June-July
2015

Volume 04 / Issue 08
₹200

domus

INDIA **041** **LA CITTÀ DELL' UOMO**

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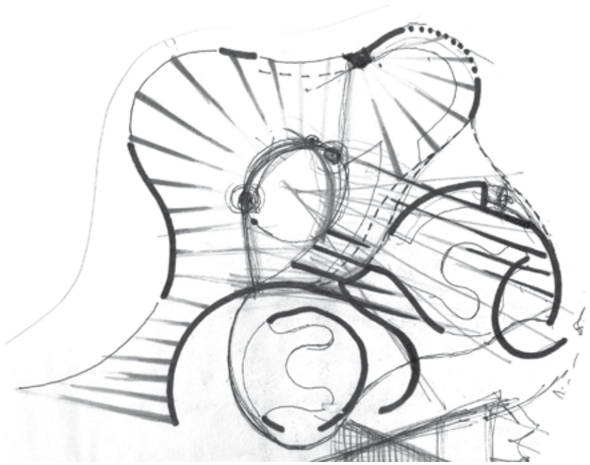
Cover: The central installation at the India Pavilion at Hannover Messe 2015, an artistic assemblage of info graphics and interactive installations that display information about the core sectors of the Indian economy, was the Trojan Lion. The Lion stands for strength, courage, tenacity and wisdom — values that are as Indian today as they have ever been. By adding a sense of forward movement and using manufacturing elements as graphic texture, this *Make in India* icon was born.



Sketch of the Brick House by iStudio Architecture which highlights the seamlessly fluid, organic nature of the design.

MAKING / KNOWING

Kaiwan Mehta

From design a condition of work and life emerges, a condition of humanity that delights in objects and materials, produced and reproduced within sites, studios and times. Time is the crucial motif of design, and especially architecture.

Planners and architects, and designers, work with stories that tie up characters (forms), plots (site/programme features), climaxes (features of built volumes or objects in the landscape) and contexts (the landscape/use that needs to be re-stitched). To tie up objects, terrains, landscapes and material features into a storyline is the essential job of the designer – to build up relationships between objects; it is not to dominate through geometry or fake recreations of natural systems, but to draw out on dreams, and reproduce material realities through human capacities to imagine, and expand imagination, shape it through craft and technique. Stories let the ambiguities and anxieties of the personal, home in the landscape of the universal; the outcrops of the personal settle within the primeval states of being through narratives of architecture, time, and space.

How do we shape the stuff of objects and architecture? From nature to myths, human civilisations have constantly produced a man-made (human-made) world. Nature exists, but our understanding of nature is a product of human thought and vision (ideological). Myths are vehicles through which humans travel the complex realities of the earth and its environment, galaxies and cosmic projections. Early image-making activities emerge from this struggle with nature and the myths. In the arbitrary behaviour of nature, one constantly tries to find an inherent structure of time or an ordering principle of form; and the process as well as its outcome are imagined as scientific. On the other hand, myths occupy the narrative world of imagination, fantasies, and poetic licences. Myths work on the science of human mental thought-processes and social structures; yet they occupy the necessary space of wonder, mystery, as well as awe. The question of how best can the real world of experience be represented is important for both – nature, as well as myths.

Architecture, and one could say nearly all of human material culture, exists within the blurs in between science and myths, nature and the man-made. It is primarily the structure of design – to make meaning in human life, and reproduce as much as reinterpret the experiences and imaginations of realities and human existence. At times, the natural is shaped into man-made frameworks, while at other times, the man-made produces through poetic imagination and story-telling sciences the structure and cosmos of the natural. We imagine the limits of science and myth are fairly defined and clear, but at all times we actually have to carefully draw out the myths within science, and the science of wonder and imagination within myths. As objects within human culture, especially architecture, actualise and realise these human anxieties within material constructions and the ideas of form and texture – the man-made is constantly producing a world of myth as well as reality. The crossroads and confluences are necessary for human civilisation to shape and further its ideas of knowledge and human production; but the differences are equally important to know. Architecture and design are sites of rich confluences and it is necessary to celebrate these as much as it is necessary to remember the individual structures and roles of each – myths and sciences, realities and fantasies, as they shape our culture and bolus of experiences.

