

# Krishna Rao Jaisim

Jaisim-Fountainhead  
Bangalore, India

## About

The terms **Architecture** and **Design** were never new to **Prof. K.Jaisim**: they run in his blood. **S H Lakshminarsappa**, his grandfather, was a Palace Architect to the **Mysore Kings** until the 1940s. Although he had never actually considered a career in architecture, the lure of a **Triumph Tiger Cub motorcycle** promised by his father proved too much and drew him to study at the **Madras School of Architecture** where he enrolled in 1960. After completing his graduation in architecture in 1966 from Madras University, he worked with the architectural firm of **LM Chitale & Son** in Madras from 1966 to 1970.

At this time, heavily influenced by **Ayn Rand's** novel, 'The Fountainhead,' and encouraged by his Design Professor, **Sheila Tribe**, at The School of Architecture (Madras) and inspired by architectural greats such as **Mies van der Rohe, Buckminster Fuller, Otto Koenigsberger, Geoffrey Bawa, and Architect Srikrishna Chitale**, Prof Jaisim started an architectural practice under the name "**Jaisim-Fountainhead**" as a wandering, restless search for meaning in the world of architecture.

**Prof Jaisim**, at the forefront of this journey in the built environment, was anchored by a few well-meaning entrepreneurs, who recognized in this Maverick, the potential to realize a new expression in architecture. From the **Mydeen Tobacco offices** and madarasas in Kumbakonam, to large printing factories for Dinathandi in Madras, to The **TAJ Fisherman's Cove** - a prestigious foreshore hotel near Mahabalipuram, to holiday homes in **Yercaud** and absolutely challenging homes and institutions in the South of India, the forward-thinking, mould-breaking creative force became unstoppable.

In 1975, he took his adventure overseas to **Muscat, Oman** and worked in the **Gulf** for a period of four years; a time he used to search inwards. Subsequently he decided to go back to **Jaisim-Fountainhead** and break boundaries of architectural space in time by returning to the sub-continent and **back to Bangalore**, the idyllic home town of his ancestors.

The journey that began fifty years ago was inspired by the writing and philosophy of the celebrated author Ayn Rand in her book, 'THE FOUNTAINHEAD' gifted by his brother **Dr. K. Ramchand**. In the reading of this work, Prof. Jaisim says, **"The pages rolled, letters, words and sentences became epics, every page, a Bible, a Quran and a Bhagvat Gita.**

Howard Roark lived in the novel, Jaisim lived the philosophy in Life. The Do's and Don'ts became evident. Clients had to walk in, they were never sought after. It was and still continues to be a tough journey.

Disappointments galore but one spark here and there, and Life and Architecture come alive with meaning and purpose. The senses awake, the elements dance.

**NATURE rejoiced.** Architecture became. Passion and objectivity subjected to Human values - the SPIRIT of Man played with Time and Space."

**Prof Jaisim's** designs are a result of his farsighted views on nature-friendly features and advocacy of cost-effective & energy-efficient approaches. His focus on **sustainability** in architecture allowed him to use rainwater harvesting and cost-effective and energy-efficient approaches in construction long before they became mandatory; and these along with innovation in design, light and ventilation became his first home in Bangalore — '**Anthem**'. According to him, **"materials and natural elements in construction are akin to letters in a language."**

Talking about his work, he says, **"All my projects are a continuum. The past belongs to the future and they both make the present. No single project can stand alone, as architecture is a totality of integrity, it is holistic, and a way of LIFE. Some projects get published, some win awards, some get talked about, a few have hundreds of visitors, a few diamonds lie quietly not wanting to be discovered or disturbed. It is amazing: very often I stop and wonder at a building only to later find I had done it - a smile comes on the face. The eyes water, a few are brought down by building booms and real estate costs, but death is inevitable. New energies must be given new space."**

Reminiscing about a recent visit to one of his erstwhile projects he says, **"Every time I walk around and mumble to these spaces, when I wander**

***them alone, experiencing new expressions and new play of light, sound and touch, all my senses come alive. I touch these walls, and peep through the voids to see the play of solids and shadows... WOW! I wish time would freeze and still let space flow."***

According to him, ***"there is no secret or Mantra of a successful life except the human spirit."***

