

# THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

# ar

**1363** SEPTEMBER 2010 £9 / €17 / US\$25 [WWW.ARCHITECTURAL-REVIEW.COM](http://WWW.ARCHITECTURAL-REVIEW.COM)

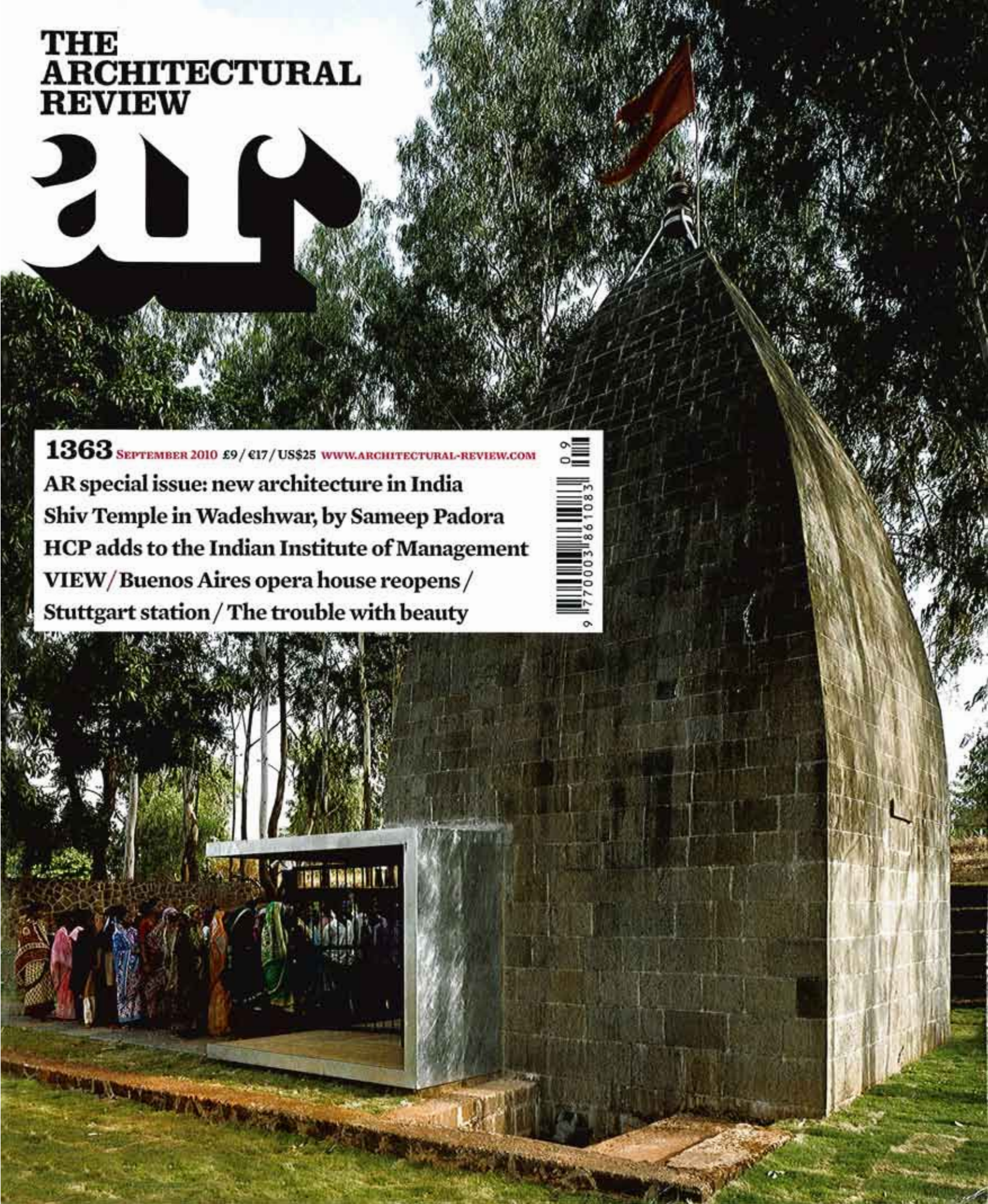
**AR special issue: new architecture in India**

