

Vitra Design Museum

Charles-Eames-Straße 2
Weil am Rhein/Basel
www.design-museum.de

PRESS CONFERENCE

28 March 2019, 2 p.m.
Business Lounge (VitraHaus)

OPENING

with Balkrishna Doshi
29 March 2019, 6 p.m.
Meeting point: Vitra Schaudepot

PRESS DOWNLOADS

www.design-museum.de/press_images

Balkrishna Doshi: Architecture for the People

30 March to 8 September 2019, Vitra Design Museum

With the exhibition »Balkrishna Doshi: Architecture for the People« (30 March to 8 September 2019), Vitra Design Museum presents the first international retrospective about the 2018 Pritzker Prize laureate Balkrishna Doshi (born 1927, Pune, India) outside of Asia. The renowned architect and urban planner is one of the few pioneers of modern architecture in his home country and the first Indian architect to receive the prestigious award. During over 60 years of practice, Doshi has realized a wide range of projects, adopting principles of modern architecture and adapting them to local culture, traditions, resources, and nature. The exhibition will present numerous significant projects realized between 1958 and 2014, ranging in scale from entire cities and town planning projects to academic campuses as well as cultural institutions and public administrative offices, from private residences to interiors. Among these works are pioneering buildings like the Indian Institute of Management (1977, 1992), Doshi's architectural studio Sangath (1980), and the famous low-cost housing project Aranya (1989). Exhibits will include a wealth of original works such as drawings, models, and art works from Doshi's archive and studio, but also photography, film footage and several full-scale installations. An extensive timeline will give an overview of the architect's career from 1947 until today, attesting to his close relationships with other influential architects and thought leaders such as Le Corbusier and Christopher Alexander.

The exhibition »Balkrishna Doshi: Architecture for the People« will open Doshi's work to a global audience and show how the architect's work has redefined modern Indian architecture as well as

shaped new generations of architects. Therefore, the retrospective does not only offer an overview of Doshi's architectural work, but also reflect on its underlying ideals and social context. Doshi's humanist philosophy was shaped by his Indian roots as well as his western education and the rapidly changing context of Indian society since the early 1950s. His architectural vocabulary, which is both poetic and functional, was strongly influenced by what he learned from Le Corbusier, with whom he collaborated on the design of the Indian city of Chandigarh and on other projects, and from his experiences with Louis Kahn, who conceived the design for the Institute of Management. Reaching beyond these early models, Doshi developed an approach that oscillates between industrialism and primitivism, between modern architecture and traditional form. His practice is based on ideas of sustainability and aims to root architecture in a larger context of culture and environment as well as social, ethical, and religious beliefs.

The retrospective follows four main themes, beginning with a look at Doshi's educational buildings. A key project here is the campus of the »Centre for Environmental Planning and Technology« (CEPT) in Ahmedabad, on which Doshi has realized some of his most significant buildings over a period of 40 years. In 1968, Doshi established the »School of Architecture«, a multi-disciplinary institution grounded in the belief that education is nourished by interdisciplinary interactions. To foster exchange and dialogue among students and faculty alike, Doshi designed the building as a free-flowing space without compartmentalization or segregation. Both through its buildings and its teachings, the school has changed the face of architectural education in India; it has also become one of the country's most important centres for urban planning. While the School of Architecture is raised above the ground on top of an old brick kiln that greatly influenced its plan and layout, the art gallery »Amdavad Ni Gufa« (1994) on the same campus is half-buried in the ground – »gufa« is Gujarati for cave – to solve issues arising from the local climate. While its structure of different-sized mounds integrated into the natural landscape is based on computer-aided design, the construction was carried out by unskilled workers using waste products and simple hand tools.

