



Made in **India**



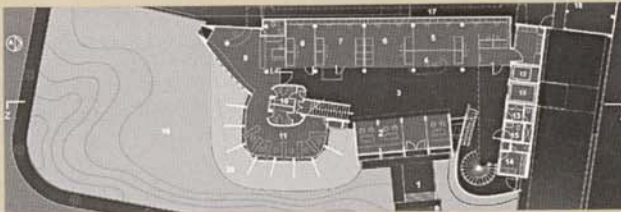
Matharoo Associates (Gurjit Singh Matharoo)

The recent work of Ahmedabad-based Matharoo Associates reinvigorates the concrete language of Le Corbusier and Kahn, and the early works of Indian Modernists, but is rendered with a more slender and lighter disposition. Projects from private residences to public facilities brandish a rough, impenetrable shell that conceals a cocoon of animated space; a difference of materiality also amplifies the contrast. Gurjit Singh Matharoo brings to his practice his earlier experiences in Bhutan, Dubai and Locarno. He is also passionate about product design, especially automobiles, having designed mobile blood-donation vans and carried out research in advanced motorcycle design.



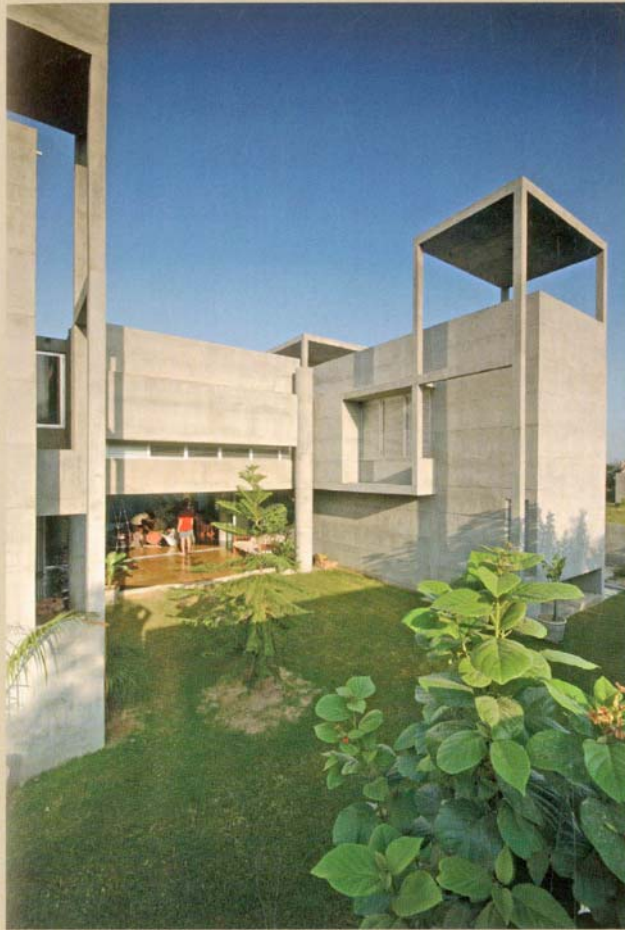
Prathama Blood Center, Ahmedabad, 2000

The design for India's most modern and largest blood centre, the clients for which are pioneers in the field of blood transfusion and processing, required a new building type that is more of a playful programme than a service-intensive functional entity, and which removes the repulsion associated with medical facilities by transforming it into a receptive public domain. Working with limited space and a low budget, Matharoo thus opted for a solid, concrete exterior that houses an animated, light-filled and transparent interior.



Cattiva mobile blood-donation van, 2005

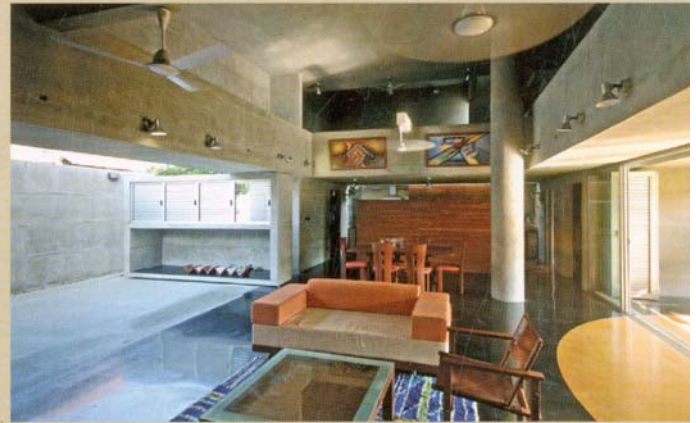
As an extension to the Prathama Blood Centre, Matharoo designed a mobile blood-donation van in an effort to reach out to those parts of the population still reeling under the compulsions of family blood ties. The van has four automatic donor chairs, a medical examination cubicle, furnished pantry, chemical toilet and a refreshment area and lounge, and is constructed on a 1616 Tata chassis. With a capacity of 100 donations a day, it is projected that each Cattiva van, connected to blood banks throughout India, will bring about a silent revolution by making the stigma that currently surrounds donating blood a thing of the past.



House for Ashok Patel, Ahmedabad, 2006

Located in a fast-growing suburb of Ahmedabad, the house was designed for a family consisting of a socially active couple, their teenage son and frequently visiting parents and relatives. It addresses the paradox of the increasingly reclusive modern suburban house by referring to the inward-looking traditional houses (the 'pols') of the area on the one hand, and the 'open plot dwelling' best exemplified by Le Corbusier's Shodan House, also in Ahmedabad, on the other.

A central void is framed by two blocks on the long side and compound walls on the shorter side. While the house turns its back on the street and the anonymous neighbourhood, it still manages to draw in the breeze, greenery, rain, sun and sky through varying degrees of openness. The columns, walls and beams appear to be woven into an intricate lattice which becomes animated when the strong sun falls on it. The epitome of the filigree is a 50-millimetre (2-inch) thick stair entirely cantilevered on its risers and composed as a square helix.



Ashwinikumar Crematorium, Surat, Gujarat, 1999

The crematorium was the result of a national competition that was necessary after plague and communal riots left the city in a condition of filth and squalor. Located next to the Tapi River, the plan of the crematorium is the outcome of a detailed study of Hindu rituals and their architectural interpretation. Within its Brutalist concrete shell, the structure accommodates all the processional and ritual elements associated with the cremation service, including the sacred dip into the river. However, the vocabulary of the building is kept secular in nature, opening the place to all, irrespective of their religious beliefs.



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