

design VISTA

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Design As Nation-builder: Institutes That Inspire.

Training Tender Minds

Corridors & Campuses

To Cherish the Past

Legacy & Responsibility

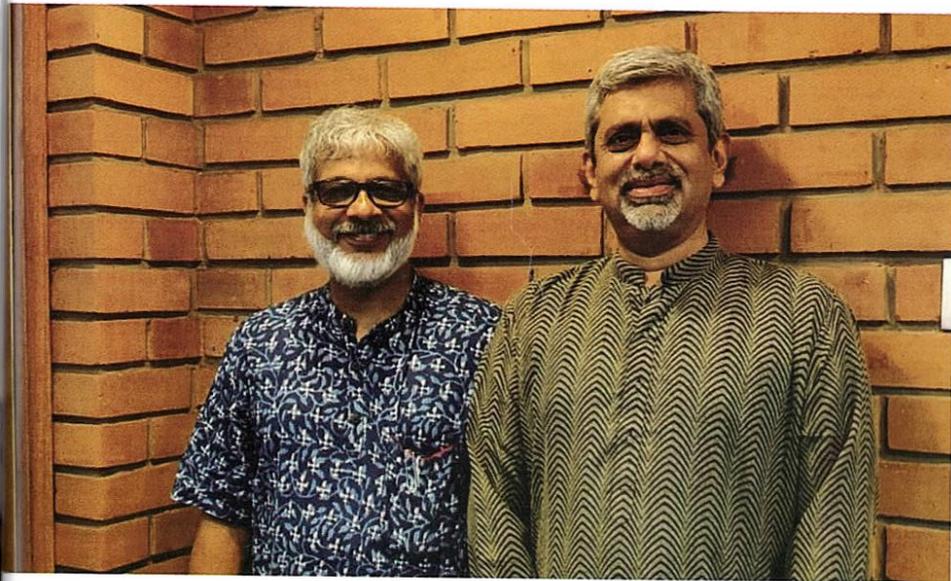
WIDE Angle **WA**

Connecting Creative Minds!

Photograph by Shirish Ghatge

Silent **SENTINEL** of Indology gets a **VOICE**

*Studio Group Phi resuscitates
a 1933 Press building.*



Project Pic - Hemant Mahajan, Atul Kanetkar

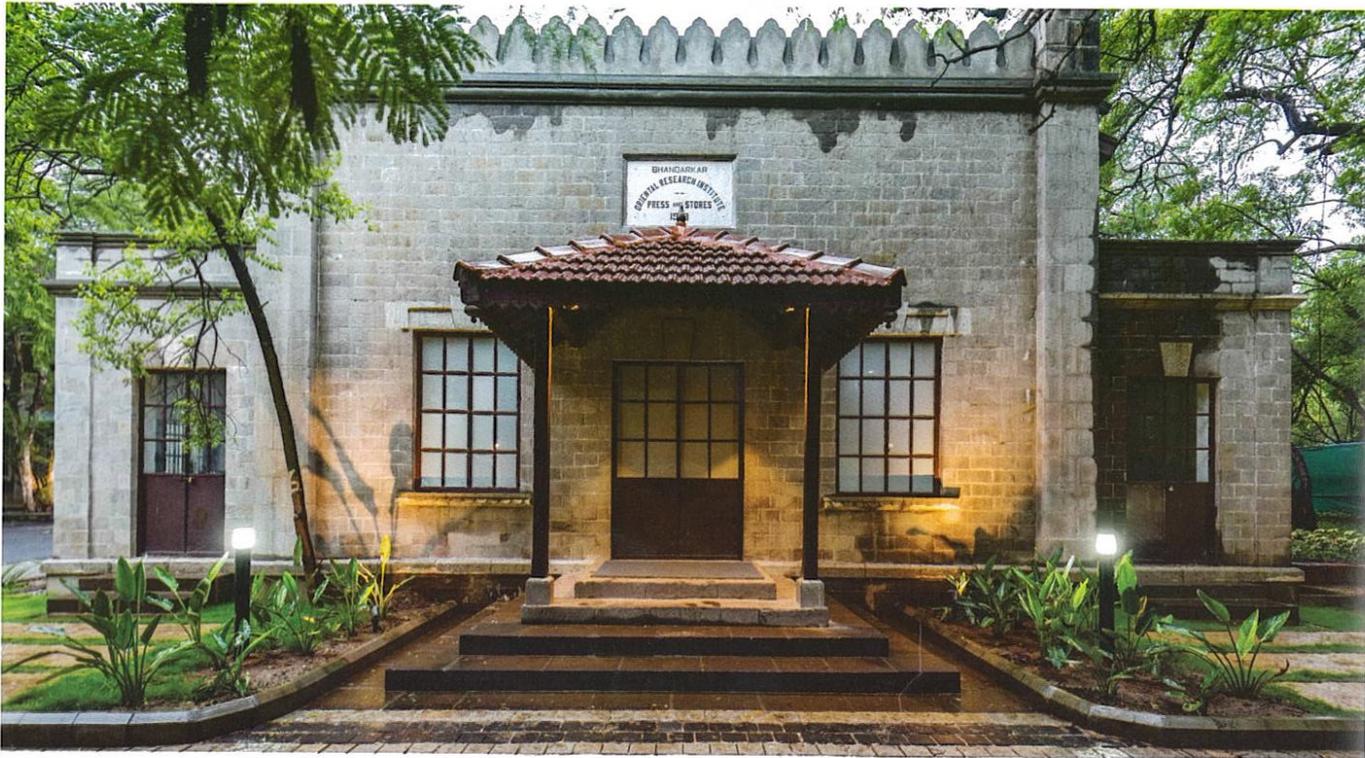
From Phi to infinity...it is a poetic way of describing the journey of a design practice that aspires and achieves and thereby inspires. Pune based Studio Group Phi- architects and Designers have traversed the entire path of design, creation, sharing of work and much more. By representing best practices in architecture, the studio is known for its academic outlook, a deep research-based mindset and a larger role to play as mentors for younger architects.

