

Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya at Sabarmati Ashram, Ahmedabad

1958-1963

Architect Charles Correa (1930-)

Background

Gandhi resided at the Sabarmati Ashram from 1917 to 1930. He began, as a protest on British salt tax, the Salt March to Dandi in March of 1930 from there. The community is made up of the main ashram pavilion, two guest houses, an open prayer ground, and a museum. Handcrafted paper and fabric are produced here and are a main attraction for tourists. Charles Correa's design for this "memorial institution" of Mahatma Gandhi was designed and built there from 1958 to 1963. Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first prime minister, inaugurated the building. It preserves and makes available tens of thousands of books and documents concerning Gandhi, his philosophies, and India's independence.



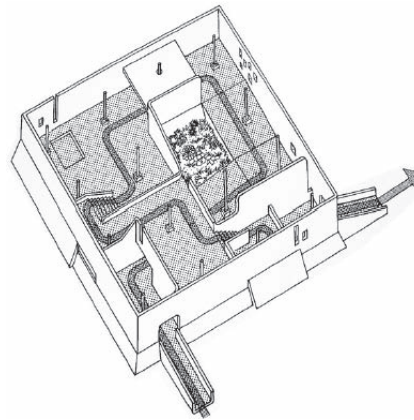
Location

The Sabarmati Ashram is located along the west bank of the Sabarmati River on Ashram Road, in the north of the city. It can be reached by busses heading north from the center on R C Road (Wadaj bus stop is approx. 1.5 km from the Ashram). Open everyday 8:30 to 12:00 and 14:00 to 19:00.

Context

Charles Correa, born in India's Goan region, attended the University of Michigan and MIT from 1949 to 1955. His work may be understood like that of Oscar Niemeyer. They were both sympathetic to European modernism, and when they returned to their native countries, were interested in adapting the movement to local situations. Correa's work is recognized both locally and worldwide as an innovative and refreshing synthesis of this combination.

Correa's office's first project was the Handloom Pavilion, designed and built in six months in 1958. Constructed of brick, mud, wood, and handloom fabric, the project showed



Axonometric floor plan of Handloom Pavilion



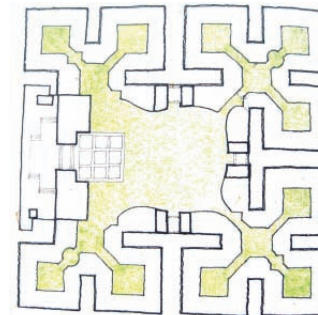
Interior photograph of Handloom Pavilion, 1958, Delhi

Correa's eagerness to adapt Modernist form to local materials and spatial ideas.

The Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya and Correa's later projects provide example of combining the Hindu architectural/cosmological idea of isotropy and Modernist functional planning. The concept of isotropy (similar to fractals) refers to an infinitely scaleable structure and can be seen in the repetition and manipulation of the decorative elements in Hindu temples. In the Smarak Sangrahalaya, the modular pavilion unit is designed for easy extension and emphasizes the accumulation of a single element to make a whole. Correa placed five distinctly



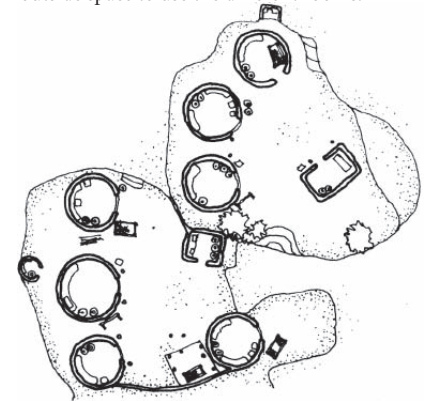
Kandariya Mahadeva Temple, 1050, Madhya Pradesh



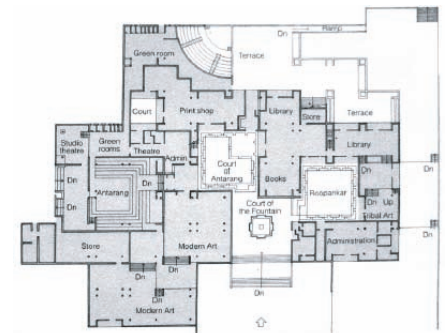
Urban module plan for New Bagalkot Township, 1970s

programmed interior spaces within the asymmetrical grid plan.

