



CHARLES CORREA FOUNDATION
EDUCATION AND RESEARCH IN HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

NEWSLETTER



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RECONSTRUCTING FROM THE ARCHIVES : INTER-UNIVERSITY CENTRE FOR ASTRONOMY AND ASTROPHYSICS (IUCAA) by Amrita Goyal

RECONSTRUCTING FROM THE ARCHIVES: INTER-UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR ASTRONOMY AND ASTROPHYSICS (IUCAA)

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One of the many courtyards that organize IUCAA's masterplan.
Photograph taken by Mahendra Sinh.

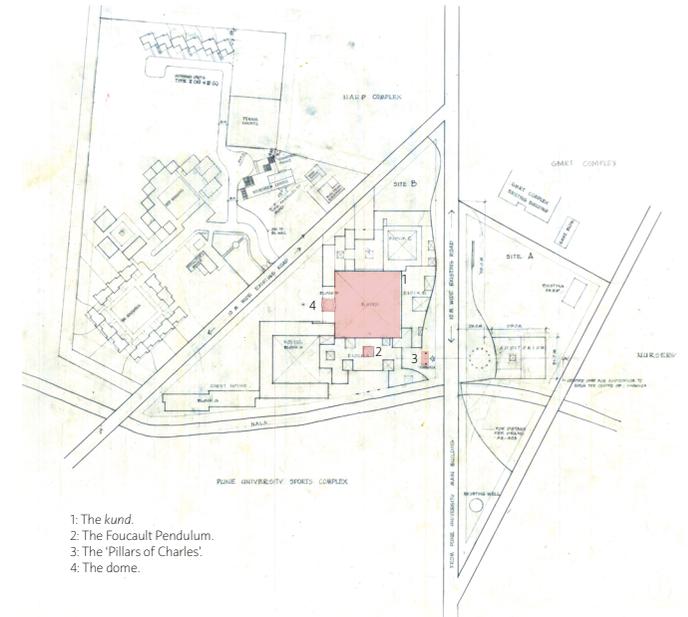
For a novice, at least in the complex fields of astronomy and astrophysics, the most gripping part of outer space is its scale — the sheer enormity, the vastness, the dizzyingly unfathomable extents of 'nothingness'. Working with an archival masterplan of the Inter-University Center for Astronomy and Astrophysics, or IUCAA, gave me the same feeling of disorientation. Completed in the early 1990s, IUCAA was the second 'Inter-University Center' (IUC) — autonomous centers set up by the University Grants Commission designed to act as national coordinating bodies to create centralised facilities that could be shared by all universities. In July 1988, IUCAA was granted 8 hectares of land near Pune University, and Charles Correa was chosen to design the buildings.

Reading a plan for the first time is a bit like learning the rhythm of an unfamiliar song, and this one — especially at the masterplan scale — was particularly elusive. Correa himself¹ describes the structure of the plan as more organic than a strict grid;

“an axis which is actually shifting, yet not breaking off at any point...”

The very apparent asymmetry that this generates is what makes the building contemporary. Compounding this was the sheer scale of the institute; in 1992, just 4 years after being granted a site, it stood as a mammoth 150,000 square foot campus.

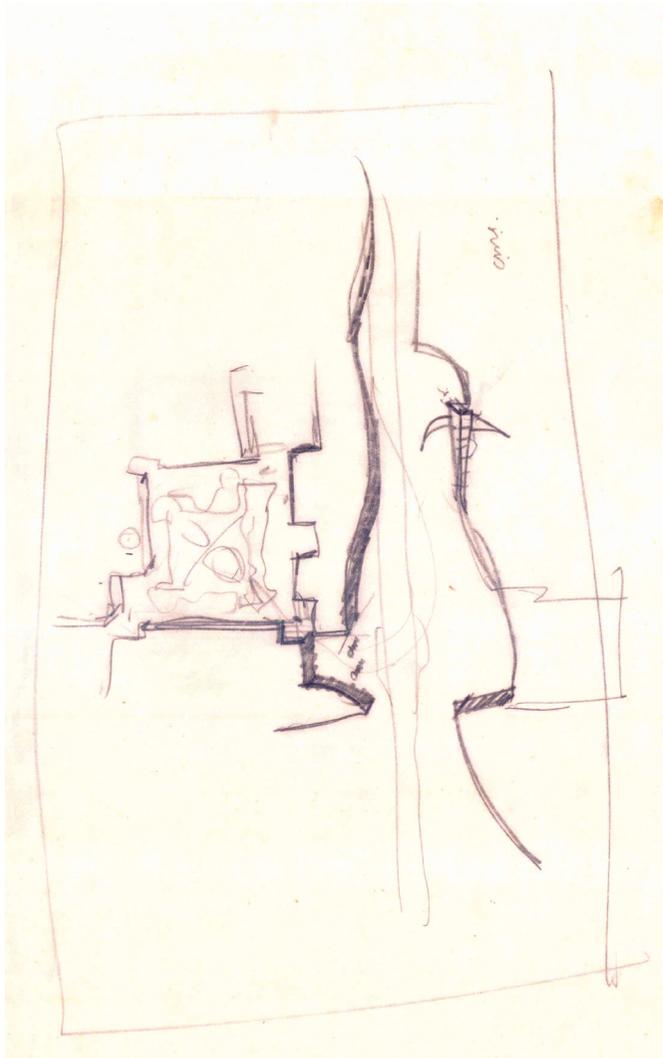
When a project is studied as a process rather than an outcome, a retrospective curation becomes all the more complex. Every line I drafted was accompanied by a lingering angst — that I was not correctly capturing the



The 3 sites of IUCAA, with the central institute, interspersed by campus roads.
Archival drawing from the Charles Correa Archives.

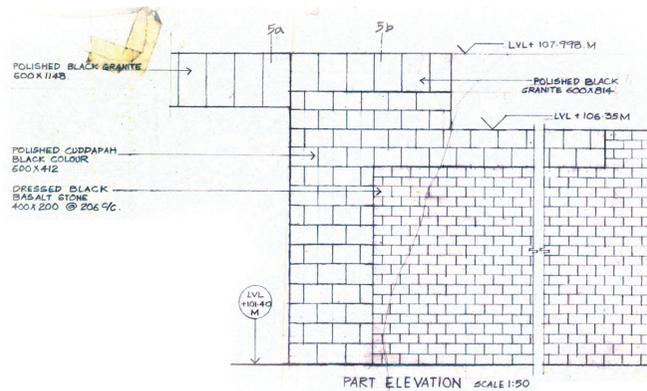
original intention of the architect, that the wall itself was built differently than the drawing, that there was somehow more to these walls that I was blissfully unaware of. This was when I took a deep dive into 'the IUCAA story' — how it had been written about, spoken about, critiqued — essentially *positioning* it in its context. It was quite evident that collaboration must have been essential for a project of this scale to have been executed in such a short time. After realising that Correa accepted the project on the condition that the scientists worked with him to bring the imagery and concepts of astronomy into the builtform, I knew that these were the tenets of this institute, and what made it so unique.

¹'Charles Correa — Traditional Concepts, Astral Effects', and 'Profile — Charles Correa', cover story by Chintamani Bhagat, *Indian Architect & Builder*, Bombay — August 1991, pg. 31-32



The 'sweeping lines' of black stone, articulated as black walls. Archival sketch by Charles Correa, from the Charles Correa Archives.

But what does this abstraction – the 'cosmos', the mandala – mean for an architect? Correa's translation of concepts into architectural gestures was not an act of force or imposition, but rather an acceptance of the land, the trees, and the terrain. While IUCAA is known for its imagery, such as the Foucault pendulum and its spiral staircase, there are much subtler nuances that catch one by surprise.

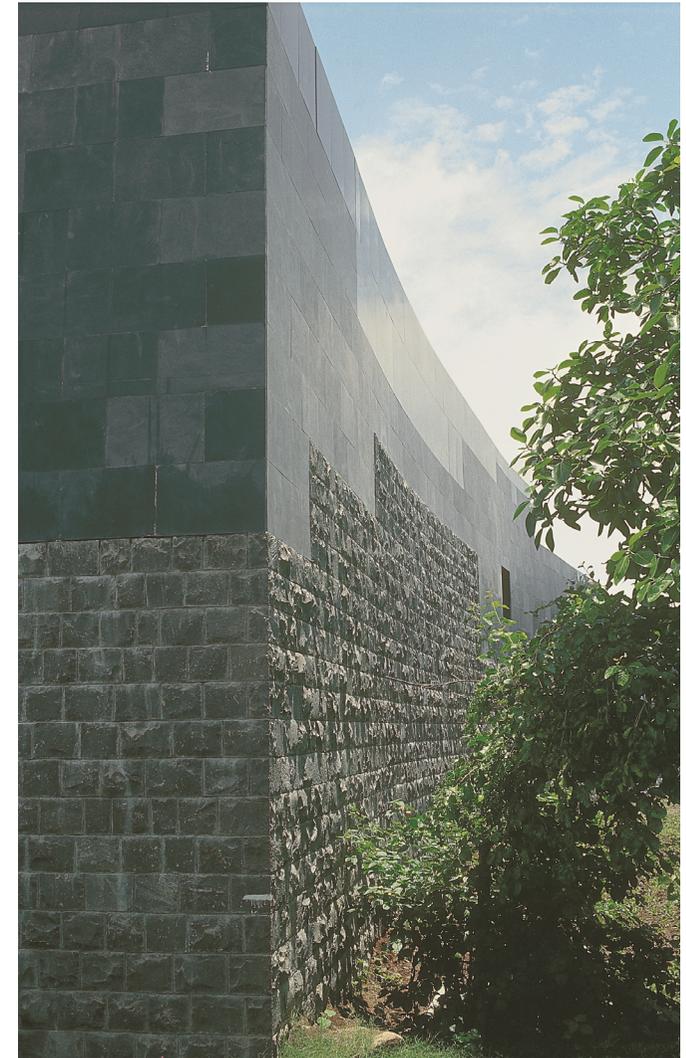


Three layers of black stones allude to the increasing 'blackness' of outer space. Archival drawing from the Charles Correa Archives.

