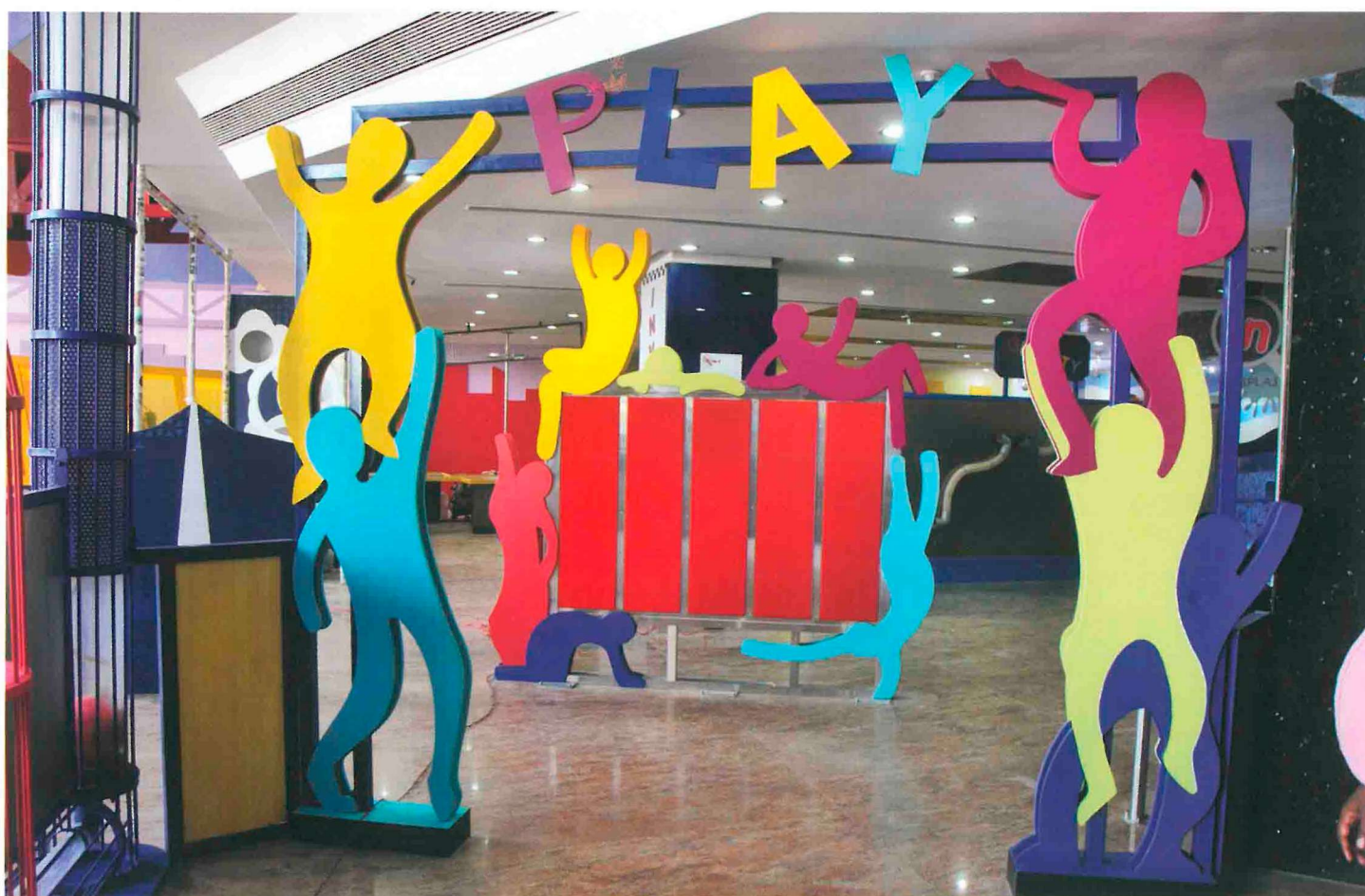


# Play-Day Redefined

A place where children play to learn and adults learn to play, Girias Children's Explorium in Bangalore is a space where kids explore things fearlessly and grasp concepts through play.



**M**oving through a stretch that connects two popular localities in Bangalore, Girias Children's Explorium in Domlur definitely grabs the attention of every passerby with its colourful façade, who wonders what lies behind these walls. Adapted from a play museum concept, the sprawling 25,000 sq ft space is dedicated for kids to play, explore, learn and have a great time. A first of its kind concept, the explorium has various play zones, a café and retail store too.

Speaking about this new concept, Sarika Gira, Co-Founder, Girias Children's Explorium said, "Kids are often told by parents and teachers to stay away from some things at home and school. The explorium is a space

for them to explore without restrictions, play, learn and have fun."

The idea struck Sarika and Manish Gira, when their kids wanted to do something fun apart from the usual visit to malls. The couple researched online about exclusive children museums in USA and followed it up with a trip to the study them closely. It was during this visit that they determined to launch the concept in Bangalore and one year later Girias Children's Explorium came to life.

Bringing this absolutely fresh concept to the country was not an easy task. After trying out some Indian design firms, the couple decided to rope in Simon Lashford, Design Director, Red Box, Chicago to create the

explorium. Simon serves as Senior Designer for a variety of projects, from children's ministries to theatrical stage productions.

The explorium is designed to have six seamless zones - Explore, Splash, Build, Invent, Live and Create - for providing different experiences to the kids.

In the Explore zone, kids get to climb a 5-storied climbing structure designed to be completely safe and helps the child in developing their motor skills with a sense of balance and adventure. And as most kids love water play, the Splash zone allows them to create their own fountain or construct a dam and even have a race for toy rubber ducks.



Encouraging role play among kids, the Live gallery allows kids to shop in a supermarket, cook or even make tea in imaginary tea sets. Such role play activity is said to increase abstract thinking, literacy, math and social studies.

Provoking the artist in a child, the Create zone provokes the artist in the child, encouraging them in activities like painting on glass, sand art, clay and other crafts.

The Build area provides opportunities for children to investigate the applied sciences by rearranging components to alter existing objects or create new objects. Use of building blocks, tools and simple machines encourages their problem solving skills.

Simple science concepts become exciting for kids and adults at the Invent zone which explores various physical sciences including air, gravity, magnetism, velocity, force and circuits in a fun way.

After exploring and playing in the various zones, kids and parents can unwind at the café for short eats and beverages, and indulge in a bit of shopping at the retail store.

Overall, the explorium is a great weekend destination for kids and parents; an opportunity for families to stay away from gadgets and spend time in playing, learning and bonding with each other. ●

**Chanda P Kumar**

