

PRESS RELEASE

Ambuja Neotia hosts 9th Charles Correa Memorial Lecture

Renowned American architect Marlon Blackwell delivers keynote address

Kolkata, June 26: Ambuja Neotia Group, in association with The Charles Correa Foundation, hosted the 9th edition of the Charles Correa Memorial Lecture at the Royal Bengal Room, City Centre Salt Lake, bringing together architects, students, design professionals and thought leaders for an evening dedicated to architecture, ideas and legacy.

Instituted in memory of one of India's most influential architects, Charles Correa, the annual lecture series has evolved into a significant platform for dialogue on design, urbanism and the role of architecture in shaping communities. This year's keynote address was delivered by renowned American architect Marlon Blackwell, whose work is celebrated globally for its deep connection to landscape, culture and place.

The evening commenced with a ceremonial lamp-lighting by Harshavardhan Neotia, Chairman, Ambuja Neotia Group, Madhu Neotia, Marlon Blackwell and distinguished members of the architect fraternity. Mr Neotia welcomed the audience and introduced Marlon Blackwell, who shared insights into his design philosophy, professional journey and presented a selection of his most acclaimed works.

Speaking on the occasion, Harshavardhan Neotia said, *"Charles Correa was not merely an architect; he was a visionary who transformed the way we think about space, culture and community. His work demonstrated that architecture can be deeply contemporary while remaining rooted in its context and people. Through this lecture series, we seek to keep that spirit alive by creating a platform where ideas can inspire future generations of architects, designers and city-makers."*

A Fellow of the American Institute of Architects (FAIA), recipient of the prestigious 2020 AIA Gold Medal, and Distinguished Professor at the University of Arkansas, Marlon Blackwell is widely regarded as one of the most influential voices in contemporary architecture. Over a career spanning more than three decades, his practice has received over 215 design awards and international recognition for projects that place people, place and purpose at the centre of design.

Reflecting on Charles Correa, Blackwell said, *"Charles Correa understood something many architects spend a lifetime pursuing - that the most meaningful buildings belong to the people who inhabit them. To speak in his memory, in a city that celebrates his legacy, is both an honour and a privilege."*

Blackwell joins an illustrious list of speakers who have participated in the lecture series since its inception. Previous editions have featured globally acclaimed architects including Peter Stutchbury, Andra Matin, Brinda Somaya, Bibhuti Man Singh, C. Anjalendran, K.T.

Ravindran, Sanjay Mohe, Yung Ho Chang, Kashef Chowdhury, Uday Joshi, Richard Hassell, Kamal Hadker, Solano Benítez and Rahul Mehrotra.

The evening was anchored by renowned architect, author and principal organizer, Ashish Acharjee, who had worked closely with Charles Correa on landmark projects including the Jawhar Kala Kendra in Jaipur. Summing up Blackwell's oeuvre, Acharjee said, *"The mastery with which Blackwell blends function, context, culture and people in creating buildings that fuse seamlessly, is the hallmark of his architecture"*

About Ambuja Neotia Group

Ambuja Neotia is one of Eastern India's leading business groups with interests spanning real estate, hospitality, healthcare and education. Led by Harshavardhan Neotia, the Group has developed several landmark projects that have contributed to the region's urban and economic growth.

About Charles Correa Memorial Lecture

Organised annually by Ambuja Neotia since 2016 in partnership with The Charles Correa Foundation, the Charles Correa Memorial Lecture celebrates the life, work and enduring influence of Charles Correa. The series serves as a platform for advancing conversations around human-centric, climate-responsive and socially relevant architecture while inspiring the next generation of design professionals.

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