This issue builds an encounter with the shape and functioning of visual culture in human history and society; and it does this employing the 'image' itself. The photos by Karl Blossfeldt featured here were imagined to be specimens for educational purpose – teaching students of arts and craft to understand the form and geometry 'inherent' in nature. Today, they are testimonials to the thinking of modern human societies. The photographic technique employed to render natural forms as geometric structures is telling of how the relationship between the natural and the man-made, or form and ornamental rendering are structured within a broader civilisational discourse of our understanding of reality and the projection of an imagined reality. These images also hint towards the techniques designers and architects developed around the 18th and 19th century of designing through projection drawings, where a certain flattening of form or neutralising structure is inherent to the formats of representation and drawings for construction. On another note, the photos by Jyoti Bhatt produce the world of humans as they render it natural to environment and their understanding of everyday life and experience. At one point, these images can be read as documentary, or misunderstood as ethnographic, but these images focus surely beyond the systems of data collection and classificatory analysis. The images of Bhatt focus on the idea of human labour and human intervention in the everyday world. Artistic production, as ritual or for decorative purposes, is a way in which humans transition their intervention into the natural world. These socio-cultural activities such as painting and decorating built forms, animals, and human beings is a way in which the man-made redraws, or maybe even freshly produces the natural world. The production of images on walls, or hide and skin, is a translation of the experiential space into collective and shared space of everyday life; in the process the natural is stylised, but yet again in the process a new-natural is invented and introduced into human civilisation.

In these issues, one concern remains Time – how do we read time in the act of photo- or image-making? Blossfeldt renders Time null and void in his technique, making the images appear universal and beyond or even free from Time. But in their flatness, and manufacture/production of details through enlargement and other techniques, there is the phantasmagorical reading/interpretation of life in the modern world too. Bhatt's photos are reminders of 'time past, and time present' – they are in themselves living within a specific time. We often make the mistake of reading images such as the photos of Bhatt as also capturing a 'timeless tradition' – as if the images have now captured that which is anyway beyond or again, free of time – also unchanged, or never-changing. However, as Bhatt points out, it is work in the way K G Subramanyan defines as 'living traditions' – the fact that human cultures process and make their traditions at all time continuously – maybe changing them, maybe even renewing them.

The other two photoessays by Y D Pitkar and Hemangi Kadu bring forth for us the way human creativity reproduces the physical, natural, and man-made world constantly through architecture and design. The mythic and human, the real and phantasmagorical are enacted through sculpture and architecture; form is textured not just through carving material surfaces and manipulation of light and shadows – but form is textured through story-telling and visual repertoires. The geometry of form is only a super-structure that contains the stuff of life in the details of patterns, scenes from popular epics, and sharply sculpted human bodies interacting with the world of philosophy (looking in the mirror, erotic, and so on) or the human (looking in the mirror, erotic, and so on).

In the feature on two proposed projects by architect Sen Kapadia – one of India's most thoughtful and intense architects – the thinking is around the question of form and place-making. Place is a notion of an environ that allows for human activities to take place in amicable and productive ways, producing a kind of sociality, and not just production as work-output. The discussions on geometry and form, monumentality and the difference between space and place are important, not as timeless arguments, but precisely as contextualised arguments within different time-frames. The idea of architecture is time-bound itself. Its nature is different for different historical locations; but then, how does a studio, an architect, locate his values and ideas within different epoch and changing values? The two projects share a common ground – a concern towards place-making, but their approaches speak of new imaginations of geometry and form, yet the design ethos, the primary concern remains in continuation. This exercise is extremely important in our times, when values and primary ideas change so fast that a single life-span may witness two or even three paradigmatic shifts in professional and subject development.

The concern with changing times and changing buildings continues with three projects in this issue – all of which deal with reworking of older buildings towards a newer use. As said before, every conservation project, every building that undergoes adaptive reuse is always a new building in a new ethos. It is indeed important to shape well the transition or preservation, but the value of conservation itself is a contemporary value. Design, once again here, struggles between science and myths – the science of history, the science of construction and architectural materiality, the science of decay, as well as the myth of time and past, the myth of unchanging values, the myth of design and aesthetic taste.

