

An ode to water, in steel

Shubhra Pant@timesgroup.com

Photos: Infract One

Gurgaon: Water is at the core of life. It's also at the core of many modern businesses. Beyond its functionality as an essential resource for life or business, though, it has many other characteristics and aesthetics.

Manesar-based Jaquar Group, which manufactures bathroom fittings and plumbing products, has found its business strategy in these characteristics and aesthetics. Jaquar's global headquarters, located in Manesar, is also inspired by water and its aesthetics. The whole office has been inspired by the 'art of sculpting water'.

From the outside, the building has been designed as an eagle with wings spread perched on a mountaintop, amid lush green landscape. As you enter the atrium of the 12-acre campus, the first thing to catch your eye is the water droplet sculpted in steel.



The building has been designed as an eagle perched on a mountaintop



Sculpted water droplets suspended from the roof at the experience centre; (right) a sculpture by Alex David

Corporate World

The sculpture has been designed by Alex Davis of Alex Davis Studio, depicting a large splash of water. On the right side of the sculpture is the experience centre on the ground floor of the building, which also houses a cafeteria, a gymnasium, an auditorium and a library. The building, in which around 500 people work, is set on a raised platform, with two basement levels which house the manufacturing hub.

"The experience centre tells the story of the brand and its founder. It's something that cannot be described in words, only experienced," says Sandeep Shukla, head (marketing & communications), Jaquar Group. Indeed, the experience centre, which fuses multimedia experience with architecture, is hard to put in words.

The experience centre has been designed by Michael Foley, renowned designer from Bangalore. Much like a planetarium, where you get to hear the story of the universe, the water-drop centre tells visitors the story of the company. It describes different aesthetics of water, such as 'hasya rasa', 'shringar rasa' and 'adbhuta



An art installation in the experience centre on the ground floor

rasa', with the help of sound, light and multimedia, and how the organisation has taken cue from these to develop its business strategy.

"This whole office has been done keeping in mind the five elements of nature — water, earth, fire, sky and air. We wanted to make an environmental

office. It has been designed as a 'net zero' campus," said Shukla. The net consumption of a net zero building does not exceed its net production. All the water used at the campus is recycled, for example. There is a waste-to-energy plant, and gas produced by it is used for cooking food for employees.

GREEN OFFICE

The three-storeyed building, which came up last year, is powered by solar energy, boasts of radiant cooling, has energy efficient insulated glass and also has Leed Certification, which is a green building rating system

The three-storeyed building, which came up last year, is powered by solar energy, boasts of radiant cooling, has energy efficient insulated glass and also has the Leed Certification, which is a green building rating system. The top floor is occupied by the directors, while the first and second are work areas.