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DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE

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STELLAR
SANJAY PURI ARCHITECTS

HOUSE 25
PARK + ASSOCIATES

SUDUT HOUSE
STUDIO BIKIN

JIANGSU BEISHA KINDERGARTEN
CROSSBOUNDARIES, BEIJING

STANDOUT STRUCTURE

THIS INTERESTING, MIXED-USE BUILDING IN INDIA IS A CONTRAST BETWEEN SIMPLE RECTILINEAR GEOMETRY WITH MUTED COLOUR TONES AND A COMPLEX ANGULAR GEOMETRY AWASH WITH COLOUR.

WORDS
SASHA
GONZALES

When architect Sanjay Puri was tasked with designing a multi-level, mixed-use building in Ahmedabad in Gujarat, India, he said that his brief was "very specific".

The client, Dushyant Goswami from the city developer Suvidha Projects, wanted a structure that housed road-facing retail spaces as well as office spaces that measured 400 to 800ft^2 each.

The developer also wanted a 5,000ft^2 office for itself and requested for the building to be highly visible and suitable for the site's location and climate.

The resulting construction, Stellar, was completed in 2019 after four years of work.

A rectilinear, 110m-long commercial building, it features retail spaces at the lower three levels, and office spaces at the remaining, upper four levels.

ALL ABOUT VISIBILITY

"The site faces out onto an arterial city road and the client wanted the retail spaces to make full use of the extensive road frontage," says Puri, who led the project.

"In addition, the building was developed for sale, and because retail spaces are generally sold at a much higher price than office spaces, with ground-floor retail spaces being the most

1. The rectilinear commercial building faces out onto an arterial city road and features retail spaces at the lower three levels.


DEEPKALA

ABOVE. The rust-red, sculptural office space helps break up the linearity of the property.

expensive, it was important for us to make sure that the retail floors were highly visible."

To this end, Puri designed the building to accommodate as many retail spaces as possible. He also created direct entry to these spaces from the road.

A long and wide footpath flanks the road-facing north side of the building, ensuring that pedestrians have a clear view of the shop-fronts.

"People in small cities such as this one prefer road-facing shops with high visibility, so we had to get this aspect of the brief right," Puri says.

ORIGAMI-INSPIRED DESIGN

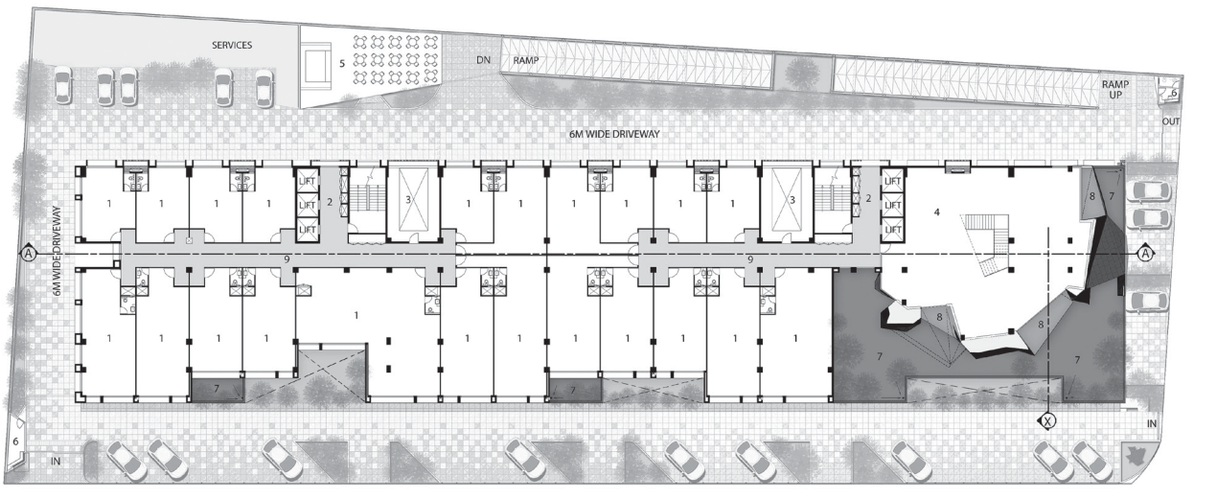
Linear buildings can look boring, but not this one. Puri added small open terraces for some of the offices at the upper levels, thereby fragmenting the linearity of the property while creating volume to what might have otherwise been a one-dimensional, "flat" structure.