These struggles are important as they should essentially help us rise above the cliched and stereotypical arguments, the safe and chewed (pre-digested) discussions around some of the issues that this edition of *Domus India* brings forth. To recognise certain nuances, read many layers from the cluster at hand, to challenge set notions, is the essential task of a magazine, clarifying critically the shape and going-ons in the profession. **km**

CONFETTI

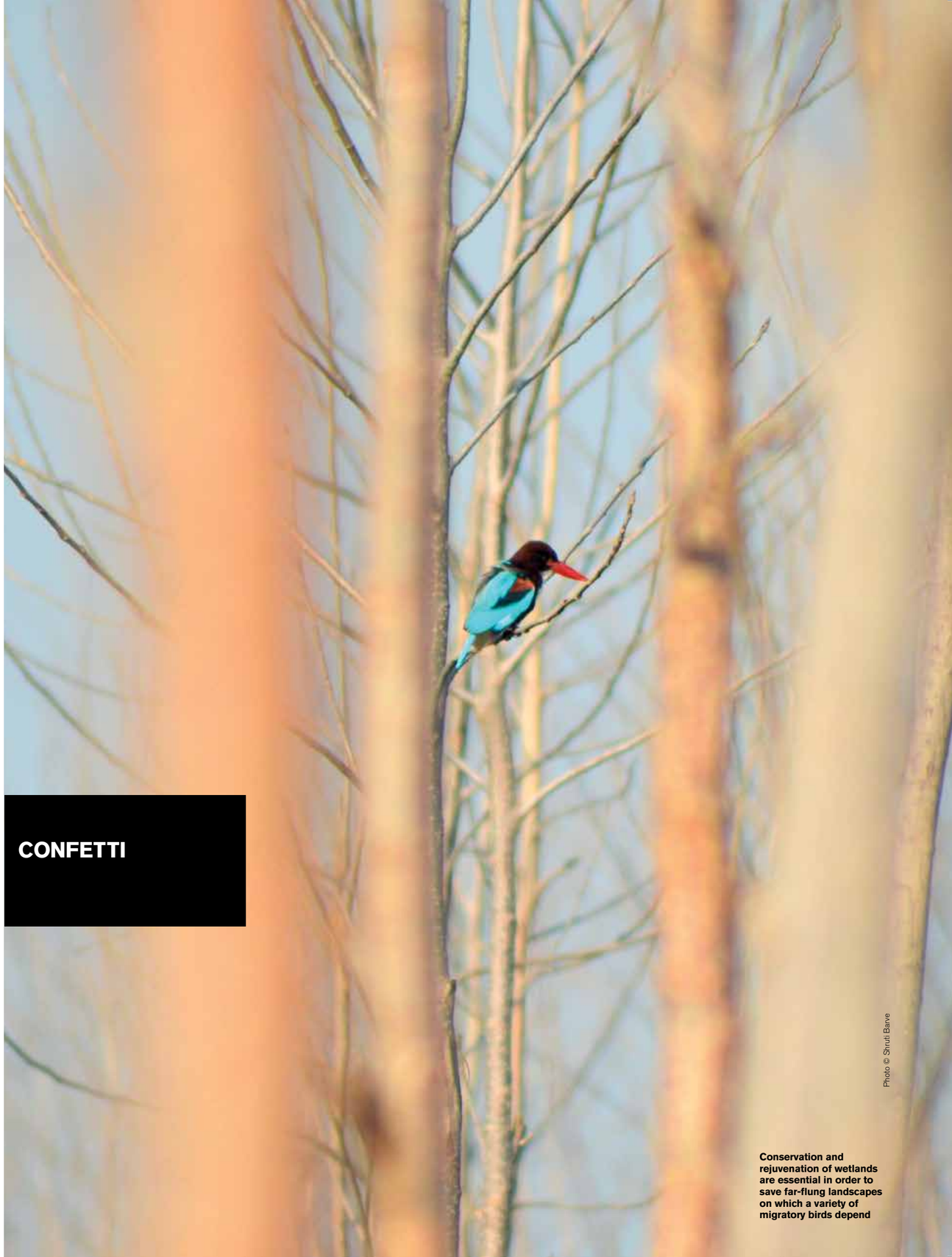
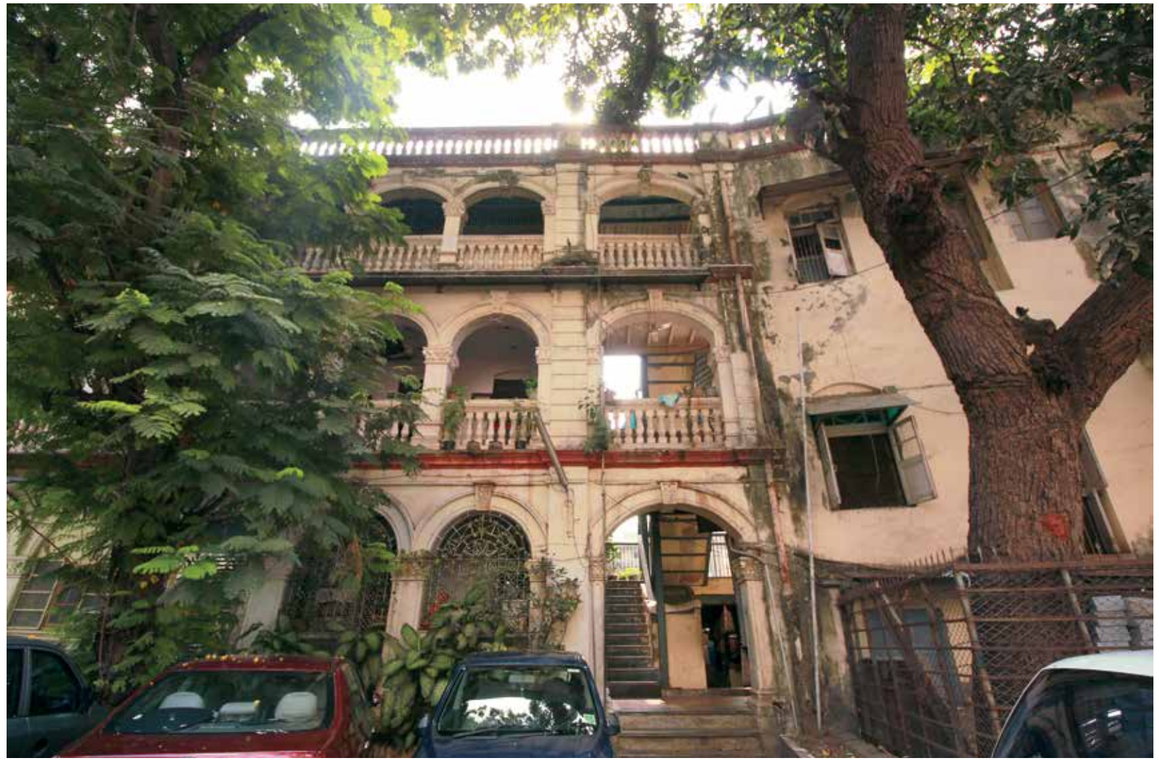


