

# INTERIORS

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**PRAKASH JHA'S**  
SIMPLISTIC ABODE

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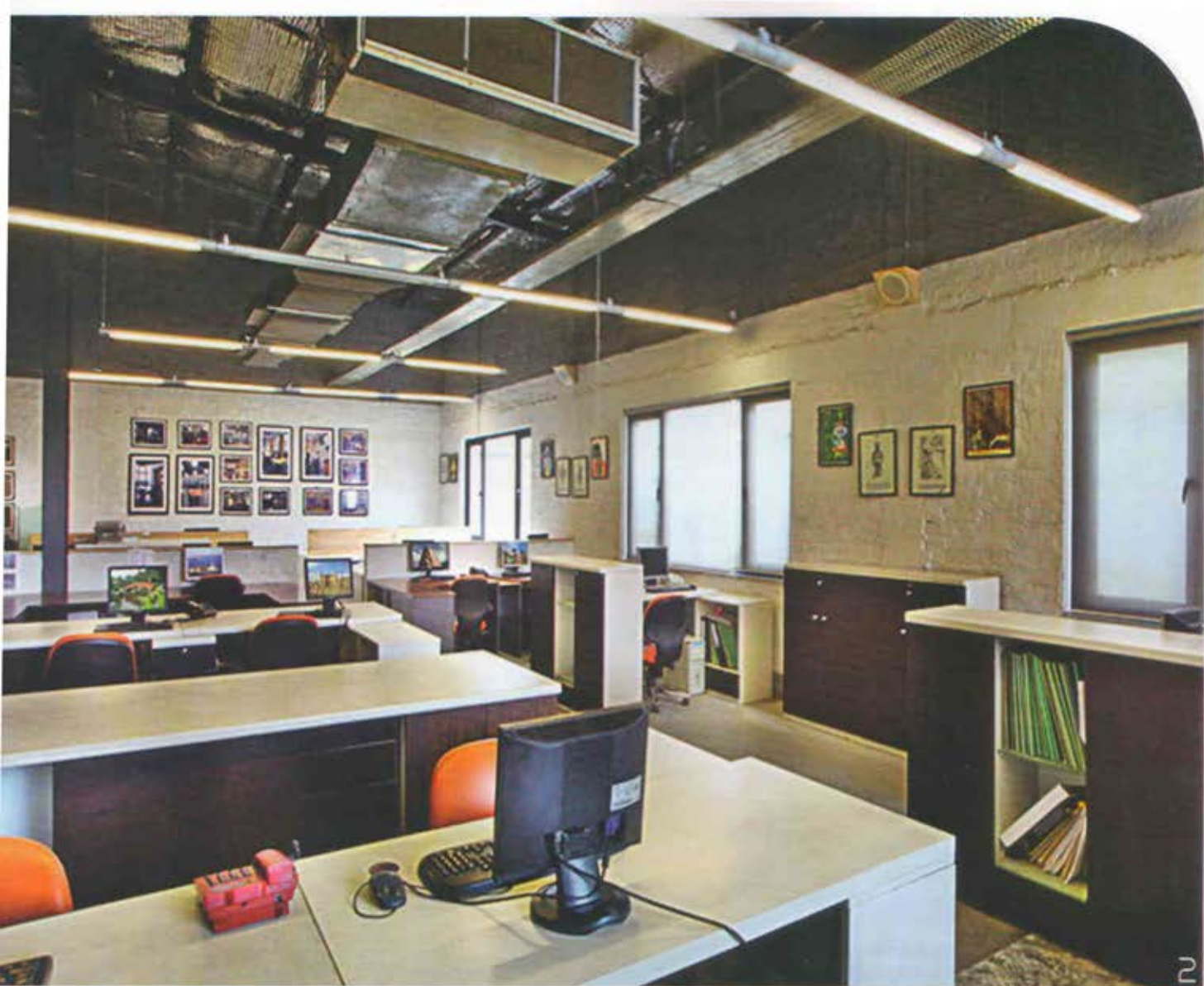
# Redefining SIMPLICITY

ARCHITECTS **AMIT AURORA** AND **RAHUL BANSAL** OPT FOR A NATURAL MATERIAL PALETTE AND VISUALLY TRANSPARENT LAYOUT FOR THEIR OWN STUDIO IN NEW DELHI.