The first gesture that I noticed in the plan was the sweeping lines – articulated as imposing black walls that are meant to draw a visitor in. Even a CAD drawing reflects the sure movement of the hand that sketched them. An elevation revealed the layers of the walls: local basalt at the base, followed by courses of a blacker kuddapah, and topped finally by glossy black granite, described by Correa² as

"black on black on black – the infinity of outer space."

² 'Pradakshina: The Works of Charles Correa', by Charles Correa (Special Report), Approach, Tokyo – Summer 1994, pg. 5



Three layers of black stones allude to the increasing 'blackness' of outer space. Photograph taken by Rahul Mehrotra.

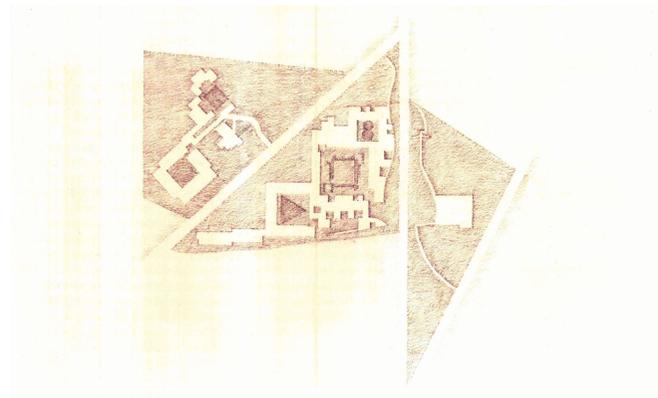
RECONSTRUCTING FROM THE ARCHIVES : INTER-UNIVERSITY CENTRE FOR ASTRONOMY AND ASTROPHYSICS (IUCAA) by Amrita Goyal

As I worked my way through the rigour and complexity of the masterplan one block at a time, the organic nature of the grid, flowing and bending for light and openings, began revealing itself. A conscious effort was made to treat each block not as an isolated entity but a part of a system, understanding the whole as much more than the sum of its parts but also the part itself as a whole.



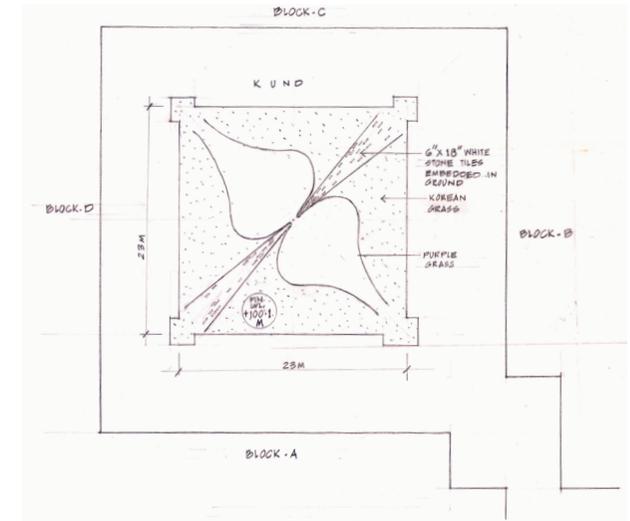
The play of scale is beautifully seen in the statues in the central courtyard. Photograph taken by Rahul Mehrotra.

The play of scale — unapologetically cosmic one minute, tenderly humane the next — beautifully parallels a layperson's understanding and perception of the 'cosmos'. Slowly, the distinctly 'Correan' aspects of the project started to emerge. The interplay of volume and void, the articulation of spaces around courtyards: places in the sun and shade, so to speak. The variation in these open spaces is reminiscent of the hierarchy of courtyards in Belapur Housing, built in Navi Mumbai just a few years prior (the project was completed in 1986, two years before IUCAA began).



The figure-ground plan depicts the interplay of volume and void. Archival drawing from the Charles Correa Archives.

The largest of these courtyards — the central square — takes the form of a 'kund', or well; another clear indicator of its architect. However, rather than being filled with water, the kund is bound by a delicate pattern of granite steps, with stones set into the grass along one diagonal, almost flying apart. On investigating this further, I saw the careful balance between the allusion to astral imagery and the grounding of an architectural gesture — in this case, directionality.



The stones that span the diagonal of the kund 'fly apart' with energy. Archival drawing from the Charles Correa Archives.

This kund was intended as a metaphor for the expanding universe: the stones are 'bursting' with centrifugal energy but also set a directional axis that leads to other facilities in the centre of campus.



The stones that span the diagonal of the kund 'fly apart' with energy. Photograph taken by Mahendra Sinh.

RECONSTRUCTING FROM THE ARCHIVES : INTER-UNIVERSITY CENTRE FOR ASTRONOMY AND ASTROPHYSICS (IUCAA) by Amrita Goyal

The two 'Pillars of Charles'³ which flank the narrow path at the entrance – columns of exposed concrete melting into the powder blue of the sky – hold the anecdotal memory of one of the young architects in Correa's office who had climbed the column and poured blue paint on it. These pillars reappear almost 30 years later in an institution halfway across the world; the Champalimaud Centre in Lisbon.



The 'Pillars of Charles' at IUCAA, exposed concrete melting into the blue sky. Photograph taken by Rahul Mehrotra.



The 'Pillars of Charles' at the Champalimaud Centre in Lisbon, 30 years later. Photograph taken by Colin Mosher.

When I studied the dome that lies to the west of the *kund*, I saw that it was quite literally a reflection of the heavens. The scientists at IUCAA had calculated, through complex mathematics, the exact distribution of stars as they existed in the sky the day IUCAA's foundation stone was laid — 8.30 pm on December 29 1988. This 'star pattern' was then mapped onto the dome, where small pieces of glass were placed before it was cast. The finished dome was painted black on the inside, creating the effect of standing in bright daylight under a bedazzled, 'starry' sky. Far from being alien and unknown, IUCAA now felt so familiar; I could see how astronomers sometimes referred to faraway stars as their friends.

If, as Correa describes⁴, "the entire building is like a painting", then its archival study has been more like a dance. My perception of scale transformed from the disorientation of reading the masterplan to the intimate familiarity I had with each block and its unique gestures. In reconstructing from the Archives, engaging with the project clarified my responsibility: not to recreate the most correct drawing or convey the most accurate version of events, but rather to tell a story — to someone who may not speak the language of space, architectural or scientific. One where the collaborative nature of the program was first reflected in its design and construction, where symbology, science, and structure found a common home. The story of IUCAA.

IUCAA is one of over 220 projects that the CCF team has been curating for the upcoming monograph on Charles Correa, scheduled for release later this year. If you have any information or drawings related to any of Charles Correa's works, please reach out to us at: connect@charlescorreafoundation.org.

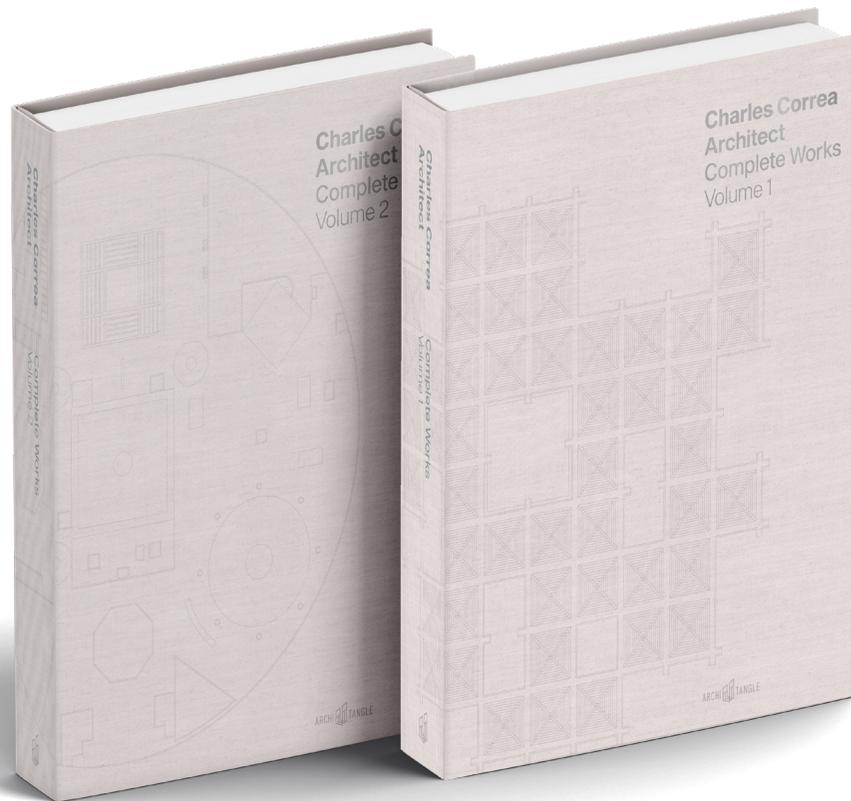
³Architecture, Astronomy and the Cosmos: From Conversations to a Masterpiece by Ajit Kembhavi, presented at the Z-Axis Conference 2024 — October 13, 2024.

