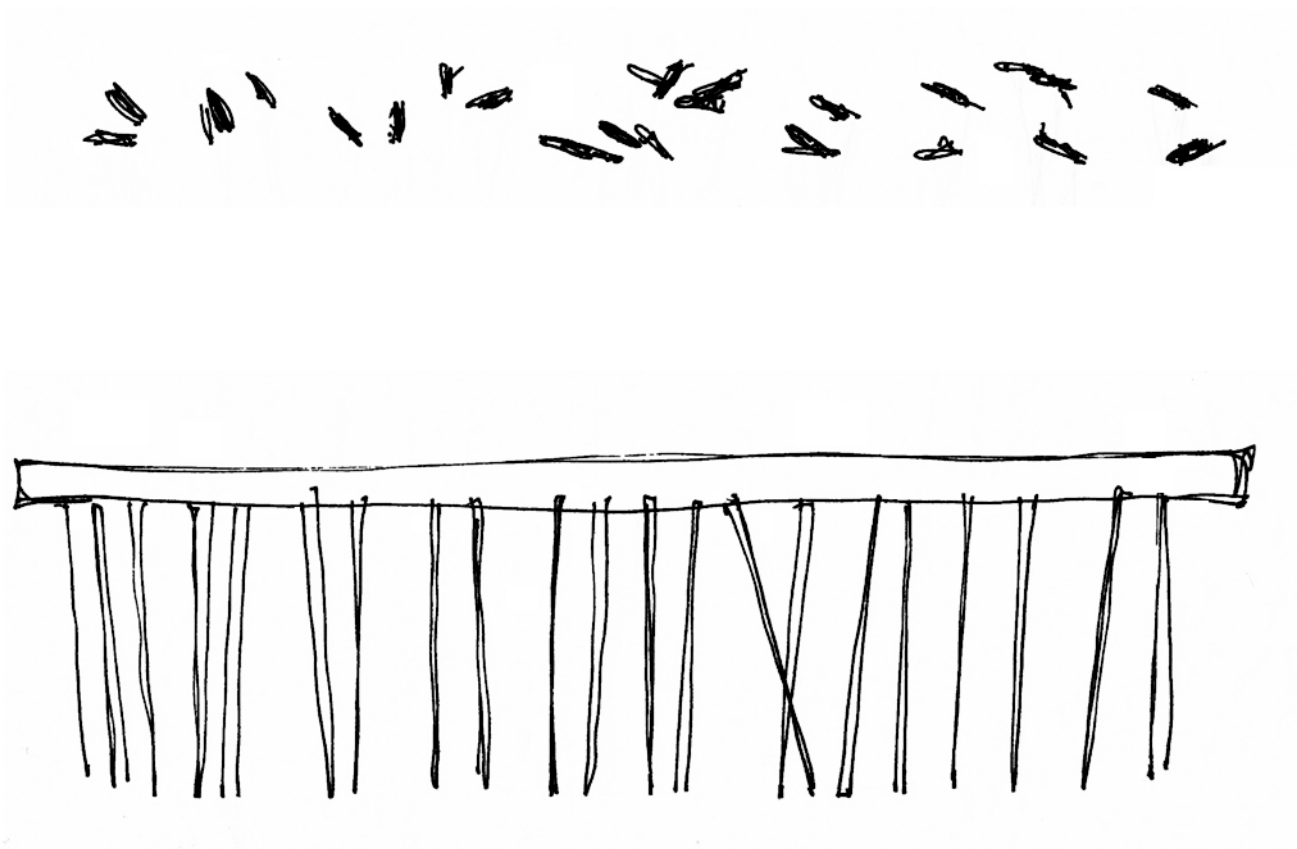
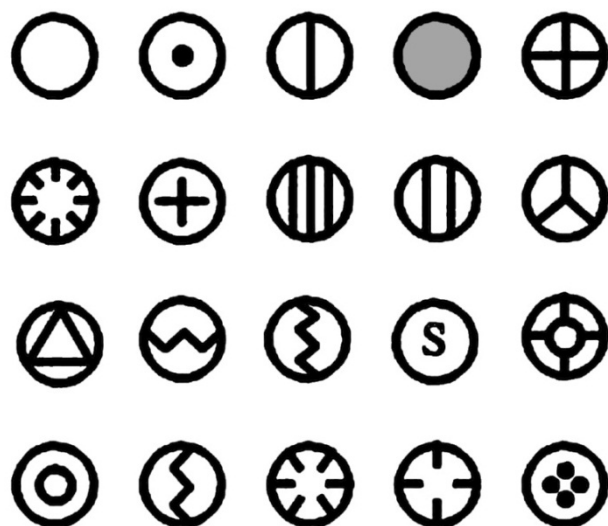


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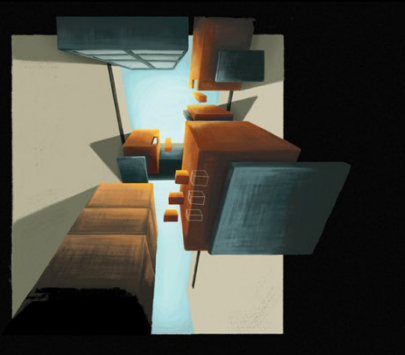
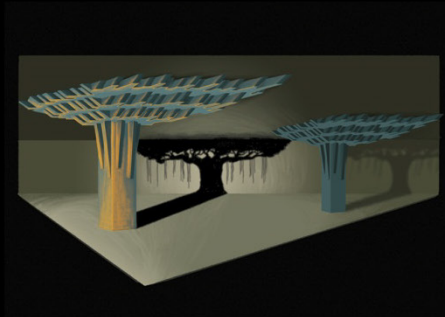
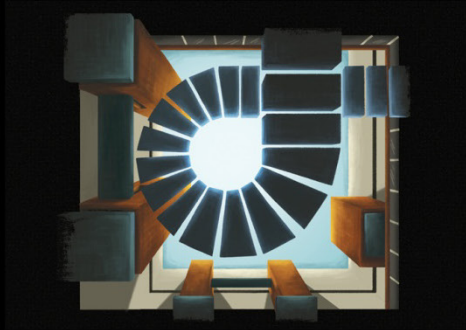
ARK





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PREFACE

In the city of Vadodara, which is spread over an area of 225 sq.km., sits Ark – an office building. This monograph looks at the manner in which the interior design of the fourth floor – the offices for Rubamin Limited – has been approached. It integrates different art forms that make up the interiors of the office. The outcome is proof of the love for art that the patron has developed.

This discourse is an attempt to understand the processes that have brought these art forms together, and created an office space. Rather than focusing on the space, and its composition, it hopes to understand the process of interior design. As far as typologies for office design in the country go, this building offers a perspective, and allows for a conversation.

