

The Black House: A workshop on Architecture

An International Level Inter College Students Workshop on Art & Architecture, Kala Bhavana, Visva Bharati , Santniketan

Supervised and built by Ramikinkar Baij, Nandalal Bose and additionally worked on by Prabhas Sen, Sukhomoy Mitra among other students along with students in 1938, may be considered an experiment firmly placed within the experimental ethos of those teaching at Kala Bhavan at the time. The Black House was made from mud, painted black and its walls covered with a variety of motifs, local and international, in low relief.

Kala Bhavan , the parent institution was founded on the integration of art and craft. A year before the making of their black house Shyamali, the mud house was built in the housing complex of Tagore . Nandalal and Ramkinker , especially Ramkinker had a hand in that . So in 1936 when Black house came up they already had some experience in making mud dwellings.

Early Image of The Black House (Saptaparni)

<http://www.find.org.in/it/alain-danielou-it/foto/rabindranath-tagore-it/>





Prsésent day Image of Black House

Black house begun in the year 1936.Factors involved in its making.

1) The project was collaborative and experimental and local techniques were investigated and absorbed within the design and construction. This methodology underscores the specificity of Shantiniketan modernity – the using of local techniques and materials yet infusing it with a universal aesthetic.

2) In the material and techniques and human resources that were harnessed, there are links with to the Swadeshi (Indian Independence) movement – Nandalal Bose and Tagore had differing approaches to Nationalism. Nandalal was more attracted to *Swadeshi* while Tagore was more assimilative and selective in his approach. 'I have it in mind to make Shantiniketan the connecting thread between India and the world...The days of petty nationalism are numbered - let the first step towards universal union occur in the fields of Bolpur. I want to make that place.' Thus also the tenets of Nationalism Vs Internationalism are imbued within this project.

3)Authorship and collaborative practice. Individual practices were absorbed within the

architecture and design of the building. Students signed their names – in different script on the top of the structure while the teachers decided not sign their names, giving up individual claims to the building and ceding instead to the opening of discourse towards its construction and design.

4)The design itself is a manifestation of openness. Here asymmetry is very masked -The building appears symmetrical but you are always in for surprise. There is no specific frontality to the architecture, there are in fact multiple exit and entry points, making for a democratic architecture.

5)The archiving aspect , most directly visible in the resource material that was absorbed, such as motifs, within the design. For example, the Bagh cave paintings, whose motifs appear within the wall, exist no more. Interestingly, the Mohenjodaro motifs have been magnified many times over which leads to interesting readings on the dynamic mechanics of information within source material that exist within archives.

Project Proposal.

Today, when Modernism is considered a spent force and the defining of the political in art is questionable, by exploring the different levels of collaborations that went into the design and making of the Black House, perhaps we might be able to take note of some of the elements that made this particular moment in Santiniketan so vibrant.

Through this exercise perhaps we might have new insights into the complex layering and textures that exist with the notion of Modernism that are, for a variety of reasons, no longer visible in our readings of it. This might allow us to recontextualise our understanding of a common proposal for art that would make it dynamic once again.

The Objective.

Students from different architecture college, design institute and Fine Arts Colleges will work as collaborators, which will engage with this specific building and come up with their articulations which can be an extension of the idea or a contextualization of the idea of the black house into material interpretations. There will be some experts both from visual arts and architecture and design background who will interact with the students and share their experience to facilitate the student groups in this respect.

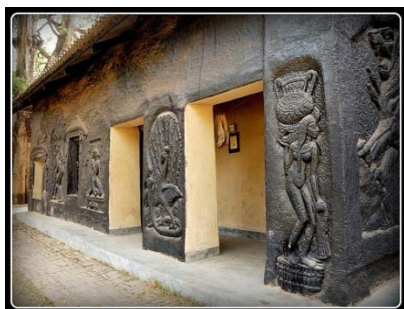
The participating students will be divided into five groups of students comprising from architecture, design and visual art background and try to engage with the context of black house and work towards a collaborative project that can culminate into a multiple model making/ drawing or other forms of visual interpretations. The Experts will work with individual groups facilitate and interact with individual groups in developing their process of engagement with the site black House.

Participating Institutes

1. SCHOOL OF PLANNING & ARCHITECTURE(SPA), NEW DELHI
2. M.S. UNIVERSITY, BARODA
3. S.N. SCHOOL OF ART, UNIVERSITY OF HYDERABAD
4. RABINDRA BHARATI UNIVERSITY, KOLKATA
5. KALA BHAVANA, VISVA-BHARATI, SANTINIIKETAN
6. DEPTT. OF ARCHITECTURE (UNIVERSITY OF ASIA PACIFIC,BRAC UNIVERSITY, BANGLADESH UNIVERSITY, BANGLADESH.
7. CHARUKALA(INSTITUTE OF FINE ARTS) , UNIVERSITY OF DHAKA BANGLADESH