To further break up the building's linearity, as well as fashion a unique identity and a clearly discernible office space for the developer, Puri created a completely different sculptural volume, inspired by origami.

"Nestled within an open north-oriented terrace, this sculptural office space is set back from the road junction and made with rust-red, solid aluminium sheets to become a focal point of the building."

The design team used three different muted, stone-textured "Neolith" slabs as cladding on the façade of the building, to

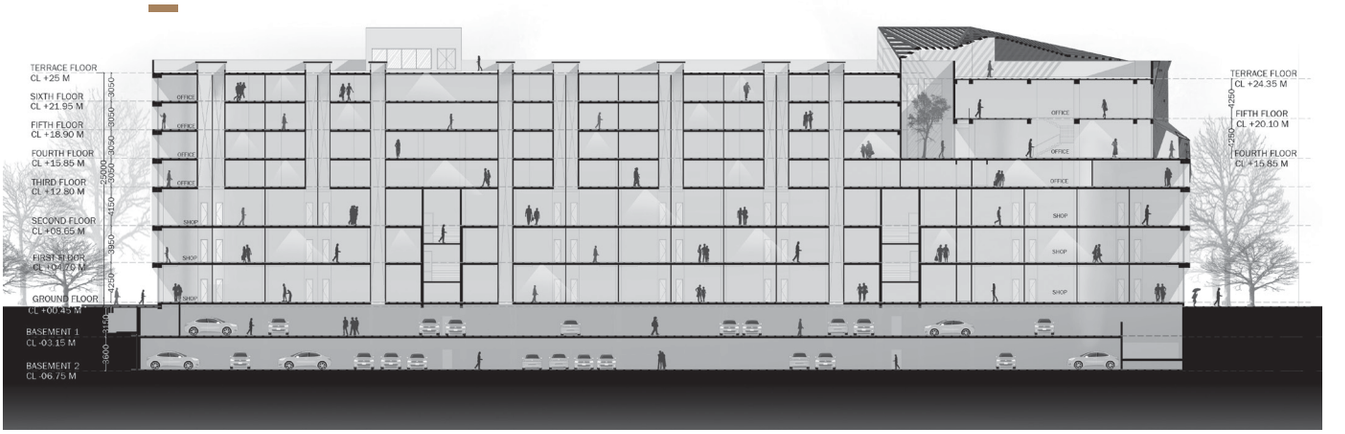
