

# Bait Ur Rouf Mosque

Dhaka, Bangladesh

**Architects** Marina Tabassum  
Dhaka, Bangladesh

**Client** Sufia Khatun  
Dhaka, Bangladesh

**Commission** 1995  
**Design** 2005-2006  
**Construction** 2007-2012  
**Occupancy** 2012

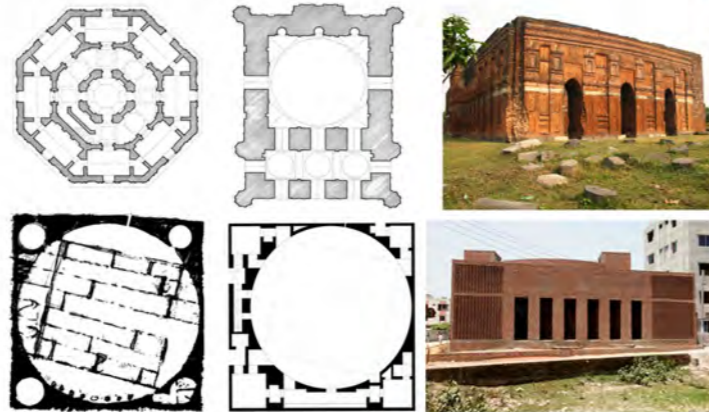
**Site** 754 m<sup>2</sup>  
**Ground Floor** 523 m<sup>2</sup>  
**Total Floor** 780 m<sup>2</sup>

**Costs** USD 150'000

**Programme** In an increasingly dense neighbourhood of Dhaka, the Mosque is raised on a plinth on a site axis creating a 13-degree angle with the qibla direction, which called for innovation in the layout. A cylindrical volume is inserted into a square, facilitating a rotation of the prayer hall, and forming light courts on four sides. The hall is a space raised on eight peripheral columns. Ancillary functions are located in spaces created by the outer square and the cylinder. The Mosque, funded and used by locals, and inspired by Sultanate mosque architecture, breathes through porous brick walls, keeping the prayer hall ventilated and cool. Natural light brought in through a skylight is ample for the daytime.

**Building Type** Religious Facilities  
**2016 Award Cycle** 4697.BAN

The initial idea was to search for the essence of Islam devoid of ritualistic and symbolic attributes - To question convention and imagery; to hark back to the time of the beginning - to question 'WHAT IS A MOSQUE' - Mosque is essentially a place of congregation of devoted Muslims, gathered in brotherhood, facing Qibla in submission to one God, Omni present. Clarity of space is prerequisite as there is no expression of mystic myth, no hierarchy. Thus, the prayer hall of Bait ur Rouf mosque is a carefully scaled and proportioned volume that is contemplative in nature is evenly lit to enhance the feeling of all as equal.



The mosques from the Sultanate period mark the glorious legacy of Mosque architecture in Bengal. In thirteenth century with the advent of Islam, Mosques built were not influenced by foreign style but combined and adapted elements found in local tradition. Built in brick, these mosques essentially embody a style that is unique to Bengal. To root a mosque to the place, it is crucial to analyze and extract from tradition what is essential. Bait ur Rouf Mosque is an attempt at creating a language of architecture that takes essence from the Sultanate period and gives a contemporary expression.

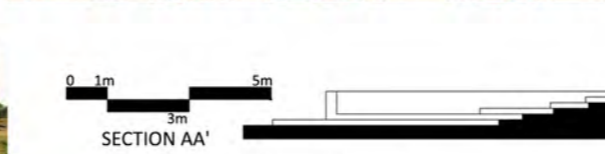


The tradition of mosque building in a certain location is influenced and localised by the use of local materials, climate, local customs and techniques. Bait ur Rouf mosque celebrates local tradition of construction, material and craftsmanship of brick. The building breathes naturally through porous brick facade that wraps the prayer hall, essentially a pavilion on eight columns. Ample skylight allows the space to remain lit throughout the day introducing a sense of spirituality.

