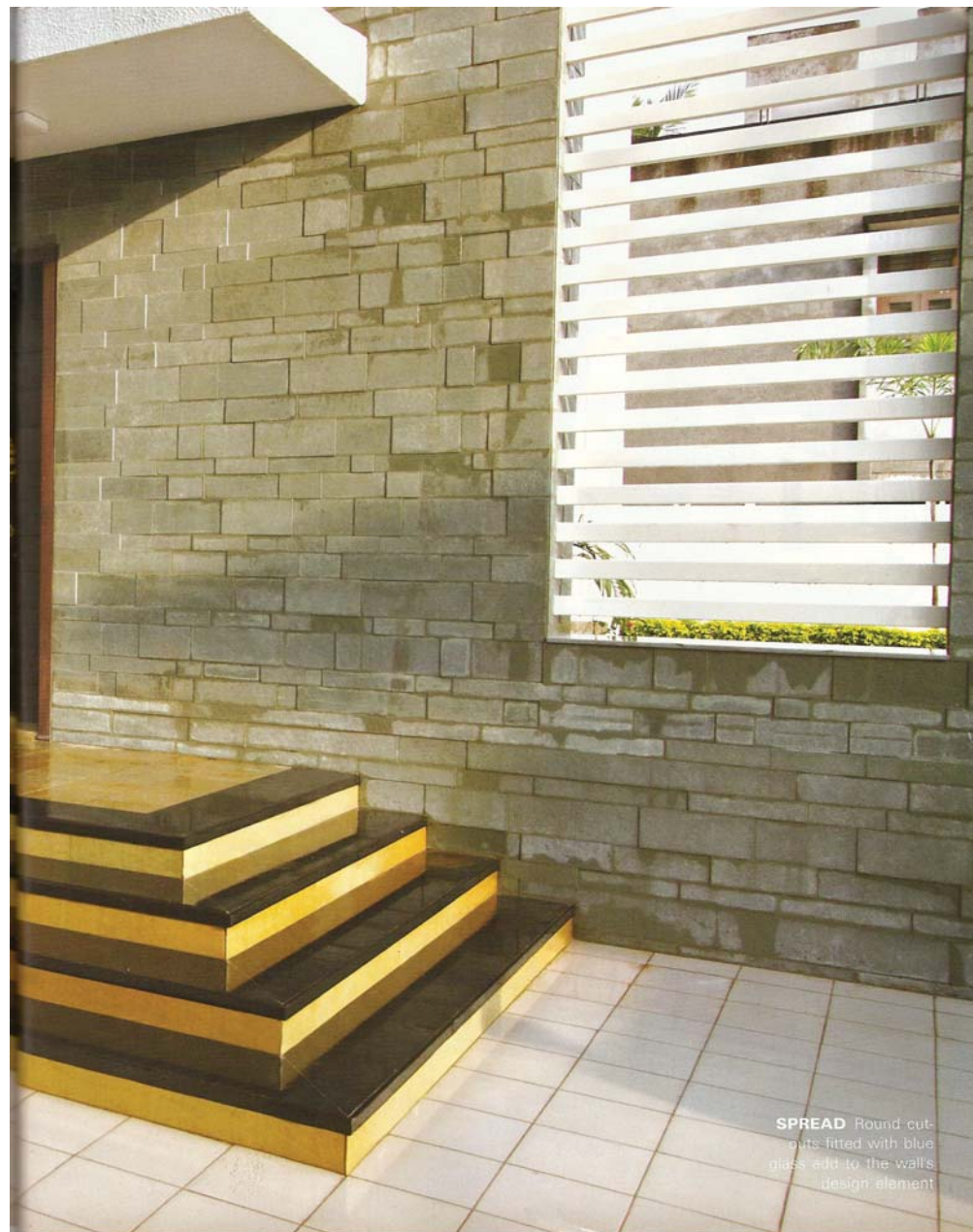
