



THE LADIES COMMON ROOM
AT SETH G.S. MEDICAL COLLEGE, MUMBAI





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This conservation project in Mumbai is in one of the busiest hospital in the world with a medical school attached. The Ladies common room is heavily used, and one that will be continuously in use for decades to come. Studio pomegranate, along with Studio Mumbai set out to design this space keeping in mind everything we could learn from the larger hospital, and make it much better. Funded by the Indira Foundation, the process started in 2016 with a conversation with Studio Mumbai, who were then working on the space.



The Seth Gordhandas Sunderdas Medical College (GSMC), attached to the King Edward Memorial (KEM) Hospital at Parel, in Mumbai is the foremost centre for medicine, and medical education in the country. Designed by George Wittet, and completed in 1926, the institution is alma-mater to some of the best and brightest doctors in the world. GSMC was the first medical school in India, and was the incubation ground for several firsts in medical innovation.

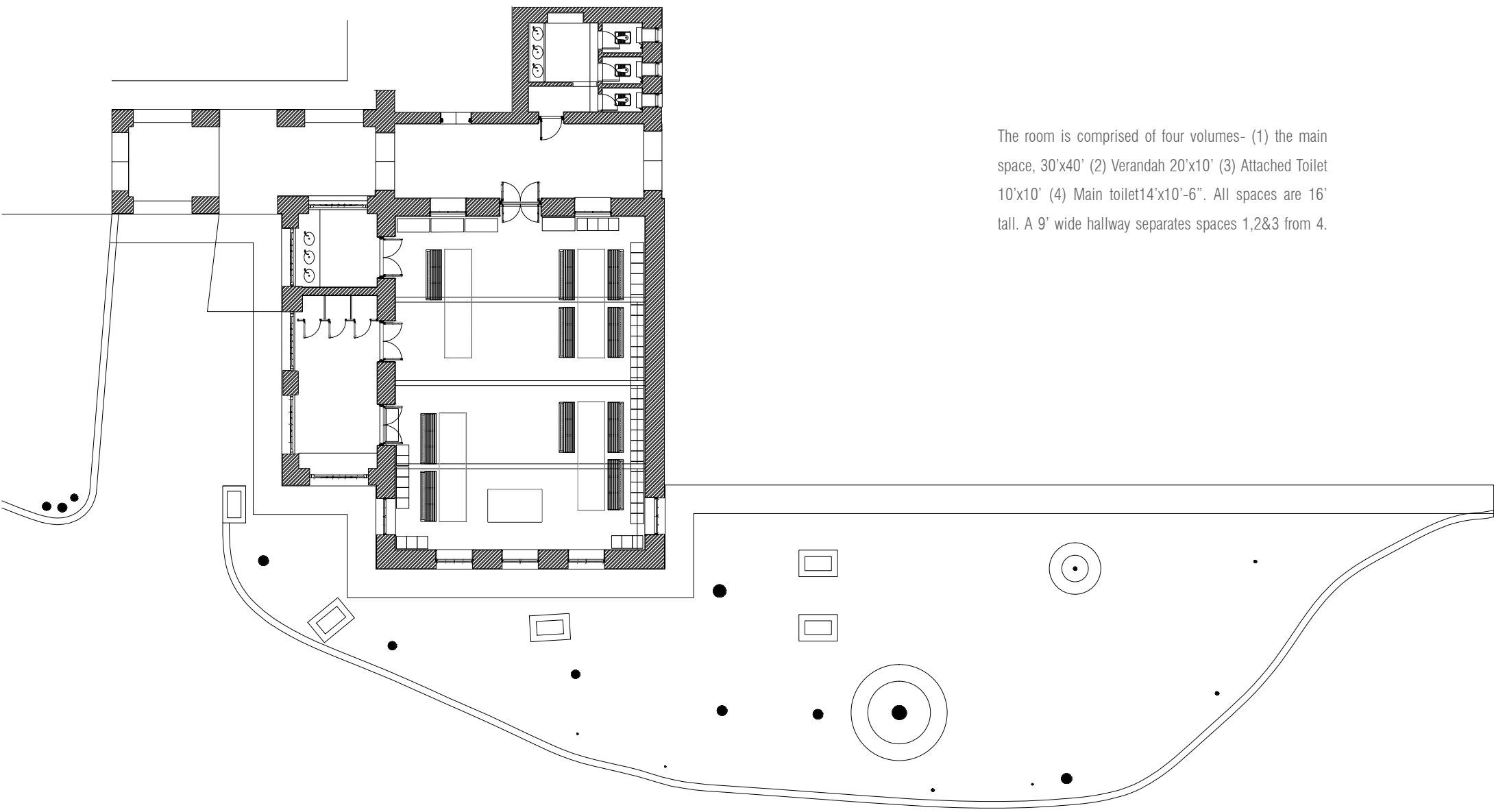


The planning of the buildings included beautiful airy lecture rooms sitting atop each other fixed like a jigsaw puzzle, open courtyards, modern laboratories, and a full array of sports and leisure spaces.