SITE PLAN

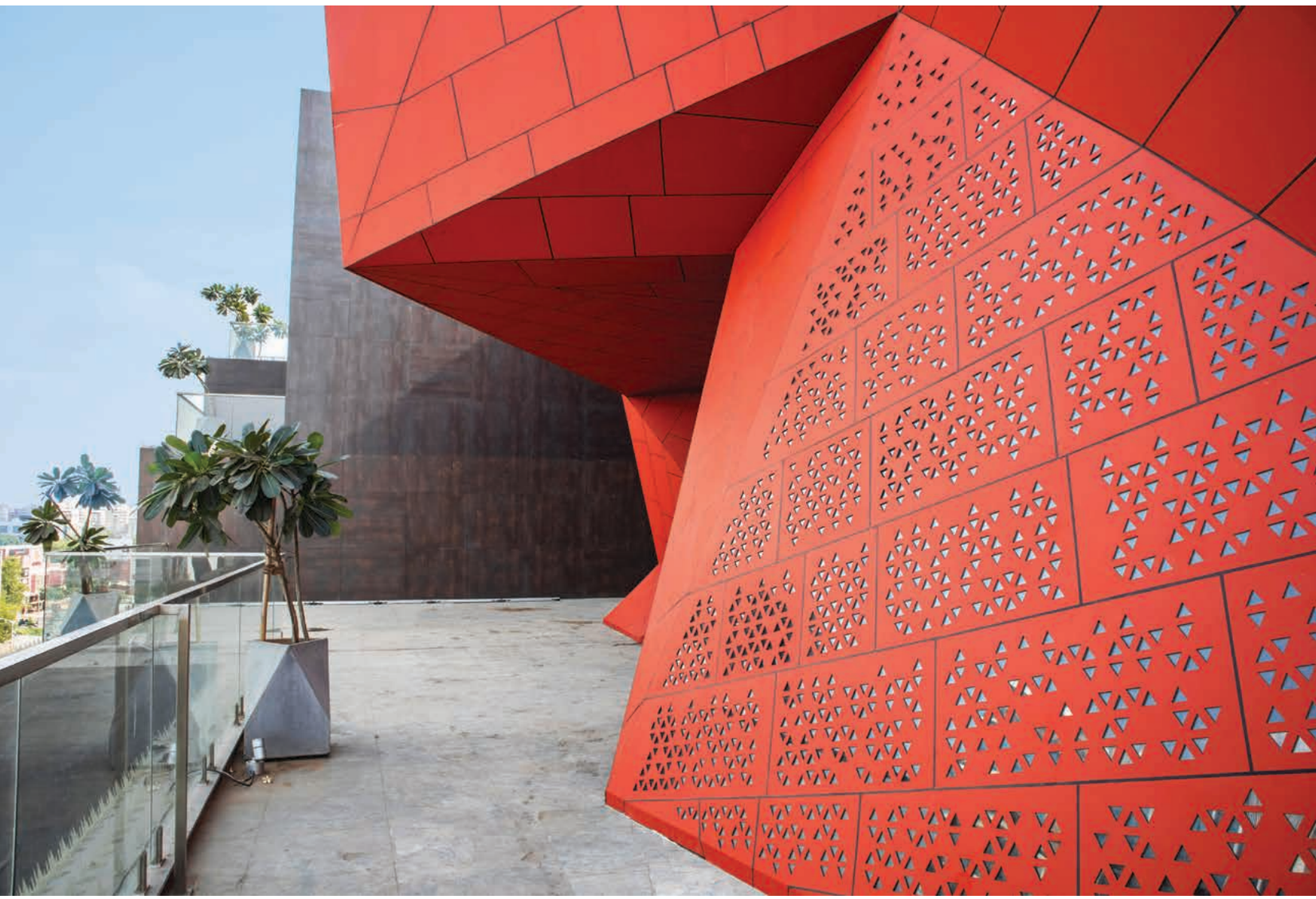


1. Office / 2. Lobby / 3. Services / 4. Private Office / 5. Cafeteria / 6. Security / 7. Terrace / 8. Balcony / 9. Corridor

ELEVATION

SECTION PERSPECTIVE





SANJAY PURI,
SANJAY PURI ARCHITECTS

help it to stand out from the terracotta-red aluminium composite panels used for the sculptural office space.

"We deliberately designed the sculptural office space to contrast with the rest of the building, creating an interesting juxtaposition of colour, volume and geometry," Puri points out.