Photo © Shruti Barve

Conservation and rejuvenation of wetlands are essential in order to save far-flung landscapes on which a variety of migratory birds depend



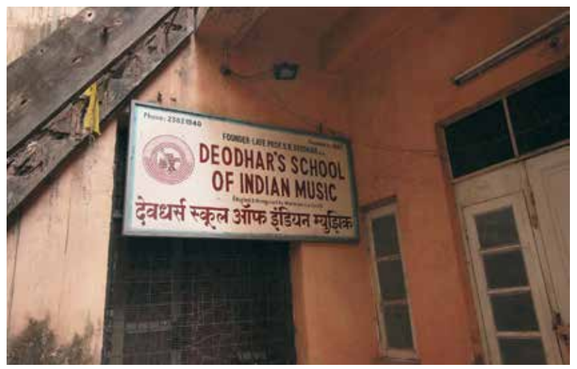
MUSICOPHILIA IN MUMBAI

The contours of the musical precincts of Mumbai indicate the intimate relationships between urban spaces in Mumbai and the music that they inspired, hosted, perpetuated and celebrated, providing a new approach to understanding the 'making' of public space in the city

Tejaswini Niranjana

How did musically literate audiences come into being in Mumbai? How was the growth of musical practice enabled through both performance and pedagogy? Taking a 'musical walk' through the native town – what I'd like to call the precinct of Greater Girgaum – helps us explore the relationship between music and the organisation of built space and neighbourhoods. The logic of the precinct is such that the space provides cultural recognition of a shared locality for people living there. The Greater Girgaum area can be broadly defined as stretching from Grant Road, Charni Road, and Marine Lines stations and Chowpatty on the west to Kalbadevi Road on the east, including Thakurdwar, Jagannath Shankarsheth Road, Prarthana Samaj, Lamington Road, Kennedy Bridge, Phanaswadi, French Bridge, and Opera House, and stretching up to Forjett Street, Nana Chowk and Talmakiwadi. This area was once home to the Parsi theatre, the Marathi *sangeet*