The exhibition's second section focuses on home and identity and examines the power of architecture to bring about social change. Inspired by Mahatma Gandhi, Doshi developed new approaches to social and experimental housing based on participation and the possibility to adapt to the users' changing needs and requirements, as seen in such outstanding examples as the »Housing Development for the Life Insurance Corporation of India« (LIC), known locally as »Bima Nagar«, in Ahmedabad (1973) and »Aranya Low Cost Housing« (1989) in Indore. Aranya was built as a model project and today accommodates over 80,000 individuals. A modular system allows the inhabitants to customise their homes and adapt them to their needs, their personal preferences, and their economic possibilities. The project was predicated on a »sites and services« approach, in which electricity, water, and sewer services were provided, but the houses were built minimally as a service core that each family could extend. An example for Doshi's residential planning on a smaller scale is his own house, called »Kamala House« (1963). This generous yet economical building with a cross-shaped floor plan maximizes lighting throughout all spaces, while insulated brick walls trap and minimise the summer heat.

The third section revolves around the many institutions Doshi has participated in building during the last 60 years. An important example for this is the »Indian Institute of Management« (IIM) in

Bangalore (1977, 1992). The large campus of this institution was built over a period of 20 years in a process that involved numerous additions and alterations. Its courtyards are designed as large gardens, its corridors perceived as interactive nodes of spontaneous communication, while both extend the learning spaces. Pergolas and cut-outs within corridors fringed with greenery transform space through the changing light they receives during the day. With its fascinating architectural conception, the Indian Institute of Management has become an important think tank contributing to India's emergence as an economic power over the last decades. Another milestone in Balkrishna Doshi's institutional architecture is his own studio »Sangath« in Ahmedabad (1980). Memories of his childhood home and of Le Corbusier's studio in Paris are fused in this building's vocabulary of spaces. »Sangath« means »moving together« in Gujarati, and today three generations of Doshi's family work here side by side. As with all of his buildings, landscape, climate, and purpose are an integral part of his design. Overnight the studio space can be converted into a concert hall or a lecture hall. Surrounded by Ahmedabad's new high-rises and the elevated metro line, Sangath stands as an oasis within the bustling city.

The final section of the exhibition is dedicated to Doshi's large-scale town planning projects, exemplified by the masterplan and urban design guidelines for Vidhyadhar Nagar (1984), a residential development for 150,000 dwellings located in the outskirts of Jaipur in Rajasthan in northern India. Conceived as an energy-conscious city on a 350-hectare site, it is inspired by the old walled city of Jaipur. An amalgamation of ancient town planning principles, contemporary needs, and contextual realities, the city and its infrastructure were designed to serve the needs of up to 400,000 inhabitants. The social amenities such as schools, health centres, and playgrounds were planned along the linear open space forming the central activity spine. Natural stone, overhangs, and balconies not only helped improve the micro-climate but also recreated the visual experience of the local traditional architecture.

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

The exhibition »Balkrishna Doshi: Architecture for the People« will be shown at the Architecture Museum of the TU Munich from October 17, 2019 to January 19, 2020.