⁴'Charles Correa – Traditional Concepts, Astral Effects'; and 'Profile – Charles Correa', cover story by Chintamani Bhagat, Indian Architect & Builder, Bombay – August 1991, pg. 31-32



The bedazzled dome with the glass-puncture stars of sunlight. Photograph taken by Mahendra Sinh.

PROJECT UPDATES: MONOGRAPH - CHARLES CORREA ARCHITECT: COMPLETE WORKS



'There are no great men,' said Stendhal apropos of Napoleon, 'there are merely great events.' And one could perhaps go further and say that there are great issues. For we are only as big as the questions we address. And this, to my mind, is the central riveting fact of life for architects in the Third World. Not the size or value of the projects we are working on but the nature of the questions they raise — and that we must confront. A chance to grow – the abiding virtue of a place in the sun.

Charles Correa
A Place in the Sun (1983), Thomas Cubitt Lecture, London

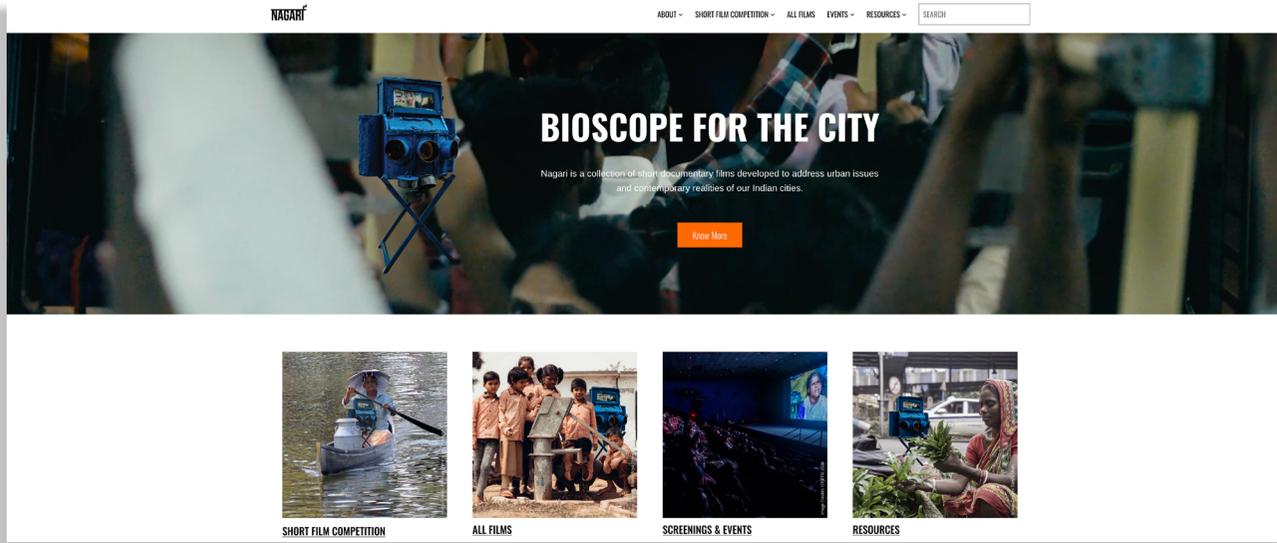
This two-volume set will reflect upon Charles Correa's six decades of practice, showcasing over 220 projects, 106 of which were built. Along with documentation from the archives, including unpublished drawings and photographs, these volumes will also have insightful and analytical essays by scholars and professionals who talk about different facets of his work: his buildings, his ideas on urbanism, his writings on cities, as well as his role in the debates on architecture in India and globally.

Correa's architecture has often been described as human centric – an architecture for India that resonated with its people – it was humble, culturally rooted, and climatically appropriate. Charles Correa's vision for India, in the formative years of its independence, were that of resilience, inclusivity and response to its origins. Buildings like the Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya (the Gandhi Memorial Museum), the National Crafts Museum, the Jawahar Kala Kendra, the Vidhan Bhavan - the State Assembly for the Government of Madhya Pradesh, the Institute for Astronomy and Astrophysics, the British Council building, the Ismaili Centre, the Brain and Cognitive Sciences building at MIT and his final project, the Champalimaud Centre for the Unknown in Lisbon. Correa designed a wide range of housing projects, from the Tube House in the early 1960s, to PREVI in Lima, Belapur housing and the sculptural tower with interlocking apartments - Kanchanjunga.

Correa was, and remains, a pioneer at the forefront of post-independence Indian architecture and planning. His work, especially his proposal for New Bombay (Navi Mumbai), eventually led to him becoming the Chief Architect for CIDCO. His pioneering work on cities led to him being appointed the Chairman of the National Commission on Urbanisation, the only such commission, by the Prime Minister of India. As we move ahead in the 21st century, his ideas not only resonate, but are relevant to the next generations of architects and urbanists.

Through illustrated essays and project descriptions, the volumes will discuss the life and work of Correa. The books will inspire, raise awareness and urge the readers to revisit their approach to building design and tackle urban issues, and to make conscious efforts that will help define India and the Global South's urban future.

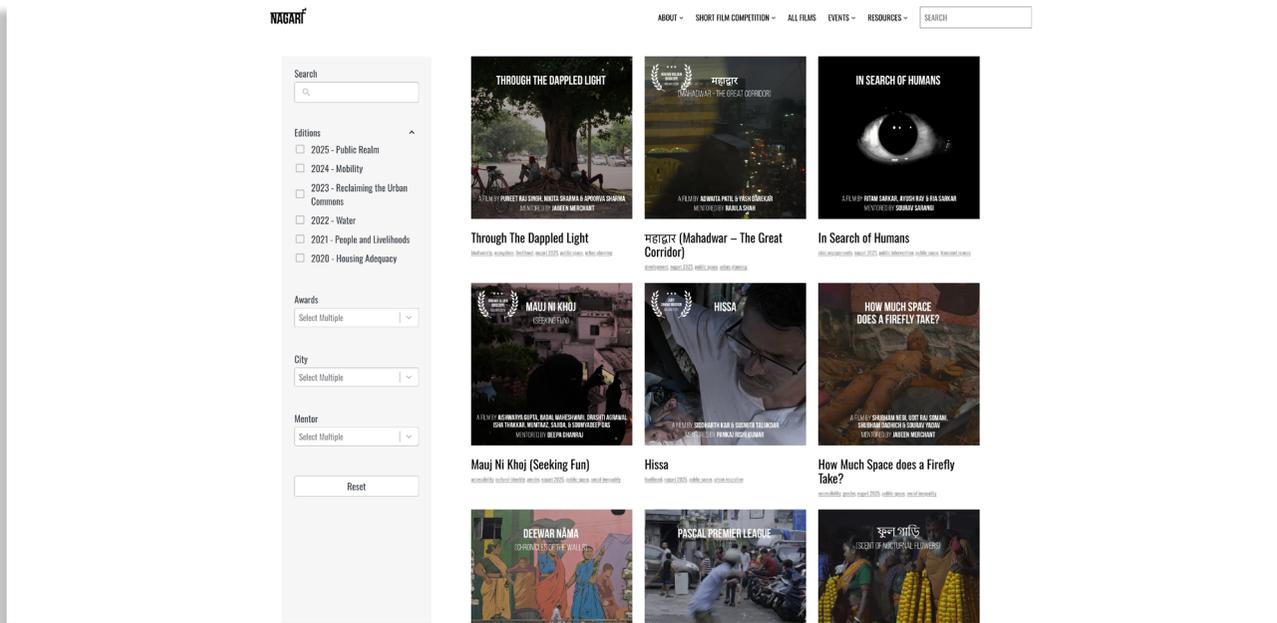
PROJECT UPDATES: NAGARI WEBSITE



NAGARI WEBSITE

We are pleased to announce the launch of the new Nagari Short Films website (nagarifilms.org), a dedicated digital platform that brings together the complete archive of films from the Nagari Short Film Competition. The website serves as a comprehensive repository of short documentary films that engage with the social, spatial, and political realities of urban India.

The website brings together key information on the Nagari programme, including its themes, filmmakers, curators, collaborators, and the wider ecosystem supporting the films. It also features sessions by resource experts addressing the social and technical aspects of filmmaking that filmmakers engaged with during their filmmaking process.



By consolidating audio visual material, contextual positioning and screening histories in one place, it tells the story of Nagari's evolution. The website becomes an exploratory tool for the user to better understand urban issues within Indian cities. The space allows for diverse users like academicians, professionals, artists etc to interact with the films and further the conversations into other realms, enabling collaboration and participation.

The website is not a static repository of information but an evolving one, where all information around upcoming screenings, information about the nagari education program as well latest updates about the next edition of the Nagari Short film competition will be posted.

We invite you to explore the Nagari website using the following [link](http://nagarifilms.org).

