



MONA DOCTOR-PINGEL

PARTNER, STUDIO NAQSHBANDI



SUSTAINABILITY HAS BECOME A FASHIONABLE WORD TODAY; BUT IT MEANS NOTHING IF IT DOESN'T CHANGE OUR LIFESTYLES, OUR THINKING AND BEING



“I agree that architecture has to fulfill a function, but it is not simply utilitarian. [The built form] can fulfill or challenge one at many levels – from the physical and the vital, to the mental and, eventually, if it is a good work to the psychic level,” says Mona Doctor-Pingel.

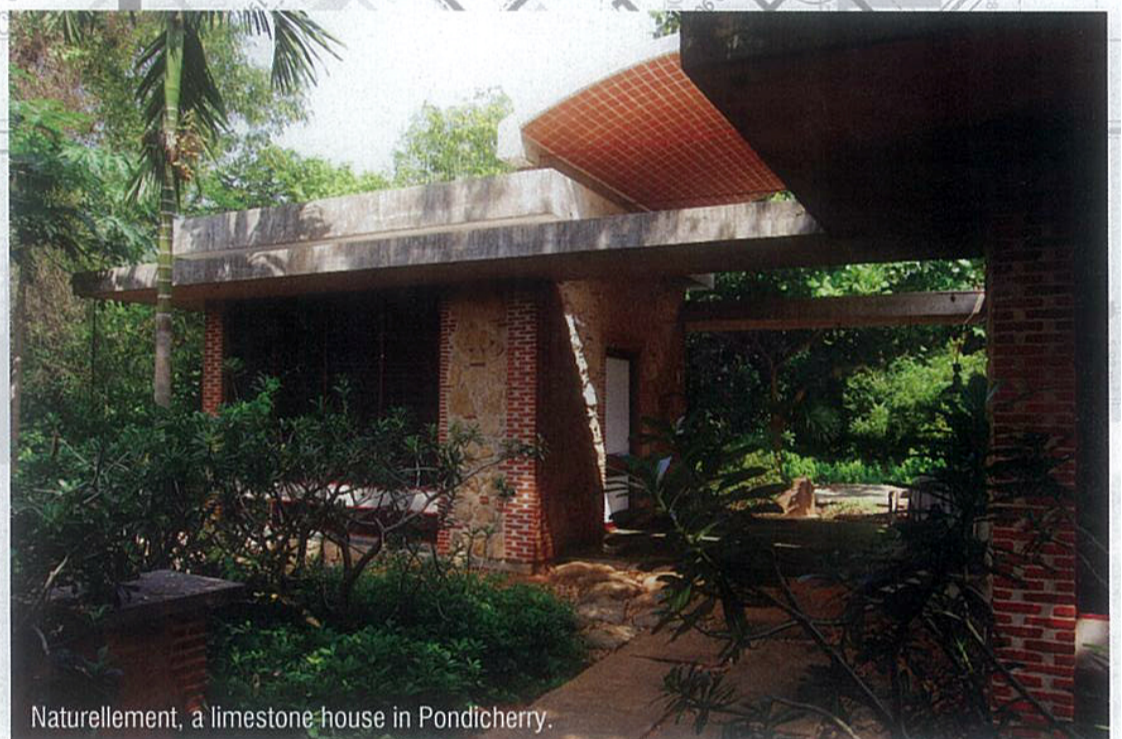
Doctor-Pingel graduated from the School of Architecture, CEPT, Ahmedabad, and later obtained a master's degree in appropriate technology from Flensburg University, Germany. Settled in Auroville since 1990, now as partner of Studio Naqshbandi, she offers a personalised approach to holistic solutions for designing and building, while aiming to find the right balance between man, nature and economy. Her work integrates interior design and landscaping, lending a sense of place and materiality that responds to the climate and culture of South India.

From 1990-92, as a fresh graduate, she worked with Poppo Pingel on two projects – the Mukuduvidu house and Udavi School. “My work involves designing and constructing with the principles of baubiology, such as earth-energies, electromagnetic fields, natural materials which are ecological and sustainable in the long run,” she says.

Doctor-Pingel has also been a core group member of the Dreamcatchers, a forum for envisioning and participatory city planning. She is currently a member of L'Avenir d' Auroville, Auroville's Town Planning and Development Group.

One of the communities where baubiology has been explored is Yantra, a group trying to integrate residences with workshops and offices in Auroshilpam, the industrial zone of Auroville.

With plenty of experience and exposure to international projects and architects,



Naturellement, a limestone house in Pondicherry.

she has her own role models. “There are many architects' works that I like. Since no human being is perfect, the architecture created can never be perfect from every angle. However, I have studied at CEPT and I do realise that BV Doshi's work and thinking has influenced me indirectly and, in recent years, more directly. Apart from that, the work of Poppo Pingel, whom she trained under in Auroville and later married, has also had a strong influence.

Doctor-Pingel believes there is definitely a need for change in the field of architecture. “The need of the hour is a change in consciousness. We need to create a society, a collective that aspires to change the world as we see and experience it today. Sustainability has become a fashionable word today, but it means nothing so long as it does not change our lifestyles and our way of thinking and being,” she observes.

She does not believe in using new materials for the sake of newness, and neither do imported products interest her. “I believe in ‘think global, act local’. Recycling of waste products from our new-age lifestyle to build something modern would be challenging,” she says.

Doctor-Pingel believes that architects must set good examples. In case of her work benefitting people in India, every project is a little step in this direction. She says: “I do see the role of architects as agents of change.”