**Text:** Trisha Mahajan **Photographs:** Courtesy The Firm







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n this tech-savvy world, exchange of ideas, styles and products reach faster; thus, blurring physical boundaries. This applies to design as well. **Studio DCA** is a fine example of an office space whose setting is shaped by many influences, the strongest of which is retaining the originality of the site and retrofitting its interiors.

Designed by partners and architects **Amit Aurora and Rahul Bansal** of **Group DCA**, the office spreads over 11,000 sq. ft. and is located just off the main arterial connection to Gurgaon. The office has been designed within the existing warehouse structure, thus retaining the originality of the space and tweaking the interiors to meet the stringent parameters laid in the design brief. The office is treated like one huge space, unaffected by any spatial segregation or design treatment. Being open, it has a visual connect with the exteriors. The façade is virtually transparent to the eye as the emphasis here is on passing through a circumambulatory path made around a mostly glazed pavilion. An intimate courtyard is carved out from within the rectilinear volume. "Minimally adorned with a steel planter bench, one involuntarily pauses to take in the unrestricted views through the studio and into the reception, transposed against a white brick wall set within a dark frame. A thorough hewn stone wall on the right has been raised to the same height as the building, creating the appearance of a wall in court in the spirit of Luis Barragan," share the architects.

1  
Exposed brick wall and wooden planks used for reception table lend an organic feel to the reception area.

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Note the admirable interactive workspaces.





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Open book shelf in the library area allows one to make an easy selection of the reading materials.

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Clear glass used for the partition encourages transparency and interactive environs.







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The reception area has a simple wooden reception table with the company's logo in wood and a small waiting area. This area divides the office into two parts—the common interaction zone and the studio with workstations. "The interaction zone is designed as a large hall with two glass and wooden boxes. This space is used for meetings with clients and vendors. The large remaining space serves as a multi-purpose hall; largely for hands-on design activities and engagement such as demonstrations, mock-ups, internal team meetings and trainings. This space also acts as a lunch room and resource center," mention the architects. Between the two zones, and strategically situated next to the entrance, is a visually engaging pantry done up with basic cabinetry mounted on an exposed brick wall.



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The discussion lounge is designed using refurbished materials.

6&7

Wooden planks being used in a frame merge to form the wall and roof.





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On the other side of the reception area lies a huge studio. A view of the outdoors is refreshing, while the artworks break the informality in the workspace. Four glass boxes within the studio enclose cabins for the partners, finance and project heads. The glass cubicles help in creating transparency between the individual rooms and the larger workspace and also maintains privacy as required by the top management. The accounts department too gets their privacy and quiet ambience as they are located away from the main workstations. The library or discussion lounge within the studio has a huge carpenter's work table repurposed as a conference table. The table is well-complemented with orange chairs and a huge open wooden book rack.



8 9

The clear glass used in the design encourages transparency and invites one to notice the interiors.

The work zones have a clear demarcation of spaces.





When it comes to the material palette, the intent was to use natural products and textures throughout the space. All materials have a wood element in them. For the ceiling, walls and flooring, raw and industrial appearance is retained from the old structure. This is further enhanced by the use of raw wood, rough unpolished kota stone and unfinished steel in the pantry and washrooms with basic lacquering to seal off untreated surfaces. "The ceiling insulation was a critical task in order to maintain a comfortable working environment and not waste electricity. In line with the industrial aesthetic, the unplastered walls are painted, the concrete floor is retained and the services remain exposed across the ceilings. The finishing and joinery of the materials and details is maintained as natural and minimalistic as possible."

They envisioned this space as one that is naturally ventilated that brings in maximum light and flexible for future alterations. "The idea was to achieve maximum efficiency through exploitation of daylight. Mostly during the day and even sometimes in the evening, the office works on natural light. Artificial light when used is at minimum levels of 1 Watt per sq. ft.," they share.

Overall, Studio DCA is one such perfect workstation which outshines for its naturalistic looks and aura of glitz and glamour. ■

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A plant enclosed by wooden planks forms an interesting seating option.



## AMIT AURORA & RAHUL BANSAL

Group DCA works on a unique philosophy of dream, design, discover and deliver and offers services in architecture, interior design and design co-ordination across projects including offices, residential, retail, hospitality and brand identities.

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