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THE FUTURE IS FLUID

M:OFA creates an unusual penthouse that's all about floating walls and shapes

TEXT BY **MANISH GULATI**

PHOTOGRAPHY BY **GAURAV and THIRU**



The family lounge has a curved wall with niches for knick-knacks. The pouffes and centre table are from Casa Paradox, the carpet from Hands in Delhi and the light is from Metalarte

The fluid dining table and breakfast counter in lacquer finished silver foil and the leather clad chairs are custom-made by the architects. The free floating, red-ribboned ceiling conceals the lighting. Sheesham wood blinds filter in the sunlight



Above Left A portion of the family lounge at the lower level, with the flooring in a combination of Bisazza tiles and Italian marble. On the sidetable rests a glass mosaic bowl


Above Right Corner of the living room with a sofa designed by the architects. The leaf silhouettes on the wall are impressions of actual leaves that were cast into the grey concrete and finished with silver foil.

On the shelf are accessories from Viya Home

Below Left Another side of the living room with a painting by Sunil Padwal and a fluid shaped column in sheesham wood in the foreground. On the ceramic tiled floor is a carpet bought from Hands

Below Right "Echoes," a bench by M:OFA in gold foiled plyboard panels held together with steel tubes, stands in the living room





Layered wave ceiling
in the master bedroom
with an in-built book shelf
and study desk in the
corner. On the table, the
lamp is from Artemide,
while the bedspread is
from Apartment 9



To be able to design a house where the walls not only appear to be floating over the floors but, they also twist, turn and reshape to suit the functional requirements of the inmates is no easy task. At a point where the design rises up from the mundane, to present itself more as a musical composition floating in space, where fluid forms intersperse with and transform regular architectural elements: That to us, is the essence of our work at Manifestation of Fluid Architecture (M:OFA). The design for Aman and Bina Mehra's penthouse at Noida started-off more as free-flowing thoughts, like random blobs of paint over canvas. Wherein, the functional cells form a co-existential relationship within the space.

SUSPENDED IN SPACE

Aman had acquired the house as a bare shell from the developer. We started adding various layers right from the electricals and plumbing, to skins and surfaces. The vertical facades were fabricated using dry wall construction. As the house came with floor-to-ceiling continuous glass as an outer envelope, to safeguard the interiors from the sun, we used sheesham wood louvers which further created interesting shadow patterns over the dual-curved walls. The fluid walls, ceilings and the furniture pieces as well as the melting dining table and kids' beds, are all created using layered plywood sheathed under a level of ferrocement. In the master bedroom, the LED strips used on the underside of the floating walls act as floor markers at night, and enhance the effect of the ceiling as well. Apart from the multiple drawings and hundreds of details custom-developed for the house, the most important aspect in the resulting design was the trust put into us by Aman with the brief, "I gave the job to you because of my faith in you as a professional, give me a house that's not only unusual but makes me feel special when I use it." ♦

Above Left The childrens' room has amorphous-shaped bunk beds with the lower bed extending into a study table. The in situ beds were constructed out of reinforced plywood layers and covered with an epoxy ferrocement shell

Above Right Floating wall effect outside the kids' room was created using recessed

skirting and concealed LED lights, reflected over a bed of black riverbed pebbles from Odyssey stones

Below In the kids' bathroom, the fluid-sheet-like wall is covered with glass mosaic tiles from Bisazza. The wooden flooring is from CJ's Interiors and the toilet fixtures and accessories, from Kerameg