READING OF THE MONOGRAPH

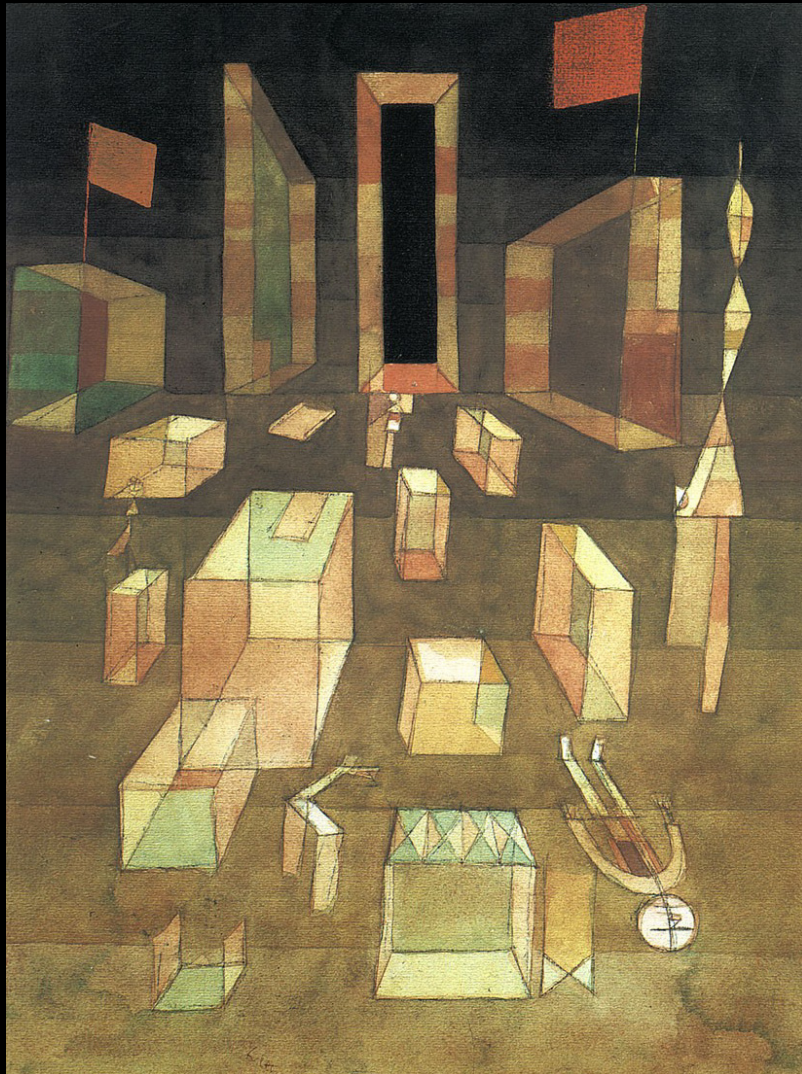
Travelogues are a traditional method of communication. These narratives allow one culture to familiarize itself with another. India is not unfamiliar with being represented in this format – be it that of the Chinese Traveller – Hieun Tsiang who visited India through the Silk Route between 627–643 A.D., or the travels documented by Ibn Battuta – 1330 or 1332, the famous Moroccan traveller. Travelogues become stand-ins for the culture they represent. These accounts created intrigue; they created an image of the culture. Travelogues satisfy different purposes depending on the background and intent of the traveller in question. Ibn Battuta was a well-educated upper-class man who travelled within the familiar Muslim culture even in unfamiliar territories. His travelogues focused on himself, the people he met, and the import of his positions. Marco Polo, a trader and merchant, was not formally trained, and travelled to strange, unfamiliar cultures. He saw everything in a new light, and hence reported accurately on aspects of dressing, speaking, and behaviour. Because of the differences in their background, aspects that they chose to focus on differed; this impacted their reporting.

As in a travelogue, this monograph talks about how art forms from different parts of the country have come together. A narrative that is simple, and has navigated across time and culture – Noah's Ark, binds them; the significance of this has been explained later. It explores the ideas and narratives being expressed through the interior design of the building, the evolving ideas of art, and the significance that art and architecture hold in the times that we live in. Just as in a city there is no set or rigid path through which one views a city, this monograph allows the reader to dip in and out of scenes, and ideas as they choose.

Star Wars, created by George Lucas, tells of the adventures of characters in a Galaxy far, far away. It is the story of perceptions; of the greys in between. It may be viewed as a travelogue; a travelogue for space exploration. As James Campbell's theory states – it follows the path of the Monomyth, the Hero's journey, Campbell explains that all stories follow a certain path or trajectory. While the details of the stories may change, the premise follows the same steps. The interior design, with art forms varying in their process and details, tells a single story.



*Buildings designed by British Architect – Robert Chisholm in Vadodara during the 19th and 20th century –
Faculty of Arts – Maharaja Sayajirao University; Sayajirao Musuem and Picture Gallery; Khanderao Market; Nyay Mandir.*



'Uncomposed Objects In Space' by Paul Klee (1929)



Metal

Ark

Art

Creating an aesthetic language for Rubamin Office, Ark, Vadodara.

The building is a tribute to the love of art that the patron has developed over the years. Ask him how he has developed this love and he will tell you a story. A story of a young engineer who came to Vadodara with not much; a young man who very quickly became influenced by the art and culture that the city has to offer. He saw the possibilities that art had to offer, the conversations that it could start.



The Parking Basement

ART AND ARCHITECTURE

“Architecture is Art when one consciously or unconsciously creates aesthetic emotion in the atmosphere & when this environment produces well-being. – Luis Barragan”

In a time where it has become increasingly difficult to express opinions freely, it is necessary to find alternative methods. Art and architecture then seem to be two media that allow for that. They become tangible remnants of a *culture*, and confer a value on it; they are markers of time. Art is dichotomous in the value that is attached to it. While, on the one hand society marginalizes certain art forms and artists, other art forms are highly sought after. Its value changes on the basis of what one expects of it. It has, unfortunately, become increasingly acceptable to not value art for art's sake. Art has now become a subject for intellectual consideration; an object for philosophical study. *Hegel* referred to this as the “Death of Art”. Of course, when he says this, he does not mean death in the literal or practical sense. Rather, he means the death of art, for Art's sake; for the sake of a pure creative outlet.

Different as the disciplines of Art and Architecture are in their interpretations and response to reality, they do share similarities; they become symbols of something that is larger than their immediate society. For both, composition is key, as is the space that is created.

