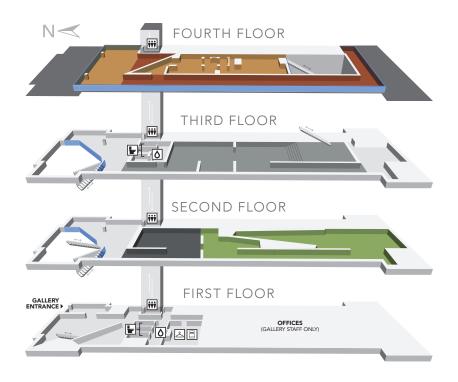


# ARCHITECTURE FOR THE PEOPLE

# EXHIBITION GUIDE FALL/WINTER 2020







#### **EXHIBITION BY THEME**

- SHAPING AN INTEGRATED EDUCATION
- BUILDING ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS
- CREATING A LIVABLE CITY
- HOME AND IDENTITY
- BHUTAN:
  A PHOTOGRAPHIC ESSAY

#### **LEGEND**

- **₽** RESTROOM
- **O** WATER FOUNTAIN
- **iii** ELEVATOR
- △ COAT/BAG ROOM
- CATALOG PICK-UP



#### **DEAR FRIENDS.**

All of us at Wrightwood 659 extend a warm and safe welcome back into the gallery. Our first priority has been – and will continue to be – the health, safety, and well-being of our guests and our team.

We have adopted the now-customary health and cleanliness standards and protocols throughout the building. The following are just some of the procedures we have instituted to ensure a safe environment for everyone:

- Visitation has been limited to a restricted number of guests;
- Admission entry times have been reduced from hourly to three discrete 90-minute blocks;
- After each session, the gallery will be closed and all high-touch surfaces sanitized:
- Coat and bag check has been converted to self-serve;
- All visitors are required to wear face coverings over their mouth and nose;
- This exhibition guide has been produced so visitors can avoid crowding around wall text panels. All of the primary information in the show posted on wall labels and graphics has been reproduced in its entirety.

For further information and specific details on how we are playing it safe, visit wrightwood659.org.

COVER: Balkrishna Doshi, Sangath Architect's Studio (Miniature painting), Ahmedabad, 1980, © Vastushilpa Foundation, Ahmedabad.

# ARCHITECTURE FOR THE PEOPLE

Wrightwood 659 is honored to be the first North American venue to present this important retrospective of the work of the seminal Indian architect Balkrishna Doshi. Despite winning the Pritzker Prize – one of the most prestigious awards in the field of architecture – in 2018, Doshi is not as well known in the United States as he deserves to be. This exhibition brings to a wider audience his extensive contributions as an architect, educator, social scientist, city planner, artist, author, and founder of numerous institutions. In his nearly 70 years of practice, Doshi has fundamentally altered the built environment of India, celebrating its architectural heritage while creating new forms.

Doshi's work displays his core belief in the power of architecture as a radical and profound act, one that can create lasting positive change in the ways people relate to one another and live collectively. He believes architecture in and of itself is incomplete, and it is only in its interaction with the inhabitant (whether an individual or a community) that its potential is fully realized. This philosophy is evident in his approach to design. Doshi speaks of and seeks a "living" architecture; in his work, people, nature, and the built environment are melded in active dialogue, all evolving together.

He remains one of the last living links to two of the great masters of Modernism – Le Corbusier and Louis Kahn. It is particularly fitting that his work be shown here at Wrightwood 659, cradled within the remarkable design of yet another virtuoso, Tadao Ando, who also draws inspiration from those two pioneers.

Doshi's work, like that of his mentors, has forever changed the landscape of India. He has proven that thoughtful design can democratize space



beyond just that of the physical world: it can beneficially alter social and cultural realms as well.

We hope that this illuminating exhibition demonstrates the principles that drive Doshi's architecture are much needed – and applicable – everywhere.

Gina PollaraCOO, Wrightwood 659



Vitra Design Museum

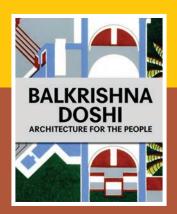
WÜSTENROT STIFTUNG



VĀSTU SHILPĀ FOUNDATION

Wrightwood 659's presentation of Balkrishna Doshi: Architecture for the People is made possible by support from Alphawood Exhibitions.

The exhibition is a project by the Vitra Design Museum and the Wüstenrot Foundation in cooperation with the Vastushilpa Foundation.



## EXHIBITION CATALOG

A limited number of catalogs of the international exhibition Balkrishna Doshi Architecture For The People are available for purchase at Wrightwood 659. The 383-page catalog features all of Doshi's most important projects and includes essays by renowned authors such as Kazi Ashraf, Kenneth Frampton, Juhani Pallasmaa, and Samanth Subramanian. Countless photographs provide fascinating insights into the complex spatial compositions of Doshi's structures. A detailed chronology outlines the architect's impressive 60year career, which has been influenced as much by Le Corbusier and Louis Kahn as by Indian building traditions.





Want to study a specific design of Doshi's, listen to the music of the exhibition, or watch related videos? Visit the exhibition's website at wrightwood659.org.



#### SHAPING AN INTEGRATED EDUCATION

What is the true nature of a campus? How can it promote interdisciplinary exchange and encourage learning both inside and outside the classroom? How can it adapt to change and accommodate growth?

The Centre for Environmental Planning and Technology (CEPT) in Ahmedabad was built over a period of fifty years, from 1962 to 2012. The centre's mission is to study, design, and develop the environment as a whole. Today the multidisciplinary campus is the home of the School of Architecture (1968), the School of Planning (1972), the Visual Arts Centre (1975–79), the Kanoria Centre for Arts (1984–2012), the School of Design (1991), and the Amdavad Ni Gufa art gallery (1994).

To foster interaction and dialogue among students and faculty, Doshi designed the School of Architecture and its campus as

free-flowing spaces, reflecting his philosophy of "education without doors." Doshi not only founded the School of Architecture in 1962. he also served as its dean, and it was only in 2008 that he ended his role as a teacher at the school. As may be expected, his influence on the curriculum was strong. He emphasized the architect's duty to society, incorporated art and music and other allied disciplines, provided laboratories and workshop facilities for research and experimentation, and established an international exchange programme. As an architect and planner as well as a policymaker and teacher, Doshi has changed the face of architectural education in India.

LEFT: Balkrishna Doshi, Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore, 1977, 1992, © Vinay Panjwani India. ABOVE: Balkrishna Doshi in collaboration with M.F. Husain, Amdavad Ni Gufa art gallery, Ahmedabad, 1994, © Iwan Baan 2018.





#### SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE, CENTRE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND TECHNOLOGY (CEPT), AHMEDABAD, INDIA

YEAR: 1968

CLIENT: Ahmedabad Education Society (AES)

BUILT AREA:

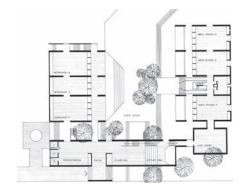
4,275 m<sup>2</sup> (approx. 46,000 ft<sup>2</sup>)

The Centre for Environmental Planning and Technology (CEPT) grew out of the School (now Faculty) of Architecture, a multi-disciplinary institution founded upon the belief that education is nourished by interdisciplinary interactions.

The site was once home to an old brick kiln surrounded by low-lying land, and its topography would influence the campus layout and give rise to the main features of its design. The low ground was left open while the site of the kiln and

hills provided locations for open classrooms and spaces for other activities

The main school building is arranged along the north-south axis, ensuring each studio benefits from the northern light and southerly breezes. This helps maximize airflow through the building and minimize the sun's harsh impact. The school's main double staircase functions as a symbolic gateway to the building and offers a place where spontaneous discussions can take place.







#### KANORIA CENTRE FOR ARTS, AHMEDABAD, INDIA

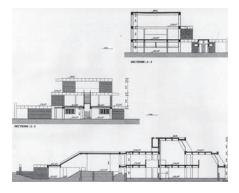
YEAR: 1984, 2012 (art gallery) CLIENT: Urmila Kanoria

The Kanoria Centre for Arts in Ahmedabad is located on the campus of CEPT University. It was commissioned by Urmila Kanoria, a member of a family of eminent industrialists and philanthropists. The initial intent was to provide a work environment for art students and professional artists and promote their future careers. The institution's exact purpose evolved further over the course of several discussions between the architect, the client, and the artistic community.

The complex evolved gradually between 1984 and 2012.
Commissioned first was the building housing the administrative offices and artist studios. Its spatial

organization reflects the dramatic relationship between supervision and freedom. In 2005 a further administrative building was erected, and in 2012 an art gallery was added at its gable end. The roof's undulating shape highlights the artistic freedom reigning here.

The use of exposed brick and concrete resonates with the architecture of the adjacent buildings on the CEPT University campus and blends harmoniously with its overall design.







#### AMDAVAD NI GUFA, AHMEDABAD, INDIA

YEAR: 1994

CLIENT: Maqbool Fida Husain

SITE AREA:

1,000 m<sup>2</sup> (approx. 11,000 ft<sup>2</sup>)

BUILT AREA:

280 m² (approx. 3,000 ft²)

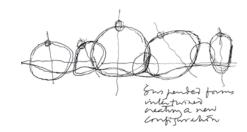
Amdavad Ni Gufa was not a commissioned project. The idea was born when renowned painter and sculptor Maqbool Fida Husain approached Doshi when seeking a site for an art gallery. They had been friends for many years, and they often met to discuss their different pursuits.

Doshi wanted the Gufa (Gujarati for "cave") to reflect his thirty-five years of experience and mark a new phase in his career, but Husain's free-spirited attitude posed something of a challenge. While working together on the Gufa's design, they began to question fundamental

architectural concepts, including the meanings of function, space, structure, form, and technology.

The plan evolved out of a set of intersecting circles and ellipses that led to the creation of an amorphous space with non-rectilinear surfaces such as an undulating floor, curvilinear walls, a domed ceiling, and slanted columns.

Computers played an important role in the Gufa's design, including the thin, double shell structure of ferrocement allowing for the optimal use of materials. All construction was carried out by unskilled workers from nearby tribal villages using simple hand tools.





#### **BUILDING ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS**

How does one create institutions that encourage dialogue – how can they remain open-ended and ambiguous? Is it possible to design spontaneity, communication, and flexibility?

Doshi's institutional buildings demonstrate a high level of community awareness. By reconciling modern and traditional approaches, he has created schools, colleges, and research institutions whose structures encourage interaction and exchange without imposing formal authority. The grounds and buildings of the Indian Institute of Management in Bangalore, for example, form an integrated context in which classrooms and courtyards, staircases, corridors, and paths are all part of the learning space. The attention given to light and shade, gardens and greenery, and transitional spaces witnesses one of Doshi's

primary concerns – to give people the opportunity to pause, wander, or simply lose themselves. Shifting axes and a blurring of boundaries between inside and outside also characterize his own architectural studio, Sangath.

The use of local materials and building techniques makes the architecture appear timeless. It also reflects Doshi's respect for Indian vernacular architecture, not least its solutions to the challenges posed by the harsh local climate. Gardens, fountains, and trees are pleasing to look at, but they also provide coolness and shade, while verandahs and vaulted roofs reduce solar gain. In this sense, Doshi's integration of traditional elements is also a mark of his environmental awareness.

ABOVE: Balkrishna Doshi, School of Architecture, Centre for Environmental Planning and Technology, Ahmedabad, 1968, © Vinay Panjwani India.





#### INDIAN INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT (IIM), BANGALORE, INDIA

YEAR: 1977 (phase 1),

1992 (phase 2)

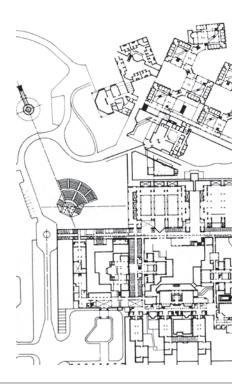
CLIENT: Indian Institute of Management (IIM)

**BUILT AREA:** 

54,000 m² (approx. 581,250 ft²)

The Indian Institute of Management is a leading academic institution spread over sixty hectares in Bangalore, also known as "The City of Gardens." The large campus was built over a period of twenty years and was conceived as a series of courtyards that harmonizes with the city's comfortable tropical climate and lush green areas.

The building's strict orthogonal plan is broken up by the shifting axis and variable scale of the corridors. Fringed with greenery, these informal spaces invite students, teachers, and visitors to linger and talk. The changing light entering through pergolas and openings lends the complex its dynamic character.







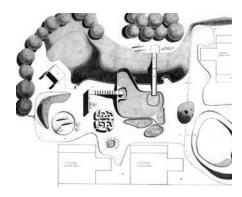
#### SHREYAS FOUNDATION COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL, AHMEDABAD, INDIA

YEAR: 1963

CLIENT: Leenaben Mangaldas

The Shreyas school complex was Doshi's first substantial commission for Leena Mangaldas. whose mother Sarladevi Sarabhai introduced the Montessori school concept in Ahmedabad in 1924. Doshi conceived a village of learning and growth for the undulating thirty-acre site. The campus emerged by transforming valleys into theatres and fields into parks interspersed with clusters of classrooms. The freestanding classroom buildings with attached verandahs are connected by means of corridors or pathways open to the sky. These open and closed spaces are intended as extensions of the learning spaces.

