



## From Our Desk

### BKA on How Can Architecture Be More Human

Architecture can be more human by focusing on the needs and experiences of individuals. This means creating spaces that foster a sense of belonging and community, while also being inclusive of cultural contexts and social diversity. By prioritizing emotional resonance and well-being, we can design environments that promote interaction and comfort. Utilizing local materials and traditional techniques bridges the gap between modern functionality and cultural identity. Ultimately, architecture should seek to create meaningful connections between people and their surroundings, enriching their lives and enhancing their experiences.

Many architects and thinkers argue that the modern architecture movement, characterized by tower blocks, apartments, and shopping malls, is unsuitable from social, cultural, and environmental perspectives. Early proponents believed modern architecture would significantly improve the living conditions of all, particularly the poorest populations. However, by selectively adopting parts of Le Corbusier's vision and implementing them superficially, architects created a stark divide between reality and intention (MacEwen, 1974). Consequently, instead of evolving positively, the modern movement degenerated into a mere style and the social content in architecture has drained away.

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## Recent Highlights

### Sustainable Architecture - Bridging Theory and Practice

The workshop on 'Sustainable Architecture - Bridging Theory and Practice', held on September 21 and 22, 2024, at Dakshinachitra Heritage Museum, Chennai, was an insightful experience. Led by Dr. Benny Kuriakose, it explored sustainable architecture within the Indian context. Key discussions focused on the integration of maintenance and conservation to

ensure long-term sustainability. Dr. Kuriakose emphasized the need for human-centered design. The workshop effectively combined traditional materials with modern practices, offering a holistic view of sustainable design.



## Meet Our Designs

### MRC Centre

The Mayor Ramanathan Chettiar (MRC) Centre, designed by Jeevan V and Benny Kuriakose, serves as a memorial and blends historic architectural elements from iconic Madras buildings

like the Senate House, Chepauk Palace, and Chettinad naattukottais. With shared facilities, the centre features a large hall and smaller halls, totaling 100,000 square feet, emphasizing natural light, ventilation, and energy efficiency. Broad verandahs and careful facade design, including arches and railings, create an ethnic and majestic look, ensuring the structure stands out from all elevations. Acoustics and cooling strategies are integral to the design. The design prioritizes functionality with or without air conditioning, while maintaining an impressive and historically inspired aesthetic.

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**What's New?**

# Reviving Heritage : Featured in Antarya Magazine

In the latest issue of Antarya magazine, Benny Kuriakose was featured for his insightful exploration of the restoration of four historic mosques in Kerala, emphasizing their architectural significance and cultural heritage. He discussed the transformative impact of these restorations, highlighting the importance of preserving historical structures while adapting them for contemporary use. The article beautifully illustrates how these mosques are given a "second lease of life," showcasing the potential of thoughtful restoration to revitalize community spaces and foster a deeper appreciation for history.

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**A second lease of life**  
BY NANDHINI SUNDAR  
FEATURING BENNY KURIAKOSE

**BENNY KURIAKOSE**

Every corner of India has a rich story to tell, the still standing heritage structures serving testimony to a vibrant past that is unmatched in both, the structural grandeur as well as the cultural lineage. The lush green State of Kerala is no exception, its towns and villages hosting this rich heritage in varied forms, beckoning the visitor to pause and absorb the past splendour and carry back unforgettable memories.

Cheraman Juma Masjid in 1958      Cheraman Juma Masjid in 2022

"True architectural progress lies in embracing our shared humanity, fostering connections, and creating spaces that genuinely reflect the diverse experiences of the communities they serve."

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