**Shiv Temple in Wadeshwar, by Sameep Padora**

**HCP adds to the Indian Institute of Management**

**VIEW/ Buenos Aires opera house reopens /**

**Stuttgart station / The trouble with beauty**



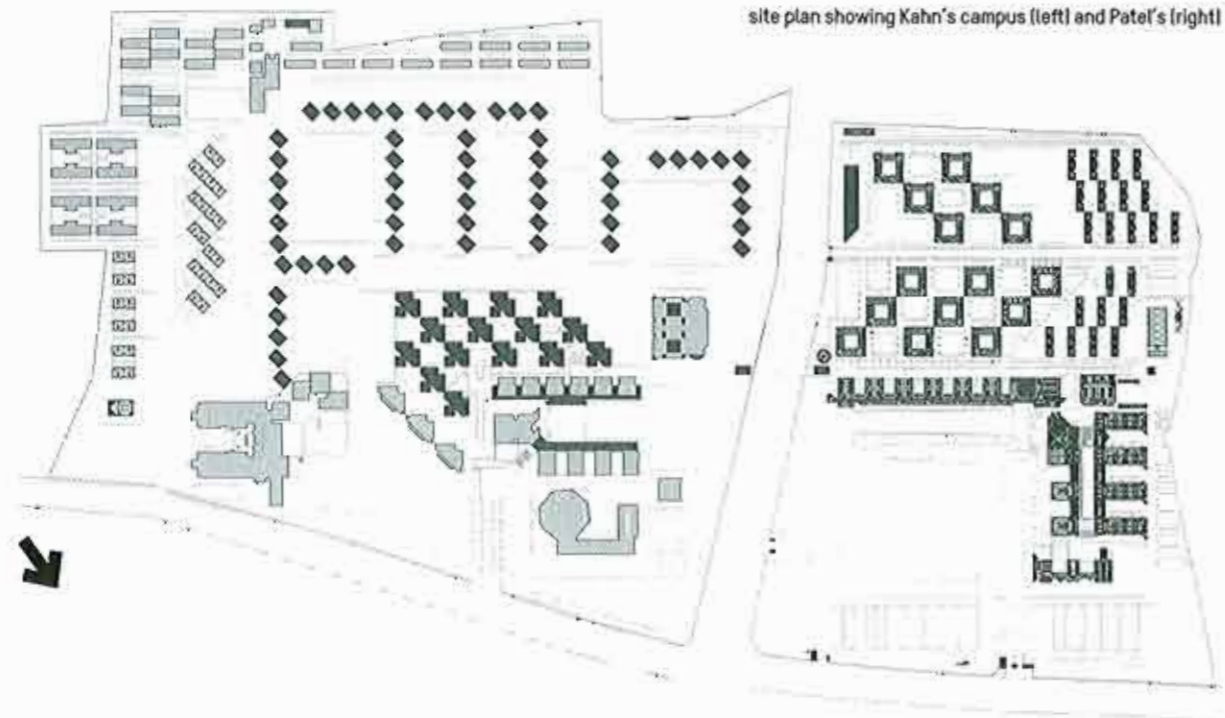
# 162

INDIAN INSTITUTE  
OF MANAGEMENT

LOCATION  
AHMEDABAD, INDIA

ARCHITECT  
HCP DESIGN AND  
PROJECT MANAGEMENT





site plan showing Kahn's campus (left) and Patel's (right)

Previous page\_ Approaching by car from the north, visitors face the more formal entrance elevation. Left\_Day to day students enter by foot or cycle along this principal east-west axis that links to the original site. A new water tower echoes that provided by Kahn on his campus.

Before being commissioned to design the Indian Institute of Management (IIM) in Ahmedabad, Louis Kahn was already arguing against the arrangement of classrooms along ordinary hallways. In his 1960 lecture 'Structure and Form', he said of an imaginary school: 'The corridors, by the provision of greater width and alcoves overlooking gardens, would be transformed into classrooms for the exclusive use of the students. These would be places where boy meets girl, [and] where student discusses the work of the professor with fellow student. [As] meeting places, places offering possibilities in self learning, [...] they would become classrooms belonging to the students.'

Completed in 1974 after 12 years, the IIM project manifested Kahn's vision of the arrangement of circulation, and today the quality and choreography of the external and interstitial spaces he created still endure, regardless of the building's obvious constructional deficiencies. Despite the slightly confused relationship at ground level – where unused moats add more unnecessary

circulation – when walking from courtyard to quad along Kahn's elevated path, passing under arch and through portal, even with no students present, it is clear that the architect's dreamed-of school has indeed become reality. Over the decades the institute has grown significantly with several additions and extensions – some good and some less good – all diligently replicating the original design's distinctive language of brick arches, buttresses and reinforced concrete lintels.