The buildings merge with the surrounding landscape and open upon a hilly playground shaped by the site's natural topography. The interaction between landscape and buildings reinforces the idea of unlimited time and space for learning.







#### MAHATMA GANDHI LABOUR INSTITUTE (GLI), AHMEDABAD, INDIA

YEAR: 1982

CLIENT: Gandhi Labour

Institute (GLI)
BUILT ARFA:

5,040 m<sup>2</sup> (approx. 54,000 ft<sup>2</sup>)

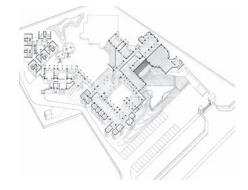
The Gandhi Labour Institute is a state-owned institution which conducts research, training, seminars, and workshops in labour management and welfare. It includes offices, an auditorium, exhibition spaces, conference and seminar rooms, guest rooms, and staff quarters.

The building is dominated by the silhouettes of the barrel-vaulted roof covered in ceramic mosaic. The large central courtyard with its dual colonnade connects the various areas with one another and reflects the idea of the cosmic principle of

Brahman capturing the sun, moon, and sky.

The plan's strong orthogonal geometry is skewed towards the living quarters while separating them from the rest of the campus – a distinction that is also subtly imposed by a flat roof covering the hostel, a contrast to the vaults over the public parts of the building.

Built shortly after Sangath was completed, the institute represents an example of Doshi's deeper examinations of multidirectional, vaulted forms.







## SANGATH ARCHITECT'S STUDIO, AHMEDABAD, INDIA

YEAR: 1980, 2010 (extension) CLIENT: Balkrishna Doshi

**BUILT AREA:** 

585 m<sup>2</sup> (approx. 6,300 ft<sup>2</sup>)

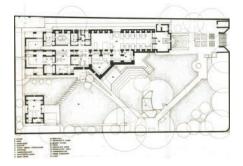
Sangath – from the Gujarati for "moving together through participation" – is Balkrishna Doshi's own design studio, where today three generations work alongside one another.

To reach the partially subterranean studio with its characteristic barrel vaults, one must first pass through a series of open and closed spaces intermingled with natural elements.

The entire ensemble, with stepped amphitheatre, raised plinths, and the silhouette of the vaults covered in a layer of broken ceramic tiles, simultaneously merges with and rises up out of the surrounding landscape.

The studio is a study in climaticallyresponsive architecture. Double-shell, concrete barrel vaults insulated with hollow ceramic cylinders and glass wool as well as water channelled along the building's periphery help keep the building cool during the hottest summer months.

Natural light enters the studio spaces through window openings in the walls, skylights in the vaults, and glass bricks on flat slabs. Undulating interior levels and volumes make the studio space flexible, adaptable, and conducive to interactions, and it can quickly be converted into a concert or lecture hall.







# NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FASHION TECHNOLOGY (NIFT), NEW DELHI, INDIA

YEAR: 1994

CLIENT: National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT)

SITE AREA:

11,650 m² (approx. 125,400 ft²)

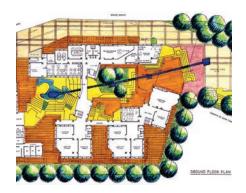
BUILT AREA:

13,570 m<sup>2</sup> (approx. 146,000 ft<sup>2</sup>)

India's first fashion institute faced uncertainty in terms of funding as well as its curricula. The site had neither a specific context nor defined features, so Doshi came up with a story of his own – the "Myth of the Sacred Spring." This story gave rise to a varied ensemble grouped around a central courtyard with a stepped well. The design of the surfaces and facades conveys an impression of heterogeneity and organic growth, but in fact all the different structures belong to a single large building.

The inward-looking courtyard emphasizes the inner search for creativity, while the exaggerated multidimensional views lend it a collage-like character spanning from the ancient to the futuristic.

These buildings with their varied spatial and material treatments provide an opportunity for the reinterpretation of time, space, tradition, and style – an apt architectural backdrop for the designers' creative processes and fashion shoots.





How do people live? Where do they go, what do they do? How does one create a city plan that encourages communication and interaction?

Doshi's concern with people's everyday lives characterizes his urban planning as well as his architecture. He believes that the built environment has a profound effect on people - their wellbeing, their sense of identity, their communal spirit. His understanding of the myriad issues involved is reflected in his fascination with Indian miniature painting, where a single multi-layered image can tell an entire story. The challenge is to integrate complexity and contradictions into a functioning whole. In terms of urban planning, this means roads and pedestrian paths, plazas and squares, public buildings, residential buildings, office buildings, commercial buildings, historic monuments,

temples, and cultural institutions, but most of all people and the activities they engage in – street hawkers, bank directors, families. To improve the quality of urban life and create livable cities, Doshi has adapted traditional principles such as compact planning, walkable distances, and multifunctional land use to the present-day context. As with his architecture, his aim has always been to encourage dialogue and exchange, break down social barriers, and inspire people with a sense of belonging.

ABOVE: Balkrishna Doshi, Housing for the Life Insurance Corporation of India, Ahmedabad, 1973, © Vastushilpa Foundation, Ahmedabad.





#### PREMABHAI HALL, AHMEDABAD, INDIA

YEAR: 1976

CLIENT: Gujarat Vidhyasabha

BUILT AREA:

6,000 m<sup>2</sup> (approx. 64,500 ft<sup>2</sup>)

The theatre was commissioned by the Gujarat Vidhyasabha, a Gujarati literary institute of national renown. It is located at Bhadra Plaza in the 600-year-old walled city of Ahmedabad adjacent to Bhadra Fort.

With seating for 1,000, the theatre was designed as an important social and cultural hub. Whereas the main hall is elevated above street level, its lower level facing Bhadra Plaza is both accessible and inviting.

The design for Premabhai Hall underwent various iterations ranging from an egg-shaped lattice structure floating in the square to

the stepped cantilevered section reaching out towards the main plaza seen today.

High apertures set in the ceilings and walls allow natural light to cascade into the spacious foyers and stairwells, making the solidity of their concrete surfaces appear to almost melt away.