FUNCTIONAL AND PRACTICAL

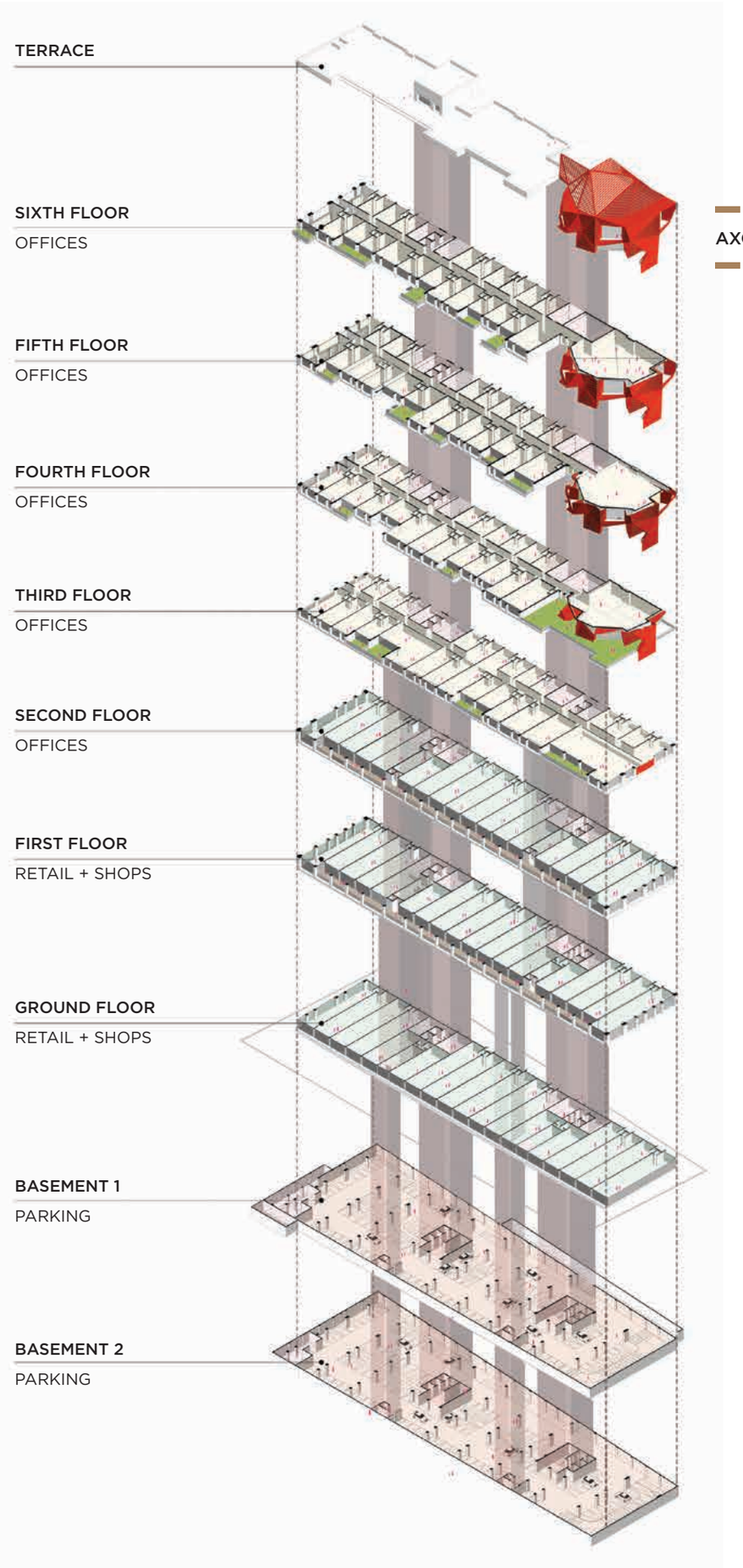
Unique look and identity aside, the building was also designed to suit the climate and be energy efficient.

The temperature in Ahmedabad averages 35 degrees Celsius or higher for eight months out of the year, so to reduce heat gain and keep the office spaces cool and well-ventilated, Puri planned the layout to include large, north-facing terraces and small recessed windows on the southern side.

Thirty per cent of the offices open out onto landscaped terraces.

Furthermore, all the terraces are connected to a rainwater-harvested tank, and all the water is recycled and reused. Solar panels harness the abundant solar power that the city receives.