Opposite page: the Royal Opera House in Girgaum. This page: Haji Kasam Wadi, also known as Raghavwadi. The *wadi* was home to the family of the founder of the Jaipur-Atrauli *gharana* Alladiya Khan's in the 1930s. Below left: Deodhar School of Indian Music established by B R Deodhar in 1925, across the street from the Royal Opera House



natak, Hindustani art music, and light genres like *thumri* and *qawwali*. Girgaum was also the earliest location to have music schools, music clubs, concert halls, and *wadis* where musicians were invited to perform. While there are a few heritage buildings like the Royal Opera House in this area, it would be more appropriate to envision the neighbourhood as a whole, as a 'heritage precinct' structured around the intangible legacies of Hindustani music.

Census figures from the late 19th century show that migration was the most important reason for the growth of the population in Bombay. As Kaiwan Mehta notes, the emergence of chawls and *wadis* are simultaneous with the influx of new migrant populations who seek to reproduce some semblance of kinship and social coherence in the bewildering urban metropolitan landscape which had an economic as well as spatial organisation very different from the areas from which the migrants came. We get a sense from the short stories of Saroj Pathak, quoted by Mehta, as to the occupants of the new chawls: primary school teachers, compounders, shop assistants, bus conductors, pushcart vendors — up to fifteen families living on a floor and sharing a toilet at the far end. An important insight of Mehta's is that the chawl is simultaneously both a building and a neighbourhood. This idea is helpful in understanding the historical space of musical performance in the Girgaum area.

For example, if we look at the Trinity Club on Pandit Bhaskarbuwa Bakhle Path (off Mughbat Lane), it is on the upper floor of a chawl. A *kholi* was dedicated for the use of musicians by one Bodas, who worked for the Shaw Wallace Company and was a fan of Hindustani music, and requested the pre-eminent singer Bhaskarbuwa Bakhle in 1907 to initiate musical activities in the chawl. So we can infer that the building, which still exists, is at least over a hundred years old. When musicians used to perform in the Club, which is housed in a room approximately 25 ft by 18 ft, the audience used to spill over into the chawl corridor outside, and people lined the staircase as well as the street outside listening for hours on end. Thus the performance space is not limited just to the one room, but expands to include the neighbourhood itself.

This was true in a space like the Brahman Sabha building also, which is off Lamington Road on Raja Ram Mohun Roy Marg in Bhatwadi, and was a major venue for Hindustani music in the mid-20th century. Audiences were not confined to a single auditorium but spilled over into other spaces and floors in the building. Another key performance space in Girgaum from about the 1930s was Laxmi Baug, also off Lamington Road on Avantikabai Gokhale Road. And, equally important was the Ganesh Utsav of Lamington Road (where the Lamington *cha* Raja presided) where all the major musicians performed during the festival every year.

All these performance spaces can be seen as part of the musical precinct, where the wider neighbourhood becomes unified through the audiences who go from one performance to the next, especially during the Ganesh Utsav. This to-and-fro movement of audiences is an interesting way by which we can trace the circumference of the musical neighbourhood: there are stories of how runners were employed to go between Laxmi Baug and Brahman Sabha, for example, carrying the information of which singer was still tuning his Tanpuras, which one had already started his or her *alaap*, and so on. This allowed the audiences to rush *en masse* from one venue to the other as the performances progressed.

The Hindustani music audience was largely drawn from the middle and lower middle classes, with the occasional appearances of wealthy merchants and in later years, even film stars.

The first three categories lived in Girgaum itself, in chawls, apartments, or independent houses depending on the social stratum of the resident. While Girgaum was largely populated at its core by Marathi and Gujarati-speaking Hindus, there were also specific areas where Parsis lived (Firoz Dastur, disciple of Sawai Gandharva, lived on Grant Road), and Goan or north Karnataka Kalavant families in Thakurdwar, as well as courtesans or *tawaifs* of different religious backgrounds on Grant Road and Kalbadevi Road. We also have the small artisanal shops, such as those of the Tabla makers in Bhaskarbuwa Bakhle Path, where the worker-proprietor and his family live, work, cook and eat in the same tiny space. The diversity of the population is to some extent reflected in the architectural styles and ornamental details where colonial architectural repertoires met motifs and spatial arrangements drawn from communities migrating into the city.