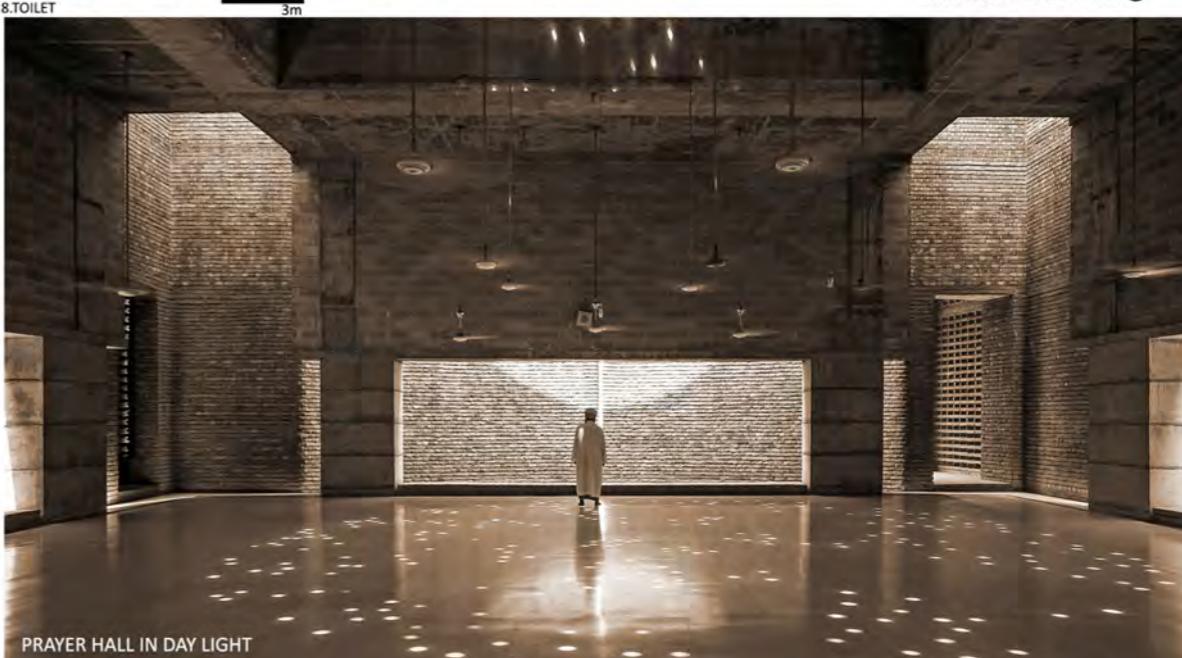
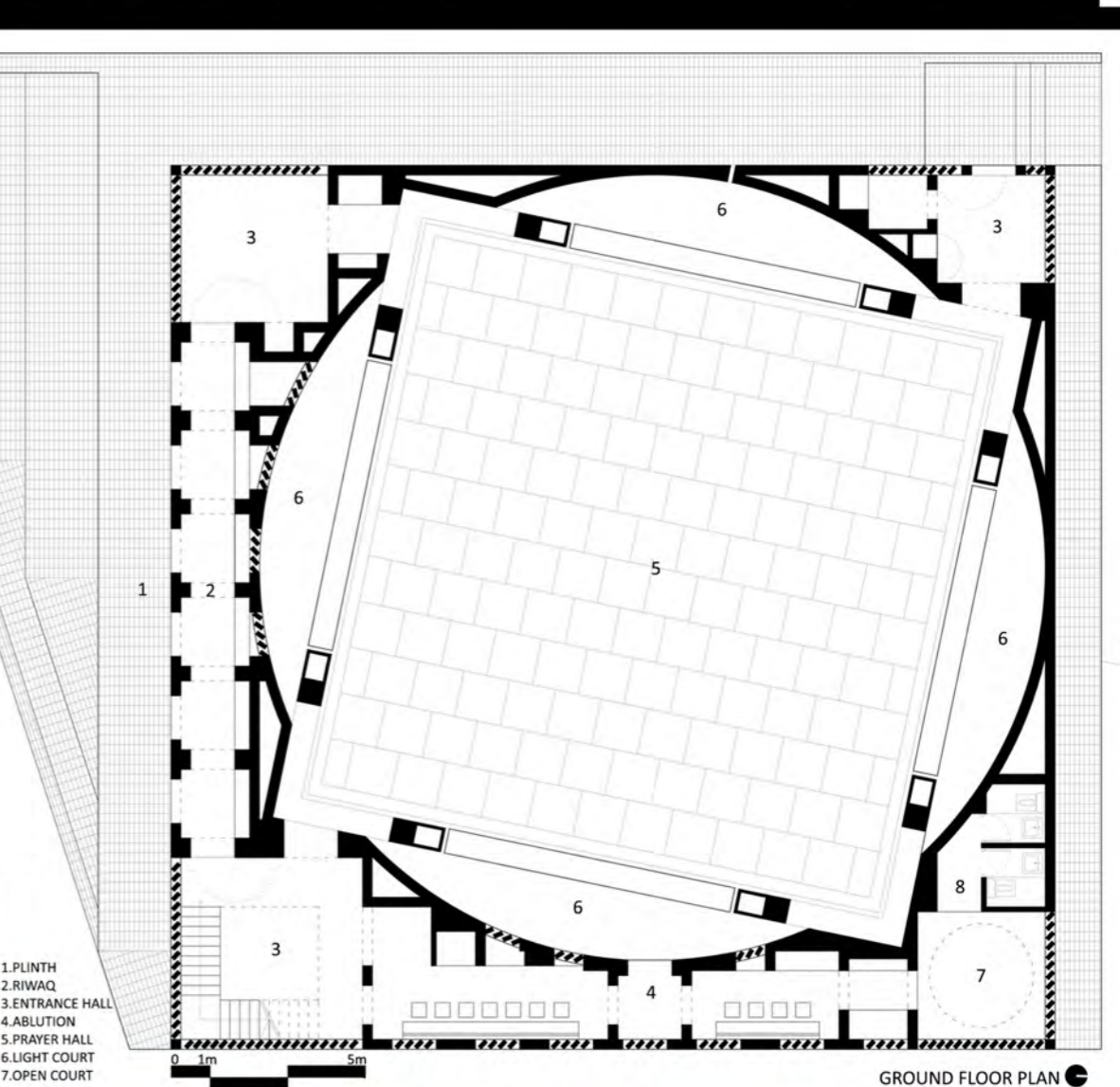
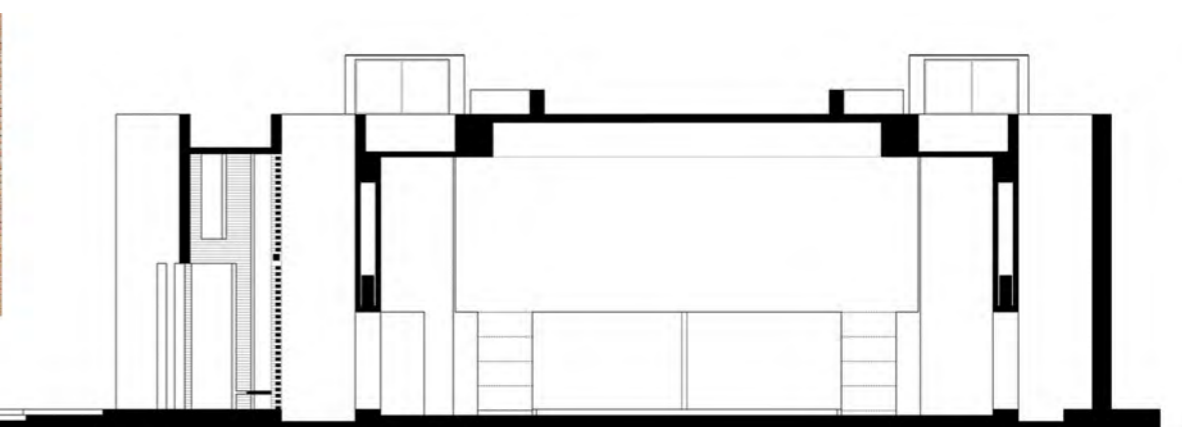
Modest budget raised through donation required responsible spending by careful selection of material and construction without sacrificing the quality of architecture.



