

MY SPACE : GAURAV ROY CHOUDHURY ART FORM : HIROTOSHI ITOH DESIGN DESTINATION : GOTHENBURG

# HOME REVIEW

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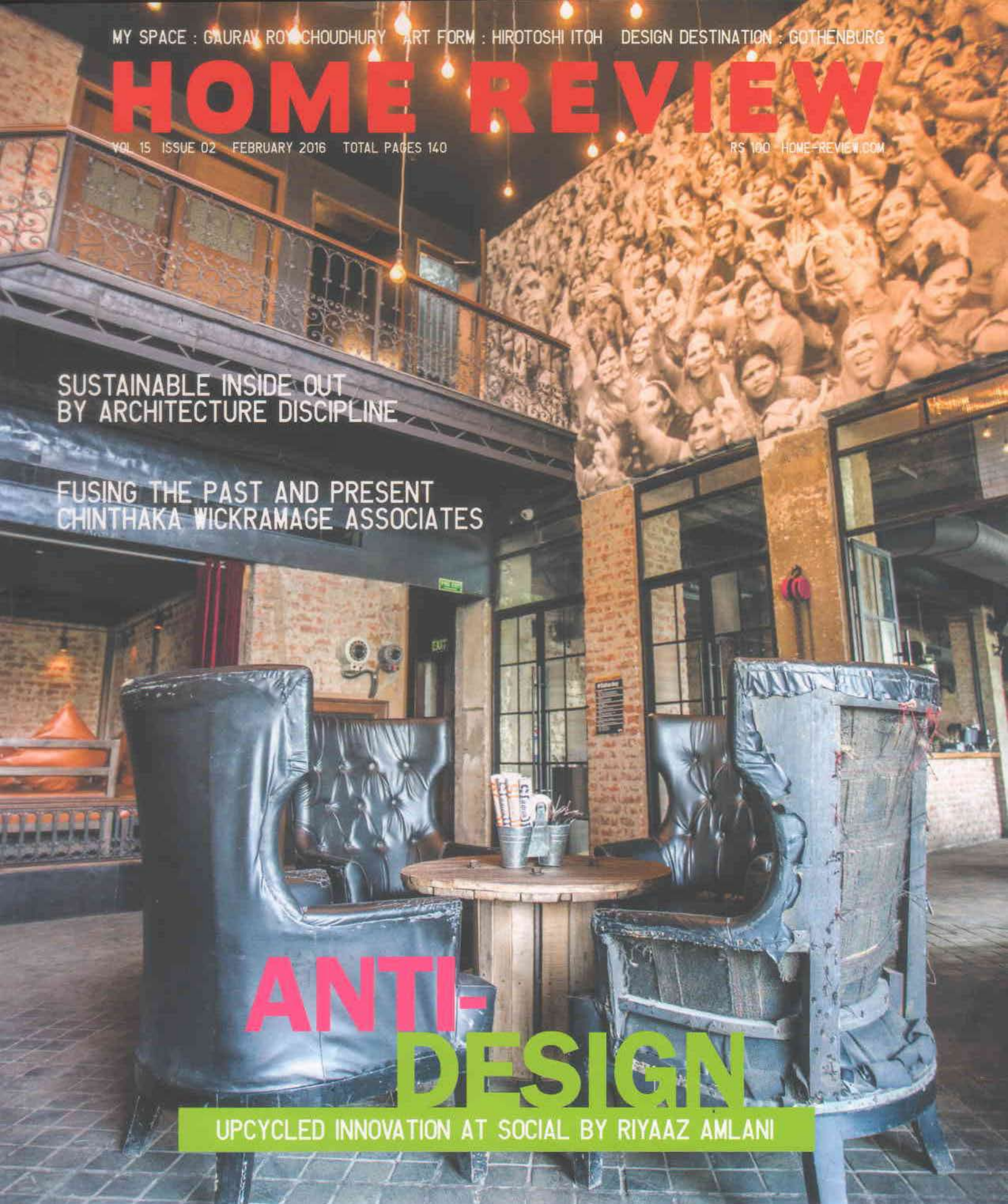
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FUSING THE PAST AND PRESENT  
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## ANTI- DESIGN