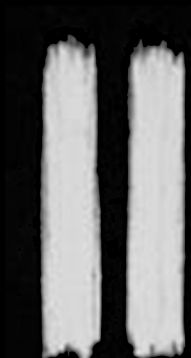
Space is a cumulative of several realities that include narratives, collectives, imageries, objects, and symbols, at once. Attaching sensibilities and meaning to spaces establishes a sense of belonging. The design of a building, and the materials that are used – along with the composition – become a reflection of an evolution of a manner of living.



Chaos creates beauty.
Chaos creates calm.



When the Gods got angry
and made the oceans churn,
There was chaos.



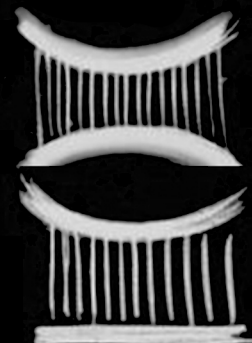
He brought two of each kind -
Plants, Animals and Birds.



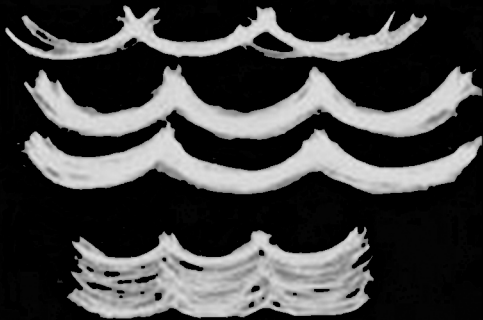
Each pair found a place,
The ark bore them all.



It began to rain.



And it rained, and rained.



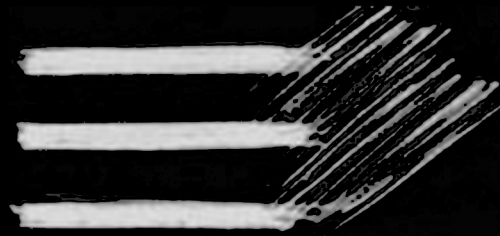
The floods were coming,
Putting the world at threat.



A man built an Ark.



Made of wood,
the Ark was a three-decked ship,
A deck for each kind.



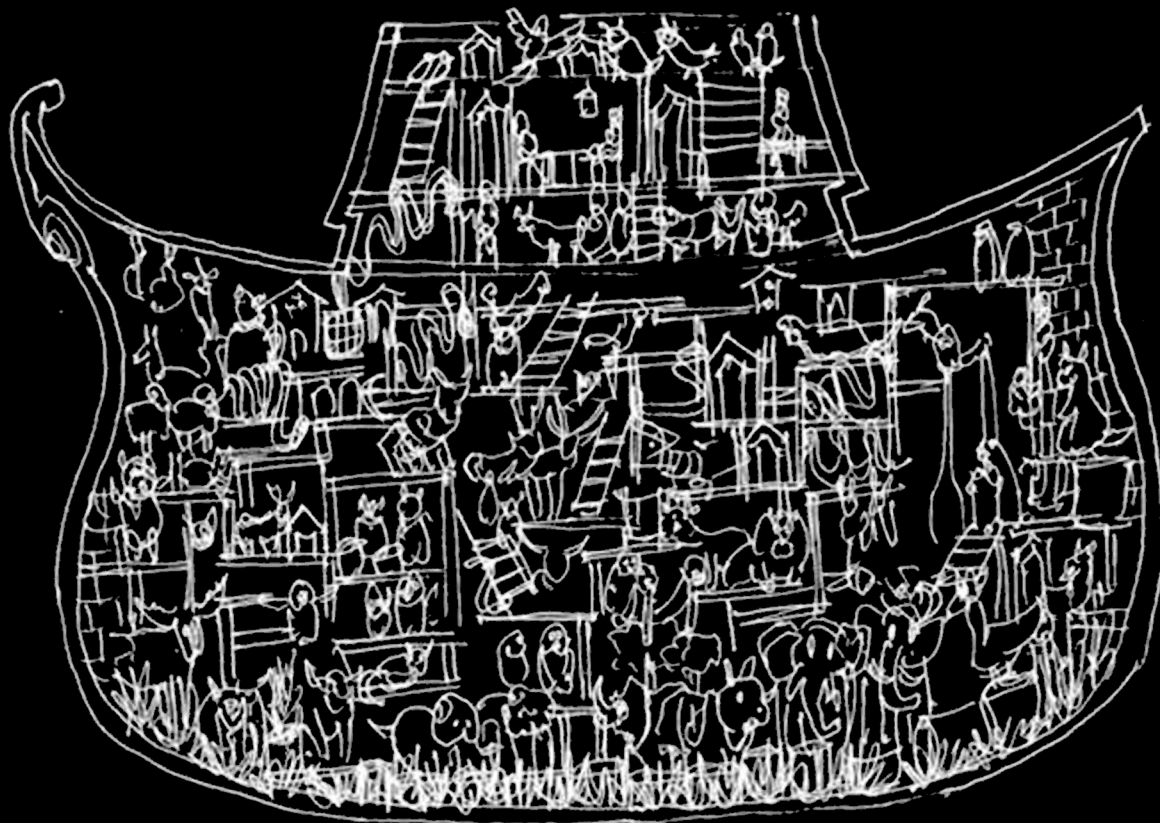
With a pitched roof and skylight,
For Despair to look up,
For Hope to shine in.



And as the water receded,
The ark found itself on top of a mountain.
A higher ground. A sacred place.



A three decked ship,
Like the three worlds –
Heaven, Earth and, the Underworld



Noah's Ark



Design elements of the space.

