

ARCHITECTURE+DESIGN

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AK Enterprises
AND Design Co
Ayan Sen Architects
DesignPlus-Infra Projects
Divine Proportion Interiors
EFI Studio
Elite Spaces
Envisage
Essentia Environments
Gangwal PMC
Gulshan Roy Architects Inc

REFLECTIONS TOP 25 PROJECTS

IDO Design
Inhabit Design Studio
Innate Architects
Internal Affairs
Jami Jambusarwala & Associates
Maker Studio by Riya
Phylosophy Design Studio
Shubhlaxmee Architects
Studio WB
Sumesh Menon Associates
Team Shabnam
Vermillion Interiors
Vismit Architects
Zeel Architects



AYAN SEN ARCHITECTS URBAN DESIGNERS & PLANNERS

RIVER'S RENEWED THRESHOLD

Judges Ghat Redevelopment by Ayan Sen

An architectural ode that rekindles urban connections to nature and heritage, this redevelopment project is a catalyst for a meaningful contemporary revival

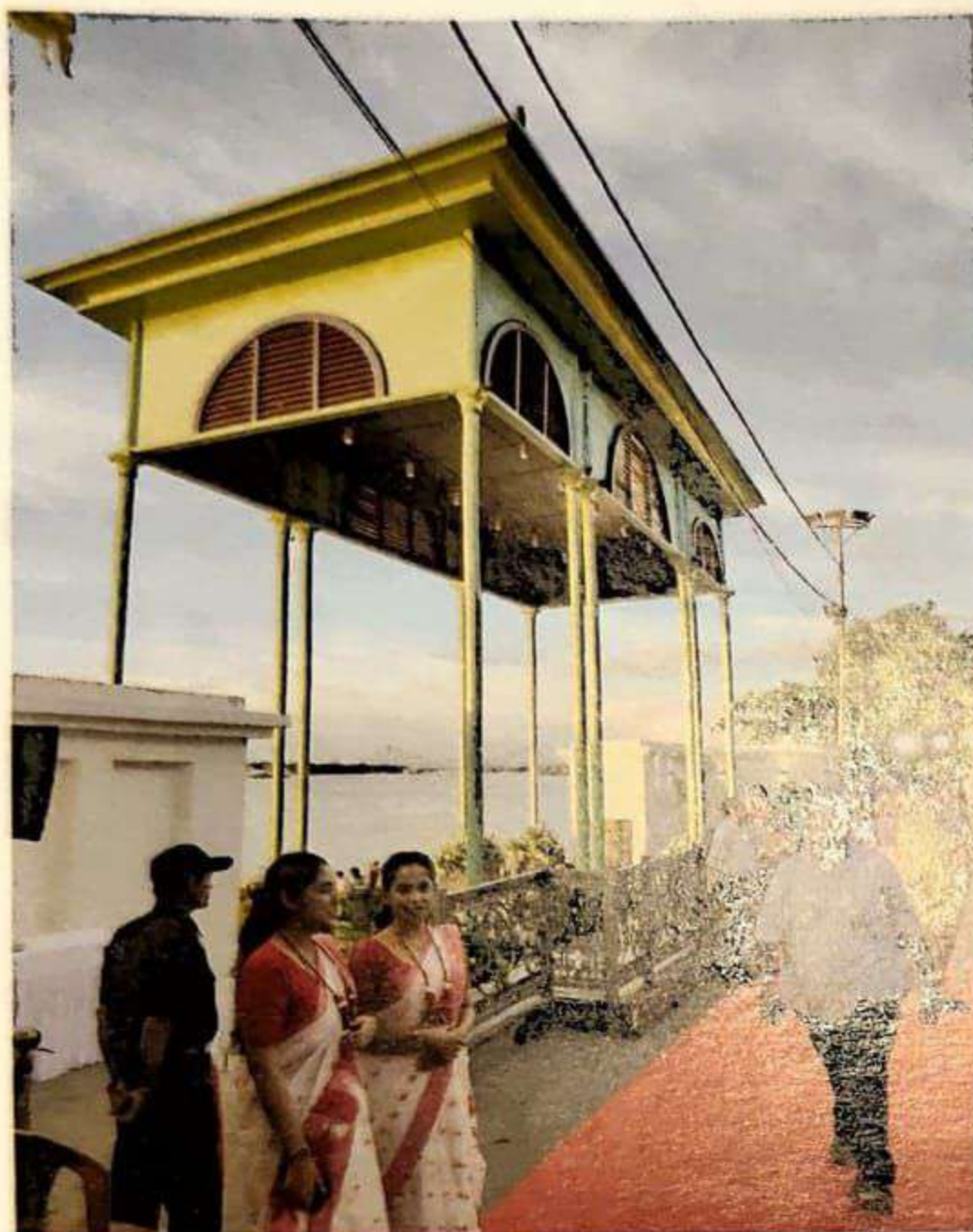
WORDS BY KASHISH KAUSHAL

With great culture comes a greater responsibility: to preserve it, nurture it and keep its relevance intact for future generations. The city of joy, Kolkata, is one such metropolis that has a plethora of landmarks and cultural zeitgeists: think the white marble marvel Victoria Memorial, the Howrah Bridge, shenanigans at Park Street. Imagine if we ignore these monuments and let them succumb to the shackles of time, which, let's be honest, can be pretty harsh on everyone. The restoration of the Judges Ghat by Ayan Sen Architects Urban Designers & Planners (ASAUDP) is one such precedence that warrants attention. Before we dive deep into this restoration project located along the curves of the Hooghly river, let's revisit its history and cultural significance. For

centuries, the Judges Ghat, once known as Gwalior Ghat, has shaped lives and landscapes. Frequented by British Judges from Alipore, the site had gradually surrendered to the wear of tide, time, and urban disregard. Yet its cultural and spatial potential remained unchanged—a place where ritual, movement, and the city's collective rhythm naturally converge. The intervention by architect Ayan Sen reveals how architecture can revive nostalgia while renewing functionality. In collaboration with the city-based Prerna Foundation, the Judges Ghat became more than just a preservation project. The restoration process began with a profound respect for the ghat's structural essence. Eroded steps were reinforced; cracked stones re-laid, and pathways reconfigured for seamless, safe movement. Rather than imposing a full-blown overhaul, the design protected its legacy while adapting the space for future needs.



Along the gentle curve of the Hooghly River, where Kolkata's past and present continue to intertwine, the redevelopment of Judges Ghat shows us how architecture can restore cultural continuity while enhancing urban life



A palette of stone and meticulously designed wrought-iron railings and balustrades created continuity between heritage and contemporary craft