#### REVITALIZATION OF BHADRA PRECINCTS, AHMEDABAD, INDIA

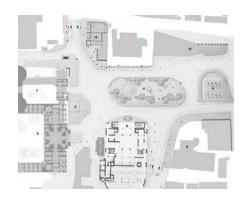
YEAR: 2014

CLIENT: Ahmedabad Municipal

Corporation

The maze-like network of buildings and streets in Ahmedabad's 600-year-old walled city culminates in Bhadra Plaza. The plaza connects the area's major historical monuments and provides space for formal and informal markets, cultural gatherings, and religious processions. By 2009 buildings had encroached upon the plaza, and only traces of the original outline remained.

The new proposal, commissioned by the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation and designed by Doshi in collaboration with CEPT University, was implemented in 2014. It sought to make the historic core more pedestrian-friendly by re-routing traffic and promoting the use of public transport, expanding the area's existing large parks, and conserving heritage monuments. The plaza's revitalization offers a place for informal and formal activities while maintaining the quality and character of a vast public space.







### CENTRAL BANK OF INDIA, AHMEDABAD, INDIA

YEAR: 1975

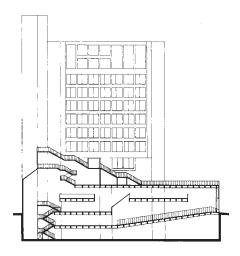
CLIENT: Central Bank of India

Established in 1911, the Central Bank of India was the country's first commercial bank to be wholly owned and managed by Indians. The site for the Ahmedabad branch is located in the old part of the city directly opposite the famous mosque of Sidi Saiyyed built in 1572.

This fourteen-storey building was one of Doshi's first highrise projects, and its design was an experiment in developing a new typology suitable for the congested areas of the old city with its increasing vehicular traffic. The primary goal was to create an urban public place above street level by means of elevated plazas. Footbridges were envisioned

that would connect the bank to Premabhai Hall and other nearby buildings.

Whereas the ground and first floors were intended to host commercial offices, public areas were to be found on the second and third floors. Office spaces were housed on the floors above the plaza level. The top two floors were planned as a penthouse.







#### DIGAMBAR JAIN TEMPLE COMPLEX, PUNE, INDIA (unrealized)

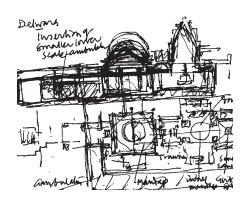
YEAR: 2004 CLIENT: Nimish Shah

The Digambar Jain Temple Complex was commissioned by a private client and was to be located on a 500-metre-long site on flat agricultural land. The design of the main temple planned for the highest point was intended to reflect the Jain tenet of openness. The temple is accessed by an elevated ramp, with the ascent underscoring the significance of the visit. The ramp's irregular design reinforces the "self-manifested" nature (swayambhoo) of this sacred monument apparently rising from deep within the earth.

The stepwell, temple, and statue of the Jain saviour Bahubali were

arranged to form a triangle, a symbol of the sacred trinity of mind, body, and soul.

The original plan called for a hostel and staff quarters and was gradually expanded to include streets, exhibition spaces, seminar rooms, auditoriums, and other amenities.







#### JNANA PRAVAH CENTRE FOR CULTURAL STUDIES AND RESEARCH, VARANASI, INDIA

YEAR: 1999

CLIENT: Bimla Poddar

**BUILT AREA:** 

1,573 m² (approx. 16,900 ft²)

The Jnana Pravah Centre for Cultural Studies and Research, commissioned by philanthropist Bimla Poddar, is located in Varanasi (also known as Benares), a city rich in Hindu culture and traditions. It sits atop a site sloping down towards the River Ganges, one of India's most sacred rivers. The centre houses research facilities as well as a museum.

The ground floor was designed as an open space overlooking the river with an undulating plinth and multiple levels allowing for various kinds of activities. The

building's design incorporates two interconnected masses symbolizing the figures of the Hindu gods Shiva and Parvati curving in towards one another, a motif often found in Indian miniature paintings. A slightly recessed cleft on the upper floor appears to separate the building's two interlocking forms.







#### OMPURI TEMPLE, MATAR, INDIA

YEAR: 1998

CLIENT: Ompuri Trust

building's ephemeral power and encourages visitors to open their own "third eye."

Although only the shrine was built, the Ompuri temple complex was originally designed as a larger dependency of Pondicherry's Shri Aurobindo Ashram, founded by Shri Aurobindo and Mirra Alfassa – known as the "Mother" – two of the many spiritual yogis and philosophers active in the early 1900s.

The shrine was designed with three zones of movement in mind – a meandering path, a gradual rise in elevation, and the light tracking around the inside of the conical structure. The latter falls through an oculus at the apex to illuminate the sacred marble platform decked with flowers. The plan's eye-like shape is suggestive of the









#### LALBHAI DALPATBHAI INSTITUTE OF INDOLOGY, AHMEDABAD, INDIA

YEAR: 1962

CLIENT: L. D. Bhartiya Sanskriti Vidyamandir

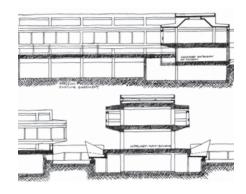
BUILT AREA:

2,858 m² (approx. 30,700 ft²)

The Institute of Indology was founded to collect, preserve, and document Jain palm-leaf manuscripts with their painted illustrations propagating the virtues of Jainism and to provide a place for graduate teaching and research. The building represents a milestone in Doshi's professional development, and it is in the institute that his ideas for an independent, specifically Indian architectural vocabulary first manifests itself. Its design was inspired by traditional architectural characteristics such as the high plinths and full-length verandahs

found at upashrayas, a kind of monastery for Jain monks. Doshi reinterpreted traditional wooden architecture using slender, precast concrete elements.

Energy efficiency and the creation of optimal conditions for the manuscripts were integral aspects of the building's design. The slanted windows in the basement let in indirect light, the verandahs provide shade, and the surrounding trees and water basins also help to cool the building.







#### MASTERPLAN AND URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES, VIDHYADHAR NAGAR, JAIPUR, INDIA

YEAR: 1984

CLIENT: Jaipur Development

Authority SITE AREA:

2,870,000 m<sup>2</sup> (approx. 1 sq. mile)

Population 100,000

from an ancient treatise on town planning and architecture, adopted a rectilinear road structure to divide the site and give prominence to the cardinal directions while segregating areas for activities based on social, cultural, and economic status.

Located in the outskirts of Jaipur, Vidhyadhar Nagar is an energy-conscious, 350-hectare plan for a city inspired by the old walled city of Jaipur. The proposed masterplan is a judicious amalgamation of traditional town planning principles, contemporary requirements, and contextual realities. The amenities and infrastructure were designed to meet the needs of 400,000 people in the 1980s.

