

decorama



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DESIGN TALES
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REMEMBERING
ZAHA HADID



Jaipur modern store, designed by Shroff, is a perfect example of traditional craft and contemporary design

MASTER OF THE CRAFTS

Architect and product designer Rooshad Shroff of Rooshad Shroff Architecture + Design talks about his love for traditional craftsmanship and fusion techniques, finds out
NISHA SHUKLA



A multi-disciplinary designer Rooshad Shroff is not only known for fusing traditional craftsmanship with contemporary design, but also for experimenting with different kinds of material and concepts across his field of expertise. He revived the age old practice of craftsmanship in contemporary form and the creations are receiving overwhelming responses across the world.

Born in Mumbai, Shroff pursued his undergraduate degree in Architecture at Cornell University and a Masters at the Graduate School of Design at Harvard University. After completing his studies, Shroff honed his design skills with leading architecture studios including Zaha Hadid in London, and OMA/REX in New York. In the year 2011, Shroff started his own design studio Rooshad Shroff Architecture + Design in Mumbai which marked the beginning of his career. Apart from architectural and design projects the studio also

creates furniture, products and graphic design. Some of his renowned works include C-series, embroidered chairs, sofa and screen and the recently launched white Makrana bulb whereas the interior projects include Jaipur Modern store and Christian Louboutin Store in Mumbai and Bangkok.

The Journey

Reminiscing his childhood memories Shroff said, "I remember visiting my dad's office and see him drawing designs and even during my holidays we used to travel to places around the world, visit museums and look at various designs of the buildings. So in a way there was some kind of subconscious introduction into the design world. I have grown up with designs. So architecture was something that happened organically to me and was not forced by my family."

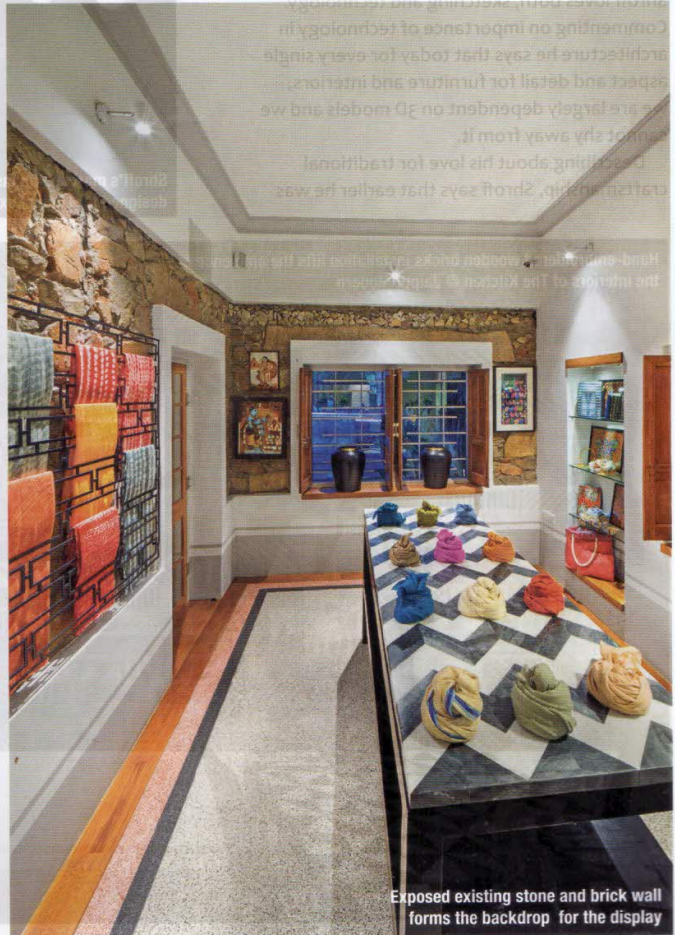
Before moving back to India, he had designed few pieces of furniture for Le Mill, a renowned ecommerce store. Le Mill had then asked him to design a collection for them, which inspired Shroff to start his own practice and it lead to inception of the studio, which will be



Hand embroidered Lotus screen



The African Juju hat adds quirk against the exposed brick wall



Exposed existing stone and brick wall forms the backdrop for the display

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turning five this year.

Talking about his career, Shroff said, "I was lucky to get Christian Louboutin Store in Mumbai as my first project. New York-based firm 212 Box had designed their overseas stores and I was chosen as a local architect for their Mumbai store. They also gave me opportunity to do their Bangkok store for which I was the design architect."

Source of Inspiration

Shroff draws inspiration from number of sources, the primary being travelling. Besides, visiting museums, art exhibition, galleries and seeing works of his peers and contemporaries also inspire him. People and culture too have major impact on his design. Apart from this, Internationally Shroff looks up to the works of Zaha Hadid, Rem Koolhaas, and other contemporaries like Ar. Peter Eisenman, Ar. Inaki Abalos and Ar. Farshid Moussavi etc. On the Indian front, he admires the works of Ar. Bijoy Jain.