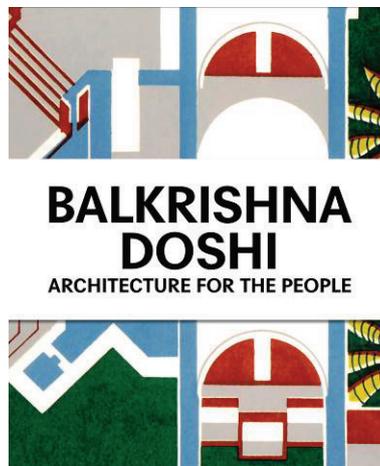
Balkrishna Doshi

Born into a traditional Hindu family in 1927, Balkrishna Doshi grew up in the atmosphere of the Indian independence movement championed by Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore. He began his architecture studies in 1947, the year India gained independence, at the Sir J.J. College of Architecture Bombay (Mumbai). In the 1950s, he boarded a ship to London, where he hoped to join the Royal Institute of British Architects, and eventually moved to Paris to work under Le Corbusier. Doshi's association with Le Corbusier and later Louis Kahn lasted over a decade and made the young architect familiar with the vocabulary of modernist architecture with a special emphasis on elemental forms and building materials. In 1956, Doshi opened his own practice in Ahmedabad and called it »Vastu-Shilpa« (»vastu« describes the total environment around us; »shilpa« means to design in Sanskrit). At the age of 35, in 1968, he founded the School of Architecture at the Centre for Environmental Planning and Technology (CEPT) in Ahmedabad. In 1976, Balkrishna Doshi established the Vastushilpa Foundation for Studies and Research in Environmental Design with the aim of developing indigenous design and planning standards for built environments appropriate to the society, culture, and environment of India. Doshi is the recipient of numerous awards and distinctions such as the Global Award for Lifetime Achievement for Sustainable Architecture, the Aga Khan Award for Architecture, and the Gold Medal of the Academy of Architecture of France, among others. He is a Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects, the Indian Institute of Architects, and the Institut Français d'Architecture, and an Honorary Fellow of the American Institute of Architects. In 2018, he was the first Indian architect to be awarded the Pritzker Prize.

Publication

Balkrishna V. Doshi (b. 1927 in Pune) is one of the most influential pioneers of modern architecture in India. His life's work was honored in 2018 with the prestigious Pritzker Prize. Doshi has realized more than one hundred projects, including administrative and cultural facilities, housing developments, and residential buildings. He has become internationally known for his visionary urban planning and social housing projects, as well as his involvement in education. His most important buildings include the School of Architecture in Ahmedabad (1968) and the Aranya housing development in Indore (1989).

»Balkrishna Doshi: Architecture for the People« is the first overview of the architect's work in over twenty years, analyzing his most important works and providing timely context to his oeuvre. In-depth academic texts by outstanding experts in the field, including Kenneth Frampton, Kazi Ashraf, and Juhani Pallasmaa, give insights into the inspiration behind Doshi's work and background to his projects, as well as his lasting influence on younger generations. The richly illustrated survey comes complete with a detailed biography and new photographs of his buildings, which demonstrate the impressive timeliness of the Indian master's approach to a wide variety of typologies.



Editors: Vitra Design Museum,
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TALKS | EVENTS | WORKSHOPS

Balkrishna Doshi

OPENING TALK (EN) | 29 March 2019

6 pm, Meeting point: Vitra Schaudepot

Balkrishna Doshi is regarded as India's most important architect and was distinguished with the renowned Pritzker Prize in 2018. In conjunction with the opening of the Vitra Design Museum exhibition »Balkrishna Doshi: Architecture for the People«, Doshi will discuss his work and ideals. His talk focuses on the connection between modern architecture and Indian building traditions as well as sustainability and the aim to conceive architectural structures that are adapted to the desires and needs of their inhabitants. The discussion will also offer insights into the fascinating career of this nonagenarian – from the beginning of his studies at Sir J.J. College of Architecture in Mumbai in 1947, to his years in the Paris studio of Le Corbusier, to the activities of Doshi's own architectural firm Vastushilpa, which he still runs today. The event will be moderated by Swiss art historian Philip Ursprung.

Free admission, registration: events@design-museum.de

Seating is limited.

Ahmedabad and Chandigarh: India between heteronomy and self-determination TALK (DE) | 25 April 2019

6:30 pm, Vitra Schaudepot

Between the 1950s and 1970s, after the end of British colonial rule, both Louis I. Kahn and Le Corbusier completed major architectural projects in India. Le Corbusier created an urban plan for Chandigarh, the new capital city in the state of Punjab, while Kahn built the Indian Institute of Management in Ahmedabad. How did the design of such important buildings come to be entrusted to Western architects in a nation that had just gained its independence? Ita Heinze-Greenberg, Professor of Modern Architectural History at ETH Zurich, examines the activities of Le Corbusier and Louis I. Kahn in India from the perspective of constructing a national identity.

Free admission

Mario Botta – Expanding on Modernism

TALK (FR/DE) | 9 May 2019

6:30 pm, Vitra Schaudepot

Swiss architect Mario Botta is regarded as one of the most important exponents of postmodern architecture. He is known for such prominent buildings as the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (1995) and the Museum Jean Tinguely in Basel (1993–96). As co-founder of the Academy of Architecture at the Università della Svizzera italiana in Mendrisio, he has taught and influenced generations of students. Geometric shapes and sculptural compositions, which emphasize the sensuous qualities of space and materials, are intrinsic characteristics of Botta's architecture.