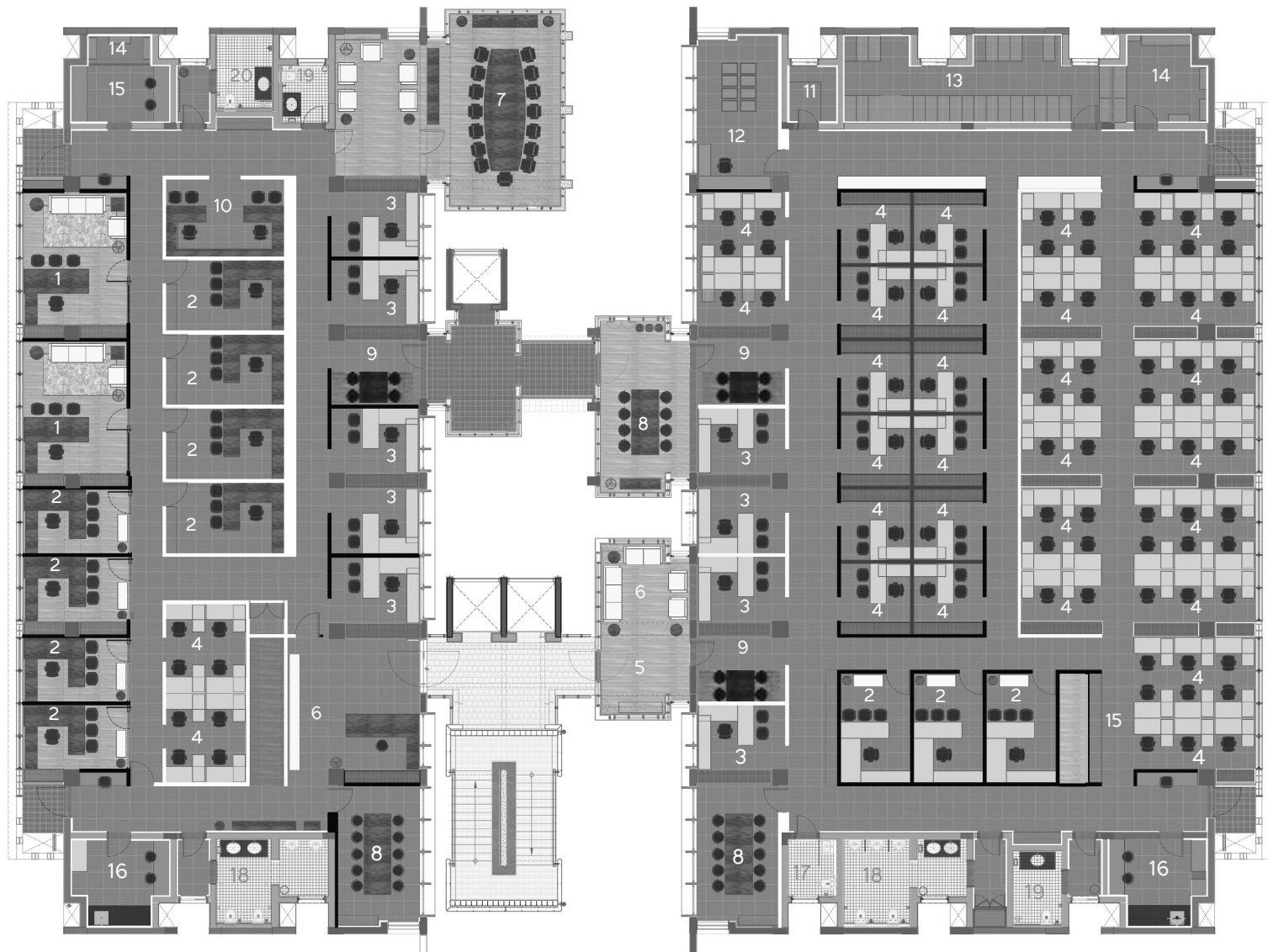
THE INTERIOR DESIGN OF THE OFFICE SPACE

The offices of Rubamin Limited are located on the fourth floor of the building. The composition of the space is such that it affords privacy as required. It is a two-part office, connected by a passage.

The material palette that has been used for the interior design of the building is in keeping with that which has been used for the architecture of the building. The way the materials have been used, displays the beauty of the raw. The interiors present a commonly established dichotomy – that of man and nature.

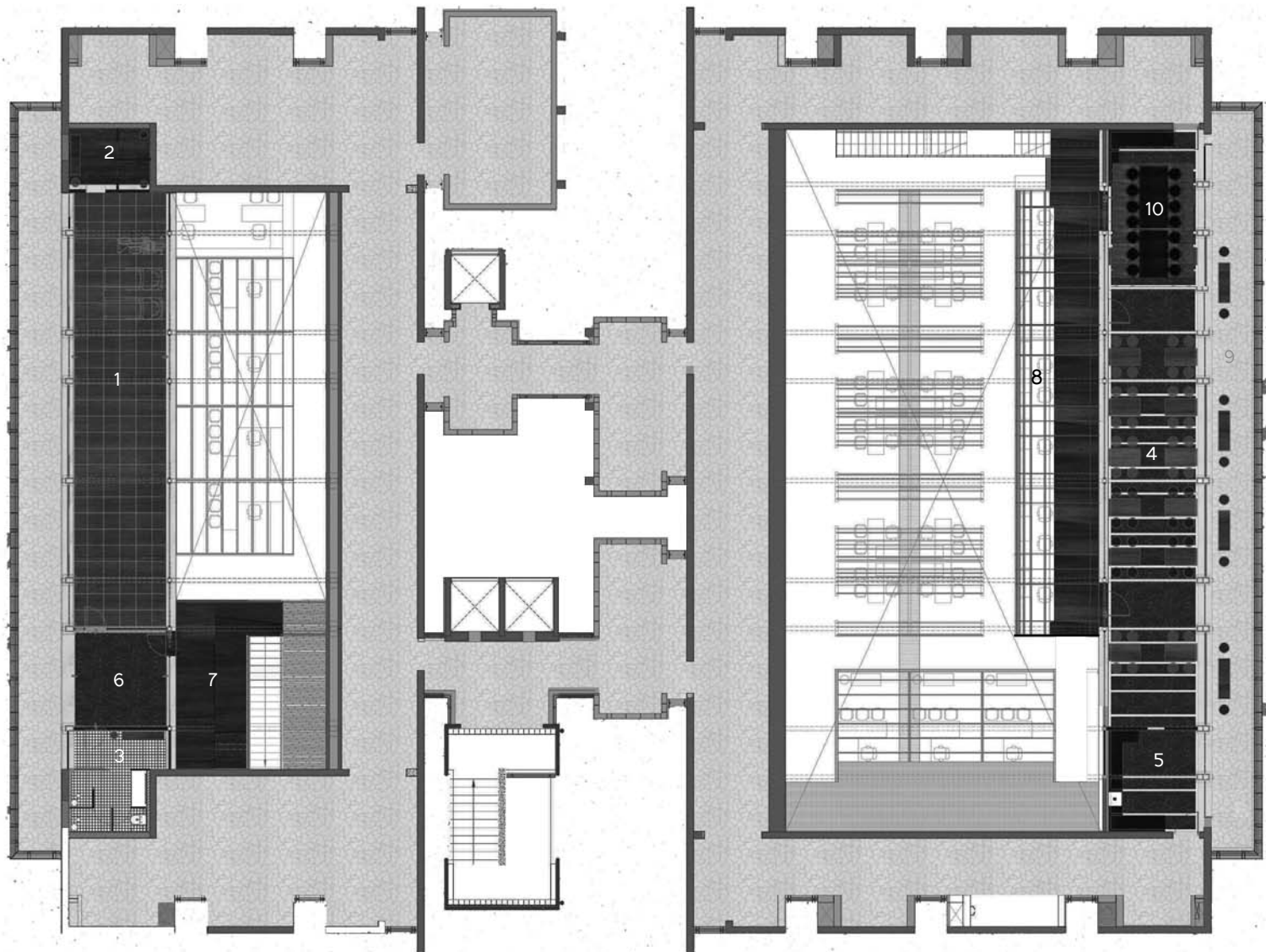
The space seems to be an ode to time – to the time that has passed, and time that is yet to come. It provides a coming together of the modern with the colonial. It represents an interesting co-existence of traditional art forms with the contemporary. This juxtaposition is also provided by the variety of furniture that is used in the office – furniture crafted through the usage of art forms, versus more contemporary furniture that has been used in different sections of the office.

