



New Delhi has been home to extraordinary modern architecture from its inception: the monumental, brick-lined St Martin's Garrison Church, the elegant mansions of Sujana Singh Park Complex, the understated, finely detailed IIC, the pathbreaking exhibition complex at Pragati Maidan, the astounding, sculptural Belgian Embassy. *The Modern Architecture of New Delhi* lists the most important buildings in the city which every Delhiite needs to know about. The first handbook of Delhi's modern architecture, it includes a description of each building, and of the architect and his vision for the work; key features to look out for and a glossary to explain all architectural terms. Beautifully designed, with stunning photography, this is an essential book for all lovers of Delhi, and of modern architecture.

*The Modern Architecture of New Delhi*

Khanna • Parhawk

# The Modern Architecture of New Delhi

1928–2007



Rahul Khanna • Manav Parhawk

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## Chakravarty Residence

Romi Khosla, 1975



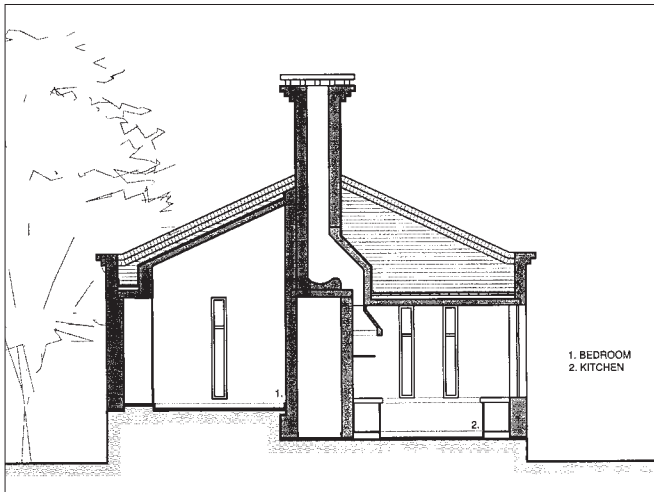
### Look out for

Romi Khosla (b. 1941), a young architect trained at the Architectural Association, London, was commissioned to build a modest residence for a professor on a limited budget. He created a brick cottage for his client, reminiscent of a colonial bungalow with a triangular sloped roof and exaggerated chimney (see photograph). The sixty square metre plot also has a courtyard that adds to its hill station aura.

The Chakravarty Residence owes much to post-modernist\* and Pritzker Prize winning architect Robert Venturi's (b. 1925) design of his mother's home at Chestnut Hill and is a derivative of it. Khosla's design was not only a modest tribute to Venturi, it was also the start of his own quest to interpret and design architecture that had no message beyond that of complete enjoyment for its intended user. Today, the house exudes even more character as the modest brick laden home is sandwiched between newer, less interesting houses.



