

UNDERSTANDING INSIDE OUT | *An Architect's Profile*

INTRODUCTION

Architect T.Y. Au was established in early 1998 in Penang, Malaysia. It is a practice, which has chosen to remain small in the belief that design quality, and principles will be diluted the bigger a firm becomes.

Au Tai Yeow, a Penangite who spent his formative years overseas, heads Architect T.Y. AU. Au left Penang at the age of 17 after completing his High School Certificate examinations. During the 1980s, competition was keen for entrance into the Malaysian universities and places limited. Au's parents sent him to Toronto, Canada following his elder sister's footsteps as they wanted him to be sure of a tertiary education. Au became valedictorian at Cambridge International College of Canada in 1984.

Given a choice between architecture and engineering, he chose the latter as profession and enrolled at Washington State University. Au chose the college in the state of Washington in the belief that a remote town provided a better avenue for studies compared to a college in a big city. At Pullman, Au was highly influenced by Professor Wayne S. Williams who guided him in architecture penmanship as well as delineation. He also became a tutor for a class in structures while at the same time honing his skills in graphics. Amongst his course mates were Ahmad Farid Baharuddin, son of Datuk Baharuddin Kassim and present director of Axis Architecture Partnership; and Zulqaisar Hamidin, present director of ATSA Architects Sdn. Bhd.

Au received numerous scholarships and awards at Pullman; the most important one was the Rotary Undergraduate Scholarship, which accorded him a year of studies at the DIS program at the University of Copenhagen, Denmark in 1989. Au was very influenced by the simple, clean and detailed works of Danish architects. During that year too, he had the opportunity to study how a Danish studio operated in the office of David Bretton-Meyer. He also took the opportunity to travel; visiting East Berlin before the unification, the Soviet Union before the break up, Greece to see the Parthenon, Egypt for the pyramids and so forth.

Au graduated with honors from Washington State University in 1990, a year later from his peers. He enrolled at Washington University at St. Louis after receiving a teaching assistantship and scholarship offer for his Masters in Architecture and Urban Design.

After graduation in 1991, Au returned to Penang to work for Laurence Loh on the Penang Museum. During the same year, he presented his thesis at an international conference in San Francisco. After completing the documentation work for the Penang Museum, Au left to work under Datuk Seri Lim Chong Keat. During his time at Jurubena Bertiga International, Au had the opportunity to work with Zulqaisar, Farid, Siah Teong Hui, present director of Axis Architecture Partnership and Azim Tan Sri Aziz, founder of ATSA Architects Sdn. Bhd.

In 1993, Au left for Hong Kong where he gained valuable experience on high rise residential, hotel, office and commercial complexes in China and Vietnam while working for John Tang And Associates. One main project which he handled was the Ramada Saigon in Ho Chi Minh City. Au left Hong Kong for Malaysia and obtained his architecture license in 1996. Au subsequently worked for an Australian architecture firm, DEM Group (M) Sdn. Bhd, in Malaysia until his promotion to a director of the firm. He was then responsible for the day to day operations of managing the company. Au was involved in the high rise residential buildings at Bukit Jambul Indah, as well as projects in Shipu, China and Sandakan.

In 1998, Au formed Architect T.Y. Au, continuing the principles of design, which he had gained throughout the years. In order to compete for bigger projects, Au formed an alliance with ATSA Architects Sdn. Bhd. as the two companies share the same principles in design. By having this association, the firm can still remain small and being personal in attending to its projects.

DESIGN PHILOSOPHY & PRINCIPLES

Post modernism was the rage during T.Y. Au's studies in America during the 80s. When he was doing his post graduate work, T.Y. Au was exposed towards deconstructivism and its philosophy. However, it was his practical experience in Malaysia and Hong Kong that has largely influenced T.Y. Au in his work.

T.Y. Au believes in Mies van der Rohe's adage 'God is in the details', having seen and experienced modern European design philosophy. Simple yet elegant design coupled with the evergreen belief in sun, wind and light typically governs the design process. Ornamentation as favored by a lot of Asian clients is kept to a minimal.

First and foremost, the design starts in the site placement and orientation of the building. After that, the circulation and spaces are worked out. The skin, and massing of the edifice is then thought out especially in the use of sun shade devices. This is quite important in this tropical climate. Designs are pragmatic and timeless, void of any leanings towards architecture of 'isms'. Issues of maintenance are also thought of in the selection of materials.

At the end of the day, Architect T.Y. Au believes that elegant, practical and cost effective design solutions should meet the client's needs. There is a full commitment to a continual process of practice and professional development. This ensures that the overall design and architecture services are personalized and superior.

PUBLICATIONS

Article

"Gurney Drive - An Evolution of A Place"

Architecture Malaysia 2001

Volume 13, No. 2

Publications

Fusion ~ Contemporary Architecture of Penang, Volume 1

PAM Northern Chapter, 2000

DEM PenangWorks 1994-1998

DEM Group (M) Sdn. Bhd., 1998

Papers

"Non traditional use of CAD in Architecture", Seminar aplikasi komputer dalam industri binaan, University Sains Malaysia, Penang, Malaysia, 14 February 1993

"Chinatown: Place and Memory", Making Cities Livable Conference, San Francisco, Nov 1991

Technical Drawings

Published for a paper in Journal of Performance of Constructed Facilities, November 1990

Prose

"The Ritual"

Published in Wind Row II, Literary Journal, Department of English, Washington State Univer, Spring 1990

Essay

"The New Follower"

Published in Wind Row, Literary Journal, Department of English, Washington State Univer, Spring 1989



selected works: 1998-2003 | **OUTSIDE**

The Millennium Monument

The raison d'être behind this proposal was to return Padang Kota Lama (The Esplanade) of Penang to the people of Penang. As the island of Penang has a dearth of public places, it was felt that creating a public monument in which the people can use will benefit the community rather than having a monument to be looked at but not utilized. A time capsule is embedded beneath a fountain in the middle of the monument. Two walls record the significant events of the island as well as the people who shape them. The events of the old century is recorded on a concrete face while the newer events, noted as they occur, are on the wall of aluminum panel on the other face. As such, the monument as a whole is seen as an icon and a place of gathering.