Bait ur Rouf mosque is a small yet effective example of people's will towards a better living environment in the fastest growing city in the world. When government's lack of attention, plan or policy towards unmanageable growth fail to respond to the basic need of urban dwellers people unite their will and resources toward a positive living environment that contribute to a healthy urban life. Small scale participatory projects are unique ways of contributing to urban dwelling in contemporary cities.



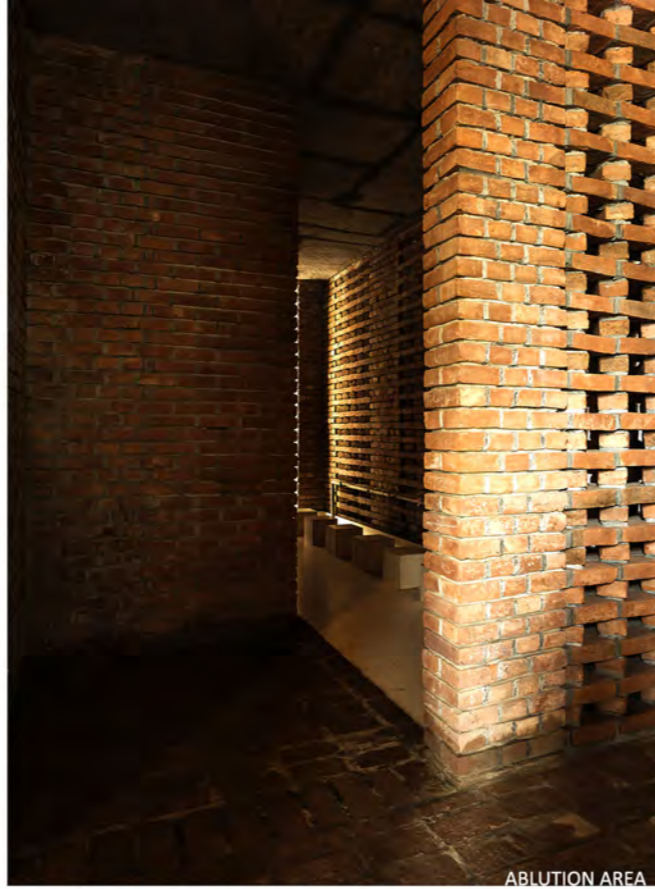
LIGHT AS THE ESSENCE OF SRIRITUALITY



PRAYER HALL IN DAY LIGHT



LIGHT AND VENTILATION WELL



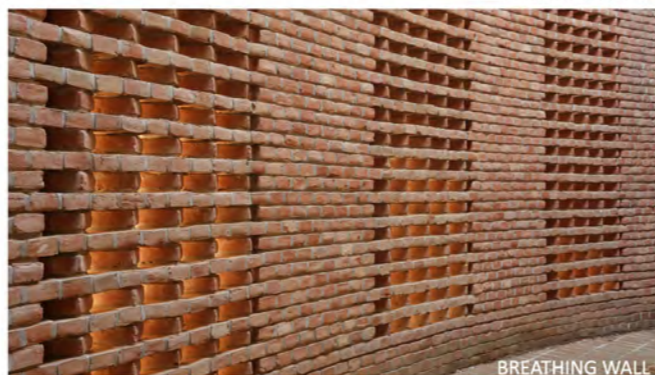
ABLUTION AREA



BAIT UR ROUF MOSQUE FROM SOUTH-WEST CORNER SHOWING ENTRANCE



THE LOCATION IS A RAPIDLY URBANISING NEIGHBOURHOOD TO THE NORTH OF DHAKA CITY



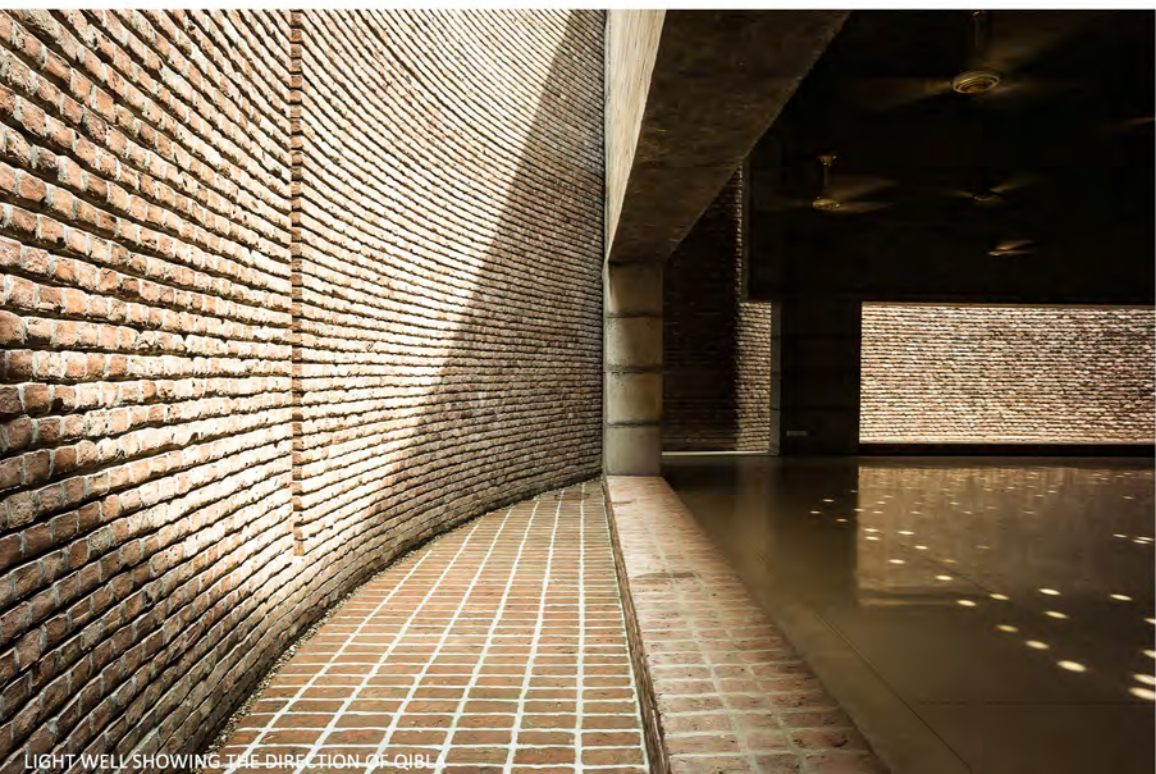
BREATHING WALL



STAIR TO FIRST FLOOR



PLINTH AS PUBLIC PLAZA FOR THE COMMUNITY TO GATHER



LIGHT WELL SHOWING THE DIRECTION OF QIBLA



VIEW OF RIWAQ FROM THE ENTRANCE HALL



PRAYER HALL BEFORE DHUHR PRAYER, PEOPLE GATHERING FOR THE JAMAT





PRAYER HALL IN NOVEMBER



PRAYER HALL IN APRIL



LIGHT COURT IN THE DIRECTION OF QIBLA



DAY LIGHT APERTURES IN THE ROOF



QIBLA MARKED WITH A SLIT OF LIGHT



AFTERNOON LIGHT IN JULY



