

BIENNALE PAVILION

Location : Fort Kochi

Year of completion : December 2016

Site area : 14400 sq.ft

Built-up area : 4157 sq.ft

To design an air-conditioned space to hold the events associated with the Kochi Muziris Biennale 2016, like screening documentaries, hosting discussions, talks etc.

THE APPROACH : The 'Pavilion' is an ode to memories. A form recollected from the distant past, born out of the architect's experience of spaces, colors, textures, emotions and sensations. The design is an exploration into recycling and reusing materials as a way of reducing the impact on the environment.

The design organically evolves from the context of the site, drawing parallels to the surrounding fabric of Fort Kochi, with its adaptively reused structures. The space attempts to create a unique ambience of cultural rootedness through motifs which draws associations from our history and context – the transition of spaces, gathering courts, celebrations, tactile sensations, traditional constructs and typologies. They bring up subconscious images like the kalarithara, the 'uru' supported on poles, the muttam, a temporary sports gallery etc, which bring up nostalgic references.

The ceiling of the pavilion is designed as a dynamic installation. The trusses supporting the roof are made using reclaimed wood in corporation with steel. Old sarees collected from the local people, forms an interesting installation, which is intertwined with the trusses to create an ever changing pattern of light and colors.

The design incorporates the usage of recyclable materials. Thus, there are a lot of tactile elements which coalesce to form the design. The external wall is a 'debris' wall, using discarded materials like broken brick bats, stones etc, in combination with earth dug from the site itself. The rakings on the floor are finished in combination of lime and sand, creating a very rustic feel. The temporary wooden galleries on the rear are made up of areca-nut planks.