Its *prastara* configuration, one of the eight planning principles



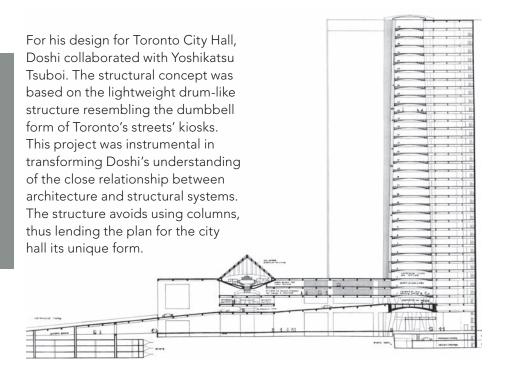




# TORONTO CITY HALL (COMPETITION), TORONTO, CANADA

YEAR: 1959

CLIENT: Municipal Government of Toronto



25



#### **HOME AND IDENTITY**

Where is home? What is public, what is private? How do you engage the community and create a sense of identity?

Affordable housing has been a pressing issue in India for many decades. Doshi began developing new approaches to social and experimental housing in the late 1960s. Inspired by Mahatma Gandhi's ideas of empowerment, he combined prefabrication techniques with local craftsmanship to create modular systems that allow the inhabitants to customize their homes and adapt them to their needs, their personal preferences, and their economic means. The possibility to participate and actively shape their surroundings was a way of giving residents a sense of belonging and community.

Based on in-depth studies of traditional Indian settlements.

Doshi's housing projects provide open-ended infrastructures that adapt easily to future growth.

Transitions between public and private are fluid, and a network of open spaces brings people from different backgrounds together, helping to blur social boundaries.

Doshi's housing developments have become an instrument of social and economic change, realizing his aim of "converting shelters into homes, housing into communities, and cities into magnets of opportunities."

ABOVE: Balkrishna Doshi, Aranya Low Cost Housing, Indore, 1989. © Vastushilpa Foundation. Ahmedabad.





#### ARANYA LOW COST HOUSING, INDORE, INDIA

YEAR: 1989

CLIENT: Indore Development

Authority
SITE AREA:

6,500 m<sup>2</sup> (approx. 70,000 ft<sup>2</sup>)

**BUILT AREA:** 

100,000 m² (approx. 25 acres)

Aranya Low Cost Housing was aimed primarily at Indore's "Economically Weaker Sections" (EWS) as well as the city's homeless population.

The challenge was to promote a new model of economic growth and empowerment while improving the standards of living for its residents. Doshi's design was executed in collaboration with the Indore Development Authority, the World Bank, and India's Housing and Urban Development Corporation Limited.

Each of the 322 ft² EWS plots includes a plinth, toilet, and an electrical connection. The government allocated each family a plot using a lottery system. By providing only the essentials, the idea was to empower families to build their own houses and make additions according to their abilities. Sixty sample houses were constructed to demonstrate the different forms the individual homes might take.

Twenty years on, the concept has proved a success. Residents have used their spaces to generate additional income and now belong to the middle-class, accomplishments that bear witness to the economic security land ownership and the virtues of choice, freedom, and social cohesion can provide.





#### HOUSING FOR THE LIFE INSURANCE CORPORATION OF INDIA (LIC), AHMEDABAD, INDIA

YEAR: 1973

CLIENT: Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC)

BUILT AREA:

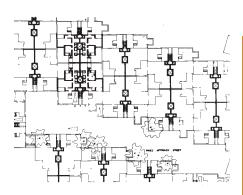
40,000 m<sup>2</sup> (approx. 10 acres)

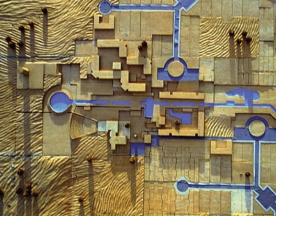
Doshi's design for this residential project for the corporation's employees in Ahmedabad was aimed at breaking down economic boundaries and generating a sense of belonging. Employees ranging from managers to low-level service employees were integrated into each block.

Each residential block is composed of six units stacked atop one another over three floors. The smallest residential unit for service employees was symbolically placed above the other units to encourage

the various groups to intermingle and overcome stigmas relating to social hierarchy. The pyramidshaped blocks include cascading terraces which residents can use for extensions to the original structure.

The shared staircases encourage chance encounters between residents and facilitate social interaction.







#### ELECTRONICS CORPORATION OF INDIA LTD. (ECIL) TOWNSHIP, HYDERABAD, INDIA

YEAR: 1972

CLIENT: Electronics Corporation

of India Ltd. (ECIL)

**BUILT AREA:** 

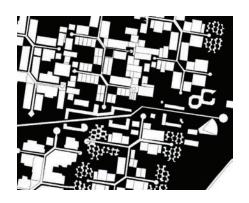
58,200 m<sup>2</sup> (approx. 14 acres)

This residential project for employees of the Electronics Corporation of India is situated in the hilly and rocky terrain of Hyderabad. Apart from precast concrete beams and slabs cast in situ, the project highlights the use of rubble masonry, a local construction technique.

The masterplan envisioned vocational training centres and small-scale industries as the township's primary economic anchors. The centre is interspersed with facilities such as a school, a

playground, a bazaar, a hospital, a post office, and a network of rainwater tanks and water channels.

The economically-designed, compact residential units include central service bays and standardized kitchens, lavatories, and entrances. The flexible living spaces can easily be modified to fit residents' needs.







#### GUJARAT STATE FERTILIZERS AND CHEMICALS LTD. (GSFC) TOWNSHIP, VADODARA, INDIA

YEAR: 1969

CLIENT: Gujarat State Fertilizers and Chemicals Ltd. (GSFC)

BUILT AREA:

11,505 m² (approx. 3 acres) 800 families (phase I); 1200 families (phase II); 1700 families (phase III) Settlement Density 40 to 68 inhabitants per acre (2,5 ha)

The township includes seven clusters connected to a central communal hub by means of roads and courtyards. The central public area includes an iconic water tower, a public hall, schools, medical facilities, and a shopping centre. The masterplan's elimination of a cross junction and shifting of vehicular roads ensure safety for the townships' inhabitants.

The residential units are designed so that the homes on the ground floor enjoy garden access while the first-floor units include private terraces. The housing unit plan is based on demarcated bays for living and utility spaces with double-storey staircases that serve as gateways.