The plan of the museum has also been compared to village houses in India's Banni region. Instead of a single volume, the houses consist of five huts each with a different function, which surround to make a courtyard. The inhabitants walk back and forth across the outside space to use the different rooms.



House plan in Banni village



Bharat Bhavan community art center, 1982, Bhopal

Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya at Sabarmati Ashram, Ahmedabad

Spaces

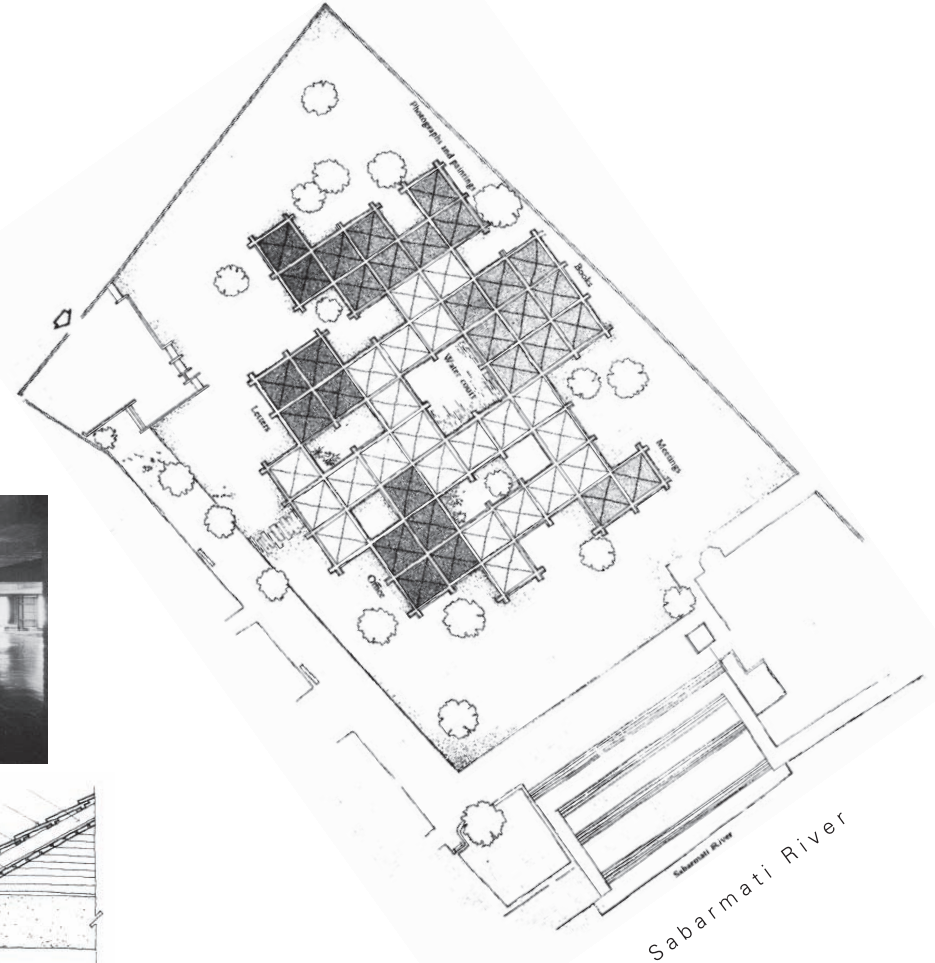
The site on the Sabarmati River bank is part of the larger ashram complex and is integrated into its gardens.