Detail of front façade



Khosla's plan



Right: side view of the house

## School for Spastic Children

Romi Khosla Design Studio, 1985–1995



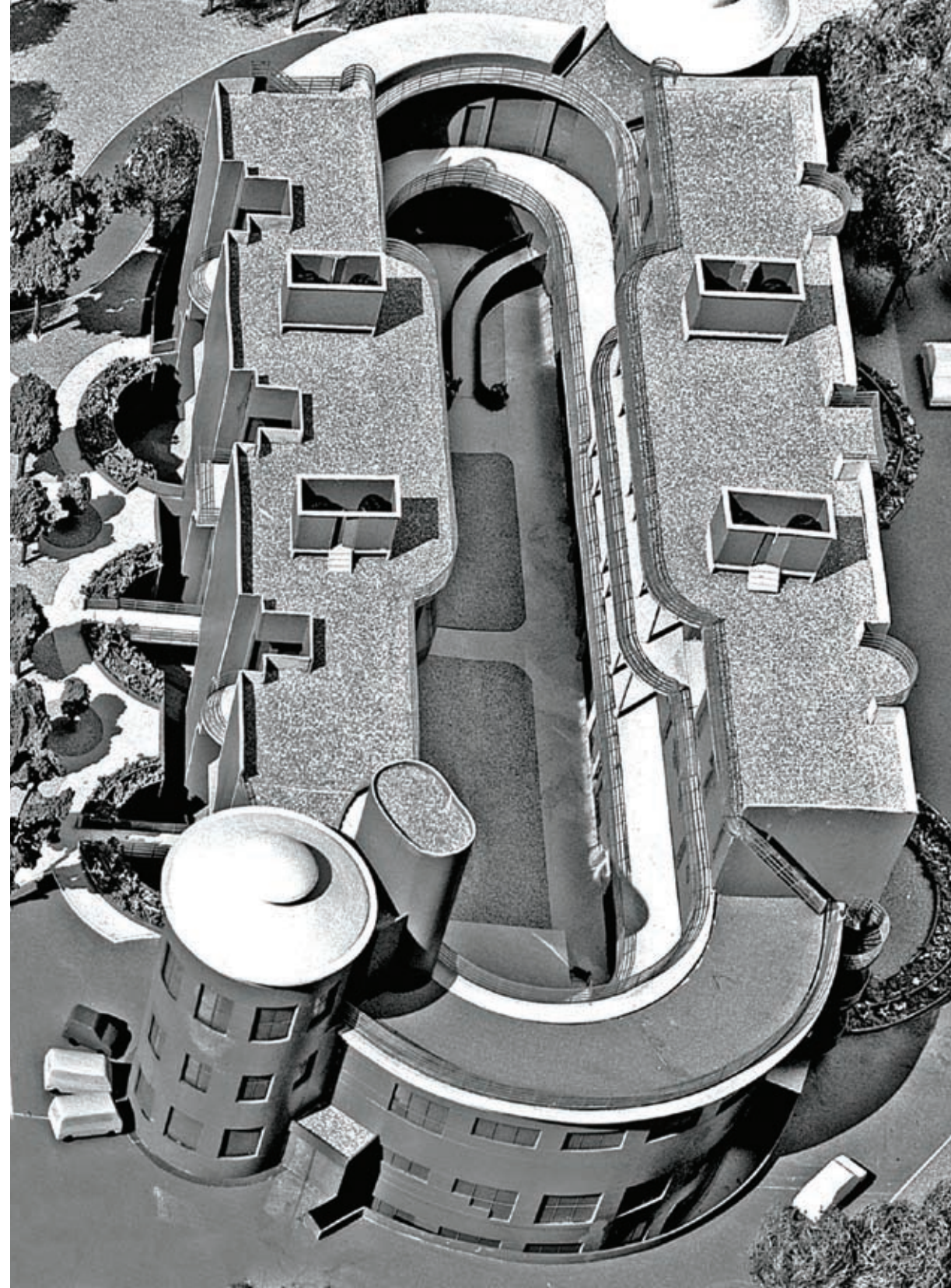
### Look out for

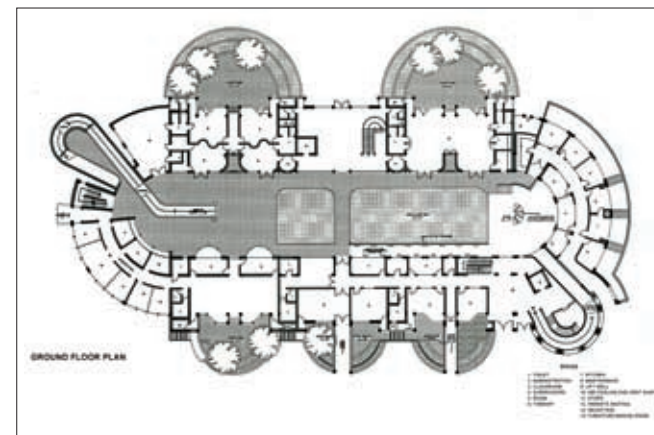
- The post-modernist\* version of arched cut outs with balconies on the façade (see above photograph).
- The internal and external ramps punctured throughout the building (see photograph on right).

Address: Spastic Society of Northern India, 2, Balbir Saxena Marg, Hauz Khas, New Delhi 110016.

