



WORKSTATION

Weaving in subtle elements, Devika Banerjee has given the Royal Touch Overseas Corporation Office a contemporary ambience.

Contemporary Composition

TEXT: SUDESHNA CHAKRAVARTY ■ PHOTOGRAPHS: BISWAJIT CHATTERJEE



Devika Banerjee, with many years of experience in India and Europe, started her operations in Kolkata in 1998 with her first project for auto maker Peugeot. Specializing in corporate interiors, some of her clients include Sony, GSK, Tata Motors, Jet Airways, L&T, Reliance, Mitsubishi Chemicals, Bengal Ambuja, HDFC, Peugeot, Westside and Taj Bengal to name a few. For this project, the team included Devika Banerjee, Probal Guha, Anup Guha and Swarup Sau.

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Devika Banerjee's design for the textile export office of Royal Touch Overseas Corporation could be called an expression of modern freshness along with official crispness. The 1,450 sq. ft. office is elegant with a sense of space. "The brief we received from the client was simple. They wanted a smart city office to meet the overseas buyers of Indian textiles with adequate display facilities," says Devika. Keeping in mind that this was an Indian export house, she conceptualized a contemporary design with subtle detailing associated with textiles. "Having been given a free hand in designing, the challenge was to suggest rather than scream about the business – in a contemporary, functional setting. The abundance of textures and colours typical of Indian textiles, for example, were represented by a variety of textural etchings and streaks of strong, earthy colours on the floor and glass partitions," she explains the concept which took just 90 days to take shape. She has used subdued colours with maroon, blue and green lines on the floor, glass partitions and blinds.

The small reception area welcomes you with warm colours. Though small, an intelligent use of space makes the office look much larger. A passage runs through the office leading from the reception with all the rooms and workstations on both sides. The MD's office, right next to the reception, is partitioned with glass. It has a rich look with a mix of solid wood, veneer and laminate. "Real textile printing blocks embedded in the table add another dimension to the decor," Devika smiles. Little niches dressed up with bric-a-bracs lend an aesthetic appeal. A small meeting room next to the reception area for visitors ensures no disturbance to the general working environment.

The workstations are very user friendly with furniture in steel and wood that is chic and contemporary. Subtle designs on the chairs make them very lively without disturbing the official look. Here, the blinds sport the theme colours — maroon, green and blue. However, the most interesting thing in this office is the finish. The corners and edges of computer tables, drawers, cabinets, etc. are exquisitely finished which speaks volumes about the minute detailing and the care that has gone in making them.

A tiny display room at the end of the passage has a number of cupboards on all sides that can be pulled out. This makes them very user friendly. The table, coordinated with display cabinets, makes the room very cosy and ideal for one-on-one meetings. The conference room, on the other hand, is well equipped with all the modern gadgets for audio-visual presentations. This room has a sense of openness due







to lots of sunlight that comes in from all sides. The twin-colour flooring also gives relief. The conference room table is an interesting piece serving multiple purposes — it also serves as a book rack and storage area. There are huge wall cabinets for display with a replica loom lending an interesting dimension. The terrace adjoining the conference room has been done up with plants and wrought-iron garden chairs and serves as an extension to the conference room for post-meeting snacks or have an informal coffee meet.

Royal Touch office comes through as a modern contemporary office displaying a European panache with Indian elegance ■