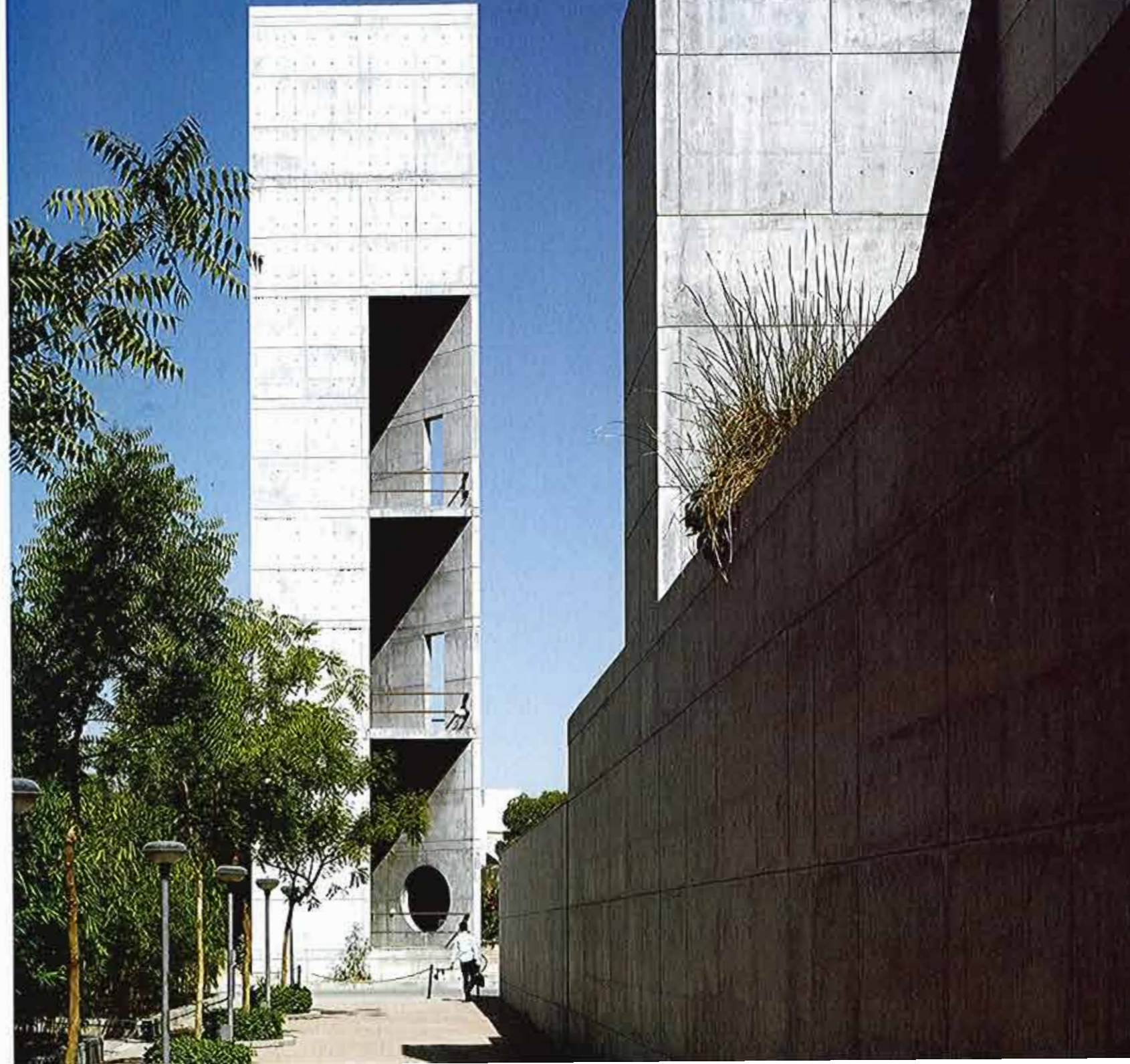
This latest and largest addition to IIM breaks the well-versed mimicry. Forming an entirely new campus on a neighbouring site for the institute's expanding postgraduate programme, International Management Development Centre and the Centre for Innovation, Incubation and Entrepreneurship, it was designed by local architect Bimal Patel, son and partner of the city's highly influential modernist architect, 77-year-old Hasmukh Patel.

Like Kahn, Patel focused on circulation by using elevated corridors as the principal ordering

device for the whole 55,000m<sup>2</sup> precinct. 'When working on large buildings for institutional clients, you know things are bound to change,' he recalls, 'so you should adopt a simple organisational strategy, nothing complicated, and then hang everything on this.' His prediction was right, as a second institute director took over the project and immediately instructed Patel to expand the brief, believing it would be impossible to regard this place as an international institution unless it grew significantly. In response Patel densified his plan, bringing greater intensity to those all-important courtyards, corridors and passageways, in a move that also addressed one of the perceived problems of the Kahn site – that many of the professors saw its 'empty spaces' as wasteful and inefficient.

