

Post-Independence and Contemporary Indian Architecture



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Immediately after the independence of India, the Modernism swept through the new buildings constructed to meet the new needs such as for schools, government buildings, housing for the poor, urban renewal, and new capital cities of various states. Collaboration with internationally renowned architects created distinctive design innovations that blended modernist and Indian style.

Immediately after the independence, the field of Indian architecture saw two major challenges:

- To bring back the glory of the past
- To step forward with new-fangled concepts.

The architects were successful in creating an architecture which could define the post-independence era to some extent. Right from commercial architecture, urban design and re-development, low cost architecture to housing, institutional, industrial and sensitive issues like conservation and sustainable architecture; all have acquired an exceptional connotation.

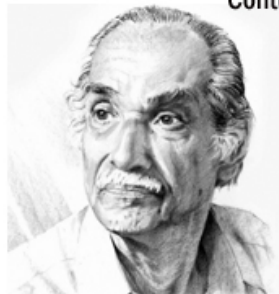
Contemporary Indian architecture to a large extent is reflected in its new boom of corporate campuses, shopping malls, and skyscrapers. Many of them reflect a growing trend of sustainable and green architecture.

The contemporary architects have induced a multi disciplinary approach to architecture which includes consideration of climate, ecology, energy efficiency, engineering and programming skills, use of 3d for better visualization, alternative technology and lost cost architecture.

Contemporary Architects



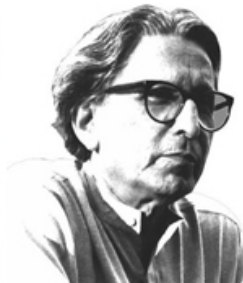
Le Corbusier



Achyut Kanvinde



Laurie Baker



B V Doshi



Charles Correa

Le Corbusier

The best-known architect recruited to the efforts of creating a new India was one of the founders of modernism in architecture, the Swiss Le Corbusier. The showpiece of his genius is Chandigarh, built as the capital of Punjab and Haryana. Outside Chandigarh, Le Corbusier's most influential structures include:

- Sarabhai House, Ahamadabad
- Millowner's Association Building, Ahmedabad.
- Interstate Bus Terminal, New Delhi
- Permanent Exhibition Hall of *Prāgati* Maidan, New Delhi

Architecture of Le Corbusier: Critical Appraisal

The original name of Le Corbusier was Charles-Edouard Jeanneret. He was born in



Switzerland in 1887 and when he moved to Paris at the age of 20, adopted name of his maternal grandfather as his pseudonym. He was one of the founding fathers of the modernist movement and of what has come to be known as the “International Style” in architecture. He is best known for the idea of a house as a “machine” to live in. His urban planning ideas were influential; readily accepted and implemented on grand scale. However, critics claim that most of them were cold inhuman totalitarian plans and resulted either in failures or in miserability. Indeed, some of his plans were utopian provocations and indeed resulted in failures {example Ville Radieuse, Ville Contemporaine}. Nevertheless, Corbusier was more an architect than an urban planner.

Achyut Kanvinde

Achyut Kanvinde (1916-2002) has been regarded a pioneer of the modern architecture in India. His influence on the wide use of flexible concrete column and beam grid in India has been much acclaimed. However, his main contribution to India’s built environment remains giving priority to people’s need over imposing intentions of designers. The **Iskon Temple** and National **Institute of Bank Management (NIBM)** at Pune are some of his hallmark architecture. He is known to have many institutional buildings in India such as __:

- Physical Research Laboratory, Ahmedabad
- Council of Scientific and Industrial Research
- IIT Kanpur Campus (1966)
- Institute of Rural Management, Anand
- Nehru Science Center, Mumbai
- National Science Center, New Delhi
- ISKCON Temple, East of Kailash, Delhi

Laurie Baker

Laurie Baker (1917-2007) is known as the “**conscience keeper of Indian architecture**” and “**Gandhi of Indian architecture**”. He is known to have learnt from the practices of vernacular architecture and turned the indigenous methods into the modernism.

He was famous as a builder of **affordable homes for the poor**. His greatest contribution was showing that cost-effective and ecologically sustainable construction does not automatically imply shoddy building and reduced creative freedom. Instead, when technologies are adopted with care and creativity, they could lead to a unique architectural expression.

He was known as the conscience keeper of Indian architecture **because** his method was the *very opposite of the prevalent model in India which followed the British system*. At a time when Indian architects were following the British way of designing and directing operations from their drawing boards as ‘consultants’ far away from the bustle of the site, Baker organized his work as a designer-builder in the manner of the traditional Indian mason. He is not known to have maintained a regular office or a battalion of assistants.

He generally sketched on wastepaper, and designed largely on site. His personal approach resulted in the cost-effectiveness design, which would have been impossible in



normal professional mode.

His architecture has been associated with brick (largely exposed), landscaped courts, jaalis, traditional Indian sloping roofs. He did profess that an architect's design responsibility is realised when the user is not just kept in mind but understood by his manner of living, within the space as well as in the regional spirit of collective growth, in the physical as well as time frames.

B V Doshi

B V Doshi (born 1927) is considered an important figure of South Asian architecture, and his work is known as an essential gauge of Asian identity in the global milieu. He is known for contributions to the evolution of architectural discourse in India. He is known for his contributions to the architecture of **Indian Institute of Management Bangalore**.

He is also known for a peculiar design of the **Amdavad ni Gufa** in Ahmedabad. **Amdavad ni Gufa** is an underground art gallery, which exhibits works Maqbool Fida Hussain. It is a cave-like underground structure whose roof is made of multiple interconnected domes, covered with a mosaic of tiles. On the inside, irregular tree-like columns support the domes.

His works are known for his preference of exposed materials and subdued natural tones.

Charles Correa

Charles Correa (1930-2015) played a pivotal role in the creation of architecture for post-Independence India. His works are known to have brought forth a skilful use of colour in Indian architecture.

His working style implies adeptness in comprehending traditional architecture and in merging the modern typology with **South Asian elements**.

The visual imagery and treatment of surfaces brings an element of youthfulness in all his projects. His famous project namely Cidade de Goa shows his artistic play of light and shade on the walls.

His famous works are the **Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Museum** at the Sabarmati Ashram in Ahmadabad and the **Jawahar Kala Kendra in Jaipur**. He is also behind the planning of Navi Mumbai, MIT'S Brain and Cognitive Sciences Centre in Boston and the *Cidade de Goa* in Goa.