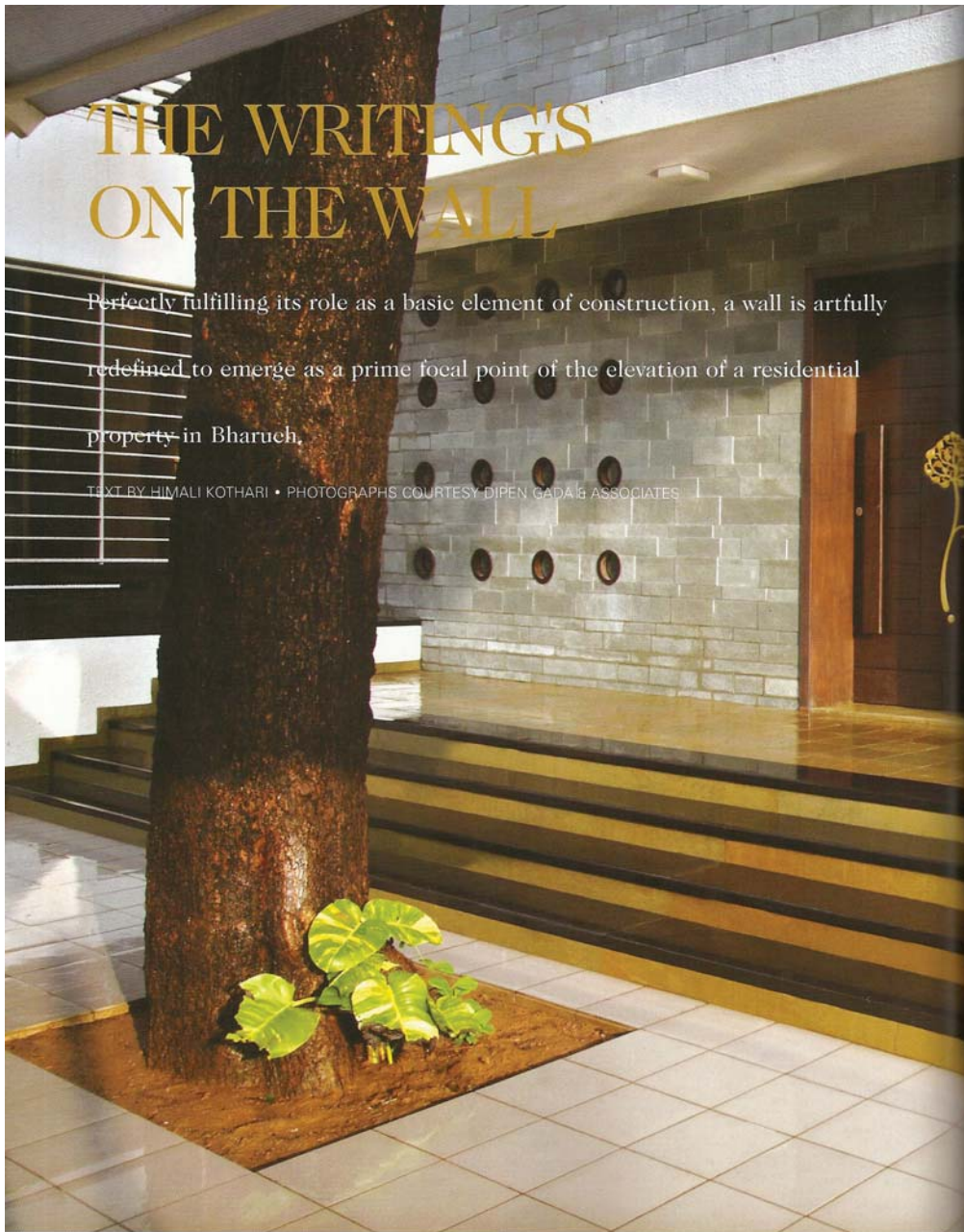