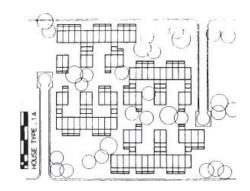
#### STAFF HOUSING AND GUEST HOUSE FOR THE AHMEDABAD TEXTILE INDUSTRY'S RESEARCH ASSOCIATION (ATIRA), AHMEDABAD, INDIA

YEAR: 1958, 1965 CLIENT: Ahmedabad Textile Industry's Research Association (ATIRA) BUILT AREA: 1,604 m² (approx. 17,250 ft²)

This project, Doshi's first independent commission, was aimed at providing low-cost housing for employees of the Ahmedabad Textile Industry's Research Association (ATIRA) and the Physical Research Laboratory (PRL).

The design was driven by two main concerns: the use of local materials and techniques, and Ahmedabad's hot and dry climate. Doshi responded to these challenges by adding brick vaults supported on parallel brick walls, plain cement flooring and aluminium-louvred, deeply recessed windows.

The individual residential units consist of single-volume vaulted bays with interior walls with niches for storage. The units, oriented along a north-south axis, enjoy covered verandahs on both sides to minimize the effects of the midday sun. The staggered arrangement of units with entrances at both front and rear encourages active street life on both sides.







#### KAMALA HOUSE, AHMEDABAD, INDIA

YEAR: 1963, 1986 (extension) CLIENT: Kamala Doshi

**BUILT AREA:** 

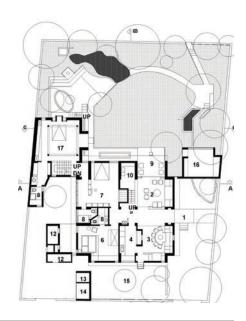
275 m<sup>2</sup> (approx. 3,000 ft<sup>2</sup>)

Kamala House, Doshi's personal residence, is named after his wife. Here Doshi challenged himself to construct a relatively small volume with a great amount of usable space as a demonstration of economical housing.

The basic concept was inspired by a visit to a brick kiln, where he saw a woman descending a dusty, worn-out staircase set in front of four columns. The scene was lit by thin shafts of sunlight streaming through a punctured old tin roof. This unforgettable image inspired him to design his own house with rooms arranged around a cross-shaped plan

extending from four central columns.

An extension added twenty-five years later reinterprets the column motif to form a frame on the rooftop terrace for a view of the stars.







#### DOSHI ON WINNING THE PRITZKER PRIZE

"Over 60 years of practice I discovered the search is to amend disparities to finally merge the heterogeneous with the homogeneous. As a result, I discovered my inclination to teach, to learn, and question the real nature of the habitat and its cause to celebrate life. This guided me to design the campuses with integrated, interwoven, in-between spaces, places and streets creating a whole new world. Finally, similar to our Hindu concept of Trinity, which depicts Creation, Preservation, and Reincarnation. [Like] Brahma the creator, Vishnu the preserver, and Mahesh the destroyer I too attempted to touch the society at large, and learned that time and energy is the real sense. If I can redefine

and touch this energy in all my attempts in layouts, designs of cell clusters, neighborhoods maybe I can reach the ocean of harmony tolerance, togetherness, humility, and forgiveness and corporation."

Excerpt of Doshi's acceptance speech. The Pritzker Prize for Architecture Award Ceremony, Aga Khan Museum, Toronto, Canada. May 2019.

LEFT: Balkrishna Doshi at Sangath Architect's Studio, Ahmedabad, 1980, © Iwan Baan 2018



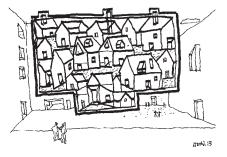


# **INTERVIEW**

# What is the inspiration for this exhibit?

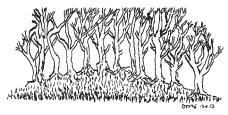
Balkrishna Doshi: The exhibition that you will see was shown for the very first time in 2014 at the National Gallery of Modern Art in New Delhi. The Director of NGMA at that time Rajeev Lochan was very keen on showing my work at the museum. Works of architects had never been shown in museums before in India. It was a great opportunity to connect with people from varied backgrounds and start a conversation / debate on the approach to architecture today. The Director then invited Khushnu Panthaki Hoof, an architect who has worked with me for close to two decades and also happens to be my grand-daughter for curation and exhibition design of the show.

LEFT: Balkrishna Doshi, Sangath Architect's Studio, Ahmedabad. 1980. © Iwan Baan 2018



Khushnu Panthaki Hoof: More than architecture this exhibition talks about lifestyle, climate and celebration as the factors defining architecture. Doshi's participatory and open-ended approach to architecture renders a timeless quality to his works. Where architecture is not seen as a product but rather a living. evolving organism with possibilities to grow and adapt. Moreover, the focus in most of his works has been to encourage dialogue and exchange between the inhabitants, break down social barriers, and inspire people with a sense of

belonging. This personal search of for an appropriate architectural vocabulary in the Indian context with major emphasis on human behavioural patterns and lifestyle is unique to his ways of working.



# What will be offered at this exhibit?

KPH: Over 62 years of practice, research and teaching, Doshi has a wide range of projects which demonstrate a significant level of environmental and community awareness, adopting modern architectural principle and adapting them to local Indian traditions, resources and context. While Doshi's oeuvre has over 100 projects, I decided to choose projects of varied typologies, varied scales and located in different parts of India. These projects talk about his experimental approaches to bring about social change while creating spaces that enhance the quality of life.

We have incorporated films which talk about context, interactive models, as well as few large scale installations which can be walked into and around. We have also tried to extend the space and add

another layer through additional walls, full scale photographs which give an illusion of space. Moreover, the landscape created through these installations give glimpses of experiential qualities that exist in Doshi's works. These installations in most cases use the same materials that are actually used in their construction, for example: Gufa 1:2 part model is made from the same material, Sangath vault china mosaic is made by the same craftsman who made the original one at Sangath. Adding colours to the walls and creating a sense of scale through that has been another intervention in the exhibition design.

The main concern while planning the exhibition was to create a connection with visitors so the effort here is to make it inclusive for students, professionals from varied fields as well as the common man. Moreover, models have been extremely important for Doshi. They are also very important to express the quality of space and scale. While drawings might be difficult to understand by people from varied backgrounds, the models and photographs give an idea of the space. The good thing about that is that some models are part models, some are site models some are models of the entire building so the viewer can interpret the building through these models and

photographs. They are just enough to convey the idea of the space and the rest is left to imagination.

# We'd love to get some direct quotes from Doshi if possible!

BD: An architect is a being whose memory, associations and experiences dominate his life. Whatever he sees, dreams or an assignment he undertakes begins by intermixing like a smorgasbord. From there he filters some through a long process. After sometime by rejecting and adding, the overall structure emerges. A building is created out of memories, associations, sounds, forms, spaces and images and many other related and unrelated encounters. Through these he reconstructs his image to connect to the world around.