PROJECT UPDATES: NAGARI EDUCATION PROGRAM

With over 60 films representing 20+ cities, Nagari Films serves as a form of visual documentation of contemporary Indian urbanism. The thematic collection of films becomes an archive of how Indian cities are being lived, contested, and transformed in the early twenty-first century. Taking from this, we are developing Nagari films as a resource tool for students in architecture / urban studies as well as professionals and NGOs working within the urban realm under two modules.

MODULE A



The first course under this module was developed and introduced to students at KRVI from 17 to 24 December 2025. The students worked to create 4 short films that were screened at the student-led exhibition at the Institute.

Module A of the Nagari Education Programme uses short documentary films in undergraduate and postgraduate architecture and urban design courses to introduce students to the everyday realities and challenges of urban India. The films will be used in a pedagogical and open discussion-based module to sensitise students aiming to work within the built environment.

To date, CCF has developed two educational modules in collaboration with faculty at KRVI for the elective 'Nature and Ecology in the Urban Context', and with Sir JJ School of Art and Architecture for the elective 'Representing the Metropolis' (in progress).

MODULE B



Discussion at U-CAN Annual Forum at the Museum of Goa (left) and Discussion on 'Mobility in Urban India' with Kalpa Impact (center and right)

This module engages local policymakers, municipalities, and city administrators through partnerships with urban NGOs. CCF aims to sensitise stakeholders to key urban issues, identify gaps in policy and implementation, and build a partnership framework that enables dialogue with NGOs, experts, and filmmakers working on specific urban concerns.

In June 2025, CCF hosted an event with Kalpa Impact on 'Mobility in urban India', followed by a collaboration with U-CAN at its annual forum in August. These engagements convened organisations working on urban issues and catalysed CCF's collaborations with government bodies and NGOs.

Institutions and organisations interested in the Nagari Education Program can reach out to us at : nagari@charlescorreafoundation.org

PROJECT UPDATES: STUDENT AMBASSADOR PROGRAM



The CCF Student Ambassador Program has affiliated with 37 enthusiastic students from various architecture and planning institutes across India, to explore and engage with the initiatives of the Charles Correa Foundation. Through this program, the ambassadors gain exposure to the resources available at the Foundation and learn more about CCF's initiatives engaging in a wide range of outreach activities. In doing so, the program helps build a nationwide network of architecture and planning students, facilitating peer-to-peer exchange and the circulation of ideas across institutions.

CCF has hosted 5 sessions so far, with each session focused on introducing the ambassadors to a resource or initiative like the Correa Archives, C20 initiative, Nagari Short Films, Charles Correa Gold Medal and Storehouse, and our publications. Ambassadors helped extend the reach of these resources by coordinating public forums within their institutions, organising activities such as Nagari film screenings, C20 debates, and informing students about CCF publications and their availability online.

In the upcoming year, the ambassadors have been tasked with developing creative strategies to get their larger student body to engage with the resources they were introduced to.

To know more about the program [click here](#).



Nagari Film screening at Wadiyar Centre for Architecture, Mysore. "For 'A Work in Progress' was followed by a discussion about how we as architects don't always consider what will happen to our buildings after they are built."



Nagari Film screening at Institute of Architecture and Planning, Nirma University, Ahmedabad. "For 'Sundari' conversation centred on the ways in which urban development has had a profound impact on the heritage, the landscape, and the locals associated with these places."



Heritage Walk at Anant National University Gujarat. "We collaborated with CHC and CRDF to organise a visit to 'Dharmaj', which is full of Havelis that have been abandoned or at the brink of getting demolished"



Photo: Mohit Tomar

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NAGARI 2025 THEME

Nagari 2025 aims to capture the essence of public space in Indian cities. Public space is defined as places that are open and accessible to everyone - this usually includes maidans, gardens, waterfronts, etc. The Indian city broadens this definition of public space by including streets, footpaths, markets, alleyways, transport infrastructure among others. Our public spaces are layered by use, scale and activity, varying across days, seasons, groups, and movement. It is “where a city’s culture is expressed most freely and openly, and it is where the city is at its most democratic, honest, and energetic” (Martin, 2017).

The past editions of Nagari have addressed the themes of [Mobility in Urban India](#), [Reclaiming the Urban Commons](#), [Water in Urban India](#), [People and Livelihoods](#), and [Housing Adequacy](#) in rapidly growing towns and cities across India. This edition looks at **‘The Public Realm in Urban India’**.

Nagari is unique as it has been conceptualised as a guided exercise, with a panel of Mentors on board to help participants on their journey to creating a film.

Visit the following link to read more about the subject, films, competition, mentors and jury:
[Nagari 2025 — The Public Realm in Urban India](#)



NAGARI 2025 AWARD CEREMONY

The Nagari 2025 Award Ceremony marked the beginning of a three-day Nagari Film Festival consisting of screenings and conversations on how cinema reflects, critiques, and reimagines urban life. Organized in collaboration with the Serendipity Arts Festival, the Nagari Film Festival was held in Goa from 15 to 17 December 2025. The session commenced with an address by Nondita Correa Mehrotra, Director of the Charles Correa Foundation (CCF) followed by a premiere of this year's anthology of short films, initiating a dialogue on the role of the public realm in our cities.

The panel discussion that followed explored the relationship between documentary cinema and the public realm. In conversation were Ram Rahman and Sanjiv Shah (Nagari 2025 Jury) and Deepa Dhanraj (Nagari 2025 Mentor) with Tanvi Karia (Assistant Director, CCF). The ceremony concluded with the announcement of the winning films of Nagari 2025 and awards close to Rs 2.5 lakhs were given out.

The Gold Bioscope as well as the People's Choice Award was presented to 'महाद्वार – (Mahadwar - The Great Corridor)', a film that captures the loss of a street, its people and its pulse amid redevelopment.

The Silver Bioscope was awarded to 'Mauj Ni Khoj (Seeking Fun)', a story that follows two young Muslims as they negotiate between societal constraints and personal agency.

The Jury Commendation Award was presented to 'पकडम पकडाई (Pakdam Pakdai)' and 'Hissa'. 'Pakdam Pakdai' navigates between work and play, hostility and joy in an urban space designed to exclude them whereas 'Hissa' is a film about inheritance, and a claim to space in the contested public realm.

Watch the Award Ceremony [here](#).





GOLD BIOSCOPE & PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD

महाद्वार

(MAHADWAR - THE GREAT CORRIDOR)

Film by Adwaita Patil & Yash Darekar

Mentored by Rajula Shah

Abstract:

Set on Kolhapur's Mahadwar Road, Mahadwar captures the loss of a street, its people, and its pulse amid redevelopment. Blending nostalgia, memory, and politics, the film reflects on what remains when cities expand — asking, are development and expansion truly the same?

Jury Citation:

The film powerfully elevates its first-person narrative through a thoughtful and expressive integration of both form and content, resulting in a work of striking emotional and intellectual impact. It conveys the subject's knowledge with clarity, nuance and authenticity, supported by strong, visually compelling filmmaking. By addressing the complex and evolving challenges of public space in India's rapidly urbanising cities, the film offers observations that extend beyond its immediate setting. Its contemporary relevance, international message and incisive perspective allow it to speak meaningfully to cities and audiences around the world, marking it as an outstanding and resonant contribution.

Watch the film [here](#)



SILVER BIOSCOPE AWARD

MAUJ NI KHOJ (SEEKING FUN)

Film by Aishwarya Gupta, Badal Maheshwari, Drashti Agrawal, Isha Thakkar, Mumtaaz, Sajida, & Soumyadeep Das
Mentored by Deepa Dhanraj

Abstract:

In the small city of Bhuj, the film follows two young Muslims as they negotiate between societal constraints and personal agency, claiming fleeting moments of “mauj” (fun) in the city. Their story is not just about restriction, but also of finding laughter in the margins, about friendship as a sanctuary that makes fun possible even if only for five minutes at a time.

Jury Citation:

This finely crafted film offers a sensitive and compelling portrayal of the ways women’s lives are restricted within a conservative social environment. Its power lies in its quiet, unassuming approach, allowing the narrative to unfold without didacticism or overt tone. Through attentive cinematography, the film thoughtfully captures the spaces these women navigate, and the public and human interactions that shape their daily realities. The film’s strength emerges from the film’s subtlety with which it conveys its message – communicating depth and urgency through restraint, rather than assertion. The film’s simplicity, honesty and clarity make it a resonant and deeply effective piece of storytelling.



Watch the film [here](#)



JURY COMMENDATION AWARD

पकड़म पकड़ाई PAKDAM PAKDAI

Film by Swapnil A, Om & Sakshi

Mentored by Sourav Sarangi

Abstract:

In Agra's bustling Sadar Market, a group of children who sell balloons take us along as they navigate between work and play, hostility and joy in an urban space designed to exclude them. Through their games and tender resilience, Pakdam Pakdai celebrates how play becomes an act of claiming space amid the relentlessness of the city.

Jury Citation:

This compelling film delivers a spontaneous and energetic portrayal of children's fleeting yet meaningful engagement with urban spaces. By observing the world at their eye level, it reveals how children navigate and momentarily claim the city as their own. The cinematography is lively and thoughtfully composed, reflecting the filmmaker's intimate rapport with the young people. This, combined with its understated approach and clear, memorable message, makes the film stand out as a sensitive and insightful work of storytelling.