The most frequented of these are the Girls (Ladies) and Boys common rooms. These rooms are designed for students to take time off, rest, and eat lunch. The Ladies common room is used by about 1000 female students daily. The architects were tasked with renovating this room with a simple brief- to upgrade facilities, increase comfort, and ensure a relatively maintenance free space.



The room is comprised of four volumes- (1) the main space, 30'x40' (2) Verandah 20'x10' (3) Attached Toilet 10'x10' (4) Main toilet 14'x10'-6". All spaces are 16' tall. A 9' wide hallway separates spaces 1,2&3 from 4.

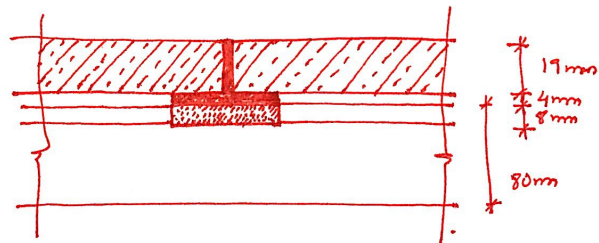
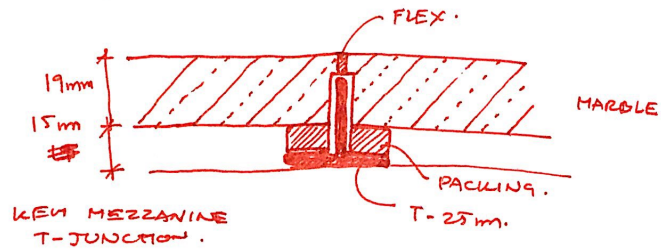


The outer windows were built in cast iron, with patterned [bajri] glass, each window had a pivoted ventilator on top, a fixed glass, and two windows at sill level. Large doors of teakwood, with beautiful moulding running in the panels. The floor was Kotah stone, and walls- originally lime plastered, are now oil painted. Several teakwood, and steel lockers were haphazardly spread out in the space. The attached toilet had been removed, and a washbasin installed, the larger main toilet was "upgraded" in the 2000's and was in poor condition.