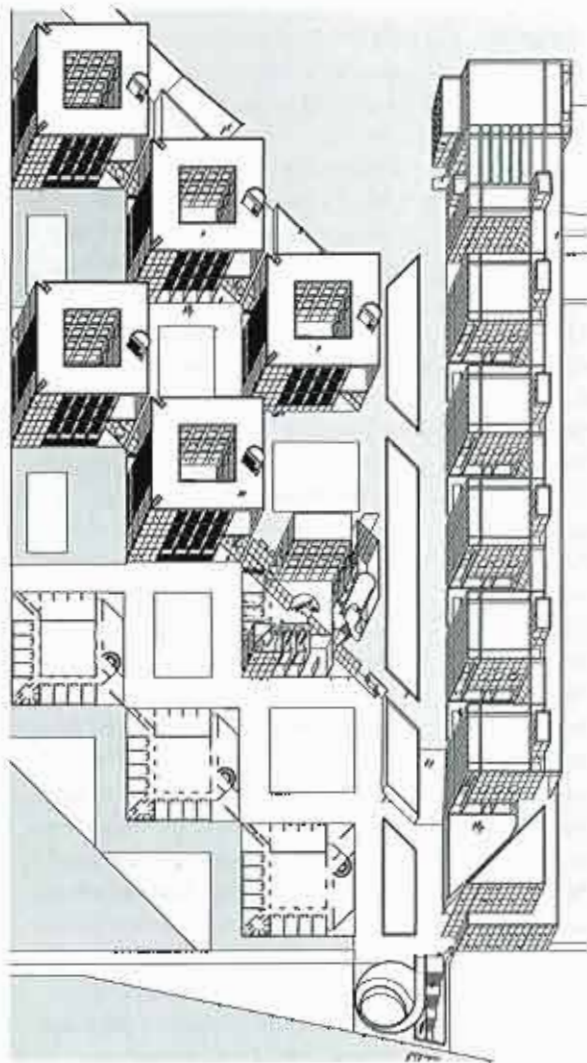
In doing so, Patel deliberately saved a large area of the 16ha site for future development, and arranged the 340 residences, five classrooms, 20 married quarters, six VIP suites, administrative facilities, kitchen and dining facilities, a sports complex, an incubation centre and 100 guest rooms, in a tight L-shaped —