Watch the film [here](#)



JURY COMMENDATION AWARD

HISSA

Film by Siddharth Kar and Susmita Talukdar
Mentored by Pankaj Rishi Kumar

Abstract:

Hissa follows two migrant barber brothers working Mumbai's Dhobi Talao streets, their setup precariously claiming public space. While one dreams of returning home, the other has made the city his own. Narrated by the elder's daughter, who recalls her grandfather's fable about frogs seeking shelter. Hissa is about inheritance, and a claim to space in the contested public realm

Jury Citation:

Hissa is a strong and poetic film that introduces complex imagery and a distinctive stylistic voice to illuminate the lives of sidewalk workers and their families. The granddaughter's narration of her grandfather's tale adds a moving, lyrical thread, while the metaphor of the fish and the frog powerfully frames the displacement of vulnerable communities. Thoughtfully crafted and closely connected to everyday life, the film makes the concept of urban displacement both accessible and deeply affecting.



Watch the film [here](#)

FINAL FILMS

We had received an outstanding response with 95 film outlines across 30+ Indian cities, out of which the following made it to the final selection:

महाद्वार (Mahadwar - The Great Corridor)

Mauj Ni Khoj (Seeking Fun)

पकड़म पकड़ाई (Pakdam Pakdai)

Hissa

Manaveeyam

ফুল গাড়ি (Scent of Nocturnal Flowers)

Pascal Premier League

Deewar Nama (Chronicles of the Walls)

How much space does a firefly take?

In Search of Humans

Through The Dappled Light

Watch the films of Nagari 2025 [here](#)



MANAVEEYAM

Film by Sreekanth Sivaswamy, Rajesh. R & Nitin. R
Mentored by Bina Paul

'Manaveeyam' traces the life of a small urban street in Kerala's capital city of Thiruvananthapuram, reclaimed by its people, where social inclusivity, civic responsibility and freedom converge. Through stories of artists, activists, and everyday citizens, 'Manaveeyam' captures the transformation of a street into an accessible, socially just, and inclusive public realm—a blueprint for the future.

Watch the film [here](#)



ফুল গাড়ি (SCENT OF NOCTURNAL FLOWERS)

Film by Anamoy Bera, Ritam Chakrabarty, Saptarshi Ghosh & Sukanya Saha
Mentored by Bina Paul

Phool Gari (Scent of Nocturnal Flowers) explores the quiet transformation of a liminal space beside Barasat railway station, shifting from a night flower market to a morning auto stand. As metro construction slowly encroaches, swallowing the space they call their own, the film follows the occupants' rhythms, their delicate balance between labour and survival, and their struggle for legitimacy within a formal space.

Watch the film [here](#)



PASCAL PREMIER LEAGUE

Film by Sapan Taneja
Mentored by Pankaj Rishi Kumar

In Jogeshwari East, a group of boys transform their lane into a cricket league, reclaiming public space and rewriting its history. A story of memory, change, and resistance through everyday joy, reflecting how everyday life, imagination, and play can redefine the meaning of public space in a city constantly reshaped by ever-consuming change and evolution.

Watch the film [here](#)



DEEWAR NĀMA (CHRONICLES OF THE WALLS)

Film by Arjun Lal & Priyanka Arora
Mentored by Rajula Shah

Deewar Nama (Chronicles of the Walls) explores Mumbai's walls as living storytellers — canvases of memory, protest, and change. Through artists, commuters, and anonymous voices, the film reveals how every brushstroke resists time, control, and erasure. As colours fade and new ones emerge, it asks: when everyone can speak, what truly deserves to be said?

Watch the film [here](#)

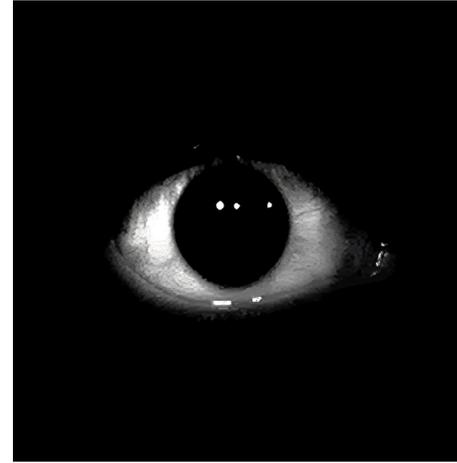


HOW MUCH SPACE DOES A FIREFLY TAKE?

Film by Shubham Negi, Udit Raj Somani,
Shubham Dadhich & Sourav Yadav
Mentored by Jabeen Merchant

The film follows Kabir as he performs his solo play about transness and belonging in the city. Interwoven with voices of trans people sharing their experiences of navigating public spaces, the film becomes a reflection on visibility, memory, and the quiet resilience it takes to exist freely in an urban world.

Watch the film [here](#)



IN SEARCH OF HUMANS

Film by Ritam Sarkar, Ayush Ray & Ria Sarkar
Mentored by Sourav Sarangi

In Search of Humans drifts through a trembling Kolkata, where digital shadows and human lives overlap. Between protest and silence, fear and hope, the film gathers fragments of memory and disappearance—searching for traces of humanity amid the city's flickering lights and restless noise.

Watch the film [here](#)



THROUGH THE DAPPLED LIGHT

Film by Puneet Raj Singh, Nikita Sharma & Apoorva Sharma
Mentored by Jabeen Merchant

In Chandigarh's rigidly planned city, trees offer shade and shelter to informal workers on the margins seeking space and belonging in a city that barely planned for their presence.

Watch the film [here](#)



NAGARI FILM FESTIVAL

15 TO 17 DECEMBER 2025

India has a strong tradition of films that explore cities as characters in themselves — their social dynamics, architecture, chaos, and contradictions.

The first ever Nagari Film Festival was held in collaboration with the Serendipity Arts Festival 2025 from the 15 to 17 December 2025 at The Old GMC Complex, Maquinez Palace Theatre, Panaji, Goa.

Over three days, the Nagari Film Festival presented a curated lineup of Indian films and discussions that engage with urban life through fiction, documentary, and experimental cinema.

The festival opened with the Nagari 2025 Award Ceremony, premiering this year's anthology of short films and initiating a dialogue on the role of the public realm in our cities. The following days featured thematic sets of screenings and conversations exploring how cinema reflects, critiques, and reimagines the urban experience.

Know more about the Film Festival [here](#).

EVENT UPDATES: NAGARI FILM FESTIVAL

15 DEC
4:00 - 7:00 PM

SESSION 1

PUBLIC REALM IN URBAN INDIA

CITY ON THE WATER | PAKDAM PAKDAI | MANAVEEYAM | SCENT OF NOCTURNAL FLOWERS | PASCAL PREMIER LEAGUE | DEEWAR NAMA | HOW MUCH SPACE DOES A FIREFLY TAKE | HISSA | MAUJ NI KHODI | IN SEARCH OF HUMANS | THROUGH THE DAPPLIED LIGHT | MAHADWAR - THE GREAT CORRIDOR

Swipe for the posters >>

In collaboration with  Presented by  Supported by **TATA TRUSTS**



SESSION 1: PUBLIC REALM IN URBAN INDIA

15 DECEMBER 2025

The evening began with an address by Nondita Correa Mehrotra, Director of the Charles Correa Foundation (CCF), followed by a special screening of Charles Correa's 1975 documentary 'City on the Water', marking its 50th anniversary in 2025. The Nagari short films were introduced by mentors Sourav Sarangi, filmmaker; Bina Paul, filmmaker and artistic director; and Ashmita Gupta, Senior Fellow at CCF, and screened publicly for the first time. A panel discussion featured Ram Rahman, Sanjiv Shah, and Deepa Dhanraj, moderated by Tanvi Karia, Assistant Director of CCF. The evening concluded with the 2025 Nagari Short Film Awards.

Watch Session 1 of the Nagari Film Festival [here](#).

16 DEC
11:00 AM - 1:00 PM

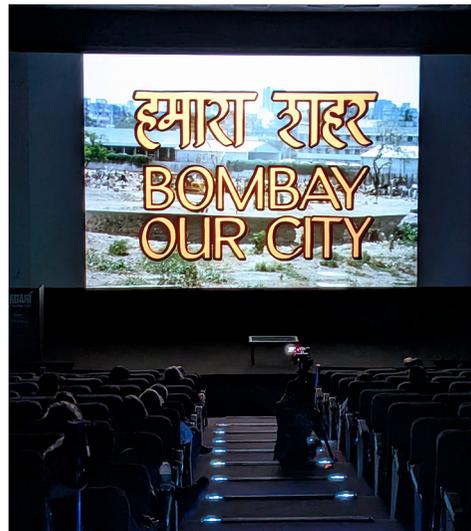
SESSION 2

CINEMA AND THE RIGHT TO THE CITY

BOMBAY : OUR CITY | THE CHAVIWALLAHS OF MUMBAI

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In collaboration with  Presented by  Supported by **TATA TRUSTS**



SESSION 2: CINEMA AND THE RIGHT TO THE CITY

16 DECEMBER 2025

The session opened with a screening of the Nagari short film 'The Chaviwallahs of Mumbai' (Akanksha Gupta & Gopal MS). This set the tone for the screening of Anand Patwardhan's 1985 landmark documentary 'Bombay: Our City (Hamara Shahar)', which celebrates 40 years in 2025. Patwardhan's film captures the struggles of working-class communities facing displacement amid Mumbai's rapid urban transformation.