He says, ***"ARCHITECTURE is beyond function and form. I love to interact with young spirits all over, exchange and learn. What I have learnt is there for all who value it to explore and express. As the practice of architecture is very individualistic, it integrates a myriad professions and dynamics - from art to technology, from permanence to continuous change. So I often wonder - what next? What do I wish to do? Every day I take up a new challenge. I love undertaking new projects which have never been done or instantiated before."***

## **Working Life:**

- FOUNTAINHEAD completes 43 years in 2013
- 1980 to Now
  - Returned to India – took up the home of his ancestors – Bangalore
- 1975 to 1980
  - Challenged – adventure into a new dimension of the Building Industry – Overseas – Muscat,
  - Venturing into spheres of import and distribution of Building Materials, from Running Scheduled Contracts to running a Stone Crusher and Fabrication Unit
- 1970 Inspired by the writings of the legendary Ayn Rand, founded practice under the name JAISIM – FOUNTAINHEAD
- The practice from 1970 to 1975, grew, winning a National Competition for the Cochin Stadia, Presidents Nomination for the Small Industries Pavilion and the Prestigious 'TAJ Fisherman's Cove'
- 1966 to 1970 worked with Chartered Architects – L M CHITALE & SON, Madras

## **Awards and Mentions:**

- Award for Dedicated Services in the field of Civil Engineering from CIVIL-AID (Feb.2012)
- JK Cements AYA - Chairman's Award (20th AYA) (August 2011)
- Award for Best Commercial Architecture (2008)
- CNBC Awaaz Crisil Real Estate Awards
- Nature's Friend Award (2007 )
- Centre for Green Building materials and Technology
- Lifetime Achievement Award (2007)
- For Outstanding Performance in the field of architecture awarded by PAA (Practicing Architects' Association)
- International Gold Star Millennium Award (2007)
- International Conference on Indo-Nepal Friendship and Economic Co-operation at Kathmandu
- Durian Society Interiors Design Award (2004)
- For Outstanding Contribution in Interior Architecture
- J K AWARD – Architect of the Year (1992)

## **Memberships and Associations:**

- Council of Architecture (CA/75/1790).
- Fellow – Indian Institute of Architects (F 5738)
- Chairman of IIA-KC 2007-2010
- Education inspector- COUNCIL OF ARCHITECTURE
- CHAIRMAN- ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE COMMITTEE OF IIA
- Fellow - United Writer's Association
- Fellow - Indian society of lighting engineers
- Fellow – The Indian Institution of Valuers, India
- Charter President – Rotary Club – Cubbon Park
- P. President – Practicing Architects Association
- Member (Treasurer) - Board of Governors –INSTRUCT
- Advisor member – Structural Engineers World Congress
- Professor (Design chair) – B M S C E – Dept. of Architecture
- Professor (Design chair) – B M S S A – Yelahanka
- Board of Governors – Oxford School of Architecture

- Board of Governors – School of Architecture and Planning – Baroda
- Advisor – Centre for Applied Research and Education, S A P Tiruchi
- Member – College of Architecture, Trivandrum (C.A.T)
- Design Chair – McGAN's School of Architecture – Ooty
- Visiting Professor to Colleges of Architecture
- Member – International Affairs Board of IIA
- Member – Indian Institute of Interior Designers
- Member Review Committee – HUDCO
- Member – India Habitat Center
- Member – C.E.E.E.F
- Member – ISHRAE
- Member – of many other organizations to do with Ecology, Environment and Architecture
- Member – TASK FORCE – HOUSING – Govt. of Karnataka
- Member Advisor – SWISS AGENCY FOR DEVELOPMENT AND CO-OPERATION
- Advisor – G M Institute of Technology
- Member - Indian Institute of Arbitration & Mediation
- Member - Indian Plumbing Association
- Adjunct Professor – M.I.T
- Member Governing Body – TERI - The Energy Research Institute

**Prof Jaisim** has **authored** and **presented** over **150 papers**, has been published in **International, National** and **State Media**, has made over **1500 presentations** on issues regarding Architecture on International, National Forums and **Multi-Media**. He has convened the **Indian Institute of Architects** – National Convention in Bangalore. He has been the Convener for the Workshop on Innovative, Cost & Energy Effective Construction Methods and Systems.

Inspired by the Youth, the SAGA of JAISIM-FOUNTAINHEAD continues....