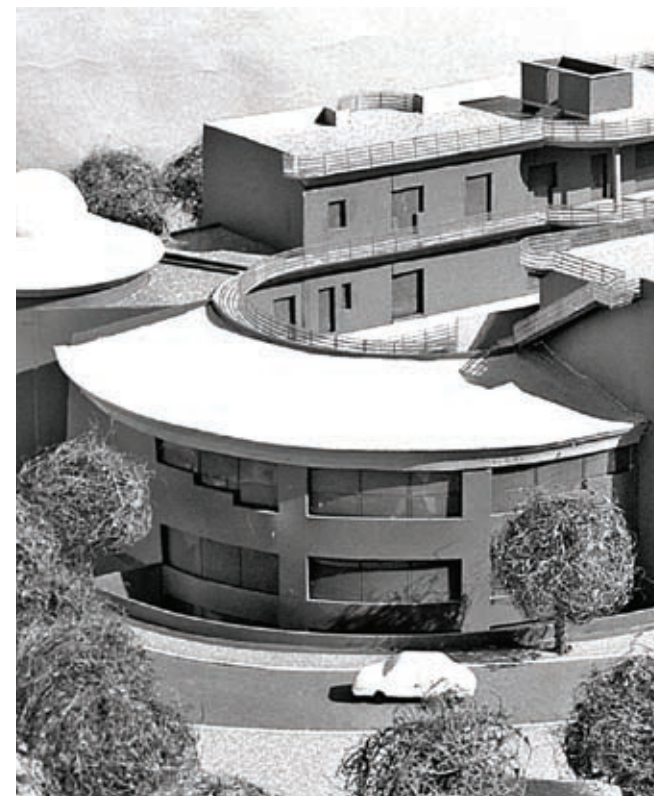
Romi Khosla's design of the School for Spastic Children with its use of abstract forms (see photograph) is regarded as a classic example of post-modern architecture in India. The architect's concern was to create a secure world for children with special needs. The structure is well secured and almost fort like, a building which has often been compared to a mother's womb. While developing his design, Khosla also visualised a ship with many decks; the numerous balconies (see photograph) in the building came out of this idea. He deliberately did not set aside any spaces for a specific function and sought a building where movement was easy and space expansive. As most of the children would have lived in small rooms all their lives, the wide, generous spaces in the school were designed to set them free. There is a large, centrally open atrium\* that Khosla initially intended to provide a cover for, but which was shelved because of the client's reluctance and higher costs involved. Attention was also paid to the students' conveniences with every two classrooms having an adjacent toilet (see plan on pp 125). With specially designed ramps and natural light penetrating into the building, the architect not only provided for a comfort zone for the children but also expressed his love of iconography in a poetic manner.

Right: aerial view of model showing internalised atrium





Site plan



Detail of model

Left: decks created through various balconies

## JMI University Students' Canteen

Martand Khosla–Romi Khosla Design Studio, 2005–2007



### Look out for

- How the roof and walls diminish to provide for the architecture's semi-openness.

Address: Jamia Millia Islamia, Jamia Nagar, New Delhi 110025.

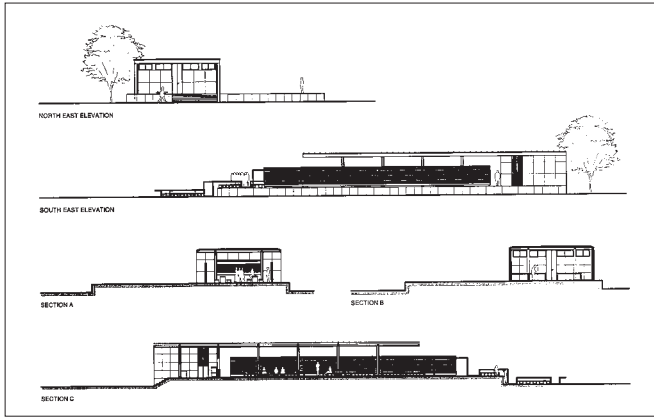
The Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) was founded by nationalist Muslims and scholars in 1920. This secular university moved to Delhi in 1925 from Aligarh and is located in the south of the city. The latest addition to the campus is the bold, bare students' canteen, designed by Martand Khosla (b. 1975).

After visiting the many dark, poorly ventilated student canteens within the city, the architect wanted to create a 'semi open-air café'. The architect seeks to create this blur of the inside and the outside through a space that is never fully enclosed (see photograph). The rectangular café doesn't have a door and is open on two sides; the roof doesn't touch the two side walls, and the side walls do not touch the floor. One of the side walls is only half as long as the other, so that some tables and benches along that wall have a view of the open. The only fully enclosed part of the building is the kitchen.

Khosla has been able to give the impression of a building that floats despite its industrial looking, pared down features. Perforated aluminium sheets in the ceiling were used to reduce the noise levels, and all artificial light has been concealed in keeping with the canteen's minimalistic look. The roof (see photograph on pp 193) is made of galvanised iron and the walls of waste marble, both low cost and durable materials. The canteen draws from the bold simplicity and detailing of Mies Van der Roe's famed Barcelona Pavilion and creates ample shade and cross ventilation for the users.



Detail of seating



Section drawings



Right: side view looking on to the main entrance