PRAYER HALL AS A PAVILION WITH OPEN TO SKY LIGHT AND VENTILATION COURT ON FOUR-SIDES

WHEN PERSONAL FEELING TRANSCENDS RELIGION AND THOUGHT LEADS TO PHILOSOPHY, MIND OPENS TO REALIZATION. . .

ONE SUCH REALIZATION IS THAT THE QUINTESSENCE OF TRADITION IS NOT WORSHIPPING ASHES BUT PRESERVING THE FIRE.



LIGHT AND VENTILATION COURT IN THE ABLUTION AREA



CONCRETE AS THE MATERIAL FOR PRAYER HALL



WHITE LOCAL TILES FOR THE ABLUTION AREA



ESHARUL IS A CRAFTSMAN WHO WORKS WONDER WITH TERRAZZO FLOORING. HE COMES FROM KUSHTIA NEXT TO RIVER PADMA. HIS FAMILY AND DWELLING IN PICTURE. THE FLOOR IN THE PRAYER HALL IS MADE WITH WHITE STONE DUST COLLECTED FROM STONE CUTTING SHOPS AND WHITE CEMENT. TERRAZZO FOR THE 80METERS FLOOR ON THE UPPER LEVEL IS MADE OF WASTED CEMENT FROM CONSTRUCTION.

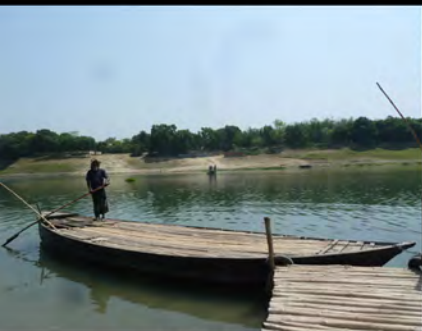
PERFORATED BRICK WORK



TERRAZZO FLOOR WITH RECYCLED CEMENT



TERRAZZO FLOORING WITH WHITE STONE DUST AND GLASS SRTIPS



SHARIFUL ISLAM IS A BRICK MASON FROM CHAPAI NAWABGANG NEAR RIVER MAHANANDA. BRICK WORK FROM NORTH BENGAL IS A CRAFTSMANSHIP THAT IS APPRICIATED THROUGHOUT BANGLADESH. SHARIFUL WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL THE BRICK WORK IN BAIT UR ROUF MOSQUE. TO MAKE A 10" THICK PERFORATED LOAD BEARING BRICK WALL WITHOUT REINFORCEMENT WAS A GREAT CHALLENGE DURING CONSTRUCTION OF THE MOSQUE.