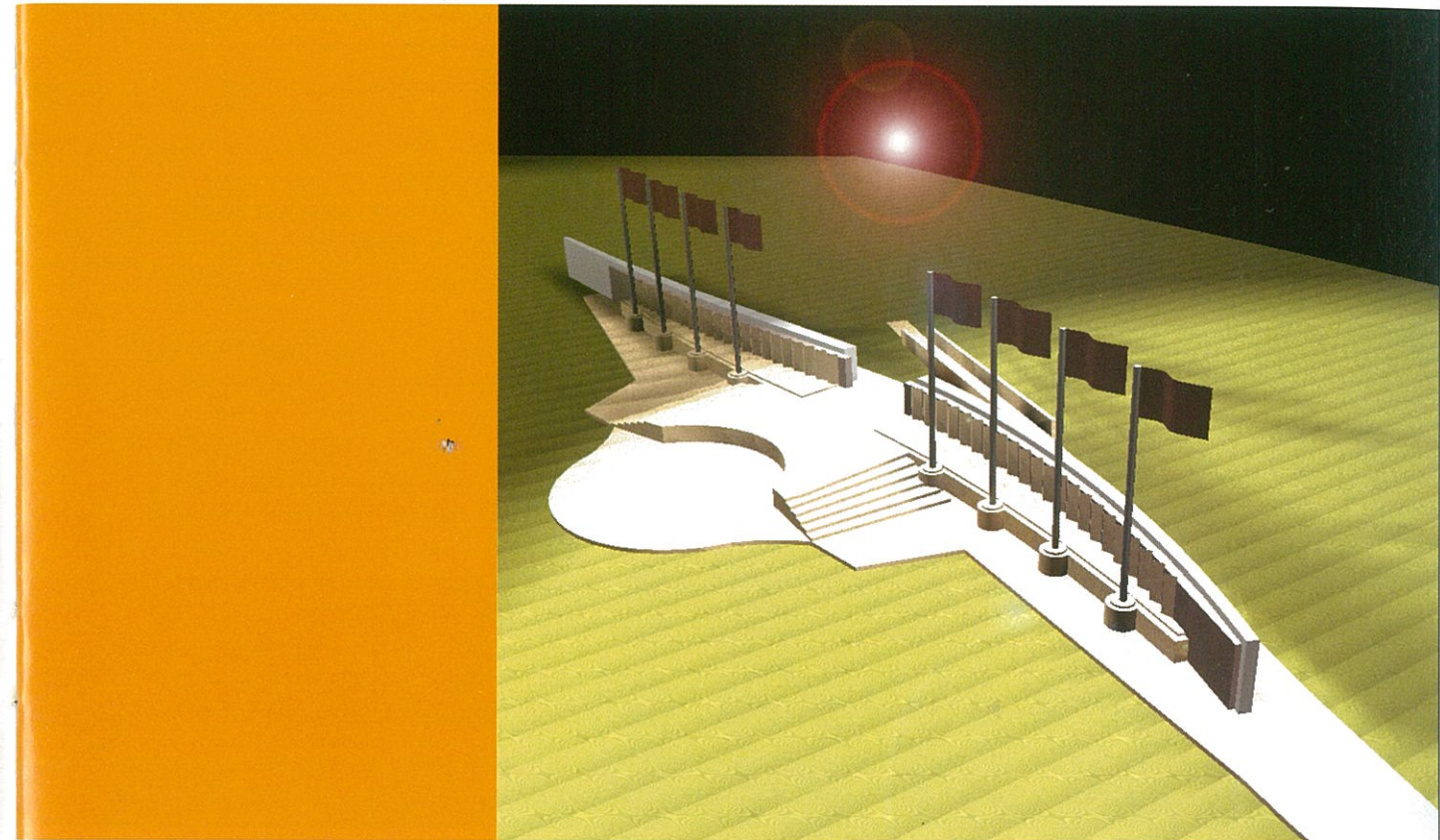
Awarded 2nd Prize by Majlis Perbandaran Pulau Pinang, 1999.

Computer generated views of the project



Computer generated views of the project

Competition



computer generated views of the project

CLIENT : Majlis Perbandaran Pulau Pinang
 PRINCIPAL : T.Y. Au
 PROJECT TEAM : Jin, Don & Pee Giak
 CONTRACTOR : Gaintrend Sdn Bhd, Prestige Pools Construction Sdn Bhd

No. 24 Campbell Street

No. 24 Campbell Street is part of a series of four unique shophouses located at the end of Campbell Street, a pedestrian shopping street in Penang. This building was originally constructed in 1909 and is listed under the Conservation guidelines. This two and a half storey building was in a dilapidated condition; floor boards were missing, roof tile cracked, the staircase timber rotted and so forth; when we were asked to provide suggestions for its repair, again within a tight budget. Working with a dedicated construction team, the building was slowly restored. First, the roof was changed to terra cotta tile roof, and floorboards entirely replaced with natural hardwood. The missing balusters of the staircase were also replaced to match the original. To prevent rain yet allow natural ventilation to pass through the building, an operable air well was designed and constructed. New timber louvered windows were also made to match and complement the existing windows in the building.