Girgaum also housed a number of *kothas* where *tawaifs* organised *jalsas* with singing and dancing. While the *kothas* of old have given way to what are now called *mujra* halls, even these have started disappearing as the 'dance bar' began to flourish in the 1990s. But Foras Road and the Congress House area still have active *mujra* halls where song-dance performances by women from hereditary performing-backgrounds can be seen. The *jalsas* of the early and mid-20th century were attended by predominantly male audiences, with the performers usually tending to be Muslim. Simultaneously co-existing with the *kotha* space, and often drawing on the same performers, we have the concert hall space, the music club

Below left: the two-storeyed Blavatsky Lodge housing the Theosophical Society Library of over 7,000 books, and a hall and meeting room which are rented out for seminars, lectures, music and dance classes and concerts. Right: the Marwari Vidyalaya High School building in Bhatwadi

This page: the various building typologies, spaces, and sites where performances and schools were housed, from *kholis* in chawls to elaborate music schools, music clubs, concert halls, and *wadis* where musicians were invited to perform. Below left: Laxmi Baug. Below right: the buildings in one of which the famous singer Avantikabai Gokhale lived, near Laxmi Baug, off Lamington Road. The street has been named in her honour – Avantikabai Gokhale Road

space, the music school space, the private *wada* space, and the Ganesh Utsav (the public *utsav* began to be celebrated in Bombay from 1894 onwards as part of a nationalist strategy fashioned by Balgangadhar Tilak, with the first *sarvajanik* Ganesh being installed in Girgaum in the Keshavji Naik chawl). This entire range of performance spaces were seen in Girgaum until about the mid-20th century, with some of the concert halls, like Laxmi Baug, even functioning until the late 1980s. Jinnah Hall, next to Congress House, was also an important concert venue.

A vivid description of the sweet misery of the music aficionado suffering from too much choice during the Ganesh Utsav is to be found in the Marathi writer Pu. La. Deshpande's writings: "For music lovers, the ten days of the festival were somewhat difficult…. One Saturday night and so many music performances! In Ambevadi [there was] Mallikarjun Mansur, in another [there was] Kagalkarbua, in Brahman Sabha [there was] Master Krishnarao (Phulambrikar), in Shastri Hall [there was] Rambhau Savai Gandharva, in Tara Temple Lane [there was] Gangubai, … in Chunam Lane [there was] Hirabai Badodekar — one would get completely torn and anxious! Who should one listen to? . . . Until about 3:30 in the morning, we ran from place to place and eventually wound up in front of Goodman, Persian-Indian, Mervaan, Viceroy of India, or some other Iranian restaurant and wait for their doors to open to have *brun-maska* [hard-crusted bread with fresh butter]. Staying awake all night listening to music, we needed a nightcap, [which had to be] tea from an Iranian restaurant without which the evening was not complete. And at that hotel, an impromptu music round table conference would come together . . . some would say Rambhau's voice had reached new heights that night, some would praise Gangubai's Miyan Malhar". [1]

On the Chowpatty side of our musical walk, we have Haji Kasam Wadi, also known as Raghavwadi. The *wadi* was home to the family of the founder of the Jaipur-Atrauli *gharana* Alladiya Khan's in the 1930s. Mallikarjun Mansur's memoirs mention that in 1935 he started learning music from Ustad Manji Khan (Alladiya Khan's son and musical heir) in Haji Kasam Wadi. His *taleem* would be from 8am to 1pm every day. This went on for one and a half years until Manji Khan's untimely death.[2]