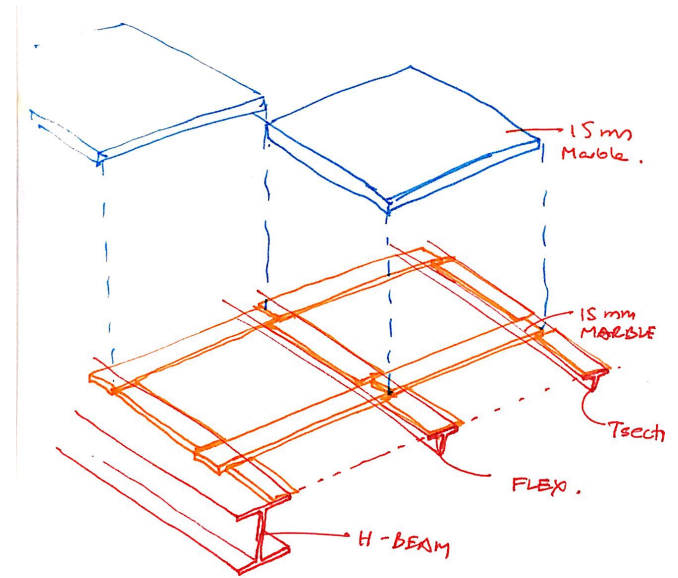
Studio pomegranate started measuring the space in May 2016, and very quickly was drawn to the immense beauty of the proportions and details; so much that over two weeks every moulding, detail, and screw were documented. The occupants of the space were also interviewed over the next six months, and time-lapse photography was used to understand usage patterns.



KEY MEZZANINE
STEEL SUPPORTS
DETAIL.

50mm X 5 X 9.

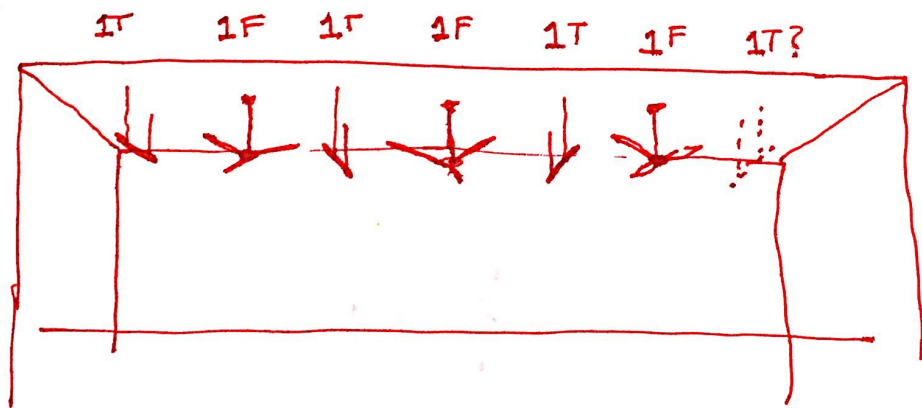
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The two studios had several discussions about the way forward, the consensus was -a mezzanine would add about 50% area to the main space and would be useful to either move all the lockers into, or to provide various spaces for the girls. Studio pomegranate set out to work on several iterations of mezzanine, and locker arrangements.







