

# insite

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EVOLUTION AND EVALUATION OF DESIGN  
**LOOKING BACK – LOOKING AHEAD**



# CONTENTS

## insite

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insite story  
ar. b. v. doshi

## Looking Back... Looking Ahead...

Anand Namiooshi	38
Ashish Kulkarni	39
Ashok Butala	40
Asutosh Shah	44
Azmi Wadia	45
Bakir Baldiwala	46
Behr Champana Gagneron	48
Bimal Mistry	49
Conrad Gonsalves	50
Deepak Sahajwani	52
Dipen Gada	54
Hiren Patel	55
Jatin Das	56
K. T. Ravindran	57
Krishna Rao Jaisim	58
Kamal Malik	60
Kamlesh Sheth	61
Kapil Surlakar	62
Karan Grover	63
Kashyap Patwa	64
Khozema Chitalwala	66
Latha Raman Jaigopal	68
Made Wijaya	69
Manil Patel	70
Mitchell Abdul Karim Crites	71
Nimish Patel	72

*“There was a time when  
the city and its buildings comprised a world;  
now the world has become a city”*

## Ashish Kulkarni

Designex, Kolhapur



What I see starting to happen around the country are opportunities for architecture and architects to step back into a dialogue with communities, particularly at a time when the housing crisis has decimated neighbourhoods. There's an enormous opportunity to bring design, in the best sense, to make sure that everyone benefits from it. And I sense it when I go to architecture schools, when I talk to architects—there's a re-engagement.

The priorities have changed: today, we engage the community as a vital source of inspiration and guidance; we enter into a conversation with other disciplines; we consider environmental impact. We've begun to de-hierarchise what is "architecture" and expand its definition. We've begun to let empathy creep into the profession. Like good historians, we're delving into architecture's very human context.

An aspect of future planning, some of which has already begun, is designing for flexibility in the event of total change of the function of a building. Some architects are assuming this responsibility. We can take this concept a step further. We could say that if the "father" of architectural design is planning, then the "mother" of design is form, and the "union" of their relationship is function. The amount of care, of nurturing of the architectural design, of thinking of future problems and providing for those problems with contingencies for special growth, for change, for adaptation – all of this care and concern for not just today, or opening day, but for future days and future populations, will determine the success or failure of the function.

Think of your favourite city – what makes it that? The buildings, the public squares, plazas, piazzas? The intimate little nooks and crannies, the side streets and cafes with their sense of human scale – is that what makes you comfortable? What, after all, are these, if not bits and pieces of architecture?

There was a time when the city and its buildings comprised a world; now the world has become a city. But a city in trouble. The future of our cities lies in the solving of the following global issues:

- Population explosions – either natural or through immigration.
- Change from an agricultural to an urban society.
- Free time and surplus created by automation and computerisation.
- Struggles for equal rights and self-determination.
- Attempts to eliminate poverty.
- Giant industrial, military, and governmental complexes.
- Speed of transmission of ideas, and transportation of goods.
- Nuclear threats/terrorism.

What's all this got to do with architecture? Architects today and in the future should be involved in not only design of single buildings, but land planning, civic design, possibly even politics. We need to create order out of chaos.



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