BRICK WALLS AS LOAD BEARING STRUCTURES

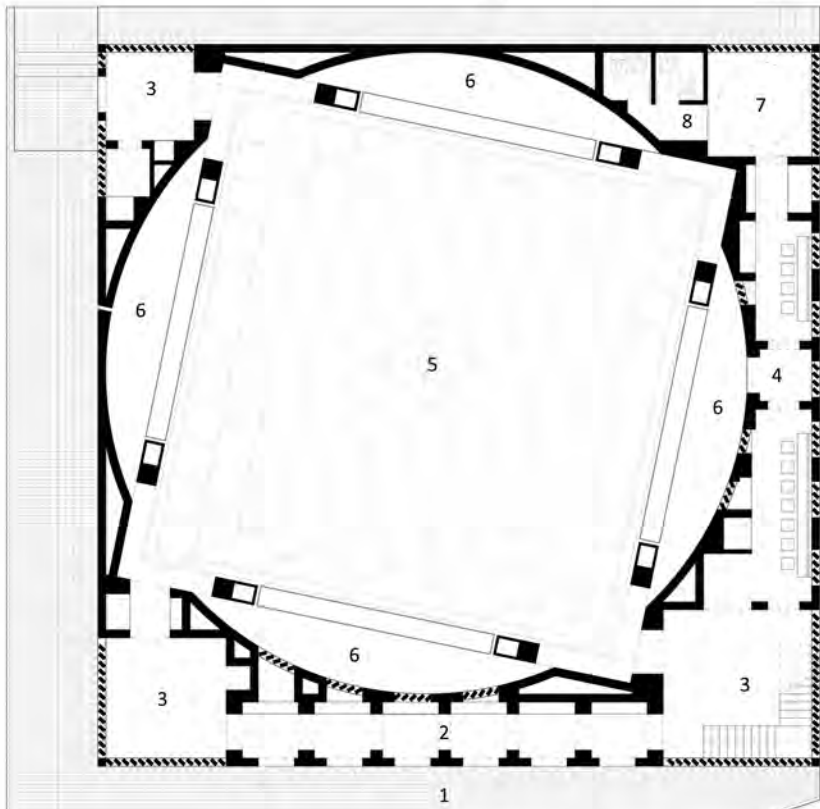


METAL FRAME AND METAL MESH DOORS

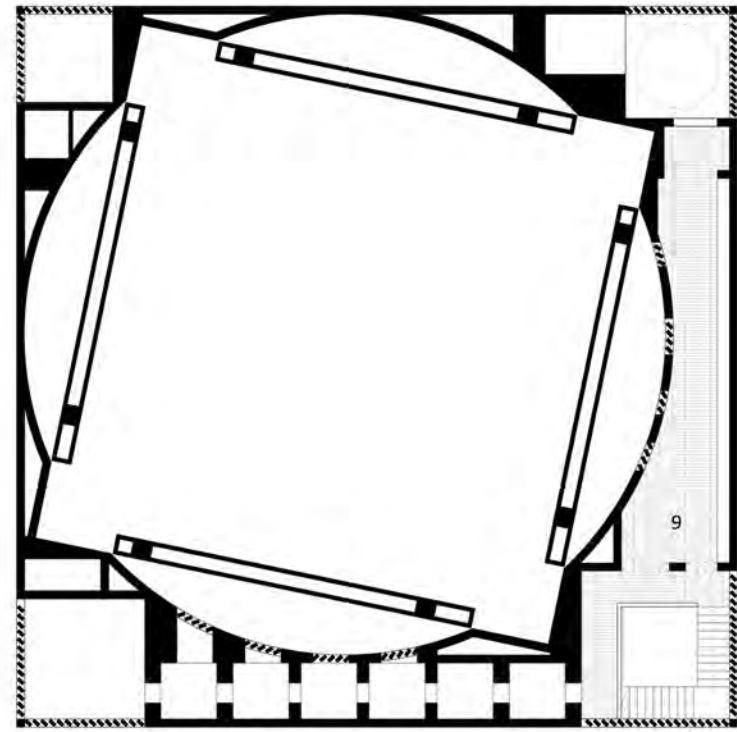
TO ALLOW WIND INTO THE SPACES THE LOAD BEARING BRICK WALLS ARE CONSTRUCTED AS PERFORATED BRICK WALLS. METAL STAIR TO UPPER FLOOR ALSO OF PERFORATED METAL SHEET ALLOW WIND AND LIGHT