View of the central courtyard windows



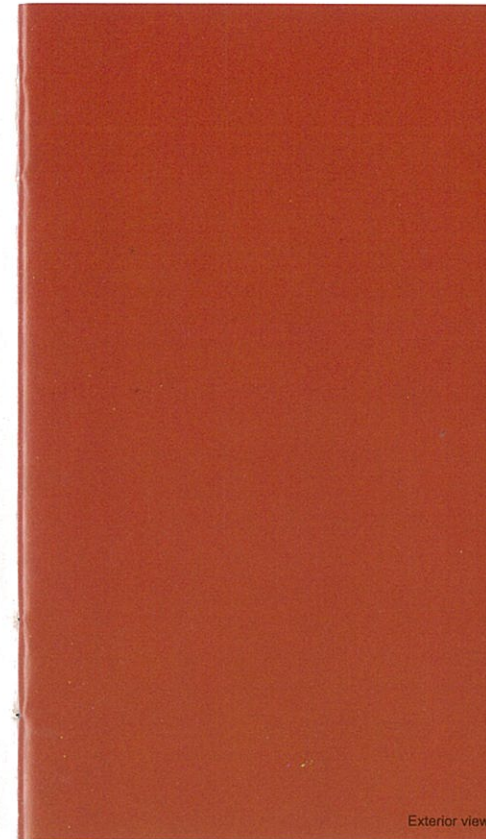
View of staircase from ground floor

View towards the 1st floor

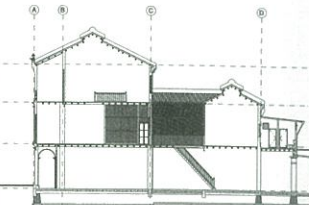
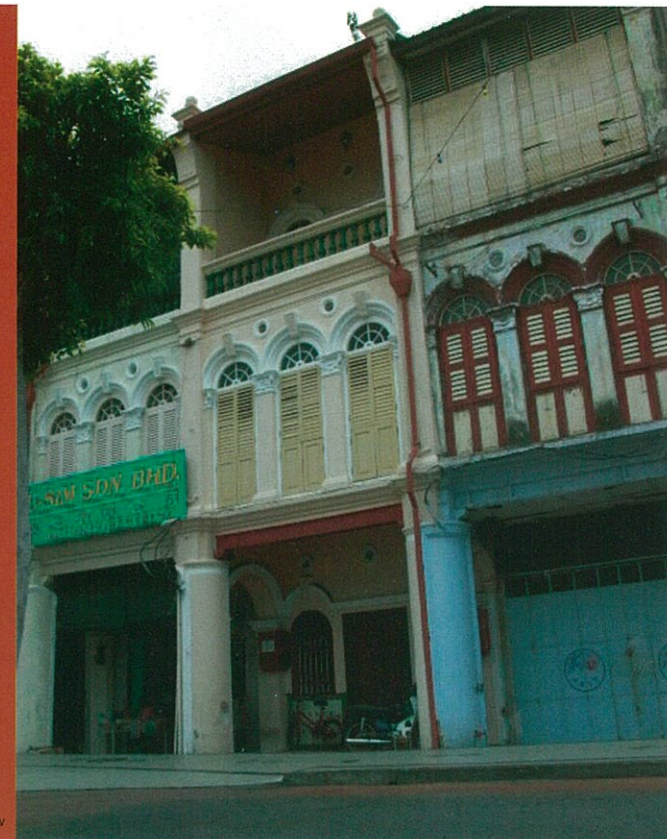
View of front room at 2nd floor

View of new roofing

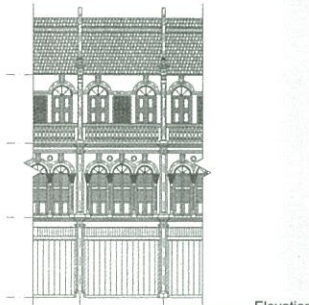
Restoration & Adaptive Re-Use



Exterior view



Section



Elevation

CLIENT : Private
 PRINCIPAL : T.Y. Au
 PROJECT TEAM : Din & Jin
 CONTRACTOR : Hookim Sdn Bhd
 COMPLETION DATE : 2001



Detail of stair balustrade

Views of original condition before renovation

No. 19 Love Lane

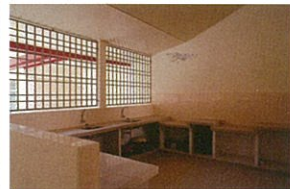
No. 19 Love Lane is a building within the Conservation Zone of Penang. This two storey building, although well maintained, had a few problems - the roof leaked, wooden beams were infested by termites, and electrical wiring needed an upgrade. Working with a dedicated construction team, the building was slowly restored. Wherever possible, we specified materials similar to the original. First, the roof was changed to terra cotta tile roof replacing the old cement and asbestos roofing. Floorboards were entirely replaced with natural hardwood timber boards. The unaffected intricate timber carvings in the main hall were cleaned and restored to their original condition. The colourful Stoke-on Trent floor tiles of the front hall were cleaned and polished while broken terra cotta ones for the rest of the house were replaced. To prevent rain yet allow natural ventilation to pass through the building, an operable air well was designed and constructed at the main airwell. The bathroom at the second airwell was demolished and rebuilt at the back courtyard. In its place a Zen garden will be constructed to promote the tranquility of the home. The ancestral altar previously in the third hall was moved forward to the second hall, trading its position with the dining area. The kitchen and bathrooms still remained at the back of the house.



