

Dandeniya, Russell

Kohomba Villa, Piliyandala

Influenced by the lush green paddy fields which adorn this linear strip of land, the Architect has tried to maximize the landscape in the design, capturing the environment and guiding the viewer's perspective of different angles.

The built form appears as two boxes subtly linked with a bridge and bounded by water bodies. While one end of the house and also the site is emphasized by a blank box façade, the other end is left to merge with

the uneven and organic character of the paddy fields. The block in the front functions as a visitor's room or optional office room while the other block functions as the residence. The slender bridge linking the two blocks is emphasized by the curved element marking an interesting point of entry for the visitors, at the same time demarcating the public and private realms of the house.

Both the entrance and the end of the residence are adorned by

shallow pools with their sensuous curved surfaces complimenting the architecture of the house. The rest of the house unfolds as an assemblage of spaces, mostly double height with little courtyards in between. The dining hall with its smooth finishes lying adjacent to a warm red exposed brick façade, is linked by a timber stairway to the upper floor living and bedrooms characterized by "kumbuk" flooring and soft pastel wall colours.



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The Garden House, Habaraduwa

A foreign couple mesmerized by the beauty of the island, their attraction to colonial period houses, their possession of over one acre of land in Habaraduwa, Galle with existing old house, and their need to transform it into a liveable home became the starting point of this project.

Inspired by the old buildings in the area, particularly the one on the site itself, the architect attempted not only to reinterpret the traditional forms and spaces in a more contemporary manner, but also to harmonise it with the natural ambience of the site.

Carefully designed steps at strategic points in the garden highlight the entrance pathways. The verandah has become a characteristic feature of the design not only linking the introverted interior space to the beautiful garden, but



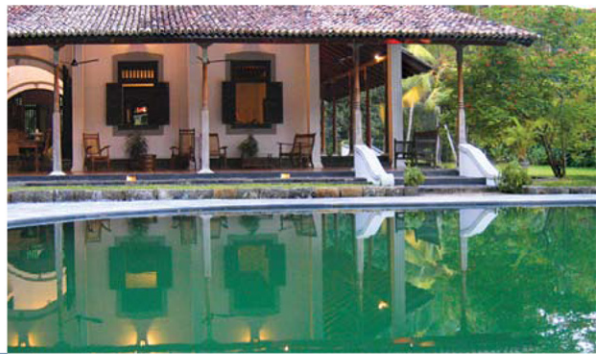
also creating a semi public area and an environmental buffer around the private realm of the house.

The introduction of the rear verandah, with a fabulous view across the garden, gives the Garden House its unique character. The tall decorative columns and

the intricate timber doors and windows, carefully placed in the façade, have also contributed to bringing out the character of the building.

Whilst all the major functions are on the ground floor, the more private bedrooms are tucked up in the upper floor undisturbed by the activities at ground level. Small courtyards, carefully placed in between the main spaces, can be found inside the building with its interesting collection of plants and animals. Streams of light, coming down from fret-work windows at higher levels, makes one aware of the double height volumes animating the flow of spaces.

The close link that one feels with nature within a traditional house has been maintained in this contemporary piece by the creative use of strategically placed, different-sized



Photography by Sithumini Ramamallala

fret-work openings. This maximises cross ventilation and protects the interior from harsh weather conditions. The Architect's use of the verandah, the pitched roofs and the selection of material clearly demonstrates the environmental responsiveness of the structure.