3 FANS + 3 TUBES
 3 FANS + 2 TUBES.

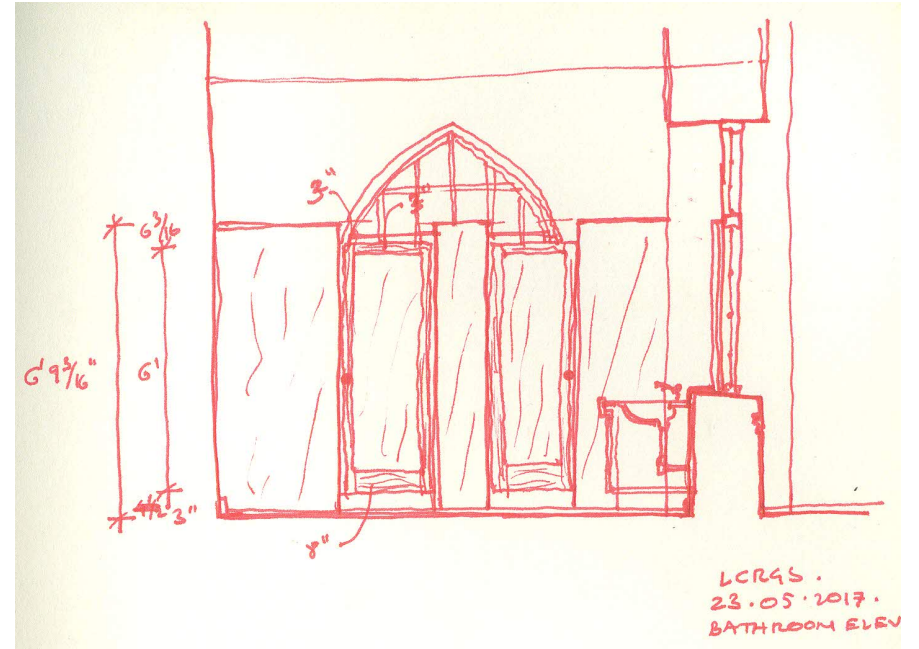
FAN &
 LIGHT
 ARRANGEMENT



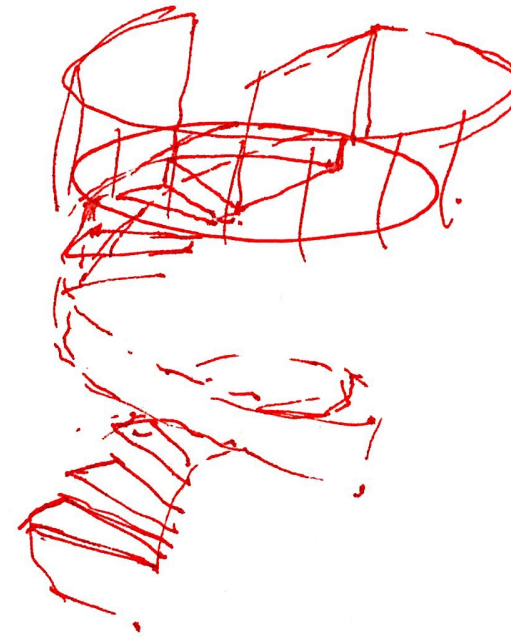
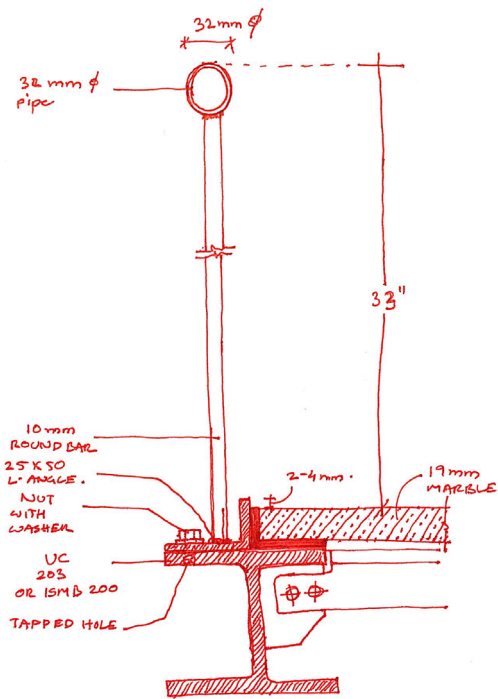
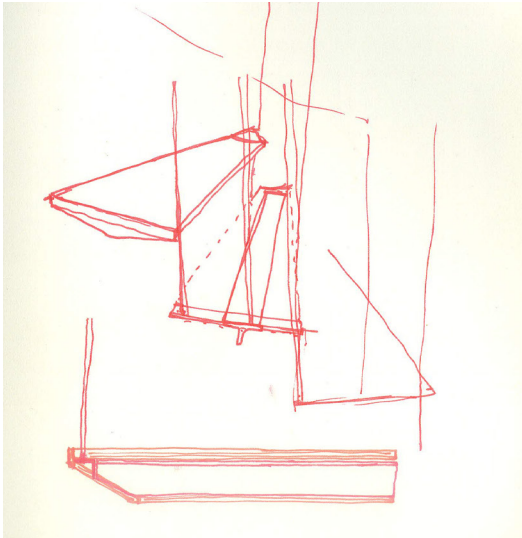


The simplest was finally chosen, with a rectangular mezzanine at the start of the main space, with a few lockers placed above.