Five interior rooms contain the collection of the museum. The rooms are enclosed by brick walls and wooden louvered screens. All five rooms are part of the 6m square module. Correa's subtle changes of the

enclosure allow for variety in the module's lighting, temperature, and visual permeability. A square, uncovered shallow pool is located between the five rooms.



- 1 Letters
- 2 Office
- 3 Meetings
- 4 Books
- 5 Photos and paintings



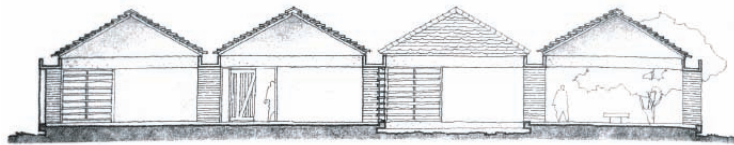
Construction

The museum uses a simple but delicately detailed post and beam structure. Load bearing brick columns support concrete channels, which are both support the wooden roof and direct rainwater. Boards are nailed underneath the joists and tiles are placed atop the joints. The foundation is concrete and is raised about a foot from the ground.

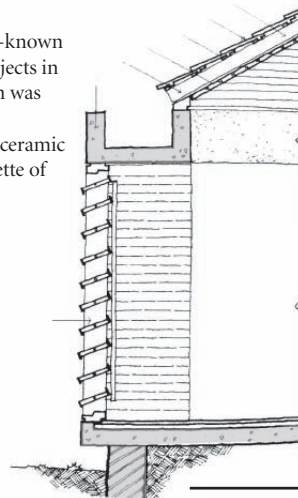
structure of the museum recalls the well-known work of Louis Kahn, who began two projects in the region shortly after Correa's museum was built.

Wooden doors, stone floors, ceramic tile roofs, and brick columns are the palette of the building.

The monumental and archetypal



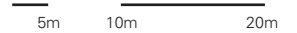
5m



1m



Site plan



References
 Charles Correa. London: Thames & Hudson, 1996.
 Charles Correa. Singapore: Ahimar Book, 1984.
 Charles Correa Associates. <<http://www.charlescorrea.net>>.

Indian Institute of Management

Ahmedabad, India

Architects: Louis I. Kahn,
Balkrishna V. Doshi, National
Institute of Design

Commision: November 1962
Design: 1963-70
Completion: 1974

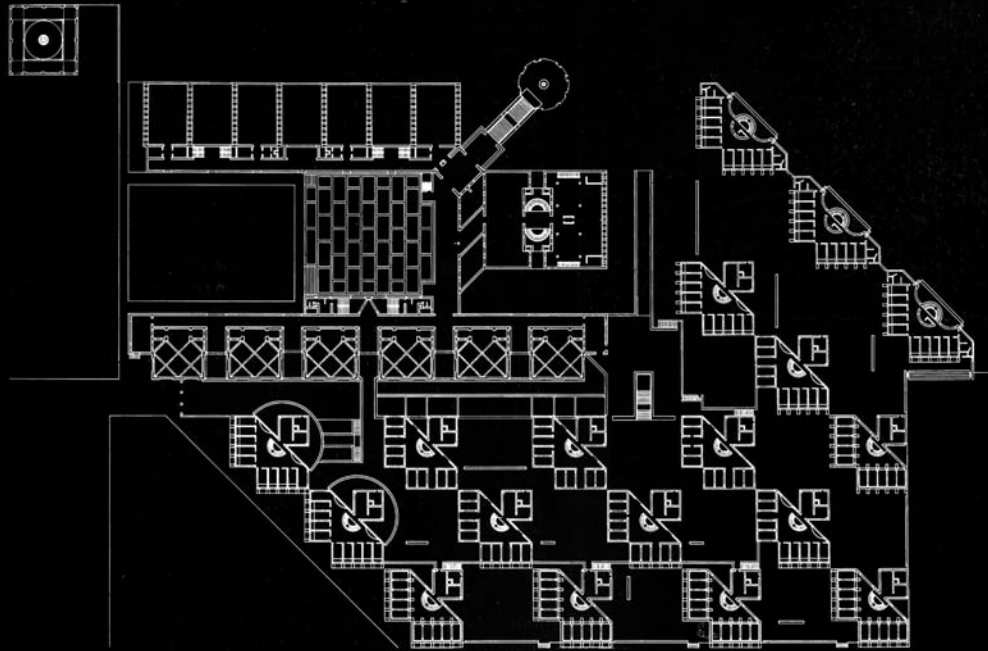
Client: IIM (Joint Venture:
Government of India, State of
Gujarat, Indian Business Com-
munity, and the Ford Founda-
tion)