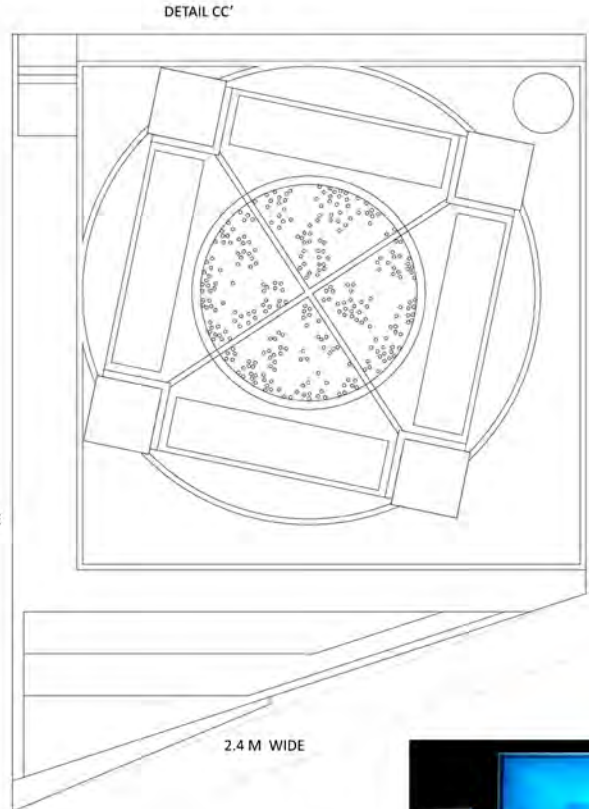
- 1. PLINTH
- 2. RIWAQ
- 3. ENTRANCE HALL
- 4. ABLUTION
- 5. PRAYER HALL
- 6. LIGHT COURT
- 7. OPEN COURT
- 8. TOILET
- 9. LIBRARY