Having said that, I am constantly fascinated, almost like a child, by the ways in which the world around me works. I see a river and think of its journey from its origin all the way to meet the ocean or the way mighty trees grow from a small seed. I see an ant, a snake, or a giraffe and think about how their form is just the perfect one for their life in their habitat. That surely is a very valuable lesson in design.

# Can he tell us about his 2018 Pritzker Prize win?

BD: Receiving the Pritzker Prize at 91,

is a like a crowning glory. A deeply touching and rewarding recognition of my work. It reaffirmed my belief that architecture is not static but a living thriving organism.

# What are his thoughts on Chicago's architecture scene?

BD: I first visited Chicago in 1958. In 1957, out of the blue, I received a letter from the Graham Foundation, signed by Professor Jose Luis Sert, then Chairman and the Dean of the Harvard School of Design. He wrote, 'Dr Gideon has highly recommended that we ask you if you would like to apply for this Fellowship which is worth \$10,000, and if you do, would you send me a note on what you propose to do?' I had not travelled to the US before, that it would be my first time, and had no idea about all places I might visit once there. Buckminster Fuller who was visiting Ahmedabad asked if I would like to teach at Washington University, St Louis, located some distance south of Chicago while I was there. I said, 'I have never taught.' To this, he said: 'It does not matter, there is always a first time.' We left it at that and parted ways. In the next few days, before I left Ahmedabad, I received a letter from Dean Joseph R. Passonneau of Washington University wanting to know if I would like to go there and teach for three weeks. Taking Bucky's advice, I accepted. That is how I ventured into

teaching, which eventually became an important part of my life and career. Perhaps this is explained by what Bucky mentioned to me years later. He had said, 'Every being has a pouch hidden deep within them, a homing device like some birds, which directs them to their destinations.' The trip to Chicago in 1958 under the Fellowship was a very educative trip since I was travelling to the US for the first time. I met the luminaries of architecture such as Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, J.L. Sert, Charles Eames, and Frederick Kiesler and visited many of their works. I also met some distinguished persons such as the Spanish sculptor Eduardo Chillida, American painter José Guerrero, Japanese architect Fumihiko Maki, and Cuban artist Wifredo Lam, who are now as celebrated as our peers then. The trip also exposed me to a world of new technologies and an aesthetic derived from technologies, not to forget the tremendous mobility among people, like a whole society on the move, which is still a characteristic of the US. So Chicago is very special. I am humbled that my life's works will now be shown in Chicago.

# How is/was Doshi inspired by Le Corbusier and Louis Kahn?

**BD:** Apart from architecture, Le Corbusier taught me to be a strategist, how to face the music,

how to look at things and how to be open. Talking of strategy, he once told me, "Don't send all the photographs of the building to the client. Send just one so that they get only a partial idea. This way you'll have fewer arguments." And when I was leaving Paris and went to say goodbye, he had some colour samples in his hand. "Look," he said, "When you show them the colours ask them to select one, but always keep the second choice for yourself. So they will be happy and your choice will compensate theirs." Architecturally, all my buildings have been influenced by him, though not obviously.

When I left Le Corbusier, I took a vow that I would not use the elements – apparently the same elements, associated with him. When you decide this, then you are left only with his spirit, which is expressed in proportions, modulations of space, creation of rhythms, tonalities. My greatest discovery was that I found freedom. I know that Le Corbusier would not have liked me to be imitative. or to repeat a building again and again, but to invent and seek out new expression. That's why I keep his photograph on my wall to tell myself, "he is there, watching me. Am I repeating myself?" So I make mistakes all the time but I'm happy that I'm trying.

While, Louis Kahn's attitude towards the expression of the humane in a building affected me a great deal due to its similarity to that of the Hindu approach. The structural clarity about there being a main structure and a substructure comes from my discussions with him. In general, I think Lou would accept the constraints while Le Corbusier would not. He would rise above them, and that is why he could create that fantastic unfolding of space, those marvellous changes of light. Lou's buildings are for meditation whereas Le Corbusier's buildings "sing."

Both these great men were intuitive and had acquired insight into the continuity of the whole process that manifests life. Through their writings, drawings and works, they have demonstrated that creative persons have no boundaries, the ramifications of these acts either consciously or subconsciously, are felt in all aspects of life. They diffuse and permeate everywhere. For example, an apparently simple question over time, finds many answers that lead to different expressions or paths, and finally lead to the same eternal truth, the celebration of life.

Architecturally speaking, this sense is revealed in a very uncanny way. For example, when Corbusier and Kahn visited and worked in India, even though their responses and

their architectural expressions were vastly different, there was that deep rooted concern for this place, with its centuries of cultural history. Intuitively, they felt the place and the local ethos. Very much like a sensitive doctor, who instantly fathoms the disease. Visiting old monuments and looking at the flora and fauna, they could uncannily discover the architectural expressions. What I can't understand is the similarity of their visions into the past, without apparent imitation but by reinterpretation. Once built, the experiences in their buildings were as vital and appropriate as the great traditional buildings and complexes of India.

I am indebted to Le Corbusier for setting me on the path to write, sketch, design, paint and to Louis Kahn for widening my understanding of the more abstract and philosophical aspects of life and working as an architect.



# BALKRISHNA DOSHI: ARCHITECTURE FOR THE PEOPLE

Wrightwood 659's presentation of *Balkrishna Doshi: Architecture for the People* is made possible by support from Alphawood Exhibitions.





659°

# **Alphawood Foundation**

James D. McDonough

**Executive Director** 

Melissa Terrell

Office and Grants Manager

**Bradford White** 

Associate Director

## Wrightwood 659

Gina Pollara

Chief Operating Officer

Devin Gora

**Building Operations Coordinator** 

Yaumu Huang

Manager, Exhibition Planning & Design

**Dan Hutchins** 

**Building Operations Manager** 

Ashley Janke

Gallery Operations Assistant

Justin Latta

Chief Technology Officer

**Chris Lempa** 

Gallery Operations Manager

**Andy Lopez** 

**Building Operations Custodial Supervisor** 

**Anthony Palombi** 

Tessitura Manager

Hannah Radeke

Gallery Operations Assistant

## Registrar

**Angela Steinmetz** 

JWSC LLC

## **Graphic Design**

Michael Garzel

Graphic Design + Photography

## **Media and Public Relations**

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS:

Samir Bitar, Siouxie Oki

The Art of Consulting

LOCAL PRESS RELATIONS:

Beth Silverman, Louise Yingduo Liu

The Silverman Group, Inc.