General Description:

The IIM consists of class-
rooms, faculty offices, and
a library surrounding a main
courtyard and dormitory wings
organized at 45 degrees.

Louis Kahn states: "Orienta-
tion to wind and shade from
sun has given architectural
elements to the composition;"
each dorm room has a screen
porch that overlooks a court-
yard. These many fragmen-
tations lead Kahn to call this
"a building within a building:
one open to sun, the other to
life." Built out of concrete and
brick, Kahn describes: "the
plan comes from my feelings of
monastery," and feels the dor-
mitories proximity to the school
as similar to Harvard Business
School.

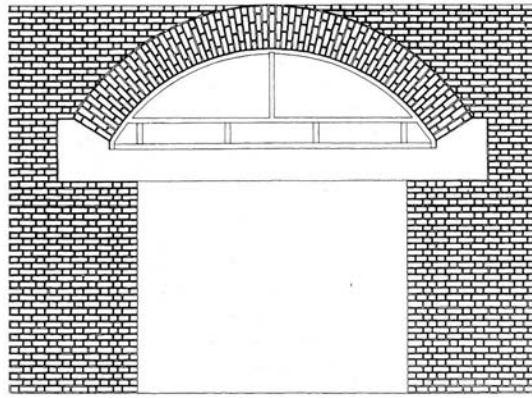
This building is part of
a 100 acre campus that also
included buildings by Doshi
and Anant Raje. The Institute,
in the Vastrapur section of
Ahmedabad, attracts the best
business students in India.



