

## Spot Light

# Experiments With Wood

A 15 day Space Making Wood workshop at CEPT University in Ahmedabad brought together 20 craftsmen and 20 designers from all over India. It was organised by DICRC (Design Innovation and Craft Resource Centre).

The participants were asked to use wood as a medium of construction. It was during this workshop,

‘Tie the loose ends and thou shall be protected,’ is what a recent experiment by Rooshad Shroff and Jwalant Mahadevwala seems to exemplify. BY VIKAS BHADRA



Rooshad Shroff along with another facilitator- Jwalant Mahadevwala (and Black Design Studio) designed and manufactured a canopy using left over wooden members within 72 hours.

The idea was to incorporate 100 tapering cylindrical wooden members (2' long / 2" diameter) that had been previously discarded due to

its unaccounted additional weight. The initial thought was to create a canopy that would contradict its inherent heaviness and move away from the linearity of the members to create a surface showcasing the grains of the wood.

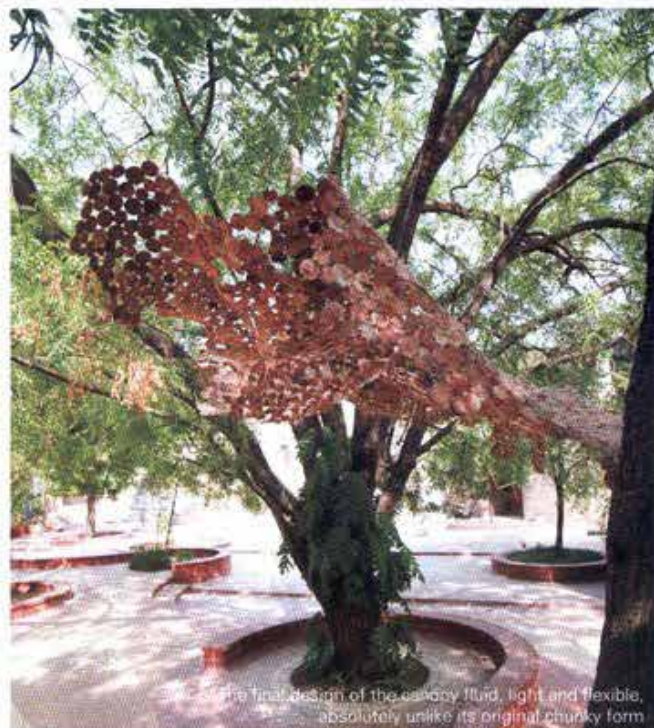
The design proposed was to deconstruct the members by way of slicing each piece - whereby 70



The canopy was made using left-over wooden members within 72 hours

cross sections from each member was utilised to move away from a linear element. Every piece having a unique cross section was individually drilled with six holes along its perimeter and was stitched together using metallic staple pins to form a 'wooden fabric.' The result was a surface like structure that was fluid, light and flexible, absolutely unlike its original chunky form. The beauty of the canopy lies in the fact, that even though it is made out of a rigid material like wood, it is flexible and fluid.

When you ask Rooshad how he managed to pull it off in such a short span of time, pat comes the reply, "We were fortunate to have the support of the dean of the School of Interior Design, Ms. Krishna Shastri, who managed to get hold of nearly 10 students in spite of it being the summer holidays to come and help put the canopy together. As the structure was rather low-tech, it was easy to put together within the



The final design of the canopy fluid, light and flexible, absolutely unlike its original chunky form



was exhausting.”

The canopy is set in the backdrop of a natural system - just like a tree is held together by leaves and branches. Here there is a support system and a level of structural interaction between the two, the canopy inherently

adopts and interprets nature to provide shade and protection.

Sited at the main plaza for the School of Interior Design (SID) within the CEPT campus, Ahmedabad - one look at the canopy and a thought crosses your mind

that it can double up as a hammock, however Rooshad chooses to differ. “If you’re going to be thinking anyway, you might as well think big,” he asserts. “A material such as wood, inherently is a material associated with its hardness, weight etc. The canopy was conceived such that we move away from the preconceived notion of the material to produce something that is more fabric like yet taking advantage of

its strength along the cross section. The challenge to have a fluid like form spanning over a larger area was part of the interest. So to take this further it would be more exciting to us as designers to go larger in scale and address issues of structure and stability than seeing it as a smaller hammock like piece of furniture,” he signs off.

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