

Q What does architecture mean to you and what is your philosophy when creating a design?

A Architecture is all about happiness. To create spaces in which people can live and work with happiness, and spaces which are joyful - is the goal, the driving philosophy of my designs.

Q When it comes to designing, do you have a signature style. Could you elaborate on the same?

A A design has to respond to site, climate, client requirements and so many other diverse inputs which give us leeway for tremendous creativity. Every design therefore has a unique DNA of its own and acquires a persona as it ages and as the users interact with the design. The signature aspect if you really want to call it that is that each design has a personality which evolves just like we do.

Q As far as working with materials is concerned, which ones are your favorites and why?

A Steel and glass are the most exciting materials. The lightness and ephemeral quality of spaces which you are able to craft with these materials is unparalleled. There is, however, the aspect of climate which we need to be considered, and there,

brick and terracotta become a perennial favourite. I look forward to the future and think that this century will probably be predominantly the age of aluminum and carbon fibre.

Q Steel construction has several advantages over conventional methods. Could you highlight the same from your own experience?

A Amongst the construction materials for the main frames of the buildings, I have found steel to be most advantageous because it gives fast construction time and comparatively lower level of site activities. Manufacturability of steel as a material is also advantageous, and the ease with which architectural concepts can be realized is also appreciable. The sustainability factor of steel works very much in its favour. The behaviour of steel being much better and more predictable than other materials under seismic loading conditions.

Q As far as structural steel goes, how much flexibility does it offer in terms of design and aesthetics?

A You see any of the designs which inspire - it could be a high rise of this age or the free form shapes which are so popular now - and steel will be the one common link in these. Steel can

be paired with practically any building material - from the ancient brick to new age alloys. The options for the young and the daring in being able to use steel is infinite and enviable.

Q What are the trends that you predict for structural steel among the architectural fraternity in India?

A As timelines shrink and as demands for quality and pressure on costs increase, steel becomes a de-facto option because it is a very versatile and adaptive material. We can use steel in many ways and with many other materials complementing steel. This gives us options in craftsmanship which were never available before. It is one of the oldest material known to humans but in adaptability, strength and utility it is unrivalled and some of the most beautiful designs of this era are all hinged on steel. For the profession, steel will become the 'go to' material of this age.

Q What advice would you give to young architects who are starting out?

A My advice to the young brigade of architects is - be passionate about what you do; practice your skills daily - every single day; read; be a master of your craft; and no matter what the temptation is, be ethical. ■

EACH DESIGN HAS ITS OWN DNA

Steel can be paired with practically any building material - from the ancient brick to new age alloys. The options for the young and the daring in being able to use steel is infinite and enviable, asserts **C. N. SRINIVASAN, MD,** C. R. Narayana Rao Consultants Pvt. Ltd.



Straight Talk