Plan

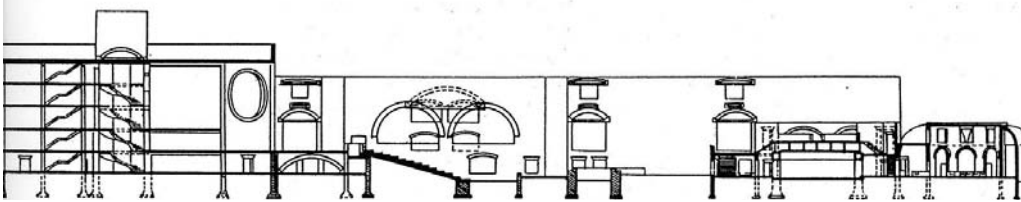
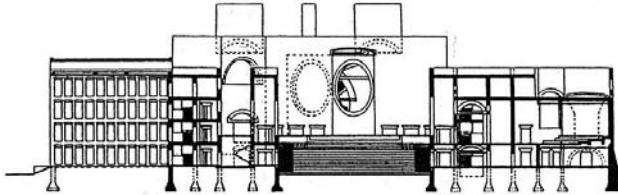
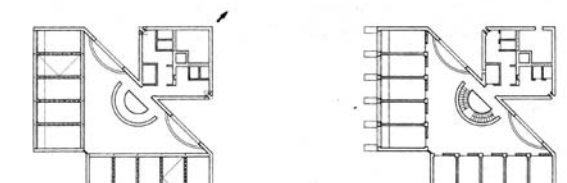
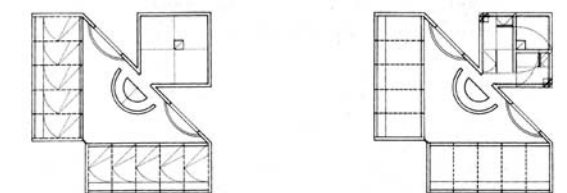
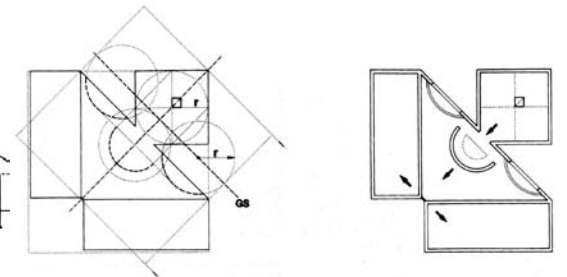
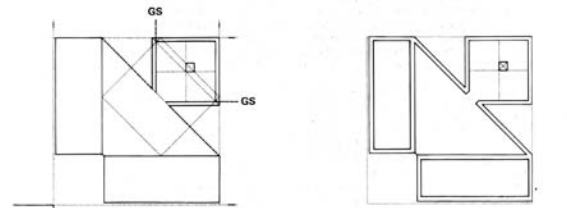
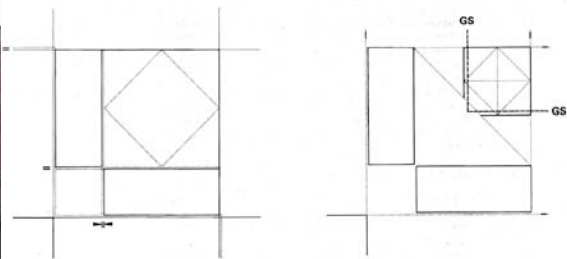
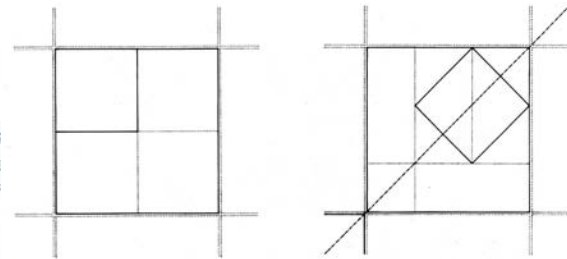
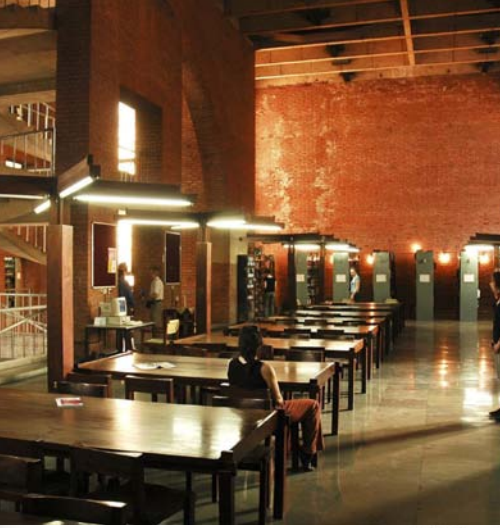
"The Fullness of air, so welcome, is always present as the basis for
architectural shapes"-Louis Kahn





I use the square to begin my solutions because the square is a non-choice, really. In the course of development, I search for the forces that would disprove the square"-Louis Kahn

Diagram of Dormitory Wing



Sections through main plaza

Additional reading:

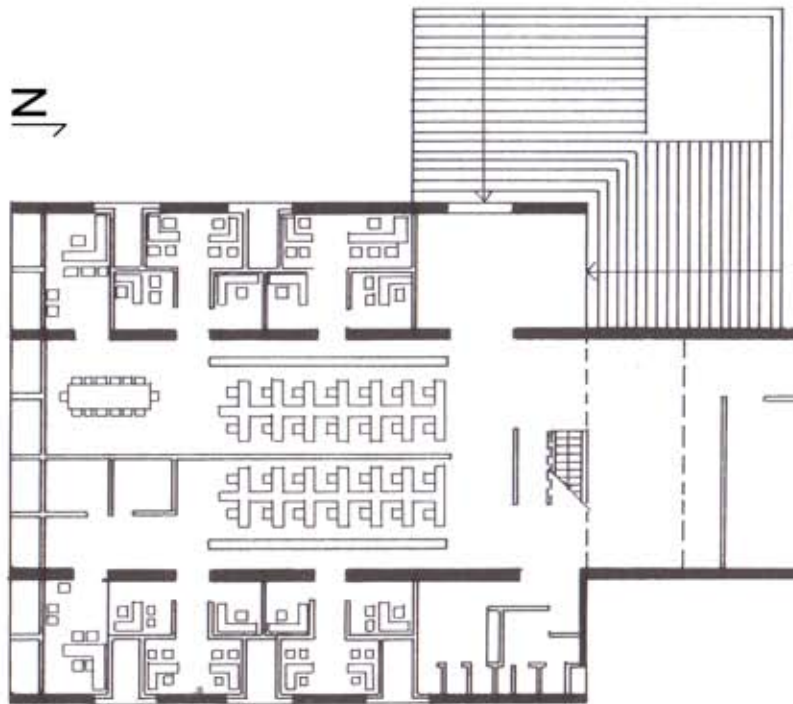
The Louis I. Kahn Archive: Personal Drawings, Garland Architectural Archives, Alexander Tzonis, Editor: 1987, New York.

Louis I. Kahn: Complete Work: 1935-1974. Heinz Ronner and Shad Jhaveri. Birkhauser: 1987, Boston.

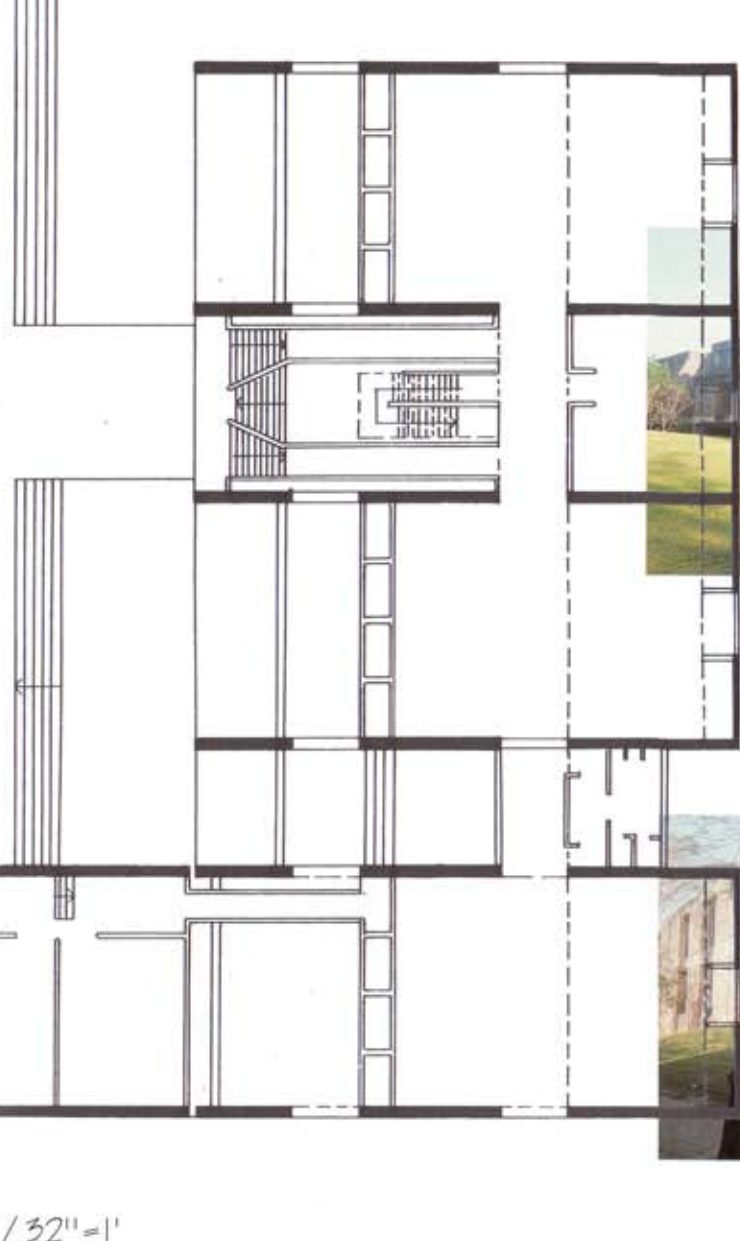
Louis I. Kahn: The Idea of Order. Klaus-Peter Gast. Birkhauser: 1998, Boston.