# THE WRITINGS ON THE WALL

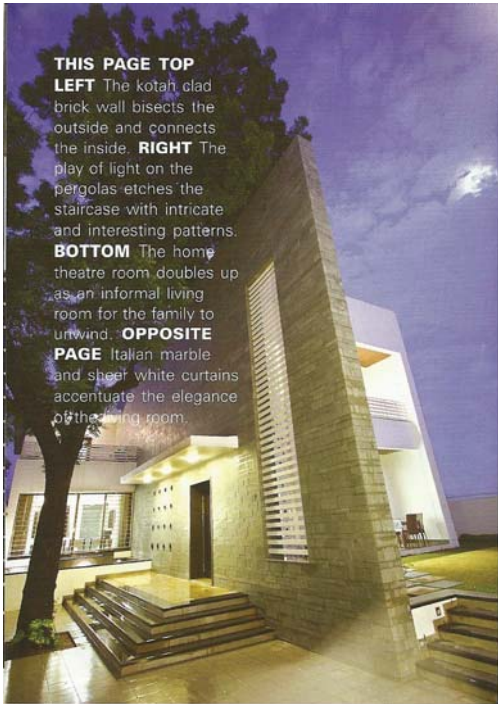
Perfectly fulfilling its role as a basic element of construction, a wall is artfully redefined to emerge as a prime focal point of the elevation of a residential property in Bharuch.

TEXT BY HIMALI KOTHARI • PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY DIPEN GADA & ASSOCIATES



**SPREAD** Round cut-outs fitted with blue glass add to the wall's design element.





**THIS PAGE TOP**

**LEFT** The kotah clad brick wall bisects the outside and connects the inside. **RIGHT** The play of light on the pergolas etches the staircase with intricate and interesting patterns. **BOTTOM** The home theatre room doubles up as an informal living room for the family to unwind. **OPPOSITE PAGE** Italian marble and sheer white curtains accentuate the elegance of the living room.

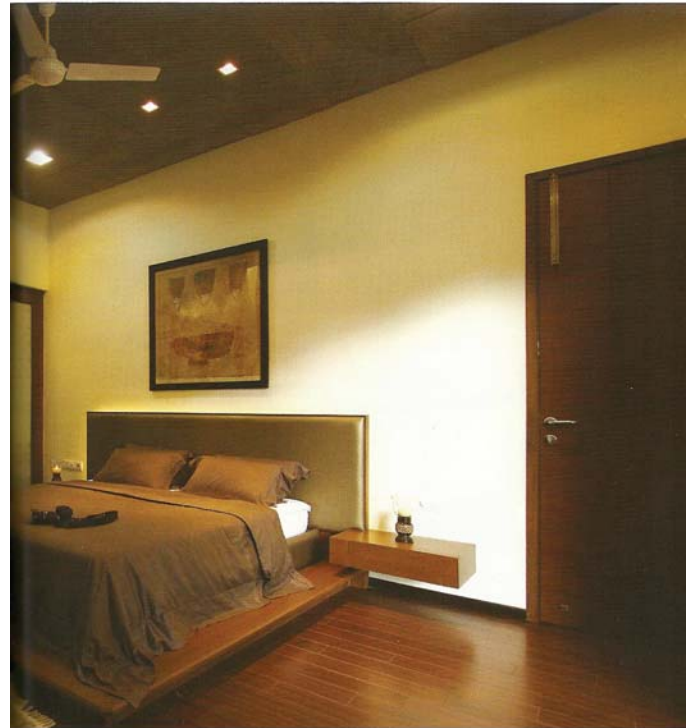
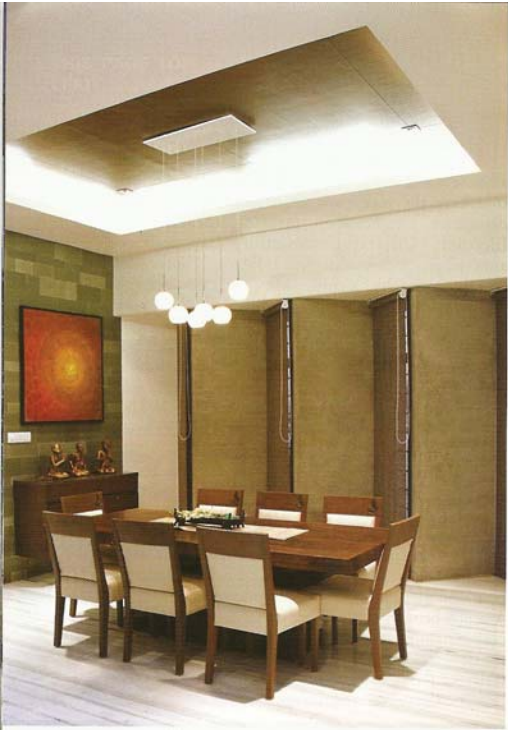