View of newly restored Main Hall



The refurbished back courtyard

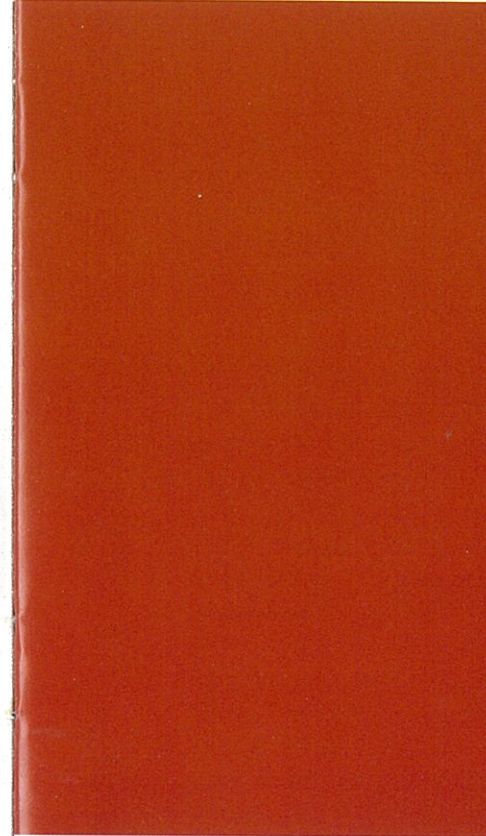


The refurbished kitchen



The ancestral room on the 1st floor

Restoration & Adaptive Re-Use



The 2nd Hall as seen towards the Main Hall

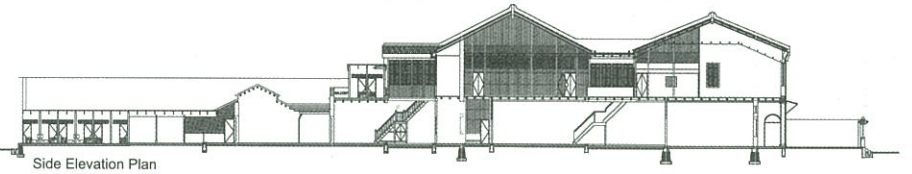
CLIENT : Private
 PRINCIPAL : T.Y. Au
 PROJECT TEAM : Din
 CONTRACTOR : Hockim Construction Sdn Bhd
 COMPLETION DATE : 2001



View of the centre divider



Original view of the Main Hall



Side Elevation Plan

Sun Yat Sen Museum

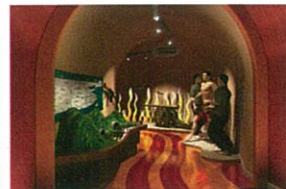
Due to T.Y. Au's previous experience with the Penang Museum, we were approached by the Penang Philomathic Union (a society founded by Dr. Sun Yat Sen in 1908) to help convert 65 Macalister Road to a museum. Dr. Sun Yat Sen stayed in Penang for six years and used the Hsiao Lan Ting Club at 65 Macalister Road to give talks as well as raise funds to overthrow the Manchurian Government. He also resided in the residence in 1905 and 1906.

We have managed to separate the Museum into two sections - the Museum proper, and the other activities that will accompany the Museum. In order to be self-sustaining, the Museum has to provide for other activities. As such spaces such as a theatre, café and museum shops have been allocated. Very little will be done to the external of the building except for the demolition of a toilet annex at the back that was added much later in the life of the building. The design of the Museum is still at its conceptual stage and it is envisaged that actual construction will only take place in 2004.

Wax Figurine Display



Exterior view of museum



Museum Display

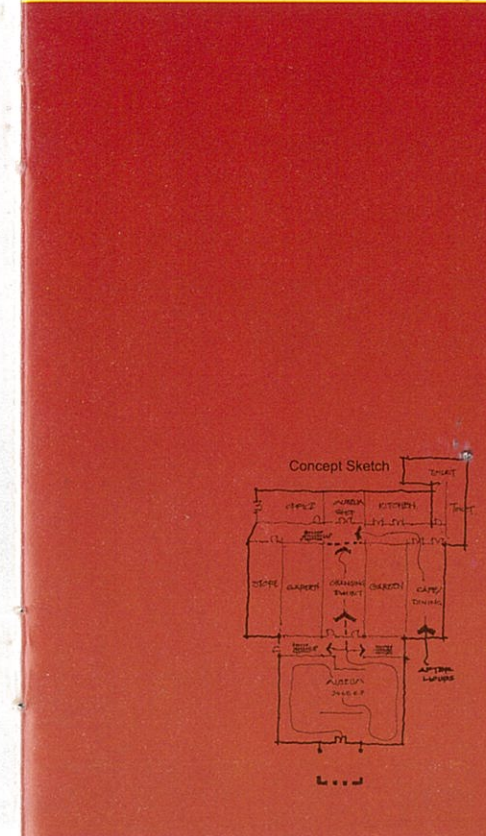


Souvenir Shop



Theatrette

Restoration & Adaptive Re-Use



CLIENT : Penang Philomathic Society
 PRINCIPAL : T.Y. Au
 PROJECT TEAM : Jaz, Loh & Choon Seong (computer graphics)
 C & S ENGINEER : GTP Consultants Sdn Bhd