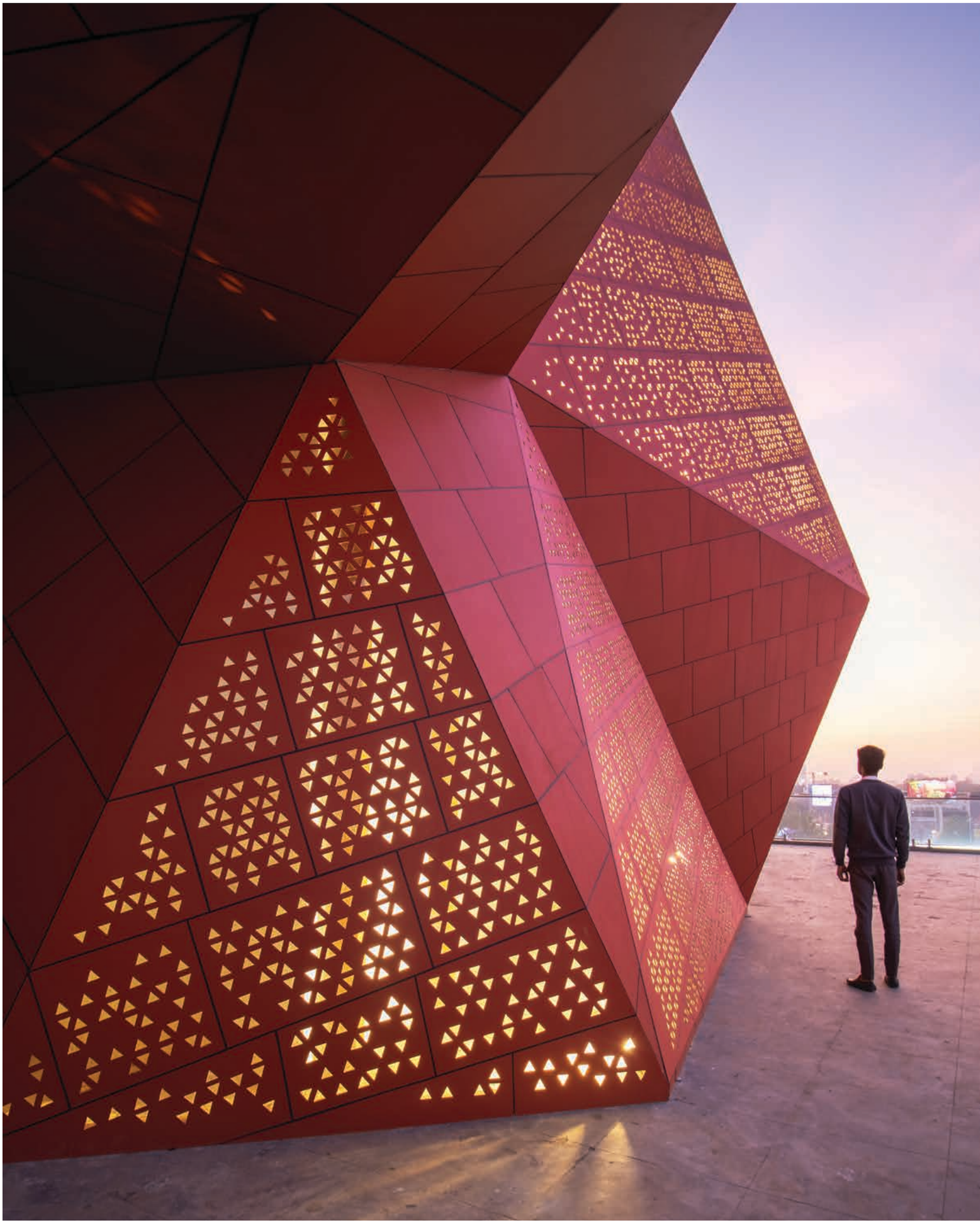
ABOVE.
Inspired by origami, the sculptural office space contrasts with the rest of the building, creating an interesting juxtaposition of colour, volume and geometry.