The Oxford Dictionary defines a wall as 'a continuous vertical brick or stone structure that encloses or divides an area of land. But, when a house is referred to as 'The Wall House' it is evident that here the wall goes far beyond its functional definition. The house in question is a property in Bharuch, Gujarat designed by Baroda-based architecture and interior design firm of Dipen Gada & Associates. Chief architect Mr. Dipen Gada says, "It was not a forced or conscious decision to make the wall the focal point of the house. The idea evolved naturally in response to the shape and size of the available area. The plot designated for the house was narrow and rectangular; plus there was a Neem tree in the front which both the client and we were keen to retain. Thus, the house was conceptualised as a linear structure and the wall came in to complement this idea."

The firm's design ideology over the years has been to pick one or two powerful elements in a design space and emphasise them, letting the rest of the elements prop up the designated key elements. In this particular property the key element is the 34 feet high wall which bisects the house from the outside. It is a brick wall that has been clad with unpolished kotah stone to lend it texture. The play between sunlight and the stone's uneven surface creates an interesting shadow pattern further heightening the design element. The wall runs through most of the inside of the house and acts as a seamless connection between the various interior spaces. ▶







**THIS PAGE TOP** Wooden flooring in the bedrooms creates a warm and intimate ambience. **BOTTOM** Bright coloured fabrics act as design foci in the monochromatic palette of this bedroom. **OPPOSITE PAGE TOP** The windows of the dining area are angled at 45°; these help tone down the harshness of the received sunlight. **BOTTOM** Minimal furniture in the bedroom leads to the creation of a space that is inviting and airy.