Free admission, registration: events@design-museum.de

Saving Slums through Architecture? The Potty Project

TALK (EN) | 6 June 2019

6:30 pm, Vitra Schaudepot

The architect and urban researcher Julia King conceived the »Potty Project« as an infrastructure initiative in India's Savda Ghevra community. This project shows how practicebased research can contribute to marked improvements in hygienic conditions in India's slums, thereby improving the inhabitants' quality of life. The »Potty Project« unites various elements of the sanitation value chain: from toilets in private homes to waste water systems to recycling facilities. King was recognised as »Emerging Woman Architect of the Year« by the »Architects' Journal« and »The Architectural Review« for this exemplary project.

Free admission

Thomas Kröger – Urbanity and Emptiness

TALK (DE) | 27 June 2019

6:30 pm, Vitra Schaudepot

German architect Thomas Kröger is one of the most interesting proponents of a freshly provocative counterposition to the quest for greater urbanity. In the regions of Uckermark and East Frisia, he remodels farmhouses, renovates old structures, and erects new buildings to create places where people can find rest and shelter from the hectic pace of city life. Kröger describes his work and presents his best projects. He also explains how his designs for urban sites differ from those in rural areas. This event is part of the series »archithese kontext«, a cooperative project.

Free admission

Wednesday Matinee

CURATOR'S TOUR (DE) | 10 July 2019

10 am, Vitra Design Museum

Curator Jolanthe Kugler guides visitors through the exhibition »Balkrishna Doshi: Architecture for the People«, giving background information on the preparations, development and main ideas of the exhibition.

€ 10.00 per person

Farshid Moussavi – Architecture and Micropolitics

TALK (EN) | 11 July 2019

6:30 pm, Vitra Schaudepot

Farshid Moussavi is an architect, principal of Farshid Moussavi Architecture, and Professor in Practice of Architecture at Harvard University Graduate School of Design. Previously, she was co-founder of the Londonbased »Foreign Office Architects«. In 2011 Moussavi established her own architectural practice, with which she has completed important international projects, including the Museum of Contemporary Art in Cleveland (2012) as well as residential complexes in Nanterre and Montpellier. Moussavi's approach is characterized by openness to change and commitment to the intellectual and cultural life of architecture.

Free admission

Andres Lepik – Social Architecture

TALK (DE) | 29 August 2019

6:30 pm, Vitra Schaudepot

Architecture shapes the society in which it emerges. Its social relevance is especially evident in the responses to such problems as political or ecological migration, overpopulation, marginalization, and slum formation. Andres Lepik, Director of the Architekturmuseum München, was a curator at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, where he realised the influential exhibition »Small Scale, Big Change« in 2010. In this lecture, Lepik presents building projects in the Global South that improve the living conditions of local populations – requiring minimal financial investment, but all the more personal initiative and creativity.

Free admission

Inspiring India – Guided Tour and Dinner

SPECIAL (DE) | 30 August 2019

6 pm, Vitra Design Museum

A special evening accompanies the exhibition »Balkrishna Doshi: Architecture for the People«. Participants will gain exclusive insights into the background and main themes of the exhibition on an exclusive guided tour. The tour is followed by a dinner with Euro-Indian fusion food and musical accompaniment in the Depot Deli. An evening for the senses!

€ 58.00 per person, incl. dinner

Registration: events@design-museum.de

Fact Sheet

Exhibition title:	Balkrishna Doshi: Architecture for the People
Curator:	Khushnu Panthaki Hoof
Vitra Design Museum Curator:	Jolanthe Kugler
Assistant curator:	Meike Wolfschlag (Vitra Design Museum)
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Press images:	www.design-museum.de/press_images
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The exhibition is a project by the Vitra Design Museum and the Wüstenrot Foundation in cooperation with the Vastushilpa Foundation



VĀSTU SHILPĀ FOUNDATION