

Bharat Diamond Bourse- Phase II



CSA Partners Ltd.
Architects & Urban Designers



Context: The Bharat Diamond Bourse project has its inception in the late 1980's and the early 1990's. The invited competition eventually led to the selection of Balkrishna Doshi as the architect for the project.

In his Jerusalem lecture, Doshi says that he visited the tower of David and thought about the parallel ideas of a citadel, which would also work well for the needs of the Bharat Diamond Bourse, but this also ties into the idea that Mumbai at one point also had a bastion called 'Fort'.

A review of his plan reveals the concept as a series of fingers or ridges traced in the sand. This is, in his mind, a metaphor for the 7 islands of Mumbai that were rock or crystal formations; it resembles the form of a diamond and the valleys or courtyards formed transpose the figure ground relationship; so relevant in Hindu and Jain philosophy of 'material and nothingness in juxtaposition'.

What is even interesting is that Doshi has created a spur from the seventh ridge to perhaps connote an eighth arm. This, one can conjecture, is not accidental, but intentional as reflection of 'Mumba Aai'. The presiding Goddess of Mumbai who

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Top: Aerial View at Dusk

Project Data:

Building type
Corporate-Diamond Bourse
Sustainability/LEED

Location

Mumbai, India

Site Area

850,000 sf

Project Area

1,700,000 sf

Client

Bharat Diamond Bourse

Completion Year

Currently on hold

Construction Cost

N/A

Client Satisfaction through Design Excellence

Bharat Diamond Bourse

saved the city by vanquishing demons.

Architecturally, Doshi has given his buildings an east west orientation by rotating them 45 degrees to the angles of the binding streets. This stems from numerous precedents and requirements.

- a) The lease depths had to be small due to an industry requirement in the 1990's for natural lighting
- b) All the finger buildings tried to take advantage of north light
- c) Doshi, like his guru Le Corbusier, perhaps believed that the 'heliothermic axis' orientation improved the quantum of natural light in spaces.

Concept: Metaphor & Architecture

Our concept truly tries to 'crown the jewel'. In the following paragraphs we will clearly identify how and why we maintain our roots, and yet bring you a truly unique concept that merges the values of the east with the efficiencies of the west.

Our concept proposes to complete the courtyard by inserting almost transparent rectangular buildings in each void. These buildings are open slabs from end to end with no obstruction of cores such that they emphasize a sense of openness and nothingness. These also permit tenants to have maximum space flexibility efficiency. Our lease depths vary between 9.0m and 12.0m thereby ensuring all Class A space.

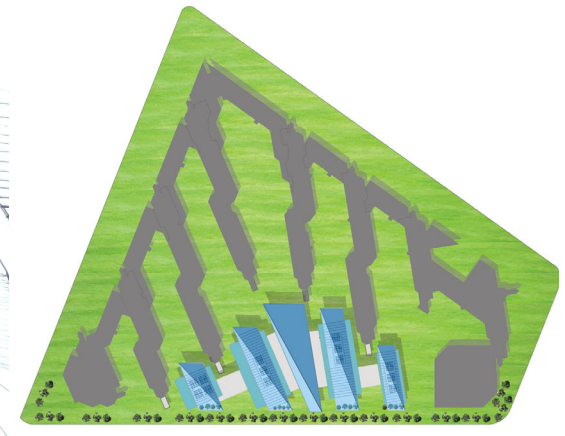
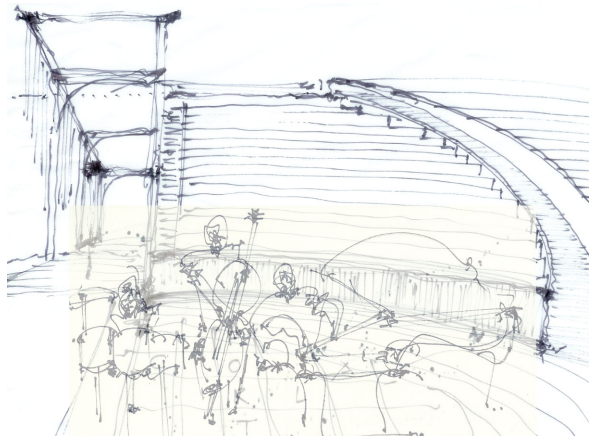
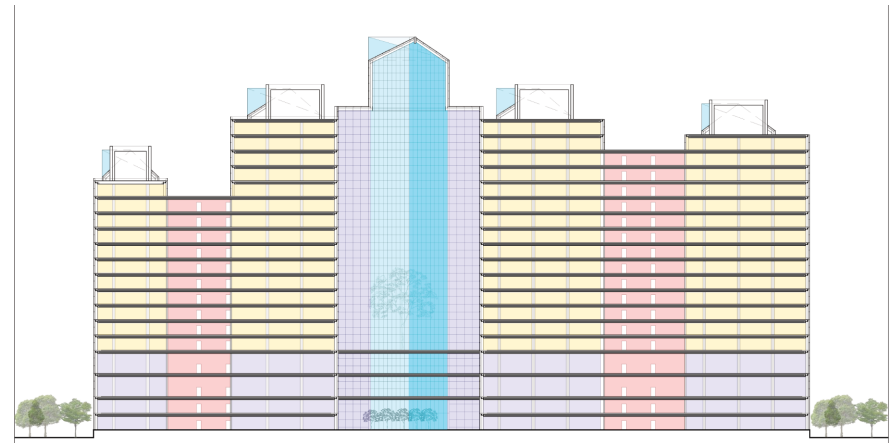
Where the fingers of the existing buildings come through, we have located our new cores and services such that conceptual clarity is maintained. In addition, this permits tying in of the old cores with the new, thereby providing ease of potential human flow through the complex. These five buildings act as jewels on a ring that crown and complete the diamond.

We have maintained the angular rhythms and structural grids of Doshi's complex trying to emphasize the unity of the pro-

Top: Floor Plan and Schematic Section

Bottom R : Site Plan

Bottom L: Sketch for one of the theaters



Bharat Diamond Bourse



ject in context but also to try and coordinate with the existing column grids in the basement. This helps avoid many conflicts with parking in the basement.

The complex as we know it is lacking in one key element and that is gardens. Gardens hold both a metaphorical and environmental value. We have created 'elevated hanging gardens every 4-5 floors which can be enjoyed both individually and collectively by the tenants. In terms of sustainable design these gardens act as sun shading devices, stack effect promoters and as convective air channels, as well as 'oxygenators' for the complex. These gardens are like crystals that are irrigated with residual water from the mechanical systems on the roof. More importantly these gardens can be visually enjoyed by the entire complex both inside and out. In addition to the above features we have created a large atrium in the central building that has a stack effect and can have additional garden balconies within. This permits and encourages ventilation in natural mode if so required, humidity permitting.

In essence, we have tried to maintain a few core principals in our concept. We believe this concept is

- Simple and humble in its form, yet powerful in its visual essence
- a design that changes from an accoutrement to something mainstream it becomes a catalyst for dwelling or as we know it 'Rit' in India
- That this design embraces the values of the east with the efficiencies of the west.

Intent and Recognition: Winner invited design competition among a list of 10 national and international architects.



Top L: Lobby View

Top & Mid R: Garden Perspectives and Phase 1 proposal

Team

Cyrus Subawalla - Principal Designer
Sangwan Seo - Project Principal

Consultants

Structural: Conceptual & Review
Thornton Tomassetti Inc

MEP/FP: Conceptual & Review
Environmental Systems Design

Structural & MEP/FP Design Development & Build
Larsen & Toubro LNT-EDRC; L&T (ECC)

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