Declaring that her work represents everything about her since every building reflects the personality of the architect who designs it, she says that “architecture is not an end in itself, but a way of life and a means to evolve.” Her most fulfilling project, so far, is her studio. And as for her best work, she says: “I like to think that the next one will be the best, or better.” **A&I**

• Aruna Rathod

27



19 - 105 iGEN TOP 50

Our third anniversary special features India's most prominent architects and interior designers. Their visions and missions, we believe, can give the country's built spaces a makeover for the better.

- Abhishek Ray
- Aftab Bandukwala
- Alan Abraham
- Annkur Khosla
- Anupama Achar
- Arjun Malik
- Arnab Banerji
- Ashiesh Shah
- Ashutosh Wad
- Ayaz Basrai
- Bharathi Prem
- Bijoy Ramachandran
- Brijesh Shaijal
- Chirag Jain
- Dipen Gada
- Eranna Yekbote
- Gunjan Gupta
- Kalhan Mattoo
- Kartik Punjabi
- Khushnu Panthaki Hoof
- Komal Porecha
- Krupa Zubin
- Kumpal Mittal
- Mahesh Naik
- Manisha Agarwal
- Mansi Mehta
- Martand Khosla
- Mona Pingel-Doctor**
- Ninad Tipnis
- Noel Jerald V
- Nuru Karim
- Pronit Nath
- Rahul Gore
- Rajiv Saini
- Ravi Sarangan
- Riyaz Himany
- Rohit Raj Mehndiratta
- Sameep Padora
- Santha Gour Mattoo
- Seema Puri Mullan
- Shabnam Gupta
- Shantanu Poredi
- Shibanee Sagar
- Shweta Kaushik
- Smaran Mallesh
- Sonal Sancheti
- Soumitro Ghosh
- Sumesh Menon
- Tanmay Tathagat
- Varun Kohli

12

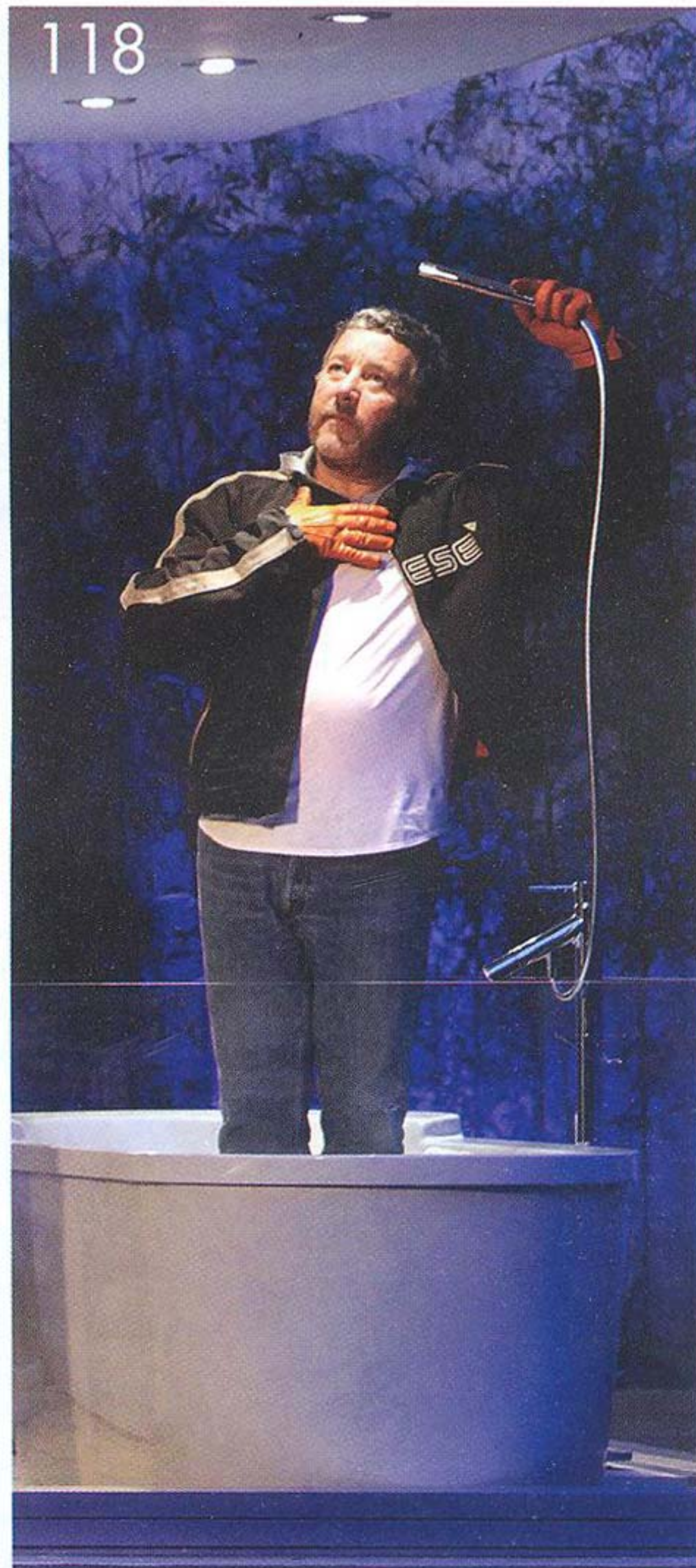


18



Cover: designed by Gunjan Gupta of Wrap.

118



18 SPECIAL REPORT: APSDA
An international conference on Design for Changing Lifestyles was organised by IIDD as part of the Asia Pacific Space Designers Alliance in Goa this year.

118 INTERVIEW: PHILIPPE STARCK
On the occasion of his 20th anniversary with Duravit kitchen and bathroom sanitaryware, French designer Philippe Starck speaks about his inspirations.