

SHANTI SADAN

DIVYA ETHIRAJAN & PRAMOD JAISWAL



Nature begets spirituality and so most religious centres are ensconced amidst nature. Shanti Sadan is a place for worship and for service. The spatial planning of this facility, the materials used in the construction and the simple form that defines this building are all a reflection of the austere life of the nuns of this community.

The site had a two-storeyed structure adjacent to an existing hospice, which had become weak due to disrepair and age. It could no longer accommodate the current and future needs of the congregation. Hence, the Sisters of St. Ann, Luzern in Mysore invited us to design a new facility. Our approach to this project was to understand the semiotics associated with religious architecture and separate it from the pervasive image of what architectural forms and shapes define a specific religion.

Programmatically, the building has two important parts: The accommodation facility and the Chapel. The first part consisted of a dormitory, a few bedrooms, a classroom, an office, dining and kitchen facility are all clubbed together in a linear arrangement over two floors, whereas the Chapel has been detached from the main block and pulled out into the greenery around. Metaphorically, this arrangement helped in detaching oneself from the worldly affairs while in the place of worship.

The aesthetics of the building drew its inspirations from Buddhist caves at Ajanta with vaulted ceiling and apsi-

dal plan of the Durga temple at Aihole; the Buddhist caves at Ajanta and the typical Byzantine, Romanesque and Gothic church plans. The two-storeyed linear mass on the northern side has an RCC vault roof finished in China mosaic to reflect the summer heat. This not only creates a more heightened spatial experience as is suitable for religious buildings, but also keeps the interior cool with a high ceiling, and also allows to accommodate the bunker beds in the dormitory.

Spatially, the double-storeyed linear mass is connected in the rear to the single-storey programme in the foreground through two small courtyards. These are the pause points in this small building and also allow cross ventilation. The linearity of the vaulted roof is punctuated by the verticality of two towers— a small one over the Chapel, more symbolic in nature and another in front of the vault roof which in fact is an overhead water tank. The second tower was deliberately given a certain mass to impart to it the significance of a typical church spire.

The entire southern façade has an apron of intricate lacing of bricks. The brick screen shields the habitable spaces from the southern sun and affords a sublime visual experience at the entrance. The brick screen wraps around the Chapel defining the passage leading to the sacristy where the priests get ready before entering the Chapel. The entire construction is load-bearing, which helped in a significant saving on the cost of concrete and steel.



Captions





GROUND FLOOR PLAN



Captions





Between Spaces at Bangalore was founded in 2010 by Ar. Divya Ethirajan and Ar. Pramod Jaiswal. They have won the IA&B Young Designers Award 2016 in the architecture category and NDTV Design and Architecture Awards 2015 for office interior category. The studio interior also won IIID Anchor Awards 2015 for small office category. Their work expresses their belief in architecture as a conversation, a dialogue between spaces. The making of these spaces through simple strategies of orientation, scale, volume, proportion, spatial and material manipulations and manipulation of light to get these unique spaces forms the core of their practice.



Ar. Divya Ethirajan graduated from R.V. College of Engineering, Bangalore. Divya has interned with Arya Architects in Ahmedabad and continued working there after her graduation and thereafter with Hundred Hands from 2006 to 2010.

Ar. Pramod Jaiswal graduated from Bangalore Institute of Technology, Bangalore. He trained under V.K. Giridhar and worked with Hundred Hands from 2005 to 2011 where he worked on some of the award-winning projects and competition projects.