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL PRESS:

Betsy Ennis, Lucy O'Brien

Ennis O'Brien LLC.

# Special Thanks to the Following

Bannerville

Tom Sitkowski & Crew

**European Painting and Decorating** 

Roy Ruschke & Crew

Michael Tropea Photography

US Art, Chicago

Jeff Stafford & Crew

The exhibition is a project by the Vitra Design Museum and the Wüstenrot Foundation in cooperation with the Vastushilpa Foundation.

Vitra Design Museum

WŪSTENROT STIFTUNG

VĀSTU SHILPĀ FOUNDATION

## **Director Vitra Design Museum**

Mateo Kries

#### Curator

Khushnu Panthaki Hoof

# **Curator Vitra Design Museum**

Jolanthe Kugler

#### **Assistant Curator**

Meike Wolfschlag

## **Wüstenrot Stiftung Foundation**

Philip Kurz, Verena Gantner

#### **Project Manager**

Sabrina Handler

#### Design

Khushnu Panthaki Hoof, Studio Sangath, Ahmedabad

#### Music

Kabeer Kathpalia, OAFF, Mumbai

#### **Graphics**

Double Standards, Berlin

## **Image and Film Rights**

Meike Wolfschlag, Sabrina Handler

#### **Technical Director**

Stefani Fricker

## Media Technology

Nathalie Opris, René Herzogenrath

#### Conservation

Susanne Graner, Julian Cech, Grazyna Ubik

#### **Archive**

Andreas Nutz, Christine Günther

## **Press and Public Relations**

Lara Schuh, Jan-Marcel Müller, Gabriela Ecke

#### **Exhibition Tour**

Cora Harris, Dominique Jahn

## **Fundraising**

Jasmin Zikry

#### **Products and Publications**

Natalie Peter, Esther Schröter, Judith Brugger, Anton Schleidt



# A PHOTOGRAPHIC ESSAY

In the years spanning 1988 to 2002, computer scientist and former MIT professor Michael Hawley led a team of photographers, publishers, and students through the Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan to document daily life. The four expeditions they took resulted in an archive of photographs of the country's people, landscapes, and cultural practices which the non-profit Friendly Planet later published in a large book entitled Bhutan: A Visual Odyssey Across the Last Himalayan Kingdom.

At Wrightwood 659, the book is displayed along a concrete wall on the fourth floor. Folded, it measures 5 x 7 feet but, at the gallery, displayed in its full unfolded length, visitors can walk along its span of 155 linear feet and see for themselves not only the visual but also the physical extent of the project. The pages, with their supersaturated colors and life-sized portraits, vibrantly represent the people and geography of Bhutan.



# **ABOUT WRIGHTWOOD 659**

Wrightwood 659 is a new exhibition space conceived for the presentation of exhibitions of architecture and of socially engaged art. It is designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architect Tadao Ando, who has transformed a 1920s building with his signature concrete forms and poetic treatment of natural light.

Stay up-to-date on new website content and upcoming exhibitions. Subscribe at wrightwood659.org.

In a city rich with art institutions and internationally known for its architecture, Wrightwood 659 is designed as a site for contemplative experiences of art and architecture, and as a place to engage with the pressing social issues of our time. Located in Chicago's Lincoln Park neighborhood, it is a private, non-commercial initiative envisioned as an integral part of the cultural and civic fabric of Chicago, as well as a new kind of arts space and cultural resource.

# WRIGHTWOOD 659 GENERAL INFORMATION

We have reduced gallery hours for this exhibition in order to provide the highest quality gallery experience:

# **THROUGH DEC 12, 2020**

Last entry is one hour before closing

## **THURSDAY & FRIDAY**

open: 12:00pm - 2:30pm closed: 2:30pm - 3:30pm open: 3:30pm - 6:00pm closed: 6:00pm - 6:30pm open: 6:30pm - 9:00pm

#### **SATURDAY**

open: 10:00am - 12:30pm closed: 12:30pm - 1:30pm open: 1:30pm - 4:00pm closed: 4:00pm - 4:30pm open: 4:30pm - 7:00pm

Closed on Thanksgiving.

Each block is limited to 24 guests. Tickets are available for \$15 at tickets.wrightwood659.org/events. All visitors must provide a ticket for entry. Visitors should plan to appear at the time noted on the ticket for admission to the gallery. No refunds can be given to guests who do not arrive at the appointed time. No walk-ups can be admitted.

Wrightwood 659's Educators are located throughout the building to answer your questions. Their backgrounds in art, architecture, and social movements provide unique insights into Wrightwood 659's exhibitions and gallery space. Educators are available to answer your questions about this exhibition or Wrightwood 659. Please let us know how we can help you.

Admission to Wrightwood 659 is only available during the public showing of exhibitions. Reservations are required and are available at wrightwood659.org.

Wrightwood 659 is committed to providing inclusive experiences for all audiences. Please call 773.437.6601 or email info@wrightwood659.org for access services. Service animals specially trained to assist a person with a disability are welcome at Wrightwood 659.

Enjoy FREE wireless Internet access at Wrightwood 659. Look for "Wrightwood 659 Guest" in your settings on your Wi-Fienabled device.



Installation view of Ishida: Self-Portrait of Other at Wrightwood 659. 2019.

Use of public transportation is encouraged. The closest bus stops are at Halsted & Wrightwood (#8 bus) and Clark & Deming (#22 & #36 buses) and the closest CTA station is at Fullerton & Sheffield (Brown, Purple, and Red lines).

There is no public parking facility at Wrightwood 659, and on-street parking is difficult. If you must drive, there is paid parking located at the Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago Outpatient Center, 2515 N. Clark Street.

# Please help us protect the artworks by respecting the following:

- Children of all ages are welcome, however, those under 16 years of age must be accompanied by an adult.
- Do not touch the art.
- Do not eat or drink in the galleries.

- Smoking is not permitted.
- Carry bags on your front or side.
- Check all personal items that are larger than 12 x 12 inches.
   Complimentary bag and coat check is available on the first floor.
- Talking on the phone is limited to non-gallery spaces throughout the building.
- Strollers are not permitted in the galleries but may be parked in the coat check room.

Wrightwood 659 reserves the right to not allow any bag, parcel, or other item to be brought into the building, and to deal with unattended objects in such a way as we consider appropriate. Wrightwood 659 also reserves the right to deny admission to or remove any person wearing attire that we consider inappropriate or that could detract from the experience of other visitors.



Wrightwood 659 was established, in part, to provide a site for exhibitions devoted to architecture, itself a civic practice, and to the art that grapples with the pressing issues of our day.