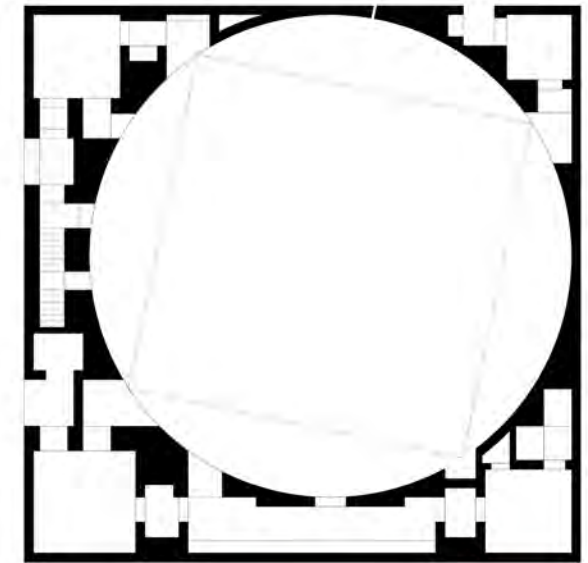
GROUND FLOOR PLAN  
0 1m 5m  
3m



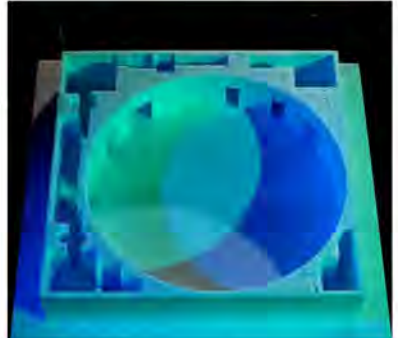
FIRST FLOOR PLAN  
0 1m 5m  
3m



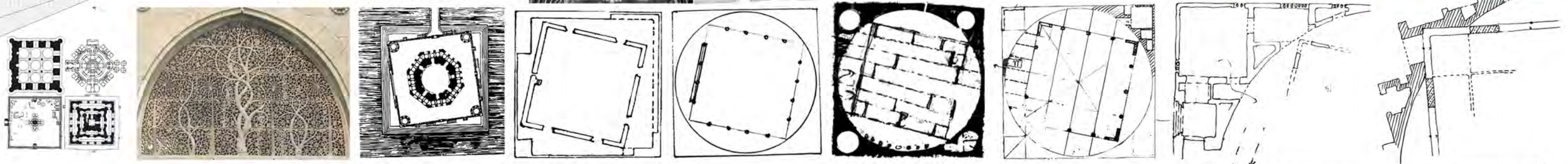
ROOF LEVEL PLAN  
0 1m 5m  
3m



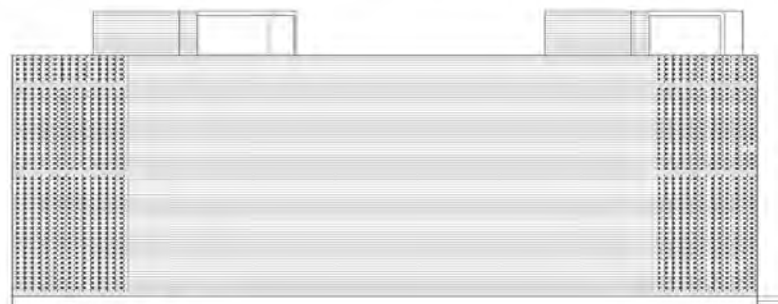
CONCEPTUAL PLAN



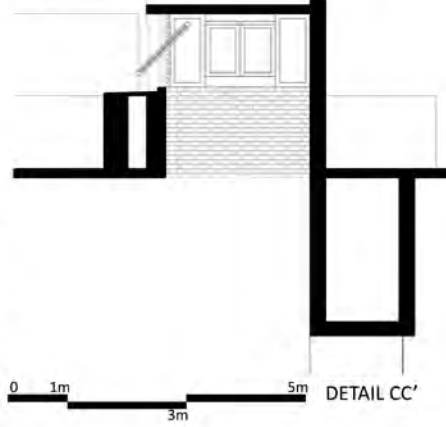
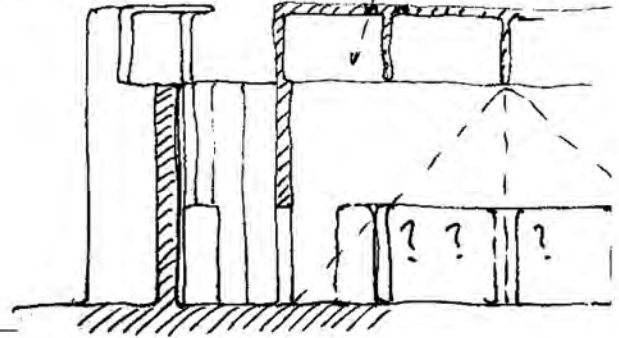
DEVELOPMENT DRAWINGS AND INSPIRATIONS



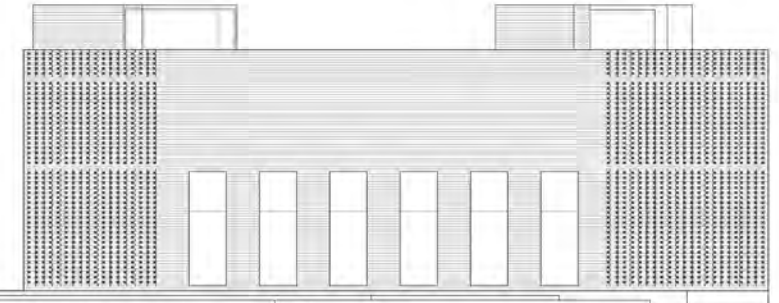
WEST ELEVATION  
0 1m 5m  
3m



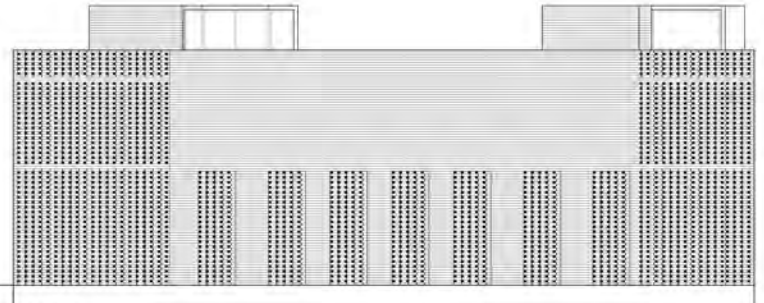
NORTH ELEVATION  
0 1m 5m  
3m



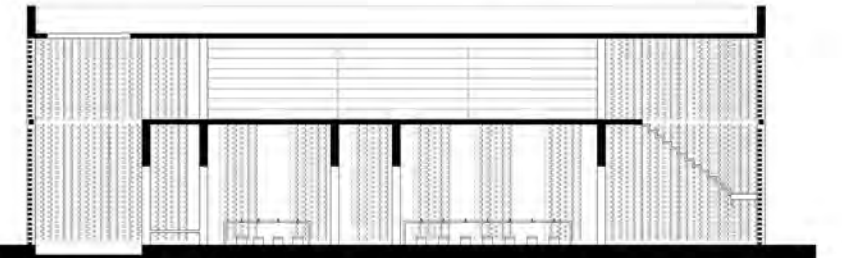
0 1m 5m  
3m  
DETAIL CC'



SOUTH ELEVATION  
0 1m 5m  
3m



EAST ELEVATION  
0 1m 5m  
3m



SECTION BB'  
0 1m 5m  
3m