There are eight forms of art that make up the interior design of the building – bell metal, lacquer, Gond artwork, Avataran – an installation modeled after the Vishwamitri River, a wooden installation that represents the Ark, applique lamps, concrete lamps, and other forms of metal. The material and art feed into a single narrative, but are also mutually exclusive.



- | | | | | |
|---------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Director's Cabin | 5,6. Reception and Waiting | 10. Art Room | 14. Electrical Room | 18. Toilet (Male) |
| 2. Cabin | 7. Conference | 11. Workstations (for repair work) | 15. Store and Print | 19. Toilet (Female) |
| 3. Cubicle | 8. Meeting Room | 12. Server Room | 16. Pantry | 20. Toilet (Executive) |
| 4. Workstation | 9. Discussion Area | 13. Record Room | 17. Toilet (differently disabled) | |

Fourth Floor Plan



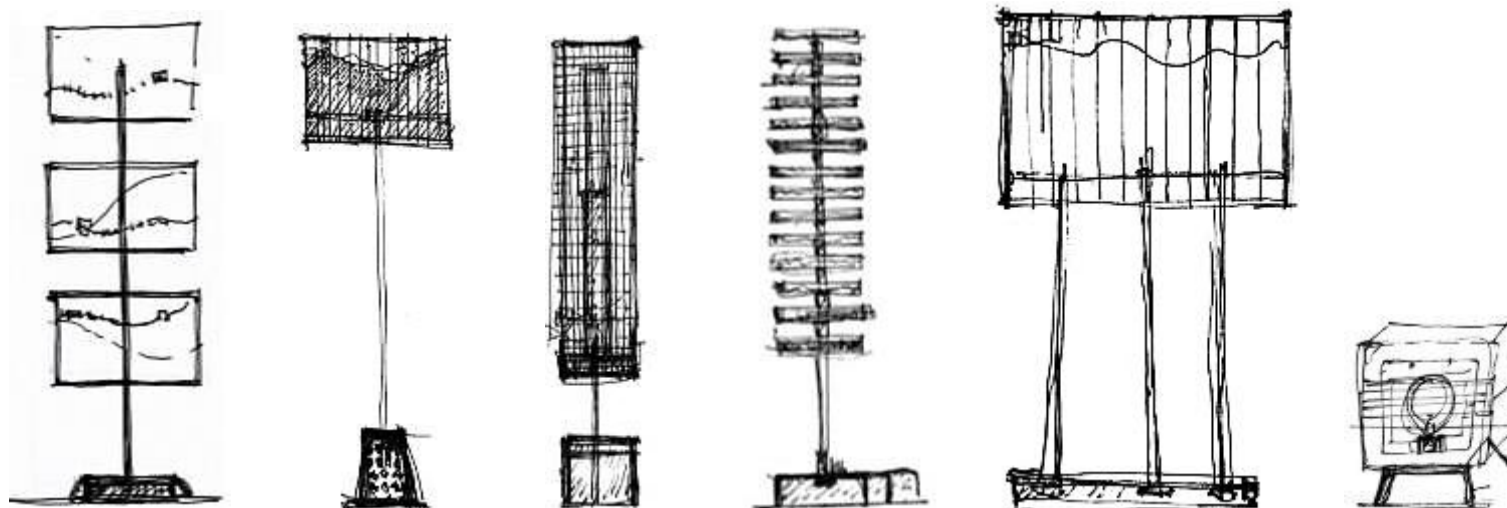
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|---|-------------------------------|
| 1. Gym and Yoga Space | 5. Store |
| 2. Changing rooms and racks for storage | 6. Library |
| 3. Changing rooms with shower booth | 7. Staircase and Reading area |
| 4. Dining lounge | 8. Bridge |

