

School of Planning and Architecture (SPA) Vijayawada
Department of Architecture

Konkan Architecture and Cultural Settlements: A Fabric of Udupi's Heritage and Its Communal Spaces.....

B. Arch 2nd year (IV-Sem) A & B Sections
Architectural Design Studio: 2024-25 SPA,
Vijayawada

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The mother art is architecture. Without an architecture of our own, we have no soul of our own civilization.....
Architect Frank Lloyd Wright.

Studio Objective

The objectives of this studio are four fold. The first objective is to expose the students to the opportunities and challenges of designing in a rural environment. The second objective is to sensitize the students to space-specific contextual factors in designing; the third objective is to sensitize the students to the special needs of the differently able people, suffering from various types of physical limitations, as they negotiate the built environment. The fourth objective is to enable the students apply theoretical knowledge learnt in the previous semester in architectural design exercise.

Overview

This Studio combines analysis and observation of non-urban settings and socio-cultures with a design project set along the development axis of Udupi of the Konkan region in Karnataka. Its goals are to equip students with the skills to see and interpret the public realm as they develop processes for designing exchange/convention/ hospitality to hold physical form and human activity. The Studio also seeks to enable designers to communicate their ideas through graphic and verbal means that are understandable and compelling to project stakeholders, panchayat, NGOs, and rural public agencies who will determine the outcomes of the design process.

The semester consists of the following activities:

1. Research and analysis of settlement site area: in and around Udipi, Karnataka
2. Identifying precedents and design themes
3. Developing the design project

The Studio's theme is 'The Communal Spaces through its non-urban context and the opportunities for forms of conventions or interpretation spaces that respond to its context. By analyzing the essential link between culture, environment, and architecture, this attempt seeks to contribute to the sustainable development of Konkan communal spaces, placemaking ensuring that future generations inherit a landscape where tradition and modernity coexist harmoniously.

Introduction

The Konkan region, nestled along the western coastline of India, is a treasure trove of cultural diversity and architectural brilliance. The Proposed studio delves into the unique world of Konkan coastal architecture and cultural settlements specific to Udipi and its region in Karnataka, aiming to reveal the rich textile of cultural heritage while exploring spatial strategies for sustainable development in this ecologically sensitive area.

Background (Brief)

With its lush landscapes, vibrant communities, and proximity to the Arabian Sea, Konkan has created a distinctive architectural and cultural identity. The region's historical settlements and structures witness a harmonious coexistence with nature, making Konkan an ideal case study for understanding the interconnectedness of architecture, culture, and social environment.

Study Objectives:

1. Historical evolution of Konkan coastal architecture specific to the Udipi region
2. Analyzing the role of community engagement and the factors of cultural settlements within the Konkan region.
3. Propose strategies for preserving and adapting traditional architectural communal spaces in the face of modern challenges within the context area chosen.
4. Designing feasible and appropriate community architectural spaces through the detailed design program.

Key Study Components:

- a) **Architectural Heritage of Konkan:** Explore the distinctive features of Konkan architecture, including Konkan-style houses, settlement patterns, cultural origins and spatial configurations, temples, shared spaces, and forts. Examine the influence of historical events, trade, and cultural exchanges on architectural styles.
- b) **Environmental & Ecological Challenges in Konkan:** Investigate the vulnerability of Konkan coastal areas to factors like socio-cultural distractions, Image and Identity losses, Flora & Fauna, trade-commerce, sea-level rise, monsoons, and erosion (*Lighter observation*). Discuss the impact of changing ecological patterns on traditional settlements.
- c) **Cultural Preservation:**
 - The design project is aimed at preserving Konkan's cultural heritage. Highlight the importance of documentation, conservation, and revitalization of traditional Konkan settlements.
 - Propose innovative architectural solutions to address derived challenges while preserving Konkan's cultural identity.
 - Exploring the integration of eco-friendly materials, energy-efficient designs, and traditional

construction techniques.

- d) **Sustainable Adaptations:** Strengthened community engagement in design to safeguard Konkan's cultural legacy while designing.
- e) **Scale and Proportions:** All kinds of spatial qualities and accepted built forms to be understood.

Goal & Scope

The goal and the scope of the project will be to encourage a comprehensive, integrated approach to assess and develop the rural community scale of conventions, social events, etc., specific to the Udipi region context as Barur, Barkur, Mattur, Agumbe & BB street along with Hasta Shilpa, Kala village.

Methodology:

- Exploring and decoding the literature case areas across contexts and developing a structure of rural fabrics' study components, scale, capacities, and typologies.
- Conduct on-site case study and analysis of Konkan community architectural patterns and structures. (Socio-Spatial, Economical-spatial, Environmental – spatial Interrelationships)
- Folk, Ethnicity, Cultural Taboos, Kith and Kinships and Spatial Configurations
- Aesthetics and Art forms layered within their architectural patterns.
- Collaborate with local historians, architects, and community elders to intervene in the insights.
- Participate in the preservation dialogue with local communities and explore the traditional practices, architectural manifestations, materiality, and sustainability.

Studio Phases

The studio works will be executed in the following broad and overlapping phases: (*Tentative*)

1. Identification of research needs and design themes combined with Explorative Assignments (Warm-up Assignments, Debates and Conversation forums): **(02-19) Jan 2024**
2. Identification & Approval of Case Study Components along with all standards/ guidelines... and preparations towards Udipi region in Karnataka: **(25-26) January 2024.**
3. Conducting Case studies (Including Travel and Accommodation): **(07-18) February 2024.**
4. Submission of All works of case studies and analytical sheets: **01 March 2024. (Mid Sem Marking)**
5. Findings and Inferences: **(7-8) March 2024.**
6. Articulation of design goals and preliminary concepts: **(14-15) March 2024**
7. Design development: **(21-22) March 2024**
8. Design resolution: **(04-05) April 2024**
9. Design presentation: **(11-12) April 2024**

References

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