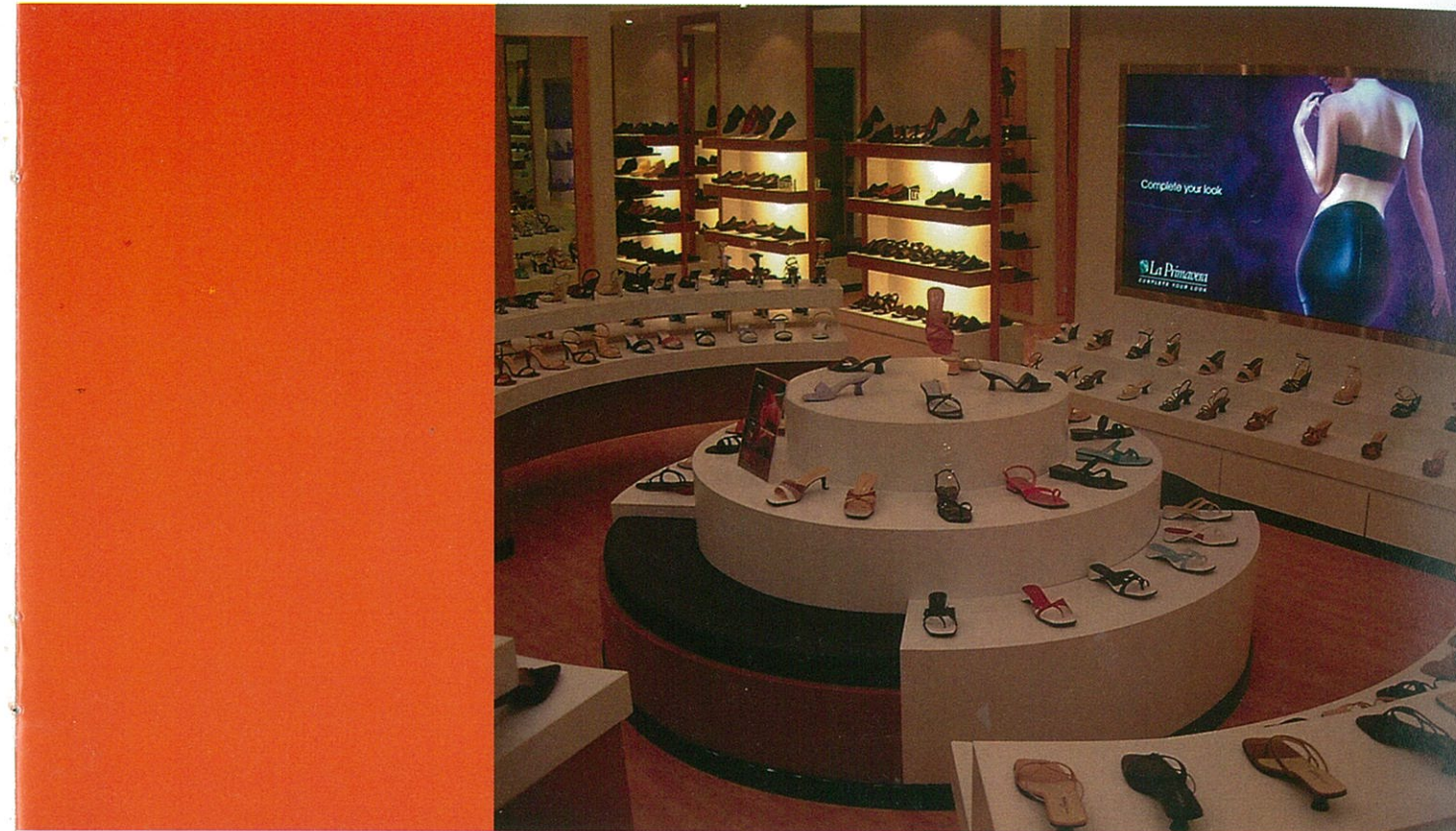
The Shoe Shop

The brief was to create a corporate feel for the shoe boutique. The concept would then be repeated throughout Malaysia. The corporate colours were given, and the idea was to create a jazzy, bright and interesting feel for the boutique. The main element in the design was the use of curves. The design of the pedestals is simple enough so as to enable them to be replicated. As always, budget was always a constraint and resulted in the ample use of mid density fibreboard.



Images of the boutique

Interior Design



CLIENT : La Primavera Sdn Bhd
 PRINCIPAL : T.Y. Au
 PROJECT TEAM : Jaz & Choon Seong (computer graphics)
 CONTRACTOR : Hwang Cheong Furnishing
 COMPLETION DATE : 2000

Genesis Asian Pacific

Interior Design

The client had a penchant for collecting antiques, and the design had to be flexible in order to accommodate his collection. The space provided was only about 800 s.f but the use of screens and partition managed to create a certain hierarchy of spaces. Again, timber was predominantly used. For this office, nya-toh timber was primarily chosen.



CLIENT : Genesis Asian Pacific Sdn Bhd
 PRINCIPAL : T.Y. Au
 PROJECT TEAM : Jaz
 COMPLETION DATE : 2000



Lobby



Reception

Manager's Room

Showcase cabinet

Bandar Tasek Mutiara Phase 7 Showhouse

Subsequent to the interior design of their corporate office, we were also engaged by Pembangunan Bandar Mutiara Sdn. Bhd. to design the interior of two types of show houses for Phase 7 of their development. The scope of works involved the selection of fabrics, material for the kitchen countertop as well as the design of the furniture for the units. Our main objective was that the show houses were basically for the developer to promote their development. We basically applied the theme of practicality and minimalism for the designs. To greater enhance the effect of the living and dining room, the minimalist design was applied. The use of everyday accessories such as paintings, flower vases and so forth provided a guide to purchasers the potential living style that can be utilized in the future.