A panel discussion with Anand Patwardhan, director, Ranjit Hoskote, author, curator, and art critic, and Nondita Correa Mehrotra, director, CCF, followed, addressing housing, urban rights, and civic participation.

Watch Session 2 of the Nagari Film Festival [here](#).

16 DEC
2:00 - 4:00 PM

NAGARI
FILM FESTIVAL 2025
Maqbool Palace
Old GMC Complex, Panaji, Goa

SESSION 3

THE CITY THROUGH MANY LENSES

TOWN ON WATER | SUNDARI | SPARROW | BEYOND FOUR WALLS |
HOMES ON THE LINE | UDTA BANARAS JUNK-E | TAAL BETAL |
ALL DAY AND ALL OF THE NIGHT | REMEMBER XILXAKU |
SAMAYADA HARIVU | GANGA KE DO KINARE

Swipe for the posters >>

In collaboration with
CINEMA CITY
FESTIVAL

Presented by
CHARLES
FOURIES
FOUNDATION

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SESSION 3: THE CITY THROUGH MANY LENSES

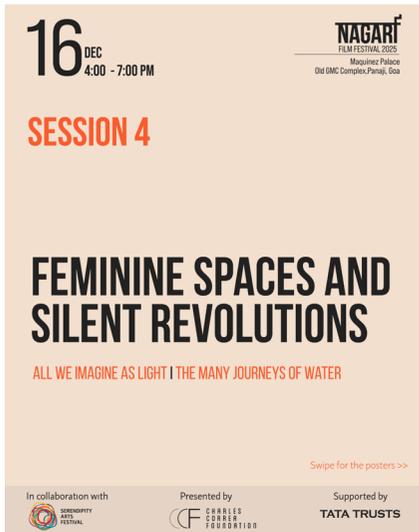
16 DECEMBER 2025

The City Through Many Lenses, showcased twelve Nagari short films from twelve cities; 'Sundari' (Sudarshan Sawant), 'Taal Betal' (Sanchay Bose), 'अख्खा दनि, अख्खी रात (All day and all of the night)' (Priya Naresh), 'Homes on the Line' (Amit Rathee), 'শিলসাঁকোৰ উদং বুকু (Remember Xilxaku)' (Maharshi Kashyap), 'Samayada Harivu (Flow of Time)' (Shruti Parthasarathy, Vikash Tiwari), 'Beyond Four Walls' (Ritika Banerjee), 'Junk-e' (Ayush Ray, Ritam Sarkar), 'गौरैया (Sparrow)' (Jatin Parveen), and 'Town on Water' (Muskaan Bhatt). Two films: 'Udta Banaras' (Apoorva Jaiswal, Manas Krishna) and 'Ganga ke Do Kinare' (Avikal Parashari, Archana Singh, Asna Jamal), did not receive the exemption certificate from the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting and were not screened. The films offered a diverse exploration of urban life, spanning memory, identity, infrastructure, and community.

Following the screenings was a discussion with Sanjiv Shah, filmmaker, Avijit Mukul Kishore, cinematographer, and Amit Rathee, one of the directors of 'Homes on the Line'. The mentors and filmmakers reflected on the mentorship process and the creative journey of the Nagari competition.

Watch Session 3 of the Nagari Film Festival [here](#).

EVENT UPDATES: NAGARI FILM FESTIVAL

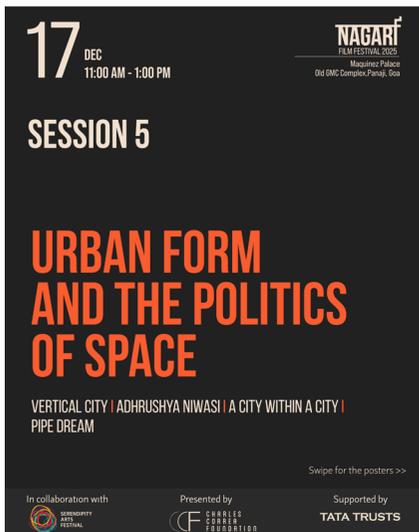


SESSION 4: FEMININE SPACES AND SILENT REVOLUTIONS

16 DECEMBER 2025

'Feminine Spaces and Silent Revolutions', opened with the Nagari short film 'The Many Journeys of Water', introduced by the director, Niki Nirvikalpa. This was followed by a landmark screening of Payal Kapadia's 'All We Imagine as Light'. Both films explored the gendered dimensions of urban life, emphasizing women's resilience, care, and agency in shaping city spaces. The dialogue, with Kani Kusruti, lead actress of Payal Kapadia's film, and Nagari 2025 mentor Jabeen Merchant, focused on gender and inclusivity in filmmaking.

Watch Session 4 of the Nagari Film Festival [here](#).



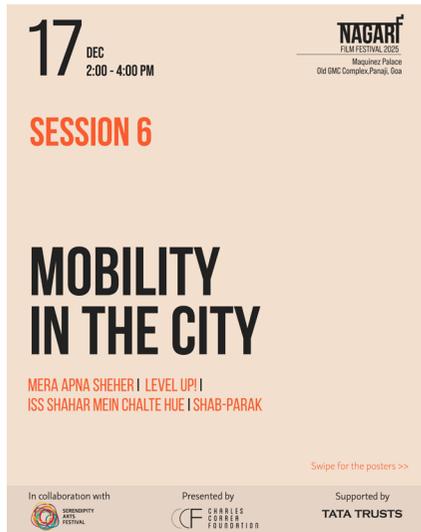
SESSION 5: URBAN FORM AND THE POLITICS OF SPACE

17 DECEMBER 2025

'Urban Form and the Politics of Space', featured Avijit Mukul Kishore's 'Vertical City', alongside three Nagari films from Mumbai: 'A City Within a City' (Prachee Bajania), 'Pipe Dream' (Suraj Katra), and 'Adrushya Niwasi' (Ayush Gangwal). Kishore's documentary examined high-rise living as a response to density and market pressures, while the Nagari films highlighted the human consequences of urban planning, infrastructure inequalities, and invisibility within the city. A conversation with Avijit Mukul Kishore, cinematographer, and Sourav Sarangi, filmmaker, delved into the politics, stories and making of city films, especially 'Vertical City'.

Watch Session 5 of the Nagari Film Festival [here](#).

EVENT UPDATES: NAGARI FILM FESTIVAL

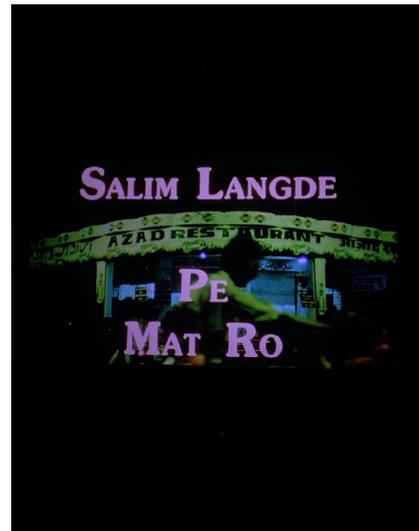
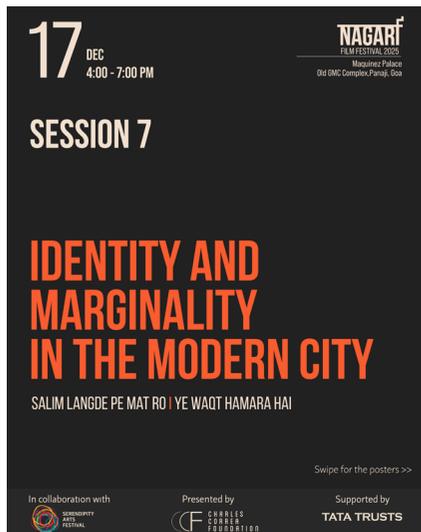


SESSION 6: MOBILITY IN THE CITY

17 DECEMBER 2025

'Mobility in the City', opened with three Nagari films—'Shab Parak' (Sabika Syed, Nikhil Mehrotra), 'Iss Shahar Mein Chalte Hue (While Walking Through the City)' (Amartya Ray), and 'Level Up!' (Bhargav Prasad, Archanaa Seker, Pavithra Sriram)—and subsequently screened Sameera Jain's 'Mera Apna Sheher (My Own City)'. This set of films explored how movement in urban spaces intersects with gender, accessibility, and social opportunity. Sameera Jain, filmmaker and editor, and Deepa Dhanraj, filmmaker and writer, led a discussion on navigating urban infrastructure, highlighting how mobility reflects social inclusion and exclusion, especially for women navigating the city.

Watch Session 6 of the Nagari Film Festival [here](#).



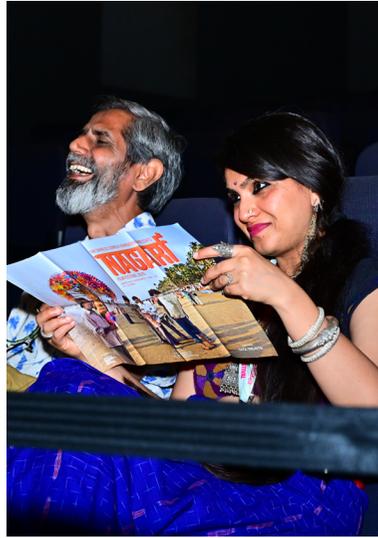
SESSION 7: IDENTITY AND MARGINALITY IN THE MODERN CITY

17 DECEMBER 2025

'Identity and Marginality in the Modern City', featured Saeed Mirza's 'Salim Langde Pe Mat Ro' and the Nagari short film 'Ye Waqt Hamara Hai' (Bhawna Jaimini). A discussion with Saeed Mirza, director, and Aradhana Seth, art director and artist, reflected on socio-cultural portrayals in Hindi cinema, emphasizing the intersections of identity, marginality, and civic participation.

