work will remain a prized possession.