Interior Design



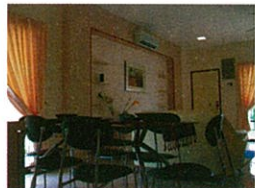
Living / Dining ~ Type C



Computer Gener



Master Bedroom ~ Type A



Dining ~ Type A



Living ~ Type A



CLIENT : Pembangunan Bandar Mutiara Sdn Bhd
 PRINCIPAL : T.Y. Au
 PROJECT TEAM : Loh, Jaz & Choon Seong (computer graphics)
 M & E ENGINEER : H.C. Toh Perunding
 CONTRACTOR : Kian Hong Interior Decoration & Construction
 COMPLETION DATE : 2003



Computer Generated Images

30 Jesselton

No. 30 Jesselton is based on the basic principles of tropical design with generous over hanging eaves, pergolas, large openings and courtyards for maximum cross ventilation provided in the building layout. There are two large existing trees on the site around which the parti of the house was arranged. As a result of this parti, a series of pavilions and wings linked via walkways and verandas are created, capturing pockets of garden spaces. The boundary between inside and out is blurred to create a living environment of rooms and landscape spaces. The 'family' courtyard features an existing 'Flame of the Forest' tree and the entertainment' courtyard enclose a reflective pool and sculptural stair. Above it sits a modern glass roof, which brings light into the house. Doors fold away and open up to more individual garden spaces, ponds, patios and outdoor dining areas.

Front Terrace



Koi Pond Entertainment Hall Terrace View Towards Secondary Courtyard Staircase detail

Residential Bungalow



CLIENT : Private
 PRINCIPAL : T.Y. Au
 PROJECT TEAM : Din, Jin & Eric
 CONTRACTOR : Chung Sap Yip General & Building Contractor Sdn Bhd
 COMPLETION DATE : 2001



Skylight Feature Detail Outdoor Dining Bathroom

4K & 4L Lorong Delima 3

The project started out as a renovation for 4K, a unit of a semi detached house to accommodate a large extended family. When the neighbouring unit became available, the owner acquired it and we ended up doing an addition and alteration to both units to become essentially a bungalow house. The brief and the spatial arrangement was easier to manage with the acquisition. The units are demarcated in that the younger generation of the family is housed in 4L and the older, 4k. The language we designed for this project is purely modernist and minimalist, with the use of timber lattice and cultured stone as the only embellishment for the building.



Corner Window Detail ~ 4L



Front Elevation ~ 4K

Cultured Stone ~ 4K

View of Balcony ~ 4K

Residential Bungalow



Side Elevation ~ 4K

CLIENT : Private
PRINCIPAL : T.Y. Au
PROJECT TEAM : Din, Loh & Jaz
C & S ENGINEER : Yow Ah Choong Consulting Engineers
CONTRACTOR : Compakill Sdn Bhd
COMPLETION DATE : 2003

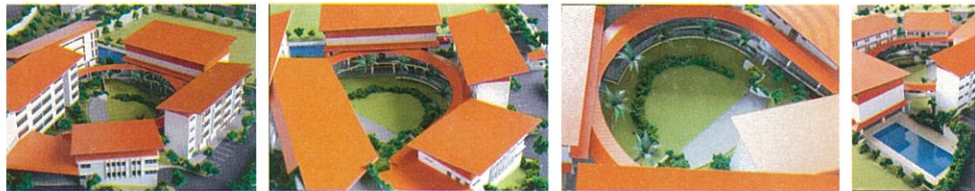


Original view before renovation

International School of Penang, UPLANDS

International School of Penang, Uplands is a cosmopolitan school for expatriates providing for elementary and secondary education. The new school is located at Batu Ferringhi and, although located somewhat inland, affords sweeping views of the sea. The tight 4-acre site and sloping terrain presented a challenge in accommodating the requirements of the school. The key to the school design was to make the spaces flexible and multi-functional. To create a focus for the school, the buildings are pivoted off a circulation ramp, and centred off a green courtyard. This courtyard also acts as a natural amphitheatre as well as a space for outdoor teaching and performances. The main drop off space is at a large covered open space besides the Administration block. This provides an opportunity for teachers to monitor the security of the school. The hostel block is placed at the corner end of the school besides the school field, allowing boarders to participate in sports at their leisure. A swimming pool has also been planned next to the Multi-Purpose block and the field thereby completing the brief.

Model



Aerial Images of Model

Courtyard

Swimming Pool

Institutions



View of Ov

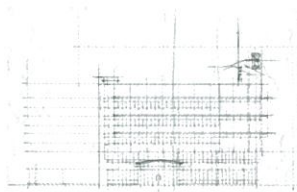
CLIENT : International School of Penang
 PRINCIPAL : T.Y. Au
 PROJECT TEAM : Jaz, Din, Eric, Jin
 C & S ENGINEER : GTP Consultants Sdn Bhd
 M & E ENGINEER : HP Beh & Associates Sdn Bhd
 QUANTITY SURVEYOR : Unitech QS Consultancy

PLB Headquarters

The building was originally a super market in Prai, Penang. The client set a tight time frame of 3 months to design and refurbish the entire building to be fit for a corporate headquarters. In order to create a pleasant lobby, a double storey space was created at the lobby area by cutting up an area of the first floor. A curved canopy was designed to announce the main entrance. At the lobby, homogeneous tiles and timber panelling were selected for a corporate feel also in view of the tight budget. The timber specie of Kembang Semangkok was used primarily for the panelling. For the other floors, metal and glass partitioning were designed for the separate divisions of the corporate office, and carpeting selected for the flooring. Signage and lettering were also designed for the building.