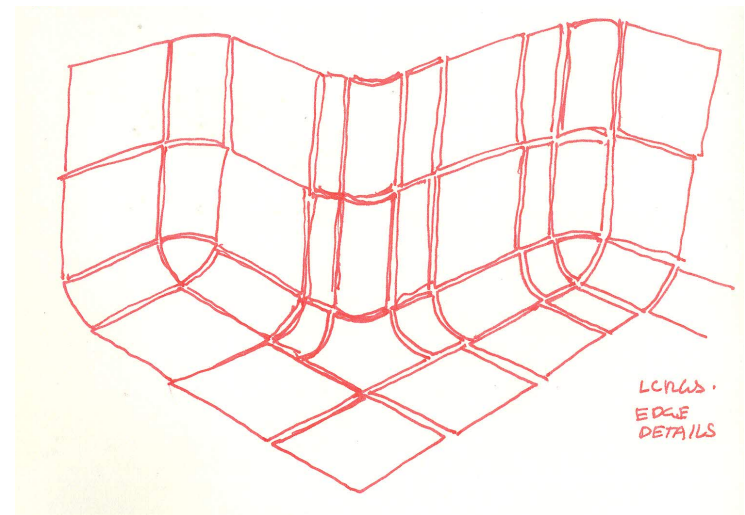
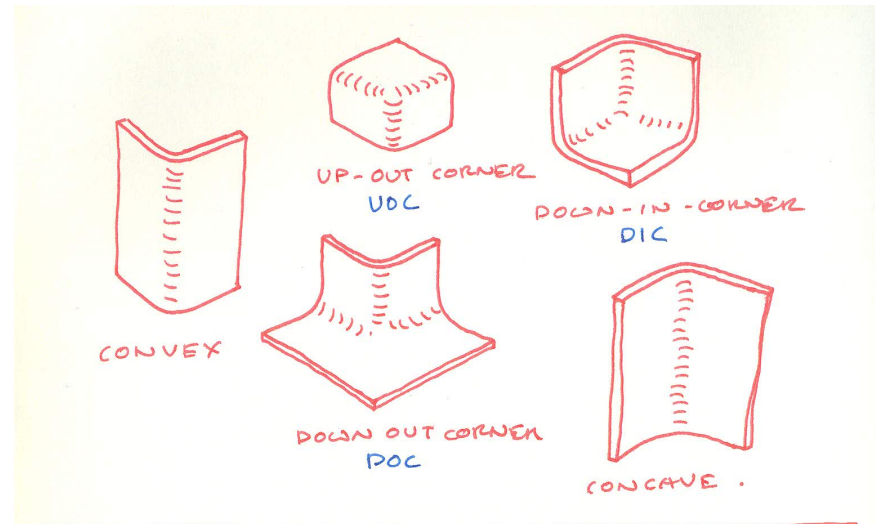