ASAUDP's material choices further gave wings to the Ghat's architectural language. "A palette of stone and meticulously designed wrought-iron railings and balustrades created continuity between heritage and contemporary craft," elaborates Ayan. The wrought iron brought about lightness that complemented the textured stone, enhancing safety while framing views of the river. As light washes over the stone planes, the Ghat transforms into a warm environment that encourages contemplation without disturbing the sanctity of the riverfront. Native landscape insertions and bio-sensitive edge treatments reaffirmed the Ghat's ecological role, stitching built form back into the riverbank. Ultimately, the redevelopment of Judges Ghat stands as a poetic expression of gratitude to the Hooghly. Today, the Judges Ghat is a melting pot of Kolkata's daily life: walkers stopping by the water's edge, families visiting during festivals, and worshippers arriving for immersion rituals. It illustrates how thoughtful architecture can awaken a city's relationship with its waterfront, not by grand gestures, but through sensitivity and continuity. ✚

It accommodates daily walkers, observers, and seasonal rituals with ease—serving as an immersion site during Durga Puja and other festivities that animate Kolkata's River culture



PROJECT SNAPSHOTS

Typology: Public Infrastructure/Heritage Restoration

Design Approach: Sensitive restoration balancing preservation with contemporary functionality; dynamic urban threshold design; heritage and daily life integration

Key Materials: Restored and re-laid stone (traditional ghat material), Custom wrought-iron railings and balustrades, subtle lighting elements, native landscape plantings, bio-sensitive edge treatments

Defining Features:

- Strengthened river-worn steps with reorganized circulation pathways
- Lighting strategy enabling nighttime use while preserving river quietude
- Integration as immersion site for Durga Puja and Chhath Puja celebrations
- Restoration under Perna Foundation's urban renewal vision

ARCHITECTURE WITH SOCIAL PURPOSE

Ayan Sen Architects Urban Designers & Planners is a Kolkata-based architectural firm dedicated to creating innovative, environment-friendly urban design, planning, and interior solutions while maintaining strong social responsibilities. The practice operates with a philosophy of holistic design—balancing light, space, nature, color, materials, and surroundings to create contextually responsive architecture. With expertise spanning new construction and renovation, ASAUDP's diverse portfolio includes residential houses, corporate buildings, hospitals, educational institutes, commercial centers, parks, and industrial complexes. The firm's work has earned recognition and goodwill across India, driven by highly knowledgeable professionals and a commitment to honest, specialised design services that explore creative opportunities unique to each project.



We approached Judges Ghat not as a monument to preserve, but as a living threshold between city and river—a place where heritage and daily life could coexist with dignity and purpose."

—**AYAN SEN**, Principal Architect,
Ayan Sen Architects Urban
Designers & Planners