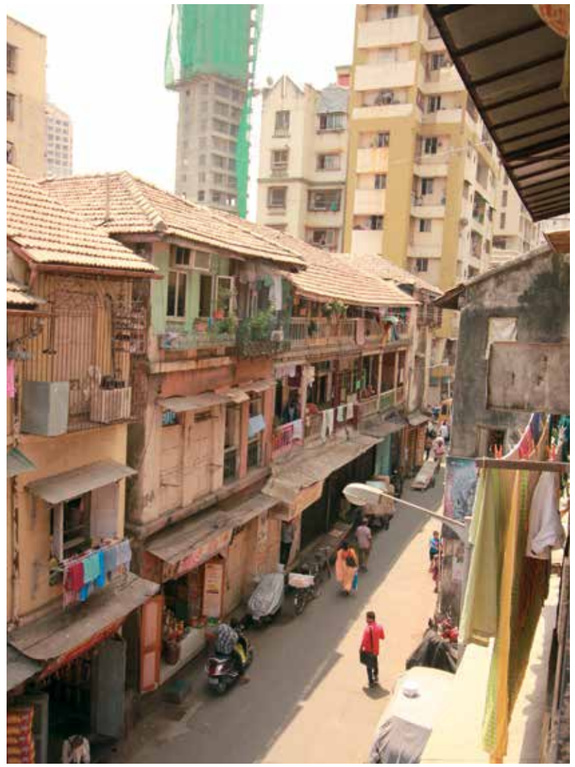
On the side of French Bridge across from the wadi there is the two-storeyed Blavatsky Lodge housing the Theosophical Society Library of over 7,000 books, and a hall and meeting room which are rented out for seminars, lectures, music and dance classes and concerts.[3] Annie Besant, who was the spiritual heir of Mme. Blavatsky, was active in Indian politics, becoming the President of the Indian National Congress in 1917. Blavatsky Lodge was an important meeting place for nationalists during the struggle for Independence. A newspaper advertisement of 1929 mentions that under the auspices of the Young Men's Parsee Association, the Framji Bharucha competition in Indian music would be held at Blavatsky Lodge on Saturday, October 5, at 5.30pm.

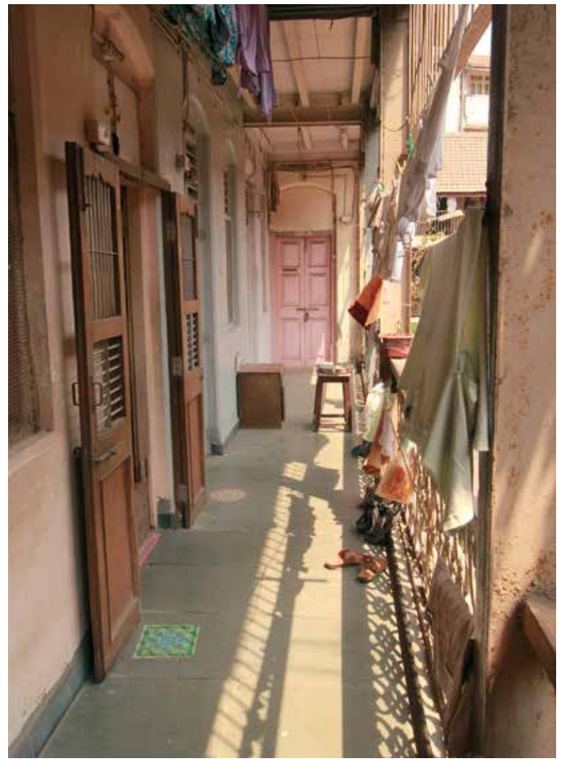
Further down to the left of French Bridge is the School of Indian Music established by B R Deodhar in 1925. He was a student of Vishnu Digambar Paluskar, who set up the famous Gandharva Mahavidyalay in different locations including Mumbai – initially at Sandhurst Road in Girgaum. For many decades, Deodhar held a concert at the School for the death anniversary or *barsi* of his teacher. The most renowned musicians of India sang at these concerts to large audiences. The School is still running, with Deodhar's grand-daughter as Principal. Across from the School, on Charni Road, can be glimpsed the iconic edifice of the Royal Opera House, the construction of which was completed in 1912, in a blend of European and Indian architectural styles. The Opera House can be said to mark the boundary of the native town with the Fort area, and true to its liminal status, it hosted performances of Western plays and variety entertainment as well as Bal Gandharva's Marathi *sangeet natak* and Prithviraj Kapoor's plays. A 1927 advertisement announces a Hindustani music concert by Hirabai Barodekar [daughter of the Kirana *gharana* founder Abdul Karim Khan] on Wednesday, April 17, at 9.30pm. Through this decade and the next, such concerts were regularly held at the Opera House.