The festival concluded by celebrating six years of Nagari films, acknowledging the filmmakers, mentors, audiences, and generous supporters, including Tata Trusts, leaving the audience with a nuanced understanding of the cities they inhabit and the civic possibilities they hold for the future.

Watch Session 7 of Nagari Film Festival [here](#).



EVENT UPDATES: CHARLES CORREA GOLD MEDAL 2025



AWARD CEREMONY

The 2025 cycle of the Charles Correa Gold Medal Competition invited colleges from across India to participate in a conversation about 'Equitability through Design' and highlight undergraduate theses that question, 'who do we design for?' in their proposed projects.

The Award Ceremony took place on 16 September 2025 at the Ice Factory, Ballard Estate (IFBE), Mumbai. The evening commenced with the launch of the newly published 'Designing Equitable Cities'— the Z-axis 2018 conference proceedings by Amit Chandra, co-founder of the A.T.E Chandra Foundation and Chairperson of Bain Capital, followed by a talk titled 'My journey as an architect, and how to save Mumbai city' by Samir D'Monte, founder of SDM architects.

The entries were judged by an eminent jury of practising architects and academicians —Vandana Ranjit Singh (Architect and Academic), Shilpa Ranade (Architect, Researcher, Writer), Rohan Varma (Architect and Researcher), Ainsley Lewis (Urban Designer and Academic) and Samir D'Monte (Architect and Urban Designer).

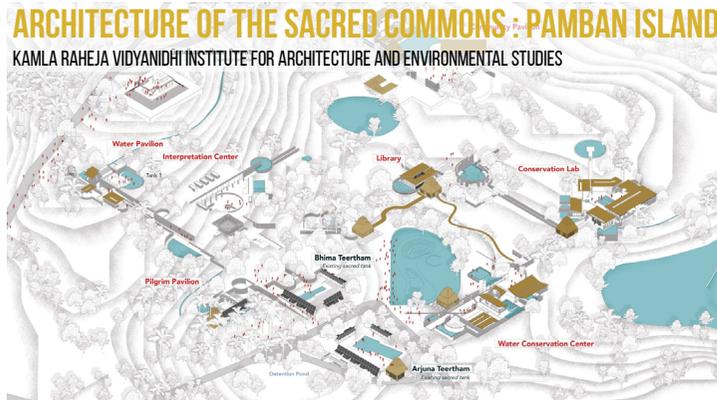
JURY 2025



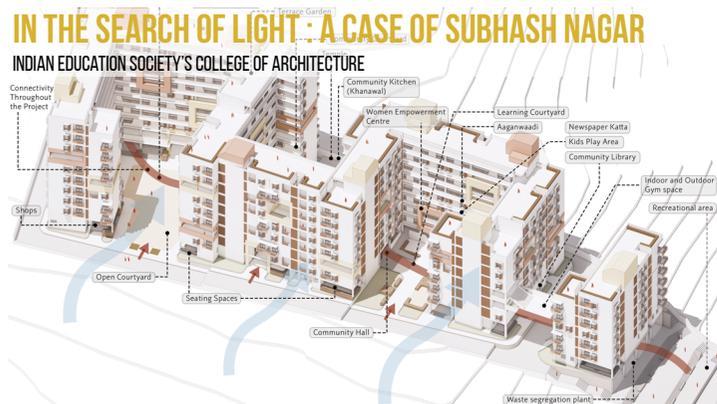
The Gold Medal was awarded to Kshitij Churi from Kamla Raheja Vidyanidhi Institute for Architecture and Environmental Studies for the project 'Architecture of the Sacred Commons : Pamban Island'. The Honourable mentions were given to Akash Kamble from Indian Education Society's College of Architecture for the project 'In the search of light : A case of Subhash Nagar' and Pranjal Prakash Tak from Rachna Sansad's Academy of Architecture for 'Aabhas : A sense of Home'.

Watch the Award Ceremony [here](#)

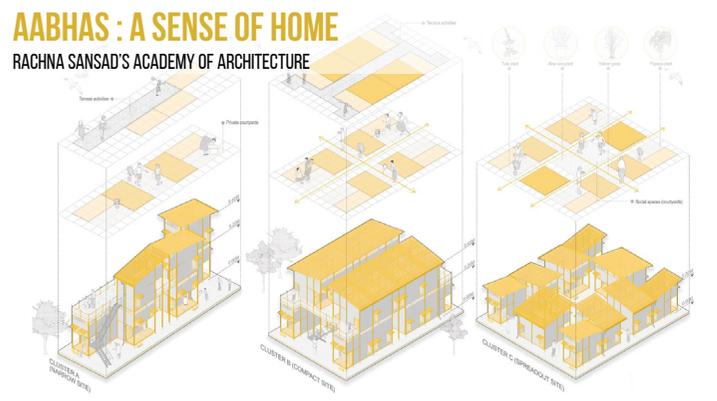
EVENT UPDATES: CHARLES CORREA GOLD MEDAL 2025



This design intervention is ecological in origin, and laudable for its programmatic evolution of 'modern sacredness'; it illustrates a great continuity of what is a sacred and fast disappearing way of life. Water conservation forms have been venerable and deeply rooted to our culture, and the program speaks to making those nuances accessible to all. From more traditional notions to the contemporary, the translation of these notions have unfolded with restraint and intelligence. Equity is addressed through accessibility; a series of water bodies made available to the community. A very elaborate study drawn with a sensitive hand.

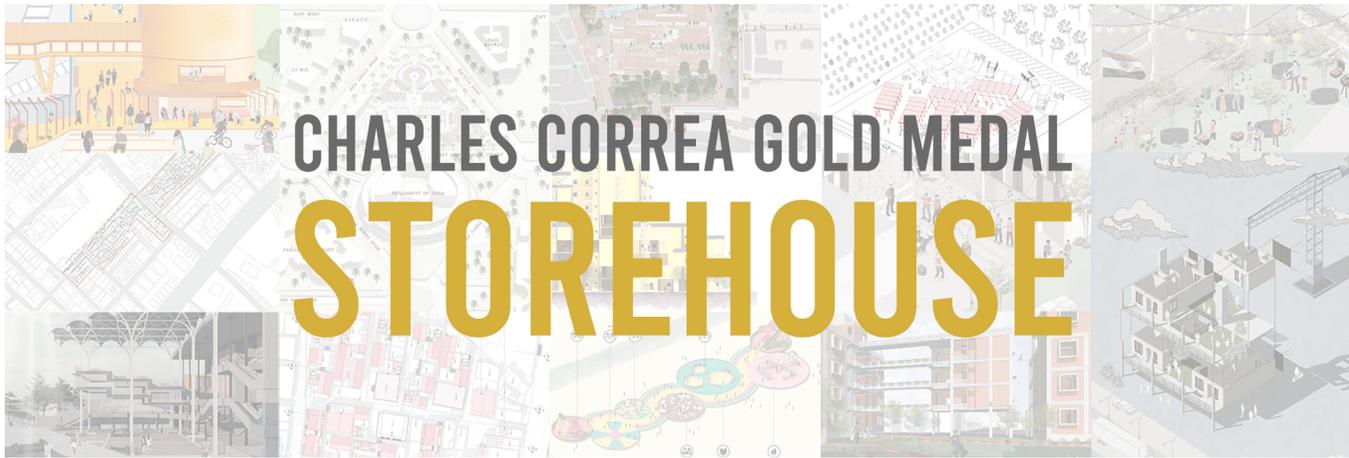


When the needs of the community are not considered, who are we designing for? Backed by a participatory approach, the case of Subhash Nagar contests the status quo of current SRA (Slum Rehabilitation Authorities) working models in large metropolitan cities such as Mumbai. Following an excellent study on the unit and typology, equity through design is achieved by actively involving the end users to reimagine their homes and surroundings as a pleasant and liveable community. The volumes of spaces were addressed across multiple scales and user groups, culminating in the synthesis of many disparate elements into one cohesive whole. A commendable, honest and hopeful take on affordable housing.