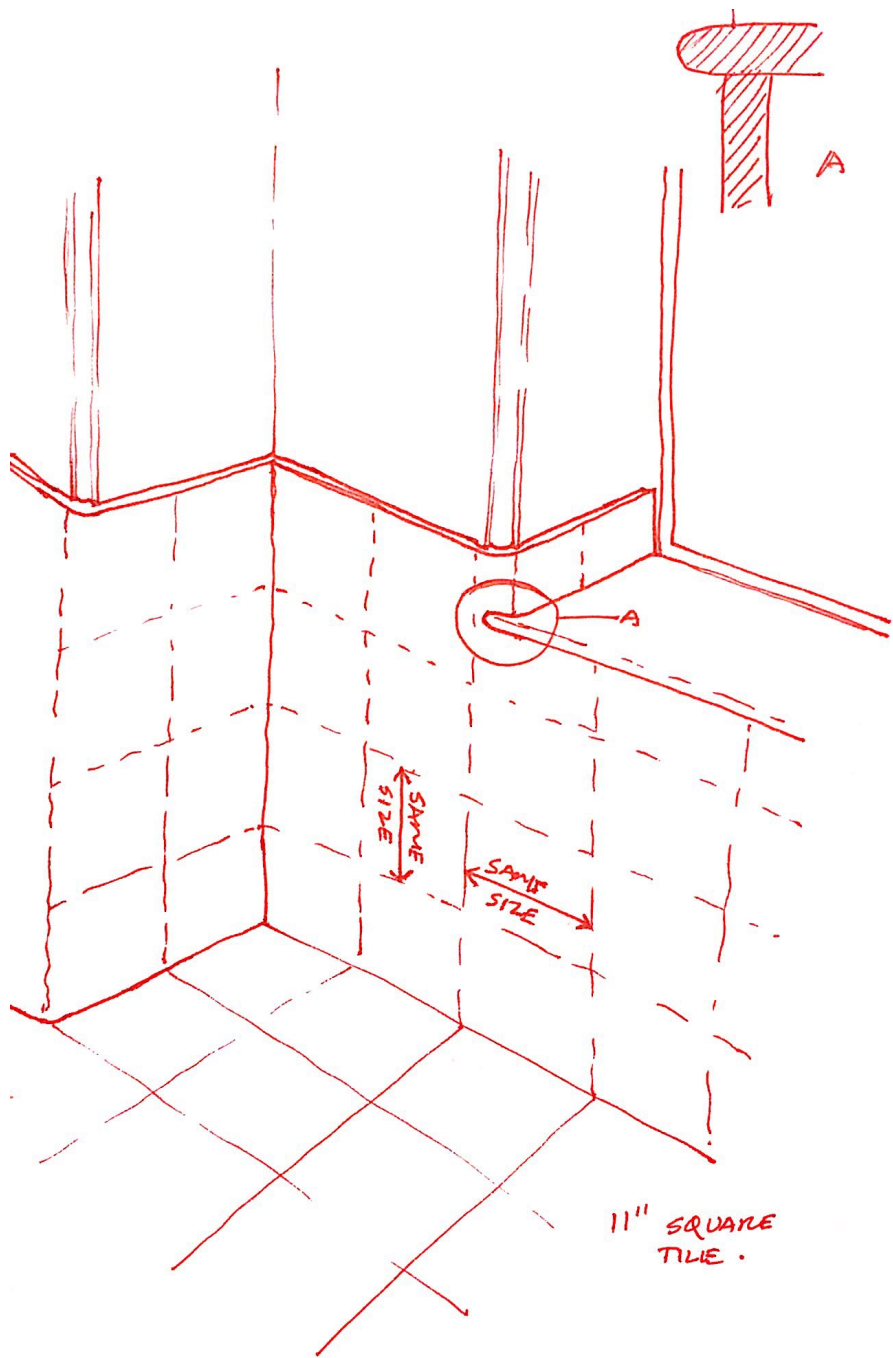


