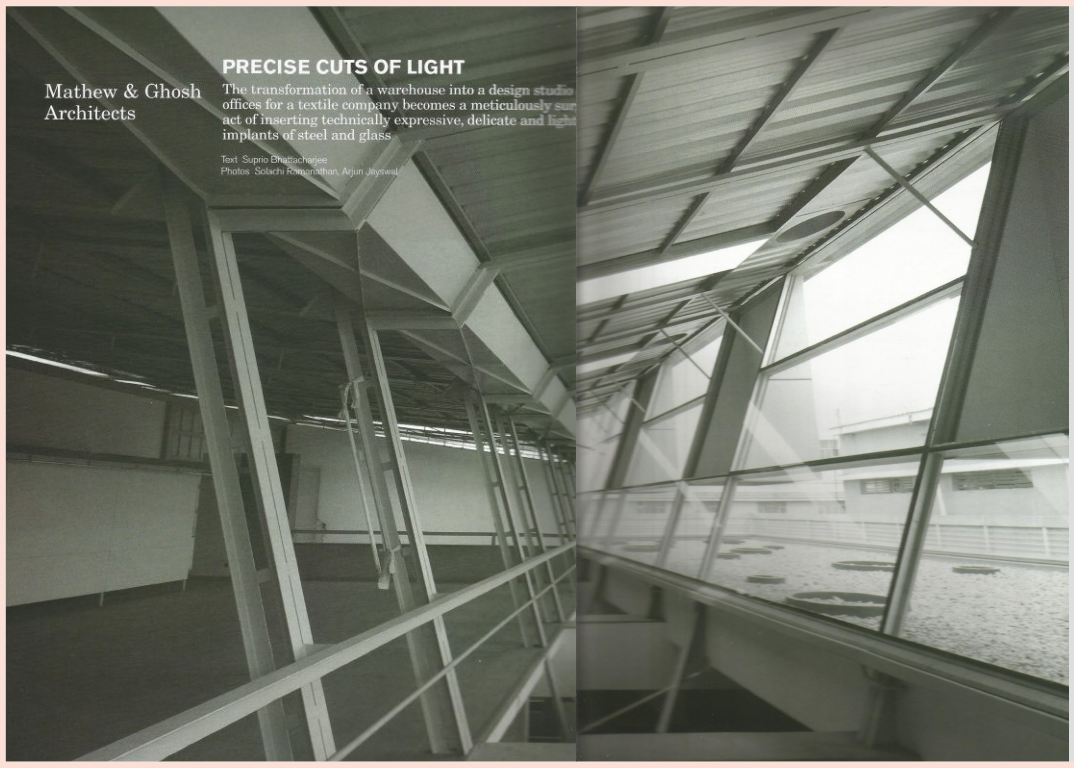

Mathew & Ghosh Architects

PRECISE CUTS OF LIGHT

The transformation of a warehouse into a design studio offices for a textile company becomes a meticulously sur act of inserting technically expressive, delicate and light implants of steel and glass

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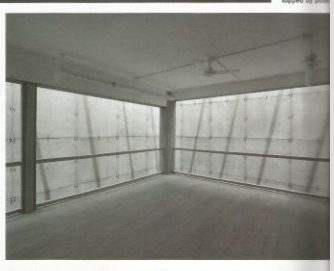

building's 're-architecting' can be seen fully. Light is brought into the centre of the former deep plan by the incision of a longitudinal slice along the building's long axis, substituting concrete slabs with laminated glass (at the first floor) and cut-outs at the former terrace level. The new buyer's floor acts as a large vitrine filtering light into the spaces below through this incision, with skylights in the new steel roof augmenting diffused light with a more concentrated glow.

The upward surge of this light-void is met with the ebullient gestures made by the delicate struts that support the new roof and vitrine. Consisting of welded angle sections, their delicate lightness offers a foil to the RCC framework, now even more robustly expressed with the slabs removed, exposing its very nature.

The new steel insertions profess a sense of technical precision and clear expression, that in some ways contrast with the nature of the RCC frame, and at times seem to be wonderfully interwoven. An example is the delicate nature of the tensioned strut that holds up the now exposed longitudinal central RCC beam at the former terrace level. The seeming incongruity of this petite steel articulation 'holding up' a brawny concrete beam is delightful in itself.

Light is also brought in along the sides with the construction of a new 'skin' of bison-board sandwiched over a steel frame set off the boundary of the RCC frame, topped by polycarbonate. This embroidered surface creates a peripheral void that, in addition to bringing in light, also creates a space for ventilation. This peripheral void, in conjunction with the central void to the new metal roof housing turbo vents, creates a building that is naturally ventilated, taking for minimum exposure to direct sunlight. It overlooks a new rooftop terrace garden strewn with pebbles interspersed with randomly placed (and sized) cylindrical hume-pipe troughs that are meant to carry wild grass in the future – patches of green in an intractable landscape. A metaphor for the regeneration of former industrial areas?

Inside, the new additions posses a raw appeal, unabashedly industrial in their expression, and uninhibited in terms of material articulation and use. These spaces profess an honest identity in terms of their making and being. This augurs well for a space devoted to a domain of the industrial design profession. The interweaving of the and over-sailing nature of steelwork, a tense dialogue. Staircases construct of thin folded steel plates held up by d steel stringers cascade through this t dimensional cartesian grid, allowing presence of the 'diagonal' in an otherw regimented spatial environment.

With the ingenious incision of light in the centre of a deep plan, and the clev interweaving of two generic systems construction, this adaptive re-use of a former warehouse into the new offices a textile company is a worthy addition the remarkable portfolio of Mathew & Ghosh Architects, as well as an import example of the seamless integration o

Above: entrance lob far left: the terrace overlooking the buyer's space; left: the administrative offices, lodges itself transversely across front of the building

overhaul, needs to be done to breathe [illegible] buildings that have outlived or [illegible] the purpose they were built [illegible] first place. They may have served [illegible] well. Or may not have. Buildings [illegible] industry are subject to these trials [illegible] technological advancements in technology bring [illegible] quickly. Spaces designed for [illegible] or machinery no longer [illegible] or lose character. Large sheds [illegible] into smaller, flexible [illegible] Bengaluru, is an example of such adaptation. A previous warehouse building receives a meticulous makeover by the surgically precise insertion of lightweight steel and glass implants, creating a set of spaces luminous and delightfully liberated of any sense of mundaneness.

Cut into a warehouse building with an orthogonal plan, the new programme consists of essentially two large spatial entities – a set of spaces for the administrative offices, and another set of spaces, taller and voluminous, that will host the company's design studio. [illegible]

The first spatial entity – that of the offices lodges itself transversely across the front o the building. The previous two-storey RCC volume is here modified to accommodate th floors, held up by a hybrid structure consis of new structural steel elements supported the existing RCC frame.

The second spatial entity – that of the des studio, is spread across the rear portion of the former warehouse – occupying the previous tall spaces. Between these two zones, a meandering staircase offers access to the upper levels from a full-height cut into the structure, with vertical openings

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