- | |
|----------------------|
| 9. Terrace |
| 10. Executive dining |

Terrace Floor Plan











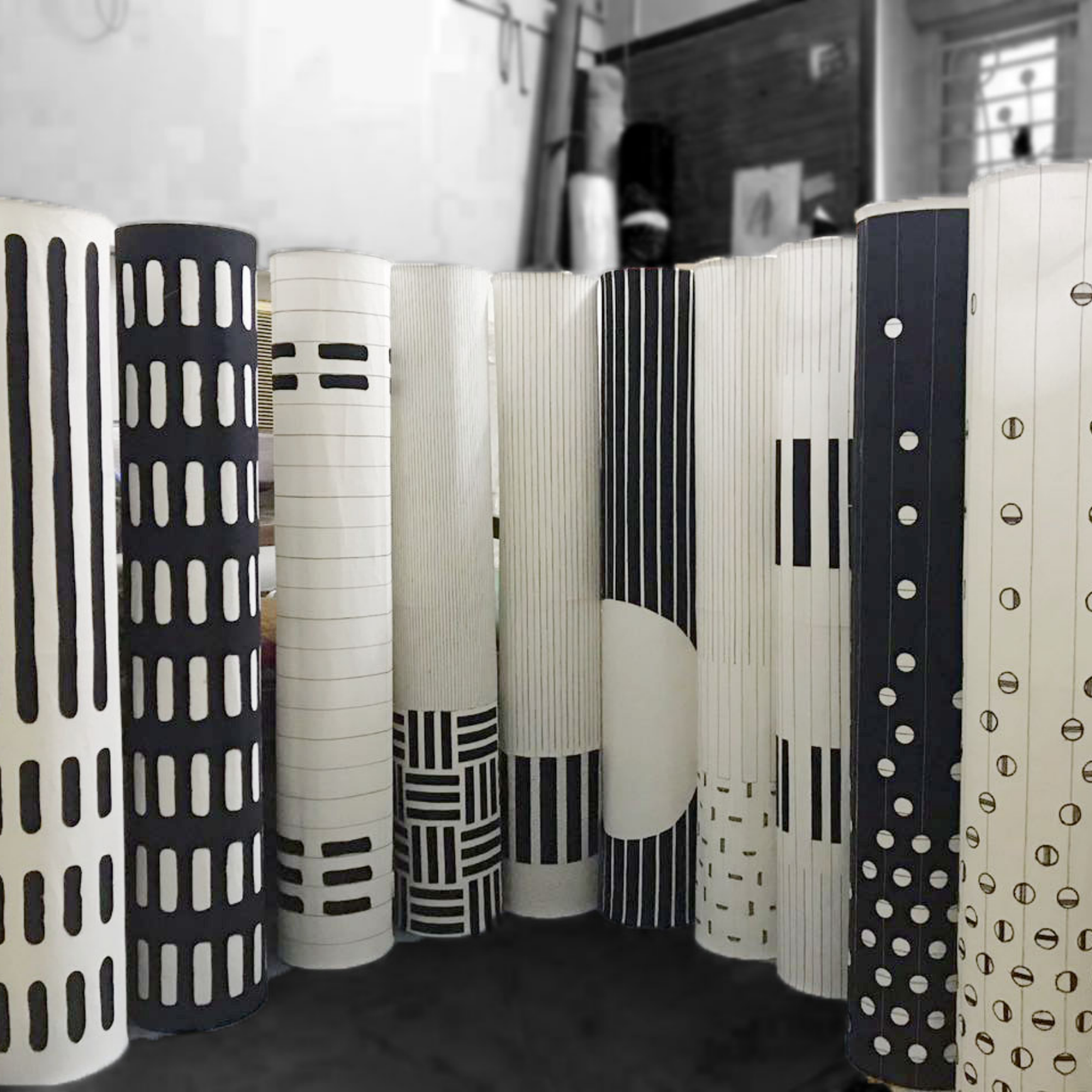
Concrete lamp: Waiting area

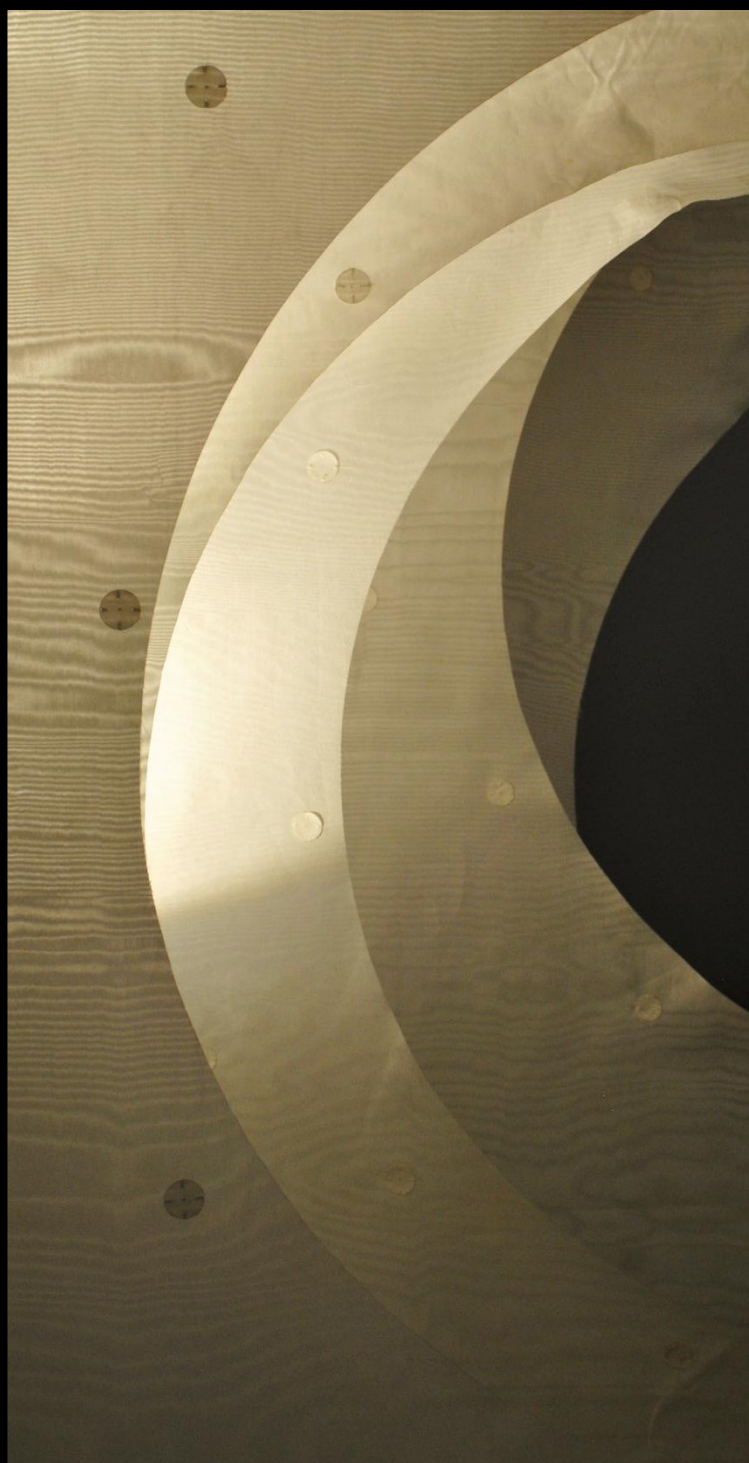


Kaushal, a Gond Artist

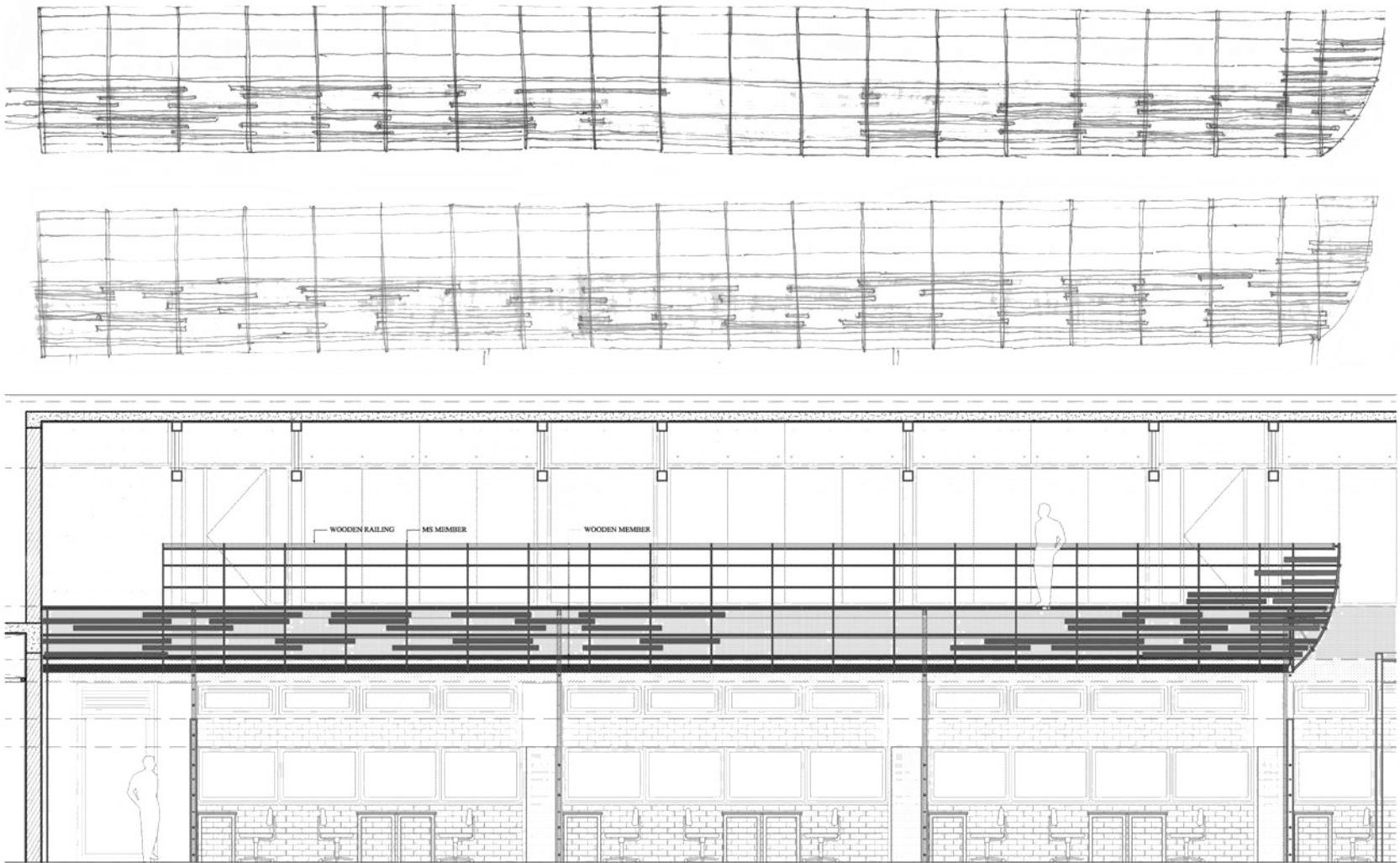


