

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ELLE DECOR brings you more in-depth articles and insights into design, decor and culture. Introducing our special contributors –



ALICE CICOLINI

WHO Director Arts and Culture, British Council India, Alice heads the organisation's Innovation Economy programme. She curates international design exhibitions, including Global Local and a show of contemporary Indian design which profiled at the V&A in London. She has also published *The New English Dandy* with Thames & Hudson in 2005.

IN THIS ISSUE Alice introduces us to the British Council IYDEY winners of 2007 on page 82



MALAVIKA SANGHVI

WHO Lifestyle and Travel Editor of DNA newspaper, she has also authored a book of poems; another one on Mumbai's iconic women, and recently edited a book "The Making of Samovar". She lives with her 17 year old son Roaj in the same flat she grew up in, in Mumbai.

IN THIS ISSUE Enter her private world in Small Treasures on page 170



MAITHILI AHLUWALIA

WHO Creative director and CEO of lifestyle store Bungalow 8. This 29-year-old moved back to India after having lived in the West for 10 years and had her first self-proclaimed epiphany when she set up her own company at 25. Turned off by bling, bad taste and oversized egos, she tries not to take herself too seriously! But when it does get too serious, she escapes to her house in Nandgaon.

IN THIS ISSUE Read her review in I Love This Book on page 114



PRASHANT CHAUHAN

WHO Passionate about and challenged by designing products, web sites, greeting cards and interiors of homes, he admits he's a workaholic by nature. "Forget and Create," is the mantra that drives his design firm Zero9. Also Zen has opened up a whole new meaning of life for him.

IN THIS ISSUE Prashant walks us through his home-cum-office in A Balancing Act on page 150

A BALANCING ACT

With a little bit of creativity and some Zen philosophy, architect Prashant Chauhan's compact apartment efficiently alternates between a minimalistic residence and a spacious office

TEXT BY PRASHANT CHAUHAN PHOTOGRAPHY BY NRUPEN MADHVANI



Zen philosophy permeates the entire space and the pebbles symbolising balance are placed strategically around the house. Here they rest on a Wenge laminated work table and reflect in a custom-made glass whiteboard

Light Customised wooden blinds hang in the unfinished kadappa window. Niches in the wall accommodate candles from Trésorie, stone bowl and Buddha head candle from Silver Oak. Wooden bowl from Trésorie filled with locally sourced pebbles sits on unfinished kadappa floor



DESIGN TIPS

Neutral coloured flooring gives an illusion of space, as the eye does not rest on any particular feature

Broadened window ledges make perfect seating options

Wall recessed niches for accessories add storage space without clutter

DESIGN TIPS

Visually arresting graphics and the texture of unfinished flooring alternately excite and soothe tired senses as does the cast in situ kotali stone basin. Full length mirror in shower area adds depth to the tiny space.

A flexible sofa cum bed allows the party room to turn into a bedroom in no time.

The full length mirror in the shower area reflects the graphic door of the bathroom. A milky white acrylic ceiling provides diffused light. The wall is covered with grooved tiles and the flooring is black kadappa. Niches in the unfinished grey kotali column held bath products.

Right The chipped black kadappa window seat complements the unfinished kotali flooring. Vase from Contemporary Arts and Crafts, beige cotton and leather cushions rest on the floor next to the couch covered in fabric from FabIndia. In the niche, a pair of wooden candlestands with brass inlays.



**DESIGN TIPS**

The glass whiteboard serves two purposes – it covers stored clutter while being a handy tool during discussions. The softboard is both decorative and functional.

Work benches that double as dining seats are easy on the eye. Their clean lines make the space seem even more expansive.



In the hustle-bustle of a city, travelling to work and back home is an extra activity that eats up a valuable amount of time and energy. Architect Prashant Chandan operates his design firm ZERO9 from his studio apartment in the midst of the city, thus managing to cut the craze of commuting and recharge his creativity.

A small one-bedroom-hall-kitchen apartment carved out to fit this architect's requirements, marks his sense of planning and practicality flavoured with a Zen style approach to living. He takes ELLE DECOR on a tour of his home-office.

THE APPROACH

At the entrance, fresh aroca palms welcome you. A mosaic of stone samples adds interest below the vinyl lettering nameplate.

WORK SPACE

A large print of my favourite religious icon Sai Baba and an ode to him is the first sight that greets you once you walk into my apartment. The kotah floor generates the sensitivity of being basic and connected to earth. Diffused lights for the workspace from the ceiling form an ambient lighting, and very well carved out storage space covered with frosted glass gets into the white paint.

The dining-cum-discussion desk is complemented with a glass whiteboard that I use

for illustrations during creative discussions. The benches at the discussion table double up as a centre table for the window seat. Around the low height window seating, with the morning light painting the space dynamically, a lovely breakfast tastes even better.

THE KITCHEN

The kitchen is great as a small pantry for light cooking. Ample overhead storage makes life simpler for practical purposes.

THE RESTROOM

I've followed a modest design language here with unfinished kadappah flooring, white pyramid tiles and unfinished kotah stone. Mirrors make the space look bigger. The hidden loft above the restroom accommodates the storage water tank and hidden lighting with a matt milky white acrylic sheet screen. The graphics of a nude woman on the theme of inspiration – a divine guidance creates a shock value for a first timer. Music always fills this space.

THE BEDROOM

A lounge during the day opens up as a huge 7' x 7' bed at night. The home theatre setup corners in handy with a neatly demarcated space for DVDs, books and a minibar. The unfinished kotah flooring soothes my senses after a tiring day. The window seat is special – that's where I unwind. ♦

Above A glass whiteboard in the creative area. Above it, one of Prashant's favourite pictures, taken at one of their sites. On the right, a softboard of beige fabric.

Above Right Close up of custom made kotah washbasin under wall mirror with vinyl lettering. In the bathroom, the soap dispenser from Alla mimics the tile design. Wooden towel stand is from Tresorie.

Left The entrance has stone samples embedded in the wall below the nameplate. Bespoke Wenge laminated table and benches in the workspace. Religious text on wall mounted sunboard.