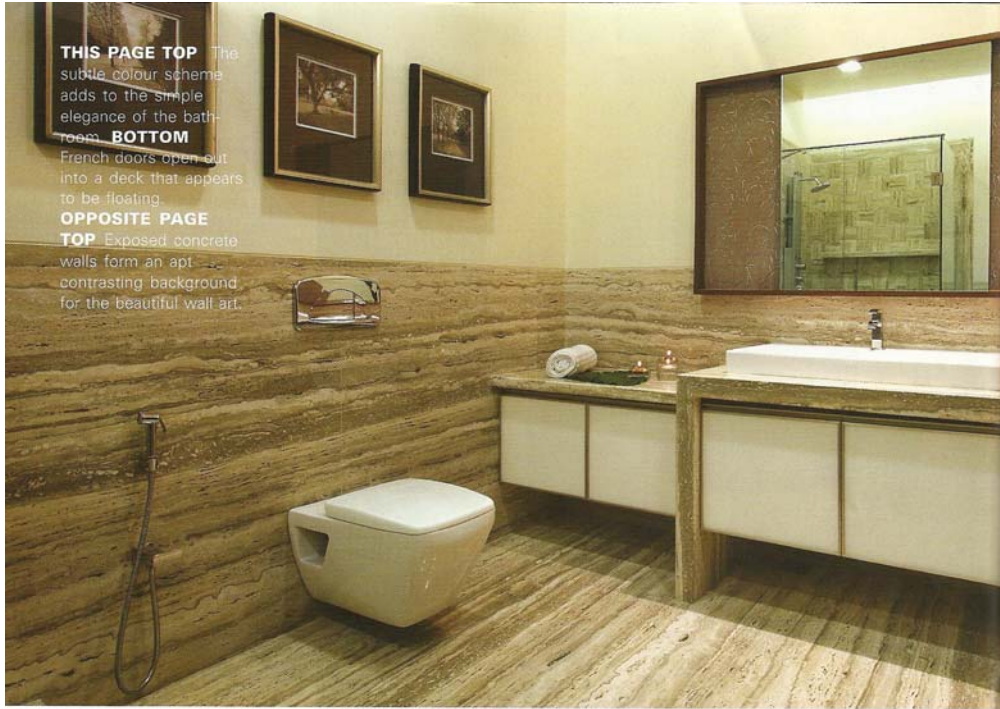




**THIS PAGE TOP** The subtle colour scheme adds to the simple elegance of the bathroom.

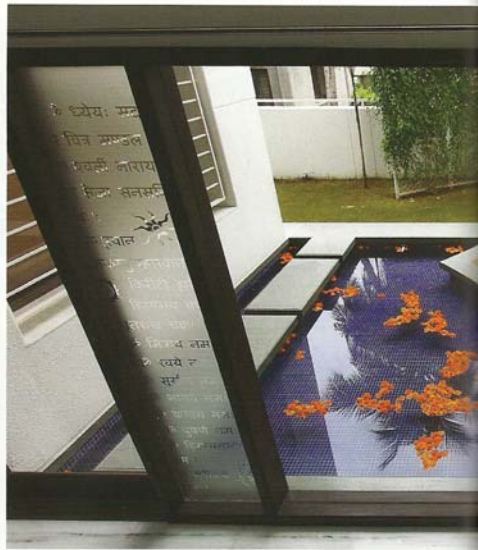
**BOTTOM** French doors open out into a deck that appears to be floating.

**OPPOSITE PAGE TOP** Exposed concrete walls form an apt contrasting background for the beautiful wall art.



Twenty round cut-outs fitted with blue glass have been made in the wall to demarcate the foyer area and allow a soft wash of daylight to flow in. A slab above the staircase has been cut out and fitted with pergolas; the staircase provides just the right canvas to showcase the patterns created by the play of light on the pergolas above. The foyer, the living and dining area have been laid with mirror polished Italian marble to accentuate the elegance in the layout and design. Just like in the foyer, natural light plays an important role in the living room as well. French doors shielded by sheer white curtains connect this room to the lawns outside. On the other hand the dining area which is prone to receiving direct sunlight has been fitted with slit-like windows angled at 45° to keep the harsh rays of the sun out and admit the gentle south westerly breeze.

One of the most interesting spaces in the house is the outdoor sit-out which has been built to appear as if it is floating on water. A large French door in the passage between the living and dining room opens out into the sit-out and forms a connect to the interior of the house. A similar semi-covered deck has also been created between the guest room and the home theatre room. A custom-designed swing so essential to the family's life style has been placed here. These spaces in the house have been designed to enable an active dialogue between the inner and outer spaces.



The elegant Italian marble gives way to the earthy, mirror-polished kotah stone as one moves towards the private spaces of the house. The home theatre space doubles up as an informal living room for the family to relax and spend time together. In the pooja room next door, the decor is minimal with only a white textured wall used as a backdrop for the idol; this acts as a subtle focal point in the space devoted to worship. The bedrooms have been planned such that each one has an access to a larger private space. For instance, one of the bedrooms opens into a private terrace garden. The bedrooms in sync with the general flow of design are kept uncluttered. Minimal furniture has been provided to cater to specific needs.

Since its inception in 1993, Dipen Gada & Associates have completed over 600 architectural projects. The Wall House is another interior-architectural project of the firm which has over the years been moving towards a design philosophy where the architecture and interiors are not compartmentalised. Arch. Dipen Gada explains, "Instead of creating a shell first and then fitting it with elaborate interiors we are moving in a direction where no superficial interiors are required. Architectural elements are artfully employed to also satisfy the design requisites of the interiors. Both complement and bolster each other towards a common design goal."