NAMES OF THE 5 EXPERTS

1. INDRAPRAMIT ROY (Faculty , Department of Painting, MSU, Baroda)
2. PROF. VINODA GANESH (JNTU for Art & Architecture, Hyderabad)
3. MR.AROBIN SALAUDDIN AHMED (Architect,Bangladesh)
4. CHHATRAPATI DUTTA(Artist, Kolkata)
5. PROF. JAYARAJ SUNDARESHAN(UCL, University College London))



Details of Black House

BLACK HOUSE: A WORKSHOP ON ARCHITECTURE

An International Level Inter College Students' Workshop on Art & Architecture

Programe Schedule

4 Groups of 15 Students(with six students from outside colleges and nine students from five departments of Kala Bhavana) and 5 Experts

17/03/15 :

BREAK FAST IN THE PURVAPALLI GUEST HOUSE

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| 10am-11am
(Nandan) | : Initiation of the workshop in Nandan, Kala Bhavana Campus, Visva Bharati

: Welcome Address by Student of Kala Bhavana
: Welcome Address by the Principal, Kala Bhavana
: Inauguration of the workshop by Vice Chancellor, Visva Bharati
: Release of the Book on Kala Bhavana titled “ Kala Bhavana: An Overview ” by Vice Chancellor, Visva Bharati |
| 11am-11:30am | : Introductory Note on the concept and context of the Workshop by Anshuman Das Gupta |
| 11:30 am - 1pm | : A walk through the Black House and other architectures in Santiniketan Campus and orientation by Anshuman DasGupta , Sanchayan Ghosh and Sajad Hamdani together with the whole student groups and the Experts |
| 1pm-2pm | : LUNCH AT MALANCHHA |
| 2pm to 4:30pm
(Nandan) | : 4 Experts make presentations of their own activities (20 mins each) followed by Group discussions.
(Experts: Prof. Indrapramit Roy (Faculty , Department of Painting, MSU), Prof. Vinoda Ganesh (JNTU for Art & Architecture, Hyderabad), Mr. Arobin Salauddin Ahmed (Architect, Bangladesh), Chhatrapati Dutta(Artist, Kolkata) |
| 5pm-6:30pm | : First Earth-Uncompromising Ecological Architecture –A film directed by The Red Pharmacy |
| 7pm to 8pm | : A multimedia Installation Performance by Students of Kala Bhavana around Black House |
- DINNER AT PURVAPALLI GUEST HOUSE

18/03/15**BREAK FAST IN THE PURVA PALLI GUEST HOUSE**

- 10am -1pm : Workshop continues
- 1pm- 2pm : LUNCH AT MALANCHHA
- 2pm -5pm : Workshop continues
- 6pm-8pm : Presentation by the participating students of SPA (School of
(Nandan) Planning & Architecture),New Delhi (45mins) and (15mins
discussion)
- : Presentation by the participating students of MS University,
Baroda, Gujarat (45mins) and (15mins discussion)

DINNER AT PURVA PALLI GUEST HOUSE**19/03/15****BREAK FAST IN THE PURVAPALLI GUEST HOUSE**

- 10am -1pm : Workshop continues
- 1pm-2pm :LUNCH AT MALANCHHA
- 2pm -5pm : (Workshop continues)
- 5:30pm-8:30pm : Presentation by the participating students from Department of
(Nandan) Architecture,(University of Asia Pacific. ,BRAC University, Bangladesh
University) Bangladesh(30mins) and (15mins discussion)
- :Presentation by the participating students from Charukala(Institute of
Fine Arts), Dhaka, Bangladesh (30mins) and (15mins discussion)
- : Presentation by the participating students S N School, Hyderabad
Central University,(45mins) and (15mins) discussion)

DINNER AT PURVAPALLI GUEST**20/03/15****BREAKFAST AT PURVA PALLI GUEST HOUSE**

- 10am -1pm : Workshop continues
- 1pm-2pm : LUNCH AT MALANCHHA
- 2pm -5pm :(Workshop continues)

5:30pm-6:30pm: Presentation by Prof. Jayaraj Sundareshan (Associate Professor UCL, University College London)

6:30pm-8:30pm: Presentation by the participating students from Rabindra Bharati (Nandan) University, Kolkata, (45mins) and (15mins discussion)

: Presentation by the participating students from Kala Bhavana (45mins) and (15mins discussion)

DINNER AT PURVAPALLI GUEST HOUSE

21/03/15

BREAKFAST AT PURVAPALLI GUEST HOUSE

10am -1pm : Workshop culminates into Open Studio

1pm-2pm : LUNCH AT MALANCHHA

3pm - 7pm : Display and discussion of process within the different groups.

6:30 PM onwards: CAMP FIRE & PICNIC IN KALA BHAVANA CAMPUS

P.T.O.

COORDINATORS:

Workshop Details and Concept:

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Workshop Programme Schedule:

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