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Layers of Privacy

Shaping personal space through screening
in small apartments of Mumbai.



A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

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01. Abstract:

This research explores how spatial design can facilitate privacy in small apartments and thereby sustain social and psychological wellbeing of inhabitants in high density housing of Mumbai, India. High density cities are the inevitable future of the developing world, and are being shaped by two key factors, namely, rapid urbanization and population growth. This has resulted in enormous environmental, social, political, economic and cultural problems. The lack of privacy has emerged as a major issue in high density housing and is regarded a major cause of anxiety in people today. It is related to a sense of loss and can lead to antisocial behavior. However, with careful design of the privacy and proximity requirements of these challenging spaces, social interaction can be managed and facilitated in a manner that promotes a safer, cohesive living experience, that in turn engenders a healthier neighborhood. This research interrogates into the socio-cultural dynamics of Indian society in relation to the ever-increasing density of human population and high density living in Mumbai. It looks in particular at the social and cultural requirements of personal space for '1 room kitchen small apartment units' for middle class families and individuals. A spatial analysis of the realities and demands on such small apartment living is combined with a selection of product development methods to create a screen based interior design product solution. The design proposition seeks to provide families and individuals with living conditions that negotiate privacy needs with the reality of high density urban living demands to provide living experiences of quality and dignity.

Keywords: Interior Design, Apartment Living, Privacy, High Density Housing, Mumbai.

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