Steeped in traditions as pure as the manuscripts it houses, it is easy to miss the quiet and sedate building of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Pune, but once you enter the campus, it can hold you, arrest you and stun you with its sheer history and heritage. As part of every Puneite's pride and identity, it is linked to the history of the city, its urban map, and has stood as a quiet sentinel at the foot of one of Pune's most famous hillocks, for more than a century. Founded on July 6, 1917, the Institute concerns itself with research activity in the field of Orientology with a vision to enlighten the world about the all -

comprehensive knowledge generated in the East especially in India.

The institute has one of the largest collections of rare books and manuscripts spanning over 1,40,000 books and 28,000 manuscripts. In short, the Institute has been effectively playing the role of a very significant centre of Indological Studies and Research.

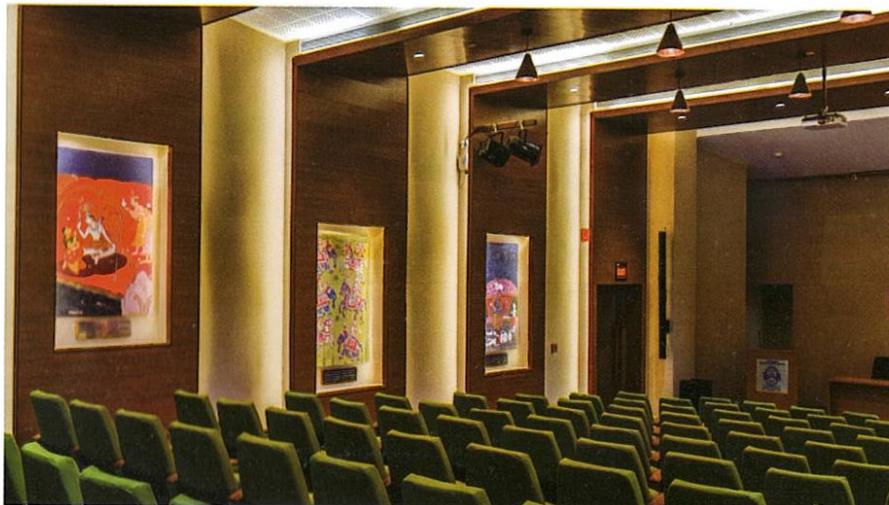
As Ar. Hemant Mahajan of Studio Group Phi explains, it was fourteen years ago that Group Phi's first foray into working for Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute began. Like every old building, this one too had certain areas that had fallen into sad disrepair. Out of three Grade 1



The front façade after restoration.



Covered corridor with connection to the outdoor landscape.



The state-of-art auditorium.

structures in this campus, each has a special value close to the architect's heart. The restoration of Nizam's house was completed in year 2014, work on the Tata hall work is in process, and in a happy ending of sorts, the culmination of it was the recent inauguration of the auditorium- surely the jewel in the crown. This auditorium was originally the Press building, where in days of yore, publications were brought out. Time had overtaken it and the entire area was in neglect. Group Phi architects created this state-of-art auditorium inside the heritage building of BORI, Pune, because of which the original structure of year 1933 Press building in BORI campus will now enjoy the second inning of life as an Auditorium.

The restoration /adaptable reuse of the Press building was done to:

- Increase the lifespan of the structure.
- Improve the functional utility



of the space.

- Enhance the aesthetic and heritage value.

After the restoration, the transformation is a lesson in heritage treatment. The spanking new auditorium is equipped with:

Seating capacity for 106 people.

Alternate panelling of techno-acoustic panels and wooden slat panels creating niche to display Manuscripts in the form of paintings showing the identity of space.

Central VRV System is used for air-conditioning.

The floor is raised and finished with carpet.

Other facilities like chairs with folding table, rostrum, lighting arrangement, and recording arrangement are also provided.

Provision of motorized screen near stage.

Additional conference hall of 25 seats facility at the backside.

Two green rooms with one

attached toilet at rear side of stage.

The verandah acts as pre-function lobby and spill-out spaces which are connected to the outdoor green landscape and washroom facilities.

Yes, it has been a painfully slow test of emotional upheavals and patience; the first because of the extremely sensitive nature of the structure and the second because of the gradual transformation of a derelict space into a throbbing purpose-filled zone. Here, from inside, you have an auditorium to be proud of, and from outside, there's a structure that tugs at the heart through the exquisite beauty of the stone. The architects

Takeaway :

Some buildings are best appreciated at any time of day; this is one such silent veteran. Whether in the slant sunrays that early evening brings from over the hillock or in the mellow artificial illumination provided by the architect, BORI new auditorium building now basks in the pampering and attention of those who love it like a precious grandparent.

mention that this task would not have seen the light of day had it not been for the constant strong support from Chairman, executive council and the team of Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute.

STUDIO GROUP PHI ARCHITECTS AND DESIGNERS

Flat no. 1 & 2 Raghuwansh Apt.

Plot no. 78, Mayur Colony, Kothrud, Pune-411038, Maharashtra, India.

Email : hemantmahajan@groupphi.com

Website : www.groupphi.com