Cabin box of Gond art.





The applique installation hanging above the stairs that lead to the bridge.



Design process for the bridge inspired from Noah's Ark.



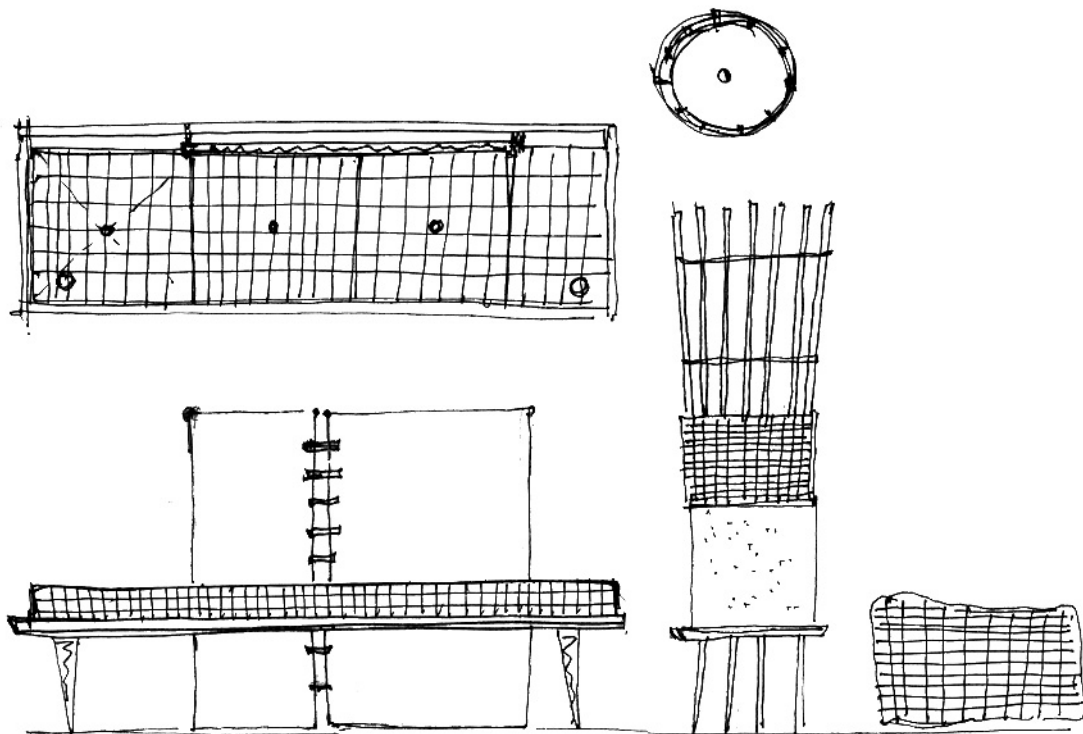
Double-height space: Fourth floor.