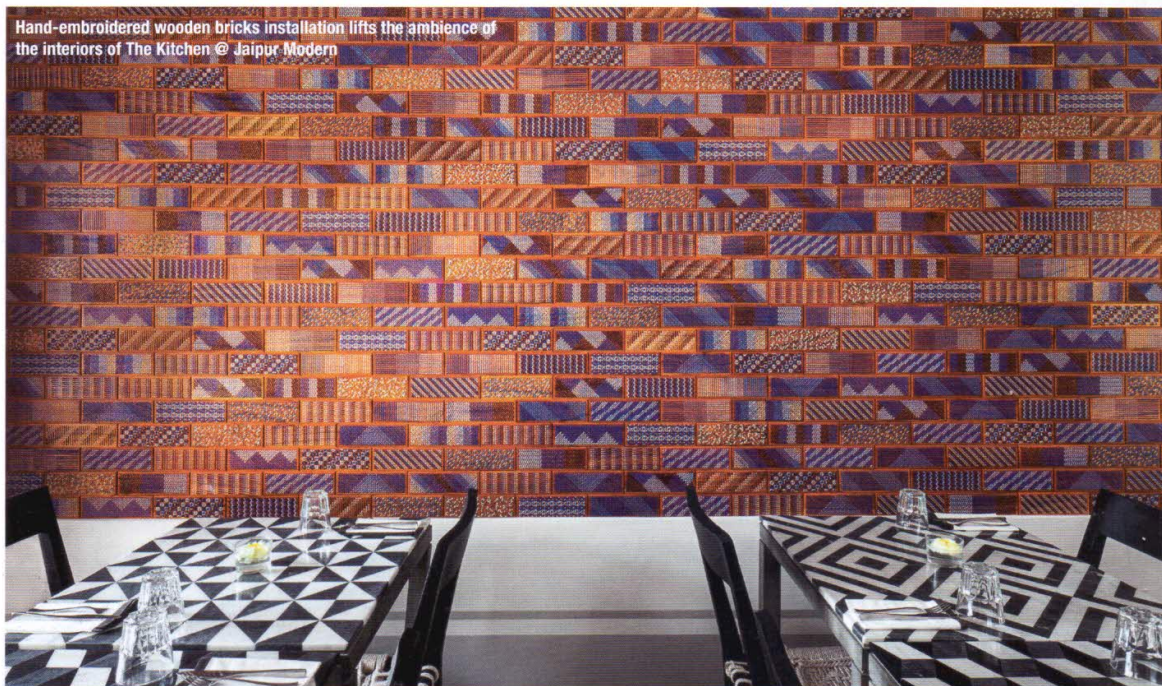
Traditional Craftsmanship

In terms of creating design for his projects, Shroff loves both, sketching and technology. Commenting on importance of technology in architecture he says that today for every single aspect and detail for furniture and interiors, we are largely dependent on 3D models and we cannot shy away from it.

Describing about his love for traditional craftsmanship, Shroff says that earlier he was



Shroff's marble bulb installation exclusively designed for Lodha Luxury Collection at Mumbai



Hand-embroidered wooden bricks installation lifts the ambience of the interiors of The Kitchen @ Jaipur Modern



The charm of traditional craft is dwindling and the only way to sustain that kind of craft is by pushing the limit of craftsmen and by evolving the craft in some form of design which is more contemporary



Shroff's prototype hand-carved with Makrana marble bulbs

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super seduced by the kind of technology, which made him feel a bit shy in terms of practicing craftsmanship. But later he realised that the end product lacks authenticity, as the product is made by machines like CNC and laser cuts and the authenticity of the author is lost. After days of research, Shroff with help of one of his friends, conceptualised and crafted the embroidery furniture and screens, which saw revival of craftsmanship and interesting technique of using wood with embroidery. "The charm of traditional craft is dwindling and the only way to sustain that kind of craft is by pushing the limit of craftsmen and by making the craft in some form of design which is more contemporary," explains Shroff.

Projects and Innovations

The multifaceted designer is busy with a number of projects including a recently launched carpet collection for Cascan Rugs,

three residential projects and a patisserie in Mumbai, three luxury retail stores in Dubai, a restaurant project in Paris and an architecture project (Jai Lodge) in Japan. He is also involved in designing furniture and bespoke pieces, window displays for Hermès, windows for Dubai's luxury label called 'Private Collection' for their six stores spread across UAE. Apart from this, he has recently launched the unique white Makrana marble bulbs, which are hand carved by artisans from Jaipur. Each bulb has a different carving inspired by crystal glass patterns which in turn creates varied lighting effects by enabling light to pass through the carved textures differently. This unique bulb has been used for Ludia Alamoort project. When asked about his other interests, Shroff jokingly says, "My work doesn't allow me the luxury of relaxing and spending me time. But if I do, I like sleeping. Besides I also like swimming, exercising and having no phone by my side." ☺