View of the completed project



Elevation study

Commercial

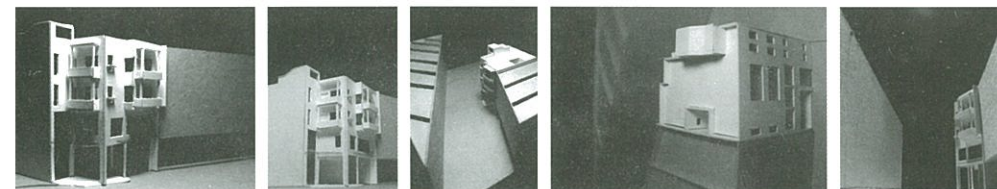
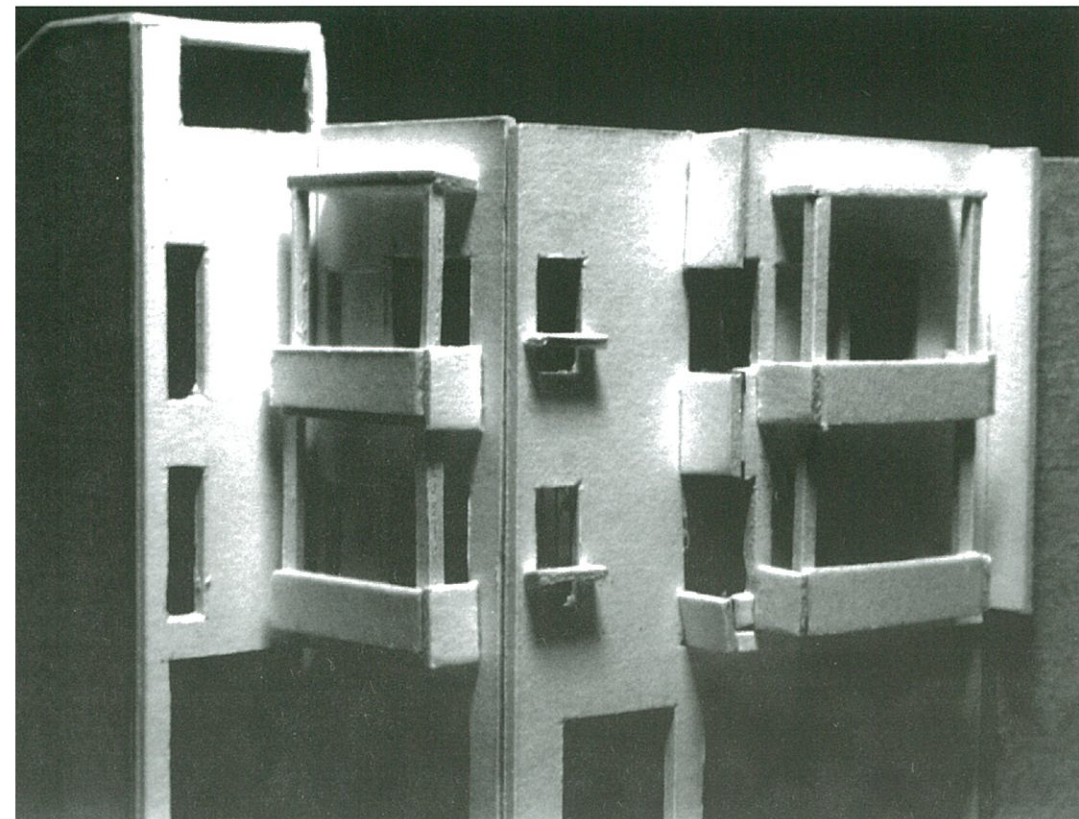


Entranc

CLIENT : PLB Land Sdn Bhd
 PRINCIPAL : T.Y. Au
 PROJECT TEAM : Jin & Aric
 C & S ENGINEER : Jurutera Jayausaha Konsultant Sdn Bhd
 M & E ENGINEER : H.C. Toh Perunding
 CONTRACTOR : Kok Hoon Sdn Bhd
 COMPLETION DATE : 1999

6 Solok Merican

The brief for this project was to design a 4-storey building with 2 units of residential apartment. Car parking was also required. The site is located in the city and as such, there was little room to manoeuvre. Ground floor was left for carparking and the first floor for commercial activities. In order to maximise the floor plate and allow sunlight into the building, the service areas such as staircases were pushed towards the corners. Care was taken to detail the building, and to distinguish the residential component from the commercial content.



Massing model studies

Commercial Pembangunan Bandar Mutiara Sdn Bhd Corporate Office

Our initial involvement with the developer was to design their corporate office. Our earlier experience for PLB Berhad proved quite handy as this time around, we were now much more equipped to anticipate detailing problems that may occur. We were involved in the design of furniture, selection of material and so forth besides co-ordinating the works with the contractors for the project.

The corporate office was basically housed in three units of shop houses which the developer built themselves. As such, the main priority was to enhance the image of the units themselves. Walls for the office space were demolished to provide for an open plan concept while the use of retail type glass panels at the ground floor provided people to view the sales office. We also helped the developer by providing the design for entrance signage to their development.



CLIENT : Pembangunan Bandar Mutiara Sdn Bhd
PRINCIPAL : T.Y. Au
PROJECT TEAM : Loh & Jaz
M & E ENGINEER : H.C. Toh Perunding
CONTRACTOR : Kian Hong Interior Decoration & Construction
COMPLETION DATE : 2003



Exterior Signage

Office

Exterior View

Bertam Perdana Phase 4



Design Sketches



Design Sketches

This project, a master plan for a 300-acre site at the new township of Bertam, Seberang Prai Utara, was designed in association with ATSA Architects Sdn. Bhd. In the planning of the whole 300-acre site, we had parcelled the phases to 5 different themes. It was envisioned that each theme would give each phase a different identity and assist in the marketing of the project. The residential areas are planned around a man made lake, which also serves to be a retention pond for the whole Bertam development. Other parts of the master plan consist of a corporate park, mosque and a public park for the entire Bertam district. From this master plan, we were later commissioned to further develop the design of 140 acres consisting of bungalows, semi detached and terrace houses.