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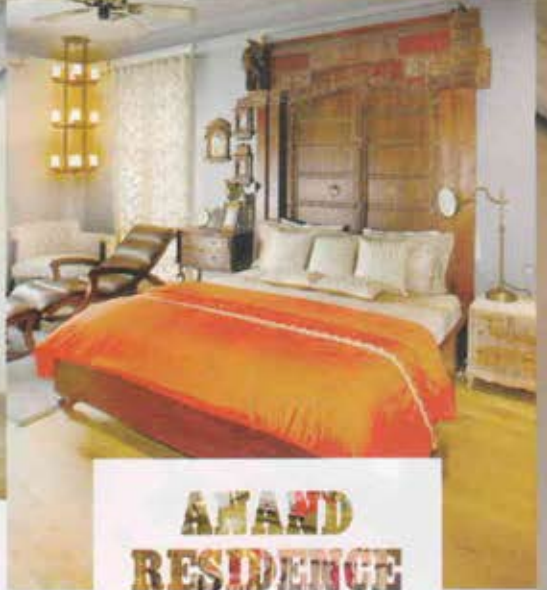
## DCA STUDIO UNCOVERED



In 1996, architects Rahul Bansal and Amit Aurora came together to form DCA Studio, a design consultation firm headquartered in New Delhi. The studio offers architecture, interior design and design coordination services.

The overarching philosophy of the team is to "always create value through such design that maximises the project's complete potential". Given this objective, it is therefore not surprising to see their wide range of projects, from retail to residential, each of which has an element of surprise, a certain charisma that makes you want to admire and look at everything twice.

The DCA office itself is a worthy example. An existing warehouse was taken and transformed into a studio, keeping not only the old structure intact but also using the local context of the original settlements in the area. With courtyards, brick and stone walls, the studio allows "contemplation of the sky and conversations with the clouds".



## ANAND RESIDENCE

A sure-fire way to boost the spirits of a creative soul! The industrial interiors have rough edges and the general aura is natural and minimalistic. Textures abound, old and new furniture blend comfortably with glass cubicles and exposed wiring.

This attention to the surroundings and to details that would otherwise be lost in a typical design is what sets these three projects of DCA Studio apart.

This residential project was to restructure the home to the current needs of the three generations of the family that inhabited the building. "A modern abode with traditional elements" was the brief and DCA implemented a dual strategy of structural and design changes to transform this into a contemporary home.

To bring in more natural light, some walls were pulled down and windows were enlarged or repositioned. Bay and corner windows were created to maximise the views and provide additional seating zones. The staircase is the focal point, the "most dramatic feature of this abode".

Reconstructed in wood and metal to connect the ground floor with the upper floor landing, it further extends to the terrace with floating steps. Chandeliers fall like raindrops at various levels competing with a gallery wall for attention. The palette is serene and the furniture and accessories have been made the main points of interest.

Earthy stone and wood flooring brings in another natural element, along with the artefacts collected by the family on their past trips.

Long before malls or even large stores were run-of-the-mill, Akbarallys originated in 1897, was India's first departmental store. The 10,000 sq ft 'Akbarallys Men' is a multi-brand store stocking premium brands and also bespoke clothing. The building in Mumbai's historic Fort area has its own special history and charm.



Text by Chrysel D'Silva Dias  
Photographs Courtesy  
DCA Studio



**Akbarallys**  
MEN



**AKBARALLYS  
DEPARTMENT  
STORE**



DCA was brought in "to transform the old site into its contemporary avatar, while retaining the celebrated inheritance". Doing so meant stripping away decades of renovations and heading for a complete facelift. The refurbishment revealed beautiful old architectural details like half-broken cornices and old arches, which were part of the character of the building.

Salvaged ship and machine parts were sourced from the Mumbai ship breaking yard to "celebrate the spirit of industrialisation". Coloured glass, antique mirrors, trunks and black and white flooring added a vintage vibe.

Extra features include a private barber shop and shoe polish station to add that final dash of good grooming to the busy urban male.

This bistro in New Delhi could be transported into a quiet town in Europe and it would be perfectly at home. A simple palette composed of a wooden trellis, tall windows and antique mirrors contrasts beautifully with the cheerful yellow planters, wooden slatted ceiling and sandstone flooring.



## AMOUR BISTRO



The dining room has painted metal chairs paired with custom-made chairs. The kitchen and rest-room walls, on the other hand, are decorated with locally available 'Delhi' stone, "cut to perfection on site".

The walls are used to display bottles of wine; the light glinting off the bottles adds another dimension of interest. The double height of the restaurant is cleverly augmented by a beautiful large antique mirror. On the opposite side, a life-size sculpture of an orchestra overlooks a balcony and serenades the diners.

The large windows flood the space with natural light and in the night, the warmth of the bespoke lights is like a beacon drawing customers in. Luxurious yet unpretentious, Amour Bistro is an elegant space that outlives fickle design trends and manages to create a timeless, yet contemporary look.

Blending traditional and modern comes effortlessly to DCA Studio and their projects are excellent showcases of this approach.

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