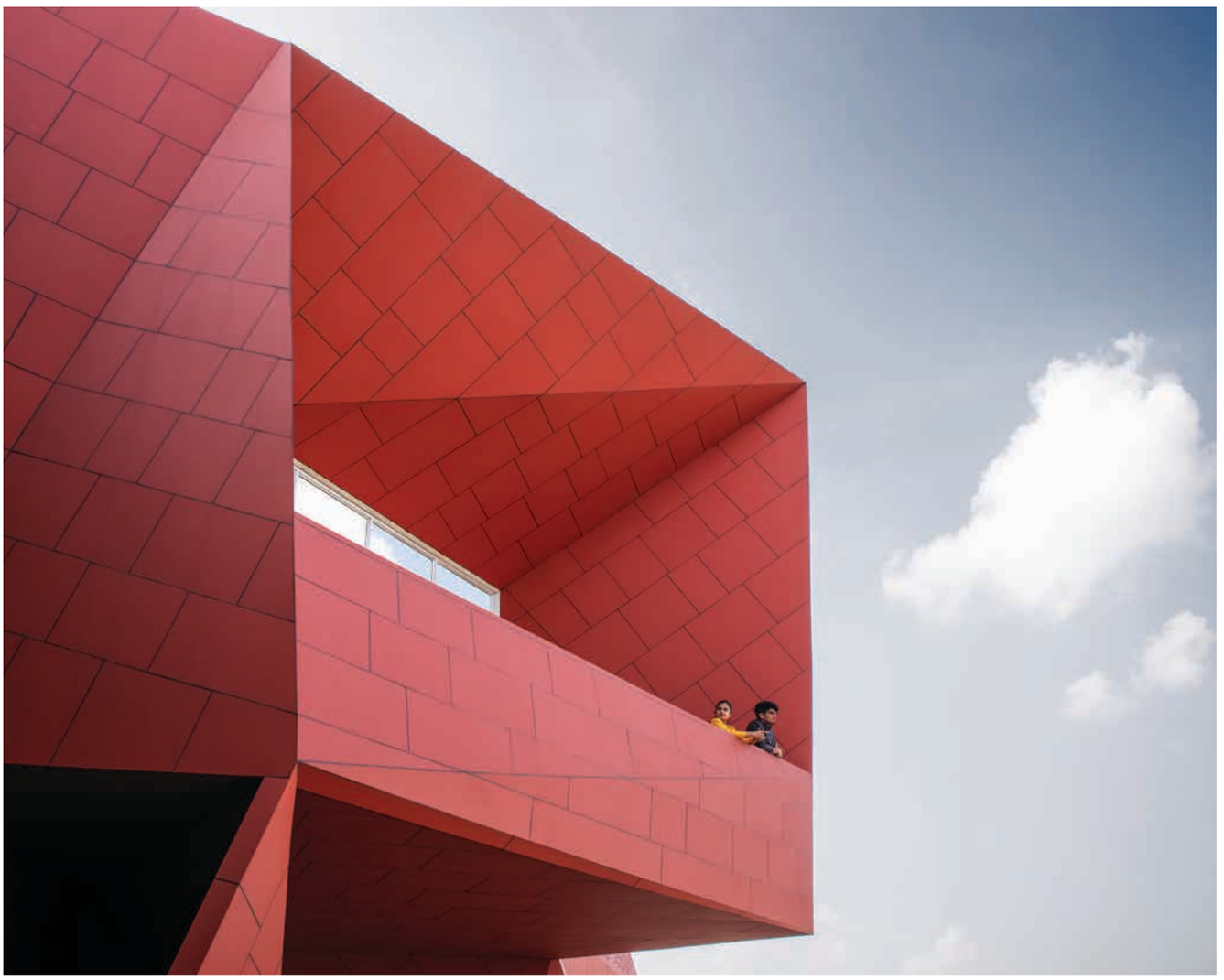


AXONOMETRY

STELLAR

LOCATION
Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India
/
COMPLETION
2019
/
SITE AREA
5,717.5m²
/
GROSS FLOOR AREA
18,580m²
/
ARCHITECT
Sanjay Puri Architects
/
LEAD ARCHITECT
Sanjay Puri
/
DEVELOPER
Suvidha Projects
/
CONTRACTOR
Spartan Builders Pvt. Ltd.
/
C&S CONSULTANT
Ducon Consultants Pvt. Ltd.
/
PT VENDOR
Post Tension Services India Pvt. Ltd.
/
M&E CONSULTANT
INI Infrastructure & Engineering
/
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT
Sanjay Puri Architects





"We used the extensive length of the site to full advantage by creating a building that was energy efficient," Puri states.

The first- and second-level retail spaces and the office spaces above are easy to access – via the road-facing frontage with vertical circulation cores in the case of the former, and the circulation cores on the southern side, towards the rear of the linear plot, in the case of the latter.

The circulation and access points for the retail and office levels are completely segregated from one another.

CAREFUL MONITORING

Despite the fact that the building combines three distinct spaces, Puri says that his team did not face any specific technical challenges.

His only concern was the largely unskilled workforce and deciding how these workers would pull off the project.

"Working in India with mostly unskilled workers is never easy, so to ensure we got the job done the way we wanted, we had to conduct frequent site meetings and site checks.

"It was important for us to make sure that the design was adhered to closely, that our drawings and plans were understood, and that the quality of the workmanship met our high standards.

"This mixed-use building is contextual to the site's location, the climate of the area and the client's brief, and our priority was to bring all the elements together cohesively."

OPPOSITE. The standout terracotta-red feature is made from aluminium composite panels. Puri's aim was to fashion a unique identity and clearly discernible office space for the developer.

EMBRACING THE ENVIRONMENT

WORDS
LOW SHI PING

The city of Sochi in Russia will soon see the addition of this building inspired by Russian constructivism hanging off its coastline.

Designed by Margot Krasojević Architecture, it is a small hydroelectric power plant that feeds clean energy back to the grid, with a sculpture gallery cantilevered over and partly submerged into the sea.

The latter portion acts as an oscillating water column, so that it gets activated when the waves from the Black Sea break onto it, generating the electricity through an array of turbines attached to it.

Expect the seawater to splash onto the gallery's roof, adding a dynamism to the immediate surroundings.

"The architecture influences the waves. It is not an obedient structure accommodating its environment," describes the architect.

Both functions of the building are tightly interwoven together, sheltered by a roof that heaves like a point break wave – a stark reminder of its location and the importance of building to exist with nature.