

The reception area-cum-visitors' lounge with warm and welcoming decor.

# TIMELESS

# DESIGN

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AR. KANAN MODI'S DESIGN STUDIO IS A TESTAMENT TO HER CORE DESIGN VALUES OF USING SUSTAINABLE MATERIALS AND EFFICIENT SPACE PLANNING TO DESIGN TIMELESS, SLEEK AND ELEGANT SPACES.



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**2** A view of the modern work space from the rustic chill out zone.



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**3** A view of the collaboration space from the work space.

**4** A glass wall demarcates Kanan's work area from the rest of the office.

**W**hen most office designs focus on minimalism and functionality, Hyderabad-based **Kanan Modi of EL +D Architecture and Interior Design** has gone a step ahead and redefined their work zone to induce maximum productivity. The office interiors is a reflection of their work; an amalgamation of expressive design facets and functional realism is what makes this office different from others. "The idea was to create a transparent and homogenous work environment. So we have designed an office with no barriers, no cabins or hierarchy. Our workspaces are interactive and encourages interaction between architects, clients, vendors, support staff and all. We have used recycled and used only locally available materials," explains Kanan Modi, Principal Architect of EL+D Architecture and Interior Design.

She further adds, "While designing this 1,500 sq. ft. design studio, we ensured to use sustainable materials. From using locally available Cuddapah stone flooring and bricks, industrial waste for creating decorative installations, recyclable materials such as metal sheets and clay, pebble bed flooring from discarded stones, to energy-efficient lighting have been used."



Collectively these elements lend dynamism to the space that constantly stimulates imagination. Lending more insight on the decor and space planning she adds, "The focus was to create spaces that encourage relentless hard work, diligence, harmony and transparency apart from including details that inspires and talks about the meticulous attention we give to small things."

The office has seamless segregation of spaces such as reception, visitors area, workstations that are unified by a coherent visual and architectural vocabulary. Doing away with a conventional reception desk, a comfortable lounge for visitors has been created at the entrance. The glass frontage of the office helps sunlight stream across the entire space. Meanwhile an entire wall made of small tiles, is dedicated to display various projects. "To this wall, we have also added a few small mirror tiles that surprises the person reading the wall to find him or herself in the reflection, and with that we yarn together our story," describes the designer. Another wall here has been casted onsite from board formed concrete giving very fine linear textured effect.

Adjacent to the visitor's lounge, and clearly visible from the outside, is an open collaboration space with a table crafted out of a vibrant red bike lift used in repair workshops with a glass top. And hanging above the table, is a unique light installation, beautifully engineered pieces of scooter fenders and wheel plate designed like petals. This feature that reminds one of a rustic workshop is a deliberate part of the design. Dark Cuddapah stone flooring with floor-to-ceiling glass windows completes the open plan.

Kanan says, "The space which is on the ground floor of a commercial building, is rectangular in shape, with only one of the shorter sides at the external face of the building. To balance this and to bring in a bit of the outdoors, we created a courtyard in the middle of the space. Each of these elements have been carefully studied and experimented with to achieve the desired results."

6 The Collaboration Space has a unique red base table crafted from bike lift with a glass top. Note the light above that has been designed using scooter fenders.

7 The work station space delicately separated with a laser-cut screen. Notice the exclusive wall shelves crafted out of metal.


The courtyard essentially divides the office into two zones, the entrance zone with a visitor's lounge and a collaboration area; and the work zone. The traditional courtyard fashioned using locally available pebbles for the floor, stepping stones created out of sliced wood trunks, jute charpoy, ceiling with inverted pots with LED lights and a library made from glass all seem to be merged here-symbolic of the firm's design outlook, which believes in being traditional yet ready for an eco-friendly future. The material library is set inside an exposed brick wall with books suspended using an old fold-stitch strap. The design was developed with details that accentuated the ethnicity of these rural textures in a modern environment.

Individually varied and collectively orchestrated, through both materials, simple elements, the space has been choreographed to create a confluence of art and an industrial aesthetic. Together they make a unique user experience defined as much by formal clarity as by perceptual complexity.

The compact spaces are organised into series of independent and self-sustaining functional bands that ensure that the office runs smoothly. Beyond the courtyard is the serious work space. A stone clad work island top that acts as a writing or drawing table while below this are shelves for storage and magnetic pin up boards above the desks made of metal sheets. An interesting *jaali* designed to be a sliding doorway demarcates the spaces and becomes a design highlight. Complementing this design feature is another contemporary laser cut metal screen. Unfinished surface of metal sheets - fresh from the factory - are folded to form stepped and layered book shelves to become a functional unit to store files, construction hats etc. A glass wall with a metal planter extending out from both sides of the glass becomes an appealing feature while exposed air-conditioning ducts camouflaged in perforated steel sheets add to the interesting visual. These angular shapes lend zest to the space.

The vibrant and geometrically complex thread work installation, the immediately comprehensible illustration and graphic designs along with the engaging compact layout and the visual articulation of the mechanical and electrical systems create an industrial aesthetic deeply infused with an artisanal quality. The ambience is that of an office offering their employees a calm and peaceful space to work in.

Here modernism and functional components mesh seamlessly with comfortable and comforting features to lend this space a sense of relaxed state of mind though it is truly a place where work and play, life and design as well as thought and action come together to make client's dream come to life. ■



### KANAN MODI

Headed by Ar. Kanan Modi EL + D Architecture + Interior Design is a leading multi disciplinary Architecture and Interior Design practise based in Hyderabad, with a presence in New Delhi and Mumbai.

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8 Note the stone topped work island.