Project & Housing Development



Bertam Perdana Master Plan

CLIENT : Bertam Properties Sdn. Bhd.
 PRINCIPAL : T.Y. Au
 PROJECT TEAM : Din, Loh
 CONCEPT DESIGN : ATSA Architects Sdn. Bhd.
 CIVIL ENGINEER : Jurutera Nusantara Bersekutu Sdn. Bhd.
 STRUCTURAL ENGINEER : Perwira Al-Shura Consulting Engineers Sdn. Bhd.
 M & E ENGINEER : Jurutera Nusantara Bersekutu Sdn. Bhd.
 QUANTITY SURVEYOR : KPK Quantity Surveyors (Semenanjung) Sdn. Bhd.
 LAND SURVEYOR : Syarikat Ayob Bin Saud

Taman Jernih

We were commissioned for the third and fourth phase of this development in Bukit Mertajam, Penang. As the theme of this development had been set by the earlier phases, our role was to improve on the architecture design. The site is located quite strategically in Bukit Mertajam, just minutes away from the famed St. Anne's Church. Its central location also makes it convenient to access the North-South highway as well as reach the Bukit Mertajam township. Phase 3 consists of 108 units of terrace housing and 12 units of semi detached houses. Phase 4 consists of 15 units of shop houses and 51 units of terrace housing.



Showhouse unit



Side profile



Showhouse unit

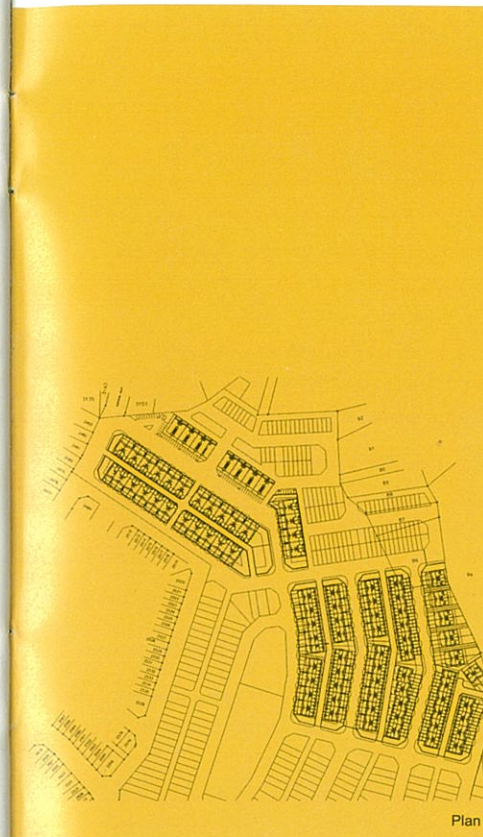


View of the first floor family hall



View of the kitchen

Project & Housing Development



Plan



Stre

CLIENT : Jernih Rezeki Sdn Bhd
 PRINCIPAL : T.Y. Au
 PROJECT TEAM : Loh & Aric
 C & S ENGINEER : GTP Consultants Sdn Bhd
 M & E ENGINEER : AG Konsult Sdn Bhd
 QUANTITY SURVEYOR : Davis Langdon & Seah
 INTERIOR DESIGN : Aloka Sdn. Bhd. (showhouse)
 CONTRACTOR : PAM Designs Sdn Bhd (showhouse)
 Goldbridge Engineering & Construction Sdn Bhd - Phase 3A
 SH Lim Enterprise Sdn. Bhd - Phase 3B

Amptek Electronics Sdn Bhd

This project is a refurbishment of an existing industrial building. We were quite limited in our options, as we had to retain the production portion of the building as well as the shell of the office portion. What we did was to modify the existing office portion by increasing the cladding height. This ensured that the proportion of the production section did not overwhelm the one storey office portion. We were also involved in the design of the interior, as well as the partition for the offices. Emphasis is placed on the detailing of the finishes. Again, the language of the whole project is kept to a modern minimalist style.



Exterior view



Exterior view



View of the lobby

Industrial



CLIENT : Amptek Electronics Sdn Bhd
 PRINCIPAL : T.Y. Au
 PROJECT TEAM : Loh, Jaz, Choon Seong (computer graphics)
 CONTRACTOR : Hockim Construction Sdn Bhd

View of t

Acknowledgments

Published and written by

Architect T.Y.Au

Suite 18-C-1, 18th Floor, Menara BHL,
51 Jalan Sultan Ahmad Shah, 10050 Penang
Tel: 604 229 5133
Fax: 604 229 5073
Email: archtyau@tm.net.my
Website: www.angelfire.com/biz7/tyau

Printed in 2003

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of T.Y.Au.

Copyright for images rests with institutions and individuals as indicated in the photograph credits.

Credits

Pages 10 - 11 : Mr Philip Thong

Pages 12 - 13 : Penang Philomathic Society

Pages 24 - 25 & 32 : David Chew Photography

Designed by

Chris Woolley Designs

ISBN No. 983-3000-00-2

Architecture is a collaborative process, and to this end, works illustrated in this book are a testament to that. In our practice of architecture, we have benefited from the input of our clients, fellow consultants as well as the hard work put in by the dedicated and talented people who work with us.

We will ensure that this collection of works continue to improve, as we believe that time and experience provides us with an opportunity to mature as designers and architects.