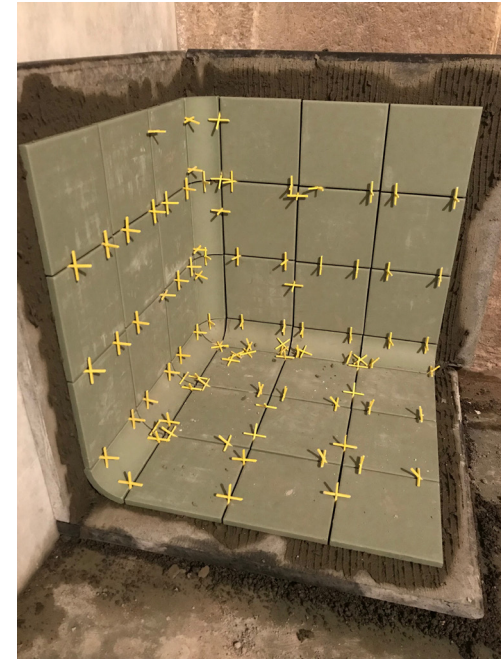


The stair would be a straight flight up from the left side as you enter. It however was never finalised, and remained a contentious issue between the studios for the remainder of the project.



A spiral stair came in later in the central zone, with a dainty handrail.





The toilets were demolished, and curved tiles, produced in Portugal were used for the toilets. Every detail, and every mould is from the original palette at the hospital, only put together to make better use of the detail.

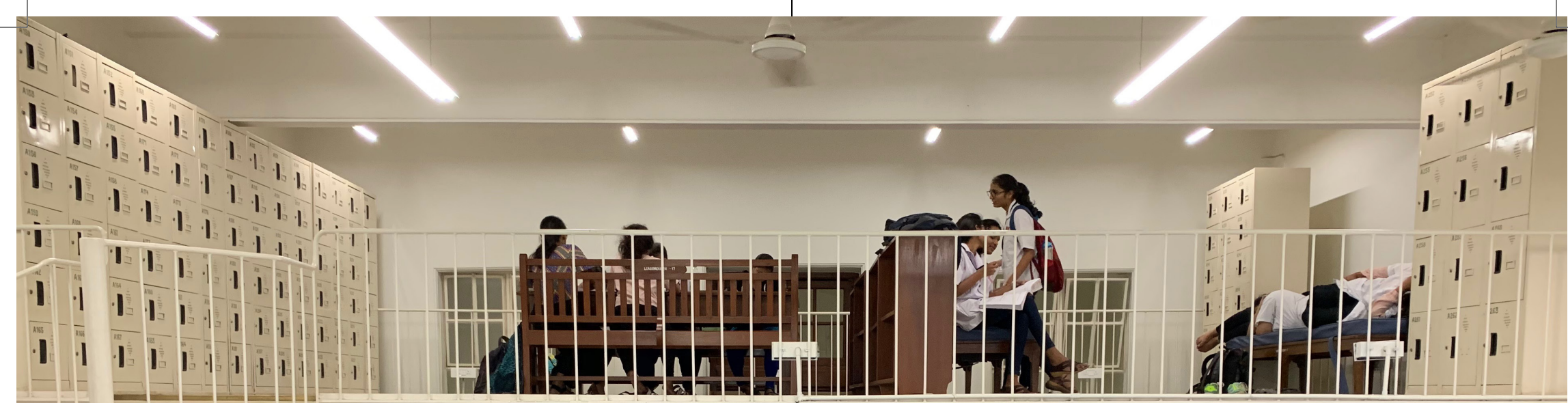








The space was reopened for the students on June 22, 2018. The girls have loved their new common room, which gives them more space, efficient locker arrangements, and better facilities. The renovation was funded by Avinash Manudhane, and Dr. Sindhu Manudhane of the Indra foundation, and built by SPE build, the design-build arm of Studio pomegranate. The design team is immensely grateful for the special efforts put in by Dr. Lopa Mehta, Dean- Dr. Avinash Supe, Dr. Anita Agarwal, the Diamond Jubilee Society Trust, and all the wonderful students of G.S Medical college who faced tremendous hardship without this room, and being understanding of the design process that Studio Mumbai, and Studio pomegranate follow. This relationship has led to an amazing space that can be fully utilised by generations of students to come.



Studio Mumbai: Bijoy Jain, Mimo Shirazi, Alba Abiad, Vatsal Bharmani,
Kashyap Bhagat.

Studio Pomegranate: Pranav Naik, Shweta Shah, Neel Davda, Anvita Balakka

Other Design Collaborators: Rameshwar Bhadhwa, Pokaram Jasol, Aslam,
Dr. Lopa Mehta

Engineer: Nitin Doshi, Dwijen Bhatt, Gautam Chande

Metal Fabricators: Shayona Drilling Engineering, Patel, Bharat Panchal

Carpenter: Pokar Ram Jasol

Civil Works: Mortar Constructions

Tiles: TopCer

Electrical Contractor: KK Interior

Painters: Rajender Nirankari

Steel lockers: Panchal

Budget: INR 1,05,00,000/-

Time: Design - 25 Months, Construction- 8 months

Photography: Pranav Naik

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