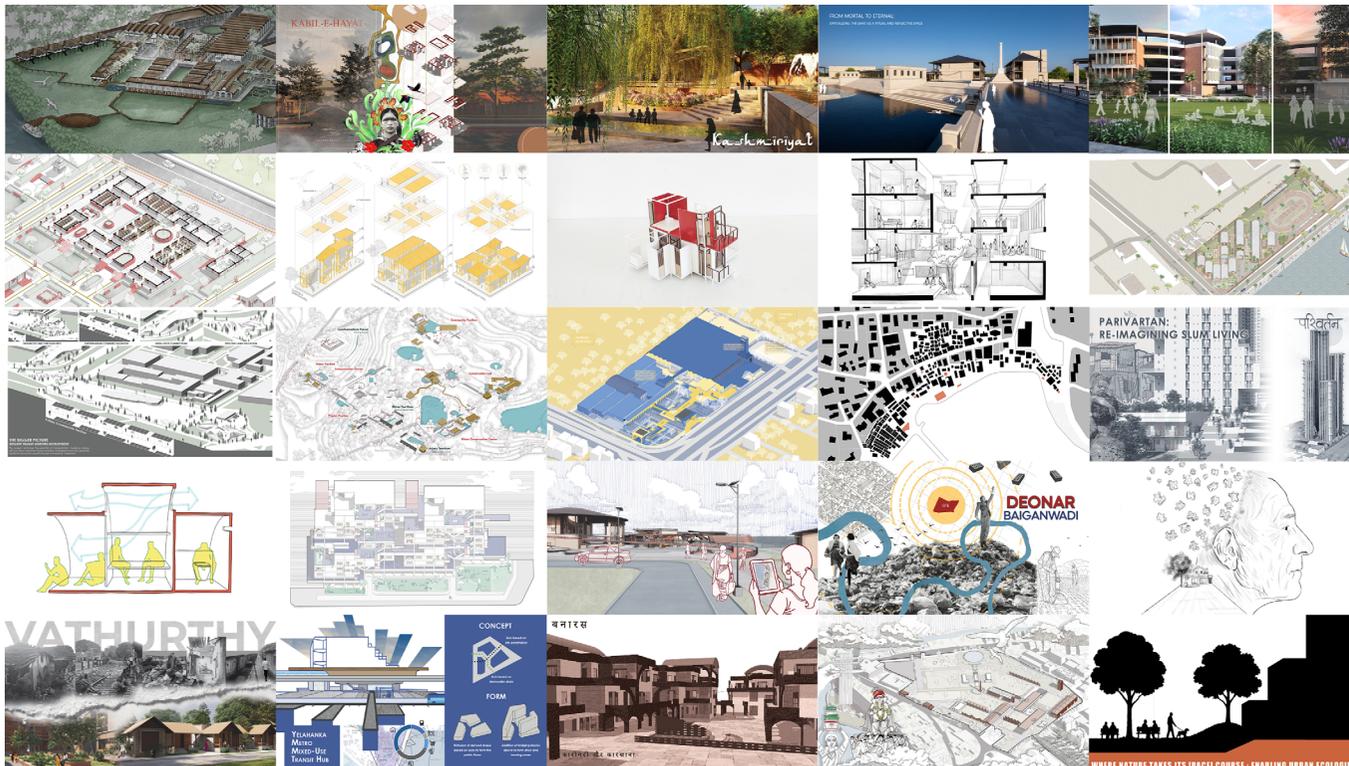
This clever, convincing proposal balances standardization of units and the adaptability of spaces to create versatile communal areas. Through a systematic approach, it achieves a technical resolution of the typology. This in turn facilitates placemaking in a temporal setting, lending agency over the land. Equity is at the forefront of the design, reinforced by the possibility of customizable clusters and densities, entirely facilitated by the users. 'Aabhas' is a refreshing and relevant inquiry on housing models for transit populations; those who build our houses!

Read more about Charles Correa Gold Medal 2025 [here](#).



STOREHOUSE

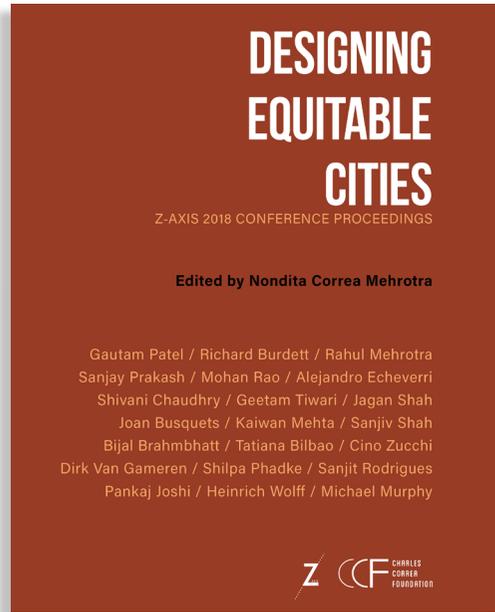
CCF maintains a digital archive of undergraduate architectural thesis projects that were received as a part of the Charles Correa Gold Medal Award and updates it annually. By compiling academic projects from across India, the 'Storehouse' serves as a referential space for students and practices to explore new methods of generating and responding to place. The platform helps incubate cohesive systems to think about architecture beyond its built form- both physically and geographically - and the role it plays across communities and cultures and its social, economic and political implications.



For the ease of use and to assist in the needs of the academic operations, projects have been marked by labels to identify projects by typology, purpose and design. The compilation also offers an interactive map marked with site locations of the projects, that allows the projects to be navigated by region.

Visit the Storehouse using the link below:
[Charles Correa Gold Medal Storehouse](#)

NEW PUBLICATION



DESIGNING EQUITABLE CITIES | Z-AXIS 2018 CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

Editor: Nondita Correa Mehrotra
Publisher: The Charles Correa Foundation
Paperback: 271 Pages
Language: English

The publication documents the third edition of Z-axis conference proceedings. The conference drew on expertise from around the globe to debate and articulate the agency of architecture and planning in creating equitable cities. With the theme 'Designing Equitable Cities', the conference brought speakers from across the world to offer their perspective on urban equity.

Designing equitable cities in India is both a moral and professional imperative. As cities grow, the choices made by architects and urban planners will shape the lived realities of millions. By embracing inclusive principles, learning from global and local innovations, and challenging structural inequalities, architects and planners should be committed to building cities that are not only smart or sustainable, but just and humane. The future Indian cities depend not merely on how they expand, but on who they include. Isn't it time to design cities that belong to everyone?

Purchase *Designing Equitable Cities* [here](#).
Explore our collection [here](#).

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Jaspreet Kaur

2024-2025 (Research Fellow)

Current location: Delhi, India



One of my most meaningful experiences at the foundation was working on the archives, an area I had long been curious about but never had the chance to explore in a formal capacity. Engaging closely with the archival material offered me nuanced perspectives on legacy, research methodologies, and curatorial practices.

Equally enriching was my involvement in the outreach initiatives, merchandising, and on-ground coordination for the Z-axis conference and the Nagari Short Film Competition. Additionally, contributing to the publication 'Form Follows Climate' familiarized me with the intricacies of the publishing process, including proofreading to layout development, which I thoroughly enjoyed.

Currently, I am working at a Delhi-based architectural studio, where my practice centres on core architectural design, complemented by photography, furniture design, and architectural documentation.

Meghna Maddula

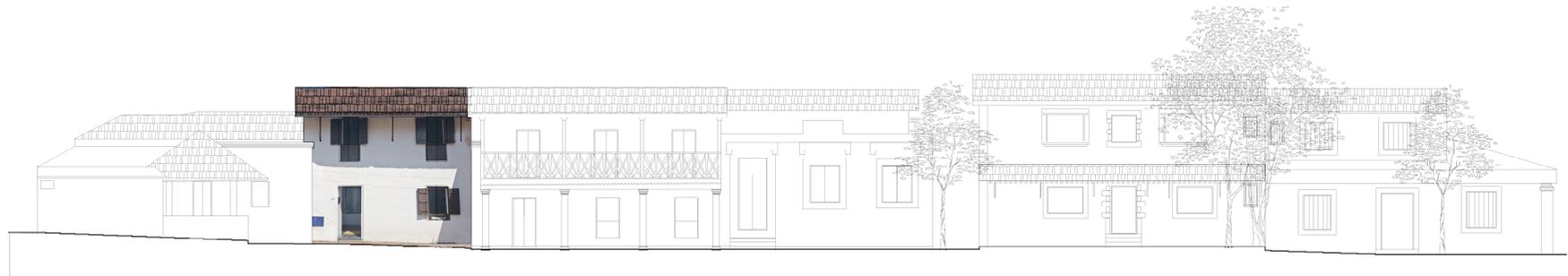
2021 - 2022 (Research Fellow)

2022 - 2023 (Senior Fellow)

Current location: United Kingdom



Coming into CCF, I was a mere confused architectural graduate, but my tenure here opened my eyes to so much more. I had the opportunity to work with the local government, participate in public protests, help organise several events and even produce short films! However, the most impactful part at CCF was the steadfast intention to do good. Working with municipalities is challenging on a good day, but the work and people at CCF have always fought through for a better urban future. Good design is easy to come by, but at CCF we understood that it's execution into good infrastructure is much, much harder. Today I can confidently say that this is what pushed me towards my masters in Urban Policy and now further as I try to figure out how to practice policy design. CCF offered me the chance to face the harsh reality of urban development, but always through the lens of hope and active intention to do better.



At CCF we believe in creating meaningful discourse within the community of architects and designers to influence positive change. CCF's mandate is to identify ideas with potential, and process them into tangible, structured projects that can be pitched to the stakeholders and authorities. Our work follows an organic process that originates with identifying an issue or concern that has the potential to use a design intervention.

Sharing walls with heritage houses in the precinct of Fontainhas, the Foundation studio occupies a small footprint in this historic area. Our office is part of the neighbourhood fabric and the Fontainhas community. Located at street level, CCF always has its doors open to anyone interested in engaging in our work.

The CCF Newsletter will be distributed quarterly, issued to all our subscribers. To subscribe for future issues, please [click here](#).

All work undertaken by CCF is on a not-for-profit basis. The Charles Correa Foundation is constituted as a duly registered not-for-profit public charitable trust and has been exempted u/s 80G of the Income Tax Act. Our activities are registered under CSR with registration number: CSR00055206.