## PATEL BROUGHT GREATER INTENSITY TO THOSE ALL-IMPORTANT COURTYARDS, CORRIDORS AND PASSAGEWAYS



## THE NEW CAMPUS IS TRUE TO WHAT PATEL CALLS 'DIE-HARD MODERNISM' BEING 'RIGOROUS IN PLAN AND CONSTRUCTION'

axonometric projection of teaching and dormitory blocks



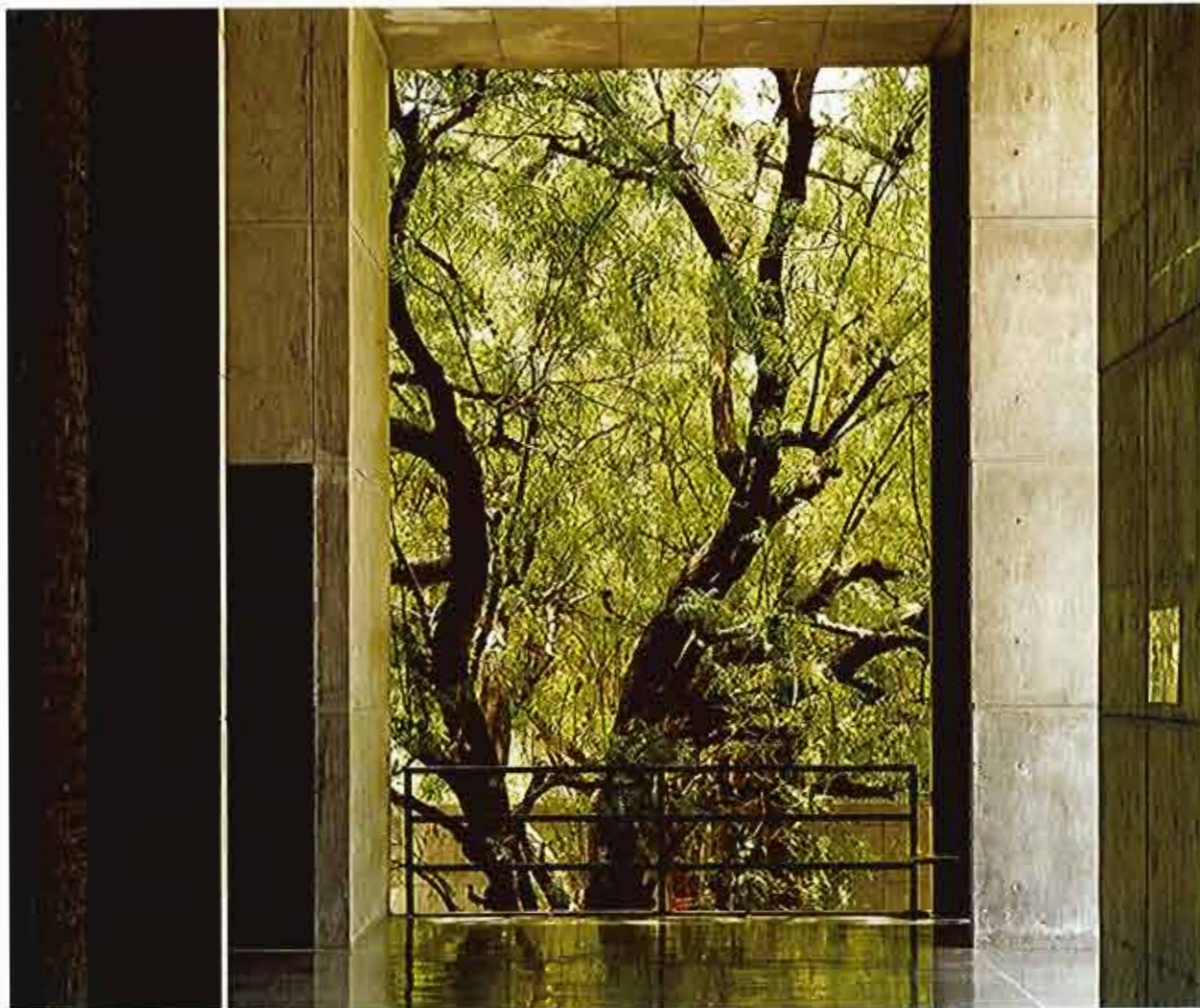
configuration. Set out on axis with the Kahn campus, the principal spine comprises a generous double-height raised gallery that serves five teaching and seminar blocks. Behind this to the south is a grid of nine dormitories that adopt Kahn's diagonal grid, and to the north sits another wing of academic conference and catering spaces.

Arriving by car, visitors immediately get a sense of the scale of the campus as they approach the broad north elevation. On a day-to-day basis, however, most students will see the thin end of the site first, as they move to and fro between the two campuses, passing through an axial tunnel designed with such dignity that it also doubles as a walk-through gallery.

Exhibiting a similar character trait to the original buildings, the new campus is true to what Patel calls 'die-hard modernism' being 'rigorous in plan and construction', with exposed in-situ concrete used to shape the geometrically strong forms. As a contrast, brick infill panels distinguish domestic rooms from academic spaces – a very familiar nod to Kahn that is seen

throughout Ahmedabad – and elegant, perforated metal screens designed by renown screen printer Walter D'Souza bring just enough ornamentation to the otherwise relentless pale smooth surfaces.

Despite past criticisms, the client always knew they owned a very important campus. They wanted Patel to provide a new one that would live up to it, expressing the gravity of both existing buildings with a new mode of architecture. Choosing to amplify but not mimic the sense of scale and monumentality of the Kahn buildings has proved an extremely successful tactic, yet even with his clear admiration for the originals, Patel was ultimately unable to resist one or two more overt references, adding semi-circular stair turrets and circular apertures. Recalling his own experience of Kahn, Patel concludes: 'My aunt worked for him in Philadelphia, and I visited the office when I was a kid. Anyone who studied at CEPT [the Centre for Environmental Planning and Technology] when I did, could not have avoided the affection that was felt for Louis Kahn. We all were – and still are – very much in awe.'



Above left\_ Dormitories incorporate the familiar language of brick infill and concrete frame  
Above\_ A typical teaching space  
Left\_ Like Kahn, Patel uses trees to articulate elevated routes through the campus

**ARCHITECT**  
HCP Design and Project Management, Ahmedabad, India  
**PROJECT TEAM**  
Binit Patel, Gajanan Upadhyay, Jyanti Gunjaria, Brijesh Bhatia, Nikil Shah, Samarth Maradia, Viprav Shah, Amar Thakkar, Mahendra Patel  
**STRUCTURAL ENGINEER**  
VMS Engineering and Design Services