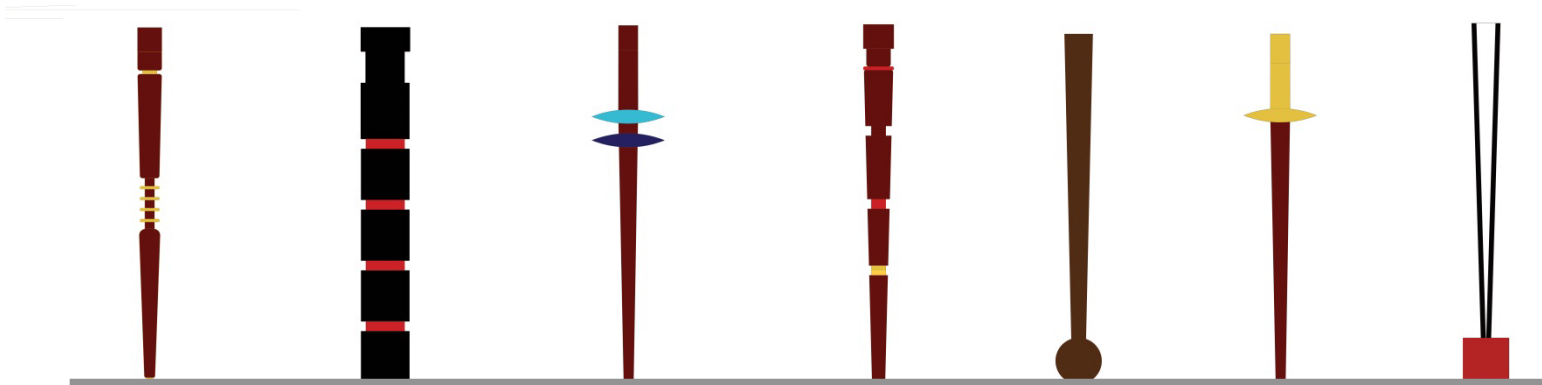


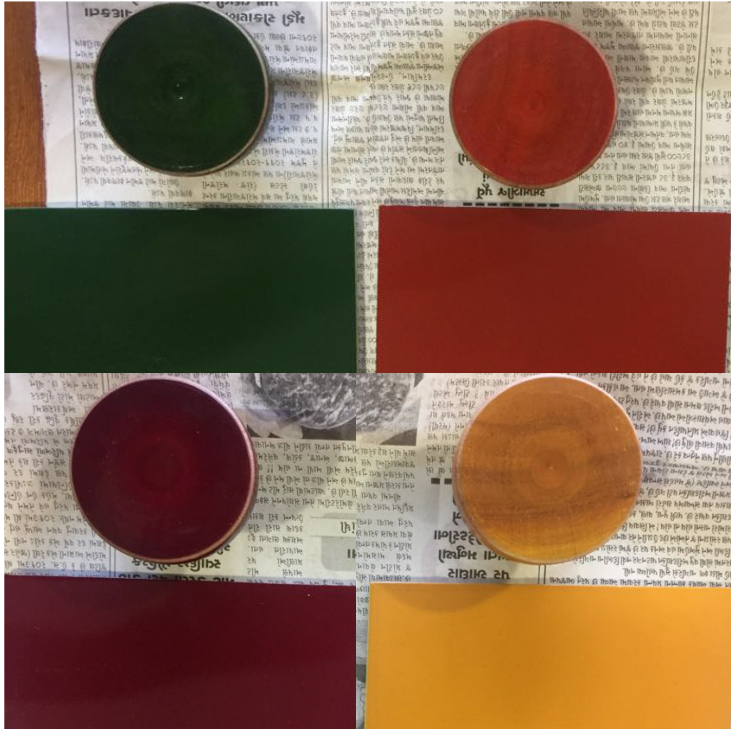
Bell metal domes & floor lamps: Reception, Ground floor.

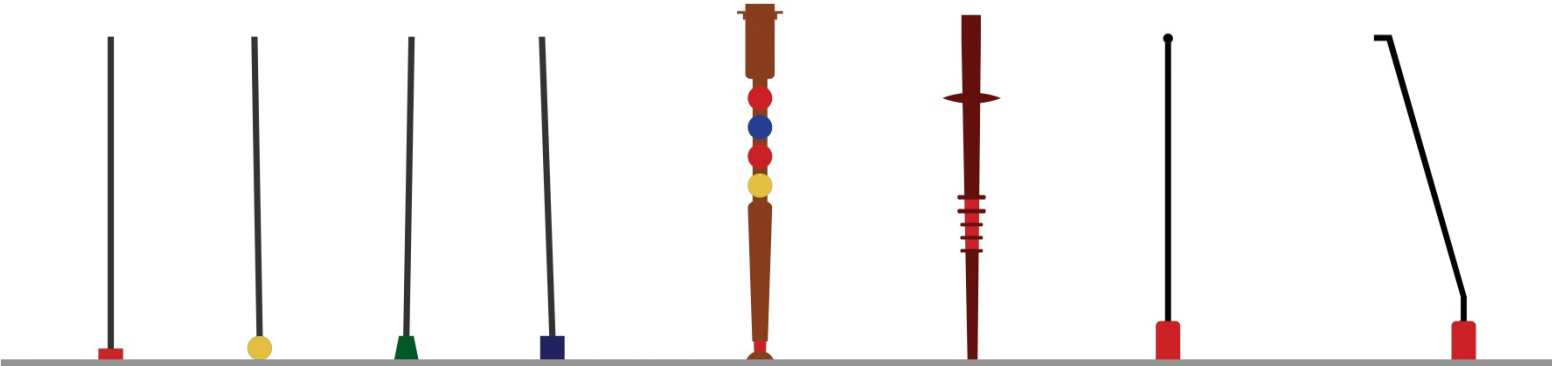




Weathering steel in reception area: Fourth Floor.









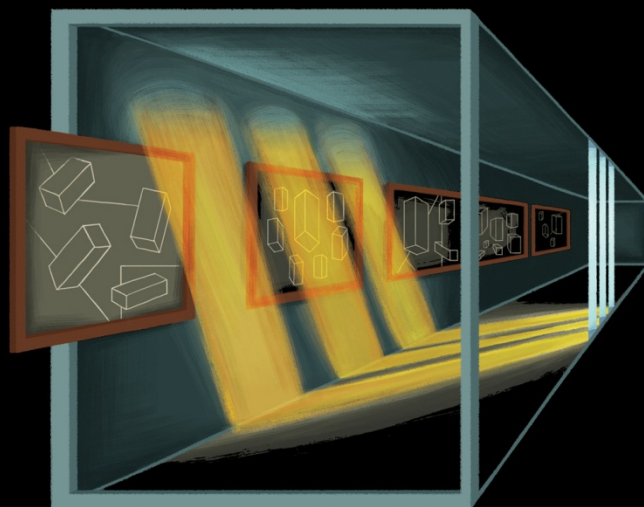
The Lacquer Leg Table in the Reception



Wood inlay in Managing Director's desk.



Wood inlay work.





ARK Gallery : Ground floor.



Art walk: Fourth floor.

EPILOGUE

The office and its usage will evolve over time. It hopes to become a space that encourages local artists, and provides them with opportunities to experiment. It has opened up possibilities for art, architecture and interior design, as disciplines, to work in tandem. While these disciplines perform very different functions towards the creation of a space, and are different in more ways than one, they do not over-power one another, but rather work in cohesion, creating a singular narrative. Each art form used for the interior design of the office is allowed its own space and freedom – while still becoming part of the larger story. The layout of the space, and the interior design will influence interactions within the space. The layout explores possibilities to redefine hierarchy, and the ideas of public and private in an office space. With its commitment to art and patronage for artists – local and other wise – it has integrated itself into the social fabric of the city.

A common theme that emerges through the interior design of the office space is the adaptation of traditional art forms and techniques, to create something that is contemporary and relevant to the times that we live in. It has shed a new light on the approach that may be taken towards these crafts.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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