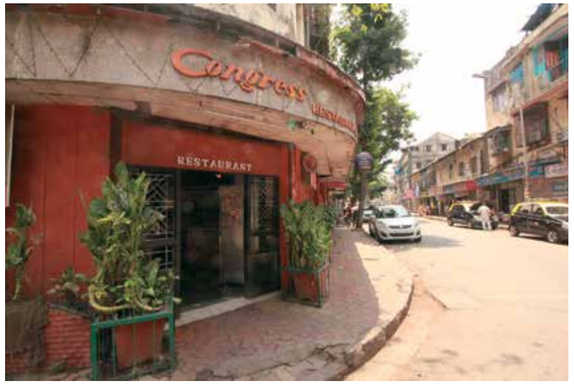
In another part of Girgaum is the Pila House area. This term, a corruption of the word 'playhouse', is used to refer to the Falkland Road-Grant Road area where there were several theatres from the 1850s, one of the oldest being the Grant Road Theatre, built in 1846. The neo-classical Edward Theatre, built in the 1880s, is still running, now as a film theatre. Newspaper advertisements from the 1880s indicate that apart from staging plays, these theatres were also used for variety entertainments and magic shows. Grant Road was at the heart of the mid- to late-19th century entertainment industry, showcasing the Parsi theatre (initially in Gujarati and then in Urdu/Hindustani) and the *sangeet natak* (in Marathi), both of which drew on the melodic structure of Hindustani *ragas* for their musical scores.

At the Marine Lines edge of Girgaum is the neo-classical Framjee Cowasjee Institute, a historically important building in Kalbadevi opposite Metro Cinema, which replaced the tank built in 1831 by the philanthropist Framjee Cowasjee (several tanks were filled up after Vihar Lake in 1860 and Tulsi Lake in 1897 began supplying water to Mumbai). The Gayan Uttejak Mandali, established in 1870, regularly held its functions in this building.

Opposite page: the Trinity Club on Pandit Bhaskarbuwa Bakhle Path, off Mughbat Lane, is on the upper floor of the chawl. This page above: the Trinity Club signage and the *kholi* that housed it – a room approximately 25 ft by 18 ft. Below: the street and the corridor; when musicians used to perform in the Club, the audience used to spill over into the chawl corridor outside, and people lined the staircase as well as the street outside listening for hours on end







This page top left: the Mumbai Sangeet Kalakar Mandal building. Top right: Congress restaurant in Girgaum is located in an area that still has active *mujra* halls. Left: At the Marine Lines edge of Girgaum is the neo-classical Framjee Cowasjee Institute building, which replaced the tank built in 1831 by the philanthropist Framjee Cowasjee. Centre: Alfred Talkies in Khetwadi, Grant Road. Below: the neo-classical Edward Theatre, built in the 1880s, is still running, now as a film theatre. All images are by Hemangi Kadu

It was also a popular venue for lectures and talks, including those by the Dyan Prasarak Mandali, established by Kaikhushro Kabraji, the founder of the Gayan Uttejak Mandali. The Institute library and reading room is still functional, while the hall is often rented out for sales of various kinds. A newspaper advertisement from 1886 announces "an entertainment of native music by the celebrated ustads from Agra, Nathankhan and Hussainbux" on Saturday, March 13, at 9pm, at the Institute, with reserved seats costing Rs.2. Thinking about the contours of the musical precinct allows us to grasp the intimate relationships between urban spaces in Mumbai and the music that they inspired, hosted, perpetuated and celebrated. The widespread passion for Hindustani music in Mumbai would arguably provide a new approach to understanding the formation of public space in the city. ◐

The exhibition Making Music – Making Space: Hindustani Sangeet in Bombay/Mumbai, *curated by Tejaswini Niranjana, will be held at Studio X, Mumbai, between June 15 and July 7, 2015. It includes architectural drawings, maps, projection mapping of musical neighbourhoods, video installations, listening stations for live recordings, and archival as well as contemporary photographs. Support for the project is from the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Heritage Conservation Society, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, and the India Foundation for the Arts.*

[1] Quoted by Janaki Bakhle, in *Two Men and Music* (2005), op. cit., from the Marathi text by Rajaram Humne, *Dhanya Janma Jaahla: Shrimati Hirabai Barodekar yaanche jeevan gane* (Poona, 1980), p.28.
[2] Mallikarjun Mansur, *Rasa Yatra: My Journey in Music*, trans. from Kannada by Rajshekhar Mansur (Delhi: Roli Books, 2005), p.42.
[3] The Theosophical Society, devoted to unconventional religious and spiritual pursuits, was founded in New York by Madame Blavatsky and Col.HS Olcott in 1875. In 1879 the founders settled in India, establishing the headquarters of the Society in Bombay.