Balkrishna Doshi
School of Architecture, Gujarat University
Ahmedabad, 1968

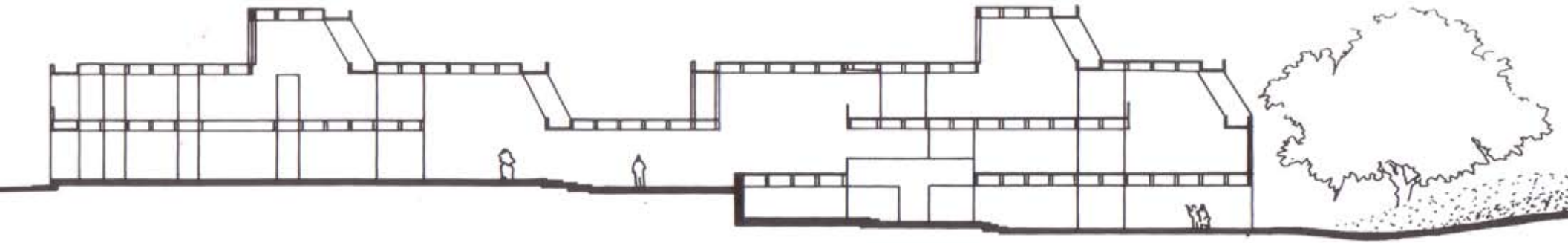
Doshi's concept for the School of Architecture was to create "an open place with hardly any doors." The l-shaped plan is configured around parallel bearing walls on a north-south axis to direct prevailing breezes through the building. The short, solid elevations face the hotter east-west axis. The hard-surfaced plaza draws cool air from the garden by convection into the shaded, open classrooms.



Scale: 1/32" = 1'



North-facing, angled glass monitors capture light and bring it into the studios below. In contrast, the south face is clad in brise-soleil which shade the side of the building and the rooms within.





Plain brick walls meet over-hanging slabs and verandahs based upon concrete cantilevers. The materials were selected to be cheap and easy to maintain. The bricks have suffered from the hot, humid climate, but the concrete has held up well.

Doshi wanted the students and faculty to have "free scope to learn and teach anywhere" and "no feeling of restriction to the exchange of ideas." These outdoor classrooms facilitate the easy transfer of information when interior conditions become too oppressive. Doshi also sought to activate the "spaces between." The steps in the plaza and the north-south corridor allow free movement and join disparate places.



See: [Rethinking Modernism for the Developing World: the Complete Architecture of Balkrishna Doshi](#) by James Steele

[Balkrishna Doshi: an Architecture for India](#) by William J.R. Curtis

[Ecological Architecture: a Critical History](#) by James Steele